

# Miscellaneous documents

## Interview project, May – July 2004

in conjunction with multiple MISCELLANEOUS alliances (mMa)

Edited transcript of a conversation between Jason Workman and Elizabeth Boyce regarding Jason's participation in mMa

*Elizabeth Boyce*

Jason Workman

*What are your plans for involvement with mMa?*

I'm just presenting a piece of writing, which I suppose I'd call an essay.

[When] Bianca [Hester] first told me about *mMa* I was working on another piece of writing, which I thought I would use. I suppose after hearing Bianca talk about her rough ideas about what she was trying to do with the show, I thought that I might like to develop something else for it. I suppose after she told me what it was about, it prompted me in what I felt inclined to write for the show.

*I'll return to that, but what was the essay you'd previously written that you first thought of?*

I considered using it because it was the only thing that I was working on at the time. It wasn't so much that I felt it wasn't the context for it. I just felt that after hearing the context of the exhibition, it might be quite nice to develop something else that was a little more specific. It's not developed in relation to the context of the exhibition, it's that it kind of fits the context.

But what was I working on? (I haven't finished it. I've basically put it aside.) I was writing about the spatial practice of people begging for money. I'd been doing a little bit of field work and then basically just trying to write an essay about what sort of spatial effects begging has in a space.

*Was it for a particular purpose, or is writing a practice that you undertake?*

No, it wasn't for a particular purpose. It was just a continuation of other things that I was thinking about. It happened quite spontaneously, really. It wasn't something that I particularly had any connection with or thought about, it just seemed relevant to other things that I was thinking about. That's all.

*I exchanged an email with Andrew McQualter about mMa, the other day. He's thinking about begging in*

*relation to exchange at the moment. I don't know if you were aware of that.*

No, I wasn't aware of what he was doing.

*You know how he makes drawings based on photographs, enactments of scenarios that relate to various things that he's thinking about? He's thinking about exchange in relation to somebody asking for money, somebody putting their hand in their pocket to give money, that kind of thing.*

*So, leaving that aside, what are your initial thoughts about something in the context of mMa? You said you are now thinking about writing something specifically relevant to mMa.*

I probably was a bit ambiguous. I didn't hear what *mMa* was about and then think of something relevant. I thought of something reasonably spontaneously as a result of what Bianca had said but it was definitely related to the writing that I was working on at the time.

But what I'm interested in at the moment is practice that engages directly in the everyday. Not really public art; it's more about using artistic processes to create experiences and those experiences kind of happen within the public realm.

*Are you thinking of practices such as [those of] the group involved in an exhibition at Ian Potter, I think during the Melbourne Festival, at one point. They occupied a house in Britain and their daily practice was documented.*

I do know who you mean. I actually went to an artists' talk that they gave. I think there were only about four people there, which was interesting, but it was quite an interesting talk.

I'm not actually addressing any specific practice. It's more looking at the premise of such practice. I'm trying to explore, myself, the potential of that practice in relation to an idea of resistance or oppositional practice.

*Have you had any contact with the Resistance Through Ritual project at WestSpace that's happening concurrently?*

No, I haven't.

*The word 'resistance' brought that to mind, I suppose, but you were talking about artistic practice and the practice of everyday life that is resistant to dominant paradigms of living and work?*

Yes. I'm in no way trying to formulate any thinking in relation to outcomes of art practice or other activity. It was more about formulating the need to resist merely in relation to making life more bearable, basically, in relation to the dominant capitalist hegemony and the consequences of living under that particular domination.

*What kind of text is emerging, or what kind of text are you thinking of? Is it polemical, or poetic, or is it academic?*

Did you see my last project, the self-published one that I did, called *Paracity*? That text was definitely of a more poetic nature. Probably about thirty or forty percent of the book was images and drawings; the other sixty or seventy percent of the book was text. But I suppose the work that I was doing prior to the essay for *mMa*, if anything, is just more of an academic sounding essay rather than something poetic.

*From what I understand fleetingly of some of the concerns you've had in the past, this is not something that is a new avenue of thinking for you. It has a long history.*

No, it's not a new avenue of thinking. It's a little bit of a departure in terms of the style of it and writing is a reasonably recent thing. I haven't actually been doing any work on any visual aspects of practice since I finished that last publication. I haven't been doing any other things for six months other than working with writing.

*I'll be really intrigued to read it. It's quite a broad area but it sounds as if you have a particular focus or interest that is quite resolved but it's hard for me to grasp.*

Yes. I haven't written it yet. I've basically finished a plan and I have started writing some portions of it. I really don't know exactly the tack that it's going to take but I think that probably between now and then I've got enough time to have it resolved to a point where I kind of feel happy presenting it.

*Is that your experience of writing texts, that they change during the production, from your initial conception?*

Yes, it is, and...

**[Recording ends abruptly]**