



SELF ESTABLISHED
FRAGMENTS OF
PERFORMANCE.

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SELF ESTABLISHED FRAGMENTS OF PERFORMANCE

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Introduction

This thesis will attempt to deal with a number of specific topics which go, in my view to generate a present style and context in performance. It will also hopefully by the amalgamation of these concepts propose future directions and thoughts in performance, and indeed the media in general. It will also attempt to show how performance as a medium itself, is completely assimilated by other mediums, especially today. It would be more accurate to say performance encompasses a number of other mediums. In this I hope to show by isolating them that these attributes of performance, even though they are self-motivated and explanatory can be broken down into fragments of the whole, (i.e. the performance), and how they themselves can have performance theory applied to them in order to transform them into performance. It is very often in a sense a notion of minimalism that allows performance to be so inward looking and insular at times.

Chapter 1

"The Status Quo:

Instead of rushing through the performance, extricating oneself from one dilemma after another, consider that one's first individual dilemma equals the collective status quo. Remain.... inside that dilemma, do not attempt to extricate oneself by random improvisation, (listen to the words for a while, and try without moving, to get a general sense of the performance). Only move if the situation changes. Every individual attempt to extricate oneself from one's dilemma alters the collective status quo."¹

"A solid state drama enquires about the nature of space and the nature of time, being, not acting the reinvention of the art of the exercise which is action of the present. These are broad phrases, but is there an idea?"²

One may perform a series of actions, each invested with the particular nature of one's own behaviour and way of thinking. The quality of these actions then depends on the particular quality of one's own behaviour and way of thinking. One may formulate an idea precisely, and then adopt a series of actions that adhere strictly to the precise dictates of that idea. The quality of those actions then depends on the particular quality of that idea. One may imagine the possibility of an idea without being able to formulate that idea

(if it exists) in any precise terms. Then one may perform this action and that action, sometimes adopting a series of actions, sometimes not, changing the actions as the idea grows, changing the idea as the action grows. Sometimes the idea achieves some precise formulation, if there is an end to this process. More often I find there is no end to this process and no end to the growth of an idea. One may carry out actions or perform a series of actions and thus create a context for the growth of an idea. But one may or may not be aware of having created that context, one may or may not be aware of the growth of the idea. Performance art can be concerned with the rehearsal towards the formulation of an idea which may or may not exist although the possibility of its existence might be imagined, even when, that possibility has not been imagined. This statement supports the previous one which shows how idea and performance (action) may grow around each other. When two or three people sit together in a room in silence, that silence becomes apparent to each of them without any of them having articulated it. The silence exists without anybody having brought it into being. To sit on one's own in silence is another sort of silence. This idea which may or may not exist, perhaps this idea will become apparent as a manifestation, perhaps this manifestation will become a performance.

It is at this stage of the process that a lot of the discussion occurs. One cannot say that the majority of discussion happens here, for discussion can continue throughout the actual construction stage or the preparation. The performance itself, and right through the documentation of (a) the performance whether it is presented as finished work or not (b) the working of the documentation as a continuation to the performance. One could say that it is with this theory

that traditionalists would hold major argument. Where is the finished work, how can it be assessed by future viewers or even the perennial question, is it Art? My personal viewpoint is that (a) this latter question has very little basis in this period of time. Considering the world in which we live, its communications systems have far exceeded previous predictions. It is a necessity to include these notions while working and indeed to refer and use them as materials and subject matter.

This can be done in numerous ways, for example it can be attempted by working through the idea and letting both happening and idea enhance and develop each other. As stated earlier these are infinite manifestations of this approach. In my work I prefer to use drawing as the basis for further structures and developments.

Beuys is an artist who also uses drawing as a fundamental stage. He was one of the first assemblagists to expand his *métier* to "happenings" and by doing so he freed himself to go in many new directions. Drawing is fundamental to this enactment, as he opens art to new possibilities and new materials, he uses drawing as the preparatory ground for all subsequent work. The drawings pass over into collages, collage-objects and small paintings. These functions also as records of works and as certificates of his presence. He would draw everywhere, even going as far as to using walls, chairs and diagramming ideas on table tops. Some of his earlier drawings seem banal, slightly later work is brought to life by this scrawling technique he used. From about 1965 he assumed control and frequently used this full range of twentieth century techniques. Beuys has never been an inventor of elegant linear relationships. More recent work, i.e. drawings done on blackboards as parts of performances, have

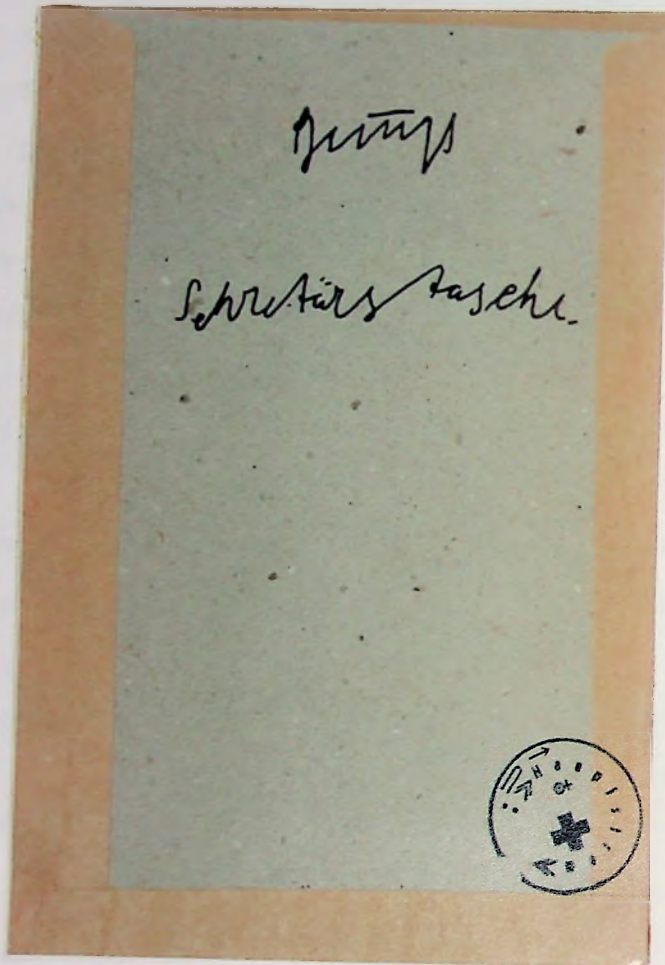


Illustration No. 1

become obsessional diagrammatic notations of ideas for performances.

"This is drawing itself (as a means of transmitting ideas ideas) transformed into action, drawing as an act that ensures freedom. Beuys stands as the culmination of a tradition as he moves away from drawing as private disclosure to a more public idea of the role of draftsmanship"³

It is important here to realise what drawing itself has become, especially over the last half century. It was mainly during the 1960's that drawing itself assumed a vital role as an important step to working in another medium. As sculptors began to have their work fabricated by industrial craftsmen, it became important first for the artist to provide himself, with a visualisation of the work and then a sketch for the fabricator with measurements and instructions. During the 1950's, object-type imagery appeared, a sort of rationalised art-making process. Johns was an initiator of this along with Stella who developed it with deductive structures and constructed shaped canvases, all this and more pointed the way to early Minimal art, and the art of objects which became dominant in the sixties.

"Minimal Artists and Sculptors such as Judd, Flavin and Morris started with these cutlery drawings thus bringing the appreciation of the activity of drawing for its own sake. It was the particular gift of artists like Flavin to restore to contemporary sensibility an initial sense of the drawing as conceptual, in the sense that it represented, independent of conventional aesthetic notions, an act of



Illustration No. 2

ideation on the part of the artist. Later it became clear that this was the nucleus around which a new interest in drawing had taken form. Study drawings such as Larry Poons's became underground cult objects. Drawings which artists had kept simply for their own information were collected, first by trading among themselves and later by collectors"⁴

All this led on to a new development in the production of an art piece, especially in regard to sculpture.

These new developments related especially to the environmental sculptors like Robert Smithson, who drew either to visualise work that could not be executed because of its ambitions or else to bring to manageable scale work of monumental proportions. Also at times these drawings were made to provide a record of works executed in distant locations. Christo is another sculptor whose drawings belong to this category. This format of drawing itself led to another development in environmental land drawings. This was the drawing on land itself. Michael Heizer's drawings in the Nevada desert, the works of Oppenheim, the Linear Traces, left behind by Richard Long on his walks through the landscape. Drawing itself became a physically environmental activity. Precedents exist: cave drawings, drawings scratched in the ground during primitive ceremonies. The most striking parallel is found on the desert plains of Peru, where a series of ancient delineations of animal and abstract figures - on so gigantic a scale that their total configuration can only be seen from the air. These remain as evidence of an incredible conceptual enterprise.

With the sixties and the general prosperity of the decade an extraordinary market for art existed. Art became more of a commercially viable commodity, and Environmental art, Minimal Art Conceptual art took up a stance in reaction to the

"Vulgarization of art by the marketplace"⁵

In effect what happened was the artist declared art could not be bought. His reaction was to "dematerialize" art to make art which was impossible to buy or collect, because of the conditions of its creation, to create art of minimum visual appeal (in retrospect, only in contrast to what had gone before), or art based only on an idea. So from this standpoint performance art had a plateau from which to launch arguments in its favour. For a number of reasons it proved advantageous to the artists and to the development of the form. Performance was suited to experimentation in ways that the traditional forms such as painting and sculpture, with their restrictions and physical limitations, were not, neither could they expect to be. Undefined there were no rules to break. Artists were able to employ the widest range of subject matter, using virtually any medium or material, they could present their work at any time, for any duration of time, at the location of their choosing, in direct contact with their audience. Artists who came to performance were able to investigate their relationship with their audience, from whom they had previously been far removed. It can be said that prior to performance, arts audience saw the work of artists, the art product, with greater regularity than it saw the artist or the production of art. With performance it could sometimes simultaneously be witness to both. As such, artists had new access to the reception of their work - no longer relying solely on

critics and dealers, and they had achieved a degree of control over the presentation and destination of their work. In addition performance artists were liberated from the art object and all that it entailed. This liberation offered the possibility of moving towards an art format in which the idea would dominate. Performance art like conceptual art could shun mere pictorial values in favour of true visual communication, using art as a vehicle for ideas and action. All of this meant that art no longer had to conform to established formats. Undefined performance was independent of current trends and traditional forms, and this independence guaranteed, for a time, that performance art would remain controlled and guided by the artists who originated the form. So the lack of a strict definition was indeed an advantage, for without clear and determined boundaries, performance was an open territory from its very beginnings.

The question may be asked 'why the need to act out art?' Part of the answer may be found in artists who had neither reached a crisis point in the object making art format, nor sought to explore 'outside space' nor to resolve their problems in performance. Artists like Mary Beth Edelson, who never intended using the medium of performance but who explained,

"with certain exhibitions I felt an imperative to act out what I was trying to say - mostly for clarity and to intensify the statement."⁶

This intensification of the statement is perhaps one of the primary reasons artists were and still are drawn to performance. Performance enabled artists to articulate their ideas in action, to set them in motion. Although some of the ideas were not always adequately articulated, or for that matter worthy of communication, authentically

new approaches to art as a form of visual communication were to be explored. One is reminded of Merleau-Ponty's idea of the body as

"The visible form of our intentions"⁷

or of Lucy Lippard's statement for performance as

"The most immediate art form, which aspires to the immediacy of political action itself. Ideally performance means getting down to the bare bones of aesthetic communication - artist/self confronting audience/society."⁸

To go back to Mary Beth Edelson who stated the need to act out certain ideas, this could be related to even earlier life experiences. For example, as children normally we will act out situations. Here I am not saying that they always express themselves in such a manner but in many ways children will simulate situations which they do not or may not have the vocabulary to describe. Performance can be seen not only as a new presence that has replaced the presence which poems and pictures silently proffered before, but as an extension of their possibilities, perhaps without any substitution or replacement.

Something that is replaced is not always superseded but can be said to have been restored. As the body artist Gina Pane stated;

"Our entire culture is based on the representation of the body. Performance doesn't so much annul painting as help out the birth of a new painting based on different explanations and functions of the body in art."⁹

Chapter 1: Footnotes.

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3. Bernice Rose; Drawing Now; The Museum of Modern Arts, New York.
4. Bernice Rose; Drawing Now; The Museum of Modern Arts, New York.
5. Bernice Rose; Drawing Now; The Museum of Modern Arts, New York.
6. Mary B. Edelson - The Art of Performance - A critical Anthology: Edited by G. Battcock and R. Nickas. (c) 1984.
7. The Angry Mouth of March; The Village Voice March 25, 1981, Page 91.
8. Lucy Lippard;
9. Wound as a Sign - Flash Art Nos 92 - 93 (Oct.-Nov. 1979) Page 37.

Chapter 2

The occurrence (happening) of the performance can, given certain circumstances, change dramatically from the initial conception or idea. There are a different set of conditions to deal with the 'actual' time, the being there, the audience (if any) and the artist and the infinite variants that will affect him. To illustrate this I quote Gregory Battcock,

"Before man was aware of art he was aware of himself.

Awareness of the person is then, the first art.

In performance art the figure of the artist is the tool for the art. It is the art."¹

Our consciousness of self is built upon a life story, a narrative that definitely requires past, present and future in a three dimensional expanse where connected events are reviewed or pre-viewed, where experience is calendarized. This spatialization of time is true not only of time as a perspective, but also characterizes our sense of time passing. Robert Ornstein's conclusion of time psychology research is that the experience of duration, how long something lasts, stems from:

"The size of the storage space for the information of a given interval."²

The passage of time is metered as a sensation of mental space being filled up like an hourglass.

Time itself only exists as a medium of the present moment. An effort to reclaim this prehistoric state of being has emerged in many areas of contemporary life and takes aesthetic form in live art and "real time" video, which aspire to the condition of the present tense. But what condition is that condition in? While many art writers have noticed the present tense, there has been little speculation on its



Illustration No. 3

properties or movement, and no recognition that this tense is the tension of time itself. Several artists have provided insightful descriptions of performing in the present tense, Douglas Davis believes,

"The perception of an event occurring, or appearing to occur, as we watch it is intrinsically more meaningful."³

Though he suggests that this might stem from "Synchronicity", (Jung's concept of simultaneity), based on apparent psychic relativity of time and space, he says;

"this begins to get to philosophical, what drives me is the exhilaration of acting in live time. To know that the moment the camera turns on is the moment of record or of broadcast is to experience a heightened reality, to perform at another level. Similarly, John Sturgeon, tries to 'save the moment of creation for the audience'",⁴

he goes on to say what he really likes about video tape is:

"its real timeness. You become sensitive to, and in fact are forced to go with it, the vibration of the moment. If you don't, if you fight against it, you get what film gets. You know today we'll shoot number 32."

Duende is a spanish term roughly translating to a sense of the presence of death. The spanish surrealist poet Federico Garcia Lorca, (1899 - 1936), had a grasp of its power and meaning, presaging many of the aesthetic premises of performance art. For Lorca, Duende,

"is not a question of ability but of true, living

style, of blood, of the most ancient culture of spontaneous creation.

The muse and angel come from without the angle gives light and the muse form. But one must awaken the duende in the remotest mansions of blood.

There are neither maps nor disciplines to help us find the duende. We only know he burns the blood like a poultice of broken glass, that he exhausts, that he rejects all the sweet geometry we have learned, that he smashes styles.

La Nina de los Peines had to tear her voice because she knew she had an exquisite audience, one which demanded not forms, but the marrow of forms, she had to rob herself of skill and security, send away her muse and become helpless, that her duende might come and design to fight her hand to hand.... The duende does not come at all unless he sees that death is possible.... Duende loves the rim of the wound and.... draws near places where forms fuse together into a yearning superior to their visible expression.... announcing the constant baptism of newly created things."⁵

The finality of one moment is the signal for the next one to follow, this is a sort of cutting edge that Lorca talks about. When expression originates in the moment, continuance is constantly at stake and there is the relentless risk of having nothing to say. Out of this desperation and anxiety of the vacuum comes the instantaneous

and spontaneity of associations coupled with the vitality of the 'live' experience. It is not surprising then that present tense performance is ideally suited for duende's expression, something which Lorca seemed to have anticipated.

"All arts are capable of duende, but where it finds greatest range, naturally, is in music, dance, and spoken poetry, for these arts require a living body to interpret them, being forms that are born, die and open their contours against an exact present."⁶

This tension in the present, that has been discussed, it can be observed in much simpler form. I see this tension in time arising every time one faces an audience. To make it even simpler, this tension arises every time we talk to someone. In many ways it could be said to be a form of responsibility, or commitment, to converse or convey a passage. One could maintain, it is a device imposed by a society structure, to make people conform to a certain method or discipline. An interesting deduction can be drawn from this i.e. if one were to impose the situation, where a group of people/audience, were in a particular space, in 'time', expecting to see, hear or witness in some format, an event. If nothing were to take place would this be regarded as an event or a method of tackling even avoiding the tension, or would nothing simply have happened? Quickly it could be any of the three.

Given that time especially live time holds a variable tension, one may well try to decipher methods of stunning time, methods of slowing down time or even living time at a slower or faster pace. This of course is time in its 'present' state. There is a strange present tense in getting high. The use of cannabis dates back to the stone age, it is the dominant illicit psychoactive drug of choice in America. Andrew Weil is



Illustration No. 4



Illustrations No.5

one of the best known drug culture theorists, provides an insight with this explanation: The best term for marijuana is active placebo.... the psychic effect arises from consciousness, elicited by set and setting, in response to minimal physiological cues. Thus, for most marijuana users the occasion of smoking a joint becomes an opportunity or excuse to experience a mode of consciousness that is available to everybody all the time.

In studies it was observed that the drug caused memory loss (short-term) which was often assessed as attentional disorder. Weil also observed, disturbance of immediate memory seems to be a common feature of all altered states of consciousness in which attention is focused on the present. It can be noticed in hypnotic and other trances, meditation, mystic ecstasies, and highs associated with other drugs.

Suspending normative patterns of perception processing to make the present moment of experience more tangible is the essence of getting high. It should be noticed that once smoking marijuana becomes the norm this ritual often merely supplies new patterns. It is easy to understand why this is treated as dangerous deviation since forgetting your place in time is a fundamental form of anarchy. Another pejorative label for being high is the amotivation syndrome, meaning workers who are high have less interest in attending to routines, whereby time is traded for money. Structuring time into a reference system for the benefit of social organisation, demotes immediate perception into a time out of mind experience. This socialization of time is visualized in a segment of John Sturgeon's Spine/Time (1982). He dealt here with a temporal consciousness quite powerfully and evocatively. Using a computerized frame selection technique

called a 'voice grab', moving time becomes a function of the social semantic, the flow of time subordinated to language. The images advance haltingly, only as Sturgeon chants,

"Don't you know? I know. I know I will never
know. Don't you know?"

By filtering time through this declaration of doubt, Sturgeon suggests that literal - minded 'clocking' of experience hears only its own ticking! It is the getting high which breaks the reality tick of the clock. What is at first chaotic disorientation becomes an opportunity to reinvent the mysteries of meaning, to rediscover how moments can manifest a totality somehow larger than a sum of accumulated seconds.

Freed from the pre-determinations of the established cognitive order the universal creative urge is let loose to find its own way, making new paths with spontaneous impulsive associations when working under these conditions (drugs) one could say reality, itself could become a challenging improvisational routine. This heightened state of working, and drug highs are related manifestations of the state of consciousness that is the present tense.

It is this notion of present tense which is vital in live art/ performance type work. All the extras mentioned initially are accommodated in the present tense theory, i.e. the actual time, the being there, the audience, and the artist and his condition and state of mind. Regardless now of whether or not the idea is developed or prepared or whatever, at this stage 'the happening' (the now) many things can change. There are infinite tangents which could be followed, and infinite spontaneous actions which might happen. This points out to the other interesting area of discussion

at this, the happening stage, i.e. the, how it happens? What manner does it come across in? How does the artist project himself. In many audiences there will be viewers who see performance and acting as having a very thin dividing line. Is there a difference even though the performer may be using many theatrical devices and methods to produce his/her work?

Performance art, which is closely linked to such earlier art forms as the happening and "environmental" performances, borrows elements from these as well as from traditional forms. Thus, acting is an important element of performance art, although it sometimes is important only because the artist attempts to minimize its role. Acting means to feign, to simulate, to represent, to impersonate. As happenings demonstrated, not all performing is acting. Although acting was sometimes used, the performers in happenings generally tended to be nobody or nothing other than themselves. Neither did they represent, or pretend to be in, a time or a place, different to that of the spectator. They walked, ran, said words, and a lot of other actions but they did not feign or impersonate. In most performances, acting and non-acting are easy to recognize and identify. In a performance we usually know when a person is acting and when he is not. But there is a scale or continuum of behaviour involved and the difference between acting and non-acting may be quite small. In such cases categorization may not be easy. Perhaps some would say it is unimportant, but in fact it is precisely these borderline cases that can provide insights into acting theory and into the nature of the art. There are numerous performances that do not use acting. Many but by no means all dance pieces would fit into this category. Several Far Eastern theatres

make use of stage attendants such as the Kurombo and Koken of Kabuki. These attendants move props into position and remove them, help with costume changes, and even serve tea to the actors. Their dress distinguishes them from the actors, and they are not included in the informational structure of the narrative and they are not invisible by any means. They do not act and yet they are part of the visual representation. Acting is 'active', it refers to the feigning simulation and so forth that is done by a performer.

But representation, simulation and other of the qualities that define acting may also be applied to the performer. The way which a costume creates a "character" is one example of this. To illustrate this one could use the example of street fashion in comparison to stage costume. For example, a person in the street wearing cowboy attire - hat, waistcoat, boots, jeans, it is merely a choice of clothing to everybody looking at him; we do not identify him as a cowboy. The effect of clothing on stage functions in the exactly same way except it is more pronounced. A performer wearing only black leotards and western boots might easily be identified as a cowboy. This indicates the symbolic power of costume in performance. If the performer is to then move in manners which may be more readily identified with a cowboy the identification may be made more easily. This action is now verging on acting. It must be said that the deciphering of whether or not a performer is acting depends greatly on the surroundings of the performance. To clarify this I will use the example of a man dressed as Santa Claus in the suit, in a cafe drinking coffee, we might and hopefully probably would only see a man in a Santa suit drinkin coffee. If

exactly the same action were carried out on stage we might well see Santa drinking coffee at home in the North Pole! This example greatly qualifies the performance situation, where many performances happen in quite ordinary areas, such as the 'cafe' or whatever. So what are the simplest characteristics that define acting? These characteristics may be either physical or emotional. If the performer does something to simulate, represent, impersonate and so forth, he is acting. It does not matter what style he uses or whether the action is part of a complete characterization or an informational presentation. No emotion need be involved. The definition can depend solely on the character of what is done. Value judgements are not involved. Acting will be acting whether its done well or not. Acting can be said to exist in the smallest and simplest action which involves pretense.

There are numerous opinions regarding the mixing of theatrical formats and art formats. Inevitably there will be some cross-over at various points along the parallel. Art based performance and theatrical based performance are closely linked and are much more successful when drawing on each others devices. The same arguments could be held for art based performance using many facets of the media in particular video and television, to aid its point of view. On many occasions there will be two or more complementary facets involved with the production of the artwork, because of the necessity to group together the mediums of performance and theatre as well as other mediums, to produce the

idea/work, many of the video, performance, theatre, dance artists of today have become very proficient at using many elements at once. Because of the speed with which imagery is produced and digested today, it is not surprising that much of this imagery is re-gurgitated into art forms. Ever since Warhol with his soup cans, coke cans and posterisation portraits started flinging culture rubbish back on itself have the beginnings of such work of today been initiated.

Chapter 2: Footnotes.

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3. A. Simmons (Ed); 'Time, Time, Time' - The Context of Immediacy
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5. C. Maurer (Translator and Editor); Play and Theory of Duende
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Illustration No. 6

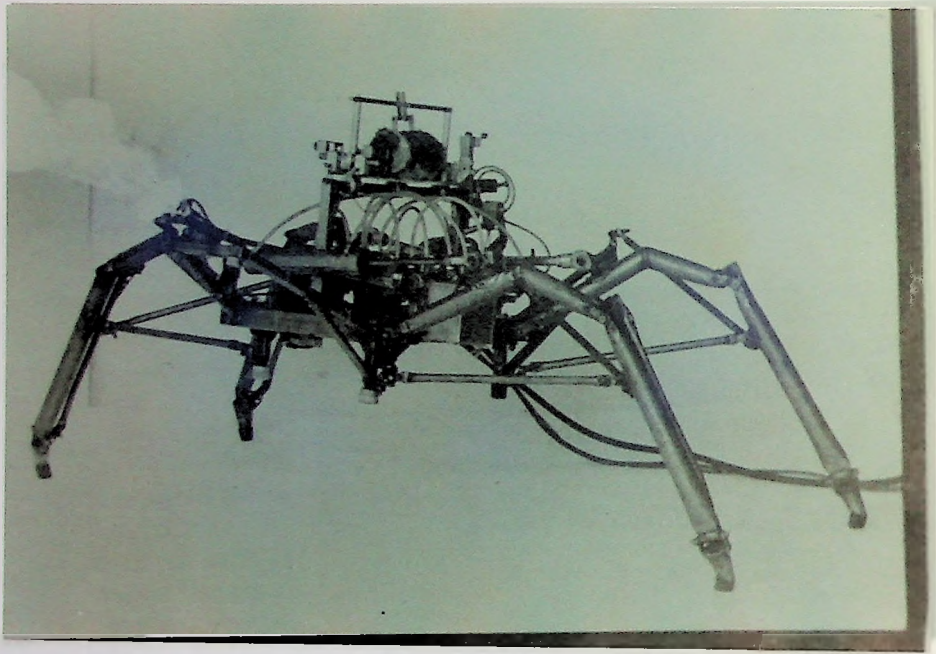


Illustration No.7

Chapter 3

Survival Research Laboratories is one group of people who qualify as part of a true avant-garde. S.R.L.'s can be said to be still working on the fringe. This group consists of Mark Pauline, Eric Werner and Matt Beckert. To this group the avant-garde is characterized by activism, antagonism, agonism and "nihilism". The activists explore new territories as agitators. By being antagonist the contemporary avant-gardist works against society and precursors.

"Agonism comes in the form of self-doubts over course of action and eventual validation.

Finally nihilism is a transcendent hatred for life and society, but contrary to popular notions of the term, it is not pure negativism.

In their confrontations with cultural absurdity, nihilists desecrate during the questioning process in hopes of effecting positive social change. Common concerns of nihilists practitioners include technology, war and military trappings, sexuality, eroticism and their perversions, fear, politics religion and death."¹

Performance has always played a prominent role in avant-garde movements since the turn of the century, but those acts which caused the most revulsion seemed to occur mainly after nineteen forty-five. In 1961 Piero Manzoni canned his own shit and sold it for the current price of gold, one of the strongest statements against commodification of art, but naturally they became sought after pieces themselves. Throughout the sixties Hermann Nitsch's performances, designed to re-enact ancient cathartic rituals involved disembowelling slaughtered animals and spreading their blood and entrails over nude human beings.

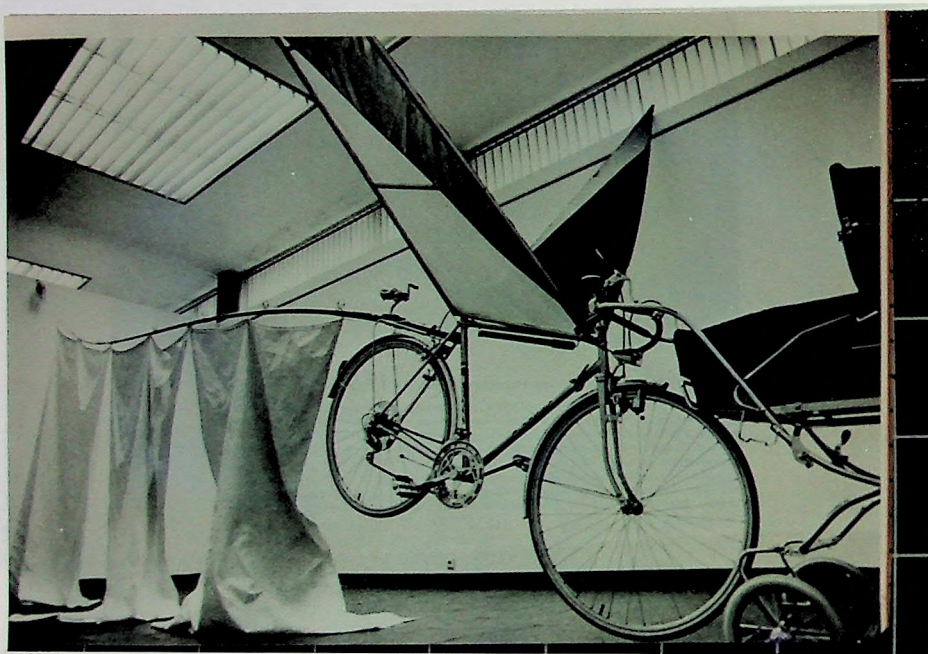


Illustration No. 9

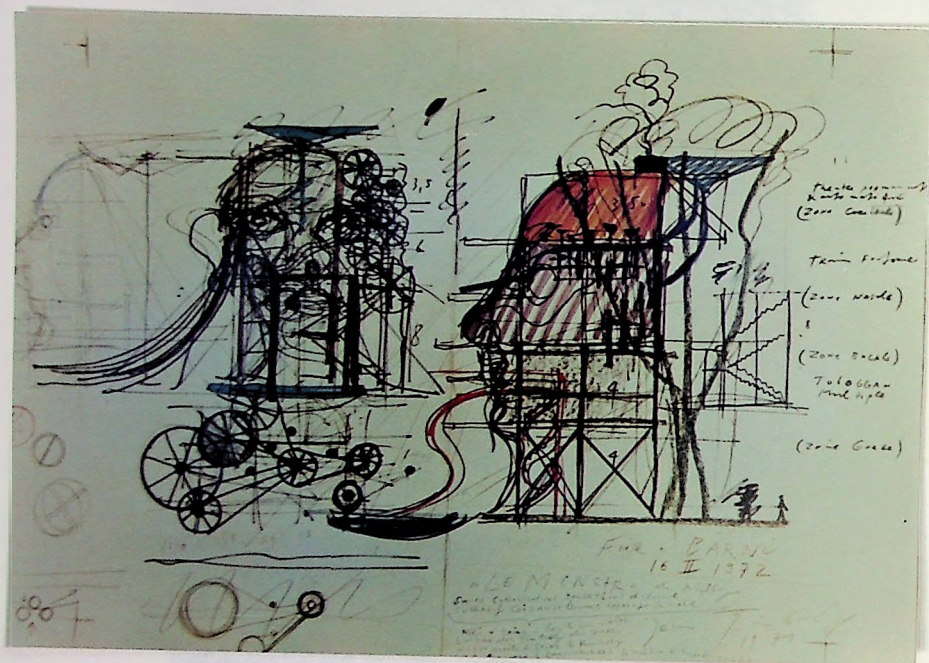


Illustration No. 10



Illustration No. 11

In the seventies extreme forms of body art usually self mutilation shocked the most, and Stelare who suspends himself with fish hooks through his skin, carries on today. Vito Acconci and John Durean used weapons to assault audiences with threats. Jean Tinguely's anti functional contraptions called Meta-Matics are often mentioned as S.R.L.'s precursors. This is not accurate. Tinguely's structures seem quite tame compared to Pauline's machines which attack each other and threaten viewers. Furthermore Tinguely showed his drawing machines and self-destructors in traditional gallery spaces, not really a nihilist area. In essence S.R.L.'s work contains elements from all of the above performances, but it undoubtedly achieves new levels of sensory and emotional intensity.

The Florida born Pauline initiated events by sabotaging billboard advertisements. In 1980 Pauline joined up with Heckert and Werner to form S.R.L.'s . The name was derived from Soldier of Fortune magazine for several reasons. They were now a group and they intended to deal with other groups, i.e. bureaucracies. The name is accurate since the group does research, and builds in its workshop laboratories machines that deal with survival on somewhat primeval metaphorical level. Pauline started creating machine performances out of a need to concretize ideas coming from existentialist and avant-garde literature using his mechanical abilities. Pauline gradually became aware of a notion of an alternative world where everything is reduced to primeval forces: power, fear, survival, death and destruction. Machines are preferred over human dancers and performers because of the potentially wider capabilities of metal and electronics. The human power range doesn't compare with that of some of Pauline's machines. Pauline's early works were limited to one or two concepts. The very

first called Machine Sex took place on February 25th 1979, at a gas station parking lot. Preparation involved killing and freezing seven pigeons, then dressing them in Arab doll costumes. With very loud music blaring in the background, a conveyor belt dropped the pigeons one by one into a drum containing a sharp blade, beheading them and spilling their remains on the ground. By late 1979 the performance consisted of several simultaneous events. Such as Assured Destructive Capability, where images of Leonid Brezhnev were violated by explosives and stabbing devices.

A major part of S.R.L.'s work since 1981 is the manufacturing of 'organic robots'. Found carcasses of dead animals as well as freshly butchered specimens (from meat markets) were brought back to life by mating them with mechanical devices in an ironic and somewhat perverse twist on the Frankenstein theme. In every way S.R.L.'s exploits its audience with this particular performance, especially dwelling around our uneasy feeling regarding death. S.R.L.'s confronts its audience with already dead animals moving as if still alive Piggly-Wiggly, for example, was constructed from pig feet, pig-hide and cow head attached to a metal armature with a motorized mechanism underneath. The Rabot was a dead rabbit made to walk backwards and the Mummy-Go-Round featured dessicated cats, dogs and rabbits. Such macabre mutations played prominent roles in An Unfortunate Spectacle of Violent Self-Destruction of September 1981 followed by A Cruel Relentless Plot to Pervert the Fiest of Beasts of Unholy Uses.

Consistent with their belief that in life maximum force is used to oppress the most vulnerable people and places, along with their intention to see how much fear they can engender without inflicting physical injury. S.R.L.'s recent performance have become massive

orgies of destruction. Many radio controlled machines attack each other as well as stationery and mobile props, accompanied by loud soundtracks, explosive laser's and smoke bombs. S.R.L.'s Views with Regret : The Unrestrained Use of Excessive Force September 1983 drew 2,500 spectators who saw at least thirty major mechanical constructions attack each other and threaten the audience. In 1984 The Relief of Mass Hysteria Through Expressions of Senseless Jungle Hate was performed. Targets included images of racial stereotypes and urban mob violence. Because the performance site was an enclosed Pier, the ear scattering soundtrack, fumes, smoke, fires, explosions, gasoline motors, shattering glass and noise from the machines themselves caused severe sensory overload. It is obvious that if these performances took the form of video they would appear as 'video nasties'. Or one might classify them in the realms of the Mad Max films, which also showed scenes of mass hysteria, confusion, violence and a host of other attributes common place to our society structure at the moment, and extremely alike the rough violent imagery so familiar to the popular media and television in particular.

The machine themselves are very well made, made from welded steel and powered by petrol engines from lawn mowers and moterbikes. One could also find crankshafts chains, pneumatic systems and batteries, all transported on wheels, augers or insect-like limbs. Pauline's crawler contains a tube hiding an extendable rod with teeth at the tip capable of spitting streams of liquid, recalling the monster from the movie Alien, the Jumping Machine by Heckert has a metal death head and four large coil springs which allow it to leap about quite menacingly. Weiner's mechanical limb rises out of its aquarium oil bath and flexes its precisely articulated wrist and fingers. This

was inspired by Pauline's 1982 accident with rocket fuel which exploded and disfigured his right hand. Weiner's piece reminds one of films where the ghostly hand moves in isolation.

S.R.L.'s next show will happen in Los Angeles on the 11th of August 1986. It will be based on themes of confinement and torture. Because of their reputation getting space has become a problem. Mostly they use open car lots. Because of these problems S.R.L.'s believe their work will take form as a guerilla tactic, where works will be done unannounced. S.R.L.'s is a group of people who are a good example of the format and theory behind the work mentioned earlier. They qualify under the multi media/intermedia heading. Their work is relevant immediately, it is present tense, time, which is another important factor, and it has solid and quite serious roots in its conceptual birth and growth. This qualification of S.R.L. under these headings is quite standard and uncomplicated. It is easy to see by the descriptions that S.R.L.'s performance could only be appreciated in the real sense, that is, in the present tense. No documentation of the work could ever relate the experience (present tense), of the event. Film could possibly give a better indication but it is the danger of the machines, the out of control feeling and the permanent possibility of disaster. The same feeling could be obtained by seeing Chris Burden's piece of a motorbike mounted onto a huge fly-wheel. As the bike started and went faster the fly-wheel began to go faster also. It eventually got going so fast that if it were to break its moorings it would go straight

through the wall of the gallery, and cause, untold damage. Again one would have had to been there to experience the real sensibility of the piece. (The Big Wheel 1979, cast iron flywheel, 9' x 4' x 12'. Bellini Motorcycle, wooden trestle).

Chapter 3: Footnotes.

1. Mauriac - Writings.

Chapter 4

Critic Abraham Moles states in an essay on the topic 'Intermedia Art' that:

"Intermedia Art is the conscious use of the dialectical power of complementarity between two, or more channels of the senses, e.g. auditory and visual, visual and tactile, visual and olfactory ect....

In fact, a large number of our present arts belong to intermedia art, the most evident of them being the old cinema which is: movie picture plus sound and music, television has become the most expanded popularisation of it in everyday life."¹

Like all other art forms in different time periods intermedia has brought out new aspects of reality. Art in itself is always the same in its basic approach, on relating human beings to their ever changing environment. What makes intermedia different from art forms of the past is that it is of our time and therefore responds to conditions of our time. There have been many changes of media in the past which signaled religious, social and political transformations, such as the transformation of stained glass and mural painting to painting of canvas, or the introduction of graphic arts. At the moment a transition is also happening, television, not one of the more regular art mediums is showing more art based material, especially in video format. Can we develop, criteria that will explain the experience and meaning of the (sequential) art forms? By what means do we categorize intermedia as an art form and relate it to the context of historical continuity? Does it fit into the history of

art? The essence of intermedia as all other art forms has to be seen in its own relation to reality. It is necessary to integrate the newly created art form of intermedia into the totality of the history of art, because every innovative work or concept of art changes and revitalizes the history of art. Udo Hultermann states in his essay 'Towards a definition of Intermedia' that:

"One of the characteristics of intermedia is its synthesizing character. Intermedia is more than a merging of earlier isolated art forms, such as painting and dance, music and literature, sculpture and theatre. A new whole is inaugurated which requires its own laws of existence. Because of this synthesizing character of intermedia we are better equipped to integrate film and television, video art and events into it."²

He goes on to say that basically there are three different characteristics of intermedia. The first is its lack of definition, or probably more accurately the problem it causes people to define it.

"The audio-visual corporeal complexity manifests itself in a physical and spiritual form which is beyond mere intellectual apprehension. Attempts to define intermedia in terms of linguistics is therefore superficial and inappropriate."³

The second characteristic being its basic dynamic character which often uses 'time' as a dominant medium. It has now become easy to see how artists have established the objectivation of time and

immaterial equipment as working tools. While there may be other forms of intermedia which are non-sequential and in which time plays a lesser role, without question greater emphasis is placed on the integration of different disciplines and the inclusion of time. Since these characteristics express the specific climate of our time they have to be seen as legitimate reflections of basic human attitudes today. The third characteristic of intermedia, has to do with open ended systems, such as the relationship between artist and public. Past definitions of isolated disciplines have become irrelevant. They have been replaced by new structural orders which signal the transformation from static laws of the past of the dynamic ones of today. This does not lead to real life situations but rather defines the transformation from reality into a new dimension of meta-reality. It is this meta-reality of space and time in which the artist communicates his message. This can be seen today with video art, and especially music video which uses the basic cinema format of movie picture (video picture) plus sound and music. The meta-reality that such media imposes can be observed through actions styles and trends, even by associations and how in our time one can live the music image. Kultermann says:

"Art is a meta-reality manifesting itself in different media according to the time. Inter-media as an art form manifests the complexities and contradictions, the syncretistic and historicistic attitudes of our time."⁴

There is much osmosis and a confluence of the various artistic languages happening at the moment. This is relevant to all the arts not just the visual ones. Proof of this can be seen in the

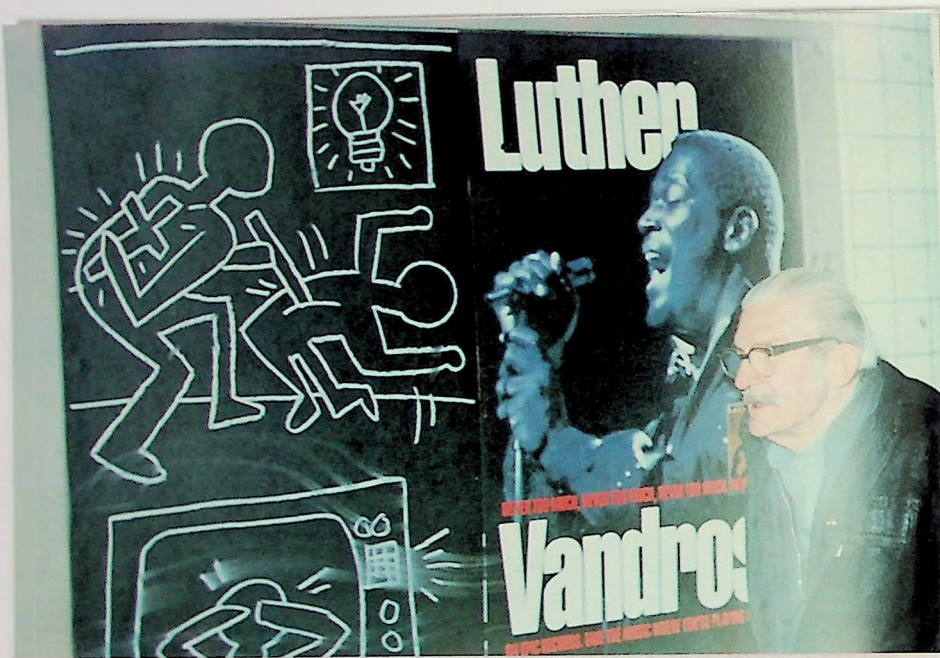


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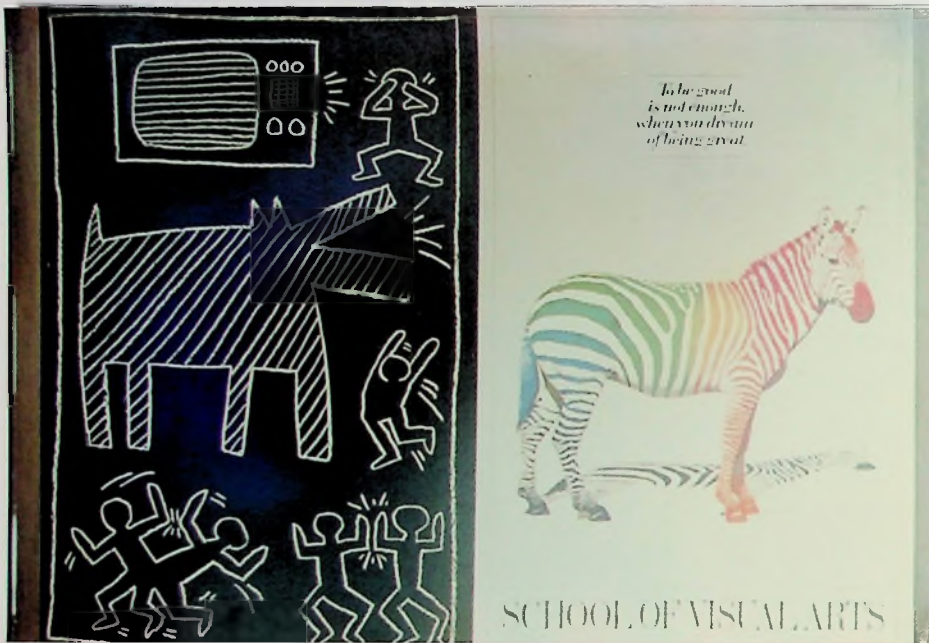


Illustration No.13



Illustration No.14

'theatricalization' of the figurative arts and of dance, the use of visual elements, whether abstract or not in avant-garde theatre, the frequent incorporation of music into any kind of performance, the use made by television of elements borrowed from the various artistic languages. Beyond this, over the last forty to fifty years, there has been an explosion of certain forms of visual and acoustic poetry, and of a lot of painting which makes use of written words or the letters of the alphabet. In many cases the theatre almost completely giving up text - has exploited the bodily aspect of action through the use of gesture and mime. The problem of intermedia and mixed media appears as a corollary of all that has just been mentioned. If we have witnessed an osmosis and confluence of those forms of art previously called painting, sculpture, music, poetry, ect., all the more so that we will be witnesses to the confluence of the various arts brought about by the mass media, which constitute a key avenue of communication and expression in our time.

There was a time when each art format guarded its borders jealously but now it would be accurate to say that each dresses up in the garb of others. As in the drawings of Keith Haring the graffiti artist who does most of his work in the subway systems of New York. It is probably fair to say that by this stage he is a well known artist, who has had work in galleries. But initially his drawings were part of the bill-board decor on the walls of the subway. He competed with the advertising firms who actually rented the space. His messages drawn in a highly stylised form of symbolism are direct, excellent drawings and very much in keeping with our society and cultural imagery at the moment. He presents them in one way, to be read completely differently. Other people who work today and who

have come from this vein are Philip Glass composer, and theatre artist, Robert Wilson who together produced Einstein on the Beach in the Metropolitan Opera House New York in the mid 1970's. This is a synopsis of an article taken from the music section of Time Magazine called the Maturing of Minimalism.

Twenty years after the rise of minimalism and a decade after Einstein on the Beach, the American Repertory theatre Cambridge Mass offered the world premiere of The Juniper Tree a collaborative opera by Glass and composer Robert Moran, staging by Director Andrei Serban.

"This event demonstrated how persuasive minimalism's influence has become, and what promise it still holds.⁵

.... Today, Glass's relentless repetitious music has become gentler, smoother, subtler and more flexible. Wilsons stream-of-consciousness stage pictures, which are intended to evoke emotional states rather than further conventional narrative are beginning to creep into common director's parlance.⁶

.... Music collaborations historically have not been very successful, but Glass's hypnotic arpeggios and Moran's dry Stravinskian syncopations are harmoniously soldered in a chamber opera that should prove practical and durable. The Juniper Tree represents a triumph of experience over youth.⁷

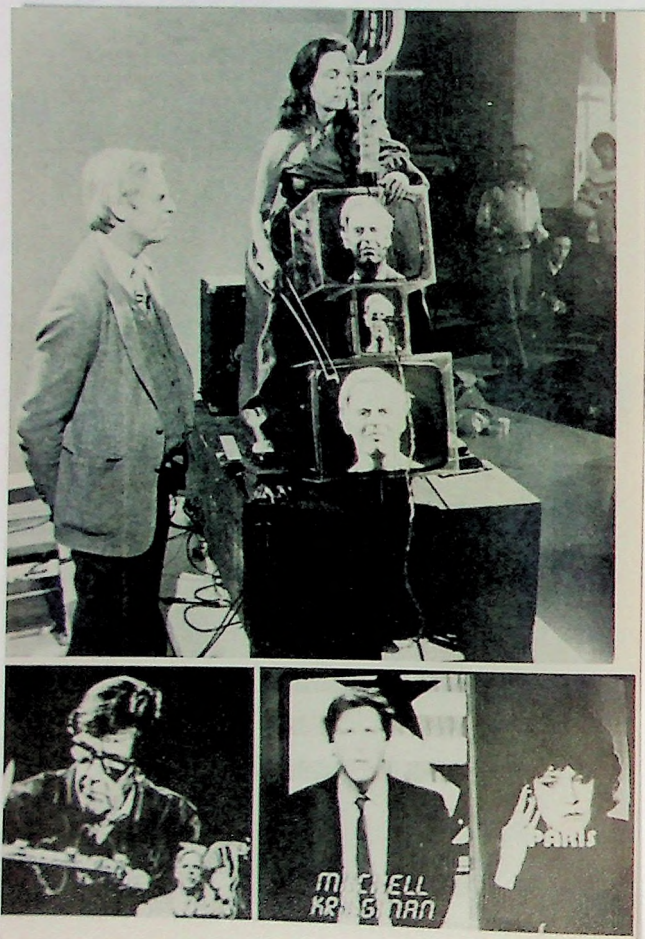


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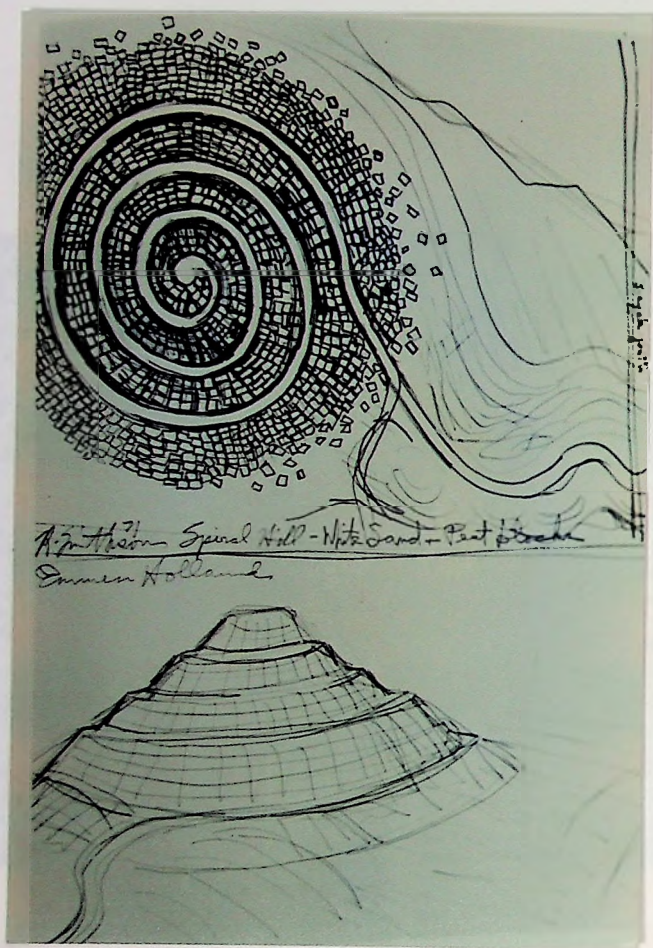


Illustration No. 16



Illustration No. 17

.... The American avant-garde seems to have conquered the angst that it felt during the sixties. It has lost much of its rebelliousness but in so doing has discovered a more delicate mode of expression as well as a broader popular base. To refine and succeed is not necessarily to become complacent or sell out. The crucial thing for any style is to avoid both self-satisfaction, and self parody, to keep the visions fresh. If The Juniper Tree is any indication, the American avant-garde is alive and well just a little older and wiser."⁸

In many modern artistic forms, particularly those which originated in the new technological and mechanical discoveries, there has been an adoption of diverse codes for the constitution of a new language which will encompass them, thus creating a language which had not existed before. A typical example is provided by the cinema and television and generally all forms of video art in which different codes, visual, verbal, sonic, Kinetic, ect., flow together to form a new language. As regards intermedia there are some forms of video art, (e.g. Dan Graham, Nam June Paik, Accorci) or land art (Smithson, Oppenheim, Christo) may be considered as forms which cannot be pigeon-holed, either as one of the 'figurative arts' or as theatre but which can be classified as true autonomous forms in themselves, whose language derives from the presence of elements coming from different artistic languages, such may be the case in works by Paik and C. Mooreman. Today it is getting more difficult to speak of the existence of artistic categories such as were inherited from the

past, even the recent past.

"'Painting', 'sculpture', 'dance', only partially correspond to the reality of our times, while the symbiosis of the different forms of art is an actual fact, which cannot be disregarded".⁹

Although in some eyes it has been dangerous because it has often led to a weakening of the cultural level and to the discomfiture of certain elitist forms, the presence of the mass media has also been positive in that it has allowed a section of the public which is in contact with artistic activities to be increased enormously.

Chapter 4: Footnotes.

1. Theoretical Analysis of the Intermedia Art Form; Experimental Intermedia Foundation; Solomon Guggenheim Museum.
2. UDO Kultermann; Theoretical Analysis of the Intermedia Art Form Towards a Definition of Intermedia.
3. UDO Kultermann; Theoretical Analysis of the Intermedia Art Form Towards a Definition of Intermedia.
4. UDO Kultermann; Theoretical Analysis of the Intermedia Art Form Towards a Definition of Intermedia.
5. Michael Walsh; The Maturing of Minimalism; Time Magazine; 23rd Dec. 1985.
6. Michael Walsh; The Maturing of Minimalism; Time Magazine; 23rd Dec. 1985.
7. Michael Walsh; The Maturing of Minimalism; Time Magazine; 23rd Dec. 1985.
8. Michael Walsh; The Maturing of Minimalism; Time Magazine; 23rd Dec. 1985.
9. Gillo Dorfles; Theoretical Anylsis of the Intermedia Art Form; Intermedia and Mixed Media as a Sign of Crisis or Rebirth of the Visual Arts.

Chapter 5

In performance as has been stated already, there are set time durations, set pieces that will be visible only for the duration of the performance itself. The impermanence of such work has led to very comprehensive systems of documentation, which are essential to historians, art critics and in some cases the artists themselves. Not all artists document their work.

There are many various formats of documentation, photography still probably being the most commonplace. Other formats used are video, sixteen-millimetre and eight-millimetre film and sound tape. Then there are also those who document by drawing (as initially occurred with the environmentalists) and there are those who document by the use of documenta-texts as happened very often with the fluxus groups.

Because the events are recorded as such many arguments will arise in the continuum of work which progresses from the first stage photographs. Are the initial documentation now a just depiction of the piece? Could they be exhibited as the art work? Are they exhibited as the art work? The same arguments and questions hold out for the rest of the mediums. Video can give a moving record so also can film. This is something photography cannot do. Douglas Davis says in his book Artculture

"John Szarkowski has written somewhere of
photography's strange alliance with time
and chance. The reason the alliance seems
strange to all of us is that the instant



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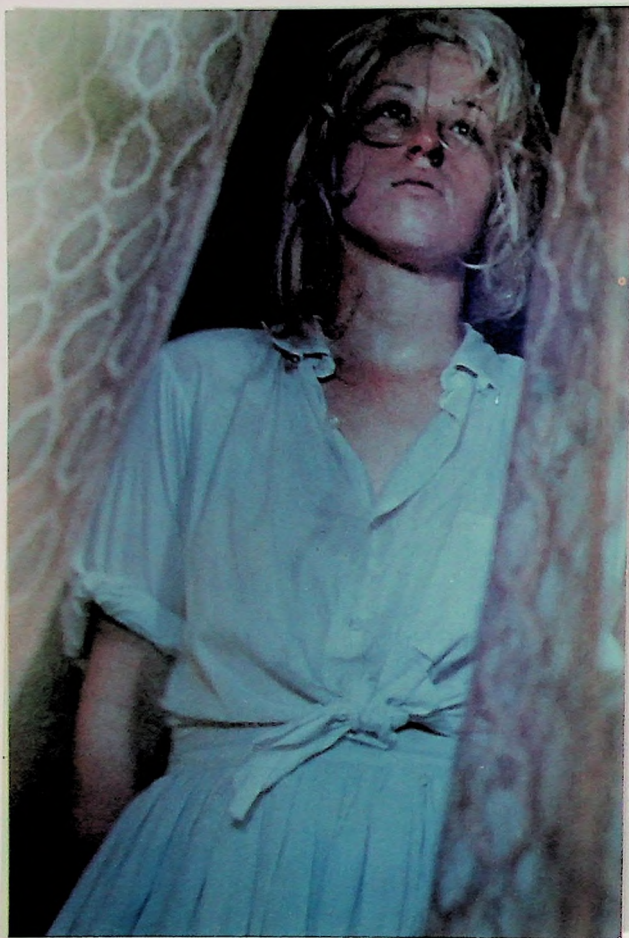


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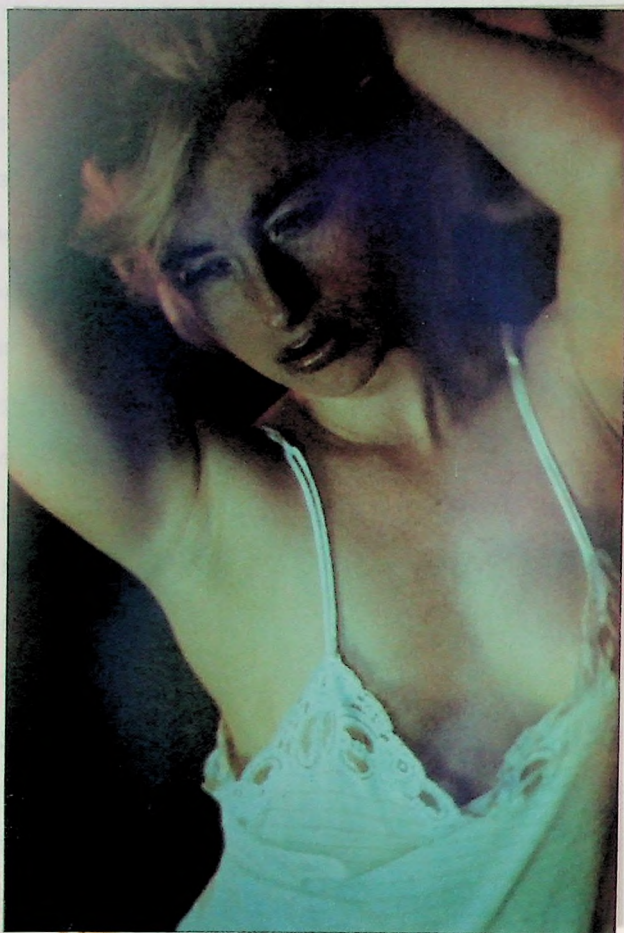


Illustration No. 21

stands still before us, in our hand, as though fixed forever. But the formalist and purist mistake is to assume that we are affected only by the presence of that glossy (or flat) piece of paper: both eye and hand are joined in the effort of perception by the mind. We know when we see a photographic image that it has come to us from a departed point in time. The photograph may not physically move on, as do film and particularly videotape, but our minds move. Both mind and photograph engage each other and move from each other into the past, in a perfect irony. Paintings are masters of their moments, imposed on time; photographs are servants of time, and in their presence we are reminded of ourselves."¹

Cindy Sherman works in the so called 'directorial mode'. This means that she herself conceives, constructs and carries out the set, the performance and the photography. Her photos are the result of a lengthy process. Most of the artists represented in the New York Gallery 'Metro Pictures' use photography or photographic derivatives in their work, which is multi-medial and centered on the tension between representation and the imagination. Cindy Sherman's work unlike that of artists like Goldstein or Lawson lacks "baroque dynamics and monumentality."²

On the contrary, it is intimate and vulnerable. This manifests itself most clearly at the point where she relativizes the ideal

image of women in the movies or the mass media. Her photographs do not indulge in the fantasy of a happy ending, they also display feminine values like doubt and vulnerability, which are not valued positively. It is exactly this aspect of her work that has been noticed by critics, who have even turned the argument around: the women she represents, they say, are too artificial to be experienced as real people. The critics are wrong here because for a long time now women have been made to look this way, especially in cinema. Cinema has a longer history than this particular format of photography, therefore that begs the question why did the critics not react early enough, e.g. in film to stop this formulation of a generalization of the female.

When Sherman uses props or details to characterize a situation, she turns to the same stereotypes we know from film or the mass media. Unlike a film director she cannot fall back on the logic of a story. She can show nothing but the details themselves, which accentuates their stereotype nature even more. In her colour photography this effect is less pronounced. There she seems to rely more on her observations of people in cities ect. around her. Sherman the 'subject' is not just an actor in a role. She creates a tension between her play acting and her own identity. She is not a filmstar, and is not presenting a prefabricated image to the public. It is now a component of her work that both Cindy Sherman and the other character have to be part of the work, and both in the picture. As a result the transformation of the one can never take place at the cost of the other, without reducing imagination

to mere imagery.

"On formal grounds she has decided not to employ parody caricature or the vocabulary of social critique."³

In the book The Camera Viewed - writings on twentieth century photography, Les Levine has an essay entitled Camera Art. In this essay Levine defines Camera Art as the use of the photographic medium by advanced artists. These artists do not consider themselves photographers. They are uninterested in the technical aspects of image-making in any art form. Levine is enthusiastic about the potential of photography to document ideas, gestures and experiences.

"The expression 'the camera never lies' is a lie. Anyone who has ever looked through a camera would realize that what the camera sees is by no means the same as what the eye sees. With the eye you can look at all that is before you, whereas the camera only frames a small part of it. Its as though you are looking at the world through your eyes, and as soon as you put the camera to your eye, you are defining which part of it you really want to see."⁴

So it should be quite easily discernable at this stage, that to present photographs of performance works, dance, theatre, mime or indeed and installation, can only give a very superfluous idea of what is happening in the work. In many cases it could be said to be



Illustration No. 22



Illustration No. 23



Illustration No. 24

even incorrect to document such works by photography and even worse to display them as a reference to what took place. It is plain to see that such work contains elements which have to be seen or experienced first hand, by being there as it happens. There will be sounds, sights, smells and reactions that no documentation can capture, much less relate to a 'ignorant' viewer.

Yet given all that there is always the counterpoint to all that. This could be evident in performance or situations specifically set up for the benefit of the camera. Many artists use this method. Arnulf Rainer uses photography a great deal, drawing over the images of himself and re-working the documentation. Another artist and writer who used the camera as such was Yukio Mishima. Eikoh Hosoe took the photographs, most of the situations Mishima initiated, but it is fair to say that there was a lot of 'trust' and co-operation in the making of the imagery.

Mishima:

".... it is the use of this civilized precision instrument for the purposes utterly opposed to civilization. The world to which I was abducted under the spell of his lens was abnormal, warped, sarcastic, grotesque, savage, and promiscuous.... yet there was a clear undercurrent of lyricism murmuring gently through its unseen conditions."⁵

"Before that camera, as I soon realized, my own spirit, the workings of my mind, had become totally redundant. It was an exhilarating



Illustration No. 25

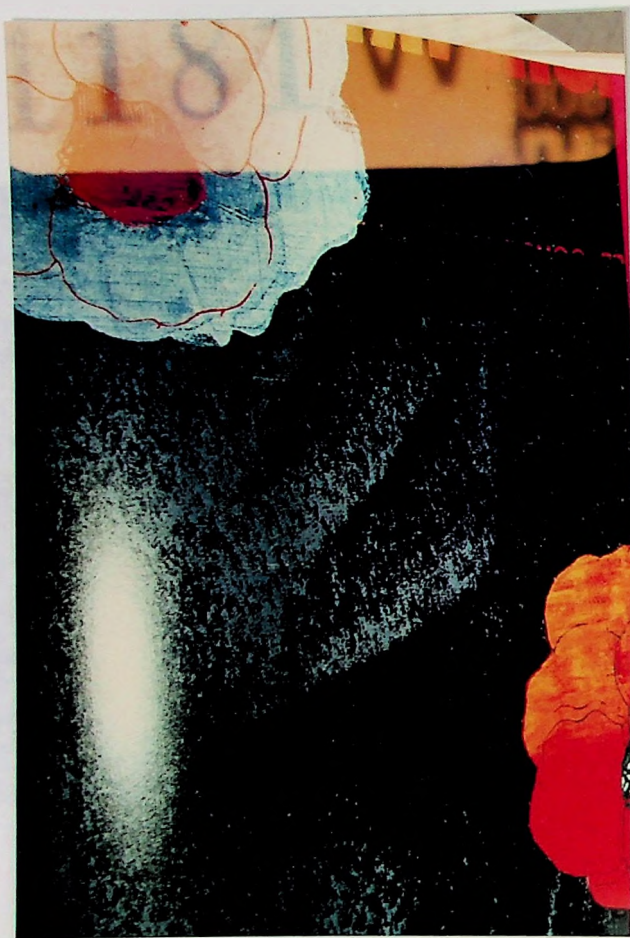


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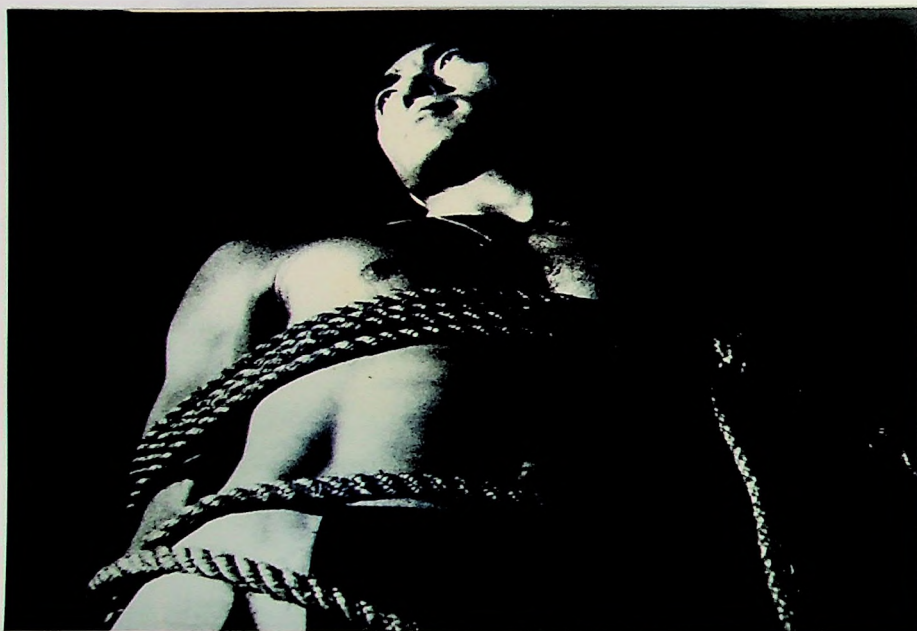


Illustration No. 27



Illustration No. 28

experience, a state of affairs I had long dreamed of."⁶

Hosoe merely explored via the medium of his camera, much the same as the novelist uses words and the composer sounds, the various combinations in which the objects to be photographed could be placed, and the light and shadow which made those combinations possible. For Hosoe the objects correspond to words and sounds.

"The objects are stripped of their various meanings, which are flung into a meaningless arrangement where their meaningless reflection of each other eventually restores a certain order to the light and shade. It is only by such means that the elements with which he composes can acquire an abstract quality similar to that of words and sounds."⁷

The first requirement for this process is of course that the objects photographed should have some meaning of which they can be stripped. This is why it was necessary that the human model should be a novelist of sorts.

"If the photographer is to create works which will stand for his spirit, in the same way as artists in other genres, he must first, having no ready-made abstract components such as words and sounds, he must supply other means to abstraction instead."⁸

Nishime trained in front of Hosoes Camera until it meant the

very same whether he faced the camera, stared into the lens or turned his back on it completely. The flesh of his eye and the skin of his back were both treated as simple externals. It was also the same for the photographer. It became obvious as he looked through his viewfinder, that he was waiting for some metamorphosis to overtake the objects there.

Nishima:

"It seems to me that before the photograph can exist as art it must, by its very nature, choose whether it is to be a record or a testimony. Whatever special lenses are used, and however the subject is there-by distorted, the camera only knows how to relate things directly. However, abstract composition therefore, the individual meaning of the subject related inevitably remains as a kind of indiscribable precipitate. The photographer's whole job is to filter this off by one of two methods. It is a choice between record and testimony."⁹

The best of press photography belong to the former class. The images which the photographer has filtered from reality. Whether particular events or the anguish of human reactions to them, already have an authenticity which the photographer is powerless to alter. It is the meaning of the objects which becomes the theme of the work. The photograph he chooses to 'record' takes the absolute authenticity

of the object photographed as its form, and the purification of the meaning as its theme. On the other hand when the photograph chooses to testify, the meaning of the objects related by the camera loses some parts in the process of being filtered off. Other parts will be distorted and made to fit into new areas/environments so as to be the formal elements for the work. As for the theme it lies solely in the expression of the photographers subjective judgment. Mishima believes that this is it, this is the photograph, there are no lies and no deceptions. He goes on to say that Hosoe's photography is that of 'testimony'. He illustrates this by going on

"In the way he treats a single rose for example
.... This particular flower embodies the general concept of the thing called 'rose' which most men harbour in their brains, along with various special meanings implicit in the place of origin, the species, the form, and the colour. The lens of the camera relates, not just the rose, but its meaning as well. These meanings, in fact, and not the image, are the only thing that can be twisted and toyed with in the process of filtering out the testimony. In a documentary photograph the meaning itself would be the theme of the work, but here the meanings of the rose are transformed and worked into the composition as his formal elements. It is here that it can become, for the first time a rose in the form of

a place, building, a rose-like an elephant, a womb-rose, a phallic rose, and yet the elephant and the womb remain not the theme of the work but mere formal elements. The theme consists solely of Hosoe's testimony. This is a true rose. This is a photograph, so it is as you see: there are no lies no deceptions."¹⁰

".... This plea, this testimony, I feel, constitute the whole of Hosoe's personal message. It is surely, only via this same consistent refrain that any self revelation is possible to the photographer at all?"

Having deciphered his theory in detail, one of his first subject matters has to do with the madness of the 'solid worthy adverage citizen'. "Yet who can laugh at his madness?" as Mauriac so admirably put it.

"Men are all mad when they are alone, they put collars round their naked necks, with roses ties and stand gazing vacantly into space, or they lie on zodiacs of marble mosaic, their bodies wrapped in rubber hoses. It is ritual that every solid citizen performs without fail, unknown to others, on one day out of the seven, for a few seconds out of the twenty-four hours. without a single exception.... "¹¹

Chapter 5: Footnotes.

1. Douglas Davis - Artculture - Icons Editions Haper and Row Publishers 1977.
2. Els Barents; Cindy Sherman; Schirmer/Mosel 1982.
3. Els Barents; Cindy Sherman; Schirmer/Mosel 1982.
4. Les Levine; The Camera Viewed - Writings on twentieth century Photography; P.R. Petruck 1979.
5. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (BA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
6. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (BA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
7. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (BA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
8. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (BA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
9. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (EA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
10. Mishima; Ordeal by Roses (BA-RA-KEI) Photographs by Eikoh Hosoe Published by Aperature.
11. Mauriac - Writings.

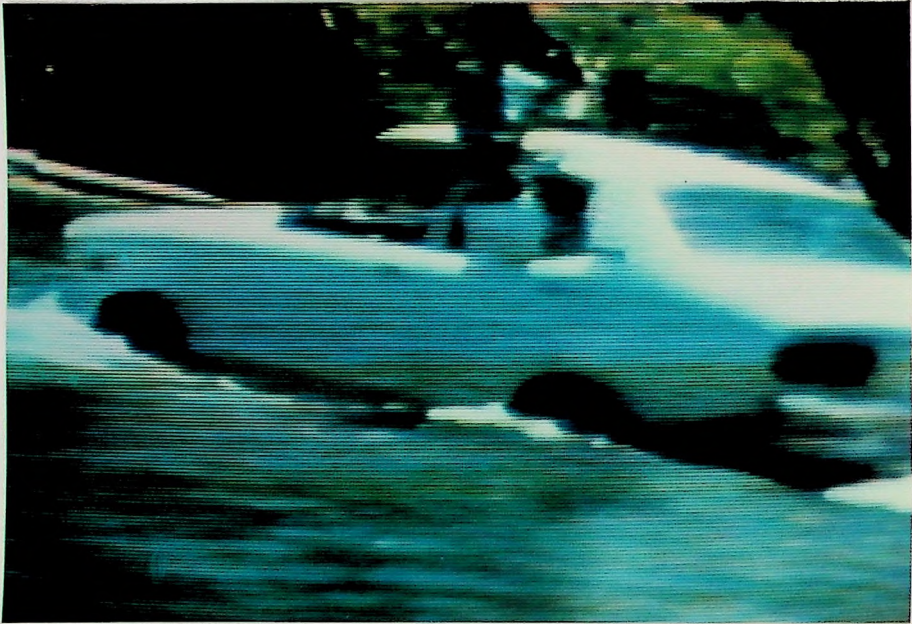


Illustration No. 29



Illustration No. 30



Illustration No. 31



Illustration No. 32

Conclusion

In conclusion, each chapter has dealt with a basic notion/concept of performance. They may not have related directly to the activity of performing, but there are elements which are common in most formats of work. These ideas could have been developed individually to form a larger work. I was not interested in doing this. The larger work is the performance itself, the action. Notions like 'time' and 'idea' are very potent and can easily in conceptual terms be broadened out into a complete concept. They form a far stronger concept, and language when grouped together. This is what it is happening in a lot of work, especially in somebodies like Mark Pauline's. In many pieces I see a new form of speech developing which is typical of this era. To refer back to chapter three - it is the Mad-Max type syndrome, the video nastie culture, in other, words levels of acceptability are increasing with each generation. This is what Pauline tries to maintain his work standards too. The question whether or not art will play a role in future everyday culture, in the form of video culture is an interesting one. If, so what or how much of a role could it play. There is enormous potential for development here, things, events, performance's actions, are happening, using futuristic spaces, (vacant parking lots, demolished blocks of buildings which have people living all around them). The art is reaching the people, it is exciting for the younger generations. I would submit that art today is far more exciting and relevant to all generations but especially to younger people as it has never been before. The uses of modern day ideas in video/performance ect., assures the artist of this. The one

exception being that the art must be broadcast or shown to the public, yet not doing this by putting inverted-commas around the art. It must appear as ordinary as the rest of the programmes.

It seems that everything circulates around words like communication and transformation. Even Marx's theory of art mentions it, that man's finest creative ability is to 'transform his material surroundings'. Beuys states in relation to Coyote:

"Transformation of ideology to the idea of freedom, and the transformation of language to a deeper understanding of its most potent evolutionary power, the transformation of verbal dialogue to Energy dialogue"¹

Probably communication is the more important word, it being the basis of all the art-work. Performance and where it is going can be seen as the newer presence that is replacing the presence which poems and pictures silently proffered before, it is also an extension of their possibilities, even perhaps without any substitution or replacement. It is not replacing all these other mediums by being a 'better' (in the academic sense) medium, but by just being a more open medium, ready to use all devices or whatever device is necessary to project its message or idea. As Gina Pane has stated,

"Our entire culture is based on the representation of the body".

Finally I feel that there should be no real conclusion to such references, as they are present tense and continuing. There is as

there always has been constant change in art. I feel that by talking in terms of conclusions that I am putting a historical context to it. This I do not wish to do as I do not believe it is finished.

Conclusion: Footnotes.

- 1 Joseph Beuys:- Coyote - Studio International 1976.

Joseph Beuys: Coyote Studio International 1976

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