

DOPPIOZERO

Rebels. Arte e AIDS nella New York degli anni '80

[Vito De Biasi](#)

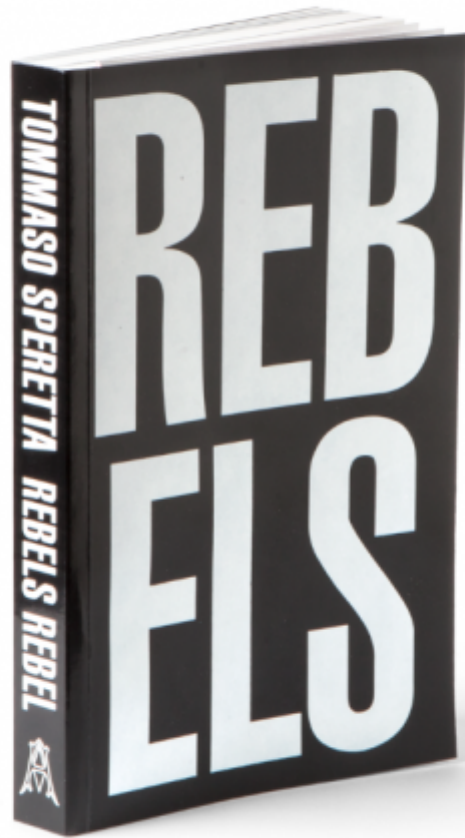
27 Ottobre 2014

Nella mostra *Disobedient Objects*, al Victoria & Albert Museum di Londra fino al 1 febbraio 2015, accanto ai manufatti di ieri e di oggi usati nei movimenti di protesta globali compare un cartello: “Molti di questi oggetti verranno restituiti ai loro proprietari una volta conclusa la mostra, perché sono stati creati e utilizzati per lotte ancora in corso”. Il tempio dell'arte e del design ha preso in prestito dalle strade manifesti, bandiere, maschere antigas, cartelli e gadget, in un'esibizione temporanea che non ha come scopo la conservazione e la musealizzazione del presente, ma la sua presentazione in un contesto curatoriale, che legge la storia dei movimenti attraverso i suoi oggetti, il suo design sociale.



Group Material, AIDS Timeline, installazione, 1989 – 90, ©The New York Public Library

In quella raccolta rientrerebbero a pieno titolo le operazioni di artisti e non artisti travolti dall'AIDS nella New York degli anni '80, raccontate da Tommaso Speretta nel libro *Rebels Rebel – AIDS, art and activism in New York, 1979 – 1989*, edito da Mer. Paper Kunsthalle: una ricostruzione ricca di materiali d'archivio che mette in ordine e analizza in profondità fatti storici e reazioni collettive di fronte a una piaga allora sconosciuta, che mise in crisi la società americana e dimezzò una generazione.



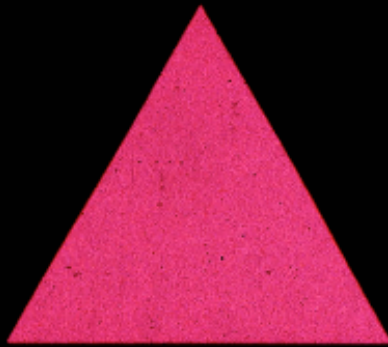
copertina Rebels Rebel, ©Met.Paper Kunsthalle

Il decennio di esplosione dell'AIDS, che travolse la minoranza GLBT delle metropoli americane, è oggi un evento lontano anche se non concluso, pronto per essere storicizzato e drammatizzato, come è accaduto nel recente film per la tv HBO, [The Normal Heart](#). Il lavoro di Speretta si inserisce invece in un ambito più specifico, quello della produzione creativa dei movimenti direttamente coinvolti nella vicenda: Group Material e i suoi componenti Tim Rollins, Julie Ault, Doug Ashford e successivamente Felix Gonzalez-Torres, e soprattutto ACT UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power), un'associazione nata proprio con l'intento di fermare la crisi dell'AIDS, che si avvaleva del braccio artistico del collettivo Gran Fury. Il punto focale dell'analisi è ovviamente l'arte pubblica, quella particolare area espressiva che nel suo sviluppo passa dalla realizzazione di monumenti e memoriali alla creazione di opere e iniziative dalla forte vocazione sociale, rivolte a un pubblico più ampio di quello tipico dell'arte.



Gran Fury, You've got blood on your hands, Ed Koch, poster, 1988, ©The New York Public Library

Group Material fu uno degli esempi di arte pubblica di nuova generazione, perché cercava di restituire i meccanismi della democrazia nella propria organizzazione e persino nei propri lavori, tutti a partecipazione collettiva, dove spesso non si distingueva tra l'opera d'arte e il manufatto del non professionista. Con lo scoppio dell'AIDS e l'urgenza di occuparsene, la partecipazione di Group Material al discorso pubblico sul tema fu un approdo naturale, e il risultato principale fu *AIDS Timeline*, una linea del tempo che ricostruiva la storia di quel periodo riportando manifesti, flyer, dati statistici e testimonianze dirette, nel tentativo di restituire il contesto sociale entro il quale quegli eventi si stavano manifestando.



SILENCE = DEATH

Why is Reagan silent about AIDS? What is really going on at the Center for Disease Control, the Federal Drug Administration, and the Vatican?
Gays and lesbians are not expendable...Use your power...Vote...Boycott...Defend yourselves...Turn anger, fear, grief into action.

Diverso è il caso di ACT UP, nato appositamente per affrontare i conflitti sociali che questa nuova piaga stava portando alla ribalta, ferite storiche della società americana che stavano riaprendosi in tutta la loro virulenza: il razzismo, il sessismo, il classismo e l'omofobia. La malattia sconosciuta era chiamata all'inizio il cancro gay, o la peste gay, vista la maggiore incidenza nella comunità GLBT. Prima che ci si occupasse seriamente di AIDS come di un'emergenza nazionale, e internazionale, la società americana e il suo establishment semplicemente ignorarono il problema, nonostante il numero e la velocità preoccupante dei contagi, perché era ritenuto qualcosa che riguardava soltanto *quelli lì*. ACT UP si diede quindi il compito di portare la malattia e l'urgenza di una cura su una ribalta pubblica, non soltanto per la città di New York (basti pensare alle altre metropoli ad alta concentrazione di cittadinanza GLBT, o ad altre fasce colpite e ignorate dalla società conservatrice del tempo, i neri, i latini, gli homeless e i tossicodipendenti). Per ottenere l'attenzione e il palcoscenico in una società capitalista dell'infotainment, la via più efficace era adottare le stesse modalità della comunicazione di massa ufficiale, a cominciare dalla pubblicità.

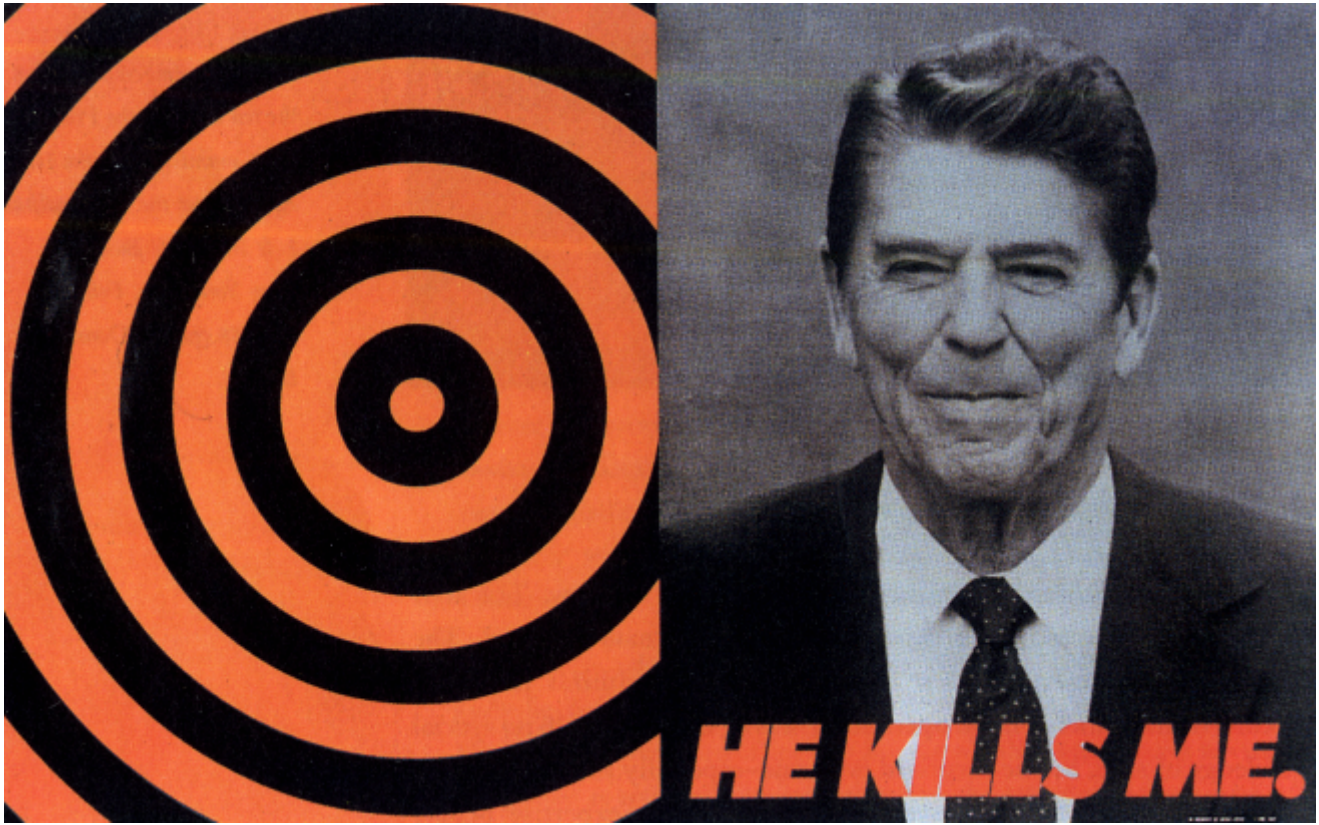


ACT UP Outreach Committee, stickers AIDS Profiteer, 1989, ©The New York Public Library



Membri di ACT UP Chicago con il cartello *Kissing doesn't kill*, Gay Pride di Chicago, 24 giugno 1990, ©The New York Public Library

Il capitolo dedicato ad ACT UP spiega puntualmente e con ricchezza di immagini come un'associazione riuscì a utilizzare le energie creative dell'arte per fare propaganda. I molti esempi riportati danno prova di una sapienza comunicativa degna di un potente ufficio stampa e marketing, nonostante spesso si organizzassero vere e proprie operazioni sovversive per mettere sotto accusa le istituzioni pubbliche e private, colpevoli di ignorare il problema o di volerci soltanto guadagnare. ACT UP produsse per esempio delle etichette adesive con su scritto "AIDS Profiteer", incollate clandestinamente sui medicinali della Burroughs Wellcome, l'azienda farmaceutica (oggi GlaxoSmithKline) che mise sul mercato il primo farmaco contro l'AIDS, l'AZT, a un prezzo altissimo, che solo in pochi potevano permettersi. Un bersaglio di ACT UP e di Gran Fury fu anche il presidente Reagan, che parlò pubblicamente di AIDS soltanto nel 1987, ben sei anni dopo l'esplosione del contagio, la cui immagine in un poster era accompagnata alla scritta a doppio senso "He kills me", "Lui mi fa morire (dal ridere)". E poi il sindaco di New York Ed Koch, il quale, come recitava uno spazio pubblicitario acquistato dal collettivo nei principali quotidiani locali, "affronta l'AIDS investendo in marmo e granito", cioè i materiali più usati per le lapidi. Il *New York Times*, accusato di sminuire la portata dell'epidemia, diventò *The New York Crimes*, un foglio che era una copia grafica dell'originale, pieno di informazioni occultate sull'AIDS, e che andò a ricoprire le vere pagine del quotidiano nei distributori della città.



Donald Moffett, He kills me, poster, 1987, ©The New York Public Library

"Meet The Conformers
Or Dead?"

The New York Crimes

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1989

Early Edition

New York Times high pressure systems
may be tested soon and some areas
made and even some clouds better and
which clouds. Details at City Hall.

AIDS and Money:

Healthcare or Wealthcare?

Decisions Made
Disregard the Sick

Professors from health-care schools are in the vanguard of AIDS, which stands at the crossroads of medicine, morality and the economic. Through the trauma of human greed and money, the relationship between money and government programs to aid the AIDS crisis needs very close scrutiny.

EXAMPLE: AIDS is not just big money. It is the result of the failure of the Federal government to provide a comprehensive program for the health-care system. The "new" AIDS crisis is a result of the failure of the Federal government to provide a comprehensive program for the health-care system. The "new" AIDS crisis is a result of the failure of the Federal government to provide a comprehensive program for the health-care system.

EXAMPLE: The complex and rigid FDA process for approval of new AIDS drugs works within the confines of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, a process that is slow and costly. The FDA process for approval of new AIDS drugs works within the confines of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, a process that is slow and costly.

EXAMPLE: Federal funding for AIDS research is limited. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has not been able to fund the research that is needed to understand the AIDS virus and its transmission.

EXAMPLE: AIDS is a complex disease that requires a multidisciplinary approach. The current funding for AIDS research is insufficient to support the research that is needed to understand the AIDS virus and its transmission.

EXAMPLE: AIDS is a complex disease that requires a multidisciplinary approach. The current funding for AIDS research is insufficient to support the research that is needed to understand the AIDS virus and its transmission.

EXAMPLE: Government action, like the call for widespread mandatory testing, is unpopular with the conservative majority because they are fearful of mandatory testing for the money. Mandatory testing is unpopular with the conservative majority because they are fearful of mandatory testing for the money.

EXAMPLE: The need to pay a salary to a doctor who is not a doctor is a problem. The need to pay a salary to a doctor who is not a doctor is a problem.

THOUSANDS OF NEW YORKERS MAY BE DYING IN THE STREETS

STATE'S HIGHEST COURT FINDS CITY LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE

NEW YORK, Mar. 27—A recently issued decision by the State Court of Appeals says that thousands of New Yorkers may die in the streets in the next few years, as a result of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

The court's decision, which is the first time the State Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue of the city's responsibility for the homeless, says that the city is legally responsible for the deaths of thousands of New Yorkers who die in the streets each year because of the city's failure to provide adequate housing for the homeless.

WOMEN AND AIDS: OUR GOVERNMENT'S WILLFUL NEGLECT

The AIDS crisis forces the question: How can we best care for women with AIDS? The answer is not simple. Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

Women with AIDS are often ignored by the medical establishment, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty. The medical establishment often ignores the needs of women with AIDS, and they are often the victims of discrimination and poverty.

N.Y. HOSPITALS IN RUINS; CITY HALL TO BLAME



Mayor Koch examines the ruins of New York City after years of his neglect. Critics blame the demise of the hospital system and the lack of AIDS services on his administration.

KOCH FUCKS UP AGAIN

NEW YORK, March 27—Health-care officials in New York City are in a state of panic over the collapse of the city's hospital system. The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

The city's hospitals are in ruins, and the city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse. The city's health-care system is in a state of complete collapse, and the city's hospitals are in ruins.

Inmates with AIDS: Inadvertent Political Prisoners

NEW YORK, Mar. 27—A prison in New York City is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

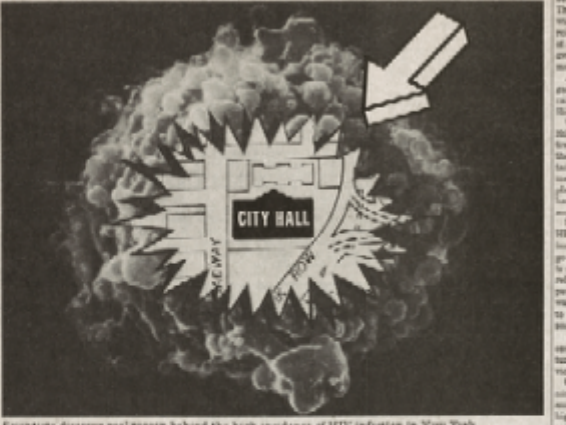
The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.

The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners. The prison is a place where the AIDS virus is spreading rapidly, and the inmates are being treated as political prisoners.



Scientists discover real reason behind the high incidence of HIV infection in New York

What About People of Color? Race Effects Survival

Studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS. The studies confirm what people of color have known for a long time: race is a major factor in surviving AIDS.

INSIDE

Coastal IV Drug Use Undercounted

Research reveals the projected HIV seroprevalence among IV drug users only counts the 125,000 locals, overlooking the 100,000 who are also users.

Homeless Teenagers and AIDS

Support groups for homeless adolescents, sexually abused and at risk, are being set up in New York City. The groups are being set up in New York City.

New City Plans: AIDS Deaths Help Communication

Anonymous information could help reduce the stigma of AIDS. The information could help reduce the stigma of AIDS.

ACT UP usò tattiche di sovversione dei canali mainstream, una sorta di hacking ante litteram, che piegava in modo situazionista modalità di comunicazione di massa come la pubblicità per avere attenzione. Così facendo, diede grande slancio a quella forma di comunicazione antagonista, non soltanto concentrata sulle manifestazioni di piazza, che chiamiamo guerriglia, e che oggi è diventata un'altra voce del marketing ufficiale. L'abilità comunicativa di queste azioni rivela un intento che va oltre la semplice comunicazione dal basso di una comunità, e soprattutto oltre le capacità espressive dell'arte e le sue tecniche: "lottavamo per portare i nostri argomenti all'attenzione pubblica, né più né meno di come fa Coca-Cola per vendere", afferma uno dei componenti di ACT UP, Loring McAlpin, segnalando come la loro "arte" fosse semplicemente il mezzo più efficace attraverso cui ottenere quell'attenzione.



Gran Fury installa The Pope and the penis alla Biennale di Venezia del 1990, ©The New York Public Library

Non è un caso che il simbolo identificativo sotto il quale tutto il movimento si riconobbe, dopo aver ritrovato una compattezza che non aveva avuto dai tempi di Stonewall, fosse passato da semplice elaborazione grafica a vero e proprio logo, immagine astratta dietro la quale un'istituzione sui generis agiva. Silence=Death, la celeberrima scritta accompagnata dal triangolo rosa col quale i nazisti segnalavano gli omosessuali, nacque come accusa pubblica di un'omofobia persecutoria che stava tacendo l'epidemia dell'AIDS, ritenuta una malattia gay, e di conseguenza stava provocando troppi morti a causa del disinteresse per la ricerca di una cura. Grazie all'attenzione che ACT UP riuscì a ottenere nel corso degli anni, quel lavoro grafico tra tanti divenne il simbolo per eccellenza, il riferimento sotto il quale potevano raccogliersi tutti coloro che erano coinvolti a diverso titolo in quegli eventi.

WITH 42,000 DEAD

ART
IS NOT ENOUGH

TAKE
COLLECTIVE
DIRECT
ACTION
TO END
THE AIDS
CRISIS

The Kitchen

December

312 West 49th Street, New York, NY 10014

January

*Karen Finley
Two In Twenty
Stephen Petronio*

*11/30-12/3
12/6-28
12/8-18*

*Wolfgang Stahe
Robert Longo
Blueblack Collective
Spin Doctors*

*1/3-28
1/7
1/13-14
1/18-2/18*

Reservations 212-675-1791

Gran Fury



Gran Fury, *Know your scumbags*, poster, 1988, ©The New York Public Library

È chiaro come questo non sia più soltanto territorio artistico, e ne è la prova la perplessità con cui Gran Fury accettò l'invito a partecipare alla Biennale d'Arte di Venezia del 1990. Le polemiche che emersero dal lavoro presentato, *The Pope and the Penis*, un'accusa alla Chiesa cattolica contraria all'uso del profilattico e al tempo stesso un provocatorio accostamento di Giovanni Paolo II all'immagine di un pene in erezione, crearono un campo di conflitti che andava ben oltre il mondo dell'arte. L'allora direttore della Biennale Giovanni Carandente minacciò di dimettersi se quel lavoro “blasfemo, da non considerarsi arte” non fosse stato ritirato, per tutta risposta il gruppo, con la consueta abilità pubblicitaria, riuscì ad aggirare la pretestuosa questione sull'arte allargando il discorso a tutta la sfera pubblica, e finendo sui giornali mainstream al di fuori

del proprio territorio d'azione. Forse fu grazie a questa nuova esposizione mediatica se da allora anche in Italia cominciarono a comparire lavori specifici sull'AIDS, soprattutto a opera di Oliviero Toscani, che nel 1994 dedicò un intero numero della rivista COLORS di Benetton al tema.

WHAT DOES KOCH PLAN TO DO ABOUT AIDS? INVEST IN MARBLE AND GRANITE.



Welcome to New York, where AIDS is good for undertakers but bad for people. About 10,000 people. People the city left to die. And more will die, unless you do something. But what's something you can do?

Simple. Be at City Hall on March 28th at 7:30 a.m. Be a part of the largest AIDS demonstration ever. And what, exactly, are we demonstrating against? A city that spends only one half of one percent of its budget on AIDS. A city whose health department cuts costs by cutting estimates of people infected with HIV. A city where IV drug users with AIDS wait ten months to get into a treatment program when, on average, they have six months to live. A city that owns thousands of empty apartments while 5,000 people with AIDS live on the streets. And if you think AIDS only affects the people that get it, think



about trying to get a hospital bed when many hospitals in New York are at 95% capacity.

Which is why we're targeting City Hall. And why we're protesting two ways: With a legal picket, and more forcefully, through civil disobedience. Civil disobedience training will be held on March 25th from 12-6 p.m. at The Center, 208 West 13th St. between 7th and 8th Aves.

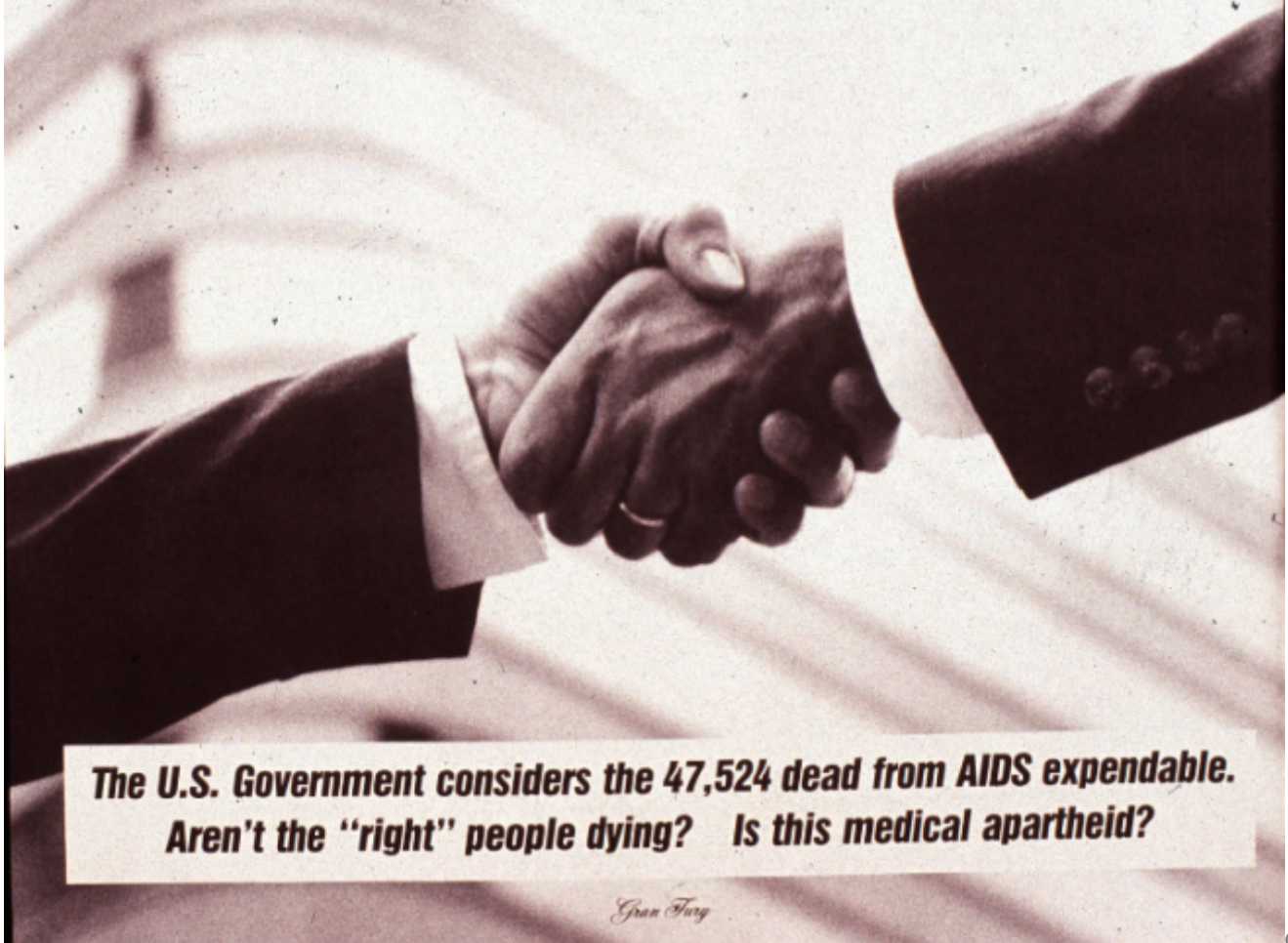
But whether you want to get arrested or not, join us on the east side of City Hall on March 28th. And if you want to know more about AIDS in NYC before the 28th, come to a teach-in at The Center on March 23rd (7-10 p.m.) or March 26th (3-6 p.m.). It's time we told City Hall to tackle the AIDS crisis, instead of burying it.

AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, 496 Hudson St. Suite G4, New York, NY 10014 (212) 533-8888.

ACT UP

Tra humor nero, détournements situazionisti e potenza del linguaggio, ACT UP segnò con le sue azioni un deciso sconfinamento dell'arte pubblica fuori dall'arte e dentro il pubblico, e nonostante il merito di Speretta di far emergere questa realtà con il racconto dei fatti e l'esibizione delle prove, la sua ricerca sembra voler far rientrare nel sistema dell'arte ciò che ne evade chiaramente i limiti. L'autore sceglie di domandarsi “che cosa succede all'artista in un periodo di forte crisi sociale?” invece di chiedersi “che cosa succede all'arte, sottoposta alle forze deformanti di una grande tensione collettiva?”, focalizzando la sua attenzione sulla figura dell'autore invece che sulla rivoluzione di una forma espressiva. Nella sua impostazione di fondo, *Rebels Rebel* parla di artisti, anche quando sono loro stessi a proclamare in un lavoro “Art is not enough”.

WHEN A GOVERNMENT TURNS ITS BACK ON ITS PEOPLE, IS IT CIVIL WAR?



**The U.S. Government considers the 47,524 dead from AIDS expendable.
Aren't the "right" people dying? Is this medical apartheid?**

Gran Fury

Gran Fury, When a Government Turns Its Back on Its People, Is It Civil War?, cartellone, 1988, ©The New York Public Library

Quella del decennio 1979 – 1989 fu una guerra, “la guerra della nostra generazione” la chiama McAlpin in un contributo ospitato nel volume, così come le generazioni precedenti avevano avuto la loro Seconda Guerra Mondiale, la loro Guerra di Corea, il loro Vietnam. E come in tutte le guerre, tra le molte battaglie c'è anche

quella tra linguaggi diversi. L'arte e il suo sistema sono infatti insufficienti per esaurire tutte le implicazioni di quel conflitto, e forse sarebbe stato più interessante approfittare di questa apertura in un linguaggio specifico per intravedervi quello che sarebbe venuto dopo: l'epoca della comunicazione totale. Una domanda che resta inevasa sembra infatti: che cosa ne è di quella forma d'arte già liminare, l'arte pubblica, costantemente dentro e fuori il sistema che la dovrebbe legittimare, quando viene spinta ulteriormente fuori da una certa appartenenza, durante un'emergenza storica che tende a ridisegnare i confini e ridefinire le cose? Che cosa diventa l'arte pubblica, quando la stessa nozione di arte e di pubblico si espandono fino all'esplosione?



Membri di ACT UP Chicago con il cartello *Kissing doesn't kill*, Gay Pride di Chicago, 24 giugno 1990, ©The New York Public Library

Un tentativo di rispondere a queste domande, abbandonando l'esigenza di tornare all'arte e agli artisti, si sarebbe avvicinato a quelle che Cecilia Guida definisce *spatial practices*, pratiche spazio-temporali che corrodono le suddivisioni tra artista e pubblico, tra spazio dell'arte e spazio del quotidiano, individuando nuove forme espressive e nuovi attori. Le avventure “totali” di ACT UP e degli altri gruppi, non solo artistiche, non solo politiche, non solo pubblicitarie, sembrano l'esperienza germinale delle pratiche contemporanee, dove “l'arte pubblica si fa processo di comunicazione e azione sociale nello spazio condiviso, mentre l'artista da autore diventa una sorta di agente sociale o fornitore di servizi” (C. Guida, *Spatial practices*, 2012, Franco Angeli).



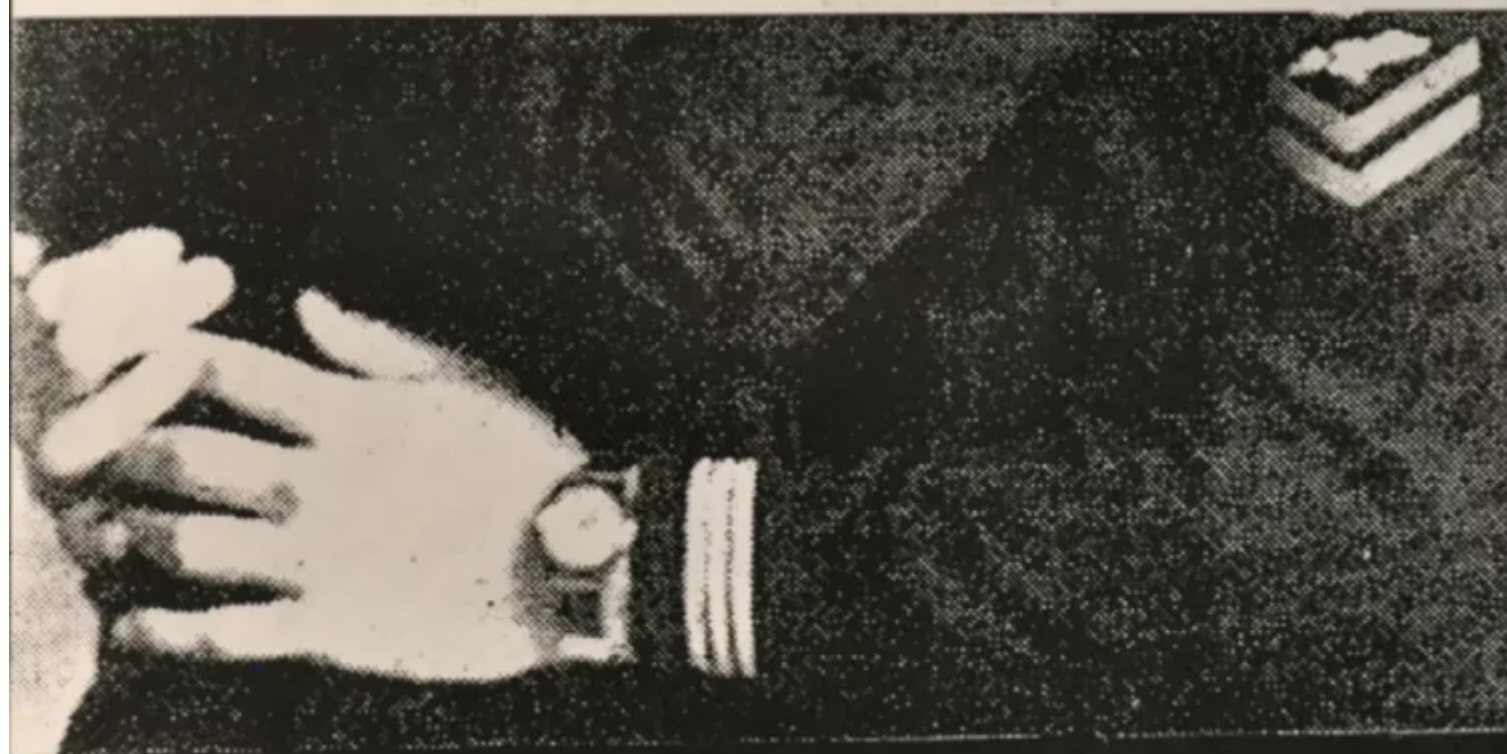
Sticker Men use condoms di Gran Fury sul sedile di un taxi, New York, 1988, ©The New York Public Library

Mettendo in crisi le vecchie definizioni di arte e comunicazione pubblica si possono capire meglio anche le odierne operazioni di scambio tra il museo e la strada, l'arte e le condizioni di vita, la politica delle istituzioni e il politico delle esistenze, come accade in *Disobedient Objects* citata in apertura, dove la non-arte passa per le sale di un museo come è passata e sta passando per le strade del mondo.

Se continuiamo a tenere vivo questo spazio è grazie a te. Anche un solo euro per noi significa molto. Torna presto a leggerci e [SOSTIENI DOPPIOZERO](#)



READ MY LIPS



KISS IN

Friday, April 29:

9:00 pm

10:00 pm

March from Christopher & West Sts.

Rally at Sheridan Square