

*Back Story: Interviewing Artists*  
**Phyllis Tuchman**

---

Artist's statements appear in various formats and lengths. They range from the short and pithy, say, sentences printed as entries in the catalogues of group shows, to books by literate painters and sculptors such as Frank Stella and David Hockney. From time to time, questionnaires are circulated and published in art magazines and literary journals.

Institutions such as the Archives of American Art sponsor Oral History programs. The Getty and a number of universities collect artist's papers. Under different editors, art magazines have printed all sorts of features. For example, Art News during the 1950s ran many "X" painted a picture articles; and Artforum during the early 1970s had Q&A style interviews. Even Architectural Digest did a series of visits to artists' studios. Recently, celebrity profiles have been popular.

In its finest incarnation, the artist interview has the critical insights of a well argued essay and the immediacy of a letter to a relative or close friend. At its worst, it's a bad imitation of a late night talk show. When they're good, we tend to credit the intellect, imagination, charm, and wit of the artists rather than their interlocutors. But some credit should be directed to those who ask the questions. They're not just turning on a tape recorder. A great artist interview involves research and editing skills. Critics, curators, and journalists must keep their egos in check. After all, it's the subjects who are supposed to shine. Facts are the province of chronologies. The artist interview is after bigger game: "deep background."

\*\*\*

Phyllis Tuchman publishes regularly in Town & Country, bloomberg news, the Smithsonian, artnet, and Art in America. A trained art historian—at the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU, she wrote a masters thesis on Picasso's Guernica and a Ph.D dissertation on The Rise of Minimalism—she has taught at Williams College and at Hunter College. Tuchman has curated several exhibitions, including Six in Bronze, Big little Sculpture, a George Segal retrospective, and two surveys of Venezuelan art.

A former president of AICA/USA, Tuchman has published many artist interviews and written extensively on aspects of Picasso, Matisse, Impressionism, and Minimalism.

*Suchan Kinoshita's "Voorstelling": aspects of conservation*  
**Fabiana Cangia**

---

*Voorstelling* is an installation embracing performance and time based media and is composed of a large and complex space, containing numerous items that differ in type and material. The work was created by Suchan Kinoshita in 1997 and is now part of the collection at the S.M.A.K. museum.

SMAK chose the installation as one of the study cases for the international 'Culture 2000 - INSIDE INSTALLATIONS' programme. The re – installation, conservation and presentation of a work like *Voorstelling* demands in-depth analysis of the work and of the related aesthetic and technical issues.

Numerous conservation-related doubts and issues emerge when one is faced with such a complex and varied installation that includes different items and materials and a transitory section (the performance) in a space that has to be re-constructed each time the gallery environment changes.

The documentation presented illustrates and proposes several of the possible strategies for its conservation.

The conservation plan and the solutions employed come after in-depth study into the meaning of the work as a whole and of its individual parts in an attempt to suggest an answer to these issues.

Starting with investigation into its artistic history, this study tries to set out some guidelines and provide indications on methods for the re-installation and future presentation of the work, the conservation of the items and materials it is made up of, and on the possibility and methods for duplicating and replacing these in line with the artist's wishes.

The participation of the artist proved extremely important for the completion of this assignment. The co-operation, conversations and work carried out with the artist proved the starting point and the motivation for the decisions taken.

\*\*\*

Fabiana Cangia is a freelance conservator – restorer.

She studied sculpture conservation at ICR in Rome, Italy, and after some years working on traditional art, she started specializing in the conservation of Contemporary Art.

At the SMAK she worked for the Inside Installation project.

Now she is working on different projects on contemporary art conservation in Italy and abroad as well. Meanwhile she collaborates with museums and institutions to setting up exhibitions and making condition reports.

*Suchan Kinoshita's "Voorstelling": a performer's manual*  
**Stijn Van De Vyver**

---

Suchan Kinoshita's *Voorstelling* consists of an installation in which a performance is carried out. Up until the start of the Inside Installation research project only very little of this complex performance was documented. The research at the SMAK earlier this year led to a manual which ensures the key information on the performance is registered.

The manual was edited in close collaboration with the artist and functions as reference for future performers. By putting together all the necessary information in one document, we succeeded in making the performance 'futureproof': from now on the performance can be carried out without any aid or intervention from the part of the artist. In this lecture the different steps in the research are put forward.

Besides the objectives and solutions in this specific case, some general pointers for documenting performances are suggested.

\*\*\*

Stijn Van De Vyver holds Master's degrees in Art History and Cultural Studies.

He is currently pursuing a PhD in Art History at Ghent University.

He contributed to several magazines and volumes.

At the SMAK he researched and edited a manual for Suchan Kinoshita's installation art work 'Voorstelling'.

*After words: Intention and the Homometrics of the E-Interview***Brian Winkenweder**

---

Robert Morris treats the artist interview as a critical component of his studio practice. Morris conflates speaking and writing about his art by consenting only to interviews that are conducted through email, refusing to be recorded in a real-time, face-to-face dialogue. Throughout his career, Morris has published numerous theoretical essays, and it is not surprising that he would embrace email as a way to conduct an interview. Email signals a historic shift in the manner in which artists, critics and scholars communicate with one another. Therefore, we must examine the advantages and disadvantages of the e-interview. This paper asserts that e-interviews are a hybrid mode of communication, flexibly located between conversations and letters, and therefore should not be seen as the equivalent of a conventional interview. Through analysis of Morris's embrace of the e-interview, I will show how email has the capacity to dialectically synthesize the directness of speech with the circumspection of writing.

Morris does not believe he can articulate his ideas as well through spoken words as through written words. As a result, the e-interview offers Morris an informal lexical space, empowering him to quickly dispense with (or ignore) some questions while exploring others in great detail. Just as email fosters immediacy, it also enables the participants to reflect and research before responding. For instance, in my e-interview with Morris, I asked him about the use of mirrors in an installation of one of his labyrinths at the Hirshhorn Museum in which a mirror was placed above it. He responded: "A labyrinth with a mirror!!! Perish the thought. Was this actually done at the Hirshhorn? I thought they only installed mirrors above beds in certain motels of questionable repute." In reply, I quoted and included a citation for my source. This exchange ended with the artist exasperated—he wrote: "I guess it happened. It is painful to contemplate." This dialogue reveals some advantages for e-interviews, as both the immediacy of artist's shock and the measured tones of research are juxtaposed. Such an exchange would not happen in a real time, face-to-face dialogue.

E-interviews provide Morris security in what Roland Barthes called the "trap of scription" whereby the casual innocence of speech is exposed and, through writing, we censure ourselves, editing out blunders and misleading statements. Like Morris, Barthes was uncomfortable with the constraints of the recorded interview; he claimed "speech is dangerous because it is immediate and can not be taken back" (*The Grain of the Voice*, 4): What Barthes sought was a "homometrics" whereby there is "a correct metric relation between what one has to say and the way one says it." I contend that the e-interview, for Robert Morris, provides him "homometric" equilibrium, whereby he can discuss his work and ideas in a forum that benefits from both the immediacy of speech and the reflexivity of writing.

\*\*\*

Brian Winkenweder is assistant professor of art history and visual culture at Linfield College, Oregon. He studied with Donald Kuspit, earning a PhD in Art History and Criticism from Stony Brook University near New York City. Dr. Winkenweder has published essays in *Art Criticism* and contributed numerous encyclopedia articles to projects published by Routledge. At present, he is completing a book assessing the influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* on the rise of conceptual art in New York during the late 1960s.

*After "The Death of the Author". On Re-installing Anna Oppermann's processual and open Ensembles,*

**Ute Vorkoeper**

"If somebody finds in a notebook full of aphorisms a reference, a hint to a date, or an address, or a laundry bill: work or not work? Why not? And so forth ad infinitum. How can we determine a work from the millions of traces that somebody leaves after his death? A theory for the body of work does not exist yet, and those who naively start to publish the work fail to notice such a theory, so their empirical work will bog very rapidly." Michel Foucault. What is an Author?

What Michel Foucault pointed out as a basic problem of every body of work is multiplied by a life work and all its distinct parts which are non finite by definition, by single works that do not include exceptionally dates, addresses or laundry bills but do really often so as meaningful particles. Anna Oppermann (1940-1993) showed the "unity of the work itself" as the impossible. Her ensembles of objects, drawings, photographs, paintings and texts are characterized by infinite grow and change. Also, the classical modern author is undermined by a dialogically operating artist who collects, reflects and arranges instead of creating something radical new. Moreover, this different author called Anna Oppermann kept her sources visible. But still she was the instance of decision in this evolving art process that made visible and gave shape.

The author in a classical sense – i.e. the one who gives a homogenous sense to what he / she does - died twice with her in 1993. First he/she died with her opening up of the artistic process, with her starting of the dialogue with the world, the others. Second he died because the artist forces her successors to decide. For to keep Oppermann's works visible and alive today means to work with their parts, to read and interpret, to follow the artist as long as possible, but to modify as soon as necessary. This turns familiar items of conservation upside down and bears new kind of problems.

The lecture will line out these shifts more precisely by introducing to Oppermann's ensemble works and explaining the attempts to re-install ensembles up to now and regarding to the first retrospective which will take place in Stuttgart in spring 2007.

\*\*\*

Ute Vorkoeper, Hamburg, Germany, b. 1963, art historian, author, curator; Ph.D. (1997); Conservator and Curator of the Estate of Anna Oppermann (1993) (since 1994). Research: Transmedia - pilot project at Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg (2001-2004); Scholarship and Lecturer at Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg (1998-2001); Curatorial Projects: On Disappearance. Loss of World and Escaping from the World. HMKV, Phoenixhalle, Dortmund (2005); get that balance, Kampnagel K3, Hamburg (2001) <[www.getthatbalance.de](http://www.getthatbalance.de)>; discord - sabotage of realities, Kunstverein/Kunsthau Hamburg (1996/97). Publications on contemporary art, artists, art theory and mediation of art; ZEIT online <[http://www.zeit.de/feuilleton/kunst\\_naechste\\_generation/index](http://www.zeit.de/feuilleton/kunst_naechste_generation/index)>; see also: <<http://www.deponat.de>>

***Methodology for qualitative research within the conservation of contemporary art, Rik Pinxten***

---

Problem: How is it possible to come to procedures of conservation 'together with the artist'?

The anthropologic (and general social scientific) qualitative methods can help:

- praxiologic perspective: through the dialectical process of interiorisation and exteriorisation a 'third world' can be build

Control by the artist and a relationship based on mutual trust

- procedure of 5 moves:      a) general ethnographic moment  
   b) indicate the cultural intuition  
   c) systematic ethnography  
   d) model of construction  
   e) to compare if desired

- with 'c) systematic ethnography' different methods are usable:

- interview
- life story
- semantic analysis of fields of meaning
- folk definition
- non verbal methods

\*\*\*

Rik Pinxten is professor Anthropology at the University of Gent and director of CICI (Centre for Intercultural Communication and Interaction)

The Conservation of a Work that « never stop starting » Or How to Create an Installation Guide for Joëlle Tuerlinckx's *'un ensemble autour de MUR*, 1998

**Maryline Terrier**

A first presentation of *'un ensemble autour de MUR* took place when the museum opened in 1998. This was followed by three other presentations up to 2003, for which the artist proposed three variations, or applications, adapted to the changing context of the museum.

In these variable conditions, how does one conserve this work without the intervention of the artist? How does one consider the objects as tools that make the work evolve, without their conservation resulting in fetichization? This was not only the museum's concern but also the artist's, who from the very beginning had created a certificate that would enable future interpreters to invent new applications, in the same way a musician interprets a partition. The certificate is thus the guarantee of the work's permeability, its adaptation to the space. It is the key to the structure of the work and one of my tasks was to understand how it worked. The aim was to make this certificate, through its analysis, into an installation guide.

My research time was to be divided in two directions: firstly, in the analysis of the certificate while following the artist at work and secondly, in devising a means to reconstruct the results of the analysis in a form or model that would serve as a manual for future interpreters.

The guide contained a study of the history of *'un ensemble autour de MUR*', the title cartel of the work, the inventory of the objects, reproduction and transformation rights, presentation of the objects, conservation and finally, experiments or scenarios as examples of variations.

These experiments have not rendered the work autonomous. However, they did contribute to the practical application of the information in the certificate, and then to its development towards a guide, which is an open manual for this variable work. The next step would be to test the use of the guide by a third party and evaluate its usefulness. Ideally Joëlle Tuerlinckx would no longer need to intervene, but, in my opinion, this is still far from being a reality and it is perhaps not a feasible goal. This being said, as the guide was constructed according to a model closely related to the work, it remains the most concrete testimony to its variability. If, in the future, the museum decides to show one of the old applications, it will be able to reconstitute the parameters of the context. But ideally, for the person willing to take the time to go through the guide, it should be possible to extrapolate a few future applications, so that the work continues to never stop starting.

\*\*\*

Maryline Terrier studied at L'école de Beaux-Arts de Valenciennes (Fr ) and paper conservation at La Cambre in Brussels. She works as the assistant of Joëlle Tuerlinckx. At the SMAK she was responsible for the case of Joëlle Tuerlinckx *"Un ensemble autour de MUR"*.

*An artist as initiator and collaborator*

**Kie Ellens**

---

In this lecture I would like to offer you an insight in my relation to another specific artist and his work.

In 1977 the work of Richard Tuttle immediately struck me as something very special. I was a young art student at the time. The work never left me. After a few years I started collecting Tuttle's books. It has grown to one of the most extensive private collections. The books and invitations form a separate independent universe parallel to the artworks.

From my background as an artist I suggested investigating new grounds. ("You don't seem to use all of your possibilities" was my blunt way of introducing myself to Tuttle) This resulted in a public project and a book. Divers knowledge of the work has become available to me by using various different means of relating to the work. From being a persistent unprofessional researcher for more than 20 years to being a collector and a collaborator. Being a collaborator of course opened a new vein of knowledge. The research has also led to archiving artists texts and unpublished manuscripts. The main goal of this last activity is to make the writings available to a large audience.

Working from a personal commitment I was able to conduct these activities, too time consuming for a museum and impossible for someone without a thorough knowledge of the creative process. But still, in this case, nowhere nearly as important as the role Tuttle's most active collectors, the Vogels from New York played. Without them Tuttle's oeuvre would have been different as I will explain. Preserving their knowledge could be a next step.

\*\*\*

**Kie Ellens** (1956) graduated from art school Minerva (Groningen,NL) in 1982. Soon he was realising projects in public space. Out of discontent with the offered possibilities he started organizing projects to generate alternatives. He curated out door projects in which artists were asked to realize new works. Participating artists were, amongst others, Lily van der Stokker, Julian Opie, Olaf Metzel. Lately he has been the art advisor of the Chief Government Architect in the Netherlands, working on some 30 projects at any given moment. On the side working, as a curator for foundation VHDG, on projects in public space. He did new projects with Tazro Niscino, Richard Tuttle and other. Currently he is also working on a book about his project with Sam Durant for the office of the Public Prosecution in Arnhem.



*The Issue of Authenticity in "Grass just Grass" by K. Bednarski,*  
**Monika Jadzinska**

---

The paper explores the notion of authenticity in installation art with reference to the case *Grass just grass* by K. M. Bednarski (the case from the project '*Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation Art*'), concerning the conceptual framework basing on philosophical considerations and the issues which are relevant to the conservators and broad museum community. The understanding of authenticity plays a fundamental role in all types of research, scientific studies, conservation and restoration decision making models and practice. The main use of the concept of authenticity in relation to the words such as 'true' and 'original' is inherent in various context, belonging to the meaning of the artwork. The current concept of authenticity as a tool for past, present and future preservation, presentation and conservation/restoration treatments is discussed.

I will consider the main issues related to the installation artwork: authenticity of context, place and space; authenticity of the creation process; authenticity of the internal unity of the artwork (the oneness of the material and meaning structures); the truth in the case of the viewer's perception; authenticity as a relevance to the artist's concept and intention; authentic as originated; the truth in relation to durability and changes.

*Grass just grass* is a kind of installation connected with emotional experience of the author as well as the viewer, using interaction leading to the expression of emotions and associations, with particular role of the place as an inherent element of the artwork. The viewer is faced with the simple form made of ordinary materials, affecting his/her senses and intellect till the work and artist's attitude change in the physical and metaphorical sense due to external and internal conditions, possibilities, time, historical and personal circumstances. Concepts of change and issue of relativism will be examined. Misinterpretations of the artwork meaning, distortion of the truth, problems of re-installation and attempts to situate a work in inappropriate space with the lack of some intrinsic elements like scent, dampness and sound, took place in the past.

In conclusion I will present the thesis that the issues of authenticity of the installation artwork constitute the delicate complexity due to the unity of: firstly - material structure, secondly - the meaning structure of the work connected with correlation between some elements of the work and space of exhibition, thirdly – arrangement based on values, as defined by Alois Riegl in the term "haptish-optish", create the unique value introduced in the work of contemporary art. This paper will identify new professional trends and needs in this field.

The ideas expressed in this paper will be illustrated with a short presentation of the case study *Grass just grass* by K.M. Bednarski.

\*\*\*

Monika Jadzinska – 1990-1997 studies at the Institute for the Study, Restoration and Conservation Cultural Heritage in Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun; from 2000 assistant in the Department of Conservation and Restoration of Old and Modern Paintings, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw; conservator/ restorer of easel paintings, polychrome sculptures, icons, wall paintings (Poland, Germany, Russia); participant in the international project INCCA, "Preservation and Presentation of Installation Arts", annually in KBN scientific research; expert for "Zacheta" Gallery, DESA UNICUM; conservator/curator in co. with White International Relations Co. in Japan; started PhD entitled: "Authenticity in contemporary art" in the Institute of Art Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw.

*“Grass just Grass by K. Bednarski” - Towards Care of Installation - [VIART@HOST](#) “ - project of digital documentation of artifacts and installations in application for virtual modeling of museum's and exhibition spaces ; needs and possibilities, limits and advantages,*

**Iwona Szmelter, Rafal Szambelan**

Executed project presumes the work on correlation of digital data about the gallery spaces and museums with the VRML artworks data. Project should work on virtual double making of exhibition spaces and real artifacts, installation as digital equivalents. There should be also provided virtual containers for contextual information connected with art work.

Improving data collection and preserving contextual information including the intentions of artists, authors, preventing the false interpretation and misguided conception of presentation of artworks is the key issue as well as optimal exhibition mode in hosting galleries and institutions which should take into account technical advices of conservators.

The project will concentrate on the creation of a general base for universal care system for adequate conditions during presentation of exhibits in hosting institutions, in original site of storage and during transports. Through introducing new digital documentation forms, in particular 3D - models and inventory data an exceptionally effective platform of conditions data assessing will be provided, not only for conservation purposes.

One of spectacular project achievements could be making possible the use of virtual reality for composing digital art work models into VRML exhibition ensembles strictly according to artists and authors intentions and at the same time covering the needs of highest standards of conservation care that should be fulfilled in the real world in case of executing the exhibition and event.

\*\*\*

Iwona Szmelter. Conservator, scientist and teacher. Graduated in conservation/restoration (MA) at University Nicolai Copernicus, Torun, Poland. Since 1981, she has been an academic teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, now - Head of Department of Conservation-Restoration of Movable Fine Art, Easel Paintings, Polychromed Sculptures, Modern Art. Receiving her degrees as a result of several projects in the field of methodology of the conservation/restoration of easel paintings, modern art, theory of preservation of cultural heritage. Professor ( 1994) Main current research interest is in the theory of conservation and science & technology of conservation-restoration of works of art and modern art.

Rafal Szambelan is a restorer working in the field of digital documentation. Since beginning of 90-ties he specialised in the application of CAD and GIS systems for artwork recording and condition reports in particular for the large scale architectural surfaces. He works as a science secretary at Inter-academy Institute of Conservation and Restoration of Work of Art ,Poland. Recently his concept of GIS application in documentation for conservation purposes has been appreciated as a runner up of the Meridian Award in the category unique and unusual. The contest is annually organised by Map Info corporation.

*Inside Installations: 2 remaining e-learning packages*

**Karen te Bracke-Baldock**

Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage / ICN

All participants in the Inside Installations project are aware of the importance of sharing information and knowledge. E-learning packages are one way to do this and in the planning of this project the co-organisers agreed to create three packages. The first package on the Bruce Nauman case has already been produced by the Tate and can be accessed via their website:

[http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/majorprojects/nauman/home\\_1.htm](http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/majorprojects/nauman/home_1.htm)

The topics of package 2 and 3 were agreed on by the co-organisers a few months ago and since then Karen has been working on their production. The topic of package two is the project itself. It will be designed with general public in mind and will give insight into why we are doing such research, how it is done and of course will deal with the most relevant issues to do with the preservation and presentation of installation art. Package 3 will be designed with the museum professional in mind and its main focus is video registration of installation art. Karen will explain the content of these in more detail as well as show prototypes of their functionality. Project participants will be invited to ask questions and offer suggestions or wishes.