

PIPA(POETRY IS PUBLIC ART)

Report: Documents from the Archive

The PIPA (Poetry Is Public Art) Project is a conceptual collaborative endeavor which is based on the site-specific potential of poetry projects to intersect with public spaces. What this means is that poetry can happen anywhere, at any time; can intersect with space and time not as random word-play but as covert reflective commentary. PIPA is a concept that has been exercised around the world for many centuries. PIPA has no members except for those who, intentionally or non-intentionally, choose to break poetry out of the frame of the page and test its assimilation and/or intrusion into public spaces. Although the archive implies organization, there is no organizing principle behind PIPA, except for the organizing principles at work in the mind of any poet who, at any time, chooses to design, orate, sloganize, decorate, or sculpturally infiltrate public space. (See disclaimer.) PIPA is not a container for the minds of poets, but rather is a convergence of minds working independently or in groups to infiltrate public spaces at the level of poetry. PIPA activities will include and/or have included:

- ˘ any poetry activity that causes passersby to pause.
- ˘ handing out poems on busy avenues (the haughtier the better).
- ˘ slapping poetry stickers on advertisements that “talk back” to the advertisement.
- ˘ leaving poems behind on park or subway benches (a.k.a. “the problematic poetics of littering”).
- ˘ leaving poems in the form of messages on phone booths or public toilets that cause passersby to pause and think: that language looks quite strange.

- proclaiming poetry from soapboxes.
- using poets' skills as condensers of language to create witty and provocative slogans for political rallies.
- designing poetry signs to blend in with the surrounding signage.

BIP3: Photographs taken at the site of public machines (SMC) subject to PIPA poetry cards, 9/00.

BIP4: Debunker Mentality wheatpaste sheet "POEMS OF GRIEF" (one of many) pasted on poles (NYC) 10/01.

THIS IS A MESSAGE OF GRIEF.

LET WAR BE WORKING

LET RIGHT TO MAKE AN ENTER COURTESY PAY FOR THE CHARGE OF EXTREME INEFFECTUALITY

ENTER A DISTURBANCE BETWEEN AN INDIVIDUAL AND HIS COUNTRY

WHY IS THE MEDIA NOT TALKING ABOUT THIS?

WHY IS IT UNETHICAL TO DENY?

THIS IS A MESSAGE OF GRIEF.

FROM: WORDS IN THE MOURNING TIME
by Robert Hayden

Oh, what a world we make, oppressor and oppressed.

Our world—
this violent ghetto, slum
of the spirit raging against
itself.

We hate kill destroy:
in the name of human good
our killing and our hate
destroy.

DEBUNKER MENTALITY

THE WHEATPASTE SHEETS "POEMS OF GRIEF" include:

- TREE OF FIRE by Adonis
- from: OF BEING NUMEROUS by George Oppen
- CHILDREN OF THE EPOCH and ANY CASE by Wislawa Szymborska
- from: DICTEE by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha
- CONCLUSIVITY by Fanny Howe
- "WILD HONEY HAS THE SCENT OF FREEDOM" by Anna Akhmatova
- M-DAY'S CHILD IS FAIR OF FACE by Muriel Rukeyser
- MY TIME by Osip Mandelstam
- THE GOD OF WAR by B. Brecht
- "I KNOW YOU, YOU ARE THE DEEPLY BOWED" by Paul Celan
- THE ANGEL OF HISTORY passage by Walter Benjamin
- PRIDE by Dahlia Ravikovitch
- from: WORDS IN THE MOURNING TIME by Robert Hayden