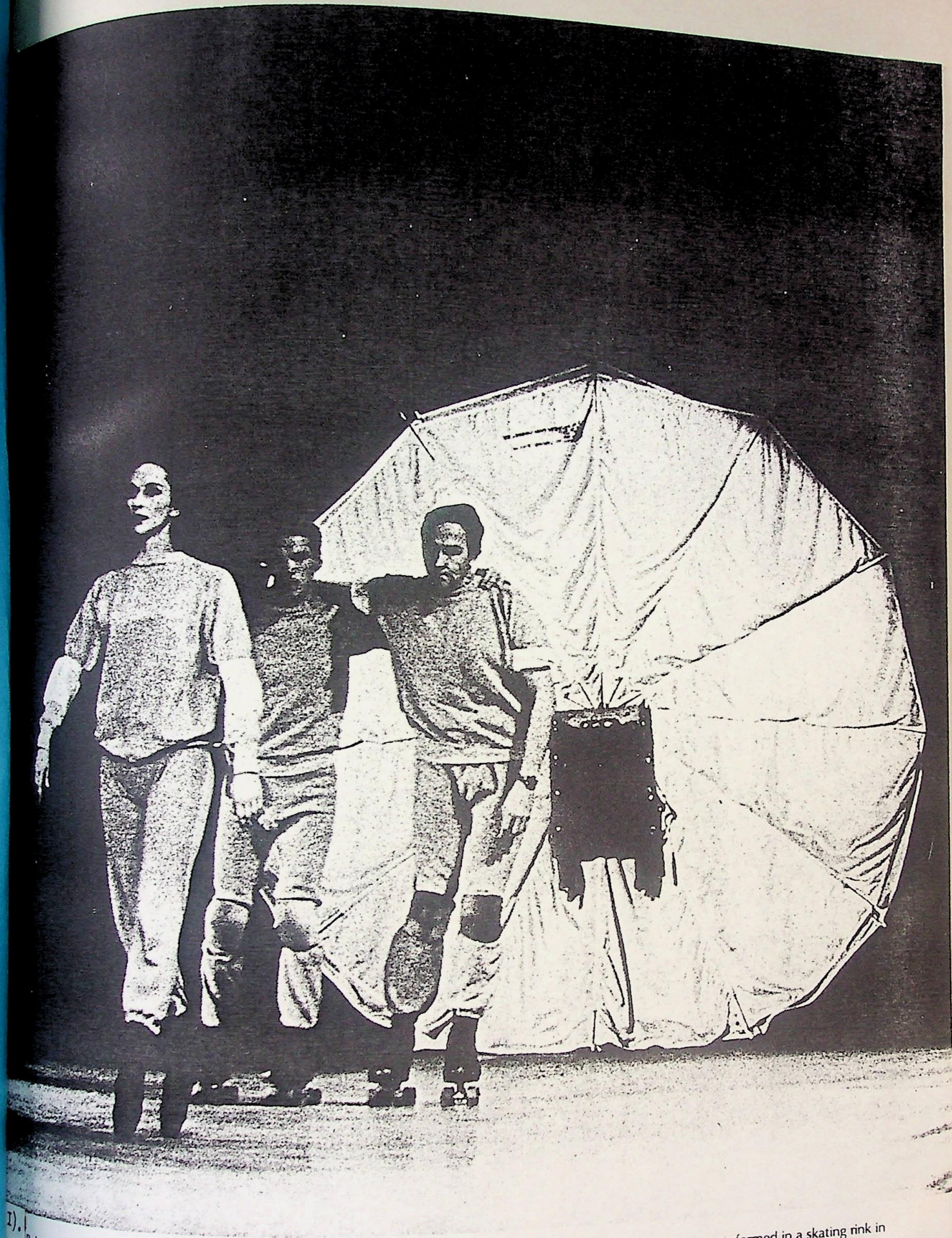


Mixed Media
IN DANCE.



2). Robert Rauschenberg, *Pelican*, 1963, with Rauschenberg and Alex Hay on roller skates, and Carolyn Brown on points, performed in a skating rink in Washington

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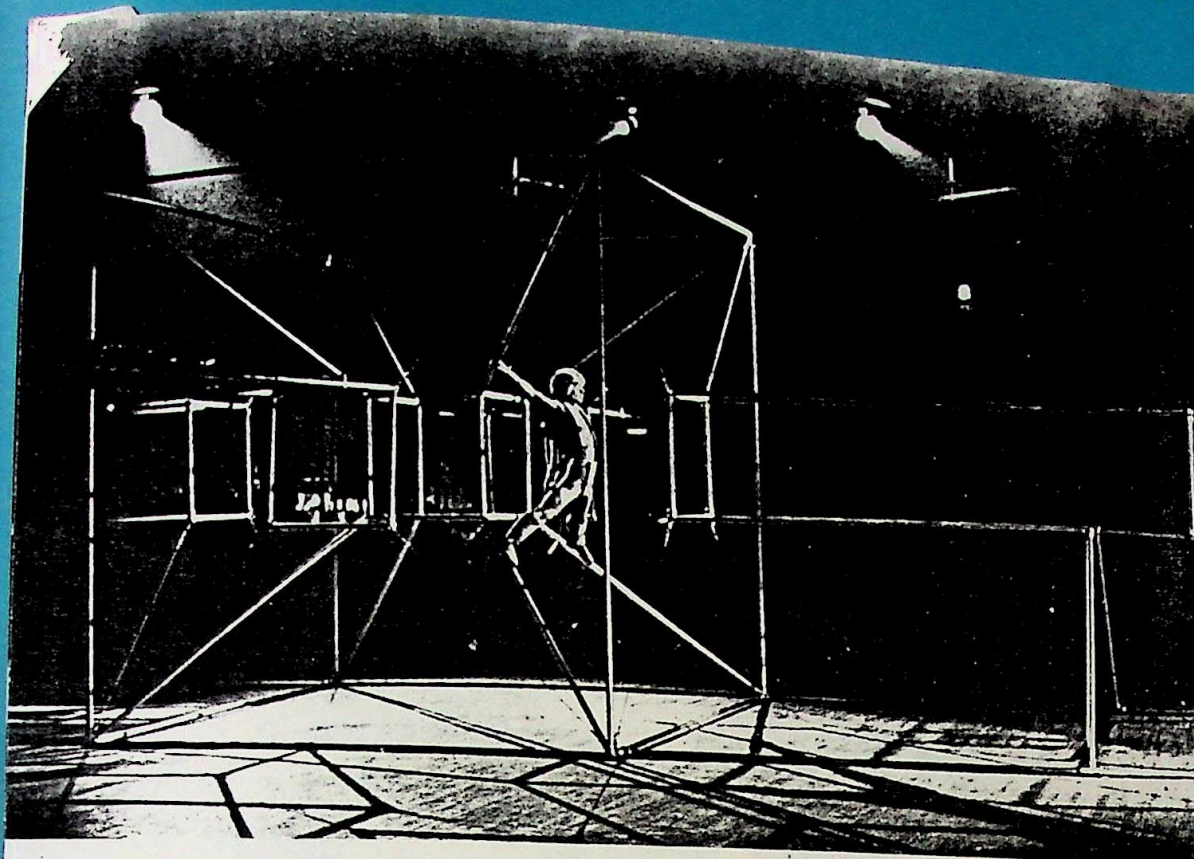
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FOOTNOTES *

- 1). 2). 3). 6). interview in Dance & Dancers, July 1968 & 69.
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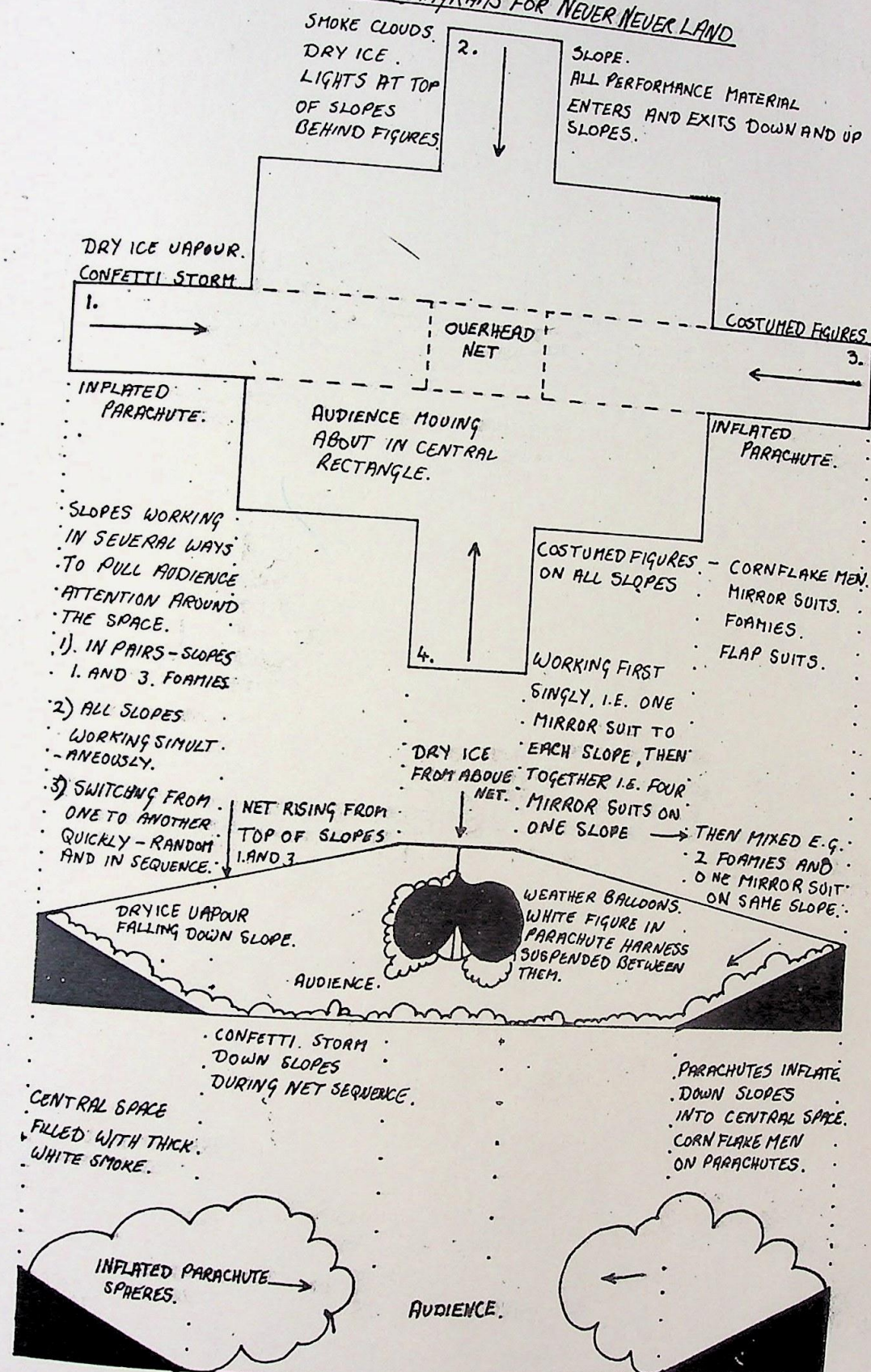


Peter Dockley *Spaced* (mixed-media event) 1969
 (Ill, 2).

Peter Dockley *Never Never Land* (mixed-media event) 1970
 Netherlands Dance Theatre

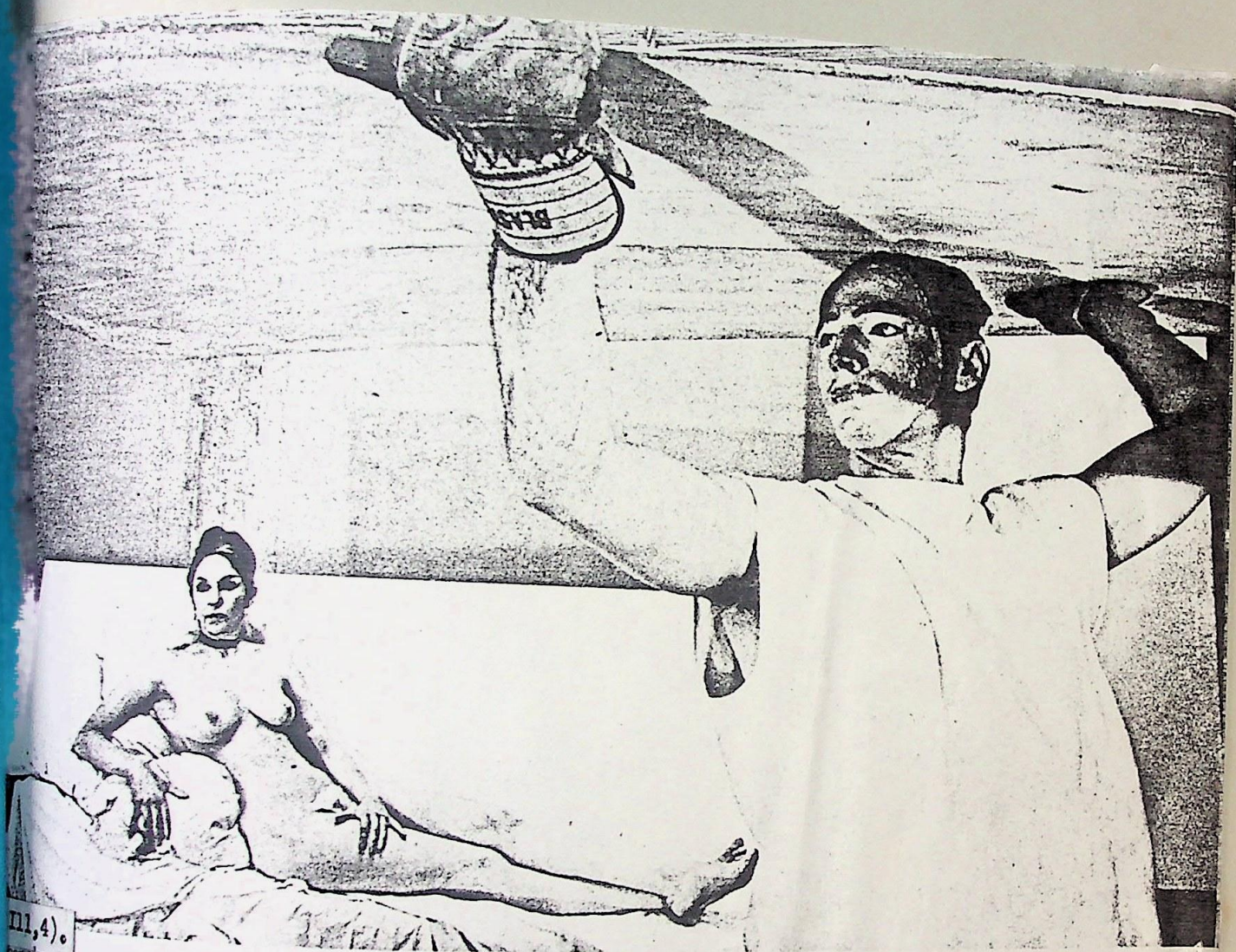


NOTES AND DIAGRAMS FOR NEVER NEVER LAND



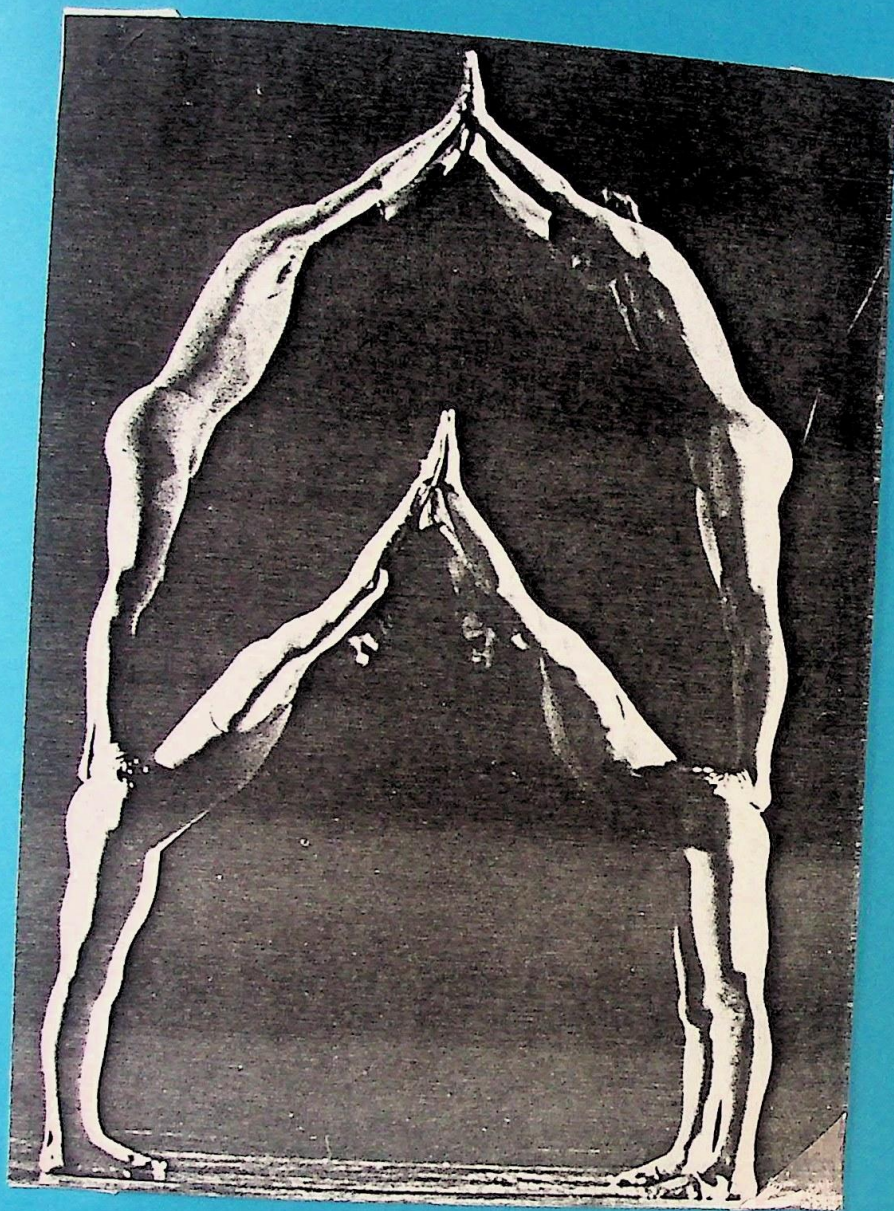


(111,3).



11,4).

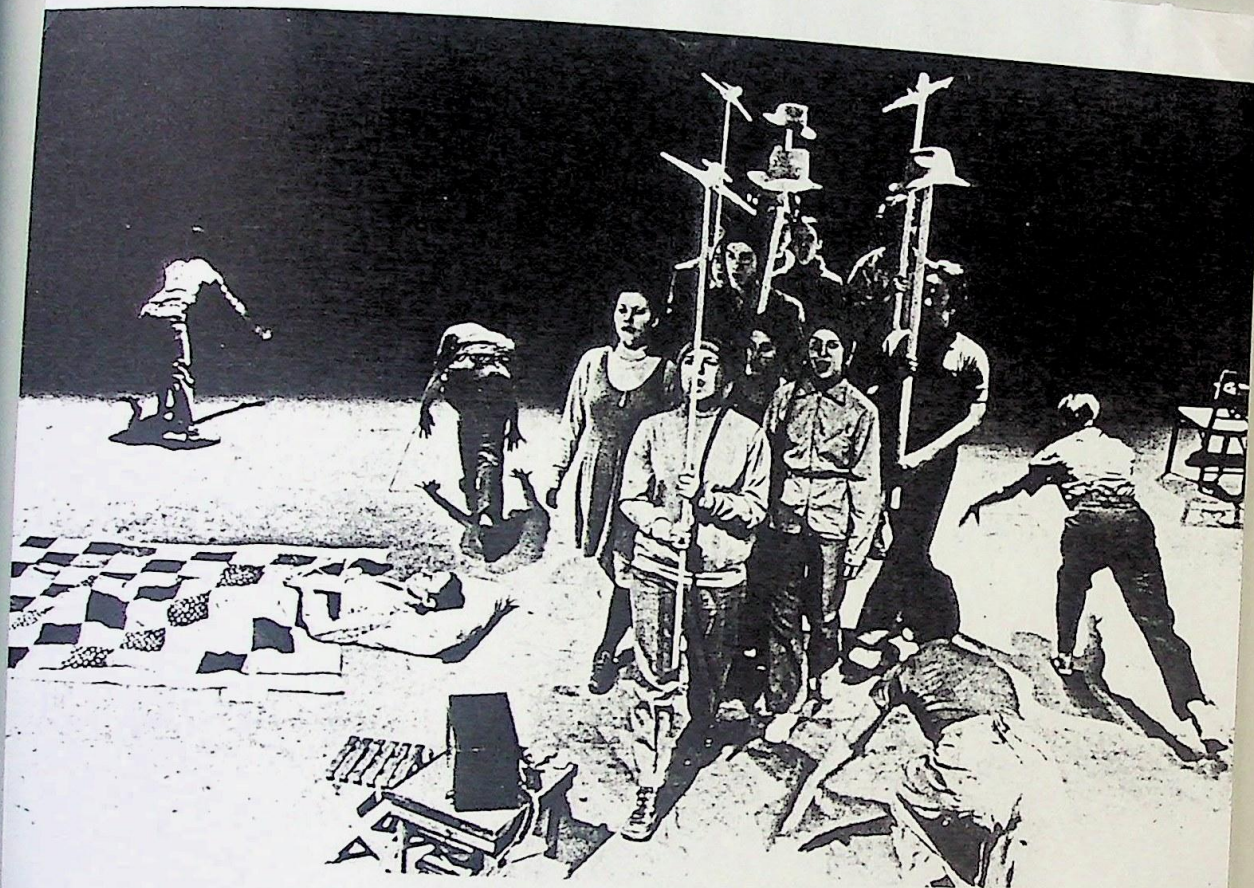
Robert Morris, Site, first performed in 1965



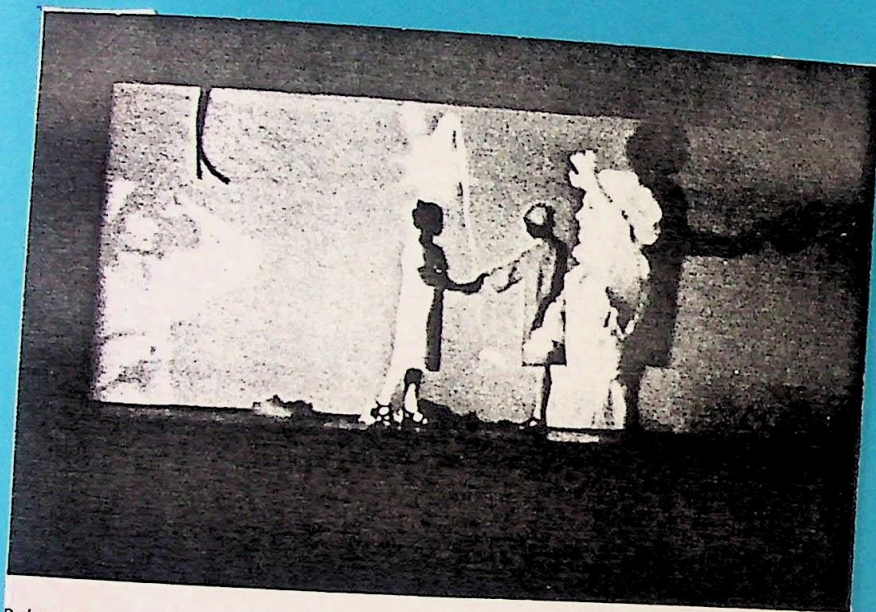


pinkshoood's Farewell

the Rally," a section from Meredith Monk's *Quarry*.



(11,7).



Robert Whitman, *Prune Flat*, 1965, performed at the Filmmaker's Cinémathèque, New York. The photograph shows a more recent reconstruction of the same event.

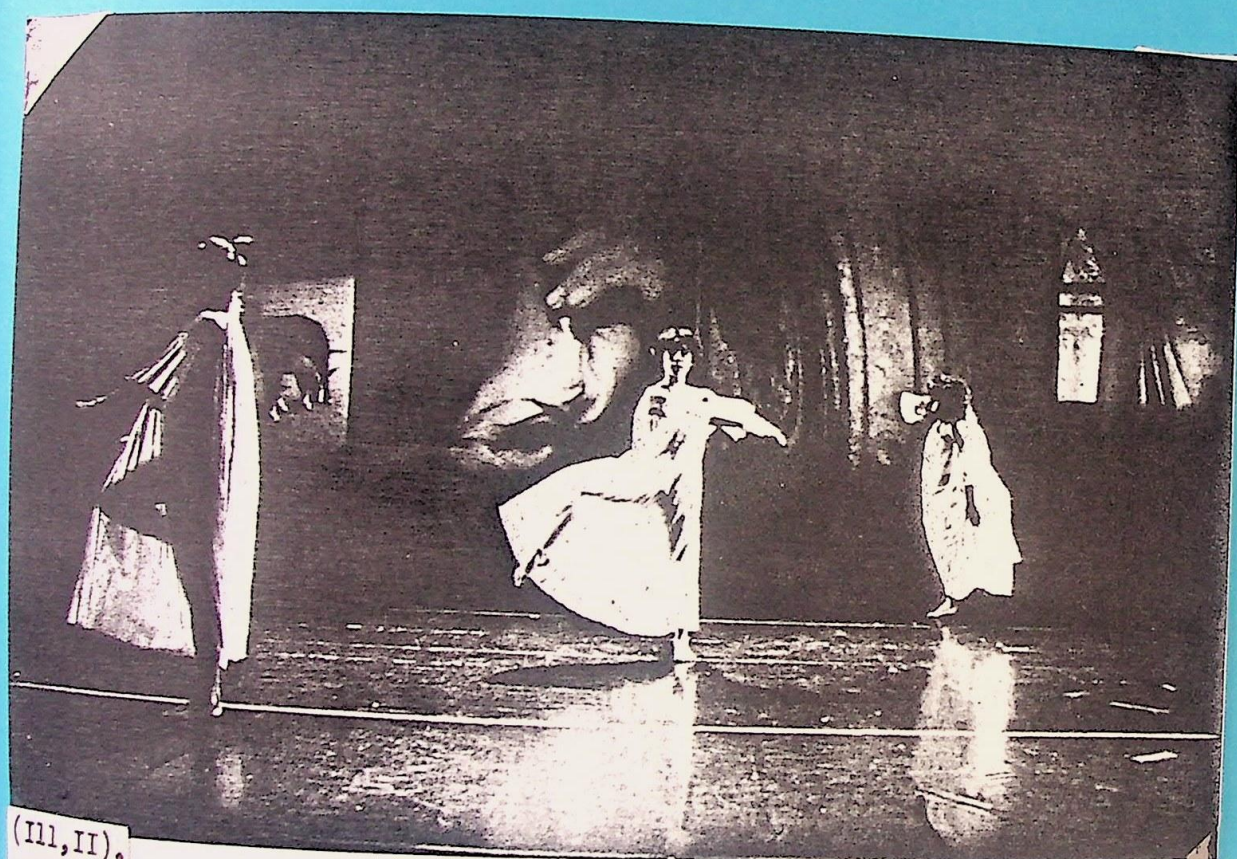
(Ill, 8).



(Ill, 9). Rudi van Dantzig *Moments* (Anton Webern) 1968
Dutch National Ballet

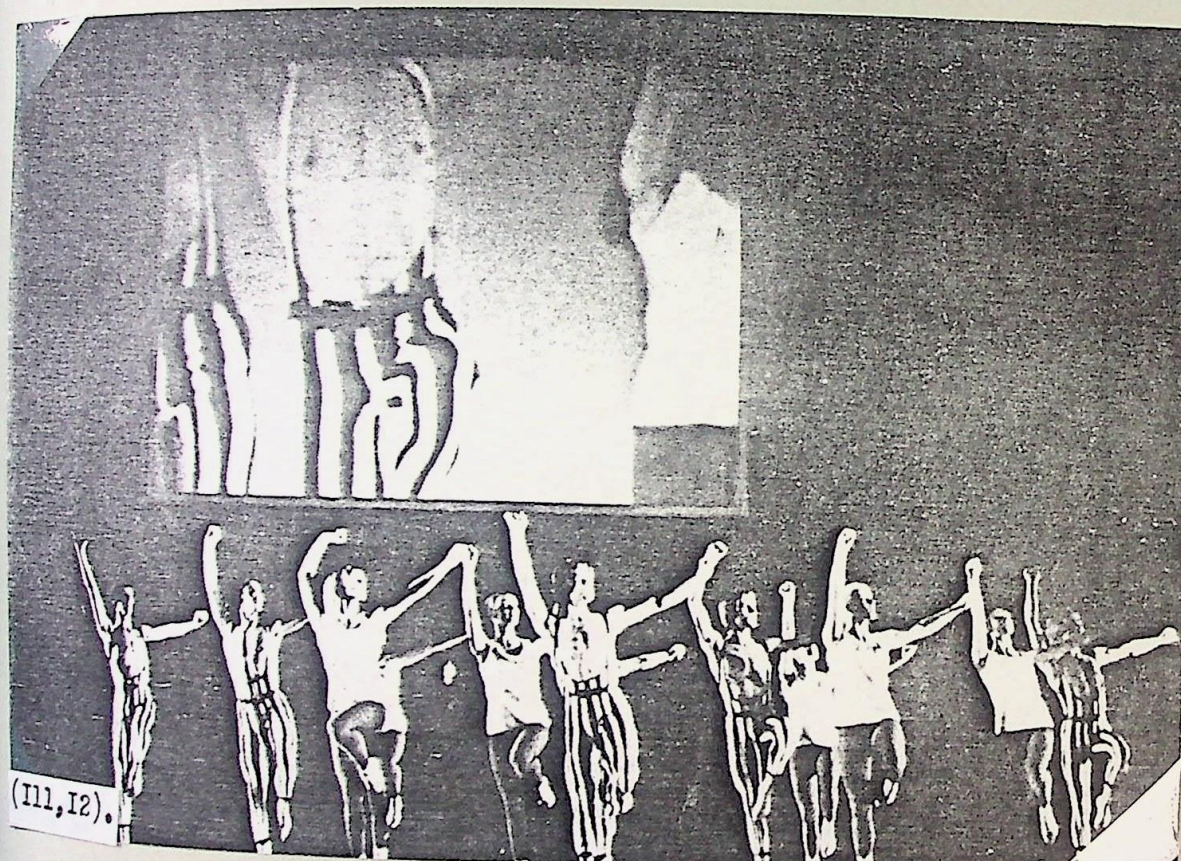
(Ill, IO). Geoff Moore
Accumulator (mixed-media event) revised version 1970
Moving Being: Brian Hibbard, John Carter





(III, II).

Trisha Brown Dance Company in *Glacial Decoy*, with visual presentation and costumes by Robert Rauschenberg

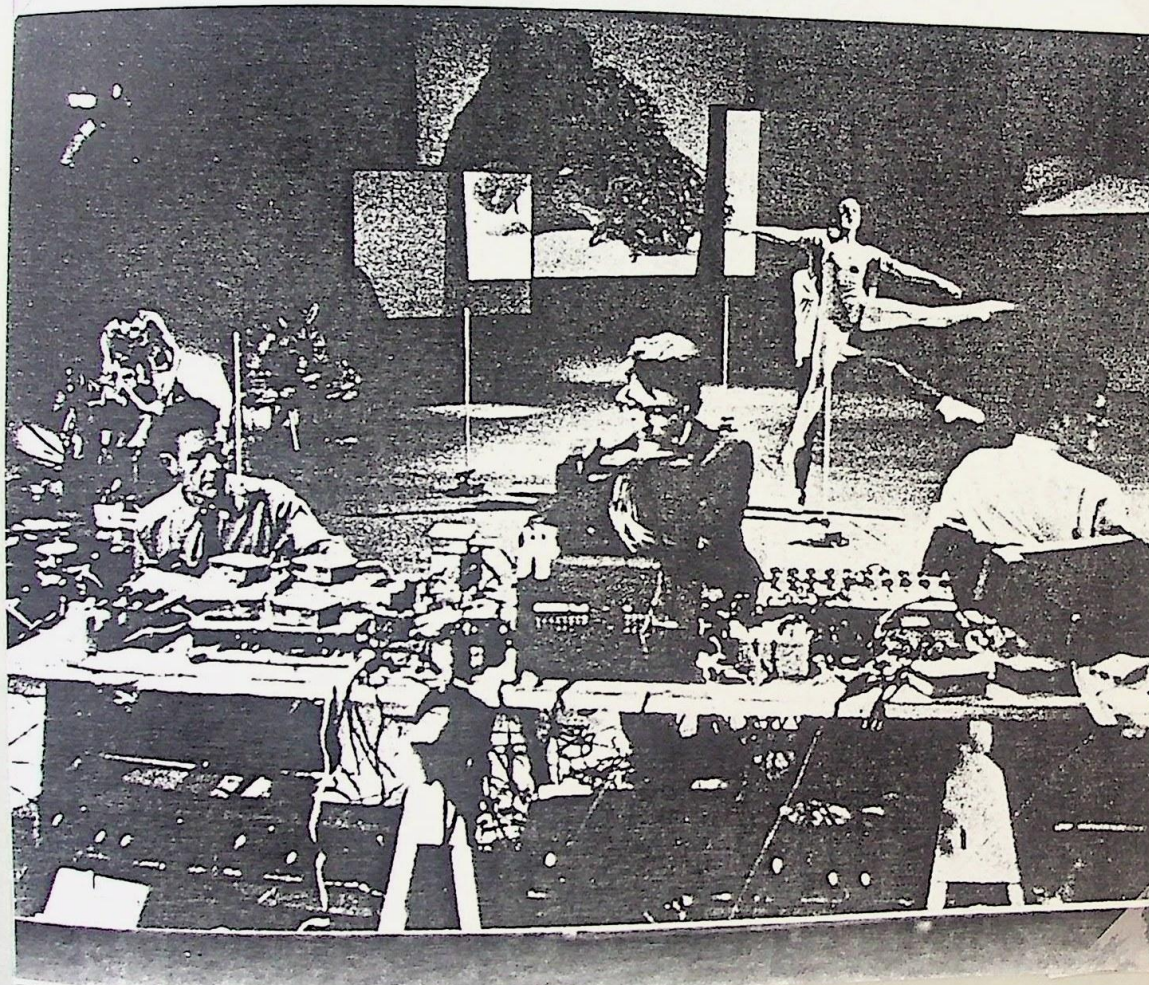


(111, 12).



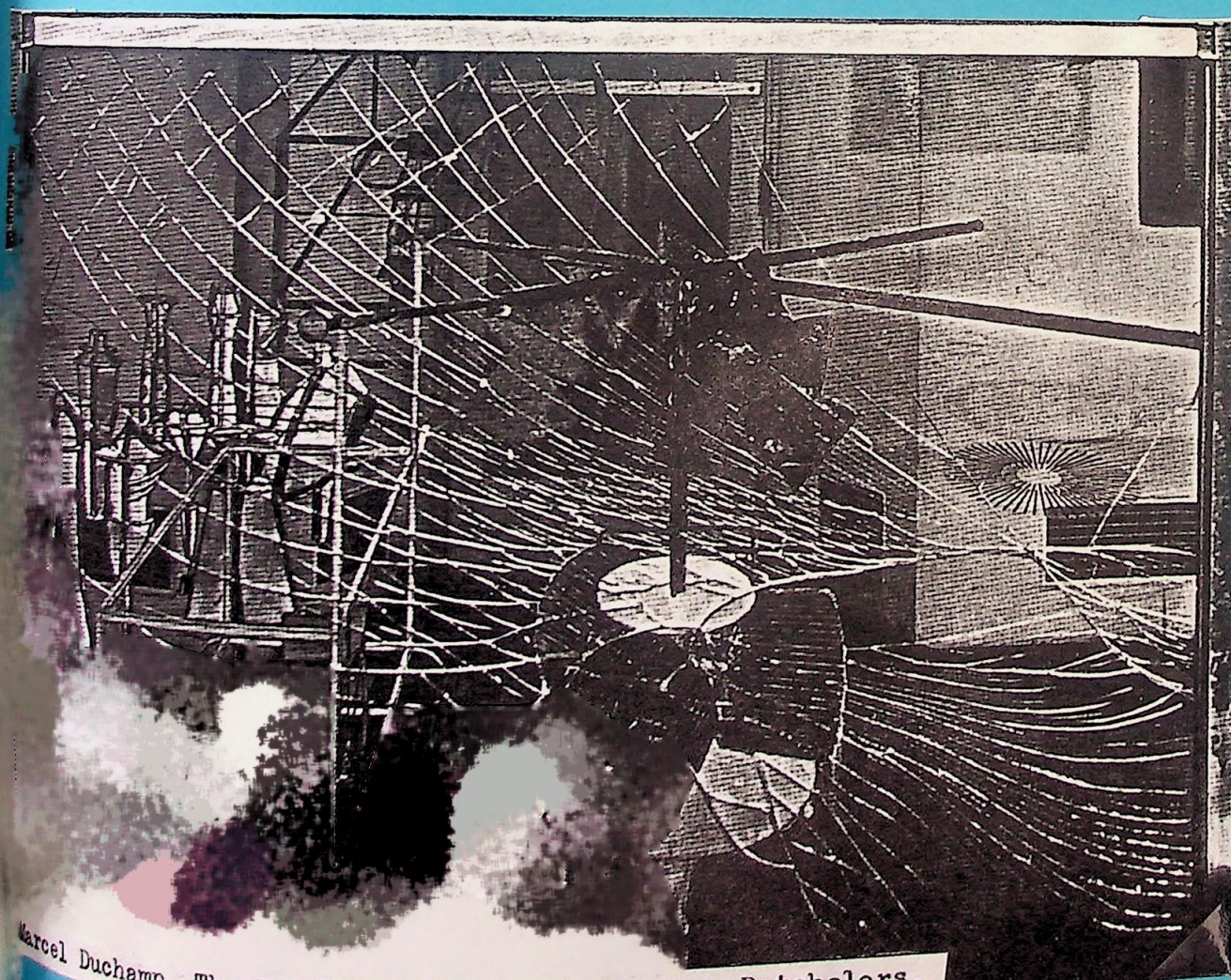
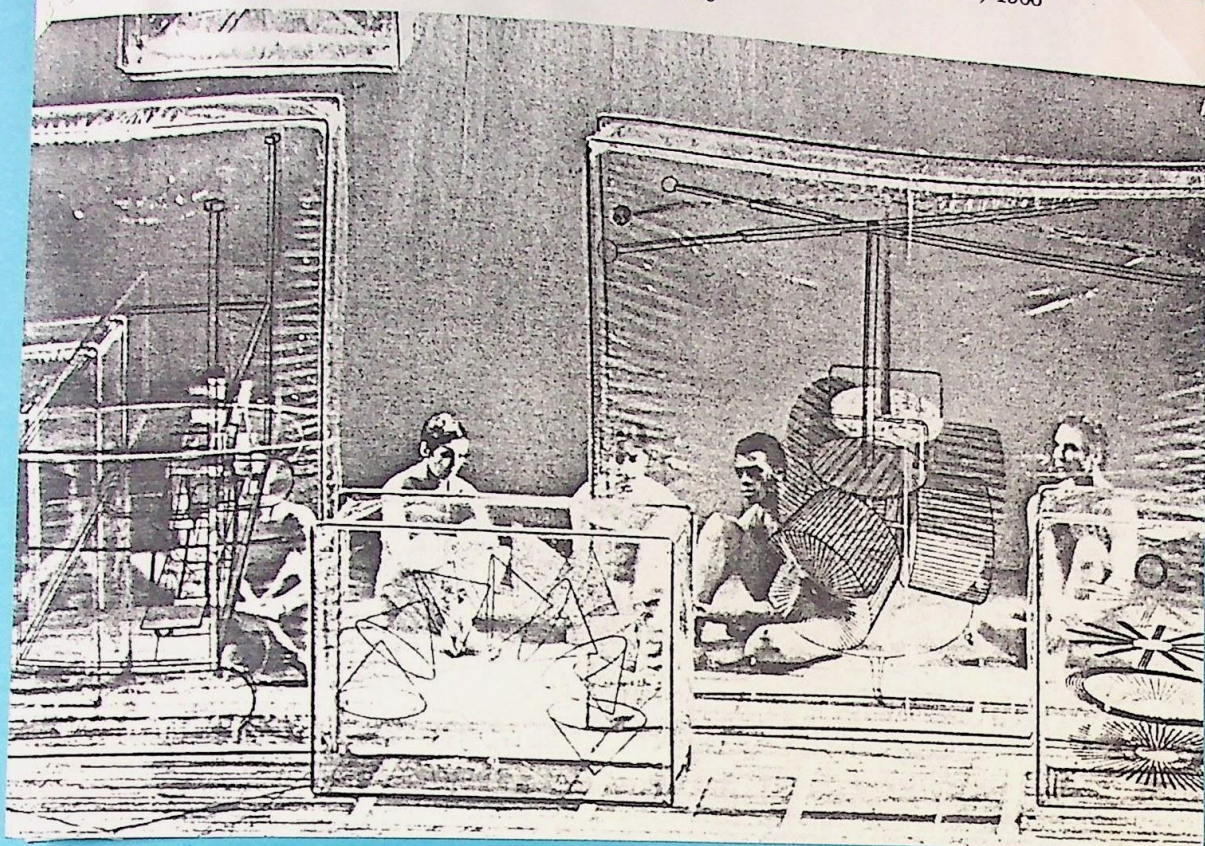
(111, 13). Taller de Montevideo
Chronus II (mixed-media event) 1969

(111, 14). Merce Cunningham *Variations V* (John Cage) 1965
John Cage, David Tudor, Gordon Mumma in foreground

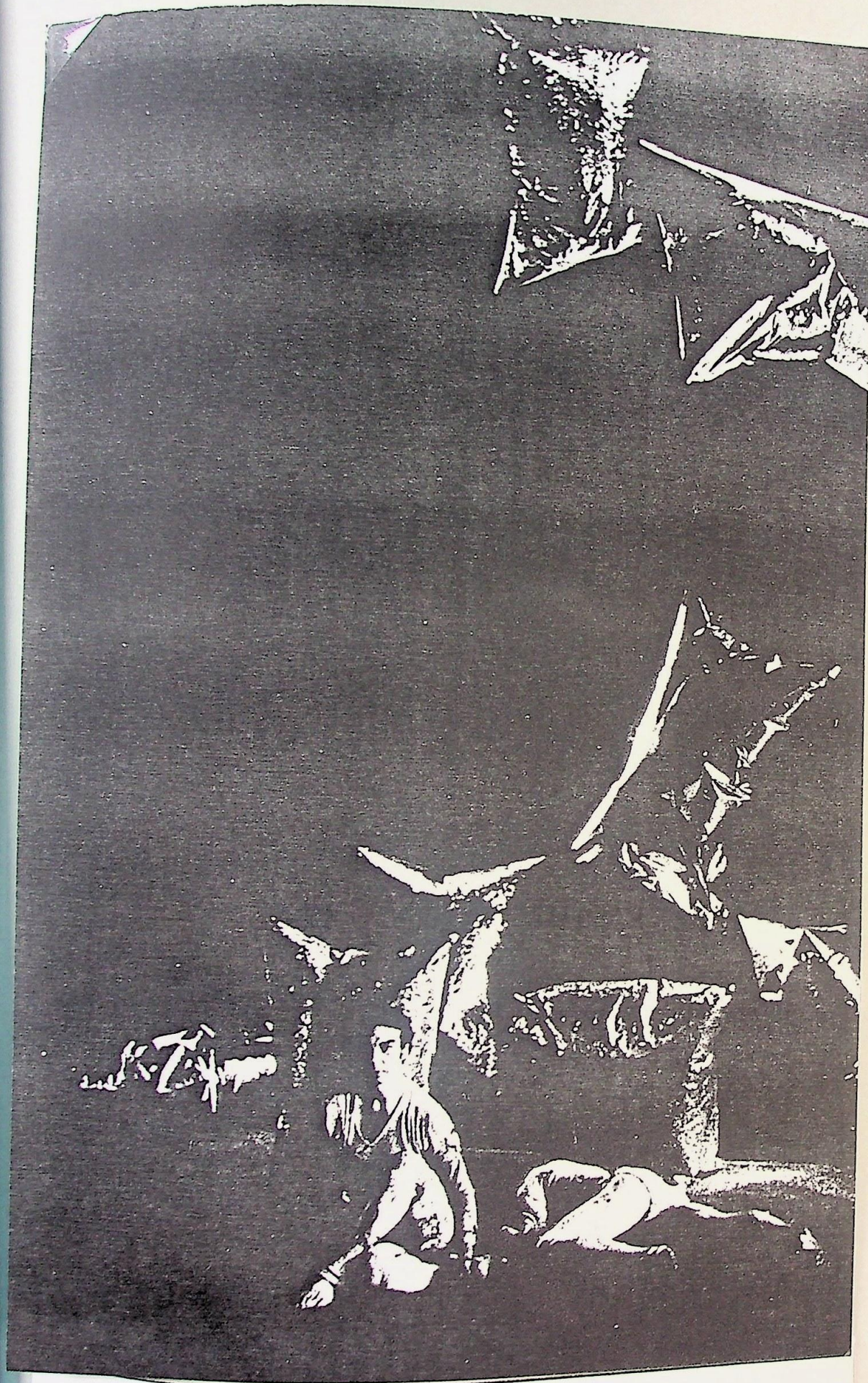


(I11, I5).

Merce Cunningham *Walkaround Time* (David Behrman) 1968
Cunningham and Dance Company



Marcel Duchamp *The Bridge Stripped Bare by her Batchelors.*



(111, 16). Merce Cunningham *RainForest* (David Tudor) 1968
Cunningham

(Ill, I7).



(Ill, I8). Alwin Nikolais *Imago* (Nikolais) 1963

by

JARLATH WALDRON

4th Year Thesis
History of Art

In American art of the late 1970's interdisciplinary activities provided quite a number of noteworthy artistic facts and promising novelties. Although it is said that easel printing is coming into its own again and that artists are beginning to shun the extremes of anti-art, which is already visible. All that has not gone beyond the stage of words, slogans and wishful thinking. Live art, though less conspicuous, more like a non-formalized undercurrent, has by no means been exhausted or lost its impetus. What only recently had been on the margin of the artistic movement, and had crossed the boundaries of traditional exhibitions, now attracts the attention of the public, critics and the mass media. Almost spontaneously the germs of a different fluid and dynamic structure have emerged and artists who are ready to run the risk and free themselves of the impediments of the art market are beginning to find a place for themselves within this new framework. In American art the process of convergence and collaboration of various disciplines dates back to the 1950's more precisely to 1952 when a ritual spectacle of music, movement, dance and visual effects was shown at the Black Mountain College in North Caroline and made history as the first American happening. Among the authors of the who were John Cage, Merce Cunningham and dancers, and Robert Rauschenberg. With Cage reading a lecture from the upper rungs of a ladder, Cunningham dancing. The audience each held a white cup which had been placed on their chair. White printing by a visiting student, Robert Rauschenberg, hung overhead. After which Rauschenberg played old records on a handwound gramophone and David Tudor played a 'prepared piano'. Later Tudor turned to two

buckets, pouring water from one to the other while, planted in the audience, Charles Olsen and Mary Caroline Richards read poetry. Cunningham and others danced through the aisles chased by an excited dog, Rauschenberg flashed abstract slides (created by coloured gelatine sandwiched between the glass) and film. Clips projected onto the ceiling showed, first the school cook, and then, as they gradually moved from the ceiling down the wall, the setting sun, In a corner the composer, Jay Watt, played exotic musical instruments and whistles blew, babies screamed and coffee was served by four boys dressed in white. The audience were delighted, Cage proclaimed the evening a success. And it provided Cunningham with a new decor and costume designer, for his dance company Robert Rauschenberg.

News of the event spread to New York, where it became the talking-point of Cage and the students who were pursuing his course on the composition of experimental music. The small classes included printers and film makers, musicians and poets, Allan Kaprow, Jackson MacLow, George Brecht, Al Hansen and Dick Higgins among them. Friends of the regular students, George Segal, Larry Poons and Jim Dine, often attended. Each had in their own way already absorbed dada and Surrealist like notions of chance and 'non intentional' actions in their works. Some were printers making works which went beyond the conventional canvas format, taking up where the surrealist environmental exhibitions, Rauschenberg's 'combines' and Jackson Pollock's action paintings had left off. Most were to be deeply influenced by Cage's classes and by reports of the Black Mountain event.

Rauschenberg's activities as artistic director influenced Cunningham a great deal. In story he not only found the costumes and improvised the setting, but at least sometimes appeared on stage. At the company's London premiere he walked on carrying a large stuffed eagle. For the next few nights he made an entrance to dye and hang up some clothes on stage, then he spent four consecutive performances constructing a combine painting on stage. Rauschenberg presumably influenced Cunningham towards the more spontaneous sort of choreography dictated partly by the specific environment of the performance, which was his own ideal, manifested for instance in the 1963 Pop Art Festival in Washington where Rauschenberg and Swedish sculptor P.O. Ultveldt,* wearing roller skates and hugh spoked sails made from parachutes. Rauschenberg and Alex Hay, knelt on a mobile trolly of wooden planks which they propelled with their hands into the central arena. The two skaters glided at speed around a dancer in ballet shoes, Carolyn Brown who slowly executed a series of movements on points. Then the back-racks on the skaters opened into parachutes, thus considerably slowing down the movements. At the same time the dancer speeded up her own stylized routine. There the elements of place, as well as objects such as parachutes, ballet shoes and roller skates, determined the nature of the performance. Rauschenberg's later Map Room 11, performed in a cinema. The Film maker's cinematheque, equally reflected his concern that 'the first' information I need is where it is to be done and when.....which has a lot to do with the shape it takes, with kinds of activity. So in the cinema where his idea was to use 'a confined stage within a traditional stage.' which also extended into the audience. He created a moving collage of elements such as tyres and an old couch. The dancers taking part - Trisha Brown, Deborah Hay, Steve Paxton, Lucinda Childs and Alex Hay - ex students of Cunningham and

*Pelican illustration 1

all strongly influenced the shaping of many of Rauschenberg's pieces, transformed the props into immobile, abstract forms. Rauschenberg's aim was that the dancer's costumes, for instance, would match the object so closely that integration would happen, leaving no distinction between inanimate objects and live dancer.

Like Rauschenberg, sculptors turning to involve their work with dance, three possibilities arise. They can make simply an environment for the dancers and choreographers to work in, as Robert Rauschenberg. Isamu Naguchi has consistently and successfully done for Graham Cunningham and others or Martha Pan. Provided the context and impetus for Maurice Bejarts Le Teck. Secondly he can bring movement into his sculpture, either with a straight forward piece of metric art, or with a moving structure which has so many planned variables that it actually gives an illusion of dancing, this is what the young British artist Peter Logan has done with Mechanical Ballet in which he has even in one occasion added live dancers.

The third course is that taken by a contemporary of Logan, Peter Dockey, who says that "I moved away from sculpture because it enabled me to explore by myself. I think, this has become a common situation with artists everywhere and in all branches".

Dockey first staged a series of events in an underground club called The Middle Earth, then turned to using sculptural ideas in a context involving also dancers and others. He has however avoided the conventional theatre situation for his work; when invited to submit ideas for a ballet to be presented at Sadlers Wells by

Netherlands Dance Theatre, his first response was "Have you twelve dancers willing to work completely submerged?" Unfortunately nothing came of this attempt.

Partly this aversion from a conventional stage comes from his sculptural bias, being used to three physical dimensions as against the flat surface of painting, but he says also that he has been influenced by the work of John Cage, Ann Halprin, Robert Morris and others or alternatives to the traditional theatre situation, also by (2) "My own observations of forms such as a cricket field, a football game, a golf match, religious meeting, law courts. All these forms have their own shape logicality and their own characteristics compare to the stage situation - the audience set out in tight rows in the auditorium looking in one direction one focal point - with an athletics match with runners on the outside encircling the field, then in the centre a whole series of activities such as javelin throwing, long jump, high jump and so on. This contains a whole series of stimulants, points of focus, and this could provide an interesting point of departure for performance."

One of Dockleys early experiments with dancers was an event called 4 Sounds 4 Structures in which four differently shaped structures of tubular metal were set up in the four quarters of a large hall. A dancer occupied each of these and there was a musician in each corner of the hall. The audience was free to move around or between the structures. The aim was to contemplate space and separate activities in space. Each dancer was asked not to try to express anything on an emotional level, simply to demonstrate the characteristics of the allotted structure; for instance one involved very strong lines and four suggested planes, these in turn suggested linear extensions into space. The dancer here was asked to move along the strongest lines, the structure

afforded asked to complement the plane shafts in her body. The separate activities within each structure were entirely unco-ordinated and the dancers were still developing movement during the performance, on the principle that 'the audience is very much aware of something which is set, finished and from which they are creatively excluded. The musicians using voices, bowed cymbols, gongs and prepared piano, were asked to improvise a line of sound passing round the edge of the hall from one to another, this further defining space.

(3) Dockely suggests that in the past: "The audience have passively received finished ideas. What these new forms are embodying is a new audience performance relationship both in physical terms and in intellectual terms. Before an audience was almost excluded in the creative process, now an audience is being invited to contribute to the flow of creativity. If for instance, elements are put in front of them that are unrelated, then it is up to the audience to bring them into some sort of relationship of they so wish."

In John Cages term "appealing to an audiences' structuring facility". I think a distinction has to be made between the various types of participation. A number of things are happening at the moment which deal with physical participation - full stop: But that in itself is a limited situation. What I tried to do was to involve the audience physically in space.

Dockley's later development of this kind of activity progressed in two ways. One was elaboration of a similar situation involving also acrobats and gymnasts, kendo fighters, some

elaborate event, costumes suggesting spacemen, vapours, fireworks and smoke bombs let off by men wearing clothes made of pieces of glittering mirror or sludgy red rubber.

The other development arose from a commission to create a work for Netherlands Dance Theatre. This first idea was to block off the stage with a ramp descending at a 30° angle from the back wall to the feet of the front row of the audience; this proved impracticable so instead they moved into an open-plan theatre in the Hague called The Hot. This is usually set up with playing space in the middle set up with playing space in the middle with slopes all around them and a net overhead with figures moving across. This and one permanently suspended there. The dancers were put in elaborate costumes dictating special ways of moving and light was used to focus attention different ways at different times. At one point there was a confetti storm, dry ice smoke dripping from white balloons and figures moving about within this like a confused mass, a layer of white above the audience which later clarified into perspective again.

Whatever its possible effect on Dockley's own future work this production called Never Never Land² had an important influence on the general trend of Netherlands Dance Theatre's policy and went a long way towards its creators ambition of evolving a performance that will 'work both as a spectacle and spectacle, inside and outside through the flow of ideas, energy and states.

A similar situation of spectacle and environment occurs in my own work 'Interpretation of Dance Through Colour'.³

² Illustration II : ³ Illustration III

The event that I organised took place in the Concourse of the art college. The concourse is a large modern enclosed space constructed mainly of steel and glass. This was the setting for a meeting of dance, music and visual art. The dancers were four women dressed in each of the primary colours and one in white. The concourse was changed for this performance by the creation of a special sculptural environment. This consisted of crepe paper wall hangings, ten-foot lengths of coloured tube suspended from the ceiling and a large fibre-glass circle. The latter was 12 feet in diameter and 5 inches high, and was divided into three sections. Each of these compartments contained one of the primary colours. Red was a combination of jelly and glycerine; blue was a mixture of oil paint and white spirit; yellow was powder paint diluted with water. Two of the three flaps which separated the primary colours were collapsible. Large rectangular sheets of white paper were arranged in a 'chess-board' pattern on the floor of the concourse. The performance opened with music by Tomita - 'Snowflakes are dancing'. This awakened the dancers to their environment and they began to move in and out of the circle interpreting the dance into the sheets of paper by direct contact through the paint on their feet. A beautiful and spontaneous effect of colour and patterns was created. The mood of the dance was transformed with Holst's 'planets.' The Bringer of Peace, dressed completely in white, knocked down the dividing flaps and thus provided an outlet for the liquids. The three primary colours mingled but didn't mix together because of the different properties. An illusion of secondary colours was created and changing lights overhead also emphasised the play of colours. This completed the performance which was videoed and finally edited.

This welding together of sculpture paint, music, dance is an important one to me and an opportunity to work various

media's into a performance, with the combined skills of other artists. A belief shared by the Judson Church in New York. Where painters and sculptors began to be involved with dance, not only as designers but as producers and performers. Alex Hay, Robert Morris and Robert Rauschenberg were among those taking part. At a concert given by a group in State University College, New Platz, New York in January 1964. a programme not declared that In the curious way in which the art world changes, painters have made inroads into theatre performances. Artists find that there are no unacceptable sources for material. The repertoire of Judson Dance Theatre reflects the latest of this recent tendency to allow freer play. Dancers mixed with painters on the stage, point out how there is another quality to bodies than just the arrived at differences. Dancers have discovered in themselves, - there is a whole book of the body which knows a lot on its own and, whether "trained" or not relays much of its' history with action. The point, about a place like Judson is that by offering opportunities for performance it encourages cross-fertilization of ideas. Both Hans Van Manen and Glen Tedley for instance had shown themselves inclined to experimental forms and attitudes before they took joint charge of the artistic policies of Netherlands Dance Theatre but it was not until they came together in this way that they followed some of their ideas to more extreme ends. Involving filmed sequences with live dancers, for instance producing Mutations with its wide sequences or inviting Peter Dockley to stage an event involving the dancers, Never Never Land. Likewise, a simple decision to adopt a different, more consciously creative policy led within Ballet Lambert to an accelerating movement towards greater company participation in policy and production, trying new subjects and forms.

Many artists involved in live events were actively participating in the Judson Dance Group concerts. Rauschenberg for instance, who was responsible for the lighting of Terrain, created many of his own performances with the same dancers making it difficult for some to distinguish wheather these works were 'dances' or 'happenings'. Simone Forti worked for many years with Robert Whitman and both she and Yvonne Rainer collaborated with Robert Morris, as in Forti's See-Saw (1961). That the dancers were leading performances beyond the earlier happenings and their abstract expressionist painterly origins is exemplified by the fact that a sculptor like Morris created performances as an expression of his interest in the 'body in motion'. Unlike the earlier task-orientated activities he was able to manipulate objects so that they did not dominate my actions nor subvert my performances.

These objects became a means for him to focus on a set of specific problems involving time, space, alternative forms of a unit etc. And so in Waterman Switch (March 1965), with child and Rainer he emphasised the 'co existance of the static and the mobile elements of objects.' In one sequence he projected Muybridge slides showing a nude man lifting a stone, followed by the same action performed live by another nude male, illuminated by the beam of the slide projector. Again, in Site⁴ (May 1965, with Carolee Schneeman). the space was reduced to context....riviting it to maximun frontality through a series of white panels which formed a trianguler spatial arrangement. Dressed in white and wearing a rubber mask designed by Hasper Johns to reproduce exactly the features of his own face, Morris manipulated the volumn of the space by shifting the boards into different positions. As

he did so he revealed a naked woman reclining on a couch in the Pose of Manet's Olympia; ignoring the statuesque figure and accompanied by the sound of a saw and a hammer working on some planks, Morris continued arranging the panels, implying a relationship between the volumes of the static figure and that created by moving boards.

At the same time the increasing preoccupations towards minimalism in sculpture could for those who wished, explain the entirely different performances sensibilities. Rainer prefaced the script of her 1966 *The Mind is a Muscle with a Quasi Survey* of some 'Minimalist' tendencies in the quantitativity Minimal Dance Activity..... mentioning the 'one-to-one relationship between aspects of so-called minimal sculpture and recent dancing.' Although she acknowledged that such a chart was in itself questionable, the objects of the minimal sculpture - for example role of artist's hand, simplicity, literalness, factory fabrication - provide an interesting contrast to the 'phrasing.' singular action, event or tone, taks-like activity or 'found' movement of the dancers. Indeed, Rainer emphasised the object quality of the dancers body when she said that she wished to use the body so that it could be handled like an object, picked up and carried, and so that objects and bodies could be interchangeable. A good illustration of her beliefs occurs in the works of Polobus⁵ living sculpture, a group formed in Dartmouth College Vermont consists of four male and two females. News of their works arrived in New York, and were invited to perform in New York University. This the Polobus style evolved, a way of working together rather than a dance technique. No one had ever seen anything like it. In the summer of 1974 Polobolus danced in Berlin, at the Salerno Festival in Italy, the Kuopia Festival

in Finland and the Holland Festival in Amsterdam. They began to choreograph what was until then their most ambitious work, Monkshood's Farewell.⁶ Partly inspired by medieval images from the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch, Monkshood is divided into six vignettes in which the dancers use their bodies as props. In the joust for example, Robby, Martha and Moses become respectively a charging steed, a rider and a lance battling Johathan. Alison and Michael in similar roles. Monkshood was completed in the United States with Pilobolus' second commission from the American Dance Festival. As it approaches the end of its first seven years, Pilobolus has given almost 500 performances in one of the most explosive rises in the history of American theatre.

Notable in a different way among the new generation is Meredith Monk, whose use of mixed media or pure movement reflects her wish not to be bound by any single style. Her work is a unique blend of music, dance and theatre which she herself has described as opera-epics, theatre contata non-verbal opera, visual poetry, image dance and mosaic theatre.

Juice⁷, a major work of Monks was presented along the spiraling ramp of New York's Guggenheim Museum with spectators taking an elevator to the top and walking down along the ramp to view the exhibits. At other points the costumed dancers surged up to the top of the ramp to perform, or, down to the lower level to chant, and dance, as the audience watched from the ramp. Critical reaction to Monk's work has been mixed; audiences, particularly the young, tend to be fascinated by Meredith Monk. Other artists who have developed strong reputations in recent years, have introduced other elements into

⁶ Illustration VI : ⁷ Illustration VII

their dance-works; films in Kenneth McMillan's. Anastasia for instance or in the Mutations which Glen Tetely and Hans Van Manen did jointly. Film is the outside medium which has already had the biggest impact on many young choreographers, many say that they have modelled their structure on that of the cinema, and Bejert goes so far as to say (4) "for ten years even more, the two arts from which I have learned anything are music and the cinema....above all the cinema, it is the only place where one learns anything about our time". Whether the process can extend much further, except in regard to the development of individual creative artists is problematical. Thanks to influence of film.

Ballet has already broken away from its old needs for straight forward structure like the old fashioned play, and has found the possibilities of flash back, simultaneity a completely free fantasy or whatever either shape is appropriate to a given work. Possibly there might be more use of film as part of the stage action, either to relate to the people and happenings on stage to actual historical events (as McMillan did in Anastasia), or to make possible contacts in manner timing such as Van Manen did in Mutations, especially slowing down the movement to make actions performed in a few seconds last for several minutes. In Duet for one (originally called Blossom) Beverly Schmidt danced both in a film directed by Robert Blossom and on stage in front of the screen. Prone Flat⁸ by Robert Whitman used films of fruit and other objects, also of dancers, and some dancers live on stage to contrast reality with illusion. Art Baumanns Dialog used films of himself running up and down the corridors and escalators of a bleak office building to supplement his own dancing on stage and convey the emptiness of material achievement.

A slightly different relationship between two media is that of film or television adaptation of a dancework, which can often completely reinterpret the original. The Czech director Peter Weigh made a largely abstract Pas de Quatre based on themes from Swan Lake in which one dancer played both Odette and Odile, another both Siegfried and Rothbart, all four being shown at once by trick photography and the whole providing a cometary relationship of the characters in the stage ballet. Alwin Nikolais's Totem has been adapted by Ed Emshwiller into a semi-abstract film with many effects of distortion, duplication or substitution to enhance its majestic symbolism.

Work for dance produced by myself has also adapted film and video as a means of documentation and special effects, which provided the final edit of "Interpretation of Dance,"

The German Television producer Manfred Gräter made a programme 2 X moments about Rudi van Dantzig's stage ballet Moments.⁹ He commissioned Klaus Lindemann director and with the idea of combining destruction and reparation. (5) "namely by producing a second version of moments which seemed more likely to do justice to the intentions of the choreographer. Thus Moments was produced twice, in a straightforward version exactly as set by the choreographer and also in an experimental version which occasionally interfered with the basic choreography for the benefit of its visualisation suited to the screen. A third team made a documentary film about both productions with the choreographer commenting on his work and on the two directors. Thus simultaneously illustrative material was provided for the question

hitherto only theroretically of how far it is sensible and desirable to manipulate the original choreography for the dimention and dramaturgy of the T.V. picture:

Four main areas of artistic activity developed prior and parallel to absolute film; and these had a marked influence on the films formal language and were also responsible for a certain amount of publicity (the stage works in particular).

Art and Music - the coloured light organs with non-objective coloured light projections which originated from the synaesthetic theory that linked musical notes to colour, thereby suggesting an abstract, coloured film like image in the mind of anyone listening to the music.

Art and music - that of futurism which moves through cubism and constructivism from the first attempts to fix movement into a static picture to the series of characterisations of equivalent images. In constructivism parallels to this is the influence of the Chinese pictures both films and stage plays. In mechanical plays, coloured strips, shapes and gyroscopes move according to a definite tythme. Prampoline Leom amongst others, all designed mechanical sculptures and relief walls. Multidiversional stage shapes and moving coloured strips whick prodiced an abstract sequence of forms were made bu Weininger, Kurt Schmidt.

Andreas Winginger, who like Graeff belonged to the school of Bauhaus students who were strongly constructivist and much influenced by Thes Van Doesburg, also designed a mechanical stage, although only in coloured crayon and water colour studies. He conceived the changing images as horizontally or vertically running coloured strips, which could be either painted or transparent and which by means of rotation could produce an infinity of new colour combinations.

Kurt Schmidt along with Theodor Byglar and Georg Feltscher also designed two-dimensional figure constructions for his 'Mechanical Ballet' which originally was presented at the Civic Theatre, Jenon, during the Bauhaus week of August 1923 to the music of H.H. Stuckenschmidt. The dynamic forces which were locked into the forms of abstract pictures should here be liberated from the picture composition and shown in movement.

Kurt Schmidt's drawings in 1925 Bauhaus book are consciously influenced by the publicity given to film clips: his stage shapes were moved by unseen blocked out people, so that an abstract apparently mechanical sequence of shapes was produced. There was a lack of money, naturally, to translate this into actual mechanics like the contemporary 'reflecting light play', which also had to be performed by hand. At the end of this 'Mechanical Ballet', which was performed on several occasions, a large red and small blue square dance on a black background, both stand up on their corners and disappear.

Common to all these works is the new artistic attitude of the 1920's 'Absolute film' as a completed work on celluloid is only a part of this broad field of creative activity, which placed a control emphasis on object-free, coloured sequences of shapes.

In this way, painting (scroll painting) sculpture (kinetic light sculpture), music (coloured light effects), the stage (mechanical ballets), and architecture (analyses of cubic space) all interrelate to the history of fibre, because these very artists put into practice optical visions and tangential thought.

Mecano is composition with time. Its actual purpose is as an artistic development of energy time. The materials must be in harmony with the movements, which must be in harmony with the movements, which must be in harmony with themselves. Climaxes, fortissimos in the movement etc. pauses, noises, tonal series, total and symbolic illumination (light sources) are composed in a sequence which produced tension. To be distinguished are eg. cyclic movements, parallel movements, contrasting, eccentric and combined movements. In one sort of movement the mechanism is concealed. In another a working machine itself produces the desired effect. Starting with colour relief, a mecano was produced with a rearward conclusion, a contrast running across two vertical rollers in front of which moving bodies and surfaces performed distinct actions.

In connection with theatre and music many ideas have been created, ideas which must be relevant to this discussion. To begin with, there has been an eagerness to adopt the stage background to the rhythmic character performed in pantomime and ballet in architectural and linear successions of movement.

In this field Bakst has been an example for the Russian Ballet. One step further would lead to the versatility

of a rythmical linear back drop adapted for dance. Perhaps as a felmic curtain raiser to a dance, or as an epilogue. The accompaniment of a rythmic linear back drop performance to a dance would most certainly signify an intervention in the performance, because of the two-dimentional quality of the dance. At the new dance stage at the theatre in Munster, run by Kurt Jooss, the painter Harkroth has tried out experiments in the direction of a unified backdrop to the rythms of the versatility of dance, with non-cinematic material.

Wassily Kandinsky, one of the co-founders of non-objective painting, was fascinated by the possibility in the theatre of a syntheses of the different art forms into a composite work of art. His ideas on abstract theatre, published in 1912 is an essay entitled 'On Stage Compositions' in the Journal The Blue Rider, related to the particularly strenuous efforts at a complete re-appraisal of theatre made in the years immediately after the turn of the century. He applied these same basic principles to a piece he composed at the same time, 'yellow sound' which like his later stage compositions 'Green Sound', 'Black and White' and 'Violet', has never been produced. His only practical work for the theatre was his staging of Mussorgsky's composition 'Pictures at an Exhibition', which Bauhaus master Kandinsky produced in Dessau 1923. In this work he transformed his impressions of colour and forms on listening to the music into stage imagery in which the basic pattern of colour and form of his painting can be recognised as moving images they are closely related to abstract film, one we have perceived the three-dimensionality which is achieved by using the stage.

Kaddinsky was invited by the director of Friedrich theatre in Dessau, Dr. Hartneamm to produce the musical composition for the stage. With the exception of two pictures Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle and the market place at Limoges (in which I included two dancers). The whole stage image was 'abstract'. Here and there I also used shapes which were remotely 'objective'. So I did not proceed 'programmatically', but used shapes that came to mind while listening to the music.

The main materials were:

1. The shapes themselves.
2. The colours on the shapes to which were added:
3. The colours of lights as painting in depth.
4. The independent effect of coloured light and
5. The composition of each image as it related to music and necessarily its decomposition.

An example: Picture 4 - "The Old Castle". The stage is bare but in total darkness (the black plush curtain hung in the background forms an immaterial dept). At the first *expressivo*, three long vertical stripes become visible in the background. They dissapear. At a later *expressivo* the huge red back-cloth comes in from the right (double colour).

Then the green back-cloth in the same way from the left. The central figure appears from the darkness. It is illuminated with intense colour. At the *poeu largamente* at light fades more and more, until at *piano* these is darkness. At the final *expressimo* - as at the beiginning - the three stripes become visible. At the final *forte*, sudden blackout.

The individual images of the pieces^s are made up mostly of flat shapes and figures - only in particular cases of three - dimensional objects - and these are either suspended, pushed in from the side or carried accross the stage by stage hands who remain concealed behind them.

The shapes are partly opaque, partly transparent or sometimes have cutout sections for the direct incidence of light. Their actions are co-ordinated in precisely calculated synchronization with the music, with the movements of coloured, graduated light which is woven into the abstract stage even through stop-lights, lamps and in one case through a Kaleidoscope projected onto the back wall.

In point, on the other hand, avant-garde filmmaking during the 1920's and 30's was closely identified with several fine art groups and activities. Jomusz Zagrodski clearly establishes the connection between constructivist aesthetics and the development of an avant-garde film culture. The constructivists conception of a work of art is an expression of the latest attainments of contemporary science and technique opened up areas as yet inaccessible to the artists. The painters and sculptors who contributed dynamic and kinetic forms to art ... saw in film a way to tackle many problems which had been considered insoluble.

The New Cinema Festival organized in New York by the Film makers cinematheque in 1965 show how much the new consciousness in film had spread. Dance and film - projections

were combined as a confrontation of image and reality; Ed Emschwillers Bodyworks for example dancers dressed in white form the screen on which he showed (with a hand held projector) a film that portrayed the dancers. Sometimes, the film and the dancing figure were identical. Sometimes only one part of the body was shown, greatly enlarged, on the dancers bodies.

Geoff Moore approach to dancing came from the just a position of this stimulus and the ideas he was developing from his formal studies, in terms of visual awareness and organic structures the developed an interest in a derangement of elements which worked in terms of painting, collages and sculpture, and wanted to apply the same process to dance and theatre.

His first attempts were purely spatial designs sculpural arrangements of figures in space with sound and other elements. Next he worked on movement relating one figure to another and to a musical basis. From this he went on to add other elements: slide projections which would relate ironically to the physical action; a sound track which would add a further level of comment and eventually the introduction of some speech by the performances e.g. Accumulator (mixed media event) 1970.¹⁰

The intention was to develop a multi-levelled event whose people could be surprised, hopefully by spontaneous reactions and that the audience would not get only what they had become conditioned to get but that it would be stimulating in terms of extending things.

Trisha Brown in *Glacial Decoy*¹¹
 with visual presentation. Chris Oldenburg (Moviehouse) used the setting of Film makers Cinematheque to activate the audience both in their seats and in the aisles, with performances supplying the various typical gestures such as eating popcorn and sneezing. Whitman was more interested in the separation between the audience and the stage, which he tried to keep and make even stronger; compared with Whitmans earlier pieces such as the *American Moon* (1960), *Water and Flower* (both 1963). *Prune Flat* was more theatrical on account of its auditorium setting. Originally conceiving the setting as a 'flat space', whitman decided to project images of people onto themselves, adding ultra-violet lighting which kept the people flat but also made them come away from the screen a little bit, causing the figures to look strange and fantastic. While certain images were projected directly onto the figures, others created a filmic background, often with the film sequence transposed. For example two girls are shown walking across the screen while the same girls walk simultaneously across the stage; an electrical company's flickering warning light, which by chance formed part of the film footage, was duplicated on stage. Other transformations of film images into live ones were created through the use of mirrors as performers matched themselves against the screen images. Subsequently time and space become the central features of the work, with the preliminary film made in the past and the distortions and repetition of past actions in present time on the stage. Has Van Manen *Twice* (pop music 1970)¹²

Now that dance is no longer a coherent and organized world shift with tradition, it is possible for

people with no dance training to approach it from different directions and contribute something of their own. For instance Taller de Montevideo Chromus II¹³ a group of six young people from Uruguay who were originally active in kinetic art, but later took the logical step of involving dancers with their work. One such event was Cronus III, which they presented as part of the 'Explorations' series given to mark the opening of 'The Place' as a dance centre of a studio with a structure comprising a collection of white rostrums with various planes and levels from which emerged a series of white verticals. The dancers moved about this structure, forming different relationships and formal compositions with its parts, while the look of the structure itself was constantly changed by the use, of lighting, (occasionally coloured with dramatic effect, but usually white in different patterns and degrees). Pulsating sound added another effect and the spectators were expected to move about, so that they saw an ever-changing Kaleidoscopic vision of these different elements. This group also tried to involve the public in a kind of art event by scattering structures along a footway in a street or rack so that the pedestrians had to move them or go about; kind of do-it-yourself dance on the simplest level.

Most of the outsiders overlapping with dance come from the visual arts, painting or sculpture, but others disciplines may lead the same way. Some mimes for instance, find themselves in effect evolving. Henryl Tomaszewski not only presents big movements - spectacles with his own company but was staged works also for classical ballet. Holland has also produced more than one group of mimes who, to a greater extent than Tomaszewski, have broken down the barriers between traditional mime and dance. One such was

Will Spoor's mime group. A typical programme began with bugs counterpoint. There grey wrapped figures who performed this piece had a wonderful time representing footloose and amorous bugs. In cardboard column canon. The performances were completely wrapped in tall columns of rolled corrugated paper, so that they were invisible except for a hand which came over the top of the column to wave soap and bubbles in the air or drop a banana skin. The point about the piece was that it made the watcher intent for every tiny movement and him to deduce large movements from the large gesture screen.

The Bewth mime group from Holland worked on similar principles to Spoor, except that he used a stage and thus showed his pieces as essentially theatrical, while they did theirs in the middle of a room with the audience all around the walls. Their activities for instance, on the contrast between the certain numbers of pleasant things like blowing whistles purely decorative elements were introduced, like all the cast putting on coloured socks, and some things seemed intended as much for the sound element as the visual. A boy sitting down, for instance, and chomping noisely away at a cucumber and apple. All this was much more like an exceptionally casual dance event than mime.

A different way into dance was that followed by Joe Schlichter, danced his cube at The Bridge in New York in 1966, he entered the plastic cube with blue paint already dripping from his hair and threw himself so forcefully against one wall that he bounced off and hit the ground hard. Repeating this process and generally throwing himself about within the walls of plastic sheeting,

he fell repeatedly in pools of red and white paint until his body was covered patriotically but not very concealingly in dripping red, white and blue. This was plainly a non-sexual use of nudity in dancing (provided that is, that you accept this activity as dancing).

All of this had a base in the other arts particularly in trends in the graphic and plastic arts. There, the surrealist, abstract expressionist and action schools of painting prepared the way through the 1960's for the "Pop" and "Op" movements. Characteristic of the latter are that they are based on or make use of, commonplace objects. Sometimes these may be "found" objects which most would regard as little more than junk. Thus, in a museum one may find on display a crushed automobile, a toilet seat, the replica of the inside of a grimy diner or the plastic cast of a man driving a car. When it is not the actual object itself, it may be the photograph like painting of it, as in the painting of a giant soup can, comic strips, or posters. Sometimes it may represent a carefully worked out abstract design to create visual illusions, or may be based on mechanical contrivances which supply motion to the art object, as in a motor-driven mobile.

Over a period of time, a number of leading choreographers have reflected these approaches. In Merce Cunningham's "chance" dances the idea of improvisation, based on certain stimuli being chosen at random, results in what might almost be called "found" movement. In Nikolais's choreography, one finds a strong resemblance to "opart".

Merce Cunningham did not explore on the dance world the way Jackson pollock struct the world of painting. I mention Cunningham in the same breath with pollick to underscore Cunningham's position as an innovator who rocked the establishment with another kind of space and order and influenced a whole new generation of artist. Cunninghams time structure was not determined by a piece of music selected in advance to accompany the dance, nor by the dance itself as he was making it. Rather he would set down beforehand and say the dance would consist of five parts. Each part would be three minutes long. Deciding on structure, he and his composer, John Cage, would work independently to fill in the structure with sound and movement. This was the first example in dance of putting things together, or letting things go together, that are not logically thought to have any business being together.

His adventures with chance began in 1951 with 16 dancers. When he had made the dance he saw no reason why the parts should occur in any particular order, so he tossed coins to determine the sequence and movement. He did this with Untilted Solo in 1953. By tossing coins to establish a movement of the head then the arms the toes etc. The resulting coordinations were so unusual as to render the performances of then extremely difficult.

This is some anology in Cunningham's method to the cubist analytical breakdown and reorganization of images. But a better relation is to the chance methods of the Dadaists, Hans Arp composed colleges by picking up scraps of paper, shuffling them and glueing them down just as they fell. The chance method of the Dada

painters and poets were primitive devices compared to the refined elaborate chance methodology evolved by John Cage, Cunningham and a number of avant-garde composers. The devices then were usually as simple as pulling words out of a hat to make a poem. The complexity of present methods is the result of analyzing the various components of a medium and applying the devices which may be curious in themselves to the different components. John Cage picked up where the dadaists left off. His inventive experiments with sound led him to the philosophy of indifference for many years. Dada wished to recover the natural, unreasonable order in the world, to restore man to his humble place in nature. The chance gesture became a spiritual insight into condition of chaos, which is the natural order of the world.

Through chance Cage arrived at his position of letting sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for emotions and ideas. Each sound is heard for itself and does not depend for its value on its place within a system of sounds. Similarly, Cunningham's movement is a series of isolated actions, and the connections is simply that of sequence or just a position or what ever the observer wishes to make out of it.

Cunningham dance. Antic Meet, the dancers wore sunglasses. It is impossible to know why exactly. Yet, the slight tentative arm gestures of the dancers seem appropriate to the shades, as though they were partially blind. In the same dance Cunningham exits after a solo and re-enters promptly with a small table (covered with white table cloth) which he sets in a polished fast manner with napkins and silverware. As he exits again, a dancer who

enters with a black umbrella, lit underneath with small blinking lights moves horizontally across the stage in a solo of intricate, foot and leg action. At the end of a funny gymnastic encounter with another dancer, Cunningham exits and re enters in a big racoon coat to drag off his flattened opponent. All these incidents are provocative images. I don't believe the observer tends to take time out to analyze or interpret what he sees or note novel combination of facts and relaxes to enjoy the images. The incidents mentioned in Cunningham's dances are related to the entire movement of college assemblage and happenings extending from Braque and Picasso to the present.

Cage and Cunningham can be puzzling especially to the person with a background of dance activity but perhaps with less awareness of the way things are developing in the other arts. Take for instance, Variation V.¹⁴ The music was a developing a concert Cage had given at the Feigen Palmer Gallery, Los Angeles, mixing sounds picked up by microphones above the bar in the gallery and at the street door, together with other pre-recorded elements of music or speech. In Variation V, the electronic gadgetry (Cages own expression) was actuated by the movements of the dancers. The sound-sources, Cunningham explains, were two fold. (7) The first was a series of poles 12 in all, like antennae, placed over the stage each to have a sound raduis, sphere-shaped of 4 feet. When a dancer came into this radius a sound would result. The second source was a series of photo-electric cells, figured out by Billy Kluver of the Bell Laborities, which were to sit on the floor along the side of the stage. So at the last minute the cells were put at the base of the 12 poles throughout the area and this seemed to function; The kind of sound, its direction or repitition was controlled by musicians

with various machines including tape recorders, oscillators and shortwave radios. Just to make matters more complicated, two films were shown simultaneously on the back cloth; these included rehearsal sequences by Cunningham and the dancers, the giant close-ups of Cunninghams feet. In addition, various coloured slides were projected apparently, sometimes right way up sometimes not; while at the same time the dancers solemnly went through their allotted movements and if you look hard enough, without being distracted by the other elements. You could see that there was some fine dancing hidden away there.

As if this was not enough, some extra novelties were introduced. Cunningham and later Carolyn Brown potted and repotted a large plant at one side of the stage, this had a cartridge microphone attached which could produce sound at any quiver. Barbera Lloyd, wearing on her head a towel with a contact microphone attached, stored on her head and was rocked back and forth. Cunningham at one point bounced on a mattress wired for sound, and at the end of the work rode a bicycle round the stage, passing all the poles and electronic cells, then quietly off.

Cage a life long friend and musical director of Cunningham and with David Tudor, Grodon Mumma play the electric machines Rauschenberg was previously in charge of the visual aspects of the performance; at present Jasper Johns has this function. These are all very advanced in their own fields. The fact remains that at his performances the audience can also see and hear the work of leading American painters, sculptors and musicians, thus attracting spectators who would not normally go to ballet, and who respond to

Cunningham, perhaps with an understanding a typical ballet audience would not share. When Cunningham played in Paris 1970, only two London news papers reviewed his performances, one sent its ballet critic and the other its art critic.

Johns is only one of the many celebrated artists who have contributed to Cunningham recent repertory. He even indirectly draws upon Marcel Duchamp, because an adaptation by Johns of Duchamps Large Glass is part of Walkaround Time. Duchamps patterns are reproduced in the form of hollow transparent plastic blocks which are set about the stage; the dancers move among these alter their positions and finally reassemble them into a complete pattern. The choreography of Walkaround Time¹⁵ is deliberately casual, it has a break in the middle, when a radio or tape is heard uttering pop sounds and the dancers do, apparently, whatever they like, a classical ballet solo, or even disappearing off stage altogether.

Andy Warhol's silver balloons provide the decor of Rainforest.¹⁶ They are pillow shaped, a bit more than pillow sized, made, I think, of aluminized mylar and filled with helium. Some float just at stage level, other higher. As the dancers in their ragged costumes move among these objects, a lump or a breeze from them passing is enough to set the silver pillow, bobbing gently about. One or two bounce right forward, may be, and end in the orchestra pit. Others form new obstructing patterns in the dancing area to be set moving again by their next contact with the dancers. It is a unique and very beautiful effect.

What is so stimulating about Cunningham is that he constantly extends the dance to match new developments in the other arts and in life today. Not only that he has the wit, skill and intuition to make it work. Without his own achievement and his example the dance world today would be a lot less lively. Cunningham's motive was not unlike that which sent Alwin Nikolais exploring a rather different direction. Light, sound, movement, paidn and 'objects' combined media of Nikolais works.

The first of his works to be widely seen was Totem 1960.¹⁷ This is a full-evening work, consisting of 15 episodes in which abstract props seem to extend to performers bodies. In one episode, Shadow Totem, dancers appear to be headless, in another, Banshee, dancers create a weird effect as they wave lights about under their huge, chapeless costumes.

A second major work of Nokilais has been Inago.¹⁸ The choreagraphy lighting and costumes are by Nikolais and has created the electronic score in collaboration with James Seawright. Imago has been variously described by critics as "weird!", "fantastic" and "delightful". Like Totem, it combines dance, movement, colour, lighting and electronic music. Its ten dances are depersonalized through remarkable costuming, the use of white make up and stylized head dresses. It contains both humour and menace, as well as sequences of great visual beauty.

Works created in the late 1970's include: Gallery, based on the idea of moving shooting gallery, with multimasked, hydralike figures; Castings, a variation of his many works using dancers

encased in stretch fabric; and sanctum, often considered his most dance like work.

The major criticism made of Nikolais' work is that it is dehumanizing - simply visual in which the performers are not dancers as such, but rather movable props, eloquently pointing out that all the arts have today become freed from the need to portray literal subject matter, and are directly translate the "abstract elements that characterize and underline antart abject".

(7) I find my needs cannot be wholly satisfied by one art. I like to mix my magics. We are now in a period of modern dance, and it is a period of new freedom."

It is this revolution in materials that is central to the whole development. The entrance of life into music first meant noise and Cage has described this entrance as (8) "The acceptance of all audible phenomena as material proper to music." The painters and sculptors recognize the same of visual phenomena. It is infact often impossible to say whether a work is more painting or sculpture, and when Robert Rauschenburg puts a radio behind one of his canvasses the visual work is clearly entering the domain of music. When Jim Dine attaches a big hatchet on a chain to a canvas divided down the centre by a rough beam of wood, the paint-construction becomes music and movement as well as paint and objects. The observer is implicitly invited to pick up the hatchet and try his hand at the wood. Just as the boundaries between art and life become confused, so the sacred limits defining one medium as distinct from another have dissolved. The only limits remaining are those imposed on the artist by his choice of materials.

No definition will do unless it covers the extreme possibilities at either end of the artistic range. Like, for instance, the man in New York, inside a cube of plastic sheeting wearing no clothes but jumping energetically in and out of pools of paint. Or the white-costumed group in the Hague dancing with no apparent emotion to calm, gentle music in a changing context of square structures below, above or around them.

More important than taste or fashion is the stimulus given to choreographers in many instances by a setting which provides an environment within which the dancers move, rather than merely a backdrop.

Film is the outside medium which has already had the biggest impact on many young choreographers. For them the cinema is the only place where one learns anything about our time.

Music too is going to continue to force and encourage dance into new experiments like the works of Eric Saties' "Ballet Realiste" whose music is composed of the noise of traffic and typewriters, jet planes and revolvers.

And if we don't like this type of Art we are reminded by Aaron Scharf that art is a mirror held up to life.

There is not much point in smashing the mirror because it shows an image we do not like.