

**ACCEP
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Acceptance Art talk

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Speakers: Sands Murray-Wassink, Radna Rumping
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00:00:01 Sands Murray-Wassink: Okay, so this is question one.

00:00:05 Radna Rumping: Question one, yeah. I was wondering about 'Acceptance Art': why you won't say that one thing is better than the other, and that you accept everything in it (in an artwork). When did that become clear to you, that that's how you want to work and how you want to look at your work?

00:00:26 SMW: I think it was around... It was before 2013, because in 2013 I had it painted on my chest for a performance, so I must have been using it before then, I think around 2012. And it's because of frustration, because I think that there's too much editing going on in the art world and people are too concerned about only showing the best things that they make. And I think what makes up a person and what makes up an artist, because an artist is a person, which people seem to also forget sometimes...I think that just like we shower and eat and shit and everything... Everything makes up who we are. Everything is part of who we are. Sleeping... This (the video camera) is just filming the floor right now, I don't know if you wanna film me or something else.

00:01:30 RR: I didn't know I would also become a camera girl. I'll put it in 'landscape'. [positions video camera]

00:01:35 SMW: Yes, 'landscape' is easier, I think, probably... But it's a statement. I'm trying to... I think that artists should provide examples for other artists. And I think that it's important to accept everything that we do. Because I don't think that you can get to the point of doing an edited final version of something, a beautiful, final version of something without... not try-outs... But all the process that goes in between... So it's actually about process, somehow. I'm frustrated that in today's art world, there's not enough focus on process. It seems to be something that people think they left back in the 60s or something, It's actually about process because of all of this... I did this, so I want to admit that I did this. I want to admit. It's just like my writing. I want to admit everything that I do because it makes up who I am, whether it's private or public. It's all part of one thing.

00:02:47 RR: But then, when you came up with this idea of 'Acceptance Art' around 2013, how did that make you look back at what you did before? Because before you maybe did make a selection, or not?

00:03:02 SMW: No, I never did. I just didn't call it 'Acceptance Art' but I was always frustrated with the fact that I felt like I had to edit myself. I've always wanted to be very messy, I think that life is messy, so I think that art should be messy too. At least my work, maybe not everyone's, but my work... And it's always been something that I've been concerned about. I've always wanted to show everything, but it was forbidden. In art school, you get this message that you're supposed to edit yourself and that you're supposed to only show the best things that you can make, or the most aesthetic or whatever. I don't have anything against aesthetics, but I think... Maybe I can hold this one up. [picks up painted textile panel which reads 'HOW IT (LIFE) FEELS'] I think things like this, which are incredibly simple, are still finished objects. And why shouldn't they be equal in worth to things like what's on the floor (other artworks) that are more aesthetic and perhaps more beautiful. I think it also comes... If I think about it, because the body and the objects are connected, my body and the objects that I make.

00:04:31 SMW: It's also been a frustration that I had... I think that in photos and in film my body is... I'm not very photogenic, and I always look different and appear differently. Not only look different, but also the energy that I have fluctuates. So it's all this frustration about having to feel that you have to be perfect all the time. There's something about perfection that really gets on my nerves. And I wish there was a kind of movement among artists or people in general. A bit like what I imagine the 70s were like... I know they weren't perfect, but there were some parts that I wish were still carried on into today. Just kind of a more relaxed approach to life and to work, where everything can be part of one thing, and where we don't compartmentalize so much. You know: 'this is beautiful, this is ugly', 'this is perfect, this is imperfect' or that kind of thing. It's not something I really... When I think of something like 'Acceptance Art', it

just kind of comes to me. It's like a message, an intuitive message that just appears in my brain, and I think, Oh, that's something I can use or work with, and I don't know exactly how it works. It's intuition, I guess. But I take it very seriously.

00:06:00 SMW: And when I paint, I do the same thing. If I think I'm gonna use yellow for whatever reason... I mean, choices are terrible. When you're painting or when you're doing anything, you have this kind of decision-making process about what you're going to do next. And when you have no one telling you what you're supposed to do next, when you just sort of expect that you're gonna put something on the wall and start making marks on it... For a lot of people, I think it's quite terrifying actually. And I just push myself even to do things that I know may not work aesthetically or may not be good. I actually had a period, and it is still the way I think, if I think something is wrong to do, that's exactly what I should be doing, somehow. The feeling of 'wrong' is something that I want to go into, and lean into and... Mine for information. So I think that that goes together with 'Acceptance Art'. That kind of feeling of no waste, using everything. And so I don't destroy anything, I keep everything that I make, it all has to have a function somehow...

00:07:31 SMW: I was thinking yesterday about shit even, why it's not possible to recycle that. That might be the only useless thing that I have to get rid of somehow because there's too much of it. I mean I could be Piero Manzoni, put my shit in a can and label it, that kind of thing. But even then, there's so much more where that came from. What do you do with all of it? So, that may be the only real waste product that I imagine having and urine, also... I guess I could collect that. Adrian Piper has collected urine and fingernail clippings and hair, and... I'm not sure I have to check that about urine actually. I know it's fingernail clippings and hair and maybe some other things. But especially the fingernail clippings and the hair. It's just about... It's about using everything. I wanna use everything. It's a bit like if you eat an animal, why shouldn't you eat the nose or the tail or whatever? It's that.

00:08:41 RR: But if you think of the archive, it's all about categorizing usually. Thinking in compartments because you need this kind of structure. So how would you relate this idea of 'Acceptance Art' and accepting everything and using everything, to structuring something into an archive? Or not structuring...

00:09:04 SMW: Well, I think that things have a similar energy. I think... I imagine what we're gonna do is group things in a way, either by year or just the way things feel. Things that go together somehow. So the archive doesn't need to be so fixed in that way. I think anyone can make an archive based on just how they wanna do it. And I guess that's what we're gonna do here: something unconventional. It has to be a collection of things that actually makes better use of space. I think that's a problem. And that's why I paint. I don't paint on stretchers or wood or whatever. Because I can just fold these paintings up and take them with me. I don't like art that takes up too much space. It's not that I'm afraid of taking up space, but I think there's enough in the world that takes up space already. So things should be no big Richard Serra steel sculptures that could fall and kill someone or whatever... I want to make discrete objects somehow.