

CONVERSATION

& SANDS
AMALIA

Conversation Sands & Amalia

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00:00:00 Amalia Calderón: But is it like? I mean...

00:00:02 Sands Murray-Wassink: I'll show you what it is... I just put it on corn bread, but you can put it on anything. It is a bit old school, from what I understand. So you see it's like...

00:00:33 AC: Like cheese.

00:00:35 SMW: Like cheese, like a slice.

00:00:36 Radna Rumping: Yeah, but it really reminds me of something that my grandparents could have...

00:00:40 SMW: Right. It's very sweet. Well, very sweet... I think it's delicious. We don't have it a lot, but it gives a lot of energy, it's good.

00:00:54 RR: It ['kokosbrood' – a Dutch cocos bread spread] really is like the inside of 'Kokosmakronen' [Dutch], those cocos cookies. Or like Bounty...

00:01:05 SMW: Bounty, yes exactly, but then flat.

00:01:12 SMW: I'll just get the tea ready... So what were we talking about? Are you recording now?

00:01:16 RR: Yeah, I just turned on the recorder because I know that otherwise it will be a very formal transition from 'yes recording/no recording'... [laughs] But you were saying something about the... You can get some tea first. But it was interesting, because I think you were explaining something about the space.

00:01:38 SMW: About the approach, and how we were doing it. I can do it while I make tea, I can just talk...

00:01:47 RR: If you want I can make the tea and you can talk?

00:01:55 SMW: Okay, yeah. I always use two teabags... I think one is not enough. Don't you think two is better? It's so precious that's why I'm not doing three...

00:01:57 RR: Maybe one... And leave it a while?

00:01:59 SMW: Let's try it. For once, and see if it works.

00:02:10 RR: Maybe they can be a sponsor...

00:02:13 SMW: Yes Simon Levelet could sponsor everything...

00:02:17 RR: Some product placement...

00:02:24 SMW: Exactly, of Rose Hibiscus tea.

00:02:38 SMW: But what we did... Amalia and I were working on the floor. Like we were literally sitting on the floor, Amalia had her laptop on her lap, and we were just doing everything there in the corner, right here. And Robin said "why aren't you working on that other table?"

00:02:57 RR: Did Robin come by?

00:03:01 SMW: No, I just told him. I said... I know why, because Amalia you said we should get some cushions, like pillows...

00:03:06 RR: [laughs] For your back?

00:03:08 SMW: No, no, just to make it a bit nicer, right?

00:03:13 AC: Yeah, I don't know why we jump straight into cushions without contemplating the actual space. Yeah, so...

00:03:20 SMW: So I told Robin that we should go to Xenos and get some cushions. And he said "why don't you just move the chairs to the other table?" So that was a very handy tip... And so we're working on this table now. We're working on this Signature Collage, as I'm gonna call it. Just everything from around... There was one period of 1995 where I took a blue crayon and just put my signature on a... The first thing we started with today was my birth certificate, a copy of my birth certificate. That my mother had sent me, I think I requested it even. Just like a photocopy. And my signature is on it. So we've gone through... What number were you at? 60 or 70?

00:04:14 AC: 68.

00:04:15 SMW: 68, we've got 68 pieces and there are a few more to do. So it will be quite a big collage, a bit like a horse cloud. Yeah, I'm really excited about it. It's a kind of centerpiece, because it's what we started with, right? Like it's the first thing we've been archiving.

00:04:35 AC: It is and I hadn't seen it before we started archiving. So it's only recently dug out...

00:04:47 SMW: Dug out, yeah. I mean, Robin hadn't seen it either, which is rare.

00:04:50 AC: Yeah, because it is in the 90's.

00:04:55 SMW: It's before Robin... It's pre-Robin.

[All laugh]

00:05:01 RR: That is also another marker, or a tag, in the archive. [chuckle]

[Talking in the background]

00:05:18 RR: So how did you find it again?

00:05:17 SMW: You see that pile over there? These large plastic envelopes, I was just digging around on the floor of my studio when I saw something that got my attention, I think it was a part of one of the signatures, and I had forgotten about it... I couldn't remember what it was. There are a lot of things in there from between 1993 and 1995... From for me quite significant things, all in this folder. It's just accidental, as many of the things in the archive have been found.

00:06:00 RR: Yeah, but a lot of things, you know about, right? But this is something you also forgot about yourself.

00:06:10 SMW: Yeah, I just didn't remember it anymore. But once you've seen things you've done, it all comes flooding back. And it's a weird mix of stuff because it's like lots of family photos, photocopies from books on Hannah Wilke and Carolee Schneemann, photos of men that I don't like... Male artists actually, there are a lot of writing the name over patriarchy in a way without even knowing what I was really doing. We talked about that recently.

00:06:45 RR: So when did you make this again?

00:06:48 SMW: 95.

00:06:48 RR: But where was it?

00:06:53 SMW: I was at de Ateliers. So that was also the gesture, because when I was there... I think Marlene Dumas was teaching but for the rest it was all men. And even the ones that were queer were so patriarchy identified that it didn't really... They weren't intersectional or queer. That word was not even really around, particularly. Although it should've been because intersectionality, just on the side, I think intersectionality was Kimberle Crenshaw, in 1998 [1989, Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8]... Just on the side, I did not hear the word intersectionality. Someone mentioned it to me, actually, someone that I don't even... Another artist, a Swedish artist who I wasn't so fond of for various reasons, she actually mentioned it to me, and I think it was 2009, so I was 10 years behind.

00:08:00 AC: I think everybody's a bit behind with that book. She is still parading the term around 'cause it just hasn't stuck to enough people. It has stuck to a lot, but...

00:08:12 SMW: Not everybody...

00:08:12 AC: Yeah, it feels brand new to be honest.

00:08:15 SMW: It feels quite fresh still. Yeah, still not completely worked out yet.

00:08:25 RR: I thought... 'cause the next thing is, I don't know so much about your process. So I'm just going to ask a few things, I think also to Amalia, also because we didn't talk that much.

00:08:40 AC: Yeah I know, it's unfortunate.

00:08:40 RR: That's okay, but that's why it's also quite interesting for me and that's why my questions will be quite open. Because there's just not much I know. [laughs]

00:08:56 AC: What is going on guys... [laughs]

00:09:03 RR: But maybe you can tell me... I think it's good to have maybe a bit of the timeline or a bit how things have

been growing between you, so in the last month or since you started... Because I can remember when we were Skyping with you from this table...

00:09:21 SMW: Yeah the interview, from this table!

00:09:19 AC: That was... Because it was also Skype, even though it was pre-Corona.

00:09:29 RR: And maybe tell a little bit about how it was for you in the beginning to enter Sands' work and to become part of the project.

00:09:38 SMW: Maybe you can go further back a little bit, from my perspective, where did you see the advertising and how did you apply (for the internship)?... Because, I never had an intern and I never thought I would have any assistance whatsoever for my work. So this was... I kept going like "Oh I've never done an interview before!"

00:10:03 RR: [laughs] it was a big event here.

00:10:09 AC: That's a funny story because I was actually talking to Megan [Hoetger] about this the other day. We were talking about how it is to access art and to find out about this little world and how things are distributed and so on, 'cause we were thinking about the marathons and how we're gonna put them out there for the general public. And I was basically saying "don't worry, there's a lot of very willing students waiting to catch that email that says that there's this event or this opportunity next week or next month, and they will jump on to it" and it was kind of like that. Ilse, Ilse van Rijn. Was it Ilse? No, it was Anja [Novak]. She's the coordinator for the archive course, which I was taking at the time. And she distributed the call basically, and I had no idea about anything. I don't know what If I Can' Dance [I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution] was... I didn't even know the Rijksakademie had studios. Looking back, I feel very ignorant, but then again, there's always things that you have to dig out in your city.

00:11:32 RR: You have to start somewhere. I lived in Amsterdam for a long time and I had no clue what this building [Rijksakademie] was. Until I entered it and I was like 'oh this is how artists work.'

[All laugh]

00:11:33 SMW: It's about attitude, I think if you have an open attitude to things, then you just discover things and you don't have to know anything in particular before. That's why we were interested in how you presented yourself as well. Although, well, that's jumping around a bit but when you said Marina Abramovic, it was almost like pain in my stomach.

00:11:58 AC: Oh, nooooo...

00:11:58 SMW: Because she's so present somehow, and the one time I've met her, she was rather superficial and a bit dismissive of me. She said my work was all about identity from what she could tell, which I thought was a really disappointing statement. So that didn't necessarily work in your favor, but I looked over that immediately.

00:12:21 AC: Actually, I mentioned her precisely because I didn't wanna drag too much into Yoko Ono. Because she's my true goddess in...

00:12:30 SMW: Oh, but that would've helped!

00:12:32 AC: Oh, would it? [chuckle]

00:12:35 RR: Bonus points!

00:12:35 SMW: You would have had millions of bonus points... I'm sure you've seen her book *Grapefruit* right? You might even have it?

00:12:44 AC: No I don't have it but I'd like to.

00:12:46 SMW: But you know that it's been reprinted in... You can get it super, super cheap.

00:12:51 AC: Really?

00:12:52 SMW: Yeah, I'm sure for 10 euros or something, they reprinted a lot of them. I have an old one from the 60s, but they're... Yeah, that would've given you lots of bonus points.

00:13:02 AC: I guess maybe I was a bit intimidated. When I saw the opportunity, I thought, I don't know if this would be for me, 'cause I felt... Exactly, I felt not knowledgeable in the sense of how art works on a day-to-day

basis: The studio and these sort of terms that I can imagine myself in my own little two square meter room, but not this kind of collaboration. So it was also brand new for me, and then when I did the interview, I also felt... I knew instantly that you knew so much about feminist legacy, that I wanted to cling onto that knowledge, but mine was very limited. So for example, I didn't mention Yoko Ono because I thought that would be too obvious of a choice.

00:13:52 SMW: That's so sweet, because I find that Marina Abramovic is more an obvious choice these days because of working with Jay-Z. Not that you would think that, but she's so present somehow, like in a brand sense. And Yoko Ono is like another level. For me she is transcendental or whatever, she transcends everything. Yeah, and Carolee [Schneemann] and her were friends you know? Because Yoko Ono, every year she gives an award, I think it's every year... I can't remember exactly what it's called. I could look it up some time, but it's an award for outstanding women artists, female artists. I don't know if there's money attached to it, but it's just a thing that she does... I don't know what you actually get... But Carolee got it. Not so long ago, actually, I think in the last 10 years, from what I remember. I should look that up while we're talking. But you've never mentioned Yoko Ono to me before, so I'm very interested that I now hear this.

00:15:00 AC: My favorite thing that she's got is the bird writings, actually.

00:15:04 SMW: Bird writings? I don't know that actually...

00:15:07 AC: She tried to translate the chirps and the singing of the birds into music, poetry... And it was this kind of non-human epistemology almost, coming in and out of this consciousness... I'm going too far now.

00:15:24 SMW: No, no, that sounds very interesting. And it's called... What did you say? Bird?

00:15:31 AC: Bird writings.

00:15:31 SMW: Bird writings, Okay, that's interesting yeah. The funny thing is that with the interview, because we interviewed three people...

00:15:42 AC: ...We know...

00:15:42 SMW: [laughs] It would be nice to hear that we interviewed 50 people. I always get very excited hearing the numbers on how many I beat or whatever. But I was very nervous, and I also felt like the best thing that I could do was to expose as much vulnerability as I could from me, and also my clumsy way – in my opinion my clumsy way – of thinking... So that you would know exactly what you were getting into. Again, like what we talked about today with archiving as well, about consciousness. Like how conscious are you when you make these signatures – what we're doing now – and the Signature Collage. If I say that it was against patriarchy, how conscious was I that I was doing that against patriarchy, when I was 19. But I think it was more intuitive and with the interview it was also quite intuitive. I wanted to just push and prod and test, but also show you what you would be getting into. So that you in that short space... How long was it, thirty minutes?

00:17:00 AC: No, it was an hour, or 45 minutes.

00:17:08 SMW: Could be, because Megan and Radna were here as well. We were all together. But yeah, so I was also nervous and I wanted to just expose myself as much as possible, I think that's always my methodology.

00:17:23 AC: It came across to be honest. I remember we talked too much. I think at some points like Megan would have to intervene and redirect the course of the conversation...

00:17:34 SMW: And Radna had questions as well.

00:17:37 AC: But it was lovely. You were all very welcoming, I would... Because sometimes... I think three people on Skype... It's difficult to allocate. But it wasn't, it went very naturally I think.

00:17:51 SMW: I felt it also went well.

00:17:54 RR: Yeah, and then I think there was only a brief time that we actually met? Because then quite soon there was Corona... I'm trying to remember. There were maybe two meetings?

00:18:15 AC: Literally two meetings. We had a meeting here and then we had the process event no. 2.

00:18:16 SMW: Number one.

00:18:19 AC: That was the first one? You didn't have one in October last year?

00:18:23 SMW: No, no. That was the kick off [If I Can't Dance I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Introduction programme 2019-20, Not Yet Shebang, Amsterdam]. That was the kick off of all of the artist commissions for If I Can't Dance. So it wasn't only me, it was six people, something like that. So that was everyone, one after another, like two days long. It was a different situation. It was also quite energizing and I really pushed myself for that as well. But it's all intuitive, that's why I was laughing with Radna. Because in the work we do for the Mondriaan Foundation as advisors, they constantly talk about the Dutch word 'onderbuikgevoel/gut feeling.' And this is not really appreciated.

00:19:30 RR: It's like not-done.

00:19:31 SMW: Yeah, not-done. Because it isn't factual enough. It's not tangible or formal enough.

00:19:31 RR: But of course, gut feeling is based on experience.

00:19:32 AC: Just because it is not articulated does not mean it is not valid.

00:19:33 SMW: Right. It's not just what I think or whatever, it's based on reading and thinking and looking around and everything, so... Yeah, it is very... I said that to you in the interview, that it was also my first time. Or maybe that was your first interview, I imagine...

00:20:04 AC: Well, no.

00:20:05 SMW: No, you've done quite a lot before. A law degree as well, and you... I'm sure you have had an interview to get into that and various other things. I've always hated interviews actually, they're normally very... Nerve-wrecking, difficult.

00:20:24 AC: You think? I don't know, I like them...

00:20:27 SMW: You do?

00:20:28 AC: Yeah, because you get a taste.

00:20:28 SMW: Well, I like them now. But when I was your age I found them daunting, overwhelming. [laughs]

00:20:36 AC: Yeah, they can be. Especially when you have this person who has done so much sitting across the table from you, and you somehow need to raise the bar to meet their expectations, but you don't have that substance to offer. So you can only offer your way of thinking or your good intentions.

00:20:55 SMW: Yes, but that's what we wanted. That's really what did it... That kind of... Just what you said, the way of thinking and your good intentions and your attitude. And also to have a good structural knowledge of technology, I suppose. Because – we talked about that – I'm not good with that, so that was also necessary, the database stuff.

00:21:19 RR: How was it... Because there was only this brief moment that you could actually meet. And we (Radna and Sands) of course already met for a while before, but you joined a bit later, and then there was Corona and then there was lockdown and then there was traveling back to your family... So how was this time in between for you to collaborate, or access the work or start with this archive in process?

00:21:45 AC: It was a bit like candy was taken away because yes, we got to see the space together, you showed me around, you opened up some of the rolled [up] paintings, and we did the horse cloud together, and I saw so much material. So I thought, Okay, it's gonna get real now, this is the time to dive in and then... Yes, lockdown, traveling back home, everybody to their respective spaces. So yeah, we had to figure out ways around this and that we can still operate, especially when it was so soon after meeting you... Because as you say, for example, you and I (Amalia and Radna), we just didn't get to talk at all, 'cause it's different branches of work, to be honest. But there was a lot to do, and I

think we proceeded quite well, we diversified quite well as well. We had written conversations Sands and I, about his different series. We decided to just jump into the digital archive, which there's also a lot of material on.

00:22:52 SMW: There is... And I didn't give you all of it, of course. Megan even had to stop me because I was like 'oh you want to do digital, let's do digital!' The flood of WeTransfer.

[All laugh]

00:23:11 AC: It was a lot. To be honest we got overwhelmed at a point. Just because you can provide so much, and archiving in the very mundane sense of it, it can get tedious, but it's also very repetitive. Not repetitive, sorry. But it's a lot of menial tasks, like appointing a task, a year, a comment, an introduction, these kinds of things. So I feel like we needed to either speed up or to slow down the process so that we could catch up, 'cause otherwise there would be an imbalance in between the works and what we were actually managing to input into the database. And that showcased... That we needed to be selective with the words, because although it was never the intention to fully archive the extent of your whole artwork practice... Because that would be kind of impossible.

00:24:19 RR: I think that also has to do with how you archive right? Because it could have been more like 'Oh, here's the image, let's put it in a database with the measurements.' But I think because the database is more fluid than that, or more extensive...

00:24:33 SMW: They called it relational messiness. I think that's a really good description of how we're doing it...

00:24:41 RR: If you want to keep that, that means you also do other things than only saying 'oh this is the size and this is the year.' Then you can go about it almost like production and factory work, and that's not what you're doing. But maybe, Amalia, you can share something about some of the writing that you did? Or how you add your own ideas or voice to the database, with the work you have encountered.

00:25:14 AC: So I think, first of all, as we are all saying, we didn't have that purpose at all of being a traditional archive. But rather we were interested in this very complex web of inter-relations and fragments of lives and social links or other people's voices that have come one way or another, directly or indirectly into the archive, both as archivists or collaborators of the project. But also all these 'frenemies' that you have [chuckle] different people that come across. Among them Wonda Women (collective) for example, different collectives, students... I think it's enriched by this kind of approach that we have, and for me, the most important thing was to archive the tale with it. So the stories are behind the work, 'cause I think that's also something that's a bit more obscured, but that can...

00:26:14 RR: Wait... Did you call it the archive with the tail? Or detail? No...

00:26:20 AC: The tales behind...

00:26:24 SMW: Tales like stories.

00:26:21 RR: Aha! I was thinking of animal tails.

[All laugh]

00:26:41 AC: As a vegan I don't respond well to that. But what were you saying? But yeah, the tales, the stories. I think that as an artistic researcher, that was kind of my role to dig out also what things mean at this point, and then these recollections of things that Sands and I have been sharing as we go through the work. For me, it's been very... It's very personal, it feels very personal, and it also feels like it's a side of the coin that you don't often get to see. Anybody could potentially be exposed to this work, but what's behind it, which is so much more... It's something a bit... Yeah, it can be silent, or it can be in this way. Not just showcase, but rather, I feel like it comes a bit into life, it's re-enacted every time you visit it. And the fact that there's a multiplicity of voices as well from all types of backgrounds enriches the story itself. Because it's not just a recollection anymore, but it's building layers on top of everything. My own baggage comes into play when we make this commentary and these notes for

the archive, your voices also end up there, taking all these notes from our meetings and just funny comments about 'Britney forever' and tails instead of tales.

00:28:18 SMW: Did you just say 'Britney forever?'

00:28:20 AC: Britney forever, yeah.

[All laugh]

00:28:21 AC: That's in the archive, by the way. And please make me stop talking when you want because otherwise I'll talk forever.

00:28:26 RR: [laughs] Well that makes two of you!

[All laugh]

00:28:34 SMW: Oh it goes [about pouring tea]. And I'm curious how one bag of tea works, because then we can save it for the archive. Oh, it looks quite good.

00:28:46 RR: I think it's meant to stay longer, right? So that...

00:28:49 SMW: Yeah, but that's good. Because we have our Rose Hibiscus tea which is no longer being made. So we have to be very, very precious with it. Oh! Actually that looks fine, does it not? I mean I'm no tea expert...

00:29:06 RR: [laughs] Well you're becoming one!

00:29:26 AC: I think tea is an important part of the process as well.

00:29:29 SMW: On that... Should I mention his name? Because there's a surrealist artist who was very, very homophobic and also probably not so feminist in many ways, but it's so historical that I can mention it: Andre Breton. He used to say 'first food then art.' And I think in that way, I mean, he was human, so in that way we can say maybe he was right or whatever.

00:30:02 AC: First tea than art. [chuckle]

00:30:01 SMW: First tea than art, yeah exactly. You need to... Also with music. When we work I always have slight music on in the background just to make it a...

00:30:22 RR: You even have a YouTube playlist for that.

00:30:04 SMW: Well, I put it on autoplay.

00:30:06 RR: And then you see where YouTube leads.

00:30:24 SMW: Then I see where YouTube leads. And actually, I'm quite disappointed with YouTube, because I used to have something called Grooveshark. Do you remember that or did you ever use it?

00:30:35 RR: Was it a website or...

00:30:35 SMW: It was like a radio website. So they had a lot of really good kind of deep house and electronic music that you could just start a song, put on the radio, and it would play for hours, and I discovered so many good songs that way. And YouTube has the tendency to play the same thing over and over and over... And I'm confused about that because I think how are you supposed to figure out anything new – I mean, once in a while it changes – I'm amazed how YouTube is like a closed loop or something.

00:31:11 RR: I think Spotify is better.

00:31:12 AC: Yeah.

00:31:13 SMW: Spotify, yeah?

00:31:13 RR: I don't use it myself but from everyone around me I hear it is really good right now, because they have more music so you don't get the same thing.

00:31:20 SMW: Okay, so you can also put that on radio or whatever, and it will just play?

00:31:25 RR: Yeah there's playlists for a certain mood or of a certain style, and then it has things for your own... And they can also see what you like after a while.

00:31:34 SMW: Oh, okay, well, I'm gonna look into that so we can have Spotify in the future as a background...

00:31:42 RR: I like YouTube for the comments because I look for specific songs and then I read all the comments.

00:31:46 SMW: All the comments! Hello! Oh gosh, the comments can be so brutal... That's funny you mention that because

I have a little standing archive on Vimeo, of my videos, and all the comments sections are closed. I don't allow comments on my Vimeo videos because I don't... I'm such an easy target, and I can just imagine all this stupidity that would come out. Or not even stupidity, but just meanness maybe, because comments are often quite brutal...

00:32:25 RR: Yeah, but when you look up certain music that is from a certain time or something. Then the comments can be really nice because people write about the memories they have about that song, things like "oh I did this with my partner and it was this year" I don't know, just all those stories. That's really nice and that people ask "who's still listening to this in 2020?" And (other) people are like "I'm still listening to this!"

[All laugh]

00:33:00 RR: Not always but with certain songs there is sometimes...

00:33:00 SMW: And music, I can imagine. That works better. Yeah, it works differently with art... I have a few things on YouTube, but I don't... And you can't close the comments, didn't know how to close the comments when I put them on. I've been very lazy with YouTube, I put a few things on and I never dare go there to see what happens with people, viewing them, liking them, commenting, whatever. I'm much more busy with Vimeo. But again, the comment section, I'm imagining that there would be unproductive comments and because one of the videos... I told Radna, and I think you also know... One of the videos has over 20000 views and within that 20000 people there has to be people that say nasty things. There's always going to be people who say nasty things and I don't want to open myself up for that. I mean I get it enough without opening myself up on the internet in that way.

00:34:05 RR: Shall we go back a bit to...

00:34:07 SMW: To what Amalia was saying...

00:34:07 RR: I was wondering how you... Maybe now it's been different because you're more in direct conversation, but when you were still working through

distance or partially also through email conversation... You also did some writing that is more of your interpretation of the work right?

00:34:27 AC: Yes poetry, artistic writing I would say...

00:34:33 RR: And how much information did you have for that, or not? How did you work with the material?

00:34:39 AC: I played around a little bit, because I really appreciate... My main focus was this idea of story-telling through the archive, or creating the archive through a combination of story-telling... And I started these writings just as a thought process to understand the images and the videos and the content in general, that Sands was sending. Because it would be accompanied with a note sometimes, the WeTransfer files, basic information like the year, what you were doing at the time, or where this exhibition happened. But mostly it was kind of up to me to interpret what the work was, more importantly what it made me feel or think about. Because I think that's also what the people that come into the archive are gonna be exposed to, right?

00:35:36 SMW: Hmm-hm.

00:35:34 AC: It's gonna be this sort of interaction of just meeting material that speaks for itself without anybody addressing it specifically. And I found it interesting, because when I wrote them down, inevitably I had to go back to poetry, cause that's my thing. But I felt the tone suited the material in the sense that I was doing something intuitive, and I didn't really know. I was more creating signifiers than content. And it is the way that I approached the work and also my role as the archivist or the researcher there. And at one point, I discussed it with Megan as well. I said, "Okay, there's work that I know nothing about, but I've already written about them, and then there's also others that you've introduced to us several times." So I'm very familiar with them, so my way of writing about them is different, so I try to switch perspectives between this familiarity of the insider to the archive, and also because I know you now a little bit better. So I can picture

where you're coming from or what you mean with something in particular, it's also beautiful to just be refreshed with this idea. I think I told you about 'Boys' specifically.

00:37:00 SMW: The B-O-Y-S ['BOYS: Zur Konstruktion von Maennlichkeiten', Shedhalle, Zurich, Switzerland, 19 April – 16 June 2002] not Joseph [Beuys]...

00:37:05 AC: Exactly.

00:37:07 RR: So this was a folder you received, or a series of photos?

00:37:10 AC: Yes, yes. And it stayed there for months actually. And we had to dig it up. Sorry I keep using that word dig, dug up, this is not a cemetery.

00:37:20 SMW: Digging is a good one, I have no problems with that.

00:37:23 AC: No. Okay, well, it's earthiness I guess, whatever, organic. But yeah, I just brought it back 'cause there's more... I'm not gonna say relevant, more well-known works, like VALIE EXPORT [Sands & VALIE: Equalities, Equivalences, 2004]... And other collaborations that you've done that have a more sound impact, and then this one kind of slipped by, and then I fished it back in. And I had this conversation with Megan, saying "now what should we do? What is this about?" And then you gave me a very short explanation after I already made a text, and it diverted completely from what I thought... You know, the images that I saw and what they actually were, had nothing to do with one another in a...

00:38:14 RR: So what did you see?

00:38:14 SMW: Yeah what did you see? I'm very curious.

00:38:20 AC: So I saw all of these pictures of Sands in glitter, dressed in glitter. What I thought was glitter at least, it was shiny and gold. In this space and moving around it, but there were no props, so I guess it was a performance, but I didn't exactly know. Okay, I thought, I have a body and data in a closed space and you couldn't even see the spectators, the viewers... So in a way I felt like I was the only viewer, you know? Which was not the case

obviously, but to my eyes, I had all these fragments, and also the way the photographs were taken, it's kind of a series... So it feels like a movie when I pass them quickly, but then I can freeze it, and I guess the beauty of the archive is that you can literally stop something on its tracks and observe or be taken by it. And yeah, it was very symbiotic in a way. I almost felt like I was wearing glitter.

00:39:36 SMW: You were wearing the glitter, and in a closed space... Because this work in particular, I won't talk too much, but just to say very briefly: This was my first nude performance, ever, for a public, but there wasn't... The actual spectators were... It was a show in Switzerland, it was also my first international group show. And it was called in German, it translated from German to something like 'Boys, the construction of masculinities.' So the spectators were the other artists and the technicians for the show, so I was literally building up this installation by doing the performative act over a course of a week, I think... At least three days, if not a week. And then you hear in the background – there's a video of it as well – people hammering or construction noises somehow. And also music, because what you can't hear in those images, of course, because there's no music with them, is music from the space and Morrissey. Which I used to listen to when I was in my teens. So it was a performance to music, and it was not planned. I did not go to Switzerland thinking that I was gonna make a nude performance installation, and the photographer was the curator of the exhibition, that was also not planned... She was a good photographer, I think. And she just grabbed her camera while I was working, and also the person who did the video work, none of it was planned. As many things I do are, so...

00:41:28 RR: How will this end up in the database now?

00:41:31 SMW: Yeah, how will it end up in the database. You have writing with it now? I haven't seen that yet I think.

00:41:38 AC: It's in my inventory writings. So I have a separate document just for my own interpretations or reflections, and then there's another document for us, when we had our written conversations, which are now turning into archiving sessions, commentary, I would

say. And that all goes individually with each item. I also think everything that we do here is very intuitive, but the comments we make are attached or prompted by one of the items, and just try to place them together to make it a good match. So all of that, I think we will not precisely be making a distinction, so we would just be addressing... Maybe for example, if a comment made by you and I, at the end, we put SMW and AC or RR or MH, or whatever it is, and whomever else participates. And I think it's just gonna be a mixture in between factual data of self-printed black and white photographs, and this actual more stream of consciousness like text that includes my writings as well.

00:43:00 RR: I'm still thinking... We've talked about this space now and before that about the digital images that you received... I'm just wondering what the experience was like for you? Because it was quite overwhelming, I can also say for my part.

[All laugh]

00:43:16 RR: Because there is so much of it, right? And you were also not here, you were with your family, and I'm just wondering, were there specific works or images that really did something for you, and if you were specifically attracted to, or not attracted to at all, or that stayed in your mind for a longer time or...

00:43:41 AC: Well, to begin with you, yes it was overwhelming. I was so scared that I was gonna lose... You know WeTransfer files, those get deleted after a few days, so I really didn't wanna mess up that. Because I hate losing content and especially someone else's content, come on. I didn't wanna write to you to say "Hey I lost your content." So as a combined effort – and I remember you saved a lot of it as well – I think we managed to... At least it was there, you know. [Glitch in audio] And then are we going in work that needs to be archived like ASAP, and she's [Megan Hoetger] taking on those because she is obviously much more familiar with them. In a way they're more, I guess, relevant or bigger parts of your work. And I was more attracted to say, to the Big Pumpkin Series?

00:44:36 SMW: That makes me very happy. I also do.

00:44:40 RR: For me, the time, the time of all these images... I don't mean it in a negative way, it was overwhelming in a kind of 'Oh!' you know. For me, I really remember that period of time, I immediately think of the pumpkin pictures. They were also outside while we all had to stay inside...

00:45:01 AC: There is an element to that. But I think they are also quite carefree and just... Fun. And it's something that's many times missing from serious archiving or the nature of these kinds of projects. I don't know if it was very personal, I loved it.

00:45:29 SMW: That's what touched you. Yeah, but it was also very spontaneous. I was staying with friends on the island of Moen island in Denmark and they had this big garden, and I was in my robe because I never get dressed very quickly in the day. I usually... 2 o'clock or whatever, I'm still in my room. And I just am half awake, but it's really sunny, beautiful, and Robin was taking pictures. And I just took off my robe, let's take some images. And Robin is... Many of them – as you've seen in the archive – most are by Robin. Things like this are unplanned and spontaneous things. It makes me very happy to hear that... The fact that we all think of these big pumpkin images, feels significant somehow. I also think they... I think I should do more with them. Print individual photos... I've never done anything with them before, they have not been public...

00:46:33 RR: Yeah, they are a bit different. I mean, you can make connections with other works, but they are still on an island somewhere.

00:46:44 SMW: Yeah, on an island somewhere. There is an artist... Because this situation of being naked in nature, it's a very old ancient topic in a way, but there was another male artist, I had to keep in mind to not be like that. Who took very heroic poses in nature, naked, named Sean Landers in New York in the 90s. And I was very careful, I was smoking in these... They were very casual. They're very casual images.

00:47:23 AC: I asked you about this actually, 'cause they reminded me of... Frederich?

00:47:29 SMW: Caspar David Friedrich.

00:47:35 AC: I remember specifically asking you why you were facing the camera and not nature in this, as you say, heroic pose of, you know, 'I will show you the world' right? And I will bring no knowledge and civilization, or whatever, to it. And instead, you were not aiming for a civilization or saving humanity or anything of the sort. But it was rather...

00:47:56 SMW: Just little me in nature. Just a speck of dust in the universe or something like that. It's more about being part of something bigger, I think. Which is something that I always work at, because I think for many years, people assumed that I was just narcissistic in a way, or just working with myself. In that way of self-advertisement or making myself the center or something. It's just easy to use yourself... You don't have to ask anyone's permission. It's a practical thing as well. I think.

00:48:43 AC: It also piqued my interest from a feminist legacy standpoint as well. Because of these female woman/goddess, nature, whole fantasy or neo-pagan spirituality that there is, and I thought there was something to that as well. Because you were not acquiring these kinds of male body language or connotations. And yeah, you maybe have a picture of wood or just a bush or pumpkin, and then you, and everything interacting, so it was very horizontal for me...

00:49:24 SMW: Yeah, yeah, I wasn't anything more... I wasn't any more important than the big pumpkins or the flowers... Yeah, I think there's definitely this... The nature aspect in the history of a feminist art, I always put my body in relation to women. I have text about this, why I do it, but I wanna give back because so many inspiring works have been made by women before me with nude images or parts of nature or whatever, and I want to... Oh! The phrase was, and then I will stop talking for a minute... The phrase was, 'I want to be nature to women's culture.' Because you have the classic, supposed distinction between men-culture/women-nature, so I want to flip that and mix it to say I've always wanted to be nature to women's culture.

00:50:34 RR: I think I did see this sentence before, somewhere.
But I didn't know about the flipping...

00:50:41 SMW: Yes, it was in the kick-off, for this project in general. I made a slide about it, a drawing in my handwriting, writing this statement. I'm very proud of it, I'm always thinking of things that I think I want people to quote me on.

[All laugh]

00:51:02 RR: But you have so many!

00:51:04 SMW: I know, I'm always thinking 'this has to be a quote, this has to be a quote' It doesn't even matter anymore that I said it, but this invention with language is very exciting, I find it very interesting. And I'm really touched that you both respond to these big pumpkin ones, because there is something living, like a beating heart or something, they could almost be the center of the archive or something. I don't know, you could attach anything in this room to the big pumpkin pictures, to make sense of it somehow.

00:51:47 RR: When you mentioned this feminist legacy, and I think that was also what you were specifically interested in with starting this project and already part of your research for a longer time. How is it for you to work with a man in this case who is so invested in feminism... Which is for me quite rare, until I got to know Sands. Like Sands told me more about feminism than I knew before. So I'm very curious to hear from you and your experience.

00:52:25 AC: Let's start with the fact that... Yeah, you know a tremendous amount. And it's not something that is easy to come by as well... Yes, I would normally just assume that I'm gonna know more than the man in the room about feminism and female experience...

00:52:39 SMW: Well, that I don't know... The female experience; I can't claim that.

00:52:47 AC: No, but you know of, which shows an interest that mostly just goes under-appreciated. But actually for me, I kind of already sensed what I was getting into, because I looked you up, I looked at your website

and I looked at a few works. I saw the archive that you already had, and it was all female, and this was part of my obsession academically-wise. Because every time I would make a work, it would be referenced mostly by white male, European, very classical authors. And I just refused it, and at one point, I just switched to almost exclusively female references and things like this. So that caught my eye. And then I saw a lot about sexuality and mental health, and I said 'Okay, this is my job. This is meant to be... It is great.' I was maybe a bit even concerned that I would be over-stepping, because I did my research on sexual... sex as a methodology here in the city. And I thought, This is gonna be too much, but if there's any place that I can bring this to, hopefully it's here. And this moment when we're talking about... 'How can this work for vulva' was it?

00:54:10 SMW: 'Is this good for vulva.'

00:54:14 AC: 'Is this good for vulva.'

00:54:16 SMW: Or is this good for anus.

00:54:18 AC: Yeah, sorry what was the question?

00:54:25 RR: I'm just wondering how it is and which insights you gained, or the other way around. Like also in dialogue with each other and you already having this interest, and you both coming from different backgrounds and maybe different knowledge of art. But there is this similar interest in feminism and in sexuality, as part of art, part of research.

00:54:52 AC: Yeah, well, on the one hand side, I think we even got a bit protective, me and Megan, of your knowledge. Because I remember in the meeting we had with Wonda Women, they brought it up, they brought up the fact that the artist was a male and how that would work as a safe space. But also in terms of exchanging knowledge, and me and Megan jumped straight in and we said 'listen, it's not gonna be a problem. This is gonna be great. Let us show you some work.' And they were on board super fast, so...

00:55:25 SMW: By the way Robin also asked about it... Whether the women knew, who wanted to work with the archive, do they know you're male?

00:55:34 AC: It's a very fair question, especially to the kind of collective they are and who they work with. But yeah, I was actually a bit surprised at how fast we reacted... We were like 'no, no, no. That's what you would think. And we understand where you're coming from, but maybe not...' And that links to what we were saying before about older and newer generations of artists and how we have these expectations and responsibilities towards one another. And you don't want your work to fail, but you don't also don't want their work to fail. So for me, coming in touch with things that I do know that I'm discovering now that I've discovered. And seeing that somebody has had a whole practice on it, and is still working on some things that I think are at the forefront of the things that we have to fight for... Makes it worth this kind of building up three generations. For me, instead of, as you were saying, battling a generation or trying to take them down, or feeling like you're at the bottom of the pit and you have to reach their glory or something like that. It's just... All that dissipated and it's just... We're talking about the same thing at the end of the day. And that's what did it for me, I guess. I'm gonna stop talking, I'm so sorry...

[All laugh]

00:57:01 SMW: No, I have to say that Amalia and I had a discussion this morning because I had – just very briefly – I had the text from Metropolis [Metropolis M, Dutch art magazine]... It's interesting to mention on the recording, one of the last... The text is about many things, I write ostensibly to Valerie Solanas, but then I say, I'm not gonna write to Valerie Solanas because she wouldn't appreciate it or something... So this is how it starts, but then I say, I want to write to the world of women, and I mentioned how I met Carolee, a lot of things are interwoven here. [Sound of flipping pages from the magazine] But one of the sentences towards the end of the text, and it's a really... It's conceivably a very, very problematic statement, or thing to write is that I wrote 'I want to be a woman artist of color.' And Amalia and I had a discussion about this earlier, and I don't remember exactly what she said because I never remember exactly what someone said. But it was so spot on, she really helped me today, because

I was confused about... This is going very, very quick, clearly with writing lots of text for lots of different places to be published. And I get almost ahead of myself and I have to stop, and I was being very critical of a young male artist. And Amalia and I talked about double pointing, like pointing your finger at someone else critically, but then you have to reflect that same criticality back on yourself. And that's what I try to do all the time, and Amalia was very... This is one of the first times that we've talked more in depth about those kinds of feelings surrounding borders, lines, which you could cross or don't cross, or you do cross... And why... I just will finish this by saying that I'm very, very happy with how this has all come together because all four of us; Megan, Amalia, Radna and me, seem to be... First of all, I don't experience any kind of... At least I don't, but maybe that's just my position that I don't see it, I don't experience a hierarchy. I don't feel that there's a hierarchy, I feel that everything that everyone says is equally valid, but it's actually not even about... It was never about me, and I didn't want it to be about me. It's about this spirit of collaboration and sharing actually, and building something which has ostensibly my work as a starting – as a jumping off springboard or whatever. But it's not about that really. Well, at least it doesn't feel like that to me...

00:59:51 AC: No, to me either. And that was one of the very prompting things for me in the beginning. As straight away, I remember Megan said it 'listen you're not an intern. You're a collaborator.' And I was so happy. I know it's not such a big deal because it doesn't change the nature of my work, but it was just the knowledge that I could speak what I pleased. And from day one, no one asked me to get coffee or anything, and if anything, you made me tea. So...

01:00:27 AC: And no censorship, also what you wrote... You asked me 'do you want to edit this?' We had this short conversation about if I want to have control over what you write. That doesn't interest me because it's what you think, so how could I have... Some artists are very, very controlling in that way.

01:00:46 RR: I'm thinking about Adrian [Piper], no? She's one of those artists, who for various reasons, likes to have a lot of control. Also of what other people write. And I think that there's many things that connect you but in some things you are quite the opposite. And in that you are the opposite because you are quite open to others...

01:01:12 SMW: Flexible. But I have to say that I can only be this open and flexible, because she was not. They provided the structure, Carolee, Hannah, Adrian... All these artists who were my age in the 80s... When I was in my 30s... In the 70s then. Then I think I can only do this because they provide a whole gridwork of ideas and thoughts and ways of doing things. That if Adrian had not done that, maybe I would have to be more controlling.

01:01:54 RR: So you mean that there was some pioneering work that they did which also had to do with making their own space. And that protection maybe was needed because otherwise they would have been overwritten, almost.

01:02:13 AC: Or disregarded completely. Washed over... Never to be seen again.

01:02:16 SMW: I mean, I owe them everything. And you give credit where credit is due, I think. No, I can only be this flexible because of the structure, which was like I wrote in the text to Adrian about why I want to collaborate with her. Because of this.

01:02:37 AC: I think there's a reason why this [email by Adrian Piper to Sands with guidelines for archiving] is on the wall. To be honest, the first time I saw it, I thought it clashed. And even though the space was almost empty, I could already tell from the way our methodology was developing, that that was not gonna be the end result. That was not gonna happen. But maybe the fact that we have a big screen shot of it plastered to the wall is not just a reminder, but as you say, this double pointing of... You need to look at that and you need to keep that in mind, but also do what you're gonna do with this archive.

01:03:17 SMW: Yeah, it's a collaboration already with Adrian, without her knowing it. [chuckle] I don't know how she's gonna respond that it has been shared all over the place.

01:03:31 RR: But the line (of text) in the Metropolis text, did you discuss it, did you change it?

01:03:37 SMW: No I didn't change it, I stand behind it. Because it has to be seen in context, and also - Amalia and I talked about this - the fact that sometimes things... Maybe you can remember a bit of what you said, Amalia, but I said I felt like I needed to... Another friend, Amal Alhaag, we talked about this sometimes, about crossing lines, making things messy, same things which are almost metaphorical or poetic. The fact that I write this, it's almost a provocative statement to question something in myself, but maybe also in... Anyone who would read it... Their reaction to it.

01:04:28 AC: I think truth doesn't matter in this case.

01:04:33 SMW: Well, what is the truth?

01:04:33 AC: First of all, yeah, but it doesn't need to be a personal statement, but rather, as you say, like using art to push beyond this idea that we have this very static identity, for example. Now that we're in this decade of identity politics and pictures and who we are and then clearing lines and so on, and so forth. Maybe it's more important to think about positionality and how heterogenous a person can be, and obviously, we were talking about this escaping or privileged sentiment that we have. But I feel it's very natural because the more aware you are of the oppression of others, the more you wanna not be on the bad side in a way. And although it's inescapable, it may be about making better connections. Fundamenting how you're gonna relate to one another, to provide space for them. And sometimes I think the discourse is lost, like for example, what you were saying before, how do you feel about a man talking about feminist issues? Yes, obviously that's one of the first red flags that has to come into play, but it's not a stop to the conversation at all. It's just that we need to redefine the kind of path that we go from, and it's very... I feel it's very individual, not individuals, maybe context-based.

01:06:08 RR: Yes I think in this case, are we talking about a whole text or one line. And I think in this case that line as a single line, maybe is problematic.

But not when I know you, you know. Or when I read the full text, sometimes things are... And I think the red flag of a man being invested in feminism, I never have had any doubt about it. But it's just because we met.

01:06:37 SMW: And how we met.

01:06:40 RR: There are also a kind of categories that we only have, or use, from a distance.

01:06:42 AC: Yeah, definitely.

01:06:48 RR: And then you don't have this actual relation with people because there's certain identities and then we put labels to it. And then from this you can say "Oh, that cannot be right" or something. Although as soon as you are in a conversation, it's very different. We're gonna continue but I just want to press pause for a bit. There's still enough battery but sometimes it can just switch off. And I want to make sure...

01:07:13 AC: That sounds fun...

[All laugh]

01:07:14 RR: And I don't want that...

01:07:23 SMW: So it's still recording?

01:07:23 RR: Yeah, yeah.

01:07:25 SMW: I think it's... I've never got on well... There are a few things, just a few brief things, I've had a lot of trouble in the past with men. With male artists, and relationships with artists never worked. So sexually... When I taught at the Rietveld [Gerrit Rietveld Academy] the title of my... It was a very, very long title, I don't remember the whole thing, but the title of my class at the Rietveld had a part in it which say "cruising men sexually, cruising women, intellectually." So this is another made-up statement in a way. And I must say that this is quite magical, how this is coming together, because what we're doing now, which we haven't really talked about at all, among the three of us, although I mentioned it before to Megan, and Maria Pask, a friend and I

were talking about it. I'm now in dialogue with an artist in Bilbao, a curator I should say... I mean, he's so sensitive that I want to call him an artist, the distinction doesn't even really matter, Aimar Arriola. And for the first time in my entire life – I may be wrong, we're not finished with our dialogue yet – but it's all going via letters and emails. And even when I sent him my book *Profeminist White Flowers*, he sent me back an image – which we're gonna use at the If I Can't Dance website [www.ificantdance.studio] – of his hand touching the book, with a shell on the book, like a sea shell and some other things. It was such a sensitive gesture. I have never had a male in the art world respond to me this way, and he even said – he's two years younger, I'm 46, and he's 44 – he's in a new relationship with a much younger man, and he said he wanted to ask me for love advice. Which is also very rare, that a queer male, a gay male would ask me anything about my life, or my relationship that I have with Robin. It's almost as if this is all meant to be in a way. Because finally, there is even a dialogue possible with another man in the art world, which I had almost written off, for just not possible at all. Not because of the feminist sense so much, although that has a lot to do with it, but more about the sensitivity. I don't know what it is that men are not trained or taught to be aware of their own behavior. But I find this lacking in most male relationships that I've had in the art world, and this is... Yeah, I think this is quite a common thought that people have, and this Aimar Arriola, I cannot say anything but good things about him. Even apologizing – which I thought I was the only one who did this – if he's not being sensitive enough, that he will try harder or something. I just... And this is part of the archiving as well. This is actually Process Event number two [Process Event #2: RELATIONSHIPS. Feminist Legacies, Queer Intimacies] with Aimar.

01:10:57 AC: I wanna give a little input on that, on what you're saying about everything coming together as of the outreach of this project. It does feel... I do feel like I'm quite invested into it and the more... The longer we go, the more the ramifications grow exponentially to the point, for example, that I just got a dog and my dog doesn't like males.

01:11:27 SMW: [laughs]

01:11:27 AC: I know. She just won't... And it's just a stupid thing, but it makes me think of this you know... Okay, so a non-human also doesn't enjoy the male company, there's something going on. I'm glad I'm doing this, that we're tackling the issue.

01:11:42 SMW: Yeah, it's very weird isn't it? How embodiment works. It's so strange. Everything is about the body, actually, for humans. And art is the human culture of production, and my frustration has been from the very beginning that people don't really talk about this. Even though it's the basis of everything, where this flesh and blood and bone, everything that it is. The hormones and whatever we have inside of us, organs and things. And this is exactly where I think the attention should be, and it's exactly where the attention is not. And it's like the world's upside down or something, or so it feels sometimes... So I do everything that I can to bring things back to the body and the experience of embodiment and learning from what came before. Because we do have so much information from the past generations, I'd say the past five, six generations or something, I don't know, going back to 1900 or before. And we have so much to absorb and they just... It's taken me forever to feel that I had any kind of voice of my own actually. Because there's so much to absorb. So now digging through all these experiments of trying to find my own voice and building some kind of a foundation, we can look back through it collaboratively, and do something which I really think hasn't been done before, with art somehow. I can't think of any other project that is really like this somehow, which means something, and it doesn't mean something. But it's something that I find remarkable, that it's not more common and maybe it will become more common.

01:13:50 RR: Yeah, I think there's also a lot that is ephemeral... Or that is part of the project that is not visible... This is exactly what the material of your work is, and that material is also materializing in the archive and process. These kinds of talks – of course now we record one – but of course there are many talks which are not recorded, or are in other ways traced somehow, in our bodies also... [laughs]

Yeah, so I think it's also quite interesting... Maybe we can go back a bit to being in the space now. Because that has been happening in these past weeks, and that's an experience, that for a while, was not possible. And now this space is gaining energy, which was for a while not possible. And for your collaboration I'm wondering what shifted because now you can work together physically in the space again...

01:14:52 AC: Definitely. Well, it's been... I feel like the whole body of the work is quite fragmentary as you've been saying. But it did feel like it was coming together, when we started doing the archiving sessions...

01:15:09 SMW: Physically you mean?

01:15:09 AC: Yeah. Because we got not just to do the work, but I think there's something about the proximity... You know, being in the space... Being together in the space. Just talking for the purpose of it. And then if something was funny or quirky or thought-provoking, I would write it down. But as you say, a lot of it just went by. But for me it was much more enriching to understand the work and then to later on reflect back on it and create other pieces from it. I think that just has so many more layers.

01:15:56 RR: And you've been mainly working on the signatures [Signature Collage, 1993-1995]?

01:15:59 SMW: The Signature Collage yes. There's so many pieces in that individually that we... When we started with all of us together, with the rolled paintings, and we had a lot of fun climbing up on the table and taking photographs, and unrolling them, and seeing what they were... So those aren't really archived. I think there are three that are formally archived, over in that box there by the wall.

01:16:25 AC: I think we did all those together.

01:16:26 SMW: Yeah, I think we did them all together. And what Amalia and I were talking about today is reaching a kind of efficiency or something, with more of a system of how to move through... We've just moved from the floor to the table, it took three sessions to figure that out for me, that we could work more effectively or comfortably on a table. And we're

nearly finished with the Signature Collage, and then we're gonna move to... We already have a plan of where to move next, I found a whole group of drawings, probably about 50, I think there may be more over there, where that colorful painting is on the floor, the abstract one. Those are from around 2001 when I was 26, and it's so strange to look back on things that I made out of pure desperation because nobody really cared about what I was doing at that time. I was not one of these rising stars, I had some steps and then I stepped back from it. And it's really, really exciting for me to look back through these... I don't know how big they are, I think... What would you say? Maybe like that heart drawing on the floor there, is that like 40 by 60 (centimeter)?

01:17:59 AC: Something like that, yeah.

01:18:00 SMW: Those are from even earlier, from 2000. But when we're through the signature collage, we're gonna go to the group where that abstract painting is, then go through those. And then after that, the heart drawings, which are kind of all that rolled ones over there, which are even earlier. But it makes more sense 'cause the other ones are flat. Because we have to flatten all those rolled up ones as well, and just move through what we can... That's a big difference between me and Adrian Piper, because she's also much more deliberate in how she makes work. It could take her a month to make a drawing or something like that, and I bang out three or four horse drawings in 10 minutes. Her work shows that as well, it's more concentrated. It looks different. Mine is spontaneous and almost casual looking in a way, rough or raw. That's just the way I work. So there's a difference between how Adrian suggested that we archive and how we're actually going to archive... Because there's so much more material. And I also say things which we have been calling 'bags in bags' and things like that, where we found things or a shopping bag in another shopping bag filled with things like contact lens solution, old condoms, pens that don't work anymore, and all this feels part of something actually. Which is, how do you archive that actually?

01:19:46 RR: I Think the reason why we started with the rolled up paintings is because we thought with that you can quite quickly make progress, and space. It's good that they're together, right?

01:19:54 SMW: Yeah.

01:20:01 RR: Because if you probably open one 'bag with bags' then you can spend a week with that or longer. Because there's all those tiny things inside and then probably with each item there is some story. It would be interesting to open one though.

01:20:21 SMW: Oh, we will. They're all up against the wall, over there, lots of them, but I think it's good that we have a plan which Megan and Amalia came up with. We move now, we have concrete material that we can work with for the next months and see how far we go. I was actually a bit... Because we're gonna do the archiving marathons as well, and I was actually a little bit concerned that we would get through all the material. But I don't... Especially if we deal with the rolled paintings, I think that's gonna take forever.

01:20:58 AC: I mean we had to be so selective of the work, so as to actually be as efficient and get through a sufficient amount of work because we also wanted to... The archive to include, to showcase the range of material that there is... If we just focus on the rolled paintings themselves, we could potentially just go through them and make the archive. But that would be not explanatory of what we...

01:21:27 RR: Because then it would look like you only make paintings, but that is not the case.

01:21:35 AC: And yes, everything has a story but we try to move in between the knowledge that we're gonna talk forever, and that story leads to another and so on. So there needs to be a moment of influx in which we switch into the actual... Okay, I just need to gather sufficient information as to the core of this work, and then we have to move on to something else. Because that's why we have this conversation so that you can provide these insights that nobody else has...

01:22:01 SMW: Yeah, that's tricky. That was also something that we talked about at a certain point, moving everything back to... It's getting ahead of it, but moving everything back home to my studio and to the storage space that we have at home. And Megan last week told me that she thought that Amalia should come by our

house, our apartment, in October... I think October, something like that. And already take a look at how things are now, because it's almost a bit scary, there are just things everywhere. And Frédérique Bergholtz – I'll just say the full names for the recording – said that maybe she thought that Amalia could do all my perfumes, on her own, like an inventory of all 500. But that would be so complicated because many of them don't have names on them, so I know what they are, but they're literally like a little blue bottle with no label or whatever. So that became... Or all my books... The books would be easier I think.

01:23:13 AC: We should go through some of that material though, I feel. Because the fragrances are so important.

01:23:18 SMW: Yeah, the fragrances are as important as anything else, I think. And I try not to make a hierarchy, right? Radna and I already have a recording of talking about Acceptance Art and not hierarchical things, but everything requires a kind of plan of attack, in a way.

01:23:37 AC: But it feels good. I don't know if they have mentioned this to you, but the idea is that when my part is over, the last thing I'm gonna do after the mistral fernissage, is to actually bring some of the material to your house and to re-organize a bit with you obviously. Because that was one of your main concerns in the beginning of the collaboration, to actually be able to produce more work without compressing everything into more bags, but actually giving it its own space. So I think it's a nice way of closing it up, of bringing it back home.

01:24:22 SMW: It has to... It has to somehow... Or it has to go somewhere else, or if someone has to buy the archive... And permanently house it somehow. [laughs]

01:24:36 RR: I think it would also be nice if it's in your house again. But not in the way it was before, but more organized.

01:24:40 SMW: Because right now, I can walk from my door to the computer table, which is on the other side of the room, and that's pretty much it. Like I have a path and I can't even properly paint anymore. I have

been a bit overwhelmed by being busier than I am used to... I had so many years where I – and it's not a complaint, it's just a fact – I had so many years when I was on my own and nobody really wanted anything from me. So I was used to just kind of living my life and making paintings and getting up very, very late and not getting dressed until very, very late. And now there are actual appointments and things, I'm even worried a bit... Maybe we can talk about this, but I was even worried that the Rijksakademie would say "you're not there enough, you have to come more than once a week" or whatever. There are all these concerns I have... But I don't know if I can mentally handle doing two afternoon sessions of archiving a week, because I also need to make new work, even if it's a quick horse drawing, to just keep going.

01:25:55 RR: And I think there's many of these, I think because of the... Not only because of this project, but I think this project also helps that people see your work again. So there are new commissions coming up, like the text you're writing now... But of course, all these things take time as well. So, because of this process already more things start to happen and then it's like 'Oh!' but I think that's the whole balancing act we're doing together, or something. Because there's many ways of doing it, right? Because also... And I think that's almost like a line, that I almost see as a phase right? Because there's different ways. We know that you will continue making work, I know how your house is and studio and I know what is here... There's all kinds of ways to deal with that. There's also very rigorous ways, when you say "this is really not okay anymore" and we put these things with these things. But that's not how we want to be, because this messiness is also part of the work... So it's always a kind of negotiation there is... You don't want any hierarchy in your work, but still now you have to make some selection otherwise we only stay with one typology. And then you arrive in this interesting space, like how to negotiate that.

01:27:35 AC: I think maybe your parameters are a bit different and that's maybe the twist to it... Not necessarily, we're searching for the most relevant works, but what works best under this kind of messy operation that

we have, and then they're under the values of what we want the archive to be... I think it is inescapable to classify it, especially because it's a class, it's a cataloguing type of work, so we need to give up some things that...

01:28:09 SMW: I have a new term, another quote, which is called 'fun art.'

01:28:19 RR: Is that a quote? [laughs]

01:28:19 SMW: Well, no, it's not a quote, it's an ism or something like that. It's a kind of art that I want to emulate and the kind of art that I want to produce, and it's the kind of art which excites me. And that is bringing joy to the world through... And good energy... To produce work that makes real effective change, and I think having fun with it... There's something about having fun, which I think may be underestimated in the art world as well, the spontaneous aspect, the messy aspect, the come up with it as you go aspect... This can be serious, this can also be a serious way of working, it doesn't need to be... It's not less than someone who is very, very conceptually rigorous or whatever... Or theoretically rigorous or whatever, and I think this is what I wanted to engage with with Adrian. I think it's exactly her rigor and her structure that provides almost a kind of mirror to me as to how I should go about.

01:29:42 RR: But maybe about fun as well... She is fun and she is funny...

01:29:47 SMW: For various reasons, but this is really what I feel connects us. Almost a kind of playfulness, which is again, a survival mechanism to get through life. Because the big question is why I make art, or why do anything actually. For survival, I guess. Beyond survival. Why do anything? What is culture and... Yeah, I just think that this process with Adrian's archiving tips as a guiding light and the spring-board, we've created something which is a bit like a cloud in itself. It has no definitive edges, it's kind of floaty... Transparent in some ways. And layered or whatever. So I just think it's the next step and it excites me to make not only a new step in archiving per se, but maybe think of new ways of approaching things. And new ways of working and new attitudes

about art... Or I don't even think they're new, they've been around forever as long as human beings have been around. But maybe spotlighting things which are maybe not so spotlighted right now. And they're there, we're not inventing them, we're existing in a long line of humanity, of course. But people have always had fun and played. It's part of being human, we need it.

01:31:47 RR: I think what's different is that it's still... This process is also very much part of institutional support, with the Rijksakademie and If I Can't Dance, which aren't these very institutional institutions, let's say. Rijksakademie a bit more than If I Can't Dance but... And there is also fun in the building, but many people are not aware of it, in the outside world...

01:32:23 SMW: So we're bringing... We're actually bringing that to them, we're bringing in the fun somehow.

01:32:33 RR: And also I think there's probably artists... And how they work here... But usually when there's open studios or when there's communication from this institution you don't sense those parts.

01:32:44 SMW: No, but I think maybe we'll have an impact in that way because we're gonna have the open soon, the internal open (studios). And then we'll have people coming in and maybe they'll say "oh I'm doing that as well, I'm just not showing it." You know, this kind of thing. So it can also work in maybe an inspirational way. You know, that this is also possible... In an institution.

01:33:12 RR: Yeah, or even from the work I know of myself. All the things I do in a week that is quite a calendar, that is usually completely full from hour to hour. There's a different energy with this kind of work because of how we work, and I think that's quite interesting that that kind of energy or fun, or playfulness or something a bit slower or a bit more messy or less efficient, that that's part of a working week also somehow. And I think that's quite rare. I don't think the coming together per se is rare, but I think it's more that it's part of an institution, or a work week for someone...

01:33:59 AC: Getting paid as well, for working in a different way 'cause... Yeah, 'cause at the end of the day, I don't know, I don't know if we're bringing... I'm sure we're bringing something here, but at the same time, I like this position of not being completely comfortable with the space. Because...

01:34:21 SMW: The institution or the space?

01:34:21 AC: Well, the space itself is fine, but yes the spatial feeling that the institution has. Even walking around the hallways feels different. So I'm not really sure if it's a duality, but I'm also a bit more interested in what their impact is gonna be on us.

01:34:46 SMW: The institution?

01:34:52 AC: Yes.

01:34:52 SMW: Well, Patricia Kaersenhout, she has this quote about keeping one foot in the institution and one foot out.

01:35:01 RR: I just wanted to say her same...

01:35:01 SMW: And I think that's really beautiful, because I have to say that if this was happening, if we were doing this at a... You bring up a very good point, because Radna, what if we talk about doing this same project in a squat somewhere, with no institutional backing. The institution also gives it a kind of 'gravitas', a kind of framework. We're able to be more free and playful because we can play off against that, like what you said about Adrian as well. Her rigorous structure/approach, and the institution is also by nature, normally more rigorously structured somehow.

01:35:54 AC: But there is something, I think, very specific about getting commissioned and then not having the main goal as production or as a non-stop efficient productivity. And I think we're very much going against that, and sometimes I've had a thought like that in my mind that I don't know we'll be around sipping tea... And for example, before you arrived, Radna, we were supposed to have one hour of archiving the Signature Collage and then be done with it. And we didn't do it. We didn't go through all of it, and that's... First of all, that's not a

problem, but also we had like a ten minute... We said we can sip tea for ten minutes, and a tiny part of me, you know that has other jobs in which attention cannot be unfocused was thinking 'Oh, you sure?' Because in another position, I would feel like I was betraying my work, that I would be getting paid for doing nothing when that's the most artificial feeling of it all, right? It's just that we have a different kind of production, and I think that's kind of key to what we're doing here.

01:37:06 SMW: Yeah, I've always thought that it's about sharing energy as well... I would say it is part of what we're doing with – Amalia, me, when we're archiving. I was also nervous at the beginning because we had not spoken that much... So when we started, when I knew that Amalia and I were gonna be here for three hours every afternoon... I was thinking 'what if we don't get along?' It's very rare that I... Well, no, it happens. I've had people come in here, friends of friends or whatever, and they've looked around and then said "what are you..." I had someone come in who was a bit more a business-like curator, and she said, "well, are you archiving with friends?" She didn't even realize that I might be working with professional curators and an intern. And I thought to myself, well, it's just a different way of... I don't see myself as lazy. The word lazy, I find fascinating. I find it really, really interesting. What is work and what is not work? And what is laziness? And what is not laziness? But I think Amalia and I also need to get to know each other as part of what we're doing. And I think that's what you're also being paid for, is to interact and...

01:38:39 AC: Forming relationships...

01:38:41 SMW: Forming relationships. Because relationships are part of the work.

01:38:43 AC: Absolutely.

01:38:41 SMW: It makes perfect sense of when we were sitting around, or I had a long-involved story about something that happened, actually yesterday, which I hesitated to tell, but then I decided maybe it was part of the way things were, so I should tell it. These are also important moments and it works

both ways. It's important for me to share and it's important for... Because I try to put my... It's very ironic in a way, because the work we're doing now with the Signature Collage is just a few years, when I was a few years younger than what Amalia is now. And this period, 1995, I would have been 21. So around the same age, and I'm also thinking about the way that history cycles around, and you know what I used to think when I met someone who was 46 when I was 21. And you can't imagine how that's gonna feel. It's so strange and the strangest part is that you never feel... You always feel like you're sixteen. So it's fascinating. The aging thing is a weird thing in itself. Because you know what Carolee used to say when she was in her sixties, and she would fall in love with someone and she would say "I feel like I'm sixteen years old again and I'm 66." It's fascinating. And this is what I want the work to be. I want it to be immaterial in many ways. And of course, I wanna get things done also. And I'm very glad to hear, Amalia, but I knew that already, but I'm very glad to hear that you have this tremendous sense of responsibility. But I feel like that responsibility is also interwoven with the kind of sitting around drinking tea type of thing.

01:40:42 AC: Caring structures as well.

01:40:43 SMW: Caring structures yes, which are very underrated. Now, people are talking more about them. But what they're actually doing with it... Often I hear the word 'care' thrown around a lot...

01:40:55 RR: Everywhere!

01:41:00 SMW: And I think, where are we actually at?

01:41:04 AC: But this with the tea, that is a caring structure. It's not just an empty abstract word, as you say, thrown around. It's a day-to-day basis action or... Yeah, or sharing. For example, if we hadn't had this little ten minute conversation before you came in, maybe this recording would have gone in a completely different way because we shared and we made these connections, then we can talk about things in a different way, I think.

01:41:31 SMW: Yeah, and I think that Amalia... I get to know her better and she gets to know me better, and there's a trust aspect as well. And I think there's more... That has to do with productivity, but also because when I say things, you get used to my way of thinking and I get used to your way of thinking and verbalizing things and... That needs to happen. Yeah.

01:41:57 AC: Yeah because also what we end up archiving is politics. What we're talking about is all the immaterial things that we're not gonna be able to grasp really... But there's a note on them, there's a fragment that this existed, that this happened. Even if it's intangible, and it goes so much further than just an item or a piece.

01:42:22 SMW: Or an object...

01:42:25 AC: Yeah, it's a very caring archive...

01:42:27 RR: [chuckles] I think I'm doing this again... [Makes circle gesture with her hands – a radio sign for 'rounding up']

[All laugh]

01:42:41 RR: Or is there something that should still be really on it?

01:42:42 SMW: No, I like the way that Amalia said "a very caring archive."

[Sound of tea pouring]

