



REVERSE ANGLE
Volunteer Gavin Krober gazes at his henna-stained PATE.

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Beasley explains that the requirements for all six Creative Time actions (which also include works by Spartacus Chetwynd, Hamish Fulton, Jonathan Monk, Javier Tellez and art collective Gelitin) were to have a “passing relationship” to the street, with no physical evidence remaining at the end of the project. “I really like the way she took that on,” Beasley said of Piper’s design. “Adrian is adopting a cultural motif—henna design—and bringing it into Conceptual Minimalist art.” He adds that the response to the project has been “amazing,” describing the volunteers as “everyone from art students to high-powered marketing people.”

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Piper is no stranger to the experiences *Everything #10* volunteers will likely have. In her 1970 “Catalysis” series, she explored the effects of making herself conspicuous with bizarre or offensive getups—like an outfit soaked in vinegar, eggs, milk and cod-liver oil—and then riding the subway to elicit the public’s response. While *Everything #10* also involves standing out in public, “Catalysis” was ostensibly an effort to explore xenophobia and racism; *Everything #10*, on the other hand, points to the more individual experience of seeing the message in one’s own reflection several times a day. “The ‘Catalysis’ series was about anomaly and ostracism,” Piper said in a 2003 interview with Fabricius about *Everything #3*. “This one is about detachment from all the relationships, communities, values and practices that make anomaly and ostracism possible.”

Creative Time producer Gavin Krober enjoys the idea of public estrangement: “I’ve always made efforts to put myself in situations that decontextualize me—that wake me up to my own life,” he explains. As for the response he might get on his morning commute, he says, “I’m more curious than concerned, though the reaction I’m going to least enjoy is when it’s mostly faded and people are like, ‘What’s with that guy’s forehead? He’s got some schmutz.’”

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 To volunteer for *Everything #10*, e-mail events@creativetime.org.

Head line

Adrian Piper’s latest public piece puts a face to a message

By **Kate Lowenstein**

Starting Tuesday 1, you may have reason to do a double take on the subway: Hundreds of New Yorkers all around town will have the phrase EVERYTHING WILL BE TAKEN AWAY written backwards across their foreheads. They’re not tattoo fanatics or victims of frat-party debauchery, but rather willing participants in Adrian Piper’s most recent project, *Everything #10*, one of the performance pieces that make up Creative Time’s “Six Actions for New York City.” Piper, 58, is an artist and philosopher who has been exhibiting multimedia work since the late 1960s, infusing Conceptual and Minimalist practices with a social message that often centers on issues of race and gender.

With a nod to the instructions-based Conceptual art of the 1960s, Piper (who lives in Berlin) relayed the following instructions for each project participant to Creative Time cocurators Mark Beasley and David Platzker: (1) Paint the phrase backwards on your forehead using a durable henna stain; (2) wear it until it finally fades, and for the duration, check your reflection in a mirror at least three times a day and write down your thoughts; and (3) archive these notes for a minimum of one year, then reread them. For anyone interested in joining in, henna artists will be adorning volunteers at locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn on Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2, sending project participants off for about two weeks (depending on how long the henna lasts) of living with an ambiguous, somewhat hard-to-read sentence emblazoned across their crowns.

This isn’t the first time the vaguely menacing phrase has

appeared in Piper’s work. In 2003, curator Jacob Fabricius enacted *Everything #3* by traipsing around Brooklyn wearing the words (written forwards) on a sandwich board; in 2006, Piper put the same expression on the sides of a large vitrine displayed on a sidewalk in Copenhagen. “The sentence just came to me,” the artist said in an e-mail exchange. “I know [it] is connected to my long-standing involvement with yoga philosophy and practice,” she added, explaining that “the relevant yogic concepts would be *vairagya* (detachment) and *kaivalya* (self-sufficiency).”

For one volunteer, Tess Korobkin, the words translate into “What do you have to lose?”—a meaning that has a particular resonance for her since she teaches creative writing in prisons. “Having it on my head in a juvenile detention facility, and thinking about what people there have to lose is very different from wearing it elsewhere,” she says.