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P R E S S R E L E A S E

For immediate release

For more information,
Contact Tom Finkelpearl
212-233-1096

PARTICIPATORY ART AT THE CLOCKTOWER MAY 9- JUNE 15.

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc
The Clocktower
108 Leonard Street
New York, NY 10013
212 233-1096

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

The Institute for Art and Urban Resources announces the opening of "Engaging Objects: The Participatory Art of Mirrors, Mechanisms, and Shelters" at the Clocktower Gallery. The exhibition will open with a public reception on Friday, May 9, 6:00-8:00 pm and will run through June 15, 1986. Gallery hours at the Clocktower are Thursday-Sunday, 12:00-6:00 pm. Admission is free.

"Engaging Objects," organized by Clocktower Coordinator, Tom Finkelpearl, is an exhibition that requires the active participation of the viewer. The audience will interact with computer generated video images, climb into a mirrored face, create music through the manipulation of a sonic pinball game, and so on. The work ranges in medium from mirrors, to video, to environmental sculpture, to mechanical art: from very high-tech to low tech. But all of the work shares one unusual characteristic: the viewer must participate in a very literal sense to complete the work.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a catalogue with photographs of each artist's work and an essay by the curator. Artists in the show are:

Vito Acconci	Liz Phillips
Bill and Mary Buchen	Aimee Rankin
Marylin Gottlieb-Roberts	Howard Rosenthal
Wenda Habenicht	Gail Rothschild
Myron Krueger	David Schafer
Philomena Marano	Buky Schwartz
Dean McNeil	James Seawright
Gary Martin	Robert Smithson
Nam June Paik	Art Spellings

Along with the exhibition, there will be three open studios: an installation by Ladd Kessler and Peggy Yunque, an installation by Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel, and a set of kinetic machines by Steve Barry. These studios will be open during gallery hours.

The Clocktower's facility is owned by the City of New York and its programs are supported in part with a grant from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Funding for this exhibition was received from the David Barmant Foundation.

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Art: 7

By MICHAEL

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1986

Art: 'Engaging Objects,' Audience Participation in Cultural Zoo

By MICHAEL BRENSON

ENGAGING OBJECTS: The Participatory Art of Mirrors, Mechanisms and Shelters" is one of the more unusual shows of the season. The subject is what Tom Finkelpearl, the coordinator of the Clocktower Gallery and curator of the exhibition, calls "audience-activated" art. What this means is art that is set in motion by our physical presence or movement — like sitting on it, talking into it, rocking it or wearing it.

The show is like a cultural zoo. Dean McNeil's vacuum cleaners lie inside a cage writhing like snakes and grinding like a pneumatic drill. Turning the switch of Aimee Rankin's music box theater called "Bliss" is the signal for lights, smells and opera. Bill and Mary Buchen's "Sonic Maze" is a homemade pinball machine in which the ball bounces off xylophones and bells. Activating Nam June Paik's video screen means making noises into microphones. The exhibition definitely does not offer the hallowed silence of a museum.

One of the aims of the show is to suggest the number of artists interested in engaging the audience in what they see as a more direct and equal way than traditional painting and sculpture. "The invitation to participate," Finkelpearl writes in the catalogue, should make viewers

"more aware of the uniqueness and subjectivity of their response to the work."

"Within parameters set by the artist," he says, "the viewer becomes a creative force, discovering and inventing a work for himself."

There are 18 artists in all. Robert Smithson is represented by a 1964 kinetic piece. Vito Acconci's "Stretched Facade" — one of several works using mirrors — consists of a large face shaped like a funhouse boat with seats in the mouth and eyes. Accompanying the show, in an almost-adjacent gallery, there are works by Stephen Barry, one of Clocktower's studio residents. In his "Sirens" we whiz back and forth in a chair, overlooking a whirlpool-like maze, listening to siren-like sounds and looking at two modern-day sirens, a young man and woman, beckoning with their eyes and puckering their lips on screens in front of us.

The piece that Finkelpearl describes as the most "technically sophisticated" is Myron W. Krueger's "Interactive Environment." It is a computer-based work in which our image activates visual and audio programs on a screen and speakers. As we move our fingers through space, we create images and sounds. In one of the programs, called "Critic," a creaturely presence appears alongside us on the screen. We can move it about and make it jump, but we can not catch or control it.

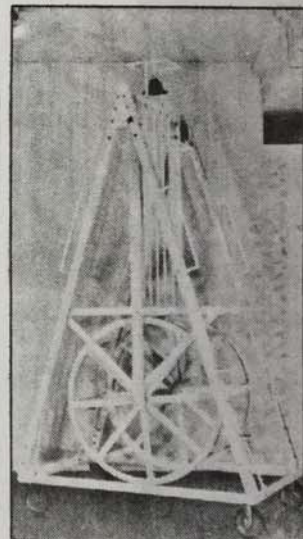
The problem with the show lies in the claims that are made for it. Before Modernism, and even in most modernist art apart from Minimalism and Formalism, artists worked with a sympathetic understanding of the needs of the public. From the beginning of the century many artists have been fascinated at one time or another by the idea of a more perfect union between art and viewer. To suggest that serious artistic consideration of the public is new, or to argue that physical participation can establish a relationship with the public that is more honest, more complete and more respectful of its "uniqueness and subjectivity" does not make a lot of sense.

What the show reveals is that art depending upon our physical participation in order to function tends to have little imaginative substance. As entertaining and clever as the objects in this exhibition are, they tend to stop the imagination, not inspire it. The most engaging objects are those that do not depend upon our physical involvement. Like some of Mark di Suvero's sculptures, Wenda Habernicht's "Shy Man's Throne" and David Schafer's "Folly" are both sculptures on which we can swing. Both have a scale that makes us want to swing on them in the first place.

Liz Phillips's sound installation, "Sound Syzygy" — which with Buky Schwartz's video-and-sculpture installation called "Pink Roof" makes

the upstairs gallery the most effective corner of the show — fills up space like sculpture. It picks up sounds — all sounds — through sensors and turns them into beeps and pings and music. Because of the way it makes us aware of space, aware of our relation to a particular space and aware of sound as something that affects us whether or not we hear it, it is the most effective piece in the show.

The exhibition, sponsored in part by the David Bermant Foundation, is at the Clocktower, 108 Leonard Street, through June 15. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 12 to 6 P.M.



David Schafer's sculpture, "Folly," upon which a visitor can swing, at the Clocktower Gallery.

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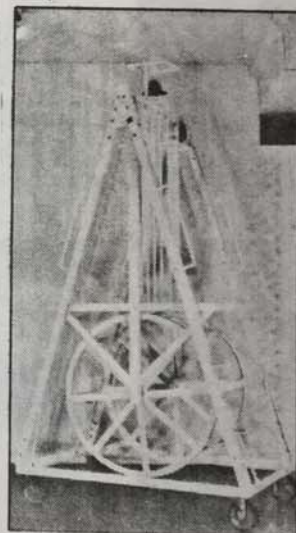
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David Schafer's sculpture, "Folly," upon which a visitor can swing, at the Clocktower Gallery.



Myron Krueger (and collaborator): Videoplacement (1972-86)

STEVEN RUBIN

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VOICE

the village

14133 • VV PUBLISHING CORPORATION

VOL. XXXI NO. 25 • THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF NEW YORK • JUNE 24, 1986 • \$1.00

BY KIM LEVIN

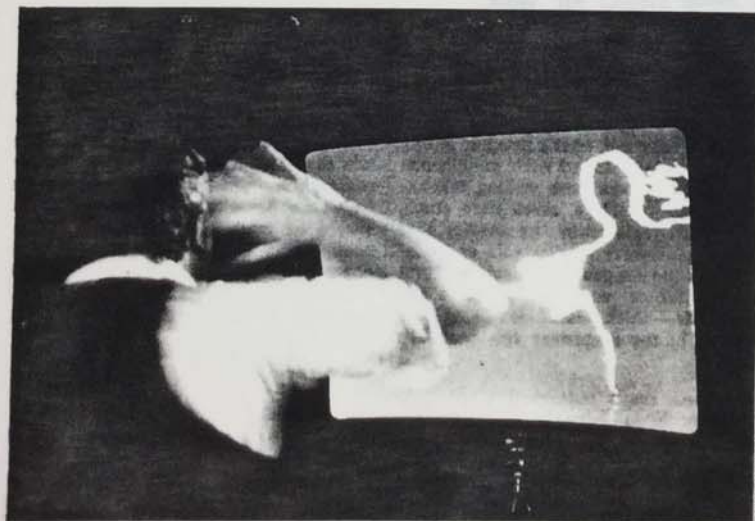
At the Clocktower (108 Leonard Street, closed) an unwieldy group show with the unwieldy title of "Engaging Objects: The Participatory Art of Mirrors, Mechanisms, and Shelters" was as full of noise, activity, and distraction—and delight in technological feats both high and low—as Gormley's art is silent, concentrated, and resistant. "Discovering a new relationship with an alienated audience has been a major preoccupation in the art of the twentieth century," writes curator Tom Finkelpearl in the catalogue essay. He wants to contradict Huizinga, whom he quotes on the "dumb and immobile" quality of visual art. This is a show of "interactive" art that required viewers to participate: the art waits for you to complete it and give it life (speaking of phenomenology), and will try anything to get you involved.

Mere presence (and a photoelectric relay switch) activated Jones & Ginzel's quivering outer-space tableau out in the corridor, and also Dean McNeil's vacuum cleaners in a cage, which shook and growled when you got too near. Climbing into the seats of Vito Acconci's mirrored face/facade completed that relatively passive piece. A flick of the switch set Gary Martin's abstract sculptures spinning, creating illusory figural shapes. Buky Schwartz's open construction of steel rods played with optical tricks too: you could walk through but on the video monitors it locked you into a cubic illusion. Some works required two viewers: Wenda Habenicht's seesawing cabins;

ART

James Seawright's *Dual Mirror*. Others involved sound. Bill and Mary Buchen's sonic pinball machine allowed you to make music while you played; Aimee Rankin's Madame Butterfly box, like a miniature opera, made music for you. And Nam June Paik's *Participation TV* from 1969 translated the sounds of your voice into visual patterns.

Myron Krueger's *Videoplace*, with a repertoire of 16 different computerized programs, was the showstopper. It let you enter and become part of a giant video game in which you—or rather your vivid video silhouette on a large screen monitor—could draw and erase green lines with a finger, or make echoing angel wings with an arm, or manipulate images in other ways. You could play with your own tiny bouncing silhouette or make tunes (each finger sounds a different note), or bounce a "kritter" back and forth like a ball as well as crush it between your hands. Every time you stepped offscreen, the program changed and so did the rules of the visual game. Exploding video kritters may not make you question the human condition, and I tend to agree with Alanna Heiss, who comments in her catalogue introduction, "art should not expect me to crank it up or ride it," but this show's crazy mixture of science museum and art arcade was pure end-of-the-season fun. ■

Myron Krueger (and collaborator): *Videoplace* (1972-86)

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VOL. XXXI NO. 24 • THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF NEW YORK • JUNE 17, 1986 • \$1.00

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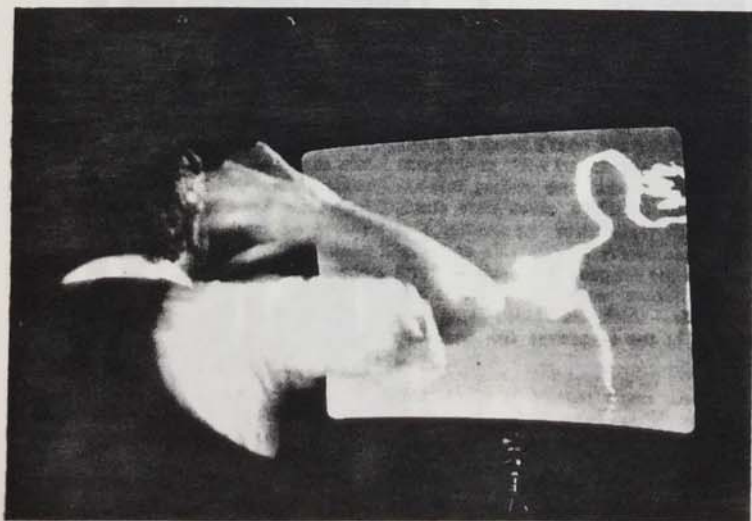
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14133 • VV PUBLISHING CORPORATION

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Myron Krueger (and collaborator): *Videoplace* (1972-86)

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Arc." the sculpture that stands just one block

New York Newsday

EDITION

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1986 • 25 CENTS

AKING PART IN

DOWNTOWN ART



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By Karin Lipson

Climb into a giant, mirrored mouth. Get seduced by a Greek siren. Drive a vacuum cleaner crazy. Above all, involve yourself in art. That's the message from "Engaging Objects," running tonight through June 15 at the Clocktower Gallery in downtown Manhattan.

Clocktower coordinator Tom Finkelpearl has brought together work by 23 artists that requires our active participation. We can interact with computer-generated video images (including a multi-movement "critter" that makes Pac-Man look positively stodgy), create music on a sonic pinball game, activate an opera by the flick of a switch. We can swing, ring and teeter-totter. Selections run the gamut from high-tech electronics through low-tech mechanics to playground-tech seesaw, but they share one common denominator: us.

Despite its often playful tone, the show has been organized by Finkelpearl with an eye toward some serious — if hardly novel — concerns about art. (Although these aren't overtly addressed in the show, they are explored in the accompanying catalog.) Just how close should the relationship be between art and the viewer be? How can art best involve us, break down our barriers of distance and misunderstanding?

Finkelpearl is especially concerned about art in public sites, such as Richard Serra's "Tilted

Arc," the sculpture that stands just one block south of the Clocktower and that has sparked some heated controversy. However controversial, Finkelpearl says, "is not the worst thing. The worst thing is indifference. And the works in this show guarantee a response."

Whether or not this show answers the knotty questions Finkelpearl raises, there's no doubt on one score: We can't walk through his show and remain indifferent.

We get right into the hot seat provided by artist Steve Barry, thereby setting off his seductive "The Sirens," inspired by Greek myth. As the seat rotates from side to side, we see two video screens, each filled with the image of a modern-day "siren" — one male, the other female, both movie-star (better yet, rock-star) beautiful — who sing to us, whisper, cajole and lure us, via twin speakers. There's a helpless feeling about being whisked back and forth between them, as they relentlessly continue their siren songs.

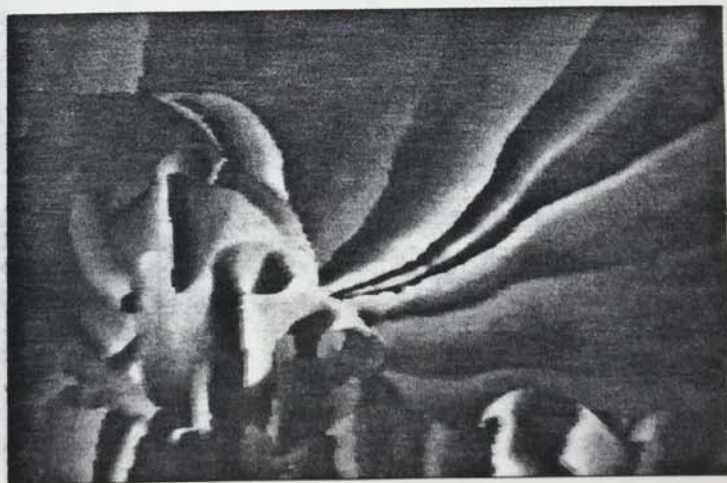
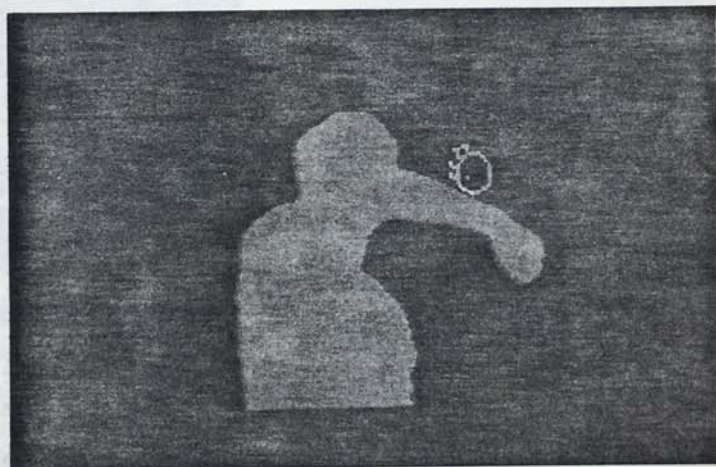
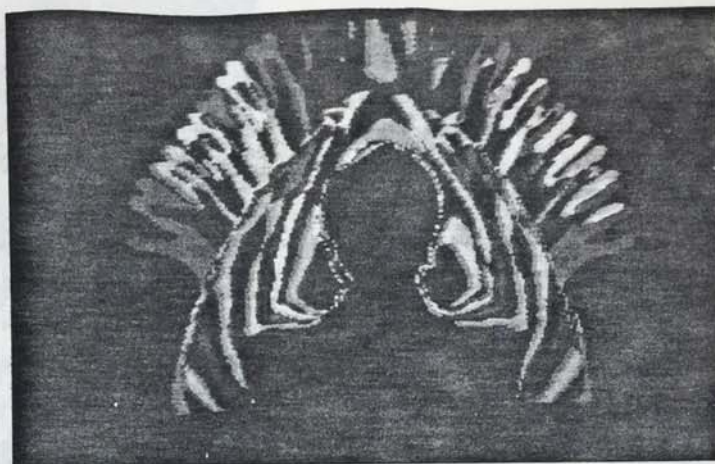
Barry will surely stir up mixed reactions with another piece that's even more explicit about seduction and loss of control. His "Circe" is a fibrous glass witch, sitting atop a tent-like structure made of steel pipes and clear vinyl. (Like all Barry's pieces, this one is made mostly of discarded objects picked up by the artist.) As we sit in front of this contraption, Circe's legs open wide, along with the vinyl sheath; we're confronted with a mirror, in which our face is quickly obliterated by the face of a pig.

Indeed, mirrors figure prominently in the show.



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Philomena Marano's 'Seawolf' is a takeoff on video games, in this case a submarine game whose frame is painted with kitschy marine creatures in a goofily attractive turquoise sea.

Vito Acconci, widely known for work that requires viewer participation, is represented here by an elegant, mirrored shelter called "Stretched Facade." Looking like an abstracted face, it has eyes and a mouth that invite the viewer to enter. (Note the comfortable padding inside.) With its undulating surface in which our reflection takes on crazy shapes, Acconci's piece manages to look at once like sleek sculpture and a carnival funhouse.

There's more carnival-type gadgetry here. Bill and Mary Buchen's "Sonic Maze" is a pinball machine on which, as its makers note, "you don't keep score, you play the score"; its components are miniature percussion instruments like xylophones, jingle bells, even a Cuisinart blade, which create musical sounds when hit by the pinball. (The "mu-

Vito Acconci's elegant, mirrored shelter, 'Stretched Facade,' left, resembles an abstracted face, with eyes and a mouth that invite the viewer to enter. It reminds one of both sleek sculpture and a carnival funhouse.

sic" can be rather tame if you don't exert just the right pressure to send the ball flying.)

And Philomena Marano's "Seawolf" is a takeoff on video games, in this case a submarine-type of game whose frame is painted with kitschy marine creatures in a turquoise sea. Though its surface is goofily attractive, an interior component, seen through the periscope, falls a bit flat.

Finkelpearl is a fan of mechanical and electronic art, of which there's a good deal in this show. Watch out when you come in; walking into the main gallery, you may break a light beam, involuntarily activating two caged vacuum cleaners; thus goaded, they go into a frenzy of noise and activity, even writhing on the floor. Dean McNeil is the artist responsible for this episode of domestic dither.

Our voice patterns appear on TV as colored images in video artist Nam June Paik's "Participation T. V." And we show up on TV, moving in and out of a cube shape projected on the screen, in an intriguing installation by Buky Schwartz. Using the laws of perspective and a TV camera, Schwartz manages to transpose the lines and angles of large steel pipes into the projected image of the cube. As we see ourselves darting in and out of the TV cube, we become part of Schwartz' tantalizing bit of video trickery.

The most technically sophisticated of the video pieces is the "Interactive Environment" of Myron Krueger, an engineer whose work has been more recognized in the scientific community than in the art world. Here, we stand facing a video camera and a large-screen video monitor, which connect to a computer with several video programs. As we move, our image creates a kaleidoscope of colors and patterns in some programs. In another, a video "critter" is born, a little blob of activity that can climb up our silhouetted arm, sit on our head or in our hand, occasionally falling off and "exploding" on the bottom of the screen.

Given all the sound and fury in the show, some of the quiet pieces come as a welcome respite. Notable is Gail Rothschild's construction of branches, twigs and rice paper, with its elements of Oriental contemplation, and David Schafer's pale pink 12-foot-high swing with a paddle-wheel. Ladd Kessler and Peggy Yunque have also created a soundless environment, a room converted to a mock-Gothic castle, complete with gargoyles. Aimee Rankin's mixed-media assemblage in a box includes lights, smells and sound; but since the sound is a scene from Puccini's "Madame Butterfly," we're not complaining.

"Engaging Objects: The Participatory Art of Mirrors, Mechanisms and Shelters" opens with a public reception tonight, 6 to 8 p.m., at the Clocktower Gallery, 108 Leonard St. ((212) 233-1096). Regular gallery hours are Thursday through Sunday, noon to 6 p.m.

Country estate houses and castles of Britain are featured in "The Architect and the British Country House 1620-1920," a show of original drawings and watercolors at the National Academy of Design, today through June 29. Highlights include the influential 17th-Century Palladian buildings of Inigo Jones, the Restoration designs of Sir Christopher Wren, the neo-Classical designs of Robert Adam, and the great country houses designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens at the end of World War I.

The National Academy of Design is at 1083 Fifth Ave. For more information, call (212) 369-4880. ■

In Myron Krueger's 'Interactive Environment,' a screen shows images produced by a video camera and monitor connected to a computer. Movements of viewers create a kaleidoscope of patterns. Top, a program called 'Individual Medley.' Center, 'Critic' creates a video bug that can climb a viewer's silhouetted arm. Bottom, 'Body Surfing.'

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 1986
Contact: Mary Ann Pierce

The Clocktower's Concert Series Presents "New Solo Virtuoso"

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Dates and Times:	Friday, April 25, 9pm
	Saturday, April 26, 9pm
	Sunday, April 27, 3pm
Program: April 25:	David Tudor, tables full of electronics Susan Stenger, flute music of John Cage and others
April 26:	"Blue" Gene Tyranny, extraordinary keyboards Shelly Hirsch, vocal pyrotechnics
April 27:	Jerome Cooper, centrifugal percussionist Ben Neill, with his amazing "mutant trumpet"

On the weekend of April 25-27, The Clocktower will host a festival of solo virtuoso performers. Six artists, well-known for extending their instruments' physical range and compositional implications will be featured. Flute, trumpet, percussion, keyboards, vocals and live electronics will be pushed to the limits during this weekend of very live music.

The series kicks off with David Tudor, a founding father of live electronic music and an exciting innovator of it. Mr. Tudor, giving a rare solo performance at The Clocktower, will employ a table strewn with assorted electronic gizmos. Tudor is well-known for his collaborations with John Cage, The Merce Cunningham Dance Company and his huge electroacoustic installations such as "Rainforest." Susan Stenger will perform John Cages's "Solo for Flute, from Concert for Piano and Orchestra," Christian Wolff's "Edges" and a new work of her own. A former member of the SEM Ensemble, Stenger has performed widely, premiering works by Petr Kotik, Phill Niblock and Jackson

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Maclow.

One of America's best loved piano virtuosos, "Blue" Gene Tyranny has garnered accolades for his work with Robert Ashley in the opera-for-television "Perfect Lives (Private Parts)," his music for the dance group "Timothy Buckley and the Troublemakers," his playing in the Love of Live Orchestra and his solo performance. Tyranny will present "The Country Boy Country Dog Intro" and "Out Beyond The Last Divide -- Part 1: A Letter From Home," works for electronic keyboards with pre-recorded tape. Also on Saturday, Shelley Hirsch will dazzle the audience with her vocal pyrotechnics that left one critic describing her as "Homer meets Yma Sumac."

On Sunday afternoon, Jerome Cooper, "Master Drummer" if ever there was one, will shake The Clocktower with his drums and balaphones. Cooper has performed with Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Steve Lacy, Sam Rivers, Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton and The Art Ensemble of Chicago. Cooper was a founder of The Revolutionary Ensemble. His concert will demonstrate why Chip Stern dubbed him "Mr. Centrifugal Force." Opening for Cooper will be trumpeter Ben Neill. Neill has performed in New York for the past five years, championing the music of Rhys Chatham, David Behrman, Petr Kotik and LaMonte Young. His concert will feature his composition for the mutantrumpet, a three-belled instrument of his own design, with an electronic processing system designed and built by Rober Moog.

The New Solo Virtuoso festival has been organized by Jerry Lindahl and Nicolas Collins, sound/music curators for P.S. 1 and The Clocktower. This music series was made possible by a grant from the New York State Council for the Arts.

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The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784 2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Please include in your listings:

THE CLOCKTOWER'S CONCERT SERIES presents
"NEW SOLO VIRTUOSO"

at The Clocktower
108 Leonard St.
New York, NY 10013

Dates and Times: Friday, April 25, 9pm
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Susan Stenger, flute music of John Cage
and others

April 26th: "Blue" Gene Tyranny, extraordinary keyboards
Shelley Hirsch, vocal pyrotechnics

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Ben Neill, with his amazing "mutant trumpet"

The "New Solo Virtuoso" festival is curated and organized
by Jerry Lindahl and Nicolas Collins.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1986

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C23

Pop/Jazz

Electronic And Jazz Solo Gigs

By JON PARELES

Shelley Hirsch plans to perform free improvisations using the Clocktower itself — particularly its spiral staircase, she said — as a source of ideas. Miss Hirsch has remarkable range and technique, with Western and non-Western sounds (including glottal stops and microtonal ornaments) at her disposal. The keyboardist Blue Gene Tyranny, who can toss off bluesy cocktail piano or pointillistic 20th-century compositions, will play two of his own pieces for electronic keyboards and prerecorded tapes, including "The Country Boy Country Dog Intro."

Sunday at 3 P.M., the drummer Jerome Cooper will play another of the solo concerts he has given periodically since the late 1970's, mixing minimalistic melodies on African balaphon (xylophone) with slowly evolving drum rhythms. And the trumpeter Ben Neill will bring music for the instrument he invented, the three-belled "mutantrumpet." He will also use an electronic system designed by Robert Moog, the synthesizer innovator.

"A solo concert is a risky kind of performance," said Shelley Hirsch. "You're going for moment-to-moment things. I rely on a lot of associations, on narrative and musical connections. When it works, you hit a certain point and then everything comes pouring out — if I can just find that opening, it will be good. And I really enjoy taking the risk."

Music at a Bargain

The "New Solo Virtuoso" series at the Clocktower, 108 Leonard Street (233-1096), brings together jazz and 20th-century classical music at a bargain price — tickets for each show are only \$1. Tonight at 9, the composer David Tudor will create a solo from a "table strewn with assorted electronic gizmos," and the flutist Susan Stenger will perform her own piece for flute and electronic delay along with compositions by John Cage and Christian Wolff that use different kinds of "indeterminacy" — open-ended directions by the composer that are completed by the performer. Tomorrow at 9 P.M., the singer



In town this weekend are, clockwise from top left: Josef Zawinul, at Carnegie Hall tomorrow; Jerome Cooper, in the New Solo Virtuoso series at the Clocktower on Sunday; and David Tudor and Shelley Hirsch, also at the Clocktower, tonight and tomorrow night, respectively.



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the village VOICE

VOL. XXXI NO. 17 • THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF NEW YORK • APRIL 29, 1986 • \$1.00

*The New Solo Virtuoso
concerts at
The Clocktower*

108 LEONARD STREET
NEW YORK NY 10013
212.233.1440



APRIL 25, 9PM
DAVID TUDOR
SUSAN STENGER

APRIL 26, 9PM
"BLUE" GENE TYRANNY
SHELLEY HIRSCH

APRIL 27, 3PM
JEROME COOPER
BEN NEILL

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VOICE APRIL 29, 1986

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STATEN ISLAND SUNDAY ADVANCE ■ SUNDAY, MAY 11, 1986 Punch 21

Project Studios offers 'combination platter'



Tullia Limarzi

DANCE

Like the combination platter at a new restaurant, a program of dances by several different choreographers is a convenient and often gratifying way to taste and test the unfamiliar. An exceptionally good opportunity for such sampling is available now during the Spring Dance Program of the Project Studios (P.S. 1).

Not only does P.S. 1 showcase the rising stars of post-modern dance, but it unites each season around a provocative theme. This year's series, which began yesterday and continues each Saturday and Sunday through June 12 is entitled "Shared and Borrowed Images — Cross Cultural Influences on Contemporary Dance."

Dancer and choreographer Blondell Cummings, who organized the series together with dance critic Joan Acocella, came up with the cross-cultural focus. "I have traveled a lot on tour," she explains. "And I know I've been influenced by other cultures. I thought it might be interesting to choose a topic that could further promote this type of exploration."

For some of the artists participating in the current season cross-cultural interaction is integral to their work. Muna Tseng is showing a dance in which a cast of Asians, Europeans and Americans exchange cultural identities. The Urban Bush Women explore the African influences in American urban society. Ze'eva Cohen dances to traditional Sephardic songs.

Other choreographers in the series will be exploring particular formal or aesthetic concepts from other cultures. Renee Rockoff, inspired by the Northern Plains Indians who record time by reference to a single memorable event, has made a meditation on the experiential marking of time. Mark Dendy will offer a group work merging Appalachian rhythms, steps, hymns, and stories with post modern dance structures. Betsy Hulton has created an ensemble with movements and groupings inspired by religious painting of the Italian Middle Ages and Renaissance.

"I hope the whole idea of cross-cultural dance will be defined and redefined during the duration of the festival," says Cummings. "The series should make both the artist and the audience aware of how many different types of experiences we are exposed to in the world today."

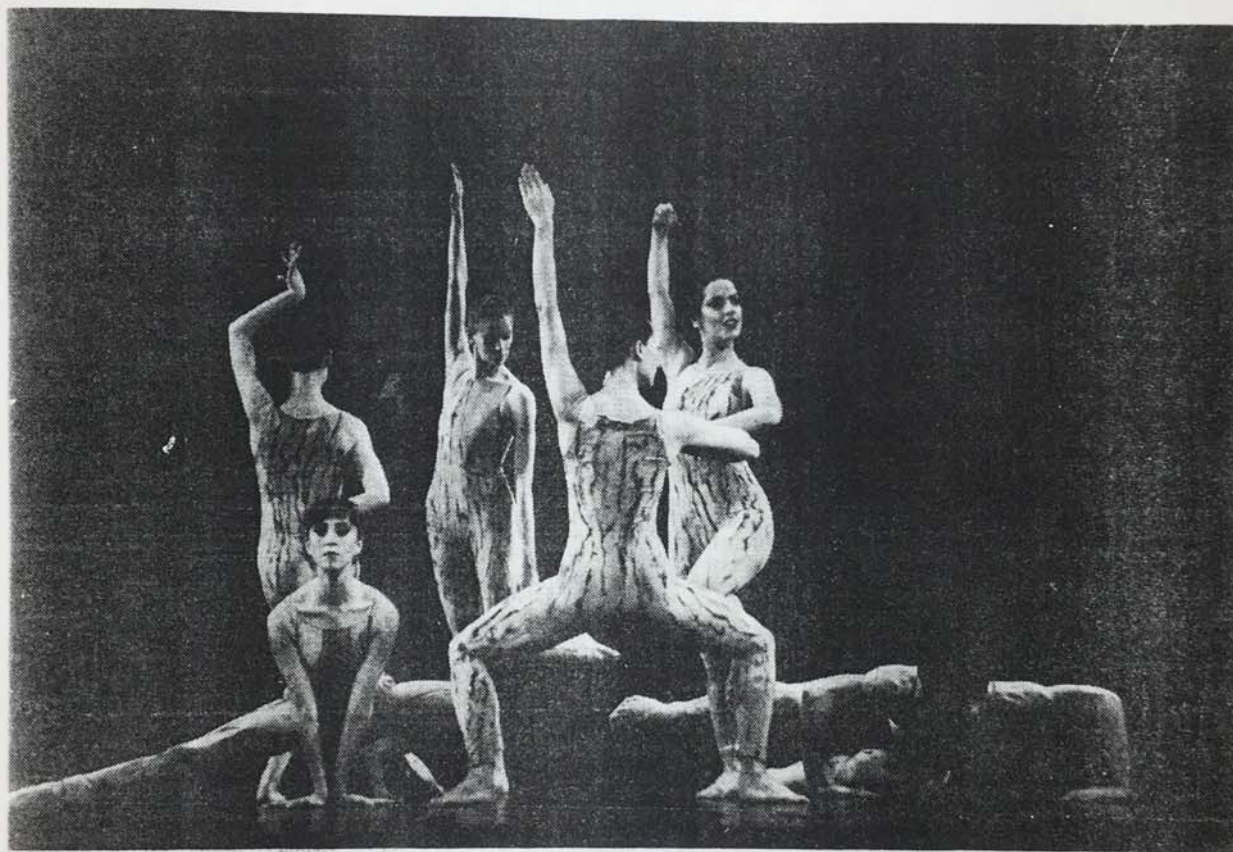
The dance program at P.S. 1 conforms to the goal of artistic experimentation espoused by its parent organization, the Institute for Art and Urban Resources. Founded in 1971 with the idea of securing low-cost artists studios in underused commercial buildings, the Institute runs The Clocktower on Leonard Street near Manhattan's municipal center as well as the P.S. 1 in Long Island City, Queens. At both The Clocktower and P.S. 1 the institute produces showings of new music, theater, performance art, film and video, photography, architecture and fashion design as well as painting and sculpture.

P.S. 1, located in a large 19th-century brick building in the Romanesque-revival style, actually was a public school. In 1979 when choreographers Jane Comfort and Marjorie Gamso approached Alanna Heiss, president and executive director of the institute, to ask for performance space, Heiss not only offered the use of P.S. 1's 5,000-square foot auditorium but suggested that the two choreographers develop a formal dance program. A year and half later, in the spring of 1981, the first theme-oriented dance series took place featuring choreography that juxtaposed verbal and visual imagery to create new forms of dance storytelling. Other subjects have included collaborations between visual artists and choreographers, and the expression of political concerns in dance.

P.S. 1 is at 46-01 21st Street in Long Island City. For travel directions and further program and ticket information call (718) 784-2084.

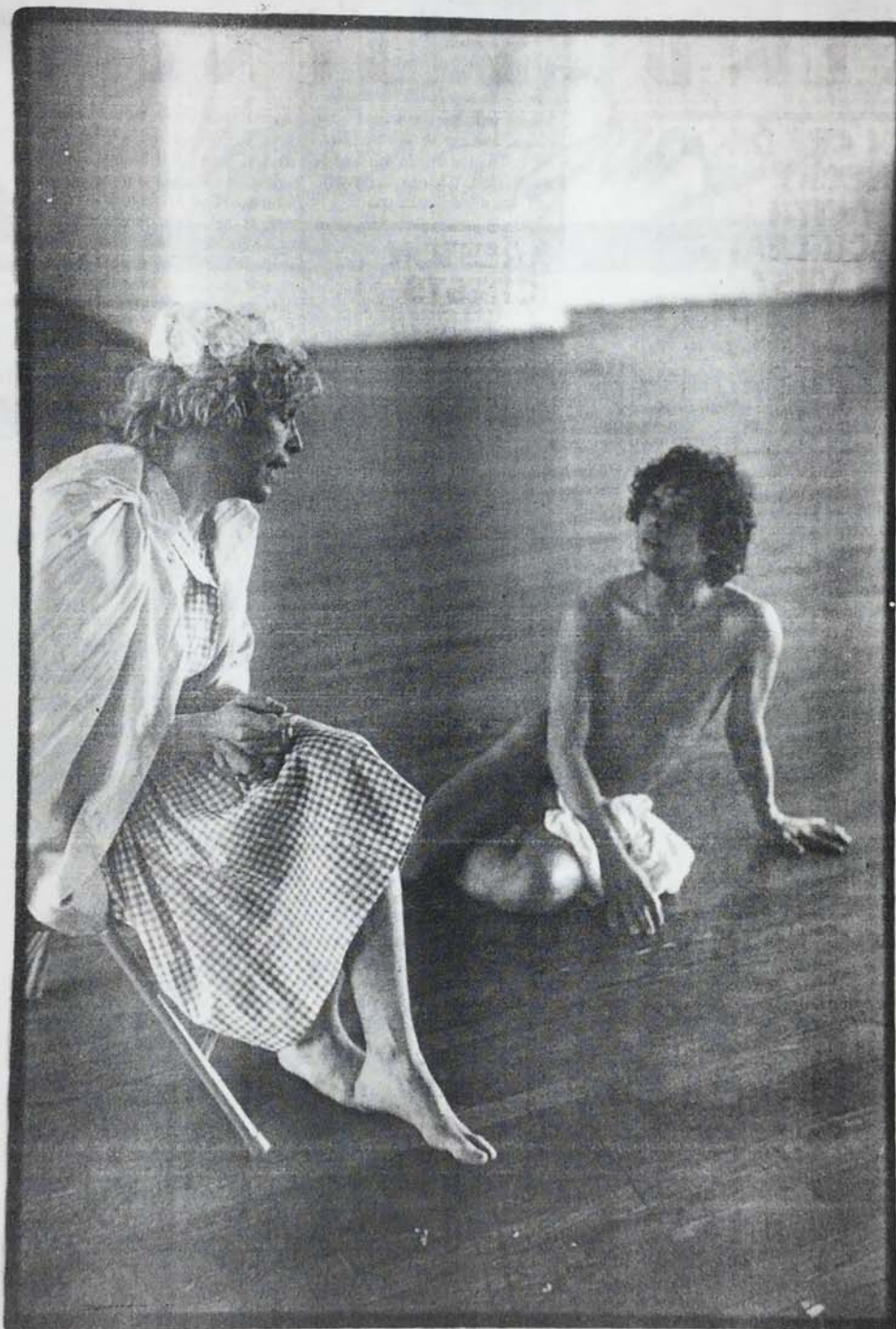
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e'eva Cohen and dancers in "Rainwood."

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Tom Brazil

Mark Dendy (I) gets up in drag to tell naked Jaime Martinez a story in an alleged Work of Dance.

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Night and Day

Issue 6

June 2-8

Free

SATURDAY JUNE 7

GIVE 'EM WHAT THEY WANT AND THEY'LL COME BACK FOR MORE

Mark Dendy and Company
"Shared and Borrowed Images"
Program B

Tonight and Tomorrow
P.S. 1, The Institute for Art
and Urban Resources
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City (which is in Queens)
For ticket information, call
(718) 784-2084

What hath Art wrought? Dee will tell you: Dance companies have figured out—no fools, they—what audiences want most. Here we have nothing more or less than full male and female nudity from a company whose director sits on stage in drag to get a closer view. Of course, they have to do this sort of thing in Queens—Manhattan isn't quite ready. So you'll have to make a few fairly simple arrangements to get there, as Dee's sure you will when you look at the photograph.

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LISTINGS

EDITED BY BURT SUPREE

DANCE

● "Shared and Borrowed Images: Cross Cultural Images in Contemporary Dance"—P.S. 1, 46-01
21st St, LIC, 718-784-2084. Muna Tseng, Ellen Fisher, Stephanie Woodward Sat, Sun, May 10-18, at 3.(\$5).

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MAY 28 - JUNE 3

AN OPINIONATED SURVEY
OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS

EDITED BY GUY TREBAY

DANCE

Shared and Borrowed Images: The second series of programs in the P.S.1 series features work by choreographers you'd think had nothing in common: for instance, Mark Dendy, whose dances are bold and splashy, Willa Jo Zollar, whose Urban Bush Women dig into the roots of their community, and Renee Rockoff, whose poetic works explore elemental images. May 31 and June 1 at 3, P.S. 1, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, 718-784-2084. (Supree)

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MAY 7-13

AN OPINIONATED SURVEY
OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS

EDITED BY GUY TREBAY

DANCE

Shared and Borrowed Images:

P.S. 1's annual spring series, curated by Blondell Cummings and Joan Acocella, deals with cross-cultural influences in contemporary dance. The first program features work by Muna Tseng, Ellen Fisher, and Stephanie Woodard (with live music by Peter Zummo). May 10 and 11 at 3, P.S. 1, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, 718-784-2084. (Supree)

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VOICE MAY 13, 1986

SPRING DANCE PROGRAM
at P.S.1
SHARED AND BORROWED IMAGES
Cross Cultural Influences in Contemporary Dance

PROGRAM A may 10, 11 and may 17, 18
STEPHANIE WOODARD
MUNA TSENG
ELLEN FISHER

PROGRAM B may 31, june 1 and june 7, 8
RENEE ROCKOFF
URBAN BUSHWOMAN
MARK DENDY

PROGRAM C june 14, 15 and june 21, 22
ZE'eva COHEN
OSCAR COREALE
BETSY HULTON
NADINE TRINGALI

Curators: Blondell Cummings and Joan Acocella

ALL PROGRAMS BEGIN AT 3 PM

ADMISSION IS \$5.00 or TDF VOUCHER

P.S.1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, NY 718-784-2084

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Shared and Borrowed Images: LIBERTAD, LIBERTAD, LIBERTAD.

by

Oscar Correale and Dancers.



at

P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, inc.

46-01 21 Street
Long Island City, New York

June 14, 15, 21 and 22
at 3:00 p.m.

ADMISSION \$5.00 and TDF's + \$1.00
Call (718) 784-2084

DIRECTIONS

Take E or F Train to Ely Avenue - 23 Street
(First stop in Queens)

For your convenience take the last car of the train
or

Take #7 train to Queens and get off at 45th Road Court

June, 1986

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PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 1986

Contact: Mary Ann Pierce

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Spring Dance Program at P.S. 1

Shared and Borrowed Images: Cross Cultural Influences in Contemporary Dance

P.S. 1's annual Spring Dance Program will begin on May 10 at 3 PM. Entitled "Shared and Borrowed Images: Cross Cultural Influences in Contemporary Dance" and curated by Blondell Cummings and Joan Acocella, this year's series is a gathering of works that, whether by birthright or simple artistic choice on the part of the choreographer, show a merging of different cultures.

The Spring Dance Program will run for for six weekends in May and June. The time is 3 PM and admission is \$5.00 or TDF & \$1.00. All programs will be held in P.S. 1 large, sunlit auditorum.

Program A: May 10, 11 and May 17, 18

Muna Tseng A new group work in which cultural identities are exchanged among the cast, including Swiss, Chinese, Chilean, Japanese, German, Vietnamese and American performers.

Ellen Fisher Utilizing music drawn from various parts of the world, this piece deals with unknown powers that control us, both individually and in our relations with others.

Stephanie Woodard Accompanied by live music by Peter Zummo, Woodard's trio will mix Javanese and Western influences in a study of ambiguity: "When two cultures meet, who is the performer and who is the spectator?"

Program B: May 31, June 1 and June 7, 8

Mark Dendy A group work using Appalacian rhythms,

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Renee Rockoff Inspired by the Northern Plains Indians, who record time by reference to a single memorable event, this work is a meditation on the experiential marking of time.

Urban Bush Women This political ensemble explores African origins in the context of American urban society.

Program C: June 14, 15 and June 21, 22

Ze'eva Cohen A solo, a duet and a trio to traditional Sephardic songs.

Oscar Coreale This Argentinian choreographer's piece
ea vacy i a po 'ce state

National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council
for the Arts. P.S.1's facilities are owned by the City of New York,
and their programs are supported in part by contributions from the
City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs.

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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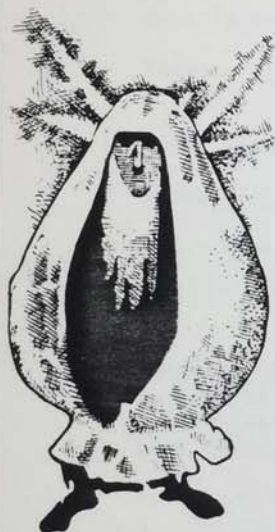
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THE INSTITUTE FOR ART AND URBAN RESOURCES INC. EXECUTIVE OFFICE PROJECT STUDIOS ONE (P.S.1) 46-01 21ST STREET, L.I.C. NEW YORK 11101 AREA CODE 212 784-2084 BRENDAN GILL CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ALANNA HEISS PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROJECTS WORKSPACE PROJECT STUDIOS ONE (P.S.1) THE CLOCKTOWER / CITY-WIDE EXHIBITIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT



MODERN DAY SAINTS

DANCE BY

BETSY HULTON

JUNE 14, 15, 21 & 22, Sat. & Sun. at 3pm

P.S.1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st St. Long Island City, New York

with:

Barbara Mahler, Colin McDowell, Patrick Riordan, Jennifer Spiegler, Peggy Vogt, Renè Calvo & Marcie Chanin

Music: Masayoshi Imamura Costumes: Jane Townsend

For Information: 212 982-9148

as part of the series "Shared and Borrowed Images"

the Institute against any and all claims or liability for any loss or damage or injury to the property of the performer or to the performer or any of the aforementioned persons who may be connected with the performer or his/her performance during the time of performance and rehearsal in the auditorium.

3. INSURANCE:

a. The performer acknowledges that the Institute does not have any insurance to cover damage, loss or theft of personal possessions.

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THE INSTITUTE FOR ART AND URBAN RESOURCES INC. EXECUTIVE OFFICE, PROJECT STUDIOS ONE (P.S. 1) 48-01 21ST STREET
L.I.C., NEW YORK 11101 AREA CODE 212 764-2084 BRENDAN GILL CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ALANNA HEISE, PRESIDENT
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROJECTS WORKSPACE, PROJECT STUDIOS ONE (P.S. 1) THE CLOCKTOWER / CITY-WIDE EXHIBITIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

This agreement made as of this _____ day of _____, 1984

between _____

(individual or leader of dance company; the performer)

whose address is: _____

phone: _____ and The Institute for Art and Urban Resources,
Inc. (The Institute).

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, The Institute is presenting the "Dance and Social Commentary" series as part of its Dance Program during the months of April, May and June in the auditorium at Project Studios One (P.S. 1); and WHEREAS, the performer has been invited to perform in the said space upon the following conditions:

1. CONDUCT:

- a. The performer agrees to in no way intentionally endanger or harm the audience, other performers, or him/herself as part of the performance or rehearsals.
- b. The performer agrees to conduct him/herself within the restriction of the law and in a responsible manner.

2. LIABILITY:

- a. The performer acknowledges and agrees that the Institute cannot and will not be liable to the Performer for any damage or injury to the performer and his/her property, including equipment or props used for the performance. It is agreed that The Institute will not be responsible or liable for any damage, whether by fire, vandalism, theft or otherwise, or for any personal injuries sustained by the performer or any of his/her agents, employees, assistants, or audience and the performer hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Institute against any and all claims of liability for any loss or damage or injury to the property of the performer or to the performer or any of the aforementioned persons who may be connected with the performer or his/her performance during the time of performance and rehearsal in the auditorium.

3. INSURANCE:

- a. The performer acknowledges that the Institute does not have any insurance to cover damage, loss or theft of personal possessions.

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4. HONORARIUM:

Each performer or group of performers will receive an honorarium of \$1,000. The honorarium will be paid after the grant from the NEA is received. Projected date is before June 20th. These checks will be mailed to the address given below:

5. ADMISSION

a. There will be a \$5.00 admission charge collected at the door of each performance. After the attendant's salary is deducted, all proceeds will be divided in half: 50% to The Institute, 50% to be divided among the day's performers.

b. Each performer will be responsible for providing The Institute with a guest list. The Institute will be accepting reservations and T.D.F. vouchers.

6. REHEARSAL:

Rehearsal time will be available for each performer in the third floor at appropriate times. This schedule will be provided to the participants.

7. EQUIPMENT

a. The Institute will furnish seating, a sound system (cassette and reel to reel tape recorders, amplifier, mixer and speakers) and a technical assistant/ stage manager.

b. The performer is responsible for supplying any costumes, props, stage settings, theatrical lighting or additional technical equipment.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have signed this agreement as of the date and year above written.

THE INSTITUTE FOR ART AND URBAN RESOURCES INC.

By: 
Edward T. Rinehart, Director for Programming

Performer

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Isamu Noguchi, *Slide Mantra*, 1986. 19 1/2" diameter. Installation view at the U.S. Biennale. Photo: Shigeo Anzai.

WINTER COUNT

(excerpt)

Renée Rockoff

with

Mia Borgatta, Susan Brown, Eileen Jones

Shared and Borrowed Images:
Cross-Cultural Influences in
Contemporary Dance

May 31, June 1, 7 & 8
3:00 pm \$5.00

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Long Island City, NY

For information call:
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Subway: E or F train to 23rd—Ely Ave.
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exit 21st Street cross Jackson.

This work was developed in part at the Arts
Lab of Yellow Springs Institute and has received
funding from the National Endowment for the Arts
and the New York Foundation for the Arts.

P.S. 1 Dance Program is funded in part by the
National Endowment for the Arts and the New York
State Council on the Arts.

Isamu Noguchi United States Pavilion

It's hard to imagine a more appropriate centerpiece for Isamu Noguchi's exhibition at the Venice Biennale than *Slide Mantra*, 1986. This sweeping white marble spiral incorporates many of the central influences on his work of

worked organic materials to create intimate, almost meditative works. The five rough stones of *Beginnings*, spotted around the gallery like the rock islands in a Japanese garden, were matched by

approximately six-foot-square cube, formed of six granite blocks by simple chisel marks slashed across its faces. Counterbalancing these is the *Tetrahelix*, 1986, a large geometric form that Noguchi, in his 1986 text, describes as "the link of creation."

His works in the exhibition include his *araki*, the "light sculpture" he has made out of rice or bark paper and wire since the 1950s, that embodied most of the apparently irresolvable tensions of his work. Looking through more than paper lanterns, delicate structures restate formal spheres, beehives, twin shapes, twisted columns—from Noguchi's work in other media—but they draw as much on his sense of design, in which beauty can coexist with usefulness, as on the idealism of Modernism. Ironically, the diversity of the exhibited puzzled some Europeans used to sharper distinctions between fine and applied arts. But the exhibition represented well the sense that Noguchi bridges in his work between found organic form and geometric abstraction, between the space of sculpture and the real world of public parks and gardens, between East and West.

—JES HAGEN

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ARTEFORUM

OCTOBER 1986 \$8.50/CAN \$8

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

R E V I E W S



Isamu Noguchi, *Slide Mantra*, 1986, marble, 10'4" high x 10'4" diameter. Installation view at the United States Pavilion, Venice Biennale. Photo: Shigeo Anzai.

Isamu Noguchi

United States Pavilion, Biennale

It's hard to imagine a more appropriate centerpiece for Isamu Noguchi's exhibition at the Venice Biennale than *Slide Mantra*, 1986. This sweeping white marble spiral incorporates many of the central influences on his work of

the past 50 years, including Modernist biomorphic abstraction and the carefully considered, meditative naturalism of Japanese gardens. It demonstrates as well his profound sensitivity to the sensuous properties of materials, and reflects the dual role Noguchi has taken for himself as a sculptor: as a creator both of formally expressive objects and of environments for people to use. The spiraling marble form, geometric and natural at the same time, is also an elegant slide that seems to have been lifted from some empyreal playground. One attendant at the pavilion even stood by the little interior steps at the back of the piece urging passersby to take off their shoes and go for a slide, and many took her up on the offer.

In the atmosphere of the Biennale, half art exhibition and half carnival, *Slide Mantra* was a surefire hit, simultaneously grandiose and innocent, profound and playful. Its implicit reference to the playground designs that are prominent in Noguchi's work was continued inside the pavilion, in bronze models for various unrealized playgrounds, from *Play Mountain*, 1933, to several versions of the playground he proposed for New York's Riverside Park in the early '60s. The design for the pavilion installation, on which the artist collaborated with the architect Arata Isozaki, sandwiched this public Noguchi between two 1986 sculptures that emphasize his use of largely unworked organic materials to create intimate, almost meditative works. The five rough stones of *Beginnings*, spotted around the gallery like the rock islands in a Japanese garden, were matched by

Ends, an approximately six-foot-square hollow cube, formed of six granite slabs, with simple chisel marks slashed into its faces. Counterbalancing these in turn was the *Tetrahelix*, 1986, a large steel geometrical form that Noguchi, in his catalogue text, describes as "the mysterious link of creation."

Of all the works in the exhibition it was Noguchi's *araki*, the "light sculptures" he has made out of rice or mulberry-bark paper and wire since the early '50s, that embodied most forcefully the apparently irresolvable contradictions of his work. Looking like nothing more than paper lanterns, these delicate structures restate formal themes—spheres, beehives, twin horned shapes, twisted columns—familiar from Noguchi's work in other materials, but they draw as much on the Japanese sense of design, in which formal beauty can coexist with usefulness, as on the idealism of Modernist art. Reportedly, the diversity of the works exhibited puzzled some European critics used to sharper distinctions between fine and applied arts. But this installation represented well the oppositions that Noguchi bridges in his work—between found organic form and geometric abstraction, between the virtual space of sculpture and the real space of public parks and gardens, between East and West.

—CHARLES HAGEN

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JULY 13, 1986

ART VIEW

MICHAEL BRENSON

In Venice, the Biennale Sinks Into a Sea of Ambiguity

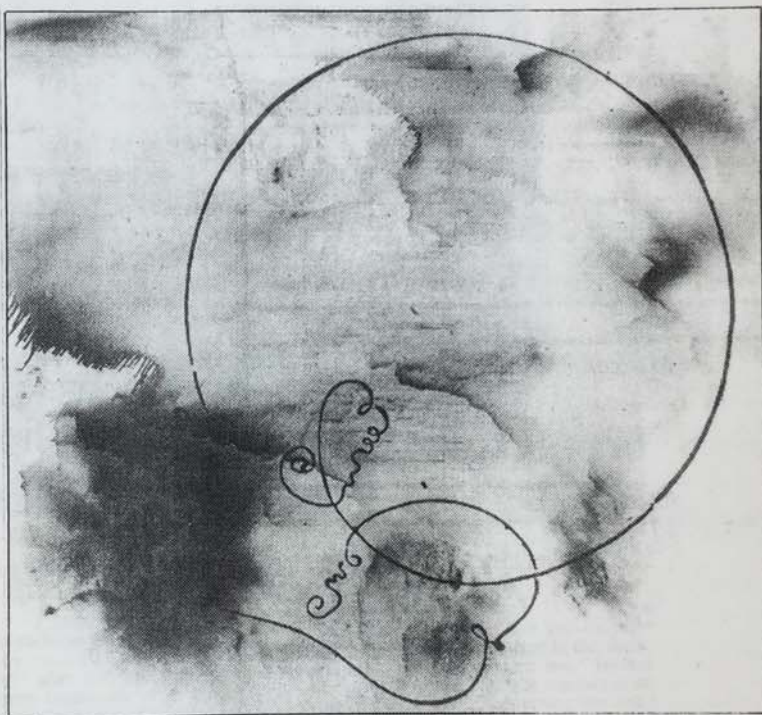
The Venice Biennale is as much of a morass as ever. Although in a large international exhibition of this stature there are invariably pockets of great interest, the current show is so equivocal that it discourages a straightforward response to the art. What is particularly frustrating is that just about every attempt to bring credibility and fresh blood to the 42d Biennale has ended in compromise, irresolution or self-interest.

One of the reasons it is largely impossible to zero in on the art is the nationalism. For example, of the 10 commissioners of the "Aperto" or "Open" section, which was intended to bring into the Biennale more adventurous art, there are one each from seven different countries and three from Italy. Of the 50 artists in the show, 10 are Italian, considerably more than from any other country. In "Wunderkammer," a theme show of objects combining the natural and the artificial, a great deal, if not a disproportionate amount of space is given to works by contemporary Italian artists.

There are many signs of indecision and manipulation. Only one of the three awards — the one to France for the best pavilion — makes sense. The French Conceptual artist Daniel Buren created an installation that reflects both the elegance and violence of his country and the vanity and visual excitement of Venice.

The award for the best artist under 40 went to Nunzio, an Italian sculptor in the "Aperto" section, where his totemic objects are surrounded by more striking works. The prize for the best artist was shared by Frank Auerbach, whose taut, small-scale, Expressionist paintings and drawings fill the English pavilion, and Sigmar Polke, whose sweeping, large-scale, mainly abstract paintings occupy the West German pavilion. If the Biennale is going to give awards — which it has done this year for the first time since 1968 — then they ought to mean something, which they cannot do when the most important award is divided between artists whose work is so different as to be almost incompatible.

The questions do not stop here. The American Pavilion, which this year is devoted to the sculptor Isamu Noguchi, has entered a new and potentially troubling stage. The Noguchi exhibition marks the first time the American Pavilion has sought private funding. According to John Coppola of the United States Information Agency's Arts America program, the Government previously provided a budget, and the exhibition was required to remain within it. The \$150,000 provided by the Government for this Biennale



Sigmar Polke's 1986 painting "Ratio," inspired by Albrecht Durer

covered roughly half the expenses of mounting the Noguchi show. Philip Morris contributed \$75,000. The Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale raised \$90,000.

Mr. Coppola indicated that the American Pavilion at the 1988 Biennale would probably also seek private funding and that the percentage of Government financing of the American Pavilion might decrease. Does this not place the Government in a position of having its cake and eating it too? If it is to take less economic and logistical responsibility for the American Pavilion, then should it take credit for and decide its exhibitions?

There are other changes in the 42d Biennale, which continues through Sept. 28. With 40 countries represented, it is the largest so far. The Corderie, or Ropeyard, of the Arse-

nale, a vaulted stone corridor over a quarter of a mile long, is being used by the Biennale for the first time since 1980. It is a 10- to 15-minute walk from the Public Gardens that serve as the exhibition's permanent home, which, in the words of Paolo Portoghesi, the chairman of the Biennale, has become "totally inadequate." The Corderie is the site for theme shows, and for displays by the 13 nations that do not have a pavilion.

The Corderie is also the site of the fourth "Aperto" exhibition. Unlike the national pavilions, this show suggests the diversity of means in contemporary art — from Brian Eno's experiments with sound, to the inventive use of photography by Sarah Charlesworth, Alfredo Jaar and the late René Santos. Jaar's installation, based on color photographs of gold miners in the Amazon, provides a welcome political focus in a Biennale

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Isamu Noguchi's sculpture "Ends," in the American Pavilion

where political decisions are consistently felt and consistently concealed.

The "Aperto" also includes impressive works in a more traditional vein. Claudio Palmieri's Expressionist landscapes and still lifes seem to be rotting and sprouting at the same time. Lisa Milroy paints objects like shoes, coins and melons in a cool, realistic style. By multiplying these everyday objects within the canvases, she transforms them into fetishes. By placing them in a pictorial space and pressing them again, objects with an unsettling violence.

There are surprises in several of the national exhibitions. François Schuiten is a Belgian artist whose cartoon narratives, done in an almost geometric, architectural style, suggest a bridge between comic strips and

the strange cityscapes in late 15th-century Italian painting. No installation in the Biennale is more dramatic than "Bronx," by the Italian artist Fabrizio Plessi. It consists of 26 television sets, each screen facing the ceiling, each one caged in by iron plates. Fixed to each screen is an upright shovel, the blades reflected on the screens in such a way that the glass looks like water. The room is dark. The shadows of the shovels line the walls like an army of ghosts as they might be evoked in a film by Kurosawa.

Noguchi's exhibition, designed in collaboration with the architect Arata Isozaki, spans 50 years. It includes old and new maquettes for outdoor sculptures, akari lamps and three new stone pieces, one of which, "Slide Mantra," began as a two-inch tall sculptural concept in 1966 and turned into a 10-foot marble

Continued on Page 33

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MANHATTAN INC.

July 1986, p. 125

CORPORATE CULTURE

ART, INC.

Behind the Biennale

THE VENICE BIENNALE, ONE OF the oldest and most important of the international art exhibitions, opened on the 29th of last month. Forty-two nations are contributing to the show, which strives to present a global spectacle of what is new and vital in the visual arts. Of those countries, the United States is the only one that has not, over the years, provided consistent funding for its national exhibitions. And this year the U.S. has departed even further from protocol by sending an exhibition supported in part by a single corporate sponsor—Philip Morris.

The Biennale comprises international exhibitions (grouped under the vague theme of "art and science"), the "Aperto," or open exhibition (which features "young and emerging" artists), and the national exhibitions. As in the past, both the international exhibitions and the Aperto are paid for with Biennale funds, provided by the Italian government, the city of Venice, and profits from the Biennale itself. The national exhibitions, however, are the financial responsibility of the participating governments.

Administration of the U.S. entry has historically been makeshift: The federal government appropriates the services of sponsoring institutions, which have ranged from the Museum of Modern Art to the University of Nebraska Museum. The sponsor curates the American entry and finds financing—a good portion of which has usually come in the form of federal grants. "Ground support," that is, the facilities for mounting the show, is supplied by the United States Information Agency, and since 1980 the USIA has been responsible for the selection of a sponsor and has arranged for government funding.

For the 1986 Biennale, the International Exhibition Panel, put together by the USIA and the National Endowment for the Arts, selected a proposal by P.S. 1, the alternative museum in Long Island City, to sponsor an exhibition of works by sculptor Isamu Noguchi. But last summer the USIA and the NEA decided to ask the "corporate sector" to match government grants for international exhibitions. Thus, of the \$365,000 needed for the Noguchi installation, the USIA

and the NEA contributed only \$200,000. The difference was made up by Philip Morris, which agreed to donate \$75,000, and by the Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, an organization whose membership is composed, for the most part, of Noguchi collectors.

Philip Morris's involvement in this year's Biennale came about through the efforts of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. An instrument of the Reagan administration's agenda to increase private-sector patronage of the arts, the committee acted as the liaison between Philip Morris and the government agencies. This is not the first time



that corporations have contributed to the cost of the U.S. pavilion at the Biennale. But it is the first time that the corporate support has come from only one company and that the donation has been so large. As the USIA sees it, Philip Morris's involvement marks the beginning of a restructuring of the funding in this area, and, says one spokesman, "We certainly hope it will continue."

Much has been done to associate the Noguchi exhibition with a single corporate sponsor. Patronage of this sort is about image-making, and the visibility of the Philip Morris name is, from a marketing point of view, the key to effective returns. There are some very practical reasons for Philip Morris's interest in the Biennale. Frank Saunders, the company's vice president of cultural affairs, explains that "we have a very active business presence in Italy—Marlboro cigarettes." Cultivating and maintaining foreign markets is a prime concern of cigarette companies as Americans in the healthy eighties break the smoking habit. Thus, as part of a

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*Il Presidente della Biennale di Venezia Paolo Portoghesi,
il Segretario Generale Gastone Favero
e il Direttore del Settore Arti Visive Maurizio Calvesi
sono lieti di invitare la S.V. all'inaugurazione
della XLII Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte
che avrà luogo Domenica 29 giugno 1986 alle ore 11
nei Giardini di Castello*

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VISUAL ART

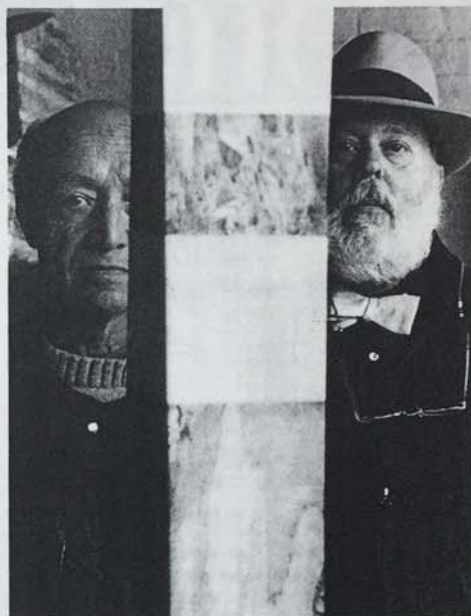
Venetian Class

Geldzahler and Noguchi, the Biennale's odd couple

Isamu Noguchi has been around for almost all of the twentieth century, an otherworldly intelligence producing irreducible icons, a man of deep natural grace whose work has entirely escaped the frenzied zigzags modern art seems to have required even of its geniuses. And worldly acclaim, happy to tell, has come consistently. He had his first one-man show at twenty-four, and at last count there were a dozen sculpture gardens around the world designed by him. (The Houston Museum of Fine Arts just installed the latest.) Few would now dispute that Noguchi is the greatest living American sculptor. And yet his work is not well known in Europe, despite his apprenticeship with Constantin Brancusi six decades ago and despite the enormous, preternaturally lovely waterfall he designed thirty years ago for the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

This summer, at last, Europeans are getting a proper dose of Noguchi: at the Biennale in Venice, the U.S. pavilion, under the auspices of P.S. (Project Studios) I, has been given over entirely to his work—thanks, improbably, to Henry Geldzahler.

Geldzahler and Noguchi? And yet there it is: Geldzahler, commissioner of the U.S. pavilion this year, has chosen to forgo modishness in favor of the old master. Geldzahler managed the American presence in Venice once before, in 1966, when he showed the work of Helen Frankenthaler, Ellsworth Kelly, Jules Olitski, and Roy Lichtenstein. Naughty but nice, kooky but credentialed (Yale and Harvard), Geldzahler was—back then—the fast-talking *Wun-*



DUANE MICHAELS

Henry Geldzahler, near left, chose the transcendent sculptor Isamu Noguchi, far left, for the Biennale's American pavilion—the final step in the curator's transfiguration from enfant terrible to éminence grise.

derkind monitoring the youthquake's early tremors. As a Metropolitan Museum curator during the sixties, he was key arbiter, coy enthusiast, and ubiquitous portrait subject for the souped-up artists of his generation, pal to Andy and Claes, Edie and Jackie. Geldzahler was America's go-go mandarin, the essential propagandist for pop art when pop art mattered. If he hadn't existed, Tom Wolfe would have had to invent him.

Now fifty, he is completing the dicey transfiguration from *enfant terrible* to *éminence grise*. During five pupal years as New York's cultural-affairs commissioner (playing Jack Lang to Ed Koch's Mitterrand), he kept his name in the papers. Then, in 1982, he heard a familiar rumbling, the stampede hoofbeats of New Yorkers with panache, youngish winners rushing downtown, aching to be hip, looking for hot art. He popped into the private sector as a freelance curator. Of course he befriended Julian Schnabel, Jean Michel Basquiat, Kenny Scharf, and the other miniature art celebrities of the moment. Of course he was hired by Palladium to choose pictures. Of course he has his hand in the manic Day-Glo revival of the mid-eighties.

But Henry Geldzahler choosing to show only Isamu Noguchi for his sec-

ond shot at the Biennale? An extreme shrewdness could be at work here—or maybe Geldzahler is simply getting wiser as he ages. The avatar of the evanescent is celebrating an artist whose subject is God, whose media are elemental—stone, bronze, light. In Venice, Geldzahler has filled one room with Noguchi's aggressive bronze "landscapes." Elsewhere is an outside edition of the celebrated Akari paper lamp and a gorgeous six-foot-by-six-foot-by-six-foot stone chunk that almost passes for an Erich von Däniken pagans-from-outer-space *objet trouvé*. "No one knows better than Noguchi," Geldzahler writes in the forty-eight-page Biennale catalogue, "when to leave things as he finds them."

Noguchi's subtle work is the antithesis of pop and of the hasty East Village neos. So? Replies Geldzahler, "It's just taken me a long time to catch up with him. There's so much hysteria about what is new—which is so much less important than what is good, what will stand up. You know, as we get older, we look for sense." Noguchi's great rock cubes and pixilated lanterns make sense. He stands up. "When I tap a stone," Noguchi says, "the whole universe has a resonance."

—Kurt Andersen

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Art in America

Report from Venice

The 42nd Biennale

More at the Giardini

An artist as important and venerable as Isamu Noguchi remained prizeless, although his show at the United States pavilion (now under the auspices of the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation) was one of the best at the Biennale. Not that it did full credit to the long, many-faceted career of the sculptor. His big *Mantra Slide* (1986) in Carrara marble occupied the forecourt of the pavilion. A mantra is an instrument of prayer, so the sight of visitors swiftly spiraling down the slide offered a new view of Zen activism. Indoors was a selection of other applied sculptures, like his models for the Riverside Drive playground, the United Nations playground and Josef von Sternberg's swimming pool. The great steel *Tetrahelix* recalled in spirit his early studies with Brancusi, and the Akari paper lamps, conceived as luminous sculptures, exemplified Noguchi's use of any material at hand, from his painted cement wall relief done in Mexico in 1936 to this year's chunky Swedish granite monoliths. Carefully planned by Alanna Heiss, head of P.S. 1, the show's institutional sponsor, and Henry Geldzahler, the pavilion's 1986 commissioner, the exhibition nevertheless distorted Noguchi's vast range of invention. A preponderance of the easily shipped Akari lamps unfortunately led Italians unfamiliar with his work to ask if the artist's main activity was industrial design. (Funding of the U.S. pavilion is perennially problematical; the

always sparse USIA subsidy was augmented for the first time by corporate money—from Philip Morris—and by a Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion, chaired by Raymond Leary.)

Other artists of particular interest at the national pavilions in the Giardini included the Danish painter Arne Haugen Sørensen. His scenes of rape and horror in the bushes are blandly and indeterminately brushed in cheerful pastel colors.

The Greek artist C. Tsoclis works on a big scale. A whole room was taken up by a 10-year installation piece that transposes and multiplies everyday objects—here, pipes, spigots and buckets. More compelling were his large painted seascapes with real rocks extending into the space of the room, and outsized portraits that combine painting and film projection. This doubling technique produces an interesting, quiet mobility of facial expressions, but when applied to *Harpooned Fish* the endless death throes were repellent.

One of the more agreeable objects at the Giardini was an outdoor walk-in sculpture by Masafumi Maita, which stood like a small open-domed, leafy kiosk in front of the Japanese pavilion and was suitably titled *Spirit of the Trees*. Cristina Iglesias, in the Spanish exhibition, showed memorable sculptures in painted iron and cement—big fragments of a larger abstract conception; they needed a wall

for support. Miguel Navarro's floor sculpture of brick and zinc added up to bird's-eye views of models of modern cities, with speedways and a punctuation of high-rise elements.

At the Canadian pavilion Melvin Charney showed his deadpan constructions that sidle up to or get into existing buildings and revamp the urban context. Also representing Canada, the Polish-born Krzysztof Wodiczko produced another of his political/visual commentaries on landmarks: in St. Mark's Square he attracted big, amused crowds by slide-projecting a camera and strap onto the Campanile at "shoulder" height, and at the "waist" a bandolier with bullets and hand grenades. The comment concerned the effects of the increasingly massive tourist assault on Venice.

For a complete conceptual topography of an exhibition as complex as the 1986 Biennale, a system like Mandelbrot's fractals would have been needed. As for scientific methodology in the production of art works, the limitations were stated by the mathematician himself. When asked if fractals could be used to compose good music, he replied: "No. When you hear it you cannot say that it is not music. It is structured, it is not noise, but it has no development in time, and it lacks creativity." The jury of a Biennale dedicated to Art and Science must have had similar reservations about the uses of technology and science in the visual arts. Only one of the Golden Lions went to an artist not completely in line with traditional materials and effects. In his long life Melotti always managed to look up-to-date, even when he was dead. □

Author: Milton Gendel is an American art historian and critic who lives in Rome.



Isamu Noguchi: *Slide Mantra*, 1986, Carrara marble, 10½ feet high; from the United States pavilion.

October 1986

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, JULY 1, 1986

Art: Biggest Biennale, the 42d, Opens in Venice

By MICHAEL BRENSON

Special to The New York Times

VENICE — The Biennale, which opened Sunday in the sweltering heat of Venice, is as ambitious and confused as any in this international art exhibition's long and controversial history. It has a global theme — art and science. With an unprecedented 40 countries represented and with national and theme shows spilling into the city from the Public Gardens, the exhibition's permanent site, it is the largest Biennale so far.

The lifeblood of the exhibition continues to be provided by the national pavilions. In this 42d Biennale, the attention has been focused on four in particular, each devoted to a single artist. The United States pavilion is honoring Isamu Noguchi, the Japanese-American sculptor whose installation of sculpture, lamps and sculptural and environmental models underlines the continuity and unity of his work.

The paintings and drawings by Frank Auerbach that fill the British pavilion were all done in the last eight years. All of the paintings are arenas in which slashing brushstrokes and dense paint battle against an almost classical feeling for structure and composition. The French Conceptual artist Daniel Buren used floor-to-ceiling stripes, some attached to the walls, others hollowed out of them, both to dress up the French pavilion and strip it bare.

One of the pastimes during the week before the official opening was waiting for the German artist Sigmar Polke. The German pavilion was the last of the major pavilions to be completed and the only one to open late for the press. It turned out to be the pavilion most worth waiting for. Polke's declarative and quizzical paintings, riddled and clumped with a bewildering assortment of materials, both reject authority and command an almost reverential respect. Although Polke wants nothing to do with traditional approaches to painting, in their grand gesture, their sense of scale and their understanding of materials, these are the works of a master.

Despite the strengths of individual pavilions, however, the Biennale remains very much an exhibition in search of a purpose. For years it was the most important international exhibition of contemporary art. Now there are others, as well as an increasing number of international art fairs. Furthermore, the art world has itself become so international that much of the most urgent contemporary art quickly becomes available throughout Europe and the United States.

The organizers of the Biennale know that the national pavilions are not enough to sustain any sense of the exhibition's stature. They continue to

try, with mixed results, to broaden its scope and appeal.

The "Aperto," or "Open," section was designed to be responsive to adventurous new art. This year this section was organized by a panel of 11 art professionals, each from a different country, all appointed by the Biennale. Among the 50 artists there are six Americans — Sarah Charlesworth, Mark Innerst, Mark Tansey, Alfredo Jaar, Kevin Larmon and the late René Santos.

According to the American curator, Thomas W. Sokolowski, the director of New York's Grey Art Gallery, the panel began by singling out four trends — including a new kind of conceptual art and a new kind of poetic image or object. Then they made their selections. The range of materials and subject matter and the spirit of experimentation in the section provide the Biennale with a freshness it needs. But the "Aperto" is also tucked away at the end of an immense corridor that is part of the Arsenale, about a 15-minute walk from the exhibition grounds, where it suggests a Salon des Refusés.

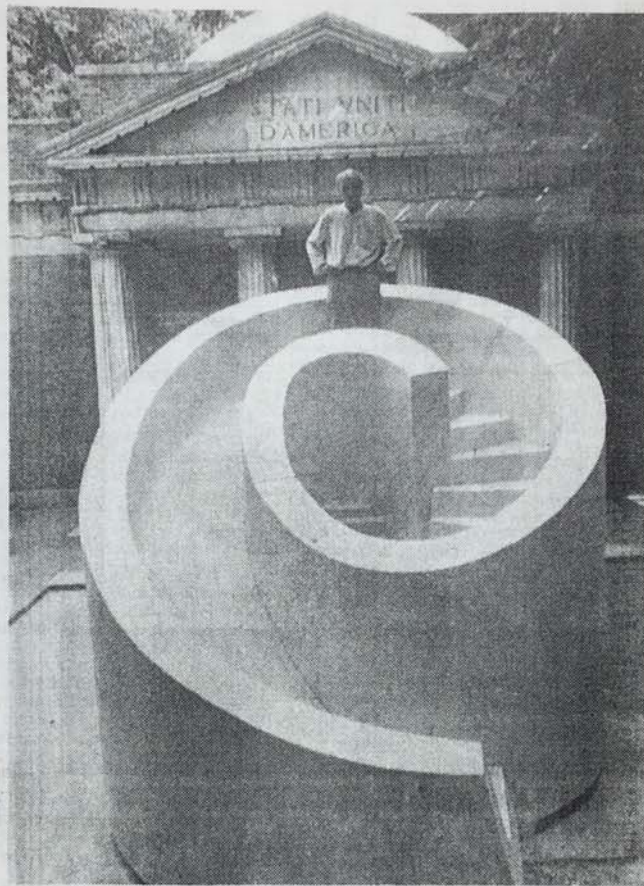
The art and science exhibitions that represent the Biennale's most substantial attempt to expand its appeal also emit mixed signals. One of the exhibitions, called "Wunderkammer," is a compendium of artistic oddities that has almost universal appeal.

Then there is the blockbuster exhibition called "Art and Alchemy," which occupies most of the newly restored Central Pavilion of the gardens. The organizer was Arturo Schwarz, a Marcel Duchamp scholar. Instead of limiting himself to those 20th-century artists who have studied or explored alchemy, which the exhibition traces back to ancient Egypt, Mr. Schwarz brings in artists whose work relates to ideas important to alchemy, ideas such as wholeness, duality, the reconciliation of opposites and transformation. Since almost every 20th-century artist has been involved with these ideas, almost everybody seems to have been included in the show.

The general lack of focus is reflected by this year's awards. The best artist award was shared by Auerbach and Polke, who have almost nothing in common. The award for the best artist under 40 went to Nunzio, an Italian sculptor of totemic metal-on-wood works. His sculptures are part of the "Aperto" section, where they are surrounded by works of greater distinction or risk.

The award that made the most sense was the one for the best pavilion, which went to France. Most of Buren's stripes consist of vertical strips of mirror or painted Formica attached to walls. Other stripes were formed by chipping away at the wall and revealing the brick behind the white surface. As elegant and even

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Agence France-Presse

Isamu Noguchi with his sculpture "Slide Mantra" at the Biennale in Venice.

luxurious as the installation can seem, with Buren there is invariably a strong dose of insolence.

The Noguchi exhibition is spare and concentrated. Its keystone is "Slide Mantra," a 10½-foot-tall outdoor sculpture in white Carrara marble whose spiral and cubic shapes echo the domed, neoclassical architecture of the pavilion. The work is architecture, playground, earthy and cosmic image at the same time. The public is invited to enter, climb the circular stairs inside the stone, rest at the top of what resembles a telescope or a shell, then descend along a precipitous slide.

The commissioner of the United States pavilion was Henry Geldzahler, the former curator of 20th-century art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This is the second time Mr. Geldzahler has been commissioner of the United States pavilion. In 1966, he selected Roy Lichtenstein, Ellsworth Kelly, Helen Frankenthaler and Jules

Olitski. Mr. Geldzahler said he chose Noguchi because his "magisterial" work remained largely unknown in Europe, where the artist spent several formative years studying with Brancusi and learning Greek and Roman carving techniques.

In a Biennale filled with questions and eccentricities, one of the most striking anomalies remains the American pavilion. While the American Government is involved in the selection and presentation of the art in the pavilion, and while the work in the pavilion is inevitably understood as representing the United States, the Government continues to provide only limited economic support. Financial support by Philip Morris and private money raised by the Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale made the exhibition at the United States pavilion possible. The Biennale continues through Sept. 28.

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sculpture just before the show. Noguchi wanted to demonstrate that from the beginning his work has been of a piece: every aspect of it has been approached as sculpture, as part of an environment and as part of nature.

The commissioner of the American pavilion was Henry Geldzahler. Since the United States Government essentially takes responsibility for an exhibition only after it reaches Venice, an institution was needed to organize the exhibition. Mr. Geldzahler asked P. S. 1, where he has been the Lila Acheson Wallace distinguished guest curator. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in Venice recently acquired the American Pavilion, and it has a contract with the American Government to serve as the pavilion's manager.

The main theme of the 1986 Biennale is "Art and Science." The largest of the many art and science exhibitions is called "Art and Alchemy." Since it is in the newly restored Central Pavilion in the heart of the Public Gardens, where it inevitably sets the tone for the rest of the Biennale, this exhibition had to be done right.

The best part is its small historical section, organized by Mino Gabriele, who defines alchemy in the Biennale catalogue as "an 'art' that claims to be the guide to the knowledge of 'matter,' of its secret sources and transformations. The result of such knowledge was to be a religious vision, in the mirror of 'Nature,' of the link between Man and the Cosmos, the individual and the whole."

The historical section presents a fascinating assortment of documents going back to ancient Egypt. They include alchemical tracts, as well as tracts on harmony, meditations on the transformation of materials, and several images of the androgyne, the mythical male-female creature that has been a symbol of the wholeness alchemists — and many 20th-century artists — have been after.

The curator of the main part of "Art and Alchemy" was Arturo Schwarz, a Marcel Duchamp scholar. If his exhibition had focused on those modern artists directly involved with alchemy, it could have led us to one of the unfamiliar threads running through 20th-century art. But that would have been a limited show, and, given the Central Pavilion's huge space, a blockbuster was clearly needed.

Almost everyone at all involved with ideas essential to alchemy, such as duality and the reconciliation of opposites — many of which have pervaded 20th-century art and culture — is tossed into the brew. Virtually all the Surrealists, Abstract Expressionists and Arte Povera people are represented in the show, as well as Jasper Johns, Keith Haring and a host of others. The exhibition is also badly installed. The objects are treated not as

art but as documents, and some of the paintings are so close to the floor that they seem to have been hung by mid-gets.

The one exhibition that does justice to the theme of art and alchemy is the solo show of Sigmar Polke's. Polke is a highly influential 45-year-old artist who lives in Cologne. His derisive and generous work produces the closest thing to a cosmic laugh in contemporary art. His paintings are part alchemy, part sorcery, part theater. Their extreme skepticism, which is never far from contempt, is clearest in the artist's perverse, mocking often angry images of postwar German life. But the skepticism is usually combined with a passionate faith in materials that has been a feature of German art back through the Middle Ages.

For Polke, alchemy offers a way of knowing that has nothing to do with scientific understanding, which he believes is "dangerous." His exhibition in the West German Pavilion, called "Athanor," which means alchemical stove, suggests his involvement with the properties and possibilities of primary materials. Polke wants materials in certain works to change. The Polkes that people admire are not necessarily those they will have on their walls weeks, months and years later.

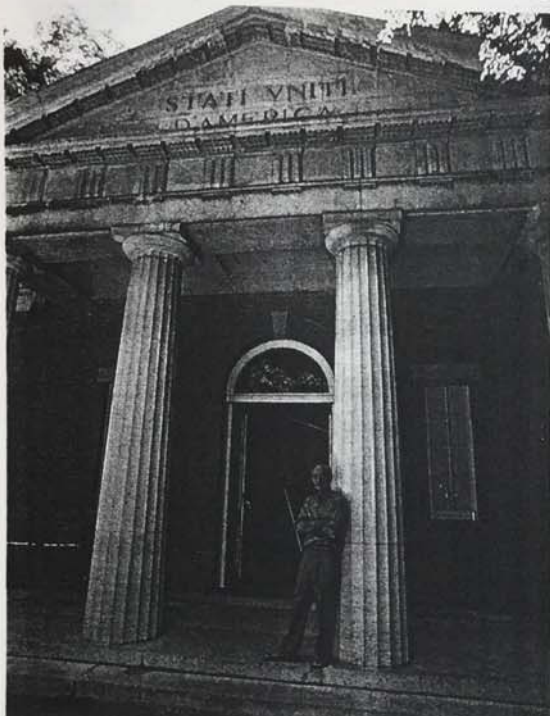
The paintings in the main gallery are huge — 16 feet tall by 6 feet wide — slick and blotchy. They look as if they had been painted by throwing, smearing and rubbing globs of caramel or glue. In a smaller gallery there are paintings inspired by the mysterious ornamental flourishes of an Albrecht Dürer woodcut. Polke takes those signs and writes them on monochromatic fields that bring to mind the caves in the landscapes of Leonardo. What makes everything convincing is Polke's feeling for gesture and scale.

Accompanying the paintings, Polke has included chunks of crystal, meteorite and quicksilver. The materials, with which he paints include arsenic, which the artist tries to use in such a way as to communicate visually its poisonous nature. In some of the paintings, there is a strange blotchy area, darker and shinier than the rest of the work, that looks as if it could suddenly burst or cast a spell over the painting and us.

In the center of the pavilion, on the surface of what resembles an apse, Polke has created what suggests an alchemical slate. On it he has painted vague, landscape shapes — again suggestive of Leonardo — that seem not so much to have been painted as to have suddenly appeared. From time to time the artist could be seen throwing water or spitting on the wall in order to see the effect on the colors and shapes. In a Biennale that is oppressive in so many ways, Polke's force of imagination stands apart. His work is a reminder that an international art exhibition should be an example and a celebration.

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The 1986 Venice Biennale



FASHION, TRENDS & LEISURE LIVING

by Barbara Church
photos by Piero Olisi

Isamu Noguchi Honored at the American Pavilion

The exhibition in the United States Pavilion at the Venice Biennale was titled «Isamu Noguchi: What is Sculpture?», honoring the famous Japanese-American sculptor who is 83 this fall. When chosen to represent the United States at the 1986 Biennale, Noguchi immediately traveled to Venice to study the pavilion site. In his introduction to the American exhibition, organizing curator Henry Geldzahler writes that Noguchi's response was not «What should I send?» but, «What shall I make for this situation, this space, that is appropriate to it?» Noguchi's gardens and public sculptures in the United States and Japan all share «The double distinction,» continues Geldzahler, «of being by him as well as for a unique set of circumstances.» The «set of circumstances» that the sculptor had to deal with in Venice was the bilateral symmetry of the American Pavilion arranged with two galleries to the left and two to the right of a central entry that also serves as an exhibition area. In front of the building there is a large space in which Noguchi decided to place a white spiral slide crafted from eight pieces of marble fitted together to make the form. Inside the pavilion Noguchi's idea was to underline the

polarity of the universe, the yin/yang, antithesis/synthesis between «bright-dark, fragile-heavy, giving off light and absorbing it». He created elegant installations using his illuminated rice paper Akari sculptures like magic lanterns in balance with and in opposition to granite, sometimes sculpted and sometimes left in its natural state.

The sculptor has written of the relationship between sculpted space and its architectural setting, «one as measure, the other as void». His collaboration with the Japanese architect Arata Isozaki for the pavilion was a perfect complement. Isozaki's worldwide reputation has grown rapidly. His plans for the Barcelona Sports Stadium, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, and the much-photographed Palladium dance club in New York City have gained him an enthusiastic American following. Noguchi and Isozaki first worked together at the Seibu Museum in Tokyo in 1985 where Isozaki's instinctive understanding and respect for the older master's work resulted in a dramatic environment. The success of the Tokyo collaboration indicated Isozaki as the architect needed to provide a framework for Noguchi's work at the American Pavilion.

A curator at P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc. and as 1986 Commissioner of the American Pavilion, Geldzahler explains why the honor went to Noguchi: «The balance Isamu Noguchi strikes between his deep respect for nature and his always startling originality make the study of his work constantly revealing.

No one knows better than Noguchi when to leave things as he finds them: a few deep chisel marks or the dislocation of five stones from an environment (quarry or beach) to another (garden or gallery) render the fulfillment of a gesture. Noguchi in his sculpture creates an impression of anonymity; his signature is difficult to remember or even to imagine.

He never opposes himself to nature; his work can be seen as the archaeological remnants of an ancient civilization, or as the harbinger of intelligence from beyond our solar system, fallen to earth with its formal integrity intact. Yet, in the presence of some of Noguchi's works the veil of appearance lifts momentarily to reveal a glimpse of the *numen*, the invisible essence that informs the universe and is as close to the apprehension of beauty as we can come.»

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LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA
Ente Autonomo

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e
pubbliche relazioni*

Press Release 1/AV '86

BIENNALE / 42nd ESPOSIZIONE INTERNAZIONALE D'ARTE

Venice, June 29 - September 28 1986

Preview for the press: June 25-26-27

The 42nd Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte - the Biennale of Venice - will open on June 29, 1986, and will remain open to the public till September 28. June 25, 26 & 27 will be reserved to the press.

It will include the traditional national participations and some special exhibitions.

The shows will take place at the Giardini di Castello and in other parts of the Venetian historical center. The theme of the 42nd International Art Exhibition is the relationship between art and science.

NATIONAL PARTICIPATIONS

The Biennale will show works of 41 Countries, 27 of which possess their own Pavilions at the Giardini: Austria, Belgium, Brasil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, German Federal Republic, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Northern European Countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), Poland Rumania, Spain, Switzerland, Uruguay, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., Venezuela, Yugoslavia. In addition to these, 14 other Countries will be housed in buildings especially provided for by the Biennale: Argentina, Australia, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, German Democratic Republic, Island, Mexico, Monaco, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Corea, Republic of San Marino. The Italo-Latin American Institute will also take part.

As to the Italian section, specifically devoted to the Biennale's theme - that is, the relationship between art and science - an exhibition hall will host the following artists: Mario Ballocco, Fausto Melotti, Bruno Munari, Luigi Veronesi, Nicola Carrino, Enzo Mari, Gianfranco Pardi, Fabrizio Plessi, Mario Rossello, Gilberto Zorio.

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THE "ART & SCIENCE" EXHIBITION

The relationship between art and science will not only be the general leit motif of the 42nd Exhibition, since a specific show is going to have that particular title and theme.

By proposing such a binding and grand theme, the Exhibition does not mean to dig theoretical or systematic foundations, but simply to offer - through its various sections - some examples suggesting the complexity of aspects - which sometimes are even in contradiction with one another - of that issue, looking for an open and lively approach to the problem, devoid of any pedantry.

Even if, for some aspects at least, art proceeds parallel to the development of scientific thought, it maintains a mobility and range of interests which lead it sometimes to revive epistemological models of the past, more congenial to the laws of imagination.

Both ways of acceding to this relationship will be documented in the exhibition, which will include the seven following sections:

1) "SPACE" - organized by Giulio Macchi (coordinator), Arnaldo Bruschi, Rocco Sinisgalli, Mariano Apa. It starts from the XV century central perspective and, through the illusionistic and multiple perspective of the Baroque age, reaches the "four-dimension" spaces of Cubism and the spaces/environments of contemporary investigations.

2) " COLOUR" - organized by Attilio Marcolli with the collaboration of Narciso Silvestrini and Fausta Squattriti. Theories and models of the distribution of colour, from the XVII century until our own days, are the premises for an exhibition of artists interested in a scientific approach to colour, or interesting for their instinctual approach to that issue.

3) "TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATICS" - organized by Roy Ascott, Don Foresta, Tom Sherman, Tommaso Trini. The most advanced technological experimentations in the artistic fields - such as the use of computers, video-tapes, lazer and holography - will be dealt with.

4) "ART AND BIOLOGY" - organized by Giorgio Celli. Behaviours and affinities link biological forms with abstract and "informal" artistic images.

5) "ART AND ALCHEMY" - organized by Arturo Schwarz, with a historical section by Mino Gabriele. Side by side with a series of ancient texts illustrating the mythical workings of alchemy, the exhibition will show some contemporary artists in whose works one can detect the

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3)

workings of imagination corresponding to a would-be science which preserves its value at the level of psychic structures.

6) "WUNDERKAMMER" - organized by Adalgisa Lugli. In the Wunderkammer, or "chamber of wonders", art and science merged, collecting peculiar objects (generally pertaining to natural sciences) and exhibiting them. Apart from the reconstruction of a Wunderkammer of the XVII century, assemblages by contemporary artists will also be shown, so to stimulate comparisons.

7) "SCIENCE FOR ART" - organized by the Ministry for Culture and the Environment. It will deal with science and technology in their contributions to the preservation of the civilization and the works of art of our past, touching upon restorations, studies, new applications aiming at analyses which do not imply any sort of destruction.

"THE APERTO '86" EXHIBITION

This is the exhibition traditionally reserved to young artists who have never been previously shown at the Biennale. Eleven critics from several Countries (Lynne Cooke, Maria Corral, Heidi Grundmann, Jan Hoet, Gérard Georges Lemaire, Giorgio Mascherpa, Giuseppe Santomaso, Claudio Spadoni, Stephan Smidt-Wulfenn, William Sokolowski, Bijilana Tomic) have selected the 48 following artists: Patrick Raynaud, Bazile Bustamente, François & Jean Lamore, Hélène Delprat (France), Ludger Gerdes, Wolfgang Luy, Jurgen Partenheimer, Astrid Klein (German Federal Republic), Thomas Huber, Anna Winteler (Switzerland), Guillermo Paneque, Patricio Cabrera, Gerardo Delgado, Juan Munoz Torregrosa (Spain), Milovan De Stil Markovic, Viktorija Vesna Bulajic (Yugoslavia), Maria Kozic (Australia), Peter Kogler, Helmut Mark, Otto Zitko, Martin Walde (Austria), Alexander Shelagh (Canada), Flavio Garciandia (Cuba), Jan Vercruysse, Lili Dujourie (Belgium), Niek Kems (Holland), Mark Innerst, Mark Tansey, Kevin Larmon, Sarah Charlesworth, Rene Santos (U.S.A.), Alfredo Jaar (Chile), Boyd Webb (New Zealand), Lisa Milroy, Jacqui Poncelet, Richard Wilson, Johan Murphy, Avis Newman (Great Britain), Mirella Brugnerotto, Gianriccardo Piccoli, Mario Raciti, Nunzio Di Stefano, Angelo Casciello, Antonio Violetta, Claudio Palmieri, Marco Nereo Rotelli, Carlo Patrone, Marilena Sassi (Italy).

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PRESS RELEASE

AWARDS

On the occasion of the 42nd Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte - The Biennale of Venice, the following official prizes will be awarded by an international jury formed by eminent personalities of the world of culture and the arts:

"PREMIO INTERNAZIONALE LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA":
(The Biennale of Venice International Award)

to be awarded to a living artist taking part in the 42nd International Exhibition, no matter in which section or to which title.

"PREMIO DEI PAESI":
(The National Award)

to be awarded to the Pavilion showing the best national participation.

"PREMIO DUEMILA":
(The Award 2.000)

to be awarded to the best young artist (not older than 40) taking part in the 42nd International Exhibition, no matter to which title.

The first two awards consists of a LEONE D'ORO - The Biennale's Gold Lion - while the third corresponds to 25.000.000 lire.

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P R E S S R E L A S E

For Immediate Release

May 10, 1986

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"ISAMU NOGUCHI: WHAT IS SCULPTURE?"
AT THE 42ND VENICE BIENNALE

In a widely acclaimed association with an historic artist and a distinguished curator, P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc., New York, presents an important exhibition of the work of Isamu Noguchi, curated by Henry Geldzahler, the United States Commissioner, at the American Pavilion of the 42nd Venice Biennale, June 29 through September 28, 1986. The exhibition is the official presentation of the United States Government, selected by the United States Information Agency, and generously funded by the United States Information Agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, Philip Morris Companies Inc., and the Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

The installation is conceived as a harmonious play of differing materials and contrasting environments. It includes a monumental spiral slide of Carrara marble resting on a bed of wood chips in the renovated central piazza of the American Pavilion. In contrast are installations of rice-paper akari light sculpture which

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relate to a tetrahelix sculpture of German steel derived from the artist's study of this form in biology and physics. This structure also refers to the tradition of spiral lanterns from which the artist's akari derive. The installation also includes a sculpture of Swedish granite and an installation of granite stones, as well as bronze models representing the artist's involvement with public sculpture. The artist's collaboration with the noted architect Arata Isozaki for the installation of the two akari galleries is a highlight of this extraordinary presentation.

Of the artist, Commissioner Geldzahler writes, "Isamu Noguchi, at the age of eighty-two, continues testing the notion of sculpture, pushing its limits. His American Pavilion at the 1986 Venice Biennale succeeds in redefining the limits of sculpture in fresh formal terms. And, while the stone, light sculptures and tetrahelix contribute to a coherent philosophy, the mystery still lingers."

The exhibition is a cultural presentation of the United States of America and is presented in collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice.

P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc., is a non-profit center for contemporary art committed to the presentation of a broad range of artistic activities in various media through exhibitions, performances, film and video screenings, and related activities.

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1904-1917 Born in Los Angeles, November 17, 1904 to Japanese poet Yone Noguchi and American writer, Leonie Gilmore. Moves to Japan in 1906; attends Japanese and Jesuit schools. Sister Ailes, born in 1912.
- 1918-1922 Sent to Interlaken School near Rolling Prairie, Indiana. School becomes army training camp; attends public high school in La Porte, Indiana having been befriended by former Interlaken director, Dr. Edward Rumely. Rumely arranges apprenticeship with sculptor Gutzon Borglum who says Noguchi will never be a sculptor.
- 1923-1926 Enrolls in Columbia University as pre-med student. Takes sculpture classes Leonardo da Vinci Art School; encouraged by director Onorio Ruotolo, decides to become a sculptor. Mother returns to U.S. after 17 years in Japan. He exhibits in academic salons; frequents avant-garde galleries. (Alfred Stieglitz' "An American Place," and the New Art Circle of J.E. Neumann, and the Brunner Gallery where he is impressed by Brancusi show). Sets up studio at 124 University Place.
- 1927-1929 Receives Guggenheim Fellowship for trip to Far East. Goes to Paris; serves as Brancusi's studio assistant for six months. Makes wood, stone, and sheet metal abstractions which he exhibits upon his return to New York--first one-man show. Makes portrait busts to support himself; exhibits them successfully. Meets R. Buckminster Fuller and Martha Graham.
- 1930-1932 Returns to Paris and travels to Peking via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Stays 8 months studying brush drawing with Chi Pai Shih. Spends 6 months in Japan. Inspired by "Faniwa" and Zen gardens; works in clay with potter Uno Jimatsu. Returns to New York; exhibits ceramics and brush drawings. Develops contacts with visually cerebral artists; first involvement with theater.
- 1933-1937 First designs for public spaces, monuments, and a playground, PLAY MOUNTAIN (all unrealized). Works briefly for Public Works of Art Project. Exhibits project ideas and specially fabricated sculpture. First theater set, FRONTIER. Does portraits in Hollywood to finance stay in Mexico; executes mural about Mexican history. Returns to New York.
- 1938-1942 First Fountain, FORD FOUNTAIN. Wins Treasury Section competition for Associated Press Building Plaque. Designs playground and playground equipment (unrealized). Drives cross-country with Arshile Gorky. Voluntarily spends months in Japanese-American relocation camp, Poston, Arizona in order to create landscape environments--unrealized.

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Isamu Noguchi Chronology

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- 1942-1948 Returns to New York; takes studio at 33 MacDougal Alley. Makes mixed media constructions, "landscape" reliefs, series of carved/constructed stone slab sculptures, self-illuminating pieces (Lunars). First manufactured furniture and lamp designs, distributed by Herman Miller and then Knoll. Extensive involvement with theater. First major exhibitions since 1935. Designs public spaces and a monumental earthwork, SCULPTURE TO BE SEEN FROM MARS (unrealized).
- 1949-1952 Receives Bollingen Foundation Fellowship to research book on "leisure" (still in progress). Travels throughout Europe, Mid-East, and Asia, documented with photographs and drawings. Does last portraits. Stays in Japan; meets and marries actress Yoshiko Yamaguchi. Does first realized garden, READERS DIGEST and interior (at Keio University). Begins designing AFARI. Works with potter Rosanjin Kitaoji; sets up studio on his land in Kamakura. Exhibits ceramics in Japan.
- 1952-1956 Commutes between New York and Japan. Separated from wife by immigration difficulties (later divorced). Designs UNITED NATIONS PLAYGROUND and first plaza, for Lever House--both unrealized. Exhibits clay sculptures at Stable Gallery; Eleanor Ward remains dealer until 1961. Exhibits AFARI at Bonniers in New York. Does series of cast-iron pieces in Japan. Continues involvement with theater. Begins series of sculptures in Greek marble.
- 1956-1961 Continues Greek marble pieces. Executes the Gardens for Connecticut General Life Insurance Company which includes a large sculptural grouping called THE FAMILY. This was the first in a long series of realized environmental projects which also initiates his work with architect Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Concurrently does UNESCO Gardens. Exhibits environmental designs, and iron and marble sculptures in New York. Works in sheet aluminum. Exhibits metal and balsa wood pieces at Cordier & Warren Gallery. Arne Ekstrom remains his dealer until 1974. Executes first plaza for First National City Bank in Fort Worth. Establishes studio in Long Island City, New York.
- 1962-1966 With Architect Louis Kahn, designs series of models for RIVERSIDE DRIVE PLAYGROUND (never realized). Executes gardens for Chinese Manhattan Bank, NYC; Beinecke Library, IBM; and the Israel Museum; as well as first realized playground, KODOMO KO KUNI in Tokyo. Does series of floor sculptures and multi-part bronzes exhibited in 1963. Begins working in stone quarries of Quarzetta, Italy. First one-man show in Paris in 1964 at the Claude Bernard Gallery. Exhibits series of marble and granite pieces in 1965. Last stage set designed in 1966.

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- 1967-1970 Exhibits stone/metal sculptures. Whitney Museum retrospective in 1968; concurrent exhibition of brush drawings. Publishes autobiography, *A Sculptor's World*. Makes public sculptures for New York: RED CUBE; Spoleto, Italy: OCIEIRA; Seattle: BLACK SUN; Bellingham, Washington: SKYVIEWING SCULPTURE. Executes fountains for Expo '70. Exhibits AKARI and striped marble sculptures made in Italy.
- 1971-1979 Establishes studio on Japanese island of Shikoku. Exhibits in London, Zurich, and New York galleries. Begins ongoing series of granite and basalt sculptures. Executes major plaza in Detroit (PHILIP A. HART PLAZA) including large-scale fountain and several fountains for Supreme Court in Tokyo, Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach, the Art Institute of Chicago. Does first United States playground (PLAYSCAPES in Atlanta, sponsored by the High Museum), and several pieces of public sculpture: VOID, PepsiCo, Purchase, New York; SHINTO, Bank of Tokyo, NYC; LANDSCAPE OF TIME, Seattle Federal Building; SKY GATE, Honolulu Municipal Building; HEAVEN, interior garden and granite pylon for Sogetsu Flower Arranging School, Tokyo; MOMO TAEQ, Storm King Art Center, N.Y.; SPIRIT'S FLIGHT, Meadows Museum, Dallas; proposal for garden at Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Acquires building across the street from Long Island City studio and renovates it for additional warehousing and storing of his work. Exhibits sheet metal sculptures at the Pace Gallery and AKARI at the Museum of Modern Art. Major travelling exhibition of "landscapes" and sets initiated by the Walker Art Center. First monograph published by Abberville Press, *Isamu Noguchi*, by Sam Hunter, 1978.
- 1980-1981 Documentary film about the artist and his work by Bruce Babcock, aired on PBS. Whitney Museum of American Art exhibits landscape projects and theater sets, "The Sculpture of Spaces." Joint exhibitions at the Pace and Innerich Galleries to celebrate 76th birthday. Show includes new stone sculptures and table/landscape sculptures. Complete catalogue of work published by Garland Press, compiled by Nancy Grove and Diane Botwin, 1980. Establishes Isamu Noguchi Foundation, Inc. SHINTO is dismantled by Bank of Tokyo and met with controversial press and activity by artists' rights groups. MEMORIAL TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, a large-scale public sculpture proposed in 1933 is re-proposed to the Philadelphia Museum of Art for the City of Philadelphia by the Fairmount Park Art Association. THE SPIRIT OF THE LIMA BEAN, a major granite sculpture is erected as the first part of an overall landscape project in Costa Mesa, California, CALIFORNIA SCENARIO. Three basalt sculptures erected at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Proposal for the plaza for the Little Tokyo plaza, downtown Los Angeles. Proposal for a 28-acre park for the redevelopment of Bayfront Park in Miami. Acquires corner gas station adjacent to his warehouse in Long Island City. Proposes razing gas station and extending Vernon Boulevard building.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series/Folder:
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- 1981-1983 Work is started on what is to be THE ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM. Noguchi designs new building extension for this museum/extension at Vernon Blvd. and enlarges the garden. CALIFORNIA SCENARIO is completed and dedicated. Plaza for Little Tokyo area in Los Angeles is completed and dedicated. Makes a series of 26 hot-dipped galvanized steel sculptures in editions, working with Gemini G.F.L. in 1982. Begins exhibiting these sculptures and has the first New York exhibit of them at the Pace Gallery, May 1983 along with stone sculptures. Work is finally completed on Museum, April 1983. Garden Museum is opened to the public Wednesday afternoons by appointment only. Work is begun on garden museum at Noguchi's studio in Shikoku, Japan. CONSTELLATION FOR LOUIS KAHN, a major public sculpture, was installed at the Kimbell Art Museum in 1983. Water garden is completed for the Domon Ten Museum in Japan, Summer 1983.
- 1984 Receives Honorary Doctorate from Columbia University. Begins to try and locate a site for his MEMORIAL TO THE DEAD, originally proposed in 1952 for Hiroshima. MONUMENT TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN is installed and dedicated in 1984. Debuts his new AKARI designs at Bloomingdale's in New York City. Receives the New York State Governor's Arts Award in 1984 and the Japanese American Citizens League Biennium Award. Celebrates his 80th birthday in Japan with an exhibition of his AKARI at the Sogetsu Kaikan in Tokyo.
- 1985 Begins the year with an exhibition of AKARI and new stone sculptures at the Seibu Department Store in Tokyo, installed by Arata Isozaki. In May, Noguchi's Garden Museum in Long Island City is formally opened to the public with various celebrations. Continues work on Bayfront Park in Miami, Florida and the sculpture garden for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Travels to Jerusalem to receive the Israel Museum Fellowship. In November, Noguchi is honored with the President's Medal presented to him by the Municipal Arts Society of New York City. During this Fall, Mr. Noguchi is formally invited to represent the United States at the Venice Biennale in 1986. The Biennale will be curated and organized by Henry Geldzahler and P.S.I. Noguchi begins work on a large marble slide and new AKARI designs for this exhibition.
- 1986 Completes several large stone sculptures to be exhibited at the Pace Gallery in April. The Sculpture Garden for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston is completed and dedicated in April as well.

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

For Immediate Release

May 10, 1986

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Contact in New York: Gwen Darien

(718) 784-2984

(212) 233-1400

in Italy: Pieranna Cavalchini

(011) 541141

"ISAMU NOGUCHI: WHAT IS SCULPTURE?"
AT THE 42ND VENICE BIENNALE

In a widely acclaimed association with an historic artist and a distinguished curator, P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc., New York, presents an important exhibition of the work of Isamu Noguchi, curated by Henry Geldzahler, the United States Commissioner, at the American Pavilion of the 42nd Venice Biennale, June 29 through September 28, 1986. The exhibition is the official presentation of the United States Government, selected by the United States Information Agency, and generously funded by the United States Information Agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, Philip Morris Companies Inc., and the Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

The installation is conceived as a harmonious play of differing materials and contrasting environments. It includes a monumental spiral slide of Carrara marble resting on a bed of wood chips in the renovated central piazza of the American Pavilion. In contrast are installations of rice-paper akari light sculpture which

-more-

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relate to a tetrahelix sculpture of German steel derived from the artist's study of this form in biology and physics. This structure also refers to the tradition of spiral lanterns from which the artist's akari derive. The installation also includes a sculpture of Swedish granite and an installation of granite stones, as well as bronze models representing the artist's involvement with public sculpture. The artist's collaboration with the noted architect Arata Isozaki for the installation of the two akari galleries is a highlight of this extraordinary presentation.

Of the artist, Commissioner Geldzahler writes, "Isamu Noguchi, at the age of eighty-two, continues testing the notion of sculpture, pushing its limits. His American Pavilion at the 1986 Venice Biennale succeeds in redefining the limits of sculpture in fresh formal terms. And, while the stone, light sculptures and tetrahelix contribute to a coherent philosophy, the mystery still lingers."

The exhibition is a cultural presentation of the United States of America and is presented in collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice.

P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc., is a non-profit center for contemporary art committed to the presentation of a broad range of artistic activities in various media through exhibitions, performances, film and video screenings, and related activities.

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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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PRESS RELEASE

October 10, 1986

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

P.S. 1 Fall Exhibitions

October 26 - December 21, 1986

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

P.S. 1's fall season opens with a survey of sculpture by the pioneer color minimalist John McCracken in the Main Exhibition Center; Special Projects Exhibitions feature Sue Coe, a group show of French painters, and an Architecture exhibition.

"John McCracken: Heroic Stance, A Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986," advances P.S. 1's longstanding interest in West Coast artists committed to the investigation of light and perception. Organized by The Institute's Chief Curator, Edward Leffingwell, the exhibition affords the public their first opportunity to view the changing, questioning nature of McCracken's involvement in sculpture from the mid-1960's to the present.

Best known for his series of monochromatic, highly polished planks that engage the wall by casually leaning against it, McCracken's work exists midway between painting and sculpture. "I think of color," McCracken says, "as being the structural material I'm interested in."

McCracken produces sculpture that concerns itself with ideal figures, that speaks of individualness in well-known ways. He refers to art of "presence" such as that of Rothko and Newman, and also to the enduring aspect of the sculpture of ancient Egypt and its "nowness" and "presence in the world."

A catalog of the exhibition will be co-published by P.S. 1 and the Newport Harbor Art Museum, where the show will travel in the spring of 1987.

The exhibition is sponsored in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the arts.

cont'd.....

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2.

Fall Special Projects Exhibitions

Sue Coe's "Malcolm X" series, predominantly drawings with a group of oils on canvas, starkly expresses the artist's horror and anger over contemporary moral and political issues and vividly communicates a political awareness dedicated to the necessity for change. "Malcolm X" is about the assassination of an image and the victimization of America's dissidents by the media. Her work, with its anguished, lurid imagery is described by critic Donald Kuspit as "a new genre somewhere between history painting and the political cartoon."

The exhibition is presented with the cooperation of the artist; her agent Sally Baker; and Phyllis Kind Gallery, Chicago and New York.

A three-gallery installation of contemporary French painting, "Preview: Eight French painters" reflects the pluralism of the current scene. Intended as a sample of representative individual painters, rather than a statement about French painting, "Preview" provides the opportunity to view aspects of contemporary French art which have not often been presented in the United States. The participants, who have been selected by a group of curators, critics and dealers are: Pierre Antonucci, Christophe Boutin, Pascal Brunart, Philippe Cognee, Helene Delprat, Bruno Dufourmantelle, Adrienne Farb and Patrice Giorda.

Architecture Curator Glenn Weiss installs "Building Machines", an exhibition of architectural models and drawings by Neil DeNari, Kenneth Kaplan, Peter Pfau, Wes Jones, Ted Krueger and Chris Scholz that refer to the traditions of Modernism in an historical moment preoccupied with the Postmodern.

cont'd...

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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3.

Paintings by Manuel Macarrulla present a stark commentary on military repression, using a vocabulary of images and symbols drawn from Dominican culture. Stephen Pusey, a London-based painter, articulates deeply-felt scenes of figures in conflict with an inhospitable world. Marilyn Reynolds presents a large-scale wall mural. Kathryn High presents her video installation "The Monk." Larry Miller's sound installation "Accord (Remote Music Machine)" uses tape playback and tuning forks.

Fall Film Program

Curator Tom Smith presents individual weekend programs featuring selections from the work of filmmakers Peter Emmanuel Goldman, Chantal Akerman and Danny Lyon. The last weekend of the series will be a selection of Super 8 films by Lower East Side artists.

P.S.1's facility is owned by the City of New York, and its operations are supported in part by a grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of New York: Bess Myerson, Commissioner; Claire Shulman, President of the Borough of Queens.

Gallery Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 12 to 6 p.m.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	MoMA PS1	II. A. 617

October 21, 1986

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JAMES TURRELL PERMANENT SITE INSTALLATION AT P.S.1

This October, P.S.1 has opened, by appointment only, a major permanent site installation by artist James Turrell. The work, "Meeting", is a vast chamber distinguished by a fully retractable roof that opens to reveal an unobstructed expanse of sky. "Meeting" is part of an ambitious series of permanent site-specific installations by West Coast artists who investigate light and perception.

The project, "West/East", was initiated in 1978 by Alanna Heiss, Executive Director of P.S.1, and includes works by Turrell, Robert Irwin, Eric Orr, Doug Wheeler and DeWain Valentine. The completed Irwin, Orr and Valentine pieces are currently slated for restoration.


With the completion of P.S.1's new roof this spring, the Turrell roof was completed. Resting on massive steel beams, this four-sided pyramidal structure of copper, aluminum and steel rolls freely. Similar to work in the collection of Count Panza in Italy, "Meeting" is characterized by its strong relationship to architectural space. Named for the gathering of Quakers in assembly, "Meeting" is conducive to meditation and to a heightened quality of perception of light and space.

"Meeting" is open to P.S.1's visitors by appointment only, weather permitting. Appointments may be made by calling P.S.1 at (718) 784-2084.

OCTOBER 26
DECEMBER 21

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main exhibition
JOHN MACCRACKEN: HEROIC STANCE
A Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986
Curator: Edward Leffingwell

special projects
SUE COE: *The Malcolm X Series*
MANUEL MACARRULLA
STEPHEN MURRY
MARILYN REYNOLDS

PREVIEW: NINE FRENCH PAINTERS
JEAN-MICHEL ALBEROLA
PIERRE ANTONIUCCI
PASCAL BRUNARD
PHILIPPE COGNEE
HELENE DELPRAT
BRUNO DUFOURMANTELLE
ADRIENNE FARB
BERNARD FRIZE
PATRICE GIORDA

architecture
BUILDING MACHINES
NEIL DENARI
WES JONES
KENNETH KAPLAN
TED KRUEGER
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video
KATHRYN HIGH: *The Monk*
Curator: Matthew Geller

permanent installations
JAMES TURRELL: *MEETING*
RICHARD SERRA
by appointment only
and
RICHARD THATCHER

Hours: WEDNESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY
12-6pm
PS. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban
Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st St.
Long Island City, New York 11101
(719) 784-2084

**OCTOBER 26-
DECEMBER 21**

PS. 1 facility is owned by the City of New York. Its operations are supported in part by a grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of New York.
Elena Myerson, Commissioner, Claire Shulman, President, Borough of Queens.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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ART FORUM

main exhibition
JOHN McCRACKEN: HEROIC STANCE
A Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986
Curator: Edward Leffingwell

special projects
Sue Coe:
The Malcolm X Series
Manuel Macarrulla
Stephen Pusey
Marilyn Reynolds

**PREVIEW: NINE
FRENCH PAINTERS**
Jean Michel Alberola
Pierre Antonucci
Pascal Brunard
Philippe Cognée
Hélène Delprat
Bruno Dufourmantelle

Adrienne Farb
Bernard Frize
Patrice Giorda

architecture
BUILDING MACHINES
Neil Denari
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**permanent
installations**
James Turrell: *Meeting*
Richard Serra
by appointment only
Richard Thatcher

The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, NY 11101
Hours: Wednesday-Sunday 12-6 718-784-2084

P.S. 1 FALL 1986
OCTOBER 26 - DECEMBER 21

P.S.'s facility is owned by the City of New York and its programs are supported in part by generous contributions from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Gianni De Michelis, Minister of Labor and Social Security for Italy flew to New York in order to accept the chairmanship of P.S. 1's newly formed International Committee. He defined the committee's goal as:

an association of major corporate, government, and private individuals who will help initiate and sponsor international contemp-

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PRESS RELEASE

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

For Immediate Release

October 28, 1986

BANKER AND ITALIAN LABOR MINISTER JOIN P.S. 1 BOARD
AT ANNUAL BOARD MEETING AT THE CENTURY CLUB

On October 16, Brendan Gill turned over chairmanship of the Board of Directors of The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc. to Anthony Solomon.

At the annual board meeting on October 16, of The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc., the non-profit corporation which operates both P.S. 1 in Long Island City and The Clocktower in Manhattan, Brendan Gill officially retired from his post as founding Chairman of the Board, a position he has held for fifteen years.

Anthony Solomon, currently Chairman of S.A. Warburg, U.S.A is the former Undersecretary of the Treasury, and the former President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. His election as current Chairman of P.S. 1, an internationally recognized avant-garde museum, founded by the current director Alanna Heiss, is remarkable in that it welds major interests in the financial world with major figures in the experimental contemporary art world.

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PRESS RELEASE

SPEECHES

Gianni De Michelis told the group at dinner of his plans for the International Committee. He stated:

As the chairman of the International Committee, I will not act as an Italian, but as an Internationalist and will seek to engage and encourage true international action and cooperation. Particularly important at this moment are Asian and South American countries, often excluded from the more obvious cultural programs in Europe and the U.S.A. The language of art is a universal one; we must seek to promote intellectual exchange and urge the cultural ministries to look not at passports, but at ideas.

Anthony M. Solomon, the new Chairman of the Board, thanked Brendan Gill and Alanna Heiss for their faith and commitment in him. He alerted the audience that he would make no dinner speech, as he would be formulating within the next six months his long range program. His election to the Board was cheered and reactions to his election were overwhelmingly positive.

Brendan Gill, in his farewell speech, described his fifteen years as Chairman, relating hilarious anecdotes of both high and low moments. He traced the Institute's development its first permanent space at the Clocktower in Manhattan, to the opening of P.S. 1 to its current status as one of the dominant contemporary art institutions in the world.

Alanna Heiss, the founder and current director of P.S. 1 and the Clocktower spoke briefly, recognizing her great debt to the founding chairman and to the commitment of past and present trustees and patrons: To work with Mr. Solomon and Mr. De Michelis represents an unusual opportunity to make substantial long range plans for important exhibitions of radical art.

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
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The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101

PS.1

OPENING SUNDAY OCT. 26 2-6PM
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ADDRESS: 46-01 21st STREET
LONG ISLAND CITY, NEW YORK
PHONE: 718-784-2084

Non-Profit Org.
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car: FROM MANHATTAN: Midtown Tunnel, exit 21st Street, cross Jackson Avenue. FROM QUEENS: LIE, exit Van Dam, right to Thompson, left on Thompson, left on 21st. FROM BROOKLYN: BOE to LIE, see above. FROM BRONX: Triborough Bridge to GCE to BOE, west on LIE, see above.

PS.1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc. is a non-profit center for contemporary art committed to the presentation of a broad range of artistic activities in various media, through exhibitions, performances, film and video, recreation, and related activities.

PS.1's facility is owned by the City of New York. Its operations are supported in part by a grant from The Department of Cultural Affairs, City of New York: Bess Myerson, Commissioner; Claire Shulman, President, Borough of Queens.

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A survey of Sculpture 1965—1986
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Preview: *Nine French Painters*

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Curator: Nicolas Collins

video:

KATHRYN HIGH: *The Monk*
Curator: Matthew Geller

on view:

JAMES TURRELL: *Meeting*
an installation, by appointment only

PS1

FALL 1986
OCT 26-DEC 21

opening:
SUNDAY, OCT 26
2:00-6:00 PM

PS. 1
Studio Artists

EBERHARD BOSSETT
C. ANN CARTER
GARY DODSON
ELLEN DRISCOLL
BARBARA EDELSTEIN
KATE FARRELL
MARTIN FOLAN
FORTUYN/O'BRIEN
MICHAEL HARDESTY
MAREN HASSINGER
HARLAN JOHNSON
KIYOSHI KAWASHIMA
ARTHUR MEDNICK
JON ARNE MOGSTAD
MICHAEL NAKONECZY
KAT O'BRIEN
JAMES OCKULTY
WILLEM SANDERS
SUSAN SCHELLE
ANNETTE SENNEBY
MICHAEL SHAUGHNESSY
LORNA SIMPSON
RITA SIRIGNANO
DIRK SOMMER
SUSAN TOGUT
CECILE WICK

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: MoMA PS1	Series.Folder: II. A. 617
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main exhibition:
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sound:
LARRY MILLER: *Accord*
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video:
KATHRYN HIGH: *The Monk*
Curator: Matthew Geller

permanent installations:
RICHARD SERRA
JAMES TURRELL: *Meeting*
(These are by appointment only)
RICHARD THATCHER



FALL 1986
OCT 26-DEC 21
opening:
SUNDAY, OCT 26
2:00-6:00PM

P.S.1. THE INSTITUTE FOR ART AND URBAN RESOURCES INC.
46-01 21st STREET, LONG ISLAND CITY 718 784 2084
GALLERY HOURS: WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY 12:00-6:00 PM

subway: E or F train to 23rd-Ely Avenue, #7 Flushing Line to Hunters Point, GG to Van Ast.
car: FROM MANHATTAN: Midtown Tunnel, exit 21st Street, cross Jackson Avenue. FROM QUEENS: LIE, exit Van
Dam, right to Thompson, left on Thompson, left on 21st. FROM BROOKLYN: BQE to LIE, see above. FROM BRONX:
Triboro Bridge to GCE to BQE, west on LIE, see above.

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VOICED OCTOBER 26, 1986

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series/Folder:
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FILM

P.S.1 FALL FILM SERIES

november 1 and 2

Chantal Akerman

NEWS FROM HOME (1977) 90 minutes

november 8 and 9

Peter Emanuel Goldman

PESTILENT CITY (1964) 15 minutes

ECHOES OF SILENCE (1964) 75 minutes

november 15 and 16 (*Super-8 Classics*)

Vivienne Dick

SHE HAD HER GUN ALL READY (1977) 28 minutes

James Nares

WAITING FOR THE WIND (1981) 12 minutes

John Jesurun

STELLA MARIS (1981) 30 minutes

november 22 and 23 (*Films of Oppression*)

Pacific Street Film Collective

RED SQUAD (1971) 45 minutes

Barbara Chang

AFTERMATH (1985) 21 minutes

Andy Anderson

POINT OF VIEW (1976) 30 minutes

curator: Tom Smith

ALL PROGRAMS BEGIN AT 1PM

Schedule subject to change without notice.

P.S.1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street, Long Island City 718-784-2084

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Thompson, left on 21st. FROM BRONX: LIE, exit 21st, left on 21st, left on

Thompson, left on 21st. FROM BRONX: LIE, exit 21st, left on 21st, left on

Thompson, left on 21st. FROM BRONX: LIE, exit 21st, left on 21st, left on

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VOICE NOVEMBER 4, 1986

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Please include in your listings:

JOHN MCCRACKEN: HEROIC STANCE
October 26 through December 21, 1986
at P.S. 1
46-01 21st St.
Long Island City, NY 11101
(718) 784-2084

Hours: 12-6pm, Wednesday through Sunday
Curated by Edward Leffingwell
Opening: October 26, 2-6pm

Also include:

FALL EXHIBITION 1986 at P.S. 1

John McCracken: Heroic Stance, curated by Edward Leffingwell

Preview: Eight French Painters

Pierre Antonucci
Christophe Boutin
Pascal Brunart
Philippe Cognée
Helene Delprat
Bruno Dufourmantelle
Adrienne Farb
Patrice Giorda

Sue Coe: Malcolm X Series

Special Projects
Manuel Macarrulla
Stephen Pusey
Marilyn Reynolds

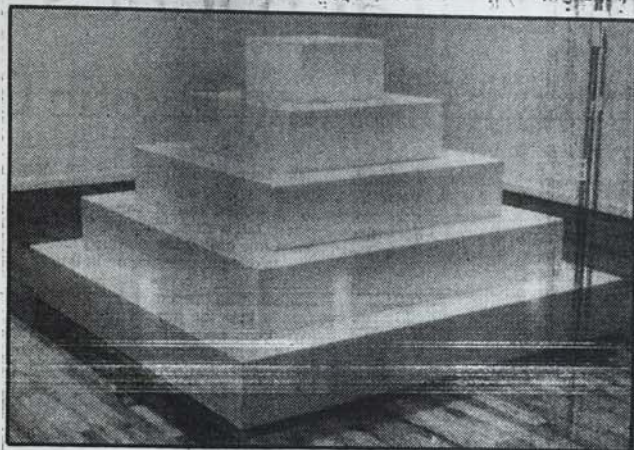
Building Machines, curated by Glenn Weiss
Neil DeNari
Kenneth Kaplan
Peter Pfau
Wes Jones
Ted Krueger
Chris Scholz

All exhibitions open October 26 through December 21, 1986
at P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City, NY 11101
Hours: 12-6 pm, Wednesday through Sunday 12-6 pm
Opening: October 26, 2-6pm

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1986

Art: John McCracken, 20 Years of Sculpture



"Yellow Pyramid" (1965) is among works by John McCracken in show at P.S. 1, located at 46-01 21st Street in Long Island City.

By MICHAEL BRENSON

JOHN MCCrackEN has been welcomed back to New York in style. The 52-year-old artist was nationally known in the late 1960's and early 1970's, when his smoothly finished, monochromatic planks, resting upright against walls like adaptable doors, helped define the Minimalist esthetic. But McCracken all but disappeared from view in the mid-70's, when he left New York and returned to his native California, and the general impression has been that his best work was past.

"John McCracken: Heroic Stance, a Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986," at P.S. 1 in Long Island City through Dec. 21, argues, on the contrary, that the artist has continued to grow and that his work is particularly relevant now. The smooth surfaces and box shapes of some rectangular wall pieces do suggest the abstract paintings of a highly visible younger artist like Ashley Bickerton. McCracken's architectural, nonfunctional objects do provide something of a perspective on the current concern with the relationship between art and design.

The exhibition was organized by Edward Leffingwell, P.S. 1's chief curator, who knew McCracken when he was in the spotlight and who remains unusually receptive to reductive art of the 60's that can speak to the 80's, with its tolerance if not need for excess. The 55 works include 30 planks that leave no doubt about McCracken's commitment both to a serial approach and to the independence of each series member. The 1965 "Yellow Pyramid," with its five progressively smaller yellow boxes placed one on top of another, plays against its cubic, white-walled space like an accordion. Although McCracken's sculpture grew out of his painting, there are only three paintings in the show, all from 1973 and they all suggest an identity with the carefree dependence of clouds.

What sustains the vitality of McCracken's work are the tensions within it. McCracken wants a dynamic equilibrium between figure and ground: the sculptural object must maintain its integrity and it must be defined by its environment. He also wants a continuing play between positive and negative. His objects are positive shapes occupying space; but when we look into the glistening surfaces of his cubes and rectangles, we see not sculptural mass but reflections of ourselves and everything around us.

The links with early modernism go beyond the Minimalist rethinking of principles of Cubist space. There is a strong sense of availability in McCracken's work. The surfaces make objects seem like blank slates. The planks and cubes seem to be building blocks waiting to be used. But the objects also have an inviolable integrity that is due in part to the way the smooth Fiberglas skin has been pulled tight over the plywood frames. The combination of openness and inviolability leads back to Picasso's women and to Cubism and Surrealism. The way these planks, so ready and yet so closed, lean against walls, also reminds us of the longtime artistic fascination with ladies of the night.

The only works in which McCracken begins to challenge the Minimalist faith are two installations made especially for this show. One consists of 10 planks, each 10 feet tall by 2 feet wide, arranged around a room. All are painted, but the paint is scumbled and the surfaces are not polished. The objects, therefore, absorb rather than reflect light, which helps give them a physicality and illusionistic presence that McCracken has largely avoided. These planks loom over us like ancestral figures and line the walls like sculptural guardians.

McCracken is even more assertive in his installation of seven thick, white rectangular columns. The columns are hollow and made of wood so they seem light, but their bulk fills the room, creating a maze analogous to the mazes created by the play of reflections in other galleries. The columns produce shadows on the wall in the shapes of mesas and step pyramids that remind us how important landscape and ancient sculpture have been to McCracken's work all along. The need to blur the boundaries between painting and sculpture that was so crucial in the 60's is less important here. The installations offer McCracken a road out of the 60's, where the other works in the show are content to remain.

The exhibition is sponsored in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. After closing at P.S. 1, at 46-01 21st Street in Long Island City, Queens, it will travel to Newport Beach, Calif., Houston and Oakland.

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The New York Times

ARTS AND LEISURE

Sculpture Breaks the Mold Of Minimalism

By MICHAEL BRENSON

This has been a November to remember for sculpture. There may never have been as many good sculpture shows in one city at one time. Together they sum up the last 25 years. And they suggest that sculpture in the United States is at its most critical juncture since Minimalism, with its hard edges, seamless surfaces and primary forms, charted a new, American sculptural course and in the process boxed and walled in every alternative.

The boxes and walls have opened up. The hard skin has been broken and the currents

terials and the freedom to know how to use them. It has the potential for abstraction, and it can once again tap human and psychological depths that are only available through the human figure. Right now it is in sculpture that the art world is most likely to find the scope, the lack of dogmatism and the sense of possibility it needs.

The present sculptural situation is far more than just a bubbly, effervescent pluralism in which everyone drinks to everyone else's health. There is a high level of accomplishment in almost every sculptural area. There is also an involvement with big issues — technology and nature, Europe and America, the artist as maker and product. In sculpture

sealed inside have begun to roar and swell. The skin itself has changed. It is now made of organic as well as industrial materials, and it can be molded by hand as well as fabricated by machine. And, not surprisingly, that skin may once again take human shape.

There is a human and artistic breadth in sculpture that right now does not exist in any other medium. Painting has become so saturated with rhetoric and theory that it is almost impossible for younger painters in New York to think big. Conceptual Art, as indispensable as it is, lends itself to hard, sharp insights that can never be embodied enough to make us feel connected to people and things with which it is concerned. Sculpture has benefited from its isolation. It has been able to follow its own drummer and take its time, and it has no such limits.

Indeed sculpture now seems to have everything it needs. It has the pictorial as well as the sculptural, the physical as well as the conceptual. It has a dizzying diversity of ma-

as a whole, there is the beginning of a will to synthesis that for a long time has not even been the stuff of dreams.

We are a long way from Minimalism. There will always be respect for the Minimalist ability to shift the focus from the sculptural interior that was central to traditional sculpture and define the object in terms of its environment. But the resulting rejection of interiority in sculpture — with all that the interior means as a metaphor for the inner life — has been repressive. And in the internationalism of the 1980's, Minimalism's once liberating repudiation of Europe seems restrictive and even provincial. Furthermore, the 1960's faith in technological salvation, which was reflected in the Minimalist preference for industrial materials, is no longer widely shared.

Steve Currie, who is having his first solo show at the Grace Borgenicht Gallery (through Wednesday), is representative of a number of sculptors of his generation. His reliefs and free-standing objects are attempts to balance technology and nature, respect for the sculptural surface and respect for the life inside it. His "Harrow" suggests both a natural shape, like a crescent moon, and a tool. If his

Continued on Page 33

Sunday November 23, 1986
Section 2

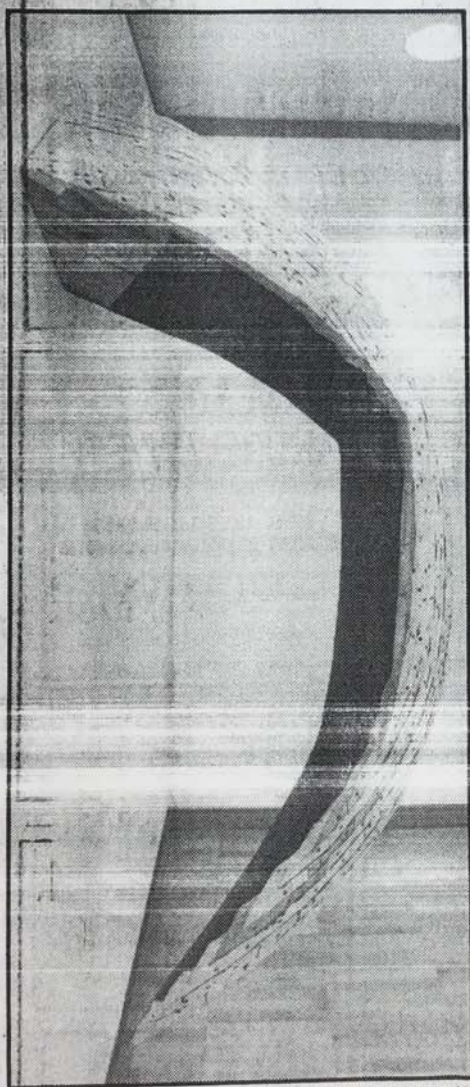
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Sculpture Breaks the Mold of Minimalism

Continued from Page 1

"Tusk" has a hard Minimalist shell, it also has an interior; inside the pincers is a miniature amphitheater. One side of Currie's sculptures is usually wood, meticulously pieced together so that the object may fan out illusionistically like a budding flower. But the other side may be lead, which stops movement cold. The freshness of the work comes from the intelligence with which radically different perspectives are joined together.

Joel Shapiro is as responsible as anyone for the shift from a reductive to a synthetic approach — from an approach that defines art in terms of its architectural environment to one that can consider the environment without sacrificing the rich, rowdy texture of life within it. He took the basic vocabulary of Minimalism and bit by bit expanded it to include more and more of what Minimalism left out. Minimalism was abstract. Shapiro made little houses. Then he made people. The wood and bronze blocks



Steve Currie's "Slice No. 2" at the Borgenicht Gallery—His objects attempt to balance technology and nature.

in his current show at the Paula Cooper Gallery (through Dec. 6) carry on like acrobats and clowns and gesticulate like revelers and mourners. The show includes references to European art, from Greece on. There is also more experimentation with verticality and a more complex sprawling and tumbling about on the floor. Shapiro uses the building blocks of Minimalism to lead us to the circuses, dance halls and boulevards that are so much a part of modernist history.

The sculpture of Carol Hepper, one of seven artists in "The Sculptural Membrane," a group show at the Sculpture Center (through Dec. 3) reflects a widespread need to get beyond the struggle between the call of the wild and the pull towards a utopian future that has been waged throughout 20th-century art. Hepper grew up in South Dakota and moved to New York last year. Her rolling wooden armatures wrapped in deer hide and fish skin form something of a hymn to restless, frontier movement. But her sculptural shapes also come out of Constructivism, which used synthetic materials and placed its faith in science. Hepper's works wrestle with that faith, but they also hold onto it, unwilling to relinquish it completely.

If there is a single polemical gesture that has crystallized the present situation, it is the one made by William Tucker, formerly an articulate defender of a 1960's sculptural aesthetic. In his gallery show last year, he took one of the polemical statements of Minimalism, Robert Morris's 1965 "Untitled (L-Beams)," and turned it inside out. Morris's three large L's were large plywood blocks with no sense of weight or interior. Tucker's three L's are gymnasts, with surfaces like flesh rippling from the movement inside them. Morris's sculpture was rigorously abstract. Tucker's fills his rigorous geometry with figurative and organic associations.

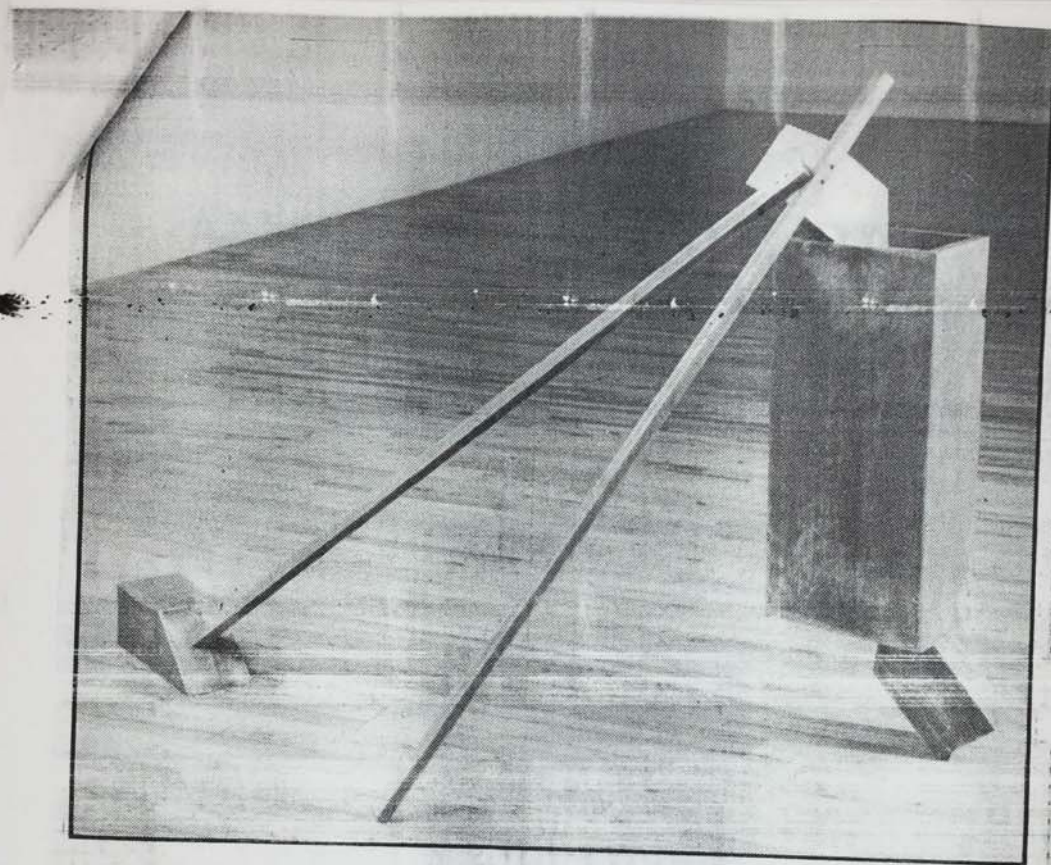
In the present sculptural situation, a great many developments and ideas have come together. They include the American tradition of sculptural involvement with the land that was established by Earthworks and Land Art. Both Arte Povera and contemporary English sculpture have offered alternatives to Minimalism, and both have been highly visible in New York during the last two years. The work of an English sculptor like Richard Deacon, who pours, screws and splashes together different materials in simple yet irrational constructions, has clearly left a mark on the new generation. Arte Povera's almost anarchic freedom with materials provides a foil to the rationalism of Minimalist structure. Sculpture in the United States, marked by the American romance with both nature and science, now needs both.

There are three distinguishing features of sculpture now. One is the diversity of, and freedom with, materials. Wood and bronze, which were all but banned from mainstream art in the 1960's and 70's, are everywhere. Scott Richter and Robin Hill are two of the many sculptors who build their simple, suggestive shapes with beeswax. There is a growing interest in glass, which is used in very different ways by Howard Ben Tré (at the Charles Cowles Gallery through Saturday), Christopher Wilmarth (at the Hirsh and Adler Modern Gallery through Dec. 3) and Nicholas Africano (at the Holly Solomon Gallery through Saturday).

The influential Martin Puryear weaves together all kinds of materials in his wonderfully clear yet allusive works, and in his hands each material represents a different thematic and cultural thread. No sculptor has been more successful in taking pure shapes like circles and cones and restoring to them an elemental mystery. In the sculptures of Jonathan Silver (at the Gruenebaum Gallery through Dec. 24) any approach to any material is possible. Almost anything from the plaster and bronze casting process can end up in a work.

No less fundamental is the attack on the authority of the sculptural skin. The machine-made surfaces of Minimalism tended to be smooth and inviolable. In the work of sculptors shaped by the 1960's such as John Duff (at the Blum Helman Gallery through Saturday) and John McCracken (at P.S. 1 through Dec. 21), Fiberglas skins are sealed tight around sculptural armatures. For Richard Long (at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum through next Sunday) disrupting the surface of the earth or the walls or floor of a gallery would constitute a moral violation. For almost all the artists who found the faith in

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An untitled bronze by Joel Shapiro—The wood and bronze blocks in his show at the Cooper Gallery carry on like acrobats and clowns and gesticulate like revelers.

the 1960's, violating the sculpture surface is still taboo.

But if the declaration of this authority was crucial once—a way of freeing art from illusionism, composition and the artist's hand, all of which were identified with European art—the authority inevitably became tyrannical. Long's and McCracken's attention to surface now seems as much a statement of protection as a statement of openness, as much denial as conviction.

In recent years sculptors have been trying to get inside, underneath or behind that skin. What they have found there can be strange and surprising. While Long glides along the surface of the earth, the magical effigies of Petah Coyne look as if they had been plucked out of it. In his "Blind Horn," now at the Cooper Gallery, Creighton Michael seems to have gone inside a steel "Curve" of Ellsworth Kelly and found inside both a prison cell and a stained-glass window. After years of maintaining the surface integrity of his forged steel bars, Alain Kirili ripped the top off a forged aluminum bar that he contributed to a recent group show. What he found inside was as exposed and bristling as raw nerves.

Once the sculptural skin could be opened up, different sensibilities could emerge. The imposing surfaces of Minimalism were well suited to a very American, male sensibility. The emphasis was on power and mind. Feeling, however explosive, could only be expressed with the support of a hard, impersonal facade. If this led to works of impressive intelligence and conviction, it also led sculpture into Hemingway country, and a lot of people are not at home there.

The historical figure chosen by the curator Douglas Dreishpoon to preside over "The Sculptural Membrane"

is Lee Bontecou. In the 1960's she used the primary shapes of Minimalism, but opened them up and exposed something dark and irrational inside. There are other women sculptors essential to sculpture now, notably Eva Hesse and Louise Bourgeois. The face of Minimalist sculpture is a mask. The fabrics of Hesse and the plasters and stones of Bourgeois can leave everyone in their presence feeling emotionally naked. With the disruption of its seamless surface, sculpture has regained the potential for sustained emotional and psychological investigation.

The third distinguishing feature is the return of the human figure. It has been overlooked in the

recent work of the former Minimalist Ronald Bladen, and it is in the sculpture of Michael Gitlin, whose gestural, rubbed reliefs also evolve from austere, abstract beginnings. The human figure appears in the sculpture of John Monti, one of many sculptors for whom the human figure is viable again because of the example of tribal art. There is a fascinating concern with the human torso that touches the recent work of sculptors as different as Scott Richter, Beverly Fishman, Joel Shapiro and Judith Shea.

One of the few sculptors who has been able to deal with the whole human figure in a way that is neither anecdotal nor academic is Jonathan Silver. One reason is that his figures are at the same time modeled, assembled and constructed. Another is that they are rarely built outward from a central core. They seem rather to have been pieced and added together. As irrational as the figures seem, the parts always somehow cohere.

And as different as its many parts may be, contemporary sculpture in this country may itself be a new whole. ■

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NOVEMBER 5-11
AN OPINIONATED SURVEY
OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS
EDITED BY GUY TREBAY

ART

John McCracken: This eye-opening survey of McCracken's sculpture from 1965 to 1986 exposes the pink underbelly of Minimalism: glossy lavender blocks, a sunshine yellow step pyramid, and a whole spectrum of plastic fantastic planks by this finish fetishist from L.A. His surfaces are heartless and perfect—a match for Judd and a new ancestor for this season's geometric Neoists. Through December 21, P.S. 1, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, 718-784-2084. (Levin)

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main exhibition
JOHN McCracken: HEROIC STANCE
A Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986
Curator: Edward Leffingwell

special projects

Sue Coe:
The Malcolm X Series
Manuel Macarrulla
Stephen Pusey
Marilyn Reynolds

PREVIEW: NINE
FRENCH PAINTERS
Jean Michel Alberola
Pierre Antonucci
Pascal Brunard
Philippe Cognée
Hélène Delprat
Bruno Dufourmantelle

Adrienne Farb
Bernard Frize
Patrice Giorda

architecture
BUILDING MACHINES
Neil Denari
Wes Jones
Kenneth Kaplan
Ted Krueger
Peter Pfau
Chris Scholz
Curator: Glenn Weiss

sound

Larry Miller: *Accord*
Curator: Nicolas Collins

video

Kathryn High: *The Monk*
Curator: Matthew Geier

**permanent
installations**

James Turrell: *Meeting*
Richard Serra
by appointment only

Richard Thatcher

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P.S.1 FALL 1986
OCTOBER 26 - DECEMBER 21

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Art in America

April 1987

Review of Exhibitions

John McCracken
at P.S. 1

John McCracken's planks, similar in proportion to the ubiquitous monolith in 2001, have become a paradigm of drastic Minimalism. Since the mid-'60s, this Californian has put his propped plank through its paces—textural, tonal, proportional, numerical. Consequently, the somewhat overdue mid-career survey presented at P.S. 1—"John McCracken: Heroic Stance, A Survey of Sculpture 1965-1986"—proved instructive in that it revealed the surprising variety of his geometric volumes. The show also underscored the optimism behind McCracken's esthetic; indeed, in the exhibition essay (printed on a 3-foot-long poster die-cut to resemble a leaning plank), Edward Leffingwell quotes the artist as saying, "It seems to me that a sculpture can have a stance that can indicate that it knows of, say, a great future, rather than only knowing of a negative future, or knowing of a continuation of what already exists." (This essay is included in the catalogue which accompanies a some-

what expanded version of the show, now at the Newport Harbor Art Museum [to May 10].)

McCracken's work from the past 20 years can be divided into two general groups: the "figural" planks and the more objectlike pedestal works. The leaning planks do not meet flush with either the floor or wall; as Leffingwell notes, were this the case the resulting alignment would suggest bars of color passing through and out of the room. Instead, the square-cut foot and top reassert the plank's specific limits—and, by implication, its very physicality—and this prosaically roots the otherwise shimmering volume of color in the same space we inhabit. McCracken's planks have always had an emphatic presence, a state the artist refers to as being "in the world."

At the same time, McCracken's plank pieces manage to retain a strong measure of otherworldliness. Generally larger than human scale (many are ten feet tall), the planks reach for "heroic" dimensions via their taut geometry. The chromatic unity of each plank does much to render it weightless even as the leaning position stresses its existence in a gravity-bound world.

The ten new planks at P.S. 1—made specifically for the show—differed in surface texture from past planks. While still stretching fiberglass around plywood supports, McCracken has moved from the highly reflective exterior mediums of polished lacquer and polyester to Varathane and oil paints, the latter applied

in a scumbled fashion providing direct evidence of the artist's hand. This is not to say that light is not still a major McCracken concern: all his newest planks take the Latin names of stars and constellations.

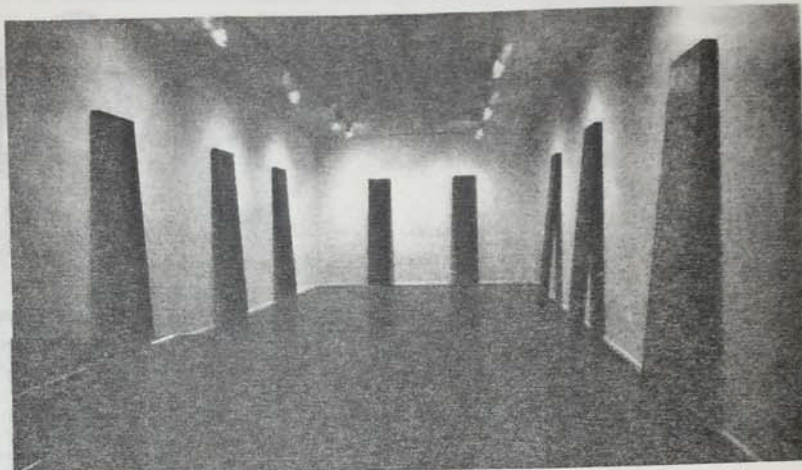
Among McCracken's pedestal works exhibited were pieces from the late '60s, compact blocks in shades of monochromatic pink, red, white and black, ranging in size from 8 by 10 by 10 to 35 by 42 by 10 inches. Leffingwell compares the scale of some of these pieces to that of household appliances; you do, in fact, get the urge to plug some of them in. For that matter, they would also make fine geometric housepets for the planks. Less open to association were several works based on pure, "pre-existing" geometric forms, among them a 4 by 6 by 6 foot yellow ziggurat in five graded sections and a smaller orange pyramid (both from 1973).

A less familiar example of McCracken's work in this survey were some pages from his notebooks, mounted under plexiglass. Through sketches and written entries unfettered by doubt or self-recrimination, the artist revealed some of the sunny purposefulness of his thoughts. There was also a large, site-specific installation consisting of seven white columns—a reinvestigation for the P.S. 1 space of an architectural and spatial idea first articulated in 1968. Four feet square, ten feet high, and fashioned out of painted plywood, the columns looked a little

shabby compared to even the most banged-up of the older fiberglass sculptures. Yet they held the room with their imperial proportions softened by crowns of light reflecting from the columns' hidden, painted tops (an effect created by aimed floodlights).

The columns are as close as McCracken gets to the illusionistic, dematerializing art of, say, James Turrell, Eric Orr or Robert Irwin. Nonetheless, he shares their interest in turning viewers' perceptions of real things and phenomena towards the metaphysical. It is as if the dark reductivism of Reinhardt had been pulled through a keyhole into a world illuminated with possibility.

—Stephen Westfall



View of works by John McCracken, all 1966, oil and fiberglass, 120 inches high; at P.S. 1 (review on p.214).

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NEW YORK

\$1.95 • NOVEMBER 17, 1986

Art/Kay Larson

CALIFORNIA IN THE MID-1960s was an artists' paradise, though no one knew it. *Artforum*, born in California in 1962, had not yet moved to New York, and home rule lent a never-to-be-equalled autonomy to the art community. Light and space, neither of which New York has, were the foundations of West Coast experience. Art, not careerism, was what mattered. Out of the peaceful palm-lined silence emerged an "L.A. School" focused on solidity and finish.

John McCracken was a member in good standing of this West Coast academy. If you ask why a retrospective of his work is currently at P.S. 1, I suspect the answer is nostalgia, since there is only one other rationale imaginable. Nothing about his glossy geometry is revolutionary now, and it looked a little derivative even then—too much in debt to the heroes (Kenneth Noland, Donald Judd, Mark Rothko, "Egyptian architecture") he lists here in a drawing. He was a craftsman in the sixties, when craftsmanship more than mattered; it was the functional expressionism of its times. And therein lies the other reason for his presence: as an object lesson to this age of Neoism.

If so, it's a curious lesson, one that seems to have been picked with a pin from the *Artforum* index. In 1966, and well into the 1970s, McCracken cast fiberglass and resin around plywood forms—boxes anywhere from several inches to several feet high, and head-high slabs leaning against the wall—to create a three-dimensional support for a field of lustrous color.

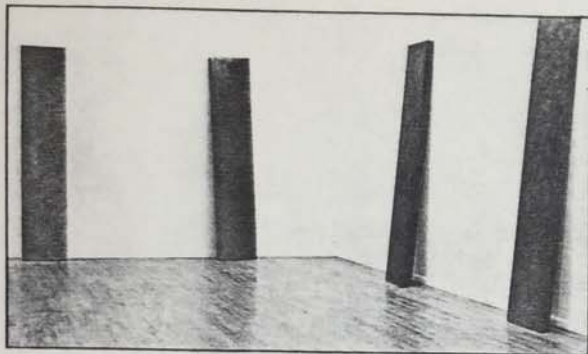
The standard riff is that McCracken's work mediates between sculpture and painting. There are pleasant surprises, now that these silent forms have been saved from the oblivion of art-magazine reproduction. I hadn't realized how intense is their affinity with hard white light. They locate and focus light within color, which then becomes a radiant beacon, a thing-in-itself, brilliant and beautiful. The passage from light (the south side of P.S. 1) to darkness (the north side) unhinges them.

But as a counterpoint to Neo-Geo, Neo-Op, and the other neoisms of the moment, why pick McCracken? The idea, perhaps, is that McCracken's minimalism is so utterly physical, so perceptually fine-tuned, so *moral*. The solidity of the real thing (even the bargain-basement variety) makes Neoism look like a phantom of the media. But Neoism *means* to be a phantom, a conceptual coup on the modernist academy. So where's the point? (46-01 21st Street, Long Island City; through December 21.)

UPSTAIRS AT P.S. 1, Sue Coe is in FIERCE form. Coe emerged from the gloom of the Lower East Side several years ago, on her way from England to provoke whatever is left of the conscience of America. She is hardly one to shy from agitprop—the life of Malcolm X gets a thoroughly rousing and reverential apotheosis in a drawing-and-painting cycle that consumes half the show—but hers is a voice that admirably refuses to be stilled, and to hell with Age of Reagan angst or Neoist affectation.

Coe draws like a banshee, so it's a disappointment to see her losing her way in oil paint, as she does whenever she wanders from the intimacy of pencil and charcoal on paper. She has had to invent a new form for herself—somewhere between political cartooning and history painting, as Donald Kuspit accurately describes it—but the ambitions of this enterprise may yet undermine her. A satirist must stay in fighting trim; Coe's searing blacks and grim reds are her most savage instrument. Her subjects—race war, rape, the homeless, the victimized, the political prisoner—are simplistic, but her obvious anger usually saves them. She falters when she betrays a British knee-jerk radicalism that, for instance, blames the bosses: Botha, Reagan, Thatcher. This age desperately needs its Daumier, but it will not listen to a mere propagandist. (Through December 21.)

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John McCracken, Installation View, 1986.
Courtesy P.S. 1.

of meaning it sought. (P.S.1, October 26 - December 21)



JOHN McCracken P.S.1
JAMIE REID Josh Baer

By DAVID R. LURIE

JOHN McCracken

According to Rosalind Krauss, "the ambition of minimalism was ... to relocate the origins of a sculpture's meaning to the outside, no longer modeling its structure on the privacy of psychological space, but on the conventional nature of what might be called cultural space." Minimalism rejected the previously dominant notion of art objects as "testimony for the artist's inner inviolable self." Art objects emphasizing internal composition and differentiation from their physical surroundings were viewed as metaphorical representations of the autonomous artist, confirmations of his or her independence from the context of social life. Rather than conceiving of art objects as windows into the psychological experiences of their creators, endowed with "a kind of intentional or private center,"

minimalist sculptors sought to invent an art practice directed toward "the public world of experience." These artists attempted to draw attention to the "externality" of the sculptural object — its relation to the particular physical space in which it is placed and the viewer's activity of perception as he/she moves through the gallery space. Rather than creating art objects insulated by frame or other device from the "literal space" in which they are situated, minimalism takes that space and the experience of apprehending it as its central subject matter.

John McCracken's plank pieces are emblematic of the minimalist project. According to notes from the artist's sketchbooks of the early 1960s (also on display in this retrospective exhibition), the planks developed as attempts to make objects that were the "essence of the man made world." Like Tony Smith, McCracken de-

rived his forms from observations of architectural space and the experience of moving through it. By "slicing away" at given architectural forms he arrived at a simplified formal vocabulary of square and rectangular blocks, pyramids, and planks.

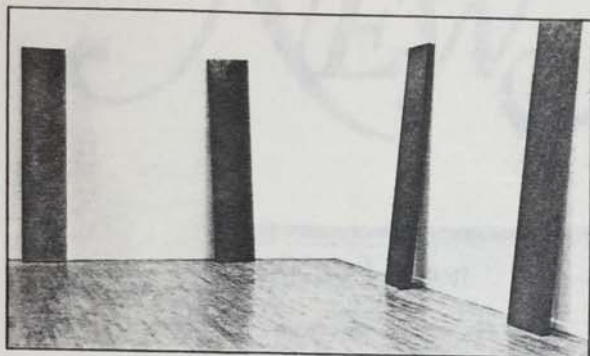
The attempt to make the physical placement of his sculptures and the viewer's activity of apprehending them the works' content was further served by McCracken's decision to make his pieces reflective. The floor, the lights, and the viewer him/herself might each be reflected as an individual examined the sculptures. The artworks were "actual objects," like the surrounding walls and floors; their integration into the architectural space was motivated by an attempt to redirect the viewer's attention toward his/her own cognitive activity.

If McCracken's work has always involved an examination of the conditions of context and cognition that places it in the minimalist mainstream, it is differentiated from that mainstream by its use of color. In the mid-1960s, the artist described his use of color (ranging from fluorescent to various shades of black) as

"structural," thereby distinguishing his work from that of painters such as Olitski and Louis. However, McCracken did not share the unambiguous aversion of sculptors such as Morris and Judd to the practice of painting. Where Morris described wall hanging as a "timid resistance to gravity" and a refusal to confront the space of experience being addressed by minimalist sculpture, McCracken continued to make paintings even as he constructed his sculptural objects.

The co-existence in McCracken's work of the conventions of painting and minimalist sculpture is less troubling now than it might have been twenty years ago. The notion of the art object as "a kind of intentional or private center" continues to be assailed. But minimalist sculpture now seems invested with the same hermeticism and aloofness from the "world of experience" as the work it supplanted. By integrating painting and its concern with internal composition into his sculptural practice, McCracken blurs the minimalist break with previous art practice and hints at the failure of minimalist sculpture to achieve the absolute externality

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John McCracken, Installation View, 1986.
Courtesy P.S. 1.

of meaning it sought. (P.S.1, October 26 - December 21)



JOHN McCracken P.S.1
JAMIE REID Josh Baer

By **DAVID R. LURIE**

JOHN McCracken

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NEW YORK

\$1.95 • NOVEMBER 17, 1986

Art/Kay Larson

CALIFORNIA IN THE MID-1960S was an artists' paradise, though no one knew it. *Artforum*, born in California in 1962, had not yet moved to New York, and home rule lent a never-to-be-equalled autonomy to the art community. Light and space, neither of which New York has, were the foundations of West Coast experience. Art, not careerism, was what mattered. Out of the peaceful palm-lined silence emerged an "L.A. School" focused on solidity and finish.

John McCracken was a member in good standing of this West Coast academy. If you ask why a retrospective of his work is currently at P.S. 1, I suspect the answer is nostalgia, since there is only one other rationale imaginable. Nothing about his glossy geometry is revolutionary now, and it looked a little derivative even then—too much in debt to the heroes (Kenneth Noland, Donald Judd, Mark Rothko, "Egyptian architecture") he lists here in a drawing. He was a craftsman in the sixties, when craftsmanship more than mattered; it was the functional expressionism of its times. And therein lies the other reason for his presence: as an object lesson to this age of Neoism.

If so, it's a curious lesson, one that seems to have been picked with a pin from the *Artforum* index. In 1966, and well into the 1970s, McCracken cast fiberglass and resin around plywood forms—boxes anywhere from several inches to several feet high, and head-high slabs leaning against the wall—to create a three-dimensional support for a field of lustrous color.

The standard riff is that McCracken's work mediates between sculpture and painting. There are pleasant surprises, now that these silent forms have been saved from the oblivion of art-magazine reproduction. I hadn't realized how intense is their affinity with hard white light. They locate and focus light within color, which then becomes a radiant beacon, a thing-in-itself, brilliant and beautiful. The passage from light (the south side of P.S. 1) to darkness (the north side) unhinges them.

But as a counterpoint to Neo-Geo, Neo-Op, and the other neoisms of the moment, why pick McCracken? The idea, perhaps, is that McCracken's minimalism is so utterly physical, so perceptually fine-tuned, so *moral*. The solidity of the real thing (even the bargain-basement variety) makes Neoism look like a phantom of the media. But Neoism *means* to be a phantom, a conceptual coup on the modernist academy. So where's the point? (46-01 21st Street, Long Island City; through December 21.)

UPSTAIRS AT P.S. 1, Sue Coe IS IN FIERCE form. Coe emerged from the gloom of the Lower East Side several years ago, on her way from England to provoke whatever is left of the conscience of America. She is hardly one to shy from agitprop—the life of Malcolm X gets a thoroughly rousing and reverential apotheosis in a drawing-and-painting cycle that consumes half the show—but hers is a voice that admirably refuses to be stilled, and to hell with Age of Reagan angst or Neoist affectation.

Coe draws like a banshee, so it's a disappointment to see her losing her way in oil paint, as she does whenever she wanders from the intimacy of pencil and charcoal on paper. She has had to invent a new form for herself—somewhere between political cartooning and history painting, as Donald Kuspit accurately describes it—but the ambitions of this enterprise may yet undermine her. A satirist must stay in fighting trim; Coe's searing blacks and grim reds are her most savage instrument. Her subjects—race war, rape, the homeless, the victimized, the political prisoner—are simplistic, but her obvious anger usually saves them. She falters when she betrays a British knee-jerk radicalism that, for instance, blames the bosses: Botha, Reagan, Thatcher. This age desperately needs its Daumier, but it will not listen to a mere propagandist. (Through December 21.)

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Houston Chronicle
Zest section
Sunday, June 21, 1987

4F / The Houston Post/Sun., June 21, 1987

McCracken sculpture: CAM takes a 'Heroic Stance'

John McCracken is a Los Angeles sculptor who experienced considerable success in the mid-60s. While still a student at the California College of Arts and Crafts in the Bay Area,

McCracken burst into prominence during the most fertile period of the California light artists and the so-called "fetish-finish" school of minimalist sculptors.

McCracken, now 52, was concerned with light, surface and space, interests he shared with other Southern California artists such as Billy Al Bengston, Larry Bell, Robert Irwin and James Turrell. His simple, geometric forms — glossy, highly reflective cubes, planks, pyramids and bars in primary and secondary colors — were critically acclaimed, shown and collected extensively until about 1972, when the attention stopped.

In recent years, however, McCracken has had something of a revival and P.S. 1, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources in New York City, has organized a retrospective exhibit of McCracken's work. A selection of 17 sculptures from that show, titled *Heroic Stance: The Sculpture of John McCracken 1965-1986*, is now on view at the Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd., through June 28. It is the first solo museum exhibit for McCracken and the first time his work has been shown in the Southwest.

For those who do not respond immediately to a cool, minimalist aesthetic, McCracken's highly reductive "single things," as he calls them, may not be easy to adapt to. Moreover, the somewhat cramped show is buried in the windowless downstairs Perspectives Gallery so that the liquid surfaces of the work do not respond and dissolve as naturally as they should.

The sculptures are made of polyester resin or lacquer on fiberglass and plywood. The planks, in particular, are reminiscent of surfboards. The materials, however, are immaterial to the work.

"I think of color as being the structural material I use to build the forms I'm interested in," says McCracken. What we have here

**Susan
Chadwick
ART**



are pure expressions of color and form — not irregular organic forms but human-created forms. And it is in contemplation of pure color in solid, monolithic form that McCracken's Platonic objects begin to speak.

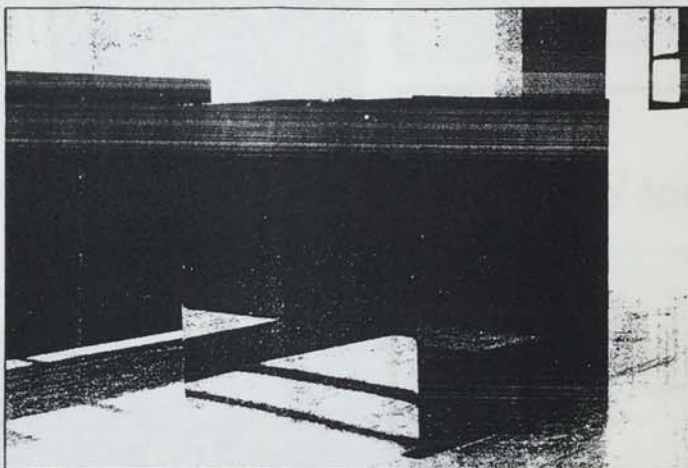
The tall planks, in varying widths, come in red, yellow, blue, orange, black, as well as mixed colors. I like the black ("Untitled," 1983). Its pure blackness in this shape has a character of obstinance, forcefulness and determined monumentality. "Orange Wall Relief," 1973, has a quality of orange-ness that I hadn't perceived before, an exuberance and joyousness. "Untitled (White Particles/Black)," 1974, is flecked with white-like stars, which give the oblong wall panel an infinite depth like the heavens.

The planks and bars are free-standing and lean against the walls, which is at first puzzling until one begins to think of them in humanistic terms. McCracken's sculptures are his "heroes and heroines." The planks and bars relate to the room. They are not just hung there or anywhere. They are dependent on the walls and the floor.

"It seems to me that a sculpture can have a stance that can indicate it knows of, say, a great future, rather than knowing of only a negative future," says McCracken in the accompanying planned sticks in modeling paste and cast bronzes. — *Chuck Anderson*

The most striking pieces are the cut sticks imbedded in modeling paste. Set in a frame and hung on a wall, the flat, sanded down, inner surfaces of the sticks are almost flush with the soft, variously colored pastes. The rough, raw, grainy sticks create an unexpected surface gymnasium, juggling the eye this way and that, jamming up and releasing the movement of the picture.

"Hong Kong" also does violent, exciting things with the surface. A



Above, John McCracken's "Installation of Black Blocks at P.S. 1, New York." Right, Vernon Fisher's "Complementary Pairs."

large, squarish wall construction of red plywood, scored, jabbed and cut, it has a white wash that picks up the grain and contour of the plywood like a printer's block. Large shards and fragments of layered plywood, dashed with acrylic color, fly out of the surface and stick in the eye.

"Lies of Truth," another wall construction, has a different effect. With a smooth background and spotting painted surface, also scored and carved, it has a lightness and translucence about it. It recedes rather than projects.

Vernon Fisher, Serge Spitzer and Lucian Freud at Hiram Butler Gallery, 2318 Portsmouth.

Hiram Butler has mounted a diverse show of artists. Included are Vernon Fisher, one of Texas' foremost artists, Lucian Freud, grandson of Sigmund and Serge Spitzer, born in Bucharest and now living in New York, Jerusalem and Berlin.

Fisher, a 44-year-old Fort Worth artist, has painted one wall of the gallery blackboard black and created a didactic but moving mural. A globe with continents and overlapping textural fragments and illustrations from children's schoolbooks on science are drawn, smudged and partially erased in chalk.

"Across the picture plane Fisher has mounted four rows of white

clay models of teeth and gums, cadaverous and haunting. A white, torpedo-like form races toward the globe and in the lower right, painted in blood-red and white, is a familiar photographic view of soldiers wading across a stream. Titled "Complementary Pairs," the visually complex work seems to contrast the limited, simplistic lessons of objective science with the moral quandary and stark reality of

international war.

The 36-year-old Serge Spitzer creates architectural installations which extend, exaggerate and create a dialogue with the formal dimensions and a grid of the rooms in which they are built. This one, titled "Houston Relevator" is a black square wall that blocks off and binds up the round white column which supports the ceiling. A rug deepens the slanted angle of the gallery and ends in a black roll which reflects the column. The black wall is built straight so that it seems to float off the angle of the floor. Inside the black fortress, visible only partly through two improbable low-set square windows, is another white wall set flush with the floor so that it rises crookedly. Two round white lights are visible like peeking suns at the edges of the black structure.

Freud is a well-known British artist whose work was recently included in the "British Art in the 20th Century" exhibit at the Royal Academy in London. The exhibit here includes six paintings, nudes, portraits and a floral still-life. Freud's work is bold, voluptuous, moody and expressive. The picture of a male nude lying on his back on a couch is a startlingly confrontational picture.

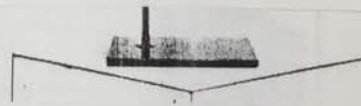
Laura Russell, recent sculpture and drawings, at Susanna Sheffield Gallery, 712 Sul Ross, through July 3.

Laura Russell's exuberant, colorful sculpture is well known to Houstonians. The artist, who had a solo exhibit at the Contemporary Arts Museum in 1983 and who recently donated a sculpture to the city at Intercontinental Airport in memory of art dealer Warren Hadler, has moved from plywood into cast bronze.

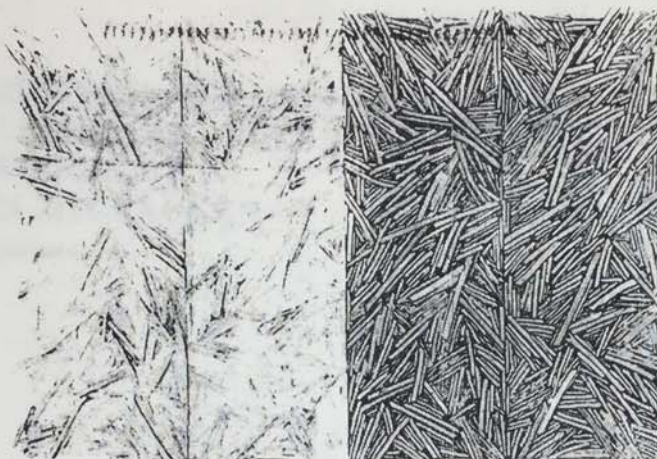
The work, full of rhythmic circular peels and intersecting planes, in this medium takes on a new weightiness and solidity. The colors now are earthy, aged metal tones with subdued patinas of green and red. Cracked and broken at the edges like the plywood from which they are made, the work has a marvelous texture and seems to fly and whirl despite its weight.

The show also includes 15 extraordinary, graphite-bis-sellum drawings that expose the circle.

these 1987 free-form and free-standing pieces, including *Schrodinger Draws a Cat* (To T.M.S.), will be on view at Susanna Sheffield Gallery through July 3, 512 Sul Ross, 526-2431; hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.



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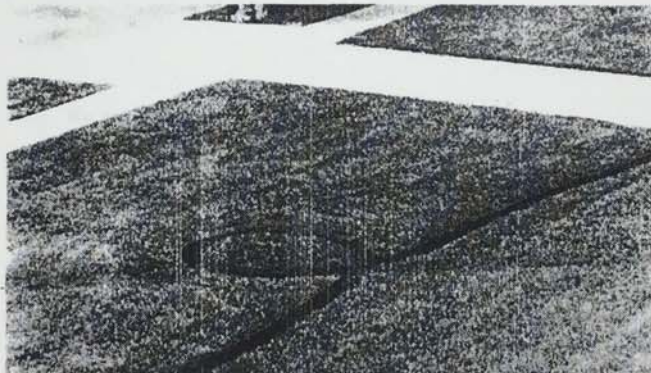


Houston Chronicle
Zest section
Sunday, June 21, 1987

Charles Arnoldi is renowned for wall-dependent "stick sculptures" in high relief and high-key color. The current exhibition of new work at Texas Gallery includes a number of these intense wall reliefs, but the 43-year-old sculptor is also exhibiting works like *Lifeline*, in which the coloration and composition are subtle and the surface has been flattened to a smooth plane. Arnoldi, who divides his time between California and New York, is also experimenting with bronze, and two works in that classical material, conceived fully in the round and with great presence, are included in the present show. On view through July 3, 2012 Peden, 524-1593; 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

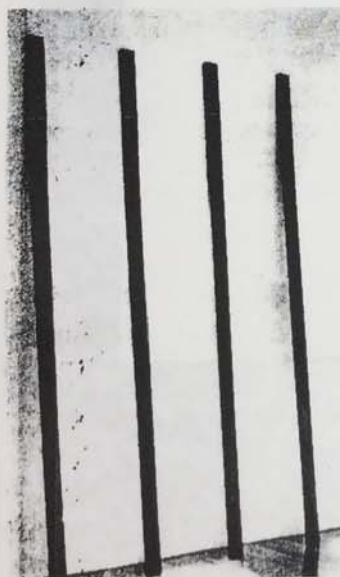
Plentitude of sculptures on tap for viewing around town

The earth-inspired piece by Michael Heizer (born 1944 in California) titled *Isolated Mass/Circumflex #2* (1968-1978), installed on the grounds of the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross, is one of the most lyrical sculptures in the city. The Mayan-R steel ribbon is embedded in the grass, and its 115-inch length intersects the sidewalk that leads to the museum's front door. It was conceived as an earthwork, number 9 of the *Nevada Depressions* that were carved in the Nevada desert, which were commissioned by the late New York collector, Robert Scull. *Circumflex #2* and two others from the series were cast in steel by the artist as independent sculptures.



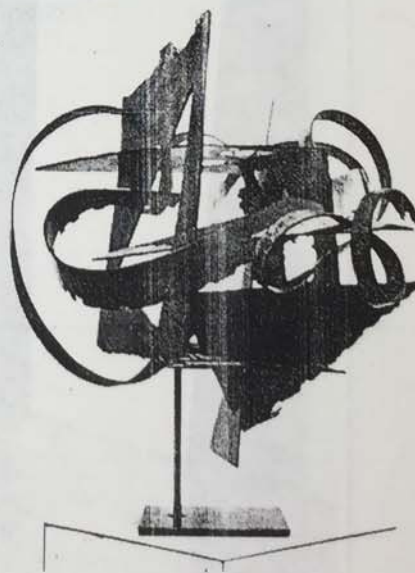
SCULPTURES have taken precedence this month in the galleries and even parts of Houston's landscape. They range from finicky to formal, frivolous to severe. The pictures on this page are a sample of what is to be found around town.

PATRICIA C. JOHNSON



John McCracken's black slabs of glossy polyester resin (1984) is an untitled sculpture included in his solo exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Museum. The show, organized by the P.S. 1 (New York) and arrogantly titled *Heroic Stance*, is a brief overview of this 53-year-old California sculptor's work from 1965 to the present. It will be on view through June 28 in the museum's Perspectives Gallery, 5216 Montrose Blvd., 526-1361. Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, noon-6 p.m. Sunday.

Laura Russell (born in 1949 in South Dakota) lived and exhibited frequently in Houston (including a Perspectives Gallery show at the CAM a few years ago) before moving to California last year. Like Arnoldi, she, too, is moving away from the torn and painted plywood works which gained her recognition and is working with traditional bronze. The small (average 21 inches high) sculptures are fabricated in plywood and cast in one piece in bronze which retains the splintered texture of its mold. Five of these 1987 free-form and free-standing pieces, including *Schrodinger Draws a Cat* (To T.M.S.), will be on view at Susanna Sheffield Gallery through July 3, 512 Sul Ross, 526-2431; hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.



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ARIS MAGAZINE January 1987

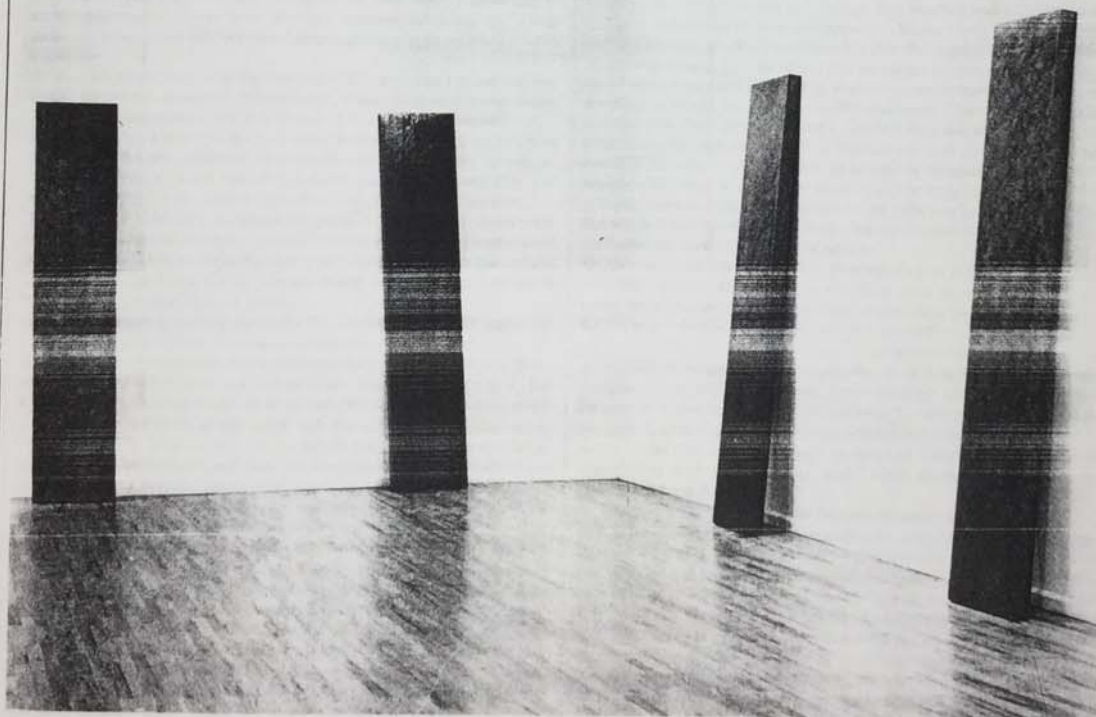
**SEMBLANCE AND RESIDUE:
SCULPTURE BY JOHN KNIGHT;
PAINTINGS BY
JOHN McCracken**

DAN CAMERON

The fact that Los Angeles' art community was swollen to perhaps thrice its normal size in early December — thanks, of course, to the simultaneous openings of the non-temporary MoCA and LACMA's new contemporary wing, as well as the first Los Angeles International Art Fair — did not go unnoticed by the New York denizens who stayed at home. For many years, it has gone without saying that Chicago, not LA, constituted the United States' "second city" when it came to the

We are learning to re-assess the California '60s for its treasure-lode of information about artificiality, about signs that lead to nowhere, and about the mercurial nature of object-lust.

John McCracken, Four oil and varathane paintings, 1980. Courtesy P.S. 1.



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great extent a situation of marketing. American art could be easily marketed and the market was here. In the meantime, people, let's say Tapes, had established a considerable price level on the European market and could no longer be introduced as a new talent in America. And I think this happened to a great many people. There was a great deal of chauvinism involved, a "Let's buy American" attitude. What's more, New York was not only the center, but the New York art world thought it was the *only* place, and anything that was not being produced there was considered out of the mainstream. The marketing, the selling and the consumption was to a very great extent determined by the dealers and by the most quoted critics, who were, at the time, concerned only with American artists. There were very few museum directors who exhibited European work. In fact, the three of us were practically the only ones.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Q: Your pieces, Mr. Chillida, look as if they were of a certain scale. Has it occurred to you how they would look if these same pieces were larger?

EC: This is a good question. Most of my work is done directly, but for several pieces, the big ones, I made drawings. I have a way to do this without losing the contact with the final version. For example, I have just now done a big work in Frankfurt, in the middle of the city, which was installed on October 17th. It is the *House of Goethe*. It is like a house and has the scale of a small house. During the whole period that I worked on this piece, I was concerned with the final rendition. The relation between scale and size is of prime importance. I knew before executing it, that the point in which the center of an arc was placed was at the level of the head of a person of medium height.

PS: The trouble I have in my classes all the time is that when we show slides, small paintings look gigantic and large pictures look small. The slides are always the same. The sense of scale is lacking and it is of truly extraordinary importance in Chillida's work. From the small, early pieces in iron and the later, small pieces in burnt clay, to the large and monumental works, the scale is very different. And the size is made to scale, as it were. The last thing you could do with a Chillida is to have a pointing machine to enlarge the sculpture. This would be totally impossible. There is an absolute craftsmanship and the whole idea, the whole concept, is related to the actual size in which the work appears.

Q: You are interested in doing something that you don't know yet, you work toward the unknown. Is this scary, frightening, to throw yourself out into the unknown? Are you afraid of facing the unknown?

EC: No, no, — I work to know. I want to know. When I am working then my works are questions. In a certain way they are like questions. And then when you are full of questions, you have proved that you want to go ahead in the territory you don't know. This is my answer.

TM: Which, incidentally, is almost the perfect definition of philosophy. You declined before the appellation of philosopher, but if I understand what a philosopher is, he is the one who asks questions in the area of the unknown, and that's what you are doing, admittedly in a different language, in the language of forms.

Q: What is the relationship between Mr. Chillida's work on paper, his two-dimensional pieces, and his sculpture?

EC: There is a lot of relationship between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. I draw in relation to the work I am going to do but I don't expect to know from the beginning the shape of the final work. I try to know the spirit of the work, develop it in time, to arrive at the end of the work. If you compare the finished sculpture with the drawings I have done before-hand, you can recognize many similarities but the shapes are not the same. The drawings are independent works, but related to the moment in which I was working.

PS: Then you do not make sketches for your work?

EC: Not really. Because the sketch is something that tries to approach the form, and I don't try to approach the form but I try to approach the language. Once the form is accomplished I would be a dead man working. If I decide to do something yesterday that I am doing tomorrow, I would be a dead man for these two days. I must use the present moment and I want to take possession of it.

Q: The controversy which is the most prominent in the news is about the Richard Serra piece. It is about an artist unwilling to let his design be seen by the public before the work is installed.

LA: Well, we're having a problem somewhat like that in Pittsburgh. An area was given to Mark di Suvero, who provided an off-hand sketch and said it would be something like this. It got the entire town in an uproar. It was sort of absurd because anybody who knows the way di Suvero works, knows he couldn't conceivably follow a sketch to begin with. I don't think you can hold a sculptor to a sketch any more than you could have asked Chillida to provide a sketch for the *Windcombs*. Look how many years it took him to create it. What I'm trying to say is for the true evolution of a work, you must have belief in the artist and just hope that it will succeed.

Q: Is this one of the impediments to placing a Chillida in American public spaces? Is the public demanding to see in advance what it will have?

PS: Well, the public needs to be educated not to ask that. I really mean that. You cannot get good public sculpture by popular vote. Art is not that democratic.

Q: You have worked in so many materials, in iron, in steel, in wood, in alabaster, in clay and so on. What is the process that makes you decide what material to work in?

EC: There are many causes. For example, I really began working as a sculptor in 1951. Before that I had done works in clay and in stone, but had been working with the hand of yesterday. But in '51 I began to work on my own and worked for perhaps seven years in iron, almost everything in iron. But I had the feeling that many things were impossible in iron and I was looking for a new material. Then, one day I was in the car with my wife in the province of Navarre and suddenly I saw a beam of wood near the road there and I stopped. I went there, to see it, and I wanted to have this beam of wood and I recognized at that moment it was the material I wanted to use. And I had to fight with the proprietor of this beam to take it and then I could do my first sculpture in wood, which is in the museum in Cuenca. The recognition of the material I needed was necessary so that I could develop a new approach to space in relation with that material. Wood, being less dense, made it possible for me to move to a large space and at the time to be able to approach the situation in relationship to the inside space. I then developed this work in wood for three years. I did big sculptures in Chicago and in Houston. But finally I had to leave wood because something incredible happened. When I was working on the last of the wood pieces, I suddenly felt that the approach to the interior space was closed. The spectator had no longer the possibility to understand what happened inside. The work became hermetic and I stopped working in wood. Later, I discovered alabaster. I have always wanted to penetrate into the stone and I realized that the alabaster was the best stone for that because it is translucent and also because it has another fantastic condition that its border is absolutely a living limit, which is not true in any other stone. Only in very old marble.

If you see a marble of 2000 years in the light you have this condition, but not in a new marble in a quarry. But the alabaster has this condition and also the possibility to build space.

Q: As you move toward the final process do you make maquettes that you can change? How do you translate your concept, how do you move from the small to the process of the large pieces?

EC: When I do the very large pieces I am obliged to have an idea of the size of the piece, of the shape of several elements, and then I do an approach which is not a maquette, it is a sculpture, and in this sculpture I try to find the scale. I can develop and use material in a factory to make beams of a certain size. I work in this way only for the pieces that I cannot develop personally because these pieces of five or eight tons are impossible to move by a man. Then I work with cranes and with big hammers, and I must know the origins of the elements of my form.

Q: Are you influenced by your Basque ancestry and if so, how?

EC: I am really influenced by my country and I am very glad to be a Basque. And as I told in the film I have learned a lot of things in my country but not exactly the aesthetical things, but much more important, a way to understand life. It belongs to my country and I have used this way to understand life, to develop my own work. Then in this way I am very much concerned with my country, and with many other countries. Also I think it is very important to develop, and, at the same time, to be economical. It is much better to go up the mountain carrying a little thing than to carry the weight of a big and complicated thing.

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production, display and consumption of advanced art. Whether or not this has changed, it is becoming apparent that Southern California's art community is willing and able to compensate for its disproportionately small number of artists and collectors by constructing immense temples for the worship and display of art objects. The availability of so much raw square footage of space, cut with a local penchant for spectacle and rampant "life-style" inflation, makes LA particularly appealing to an art market currently specializing in computer-age distancing effects, and the ironic cul-de-sac of complicity.

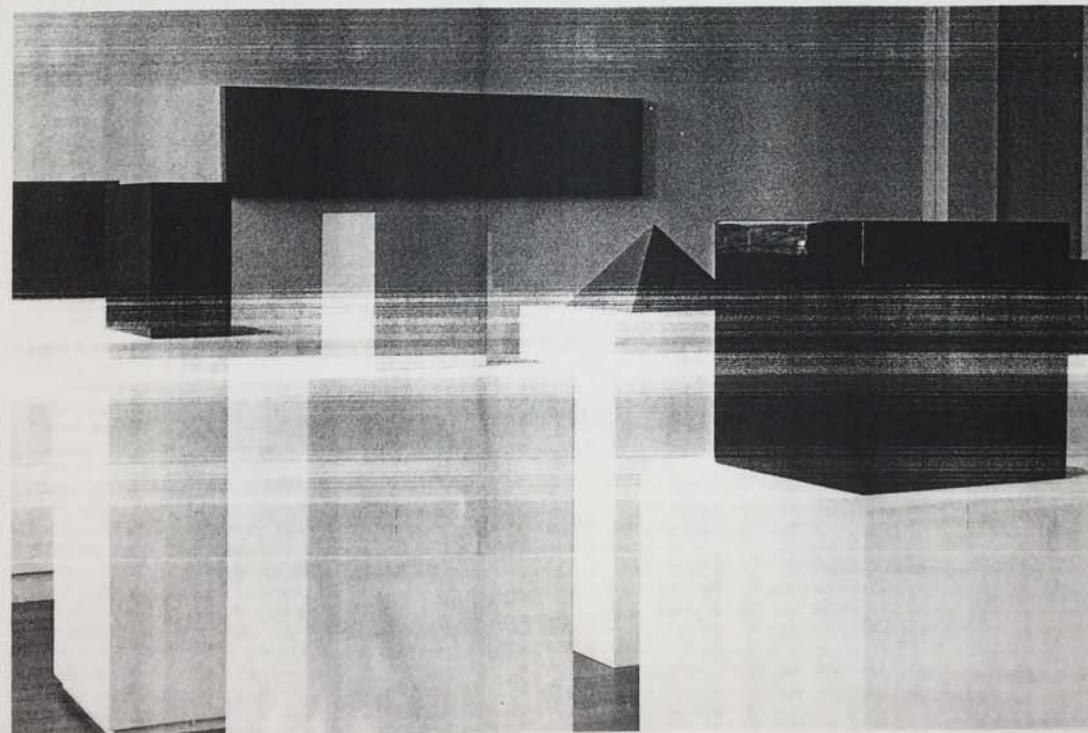
That this relationship should be so comes as no surprise when one considers the proverbial East-West (Coastal, that is) dichotomy concerning mass media: Hollywood makes TV programs, New York makes TV commercials; LA produces movies, Gotham organizes the ad campaigns for them. In things artistic, New York thrives on neurotic suppressiveness, a freedom to scold, that somehow fulfills its wish to be more condescendingly "Old World" than Los Angeles. Because so much of the recent art from New York appears to take delight in its compromised status as a luxury commodity, many people have been scrambling to find historical precedents that transcend the well-worn Pop-Minimal-Conceptual trinity. Certainly this urge takes us to European art of the 1970s for a closer look; even more significantly, we are learning to re-assess the California '60s for its treasure-lode of information about artificiality, about signs that lead to nowhere, and about the mercurial nature of object-lust. This shift in geographical emphasis makes a mark on the New York gallery scene, as SoCal shows (Antin at Feldman, Kelley at Metro, Knight at Goodman, and McCracken at P.S. 1) nose out shows by Italian artists (Clemente at Spallotti, Nosel group, and Spalletti at Baskerville + Watson), and place even with the Germans (Dokoupil at Sonnabend; Lupertz at Boone; Lühring, Augustine & Hodes' group; and Laib at Maeght Lelong). Chicagoans, by comparison, aren't even in the running.

John McCracken's retrospective exhibition at P.S. 1 is a textbook example of the ways in which Los Angeles has been ahead of New

York all along. For decades, McCracken's career has seemed mystifyingly inaccessible to New Yorkers. Despite his frequent appearance in comprehensive group shows like the Jewish Museum's 1966 "Primary Structures," and his importance to public collections of art from that period, McCracken's work slipped in between the guru status later accorded to Irwin, Kienholz, and Ruscha, and its obverse — the aggressive over-marketing that gradually undercut the careers of Larry Bell, Ron Davis, and Craig Kauffman. Like sentinels of historical passage, McCracken's planks become more than period pieces, yet less than masterworks. They serve us today by elucidating the urgency of mid-'60s reductivism, while making evident their awareness of time's passage since then. More understated than ever, McCracken's work nevertheless seems clearer in its humanistic bent than it did back then. It is hard to imagine today why Louis and Olitski seemed more about formal clarity in 1970, or why McCracken's distinctive scale did not suggest a clear case for totemism in advanced abstraction, as it does today. Scale and color were obviously meta-issues in painting at that moment, so an artist who could fuse them into a single, contextualized package was not as intrinsically interesting as one who stretched them to their furthest formal limits. McCracken in 1986 sheds a great deal of light upon many of the burning aesthetic issues of this moment, to the extent that it is worth speculating whether previous readings of this work may not have missed the point altogether.

As selected by P.S. 1 curator Edward Leffingwell — it will travel to Newport Beach in early 1987 — "John McCracken: Heroic Stance" constitutes the sculptor's first major East Coast exhibition since 1973, so there is a lot of catching up to do. McCracken's works from 1965 are differentiated both in surface and structure from his mature style. *Mykonos* and *Shogun* develop the principle of freestanding geometric units more explicitly, but it is the previously unknown yellow *Pyramid* lent by Nicholas Wilder which puts forth McCracken's signature color sense with the greatest foresight. Built from plywood, finished with fiberglass, and evenly sprayed with lacquer, the pyramid's expansive

John McCracken, Installation view, 1986. Courtesy P.S. 1.



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weightlessness suggests that McCracken quickly moved to planks in order to make good on the transparent reflective surface's uncanny suggestion of a rift in physical space. Not only is McCracken's brief flirtation with a grid format in advance of Sol LeWitt's procedure (although it follows on the heels of Carl Andre and Robert Morris), but his careful siting of work, from 1966 to present, a few inches away from but leaning square against the wall, makes this work a precursor to much of the environmental concerns of the later '60s and early-to-mid 1970s. "Parity" is a difficult word to use in McCracken's case, because his painting-objects function as idealizations in the Platonic sense — they are unabashedly utopian, unequivocally directed towards the perfect future. Because they are also machine-crafted, the planks, wall reliefs, and freestanding sculptures refer endlessly to the society that produced them and will make use of them. Twice-distanced from nature, yet flattering of human ambition, McCracken's work seems to reach past the transcendentalism of John McLaughlin and Robert Irwin, and settle for a message of reconciliation for the Information Age.

With this interpretation in mind, it is disappointing to find that McCracken's moment may already be behind him. Of the work from the '80s on view, the least successful are a series of ten 10-foot high planks that are painted with oil and sealed with varathane in such a way that both the trace of the brush and the corrugation in the fiberglass are readily apparent. Equally problematic is a room-sized installation of seven white plywood columns, also 10-feet high, that succeed in re-introducing the grid motif into McCracken's oeuvre, but with lackluster results. Still, a 1983 gray plank lent by Ruth Schaffner may be one of the subtlest yet most rewarding pieces on view. Even more surprising is the success of McCracken's little-known wall pieces from 1970-73; these look disturbingly similar to the current season's simulationist abstraction, but without the fashionable pseudo-irony. In fact, McCracken's wall "paintings" seem to extend Artschwager's principles of "natural" abstraction, minus the quotation marks. These reliefs, with the impressive series of freestanding sculptures — particularly those from 1970 or earlier — make a clear case for McCracken's position as, after John McLaughlin, the most important abstract painter in southern California. If his late work is on a par with the period from 1965 to 1973, McCracken may wind up giving a few lately-emergent painters a difficult task to measure up to — the compromised-but-still-exalted sublime... the doorway that is also a mirror.

In John Knight's exhibition of recent work at Marian Goodman Gallery — which also marks his first solo New York exhibition — the mirror fulfills a quite different purpose. Only a decade in age separates Knight and McCracken, but their generational distinctness corresponds to the passage from Minimal to Conceptual and post-Conceptual Art. Until recently, up to 1982 at any rate, Knight's somewhat stringent aesthetic even precluded the fabrication of discrete objects for display. His subject has always been more about display itself, particularly the language of social control that is filtered through the multiple scrim of desire, commemoration, promotion, wealth and institutionalization embodied by the art museum. In his various projects and exhibitions, Knight's art has deftly assumed the mantle of near-invisibility, deflecting the viewer's attention away from the artist's production, and directing it towards the mediated and compromised context in which art finds itself.

Knight's work in the 1980s has been of particular interest because of its unpredictable humor, and through its interest in the re-positioning of art according to the codifications of secular — that is, non-artistic — society. His 1983 exhibition at The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago featured a series of commemorative plates made expressly for that project. Issued in standard china, the sixty ten-and-a-half inch eggshell-colored plates featured gold trim, and each sported an individualized floor plan from a major art museum silk-screened onto the center in regal purple-blue, then overglazed. As Anne Rorimer writes of this series, the plates, collectable by nature, "ironically depict that institution in which collecting provides historical credibility"; by adapting the floor plan as a form of corporate logotype, Knight's work becomes, in his own words, "a representation of the museum and its role in the culture." The plates commemorate something which is fictionalized, hence non-existent except in its remembered state; that something which is lost is art.

A slightly more famous work was created for Knight's 1984 exhibition at LAICA. Rather than utilize the exhibition rooms, Knight borrowed

Yves Klein's closed-gallery motif, and chose to block the main door with a huge commercial-looking photographic Old West landscape, complete with stagecoach nestled amongst the sage hills. Emblazoned across an upper corner was the graphically imposing LAICA logo, with a line of copy beneath: "When the conversation turns to art." To take as the subject of his installation the museum's need to promote avant-garde production in order to improve its public profile, Knight seeks to demonstrate that all art is selling something, and only rarely is that something as simple, or as limited, as the object itself. Like recent "image" advertising, contemporary art supports the lifestyle that exists to consume it, but it also speaks in a language that relatively few people are conditioned to understand. Thus, when the conversation "turns" to art, LAICA is probably one of the places one would least want to be, for it is the near-exclusive domain of persons for whom art serves as a primary interchange with the world. Essentially, one of the very few ways in which art can justify its present existence is to shed a semi-public light on the social fictions to which it implicitly adheres. Knight takes his work even further than this, postulating the artist as the archetypal go-between, purveyor of soothing lies, but with his/her activity codified as an example of speculative creativity for the rest of society to recognize, both in terms of its privilege and powerlessness.

Knight's recent "Mirror Series" continues to address most of these concerns, but from a new vantage point — that of the uptown Manhattan gallery. Because of fashion, because of his generation, because he's from California, and for a myriad of less objectionable reasons, John Knight is suddenly very marketable. The art-machine must be fed new commodities, and these objects have a correspondingly "hand-made" feel to them. Knight has begun with a 42-inch square piece of tongue-and-groove knotty-pine paneling, which is then trimmed to the shape of a well-known corporate logo. At the form's center, the artist has added a mirror, which may reflect the gallery ambience as much as that of a corporate reception area, or a private collector's interior furnishings. In an excellent but quite slanted catalog essay by Benjamin Buchloh, the word "homeless" is used to describe the work's ultimate effect in any given situation, and this territorial instability becomes the crux of Knight's most recent work. Somehow, Buchloh points out, these mirrors will "bring considerable discomfort upon all other objects surrounding them which are solely devoted to aesthetic contemplation," giving them a critical edge that supersedes any similar effect created by, say, recent geometric abstraction, or sculpture that utilizes found objects. Buchloh's analysis is damaged by his needless propping up of Knight's work with a more-critical-than-thou integrity, while making such banal asides as this one: "... as though a Japanese transistor radio or a rubber mask were conceptually any more radical than a urinal or a typewriter cover were seventy years ago." In fact, Knight's work fits quite handily into current simulationist concerns, a realm shirked by Buchloh, who prefers to believe that when an American artist uses his/her signature as a central motif, he/she "borrows" this device from Broodthaers, Fabro, or Kounellis (not, god forbid, from Nauman, Oppenheim, or Warhol). Both the signature and the mirror are aesthetically "outmoded" avant-garde signifiers, and Knight's deadpan assumption of their earlier, "legitimate" meanings seems to hinge on Smithsonian or Baldessari as much as Broodthaers. In fact, a tongue-and-groove knotty-pine mirror is not a shred more "critical" than a rubber mask, and the mind-set which believes this to be the case is simply over-polemicalizing the art in question — a critical narcissism which resulted, for example, in the wholesale withdrawal of support for Sherrie Levine's work once the editors of *October* discovered a few years ago that she was actually working with (gasp!) a paintbrush.

These issues aside, it is clear that John Knight's work will find a very receptive audience in New York, but it would be advantageous to time his next exhibition with a museum installation that clarifies his position regarding the institutional manipulation of artistic meaning. Unlike McCracken's survey exhibition, the Knight project assumed a great deal of background information on the part of the audience, whereas the innocuous vacuity of his recent work struck a too-familiar chord in the season of simulation. Blocking the doorways of a New York museum would have seemed, on the other hand, refreshingly liberated, which is perhaps as critical as one can be in a town where thousands vie to become sitting ducks for the avant-garde's next quasi-outrage.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1986

Sue Coe — "Malcolm X" (P.S. 1, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, Queens): Sue Coe's "X" or "Malcolm X" series is an extended and ongoing tribute to the assassinated black leader. The paintings and drawings are inspired by events in Malcolm X's life, each one dramatized by the artist's breathless and ghostly expressive style. Coe identifies with the repressed. Capitalism is presented as an unmitigated evil; every conceivable injustice and abuse is laid at its doorstep.

The artistic problems posed by this viewpoint are considerable. There are no real people in these works, just abstractions of good and evil. There is also a constant danger of illustration; the human figure is used to mobilize feeling and make points. Coe needs her fury to be matched by her approach to materials. In the deliberate medium of painting, she is not yet at home.

With black pencil on white paper, however, this stark, utterly black-and-white vision can generate powerful and chilling effects. Coe is one of the most inventive and gifted graphic artists around. On paper her images of Malcolm X and his family in the hands of white monsters and witches can embody outrage. Coe can turn black into different colors and give it the inevitability of blood. When she frames drawings so that they look like prints or photographs, she builds into the image a moment of hesitation and groping that makes the content stronger. (Through Dec. 21.)

by Michael Brenson

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MANUEL MACARRULLA
415 First Street
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030
(201) 653-5448

C U R R I C U L U M V I T A E

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Solo show, PS 1, Long Island City, New York, 1986. A "Special Projects" exhibition of political art.

"Caribbean Art - African Currents", Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art (MOCHA), NYC, 1986.

"In the Tropics", Longwood Center Art Gallery, Bronx, New York 1986.

"We're All In the Same Boat", a calendar project made by socially concerned artists. At the Bronx River Art Center Gallery, Minor Injury, Printed Matter, ABC No Rio, and the Brecht Forum, all in New York, throughout 1985-86.

"Trends", MOCHA, NYC, Summer 1985.

"From East to West", a traveling show sponsored by MOCHA, NYC, 1985-86.

"Dimensions in Dissent", Kenkeleba House, NYC, 1985.

"Forecast: Images of the Future", Kenkeleba House, NYC, 1985.

"Penn Alumni - Recent Graduates", New Hope, PA, 1984.

"Dominican Visual Artists of New York - First Annual Exhibition", City Gallery, NYC, 1984.

"The Reunion of Divided Parts", Kenkeleba House, NYC, 1984.

"10 on 8", collaborative window installation, NYC, 1984.

"Hoboken USA", Summit Art Gallery, Summit, NJ, 1983.

Solo show, Cayman Gallery, NYC, 1983.

"Painted Light", a traveling exhibition mounted by the Artists' Choice Museum, NYC, at: the Reading Public Museum, the Queens Museum, the Colby College Art Museum, the Butler Institute of American Art, throughout 1983.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Percent for Art mural commission, Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC, 1985.

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Honorarium for mural design, Bronx Council on the Arts, Bronx, NY, 1985.

Fellowship Award, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, 1984.

Honorarium for mural design, Cityarts Workshop, NYC, 1983.

Mural commission, Universal Folding Box Co., Hoboken, NJ, 1983.

Artist-in-residence grant, Altos de Chavon, Dominican Republic, 1982.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Sub-contracted to execute New York Bar Association Mural designed by Richard Haas, NYC, 1984.

Studio assistantship to Nancy Graves, 1983, Charles Ross, 1982, and Red Grooms, 1979.

MEDIA COVERAGE AND PUBLICATIONS

"Necessary Evils", review by Lucy Lippard, The Village Voice, March 19, 1985.

"Mid-Day Show", WNEW-TV, NYC, Nov. 5, 1984.

"Tiempo", WABC-TV, NYC, Nov. 25, 1984.

The Hoboken Terminal, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1984.

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

P. Barreras, NYC
A. Cabral, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
A. Egman, Philadelphia, PA
R. Gordon, Paris, France
R. Grooms, NYC
Gulf + Western Corp., NYC
H. Nakazato, NYC
E. Stein, NYC
L. Stanley/H. Carr, NYC

EDUCATION

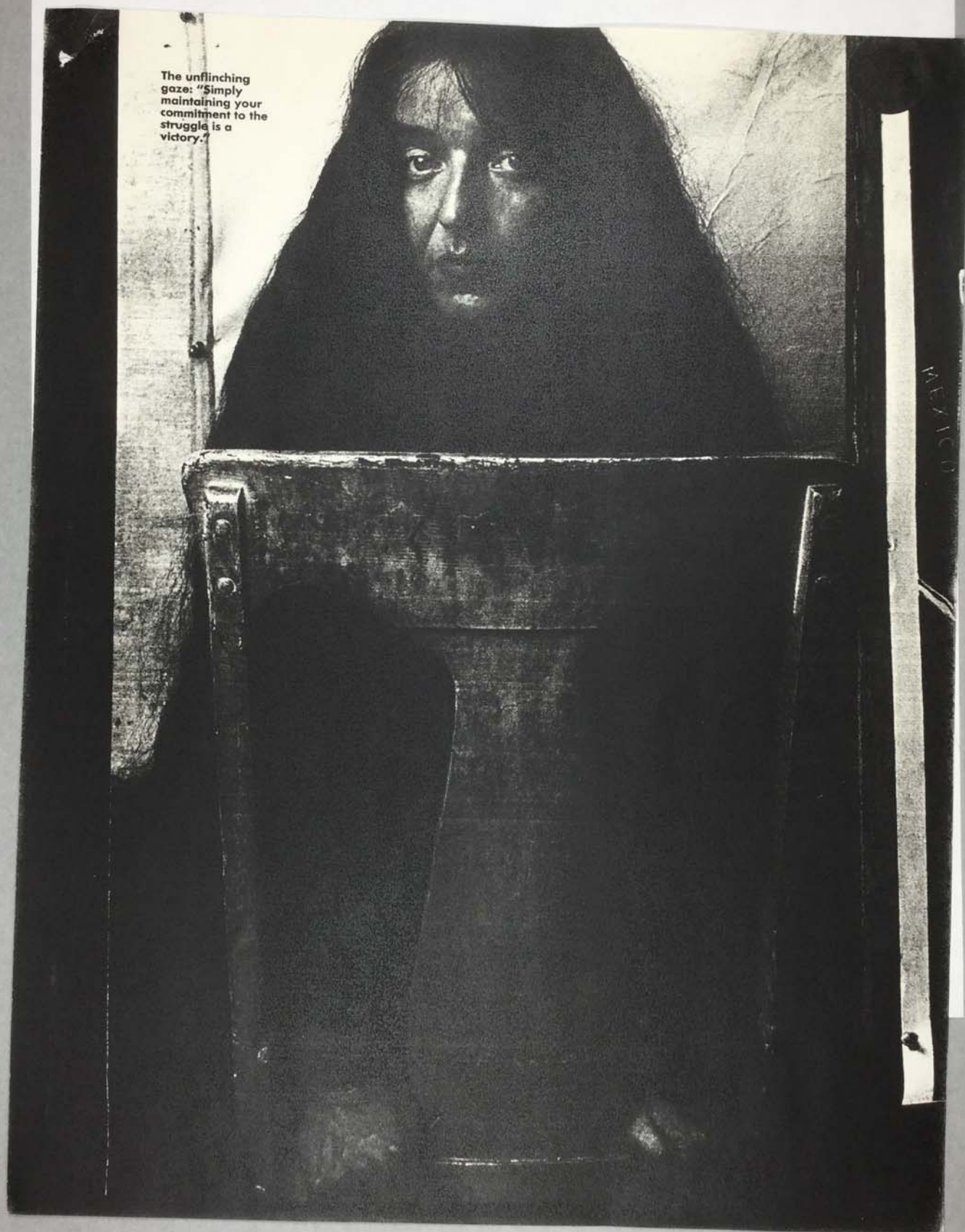
MFA, BFA, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 1979.

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The unflinching
gaze: "Simply
maintaining your
commitment to the
struggle is a
victory."

MEXICO



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SUE COE'S INFERNO

Working in the gap between illustration and high art, she forces us to confront the realities of oppression and despair

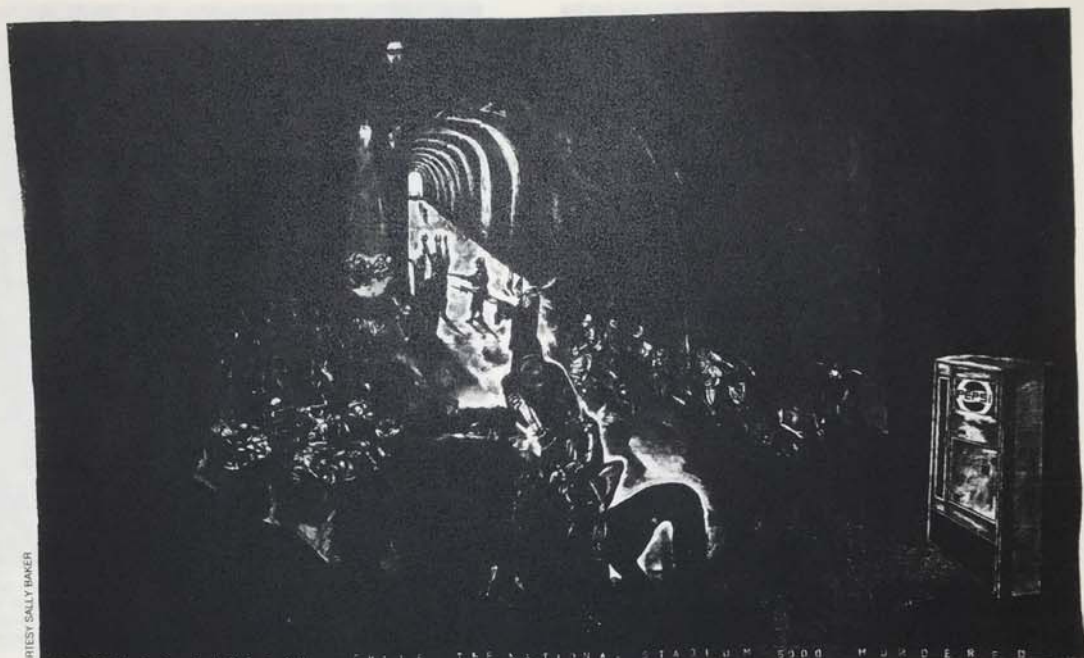
By Susan Gill

It is a measure of Sue Coe's single-minded determination that when she first came to New York from London in 1972, at the age of 21, she immediately landed a job working as an illustrator for the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*. Now 35 and in full command of her art and her career, Coe is receiving international recognition for a distinctive kind of work that bridges the gap between illustration and high art. Her paintings and drawings on the life of Malcolm X were shown at P.S. 1 in Long Island City last year. Currently, her exhibition "Police State" is touring the country. Next month, Coe will participate in the survey "Process & Project: The Making of a Contemporary Masterwork" at the Edith C. Blum Art Institute of Bard College, along with such contemporaries as Robert Longo and T.O.D.T. and such established older artists as Louise Bourgeois, Leon Golub, and Alex Katz. In January she will be included in the Museum of Modern Art's "Committed to Print" show, a major overview of political art in America since the '60s.

Coe's work is fueled by her commitment to social and political causes. Her subjects may be as close to home as a beggar she sees in her local subway station or as far away as the victims of apartheid in South Africa. Her scathing work has covered the Ku Klux Klan, vivisection, rape, Greenham Common in England (the site of an ongoing antinuclear demonstration), and the Brixton riots in London, among other subjects. Although she exhibits in galleries and museums, Coe finds it essential to continue contributing to the popular press, where her work can be seen by as broad an audience as possible. She contributes regularly to a wide range of publications, from *The New York Times* and the *Times* of London to *New Musical Express*, *Discover* magazine, and *Mother Jones*.

Coe is one of the most important social-protest artists working today in the long tradition of those who have recorded man's savagery. Her unique style incorporates many aspects of past art: the atmospheric quality and incisiveness of Goya; the pathos of Käthe Kollwitz; the sharp angularity of Max Beckmann; the collage technique of John Heartfield; the chilling skeletal forms of Posada and Orozco. They have all been

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Pinochet 1973, 1987, mixed media and collage on paper, 97 1/2 by 154 inches. Coe's next book will be on Chile—the overthrow of the Allende government, and the violent regime of dictator Augusto Pinochet.

given new life in her searing portrayals of contemporary life.

Over the past 15 years, Coe has developed a complex body of work in which a variety of styles is visible. She has created political caricatures of such figures as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, but her greatest strength lies in a form of art that critic Donald Kuspit calls "a new genre, somewhere between political cartoon and history painting." A good example is *They Are in Such a Rush* (1987), in which frenzied figures rush past a lame Vietnam vet on their way to catch a subway. "The picture," says Coe, "is about people who are anxious to go into the next war, the war in Central America, while they've completely forgotten their responsibilities to the vets of the last war." On the wall above the crowd are three posters, including one of a 1965 *Newsweek* cover featuring General William Westmoreland, senior military commander in Vietnam, and an expressionistic poster with a macabre face and skull right out of Weimar Republic Germany. The message reads, "Real Men Join The Army."

"If I particularly like a figure, I'll use it again and again. So what you think is a photograph is a recycled print," says Coe. The figures are created out of various collaged drawings that she combines and recombines until they achieve the effect the artist is after. Both the disjunction in scale among the figures and the varied drawing methods result in a jarring sense of dislocation that functions as the ideal vehicle for Coe's subject matter.

Coe's ability to sustain work of violent intensity, which is at the root of her power as an artist, may be in part the result of her earliest childhood experiences. Born in Tamworth, Staffordshire, in 1952, Coe grew up in postwar London. "My sister and I walked to school through areas that had

been totally blitzed during the war," says the artist. "This was an endless source of fascination for us. There were buildings in which you could see parts of houses that were totally intact. You could see the wallpaper and the fireplaces and the mantels and the little ornaments on the mantel shelves, three stories up. You could see the family portraits still hanging there. There were also a lot of bomb shelters which we would sneak into. I feel that my first political consciousness came with that early knowledge of bombed houses, bomb shelters, and family members talking about the buzz bombs."

Coe's mother, who worked in a doll factory, was also an amateur painter and obviously inspired her young daughter. "I remember drawing war scenes when I was four or five," Coe says. She attended the Chelsea School of Art when she was 16; three years later she was accepted at the Royal College of Art in London. The artist has vivid memories of the three years she spent there. "During the early '70s the Labour government was in power, and they encouraged education for working-class students at the Royal College. I got in for free—otherwise I couldn't possibly have gone."

The Royal College was a breeding ground for rebellion, which, in the mid-'70s, meant punk. "We shaved our heads and wore brooches made of raw liver. We incorporated razor blades and blood into our paintings," Coe recalls. "The art schools in England have always been hotbeds. The kids who go to the art schools are usually the misfits of society. They gravitate to art school because they're left alone there. The genius of the British art-school system is that the kids are given wonderful equipment to use and are left on their own. If you want to talk to a professor, you go round to the pub. Out of this system came wonderful industrial design and rock music."

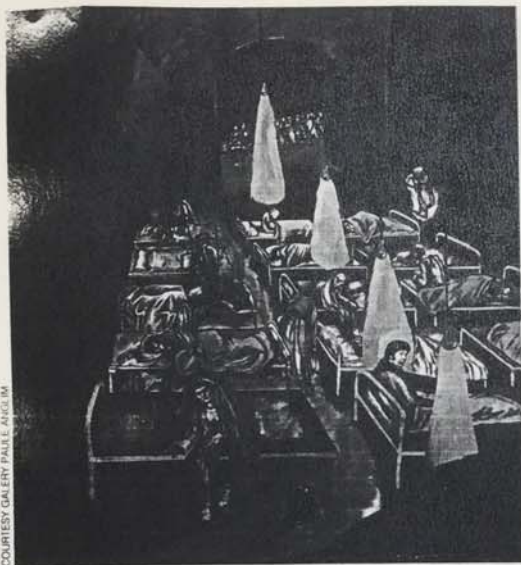
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COURTESY GALLERY PAUL E. JACKSON

"I'm not in the art world," Coe says, "I'm here." ABOVE *Shelter for Homeless Women, Washington, D.C., 1987*, mixed media on paper, 57 by 51 inches. RIGHT *Pool Hall, 1986*, graphite on paper, 60 by 48 inches.



COLLECTION OF EDWARD CAULFIELD

Coe moved to New York because there were not enough outlets for her art in her own country. She lives and works in a walk-up apartment in an old, ethnically mixed area of Manhattan's East 80s. One enters the tiny apartment through a dark room used as both kitchen and bedroom, where the artist's cat, Mauser, lies contentedly on the bed. Entering the living/work room, one is immediately struck by the graphic work that crowds the walls. There are prints by the American artists William Gropper, Boardman Robinson, Robert Minor, and Rockwell Kent. Framed covers from the journal *Die Pleite*, done by George Grosz in 1919, hang on the wall, as do prints by Goya, Beckmann, and Daumier. The artist uses an empty wall, an easel, and a small table for her work. A small TV is set in the fireplace, and a blurry black-and-white picture is flickering on the screen. Flanking the fireplace are bookcases that contain many art books and several shelves devoted to Thomas Mann, whom Coe admires in part for his "accurate descriptions of the decline of the German bourgeoisie." Between the two windows in the back wall of the apartment is a mahogany cabinet that Coe recently purchased for her collection of books on Goya.

In progress on this particular day in March is a drawing of Chile's dictator, Augusto Pinochet. "I'm working on my next book, which is about Chile and the overthrow of the Allende government," says Coe, who is seated on the floor, her clear blue eyes peering out from behind her long brown bangs, her silky braids touching the floor. She smokes almost continuously. When asked a question, she usually takes a few puffs on her cigarette, spends a moment or two thinking, and then gives a deliberate and carefully worded response. She shows me two powerful drawings depicting incidents that took place after the fall of Allende. They

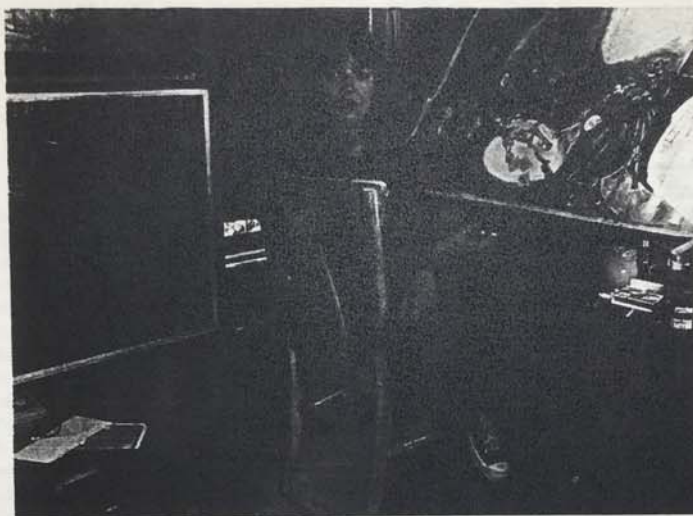
involve the mistreatment of ordinary Chilean citizens and the mass murder of Allende's sympathizers by Pinochet's military regime.

Coe's treatment of such politically controversial topics underscores her artistic achievement. Her work reaches beyond the working-class audience for which it was first intended. Pieces have been purchased by the Edward R. Broida Trust in Los Angeles, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Arts Council of Great Britain. Her unexpected success within the establishment that her art so vigorously criticizes has been problematic for Coe. She strongly resists being part of an "art-star circuit" and says she must keep herself in continual check. She is constantly reassessing her work, its presentation, and its publication.

Through her work, Coe meets many politically aware people—for instance, a Chilean refugee who was struck by the accuracy of Coe's Chilean drawings, which he saw in San Francisco, and a professor of African studies who came to speak to the artist after seeing her recent exhibition in Richmond, Virginia. She has an ongoing dialogue with political activists, community leaders, and working-class people—a very different network from the art professionals surrounding most well-known New York artists.

Coe maintains her connection to social causes through the vigilant observation of realities that most New Yorkers try to ignore. When walking down the street, the artist is particularly sensitive to what she sees—from the muggings and beatings she has witnessed to the misery of the homeless. "When I go down to get a cup of coffee," she said in a 1984 interview in the *East Village Eye*, "there are six people sleeping out in my doorway who are dying of malnutrition. Am I supposed to step over that and pretend I'm in the art world? I'm not in the art world, I'm here."

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Coe at the easel: When she first came to New York in 1972, at the age of 21, she landed a job as an illustrator for the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*.

Coe's commitment to the printed page is one of the ways she fulfills what she sees as her mission: the dissemination of information for the purpose of social change. The book produced in conjunction with "Police State" exemplifies the emphasis on content that is central to Coe's art. It is composed of 23 16-by-11-inch pages, each with an image on the front and a related text on the back. The text, written by Coe's sister, Mandy, a political activist, does not describe the work, but gives specific information about the subject depicted.

For example, a painfully graphic representation of five women crouching on the floor of a bathroom in New York's

Pennsylvania Station is accompanied by the following text: "In the U.S.A. two to three million people have no homes; they sleep in doorways, cars, tents, and emergency shelters." The facts are quoted from a study of unsheltered women made by the Birch Center for Policy Research. The plates are enclosed in a jacket, which is folded in thirds. The inside of the jacket contains two critical essays and bibliographical information about Coe's art.

Coe's first book, on which she collaborated with the journalist Holly Metz, was the highly successful *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa*, published by Raw Books and Graphics in New York. The book ran through two printings, with approximately 10,000 copies distributed in the U.S. and England. Says Coe, "I first got involved with South Africa when I read about Steve Biko in 1976. [Biko founded the South African Students Organization in 1968. He died in prison in 1977.] When I found out more about how many people

had died in detention, many of them young idealists, I became enraged. Holly and I wanted to make a record of all the people who died in detention who supposedly committed suicide. We both believe that if people know the facts, they'll change the system. When divestment became an issue on college campuses, students read the book. It became an organizing tool, which is our highest ideal of how the book could be used."

The full range of Coe's art, from her visionary expressionism to her realism, can be seen in the book. Her visionary side is strikingly revealed in the drawing *South*

Africa, which appears as the book's centerfold. The central image is a black woman whose hands are tied and who is flanked by two men wearing horned dog-skull masks and brandishing whips. At right, President Reagan holds the rope that binds the woman's hands, while a black man in the foreground shoots at Reagan. An androgynous shaman, in a headdress, representing the power of Africa, stands behind bars, light emanating symbolically from his cell, while a naked prisoner in the foreground falls to the ground. Blood-red streaks cover the falling man's body. The title of the work appears at the top as a collage of individual letters taken from newspapers, a device used by Coe since the mid-'70s. The newspaper photograph that inspired the work, showing two men about to beat a helpless woman, is collaged at the lower right corner.

NO Peoples Republic is reminiscent of Goya's famed etching *One cannot look at [this]*, from his "Disasters of War" series. In Coe's compelling im-



South Africa, 1982, graphite and mixed collage on paper, 38 by 52 inches. "When I found out how many people died in detention," Coe says, "I became enraged."

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... three black men back into a barbed-wire fence as they pull a slain friend away from pointing rifles, the tips of which are visible at right. Another victim lies at the slain man's feet. Here Coe shows the shattering effects of racism in the poignant faces of the four shocked and sorrowful men.

After the South Africa book," Coe explains, "I wanted to do something about America, about racism here, and not just as something exotic and far away." The result was the series of drawings and paintings about Malcolm X that was exhibited at P.S. 1. Coe sees the Muslim leader as a revolutionary hero whose background was really like that of many other blacks in urban America. She read every available book on the man, as well as F.B.I. records. She visited places connected with Malcolm, including the Audubon Ballroom, where he was assassinated in February 1965. Coe's enormous body of work contains depictions of events in the black leader's life, from his early years to his assassination. There are also Goyaesque representations of J. Edgar Hoover's witch hunts and the Ku Klux Klan, and satirical caricatures of Reagan and the money sharks of Wall Street.

Many of these images are reproduced in Coe's 1986 book *X*, which also contains poems by Coe and a text, "Concurrent Events," written by journalist Judith Moore. The text is a chronology beginning in 1955, the year Malcolm became a Muslim, and ending with his death. Facts about Malcolm's life are interwoven with the history of the American civil-rights movement, events in South Africa and Vietnam, and the development of American pop culture. With Moore's satirical

and highly readable text and the color plates, *X* stands on its own as an independent work of art.

One month after the closing of the Malcolm X exhibition at P.S. 1, Coe's show "Police State" opened at the Anderson Gallery in Richmond, Virginia. (It will travel through next April to seven locations around the country.) The show, which is something of a mini-retrospective, includes over 30 works created from 1982 to 1986 and features a room showing Coe's illustrations for the Op-Ed pages of *The New York Times*.

Among the works is an image that caused a minor scandal when it was exhibited in England in 1984. *England Is a Bitch* (1982) depicts a riot in Brixton. In the foreground are two fierce policemen, one using a club, the other setting off tear gas. The picture contains several newspaper photos, including at center a shot of policemen crowded together

with riot gear and a picture of prisoners being led away. There are headlines as well, reading "Neo-Nazis Accused in London Riots" and "British cops kill youth as royalty live it up." At right is an image of Prince Charles and Princess Diana engaged in a sexual act.

The scandal, which was prompted by an exhibition called "Power Plays" at the Ferens Gallery in Hull, England, was avidly reported on by the local Yorkshire press. It involved both this controversial piece and the 1976 *Rape of Rosa Velez*, which was Coe's first painting about this subject. She has created a number of works depicting rape, most notably *Woman Walks into a Bar, Is Raped by Four Men on a Pool Table, While 20 Watch* (1983), based on the widely reported incident in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

When she shows slides of these pictures during lectures at colleges and universities around the country, there is an immediate response. "What's interesting about the rape paintings," she says, "is that wherever they're shown, women come up to me and tell me their own experience, and so, in a way, the work opens up a line of communication and offers a catharsis."

Coe is particularly sensitive to the plight of women. She has depicted heroic women in her drawings of Greenham Common, the site of a U.S. missile base that women have been protesting since 1981. She has also created images of women who are victims of abuse and poverty.

One of her most compelling works to date, *Shelter for Homeless Women—Washington, D.C.* (1987), was inspired by the large armory in the nation's capital that houses hundreds of women. Coe effectively combines drawing and painting, using graphite, raw sienna, green, rose, and muted yellow to create a nightmare image of an inferno. In a dark, cavernous room, women sit or lie on beds lined up in rows, while in the distant background many more await entry, huddled together in a pitch-black void.

While Coe has brilliantly rendered the face of despair, her work grows out of the positive belief that if she exposes injustices, they will eventually be corrected. How does she maintain such idealism in the face of today's harsh realities? Coe replies: "When you are in touch with the people and feel you are part of their struggle, you realize that simply maintaining your commitment to the struggle is a victory. That's why, if you want to be a progressive person, you must be satisfied with tiny, tiny victories—not major ones."

Susan Gill is a critic and writer living in New York.



Pinochet: Back to the good old days, women must wear skirts, 1987, mixed media on paper. London's Royal College of Art, where Coe studied, was a breeding ground for rebellion.

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arts

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POLICING THE STATE: THE ART OF SUE COE

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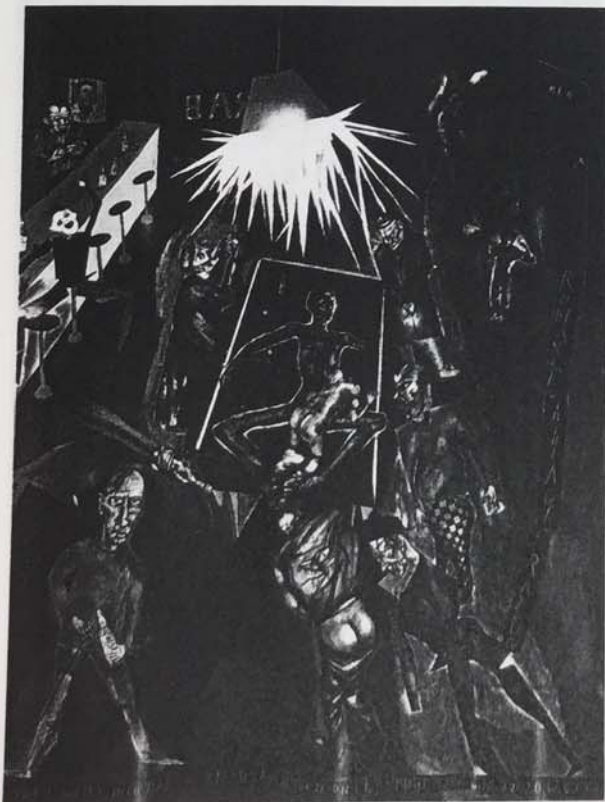
In the atmosphere of narcissistic self-aggrandizement that permeates our culture, there is an acute need for critics. However clichéd it may sound, if art can be said to be a mirror of the world, then where is the mirror to be turned? Upon what can—or must—an artist reflect? Post-modernism has allowed a return of non-referential styles, narrative, and content-laden imagery, yet little of it has the critical dimension necessary to mirror the inequities of contemporary existence. In the

art world as elsewhere, we have need of the rogue artist, the uncompromising mirror of painful, hidden truths. Sue Coe is that rogue working within the system to confront the system, she is a lone voice howling in the vast expanses of the wilderness, a fierce and indomitable voice raised to the blank heavens. She retreats from no issue, so much so that at times her voice seems as cacophonous as a mob's.

Though none are as horrifically direct as Coe, there are other vocalists of dark outrage: Cuban-American Luis Cruz Azaceta, Ida Applebroog, Nancy Spero, Leon Golub, and the Austrian Josef Schützenhöfer whose attitude most closely resembles Coe's. All of them spew scorn upon their surfaces, all work in similar radical veins of exposure, all have been attacked for formal indifference at one time or another, but none—with the exception of Schützenhöfer—has been as topical or as unrelentingly cruel as Coe. Lifting the banner of Critical Realism

**Sue Coe is a fierce and indomitable voice.
She retreats from no issue, so much so that at times
her voice seems as cacophonous as a mob's.**

Sue Coe, *Romance in the Age of Raygun*, 1984. Mixed media on canvas, 72 x 48". Edward R. Broida Trust, Los Angeles.



Sue Coe, *Greed*, 1984. Mixed media and collage on canvas, 72 x 48". Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon.



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as Otto Dix, George Grosz, and José Clemente Orozco did before her, she's the reigning Queen of Confrontation.

A Critical Realist is not necessarily a Social Realist, since a specific leftist ideology is not a prerequisite. In fact, allegiance to Marxism as it is now practiced would hinder the Critical Realist, whose intentions are ethical rather than political and whose target audience is all-inclusive. The Critical Realist fuses heart with mind or emotion with intellect in an empathetic manner, and — as Coe has often argued regarding her intentions in interviews — proceeding from content to form. And since the content is aggravated by the subject matter, topicality, which is so scorned by the art-must-transcend formalist aesthetic, is a constant in such art.

Thus, Critical Realism is not a style but an attitude comprised of a topical, documentary subject matter that is molded by a critical emotion. This is no mere reportage, rather, it is compassionate commentary, redolent with empathy. Since it invariably carries the emotional charge typical of Expressionism, it often utilizes a similar formal distortion, finding such exaggeration necessary. It eschews the cool media-influenced stance common to such superficial commentators as Robert Longo in favor of an expressively hot, involved approach. The artist is a watcher without distance, an enraged iconoclast who shatters the notion of formal beauty without flinching. The viewer must proceed

through a minefield so heavily saturated that no one emerges unscathed. With Coe, as with Dix, there are no unscarred souls. We are all culpable. *We* are the enemy, creators and/or perpetrators of an evil so banal, so pervasive that it reinforces the senses of frustrated outrage embedded in the work. Coe will allow no retreat, sweeping entire continents in her search for the victims of our evil.

It is this sense of the victim, this identification with suffering, that infuses Coe's Stygian works with their special empathy. Like her heroine, Kathe Kollwitz who devoted her skills to graphics, Coe often attacks power indirectly by focusing on the casualties of its misuse. She savaged Apartheid in the Raw Books and Graphics publication *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa* and American racism in the more recent *X*, which contextualizes Malcolm X's assassination in an era of increasing greed and subterfuge. Her work is fueled by the daily violence of gang rape, muggings, poverty, and indifference to the surrogate suffering of vivisectioned animals, and it is scattered with the collaged reality of flyers, tabloid headlines, and street detritus. From Wall Street to the Vatican, the sharks feed while their victims cringe in corners or lie, as horrid dissections, on pool tables, sidewalks, and prison cots. Coe has an unerring sense of the location of our soft underbelly — our false sense of security, prosperity, and moral elevation — and rips into it with glee.

She has been accused lately of a lax formal sensibility, a complaint that begs the entire question of her work. The specific cavil revolves, it appears, around her use of paint. Since Coe only recently began to experiment with oil, a notoriously difficult medium to control, it would be reasonable to expect her first efforts to lack a traditional finish. But her oils aren't badly done, they're just not elegant. Their dry surfaces are sluggish, rough. These dragged-brush images continue the

Sue Coe, *The John Walker*, 1986. Oil on paper, 53 x 31". Courtesy Sally Baker.



Sue Coe, *Diet Popsi*, 1985. Graphite, gouache, and collage on paper, 39 x 29". Private Collection, Australia. Courtesy Sally Baker.



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style Coe has developed in her graphite drawings and, like those, it is harsh content that dictates the manner of application. Why would Coe wish, with a mere change of medium, to alter her style? The argument that these paintings are stiff, and not beautiful is a false one. Coe's treatment of surface is consistent in both oils and graphites. From a tonal murk akin to a tenebrous hell composed of layers of pigment, or from the tarnished, silver depths of the drawings, corrosive images stagger forward. Her recent compositions have an expressionistic effect: the viewer is almost always suspended uncomfortably above the action, forced to examine a distant terrain that is dotted with figures of oddly varying sizes engaged in tumultuous violence. The narrative is pointedly confusing, as cluttered and as complex as harsh reality allows. Neither form nor subject is simplified or reductive. Flickering white outlines like nervous auras and mismatched lettering keep the visual tension high and force the inveterate reader through images that might otherwise be avoided. Coe's images cannot be as quickly read as aestheticized messages, they must be absorbed slowly, utilizing the accompanying written evidence. In these chaotic images resides the catch that certifies Coe as a true Critical Realist: savage irony hides compassion. Empathy on our parts may precede action and Coe wants action. She's paradoxically quite optimistic, thinking images can change the world. And, while Coe has had good exposure in New York, most recently in the exhibition of the "Malcolm X" series at PS 1, she has just begun to mount solo shows elsewhere in the country. With eight stops across the U.S. on its agenda, "Police State," which began its run in Richmond, Virginia, at Virginia Commonwealth University's Anderson Gallery in late January, may be the best opportunity for American viewers to confront her themes.¹ Composed of major images like *Romance in the Age of Raygun*, *Bobby Sands*, *Woman Tied to a Pole* (from the *Suicide in South Africa* book), and *X's The Money Temple*, the exhibition exemplifies the artist's Critical Realist stance.

The show's range extends from Coe's concerns with personal victimi-

zation to public responsibility. These private victims of conspicuous apathy and greed often become all too visible, as in the subterranean women who gravitate to the warmth of public toilets in *Homeless Women in Penn Station*, a reality which is easily verifiable even in midsummer. It is more common, however, for Coe to single out a victim as a symbol or a type. In the second and more successful image of *Greed* (1984) the artist concentrates on the pervasive problem of handgun control. Coe elevates the viewer above a barren landscape that is shot through with eerie flashes of light illuminating the incipient carnage below. This conflation of urban and rural scenes contains the confrontation of hunter with bear (foraging in cast-off McDonald's wrappers), whose back is turned to an approaching car festooned with a deer's carcass. The other figures, a pair of vacant-eyed fellows laden with guns and a contorted nude woman, seem lost in the wilds, better suited to the city which is perched on a distant hill. The woman holds a tiny .22-caliber pistol — improperly — a feeble offering of protection. The implied face-off is made more acute by the deliberately turgid handling of the tempera, which oozes and drips around and over the frozen figures, pinpointing the morass of inaction.

This is considerably more successful than the earlier version, a tempera/collage from 1978, in which the viewer is grounded solidly before a graffitied street tableau complete with an interracial fistfight, a blank-faced whore, and a bystander holding a *New York Post* with a sensational murder-victim photo. The impact is indistinct, lacking the tension created by the later image; the sense of being able to turn and walk away on solid ground defeats any implied threat. Coe's expressionistic manipulations exponentially increase the power of her content: as she reduces the figures within an image, separating them by voids, knocking the ground out from under her viewers, she paradoxically magnifies the horror.

Coe's rendition of *Crystal Night*, with its reference to the Nazis' first sanctioned outburst against the Jews, is set in the black ghetto.

Sue Coe, *Bothatcher*, 1986. Graphite on paper, 30 x 22". Courtesy Sally Baker.



Sue Coe, *The Contract*, 1986. Graphite on paper, 30 x 22". Courtesy Sally Baker.



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A shattered room with a single, swinging bulb illumines a trio of contemporary pietàs: the central figure offers a withered breast to her dead son. Her hysterical face recalls Dix's *Madwoman From Ste-Marie-a-Puy* in his 1924 antiwar cycle, *Der Krieg*, and the two flanking groups — a crucified Christ embraced by a woman and a nude female collapsing into the arms of the driver of a wrecked car — recall both Grünewald and Kollwitz in their mixture of the compassionate and the horrific. The coke-sniffing figure, floating indifferently in the corner with his unshattered glass fixings, is oblivious to the shattered lives around him.

Coe utilizes similar figures in *Woman Tied to a Pole*, a drawing incorporated in *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa*. Futilely embraced by her little daughter, the woman is threatened by nature in a series of ragged lightning bolts, as well as by the military in a noncom removing his fatigues for an obvious purpose; she is the Kollwitzian war victim, drawn à la Orozco in angular slashes outlined by shivers of white.

Less political rapes have gained notoriety because of the collusion of indifferent onlookers, who claimed innocence because of nonparticipation. This callous attitude has spurred Coe's enraged response in no fewer than seven different public rape images, two of which — *Romance in the Age of Raygun* and *Woman Walks Into a Bar—Is Raped by Four Men on the Pooltable While Twenty Watch* — are included in "Police State." Each is based on the same well-publicized incident in which a woman was repeatedly raped on the gameboard in sight of several witnesses. Her objectification is made pitiable in both, as she sprawls as the center in the vortex of lust which is quickly turning into a battle for dominance. The same harsh Cubistic light swings above as she endures her private Guernica. In a horrific amalgam of apathy and aggression, Coe equates this sordid affair with Picasso's parable of evil, inserting a figure who carries a placard stating, *I'm blind. Help me to see*. These are Coe's intentions entirely: forcing us to see ... and feel.

But her grasp of the source of this outbreak of sexual violence is to be found in the withering scorn that infests the ludicrous figures in her painting *The John Walker*, which is accompanied in "X" by a vicious exhortation to:

Be a Real Man
And give your girl a slam
She knows her place
Painted with a pretty face
Put her on the street
And have her meet meat.²

If a man can turn a woman out for profit, the gratuitous assault in the bar follows easily. She obviously didn't know her place. Coe's rage invents satirical customers for the John Walkers queued up for a treat; their heads have abandoned their shoulders and peep through their flies, penis-tongues distended. In a typical Critical Realist manner, Coe gives them all uniforms, rather like Duchamp's ineffectual bachelor-apparatus's molds, they are a banker, a diplomat, and a clergyman.

The streets are undoubtedly cruel at times, as *It's Like a Jungle* demonstrates. In a Beckmann-like entanglement, all sharp ribs and elbows, there is a long message — pasted like a threat all over the figures, traveling from *trying not to lose my head to your eyes will sing a song of deep hate* down the skinny leg of the main figure. Surrounded by liquor stores, whores, money-tattooed vampire bats, syringe-rats, and street cats, Coe's struggling fellow is bound to go under. To see it, to read it, is to weep. And remember John Heartfield's bitter montages that appeared from nowhere all during Hitler's regime. These street collages, like 1981's *Drums in the Night*, with its fragmented collection of derelicts pumping poisons into their veins, takes Heartfield's strategies into the bowels of the democratic system (one that failed his country) and lays blame squarely at the feet of the people.

But Coe goes public with her blame as often as possible; her editorial work for *The London Times* and *The New York Times* fuels her grasp of wide-ranging political events, powerfully bitter images that "Police State" includes. She stalks politicians on three continents, reducing them to hybrid monsters like the *Bothatcher*, a two-headed black widow spider astride South Africa, or like *Reagan as Pig*, perhaps her best-known caricature, in which the fanged president peers like a masked lone ranger from a distended pig suit. Beneath his jaunty bowtie the belly is split open to reveal a Klansman. In *X*, the verse accompanying this scathing cartoon figure, Reagan is named *The Mas-*

ter of Malice. In these works Coe comes close to Daumier's pear-shape Louis Philippe, which undoubtedly has provoked the critical comparisons to that artist.

The politicians' collusion with industry and capital have generate several savage works, like *Diet Popsi*, a dual-pronged attack on the Roman Catholic Church and American industry, whose representative proffer redemption to the starved South African with one hand and diet cola with the other. The skeletal Pope's miter is a gaping shark head; a similar hungry mouth in a broker's morning suit ingests victim in the underwater world of Wall Street.

The Money Temple, a major part of her "Malcolm X" saga, sums up Coe's vendetta in quasi-biblical terms. Malcolm X functions as Samson toppling the columns of a gambling den infested by Groszian capitalist and nude dancers. The Masonic emblem of the all-seeing eye in the pyramid has become a debased symbol, emitting the light that reveal the pink female flesh offered to customers. The hero is too small, the columns unconnected to the structure; Coe's symbols have been subverted by the power of the dollar, which looms large on the edge of this casino.

This scorn becomes far more specific in the South African images where Coe berates her native England with a working-class anger. Coe's angry elegy on the murder of Bobby Sands (subtitled *ein Mörder ist ein Mörder ist ein Mörder*, or "a murderer is a murderer is a murderer") — a horrific paraphrase of Gertrude Stein's deadpan description of a rose) literally implicates the riot police with an indifferen Prime Minister alongside the church wearing an eye patch and swastika; stickpin. Mrs. Thatcher, oblivious to her bloody hand, drifts away from the body, more concerned with her pearls than with events. A red *Ni* defaces the graffiti *People's Republic*, which reflects Goya's *Disasters of War* in its focus on a group of huddled prisoners at the mercy of two gun barrels. In *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa*, which includes the incipient police action, Coe builds her case against the state in an airtight package of documented words and scarifying images. This radical dissemination in a large-format book containing *all-the-news-that's-fit-to-hide*, follows Kollwitz's belief that an oppositional battle must be conducted in the print media.

Perhaps Coe's most difficult works — as well as the most serious issues she faces — are contained in the overlapping images of vivisection and nuclear protest. It is a case of lesser things and things-too-great-to-comprehend colliding in a painful, personally-charged style. Coe's revelation of the trials of the dumb creatures captured for our research in cosmetics, disease-prevention, and, ultimately, radiation effects, expose our worst deeds and fears. In *Pentagon Wound Lab's* bloody space surrounded by little caged creatures awaiting their worse-than-death fates, a graffiti spells out the subtext: *If animals believed in God, the devil would be like a human being*. Coe's progressive humans rarely resemble the noble concept of humankind; only the ravaged victims, invariably in skeletal condition, reveal the human soul behind their eyes.

Her objections to the arms race, shown in many works from those on animal experiments (*Testing on Monkeys* and *Testing on Donkeys*, 1981) to those concerned with the antinuclear squatters that belied the *Welcome to R.A.F. Greenham Common* sign prominently displayed in her image of an on-site immolation in 1984, are an obvious extension of her empathy for racial and sexual victims. In her refusal to avoid the almost incomprehensible issue of nuclear annihilation, Coe disdains the beautiful diffusion of Robert Morris's *Firestorm* drawings, illuminating individuals against the searing light of the ultimate threat.

True to her uncompromising Critical Realist stance, Sue Coe refuses to avoid painful, complex issues. In taking sides, she's our surest advocate in contemporary art, relentlessly engaged in policing the state and exposing the evils of the eighties.

1. Confirmed tour dates for "Police State," which is accompanied by a catalogue with essays by Donald Kuspit and Marilyn Zeitlin, and text by Mandy Coe are as follows (with British segments unconfirmed at this writing, though scheduled for 1988): Jan. 20-Feb. 28, Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia; Apr. 10-May 23, Knight Gallery, Spirit Square Arts Center, Charlotte, North Carolina; June 12-Aug. 2, Portland Art Museum of the Oregon Art Institute, Portland, Oregon; Sept. 2-Oct. 11, Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Center for the Arts, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut; Oct. 31-Dec. 6, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas; Jan. 8-Feb. 21, University Gallery of Fine Arts, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; Mar. 15-Apr. 23, San Francisco Art Institute, Emanuel Walter & Atholl McBean Galleries, San Francisco, California.

2. Sue Coe, Art Spiegelman, and Judith Moore, *X*, New York, Raw Books and Graphics, 1986, unpaginated.

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Weekend

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Art: 8 French Painters (Page C26)

Art: '8 French Painters'
In Exhibition at P.S. 1

By MICHAEL BRENSON

WITH all the attention that has been focused this fall on museum exhibitions involving French Conceptual Art, a show of contemporary French painting has sneaked into town almost unnoticed. Yet "Preview: Eight French Painters," at P.S. 1, is important. It is a complement to "Angles of Vision: French Art Today," the 1986 Exxon International Exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and "A Distanced View: One Aspect of Recent Art From Belgium, France, Germany and Holland," at the New Museum of Contemporary Art. If "Preview" is the most conservative of the three shows in content, it is the most radical in its ability to shed light on the general art situation.

"Eight French Painters" came about when a consortium of 12 prominent curators, critics and art dealers, including Leo Castelli, Nancy Gillespie, Adrien Maeght, Suzanne Pagé and Daniel Templon, reacted to the Conceptual focus of the Guggenheim and New Museum exhibitions. They recognized that together the shows would create the impression that the only vital art in France now was Conceptual. The dealers also clearly believed that being excluded from a major French exhibition like the one at the Guggenheim would not do their reputations any good.

Last July the consortium approached P.S. 1 and asked if it would take a show of work by painters as unfamiliar in New York as the artists at the Guggenheim and New Museum. P.S. 1, which has close ties with European artists and institutions, agreed. The artists are Pierre Antonucci, Christophe Boutin, Pascal Brunart, Philippe Cognée, Hélène Delprat, Bruno Dufourmantelle, Adrienne Farb and Patrice Giorda. Coordinated by the French art dealer Nikki Diana Marquardt, the exhibition runs through Dec. 21 at P.S. 1, which is at 46-01 21st Street in Long Island City, Queens. (Both "Angles of Vision" and "A Distanced View" close Nov. 30.)

While the Guggenheim show is essentially concerned with alternative media and work in which there is no evidence of the artist's hand, the eight French painters are intimately involved with paint and the French tradition. One of the surprises and justifications for the show, however, is that despite their orientation, there is almost no painting that is immediately identifiable as French. Nor does the work as a whole bring to mind any other nation or style. Together — and only together — the P.S. 1, Guggenheim and New Museum shows suggest that French art finally has a fresh slate.

There are clear links with the School of Paris. The horses of Pierre Antonucci, large and bent into the pictorial field, automatically bring to mind Picasso's "Guernica." Philippe Cognée's deadpan, apocalyptic paintings, crammed with figures and animals that are half-human, half-toy, come out of Max Ernst and Surrealism. In the paintings of Hélène Delprat, Giacometti-like figures come and go in almost liquid fields.

Part of what is surprising is the subject matter. Patrice Giorda walks through the mountains of salt and coal that are part of the modern French landscape. Then he makes paintings with quiet but sharp contrasts between darkness and light, fire and ice. Pascal Brunart paints huge, almost shapeless mounds that are built up carefully, stroke by stroke, until they press against the sky.

One of the encouraging aspects about the show is the ease with large scale. If French painting has seemed relatively insignificant alongside German painters like Anselm Kiefer and Sigmar Polke, it is partly because it has seemed incapable of a comparable physical and imaginative sweep. Christophe Boutin has a large untitled painting in the show that feels big. A rough area of black is wedged in by a ruddy field, just as the canvas is itself wedged in by metal. The painting has a take-it-or-leave-it quality and an uninhibited debate between control and violence that has not been present in French painting for a while.

But the show also provides another perspective. Although Thomas Messer, the director of the Guggenheim, wrote that "Angles of Vision: French Art Today" "does not attempt more than the projection of a personal view," that is not the way the exhibition is packaged. From the reaction of French dealers, that is also not the way any Exxon International Exhibition is perceived.

The Guggenheim show is a reminder of how boxed-in museums can be. The Exxon exhibitions are necessary, but they almost always have to walk a gauntlet. If they present anything resembling traditional painting or sculpture, they are accused of being manipulative or reactionary. If they search for a cutting edge, they are accused of catering to the New York moment. Then there are the demands of dealers and the rivalries of institutions. The Guggenheim could never have gotten away with showing the work at P.S. 1. One of the ironies of the present situation is that a feisty and imaginative institution like P.S. 1, working within a broad definition of "alternative space," can sometimes do more justice to a respect for tradition than a museum where history is a trust.

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PREVIEW: EIGHT FRENCH PAINTERS

PIERRE ANTONIUCCI

1. ROUGE 1985
83" x 91"
oil on canvas with ashes
2. COLERE 1985
113" x 89"
oil on canvas with ashes, earth, and tar

CHRISTOPHE BOUTIN

1. UNTITLED 1986
11' 2" x 10' 3"
mixed media
2. UNTITLED 1986
7' 8" x 5' 2"
mixed media

PASCAL BRUNART

1. SOLANA 1985-86
71" x 110" (two parts)
oil on canvas
2. UNTITLED 1986
31" x 33"
oil on canvas
3. UNTITLED 1986
7" x 6"
oil on canvas

PHILIPPE COGNEE

1. UNTITLED 1986
91" x 71"
paper on canvas
2. UNTITLED 1986
79" x 79"
paper on canvas, frame of
sculptured wood

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BRUNO DUFOURMANTELLE

1. TRIPTYCH 1986
79" x 189"
oil on canvas

ADRIENNE FARB

1. BLUE WITH APRICOT 1986
59" x 59"
oil on canvas
2. CENTERED RED 1986
59" x 59"
oil on canvas
3. WHITE WITH ORANGE 1985
51" x 51"
oil on canvas

PATRICE GIORDA

(from the series: "La Purification")

1. LE FEU 1986
79" x 64"
acrylic on canvas
2. LA MONTAGNE DE SEL 1986
79" x 64"
acrylic on canvas
3. LES TAS DE CHARBON 1986
71" x 64"
acrylic on canvas

HELENE DELPRAT

1. UNTITLED 1986
59" x 64"
pigment and acrylic on canvas
2. UNTITLED 1986
53" x 59"
pigment and acrylic on canvas
3. UNTITLED 1986
53" x 59"
acrylic and pigment on canvas

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The Institute for
Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
P.S. 1 (Project Studios One)
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

PREVIEW: EIGHT FRENCH PAINTERS

A three-gallery installation of contemporary French painting, "Preview: Eight French Painters" reflects the pluralism of the current scene. Intended as a sample of representative individual painters, rather than a statement about French painting, "Preview" provides the opportunity to view aspects of French art which have not often been presented in the United States. The participants, who have been selected by a group of curators, critics and dealers are:

PIERRE ANTONIUCCI
CHRISTOPHE BOUTIN
PASCAL BRUNART
PHILIPPE COGNEE
HELENE DELPRAT
BRUNO DUFOURMANTELLE
ADRIENNE FARE
PATRICE GIORDA

selected by- Leo Castelli, Kermit Champa, Lucien Durand, Nancy Gillespie, Yves Mabin, Adrien Maeght, Nikki Diana Marquardt, Yves Michard, Suzanne Page, Gabrielle Salomon. Daniel Templon, Catherine Tieck.

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For further
information
contact Kenneth Kaplan
212 686-9677
or Neil Denari
212 982-8465

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BUILDING : MACHINES

October 26- December 21, 1986

Opening: Sunday, October 26, 2-4 pm

Gallery Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 12-6 pm

BUILDING : MACHINES is a group exhibition of the work of six architects, two groups of which work in collaboration. The architects Neil Denari, Ted Krueger, Ken Kaplan and Chris Scholz, and Peter Pfau and Wes Jones.

The title of the exhibit expresses for the six architects their sense of the flatness of present architectural discourse - a flatness they feel reduces the potential for meaning in architectural convention to that which may obtain in equational propositions among simple integers. me Tarzan, you pediment (this architecture). The work of the young Architects, shown together for the first time, represents an attempt to re-ground the possibility for significance in architecture. The widely disparate arguments presented, which follow and then guide the trajectory of this desire, converge upon the shared conviction that the structures of mechanicality are the most basic form-giving reality. In digging through the layers of inherited thought and practice towards an ever-retreating bedrock of certainty, these architects have discovered that what was architecture dissipates under scrutiny to reveal a more fundamental idea of mechanism. The work displays a sometimes subtle and sometimes raw mix of conviction and irony - the conviction stemming its inarguable sense of the importance of the machine to contemporary experience; the irony coming with the awareness that such a conviction must undermine the position of its authors as "Architects".

(continued)

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The work by Pfau and Jones represents a combination of collaborative and individual efforts. The two dimensional and three dimensional texts presented in the exhibition range in scale from meditations on the narrowest points of theory to proposals for large hubristic suburban interventions. Models of Primitive Huts form the text of a speculation on hueristic origins entitled EITHER/ORIGINS. Another text, entitled HOUSE TRACT, re-presents the Machine-for-Living as an argument within a suburban Housing Tract, in the same tract just down the block, lurks a proposal for a twenty-floor housing slab-machine which makes up a text called OCEAN-LINER NOISES. Also exhibited will be their proposal for (HOMELESS) HOUSING IN THE CRACKS, previously shown at the Storefront for Art and Architecture. Pfau and Jones practice architecture both in New York, as themselves, and in San Francisco, as Holt and Hinshaw. Mr. Jones teaches presently at the Cafe Trieste, while Mr. Pfau drives a late-model Pacer named Shamoo.

In an age of mechanical [re]production, the work of Neil Denari presents propositions based on physical and cultural imprecisions. Approximations of Time and Entropy are explored through the moving machine in London entitled SOLAR CLOCK - No 8602, while projects such as MONASTERY - No 8305 and ADAM'S HOUSE - No 8406 feed off of urban conjestive meditations between the OBJECT/MACHINE and the extant New York City condition. Mr. Denari is a Texan living in New York, teaching and working on buildings and music.

The collaborative efforts of Kaplan, Krueger and Scholz are represented in the exhibition by four machines. Two would function as tables, one is a sculptural construction, and the last is a child's stroller and its garage. Kenneth Kaplan, Ted Krueger and Christopher Scholz have worked in collaboration since 1984. They build machines in their laboratory on the lower west side of Manhattan.

BUILDING : MACHINES has been partially funded by the New York Foundation for the Arts and organized in cooperation with the Storefront for Art and Architecture. The show has been organized by Glenn Weiss.

P.S.1 is owned by the City of New York. Its programs are supported by generous contributions from the N.Y.C. Department of Cultural Affairs.

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ARTFORUM

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1986

Architecture: Kinetic, Machine-Inspired Buildings

By JOSEPH GIOVANNINI

DURING the last two years, six young New York architects met regularly at one another's homes and studios to discuss alternatives to what they called "the flatness of present architectural discourse" and "the dense wall of post-modernism." The six — Neil Denari, Wes Jones, Peter Pfau, Ken Kaplan, Ted Krueger and Chris Scholz — said they believed that post-modernism's retreat into classicism had limited architecture's range and technical capabilities, and that a machine-inspired architecture offered possibilities for richer buildings better tuned to contemporary culture.

The results of their discussions are on view at a new show at P.S. 1 in Queens, "Building Machines," and the exhibition is a manifesto. The three rooms of the show have architectural models and drawings of small and large buildings, all equipped with operable parts — roofs retract; floors flip up; stairways roll and lift; sun screens rotate. Buildings as humble as huts and as vast as ocean liners are designed to be kinetic rather than static — operable by hand or, like a convertible, at the push of a button. Some have rudimentary 19th-century mechanisms; one is really an electronic environment that senses the airwaves — the environment is not one of breezes and sunlight but of information.

The show starts with a miniature billboard carrying a famous 18th-century drawing of the first primitive building — four saplings act as the corner posts of a simple forest structure that has a roof of branches. The billboard is held up on steel arms outstretched from today's equivalent of the forest hut — I-beams are the corner posts; the entry ramp is a steel

gangplank; the foundations look like jacks and the arms like forklifts. Only the roof is made of branches.

The beautifully composed building may be overstructured and overdesigned, but the basic point for its architects, Pfau & Jones of New York, is that this steel hut is the paradigm structure for our industrial condition: steel is the wood of our cities, and buildings should operate like machines, performing tasks other than passive shelter. Their building is not only machine-made but is itself a machine.

Mr. Pfau and Mr. Jones have applied the idea at several building scales. In an architectural model of a full neighborhood of simple houses, the architects take a single house, leaving the front and back facades, and gut the interior between the facades, making it into an operable mechanism in which nearly everything moves. The solar collector tilts and follows the sun; walls slide; terraces retract; shades drop; the roof pulls back. While traditional buildings may have movable parts like shutters or sliding barn doors, every surface in this house is negotiable. Like many modern buildings, the suburban house is also spatially porous — a small forest of struts and bars permits deep views into the house.

The French architect Le Corbusier first proposed the idea of the building as a machine for living, and Mr. Pfau

and Mr. Jones acknowledge the precedent in a huge apartment block similar to one done by Le Corbusier in Marseilles. The two architects take the metaphor further, however, giving their structure a strong visual emphasis so that its external metal shades and ventilation ducts look like a new architectural order — not neo-classical but neo-mechanical — and actually humanize the building.

This is a facade that anyone can adjust; it is a participatory environment — you simply reach up and tilt its sun screens or any of the window louvers that make up the walls. An ink drawing shows an interior hall that is just as adjustable: staircases roll and lift up and floors fold back for storage underneath. The building is surprisingly humane despite its forbidding scale.

The structures in this show are all buildings of many parts. With long mechanical legs, arms, knuckles and joints, some have the articulate fragility of spiders; others have intricate mechanisms that interlock and pivot with what engineers call elegance. One — designed by Mr. Denari to occupy the center median of a highway — has the symbolic power of a totem pole. Rooms are stacked atop one another, each one oddly shaped, sheathed in metal and connected by tubes and channels.

The architects are using the designs to make a polemical point, and to achieve a high enough decibel level the buildings are provocatively overstated and overdesigned. None are about minimalism.

Manifestos, to be a clarion call, must be "the idea whose time has come" — and one wonders if this isn't all a little late. Didn't the 20th century already have its romance with the machine? Even in the rooms of P.S. 1 — at 46-01 21st Street in Long Island City — we see old pipes and radiators well over a half-century old, and outside, the erector-set Queensboro Bridge. This is, after all, a post-industrial, electronic age: the computer and the chip have replaced the machine and the cog, and cannot really furnish a physical basis on which to build — the parts of the new chip technology are simply too small to sit on. The image on the television, videocassette recorder or the computer seems to be the basic image of our times (only Mr. Denari's design for what he calls the tower of London — a transmitting tower — takes the idea of the age of communication and makes it into a building).

With their references to Le Corbusier, the architects clearly acknowledge a past machine age in architecture, but they are trying to restate and revalidate its lessons and take them further. The designs do not tend toward simplicity, as the industrial process encourages, but toward complexity — the idea is more to increase rather than reduce the number of moving parts. The machines are not intended to be mass produced — they are paradigms rather than prototypes.

Also, the designs do not tend to be neutral mechanisms. Some have subjective associations and humor, such as an aluminum-plated baby carriage by Kaplan, Krueger, Scholz, which is shaped like a top, with the nose forward; on one side the wheels look like the short legs of a centipede. The design is not reduced but enriched, and as complex and contradictory as any thing post-modern.

Many of the designs are deft assemblages, but the architects have created more than handsome buildings and objects. The strong work supports an interesting argument. They have developed a complex architectural approach and a vocabulary as a critique and counterproposal to the visually preoccupied historical architecture they say has dominated the field. They are proposing a new school of thought.

Despite the architects' initiative, and the start of an idea, the manifesto is not entirely convincing. The argument does not have the great depth and cultural resonance of the modern architecture created during the machine age early in this century — the nature of our machines has changed, and so must an architecture based on the idea of machines. The architects have not sufficiently explored the new "machines," such as computers, to create an architecture inspired by recent technology. The exaggerated use of old machine imagery is in some way decorative — an exercise in style.

One of the more convincing arguments for their position, however, is an unstated, psychological one — that the buildings invite the participation of their occupants in the most simple acts of living. One can reach anywhere in these buildings and adjust the environment: the building is offering its hand. It is the building's invitation that keeps these "building machines" from perpetuating the architectural coldness that is often associated with modern architecture.

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FEBRUARY 1987 \$6.50 / CAN \$8

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

"Building Machines"

P.S. 1

During most of the 19th century architecture either exploited technology for invention or erected itself as a barrier to the machine's increasingly omnipresent nature. In the 20th century, mechanistic processes began to provide a metaphorical language, a hard-edged imagery, making buildings look as if they had been turned inside out; the guts and the service core became a new public iconography. Since the advent of the industrial age, machines have altered inorganic structure, organic life, and most of all the human mind.

"Building Machines," organized by Glenn Weiss, examined the implications of machinery on human life. The show included work by Neil Denari, the collaborative team of Ted Krueger, Kenneth Kaplan, and Christopher Scholz, and the partnership of Wes Jones and Peter Pfau. These designers did not simply appropriate machine imagery, but looked to the concept of mechanization with originality, intelligence, and some irony. Much of the work possessed a compelling Duchampian banality. The various projects included mechanized devices set into real or implied motion by the architects' wills. But there is an irony here; all of these architects have the craftsman's obsession with humanized processes, rather than the product-preoccupation of mechanized systems.

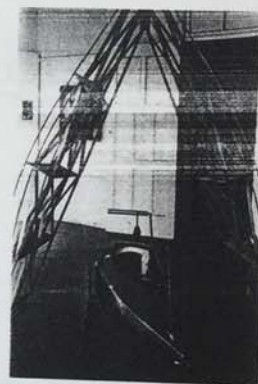
Kaplan, Scholz, and Krueger focused on objects composed of elements that can be arranged or recombined to satisfy different functional circumstances. *Crib-batic*, 1986, is a small vehicle—a tool cart. It is designed for a child and is filled with manipulable instruments. A separate, free-standing, wooden frame construction can be used to form a corral or an archway, creating distinct geographic regions within which the vehicle may move. This exquisite little construction acts as a symbol of the humanized machine.

Jones' and Pfau's ambitious range of work included plans for major housing projects, a series of investigations of the primitive hut/machine, and a proposal entitled "Housing for the Homeless," 1985. This project suggested using the leftover chinks between city buildings—the narrow caverns and

alleyways—as slender volumes to house New York City's homeless population. The architects devised makeshift, improvised forms of street habitation, including dumpsters, abandoned cars, and trains. With directness, poetry, and irony, Pfau and Jones employed a mechanistic assemblage to show the great breakdown of the city machine, its physical as well as political impairments.

Denari and the team of Jones and Pfau included texts with their work, sometimes as explanation, but more often as parallel and independent investigations. One of Denari's current projects is *Solar Clock*, 1986. This large yellow capsule is set on a track that loops through the city of London once every 24 hours. Its function as a timepiece is discernible only relative to its location within the city. Denari's theoretical proposals are incisive studies in philosophy, exploring the anarchistic qualities of mechanical systems.

Many contemporary architects are once again looking to the machine as part of the oppositional backlash to the depthlessness of post-Modernism. It is as if the mechanical drawing has become more interesting than the perspectival illusion. But the fallacy of much current work in this vein is the superficial exchange of one set of images for another. The architects included in this exhibition look beyond the appearance of mechanistic properties to more profound questions of rationalization and symbolism in the late 20th century. What a relief to see something other than a fear of, or nostalgia for, some technological promised land.



Kenneth Kaplan, Ted Krueger, and Christopher Scholz, *Crib-batic*, 1986, installation view. Photo: Denise Garone.

—PATRICIA C. PHILLIPS

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OCTOBER 15-21

AN OPINIONATED SURVEY
OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS

EDITED BY GUY TREBAY

ART

James Turrell: Collaged, crater-pocked, and drawn on, these site-plans for his Roden Crater Project in Arizona offer tantalizing evidence of what may be the most elegant, ambitious, and cosmic Earthwork ever. If you want an inkling of Turrell's famous magic with light, space, and celestial effects, though, see the new roof installation at P.S. 1. Site plans: Through October 25, Marian Goodman Gallery, 24 West 57 Street, 977-7160; Rooftop installation, by appointment: P.S. 1, 46-01 21 Street, Long Island City, 718-784-2084. (Levin)

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Weekend

The New York Times

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1986

Artists Putting Studios on Display

By DOUGLAS C. MCGILL

FOR anyone puzzled by painters and sculptors — by their creative minds and by the gritty question of how they live and survive and sometimes thrive in New York today — an "open studio" is just the thing. And this month, with several large open studios being held around the city, is just the time.

The open studio is similar to an "open house" tour: visitors, carrying a map that indicates where the participating artists work, walk from studio to studio. There, in lofts or apartments or converted garages, the artists have a selection of their work on display. And visitors are encouraged to ask whatever questions come to mind.

This weekend, one of the city's largest and longest-running of such events will be held at 41 Union Square West, an office building filled almost entirely with artists.

An open studio tour in the newest of New York's art districts, Long Island

City, Queens, will also be held this weekend. And next weekend, no fewer than three open studios will be held around New York, one on the Upper West Side of Manhattan and two in Long Island City.

The pieces on exhibition in the studios are usually for sale — and reasonable prices, nearly always lower than one could find in Manhattan galleries, are the rule. This is not because the artists are Sunday painters. Most are serious artists who, by reasons of youth, choice or wayward luck, are not part of the high-priced commercial gallery scene.

Neighborhood open studio events have been around for more than 20 years, usually in "emerging" art neighborhoods — as SoHo and Greenwich Village once were. Today, those neighborhoods have changed, and so have the venues of the open studios. They now can be found especially in Brooklyn and Long Island City. In those neighborhoods, in recent years, dozens of open studios have been staged by artists hoping to share

Continued on Page C30



The New York Times/Jim Wilson

Among artists who are participating in the open studio tour at 41 Union Square West in Manhattan this weekend are, clockwise from left: Ellsa Decker, Ray Houlihan, Hank Virgona, Erika Welhs, Jan Wunderman, in whose studio the artists are gathered, and Deni Schutzer, seated on floor.

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Artists Are Opening Up Their Studios to Visitors

Continued From Page C1

their work with one another and with a larger public. Usually word-of-mouth affairs with leaflet advertising on telephone poles, open studios have in some cases become regular and highly organized, such as those run by the Brooklyn Waterfront Artists' Coalition and the Park Slope Artists' Council, also in Brooklyn.

"What's going on in the Manhattan gallery scene is not representative of what many artists are doing," said Joan Zraly-Turken, a spokesman for the Park Slope Artists' Council. "The gallery scene is about what's new, what's hot, what's fashionable. Our artists work year in and year out making work that they want, as opposed to what some dealer thinks will sell. We hope that ultimately people will realize that we exist, and that the fact that we don't live in \$2,000 lofts doesn't mean we are not serious."

From Dentistry to Art

Tomorrow and Sunday, one of the largest and most successful of New York's open studios — and one of the most convenient for visitors — will be held in the 41 Union Square West building, at 17th Street. Built around the turn of the century, the 17-story building is filled with rooms that are highly attractive to artists, since many were once used by dentists and are equipped with sinks.

This year's open studio, the building's fourth in six years, will include more than 70 artists. There are few "stars" on the list, but visitors will certainly recognize many of the participants from their work in the graphic arts. Susanne Suba, for instance, draws many of the compact vignettes of city life — a man at a hot-dog stand, or people talking by a bus stop — found at the bottom of columns in *The New Yorker*. Erika Weihs has painted and drawn illustrations for the covers of several Joyce Cary novels. And Ray Houlihan — whose studio contains a classic mountain of artist's clutter — has drawn thousands of illustrations for *The Reader's Digest*, specializing in scenes of the Old West.

Hank Virgona, a watercolorist, printmaker and political cartoonist who works in Room 416, began the open studio and remains its organizer. "I knew that people loved to go behind the scenes," said Mr. Virgona in a recent interview. "And artists are a very mysterious group. People imagine artists as some kind of mythical heroic figures. They forget that everyone can be artists. Our attitude is, ask questions. A studio is not a church."

Among the other participating artists will be Jan Wunderman, whose delicate abstract collages are made of such materials as tissue, bed-sheets, plaster cloth and pheasant eggs. Irene Berkson will show sculptures made from the roots and trunks of trees, and Harvey Goldstein will exhibit cast sculptures of human faces that he makes from scrap dowels of wood and Plexiglas.

Seven Artists, Seven Studios

Not all the studios will be offering "fine" arts. Kathie Abrams, a graphic artist, will sketch caricatures of visitors, and in the workshop of "Eccentricities," a costume and propdesign company, foam and fabric costumes now being made for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade will be shown. The hours of the open studio are from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. For information, the number is 243-5874.

Also this weekend, an open studio tour will be held at I.S. 1, on the fourth floor of a converted Long Island City furniture factory that a group of 14 artists have leased cooperatively. (The name is for Independent Studio 1, a takeoff on P. S. 1, the most established alternative art space in Long Island City.) About seven of the artists, in as many studios, will show their work at the building, which is at 10-27 46th Avenue. The hours are 1 to 6 P.M., tomorrow and Sunday. Information: (718) 729-8001, or (516) 466-0513.

Next weekend, the West Side Arts Coalition will sponsor its fourth annual open studio among artists of the Upper West Side. Unlike the event at 41 Union Square West, the studios are scattered over several square miles, between 59th and 110th Streets. This event also includes six concurrent group shows of Upper West Side artists that will be held in such various locations as a law office, the West Side Y.M.C.A., the Mannes College of Music, and a Wendy's restaurant.

To help visitors decide the routes of their tour, a group show will be presented at the Broadway Mall Center, an old "comfort station" at 96th Street that has recently been renovated for use as an arts center. Works by each of the artists in the open studios will be on view, as will slides of examples of their art and maps giving their studios' location.

"Art has been very prominent on the West Side, with lots of writers and theater people living here since the turn of the century," said Carole Kaufmann, one of the organizers of the open studio. "People forget that visual artists are also there. Banding together is making us better known." The hours of the event are noon to 6 P.M. on Oct. 25 and 26, Nov. 1 and 2. Information: 316-6024 or 861-0469 days, or 799-4212 evenings.

Garages, Basements and Lofts

Also next weekend, Long Island City will again be jumping with two open studios. One is the "First Long Island City Open Studios 1986," in which 10 artists will take part. A concurrent group show of their work will be on exhibit in the lobby gallery of La Guardia Community College at 31-10 Thomson Avenue (9 A.M. to 8 P.M. Monday through Saturday, through Oct. 31).

The studios in this event give the full flavor of the East East Village (as some have called Long Island City), with artists working in a variety of spaces ranging from huge old auto garages (Dan Sinclair's studio) to town-house basements and converted factory lofts. Maps will be available at the Studio K Gallery, 12-15 Jackson Avenue. The event will be held Oct. 26 from 1 to 6 P.M. Information: (718) 784-0591.

Finally, P. S. 1 will sponsor an open studio on Oct. 26 at 46-01 21st Street. A renovated schoolhouse and perhaps the city's leading showcase for promising younger visual artists, the building is divided into two sections, one for exhibition space and one for the studios of the artists, who work there on a yearly grant program.

The open studios, held three times a year to coincide with the openings of P. S. 1's major exhibitions, are bustling art emporiums. Several thousand people are expected to walk through the 20 open studios — artists to keep up with trends, collectors to buy the newest thing, and dealers to sign up the bright comers. The hours are 2 to 6 P.M. Information: (718) 784-2084.

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 108 Leonard Street
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Michael Howard participated in The Institute's Studio Artists Program from 1983 to 1985. He is currently represented by Gracie Mansion Gallery and is completing a series of paintings to be featured at The Institute's CAR HOP fundraising event in the Fall (See inside for additional information.) Michael's text was excerpted from an interview conducted by Tom Finkelpearl, Coordinator of The Clocktower.

The first contact I had with P.S. 1? Richard Flood included me in the "Beast" show (Fall of 1982) with Jon Borofsky, Roger Brown, Keith Haring, Andy Warhol and others. I was really isolated at the time and came over to P.S. 1 to see the show. Something sort of clicked.

I'd been painting in a small, eight by ten foot apartment, on the Upper East Side, and that was about the same as living in New Jersey. I was doing 12 by 12 inch paintings. My girlfriend was an actress and would rehearse "Camelot," or whatever, in this tiny studio. When anyone came over to look at paintings, they thought it was insane that I was trying to work there.

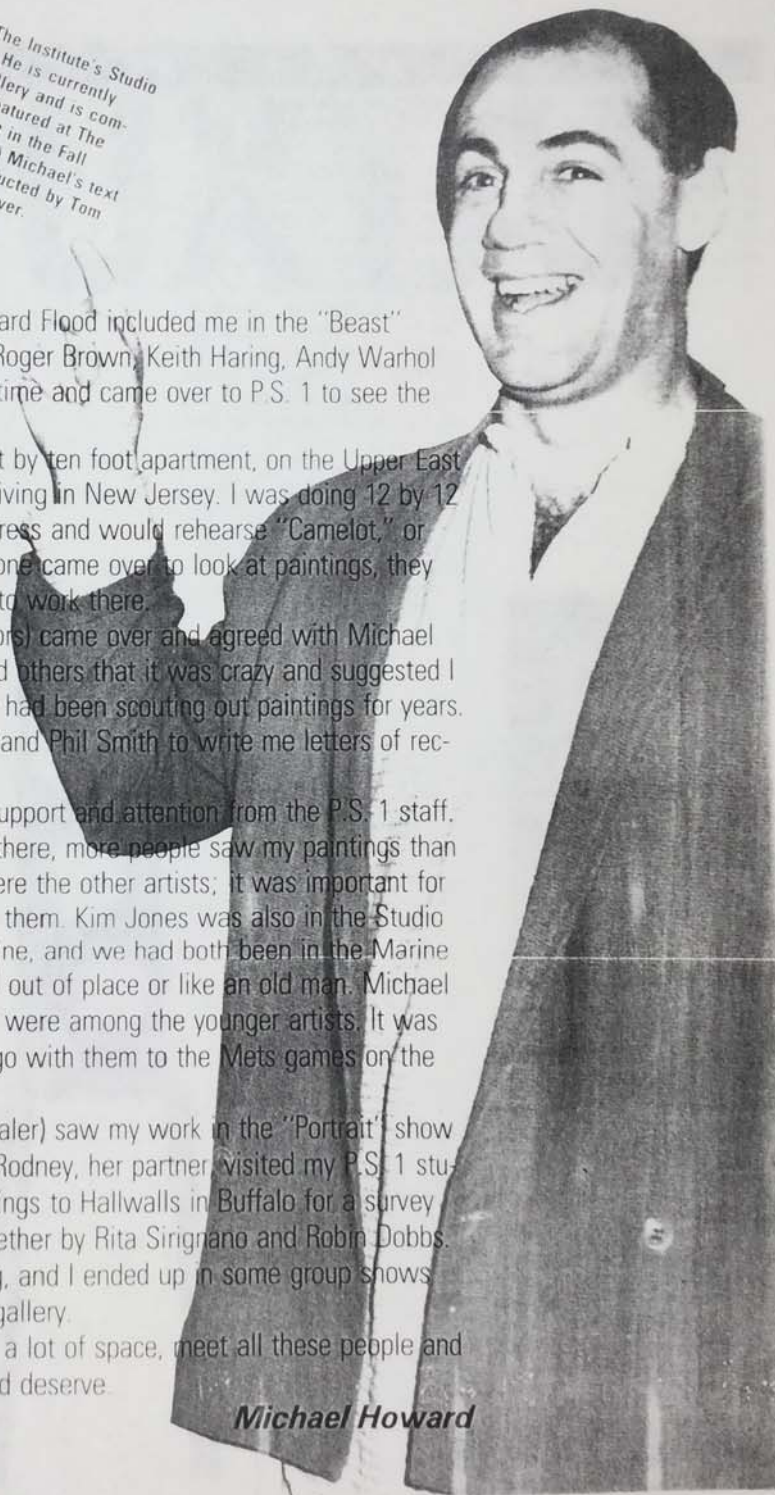
Don and Mira Rubell (the collectors) came over and agreed with Michael Walls (the director of Siegel Gallery) and others that it was crazy and suggested I try to get a studio at P.S. 1, where they had been scouting out paintings for years. At the last minute, I got Michael Walls and Phil Smith to write me letters of recommendation and got in.

As a studio artist, I got a lot of support and attention from the P.S. 1 staff. I guess in the two years I had a studio there, more people saw my paintings than in the previous ten years. Then there were the other artists; it was important for me to be in the same environment with them. Kim Jones was also in the Studio Artist Program. He was my age, thirty-nine, and we had both been in the Marine Corps between 1963-67, so I didn't feel out of place or like an old man. Michael Byron, Scott Dedecker and Sam Messer were among the younger artists. It was good for me to see their paintings and go with them to the Mets games on the Number 7 train.

Later, Gracie Mansion (the art dealer) saw my work in the "Portrait" show curated by Jeffrey Deitch. She and Sur Rodney, her partner, visited my P.S. 1 studio. At the time I was sending old paintings to Hallwalls in Buffalo for a survey show of my work from 1974-84 put together by Rita Sirignano and Robin Dobbs. So, Gracie and Sur got to see everything, and I ended up in some group shows and then two one-person shows at her gallery.

So, at P.S. 1 it was good to have a lot of space, meet all these people and get the attention artists are dying for and deserve.

Michael Howard



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April 16–May 14
The Guerrilla Girls
The Clocktower



The Institute has traditionally included disparate and dissenting voices through programs by guest curators and temporary exhibitions. In recent years, an anonymous group of concerned individuals, operating under the name, The Guerrilla Girls, has attempted to call the art world to account for perceived exclusion of women from galleries and museums in numbers comparable to male representation. Their concern has extended to related minority issues. The Clocktower will be given over to The Guerrilla Girls who have referred to themselves as "the conscience of the art world."

May 7, 8 pm
"Captive Women," Reading
Susan Howe
Curator: David Matlin

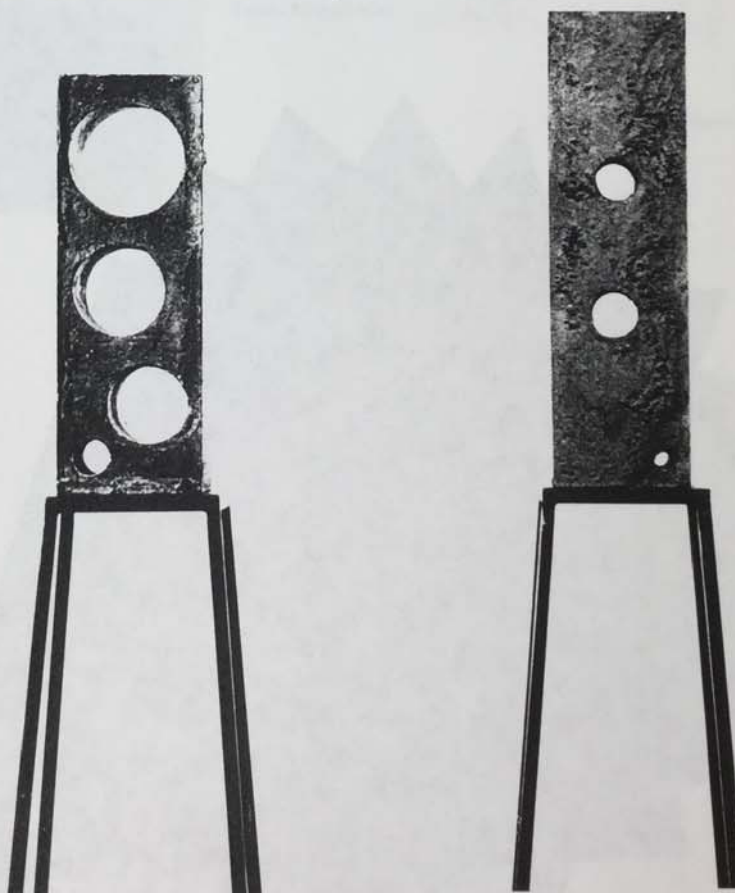
April 26–June 21
Juxtapositions:
Recent Sculpture
from England and Germany
P.S.1

The Institute's main Spring exhibition features the current work of eight challenging sculptors. "Juxtapositions" investigates how England and Germany, for all their political and cultural differences, have emerged in the past four years as leaders in a movement that has at its heart a shift away from painting into the realm of sculpture-making. Among other concerns the artists' works explore are architectural form and function and how cultural detritus is used as material for sculpture. The English sculptors include Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Bill Woodrow and Tony Cragg. The

Germans include Reiner Rüttenbeck, Genzken, Harald Klingelhöller and Thomas Schütte.

An illustrated catalog, with essays by Denys Zacharopoulos and Joshua Decker and two interviews with Alanna Heiss and Kaspar Koenig and Benjamin Buc and Joshua Decker, will document the exhibition.

Curator: Alanna Heiss
Assistant Curator: Joshua Decker



Lautsprecher, 1986

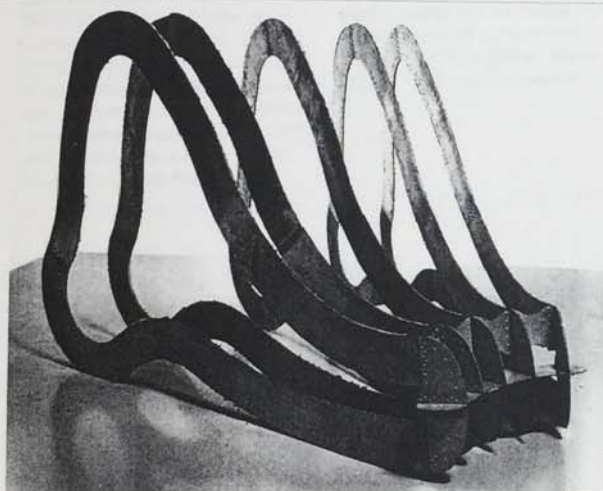
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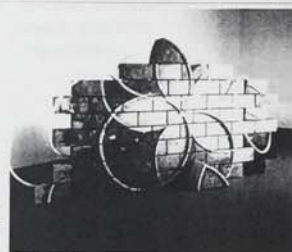
POSITIONS

May 28-June 28
Nicholas Moufarrege
The Clocktower

The Clocktower's memorial exhibit features the work of Nicholas Moufarrege, organized by Cynthia Kuebel, Elaine Rex, Bill Stelling and Tim Greathouse, who was an influential artist whose death in 1984 deprived the New York art world of a multi-talented force. Moufarrege's numerous Pop image paintings reveal a deep understanding of contemporary history and for the meanings implicit in borrowing or appropriating images.

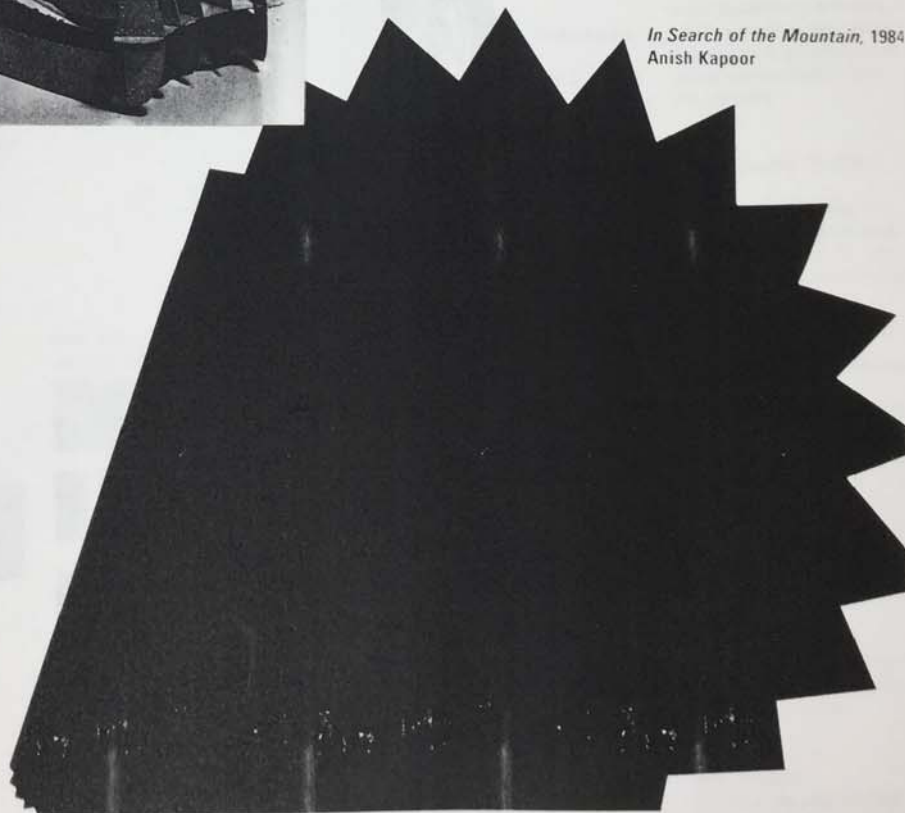


Tooth and Claw, 1986
Richard Deacon



Blau Blum, 1984
Harald Klingelhöller

In Search of the Mountain, 1984
Anish Kapoor



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April 26-June 21
Special Projects
P.S. 1

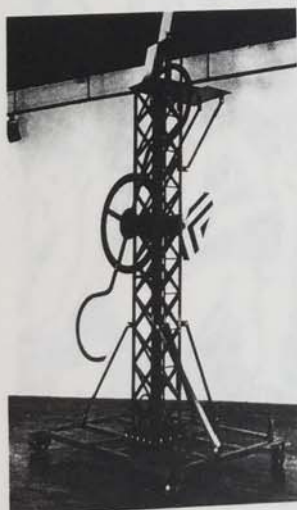
While the Spring's Special Project exhibitions include diverse mediums the artists represented share certain concerns. The figure is central to the paintings of Barbara Smukler, Betty Tompkins and Judy Glantzman. David Schafer will install two sculpture machines, "UU" and "Little Demon," while Petah Coyne's sculpture, assembled from roots, tar and wax, combine to remind the viewer of a kinship with earth processes. Other projects include works by Robyn Almaleh, Margot Lovejoy and Andrew Moore.

April 26-June 21
Raw Zones: Bethany Eden-Jacobson
P.S. 1

Video Curator Matthew Geller will continue his tradition of presenting installations as well as screenings with the work of Bethany Eden-Jacobson. "Raw Zones" includes a wall-to-wall photographic montage and a videotape exploring the influence of war technology (Reagan's Star Wars program particularly) on a woman's consciousness.

May-June
Spring Dance Series
P.S. 1

"He/She," this Spring's Dance Series presents dances on the themes of love, sex and gender. Co-curated by Joan Ross Acocella and Valda Setterfield, the series, will run on Saturday and Sunday at 3 p.m., during May and June and will include established and lesser known choreographers.



Little Demon, 1986
David Schafer



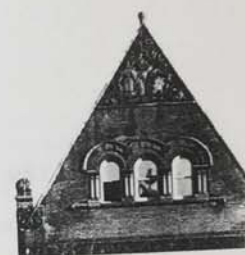
Debbie Curran

Performance

at P.S. 1, 1986

Spring

Dance Series



Education Program
Grants Received

The Institute's Education Program has received grants from the Helena Rubinstein Foundation and the Syntex Corporation, allowing for expansion of the public program to include multi-disciplinary activities. For additional information about the program or to schedule your group, contact Karen Ernst, 718-784-2084.

Queens Council Provides Support

The Institute gratefully acknowledges a grant from the Queens Council on the Arts to support a direct mail brochure for members.

Help Support the Studio Artists Program

Contribute to the Studio Artists Program by taking a chance on a Mike Howard original. Your \$600 donation buys one in a series of 200 specially commissioned Howard paintings of Ford automobile, two tickets THE CAR HOP dinner-dance and a chance to win a Ford car drive away.

Your support will go toward maintaining our thirty-five studios in the program.

Film Program

The Institute's Spring Film Program will be organized

Raw Zones, 1986
Bethany Eden-Jacobson



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DANCE-AND-FILM
BY-SUSAN-WELT
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**P.S.1 · SPRING · DANCE
S E R I E S · H E / S H E
MAY 30-31, JUNE 6-7 · 3:00PM.**

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April 10, 1987
Annie Raulerson

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Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Spring Dance Program at P. S. 1

He/She: Love, Sex and Gender

P.S.1's annual Spring Dance Program will begin May 9 at 3PM. Entitled "He/She: Love, Sex and Gender" and curated by Joan Acocella and Valda Setterfield, this year's collection of dances deals with how the sexes see one another (or themselves), and what they do with and to one another. Most of these dances are new works.

The series will run for six weekends in May and June. the time is 3PM and admission is \$6.00 or TDF + \$1.00. All programs will be held in P.S. 1's large sunlit auditorium.

Program A: May 9, 10, and May 16, 17

NINA MARTIN - "Endless Efforts", a work prayer choreographed by Nina Martin investigates the inevitable realities of working for a living. The frustrations and the joys of working men and women and the humor of the efforts that take them in many directions at once.

CATHERINE TUROCY - Ms. Turocy will present a "neo-baroque" adaptation of Les Caracteres de la Danse, originally choreographed and performed by Francoise Prevost in the early 18th century. In this solo, New York Baroque Dance Ensemble member Renouard Gee will play both male and female roles.

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DJ McDONALD - "Moods of Love" is a three part suite that examines "the light of love prismatically, refracting its white light in the colors of loss, lust and loyalty." The second section of the suite will be a world premiere - a male/female duet of erotic love.

Program B: May 30/31, June 6/7

ANDREA HICKS and SUSAN WELTI - Juxtaposing dance with film-projected images (for example - a couple kissing), Hicks and Welty's new work will be presented as an "installation." The movement of the dance will react against and play off the "other" which is the film.

DIANE MARTEL - Ms. Martel will be presenting her dance/performance piece "Brother Jack Ass." Regarding this piece, Martel says: "Gender and sexual dominance are interchangeable as the characters assume, relinquish and exchange roles of power at various points throughout the dance in relation to each other and to the audience."

PAM QUINN and MICHAEL O'CONNOR - Quinn and O'Connor will collaborate in a satiric duet set to music by Mantovanti.

BARBARA HOFRENING - Ms. Hofrening presents a sextet entitled "A Hierarchy of Parts" in which Hofrening "suggests the excitement of early encounters in non-discriminating play as well as in the dawning awareness of the conscious, the preference, the sex, the difference."

Program C: June 13/14, June 20/21

DOUGLAS WRIGHT - "Hey Paris" is the title of a new duet for a man and woman in one suit.

JEFF McMAHON - In collaboration with composer Charles Nielson and visual artist Stan Pressner, McMahon will present a multi-media event. Entitled "Away from You", this duet for two men is narrated by a third and focuses on the issues of emotional relationships and desire.

SALLY SILVERS - "Gender damage" will be the topic of Silver's latest piece which will be structured as a series of duets within an ensemble of dancers.

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TERE O'CONNOR - "Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby" is the title of O'Connor's duet set to original music composed by Diane Martel. O'Connor works with "gender in its allegorical senses in an attempt to speak about something that is without time and is not local."

P.S. 1 Spring Dance Program is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council for the Arts. P.S. 1's facilities are owned by the City of New York, and their programs are supported in part by contributions from the City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs.

"Gender" was created by David Aronson and Tere O'Connor. This year's collection of dance works will also include two other new works by Tere O'Connor and David Aronson. The collection will be presented in May and June. The time is 7:30 and admission is \$5.00 or \$10.00. All proceeds will be used to fund the P.S. 1's dance program.

The series will run for six weeks in May and June. The time is 7:30 and admission is \$5.00 or \$10.00. All proceeds will be used to fund the P.S. 1's dance program.

Presented: May 9, 10, and May 16, 17.

DIANE MARTEL - "Radical Effort", a short play choreographed by Diane Martel investigates the inevitable results of working for a living. The frustration and the joy of working and the work and the humor of the efforts that take place in many directions of work.

CATHERINE TURLEY - Ms. Turner will present a "one-act play" adaptation of the story of the blind men and an elephant. Originally choreographed and performed by Catherine Turner in the early 1980s. In this solo, New York's Catherine Turner explores the world of the blind and the world of the sighted.

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 1987

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46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
718 784-2084

Alanna Heiss
President and Executive Director

Spring Dance Program at P. S. 1

He/She: Love, Sex and Gender

P.S.1's annual Spring Dance Program will begin May 9 at 3PM. Entitled "He/She: Love, Sex and Gender" and curated by Joan Acocella and Valda Setterfield, this year's collection of dances deals with how the sexes see one another (or themselves), and what they do with and to one another. Most of these dances are new works.

The series will run for six weekends in May and June. the time is 3PM and admission is \$6.00 or TDF + \$1.00. All programs will be held in P.S. 1's large sunlit auditorium.

Program A: May 9, 10, and May 16, 17

NINA MARTIN - "Endless Efforts", a work prayer choreographed by Nina Martin investigates the inevitable realities of working for a living. The frustrations and the joys of working men and women and the humor of the efforts that take them in many directions at once.

CATHERINE TUROCY - Ms. Turocy will present a "neo-baroque" adaptation of Les Caracteres de la Danse, originally choreographed and performed by Francoise Prevost in the early 18th century. In this solo, New York Baroque Dance Ensemble member Renouard Gee will play both male and female roles.

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DJ McDONALD - "Moods of Love" is a three part suite that examines "the light of love prismatically, refracting its white light in the colors of loss, lust and loyalty." The second section of the suite will be a world premiere - a male/female duet of erotic love.

Program B: May 30/31, June 6/7

ANDREA HICKS and SUSAN WELTI - Juxtaposing dance with film-projected images (for example - a couple kissing), Hicks and Welty's new work will be presented as an "installation." The movement of the dance will react against and play off the "other" which is the film.

DIANE MARTEL - Ms. Martel will be presenting her dance/performance piece "Brother Jack Ass." Regarding this piece, Martel says: "Gender and sexual dominance are interchangeable as the characters assume, relinquish and exchange roles of power at various points throughout the dance in relation to each other and to the audience."

PAM QUINN and MICHAEL O'CONNOR - Quinn and O'Connor will collaborate in a satiric duet set to music by Mantovanti.

BARBARA HOFRENING - Ms. Hofrening presents a sextet entitled "A Hierarchy of Parts" in which Hofrening "suggests the excitement of early encounters in non-discriminating play as well as in the dawning awareness of the conscious, the preference, the sex, the difference."

Program C: June 13/14, June 20/21

DOUGLAS WRIGHT - "Hey Paris" is the title of a new duet for a man and woman in one suit.

JEFF McMAHON - In collaboration with composer Charles Nielson and visual artist Stan Pressner, McMahon will present a multi-media event. Entitled "Away from You", this duet for two men is narrated by a third and focuses on the issues of emotional relationships and desire.

SALLY SILVERS - "Gender damage" will be the topic of Silver's latest piece which will be structured as a series of duets within an ensemble of dancers.

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TERE O'CONNOR - "Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby" is the title of O'Connor's duet set to original music composed by Diane Martel. O'Connor works with "gender in its allegorical senses in an attempt to speak about something that is without time and is not local."

P.S. 1 Spring Dance Program is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council for the Arts. P.S. 1's facilities are owned by the City of New York, and their programs are supported in part by contributions from the City of New York's Department of Cultural Affairs.

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SPRING DANCE SERIES 1987

HE/SHE: Love, Sex, and Gender

MAY 9/10 and MAY 16/17 3PM

Nina Martin: *Endless Efforts*

Catherine Turocy: *Les Caracteres de la Danse*

DJ McDonald: *Moods Of Love*

MAY 30/31 and JUNE 6/7 3PM

Andrea Hicks and Susan Welti: *Untitled*

Diane Martel: *Brother Jack Ass*

Pam Quinn and Michael O'Connor: *Untitled*

Barbara Hofrening: *A Hierarchy of Parts*

JUNE 13/14 and JUNE 20/21 3PM

Douglas Wright: *Hey Paris*

Jeff McMahon: *Away from You*

Sally Silvers: *Gender Damage*

Tere O'Connor: *Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby*

Joan Acocella and Valda Setterfield, Curators

PS.1

The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street Long Island City, NY 11101

Major funding for PS.1's Dance Program was received from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council for the Arts. PS.1's facilities are owned by the City of New York and their programs are supported in part with an operating grant from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

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MAY 6-12

AN OPINIONATED SURVEY OF THE WEEK'S EVENTS EDITED BY GUY TREBAY

DANCE

'He/She: Love, Sex, and Gender': Organized by curators Joan Accella and Valda Setterfield, this year's Spring Dance Program at P.S. 1 deals with "how the sexes see one another (or themselves) and what they do with and to one another." Three different programs are spread over six weekends—on tap for the first two weekends are Nina Martin's *Endless Efforts*, a "work prayer," Catherine Turocy's "neobaroque" adaptation of an 18th century piece in which Renouard Gee will play both male and female parts, and DJ McDonald's *Moods of Love*, examining loss, lust, and loyalty. May 9 and 10 at 3, P.S. 1, the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, 46-01 21st Street, Long Island City, 718-784-2084. (Zimmer)

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SPRING DANCE SERIES 1987 *HE/SHE*

Joan Acocella and Valda Setterfield, curators

**P.S.1 seeks dances on the themes of
Love, Sex, and Gender
for its Spring Dance Series.**

All choreographers will be paid a stipend.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 31, 1986

The application should consist of:

■ 1/2" or 3/4" videotape of your work.

Please cue tape to the 10 minute segment you wish
the panel to view.

■ resume

■ written proposal for a dance on above theme

■ S.A.S.E. for return of videotape

Please send applications to:

**P.S.1 The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc.
46-01 21st Street Long Island City, NY 11101**

The P.S.1 Spring Dance Series is made up of three programs, each running
for two weekends (four matinees) and consisting of 3 to 4 choreographers.
The performances are given during May and June in the P.S.1 Auditorium.

For further information please call (718) 784-2084



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SPRING DANCE SERIES 1987

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For further information please call (718) 764-2084

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VOICE NOVEMBER 4, 1986

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Gender Bender

BY SALLY SOMMER

HE/SHE: Love, Sex, and Gender. At P.S. 1 (May 9-10, 16-17, June 6-7) Nina Martin's *Endless Efforts*, DJ McDonald's *Moods of Love*, Diane Martel's *Untitled: Work in Progress 5/87*, Jeff McMahon's *Circles of Lines/Divided Grounds*, Tere O'Connor's *Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby*.

Too bad if you missed this spring's P.S. 1's series, "HE/SHE: Love, Sex, and Gender," since five of the eleven choreographers presented some very good stuff.

The series' theme covered everything important in life—and so did the dances. On the first program, Nina Martin's *Endless Efforts* took pleasing, disjointed jabs at work and sex (plus the lack of both). Humorously performed by Barbara Hofrenning, Benoit Lachambre, and Martin, Martin choreographed her dance with a kind of gangly athleticism that had the dancers slinging each other around as if it were all a mistake, an unexpected collision happening midair. DJ McDonald's ideas for *Moods of Love*—which dealt with young and old love, using old and young performers—were intriguing. But somehow the dance got grounded. Diane Martel's *Untitled: Work in Progress, 5/87* was a piece of shit. Literally. Adam Morris, dressed like baker, craps into a big bowl, then bakes a cake with its contents. Martel seems to be looking for fame and fortune through scatology. She'll probably get crowned queen.

Jeff McMahon's explosive new solo, *Circle of Lines/Divided Grounds*, tackles all those big subjects of "HE/SHE: Love, Sex, and Gender" by dealing with a relationship—except this is one man's fantasy about a relationship. The dance is launched as McMahon frantically lays down sticks in strict pathways, putting love inside boundaries. Delivering proclamations in a nonstop staccato monotone, he instructs and questions, gesticulating like a crazed mime, flinging his arms in exaggerated gestures to illustrate his words. "This is the room. Make it yours. This is the line. Stick to the path. This is my half. That is yours." It gets darker

and deeper: "Say the words. Whadda you mean? Brother, lover, sister, mother? Where is it? In my hand? In my pants?" Deliberately he strips off his zippered jacket and shirt, rips off his tie, and announces, "Marry me! Sign on the line." This sends him into a stick-laying flurry, making more paths, running more tracks.

Sex roles tumble in ambivalence and assertion, movements pick up momentum: "I'll make the closets in the morning and you make withdrawals. I'll build you a car and buy you a baby. I want the daddy! I want the baby! I want you!" Comeoncomeon he signals—as he backs away, muttering, "This isn't the big picture. This is just a couple of lines. That's good. That's a wrap." It's impossible to tell which comes first, words or motions. Everything blends together at high speed, overlaid occasionally with voiceovers or lush music (by Charles Nieland). Balancing chaos and order, McMahon throws emotional cacophony against the graphic structures created by the sticks. In the past McMahon used multimedia devices to create texture, but this time, by distilling it down to body, voice, some music, and sticks, he has made *Circle of Lines/Divided Grounds* a powerful, intense work that pulls you into its disturbing center. You can't break away. You don't want to.

When Tere O'Connor walked out in his little boy's costume and announced, "Once upon a time there was a boy, another boy, a giant, and a little baby," I thought this was going to be another tortured dance about boy-meets-boy. Instead, O'Connor created a long work about something a lot more interesting.

Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby is really about the child connecting daddy and giant, penis and baby. O'Connor and his wonderful partner Nancy Coenen keep approaching, then retreating from an enormous picture of a giant (it looked like it had been painted by a child). O'Connor lays down repetitive looping movements that hypnotize, accumulate, and build into strange, compelling rituals (I kept being reminded of the boys' maddened dance of totem worship in *Lord of the Flies*). The dance is elegantly performed by O'Connor and Coenen, who reminds me of another great dancer, Vicky Shick: she possesses the same physical clarity and calm demeanor, chiseling herself in space like a sculptor. Coenen so exactly follows O'Connor's movement style that they become clones, two halves of a single body. It's not easy. O'Connor's physical vocabulary is an imaginative hybrid of balletic arabesques and pliés ornamented by quirky little skips, hip wiggles, flea-hops to the side, the body tilted at a crazy angle with fingers splayed wide. They worship the giant, playing at the altar of adulthood, merging child and adult, when O'Connor falls and rolls before his god, then births a tiny babydoll from his pants. *Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby* is a mysterious, compelling work, intelligent and opaque—the perfect ending to this excellent series. ■

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VOICÉ JUNE 23, 1987

If You Show Me Yours

BY SALLY SOMMER

"HE/SHE: LOVE, SEX, AND GENDER." At P.S. 1 (series May 30 to June 7). Barbara Hofrenning's *A Hierarchy of Parts* and Pam Quinn and Michael O'Connor's *The Naked and the Dead*.

I thought comedy dance was dead. But on the second program in P.S. 1's "Love, Sex, and Gender" series, Barbara Hofrenning and the team of Pam Quinn and Michael O'Connor proved it isn't.

Hofrenning's *A Hierarchy of Parts* takes a deliciously funny look at early sexual development when sex is polymorphous and simple. Everything oral, anal, and genital gets cheerfully tumbled together in games that are ruled by the sacred rituals of sequence: Most important is who does what when and what follows what. Sex, gender, love, and morality are merely parts of an indifferent hierarchy.

Four zany babies (brilliantly performed by Hofrenning, Julia Grella, Scott Heron, and Diana McWilliams) crawl through a turquoise barrel into P.S. 1's gigantic space. Dressed in tacky blue slips, pieces of peach pajamas, and bizarre bonnets, they look like punkster Baby Snooks or Pee-wee Herman in infant drag. One is born carrying a valise, another clumps about on little pieces of wood, and McWilliams, a wonderful comedian, emerges with an inimitable expression of bafflement and beady-eyed suspicion. Squiggling around for positions, they seat themselves before a black cloth laid on the floor and unpack the valise. The games begin.

Good babies wash their faces with rice,

scrub their ears and armpits with sandpaper, and read about sexual theory: "If we accept that Morgan represents gynecological authority,"—McWilliams pauses, squints at the ceiling for understanding, then sagely nods, "Oh. Ah." Although the images are suggestive and lascivious—they stuff their mouths with marbles, then gaze out the corners of their eyes as they spit them out, one-by-one, into china cups—they remain guileless and totally concentrated. The games pick up in sexual connotations, climaxing in a rollercoaster of ecstasy as one sits behind the other, emitting breathy cries. It ends when each rolls away murmuring "I'm sorry. Sorry," yet their affect is as flat as seals lolling in the sun.

Hofrenning structured her dance as a series of vignettes, each perfectly phrased and cut, but there are too many; the last quarter of the dance is superfluous. It is a tribute to Hofrenning's taste that her piece never becomes coy or sentimental, and a mark of her performers' excellence that they remain tough little innocents playing at adult sex.

The Naked and the Dead, choreographed and performed by Pam Quinn and Michael O'Connor, is a brilliant parody of the 1950s view of the predatory (i.e., liberated) female. A nerd (O'Connor's shoulders slump from too much time in the library; he wears spectacles, brown polyester pants, and is perpetually shocked.) is pursued by a bleached blond in a red dress and crinoline (Quinn). Throbbing, schlocky organ music (composed and played by Verne Langdon) moves the stupid and universally significant plot.

The blond moves in on the nerd. He runs, she pursues and captures him. Triumphant pulling down his trousers, she flips him to the floor—and *does it to him*. That's bad enough. But when she sits on his face, he leaps up in horror and hobbles away because his pants still encircle his ankles, where they remain. She's wounded and sulky. He feels guilty about upsetting her and tries to make up. At first, she rebuffs his advances but finally succumbs and forgives—and forgiveness turns to passion. This time she snatches off his trousers and uses them to lasso her guy. Maddened and beetle-browed, he turns the tables, and strangles her with his pants. Now he's *really* sorry. Remorseful, he carries her away, lays her down, and safe at last, he lays beside her. She revives for one last kiss, then dies, reminding us that the wages of sin are death.

Quinn and O'Connor (he worked with Bill Irwin for a long time) are skilled mimes, masters of the cliché, able to pull their faces and bodies into perfect caricatures. Holding all of this together are some of the best imitations of bad, classic modern dance phrases. Quinn never does a front rond de jambe without first making a strong contraction, and O'Connor uses his arms like he's wiping off the counter in a fast-food joint. Along with Hofrenning, they prove that comedy can still get it up. ■

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 1987

WEEKENDER GUIDE

Continued From Page C1

has become a rite of summer. The Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival is back and celebrating its 10th anniversary. This weekend the festival — which takes place in Croton Point Park in Croton-on-Hudson in Westchester County from 11 A.M. to dusk Saturday and Sunday, rain or shine — will provide its usual quotient of easy and provocative listening in concerts of folk, jazz and ethnic music. The lineup of 84 performers appearing on the festival's eight stages includes the Georgia Sea Island Singers, Los Pleneros de la 21, Si Kahn, Richie Havens, Utah Phillips, Bonnie Raitt, Jane Sapp, Edwina Lee Tyler's Piece of the World, Ruth Pelham and the Soh Daiko drummers. There will also be storytelling, crafts booths, small boat workshops and environmental exhibits, dancing parties and fiddle, band and clogging contests, as well as food of every description. Admission is \$12 a day or \$21 for both days; \$6 a day for the elderly and disabled; children 12 and under free. An excursion package is available through Metro-North for \$17.95, which includes round-trip train travel from Grand Central and admission to the festival. Information: (914) 454-7951.

'LOVE, SEX AND GENDER'

The exploration of gender differences has been a preoccupation of dance for some time now. Three choreographers and one performance artist will explore that subject and others in "He/She: Love, Sex, and Gender," presented Saturday and Sunday afternoons at the P.S. 1 arts complex, 46-01 21st Street, in Long Island City, Queens. The new works include Sally Silvers's "Be Careful Now, You Know Sugar Melts in Water," a new piece for six dancers, a big red pillow and two red chairs, and Douglas Wright's new "Hey Paris," a funny athletic duet for skimpily clad dancers. Also new is Jeff McMahon's "Divided Grounds," a solo with text for Mr. McMahon about grappling

with physical desire and the possessiveness of love. Tere O'Connor's recent "Boy, Boy, Giant, Baby" completes the program, whose curators are Joan Accocella and Valda Setterfield. Tickets are \$6; Theater Development Fund vouchers accepted. Information: (718) 784-2084.

Sunday

DANCING IN THE STREETS

What more could one wish for on a summer afternoon than free music and dance by the sea? Dancing in the Streets has come up with a stylish alternative to summer theatergoing with "Motion by the Ocean" Sunday afternoon at 5 o'clock at Orchard Beach in the Bronx — in the water, on the sand and picnic tables and by the bathhouse. The performers include the madcap Mark Dendy and Company, Jelon Vieira's exuberant Dancebrazil, and Retumba Con Pie, an all-female dance and percussion group. There will also be works made for the site by Marta Renzi, appearing with her Project Company, and the Eva Dean Dance Company, augmented by city schoolchildren. Transportation to the performance will be provided by the City of New York Parks and Recreation on air-conditioned buses departing from the Arsenal Building at Fifth Avenue and 64th Street at 3:30 P.M. Bus tickets are \$2 per person round trip. Information: (718) 797-5342. Travel information: 360-1333.

JEAN, VIVIEN AND MARILYN

There are those whose first thought is to crawl into the dark, cool recesses of a movie theater when the temperature climbs on a summer Sunday in the city. The Regency Theater, at Broadway and 67th Street, will once more bring an extra fillip to moviegoing with "Three Beauties," a tribute to Jean Harlow, Vivien Leigh and

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Continued From Page C1

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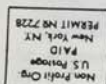
NEWSLETTER • JUNE 1987

DJ McDONALD AND DANCERS

1987

RECEIVED

Long Island City, NY 11101
46-01 21st St.
P.S. 1



Tom Kamm has co-designed five works with Robert Wilson, including *Alcestis*, and all sections of *the CIVIL warS*. He has also designed two shows for PBS, and his designs have been exhibited at the Otis Parsons Institute, in Los Angeles, and the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York. Beginning with our DTW season in 1985, Tom has been the lighting designer for all DJ McDonald & Dancers concerts, and created sets for "Men (are such beasts)" in 1985, and *Lost Tribes*, in 1986. He has also created and directed works for stage, sound tape, and video.



Company members take their bows after the August 8, performance of *Lost Tribes* -- a specially commissioned presentation as part of the Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors Festival. The piece featured 37 performers ranging in age from 13 to 73. In the front row are (l. to r.) Colin McDowell, Barbara Mahler, DJ McDonald, Cliff Williams, Jennifer Johanos, and Sharon Oliensis. Anchoring the second row is Stuart Hodes, composer Paul Galasso, and several senior guest artists. The third row includes company members Dawn Abels, and Charmaine Warren, among performers from the H.S. of Performing Arts. In the fourth row are the Central Harlem Tapping Seniors.

photo by Tom Brazil

625 Broadway New York, NY 10012

Cultural Council Foundation
Management and Resources for the Arts



WHAT'S NEXT?

Upcoming performances for DJ McDonald & Dancers include:

Sunday, June 28, at Ethnic Folk Arts Center, 179 Varick St., 2nd Floor, (1 1/2 blocks below the Houston St. stop on the # 1 Seventh Ave. IRT). Cordials at 1:30, performance at 2 p.m., reception 3 p.m. Contribution \$3. "Moods of Love," and excerpts from "The Oppenheimer Project."

Thursday, July 30, at Bryant Park, 42nd St. and Sixth Avenue, 12 noon, free. "Moods of Love" and excerpts from "The Oppenheimer Project."

Sunday, August 2, at Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1100 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, as part of a day long performance event from 2 p.m. to sunset, free. Excerpts from "The Oppenheimer Project."

Friday, December 18, at Marymount Manhattan Theater, 221 E. 71st Street, 8 p.m., "The Oppenheimer Project, Part 1." Opening night gala, \$50, \$25.

Information: (212) 627-2626.

Written by: DJ McDonald

Edited by: Beth Clarke Glancey

Layout: Edward Farrell and Jennifer Johanos

Graphic Design: Reeve S. Miner.

Vertices Incorporated/DJ McDonald & Dancers is a program of the Cultural Council Foundation

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P.O. BOX 209 • PRINCE STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10012
(212) 627-2626

NEWSLETTER • JUNE 1987



DJ McDonald in a performance of "boot camp" at P.S. 1, May 9, part of "Moods of Love."

photo by Tom Brazil

SUMMER "LOVE"

The experiences of loss, lust, and loyalty are portrayed in the three dances of "Moods of Love." The new suite premiered at Project Studios 1 (P.S. 1), in Long Island City, May 9 - 10, and May 16 - 17, as the Institute for Art and Urban Resources spring dance series "Love, Sex, and Gender."

The suite has something old, new, borrowed, and blue, and features two new works, and one familiar favorite: In "boot camp," DJ McDonald battles the end of a love relationship wearing fatigue shorts, kneepads, and a deadpan expression in a solo that combines physical risk with a witty tongue-in-cheek poignancy. The duet "eros and psyche," a work commissioned as part of the series, explores the notion that love is blind. It draws upon the myth of the mortal woman visited nightly, in the secret dark by the god of love.

The ever popular "Nocturnes" (1985) completes the suite. These performances of "Nocturnes" featured the debut of company member Dawn Abels, and Board Member Calvin Holt in the roles of the older couple. For Mr. Holt, who often performs culinary magic from the kitchen of his Serendipity III restaurant for television, the role marked his return to the live stage after an absence of 34 years. Bravo!

"Moods of Love" can be seen again this summer as part of the company showing Sunday, June 28, at 2 p.m., and Thursday, July 30, at Bryant Park. Bring someone you love!

ROBERT WILSON TO HOST GALA

Internationally renowned playwright, director, and designer Robert Wilson (Einstein on the Beach, the CIVIL WARS) has been named Honorary Chairman of the 1987 Gala Committee for DJ McDonald & Dancers. The company's first gala event will take place Friday, December 18, 1987, following the opening night performance for "The Oppenheimer Project, Part 1." Tickets are \$50, and \$25.

Making Oppie Dance

The Oppenheimer Project, 1986-89

by DJ McDonald

The tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the father of the atom bomb, represents a kind of original sin with which we are all tainted. His life stands as a prism through which the shining promise of applied science reveals the spectral colors in which we see our own lives and times.

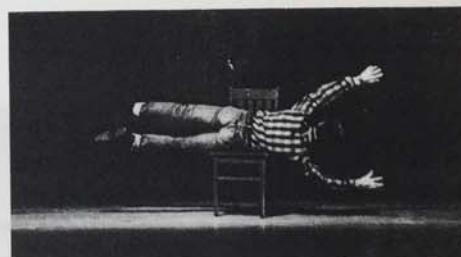
To examine this heritage I have begun "The Oppenheimer Project" in collaboration with composer Paul Galasso and set and lighting designer Tom Kamm. Seven individual pieces will be developed as modular units over the next three seasons. These will be variously assembled in stages towards final presentation as a full length work of dance and music theater.

"Oppenheimer in the Trees," received its premiere on March 3 and 4, directly across the street from the original site of the Manhattan Project which produced the bomb, as part of the Morningside Dance Festival.

"Oppenheimer in the Trees," recalls the physicist's seclusion in the mountains of New Mexico following the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Movement based on films of Oppenheimer is given a dramatic edge in solo and partnering work featuring a hardboiled athleticism as the physicist wrestles within himself. In making Oppie dance the foundation for the entire project is revealed.

Sections of "The Oppenheimer Project, Part 1," will premiere with live music at the Marymount Manhattan Theater on December 18-20, 1987.

Upcoming performances of the work in progress also include: Sunday, June 28, 2 p.m., Ethnic Folk Arts Center, 179 Varick St., NYC; Thursday, July 30, 12 noon, 42nd Street and 6th Avenue, a free event as part of the Bryant Park Festival; August 2, Sunday, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island, time to be announced, admission free.



DJ McDonald in "Oppenheimer in the Trees."

photo by Georgina Bedrosian

The Collaborators

Paul Galasso composed the music for "The Figure 8's," (1982), Levittown (1982-84), and a section of Lost Tribes (1986). He has often written and composed for theater, most notably in his own music theater works The Guilty Philosopher (1980), and The Plant Wizards (1984). His frequent collaborations have included the critically acclaimed Basic Behavior, and The America Hour, both with S. K. Dunn and Jim Neu.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 1987

Dance: 'He/She: Love, Sex and Gender'

By JENNIFER DUNNING

CHOREOGRAPHERS are back to sex. Joan Acocella writes in program notes to the "He/She: Love, Sex and Gender" festival at P.S. 1 in Long Island City, Queens. Dance is inextricably involved with sex and gender, whether consciously or by implication, but gender differences were one of the theatrical elements discarded by the postmodernists of the 1960's. Today, however, many choreographers are involved in a politicized exploration of gender and sexuality, as Ms. Acocella, curator of the festival with Valda Setterfield, observes.

The dances performed on Saturday, in the festival's closing program, offered a look at those contemporary concerns that was impressively wide-ranging both in style and content. Tere O'Connor touched on fathers, sons and gender confusion in his funny, sad and even terrifying "Boy,

Boy, Giant, Baby." The duet, set to music by Diane Martel, was performed deftly by Mr. O'Connor and Nancy Coenen.

In her new "Be Careful Now, You Know Sugar Melts in Water," Sally Silvers created a landscape in which both figures and ground — two lovers and a shifting chorus of four — were set forth clearly and with Ms. Silvers's typically spikey humor. A large red pillow and two red folding chairs suggested a kind of valentine. There was a charming sense of reality about the two lovers. And the sprawling dance was filled with gnomic, cogent little moments that were both irrational and transcendent. Bruce Andrews created the witty music and text collage.

Jeff McMahon provided the program's social theory and commentary in his new performance piece, "Circle of Lines/Divided Grounds," set to music by Charles Nieland. Mr. McMahon has the look of the archety-

pal innocent, quiet, murdering "loner" next door. Sinuous and compulsive, he moved here along paths like dotted lines, made of pieces of wood laid out across the floor. What he murdered, in movement and his painfully funny text, were a good many of the conventions of community and romance we have fallen into in the 1980's.

Ms. Silvers and Mr. McMahon made use of all of the open performance space. In Douglas Wright's wittily ingenious new "Hey Paris," set to music by Albert Ayler, Al Hirt and Conlon Nancarrow, the two lovers rarely strayed from each other. Fussing and flirting, they embodied most of the contemporary signs and symbols that distinguish gender and suggest appropriate sexual behavior. Most amusingly, the two together intertwined to make up a complete nude or dressed body, with Debbie McCulloch in a bowler hat and trousers and Mr. Wright in a shirt and skimpy dance belt.

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A HIERARCHY

P.S.1



OF PARTS

by: Barbara Hofrenning

with: Julia Grella,
Scott Heron,
Diana McWilliams

P.S.1 "Love, Sex, and Gender" Series
Saturday and Sunday, May 30-31; June 6-7
3:00 p.m.

Dixon Place: Sunday, May 17
8:00 p.m.

P.S.1
46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101

Directions

Subway
E or F Train to 23rd/Ely Avenue
#7 Flushing Line to 45th Road/
Court House Square
GG to 21st Street/Van Alst

Car

From Manhattan:
Midtown Tunnel, exit 21st
street, cross Jackson Avenue

From Queens:
LIE, exit Van Dam, right to
Thompson, left on Thompson
left on 21st

From Brooklyn:
BOE to LIE, see above

From Bronx:
Triboro Bridge to GCE to BOE
west on LIE, see above

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west on LIE, see above

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Alanna Heiss
P.S. 1

JEFF McMAHON

512 East 11th Street New York NY 10003

#4B

(212) 677-3214

June 9, 1987

Dear Alanna,

I will be performing at P.S. 1 during the next two weekends, and want to extend a special invitation to you to attend. This is the second time I have performed at P.S. 1, the first time being in 1983. P.S. 1 is a truly serene space for dance and performance, and it delights me to be able to present my work there again.

I will be presenting my new solo piece, DIVIDED GROUNDS, on Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 3:00 on June 13, 14, 20, 21. The piece has been specifically designed for the auditorium at P.S. 1, and I think will serve it well. DIVIDED GROUNDS is a melding of text and movement, centering on the mind's grappling with desires of the body and the possessiveness of love. The score features texts that I have composed in a rhythmic, kinetic fashion, locating thoughts in the body and physical space as they struggle to assert themselves. I have been working with the mixing of text with movement for several years, and feel this piece strongly reflects this work. During the twenty minute piece, there is a constant shifting between recorded voice and live speaking, augmented by the complex and evocative music of Charles Nieland. The modular set is simple and graphic, dividing the vast terrain of P.S. 1 into pathways which allow focus to center on the solo performer changing and rearranging space in the midst of the performance.

I have been creating dance-based performance work in NYC for the past several years, and have been presented by such spaces as P.S. 122, The Kitchen, The Neuberger Museum, Just Above Midtown, and Franklin Furnace, as well as numerous venues across the U.S. and Europe. I have received Choreographers Fellowships from the NEA for 1984 and 1987, as well as project support for my dance films. As you may not be familiar with my work, I am enclosing a resume and reviews of past performances to give you a better sense of what my work is like.

I am especially interested in your reactions to the piece, as I am interested in presenting a large-scale performance work sometime in the near future, independent of the Spring Dance Series. I would like to create a site-specific performance/installation piece in the auditorium, blending performance and visual arts concepts in a manner that would take into consideration the unique architectural properties of the space. My work in the past has usually had a strong visual sensibility, often using projections of film, slides and video to create an integrated and evocative performance environment. Making work respond to the specific site is always an exciting part of the work for me, and I am eager to expand on my use of the performance site at P.S. 1. One of my most exciting projects, in Summer of 1985, was creating a site-specific piece for the Neuberger Museum, using a 30,000 sq. ft. plaza with Henry Moore's "Large Two Forms" situated on it. Suzanne Delehanty, director of the Museum, called it: "the most successful of the many such events we have sponsored."

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JEFF McMAHON

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The project I am proposing would be a collaboration between myself as Director/Choreographer/Writer; Stan Pressner as Multi-Media and Lighting Designer; and Charles Nieland as Composer. I will work with a group of performers creating movement and dramatic tableaux to interact with the multi-media installation. This installation will feature the use of numerous projections and lighting that takes advantage of the surfaces and framing inherent in the auditorium's design. Natural light will be used in a highly focused manner, augmented and altered by many projection devices. The piece would be designed to be performed during the day, but with a much more theatrical use of light than is normally used in the space. It is also possible that there could be a presentation in the evening.

The material for the proposed piece will develop through consultations among the three collaborating artists, with initial thematic and structural impetus from myself, serving as project director. Stan and Charles will attend rehearsals, contributing visual and aural concepts for the performers to work with. In this manner, we hope to create a shifting and rich environment for the creation of the piece; one that is interactive in both process and performance. The piece will have a strongly kinetic core that comes from a synthesis of all the elements involved.

As the material will be developing in process, it is possible only to make general assumptions about the content of the piece, and its final form. The score will be created in a process similar to how Charles and I have created scores in the past, exchanging texts, songs, music and sound concepts in a back-and-forth fashion. The music will be a mix of styles, with occasional appropriations from extant forms such as opera and film scores. The visual imagery will provide a constantly shifting sense of locale; realistic places and images gradually shifting into abstraction. This imagery will work with the specific architecture of the auditorium: the archway, the walls flanking the arch, the room behind, the windows; creating a fluid sense of place and time. This interaction will be effected by the use of overhead projections, using both hand-drawn and photographic imagery. The figure-to-ground relationship will be explored between live performer and projected visual, using projection techniques developed by Stan. This interaction will be a fluid exchange, with the projections able to react immediately to the live performance, due to their hand-manipulated design. The visual imagery will also feature the occasional use of projected film, bearing textual information in the form of subtitles. The text material; spoken, sung, and projected, will serve to integrate the live action and the visuals, as the elements inform each other in a mix of direct and indirect exchange.

I have worked with both Stan and Charles on several projects, and have designed this proposal with the intent to further explore that collaborative process. Stan has designed lights for two of my productions, RATE OF EXCHANGE and YOUR HELPING HAND, as well as assisting me in the creation of the set for DIVIDED GROUNDS. Stan has extensive experience in lighting and multi-media design, having designed lights for Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane, Tim Miller, The Kitchen, Roz Newman, Kinematic, and Laurie Anderson.

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JEFF McMAHON

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Charles created the music for DIVIDED GROUNDS, as well as the score for my dance film, TELL ME MOVING. He created the sound-track for my piece at the Neuberger, MORE MOVING PICTURE as well. He is an accomplished instrumentalist, composer, and sound engineer. I am enclosing resumes for both Charles and Stan to give you a better idea of their background.

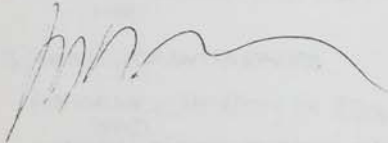
The project, for which I am going to be seeking funding from the NEA Inter-Arts Program, would be performed sometime in the late Fall/early Winter of 1988/89. I realize that the auditorium is often used for visual arts installations at that time, but see this project as an extension of that use. My hope is that we will be able to speak in greater detail soon, when I could give you a more detailed picture of the project.

I realize that you may wish to someone familiar with my work, and suggest that you speak to any one of the following: Mark Russell, Director of Performance Space 122: 477-5288; Joy Silverman, Director of Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) (213) 624-5650; Suzanne Delehanty, Director of the Neuberger Museum, (914) 253-5134; Al Nodal, Director of Exhibitions at Otis/Parsons, (213) 251-0556. They will be delighted to speak with you, as will I.

I do hope that I see you at the performance one of these next two weekends, and that we will be able to speak in greater detail soon. I will be leaving for Los Angeles at the end of June, to work on a collaborative performance project sponsored by the Santa Monica Arts Commission. The piece is an outdoor site-specific performance created by Jacki Apple, in collaboration with several artists. I am contributing texts and movement, as well as assisting Jacki with the direction. That piece will be presented at the beginning of August. I will return to NYC briefly in August, but will probably be going out of town for most of that month as well. So, if we can speak during the next three weeks, that would be ideal.

I hope that all of the above is compelling to you, and that we will be able to work something out. I appreciate your support of performance work, and your work in making P.S. 1 the stunning place that it is.

Yours,



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JEFF MCMAHON
512 E. 11th St. #4B
New York, NY 10009
(212) 677-3214

I. PERFORMANCE/MEDIA WORK:

- IT IS YOU SPEAKING Solo Dance/Media piece. The Zap Club (Brighton, England) June 1986; BarBue Nightclub and The Institut Francais (Copenhagen, Denmark) July 1986; The Negerhalle (Munich, W. Germany) July 1986. The Dance Hall (Cincinnati, Ohio) October 1986.
- TELL ME MOVING Dance Film. Directed/Shot/Edited by J.M. Premiered Performance Space 122 (NYC) February 1986; P.S. 122 (NYC) April 1986; Chisenhale Dance Space (London, England) July 1986; Dance On Camera Festival (NYC) November 1986; Collective For Living Cinema (NYC) November 1986. Also shown in Europe as part of performance tour Summer 1986. Included in Lincoln Center Dance Collection.
- MORE MOVING PICTURE Outdoor large group piece. Presented by The Neuberger Museum at State University of New York at Purchase, September 1985.
- YOUR HELPING HAND Dance/media piece for company of 8. Premiered Performance Space 122, NYC in January 1985. Performed as work-in-progress at The Kitchen NYC November 1984. Performed as duet at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) April 1985. Directed by J.M. Choreographed by J.M. and Kaja Gam. Films by J.M. Score by J.M. and Michael Simon. Lighting by Stan Pressner.
- PASSING DOWN Short dance/media piece. Live version performed at P.S. 122 Benefit February 1984. Video version shot Global Village NYC February-March 1984. Directed by Brian Muni. Score: J.M./Brian Muni/Charles Clouser. Broadcast Manhattan Cable TV Channel J September 1984.
- BELIEVE YOU ME Dance/Video live solo, using tape of same name. Created in collaboration with Lucy Hemmendinger. Premiered at P.S. 1 NYC April 1983. Also performed at: Hallwalls (Buffalo, NY), Just Above Midtown (NYC) in December 1983; Video Free America (San Francisco), and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) October 1983.
- STRAIGHT EDGE Solo Performance at P.S. 122 Benefit January 1983. Score and choreography by J.M.
- RATE OF EXCHANGE Dance/Video with live solo. Video Element by J.M. and Lucy Hemmendinger. Score by J.M. Premiered Franklin Furnace NYC on September 1982. Revised version at P.S. 122 in December 1982, with lights by Stan Pressner. Also performed at Beyond Baroque Literary Center (Venice, CA), January 1983.
- STURDY CHILD solo performance. Presented by Dancers For Disarmament at P.S. 122 NYC June 1982.
- CULT OF PERSONALITY solo monologue. Part of event "Three of Them", performed and produced by J.M. Tim Miller and Dennis Cooper. Club 57 NYC April 1982.
- LONG MARCH solo theater piece. P.S. 122 NYC July/August 1981. Texts/performance by J.M.
- MEMOR solo theater piece. P.S. 122 NYC February 1981. Texts and design by J.M. Performed by J.M.
- SMILE AT KNIFE theater/vocal piece. Premiered at "Men Together" Festival, P.S. 122 NYC November 1980. Also performed at "Avant-Garde-Arama" P.S. 122 December 1980.

II. AWARDS/GRANTS/HONORS

- HONORABLE MENTION for TELL ME MOVING in 1986 Dance On Camera Festival (NYC).
- NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS CHOREOGRAPHER'S FELLOWSHIPS Received for 1984 and 1987
- NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS DANCE FILM/VIDEO PROJECT grant received with Lucy Hemmendinger for 1984
- P.S. 1 SUMMER DANCE RESIDENCY for July/August 1985
- CUMMINGTON CUMMUNITY OF THE ARTS in residence September 1981
- EXCELLENCE IN ACTING award from American College Theatre Festival, Region III January 1976

III. PROFILES

- "The Advocate" article by Barry Laine, issue #371, July 7, 1983
- "The Advocate" article by Dennis Cooper, issue #416, March 19, 1985

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IV. PERFORMANCES IN OTHER WORK

HOW TO WIN AN ARGUMENT voice-over for Warner Publishing educational tape. 1985.
Produced by Gregory Miller.
THE CAMPAIGN GAME featured in radio play by E-Radiotheatre. Premiered July 1984
WBAI radio.
STREET PERFORMANCES performed in series of street performances with Yoshiko
Chuma and the School of Hard Knocks September-October 1983 in NYC
COST OF LIVING appeared in Tim Miller's work-in-progress at Danceteria, NYC May
1982.
MEN IN DARK TIMES featured in Eric Bogosian's theater piece The Kitchen
NYC, The Mudd Club NYC March 1982.
POSTWAR performed in Tim Miller's piece at Dance Theatre Workshop NYC January-
February 1982.
WHAT WE'RE MADE OF! performed in dance piece directed by Ishmael Houston-Jones
and Two Men Dancing. Network Theater NYC June 1980 and Contemporary Arts
Center, Philadelphia PA.

V. EDUCATION/TRAINING

REED COLLEGE two years study 1975-77. Theater with Larry Oliver and Diana
Bellamy. Dance with Judy Massee.
REED COLLEGE SUMMER REPERTORY COMPANY 1976 actor in company.
VOICE TRAINING with Diana Bellamy and Stan Vincent in Lessac and Linklater
techniques.
SINGING LESSONS Currently studying with John Eppler/Jeanette Lovetri in NYC.
March 1985-present.
SKINNER RELEASING two years of study with Joan Skinner and members of company.
Seattle 1977-78.
CONTACT IMPROVISATION with Mangrove. San Francisco 1979.
DAVID SHEIN one year study with member of Blake Street Hawkeyes in extreme theatre
technique (Iowa Lab Theatre). 1979.
RUTH ZAPORAH one year study physical theater. San Francisco 1979.
JAMES TYLER one year study in Hawkins-based dance technique 1979.
SIGHT SINGING one year study with private teacher. NYC 1980.
OCCASIONAL WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES 1978-81 with: Danny Lepkoff, Nancy
Stark-Smith (Contact Improvisation); Meg Egington, Beverly Brown, Yvonne Meier,
Douglas Dunn, Bill T. Jones, Tim Miller (Dance/Performance).
FILMAKING course with Darrell Wilson at Collective for Living Cinema May 1984.
OPTICAL PRINTING film course with Jon Rubin at Millenium NYC
VIDEO EDITING course at Film/Video Arts in NYC with Alex Hahn. Fall 1985.

VI. RELATED PROJECTS

TEACHING WORKSHOPS FOR MENTAL HEALTH/RETARDED FACILITIES in NYC
under sponsorship of Hospital Audiences, Inc. Teach dance and movement-related
skills. Part-time 1983-present.
DANCE/MOVEMENT SPECIALIST for mental health population at ALTRO/ARCH
residence, Ward's Island NYC, March 1986-present.
VISITING ARTIST The Childrens Museum, NYC January 1987
VISITING ARTIST Art Center College of Design (Pasadena, CA) April 1985.
VISITING ARTIST California Institute for the Arts. April 1985.
PERFORMANCE SPACE 122 Associate Director of NYC venue. Ongoing involvement
since 1979.
RED WING PERFORMING GROUP, INC. Board Member April 1986-present
DANCERS FOR DISARMAMENT served on original steering committee. Planned events
coinciding with UN Disarmament Session. January-June 1982.
WEDGE MAGAZINE collaborated with artist Robert Flynt on piece published in Fall '82
edition.
OPEN MOVEMENT facilitator of weekly improvisational event 1979-present at P.S. 122.
WORD OF MOUTH produced and performed in reading/performance event at Club 57
NYC May 1981
WINTER SAFARI produced first benefit for P.S. 122 February 1981
LIVE BOYS stage-managed performance by John Bernd/Tim Miller at P.S. 122 March
1981.
512 E. 11th St. HDFC Board Member of low-income Co-op 1982-present

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THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

Sunday, September 28, 1986

Performance artist McMahon strives for the 'human touch'

BY DAVID LYMAN
Enquirer Contributor

Performance art is one of the least understood niches of the arts world. Most often, it is performed by a single, idiosyncratic artist. Part dance, part theater, and part visual art, performance art has tended to be an exploration ground for its component art forms.

As it experiments with not just one but many forms of art, performance art has always been difficult for many audiences to accept.

In its most recent incarnation, performance art has been more successful than ever. Simultaneously, it has been more widely reviled than at any previous time. Often intentionally shocking and bizarre, it has both offended and delighted its audiences.

Like other arts, it has its stylistic swings. Now that mainstream performing arts are dabbling in postmodernism, many performance artists are returning to more traditional themes — humor, human relationships, and emotions.

Jeff McMahon is a performance artist who chooses to focus on life's more human facets. McMahon, from New York City, will perform a solo concert at The Dance Hall Friday and Saturday.

Sitting in his tiny apartment in a litter-strewn neighborhood in Manhattan's Lower East Side, McMahon recently reflected on the changing face of performance art.

"When you look at the history of performance art — the Dadaists and the Futurists, and so on — you realize that a lot of this has happened before. And that, as far as I'm concerned, doesn't matter. It isn't the form that matters. It's the content within that form."

While his work's roots are in dance, McMahon admitted he is "not highly trained. Dance is my motivating language; it's the language I'm currently choosing to use." But single-word titles seem inadequate to describe his art.



Jeff McMahon, who performs at The Dance Hall Friday and Saturday, calls dance his "motivating language."

"I would say what I do is create an environment. It's about stimulating and changing the context within which I'm living, even if only for 15 minutes — or five minutes or even 30 seconds."

To do this, McMahon wields a host of tools — choreography, music, film, projections, text — a wash of theatrical formats.

To some audiences, the richness of the mixture is appealing. To others, it is merely confusing. "One of the problems people have had with my work is that they're not sure where I fit in."

Smiling gently, McMahon suggested that the solution is not that difficult. "You just have to have a kind of discourse with the work. You have to allow your critical imagination a little free rein."

McMahon didn't get involved with dance until he went to Reed College in Portland, Ore. "I wasn't particularly athletic as a child," he said. "Oh, I played a little basketball. But I found that dance was the one form of physical exercise I really enjoyed."

Such a late start has imposed limitations, though. "I'm not a dancer," he said, "at least not in the generally accepted sense. But I think of dance as an attitude. A movement can become dance by the attitude that you put into it."

Much of McMahon's work is developed out of improvisation. Indeed, there are improvisational elements even in the "final" form.

"My work isn't choreographed movement by movement. The geography is set, the design is set,

but within each moment there are certain things which are being worked on."

Many artists agree with McMahon's opinion that once a work has been "set," it has a tendency to become stodgy and somewhat inert. Although improvisation is unpredictable, it offers spontaneity.

On his program at The Dance Hall, McMahon will perform "It Is You Speaking." Created as a duet, the work underwent a major revision last summer when McMahon's partner was unable to perform the work in Copenhagen with him.

"Originally, the piece was about a relationship," McMahon explained. "What it became was about the absence of someone."

The challenge was in trying to evoke the spirit of a second person, a person who is not there. "I do that through the kind of environment provided by the audio tapes and the text and music. Through the media presence of this other person, she can be part of it, but not actually there."

McMahon hopes to begin on a new work, a venture that typically takes him 1½ years. He is toying with the idea of collaboration.

"I tend to want to do everything," he said. "At times that weakens my work, since I'm able to focus on only one thing at a time. I realize now that there are things I will not be able to do. I think, ultimately, my interest is not so much in me as a performer. It is more in me as a director, as a choreographer, as a conceptual artist."

Most important, though, is that his work have the opportunity to speak to larger audiences. "I don't want to be working in a private language the rest of my life."

This is not to say that McMahon is going to start playing to the masses. There is much of his work that would be inappropriate for larger audiences.

"It is so personal that it doesn't go beyond the fourth wall. That's all right if you just want to be speaking to art audiences, or to be analyzed by critics — the 'art-magazine school of performance'."

David Lyman is the dance writer for The Enquirer.

Jeff McMahon will perform at The Dance Hall Friday and Saturday, at 8:30 p.m. He also will lead a workshop 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call The Dance Hall at 751-2800.

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HIGH PERFORMANCE

A Quarterly Magazine for the New Arts Audience

Volume 8, Number 2, 1985

VIEWPOINT



Jeff McMahon & Kaja Gam

SPOTLIGHT REVIEW

Wrestling with an Age That Won't Give Back

YOUR HELPING HAND

Created by Jeff McMahon
Performed by McMahon & Kaja Gam
LACE
Los Angeles
April 14, 1985

by Jacki Apple

Already at mid-decade a sense of fatigued ennui pervades the art world. On one hand the prolific innovations of recent history—thirty years of precedent-setting, ground-breaking art—seem insurmountable in what remains of this century. On the

other hand, postmodernist appropriation of both our own art history and our omnipresent media culture has caught up with itself. The snake has swallowed itself right up to its neck.

In performance it is no longer a time of breaking boundaries, but of synthesis and refinement. For mid-career or well-established artists who emerged in the 1960s and '70s the problem is now to carry one's past into the future without being seduced by either old success formulas or a new decade's fashions. For the young artist emerging in the '80s the problem is how to find one's own authentic voice amidst the cacophony of recent history and media hype.

In his three performance works since 1982—*Rate of Exchange*, *Believe You Me*, and *Your Helping Hand*—New York performer/choreographer/media artist Jeff McMahon has looked long and hard at the immense dance, theater, media and performance art vocabulary at his disposal, and considered carefully how and what to draw from it for his own use. He has developed and honed each element (movement, audio text, film/video, music, spatial design) and combined them in such a way as to create a syntactical structure of his own. He fuses an almost classical romanticism with a gentle, understated romanticism, an austere, structural sensibility with psychological and emotional subject matter.

First presented at the Kitchen, N.Y.C., as a large group piece, McMahon's newest performance *Your Helping Hand* was redesigned as a duet for its Los Angeles premiere at LACE (April 14). McMahon's use of the space was brilliant. He created a set that functioned as a series of separate locations each with its own ambience. We shared the intimacy of a couple at a kitchen table, or perhaps in a restaurant. We gazed voyeuristically through the windows of the performance area across an exterior space into another room, observing the performers just as James Stewart watched his neighbors in the opposite apartments in *Rear Window*. A free-standing wall had a door in it that opened and closed changing the performance area from interior to exterior place and back again. A film screen became another room, then a mirror in the same

room we are in, then a window into the outside world. McMahon's spatial design and the way he activated it—"cutting" or dissolving from one part of the set to another—created a cinematic sense of time and place, as if the events portrayed took place over an extended period of time. At the same time our proximity to the performers gave us a sense of shared experience, of tactile reality.

McMahon never loses sight of the relationship between form and content. *Your Helping Hand* is about communication, and the subject matter is skillfully transposed into the structure. The choreography, with its terse repetitive patterns and movements and gestures derived from everyday activities, engages in a dialog with both the aural and visual media. Similar repetitive patterns occur in the recorded texts. Yet, like the interaction between the two performers, the spoken and sung words are emotionally resonant. Whether McMahon's voice is questioning or declarative, it remains introspective and personal without being either autobiographical or confessional. The close-up black and white film images add another "voice" with a slightly altered viewpoint—sometimes anticipating actions, sometimes commenting on them, sometimes opposing them. Tautly drawn lines of tension run between actions and words, external appearances and internal emotions. McMahon's orchestration of the various media is as precise and evocative as his movement choreography (developed collaboratively in this piece with Kaja Gam). No flashiness, no fills, no excesses or indulgences. The power of his juxtapositions lies in their disciplined restraint.

Unlike his minimalist postmodern dance predecessors, McMahon's formalism is not self-reflexive. Everything is at the service of the subject matter. At the heart of this piece is the relationship between the two performers, between a man and a woman, between two people. Movement is the language through which they communicate. McMahon explores the problems of intimacy—of interdependence and autonomy, friendship and sex and partnership—with lucidity and uncompromising honesty. *Your Helping Hand* is a strikingly tender work that never succumbs to sentimentality. It is characterized by grace, compassion, generosity and hopefulness, words and ways of being that are all too absent from our vocabulary. At the same time it confronts and examines loneliness and yearning, competitiveness and aggression, and the amorphous sense of detachment and loss that permeates our culture.

The piece begins with a solo by McMahon, his body held erect, knees slightly bent. He moves his arms rapidly, holding them close to his sides, repeating sets of gestures over and over. On the film his hands draw lines with a ruler and pen. His taped voice says, "I have organized. I make a rule. I take directions ... from you. I make my mark ... here. I make the pattern. I write the words. I make the move. Take the picture ... down. Break the rules." Gam appears in the window of the other room making similar movements. Everything accelerates. They are two people attempting to control their lives in an uncontrollable world. McMahon leaps and turns repeatedly as the text segues into a dramatically melodic aria, "La Donna Mobile" from Verdi's *Rigoletto*, creating a mood of romantic expectation. Although we don't understand the words (in Italian), the feeling is clear.

Gam comes through the door, first in the film, then into the space. Their meeting is one of pushing and pulling back and forth, of attraction and self-assertion, of coming together and breaking apart, of finding a common ground. On tape he sings a pulsating Talking Heads-style rock song about openings and closings, comings and goings, presence and absence. They are silhouetted in the space between the window frame and the window, touching each other with fingertips in slow motion. The operatic music returns. In the film they toss their heads joyously, caressing each other's hair. Live, they take turns running, jumping and falling into each other's arms, catching, lifting, moving, supporting, releasing, each giving or receiving, being strong or vulnerable. They sit at the table facing each other. He feeds her, puts her to sleep. Through the window, in the other space, two people pass a large ball back and forth between them. Two hands wrestle and caress on film. McMahon's voice observes and describes the two people from a voyeuristic distance. "Maybe now it will happen," he says.

The door opens and the ball rolls through it. McMahon moves the ball along the edges of his body, outlining it. Gam takes the ball and repeats the action on her own body. Then he moves the ball over her body, she over his. They never take their eyes off each other. It is an exquisitely sensual *pas des deux* filled with longing. The ball rolls out the door and they do another fast-paced duet tossing each other back and forth, this time as if pushed and pulled by outside forces. McMahon sings on tape to an "Island" beat. "I don't know if I can live without

your big hands, your big feet, your big arms, your big eyes, your big heart. ... Put my heart in your hands. I don't know if I can see without your big eyes, etc. ... They each do separate solos, then come together in a symbiotic exchange, both using and supporting parts of each other's bodies.

There are two more scenes at the table. The space between them seems immense. Their gestures are tense, language of arms and hands, bodies shifting in chairs, turned-away half-covered faces, tentative approaches, defensive retreats. Later they volley the ball back and forth across the table, force-feed each other, compete in a drinking contest. He breaks the cup, smashes the chair. She falls down. A couple in the window across the way are fighting.

In the final scenes she rolls across the floor, away from him. He follows her, but just so far. She leaves. He sings plaintively about "chaos over order" and "making a mess out of perfect arrangements, grinding them under our heels." The text is about failed communication and a sense of failure. What we have become and who is responsible, he wants to know. He is alone with his doubt, disappointment, a sense of loss. "wrestling with the monster" questions that don't give clues to us and answers that don't make sense to us. "wrestling with an age that won't give back to us ... or give enough to us with a love affair that can't get the best of us ... or take us where we thought it would ... with schedules and tickets and suitcases ... a future that isn't as clear as we'd thought."

But Gam comes back, and they face each other willing to wrestle through the problems, "through the eyes and look of another," willing to reach out, and to touch each other. They leave us with a sense of hope and possibility despite the obstacles and inhumanities of our present world.

After looking at so much work filled with chic cynicism, superficial irony and media parodies, the intelligence, sensitivity and depth of McMahon's performance work is refreshing. Still in his twenties, he is an artist to watch. If he continues to develop in the direction he seems to be going, by the next decade he may turn out to be one of the most important artists in performance to emerge in the '80s.

HIGH PERFORMANCE

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By Sasha Anawalt
Herald dance critic

Los Angeles Exhibitions first "Out of with two per day that sent mor inspired sparks fly Multidisciplinary McMahon and Kaja "Your Helping Hand" Manuel and Mel Ke "Our Hero." If the I didn't exactly light least enough clear brilliance intrinsic enable us to see that ers are serious at worthy

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Idiosyncratic dancing lights up LACE

Two separate performances radiate ideas and energy

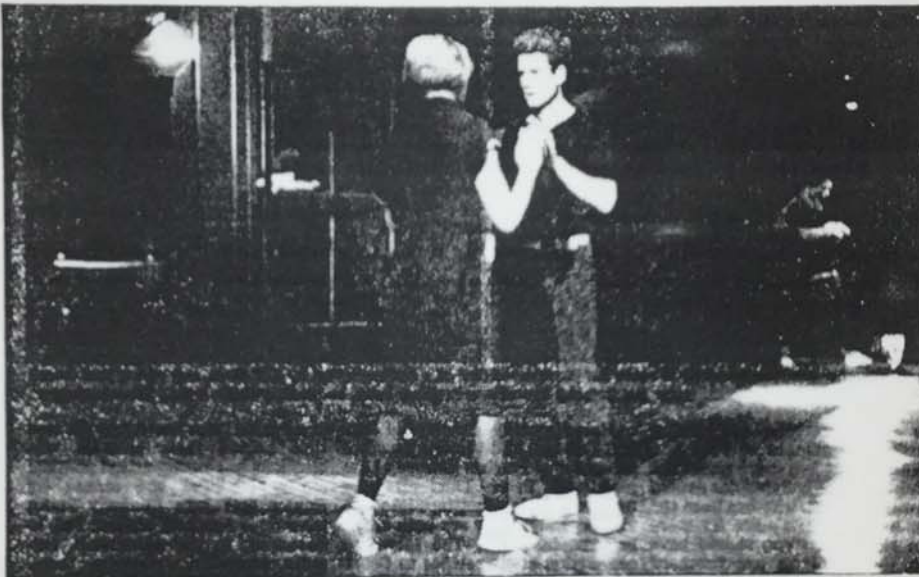
By Sasha Anawalt
Herald dance critic

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions concluded its first "Out of Dance" series with two performances Sunday that sent more than a few inspired sparks flying.

Multidisciplinary artists Jeff McMahon and Kaja Gam did their "Your Helping Hand," while Luis Manuel and Mel Kennedy enacted "Our Hero." If the Los Angeles sky didn't exactly light up, there was at least enough clear thinking and brilliance intrinsic to their works to enable us to see that these performers are serious and their ideas worthy.

In "Your Helping Hand," McMahon — a slight, healthy-looking young man who lives on New York's Lower East Side and makes works that are often seen at the Kitchen or P.S. 122 — stands at the center of LACE's makeshift performing space. He moves only his hands at first, flipping them around in the manner of small, white fishtails, until their haphazard motion begins to suggest either that McMahon has a muscular problem or that he is mentally insecure.

As we watch him, a black-and-white movie of a person's hands drawing straight lines with a ruler appears on the screen behind him, and a taped voice repeats these sentences: "I am organized. I take a pattern. I put a mark here. I take directions. I make the design clear."



Donna Ann McAdams

We begin to think that McMahon is devising a case for himself as an artist — that, despite his appearing to be out of control or out of his mind, the real purpose of his life and work is order, and that the purpose of "Your Helping Hand" (directed by McMahon and choreographed by him and Kaja Gam) will be to depict an ordering process as he defines himself as an artist.

McMahon continues flailing just long enough so that the gestures become manic without being indulgent and trenchant without being sophomoric. (And this may be one of McMahon's stronger traits as a performance artist — that unlike so many others, he seems to know when to stop and start.)

In walks his partner Kaja Gam, a blond, fresh-faced dancer from Denmark. The two appear happy to see each other because they smile, but their next actions — dragging each other backward by the arms

At Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions Sunday, Kaja Gam and Jeff McMahon depicted a push-pull relationship in "Your Helping Hand."

— contradict this warm impression. They repeat the forward-running backward-dragging phrase for a long time.

Nearly everything about "Your Helping Hand" suggests the kind of conflict exemplified above. McMahon and Gam harshly yank each other's hair while silently laughing uproariously to a Verdi accompaniment. They kindly feed each other cake and red wine, then smash a cup so that its pieces lie precariously near Gam's body as she writhes on the floor. It is only when the piece ends with the audio track repeating "Chaos over order, chaos over order" that lucidity is achieved.

In sum, "Your Helping Hand"

does not seem to be about self-definition or artistic definition so much as it is about the disturbing role chaos plays in a relationship. Love is by definition chaotic. Order, by contrast, is loveless. And according to McMahon and Gam's view, it's far better to have chaos in your life because that at least implies something big and humanistic. The sparks that flew in "Your Helping Hand" flew because these artists from New York expressed anew an enduring truth.

(excerpted from longer article)

Los Angeles
Herald Examiner

Tuesday
April 16, 1985

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Los Angeles Times

Tuesday, April 16, 1985 ★

PERFORMANCE ART REVIEWS

McMAHON AND MANUEL IN L.A. EXHIBITIONS

Jeff McMahon and Luis Manuel are New York-based performance artists who use sophisticated dance skills to depict a dangerously disjointed urban existence. On the stimulating two-part "Out of Dance" program, Sunday at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, McMahon approached this subject through audio-visual-kinetic manipulations, while Manuel opted for relatively conservative dance-drama.

McMahon's multimedia "Your Helping Hand" began with a ritual about order and control that quickly began to collapse. Indeed, the essential process here involved establishing a structure (a song, a litany, a game, a relationship) and then staging its deconstruction.

For example, a tape of Verdi's "La donna e mobile" was dismembered and spliced in new combinations—its components always familiar even as its permutations

grew increasingly strange.

Wiry and vulnerable, McMahon danced compellingly in the demanding passages of interplay with the strong and impassive Kaja Gam—the link between them increasingly tested by the vortex of sounds, images and actions leading toward complete breakdown.

Breakdown also threatened Manuel's character in the two-scene "Our Hero" (written by Mel Kennedy), as he left a dehumanizing job to face isolation and loss of identity in front of his TV set.

Manuel's remarkable intensity—the sense of his body rebelling against its imprisonment—gave extraordinary freshness to this middle-of-the-road modern dance essay in social satire and character psychology. It didn't matter that the "performance art" label didn't fit. Dancing this powerful compels admiration in any context.

—LEWIS SEGAL

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Los Angeles, Venice / Jacki Apple

The definition of what is or is not performance art is getting fuzzier and fuzzier, and with good reason. On one hand, producers and management (we call them presenting organizations) are packaging glamor spectacles featuring the stars, prestigious venues, dazzling technology and high-powered promotion that draw big audiences and media coverage. On the other hand, many artists are creating low-

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FOUR SOLO FLIGHTS

(Excerpted from longer review
of four individual performers)



Jeff McMahon, *Believe You Me*, performance, at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions. Photo: Jacki Apple.

budget, solo performance pieces that they can take on tour, works that often appropriate or simulate various popular entertainment forms such as TV sit-coms, talk shows and nightclub acts. Some performance artists are now working with directors. Still others are doing long runs in little theaters. In view of Laurie Anderson's success, many young artists aspire to "crossing over" into media stardom.

All of this raises a new set of unanswered critical issues. Last year everyone was asking, "Is it theater, dance or performance art?" Perhaps the key word now is not *performance*, but *art*. Today's question is, "Is it art or entertainment?" And what is the difference? In the areas of performance and media, should art be defined solely by intention and not by context or form? And how does this affect the artist's autonomy and control? After all, one of the advantages of being an artist and presenting work in the art world is that, at least in theory, you can do and say anything you want to in whatever manner you choose, uncensored by accountants, ratings and marketing strategies.

There is no other way to look at and define Jeff McMahon's performance *Believe You Me*, presented at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), except as art, and very good art in the bargain. In this new work, as in his earlier piece *Rate of Exchange*, McMahon combines the separate elements of audio (text), video (image), and live performance (gesture) in a tightly controlled dialog that demands our full attention. He creates a dialectical tension between words and movement and between real and recorded image that is like a taut, vibrating wire.

Five video monitors on pedestals in the starkly lit white space are like windows, and we look through them into McMahon's exterior and interior world. The images never stop moving—subway trains coming into tunnels, tenements seen from the windows of a moving train, an unmade bed, a kitchen, McMahon and a woman (his video collaborator Lucy Hemmendinger) going round and round an empty room, faces, arms, legs, hands, feet, McMahon moving in place or running—making the same gestures and movements we see him making live. The video screen is like a mirror or a memory. Life goes past faster than a speeding train or a speeding bullet, at the speed of video.

McMahon, live, is moving all the time. His gestures are derived from everyday activities distilled, concentrated and refined. Running, walking, jogging, pivoting, with arms swinging and head turning—McMahon's abstract gestures and terse movements convey a state of stress both physical and psychological.

The voices (McMahon's and Hemmendinger's) reflect inner turmoil, emotional needs and desires, fears and anxieties. They make demands and, most of all, ask questions about the conditions that govern our lives: "What if the history of everything no longer matters, and you are alone? Do you think you have a future? Who will do the dishes? You want me to dance? How much will it cost? What if the walls cave in? Are you just another body? Just a warm bed? Just a lot of laughs? Will you stay with me?"

McMahon as an artist not only is willing but actually is seeking to probe deeply, be vulnerable, strike a nerve ending, make us feel and, in the process, to test himself, perhaps even fail if he must in order to do so. There are no excesses, no indulgences in this work, only rigorous discipline and sensitivity, and an inquiring, uncompromising intelligence that prefers to awaken and disturb an audience rather than stroke it. *Believe You Me* leaves an imprint, a reverberation—something that doesn't happen very often these days, but something I still expect from good art. □

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From the "Los Angeles Daily News"

Daily News March 16, 1985

'Out of Dance' series is rather out of sorts and contemporary

By Gillian Rees

Special to the Daily News

The artists presented by Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions Inc. in the "Out of Dance" series at its downtown gallery Saturday and Sunday nights all have their roots in dance, but that's about the only thing they have in common.

The four widely divergent styles represented ranged from the wild, messy, paint-splashing commentary of Ann lobst and Lucy Sexton (making their West Coast debut) to the orderly and beautifully thought-out work of Jeff McMahon.

McMahon's stunning duet, "Your Helping Hand," opened Sunday with the choreographer, dressed in black jeans and T-shirt, executing precise, calculated arm movements — almost as if he were signing. A black door, a hanging sash window, a table and two chairs comprise his environment.

A voice on tape repeats statements such as "I make the pattern, I put the line here, I take directions," while a black-and-white film flickers on the screen behind him: a pair of hands meticulously drawing lines and then a grid on a white piece of paper. Gradually, McMahon begins to break out of this ordered, stilted existence and a woman (Kaja Gam) joins him for a duet that was nothing short of masterful.

Two images that particularly stuck in the mind: an extraordinarily sensual trio for McMahon, Gam

and a large red ball that they rolled slowly over their bodies, and a section in which the dancers mussed one another's hair with playful familiarity — an image that continued to play on film while the dancers moved on to other things.

Saturday night, in "Tango Terror," lobst and Sexton (who also played in McMahon's work) indulged in almost every performance art cliché imaginable. Wearing combat boots, thrift store dresses and black lipstick, they smeared mudlike paste on their bodies; poured sticky red liquid contained in Kotex boxes over their heads; donned reptilian masks, offered the audience half-eaten birthday cake and spray-painted the television sets that were spewing out "The Newlywed Game" and hair color commercials.

"Tango Terror" seemed to be about femininity in today's pop culture, but the message got bogged down.

Most successful on Saturday's program was Pamela Casey's and Steven Nagler's "Shrimps," a dance for four men of varying shapes and sizes. Only one of them, Nagler himself, was a trained dancer. They shimmied and jumped and made faces. One mopped another's face, gently. Another adopted muscle-man poses. With very few gestures and no artifice, the choreographers succeeded in showing what it means to be a man.

Least successful in the series were two solos — Nagler's "Skunk," in which a drunk tries to run away from himself, and Luis Manuel's "Our Hero," a study in boredom and paranoia.

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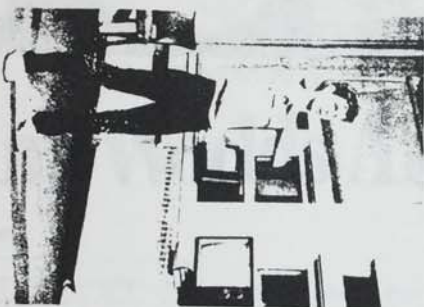
ARTWEEK

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PERFORMANCE
THE MUNDANE DISJUNCTIONS

Venice / Kathi Norkun

Jeff McMahon is a performance artist, raised in Los Angeles, working in New York, who draws upon his training in acting and dance to produce narrative works comprised of highly formalized gestures. His performance *Fate of Exchange*, at Beyond Baroque, was an adaptation of earlier performances at Franklin Furnace and P.S. 122 in New York. At the latter roomy space, he performed opposite a large video screen and moved along an X marked by lights along the floor. (McMahon is not displeased to be reminded of this staging's similarity to collaborations between Lucinda Childs and such artists as Sol LeWitt, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in recent years.)



Jeff McMahon, "Fate of Exchange," performance at Beyond Baroque, Venice
Photo: Sherree Levin

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At Beyond Baroque, McMahon had a small, fairly intimate space. He traded the large Advent screen for five television monitors of graduated sizes, the smallest a tiny portable that he picked up at various times during the performance. The room was otherwise empty, except for the audience's chairs and a chair for the performer in the left corner of the stage area.

The audience entered to a performance already in progress. The artist was seated, quietly disregarding the audience, on each of the television monitors, a face repeated in three-quarters profile stared expressionlessly into space. McMahon's prior occupation of the room prevented the theatrically an entrance would have entailed. The work accelerated slowly; there was never any radical break from the space of real life, but a kind of progression out of it.

A tape began after the audience was seated. The recorded voice repeated in a monotone, "I can't do anything." The phrases accumulated ("I can't move," "I can't lift an arm to help") while the eyes of the faces on the monitors began to shift back and forth. The voice slumped into "I'm just going to sit here." Then there was a shift, the mouth of the monitor face began moving while the voice intoned, "Get moving."

During this time, McMahon began to move with nervous, broken gestures until he was fully standing. He tuned each television set in turn, then picked up a large rubber ball. The subsequent interaction of monitor, ball and performer provided the structure and subject of the piece, which was essentially an exteriorized interior monolog.

McMahon is an athletic performer. The movements he used came from

mundane activities, but especially from sports. Tossing the rubber ball back and forth, or arcing it over and over, were gestures from a basketball vocabulary done, by a practiced player, almost automatically. McMahon performed these athletic movements while the voice on the tape repeated, "What are you thinking about?" and a little later, "Doing one thing...and thinking another." The rhythms of ball tossing and voice were parallel but distinct.

At one point, McMahon took a break from his incessant movements back and forth across the floor and, draping himself in a corner near the smallest monitor, crooned along with an a cappella recording of "Body and Soul." The words to the song appeared on the screens, line by line, but broken in the wrong places. Body and soul, thought and action, performer and prop, performer and video and audiotapes—these disjunctions were the subject of the performance.

Simply, McMahon reminded us that we are often thinking about something other than what we are doing. He also reminded us that this dissociation is not without consequences. "To bed, to table, to bath, to war, to war," he chanted aloud, as if to imply that war slips in while we are not thinking. This section was immediately followed by a jittery fast-paced segment in which the taped voice reiterated, "Mix it in, mix it in"—everything from mowing the lawn to grandmother—while McMahon threw the ball around hurriedly. There was the implication that this was more than an esthetic solution.

A poetry critic recently suggested to me that politics are no different from what we do every day. If this is true, then

McMahon's performance method was a political one. His gestures were extracted from banal daily movements, and his monolog proceeded from the most mundane level—simply a consciousness aware of itself.

McMahon's movements were formalized just enough to distinguish them from their ordinary context. As a performer, he exuded a feeling of reined energy. His presence was sufficient to carry the audience through this one-man show, his control sufficient to allow for distractions (the figure on the videotape being bombarded with balls was one of several incidentally humorous moments) without losing the thread of the developing thought. There was a progression in the performance from an exteriorized parallel of thought and action—a video image of hands literally pounding the typewriter while the performer's actions appeared forcibly frenetic—to an increasing dominance of the interior monolog or, put another way, to an increasing consonance of performer and performance. At one point, McMahon enacted a slow duet with his video image, holding the ball at arm's length and looking over his shoulder at the audience while the image on the monitors did the same. The split within the performance became a split between performer and audience. Near the end, we saw McMahon on the video screen, through a window. This distancing symbolized contemplation, but it was a hermetic image. The room went dark, the television screens went blank, and the voice repeated, slowly, "I was thinking." McMahon had dropped the ball and walked out of the door. As gently as it began, the performance ended in the audience's real time and space. □

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the village VOICE

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Making Worlds Alone

By Sally Banes

WATCHWORDS OF THE EIGHTIES. A performance and video by Martha Rosler, at DTW's Bessie Schonberg Theater, 219 West 19th Street, an Economy Tires Theater presentation (September 17, 18, 24, 25).

SOME KIND OF DANCE. A performance by Stephanie Skura, at Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin Street (September 23).

RATE OF EXCHANGE. A performance by Jeff McMahon, at Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin Street (September 30).

The solo performance is a remarkable form. There are so many things a single human presence can say. The body bristles with associations, and what it speaks of ranges from the private to the globally political. It ought to give us some kind of faith in the world and in human action.

Jeff McMahon's *Rate of Exchange*, like *Watchwords of the Eighties*, mixed video imagery with the solo presence. Yet his approach was directly opposed to Rosler's. Where Rosler sought fragmentation, McMahon designed a unity of effect; where Rosler undermined the graphic simplicity of TV with an intended complication of audio/visual channels, McMahon let the simplicity of video condense the meaning of his performance. *Rate of Exchange* is both austere and obsessive. It's like a long, low shriek against the distortions of modern life, the shortages—as the title ambiguously suggests—of money and of human energy.

McMahon sits in a chair stage right; behind him, the kitchen in Franklin Furnace's performance space forms a kind of scenic backdrop. Stage left, an Advent screen shows us the same image we see live: the performer's face, staring impassively, then blinking and shifting eyes from side to side. "Get moving! Get moving!" a video voice hisses. McMahon stands and, in white T-shirt and khaki shorts, begins tossing a basketball from one hand to another. The voice relentlessly continues its driving, rhythmic patter. "What are you thinking about? What are you thinking about?" The patter includes answers: "I'm thinking about work. I'm thinking about you. I'm thinking about fame. I'm thinking about me. I'm thinking about making love. I'm thinking about the critics. . . ." "Doing one thing and thinking about another." McMahon's movements become a kind of dance, a set of limited variations on the incessant tossing of the ball back and forth, with an occasional duck of the body under the arm to turn around, a dance of nerves, of rising tension. The mood changes as he croons a '40s love song over a recording smoothly secure. But then a metronome appears on the screen and the sound of its rapid tick renews the sense of edginess. The ball tossing, the litany, the pacing begin again. "To bed to table to work to love. . . ."

A separate text in the program notes echoes the paranoid, insistent tone of the piece and concludes, "no more no more there is a limit there is a point where somebody's got to say no somebody's got to say stop stop stop." In the performance, McMahon himself seizes the moment, pulls open the shutters on the long window facing the audience, and stands silently before an eerie landscape—crooked tree flooded with nighttime light—opening a feverish mind to the world. The performance creates a monotone image of a restless, driven persona—but, oddly, shows us only its structure and not the subject of its obsession.



Jeff McMahon in *Rate of Exchange*

ROBERT EVANT

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NEW YORK
NATIVE

Issue 159

May 5, 1986

Dance

Jump Cuts

by Gary Parks

New! Stuff
P.S. 122
April 11

An evening spent at P.S. 122, the former public school at the corner of First Avenue and East Ninth Street in the East Village which presently houses a thriving "performance space" and "painting space," is rarely dull. In this crumbling red brick building, the adventurous can feel safe. P.S. 122 programming lies somewhere between run-of-the-mill avant-garde studios, where you're as apt to encounter something awful as to discover tomorrow, and Dance Theater Workshop, the Lincoln Center of downtown dance, where certifiably acceptable new dance is presented.

Thanks to P.S. 122 board members Charles Dennis, Tim Miller, and Charles Moulton, and executive director Mark Russel, you can see genuinely interesting—and sometimes genuinely bizarre—contemporary dance in the East Village. Under the breathless rubric *New! Stuff*, P.S. 122 recently presented choreography by Maria Cutrona, Betsy Hulton, Gus Solomons, Jr., and Viveca Vazquez, as well as a film by Jeff McMahon.

Kaja Gam and John Bernd were the jump-cut couple in Jeff McMahon's black-and-white film *Tell Me Moving*. The pair gamboled in an otherwise empty loft, accompanied by some rather ominous music by Charles Clouser and Charles Nieland. Occasionally they produced a couple of chairs and used them for support. McMahon's choreography for Gam, Bernd, and their chairs was accomplished as much through his lens as by the discrete actions of the performers. The result, rich with the textures of the loft's rough walls and finely smoothed floor, was absorbing from beginning to end.

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CHARLES NIELAND
152 Fordham Street
City Island, N.Y.

CIRCLE OF LINES/DIVIDED GROUNDS

a performance by Jeff McMahon

Saturday afternoons at 3:00

Sunday

June 13,14,20,21 1987

P.S. 1

46-01 21st Street
Long Island City, N.Y.
(718)784-2084

Robert Flyn

sessions, including 55 original compositions

1976-present

Played bass and guitar since 1976
Lead vocalist since 1982
Arranged synthesizers since 1984

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CHARLES NIELAND
152 Fordham Street
City Island, The Bronx, NY 10464
(212) 885-0223

SKILLS:

Multi-instrumental Composition and Performance
Audio Recording Engineering
Digital Sampling and Sequencing

EDUCATION:

1981-85 Hampshire College, Amherst MA
B.A. Degree: "Music Composition"

1985-present The Center for Media Arts, NYC
Recording Arts program

EXPERIENCE:

1985-present Big Apple Recording Studios, NYC
Cleaned and calibrated 24-track tape
machines and assisted the engineers

1985-present Jeff McMahon, 512 E 11th St. (4B), NYC
Composed, recorded, and edited 16 pieces
as scores for dance concerts and films

1984-present HCEMS, 617 Carlton Ave., Brooklyn, NY
Composed, arranged, and acted as front
man for this electronic music group

1983-85 Hampshire College Dance Department, Amherst
Composed, recorded, and presented music for
five dance concerts by students and faculty

1983-84 Crystal Mittens - Composed, recorded,
and acted as front man for this group
performing in Boston and Amherst

1983 Sunrise Sound Studios, Houston, TX
Cleaned and maintained 24-track tape
machines and assisted the engineers

1982-83 The Answer - Composed, recorded, and
arranged for this group performing in Amherst

1981-85 Hampshire College Music Studio, Amherst
Supervised over 100 multi-track recording
sessions, including 55 original compositions

1976-present Played bass and guitar since 1976
Lead vocalist since 1982
Arranged synthesizers since 1984

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STAN PRESSNER

200 West 108th Street #9E

New York, New York 10025

212-662-5948

United Scenic Artists Local #829

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF WORK:

LIGHTING DESIGN

YOSHIKO CHUMA & NONA HENDRYX	THE BIG PICTURE
ELIZABETH STREB/MICHAEL SCHWARTZ LIVE FROM OFF CENTER	AIRDANCE
ERIC SCHMIDT	THE PIANO ABOVE HEAVEN THE MATADOR OF SPIT COBRA
JOHN KELLY	A HISTORY OF ART PASS THE BLUTWURST BITTE
THE UNIVERSAL BALLET OF SEOUL, S.KOREA;	GISELLE SERENADE ULYSSES DON G. PAQUITA BLACK SWAN PAS APOLLO BELONG PAS TCHAIKOVSKY PAS ROMEO AND JULIET REP PLOT
BILL T. JONES/ARNIE ZANE AND CO	SECRET PASTURES LONG DISTANCE SHARED DISTANCE
CHICAGO FEST/SOUTH DOCK STAGES	
HUMAN OPERA	SMALL FARMER
ROSALYND NEWMAN AND DANCERS	MIRROR LAKE HEART BEAT UNTITLED WHITE FREE SPEECH FOUR STORIES
WHYY/TV PHILADELPHIA	NIGHT MUSIC
PBS/THE KITCHEN	TWO MOON JULY
KENNEDY CENTER/IMAGINATION FESTIVAL	THE TRIP
EVANSTON REPERTORY OPERA	TROUBLE IN TAHITI
KINEMATIC	THE DARK RIDE POWERS, ROOTS AND IMAGINARIES HOME MOVIES
GLENN BRANDA	TONAL PLEXUS
CHICAGO MOVING CO/REP	43 PIECES REP PLOT

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AS PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER/PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR		
1987	STEPHEN PETRONI AND DANCERS PARALLELS IN BLACK CHUMA/HENDRYX/THE BIG PICTURE	DIRECTOR FESTIVAL EUROPEAN TOUR NYC
1986	ROSALIND NEWMAN AND DANCERS TIMOTHY BUCKLEY AND THE TWISTERS TIMOTHY BUCKLEY AND THE TWISTERS THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS YOSHIOKO CHUMA KENNY/ALICE/THE DARK RIDE/VIDEO ISABELLE MARTEAU/POST COITUM DANCERS AND GINA BUNTZ THOM FOGARTY AND COMPANY DUMMIE WEDDING EXTRAVAGANZA ERIC BARNESSE AND DANCERS AN EVENING WITH SUSAN BRAHAM THE KITCHEN DANCE FESTIVAL JOSHUA LIGHT SHOW	SADLERS WELLS, LONDON EUROPEAN TOUR U.S. TOUR EUROPEAN TOUR EUROPEAN TOUR N.Y.C. N.Y.C. N.Y.C. N.Y.C. K.C., MO N.Y.C. N.Y.C. N.Y.C.
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1984	SECRET PASTURES/NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/JONES-ZANE TIMOTHY BUCKLEY AND THE TROUBLEMAKERS ERIC BARNESSE POSTWAR/TIM MILLER BARBARA ALLEN AND DANCERS TCHAIKOVSKY BALLET FESTIVAL THE TRIP/KENNEDY CENTER JOSHUA LIGHT SHOW	N.Y.C. SADLERS WELLS, LONDON EUROPEAN TOUR EUROPEAN TOUR EUROPEAN TOUR EUROPEAN TOUR SEOUL, KOREA WASH., D.C.
1983	BALLET STARS: AN INTERNATIONAL AN INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION OF DANCE IN LIGHT OF SOUND/HARMONIC CHOIR/VIDEO MORE LIGHT BENEFIT/F.S. 122 JOSHUA LIGHT SHOW	N.J. N.Y.C. N.Y.C.
1982	CHICAGO FEST/SOUTH DOCK LOOP ALIVE FESTIVAL/CITY OF CHICAGO TIM MILLER DANCERS FOR DISARMAMENT BENEFIT LAURENCE ANDERSON/USA/PRELIM CHICAGO FEST/NORTH END GLENN BRANCH/TOTAL FLECKUS TRANSPORT/THE KITCHEN FOR COLORFUL GIRLS WHO OVERTEAKEN BALLET THEATRE CHICAGO FEST/VARIETY MATHERS AND MASTERS DANCE THEATRE PARALLEL/VIDEO	CHICAGO CHICAGO EUROPEAN TOUR N.Y.C. N.Y.C. CHICAGO N.Y.C. N.Y.C. 4TH NATIONAL U.S. TOUR CHICAGO CHICAGO CHICAGO

ADDITIONAL HISTORY AND REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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ISAMU
NOGUCHI

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Collection:	Series/Folder:
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY MoMA PS1	II, A. 17

ISAMU NOGUCHI

What is Sculpture?

The 42nd
Venice Biennale

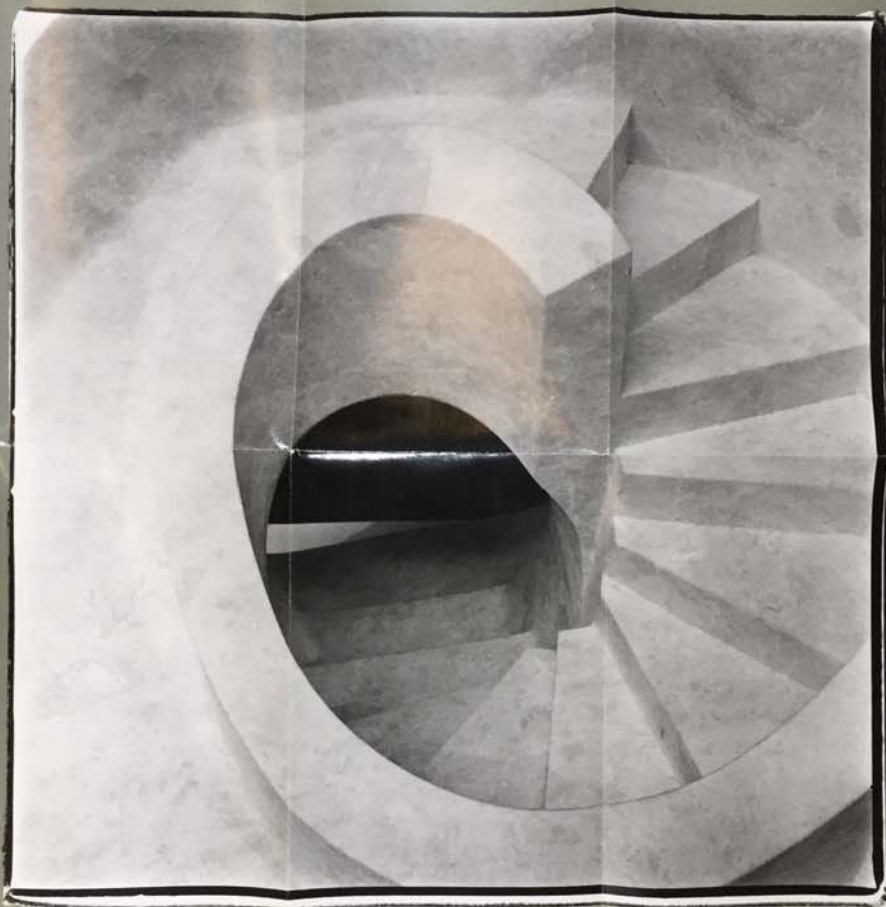
June 29-
September 28
1986

Sponsored by the
United States
Information
Agency, Philip
Morris Companies
Inc. and the
Committee for the
1986 American
Pavilion at the
Venice Biennale

A cultural
presentation of
the United States
of America

Presented in
collaboration with
the Peggy
Guggenheim
Collection

Organized by P.S. 1,
The Institute for Art
and Urban Resources, Inc.
Henry Geldzahler, Commissioner



Camera mirror side model, 1959-60. Photograph Jürgen Arndt.

ISAMU NOGUCHI

Che cosa è la Sculptura?

La 42^a
Biennale di Venezia

29 giugno-
28 settembre
1986

Sponsorizzato da:
United States
Information
Agency, Philip
Morris
Companies, Inc.,
e la Commissione
culturale degli
Stati Uniti
Americani alla
Biennale di
Venezia 1986

Organizzatore:
P.S. 1, The Institute for Art
and Urban Resources, Inc.
Commissioner: Henry Geldzahler

1959-60. Camera mirror side model. Photograph Jürgen Arndt.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

Collection:	Series Folder:
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	MoMA PS1
	II. A. 17

ISAMU
NOGUCHI

Che cosa
e' la
Scultura?

La 42^a
Biennale di Venezia

29 giugno-
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Sponsorizzato da:
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e la Commissione
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Americano alla
Biennale di
Venezia 1986

Presentazione in
collaborazione
con la Peggy
Guggenheim
Collection

Una presentazione
culturale degli
Stati Uniti
d'America

Organizzazione:
P.S. 1, The Institute for Art
and Urban Resources, Inc.
Commissario: Henry Geldzahler



Vista del modello in gesso di Isamu, 1964-65, foto: Stephen Aron

ISAMU
NOGUCHI

What is
Sculpture?

The 42nd
Venice Biennale
June 29-
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Collection

Isamu Noguchi, 1964-65, foto: Stephen Aron

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:
MoMA PS1Series Folder:
II. A. 617

1. *Study Model (Model of Study Model)*, 1963, bronze, 20 cm x 10 cm x 5 cm. Collection of artist.
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The essence of sculpture is for me the perception of space, the continuum of our existence. All dimensions are but measures of it, as in relative perspective of our vision lie volume, line, point, giving shape, distance, proportion. Movement, light and time itself are also qualities of space. Space is otherwise inconceivable. These are the essence of sculpture and as our concepts of them change, so must our sculpture change.

Since our experiences of space are, however, limited to momentary segments of time, growth must be the core of existence. We are reborn, and so in art as in nature there is growth, by which I mean change attuned to the living. Thus growth can only be new, for awareness is the ever-changing adjustment of the human psyche to chaos. If I say that growth is the constant transfusion of human meaning into the encroaching void, then how great is our need today when our knowledge of the universe has filled space with energy, driving us toward a greater chaos and new equilibria.

I say it is the sculptor who orders and animates space, gives it meaning.

Isamu Noguchi 1946

The balance Isamu Noguchi strikes between his deep respect for nature and his always startling originality makes the study of his work constantly revealing. No one knows better than Noguchi when to leave things as he finds them: a few deep chisel marks or a dislocation of five stones from one environment (quarry or beach) to another (garden or art gallery) render the fulfillment of a gesture. Noguchi in his sculpture creates an impression of spontaneity; his signature is difficult to remember, or even to imagine. He never opposes himself to nature; his work can be seen as the archaeological remnants of an ancient civilization, or as the harbinger of intelligence from beyond our solar system, fallen to earth in its formal integrity intact. Yet, in the presence of nature of Noguchi's works the veil of appearance lifts momentarily to reveal a glimpse of the *numen*, the invisible essence that informs the universe and is as close to the apprehension of beauty as we can come.

Isamu Noguchi arrived at his aesthetic through a wide variety of apprenticeships and philosophical alliances. The stages of his enlightenment are disclosed in his autobiography *Isamu Noguchi, A Sculptor's World* (1968). Here is the essence of his story: he discovered and combined elements of diverse traditions to forge his own aesthetic; how he has carried on the direct lineage of stone and the sense of proportions of Graeco-Roman statuary; his continuation, in the wake of Constantin Brancusi, his first master, of the modernism that was wrested from Rodin's more strenuous humanism; and his alliance with the traditions of China and Japan, from the ceramic *hanjira* figures to his drawings in *sumi* ink. All are tributaries to a river of invention that flows through the artist and resides in his work.

Months of conversations with Isamu Noguchi have crystallized the sculptor's private concerns about his representation in the American Pavilion at the 1966 Venice Biennale. He refuses to be set on a pedestal as an artist whose work is largely accomplished. Now, as always, Noguchi's eye and hand are abidingly fixed on the work he has under way, and even more resolutely, on the next body of sculpture or the next garden he is eager to undertake.

In working with Noguchi one is not simply dealing with an artist who makes sculpture; the impulse that motivates decisions about what to wear or

what food to eat proceeds from the same single underlying sensibility that animates his work. It should not, then, surprise us that he approaches working situations with more in mind than, "What should I send?" to a particular exhibition, but rather with, "What shall I make for this situation, this space, that is appropriate to it?" His gardens and public sculptures in Detroit, California and Japan, for instance, all share the double distinction of being by Noguchi, as well as for a unique set of circumstances.

Bringing all this to bear, Noguchi's approach to the question of what to propose for the American Pavilion has been thoroughly consistent. He has often visited Venice, most memorably, perhaps, with his friend and collaborator Buckminster Fuller; he knows the look and the mood of the city. In 1965, on one of his periodic visits to the marble quarries of Carrara, where in the past decade he has made splendid sculptural use of Italian marble, a counterpart to his Japanese work in granite, Noguchi revisited Venice and undertook a study of the Pavilion building.

His first decision was to make the marble spiral slide. Taking measurements, Noguchi discovered that the piece as envisioned would fit; it has been crafted of eight pieces of marble fitted together to make up the form. He decided that the slide could not simply stand on the ground, nor would a platform or pedestal be appropriate. Solving this dilemma, he proposed to set the marble spiral on a ground cover, a bed of wood chips.

A major element in the Noguchi presentation at the American Pavilion is the *akari*, or light sculptures, familiar to several generations as something "natural." Learning that Noguchi first designed the *akari* over forty years ago creates a shock akin to the realization that a "folk" song was actually written by someone.

Elements in the exhibition include one large *akari*, five feet in diameter, alone in a room, balanced by a sculpture in Swedish granite, a material that Noguchi has used increasingly since the early sixties.

This identifies the rationale underlying Noguchi's presentation: the logic of material synthesis and antithesis—illuminated rice paper in balance with granite; illuminated rice paper opposed to a granite. In the present exhibition, there is also a cube of dark stone, six feet in every dimension. The bright and the dark, the fragile and the heavy,

translucent on one side, opaque on the other, emanates light and absorbing it; these are the antitheses. The synthesis is the effect of the Pavilion experienced in its totality by visitors.

These polarities continue in the other rooms, one filled with a grouping of new *akari*, the other with granite stones Noguchi has brought from Japan and whose position in the gallery was determined in response to the space.

The final element of the Isamu Noguchi installation at Venice is a structure which Noguchi calls the tetrahelix. For Noguchi, the choice of this kind of form shapes a fundamental relationship to space: the indeterminacy of nature is complicated by the tetrahelix, he explains, "It is the mysterious link of creation, its possible core." Another antithesis exists in the scientific and engineering complexities of the helix on the one hand, and the casualness of the found and positioned stones on the other.

Isamu Noguchi, at the age of eighty-two, continues testing the notion of sculpture, pushing its limits. His American Pavilion at the 1966 Venice Biennale succeeds in redefining the limits of sculpture in fresh formal terms. And, while the stones, light sculpture and tetrahelix contribute to a coherent philosophy, the mystery still lingers.

Henry Geldzahler

Sponsored by the United States Information Agency, Philip Morris Companies Inc. and the Committee for the 1966 American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale; Chairman, Raymond Leary; Lily Auchincloss; Agnes Gund; Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Herndon; Mrs. James H. Kahler III; Mr. and Mrs. Raymond D. Nasher and Louisa Stude Sardin

1. The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, a non-profit center for contemporary art, is dedicated to the presentation of a broad range of activities in various media through exhibitions, performances, film and video screenings and activities.

Isamu Noguchi: What Is Sculpture?

Checklist of the Exhibition

- Slide Mantra, 1986, Carrara marble, 10" x 10" x 10" (3.15m) Collection of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation.
- Ends, 1986, Swedish granite, 5'7" x 5'7" x 5'7" (1.7m x 1.7m x 1.7m) Collection of the artist.
- Beginning (Ends), 1986, Androsite, five stones for an area of 21'2" x 32'9" (6.5m x 10m) Collection of the artist.
- Bronze Models
- Play Mountain, 1933, bronze, 29 1/4" x 25 1/4" (74.3 cm x 64.5 cm) Collection of the artist.
- Swimming Pool for Josef von Sternberg, 1935, bronze, 15' x 14' (45.7 cm x 42.7 cm) Collection of the artist.
- Contoured Playground for Central Park, 1939-41, bronze, 26' x 26' (79.2 cm x 79.2 cm) Collection of the artist.
- United Nations Playground, New York, 1952, bronze, 19 1/4" x 27 1/4" (49.5 cm x 69.2 cm) Collection of the artist.
- The Tortured Earth, 1943, bronze, 28" x 28" (71.1 cm x 71.1 cm) Collection of the artist.

A series of four models for Riverside Drive Park at 103rd Street, New York City.

- The First Study Model, 1961-62, bronze, 15" x 17" (38.1 cm x 43.2 cm), Collection of the artist.
- Detail of Study Model, 1961-62, bronze, 5 1/2" x 20" (13.9 cm x 50.8 cm), Collection of the artist.
- Study Model, 1963, bronze, 5 1/2" x 20" (13.9 cm x 50.8 cm), Collection of the artist.
- Study Model, 1965, bronze, 20" x 35" (50.8 cm x 88.9 cm), Collection of the artist.
- Series of *akari*, 1955-86, paper, various sizes, Collection of the artist.
- Tetrahelix, 1986, steel, 16 1/2" x 4 1/2" (41.9 cm x 11.4 cm) Courtesy of Mero

Essay © 1986 Henry Geldzahler

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

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about his representation of the human figure in various media through sculpture, film and video recordings and

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Planned by the United States Information Agency, Philip Morris Companies Inc., and the Committee for the 1986 American Pavilion in the Venice Biennale.

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L'essenza della scultura e' per me la percezione dello spazio, ovvero il continuum della nostra esistenza. Tutte le dimensioni non sono altro che la misura di esso, proprio come nella prospettiva relativa della nostra visione dove abbiamo il volume, la linea, il punto che danno origine alla forma, alla distanza e alla proporzione. Il movimento, la luce e anche il tempo sono qualità dello spazio che altrimenti sarebbe inconcepibile. Questi elementi sono l'essenza della scultura e via via che i nostri concetti su di essi cambiano così nello stesso modo la scultura deve cambiare.

Dal momento però che la nostra esperienza dello spazio e' limitata a segmenti di tempo, la crescita deve rappresentare il nucleo dell'esistenza. Noi siamo nati di nuovo, e perciò sia in arte come in natura c'è crescita, vogliono movimento, la luce e anche il tempo sono qualità dello spazio che altrimenti sarebbe inconcepibile. Questi elementi sono l'essenza della scultura e via via che i nostri concetti su di essi cambiano così nello stesso modo la scultura deve cambiare.

Dico dunque che e' lo scultore che ordina ed anima lo spazio e che gli dà significato.

Isamu Noguchi 1946

L'equilibrio che Isamu Noguchi raggiunge fra il suo profondo rispetto della natura e la sua sorprendente originalità è delio studio del suo lavoro una continua rivelazione. Nessuno su meglio di Noguchi quando lasciare le cose come si trovano per i propri fini, la luce e anche il tempo sono qualità dello spazio che altrimenti sarebbe inconcepibile. Questi elementi sono l'essenza della scultura e via via che i nostri concetti su di essi cambiano così nello stesso modo la scultura deve cambiare.

del nudo, dell'invisibile essenza che informa l'universo e che ci avvicina quanto più possibile alla conoscenza della bellezza.

Isamu Noguchi è giunto alla sua estetica attraverso una grande varietà di esperienze e di affinità filosofiche. Le fasi della sua illuminazione sono rese note nella autobiografia *Isamu Noguchi, A Sculptor's World* (Isamu Noguchi, Il Mondo di uno Scultore), 1968. Qui vi troviamo l'essenza della sua storia personale e cioè come egli abbia scoperto e combinato elementi di tradizioni diverse allo scopo di forgiare la sua propria estetica, come egli continui la tradizione statuaria greco-romana sia nello scultore direttamente su pietra che nel senso delle proporzioni; e ancora come egli spinga in avanti secondo la lezione di Constantin Brancusi, suo primo maestro, quel modernismo che era stato emulato dal più inteso universalismo di Rodin. Vi troviamo infine l'alleanza con la tradizione cinese e giapponese, specialmente nelle ceramiche *hanaiwa* e nei disegni con inchiostro *sumi*. Tutti questi elementi affluiscono in quel fiume creativo che scorre attraverso l'artista e che prende corpo nel suo lavoro.

Mesi di conversazione con Isamu Noguchi sono serviti a mettere a fuoco le preoccupazioni dello scultore circa la sua partecipazione al Padiglione Americano della Biennale di Venezia 1966. Egli infatti non acconsente di essere posto su un piedistallo come un artista il cui lavoro sia giunto a compimento. Ora come sempre l'occhio e il cuore di Noguchi sono indissolubilmente concentrati sul lavoro che sta realizzando al momento, oppure, sulla prossima serie di sculture o sul giardino a cui si appresta a lavorare.

Lavorare con Noguchi quindi non è semplicemente venire a che fare con un artista che la scultura. L'impulso che motiva le decisioni sul vestirsi o su che cosa mangiare procede dalla stessa sensibilità.

Non dire che anima tutto il suo lavoro. Ma ci deve perciò sorprendere il fatto che egli affronti le situazioni relative al lavoro con ben altro in mente che la fatidica domanda "cosa dovrà essere in mostra?", ma invece chiedendosi "che cosa devo fare perché" il lavoro sia appropriato a quella situazione o a quello spazio? I suoi giardini e le sue sculture pubbliche a Detroit, in California e in Giappone, ad esempio, condividono la caratteristica doppia di essere di Noguchi come pure un unico compendio di ricominciare.

Considerando tutto questo l'approccio di Noguchi alla questione di che cosa proporre per il Padiglione Americano è stato consistente fino in fondo. Egli ha spesso visitato Venezia, forse in modo memorabile con il suo amico e collaboratore Brancusi Fuller, e conosce l'aspetto e l'animo della città. Nel 1965, durante una delle sue visite periodiche alle cave di marmo di Carrara (nell'ultimo decennio ha fatto un uso non solo di lavoro giapponese in granito), Noguchi rivisitò Venezia e intraprese uno studio dell'edificio del Padiglione.

La sua decisione immediata fu di fare la spirale-scivolo di marmo. Prendendo le misure "Noguchi scoprì che il pezzo così" come si diceva, sarebbe risultato appropriato per quello spazio. L'opera è stata costruita con otto parti di marmo che si uniscono a formare un tutt'uno. Noguchi si accorse anche che lo scivolo non avrebbe potuto stare in piano sul terreno e che ne la piattaforma ne un piedistallo sarebbero rivelati adatti. Il dilemma fu risolto proponendo di posizionare la spirale di marmo su di un letto di piccoli pezzetti di legno.

Uno dei più importanti elementi della presentazione di Noguchi al Padiglione Americano è costituito dagli *akari*, ovvero sculture luminose, certamente familiari a molte generazioni come qualcosa di "naturale". Sapere che Noguchi progetta gli *akari* oltre quaranta anni fa produce uno shock simile a quello provato quando si viene a conoscenza che un certo motivo musicale popolare in realtà era stato scritto da qualcuno.

La mostra include un grande *akari* del diametro di metri 1,50, posto da solo in una stanza e controllabile da una scultura in granito svedese, un materiale che Noguchi ha usato in modo crescente fin dall'inizio degli anni Sessanta. Tutto ciò identifica la razionalità che sta alla base della presentazione di Noguchi: la logica della sintesi ed antitesi dei materiali. Carta da riso illuminata in equilibrio con il granito oppure in opposizione al granito. In questa mostra è anche posto un cubo di pietra scura di mt. 1,90 per lato. Il luminoso e l'oscuro, il fragile e il pesante, il semitrasparente da una parte e l'opaco dall'altro, ciò che emana luce e ciò che l'assorbe: tutte queste sono le antitesi. La sintesi è costituita dal padiglione stesso come sarà vissuta dai visitatori nella sua totalità.

Queste polarità poi trovano continuazione nelle altre stanze: una riempita da un raggruppamento di nuovi *akari* e l'altra di pietre di granito che Noguchi ha spedito dal Giappone e la cui posizione nella galleria è determinata in risposta allo spazio stesso.

L'elemento finale dell'installazione di Isamu Noguchi a Venezia è una struttura che lui chiama *tetrahedra*: una struttura profonda che si ritrova in biologia e fisica. Per Noguchi la scelta di questa forma segna una relazione fondamentale con lo spazio: l'indeterminatezza della natura e' resa esemplare dal *tetrahedra* che come egli spiega "è il legame misterioso della creazione, e' il suo nucleo possibile". Un'altra antitesi possibile trovarla da una parte nella "complessità" scientifica ed ingegneristica dell'elica e dall'altra nella casualità delle pietre trovate e quindi posizionate.

La simmetria bilaterale del Padiglione Americano a Venezia, che ogni anno ospita le opere di uno o più artisti americani, è impositiva rispetto a ciò che può essere mostrato con successo. L'edificio è composto di cinque ambienti-gallerie, due a sinistra, due a destra e uno spazio di ingresso che serve come quinta galleria. Fuori c'è posto per una scultura di grandi dimensioni.

Isamu Noguchi, all'età di ottantadue anni, continua a verificare la nozione di scultura spingendola verso i propri limiti. Il suo Padiglione Americano alla Biennale di Venezia 1966 riesce felicemente a ridefinire i limiti della scultura in termini di nuova freschezza formale e mentre le pietre, le sculture luminose ed il *tetrahedra* contribuiscono alla formazione di una coerente filosofia, tuttavia l'incerto mistero permane.

Henry Geldzahler

Sponsorizzato da United States Information Agency, Philip Morris Companies Inc., e la Commissione per il Padiglione Americano alla Biennale di Venezia 1966; Presidente, Raymond Lavery; Lily Auchincloss; Agnes Gund; Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Herstand; Mrs. James H. Kabler III; Mr. and Mrs. Raymond D. Nasher and Louisa Stude Sarofin

P.S. 1. The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Inc. e' un centro di arte contemporanea non avente scopo di lucro impegnato nella presentazione di una larga varietà di attività artistiche che noi media più di noi, per mezzo di mostre, performances, films e video e di attività correlate.

Isamu Noguchi: Che cosa è la Scultura?

Elenco delle opere in mostra

- Slide Mantra (Giovanni Mantra), 1986, marmo di Carrara, altezza mt. 3,15 Collezione della Fondazione Isamu Noguchi.
- Ends (Fini) 1986, granito Svedese, mt. 1,7 x 1,7 x 1,7 Collezione dell'artista.
- Beginnings (Inizi), 1986, Andesite, cinque pietre per un'area di mt. 6,5 x 10 Collezione dell'artista.
- Modelli in bronzo

Play Mountain (Montagna per giocare), 1933, bronzo cm. 74 x 65 Collezione dell'artista.

Swimming Pool for Josef von Sternberg (Piscina per Josef von Sternberg) 1935, bronzo cm. 38 x 36 Collezione dell'artista.

Contoured Playground for Central Park (Area di gioco per le Nazioni Unite, New York) 1952, bronzo cm. 50 x 60 Collezione dell'artista.

United Nations Playground, New York (Area di gioco per le Nazioni Unite, New York) 1952, bronzo cm. 50 x 60 Collezione dell'artista.

This Tortured Earth (Questa Terra così torturata) 1943, bronzo cm. 71 x 71 Collezione dell'artista.

Una serie di quattro modelli per il Riverside Drive Park all'altezza della 10