



IKON

creativity
and
change

THE SIXTIES

A Retrospective of IKON Series One 1966–1969

IKON #11: The Sixties

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IKON #11: The Sixties

A Retrospective of IKON Series ONE

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THE SIXTIES/THE NINETIES LOOKING FORWARD, LOOKING BACK

Perhaps the question we are asked more than any other is what does IKON mean? Most people associate the word with religious iconography, at least before Apple computers took it over to stand for those little pictures on Mac programs. In a sense any painting or drawing in which the meaning is perceived "all at once" is an icon. We interpreted the word to mean "combining separate symbolic elements into a unity in which all are perceived simultaneously, thereby eliminating the separation of body and mind, spirit and intellect, feeling and thought."

Bridging seemingly disparate elements is what we conceived the first series of IKON, published in the Sixties, to be about. We were sick of hearing that artists and women, sensitive creatures as we were, were not capable of, and shouldn't tire themselves out with analysis, that, in fact, thinking was something only specialists, in this case critics, were capable of. Which of course meant that judgment of our work passed from our hands. Later the same argument would be used against any kind of socially or politically related art.

Why couldn't we have a magazine in which art would be discussed by those most involved with it...artists? Why couldn't we have a magazine where artists could discuss the work of their friends and colleagues? Why should it be taboo to talk about the very work that interested us most? Why couldn't we have a magazine that printed poetry and music, that cared about graphic design and visual art, that published radical political documents and analysis alongside articles on alchemy and the Tarot. No reason—if we did it ourselves. And so the original IKON was born.

The first series of IKON lasted seven issues, until pressure following my trips to Cuba in 1968 and 1969 finally put us out of business. IKON was reborn in 1982 with the focus on women and in this, our eleventh issue, as we enter the 90s, we reprint a small selection of that Sixties material. As much as possible we have tried to stick to the original layout. Since it was impossible to get most of the original photos, we have veloxed from the old magazines. We felt it was important to try to get a sense of the magazine as a reflection of those years. We have made selections and divided the material by issues, with that in mind. The work and the context in which it was written. An IKON in itself.

But things have changed. Some for the better. Some, uncertain. So IKON #11: *The Sixties* and the next issue #12: *The Nineties* should really be seen as a piece. Margaret Randall has written a new introduction to this issue to put some of the issues raised in both eras into perspective. One of the most noticeable deficiencies of the original series was in the under-representation of women artists of color. So our second introduction is by Carole Byard, who is presently putting together the section in IKON #12 which will spotlight *Coast to Coast: A Women of Color National Artists' Project*.

The original IKON was the work of a lot of people but basically two women worked consistently on all the issues—myself, as the original editor, and artist and painter Nancy Colin, who conceived of the idea of a magazine which integrated words and visual design and without whose devotion and energy the magazine would never have existed.

There is really no better preface to this retrospective issue than to reprint the original editorial from IKON #1, Series One, which states aims we are still trying to make a reality today.

SUSAN SHERMAN

IKON ONE, Series One: 1967

IKON has come into being because of a need. A need for information. IKON is a magazine of information about works of art (literary, performing, visual) AND ABOUT THE PROCESS AND PROBLEMS CONCERNED WITH ART BY THOSE INVOLVED IN THAT PROCESS. IKON is an international magazine, a focal point for discussion and presentation of art in every part of the world. IKON finally is a magazine of information in terms of the very structure and design of the magazine itself.

In an age where we are constantly bombarded with words, sounds pictures, facts, there must be a center of focus. IKON is a method, it is a method of DEALING WITH INFORMATION as well as providing it. It is a synthesis, working on the premise that the distinction between method and examination, between thought and fact is arbitrary and deadly.

The work of art is an embodiment of the process of choice. Each step a person makes constitutes a choice. An evaluation or judgment is the basis of choice. In order to make a judgment a person must be supplied with both the material to judge from and a method of judging. Movement is a dialogue, and artists must engage in this dialogue, with themselves, with other artists, with their audience (that body which participates in their creation, without which their creation has no existence).

There is no longer a place for the professional critic, the professional middleman, the professional observer. There is no longer a place for the uninvolved. But this does not mean there is no place for judgment, observation, dialogue. It is to this purpose that IKON has been founded. It is for this purpose and this purpose alone that it exists—SO THERE CAN BE A PLACE WHERE SUCH A DIALOGUE CAN OCCUR. Where information can serve as an impetus to action, not divorced from, but irrevocably a part of our involvement in this world, this present moment in which we find ourselves as participator and participant, our stance directed toward the future, not the past.

ART AS INFORMATION: Parallels From The Sixties to The Nineties

MARGARET RANDALL

Contemporary interest in the Sixties comes not simply from our periodic fascination with anniversaries—two decades, a quarter century, thirty years—but responds to deeper parallel connections. Now as then, we are clawing our way out of the strictures imposed by a period of repressive conservatism, dangerous conformity, censorship and its byproduct, self-censorship. Now, as then, socially conscious artists respond with our work, passionately committing our creativity to change. Now, as opposed to then, electronic advances have given those in power more complex weapons against us.

Back when IKON's first series was a clarion voice among the little magazines, independent publishing ventures, cafe readings, exhibits, performances and happenings of all kinds that together defined the Sixties renaissance, the long death chill of McCarthyism had just begun to thaw. Great artists had been silenced by the anticommunist witch hunt, many of them permanently. Others were changed forever, after years of not being able to find work, publish, speak. The consequences of those years for our national intellect and creativity will probably never be thoroughly understood.

When things "get better," most of us tend to breathe a sigh of relief and happily retreat from trying to dissect events or the forces that shape them. How often have Americans massively voted for those whose only solutions are a string of utterly empty promises? *It isn't in our nature*, our profusion of dime store psychologists tell us, to dwell on **how** things went wrong or **how** to make sure they won't again or—more important—the crippling effects such deformations may project into a future tense. The notion that such analysis doesn't *come naturally* to Americans is most certainly produced and nurtured more intensely by our media images than by any rational look at our experience or by an assessment of our most profound feelings.

The McCarthy-era chill of the Fifties didn't lift of its own accord; the energies unleashed by artists who dared to raise their voices created a dialectic that itself produced the *new avant garde*, one that vowed, once again, it would not be silenced. As is true with every struggle to throw off

the forces of repression, those who demanded voice and space, those who insisted upon making themselves heard, brought many others into the arena. These pioneers were the men and women for whom the witch hunters reserve such epithets as blatant, vulgar, strident, obscene, belligerent, angry or just plain willful. These artists, in turn, provided context and courage for those to come.

Raw questions also surfaced in our art back then. Were they really any different from those which artists have asked and for which we have sought answers since art exists? In the larger sense, perhaps not. The major issues continue to be integrity, community, love, fear, death, contradiction, sorrow, antagonism, fulfillment. It's the composition of society, and how we perceive our relationship to it, that changes from generation to generation. The movement from Fifties to Sixties brought with it, among much else, a more open, cruder discussion of the contradictions between societal norms and human need. This new honesty, this willingness to lay bare our innermost landscapes—ugliness, abuse, need shame, pain, revolt—became a central theme in our arts ("Airing dirty laundry in public... Making things up... Lying..." our male-defined elders would say, when much later this search led some of us to write about battery, rape, incest, ritual abuse: the previously protected terrains of a patriarchal society.)

Neither did the Sixties themselves happen in a vacuum. Remember that Ginsburg's *Howl* battled for its right to print as early as 1956, a precursor to similar struggles over the freedom to publish and read which would be fought later over classics as D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, and William Burrough's *Naked Lunch*. (These, of course, are all books by men. Women's creativity and thought were still overwhelmingly absent from the literary canon and only tokenly present on the best seller lists. Black writers were tokens. Gay and lesbian culture was still camouflaged or underground. Great Midwestern poet and novelist Meridel LeSueur tells a story of having to wait twenty years for *The Girl* to find a publisher. "You couldn't sell a book about a woman protagonist who wasn't a victim," she says.)

The late Fifties produced those courageous women and men who would foreshadow the explosive decade: Beat and Black Mountain poets, The Living Theater, Action Painting, the Happenings and early performance pieces, Merce Cunningham—the list is long and an artist's position as forerunner or disciple may, in retrospect, be a matter of opinion. But by the early Sixties individual talents had once again coalesced into movements. The little magazines were one of their most authentic and enthusiastic showcases.

In New York City, from February of 1967 through the same month in 1969, a magazine appeared which was both within the context of the Sixties literary renaissance and quite different from other *littles*. This was the first run of IKON. In its first issue IKON described itself as "a magazine of

information about works of art (literary, performing, visual) *and about the process and problems concerned with art by those involved in that process.*" It shunned what its editor, Susan Sherman, called the "professional critic, the professional middleman, the professional observer." "There is no longer a place for the uninvolved," it proclaimed.

IKON's seven issues of the Sixties were true to that initial promise, becoming a forum for the most exciting and far-reaching *conscious art*, regardless of the medium. On its every page it declared that meaningful art and a consciousness of the world we live in are inseparable. And the magazine grew beyond its physical form. In late '67 through '69 there was also the IKONstore, a storefront next to La Mama ETC on Fourth Street between Second and Third Avenues.

In the art of those times, a recognition of *the American* was essential. In painting, in music, in theater, and especially in literature we no longer looked to Europe. Europe, in fact, started looking to us. And so our eurocentric vision began, ever so slightly, to crack. In New York City, institutions like The Artists Club were born in an old industrial loft, where painters, sculptors, writers, musicians and even critics came together to share ideas and concerns outside the confines of the establishment. A few blocks on East 10th Street, from Fourth Avenue over to Second or First, housed alternative galleries, some of which were artists' cooperatives.

The first Cedar Bar, on University Avenue near the corner of Eighth Street, was the scene of less formal discussion: Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Franz Kline, Milton Resnick, Pat Passlof, Robert and Mary Frank, Larry Rivers, John Cage, Alice Neel and others held forth. Ornette Coleman's white plastic sax made sweet music at the Five Spot, Odetta sang at the Village Gate, and slightly further North and West, Julian Beck and Judith Malina's Living Theater was a constant source of energy and inspiration.

I had come to the mecca of the art world from the provinces (Albuquerque, New Mexico) in 1957, so I knew that outside of New York City, artist's communities were also generating important work. Such work had a proud history where I lived, ever since the 20s when the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad opened the Southwest to people like D.H. Lawrence, Mabel Dodge Lujan, and Georgia O'Keeffe. And it was happening in California, Illinois, Minnesota, Georgia, and many other places as yet unconnected with the metropolis. But the San Francisco and New York renaissances were surely the most visible and vocal. The Beat road map connected both coasts, and poets went *on the road*, reading to one another, high on the mind-expanding (and in retrospect fairly harmless) artists' drugs of the decade.

Some of us even dared define America more broadly: as including what we perceived as a culture of *Latin America*, and—although unevenly—of our own multiracial history. Some of us explored the roots of Latin American, African, and Asian artistic expression and developed working relationships

with those continents' contemporary artists. After four essential years in Manhattan, in 1961, I would travel south to Mexico. There, with a Mexican poet Sergio Mondragon and immersed in a multinational group of young writers and artists, I founded *El Corno Emplumado/The Plumed Horn*, a bilingual literary journal that for the next eight years would bridge cultures and mark a decade. My contact with the first IKON and its visionary editor Susan Sherman dates from this period.

But I'm still talking about New York City, late Fifties and early Sixties. In 1959, Fidel Castro and a ragged group of bearded rebels had taken power on the island of Cuba. Some artists, as their predecessors in the Thirties had done, broke from the peculiarly U.S. constraints that proclaimed art as "pure" or "beyond politics," divorced from social concerns. They visited or even lived in Cuba. (After her death in 1986, the Cuban period in the work of the great people's artist Rini Templeton has come to light.) In New York and in response to the 1961 U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of that country, African American poet Amiri Baraka (then LeRoi Jones), Elaine de Kooning, Marc Schleifer, and myself authored a protest signed by hundreds of artists and writers.

We would need yet a greater historic distance from the civil rights movement, as well as from the Black, Hispanic, Native American, women's, and gay and lesbian movements that reemerged or would surface in the late Sixties, in order for us to recognize cultural contributions defined not simply by our "generosity" but by these peoples themselves. In this sense, I knew then about the artists who had come from the East and became known as the Taos School (Lawrence, Lujan, O'Keeffe, and others), but wouldn't have thought to explore the work of New Mexico's San Ildefonso potter Maria Martinez, or the makers of storyteller dolls that were first sculpted by Pueblo Indian artists in the Sixties. Just as there was more than a single culture in Latin America, African American and Hispanic cultures in our own country were never what a mostly liberal white male art world assumed them to be.

From the Fifties to Sixties, art in its various contexts—as well as peoples' perception of traditional academic canon (history, literature, art, the social sciences—changed radically. In the transition from Eighties to Nineties we can see a similar shift, but now we also have our Sixties history upon which to base the next leaps. The book-banning atmosphere of the Fifties gradually ceded to the Sixties renaissance, just as the tendency to retreat or pull back that was forced upon artists in the Eighties gives way to the exuberance which today seems just around the corner. (Witness radical multi-media art itself, such as that made by Guerrilla Girls or Tim Rollins + K.O.S. Witness artists', writers' and musicians' enormous efforts to support the struggles of victims of colonialism and imperialism in other lands, as well as our own farmers, homeless people, and those with AIDS.)

Struggles to distort our cultural history (by some) and retrieve it (by others) follow a similar curve. Against the Alan Blooms and Saul Bellows of this world, we accumulate and unleash a fountain of energies that won't be stilled. (Bloom's fundamentalist crusade for a return to "the basics" and against all indigenous faces of our culture is well-known. In the case of Bellow, I am referring to his derogatory statement in the context of the efforts to diversify curriculum at Stanford University that "he did not know 'the Tolstoy of the Zulus; the Proust of the Papuans.'" (*New York Times*, January 19, 1988).

Poetry, fiction, and artwork that brought form and content into a single focus was at the cutting edge of that creativity expressed on the pages of the independent Sixties press. Time and space also joined forces in new ways, or at least we were more conscious of how they affected one another. This could be seen in the pages of IKON's first series, where the layout of each contribution creatively balanced meaning with visual impact. In what might seem to be a very different genre, it was also apparent in the varieties of ephemeral art that emerged throughout this period: a renewed interest in the found poem, body-painting created and washed away in a night, a new type of audience participation in experimental theater, happenings with a single evening's life span, the role assigned to change in performance pieces, music, "pop" and other expressions among the visual arts.

This Sixties art was rooted in experience, in the present. The beginning of the decade was marked indelibly by the civil rights movement in the South. That extraordinary struggle by African Americans and whites affected American culture throughout the country. By 1968, intense student protest ignited hundreds of campuses, and by the late Sixties Vietnam provided the disturbing images on the evening news. Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., My Lai, Selma, the four Sunday school students in Birmingham: These were encoded into our national memory. The art rooted in these images, in these events, spurned preciousness and armchair observation—the experience itself was the thing.

This Sixties art stood in defiance against the withering formulae of timid predecessors, as it began as well to search out and use the legacy of previously ignored forbearers. In the following decade we would unearth our thoroughly lost and unsung female visionaries (some of the strongest women poets began to retrieve these women's voices in their work). We would begin to read gay and lesbian voices *as such*, artists who began to write or publish past midlife, battled disability, or dealt with other politically risky conditions. Later, with the advent of the AIDS epidemic, we would embrace a culture of life born in close proximity with death.

In that first run, IKON crossed several bridges; the women and men published in its pages explored magic, language, the latest psychoanalytic theories, and places like Cuba where a new society encouraged and supported its *cultural workers*. This concept of the artist as *cultural worker*, like

that of the *New Man*, came from the experience of Cuban sisters and brothers. Participating in a totally different social system, we nevertheless longed to be able to apply such ideas to our lives and art. In Mexico to a certain extent, and then in a much more comprehensive way in Cuba and Nicaragua where I lived from 1969 to 1984, I was able to know and work with artists whose relationship with the State was necessarily more urgent, more practical, and allowed for more far-ranging possibilities in this regard.

But it was never easy to sustain an independent bridge between writers and readers. I remember an incident in the mid-Sixties around the publication of *El Corno Emplumado*. The Pan American Union, cultural arm of the Organization of American States in Washington, had bought 500 subscriptions to our magazine. For a struggling literary journal this meant economic security for at least another issue. When we published an exchange of letters with a well-known Cuban poet, an emissary from the Union traveled to Mexico to let us know that unless we stopped giving space to Cuban poets, those subscriptions wouldn't be renewed. We were already preparing our issue featuring an anthology of the new Cuban work. Of course we told our "benefactor" what he could do with his subscriptions.

Throughout the Sixties, those published were overwhelmingly men. In looking at IKON's first series, with an eye to selecting the pieces for this anthology, Susan and I remember how heavily weighted on the male side its contents were. The same is true of *El Corno Emplumado*, and the vast majority of other "little" magazines of those years. Even so, the fact that we were women undoubtedly, though still unconsciously, opened us more than most other editors to our sisters' work.

We weren't yet feminists, but like the prechill people's artists of the Thirties, the Sixties intellectuals and artists saw ourselves as social beings. We were concerned with assuming social responsibility. This was something we talked about a great deal: the ivory tower isolationism encouraged by the manipulative Fifties was giving way once more to a sense of community, and to the activism community engenders. As artists back then, we asked ourselves what our responsibility might be, to whom we owed it, and what kind of art it would produce.

This led to polemics, projects, and important artistic statements subscribed to by a variety of artists who might otherwise not have crossed formal or aesthetic lines. The Angry Arts was a New York based movement of protest against the Vietnam War which involved writers, painters, musicians, theater people and others. By 1969 and '70, there were numerous collective readings by poets and writers outraged by the war. These took place in cafes and parks, and also in such academic forums as the Modern Language Association's annual meeting. Later, it would be a young Chinese-American architect, Maya Ying Lin, who would design the extraordinary Vietnam Veterans War Memorial in Washington, DC. Much more

recently, in Montgomery, Alabama, she built a memorial to the Civil Rights struggle. The Vietnam experience and the struggle for desegregation in the South (which, as Lin points out "[happened] simultaneously... you never realize that overlay") profoundly affected a generation and its artists.

The Freedom Schools of the Civil Rights Movement (Mississippi 1964) inspired the concept of *free school* that challenged a stifling academy. *Free schools* and *free universities* sprang up everywhere. Poets and writers went out into the community; prison workshops and the Poets in the Schools programs were born. Lines from contemporary poetry and images from contemporary art began to appear on subway and bus placards, in architectural projects, and in parks.

Some visual artists looked to the great Mexican mural movement—or our own WPA (Works Project Administration, one of the U.S. government efforts to provide work during the depression years)—and the first neighborhood murals were painted, increasingly with the participation of people in the communities they served. When creative women finally came to the fore, monumental endeavors like Judy Chicago's Dinner Party pushed feminist art to a retrieval of our history. (Later, Chicago's Birth Project would link the power of a visionary artist with that long-obscured women's art which had forever been regarded as craft: quilting, weaving, embroidery, fine needlepoint. And a public discussion of process would be a part of this.)

Sixties' art literally wrote itself onto our bodies and our walls. The anonymous artist claimed her or his space. A more active class struggle, the powerful fight against racism, and the new feminist consciousness brought into clearer focus our rejection of the self-image and falsely-created needs projected by the establishment media. The results of this focus could be seen in such seemingly disparate manifestations of popular art as New York City's graffiti-covered subway cars or the emphatically altered billboards that began to spring up everywhere: key words paired with blatant female seduction images ever so slightly changed, the addition of one more word to stop signs, producing "STOP WAR" and "STOP RAPE" on street corners across the country.

One of the exciting things about peoples' art in the Sixties was that it revived attention to process. The Beat and Black Mountain poets moved out from Williams, not Eliot. Some went further, their new voices echoing as well Brecht, Reich, Artaud, Vallejo, Kollontai. Poets hitting the road to share their work in lofts and cafes, the *Happenings*, the first performance pieces: increasingly the artist's process itself became her/his product.

Later, with feminism and the explosion of women's art, this exaltation of process became much more political. As women, process had always been at the center of our unacknowledged experience. But our process had been shunned as meaningless, and we were also denied its product in the bargain. Strong feminist voices like Toni Morrison, Adrienne Rich, Judy

Grahn, Alice Walker, Joy Harjo, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sonia Sanchez, Sandra Cisneros and scores of others; women's music such as that made by Sweet Honey in the Rock; powerful women's theater like *At the Foot of the Mountain*; extraordinary women in the visual arts; all are pushing outward the confines of the traditional canon.

Along with Black and Hispanic Studies, Women's Studies (and much more recently Lesbian and Gay Studies) fought their way onto the country's campuses. Feminist magazines, presses, gallery spaces, dance companies and theater began producing work that could not be ignored (although many of the good ole boys continue to try). Essayists like June Jordan, Mab Segrest, and Paula Gunn Allen bring female experience and the larger political picture together in ways men have not. Women's and lesbian archives begin the serious work of retracing and refocusing obscured history. The Lesbian Archives in New York is particularly noteworthy. Women's and Lesbian oral history projects like Elizabeth Kennedy's and Madelaine Davies' in Buffalo, unearth exciting stories—*herstories* in the new vernacular. Scientists like Ruth Hubbard question not only women's role in science, but—consequently—the nature of scientific work itself, and thus *what knowledge is*.

For movement women and artists, who in the early Seventies began taking over the independent publishing ventures and art spaces our hard work had helped to create, process was not something to be discarded, or so easily ignored. Our cultural identity and history of struggle, stress attention to process as intrinsic to the product we wish to nurture and preserve. IKON's second series includes a number of special issues: Women and the Computer, Creativity and Change, the Asian American women's issue—in which this is particularly apparent.

IKON #9, "Without Ceremony" an Asian American women's anthology is worth noting, among much else, because of its several community collages: conversations among different generations of working class Asian women discussing their struggle to balance tradition and rebellion in their lives, and talking about it. This is just one more example of the emphasis on process. IKON's first book, *We Stand Our Ground* (which combines the poetry of Kimiko Hahn, Gale Jackson, and Susan Sherman), devotes its first twenty pages to a conversation among these poets. here a Japanese/German/American heterosexual woman, an African American lesbian, and a Jewish lesbian tell each other and their readers how family and society have influences them, what it has meant to them to be women, engage politically, create, resist, write.

Today, as the Nineties begin, we gather and unleash our creative powers in the wake of another repressive period. Eight years of Reaganism in this country achieved epidemic homelessness, increased economic crisis even for the middle and upper middle classes, cutbacks in social services and creative programs, the reversal of many hard-won people's rights, a

backlash of conservatism, a rigidity, false patriotism, and mediocrity in the arts with real parallels to the Fifties. The media, technologically advanced as never before, succeeds, in helping the elite to trivialize what is meaningful, to magnify trivialities, to rewrite history. Fundamentalism, political as well as religious, has become the new ruling class ideology.

But even as officialdom announces the death of unions and the consolidation of the electronic revolution, the victory of Capitalism, the end of history itself, the extraordinary power of peoples' culture resurfaces through inevitable fissures. Feminism continues to irreversibly change society as a whole, as well as women's lives. Labor struggles are revitalized. A woman, Geraldine Ferraro, runs for Vice President. Before she loses, and despite her class and skin privilege, she manages to address some real issues with intelligence. An African American Jesse Jackson runs for President and is visibly forced from center stage, but his new type of campaign suggests a renewal of participatory possibilities for electoral politics in the United States.

Some of the young artists of the Sixties have earned a degree of power in the Eighties. This, along with the general public's incipient resentment of endless media hype, may account for the fact that today, even among such costly genre as commercial film and TV, we can find outstanding examples of revolutionary art. Some titles that comes to mind are Torch Song Trilogy, The Milagro Beanfield War, Born On The Fourth of July, Do The Right Thing, and Roger and Me.

And here is where our creative use of image responds to and intersects with the system's media manipulation of those scenes which have literally become our lives.

The U.S. government has created a "drug war" in which anything goes. The plague of coke and crack in our neighborhoods, which were infested years ago when the CIA first operated its Air America opium and heroin runs out of Southeast Asia, makes all **apparent** efforts to curtail this death seem welcome. Panama's deposed President Manuel Noriega, who got on the U.S. blacklist when he refused to continue cooperating with our CIA, was a made-to-order target. Here, image distortion has been particularly grotesque, even going so far as to confuse cocaine with corn *tamales*, Noriega has been successfully vilified to the extent that most will agree: in the invasion of Panama the end justified the means. Even the more critical reportage, which details the U.S. role in creating Noriega in the first place, makes no difference. We can see it all, yet accept it all. Such is the power of today's media.

Some of us are shocked; how can such things happen, we ask. Sadly, we need not only understand **how** they happen, but that **our own establishment media, our "free" press, is the master teacher of such manipulation.** The idea that an end can justify the means is, indeed, a basic tenet of our product-oriented society. The facile image, the idea sold subliminally

with subterfuge and glitz, the product—always the newer, better product—takes precedence over process, which is ignored, if not totally destroyed.

"News" gives information and disinformation. Art also, and essentially, informs and disinforms. Discussions antagonistically positioning social realism and so-called *pure* art are no longer on our agenda. But artists and writers who are affected and moved by the central issues of our age, create from a consciousness of how imagery is manipulated as well as out of an energy aimed at change. We need our collective memory in order to know and give of ourselves. Art makes new leaps from and into life.

IKON, on the cutting edge in the Sixties, reappeared in the eighties with a second series just as essential to the creative *avant garde*. As feminism and lesbian culture showed themselves to be at the core, the magazine reemerged as a feminist literary journal, a forum for women's work. Written in large letter across the first cover of the magazine's second year: "We can and must create a new world with new forms, techniques and ideas."

And, just as in its first incarnation, IKON often baffled the "purely literary" and the "narrowly radical" by refusing limiting definitions, this time it again moved beyond confining paradigms. Not just gender, but race, ethnicity, class. Not only women, but sometimes men as well—for example, in its powerful "Art Against Apartheid: Works for Freedom" issue.

In going back and retrieving some of the most exciting work from its Sixties pages, this issue of IKON does more than honor a period of tremendous artistic power. It recognizes certain socio-political parallels. It reminds us, as creative beings, to think about the importance of reviving our authentic and multiple cultures against the death-dealing chill of a Jesse Helms or a George Bush. It urges us to step up the fight against the murderous corruption of our words, our images, and our lives.

Hartford, CT, Winter 1990.

ON BEING A WOMAN ARTIST OF COLOR: The Sixties, The Seventies, Today

CAROLE BYARD

This essay was edited from an interview with Carole Byard taped in March, 1990.

THE SIXTIES

When I started art school in 1964, it wasn't at all what I expected. I lived in Harlem, and the school I went to (the New York Phoenix School of Design) was located on 30th and Lexington. When I left my house in the morning, I was in one world. When I took the bus all the way from Lennox Avenue along Madison Avenue to 30th Street, I entered a really different world. And I found myself divided in both of those worlds.

I expected an art school in New York to have a variety of people. I expected to find students of different ages from all over the country or at least different parts of the city. In fact, there were very few people of color, particularly in positions to make decisions about what we were going to study. The New York Phoenix School of Design was a very small school—maybe five out of the 150 or so students were Black. There was one faculty member who was Asian. We had several Black models in my illustration and drawing classes—I think the teachers felt they were exotic, so they would get Black models when they could. But even though we learned a lot about painting and drawing the figure from both Black and white models, they were each approached from a different perspective. You weren't expected to bring in things that showed images of yourself or of Black people. In the courses I took the white image always dominated what we were studying.

I was out of high school five years before I could go to art school, so I felt I'd missed a lot and was very interested in everything being taught. Art history was something I was particularly interested in. Not only were there no artists of color included in art history, here's a graphic example of how things were: One day I can remember distinctly my Art History teacher, Miss Melody, teaching about different cultures—I guess this was her time of wanting to say there were other people in the world. She said you can always tell when people are civilized by the colors they wear. She said bright colors will let you know that people are uncivilized. And subtle colors—the tans and the grays and the blues—will let you know that these are civilized people. (People of color basically like bright colors and have taught a whole lot of people finally to wear color—I've watched that transition since Miss Melody said these words.) Our whole class just gasped, because here I was, the one Black student in the classroom, and she's saying that.

It was so embarrassing for almost everybody in the classroom, and she never even dealt with the fact that it was a racist remark. She just kept on

going. And laughing and talking. I never said anything because that was the way I was in those days. First of all I was a little stunned. But it worked on me. After all, I still repeat it. That was one of the ways I guess I could describe some of the insensitivity in art school.

Ironically, the very thing the school prided themselves on was being in touch with the students. They were rigid in many ways and had strict rules. For example, you couldn't wear jeans to school. For the most part, the people who ran the school were elderly. They were also caring—I have to say that too. When I went there, I only had enough money to pay for the first ten weeks of school. I was older than the other students and when I moved to New York for good, I quit my job and stayed with some relatives. I felt very firmly I made the right move. That it was what I was destined to do—to go to school and to spend all my time working on my art. I was the monitor in the class, I was the oldest student there, I was a very hard worker, I got along well with everybody and the students looked up to me for advice. So when the time came for me to pay, they didn't ask me to leave. The school gave me a work-study scholarship for the next four years. Every year they extended it. They found a job for me in the library and in the school store and that's how I got through school. So I have to say they were sensitive in that way, but they were from the kind of old tradition that excluded Blacks or non-whites from any real artistic consideration, even though they had an Asian instructor, and when I finished school they hired me to teach.

At that time, involvement in the galleries just wasn't happening for Black artists. I was only aware of Richard Hunt as being a Black artist who had achieved that kind of recognition. He was in the galleries and acceptable to them. He was a part of their world. I loved his work and was very proud of his having "made it." There were certainly some other artists who were headed in that direction, but not like him. His work was abstract so there was very little for them to fear in terms of having to confront a Black image. But that didn't deter me or make me think there was no room for me in the art world. I just felt there were other audiences.

At that time I was very naive really about how things were controlled. I was trying to do two things: I was working as a fine artist as well as going from one commercial publisher to the next with my portfolio trying to get work. It was very difficult. It was really the Civil Rights Movement and afterwards the Black power movement—really the militancy of those movements—that changed things, that made the publishers start publishing material by Black writers. And it was Black authors insisting that they wanted Black illustrators to illustrate their material that eventually opened the doors for me in 1969.

My world from 1963 to 1967 basically involved going to school and going home. I spent a full day in school—from nine to three- thirty or four o'clock, and I didn't know a lot of people in New York until I met some photographers and musicians who were working with the organization that Malcolm X founded in 1964, '65—*The Organization of African American Unity*. Artists like LeRoi Jones (now Amiri Baraka) belonged to that group.

THE SEVENTIES BEGIN

In 1970, I moved here to Westbeth from 142nd Street and became part of an organization called *The Black Artists Guild*. It was started by an actor, Preston Bradley, and the core organization was basically the cast of LeRoi



Carole Byard "Slaveship" Oil & Charcoal on Linen Canvas 1969-1970
from the collection of Janet & Ron Carter



Carole Byard "Kujichagulia" (Self-determination) Oil 1970

Jones' wonderful play, *Slave Ship*—Gilbert Moses, Bill Duke, Garrett Morris, Maxine Griffith, Frank Adu, Seret Scott, a number of people who were doing a lot of things then and have continued to do a lot of wonderful things today. My aunt took me to see it when it played at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and it was one of the most moving experiences I've ever had.

The theater was set up like a slave ship and the people in the audience were a part of the production—things were going on behind you, beside you, in front of you. There was the inside of a slave ship. There were auction blocks. The play was incredible. At one point, they tried to auction the children off to the people in the audience, and there were songs and people were singing and people were crying—Oh, it was something. It was something. We were on our feet. It was very, very engaging. And I was very moved by it. I'd never seen that kind of production that was 360 degrees of intense involvement for everybody. I did a sketch when I came home of a scene from the play. I felt so close to it.

When the cast of *Slave Ship* went on tour to Italy and other places where people didn't even speak the language, the play had the same effect. Preston Bradley started the *Black Artists Guild* because the cast felt so connected to one another and the experience of doing the play was so powerful, and when I was asked to join the Guild, I met all these people I felt so close to anyway. I was asked to be a part of the Council, the decision-making level of the organization. There were a number of women in the *Black Artists Guild* such as Marilyn Worrell, a dancer/actress, who were on the council, although it was really Preston's vision that guided the organization.

The Guild was very interesting because it was a group of actors, actresses, dancers, visual artists, a few musicians, and we all felt very strongly about Black awareness and the need to be assertive—the need to do something positive with our work. The whole thrust of the Guild was to do things for Black children, to be really effective in the community. And we did do some things, we did do some productions.

Another thing that was good about it was we would bring our work to the Guild—our peers—and we would do works in progress and people would comment, not exactly critique, but you could get some feedback. Everybody in the group had a talent, something to do in the arts, so we did a production here at Westbeth. We did a couple of things where we invited people to raise money. We were much more of an arts organization than a political kind of militant organization. The group was particularly helpful to me because I joined right after I came out of school. Finding myself with a whole family of artists who were Black helped me focus on what I wanted to say with my work.

The Guild was based on the "Seven Principles of Kwanzaa" created by Dr. Maulana Karenga: *Nguzo Saba*. That was our creed. We would do as much as we could to be of service to our community, and we would try to get people to remember these principles. One of them was *Kujichagulia* which means self-determination. That was a very big part of what we were doing with our work and my painting *Kujichagulia* came after *Slave Ship* and other pieces similar to it in vision. The "Seven Principles" are: *Umoja* (unity), *Kujichagulia* (self-determination), *Ujima* (collective work and responsibility), *Ujamaa* (co-operative economics), *Nia* (purpose), *Kuumba* (creativity), *Imani* (faith).

The first time my work was seen in a major exhibition was in a show that Benny Andrews curated at the New York Cultural Center. Benny Andrews is a very fine Black artist whose work is always conscious of what time it is, what is going on with Black people. He had started an organization along with Cliff Joseph and one of the things he did was organize this exhibition. He had a few artists who were well known and a few artists who he called unknown, but who one should look out for. There were two artists in that category and I was one and Melvin Etrick was the other. Lots of people saw the show and I got good reviews.

I did exhibit my work a bit during those years, but not a lot. It was very, very hard—you didn't have many options at that point. First of all, I didn't even know where the artists were before I got in the *Black Artists Guild* and the only visual artists in the *Black Artists Guild* were the two artists I invited, Ed Towies and Geo Smith. Later Charlie Abramson was with us.

In 1971 I got a grant from Ford Motors to travel anywhere in the world. I went to Africa for five months, and when I came back we had an exhibition at the New York Cultural Center. It was the first time I was reviewed in the *New York Times*. But that was a singular experience—Ford Motors sponsoring a grant designated for Black artists. You got involved in it by invitation. They had a few select people they had sent applications to for recommendations, and then they selected based on support material and your project. They picked five artists. The award was for travel anywhere in the world—you had to spend three months wherever you went. All five of us chose Africa. Two of us were visual artists and three were writers. I don't know of anything like that today.

It was wonderful to travel, to have money and a roundtrip ticket in your pocket, to be able to know where you were going to stay—to not have to worry. That was a remarkable thing for me to have happen early on in my art career. Going to Africa is something I will always have with me. I went by myself with just my paint case and some clothes and brushes and paper, and I just traveled around and met people. It was right at the time when everything was about Black pride. And there I was in Africa and able to see what we referred to as "The Motherland." My work was definitely affected by it, how I felt about myself, my vision of what I wanted to do in the future. I'm still reaping some of the benefits from that first trip as I see my work today leaning more and more towards African influences.

When I came back from Africa I met Valerie Maynard. She was working at the Studio Museum. In 1973 and 1974 I got to exhibit my work at the Studio Museum because I was one of their Studio Artists-in-Residence. But other places to exhibit, for the most part, were all alternative places at that time.

THE NINETIES, FEMINISM & COAST TO COAST: the National Women of Color Artists' Project

The question of gender was very hard for anyone in the Black movement, particularly Black women, in the Black movement to even consider in the Sixties. The focus at that point in the Sixties and even into the Seventies was still on the men, with women being supportive. Women, certainly, were leaders in some areas, were doing a lot of the work, but they were usually not as visible. I wouldn't even have thought of calling myself a feminist. I saw feminism as something white women did. I didn't think of it as something

Black women did. We were still just in the middle of trying to liberate our human rights. It was very hard to then start thinking I had to be liberated as a woman. Our issues had more to do with the whole family. To then separate yourself and say, as a feminist I need this and I need that, at that time meant you were watering down the issue, was seen as being divisive. And that wasn't what we wanted. We felt if the needs of the Black man were met then we would all be better off. If we talked about gender at all then it was about men.

Also, we had many strong determined Black women in our families. Real life Tubmans and Sojourners. Aunts, mothers, grandmothers doing everything they could to keep families together, keep the children safe and healthy.

We were very serious about our role in the movement.

It took a long time really for me to evolve to speaking about myself in terms of being a woman. It took a long time because I didn't focus on myself. I focused on children, the community. I focused on other things. I really didn't think of my plight as an individual being. Maybe it didn't even really get to that until recently—in the past ten years, maybe not even then. I think I was really slow in getting to that point. It is really hard to sort it out. There were so many feelings wrapped in the original vision of what one wanted.

Faith Ringgold started a group of Black Women artists in the late Sixties, in 1969 I guess. It was called *Where We At Black Women Artists*. It's still in existence. That was the first group of Black women artists that I'm aware of. The group came out of an exhibition "Acts of Art" that was at a gallery a Black man owned in the Village. When I went to see their show, I was really surprised to see that there were eight or nine Black women artists, and I didn't know any of them. I liked some of the work a lot, so I went to meet them and they invited me to be part of the group. But even when I was in *Where We At* I saw myself as a woman, but not in a feminist perspective. We were just a group of Black women artists who were very supportive of each other.

Now it's different. I see the need, the void. It would be very difficult for us to have the experiences we have in *Coast to Coast* in terms of how we can support one another and really listen to one another and make decisions for ourselves if it was multi-cultural—all cultures, not just women of color—and if men were involved too. It wouldn't have the distinction it has now. *Coast to Coast* needs to be the way it is now until things get to be right.

There is a tremendous void in the lives of artists of color. I really don't believe you create solely for the act of creating or for yourself. It seems to me it's incomplete if the work isn't experienced by someone other than the creator—that that is very much a part of the life of the work. The work is a form of communication. You are *saying* something. I wonder often what all the many artists of color who are creating do with their work. I wonder what makes us continue to make art that doesn't get seen.

Coast to Coast exists because we feel everybody's being shortchanged—the artist who creates the work and the public that never gets to see it. And not just Black people. White people, Asians, Hispanics, everybody. Because what we have to say says a lot about how we feel about ourselves and how we feel about others. We're speaking not just from a perspective of "what happened to me personally," but "this is happening to me and all of us."

Everyone has written books about women artists of color and defined us and we have not really defined ourselves and written the books that comment on what we do, what we are like, who we are. The feeling there is no interest in work by people of color, that what people of color create is not worthwhile, not "sellable," or not of interest and the fact that the artists continue to make it—these are some of the things that drive us to work harder in *Coast to Coast*. We want to create a forum, a place where the work can be seen in an atmosphere that is deserving. I don't know how else to say it. I mean after years of hanging your work outdoors or in school corridors or in the lobbies of libraries or other kinds of alternative spaces like restaurants, you eventually want the work to be seen in a different way—without the distractions, without the work being simply a decoration or a secondary element for something else. You also want it to be respected. You want to have respect for what it is you have done. You want people to "get it." What it is you're saying.

We feel that there is a lot of "curating out" of women and of women of color in particular. If it is difficult in general for women in the arts, then what is it like for us? Because if it's hard for women period, and if it's certainly hard for people of color then after the white man got in, then the white woman would probably get in, and then the man of color would probably get in. And then lastly the woman of color. So we working artists decided to do something. I say "we" but I didn't start *Coast to Coast*. Faith Ringgold started *Coast to Coast*, and Clarissa Sligh and Margret Gallegoes worked with her to put together our first exhibition, the *Coast to Coast: A National Women of Color Artists' Book Show* which opened at the Women's Caucus National Conference in Houston, Texas in 1987. A call went out to women of color all over the country to participate in that exhibition.

Before that though Clarissa Sligh had called a very special meeting. I got an invitation in the mail that said it's time we got to know each other. It was a card that had an archival photo of Black women on it with antique clothing. Clarissa was inviting every Black woman artist she could find who lived in New York to come to a dinner. They videotaped it. And it was wonderful. Really wonderful. I mean I had to go. I was in California, and I had to jump on a plane and come back early. I was quite ill when I got here—I had some kind of flu—but I had to stay long enough to say my name and to say my piece in the video about how delighted I was that something like this was happening. Just for us to be assembled together was a wonderful thing.

It was after that *Coast to Coast: A National Women of Color Artists' Book Show* opened. The theme of the show was somewhat autobiographical. Each artist made a book about herself or something that concerned her at the time. Some worked in collaboration—mother, daughter, friends, visual artists and writers were some of the combinations. And women from all over really loved the concept and the fact we were coming together. Asian, African, Native and Latina American women were invited to be in the exhibition. Once the show was up, we realized it was more than just a show. It was something very vital, something really necessary. Women sent letters about how glad they were to participate.

At that point, I volunteered to be in the working part of the group, not just the exhibit. I wanted to be a part of helping to shape it and keep it going.

It's amazing it didn't occur to us earlier that as women artists of color we should get together in this way. We could get together as Latina women, as Black women, as Asian women. We had our own ethnic communities. We all had friends, alliances, lovers, family with white women or white men. We knew white people. But none of us knew each other. White men and women were free to move in and out of Native American culture or be freely involved in writing about and speaking Spanish and interacting with Hispanic women or Asian or African Americans. Or Africans. But we never thought of getting together collectively. And that's one of the things that makes *Coast to Coast* so unique. Finally we've found out we have so much in common. I mean not just because we are "the other" or however you want to define the fact that we're not the majority in this country...yet. But even culturally, there are some things that are very interesting, very closely related. Symbols. Stories. Fables. Folklore. Beadwork. A lot of things that traditionally people do with their hands.

So it happened that when we moved from being a group of Black women coming together to celebrate "here we are all in one city, we're here in New York and we don't know one another" to saying nationally, "all women of color come together." That took a long time. I don't know what made Faith take that jump to saying we should expand in this way. But it was a wonderful to have that idea. Because I never knew any Native American women, and I knew very few Asian American women. I knew some Latina women because Blacks and Latinas are closer in terms of African-based religions and music. Also one community often borders and overlaps another. But *Coast to Coast* has really pulled us together. Now I'm talking to Native American Women in Seattle and Texas and Chicana women in Southern California and it's very different. It's really something.

Men always had had a tendency to act like they were patting us on the head. Very paternal. Not as equals. In *Coast to Coast* it's openly acknowledged that we are there to support one another and we really appreciate each other's work. We don't see our work as being anything "less." We see it as being *the best*. And so we put our energy into it in that way. We try to make whatever we do or whatever we send out reflect the high quality of the work our artists create.

THE SIXTIES, THE SEVENTIES, TODAY

When I try to compare the late Sixties and early Seventies with today I move from one position to another. For example, when I was talking about the Ford Motors grant, nothing like that exists now and there were other opportunities like that then. Earmarked for Blacks, they existed for a few years and then they disappeared. The same thing in publishing. A lot of Black material was published. And then it dried up. And Black Studies too. Often you go into a book store today looking for something in Black Studies and they send you to the African Section. They don't have the materials anymore, not put together.

When there's conflict, people start listening again. Today we seem to be headed for even more terrible times racially. I think there's going to be even more conflict. This is what I'm sensing.

I think the Nineties will be very different from the Sixties because in the Sixties people had hope. Things were pointed out to people and they'd

say—oh, no, I'm not like that, I want to change. And somebody would reply—well, you are like that, and this bothers me. There was dialogue. People were fighting, but they were also talking. The Sixties and the Seventies were a terrible period—a vicious time. But they were also a wonderful time. A time of growth. A time when a lot of new voices were heard. The Civil Rights movement of the Fifties and early Sixties paved the way for people everywhere to make a stand—the Womens, Anti-war, Native American, Gay and other Liberation Movements came after and used similiar tactics and gained momentum from the Black Movement. We all thought people wanted to change. I think individual people did. I also think some people in the government really didn't want things to change. Otherwise, things might have developed differently. Instead, they have become even more violent.

Today I see people very hard-lined about racial issues. In that way, it doesn't look good. In another way though, in terms of what's happening in places like the cultural world, there seems to be an attempt to do more things that include people of color. This doesn't mean that these people's hearts have changed, but they are to some extent printing things, reviewing our work—they are interested. Perhaps they see us as an untapped market. But buyers still look toward white curators or gallery owners to pull things together before they look at artists of color's work.

In *Coast to Coast*, we're doing it ourselves and people are looking at our work. We don't need to be introduced by a white institution to make these people feel that we've arrived. And that's different. That's really different.

It's hard for me to really trust these things—to say this is going to last, because I thought we were on before and we weren't. The dialogue that we can have now *is* better. I'm just trying to figure how that translates to the people who are unwilling to listen.

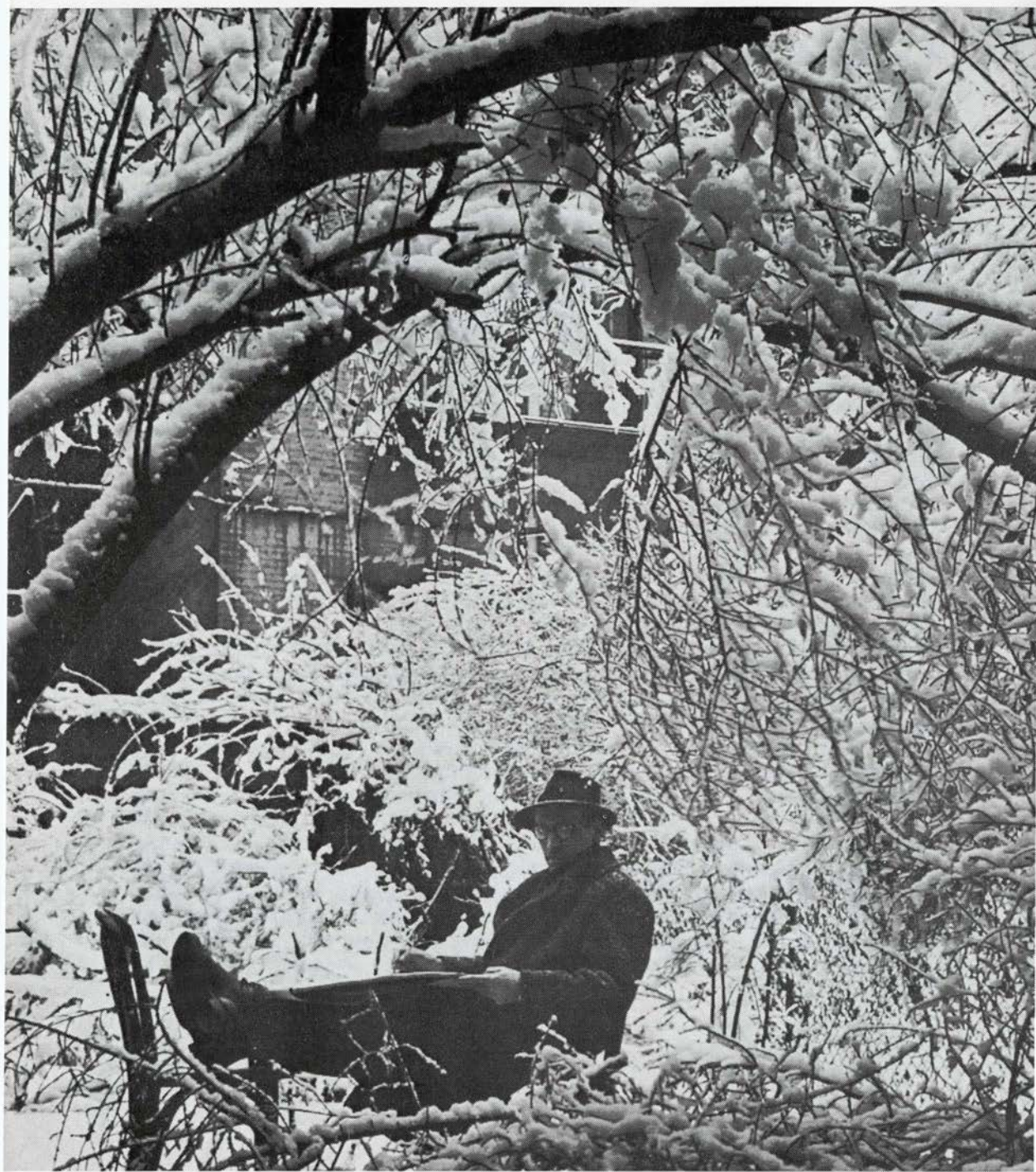
In *Coast to Coast*, as individual artists, we're keeping up the dialogue because we care. Because it matters to us. How effective it is, and how long it will remain effective, I can't really predict. But I have to believe that as the wheel turns things do get better.

TWO PORTRAITS

Karl Bissinger

Karl Bissinger was born in the "Queen's City of the West," Cincinnati, Ohio. He studied art with Yasuo Kuniishi, Morris Kantor and Raphael Soyer at the Art Student's League and it seemed a natural progression to him to take up photography as a profession. He has since worked as a free lance photographer on the New York circuit, doing work for *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue* and *Town & Country*. He "lived" with the Living Theater in New York and admires their community style of life. His son is a poet and one of the "over-educated" private detectives of San Francisco. Bissinger is the proud grandfather of Zachery (8) and Sam (6½). He counts among his dearest friends their mother Dianne Roxas. Active in the anti-war movement, Karl Bissinger currently works with the War Resister's League continuing the activities he began in the Sixties. He was Staff Photographer for the first series of IKON and took most of the photographs in this collection. Of his two portraits he has this to say:

"I looked out my back window one winter morning and realized how much the filigreed trees and snow-transformed landscape looked like a Saul Steinberg creation. Acting on impulse, I called and asked him if he would sit for a portrait in the garden. A half hour later a slight, hunched man buried in an overcoat and hat rang the bell and not saying a word followed me into the garden. He sat for some time while I photographed him and when I was finished asked only, "which way is the door?" The photograph of Colette was taken just before her death. I was given permission to photograph her but was given no information about the nature of her illness. I was told she could not speak English. My French is very limited so communication with her about the nature of the photograph was impossible. Colette was bedridden and every photograph of her in the recent past had been exactly the same—a bedridden woman with a window directly behind her. I made this observation to the man who had brought me to her, saying I didn't see any reason to take one more photograph that was merely a replica of previous photographs. She motioned to me, and speaking in English instructed me to set up my equipment on her bed. I photographed her with my equipment sitting heavily on her legs. Later I found that she had arthritis and that the operation she had undergone caused her incredible pain. She had stated after I left that anyone who cared so much for his work should be allowed any means necessary to make that work as fine as possible."







YVONNE RAINER

Notes on Two Dances By Deborah Hay

It took me awhile to see what was going on in Deborah Hay's two dances: "No. 3" and "Rise." At first encounter they seem both simple and apparent: a solo dancer shuffling around like a swooning Giselle and at the same time anonymous assistants manipulating—in the first dance—three columns of bricks, and—in the second—a wooden flat two feet wide by seven feet high. And that is essentially all that happens. The implications of these observable actions are more difficult to deal with.

First of all, she has "done something" to the role of soloist. In an area of theater where one is accustomed to being confronted by the glamour, apotheosis, or accentuated vagaries of the prima donna, prima ballerina, and prima strinarosa, one is tempted to make a connection between the shape of the pose Deborah Hay affects as she shuffles around with a wilting Giselle or the figures of slightly enervated nymphs on Grecian urns. One relates to her in terms of a traditional dance protagonist. But as each dance proceeds, something else happens: another protagonist begins to emerge, almost nullifying the first one and subverting Deborah's primacy and nostalgic image by forcing upon us an entirely different kind of presence, that of inert, inanimate objects.

Although, in the recent history of dance-like events, objects have been used as body-substitutes (compare Robert Morris' "Site" and "Arizona"), they have rarely pre-empted the importance of those who manipulated them. In fact, manipulation—which by definition sets a hierarchy of roles—has so far been the main objective, and in those instances where the object had no anthropomorphic role, it served as a tool to accomplish a task or create movement. In other words, objects have been used as intermediaries to produce events beyond the limits of their (the objects') immediate presence and invariably the focus of attention in these events has been the human performers, however minimal their "performance."*

I shall try to account for the unprecedented shift of focus in Deborah's dances, for it would seem unlikely

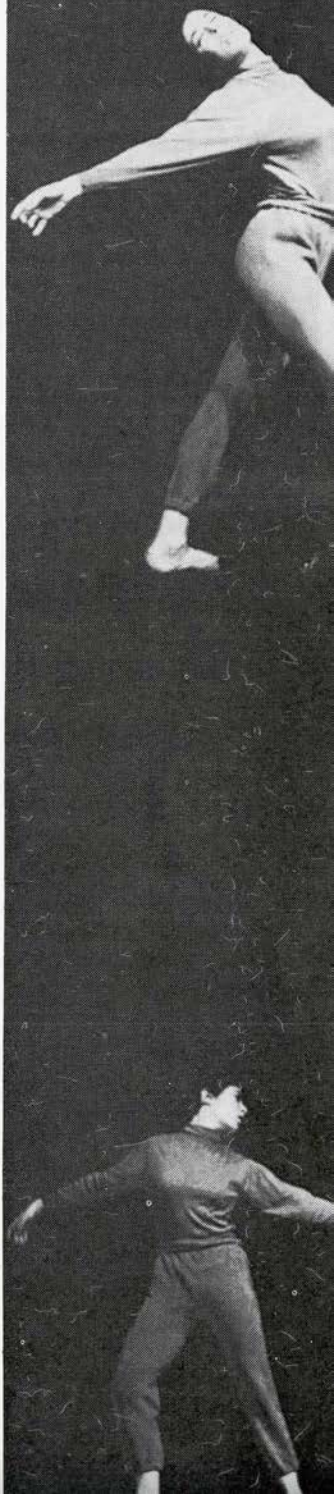
*I am still speaking within the somewhat arbitrarily separated context of 'dancing' as distinct from 'happenings,' even though that distinction may have more to do with chronology than aesthetics.

that the presence of a "dancing girl" could be eclipsed—or at least matched—by that of as banal an object as a gray flat from behind which two men in gray sweatsuits occasionally emerge to move a few paces forward, left or right. (I once did a solo called "The Bells," during which a yellow plywood column stands on one side of the stage. No one I talked to afterwards had even seen the column despite my repeated crossings before and behind it!)

One factor involved in this reversal of roles might be the trading of identities, or significations, on the part of the two "protagonists." In terms of dance, the reference in Deborah's movement to the soloist-ballerina is assumed by the gray flat that is so exquisitely "partnered" by its two manipulators; while in the case of "No. 3" the *implicit* association with virtuosic movement activity—an association even more heavily underscored by the obvious absence of that activity in the actual dance—becomes lodged in the movements of the manipulated bricks. The variations in expressiveness of the bricks as indicated by their weight, fall, clatter, scraping, accent, rhythm, density, individuation, response to gravity, and—in this instance, their very inertness after "moving"—suffuses them with a decidedly dance-like, hence dancer-like, aura. In fact, as one becomes more acutely aware of the absence of phrasing or noticeably accented dynamics in Deborah's movement, it almost appears that energy and dance-type attributes have been siphoned off from her activity to enhance the life of the bricks. (This is in part an illusion, as the dance-attributes of energy and endurance are indispensable in maintaining any kind of movement continuum. The Chinese gymnastic discipline, T'ai Chi Ch'uan is a classic example.)

On the other side, Deborah's role becomes "object-like" as she takes on the impersonal and non-demonstrative characteristics one usually associates with stable objects. This is accomplished partly by the continuum-nature and evenness of her movement, which eventually neutralizes all reference to the character "coloration" she initially displayed, and partly thru the relinquishment by the "object-protagonists" of their characteristic stolidity.

It is important here to point out the relationship between the objects themselves and the performers who manipulate them. The nature of this relationship is a crucial factor in the emergence of the objects as autonomous presences. In "No. 3" each manipulator is crouched at some distance from his column of bricks, pulling on a string that is attached to the bottom brick. The invisibility of the string and the restraint of his movement make his role both equivocal and anonymous. One begins to wonder who is acting on what, or what on whom. Here again the drama





of the object-movement supercedes that of the performer-movement. In "Rise," the cause and effect factor again is minimized, made almost invisible, by the simple act of the manipulator's disappearance behind the flat after they have moved it. One sees that it is in a different place, but "forgets" how it got there, in the same way that one can discount or "forget" the role of the scene changers in the Kabuki theater.

Of course, ultimately, none of this activity is invisible. It is all there to be observed. The beauty of the dance lies in the ambiguities that are set up in terms of relationships and roles that challenge our preconceptions about performance, an area that continues to be one of the frontiers in the search for new values in the theater.

One aspect of these two dances that I have not touched upon—one which seems of lesser importance—is the costuming. It consists of sweatsuits that are always dyed to match the color of the floor and/or backdrop against which the dances are performed. The bricks and flat are identically dyed. Aside from the idea of "camouflage," or making things more difficult to see (which seems somewhat literary, or ornamental, in this case because it is not successful), what this device does accomplish is the equalizing of the total environment pictorially so that the essential elements of the dances can emerge. From this point of view it seems a rare and beautiful and highly efficient device.

(reprinted from IKON #1 February, 1967)

TWO STORIES WITHOUT TITLES

FIELDING DAWSON

Dear ones it's been a long time—but here are the photos. I was counting on your coming out here this year and didn't make that clear to you—so I want to ask you firmly and sincerely and want an answer—could you come next August?

I couldn't remember the word that day in the car; my sister's husband was an Episcopal minister, and we were driving back to the cabin. "That which is a thing is by virtue of its form." He was irritated and rightly jealous and exasperated because I had had those bottles of beer at the local bar while he was doing the shopping.

Later we all had a wonderful time.

My wife and I had started out from Mexico with a few quarts of tequila and on evenings in the cabin in Colorado I made margaritas for the local Episcopal community of ministers and wives from other cabins up the side of the mountain. There was a pale minister about my size with thinning hair. I remember his objective and bitter smile. When I asked him how he was doing, and then answered his smiling question how my writing was doing, I said, ok.

Bill has finished the new room and it makes quite a difference—the living arrangement. Also—a friend here is changing over from gas heat etc, to electric and has offered us a gas water heater—the plumber from town has located a bathtub. This will be a luxury resort then—and we surely would love for you to come.

Also—I think you would like Carol's husband. I do—alot—and was hoping they could join us—well—would like to have word from you.

She can't stand being alone, like me; for none of our family ever stood it though we all were.

I'm on the step with my wife Barbara, and with Tim, my sister's son, in a blue black Kodachrome shot. Me tight-lipped, face barely out of a shadow. My hair explodes silver. Above the circumference of my arm over my wife's shoulder, her glittering and beautifully disheveled head is lowered toward blue smiling Tim.

I want to know some data about you. Please send a progress report.

We are fine—after all the excitement.

Tim is thriving on this air and looks healthier than ever before. Mary is suffering from an air infection right now—but I think we will see the end of it soon.

My sister and I sat across the table from each other in the cabin and talked; Barbara was taking a nap, and the kids were outside playing. We were able to look at each other and talk about our mother, and hunt for un-found clues to our dead father.

We are going to bring our swimming pool next year & Bill will make a 'deck' for it to rest on. We fought so hard to believe, in the old days. This will help Mary pass the time—& perhaps other years she can go to a camp for the

summer. Unstructured time is very hard for her.

Bill drove. My sister was beside him. I was in the back seat behind her; Barbara beside me. My sister said, about God: Oneness, and we were four.

I watched fields and flowers pass as we went into town. Later I bought dinosaur bones for a half a buck each. She said God, angrily, and I angrily said she meant Christ and she admitted perhaps. I said God, and time, continuity. Continuity, she murmured, she hated the refusal of Christ in my mind. She sneered God was more than time and continuity, and I said they were the same thing with Jesus as Metaphor. We have a cat named Chula Kitty. He has more fun than all of us. Trees & bees, mice & birds were all new to him. Please write—

She asked me, how about Jesus? and I said. Her face darkened. I saw my sister's intelligent expression draw to a pointed fix of hatred. She huskily asked what that meant.

Bill said yes, angrily: what, exactly, does that mean?

I said, the sound and touch in you that Jesus exerts to understand God, and I felt sad and sick and different. I'm going to work Sept. 1st—I was—I am to be the receptionist & switchboard operator for the Diocese of Missouri!

Hardly a career—but about \$200 a month more for THINGS.

I will work as long as I can and if it doesn't work out well because of the children—but if we can manage, I will want work for more than 5 years. Then I plan to spend the whole summer here.

Love

(reprinted from IKON #1 Feb., 1967)



Drawings Dorothy Heller





In the end you are forced to wonder. Here lies the joy of creating and the ability to experience. Goethe once remarked: "That is the highest to which man can attain, and if the prime phenomenon makes man wonder, then let him be content."

Jerome Rothenberg

THE MOTHERS

1

scandal, too hard to bear
but kept in her mind
from girlhood it returned
& hung around the bed
somebody's mouth was always going
words in the old tongue
language of the simple people of our town
there ought to be a book
if someone would ever learn to write with light
& burn it in my heart
that was the way we learnt our history
but forgot it
learnt to unscramble simple sentences
& as a girl husht it up

2

mothers first
& dancers in love with misfortune
together we sat
together we told the bushes the names of our loves
a spy?
a squadron of guards from the palace?
a dirigible back of the lake?
all is secret, sing the mothers
all is innocent
& draws a white circle
behind their eyes
the circle starts to sell moistens
& leaves a trail of fat
how beautiful, she says

3

she has their desire to be always in love
always respectable
as if prosperity were the name of a town
or of a house in the town
& had no windows
"doomed to old age, they withered"
went the song the secret was out
there will be no sun from this day forward
no more numbers to add up
or coins embedded in the risen dough
all is done, sing the mothers
all is forgotten
& has no book of its own written in light
& no town

Jerome Rothenberg

SOAP (I)

The lonely. Sliding
between my hands
A sorrowful island
he dreams of small birds in fragments above his head
& smeared windows
misted eyeglasses
something white floating in a tumbler
lips drinking
remembering a silence white as soap
like rubbing out a name
"the man who writes his name
on the beloved's belly"

knows it
what does the man know
hiding from a name?

Answer: "the place where it was hidden"

wax. Sweet
scent
an open skylight
soap
a hand against the tap, palm flat
delight of using soap
he opens papers
sometimes he throws away the ribbon
& picks his nose
Soap in all his orifices
he says, Someone
is clean
Even the doorknob smells of soap

SOAP (II)

Will the man who gets clean love his neighbor?
Yes the facts are apparent yes the facts
Live on in the mind if the mind lives on
"I have no right to another man's business
& it makes me sick"
When Meyer fell asleep in his chair, his wife
shouted DONT TOUCH MEYER!
The sugar at the bottom of the cup was brown & hard
Twice a month he had the hairs clipped from his nose
& thanked his barber
(He had sold him shaving soap the day before)
Selling soap to the pious
Calling it *zeyf*
Saying: *ah shtick zeyf*
Or saying: *Ah shtickeleh zeyf* (dim.)
Theirs was a business between friends
& meant lying
But the tips of his fingers smelt good to him
Women admired it
The books on his shelf were in a language he
couldn't understand
So he began to make little songs
& to stuff his pockets with little bars of soap
"Children, eat omelets
"Children, when the chamberpots are empty the
great bear comes at night
"Children, there are other values in this life"
Yes said the voices in his dream yes
Sang the voices to the man who sold soap
& was ticklish
But where will the road end, do the voices
Tell you where the road will end
Do they lead you to a new town where the people
aren't clean?
"I have no right to another man's business
& it makes me sick"
There were always towns like that



LETTERS FROM JAIL

JULIAN BECK

Jan. 28, 1965

DEAR KARL,

Thoughts on the theatre from jail. Remember that our two greatest successes, "The Connection" and "The Brig," came out of our jail experience, Judith's and mine. Judith dedicated the production of "The Connection" to "Thelma Gadsden, dead of an overdose of heroin...and to all other junkies, dead and alive, in the Women's House of Detention."

She had known Thelma in jail; we both met many addicts there and had come to respect them as individuals. In jail you get very close to your companions in a way that you don't "on the street." There is a candor, an honesty, that prevails in the talk; and the close living breeds understanding and affection. In doing "The Connection" we wanted to show these people not as degenerates, but as individuals worthy of our respect, such as we had felt when we had come to know them.

When you leave jail you don't leave altogether. Anyone who had ever been in is in some ways forever tied to it through a bond of sympathy coupled with the hope that some day everyone will be free. Jail gives you new ideas about freedom. We felt compelled to do "The Connection," not only because of our great admiration for Jack Gelber's accomplishments but also because we were still somehow bound to jail and the junkies there and hoped, naively, that a play might help set them free.

The connection between "The Brig" and our jail experience is obvious. When we did "The Brig" we wanted to bring to the production all the facts, without faking, as we knew them. That, for instance, is why we made the play so loud. Jail is loud and we wanted the audience to feel the affliction of the noise, the reverberation of sound in steel and concrete buildings. Audiences complained, but we insisted on keeping the sound level, because that's the way it is. And again, by showing facts we hoped in our usual naive way, that the theater might bring freedom, at least from the abuses of authoritarian discipline.

It is interesting that in here my chief thought about everything, theater and life, revolve around the concepts of freedom and honesty. And when I dream of a theater of the future



I dream of a theater that will be honest and free. Now my chief criticism of the contemporary theater is that it is neither honest nor free.

Honesty. I'm not even talking about truth; that's less accessible; the truth is so holy, so related to abstract values, I think, that it would be asking too much to ask for that. I am, however, asking for the simple presentation of things as they are; and I ask this of actors, directors, designers, and producers. Just give us a chance to see what things are really like, then maybe the theatre can lead to real understanding.

But the theater, like life today, is so drenched in attitudes and phone concepts; it labors, like life, under the weight of so much propaganda from advertising, newspapers, public agencies like the F.B.I. and the Narcotics Bureau. Senatorial committees, campaign speeches, and classroom information molded by the morals of school boards that we hardly know any longer how to think honestly.

I am not putting down imagination or fantasy or symbolism. The imagination of the poet is not dishonest; it is the real factual statement of his imagining. I do not put down what masquerades as imagination: when writers are only dishing out preconceived notions of what's supposed to be imaginative.

I think if we will look at the world as it really is we will find that even what is most ugly has within it the sparks of life, and is therefore moving and worthy of our attention. And I think we go to the theater to glimpse those sparks. That's why we get so excited with anticipation before we go to the theater. It's because we're looking for light in a very dark world.

As I write this I am sitting in a very ugly room in this jail but I find it, strangely, more beautiful than most of the setting I've seen in the past year on the stages of London, Paris, Berlin and New York. Because stage designers are more concerned with dramatic effects, sentimental lighting, tricks and imitation of both art and life themselves. Life is very dramatic, you don't have to fancy it up. Art does not simply dispose of charm, which seems to be the constant effort of contemporary stage design.

Life in jail is very real. No one has to be fake. I hear real speech all the time, and how I wish I could hear more of this kind of speech in the theater. Actors don't have to speak better than people. Nothing is better than people. We have to get rid of the idea that elocution constitutes good speech; I think elocution and the throaty way even our best actors

often speak is related to some kind of respect for royalty, 1965. We ought to be beyond that.

I want actors to stop posing. I'm talking to Method actors, too, to stop trying to create effects and break through into the representation of honest life. It would be thrilling to hear Shakespeare spoken honestly, and Brecht. I think it would be startling. We might be so moved that we might begin to respect ourselves, and instead of accepting substitutes for life in the theater and "on the street," we might find that what is real surpasses all our foolish notions.

Faithfully,
JULIAN.

January 30, 1965

DEAR KARL,

I got so hung up on honesty in the last letter that I left out freedom, a common fault. Am I overwhelming you with polemic? I'm guilty of that all the time, but jail makes you want to rail and yell. I often think that if the people on the street would realize how the world we live in is a prison, they'd do more yelling and railing, too. The sad, perhaps tragic, thing is that people do not realize they're not free. How thoroughly we have lulled ourselves with our pride into our brand of limited liberty.

There's liberty here too, within the rules of the institution. There are books, lectures, classes, movies, television, though the programing is table d'hote; pretty good food, air, trees, clean clothes, cleanliness in fact almost to the point of sterilization, much as modern American life upholds cleanliness so much that we have become enslaved to the process of keeping clean. But here we know we're not free.

Outside, people delude themselves because they don't see the bars. I dream of a theater that is free. What do I mean by that? To begin with, let us recognize the fact that everyone is not free to go to the theater; it costs too much. And then there are the production costs that are so great that even the plays many people might want to do they are not free to do. But the public is also guilty. We applaud too easily expensive productions, which leads me to believe that we are enchained by the notion that only wealth can give us something worth major attention. In the theater we aren't free to speak freely about sex, or politics, nor are we free enough thinking public to permit the theatre to criticize all but our obvious frailties without becoming irate.



Nor are we free to fail. That's the great fear. We are so much the slaves of the success-pattern idea, that we regard failure as killing. Directors and actors aren't even free to work in this so-called free society of ours. You have to plot, scheme, deceive, and dissemble to get a job. Or spend months, or even years, of your life waiting for the opportunity to work. And when, finally, you do work, you are not free to act, you have to be realistic the way, let us say, so much sculpture is realistic. No pubic hair. And when finally you do work, the pressures of time and money are so severe that you are rarely free to see your work through to completion.

What remedy do I suggest? I guess I am recommending complete social restructure. Just changing a few conditions in the theatre won't help. That's an illusion. How? No answer. But if enough people start thinking about the state of things we're in, we might find a solution, an action, together.

Faithfully,
JULIAN

Jan. 31, 1965

DEAR KARL,

Will try to make this letter less gloomy than the others. Fortunately you know me, as, at least, occasionally cheerful. A fellow inmate remarked, "You know, there are two kinds of guys in jail, the guys that are hip and the nondescripts." "How do I classify?" I asked. "You? Why man," he replied, "you're entertainment."

Entertainment. My high-priest act tends to cover the fact that I'm an ardent admirer of entertainment, of the theater of music and dance. I think even the Hasidim regarded the delights of the flesh, and their cultivation, as ways of celebrating the lavish world created by God. But I think entertainment loses its purity and joy when it tries to put itself over as an art and becomes arty.

Genet adores popular songs because of the lush words they put in the mouths of common men who otherwise might never utter such phrases as "I adore you." Bring on dancing girls, pretty boys, music, color. Swing. But too often the true spirit is destroyed by the falsehood of artistic pleasure.

Repertory. It's chief virtue is that it provides a chance for artists to work together on many plays over an extended period of time, and therefore there is the chance to develop the craft of communal work and to develop as men working communally. Repertory theaters will fail when they keep

working competitively and will succeed, at least in their work, as they develop communally and as the public develops its admiration for art made by unified groups as opposed to that of lone star individuals only.

The Theatre of Cruelty. The only prediction I venture: More and more will be seen and heard of and about this kind of theater, named by a Frenchman, Antonin Artaud, who envisaged a theater which did not numb us with ideas for the intellect, but stirred us to feeling by stirring up pain. We are a feelingless people (consider all the suffering we permit in this world as we go about our business); and if we could at least feel pain, we might turn towards becoming men again instead of turning more and more into callous automata.

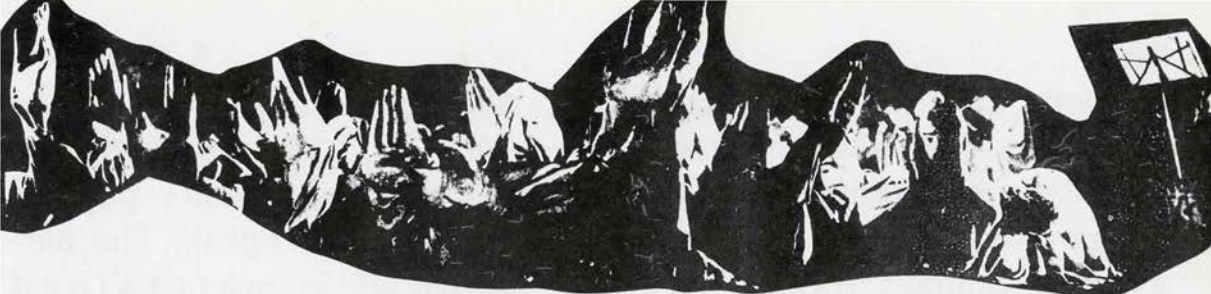
Black Theater. The theater is a mirror of the world. In the West, especially in the United States, the more it avoids the presence and problems and world of the Negro, the more distorted it is. More black writers and actors are only part of the problem; the other part is that whites, who control most theater, if they want to see the truth, will find ways of bringing black into the theater. And to do that we must learn to communicate, black and white, each learning about what goes on in the other's heads and lives. We don't know now. That's part of the work. Love is the measure of the degree of communication. When I love someone I want to be with them.

I look forward to being with you soon.

Faithfully,
JULIAN

(reprinted from IKON #7 Jan.-Feb., 1969)





BREAD AND PUPPET THEATRE

HAROLD HERBSTMAN

Peter Schumann is producer, script writer, actor, dancer, singer, orchestra leader. He also plays the violin and puts out a weekly newspaper. Peter Schumann invented the staging, settings and costumes, it is his philosophy and administration that guides the Bread and Puppet Theatre. However, the theatre is also a communal effort depending on the energy and devotion of many people.



Peter Schumann invented the Bread and Puppet theatre. His theatre and workshop are related to the morality plays. Much of his material is drawn from Biblical sources. Peter Schumann has rediscovered the Nativity and Passion play. The Bread and Puppet theatre of protest uses the form of the Japanese puppet theatre, the dumb show, and the Procession.



The puppets are several inches or twenty feet. The large puppets are manipulated by actors who clothed in the guise of puppets control the movements with poles.



A great deal of attention is given to the total visual presentation. Peter Schumann's puppets usually don't speak. The narrative line is maintained through caption signs, a narrator, mixed noises, various instruments and well paced silences.



The workshop and children's theatre is in the Shakespeare Theatre on Lafayette Street where all the construction equipment, tools, costumes, and props are stored. When a show is to be done, the group works on the set and props and the same members go out and give the performance.

Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet theatre presents good and evil and the joy from good and the pain from evil, and we watch and participate and choose.



SUSAN SHERMAN

THE LANGUAGE OF ART

...verses are not, as people imagine, simply feelings (those one has early enough)—they are experiences. For the sake of a single verse, one must see many cities, men and things... And still it is not yet enough to have memories... For it is not yet the memories themselves. Not till they have turned to blood within us, to glance and gesture, nameless and no longer to be distinguished from ourselves—not till then can it happen that in a most rare hour the first word of a verse arises in their midst and goes forth from them.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

In studying the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, it is suggested in the preface that Western readers start from the moment of rebirth, reentry into the world, and read backwards toward death. This is a solution suggested again and again in Kabbalistic and related works. If there is a philosophy, a general principle of order, to be discovered which does not apply meaning before fact but which restores meaning and allows for creative perception, perhaps it must be found in this way—by going backwards from the simplest perception to the complex formulations which order our experience.

This is not a new idea, but with the growth of popularity and the subsequent increase in information about dialectical philosophy, particularly Phenomenology and Marxism, there occurs the possibility of a bridge between Eastern and Western philosophy, between analytic and dialectical philosophy, between logic and poetry, experience and thought.

The meeting ground is caused by the emphasis on the importance of two words—*relationship* and *process*. The shift is from “things” to the relationships between things. Function or action become of predominant importance. The emphasis at the same time switches from the use of the word “object” to the use of the word “subject”. The experiencing subject, the human being, becomes central. People are no longer machines made up of intricate but calculable mechanisms, they are complex human beings with feeling and emotion.

A dialectical philosophy searches for broad general principles of order. It is not built up inductively by generalizing from a series of occurrences; it rests on analogies gained from an understanding of relationship. The emphasis is on an understanding of similarities and differences, rather than on statistics, as an image in a poem is built upon the discovery of a relationship between things not ordinarily related. Bacon, in his essays on scientific method, describes the invention of the compass as something that could not have happened through ordinary logical research. Discovery is a flash of insight—a momentary and unique synthesis of two or more seemingly contradictory objects, objects which to logic seem entirely unrelated.

Dialectical philosophy is a philosophy of method. It implies not a throwing aside of data, but a new, a radical means of interpreting historical data in the

light of new material. It depends on situation, on context, rather than on an isolated, artificial environment. An object, or subject, becomes a point of focus in a field, rather than an alienated piece of matter. The difference is one of attitude. Unity becomes the underlying base of human existence.

But even a philosophy like Phenomenology is still paralyzed by certain philosophical prejudices, by a reluctance to admit experience as evidence, as fact, because experience is something that can happen only once, to one individual. It is a unique occurrence, an interpretation. As a new attitude toward the human being has been provided, a new attitude toward science itself must occur. Experience does fulfill the most important scientific criterion—although it is not directly repeatable, it allows prediction. It can never be cut open, examined, pinned on a wall, but it can give meaning by being assimilated, by being gathered up and held.

In the *Zohar* one reads, "The recitals of the law are the vestment of the Law. Woe to him who takes that vestment for the Law itself!" In emphasizing unity, relationship, process, event, there is a danger of going to the opposite extreme and neglecting the fact that a relationship occurs between specific things, people or objects. Artists cannot forget this because they must direct their process of expression through certain physical processes—through paint, through an instrument, through notation, through words. The poet must deal with the physical aspect of words—their rhythm, their tone, their weight. The poem itself is not the experience, it is a trigger gauged to set off an experience—either between the poem and the poet or the poem and the reader. And it is through this combination of relationships that the experience which is the poem is lived.

The primary concern of the Phenomenologists is to find an adequate and precise method of examining perception, that means through which people understand and inhabit their world. To Merleau-Ponty, for example, perception and expression are inseparable—the two functions, though divisible through analysis, are, in reality, one. *To perceive is to express*. The way in which our body is part of the world, inseparably united to it and to us, is comparable in part to a work of art—a work of art can be broken down, analyzed, criticized, but the analysis is never comparable to the original poem or painting, which holds in its particularity or individuality that unique unity or form which makes it a work of art.

Our body is not in space like things; it inhabits or haunts space. It applies itself to space like a hand to an instrument, and when we wish to move about we transport it without instruments as if by magic, since it is ours and because through it we have direct access to space. For us the body is much more than an instrument or a means; it is our expression in the world, the visible form of our intentions.¹

In dealing with this problem—a problem of synthesizing and ordering data which are often contradictory and lacking exterior relations—Merleau-Ponty uses categories borrowed from such divergent fields as aesthetic, psychology and anthropology. He uses the field theory of Gestalt psychology, grounded in a category of language which is basically the language or art. The *gestalt*, the field, forms the raw material, the background. The subject, the human being, brings into focus the objects used and the other people

light of new material. It depends on situation, on context, rather than on an isolated, artificial environment. An object, or subject, becomes a point of focus in a field, rather than an alienated piece of matter. The difference is one of attitude. Unity becomes the underlying base of human existence.

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In dealing with this problem—a problem of synthesizing and ordering data which are often contradictory and lacking exterior relations—Merleau-Ponty uses categories borrowed from such divergent fields as aesthetic, psychology and anthropology. He uses the field theory of Gestalt psychology, grounded in a category of language which is basically the language or art. The *gestalt*, the field, forms the raw material, the background. The subject, the human being, brings into focus the objects used and the other people

that are recognized. All these come into being for people as they express themselves through the *focus* of their perception. And, at the same time, individuals are brought into focus by the forces which surround them. In a very real way, language is that manner of expression by which the human being both forms and is formed. There is no mind-subject as opposed to body-object, there is only the body-subject, that unity which expresses itself as the individual. All objects in the outside world become an extension of the human being, or more precisely can only be *described* as an extension of the central subject. On a higher level of complexity, this unique relationship of subject and object transcends the subject-predicate distinction entirely and the transformed subject now becomes describable in terms of process. The subject-predicate sentence becomes transformed into a verbal clause. "To be" becomes "being." The participle includes all segments of time and action, all objects, all moments, the subject itself, and becomes event.

To discover the origin of perception, it is therefore necessary to describe without preconceived notions our act of perception. Language is the key, because language is the way by which each person, through their body, their means of expression, engage in that dialogue which is their own particular manner of existence in the world. "For contemporary psychology and psychopathology the body is no longer merely *an object in the world*, under the purview of a separated spirit. It is on the side of the subject; it is our *point of view on the world*, the place where the spirit takes on a certain physical and historical situation."²

People are committed to the use of their language and are inseparable from it. The poem teaches us to learn because in experiencing the poem we realize not that we are learning something new, but because, for an instant, our eyes focus and something moves us from the outside. "It is not the object which obtains movements of accommodation and convergence from my eyes. It has been shown that on the contrary I would never see anything clearly, and there would be no object for me, if I did not use my eyes in such a way as to make a view of a single object possible."³ Consciousness is intentional—consciousness must always be consciousness of something. In the same way that we are aware of our body, in that same way we, through our body, recognize and deal with the world. Our body is the extension of our intentional faculty, it is a tool which enables us not to be *in* the world, but to *inhabit* the world. But our consciousness plays a trick on us. We live in a field, but we are directed toward that image or object which serves our need and in this direction, much in the manner of a movie close-up, we lose recognition of the field or horizon which enables this perception to exist. We lose sight of the relevance of true perception and define perceiving as what we see.

Art not only focuses our eyes, it teaches us how to see. The language of art is not the seen, it is the seeing, and it is only through "seeing" that other objects exist, that the dialogue between one individual and another, between individuals and themselves is possible. "The landscape thinks itself in me," he [Cezanne] said, 'and I am its consciousness.' Art is not imitation, nor is it something manufactured according to the wishes of instinct or good taste. It is a process of expressing."⁴

Speech is deceptive. To Phenomenologists or other philosophers like Merleau-Ponty it does not seem overtly to have material connections to the

outside world. But this is a fallacious conclusion. Anyone who has dealt with the "word" as an artistic medium knows that it is just as physical a concept as "paint." The point is that the word is *more* than meaning. The word is rhythm. It is sound. It holds a variety of textures and shapes. Style arises not only from meaning, it arises from the attributes that belong to words as physical objects—their length, their weight, their shape.

In our attempt to bring the background into focus, we must not lose the object. And it is precisely this that art does not do. But we must return to a symbolic understanding of experience as the basis of a relevant, scientific method. It is not necessary to prove experience, but it is necessary to understand it. We live in a society that trains us to react to names. It is time we not only learn, but that we experience, what those names mean.

¹Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, (Northwestern University Press, 1964), p.5

²*Ibid.*

³Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, (Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 66

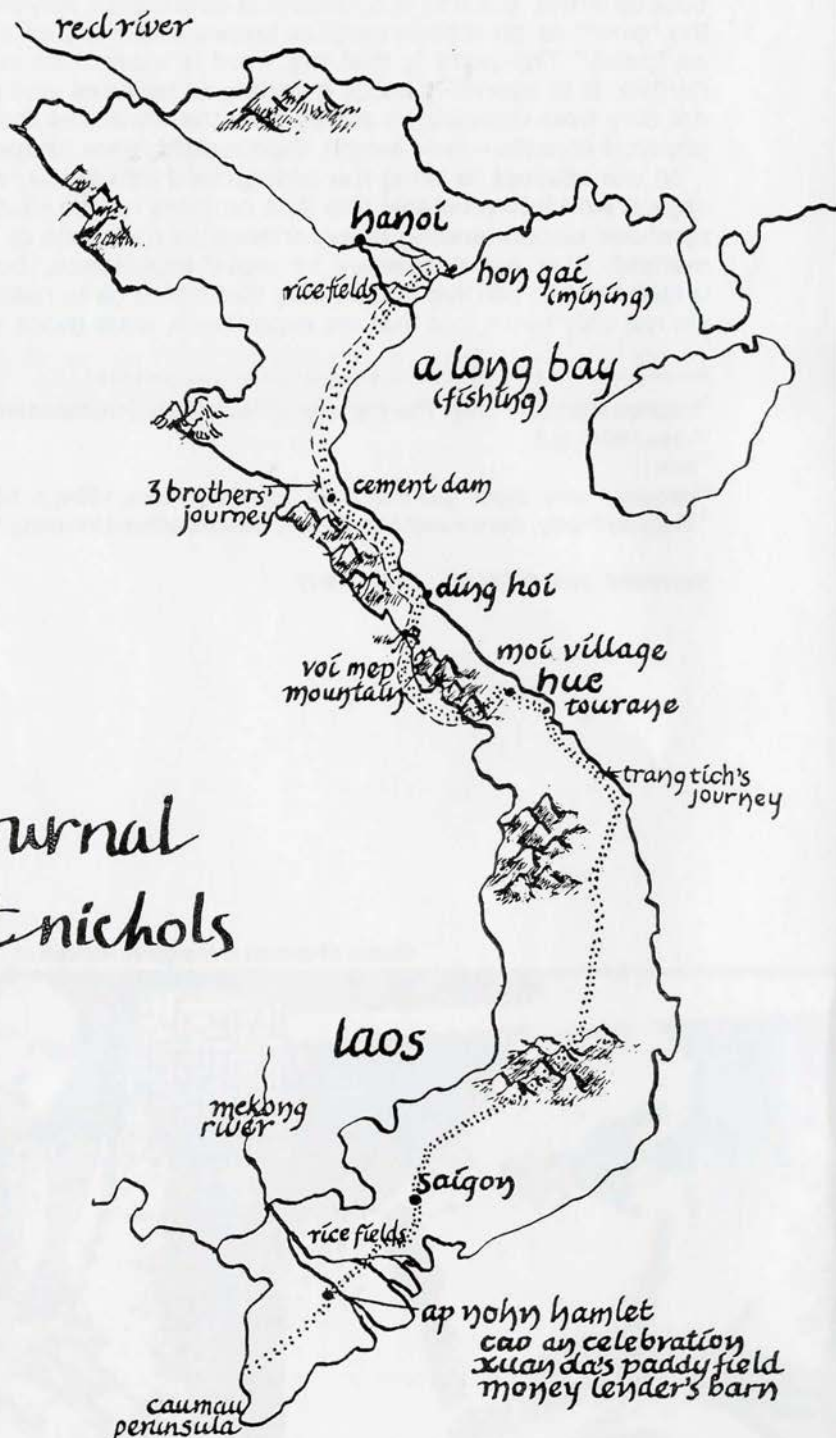
⁴Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-Sense*, (Northwestern University Press, 1964), p.17

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Susan Sherman & Margaret Randall at *Bohemia Magazine*, Havana, Cuba 196



vietnam journal
robert nichols



(Author's note: this section is part of a longer work which goes backwards and forwards in time. It has been written in the style of an improvisation. Somehow the first part, which was about America, tended to go backwards in time to Rome of about the 5th and 6th centuries, and to open out in space towards Asia. In this way I found myself writing about Vietnam, without expecting to. I have tried to recreate Vietnam in my imagination, using fictitious names and places simply taken off the map. I do not know if the short stories and poems are true. If so, I would like the Vietnamese who might read this to recognize themselves in them. Therefore I have written as realistically as I knew how.)

Note: The Bay of Along is just up the coast from Hanoi.

VIETNAM JOURNAL

Quan Dao Fa Tsi Long

La Baie d' Along

the Blue Bay of A-Long

brims the peaks

in the stillness

an oar creaks

he bends his back

the fisherman Tra Huu Quan

As the oar dips in and out

it scatters drops

like spit from the mouth of a water

buffalo

plows

the Bay of A-Long

the blue Bay of A-Long

"my wife at the stern hooked to a big fish"

(hopefully)

the mackerel dives under the mountain

roots

of the infinitely blue bay

CRR-EAK

the handle of the long sweep into the pivot

he bends his back

in the soaked paddy the farmer thrusts

his legs

Trang Tich struggles behind his water

buffalo

hip deep in mud

the rice terraces!

descend

one by one

to the Bay

drenched in sweat

CRR-EAK

CRR-EAK into the pivot

at the edge of the deck

the sampan rower steadies himself with

each stroke

with each stroke

leans forward and recovers

leans forward and recovers

ankles flexed

one foot balanced before the other along

the gunwale

suspended over

turquoise

"We call the mud red because of the

rich silts

collected from the highlands

and the river red

because of the dragon that sleeps

below its mouth underneath the

islands

with their weird shapes"

The noon whistle!

Nyugen Son Doc stretches

coal grime heavy on his arms

Smoothing the newspaper

he spreads his lunch out on the jetty

that runs from the Bay

into the coal mining town of Hon Gai

"my brother out there catching fish"

La Baie d' Along

In Mesopotamia and the Ionian cities of Asia Minor there were irrigation works of marvelous ingenuity on a truly vast scale. Among the world's wonders. It is commonly supposed that these were destroyed in the twelfth century by the Mongols, thus bringing to an end these great empires. On the contrary, they had begun to fail hundreds of years before, because of the lack of a sound water works policy. Over the previous five or six centuries, there had been floods, droughts, the irrigation ditches gradually

filling up with silt from the upland pastures, all this due to over-grazing by goats.

How fortunate we are that our people were farmers from a very early date, that is, after rice cultivation had been discovered and brought down into this peninsula. We have always hated goats and shepherds, and have been painstakingly careful in our own land practices always to contour the land and to protect the rice terraces, which are subject to violent rainstorms.

That is why in mid-summer when you go through one of our Vietnamese villages and you hear a drum beating, that is the sign of a real crisis. One of the dikes has broken, probably because of the ratholes. Then you will see the whole village turn out and rush to the trouble source, where they shore up the ruptured earth wall with bamboo poles then fill in the holes, stuffing them with straw and even thatch and pieces of mat from their houses.

(Hydrology Studies I)

Rain

from May on thru June to end of July
steadily and solidly
sky plug pulled out sluiceway open
pouring water
straight
down

grey grey

erasing the outline of trees

THE RAMPAGING RED RIVER

Rain

life-giving rain touches
the forehead cheeks mouth
into the open mouth
the first drops
of the first rain

then the succeeding rains
regularly every month
soaking the skin

Everywhere:
rain drumming

into the pocked bay
into the rice paddy
into the open pit coal mine

DROUGHT YEAR

beady-eyed gull observes hunger
close-mouth gull surveys the signs the
indications
of hunger without comment

Item low water in Song Ngan River

Item almost white sky enormous sun
standing directly overhead

with flick wingtips gull elevates glides
past

Tra Huu Quan's boat floats over
the dyke

Item to the horizon red hard-
baked soil
with cracks in it every few feet

Item a man lies on the ground with
his mouth open
a beetle crawling out of it

Thirst during the malaria fever!

Thirst of the cracked soil during the
dry months!

Hunger

FARMERS' HOLIDAY

The gong summoned everyone to the Dinh. The Sorcerer had come. He would perform a few tricks then go out with his helpers on all the roads, beating on the orange drum, all of them shouting at the top of their lungs to exorcize the cholera spirit. No harm in it.

At the entrance to the Dinh stood M. Pontebry, the French visitor, in a tropical white suit chatting with the Chief Notable. Yes, wasn't it a nice day? Already the children had crowded into the public section where they were waiting for the show to begin, their eyes bright and munching moon cakes. A band played in the corner. I was standing at the back next to two other

laborers, Xuan Da and Kim Dong Bac, who kept scratching himself.

Loud banging on the big drum hanging from the ceiling, measured strokes on the small drums, and a frenzied medley from the other musicians. Everyone stops talking about fertilizer.

The ritual begins under the supervision of Cung Boa Phach, the rites master. First, the Highest and Oldest Venerable scoots in, presents his food offering and kowtows, bending at the waist and holding out his hands at chest level, his hands trembling and his eyes watering slightly. He is followed by the other High Venerables, who also make offerings and kow-tow. Then the Village Notables and other members of the Cult Committee make their offerings and kowtow, in order of rank and by twos. These are followed again by the Police Agent and by the Village Recording Secretary. The French visitor in his white suit also kowtows. All this is done politely and smoothly.

During the first festival meal I had a nice talk with Cung Bac Phach, the Ritual Master, to whom I owe \$800 VN. He gave me some good advice about planting. Last year the bottom dropped out of the Yellow Grain rice market, but Cung Dao advises me to plant it again this year, there's bound to be some demand for it. He's going to plant a half hectare of Yellow Grain and also 7 hectares of Nanh Dran rice, the best. But that would be too costly for me in fertilizer. He also advised me to plant part of my field in Fox's Fang. A smart fellow.

More ceremonies, the town soccer game against Nho Lam, then the second food serving at five.

We ate it with relish, also drank a good deal of rice alcohol to celebrate the general good feeling. So by the end of it, Xuan Da, Kim Dong and I were feeling a bit potted. We were then stood up and packed up against the wall of the Dinh again, for the night ceremony. The musicians were all in the corner, on the wood bed.

It had been a very nice Cao An—that is for Peace and Prosperity, at the end of the dry season. We hope. By May 1, the

seed beds would be prepared; a month after that the fields barrowed and plowed, and the transplanting operations finished. All this with good luck, and enough rain of course. If so, we'd be through the worst danger by the middle of August; by then the plants would be grown and the first sweet smell of the ripe grains in everyone's nostrils.

Soon the Sorcerer and his party would return. For the Spirit Boat Ceremony. The Dinh would vibrate with the shouting and drum beating. The Spirits would be invited to enter the toy boat and eat, just as we had been doing. Then politely but very firmly and deliberately the spirit boat would be escorted down to the stream bank and shoved off. Good-bye, evil spirits! The stem-borers had been terrible the last few years. The pesticides didn't touch them, being only good against the leaf-chewing insects (because of the copper-sulphate solution). Still, it might be a good year in spite of everything. If it were, if the rains came, I was thinking and everything worked out all right and the market prices held, then I'd be able to pay back Cung Phoa, the money lender. If not, I'd be in even deeper.

Xuan Dao was wedged up next to me as if we were glued, the skin of his arm hot. I whispered to him: "How much do you owe Cung Phao, on next year's crop?"

"I owe him a half," he whispered back. "And you, how much do you owe him?" I asked Kim Dong.

"Three quarters."

Wild drumming, a frenzied explosion from the band members—several of whom had fallen off the bed. The Sorcerer swept in.

The Blue Bay of Along

At the edge

the Delta country lies flat flat
but higher up

where the hills meet irregularly
the rice terraces are shaped like dragonfly wings

In the last twenty years (since the introduction of fertilizer) three things have happened. First, the rice grains have

grown larger. Second, there are more bugs. Third, the rice-planting girls have stopped singing their song.

(from: An Old Man Remembers)

and that poem who was it by?
about "all the windows going up
and everybody laughed
to see an old man coming home
drunk
with flowers in his hair"
Something like that

AN OVERLAND JOURNEY

Some time ago, Tra Huu Quan, Trang Tich and Nuygen Son Doc went on a trip which I shall now describe to you. They left from the Bay of Along in a dry wind. The main road to the south lay on top of the dikes. It was heavily traveled in this district. Hardly ten minutes went by without some truck rumbling past, covering them and their bicycles with dust. When this happened they would stop and all shout as loudly as they could at the driver, brandishing their fists, Trang Tich making an obscene gesture and shooting his tongue out between the gap in his front teeth. Then roaring with laughter the three brothers would beat the dust off each other's clothes and continue on.

After four days traveling in this manner they came to a village at the junction of two rivers. Here a hydroelectric plant was in the process of being built. Everyone in the whole village was at work moving dirt. The women carried loads of earth and sand in two baskets hanging from a yoke slung across their backs. The men transported the heavier gravel, stone rubble and cement sacks in bullock wagons and sledges which were hauled uphill. The dam was going up directly above the town and was not far advanced.

After a supper of fish soup the travelers asked one of the foremen about the construction schedule. They received the following account: the dam was one of a series that was being planned and that would eventually cover the entire valley with a flood control and power network.

There would be additional benefits, such as irrigation, water purification, etc. The community had been at work steadily at this site for ten years. The project had been going along well and last year the dam was almost completed, when it collapsed, wrecking a large portion of the village and burying many people. Although the engineering had been sound (the foreman assured them), the officials in charge of the project had not understood how to mix cement. Now work had been started over again and this time it was going along excellently.

The travelers had now reached the province of Quang Binh, where the road over the mountains begins. Here the bicycles would be no longer serviceable. At Ding Hoi they traded them in at a store, for traveling supplies: sacks of tea and rice, sandals, and padded cloth coats to keep the cold out. Up to this point the brothers had worn only their black shorts and had gone barefoot. Tran and Tra Huu had on the traditional straw hats, but Nuygen Doc insisted on wearing his blue and grey striped miner's cap.

They walked towards the border of Quang Binh and soon found themselves in the forest. The trail kept going up and up. As it did so the air became cooler. The trees were very large and covered with vines spiraling up to the leafy roof through which chinks of sky glinted. But the ground below was fairly open, the trail keeping to the ridges.

Towards late afternoon they stopped by a waterfall and had tea. The noise of the birds and monkeys was almost as deafening as that of the water. The land fell away precipitously. Through an opening in the trees they could see the ocean, which they had left days before...

From the jungles of the plateau the road descends to the Coast very quickly, hardly more than a day's walk. Soon the travelers found themselves on the dike road running between prosperous paddy farms. That evening they were parading down the main street of Hue.

After three days sightseeing in Hue, spent visiting the pagodas and fine University buildings, they went twenty miles

down the coast to the ancient city of Tourane. Tourane had been the capital of the Emperor Thieu Tri during the magnificent and somewhat obsolete Nuygen Dynasty. It was here that the Imperial fleet suffered a humiliation at the hands of the French in March 1858.

On the morning of March 23rd
when the harbor was spotlighted
by the sun coming out from under a
cloud
and the harbor-side street was swarming
with whores, customs inspectors and
merchants selling dried squid—
suddenly the Fleet's sails were stripped.

In one moment
the air over the harbor was cluttered
with hundreds of pink, plum, crimson
viridian and chocolate-colored sails ...
the next

a forest of bare sticks

(Poem written by Tra Quan)

They were standing on the beach outside Tourane. The sea stretched for miles. If it had been night, Tra Quan's eyes would have gleamed in the phosphorescent light. Standing with his ankles in the waves, like a thin crane, the fisherman had grown taller and wirier. A hump had appeared on his back, from the pull of invisible tides.

When the brothers had started out four months ago, there had been a cold dry wind cutting down from the North and the Himalayas. Now it had shifted to a Southwesterly one, coming from the direction of Ceylon and Madagascar, carrying rain from the Indian Ocean. The monsoon wind. Time to return. Time to get back to work.

Tra Huu Quan and Nuygen Doc hiked North along the beach, the ocean at their right hand; on their left, the tree-tangled mountains at first, then the farms. They reached the Bay of A-Long. When they had come to a village on the shore as white as a bone, with the boats pulled up, Tra Quan split. Nuygen Son Doc went a little further on, to the Hon Gai mines.

Beside him the open seams of coal shone in the rain, like wet silk.

Trang Rich had decided to visit his wife's uncle's family on their farm on the Ca Mau peninsula. He took the main highway south. After Saigon he took Route 4 over the Delta. Shortly before he arrived at Ca Mau he heard over the radio the town had been evacuated because of a cholera epidemic. When he got there, the uncle's family was missing. He could find no trace of him.

LETTER FROM NUYGEN SON DOC

Milestone 6 Mine

Hon Gai

15th day 1st Lunar
Month

Dear Mother

I want to tell you how happy I am here at the Gam Pha mines. Last week our unit was awarded the Red Banner for the best boring machine team, that is with the highest production rate. It's flying over our boarding house now.

Sorry I can't be back home to-day, for Tet. Give my regards to my two brothers, will you please. And don't worry about me, Mom, they treat us miners great here: we have meat and potatoes every day, and on Sundays schnapps, katoufelpouffer (that's a kind of Czechoslovakian pancake) egg noodles and kippered herring.

I hear the French Fleet has captured Tourane.

Yours fraternally,
Nuygen

AN OLD MAN REMEMBERS—2

Stumbling up Thung Hiep road
the rain and the sea at my back
half drunk from drinking brandy while
fishing

my fingers frozen

I remember how we used to gather salt
in this meadow I am passing

Without paying a tax without paying a
tax!

Without paying a tax without paying a
tax!

oh rain

soggy old village road in winter



CATASTROPHES!

Note that they were:

- 1) COLLAPSE OF THE CONCRETE DAM
 - 2) FOREST FIRE
 - 3) WAR
 - 4) FAMINE
 - 5) PESTILENCE
- the wheel of Buddha

RITUAL SONG

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
CARBON IS OXIDIZED

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
(gong)

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
(gong)

& THE SEA GIVES UP ITS COLD IONS
WHICH ARE DISCHARGED AS RAIN
(gong)

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
(gong)
NITRATES ARE FORMED
(gong)

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
THE WORM BURROWS
TO MAKE A PASSAGE & THE WILD
CUCUMBER APPEARS

(the participants gather. Filling the vessel
with water they intone)

THE POND IS CONSTANT
UNDER MY LORD BUDDHA'S EYE
(gong)

IT FILLS & REFILLS
(gong)

THE POND REFRESHES ITSELF BY
OVERTURNING

AUTUMN & SPRING

MORNING & EVENING

THE FISH DIES
& IS TRANSFORMED INTO WEEDS
INTO ROOTS & TUBERS

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
(gong)

IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
(gong)

(the participants fill the vessel with earth
& intone to the gong sounds)

THE PRAIRIE STRETCHES ITSELF
A SINGLE ORGANISM

UNDER THE YELLOW MOON
(gong gong)

IT NOURISHES ITSELF FROM THE
DEPTHS

(gong)
 IN THE EYE OF BUDDHA
 THE FLOOR OF THE OCEAN RISES
 TO BECOME BLUEGRASS
 THE DEER THE BUFFALO THE CAT
 GO FROM THE SALT LICK
 (gong)
 & THUS PHOSPHORUS IS
 DISTRIBUTED
 IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA
 (gong)
 THE WILD PUMA GOES OUT
 IN THE EYE OF MY LORD BUDDHA

(An egg is placed on top of the vessel of
 earth and water. The participants join
 hands & say)

ALL IS MAINTAINED
 ALL IS MAINTAINED
 ALL IS MAINTAINED
 IN AN OPEN STEADY STATE
 IN THE FLEXED ELBOW OF BUDDHA

(gong)
 HE SHOOTS LIGHT THROUGH THE
 GASSY ENVELOPE

(gong)
 WE LIVE IN THE LIMIT BETWEEN TWO
 BURNS

OF THE WAVE FREQUENCY
 (gong)
 THE CELL IS A NEGATIVE ENTROPY
 FOR MY LORD BUDDHA

(gong)
 FOR MY LORD BUDDHA
 (gong)
 HE REGULATES THE HEAT GRADIENT
 IN THE PETROLEUM LAKE (gong)
 LIES A FOSSIL (gong)

OF STORED SUNLIGHT (gong)
 THE WHOLE OF BLUE IS CONTAINED
 IN THE COBALT OF MY LORD
 BUDDHA
 THE WHOLE OF RED IS CONTAINED
 IN THE MANGANESE OF LORD
 BUDDHA
 THE WHOLE OF YELLOW IS CON
 TAINED
 IN THE SULPHUR OF MY LORD
 BUDDHA

A FOREST MADE OF RAIN

a forest made of rain
 the eucalyptus—*Eucalyptus marginata*
 mahogany the teak tree
 made of rain
 made one half of rain

Downpour Rainflood must exceed 3 or
 4 feet in a year
 and the wind be not dry but moist
 water-laden the wood-weight

the dense rainforest of the Pacific
 put to-gether drop by drop

the Northeastern hardwood-hemlock
 configuration
 In the mist the Tropical rainforest
 rises out of thin air

The soil profile is displaced upwards
 molecules of quartz felspar pried loose
 pulled into the capillaries
 stone moving into the atmosphere of
 rain

the dead porcupine is raised through
 the earth layers
 by its own quills

The leaf streams Sun-engine drives
 fluttering
 splitting the carbon atom out from the air
 binding it into the water molecule
 fat body

of the Teak Tree
 radiates green green

(Fifth chromopoem) THE WHEEL OF BUDDHA

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER'S FUNERAL

A group of farmers were returning to Ap
 Nohn hamlet along National Highway 1.
 The road ran alongside Xan Da's field. As
 they approached they saw the body of an
 American soldier lying cross the paddy
 field. The earth was a powdery ocher
 with the stubble of last summer's rice
 crop glimmering a faint yellow.

The body was enormous. It stretched
 from one edge of the field to the other. At
 the north boundary the frond of a clump
 of *latania* palms had been torn slightly.
 The feet rested at the south end not far
 from the water paddle wheel. A hand
 sprawled across a dike.

These farmers (and their families) had been away for several weeks, at one of the Government's "New Life" Hamlets. They carried bundles slung over bamboo sticks. It was a crisp day. They examined the corpse carefully walking around it at some length, touching the big pack which was strapped on the soldier's back with their sticks and occasionally prodding the pockets of which there were a great number. Then they sat down to wait under the palm clump. Xuan Da's boy was sent on ahead to the village to inform the Chief Notable. It was around noon.

By the middle of the afternoon the entire village had come out to Xuan Da's field. The villagers walked around the corpse in groups, discussing the fine points. The children cracked nuts. Luckily the middle harvest was in. The ground was dry and had not been dug up. The dikes were packed hard and were undamaged except where the hand had breached a wall next to the irrigation stream. At the bottom of the ditch the water purred softly.

What is the difference between the death of a soldier and the death of an ordinary person? That's a hard question. In the death of an ordinary person the body is washed and dressed ceremonially, the vigil and the burial service had to be performed in exactly the right way, then the spirit will be permitted to take its place directly with the revered ancestors. Even when the family lives far away (as in the case of the Chinese merchants on Cholon) the body is simply shipped back in a box, and the ghost with it, to the ancestral village and there—you can count on it—the right rituals will be performed by the authorized persons. But when a soldier dies, obviously this is a very serious matter.

There is also the matter of size. True, ghosts don't have an actual physical size and shape. Still, they are determined by what they were. This is particularly true of animals. For instance, in the smaller animals—the pig, the dog and the cat—ghosts are considered relatively harmless though sometimes troublesome. These are the "Little Ma" that one stubs one's toe on, or stumbles over while crossing a field at night. But the "Big Ma"—that is the large animal ghosts, the

ghosts of the horse, oxen and water buffalo—can be extremely dangerous. How much more dangerous than the spirit of this huge soldier.

Who would take care of it, so the ghost would not wander? There were no relatives. Who would pray for it? How could it be dressed for the funeral? How could it even be washed properly?

That evening nothing was decided. The Chief Notable arrived soon after supper with the Buddhist Priest. But they could not agree on what to do. Under the Notable's direction the minimum precautionary measures were undertaken and the whole company went back to the hamlet to sleep.

VIGIL DURING THE FIRST NIGHT

Everyone had left Xuan Da's paddy field except three boys who had been assigned to remain behind and scare away the rats. Every so often they ran around the corpse clapping sticks and setting off fire crackers. A ladder led up about 20 feet to the soldier's stomach. On top of this several large bunches of bananas had been placed under the priest's direction. This was to divert the Celestial Dog, so he would not be tempted to gobble up the soldier's entrails.

2ND DAY OCCURRENCES

In the morning a rigging crew arrived from the provincial highway department at Soc Trang. They were accompanied by officials of the Agricultural department. The owner of Xuan Da's land (you remember, he was a tenant farmer) had got wind of it, and had telephoned the administration insisting that the corpse be moved off the paddy onto the asphalt paved highway. Otherwise the soil might be permanently damaged. Although it was now the dry season, rains would begin in a few months and impurities would accumulate.

The morning passes. Everyone is here, but now the post-hole digger has to arrive. It is the plan of the rigging crew to drive in concrete posts on the far side of the highway. Block and tackle will be attached to them, and the corpse pulled by winch to the asphalt road. The pulling of the body across the dikes will be the tricky part.

P.M. The rigging crew has driven in the concrete stakes. However the priest and the Highest Venerable returned shortly after lunch and insisted that the body not be moved until some time later after it had been washed. None of the villagers volunteered to do this.

2ND NIGHT

My neighbor's son, Nuygen Li, and several other teenage boys, have been assigned as guardians of the field for the 2nd night, also a girl cousin of Nuygen's. Few firecrackers were set off. A thatched hut has been built temporarily in the lantania grove, very comfortable. Luckily the body has not begun to smell yet and the air is still fresh, especially in the night breeze. And all the stars are shining.

THE 3RD DAY

A flock of beach plovers and many white cranes have perched on the body. There is danger that the soldier's eyes might be pecked out by the smaller birds, but they are protected by the big bony brows which cast a shadow over the face, and the heavy eyebrows. The cranes rummage among the uniforms for fleas. An official plan has now been drawn up. The State Highway Department in cooperation with the Agricultural Administration will winch the body onto the road. The earth dikes must be leveled to accomplish this and the irrigation stream filled in. The canal has to be diverted upstream. A digging crew is already working on this. Boundaries must be changed, at least temporarily, and certain landowners will have to be compensated. The plan is to lift the corpse up onto two flatcars. It will then be transported to the estuary where it will be set adrift on the flatcars. It is hoped at this stage the body will be picked up by the U.S. 7th Fleet and given the correct burial services.

Everyone was ready to get started. However the Fortune Teller arrived from Can Tho. He has told us this week is not auspicious for moving anything (because of the star conjunctions). It might bring very bad luck. But the day after tomorrow will be more auspicious.

5TH DAY

We move down the main road in the direction of Ap Nohn hamlet. Low tide. On either side the streams drain, rivulets of blue in the black mud. Through the paddy flats which stretch endlessly the river loops back and forth, and finally disappears behind the tall clump of palms that mark the village. This is situated on high ground, like an island in the ocean of rice fields. The palms swivel. The cortege is now about 3/4 of a mile away, strung out along the road. Birds swoop overhead.

THE HAMLET OF AP NOHN

The hamlet of Ap Nohn consists of a small store selling fish sauce and canned goods, and the Dinh where meetings and religious ceremonies are held. Also along the spur road are two primary schools, two cemeteries and the town soccer field. There are about fifty houses scattered at varying intervals depending on river access to the rear: each house has its boat landing where a sampan or pirogue is tied up, under the dense cover of banana trees. House and barns are made of wood with tile roofs. As the procession crosses the town line over a bridge, with the planks clattering, we are almost run over by a small boy driving a flock of ducks.

We move down the main street.

Two villagers have been chosen to represent the mother and father of the deceased; also a group to impersonate the rest of the kin, brothers, patrilineal grandparents, the soldier's widow, etc. All these march behind the hearse looking very distraught. The women wear mourning cloth of white gauze very sloppily put on, and the men rough turbans wrapped around their heads. Everyone looks utterly overcome and distracted, as if they had just gotten out of bed or were running from a fire. The male mourners pretending to be part blind, totter on bamboo sticks making tapping noises, while the women and birds shriek.

At the head of the process is the band. Then the priest and the fortune teller supported on hammocks. Then come the paper prayer scrolls and pennants lifted aloft and the lavish displays of ceremonial food held over the heads of the young men, most of whom are drunk on rice wine.

Along the sides of the road children, who have recently been burned, give away paper money.

Through the trees at the end of the village street the boat landing can be glimpsed.

We are now passing Cung Bao Phach's, the money-lender's house. Unfortunately the wheels get caught in the sand and the whole hearse tips over, sending the body sprawling against Bao Phach's barn. The impact of the fall has split the corpse open. Birds descend, the beaks of the sandpipers and cranes puncturing the

worn fabric and the dry skin. In the pack that the soldier has been wearing strapped to his back, it is discovered that there is another dead soldier. There are also others inside each of the pockets and the other holes everywhere which the birds now proceed to open.

The air is black with them. How many ghosts of the dead—hundreds and hundreds? We will suffer forever. The land will always be damaged by them.

(reprinted from IKON #3 July, 1967)

THE SAD STORY ABOUT THE SIX BOYS ABOUT TO BE DRAFTED IN BROOKLYN



Photo by Karl Bissinger

GRACE PALEY

I
There were six boys in Brooklyn and none of them wanted to be drafted.

Only one of them went to college. What could the others do?

One shot off his index finger. He had read about this in a World War I novel.

One wore silk underpants to his physical. His father had done that for World War II.

One went to a psychiatrist for three years starting three years earlier (his mother to save him had thought of it).

One married and had three children.

One enlisted and hoped for immediate preferential treatment. This is what happened next:

II

The boy who enlisted was bravely killed. There was a funeral for him at home. People sat on boxes and wore new sackcloth as it was one of the first of that family's bad griefs. They ate and wept.

Then, accidentally, due to a mistake in the filing system, the married father of three children was drafted. He lived a long time, maybe three months and killed several guerillas, two by strangulation, two by being a crack shot, and one in self defense. Then he was killed as he slept in the underbrush for other people think they ought to act in self defense too.

A couple of years later, the boy who had gone to the psychiatrist for three years and the boy in the silk underpants were reclassified. Because of their instabilities, they had always been against killing. Luckily, they never got further than the middle airplane over the very middle of the Pacific Ocean. There, the mighty jet exploded, perhaps due to sabotage, distributing 133 servicemen in a blistery blaze to their watery graves.

As the war went on and on, the college boy became twenty six years old. He was now in his eighth year in college. He could not remember the name of his high school when he applied for his first job. He could not remember his mother's maiden name which is essential to applications. Nervousness ran in that family and finally reached him. He was taken to rest in a comfortable place in pleasant surroundings where he remained for twelve years. When he was about thirty-eight he felt better and returned to society.

Now, the man with the shot-off index finger:

III

Even after four years, he didn't miss that finger. He had used it to point accusingly at guilty persons, for target shooting, for filing alphabetically. None of these actions concerned him anymore. To help him make general

love, he still had his whole hand and for delicate love, his middle finger.

Therefore he joyfully married and fathered several children. All of them had shot-off index fingers, as did their children.

That family became a peaceful race apart. Sickness and famine didn't devastate them. Out of human curiosity they traveled and they were stubborn and tough like the feathery seeds of trees that float over mountain barriers and railroad valleys. In far places the children of the children of the man with the shot-off index finger gathered into settlements and cities and of course, they grew and multiplied.

And that's how at last, if you can believe it, after the dead loss of a million dead generations, on the round, river-streaked face of the earth, war ended.

(reprinted from IKON#3 July, 1967)

ROBERTA GOULD

Untitled Poem

Will they bow before your face of
an old man on a child
skin bare, pink, purple,
chin braced over
the neck with its hole?

Will they come to weep before you,
scarred, bearded, nose to a side,
seeing from one eye,
the other off towards the cheek?

Will the women shake
holding palms up to the roof of the bus
at the sight of you?
Or thrill at your stripes,
embrace them,
give you what you need
for love or money?

Or will you be kicked
as defeat
as they live
movie proud, world smooth,
with brief case, with cane?

Want to reach out and can't
and can't be touched
because the pain's enduring.

Bandages drop, are removed or rot
and artificial limbs are sent—
they stop communism that way.
The world turns
the nations roll
Whether they
enshrine you or beat you to death
you are
love
one
flower
In
this heart.



Photo by Karl Bissing

ANGRY ARTS FOR LIFE AND AGAINST THE WAR

The Week of the Angry Arts started from a few human centers of pain, hopelessness, anger, despair, fury... and became 500 artists who presented forty events to about 65,000 people. It took some risky and foolish directions along the way—like any work of art there was no sure notion of what it would become.

A couple of stubborn people from Artists Protest and the Greenwich Village Peace Center met, involved other artists, worked with certain conventional ideas for a while, but in large opinionated meetings they soon saw that it was important to be wide open—to say yes. If an artist wanted to take responsibility for an idea and act on it, that artist became something like a committee and put out a call. If others too were looking for a way to speak through their own work about their loathing for the war in Vietnam, then they would all get together and be the ones in charge of the shape of the Week.

There were no lists of great persons drawn up to send out sponsored calls to action. There was no administration that could do this or had interest in doing it—all the energy went to the work itself. With a few early exceptions, well known artists were drawn later, to rumors of new and interesting forms of protest. For instance, the organization of the "Napalm Poetry Reading" happened after dozens of poets had experimented with street caravans, reading off a flatbed truck on city street corners—distributing tens of thousands of poem booklets, "Is This What You Were Born For?!" Something like the "Vietnamese Life Project" had never been done before. Thirty or forty poets, dancers, actors...many of them the same people who had worked on the trucks, helped develop a seven hour investigation into Vietnamese life which showed "The People's Wounds," "A Vietnamese Wedding," "The

Guerrillas," "Night," "Faces," "Bicycles," "Children in Cities," "The Forest"...that is, the whole life of the people we're killing.

The Week of the Angry Arts was not a "Famous Name Performance" to enhance the peace movement but an open opportunity for any artist to speak in his own language. Musicians have signed ads and petitions before, but when a pianist played a Bach Partita in a Harlem church service and dedicated it to the Vietnamese people, he was saying, "This work is my signature. It is my demonstration before the people and the government."

These were the events of the week:

Eleven music programs including unusual events like Schubert's opera *Lysistrata* last performed 100 years ago, a midnight concert in Town Hall, a conductorless orchestra ("to symbolize individual responsibility..."), *Wachet Auf* by the Judson Ensemble and the Bread and Puppet Theatre...also two *avant-garde* programs, jazz and folk rock.

Dancers: Two programs at Hunter College.

Theatre: six Off-Broadway plays, one "Broadway Dissents" and "The Last Word", a variety show, two childrens' shows—all crowded. The "Napalm Poetry Reading," "Vietnamese Life," The Poets Caravan, three panel discussions (two on the war and the artist and one on "Architects and Vietnam.") Also the "Vietnam-Life Happening" at Lincoln Center in which 200 people participated. And "The Collage of Indignation"—the work of 100 artists on a 100 foot length canvas which was visited by over 20,000 people at NYU's Loeb Center. All of these were coordinated and booked into churches, theatres, community centers by a coordinator and a lot of artist volunteers. The labor was enormous and quantity and quality worked hard together.

Once the week was over and its achievement known, it seemed absolutely clear to some of the artists that the name had to be changed to Angry Arts FOR LIFE and Against the War in Vietnam. Many of the artists had been pained from the beginning

by the omission of those two words and of course the meaning of the Film Committee had been—specifically—a film collage called "For Life and Against the War." Others couldn't care less and only wanted to continue and extend their anti-war activity.

The Poets Caravan did go on and visited college campuses throughout the city and were brave on the street corners of Queens and the Bronx. The film collage, the slide and tape show, some of the "Collage of Indignation," the "Napalm Poetry Reading" and parts of "Vietnamese Life" were exported to the Angry Arts Week of other cities—and to universities all over the country. Requests for the use of this material continue and there is an invitation to bring some of it to Montreal in August.

In May, a group of young poets met with Andrei Vosnezensky who had been spending most of his time in New York with the uptown literary establishment. After some discussion, he proposed a poetry reading along with the poets in order to make quite clear his position on the war. He wanted also to identify himself with younger American poets as he has with the younger generation of Russian poets. Four days after the first announcements, he recited his poems and fifteen American poets and one Englishman read their poems in a program that included Philip Corner and The Fugs—an evening called "3-Penny Poetry Reading for Life and Against the War in Vietnam." For which the admission was 3 cents.

The Future: Street Fairs will be co-sponsored with community organizations, particularly in low income communities not reached by middle class peace organizations. An effort will be made to link local issues with the war if community groups agree. The PEACE/ARTS CENTER which is being set up now will make the experience and the artists of Angry Arts available to the peace movement. Theatre pieces, poets, films, tapes, slides, musicians, singers will help provide the anti-war organizations with different ideas and new possibilities of communication. The artists themselves will have a platform and the continuous opportunity to act and experiment.

Much to the surprise of people who had had furious disagreements on everything but opposition to the war, a community of artists does exist. An interested and demanding audience exists. The American artist has never expected to be taken seriously. The serious attention of those crowded auditoriums and theatres, the statistical accomplishment of so many performances and programs cannot help but change artists and their work. Whatever Angry Arts undertakes, however, there is a determination to keep the organizational end of it as unstructured and flexible as possible. Indeed, this is the real challenge of Angry Arts.

(reprinted from IKON #3 July, 1967)

HENRY FLYNT

Exercise Awareness-States (July 1961)

*The July 1967 issue of IKON contained Henry Flynt's "Mock Risk Games." This work was a reconstruction, from memory, of Flynt's 1961 work, "Exercise Awareness-States," which Flynt had disavowed and discarded in 1962. In 1981 Flynt obtained a copy of the original 1961 piece in the possession of Tom Constanten. In this issue IKON publishes, for the first time, the original "Exercise Awareness-States." Preceding the text, we reprint the introduction from "Mock Risk Games" because of its clarity in explaining the work. Flynt read "Exercise Awareness-States" during his July 15, 1961 appearance in the legendary series at George Maciunas' A/G Gallery, NYC. This was the only documented public presentation of the work in that period. The reconstruction "Mock Risk Games" has been printed a number of times—it was included in Flynt's book, *Blueprint For a Higher Civilization* (Milan, 1975).*

INTRODUCTION (from "Mock Risk Games"—1967 Version)

Suppose you stand in front of a swinging door with a nail sticking out of it pointing at your face; and suppose you are prepared to jump back if the door suddenly opens in your face. You are deliberately taking a risk on the assumption that you can protect yourself. Let us call such a situation a "risk game." Then a "mock risk game" is a risk game such that the misfortune which you risk is contrary to the course of nature, a freak misfortune; and thus your preparation to evade it is correspondingly superficial.

If the direction of gravity reverses and you fall on the ceiling, that is a freak misfortune. If you don't want to risk this misfortune, then you will anchor yourself to the floor in some way. But if you stand free so that you can fall, and yet try to prepare so that if you do fall, you will fall in such a way that you won't be hurt, then that is a mock risk game. If technicians could actually effect or simulate gravity reversal in the room, then the risk game would be a real one. But I am not concerned with real risk games. I am interested in dealing with gravity reversal in an everyday environment, where everything tells you it can't possibly happen. Your "preparation" for the fall is thus superficial, because you still have the involuntary conviction that it can't possibly happen.

Mock risk games constitute a new area of human behavior, because they aren't something people have done before you don't know what they will be like until you try them, and it took a very special effort to devise them. They have a tremendous advantage over other activities of comparable significance, because they can be produced in the privacy of your own room without special equipment. Let us explore this new psychological effect; and let us not ask what use it has until we are more familiar with it.

Instructions for a variety of mock risk games follow. (I have played each game many times in developing it, to ensure that the experience of playing it will be compelling.) For each game, there is a physical action to be

performed in a physical setting. Then there is a list of freak misfortunes which you risk by performing the action, and which you must be prepared to evade. The point is not to hallucinate the misfortunes, or even to fear them, but rather to be prepared to evade them. First you work with each misfortune separately. For example, you walk across a room, prepared to react self-protectingly if you are suddenly upside down, resting on the top of your head on the floor. In preparing for this risk, you should clear the path of objects that might hurt you if you fell on them, you should wear clothes suitable for falling, and you should try standing on your head, taking your hands off the floor and falling, to get a feeling for how to fall without getting hurt. After you have mastered the preparation for each misfortune separately, you perform the action prepared to evade the first misfortune and the second (but not both at once). You must prepare to determine instantly which of the two misfortunes befalls you, and to react appropriately. After you have mastered pairs of misfortunes, you go on to triples of misfortunes, and so forth.

EXERCISE AWARENESS-STATES (July, 1961)

I am concerned here to introduce an activity which I will call, for want of a better term, "exercise," and the states of awareness one has in exercise, "exercise awareness-states." Incidentally, this activity is based on wrong, although common, philosophical assumptions, but I hope the reader will play along with them for the sake of the activity; philosophical rightness is not the main concern here. Exercise should be thought of first as training to help prepare one for dangerous situations of a very special kind (which the reader is admittedly not likely to encounter). (Incidentally, 'danger' here should not be an emotive word; my concern is with the theory of defense, not with giving the reader vicarious experience.) Suppose that the adults in a society occasionally have to be in situations, such as walking across a bare metal floor in a certain "building," during which *dangers*, very unusual and *unpredictable*, may arise. Suppose that they know nothing of the provenance of the dangers, just that they may be there, so that they can't prevent them (or predict what they will be); the persons are somewhat like animals trying to defend themselves against a variety of modern (human) weapons. They cannot adequately prepare for the dangers by practicing responses to specific dangers so that they become habitual, because of the extreme unpredictability of the actual dangers. However, the dangers are such that when one arises a person *can* figure out what he needs to do to defend himself *fast enough* and carry it out.

Finally, suppose that although it is desired to train persons [to be prepared] to defend themselves in the situations, there isn't the technology to simulate dangers, so that they can't be given a chance to actually figure out and carry out defenses against simulated dangers. Then it would seem that the best preparation in the situations (until a danger appeared) would be the *state of mind*—"unpredictably-dangerous-situation awareness state"—of lack of preconceptions as to what one might encounter, emotionlessness (except for the small amount of fear and confidence needed to make one maximally alert), very very heightened awareness of all sensory data, and readiness to figure out (quickly) whether they indicated a danger and [to figure out] a

defense against it. After all, it might be best to stay away, or at least get away, from the preparation resulting from practice with simulated dangers, just because the actual ones are so unpredictable. Training for the situations would then be to help persons achieve this best dangerous-situation awareness-state when in the situations. Then (one should first think) the purpose of "exercise," or the "exercises," is to help persons to achieve the best dangerous-situation awareness-state in the situations by teaching them to achieve "*ultimate exercise awareness-states*," which are as similar as possible to the best dangerous-situation states within the limitations I have given.

Exercise may secondly be thought of as something to be done for its own sake, so that ultimate exercise awareness-states are achieved for their own sake, in particular, as an unusual way of "appreciating" the sensory data while in them. This is the way I suppose the reader will regard exercise. Thus exercise, rather than unpredictably dangerous situations, is the principal subject of this paper. However, it should not be lost sight of that exercise could be useful in the first way; and the development of exercises should be controlled by concern with whether they are useful in the first way.

I will now give some explanations and general instructions for exercise. An "exercise" is what the general instructions, and a specification of a(n exercise) "*situation*" one is to place oneself in and of several "*given dangers*" to anticipate in the situation, refers to; an "*exercise awareness-state*" is any state of mind throughout an exercise. In first doing an exercise, one anticipates given dangers; the point of having specific dangers to anticipate at first is to keep one from anticipating nothing, being indifferent in the situation and thus not achieving an interesting awareness-state. In a good exercise, the dangers should be interesting to anticipate, one should find it easy to anticipate them strongly, and it should be clear what is dangerous in them and how they can be defended against. It is only when one can anticipate the given dangers strongly that one does the exercise, places oneself in the situation, without thinking of specific dangers, trying to strongly anticipate unpredictable danger; when one can do this one will be achieving "*ultimate exercise awareness-states*."

The general instructions for the exercises follow. First place oneself in the situation, anticipate one of the given dangers as strongly as possible (short of getting oneself in a state of fright), be very very aware of all sensory data, and be ready to figure out (quickly) whether they indicate the danger and to start defending against it. Try to achieve the greatest anticipation of and readiness for the one danger. The result is an "*initial exercise awareness-state*." Finally one can do the exercise forgetting the given dangers; place oneself in the situation, try to anticipate [unpredictable] danger strongly (short of getting oneself frightened), without preconceptions as to what form it will take, be very very aware of all sense data, and be ready to figure out (quickly) whether they indicate a danger, and a defense against it. This is an "*ultimate exercise awareness-state*." A final point. So that one will not be distracted from the exercise, there must be a minimum of familiar events extraneous to it during it, such as the sight of a door opening, talking, cooking smells. For this reason, unless otherwise stated exercise should be taken in environments as inanimate, quiet, odorless, etc. as possible. One will fail to achieve interesting exercise awareness-states if one cannot play

along and (for the sake of the exercise) strongly anticipate danger; [because one doesn't expect it,] but rather remains relaxed, indifferent, or worse is sleepy, physiologically depressed (indifferent, depressed exercise states). It should be clear that one has to really try the exercises, not just read about them, in order to appreciate them.

EXERCISE 1

The situation: You walk across the floor of a medium-sized brightly lighted square room, from the middle of one side to the middle of the other, in a straight line. There should be no other animal [fauna, animate creature] in the room and the path of walking should be clear [of obstructions]; ideally the room should be bare.

The given dangers to anticipate:

- (1) Heavy invisible objects falling around you, making a whirring noise as they do.
- (2) Immovability of whichever foot presses most strongly on the floor, and a steel cylinder two feet in diameter with sharp edges' falling down, around you (hopefully).
- (3) Instantaneous inversion of yourself so that you rest on whatever part of your surface was uppermost in walking, and doubling of the gravitational force on you.
- (4) Sudden dizziness, change of equilibrium to that of one who has been turning around for a long time, and the floor's vanishing except for a narrow strip, where you have walked, shortening from the front.
- (5) Change of field of vision to behind your head, instead of in front, something's coming to hit you from the side in an erratic path, and loud noises on the side of you opposite it.
- (6) What you see's suddenly becoming two-dimensional instead of three so that you bump into it, while the room fills from behind with a mildly toxic gas; and going forward's requiring that you *guess* the unpredictable action, symbolic of getting past the barrier, which will enable you to get forward.

EXERCISE 2

You stand, in a dark room, facing a wall and pulling medium hard with both hands on a horizontal bar running along the wall and attached to it, for five minutes. Have an alarm clock to let you know when the time is up. There should be no other animal in the room; ideally the room should be bare. You must not let up on the pulling; the assumption is that if you do your eyes and ears will be assaulted with a blinding light and a deafening sound, except in the case of certain dangers.

The dangers:

- (1) Loss of your kinesthetic sense. (body-movement or muscle sense)
- (2) Suspension of the "normal" "cause and effect" relationship between pulling and keeping the light and sound from appearing, so that you just have to guess what to do to keep them from appearing and it changes with time, with the restriction that it will be closely related to pulling on the bar, e.g. letting go of the bar.
- (3) Suspension of the "normal" "cause and effect" relationship between what you will and what your body does, so that you just have to guess what to will to keep your arms (and hands) pulling on the bar and it changes with

time, with the restriction that it will be closely related to willing to pull on the bar, e.g. willing to let go of the bar.

(4) Having the tactile, cutaneous sensation of being under water, so that you will "drown"—"cutaneously"—unless you cutaneously swim to the top; your sight and hearing being lost except for sensitivity to the light and sound if you stop pulling.

EXERCISE 3

The situation: You lie on your back, barefoot, on a bunk, your arms more or less at your sides, with a pillow on your face so that you can breathe but not easily, for five minutes. Do not change your position; the assumption is that you can't except in the case of certain dangers. Have an alarm clock to let you know when the time is up. The room should be dark and there should be no other animal in it. Ideally you should be lying, in the middle and along the longitudinal axis of a not uncomfortably hard rectangular surface a yard above the floor and having an area almost that of the room, in a very long room, which should otherwise be bare.

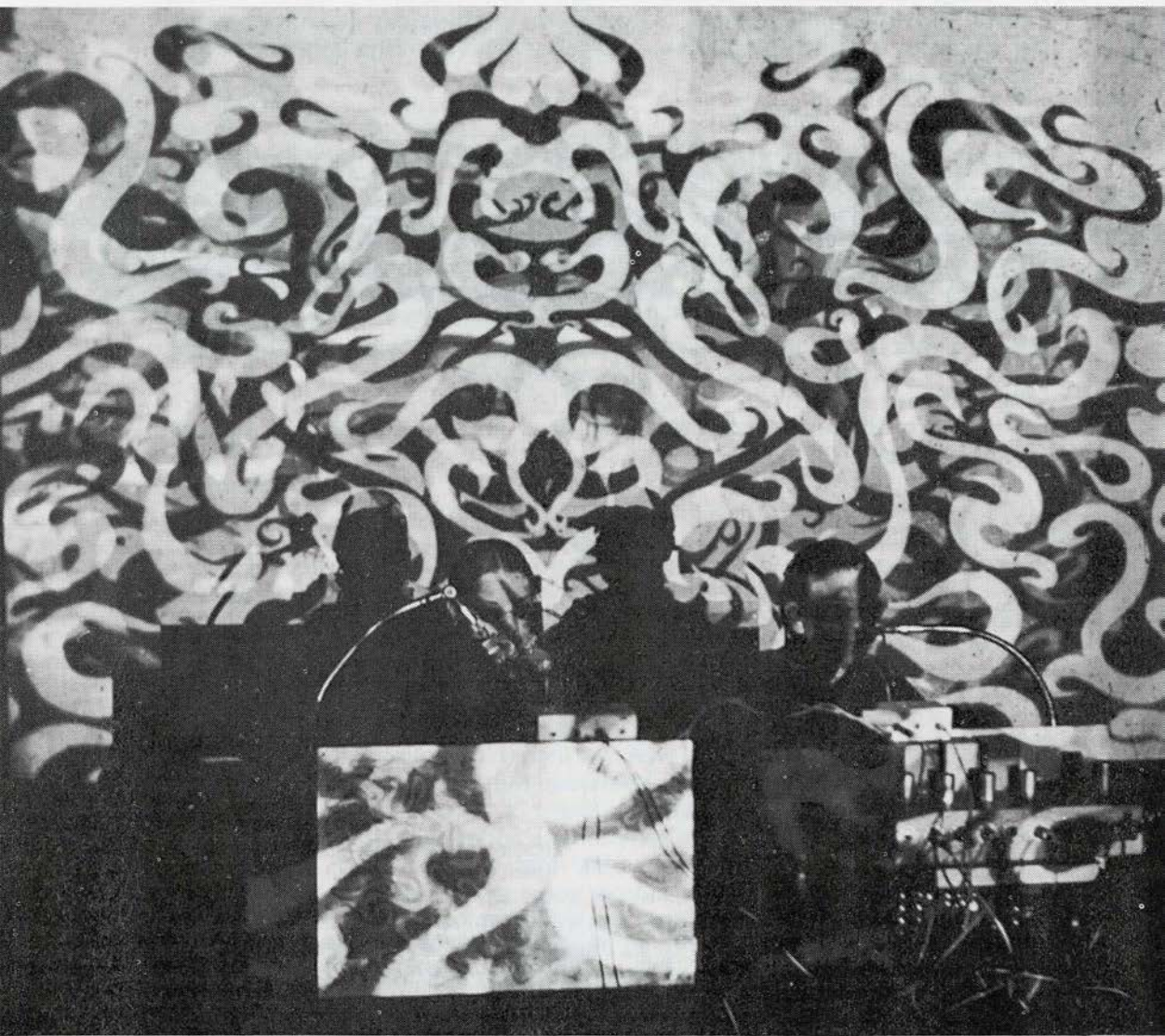
The dangers:

(1) The gravitational force's becoming zero and the room's getting unbearably hot towards the ceiling.

(2) Having to press the pillow against your face with your arms and hands, except for one angle of your face wherein you can roll your face from under the pillow, your head and neck becoming movable.

(3) The surface you are lying on's and the pillow's turning into a two-part living organism, of which the lower part is so delicate that unless you distribute your bodily pressure on it as evenly as possible, it will be injured and the upper part will pull you off of it by the skin of your face in self-protection, the organism being sufficiently telepathic that you can sense when it is hurting.

(4) Division of your body (and clothing) just below the ribs. The two halves separate by 1½ feet and a metal wall one inch thick appears between them. Matter and so forth are transmitted between halves and they remain in the usual position relative to each other so that it is rather as if you simply grew in the middle by 1½ feet. Your consciousness suddenly seems to be located in the pillow, where the pillow is, rather than in your head; nothing that happens to the pillow materially affects your consciousness. Two kinds of metal blocks come crashing against the wall from far in front of and behind it, starting slowly and speeding up as they get near the wall, and then draw back to where they came from. Blocks of the first kind come from the front (the side the upper part of your body and the pillow are on) only; they are "vertical," tall and narrow so that they can be avoided by moving from side to side. Blocks of the second kind come in pairs, one in front, one behind. They are "horizontal," two feet high (thick), and very wide (long). The ones in front hit low and the ones in back high, so they can be avoided by standing up (necessarily in a stooped position). Each time the pair hits higher and higher. There are long indentations in the back side of the wall in which one can get footholds to climb the wall. If one gets to the top of the wall, gets both halves of one's body above the wall, they will rejoin.



© La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela 1967



The Theater of Eternal Music DIANE WAKOSKI

Neptune, an old man, blows his pitchpipe
and your ear catches every sound.
If sounds were a bag of mixed spices,
you could sort them out with many sieves.
If melody were a grey thread
mixed in with a thousand other varied threads,
you could pick it out with your eye.
So, when you strike an enormous gong
and everyone gasps at the overwhelming
powerful sound,
you stand listening rapt,
but not at the grandeur.
Rather, you are hearing the overtones,
the small pitches that change.
You can analyze the whistle of a bird
or the wind
blowing through a broken pane of glass.

La Monte Young says he was born in a log cabin, that his father was a shepherd, and that his earliest memories are of the wind coming in through the chinks in the building. I know him to be a Californian. One who chooses to live in New York City. He lives in a sparsely furnished loft in the warehouse district of Manhattan. The room is dominated by electronic equipment set up around a green rug and looks like the delicate exposed bones of a dog's ear.

He has an article about Mozart's death tacked up by his sleeping room (one theory says that Mozart died of starvation in impecunious circumstances, even though he was one of the most admired and respected composers of his time); his walls are filled with the mysterious calligraphic drawings and paintings of his wife, Marian Zazeela, who also sings with him in his performances of The Theater of Eternal Music. The refrigerator and shelves are filled with far eastern spices and condiments used for cooking their food. Their way of life is a necessary introduction to their music and light shows.

Some amount of peace will inevitably enter your body when you walk into this room. There are always a few low, seemingly monotone sounds being generated electroni-

cally, as a kind of living noise. La Monte's music has evolved through many styles, but his compositions have all had one thing in common: an interest in long durations, subtle pitch changes, and a kind of poetic accompaniment to life. His work has evolved into the "eternal music" which he now produces (partly by singing and partly by using either electronic equipment or electronically amplified instruments which can sustain long constant pitches), and which is as much designed to accompany life, as to be an aesthetic object.

Being a poet, I think I am first fascinated by the lives and personalities of La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela. Perhaps I can sound casual about their art because they are so very good, technically, at what they do. Or perhaps my interest in their lives, their way of life, comes from a less pedestrian perception: art has a very different place in the world of 1967 than it ever has had before. Technology makes the artist as craftsman a much less interesting prospect. A painter who doesn't have to manufacture his own paint doesn't have to be as absorbed in technicalities as Reubens did. Granted, there is no reason to depart from a love for the "beautiful object"; but when you can find more beautiful objects in Gumps and Bloomingdales, some of which cost less than \$10, than a museum one hundred years ago might have possessed, then a work of art has to have some other function than to just be a beautiful object.

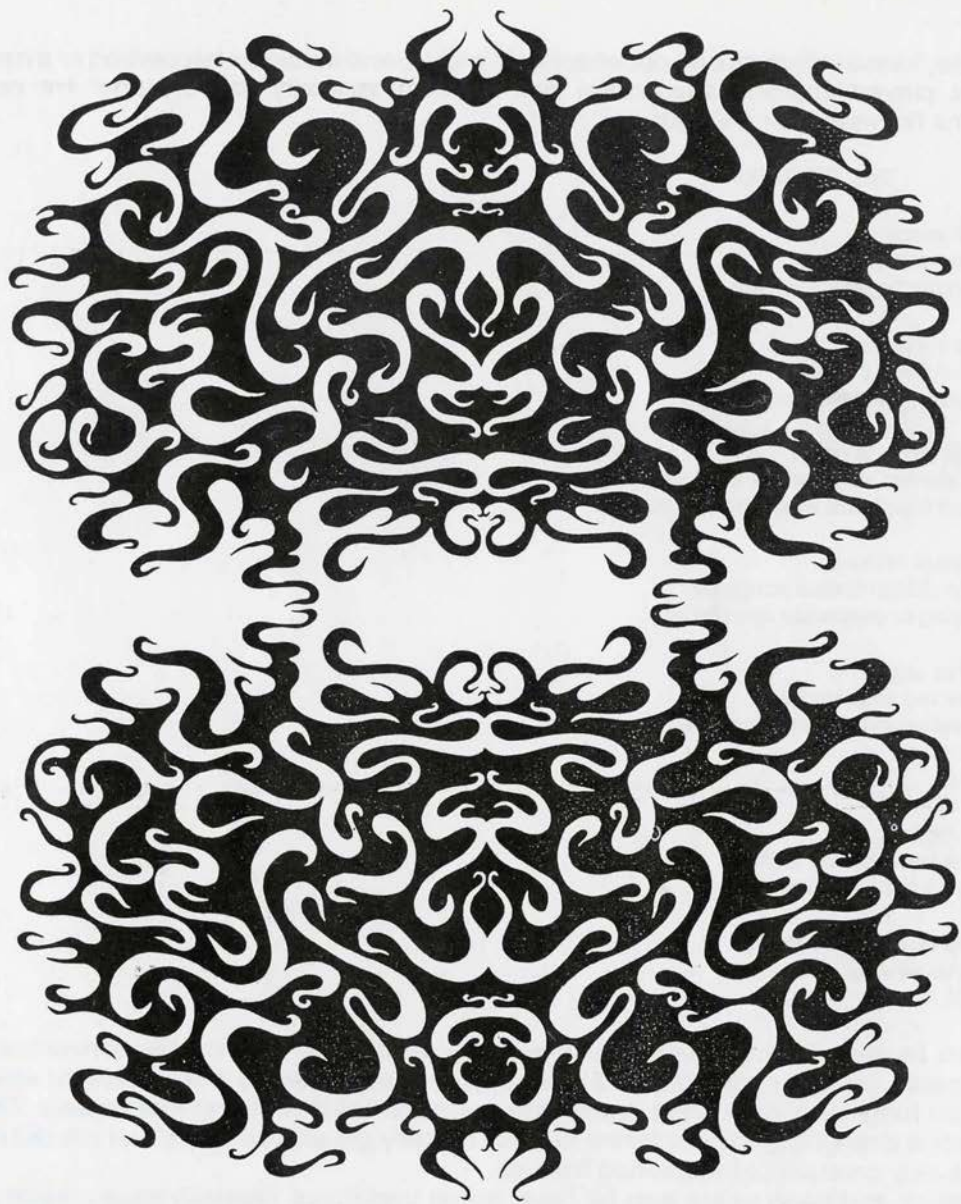
To be of significance in this century, I think an artist must have more than just his artistry. I think he must have the power and ability to affect other people's lives and imaginations. A way of life is not enough either. The complete artist is one who can produce a beautiful object—a poem, a painting, a piece of music or sculpture, but his way of life must present it to the world for the delight or awe or inspection of others.

One evening a few years ago, I walked into La Monte's and Marian's loft. They were both wearing black levis, long sleeved polo shirts; a gong painted black and white like a target, about five feet in diameter, was suspended on a wooden frame. During the evening they played their gong music for me. They each put on a new pair of white cotton work gloves. With their black costumes and the white gloves much too large for their hands, they appeared to be priests of an esoteric order performing a sacred ritual. They took violin bows and rubbed them for a few minutes with resin. Then La Monte positioned himself on one side of the gong, Marian herself on the other. One facing north; one south. They began to bow the edges of the gong, slowly, as if a train were passing a room with a cello in it, and the strings were beginning to vibrate without hands touching them. The sound of the gong increased until it filled the whole room, taking several minutes to achieve the effect that would have come, but with sharpness, if the gong had been struck with a mallet. Once the room was filled with the sound of the gong, playing it became similar to the performance of one of their more recent electronic-voice pieces—in that the sound stayed seemingly constant, with only minute pitch changes. It lasted for about half an hour; the room was like glass. I remembered one of La Monte's favorite poems which he uses in his "Lecture 1960."

THE HARP

I lay my harp on the curved table,
Sitting there idly, filled only with emotions.
Why should I trouble to play?
A breeze will come and sweep the strings.

—Po Chu-I (772-846)
translated by Ching Ti



© Marian Zazeela 1967

There is always an apparent contradiction in La Monte's music which has always fascinated me. He seems to be at once an over- cerebral calculating mathematician theorist and also an almost primitive sensuous poet interested in the simplest kinds of rhythm and sounds. He began his musical career with a dual interest in playing jazz saxophone, fervently inspired by Charlie Parker and Lee Konitz (later the music of John Coltrane), and composing figures in the style of J.S. Bach. Craftsmanship, technique, technical thought about music have always been things he's taken for granted. But more than that, he's always had an awareness of making things new, of devouring ideas, and exploring possibilities. He has explored the techniques of music

concrete, found object music, dodecaphonic music, and music as happening or event. He has played soprano saxophone and his own specially tuned piano. He now performs his music as a singer.

THE SINGER

All songs
Are tattoos
On his fingers and toes

As he moves
from year to year
walking on telegrams

His throat a pipe
is carved with ancient animals;
and telephone wires imitate his hello.

Under his arm
the dream-tortise struggles
trying to evaporate into the air

This organ
the red slippery heart
beating in the cushion of each finger
is sing-
ular

a rhythm,
the snow slowly shifting
to cause an avalanche

the dust accumulating
on a window
sill.

When he was writing music which was conventionally scored for conventional instruments, he was constantly told that he asked performers to hold durations which were too long—the instrument and/or the performer always being inadequate. This must have strengthened his interest in electronically generated sounds which did not have to rely on such old fashioned frailties.

As much as fifteen years ago he gave up on traditional Western music, such as Beethoven symphonies (the symphony is a form La Monte Young has few affinities for), because they were too filled with contrasts and climaxes. He was probably one of the first to seriously listen to Chinese opera, Gagaku music, and East Indian music. The latter opened up possibilities on which he has based the last five years of his composing. In his "Lecture 1960" he says, "Once I tried lots of mustard on a raw turnip. I liked it better than any Beethoven I had ever heard." Unsatisfied with even the 20th century revolution in Western music, "atonality," he has been working on his own theory of composition which is based on an idea in music called "just intonation." In "just intonation" intervals are defined by integral and rational numbers. All of the frequencies used within a given setting are in a rational relationship to each other.

In an interview with Richard Kostelanetz, La Monte relates these ideas to the modal tradition in music. He says:

The tradition of modal music has always been concerned with the repetition of limited groups of specific frequencies called modes throughout a single work and, as a rule, the assignation of a particular mood or psychological state to each of the modes. There is evidence that each time a particular frequency is repeated it is transmitted through the same parts of our auditory system. When these frequencies are continuous, as in my music, we can conceive even more easily how if part of our circuitry is performing the same operation continuously, this could be considered to be or to simulate a psychological state. My own feeling has always been that if people just aren't carried away to heaven I'm failing.

The music that La Monte Young composes now is not written down. It exists in theory, as do Indian ragas, each performance being a unique working out of theoretic possibilities presented. Thus each performance is recorded; that recording or realization being a discrete composition. His Theater of Eternal Music is a group using electronic equipment with singers and/or instrumentalists who use various kinds of microphones and produce long-durationed pitches which, to any but the most careful listener, never seem to change. The membership of the groups usually consisted of La Monte, Marian, John Cale, Tony Conrad, Terry Riley, and at various times, Angus MacLise, Terry Jennings, and Dennis Johnson. The work has evolved now so that most performances center around La Monte as the sole singer. There is no doubt but what Oriental philosophy, Oriental music, and John Cage have been great sources of inspiration to him. I am reminded of the following stories by John Cage, which are published in his book *SILENCE*.

In Zen, they say: If something is boring after two minutes try it for four. If still boring, try it for eight, sixteen, thirty-two, and so on. Eventually one discovers that it's not boring at all but very interesting. At the New School once I was substituting for Henry Cowell, teaching a class in Oriental music. I had told him I didn't know anything about the subject. He said, "That's all right. Just go where the records are. Take one out. Play it and then discuss it with the class." Well, I took out the first record. It was an LP of a Buddhist service. It began with a short microtonal chant with sliding tones, then soon settled into a single loud reiterated percussive beat. This noise continued relentlessly for about fifteen minutes with no perceptible variation. A lady got up and screamed, and then yelled, "Take it off. I can't bear it any longer." I took it off. A man in the class then said angrily, "Why'd you take it off? I was just getting interested."

La Monte tells his own story on this subject in his "Lecture 1960."

I used to talk about the **new eating**. One time Terry Riley said, "Yeah, even the cooks'll get rebellious. We'll walk into a hamburger stand and order something to eat. In a few minutes, the cook'll give us some salt. Just salt. Then one of us will say, 'What? Is this all?' And the cook'll answer, 'What'sa matter, don't cha like static eating'?"

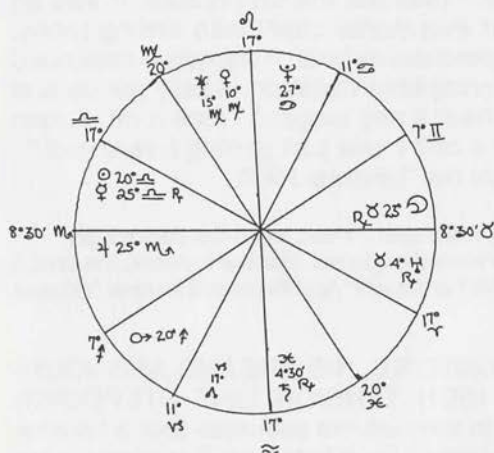
When La Monte performs pieces like *THE TORTOISE*, *HIS DREAMS AND JOURNEYS*, or *THE SECOND DREAM OF THE HIGH TENSION LINE STEPDOWN TRANSFORMER*, it takes him at least one day to tune up. He assumes that a listener will also tune his ear for at least an hour or so before serious listening. For Westerners who want their senses assaulted with variations and contrasts, this sort of settling into a sound, of getting inside it, looking for the subtleties is a difficult discipline. But it is something like studying Yoga; it becomes a whole new approach to life, an irreplaceable one. I've seen any number of people walk out on La Monte's music just

when they should have been getting interested. I have seen it transport other people when they entered the room. Much as I hate the term, for its current vulgarity, I do think the music is "psychedelic" and has that effect on everyone who hears it.

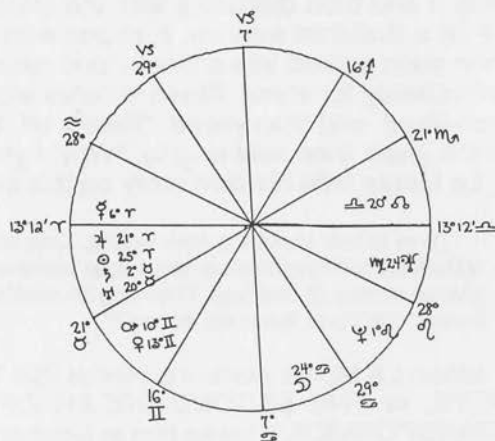
The light shows which accompany the Theater of Eternal Music are very different from the flashing strobe lights one sees in the commercial psychedelic world. Marian Zazeela, like La Monte is above all a craftsman, a workman, technician, an artist with a consummate sense of the delicate and structural. From early Miro- like paintings on large canvases which she executed at Bennington College, her work has condensed and condensed until now she produces exquisite calligraphic drawings. I believe, though it may be my superstitiousness, that every drawing of hers may be a kind of magic formula, slipping into tiny lines and beautiful forms. She designs tape boxes to house the Master tapes of the "eternal music as well as light boxes, skin jewelry, and, of course, the slides which are projected onto the walls and performers around the room during a performance of the music. These slowly change from variations of green and sunset colors to rooms full of intense patterns. Many of the designs are based on the letters "Y" and "Z".

La Monte's music is so dramatic that it often tends to overshadow Marian's work, since the two are like the Gemini twins, never apart, always counterparts to each other. Because the effect of this music is so involved with the visual, and because sight and sound are so successfully integrated, her quiet personality is not talked about as often as his; but it should be and will. Their work is the fusion of two very strong and independent but constant minds.

For students of astrology, such as myself, the horoscopes of La Monte and Marian show both their extreme individuality and their spirituality. Their suns are in the signs of Libra (La Monte Young) and Aries (Marian Zazeela), magnetic or polar opposites. Libra is the sign of delicacy, balance, harmony. Aries the sign of the pioneer and innovator. Together, they give impressive sensitivity and the will and discipline to create new music and painting.



La Monte Young, October 14, 1935, 8:20 A.M., Pocatello, Idaho.



Marian Zazeela, April 15, 1940, 5 A.M. E.S.T., New York City.

© Marian Zazeela 1967

At present, their greatest inspiration comes from Gopol Nayak, an Indian singer of 600 years ago, who was famous for singing two or three note ragas for forty-eight hours at a time. La Monte told me, yesterday, the story of an American who visited India and asked a musician why his singing seemed to focus on one note all the time. The Indian replied, "You Westerners are always tuning up, looking for your pitch. I don't need to. I've found mine." La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela are two artists who've found their pitches; but like the authentic Americans they are, keep honing, tuning, refining, making their work new and refreshing. They are part of the turned-on revolution, bringing the peace and reflectiveness, the pace for subtleties of 4000 year old civilizations, to the color, the movement, the knowledge and variety of the 20th century.

COMPOSITION 1960 #5

Turn a butterfly (or any number of butterflies) loose in the performance area.

When the composition is over, be sure to allow the butterfly to fly away outside.

The composition may be any length but if an unlimited amount of time is available, the doors and windows may be opened before the butterfly is turned loose and the composition may be considered finished when the butterfly flies away.

La Monte Young

(c) La Monte Young 1963

(reprinted from IKON #4 October, 1967)

in the past several years there has been a great deal of renewed interest in alchemy. Some of it has been genuine, some, the unearthing of esoteric material for use in Ph.D theses, and a great deal more a rather pietistic fascination with magic which has been neither knowledgeable, nor particularly rewarding. It has been as if there were a renewed interest in obscuring the traditions, as many of the true alchemists obscured them, with the difference that there has been no skill evidenced, either in the obscurantism, nor in the traditions themselves—a mistaking of the hagiography for the heart of the matter. For instance, I dare say that many who profess an interest do not realize that the researches of the most illustrious were not concerned with the discovery of the Philosopher's

stone than their concern with medicine. Many of them were not compassionate in the sense that Hippocrates was: The patient was an object of interest, rather than a human being in pain. The tradition of medicine was based on the classical aloofness of Galen, rather than humanitarian principles. This is not too far removed from the attitude of many contemporary physicians, including a number who write semi-popular statistical handbooks, and presumably receive comfortable royalties as a direct result. Fortunately there were others who combined combined practical knowledge and clinical detachment with a concern for human misery. Among the last of the alchemists was a curious figure who has continued to be a source of controversy for over four



stone *per se*, but in guarding a tradition which was already available to the adept. Further, that there was no true concern in turning base metals into gold, but rather in a discovery of a primal source of energy—the source of life—if not that of eternal life, at least that of extending the possibilities of mortality. Gold, as a primal noble metal, incorruptible by ordinary means, was regarded symbolically, rather than as actual. It was by color and by heat, by a correspondence through the Doctrine of Signatures to the sun as source that the concept of gold became important. *Aurum nostrum non sunt suri vulgi* (our gold is not common gold) became almost a password among the adepts.

It appears to me that a very much more valid approach to the tradition might be made through a study of the history of medicine—some of it rather recent history, such as the development of homeopathy in the nineteenth century. Most of the alchemists were physicians of one sort or another, and their use of the occult

hundred years—Paracelsus. There were those, both contemporary and who followed him, who took him at his word, as the greatest of all physicians, and those who dismissed him as a quack and a charlatan who had made no real contributions, and who died addicted to the laudanum which he was the first to use medicinally. His own writings can be used to support either thesis—a man who was theologically a product of the Catholic Middle Ages, and yet one who could sanction his contemporary, Martin Luther's reforms in religion, stating that he would do for medicine what Luther was doing for the church.

He was hated by most of the academics, including professors who complained that he lacked degrees and yet taught (briefly) at the university in Basel, physicians who were envious of his often remarkable cures, and apothecaries of whose stale drugs he was contemptuous, breaking an age old tradition in gathering materials for his own prescriptions. He wandered continuously over Europe and

the Near East, and died before he was fifty, with only two of his many books published (written characteristically in his native Swiss-German, rather than in Latin.) It is quite apparent, even to superficial reading, that he was dedicated to a preservation of the best of the alchemical tradition as he saw it, not as an arcanum of magic shrouded in mystery, but as a vital principle which should be available to all who were willing to learn. He wished to preserve his findings from misuse, but not as a source of personal power for an elite composed of wizards and necromancers. In the *Astronomia Magna*, talking of the properties of chicory, he states it clearly: "Why do you think its root assumes the shape of a bird after seven years? What has the art of magic to say about this? If you know the answer, keep silent and say nothing to scoffers; if you do not know it, try to investigate, and do not be ashamed to ask questions." Further, in the *Antimedicus*, he speaks of the qualities of a good physician as those of knowledge, humility, and dedication to the alleviation of suffering. Many of his speculations were further than all subsequent investigations. Indeed, there are still areas indicated in his theses which have been largely overlooked. Some of these might not prove particularly rewarding, but there is a sufficient residue to make one wish that the complete German translation of Karl Sudhoff were more generally available. In 1876, Dr. Constantine Hering, the pioneer homeopath in the U.S., and one of the greatest Paracelsus scholars of all time, deferred to Paracelsus along with Leonardo da Vinci as the founders "of the strict inductive method through which, since then, science has made such gigantic strides." If contemporary psychiatrists were to consider his treatises on hysteria, they might find them equally stimulating. My own interest in these texts is, admittedly, extremely imperfect and superficial, but in an accidental discovery of the link between the traditions of alchemy and homeopathy, I have been convinced of the importance of a method which is usually dismissed by the contemporary scientific community as beneath notice, although many of the most common contemporary drugs, such as aspirin, were discovered through an application of the Alchemical Doctrine of Signatures.

Last summer I acquired the library of a homeopathic physician from an abandoned house in Maine. Among the texts were those of Samuel Hahnemann's *Organon of the Art of Healing*, and Constantine Hering's exhaustive ten volume, *Guiding Principles of Our Materia Medica*. Struck by the beauty of the writing, I decided to investigate the history of early homeopathy and the men who founded it. The official contemporary attitude seemed best expressed by one doctor who dismissed the tradition as one which "had its points, but they were mainly negative. The allopathic establishment used massive mixed doses of medicines which were often fatal. The homeopaths did less damage, since their prescriptions called for minute doses which often proved harmless." But there is no mention of the pioneer work in vaccines, and

THEODORE ENSLIN

Towards PARACELSUS



in the light of what I have found since then, it would seem to be glib ignorance of fact. Medicine in the late eighteenth century was so primitive that we who are accustomed to anesthesia and contemporary knowledge of biochemistry would be frightened to expose ourselves to practitioners who resorted to massive doses of lead or mercury, or bloodletting which was considered a panacea, even though the patient might be suffering from anemia. The collusion between doctors and druggists was substantially the same as that which existed in Paracelsus' time. Epidemics of various sorts were largely unchecked. The individual physiology of the patient was ignored—he had such and such a disease, therefore such and such remedies were called for. It took Hahnemann to discover that while the general outline of a disease could be diagnosed, the sufferer might be allergic to a standard remedy, and that an individual cure must be found. He was one of the few who paid heed to Paracelsus' warning to physicians, "That (they) should not scorn the workings of time and chance." In other words, he became convinced that medicine must be based on more than pat rational traditions. His system was imperfect, but it was based on the total concentration of the physician, on wide speculation which included many elements which were not commonly associated with medical practice. Through this he became the father of homeopathy: *Similia similibus curantur* (like cures like) which was strikingly similar to the ancient doctrine of signatures—that there are signs in natural propinquity—that what is malign has its benignant curative within itself. Paracelsus had said in his treatise on the diseases of miners, "—for good heals evil which stands next to it. For instance, whatever causes jaundice also cures jaundice." Hahnemann began the proving of drugs on the healthy, often himself, to support his thesis. The results were often spectacular. The history of his life was similar to that of Paracelsus. He was persecuted—chased from one small German town to another, and cordially detested by his contemporaries. Those who were fortunate enough to become his patients were often ungrateful after they had been cured. The number of those who became his disciples was pitifully small, but fanatically devoted. Among these was Constan-

tine Hering who brought the new medicine to America, and having settled in Philadelphia, founded the homeopathic medical center there almost singlehanded. It was easier in the United States. There was no deeply entrenched tradition on which he must waste valuable time simply to exist. There was opposition, but opportunity as well, and eventual respect which amounted to veneration. This favorable climate allowed Hering the breadth of movement which a new science, at least a new development of an old tradition, demanded. He was no mere follower of Hahnemann, and often questioned theories which seemed untenable in the light of his own experiments. Above all, he was a scholar in many fields, and through correspondence with Hahnemann, as well as his own prior knowledge, he recognized the debt which homeopathy owed to the investigations of the alchemists, foremost among them, Paracelsus. He assembled the finest single collection in the world of editions of "The Wandering Doctor," including translations into many languages, and the earliest published texts with much supporting material. The present fate of this library seems typical of the knowledgeable neglect which dogged Paracelsus himself. It is available to scholars in an archive of the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, but few go there to use it.

The following are texts which Dr. Hering collected and thought worth copying in his own hand.

"In the meantime I will give to Spagiricall Physitians their due praise; for they are not given to idleness and sloth, nor goe in a proud habit or plush and velvet garments often showing their rings upon their fingers or wearing swords with silver hilts by their sides, or fine and gay gloves upon their hands, but diligently follow their labours, sweating whole days and nights by their furnaces. These do not spend their time abroad for recreation, but take delight in their laboratory. They wear leather garments, with a pouch and apron, where-with they wipe their hands. They put their fingers amongst coales,

into clay and dung; not into gold rings. They are sooty and black, like smiths and colliers, and do not pride themselves with clean or beautiful faces; but laying aside all these kinds of vanities, they delight to bee busied about the fire, and to learn the degrees of the science of alchymy. Of this order are distillation, resolution, putrefaction, extraction, calcination, reverbation, sublimation, fixation, separation, reduction, coagulation, tincture," etc.

—Of The Nature of Things

(*Spagircall*. This word was coined by Paracelsus, and is derived from the Teutonic word *spaher*, a searcher.)

from: *a treatise on the Urim and Thummim*,

"Philosophy is nothing but the study of wisdom considered in a created nature, as well subject to sense as invisible, and consequently material; and wisdom's central body is the shadow of wisdom's central essence; and the moral interpretation can never exclude the real effects from ocular demonstration: but where reason hath experience, faith hath no merit; and without faith there is no knowledge of any excellent thing; for the end of faith is understanding. Again, to obtain the treasures of nature, you must follow nature only, who gives not the like time to every generation; but as the mare hath ten months, the elephant three, or some say nine, years, and fifty, before conjunction: be patient, therefore, in a work of nature; for thereunto only is promised victory; and the chief errors in art are haste and dullness," etc. "Neither refuse the waters of Siloam because they go slowly; for they that waded in deep waters cannot go fast.

"The perfection of every art (properly so called) requires a new birth, as that which is not

quickened except it die; but here death is taken for mutation, and not for rotting under the clods. Now, therefore, we must take the key of art and consider the secret of everything is the life thereof: life is a vapour, and in vapour is placed the wonder of art; whatsoever hath heat, agitating and moving in itself, by the internal transmutation, is said to live. This life, the artist seeks to destroy, and restore an eternal life, with glory and beauty.

"The sun and the moon are as the parents of all inferior bodies and things. The sun's motion and virtue doth vivify all inferior bodies, and those things which come nearest in virtue and temperature are most excellent; and the pure form of a terrestrial sun is said to be all fire, and therefore, the incorrupted quality of pure sulphur being digested in eternal heat, had also regal power over all inferior bodies, for the sun doth infuse his influence into all things, but especially into gold; and those natural bodies do never shew forth their virtues till they be made spiritual.

"In itself the perfections, power, and virtue of Sol, it runneth through all the houses of the planets; and in his regeneration acquireth the virtues of the superiors and inferiors; and by the Almighty solely to the faithful, for matrimony thereof appeareth clothed in their candor and beauty. (and as being originally of gaseous origin): Crude mercury is originally a vapor from clear water and air, of most strong composition, coated of air itself, with a mercurial spirit by nature, flying ethereal and homogeneous, having the spirits of heat and cold and by exterior and inferior heats, doth congeal and fix.

"Wherefore to revive it is the secret of all secrets and the glory of the whole world, and only proper to such whom the creator hath

apted by way of natural disposition."

—From the Manual of the Stone of the Philosophers

"First of all, by the vulcanick art is Fire smitten out of the Flint.

"Whatever brings a thing into ashes, calyx or glass is in the fourth degree of fire. As fire, mercurial water and *aqua fortis*. Whatever is of a biting quality and bringeth things to an eschar so as to putrifie is in the third degree—such as Colcothar, arsenick, Salt-amoniack, Borax and auripigment—as also alkali. But as to what appertains to the virtue of these things, by which some things excel others, that belongs to the points and not the degrees. Besides, whatever makes cicatrizes or blisters possess the second degree of which sort are Raboia, Cantharides, Flamula, or scarwort, Melona and others of that kind. For although Flamula be in the first degree, yet other ways it pertains to the second degree—because the spirit of salt reduceth Flamula so far that it may be in a sort transferred to the first point of the second degree.

"Lastly, whatever heats, and yet attains not to the aforesaid signes, as ginger, cardamomes, southernwood, and others of that kind is in the first degree together with their higher and lower points.

"Whatever congeals humors possesseth the fourth degree of cold, of which sort are those begotten of the elements of fire, but whatsoever infrigidates (that I may use the common expression) and yet doth not impair the spirit of life, the remedy being administered in its own proper dose, as narcoticks, anodynes, somniferous things, the sperm of frogs, hemlock etc., are subjected to the third degree. Moreover whatsoever congeals humors, as the beryll, carmiola, possesseth the second degree. But whatsoever ex-

tinguisheth praeternatural heats, and allays the paroxismes or fits is in the second degree.

"Lastly whatsoever hinders a disease from breaking forth into a paroxism or fit is of the first degree. This rule doth not differ much from that which is of heat—by which is the rule of enantiosis—or just-contrary.

"The life of man is nothing else but an astrall balsame, a balsamic impression, and a celestial invisible, and included air and a tingeing spirit of salt. The life of bones is the spirit of mummie. The life of flesh and blood is nothing else but the spirit of salt which keeps them from stinking. —The soul is to be considered as compounded of an elementary and sacramental substance, the former of which is corruptible, whereas the latter, syderal or celestial, as it is also called is never putrified or buried, neither doth it possess any place. This latter body appears to men, and also after death is seen."

"Whoever saw a tree to grow, or the sun or stars move; nobody: but that the sun and stars have been moved by a space of time, who knoweth not?

"A tailor might as well work without his goose, as an alchymist without his furnace, or to speak more technically, without his Athanor, so called by the ancients, for this plain reason, that it refereth to the womb in the spagyrick generation.

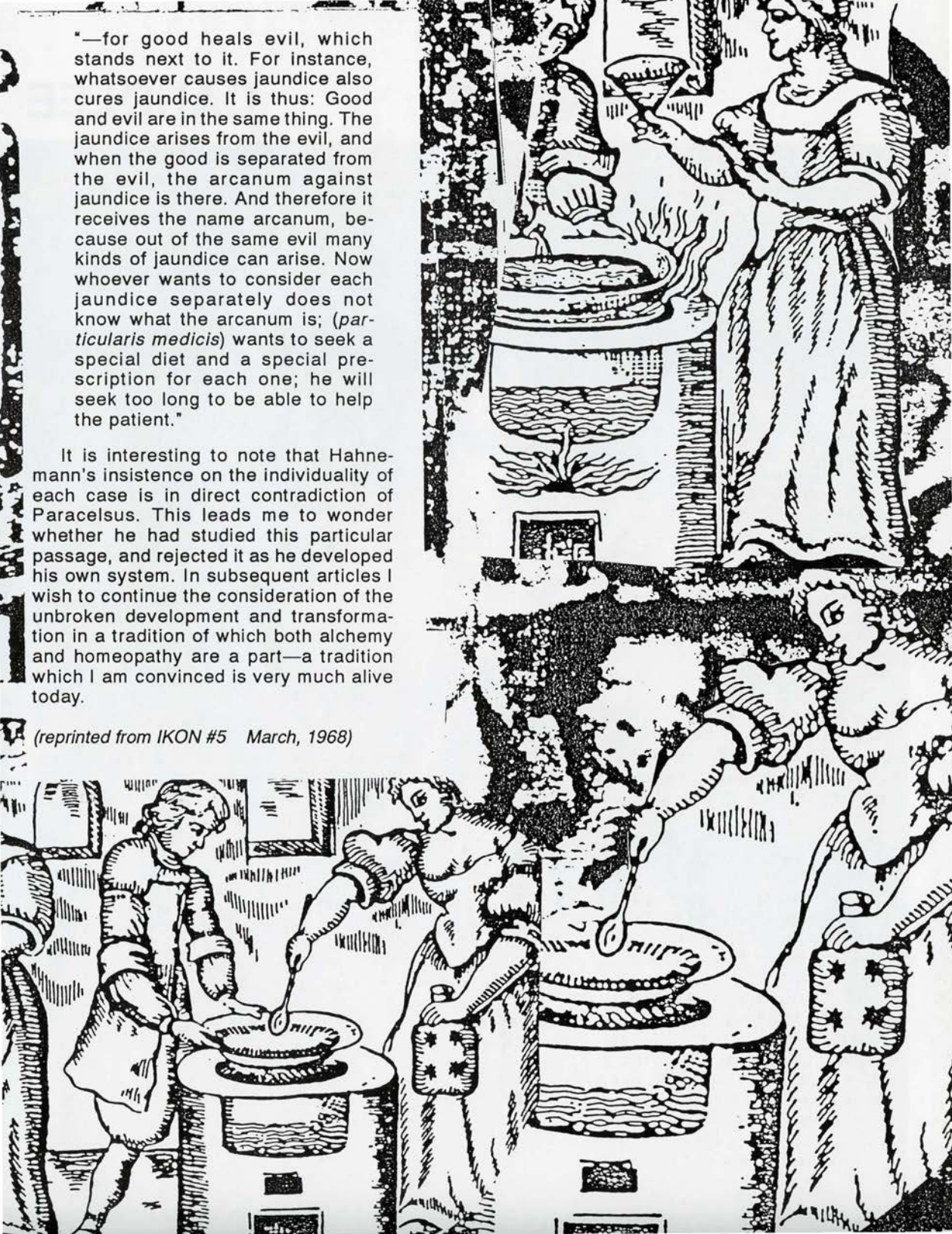
"But these are matters of minor import compared with the grand object of our art, which is to infuse the numial essence into the tree of life, by which eternal sanity or immortality is from God."



"—for good heals evil, which stands next to it. For instance, whatsoever causes jaundice also cures jaundice. It is thus: Good and evil are in the same thing. The jaundice arises from the evil, and when the good is separated from the evil, the arcanum against jaundice is there. And therefore it receives the name arcanum, because out of the same evil many kinds of jaundice can arise. Now whoever wants to consider each jaundice separately does not know what the arcanum is; (*particularis medicis*) wants to seek a special diet and a special prescription for each one; he will seek too long to be able to help the patient."

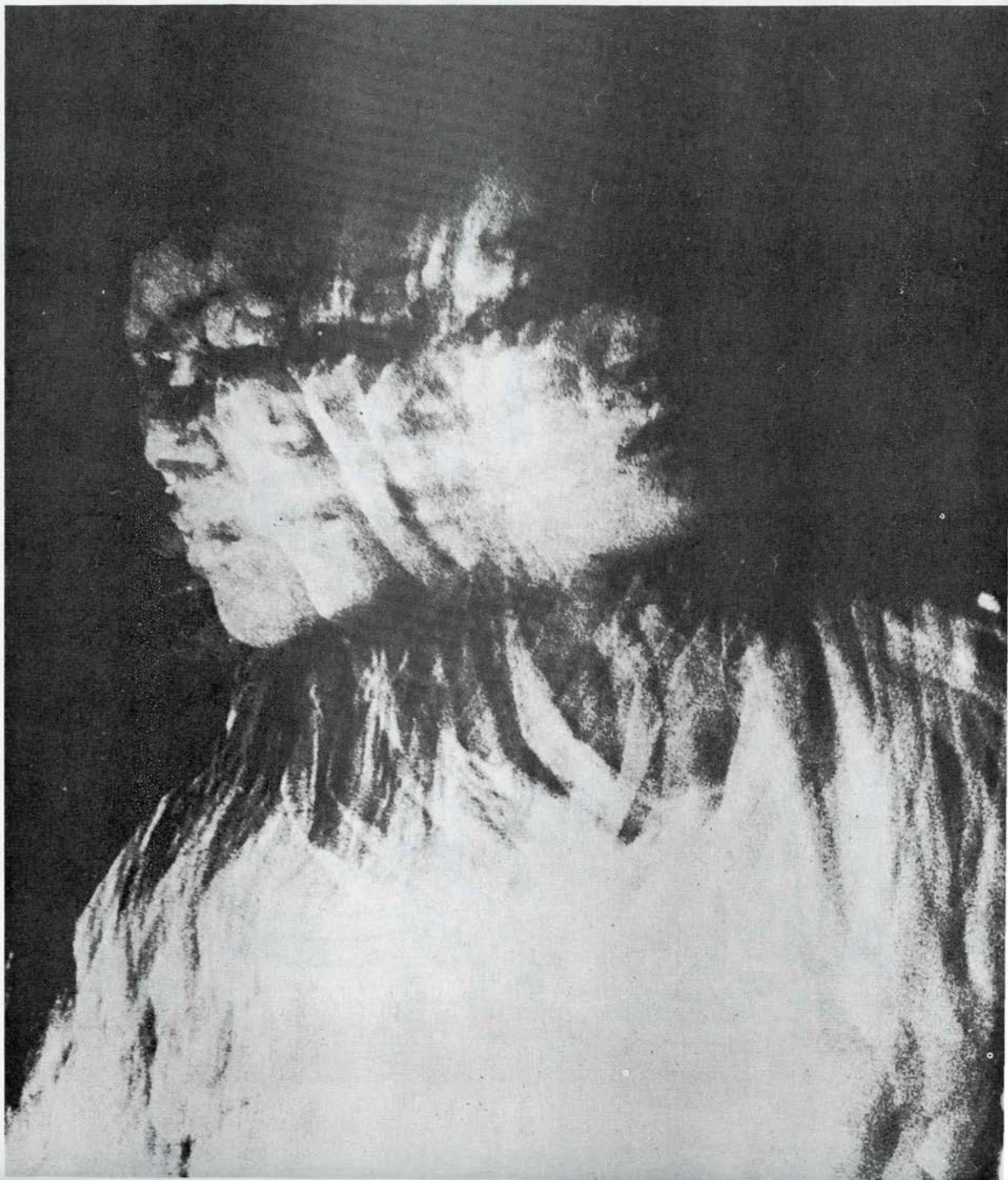
It is interesting to note that Hahnemann's insistence on the individuality of each case is in direct contradiction of Paracelsus. This leads me to wonder whether he had studied this particular passage, and rejected it as he developed his own system. In subsequent articles I wish to continue the consideration of the unbroken development and transformation in a tradition of which both alchemy and homeopathy are a part—a tradition which I am convinced is very much alive today.

(reprinted from IKON #5 March, 1968)



SNOWS

CAROLEE



SCHNEEMANN



I am after the interpenetrations and displacements which occur between various sense stimuli; the interaction and exchange between the body and the environment outside it; the body as environment...for the mind...where images evolve...that total fabric wherein sensation shapes image, taste, touch, tactile impulse; various chemical changes and exchanges within the body and their effect on the immediate present, on memories action in the present.

Vision is not a fact, but an aggregate of sensations.

I want evocation (a place) between desire and experience.

I am after the interpenetrations and displacements which occur between the performers themselves and the theatrical material; which is not to indicate a democratic process or structure, rather an evolutionary one. The physical qualities of the performers add to the shape and character of the work; their personalities emerge in contrasting contacts—juxtapositions of individual presence focused on actions and materials presented or provoked. And it is not psychodrama...

Vision creates its own efforts (toward realization—tracking); effort does not produce vision.

Perception should lead to action. Empathy-drawing... perception as eye journey. My theatre simply carries visual-tactile experience into the body; the body as the active unit (where it was the hand previously) in its environment.

Perception of an idea, the search to clarify an idea when it leads to typing, is catching free motion in a net of mechanical restraint. My mind may be streaming images that lead directly to drawing, fast spontaneous notes. But if I try to order them on the typewriter... well, look... I'm seated, hands on the keys, arms at my sides, eyes straight ahead... repeated jumpy little rhythms

utterly contrary to rhythm of thought process which flows elongated, breaks, shifts, wavers or stops and begins anew in straight sharp bursts that thoughts are in clusters of words and words poor words hit out on the typewriter letter by letter... it makes me sweat, my knees get stiff, fingers twitchy. Then the idea is there and barely recognizable from its passage within memory, its shuttling within the immediate sensory environment which may have fed its passage originally (those bird sounds, the silvery green of black locust leaves... that cloud formation

written, laying flat on white paper there's the old brown bottle and the violet one with a cracked neck—not an explicit idea in them... just light, shadow, finger marks, reflections, colors from a landscape beyond the window sill where they are placed.) I'm learning to talk into the microphone—to keep it around, the tape recorder as ready to record as a typewriter can be... to let speech carry minds workings... certainly I'm better, closer to using speech as convoy than writing. It requires adjustment, another coordination, just as it required becoming accustomed to the presence of the recorder when we made the tapes of orgasm song. And now the camera...

We roll and we twist
And we kick and we squirm,
And we toss about
On the floor.
And when we have done
Everything we can do,
We start over and do it
Once more.

*fragment from Water Babies (?) book 1940
ill. Ruth E. Newton (and C.S.)*

Every living organism is a functional unit; it is not merely a mechanical sum total of organs. The basic biological function governs every individual organ as it governs the total organism.

Wilhelm Reich. Selected Writings p.218.

If I told the performers Snows was my first Viet Nam piece, they had no idea how it would be that; the film and sound material evolved around their substance and it surprised them. We discovered the nature of our situation together by experiencing it, creating it.

Loving trust enables us to take physical chances together, to engage in struggles, violent movements; assaults, captures, grabs and falls, to drag, carry, even drop one another, knock one another down; loving trust keeps us focused on each other, expressive without self-consciousness, without an "idea" of expressivity, free in a process which in itself is transforming, releasing our intentions. Building the piece is a strange journey which reveals its substance to us as we follow. Further: absence of personality combination, starthrust, decorativeness—every gesture the result of organic necessity arising spontaneously in the circumstance of our work. All motion as seed to emotion, all action interaction beginning with the BODY. That's what a "corps" should be Turned On to/by each other, to the possibilities we will encounter, concretize in our physical relations and these relations reaching from each other into the material of the environment streaming into the audience.

SNOWS SEQUENCE OUTLINE 1967

Audience enters the Martinique theatre through backstage door. In the dark they squeeze through two huge pink foam rubber "mouths" which form entrances. They then crawl over or under two long planks which stretch from the stage across the aisles, over the seats to the rear wall. The technicians are resting on these silver

planks—they may or may not assist the audience. The performers in pale grey shirts and work pants sit together on the low stage in their basic resting position—an Oriental squat (feet flat on the floor, weight balanced over ankles, arms or chin on their knees). What the audience first sees was best described by Michael Smith in the *Village Voice*:...

"as wintry as a Sonia Henie movie. The spacious arena stage of the Martinique Theatre is swathed in silver and plastic sheeting. Bare white branches hang down from overhead. The rear wall is flaked with large ragged sheets of white paper. Even the seats are festooned with white plastic scallopings, unoccupied, they look in the dark like receding ranges of snowy mountains. The lighting is icy: chill greens, blues, lavenders, with sometimes a flash of fire or sunlight. Two movies of skaters, skiers and related scenery are projected here and there on the set. At the rear is a large double construction: up to eight or ten feet, white outlined squares of varicolored plastic and open space on top; a revolving light sculpture by Laurence Warshaw—flickering, reflecting moving shading colors and intensities within striations of plastic. It is very beautiful and surprisingly, not at all cold."

The revolving light sculpture is actually worked by the motions of the audience turning in their seats which are wired with contact microphones and hooked into an amplification system and color organ (made by Robert Schultz). The light machine could also be controlled manually; some overhead lights were triggered by photocells picking up light variations; this and a complex audio system were made workable by Ralph Flynn, using equipment which Experiments in Art and Technology made available to us. The edge of the stage is bordered with piles of plastic scrap, foil scrap, and artificial snow debris; embedded in this border were several contact microphones which amplified noises made by the performers. The equip-

ment used by the technicians was also situated in the border of debris; their actions exposed, integral: two strobe lights, three small film projectors, and held spots. They were also prepared to serve as a first aid station if that became necessary.

Train and Orgasm sound collage audible. The 1947 Newsreel begins. Performers watch. (Phoebe sweeps snow debris with broom.) When it is over they disappear behind the water lens. The light machine flickers dimly. Silhouettes of the performers appear as shifting shadows behind the water lens. Slowly they will begin to crawl through empty apertures in the lens. A slow, intent, animal crawl focused on audience: some will crawl partly onto the planks among the audience. They turn to meet in the center of the stage, on hands and knees, in a central knot and begin a buttery slow crawl in and out of one another's legs, arms; some are caught between bodies and lifted onto the backs of others: a revolving unit organism which echoes in flesh pulses the motions of the light machine. They move apart slowly: blue floor lights shifted by technicians. Films "Snow Speed" and "Winter Sports" begun; centered on side walls, varying levels, across ceiling. Performers crouching, staring at one another to eye-cue a partner and begin "Grabs and Falls;" an instantaneous collision, a giving over of weight and impulse on impact. Bodies thundering onto the stage. After series of shifting "Grabs and Falls" (determined by mutual awareness) one of the men about to enact a grab with a woman grabs and lifts her instead. The other women remain where they have fallen in snow and foil debris or among foam rubber "roses." The other two men stand for "Passing Women": in clumsy holds and walks they carry the body passed to them and pass it in turn until one of the men situates it on the white

circle which has been horizontally raised. At the conclusion of passing the remaining two women the performers are situated to begin "Creation of Faces." All lights out. No film. O & T tape.

"Creation of Faces" is done with a partner (random determination by preceding sequence). Small jars of clown-white are taken from the debris ring. In the flashes of strobe light each partner begins to cover the others face. The entire series of exchanges moves back and forth in silent response to each other. When both partners faces are covered one will begin to shape the others face: the one being shaped gives over, takes on what is pushed and prodded into their facial musculature; the transformation of the musculature induces a corresponding and unpredictable emotion. The created face accepts, dwells in the quality of its transformation and turns it to the audience; holding it until the facial muscles relax of themselves and the expression fades. They then turn to their partner and create a face for them. Simultaneous overlappings of faces among the six caught in the strobes, flickering flaming agonies, joys, silent laughs, grimaces, floating over the bodies mask-like.

After an unspecified number of face-creations one of the people will begin to move another—not necessarily the face partner, for Body Sculpture. Overhead light slowly on, O & T tape returns, "Snow Sports" films are projected directly on the bodies. The men take the initiative in shaping the women who accept and hold whatever positions they are put into; if a position is impossible to hold they will simply fall. At a certain point one of the women being "sculptured" suddenly grasps the hand shaping her; the shaper freezes his action and becomes the one to be sculptured. The "sculptors" may move about, ex-

changing bodies or simultaneously working on one. The men become active again, one couple who has been centered on the floor will be brought onto the white table where all the women are sculptured at once, finally be moved out onto the floor; here they rest, immobile.

The men stand the white circle up vertically and carry the women to it, propping them against it. On their torsos a color film of a snow storm outside of the theatre and in the country is projected. One of the men watches the film, lying on the stage, the other two have climbed up onto the water lens; at a signal from the watching men, the others slowly spill piles of artificial snow over the women who sink down into a heap.

Sharp flickering moving sculpture light; flashing blue side lights; performers scramble across the floor; the people who fall and roll into a ball have chosen to be the "body ball," those standing or crouching will be "pushers," two remaining are "watchers." The body ball is pushed, rolled, shoved in an eddying journey by the body of the "Pusher" who must move the ball without using hands.

When the pusher has made his track with the "ball" they begin "crawl and capture"; the "body balls" become the "victims," the "watchers" become "pursuers," the "pushers" become "interference." The pursuer grabs his victim by the ankles; the interference in turn hangs on to the pursuer, trying to drag them back as the victim struggles on the floor to escape.

The victim flat on the floor begins to crawl to escape the pursuer, the interferer hangs on to the ankles of the pursuers to impede their advance towards the victim; the pursuer catches hold of the victim's ankles and begins to try to hold them back by the legs, or shoulders; the interferer suddenly slithers ahead and grabs the victim from



the opposite side—a tug of war ensues. The victim can usually gather enough energy to centrifugally leap out of the grips of both tormentors; the leap and cry of the freed victim stops any movement by the other two. The victim now chooses between the pursuer and interferer, one of whom becomes the “dragged body.” Many of these images are based on Vietnam atrocity photos. The dragged body is quite specifically based on figures, face down, arms out being dragged through the dust by ropes attaching their ankles to U.S. tanks. The “dragged body” is completely slack, face and body scratched in the foil scrap and artificial snow. The first body to complete its journey will be hung up on a rope by the dragger. Two people gather foil and begin to cover the “body” completely. This standing body will become one of the “silver walkers”; when another person is wrapped in a standing position they become the second “silver walker.” Among the remaining four are two separate “cocoons” and one “double cocoon” (that is the last unwrapped performers sit down & mutually cover each other as one form, falling over together when they are wrapped.)





The walkers on the rope and on the silver chair remain immobile. The fallen cocoons slowly, slowly twist out of their silver wrappings without using their hands, as if a layer of burnt skin. No sound but the crackling foil. Before they are unwrapped the silver walkers who are nearly blind under their wrappings with stiff encased arms and legs, slowly walk out onto the planks into the audience; the projectionists guide them with hand held blue lights. They make their way precariously—the planks are slippery and slope upward across seats. At the end of the plank they sink into their Oriental sitting position which recurs throughout the piece. The first free cocoon becomes a rescuer; the Viet-Flakes film begins in center stage on the white circle. Feeling danger the rescuer scuttles up the plank and begins to drag the walker down: the walkers are corpse-like, the remaining free cocoons wait on their bellies at the end of the plank to assist dragging back the walker. Desperate struggle, clum-

sy haste, we frantically gather together in a collapsed heap under the Viet-Flakes film. The Viet-Flakes sound collage is only sound until the snow machine goes on overhead; artificial snow pours over the bodies filling their nostrils, ears, eyes, covering them.

Every element we partake of—an imagistic reach and thrust; the environment, what we wear, any make-up, the nature of sound, film, slides, technological elements. *Snows* was stretched out in time between five films, whose related content triggered the juxtapositions of a winter environment and Vietnam atrocities. The film which begins "*Snows*" (performers sit and technicians sit around the low action area watching it, one girl sweeping artificial snow clear of the floor) is a five minute 1947 Newsreel of one holocaust after another. I choose this film by "closed eye vision," that is: I stood in front of a rack of remaindered old newsreels waiting to feel some impulse, vibration, and let my hand pick the packet which seemed "to speak." Projected at home the film justified my hopes: it begins with a ship exploding, a sequence of tiny figures massed in a "riot," cut to tiny figures of "red" Chinese, being shot by nationalist guards (I had already used a still of this **exact** sequence which I had among the stills from which I made "*Viet-Flakes*"—a film which ends "*Snows*!"); the Pope blessing the crowds; a volcanic eruption in Bolivia, peasants running through an exploding landscape, American Legion parade in Philadelphia in a snow storm; an automobile race, car crashes, explosions.

During early sequences of our actions, the two projectionists on the edge of the performing area each have a small 16mm projector which they direct by hand over our figures

and the collaged white papers all around the theatre. Both films are of winter sports, made during the Second World War. (Close-ups of faces of Bavarian winter sports enthusiasts are unforgettable.)

The fourth film is in 8mm color; it is projected on the torsos of the three women whom the men have leaned against the "white wheel"; immobilized images I shot flash over us: the neighborhood of my loft (W. 29th St.), the Martinique (W. 32nd), Gimbel's, Greely Square Park, in a blizzard, through the whitened city, out the West River Drive, into the night and country landscape, myself and James Tenney in windows of a country house, a snow fight.

"Viet-Flakes" was made from my collection of Vietnam photographs, cut from papers and magazines. I used a close-up lens and traveled within the images to give the effect of actual animation. The images go in and out of focus in a broken rhythm, abstract shapes and motions turn into a body being dragged through grasses, etc. James Tenney made a sound collage for the film breaking sound sources I had asked for into sound fragments so small they could become recognizable only accumulatively in time: Mozart Piano Concerto #20, Bach Cantata 78 (Aria Duetto); Bach Partita; Bach Alleluia from Christmas Cantata; Beatles, "We Can Work it Out"; Bobby Hebb, "Sunny"; Fontella Bass, "Don't Mess with a Good Thing"; Jackie de Shannon, "What the World Needs Now"; Ques-

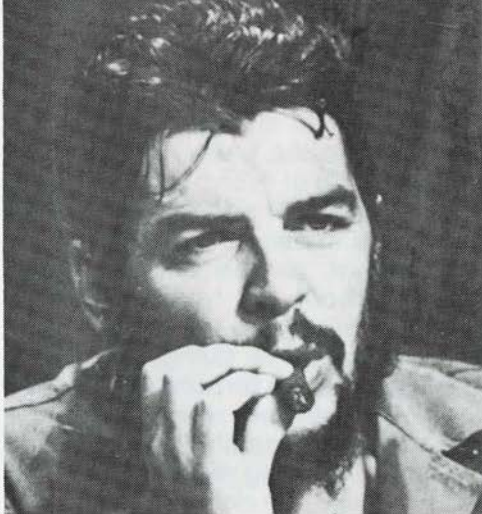
tion Mark and the Mysteriums, "96 Tears"; Vietnamese Folksong, Lao-tian Love Song; South Chinese Folk Song.

The other tape used in "Snows" was a collage of trains shunting, whistling, moving in and out, overlaid and juxtaposed with sounds of orgasm.

Violence is not always destructive. Destructiveness is essential to creation. "Snows" imagery is built out of Vietnam atrocity photos, my anger, outrage, fury, and sorrow. The imagery of Snow is ambiguous, shifting metaphors in which the performers are simply themselves, as well as victim, torturer and tortured, aggressor, lover and beloved. We set each other on fire, we extinguish the fire, we create each other's face and body, we destroy each other's face and body, we abandon each other, we save each other, we take responsibility for each other, we lose responsibility for each other, we bury each other, we reveal each other, we activate, we respond, we chose our actions, someone else prevents our actions, we build and we are wiped out finally, at the end dragging back the blinded "silver-walkers," our faces smeared with whiting, our arms covered with scratchy lumps of "snows" covering the floor, crawling and dragging exhausted to fall in an animal pile under the white moon disk where Viet Flakes film our moves, the snow machine turning on, "snow" falling, filling our eyes, our ears, covering us.

(reprinted from IKON #5 March, 1968)





DAY OF THE DEAD/PATZCUARO Margaret Randall

Rereading this piece twenty-three years later both moves and discomforts me. I am discomforted, of course, because there is much I would change; I am certainly a more mature writer in my fifties than I was at thirty. Today I might have chosen an entirely different form to say what is here. Honoring process, I allow its republication. Relieved, I note that essentially I would still have chosen to say the same things. But this piece moves me — winter/spring 1990 — because Ernesto "Che" Guevara's vision is, if anything, more vital now than when he was murdered. Pitifully few college students of the Eighties or Nineties remember Che's name, much less do they know his ideas. Recent Soviet history, as well as events unfolding in Eastern Europe, point to the virtue of those ideas, the need to retrieve their prophesy and value.



el che is dead. there is nothing to say, but having to, the poems, the reality, how can it—so much a part of us—be part of us? the conversations, the letters, the pain. what can we say that reaches out instead of in? to work with, out of creation, the line that moves. suddenly, two weeks after the fact and in mexico, the image becomes a part of the whole.



patzcuaro. the village is full, no rooms in any of the four or five hotels, houses overflowing, shacks overflowing, americans in noisy cars, photographers, their equipment bulging under jorongos, blankets, and sweaters, a line of slow feet to the pier like the other slow feet slowly on the stones of janitzio :the tarascan footsteps on the cold stone. how to fill the cold inside, left by death, by a not being there, that cold? and the ofrendas—elaborate orange flowers and hard bread dough and painted sugar candy and fruit topped with long white candles, winding and winding, going up and over, silent and

slow, to sit and sleep and be on the graves, unmarked but known from memory, the tombs of janitzio and the tarascan language singing in the cold air. all around us. and our tomb, where is it?

the english film crew holed up eight to a room in the best hotel in town, canadian head cameraman just back from a month of shooting in saigon—did you fight there, too, che? —, canadian sound man moving in on the voices, song, the mike sensitive in his hand, his eyes, ears moving. the cameraman dances, later he says :the hardest night of shooting i can remember, the worst night of shooting i can remember, the necessity of imposition, catching it, stopping the faces, gesture. we shouldn't be here. no.

where can we be, now that you are dead? the ritual goes on, imperious, what to be found or not found behind these faces, open, closed, the way life lives and dies in spite of eighteen late model cadillacs and twenty jeeps, do you want to taste that whitefish, the island famous for it, the cameras, the blankets, the screaming ambivalent air.

parking is organized at the pier, it says TO THE PIER and ALPUERTO in english and spanish, pieces of paper, receipts, the slow going out of the launches, six pesos per person, and on ours a group of young mexican kids, a loud aside :a lot of english spoken around here, what, nothing like tourism at patzcuaro, god damned americans everywhere, day of the dead, for us felipe tells them :english, spanish, it's all the same, all foreign to tarascan, the words of this place. o.k., kid. i dig you, but you're wrong.

the kids begin to sing revolutionary songs, aggressive, beautiful. two fat and frizzled fortyish women nibble at their sticky penis candy.

the sound of the songs. it all comes up to me, touches, alongside the flaming torches on the water as we move out, the death of el che just two weeks old brought somehow to this day of death, life, these people, their faces, impassive, as the bolivian peasants in whom he found no answer, no receptivity, no response. and what civilization is doing, has done, has tried to do to tarascan life, the knick-knack offered screaming beside the real life/art/death/art :the ofrenda, offered, the long red pleated skirts and bare feet, the embroidered aprons wide and long, the women as they walk and kneel.

el che is here, it is part of the history, this night, the promise, hard, the faces and their no-answer that will someday be answer, part of answer, in spite of. our hands freeze beneath the rebozos, and the jorongos, our hands freeze and our faces frost and the water is silent, black, cold, lit only at intervals by the torches, janitzio —the island— a crowded busy postage stamp rising beyond and before us, what do we have before us, if you are gone?

the boat arrives. the rock reminds of mount saint michel—long french memories of the loud stands and the screaming tourist wares and the smell of food, a different food now but food, all covering the real rite, the huge ofrendas behind each stall, in back rooms, the work of this night, the music. this night that is that night, what did you eat, what do we eat this knowledge in us?

we walk, we run, carrying tripods, batteries, cameras, sandwiches and tequila and rum, lenses, the big movie camera going round and round, the sound equipment receptive, we run up the cobbled streets, around and around, spiraling, out of breath at the basketball court covered with fishnet, the spanish alternating with tarascan

on the loudspeaker, the dancing already begun.

a letter for the policeman at the entrance, deference, hundreds of indians and visitors sitting in the stands, spread about the rocks above, the dancers moving in the arena, and the musicians chanting, playing, the combination of instruments, feet. the ninety-two year old woman barefoot running from one side of the court to the other, her small horse's neck and head bobbing phallic and alive from her waist, the old men in traditional jerky movement of their old man's dance, the butterfly nets, the fight of the two bulls rasping against each other, horns, the bodies of men behind them.

rufino tamayo and his wife in their place of honor on the stands, all deference to the painter, sitting to one side i hear the wife's remarks, stupid woman, tamayo's black and white checkered sports coat and red beret :suddenly even they or most specially they are made the goats, make themselves the goats, take the a part of the mexican middle class, destroyer, imitator, deformer, ridicule sliding off like oil, what can change these people? we are, also, the goats? did you know, che? four tarascan women behind me pull the edges of their rebozos up against their noses, mouths, singing the language, giggling at the inuendos of the dancers, lost to us, partially lost, partially gained. god, it is cold.

the cameraman moves in. twenty others scramble down to use his light. his face is lined with pain, he moves, shoots, records, the flick of an arm, over this way, takes it in, moves back. the twenty move back with him.

the music continues and the dancers continue and the voices and gestures continue and it is all there on a thousand levels, before us. coming down out of the stadium the cemetery

suddenly floods our eyes :a hundred crunched and folded women bent over their family plots, candles streaming light, spirals of breath in the freezing air, neat piles of food covered with a hundred different figures on the graveside ofrendas, these women who will sit all night with their dead, and the tourists who mill among them, dropping money, pinching babies, taking pictures, asking questions in their half spanish or loud english, invisible in their violent visible parenthesis of now.

now this is your grave for us, why not, unmarked except in our heads, on our eyes, in our hands.

we would be women, folded, sitting all night.

it is three a.m. at one of the open fronted curio shop bright incongruous restaurant stalls we stop and sit and recharge the batteries and our bodies around a couple of square metal tables pushed together. the metallic sounds of your bed of death ring in our ears. in the back room the ofrenda. spectrum of belts and boxes and masks and baskets and dolls and nets and boats and bags hanging from the ceiling and shelved against the walls. in the front of a hot fire under the greased grid, the owner rolls small whitefish tacos for the crowds, we munch and drink rich cafe de olla, hovering in his electricity his warmth. his face is a mask of both worlds, selling the expected to the tourists, the map of his time and place in the great candy and dough and flower arrangement in his back room. the cold, it is always, also, the cold.

we watch the people streaming up and down. we eat. the cameraman talks of vietnam, his months there, the film for CBS, it didn't matter what they wanted us to shoot, what they let us shoot, there's only one thing to shoot, it's there. that's all.

the assistant cameraman is the flying dutchman with his wide blue eyes and blond straw over the red forehead, a seaman's cap and heavy square hands somehow spelling tenderness. the soundman is silent, filled, his fingers long and out, the mike even there, not put away, a part of him, extension. the english director is nervous, moved, moving, awkward, perhaps there is nothing here for him to do, somehow, but no. and el che, you who are with us too, here, invisible, real, your death with these deaths your lives with these lives your fight for these impassive masks, situation in space, america.

four a.m. :the graveyard again. every plot contains itself, two or three women, this is a woman's act of contrition, response, offering, rite. the men, all of them are drunk. they move, staggering, along the sides. some of the women are asleep now, waiting, curled before their candles and their dead, offerings, pieces of object made symbol, substance, connection, the dead. the living. the tourists both dead nor alive move here, among, their brittle commentary, photos, words, laughter, neither here nor there a running off, running off like oil on the face of god. the sky is black and cracks with stars and candle light, the shadow of el che is great and real, a power and a promise, when?

by the high arch the entrance to the cemetery a lonely man cries very quietly, says a few words in spanish, in french—understand?— dark red muffler up around his neck, pale green jacket, he is looking he is seeing it all, he is trying to tell the assistant cameraman what he feels, he is very drunk.

the governor of the state of michocan surrounded by his party, walking up, through, followed, coming down, going off in his private launch, no involvement there. the chanting continues, the music is thin and cold, the air shivers inside us. your air shivers inside us, too. there is no meaning in the comment "this

scene has changed in fifteen years, the tourists are ruining mexico," shit this IS mexico, twentieth century, world, home of tarascan and late model cadillac, home of olympics in '68, home of revolution and young romantic mexican kids, home of el che, his fight, our ears, eyes, hands.

in the morning we are turning on the cramped beds eight to a room. the bottle of tequila is still being passed around. at noon patzcuaro is beautiful, green and stone and old houses scrubbed by the sun and whitewash, the plaza unbelievable and true, the vegetables and dishes and blankets, the great old buildings heavy and strong. strong enough to hold you, too, che. strong enough for your promise and our pain.

the late model cars are leaving. the restaurant owners are washing their hands. the waiters are bowing low for the last time this year. the tourists are on their way to to drink at the fair in morelia. or the cabaret in mexico city, the beach in acapulco. the english film company packs up to move, to finish shooting norman mailer in new york. the cemetery on janitzio is empty, there are only the marks of foot and candle wax on the soft memorized ground. in bolivia regis debray is asking too be considered guerrilla by the military court, el che is dead, this che is dead and other ches being born. other ches are already fighting. in bolivia the indians show the same impassive faces as the tarascans of janitzio. in mexico this is folklore. in bolivia it is already more than that.

in canada the head cameraman's family is waiting for him. in england the allan king associates are waiting for this film. is it really a film about tamayo? in mexico city our lives are waiting too. our eyes. our hands.

mexico city — 11.4.67

(reprinted from IKON #5 March, 1968)

HAYDEE SANTAMARIA

LETTER TO CHE

Che: where can I write you? You'll tell me—anywhere, to a Bolivian miner, Peruvian mother, to the guerrilla who's there or isn't there but will be. I know all this, Che, you yourself taught me, and anyway that letter wouldn't be for you. How can I tell you I haven't cried so much since the night they killed Frank, and this time I didn't believe it. Everyone was sure, and I said: it's not possible, a bullet can't put an end to infinity. Fidel and you must live, if you don't live how can we. Fourteen years of this, of seeing those I love so greatly die, that now I'm tired of life, I think I've lived too long, the sun doesn't look so good, the palm, I don't feel the pleasure of seeing it; sometimes, as now, in spite of my great love for life—for those two things alone, the sun and the palm, it's worth opening your eyes every morning - I feel like closing them forever, like them, like you.

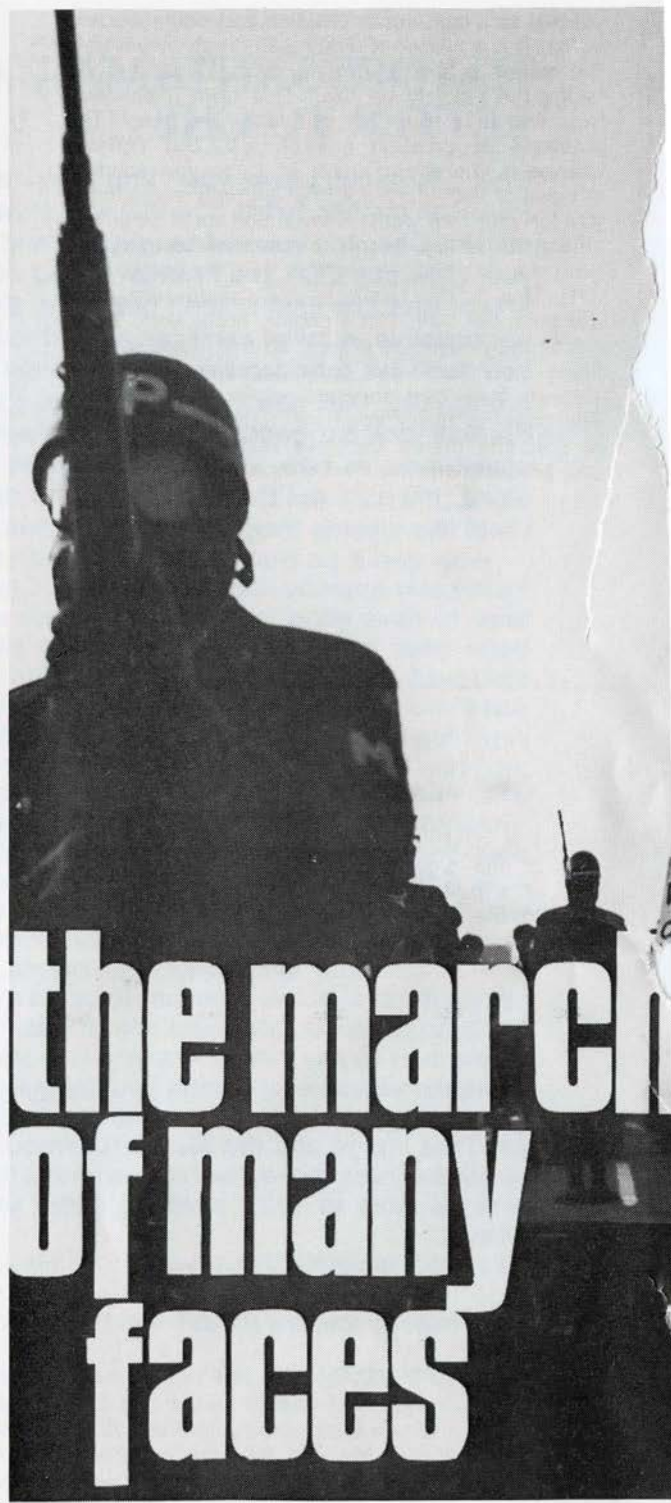
How can it be true, this continent doesn't deserve this. With your eyes open Latin America had her own road. Che, the only consolation would have been to have gone, but I didn't go, I am with Fidel, beside him, always I've done what he wanted me to do. Do you remember? In the **Sierra** you promised me, you said: "you won't miss the coffee, we'll have **mate**." For you there were no frontiers, but you promised you'd call me when it was in your Argentina, and how I waited for that. I knew you would keep that promise. Now it can't be, you couldn't, I couldn't. Fidel said it, it must be true, what sorrow. He couldn't say "Che," he called on all his strength and said "Ernesto Guevara," that's how he told the people, your people. What tremendous sorrow. I cried for the people, for Fidel, for you, because I can't bear it now. Afterwards, at the wake, this great nation didn't know what rank Fidel would give you. He said: **artist**. I thought all ranks were too few, too low, and Fidel as always, found the right one: everything you made was perfect, but you created one thing among all others, you made yourself, showing the possibility of this new man, so we could all see that this new man is a reality, because he exists, he is you. What else can I tell you, Che. If only, like you, I knew how to say things. Anyway, you once wrote me: "I see you've become a literate person with control over language, but I admit I like you best in my image of that New Year's day, all the shots gone and canons blaring around us. That image and the **Sierra** (even our fights of those days are good to remember) are those I will take with me for my own use." That's why I won't ever be able to write anything about you, and you'll have that memory forever.

To victory always, Che, love.

Haydee.

(Translation by Margaret Randall—reprinted from Vol. 1, #6 October 1968)

HAYDEE SANTAMARIA was one of the two women who fought at Moncada (1953) with Fidel. She lost her fiancé (Boris Luis Santa Coloma) and her brother (Abel Santamaria) there, and was imprisoned with Fidel. She was director of the Cuban Cultural organization, Casa de las Americas. She was president of OLAS as well. She was married to Armando Hart, who took this personal letter and saw to its publication.





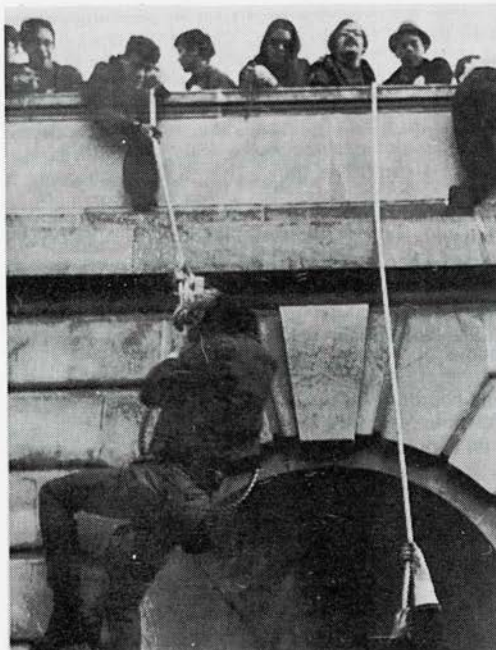
Until the moment of arrival in Washington, the only idea of what to expect came from news reports. It seemed that every hour someone was announcing that more troops had been dispatched to the Pentagon to "greet the demonstrators." No matter where you heard it—on your car radio; in the newspapers that circulated through the trains and buses—the words all said one thing. That any person going to Washington to protest the war would meet not only his country's official scorn, but its fear as well.

Beyond that it was impossible to know what would result when the last demonstrator had reached his destination. Some of us were going with hopes of raising the Pentagon off the ground; others in our ranks hoped to get inside. There were some who had come for the week-end; others only for a day. A multitude of persuasions were converging from all over the country, and they would all influence the events to come. What would happen, or how or why, no one could predict.

Once you arrive at the Lincoln Memorial rally, there is no more time for news reports or thought. Now, whatever might happen, you are part of it.

Most likely you arrive in the middle of somebody's speech, so you immediately sit down, as close up front as possible, and try to immerse yourself in the trend of thought emanating from the podium. This is hard to do, for every few minutes a low-flying helicopter goes by, back and forth, interrupting. Your eyes shift from the police on top of the memorial, to the faces around you. No matter where you stand, ideologically or otherwise, on this day you find yourself agreeing with just about everyone. Whether they have come to sing, speak, listen, carry a sign, or make the Pentagon fly, you're glad they're all there. The day is warm, the faces are friendly, the afternoon beckons everyone to take part.

Because of the interruptions from the helicopter, several of the demonstrators start for the Pentagon ahead of the rest. When the bulk of the marchers arrive at the bridge to Virginia, it is already lined on both sides with people.



The helicopter follows, keeping everybody within the scope of its two-way route. By this time it is so close that often you find yourself standing in its shadow.

Waiting on the bridge are three counter pickets. Two young-looking boys bear signs saying "DRAFT FLOWER CHILDREN" and "BOMB HANOI." The boys themselves say nothing. Their mouthpiece, a slightly older young man says he hopes to be sent into combat duty as soon as he finishes medical school. The spectacle stops traffic, so the parade marshals urge us to move on.

You follow a loose trail to the Pentagon. Through some high grass, onto a winding road, down a hill, onto another road, across a green field. Some walking, some running, but everyone anxious. Up the steps and you're there.

A white rope extends along the top of the steps. Behind the row, enforcing it, stand rows and rows of troops.

What now? Each of us may have different personal reasons for why we wanted to be at the protest, but above all was the idea of taking part in actual confrontation with the warmakers. Well, here they are. The stage is set for dialogue, and it's up to us to open it.

"Don't you have children?"

"We are not your enemy."

"Afraid of me? I won't hurt you."

But there is no response. The soldiers stand, unmoving, until the first "incident." A boy crosses the line over the rope. He is instantly thrown on the ground and dragged away.

"Good-bye... Thank you for going first... some of us will join you soon..."

At the same time, in another place, Norman Mailer was arrested. Norman Mailer—the MPs were glad to see him. Holding him gently, they escorted him to a police van, shook his hand, and relaxed into smiling conversation.

"...President Johnson today assailed the irresponsible acts of violence and lawlessness by many of the demonstrators."

NY DAILY NEWS BUREAU
10/22/67

"HEY MUTHAFUCK — PUT IT OUT"

Someone has set fire to a small American flag. His fellow demonstrators revile him and, embarrassed, he leaves.

"... Defense officials said that tear gas was apparently used, but said that it came apparently from the demonstrators."

The (Washington) Sunday Star
10/22/67

The parade marshals are yelling from the sound-trucks. "They've made it!" Six of the demonstrators at the left front door have broken through the layers of troops, and gotten inside the Pentagon. The crowds at the doors surge forward, but the now-alerted soldiers easily repel them. Demonstrators topple over one another. People cough and eyes sting. Tear gas.

Even if it didn't get you, you could smell it as you tried to hear the instructions of the parade marshal. Since nobody (except the soldiers) thought to bring gas masks, you are advised to keep a small piece of cloth to cover your face. Some of the men in the crowd rip up their shirts and pass the pieces around.

"Should a gas grenade land near you, pick it up if you possibly can, and throw it back."

I wonder if anyone followed that instruction.

When the air clears, the parade marshals debate about what to do next. Some say we should begin mass civil disobedience. Others say it is more important to maintain the ground we already have, but even they become excited when a small group encircles a TV camera.

Now, the mood of the march changes. Some of the buses head back. The crowd thins. The temperature drops and it begins to get dark.

A young demonstrator greets the sunset by jumping up on the sound truck. Arms upstretched, he burns his draft card. The crowd cheers, and little draft card fires spring up everywhere. Nobody speaks of getting into the Pentagon anymore, but a sleep-in is called. Again, cheers.

But nighttime also means the departure of the press. Although they are in no way our ally, when they leave with their pads and cameras, the world is cut off. Now we are left alone with the troops. Some of us are appointed to go into Washington to get food and medical supplies. Others start campfires on the Pentagon grounds.

Those who stay to hold the line remain seated and wait. Eyes downward, arms linked, hardly speaking or moving, prepared for the long night ahead. The tension for some is broken by a boot thrust in the lip, or a rifle butt in the back. Screams erupt as the intervals of violence become more frequent, and suddenly nothing is real except the pain and tear gas.

"It's a battle up there. Don't go."

"Please, my friend is hurt. Where's the first aid station?"

"Some policemen made us move it. It's all the way in the parking lot now."

"I can't see that far. I'm blind. I can't see."

At the top of the steps the soldiers have formed the "flying wedge." Half of them stand firm. The others march toward them, like the minute hand of a clock nearing 9:30. Anyone in their path gets beaten and arrested.

The marshals are yelling that it isn't too late to leave. "It's a lousy decision to have to make, but that's how it is. Either stay and be arrested, or leave now. And even-

ryone who gets arrested, without exception, gets beaten."

But despite the warnings, each one of us stayed. It was almost too much to take at once, for every sense seemed to be bombarded with part of the horror. The smell of the tear gas; the sounds of the songs that we can hardly sing because our throats are dry with fear, and the screams that rise louder than the songs; the feeling of your sweating body shivering against the cold; and the unbelievable sight of the advancing troops. Together they are almost paralyzing.

The marshals repeat their warning, but it is no longer an open choice. You can only sit still and watch the line of soldiers coming at you. You tell yourself that they wouldn't arrest you just for sitting there. Somehow you make yourself believe that, even as you watch them beating your friends and dragging them off. You can't even be angry. You can only sit there and tell yourself that it isn't really happening.

Suddenly, a new voice breaks through, overpowering all the noise. The voice of a leader.

"YOU ARE VIOLATING THE PERMIT... YOU ARE IRRESPONSIBLY ATTACKING PEACEFUL PEOPLE..."

The screaming stops, and so do the soldiers. They are still, maybe even listening.

"WE ARE PEACEFUL PEOPLE CONFRONTING A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT... WE COME TO YOU IN PEACE AS YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS... YOU REACT BY BEATING US... WHERE IS THE TROOP COMMANDER? WHO GAVE YOU THE ORDERS TO ATTACK?"

The calm that his words bring is almost as stunning as the violence a few moments ago. You slowly come to your senses and wonder who is speaking.

"MY NAME IS DR. SIDNEY PECK... I AM ONE OF THE MOBILIZATION LEADERS WHO ORGANIZED THIS DEMONSTRATION... I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY ONE OF THESE PEOPLE... WHERE IS THE TROOP COMMANDER? LET HIM COME FORWARD AND EXPLAIN THIS ATTACK."

There is nobody to talk to. There are only bayonets to face. Dr. Peck has no gun, he

must continue to beg. The call is changed to "We want Van Cleve." Meaning Henry Van Cleve, establishment representative, co-signer of the demonstration permit.

"MR. VAN CLEVE YOU PROMISED WHEN YOU SIGNED THE PERMIT THAT YOU WOULD BE ON HAND IN CASE OF TROUBLE... THE SOLDIERS HAVE ATTACKED US FOR NO REASON..."

After speaking and leading chants for nearly forty-five minutes, Dr. Peck takes a rest and other mobilization leaders take the microphone. They talk to the soldiers, but also for the morale of the demonstrators who sit huddled around fires built on garbage. Some of them were injured during the "wedge."

The leaders keep speaking, but this will not be sufficient to hold the soldiers all night. We must not let them end the demonstration by force.

Dr. Peck returns to the microphone to present a plan to prevent another attack. One by one each of us remaining on the steps may take a turn at committing voluntary civil disobedience, and being arrested. But the arrests must be made in the same peaceful manner and spirit as the disobedient act itself.

The first volunteer gets up. Dr. Peck instructs the army in how to make a non-violent arrest.

"OPEN YOUR RANKS AND LET HIM THROUGH. THEN YOU CAN ARREST HIM. HE WON'T RESIST, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO USE FORCE."

I remember straining, trying to see what it would be like when my turn came. But then I didn't need to look, or even want to, as one girl shouted,

"STOP IT — DON'T DO THAT TO HIM!"

Dr. Peck spoke again, as the volunteer was placed on a stretcher and carried

away. It was clear that the troops would not cooperate with any peaceful plan.

And so it went through the night. Little flareups and sporadic arrests. Sunday morning brought the return of the press, and some of the six hundred arrestees, bailed out by the mobilization.

Through Sunday selective arrests were methodically made.

If you were one of the "chosen," an army marshal would stand in back of you and give a slight nudge with his knee. That would be the signal to prepare yourself, for the next thing you would feel would be the clubs of two or three MPs. Arresting procedures consisted of an MP marshal dragging you off by your clothes, limbs, or hair.

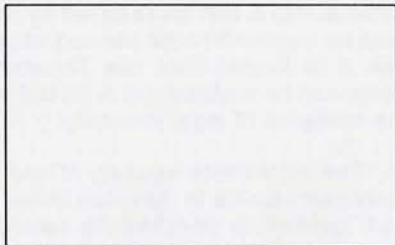
By doing this, the troops managed to decimate our numbers enough so that when Sunday midnight came the final "sweep up" was easy.

"... When the last demonstrator was gone, there was a moment of silence, and then a wave of cheering from the troops. The marshals then applauded the soldiers."

NY POST
10/23/67

For them, I suppose, the end of the demonstration was a joyous event. That's how they saw it. The march had many faces, and no one could get an aerial view. Where I and those around me saw the flying wedge, others, not so far away, say they shared the fire's warmth with some of the soldiers. Some people have told me they saw soldiers defect to our side. There was horror and pain, but beauty and friendship too.

(reprinted from IKON #5 March, 1968)



NOTES TOWARDS AN ABSOLUTE THEATER OF CHANGE

ROBERT KELLY

AT THE SIGN OF THE LIZARD

THE
THEATER OF
CHANGE



To be at ease,
to change,
to transform

chorten
or hortus alchemicus:
The Man himself
is the Theater
The Movements of
"Elements"
within him are the
Play.

The Player who is the candidate for initiation (into the mysteries of the self) enacts the glyph of his being.

Epidauros in daylight= Eleusis in dark. The mysteries were at night & their center was brightness. The theater was in the daytime, against the *skainê*, or *scene*, the wall whereon the shadows are projected, whereon the dark opacities of the agonist declared itself & was visible to himself & to the audience.

This will be one more attempt to rescue the theater from actors & texts & directors, free the **form** for use. Artaud declared, in word & flesh, a mode (he called it **cruelty**, for reasons personal & traditional) of archetypal engagement. His idea was soon enough bastardized into one more theatrical gimmick, a revival of nothing more spectacular than Grand Guignol, whether bare-ass Marat or jungle fighting live on the tube.

I. Basic premise: the Theater is a **place** in which the agonist's gestures & responses are at the same time the movements of a candidate through initiation.

II. There is (consequently) no audience. Each play is unique, is the conjunction of a more or less firm identity with programmed chance-ful environment.

III. Only the actor or agonist is in a position to engage with what befalls him. He moves through the changes.

Ground Set:

1. The theater itself. Premises conditioned in such a way that there is a specific number (e.g. 12) of controlled environments or rooms, areas, chambers. Such an environment is here designated **thalamos**.

2. Each thalamos will be composed of a variety of sensory overpowers. Certain of these may be static, certain dynamic. The dynamic phenomena may be so program-

ed as to have a chanceful coincidence among themselves.

3. Fundamentally, the whole play is the passage of the candidate successively through all the thalamoi & so out of the theater.

4. Each candidate will enter the theater alone, or (for instance) with one other person with whom a sexual polarity may be expected to exist or arise.

5. The candidate will prepare himself by some minutes spent alone in an empty neutral quiet antechamber designed to throw him upon his inner rhythm.

6. Access to each succeeding thalamos may be rigidly predetermined by schedule, or may be varied or wholly controlled (tho this last is not to be desired) by onlooking attendants. Presumably, the candidate will have to spend a significant time in each thalamos before he is permitted to find his way to the next.

7. More exactly, the candidate's stay in a given thalamos will be largely given over to his attempt to pass from it to the next. Participation in the Theater of Change may be analogous to a journey through night & enigma, in the presence of sensory overpowers designed to menace, & thus isolate, the candidate's inner order.

8. After passing through the last thalamos, the candidate remains for a time in total dark in an anechoic chamber. Light comes to him gradually; one comes to lead him out.

Observations:

a. Candidates will wear white robes. Besides being etymologically satisfying, the white robes will desecularize the candidate from the outset, prevent damage to his own clothing, & allow attendants to perceive him in dark places.

b. It is assumed that each thalamos will be equipped with one or more hidden spyholes, & a disguised door, so that the

candidate can be under the surveillance of attendants, & can be rescued by them should he succumb to the sensory stimuli. Since it is hoped that the Theater of Change can be realized, (a) & (b) will offer some measure of legal immunity.

c. The attendants spoken of are obviously comparable in function to the so-called "guides" in psychedelic sessions. Their powers are less susceptible of abuse, yet they must presumably be carefully chosen, especially when the program allows them discretion in opening doors.

d. The words **chance** or **chanceful**, as used here or anywhere, are not to be taken too seriously. Chance is chimerical, a philosophic guessing-game, a trick of attention. **Change**, on the other hand, is a less doubtful commodity.

The Mysteries:

I use the word **cycle** or **program** to describe the basic symbolic understanding underlying the choice of specific environments at any given moment in the Theater of Change. Any number of cycles are imaginable, & can be drawn from the traditional religious & mythic repertory, from literary sources, or can be devised for the occasion. Clearly there is much to be said for the ancient numerical & nomenclatural processes.

Each cycle will involve its own sequence or congeries of environmental conditions.

From among the many cycles that present themselves (e.g. Theban Ennead Cycle, Pyramid Text Cycle, Olympiad Cycle, Bardo Cycle, Taliessin Cycle, Planetary Cycle, Prime Number Cycle, Tarot Cycle).











I sketch for the sake of example this one:

ZODIAC CYCLE FOR THE THEATER OF CHANGE:

Each thalamus will correspond to one of the signs of the zodiac. The candidate will presumably enter at Aries (or at the sign of his own Ascendant).

The brief descriptions below refer to the kinds of stimuli, the tasks imposed upon the candidate, &c.

It is to be understood that stimuli are, unless otherwise planned & stated, very strong.

	Aries:	Heat. Fire & urgency. The beginning in terror.
	Taurus:	Calm. The kingdom of touch & possession. To retain something of all this. Music. The candidate is perhaps allowed to be bored. The candidate is summoned from Taurus to Gemini by name .
	Gemini:	Isolation. Messages (auditory, visual) incessant.
	Cancer:	Protect yourself! Darkness. Fight to drive inward. Pry him out. Inward, infolding. The path out is inward. Look down.
	Leo:	Brightness. Sustained sound. Exchange. Generations of hydrogen & helium. Things all round that can be looked at. Any sexual motif begins here. Perhaps sudden sullen silences, hears his heart beat.
	Virgo:	The numerical underground. How many are there? Riddle your way out. How many? Apotheosis of number, quantity as criterion. The innumerable proportion.
	Libra:	The fun house. Tactile. Disorder of balance, of poise. Slides & pratfalls. Land of contrast. Take hold! Pick the right one. Hold!
	Scorpio:	Red intense mula excitation. Skin flicks from all sides. The power is within. Can he stand the power? Can the power stand?
	Sagittarius:	Intelligible order. Calm. Preside above these things. Give them away. Issue commands. Control in sympathy. Judge. Enigmatic crimes & tragedies are enacted or depicted. Physical agility needed here. Nothing is easy.
	Capricorn:	Transformation under process. Make something. The self over others. Black. Be a light.
	Aquarius:	Flex of self among others. Confusion of identity. Land of shadows & masks & phony mirrors, distorted messages from all sides, music subtly wrong. Names shouted from all sides, ideas & theories. Vision. Death of intimacy. When it is cold you huddle for warmth. It is cold.
	Pisces:	Flow. Transformation beyond form. Water. Water. Erratic. Erotic. Strangeness. Magic. What power is in your hands? Summer on the moon. Pass thru enigma.

(reprinted from IKON #5 March, 1968)

MIGUEL BARNET

ebbo for the slaves

A layo!

Kini ba wo

Three feathers from your left wing
to make ready a stone that walks in the mountain, niggardly dawn,
and hunts, close to the roots,
between the *jocuma* and the *palo bobo*
the hot and gathered blood of the negroes.

Three doves on a thousand leaves
covered with dew
to offer freedom

A layo!

Kini ba wo

Eleggua watches the door
in his white bramble shirt
so the devil won't come in

The mass has ended... the crows no longer possess the stars
We have all been witness
Good to have waited through the cold nights
of so many centuries... In the word, in the muscle we are

Mother of Water moves the water of all the oceans with her skirts
My eyes tremble in the freshness of the dawn
On the other side of the bay parting the coconut in four
announces the red heat of man
to the world.

(translation by Margaret Randall)



MIGUEL BARNET

the absent friend

I've had a letter from Albert:

"It's a big warehouse, all made of aluminum,
it's cold working there
but we keep going
There's a negro here like old Napoleon, the guy
who washed cars, remember?
he kept at me to write you
I told him I liked you but you're with Castro
I think they treat him bad
but it's only natural
Everything here is in English
you know I'm not so good with the language
but, what can you do...
If you answer I promise to send a picture of my youngest kid
Well, Miguel... "

Together, we'll never again gather the seeds of the orchard
Nor will we rise before the roosters
to see the shining leaves of coffee
We'll never again go together to the meetings of Pancho Socrates
and come out saying:

What a good guy, that Socrates,
he can't imagine how we laugh with him!

My friend went away, carrying death
The doctrine of love in a bag full of holes
eaten away, like a piece of old tobacco
I've told my brother to open his window to the storm
To remember that every past generation
was tricked
To be stubborn, straight
as a school teacher
To sink his feet in the river till they stop bleeding

At the bottom of it all
Albert is an old, timid cry

Weak fist that could not carve its way!

And day before yesterday, hear this,
An old man told me the earth
leaned back against a tree
to hear a worker reading
CAMILO'S journal in a low voice

(translated by Margaret Randall)



THE CINEMA AND REVOLUTION

**Santiago
Alvarez**

Santiago Alvarez, a Cuban filmmaker, is best known for his extraordinary documentary films. (CERRO PELADO, NOW, CICLON, HANOI MARTES 13, etc.)

Early in this century when the Generals who colonized the African Continent looked upon the Cinema as a pacifying means and recalled the **healthful terror** provoked by the films projected in the palaces of the Sultans, they were thereby prematurely making known what would later on become one of the most powerful ideological instruments of communication to influence the thoughts of millions of persons in all the continents. Hollywood's production not only represented for the big monopolies a source of profit, it spread out both domestically and internationally with very defined purposes of cultural infiltration, bent as they were on molding the minds and standardizing the tastes of millions of consumers of material and spiritual goods in the capitalist world and in the colonized countries.

Yet, to the same extent that Cinema has served and is serving the objectives of the Metropolis, it can also prove helpful in developing underdeveloped countries liberated or in revolution.

Because of its characteristics, Cinema represents an instrument of opinion and information of the individual and the collective conscience and it may contribute to make more profound and transparent the revolutionary spirit and sustain its creative breath.

In fighting against underdevelopment (underdevelopment is always sub-information and sub-information is ignorance), we must recover and use without delay the multipliers of information (mass-media) capable of reaching every place regardless of how inaccessible and far away that may be. And parallel to this we must, without delay, eliminate illiteracy, traditionalism and poverty, for while it is true that information generates a formative substance among the masses, it is likewise true that the formation of the masses puts them in a position to grasp better and understand more efficiently the objectives of such mass media. And there is nothing else to do but to rend the vicious circles of underdevelopment with a parallel effort.

Winning the race against the clock is part of the effective struggle against underdevelopment. And to win this race in Cuba

it became necessary, parallel to creating a cinematographic industry which did not exist prior to the Revolution, to teach an entire people how to read and write.

We did not wait to do one thing first and then the other. With the few cinema technicians existing in this country, an accelerated training of unskilled personnel was undertaken (men worked and studied at the same time). And Cinema was also brought for the first time into rural areas and areas of difficult access, incorporating millions of new spectators.

The recovery and usage of mass-media of a country in revolution like ours involves also a struggle against the heritage that the former society left us. The need for creating a non-existent cinematographic industry goes hand in hand with the following objectives:

1. Creation of a form of cinematographic expression of the national culture.

2. Formation of a new public, more critical, more complex, more conscious, more demanding, more revolutionary.

But a national production by itself alone can hardly recover a public. It also becomes imperative to elaborate and carry out an entire program to help in shaping a new spectator, that tends to eliminate existing habits from the past, habits which leave traces which cannot be made to disappear by means of decrees or slogans.

Cinema is one of the most powerful means available to modern man to put us in touch with what Unamuno referred to as intra-history. And if quantitatively the fact that more than twenty billion spectators attending the movies each year throughout the world serves to corroborate fully the characterization attributed to Cinema as a mass medium, then qualitatively it also may be placed on an exceptional rank. Its power to polarize crowds does not conflict with the spectator's individual participation. Isolated or in a group he is a simultaneous participant. Darkness was organized isolating the spectator, "encasing him in black"—to quote Epstein—, dissipating the diurnal resistance and stressing all the fascinations of the shadows. And if we are to add to the aesthetic and effective magic represented by Cinema, the development it has gone through in its

inner structures (sets and other techniques for rhythm and movement of image and sound), we can conclude that this new artistic experience of this century has resulted in an enrichment almost indispensable for a harmonious development of the personality. And developing such a personality in technically underdeveloped countries is to favorably contribute to technical development itself, so necessary in order to settle the problems of a backward economy in a country in revolution where the "Middle Ages coexist with the Modern Age."

And it then becomes necessary to use the Cinema as an effective aid in training the new technicians who will make possible the transformation of the archaic means of production, whether agricultural or industrial, at times encouraging the vocation of hesitant students or popularizing working methods or modern technologies that on many occasions conflict with the convention and tradition of peasantry handicraft. Usage of scientific cinema also falls within the vicious circles of underdevelopment. Scientist-filmmakers or filmmaker-scientists are in short demand but the apparent contradictions must have a solution and we have not the time to train one first and then the other. To accomplish that simultaneously in this case is to help an accelerated development.

On the other hand, both in capitalist and socialist countries, the cinematographic newsreels, which periodically report to millions of spectators on the events taking place around the world have lost popularity among the audiences of these countries due to the conventional manner in which they operate, clearly at a disadvantage with the style used by television which, in addition, surrounds the new with a dynamic charge of immediate current interest (curiously enough, just a few days ago we learned that newsreels are to be discontinued in U.S. movies since they are unable to compete with TV news broadcasts). In view of the above, it has become indispensable to search for new forms of information in Cinema, inasmuch as contrary to an opinion at times sustained, it is not the Cinema which has lost

effectiveness, but the way some of the film makers go about it.

Having the mass-media available is not enough to accomplish the objectives of helping to build a new society. To do an effective job it is required to bear in mind the following factors:

1) To discontinue the Metropolis' formulas and sketches to which a "revolutionary content" is incorporated does not mean that the influence of the Metropolis is eliminated.

2) Revolutionary ideas are not be spread through dogmatic, schematic forms which provoke in audiences lack of interest or rejection. We must not forget that capitalism, by itself, uses a lot of ability to embellish its most harmful messages.

3) Judging from examples taken from our daily life in vastly different fields (sports, popular music, festivals, Tricontinental Conference, this very Cultural Congress...) we can substantiate that to counteract the pressures exerted by the blockade of the Metropolis, we must avail ourselves of our mass-media to avoid

isolation caused by fear or distrust of the peoples' selective capacity, whose sole result would be (history proves so) the paralysis of our liveliest and most creative forces.

In view of the above, it is necessary to establish a policy of principles in developing our mass-media, a policy that, without denying the characteristics of every one of the communication vehicles used, would review the manner of aiding the integral, harmonious and coherent formation of the audience to whom it is directed (moviegoers, TV watchers, radio listeners, readers, etc.) A deficient information circuit is a grave symptom of underdevelopment. That is why it also becomes necessary to set up a communication network with which to represent a reasonable coordination of all the factors, upholding it by references to highly concrete realities so that in this way the development of our masses could be accelerated as much as possible, this being a basic point for us to confront—the fascinating, great work of shaping our new society.

reprinted from IKON #6 Oct. 1968

TRIVIA
A JOURNAL OF IDEAS

**RADICAL FEMINIST
Theory
Experimental Prose
Translations
Reviews
Essays**

TRIVIA
A JOURNAL OF IDEAS
FALL 1989

Ruthann Robson
Carol LeMasters
Christina Thürmer-Rohr
trans. by Lisa Weil
Carolyn Gage
Amy Elman
Joan Chevallier
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Laurel Rust

Historicity
S/M and the Violence of Desire
Turning Thoughts/
Turning Away
No Dobermans Allowed:
A Dramatic Argument for
Separatist Theater
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唯一の平和への道
 米軍の全面撤退 (平連)
 THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE
 WITHDRAWAL OF ALL
 U.S. TROOPS
 BEHEIREN

4th May
 大塚美年子

It's me. →
 Mineko Ohtsuka
 · 25 years old
 · height - 162 cm
 · graphic designer
 My younger sister took
 this photo at Shimizugidani Park in Tokyo.

殺すな
 DO NOT KILL

5th. May
 in front of
 U.S. Army Hospital
 Camp OJI

N.F.L. flag

I'm sorry this isn't color photo.

He is a mathematician.
 He works for BEHEIREN
 and mathematician's group
 against Vietnam War.

せんとう
 きんとう
 とら
 い
 さん
 さん

4th. May
 I DISLIKE WAR
 TOMOKO

This is his daughter
 and this placard is
 her master piece.

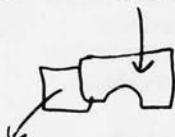
her name





4th. May

今こそ平和を
PEACE NOW



日本政府はベトナム戦争に
協力するな

JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
DON'T CO-OPERATE
WITH ~~THE~~ VIETNAM WAR

LETTERS FROM MINEKO

April 27, 1968

Dear B...

Today I want to speak about the film about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This documentary was taken by Japanese cameramen and scientists one month after the bombing in order to record the results of the worst destruction the world has ever seen—by order of the American Army of Occupation. This film was taken away from the eyes of all Japanese and the world by the American Government. At last it came back to Japan, after 23 years from that day. And lately we could see it on television for the first time. How do you think we feel?

I felt relieved, and I got angry. At first I was afraid to see terrible things, especially the effect of the atomic bomb on the human body. But we had to see it, it was our duty. I felt the same fear before I entered the museum in Hiroshima.

The film was cut by the Japanese government at the most important and terrible point: about 13 minutes showing the effect on the human body. They said it was to protect the privacy of the victims. But in reality the victims want most to let the world know the cruelty of nuclear weapons, to open all of it to the public.

But our government did not want to show this because it is a friend of your government. Japan's government is interested in nuclear weapons, not to have for itself, but it does welcome the atomic energy seaplane carrier ENTERPRIZE and the B52 stations in Okinawa.

Someone has said that this film has no faces. We have the impression from this film that there were no people in Hiroshima or Nagasaki or that the atomic bomb did no harm to the human body and soul. This

narration and explanation which was made in the U.S.A. and translated into Japanese as it is. It seems to say "You must be careful on this point, to destroy more effectively **next time**."

At the end of the film I read and heard the words DESTRUCTION ENDED and then saw the wheat growing up on the ground where the bomb had fallen, where the construction began again with hope and dream. CRAZY! Yes, buildings were built once more, trees and grass grew up and the sun shines. But the victims are **still** having a hard time. Radioactivity invaded the babies in their mother's body. And it invaded the soul. The Atomic Bomb threw the people of the world into fear, and DESTRUCTION BEGAN at that time, not ended. But the most fearful thing of all is not to understand the real horror of it and not to let people know.

I want to know if the American people feel the fear of nuclear weapons. I have read somewhere that shelters were being made for the H Bomb, and that people had put rifles in them to shoot neighbors who haven't their own. I was astonished, for I myself would never want to survive after the H Bomb has fallen, and I think almost all people in Japan feel this way too.

I like the song "What Have They Done to the Rain?" but when I hear it or sing it I can't be calm in my heart. It's **too** beautiful. Songs that are born from the H Bomb can never be comfortable to the ear.

Next time I will write about Vietnam. Goodbye.

Your friend, Mineko

May 1, 1968

Dear Barbara,

I made a new song recently:

*A cat is crying round my house.
Round, round, round, round,
It circles round and cries.
Nobody say anything about that.*

*One day (some time ago)
The cat came in above the ceiling
of my house,
and bore it's kittens.
They scratched on the ceiling.*

*A man who was called
Caught the baby kittens,
All of them at last (with difficulty)
And took them away somewhere in
the car.*

*It happened while I slept.
When I woke up later
I heard out of the window
A cat saying something.*

*I went beside the cat,
But it didn't run away.
And it looked at my eyes with grief*

And was crying, and was crying.

*Cat is crying 'round my house,
It goes round and round
And is crying again today.
Nobody says anything about that.*

This isn't such a good song, I think, but it really happened to me lately. And when I was hearing that cat crying, that situation seemed very symbolic to me. Am I too sentimental?

I am very sorry I haven't great skill in song writing or singing, or playing instruments. (I have a guitar), so I want to say something from my heart by drawing. I haven't yet my own style of drawing now, but sometime...in the future, as you wrote to

me "I have been singing songs..." I want to say "I have been drawing and struggling against war all my life."

When I think of Vietnam, I can't help being very angry at the American Army's way of doing things.

They burned houses and villages, and drove the people away. Then they say they will give them new houses. But they can never understand the different style of life. A Western person may have **conquered** nature, but Eastern people **live** with nature. It isn't an official theory, and I can't say it well. But this is the feeling in the heart of Oriental people, I think. So the thing about the Vietnam war which moves many ordinary people in Japan is the feeling that Western people, white people, want to break down Eastern, Oriental life. It seems they don't care if the culture and life of the people, and the country itself must be broken in order to make a dike against the "red devil" (almost all of the people in Japan don't think Communism to be that), and to show this to the world.

Whenever I read articles by men who have visited Hanoi I feel strange. They say that Hanoi is very quiet and bright, and that people are smiling. A famous Japanese journalist has called this the "Smile of Hanoi" and he says this is the key point in understanding the Vietnam War.

Another Japanese journalist has said that European and American journalists compare life in North Vietnam with European life, completely overlooking how the Vietnamese have suffered under French colonialism (and Japanese militarism at the end of W.W.II).

There were more deaths from starvation during those times than deaths from the war now, I have heard.

Everyone who comes from Saigon, on the other hand, says it is the city of **vice**. And when I see the photographs of children entwined with their mothers I remember when I was a child Japan was the same as Saigon. It is a bitter memory. There is nothing more unreasonable, more unfortunate, and unjust than that there is a foreign army in your own country.

Your friend, Mineko

May 6, 1968

Dear B.,

Yesterday was May 5th, Children's Day in Japan. I went to Oji to attend the demonstration by students and citizens against the US Army Hospital there. I had read about the place in the papers, and heard through the radio, television, and magazines. But when I walked there and saw it for myself I was amazed. It stands in the middle of a residential district and, like all other such districts in Tokyo, the houses are crowded in and the roads are narrow. It is surrounded by a hospital (like a sanatorium), a girls' school, project apartments for ordinary people (we call them Dachi) and small houses. Maybe you will see pictures in your magazines about the violent clashes between the students and police there.

We students are generally concerned that the Vietnam war may spread to Japan and the U.S. Army would then act freely here. But the inhabitants of Oji have more direct reasons to be afraid. The people protested because of the terrible noise of the helicopters bringing wounded soldiers, they protested the use of jeeps which cause many accidents on the crowded streets, they are concerned about the possibility of spreading infectious disease, and the corruption of public morals. There

are these same troubles wherever there are U.S. Army camps. And there are other which come to individuals or isolated districts, so usually these complaints are overlooked.

But I think it symbolizes the relationship between the U.S.A. and Japan. Our Prime Minister, Mr. Sato, says Japan is the best friend of America. But we say the Japanese government is the first servant of the American government. And the U.S. Army base is as a tyrant to the inhabitants. In yesterday's demonstration there was a worker who carried a big flag of the Oji Citizen's Group. He had been the victim of a traffic accident, hit by a U.S. Army Jeep, in which he lost his right hand and lost his voice.

Americans have never had the experience of a foreign army occupying their country. But look carefully at what could happen. Your government says it guards Japan from Communist invasion; but many of us think that if ever China or the USSR would invade Japan it would be because there are U.S. Army bases everywhere here. These bases only irritate and terrify China.

I took photographs yesterday at the demonstration and I will send them. When I stood at the hospital gate with my camera, someone asked me to take a picture of three women who had just come out. He said, "Don't photograph their faces too clearly" and it was obvious what kind of women they were...of a certain profession. They keep only American soldiers company so the Japanese call them ONLY. I couldn't believe it unless I saw it that afternoon. That kind of woman walking through the gate and many, many policemen standing against ordinary people in the demonstration so that they could not enter. Inside another

gate, many more police watched and waited. Very interesting, don't you think, what kind of people, men or women, take care of the U.S. Army Camp. Very symbolic.

Troubles like this happen in a really concentrated way in Okinawa. Now Okinawa doesn't belong to Japan. Okinawa symbolizes the situation of Japan, and is the biggest base of the Vietnam war. It is difficult to speak of Okinawa in English for me. It's a big question, and I will try to discuss it next time.

Your friend, Mineko

(from IKON #7 Jan.-Feb., 1969)

At the time she wrote these letters Mineko Ohtsuka was an art student in her mid-twenties, living in Yokohama. They were written to Barbara Dane, who kindly gave us permission to print them in IKON.



CONTRIBUTORS

SANTIAGO ALVAREZ, a Cuban film maker, is best known for his extraordinary documentary films including *Cerro Pelado*, *Now*, *Ciclon*, and *Hanoi Martes 13*.

MIGUEL BARNET is a Cuban poet, sociologist, and folklorist. His book, *Cimarron*, a biography of an 108-year-old ex-slave, has been translated into many languages.

JULIAN BECK: "He did what he wanted to do: with his wife Judith Malina he created the Living Theatre... Not an ivory tower however, a headquarters of revolution, a guerilla theater, though a pacifist one..." —Eric Bentley. Julian Beck died of cancer in 1986.

CAROLE BYARD, a widely exhibited visual artist and lecturer, was the recipient of a 1985-86 NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) fellowship. Her work appeared in the Jamaica Art Center's "Art Against Apartheid" show. The *Coast to Coast: A Women of Color National Artists' Project Book Exhibit* opened there in August. She will co-edit *IKON #12: The Nineties*, guest editing the section featuring *Coast to Coast*.

FIELDING DAWSON is the author of 19 books, the most recent a new, revised edition of *The Black Mountain Book* (N.C. Wesleyan Press). He is also an artist, A Pantheon author and a member of PEN and D.S.A.

THEODORE ENSLIN: "I've published 81 books, and I don't know whether to be proud of that or not. In recent years I have been most interested in the use of musical principles in poetry, and have made a number of experiments, using elements of musical procedure consciously. I probably always did do that but not with the express intention. I have composed one piece of actual music using these principles (*Small Suite for Solo Flute "Ragdale"*). My new book due this fall is *Love and Science* (Membrana Press). I live in Milbridge, Maine with my wife Alison, and son Jacob.

HENRY FLYNT: Born in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1940, Flynt is something of a legend for having originated concept art in 1961, for being the most serious anti-art theorist to have emerged from the avant-garde, and for being an avant-garde culture theorist, as exemplified by his book *Blueprint for a Higher Civilization* (1975). He became a political activist and economics student in the mid-Sixties. In 1987, Flynt returned to the art world in order to revive authentic concept art. He is represented by Emily Harvey Gallery. In 1989, Flynt resumed writing in political philosophy and economics. His current works in progress are "The Future of Utopian Deliverance" and "Philosophy of Economics."

ROBERTA GOULD has been a poet and activist for almost three decades. She is author of *Dream Yourself Flying*, (Four Zoas Press) and co-editor of the anthology *Group-74*. Her book *Writing Air, Written Water* was published by Waterside Press. She was the founder and editor of *Light* magazine.

KIMIKO HAHN is the former Project Director of *Word of Mouth*, a multi-cultural literature project in Chinatown and former poetry editor of *Bridge: Asian American Perspectives*. She was awarded grants for poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1986 and The New York Foundation for the Arts in 1987. Her most recent book is *Air Pocket* from Hanging Loose Press. She is working on a book to be published in the Winter of '91. She is poetry editor of *IKON*.

DOROTHY HELLER has had solo exhibitions at Betty Parsons Gallery, and the Poindexter Gallery in New York and Galerie Faccetti, Paris. She has appeared in Group Shows at the Whitney Museum Annual, the Museum of Modern Art Traveling Exhibition, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York Cultural Center Exhibit, "Women Choose Women." Articles on her work have appeared in *Art News*, *Arts Magazine* and *La Presse*. Her work is part

of the Collections of the University of California Art Museum, and the Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Art.

ROBERT KELLY was born in 1935 in Brooklyn. He has published thirty books, mostly poetry, since 1961 including *Armed Descent*, *Axon Dendron Tree*, *Finding the Measure*, and *Songs I - XXX*. He has been involved since 1980 in the Avery Graduate multi-arts center at Bard College. His two current books are his third book of fiction *Cat Scratch Fever* which will be published in the fall by MacPherson and a new collection in the spring of poetry from 1985-88 by Black Sparrow Press.

ROBERT NICHOLS published a four part utopian volume with New Directions titled *Daily Life of Nigshi-Altai* and City Lights published his *Slow Newsreel of a Man Riding Train*. He lives and writes in Vermont and is interested in farming.

GRACE PALEY was born in New York City in 1922. In 1970, she received the literary award for short fiction from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. She was elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters in 1980. She is the author of *Later the Same Day*, *The Little Disturbances of Man*, and *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute*.

YVONNE RAINER started her dancing career in 1961 in a performance at the Living Theater. In 1972 she made her first film, *Lives of Performers*. Her films include *Film About a Woman Who...* (1974), *Kristina Talking Pictures* (1976), *Journeys from Berlin/1971* (1980) and *The Man Who Envied Women* (1985). Her new film, *Privilege* is currently being distributed by "Zeigist." *The Films of Yvonne Rainer* by Yvonne Rainer with contributions by B. Ruby Rich, Bernice Reynaud, Mitchell Rosenbaum, and Patricia White has just been published by Indiana University Press.

MARGARET RANDALL was born in 1936 in New York City. Her latest books are *The Shape of Red: Insider/Outsider Reflections with Ruth Hubbard* (Cleis Press, 1988), *Coming Home: Peace Without*

Complacency (West End Press, 1990), and forthcoming *Walking to the Edge: Essays of Resistance* (South End). In August, 1989, five years after it began, she finally won her case against the US Immigration and Naturalization Service to stay in the country. She lives in New Mexico in the summer and fall, and spring semester 1991 will be distinguished Visiting Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Delaware.

ROBERTO FERNANDEZ RETAMAR is a Cuban poet and essayist. His work has been translated into many languages, including English, French, Italian, German, and Portuguese. He is the president of the cultural institution, Casa de las Americas, and edited its journal between 1965 and 1988. His book, *Caliban and Other Essays* was published in 1989 by the University of Minnesota Press.

JEROME ROTHENBERG is the author of over forty books of poetry including *Poems for the Game of Silence*, *Poland/1931*, *New Selected Poems 1970-1985*, and *Khurbn & Other Poems* (all from New Directions). He has also edited six groundbreaking anthologies of experimental and traditional poetry (*Technicians of the Sacred*, *A Big Jewish Book*, *America a Prophecy*, etc.) and has been actively engaged as a performance poet since the late 1950's. Books of his poetry have recently appeared or are scheduled to appear from Sun & Moon Press, Pennywhistle Press, Zasterle Press, and Arundel Press. He is currently a professor of visual arts and literature at the University of California, San Diego.

HAYDEE SANTAMARIA was one of the two women who fought at Moncada (1953) with Fidel Castro. She lost her fiancé (Boris Luis Santa Coloma) and her brother (Abel Santamaria) there, and was imprisoned with Fidel. She was director of the official Cuban cultural organization, the Casa de las Americas, and was president of OLAS as well. She was married to Armando Hart, who took this personal letter (the letter for Che) and saw to its publication.

CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN is a painter who has also done pioneering work in performance art, film and video over the last three decades. Her films, which have been widely celebrated and censored, explore such themes as sexuality, the body as a source of knowledge and the integration of the ordinary with the creative process. In her pioneering group work, *Meat Joy* (1964), performers enacted erotic and mythic rituals culled from dreams, popular culture and Schneemann's evocation of the sacred erotic in her own body. Schneemann's first book, *More Than Meat Joy* (1978), incorporated photographs, scores, scripts, and annotations, documenting performance pieces from 1962 to 1978 as well as essays on perception and culture.


SUSAN SHERMAN: Poet, essayist and editor of both series of IKON, her latest book is *The Color of the Heart: Writing from Struggle & Change 1959-1990*. (Curbstone). She was awarded a New

York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship for Poetry 1990. She collaborated with Kimiko Hahn and Gale Jackson on the book *We Stand Our Ground: Three Women, Their Vision, Their Poems* (IKON, 1988). She is currently working on an "autobiography of events," *Home*, and a cultural history of the Lower East Side. She teaches at Parsons School of Design.

DIANE WAKOSKI has published many volumes of poetry. Her latest collection *Emerald Ice: Selected Poems 1962-1987*, was the winner of the William Carlos Williams prize from the PSA. Her criticism was published by the University of Michigan in *Toward a New Poetry*. Her awards include a Guggenheim Foundation grant in 1970, a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1972, a Writer's Fulbright Award, Yugoslavia, 1984, and the Michigan Arts Foundation Distinguished Artist Award, 1989. Her work is included in *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry* and *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*.


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