

# DAVID HEATH LECTURE IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

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Graduate Colloquium:

## **Absolute Complicity: 77 Days as Ambassador to Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci Monument**



Thomas Hirschhorn, Gramsci Monument, 2013  
Forest Houses, Bronx, New York. Courtesy Dia Art Foundation  
Photo: Romain Lopez

## **Yasmil Raymond**

Curator, Dia Art Foundation, New York, NY

**Friday, April 10, 2015**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Carlos Hall Conference Room**

*The David Heath Lectures in  
Modern and Contemporary Art are  
funded by a gift from Dana Ruben  
Rogers, '87C, and Greg Rogers.*

The outset of my investigation is the distinction between a curator and an ambassador. The display and presentation of art is no longer considered from the extrinsic point of view of meaning production, but rather from the point of view of its fundamental identity within the authoritarian machinery of entertainment. Curators are asked to “manage expectations” or “monitor” the artists as the production process of exhibitions is transformed into a product by the apparatus of the institution. When Thomas Hirschhorn assigns the title of “ambassador” in his work, he does so to problematize loyalties and interests, and revert the power game between institutions and artists. Hirschhorn's continuous production in Gramsci Monument carried over through the differentiation between a curator and an ambassador, reviving institutional taboos, inciting tensions, and redefining the rules of artistic engagement.