



Summergarden

July 1985
For Immediate Release

CLOWN BOB BERKY AND FRIENDS

SUMMERGARDEN, The Museum of Modern Art's series of free evenings in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, continues on August 16 with a performance by clown Bob Berky and friends. Made possible by a grant from Mobil, the series' sponsor for nine seasons in the seventies, SUMMERGARDEN takes place on Friday and Saturday nights in July and August from 6 to 10 p.m. Short, informal presentations of music, dance, and performance art are scheduled for Friday nights at 8 p.m.

Bob Berky is an eclectic artist who performs juggling, kazoo speech, and pure, unadulterated slapstick. For his performance at SUMMERGARDEN Berky will collaborate with ventriloquist/pianist Doug Skinner, designer John Kahn, and dancer/actor David Chase. Several of the masterpieces in the Sculpture Garden will be integrated into the performance as essential elements. For example, Berky plans to don high-water boots and wade through the Sculpture Garden's West Fountain; confront Gaston Lachaise's Standing Woman; and interact with Pablo Picasso's She-Goat.

Berky has been compared to Charlie Chaplin, Danny Kaye, Marcel Marceau, and Red Skelton. Hailed by the London Daily Telegraph as "one of the greatest mimes in the world today," Berky's initial performing experience was as a French horn player at the Eastman School of Music. He studied mime with Paul Curtis

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**Friday and Saturday evenings in the Sculpture Garden of
The Museum of Modern Art are made possible by a grant from Mobil**

at the American Mime Theatre at Cornell University, and founded the Rochester Children's Theatre, which toured regional schools in the early seventies. Berky also researched the psychological effects of theater on emotionally disturbed children at the University of Rochester. In 1973 he began studying with Tony Montanaro, a contemporary of Marcel Marceau's, and was subsequently invited to join Montanaro to create The Celebration Mime Theatre.

Berky has presented his own work in Asia, Australia, Europe, Mexico, and throughout North America. He received a 1980 Choreography fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and the coveted "Fringe First" award at the Edinburgh Festival--an award given to the best festival debuts. Berky received a 1983 OBIE from the Village Voice for his contributions to the off-Broadway production of "Foolsfire," with clowns Michael Moschen and Fred Garver. Recently, Berky performed in Bill Irwin's The Courtroom at the Lenox Art Center at St. Clement's Church in New York, and presented a solo work at the International Festival of Clown-Theatre at Westbeth. During July he toured South America with Michael Möschen. Berky and Möschen will perform in The Alchemedians during The Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival this November.

Ventriloquist/pianist Doug Skinner studied composition at the Oberlin Conservatory, and was an original member of the Oberlin Dance Collective, for which he wrote a number of dance scores and vaudeville pieces. His music will be featured on Thursday, August 16 on the noon radio program "Around New York" in a segment hosted by Brooke Wentz on WNYC (FM 94). John Kahn is currently working on a long-term project, "Helium Balloon Circus," which is an actual circus suspended by hot-air balloons that he expects to complete around 1990. Dancer/actor David Chase has performed with the Martha Graham Dance Company, Kazuko Hira Bayashi, and other dance companies.

Admission to SUMMERGARDEN is free, on a first-come, first-served basis. On Friday and Saturday evenings the Garden is open from 6 to 10 p.m., and performances take place on Friday evenings only, beginning at 8 p.m. In the event of rain, performances are postponed until the following evening (Saturday) at 8 p.m. Entrance to SUMMERGARDEN is through the Garden Gate at 14 West 54 Street, between Fifth Avenue and the Avenue of the Americas. Refreshments are available at the Garden Cafe. For visitor information call 212/708-9880 or 212/708-9500.

SUMMERGARDEN project director is Andrew B. Caploe; associate project director is Peter S. Pretsfelder.

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Coming to SUMMERGARDEN:

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| August 23 | Linda Mussmann's Time and Space Limited: A sound and movement work created especially for the Sculpture Garden |
| August 30 | The Art Ensemble of Chicago: A performance in celebration of the group's twenty years together (the sole amplified event of the series) |

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For press information contact the SUMMERGARDEN office at 212/708-9850, or the Department of Public Information at 212/708-9750.