

Thesis  
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H O N E Y I S F L O W I N G

JOSEPH BEUYS,

A B I D F O R C U L T U R A L F R E E D O M

A final year history of art thesis

by:-

Gerard Cox,

Third Year Sculpture Student.

6th April, 1979.

FROM: "The New Avant Garde" by Gregoire Muller.

Beuys's bid for cultural freedom has allowed him to transgress stylistic boundaries.

Everything is part of the all-encompassing language that he aims to create.

A concrete vocabulary whose signs would be engulfed in time.

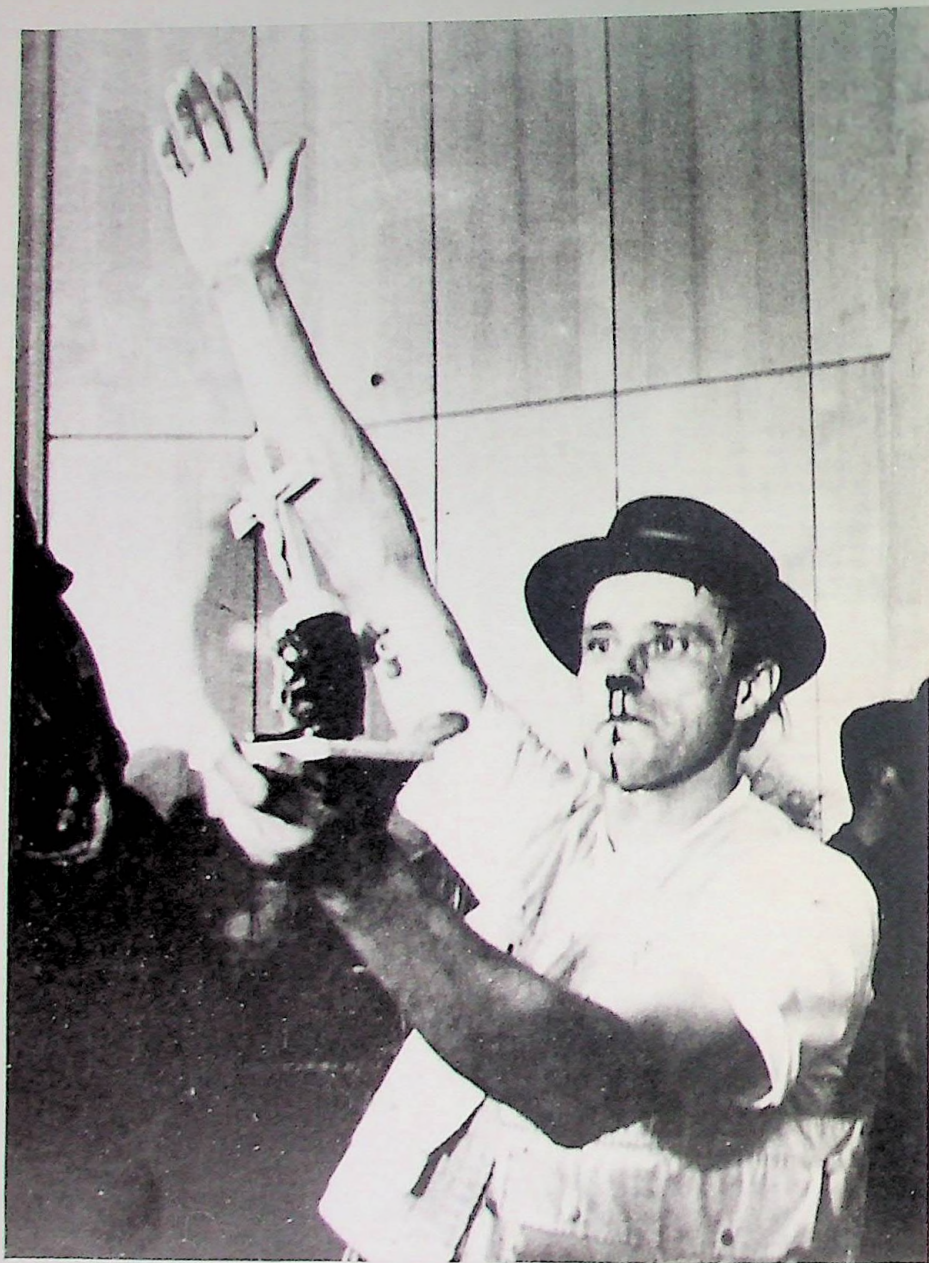
Materials that deteriorate, fat that slowly melts, sounds, and living animals are juxtaposed with more permanent things.

A time dimension is created in the mind. The viewer's certitudes become no more real than those vague feelings of having already experienced an absolutely similar sensation or situation.

The different meanings we have learned to attach to things, and the meaning of the sensations experienced in the contact with them.

Man has a chance to assert his freedom against all sorts of determinism that society tends to impose upon him.





Festival of New Art AACHEN: 1964.



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Note

A lot of the material in this thesis has been brought together from many sources, including German ones. So far as the writer knows, the German material is now in English for the first time. Statements made by Beuys were translated from the German by a friend in the United States.

This mixture of quotation and comment is offered to the reader in the sense of a documentary film with 'voice over'. I could have taken off the quotation-marks and presented the bulk of the information as if it were in my own words. Honesty won and, anyway, it seems to me that Joseph Beuys says it better than I can.

G.C.



## INTRODUCTION

Joseph Beuys is a German artist, born in Kleve, on the left bank of the lower Rhine on 12th May 1921.

He may well prove to be the most influential European artist of the post war period.

His work forms a continuous investigation and synthesis of a whole range of material and spiritual phenomena. His activity partakes of the character of both high priest and research scientist. He is very German in character and there is something in both his work and his words that is often untranslatable and inexpressible.

Beuys has hardly travelled or lived abroad. He studied at the Dusseldorf Art Academy and later, in 1961, took a teaching post there as professor of sculpture.

Through all Beuys's work there runs a strain of what he and his interpreters are forced to call the 'transcendental'.

His work is not a demonstration of the nature of materials or processes but their use to express certain fundamental philosophical premises. When he uses felt or fat it is as part of a system of balances of energies and potentials, not simply as an extension of the sculptor's normal materials.

Beuys's pieces involve metaphysical entities. It must be noted that the area of the Rhineland he comes from has traditionally been a home for extreme forms of mysticism.

The intimate bond of man, nature and animal in the sympathetic magic of pre-Christian religions, and the transubstantiation of bread and wine into flesh and blood, the central fact of Christian religion, are as near to the centre of his work, is a crucial concept. The fat equals



energy, an inert mass capable of infinite manipulation. The corner a meeting place of straight lines and angles is capable of different levels of symbolic interpretation. It seems necessary to Beuys to push himself to extreme physical limits, to test his own endurance . A Stuka pilot during the war, he fought on the Russian Front, when his plane crashed. He was trapped, badly injured, in the wreckage for several days, in freezing weather. Despite the permanent damage from these injuries, he persisted in involving himself in extreme acts of physical endurance. In the action TWENTY-FOUR HOURS of 1965, he stood or knelt on a white box for twenty-four hours, performing a complex series of actions involving objects placed at full stretch from him. He had prepared himself for the work by fasting for several days. At the climax of SCOTTISH SYMPHONY he stood motionless for over an hour. In THE CHIEF-FLUXUS SONG he lay wrapped in a roll of felt for twenty four hours. Since Beuys abandoned science as a mode of inquiry in the early 1950s, he has successfully used and discarded various artistic processes. Drawing was originally his major activity. His drawings are strange, diagrammatic. There is an affinity with Celtic ornament, graffiti cave drawings: girls and skeletons, reindeer and mountain streams mingle with abstract diagrams like lines of force. His later drawings are more and more like an experimental scientists' notebook. From drawings he moved on to making objects. Increasingly these objects were incorporated in, or made during, his various actions and performances.



Without appearing to court controversy, Beuys has regularly been at the center of it. His teaching methods, his desire to work across the barriers of media, his acceptance of students from other disciplines, have caused friction with academic authorities. He has said that teaching is his supreme work, and that he will make less and less actions because he feels no desire to repeat himself.

One of his most controversial events was his founding of the German Student Party in 1967. Typically, this was both radical and non-aligned, a stance that has attracted some criticism both in the highly charged political atmosphere of West Germany and elsewhere. Invited to do an action at the Tate Gallery in London in 1972, Beuys spent a day explaining his political philosophy.

Beuys certainly possesses an extraordinary charisma, simultaneously shunning the art press and courted by it. Equally, his whole life is an art-work, of which the actions and objects are only the islands that show above the surface.

Beuys has constantly asserted that the power of the artist is to create truth, not simply reveal it as the priest or scientist does. His work may be summed-up in the title he gave one of his rare exhibitions: "CREATOR OF TRUTH - MAN".

## PART ONE

Childhood

Hitler Youth

Second World War

Begins Art School

Interest in Rudolf Steiner



## PART ONE - INTRODUCTION

In this first section I want to give a brief background to Beuys up to the time he became involved with Fluxus; which is when his work began to be known outside Germany. I felt it was important to include this material as it shows that Beuys had a very early interest in natural science upon which a large part of his work is based. It also shows that at an early stage he was involved in research and investigation and this he has continued right through his life. The teaching, philosophy and spiritual ideas of Rudolf Steiner have greatly influenced Beuys and here I will give a brief note on him as he is mentioned many times in the following pages.

Rudolf Steiner was born in 1861 in Austria. He was a scientist, artist, editor, and founder of Anthroposophy, a spiritual movement still active in Europe and America, based on the notion that there is a spiritual world comprehensible to pure thought but accessible only to the highest faculties of mental knowledge. He founded the Anthroposophical society in 1912.

He believed that man once participated more fully in spiritual processes of the world through a dream-like consciousness but had since become restricted by his attachment to material things. The renewed perception of spiritual things required training the human consciousness to ~~rise~~ rise above attention to matter. The ability to achieve this goal by an ~~exercise~~ exercise of the intellect is theoretically



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innate in everyone.

In 1913 at Dornach, near Basel, Steiner built his first Goetheanum, which he characterised as a "school of spiritual science". Burned in 1922, it was replaced by another, made of moulded concrete according to Steiner's design.

## BEUYS'S CHILDHOOD

"I had to care for myself very early. The times were hard; they worked terrifically and oppressively on me as a child. I had, despite all that, a very lasting enduring relationship to the landscape and to Kleve. In the neighbourhood there were certain people; a person could take for examples: Johannes Sanders, for instance, who influenced me enormously, <sup>and</sup> ~~who~~ owned a large laundry in the immediate vicinity of my parents' house. It was bombed during the war and no longer exists. The laundromat was a dark building with gigantic chimney stones. Saunders himself was a progressive spirit who continuously experimented here and there with every possible piece of equipment. At his store there was interesting machinery, steam boiler and heating supplies, ironing machines and spin drying machines with huge degrees of value that fascinated me as a child, naturally, because it was fantastic and grotesque at the same time.

"Then drawings like Deerherder or Ghengis Khan's grave emerge, these things that a person can define as fundamentally psychological phenomena; primary experiences, in part dreams, that a person actually experiences as a child. Dreams like these are an extraordinarily subjective conception that later present themselves as completely objective in the course of a career. As a child a person experiences things somewhat pictorially. At least for me it was that way, so much so that I played out whatever I had experienced. I can still remember very well that for a full year I imagined myself as a shepherd, which means I walked



around with a staff, EURASIENSTAB as it later appeared, and I was always herding my imaginary sheep around with me. I was a proper shepherd who scouted out everything that came my way. In this role I felt so very well that the experiences that I had immediately attempted to play out".

"I began to be interested in plants and botany and realised that what there was to study in this field would fill many books. With other children excursions were organised. We arranged collections and made them open to all. Naturally that all had a play quality. A large tent was built of towels, rags and remnants that we had 'begged' and inside each thing that we had collected was shown, beginning with mosquitos, creeping insects, fish, bugs, rats, and old mechanical equipment, and whatever we could get our hands on! It happened that I also made extensive excavations, because we built parts underground a labyrinth of diggings. This all played itself out in Kleve in the years from 1925 - 1933".



About his participation in the HITLER YOUTH:-

"I had really no scruples about it. A person must admit that - somewhat the opposite of today. Then the situation was ideal for youth in a definite way to live at the fullest. It's out of the question that we were manipulated; good, a person stands in the rank and file and wears a uniform, but for the most part we felt ourselves to be free and unattached. Above all, I found myself protesting from an inner situation, but, instead of as an outsider, experienced the same as in my parents house, also in school out of the situation where a person would have liked to remove stains from me, as also in the Hitler Youth.

A person researches and investigates much in this age. I was doing this, taking in everything that was forbidden during the time of Hitler. It opened for me a special love for the spiritual upheavles of the turn of the century after Jugendstil and Symbolism. There came literature like Maeterlinck, George, Oskar Pannizza and others. They had neither a direct nor indirect importance for me. I had read them in part but my enthusiasm for them did not go so far that they influenced me in any way. Jugendstil had no influence whatever on me. On the contrary I had not then, nor do I now have a single bit of sympathy for it. Above all that does not prevent me from enjoying and valuing this wardrobe that I have placed in my apartment which was designed by Joseph Maria Olbruch, and which I found in Dusseldorf. I have valued it for the reason that the Jugendstil decor on



it is very reserved".

During the war Beuys was a Stuka pilot. He made several raids over the Russian front. On one of these his plane was grounded during a snow storm. He was trapped, badly injured in the wreckage for several days, in freezing weather. He was found and freed from the wreckage by a group of Nomads. These people cared for him while he was recovering from his injuries. The time he spent with them has had a great influence on Beuys as he came into contact with the Mongol - Slavic mentality of these primitive people whose life is spent in a continuous wandering across the Russian Steppes. Beuys frequently refers to primitive cultures in his drawings and performances e.g. Indians of the United States, the Celtic culture of the British Isles. I feel that this incident of actually having his life saved by a primitive people is one of the strongest experiences of his life.





JOSEPH BEUYS: 1941.



## THE POST-WAR PERIOD

He returns from the war to find his parents' house bombed out - they have taken up shop with his father's brothers in Rindern. He meets Walter Brux and Hans Lamers who encourage him to pursue his studies in natural science but to further himself in art - Brux teaches Beuys some of the techniques of sculpture while Lamers makes contact with the Parisian artists of the Café du Dôme. "The only one who was on my side was Hans Lamers. As the only one ~~who~~ said 'yes that is the only possibility' ".

He Begins Art School at Dusseldorf.

Discussions with Rainer Lynen:-

"I remember yet exactly these particular polemical discussions of which only one substantial example is necessary. We discussed much. Often we argued over Rudolph Steiner. Lynen was and still is a rigorous opponent of Steiner, whereas, I have followed these paths of thought with great interest for many years".

Beuys was first introduced to Rudolph Steiner by Fritz Rolf Rottenburg in 1941:

"First of all I couldn't feel very enthusiastic about it. Later, after the war, 1945 and 1946, I took up the writings of Steiner again and gained from them a very very strong impression from all of Steiner's fundamental knowledge of Natural Science questions.

I repeatedly returned to the subject of Steiner in

discussions with Lynen, and tried to clarify the writer. But Lynen refused to respond, or rather to agree that in Steiners ideas there lay a start that refers directly and practically to reality.

It was hard to get into the Steiner class. I had to strive hard for this because he was the kind of teacher who only worked with a few students. He neither worked nor taught at the academy.

He was rather private. For a studio and teaching space he had rented a small schnaps manufacturing place. He was not prepared for discussion with his students; he was too much of a mono-maniac. His strength was his spontaneity, not his talks and discussions.

He thought I could never become a sculptor. "No", he said "a sculptor you could never be; you are a painter".

Despite that, he accepted me as a student. All the botanical analysis and anatomical animal studies came through from different sides, where<sup>there</sup>in also plays a personal conception of mythology".



### Bees, Wax and Fat:

The 'warm organisation' of the bees' cities is doubtless the essential element that I have needed to bring wax and fat into connection with the bees. That which has interested me about the bees, or even more in their system of living is the entire warm organisation of such an organism and within this 'warm organisation' there is even a sculptural outer form. The bees have this warm element on the one hand, which is a very strongly flowing one. On the other, they build sculpture that is crystalline; they make regular, entirely geometrical constructions. There is still something to discover of sculptural theory, therefore, of the FETTECKEN-FAT CORNER, for example, which also emerges in specific situations as a geometric context. But the actual warm issuing character is really the flowing warm outgoing element wherein the fat is influenced by the warmth and then even flows away.

### Drawings, Deer and Hares:-

The subject contains both landscapes and religious themes. His preference for vegetable motives and animals e.g. bees, hares, deer, swans, springs from his interest in science and biology. Still he sticks to mythological engagement rather than mere physical representations, and this adds a surprising aspect to many of his works.

It is not difficult to immediately recognise the object, but it is difficult to grasp its message. Many of his works appear like tokens of primitive cultures (to which they always refer), but at the same time they want to be their modern equivalents.

If we count with the state of mind in which Beuys conceived his representations of animals, it is easy to see distinct analogies between many of his drawings and cave and rock paintings from the paleolithicum. But it is more than a resemblance of shapes. In both cases there is this magic consciousness that leads to a harmonious synthesis of art and religion.

The deer and the elk are direct metamorphoses of Beuys's mythical feeling. They stand for organic life and fullness. Being naturally tied to the environment, they occupy an extremely intimate place in nature's process of organisation. The deer is a sign from the magic world of experience and knowledge that has not yet been affected by the intellect.





Untitled: 1957.



The main characteristics of the deer, the antlers, the peaky snout and the slender legs are mostly schematized or simplified, which makes them immediately identifiable and gives them a key function in compositions that are more abstract. In the world of fairy-tales, antlers have a magic power.

The hare is another of Beuys's many symbols. Apart from its different meanings in popular belief, it is strongly related to the general principle of womanhood, birth and the chemical processes of the blood. The hare digs itself in and completely unites with the soil. In the figurative sense, this refers to an activity man can only radically carry through in his mind, a profound unification with some material, which allows him to acquire knowledge, to sharpen and eventually bend (and thus restructure) his thoughts. Beuys aims both at a strictly individual evolution of man, and at a maximal collective evolution. (See 'How to explain pictures to a dead hare') (See p. 27).

The last drawing in The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland is "Hare's Blood". This expresses the alchemical character of Beuys's person: "the hare as a sign of alchemical transformation and chemical change: the mobility of blood, the relationship between the hare and menstrual blood, birth and incarnation: the upper half for the soul, and the lower for fertility".

In an interview with Cosmopolitan Magazine Beuys was asked: "Is it possible to introduce yourself?". After a moments thought he replied, "First I'm not really a human being - but a hare".



A time of sickness with no commissions:-

"Doubtless, this time of crisis worked like a war experience but also, in actuality, because some things had to die off. I think this phase was one of the most essential for me in so far as I have fully left my body unmarried; I had dragged my body around with me for too long. The initial occurrence was a general state of exhaustion - that turned itself quickly into a regular renewal event. All things had to change themselves; from the physical inward a metamorphosis had to come. Sicknesses are almost always spiritual crises in life where old experiences and thought files are cleared out, to become recast thoroughly into positive changes.

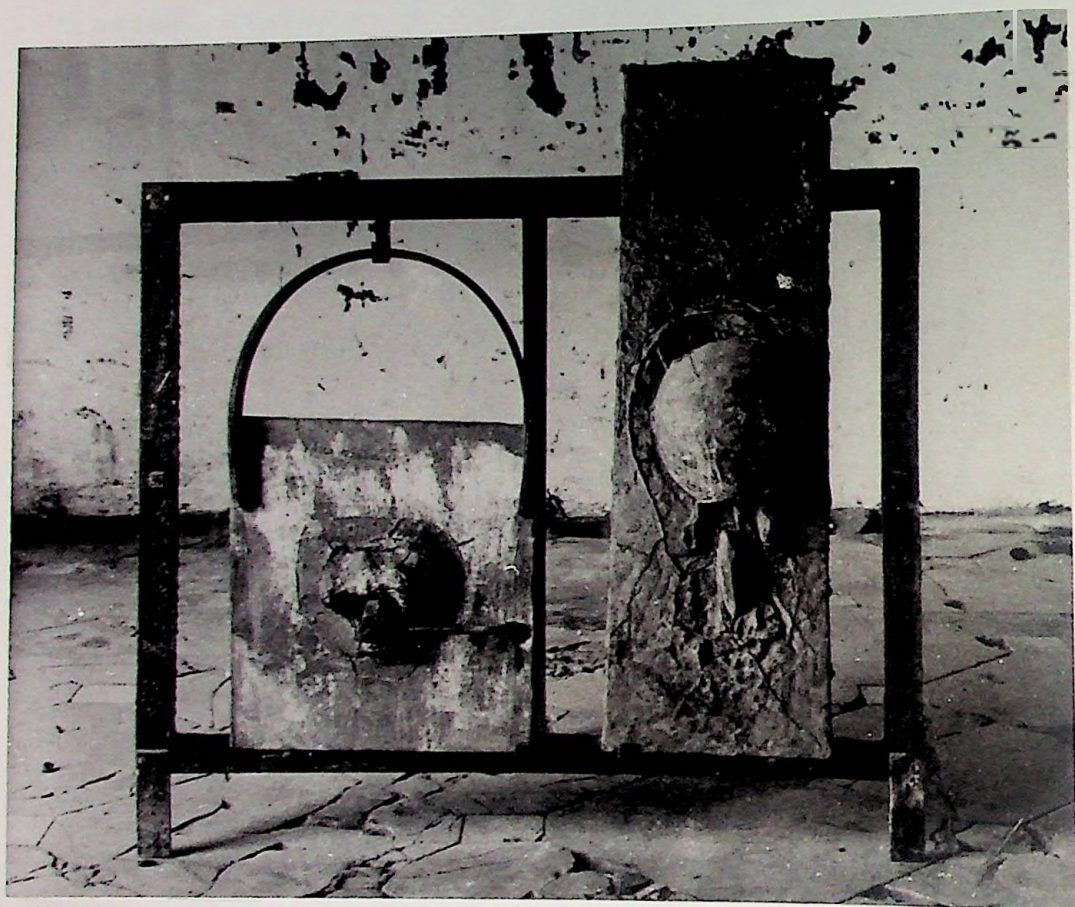
Certainly many people experience this phase of unorganisation and reorganisation, but when a person comes through it he sees much that was originally unclear or only vaguely laid out. Such a crisis is a sign that either a directionlessness exists or that too many courses have been taken.

From then on a systematic work on certain fundamental principles began for me. Also at that time I occupied myself with Dada. I tried to pull out the key though from this movement that which would be taken for truth also. (later I joined myself only outwardly organisationally, not inwardly with the Neo-Dadists, the Fluxus people, most of whom worked within the concept of Dada. I joined myself with and at the same time I developed my own idea of Fluxus.



1958 and 1959 were spent entirely in the study of literature in the field of natural science. At the time it intensified a new understanding of science in Beuys. Through researches and analysis he came to the realisation that the two concepts<sup>of</sup> Art and Science had become dramatically opposed in the development of thought in the Occident and that the reason for this fact must be looked for along with a dissolution<sup>of</sup> of this polarity intuition in conception. The furthering of ideas must be built upon the beginning of human knowledge, that is, all that is human, scientific, stems from art. In this entirely primitive view of art all things are associated; we come to the conclusion that science was originally held up as art.





SåFG - SåUG: 1953/58.



## PART TWO

Fluxus

"Festum, Fluxorum, Fluxus"

The Chief, Fluxus Song

Twenty Four Hours

How To Explain Pictures To A Dead Hare

Eurasis, 34th Movement of the Siberian Symphony

Manresa

Hauptstrom

Founding of German Student Party

Fluxus Concert

Closing of Dusseldorf Art Academy

Iphigenie - Titus Andronicus

Prospect '69

Discussion with Willi Brant

Action Celtic (Kinloch Rannoch) Scottish Symphony

We enter The Art Market



#### FLUXUS:-

"My Fluxus activity began in 1962 as I was speaking with Nam June Paik about all possible activities that a person could do or perhaps that also must be done. Every so often we met with Macuinas who was in Wiesbaden with the American army, to talk about organisational questions, programme format and the possibility of tours. First of all, it had to be clarified which people a person could drum up for these "activities." Yes, we all three then applied for different positions to organise whatever things were needed for such "Fluxus-Festivals". Macuinas and Paik concentrated on the Wiesbaden Aktion, 1962. I was published on the participants' list, but for some reason could not be in on the aktion. I prepared for the Dusseldorf Festival the following year to be held at the Academy. In 1962 I myself took part in no aktion".

#### OF THE FIRST FLUXUS:-

Most of the participants were musicians. There was not a pronounced area of specialists.

Everything from the simple tearing of a small piece of paper to the full transformation of human society can be illustrated. Everything was to be joined under a global concept because there was no special Fluxus ideology. The ideologies were as numerous as the participants.

There were synchronized works within one which takes place in a quickly succeeding programme. Participants were merely asked what was the necessary material and which space was ideal; for example there would always be a piano, a few



buckets of water or a ladder needed, but that was about all. Whatever was necessary beyond that each one brought himself.

"There were three tendencies above all that flowed together to try to put things more out of the context of spiritual development to evolve something. That was the least. When one looks closely at the facts, I was the only one who tried to bring it into unity. Because there was a dadaistic tendency brought in by people like Paik, while a surrealistic tendency was also brought in by the Scandanavians. The political dimension was very scarce; it was actually only brought in in the original talent of Macuinas".

All Fluxus people were sensitive spirits, they experienced much and in particular were very harmonious. They were always directed toward materials with the most possible dramatic effectiveness without wishing precisely to fix the conceptual. They lacked a proper theory, a perceptible substructure, likewise a clearly marked out goal.



# FESTUM FLUXORUM FLUXUS

MUSIK UND ANTIMUSIK  
DAS INSTRUMENTALE  
THEATER

Staatliche **K**unstakademie  
Düsseldorf, Eiskellerstraße  
am 2. und 3. Februar 20 Uhr  
als ein **C**olloquium für die  
Studenten der **A**kademie

George Mackerras  
Nam June Paik  
Emmet Williams  
Benjamin Patterson  
*Takemitsu Kenji*  
Dick Higgins  
Robert Watts  
Jed Curtis  
Dieter Hilsmann  
*George Zide*  
Jackson Mac Low  
Wolf Vostell  
*Jean Pierre Willems*  
Frank Trowbridge  
Terry Riley  
Tomas Schmit  
*George Ligeti*  
Raoul Hausmann  
Caapri  
Robert Filliou

Daniel Spoerri  
Allison Knowles  
Bruno Maderna  
*Alfred O. Jordan*  
La Monte Young  
Henry Flynt  
Richard Maxfield  
John Cage  
Yoko Ono  
Jozef Patkowski  
Joseph Byrd  
*Joseph Beuys*  
Griffith Rowe  
Philip Corner  
Arthur Mr. Kettner  
Kenjiro Ezaki  
*Jamie Ture*  
Lucia Dlugoszewska  
Istvan Anhalt  
Jörgen Friisholm

Toshi Ichihara  
Cornelius Cardew  
Pär Ahlborn  
*Gibran Lica*  
Brion Gysin  
Stan Vanderbeek  
Yorlaci Matsudaira  
Simone Morris  
Elyvino Bussotti  
Musika Vitale  
Jak K. Spek  
Frederic Rzewski  
K. Penderecki  
J. Stasulenas  
*V. Landberg*  
A. Seicins  
Kuniharu Akiyama  
Joji Kuri  
Toru Takemitsu  
Arthur Köpcke

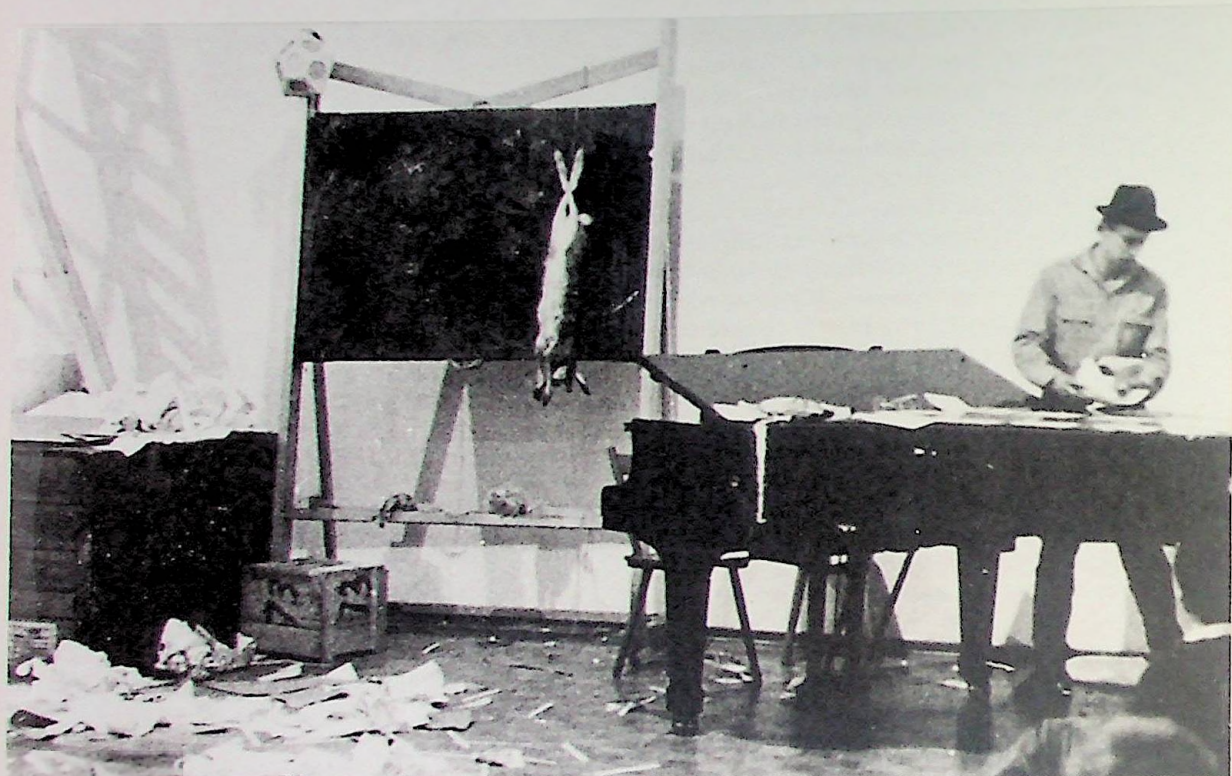
POSTER FOR FESTUM FLUXORUM FLUXUS.



1963: He organised "Festum, Fluxorum, Fluxus", a colloquium for students in the State Art Academy in Dusseldorf.

"My first action was an action with a hare too. I think it was one of the most important actions, it was a key point in my further development of demonstrations in Fluxus. The name of my first action was a ... the name was the 52 seconds from the Siberian Symphony. I had a big black piano on the right side and a blackboard and on this blackboard I wrote diagrams, the idea being to communicate with other spectators than only human beings; therefore the hare and I made the connecting line from the blackboard, from the dead hare who hung on the blackboard over this diagram; and there was a connecting line divided in proportioned sections and it hung over small sticks sticking in bowls of clay and this line went over the whole piano and then I played it - piano - I played piano, I produced special sounds (and I made this action with the dead hare). I made it open, took the heart connected with the whole line to the piano and the sticks and the bowls of clay. It looked very empty, really like a Siberian landscape. From this time I used the word action more than happenings, anti-art, Fluxus, Art Totale and all these declarations."





Siberian Symphony: 1963.



July 18th, 1963: Alan Kaprow holds a seminar about Happenings in Galerie Rudolf Zvirner, Köln.

"In the evening at Galerie Zivirner, fat entered for the first time as a medium into the real with the FAT PILLOW. That was a very interesting evening because I could discuss all themes with Kaprow. His presentation of Happening I found to be untenable at least from the concepts here. We spoke about theoretical structure. But he did not want to know much about that, I believe, because above all Fluxus would be discussed rather than Happening".

"Concerning materials, I had actually not employed one new thing, rather I had only further developed the foundational ideas of Fluxus, and tried to realise it in materials".

#### ABOUT THE OBJECTS:-

"What remains is their provocative declaration, and that is little valued, because they speak to all the possible powers of spontaneity in the viewers who can get beyond the irritating question, "What is that supposed to be?", to the centre of feeling which is often repressed or perverted today, to the soul or whatever a person will call this subconscious focal point".



1964, December 1st: THE CHIEF Fluxus Song.

Gallery Rene Block, Berlin:

Beuys lay inside a roll of felt, a dead hare at each end, a fat corner of German margarine at one end of the room. A microphone at one end of the felt roll amplifies Beuys breathing, inhaling, exhaling, rattling in the throat, coughing, sighing, nagging, hissing and whistling.

Beuys: "An ancient noise that can bring a person into a closeness with the two dead hares".

In the room were family members, members of the press, friends and others.

Heard were questions such as:

Unfortunately, I'm uninformed, what is it supposed to be?

Has Prof. Beuys really be<sup>n</sup>rolled up for eight hours?

Is he not hungry?

Is that Fluxus?

Is this a happening?

What are both of these things?

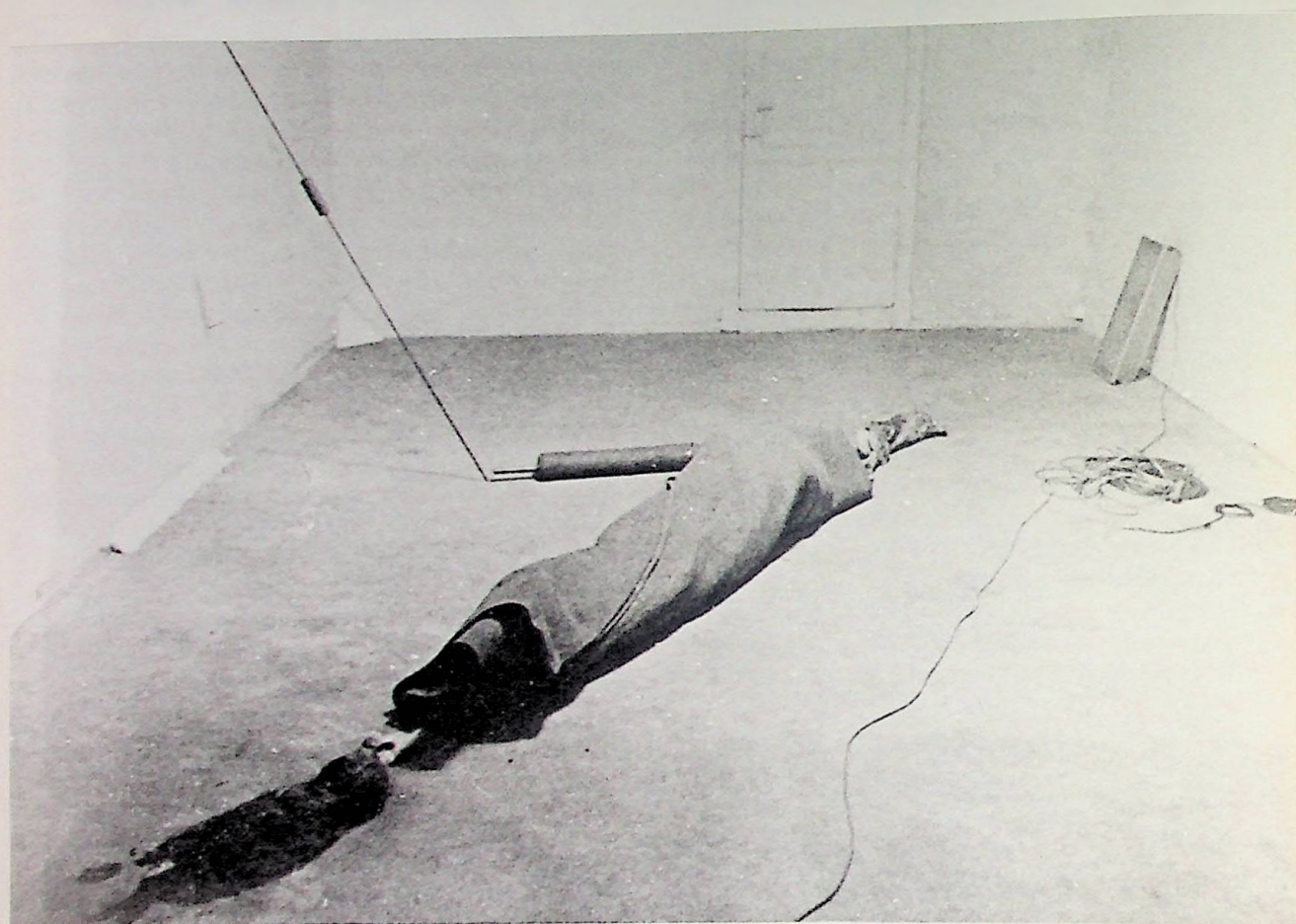
After 24hours a few saw him climb out of the felt. A person immediately asked him why he called for the raising of the Berlin Wall by 3cm.

Beuys: "Two types of men come against each other, that have explained themselves to be separated from each other by different ways of life. That could only be so with us".

He calls his work a demonstration of the plastic principle.

"I am a transmitter; I shine out".





The Chief - Fluxus Song: 1964.



Beuys's work deals with transformation. The hares  
 symbolise rebirth. The fat when given warmth creates  
 energy and flows away. Beuys is insulted<sup>a</sup> and warmed by  
 the felt. He becomes a battery and transmits energy  
 from within the felt.



1965, 5th June: TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

".....and in us ..... under us .... underground...."

Gallery Parnass, Wuppertal.

The happening lasted from midnight to midnight. Other artists involved were Bazon Brock, Charlotte Moormann, Nam June Paik, Eckart Rahn, Tomas Schmit and Wolf Vostell. Beuys had prepared himself for the action by fasting for several days.

Beuys worked in one room, the other artists worked in other rooms nearby.

Beuys stood or knelt on a whitebox for the twenty-four hours, performing a complex series of actions involving objects placed at full stretch from him. A pillow of fat is near him. Each time he tries to lay his head on the fat pillow he is distracted by the objects.

Wolf Vostell in the next room, lying on the ground sticking knitting needles into the lungs of dead animals. A vibrating washing machine to one side. Barbed wire, symbol of German division, runs around the room.

Bazon Block, the literary man of the happening-action group, stands with his head in front of a slowly rotating disc like a gambling wheel, every fifteen minutes a letter comes up, after twenty-four hours a text.

Nam June Paik controls a robot made of technical waste material.

Charlotte Moorman plays on a cello wrapped in plastic.

Beuys's idea of time - beyond time, space - anti space is





IN US.....UNDER US.....UNDERGROUND: 1965.



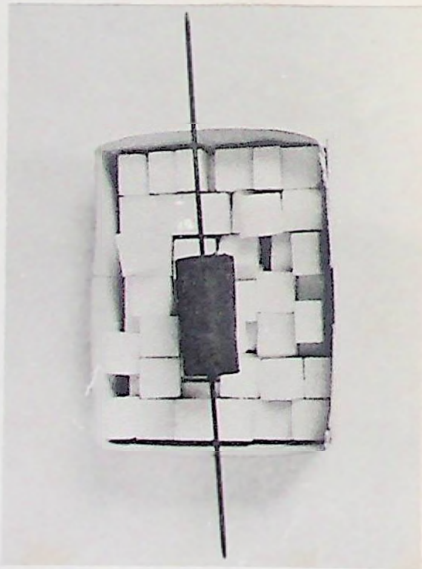
illustrated in this action. He says that here it goes beyond the physical realm; it goes into the plastic idea insofar as the moment of exten<sup>d</sup>able movement is a condition of experience in space and time and that means an extension into the spiritual space.

#### WITNESS OF THE TIME:-

Beuys tries to make possible this spiritual time/space experience in the action. Also he is trying to show the audience that they are the source of the times.

When man understands himself to be a witness of the times, he experiences the widening of his real existence into a spiritual existence.





IN US.....UNDER US.....UNDERGROUND: 1965.



1965, 26th November: HOW TO EXPLAIN PICTURES  
TO A DEAD HARE

Galery Schmela, Dusseldorf:

Beuys covered his head with honey and gold leaf. He cradled the dead hare in his arms and took it to the pictures. "I explained to him everything that was to be seen. I let him touch the pictures with his paws and meanwhile talked to him about them... I explained them to him because I do not really like explaining them to people. Of course there is a shadow of truth in this. A hare comprehends more than many human beings with their stubborn rationalism... Itold him that he needed only to scan the picture to understand what is really important about it. The hare probably knows better than man that directions are important. You know the hare can turn on a dime. And actually nothing else is involved".

"With honey on my head, I do something which naturally has to do with thoughts. A man's capability is not to give honey; rather it is to think, to give forth ideas. Through that will the deathlike character of thoughts at present be brought to life again. Honey is without a living substance. A man's idea can be living. Or it can be intellectualised and death-like, and remain dead, manifesting itself as a bringer of death in the political sphere or in the field of education".

About the hare: "The hare has a direct relation to BIRTH





How to explain pictures to a dead hare: 1965.



For me the hare is the symbol of incarnation. Because the hare does in reality what a man can only do in thought. He burys himself, he digs himself a house. He incarnates himself in the earth, and that alone is important".



1966, 14th - 15th October:

ACTION: EURASIA AND 34th MOVEMENT OF  
THE SIBERIAN SYMPHONY.

Gallery 101, Copenhagen.

This was the 34th section from the Siberian Symphony, and lasted an hour and a half. The introductory motif was THE DIVISION OF THE CROSS. Kneeling, Beuys slowly pushed two small crosses which were lying on the floor towards a blackboard, on each cross was a watch with an adjusted alarm. On the board he drew a cross, which he then half erased; underneath he wrote EURASIA.

The remainder of the piece consisted of Beuys maneuvering a dead rabbit along a marked line. The rabbits legs were extended by long, thin black wooden poles. When the rabbit was on his shoulders the poles touched the floor. Beuys moved from the wall to the board where he deposited the rabbit. On the way back, three things happened; he sprinkled whit powder between the rabbit's legs, put a thermometer in its mouth and blew into its tube. Afterwards he turned to the board with the erased cross and allowed the rabbit to twitch its ears while he himself allowed one foot, which was tied to an iron plate to float over a similar plate, on the floor.

The division of the cross is the split between East and West, Rome and Bysantium. The half cross is the United Europe and Asia, to which the rabbit is on its way. The iron plate on the floor is a metaphor - it is hard to walk





EURASIA: 1966.



and the ground is frozen. The three interruptions on the way back signify the elements snow, ice, wind. All this is only understandable when the word Siberia is caught.

1966 SPAIN:-

The death of Beuys was performed in a Spanish vineyard, with a provincial doctor, two grape farmers and their wives looking on. Beuys lay on a fur, wrapped in a sheet, his head covered with a paper bag in which holes were cut. His mouth was stuffed with five or six cigars (because he loved cigars). He raised his head to allow his wife to place her hand under it and he said to Per Kirkeby in a raspy death-like voice that his artistic life was shorter than we thought, less than one year, and that he was going away with horror and paralysis over his fate.



1966, 15th December.

ACTION: MANRESA

Gallery Schmela, Dusseldorf.

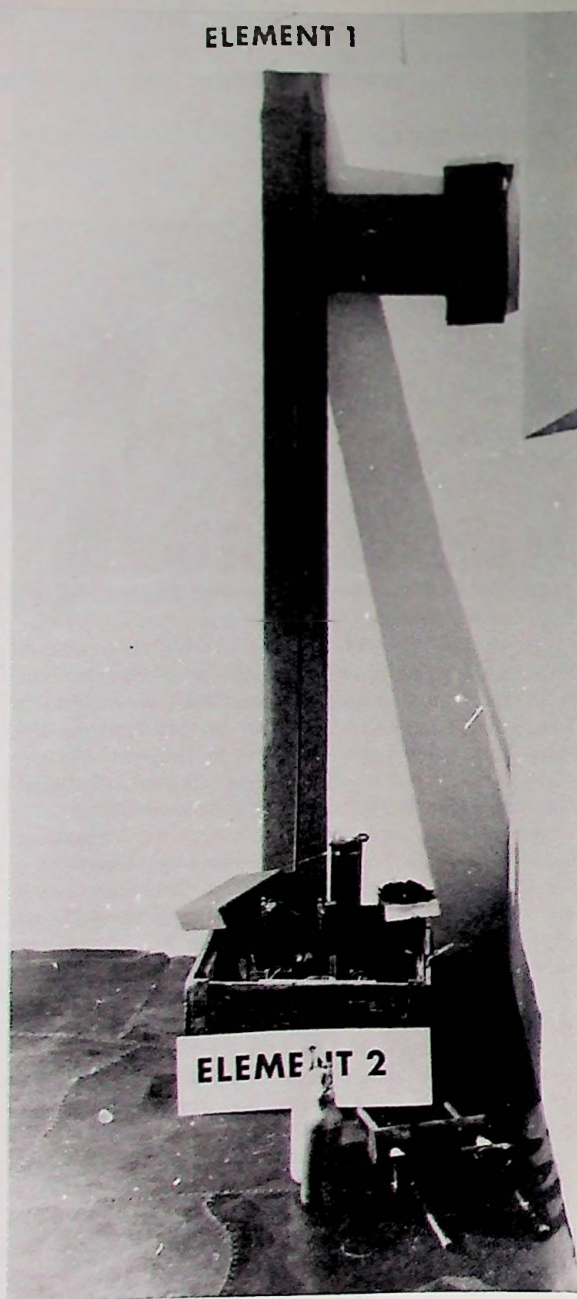
It was in the village Manresa that Ignatius of Loyola had his retreat on Monserrat. He spent a long time there in repentance and experienced a mystical event. It was there in 1523 that he began to write his Ejercicios espirituales.

In Manresa, Beuys speaks about a spiritual historical reference point of the existing exchange of all areas of being and links them in the frame of his "Beyond Time" and "Beyond Space" coming together to one field of meaning.

The key to Beuys' actions - the relationship of rationality and intuition. Intuition is the higher form of the rational. The rational is absolutely not in the position to experience ideas.

It was winter and the weather was cold. With frozen noses, the public looked through the windows of the Gallery at the event. Other onlookers stood pressed closely together in the only indoor space available in the Gallery. Joseph Beuys, Bjorn Norgard and Henning Christianson work the space in a musical continuous demonstration, the first of their Art.





Element 1 and 2 from MANRESA: 1966.



1967, 20th March.

ACTION: HAUPTSTROM.

At the opening of FATROOM,  
Gallery Franz Dahlem, Dramsdadt.

The Eurasianstaff serves as a symbol of radiating power in all directions.

In the Dramstadt house of the Martin Behaim Society, Beuys rubs an entire white wall with butter and makes a large ring out of bars of butter on the floor.

The ritual of man has been cleaning and scraping.

Beuys hopped and slid on the butter rubbed floor and ate some of it. He then stood with "antenna" to his ear and then with hand to forehead.

1967, 22nd June:

Founding of the DEUTSCHEN STUDENTENPARTEI

(THE GERMAN STUDENT PARTY-)

The founding meeting of the party was in the Art Academy in Dusseldorf. Its members were students and journalists, over two-hundred in all.

From the protocol of the D.S.P. by Johannes Stuttgen:-

The most important aspect of the new party is the desire for the education of all men to spiritual maturity.

Beuys: "I will at the beginning be your speaker".

The party was founded to procure information, to pursue





HAUPTSTROM: 1967.



enlightenment and to be able to effectively concretize political ideas.

"Not only a problem for students but for the whole of Western Society",

1967, 17th November:-

Notorised signature of the founding protocol and the statements of the D.S.P. (German Student Party) through Joseph Beuys (1 chairman), Johannes Stüttgen and Bazon Broch (2 and 3 chairmen).

Beuys opens the party, axe in hand, with ten minutes of barking, whistling and whispering into a microphone.

1968: VACUUM/MASS, MASS/VACUUM:-

Beuys arranged a roomful of bicycle pumps wrapped in fat. In the action the air was expelled loudly from each pump, then the pumps were placed, together with an extra thirty five pounds of fat, in a T-shaped steel box on which Beuys welded a lid. This T-shaped tow cross, is one of the most frequent images in his actions, a symbolic meeting of lines of force as well as a religious symbol.





Vacuum Mass - Mass Vacuum: 1968.



1969, 27th March: FLUXUS CONCERT

On the stage stands a grand piano with a microphone and music stand. On the piano are two violins (one painted green), a flute, a bottle of nasal drops and a bottle of cough medicine. On the floor a trunk containing rubber balls.

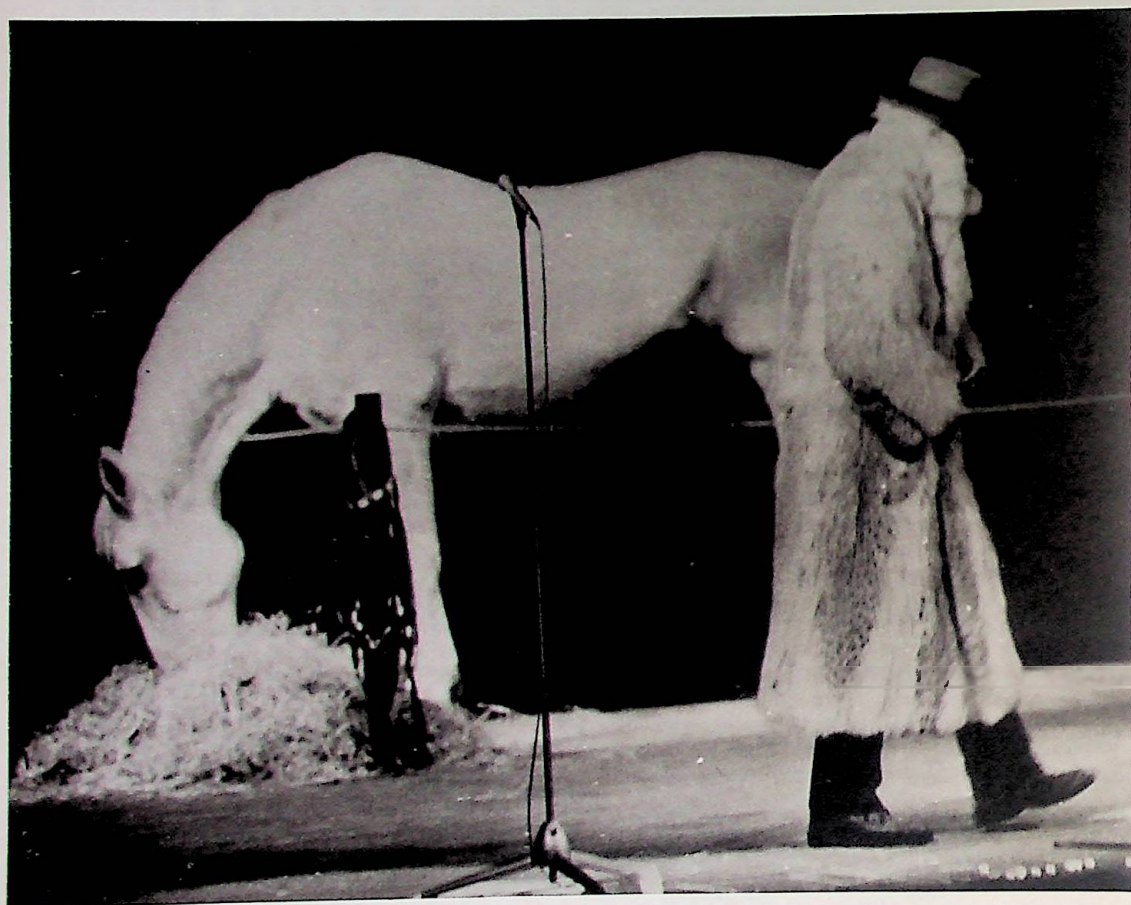
Beuys takes the cough syrup and puts nose drops in his nose while Henning Christianson switched on a tape recorder.

On the tape; a man's voice saying Ja, Ja, Ja, Ja, Nee, Nee, Nee, Nee, sounds of birds and noise of sirens, street commotion and electronic sounds. Then Beuys plays the flute or piano, takes cough medicine again, coughs into the microphone and strews saurkrout over the music stand. At the same time Christianson plays quiet notes on the violin, lights a pipe, scrapes on the green violin and stamps on the balls in the trunk.

1969, 7th May:

By the order of the education ministers of the state Norhein - Westphallen the Dusseldorf Academy of Art is closed with the help of police who were called in by the Director - Professor Dr. E. Trier.





TITUS - IPHIGNIE: 1969.



1969, 29th - 30th May.

IPHIGENIE/TITUS ANDRONICUS:-

The white horse eating hay, a microphone hidden in the hay. The sounds of the horse eating is amplified. A tape recorder gives the text from Goethe and Shakespeare on which the performance is based. Beuys plays with margarine, sugar, piece of iron and cymbols.

The amplified sounds of the horse eating and stamping cover the sounds of the reading.

"Intuition tells you this, the only way you are prepared is by using your head.

The materials are not important but the further associations which can be made are important.

Verbal = intellectual, crystalline. Functional organic co-ordinate = man. Impulse = man.

To put two things next to each other defines both.

The plays do not change, they are not for ideas but accoustical material (because they are repetitions)".

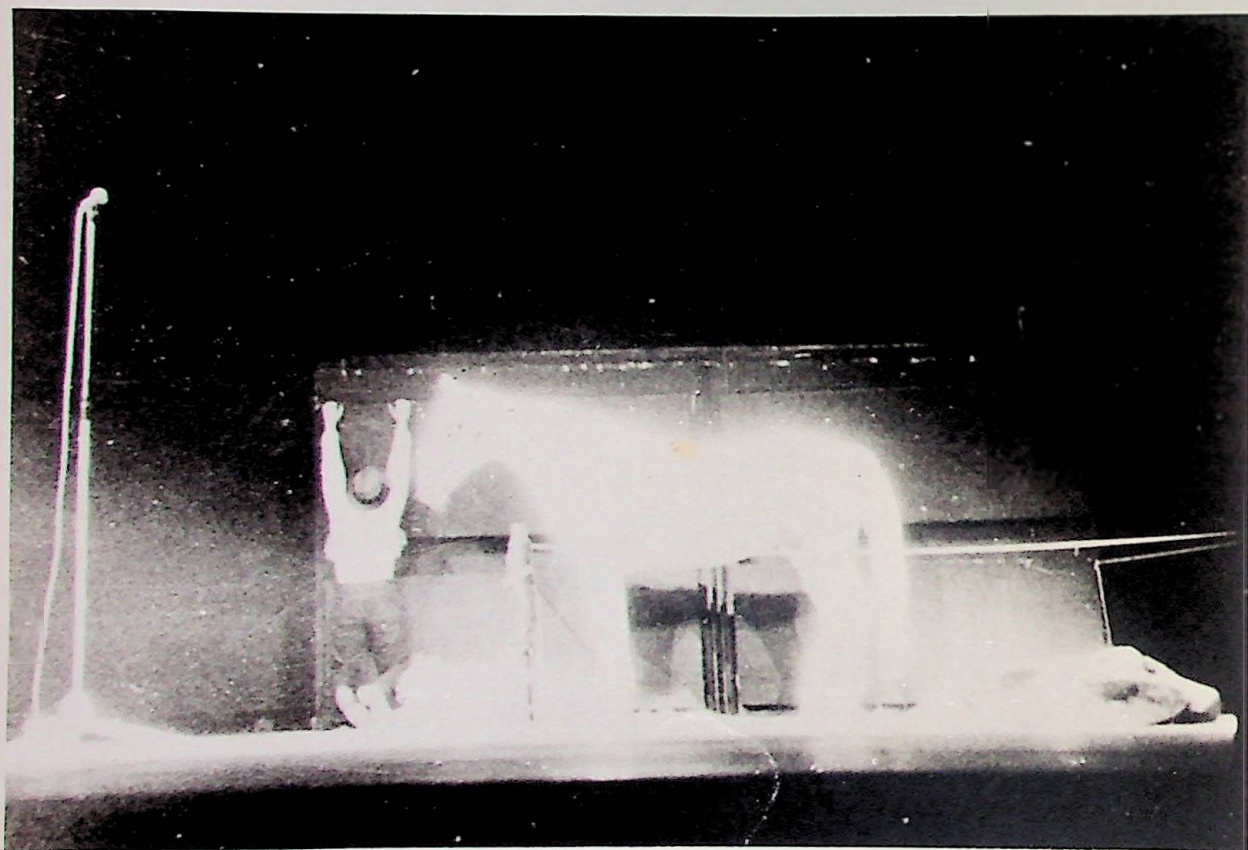
He is against theatre, against traditional space and the literary fantasy.





TITUS - IPHIGNIE: 1969.





TITUS - IPHIGENIE: 1969.



1969, 30th September - 12th October.

ELECTRIC FOOT - PLASTIC FOOT

Prospect '69, Dusseldorf.

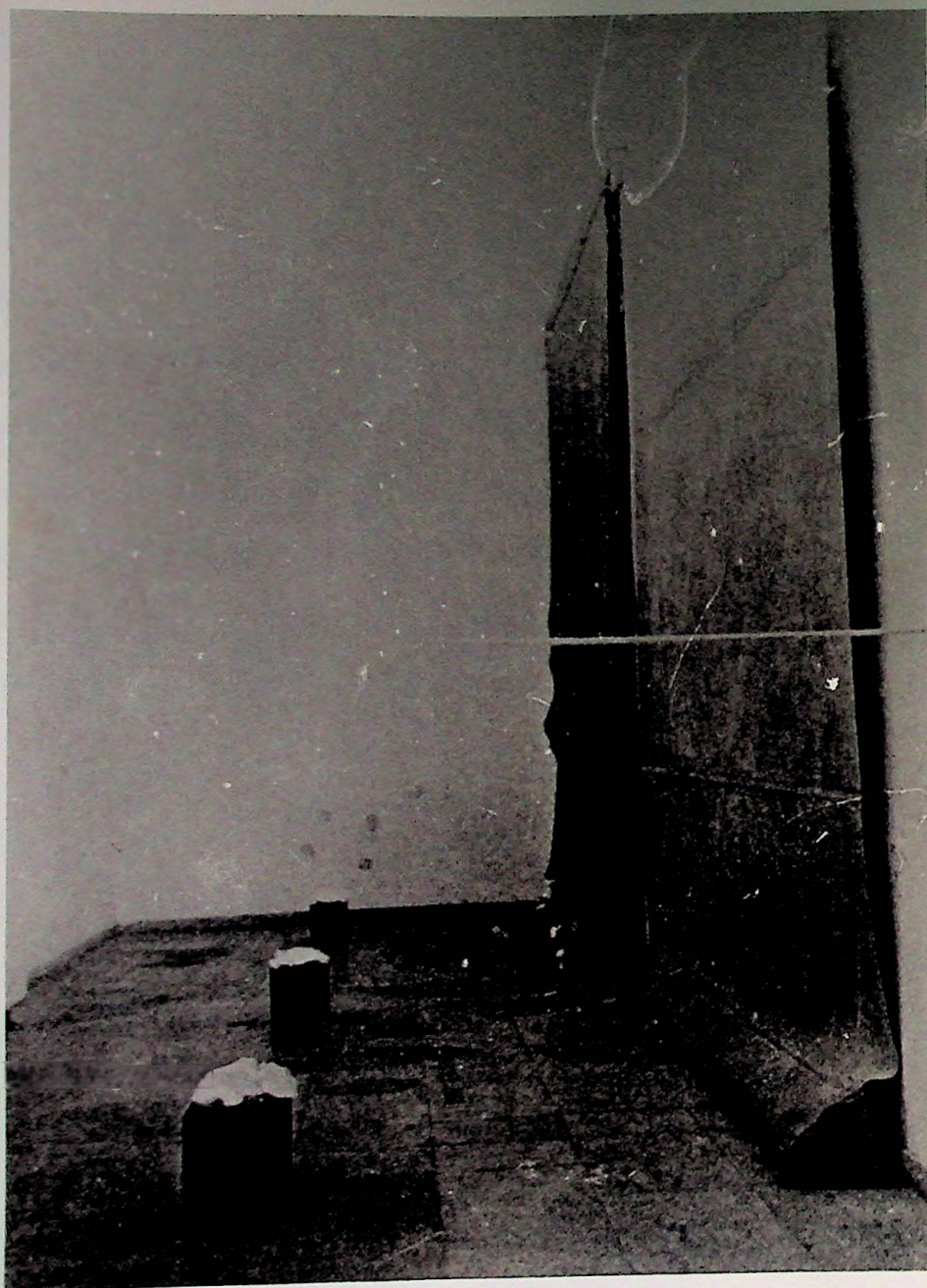
The sculpture consisted of two batteries with coloured gelatine lying on them and two giant felt paths hanging from the wall.

One felt path hangs flush with the wall and is sown taut over a plastic frame, the other hangs lightly rumpled and forms at the ground level varying drapery folds.

#### ANTI - ART:-

Beuys' idea of anti-art as questioning after furthering of consciousness, after creativity, after fuller moving into a man-like activity (which is thinking) in the comprehension (activity) of art, because it is the basis of mans existence, and man suffers without it.





ELECTRIC FOOT, PLASTIC FOOT: 1969.



1970, January 24th - February 22nd.

Group Show TABERNACLE:

Louisiana Museum Copenhagen.

Beuys shows a 16mm film TRANS - SIBERIAN RAILROAD:-

The camera becomes the viewer's eye which looks through a hole in the wall; the camera is static (as a one eyed view through a small hole would be). There is no action, no flourishes, no blow-up, merely slight blurriness and deliberate double image, like when the observer of an environment, because he uses the other eye in front of the hole in the wall, his point of view slightly changes.

1970, May 1st.

Discussion between Joseph Beuys and Willi Brandt on the occasion of the André Masson show in the Museum at the Ostwall Dortmund.

Beuys asks Brandt to allow the "opposition" to air its political view at least once per month so that others can appraise their ideas. But they have no other information level other than the street, "and for that reason I ask, not for myself, for and outspoken freeing of the media". Brandt answers that: "Its a good idea", but he couldn't get himself into it because art "strengthens a political office wherever it becomes propaganda".



1970, 26th - 30th August;

ACTION: CELTIC (KINLOCH RANNOCH) SCOTTISH SYMPHONY.

With Henning Christianson.

Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh.

"Actually when I went to Edinburgh I had nothing, only the "consciousness". I am making a concert there. I had ordered a film, a piano and many other things. I didn't know what would happen. I only knew I was going to make a concert". I prepared myself inwardly beforehand. When I went in there all I saw was an old floor. It presented itself to me as being important. I needed that. During my thoughts about it I saw some kind of business with an axe. I bought the axe. Then if the circumstance arose I could use it. I placed it there in the Gallery and I didn't use it - but it was good that it stood there. Then I began. I saw myself in the space and began off and on to touch everything and to develop (explain) the corresponding drawings, to design a time-plan. Then into the room came Henning Christianson. The beginning is simple. The place is important. Then I said, "We live only once on this planet, and that a man considers that we live only once as an organism, he lives so the place plays a role in that". Simply first as a question, what is here in Scotland? What is it here? Then I begin like this to crawl, then I set my antennae up and promptly had a radio.

Immediately it was alive in me, Scotland, Arthur's round table, the legend of the Grail. The elements met and showed ~~themselves~~ present, a foundation of the forework. A person



must not evaluate that as if it were a musical score.

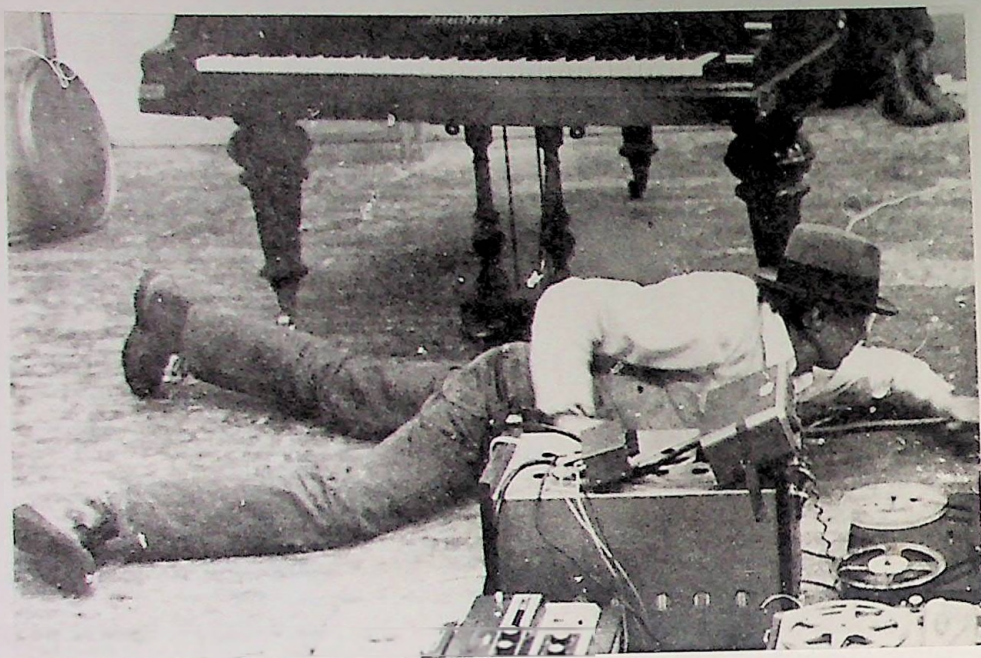
The forework hangs together and is closely related to my life".

Two films showing on the back wall - one (Vacuum Mass) on a silver board, the other (Eurasienstab) projected on a larger picture format directly on the back wall. 2 portable cassette recorders, 4 tape apparatus and tuners, 1 microphone, 1 piano, 1 axe, 1 blackboard, 1 round tim plate, 2 bottles of slip, 1 spear, 1 ladder, 1 floor, gelatine, and a black felt covered long plank.

In the left of the room the film projectors, behind a blackboard on the back wall. In the middle of the room is a microphone with the axe leaning on it, left of that the tape apparatus and tuner, behind that on the wall the spear and the bottles with the slip, right of that the piano, behind that the felt covered plank; right on the wall the ladder; the windows are blackened.

The films are shown. First Eurasienstab then Vacuum Mass and Rannoch Moor. He had made this film a few days before with Rory Mc Eivern and Mark Littlewood in the highlands with a composition by Arthur Kapcke. Part of the film showed Beuys's hand squeezing first a lump of fat, then a lump of plasma, against the bleak background of the moor. Beuys leans the felt covered plank (which he has been carrying around) next to the film Rannoch Moor, he then goes forward with the two cassette recorders over his shoulders which play Ja, Ja, Ja, Nee, Nee, Nee. The





CELTIC (KINLOCH RANNOCK) - Scottish Symphony: 1970.



Vacuum Mass film ends and the other plays on alone.

Earlier he had thrown the gelatine against the wall, now he takes the ladder and tin plate and slowly gathers the gelatine piece by piece from the wall. He carries the plate like a waiter, fingers spread; the ladder under the right arm, he sets against the wall to reach the higher pieces of gelatine.

When he has finished gathering it he sets the ladder beside him, lifts the plate over his head and pours the gelatine slowly over his head and shoulders onto the floor. He then lifts the blackboard over his head and sings Ö,Ö,Ö,Ö, into the microphone and lays it on the floor. He then went after the spear, and placed himself legs wide apart, the spear in the right hand the concluding image behind the blackboard, while Henning Christianson switched off the electric apparatus (lights, recorders etc..).



1970, 12th October.

ACTION: WE ENTER THE ART MARKET:-

With H.P. Alvermann, Wolf Vostell and Helmut Rywelski. They sent out an open letter during the preparation of the new Köln Art Market.

A protest against the further cementation of selling monopoly that has presented itself as the "Society of Progressive Art Dealers". It has been promoted this way for many years by the Köln city administration. They have given the society rent-free all of the Art Museum and rooms for their meeting.

They go to see Dr. Hackenberg at the Köln Culture Department. They speak to him for about thirty minutes through a closed glass door.

Beuys: I hold that the high art market price is unsuitable because my works are made so expensive, I can do nothing about this, because the price is set by the market alone. I have demonstrated for a new, free art market. I think that the art market has little further to go.



I think it was no accident that Beuys was dismissed from his professorship at the Dusseldorf Art Academy in 1972, or that he pronounces the founding of a free international school his most important esthetic goal. The difference is most between virtue and vice, between two contrasting esthetic systems. Beuys is now skilled in feinting with the world, and uses it like a canvas, expanding the sense of scale beyond the physical to the social.

To a certain sector of the public, any proposal for reform or change, in politics or art, is instantly dismissed as naive, in complete disregard for the bottom-line purpose of the proposal, or the real nature of the proposer. In recent art, this charge has been levelled in various ways at Joseph Beuys, whose worldliness, is in fact beyond question. Beuys very nearly changed the nature of art education in Germany through his continuing political ACTIONS (or performances, we might say), he fell short, but he has plans for yet another school - a Free International University for Creativity (in Dublin).<sup>\*</sup> No one who has tried to teach, to shape even a moderately new curriculum at any school (liberal or professional), or to introduce any art related issue into the public consciousness (Beuys's struggle against the Dusseldorf Art Academy was headline news in Germany for several years) can underestimate the sheer tenacity, not to say cynicism, that is required to meet these ends.



Beuys is not a Utopian in the popular sense. Nor is he to be fitted into left-wing or right-wing groups, on any issue. Beuys is as opposed to the statist dictatorships of Eastern Europe as he is to the capitalists in his own country.

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\*  
In August 1978 I wrote to Joseph Beuys in Germany to ask about the Free International University plans for Dublin. His secretary, Caroline Tisdall, wrote back on his behalf to say that the F.I.V. activities are alive and well and currently operating through the group "Art and Research Exchange" in Belfast.



## PART THREE

Plans for a Free Art Academy

Demonstration against Koln Art Market

Founding of Organisation For Direct Democracy  
Through Plebiscite

Numerus Clausus

Letter to The Director of Dusseldorf Art Academy

Letter to The 142 Rejected Students

Presentation : Voglio Vedere I Mier Montagne

Isolation Unit

Overthrow Finally The Part Dictator

Kunst = Mensch (Art = Man)

Peace Party

Documenta 5, Information Bureau

Farewell Action

Interview with German Press

Free International University

Every Plan for the Western Man

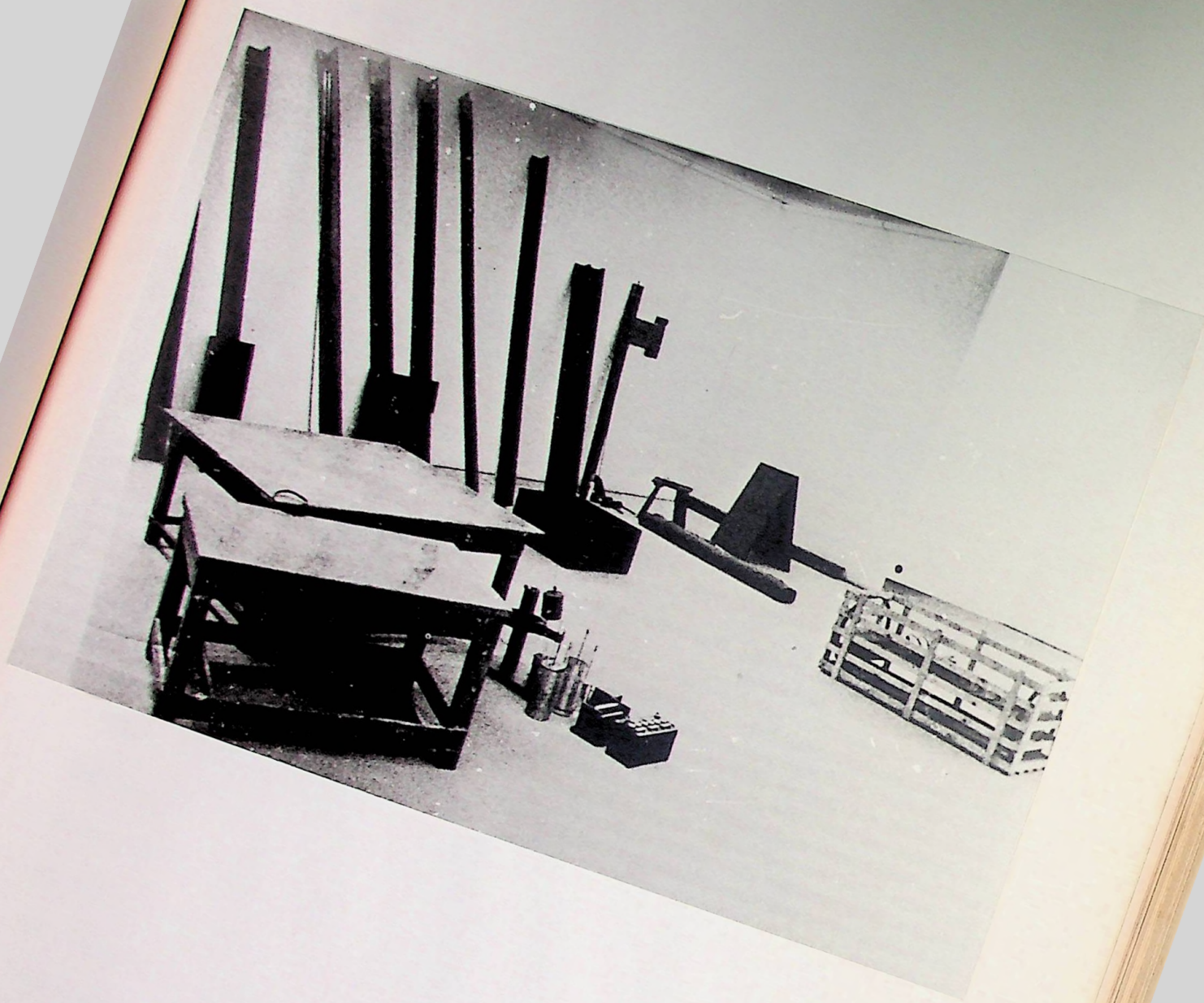
Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me



Beuys deals with the real world and his own esthetic on the same level, not sacrificing one for the other. His Organisation for Direct Democracy is an AKTION, at once an instrument in the real world and an instrument in advanced esthetics. Beuys does not go to the world and ask it to do good, or to believe in a particular political figure. He asks it to see life and art as linked, to begin where he begins, before ending in conclusions. "Man, you have the strength of self-determination", he said, in a performance at the Tate Gallery in London. The next step toward the fruition of his goal is his referendum "for a new democracy", at once a practical step and a metaphorical one. In his organisational charts proposing a newly structured society, in his pamphlets, in the hundred days of discussion at Documenta, Beuys demonstrates how a modernist mind can work in the real world as carefully and acutely as in the studio.

In his AKTIONEN - the Documenta hundred days is an example - the meaning, and symbol are in front, filling the viewer's mind and eye. At Documenta Beuys debated and argued, from morning till night, over the meaning of political power. By unlocking the latent creative powers in the public, he claims, new political structures can be created, then realised, through referendum. Beuys believes that the on-going dialogue about these subjects, back and forth, is an oscillating sculpture.





PLASTIC SPACE, DOCUMENTA 4: 1968.



1971, January:-

Beuys plans a free academy and inter communications centre. He hopes to begin his project using the old two story Dusseldorf convention centre. The free Academy should be a memory bank of the times in which things happen; not an art academy but an educational establishment that takes in anthropological dimensions and, above all, pursues sociology. The furthering of this new concept art depends on this new free academy in this model school.

"A person learns to define himself and the world around him. Only from this point on comes the ability to define oneself. The free self-determination of all people from here on, as I see this art concept as a revolutionary one in its totality."

"Then I am ready to specialise and to decide and to say: first at a particular point in the biography of man must every man become a specialist in a society with division of labour."

"Then he decides to study physics, while another will study painting, the third nursing etc.. Before, however, such a decision to specialise ensues, a person must be developed in this that is a total art idea i.e. out of man's power of thought, emotions and will procure a person that can "achieve something".

1971, 10th February:-

Demonstration against the exclusiveness of the Köln Art



Market from October, 1970 is continued in the programatic promotion of a free production fair in a joint ACTION with artists Ervin Hruich and Klaus Staeck. He hands out a manifesto "AUFRUF" - CALL SUMMONS against the Köln Art Market. Internationally known artists, museum directors, gallery owners and critics signed it. Those who signed denied support of the Berlin and Köln Art Market as long as they do not allow a production fair organised by artists to exist.

"It is schizophrenic and inconsistent, when artists, who with their products and ideas take up a position demanding a change in consciousness and a free ordering of society, are humbled by repressive institutional appearances like the conservative structured Köln and Berlin Art Markets".

1971, 20th March - 25th April.

OBJECTS AND DRAWINGS:-

VON-DER-HEYDT MUSEUM, WUPPERTAL.

Beuys gave a talk entitled ART IS KNOWLEDGE, LIFE AND LESSON, his teaching rule. He stated that he wishes to alter society through an evolutionary process of change.



1971, 1st June:-

Founding of the Organisation for Direct  
Democracy through Plebiscite.

From the statute and political programme of the  
organisation:-

1. Freedom of formation in the political system from the lowest to the highest.
2. Sovereignty of the people at all administrative levels.
3. The people as the making of their own constitution.
4. Men and Women without party card are equal with those who have party cards in the law-giving body.
5. No privileges for particular representatives of the people and government workers.
6. Peoples veto in particular cases (e.g. when equal handling of all men is not certain).

The information centre is in Dusseldorf; there a person can be registered.

The organisation grows under the leadership of Joseph Beuys, a social political concept that rests on the three organisation principles of the anthropologist Rudolf Steiner. This principle is STATE/KNOWLEDGE/SPIRITUAL LIFE.

The groundwork of this plan was that the social life of man could only be healthy when it would be consciously organised. He gave the ideals of the French Revolution a new context.



Reuys believes that it is of the most importance that people be self-determining. Freedom comes only through thought. "Man really is not free in many respects. He is dependent on his social circumstances, but he is free in his thinking".

"We must work at the ground of the statutes and the system of government (constitution) of the states and we can move ourselves only inso-far as we remain within the bounds of legality. We are trying to open new points of history and perspective, without crossing the borders into illegality. The organisation builds on a substance that is only conceivable through organisation. The concept of art will become widened as social architecture that is the product of many".

Over the Organisation for Direct Democracy:-

"I have come to the conclusion that there is no one possibility for a person that is outside art. I need a pedagogical concept, I need a theory of realisation, and I must dispute, therefore, that there are three similar things under one roof.

The pedagogical question refers to this: that a person is very important. First of all to convey a consciousness of this, that he as a creative being, is also a free being, and that he for this reason must behave necessarily in an anti-authoritarian fashion.

The perception theory concept lies actually somewhat sooner,



in that I ascertain that only the creative person can change the situation in time, therefore, can work revolutionary things from out of this creativity.

Yet another degree goes back to the pedagogical theory; it would mean: Art like creativity like personal freedom... the changing of the sociatal situation as like now in an instant it lies before and it works repressively on mankind, that which we call 'the majority' or 'the workers' or 'the proletariat'. These things belongs with my pedagogical concept; thus to work practically and politically.

We inform people about this, what exists and to one who is open is to remove that and to organise the people into a position of strength, some day. They stand in agreement, for example, in the choosing of a party state or a formal Democracy. All power of the state goes out from the people, but now that is possible is what we wish to inform them of and at the same time organise them.

When the majority of people have one vision, ... that there is only one way, for example, to change a constitution.... then the people will easily step into plebiscite. They will say so, we have discerned, it is no longer sensible for their voice to be delegated to one man, who as party politician has nothing else in his mind but to take seriously the interests of his party. We will no longer delegate a man, we will choose for ourselves and will step into plebiscite on the area of production materials.



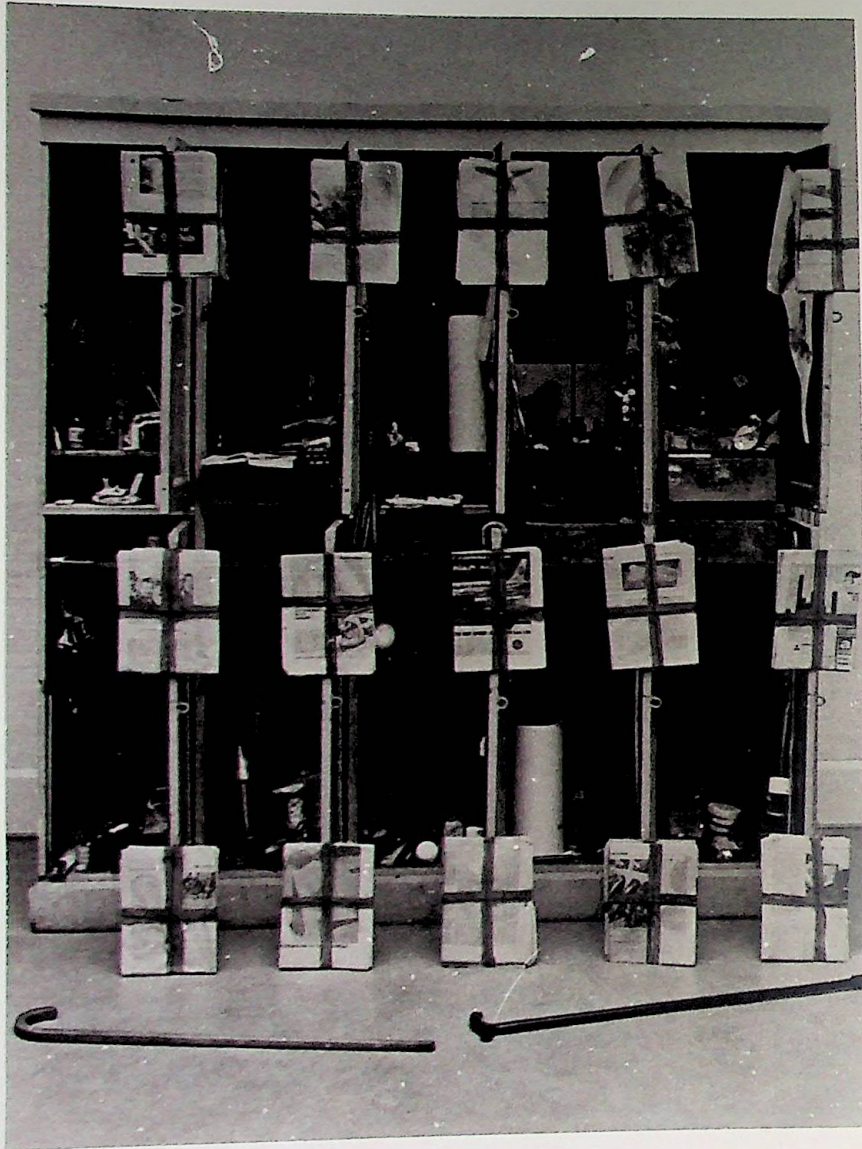
When the majority decides that then the law is of value. Or the minority, they that have the power in their hands, make themselves uncreditble as a Democracy. Because also the one who has power today certainly wishes, Democracy, as they say. Then they will easily experience that which they must take seriously with the Democracy, that, therefore, the majority has made a law for themselves, against which they force themselves.

QUESTION: Mr. Beuys, now as there is no one who has the power to give power up willfully, how can your programme be realised without the force of authority?

ANSWER: Yes, the authority here is the authority of creativity, thus the authority of the spirit or the authority of insight. I say, in a moment where the majority has realised where their interests lie, and how they can carry through their interest, simply through the principle of plebiscite. In that they organise themselves and in an instant the circumstances will be ended. Use of power from your power, that you have through the right of self-determination. Thus the people make a use of their power as individuals, as free creative people. That is the foundation.

You must always note that I anticipate, when I describe something, that it directly means something for the future state.





THE STAG HUNT: 1961.



"The Student Party" was a party against parties, it was a paradox then, therefore, also <sup>an</sup> artistic paradox. It was the first stage; there I gained many good co-workers. There also it became very clear to me that the political work with the students can be very unfruitful. Students are very essential co-workers in the process of changing society, but a person cannot build one-sidedly on them, and from the founding I went out into the streets. I can now speak to all people"

1971, 18th June:

ACTION WITH THE LEAFLETS:

On Köln Main Street.

Handing out leaflets explaining Beuys' work and encouraging street discussion. People were sympathetic but "what can a person do against the strength of the mighty law?"

An edition with felt and leaflets went to support the Organisation for Direct Democracy.



1971, July - August.

Beuys takes 142 rejected students into his class.

NUMERUS CLAUSUS:-

About letting the rejected applicants into his class  
Beuys said:-

"That does not mean that the students can settle and make themselves comfortable with me, as so often is hinted in false interpretations, rather they will have their conscientiousness tested by me, whether they may have a study at the Art Academy.

I am not answerable to the existing system that matriculation decides a "game-plan", because my experience with this principle of choosing has been very negative. My most interested students were not directly in the group of those to look for, rather among those who had been rejected. If I had not had this introduction of the progression of school principles, education, university, culture, creativity, freedom - then I could not make ready my mission. Because I had this introduction, I will take on students without restriction. But as to the final end which I aim at, it is the changing of our socio-political systems.

In the presentation of aims lies the criticism of the party-state, the criticism of formal democracy. For this reason there lies in the setting forth of goals a new, formed nature of schooling, the overcoming of pure, formal, representative democracy. It is not compatible with the



fundamental law, that a formal democracy will practice, that which is in the statutes of the law - ALL POWER COMES FROM THE PEOPLE. The majority of the population will one day decide everything having to do with the dealings and needs of the law.

I have no illusions and I don't believe that man can go the way of evolutionary - revolutions in one step. I always say evolution - revolution: evolutionary in the methods and revolutionary in the set up of goals, in the end effect. But I am clear on the fact that critical consciousness grows and the evolutionary - revolutionary way is leveling out, that is something I experience daily."

From an open letter to the director of the State Art Academy, Prof. Edward Trier from Joseph Beuys and Johannes Stüttgen:-

When likewise the experience of the unrestricted admission with two trial semesters, as it was decided in the teachers conference of June, 15th, 1970, for the present should only be tried and then counted unworkable, then it is the occasion for stocktaking. And it stands indeed also no such decision of the conference to turn back to a method of which the spirit, the content, as well as the laws of our state constitution opposed.

We are not ready to participate in such a game with the basic rights of all people, in particular the young people seeking education. Therefore, the 142 so-called rejected



students have their chance to be objectively tested in the trial semester.

Every attempt to prescribe a method of admission to our class, is an illegal encroachment into teaching freedom. It is possible that a teacher who is willing for it will take on 142 additional students although other civil employed teachers fill themselves to the limit with 6 students , or some like number.

Questions of capacity of the school, schoolrooms, staff, teaching materials, teachers, etc. do not have to figure together with admissions limitations. For this appearance of lack in certain areas must be supported by existing authorities, their officers, civil servants and finally, those who over the head of the majority govern from afar - i.e. the party politicians. The NUMERUS CLAUSUS is fundamentally illegal and not something that is governed by the solution of a problem of capacity. Capacity is not an issue. The small amount of resources is a result of party politics. The majority should be allowed their education when and where they will.

Our decision is orientated toward the needs of society and the guarantees of the constitution toward a freer development of education instruction in free schools for everyone.

This need will be violently suppressed through the dictator of the Party. We are beginning a task, for which the state has proven itself incapable, liberation of the cultural



constitution and informations sources.

From a letter to the 142 rejected students:-

I have admitted you into my class at the Art Academy, you are therefore students of mine at the Academy. Your course of study begins with the Winter Semester 1971-1972 beginning October 15th 1971. The first two semesters serve as a trial period with a presentation of your work through which <sup>it</sup> will <sup>be</sup> determined whether or not this course of study is suited to you.

Also in this act is the expression of my right as teacher to admit those whom I wish to teach and as many as I wish (a right guaranteed by the constitution that I do not want curtail for myself under any circumstances).

I refuse the heavy and thoroughly pigeon-holed ar of each admission regulation. Such a procedure seems to me to be arbitrary and unresponsible. I am interested in the students, to get <sup>ac</sup>quainted with them, to become familiar with their mental attitudes, their working methods etc. On first impression and then, as time passes, to become familiar with them in order to be able to examine them as to whether this course of study appears to be suitable for that person or not. Therefore, the works of their portfolio deliver too little for me and also a too vague point of view. For a real judgement of your goals and abilities a deeper insight is required. First after a longer time in the



co-working situation with the other students and in comparison of all results among yourselves. A person can procure a clarity for himself on this point. It is necessary that each applicant prepares himself to remain open to the possibility of test, and I have decided to stand up for this.

It is, I believe always much better under extreme conditions to present the hardest demands on each and every person, to work simply for the chance of a course of study. You should have the possibility, to make your own decision, whether you will study under these conditions, as to place and position. Perhaps, for example, you would not like to have me as your teacher. It is then your concern to look for another teacher for yourself, here or elsewhere.

The problem applies to everyone and should not be shifted onto just a few, as is now the case. True freedom in teaching and education, in the free school also, lies finally in the interest of every man and results as need out of his direct nature.

And as a result of a need of this direct nature, man is not only a social being, rather he is also in the greatest sense a free creative being. Here is the point at which every art ultimately becomes political.

All should come and, from here on, work together with me in this political struggle and stand up for your rights and the right of others.



In closing must it yet be said that in my class the artistic education is of primary importance and by no means do you have to take part in the problems, but also, if you don't, do not let it separate you.



1971, 17th August.

PRESENTATION: VOGLIO VEDERE I MIEI MONTAGNE: \*\*

Stedelijk van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven.

He takes his bedroom furniture and arranges it, with Italian words chalked in on each. The wardrobe could be a glacier.

Beuys wishes to show in the presentation of a room, that it has built itself through the passing of time as a living space of an outsider who sees himself as a wild thief or partisan.

The weapon (rifle) on the wall is therefore an important hint. The weapon is chosen as an aiming instrument, with which a man focuses, reduces and concentrates. A person looks with his aiming instrument, to get something into his possession. The acquiring process occurs through killing off and seizing. Notch and grain are helpers of concentration. They build the co-ordination system that reconciles itself in a sharpened point.

1971, 4th October.

AKTION = ISOLATION UNIT:

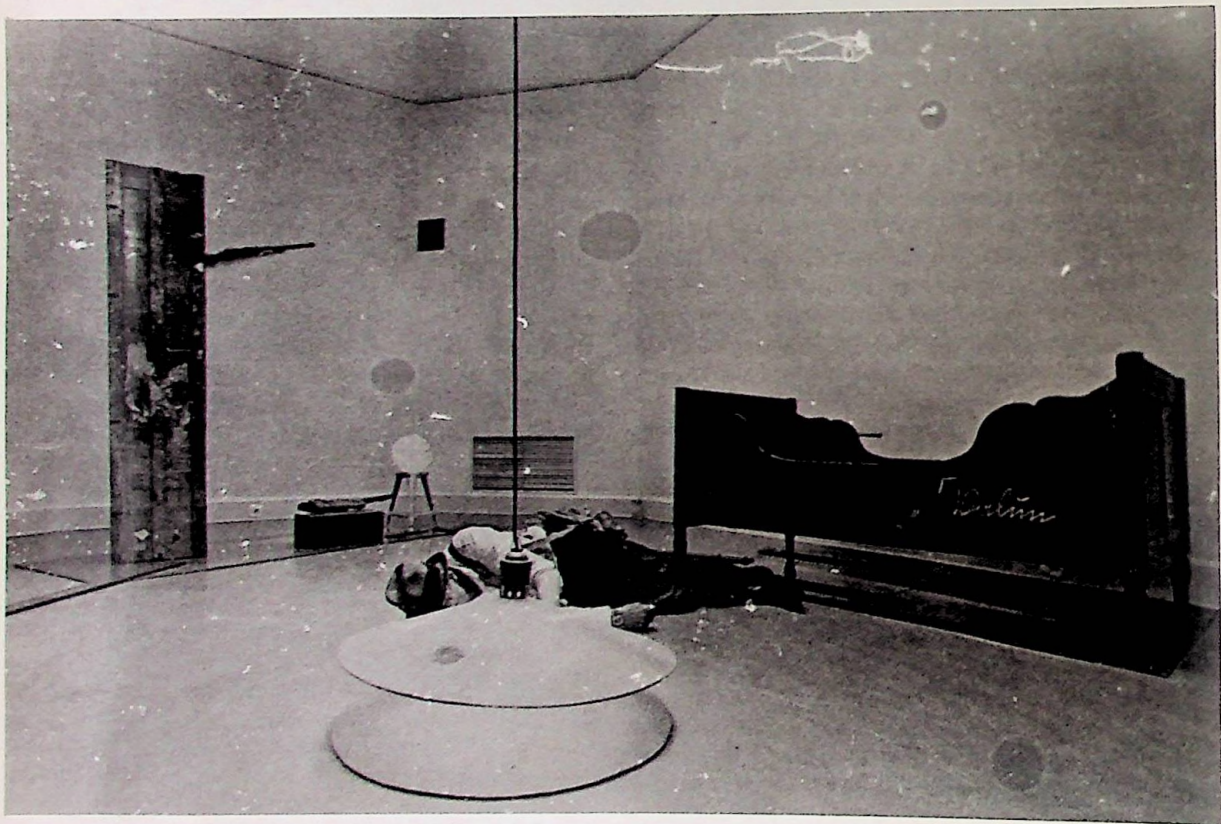
with Jerry Fox,

State Art Academy, Dusseldorf.

They use only one material - felt. Jerry Fox smokes a pipe, dumps out ash, it starts a fire in the shape of a cross which he puts out with extinguisher foam. There is a candle in the

\*\*Translation: I WANT TO SEE MY MOUNTAINS:





I WANT TO SEE MY MOUNTAINS: 1971.



window. Fox takes two iron pipes and begins hitting them together. He breaks a window at the height of the noise which is amplified. Next Beuys holds a dead mouse over the fire and lets it revolve around the tape recorder.



1971, 14th December.

ACTION: OVERTHROW FINALLY THE PARTY DICTATOR:  
Demonstration against the widening influence of the  
Rochus Clubs in Dusseldorf.

The advice is for the rich, we will not yield. General  
welfare advances.

The action was done by Beuys and fifty students in the  
forest where there were plans to build more private tennis  
courts. They marked the trees that would be cut down with  
white circles and crosses. It brought about an outcry *against*  
the political community by the business community that the  
trees should be saved.

Beuys: "The whole world is talking about the protection  
of the environment, but no one takes care of it. We  
perform with this action our contribution, because the trees  
that would be removed are essential to the lives of those  
of the future generation. This demonstration is only one  
of many that will follow. And should even one try to saw  
down one of these trees, there we will stand as witness  
against him.

The forest environment is for everyone; it is to be protected.  
This is our first action having to do with the protection of  
the environment, but most certainly not the last. Further-  
more, wherever there is a question of environmental protection  
comes up, we will be there. The environment belongs to us  
all, not only to High Society",



1971, 18th December,

KUNST = MUNSCH (ART = MAN):

Kaiser - Wilhelm - Museum, Krefeld.

Art is like man; it is like creativity, like freedom. Every man is creative, therefore free. Freedom and creativity displace art principally in the ability to define form and change. That goes for the artistic sphere as well as the social sphere.

Beuys sees this epoch as a time of spiritual metamorphosis. Freedom can be realised through the employment of creative possibilities.

"I start my political struggle not from alteration, a de-construction in the economic sphere, I begin from my knowledge about schools. For these reasons I have always said, the only revolutionary power is the power of human creativity, and I have posed the question, which for the present works a bit absurdly, the only revolutionary power in art.

When a person already is art, to spread so completely the concept of art, that is contained in the concept of science, therefore, the whole of human creativity, then he comes to the conclusion that the changing of relation can only take place through the will of man. When I tie together will with the idea of democracy that means: when man becomes acquainted with his strength in self-determination, then he will create for himself one day, a democracy grounded on this



will. I would like to abolish all that is undemocratic, that which works as dictatory, and achieve self determination".

1972, 26th - 27th February.

INFORMATION ACTION:

Tate Gallery and Whitechapel Gallery, London.

He spent each day explaining his political philosophy - "Man you have the power of self-determination".

1972, 31st March.

PEACE PARTY:

Joseph Beuys and Jonas Hafner.

People recited the 1st and 2nd strophes of "Peace Party" by Holderlin, 713c - 714a from Plato's dialog "Nomoi", chapter 15, 9 - 17 of John the Apostle and the three like ideas of freedom, equality and brotherhood from Montesquieu's 'L'esprit des Lois'. These readings followed in a spontaneous exchange while Jonas Hafner sewed flag cloths together and wrapped up a statue of Christ like a corpse in it. Beuys has the carrying case of the Organisation for Direct Democracy Through Plebiscite. It is filled with vinegar and a sponge. He placed the sponge against the church



door and wrote the word EXIT upon it with vinegar.

(March 31st is Good Friday).

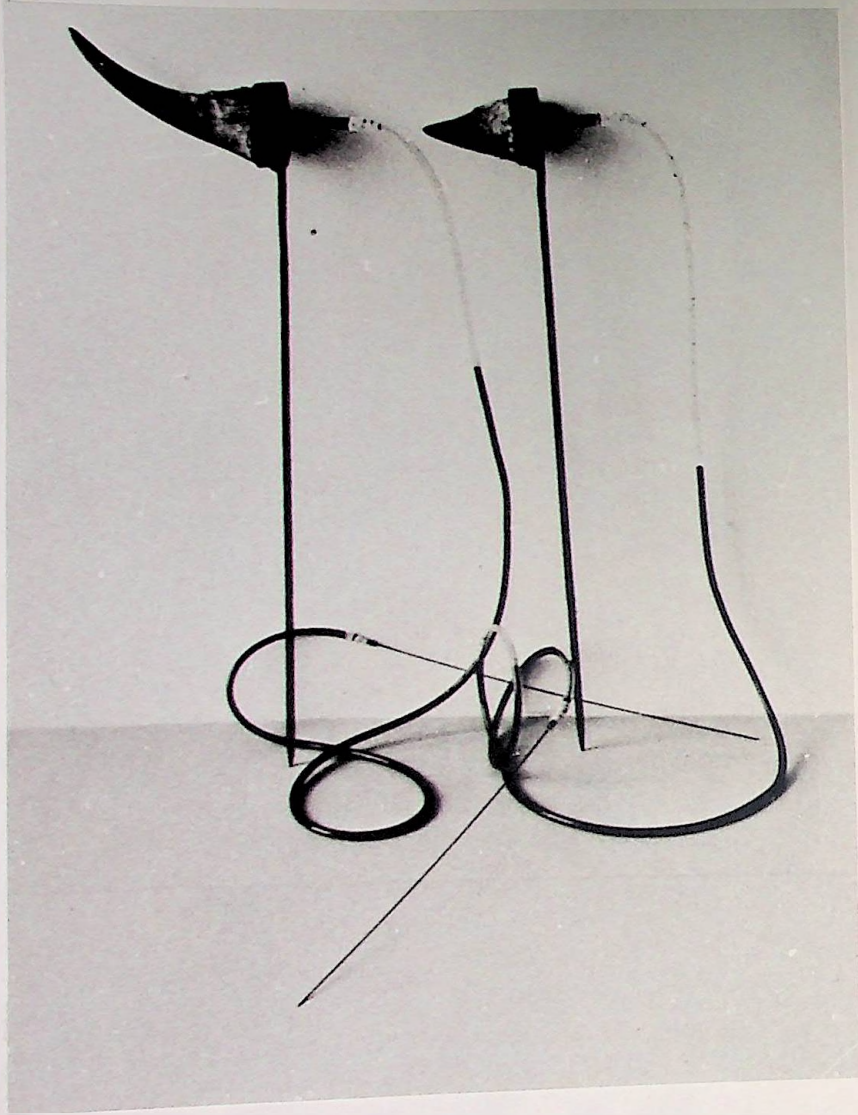
"Much mischief has been done with the concept of peace in the course of history. Originally peace was a very active concept that in the passing of time has gotten a passive character. When man carries on war and struggles with consciousness and thus avoids the outer wars, then he has reached a positive state of peace. The war of ideas within oneself would be the only positive peace worth wishing for".

1972, 1st May.

ACTION: JOSEPH BEUYS SWEEPS OUT:

During the May 1st procession, Beuys sweeps *up* the pavement of the Karl Marx Platz in Berlin.





HORNS: 1964.



1972, 19th May.

Chaired discussion in the State Art Academy in  
Dusseldorf about a FREE SCHOOL FOR CREATIVITY:

On the panel with Joseph Beuys were his friends, the  
museum director from Monchengladbach - Johannes Cladders,  
the Dusseldorf Gallery owner Alfred Schmela, the painter  
Erwin Heerich, the collector Hans van der Grinten and the  
art historian Willi Bongard.

The event was meant to be a kick off of the foundation of  
a "Free International School for Creativity and  
Interdisciplinary Research".

1972, 30th June - 8th October.

DOCUMENTA 5.:

Beuys maintains an information bureau for the "Organisation  
for Direct Democracy through Plebriscite".

Beuys sits at a desk along with two assistants, a rose on  
the desk; on the surrounding walls are seven blackboards,  
on one is written the word MAN. He states, "we do not  
want to be a power faction, rather an unconditional free  
school".

A young Swiss man asks Beuys whether he wants to nationalise  
business. Beuys answers, "no, I am not concerned with  
nationalisation, rather I would like socialisation".  
The state, whether of west or east seems to him to be  
an evil. He quotes Bishop Dibelius who describes the state as



an animal from the underground.

A young man comes in and argues heatedly against Beuys, he calls the ACTION imbecility. He asks Beuys what he has accomplished. He advises that Beuys should join the workers' movement and to put his money towards furthering their end. Beuys answers: "You cannot think. I cannot work with the concept of classes. There is only the idea of man. A person must simply realise what has never yet existed in history, that is democracy".

Other questions and answers:-

Q: Couldn't we talk about Documenta and not only about Politics?

Beuys: Here we are concerned with the politics of creativity of all.

Q: Mr. Beuys your art works are a part of the system, namely, the price is too high to be able to pay?

Beuys: Everyone who lives in the system participates in it. I must utilise my work through the sale of the works.

Q: I do not see the connection between your theory and your felt objects.

Beuys: Many people have seen only my objects and not seen my ideas which belong to them.

Q: Would you describe yourself as a non-violent anarchist?

Beuys: Yes.

Q: A person is entertained too little here. Much goes too slowly in this Documenta. It is still too elite?

Beuys: Art is in a crisis. All things are in a crisis.



Q: You are a large earner in the German Art Market. What do you do with the money?

Beuys: The money goes into this organisation.

Q: How far can an art exhibition be a suitable forum, to give the public further impulse, as you hope it will?

Beuys: Yes, the place is relatively unimportant. I have an office here it is a copy of my office in Dusseldorf that is located in the street. Here people can come in from outside. It looks exactly like our office, not a hairs difference. And there everyone can come in. I have thought about it. What is more effective? Should I now stay in Dusseldorf or stand up on this platform and reach people here. I have come to the obvious conclusion; in Dusseldorf it is now pickle harvest. There we would have perhaps one visitor in a day, and here we reach many people. Here I can reach people from all over the world. I can form international contacts. That is very important.

Q: Do you see your office here as an isolated division?

Beuys: No. I see myself in no way isolated here. Because I have all possibilities here. Here I can talk freely with the people. No one and nothing has hindered me up to now.

Q: Does the fact that you have opened your office at the 5th Documenta mean that you wish to pursue not only political intentions but also artistic intentions with it?

Beuys: Because the actual future political intentions must



be artistic, that means they must stem from human creativity, from individual freedom of every individual, For this reason I occupy myself with the school problem, with the pedagogical aspect. This is thus a "freedoms model" thats understood as a revolutionary model.

There must be a free press, a free television media, and so forth, that is not dependant on the influence of the State. Not like it is in the state influenced schools. On this matter, I am trying to build a revolutionary model that so formulates democratic foundation proceedings.

So it is even now in the constitution: all power of the state comes from the people.





Celtic + ~~~~~ : 1971.



1972, 28th August:

During registration for winter semester '72-'73 Beuys again states that he will take all of the contestants into his class. He sends a letter to the head of the Art Academy - Edward Trier, the Ministry of Science and the parents of all the applying students.

1972, 8th October:

FAREWELL ACTION:

On the 101st day of Documenta 5 a boxing match between Joseph Beuys and Abraham Christian Moebuss.

BOXING MATCH FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY:

The idea for this action occurred on the first day of Documenta when Abraham C. Moebuss started a heated argument with Beuys, to the point that he challenged Beuys to a fight.

Beuys was announced as : "fighter for points for direct democracy through direct encounters".

The money went to the Organisation for Direct Democracy.

1972, 10th October:

Beuys is fired for "disturbing the peace" in the Academy according to the Wissenschaftsminister Johannes Rau.

Beuys sends the letter back saying he will continue to do his job until a decision is made as to whether he will be able to accept the extra students.

He was told there is no room for the students. He suggests the use of the empty convention hall. The ministry refuses.



Out of 227 applicants only 54 were accepted. Beuys has offered to finance his own teaching.

INSTEAD OF TEACHING TO PAY FOR HIS ART, HE WISHES TO SELL HIS ART TO PAY FOR HIS TEACHING.



1972: From an interview with Johannes Rau:

Rau: "He (Beuys) must stand fast against demonstrators. Those who had the job before him had to face the lack of space problem, he must deal with it too".

Interviewer: "Don't you fear that Beuys and those who come after him will shake the ministry position of Herr Prof. Rau?"

Rau: "I cannot and will not be answerable to that".

From an interview with Joseph Beuys in the German Press:

Q: "Will you continue to teach in spite of the notice?"

Beuys: "Yes, certainly - I started my class last Thursday. I have raised a protest because of the notice. In the letter to the ministry that I have just sent it says above all: the argument for the immediate dissolution of the circumstances of duty was not confidently given. The actual reason for the dissolution is public knowledge. I will bring about from this a just discussion. Until now, for the past eleven years I have done my duty and taught in the academy. For I am answerable to be judged for the young people entrusted to me".

Q: "I know a quote of yours, 'every person is an artist'. But when every person is an artist what reason is there for continuing to have art academies and art professors?"

Beuys: "Now every man is indeed an artist, in a general sense. The artist that a man must be, for example, to manage the determination of his own existence. But at a



definite stage in life every man becomes in a certain way a specialist. One studies chemistry, the other sculpture or painting, the third becomes a doctor and so on. For this reason, obviously we need also specialist schools".

Q: "Why do relatively so many people crowd into the field of Art?"

Beuys: "Art is in my opinion, the only evolutionary force. That means only through creativity can they change their circumstances. And I believe that many people perceive that humans, can be, for the most part, further developed in art".

Q: "But not all people can become artists, especially, they cannot all study at the art academy".

Beuys: "Should all people wish to study art then they must be given the opportunity. If that were so we would finally have a world that lives in the spirit. There's no reason to fear such a thing happening".

Q: "But a world in which such would be possible could be realised in fifty years after a further development of the means of production".

Beuys: "Yes now, that would go hand in hand. Man would realise more and more that man does not only need his surrounding standard of living, rather that he must, above all things be nourished by spiritual things. But that is not what we are concerned with in our present structure, all will be judged here by scientific standards. These scientific interests are certainly not the interests of the majority.



IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT ART YOU PRESENT - THE IMPORTANT POLITICAL STATEMENT IS THAT PEOPLE ARE FREE TO BE CHALLENGED AND TO CHANGE IN A PUBLIC SITUATION - THE ART IS THE COMING TOGETHER OF THE PEOPLE - THE AFFIRMATION OF SEEKING AND WILLINGNESS TO BE CONFRONTED, AND FREEDOM TO ACCEPT OR REJECT WHAT IS PRESENTED".

Q: "If one says to you, you are acting irresponsibly when you take in all of the refused applicants and thereby enlarge your class to over three hundred?"

Beuys: "Who is acting irresponsibly here seems obvious. It is clear to me that in the art academy, and now many students in other academies, are in a predicament. That is that the whole nature of German Schools is in a predicament; consequently, I am fighting not only for the art academy issue, but rather for the freeing of the total school system in this same predicament. And in this emergency, it is better that people are able to study in distress, who were generally not allowed to. The young people also have clearly recognised that equality must continue. They are also against the phrase "Whoever comes first paints first" when others stand on the outside and are given no chance".

Q: "You have presented your ACTION - ORGANISATION FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY for one hundred days in the Kassel Documenta. For what purpose and for what success?"

Beuys: "I hold revolution and violence to be nonsense.



At Kassel, "our model" ran up against a great interest among the people. After Kassel we had a good taste for offices of information. Also in England, Switzerland and Denmark, I had to be everywhere, to help work on the complex beginnings and the organisation of these information bureaux".

Q: "After the success in Kassel followed a disappointment in Dusseldorf..."

Beuys: "I don't see it that way. Through these ACTIONS at the academy and through the way that it was handled by Minister Rau my idea about DIRECT DEMOCRACY became even more popular. It became clearer to the people that I am doing what is necessary to do. Namely that through relevant smallworks we heal the wounds of society. Equality in the education culture and also in actual outworking development must exist. I stand up for that, that the Constitution will be fulfilled. Others have broken with it permanently".

Q: "Have you really kept to the laws of the Sekretariat in the rules of the house and in the constitution?"

Beuys: "I have completely adjusted myself with the call of duty, that which I have as teacher at the academy and also as citizen of the state. It means, I have remained constant to the decision of the conference and invited the rejected applicant students to begin the semester at Dusseldorf. I returned from Kassel the first day of the semester in the early morning. I went into the academy where I found about fifty five new students and I joined



with them and arrived at the sekretariat.

There I said: Here I will stay until the students receive what is theirs by right as students, that is, the opportunity to study. That was very efficient last year. This year the police intervened. The students were forced to leave. I was given notice.

In spite of that, I persist further, with what was decided at the conference, in considering it obligatory for me to take on as many students as I can "energize".

In the end it will be clear, that it is not <sup>the</sup> director, but someone else who pulls the reins of the academy in his hands.

That is not good for the work or for the academy".

Q: "Is this setting yourself against the Ministry not also a living piece of your artistic activity, that is to say a monumental work?"

Beuys: "It is essentially a piece. In all my ACTIONS, whether it is figurative or conceptual art, there lies at ~~the~~ foundation, the form of pictorial concepts of fundamental human powers. For example, the power of Self-determination, that which is the original form of creativity. Through all my ACTIONS the public will be sent out "activated", whereby a social architecture will be reached. To form a social order like a piece of sculpture, this is my purpose in Art. So far as a man knows himself as the essence of FREE WILL he is in the condition to form the world content of the Aktion.





Celtic + ~~~~~ : 1971.



1973, 27th April:

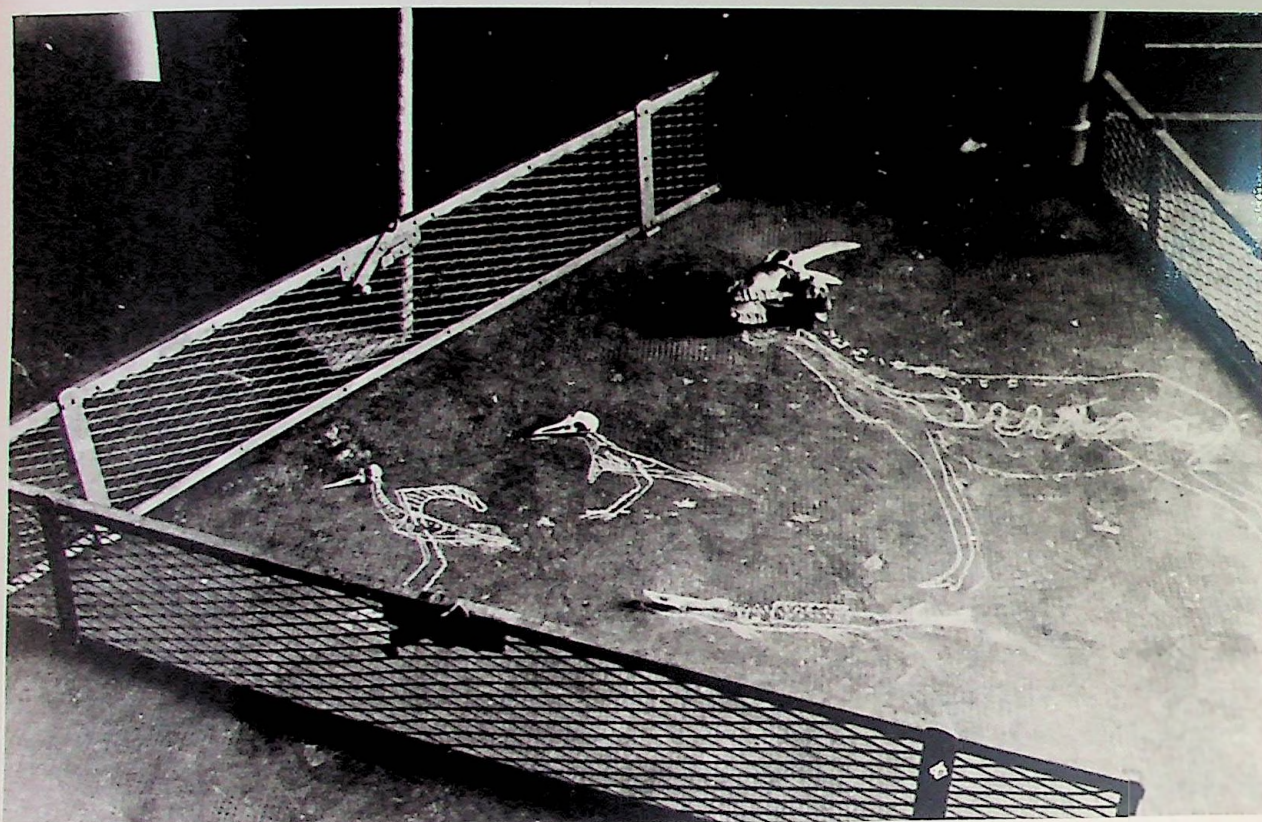
Founding of the Association for the advancement of a Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research.

The Association has two goals:

1. To realise the goal of Beuys, that is, to free the old convention hall in Dusseldorf which stands empty, thereby doing away with the need for numerus clausus which limits the number of students accepted to the art school (twelve out of every hundred).
2. To further the idea of a special interdisciplinary art academy that attempts to join art and society, art and science, art and philosophy.

Beuys also has the support of Heinrich Böll on this project. Böll wrote a manifesto on the idea of a free interdisciplinary school.





EVOLUTION: 1965.



About the Free International University:-

Q: In this school do the people also have to learn how to escape the manipulation of unrestrained consumerism?

Beuys: "Yes, so that they become immune to it. I have nothing against an economy based on advertising. But the media for information - press, radio and television must be run by other things besides the advertisers. They are principally areas of human culture sphere with the economic orientated advertising is a manipulation of the worst sort. It is damnable.

I am coming more and more to the realisation that the relevant problem of today in the economic sphere that needs looking into is not in the cultural sphere, but rather, in the field of production, where production, circulation and consumption of goods occurs, also the field of culture must be organically founded in this circulation process. Unfortunately today economy and culture are separated widely from each other.

Today man had not yet proven to himself what need actually means and for what he is working. The moment that man realises that the production of goods must fill a higher task than just freeing man from biological needs and raising his standard of living, he will, at that time, link the cultural realm with the economic. Art will then open the possibility for man to break open the now so predominantly end object purpose orientated production into cultural free



spaces.

Therefore, I would like to look into this needful binding of culture and economy, to organise an educational system, that is structured like a free enterprise. Both establishments are really the same, human potentialities come into service in enterprise through the production of goods, in the school system through the setting free of mental potential. It is necessary that seeing people as a potential means of production flows back into the cultural sphere, therewith it closes for itself the cycle of development of potentialities and the basis of gained (earned) production potentialities as well.

When man establishes this organic cycle between economics and culture, then the self abolition of capitalism will take place. Capitalism that through its accumulation of money and means of production has disturbed the flow of this cycle from economy to culture. That is also at the heart of <sup>the</sup> foundation of human alienation & need of spiritual nourishment and this need fills itself when the economic and cultural spheres of life begin an organic co-operation.

This way can become mature through this course of events, that a man is given the privilege of one paid weekday in the working of the university, that means, that the worker for one day of the week does not produce on the assembly line or on some machine but instead of that, he can enrich his mind. Thereby he should be able first of all to become personally acquainted with the production process and its end,

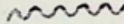


with which he will be able to understand from where and for what industry produced goods through him, and he will be able to critically weigh the worth of that production. In this way will industry come into a place of culture, and the workers will become interested in the education of themselves to their spiritual opportunities through this schooling because through it they can rightly assess the meaning of their occupation at the place of work.

1973, 29th June - 26th July.

EXHIBITION OF MULTIPLES:

Gallery Grafikmeyer, Karlsruhe.

During the exhibition the film ACTION: CELTIC +  was shown. It showed a signed postcard with the text:

JOSEPH BEUYS - NEW ADDRESS:

STATE RUINED ART ACADEMY,

4 DUSSELDORF,

EISKELLIERSTRASSE 1.



# 1973: ENERGY PLAN FOR THE WESTERN MAN:

Beuys presented his ENERGY PLAN FOR THE WESTERN MAN in New York, Chicago and Minneapolis, speaking all the time, using the spoken word in lecture form. This Energy plan for the future takes its impulse from Beuys's belief that the human being is fundamentally a spiritual being, and that our vision of the world must be extended to encompass all the invisible energies with which we have lost contact, or from which we have become alienated. Then new energies can be created, and for Beuys these are real and living substances = democratic forces of love, warmth, and above all freedom - the substances of Campanilla's Sun State.

There's a futurological aspect to this, but it relates too to the development of thinking, feeling, and will powers. There's the question of whether man can, will, change, and then whether he can link his organic instinctive feeling powers to his thinking processes: "Only the human capacity for thought can bring new causes into the world, and these determine the future course of history". Thinking is evolutionary, and the human race is a species in a state of evolution. But consciousness of this must be reawakened. And so must the balance of physical and spiritual in all fields of human activity. The logical outcome of Beuys's Energy Plan is that a term like 'economics' could never be reduced to describe the production of simply physical goods: all forms of production are economics, and all forms of



production are creative.

The expansion of terms and definitions beyond their restricted applications is the key to the ENERGY PLAN FOR THE WESTERN MAN, and to all of Beuys's activity. To present the energy plan he used his voice, extending the definition of sculpture to the moulding of thought forms into words, words arrange into the lecture format and determining the visual structure of the diagrams that accompanied them. The energies he described are those he has pursued through years of drawings, sculpture, environments and performances, right from the beginning.

He was trying to demonstrate that the voice is a vital transmitter of energy and a direct means in the sculpting of thinking forms. "It is vital that humankind should slowly learn to speak, should come out of its dumbness and this applies above all to the man in the street. He must become conscious of the fact that fundamentally he knows an enormous amount and that an official or state education just does not make it possible for him to clarify his thoughts and feelings firstly into words and then into free speech. This amounts to saying that it makes it impossible for him to work together with other human beings within the conceptual field.

"For me it is the word that produces all images. It is the key sign for all processes of moulding and organising. When I speak using a theoretical language, I try to induce the



impluses of this power, the power of the whole  
understanding of language which for me is the spiritual  
understanding of evolution".

**JOSEPH BEUYS**

**NEW ADDRESS:**

**KUNSTAKADEMIE DUSSELDORF**

**RUINED BY STATE**



COYOTE: I LIKE AMERICA AND AMERICA LIKES ME:

Rene Block Gallery, New York.

The COYOTE action began on the journey from Europe to America. After the ice fields of Labrador, Beuys covered his eyes and that was the last he saw of America.

At Kennedy Airport he was wrapped from head to foot in felt, the material which for him is both insulator and warmth - preserver. He was loaded into an ambulance and driven straight to the place which he was to share with the coyote. The action ended a week later, when once more insulated in felt, he was carried back to the ambulance on the first stage of his journey back to Europe.

Straw had been brought with the coyote. Beuys brought objects from his world: Felt, walking stick, gloves, flashlight and Wall Street Journal, fifty a day and the edition of each changing day. Several times each day he performed a series of movements. He swathed himself in the felt, eased it up over his hat. Then he would fall sideways onto the ground. The general structure of the movements was always the same, but those of the coyote varied with each sequence.

Beuys: "I believe I made contact with the psychological trauma point of the United States's energy constellation: the whole American trauma with the Indian, the Red Man".

This is where the figure of the coyote appears, respected and venerated by the Red Man, despised and persecuted by



the White Man, a polarity and a gulf. Somehow the trauma has to be reversed and amends made: "You could say that a reckoning has to be made with the coyote, and only then can this trauma be lifted".

For the Indians the coyote was the image of transformation, and like the hare and the stag in Eurasian myths, he could change his state from the physical to the spiritual and vice versa at will. With the coming of the White Man, the coyote's ingenuity and adaptability were now interpreted as low and common cunning, he became the mean coyote, and having classed him as an antisocial menace, white society could take its legalised revenge on him.

That is why Beuys insulated himself from the rest of America: "The manner of the meeting was important. I wanted to concentrate only on the coyote. I wanted to isolate myself, insulate myself, see nothing of America other than the coyote".





## CONCLUSION:-

Is Beuys's work only art, not serious politics? Or is it politics, not serious art?

What he has done, it seems to me, is to fuse high art and high politics. The strength of his work lies precisely in its chameleon structure, which holds from beginning to end: at once in the nature of the presentation (through poster<sup>s</sup>, drawings, and verbal statements, and dialogue, and dress) and its substance (ask for a referendum or decentralising power; base the objective of a new society in creativity, not greed; begin in education, by de-emphasising grades). The form of presentation - which is the "oscillating sculpture" of the dialogue - is of course revolutionary. For Beuys to have presented his work as a painting, a sculpture, or even yet one more AKTION Happening would have immediately mired it in art-historical mud. The entire work is rigorously thought out and

furthermore organises a complexity of materials and events that puts the organisation of other artists to shame. That the rigour of its social and political strategy virtually transcends many artworks made today. I am amazed by those who say that Beuys is simply fooling about, or that he is, like all artists, politically naive. Let us remember what he has done; changed the curriculum of the Dusseldorf Art Academy (a major state-supported art school); caused a nationwide debate about the nature of art (and all) education; recently won a case in federal court voiding his



dismissal, re-instituting his professorship and all his back pay; and now he is maneuvering to gain state support for a "free academy" of art, open to international constituency. These are hardly acts of a naive man, incapable of acting successfully in the real world.

For Beuys, teaching is one of the major aspects of his work. Essentially, it consists in showing his students new alternatives to all the systems imposed by our culture and in emphasising the truly creative faculties.

Through art man has a chance to assert his freedom against all sorts of determinisms that society tends to impose upon him. Beuys is therefore not only in opposition to the capitalist system and its limiting values, but also to Marxism, which sees human life in terms of socio-economic conditions.

His deversity demonstrates his ambition to create a language that is as large as it can possibly be.

To a world whose structure is imposed on man, Beuys rebuts with a somewhat supernatural creation of a world that has the meaning that he, as a free individual, wants it to have. We too have this freedom, and, in this respect, it is true that the message of Beuys's teaching is the most important aspect of his work.



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