



Joseph Beuys from "Coyote", 1974 (Illus.no.1)



Adish Kapoor's, "Installation Piece" ; (Illus.no.2)

THE MYTHOLOGICAL AND SYMBOLIC ASPECTS OF THE WORK
OF FOUR CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

A Thesis Presented by

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CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a personal exploration on the lives and works of artists that I hold on high esteem. These artists are Joseph Beuys, Paul Neagu, Adish Kapoor and Yves Klein. I intend to put a lot of emphasis on the symbolic and mythological significances the completed works - sculptures, performances and paintings - had for the artists, and how these artists establish their personal concepts through their chosen media.

I aim to devote more time in the research and discussion, particularly, on the artists Beuys and Kapoor because these two artists have stronger artistic characteristics that need extra attention. The other artists, Neagu and Klein, are introduced as contrasting artists, whose works and concepts are similar to those of Beuys and Kapoor.

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CHAPTER II : INTRODUCTION ON JOSEPH BEUYS

Joseph Beuys has been the subject of much controversy in the past and will, no doubt, be considered one of the most important and essential artists of this century. This man fascinates me beyond comprehension. To me he is like a Christ-figure who was sent to redeem us. Beuys makes us think, encouraging us towards self-reflection, to examine our needs and wants. Whether we can justify what we are doing or not, he insists that we broaden our minds, nourishing with newer more exciting ideas. He concerns himself with the fact that we may be suppressed by command or subject to power and privileges. He demands the freedom of self-expression so we, too, should insist on full control over our minds.

Beuys has occupied himself for many years with those most important questions: freedom of thought and self-expression. But, it was not until 1955, (when after completing his sculpture course at the Dusseldorf Academy), he stopped working and lived like a hermit in the mountains, his only company being hares and other wild animals, that he really considered his role in life. For, after that experience, he became a true philosopher.

When dealing with this man, one has to dig into his soul, for without that inside knowledge, we would fail to understand the proper significance of his objects, performances and actions. I feel that I must travel back to when time began, for Beuys, that is.

Biography:

Joseph Beuys was born at Cleve in 1921, on the left bank of the lower Rhine. This place was once known as the home of mystics, fantasy and superstition, which remains in the local characters. Beuys, for certain, has inherited all this and it becomes most obvious in his work.

When one thinks of Germany, one automatically envisages a scene with a castle, as is the case of Cleves, for dominating the town was a massive castle called the Schwanenburg. This was destroyed during the Second World War. Its surroundings were more than perfect for nesting swans and other animals that were held in Beuys imagination, for he makes continuous references to them in his work. These references go far beyond romantic or nationalistic interpretations of Lohengrin and the Arthurian legends.

For the child, the swan was one of the most potent of all images - an intimation of deep layers of history and meaning that elude rational explanation. This intangible image was to find expression in later drawings, particularly in the drawing "From: The Intelligence of Swans" 1955; (Illus. No. 3). In this drawing the light falls into a cave, where there is a swan with its throat in water. There is a special and ironic use of the word "intelligence", because people have always considered swans intelligent animals, but scientifically this is not so.

The figures of the horse, the stag, the swan, and the hare, constantly appear in his drawings and sculptures. In German folklore these figures pass freely from one level of existence to another and represent the incarnation of the soul or the earthly form of the spiritual being. They have the same significance for Beuys, but he also introduces other, perhaps more scientific, interpretations when he is dealing with these images in his work. For instance, the horse, for him, only symbolises energy and no more, whereas the horse symbolises insight and intelligence in German mythology.

Drawing for Beuys, has been a way of thinking or, as he calls it, "a thinking form". His drawings came into existence in a development sequence, parallel with the search for a central concept. It is a way of gathering material which represents ideas and experiences about things which had effected him during his life. This seems

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"From: The Intelligence of Swans" 1955; (Illus. No. 3)

to be the central theme running through all his drawings. They are, for him, references that can be used again, the drawings keep him in touch with the past and through them he ventures into the future.

The drawings too are a form of energy plan. Energy, in science, means warmth and, in art, means creativity. This concept is very much a Beuys' concept, for the drawings are Beuys' personal understanding and discovery of the world he lives in. In them he finds solutions for the future, as the course of the drawings unfold, the ideas pass into sculpture, then into performances and speech.

For Beuys, this process of personal understanding and discovery of the world began with natural life and forgotten materials. With material or, technically speaking, with sculpture, Beuys is able to analyse his own interpretations of the energies that give meaning and direction life. Beuys' sculpture is not always visible or tangible. It sometimes extends far beyond the conventional field of art in which the whole process of living, thinking, talking and teaching, itself is the creative art.

In dealing with Beuys' media, it is important to note that there is, of course, no logical reason why the use of the artist's materials should in any way be restricted. In Beuys' case, the materials he uses - Fat, Felt, Honey, Iron, Copper and Batteries - derive from a childhood investigative interest in natural forms, principles and growth patterns, and also from studying science at a university. This investigative interest in natural forms and growth patterns has remained fundamental to Beuys' thinking throughout his life. Many of his metaphors for warmth and growth processes, in art and life, came from botanical sources. For Beuys, these sources become metaphors of transformation and generate the concepts on energy.

When elements of science and mythology appear in Beuys' sculptures or performances, their presence is always intended as a symbol for scientific term "energy". In science, technical terms like "insulator", "battery", "transmitter", "receiver", are all derived from the passage and storage of physical energy, but Beuys also draws these scientific terms into a spiritual and mythological level so that they become symbols and metaphors of transition - from one

substance to another, changing their original physical state - and energy.

Beuys' concepts on energy are represented by materials that are in themselves a source of energy. These materials may be organic (honey, wax, fat, felt, blood, bone or metal) or mechanically orientated (batteries and electrical objects). In most of Beuys' sculptures, natural and mechanical materials are combined together and strongly need each other if they are to be seen as incentives for the transformation of the idea of sculpture. Beuys feels that the materials should arouse thoughts about what the sculpture represents, and how the concept of sculpting can be extended into everyday activities and materials used by everyone.

The materials Beuys uses to express his ideas are, in fact, everyday materials. These everyday materials, which normally people have very little regard for, are, for Beuys, intended to be carriers and conveyors of meaning and, most importantly, represent Beuys' own understanding of the energies that give meaning and direction to life. The remainder of this Chapter will be divided into sections, each dealing with individual pieces of sculptures and performances that I found most forceful in their construction and in their conceptual and symbolic meanings.

Fat Chair, Fat Corners and Felt Corners:

The material Fat which can be quickly associated with being an everyday material is used in a sculptural context in the sculpture "Fat Chair" 1964; (Illus No. 4). Here, fat is an ideal material for demonstrating Beuys' Theory of Sculpture, which fundamentally deals with the concept that everything is in a state of change. Beuys realises that materials go through some sort of metamorphosis, whether it is chemical or natural, and he establishes this concept through his work which is never fixed or completely finished.

The use of Fat results from Beuys' interest in natural forms and growth processes. It ideally demonstrates his Theory of Sculpture, because Fat exists as a physical example of metamorphosis - a formless and flowing liquid when warm, and structurally solid when cold.

But, when the material is placed on a wooden chair, as in "Fat Chair", it not only becomes a humorous object, but it also stimulates discussion which was also Beuys' original intention. At first sight, both materials, fat and wooden chair, have very little scientific connections. But, in fact, both materials are closely related in the sense that the chair represents the lower abdomen of the human body where there is a number of natural and chemical changes taking place, it is the area of digestion, of excrement, and of the sexual organs. These (physically) natural and chemical human processes relate strongly to the metamorphosis of fat. Suddenly, the humour of the piece of sculpture becomes a scientific reality.

It would be interesting to note the psychological effect this piece would have on the viewer if the Fat was allowed to melt over the sturdy wooden chair. The effect might symbolise the human natural processes going out of control, as they sometimes do. Though, fundamentally, this piece of sculpture describes the passage of everything in the world, physical or psychological, from a controlled structured state to a more flowing liquid state or vice-versa.

The Fat on the "Fat Chair" is not geometric as in the piece of sculpture called the "Fat Corner" 1960; (Illus. No. 5). For Beuys, the corner represents the mechanical and concrete hard-edged structures of society - square cities, thus square buildings and



"Fat Chair" 1964; (Illus. No. 4)

rooms. The corner represents the minimisation of society to the right angle. Beuys challenges the rigid system of societies, culture, science and living processes when he places a substance that is paradoxical in its structure. The Fat in the corner is metaphorically being used to symbolise organic growth and change processes which, in Beuys' mind, cannot be rejected by the hard-edged angle because fat expands and soaks into its surroundings.

The introduction of a filter of white gauze, in "Felter Fat Corner" 1962; (Illus. No. 6) is a more three dimensional version of the effect Fat has when it infiltrates other materials. Here, the gauze represents a sort of membrane that needs to be broken through. Its very nature is porous and what passes through it becomes purified and refined. The membrane of gauze could also suggest that the gauze functions as an insulator - in this case, the gauze separates one area from another. The reason for this is that Beuys subconsciously realises that to unite the natural organic world with the mechanically structured world is unrealistic, perhaps he feels that the two worlds are too far apart.

Due to Beuys' direct dealings with natural and scientific processes - he began to develop a humane understanding for natural order whilst a child and studied science in great depth when an adolescent - he is familiar with the theory that Fat infiltrates other materials. When it comes in physical contact with especially porous materials, it is gradually absorbed and brings about a process scientifically termed "infiltration". On the other hand, Felt absorbs anything with which it comes into contact - fat, dust, dirt, water, or sound - so, therefore it is quickly integrated into its environment. Unlike the gauze, it does not let things pass through it, instead it soaks substances up straight into its centre, becoming even more effective as an insulator.

So, the concept behind the Fat Corners is scientifically different from that of the "Felt Corner" 1963; (Illus. No. 7). Visually, this piece does not take on the three-dimensional shape of the corner like Fat, instead it hides it, forming a triangular shape with the base only visible. Felt, like Fat, is a natural material, made from layer upon layer of animal hair. This association with animals is something of which Beuys is strongly aware. Later on he deals directly with animals in works like "The Coyote" and

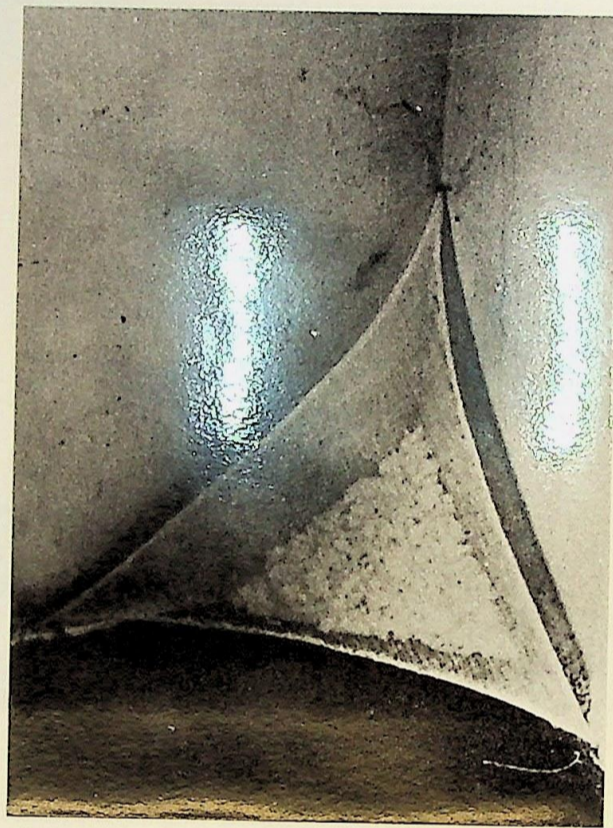


"Fat Corner" 1960; (Illus. No. 5)

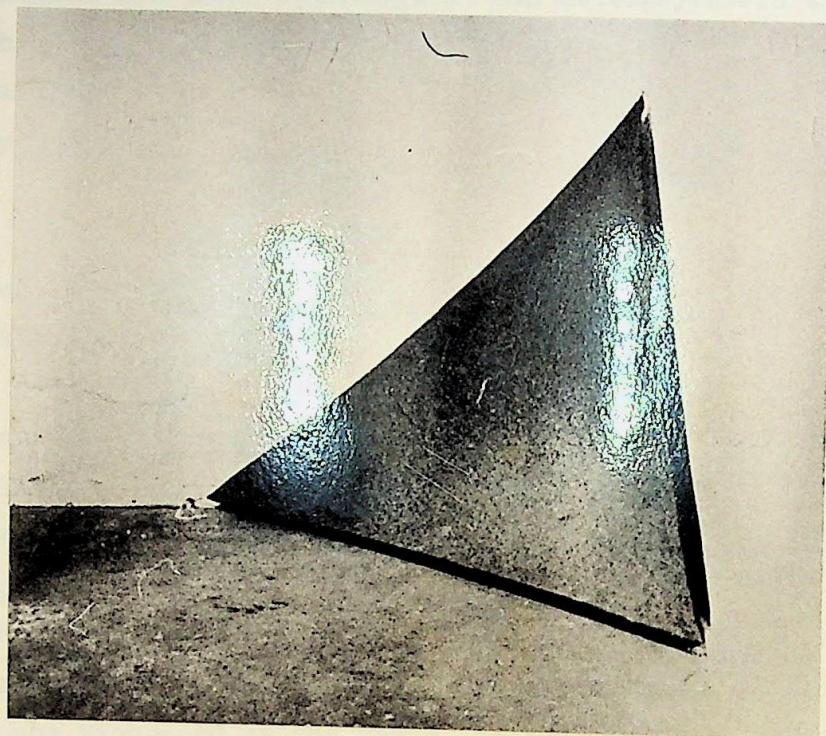
"How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare". Because Felt has no warp or weft like woven materials, it becomes flexible so that it can be pulled and stretched into shape, like Beuys' "felt hat" which has become a noticable characteristic of Beuys.

Felt plays a very essential role in the construction of Beuys' ideas and concepts. It has qualities that when put in metaphorical terms, "it becomes a carrier and a conveyor of Beuys' own understanding of life and art". Felt acts as an insulator, but in Beuys' sculptures it is metaphorically used as a protective covering against outside influences : dogman whether political or religious, restricting the individual thinking processes and negative thinking in general.

Then there is the quality of warmth which is influenced by its colour (brown or grey). The warmth character of Felt forms an important part in the Theory of Sculpture; deals with the concept that everything goes through metamorphosis, the Theory also deals with the concept that we control, mould and shape our thoughts and the world we live in. Because of the flexible nature of Felt, Beuys moulds and shapes it to represent or symbolise negative or positive thoughts. The negative psychological character of Felt as an insulator means the inability to communicate. While on the other hand, the positive physical character of insulation lies in the protection it gives from cold, heat and sound. We realise that Beuys focusses our attention upon the material - Fat and Felt - in a context which enables us to see it as he has seen it, perhaps not in its familiar role or function, but as a potential embodiment of a changed attitude to life.



"Felter Fat Corner", 1962; (Illus. No. 6)



"Felt Corner" 1963; (Illus. No. 7)

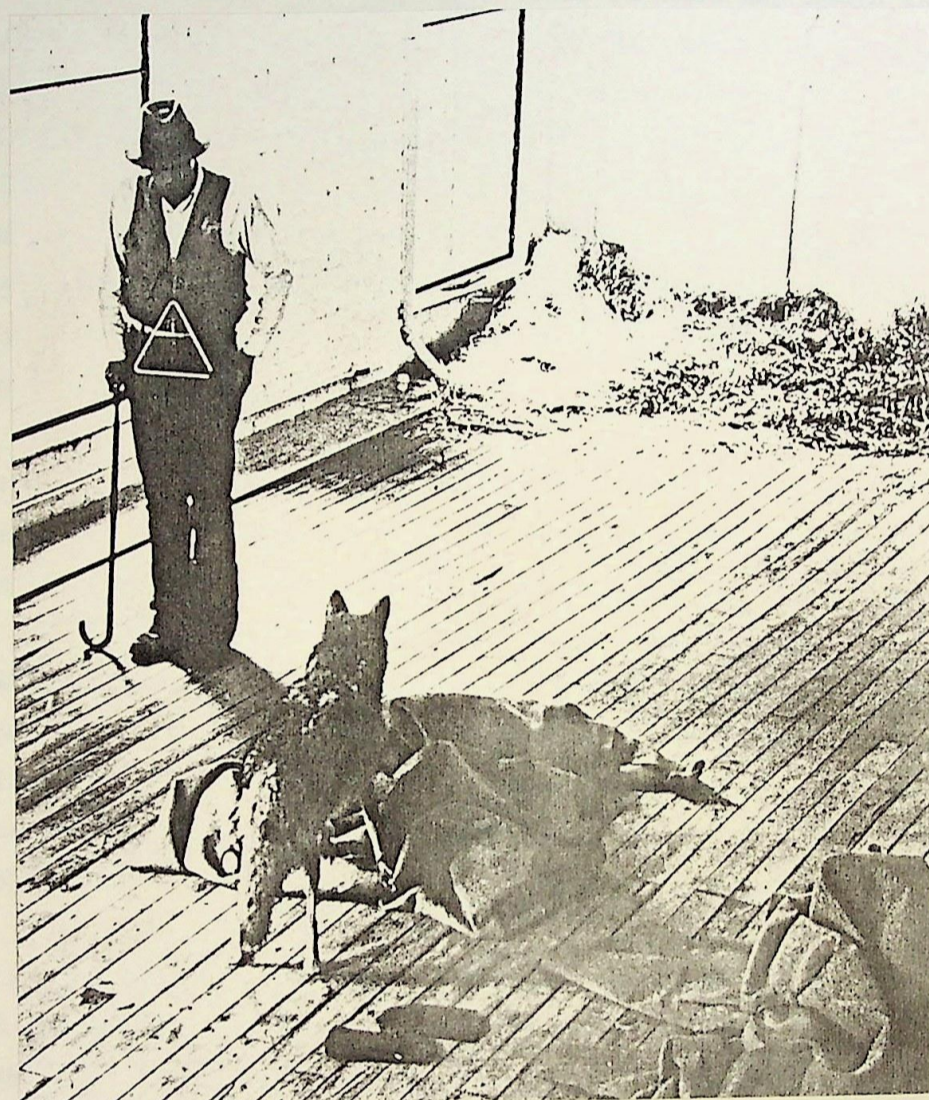
Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me:

From Beuys' direct dealings with natural life came an understanding and a strong affinity with animals. This direct and personal involvement has remained fundamental to Beuys' thinking throughout his life. Many of his metaphors for warmth and growth processes in art come from an investigative interest in the physical lives of animals and their mythological and metempsychosis significances. On the practical side this has meant an increasing involvement in the animals' welfare, therefore in 1966 Beuys founded The Political Party for Animals.

This understanding and recognising the spiritual power of animals is represented truthfully in Beuys' sculptures and performances. He realises that animals represent an enormous source of energy, and that they have still retained their powers of instinct and their affinity with their environment. Animals also used to play a vital part in the spiritual lives of primitive peoples in particular. In the performance "Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me" 1974; (Illus. No. 8), Beuys acknowledges the importance of animals, in this case the Coyote, throughout history, and how the Coyote effected the spiritual and psychological lives of the Red Indian, who once prospered on the great lands of America before the white man came.

Right throughout history the Coyote, was for the Indian, the most powerful among animals. The Indians strongly believed that this animal had extensive seven-sense-powers, so they worshipped the Coyote. For them, the Coyote was the image of transformation, and like the stag and hare in Eurasian myths, he could change his physical state to a spiritual state or vice-versa at will. The Coyote was also noted for his sexual prowess. This quality was very much respected and appreciated in a society where fertility was of great importance.

But, when the white man came, the admirable status of the Coyote was greatly reduced from being highly regarded spiritually and mythologically to a degrading position of being considered a wild and dangerous animal. This transition also parallels with the transition in the status of the Indian. Suddenly, the Indians, who lived in a very highly structured society, were also considered wild



"Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me" 1974; (Illus. No. 8)

savages that had to be suppressed.

For Beuys the persecution of the Indian and the Coyote was indeed a grave deed, and it is this suppression that Beuys deals with in his performance "The Coyote". This is also why Beuys insulated himself, with a large blanket made of felt, from any American influences. Beuys wanted to concentrate only on the Coyote, so when he landed at Kennedy Airport from Germany, he was completely covered with a large felt blanket, insulating himself from outside influences, and was driven directly to the place which he was to share with the Coyote for a full week. When the performance or action was over, he was returned to the Airport in the same fashion, still insulated and slightly worn-out from the week's ordeal.

During the week there were various reactions between the man and the animal, some expected and some not. Beuys' main purpose during the action was to return to the Coyote his mighty spiritual status. He waited for a point during the action when the level of consciousness between man and animal was at a level where it would be possible for Beuys to bring the sense of powerfulness back to the animal. It seems that the Coyote was fully aware of Beuys' intent because neither of them took their eyes off each other during the whole event, each watching the other for the unexpected.

To symbolise man's environment and to represent Beuys' own ideas and experiences, he brought felt objects, walking stick, gloves, flashlight, and heaps of 'The Wall Street Journal'. Interestingly, the Coyote urinated on all the objects, but especially on the newspapers. This could indeed symbolise his contempt for the white man's things.

Beuys' movements during the actions were all preconceived, unlike the Coyote whose movements varied from time to time. Sometimes he was excited by the viewing crowd on the other side of the mesh wall (Illus. No. 9), then he would become quite aggressive towards the objects lying on the floor, or he would become detached and remain sitting on either his straw bed or Beuys' felt bed. Sometimes he would lay down with Beuys or even try to creep beneath the felt blanket.

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Metal Mesh which separates the man and the animal from the
viewers; (Illus. No. 9)



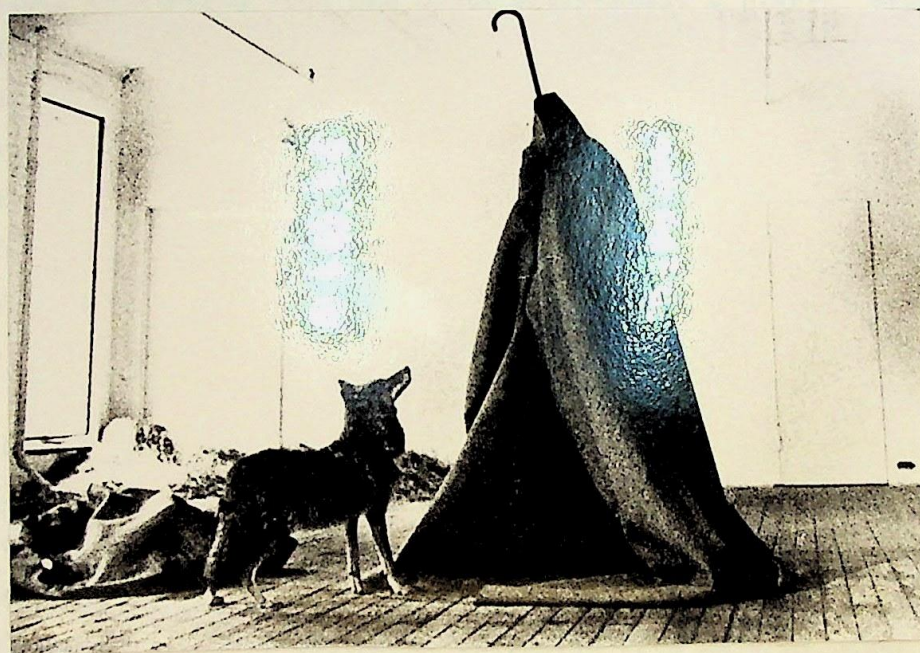
Beuys Striking the Triangle Three Times (Illus. No. 10)

Occasionally, Beuys would jump up, shake off the felt blanket, and strike three clear notes on the metal triangle at his waist (Ilus. No. 10). The high pitch sound shattered the silence. Then there was silence again, but it only lasted for ten seconds to be broken again, this time by the recorded sound of turbine machines. Just then Beuys had all the qualities of a contemporary shaman. In a ritualistic manner he reminds us of and introduces the Coyote to the mechanical world.

The whole action was divided into a series of movements carried out by Beuys, but were determined by the uncalculated moods of the Coyote. Generally, the series lasted about an hour, sometimes much longer. During the week, it was repeated over thirty times, though each time the moods were never the same.

The movements were of Beuys walking to the centre of the space where objects that represented his ideas and experiences were laid. He pulled on the brown felt gloves and wrapped himself completely in the felt blanket, he raised the walking stick well over his head (Illus. No. 11). These animated movements reminds us of a shaman performing some ritual. Here, the Shaman, Beuys, was reaching out for a more psychological and spiritual understanding between himself and the Coyote. This was the stage for which Beuys waited, when the level of consciousness between man and animal was at a level where Beuys could possibly return to the Coyote his sense of spiritual importance and his sense of freedom. It was at these stages that Beuys tried to remind the Coyote of his heritage, as a powerful symbolic image of the transition from the physical state to a spiritual state. Beuys wanted to restore the Coyote's sense of power. He achieved this, but only in a physical sense. After each series of movements he throws his brown gloves to the Coyote. These gloves symbolise, for Beuys, the freedom of movement people have with their hand. So, by throwing them to the Coyote, he gives him freedom of movement.

When the week was finished, Beuys was again wrapped in the felt blanket and embraced the Coyote affectionately. After he left, the Coyote turned quite savage. So, was the performance of any significance to the Coyote? It seems that only Beuys and perhaps the viewers understood the nature of the performance.



Beuys Raising the Walking Stick Over His Head (Illus. No. 11)

"How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare"

Beuys' preoccupation with the mythological and natural processes of Fat, Felt, Wax and Honey, is very much evident in all his sculptures and performances. What interests him mostly is their warmth of character, which forms an important part of the Theory of Sculpture, and their importance extends even to social and political concepts.

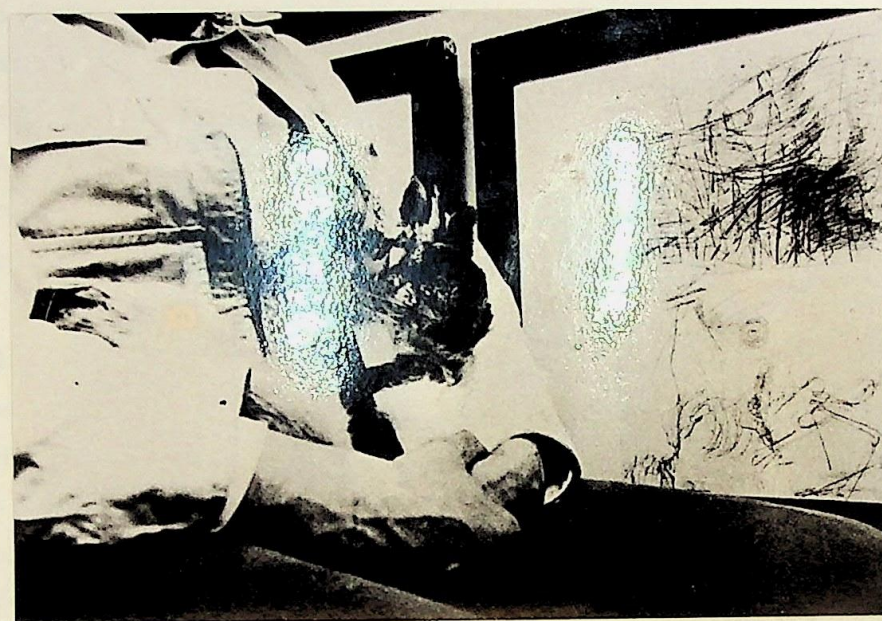
In mythology honey symbolised spirituality and bees were regarded as godly. The production of honey depended fully on an amount of various substances from the whole environment - plants, minerals and the sun played an essential role in the production of honey. This necessary cooperation between the elements is a concept that Beuys readily deals with in most of his work. He strongly feels that human beings, too, should cooperate with other forms of life. He believes that the human being is fundamentally a spiritual being and that our version of the world must be extended to encompass all invisible energies contained in the natural world.

In his performance "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" 1965 (Illus. No. 12), Beuys is fundamentally concerned with the concept of communication and the lack of it. Beuys spent three full hours silently explaining his drawings to a dead hare. He makes us realise that we have alienated ourselves from natural order and life. Beuys believes that all animals have a spiritual being and is capable of communicating with us on perhaps a spiritual level. Similarly, he wished to make us aware of this in the action with the Coyote. But since we have separated ourselves from the natural world, we have lost all physical and spiritual contact with natural beings.

By anointing himself with honey and gold leaf (Illus. No. 13) Beuys brought himself and us back to mythological times. But, on another level, the honey which is the produce of the bee, symbolises the human ability to produce ideas. This concept plays a vital part in the Theory of Sculpture, which also deals with warmth of character and everything being in a state of change. Here, in this action, it is concerned with how we mould and shape our thoughts, and how we communicate our ideas to other beings.

To help communicate his ideas to the dead hare, Beuys placed around

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"How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" 1965; (Illus. No. 12)

him objects that had their own personal symbolic and mythological interpretations (Illus. No. 14), so that he would be better prepared consciously to explain his drawings to the animal. While the various elements illustrate different principles, they share common meaning and intentions, both physically and symbolically. He sits on a stool covered with felt, and under the stool was a number of objects - a radio made from bone and some electrical components. Attached to his shoe was an iron sole, beside which was lying a twin sole made from felt. Sometimes he would tread heavily on the floor with the iron sole which broke-up the ritualistic mumbling sound coming from Beuys. Singly these objects have their own scientific symbolic significances, but, as a group, they represent Beuys' personal ideas and beliefs. Perhaps, by placing familiar objects around him, Beuys reckoned he would be more relaxed and properly prepared to discuss his art with the dead animal.

Fundamentally, this action, which was majestically carried out, concerned itself with the necessity to communicate. Beuys deals with the difficult problems we have when explaining our concepts and feelings to others, especially where art and creative work is concerned. Because we have separated ourselves from the natural organic world, we have lost all our animal instincts. Instead we have adopted the technicalities of the mechanical world and fail to use any "primitive" means of communication. In "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" we consciously or subconsciously return to natural order, and we reach a level where our imaginations and our intuition are the one, and we communicate through Beuys to the Dead Hare.



Beuys Anointed with Honey and Gold Leaf Paint (Illus. No. 13)



Personal Symbolic Objects (Illus. No. 14)

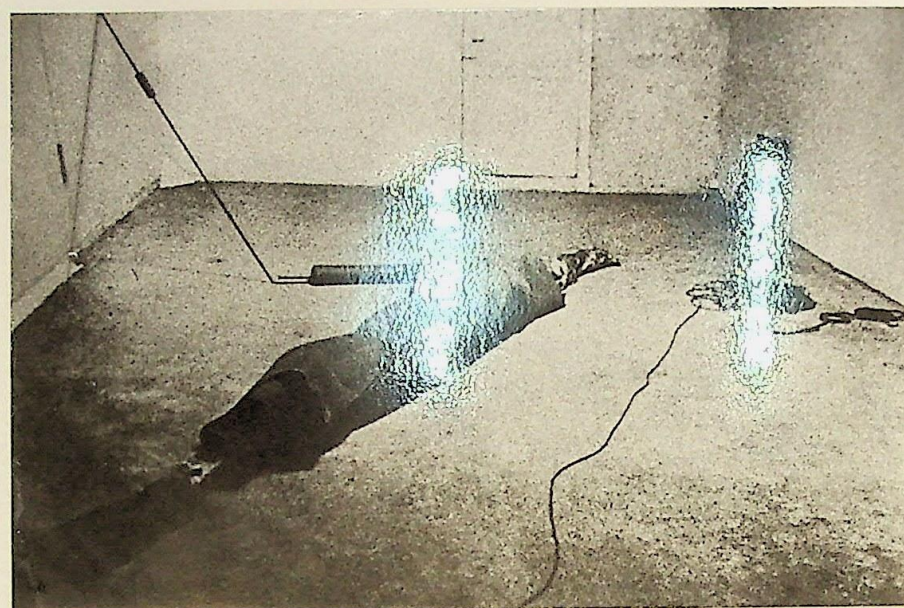
"The Chief"

Every animal on earth utters some sound or other, and it is an old Irish expression to say: "I could hear the grass growing". Sound, and the science of sounds, is a concept which Beuys deals with in the performance "The Chief" 1964 (Illus. No. 15).

In this performance, Beuys, wrapped in a Felt blanket (symbol of insulation) lies in the centre of the room. At each end of the sculptural form were two dead hares (symbols of natural life). Around the space were varied triangular and wedged shapes made from fat and margarine (symbols for metamorphosis). Near the top section of the figure lay a felt roll wrapped around a thick copper rod (copper is a metal used for transmitting or conducting electricity). For Beuys, copper symbolises the communication of ideas and beliefs. He surrounded himself with personal objects representing his own ideologies on life and art. To be in a familiar environment was of great importance to him, as we have already noted in "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" (Illus. No. 12).

The performance lasted eight hours, and during irregular intervals Beuys transmitted, through a microphone, human sounds - breathing, coughing, groaning, grumbling and whispering. There were no distinctive words used. Instead, Beuys reminded us of the original sounds uttered by man. Through these primal sounds, Beuys establishes an intimate relationship with the Dead Hares, which makes us relate more strongly with them. For Beuys, this performance was a way of coming into contact with forms of existence other than the human one. This is a theory he emphasises over and over again in his work: that we must extend our energies to encompass all the invisible energies with which we have lost contact or from which we have separated ourselves. We must aim for contact before new energies can be created.

We clearly see from his work that Beuys regards himself as an educator in search of ways of influencing human development. By doing so, he combines contemporary scientific analysis with historical mythology. Both elements, together with his own personal philosophy, makes us examine our concepts according to which way we have shaped the world we live in. Beuys, through his sculptures and performances, causes us to ask ourselves whether those concepts have benefitted the world.



"The Chief", 1964 ; (Illus. No. 15)

CHAPTER III : NEAGU : IN RELATION TO THE WORK OF BEUYS

Most of the work of Rumanian Sculptor Neagu contains several metaphorical concepts. A lot of his concepts derived from his great interest in human development and how it is influenced by the various forces: spiritual, religious and political. Although his work is aesthetically abstract, it creates several layers of meaning, summarising the artist's thinking. His sculptural images are closely connected to natural organic sources.

Because of the negative attitudes which the Communist Government had towards the creative arts, Neagu emigrated from his native land, Rumania. He moved to London in 1971 so that he could be free to express his own individual ideas. In Western Europe, he felt that there would be more potential for change and, above all, freedom to self-express in his own individual artistic manner. "A Mountain For Every Man" 1968, a painting he completed before he left Rumania, suggests complete suffocation. He achieves this effect by placing tiny men within a zig-zag pattern, each man with his arms outstretched, as if they were tearing to be let free from their confinement.

Neagu believes that to escape from subservience of any system of thought is essential for personal growth. One cannot wallow in the past, instead one should weed through it, collecting ideas that lead to further, more ambitious experiences. Beuys, too, felt very strongly on this issue. He realised that the individual must break away from both external and internal restrictions to succeed in becoming an open-minded and free-thinking individual.

"Going Tornado" 1974 (Illus. No. 16) a performance which was meant to symbolise Neagu's breaking away from political restrictions that once held him tightly.

"To remember that our civil routine is an inhibitory prison and our roads umbilical dependencies, is a difficult affair of heart and mind, of guts and soul, to revolt is to revolt."¹

Neagu sheds all clothing that would restrict his movements. He shaves in ritualistic preparation and slowly, like a shaman, begins to spin. Then stops and attaches the discarded clothing to his body, and once again spins around. These items represent personal

history: he left his homeland in favour of freedom of self-expression, it was the tearing free from censorship, cultural background. Brancusi was still considered a decadent artist by the Communist Government and, in conceptual language, "Going Tornado" contained concerns and detachment, love and judgement, respect for the physical self and the freedom of thoughts and speech.

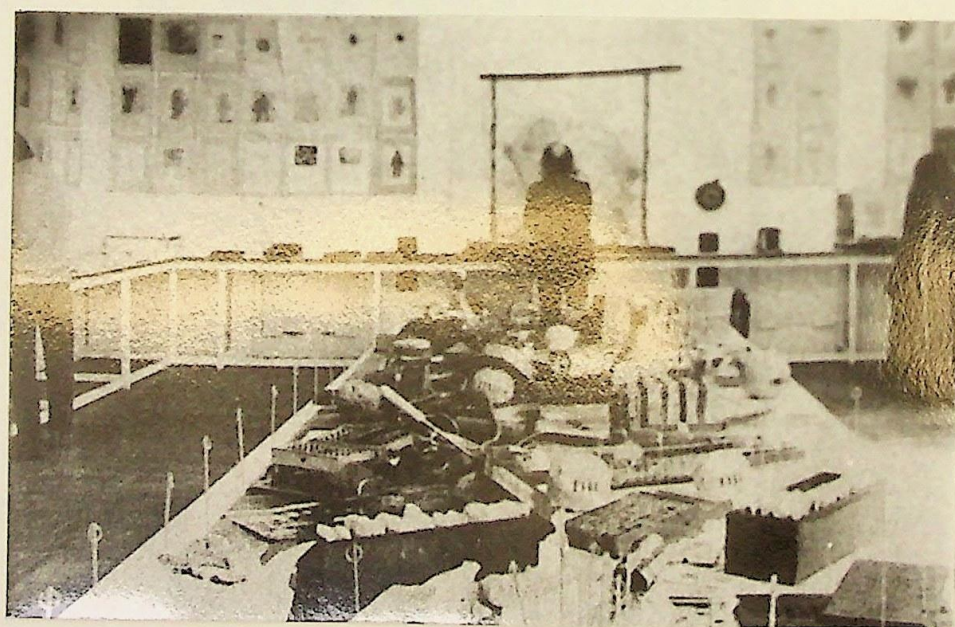
There is one particular piece of work which has some similarities to Beuys's sculptures, "Stag Hunt", 1961, and "Barrague Dull Odde", 1961-1967. These pieces by Beuys were like formalised laboratories, where on several shelves, he placed a number of personal and scientific objects that he had accumulated over the years. Neagu's piece was an installation (Illus. No. 17), where hundreds of drawings and small sculptures littered shelves and tables as if they were waiting to be sorted through and handled. Metal or leather hinges enable lids and flaps to be opened, disclosing the hidden compartments inside, which contained other curious small items. It seems that all the objects had some personal significance to Neagu. A variety of cheap materials, some treated to look old or well-handled, suggesting that the objects have already been used to perform some obscure or forgotten function.

"Box" 1969 (Illus. No. 18) is a magical piece of work, for it contains several interesting concepts as well as the artist's personal feelings. The Box is a frame without walls, floors or ceiling - a temple within which the soul is contained, perhaps, in this case, the artist's soul is contained within the walls of this small "temple". The whole construction gives the impression that Neagu is restricted. This is emphasised by the enclosed linear format of the box. But, the negative spaces seem to be offering him a means of escape - escaping from a rigid Communist society, entering a freer, less domineering one. This piece and the other found objects seem to be like tools used by a shaman to perform some symbolic ritual. But, for Neagu himself, each object contains very personal symbolic importance. Also, like the advancing progression of his intellectual thinking, each group of work builds on the last - adding new elements and discarding irrelevant ones, so that there is a very definite theory developing through his work, all symbolising Neagu's thinking and feelings.

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"Going Tornado" 1974 (Illus. No. 16)



Installation 1969-1973 (Illus. No. 17)



"Box" 1969 (Illus. No. 18)

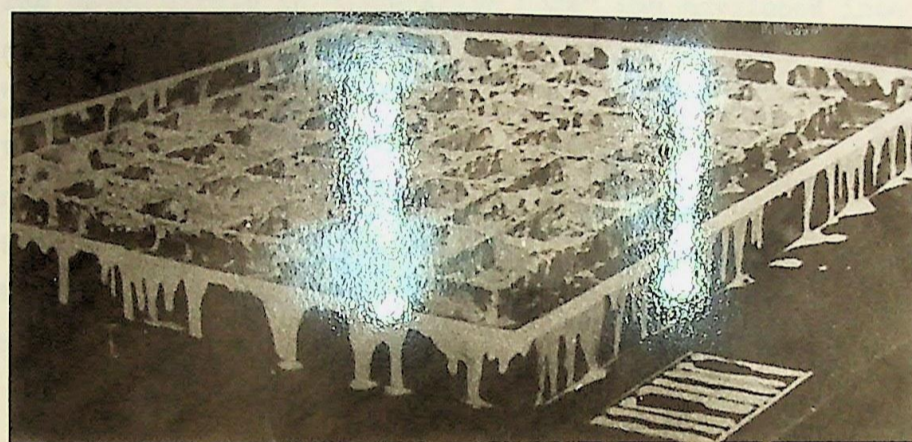
The Sculpture "Model for a Potential Environment" 1970 (Illus. No. 19) developed from "The Box" sculpture. The "Temple" or the "self" metaphor has been used again. The temple being the overall square. All the squares or cells contain a complex of inter-relationships - moral, social and political, all signifying the various aspects that dominate and influence the individual. Coloured pigment has been poured over the cells of the sculpture, perhaps to soften the rigid edges of the walls. It was also used to introduce a different contrast - the hard walls contrast with the sensual flowing substance.

Here, the beehive association is obvious. The pigment flows like honey, collecting in the recesses. Also, the various cells, making up the whole square, are similar to the structure of a honeycomb. The honey metaphor is used in a different context to that in which Beuys used it. Honey for Beuys symbolised growth, warmth and energy. But, for Neagu, honey symbolised the complete friction between the individual and his environment and his society. The flowing pigment signifies how the individual is being smothered by a pre-structured society. The fact that some coloured pigment flows over the outer walls suggest some means of escape and hope for mankind.

Neagu continues to make sculpture and drawings in a very personal style - each piece develops from the last, further advancing and clarifying his ideas. His basic concern is in the development of human nature, and how it is conditioned by the environment and society in which it strives.

Nevertheless, it seems strange, sculpturally speaking, that he begins to construct the series of "Hyphens". Though they are conceptually very much in line with what he was thinking in Rumania. "Hyphen" means a "coach of unity". For Neagu, they are tools that help the development of one idea from another. These sculptures, in fact, contain strong metaphorical elements. The legs of the sculpture - two short and parallel, a third longer and sharply pointed - represent the mother (nature), the father (culture) and their offspring (art). The three legs form the three points of a triangle on the ground surface. In Indian mythology, the triangle shape symbolises the unification of life: one point of the triangle symbolises the individual, the other his god and the next mother

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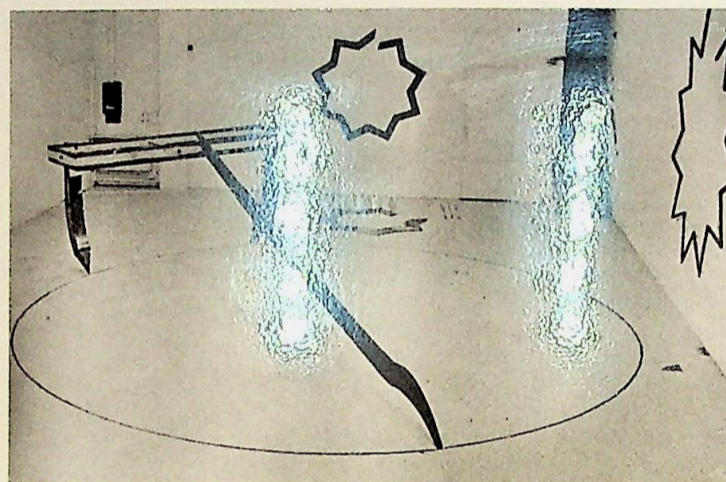
"Model for a Potential Environment" 1970 (Illus. No. 19)

nature, all suggesting complete unification and dependency on each other.

It is clear that Neagu's work is also evolving towards greater abstraction. "Generative Code" 1979, for instance, which like the "Hyphens", contain the three figures of the hierarchy: culture, nature and art. We find this statement is being made in a much more simplified manner compared with other work completed up to this stage. Its simplification suggests a summary of all his ideas, signifying complete awareness.

The outer circle in "Generative Code" was developed into the star-shaped wall pieces that accompany "The Hyphens" to create "Fusions" (Illus. No. 20). Neagu's work has developed from the tactility and sensual appeal, through the performances phase, and now entered a third phase of symbolic abstraction. We realise that abstraction for Neagu was a means of clarifying his ideas. A stylised form of drawing and sculpture results from this stage, symbolising in a symbolic manner the artist's personal ideas.

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"Hyphens" and "Fusions" 1979 (Illus. No. 20)

CHAPTER IV : INTRODUCTION ON ADISH KAPOOR:

I simply could not hold back my excitement when I first encountered Adish Kapoor's work in the Tate Gallery, London, in September 1983. All I could think of doing was to rub my fingers along the contours and various forms placed on the floor. The forms were shaped so simply that I could not believe the powerful impact they had. They were coloured in ordinary red and yellow powder pigment but, in the way they were placed on the floor, the colours seemed to explode - one reflecting the other. Soon, I realised that this powerful presence was due to the simplistic shapes and the brilliant powder pigments, both uniting together causing a wonderful sensation. From my research I learnt that this unity of form and colour was one of the many concepts running through Kapoor's work.

I have divided this chapter into sections related to Kapoor's yearly developments.

Earlier Work:

Kapoor was born in Bombay, India, in 1954, but spent most of his life living in Europe, where he lost some contact with his native culture. This lack of intimacy was very much present in the artist's earlier work.

One piece in particular which expressed "an absence" was made in 1977. Here, Kapoor used transparent gauze curtain, with painted gestural marks, to divide a room. Behind the screen, visible but inaccessible, were nine ceramic bowls placed religiously on shelves. In front of the screen were pieces of both broken and geometric plaster shapes just spontaneously scattered on the floor. The centre of the room contained a small mechanism which made a regular sound - a continual sound which coincided with the calling sound in Kapoor's heart, for the unification of the objects on both sides of the dividing screen.

The screen represents Kapoor, himself, torn between two traditions. Wanting to go towards his native tradition, represented by the nine ceramic bowls, but fears being categorised an "Indian artist" because of the restrictions this would have caused in his work. At this time, Kapoor's only aim was to arrive at an art that would eventually look like nothing else other than what he wanted it to represent. This ambition also reflects his own personal concerns, which were to capture the psychological and emotional processes inherent to all of us whatever our cultural background.

A visit to his native land, India, in 1979, proved to be the turning point in his career. In India Kapoor began to develop an affinity with a culture from which he originated. At once, he soaked in a spirituality that was completely Indian, both religiously and culturally. This reintegration with the Hindu culture was crucial for he is half Hindu and half Jewish. So, he quickly recognised the importance of both to his identity. Kapoor remarks that all his work after this visit were about learning how to be Indian. This can be clearly seen in his work, which from now on contains very strong Hindu mythological, religious, art and architectural concepts.

Kapoor was especially influenced by the mounds of coloured pigment

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in red and orange that the Indian women sold for temple rituals and cosmetic purposes. All these colours, and many others, have their own symbolic interpretation, and this is an aspect Kapoor quickly introduces into his work.

Works completed Between 1980 - 1982:

After his return to London in February, 1980, Kapoor began, for the first time, making sculptures using powder pigments - inspired by the coloured powders he had seen used in India. In the beginning the shapes were made entirely from ground chalk or else plaster maquettes were covered with coloured pigments. He began placing items, such as bowls, things made from gesso and clay, drawings on paper, beside the powder forms. Suddenly, it was as if what was behind and in front of the transparent gauze screen (in the installation of 1977) was beginning to formalise in a more positive manner.

The use of colour had a most instant effect on the work. Kapoor always felt that colour had an essential part to play in sculpture. He especially felt that colour could be symbolic, as in Indian mythology. The introduction of colour was also the solution to many sculptural problems Kapoor had prior to this. It is true that colour, especially in the way that it is applied, coheres the form into a gestalt. Therefore, colour is substantial, and at the same time, through its sheer strength and unifying characteristics, transforms the object into an image.

In India, red is usually the colour of the female - women wear a red mark ("Tika") on their foreheads. This is a symbol of fertility. White represents the male. Though Kapoor tends to reverse the symbolic significance of the colours. This, he feels, is necessary to help expand his ideas. One of the most important elements he looks for in his work is harmony. Harmony implies unity, between man and woman, between form and colour.

The importance of powder sprinkled on his objects can never be underestimated. Its rapid introduction enriches the whole body of Kapoor's work, for it was a means by which he was able to introduce life into his constructions. The application of the coloured powder sparked off a powerful energy which was very much lacking in his previous works. This energy unites both the form with the colour, creating a magical environment - an environment within which one is eager to get lost - one completely forgets about reality. Here, exists a most extraordinary world, full of exquisite fantasy and elaborate myth. A world of simplicity which has a very

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basic structured society where the most important elements are nature, man and god.

This fusion of sexual and religious passion is found in Hinduism, and it is here that Kapoor gathers all his sources. The first powder works, of 1981-1982, have been made with the idea of the pieces being uniting objects of a group sculpture or individual sculpture in their own right. Separately he entitles them "1000 Names".

At this stage, the pigments Kapoor began to use were white, red, blue and yellow. These colours also emphasise the same symbolic interpretations as those in Hinduism: red and white as male and female; Krishnas blue body - a very beautiful man/god - with his yellow sash. As a rule, Kapoor would use these symbolic colours, though, sometimes, he would reverse their significance to suit his own personal ideology. Naturally, he also feels a need to explore and expand and not totally confine his ideas to the more conventional, traditional concepts of his culture.

Kapoor feels that the symbolic significance of colour is not so important as the effect, the relationship between the colour and form, and the different coloured objects, has on the viewer.

Four Series of Objects Completed During 1981-1982:

Kapoor made four installations during this period - 1981-1982. This time the objects were shaped to be placed in relation with each other, thus, creating a powerful magnetic presence. The four groups have their own personalities and visually they are quite different from each other. Each piece or installation develops from the previous one. This gradual development reflects Kapoor's own artistic development.

Kapoor's first installation, "To Reflect an Intimate Part of Red", 1981 (Illus. No. 21), contains five objects. Four of these objects, coloured with red powder, surrounds a dome shape which is coloured in yellow. The shapes are made from ground chalk and powder pigments. The coloured powder is applied with a brush to remove any traces of being man-made. This effect gives the installation a mystic effect. It seems that the organic shapes have just appeared up from the ground. The halo of pigment around the individual shapes establishes this concept.

It gives the feeling that the shapes have just pushed themselves through the ground. Meantime, spilling parts of the colour on the ground around them, like the pollen falling from flowers. The halo also makes this transition - from one existence to another - more subtle. Sometimes, I feel, that the "fallen" pigment suggests that the objects are static, but I suppose that their brilliant colours rescue them, causing them to pound with vitality. Also, some of the shapes are reflected onto the shiny floor. This effect was not preconceived, but it works wonderfully, because this important element echoes the real shapes, causing a balance between reality and illusion.

Subconsciously, Kapoor was thinking of birth while constructing this installation. The voluminously organic shapes strongly suggests fertility and growth. The concept of birth could also symbolise the birth of a new discovery - discovering a fresher, more positive, means of self-expression.

In this installation, the curved organic shapes contrast with the architectural corner type shape. It is also the tallest shape,

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"To Reflect an Intimate Part of Red" 1981, (Illus. No. 21)

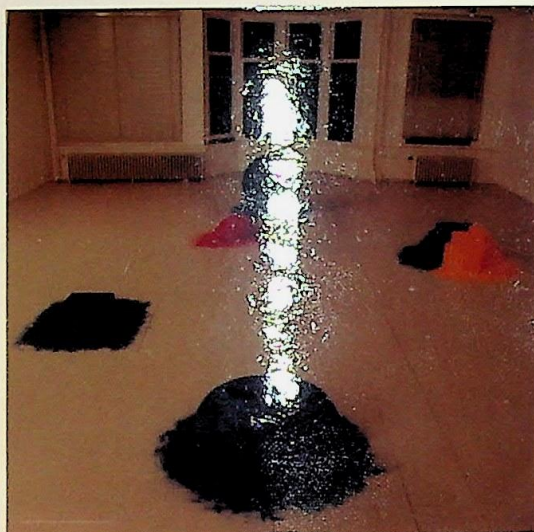
but the red pigment blends it perfectly with the other red forms. This fusion of the organic and the architectural is typical of Persian and Mughal carpets. The introduction of these contrasting qualities was a natural progression, not a rapid and unseen change.

The sculpture, however abstracted and magical, are, in fact, very humane and sensual pieces. They seek to be touched, for one could not resist their roundness, their colour, their hypnotic brilliance. Kapoor consciously keeps them close to the physical. Each piece is scaled to suit his own personal physical condition. As a result of this, the viewer can also relate more freely to the work.

The tactility of their surfaces intices one to touch, but the powder forbids this, for it would come off on one's fingers, eventually destroying the whole sculpture. This is one of the many apparent contradictions in Kapoor's work. He also has said:

"I have no formal concerns. I don't wish to make sculpture about form - it doesn't really interest me. I wish to make sculpture about belief, or about passion, or about experience, that is outside of material concern." ².

This, I feel contradicts all the formal qualities of his objects. Without their form or shape, these objects would cease to exist. It is not enough for him to be satisfied with the personal symbolic significance of his work, the viewer needs the form. The form leads one into the various concepts entailed in the sculpture. Overall, this installation is a most relaxing piece, made so by its curvy organic shapes, displaying a feeling of complete contentment.



"Part of the Red", 1981 (Illus. No. 22)

In the second installation, "Part of the Red" 1981, (Illus. No. 22), the objects are painted in blue, yellow and red. The concept here is that the blue and yellow represent different parts of the red. The various shapes were moved around a number of times until Kapoor was totally satisfied with the end arrangement. This strengthens the concept of the artist's personal touch - only he knows when the objects are properly placed, only he can achieve harmony and beauty through ideal shapes and a system of placing an object suitably proportioned and complementary to the next.

The contrast between the curved and the architectural shapes is extremely potent. The sharp corners of the temple-like shapes are softened by the sprinkling of powder pigment as in the previous installation, "To Reflect an Intimate Part of the Red". All the shapes in his second installation, regardless of their size and shape, unite together, making the room space very special.

In Kapoor's work, the repetition of shapes is yet another important element. In this piece, we meet again the hemispherical shape, with a surface like that of a cactus without the spikes. The shape is much larger, but, because of the same blue pigment, it subtly domineers the whole environment. Shapes like the front "bowl" reminds us of the nine bowls in the 1979 installation. Perhaps, this is of a more personal significance for Kapoor himself.

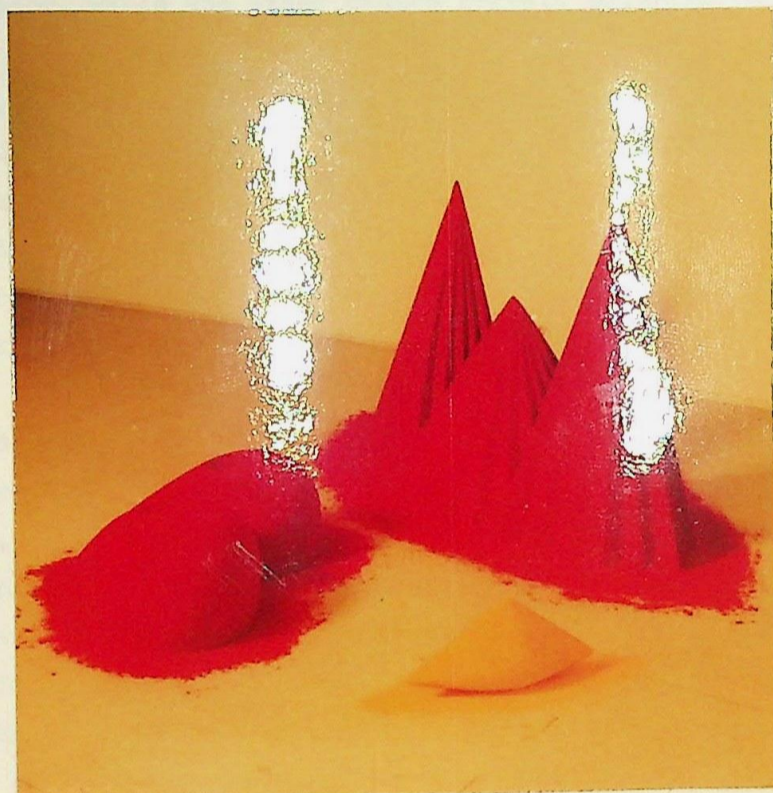
All the objects are placed in such a way that they form a circle, even though the red shape slightly interferes with this concept. Again, we are reminded of the most basic of all symbols. In all mythologies the circle symbolises unity. For Kapoor, unity symbolises all aspects of life. The bond between man and woman and their god; between fertility and growth are constant themes in his sculpture. The curved shapes suggest natural organic growth whereby the architectural shapes signify a temple which means "the body" in Hindu and Christian religions. The evolution of man and nature parallels with the evolution of Kapoor's objects - one object giving birth to another.

With the third group, "As If to Celebrate, I Discovered a Mountain Blooming With Red Flowers" 1982 (Illus. No. 23), Kapoor combines similar forms into the one shape. The three-peaked mountains shape, and the two breast-like shapes are coloured in red, and one smaller shape is in yellow. This was the installation I saw in the Tate Gallery in Summer 1983, and it indeed had an immediate impact on me. I so much wanted to touch them. The fact that they were covered in powder would not have stopped me, but the barrier around the piece did. If that barrier was not there, the piece would indeed get destroyed.

Metaphorically, the three-peaked mountain symbolised "the body". "The body" is characterised by the phallic and breast-like shapes. This larger shape commands the pair of red breasts - their points joining together to form a heart-shape. The third shape, which is much smaller, is lifted off the ground, and its boat-like appearance suggests a flowing movement between the other larger shapes. The title suggests a rustic environment. This is so when the installation is viewed from a distance. But, in fact, the whole environment, instead, contains more humane sensual qualities.

This piece is one of the most important in the series of installations, because Kapoor has reached his full maturity. The objects are far more metaphorically obvious and the pieces formulate a more comprehensive story.

The close placing of the objects suggests a coming together of all his concepts. Also, it is possible to get a better view of the sculptural qualities. The three-peaked mountain suggests upward movement, pointing up to the sky, while the points of the breast shapes lead the eye outside the invisible triangular shape, formed by special placing of the three separate objects. The curved organic shapes contrast with the architectural qualities of the three-peaked mountain, yet again being of the same surface texture as the others, it is possible to overlook its contrasting qualities. The boat-like shape, even though of a different colour, unites the other shapes, pointing in the direction of both, yet it also points towards the sky, and it also points into and outside the invisible triangle. This shape becomes the binding agent of the whole installation. Looking deeper into the piece, I realise that this yellow object could indeed symbolise the off-spring of the other objects, though if so, it has more paternal qualities.



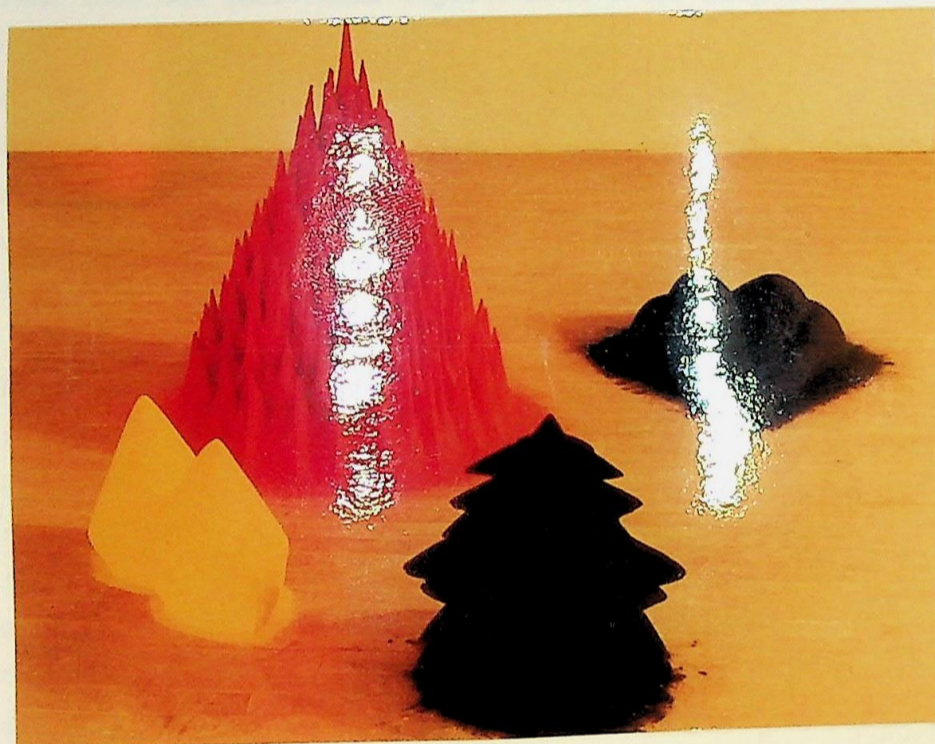
"Blooming with Red Flowers" 1982 (Illus. No. 23)

The final group of installations, "White Sand, Red Millet, Many Flowers", 1982 (Illus. No. 24), includes, for the first time, two objects powdered with black pigment, and the shapes themselves have been very ambitiously constructed. The amazingly jagged surface of the mountain shape makes me wonder how it was possibly constructed. It looks too natural to be man-made. The black shapes are of female origin; the front one being a mountain of breasts; the other is an opening vagina. The black vagina seems to be sweeping across the floor, while the other stands erect, pointing to the sky.

Again, we are confronted with Indian mythology: Siva, whose colour is red, is "the Lord of the Mountain; while Parvati, his wife, is also the daughter of the mountain. Parvati's erotic aspect is golden, but in one particular myth, she leaves to practice asceticism on the peak of the mountain because Siva called her "black", referring to the darkness of her skin.

I find that the colour black overweights the whole installation. I understand the contrasts of the various different shapes and sizes, but, here, the colours seem to fight each other for breathing space. This I find hard to accept. Even the scale of the red mountain does not seem to hold its place in this environment. Thankfully, the yellow object retains its own sense of authority. One black shape would be enough or even, perhaps, just the two black shapes with the yellow, completely excluding the red.

The completion of the series of four installations was indeed a revolutionary act, for it entailed cutting himself away from concepts that restricted his ideas, smothering his natural senses. Revolutionary in the sense that he broke loose from all those restrictions, welcoming new ideas and believing in their potential.



"White Sand, Red Millet, Many Flowers" 1982, (Illus. No. 24)

The "1000 Names" Completed During 1980-1982:

Each time he makes an object that is exhibited on its own, Kapoor gives it the title "1000 Names". Kapoor feels a necessity to make single objects because, he maintains, that all objects have their own individual beauty and presence. Although, he also feels that the objects on their own have not got the strength to survive, or not strong enough to create the impact he wants. I feel that the individual objects need other shapes and forms to complete a successfully balanced unity. It would be like planting a flower in earth without water, or without being exposed to sunlight. Naturally, the plant would not be able to survive without those essential elements. Fundamentally, Kapoor's work is concerned with growth, and his "growth" - organic shapes and objects - demand the presence of others so that a complete environment is created.

Kapoor begins with no preconceived ideas of the shape or size of an entire installation. He just constructs one object at the time until he has enough information to put together an organised environment. Experience has taught him that one shape evolves from the previous one, thus, continuously building up a vocabulary of newer more exciting shapes and forms. Making more than one object gives the installation a sense of place within which one can discover all sorts of events and experience all sorts of feelings. It is quite possible for the spectator to get totally engrossed in the various contours of the individual shapes and forms. Each one has a different story to tell, all stories unite together, forming the main concept that lead to its construction.

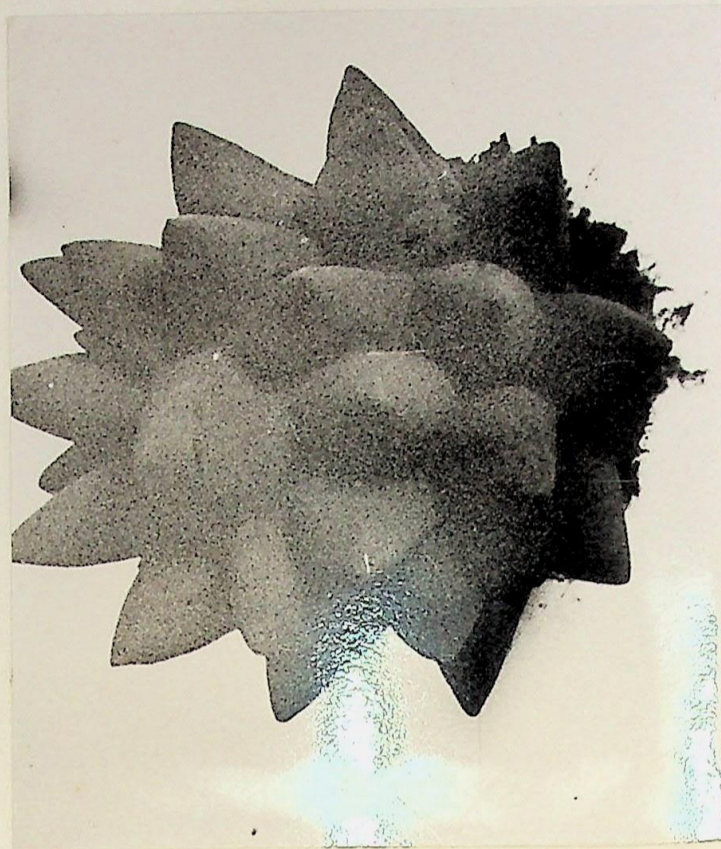
Some of the single objects are indeed magnificent in their construction and colour. Even if they sometimes lack some mythological purpose, aesthetically they are immensely powerful. Their individual sensuality makes one seek a more personal intimacy. With "1000 Names" 1982 (Illus. No. 25), a sexual intimacy is created by the voluptuous quality of the shapely breasts. This shape is slightly top-heavy. Perhaps, if Kapoor continued to rub more powder on the wall - creating some sort of frame - this piece would look more natural. Here, it looks as if it was just placed on the wall, lacking all the sprouting qualities present in the objects placed on the floor, especially the smooth organic shapes with the halo of coloured powder around their bases.

These shapes successfully create a feeling of a more natural growth, excluding any man-made qualities.

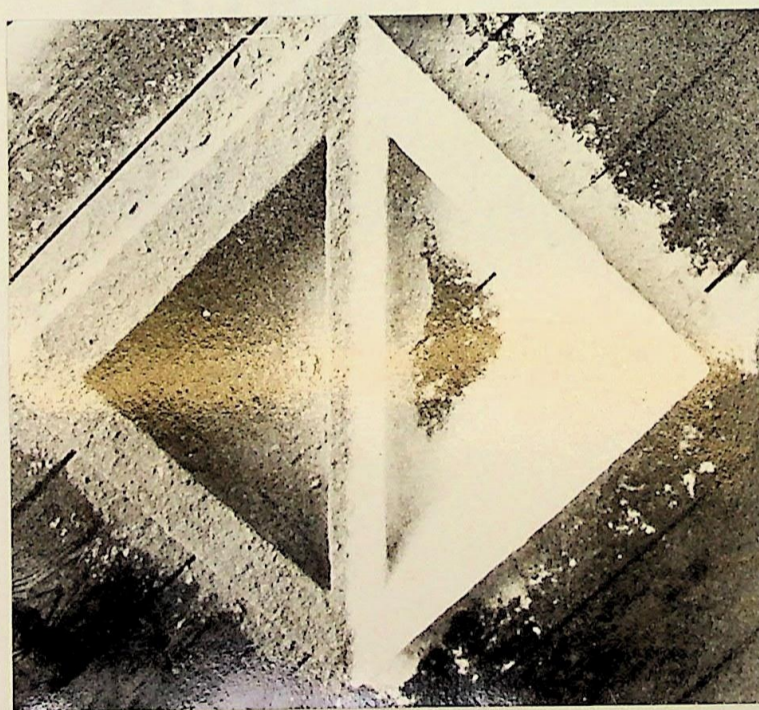
Although the geometric shape of "1000 Names", 1981 (Illus. No. 26), plays havoc with our preconceived concepts on organic growth, it has all the qualities of an object that just appeared - powder pigment has been sprinkled over its contours, leaving a halo of pigment around its edges. This effect gives the feeling of sudden growth. But this cannot be so, because its geometric structure suggests that it was man-made. Kapoor cleverly sprinkles powder pigment, causing bizarre illusionary effects. This piece of work contains two shapes in one - symbolising male and female. The two-in-one shape suggests unity of the elements necessary for the evolution of man-kind.

It seems strange, at first sight, that Kapoor should have two objects in "1000 Names", 1981 (Illus. No. 27). This piece of sculpture consists of a square shape and an organic shape, representing the male and the female respectively. I feel that the placing of these objects give the impression that a spiritual ritual is about to take place. It is as if a shaman is religiously about to place the organic white shape into the red square, thus ensuring the unification of man with woman. The white and red pigment are excellent complementary colours. Both, individually, are extremely strong colours, so, together, in this piece, one colour does not overpower the other. Somehow, the simplicity of the objects does not justify the colour. Without the colour, the objects would not suggest a ritual presence.

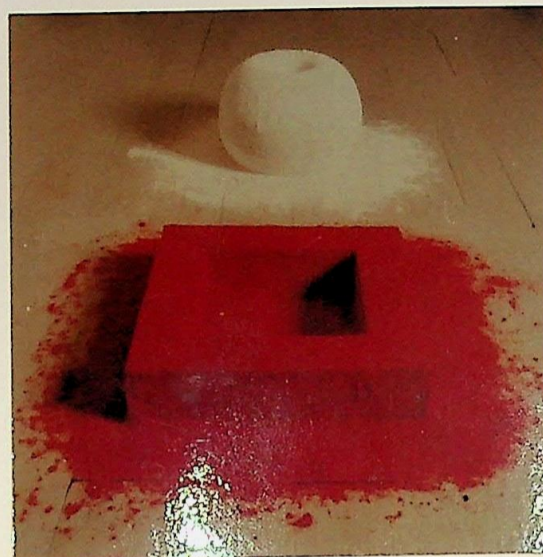
The "1000 Names Installation" 1981 (Illus. No. 28), contains a very delicate atmosphere. All the objects have a wonderful flowing feeling. The only weakness, aesthetically speaking, is the white object and the white section of the yellow object. The yellow and red pigments complement each other, but the white pigment seems to upset this balance. The red architectural shape is the most potentially successful piece. Its two and three-dimensional quality causes an interesting sensation, and it helps to combine the sweeping feeling created by the floor objects with the perpendicular surface of the wall. If Kapoor was able to achieve this effect with the numerous breast shapes, (Illus. No. 25), it would have been a far more successful piece of sculpture. The illustration



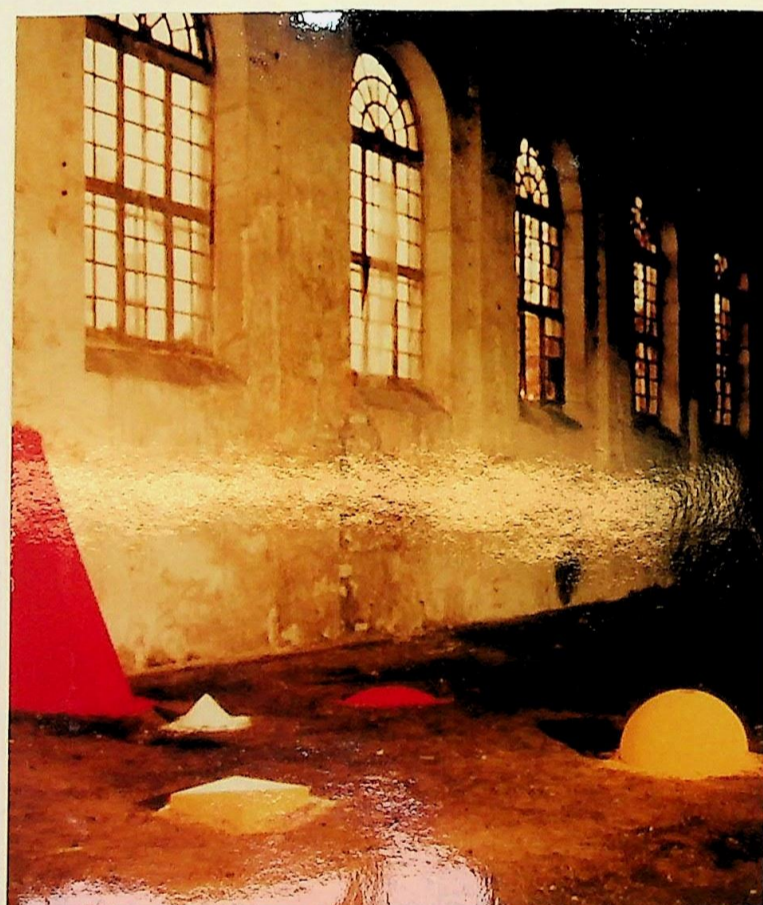
"1000 Names" 1982; (Illus. No. 25)



"1000 Names" 1981; (Illus. No. 26)



"1000 Names" 1982; (Illus. No. 27)



"1000 Names" Installation, 1981; (Illus. No. 28)

of the "1000 Names Installation" tends to make me forget that it is a combination of individual objects which exist on their own and only come together for the purpose of the exhibition.

This necessary combination further emphasises the fact that single objects lose their individual spirituality when placed on their own. They religiously, spiritually, and aesthetically, need the companionship of other objects, especially if they are to fulfill Kapoor's own personal concepts.

Works Completed During 1982-1983:

It is very clear at this stage that Hindu culture emerges constantly in all Kapoor's sculpture. Like a faithful Hindu, he lives by its religion and myths, respecting them utterly. All the forms he constructs rely on each other. The survival of the whole mass is essential to Kapoor's belief. With the togetherness, an atmosphere of tranquility is established, giving the space, within which the objects are contained, an eternally powerful presence.

In the "Red in the Centre" (Illus. No. 29) completed in 1982, it is quite clear that Kapoor has relied less on the powder pigments. At first, this appears to be a rapid change. In fact, it is a natural progression. Kapoor has always felt the need to explore other possibilities. He does this through experimenting with colour to the full of its potential. As his work progresses, we will be sure to find that Kapoor has discovered all the possibilities and limitations of the powder pigment. Perhaps, in this particular piece of work, he feels the need to experiment with the actual strength of the form without applying colour to its contours.

Instead of a skin of powder pigment, which was the main characteristic quality of his earlier objects, Kapoor leaves the natural surfaces of most of the shapes exposed. The objects are made from clay - the most basic material known to man, and perhaps the most obvious material Kapoor should adopt. Clay is of great significance to him. It was the most suitable material for symbolising the earth Goddess. Clay has been used from when time began to represent the mother earth, and also for functional objects - cups, bowls, etc. Kapoor takes up this concept, making extremely earthy organic shapes, all representing growth and birth.

I find this piece more interesting in its potential than in its own right. The brown wooden floor boards tend to soak up the similar colour of the clay forms. This cohering of one environment within another does not seem to work. The natural growths give a feeling of warmth and tranquility. This environment is being inhibited by the rigid cold hard-edged surfaces of the gallery space. This installation is unlike the other in that there is not the harmony and unity between the shapes. The coloured powder sprinkled on the top section of the boat-like shape is more like an after-thought than a pre-calculated decision. This, I feel, upsets the aesthetic

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The "Red in the Centre" (Illus. No. 29)

value of the sculpture. The extremely refined surfaces of the earlier work has been replaced by a much rougher surface. Before, the shapes were presented in their glorified state, now, in their naked state, they represent the processes of fertility and growth in a far more realistic manner.

The "wagging" tongue on the wall, the only coloured object, looks very alive and full of vitality. This is mostly due to its glowing pigment and its shadow cast on the wall. Lighting helps create the effect Kapoor wants: casting shadows from one object onto another helps unite the objects in a more illusionistic manner. It also introduces a fourth dimension, which often plays games with one's imagination. Aesthetically, this installation is not as exciting as the earlier ones, especially "White Sand, Red Millet, Many Flowers". The shapes in "Red in the Centre" are much calmer, especially the boat-like shape and the oval shape, whose centre invites one to enter. This oval shape would indeed be most powerful on its own. Inside its contours it seems to contain a world which is more fantastical than that of the outside world.

"Red in the Centre II" refers even more closely to the metaphors of growth and birth. The work, which is a single large object, contains animal-like qualities. This piece, with its soft wavy contours, is given movement by rib-like ridges flowing down along its contours, coming to a point, from which emerges a peculiar curved horn, around which lays a halo of turquoise powder succeeding in retaining contact with more organic qualities. Different concepts - male and female, birth and organic growth - which would previously have been divided amongst a group of individual objects, are here contained in a single object.

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CHAPTER V : KLEIN, IN RELATION TO KAPOOR

Klein's work contains much of the same spiritualism as is found in Kapoor's work. The work of these two artists can be strongly linked together, especially their concepts on colour.

Klein adopted a Zen (The Buddhist) version of theosophical cosmology, where "life" or "the spirit" is identified as space. And this "life" or "spirit" is represented by colour. There is an affinity with Kapoor's religious and mythological Hindu beliefs, where in India, colour is used symbolically. But Klein believes that the colour blue has exceptional spiritual and symbolic qualities, more so than any other colour.

The colour blue is exceptional because, according to Zen teachings, it is able to dissolve itself into space instantly, becoming part of the atmosphere. It also has a hypnotic quality, which draws one into its boundless atmospheric space. Klein believes that when one becomes contained in the vastness of this spacious colour, its atmospheric quality seems to rid us of all our inhibitions and restrictions - restrictions imposed by ourselves or others; political, religious or social.

So, for Klein, colour symbolised freedom of self-expression. He thus involved himself in the aspect of space (colour) as being the Pure Spirit. He strongly felt that by saturating himself within the limitless sensitivity of space (colour), he would return to a purer existence.

Before long Klein was regarded as an international phenomena, especially known for his blue monochrome paintings. At first glance, these appear to be quite simple, but in fact, they are complex in construction and concept. The delicately varied surfaces and texture of the unvaried and vibrating colours: blue, gold, yellow, pink, white, black and green (he sometimes used other colours) creates an environment which engulfs the viewer. One becomes totally engrossed in the contours of the calm or vibrant silhouette shapes (Illus. No. 30). We are reminded of Kapoor's three-dimensional shapes, their silhouette quality stimulated by the vibrant colours bouncing off a white background.

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Performance of Anthropometeries of the Blue Age, 1960 (Illus.no.30)

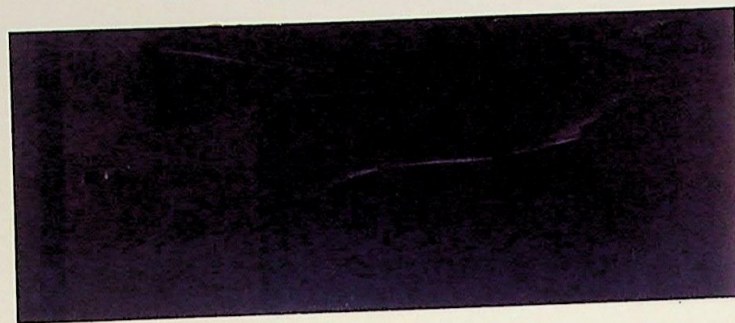
Klein once stated that the paint on his paintings and sculptures are rolled so to eliminate any evidence of human touch. This is true of his blue monochromes completed in 1955 (Illus. No. 31) and 1959 (Illus. No. 32), but it can hardly be true of figurative paintings completed during 1960 and onwards. During one of his many performances during the '60's, two naked female models appear carrying buckets of the "International Klein Blue" paint. With verbal guidance from Klein the models applied the paint to their bodies and pressed themselves against huge sheets of paper - as such becoming living brushes.

This technique does not justify, firstly, the previous statement about the need to saturate himself within the limitations of colour. I feel that the performance lacked complete physical involvement on the part of the artist - Klein should have been the "living brush", applying the paint to his own body. Secondly, this performance does not justify the statement regarding the removal of the human touch. The performance, right from the beginning, contained very strong elements of human contact and personal touch. The layers of paint applied on to the paper with the models' bodies suggested that they had left a coloured version of their outer skins printed on the paper, also containing obvious skin textures and definite human shapes.

As we know, Kapoor also concerns himself in removing any evidence of human touch. But, unlike Klein, he justifies this concept. Kapoor's objects contain strong elements of being constructed magically, except those that are geometric in shape.

Klein's oeuvre contains two hundred of these "living brush" works. Sometimes he sprayed paint around the contours of the models, creating a negative effect. This exciting effect is something that is lacking in Kapoor's work. The coloured halo around the various objects would have caused a most bizarre effect, especially if he further experimented with the negative shapes intersecting each other.

In Klein's "People Begin to Fly" of 1961, we quickly recognise the effect of the sprayed negative shapes. The extreme active atmosphere could also be due to the definite movements of the



Untitled blue monochrome, 1955; (Illus. No. 31)



Untitled blue monochrome, 1959; (Illus. No. 32)



"People Begin to Fly" 1961; (Illus. No. 33)

figures. Also, the airy quality of the sprayed outlines adds to the vibrant atmosphere of the whole painting. The figures seem to leap out from the space within which they are contained, stimulating a desire for the viewer to become physically involved.

"I seek above all.....to create.....this transparence, this void immeasurable in which lives the sprit permanent and absolute, freed from all dimensions. The absolute void.....is entirely naturally the true pictorial space."³ Yves Klein.

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CHAPTER VI : CONCLUSION

All the artists I have just discussed have remarkable similarities. Although they come from different countries and societies, their concepts on art and their philosophies on life can be very much linked together.

Beuys seeks to bring out the whole idea of an enlarged understanding on life and art. He sees himself as an educator who is in search of ways of influencing human development. He reckons that everything starts with the "thought" and that it is the artist's task to bring people better information or even a better formulation of what their own needs and thoughts are. Beuys's concepts on the freedom of self-expression are most interesting. He insists that freedom lies in the mind, for it is in the mind that we are able to formulate thoughts, and from our thoughts we become creative. Through the usage of various mediums: sculpture, performances and drawings, we can release our energies and thoughts, and establish an essential means of artistic self-expression

Both Beuys and Neagu have instilled in me a courage to challenge preconceived ideas - concerning religious, political and social behaviour - that have always influenced my life. Such negative influences created attitudes that stilted my personal and artistic progress. Beuys and Neagu, themselves, have an overwhelming strength of character that is, in fact, quite powerful. In a sense, they are like contemporary shamen, making sure we keep in touch with the basics for living. I strongly feel that Beuys and Neagu have managed to keep humanity intact through their massive observations on natural order and the mental capacity of the human mind. We could all truly learn from their insight and decide how we too could benefit society.

On the other hand, it is the more aesthetic aspects of the works completed by Kapoor and Klein that interest me mostly. It is clear what importance and symbolic significance the various shapes and forms and their respective colours hold for the artists.

In the case of Kapoor, the visual impact was immediate, and the whole mysterious quality created a magical atmosphere which was very hypnotic in its effect. The simplicity of his conventionally-

structured shapes and forms, adorned with powder pigments, become alive and fantastical by the brilliance of their colouration. It seems that they have just appeared out of nothing, and that Kapoor's only role was to present these, sometimes, bizarre shapes and forms in some ordered sequence or create an environment worthy of their magnificence. The simplicity of these shapes and forms, and the complete gentleness with which the powder pigment was applied, somehow had a strong psychological effect on me. They made me lapse back into my childhood days, when everything colourful caused such excitement - then, all I wanted to do was to touch and hold - the exact feelings I experienced when I first encountered Kapoor's work.

Klein has also created environments, but in a different sense to those by Kapoor. In Klein's environments the spectator, instead of walking into the three dimensional environment (as in those created by Kapoor) becomes totally saturated in them. Klein's environments are, in fact, two-dimensional paintings. These works are painted with a special blue colour which, for Klein, signifies a space in itself. A blue space within which one could break loose from all restrictions: personal, religious, political, etc. Klein has also performed many performances during his short life - he died at the age of thirty-four - but it is clear the significance colour had for him and for the successful execution of his concepts.

All the above artists have influenced me in a very special way. Each one has planted in me a desire and need to explore my own artistic potential, a necessity to develop my concepts, and encouraged me to have a more philosophical attitude towards life and my work.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

No. 1. Joseph Beuys, from "Coyote", New York, 1974.

No. 2. Adish Kapoor's, "Installation piece", 1979-1980.

Works by Joseph Beuys:

No. 3. "From: The Intelligence of Swans"; 1955, drawing 164x250.
Artist's collection.

No. 4. "Fat Chair", 1964, Wood and Fat, 2½'x1¼'. Artist's
collection.

No. 5. "Fat Corner", 1960, Room corner and fat, approx. 1'x1',
Artist's collection.

No. 6. "Felter Fat Corner", 1962, Room corner, fat and gauze,
approx 1½'x1½'. Artist's collection.

No. 7. "Felt Corner", 1963, Room corner and felt, approx 1½'x1½'.
Artist's collection.

No. 8. "Coyote: I Like America and America Likes Me", 1974,
Performed in René Block Gallery, New York.

No. 9. From "The Coyote".

No. 10. From "The Coyote".

No. 11. From "The Coyote".

No. 12. "How To Explain Pictures To A Dead Hare", 1965, performed
at the Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf.

No. 13. From "How To Explain Pictures To A Dead Hare", 1965.

No. 14. From "How To Explain Pictures To A Dead Hare", 1965.

No. 15. "The Chief", 1964; Performed first in Copenhagen in 1963,
then in the René Block Gallery, Berlin.

Works by Paul Neagu:

No. 16. "Going Tornado", 1974; Performed in the Traverse Theatre,
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- No. 17. Installation, 1969-1973, Serpentine Gallery, London.
- No. 18. "Box", 1969, wood, gesso, approx 13"x9"x7". Artist's Collection.
- No. 19. "Model For A Potential Environment", 1970, wood and pigment. Artist's collection.
- No. 20. "Hyphens" and "Fusions", Installation view - Third Eye Centre, Glasgow, 1979.

Works by Adish Kapoor:

- No. 21. "To Reflect an Intimate Part of Red", 1981, Installation at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.
- No. 22. "Part of the Red", 1981, Installation at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.
- No. 23. "Blooming with Red Flowers", 1982, Installation at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.
- No. 24. "White Sand, Red Millet, Many Flowers", 1982, Installation at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.
- No. 25. "1,000 Names", 1982, Clay sculpture at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring, 1982.
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- No. 27. "1,000 Names", 1982; 20"x20", at Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.
- No. 28. "1,000 Names", Installation, 1981, Chambery.
- No. 29. "Red in the Centre", Installation, 1982, clay and powder pigment at the Walker Art Gallery, Paris, during Spring 1982.

Works by Yves Klein:

- No. 30. Untitled Blue Monochrome, 1955, mixed media on fabric on board, 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ "x15 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", private collection.

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No. 31. Untitled Blue Monochrome, 1959, dry pigment in synthetic
medium on fabric on board, $36\frac{1}{4}" \times 28\frac{3}{4}"$, private collection.

No. 32. "People Begin to Fly", 1961, anthropometry, synthetic medium
on paper on fabric, $98\frac{1}{2}" \times 157\frac{1}{2}"$, private collection.

FOOTNOTES:

Chapter III:

1. Paul Neagu - Sculpture, by the Institute of Contemporary Art, London SW1, an exhibition during 6th. July-5th. August, 1979, p. 8. (lines 1-4).

Chapter IV:

2. Objects and Sculpture, by the Institute of Contemporary Art, London SW1, p. 20. (lines 1-3).

Chapter V:

3. "Attendu que j'ai peint...." in Yves Klein, catalogue of exhibition. Musee des Arts Decoratifs, Paris, 1969, pp. 38, 40; Depassement, p. 2; letter of Klein to Yamazaki, February 15th., 1960.

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3. "Documenta 7", Ban 2/Vol. 2.
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17. "Art Forum", Jan 1982, VolXX/No. 5, Article by Thomas McEvelley.

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