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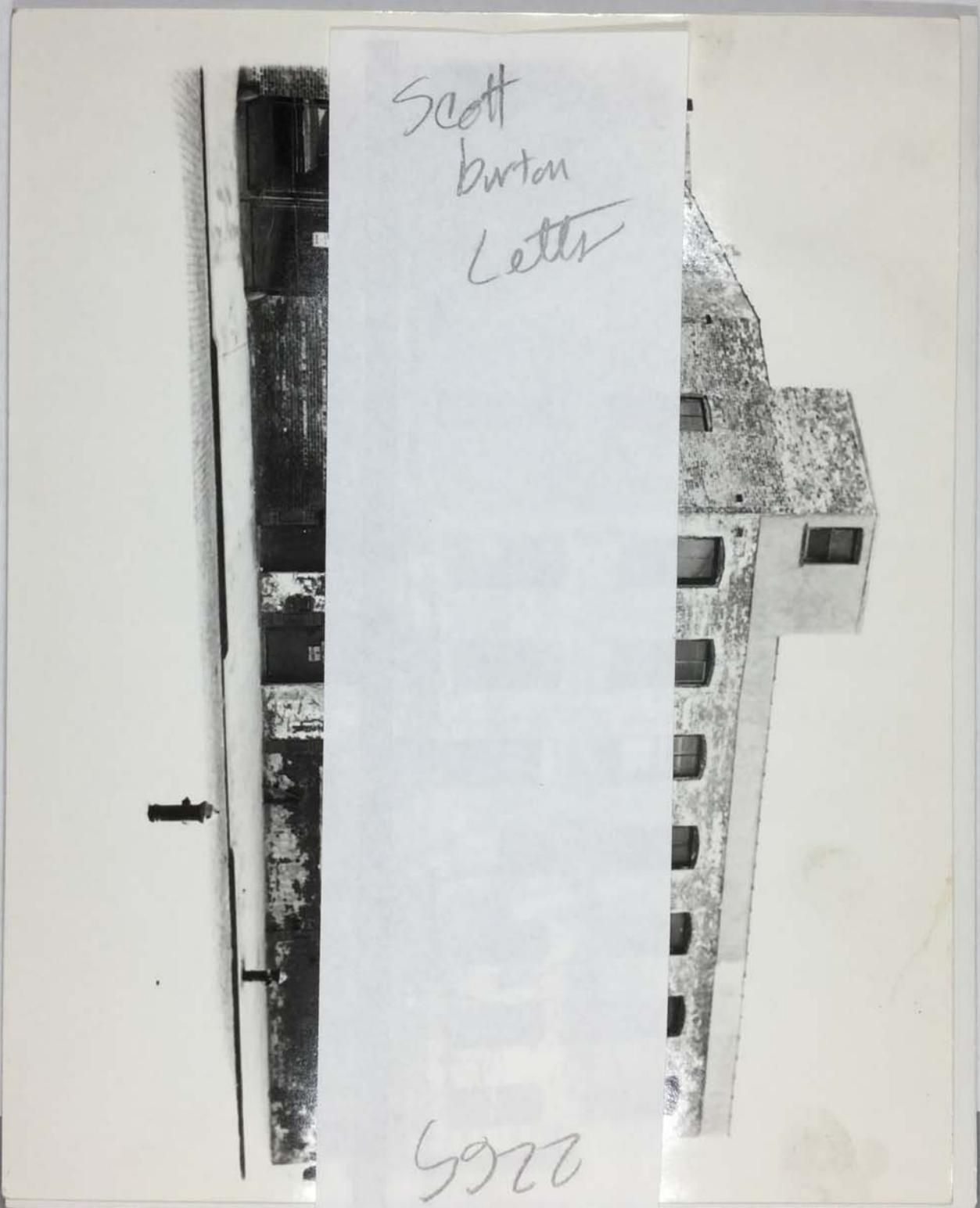
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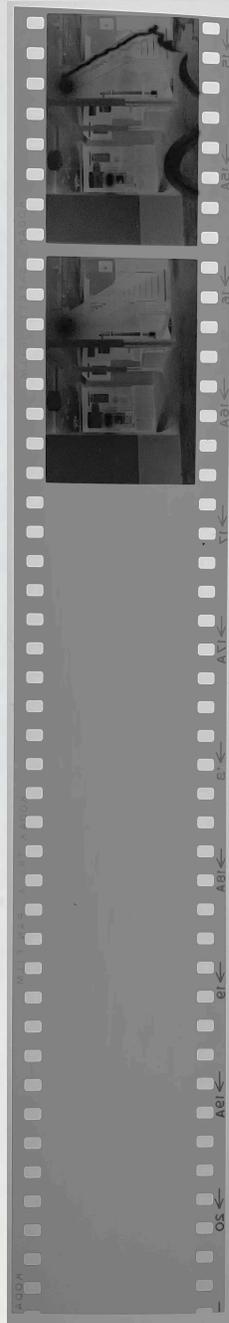
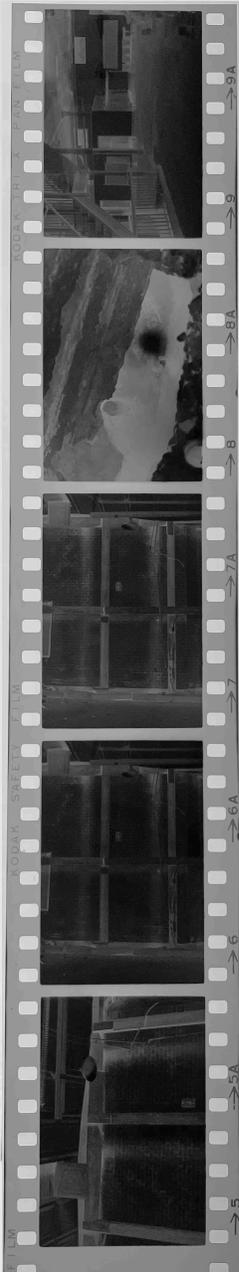
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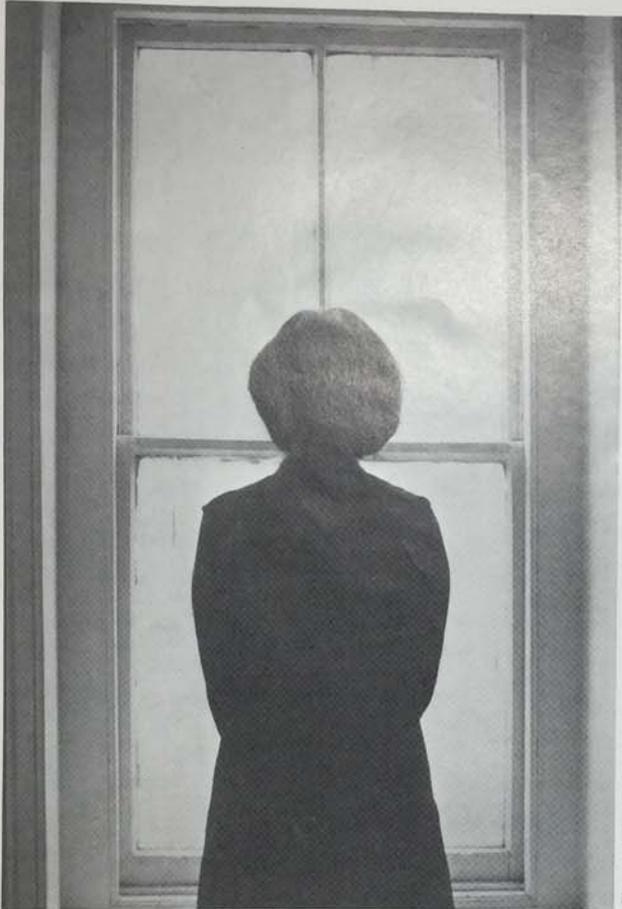
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Photovella, 1971-73; frame one.

SCOTT BURTON  
NEW TABLEAUX — FIVE THEMES OF SOLITARY BEHAVIOR  
THE IDEA WAREHOUSE  
22 Reade Street, New York

*Twelve performances — Tuesdays through Sundays  
March 18-23 and 25-30, 1975 9 PM (length one hour)  
Limited seating, tickets required 233-1096  
Tableaux performed by Elke Solomon*

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I.A.3  
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2 pages

... piece for your space:  
... med by one woman. Some  
... shows at the Whitney  
... he accompanying photographs.  
... rth of a photonarrative  
... one woman subject.

The performer uses three  
... long wall. I need a very  
... the viewers must be separated  
... This performance space has  
... four weeks--two to install  
... very slow and the poses are  
... that separate the tableaux  
... be to exhibit the piece.  
... e like this that for me to  
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108 Leonard Street  
New York City

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Cocktail reception in honor of

SCOTT BURTON

Sunday March 16th 6-8 PM

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show it only once or twice would not make it available to enough people to see.

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V

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Idea Warehouse Program  
Institute for Art and Urban Resources  
108 Leonard Street  
New York City

I. A. 3  
IF 2265  
2 pages

I am writing to propose my new performance piece for your space: a new series of narrative tableaux performed by one woman. Some earlier related tableaux from one-person shows at the Whitney Museum and Finch College can be seen in the accompanying photographs. The accompanying slides represent one-fourth of a photonarrative installation piece which also deals with one woman subject.

The tableaux I am working on are silent. The performer uses three or four pieces of furniture set against a long wall. I need a very large space for this performance because the viewers must be separated by fifty feet from the performance space. This performance space has to be forty feet wide. I need the loft for four weeks--two to install and rehearse, because the movements are very slow and the poses are very precise, and the timing of blackouts that separate the tableaux is also precise. The other two weeks would be to exhibit the piece. So much work and material goes into a piece like this that for me to show it only once or twice would not make it available to enough people to see.

I would like to try to get contributors to the Institute to cover the expenses. These will not be great, probably around \$300 ~~xxxxxxx~~ excluding a mailing. I would like to do this project before April 15 or after

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ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM

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*Festival of Contemporary Arts*

Published three times a year by the Allen Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. \$6.00 a year, this issue \$3.00; mailed free to members of the Oberlin Friends of Art. Printed by the Press of the Times, Oberlin, Ohio.

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Scott Burton's art has mostly been performance-oriented with divergences into conceptual art, environments and street-works. While some of his earlier pieces appear to have been somewhat Surrealist in feeling, his recent and most important work to date, *Behavior Tableaux* (fig. 19), displays an extreme, almost minimal, austerity and formalism. It is a very ambitious and perfectly controlled hour-and-a-half sequence of over fifty silent *tableaux vivants*, separated by brief and equally silent blackouts. The scene, or rather scenes, takes place in a sparsely furnished office space, containing a centered table with five chairs, a couch at the right and a bench at the left. The furniture is plain, but so clean-cut and precisely placed that it sticks in the mind in an almost haunting way. Five lean young men in light shirts and dark pants enact different situations and confrontations reminiscent of numerous aspects of the bureaucratic world: the president of a company holding a conference with his board; relationships of boss and employee or office colleagues; interviews; waiting in antichambers of offices—the entire complex and dreary atmosphere of corporate routine. Some of the tableaux are brief

and totally motionless, some longer and entailing a sequence of slowly changing positions or moods.

In spite of the use of an old-fashioned genre and the almost pedantic neatness of presentation, Burton's work evades theatricality or triteness through an extreme economy of means, the extended silence (the performers wear soft-soled shoes) and an unreal smoothness of movement, reminiscent of slow-motion cinematography. In a way very unusual for contemporary art or theater performances, the spectator is kept at a distance, watching a remote world, like an underwater scene. But the coolness and intellectual elegance of the presentation do not conceal the quiet tragedy that emanates from this work.

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SCOTT BURTON

PERFORMANCE PIECES

ONE-MAN

Lecture on Myself, Oberlin, Allen Art Museum, May 5, and Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, April 10, 1973

Behavior Tableaux, New York City, Whitney Museum of American Art, April 19, and American Theatre Lab, October 27, 28, 29, 1972

"Eighteen Pieces by Scott Burton," New York City, Finch College, March 4, 1971

GROUP

Self-Portrait as a Modern American Artist with Cothurni and Ithyphallus, in "Persona," New York City, Artists Space, April 23-26, 1974

Furniture Landscape and Ten Tableaux, in "Two Evenings," Iowa City, University of Iowa, July 31 and August 5, 1970

Instructions, in "Art in the Mind," Oberlin, Allen Art Museum, April-May, 1970.

Thirty Compositions, in "Four Theater Pieces," Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, April 14, 1970

Five Theater Works, in "Theater Works," New York City, Hunter College, May 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 1969

Self-Works, in "Street Works I, II, III, IV," New York City, March 15, April 18, May 25, and Architectural League of New York, October 2-25, 1969

Born Eutaw, Alabama, 1939. Education: Hans Hofmann studio, Provincetown, summers, 1957-59; BA, Columbia University, 1962; MA, New York University, 1963

GRANTS

1973 National Endowment for the Arts, Visual Arts Program, Short-Term Activity Grant.

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Scott Burton, Behavior Tableau (1970-72) Whitney Museum of American Art.

with a table and four or five chairs at its center, a bare iron cot on the left and a public waiting-room bench on the right. The tableaux began and ended with the participants posed and immobile; there would be a blackout during which they would rearrange for the next tableau. Often there might be limited movement within a tableau, particularly the longer ones, but in many instances there was no movement at all. The performers were dressed very plainly in shirts and slacks with their hair drawn back; their faces were expressionless and the lighting was such that the eyes were usually obscured. The audience sat at the far end of the room.

Each section differed somewhat dramatically, but not visually, from the others and there was a loose kind of progression from a less to a more depressing atmosphere. In Section I, a number of the tableaux reveal casual, almost friendly groupings of the men. In Section II, they enter and leave the set, moving around it singly with excruciating slowness, while those seated slowly, almost imperceptibly, turn their faces away when someone passes. In Section III, the group divides four to one, the one always separate from, confronted by the four. Midway in this section there is a shift and the four are confronted, first as a group and then singly by the one. The obvious but unexplained confrontations or avoidances of confrontations result in a constantly growing and shifting sense of guilt and tension. Section IV, repeats, with some variation, the division of Section III. By Section V., everyone is completely separate, they enter singly and seat themselves equidistant from one another across the set, and in the final tableaux, each one is each time in a different chair.

More basic to the work than any dramatic content or sense of over-all structure, is Burton's imagery which he establishes immediately. The set, the appearance of his performers, their poses and movement establish a great sense of separation and distance in time and space. Visually the piece is particularly timeless, yet distinctly American, with strong references to the people of Hopper, Eugene O'Neill, or George Segal; they all share a still, unreachable quality and are ultimately isolated from each other and from the audience. The figures are anonymous, devoid of character or expression, except that attributed to them by their physical behavior. Their rigidity and containment is at once blank and abstract and intensely expressive of an increasing sense of despair and isolation. This kind of combined anguish and abstraction is very clear in a series of tableaux involving a single, immobile performer at the end of Section IV, but it is also present in the more naturalistic scenes, too. The quality of Burton's performers as they move differs from their immobility. Their movement is slow and regular thereby establishing another kind of timelessness: that of not knowing how long a particular motion is actually taking. Geometric and symmetrical, their mobility seems entirely unnatural, making the immobility all the more normal and final. The piece was somewhat too long, the tableaux did not vary enough to merit such length, although this too may have something to do with Burton's particular version of timelessness. It is, nonetheless, a very fine, complex piece and there remains quite a bit more to be said about it. (American Theatre Lab, Oct. 27, 28, 29)

using fabric as the vehicle for the ink, were the most interesting of Kr (Oct. 7-27)

Following Healy and two-woman show of WILLIAMS- and AGN showed two pieces, one, consisting of three enor about ten feet high and newspaper. The second conceptual, stemming from finding a note in a beach. The piece consists of glass jars, fifty containing by friends of the artist the sea after the exhibit many empty ones, are papered with innumera jars itself.

In the other half of the notebooks, graphs and vestigations. Two prints blots, while another piece x-rays of famous works of art, revealing the various layers of paint and the techniques used to make them. The most interesting piece was *Psychograph* in which about eleven artists answered a questionnaire which was then analyzed by one or two New York psychologists. All this was blown up and mounted on the wall, the analyses appearing at the bottom of each questionnaire. The artists were asked to complete sentences with beginnings like "Dreams are . . .", "My mind . . .", "My art . . .", "The future of art . . .", "It pains me when . . .", "My lover . . .", etc. Their responses were various: some were serious, some flip and amusing; others subversively used the beginnings as their completions and the last found the whole thing unanswerable. The variety of responses was revealing and entertaining and the analyses of the psychologists were pretentious and unintelligible enough to raise grave doubts about that group. (A.I.R., Oct. 28-Nov.17)

At the Barney Weinger Gallery, WALTER LENGSELDER exhibited about twenty medium to small-sized collages. Lengsfelder is

ARTS MAGAZINE/December-January 1973

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Jay Rosenblum	Blue Parrot
Sylvia Stone	Emmerich Downtown
Ann Healy, Louise Kramer	A. I. R.
Susan Lewis Williams,	
Agnes Denes	A. I. R.
Walter Lengsfelder	Weinger
William David Ridenhour	Elkon
Scott Burton	American Theater Lab

BY ROBERTA PANCOAST SMITH

colors tend to be very strong or bright: reds, pinks and yellows balanced by an occasional dark purple or green. Ridenhour lays on his color in a series of vertical stripes separated by thin lines of unpainted paper. The colors within each stripe are painterly and fluid in a way which suggests a looseness of control, but their positions are repeated regularly from stripe to stripe in a way which doesn't. The accuracy of the repetition and the regularity of the vertical stripes give a certain structure and geometry to Ridenhour's otherwise "lyrical" color and application, but the work is somewhat thin and undeveloped. (Robert Elkon, Nov. 4-30)

Behavior Tableaux, a performance piece by SCOTT BURTON, presented last spring at the Whitney, was performed twice nightly October 27, 28, and 29 at the American Theatre Lab. The piece consists of 70 tableaux *titants* of varying length (from several seconds to several minutes) presented in five sections by five male performers. The performers were John Smead, Charles Stanley, Carl Wilson, Terry Wilson, and Bruce Wolner, working in a stark, barren set

light and somewhat crammed, materials they used ceramic tile products. The titles such as *the Alchemists, Planet Long* stand out as titles. (Barney

OUR, a young now in this city denhour works white paper ed canvas. The

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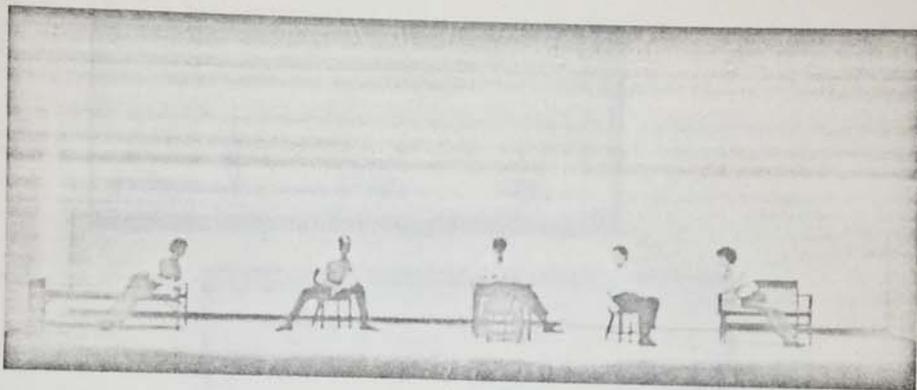
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## Scott Burton's



## *Behavior Tableaux* (1970-72)

By Ronald Argelander

Kinesic and proxemic behaviors are only two of many cross-referenced expressive means that convey information about situations. Because of this, communicative aspects of movement and position, like rules of language structure (grammar, syntax, etc.), have tended to remain "invisible," overshadowed by subject matter and other expressive means. This is not the case in Scott Burton's *Behavior Tableaux*, a five-part performance piece composed of approximately 80 silent tableaux vivants. Some tableaux, lasting only a few seconds, are static pictures exhibiting proxemic (spatial) relationships between interactants; others, lasting as long as five minutes, offer isolated elements of kinesic behavior (movement), which develop the scene beyond what could be conveyed by spatial relationships alone.

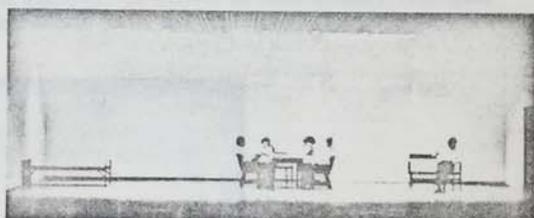
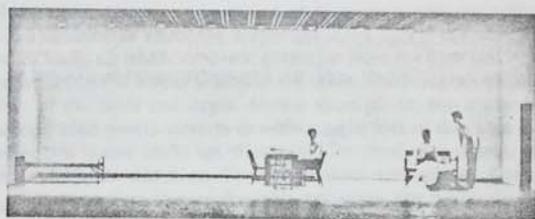
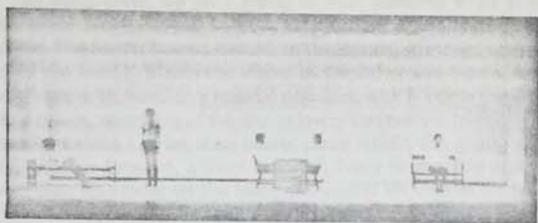
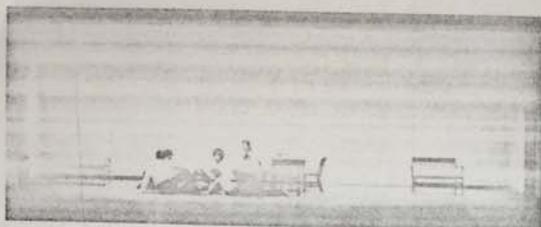
*Behavior Tableaux* is about how males relate to each other through "body language" and manipulations of "personal space" within five distinct group situations: the harmonious peer-group; the discordant peer-group; the group and leader; the group and outsider; and the "non-group." Instead of presenting each of these "scenes" explicitly, through costume, character, and scenery, Burton uses only the barest essentials of setting and personal appearance.

The amount of information generated by the personal appearance of the five male interactants is reduced to a minimum by eliminating facial color, expression, distinctive dress, and individuated movement: Hair is combed back, faces powdered lightly, eyebrows and other strong facial features erased lightly with makeup. Each man is dressed in dark slacks, dark shoes, and light button-up shirt; movement is uniformly slow and deliberate, as in a slow-motion film.

Information supplied by the setting is also minimal. The performing space, a plain white box-set with a small door in the right wall, suggests a shallow room. A bench, table and chairs, and bed-frame are placed evenly across the room in line with the

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door opening. At its first presentation, in a large painting and sculpture gallery in the Whitney Museum of American Art on April 19, 1972, a distance of about forty feet separated the first row of spectators from the shallow performing space, thus preventing any close examination of details, and eliminating the noise of stage movement. The photographs and descriptive material presented here are from that performance.<sup>1</sup>

It is impractical to describe every tableau. I have selected one long tableau and a sequence of four short tableaux from the third part, dealing with group-leader relationships, to illustrate the way in which "meaning" is created and modified through kinesic and proxemic behavior patterns.

The first of these illustrates a kinesic modification of the group expression from that of tension to that of relaxation, following the pattern of their leader. It is in seven stages. No blackouts were used to separate shifts in position.

<sup>1</sup>In subsequent performances of *Behavior Tableaux* at the American Theatre Lab (October 27-9, 1972), the physical scale of the work was reduced about a third, including the distance between the audience and performing area. Also, a number of tableaux were cut and rearranged.

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SCOTT BURTON'S BEHAVIOR TABLEAUX

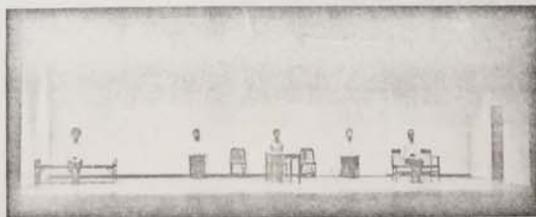
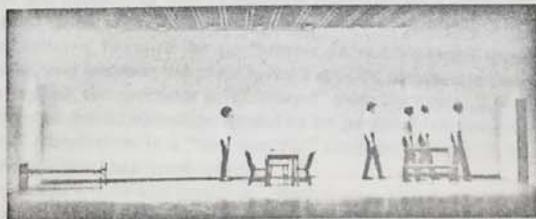
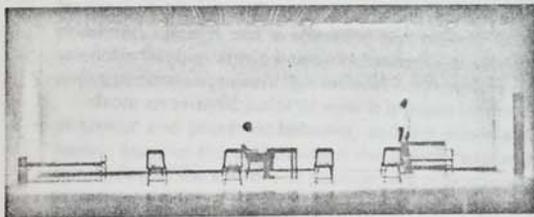
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The lights come up on a group of four standing stiffly at opposite sides of the table, while beside them, in front of the bench, the leader stands in a similar stiff position. The leader lowers himself to the bench, stretches one arm casually along the back of the bench, places the elbow of the other arm on the arm of the bench, then slowly lowers his head to a relaxed position, with his chin coming to rest on his hand. After a pause, members of the group lower themselves to sitting positions at the table, then slight shifts can be seen taking place within the group at the table: one leans back, another forward, a third turns his body to the side and stretches out a leg, a fourth puts his elbow on the table and places his chin in his hand. One by one they exhibit variations on the specific bodily expressions initiated by their leader until the whole group arrives at a configuration expressing relaxation.

The second example, a section composed of four short tableaux separated by blackouts, depicts a situation in which the leader sits at the side of the table facing the doorway, and either looks up when someone enters, or does not look up.

The lights come up on the leader seated at the table. The first man enters, crosses to within four feet of the table and stops. After a short pause, the leader looks up. Blackout. The second man enters, crosses to within eight feet of the table and stops. After a long pause, the leader looks up. Blackout. The third man enters, crosses to within eight feet of the table and stops. The leader does not look up. Blackout. The last man enters, takes a few steps toward the table and stops. The leader does not look up.

It would seem, from these examples, that there is not much to look at in *Behavior Tableaux*. And, on one informational level, this impression is accurate: Very few



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"hard" facts are presented about the situations; also, the behavior patterns used to convey the group relationships are common knowledge not only to sociologists and psychologists but to directors and actors as well. But, if each tableau were broken down into its respective internal micro-relationships, as in microkinetic stop-action film studies, a whole range of material presents itself for examination. The following partial breakdown of internal kinesic and proxemic relationships in the second tableau described, illustrates what I mean:

Lights up

Leader seated at desk—looks down—alone

Leader seated at desk—looks down—man enters room—

Leader seated at desk—looks down—man approaches table—

Leader seated at desk—looks down—man stops 4' from table—

Leader seated at desk—looks down—man stands waiting—

Leader seated at desk—looks up —man looks at leader

Blackout

At each step of this tableau a different set of possibilities for movement and meaning is presented; with each successive step, previous possibilities are eliminated and new ones generated. For example, the man at the table can remain alone or be joined by others. A man entering the room, eliminates the first possibility and sets others in motion: they can ignore or acknowledge each other; the seated man can stand or look up or remain seated; the other can approach, remain by the door or take any position in the room. In approaching the table directly, the man acknowledges the seated figure and limits other movement possibilities. It remains to be seen where in relationship to the seated figure he positions himself, and whether or not the seated man will stand, look up, or ignore him, and so forth.

No startling information is uncovered about the behavior patterns between leader and his subordinate; nor are there any revelations concerning kinesics or proxemics. This is not a scientific experiment, but rather performance art using scientific findings about human behavior as its subject matter. It presents the viewer with a performance event that induces contemplation of interactional phenomena.

From an analytic point of view it is important not only to examine the principles of kinesic and proxemic behavior, and the information conveyed through such behavior, but also the way in which the artist's "expressive means" affects the viewer's perception of the event. The position and movement of each element becomes more important the less it is correlated by supportive information. Any slight shift, addition, or deletion of an element of expressive means, may suddenly make the meaning more, or less explicit, or may completely transform the meaning communicated by the "scene." Thus, attention to detail is intensified by reducing information input.

Furthermore, because the performers do not represent specific characters, or themselves, and because the place is not a specific locale, and the situations are only vaguely explicit, the spectator is "distanced" from the event. A tension is created because many of the relationships appear to be personal, yet are presented by "depersonalized" interactants in a "non-specific" situation. Interest is maintained through detachment rather than involvement.

Movement is slow and repetitive; there is enough time for the viewer to contemplate each individual element of the configurations. The viewer has time to reflect on the relationship between movements and configurations and the meaning they

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SCOTT BURTON'S BEHAVIOR TABLEAUX

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convey, and to speculate about how a specific move further changes the meaning. The viewer can examine the details of walking, sitting, or turning a head, or contemplate the formal patterns of a repetitive action, such as the entrances and exits of the performers through the darkened doorway, and so forth.

*Behavior Tableaux* is reflective art, and, as in all reflective art, it is about its subject matter only insofar as it stimulates contemplation in the viewer. This does not mean that the material presented is not important, but that it is only part of what is actually happening during the performance. By using staging techniques that minimize the information presented about potentially explicit interactional situations, and other techniques that slow down the movement, Burton places the viewer in a position of having to work mentally in order to make the performance meaningful. It is not so important that the viewer absorb information about the interactional situations presented, but that he *think* about them—contribute something to them.

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Appendix I: Chronology of Workspace Projects and Selected Reviews

To date The Institute for ART AND URBAN RESOURCES has successfully sponsored the following low-cost projects:

1971 Brooklyn Bridge Event : The docks and lots beneath the Brooklyn Bridge were cleaned up and used for an important sculpture exhibition and series of outdoor theatre performances. Budget \$8,000

1972 Bleecker Street/Bowery Warehouses: Abandoned and partially burned warehouses were salvaged for artists' studios, sculpture exhibitions and performance series (see Grace Gleuck, "Brightening Up the Bowery", New York Times, July 1972 and Barbara Rose, "More About the Care and Feeding of the Artist", New York Magazine, August 1972). Budget \$20,000

1972 Coney Island Sculpture Factory: An empty factory was reopened for artists' fabrication of large scale sculptures.

1972 80th Precinct Building, Brooklyn: Top floors of a police station were re-used for artists' studio spaces (see Gerald F. Lieberman, "Police Station Aiding Arts", New York Times, December 1972).

1973 Clocktower, Lower Manhattan: The top floor and clocktower of a municipal office building were renovated and opened as a solo exhibition center, artists' studios and IAUR administrative offices (see Peter Schieldahl, "The Avant-garde Has an Outpost in the Sky", New York Times, June 1973; Thomas B. Hess, "Private Faces in Public Places", New York Magazine, June 1973; Stephanie Edens, "Alternative Spaces", Art in America, November 1973). Budget \$45,000

1974-75 Idea Warehouse, Lower Manhattan: Along with the Coney Island, Bowery and Clocktower projects, Iaur opened a center for experimental performance on empty floors of a city owned storage depot slated for demolition (see Joan La Barbara, "Philip Glass Ensemble Inaugurates the Idea Warehouse", Soho Weekly News, January 1975; John Rockwell, "Music in Twelve Parts", New York Times, February 1975).

Budget \$89,000

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Appendix I (cont.)

1976 Project Studios One (P.S.1), Long Island City, Queens: The oldest public school in Queens, constructed in the 19th century, was saved from demolition through conversion into a work center for contemporary artists, including studio, special project, group exhibition and performance spaces. It is the largest artists' facility of its kind in the U.S. The City estimated \$1,500,000. for renovation. IAUR succeeded in reopening the building for 1/10th of the cost, \$150,000. (see Amei Wallach, "A School of Studios, P.S.1 Becomes an Art Colony", Newsday, June 1976; Roberta Gratz, "The Artful Reincarnation of P.S.1, Queens", New York Post, June 1976; Grace Glueck, "Abandoned School in Queens Lives Again as Arts Complex", New York Times, June 1976; John Russell, "An Unwanted School in Queens Becomes an Ideal Art Center", New York Times, June 1976; Nancy Foote, "The Apotheosis of the Crummy Space", Artforum, October 1976; Thomas B. Hess, "Across the River and Into P.S.1", New York Magazine, April 1977; Phil Patton, "Other Voices, Other Rooms: The Rise of the Alternative Art Spaces", Art in America, July 1977; Kay Larson, "Rooms with a Point of View", Artnews, October 1977). Budget \$317,000

1978 Street Museum, Midtown Manhattan: Five adjacent gutted storefronts on Eighth Ave. (54th & 55th Sts.) will be rebuilt into works of art by five nationally known artists. All five artists share common concerns with aesthetic statements through the alteration of existing architectural forms. All the works will be on view from the street (see Project Description and Citibank Grant Request, 20th CENTURY RUINS/THE REBUILT ENVIRONMENT, and Calvin Tompkins, "Space", New Yorker, April 1978).

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Appendix II: Recognition

Institutional: Since 1975 ART AND URBAN RESOURCES has received the largest grant in the state given by the Visual Arts Program of the New York State Council on the Arts. ART AND URBAN RESOURCES was the first visual arts organization in the U.S. to receive grants simultaneously from the Visual, Museum, City Spirits, and Architecture and Environmental Arts programs of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Civic: January 1978, Mayor Edward Koch chose P.S.1 for the Queens Borough Inaugural Reception, stating that "P.S.1 is living proof of the initiative of the City's visual artists and the vitalizing impact that an arts institution can make on a community". Mrs. Joan Mondale visited P.S.1, May 1977, and subsequently wrote, "P.S.1 will serve as a model for people all around the country". May 1978, IAUR was awarded the Citation of Merit by the Municipal Arts Society in recognition of its programs in Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan.

Artistic: The level of artistic quality has been broadly recognized by art critics and museum professionals. Major coverage has been accorded many of the exhibitions:

- 1973 "My vote for the most perfect show of the season is in an old Clocktower, New York's new art center."  
Thomas B. Hess, New York Magazine
- 1974 "IAUR is a determined patron of young vanguard artists. It is currently offering the first public showing of drawings and sculpture. The works are a delight and well worth the climb to the Clocktower."  
D. Davis, Newsweek
- 1975 "Phil Glass' "Music in Twelve Parts" is being performed in a series of four concerts at the Idea Warehouse. Mr. Glass has summed up his whole idiom and the result is breathtaking."  
John Rockwell, New York Times
- 1976 "ROOMS" Exhibition at P.S.1 voted most important art exhibition of the year by Village Voice and Soho Weekly News.
- 1977 "Robert Ryman's exhibition at P.S.1 is a remarkable display of eloquent paintings in one of our city's most dazzling exhibition spaces."  
John Russell, New York Times
- 1978 "Work by artists at Project Studios One has won it a worldwide reputation."  
Amei Wallach, Newsday

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Appendix II (cont.)

- 1971 Philip Glass first performed in conjunction with IAUR.
- 1976 Philip Glass' composition for "Einstein on the Beach" was premiered at the Metropolitan Opera.
- 1973 Richard Tuttle had a one person exhibition at the Clocktower.
- 1976 Richard Tuttle had a one person show at the Whitney Museum.
- 1978 IAUR received all three nominations by Soho Weekly News for the best exhibitions outside of a museum: 2 for P.S.1, 1 for the Clocktower.