

THE ACT

PERFORMANCE ART

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Cover inset: **Terminal #2: Primordial Landscape**, Christopher T. Gallagher.
A luminous painting shown (left) in light, and (right) in darkness.

Notes

Our purpose is to:

- allow a free range of activity
- permit as wide a range of representations as we can and let them contend with one another
- re-value "performance"
- let the artist speak
- empower the reader, holding open areas where the reader can act: in addition to being a witness and, above all, more than just a passive witness!

Contributors

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acting advancing agonizing alienating arguing arriving assisting
assuming attempting balancing beating beginning being bending
binding bleeding blowing blundering bowing bringing calling
capitulating catching causing celebrating changing clapping
cleaning clearing climbing clowning coming continuing cooking
counting covering creating crouching curing dancing dealing
declaring deflecting describing disappearing doing dreaming
drooling eating editing employing encasing establishing expanding
experiencing exploring facing falling feeling fighting finding floating
flowing fluctuating flying following ganging gathering getting going
grabbing guiding hanging having hearing helping hiding hitting
holding humiliating hunting illuminating inching including
installing interpreting introducing keeping laying leading leaning
leaving listening listing looking looming losing lying maintaining
making maneuvering meeting mentioning missing mixing moving
multiplying muttering needing nothing obscuring oozing passing
paying peering performing permitting picking playing plundering
pointing posturing pouring praying presenting pressing pretending
printing projecting providing pulling reading receding receiving
recircling recognizing recovering remaining remembering removing
rendering repeating replacing rescuing resting returning rising
rooting running succeeding searching seeing seeping serving
shackling showing singing sitting skipping smiling sounding
speaking spinning sponsoring sputtering squatting standing
stepping stirring stumbling submitting subverting supposing
sweating sweeping taking talking teetering thinking touching
tracing trailing traveling trying tumbling turning understanding
unwinding using vanishing varying waging waiting walking
wandering wanting washing watching whirling whispering whistling
witnessing working writing yearning yelling



Perseverance



The Shadow of Antigone

Eugenio Barba

(Address given at the Venice Theatre Festival, October 1985)

We are at the "The Gospel According to Oxyrhincus," Odin Teatret's latest production. A woman called Antigone has just covered her brother's severed head with her dress. His head had been set out as a warning. The woman is then surprised by a man called Jehuda, the Grand Inquisitor, a keeper of the law. He approaches Antigone, who prostrates herself. Jehuda, the Grand Inquisitor, draws out of his hat the bunch of flowers which cover the knife he has used to kill other characters in the performance. He holds the flowers over Antigone's neck. But he does not kill her, he does something else. He circles around her, and, at that moment, the darkness which earlier had blanketed the room is dispelled by the appearance of a golden light, the sun.

Jehuda searches with his knife on the floor: he finds Antigone's shadow, starts to scrape at its edges. He outlines the shadow with the dagger and at the same time seems to be trying to efface it.

And so the scene continues, the knife trying to obliterate the shadow and the shadow inexorably advancing.

I worked for a long time to find all the details for this scene, without knowing why. I asked myself all the while: why am I working so much on this scene, why is this scene so essential for me?

On the 8th of August, in Holstebro, I was watching television. For nearly the entire evening, the programs celebrated the anniversary of an historical event: 40 years earlier, the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Among other news items was the report that the pilot of the plane which had dropped the second atom bomb (on Nagasaki) had committed suicide. And then came the customary images, those which by now belong to. . . I would not say to our imaginary museum, but to our very concrete museum. The images of our individual-collective memory. Seeing these images again, I realized that I needed to look for yet another: in my library, I took down a book which I had bought in Japan, in Hiroshima, in fact, and there I found, amongst other things, the explanation for the scene in "The Gospel According to Oxyrhincus" on which I had worked so much. A postcard bought at the Atomic Museum in Hiroshima shows three steps, the entrance to a bank, on which a shadow had been imprinted. A man was climbing these three granite steps when the bomb exploded and the heat of the bomb's fusion stamped his presence into the granite.

Thus I understood why Jehuda persisted in trying to obliterate Antigone's shadow: because it is easy to kill bodies, very easy, but some bodies leave shadows, as if their lives were so loaded with energy that they remained imprinted on history. Even if physically the people have vanished, their shadows remain and darken the beautiful landscape.

There are certain people who have left deep shadows in the history of our profession: Stanislavski, Artaud, Brecht, Julian Beck. There are many Jehuda's who try to scrape their shadows away. But the shadows remain. They remain for those who know how to grasp the meaning of history, for those who want to remember, who do not want to lose the memory.

I mentioned the beautiful landscape and the shadows which darken it. Since some people think that theater derives from literature, let's listen to a playwright, in this case, Heiner Müller, without doubt one of the most fascinating contemporary writers: "The sun shines on the beautiful landscape in the time of betrayal. I see bodies in decay and I recognize the ghosts of their youth. I see bodies which are nothing but the landscape of their death."

Why speak of betrayal? What is betrayed?

To betray literally means "to deliver," "to hand over" someone or something to someone else.

But what is delivered into others' hands? One might think that one's own shadow is handed over, like the character in Chamisso's novel who entrusted his shadow to that apparently innocuous old man.

But what can it mean, to deliver one's own shadow to someone else? It means to extinguish, to surrender, to weaken or to suffocate those energies which should imprint one's own presence on the stone, on history. It means not giving in to the temptations of the spirit of the times. Not to betray means to refuse, it means being a political man in the sense of attacking what happens in the polis, the city, using the weapons which the intellectual has in his hands.

But what are the intellectual's weapons?

Once again I asked myself why the figure of Antigone had for a long time, for three or four years, continually returned to disturb me, like a ghost. First with "The Romancero of Oedipus," which Toni Cots

and I made together, and where, both in the text and in the actual production, Antigone had a principal role. And then in this other performance, "The Gospel According to Oxyrhincus." I asked myself: what is Antigone trying to tell me?

There was something disturbing me very much, pitting me against Antigone. "If you don't agree with Creon's law," I found myself saying to her, "then don't make your ineffectual gesture, don't pretend to bury your brother with nothing but a handful of dust. You go to Creon every day, see him every day, speak to him every day. So do as Brutus did, take a dagger and kill him, take the power of the polis yourself and establish the morality which is important for you, make it respected. But why this symbolic gesture of burial which accomplishes nothing?"

This is, fundamentally, what the blind narrator, the wise man, in "The Romancero of Oedipus," says when he presents all the stories of the family of Laius: it is almost with irony that he shakes his head when faced with the ingenuous girl who is trying to change things with her useless gesture.

In "The Gospel According to Oxyrhincus," Antigone appears once again. And I could not understand what lay hidden behind her gesture, what it wanted to say to me personally.

I finally understood it when I asked myself what the intellectual's weapon is, what he could use to fight against the law of the city. I think that the weapon is a handful of dust, a useless and symbolic gesture, which goes against the majority, against pragmatism, against fashion. A useless, inefficient, symbolic gesture, but which must be made. Here is the intellectual's role: to know that the gesture is useless, symbolic, and to have to make it.

It is above all a gesture that does not give in to the spirit of the times, a spirit which refuses memory, refuses the past, refuses that which has been, and which believes that all that happened in the Sixties and Seventies is a vanished Atlantis.

A great sword master in Japan before the Tokugawa period was recognized by the fact that he was able to strike a blow to his opponents' neck without removing the head. Everyone would think: he missed. Then the opponent would take a step or two, and with the slightest inclination of the torso, his head would fall off.

I believe that, for the theater, the experiences of the Seventies, which are no longer in fashion, belong to this kind of mastery. They were a blow dealt to the

apparently unitary body of the theater, and if even now many exult, believing that this body has remained intact, the generations to come will see its head fall. Something else is hidden in this body: another kind of life, in the blood, in the arteries, another vision of our profession, which is not only text, scenic incarnation. Again, it is as the playwright says: "to be able to accept the decay of the body — because biologically we all crumble — and try to preserve intact the ghosts of our memory."

Perhaps, with my companions at Odin Teatret, and with all those who are around us, I succeed in remembering that I must not lose the shadow, the presence, the charge of energy which derives from a single necessity: to refuse. I do not accept the present, I want to remain apart, I want to make performances which are of use to me and to my companions, not performances which are requested or imposed. I want to make my reflections, impose my reflections. I will have strength only so long as I succeed in maintaining this refusal.

I know that all those who seek to erase our shadow will not succeed in taking it away. We, and with us Julian Beck, Grotowski, The Bread and Puppet, all group theater, a certain vision of theater making, will remain: their shadow, our shadow.

This is the beauty of this period of time: to see which is the stronger, the steel of those who wish to erase our shadow, or us. This is the real challenge of the ice age in which we find ourselves, the glaciation which is slowly mutating all theatrical and cultural vegetation: to be able to cross the icy landscape, leaving our shadows behind us.

I have no more to say, if not that I contemplate with joy the decade to come: it is the decade in which the group of people who have worked with me for so many years, and I myself, will become biologically more than mature. It is the time in which our bodies will begin to become ruins. We will see whether or not we will be able to keep the ghosts of our youth alive in these ruins.

The only hand I hold out, that I would like to be touched and remembered, is towards those people who in ten, twenty years will say: yes, we saw, we remember, we keep alive the memory of something which happened and which can happen again, differently, but it can happen.

Excerpt from a Work

Jacques Chwat

Brecht once wrote
*Once thought I'd like to die between sheets of my own
now
I no longer straighten the pictures on the wall.*

* * *

*All this occurs
Because I so favor the provisional and don't altogether
Believe in myself.*

Why is it that I so yearn for the
Provisional?
Now
What is it in those provisional break
fasts
Brought to my room
Directly
The Hot Coffee & Hot Milk
(alternating with hot cocoa)
& Crisp Bread & Butter
(all on a tray)
The shock when I ask for a piece of gruyère to be added
The bed & the room
all made up
for my return
So (that) I can place myself at the desk
sit there & work at the desk next to the window
looking onto the hills around Zurich
& the back of Aix-en-Provence
1 9 7 0.

*Do not do as you have always done
Do not act as you have always acted:*

During what Arendt was to call 'dark times'
a government agent came to the house of a man who
'had learnt how to say no'
took over the man's house (& food) & asked
'Will you wait on me?'
The man put the agent to bed, covered him with a blanket,
guarded & obeyed him for seven years
never saying a single word.
After seven years the agent grew fat & lazy
(phlegmatic) from (over) eating & (over) sleeping
& died.
The man then wrapped him in the (now) rotting blanket
Threw him out of the house
washed the bed
whitewashed the walls
sighed with relief
and answered:
N O.

Time to Talk about Time

Jacques Chwat

For a long time now I have had this strong sense that one of the reasons [principal reasons] for our existence is in order to pass things on. Not necessarily directly, but to filter things through: take what already exists, respond to it, pass it on. (It has been theorized that everything imaginable that exists has always existed, only waiting to be uncovered.)

In talking of time, our notion of time, it is impossible to ignore our conditioning — which seems to operate in so-called alternative or experimental situations [as well as in daily life]: to produce; to live in terms of products and production, ultimately to be defined by them. So, we must seek [out] true alternatives, beginning perhaps by working a month or two on a project, laying it aside, then resuming work on it. Because of our conditioning we seem to need even more time — time to rid ourselves of it as far as possible — yet paradoxically we have less. We have become so used to the 'quick fix' in daily life as well as in our work that we must begin by finding a way out.

Begin, see where the work leads, continue, shift, stop, leave, return. (Returning perhaps a year later as we did with *resonance* which I first directed at LaMaMa then took to the Washington Project for the Arts' Experimental Festival — with a new variant of the piece.) Whether hours or years it's all time. Many of the legendary Asiatic and European troupes that we admire, among other reasons, for having literally spent years on a production also perform every day so that the *total* number of hours spent in rehearsal may not be much more than, say, in a regional theatre in the USA. What is longer, much longer, however, is the time-span: one continues working even on days when one is not rehearsing, albeit unconsciously, gaining what I choose to call breathing space, breathing time.

Say you spend 200-odd hours working over a two-month period, or even over a six-month period, then present it to a public for a week or even a month, with the possibility of spending 50-60 more hours working on it. The aim is for the authentic moments to be close enough to each other to sustain the entire piece.

Not too close, nor too far apart so that if you picture it as a rope held up by two posts it would begin to sag too much; it does need to sag somewhat in order for the production / piece to come to life: it must be neither too taut nor too loose.

By permitting breathing space you permit true participation on the part of the audience literally, as the French say, "assisting at a spectacle," letting their own associations come into play. (In metaphoric terms the piece then becomes like a vessel that we [audience, public] are able to fill with our own associations . . .)

We are very much, I believe, at the tail end of an era where the role of the director has been predominant, just as I think that we are at the tail end of much in our civilization — in a true time of transition — and I have no idea where we are headed. I do, however, have some notion of where we are coming from as well as of certain shared values. If, to paraphrase what Stanislavsky is remembered as having said toward the end of his life, the main function of the director is to provide a runway from which the actor may take off, then I am convinced that the runway must be on *terra firma*, grounded.

FORCING THE ISSUE: DISPLACEMENT

- **The Pigears and the Galleries**
- **The Performance: Untitled**
- **A Proposal for: A City within the City**

Laurie Perricci

Penelope Wehrli

THE PIGEARS AND THE GALLERIES. September 5-19. 85'

It began with coming home. Returning to New York after a European and a Middle Eastern working absence. Often when one comes home after a period of time, things seem to have suddenly changed.

We were simply confronted with what we had ignored before, an outside reality we had been close to.

The art seemed now more meaningless, the galleries more commercial than ever, the political consciousness seemed to have faded completely and the housing situation was more crucial and threatening.

We believed the new galleries to be a part of the problem. Of course we were made aware very soon that we too were intruders and that we all were in the same boat.

"Everybody is just trying to survive here," said a friend who also runs a gallery.

Yes, survival again, but we were convinced that there was a different intention behind this kind of survival. We felt homeless with our anger and thinking. We felt an immediate statement was necessary and a fast move — a kind of street attack, very different from our usual way of working.

We decided to strike the galleries and confront the artists, "the blue ribbon plum pigs," that seemed to evade any form of responsibility towards the ongoing state of change on the Lower East Side. We chose to make our attacks when most people were at the galleries, the "high times" of the openings. A fast appearance — arriving in an old van, the nailing of pigears into the door frames, hanging pigears on ropes to tie the entrance doors closed — guerilla approach.

We ourselves, in black armors, white faces, garlands of fresh pigears around our necks like trophies.

The ears did not last long, neither did we!

At Gracie Mansion Gallery a co-owner walked with raised arms through the space, our long rusty nails with ears sticking through them were held in his hands. At M13 and Limbo Lounge, it took about 30 seconds until we were physically removed from the spaces by owners eager to defend their newly renovated galleries.

After the third day, the police started to follow us. Not much sense of experimentation seemed left in this part of town. We had made the mistake of sending a list of our appearances to various newspapers, foolishly hoping for publicity.

We changed our tactics and started to appear in places off the list. To confront mass with mass we started to recruit a small army, clad in pigears. To allow a more reflective reaction to the activities, we decided to forego the act of trespassing and defacement. The ignorant reactions of the supposedly sophisticated audience were quite disturbing. Comments like, "Their faces are painted white, does that mean they don't like blacks?" were disheartening.



Valdgir Cruz

With our chance-provoking appearances, we gave up control over space, light, sound, and timing for the impact of immediacy; we hoped that the anger of the image and the urgency of the statement would be enough to stimulate the imagination and concentration of our audiences. Unfortunately, our experiences brought us straight back to reconfirming the necessary use of the old methods of visual tricksters.

We decided to put a halt to our attacks because we could not rid our feelings of fighting against dead matter. We had to direct our efforts and energies towards a more constructive way of expressing that anger.

A PERFORMANCE: UNTITLED. November 3. 85

A work to reflect nightmarish and grotesque aspects of “home” and the “art-making process” and to confront the issue of mental and physical homelessness as well as an emphasis towards artists’ responsibility not to become “blue ribbon plum pigs.”

The Installation

An empty lot, a field of trashy leftover parts of living, remnants of burned-out cars.

Fronted on two sides by small buildings, across the street a seven-storey-high burned out facade and in the back more emptiness — all too real for a Hollywood war-fantasy set.

The audience faces the burned-out building.

On the right side a plastic-covered low enclosure, a bluish embryo-bubble.

On top of a rusty gym staircase, another plastic-covered bluish tower-like habitation, just wide enough to stand upright; a metal slide coming down diagonally on its other side, a barrel on the ground.

A tall painted target figure, a sling shot.

A screen attached to an empty van.

Right in front of the audience, a black ring at eye level, the size of a lifesaver attached by orange elastic strings to the ground and to somewhere in the invisible dark above the heads of the audience.

The ground is sandy, the light dim.

The Action

Barrels with fire.

Two ghostly pale, black-dressed figures, each isolated in their house-like enclosures, freezing cold.

The ticking of time, removed as through earplugs, heavy.

A voice, faint, very, very slow pictures a dreamsequence:

It was a foreign time, a time ahead of us. what is now subtle, was the law. we were walking down the street. we turned right on first. there was nothing but an empty field. a field of rubble. the house was gone. eliminated. leveled out. I couldn't believe. it was like a hallucination. I ran. ran, looking between the bricks. I was paralyzed, not capable of finding my anger. I stood there poking the ground. the ones who have and the ones who don't, it was very clear, inescapable, pressing. to have a place to live. a home, it was a matter of life and death. we knew that. they had bombed it. overnight. they said it had become dangerous for the people living in it. it could have collapsed at any time. they had to do it. they were very sorry about this. we knew they wanted the ground. we knew houses were power. that's how they controlled the poor. to eliminate them, now us.

Film images flash onto the building next door:

the head of miss Liberty

a body falling

shocked viewers, turning their heads, pointing their fingers

a door that is closed in front of a person, abruptly, over and over again

bodies curled up on street corners

between trashcans

rows of beds without mattresses

a sand clock running out

Ticking time, still. Closer.

The figures leaving their enclosures, slowly, heavily.

One walks to the center of the ground, goes onto her knees, gets up as if following an unheard signal shot, runs towards the audience. Stopped by the lifesaver between them, she bounces back, falls to the ground, gets up, walks back, turns around, onto her knees, up again and runs into the ring, falls again and again.

The other figure picks up the barrel, bangs it against the slide and starts walking up, standing diagonally in the air, moves the barrel with her feet higher and higher until she falls over the barrel noisily and down to the ground, tries once more.

The figures move in circles from one object to another, counterclockwise, isolated from each other, along with the ticking sound.

One writes on the screen: HOME.

As the other shoots against the high target figure, stone after stone, hitting the metal.

One crosses out aggressively the words on the screen: HOME IS WHERE

The ticking is constant.

Run into the ring, fall back, up on the slide, trip over the barrel, again, more words: WHERE THE HEART IS

more noise, faster, much faster, breathless, useless, endless

HEART - ART

a jackhammer found
hitting it against the car parts
the barrel is falling, over it
the machine overturns
suddenly stops
the bodies fall
fall to the ground
finally silence

another song, gentle, calling out into the void, an echo comes back
the bodies crawl, breathing into the sand,
slowly, exhausted
one up the stairs, one across, back to the enclosures
a projection onto a building:

a head in flames
flames
the house in flames
burned, burned-out

Facts and Relations

TO TEST THE STRENGTH OF BODIES, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL, FORCING THEM THROUGH STRENUOUS ACTIVITIES, USING OURSELVES AS GUINEA PIGS TO REPRESENT AN OUTSIDE WHICH WENT FAR BEYOND OURSELVES, OUR BODIES.

HOMELESSNESS, A REALITY THAT IS UNDENIABLY PHYSICAL, HAD TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE MOST PHYSICAL WAY POSSIBLE.

This activity caused us total exhaustion and physical injury.

The question comes up, of course, how useful is it to injure oneself in a performance or artwork to make one's statement? How far does one automatically enter a self-destructive realm with this kind of approach? This is not a new question.

In our case, the live performance became a form of exorcism caused by the various difficulties we had encountered during the process of this piece and by the weight of the subject itself.

However conceptually provoked the physical exhaustion was, it turned out to be quite true in the end.

Afterwards, we learned that our shock-realistic approach had made many people in our audience feel extremely uncomfortable. It had been painful to watch. We were criticized as being too negative.

But wasn't that the point?

Displacement was the issue that we wanted to force, force to a point of repulsion.
But what an ironic situation we were to encounter!

Besides the usual problems any independent low-budget performance artist has to face while working outdoors (the fact that 8BC, our original host, had been closed down by the building department for hideous reasons only topped that situation), we were confronted with the actual reality of our subject.

We were going to appear as intruders, despite our different intentions.



Bill Barrett

In the beginning of this work, we talked at length with the people in the neighborhood about the project. They were enthusiastic about it, at least at first. But after a while, those two white women carrying around bizarre objects, became slightly suspicious to them. As the temperature dropped, the tension grew. We couldn't hang around and eat the empanadas they offered to us.

We had made arrangements to use some of the burned-out cars on the lot as part of the installation. No one around objected.

But we were in for a rude awakening: we found a man living in a van among the cars.

A slap in our own faces. We were now guilty of what we were blaming others for. We were contradicting ourselves.

Unfortunately, there was hardly a way to speak with the man. Each attempt drew attacks from him and his giant pitchfork.

We started to work around him and his van, but the threats didn't cease.

Absurd as it was, we had displaced him with our ignorance of these flexible street-laws of privacy. We had invaded his borders.

A painful clash of two different ways of living. Our intentions would not serve as a bridge towards understanding.

During the performance we still heard him verbally threatening those bastard artists, reinforcing the threats with crashing bottles and firecrackers.

Could we blame him?



Leni Riefenstahl, from *Olympia*.

A CITY WITHIN THE CITY

- An exploration into the possibilities of building new forms of communities.
- Suggestions for the use of wasted energy and space in an overcrowded society.
- A manifestation of artists' responsibilities to recognize and challenge a denied aspect of this society: the displaced and homeless.

Since there exists no sense that displaced people are accepted as an active part of this society, a community of their own has to be developed.

THE PERFORMANCE IS THE FORMING OF THESE TEMPORARY COMMUNITIES, THE PRESENTATION OF A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE WAY TO EXIST.

A Proposal for One Hundred Performers/Participants.

Each performer is provided with an inflatable unit/house that can easily fit one person.

One unit can be transported by one person on the back like a crate.

Each unit is painted orange like a signal.

To provide necessary heat, the units are placed on subway air grates or a simple pipe system can attach them to the air exhaust of laundromats, for example.

The units are for living, storage or mail deposit.

Materials are fireproof and water resistant.

The look of the units may vary depending on specific needs for comfort and/or aesthetics of each tenant.

Units can be attached to each other to build walls, circles, etc.

A PIECE DESIGNED FOR THE NOMADS OF THE CITY.

THE PERFORMERS ARE REAL PEOPLE WITH REAL LIVES.

A PERFORMANCE ABOUT PEOPLE MIGRATING THROUGH A DESERT CITY.

THE ACT OF MOVING LIKE A SNAIL WITH ONE'S HOUSE ON ONE'S BACK.

A manifestation of HOME as a necessary part of SELF.

She was always there. Sometimes she was more noticeable. Other times she seemed to blend in with the hotel lobby wall. Her chair faced away from the street and the park. Instead, it pointed toward the elevator.

From time to time she would make a sound. It was always the same sound. Somewhere between the watery cry of a dove and speech. It sounded like "Brul."

The hotel workers paid little attention to her. The only explanation ever offered came from the man in the cowboy hat. He pointed his finger to his forehead, made a circular motion, and slightly shrugged his shoulders.

One day, I heard a brief, unmistakable cry. I turned and there she was, this white haired lady, walking in half-oblivion. As always, she said "Brul".

Later I learned what this sound meant. It was the name of her dead husband.

Performance is often accompanied by sadness. This unhappiness is of two kinds. An immediate sense of loss, and a later feeling of emptiness.

The sense of loss is bittersweet. One misses the energy of preparation, and the moment of performing. Friends may voice their appreciation, but one is glad it is over.

The later feeling of emptiness is more simple. One has no ideas, and it seems one will never have ideas again. From concentration, one has fallen to powerlessness.

There is no immediate cure for this condition. One can start a new piece, which may be a pale imitation. Or one can try the everyday world, which may be without interest.

Somehow time passes. And then it happens. An image, an idea. Again, there is fragrance.

"Living" and "Living As"

Jeffrey Greenberg

The mask which an actor wears is apt to become his face.

— Plato

Once it's over, it's over. And yet some activities demand their furtherance — they require us to bring them to other realms. This might be the task of representing oneself in professional terms; it might require a second, third, or series of activities; it might end, never to live again. For once it's over, it's over. And still again there are acts of return to the initial scene in homage, in language, in memory, in quest of re-(e)valuation.

Holding the event in mind, swirling it over the tongue, reviewing its minute subtleties, or violently smashing at it and oneself in the name of perfection, or hungrily sucking nourishment from its still warm bones. The vampiric act is merely a recognizable instance of the acts we engage in as witnesses and creators. Everyone comes to an "event" in the life that brought them — no one is an idealized spectator waiting to take it in. And most important, the creator of the event does not have any correct experience of it; an intention, maybe. Of course, we share a culture; there are certain things we respond to, common languages, but I am referring to those things in a work/life that are subtler than the mechanisms of cultural meaning, namely what the body knows. In the immense details wherein the world lives — so small that any scheme attempting to account for it falls short — a performance takes place uniquely with everyone. What then does it mean to represent it? Who has the authority to speak? — who best knows the work? No one. But, in reality, the presses do; that is, they speak.

The primary style in the representation of activity is journalism. Implicit in reportage is the lie of objectivity which denies the multiple interpretive acts that take place. Events tend to be characterized with a kind of Cartesian scientific precision, a telling of mere fact, but really the representation of the event in factual terms. It is the "world of facts" that Martin Heidegger blames for our turning the earth into a "gigantic gasoline station." "The botanist's plants are not the flowers of the hedgerow; the 'source' which the geographer establishes for a river is not the 'springhead in the dale'" (M.H.). So, let us turn into the gulf between fact and "that about which we cannot speak and must pass over in silence" (Wittgenstein).

Two representations: the dance and the dance score. For simplicity let us look to the latter. Dance notations, Laban, Zorn, et al., view the body as an armature, describing which part is moved, how far, at what angle, when. This is fine to the extent that one experiences a dance as surface, as the working of a figure in space. But remember the thickness of movement, of sweat and heat — all the "interior life" — and one knows what the notations lack. Because notations lack the full richness of the dance itself, we end up with the cult of the performer — the interpreter of scores. This situation is far more advanced in the musical world, where a much longer history of scoring exists. The performer has a major presence, growing in the crack between the score and its doing. Perhaps this is key. . . Perhaps to conceive of a representation as a conveyance of everything leaves us to be docile receptors, absorbing without effort everything that comes our way. Our role might better be the interpretive struggle from the representation into something the representation *claims*: to

assist or perhaps simply to coexist with the representation. To serve it at times and refuse it at others. (The colloquial phrase in French of saying "I go to the theater," is literally, "I assist the spectacle.")

Other than this co-relation with representation, as assistance and refusal, let us take up a fabrication in which the artist has lied for the sake of promoting an imaginative spectacle. Such work could be nothing more than thin and weightless. Yet pretending is the preeminent means of radically disconnecting the representation of the work from the representation of the work as fact. To really lie as a work and have the work live is so difficult as to be a limit; it is merely the impossibility of loosing culture's grip on us (Heidegger's historical people in the history of being).

By everyday gestures, a magician accomplishes the extraordinary. The natural hiddenness of the body facilitates the mystery. The hand palms, a turn of the body shields, a flick of the eye misdirects. Let this charming deception model hidden motives and desires in the sea of representations. Within hiddenness, the unobservable forces work: our perceptions become less perceptive. Behind dark curtains we cannot say, "What appears, is." Everything softens with doubt. (This softening is not bourgeois ease, in which everything is available for our use, but simply the pleasurable feel of our feet in the earth's soft dampness. "The soul desires to be moist" — Edmond Jabes.)

The magician diverts us and returns us full circle. What does it mean to represent ourselves: (1) not to present ourselves as objects of use, as earth is a gasoline station, but to engage in the representations of living in order to live, and (2) to be open to the hiddenness that is. Beyond this: "Morality in the arts is a sign of weakness." — Nietzsche

Synopsis of The Destruction in Art Symposium (DIAS) and Its Theoretical Significance (1)

Kristine Stiles

Notions of creation and beauty are commonly considered synonymous with the very meaning of art, however determined they may be by changes in historical taste. Such concepts rarely include destruction as a characteristic of beauty, a condition of creation, or a fundamental component of art. The dialectic of destruction/creation and its synthesis in art have been neglected in the etiology of creation.

Destruction *in* art is not the same as destruction *of* art.(2) On the plane of form, destruction in art introduces destructive processes into the actual making of an object or event, and on the level of subject matter, it is not only an examination of the meaning and presence of destruction in the creative process but in life in general. As a conveyor of content, destruction in art is a theme which critiques the autonomous character of the traditional arts as these productions have been isolated and defined within various systems of historical discourse and its markets. As signification, destruction in art attacks the traditional identity of the visual arts but not actual art practices such as painting and sculpture. Destruction in art should be understood as a method employed to expose habits of theory and practice that deterministically narrow artistic production and its public reception. In a general way, destruction in art metaphorically addresses the negative aspects of social and political institutions, within which life-threatening technology and psychic practices have evolved and, in a specific sense, it examines conventions which constrict the constructive capacity of the individual.

All of these issues were brought into focus at the Destruction in Art Symposium which took place throughout the month of September 1966 in London. More than fifty artists and poets from ten countries in Europe and North America met there to participate in a three-day symposium and to perform events or create objects in a wide range of media throughout the month.(3) The majority of those who participated were visual artists who had been instrumental in the development of Happenings, or were poets who had created visual and phonic (Concrete) poetry. An equal number of artists from as far away as Argentina, Japan, and Czechoslovakia either sent photographs, original works of art, documentation, or theoretical texts to be read or exhibited at DIAS.(4)

The diverse collection of artists who participated either directly or indirectly in DIAS were unified in their response to the theme of destruction in art. Yet they never comprised a movement nor produced a manifesto or publication.(5) They never established a meeting place to discuss and share ideas, nor did they exhibit as a group again after DIAS. Apart from the month of events, DIAS simply represented a special moment in which a small body of artists shared a discriminating attitude about the use of destruction as an element in the creation of art, as a conceptual frame, as an attitude to the world, and as a way of relating subject matter in art to events and conditions in society. This attitude permitted them to explore a body of thought and aesthetic action of intellectual, social, political and aesthetic consequence.

DIAS was conceived and orchestrated by the stateless artist, Gustav Metzger. He was primarily assisted by John Sharkey, an Irish poet working with visual (Concrete) poetry, a film-maker, playwright, and author who designed the DIAS poster and who, at the time, managed the gallery at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London. Seven years before DIAS, on November 9, 1959,

Metzger authored the manifesto *Auto-Destructive Art*, the first of five manifestos written between 1959 and 1964.

A U T O — D E S T R U C T I V E A R T

Auto-destructive art is primarily a form of public art for industrial societies.

**Auto-destructive painting, sculpture and construction
is a total unity of idea, site, form, colour, method and timing
of the disintegrative process.**

**Auto-destructive art can be created with natural forces,
traditional art techniques and technological techniques.**

**The amplified sound of the auto-destructive process can be an element of
the total conception.**

The artist may collaborate with scientists, engineers.

Auto-destructive art can be machine-produced and factory-assembled.

**Auto-destructive paintings, sculptures and constructions have a lifetime
varying from a few moments to twenty years.**

**When the disintegrative process is complete
the work is to be removed from the site and scrapped.**

London, 4th November, 1959

From 1959 until 1966, when he created DIAS as a forum for other artists to expand the dialogue he had begun on destruction, Gustav Metzger realized his socially motivated, inherently political theory and practice of Auto-Destructive Art in such works as public lecture-demonstrations (1960-1966), in the development of an acid-nylon technique for painting (1960-1962), in very early (1963-1966) projections of liquid transforming crystals, and in his visionary projects for auto-destructive sculptures to be erected in public places. In his *Manifesto World* of June, 1962, Metzger berated the "stinking fucking cigar smoking bastards" and "scented fashionable cows who deal in works of art" and called for the artist to "destroy art galleries. . . (the) boxes of deceit" that represent "capitalist institutions." (6) Such a destruction, he urged, was a means to create a new realism capable of showing "the importance of one object" or the "relationship between a number of objects" and was the first step to the formation of a theory of aesthetics that might include "the total relationship of objects including the human figure."

Gustav Metzger was the first artist to systematically identify destruction as the essential theme of, and dilemma in, modern life. He then incorporated his findings in a comprehensive reappraisal of art and its potential role in society. His special contribution resided in the conjunction of formal innovation and historical circumstance; he analyzed the phenomena of the destruction of materials through change, chance, and indeterminacy as the basis of kinesis and destruction in political, psychological and social material. He provided an aesthetic equivalent to destruction by collapsing form, subject matter, and

content into a single plane of expression in a self-decomposing and deconstructing object. While other artists such as Jean Tinguely, Yves Klein, Arman, Bernard Aubertain, certain members of the German based ZERO group, and Fluxus at times employed destructive means in their work, no one except Metzger so thoroughly recognized and pursued the full ramifications of this problem.(7)

Metzger's work demanded not only a political reading of art, but an engaged and self-conscious relationship to its production. His concern for the international, interdisciplinary scope of destruction in art was most clearly brought out in the first press release he wrote for DIAS, where he explained that:

The Destruction in Art Symposium. . . will bring together artists from various countries. . . writers, psychologists, sociologists, and other scientists. The main objective of DIAS is to focus attention on the element of destruction in Happenings, auto-destructive art, and other new art forms, to relate this to destruction in society.



Ivor Davies performing "Robert Mitchum Destruction/Explosion Event" on Porto Bello Rd., near the Free School Playground, London. September 13th, 1966. Photo: Michael Broome

The destruction-in-art works performed at DIAS might be generalized into three broad and often overlapping categories: destruction of materials, destruction caused by nature, and psychological and physical attacks on the body. The majority of the objects and events at DIAS were constructed to be destroyed through various means such as explosives, burning, tearing, and cutting. John Latham's burning towers of books, SKOOB Towers (books spelled backwards), attacked the symbols of rational, scientific, and linguistic systems that dominate creative intuition and non-rational invention. The Welsh artist Ivor Davies set off explosions destroying mannequins, objects, an enormously enlarged photograph of Robert Mitchum, and parts of the abandoned buildings in which his work was situated near the London Free School Playground on Nottinghill (an open, littered space, a *terrain vague* razed by Nazi bombs where, appropriately, many of the DIAS events took place). Davies' works recalled World War II bombings and the potential annihilation in nuclear war. Although virtually unknown, they were direct antecedents for the kinds of performances staged by Mark Pauline and Survival Research Laboratories Group in San Francisco today.

Only a few artists at DIAS worked with natural forces such as destruction wrought by wind, fire, rain, air, water, or gravity. Foremost among them, Graham Stevens created a massive pneumatic structure into which the public was invited to experience the heaving, swaying, and constantly changing shape of nature. (8) Juan Hidalgo of the Spanish ZAJ group, often associated with Fluxus activities, performed his colleague Tomas Marco's *Mandala*, during which a candle burned silently for one hour, one minute, one second.

The events in which DIAS artists utilized the body to signify the destructive and violent conditions affecting the individual ranged from private, psychological and spiritual experiences, to public and social experiences.



Yoko Ono performing *Cut Piece* at Africa Centre, September 29, 1966. photo: John Prosser.

Powerful among these were Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece*, in which she sat passive and immobile after having invited the audience to come to the stage and snip away her clothing. In Rafael Ortiz's event, *Self-Destruction*, Ortiz ripped his suit to reveal himself dressed in diapers. Whining, screaming, cajoling, and desperately calling, "Mamma, Ma Ma Ma Ma" and "Pappa, Pa Pa," he banged a rubber duck and drank enormous quantities of milk from bottles until he vomited on the stage, bringing his psychic Oedipal drama to an end. These kinds of physical actions stood at the apex of DIAS activities but none more than the presentation of Hermann Nitsch's *Orgies Mysteries Theatre*. The artists who witnessed Nitsch's work at DIAS were nearly unanimous in their agreement that Nitsch and the Austrians had pushed the possibility for visual expression to the limit.

In the late 1950's, Nitsch had begun to construct an aesthetic theory analagous to the collective, violent, and destructive inheritance that he believed shaped Western civilization. He drew upon three traditions: the savage crucifixion of Christ; the legend of the ferocious, erotic, and paroxysmal Dionysian rites and mysteries; and the mixture of wounding, suffering, and sexual taboo in the collective guise of the Oedipus legend which informs Freudian psychoanalysis. He combined these sources into a directly experienced action which, he theorized, might induce a cathartic or abreactive response in viewer-participants, cleansing them of destructive impulse.

On the night of September 16th, with the help of Günter Brus, Otto Mühl, Al Hansen, and with participation from the audience, Nitsch presented his fifth *abreaktionsspiel* in a meeting room of the St. Brides Institute, which was attached to London's historic St. Brides Church. During the action, a lamb carcass was strung up, beaten, and mutilated. Animal viscera and offal were scattered about the area of action. Red paint, simulating blood, was poured over the dead flesh of the animal and its organs. A film showing images of male genitalia immersed in viscous fluid and manipulated by strings was projected on and off the flesh of the suspended lamb carcass, while percussive sounds of whistles, rattles, and other instruments punctuated the action. (It is noteworthy that, at DIAS, Nitsch first introduced sound into his work. The orchestration of his own music would subsequently become a component that would form a critical part of the structure of his work.)

Two Associated Press journalists reported Nitsch's action to the police, who arrived near the end of the performance. Metzger and Sharkey were given a summons to appear before a London Magistrate on the charge that they, in exhibiting Nitsch's work, had presented an "indecent exhibition contrary to common law." Ten months after DIAS, and after the Magistrate had assigned the pair to a trial by Jury, Metzger and Sharkey stood accused for three days in July, 1967, at London's famed Old Bailey. The real threat of a maximum six-year prison term hung over their heads regardless of the fact that they had the artists indemnify them, prior to participation in DIAS, against responsibility for the destruction of material and/or the possibility of danger to life and property.

The verdict of the trial relied upon a series of photographs taken during Nitsch's event. The critical role of photography in recording and communicating the objective conditions of an action emerged as an unanticipated but salient feature of destruction-in-art events. Regardless of the fact that the photographs were *re-presentations* of a past action, they were presented to and understood by the jury as the primary account and record of the original event. Much testimony on behalf of the defendants pointed out that the photographs dramatically altered the context and feeling of the performance, since they isolated the various actions and images from their original continuity, simultaneity, and kinesthetic sequence in the event. Yet, on the basis of the prosecution's careful selection of photographs presented as evidence of the "indecent" nature of Nitsch's art, Metzger and Sharkey were ultimately found guilty of the charge. Both were sentenced lightly.

Since the photographs stripped the serially developed action of its unity, they raised questions of a more general nature about the conditions and responsibility of documentary photography. It is well-known that photographs distort and misrepresent information, that they are not images of reality any more than reality may be perceived as a static object for contemplation. The DIAS trial, however, raised a question seldom asked of such photographs: With whom rests the responsibility for interpretation of the artistic intent and content of an action mediated by a photograph: the artist, the photographer, the sponsors of the exhibition, the viewer?



Hermann Nitsch performing *Fifth abreaktionsspiele*, *Orgies Mystery Theater*, St. Brides Institute, London, September 16, 1966. Photo: John Prosser.

This problem poses even more serious considerations if the photographs — which may or may not distort an art action — tend to be of a particularly destructive, violent, and/or pornographic nature, or are salacious or scandalous in content and suggestion, offering no real sense of the conditions of the original event. Some photographs produced by the Austrian artist Rudolph Schwarzkogler provide an example. Schwarzkogler set up tableaux of castration for the purpose of producing a series of photographs. Although Schwarzkogler used the artist Heinz Chibulka as his model for the photographs, some of which pictured a male figure whose penis was swathed in gauze, stained with blood, and resting on a table before him, the images were understood by viewers to be representations of Schwarzkogler's self-mutilation. A story circulated that Schwarzkogler's death in 1969 (the photographs were taken in 1965) had occurred as the result of a castration performance and this myth was internationally perpetuated by Robert Hughes in *Time*. (9) How will future artists transform and interpret provocative works by artists such as Chris Burden, Gina Pane, Nitsch, Mühl, Brus, and Ortiz, when the photographic document is considered primary and equal to the event?

In addition to Nitsch's actions, Ortiz suggested that, as part of a destruction ritual related to Mayan legends and to his own genealogical history, he would sacrifice a chicken. His comments were widely publicized and an enormous outcry in the media registered public indignation, culminating in a picket of his event by members of the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals. Ortiz's proposal presented the DIAS organizers with the difficult and seemingly contradictory problem of deciding whether to take responsibility for the very art for which they had prepared a platform. The question of permission bordering on censorship again emerged as a key issue in the use of fire in Latham's SKOOB Towers. A week following the police action at Nitsch's event, Latham was scheduled to destroy one of his SKOOB Towers, but the DIAS Committee (at this point left in the hands of Metzger) decided not to sponsor Latham under the DIAS umbrella for fear of further legal action. Latham, nevertheless, ignited three SKOOB Towers (constructed of books of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Seminars in Art), which had been set up behind the British Museum, and which continued to blaze until the arrival of the fire department, who put them out. Latham was not cited.

In Spring 1966, the late Mario Amaya, then editor of the fledgling publication *Art and Artists*, worked with Metzger to produce a special August issue on "Violence in Art" which featured many DIAS artists. DIAS events also attracted wide international media coverage, culminating in the February 12, 1967 cover story for *Life* which labeled DIAS the "underground" of Happenings — the "Other Culture." However sensational, DIAS and the destruction-in-art exhibitions which followed it (10) lapsed into obscurity, an obscurity which testifies to the provocative challenge of DIAS and its assault upon widely held ideological assumptions at the core of art, culture, and society. The marginalization of DIAS events and artists also testifies to the historical viability of such art and artists, especially when compared to the current fashion for tailoring art to be marketed and consumed as political art — the liberal intellectual's aesthetic placebo for political activism.

DIAS left emanations well-outside the radius of its frame, theme, historical place, and time. In psychoanalysis, the pop-psychologist Arthur Janov attributed the account, which one of his patients gave him, of the performance *Self-Destruction* (which Ortiz did at the Mercury Theatre during DIAS) as the basis for his development for the Primal Scream technique.(11) The effects of DIAS surface in political events, especially in the May 1968 student revolt in Paris, in which Jean-Jacques Lebel took a central role. Lebel had earlier collaborated with the *Situationistes Internationales* and was active in the climate that produced Guy deBord's 1967 tract, "On the Poverty of Student Life," a text well-known to have agitated students at the University of Strasbourg, and which also influenced the May events in Paris. Ortiz and Jon Hendricks used elements of Nitsch's work in a massive protest march on Washington when, together with an agit-prop group, they were pictured in *Time* carrying bloodied lamb heads to symbolize the carnage of the Vietnam War. Peter Townshend of The Who has acknowledged that it was Metzger's *Auto-Destructive Art* lecture-demonstration in 1962 at Ealing Art School (where he was an art student at the time) that directly influenced his decision to use destructive elements such as smashing his guitar to splinters in eroticized, frenzied, musical climax while performing.(12)

Out of the cacophony of events, press conferences, the symposium, parties, friendly jostling for power, attention, and influence that occurred in or resulted from DIAS, several important theoretical issues emerged. The trial of Metzger and Sharkey brought into sharp relief the problem of censorship which was rooted in the paradoxical core of the destruction/creation dialectic. Still insoluble are the moral, ethical, and aesthetic questions which surfaced then and remain enigmatic today. How far might the borders of art be stretched to accommodate personal, cathartic actions and destruction-as-art? The killing of animals under all conditions (even to support human life) and the destruction of matter and property (i.e., books, paintings — as in the case of works created by Werner Schreib, John Latham, Pro-Diaz, and musical instruments as in Ortiz's *Piano Destructions*) remain the subjects of bitter debate. What is the relationship between the freedom to explore authentic artistic impulse and an artist's responsibility to uphold and respect commonly held public values? (What is the real effect on viewers and participants when highly symbolic and organic materials such as blood are used?) Today, as in 1966, the definitions of pornography and obscenity are embroiled in gender and religious politics and are rife with fundamental questions of decency, the integrity of the body and mind, and respect for human propriety.

In addition to problems of censorship and the role of the documentary photograph that emerged at DIAS, DIAS events revealed the fundamentally radical form and content of Happenings which had been clouded by subject matter other than destruction. The alternative paradigm for artistic practice inherent in event-structured art consisted essentially in the role in which the human being functioned as a materialization of the contiguity of life with art.

The artist, by literally acting as the mediator between the two, then, in philosophical terms, created an event that provided a link between the alienated space of subject and object — linking the world of the viewer to the world of the art object through the transit of the body. The artist now inhabited the position traditionally occupied by the art object and, in so doing, mediated between the viewer and the meaning of the event. The alienation between subject and object was thereby reduced, although not resolved. In other words, the artist as being-in-the-world visualized the contingency and inter-dependence of subject identifying with subject.

I would like to suggest that this alternative paradigm was accomplished by shifting from the visual arts' traditional and exclusive dependence on the communicative mechanisms of metaphor to those of metonymy.(13) A metonym is a figure of speech like a metaphor. Unlike metaphor, which operates through replacement, metonymy functions through connection, by creating a direct link between two proximate persons, events and/or objects. Some philosophers of language have even suggested that the metonymic process precedes the signifying capabilities of metaphor.

For metaphor, we must envisage a certain structure, i.e., perceive and interpret a metonymy, an expression like copper beard is to be interpreted 1). beard = bearded man (metonymy); 2). copper = red (metaphor). Neglecting the metonymy we run the risk of misinterpreting the metaphor: beard made of copper. Meaning is here dependent upon prior connective information — men have beards the color of which may be red like fire which can be described as copper — in order to understand the metaphor copper beard.(14)

Linguists have argued that meaning, conveyed through the metonymic operation,

requires a structuring along the axis of combination (a perception of contiguous relations). . .and deals with human relationships. . .through reduction to a less complex and usually more concrete realm of being.(15)

In DIAS events, metonymy functioned as a connective tissue that joined the destructive aspects of real-time events to the symbolic expressions of them in art. Through the signifying body, the artist was able to create a means to express the corporeal threat at the very base of social and political experience. Functioning as a live vehicle of transit, the body operated as a synapse demonstrating the contiguity between art and life as well as the inexorable human link between subject and subject. This is not to say, as has been suggested by others, that a "universalization of categories" or a totality was created, but rather that the body in live, performed art operates as a means of association and juxtaposition like a connector, a bridge, a synapse, between two mutually identifying human beings.(16)

It was no coincidence that the art action — an art form animated by the dynamic structure of an event (a Happening) — appeared at a point where painting and sculpture were no longer able to effectively realize the political and social ramifications of the fragility of existence in the wake of the devastations of World War II. By introducing the artist's own bodily presence as the material work of art, these artists permanently altered the ways in which social issues might be presented in the visual arts. By situating the signifying body at the center of destructive events, they found a means to link creative values in art to the existential dilemmas of the nuclear age and stressed, finally, existence over essence.

I would like to close with the suggestion that, by reintroducing the living figure into experimental art and presenting the body as an object in and of historical circumstance in an avant-garde context, the DIAS artists radically revalidated the historic privilege which had been accorded the representation of the figure in painting and sculpture before the advent of Modernism.(17) The communicative power of figuration in experimental art was thereby restored, reinvigorating the strategies of avant-garde practice at the precise historical

moment that Modernism floundered and was pronounced "dead" by many critics.

By presenting the living figure as form, subject matter, and content, destruction-in-art works condensed and displaced paradoxes of destruction and creation experienced only indirectly as historical events. The presentation of the threatened body can be argued to have also played a role in the strong re-emergence of the existential figure in Action and Body Art and, however subliminally, in Neo-Expressionist painting and sculpture, where the human being is often represented as politically and/or psychologically threatened. At the very least, the strength of the figure in recent art owes a tremendous historic debt, not only to the twenty years of live art that preceded it, but to the achievements of those who struggled to penetrate the meaning of destruction in their artistic practice.

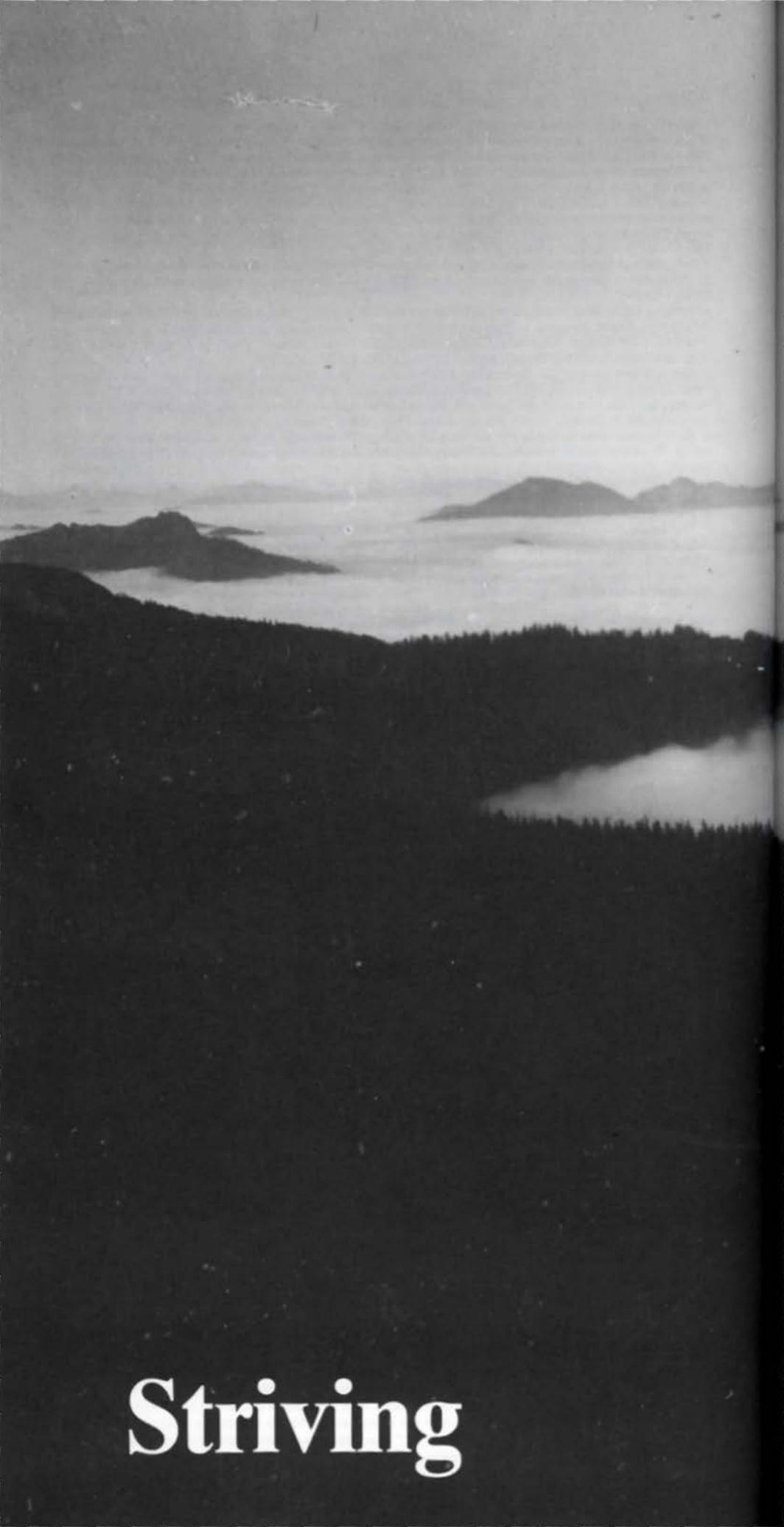
Twenty years after DIAS, it has become an historical object, not only a reflector of its period, but a subject of study which reveals the significance of the often historically invisible on the too-often insignificant visible. DIAS dramatised what was already apparent but remained unaddressed. In this way, the DIAS artists were a society's sentient antennae who, with highly cultivated consciousness, quickly responded to the ethos of the post-World War II period and constructed an image of some of the most problematic experiences of art in our time.



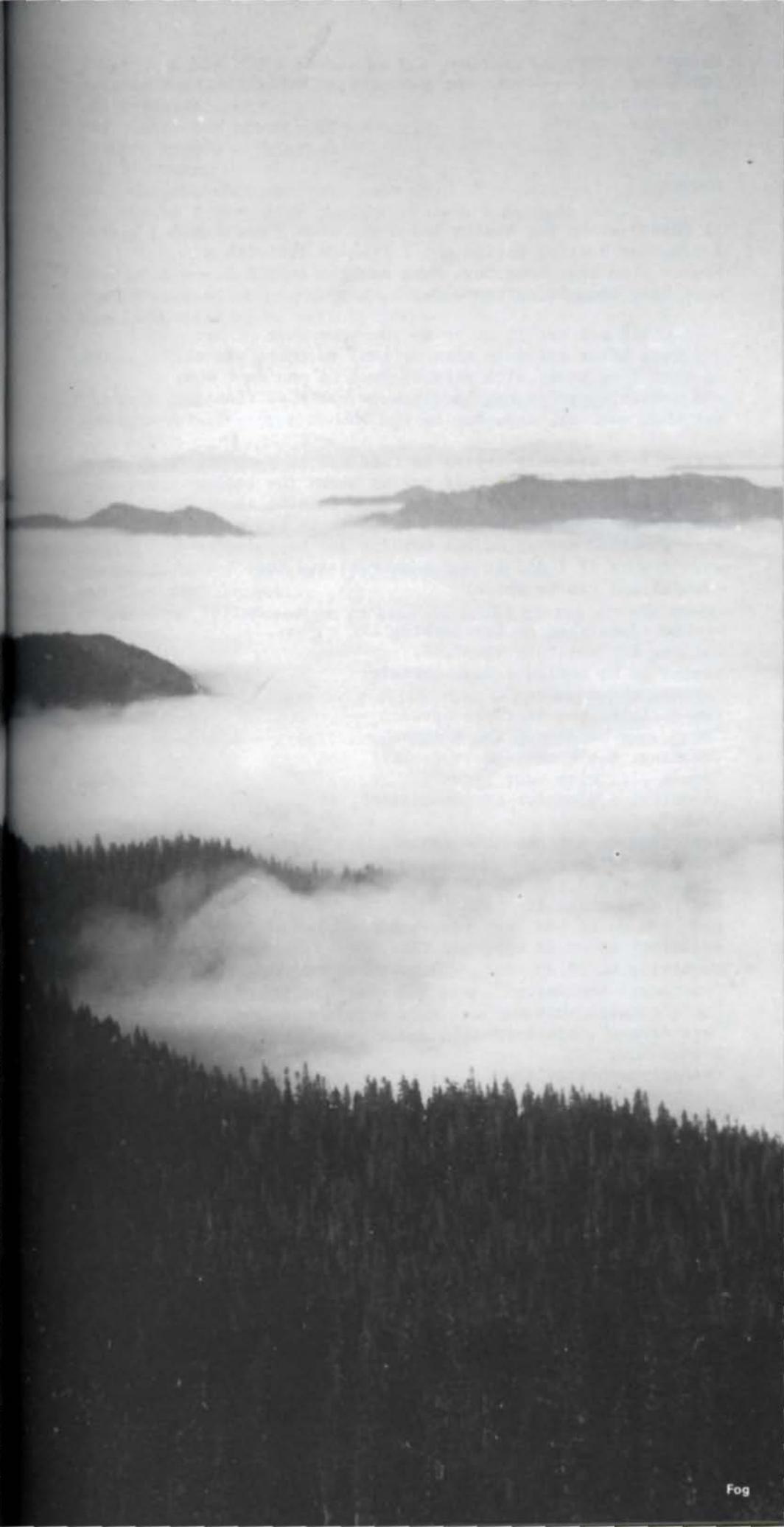
London Free School Playground. Site of DIAS events. Gustav Metzger in foreground carrying plastic bag with found objects. September, 1966. Photo: Hans Sohm.

NOTES

1. September 1986 marked the twentieth anniversary of DIAS. I began the reconstruction and analysis of this event for my doctoral dissertation entitled **The Destruction in Art Symposium (DIAS): The Radical Cultural Project of Event-Structured Art** at the University of California, Berkeley in 1980 under the direction of Professors Peter Selz, Herschel B. Chipp, and Martin Jay. I am as indebted to their support and insight as to that of the artists with whom I have worked these past six years, especially Gustav Metzger, John Sharkey, Jean-Jacques Lebel, Wolf Vostell, Rafael Ortiz, Ivor Davies, Otto Mühl, and Hanns Sohm, the extraordinarily inventive and dedicated archivist of Happenings and Fluxus, whose archive now exists in the Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart. A special thanks to Jacques Chwat, Jeffrey Greenberg, Jan Peacock, and **The Act** for their astute editing of a much longer text.
2. Art is here defined broadly as that generic endeavour of causing, founding, originating, bringing about, or giving rise to observable results in the form of sensate or psychological, perceptual phenomena and/or actual objects.
3. Among those who participated in DIAS not named in this essay were Mark Boyle, Barry Flanagan, Jeff Nuttall, Criton Tomazos, Cornelius Cardew (England); Kurt Kren, Peter Weibel (Austria); Henri Chopin (France); Wolf Vostell (Germany); Jean Toche (U.S.A.); Luis Alberto Wells (Argentina); Robin Page (Canada); Jose Luis Castillejo (Spain).
4. Kenneth Kemble and the Destruction Art Group, BEN, Robert Filliou, Ilse and Pierre Garnier (France); Peter Gorsen (Germany); Milan Knizak (Czechoslovakia); Mathia Goeritz (Mexico); Simon Vinkenoog, Herman de Vries (Holland); Ad Reinhardt, Philip Corner (U.S.A.); Tomas Marco, Manolo Millares (Spain); Gianni Emilio Simonetti, Enrico Baj, Giuseppe Chiari (Italy); Diter Rot, (Iceland).
5. Wolf Vostell devoted issue No. 6 of his publication **Dé-coll'age: Bulletin aktueller Ideen** in 1967 to artists and texts related to DIAS and Metzger published a six-page handbill entitled "DIAS Preliminary Report". Apart from these two, no publication was undertaken about DIAS by any of the DIAS artists.
6. See "Manifesto World," in Metzger's **Auto-Destructive Art: Metzger at AA**, a booklet that Metzger published on the talk he delivered to the Architectural Association of London in February, 1965 (available in the Sohm Archive, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart).
7. The actual DIAS Committee was made up of an international body of artists and intellectuals who helped to shape the structure of this massive event. The committee included Dom Sylvester Houedard, a Benedictine monk from Prinknash Abbey in Gloucestershire and critical figure in the development of the Concrete Poetry movement in England, as well as Bob Cobbing, also a concrete and phonic poet who managed Better Books — a bookstore that functioned in the mid-1960s as a gathering place for the international avant-garde and underground. Mario Amaya, then editor of **Art and Artists**; Ivor Davies, a Welsh Painter working on his doctorate and teaching at the University of Edinburgh; Roy Ascott, an artist and innovative art educator, then director of the Ealing School of Art, the American Jim Haynes, then a member of the editorial board of the **International Times (IT)**, and 'Miles,' an ever-present figure in the London Underground who ran the avant-garde bookshop and gallery in London called Indica, as well as Wolf Vostell, the German creator of dé-coll'age Happenings, Enrico Baj, an Italian painter, and Frank Popper, the influential critic of Kinetic and Optical art then living in Paris.
8. John Rydon of the London **Daily Express** featured a photograph of Metzger and cited his Auto-Destructive Art concept in that publication on November 12, 1959. On March 10, 1960, Rydon again reviewed Metzger and published a photograph of his first auto-destructive model for a public sculpture. Tingly realized **Homage to New York** on March 17, 1960. Before that time, the element of destruction had never entered his art, and even the total auto-destruction of **Homage to New York** was fortuitous.
9. Robert Hughes, "The Decline and Fall of the Avant-Garde," **Time**, December 18, 1972, p. 11. Edith Adam, Schwarzkogler's companion at the time of his death in 1969, was in the apartment the day the artist died, and has explained to the author that Schwarzkogler had been following a mystic health regime that had induced hallucinations from time to time. In a highly agitated and nervous state the artist fell, jumped, or thought he could fly from his apartment window in Vienna and fell to his death.
10. Both **12 Evenings of Manipulations** which took place in the fall of 1967 and **DIAS/NY: A Preview** (1968) took place at the Judson Church. Both were organized by Rafael Ortiz and Jon Hendricks, future founder of the Guerrilla Art Action Group (GAAG). **Destruction Art** took place at Finch College in New York, 1968. Ortiz and Hendricks ultimately cancelled their plans for an international exhibition on the scale of DIAS London (which would have been entitled **DIAS-U.S.A.**) after the assassination of Martin Luther King. Ortiz and Hendricks published a statement:
In deference to the memory and the spirit of the beautiful soul of D. Martin Luther King, Jr. . . .
This is a time for the ceasing of all destruction — even that of art.
11. Arthur Janov, **The Primal Scream: Primal Therapy: The Cure for Neurosis** (New York: A Delta Book, 1970), pp. 9-11.
12. **The Who**, (New York; St. Martin's Press 1982), pp. 6-7.
13. I first discussed the relationship between the operations of metonymy and the alternative communicative functions of live, performed art with my students in 1979 while teaching a seminar on the history of Performance Art at the University of California Berkeley, to which I invited Laurie Anderson, Tom Marioni, Chris Burden, and Linda Montano to speak on their work.
14. Jerzy Kurylowicz, "Metaphor and Metonymy in Linguistics," **Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich** 9 (1967), p.8. For a working definition of metonymy also consult Roman Jakobson's "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances," in Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle's **Fundamentals of Language** (The Hague, Mouton, 1956).
15. Robert J. Matthews and Wilfrid Ver Eecke, "Metaphoric-Metonymic Polarities: A Structural Analysis," **Linguistics: An International Review** 67 (March 1971), p. 49. The authors quote Kenneth Burke's **A Grammar of Motives** (New York, Prentice-Hall, 1945), p. 504, where Burke explains that the strategy of metonymy is "to convey some incorporeal or intangible state in terms of the corporeal or tangible." This point is of particular relevance to the function and structure of the communicative potential of live, performed art — art structured in the form of events.
16. Thomas McEvilley's "Art in the Dark" **Artforum** 21 (Summer 1983) reprinted in **Theories of Contemporary Art** ed. Richard Hertz (New Jersey 1985), p. 288.
17. In 1983, this topic was the basis for the lecture "National Tendencies in Contemporary German Art," which I was invited to deliver to the Post-Graduate Interdisciplinary Summer Seminar in German Studies and German National Identity, conducted by Professor Tony Kaes at the University of California, Berkeley. Aspects of this problem were presented in a talk I gave at the Walker Art Center, December 8th, 1986, entitled, "Contingent Life and a New Figuration." The paper dealt with Oskar Schlemmer's innovative integration of the figure into painting, theater and dance.



Striving



kenneth gaburo
PENTAGON/Y (---concerning guns and cock-fighting)¹
for solo reader
PART ONE: AGO

NOWTHEN,

:I fessup shame for having had a gun when I was a kid.
I remember hurting Marion who I liked a lot with a
beebee from that mean toy. Some mucking fessUP I
must have been an anthropologist then:

---I could not get it up to do you know what to her
(we were after all only nine or ten) so there was all
of that fore stuff with playing guns by you know who,
who couldn't get it up, hardly knew where to find it,
but who, even so, fessedup to the Father---

(Actually I was only trying to find out if what
I was doing was jerking off having heard the fellows
in the elementary school locker room talking about it
one day and so I ran home and tried it in bed with the
sheets pulled upover me but nothing wet happened so I
wasn't sure if I did it and became afraid that I wasn't
natural and ran to where)

---WHO admonished me for jerking off anyway,
calling it "solitary vice",
saying to me behind a dark curtain:

"shame, shame on you",
(emphasizing the distance between us),
"keep your hands off the trigger",
(meaning: don't massage your clit), and
"don't play with your fore-",
(meaning: a plea for circumscision), or
"rub-",
(meaning: to not get-skin close).

WHO then said:

"just piss and get off it
don't even shake it and
when you go to bed keep your hands on top of the sheets",
(meaning: cover it up), and THEN,
absolving me of my sins, WHO muttered something about
"nocturnal emmissions",
"it's natural that way",
"wet dreams", so-to-speak;

I know now,

but only wondered then,
if it is true that the gun shoots itself,
having yet had no experience with that either.
But there was no answer to that one as WHO'S Father's little
door,

behind the dark curtain, closed his "peace be with you my son",
and the AHmen I was fessing up to---

(being a natural thing I suppose)

:wanting so to get near someone
that, I finally did with a beebee.
Not come fluid.
But with AGO/ddamf-uhcking beebee.
And not mine at that:

(who says)

:some gunfucker made it and I (only) used it? How unnice
it was when I lost my innocence and found out how it really was.

Imagine if she had a beebee up her you know what
because some gunfucker made it
and I (only) used it.
How's that for group sex?
Up your giggie siggie!
And bigbucks.
But, oh, oh, that poor you know who.
Why should I have ever thought of such a thing?
Surely I didn't:

(But what possessed me to have one?
What possessed me to point one at her you know what?
What possessed me to pull it off?)

NOW,

YOU KNOW WHAT
POSSESSION POSSESSED ME:
GUNS POINT COCKS
POWER COCKS GUNS
GUNS POWER COCKS
COCKS POINT GUNS
BANGO!

I'VE BEEN THINKING

THAT'S WHAT.

(Actually if you have one you gotta try it out
you just itch to get it off;
and I found it impossible to keep my hands on top of the sheet-
coversup,
even though,
being resourceful,
I did rub it nowandthen by pulling them eversosoftly over it,
backandforth,
meanwhile excusing myself since there was no direct contact)

THEN,

---but,

being only nine or ten I still couldn't stand the smell
of sorting out all of those dirty sheets,
blankets,
and clothes,
hour after hour,
in my father's laundry;
trying to breathe as little as possible;
sorting out the smellings into big bins;
separating the unclean colored ones from the unclean white ones;
bagging each into huge nets, which,
after having been washed,
wet-weighted 60 or so pounds.
My uncle Johnny,
the hunter, one of five brothers who also worked there,
was responsible for showing me the ropes, more or less:
first how to dock-unload;
then how to bin-dump;
then how to sort-out;
then how to net-up;
then how to name-tag;
then how to cart-load for pushing them to the centrifuge,
which was for forcing all the water out.
(he used to call me "sonny")
Then one day it was time to learn how to use it.
The washed had to be loaded very carefully into the centrifuge,
or the machine,
when operating at full speed,
would wobble so badly would lose its balance so wildly,
that it could,
so he said,
actually spin off its course.

But I could never load the nets.

Right ?

They weighed a ton to me,
and always cut into my fingers badly,
being so coarse and wet as they were my fingers
being so sensitive and so un-calloused as they were.
The first time I pushed the button
the centrifuge began to move.

But then,
almost at once,
it made an erratic surge in my direction.
It got me in my you know whats,
knocked me down on my you know where,
my you know where slipping some distance backwards on the wet,
soapy floor with the rest of me still attached,
more or less bango.

Wrong !

But(t)
Johnny,
the hunter,
stopped it dead in its tracks,
and with a smile,
muttering "sissy",
pulled out all the nets with admirable ease;
and again,
smile-muttering "this is no job for a piano-player",
proceeded to teach me,
in true Socratic fashion,
how centrifugal force works---

(Actually it didn't matter that I missed
right ?)

:It didn't matter
that I didn't think
of you know whating her
in her you know what
with a gun.
It didn't matter:

(Wrong !
Bucks and beebees mattered and all in the name of sport-loves
and raw games to the man who made the beebees who bucked the
beebees to the man who bucked the beebees to the man who bucked
the beebees through all the middle men markups to the man who
bucked the beebees to some consumer.
But I (only) dispensed
some shots at Marion's innocent you know what
without ever asking her
because I liked her.
Was it really a sign of affection?)

---As it turned out,
there used to be an unattached kitten that hung
out in the laundry.
So,
in a flash,
my uncle Johnny,
the hunter,
picked up the kitten,
stroked it saying "sweet pussy" to it,
then loaded it in the empty centrifuge,
closed the lid,
pressed the button and got the fuge "purring" so-to-speak;
possessing it all the while (I could tell he loved the force of
it),
with his hands holding onto the perimeter standing next to thuh,
pushing his pelvis so naturally into thuhh,

moving his head distancing himself (I could tell) from thuhhh
so-shining,
so-sweetly gyrating casted-steel shell.
I think something happened between his legs
as the centrifuge responsibly slowed down to his button push.
THEN:

He opened the lid,
pulled out the damp fur pelt,
held it for a moment in front of me at arms length,
then,
still breathing heavily,
threw it into the dryer.
He could tell it drove me sick,
but smiled,
saying sincerely "see, it all comes out in the wash"---

(I must confess I didn't quite understand the significance
of this then,
since my sheets were yet-unstained,
so I thought)

:her almost-mutilated
you know what
just got that way
because of ago/ddampf-uhcking gun;
because of a free-floating
self-made dildo of steel
which turned itself on and off so naturally;
except (perhaps) for a little help from some bumblebee who also,
innocently enough,
got in the way of the trigger;
stuck,
making its sweet pot of honey,
there:

(Actually appearing,
she said: "no, no, don't")

:but then I was happy to have it.
There were so many tin cans
and rusty brake drums
and steel oil containers
and all sorts of scrap metal hanging out in the junkyard
nearby:

(Actually facing me,
staring at me,
she pleased: "please don't")

:some still new enough to be glistening in the sunny light
in the hot summer air I was beginning to get real good at
loading the empty chamber and
closing it and
cocking it and
stroking it and:

(Actually she pleaded
"please don't",
even though she liked me I could tell)

:I could tell I was beginning to love the power of it:

(Actually "please",
then quickly turning her back to me)

:as I held its hard:

(to me!)

:hardShiny surface in my hands being so-attracted to thuh:

(that's why I missed her you know what)

:standing behind thuhh:

(BANGO! rear-ended)

:pushing my body so naturally into thuhhh:

(and I,
bullshitting,
I know now,
with my tongue-come,
afraid,
said:
"Actually I'm sorry")

:moving my light-struck eyes without jerking thuhhhh:

(surely she couldn't have wanted one up her anywhere,
now could she?)

:hearing the so-shined,
the so-sweetly gyrating:

(there was no permission
no agreement
no talking about it)

:steel-casted:

(Actually "please don't" was her only defense)

:zinging pellets:

(she cried and ran away)

:making:

(screaming)

:contact!:

(BANGO!

Actually only then did I see the blood spurting from her.
Even so,
I couldn't imagine how such a thing could effect her life
being only nine or ten
as I ran in the other direction to hide behind a tree;
to jerk off;
still dry)

---then again to the laundry to sort out some smells
having at the moment nowhere else to turn;
to Johnny,
the hunter.

WHO wouldn't say much about it except that I hadn't "practiced"
enough.

(Now I wondered what "enough" was)

WHO, being resourceful,
(I know NOW!)

THEN tried to bribe my piano teacher
to not teach me anymore,
to save me from becoming a fruit so-to-speak;
but she had the courage to say she couldn't do that.

Although I didn't know it at the time,
he wasn't much with words,
even though his favorite expression was:
"do as I say, not as I do".
Now it could have been the other way around.
I don't remember for sure.

But,
it came from him;
from the man who bought it;
from the man who gave it to me;
from the man of few words who said sincerely:
"this will make a man out of you".
It came from the man who gunbucked from the man who gunbucked
from the man who gunbucked from all the middle men who gunbucked
from the man who gunbucked made it who gunbucked to the man who
gunbucked to the man who gunbucked to all middle men gunbucked
markups to the man who gunbucked it to the hunter who bought it
who gave it who said nowthen:
"keep it clean,
be resourceful,
and it will always work for you"---

NOW,

YOU KNOW WHAT
THERE IS THIS HUGE CORPORATE BROTHERHOOD
OF ANONYMOUS GUNFUCKERS,
BUT THERE'S ALWAYS SOME WHO
BEHIND EACH AND EVERY SMELL.
BANGO!

I'VE BEEN THINKING

THAT'S WHAT!

THEN:

(I ran back to the tree being more afraid than anything else)
---being afraid of losing my fingers---
:being afraid of having deeply hurt her:
---being afraid of wanting to please him---
(being afraid waiting for the wet to come.
Not yet.
Nor weeping.
Just afraid.
(Thereby excusing myself from any foul deed)
:being only nine or ten:
---being not-yet
unpossessed---

(end part one)

¹PENTAGON/Y (---concerning guns and cock-fighting) forms part of
a massive theater entitled THE SCRATCH PROJECT: ACTS, 1982-7. AGO
is the first of ten texts for solo reader which comprise PENTAGON-
/Y. Gaburo comments:

"I believe violent acts are crimes against all life. There is no
plea powerful enough to justify them, or to expect forgiveness for
them. I saw Marion only once again, and the hunter many times (be-
fore I got wise). In each instance, what could possibly have been
said that would have mattered? The acts, certainly mindless in the
light of their damaging consequences, happened. Nothing could undo
them. Forgetting is impossible. Due to such mindlessness, agonies
born of 'unforgetting' are sustained by those affected. I hear
them everywhere. In AGO a stage is set for what follows during the
course of PENTAGON/Y."
11.23.86

Darkness

Gary Goldberg

Complete darkness.

One performer.

Sit in a seat behind the last row of the audience.

Do both voices.

You're in my seat.

- It's my seat.
No, it's not.
- Yes, it is.
It's my seat.
- Mine.
Mine.
- It's mine.
I was sitting in it.
- When.
Before.
- Before when.
Just now.
- You were sitting in it just now.
No, before.
- Before what.
Before you sat in it.
- When did I sit in it.
After I sat in it.
- I've been here all day.
No, you haven't.
- Yes, I have. Were you here yesterday.
No.
- What about the day before.
I don't remember.
- Have you ever been to this movie theater before.
Yes.
- When.
I don't remember.
- Did you sit in any of the other seats.
I suppose so.
- You suppose so. Perhaps you only sit in this seat.
No, I don't.
- Which seats do you sit in.
I don't know.
- If you don't know which seats you sit in, how do you know you were sitting in this seat.
Because I was sitting in it.
- When.
When I sat in it.
- When was that.
I don't remember.
- . . .
- I'm sitting down.
- . . .
- Next to you.
- . . .

- That's where you were.
When.
- When we came in.
Oh, it's you.

(Pause)

- I can't see.
- Ask them to move their heads.
Who.
- Them.
Them who.
- Them whose heads are in the way.
In the way of what.
- In the way of your head.
I can't see their heads.
- Are you wearing your glasses.
No.
- Why not.
I don't wear glasses.
- Yes, you do.
No, I don't.
- Yes, you do: where are they.
I left them home.
- Why didn't you stay with them.

(Pause)

It's dark.

...

Black.

...

- I can't see a thing.
- What do you want to see.
The movie.
- It's there.
Where.
- There.
Where's there.
- There, where I'm pointing to.
I can't see you pointing.
- Look at me.
I can't see you.
- Can you hear me.
Yes.
- Then you know where I am.
...
- Ow. Why did you do that.
- I wanted to make sure you were sitting in the seat next to me.
Am I.
- Yes.

(Pause)

- I want to go home.
- You can't.
Why.

- I have the key.
I want a copy.
- There is no copy.
Why not.
- You can't go home.

(Pause)

- Watch the film.
I'm watching it and I don't see a damn thing.
- Well, watch that.
Why should I.
- Why shouldn't you.
Why should I.
- It gives your eyes a rest.
I want to see.
- See the way you see.
I can't see.
- Can you see that you can't see.
I can see that.
- What a relief.

(Pause)

- What is it.
What do you mean, what is it.
What is it.
- I don't know.
You don't know.
- I don't know.
You don't know what it is.
- Why do you think I know what it is.
You know everything.
- I do.
Don't you.
- I'm not prepared to answer that.
Then you don't know everything.
- How do you know that.
Because you can't say that you do know everything.
- Where's the contradiction.
Isn't there one.
- I don't know.
What do you know.
- That you have the biggest mouth in the movie theater.
I paid my money, I can't see the film, and I might as well have a good time.
- Is this your good time.
No.
- Then go ahead and have it.
I will.
- But leave me out.
I will when you move.
- Why.
You're in my seat.
- Let's switch seats.
O.K.

(Pause)

- Ow. Why'd you do that.
I'm getting back at you.
For what.
- You did it to me.
When.

- When you were in my seat.
But that was you.
- No, it was you, in my seat.
But I'm not there anymore.

(Pause)

- Ohh.
- What's wrong.
Headache.
- Close your eyes.
They are.
- Now open them.
O.K.
- What happens.
Nothing.
- Close them.
O.K.
- What happens.
Nothing.
- Something's wrong.

(Pause)

- Why don't we crawl on the floor.
- What for.
No one will see us.
- No one.
I can't see them.
- They can't see you.
Blind.

(Pause)

- Sit in other seats. Sit in other seats. Sit in other seats.
- What now.
They won't know who it is.

(Pause)

- I know, the uniform.
- Uniform.
It's in the dressing room. You put on the uniform and let me out and I'll come back and you take off the uniform and I'll put it on and let you out.
- Who will let you out.

(Pause)

- I've run out of ideas.
- That's redundant.

(Pause)

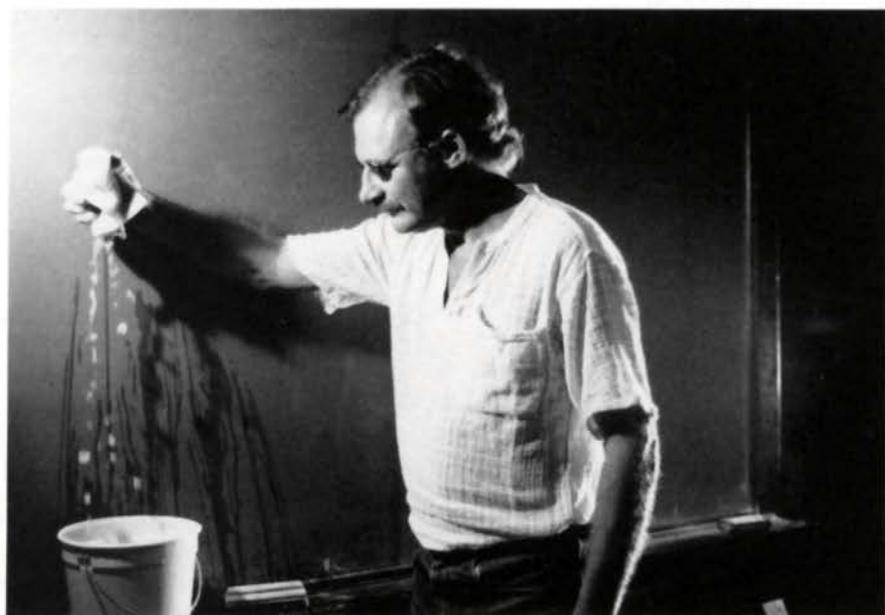
- I know, the back door.
- It's locked.
Locked.
- It's over.
It's over.
- As far as I can see.
Why didn't the lights go on.
- There's no one here to turn them on.

(Pause)

- Excuse me. . . excuse me. . . excuse me. . .
- Excuse me. . . excuse me. . . excuse me. . .

Rae Davis' *Vanishing Acts*: A View from the Inside

Robert McKaskell



Robert McKaskell in *Vanishing Acts*. Photo: Martha Davis.

My involvement with performance art began in graduate school, in Athens, Ohio, in 1967, when I studied Allan Kaprow's "Happenings", the work of the Fluxus group, Yvonne Rainer and, in general, the early 1960's scene. I met Rae Davis in 1975 and have performed in several of her works, including *Vanishing Acts*, her most recent. Her influence on my own work, on my thinking, on the way I walk on the ground, has been profound.

Davis has been working with performance art in the relative isolation of London, Ontario, Canada since the early 1960's, some decade before the term "performance art" gained currency. She had been writing and directing for the theater, but found what happened in rehearsal and behind stage more interesting than what was presented to the audience. She discovered also that her work was more appreciatively received in galleries.

The first work I saw by Rae Davis used three men. They were dressed in black, with bare feet, and were sitting on chairs some four feet apart from one another, staring toward the audience. Very, very slowly, with great concentration, one lifted his right hand from his leg, another lowered his head to his chest, and the third swiveled his feet on the floor from straight in front of his body to something like a 180-degree position. When the "foot" man and the "head" man completed their moves, Davis called the name of one of the performers, signifying the end of the piece. I liked it for its simplicity, for the concentration it demanded from performers and audience, and for the implications of its title: *Audition*. (1)

Having performed in two subsequent presentations of the piece, I learned that slower is better; at its best, *Audition* took about ten minutes.

HOW THEY LOOKED FOR YOU ON THEIR WAY BACK, DOWN ALONG

Imagine yourself extending the action of moving your head from an upright position to the point where your chin touches your chest through a ten-minute period. Imagine seeing three men moving imperceptibly. It might take three minutes before you are aware of movement; it might take five minutes before you identify the three separate actions; then, which one do you study?

Davis started work for *Vanishing Acts* in January, 1984, almost three years before its October, 1986 presentation at the London Regional Art Gallery. She began by studying the space for which it was commissioned and by taking notes on her current reading. The reading that led ultimately to the structure and content of *Vanishing Acts* included books on physics (especially David Bohm's investigations into quantum physics), *The Tourist* by Dean MacCannell, Rilke's *The Duino Elegies*, and Aldo Rossi's *Scientific Autobiography*. The few notes that follow, culled from hundreds of pages, are indicative of her preoccupations while thinking of the piece.(2)

Things do not happen in sequence but all together.

People see, think, assimilate multiple ideas with every glance. Art should insist that people use what they've got. (DR 18)

The actual immediate present is always the unknown. (PST 182)

By working associatively, something emerges which is *not* dependable, measurable, or exactly clear — there are handles and hooks to grab on to, but what is seen and constructed is put together by the person seeing it, experiencing it, etc. It reaffirms the shifting mysteries of being, an awareness of the energy of the unstated, but experienced sub-text that's a part of all our lives every minute of our lives.

If something is not considered a real possibility, there is no chance at all that it will appear among one's choices. (PST 203)

The divisions between "large" and "small," and between "simple" and "complex," are of only a relative and limited kind of significance. (PST 261)

In performance, I wish to see all these polarities operating within a context where all is accepted at once and makes a time-situation, an experience/process situation of infinite possibility.

A. N. Whitehead: "Seek simplicity and mistrust it." (PST 312)

Again, the thought that autobiography — your inner self — is what you've got.

Though Davis gave performers specific directions in *Audition* and in other earlier works, we were always instructed to perform the action in as natural a way as possible, in other words, to "be ourselves." I found that the concentration required to sustain very slow movement turned my action into a form of meditation in which my sense of myself, of my presence, was intensified. I am more "myself," more self-aware, when I am working with Davis on a piece, and over the years, the kind of concentration I take to her work has influenced the way I live my life.

In more recent works, performers have had the opportunity to develop their own actions through improvisation. In other notes for *Vanishing Acts* Davis wrote:

Performers: "It's just about being it and doing it." (DR96) Performer left to explore his own relationship to the task he is carrying out.

Encourage each performer to HONE what he or she's doing, so very basic, clear movement, gesture, event is end result; variations in speed and pacing—don't want melange or stew but *do* want SIMULTANEITY. . . . Keep to reality principle—real time, real space, movement grounded in the individual. DISCOURAGE INTERPRETATION.

Performers — sense of the piece; time of total contingency — things on the edge of chaos or on the edge of control — the swings between. Using your own life experience.

There were eight performers in *Vanishing Acts*: four "movers" (two males and two females), who constantly occupied the space, and four "shakers" (two males and two females), who had brief appearances. The movers, of whom I was one, first met with Davis in late April (six months before the October performance date) to arrange a rehearsal schedule. There were to be forty-two rehearsals, two hours each, beginning the following month.

At this first meeting, she asked us to get a picture of a place, an elsewhere, that was important to us; to write a message to someone important who no longer figured in our lives; to note habitual, perhaps unconscious, actions, and to think about 'folding.'

In May, each of us met individually with Davis. We gave her the messages we had written (these would be transmitted across an LED message board in the performance), told her about our habitual actions, moved with her through the space of her studio, and spoke about folding.

Time is an abstraction from movement, becoming, process. In each moment there may be enfolded a memory of its past in which, in turn, there may be enfolded a memory of its past, etc. Memory is thus in a kind of nested order of enfoldment. (PST 177,181)

We talked about the picture of our important place and she taped our stories. She later transcribed and edited these and had slides made of the pictures. (At intervals during the performance, each of the movers would read their own material while their slide was projected.)

Before the movers began meeting in June, Davis had determined the areas of the gallery to be used for the performance. The space is a voluminous gallery, crossed by a 22-foot-wide, black reflecting pool which is spanned by a concrete bridge and a metal grid platform leading to large elevator doors on a side wall. On this same wall, at the second storey-level, there is a long passageway visible through a narrow window, and, on the opposite wall, a large window complements the elevator doors.

Rather early on, she decided to have a plywood slope built along the back edge of the pool with a wide platform along its top. Using the slope would give performers more presence in the large space and would provide a challenge for developing action. She also designed a system of risers for the audience along the opposing wall so that everyone could see the action, and so that their positions in the space would mirror those of the performers on the slope.

In addition to the slope, we were to use the passageway behind the side wall (which we called "the cave"), the floor between the audience and the reflecting pool (on which she would place four platforms on wheels that could be used as independent structures or, placed in a row, as a second bridge), the concrete bridge and metal grid over the pool, and, behind the slope, an extension ladder with a platform.

Since we were not allowed access to the gallery until late August, rehearsals up until then were held in a smaller space, and our experience of the water, the cave, and the slope were mere projections. Her solution to the problem was simple: "We'll make a piece for this space," she said, "and using what we've learned, make a new piece for the gallery."

In the rehearsal space, she marked out the proportions of the gallery, indicating the pool and bridge. The cave was a separate area in the room and the platforms in the pool were represented by pieces of cardboard.



Photo: Martha Davis.

Our first rehearsals were spent in collective action — gaining our balance on the slope, learning the areas for use, and "playing" with various objects Davis provided. Those objects included a canvas bag filled with stones, a plastic rabbit and a ferocious looking foam dog, books, a mirror, various poles and sticks, a paddle, and a music box. Later, one person was asked to occupy an area or work with an object for five or ten (timed) minutes while the others watched, following which there was discussion.

This period of improvisation was exhilarating. The movers got to know one another, to be comfortable with one another through body movement, and to experiment with the objects. The mirror, for example, was used to double images of isolated body parts, to reflect light across surfaces of wall, and, like a "ghost" projector, to transmit images that had been drawn in the condensation from breath. We became concerned about how our movements felt and looked, and, at the same time, we were noticing our individual differences, our limitations, our idiosyncratic contributions to the piece.

By mid-July Davis had selected several of the actions she wanted to use and had begun to organize them in fixed sequences. She wanted to resolve "traffic problems" and to make sure that actions would occur through the whole space. More importantly, the piece had a clear structure: The first part, "warm," would

THAT DAY WAS ALIVE AND VIVID IN THEIR MEMORIES.

feature a projected image of a camel and would be relatively more active; the second, "cool," with a projected image of a stag in a snowbank, would have a more dispersed energy, suggesting decay or entropy, the aging of a system.

It was only after we arrived in the gallery that we were able to see the real shape of *Vanishing Acts*. Davis had filled the large windows with a fiber optic cable system that represented the constellations of October's north sky. On the opposite wall, the elevator doors were covered with green astro-turf. Sky and earth were thus presented as vertical planes bracketing performers and audience, our usual sense of ground and circumstance turned on a 90-degree angle.

Lights not available in the rehearsal space became important. The gallery's 38-lamp ceiling grid was used for area lighting and special effects, hanging "trouble" lights provided local lighting for certain areas, performers worked with flashlights in several actions, and a follow-spot served to focus attention on other actions. A miniature city, which appeared to float in the air above the pool (it was actually set atop a blackened platform in the water), was lit up some minutes into the first part; in the second part, I used wooden matches to make a miniature campfire.

Finally, there was water! At the beginning of the piece, a sprinkler attached to a hose moved back and forth over the pool and bridge. Later, the sprinkler head was replaced by a nozzle and I was able to develop an action with another performer by spraying an arch over the bridge while he walked across it. It was only during the fourth of the five consecutive performances that we fully resolved this action. At the other mover's suggestion, I lowered the arch so that the water struck his face as he walked through it. The surprise and the effect of the sound gave the incident a density we liked.

I describe our work on this action to indicate that the piece was always "in process." Although the various actions were set, one could continue to explore ways of completing them. Another example: At the beginning of the piece I rose vertically, very slowly, from behind the slope, moved down it and across the platforms in the pool, and arrived at the floor in front of the audience in a horizontal position. The action became slower each night we did the piece. In the last performances I couldn't make it to the floor in the allotted time; instead I lay prone across the platforms.

Sometime early in the improvisation sessions, Davis had asked each of us to do something with the blackboard for five minutes. One mover drew a grid and made handprints with water; the other two treated it as an object and moved around, through, and over it. Near the blackboard I saw a pail of water with a sponge. I simply placed the pail on the chalk ledge and spent five minutes experimenting with ways to squeeze water out of the sponge. Although I found my action rather boring, Davis decided to use it. She coupled it with one mover doing a dance improvisation to Telemann's *Water Music*, another mover leaping on the slope, and the fourth mover working with a map and a flashlight on the ladder's platform.

While I understood her reasons for wanting simultaneity, I didn't understand why she chose my squeezing water from a sponge as an action. As I did it more often, though, I found the action more and more interesting and variable, and I became involved with providing a foil to the music. In the gallery, I thought of the water dripping from the sponge as a momentary vertical flow to balance the obdurate horizon of the pool. Then it came together for me. At the end of the piece there was a film of Niagara Falls. My small drips were the human complement to nature's huge gush.

But no. This is only interpretation, and I mistrust the simplicity of the parallels.

"Actuality," George Kubler wrote, "is when the lighthouse is dark between flashes; it is the instant between the ticks of the watch: it is a void interval slipping forever through time: the rupture between past and future: the gap at the poles of the revolving magnetic field, infinitesimally small but ultimately real. It is the interchronic pause when nothing is happening. It is the void between events. Yet the instant of actuality is all we ever can know directly." (3)

It was the *experience* of squeezing the sponge that mattered, and the thoughts of those who witnessed it.

For thirteen minutes between the first and second parts of *Vanishing Acts* the gallery was dark. Four letters that Davis had written to someone important who figured at one time in *her* life were transmitted across an LED message board. The letters were very different from one another, each emerging from a specific kind of memory or projection. All were equally "real." As she wrote in her notes, "Autobiography — your inner self — is what you've got." Everyone's autobiography is different, of course, but like the instant of actuality, one's own autobiography is constantly changing, constantly occurring in a rupture between past and future.

It seems to me that the moment of doing or watching performance art provides a heightened, more memorable, fixed rupture, and that this notion probably motivated performance art twenty-five years ago.



Robert McKaskell in *Vanishing Acts*. Photo: Martha Davis.

NOTES

1. Some implications are obvious: Is this a representation of an audition? If so, is the performer who is named the chosen one? Or are the performers passing time, dropping off to sleep while waiting to be called? I was once a violinist. Before beginning a recital I would sit off-stage, drawing my bow across one string so slowly that no sound would vibrate. When I completed the movement, I knew my bow arm was "in shape", and that my adrenal flow was in control. Are the performers doing a warm-up exercise?

2. *The Drama Review*, Vol. 29, no. 2. Cambridge, MIT Press, quoted as DR followed by page number. *Physics and the Ultimate Significance of Time*, "Bohm, Priogine, and Process Philosophy," ed. David R. Griffin Albany, N.Y., State University of New York Press, 1986, quoted as PST followed by page number.

3. Kubler, George: *The Shape of Time*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962, p. 17.

[day 24]

Seems funny not to be recording my time use at the very moment when I am about to collaborate with a psychologist on a mathematical analysis of my time use.

[day 25]

Yasuko, Don Soker's friend said:

How wonderful that you figured out a system where you don't have black and white, where you validate yourself for doing the recording and you validate yourself for not doing the recording.

[day 31]

Just received Alain Touraine's statement on my art:

Morgan O'Hara — Artist of Time & Space

Morgan O'Hara loves space and fears time. She discovers peoples' personalities by identifying the places in which they have lived, the spaces through which they have traveled. Isn't it a seaman's behavior, or at least the reaction of a seaman's daughter to look for her roots not in a land or a tradition, but in a multiplicity of places: San Francisco, New York, Japan, Paris, Sweden, Switzerland, in which she spends parts of her life.

The space she constructs is wide open but centered. Her friends come and go on an earth oriented by a port to which they will return rather than a port as point of departure.

Morgan represents women and men who need at the same time intimacy and discovery, who are both rooted and cosmopolitan. She carries in her soul and body the land and sea of Ireland, as well as her tiny house on the cliff overlooking San Francisco Bay, while she discovers still more of herself in other parts of the world. She can live in Japanese or French as easily as in English.

But while she is attracted by space, she is afraid of time: she tries to master it, to transform it into a space which can be organized, divided, classified, measured, like a house or field, so that each moment is in its right place. Colors must create a heartening impression, reassuring her that time is under control.

Last century's Europe had a deep confidence in time, future, history, and was afraid of space, which was divided by frontiers and wars. Morgan, like most of the people who will spend half of their lives during the next century, has no confidence in the future and its false promises. She values on-going time more than she values "progress." She looks at herself in time like in water that she tries to stop with her hands. Conversely, she loves to stretch her body over the planet, her arms reaching faraway continents over Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

Morgan is not a painter in the usual sense of the word. But since painting no longer seeks to represent, she is interested in representing, not the soul, the essence of a personality, but the set of actions which construct rather than express a personality.

She is an artist of acts and of ideas, or relations with others more than of self expression, of desire more than possession, of absence more than presence. Not one symbol, no discourse in her work, she is at the opposite of formalism. Her portraits are made only of objects, but which make present absent travelers. She is craving for the absent's presence and is full of fear of a distressing solitude.

Morgan's work is tensely waiting for the other, is an invitation to the encounter which alone can stop time, subordinate it to space, reconcile traveling and intimacy.

Social thought is awakening again after two decades of fear of ego. Structuralism eliminated subject, proved the impossibility and non-existence of action, denunciation replaced hope. Morgan works exactly when, at the end of this long winter, the ice breaks, when movement, desire, words, hope and fear reappear again, when we take control again of time and space, categories of action. Morgan creates, after Baudelaire, a new *Invitation au Voyage*. After a long time of confinement in a meaningless universe she rediscovers with us seas, dreams, absent loves. Her works are full of anxiety and confidence. They are a clear and gentle call for friendship and closeness.

Her consciousness is constantly awake, not to protect itself with principles and certainties, but to locate on the high sea, from the end of the pier, the ship which brings into port the face of the unknown other."

— Alain Touraine, Sociologist/Paris/July 1986

[day 34]

. . . Touraine says I fear time. . .

[day 49]

. . . Last February 16th, I cut an article out of The New York Times, the story of Anatoly Shcharansky after his release from nine years in Soviet prison; he described the mental processes by which he survived:

I decided to rationalize fully all my activity so I will be absolutely sure I was acting according to my principles, not according to my fear. You must have special psychological exercises. It is very individual. Everyone must invent it for themselves.

. . . In 1980 I wrote, My art is not my life nor is it myself. It is rather an intermediary between the two — a passageway between myself and the experience of living. Marcel Duchamp:

The onlooker is as important as the artist.

The work of art is always based on the the two poles of the maker and the onlooker, and the spark that comes from this bi-polar action gives birth to something, like electricity.

[day 78]

Am I now imprisoned by *this* process? . . . I feel a liberation precisely because of the structure, this self-imposed study/observation/structure gives me a sense of freedom and direction. . .

[day 79]

Loneliness.

Isolation.

More recently, intensive Buddhist studies. The view on the periphery of my awareness. General feeling of spiritual malaise. A feeling I'm accomplishing nothing. Awareness. . .

Basically, this time-accounting process is the only long-range process I've begun and followed through with no matter how many ups and downs it presented. The first few years were extremely difficult but somewhere internally in my spirit I knew it would help me. I don't remember any guilt associated with it. During the first five years before I recognized it as art it was in an intensely formative stage. My curiosity about where it would lead me was pretty strong. Thinking back on it now, I remember I often had the feeling that the process had sort of come down from somewhere and claimed me, directed me, periodically handed me small scraps of insight so I would keep up with the discipline of the process. There were a few times I thought "the hell with this, its too obsessive" and then I'd get scared just at the point of quitting — anticipating a fear of extreme loss if I did quit — and I've decided not to.

What would happen if I recorded my internal movements instead of my external activities? Could I actually monitor them that closely? Would it be spiritually productive to do so? I should think so — question is whether it can actually be recorded. Does one internal atmosphere replace another in sequence the way external activities do? What categories would I identify as observable — as it probably would be good to keep it simple in the beginning, just so the thing would be possible to do. I already know about the free-floating negativity which goes on. Recording that would make me more aware of it — but is that the point? It would be more to the point if observing it could change it. That's actually what has happened with the time recording.

Observing myself carefully, I have changed myself. . .



Record Books, 1970-1980

A LITTLE BELL GONE BERSERK

Laura Foreman

Imaginary Setting:

A man stands behind a lectern downstage right, facing the audience, and reads the story which has been preset on the lectern in front of him. He should appear young and boyish. At the same time, a woman stands behind a lectern upstage left which is at right-angles to the man, her hands placed on the sides of the lectern which is empty in front of her. She is older than he and attractive. Throughout the man's reading, the woman's eyes never leave his face. Both performers should be dressed in somewhat formal attire — the man in a suit, the woman in a tailored dress — the kind of apparel one might wear when giving a formal reading in a formal setting.

A LITTLE BELL GONE BERSERK

He wondered about her. He was twenty-two and wrote plays that sounded like he knew all about women, fingering them, fucking them. In the writers' colony kitchen, he joked with her about the beans he was cooking in his lentil soup and how he didn't know they swelled up to twice their size and she said how could he *really* know since he was only twenty-two. And he said how his was a vegetarian lentil soup, no meat, and she said she only wanted meat in her soup and looked him straight in the eye without blinking. He didn't know if she was putting him on or what.

When she wasn't looking he'd examine her face. She was awfully pretty, but old. She must have been close to forty. Brian said she was thirty-six or thirty-eight but with all her credits, all the things she had done, she might have been even older. He especially liked her eyes, a certain blue-green he had seen in old marble. And when he said something funny, usually when he thought he was being serious, she would laugh and laugh like a little bell gone berserk. It got him hot when she'd laugh like that. He wanted to kiss her all over her face and hug the laugh right out of her.

Brian told him that her husband had OD'd on something when he was forty-two and that's all she had ever said about him. They had been married for nine years and he'd been dead now for two-and-a-half. She never discussed other men except to go to the local bar every night and sometimes come back and joke about the locals who made passes at her. And she wrote letters every day, to someone named Ben, who never called her and never wrote her back. One time when he asked about the letters, she gave him a funny smile and looked out the window.

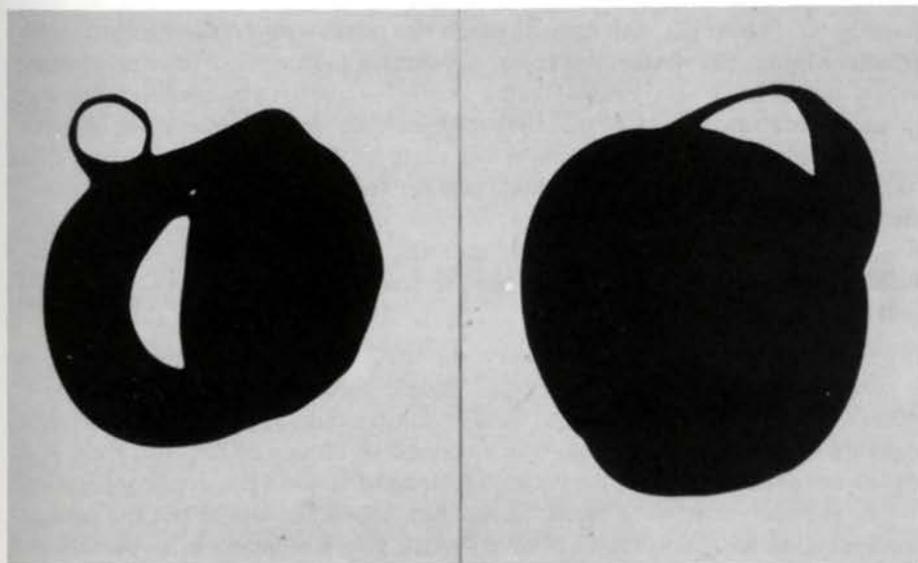
Her body looked great. At least with clothes on, he thought. Really gorgeous breasts. But that could have been the bra, maybe without it they wouldn't be so firm and pert. But the ass—Beeautiful! It was all he could do not to smooth his hand over its curve or take a little nip out of it when she passed him in the kitchen.

He wondered what it would be like to lose his virginity with her. First of all, would she do it or look at him like he lost his marbles if he were to try and suggest it. Jesus, he thought, how do you suggest such a thing to a woman like that! Especially when she thinks you're such a sophisticated writer for your years and maybe even thinks you could teach her a thing or two.

But when he finally got her to take him to bed, she was all gentleness and concern and controlled passion. She told him he had a beautiful cock and smoothed it back and forth with her hand like it was fine ivory and kissed it as if soothing it of an old hurt. And she sucked on his nipples too which embarrassed him at first, he thought only fags liked that, but she assured him all the men she had known liked it and it was a man, a black man even, who had taught her to do it. He fell asleep in her arms.

The next morning she made him breakfast and talked of plays, his and current ones. She was certainly pleasant enough, but there was a certain officiousness about her. Her eyes had marble-ized. They looked harder than he had ever seen them. He didn't refer to their sex. He was afraid she'd hit his wrists with a ruler—it was that kind of feeling.

She told him to keep in touch. But he didn't. He was afraid of her. And besides, he knew how to do it now, even knew some tricks, and could get someone his own age for the duration.



Black Duet, 1984, paint on grey canvas.

STUFF

Laura Foreman

Imaginary Setting:

The room is totally black. The voice of a woman is heard over loudspeakers placed in front, at the sides, and behind the audience. The voice is choreographed so that at times it remains for longer periods at one loudspeaker, while at other times it travels from loudspeaker to loudspeaker as if the voice were coming from a person walking around a room, stopping, going back to look at something seen or spoken of before, moving past something to something else, etc. The voice moves in the spontaneous, casual and somewhat erratic manner of a hand-held camera when sighting objects for the "first" time, as if never having "seen" them before.

STUFF

Brenda was teaching me proofreading so I could get some money fast. I didn't know her very well — just a couple of opening parties at Gracie's — so she hardly remembered me when I showed up at her studio on the Bowery, out-of-breath from the seven flight climb up to her loft. I offered to give her free dance classes in exchange for the proofreading help but she seemed uncomfortable with that even though she said she wanted to lose weight from "here" (her stomach) and from "here" (her) (thighs). She said, "When I was in college, the parents of my friends told them, you owe me. My mother told me, You don't owe *me* anything. What I've given you, you'll owe your children. That will be my payment." Looking at me Brenda said, "So what I would like you to do with the proofreading is to teach someone else what I've taught you; that would be my payment."

I thought about that. That premise. Of passing on what you've received. In Brenda's case, with her art work at least, it is more like holding on than passing on. She works with cement which she mixes with acrylic paints or with powdered glitz. She wedges this colored cement onto things like dresser drawers, vanity mirrors, TV sets, bricks, lamps, chairs — almost anything that was her or someone else's discard — and then to these discards she affixes more discards — marbles (lots of marbles) those big clear ones enclosing half-moons that look like colored bananas and those smaller (older) opaque ones, and other stuff like lipsticks, mascara brushes, starfish, paper dolls, plastic fruit, aspirin tins, crockery, sea glass, shells, table utensils, scraps of material, coke bottles, beads, paste jewels — stuff, from her life and other people's lives, her debris and their debris.

Before she moved to the Bowery, she used to live in a Boston suburb, in a kind of artist's housing complex and people used to bring her things, leave them in paper sacks and shopping bags and boxes outside her door. Sometimes married friends would leave her broken crystal or broken dishes. But there was a pattern to these items — they always seemed to herald a divorce or separation — as Brenda put it — a "split." Like they hoped she would put the broken stuff together for them, repair it for posterity, give it meaning in a new setting; as if, in some way, her hands could heal and preserve it.

When I first saw Brenda with her boy's close-cropped grey hair and matter-of-fact body, I thought she was kind of butch. But I don't think so anymore. She has three kids and an ex-husband and her eyes are soft and so's her voice. But, that's not it — it's really the stuff she collects and what she embeds it in. Her works are like cement wombs in different disguises, containers and surfaces with the bright shiny treasures of childhood forever affixed in the hardened cement mud.

But then not everything is held fast. Some items can be removed, opened, pulled out, like bottles and bottle tops and lipstick tubes — they have places and slots — a place where the object belongs but can be temporarily removed. I guess I don't like most of her work because it's brittle, the cement repels, doesn't invite touch. The items barnacled in it are lures, the way fish hooks are camouflaged by lures.

She showed me a work she calls her "Suburban Window." It has eight little panes, each with its own small projecting ledge. A place to put (odds) and (ends), she says. She says everyone has one in suburbia but Brenda's window is permanently cemented with these odds and ends, with bobby pins and bric-a-brac, scraps of notes and children's drawings, and lots of clear little bottles filled with vodka and gin.

Since her move to the Bowery, Brenda collects stuff right off the street. She has boxes of broken glass, green as emeralds and autumnal as amber — shards of broken "Night Trains" and "Thunderbirds" and "Christian Brothers" and crushed tins of beer and soft drink containers. She passes the derelicts on the street or slumped against her front door, she bypasses them to collect their objects, she rescues their objects, their artifacts, for her art. Her studio has become a kind of Salvation Army: a soup kitchen for the crushed cans, a rescue mission for the broken glass.

The only non-encrusted object in her loft, the only truly clear space, is her cat "Thomas," all white, with sea-green eyes. Thomas' favorite napping and hanging-out spot is under one of Brenda's art chairs. You see, Thomas likes it there because one of the four legs of the chair is permanently set on a ceramic frog, while sprouting from the feet of the other three legs is plastic sea grass. The bottom rung of the chair is cemented with terra-cotta pots holding plastic geraniums and beneath the base of the seat, plastic moss grows wild. For Thomas, and for me, it is a touch of the country, "art" country, artificial and full of memories, in this top floor fire-trap in the heart of the Bowery.

This is a
song for Noah.
This is a
song for Noah.

AND GOD SAYS:

"Make thee an ark of gopher wood;
rooms shalt thou make in the ark,
and shalt pitch it within and without
with pitch."

And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it within
and without with pitch.

Foremast
Foretopmast
Fore-topgallant
Fore-royal
Fore-skysail pole
Mainmast
Maintopmast
Main-topgallant
Main-royal
Main-skysail pole
Mizzenmast
Mizzentopmast

This is a
song for Noah.
This is a
song for Noah.

AND GOD SAYS:

"Make thee an ark of gopher wood;
rooms shalt thou make in the ark,
and shalt pitch it within and without
with pitch."

And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it within
and without with pitch.
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it within
and without with pitch.
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it
And pitch it within
and without with pitch.

Mizzen-topgallant	And pitch it
Mizzen-royal	And pitch it
Mizzen-skysail pole	And pitch it
Bowspirit	And pitch it
Spiritsail yard	And pitch it within
Spanker boom	and without with pitch.
Spanker gaff	And pitch it
Jib-boom	And pitch it
Flying jib-boom	And pitch it
Lower studding sail boom	And pitch it
Jib of jib-booms	And pitch it within
Ringtail boom	and without with pitch.
Main	Within and without
Mizzen	And within and without
Foretopmast stud boom	And within and without
Main	and within with pitch.
Mizzen	Within and without
Fore-topgallant stud boom	And within and without
Main	And within and without
Mizzen	and within with pitch.
Fore-royal stud boom	And pitch it
Main mizzen	And pitch it
Main mizzen	And pitch it
Main	And pitch it
Mizzen	And pitch it within
OUTSIDE four panel doors, framed with a five eighth quarter-round, lined as common, per yard,	and without with pitch.
INSIDE four panel doors, framed with a five eighth quarter-round, lined as common, per yard,	Within and without
Six panel doors, double work and single hung, per yard,	And within and without
Ditto, double hung, add	And within and without
Eight panel doors, double work and single hung, per yard,	and within with pitch.
Ditto, double hung, add	Without and within
Six panel doors framed with a three quarter quarter-round, lined and single hung, per yard,	And without and within
Ditto, double hung, add	And without and within
Eight panel doors, three quarter quarter-yard, lined and single hung, per yard,	and without with pitch.
Ditto, double hung, add	And pitch it
Six panel doors, near two inches thick, and lined as common, and single hung, per yard,	And pitch it
Ditto, double hung, add	And pitch it
Eight panel doors, near two inches thick, and lined as common, and single hung, per yard,	And pitch it
Ditto, double hung, add	And pitch it within
If framed with an agee or ovolo, add per yard, add	and without with pitch.
If raifed with a feint hollow, add per yard, add	Without and within
	And within and without
	And without and within
	and without with pitch.
	Within and without
	And without and within
	And within and without
	and within with pitch.
	And pitch it

If such doors are lined in the rabbet,
add per yard.
And if such doors are arched,
or otherwise uncommon,
add in proportion to the labor.

And Noah goes,

And Noah goes,

And Noah goes,

WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS.

Noah built the ark of three stories, an upper, a middle, and a lower.
And Noah had three sons, an older, a middle, and a younger.
And every story had a son.
And every son had a story to tell.

LIKE THIS:

So SHEM comes into the ark.

And seven cranes surround him.
And seven cocks confound him.
And seven snakes have bound him.

And Shem says:

Dessication. A freighter in the dock. Dessication.

We were chained in the galley. An ocean
underneath us and we hadn't seen water for days.

Now I don't row no rowboat
And I don't deal no jewels
And I never been to Malibu but—
I can Marco Polo too.

Just twist right out of the chains
Just close your eyes and it rains
Just start your mind however you do
And you can Marco Polo too.

So HAM comes into the ark.

And seven wolves upset him.
And seven bats bloodlet him.
And seven dragons net him.

And Ham says:

Dessication. A crater and a shock. Dessication.

We were trapped under the crossbeam. Twelve
degrees on the Richter scale and it didn't
shake a drop from the pail.

And pitch it within
and without with pitch.

And Noah goes,

And Noah goes,

And Noah goes,

WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS.

One day on the ark.
One night on the ark.
Two days on the ark.
Two nights on the ark.
Three days on the ark.
Three nights on the ark.
Four days on the ark.
Four night on the ark.
Five days on the ark.
Five nights on the ark.
Six days on the ark.
Six nights on the ark.
Seven days on the ark.
Seven nights on the ark.
Eight days on the ark.
Eight nights on the ark.
Nine days on the ark.
Nine nights on the ark.
Ten days on the ark.
Ten nights on the ark.
Eleven days on the ark.
Eleven nights on the ark.
Twelve days on the ark.
Twelve nights on the ark.
13 days on the ark.
13 nights on the ark.
14 days on the ark.
14 nights on the ark.
15 days on the ark.
15 nights on the ark.
16 days on the ark.
16 nights on the ark.
17 days on the ark.
17 nights on the ark.
18 days on the ark.
18 nights on the ark.

Now I don't fly no Lear jet
And I don't stalk no silk
And I never been to Kyushu but —
I can Marco Polo too.

Just turn your eyes into planes
Just gear them up and it rains
Just point your mind wherever you do
And you can Marco Polo too
And you can Marco Polo too.

So JAPHETH comes into the ark.

And seven rams divide him.
And seven crows dehide him.
And seven horses ride him.

And Japheth says:

Now I don't pack no jet pack
And I don't trace no spice
And I never been to Kathmandu but —
I can Marco Polo too.

Just walk around in your brains
Just drill a hole and it rains
It's all right there in front of you
When you can Marco Polo too
And you can Marco Polo too
And I can Marco Polo too
Said I can Marco Polo too.

Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one

And you're swimming
and Yoswimi says:

Hey Marco —

Have you ever been to Jericho?

I have.

Have you ever been to Gallico?

I have.

Well I have too.

I have three

I have four

19 days on the ark.
19 nights on the ark.
20 days on the ark.
20 nights on the ark.
21 days on the ark.
21 nights on the ark.
22 days on the ark.
22 nights on the ark.
23 days on the ark.
23 nights on the ark.
.
30 days on the ark.
30 nights on the ark.
31 days on the ark.
31 nights on the ark.
32 days on the ark.
32 nights on the ark.
33 days on the ark.
33 nights on the ark.
34 days on the ark.
34 nights on the ark.
35 days on the ark.
35 nights on the ark.
36 days on the ark.
36 nights on the ark.
37 days on the ark.
37 nights on the ark.
38 days on the ark.
38 nights on the ark.
39 days on the ark.
39 nights on the ark.
40 days on the ark.
40 nights on the ark.

I have five
I have six, seven, eight, nine, ten
laps to go.
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one

Two buffalo come into the ark
into the ark
into the ark
Two buffalo come into the ark
in a row
Three buffalo come into the ark
into the ark
into the ark
Three buffalo come into the ark
in a row
Four buffalo come into the ark
into the ark
into the ark
Four buffalo come into the ark
in a row

So Noah goes
So Noah goes
So Noah goes
So Noah goes
See buffalo
See buffalo
See buffalo
See buffalo

ON THE ARK

Five buffalo jump onto the ark
onto the ark
onto the ark
Five buffalo jump onto the ark
in a row
Six buffalo jump onto the ark
onto the ark
onto the ark
Six buffalo jump onto the ark
in a row
So Noah goes
So Noah goes
See buffalo
See buffalo
I gotta go
I gotta go
Gonna Polo
Gonna Polo
Gonna Polo
Gonna Polo
To Okdo
To Okdo
Homo
Homo

Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
And you're swimming
And Yoswimi says:
Hey Marco —
Have you ever been to Jericho?
I have.
Have you ever been to Gallico?
I have.
Well I have too.
I have three
I have four

I have five
I have six, seven, eight, nine, ten
laps to go.
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
And you're swimming
And Yoswimi says:
Hey Marco —
Have you ever been to Jericho?
I have.
Have you ever been to Gallico?
I have.
Well I have too.

So Noah takes a raven and ties him
to his left arm
So Noah takes a dove and ties him
to his right arm
So Noah takes a raven and ties her
to his right arm
So Noah takes a raven and ties her
to his left arm
And he closes his eyes
And he revs up his mind
And the windows of heaven are broken
And the word for the Polo is spoken
And the door to the ark is reopened
And the ocean comes in
Two buffalo fly over the sea
over the sea
over the sea
Two buffalo fly over the sea
in a row
Three buffalo fly over the sea
over the sea
over the sea
Three buffalo fly over the sea
in a row
Four buffalo fly over the sea
over the sea
over the sea
Four buffalo fly over the sea
in a row
And Noah's Ark flies over the sea
over the sea
over the sea
And Noah's Ark flies over the sea
ON THE GO

TO OKLAHOMA

WHERE THE DEER AND BUFFALO ROAM AND THE RAIN COMES DOWN

So Noah takes a dove and plucks out
a white plume
So Noah takes a raven and plucks out
a black plume
And he ties them in his hair
And he says a little prayer
And Noah goes
And Noah goes
And Noah goes
And Noah goes
I'm Geronimo
I'm Geronimo
I'm Geronimo
I'm Geronimo
I'M GERONIMO

Now Geronimo was a scientist of
the highest order.

I have three
I have four
I have five
I have six, seven, eight, nine, ten
laps to go.
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
Put your right hand over your left
Put your left hand over your right one
And you're swimming
Two buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Two buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Three buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Three buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Four buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Four buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Five buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Five buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Six buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Six buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Five buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Five buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Four buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Four buffalo jump over the flames
in a row
Three buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames
Three buffalo jump over the flames
in a row

He spent many years searching for
a vaccine to combat the white plague.

He tried hail storms, archery,
rope tricks.

There were too many agents to contain,
too many germs to conquer.

They had him holed up in the mountains
of Mexico.

He lifted his eyes toward the sky and
saw buffalo jumping through a
hoop over the flames.

So Geronimo put out the flames.

He did a little rain dance.

And he seeded the clouds.

AND THE RAIN CAME DOWN.

And it rained for forty days and forty nights.

And we let the raven go and it never came back.

And we let the dove go and it never came back.

And we lowered the drawbridge onto an aquiline plain.

And Noah heard the chant of the Antedeluvian tribes:

Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo

LONG LIVE NOAH

And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo

LONG LIVE NOAH

Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long Live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo

LONG LIVE NOAH

Two buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames

Two buffalo jump over the flames
in a row

Three buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames

Three buffalo jump over the flames
in a row

Four buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames

Four buffalo jump over the flames
in a row

Five buffalo jump over the flames
over the flames
over the flames

Five buffalo jump over the flames
in a row

Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo

LONG LIVE NOAH

Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo

LONG LIVE NOAH

Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo
Long live Geronimo
And long live Marco Polo

LONG LIVE NOAH

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