

Why I'm Not Talking About My Artwork (2015)

One of the reasons I am not doing interviews or talks about my artwork for now is that I have already said more on this topic than any sane person could possibly want to read or hear. Most of it is listed at <http://adrianpiper.com/docs/AMSPCV.pdf> , in Section 12. I said all that because at the time, no one else was saying it; and I felt the need to add my own artistic ideas and concerns to the general discourse. It was the right decision at that historical moment.

Unfortunately, circulating those ideas within the shared discourse also had the unwanted side effect of sabotaging those ideas themselves, which mostly revolve around the concept of an unmediated relationship between subject and object in the indexical present – the immediate here and now. This demands of every viewer an intense engagement with one's own concrete experience of the work. But by talking and writing about this kind of relationship to my artwork, I in effect mediated that relationship through my discourse about it, thus undermining the ability of viewers to enter into it!

The result was that the artwork itself was often, and usually incorrectly, viewed through the lens of my pronouncements about it, as autobiographical. That I had asserted *P* was taken to be a statement about me, rather than about *P*. Instead of inquiring into the nature and implications of the object I had made, much writing that was supposedly about my work was in fact about reporting on the inner states the writer took me to be expressing by having made those pronouncements. Art criticism was replaced by biography – not the field I signed up for.

Actually I don't think what I have to say about my work is all that interesting anyway. It's only a very small part of the public meaning of the work, which is constituted out of the multiplicity of perspectives we all bring to it. I would much rather hear what other people think about the work itself (not about me; about *the work*). That's the way I get to learn something new about it, by discovering the very wide variety of ways it affects other people. That new feedback opens up my worldview and nourishes my creative process. So I've concluded that it would be best for me to just *get out of the way*, so that others can have a go at it for themselves. Please do.

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