

collectorspace
presents:

BAS

Collection

collectorspace
presents:

*Corrections
and
Clarifications*

Anita Di Bianco

Contents

<i>Introduction:</i>	
Haro Cumbusyan and Özge Ersoy	4
<i>Correcting and Clarifying:</i>	
Duygu Demir.....	8
<i>Almost Certain:</i>	
Yasemin Nur	18
<i>Body of Books: Collection:</i>	
Philippine Hoegen.....	48
<i>Conversation with</i>	
Banu Cennetoğlu	64
<i>About the Artist</i>	70
<i>About the Authors</i>	72

Introduction

Haro Cumbusyan
and Özge Ersoy

In 2013, we collaborated with Phil and Shelley Aarons who encouraged us to challenge the conventional notions of ownership of an artwork. The Aarons acquire ephemeral and temporal works and are dedicated to supporting artists' exhibitions and publications, which give them the reputation of "art philanthropists" rather than simply "collectors." While discovering their collecting practice, we also found out that Phil has a collection of books, over ten thousand items as of now, including books on art as well as books by artists, from 1965 to the present.

In discussing this particular collection, we started asking how collectors acquire and value artists' books, as this medium is often seen as not only inexpensive and accessible to wider audiences, but also as an alternative to more traditional methods of distributing art. It was precisely these conversations that led us to delve into BAS, an Istanbul-based artist-run space and collection that focuses on artists' books and publications with multiple editions. For us, an artists' book collection already constitutes a sort of resistance against the idea of object-base preciousness that is

still foundational to mainstream art channels.

Initiating BAS in the early 2000s, artist Banu Cennetoğlu has devised an open acquisition policy when buying, accepting, and bartering artists' books. She has chosen to favor diversity over personal taste or selection, and the collection has eventually grown through acquaintances and coincidences with and around artists, curators, and publishers Banu met over time. "Objects or books hold a memory of themselves, of their 'neighbors,' and also of their collectors, guardians, and visitors," Banu says in our conversation. This is one of the reasons why she has come to consider BAS as a whole, as one entity, rather than a culmination of individual works, which inquires into the notions of uniqueness, ownership, authorship, and accessibility.

For our exhibition at collectorspace, we created a reading room in our storefront gallery in Taksim with fifteen editions of Anita Di Bianco's *Corrections and Clarifications* (2001–ongoing), a work that reflects the overarching sensibilities of BAS. Di Bianco's work mimics the familiar format of the daily newspaper and yet leaves out the original journalistic material. This idiosyncratic newspaper features corrections of typographical or factual mistakes and statements intended to clear up misunderstandings published in daily newspapers.

The work is printed in multiple editions—ranging from 500 to 5,000 copies—, distributed gratis, and meant to be passed along, discarded, or discovered inadvertently.

After our exhibition, we, together with Anita and Banu, wanted to collaborate again to produce a Turkish-language version of *Corrections and Clarifications*. This new edition, the 16th in the series, covers Turkish-language newspapers from January 2, 2012 through July 27, 2014, the date when we stopped the research for the work. This edition was printed in Istanbul with 2,000 copies and distributed gratis. We left hard copies in subway stations, on ferries, and at cafes, with the hope of letting them be discovered accidentally. This has given us the opportunity to spread an artistic intervention, a conceptual exercise to question power relations in print journalism to larger audiences that Anita trusts to extricate systematic errors and intentional mistakes in knowledge production.

In this publication, writer and curator Duygu Demir offers a close reading of *Corrections and Clarifications*, and discusses how Anita diverts the authorship of the project away from herself, while artist Yasemin Nur contributes an artistic response to Anita's work, seeking ways to transform it and pushing for an almost alchemic reaction as she boils the newspaper in water, freezes it in the fridge,

and carries it with her for months. And artist Philippine Hoegen who, for long years, collaborated with Banu to commission artists' books at BAS, writes about the collection's journey from an itinerant bag to a physical space where it has grown with donations, exchanges, and new commissions. In her text, Philippine also devises simple scores to pose a crucial question: How does a collection perform itself?

We are indebted to all of our contributors in this publication. We would also like to thank Şekip Hardal, lawyer and founder of *Medya Tekzip Merkezi* [Media Disclaimer Center] that provided the main content for the new edition of *Corrections and Clarifications*, to Göksu Kunak and Hazal Rüzgar for their support in the research, and to Okay Karadayılar for the graphic design of the Turkish-language edition. We would of course like to express our gratitude to Anita and Banu who continue to push us to rethink the value we assign to artistic and collecting practices. It has been thrilling for us to facilitate the production and distribution of the latest edition of *Corrections and Clarifications*, which has strengthened our belief in the potency of random encounters with artworks in the public realm.

Correcting and Clarifying

Duygu Demir

Anita Di Bianco's ongoing publishing project *Corrections and Clarifications*, often given the subtitle *Apologies and Amplifications, Denials and Distinctions, Retractions and Refusals* by the artist, is a counter-flow—a timeline read in reverse chronology from right to left, a gesture of antagonism, and perhaps, *almost* literally, the verso. Produced since 2001 and published on the occasion of exhibitions in Banja Luka, Berlin, Derby, Istanbul, Leuven, Ljubljana, Nuremberg, and Zurich, *Corrections and Clarifications* borrows its format—and most of its content—from newspapers. The organizational principle of this irregular periodical is rather simple: The editor, in this case the artist, re-prints a selection of corrective declarations taken from newspapers. The only other recurring features are a brief, minimally altered editor's note on the second page of each volume and a list of sources toward the end of each publication. Anita Di Bianco re-presents this accumulation with the belief that "perhaps what is conveyed unintentionally, and by repetitious mistakes, is more revealing, more historically identifiable, and substantially less conciliatory than it is meant to be."

While there are subtle alterations in the graphic design from volume to volume, *Corrections and Clarifications* replicates the well-established, familiar graphic and tactile parameters of newspaper printing. Produced in either tabloid or broadsheet format, it is printed in black serif typeface on newsprint. The corrections are arranged in columns under the date, with certain selections accentuated by grey boxes. Di Bianco also replicates the comfortably familiar world order of bold and italics, using these editorial tools as she sees fit. Each edition of *Corrections and Clarifications*, printed in runs ranging from 500 to 5,000 copies, is either distributed gratis within the context of the exhibition for which it was printed or available later at the price of one US dollar at Printed Matter in New York. As the project progressed over the last decade, *Corrections and Clarifications* has not only expanded in its source material with a larger selection of newspapers and other sources such as Twitter, but also ventured out of the Anglophone world, with some issues available in bilingual editions, such as Slovenian, German in addition to English and most recently, a volume printed only in Turkish.

The first issue of *Corrections and Clarifications* covers the period September 1, 2001, to July 4, 2002.¹ It comprises twenty-four broadsheet pages and includes corrections gathered from predominantly widely

¹ This first issue of the publication was produced in conjunction with the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, and printed in Amsterdam.

distributed English-language newspapers covering a diverse range of angles from The New York Times to The Jakarta Post. In her editorial, Di Bianco draws attention to the apparently arbitrary end date of the volume "... in the US, [4th of July] being that annual reminder of the original intention of the colonies to create a nation based on democratic principles." While this symbolic gesture of resurrecting the revolutionary aspirations of a national holiday is significant—and sets the tone for the political engagement and social bend that continues throughout the project—it is the start date of *Corrections and Clarifications* that is perhaps more revealing.

Here, I am using the same creative license to suggest that the artist must have intuitively (or alternatively, remarkably consciously) chosen a date range covering the before and after of 9/11. This was a moment of derailment that both marked the immense representative power of media and its seemingly inexhaustible potential for instrumentalization in shaping a narrative, which in turn justified a series of actions and events—most notably, the United States' invasion of Afghanistan and in 2003, Iraq. The social, political and economic ramifications of these events still shape our present day the world over. The artist reveals her motivations for the project in this first volume through a story that she will repeat in each of her minimally altered editorials in the volumes to come:

In defense of granting TV/entertainment producers access to US troops in Afghanistan for the production of a reality TV show, Admiral Craig Quigley told reporters: "There are a lot of other ways to convey information to the American people than through news organizations." (February 22, 2002). Ignoring for the moment what is at least a subtle threat. That one cannot argue with such double-talk is obvious, and no less promising than simply reframing the contradictions this type of speech invariably produces, coerces, and demands. So this is a newspaper without headlines, allowing double-talk to talk to itself.

The first iteration of the project embodies the motivations and interests of the artist more openly and visibly than subsequent issues. Starting on July 4, 2002, with several entries under each consecutive date arranged in reverse historical order, Di Bianco stresses her own interest in these corrective announcements by italicizing certain parts. A sampling of these italicized portions quickly reveals her own motivations in political and social agents of economy, surveillance, representation or law in informing the selection process of chosen corrections; "changes in the way UN prices Iraqi oil," "the police initiative focused on CCTV," "images of the bombed Afghan bases," "an example of the way a nuclear war was avoided," or "there is no way to fool an audience that has remained loyal to the company for decades (not 'There is a way')."

Di Bianco's inherent belief in the revelatory power of misprints, factual mistakes, slips (Freudian or not), editing errors, misstatements is evident, and her decision-making process emerges through these graphical accents of bold, italics, or grey box frames. With the first volume of *Corrections and Clarifications*, this exercise takes the shape of a somewhat ethnographic look at mishaps and euphemisms, a presentation of alternative knowledge, and an exposé of undercurrents.

In her editorial statement, Anita Di Bianco paradoxically diverts all credit of authorship away from herself. She identifies four actors deserving of this credit; the creators of the statements she re-prints (writers, i.e. the correctors): "those who have provided the material for this publication by having seen fit to correct themselves, or having seen themselves fit to correct others"; the editors: "those seekers, processors, middle managers, and ultimate regulators of public information who take it upon themselves (or impose it upon others) to re-name, re-classify, disguise, de-fuse or be de-briefed..."; those whose misstatement caused the grounds for the correction "who, regardless of stated intentions, occasionally reveal something, piece by piece, through slips in language and naming systems"; and finally, the readers of *Corrections and Clarifications* "who regard these revisions and retractions with the same skepticism they have for the originals." Anita Di Bianco's statement is rich in underlying currents of passionate criticism of this well-established filtering

system and her clever appropriation is in fact revealing; however, by this reattribution of credit, Di Bianco tactfully disguises her own presence in *Corrections and Clarifications*. While highlighting certain patterns of speech and coverage through others' words, she is speaking through others in the same way newspapers speak through current events, bending them to their own agenda.

The volumes that follow the ambitious first edition stay loyal to the initial framework; however, the visibility of the artist's interests inherent in the selection process of each one of the included corrections fades noticeably with each volume. Italics and bold have disappeared from the volume which traces corrections dating from August 15, 2004 to January 1, 2005. As the editions continue, there are fewer grey boxes and alterations of bigger font sizes that highlight certain entries. In two instances, the artist's presence is reinstated; in her editorial for volume six, Di Bianco draws attention to an omission; "whose absence hints at their eventual admissibility as evidence," she states that there have been no market corrections to the massive rises in quarterly profits to oil companies, hinting at her expectation and interest in the significance of this information. Here, her interest in the direct economic impact of political decision-making processes is evident. In the eleventh volume, *Corrections and Clarifications* adopts a new filter; it "specifically interrogates the frequency and repetitive nature of errors and limits in breadth and vision, either

incidentally or directly, in news reporting on issues of gender and sexuality.” Another politically and socially charged cause revealing the personal politics and priorities of the artist is revealed openly.

The most recent volume of *Corrections and Clarifications*, which covers localized news reporting in Turkey from January 2, 2012, until July 27, 2014, is published only in Turkish, with some alterations to the format.² This publication features not only corrective statements published in newspapers, but letters of correction sent to be collected and made public in the reports of a voluntary media watchdog organization active in Turkey, *Medya Tekzip Merkezi* [The Media Correction Center] as well as expanding the range of publicly shared corrections to personal Twitter accounts, in line with the dominance of social media as the increasingly popular mode of receiving news—a key resort especially in a country where the level of freedom in popular printed media is very low. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this issue features many corrective statements denying any truth at all in what is deemed speculative reporting; letters of rebuttal came from the presidential office, members of parliament, municipalities, soccer players, and celebrities, and were often signed by their attorneys. There is an especially

² The most recent issue of *Corrections of Clarifications*, titled *Düzeltilmeler ve Açıklamalar* in Turkish, was produced in collaboration with the Istanbul non-profits collectorspace and BAS, and printed in Istanbul. It proceeded from the exhibition *Corrections and Clarifications from the BAS Collection* displayed at collectorspace February 5–March 22, 2014.

high concentration of pronouncements with reference to defamation of character in this Turkish volume. The underlying belief in the intentionality of misrepresentations, factual errors and a strong conviction thinly disguised in these rebuttals admit to the commonality of reporting with ulterior motives. In this case, the corrections act more as a barometer of the ethical standards in news reporting in Turkey, or lack thereof. When deployed by public figures such as politicians, officials and government offices, these corrections often function as allegations and intimidations. The phenomenon quickly morphs into a seismic measure of political undercurrents.

While *Corrections and Clarifications* is a conceptual exercise in public service, providing information that reveals complex bureaucratic, political, social, psychological, and legalistic structures that regulate our perception of current events through journalism’s convoluted processes of knowledge production, the gradual disappearance of the hand of the artist illustrates an embodiment or repetition of some of the very news reporting schemes that Di Bianco sets out to reveal. The decision-making process of what makes it to print is invisible: The numerous conditions motivating the selections of the editor are inaccessible to the reader, the reasons of selected sources are often not apparent, and limitations of access via language or errors in translation come into play, as in the bilingual issues when the artist is dependent on other researchers, their motivations, and

intricacies involved in translation. The obscured editorial mechanism, ironically but evidently, ends up repeating itself in *Corrections and Clarifications*. Anita Di Bianco says "perhaps what is conveyed unintentionally and by repetitious mistakes, is significantly more revealing, and more historically identifiable, than it is meant to be," which begs the question: Can you correct the corrections? And if so, and somewhat naively, who will do it? The artist's final call for the necessity of doubt, her hope that "[the] readers who regard these revisions and retractions with the same skepticism they have for the originals" is fulfilled within the means of her own production. An infinitely intriguing artistic exercise revealing different facets of societal complexity in different geographies, Di Bianco's project produces the skeptic reader that it calls for.

This text was previously published in "The Interpellated Subject Speaks / Das unterbrochene Subjekt spricht," the seventh issue of the interdisciplinary online journal produced by Open Systems, edited by Berin Gölönü (Vienna, November 2014).

Almost Certain

Yasemin Nur

The below text absorbs all that has happened, concurred and experienced since the day I started working on it through other texts.

Self-reference: "I boiled a copy of *Corrections and Clarifications* on the stove in a pot in which it could fit folded. I can't make myself write, I'm paralyzed."

I started from here. Excerpt from *Corrections and Clarifications*: "We will correct it." "All presented statements are completely fictional."

"Completely fictional" takes me to a book I read and underlined—*Kostantiniyye and Hagia Sophia Legends in Turkish Texts* by Stefanos Yerasimos. The term reminds me of a sentence used by the author: "We're almost certain."

When continued in this order, at a place where it can be confusing as to what comes from where, "I place one of the 2,000 copies of *Corrections and Clarifications* in the freezer. Is it possible to freeze its contents, to stop the voices that come from their time—to make them wait, to escape the

voices? Instead of reading and writing, I'm looking for something else."

From *Kostantiniyye and Hagia Sophia Legends in Turkish Texts*: "It will construct its own circuit. . . What justifies the story are the references that are complementary."

August 16, 2016: I noted down this date as the date when Özge came to visit. Self-reference: "I put the water in the pot and I put a folded copy in it. I'm with Özge in the kitchen. We're talking about the text I will be writing on *Corrections and Clarifications*, next to its essence. The water boils and the publication sits in there."

I posted a photograph of the publication boiling in the pot. Now I look back at what has accumulated. This is what I wrote down as a comment: "To be on record, not to be indifferent, to cook words." The following comments are: "Delicious," " :) :) :) Addle it, boil it real good," "wordcake."

I go back to Yerasimos: "But the same authors have contributed some elements [to the legend] that the future legends will lean on." In thinking about elements that are added to the news and the clarifications that lean on these elements, I feel that the photograph of the boiled publication and the related post are the elements to lean on in the future.

The authors recorded these elements; they included them in circulation among other texts. And thus they were able to take a place.

If I can continue writing, I'd like to stay on record without any constraints.

Kostantiniyye: "Semsuddin is free to construct his story without any constraints to create a perfect harmony between the project of the empire and the divine rule, except for weeding out anything that might bother the Ottoman reader."

Self-reference: "Both what remains in the fridge and what is out in the sun go yellow in the same way. The impact of the cold and the heat are almost similar."

There is a huge difference between looking at this publication at the beginning of July and at the end of July. Or there should be. Just like the people of this city, objects, trees, and stones have all been subjected to July 15. What are the remains of that impact on them?

Could a "circuit" be spelled with all these? Could it be in words? Or abstraction?

I return to my notes on *Kostantiniyye*: "It's been melted." I specifically underline it and carry it to the margin with an arrow—happy to use a different color, which indicates a different time. I write down: "It's been juiced."

"It's been melted within another circuit, since..."

As I'm writing this text, just as I need to "decompose," I take the pot to the table where I'm working. The publication that I'm trying to write about, that I'm looking at, that I'm taking with me to places is there in the pot, sitting in water next to me. One of the copies is in the fridge and another one in my bag, full of notes.

All of these are because of the accumulation.

It's time to separate it. It's time to take out the copy from the water where it was boiled and kept in. I put the water in a jar and the copy on a cutting board, letting the water seep. The area on which the useable material will cumulate widens. The publication is boiled—I return to Yerasimos then and before—, and it goes to travel with me on holiday, to Thessaloniki, to home, on the road, on land, in the air, on water; notes are taken with it and from it, the memories are re-membered, files are opened.

"Tradition doesn't have the time to be sharpened from text to text over generations. In order to serve the purpose, it's necessary to accelerate the production of legends while widening the area of useable materials."

I didn't think that these things were going to emerge from the publication when I boiled it. In

front of me were all the things that are open for correction and clarification from the years that the publication gathers its materials from. During the process of boiling, numerous problems in my life from those years—those that I postponed and accumulated—were right there, again.

She said, "Put the text in front of you."

It was such a boiling down—like magic—that all those years and everything that the years brought were piled in front of my door. The materials from *Dance of Africa* and the essay I started to write before, during and just after Gezi and never finished—those that went around with me in the trunk of the car where I put them together as I left the studio in Tophane—emerged with its additions in bits and pieces.

Not finishing and adding piece by piece—it reminds me of something. It was before Gezi when I started the text I wasn't able to finish. This text began before July 15. It doesn't end.

"Is this the work from before?"

"What is before?"

In the etching studio, Can asked for a sketch from a student: "We need something to begin with."

Legends usually come out of accumulation or making up things in different contexts, says Yerasimos.

Can said, "It should be worth reproducing."

Text with a shell.

Doodlings of references.

Tired bullet—from a newspaper clipping.

A dead wave.

Empty columns of the Cumhuriyet newspaper.

Mute, not loading Internet.

As adding elements is easier than making deductions, corrections and clarifications should be developed as an accumulation. Clarifications are added in order to correct.

The play *Dance of Africa* was staged in March 2014. SALT Beyoğlu was open back then. We were there. During the play, actress Ayla Algan pinned sheets of paper on a curtain behind a transparent, stretched curtain-screen. She wrote on those sheets. Today, as I separate the sheets from each other and take off the pins, I feel like I'm opening up a spell. Pins—just like the objects, the pot, and the cutting board in the text—are now on the table, sitting right next to me.

November 18, 2016: He was very upset when she said their relationship wouldn't work and accepted the job offer in London on a whim. He wanted to get far away from the city and from her. Then in 2013, they got together at a party, became lovers again, got married, and had a daughter. But

he had to continue with the job in London and had to live between two cities. He said on the phone: "The London chapter is finally closed." We laughed. "Don't make hasty decisions, you learned that, right?" It takes time to be able to correct mistakes. It takes years to correct them. It takes years to finally be correct.

Speaking of haste, I want to talk about the recent apology of the Posta newspaper. In the apology, it says that extreme speed and haste brought about a disaster. The apology for—mistakenly—publishing on the front page that Hillary Clinton was elected as the president of the USA the day after the elections. I didn't get the newspaper for the day after the elections, but I wanted to get the newspaper of the day when it became clear that Trump was elected president. I was curious about the correction and the apology. This is another newspaper to put to the side.

I regularly collected newspapers and newspaper clippings until 2012. I checked to see if I have any one of the newspapers mentioned in *Corrections and Clarifications*. There are different newspapers from June 19, 2014.

I read the publication extensively and take notes right on it—it takes me a while to read the whole thing.

A few days ago, students from the etching class told me that I look like someone who reads the newspaper to look at classified job ads. They didn't stop talking even when I said this was not a newspaper.

On page 4–5, on a photograph from Sabah newspaper, dated March 13, 2014, it says: "There is no relationship between the news text and the image." I had prepared a presentation years ago within a similar framework. It was about the gap between the news and the images.

I stop here for a while, I'm not sure whether I should write this or not. I'm almost not certain.

Holy scraps!

November 14, 2016: I took my daughters to the dentist and saw the cover of a newspaper that said "Yasemin's Victory." What a day, what a victory, I bought the newspaper and put it aside.

Many years ago, I started collecting clippings in which members of my family appeared in unexpected places in the news. The most surprising one was about my grandfather. In the morning of a night I spent at my parents' place, my mother came by to tell me that my father sent me a newspaper and asked me to find my grandfather in the photograph. This is how the news piece began: "It was discovered that Monroe visited the Turkish

soldiers in the Korean War for morale and took a souvenir photo with them." Marilyn Monroe was among the soldiers. Above the photograph, there was an arrow, pointing to Marilyn in the Turkish uniform. I looked at the photograph—I only know my grandfather from photographs and I had heard that he had gone to the Korean War—and pointed him out right away.

The uncorrected text, which gives way to this one, ends before a section that reflects the correspondence between poet Turgut Uyar and the Turkish Language Institution. There is a section where he writes on "founded/unfounded" and that took me to "recorded/unrecorded," "concerned/indifferent" and to the words in the publication, "untrue/true," "with/without constraints." I will perhaps make this connection.

His letters begin with: "I will not defend myself."

To defend for the sake of defense as a reflex.

Constant defense.

I will not defend.

Uyar says, "They should enlighten me on how [their accusations] are 'founded.'" What is unfounded is what isn't settled or ingrained. It's not holding its ground. It's easy to weed it out.

I noted down that maybe such a piece of paper won't exist again.

As I ran out of the house in the morning, next to the publication that was boiled and the shell on top of it—all on the table—, there was also a piece of paper that I left in the water of a single rose that I boiled. Which rose it was and what happened around it is in my records. The plate was almost dry and I needed to take the paper out, but in a hurry, I decided to make it wait until I came back home. When I came back, the paper was stuck to the plate. I took it off with difficulty, almost destroying it. I was watching the veins happening inside its water every day bit by bit and how those veins were permeating in the paper, waiting for the whole transferral.

As I think again about the piece of paper that I couldn't take off, this sentence connected me to the publication: "Maybe such a publication will not be realized again." It is not possible to reach that moment, that togetherness, those rushed experiences. It is a unique publication with its own process.

To boil, to ease down what is done, to fear as I don't know much about spells, to get excited and to not be able to reach a word, I'm holding on to all the essences. What I want to say is that it's such a mix that it's a spell itself, it's beyond just the reading.

I'm pushing my widow memory,

which I always rely on. Because I'm on record, I'm concerned. I accumulate to go back to one day.

Now all of them are emerging lusciously and erroneously.

Lusciously and by mistake.

There is a beautiful difference between mistakes and wrongness. I thought about the newspapers I put aside and pulled out one. The first one said "the last victim of the disease of recording." The headline said, "We are really scared!"

I can't leave it, I'm holding it in my hands—it is ripped into pieces.

It's in the freezer; the boiled one is on the table.

Corrections and Clarifications:

"The article, which obviously was written to batter, all of the elements outside of what is in the correction above are completely fictional and ill-intentioned."

"Insistently creating new imaginary constructions"

"To try to include in new constructions"

"What we have encountered in different phases and reprimanded repeatedly"

"The right to learn the truth"

"Ill-intentioned pens"

"Holding on to our legal rights"

"The target is well-known to everyone"

"Completely constructed and does not reflect reality"

"Completely constructed"

"A huge mistake

and unjustified"

"Targeted news and comments are included"

"Unfounded gossip that is not based on tangible facts and documents, news and comments of such nature"

"Every citizen who loves their country and their people and who actually values the essential value of unity should be utmost sensitive"

"There is not even a word of truth in there"

"Based on wrong facts"

"I don't have anyone close to me who would speak like that"

"I didn't look for it. I didn't find it"

"We will correct it and apologize."

"In regards to the matters that are based on false information"

"To give the right information"

"A bug report was hastily prepared"

"It is said"

"Never existed"

"The article that we think have been written on purpose"

"It was published to prevent any misunderstandings"

"It caused confusion"

"The explanation to relieve any confusion"

"We will let the press know the price"

"The news article about the accident that was published under the headline 'Haggling for

life on the sidewalk' included a photograph of the person who died, but this photograph actually belongs to O.B. who was a passenger in the car."

"A connection was attempted"

"Ignorance could explain it"

"If they had sought his statement"

"I think it was relayed to you"

"Completely false"

"The mentioned intervention did not take place"

"Without their knowledge"

"It is very thought-provoking that contrary statements were made"

"In order to create the perception that they were opposite side people"

"Photographs of two young women were included in the article"

"Nothing to do with the aforementioned young women"

"It harms personal rights and affects their bubble of social environment"

"Some mistakes were included"

"Inexplicably, Cihat Aşkın became Cihan Aşkın"

I had boiled the publication in water. I had left the publication to dry on the cutting board. I had kept the water in a jar. And then I poured that water on a plate and left a white sheet of paper in it. I kept it there. So that what is in the water would be transferred on the sheet of paper. The unwritten

form of the publication. In the color of its water. Now the piece of paper is in front of me.

December 7, 2016: I scared away the musicians who came by in Dedem-Aphrodite, a local tavern. I'm still waiting for those who will be meeting me after the theater play ends. The publication and the text and the notes are on dinner table.

In some of the corrections, for example in the one from April 26, 2014, the correction is written for April 22, 2014. In some examples, the date could even be earlier. They're referring to a situation in the past and publishing it on a new date. An infinite past.

I'm thinking about the date on the back of the sheet of paper that is in the color of the boiled publication—the color of its own water. I'm trying to find out how and according to what I have written the dates on the backs of the sheets of paper. First is the date when I pick what I boil. The second is the date when I put the paper in the water where I boil what I pick. The third is the date when I take the paper out when it soaks all the water. If I write down two or three of these dates, that would correspond to the dates that are repeated twice or three times in corrections and clarifications.

From the back of the sheet of paper that has dried in the water

of *Corrections and Clarifications*:

"This sheet of paper was taken out early,

The separation from before it went out.

I took it off before going on road, before it soaked up the water on the night of September 11, 2016."

This sheet of paper that was taken out early,

I never went on that road.

I was lusciously liberated,

Correcting should be personally.

Corrections and Clarifications:

"There was a mix-up with the photographs in the news article"

"This made-up news implied a separation"

"I didn't have such a contact"

"I take on the responsibility"

"It will be more humane to apologize"

"Was subjected to"

"We are open to criticisms"

"I hope that you will understand my haste"

"I correct myself in your presence"

"It is thought-provoking"

"As they didn't change hands"

"Keeping all our rights"

"My haste and certain prejudices led to a mistake"

"The aforementioned subject"

"Based on scribbling"

"The publication was based on enmity"

"That I was the person on

record was implied"

"It is sustained within the framework of institutional memory and toleration and on a normal course"

I'm trying to continue on the normal course.

October 1, 2016: "Mom, could we have some of the butter you froze?" "Yes, but watch out for the publication."

He said, it is not handicapped, it is flawless for the antique caftan in his hand

It has an excuse

Excuse me

I thought about the similarities in names as I walked home. Just like a mystery coming out, these similarities showed other things that are unknown. The fact-checking comes after—saying, so it was really like that.

When we discussed his lack of interest in the last few weeks, one of us said to the other one, maybe there is someone else? Then I thought of a name that I picked from his last sentences that I recorded in my mind. I then started to work with someone with the same name in a new play. Then a student with the same name called for registration. I kept hearing the same name. For these names to be confirmed and it needs to be connected to the first situation of the name being mentioned. Fact-checking. The checking of that feeling that

starts with a name and these similarities. Fact-checking besides correction. Somehow checking for something else.

There is something else that is similar or that is emerging inside the circuit. Besides names also there are repeated objects. The line of similarities begins with an object, a shell, and a needle. I say similarities in objects. As we have touched upon this so much, my similar repetitive object is red pepper—very hot pepper. The hot peppers remaining after two break-ups. The last time, I boiled the pepper and leave sheets of paper in its water.

Corrections and Clarifications:
"It no longer matters leaning on what and how I made the mistake"

"Anything outside of this serves to blacken and should not be honored"

"There is no secret or open thank-you here"

"There is an insult in contrast"

"It is meaningful to show the ongoing rudeness"

"Carelessly trampled"

"It is illogical for a person who has female friends with him to try to kiss another woman and when the social status of my client is taken into consideration"

"I overtly apologize"

"I am very embarrassed"

"A note that denotes the photograph as representative is

missing"

"There is no relationship between the person in the image and the content of the news"

"Jurisdiction is the best way to be acquitted for everybody"

"There is no relationship between the article and the photograph"

"Behind the photograph in question"

"No foundation and the unfounded nature of it was also stated in the text"

"As if it is a new piece of information"

"The correct graphic is below"

"Your text that makes a cassette of the content of private life"

"The information of that nature does not reflect reality just like the others"

"Unfortunately the press has been instrumentalized"

"Called and made a correction"

"Reasonable number of suspects"

"Discussed over it"

"Conditions that will be sought in real people"

"Ugly, crass, rude"

"The betrayal of misdirecting the information"

"Black pencil, black spirit, black thoughts"

"Removed from such actions that will give opportunities to"

"The unskilled young generation has reached today"

"In my article titled 'If the women gets excited'"
"I definitely didn't go"
"I didn't let anybody see each other"
"I didn't see"
"Expressed that they are not related"
"This piece of news written with wry sentences that poke needles"
"It revealed a nice sense of humor, but I will correct it and apologize"
"Within the measure of its deserving"

I continue with the notes on the page: "Hüsna came. She brought licorice root dye.

Kara Memi *aher*. I call Hüsna now. I ask her what *aher* is. She says: "We use *aher* to make corrections. The material makes the surface of the paper shine. After we apply *aher*, the surface of the paper is wrinkled and to make it smooth again, we often use a seashell or an onyx stone. Onyx is used to make gold shine too."

Clarification for myself. It's good that I used different pencils on the newspaper so that I can see that I wrote different things on different days. I took notes on the publication over what we talked about.

Etching studio, Monday.
Scrubber: Used in the etching studio to erase bad drawings, stains, areas by scrubbing different metal surfaces and to correct.

When I was telling tell Seçil about the unfinished text, I kept saying, it's like a shell. Tonight, I took the *Corrections and Clarifications* that I boiled in its own water-essence and then let it dry. I had folded it to make it fit into a pot. It dried as such. I put it on the table with other things. Days later, I brought a dried zucchini shell—that we used at the play—, a small piece of shell that could fit into my palm, and placed it on the publication. And until now, they've been there together. They are together but why? What kind of a bond is it? What kind of a harmony?

They stand just fine together, but why? I've been always curious about how good and natural they stand together and what happens there. What is happening in *Corrections and Clarifications*? Why does it happen?

As the photographs and the texts cannot fit together, next to each other, the shell and the corrections and the clarifications can be well next to each other.

Today, at BAS I told Seçil about the text, what happened last week, the encounters and the day when I found the article I hadn't finished. At that time, I was working with small pieces of paper on the wall, adding one after the other. Later, I took these pieces off of the wall and closed them on each other. They were

like a shell.

Corrections and Clarifications:

"With respect"

"It was a mistake but not a disaster"

"Working with zero discharge"

"Moreover"

"Showing loyalty when naming"

On Wednesday, I'm waiting for Elif at Peyote, a local bar. On the table, the publication is scribbled with arrows and headlines. The publication becomes crowded and so does Peyote. A passerby puts some popcorn on the publication. The publication becomes salty.

Corrections and Clarifications:

"It is strange that they made news out of this"

"Dear respondent"

"Lightly put"

"Not everybody can be deceived"

"Efforts to prevent the beauties produced"

"Working with emotions"

"With the same love and enthusiasm"

"This news is very important"

"As there is no real possibility of relating to reality"

"I am not interested"

"There is no such possibility"

"It was up to me to give and to take"

"Isa Gök's photograph was used instead of one of Levent Gök"

I'm reading the newspaper on

the subway, on my way home. Not many people have newspapers in their hands anymore. I'm taking notes with a pen, which draws suspicious, interested looks.

"It is not right that traces of innocence are violated"

"The file of different jobs"

"We will warn by proxy"

"There is no other city that loses"

"It would be clear if one looked at our profile"

"You should know"

"An innocent use"

"Not everything is what appears"

November 26, 2016: "The one in the photograph is Fatma Şahin Hanımefendi." I take a note on it. Last night there was an explosion in Antep. Fatma Şahin, the mayor of Gaziantep, made a statement: "There are no facts that we could verify about the explosion in Gaziantep. The most accurate statement will be made by the officials."

"Not going beyond gossip"

"To reach a 'funny' conclusion from this situation"

"The statement 'I am not that person' was made"

"The headline, mistakenly, reads smallpox"

"The need to receive the information from the source"

Boiling from the source.

"It can be seen that the falsities were montaged on"

"It is being rid of addiction"
"There are no provocative statements in the draft text"
"In whichever way I managed"
"Essential seed"
"Was able to return to the world"
"If a kinship could be contributed"
"Was not placed there on purpose"
"We urgently recommend"
"This newspaper"
"But it is not right to turn this into an expectation"
"This is a nuance"
"We correct the piece of information from yesterday's newspaper that the panel was to take place yesterday"
"But I expected you to call"
"It is difficult to stay quiet but we have to stay quiet"
How quick was I to put up shells, she said
That Saturday when we found the secret
"Some days, it escapes you, even if the text that you are reading is different from the text that you wrote"
"Instead of writing PTT branch, PKK branch was written by mistake."
(Notes from our talk with Umut)
"Those children are also tired"
"It is to desire clarity"
(Ceren said) It permeates the sheets of paper, right?

To permeate inside and to satisfy so that it permeates.
"It is necessary to be more careful"
"Will be left defenseless"
"I was not less informed"
"The loser outlaws "
(The repetition of December 10, 2013
Also from December 10, 2014)
"A photograph of İsa Gök was used instead of one of Levent Gök"
"Reel was written as keel"
"All the information is there, the name is not"
We found the magic. It is necessary to accept it.
"Because they visited both the CHP women's division and parliament of women of the city council"
"I deeply upset those from Kalecik by saying it is a 'village'"

I fell asleep on the couch. I thought I was poked with a needle. I woke up. I returned to the kitchen to read the publication. Tonight I realized that I wrote down what she told me when I first started writing the text. Some women poked me with a needle in my arm on the subway. I said, I'm coming to you, if there is a spell cast I'm coming to you.
"We said we should be loyal to the text but we became the victims of our ignorance of history

of religion"

"A fiction based on lies"

We had to lie to correct to set the ground. It's difficult for me to face this. But I have to do it. There are lies told to fix the situation. Those that are said to get through. But you shouldn't be caught unprepared. Then the lie draws you in.

"It is impossible for them to 'work' where they are not present"

"To touch themselves with the tip of the needle"

"I'm making this correction in the name of the minister, but I'm still thinking about it"

"I'm using the right to correct in the name of 'respecting the right to correct'"

"The champion of doubles"

"There was fear over possibilities"

"The woman scared of possibilities"

I placed the needles in a bowl full of water. I salted the water so that bad spirits would come out. In the beginning, there was salty water, not rust. I took out the needles and left a piece of paper in the rusty water to have it seeped. Now I have to go back to the text to check the date of the dried sheet of paper. I also entered the circuit through this text.

"The sentence in quotation marks refers to the permeation,

which became open to misinterpretation because of a missing letter"

"Everyone makes a mistake; it is important to know how to apologize"

"Nobody has yet apologized for the mistake they made"

"Those who keep poking others with bodkins still have not tried the needle on themselves"

"That they are deeply regretful"
I shouldn't sleep with it—the publication.

Is the needle in there?

"Reached the conclusion that they are not beyond the appropriate level of skepticism"

"I learned near the end that the exhibition was over"

"No such offer was made"

"I correct it with pleasure"

"A circumflex is placed on the word, changing its meaning"

"These are statements about the system of performance that could not be relevant"

"Sometimes 'mind eclipses' that come out of nowhere stand in front of everything"

"Unfortunately sentences could not explain themselves"

"I noticed my mistake in the morning"

"I recommend that they look at the forest instead of being stuck on the trees"

"How the seconds became the firsts"

"Can only see by looking at

what has been experienced”

“Incidents cannot be corrected with disclaimers”

“We state that the picnic was organized for members of the media and we apologize”

“That the things were carried the day of the news”

“I wrote ‘Fişne’ bay instead of ‘Şifne’ bay”

“Our readers are right”

You’re chewing and rolling years in your mouth.

Last Saturday, I returned to the notebooks with clippings from 2008. Again from a similar clipping, again from a similar perspective, a familiar tone: “And whoever thinks that we could make this mistake will receive a response in the same tone. That’s what it is.” Thus, I would like to place this tone next to the sentences that are right after each other. At the beginning of the sentence, the tone was “We’re almost certain.”

Kostantiniyye: “We had to trace many false lines.”

“There is a gap that we could believe to have lost their legitimacy.”

“The tendency to understand.”

“This story holds together all that happened.”

“There is a chance that it was copied from another text.”

“It will be articulated when it’s too late.”

“There is no other reason to keep us from imagining.”

I continue from here up—towards the text, adding and subtracting.

Translated from the Turkish by Merve Ünsal. You can read the original text in Turkish on medium.com/@yaseemnaan

Body of Books: Collection

Philippine Hoegen

Part 1: A History in B♭ (to be read out loud)

... Brush off poppy seeds.

Capture a warm memory. Change your eye color. Cross Canada shopping. Do compound exercises. Don't be all business. Wash away perm dryness. . . Put time on your hands! Get away from the pill. Plant some mini-tulips. Escape the daily grind. Live the sporting life. Don't blame your hair. Expect the unexpected¹ New York, around the year 2001. There was a book called *A 1000 things to do* by Claude Closky, and probably there was a book called *Cahiers d'Images* by Céline Duval and Hans-Peter Feldmann. Certainly there was a newspaper called *Corrections and Clarifications* by Anita Di Bianco. They were kept together, not because they were inseparable or even needed each other very much, but because together they represented a possibility, a form of thinking, and a manner of making.

1 Claude Closky, *A 1000 things to do*, 1994–1996.

Keeping them together confirmed they were not a singular, one-off phenomenon but a category.

With the handwritten books, Closky makes piles. With the multiples, he unravels, draws out, and exhausts all possible combinations. Yet the notebooks and multiples quite often reveal the same preoccupations. . . The book is a product of thought as well as a vector linking author and reader. One "writes" or "reads a book" as one "drinks a glass," according to the same metonymical shortcut that confuses content and container, work and "publication," "volume" and its contents. It was this double game that brought Closky to the artist's book. . . As single editions, books are condemned to confinement, to be distributed clandestinely and exhibited under glass. Multiple editions can be read more widely, which breaks our fetishist relationship to the object while giving it the undeniably hypnotic status of industrial product, that is, of an object resulting from a more or less long series of mechanically produced transformations (a sterile object, produced by a machine, which itself was made by a machine, which...)."2

2 Frédéric Paul, *Claude Closky*, trans. David Wharry (Paris: Hazan, 1999), 9–15.

Some more books were added but not too many; they had to fit in a bag and they couldn't weigh too much—a portable category. In 2002, the bag with the books traveled to Amsterdam. The body started to expand, because it was introduced into an environment where this manner of thinking, this category was thriving. It was a shared discovery—for some, perhaps a common code. Not all books that were offered for the bag made it into the bag. They were kept, so as not to snub the book nor offend the kind donator, but separately, a second bag, a limb hors catégorie.

Through similar force of habit, the term "catalogue" designates any publication produced to accompany an exhibition (even if it has neither the form nor the taxonomic aim), and "slim volume" is the term used for a short book of poems with only limited distribution. Due to ignorance or neglect, the term "artist's book" continues to conjure up principally the image of a hand-painted book, a book-object, or perhaps even a collector's piece, but certainly not a banal offset-printed edition of five hundred to a thousand. For the printer, who happily has no feelings one way or the other, any bound collection of a few pages is termed a

"brochure"—a definition unlikely to be put into question.³

... Practice like the pros!

Recharge an active dog. Put style in your step. Request itemized bills. Care for indoor plants. Stay free in Las Vegas. Pull out your lip balm.⁴

In the year 2005, the bag moved to Istanbul. The body of books tumbled out of the bag and it finally began to stretch its limbs. It was given a space in a place and a place in space, as BAS opened its doors in Şişhane, Istanbul.

Fasten your seatbelts. Plump out facial lines. Grab life by the beans. Add spice to your life! Go on a balloon safari.⁵

The first books to come out of the bag were the ones that had been there longest:

Artists' books and videos conceived by documentation céline duval combine classification, editing, re-mediation, and re-circulation of images, with a view to a kind of artistic anthropology of visual culture... While introducing a documentary bias into her works (*Les Photographies du géologue* and *Les Images de Thouars bavardent*, videos, 2014), the artist also pays every greater heed to the plastic, not to say pictorial

3 Ibid.

4 Claude Closky, *A 1000 things to do*.

5 Ibid.

dimension of the images which she appropriates and whose cultural and social representations are reliant on visual forms and constructions.⁶

*Get your head together. Carry a winning smile. Fill the social column. Don't work in the dark.*⁷

It is no coincidence that the first books in the collection are what they are. Each, in its own way, represents a state of mind.

Corrections and Clarifications is an ongoing newsprint project, an edited compilation of daily newspaper corrections. . .

A catalog of lapses in naming and tangling of catch-phrases, *Corrections and Clarifications* suggests a more than incidental relation between news mis-speak and consolidated media interests.⁸

In the same year when the books found their space in Şişhane, I met Banu Cennetoğlu, BAS, and the body of books. It had just arrived, it was still quite scrawny, even a little heart-breaking, this bundle of parts that had been scraped together and hoarded, now tentatively spread out across some spindly

6 Jérôme Dupeyrat, "Portrait d'artiste: documentation céline duval," *Critique d'art: Actualité internationale de la littérature critique sur l'art contemporain* (No. 44, Spring–Summer 2015): 104–108.

7 Claude Closky, *A 1000 things to do*.

8 Anita Di Bianco's website, accessed July 11, 2016, <http://www.anitadi.net>.

structures, offered up to anyone who would give it the time of day. It was generous, eager, impatient, frail, meticulous, and hospitable. *Take a summer vacation. Wrap up in a wink of time. Start a stable career. Take time to make time.*⁹

The fact that there was a space had a huge impact on the collection. It started to snowball with people passing by, bringing books of their own, and packages arriving from all over the world. The body itself, as bodies do, had a magnetic effect, attracting more books with books, through affinity, familiarity, similarity, or through coveted familiarity or similarity. But attraction also works through oppositeness, or dissatisfaction, a notion of something lacking and the desire to add. The BAS body incorporated what was offered without losing its firm focus on the category, simply by ordering and arranging in space its head, its torso, and its limbs—some limbs looser from the body than others. *Resolve an inner conflict. Put on some sun scream. Make it simple, stupid. Keep beaches beautiful.*

In 2006, BAS, Banu and I became more firmly entangled, as we embarked on a production project called Bent—editing, producing, and disseminating ten artists' books in total, by different artists and art collectives from Turkey. Besides Bent, BAS

9 Claude Closky, *A 1000 things to do*.

engaged in other collaborations, producing and publishing research, as well as artists' and other books. Because of these publications and the need to disseminate, BAS began to travel to art book fairs in New York, Paris, London etc., recently even to Mexico City. The fairs contributed substantially to the further expansion of the body of books, as books were the currency with which to barter and broaden the scope of the collection.

In addition to being fields for hunting and gathering, the fairs also brought people from everywhere you can imagine into contact with BAS, resulting in a far-flung circle of friends who order and contribute books, visit BAS when they travel to Istanbul, or invite BAS and Bent for presentations, exhibitions, talks, and projects. *Sell your house online. Dress better for less. Think before you speak. Achieve all your goals. Shop the world by mail. Uphold your reputation.*¹⁰

Although basking in this bright global gaze was fruitful and formative, BAS would be pointless unless it confronted and engaged with its own physical and local context. A period of self-reflection ensued, and a product of that scrutiny was the decision, or the realization, which occurred sometime around 2009, that a

10 Ibid.

production without a discourse would always teeter on the brink of being a hollow exercise. As a consequence, BAS shifted its focus from production to more discursive events and projects. *Learn how to multiply. Don't be disappointed! Make sleep a priority. Put the world on hold. Show your true colours.*¹¹

*Discover another world. Do something delicious. Face up to your future.*¹² Unchangingly, at the core, the backbone and the base structure continue to be a body of books that began in a bag and were brought together by one person's obsession. There have been interns, volunteers, and collaborators involved with BAS, but even so, it still mainly evolves around that person, being Banu Cennetoğlu, its founder and initiator—the driving force determining its mental and physical framework and its critical conscience. Being an intrinsic part of Banu's practice, BAS is an element within a constellation of other elements—artistic production, research, and exhibition practice. Therefore, the project falls under the same scrutiny for urgency and necessity, and that "personal" and artistic scrutiny exists under the pressure of the complexity of BAS's immediate geographical, social, and political context.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

The project has always been suspended in between conflicting internal and external forces. *Forget science fiction. Drink plenty of fluids. Exercise without angst. Find the time you need.*¹³

The conflict of internal forces came to a head around 2013. A recurring desire to stop, quit, break, change the confines of habit, to resist the existing for the sake of the existing and the unresolved (perhaps unresolvable) plaguing questions on the who-for, where-for, and the why of the BAS project, caused it to almost grind to a halt. It didn't, however, close its doors, and in addition to continuing activities concerning Bent, the work of Masist Gül¹⁴ and sporadic collaborations, other less spectacular, more reflective practices developed, including a monthly reading group: a varying yet somehow consistent formation that gathers every month around one of the books in the collection to read, analyze, contemplate, and to consider that object.

The possibility of closing, temporarily or permanently, is as yet unexplored. A different option and a potential "emancipation" of BAS from Banu and her practice is now given a trial run: From June 2016 on, for at least one year, BAS will be laid in the hands

¹³ Ibid.

of artists Yasemin Nur and Seçil Yersel. *Forget exotic imports. Get a free travel bag. Don't just make dinner. Reveal your best skin. Get the best fake tan. Send yourself to camp.*¹⁵

Part 2: Scoring the collection

Since the day in 2005 when I first entered BAS's space in Şişhane, I have spent intense moments up close and personal with the body of books, and more recently with vast amounts of space and time between us. In order to reconnect with the collection, but also to choreograph interactions between the human bodies at BAS and the body of books, I sent several scores to be performed in or with the collection.

¹⁴ Masist Gül (1947–2003) was an Armenian artist who was born and lived in Istanbul. He made his living in cinema, working as an extra in more than 300 films. He made collages, drawings, and copper gravures, wrote poetry, painted portraits, and produced graphic novels. None of his work was published or exhibited during his life. During the 80s, he conceived and made by hand a series of six books entitled *Kaldırım Destanı – Kaldırımlar Kurdunun Hayatı [Pavement Myth – The Life of the Pavement's Wolf]*, using a periodical comic book format. In Bent 001 1–6, we reproduced and published these books as facsimiles of the originals. BAS is the caretaker of the collection of Gül's original works on paper, copper, and books. The collection has been exhibited on various occasions, most recently in the exhibition *The Beast and the Sovereign* at Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, October 17, 2015–January 17, 2016.

¹⁵ Claude Closky, *A 1000 things to do*.

Two scores:

Day 1, Tuesday, March 15,
2016

The Middle of the Middle

- Decide on which direction is the right direction for you to make a complete circle of the space (For example, starting at the left of the door as you come in, making your way clockwise, past all the book cases/shelves/tables until you reach the door again. Or counterclockwise, or starting from the desk, or the window, etc., whichever makes most sense to you).

- Place yourself in front of every book case/structure. Decide which one is the middle of that structure, take out the book or the object that is in the middle of the middle, and let it fall open at its middle page. What do you see?

- Do this for every structure, including tables, until you (1) are fed up, (2) have run out of time, or (3) you have come to a full circle.

Day 2, Wednesday, March 16,
2016

A companion for the day

What to do:

Choose a book from the collection. Any book. The book will be your close companion all day today. Take it with you whatever you do. Keep it in your line of vision or otherwise

be in physical contact with it as much as possible: Have it on your desk as you work, take it out of your bag and hold it when you're in a taxi or walking down the street, put it on the table in the café or restaurant, on the kitchen counter as you cook, on the table when you have dinner, beside your bed when you sleep.

Things that could happen:

You may choose to talk to your companion. It may talk back.

You may choose to arrange your day a little differently so that it's more interesting for your companion.

You may get annoyed with it.

You may introduce it to someone else.

They might talk to it.

It may get damaged, or worse, lost...

How to finish:

When you get back to BAS tomorrow morning, assuming that you didn't lose it, put the book in a place that feels like it's the right place for it to be.

I received a video, thirteen photos, and fifty-three text messages on WhatsApp, documenting Banu's interpretation of these two scores. *The Middle of the Middle* produced a journey through a cross section of the collection, through old and new, heavy and light, recently acquired books and old acquaintances. And we now

know the exact measurements of all the support structures at BAS.

A metal structure is divided into two halves. Please do not place drinks on the vitrines or books. It is lit from the inside or from the back, so that the figure moving around in front of it is a silhouette. The structure has shelves. The objects—rectangular stacks on the shelves—are lying flat; from this angle, I can only see their slit sides.

On the wall behind the structure is a shimmering foil, gold or silver, and a cowgirl with glasses asks to be taken to the *curador*.¹⁶ Then there is a window, it has thin bars; the lines do not align with the stripes of the chaise longue, and a skinny palm tree is eccentric.

There is a determined crack where the wall and the ceiling meet.

In the middle of the middle of the left structure is a double black star¹⁷ that is a very old friend. In the middle of the middle of the right structure, there is a small book with, amongst many others, two images of a mouth. They look

16 Sophie Nys, *Take me to the Curador or A Poster a Day Keeps the Curator Away*, 2005.

17 Banu Cennetoğlu, *15 Korkutan Asyalı Adam – 15 Scary Asian Men*, 2005.

like vaginas if you hold them the right way.¹⁸

The next viewpoint introduces a completely different perspective, looking down, perpendicular to the shelf. There is an array of mostly white books with black lettering, one year, the birthday, the future, and under the arm to death are amongst them.¹⁹ The shelf supporting them is transparent. It is in fact a drawer that can be pulled out. Between the books, I catch glimpses of other books floating beneath and the grey carpet beyond.

There is a publication that has the color of an old-fashioned beige envelope, which opens by unhooking a small string, making a quick circular gesture.²⁰ Another book has *things* between the pages, something that looks like a used black glove,²¹ and there is a future dictionary²²: Patricide will come to mean the act of killing one's (obsolete) father, a term used during the human physical annihilation era, ending in the 21st century...

Of the next structure, the middle shelf slides open.

18 Isabel Carvalho, *Crónicas escritas por autoras anónimas*, 2009.

19 Pierre Huyghe, *One Year Celebration*, 2006.

20 Gülçin Aksoy, *Duble Hikaye*, 2014.

21 Daniel Knorr, *Cudesch d'artist*, 2009.

22 Jim Drobnick, *Rudolf Baranik's Dictionary from the 24th Century*, 1990.

Passing over SERVICE,²³ moving to the 75th centimeter takes us to Woodstock,²⁴ and to dark black and white photographs of urban scenes that could be anywhere, in any town, in any country.²⁵

The last structure is a low one. The measuring process is crooked and brings to view a *Radical Journal of Shimming*²⁶ and some *Pages*.²⁷ *Pages #4* is a voice.

A Companion for the Day led Banu to take a book home:

There is the chaise longue again. The book²⁸ is resting on a pile of newspapers lying on the chair. The letters on the book are staring straight up. I imagine it is waiting to be picked up. It has a bottle of water beside it.

It lay with her on her bed,

There is a picture of a bed: birds eye view, a white bedspread with an implicit circular pattern. Lounging lazily on the bed are a wallet, a lip balm, a receipt, a grey leather

pouch, and the book. Four pennies push down heavily on the downy duvet. The book lies slightly apart from the other objects; it barely makes an indent.

and it accompanied her to a restaurant. She introduced it to someone, who was attracted to its design, but this design also makes the book hard to read, they realized. There was some annoyance, but this was cushioned by its content. Back at BAS, it was given a new place in the space.

The new place is upon a record player. The orange of its letters is very different from the orange of the purple and the orange memorial album.²⁹ The face in purple looks us in the eye, whilst behind his right ear, we can read that the midheaven mission of the library has to do with giving allowance, with springing the suppressed.³⁰

29 Sunfoot, Chris Johanson, Brian Mumford, and Ron Burns, *Purple and Orange Memorial Album*, 2012.

30 Genevieve Jacobs, "The Brautigan is a Taurus," *The 23* (Vol. 2, No. 3, June 1992).

23 Martha Rosler, *SERVICE*, 1978.

24 Haktan Özer, *Woodstock*, 2010.

25 Nobuyoshi Takagi, *Deep #1*, 2010.

26 *Journal of Radical Shimming* (Issue 5, 2009).

27 Nasrin Tabatabai and Babak Afrassiabi, *Pages* (#1, #2, #3, #4), 2004–2005.

28 Pelin Başaran and Ulaş Karan, *Sanatsal İfade Özgürlüğü Kılavuzu [Guide to Freedom of Artistic Expression]* (Istanbul: Siyah Bant and Istanbul Bilgi University Human Rights Law Research Center, 2016).

New alliances were formed. A limb was lifted, the body shifted its position

just

significantly

slightly

In Conversation with Banu Cennetoğlu

Özge Ersoy: In an earlier conversation, you talked about the owner of a kiosk in central Athens, who sells all types of newspapers, magazines, and publications along with souvenirs, perfumes, and cigarettes. I remember you saying that you've been fascinated by his display. What makes you excited about such a selection or collection, if I may use that term? Does it reveal anything about the sensibilities of the BAS Collection?

Banu Cennetoğlu: The owner, Mr. Dimitri, is originally from Constantinopolis and has been running this kiosk at Omonoia Square with his brother for the last twenty years. They keep it open for twenty-four hours a day—Dimitri stays there during the night and his brother during the day. Here you find magazines, cigarettes, and beverages next to I-Love-Greece t-shirts, bags, and books on the Acropolis. Imagine porn literature, Donald Duck, Mister No, and the best-selling S.A.S. espionage series all together. So it's not a regular kiosk—there's something more to it. For me, Dimitri is a truly collector. When you look at his kiosk, every juxtaposition creates a new story—a story that is quite personal, and this is possible only in Dimitri's way of display. Last time I visited him, I was next to a customer who was perusing the books on

display. After a while, she left the kiosk, annoyed, when she got her hands dusty. On the other hand, the dust and the sun, especially hitting the books on the top, all become part of the story.

In the last 15 years, I have worked intensely with databases, as well as personal and public documents—for some reason, often with, for or from the deceased ones. Sometimes you meet someone through a book, a sentence or an object, and you want to share it with others because it's just too great. In other words, I try to give them the value I think they deserve. But also, who am I to speak or to think on behalf of them?

ÖE: Talking about the kiosk in Athens, I thought about the fruitsellers in Beyoğlu, near the fish market. They have the most meticulous displays for fruits and vegetables, on such a level that you would assume the owners suffer from OCD. I'm sure they spend hours organizing and exhibiting their products. I wonder if this comes from an addiction or if it's only a marketing strategy.

BC: Of course they have to be pragmatic, because they have to sell to make a living. Both these sellers and Dimitri use a display that depends on their very resources. Dimitri wouldn't be able to beautify his display as much as the fruitsellers do, because he's got very little space. But I'm sure he thinks about functionality when he displays stuff. For instance, beer, condoms, and pornographic magazines sell better at night. He also has Donald Duck magazines but they're always in the back, as

he doesn't have many children around. Dimitri has to sell whatever sells. But you can still see his interests and curiosities. For me, he's not very different from a second-hand book collector or a dealer, as he always explores what he could contribute to his collection. He's in a constant state of searching. And whatever he adds to his display, that thing becomes a "bare necessity."

Libraries and bookshops have practical categorizations, whereas at the kiosk, you feel as if you're walking into someone's home and not just Dimitri's home. He sells some of the items, for sure, but for me he's still a collector. When the time comes, gatherers or collectors might leave their collectibles behind. What matters is the story they tell through their proximity.

When I look at a collection, I don't see individual works but a totality—something that represents an individual's process of accumulation and collection that reveals his or her own memory. When you look at Dimitri's kiosk, you would want to imagine whom he's friends with, who he talks to, and what he's curious about. The books he has have all the clues needed. I simply wish I could make a list of his inventory.

We have a similar situation at BAS. We have around 1,000 books but only twenty of them are "rare books," so to speak. What's curious is how every single artist's book changes over time, because they all witness what happens at BAS in particular and in the world in general. Objects or books hold a memory of themselves, of their

"neighbors," and also of their collectors, guardians, and visitors. That's why I tend to think about collections as a whole.

ÖE: There are many stories that build up over time. But what happens to these stories when the collector is not there anymore? Do they become orphans?

BC: You can get a substantial story even when you put the works' captions next to each other. Imagine the artists' books we have at BAS. If you make a list of the authors/artists, dates, and place of production, you would have enough data to map the collection. That's why I very much care about inventories. Anything beyond this pool of data is personal. Having said that, the following question remains: What happens to these works after one ceases to exist? I've collected so many books, bottles, and spirits in the last six years. I'm sure they would cause a big hassle to whoever remains after me. I find it very tempting to get rid of it all.

ÖE: I remember being shocked when I heard that a friend of mine, a music therapist in his 50s, sold his entire records collection a couple of years ago. It was a collection that witnessed at least thirty-five years of his life, putting aside the historical value of every single record he had. He could have donated or sold the collection as a whole, but instead he chose to give it away to a second hand shop around the corner of his house. He knew that the records wouldn't stay together, so in a way, he wanted to get rid of the stories as well.

BC: He was probably exhausted. I also consider this decision from time to time. This is a familiar dilemma for artists as well. You keep working and producing independently from whether or not you are able to sell them, and you wonder if one day your works will have another type of value, both content- and money-wise. And the whole maintenance work—both physically and emotionally—could become a burden.

I have to admit that I have bouts of extreme attachment and detachment. I can work endlessly to make something happen, but when it's finished, I might not be able to sustain the same intensity to maintain it. This is somehow contradictory to what I do, as I work a lot on classification, on some kind of preservation. One day, all of this might be too much to carry, and I might simply get rid of them. Or even burn them. At the end of the day, who cares?

ÖE: Are there any artists' books that you really wanted to have in the collection, anything that you had to run after? Or do you simply grow the collection organically, as you encounter new works, new books, and new artists?

BC: BAS has an eclectic collection that has been shaped according to the changing life conditions. I've always appreciated the juxtaposition of a book I love, a donated book, and a book I simply don't like. I often get this question from artists' book lovers: Do you have such and such book from this great artist? I've never had

such an ambition. Well, if I have to be honest, this is not exactly true, as I always wanted to have books by Ulises Carrión. But I never ran after them and never had enough money to buy them. When I had the means to afford one book by him, I chose to buy ten books by various other artists.

In the beginning, I had a budget for buying books for the collection, but I didn't have that luxury for a long time. And frankly, I haven't pushed my limits so much to buy more. Slowly but surely, BAS has grown as I met different artists, books, publishers, friends, and supporters. It has grown with acquaintances, constructed coincidences, and of course with love.

ÖE: Last summer, only by chance, I met an artist/designer who published his first short story. The books were freshly out of print when we met for a tea. I couldn't stop myself and bought one to donate it to BAS, as I knew you would appreciate the outcome of a random encounter. I read the story when I got back home, and to be honest, I really didn't like it—it was such a disappointment. For the last couple of months, I'm trying to decide whether or not I should give that book to you.

BC: No one would have noticed if you simply left it on one of the shelves at BAS. But now that you told me this story, I simply want it.

About the Artist

Anita Di Bianco lives and works in Berlin. Her films, videos, and texts involve re-considerations of previously published, assumed, or familiar patterns of characterization from the worlds of cinema, literature, theater, and political media. Di Bianco's moving image and print works have been shown at PS1, Kunstwerke, the Kunsthaus Zürich, the Kunstverein Braunschweig, the Rotterdam Film Festival, K21 in Düsseldorf, the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, and the Glasgow International, among others. She received her MFA from Rutgers University in 1997 and was awarded a research stipend at the Rijksakademie by the Dutch Ministry of Culture in Amsterdam in 2000–2001. *Corrections and Clarifications* is distributed in New York by Printed Matter and is held in the collection of the MoMA, New York.

About the Authors

Banu Cennetoğlu lives and works in Istanbul and Berlin. Her practice explores politics around information production/ dissemination, particularly through referential compilations. In 2006, she initiated BAS, a project space in Istanbul focusing on collection and production of artists' books and printed matter. She is currently a resident at the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program. Recent exhibitions include *House of Commons*, Portikus, 2017; *It is obvious from the map*, REDCAT, 2017; *Documenta 14*, Athens & Kassel, 2017; *FOOD – Ecologies of the Everyday*, Fellbach Small Sculpture Triennial, 2016; *Banu Cennetoglu*, Bonner Kunstverein, 2016; and *Burning Down The House*, 10th Gwangju Biennale, 2014.

Duygu Demir is an independent curator and a PhD student in the History, Theory, and Criticism of Art and Architecture program at MIT. Her research focuses on transnational encounters in art, pedagogy, and exhibition-making in and about Turkey. Before her graduate studies, she worked as a programmer at SALT in Istanbul. She has curated exhibitions at Arter Space for Art, Istanbul, SALT, Istanbul and Ankara, as well as Tate Modern in London. She received a combined BA degree in Art History and Visual Arts from Columbia University in 2008.

Philippine Hoegen is an artist based in Brussels and Amsterdam. Her work consists of performance, writing, and video installations, engaging with issues of display, objecthood, and personhood. Her recent performance *Regarding David* took place at Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam and at Gallery Tegenboschvanvreden, Amsterdam. Hoegen teaches at the AKV St Joost academy in Den Bosch and Breda, and since 2016 she is conducting a practice-based research commissioned by the Expertise Centre Arts and Design

of Avans University. She regularly acts as moderator in debates and conferences, most recently at *The Fantastic Institute*, Buda, 2017 and *The Body is a Battlefield*, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, 2016.

Yasemin Nur is an artist based in Istanbul. Her work explores the practice of collecting objects, ephemera, and stories. Nur holds a Doctorate in Fine Arts from the Painting Department of the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University and currently teaches at the Printmaking Studio of the same department. She has an MFA in painting from the same university and an MFA from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. Nur was a founding member of Atilkunst, an Istanbul-based artists' collective active between 2006–2013. In 2013, she started collaborating with theater director Emre Koyuncuoğlu for creative background and stage installations. In 2014, she started taking *Kat'ı* (Ottoman art of cut-paper) lessons from Emel Nurhan Oğan.

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Taksim-Gümüşsuyu Mah.
İnönü Cad. No: 9c
Beyoğlu 34437
İstanbul

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Editor:
Özge Ersoy

Copy editor:
Merve Ünsal

Graphic Design:
Future Anecdotes Istanbul

Graphic Design Application:
Gamze Özer

Photograph:
Sevim Sancaktar

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collectorspace.org

info@collectorspace.org

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8