

ALTERNATIVES IN RETROSPECT

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW 1969–1975

Gain Ground

Apple

98 Greene Street

112 Greene Street Workshop

10 Bleecker Street

Idea Warehouse

3 Mercer

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Jacki Apple, guest curator
with an essay by
Mary Delahoyd

THE NEW MUSEUM
New York

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THE NEW MUSEUM

65 Fifth Avenue New York, New York 10003

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PREFACE

Alternatives in Retrospect is an important exhibition in The New Museum's young history, since the information it provides—in the form of documentation, videotapes, objects, photographs, and recreated installations and performances—is relevant to our own genesis, and to our continued function and constant redefinition as an extension of and alternative to other existing contemporary arts institutions. Artists, collectively and individually, were the ones who first began to organize and collaborate in order to provide ways of making and showing their work other than the limited possibilities offered by major museums or commercial galleries. Their energy, commitment, vision, and optimism ultimately encouraged others with ideas, ideals, and methods of their own to establish organizations which nurture and support contemporary art and related activities.

The New Museum, which is a growing organization whose purpose is to present the most recent (and often controversial) work being done today, to provide a forum for new ideas and ways of seeing, and to support the work of living artists which might not otherwise receive critical attention or public exposure, represents one outgrowth of the pioneering spirit which *Alternatives in Retrospect* allows us to review.

My thanks to Jacki Apple, guest curator of the exhibition, for her tireless work and thorough documentation of one of the most important, and neglected, facets of our recent art history, and to the many artists, art historians, friends, and colleagues who helped with the enormous task of compiling and presenting such an exhibition.

Our thanks to The New Museum's many interns and volunteers who have devoted much time and skill to the success of the exhibition. We are especially grateful to The National Endowment for the Arts, The New York State Council on the Arts, and The Jerome Foundation for their ongoing support of this and other exhibitions which constitute our programs. Most of all, however, we thank the participating artists for sharing with us those concepts and works which have contributed greatly to the vitality of present-day art and arts organizations, and which have substantially enriched the cultural and intellectual life of the American public.

—Marcia Tucker
Director

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since its initial conception, this exhibition has been two years in the making. It has involved an extensive amount of research and without the cooperation, assistance, enthusiasm, and support of a great number of people it could not have been realized. I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to all of the participants in this project, and to the following people a very special thank you:

Marjorie Welish for her generosity in sharing with me her research and information on 10 Bløecker Street and the Idea Warehouse, and for her insights and knowledge gained in the preparation of her book on the Institute for Art and Urban Resources; Robyn Brentano, editor of the book *112 Workshop/112 Greene Street* for her advice and guidance, for providing access to the extensive files and documentation that went into the research and development of her book, for allowing the book to be exhibited, and for giving permission to reprint invaluable excerpts from it in this catalog; Holly Solomon for sharing her personal recollections, time, energy, and enthusiasm, and for her financial support making possible the recreation of Gordon Matta-Clark's *Open House*; Ted Greenwald for his assistance in compiling the 98 Greene Street chronology; Jane Crawford for her support and financial contribution to the recreation of *Open House*; Richard Nonas, Jene Highstein, and Ted Greenwald for organizing and reconstructing *Open House*; Billy Apple for providing a complete history and documentation of Apple; Robert Newman for his very early support of this project; Jeffrey Lew, Tina Girouard, Richard Nonas, and Dieter Froese for sharing their personal memories and perspectives, and for providing important background information and individual overviews; Peter Frank for providing access to his writings from the period; Mary Delahoyd for her historical essay and assistance; Emory Craig for the success of the installation design and execution; Joan Greenfield for her skill in designing the catalog, thereby making it possible to include so many artists in a limited space; and to both Emory and Joan for their extensive collaboration with me in the planning and development stages; Marcia Tucker for her initial and continuing support of this project and for making possible the realization of this exhibition at The New Museum; the staff of The New Museum for their assistance; Martha Wilson of Franklin Furnace Archives for her assistance in writing the original grant proposal.

I would also like to thank all of my friends, especially Shelley Rice, whose patience and support have been sustaining throughout. Finally I want to express my gratitude, appreciation, and admiration to all of my fellow artists. They are the people whose work and spirit really made this show possible, and without whom it would not exist. I thank them for their energy, enthusiasm, cooperation, professionalism, perseverance, dedication, and most of all for their trust and good faith.

—Jacki Apple

INTRODUCTION

When the idea for this project first occurred to me in 1979, I was the Curator of Exhibitions at Franklin Furnace Archives in New York, and in that capacity my original motivation was archival. It was conceived initially as a modest project that might be exhibited at the Furnace—a collection of books, posters, photographs, drawings, and statements depicting the activities that took place in now extinct, New York City alternative spaces prior to 1975. I was concerned with compiling objective data, preserving for historical reference documentation of a body of work a good portion of which no longer existed, and collecting and cataloging the recorded information still available from the primary sources (the artists) before it was dispersed, lost, or forgotten. As I began to research the subject, it became apparent that complex cultural, social, political, and ideological factors were involved which were integral to the art activities that began in the late 1960s and shaped the decade that followed, factors that made the rise and fall of the “alternative” space inevitable.

I came to this project not as an historian, critic, or curator, but as an artist who entered into, emerged, and grew up in the New York art world as an active participant in the formation, development, and decline of the alternative spaces. Thus, my role in this project evolved from an initial curatorial investigation and concern to a personal and political commitment as an artist to examine, through the words and works of my peers, the temperament of the times—the social, economic, and esthetic forces that created the alternative movement, and the spirit of community and collaboration that existed among these artists. This exhibition and catalog are intended to provide a clearer understanding and perspective of what happened, how and why it happened, and where we are today as a result.

The issues of “intent and context” and “art and life”—phrases that were so much a part of the vocabulary of that time—exemplify the direct relationship between the emergence of the artist-generated alternative spaces and the form and content of the work that took place in those spaces. A majority of the works were process oriented and situationally specific, involving a relationship between materials, concepts, actions, and locations. They were sometimes spontaneous, improvisational, open-ended, and often collaborative. The works existed within a given time and then ceased to exist. As a result much of this work was labeled “ephemeral,” the intent being to create an experience rather than a product, and new terms were devised to describe it, such as “installation” and “performance.” Often all that remained after these events was photographic documentation or evidence.

Beyond the diversity of styles, content, sensibilities, and ideological positions of the individual artists, the collective art activities that took place were characterized by a shared attitude of experimentation, immediacy, and urgency—the process of *making work* being the primary concern. Accompanying was the desire to “break out of the frame,” to extend the boundaries and definitions of what was considered art, and to inevitably alter the established structure of the art world itself. Galleries and museums could not and did not recognize and accommodate this kind of work. In response, during the period with which this exhibition deals, artists out of necessity created and took control of their own contexts. It was a brief, yet highly productive time in which they experienced a sense of both their individual autonomy and their power as a group.

This exhibition and catalog do not claim to be nor, due to the limitations of both space and

funds, can they attempt to be a complete and definitive statement on the subject. It is rather a first effort, an introduction, so to speak.

Given the resources available, it was not possible to include all the artists, activities, and spaces that existed, so I chose to represent locations—"spaces"—that had consistent, ongoing programs of activities over a period of a year or more, and in which a number of artists worked and interacted. Not included are numerous street works and performance activities done outside the auspices of any one space and important single events such as Alanna Heiss's Brooklyn Bridge project. Also missing, among others, are the activities at Alan Saret's Spring Palace, which anticipated and inspired the formation of 112 Greene Street; Jean Dupuy's *About 405 East 13th Street* series; the works sponsored by Willoughby Sharp and Liza Bear of *Avalanche* magazine at the Grand Street loft; and the unique and significant role that *Avalanche* played in reporting and promoting the artists, events, and artworks of the period.

The aim of this catalog is to present a kaleidoscope of viewpoints, a history of events as perceived by the participants in them, spoken in the personal, subjective, individual voices of the artists and directors. Thus, the statements range from autobiographical and anecdotal narratives (including conversations and interviews) to the purely descriptive and expository, all of which are amplified by visual documentation of the actual works. Some of the statements were written at the time of the events, while others were recently prepared especially for this catalog. Also included are complete chronologies of the spaces making the catalog a reference source.

As in any exhibition of this sort, questions are bound to arise about the basis of selection of both the works and the artists represented. It was not an easy task, and there were many pieces not included for the purely practical reasons of physical and logistical impossibility. The final choices for re-installation, reconstruction, performance, or documentary representation were made after careful consideration of the following criteria: the works most closely represent or typify the esthetic concerns and philosophical positions of the individual spaces in which they were made and shown; they are by artists who were the most active participants in those spaces; they are key works in the development of the artists; they set precedents for the decade that has followed; they have remained fresh, strong, and visionary in their own right. Some of the artists are now well-known, others are not. Included in this exhibition are paintings, installation documentation and drawings, and photo-text works; sculpture, installations, and artifacts; performances; documentary videotapes of performances and process installations; and films (on videotape).

In some ways researching and organizing this exhibition and catalog have been like an archaeological expedition. The works have been excavated and restored, the evidence presented from locations and a period which, like past civilizations, are now extinct. And the questions that arise regarding the causes of their demise are not dissimilar, nor are the answers.

A factor common to these alternative spaces in the early days was little or no outside institutional funding. Several spaces not represented here but which began at the same time and others that were created later in the same spirit, such as The Kitchen, The Clocktower, P.S. 1, Artists Space, and Franklin Furnace, have not only survived but thrived; some now have six-figure annual budgets. They can, however, no longer be identified, defined, or accurately referred to as alternative spaces in the spirit of what that originally meant in the early and middle 1970s. They have evolved into non-profit arts institutions, governed by boards of directors and arts administra-

tors, funded by corporations, private foundations, and government. It is only logical to expect that, under those circumstances, they would take on the same structural bureaucracy and operational policies as museums, or that they should resemble institutes of contemporary art, large and small, and that the guidelines and procedures for procuring funds should subsequently be reflected in the way in which programs are conceived and carried out. This evolution is, after all, a predictable aspect of our culture. This is not to say that these arts institutions do not play a necessary and important part in the art world, much as museums and commercial galleries do. But perhaps the time has come to examine and re-evaluate the meaning of this evolution, as well as to reconsider what options are open to artists who are faced with the impending withdrawal of a significant portion of the depended-upon funding support, and the subsequent shift of power and influence from former sources to other financial sponsors.

It is obvious that the issues in 1981 are not what they were ten years ago. It is useful here to compare what happened to the alternative space concept, and what happened to the "radical politics" movement of the late 1960s. A similar process of co-optation occurred. It is not a coincidence that the idealism, innocence, aspirations, and values of a generation were involved in both. Yet it is a generation whose work, visions, and concern have continually grown, survived, and responded to the world in which they have operated. In many ways it has remained a generation in transit, one that has consistently resisted "labeling" and often been "unmanageable"; it continues to retain its vitality and a capacity to question the established order of things, take risks, and initiate constructive change. It should not be forgotten that the climate created and the opportunities provided by those early alternative spaces made it possible for so many women to develop and show their work and eventually enter the mainstream of the art world and influence its direction.

The issue now is not so much one of creating new alternative spaces, but rather of examining the nature of future contexts in light of present conditions. We are living in a society in which advanced information-processing communications technology, still thought by most people to be science fiction, already exists and is in operation. In a relatively short time more than fifty percent of the gross national product has changed from goods to services to information, and our future reality may be one of home-entertainment components and home computer terminals. The primary and dominant image-makers of our society are not artists (or the people who are presently called artists). This puts the very role, definition, and function of the artist in society at stake. Perhaps we should be asking who are these other image-makers who determine, control, program, and condition our desires and expectations, define our reality, identity, visions of our place in the environment, and ultimately our future. Is it possible that artists as image makers will find themselves isolated and impotent, chattering only to each other in a vacuum, soon to become extinct like dinosaurs of a past civilization? Perhaps the issue now and in this next decade is not one of alternative spaces, but of alternative voices and visions that are meaningful and effective in the larger context of the world. The need is no longer to find and create an alternative within the art world, or within the world of commercial entertainment and communications media, but to draw upon the resources that each offers in order to create an alternative context that encompasses and extends beyond both. This may well involve radical changes in our ideas about art, and it may require all of our collaborative energies, but it may also be our only chance for a truly relevant future.

—Jacki Apple

SEVEN ALTERNATIVE SPACES

A CHRONICLE 1969–1975

The creative process—idea generated into matter—remains incomplete until it has provoked some response. The artist needs an audience. Otherwise such activity flirts dangerously with catharsis or self-indulgence. Indeed, dialog stimulates the artist to continue, to refine and extend the original premise.

At any historical time a system for attracting and holding an audience emerges out of the combined needs of artist and society. Traditionally in Western art, realms of power—government, religion, wealth—sought visual expression to legitimize and sustain and proselytize their dominance. Artists warmed to the security and the challenge of such patronage until the mid-nineteenth century when a widening rupture in the fabric of this venerable society irrevocably altered its character. Industrialization shifted activity to the cities which grew rapidly with a burgeoning middle class. The artists, acknowledging these new conditions, refused to accede to the wishes of the old patron. In the new position of antagonist, the artist began producing works which claimed a different territory for painting and sculpture. This art, alienated from its traditional societal role, turned inward to explore the nature of its unique existence and that of the individual making it. The modern era was born.

At that moment of inception modernism lacked any audience at all. It could have accepted this estrangement as a dimension of its radicalism. But, almost immediately, this new art began to seek its own audience—proof that response and dialog are fundamental to the art act. At first artists placed their work anywhere and everywhere, in art supply shops, store windows, cafes. Yet this activity was both random and confused. The artists certainly recognized its flaws but were hardly eager to do what the situation demanded—become their own agents. Initially a few enterprising individuals—Paul Durand-Ruel, Joseph Duveen, Ambroise Vollard—recognized the new need. Then more responded and the commercial gallery system came into being. Soon galleries became the principal forums for viewing these discrete, modern objects which defined their inherent character in startlingly new themes, forms, and materials. But objects they remained—identifiable, graspable, and salable. The gallery system promoting this art sustained its audience through the booming decade of the 1960s.

Then came the late '60s, a time of deep conflict and questioning that attacked the heart of modern society and with it the institution of the gallery system. Racial and sexual prejudices were assaulted. The right of America to wage war for its material and patriotic glory was challenged—and the challengers won. The sacred family unit became only one option. Given these new circumstances, the hermetic quality of modernism seemed inadequate or alien. Artists began charting new territories beyond the object, beyond the gallery, beyond the audience. The system which had developed to support the modernist premise was intrinsically unable to respond to such different, even antithetical, terms. Yet these new artists came to recognize the need for an audience — ever as essential as the need to make art.

In the 1960s the commercial galleries in New York—the most active center for art exhibition and exchange in the world—were clustered uptown along 57th Street and north on Madison Avenue and its immediate environs. There the commodity of art, both traditional and contemporary, was being traded at spiraling prices. But most of the artists who were beginning to ask new questions of their art and their society were not only producing ephemeral statements that eluded the market but were also living apart from this commercial hub. Indeed they were becoming urban pioneers as they sought to reclaim abandoned and dilapidated warehouse and industrial spaces throughout Manhattan and especially in the territory south of Houston Street (Soho). The motivations were simple: extensive work space and cheap rent. The artists risked violations of city zoning laws that prohibited use of these buildings for living and risked personal investment in materials and labor for no guaranteed return. But, at the time, this situation seemed less a risk than a solution, even a blessing. Thus a community of artists arose. The bonds were idea and place.

The community grew ever stronger as it began actively to seek its own audience on its own territory. Only a few dealers—Virginia Dwan, John Gibson, Klaus Kertess at Bykert, Ileana Sonnabend—tested this art in the tight uptown sphere. Still fewer—Paula Cooper (the first, in 1968, to open a Soho gallery), Richard Feigen, Ivan Karp at O.K. Harris, Max Hutchinson—dared to venture downtown. But primarily it was the artists themselves who joined forces: they located the raw spaces; they cleaned and renovated them; they planned the programs; they raised the money—all from private sources and never enough—to keep these places going. Thus yet another support system emerged, distinct in character from its predecessors and responsive in form to the new concerns.

The physical character and human organization of each of the seven spaces (founded between 1969 and 1973) which constitute the subject of this exhibition were unique. The pristine appearance and homogenized structure of the commercial galleries were not—and could not be—replicated. Special concerns of the participating artists gave each space its definition which fluctuated as personnel changed and programs evolved. Significantly, a precedent for an exhibition space run by artists appeared in early twentieth-century New York. The gallery “291” was opened by Alfred Stieglitz in December 1908 and succeeded “The Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession,” 1905-08, which had been Edward Steichen's studio in the adjacent building. This new place exhibited the latest American painting, sculpture, and photography together with the work of young European art rebels. Neither the Americans nor the Europeans had any other viable New York outlet, so a photographer and his friends created one. And, the opportunity for discussion afforded by 291 became as important as its exhibition program. From its center art talk and activity radiated, especially in the direction of Greenwich Village. However, commercial galleries, inspired by the work exhibited at 291, soon came to dominate the showing and marketing of art until the sharp turn of events in the late 1960s.

Two spaces, both beyond the 57th Street center but outside of Soho, appeared as harbingers of the alternative idea. One had a brief history; the other continued well into the years of the Soho alternatives.

Gain Ground first opened its 246 West 80th Street doors in April 1969. Its founder, Robert Newman, established the space as a forum for verbal and visual interchange. Indeed this public

place was a private studio opened to the wider world. Newman himself had ties with New York experimentations in "concrete poetry"; to this literary dimension he joined an interest in the most advanced technology. Others of similar persuasion naturally gravitated to his empathetic space.

The first exhibition set the tone. *Bookwork Art, Objects Made by Poets, Word Art and Poet Visions* realized the "concrete" of that new poetry literally by generating things out of words. Such transformations were explored by Vito Acconci, Eleanor Antin, Michael Benedikt, Charles Frasier, Dan Graham, Ron Gross, Bici Forbes Hendricks, Jackson MacLow, Bernadette Mayer, Robert Newman, John Perreault, Patricia Sloan, and Hannah Weiner.

Newman himself produced two experiential events. *Live Photography/Rooms with Electric Mirrors* explored the possibility of transient photography through mirrored reflection and attendant verbal exhortations and queries to the viewer/subject. *Power Throne* installed the participant, ushered by two red-robed females, on a dentist's chair in a suffusing red interior. With stethoscope and earphones one heard the amplification of one's own internal power source. After leaving this immersion chamber one confronted the external self-reflection in a mirror placed in a white-lit room. The self's sense of appearance became subtly altered by the new acquaintance with one's inner being.

The possibilities of wider experimentation also induced performance. For *Room Piece*, Vito Acconci spent three weekends moving his belongings, by both public and private transport, from his studio on Christopher Street to Gain Ground. He documented this procedure with words and photographs, and on the last day doled out whatever was on his bookshelves. Acconci's personal conception had shifted naturally from language which asserted the bald activity of its existence to an action which called conscious attention to its own activity, in turn caught in its temporal evolution through verbal-visual documentation.

Turning biographies into objects, Eleanor Antin constructed *California Lives*—twelve portraits, some real and some fictional, made out of associative, shiny new wares from discount stores and mail-order houses. Narratives accompanying each personage paralleled in words the visual metaphors for these character-types.

After early Spring 1970 the activity at Gain Ground ceased, but this alternative space continued to sponsor programs elsewhere in New York. A performance with installation by Juan Downey and a program of works by various filmmakers took place at the Cinematheque. And in the Fall of 1970 at the Chelsea Hotel, Antin held a personal celebration of New York in her *Portraits of New York Women* focusing on eight particular individuals: Naomi Dash, Amy Goldin, Margaret Mead, Rochelle Owens, Yvonne Rainer, Carolee Schneeman, Lynne Traiger, and Hannah Weiner. Again objects carried the weight of personalities. Despite the transient dimension of these last events sponsored by Gain Ground, this place had provoked a new symbiosis of verbal and visual expression.

At the inception of any radically new idea, the need for interchange among the proponents is as pressing as the need for an audience. Indeed the first audience invariably consists of fellow artists. Apple served just such a fundamental purpose. In the beginning it was the public face of Billy Apple's private studio opened to exhibit successive variations on his own vibrant neons. During its four-year history he continued to show his work intermittently. However, because the founder sought a public forum, Apple soon became an "idea exchange." Self-investigation led to autobiography expressed through narration and ritual performance. Art about the nature and ev-

olution of matter paralleled the exploration of self. The preciousness of a finite object, or even of the discrete creative act, came under fire.

Three artists converged on *Matter Transformation* as Billy Apple, Geoff Hendricks, and Jerry Vis explored respectively glass, earth, and stone. For two weeks each artist manipulated the material of his initial selection and interacted with the other substances and artists. The result was a single work.

Undermining pure modernism even more, the *Activity Exchanges* involved six artists—Mac Adams, Jacki Apple, Geoff Hendricks, Davi Det Hompson, David Troy, and Jerry Vis—each performing the proposal that another had made. What one artist had verbally wrought, another could alter, expand, personalize through interpretation.

The space at 161 West 23rd Street was a bare cube painted white and halved by two columns. This physical configuration inspired several works. In the middle of Apple, Vis constructed *Rooms*, a half-scale echo of the interior space itself; then Ed Hee used this room-in-a-room as the stage for his performance, *Tight Shoes*. On one day, two activities—opposite in nature—continued concurrently for six hours: in one half of the room a band, Artwiser/Artwiser, played rock music non-stop while the beer flowed; in the other half, Billy Apple scrubbed the floor continually for the duration.

The thirty artists who participated in Apple over the course of its existence to December 1973 accepted the shared responsibility and relished the sustained discourse, both formal and informal, which gave this space its special character. Although Madison Avenue could not sell talk, the talk had to go on. Casual intermittent exchanges were inadequate. A place dedicated to just that vital endeavor and its tangible art consequences had to happen.

Greene Street is the most architecturally spectacular, even gaudy, of the Soho thoroughfares. Its facades offer the widest range of classical-to-baroque interpretations in cast iron; brilliant colors now pick out those details. The combination of esthetics and business, of surface polish and interior rawness, which gave nineteenth-century definition to this street can still be felt. It had become something of a demimonde of light industry, clandestine activity, and neglect by the time the first Soho alternatives appeared, at numbers 98 and 112.

Christmas Eve 1969—an event took place. It was really a birthday party for Alan Saret, a performance by Gordon Matta-Clark. The room was dark except for illumination from three theatrical spotlights on three trees: a Christmas tree, a holly bush, and a flowering fruit tree. One hundred chairs were stacked against the back wall. As each guest arrived a chair was claimed so that at a glance one could tell how the party was growing.

Thus began the life of 98 Greene Street, founded by artists of diverse interests in league with Holly and Horace Solomon, long-time art collectors who had determined that the existence of such a space was more crucial at that moment than the private purchase of art objects. In their role as acquirers they had begun to feel more and more helpless against a changing, late 1960s' society which they believed demanded radically different esthetic responses. Such evidence was beginning to emerge in the art of a younger breed who were questioning the issues that art should raise, the look it should have, the terms it should posit. A place for experiment and interchange seemed the logical course of action for the Solomons. Horace became the guardian of its purpose, the custodian of its physical needs, the publicist (with each exhibitor) of its exis-

tence. Holly shaped its spirit. Because of her own involvement with the theater, 98 Greene Street naturally featured a rich variety of performance art; its poetry readings often sought visual and aural accompaniment; its paintings began to tap a vein of exuberant pictorial and thematic expression. And, the spontaneous atmosphere of discovery, production, cooperation gave 98 Greene Street the feel of an extended family.

Indeed, the impetus to many performances was familial. In *Ritual* Roger Welch became the primitive oral historian seated in a candlelit circle of branches. From that setting he told stories, triggered by only a name or an object, about his own "tribal" family. Then he moved into the twentieth century by showing *Portrait*, a silent film of home-movie clips from the 1920s to the present taken by his grandparents, parents, and himself; through editing he related similar images and poses documenting and linking the generations. In the same spirit Welch made *Family Photo Pieces*, a record through photographs of family members at different times but in positions and situations echoing one another; accompanying the images were recollections, written in the present, by the living subjects of each picture; blank spaces told of those now deceased.

Dennis Oppenheim reversed this genealogical direction in *Works with Offspring*. He and his three children joined in a physical bond by transferring to one another some aspects of their existence in the warmth of shared lives. In one exchange, son Erik drew on his father's back, and by felt sensation alone Dennis tried simultaneously to replicate that image on his son's back. Private actions of familial communication became the subject for public art.

Charles Simonds moved out of the exhibition space to the second-floor window ledge and fire escape to erect *Dwellings*, miniature houses which invoked both theatrical stage sets and children's toys.

In *The Masque of Monuments (Rocks and Water)*, Robert Kushner took performance into the realm of global spectacle by depicting natural and man-made phenomena as animate rocks and water. Thirteen performers, naked under foam rubber sheets (the rocks) or in a long tube of polyethylene (the water), assumed the configurations of eleven sites. As a voice identified the locations and music occasionally set the mood, the performers traveled from Plymouth Rock to the Versailles Gardens to the Great Wall of China to the beach at Santa Monica, and points in between. The historical stimulus had been the joyous and convivial court masques in seventeenth-century England and France.

At 98 Greene Street traditional theater was challenged and extended through a program of plays organized by Chuck Portz. *Cosmic Forces*, "a space opera" by John Quinn, was performed on a set of ramps and scaffolding planned by Gordon Matta-Clark and erected around the perimeter of the loft with the audience seated on cushions in its center. Gauzy costumes alluding to the Orient were designed by Holly Solomon, who also staged the event. Dick Gallup assembled actors to do a reading of his play while passing among themselves *The Bingo*, a concealed object which George Schneeman had made but no one ever saw. Bill Beckley played on "play" by combining opera and games in *Song for a Chin-up* and *Song for a Sliding Board*; in each event the singer played while singing for sixty seconds. After these two minutes, the audience migrated to 112 Greene Street for more "play" and the opportunity to participate in golf, ping-pong, or hopscotch.

On two successive Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons, there were performances of *Footnotes from Macbeth*, "A concept play in five beats," written by Holly Solomon. On

each day the actors were dressed differently, according to the current social dictates for what was worn on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. This play would affirm not its separateness but its continuity with the audience who joined the actors in slipping between reality and fantasy as boundaries between the stage and the loft, the actors and the spectators, melded. Holly Solomon's second play, *Boxing Match*, was not even held at 98 Greene Street but moved to a more appropriate setting—Clancy's Gym. The stage was the square of the boxing arena with actors on one side, boxers on the other. Between three-minute rounds of boxing the actors played confrontational scenes from various theatrical archetypes including Greek tragedy, Chekhov, Off-Broadway. During intermission hot dogs and beer were sold; in that environment the audience found itself reacting like fans at the Golden Gloves.

Poetry, another vital dimension of 98 Greene Street, also frequently engaged in theatrics. The first five readings were organized by Peter Schjeldahl; subsequent events were planned by Ted Greenwald, who had been one of those invited to participate in the opening series. As Greenwald read from the high stage, Gordon Matta-Clark hoisted himself in a leather armchair to a level even with the poet and then, suspended in mid-air, proceeded to build a piece out of foods draped over and around the chair. Ted Berrigan and Anne Waldman read poems dedicated to each other. With the exception of one major group event as a benefit, all other readings were solo, against the custom of paired programs. Bernadette Mayer's recorded six-hour poem, *Memory*, written in the winter to recall the previous August, was played while the audience perused over 1,600 photographs that Mayer had taken each day of that August. John Giorno read *Cum*, the first live performance of one of his double-column poems. Taylor Mead read to his own piano accompaniment. Jennifer Bartlett read *Cleopatra* in her first New York reading. Kenward Elmslie read and sang songs, Joe Brainard read, Andy Grundberg read, Tom Rawworth read . . .

While the boundaries of established arts were being tested, new areas for expression were investigated. Bert Spielvogel, who supervised the film program and tended the machinery, produced *Ads*, a chain of television commercials documenting the history of this genre from its beginning—a history that Spielvogel in his days as a pioneering maker of TV commercials had significantly shaped. To seek a broader territory for photography, Stephen Shore assembled the exhibition *Meat You Can Eat*. Reaching beyond the accepted photographic esthetic, it juxtaposed old photographs and quick new polaroids, elegant Cecil Beaton fashion photographs and government aerial reconnaissance images, and other surprises.

Instead of the cool painted objects and the aggressive pop icons which had dominated the 1960s, 98 Greene Street offered works of gentle romance, lush decoration, and unabashed sentiment. Many of these artists were showing for the first time in New York, or anywhere. Brad Davis emblazoned on vast patterned fields the most blatant and horrifying symbols of power, the swastika, which for him was charged with both political and personal meaning. Gary Perkins built huge machines whose scale brought them to surreality and whose wooden material gave them a touch of nostalgia. George Schneeman reverted to the Renaissance with simulated and actual fresco portraits of his close friends; every avant-garde pictorial principle was rattled. Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt reached back even further to a medieval time which still lived in pockets of the Catholic immigrant population of his childhood; *Panis Angelicus*, an altar emitting Gregorian chants, was the flamboyant tinfoil result. Susan Hall immersed herself in a private world of actuality, reverie, and fantasy visualized in tensile line and muted pastel. Denise Green painted

intimate views of architectural details. Ed Baynard presented his ingenuous floral watercolors. Finally, Neil Jenney—in the last event, December 1973—showed terse painted encounters between activity and passivity including *Plowed and Unplowed* and *The Hunter and the Hunted*. The paintings were set in a cozy context replete with lamps and couches where visitors could lounge and talk.

Ease, spontaneity, variety, and freedom characterized 98 Greene Street. The feeling of hopelessness against a stagnant status quo which had prompted its beginning had been turned into one of eager experimentation in a vital new context.

Between 98 and 112 Greene Streets, for three days in May 1972, a dumpster appeared; it could have been part of the old working Soho or the new art Soho. In fact, it emerged from the latter to invoke the former. Gordon Matta-Clark, with the help of Ted Greenwald, had turned a container for refuse into *Open House*, a habitation subdivided by partitions and doors; when it rained, umbrellas became the roof. This “house” gave out its own sounds—*Voice Truck*, a six and one-half hour audiotape of a day on Greenwald’s newspaper delivery truck. The random sounds of the entire city issued from a familiar urban object transformed into a dwelling. At one point during the first existence of *Open House* (a second version was constructed for the artist’s exhibition in the Fall of 1972), Matta-Clark concocted an attendant piece on the sidewalk; umbrellas and a dog were its components. Then Barbara Dilley, Tina Girouard, Suzanne Harris, Richard Landry, and Robert Praddo performed in and around the *House* while Matta-Clark barbecued a pig—a twist on the suburban cook-out.

This event totally realized the unique spirit of 112 Greene Street. Its cavernous ground-floor space stirred feelings of monumentality despite the tentative state of its floorboards and related more to the outdoor urban action than to its own superstructure. The detritus of that urban world became raw matter for the art action inside and out. Often works were produced through collaboration, even urban guerrilla activity. The sheer weight and scale of the sculptures demanded a large work force. In this spirit of cooperation and against the material density came the music, the dance, and the performance which defined the other side of the 112 Greene Street personality. The masterminds of this space were two artists: Jeffrey Lew, the owner of the building, and Gordon Matta-Clark. They did not control or even organize the programs but rather provided the site and generated the attitude for things to happen.

The history of this space was punctuated by bold group exhibitions of powerful sculptural forms, unexpected materials (even with the historical preparation of Dada), and grand experiments. Anyone who would dare could curate such a show; many artists gave it a try. Seventeen individuals participated in the Fall 1970 opening of the space. From that time on virtually every major sculptor of the ’70s encountered 112. Indeed its physical character may have impelled the sculpture of that decade on its free-wheeling experimental course.

Since the space was never considered architecturally sacred, many artists produced works which incorporated or altered it either intentionally or by default. In the opening exhibition, George Trakas used the basement for a sculpture which extended out a back window to a triangular air shaft where it was anchored by a stone. Trakas’s second sculpture began in the basement as a demolition scaffold supporting a glass, steel, and wood superstructure that emerged on the first floor through an eight-foot hole cut in the floor. Across the horizontal expanse and into

its walls Jene Highstein thrust two steel pipes, one at a lofty eight-feet-six-inches and the other at a touchable six-feet-four. Alan Saret appropriated stuff from the street, including sheet metal and cornices which he had scavenged from a nearby demolition. Larry Miller covered a wall with *Knives*, twenty-one color photographs of knife-induced scars hung over the actual blades. And Matta-Clark showed photographic records of the first buildings slated for demolition whose fate he temporarily reversed by placing his personal mark on them through cuttings and removals. Some of these remnants were then brought into 112 as proof of artistic reclamation. Suzanne Harris built a *Flying Machine* rigged from a wooden I beam suspended close to the ceiling; two performers held in its body slings then became marionettes whose tandem movements were governed by the machine. Tina Girouard erected four sculptural contraptions: *Air Space Stage/Sound Space Stage/Wall Space Stage/Floor Space Stage*. Constructed in relation to one another, they could assume various positions or engage in movements which performers (Barbara Dilley, Suzanne Harris, Richard Landry, Mabou Mines Theater Company, and the artist herself) occasionally activated. In gentle evocation of a distant place and historical time—her Cajun Louisiana—Girouard created “stage settings” of wallpaper, fabric, and linoleum which existed independently and also cradled haunting performances evocative of ritual.

The epitome of the 112 Greene Street mission was “Anarchitecture,” a group dedicated to the voids, gaps, interruptions, and movements in the physical environment. Once a week for a year this group, led by Matta-Clark with Laurie Anderson, Tina Girouard, Suzanne Harris, Jene Highstein, Bernard Kirschenbaum, Richard Landry, and Richard Nonas, met to discuss “anarchitectural” facts and the ideas that they might provoke. Then in March 1974 the group collectively occupied the 112 territory. No individual was identified; there were only anonymous photographs and drawings, the results of the group’s synthesized activity.

In the early 1970s signs of enterprising new methods for showing art were everywhere in Soho. Cooperatives, vital in the 1950s and dormant during the next decade, began to revive: 55 Mercer Street, in 1969, was one of the earliest; Ward-Nasse followed in 1970; A.I.R. brought women artists together in 1972. In the same year the Committee for the Visual Arts, Inc. was formed and opened Artists Space (supported by the New York State Council on the Arts) to give young artists a public opportunity. And The Kitchen—“not an alternative to anything,” the description of former director Robert Stearns—gave video a chance in 1971.

But despite the renaissance of downtown spaces for living, working, and exhibiting, many ideas were still forced to remain at an incipient stage for want of adequate physical territory to execute them until Alanna Heiss recognized and began to tap a whole new urban resource—the abandoned municipal building or part thereof. She set about making the city bureaucracy aware of this need and tried to convince government that it, like the private landlord, could only benefit by having its derelict spaces occupied. The first such reclamation was 10 Bleeker Street which offered artists both work and exhibition opportunities for producing massive sculptures on the spot. From May 1972 through January 1973 it was the scene of four events. Richard Nonas launched the space with *Enclosure*, territorial demarcations strategically and tensely situated. Two group exhibitions followed. *Six Sculptors—7,000 Square Feet* brought together Cecile Abish, Bill Bollinger, Peter Gourfain, Robert Grosvenor, Jene Highstein, and Richard Nonas. Then Power Boothe, Peter Downsborough, Nancy Holt, Clark Murray, and James Reineking showed *Recent Work*. Not only sight/site but also sound emanated from this place as Philip Glass

organized a series of concerts in January 1973. Then 10 Bleecker Street closed and the artists had to migrate again.

The next nesting place was an unlikely aviary atop a municipal building at the corner of Broadway and Leonard Street. Here the top floor and a three-story "Clocktower" (the space abandoned and the clock broken) were claimed for artists. At first, during the winter of 1972-73, this place served only as a private work space. Then in April 1973 Joel Shapiro inaugurated its public exhibition program with small-scale bronze sculptures. That program still continues.

Something of an adjunct for performers and musicians, Idea Warehouse opened four blocks south of the Clocktower at 22 Reade Street in 1973. There Philip Glass, Mabou Mines, and Charlemagne Palestine worked. In December 1974 the public life of Idea Warehouse began with a solo exhibition by Nonas. Then the Philip Glass Ensemble presented a series of *Sunday Afternoon Concerts*; Mabou Mines performed *Red Horse Animation*; Scott Burton staged his *Solitary Behavior Tableaux*; Douglas Davis launched *The Flying Man* on the ceiling; and, Charlemagne Palestine had two piano concerts, the latter a collaboration with the dancer Simone Forti—*Sheila in Progress*.

As at several of the other alternative spaces, a group of artists showed together—*Ideas at Idea Warehouse*. The originator of this exhibition, Dieter Froese, invited twenty-five individuals to join in this enterprise combining object, situation, performance, film, and video.

In addition to these more sustained territories, Alanna Heiss sought New York spaces, both interior and exterior, for single events. In 1971 the *Brooklyn Bridge Sanitation Pier* permitted twenty-three artists to make work in the environs of the Bridge. In 1972 the *77th Precinct House* on Grand Avenue in Brooklyn became a work space. In 1973 the *Coney Island Project* provided a huge location for Jene Highstein to make and exhibit his grand and severe forms; Robert Grosvenor continued to work there privately through 1975.

Perhaps to become a significant counterforce to the urban bureaucracy with which she continually had to deal, Heiss incorporated her activities in October 1972 as the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc. In more elaborate administrative form, replete with Board of Directors, it continues as a functioning entity.

In October 1973 Stefan Eins, an artist living in the back rooms of 3 Mercer Street, opened its raw storefront to show his own work. Within a month this space expanded to the presentation of other artists' work. The combination of Eins's own interests and the special physical character of this building prompted emphasis on performance and installation extensions of life activities—much as the store was a literal extension of Eins's living quarters.

Christopher McNeur recreated a one-day police investigation of a murder in the second event presented at 3 Mercer—*The Residue of Violence*. A chalk outline marked where the body had fallen; areas were "officially" roped off; newspaper accounts told the grim story. All the while an audiotape of actual police-report dialog, recreated by Ted Greenwald and Max Flagg, played.

The store window became a primary focus, defining the delicate, transparent boundary between inner and outer, private and public worlds. Bill Beirne used it as the locus for an examination of the *Similarities & Differences* between him and his brothers. This activity extended to the sidewalk as the brothers walked in tandem rhythms but opposite directions around the block. Dieter Froese in *Toenis Loop/Re-stage* and Michael Busch in *Emil Nolde Marching Band* both

created installation displays right in the window.

The ordinary and ephemeral character of activities at 3 Mercer frequently allowed it to blend into the ongoing, unselfconscious life of that block. If one did not know that it was there, one could easily pass it by. Even if one did, one had to look carefully to find it—like most other particulars of this glutted city. And then the distinction between art and life was enthusiastically confounded.

As the late '60s and early '70s prompted fundamental examination of accepted beliefs and expectations, the artists demanded a total reassessment of the terms of art. The pure absolute object isolated on gallery wall or floor could no longer be the ideal. Art became relative as its forms exposed the processes of gestation, emerged in unpredictable configurations, and even changed during the course of their existence. Art became contingent as it played out its capricious life in environment, performance, documentation, and outrageous hybrids of previously distinct media. Art became subjective as it probed hidden corners of the artist's experience, both actual and fantastic. The alternative spaces had to happen to give voice to these new art concepts. As artists forged both the ideas and the places to exhibit them, it became evident that an entire generation shared in this grand experiment. The energy flowed, sometimes effectively, sometimes randomly. People cooperated and feuded. But there were spectacular successes and failures. They seized the day with a new passion; nothing seemed impossible and the life of these alternative spaces showed it all.

—Mary Delahoyd

GAIN GROUND

246 West 80th Street, New York City
Director: Robert Newman
April 1969–June 1970

As director of the Spectrum Gallery and as an art critic from 1966 onwards I was constantly looking at the work of new artists, and I mused about the need for alternative art-gallery formats. Behind my thin disguise as gallery director and art writer, I was in reality a poet/artist. In 1966 I had broken through the pages of my compositional writing and was working in dual verbal/visual formats. Before completing my first artwork book *Signs* in 1969, I had struck into a new body of work which was verbal, visual, and three and four dimensional It was clear that I needed some kind of gallery space for my own work and I was very interested in those others who needed a new space format for their expression. I particularly wanted to provide a spatial arena for some of my poet friends who were coming into some new dimensions or actions, verbal/visual, intermedia, or whatever. I wanted to obtain a wide-open, experimental presentation field in a traditional gallery format.

So I happened upon a studio room in the West 80s just off Broadway in a nondescript building, and I decided to try to make it work as a gallery worth going to. I was open to any nonobjective installation concept. We would have nothing to sell but intelligence, you could say, and somehow we'd get the rent paid and get a little promotion done. We counted on word-of-mouth to bring people in. Naomi Dash, whose studio it was, was most helpful, and the artists and critics brought it to life. Gain Ground opened in April 1969 with a show called *Bookwork Art, Objects Made by Poets, Word Art, and Poet Visions*. It was perhaps the first exhibit of artists' bookworks in New York. Plans for shows for Fall '69 included first one-person shows for Eleanor Antin and Vito Acconci. In addition, John Perreault, Juan Downey, John Giorno, Hannah Weiner, and Newton Harrison were among those considered in the "stable" who had not had individual shows in New York at that time. Arturo Cuetara designed a formidable building, a lucite hemisphere, to be erected in Central Park: *Project to House Gain Ground*. It was the ultimate gallery, changing the outer and inner space of the building to suit the work presented.

In spite of our financial difficulties Gain Ground produced four shows at the West 80th Street space in the Fall/Winter 1969–70 season, and when we lost the space, we stayed alive finding appropriate places for more alternative space events. We continued until February 1971 working on art and technology projects that carried art into the environment. Newton Harrison's *Seven Sound Fountains in the Pacific* was one work we tried to produce, unsuccessfully. The last two Gain

Ground productions were held at the Cinematheque on Wooster Street. They included a painting by Mario Yrissary hung from the ceiling like a floating square screen with projector lights illuminating it while a sound tape by Phil Niblock filled the space, permutating clock sounds into superharmonics. And finally Juan Downey's *Invisible Energy Dictates a Dance* on June 11–12, 1970. This work used a number of people as responsive figures or information dancers and utilized the entire space and the basement rooms below.

The Gain Ground project started out unpretentiously, then tried to be pretentious, tried to get grants and support. All and all, we considered many things and did what we could with almost no budget. Many of the shows were important beginnings for now well-known artists, and most got excellent reviews in the art magazines at the time.

—Robert Newman, 1981

Vito Acconci, Eleanor Antin, Michael Benedikt, Charles Frazier, Dan Graham, Ron Gross, Bici Forbes Hendricks, Jackson MacLow, Bernadette Mayer, Robert Newman, John Perreault, Patricia Sloan, Hannah Weiner <i>Bookwork Art, Objects Made by Poets, Word Art, and Poet Visions</i>	SPRING 1969 April 12–27
Robert Newman <i>Live Photography/Rooms with Electric Mirrors</i>	May 3–23
John Perreault <i>Word Room (A Machine)</i>	FALL 1969– SPRING 1970 November 28– December 14
Robert Newman <i>Power Throne</i>	December 19– January 6
Vito Acconci <i>Room Piece (activity/room situation)</i>	January 10–25
Eleanor Antin <i>California Lives</i>	January 30– February 13
Hannah Weiner <i>Hannah Weiner at her Job</i>	March 11–25
Vito Acconci, Eleanor Antin, Dan Graham, Phil Niblock/Mario Yrissary, John Perreault, Marjorie Strider, Hannah Weiner, <i>Image Control</i> (filmworks at the Cinematheque)	April 23
Juan Downey <i>Invisible Energy Dictates a Dance</i> (performance/installation at the Cinematheque)	June 11–12

VITO ACCONCI

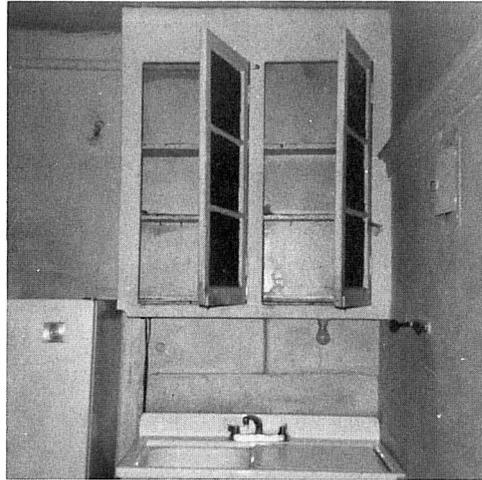
Room Piece (activity/room situation)
Three weekends, January 10–25, 1970

Each weekend of the show, the contents of one room of my apartment are moved to the gallery; the contents are left in boxes, there's no attempt at re-location, the gallery functions as a storage.

Each weekend, then, my home-space is stretched: the gallery is used as one point in my living space —my apartment extends approximately eighty blocks, from Christopher Street, downtown, to West 80th Street, uptown.

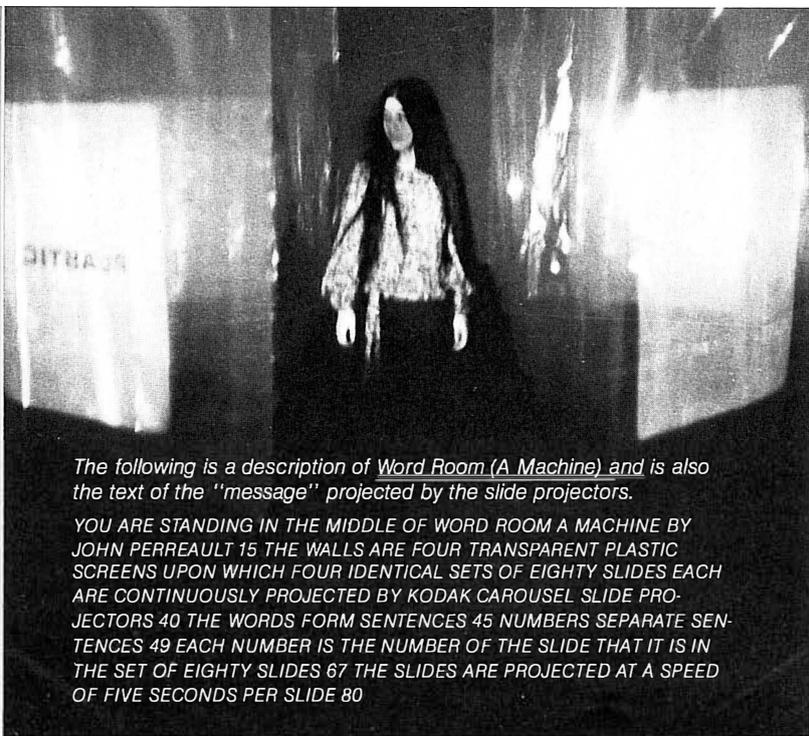
The items stored at Gain Ground are used as they would ordinarily be used inside my apartment. Whenever I need something that's now at Gain Ground, I go uptown to get it, bring it back downtown where I can use it; when I've finished with it, I return it to its gallery storage.

—Vito Acconci, 1970



Vito Acconci, *Room Piece*, 1970

Kathy Dillon



JOHN PERREAULT

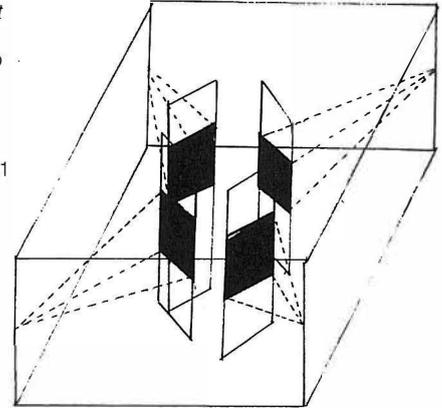
Word Room (A Machine) (installation)
November 28–December 14, 1969

On December 13th I presented Word Room Plus Sound. The sound pieces that I added were Traffic (stereo recordings of the sounds outside my window on West 10th Street, where I lived at the time); Recorded Message (a tape loop of the sentence "No one is drowning in the beautiful lake"); and Word Room Poems (of which I have no record).

—John Perreault, 1981

John Perreault,
Word Room, 1969

John Perreault, *Word Room*
(diagram of installation), 1969



The following is a description of Word Room (A Machine) and is also the text of the "message" projected by the slide projectors.

YOU ARE STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF WORD ROOM A MACHINE BY JOHN PERREAULT 15 THE WALLS ARE FOUR TRANSPARENT PLASTIC SCREENS UPON WHICH FOUR IDENTICAL SETS OF EIGHTY SLIDES EACH ARE CONTINUOUSLY PROJECTED BY KODAK CAROUSEL SLIDE PROJECTORS 40 THE WORDS FORM SENTENCES 45 NUMBERS SEPARATE SENTENCES 49 EACH NUMBER IS THE NUMBER OF THE SLIDE THAT IT IS IN THE SET OF EIGHTY SLIDES 67 THE SLIDES ARE PROJECTED AT A SPEED OF FIVE SECONDS PER SLIDE 80

Michael Benedikt

ROBERT NEWMAN

Power Throne
December 19, 1969–January 6, 1970

Power Throne was technological magic theater which made the gallery-goer the dramatic subject and object of the work of art, a theater of bio-psychic feedback in which the subject-object duality could be eliminated, as in Artaud. You were guided alone into a circular, red throne room, having passed through a series of mirror and sound-field spaces installed in the gallery.

—Robert Newman, 1981

"Two silent red-robed girls glide forward in the redness, seat you in the throne, wrap you in a (concealed) electronic stethoscope and from the speakers (in the walls of the chamber) you are surrounded by the sounds of your own heart beating steady erratic everchanging hypnotic magnified

beats, turning you inside out, making the chamber an enlargement of your body with you at its core."

[Kim Levin, *Artnews*, March 1970]

"You are brought through several phases of a heartsound feedback system, encouraging psychic shift to the energies of your heart, to the sound energy mind of your heart."

[Carter Ratcliff, *Art International*, March 1970]

"... makes a very strong departure from Artaud by effecting a welcome return to the center theme, or 'matrixed' presentation ... Human gesture punctuates the drama and modifies the effective dimensions of the performance area. All steps in your performance form are set and you complete them. The performance, the spectator-performer, and the author become one in live, nonrepeatable majestic heart energy, which is THE WORK ITSELF."

[Rita Simon, *Arts Magazine*, March 1979]

Robert Newman, *Power Throne*, 1969



ELEANOR ANTIN

California Lives

January 30–February 13, 1970

From 1969–1971, I made sculpture out of brand new, American-manufactured consumer goods. They were portraits of people I either knew or invented, made out of objects purchased in discount centers or from mail-order catalogs. It was the height of the Vietnam War and California was Nixon's world, lethal and very sad. After all, San Clemente was only a short car ride away up the coast on Route 5, separated from the cluster of little beach towns where I lived by the Camp Pendleton Marine Base, the San Onofre Nuclear

Power Plant, and the check station for illegal aliens. I listened to country music for months while doing the show. It was like living in a Chekhov play—sitting around while the Redwoods fell down.

California Lives, the first exhibition of these works, was at Gain Ground in the Winter of 1970.

In New York, they complained that they couldn't understand my portraits. "We don't know these people," they said. Apparently, my attempt to evoke psychological and sociological archetypes was unreadable to an art world fixated on minimalist abstraction and self-referentiality.

By 1970, I had become involved with the discourse surrounding women's issues and wanted to try my hand at doing portraits of women—women the

New York art world might reasonably be expected to know. Wherever possible, I chose new, shiny, glamorous objects, bright colors, reds and pinks. My women were brave, gay, glamorous, amusing, foolish sometimes, occasionally sad. Some of my women were less lucky than others though. One of my subjects entered a mental hospital the day the show opened and I ran to Canal Street to buy a hammer for her portrait.

By this time, too, Gain Ground had lost its loft on upper Broadway, so I ended up doing Portraits of Eight New York Women in the Fall of 1970 at the Chelsea Hotel with the blessing and help of the Gain Ground directors, Naomi Dash and Robert Newman.

—Eleanor Antin, 1981

Eleanor Antin,
California Lives (detail),
1970



Peter Moore

I began the space in 1969 in order to provide an independent and experimental alternative for the presentation of my own work and the work of other artists ... a place where artists could discuss, present, and experience "difficult" works—pieces which often could not be done in commercial galleries.

I am concerned with the element of "risk," of "stepping out on thin ice" ... so that the guiding philosophy of what has been presented here [at Apple] has been that the artist's attempts at experimentation, investigation, and communication be extended as far as possible ... This is more important than the "success" or "failure" of any individual work. ... The process predominates, thus the artist's intent becomes the determining factor.

Every act that has taken place in this space, from the moment the artist enters, has been considered an integral part of his/her art activity. In the space, there is no separation between art and non-art activities The installation or preparation of a performance event, or process-situation, is considered valid as an art situation/activity/event in an art context.

In the past four years the emphasis at Apple has been placed on Art & Discourse ... a forum for work evolving from dialog ... collaborative situations—an interaction between artists, between art situations and participants, between artists and non-artists....

It was part of my studio in the beginning. Thirty artists have participated in this space ... they help maintain it ... assume some responsibility. It must be restored to its original condition after each event. There has been no outside institutional funding. The financial viability of the work is never the issue ... a few friends occasionally make personal contributions—it is always operating on that edge.

... I would like to expand the concept of Group Activities: an open-ended situation of interaction between an unknown number of people. The idea is to continue a necessary alternative within the art context: an open, evolving situation concerned with the exchange of ideas, concepts, experiences, attitudes, perceptions, verbal and non-verbal communication. A meeting place.

—Billy Apple, 1973

Billy Apple *Four Spotlights*
Billy Apple *Ozone #1—High Room Temperature*
Billy Apple *Aromatic Colored Space*
Billy Apple *Six Standing Neon Spirals*

Billy Apple *Neon Floor #1*

Billy Apple *Neon Floor #2*
Billy Apple *Neon Floor #3*
Ed Hee *No Entry*
Billy Apple *Neon Accumulation #1*
Billy Apple *Neon Accumulation #2*
Mac Adams

Billy Apple *Laser Beams*
John Czerkowicz
Billy Apple *Ozone #2—Low Room Temperature*
Jerry Vis *Water Pollution*
Howard Temple *Multiple Viewpoints*
Billy Apple *Neon Accumulation #3*
Nick Bentley *Chickenshit*

FALL 1969–
SPRING 1970
October 11–12, 18–19
October 25–26
November 1–2, 8
November 9, 15–16,
22–23
November 20–30,
December 6–7
December 13–14
December 20–21
January 10–11
January 17–18
January 24–25
January 31–
February 1
February 7–8
February 14–15
February 21–22
March 14–15
March 21–22
March 28–29
April 4–5

Billy Apple <i>Neon Accumulation #4</i>	April 11–12	Mac Adams <i>Memorandum</i>	December 7–12
Brenda Miller <i>Phase I</i>	April 18–19	Davi Det Hompson <i>Walking and Talking in Four Corners of a Room</i> (A Colorful Evening)	December 10
Carmen Sanchez	April 25–26	Jacki Apple/Pamela Kraft <i>Transfer</i>	December 11
Larry Miller <i>Spire, Up and Down, After Image</i>	May 1–3	Jerry Vis <i>Transplant</i>	December 12–19
Geoff Hendricks <i>Mooring</i>	May 9–10	Mac Adams/Billy Apple/Jacki Apple/Geoff Hendricks/Davi Det Hompson	January 1
Les Mills	May 21–23	Preston McClanahan/Jerry Vis <i>Meeting</i>	
	FALL 1970– SPRING 1971	Billy Apple <i>Inventory</i>	February 1–29
Billy Apple <i>Vacuuming</i>	October 1– [June 5, 1972]	<i>Activity Exchanges</i> (performance works interpreted and performed by the artist listed in parentheses)	(Dates listed below)
Billy Apple <i>Manhattan Street Glass</i>	October 3–25	David Troy <i>Alternations/Reactions</i> (J. Vis)	February 19
Howard Temple	October 31– November 5	Davi Det Hompson <i>Whisper/Writing</i> (D. Troy)	February 20
Jerry Vis <i>Tree Alteration</i>	November 21– December 19	Jacki Apple <i>Identity Exchange</i> (G. Hendricks with Stephen Varble)	February 22
Billy Apple <i>Neon Transformation</i>	January 23– February 14	Mac Adams <i>Untitled</i> (D.D. Hompson)	February 25
Billy Apple/Geoff Hendricks/Jerry Vis <i>Matter Transformation: Glass/Earth/Stone</i>	March 6–20	Geoff Hendricks <i>Eight Hours: An Exchange Piece</i> (J. Apple)	February 26
Bob Watts <i>Addendum to Pop—1964</i>	March 27–April 10	Jerry Vis <i>Alternate Reality</i> (M. Adams)	February 27
Bici Forbes <i>Page Process</i>	April 13–17	Billy Apple/Geoff Hendricks/Jerry Vis <i>Matter Transformation #2</i>	March 11–12
Davi Det Hompson <i>Yours for the Asking</i>	April 20–25	Geoff Hendricks with Stephen Varble <i>Beginnings</i>	March 21–25
Billy Apple <i>Roof Dirt</i>	April 30–May 2	Taka Imura <i>Timing #1, #2, #3</i>	March 31–April 1
Geoff Hendricks <i>Relics & Special Events</i>	May 8–22	Davi Det Hompson <i>Unauthorized Performance</i>	
	FALL 1971– SPRING 1972	Mac Adams <i>Two Works</i>	April 15–16, 22–23
Preston McClanahan <i>Silence</i>	October 2–10	Jerry Vis/Jacki Apple <i>A Situation: Alterations and Interactions</i>	June 3
Christopher McNeur <i>Entropic Wall</i>	October 12–17		WINTER 1973– SPRING 1973
Billy Apple <i>Fluorescent Light Cleaning</i>	October 14	Jerry Vis <i>Rooms</i>	January 13–March 3
Billy Apple <i>Gaseous Discharge</i> (film)	October 16	Ed Hee <i>Tight Shoes</i> (performance in <i>Rooms</i>)	March 3
Billy Apple <i>Floor Scrubbing</i>	October 23	John Czerkowicz <i>Trees, Light, Space, Power</i>	March 10–17
Artwiser/Artweiser (performance)	October 23	Christopher McNeur <i>Evidence of Rites</i>	March 24–31
John Czerkowicz, Arlene Guttke, Alec Nicolescu, James Riordan, David Troy, John Van Saun, Ernest Whitworth		David Troy <i>Linear Perimeters</i>	April 7, 14
Billy Apple <i>Floor Painting</i>	November 6	Davi Det Hompson <i>A Series of Occurrences</i>	April 7, 14
Billy Apple <i>Excretory Wipings</i>	November 16–20	Billy Apple <i>Negative Condition Situations</i>	April 21
Group Activities (open-ended situation with unknown number of people)	November 23–28	Nick Bentley <i>Culture Collection</i>	April 21–28
Geoff Hendricks <i>Dream Event</i>	December 3–5	Jane Greer <i>Equal Time/Equal Volume</i>	May 1–17
		Jacki Apple <i>Positions: Definitions and Descriptions, Interpretations and Impersonations</i>	May 19–26
		David Burrows/Elton Anglada <i>Exhibition</i>	May 27

BILLY APPLE / GEOFF HENDRICKS / JERRY VIS

Matter Transformation: Glass/Earth/Stone March 6–20, 1971

This is an attempt to rid myself of a large quantity of glass tubes. Because of the inability to destroy matter, the only alternative is to change it in such a manner so as it appears to have been eliminated. The illusion of disposal is a mental con.

—Billy Apple, 1971

Earth: Transformer. Seedbed. End product. Manure. Barrier. Receptacle. Grave.

1. Transport dirt from forest to city.
2. Work the clods of earth.
3. Restructure: tilling, sifting, building, burrowing.

—Geoff Hendricks, 1971

My personal predilection is to discover all things and lose them. I shall begin by transforming quarried stone into sand. This transformation will then be combined with those of Billy Apple and Geoff Hendricks.

—Jerry Vis, 1971

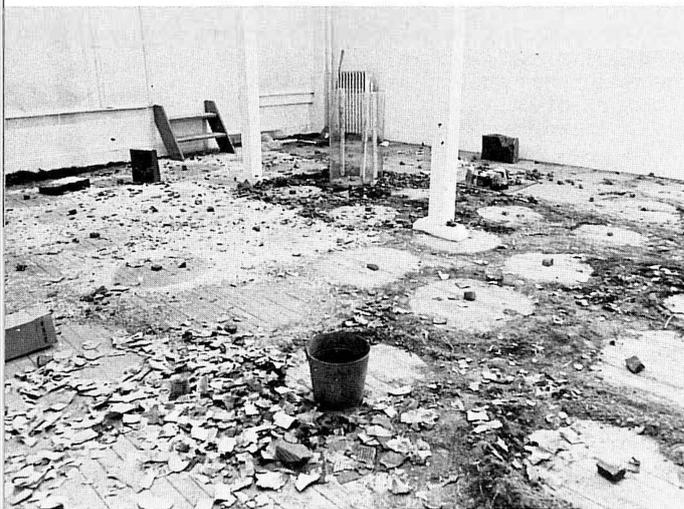
Matter Transformation was initially conceived as a situation in which three artists could collaborate. There were no limitations other than the empty space, the raw materials selected by each artist, and the time span in which the work might evolve. Each day the physical and psychological dimensions of this work changed as each artist altered his or anyone else's materials. In this described context the difficulties of collaboration evolved into cooperation as the three artists became the content—one entity.

—Jerry Vis, 1981

Matter Transformation #2 March 11–12, 1972

"*Matter Transformation #2* was a public situation in which three artists shared their private, individual evaluations of the meanings and impacts of the earlier *Matter Transformation* work. After one year a conclusion for *Matter Transformation: Glass/Earth/Stone* was agreed upon, and the transformed materials were taken to the country and carefully spread upon a dirt road.

—Jerry Vis, 1981



Billy Apple



Billy Apple/Geoff Hendricks/
Jerry Vis, *Matter Transformation:
Glass/Earth/Stone*, 1971

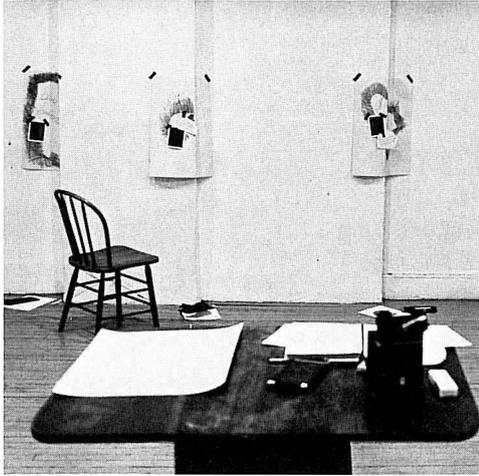
Billy Apple/Geoff Hendricks/Jerry Vis,
Matter Transformation #2, 1972



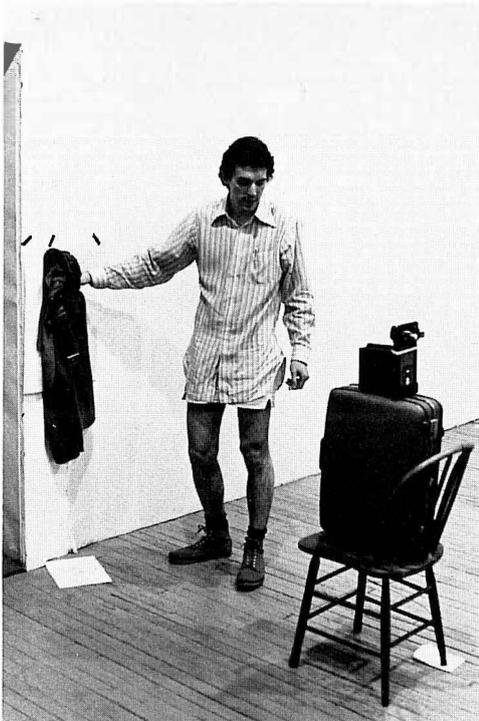
Jerry Vis

DAVI DET HOMPSON

Davi Det Hompson,
A Series of Occurrences, 1973



Naomi Bushman



Walking and Talking in Four Corners of a Room (A Colorful Evening) December 10, 1971
Whisper/Writing in Activity Exchanges February 20, 1972
A Series of Occurrences April 7, 14, 1973

A Series of Occurrences was two, four-hour-long installations enacted on successive weekends. Both produced articles that were simultaneously proposal, action, and document. The first weekend I carried envelopes, paper, pencil, tape, and a pinhole Polaroid camera to New York City in a suitcase and there documented by outlines, writings, and photographs the individual items on my person—items that have remained constant in kind and number for many years. The results of the activity were mailed in envelopes to visitors that came to Apple during the installation.

The second weekend was more direct. One-by-one papers were attached to the wall and photographed. Each activity that I proposed to take place during the long exposure was noted in writing beside the final photographic print. As the afternoon progressed the growing number of proposals (a final total of twenty) was documented by each successive photograph. As *A Series of*

Occurrences was conceived as actions that would require no other documentation outside of themselves—no journalistic interpretations—do I now erase a large part of each action's strength by allowing reproductions of those self-documents in a catalog?

At the time I wanted my actions to be without metaphoric alliances. I wished to make a series of simple, cyclic, self-fulfilling movements. ACT was to be substituted by ART. This same motivation was the basis of *Whisper / Writing*, my exchange piece with David Troy in *Activity Exchanges*. It was the most focused of that series, the one that came closest to becoming a non-symbolic ritual, an action that required the sparsest of equipment and situation. *Walking and Talking in Four Corners of a Room (A Colorful Evening)* required less and proved to be impossible to visually document. Even the people who were there during the event had a difficult time locating my presence.

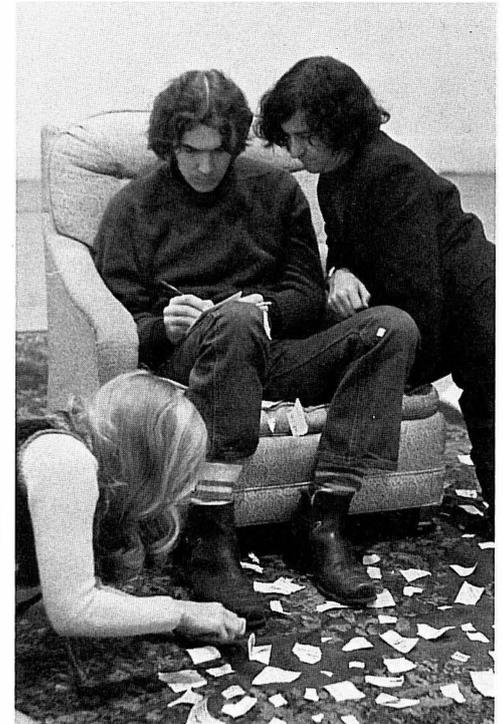
—Davi Det Hompson, 1981

A floral rug is laid in the center of a space.
 An upholstered chair is set in the center of the rug.
 A person sits in the chair.
 Small torn pieces of paper are scattered
 on the person, the chair and the rug.

The person whispers fragments of what he/she observes and writes.
 The person writes fragments of what she/he observes and whispers.

Other people may listen, read, write or speak to the person in the chair for the duration of the situation.

Davi Det Hompson, *Whisper/Writing* (in *Activity Exchanges*, interpreted by David Troy, performers [left to right]: Jacki Apple, David Troy, Muir Weissinger), 1972





JERRY VIS

Transplant December 12–19, 1971

Transplant took place shortly before Christmas season. One hundred potted poinsettias in greenhouse foil were arranged in a 10 x 10 grid under plant lights. The intent was to be visually seductive. Half of these plants were to be esthetically altered with the intention of killing them. These alterations covered a broad range of activities such as painting, dissecting, chopping, decorating, smashing, binding, suffocating. Extreme control was maintained throughout this week to preserve

the initial esthetic appeal of the environment so that the viewer would initially be drawn to the plants and then repelled by them. In conjunction with these activities a daily record of events and a statement of personal psychological responses were placed on the gallery wall.

This work was an extremely distressful undertaking. Halfway through the experience I could no longer sleep, being disturbed by nightmares.

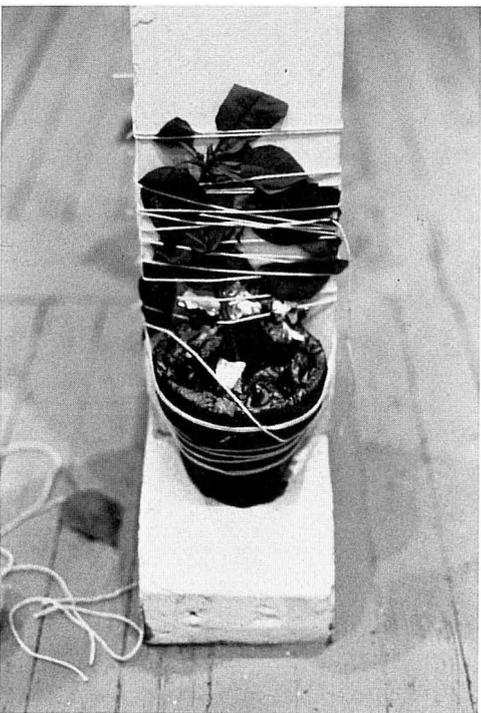
On the fourth day all alterations ceased. On the final day anyone could select any plant and take it away. Strangely most of the plants selected were the altered dying ones."

—Jerry Vis, 1981

Jerry Vis, *Transplant* (detail—plant with silver straight pins), 1971

Jerry Vis, *Transplant* (detail—plant bound to post), 1971

Jerry Vis, *Transplant*, 1971



TWO SIMULTANEOUS EVENTS

BILLY APPLE

Floor Scrubbing October 23, 1971

Starting in the center of the floor, using Ajax cleanser, sponges, and water, the artist scrubbed one tile at a time until completely clean. This activity began at 12:00 noon and continued without interruption and in silence until 6:00 pm. The floor area of the studio space measured 11'6" x 20'10" (16 tiles wide by 39 tiles long), and consisted of 624 white painted tiles, 86 of which had been thoroughly cleaned by the end of the six-hour performance/activity.

Billy Apple, *Floor Scrubbing*, 1971



Jacki Apple



ARTWISER / ARTWEISER

Performance October 23, 1971

I ran into a fellow who gave me some Jello
I was looking for ice cream ...
I screamed*

The Artwiser performance at Apple was a mixture of sound, music, performance, and cooking. It started at noon and continued until 6:00 pm. During the afternoon Polaroids were taken at fifteen-minute intervals. The photographs and the props used during the performance became the exhibited objects left on display for the duration of the show.

All the Artwisers [sic] in the performance were visual artists curious about alternative ways to reach an audience. Inspired amateurs at sound, music, and performance. The sound, volume, and visual components in combination made for an immediate audience reaction that was refreshing,

ARTWISERS at Apple: John Czerkowicz (electric guitar), Arlene Guttke (amplified violin), Alec Nicolescu (special effects, food performance), James Riordan (sound engineer, audio effects), David Troy (vocals), John Van Saun (electric guitar), Ted Victoria (vocals, lyrics).

Artwiser/Artwaiser, rehearsal at Charles Simonds's loft (performers [left to right]: John Van Saun, Ted Victoria, David Troy, John Czerkowicz)



David Troy

inspiring, and new to us. Our method of composing was ad hoc. Lyrics emerged spontaneously from agreed-upon musical and thematic ideas. Some of the song titles were *New Jersey Woman* (performed with white electric train, white shoes, and white umbrella), *Dessert in the Desert* (performed with food), and *I've Been Around the World but I've Never Been to Outer Space*.

The Artwiser esthetic was improvisational, fluid, and impulsive. Songs were constructed around themes and changed from rehearsal to performance. Volume, chaos, disagreement, debate, energy, and curiosity about new toys which made music and sound became our medium. The music we liked was Rock n' Roll. The sound that resulted was raw, eerie, and sometimes very beautiful. The music threatened to pull itself apart and often did, taking us and the audience into new realms of confusion. When the elements fit into place the result was sheer Artwiser/Artwaiser fun.

*Lyrics from *Dessert in the Desert* by Ted Victoria

98 GREENE STREET

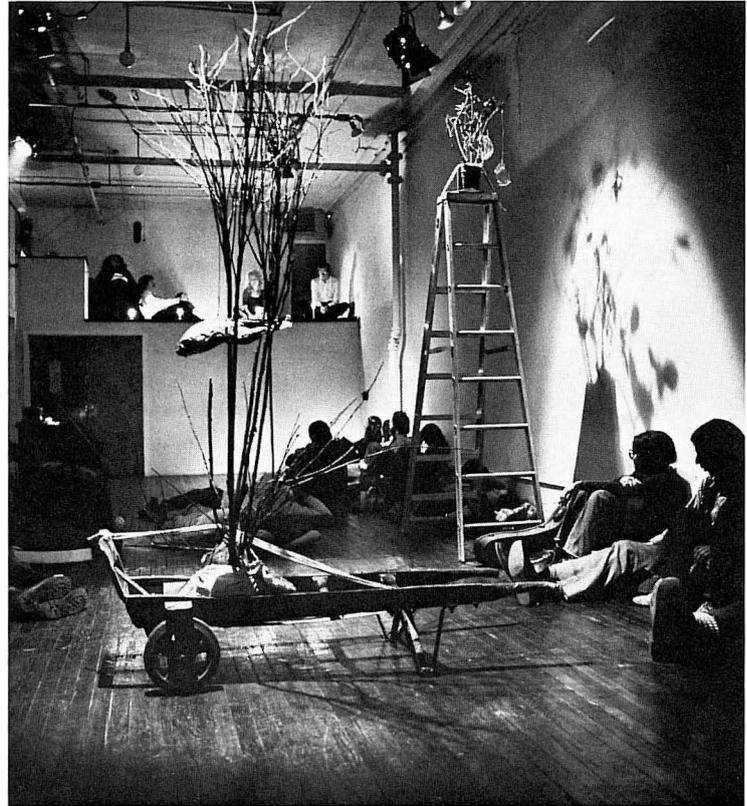
98 Greene Street, New York City
Director: Holly Solomon
December 1969–December 1973

...When I opened the space at 98 Greene Street at the end of 1969 I was a theater person who collected art. The theater no longer interested me, and I felt that it was about time I did something that I could *do*. It was a step in my growing up and being responsible....The intention of the space was to allow artists and poets and performers to *do* their work, and have it be seen. The space was given to them and they could do with it what they wanted....I didn't want any name on it. That's why it was called 98 Greene Street—a location, a place....I wanted to create a place where there could be communication between people, between artists, poets, filmmakers, actors—an atmosphere where people could socialize and make friends, and create work and share it....It was quite spontaneous on purpose—no particular schedule—an atmosphere of immediacy. Galleries and museums must plan ahead. At 98 Greene the artists created what happened....they did a piece, brought their friends. The quality and spirit of the place was in this spontaneity. It was *their* space.... I've never been against the notion of galleries and museums. For me 98 Greene Street was something that added to the system, allowed for work to happen that the organizations and institutions at that time couldn't or wouldn't do.

...It was a time of great distress when everything seemed to be falling apart, and for Horace and me opening the space was a political statement. We felt that we couldn't change the world, but that privately we could do something. Individually we could take responsibility, act with a sense of honor and dignity, at a time when as privileged people we felt robbed of the dignity of our convictions—in this instance the right of people to express themselves without fear or political interference. Starting the space for us was about maintaining a sense of one's own democracy, being responsible for one's own fear, and it was both a moral obligation and a pleasure.

...It was also important for me in that it opened up my own sense of myself as an independent person. It contributed to my sense of being a capable human being, and as a woman that it was okay to make a living and help others make a living, and that Horace supported this and wanted this for me too....Horace believed in what we were doing—he believed in the artists—and he gave his full support. He swept the floor, fixed the lights, took out the garbage, sent out the mailings—whatever needed to be done that he could do....And the artists helped too. They taught me how to do an installation.

...One thing I learned at 98 Greene was that collecting was an important part of it. I believe that artists should be dignified people, be able



Gordon Matta-Clark, *Christmas Piece*,
performed opening night—December 25, 1969

to live a dignified life, and that finding private support was a central part of cultured activity. It was more than just making a membership contribution to a cultural institution. Without taking the ultimate responsibility of selling the work, of clearing that space, making that vacuum for the artist to fill, it couldn't last. This is why we gave up the space at the end of 1973—it had served its purpose—and so we went on to open our gallery....

—Holly Solomon, 1981
(in conversation with Jacki Apple)

PERFORMANCE

Billy Apple and Anna Lockwood *Audiotape to be Heard in Total Darkness*
Pat Ast
Ed Baynard *The Rise and Fall of Parity* (one-act play)
Bill Beckley *Song for a Chin-Up and Song for a Sliding Board*
Wayne County
Jackie Curtis
Ralston Farina & Friends *Time Time Tattoo*
Dick Gallup *The Bingo* (play)
Dan Graham *Two Consciousness Projection* (performance with video)
Gunderson & Clark
John Kendrick *Just Keep Listening and When the Wine Is Cold*
(one-act plays)
Robert Kushner *The Masque of Monuments (Rocks and Water)*
Gordon Matta-Clark *Christmas Piece*
Taylor Mead
Mighty Oaks Theater Service Nancy English, Bill Fares,
Rina Kosersky, Elke Solomon, Arlene Slavin,
James Starrett, Zina Steinberg, Pat Steir, Wolfgang Stoechle,
David Troy, Marcia Tucker, Tim Yohn, Barbara Zucker.
Dennis Oppenheim with Kristin, Erik, Chandra *Works with Offspring*
Judy Padow *Dance*
Chuck Portz
Pranath, Marian Zazeela, La Monte Young
John Quinn
Holly Solomon *Footnotes to Macbeth and Boxing Match*
Gus Solomons Jr. and Company *New Dance Works*
Roger Welch *Rituals*

FILM & VIDEO

Ed Baynard, Susan Hall, Gordon Matta-Clark, George Schneeman,
Charles Simonds *98.5* (films)
Peter Hutchinson and Leonore Jaffee *Bananas & Barbershops* (films)
Burt Spielvogel *Ads* (video)
Roger Welch *Welch Films*

PAINTING, DRAWING, PHOTOGRAPHY & TEXT

Ed Baynard
Brad Davis *Nazi Paintings*
Donna Dennis/Jane Delynn (collage/poems)
Sandy Friedman
Denise Green
Susan Hall
Neil Jenny
Bernadette Mayer (snapshot installation with audiotape)
George Schneeman
Stephen Shore *Meat You Can Eat*
Roger Welch *Family Photo Pieces* (photo/text works)

INSTALLATION & SCULPTURE

Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt *Paris Angelicus*
Gordon Matta-Clark *Open House with Voice Truck* audiotape by Ted
Greenwald (on the street—see 112 Greene Street Workshop)
Gary Perkins *Machines*
Charles Simonds *Dwellings* (on the second-story window ledge)



Holly Solomon, *Footnotes to Macbeth*, 1970

POETRY READINGS (organized by Ted Greenwald)

Allen Appel, David Ball, Jennifer Bartlett, Bill Berkson, Ted Berrigan, Joe Brainard, Jim Brody, Michael Brownstein, Jane Delynn, Karen Edwards, Kenward Elmslie, Larry Fagan, Dick Gallup, John Giorno, John Godfrey, Ted Greenwald, Andy Grundberg, Gerrit Henry, Steve Katz, Lewis MacAdams, Steve Malamude, Jayne Nodland, Ron Padgett, Charles Plymell, Carter Ratcliff, Tom Raworth, Peter Schjeldahl, Johnny Stanton, Jack Thibeu, Paul Violi, Anne Waldman, Lewis Warsh, Rebecca Wright, Bill Zavatsky

Kenward Elmslie, reading in the poetry series organized by Ted Greenwald



ROGER WELCH

Welch Films and Rituals November 1971
Family Photo Pieces April 1972

I moved to New York in 1970. At that time a few "alternative" spaces existed, but they weren't called "alternative." They were spaces run by artists or other non-gallery people so that artists could work with a sense of freedom and explore their ideas. Each space had its group to some extent and consequently this dictated the type of activity that evolved within the space. You still needed to know somebody in order to get a show or a night, but it was much more open than any gallery at that time or since. It affected the galleries' attitudes toward what they were doing as well as what the artists were doing.

The first space I performed in was Jeffrey Lew's 112 Greene Street space. In this performance, I participated as one drummer in a two-man drum exchange. Then we hooked ourselves into alpha brain-wave feedback devices, to continue the solos by internal rather than external movement.

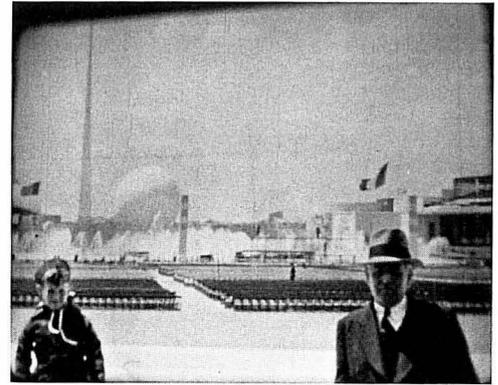
I also tore up an old high-school yearbook, page by page, as I left my footprints in printing ink going out the door. For me it was my entrance into the New York art world. But, as I was later to find out, each show, each work moves you along a little. You often expect more out of a show than actually happens. But these spaces provided the chance to execute some of your ideas.

The other space I worked with was Holly Solomon's 98 Greene Street loft. I first met Holly and Horace at their home. It was unusual for me to be surrounded in a home by works of Oldenburg, Warhol, Oppenheim, Christo, and others with whom I felt an affinity and whose work I liked. But unusual also was their willingness to take a chance on something untested ... to associate themselves with something completely unknown. Ted Greenwald helped a lot in running the space. It was the first place I was able to show, in 1971, my family film—originally in a short, 16mm silent version called Portrait, and later to become the 1-½ hour, 16mm sound film called Welch. After seeing the Portrait film, Holly hired me to edit a film she was doing on five artists called 98.5. I had never edited someone else's film and she was again taking a chance. It was a good experience and also a financial help for me. As a result, I became acquainted with other artists who became friends, like Gordon Matta-Clark, Charles Simonds, and others. Later that same year, I had my first one-month long, one-man show in New York. These

works were the family photo pieces where I matched photos from one generation with the next and wrote by hand on each panel the remembrances of each living person about the photo in which they appeared. With these works, I established a personal identity for myself and began showing in galleries both in the U.S. and Europe.

The spaces have disappeared and the old 112 Greene Street space is now a gallery. The old 98 Greene Street space is a residential loft building and Holly and Horace are directing two public galleries. But the spirit of those spaces and others generated much new work, intellectual dialog, excitement, and expectations. They probably left a lasting effect in that young, unknown artists are more readily viewed, accepted, and taken into the art scene than ever before. One would hope that the energy which came out of these situations will not completely dissipate into work dictated by the commercial interests of a few gallery owners and collectors.

These spaces acted as a launching platform, provided an openness and an unrestricted-by-business-rules situation for this kind of art to

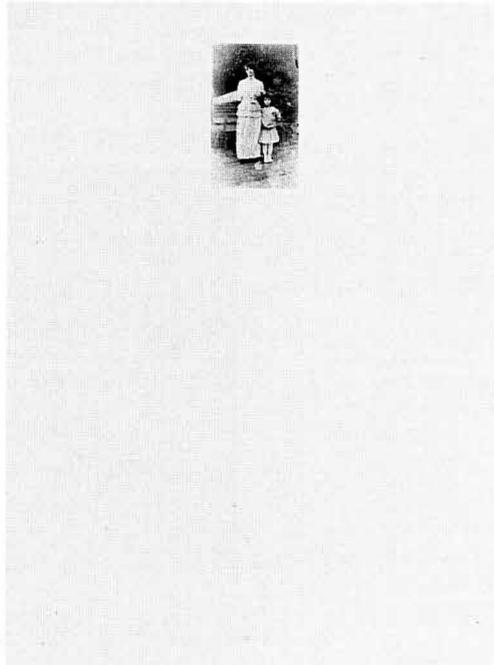


Roger Welch, Welch (still), 1971

emerge. This significant attribute of these spaces contributed to the rest of the more predictable art world structure. The system that worked with that energy was then recuperated, even though it did not create it.

—Roger Welch, 1981

Roger Welch, Family Photo Pieces (detail—Mother and Daughter), 1970



D. James Dee

BILL BECKLEY

Song for a Chin-Up and Song for a Sliding Board
April 15, 1972

The performance at Holly's loft consisted of two separate, but related, works.

In the first, Song for a Sliding Board, a soprano climbs the steps, stands at the microphone affixed to the platform, sings the song to its end, then slides down. The song is a metaphor for the act. Sung at the high point of the slide when the soprano is otherwise inactive, it becomes a memory of her recent past (stepping up) and anticipates her immediate future (sliding down).

In Song for a Chin-Up the tenor approaches the bar, pulls himself up to the microphone, sings a low "C", a high "C", a low "C", then lets himself down.

The lyrics of both pieces are simple—in each case they are the present tense plural of the verb "to be" stretched through the procession of ascending and descending notes. I am using the present tense here to describe the work because I intended the performances to have the possibility of being repeated—not just to exist for one performance only and thereafter as documentation. They are formally scored, the objects needed to perform them are permanent and transportable (the chin-up is almost as easy to carry as a trombone, and the slide easier than a piano), and like traditional compositions they do not depend on the composer to be present, or even alive.

The same evening, at 112 Greene Street, I installed three works—Song for Golf, four Silent Ping Pong Tables, and Story for Hopscotch.

Any of the works shown at 112 Greene Street could be played by anyone—they were not meant to be performances like the chin-up or slide. The hopscotch story prefaced work I did for the next few years; the slide and the chin-up, more sculptural in nature, prefaced work I am doing now.

The so-called alternative spaces were important at the time they developed—not because they offered a kind of gestural departure from commercialism (a 60s' attitude), but because they offered a freshness, a less coded space which contributed to a differently coded art originating more from Duchamp than Matisse.

—Bill Beckley, 1981

song for a sliding board (sung in its entirety while standing at top of slide)

Bill Beckley
11/71

"are"

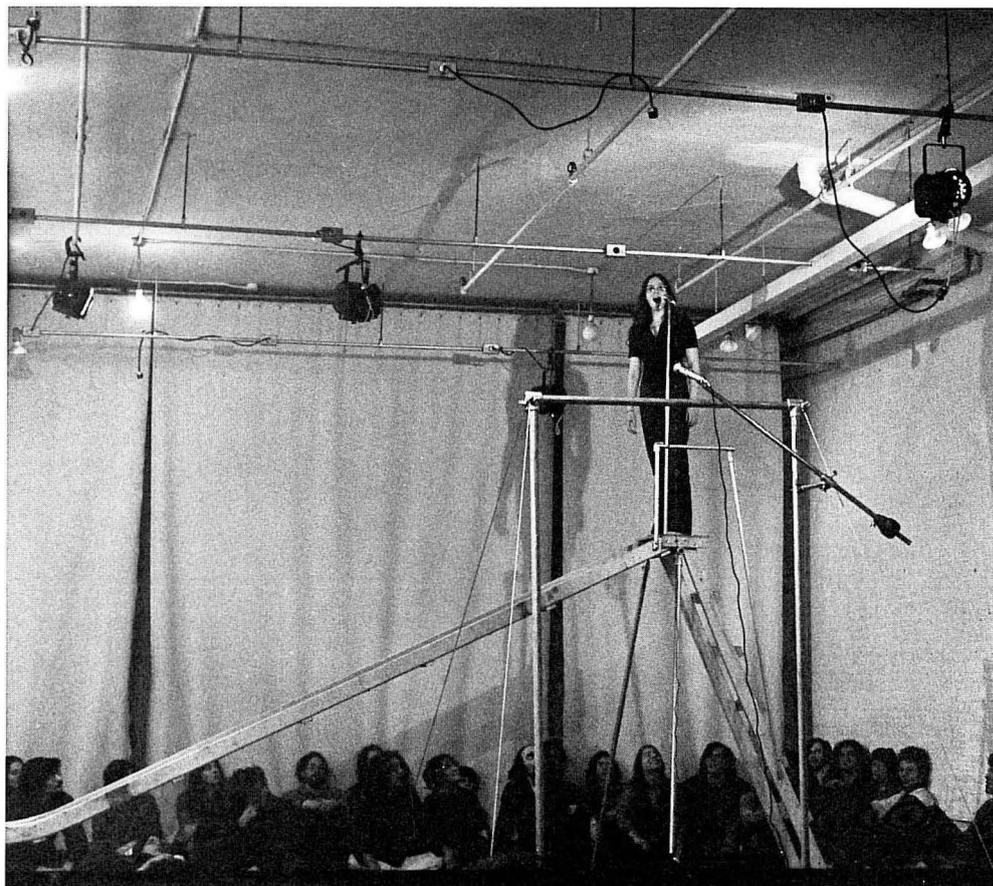
Soprano

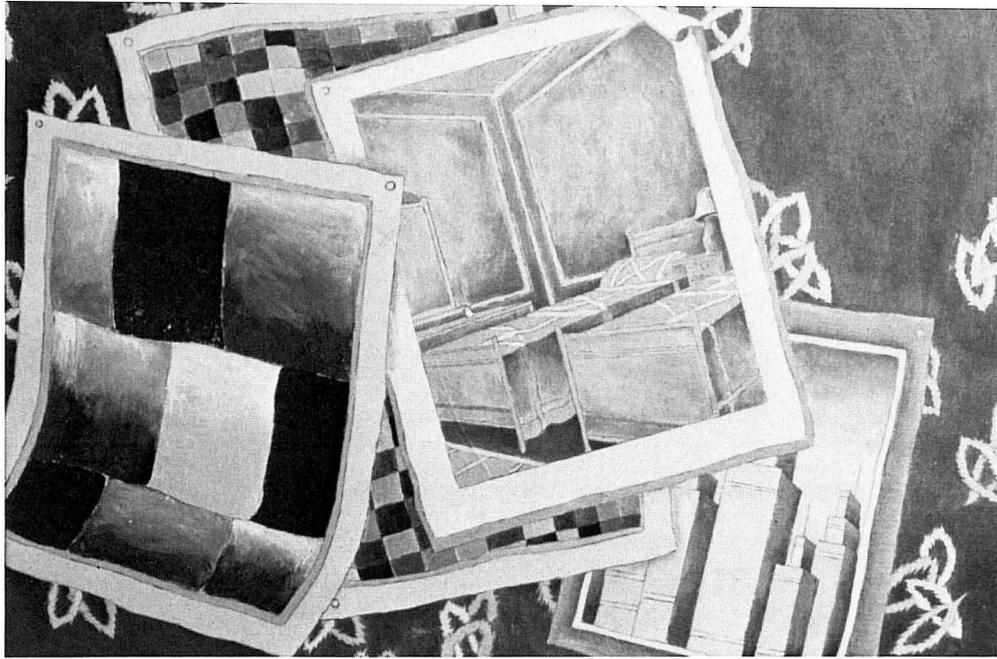
(Cadenza)



Bill Beckley, *Song for a Sliding Board* (score), 1972

Bill Beckley, *Song for a Sliding Board*, 1972





SUSAN HALL

Paintings 1971, 1972

...The paintings are really funny and sensitive at the same time. The title *L.A. Waitress* is clue enough. They are all about women and they are metaphysical.... A woman's view of women, with all the male-myths hovering. Like a woman's view of herself is still a man's view and Susan Hall clarifies this.... She is to femininity what David Hockney is to masculinity... It's all voluptuously private. And pretty. And more violent than I care to acknowledge.

—John Perreault
Village Voice, June 3, 1971

Susan Hall, *Death in a Garden*, 1972

ROBERT KUSHNER

The Masque of Monuments (Rocks and Water)
February 2, 1973

Performers: Deborah Davis, Susan Ensley, Ed Friedman, Carol Goodden, Stephen Greenstein, Lynn Gulkis, Cynthia Hedstrom, Robert Kushner, Fred Landman, Tom Maker, Mary Overlie, Susan Plunket, Ned Smyth

Tape music *Eruption* and *Breath of Spring* courtesy of Jim Burton; *River* costume courtesy of Plicoste, Diamond-Shamrock.

Brief Scenario of *The Masque of Monuments*

1. Plymouth Rock, Plymouth, Massachusetts
2. The Aswan High Dam on the Nile
3. The Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
4. The Sands of the Gobi Desert
5. The Beach at Santa Monica and the Pacific Ocean
6. Le Notre's Formal Gardens at Versailles with a Fountain
7. The Blue Grotto on the Isle of Capri in the Bay of Naples
8. Morning at the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River
9. A Roman Temple of Vesta
10. The Great Wall of China
11. The Eruption of Mauna Loa

In this piece I was dealing with the form and the imagery of the 17th-century English Court Masque, a performing tradition, parallel to Ballet and Opera, which mysteriously died out. The costumes remained the same—1" foam rubber covered with grey mohair, grey bonded jersey, or beige ribbon

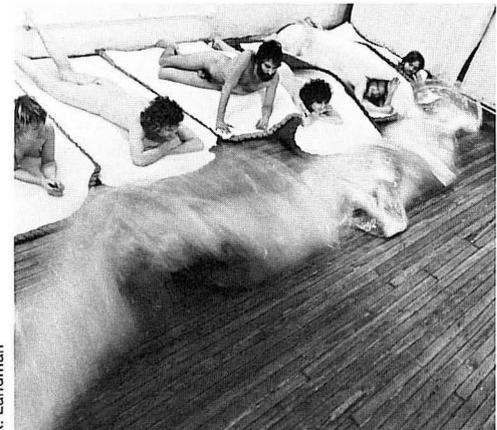
Robert Kushner, *The Masque of Monuments (Rocks and Water)* (detail—"The Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids, Iowa"), 1973



knit. By being worn differently and arranged differently they depicted various natural and man-made monuments. Each tableau was announced and then held for two minutes. Music accompanied two sections and the lighting changed all the way through.

—Robert Kushner, 1981

Robert Kushner, *The Masque of Monuments (Rocks and Water)* (detail—"The Beach at Santa Monica and the Pacific Ocean"), 1973



K. Landman

BRAD DAVIS

Nazi Paintings May 6–June 3, 1972

... It was about the time of Kent State and the Cambodian invasion. It was a time when there was a lot of political consciousness among artists and everybody was concerned about how they could make their work more meaningful or make some kind of statement, whether it was through their work or not. And I felt completely alienated from the direction that it took.... The desire to find some sort of answer inside myself for that problem is what generated the experience that these paintings came out of.... Art's real strength and its real source of energy comes from, at least for me, the exploration of your inner self and its forces. I chose the swastika ... because it is the single living symbol in the 20th century of oppression in its most extreme and horrible form. And to use that symbol and somehow direct it inward—to find the qualities of that kind of oppression in your own heart—was my basic attitude in the work.... The whole crux of the painting is the introduction of symbolism. Symbolism in the sense of making some sort of image that has contradictory associations that you have to draw in and somehow deal with on your own terms. Also I am very interested in dealing with dead symbols.

... There are symbols for the inner life that are not meaningful now. They are really symbols of inner forces on the deepest level of consciousness. Those symbols are lost. I think we are in almost totally secularized culture.... I don't think they've been replaced—I think they've been discarded. I think that whole dimension is largely unknown now.... There needs to be work done on discovering new symbols because those forces are ongoing. They don't stop as soon as the symbols stop. We just don't have a language to talk about them.... The thing I'm most concerned about is to somehow make meaningful equivalents of those forces that everybody has but that you have to find, I'm trying to make something that seems like an equivalent....

—Brad Davis, 1972



Brad Davis, *Untitled*, 1971

112 GREENE STREET WORKSHOP

112 Greene Street, New York City
Director: Jeffrey Lew
October 1970–June 1978*

None of the doors in 112 were ever locked. It was the most open, if not the only, socialist art system in New York at that time.

There wasn't really a first show because everybody just arrived. Gordon Matta, Alan Saret, and everybody came there and worked. They would say, "Jeffrey, could I have a show here?" My answer would be "No!" but then of course they would have their show. They would just walk in and do it. That's what I liked about it—the fact that there was no administration. None.

I didn't make critical judgments. If an artist showed you his work just one time, you couldn't judge a career on that, so nobody ever showed us their work beforehand. I refused to look at slides. The artists came in through friends . . . Gordon [Matta-Clark] would say, "He's good, let him show." "What do you mean?" I'd say. "He's already doing it. Isn't that his work over there?"

112 had no political interests. It was a free space where an artist could come in unknown, without a resume, and have a show.

There were a lot of people who wanted 112 to end. I think that Robert Smithson said that it should end. I don't remember why he said it . . . he felt that works shown should be selected. But I never understood the difference between selection and elitism.

My concept was for well-known people and unknown people to show together. I didn't want some artists to feel inferior because they didn't have a gallery.

I was the head administrator. And, of course, nobody listened to me.

We tried to organize the schedule many ways. The idea was to experiment. I hung up a calendar with a pencil tied to it and the artists made their own schedule. Then when the grants came in, they said, "We're giving you a grant, you must have a schedule." I said, "Well now, how do I choose the shows?" "We'll give you a schedule; let's see, we're going to have a *Group Indiscriminate*." We made up a *Group Indiscriminate* because they insisted on a schedule. Something special happened during the first three years, and after we got the grants it didn't happen any more. We never got any money from the artists who showed there. We did say, okay, artist, this is the deal: you have your show and when you sell, we get a percentage. The most we ever got

was lightbulbs. In some cases artists sold pieces because of their shows and people got interested in their work. 112 was a real launching pad. I once sold out almost a whole show of my own work, and I did it all myself. Then I did get the lightbulbs for the gallery. I was reluctant to do it. I got cheap lightbulbs.

A piece would go up and a piece would come down and another piece would come in and some other pieces would stay and then finally those pieces would go and more pieces would come in. There was something very beautiful about that. It was like a dance floor where you get tapped on the shoulder and you're out. Then some new person comes in and starts dancing. That's the way it was.

You came into 112. There was a sound, the tone of order, of people really working on putting their pieces in the space and this was very special.

—Jeffrey Lew, 1978

(from an interview with Robyn Brentano
in the book *112 WORKSHOP/112 GREENE STREET*)

FALL 1970–
SPRING 1971

October–December

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Bill Beckley, Bill Bollinger, David Bradshaw/
James Brown, Rafael Ferrer, Lee Jaffe, Barry
Le Va, Jeffrey Lew, Gordon Matta-Clark, Brenda
Miller, Richard Nonas, Douglas Sanderson,
Alan Saret, Marjorie Strider, George Trakas,
Richard Van Buren Group Show | January |
| Bill Beckley <i>Treble C, Darkened Version; Middle C
Sung as "In"; Soprano C, Yellow Finches</i> | February |
| Bill Childress, Joel Fisher, Richard Haynes,
Douglas Lichter, Charles Rehwinkel, Italo
Scanga, Richard Van Buren, Todd Watts
Group Show (Organized by Richard Van Buren) | March 13–27 |
| Mel Bochner <i>Aspects of the Theory of
Measurement</i> | April 10–May 8 |
| Carl Andre, Rosemarie Castoro, Marjorie Strider
Bill Beckley <i>Middle C, Swinging; Cardinal; Quail,
Swinging; Treble C, Swinging; Song Sung to Raven
and to Viewer; Rooster, Lying; Raven Recitations,
First Series, 'Dark'</i> | April-May |

*This catalog and exhibition cover the period from 1969 to 1975 only. After 1975, the 112 Greene Street Workshop continued under other directors.

Brian Gayman, John Ingram, Nina Kayem, Lewis Marinano, Michael Morrill, John Avery Newman <i>Six Yale Art School Graduates: Sculpture and Drawings</i>	July 12–31
FALL 1975	
Group <i>Indiscriminate</i> Event for WB Magazine	September 1–25 September 28
Jill Breakstone (collage)	September 29– October 1
Suzanne Harris, Mary Heilman, Harriet Korman Susan Rothenberg <i>Three Large Paintings</i>	October 4–23 October 25– November 13
Tina Girouard and Richard Landry (video drawings)	November 15– November 27
Jacki Apple <i>Trunk Pieces</i> , Alice Aycock <i>Scaffolding</i> , Rita Myers <i>Dumbdadaaddadumb</i> , Martha Wilson <i>Truck Fuck Muck</i> (installations)	November 29– December 18
Mimi Smith (drawings with recordings)	December 20– December 31

The following are excerpts from the book *112 WORKSHOP/112 GREENE STREET*, edited by Robyn Brentano with Mark Savitt, designed by Barbara Knowles, and with Katherine Goetz and Charles Rue Woods (editorial assistants). New York: New York University Press, (1981—in press).

112 began in 1970 when a rag-salvaging business vacated the huge ground floor and basement spaces at 112 Greene Street in the industrial district of Soho in lower Manhattan. The owner of the building was Jeffrey Lew, an artist with boundless energy and charisma, who sensed the need for radical changes in the art-showing process and responded by opening up the raw space to a loose-knit community of artists, known and unknown.

“Nobody knew what 112 Greene Street was going to be when it started. It was a process, not an idea.” (Tina Girouard)

“We didn’t think of it as an alternative space at the time. We just wanted to get our work out and it was fantastic to have a place that wasn’t pristine, that we could knock around in...” (Suzanne Harris)

...“We had been protesting all our lives. We had had Cuba in high school, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement. By the time we reached maturity and were out of the universities ready to be artists, we were finished with protest. We just wanted to make our work, and yet we were anarchists...” (Tina Girouard)

Protest in the 60’s, with its specifically political targets, was finding a

new dimension in the early 70’s. Artists were beginning to focus on the problems that most directly affected them—life in the city and economic survival. Lew talked about this new sense of personal commitment in an interview for *Avalanche* magazine. “... it’s time for action and clear thinking. There was once a time for being chaotic and letting yourself completely freak out. Now I just don’t feel that way. I feel like getting it together ... things which make you an artist can make you a revolutionary, can make you change your own environment...”

The move into the low-rent industrial lofts of Soho created new possibilities for more artists to realize works in large spaces and to begin to build a network of support amongst themselves. There was also a keen interest in revitalizing the dead, abandoned spaces around the city and in using the cast-off materials of light industry in the neighborhood. The results were often undefinable and unsaleable. What’s more, the work seemed to focus on process itself and its relationship to the personal inhabited space of the studio. So when the clean, well-lighted galleries uptown proved inadequate to the work, artists began to seek and create alternatives....

The ground floor at 112 Greene Street measures approximately 33’ in width and 110’ in length with a 16’ high ceiling. The room is divided by seven beautiful Corinthian columns and has large windows front and back. There is a stairwell to the basement along the left-hand wall as one enters the space. In 1970, the walls were crumbling, there was no heat, and the place was dimly lit. “It was the funkier place in the world—so beautiful and impossible at the same time. The floor was terrible, but the space itself was so strong that whatever went on there had to be at least that strong to work. Some very powerful things happened in that space.” (Jene Highstein)

It is important to note that although there were many reasons for protest in 1970, the real focus of 112 was on the work itself. “We didn’t go there because it was a social experiment. We were really restless and impatient and we had work to get out then.” (Richard Nonas) Peter Schjeldahl acknowledged this fact in his review of 112’s first show. “Not that the artists’ acceptance of funky ambience necessarily constitutes an anti-establishment statement, it reflects exactly the new art’s aesthetic ... [The artists’] break with the recent tradition of formalism, with its insistence on the rationalized art ‘object’ seems complete.... [The work carries] the precise inference of an act: each piece in its fragile or tough simplicity bespeaks the physical activity or series of activities that went into making it....” This could only have happened in a space where anything could happen. As Lew said, “In most galleries you can’t scratch the floor. Here you can dig a hole in it....”

Tina Girouard, who had recently moved up from Louisiana, had been giving performances in her own studio before coming into 112. “The reason I committed myself so strongly to 112 was because they were interested in the project itself, not in putting together a concept

show or basing shows on dates or individuals. The way it worked was you had a project and went into the space and saw where you wanted to do it. If someone else was working there, you just said tell me when you're going to be finished. Then that piece would come out and you could get to work. The artists were the ones who kept the gallery open. ... So it was a meeting place—for instance, you could go in there and see a finished work by Gordon Matta-Clark and there would be George Trakas busy at work. You were seeing artists at work and finished works and there was a dialogue there... and a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. People definitely helped each other...."

Collaboration not only meant that the artists got the work done with the help of their friends, it also brought many disciplines together under one roof. Distinctions between art forms naturally began to break down. Sculptors and painters gave performances with their work. Dancers and musicians came to 112 because they could use it at any time and the installations provided ready-made sets for concerts....

As a pioneer artist-run space, 112 had the advantage of creating its own givens. The ambience was casual, but the space itself demanded rigorous solutions to the art-showing process. The artists had complete control over their own shows, from installation to publicity. They could choose to have a one-person show, share the space with others, or curate a show, as Gordon Matta-Clark and Richard Van Buren did in Spring 1971. Many people remember that there were strong reactions both to the idea of 112 and the art that appeared there. Critics had the task of "differentiating between art and casual debris ... but," as Jay Jacobs pointed out, "this somehow seemed to make for a more powerful commentary than some of the other galleries' antiseptic presentations." Because the "system" was based on word-of-mouth, there was no need for an organizational policy in the beginning. "There wasn't really any structure to it; it was just something about friends. It wasn't even a cooperative." (Suzanne Harris) "112 wasn't really a cooperative because Jeffrey had all the responsibilities of running it and all the financial worries ... [the artists] could do whatever they wanted to do, so in a way, it was a gift." (Caroline Goodden)

"All I remember is this feeling that I had. I wanted the artists to go completely wild in there. Showing at 112 was license to do anything you wanted. The rule was you weren't supposed to disturb the other artists who were already working there. If you could work within that framework, fine. If you did something to the space, you put it back in the most reasonable condition that you could. And people did. It was an amazing amount of teamwork.... If you walked in and didn't like the work there, obviously you didn't put your work in there." (Jeffrey Lew) ...

"The grant structure says that you have to use grant money to service as many people as possible ... therefore people have to be constantly changing, which was fine.... In the spirit of the way it began, it was perfectly reasonable to turn it over to the next group of people who needed it." (Suzanne Harris) This meant that the pattern of artists

returning each season for a show changed and was replaced by a flow of artists who were not necessarily connected by a shared sensibility ...

"At a certain point, the place became a focus, as opposed to people being a focus earlier." (Richard Nonas) ...

The *Anarchitecture Show* appeared in March 1974 like a signature piece to all that had come before it. Once a week for a year prior to the show, a group of eight artists organized by Gordon Matta-Clark would meet to talk about concepts of space and alternative modes of architecture. Matta-Clark said, "The *Anarchitecture Show* was about something other than the established architectural vocabulary, without getting fixed into anything too formal." They presented their ideas anonymously as a number of 16" x 20" photographs and some drawings. Jene Highstein, one of the group, recalled that the public was disturbed because the artists did not identify themselves

If alternative spaces are "about" anything, they are about the roots of art in everyday living and the necessity of everyday living to restore to itself the artist's inspiration and grace.

—Robyn Brentano, 1979

"One day in 1970, my uncle, Kurt Wasserman, came into my 119 Spring Street studio with Jeffrey Lew. Jeffrey was looking for plastic and met Kurt, a manufacturing chemist; he convinced Kurt to be a backer of a new kind of art space at 112 Greene Street.

At the time, I was terminating my involvements with commercial galleries because they had become a blind alley to the vehicles of art in an ethical, spiritual dimension.

In my ground floor and basement space at 119 Spring Street, the "Spring Palace," I was moving toward the idea of an artist's studio that would periodically become public for the display of the work of the artist and any others that artist might designate.

Through the medium of space transformed by the mind and hand of an artist, people could see a total vision entering domestic and social concerns as well as through individual works of art called "pieces." Under most circumstances, the public could meet the artist, who would then be in a more direct position of leadership and education in relation to his transmission.

Thornton Willis and Jennifer Bartlett showed at 119; Laura Dean and Joan Jonas danced there. I had a show which made the cover of *Artforum* in March, 1970.

My building was sold and I left for India. Kurt and Jeffrey parted ways, and Jeffrey readily found new backers for 112, which evolved into the prototype of the open-ended, not-for-profit, art-display-and-performance space.

In the beginning we were reluctant to fix it up, not wishing to disturb the raw power of the space. We wanted to avoid the taint of art commerce "ifarianism," which wall-boards each space to look like the one next door.

112, now minus its basement, and somewhat fixed-up, still has a freer air than any gallery. For me it is an oasis in the regular scene, which I avoid. It is not the vision of the "Spring Palace," because it lacks a living demonstration of the artist's hand and mind in other dimensions

of human activity. The creation of such entities remains the major artistic challenge of our time, or any time, and I call you all to help bring it into being."

—Alan Saret, 1978

GORDON MATTA-CLARK

Open House May 19–21, 1972

with BARBARA DILLEY, TINA GIROUARD, TED GREENWALD, RICHARD LANDRY, SUZANNE HARRIS, GORDON MATTA-CLARK, and ROBERT PRADDO

Matta arranged for a dumpster (a refuse container the size of a small tractor-trailer rig) to be delivered between 98 and 112 Greene Street. With the help of poet Ted Greenwald, he divided the interior into thirds by building small rooms with doors between them. There was no roof. Matta placed umbrellas over the top when it rained. Greenwald installed a speaker and cassette tape recorder that played six and one-half hours of the sounds recorded on his newspaper delivery route around New York City. Matta also made a piece on the sidewalk with umbrellas and Caroline Goodden's dog, Glaza. Barbara Dilley, Tina Girouard, Richard Landry, Suzanne Harris, and Robert Praddo performed while Matta made a big barbecue with a roast pig. Nourishment was an important aspect of the piece for Matta, who often made food for art events. This project was sponsored by Holly Solomon, whose own 98 Greene Street space was frequented by many of the artists who worked and performed at 112 (Matta may have made a second piece in a dumpster the following fall, but the details are not known).

from the book
112 WORKSHOP / 112 GREENE STREET
edited by Robyn Brentano with Mark Savitt

Installation October 21–November 10, 1972

Matta papered a gallery wall with soft colored silk-screened images of the exposed walls in wrecked buildings. He also exhibited photographs of holes that he had cut out from walls and floors of buildings. Some of these cut-out wall sections were also displayed in the space, including one from Food Restaurant. [Food, located a block away from 112, was started by Caroline Goodden with help from Matta, Tina Girouard, Suzanne Harris, Rachel Lew and many other artists who frequented 112.] Caroline Goodden recalls, "This was the

beginning of his cutting houses; cutting whole houses came right after this cutting of sections of floors . . . He never was as interested in the pieces as he was in the hole. The light and the lines interested him much more than the piece, which was simply documentation. He was taking something that was dead-looking and making it alive again." The gallery show documented the fascinating spaces Matta had found and created.

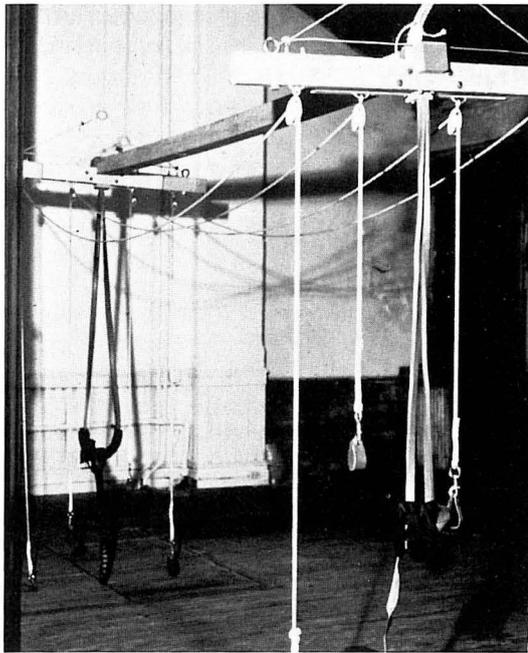
from the book
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Gordon Matta-Clark, *Open House*, 1972



Richard Landry



SUZANNE HARRIS

Flying Machine, The Wheels, Enclosed Space Form, Z (sculpture) March 17–29, 1973

Flying Machine is an attempt for two to defy gravity with minimum aid: visually sadistic until set in motion. A most elegant sensation of flying.

It's a twelve-foot long structure suspended from the ceiling and raised by a winch constructed out of wood, rubber, nylon rope, ¼-inch cable, with harness-like contraptions for the performers.

—Suzanne Harris, 1973

Suzanne Harris, *Wheels*, 1973

Suzanne Harris, *Flying Machine*, 1973

TINA GIROUARD

Patterns December 29, 1973–January 10, 1974

In about 1970, I was given a collection of eight, twelve-foot lengths of gaily patterned 40s' silk. It was meant to be cut up and sewn into clothing. At the time, I had been working on large environmental installations called *Stages*, and was wearing blue-jeans, T-shirts and steel-toe boots. Periodically, I would take the fabrics out and look at them, knowing I could never wear them. I had discovered a new way of looking at them ... side by side. By placing various lengths next to each other, I saw that very different patterns and colors could be balanced if put in a specific order. The problem was new, whereas many were studying the juxtaposition of color or surface, this work dealt with the multiplicity of pattern. In 1971 I made a collection of wallpaper and linoleum in Louisiana to be used in a series of works addressing that problem. In the formal conceptual sense, the pieces were about simultaneity. *Patterns* were selected for their

differences (sometimes color, sometimes scale, sometimes narrative content). The problem was to put separate but equal parts together and make a whole, a mandala, a painting. At the same time, the pieces had a decorative visual impact, familiar and attractive to the lower and middle classes in America, and new to the art world. There was a feeling among artists in the late 60s and early 70s that there were enough objects floating around, and that the "idea" was the work. So to recycle mass produced materials was in keeping with those thoughts. The pieces functioned as a museum for the materiel.

The pleasure in exhibiting at 112 was that the audience, made up mostly of artists, was in sympathy with the ideas involved and therefore understood the work on all its levels. Solomon's Lot, the silk collection, was first shown as Wall Space Stage, in the 1972 show called *Stages*. The wallpaper and linoleum works were completed in 1972–73 and were shown at 112 in 1973–74; the show was called Patterns.

—Tina Girouard, 1981



D. James Dee

Tina Girouard, *Walls Wallpaper II*, 1974

LARRY MILLER

Multi-media installations, photographs, sculpture
December 15–27, 1973

MOM-ME is a work that used hypnosis as a tool to experiment with psyche as "material." After six weekly sessions with a hypnotist, I became MOM in mind and body. I got on the "inside" where the subject and substance was experience. The presentation of the work became a third object of the MOM-ME conjunction—an offspring. The installation was comprised of a video-document, photographs and drawings.

Other works in this exhibition were—MOM-MOON-ME (photographs/film with sound), MOM'S FEET (plaster cast), MOM-MOON (photograph and audiotape), FOUR MOONS (4 photographs), ORANGE IN SPACE: ECLIPSE OF THE MOON (photograph), STONE (object and audiotape), KNIVES (photographs and objects).

—Larry Miller, 1981

Larry Miller, *MOM-MOON-ME*
(video document), 1973

Larry Miller, *MOM-ME*, 1973



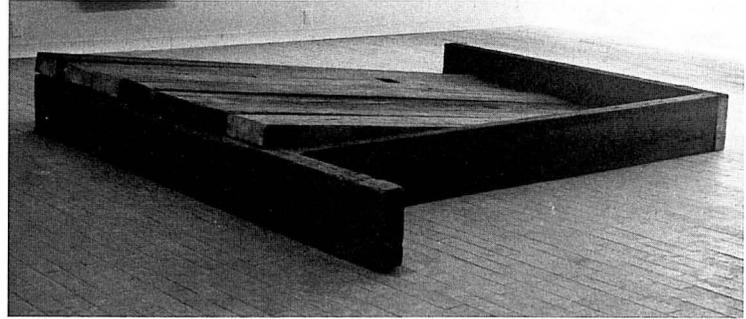
RICHARD NONAS

We were ready—112 and us—at the same moment. And we were full of it. 112 was our flood, our explosion. 112 was our action. We were prisoners in our studios, and 112 was our break-out. 112 was our escape. We grabbed it. We held it. We tore it apart. 112 was our battlefield.

—Richard Nonas, 1981

IT'S THE WAY IT CHANGES THE CHUNK OF SPACE YOU'RE BOTH IN; THICKENS IT, MAKES IT VIBRATE LIKE NOUNS SLIPPING INTO VERBS. LIKE DAMS NO BEAVER WOULD TOUCH.

Richard Nonas, *Southern Champ (Robert)*, 1973
"Robert Prado was an extraordinary musician and friend. He played with Philip Glass and Dickey Landry, cooked at FOOD—and was killed in an oil field accident in Louisiana at about this time."



Richard Nonas, 1970



JEFFREY LEW

Images April 6–18, 1974

Jeffrey Lew stationed life-sized Kodaliths (a photographic process) on glass in front of the columns presenting rear views of his Favorite Artists. The same rear views could be seen looking toward the front or toward the rear of the gallery. Among those depicted were Philip Glass, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra, Keith Sonnier, and Cy Twombly. Lew entitled another series of Kodaliths, which angled off the wall and rested on the floor, The Chinese Lesson. Images of hair, tooth, mouth, nose, and eye were featured with English and Chinese translations below them. The artist also provided a list of 26 reasons for learning Chinese. Other Kodaliths which hung in the back windows of the space included one of Geronimo, one of a starfish, and one of another Indian.

—from the book
112 WORKSHOP / 112 GREENE STREET
edited by Robyn Brentano with Mark Savitt

10 BLEECKER STREET

10 Bleecker Street, New York City
Director: Alanna Heiss
May 1972–January 1973
Workspace: Spring 1972–Spring 1975

Richard Nonas *"Enclosures"*
Cecile Abish, Bill Bollinger, Peter Gourfain,
Robert Grosvenor, Jene Highstein, Richard
Nonas *Six Sculptors—7,000 Square Feet*
Power Boothe, Peter Downsborough, Nancy Holt,
Clark Murray, James Reineking *"Recent Work"*

1972
May 13–27
June 10–24

July 15–August 5

1973
January 12, 20, 28

10 Bleecker Street Concerts
(Organized by Philip Glass)
Philip Glass Ensemble
Jon Gibson, Philip Glass, Richard Landry,
Arthur Murphy, Kurt Munkacsi, Richard Peck

Richard Landry
Rusty Gilder/Richard Peck
Jon Gibson and Friends
Kurt Munkacsi/Tina Girouard

January 13
January 19, 26
January 14, 27
January 21

Workspace
Steve Bennyworth, Carl Dittebrandt, Peter
Dudar, Lily Eng, Sidney Geist, Philip Glass,
Nancy Graves, Keith Hanadel, Ken Jacobs,
Randy Jones, Judy Karelitz, Christa Maiwald,
Richard Mock, Buky Schwartz, Carl Van Brandt,
Jay Walker, Mia Westerland

SPRING 1972–
SPRING 1975

RICHARD NONAS

in *Six Sculptors—7,000 Square Feet*
June 10–24, 1972

Alanna fed us in the ways that counted. We were hungry; we hurt with hunger—hunger for space, hunger to get work made, hunger to get it out and seen, hunger to get on to the next work. Alanna manned our kitchens.

—Richard Nonas, 1981

Peter Moore

JENE HIGHSTEIN

Untitled in Six Sculptors—7,000 Square Feet
June 10–24, 1972

It was a situation where the exhibition space itself was so violent that you had real competition between the work and the environment. To try to put something that was contemplative in that space was a real challenge. That was generally the nature of the alternative-space context.

—Jene Highstein, 1981

Six Sculptors—7,000 Square Feet (installation-view detail, artists [left to right]: Richard Nonas, Robert Grosvenor, Jene Highstein), June 10–24, 1972



NANCY HOLT

Crossed Locators and Visual Sound Zone #3 in Recent Work July 15–August 5, 1972

CROSSED LOCATORS (workspace, ground floor)
Four Locators made of black steel pipe (5' × 1' × 2") are placed on each side of the room. By looking through each Locator towards the interior of the room, the opposite Locator is visually encircled. Looking through the Locators in the other direction, any one of the following can be seen exactly filling the area of vision framed by each Locator:

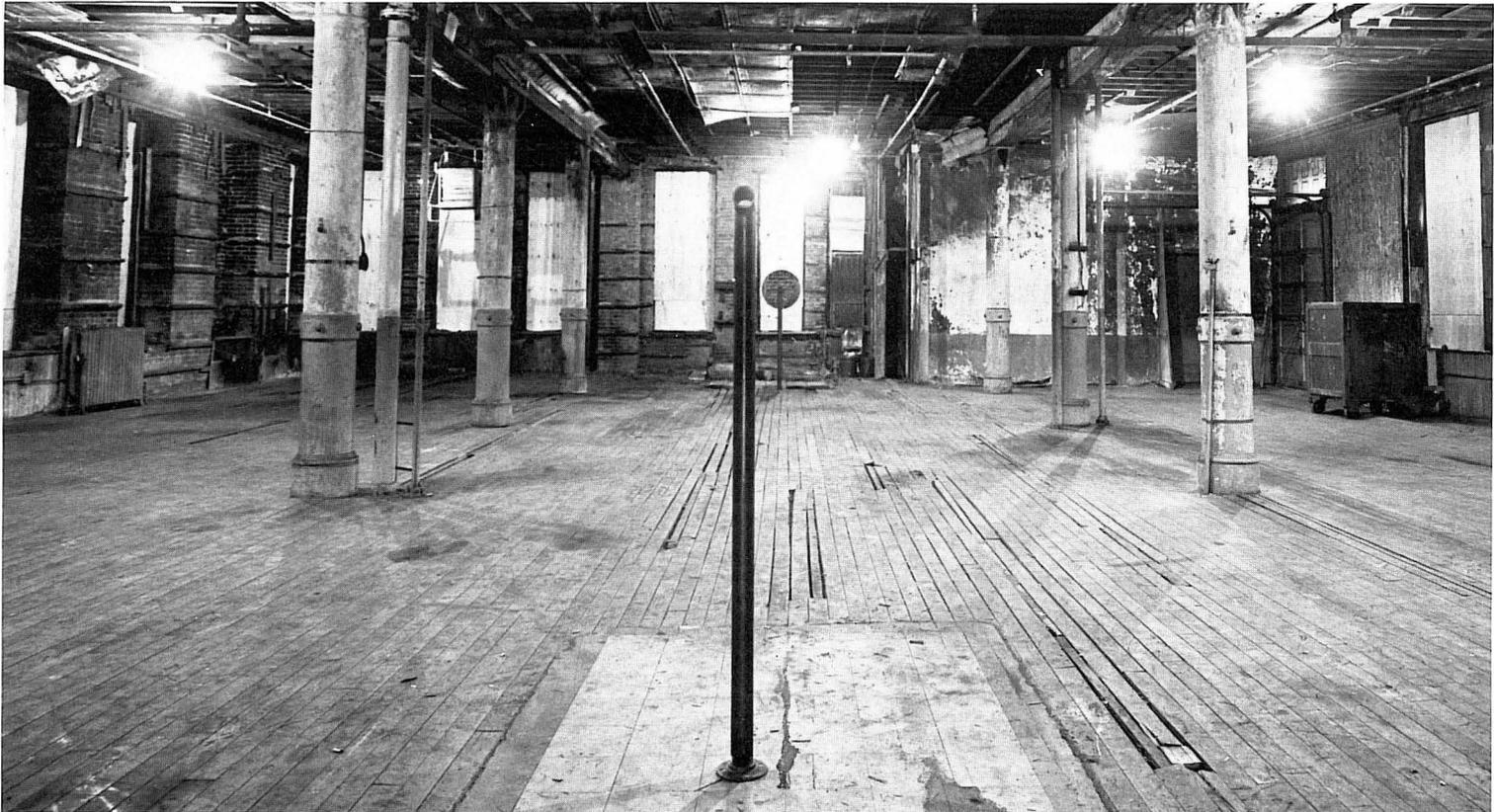
- a circular hole cut in a boarded-up window, exposing bars and a brick wall beyond;
- a circular mirror reflecting back the viewer's eye—the act of seeing, seen;
- chalk outlining part of a chipped and peeling wall, which the eye, through the Locator, perceives as a perfect circle, but which is actually an irregular chalkline looping into indentations and around corners;
- a view outside the building through the door, not framed or outlined, where cars and people are seen passing in and out of the rounded field of vision.

VISUAL SOUND ZONE #3 (a corner of the ground floor)

In a small, burnt-out alcove an endless tape repeats over and over, thoroughly describing the area inside the parameters of the sound. The ear alerts the eye as visual attention focuses from one detail to another during the three-minute description.

—Nancy Holt, 1981

Nancy Holt, *Crossed Locators*, 1972



CECILE ABISH

in *Six Sculptors — 7,000 Square Feet*
June 10–24, 1972

I was invited by Alanna Heiss to participate in the exhibit. At the time of the show I was working on a series of circular wall drawings. One consisted of two 36" charcoal circles one above the other, the lower circle covered but not obscured by three-inch strips of waxed, opaque paper in a hexagonal shape.

The installation at 10 Bleecker was based on the circular wall drawings I was then doing. But for this occasion I reversed the process and instead of obscuring the circle, emphasized it, so that the circle of poured plaster (22' in diameter and 1-1/2" high) would dominate the entire hexagonal shape.

The large circular work (22' in diameter) enclosed two of the massive interior pillars in the space; the white poured-plaster circle, which was between

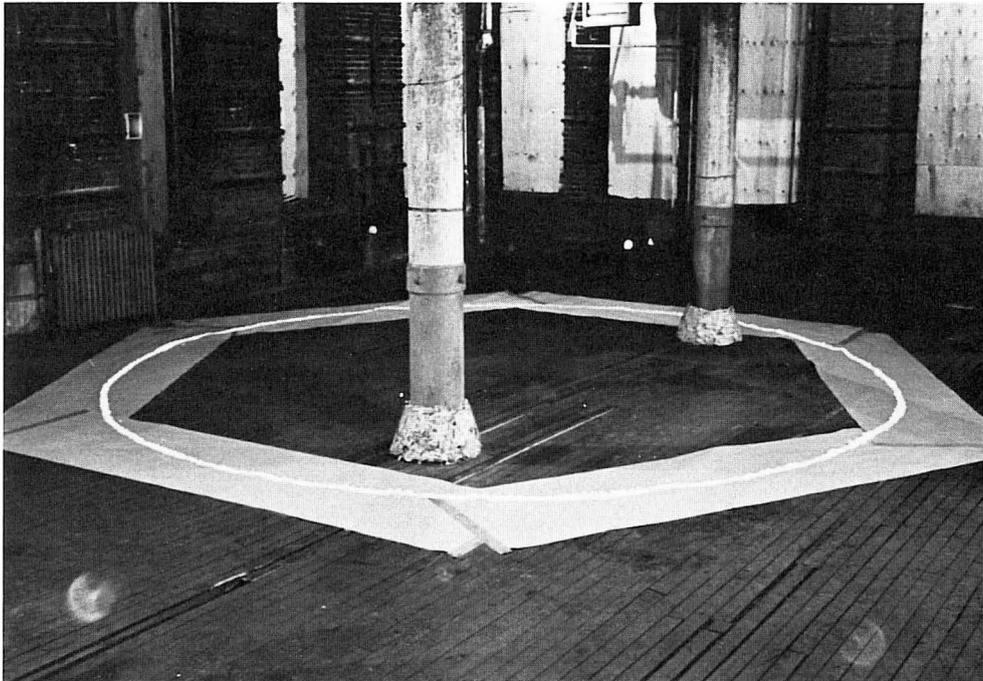
1-1/2" high, visually dominated the entire field, thereby defining a specific location within the larger space at 10 Bleecker.

The diameter of the raised plaster circle was predicated on the length and width of each Kraft paper section forming the hexagon. I chose plaster because in the pouring I was able to create a continuous, narrow, raised circumference that established a bond between the work and the installation site. The act of pouring, sealing the circle into place. Re/moving the work, the equivalent of destroying the work.

In addition, to call attention to and reinforce the explicit architectural implications of the two pillars in my space, I skirted them with wire mesh, stuffing the mesh with newspapers. The wire-mesh skirts neutralized the pillars' domination of ground space. The three 11' long, narrow paper triangles, each with a 1" raised plaster line down the center, were meant to define the circle's physical separation from, and intrinsic relation to, the hexagon.

—Cecile Abish, 1981

Cecile Abish, *Untitled*, 1972



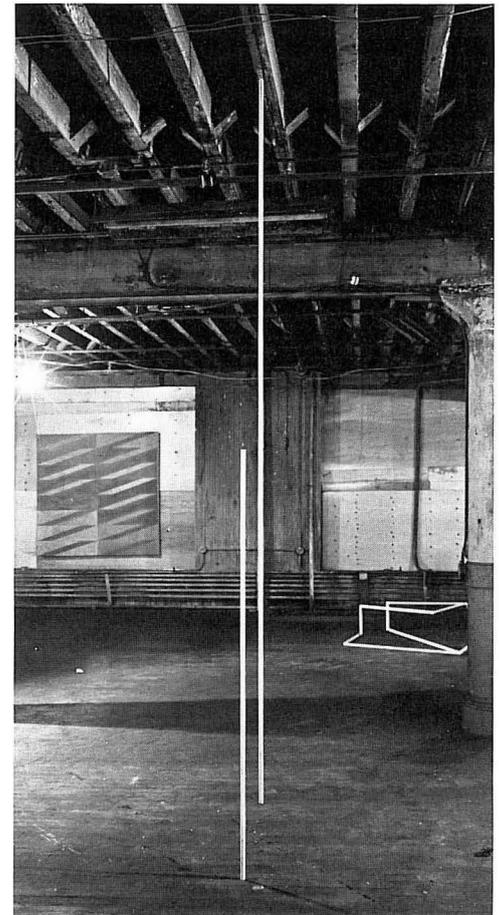
PETER DOWNSBROUGH

10 ft. 4 in./6 ft. in Recent Work
July 15–August 5, 1972

10 Bleecker Street, an interior space. If it had been an exterior space two pipes (1 1/4" ID) would have been used and both placed in the ground. The location with-in the space was chosen... as a place where two sticks could interact... with the space (and/or its contents). The sticks were/are 1" poles — there was/is 3" between them. In an interior space they always overlap(ed).

—Peter Downsborough, 1981

Peter Downsborough, *10 ft. 4 in./6 ft.*, 1972



Peter Moore

IDEA WAREHOUSE

22 Reade Street, New York City
Director: Alanna Heiss
December 1974–December 1975
Workspace: Winter 1973–December 1975

Richard Nonas Philip Glass Ensemble Jon Gibson, Philip Glass, Richard Landry, Kurt Munkacsi, Richard Peck, Michael Riesman <i>Sunday Afternoon Concerts</i>	WINTER 1974– WINTER 1975 December February 2, 9, 16, 23
Mabou Mines Joanne Akalaitis, Lee Breuer, Ruth Maleczech, David Warrilow <i>Red Horse Animation</i>	February 12
Scott Burton <i>Solitary Behavior Tableaux</i> (performed by Elke Solomon)	March 18–20
Charlemagne Palestine <i>Strumming Music for Bosendorfer Piano</i>	April 1–13
Sylvia Whitman <i>Slingshot</i>	May 2–3
Douglas Davis <i>Veiled/Unveiled: An Object (Unveiled)</i>	May 5–15
Charlemagne Palestine/Simone Forti <i>Sheila in Progress</i>	June 5–7
Kirsten Bates, Bill Beirne, Jim Cobb, Colette, Ralston Farina, Colleen Fitzgibbon, Peter Frank, Dieter Froese, Julia Heyward, Davi Det Hompson, Taka Jimura, Willy Lenski, Gianfranco Mantegna, Anthony McCall, Michael McClard, Rita Myers, Virginia Piersol, Marcia Resnick, Angels Ribe, Joost Romeu, Willoughby Sharp, Ted Victoria, Yoshi Wada, Robin Winters <i>Ideas at the Idea Warehouse</i> (Organized by Dieter Froese)	June 16–July 11
Ken Jacobs <i>Shadow Play</i>	1975 (performed intermittently)
Jared Bark <i>Lights On/Off and The Neutron Readings</i>	October 10–17
Charlemagne Palestine/Carol Parker (installed but never shown)	December 20
Workspace Philip Glass, Ken Jacobs, Mabou Mines, Charlemagne Palestine	WINTER 1973– DECEMBER 1975

Philip Glass and I had been sharing a floor at 10 Bleecker Street. Just prior to being given notice to vacate, Alanna Heiss found us another space near City Hall at 22 Reade Street. It consisted of the entire top floor of a city building that had been semi-abandoned in lieu of Mayor Lindsay's Civic Center project that never materialized. The floor was broken up into three separate spaces—two 2,000-square-foot, typical raw lofts, and one large, nearly square 6,000-square-foot space with lined windows on two sides, a gradually sloping ceiling, cave-like acoustics, and an uneven, but splinterless, wooden floor. Philip and I took one of the small lofts. Mabou Mines took the other, and the large space was christened the Idea Warehouse. I was made caretaker and liaison between artists, city personnel, and the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, who had procured it.

Over a two-year period many works were constructed and performed there, including the final collaboration of sound and body works I performed with Simone Forti, and my strumming music for Bosendorfer piano; even a few of my videotapes were shot in the Warehouse, including *Running Outburst*. Finally one fateful night before a collaborative installation between myself and sculptor Carol Parker was to open, the Idea Warehouse floor caught fire and the space never reopened again.

Recalling the Idea Warehouse to my mind, I remember a space of haunted power, seemingly possessed by strange spirits. Any works that took place there seemed to contain something extraterrestrial, almost as though it housed ghost refugees from a seance long ago. I loved that space as did many other people. Spaces like that are almost extinct now.

—Charlemagne Palestine, 1981

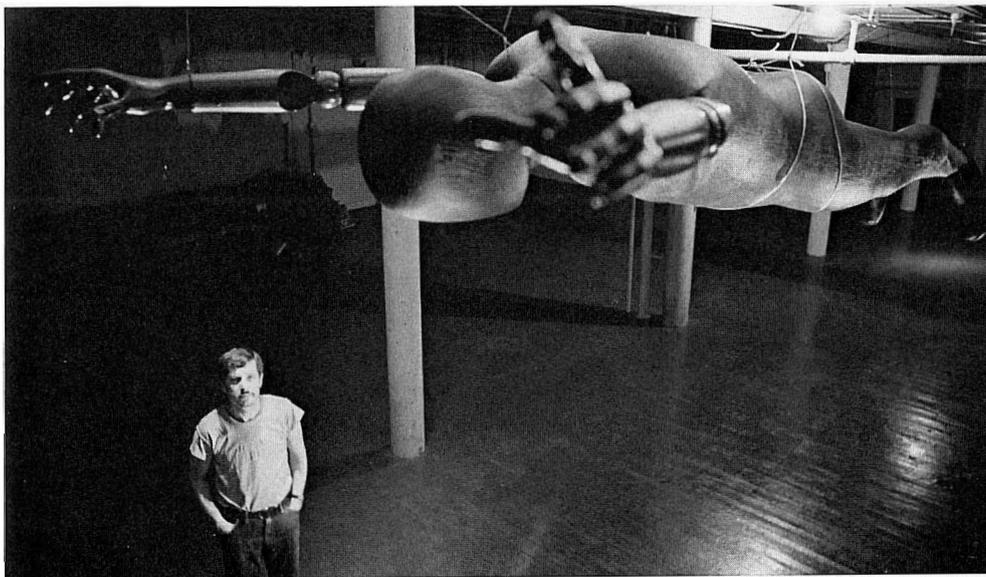
DOUGLAS DAVIS

Veiled / Unveiled: An Object (Unveiled)
May 5–15, 1975

THE FLYING MAN (Images from the Present Tense II), 1975–78. This image takes many forms. He/she first appeared as seen on this banner suspended from the roof of the Idea Warehouse, New York City, April 1975.

In May he was placed in the ceiling under a large masonite board. Since he was alone in this large,

Douglas Davis, *The Flying Man (Images from the Present Tense II)*, 1975



dark space, we placed spotlights on the floor beneath him. The light cheered him up and kept his spirits from sinking too low. It's hard to describe what it was like entering that huge barn and seeing him pinpointed in the sky, facing north toward Soho. I always thought of it as performance in flight. Charlemagne Palestine told me years later he thought it was me. But he was only six feet tall.

Since then he/she has turned up on the side of several buildings, on a videotape, and inside the pages of a book. There is no telling where the image will end.

—Douglas Davis, 1981

VIRGINIA PIERSOL

Body-Dolly July 7, 1975

*From about 1971 to 1975 I thought of myself-in-the-act-of-filmshooting as central—literally—to the content of most of my Super-8 film pieces. I was interested in process, found imagery, and a sense of immediacy produced with much hand-held camera work and in-camera editing. In later editing I used the rhythm or pace established in the filmshooting process as a standard. Some of the films were cyclical, designed for two- or three-minute film-loop cartridges and a specific site. One such piece, called *Indiana Window Bus*, incorporated a moving shape of reflected sunlight into the film-projection area.*

The Idea Warehouse space invited movement. My first inclination was to roller skate there, and I did, with two cameras on a body-mount, some simple props, and a walker and bicyclist for counterpoint.

*The piece as it was seen July 7 involved four layers of documentation: videotape of the original shooting on roller skates (*Body-Dolly*), the films projected, the loop projection/performance, and the filmshooting/performance.*

The film projection consisted of a double projection of the images which had been collected simultaneously by the cameras, one from over the shoulder and one at a right angle to the direction of travel.

In the skating-with-loop-projector performance, the film image was "thrown" over the shoulder onto near or far walls.

*After a false ending, *Body-Dolly* exchanged the loop projector for a camera and filmed while weaving through clusters of people from the audience, giving a kind of open-ended conclusion to the piece.*

—Virginia Piersol, 1981

Virginia Piersol, *Body Dolly*
(detail—film-shooting process), 1975



IDEAS AT THE IDEA WAREHOUSE

Organized by Dieter Froese
(performance, film, installation)
June 16–July 11, 1975

Kirsten Bates (installation)
Bill Beirne *Grounded / Cornered* (performance/installation)
Jim Cobb (installation)
Colette (installation)
Ralston Farina (performance)
Colleen Fitzgibbon (performance)
Peter Frank
Dieter Froese *Multi-image Sync Film Loop Studies* (installation)
Julia Heyward (installation)
Davi Det Hompson *I Haven't the Faintest Idea* (slide projections)
Taka Imura *A Loop Seen as a Line* (film installation)
Willy Lenski / Judy Rifka *Abstract Expressionism Connected to a Social Act* (film)
Gianfranco Mantegna *The Violent Death* (installation)
Anthony McCall *Long Film for Ambient Light*
Michael McClard (performance)
Rita Myers (film installation)
Virginia Piersol *Body Dolly* (performance with film)
Marcia Resnick (installation)
Angels Ribe *The Best Way of Expressing It* (installation)
Joost Romeu (installation)
Willoughby Sharp *Territories of the Self* (performance with video)
Ted Victoria (installation)
Yoshi Wada *Earth Horns and Electric Drones* (music performance)
Robin Winters (performance)

An uptown, commercial gallery had invited me to organize a “summer festival” for their space. I had asked twenty artists to take part. The show was to consist of installations and performances and would run for four weeks. Each artist would receive a participation fee. There was to be a catalog. Two ads were placed in major magazines. Three weeks before the proposed opening the gallery arbitrarily cancelled the event.

I gave myself one week to find a new sponsor. Alanna Heiss and Linda Blumberg of the Institute for Art and Urban Resources were interested and offered the Idea Warehouse, a large space on the sixth floor of a commercial building on Reade Street.

There were conditions which led to some reorganization of the show: mainly, there was no money for the artists. Also, since the place could not be properly protected, video works could not be shown. As a consequence a few artists dropped out or had to be told that their video pieces could not be accommodated. The Institute suggested a number of new artists to join. The original concept, however, did not have to be altered.

Peter Frank agreed to write an introductory essay to an inexpensive

catalog which I designed in collaboration with the artists.

All activities took place in the Warehouse and around the premises—in the hallway and in the street in front of the building. Most works related to the space or referred to it; only occasionally were finished works brought into the gallery from the artists' studio. Often cross-over work was produced: performers projected slides, videomakers showed films, photographers made sculptural installations.

The activities roughly broke down to seven performances by eight artists and fifteen installations with sixteen artists. There was a one-catalog-only contribution.

One week after the show was over a meeting of the artists involved in the exhibition took place at Magoos Bar. Dissatisfaction was voiced toward the Institute's handling of the show. Some artists felt used rather than being supported by the hosting institution. Some questioned the merits of exhibitions of this kind with alternative spaces.

A year later artists involved in P.S. 1's *Rooms* show received honoraria.

—Dieter Froese, 1981

3 MERCER

3 Mercer Street, New York City
Director: Stefan Eins
October 1973–June 1977*

	FALL 1973– SPRING 1974		FALL 1975
Stefan Eins	October 20– November	Demi	September
Christopher McNeur <i>The Residue of Violence</i>	December 1	Bill Beirne <i>Similarities and Differences</i>	October 25
Christopher McNeur <i>Polar Prints</i>	December 8–22	Lil Picard with Kathy Acker (performance)	November 29
Stefan Eins <i>Crowbar and Pulley Sale</i>	April 27–May 17	Mitch Corber <i>Reciting Poetry Under the Influence of Onions</i>	December 2
		Stuart Sherman with Jaime Davidovich <i>Fifth Spectacle</i> (performance and video)	December 4–5
Stefan Eins <i>Crowbar and Pulley Sale</i>	WINTER 1974 SPRING 1975	Richard Hayman <i>Whistling in his Sleep</i> (performance)	December 7
Richard Quarrell	November 21– December 7	John Bowman and Karl Kovacs <i>A Fumigated Field</i>	December 13
Willoughby Sharp <i>Double Take</i>	January 9–18	<i>Looks Pretty Much Like an Unfumigated One</i> (films)	
Jane Greer <i>Seven Drawers</i>	January 28– February 1	Dieter Froese <i>Watching TV–tv</i> (performance)	December 30
Virginia Piersol <i>Works in Super-8</i>	February 2–8		
Billy Apple <i>By Subtraction</i>	February 11–15		
H.P. Adamski, Krimhita Becker/Charlotte Kaindl, Heinz Breloh, Marga Jordan, Lothar Reiners, Matthias Schaeffer, Reiner Stumm <i>Seven Cologne Artists</i>	February 20–March 1		
Bill Beirne <i>A Pedestrian Diversion</i> (sidewalk installation)	March 6–27		
Nancy Barber/Richard Mock/Susan Sayre <i>Pieces on Broken Arms</i> (video)	March 6–22		
Michael Malloy <i>Shelves</i>	March 23–29		
Richard Hayman (installation and performance)	March 31–April 5		
Dieter Froese <i>Toenis Loop Re-stage</i> (window installation)	April 6–12		
Angels Ribe <i>Two Main Subjective Points on an Objective Trajectory</i>	April 15–19		
Leah Reichman <i>A Piece of Cake</i> (performance)	April 24–26		
Stefan Eins (demonstration and sale)	April 26		
Michael Busch <i>Emil Nolde Marching Band</i> (window installation)	April 15–May 10		
Susan Hiller <i>References</i> (installation)	April 28–May 3		
	June 23		

3 Mercer was established by me to sell my unlimited-edition mass products (such as my specially designed crowbar or the mechanical toy bird that flies by flapping its wings). Many artists used the space, mostly for performances and installations.

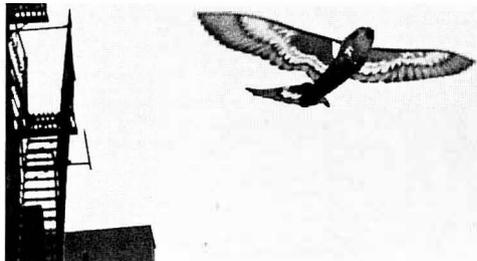
—Stefan Eins, 1981

The early scientists had to deal with a certain amount of stupidity from the people of the world. The proprietor (Stefan Eins) of 3 Mercer Street need consider only the artworld's sensibility, which may be more sophisticated than the Inquisition's, but still stupid.

—ART-RITE –8, 1975

...It [3 Mercer] had a kind of salon atmosphere where artists could hang out, talk, drink coffee almost any afternoon or evening for several years. The smallness was another contribution..... content over scale, decentralization, low-budget mobility.

—Virginia Piersol, 1981



Stefan Eins, *Mechanical Bird*, 1975

*This catalog and exhibition cover the period from 1969 to 1975 only.

STEFAN EINS

Demonstrations and sales October 20–November 30, 1973; April 27–May 17, November 21–December 7, 1974; April 15–May 10, 1975

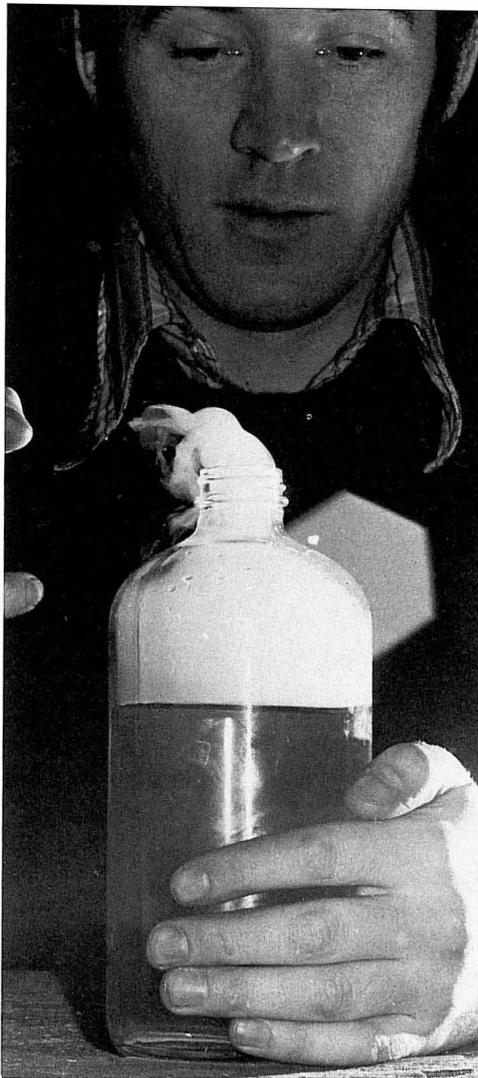
Austrian emigré STEFAN EINS rented a storefront in SoHo, a few blocks below the main gallery scene, and sits in it to demonstrate his artworks. There are four of them: a pulley attached to the ceiling; a crowbar leaning against the wall; a wooden block with a pin in it with which Eins plays records on an old phonograph; and a bottle of water and a pump he uses to force air into the jar until enough pressure builds up to condense the humid air into a kind of fog.

Eins offers the two tools and two toys at prices that must be close to the cost of materials. Oldenburg's 1961 Store, sponsored by a gallery, contained work that was clearly sculpture and priced accordingly. What Oldenburg carried out metaphorically, Eins has done literally. As a shopkeeper/artist at his own store/studio, he literalizes the nearby art dealers as clerks and their galleries as showrooms.

Eins's pulley and crowbar are extremely tenuous as artworks. They're more attenuated than Duchamp's Readymades since they are thoroughly unsurprising objects. They were tools in his hands, and he passes them on as tools. Nothing has happened to them except that they have been offered for sale in his store. The audacious paucity of the offerings and the curious, eagerly demonstrative behavior of this shopkeeper (which is not the same as a declamatory interposition of his artishood) is all that separates Eins's store and the objects he sells there from the hardware stores and their wares half a block away.

These things are Readymades in the subjunctive case — it is context alone that defines them as artworks. Eins's role as shopkeeper involves a performance aspect. He demonstrates the fog piece and the block-and-pin record player. Using these pieces as props, it is fairly easy to recreate the performance context that gives them meaning. But, since Eins declines to specify grounds for the artness of the crowbar and pulley, they reassure their apparent function once they leave the store which is their context and arena of meaning. The line is so thin — but underscored by my writing.

Eins's store is about several kinds of poverty, and part of that is politics. It's also a more delimited realization of an implicit objective of Fluxus art: a voluntary denaturing of the artist's position. This can be an antiheroic abdication or simply the logi-



Yuri

Stefan Eins, *Fog*, 1975

cal outcome of a rarification of formal means. Not only is the spectator expected to apprehend the work, but he or she is cajoled or enjoined to a complicity in its realization as well.

As a formal determinant in object-making, this participatory function is partly rooted in what Dali called "Objects of Symbolic Function," Surrealist works like Giacometti's *Suspended Ball* of 1930–31 which incorporate particular elements designed to be moved.

—Alan Moore
Artforum, February 1975

CHRISTOPHER McNEUR

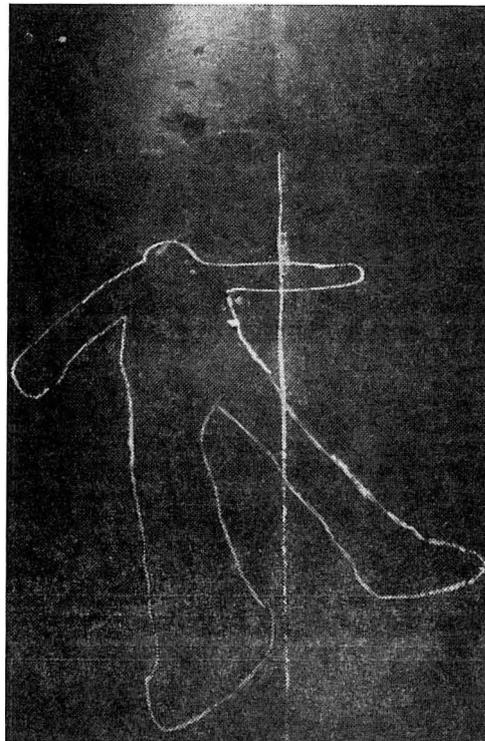
The Residue of Violence (installation with audiotapes by Max Blagg and Ted Greenwald) December 1, 1973

The Residue of Violence is after the fact entropy. This event is the rationality of irrationality, the institutionalization of adrenaline inspired action, and the substitution of statistical analysis for random individual acts.

Various mechanisms we use to understand occurrences that are beyond our normal comprehension are used to create the situation. The outline of the murder victim, the newspaper articles, and the forbidden crime-evidence area give us a moment held and events frozen. We try to see and understand from the history, but the basic contradiction of violence always seems to exist. What is the explanation for events that make no sense?

—Christopher McNeur, 1981

Christopher McNeur, *The Residue of Violence* (detail), 1973



DIETER FROESE

Toenis Loop Re-Stage (window installation)
April 15–19, 1975

The four-channel piece was only visible and audible from the street. It was installed from the inside of the store into one of the two windows. A monitor, three film loops and a slide projection displayed a series of gestures. Three channels were Re-Stages of human behavior displayed in repetition on the original video recording.

—Dieter Froese, 1981

STUART SHERMAN / JAIME DAVIDOVICH

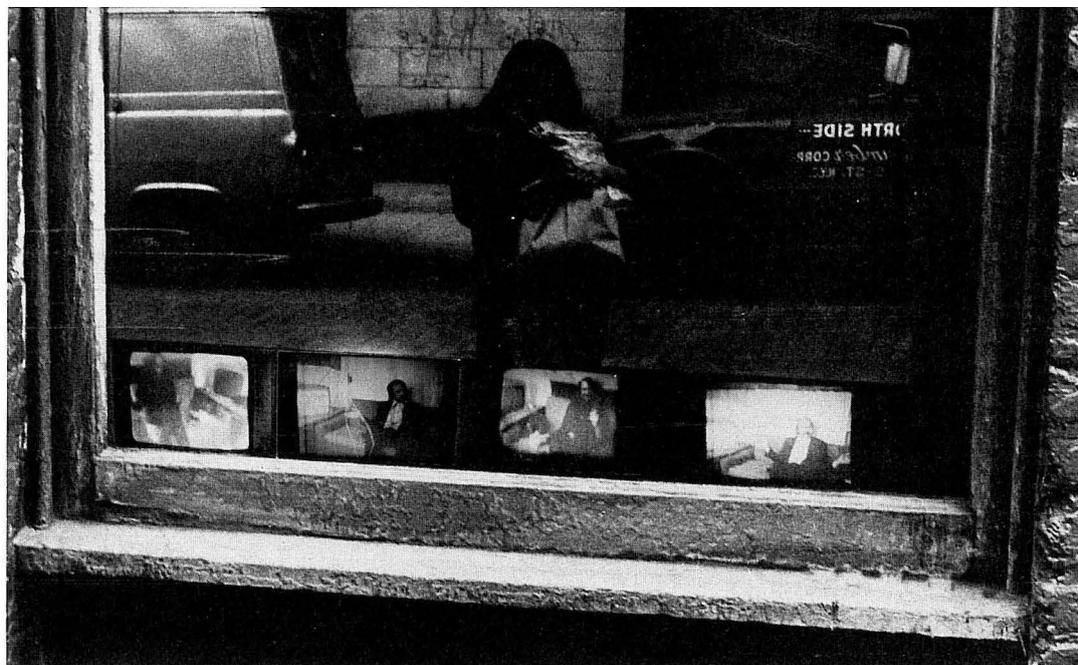
Fifth Spectacle (performance) / 3 Mercer Street
(video) December 4–5, 1975

Like much of my other work, the *Fifth Spectacle* consists of many brief manipulations, each demonstrating a complex idea through a precise sequence of actions performed with common objects in unusual contexts. The manner of the performance is rapid and informal. Special to this performance, however, was the fact that I presented it standing alongside a video monitor showing Jaime Davidovich's video piece, which had itself incorporated my *Spectacle* into a prior camera exploration of the space in which I was to perform.

—Stuart Sherman, 1981

3 Mercer Street is a silent exploration of an empty storefront. The camera, steadily, continuously, and repeatedly pans the small room, and the viewer becomes increasingly familiar with the space until it becomes possible to anticipate what will appear next. There is an element of surprise with the recurring appearance of a performer (Stuart Sherman). A suspense develops because it is impossible to predict when and where he will appear or to understand what he is doing. The camera totally disregards him and continues on without slowing or stopping for an investigation of his activity. The barren room and the deserted dark street seen through the window create a surreal atmosphere in a "Hopper" setting. The seriousness of the environment is relieved by the humor and irony created by the illogical and sporadic appearance of the performer.

—Jaime Davidovich, 1981



Dieter Froese, *Toenis Loop Re-Stage*, 1975

Jaime Davidovich, *3 Mercer Street* (details from videotape), 1975



BILL BEIRNE

Similarities & Differences

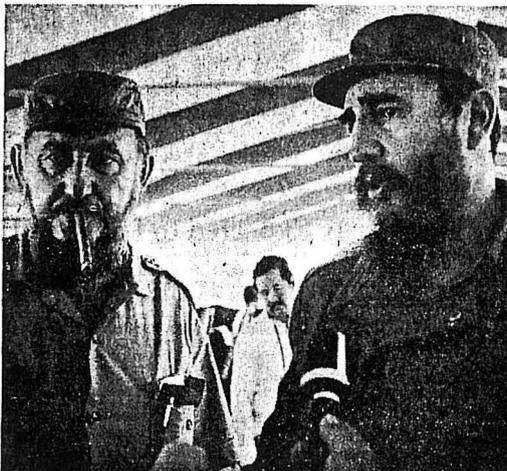
October 25, 1975

Similarities & Differences, a street performance by Bill Beirne was presented on the sidewalk bounded by Mercer, Canal, Greene, and Grand Streets. . . . The performance consisted of Bill and his brother, Stephen, walking in opposite directions around the block, each beginning at one window of the store and ending at the other. The brothers who look alike but are not twins were dressed similarly. The movement around the block was continuous for four hours. Supplementary documentation including birth certificates, photographs, and written descriptions of the two brothers and a third, Stephen's twin Paul, as well as ten statements exploring the relationship between the artist and his brothers could be seen inside the store.

"The performance described and intensified for me the kinds of avoidance or withholding that have always existed in my relationship with Stephen. We moved in opposite directions around the block, never quite making contact, creating a sort of negative magnetic field in front of the store, between the two windows. I was interested in the shifting of identities which was accomplished by stopping in front of the window containing the information about me and then walking around the block, passing Stephen and ending the cycle in front of his window. If the viewer didn't know me or him it would never be clear as to which was Bill and which was Stephen. I was forced to synchronize our movements around the block, adjust to his pace, try to move like him, become him. The ten autobiographical statements were an attempt to communicate our relationship and subsequent interrelationships of a similar nature."

[Bill Beirne]

—Liza Bear/Willoughby Sharp
Avalanche, Winter 1975

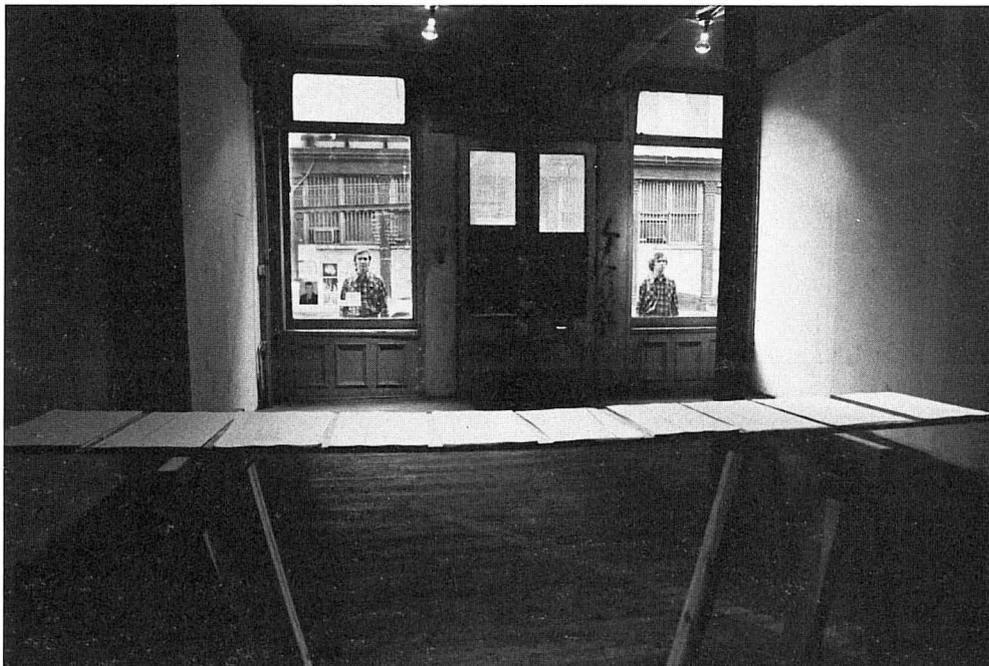


The New York Times/Sally Boston
Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba, right, on a visit the other day to his brother Ramón at a cattle breeding station he runs in Picadora. Yesterday, despite some reservations, Mr. Castro called move by the United States on trade with Cuba "a positive measure."

Bill Beirne, *Similarities & Differences*, 1975

"two brothers who love each other so much that they look alike . . . two brothers who look so alike that they love each other . . ."—Jean Genet

Bill Beirne, *Similarities & Differences*, 1975



*"two brothers who love each other
so much that they look alike...
two brothers who look so alike
that they love each other..."*

Jean Genet

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