

# The Museum of Modern Art

## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART TO OPEN A MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE OF ADRIAN PIPER IN MARCH 2018

### ***Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016***

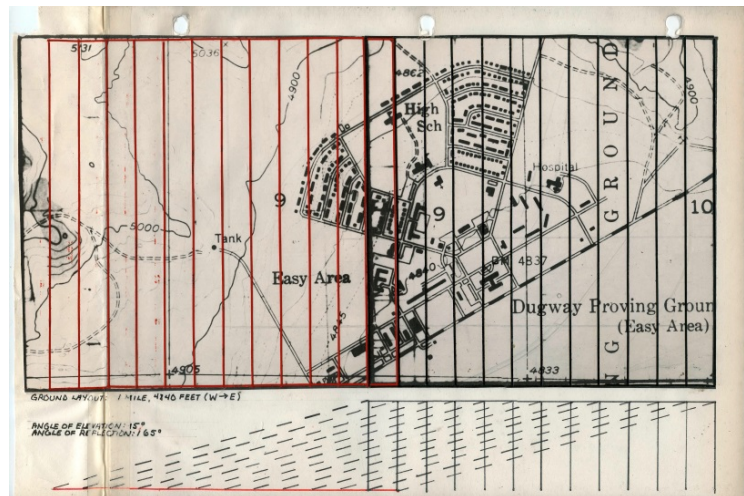
March 27–July 22, 2018

Floor six, The Steven and Alexandra Cohen Center for Special Exhibitions, and

Floor two, The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium

**NEW YORK, March 13, 2018**—From March 27 to July 22, 2018, The Museum of Modern Art will present the most comprehensive exhibition of the work of Adrian Piper (American, born 1948) to date with *Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions, 1965–2016*. The exhibition is the result of a four-year collaboration between Piper and Christophe Cherix, Chief Curator in the Museum's Department of Drawings and Prints, Connie Butler, Chief Curator at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and David Platzker, former Curator in the Museum's Department of Drawings and Prints, with Tessa Ferreyros, Curatorial Assistant in the Museum's Department of Drawings and Prints. A selection of works from the exhibition will travel, under the title *Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965–2016*, to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (October 7, 2018 –January 6, 2019), and Haus der Kunst, Munich (April 12–September 22, 2019).

Comprising over 290 works gathered from public and private collections around the world, this inclusive retrospective, which will be seen in its entirety only at the Museum of Modern Art, will occupy the Museum's entire sixth floor – the first time that entire level has been devoted to the work of a living artist. The exhibition will encompass the wide range of diverse mediums that Piper has explored for over 50 years: drawing, photography, works on paper, video, multimedia installation, performance, painting, sculpture, and sound. The exhibition will be Piper's first American museum exhibition in over 10 years, and her first since receiving the Golden Lion Award for Best Artist in the 56th Venice Biennale of 2015 and Germany's Käthe Kollwitz Prize for 2018.



Adrian Piper. *Parallel Grid Proposal for Dugway Proving Grounds Headquarters*. 1968. Two typescript pages; ink and colored ink on fourteen sheets of paper; architectural tape on acetate over ink on thirteen photostats; and ink on cut-and-pasted map, mounted on colored paper. Detail: *Parallel Grid Proposal for Dugway Proving Grounds Headquarters* #11. Collection Beth Rudin DeWoody. © Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

Challenging our assumptions about the social structures that shape the world around us, Adrian Piper has consistently produced groundbreaking, transformative work that has profoundly shaped the form and content of Conceptual art since the mid-1960s. Often drawing from her personal and professional experiences, including her engagement with philosophy and yoga, Piper's pioneering and wide-ranging contributions have directly addressed gender, race, xenophobia,

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and, more recently, social engagement and self-transcendence. Despite tackling some of the most sobering and divisive issues of our time, she has—through the use of irony and penetrating wit—created a body of work that is as humorous as it is incisive.

Throughout the duration of the exhibition, various performances from Piper's *Everything* series will be enacted in the galleries and on the sidewalks outside of the Museum. On Friday afternoons, as part of *Everything #3* (2003), performers will picket the museum wearing sandwich boards reading "EVERYTHING WILL BE TAKEN AWAY," riffing on both traditional protest actions and street advertisements. In *Everything #10* (2007), a number of Museum staff will have the same phrase written on their foreheads in henna. As the text will be written in reverse, the message will be most easily legible when the wearers see their own reflection.

Piper's 2012 *The Humming Room* interrogates our implicit trust in institutional authority, while also encouraging musical exploration of the voice. *The Humming Room* will be presented as a required passageway between the first two-thirds of the exhibition and the remaining sections. Blocking the passageway is a security guard and signage instructing visitors that "IN ORDER TO ENTER THE ROOM, YOU MUST HUM A TUNE. ANY TUNE WILL DO." Visitors are met with a paradoxical proposition—an obligation to perform an idle, commonplace act of modest self-expression in any way they wish.

Another participatory work, *The Probable Trust Registry: The Rules of the Game #1–#3* (2013), will be presented throughout the run of the show in the Museum's sixth-floor galleries. This installation and group performance invites visitors to explore the experience of trust in oneself and others through the signing of social contracts that read, "I WILL ALWAYS BE TOO EXPENSIVE TO BUY," "I WILL ALWAYS MEAN WHAT I SAY," and "I WILL ALWAYS DO WHAT I SAY I AM GOING TO DO."

*What It's Like What It Is #3* (1991), a newly acquired work that was first shown at MoMA in the 1991 *DISLOCATIONS* exhibition, will occupy the Marron Atrium. Consisting of a gleaming white amphitheater with a nine-foot-tall column at its center and reflective mirrors surrounding its upper periphery, the installation's sleek geometry recalls a work of Minimalist sculpture. On the four video screens embedded within the column are simultaneous views of an African American man; he speaks directly to the audience, negating a list of offensive racial stereotypes: "I'm not dirty, I'm not horny, I'm not selfish, I'm not evil ..." while in the background, The Commodores sing of flying "far away from here, where my mind can be fresh and clear ..."



Adrian Piper. *What It's Like, What It Is #3*. 1991. Video installation. Video (color, sound), constructed wood environment, four monitors, mirrors, and lighting. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired in part through the generosity of Lonti Ebers, Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis, Candace King Weir, and Lévy Gorvy Gallery, and with support from The Modern Women's Fund. © Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin

MoMA is producing two publications to accompany the exhibition: an exhibition catalogue and a reader. The catalogue features the full range of Piper's work through more than 300 illustrations, and essays by the exhibition curators that examine Piper's extensive research into altered states of consciousness; the introduction of the Mythic Being—her subversive masculine alter-ego; her media and installation works produced after 1980; and the global conditions that illuminate the

significance of her art. Previously unpublished texts by Piper lay out significant events in her personal history and her deeply felt ideas about the relationship between viewer and art object. *Adrian Piper: A Reader* presents a volume of new critical essays by Diarmuid Costello, Jörg Heiser, Kobena Mercer, Nizan Shaked, Vid Simoniti, and Elvan Zabunyan that investigate previously unexplored dimensions of Piper's practice. Focused texts assess themes such as the Kantian framework that emerges from Piper's philosophical studies; her contributions to first-generation Conceptual art; her turn from object works and works on paper to performance in the early 1970s; the work's connection to her yoga practice; her ongoing exposure of and challenges to xenophobia and misogyny; and the relation between prevailing interpretations of her work and the viewers who engender them. Also to accompany the exhibition, Piper has released an autobiographical work, *Escape to Berlin: A Travel Memoir*, published by the APRA Foundation Berlin and currently available at the Museum Bookstore.

"It has been a privilege for us all to work with Piper in mounting this uncompromising exhibition, which will vastly expand our understanding of the Conceptual and post-Conceptual movements and Piper's pivotal position among both her peers and later generations of artists," said Glenn D. Lowry, The Museum of Modern Art's Director.

"I have been deeply honored and very moved by the curators' invitation to do this exhibition," added Piper. "It is a pleasure to collaborate with them on it. The Museum of Modern Art is offering me a unique and invaluable opportunity to make a much larger selection of work available to a much larger and more global audience than has ever been possible before. It is a terrific adventure."

#### **SPONSORSHIP:**

The exhibition is made possible by Hyundai Card.

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Generous funding is provided by The Friends of Education of The Museum of Modern Art, Marilyn and Larry Fields, and by Marieluise Hessel Artzt.

Additional support is provided by the Annual Exhibition Fund.

#### **PUBLICATIONS:**

- *Adrian Piper: A Synthesis of Intuitions 1965–2016* with texts by Christophe Cherix, Connie Butler, David Platzker, and Adrian Piper, and exhibition history and bibliography compiled by Tessa Ferreyros. 352 pages, 373 illustrations. Hardcover, \$65. ISBN: 978-1-63345-049-3.
- *Adrian Piper: A Reader* with an introduction by Connie Butler and David Platzker, and texts by Diarmuid Costello, Jörg Heiser, Kobena Mercer, Nizan Shaked, Vid Simoniti, and Elvan Zabunyan. 280 pages, 127 illustrations. Paperback, \$45. ISBN: 978-1-63345-033-2. Both titles are published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and available at MoMA stores and online at [store.moma.org](http://store.moma.org). They are distributed to the trade through ARTBOOK | D.A.P. in the United States and Canada, and through Thames & Hudson outside the United States and Canada.
- *Adrian Piper, Escape to Berlin: A Travel Memoir*. 328 pages. 110 full-color illustrations throughout. Bilingual edition (English/German). Hardcover. \$25.00. ISBN: 978-3-9813763-4-0. Published by the APRA Foundation Berlin and distributed by Central Books Ltd.

**Press Contacts:** Meg Montgoris, (212) 708-9757 or [meg\\_montgoris@moma.org](mailto:meg_montgoris@moma.org)  
Olivia Oramas, (212) 408-6400 or [olivia\\_oramas@moma.org](mailto:olivia_oramas@moma.org)