

Pierre Leguillon

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Pierre Leguillon, *La Promesse de l'écran* (*La Promesse du divan*, Adrien Fauchaux and Delphine Merabet, 2008), Espace Abraham Joly, Hôpital de psychiatrie de Belle-Idée, Chêne-Bourg, Suisse, 11 november 2010 © d.r., with courtesy of the artist.

- 1 In 1991, while still a student, Pierre Leguillon launched the magazine *Sommaire*.¹ In the following year, he organized the exhibition *Des Hauts et des bas* in Paris, in a small maid's room put at his disposal. In 1993 he reviewed Hans Ulrich Obrist's exhibition *Hôtel Carlton Palace chambre 763*, and then jointly published the show's catalogue.² The artist thus became both publisher and curator.

- 2 With his first slide show, in 1993, he donned the lecturer's mantle. He described his visits to exhibitions of carefully framed, medium-format slides, to which he added other photos in publications. He became an iconographer. In 1999, he did away with all manner of commentary and ushered in, once for all, just the manipulation of images and sounds, looking for systems and arrangements adapted to each new situation: props, voice-overs, the place of the screen, and so on. For many years he would define himself as a "diaporamist" or, literally, "slide artist".³
- 3 In the *Diaporama*, a compendium of his whole oeuvre, one image summons another, or is relayed by the sound track. Leguillon found his associative principle in a body of work that he is especially fond of, that of Raymond Hains. It was he who, in 2001, edited the publication⁴ accompanying Hains's retrospective exhibition at the Centre Pompidou. Hains liked puns and wordplay; in the *Musée des erreurs*—a lengthy project inaugurated at the Wiels contemporary art centre in Brussels, in January 2015—Leguillon cultivated dreadful puns.
- 4 Since 2007, the same principles involving sequences have governed the construction of the *Promesses de l'écran*, projections of selected film extracts around a theme or in collaboration with guests. What is involved, in Leguillon's words, is "finding ways of organizing and reading (using analogy, editing, sequences) which question today's society."⁵
- 5 "His way of thwarting rules", observes Aurélien Mole, "entails taking over everything which usually represents the work's paratext (notices and labels, transport crates, invitations, the titling, the programme schedule)"...⁶ And even artists' calling cards.⁷ Deconstruction was expressed in the 2006 show *Cneai = Pierre Leguillon. Cherchez l'auteur*, a criticism of individualism. Each work was organized around a "transitory community". "The sharing of images is a moment that cannot be reproduced."⁸ This is how things are with reactivations—spinning a bicycle wheel, painting blue triangles like Palermo, re-projecting Ad Reinhardt's slide show—which are so many community moments. Pierre Leguillon has the art of providing new ways of looking at very well known works. Noticing that Carl Andre's sculptures had been cut out by the graphic designer in several catalogues, he brought them together as *Flying Carpets*, a way of questioning the reproduction of art. He located lots of Jean Dubuffet's (handwritten) typographical works and turned them into an exhibition and a book⁹, a way of distancing the obviousness of our mechanized keyboards. Observing that the main way in which Diane Arbus's photographs existed was their publication in magazines, he brought them together and turned them into a travelling show,¹⁰ a way of keeping the cultural *habitus* of the framed photograph in perspective, and criticizing the commodification of art, but also of re-introducing the issues of gender and race present in those photographs.
- 6 Keeping a critical eye on the world, and casting it "on déjà-vu images, even when worn out by comments and arguments, repeated ad libitum", on the Internet and elsewhere. We should duly note that the subtitle of the 2015 Pierre Leguillon show at the Wiels was "contemporary art and class struggle"!

NOTES

1. 35 issues published between November 1991 and September 1995.
2. *Hôtel Carlton Palace chambre 763: An Exhibition by Hans Ulrich Obrist*, edited by Johan Holten, Pierre Leguillon and Hans Ulrich Obrist, published for the exhibition *Room Service: The Hotel in the Arts and Artists in Hotels* (Baden-Baden: Staatliche Kunsthalle, 22 March-22 June 2014), Cologne: Walter König, 2014
3. Leguillon, Pierre. "Si on allait au diaporama ?", Paris: Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, 30 October 2002. Interview with Patricia Falguières and Catherine Francblin transcribed and published online at <https://www.fondation-entreprise-ricard.com/Conferences/view/152-pierre-leguillon-si-on-allait-au-diaporama>
4. *Raymond Hains: j'ai la mémoire qui planche*, Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2001. Ed. by Pierre Leguillon
5. Interview with the author.
6. Mole, Aurélien. "Pierre Leguillon: Le factotum du musée imaginaire", online: <<http://www.contenant.net/Pierre-Leguillon,233.html>>
7. *Oracles: Artist's Calling Cards*, Zurich: Patrick Frey; Geneva: HEAD, 2017. A compilation of studies of 123 artist's calling cards, all identically reproduced and inserted by hand into the book.
8. Blois, Jeffrey De. "Pierre Leguillon", *The Artist's Museum* (16 November 2016-26 March 2017), Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2016, p. 130
9. Leguillon, Pierre. *Dubuffet typographe*, Brussels: SIC, 2013
10. *Pierre Leguillon présente Diane Arbus: rétrospective imprimée 1960-1971*, Paris: Kadist Art Foundation; Douchy-les-Mines: Centre régional de la photographie, 2008 (exhibition booklet)