

frieze

QUESTIONNAIRE

Anthea Hamilton



WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU KNEW?

"How to think more than one step ahead."

What images keep you company in the space where you work?

Unless they're specifically with a project in mind, I mostly keep images out of sight: they're too distracting. Nicholas Nixon's photograph *Boston Common* (1978) has come up as a reference point for the rehearsals for my Duveen Galleries commission at Tate Britain: an exercise in hanging out. Another is Roger Phillips's *Marram Grass* (1980): asking Roger to reprint some of his photography from one of his 50-odd books for my show at Hepworth Wakefield in 2016 was an excuse to meet him.

What was the first piece of art that really mattered to you?

Rather than art, I think it was something I saw on television. A ballet – or maybe a pantomime – screened on BBC2. It was my first palpable encounter with the shadowy sensation of culture – where you see there is this strange entity open and available to you but you have to reach out across a void with your whole self to meet it so that it can become concrete. I had a crush on one of the performers who was dressed as a peppermill. As a five-year-old watching him on television, I knew it would never work out.

If you could live with only one piece of art what would it be?

I don't live with any as it is. I'm not sure I believe the possession of works of art is necessary.

What is your favourite title of an artwork?

As a rule, I don't keep favourites, but I can say I'm quite keen on Bruce Nauman's *Run from Fear, Fun from Rear* (1972) because the title's also the text that constitutes the work. So, it's a complete description as well as a title as well as an artwork, and it's also a description or suggestion of two simultaneous physical acts. It's all laid out – nothing is left cryptic or enigmatic – and, as a neon, it's decadent whilst being efficient. It's also an anagram and it rhymes, so it's easy to recall.

What should change?

Everything's always changing – either for good or for bad. It's the rate of change that needs consideration.

What should stay the same?

Fingers crossed for The Rookery on Streatham Common and Bonnington Square in Vauxhall [both in south London] as well as a free and accessible National Health Service (too late already?).

What could you imagine doing if you didn't do what you do?

Realistically or according to my wildest imagination? The question isn't clear.

What music are you listening to?

I'm flip-flopping between Janet Kay's *Silly Games* (1979) and Tyga's *Ready to Fuck* (2012).

What are you reading?

Emails, transcripts of conversations at Secession in Vienna, children's books, *Vogue* runway reports, *Cafe Astrology* for daily horoscopes, right-wing tweets, and varied bits and pieces as research for future projects.

What do you like the look of?

My kid.

Nicholas Nixon,
Boston Common,
1978. Courtesy: Museum
of Modern Art,
New York/Scala Archives ©
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ANTHEA HAMILTON is an artist based in London, UK. Her solo show at Secession, Vienna, Austria, opens in September. Her work is currently on view at Tate Britain, London, until 7 October.