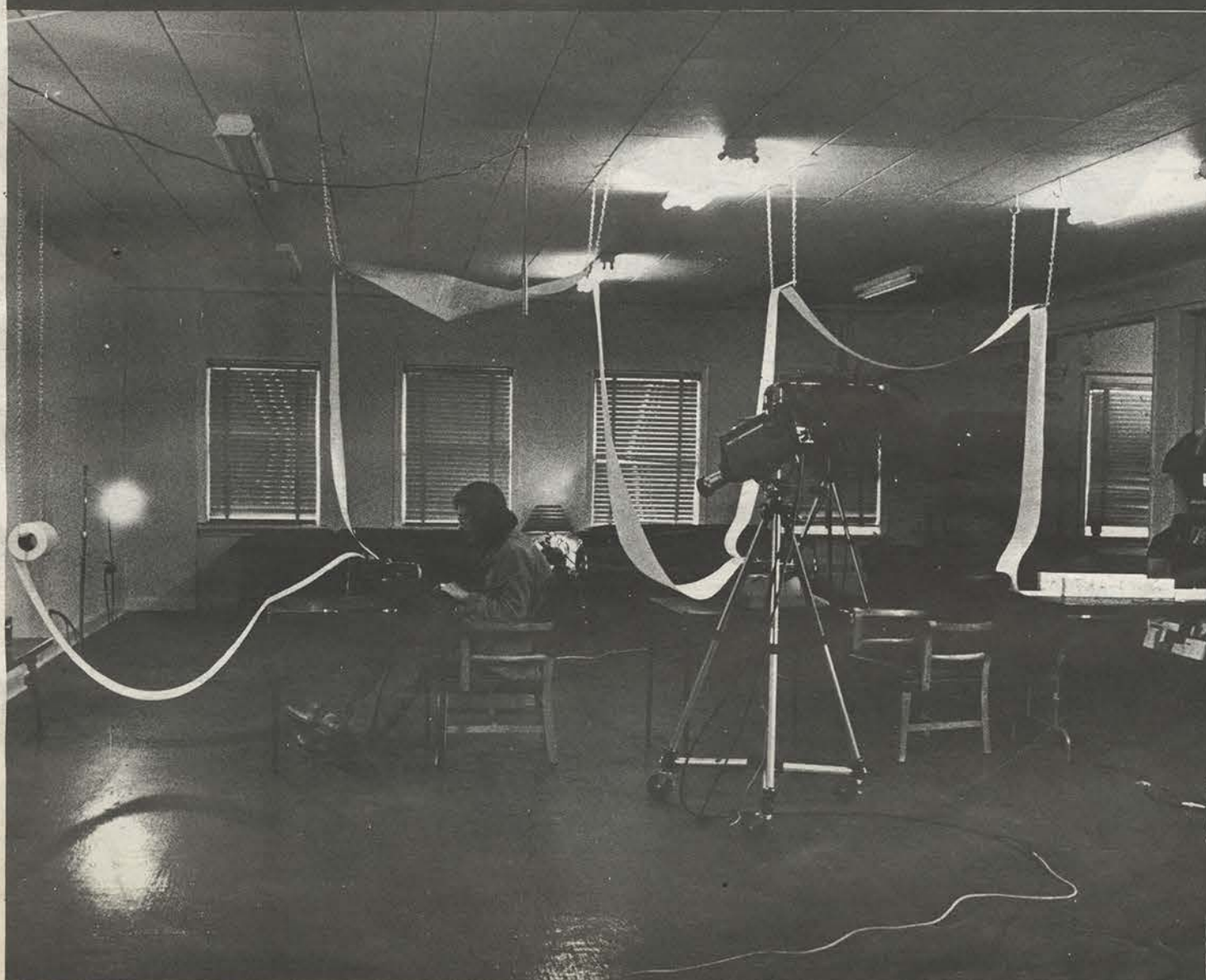




CENTERFOLD

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST'S NEWSPAPER

Vol. 2 No. 2&3 JANUARY 1978



FEATURES:

- HP Rolls out RELICAN for its premiere service
- Steve MacCaffery gives MEDICAL OPINION ONCE HELD
- Robert Filliou PROPOSES

INTERVIEWS:

- with Carl Loeffler of La Mamelle
- with Kate Craig on Western Front Video
- with Dennis Tourbin on CBC/FLQ

REVIEWS:

- General Idea and the Metaphive
- CCMC and the 'listener'
- LE/LA and Canadian SPacific
- Don Mabie stakes his claim
- Crytearia weeps for all

PLUS:

- The Strategist Manifesto and much more

Top: Robert Filliou
Bottom: Steve McCaffery: VARIATIONS ON THE OVAL, 1977.

ARTISTS

TOBY MacLENNAN
Reading
January 14th 8.00 pm
[admission free]

**JOHN OSWALD &
HENERY KAISER**
Creative Musics
January 22nd 8.00 pm

JOHN OSWALD
Artist-in-Residence
January 22nd - February 5th.

Concert:
February 2nd, 8.00 pm
[admission free]

ROBERT FONES
Reading
February 18th 8.00 pm
[admission free]

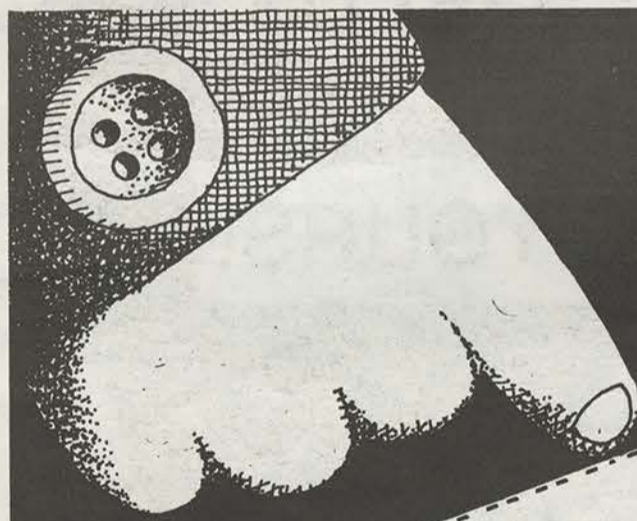
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FLUX FILMS.**
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DARCY LANGE
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- answering why an energetic C.A.R. failed in Alberta,
- asking is 'our' government soliciting stagnation?
- artists emphatically stating: What Wealth? What Growth? What Concern?

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March 1st 1978)

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EDITORIAL

As there often exist new concerns to clarify or discuss, an editorial is not the embarrassing nonentity it might have been in the recent past. This double issue of Centerfold is somewhat mixed in its content and (without deliberate intention) gives at least three generations of viewpoint as to the fundamental directions and objectives within post-preemptive (Bienvenue) or post-cognitive (Higgins) art.

The artist-curator, though it has become extremely useful within the last five years as a species is becoming a lead-filled balloon as it expands towards the 'institutional' model. Such weight means that other perhaps more necessary aspects of display: Knowledge, its historicization and publication for internalization by society, are receiving less than adequate attention. What we often refer to (as artists) as 'documentation of research' is not digestible by either the mausoleums of intellect or the vocal chords of aural passage. It is, then, moisture which evaporates as

quickly as it precipitates. Programming becomes an annual 'problem' of appetite - it requires little perspective, is both ephemeral and a disposable item and also removes the need for a concern with consequences.

The artist-curator (or artist-editor) we believe has more at stake than to allow (his/her artist part) to be treated in such a consumeristic way; - only by paying attention to those digestive juices and their function will those concerns be met.

We look at *Western Front Video* through the eyes of its director, *Kate Craig*, for policies of production; we talk to *Carl Loeffler* of *La Mamelle* to hear his views on distribution and production. *Steve MacCaffery's* *Intraview* offers insight to his methods of sound poetry and performance, *Dennis Tourbin* relates his experience when recently presenting *CBC/FLQ - A Painted Play* in Montreal. *Brian Dyson* relates his position and regard for objects and the historical ready-made. *HP* define their invention *RELICAN* as a formula to counteract the loss of (Canadian) spirituality.

Robert Filliou outlines his numerous projects and makes connections to his own philosophical and socialist interpretations.

There are 'reviews'. The CCMC fortunately (for us) again raises questions of listening and pre-conditioned musical heritage. The review of *Criteria's* review of Cdn Art Publications story (*Criteria* Vol. 3, No. 3) attempts to deal with ambassadoreality.

The review of *General Idea's* 'Re-Constructing Future's' show in Toronto tests the tensile strength of the Pavillion, given the weighty audience expectation. *Brooks Joyner* reviews *Chuck Stake Enterprises*, *Paul Woodrow* reviews *Le-La* and *Canadian SPacific*.

We apologize to *Opal Nations* for losing the cassette we made towards an interview of his work.

We could have called this double issue 'An Issue of Strategy', but we didn't. Strategy is a loaded word - we all use it, need to use it both to survive and to enable us to indicate changes in environment and ailing bureaucracies. However there is a growing legitimacy for another type of strategy emanating from the art club-of-the-month club which initially seemed unconscious in its origins but has grown by co-opting ideologies from both the extreme right and mediocre left.

We believe that this presence, which is fast becoming a bourgeois plaything, has not, up to this time, credited itself fully by outlining its complete objectives or by taking the 'curtain-call' for such a notable coup.

To assist them we have in their stead published what we believed is lacking - that is a Manifesto which makes clear their achievements and objectives. So we present a sequel to the 'Art of Madness', our version of what might be their STRATEGIST MANIFESTO:

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THE STRATEGIST MANIFESTO

1. We believe in the codicification of strategy, strategy is not to be confused with format or publication.
2. Strategists are those of us who believe in stealing the model of permanent revolution to cover up a fight within defined syndromes of operation (including art) and replace us ever again having to worry about where we are going next (including our art).
3. Strategy is not a context, strategy is our content.
4. We are proud to admit that the internalization of what we thought was useful as art, that is its internalization by society, is just a hollow myth.
5. We believe that all those who talk about a Network cannot shake that old myth.
6. We want those people to know that they should cease worrying about society. We have proved that the art context is so weak, so confused, so decadent that no-one will ever question our strategy.
7. There is no danger in being strategists: as soon as it is accepted that we don't have to qualify our model it's as safe as a landscape sketch, and of course much more exciting.
8. If necessary we will kill our parents and become adopted by the nearest derelict to prove to the world that yes we are of working-class stock.
9. We will adopt the most right wing elements of Nationalism and cleverly encase them within radical left-wing language exclamations.
10. We are clever, we've watched TV advertising and, we know how to sell.
11. We believe that the present notions of art in our society will never betray us.
12. What we say, Is. - It's such an exciting time to live.
13. We will have our photographs taken with the famous models of art. We will attend as many conferences on 'art and society' as we can. We will chew the language of the Network and spit it out. WE refuse to be questioned. All questions are irrelevant, only our questions will be permitted.
14. Why should we care about Marx or any other historical model. We are the children of the immaculate strategic conception. We are part of the largest segment of consumers within present society.
15. We know that the market can be turned around on itself. We have the numerical right to be consumed. We will make them eat our words. We will make them give us all the wealth that they have been the Guardians of. We have come of age. We will cry for it, we will scream for it - we are the Strategists.
16. You have already given us the power. We fooled you, we told you it was art. You were so stupid you didn't have the basic mentality to challenge us. We told you it was a question of access. We weren't lying. Your stupid Canadian democracy crumbled to our demands. You were vain - you were proud to assist all of the 'new' elements in art. We won't leave you alone.
17. We are not socialists, we are not anarchists, we don't care about art, society or Politics. We are strategists.

The Propositions and Principles of ROBERT FILLIOU [Part One]

The following is a transcription of segments from video productions made with Robert Filliou. The four hours of tape was edited into a 45 min. work titled *PORTA FILLIOU* [available from Art Metropole]. Filliou was for most of this seated behind a table surrounded by rubber stamps that he used as cue cards to direct the monologue around his many projects. Robert Filliou is unique in the art world, both as a humanist and catalyst of proposals and propositions which he throws out with careful [not careless] abandon.

Together with The Western Front, Vancouver - Arton's invited Filliou for a five week residency during which time he completed three tapes and seven 'lectures' [the lectures sound much the same as this transcript]. He is presently working on a second volume of his book 'Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts', *Porta Filliou* was a sketch in that direction.

[This is one of two transcripts of Filliou's work that will be published in *Centerfold*, the next will appear in Vol. 2 No. 5.]



ETERNAL NETWORK PRESENTS

The Eternal Network presents Robert Filliou. I had a stamp made which said 'The Eternal Network Presents . . .', **George Brecht** uses it also and everytime we have a show, a manifestation, a something we like to use this stamp so that the place in which we do it is not so important as the fact we are, each one of us, just one member of the Eternal Network. The first stamp I used was in 1961 when I had the idea of having a gallery, to open my own gallery and I opened a gallery called *galerie Legitime* in my cap. The stamp reads: 'galerie legitime,'. It's only in French that there is a double meaning. It may mean, 'it covers up a masterpiece', that is it covers-up the brain; it means also covering up works. So in my cap, similar to the one I'm wearing now, inside my cap on top of my head I had small works of mine - at that time I used to make things where I used measurements, or I mummified them. Then in the streets of Paris I would walk through the streets and I would come up to someone and a typical dialogue might be: "Are you interested in art, monsieur or madame?" and if they said, Yes, yes I would say: well you know I have a gallery. And if they expressed some interest I would say: Here it is. There inside my hat were the works. They were perhaps a little bigger than this grape. And then we would look at the works.

GALERIE LEGITIME

So with the *galerie Legitime* I could go through the streets, I could go also inside houses and other buildings and many things happened to the *galerie Legitime*. For instance when I was in Germany with another version I lost it so I went around Frankfurt looking for my gallery. At another time my gallery was stolen. I think one of the most interesting occurrences that happened with the *galerie Legitime* was a show I made in 1962 of works by **Benjamin Patterson**, the American composer. He had made small works that

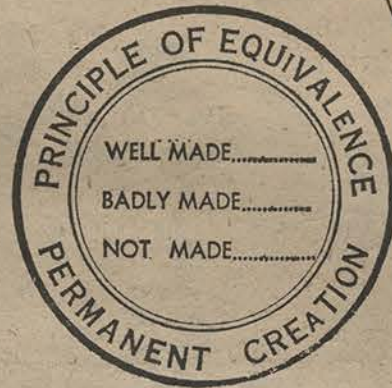
were in matchboxes, the matchboxes were under the hat and we announced all the places that we would be on that particular day. **George Maciunas** printed the programme on rough wrapping paper, it included a map of Paris. We started at three o'clock in the morning in the Central Market and we ended up at midnight in the Coupole in the 14th arrondissement. We were very precise. We announced that at a certain time we would be at such and such cafe and we were there as predicted. At eleven o'clock we were to be at **Gertrude Stein's** grave, I remember the gravedigger when we asked him where her grave was and he said, Gertrude who? We said, Gertrude Stein! And he said, Well you know, he said, we see so many people here I don't know where it is. After we had dinner at the Coupole (a small cafe) we had said that we would have dinner with anyone that was willing to treat us to dinner, we went to someplace where there was what was called *FLUXUS Preview*. Pieces were performed of **George Brecht**, **Benjamin Patterson**, **Bob Watts**, **Cage**, **La Monte Young**. One of the things was called 'La Voyage de la galerie Legitime' - *galerie Legitime* strip because as we went around Benjamin had carried a tape recorder in a bag so that we could record our conversations with people, unfortunately this tape is lost. One of the last projects with the gallery was in London at the time of the *Misfit's Fair, 1962* - of course in London it was a bowler hat. All of the participants - **Ben Vautier**, **Emmett Williams**, **Robin Page**, **Addi Koepke**, **Daniel Spoerri**, **Metzger** and myself - gave a small work that went into the hat and I announced the beginning of the frozen exhibition. That is I put the *galerie Legitime* into a freezer, the opening of the frozen exhibition was to last from October 22nd 1962 to October 22nd 1972.

The *galerie Legitime* was thrown away (laughs) when I moved from Paris to Villefranche to open *La Cedille Qui Sourit* with **George Brecht** in 1965; but still in 1972 I was able to with the help of **Robin Page**, who designed the hat, to 'defrost' the 'frozen' exhibition. Instead of having the works inside there is all the information on the *Misfits Fair* and the story I just told about the origins of the *galerie Legitime*. I think the very last thing I did with it was in 1968 when a poster was made and the poster could be folded into a paper hat and on it I had created the autonomous branches of the *galerie Legitime* - that is everyone could have his/her own gallery.

I have another stamp here which says: "Mind. A personal message with love from Robert Filliou." I used this stamp for my correspondence and it was also made into a postcard. In Dusseldorf I had it on the door of my flat, that is the word 'Mind' was stamped. People in the building used to call me Herr Mind, they thought it was my name. I have thought of another stamp, ten years later that perhaps could go on the other side and say 'Never Mind'.

The *galerie Legitime* beside being a *couvre* chez d'oeuvre, that is covering up artworks the main one being the brain, the name the *galerie Legitime* was in itself a whole programme. I thought at the time that it was legitimate to take artworks from their heights in which they were placed down to the street level and also I thought that anything that artists did to make a living was legitimate. I had good grounds for making such a proposition at that time because times were hard and since I am at it I'd like to read the invitation that we sent for the *Festival of Misfits*. It will give you more of an idea why we called it 'misfits'. It says:

If you are too successful, and have nostalgia for the days when you were not.
if you are unsuccessful, and hope some day success will knock at your door.
if you are too beautiful, and find men in the street are bothersome.
if you are ugly, madame, and wish you were beautiful.
if you sleep profoundly at night, and feel that it is a waste of time.
if you suffer from insomnia, and have time on your hands.
if you have teeth, and no meat.
if you have meat, and no teeth.
if you belong to the weaker sex, and wish you were of the stronger.
if you're in love and it makes you suffer.
if you're loved and it bores you.
if you're rich, and envy the simple happiness of the poor.
if you're poor, and long for la Dolce Vita.
if you're afraid to die, or find no point in living.
if you're a drunkard or a teetotaler.
if you believe in heaven or believe in hell.
if you're satisfied with the colour of your skin, or would rather change it.
if you believe in yourself and are pleased with what you do, or don't believe in yourself, and wonder what you are doing, and why



then come to see the FESTIVAL OF MISFITS

built by people who sometimes sleep soundly, sometimes don't; sometimes are hungry, sometimes overfed; sometimes feel young, rich and handsome, sometimes old, ugly and poor; sometimes believe in themselves, sometimes don't; sometimes are artists, sometimes not.
We make music which is not Music, poems that are not Poetry, paintings that are not Painting, but music that may fit poetry, poetry that may fit paintings, paintings that may fit . . . something, something which gives us the chance to enjoy a happy, non-specialized fantasy.

Try it THE FESTIVAL OF MISFITS

LA CEDILLE QUI SOURIT

George Brecht and I when we were in Villefranche and we started what we called *La Cedille Qui Sourit* we had a stamp made, I don't have a copy of it but there was a book made called *Games at the Cedilla or The Cedilla Takes Off* (Something Else Press, N.Y. 1967). It was a very small space located in a fishing village near Nice. **Marianne**, **Donna** (Brewer), **George** and I were running it. At times we used to say that *La Cedille Qui Sourit* invents everything that has or has not been invented. We considered it as a *Permanent Creation Centre*, this was in 1965. We had reviews in it, information about things that occurred that people sent us. We carried some editions from Fluxus, also **MAT**, that **Spoerri** was editing. We started several programmes: one called, *Contributions to the Art of Gifting* where we asked people in Christmas of 1966 to look upon artworks as things that could be gifted rather than objects of collection. Fifty or sixty artists participated - we all made small inexpensive works that could be bought as gifts for Christmas. One thing that we did also, besides writing this book and having a lot of fun was starting the *Non-school of Villefranche*. We have said that the *Non-ecole de Villefranche* never got farther than just being a letter-head, conceived for all useful and useless ends. The whole programme was under the letterhead, I still stick to it - I am doing it now: its carefree exchange of information and experience. No students, no teachers. Perfect license - at times to listen, at times to talk. We even proposed to the Mayor of Villefranche to transform the enormous citadel that they have there to become the real *Non-school of Villefranche*, we would have invited all kinds of people to have come to be friends-in-residence, exactly as I am now at Arton's: artist-in-residence and friends also. By the time 1968 came around we had been in Villefranche for three years, we were broke - I think we managed to pay the rent of the *Cedille* for these three years, which was thirty dollars a month.

ETERNAL NETWORK

So, we had this poster made that there is always someone making money, someone going broke: we in particular and that the *Cedille Qui Sourit* was turning the page; we meant by this (laughs) that we were closing down. The same poster announced the birth of the *Eternal Network* [1968], which proved to be timely and was assisted particularly by the artists working in Canada. Here **W.O.R.K.S.** (Calgary), **Image Bank** in Vancouver, **General Idea** in Toronto. So, we had a stamp made. In 1973 I decided to come and visit Canada to meet the people I've just mentioned. And from this trip came what I called *Research on the Eternal Network* which was shown in a group show in Berlin titled *ADA* (Action of the Avant-Garde) together with **Vostell**, **Kaprow**, **Mertz** etc.; I used my space to present what I called my *Research on the Eternal Network*. There was no doubt that at that time, really I think the impetus for the actual creation of *The Eternal Network* has come from these people in Canada - now of course it has spread world-wide and it is the way we

have to create, to be creative outside or without the advice or opinion or concern even at times of the media, or the art establishment. We also deal as practitioners of course, as people who exchange foodstuff - we also deal with the establishment when we have to. This Research project I mentioned had many parts. One was the telephone conversations (see VOICESPONDENCE), recorded from Vermont - talking with people in Canada and in the States. Another part consisted of documentation - reporting what I found people doing in Canada.

For instance, I had a table with several issues of FILE magazine - people could read them and if they were interested in getting a subscription they just had to write their name on the table. And out of all these names - there were over several hundred, I copied each one on small pieces of paper and my daughter Marcelle picked them out of a hat. One hundred and one subscriptions to FILE magazine were thereby given away by me out of what was my fee for the exhibit in this exhibition. Another part was **Telepathic Music No. 2**. It was No. 2 because the score for No. 1 was just one word - telepathy.
Score:

TELEPATHIC MUSIC No. 2

dedicated but not limited to these Canadian members of the Eternal Network: Vehicule, Montreal; General Idea, Toronto; W.O.R.K.S., Calgary; Image Bank, Vancouver

CONCENTRATING SILENTLY
SEND WAVES OF

GREETINGS
WEATHERLUCK
MANLUCK
WOMANLUCK

TO ANY OR ALL OF THE MEMBERS
OF THE ETERNAL NETWORK THE
WORLD AROUND

Duration: a split second to all day or all night or all day and night (all days and nights)

Performance Note: no proof of reaching or benefiting is necessary. Knowing yourself, suspecting others, to be performers of Telepathic Music is sufficient.

suggested by Robert Filliou, ADA-Aktionen der Avantgarde Berlin 1973, as part of Research on the Eternal Network

Another thing I did there which I had done at Halifax at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design (where Emmett Williams was teaching) with the students was a proposition I had made which perhaps helps to illustrate what I might propose or mean when we use the word 'network'. I was told by a noted mathematician that Poincare who died in 1912 was the last research mathematician who knew all the mathematics of his time. That now it would take thousands of pages of the most distilled information and that it is not any longer possible for there to be any one mathematician that could know all of it. So I went on to say replace mathematics by art, mathematicians by artists and of course I think that there is not one artist right now who knows what goes on in the world. Even here not one of us really knows all of the wonderful things that are contained in your archives, which, in a way, is an illustration of the network. So if no one person can tell us what is going on, I proposed that the concept of the avant-garde is obsolete, and therefore it's much better for every artist to think of themselves as part of an eternal network. The initial dream-like thing, I don't know, that George and I had written was:

There is always someone asleep and someone awake,
Someone dreaming asleep, someone dreaming awake,
Someone eating, someone hungry, someone fighting,
someone loving,
Someone making money, someone broke, someone travelling, someone staying put, someone helping, someone hindering, someone enjoying, someone suffering, someone indifferent, someone starting, someone stopping, only the network is eternal - the network is everlasting.

So the way I see the Network, as a member of the Network, the way more it exists artistically through the collective efforts of all these artists in Europe, in North America, in Asia, in Australia, in New Zealand - everywhere. In Africa also: I have received communication from Yemen for instance; each one of us artistically function in the network, which has replaced the concept of the avant-garde and which functions in such a way that there is no more art center in the world. Nobody can tell us, as Terry Reid put it, where the place is - where we are is where the things are taking place and although we may need to meet at times or gather information at certain places - the network works automatically. But this artistic network itself - it may help to think of it as being part of the wider network where artistic activity just become one of the elements of the human network, and I would include in



TELEPATHIC MUSIC No. 2, Berlin 1973.
(photo: Jurgen Muller-Schneck)

it all our fellow travellers, other animal and plant species. This world/earth experience is part of this wider network (hands spiralling) which you can take or leave but certainly has been important to many of us working with these concepts and ideas. I insist on the term 'working' because it's a practice: we are a people that practice what we speak about.

PERMANENT CREATION

Permanent Creation is the one thing that interests me. I can go around this concept and start practically anywhere in my work. Here I have this stamp that I had made finally that says: Permanent Creation - Principles of Equivalence: Well Made. Badly Made. Not Made.

That is to say I proposed in terms of Permanent Creation its equivalent whether a work is well made, badly made or not made. I got interested in Permanent Creation, and I use this word frequently rather than using the word art, because as I practice art as creativeness and often I have defined anti-art as the diffusion of the works coming out of that creativeness, and non-art as being creative without caring whether one's works are diffused or not. Anyway, for me the idea of creation came very soon to imply that creation should be permanent and I should practice the idea and the ideal of Permanent Creation. One of the first works I got involved in which uses the concept of Permanent Creation is the Poipoidrome which is the permanent creation centre. I conceived together with my friend, painter, architect, urbanist, Joachim Pfeifer in Paris in 1963. It is a building that could be used which I will speak of later. The Cedille Qui Sourit we conceived as a Permanent Creation Centre. The Principle of Equivalence is a conceptual tool, that is to say I used it in many works - illustrating what I mean by this. The first work was putting a sock into a box, I put a red sock into a yellow box and the first time the proportions were right, the colours were right - I called this work Well-made. I did it once more and the proportions were not right and the colour was out - Badly-made. I did it a third time - it was just the concept: red sock in a yellow box. And then having these three works together I considered them as Well-made, seeing as I went to the trouble of making them. And I remade the three of them once more badly-made and then once more not-made. And then those three sets of three I considered well-made as I had reasoned before and I re-did it once more badly-made and a third time not-made. So I had started a progression with this first work that was made in wood, I had to stop after the fifth element of my series and it was already forty feet long. I worked out that if I had made a series of one hundred, the dimensions would have been 10 (power 21) light-years. So everytime I showed this work I used to say this work illustrates the Permanent Creation of the Universe. And I called the exhibition of this work, Exhibition for the Third Eye. Because I proposed that the Principles of Equivalence: Well-Made, Badly-Made, Not-Made applies to every growth, every thought, every idea and once more of course like the idea of Permanent Creation itself the burden of proof was on me - since I propose it, I must practice it. Since I say that the Principles of Equivalence illustrate the Permanent Creation of the Universe, alright, so I am going to find out what it would give.

RESEARCH ON THE ORIGIN

Meanwhile from the time I thought of the Principles of Equivalence to the time when I went to apply it to the Permanent Creation of the Universe I had started

something that I had called **The Territory of the Genial Republic**. The idea was to create my own territory and to propose of course to everybody that they create their own territory, in which I said people living on that territory will give their time developing their genius rather than their talents. Well these were very big words for a very simple idea that I was trying to get across. But I just worked on the intuition that just being a human being is to be a genius and that by insisting too much upon developing our talents we may lose this quality that perhaps we share with every living creature. While I think, generally, that everybody's perfect - I wonder whether people realise it themselves; I proposed at one point I just stated it this way: Everyone is perfect, including me - with a big interrogation point. How about the science of perfectology. For a while I did some research on perfectology because the whole idea of the Genial Republic was based upon a concept of research. Research, I proposed, is not the privilege of people who know - on the contrary it is the domain of people who do not know. Everytime we are turning our attention to something that we do not know - we are doing research. In other words what I was saying to everybody was you are your own territory - you don't have to appeal to higher authority to make up your mind about anything. I engaged after this on many, many, many research projects and one of them was applying the principles: well-made, badly-made, not-made to the Permanent Creation of the Universe. I called this Research on the Origin. I did this work in 1974 and again it turned out to be a progression of course and I think I discovered a certain relationship, a connection, between astronomical physics as I understood what I read in works of vulgarisation that I bought and the tradition as expressed in the Tao Te Ching. I see what is happening now as a desire to form a bridge between the tradition on one hand and science on the other and I think that art can make an important contribution to this, maybe in a certain way - I use work this way, I use art this way. And whether it gives rise to sense or to nonsense is not too important - I would apply the Principle of Equivalence to this anyway. After finishing work on the Speed of Art for instance I came to think that perhaps all I meant is that - Nonsense is the speed of Sense.

RESEARCH ON PRE-BIOLOGY

So Research on the Origin was one research project. Another one was rather important to me, as artistic proposition - I call all these things artistic propositions, was Research on Pre-Biology. Research on the Origin was a work done on cloth - it was ninety metres long - in other words the spectator was part of it, can walk along it - about three metres high. I had stopped Research on the Origin at a point or time of the appearance of mind or consciousness in the world. So I went back, but I went back even further to Pre-Biology, Pre-Life and I proposed a new concept which I called pre-biological genius which I defined this way.

Pre-biological genius is the total set of conditions that affect the passage from the atom to the cell and I proposed as a general principle that genius is having followers. I always like to take as an example the case of the fly or the oyster - but the fly is a pretty good one. The fly I understand existed in its present form one hundred and fifty million years ago. So I think of this fly that started it all as a genius of a fly - it had many followers for a hundred and fifty million years up to now. But it is possible that at that time there could have been a fly that - I put it to you this way - would have been able already built-in to resist DDT for

instance, it wasn't followed. I can make examples, many aspects of spiritual life will come to mind. In this research on pre-biology I saw the strategy of evolution, since I dealt with evolution, changing error, as the tactics of evolution changing solitude; because in all the projects I have been involved in which include social factors reflecting upon the world at large these principles of equivalence of permanent creation its a way to communicate with people; because all my life I have lived from, and I work for, my friends. As I see the ideal organisation of society for me - you will see that I worked on this in **The Principles of Poetic Economy** on which I have been working on for some fifteen years - would be to arrive at a happy solitude for every human being. As long as the world is the way it is our solitude is an unhappy solitude. So that's why I propose this as strategy and tactics. So I was in pre-biology - I come nearer and nearer to actual problems, actually all these principles, all this research, applies to every aspect, every moment of my life including what I am doing now. What I am doing now I propose its equivalent whether it's well-made, badly-made or not-made.

THE SPEED OF ART

I came to be interested in what I call **The Speed of Art** from pre-biology, evolution - O.K. I leave it open, it's research in progress, I can only go so far - nobody so far has helped me carry out this type of research. That's the fate of most artistic propositions - we must do it ourselves. So I came nearer to home and I started to think of something I called The Speed of Art. I proposed that we might look at art as a function of life plus fiction, with fiction tending towards zero. So that if art is a function I can get perhaps the first derivative of the function and the first derivative of a function, mathematically, is the speed. So I put it this way when I explained it to Marianne (Filliou) or Marcelle (Filliou) or to Bruce (Filliou) what did I mean by this? If there is no fiction then art is the same as life, many people have tried to look upon art this way and have made attempts to arrive at it except that we are always doing a performance. When I am doing now although it's life is a performance. So therefore we introduce all the time an element of fiction, and this fiction can be positive or negative. So I would call positive with a plus sign, as a for instance? Oh, as artists we introduce elements which maybe do not correspond to the objective and subjective conditions of the world in nature: the heart's desire. Whilst at times fiction is negative like in an hour and a half we are going to summarise the life of one person, or, perhaps a nation, or maybe in this tape (laughs) we are going to try and summarise what I did over the past many years.

And then I met a mathematician, a school-teacher, I asked him whether he was able to help me with this function and we started to work on it and he started to point out to me that in my function art is a function of time, and life is a function of time. That's right why not replace art by life, why not say that life is a function of reality plus fiction - with fiction tending towards zero. Because all we say about reality is fiction. Before Einstein wrote his physics we didn't see the universe the way that we do now, and even more so before Copernicus. I like to think of it this way - the homing pigeon never said that the earth was round, the Pope said that it was.

This brings me to a very big subject that I am interested in called **Built-in versus Built-upon**. But I'd like to finish the Speed of Art first.

Robert Filliou:
VERTICAL and HORIZONTAL RESEARCH
Calgary, 1977.
(photo: M. Bienvenue)

So this teacher and I tried to work out a curve to see if what we said about the world was influenced over time by what we thought about the world and vice versa. Before we finished this work I told him why not replace life by the universe, why not say that the universe is a function of emptiness plus fiction with fiction tending towards zero. At this point we stopped working together, we used to meet after school in a cafe for a few hours once a week.

Just this summer (1977) I presented the whole field of The Speed of Art to my friend, the mathematician - Edwige Regenwetter. Edwige teaches mathematics at a University in Paris. And so after I had showed Edwige what we had been working on, Edwige came to the conclusion that mathematically The Speed of Art was meaningless, The Speed of Art does not exist mathematically. Alright, I said, but still what is the Speed of Art? That is to say that as an artist the fact that the concept is meaningless is meaningful to me. She agreed that we could look upon it, this artistic proposition of the Speed of Art in three different ways. There is first the poetic formulation, like Marianne says that the poetic formulation of The Speed of Art is enough for her: Art is a function of Life plus Fiction, with Fiction tending towards zero. Edwige says that mathematically it's meaningless particularly she pointed out to me that when I get into the universe and emptiness (vacuum). I had arrived at a final function that said Emptiness plus 3 times fiction equals emptiness. So that maybe the Principles of Equivalence applies to Fiction too. Fiction well-made, fiction badly-made, fiction not-made. Whatever it is we realised, together, that it might always be an esoteric way. The poetic version, the esoteric one and the mathematical one. The intuitive conclusion I had arrived at was that consciousness was not the center of the universe and that because of that you may find in the tradition of Buddhism perhaps. You see this thing of Permanent Creation is actually something or maybe the only thing that I am trying to share with people. I have looked upon it in other ways - at times I have called it the secret of Permanent Creation. I propose that the relative secret of Permanent Creation, it's another way to look at it, is whatever you do, do something else, whatever you think, think something else - as a performance it can be very funny. And what I propose as the ABSOLUTE secret of Permanent Creation, as I called it in a performance at the Cafe au Go Go in New York in 1965, what I called the Filliou Ideal; the absolute secret I took from soto Zen tradition which says: not choosing, not wanting, wide awake, sitting quietly doing nothing. Another way I have presented Permanent Creation as a practice is what I have called 'work as play' and 'art as thought' because I consider myself as an entertainer of thoughts, and artworks as exchange of foodstuffs.

BUILT-IN v. BUILT-UPON

There is another research project I just mentioned I think I'd like to share - it's what I called: **Built-in versus Built-upon**, I go back to this slightly idiotic concept of the Genial Republic. What I meant to say is that everything that works is built-in, that if you look at animals and insects and plantlife around you you see that all the major inventions we have made they have made already: the bat invented radar, there is a species of fish that lives near the bottom of the sea that has a 'Coney Island' at the back of his mouth and when he opens that same mouth the little fish swim in. Everything that works perfectly in us is built-in also, I wish I had as good a brain as a stomach. So we also built-upon, we can't fly - we have airplanes, we invent submarines - we need this and we need this, we know all the problems. Lots of anguish it causes - I propose

it's because it's built-upon rather than being built-in and particularly what is not sufficiently built-in is the ability to live with oneself and with others. Now, or yesterday, I would propose as a **working definition of human genius** the ability to live with oneself and others in harmony and peace. As this built-in quality exists in very few of us, and in all of us only a brief time - whole sciences have been built to deal with this, these very sciences of the mind put in doubt our very motives to come out of this bad trend. As we can't live in peace and harmony we built-upon, we create the police, we create the state, we create all the institutions that are necessary - The Territory of the Genial Republic is dedicated to this type of research also. In Flayosc in the south of France where I live, Marianne has created what she calls **Cucumberland**, it's really the mimetic territory of the Genial Republic. She knows that you mustn't talk about it - you must do it. Let people name it the way they want. In the Cucumberland of ours we try to combine many of the elements we have been speaking of - and in particular we try to combine manual work, artistic work, intellectual work, moving about doing things as part of the Eternal Network. Marianne has goats and makes goat cheese, Cucumberland is part of the Eternal Network.

THE PRINCIPLES OF POETIC ECONOMY


As I have mentioned **The Principles of Poetic Economy** is probably my longest research project - I have been working on it for some fifteen years. I dedicated **The Principles of Poetic Economy** to Fourier.

Fourier was the nineteenth century thinker and Utopist who before Marx wrote and before Freud was born, succeeded in reconciling both. That is to say a hundred years before his time achieving already what many people realise as the main objective behind a really true new society that would combine justice and freedom. Fourier in particular is a precursor of many of the Liberation movements that we see now, he is the one who said that: 'when man runs out of imagination, it's time to turn the world over to women and children.' He thought that he had discovered the secret of harmony.

(reads) 'For the Permanent Creation of Permanent Freedom.' That's right, when I spoke of Permanent Creation I spoke of the Permanent Creation of Permanent Freedom. The Territory of the Genial Republic actually is more or less dedicated to the liberation of children, the child in us. Because while I consider the movement for the liberation of women perhaps the most important thing that is going on now, the bringing of more ying into the yang for the next cycle in the universe - I must say, I must accept the fact that I have been part of the problem myself for all the women I have known. The way I present myself is former fallowcraic trash. These Principles of Poetic Economy I illustrate with another project of mine: 'Dessins sans Voir, Dessesins sans Savoir' - drawings without seeing, designs without knowing. I don't know really how to bring about all these social projects that I may have. In the old days the proposals that nations should exchange war memorials to secure peace in Europe was one of them. I don't know how to achieve them but somehow by illustrating them with drawings made with my eyes closed - the very spontaneity of the drawings is a way in which complexity of the project - the design may be solved.

Meanwhile I am thinking about workers without whom there is no poetry and I am looking for and I am doing research to find out what aspect poetry, which is futile, could be useful to them. Another way to put it is how to reconcile the gnosis which is so happy, so light and economics which is so dismal. How to go from Work as Toil to Work as Play. Of course everything is poetry, toil as much as play but where is joy in all this?





Every life - I go on to say - is its own reward. So if we want that work should be its own reward wouldn't it have to be the finishing line rather than the starting point? It might a question of doing 'nothing', not being inactive. Because life acts in such a way that its work is itself, so done, so made. (difficult to translate from French). And I realised that this was the first chapter of The Principles of Poetic Economy. I wrote: To the butterfly that is flying in my studio I dedicate this first chapter, I baptise both the butterfly and this chapter Pierre. It is 11.51, I failed to note which day it was. The second chapter is called Jacob in honour of the lizard that lives in my house.

I am thinking about people who work - the working people and the mood came upon me that this work I was doing was nothing. Life is so complicated, the work is so hard, economics is so dismal and poetry so futile and I felt my will abandoning me. Then I found something in a book by Meister Eckhart - I'll translate from the French: 'I can do anything with my will, I can carry all the weight of humanity, I can feed the poor, I can do the work of the world and everything I please. If I lack the power, but not the will to do it, then in front of God I have done it and nobody can deny it or dispute it one moment.' After reading this I just went on with my work. However I must accept and I propose that poetry is not the bird but the grain of salt (fable of stopping bird flying by putting salt on its tail), and I was wondering will tomorrow all of us be birds.

TRUE RATE OF EXCHANGE

So I went towards the definition of what I called 'the true rate of exchange' and I proposed that we all have the same differences - what we have in common is our differences. From now on I propose to call T.E.R. (True Exchange Rate) the exchange that goes on that is based upon our differences. And that to arrive at an optimum situation in society we should have a situation where the difference in one over the difference of the other one equals zero. In other words what we need is that work should be the brain harmonizer. You know Ronald Laing in Scotland, one of the founders of anti-psychiatry has been working on the theory of the double-brain, the double-cortex and apparently there are two knots on our cortex and one corresponds to very primitive ways of life and aggressivity. Upon this system we can see Darwin's theory of evolution: the survival of the fittest. On the other cortex all the other elements of, let's call it civilization, are included. How to harmonize the two brains is the work of every one of us at every moment of our life and that's why of course we need so many drugs and our whole society lives on drugs. However the only drug that is acceptable in our capitalistic society and perhaps in the socialist society as it exists now is alcohol (That's another problem). And so I'm working towards this problem that it all began with the division of labour and that if you come to look at it in a certain way the value of anything is smaller or greater according to whether it increases the division of labour or not. That's the way it works in our society. In the Principles of Poetic Economy I am investigating ... I mean Marx tackled this in his first work: the theory of value, could we develop the theory of value? Of course, Marx is considered as a social scientist, he's considered as a scientist - he used to like Fourier so much, he praised him highly but of course he thought Fourier was an utopist, not to say a crank at times (and of course Fourier is very funny and cranky at times) so Marx proposed his own type that he called scientific socialism. At times I say I wish that Marx had been a poet rather than a philosopher, sociologist and economist because if he had been a poet nobody would have made a religion out of it and perhaps we could've got from what he said enough elements for a true transformation of society. I really think we have to go back to the utopist because now everything has become utopia. Whether we can finish this tape without having an argument is a utopia.

The fact that the world may not be blown up in the next five minutes is utopia. Things that seem so, so easy to achieve - Socialism and Democracy, for instance seem to be utopia; the liberation of this and the liberation of that, however the liberation of women and children that is going on in our time point in this direction.

I must stop now, travelling light is what I wish all of us.

THE FROZEN EXHIBITION

THE FROZEN EXHIBITION OCT.62-OCT.7

The Mists, Fair owed some of its merits to the competent carpenter hired to help us. To his enthusiasm also. Said Albert gruffly to a distinguished lady attending.

GENERAL IDEA AND THE METAPHIVE - One beyond the metaphor

CONSTRUCTING FUTURES - Dec. 10th to January 3rd
Carmen LaManna Gallery, Toronto

General Idea's work is accumulative. Its endo-skeletal construction forms an open mesh web that is neither difficult to enter or hazardous to exit. This web has both symbolic and real intentions; their borderline cases become both advantageous and disadvantageous luggage to carry across mimetic borders. At times their passports seem to be falling apart with overuse, but in this, their tenth year, these media nomads are at last developing hard protective skins to cover the contact points of their feat(s).

If I have learnt anything about General Idea in the last five years it is that their initial frames of reference were so intuitively correctly selected as a panoply to deal with North American life that their tireless encapsulations of social research will long outlive the more redundant contexts of contextualisms, performance or technological graffiti of the N. American art world. What they seem to be doing best is phenomenising which inevitably is of more use than inventing illusionary language or gestures that often turn out to be mental occupations of unemployable semiotics.

General Idea is not afraid of (or allergic to or morally disturbed by) articulate bureaucrats, the mass media, curatorial sleepers, rich dilettante Italians, salivating socialists, grass roots humus - they 'love' them all. They are trained in the art of shuttle diplomacy and yet can read signs which say: The Art Stops Here. They keep their eyes in the library and their feet in the streets, playing the beret at both ends. These gestures are for survival but beyond the metaphorical games there is also a behavioural studying which in their output contains a distilled and unique sociology.

"Lost in the dense growth of the metaphorest, step into the clear vistas of the metaphive." (Steve McCaffery)

The gallery contains sets of lay-up cards, each numbered according to its reference. Each card has a title, a photo and a legend. There are five reference categories. 1. is THE SEARCH FOR THE SPIRIT OF MISS GENERAL IDEA 2. THE 1984 MISS GENERAL IDEA PAGEANT 3. MISS GENERAL IDEA 1984. 4. THE 1984 MISS GENERAL IDEA PAVILLION and 5. FRAME OF REFERENCE.

This show has cards from categories one, two and four - forty-nine in all. Further back in the gallery is a tableau flanked by two 24' x 8' blow-ups of the Pavillion site reduced to a smouldering rubble. The tableau consist of a pair of marbled dumbbells situated in front of two re-upholstered seats. The tableau is directly in front of a metal screen constructed in a soft S shape, the screen opened with 3/4" holes drilled 1 1/2" apart through which you can see an 8' x 8' blow-up of General Idea as the survivors of the disaster. The blow-up is in a coarse screen so that you look at a screened image through the screen. The screen itself is not a screen, opened fluorescent strips at the back of the 'S' push light through the grid - it is called The Iron Curtain. Beyond the Curtain, just about audible is a tape of someone urinating - is it to give the room an ambience of panic, or relief, or is it standing in for the control mechanism of white noise?

What seems at first glance to be a parallel gesture of intended mistaken idea General Identity looks photographically Behaviouralist - referring to a very limited garb popularised by the English group Reindeer Werk, limited because it isolates a post-war survivor that is either shell-shocked, schizophrenic or both. Their publication FILE with its too puked to punk issue epitomised the Angle bover boy - 'IRA hybrid' otherwise known as Punk. In keeping with their popularized reflections it is more likely that their scenario was drawn from the disaster movies, emptying the shell of terrorism making violence more habitable - a hurricane, a tidal wave or the flagration of an architectural dream is hardly a 'political' act. The timing of the overlap between celluloid and performance art however is. Or to put it another way where the natural disaster culturally created and the cultural disaster naturally created collide.

Anyone who has watched General Idea's work change within the last ten years would hardly call it political except in its narrative sense similar to the astrologies of McLuhan who to a degree they have eclipsed in detail if not matched in audience. Not forgetting for a moment that A.A. Bronson, Jorge Zontal and Felix Partz as General Idea are and have been a 'collectif' for almost a decade paralleling as they do Trudeau's 'reign' which is perhaps one of the lesser numerological signifiers that they might wish me to make - it is difficult to think of any other political or creative unit that has survived working that close, agreeing that much. The purpose of this lead-in is not trivia as there on the wall in the gallery were their own comparatives. Portraits of themselves working together, walking together - portraits of other non-radicals doing the same. Three draughtsmen, three site workers - all Canadian-American images all hauntingly looking very Chinese, made even more ambiguous by the texts.



photo: General Idea
(courtesy Carmen LaManna Gallery)



photo: Rodney Werden
(courtesy Carmen LaManna Gallery)

2-055 "The trio is enacting a group demonstration of consensus. It's often difficult to avoid the pitfalls of leading and following. It's slowly becoming second nature to demand a unique group vision with only a tenuous relation to individual aesthetics. What a cultured point of view! Once these private goals are reached it's pleasant to make public appearances, walking together."

or 1-076 Right-Hand Man "The three of them are all each other's right-hand man - but they aren't taking any chances. If one was lost on the job it would throw them off balance. They know that three's a crowd and a basic social unit and they'd hate to be reduced to a couple."

Is it a real social definition, or part-parody of non-reactionists that can't keep themselves together as in Art & Language? If it is a social definition is it attempting to expand the definition of 'collectif' by saying that there are multiplied apolitical situations where people do work together without alienating each other, or can the social compatibility work so well as an image and it's just left at that? Is it furthermore saying that for all the lack of evidence of basic social units being able to work together for long periods of time that it might just as well be reduced to the convenience of an image?

1-078 Three Heads are Better "...it is a good idea for the team to have a goal or to draw up a blueprint to keep them on the right track. Once the 'compromise' has been reached, others will become easier."

General Idea's attitude towards File is often stated, a rough paraphrasing might be that they empty the medium of content so allowing anyone with a contemporary aesthetic to fill it in for themselves. G.I.'s self-removal from their own work I see as a more self-involving aspect of the same mechanism. The nearest comparative is in the videotape of Dan Graham's called 'Performer/Audience Sequence' where he detailedly describes his own minute actions until the audience is focused on him; and then he quickly changes his description to observation of the audience's behaviour until they become self-conscious or begin 'acting' when he again reverses the focus on himself until the audience has forgotten, when the process begins again. Graham is constantly quicker than the audience, it's low-key and the verbalisation is even and relaxed. General Idea often seem to employ a similar mechanism. Whether complete you see this as a non-committal strategy or one of extremely subtle didactic inference is dependent in the end on your own present state of generosity. If you do admit this mechanism working within their art you are admitting that they achieve the best of both worlds which is not only the artists' dream.

The flip-flop chip does not always work as expected, until recently the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion was becoming a little too stable for comfort. Having sculpturally constructed the Hoarding, drawn real blueprints and rehearsed a number of pageants, people (as they will) were beginning to ask where will it be built, how much of it, and when? Nothing is worse than projecting an image and then having the arduous task

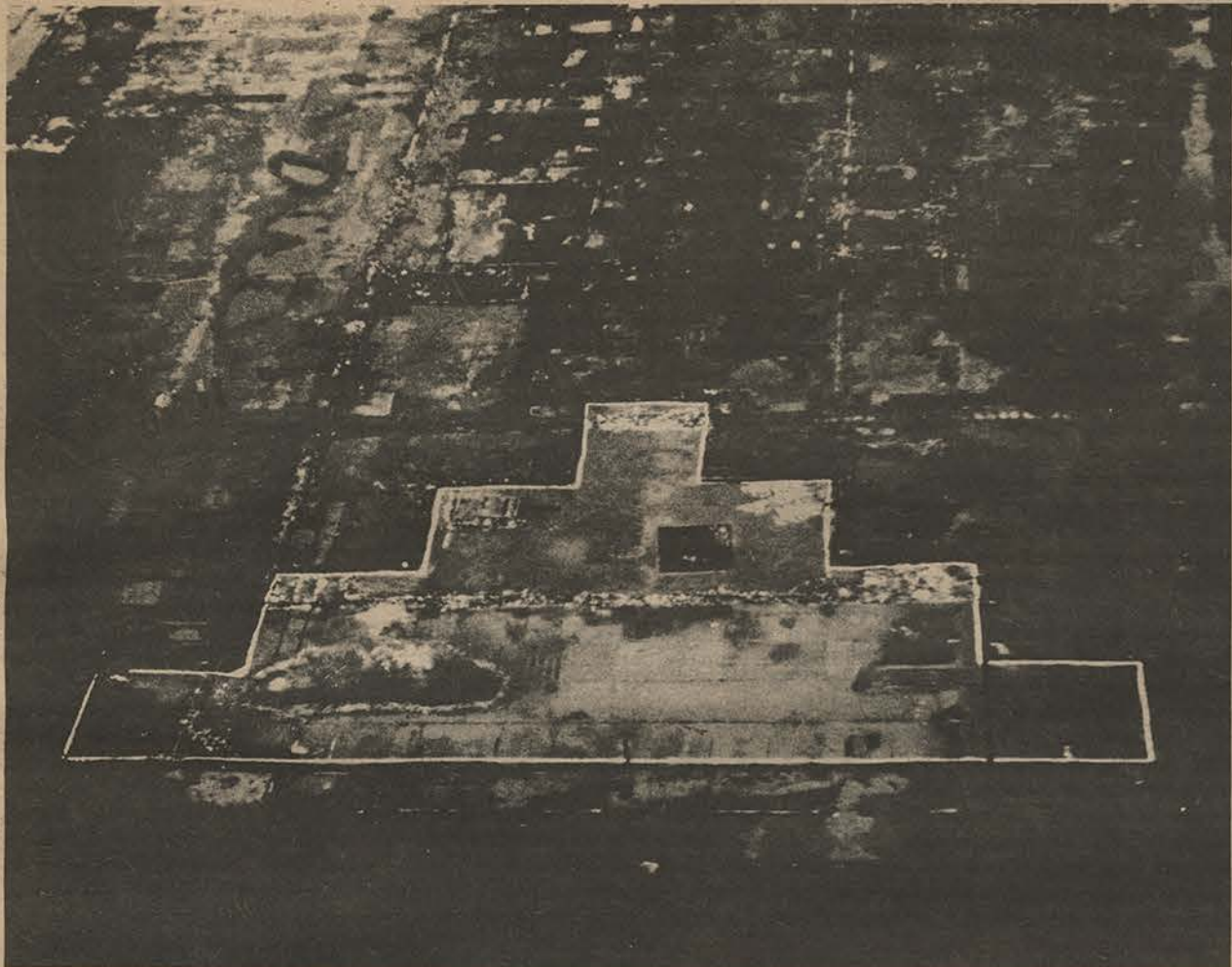


photo: General Idea
(courtesy St. Lawrence College, Kingston)

of merely filling it in. As the December exhibit shows, not only were steps taken to deal with the where but as artluck had it the Winnipeg rehearsal of the audience making a panicked exit also simultaneously led to the possibility of staging a fire of the Pavillion so that if need be the Pavillion had been built and we have footage of the rubble to prove it!

1-096 Oblique Intentions "... one version of the disaster was that the Pavillion slipped like a deck of collapsed aesthetics."

1-099 A few charred cliches "We salvaged enough remnants from the Pavillion to fill all the museums and galleries that really matter several times over. Whatever gaps remained were quickly filled with memories and blueprints. Looting was negligible, and souvenir hunters had to content themselves with a few charred cliches, hardly worth the price of admission."

Those flanking blow-ups are aerial shots of the real-size outline of the audience section of the Pavillion complete with smoke, realised whilst G.I. were completing a residency at St. Lawrence College, Kingston, Ont. And so the ambiguity of archaeology rides in on an attending firetruck to save the day.

4-024 Stock-Fire Footage "For months we raided demolition sites for rubble to re-create the fire-gutted remains. Conferred with fire-chiefs, environmentalists and weathermen but just in case something should go wrong at the last minute we carried stock fire footage with us to each of the de-centralised sites."

Back in the gallery those blow-ups are similar but different, one has smoke, one is smokeless. Has the gallery been considered to conform to the Toronto city by-laws? A section for smoking, a section for non-smoking? That, coincidental or not, is example of the contemporaneous accessibility.

As soon as this accessibility is exemplified it can become easy to fault the work for over-literality, fortunately G.I. do not make these connections as part of the work - the spectator or reader either makes these connectors or they go unnoticed.

Much of G.I.'s consumer gestures, playing the part of a mass cultural etymology, reflect a suburbia lash-back against the apathy and agony of the sixties. 'Loving' and 'living' the totalitarian philosophies and products is ultimately a far more heroic tack to take than the paranoia of a William Burroughs. This projection of 'loving' and 'living' of a cultural, social and

political disease is more than a creative fascination or fetish, their art is a change-it-yourself medication - it is a dough mix of conflicting tactics that in a culinary sense work because the final foodstuff that is under preparation is never revealed. It is not tautologous but the **mature politics of a minority group**. The non-revelation of course infuriates the art world or at least that fringe segment that make a living out of concise interpretation. Their upfront cleaner-than-thou drag furthermore brings out the con-artist accusations in all of us, further fanned by a school of General Idea that uses key-phrasing and a pictographic semblance without a comprehension. At many artist Tupperware parties you can witness this phenomena as 'legs without ideas'. (Ideas with legs refers to the Venetian Blind gowns which reveal nothing of the wearer except arms and legs.)

General Idea utilise their work as a capable counter-remark.

2-057 Pumping Irony "Body building plays the part of creation in this archaeological find: Was he working out or passing out? Was this the victim of destruction or a designer taking time off work at the draughting board to work it out in the gym? Did he collapse under the weight of audience expectations? Or under the weight of image-bondage?"

To suggest to the extreme that General Ideas are habitable I suggest the following. Whilst it might not be the most interesting interpretation no-one will attempt to argue that it is not easily accessible:

1. **The Search For The Spirit of Miss General Idea:**

A codification for the Search of a N. American identity. Here it is as much a Levesque aspiration as it is a Trudeau exasperation - Federalism just means you employ a costlier search party.

Further south it is the search for a Spirit lost. The quest for a toothless imperialist democracy with a Lone Ranger, masked, as head of state.

2. **The 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion:**

a) Solar energy re-charging a transistorised office building which can be carried on the shoulder complete with AM/FM, cassette playback and a small TV.

b) The Pavillion existed not only in Sullivan and Chicago but in every fast growth Canadian city whose silvered glass windows only reflect a Spirit of economic identity.

3. **The 1984 Miss General Idea Pageant:**

The pageant is the staging of the image of the Spirit. It is the Calgary Stampede, Klondike Days, The Grey Cup - none of them are anymore cultural institutions but more like archaeological sites frequented by millions of weekend-archaeologists all trying to find one of the original pieces.

To ask the question is General Idea socially responsible or are they merely decadancing will get us nowhere. To admit that both possibilities exist in a group of Canadian artists is itself more notable. To admit further that General Idea remain as this show aptly demonstrates dexterously relevant in both areas is to admit a real excitement. At least in the eighties there will be some Canadian art of this era worth researching!

CLIVE ROBERTSON

ART METROPOLE

Art Metropole's facilities and services include a research library of artists' publications, recordings and videotapes; the distribution of artists' publications, recordings and videotapes; and the publication of FILE Magazine and occasional books by artists. For further information write Art Metropole, 241 Yonge Street, Toronto, Canada.

ART METROPOLE PERIODICALS BY ARTISTS

The 'books-by-artists' phenomenon of the last ten years grows out of artists' involvement with publishing over the last century. The Russian constructivists, the Dadaists, and the Futurists were all intimately involved with self-publishing, especially in periodical format. Artists' periodicals continue to flourish and continue to act, for many artists, as an opportunity to try out ideas that are later extended into book format.

Listed below is a small sampling of a few periodicals by artists currently available from Art Metropole. A more detailed list is available from our catalogue, and a more extensive selection is available for viewing on the premises only from our archive.

CONTROL

Edited by Stephen Willats, this British artist-produced magazine pioneered early structural and sociological art thought.
No. 4: The artist in relation to society. Includes Victor Burgin, Steve Willats, John Sharkey, others. Silk-screened cover. \$3.50
No. 5: Laurie Burt, Don Mason, John Sharkey, others. Silk-screened cover. \$3.50
No. 6: Kopinski, Willats, George Mallen, more. Silk-screened cover. \$3.50
No. 7: Peter Smith, Willats, John Staezaker. \$3.50
No. 8: August 1974. Willats, Staezaker, Gerald Laing, Joe Wilson, more. \$3.50
No. 9: December, 1975. Herve Fischer, Alan Sondheim, Willats, Dan Graham, more. \$3.50

EGOZINE

Edited by J.R. Lambert, California.
Vol. 1, No. 1: This first issue features self-imagery focussing on the art/rock'n'roll hoaxes perpetuated by the Petites Bon-Bons, of which the editor was a member. \$7.50
Vol. 2, No. 2: This is the second issue, subtitled Casa Egozine, presenting the artist's collage-or-perish answer to House Beautiful. \$7.50

IMPULSE

Although many issues of Impulse feature contributions by artists, Vol. 6, No. 1 is a book-work by Les Levine, entitled 'Five Ohhh, disposable sculptures'. \$5.00

KONTEXTS

Edited by Michael Gibbs, Amsterdam. A magazine of art and language.
No. 8: Spring, 1976. Tabloid format, featuring Henri Chopin, Wm Burroughs, Brion Gysin, and others. Edition of 500. \$2.00
No. 9/10: Special 'Langwe Jart' issue features Dick Higgins, Tony Rickaby, bp nichol, Bill Bissett, Michael Gibbs, more. \$5.00

SALON

Edited by Gerhard Theewen, Koln, Germany. A magazine of artists' contributions.
No. 1: April, 1977. Adamski, Blume, Dahn, more. \$5.00
No. 2: August, 1977. Didier Bay, Robert Cumming, Cioni Carpi, Alex Silber, more. \$5.00

SCHMUCK

Published by the Beau Geste Press, England. Contributions from artists, often focussing on the correspondence art network, with many inserts and additions by hand.
Aktual Czechoslovakia Schmuck (#4): edited by Milan Knizak, who was later seized by the Czech police for 'discrediting the image of Czechoslovakia abroad'. All work by members of the Aktual group. \$3.50
General Schmuck [#5]: Includes COUM, Ken Friedman, Tony Rickaby, Bill Vazan, Dick Higgins and more. The pamphlet 'The First Lecture by the Intermediary' by Victor Musgrave is inserted. Edition of 550. \$10.00
French Schmuck [#6]: edited by Jean-Clarence Lambert and David Mayor. Includes Filliou, Le Gac, Broodthaers, Gerz and more. The pamphlet 'Me Ben I Sign' by Ben Vautier is inserted. Edition of 550. \$6.50
Teutonic Schmuck [#7]: Dietrick Albrecht, Gabor Altorjay, Jorg Daumeter, more. The pamphlet 'Art Impressions, USA & Canada' by Klaus Groh is inserted. Edition of 400. \$4.50
Japanese Schmuck [#8]: edited by Ashizawa and Kosugi. Thirty artists. The many inserts include a pamphlet by Hideki Yoshida. The final issue of Schmuck. Edition of 500. \$8.50

WATCH FOR:

The upcoming issues of Kunststoff, Fanzini, and File: the new Fanzini features an 'architectural' motif, while FILE celebrates its tenth anniversary in a special GENERAL IDEA issue.

LE-LA société de prevoyance mutuelle

Canadian **S**Pacific

P	H	A	R	M	A	C	I	E	S		D	E	S
M	A	R	C	H	E	P	I	E	D	S		S	A

PROSPECTUS

Canadian (S)Pacifc is an organization for the production, distribution and marketing of products which qualify formally as art objects. Works are first produced as maquettes for unlimited editions. Maquettes are not for sale. When a piece is mass-produced in a limited number (for reasons of economy), a second edition will be begun immediately when the first edition is sold out. While it is anticipated that demand will be heavy, taxing our production facilities to the limit, every effort will be made to maintain the highest standards of quality control in order to ensure that your particular piece is identical to everyone else's.

Prices for Canadian (S)Pacifc products are computed on the following basis:

(Since ideas are ten a penny) - Conception 0.10¢
Hours/Labour (Carpentry, artwork, photography, metalwork etc.) at current rates.
Subcontracted work at cost plus 10%.

Terms: Work will be begun on receipt of authorized purchase order.

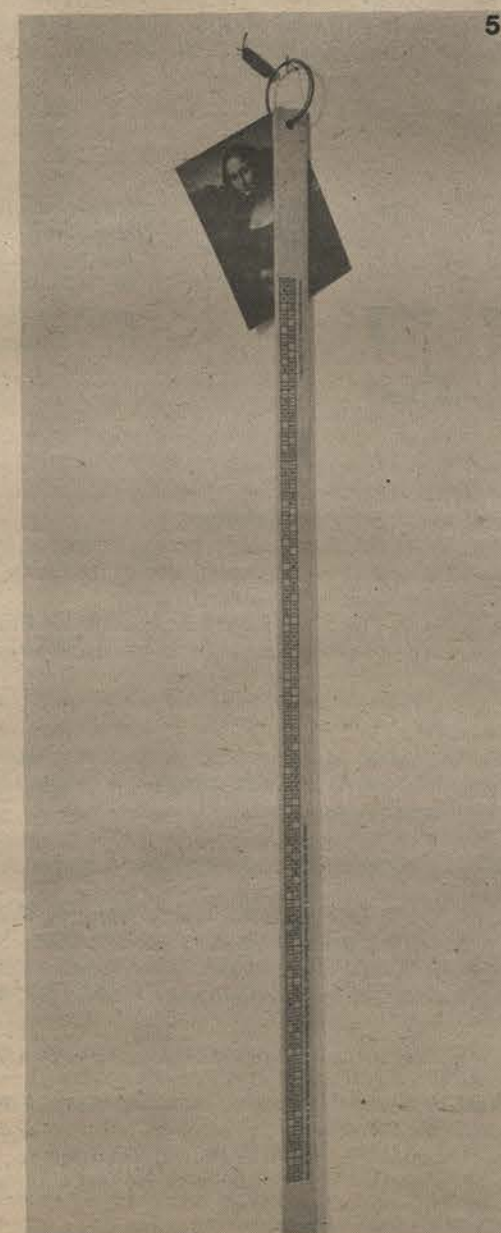
All prices F.O.B. Calgary.
Payment - cash on delivery.
Institutions - net 30 days.

A mail order catalogue is being prepared. If you would like (S)Pacifc information on a particular product or would like to be placed on our mailing list please write to:

Isy Brandon
V.P. Marketing
Canadian (S)Pacifc
321, 9A Street NW
Calgary, Alberta
T2N 1T7

Many of these products, which when placed in the passive environment of the traditional art exhibition meet all formal requirements to be considered as 'works of art', can in their activated state become teaching aids for the Le-La Society.

LE-LA (Societe de Prevoyance Mutuelle) was founded on the conviction that any desire for social change is in reality a projection of a subconscious desire for change in oneself. The aim of the society is to increase individual understanding by intense application of creative energies; to develop self-knowledge and to gain full recognition and acceptance of the real world by illuminating (among other things) certain manifestations of imagination. Whilst being based on my own verified investigations over a period of some twenty years, the society owes much of its methodology and social practice to the work of G.I. Gurdjieff.



LE-LA is actually my first preoccupation in life. Its roots go back some twenty years or so and precede my interest in the visual arts by a number of years. On completing the mandatory induction year at art college in 1962 I resolved never to make art objects for two reasons:

1) Because this kind of closed system thinking seemed nothing more than an indulgence and was, I thought, completely obsolete to the times, having very little to do with what was, for me, the appropriate function of art in society.

2) It seemed absolutely unnecessary to offer yet more support to that specific conclusion of Darwinism (proof offered by self-named artists every time they put brush to canvas), that men were but one generation removed from apes: That is, in this instance, removed solely by virtue of their insufferable conceit, a conceit which they most characteristically expressed by insisting that art owed them a living.

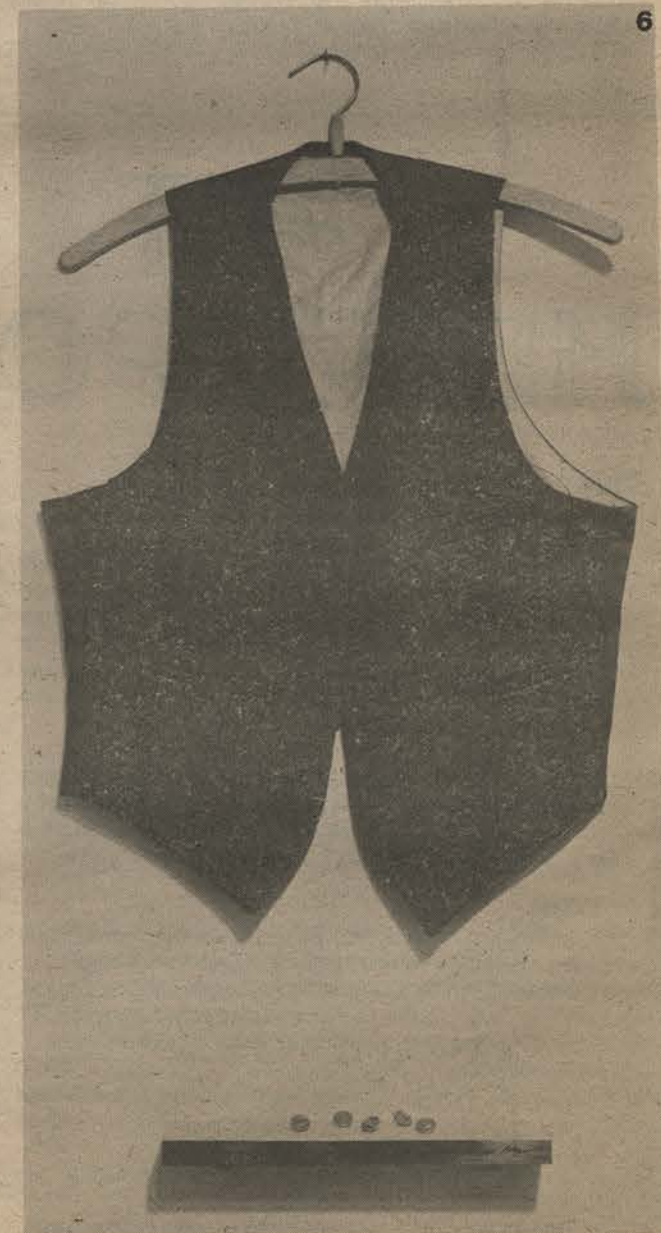
Now, 15 years later, these objects, particularly the remade ready-mades, which were originally made as imitation art objects, become bona fide art objects simply by being placed in a specific exhibition environment. They were made as an amusing diversion for myself, and are exhibited as a particular strategy to promote the ideas of LE-LA. Although Canadian (S) Pacific was formed in 1971 most of these objects were not conceived until after the formation of LE-LA in 1975, and none were completed before this date. They were made and are now being exhibited because the future activity of LE-LA will be influenced by being preceded by this body of work. The work is important to me for this reason. Far more important than questions about plagiarism, trespass, private property, standing on another's reputation etc. that the concept 'remade ready-made' raises, although this too is intentional.

Within currently accepted definitions of 'art', I think Duchamp's advice that we stop making 'art' is of greater significance than all of his works combined. I am also conscious of the fact that it is necessary to make 'art' before one can stop making it. This double gesture is very important to me because, however much I might like to protest, I always did want to make 'art' even though I have claimed otherwise and no doubt will continue to do so. I just don't think that artists are as important to the world as they think they are at the present time, and perhaps LE-LA is a rather futile attempt to face this situation, in the hope that we might create something lasting and valuable within ourselves instead of the purely decorative and imitative output of most visual artists; unconscious products of an art education system based on nothing more substantial than talent. LE-LA despises talent, believing it to be a freak occurrence on a level with six-toed people and certainly no more worthy of attention. The creative work of LE-LA is invisible and intangible, coming from a source not measurable in terms of finite geometry, and is indirectly made manifest through appropriate action.

I am very interested in Duchamp's idea of infra-thin, which is for me a delicate suspension between two existing 'definitions' or 'mental fixes'. I would like these objects to find that particular space not equidistant between the profound and the absurd, but that space where they are both equally profound and absurd at the same time. Many are esoteric in the true sense of the word and I make no apology for demanding a degree of effort (at the very least a knowledge of French) in order to get into most of them.

I would have liked Duchamp to have seen them.

I think he would have had a good laugh.



STEVE McCaffery



photo: The Western Front

MEDICAL OPINION ONCE HELD an Intraview with Steve McCaffery

To begin with, why did I choose this particular form of interview?

I mean, I take it, why the intraview rather than the interview?

Yes.

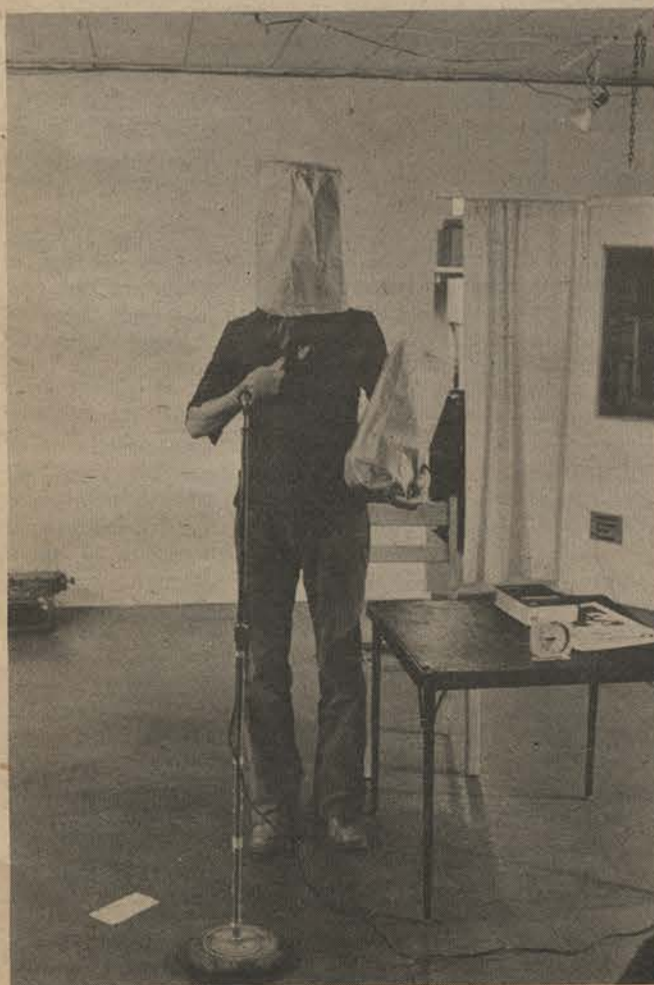
Well, apart from the fact that Clive Robertson, my potential interrogator, is terribly busy with a show right now, I chose the intraview as a way of including a structure of unwanted viewpoint within a monologue. The technique goes back to, at least, the Earl of Shaftsbury who talks a lot in *The Characteristics* about the technique of stereophonizing the mind to develop of rhetorical technique that uses the psychic strategy of schizophrenia. The idea being, of course, that the mind, in necessarily bifurcating this way, actually zones itself within a content it otherwise would not, and to a degree such that cognition tends to invent rather than reveal itself.

Would I say that this is also Plato's technique in the Dialogues?

In a sense yes, but only in a sense. Plato opted for a type of dishonesty (a principle of fiction if you want to be kind). Rather than locating his own cognition dialogically (i.e. in an interplay with itself through the invention and intervention of ideological confrontations) he opted for the disembodied, omnipotent cognition that organizes and orchestrates a set of seeming dialogues. But the dialogic structure is not internalized; it reflects Plato as the distanced, rhetorical orchestrator. The technique of the intraview, when used most effectively, performs an actual incision into the mind.

So I see the drift of this structure as a kind of psychic masochism then: I mean the term I used was "incision in the mind".

Well I said it, not me. I suppose I could see it as a masochistic structure if what I wanted was a clearly unfolding line of argument. But neither line nor argument is what I want. I prefer to think of it more as a postcognitive strategy, a tactical way of inventing and inserting the unnecessary with which, and in which, the mind can play. Linguistically the intraview transforms any "I" into a "we" without that we assuming the form of a collective identity.



I wanted me to ask myself about the concept of PERMANENT PERFORMANCE and I wanted the intraview to develop somewhat along the lines of a documentation of my own progression from oral readings through soundings to what I now refer to a permanent performance. Permanent Performance grew out of a sense of seeing my work fitting into a larger matrix of performance: a matrix that includes global, cosmic and galactic performance.

I see that matrix as incorporating a reflex with infinite reverberation . . .

What I'm referring to here, I suppose, is what I call the imposed, transitional absence of the art?

In a sense yes. In that I feel performance as comprising a reflex that instigates a reverberation to infinity which, at some point in the reflexivity, becomes temporarily blocked. Take an example of galactic performance: a nova explodes and we are the audience. Now there is a delay manifestation of millions of light years before the performance reaches the audience. This is the marvellous paradox of astronomy as a written text - that all present experiences are always written in the past tense. Now this delay manifestation, this temporal gap within performance finds its precise analogy within the microstructures of writing and performance art. A concept explodes in my head; there is then a delay manifestation in the time it takes to actually work out a notation for the concept (possibly days or months); then there's the further delay in actual enactment (weeks in negotiating for a performance space, months in getting funds to finance the enactment). It's the same phenomenon in publishing: months in finding a publisher, months in typesetting and printing, years on a bookseller's shelf, etc. All of which convinced me of the necessary autism, gap structure and inevitable non-communicability of the concept event.

Which led me into treating my writing and performance as inventions within a Principle of Absence (spatial) and Ignorance (mental).

What I suppose I was going to say is this: that my work is very largely concerned with what I don't know than with what I do know?

No, I was going to talk about trace structure and performance as a trace.

But why not talk a little at this point about video. After all, wasn't my purpose in coming to Arton's to work on amalgamating several of my linguistic concerns with video concerns, i.e. with concerns of the interrelation of word, frame and image?

Before that I have to preface my remarks by stating my preference for an art of ignorance; an art, that is, which locates within its own mistakes and examines the drift of the error, which is exemplaristic of the measure of the error. I say this because I feel it's terribly important to invest within one's own errors and to explore and test the parameters of one's own ignorance. This is what's so exciting about video for me, because, as I know, I came to Arton's with a lot of theoretical preconceptions about video but with hardly any practical experience with it, which meant, of course, that an immediate dialectical relationship was set up.

I know what I'm going to say next. I'm going to mention the conceptual drift in my own work from its basis in processuality to its new base in continuity through transform, and from a domination of structures by the principle of the metonym to a government by the principle of macrostructural rhyme.

Well I wasn't actually, but I could. I mean the connexion between metonymy and video is very clear (the whole notion that is, of the part standing for the whole and predicated upon the deeper principle of representationality itself i.e. of any thing standing for something else is fundamental to screen and lens structure and competence and to the ontology of video in the photographic image passed through time). Deciding to invest in that principle (metonymy) within a video project after I've conceptually rejected it as negative and contradictory is extremely interesting to me. Now the rhyme principle in my work is quite simply the principle of a vector issuing from a viewpoint (thereby eradicating the fixity of point in any viewing, so what's presented is viewdrift or viewtrace rather than point). Rhyme as I use it is a device for temporarily connecting otherwise disparate events without those events losing any of their autonomy.

Which led me, didn't it, to that sense of the universe as being a part of language and not vice versa?

Yes, it led me to a belief in the universe as a trace structure based upon the same interrelation of space and arbitrariness as language itself. At the same time it led me to a treatment of language as non-expressive and in my own work to a more exemplaristic exposure of language's own differential and oppositional nature; its gap and space structures and its trace patterns.

I've often referred to my writing as a drift between the two coordinates of word-order and world-order believing as I currently do that every verbal act is a political gesture and further, that political and social orderings are to a large extent determined by and/or reflections of certain linguistic orderings: grammar and bureaucracy, for instance, and all language structures founded upon the paradigms of hierarchization and subordination of elements.

How does this connect with my Marxist proclivities?

I was first attracted to Marx when I learnt that his first dream was to be a poet. Poetically speaking he



was a total failure but as a social analyst he's still probably the best we have. I'm attracted to Marxism, not from any ideological conviction, but from the possibility of using Marxism as a rhetorical device, as a lexical framework in which to operate. I see vocabulary as working in the same way as camera lens, as a device of focus and adjustment, and I believe that locating inside a particular rhetoric opens up significant areas of new perceptuality. It's not a question of truth and approximations to an answer, but of difference, difference in view, difference in location etc. Difference is, as Robert Filliou might put it, the domain of the genial republic, a region detached from truth and normative value and opened up to the play between differences. At heart I guess I'm simply a bricoleur and just happen to find Marxism of use at present as a structural rather than contentual aid.

Marx's notion of commodity fetishism, which is to say the occultation of the human relations embedded in the labour process has been central to my own considerations of reference in language - of, in fact, a referentially based language, in general - and to certain "fetishistic" notions within the relationship of audience and performer. Reference in language is a strategy of promise and postponement; it's the thing that language never is, never can be, but to which language is always moving. This linguistic promise that the signified gives of something beyond language I've come to feel as being central to capitalism (the fetish of the commodity) and derived from an earlier theologicolinguistic confidence trick of "the other life". It's this sense of absence as a postponed presence which seems to be the core of narrative (the paradigm art form of the capitalist system) and basic to the word as we use the word in any representational context. To demystify this fetish and reveal the human relationships involved within the labour process of language will involve the humanization of the linguistic Sign by means of a centering of language within itself; a structural reappraisal of the functional roles of author and reader, performer and performance; the general diminishment of reference in communication and the promotion of forms based upon object-presence: the pleasure of the graphic or phonic imprint, for instance, their value as sheer linguistic stimuli. Kicking out reference from the word (and from performance) is to kick its most treasured and defended contradiction: the logic of passage.

And this hits at the core of what I refer to as the crisis in representation and the paradox of graphic identity. In classical discourse words function this way: there is a this standing for a that: this word "tree" stands for that concept "TREE". And in this is the paradox of identity, for a this can never be itself as it's always standing for a that, whilst that "that" itself can never be present because it's always being stood for. This makes absence central to all concepts of presence.

In performance I've felt troubled by the inherited power patterns of the classical semiotic circuit: the pattern of an active performer and a passive, receptive audience. What I'm wanting is a more dialectical circuit with performer and audience both conceived as performers, a context which contains a performed activity and a performed passivity with the added possibility of volatile transform of the two performative poles.

Performance art involves the interweave of at least three semiotic circuits:

- 1) the semiosis of the text itself (the verbal, ideological content made use of in or prior to performance)
- 2) the semiosis of the body i.e. the system of secondary messages emitted through and during the performance by the performer's body and presence: bio-stylistics, energy transform of verbal language through sound, textual filtration (primary text) through anatomy, bodygraph and biogram etc.



3) the semiosis of the context i.e. the code emitted by the dialectic situation, the spatial configuration of audience and performer, the various moods and states imported into the performance context by the individual members of the audience etc.

I think I should qualify my use of the terms primary and secondary message here.

Yes, I didn't want to imply any normative judgements in "primary" and "secondary". Secondary is simply meant as not part of the first; it's meant to describe a lateral difference between messages. The term I think comes from the social sciences, for instance, a politician delivering a campaign speech is delivering a primary message. Should he have the habit of picking his nose or scratching his balls during the delivery, then those physical "performances" would constitute his secondary message. I have a performance event which comprises reading a very straight text at the same time I'm picking my nose. This secondary message is built up as a focus of attention until, by the end of the piece, all attention is switched to the secondary message. As a piece it combines my interest in translation and transform and my interest in stereophonizing a message, of instituting a simultaneity or polysemous configuration.

In the three way semiosis I've outlined, how do I attempt to interrelate the systems?

Well, the interrelation is there from the very start, accordingly my involvement is way a morphologic restructuring or reshaping of the system of relations. One thing I try to do is relate the systems dialectically. Text often functions as a prop (a thesis) what I now refer to as the pre-form of the performance. As prop, text functions as the point of departure for the performance instead of acting as the target for a re-presentation or re-duplication. What is established is a thetic pre-performance, an antithetic performance and a synthetic post-performance. This way a performative reverberation is established with the primary reaction of performer to text and the secondary reaction of audience to performer, which frames performance in a wider performance, which in itself may have repercussions of frame and reaction.

Performance begins with the recognition of the body's own redundancy. An 'I' performs precisely because an 'I' does not have to perform. Forced performance is work which is antithetical to the labour process of art. Performance is the transformation of utility into futility, a displacement of energies from a use function to a non-use, investigative or leisure function. Futility I define as one letter beyond utility; it's accordingly the practice of a meta-usage. I agree with Filliou's description of art as the creative use of leisure and that leisure has the potential of transforming itself into the way that all work will be in the future.

Performance becomes for me, then, an exploration of futility, of the zones of redundancy which leads into the configurations of the three way semiosis I outlined above. Sound, for instance, as I absorb and retransmit it, becomes the link connecting and igniting the two codes of body and text. Sound, for me in performance, acts as a transform changing text into performance through a displacement of energy from written patterns to body patterns. A high-energy fricative, for instance, carries performative implications: it choreographs the mouth, which in turn choreographs the diaphragm, which in turn choreographs the anal muscles and intestines. Performance measures the degree of "error" obtained between the written sound and the physical transformation of that sound. Accordingly, text need no longer function as notation, it can function as a thetic code within a dialectic, and what the actual performance traces is the play of difference and deviance between written code and spoken event.

What about my work in collaboration?

Collaboration forms about sixty percent of all my art.

I regard collaboration as an activity upon the interface of differences. It's part of that large aspect of my work which derives from the differential source of language. I collaborate as much to meet my own energy flows as reconciliations within it. Collaboration is the most imaginative form of compromise. With The Four Horsemen, for instance, well, that's a collaboration that goes back over seven years and has its base in a solid friendship. It's a friendship, however, nurtured within a "workshop" experience, which is to say an interconnectedness of concern brought all of us together, reshaped our energies and produced a friendship still very much anchored in the work we do together, individually and collectively. The friendship, in fact, forms part of the semiotic competence; it's successful communication and successful communication is just about the most generous description of what poetry is.

One thing I wanted to ask myself was the extent to which collaboration affects the subjective strata of my work.

All my work is geared by a desire to remove subjectivity or else to recontextualize it as a marginal, rather than central, force in my writing. In such regard collaboration has been an ideal way of actually decentralizing personism within a group collective. I mean The Horsemen in performance makes the poem a community. We become a group syntax with no central core. In this respect our work is very similar to CCMC, the freemusic collective whose improvisatory base dictates a "no star" system in their work and creates a sense of marvellous non-hierarchical structures. They are distinctly a-grammatical (if you think of grammar as the imposition of a structure of subordination of parts). Interestingly, I've run up against the greatest problems in individual performance where performance can very easily become personality: a seeing not of the action and eventuality of the piece but a seeing beyond to some identity behind it. Person-searching in performance I think comes as a vestige of referentiality, of the logic of a postponed presence. One of the things that interests me in video is the use of zoom and close-up as a means of depersonalizing image into compressed metonymy.

There's very little of me now that feels it's saying anything. It's practising and inventing a lot but saying very little. Invention is much more interesting than statement. You see the exciting thing about a demonstrative or practitioner approach to art is the possibility of an audience being less ignorant than you. In other words, invention is a way to bypass the traditional semiotic circuit of an active transmitter and a passive receiver; a method of realigning the two poles within a zone of ignorance.

Could I go a little further into my principle of ignorance?

Well, I share a belief with Randolph Bourne: that the child is always right and the adult always wrong. Accordingly I'm constantly moving closer and closer to absolute error. Art can thus be diagrammed as the asymptotic movement of two lines towards the point of absolute ignorance. My work, of course, has nothing to do with truth values but rather with the play of that drift from knowledge to error. As Robert Filliou (might) put it: the principle of ignorance in art conducts to the point of originary research i.e. the point of absolute ignorance. Research (creativity out of the principle of ignorance) is the locus of intuition in that drift through the kingdom of unknowing. What invention means to me is saying hello to the unknown in a way that might be interesting to other people.

The Principle of Ignorance too must also connect with my Principle of Paradox?

Paradox is the core of any dialogic sense of art, or to a sense of art as establishing and exploring problematics without the search towards solutions (the solution to a problem is in the institution of a further

problem). The Principle of Ignorance converts all probabilities into mere possibilities and reinstates energy into new configurations of potential. One invents the potential to avoid the probable and one avoids the probable to make possibilities possible.

It seems that specialization partly arose as an attempt to provide answers to problems. In other words, it makes assumptions as to reactions to problems. Pataphysics, on the other hand, sets its task as that of establishing problems that actually don't exist; it provides answers to questions that are never asked. This I find is a much more interesting way of solution-performances: of posing problems within the mental space of the answer, of de-necessitating questions and so forth.

And this I believe is mythic.

Yes, myth arises as a way of generating answers to questions incapable of being posed.

Now the Paradox I see is core to an aesthetic of ignorance. Paradox generates a displacement, in the sense that one has to go somewhere but there's nowhere to go. To reconcile a paradox is to become a refugee i.e. one opts for a place within the loss of another place. To sustain the paradox is to be in two spaces at once, to uphold and sustain confusion, to support the contradiction leads to a stratological upheaval. There is no place to go but one has to go somewhere, so one goes somewhere else. The same is simply different; somewhere else is really a complication of the same place: this is the geography of the paradox.

So my preference is to sustain complexities?

I think so. But what about beliefs and ideas?

Beliefs and ideas are dangerous if conceived of as products and as behavioural control instruments. My beliefs are tools and inventions which I use and when blunt I discard. Invention is very close to dressmaking: one invents, one wears, then one hangs up in a cupboard. The cupboard may be a book, a performance or a filing cabinet. I supposed I reached this position after holding many beliefs that ended up controlling me to a crippling degree. For instance, I've always been amazed as an ex-marxist, now I suppose a rhetorical-marxist, at the number of marxists who seems emotionally minimal. A revolution that lacks a sense of humour about itself will never succeed. So I conceived a T-Shirt apothegm: Beyond the reason is the dialectic and beyond the dialectic is the laughter. At one point later I had the image flash of a poet entering a stage with a sign round her neck saying: "Take yourself seriously." Marxism, which I've always respected, became the first thing to be transformed from a behavioural control to a performance prop; an ideology to transform ideology. So now I either invent ideas or else wear other peoples' ideas for a short time hoping they sit differently upon my head. I try not to be influenced by my own ideas and I owe this last behavioural trait to being influenced by Dick Higgins.

The notion of plagiarism then is not of much consequence to me?

Plagiarism is based upon a sense of propriety ownership I don't have much patience for. I mean I don't believe at all in the uniqueness of intellection. I think that somewhere someone else is probably having the same thought as I am this moment, so how can I even hold plagiarism tenable? Additionally, I feel that plagiarism is an unconscious form of flattery. Flattery embarrasses me, luckily I don't get much of it, but unconscious flattery I can just about handle.

How can I reconcile this rejection of intellectual property with my specific life style?

Obviously I can't and don't have any intention of trying. I own a house in Toronto and yet at times feel that the only home I've got is my own creativity and my own ideas. When I'm home I sit in a house I'm beginning to own and theorize upon the dangers of property ownership. The thing is, however, and this may be important: I'm not property conscious. Owning a house seems to me like an alternative way of performing that little human scenario entitled paying the rent. For most of my life owning a house will comprise a cash outflow to a mortgage department as demanding as a landlord. So there's not really a difference. I mean the difference is in the postponed promise of ownership, of it being yours. Is this hypocrisy? I don't know. I'm not really interested in hypocrisy which springs from a very unimaginative, binary view of things. I'm more interested in sustaining the contradiction and pursuing the possibilities of the many paths.

The Theory of Ignorance reveals itself actively in the Praxis of Bricollage, doesn't it?

In my own case it does, yes. As I only know what's immediately around me (Ignorance remember = "we only know what we happen to know") so I tend to use what happens to be around me to invent upon. Ignorance thus might be seen as describing the limits of my knowing (whilst specialization hides i.e. fetishizes the limits of knowing). What happens to be around me most of the time are books and so books become the vocabulary of my bricolages. This type of application of the Ignorance Principle led me into Homolinguistic Translation (i.e. translation from the same language) and into various types of treated texts. Rather than compose (in the cognitive manner) I would practise an activity upon language as material to transform an original, or reshape an existing work for a different purpose. This notion of textual treatment and recycling has become very important to me now with

my current interest in a linguistic ecology. Put simply it's this: language is a delicately balanced environment (not a tool for expression) needing care, attention, research, balance and input. Its forms are infinite but its competence is finite. To take the attitude that language is raw material leads to an exhaustion of potency in the same way as deforestation does nature. Referentiality i feel as one "attitude" to language that has resulted in a tremendous ecological imbalance which the work of language centered artists such as Bruce Andrews, Clark Coolidge, Ron Silliman, Charles Bernstein, Peter Melnick and Ray di Palma are trying to repair. If we now have a Network and not an avant garde then we likewise have a materials ecology and not an unlimited supply. Invention is the great replacer of worn out systems and forms, but balance is important. Words disappear in any case as any diachronic analysis of language shows. Languages are dying out every day in parts of Africa, South America and Asia and linguists and anthropologists are frantically trying to record these tongues before they finally become extinct. So that i almost feel a writer has an ethical responsibility to an ecological awareness of the balance of language. The video artist and sound-text composer should, at least, consider the implications of predicating an art form on a depleting global resource. This may not alter video invention, but at the same time it might. Invention i conceive as a way of caring for language; sound poetry's been a way of reinvesting sound back into a language largely visualized, of reinjecting a certain property into a deficiency. Similarly, translation for me is a way of recycling linguistic forms and materials.

Now this stance, as i both know, angers a lot of people. It seems arguable that the ecological analogy is trite, but as a technique of adjustment, of determining a stance before something it has its values. What's struck me about the ecological aesthetic is the amount of tolerance generated by it.

Yes. It puts emphasis on conservation and accretion rather than replacement and this is hard to reconcile with a dialectic unless i treat dialectic as an ecological reflex itself. Paradox solving, however, is an energy waste; it removes a possibility to maximize; it cuts down the inherent polysemousness of language. This is why paradox maintenance is so vital: it constitutes an intermedia reflex; it allows, for instance, a poem to be a performance, a performance to be a non-event, a non-event to be a sculpture, a sculpture to be a musical score and so on. It's these possibilities of transformations in the spaces between categories that make possible the Praxis of Permanent Performance.

A problem is only a problem when you wish to solve it. Revolution must include within its terms its own reaction, otherwise revolution renounces its permanent aspect. Hence the significance of the Ignorance Principle as a Principle for invention. You invent what you don't know (exists) and in the process usually establish mistakes. Mistakes function as agents of reaction, which is also why new forms do not propose alternatives so much as accretions, allowing an expansiveness out towards a richer amalgam of paradoxes and possibilities. This is the line of dialogic rather than monologic behaviour, i.e. of a life and art style concerned less with resolution (through revolution) but with revolution (through revolution); with logics of inclusion and principles of problems rather than logics of exclusions and principles of answers. This is what Futility offers Utility: the added power of that single letter is the power of the imaginative and intuitive acceptance of the problem.

Could I talk a little about Form in my work?

Form, i take, less as a destination than as a departure; it's the thing one leaves rather than the thing one arrives at. My principle of linguistic deviance (central to all my writing) is predicated on the following phrase: Why be simple when you must be complicated? I could explain it more fuller but i'd like to leave it like that. i should point out, however, that form in either its classical sense or as in my more Marxist sense of departure point involves the same gravitational power and the path of the movement (either towards or away from) is what is most important. What happens in the movement away from form is that form becomes a trace, an absent locus by which the path and distance of the deviance can be measured. Measure, i believe, permits retracement and retracement commits one to a two-way movement of line.

At the beginning of this intraview i think i said that i wished to trace my own development out of reading, through soundings to what i now call Permanent Performance. It seems to Me (and i hope to me too) that such a progression parallels the progression of the deviance from form.

Well, first i have to reject the notion of progression; it's not progression at all but rather the play of the deviance which is important. It's important to realize that i'm not interested in any normative selection, no value at all, simply the inscription of the difference. Who am i to say that i'm any better or worse than anyone else? We all take our points as nodes on the network, having replaced progressive line by polymorphous surface. So i can measure my difference and state that as performance. My change from reading to sounding came from a sense of my own physical redundancy in performance. At the same time i realized that spoken language could not permit this superfluity,

that as a semiotic focus in performance (i.e. how the audience performs you) you're at the same time an intensely physical focus. So i began to become aware of the energy patterns occasioned in my own body by the sounds i was making in the sound texts and saw in those patterns another level of expressivity that i had previously ignored. In the transformation the following happened: text which in classical "readings" had controlled me physically, became recontextualized as prop (a device to be used, discarded, performed or rejected), whilst body became an added language system. In sound poetry, where sound is isolated from semantics and rendered self-performative, then energy emerges as the new content. Language is readdressed to the central nervous system from the cortex, the whole experience becoming spinal, intestinal and sexual rather than cortical and intellectual. As such sound poetry tends to redistribute the traditional communicative circuits. So that was the drift as i understood it: the isolation of sound in my readings, which led me to the discovery of new energy circuits, which moved me into performance as i then understood as an intense body presence, a bringing together of language and the body as a confluence in energy.

But i was telling myself recently that such a concept is too simple, that performance itself is a much more complicated concept. What i realize now is that performance-language is stereotectonic and multi-regional. There are at least two zones of performance important to me now: one is action poetry and sound-text performance which demands intense body presence and energy emission; the other is the free performance of language itself which appears in my chance poetry, my language centered writing and certain of the non-intentional translative systems that i use. The latter makes reading itself a performance, in fact, i insist that the great discovery for me through chance procedures in writing (allowing language to generate its own spatialities and occurrences through the operation of non-intentional systems of generation) was that i ceased being a writer and became the first reader of my own inventions.

It would be better to say that i outvented rather than invented. Outventions are the productions of any non-intentional process.

Could i say a little more about the concept of Primary Readership?

Primary Readership is part of the general shift in the arts today towards a readjustment of its topographies; it arises from a shift of the writer from a role zone as composer to a role-zone as witness to a marginal activity. There's a little performance event i do called "Reading Round the Margins" in which i take a text and simply describe its graphic presence on the page. i read, in effect, the context and not the content and in so doing i force myself into a different function than that of the author delivering his product. i become the reader of a chance presence of language in the world,

describing the imperfections of the paper, the idiosyncracies of type, etc. But the significant thing is the role change necessitated by the piece.

A sort of domino principle.

Precisely, a domino effect. The performer changes role, effecting a role change in the audience (they're now watching something else); and what both audience and performer perform together is the transform itself. We become part of that larger structure which rhymes with the macrostructures: urban performance, national performance, global performance, cosmic performance. We instigate a vibration whose termination is endless, and that particular vibration is the vibratory reflex within permanent performance.

Performance then is as much a context as an activity.

I see audience as performer and performer as performer. Audience performance is often non-intentional (people are performers and don't know it) whereas performer performance is instigative (performers are people and know it all too well). But the important thing to grasp is the fact that audience and performer together constitute the dialectic of performance.

Finally, i want to say a few things more about Permanent Performance. I think i can now say that the permanence in performance is the interrelation of two factors: continuity and transformation. Permanent Performance traces its own paradoxes: its permanence is not objective but processual. If an object result then that object is a bi-product to be seen as an accretion to the paradox. Permanent Performance is the intransitivity of itself. It is the context of actions within activity and a simultaneous stressing of the difference between them. It is the processuality of the ephemeral sequence of events that collectively constitute the transformation of their reemergences and disappearances.- Placing performance within the context of the permanent allows for an anti-faustian art, a contribution to futility, an art that is the means of avoiding power rather than asserting it.

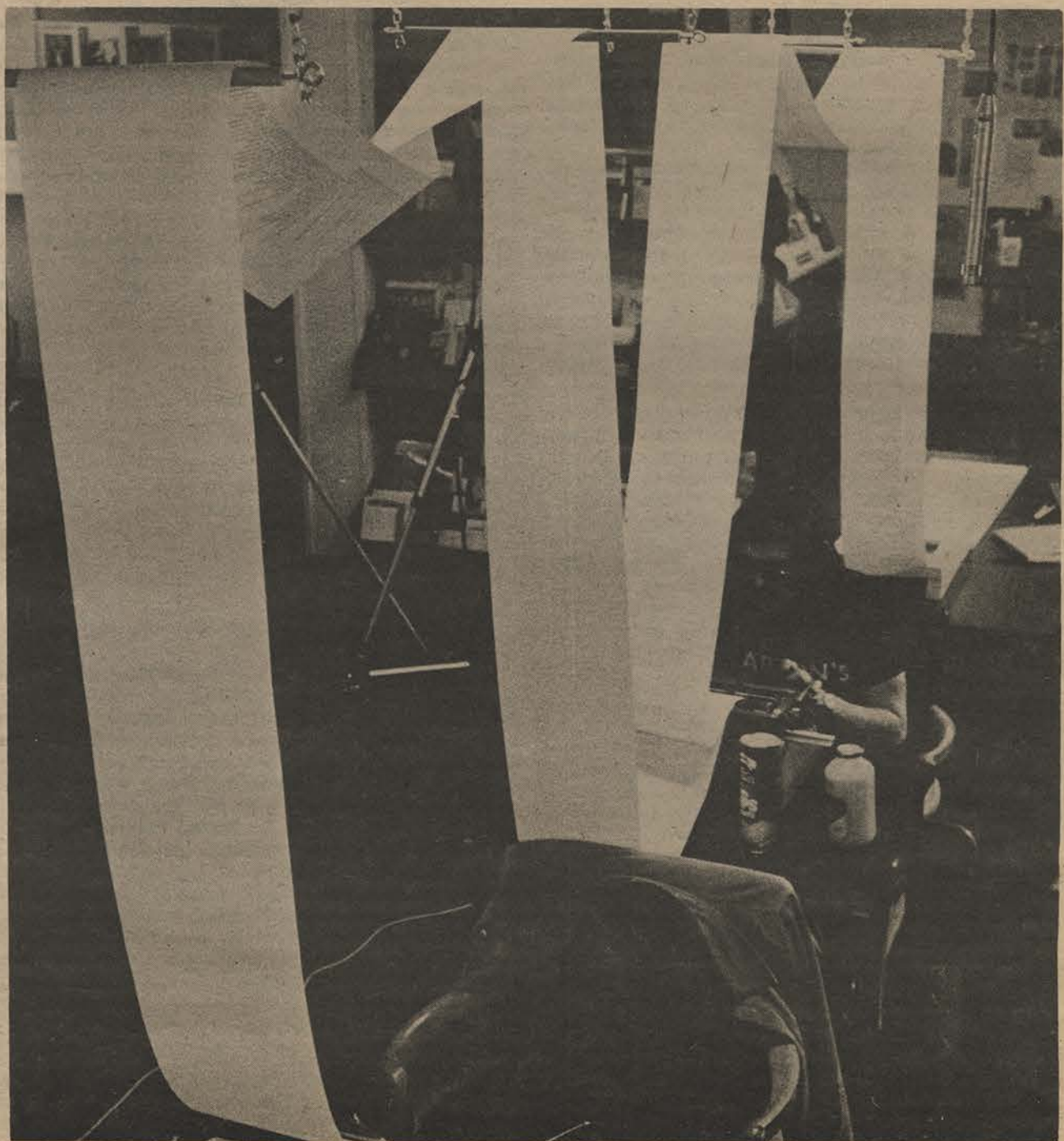
The performance of invisibility.

I should really finish here but i just want to mention one other thing. It's a little note about medicine and the head:

Medical opinion once held that the human head was actually flat and that any thought starting upon the head must inevitably arrive at an edge and roll off into nothing. Until one man came along and claimed that the human head is really round, so that any thought, wherever it starts must eventually arrive back at the point at which it started.

Then . . .

Calgary Nov. 26 - Dec. 15, 1977



divisions, did McNair reconsider. While approving creation of two airborne divisions, he insisted that they have a minimum of overhead and transportation and constitute, in effect, an infantry division in miniature. With the decision, out went **Our condition is post-preemption, - immediately preempted by World War II.**

As conceived and approved in late summer of 1942, the airborne division totalled only 8,500 men, as opposed to some 15,000 in the infantry division. Two divisions were activated - the 82nd and 101st - each with one parachute infantry regiment and two glider infantry regiments, a ratio about which McNair and Lee differed sharply, but McNair's view prevailed. The economies in numbers were achieved in part by sharp restrictions on the amount of ground transportation but also by reductions within the tactical units: the glider infantry regiment had only two battalions and two platoons per company; the parachute platoon had only two rifle squads and a machine gun squad; and there were only three parachute field artillery battalions.

Individual weapons were similar to those of regular infantrymen except for more automatic weapons, such as the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), the 'Tommy-gun' (Thompson sub-machine gun), and the 'grease gun' the latter so-called because it looked like a device for servicing automobiles. Division artillery consisted of thirty-six 75mm pack howitzers, although later one of the parachute battalions would be converted to a 105mm glider battalion. Having no organic aircraft, the divisions depended for movement on transport planes of the Army Air Forces' Troop Carrier Command.

At dusk on 10th February 1941, eight Whitley bombers took off from Malta, two loaded with bombs with orders to create a diversion, the other six carrying thirty-eight men of the 11th Special Air Service Battalion. The objective was to cut an aqueduct in southern Italy that carried the main water supply of the province of Apulia, including that of such cities as Taranto, Brindisi, and Bari. The British

were putting their new airborne force to a test in its infancy.

Five of the six Whitleys bearing paratroopers dropped their loads close to the appointed spot while the men in the sixth came to earth in the next valley, too far away to participate in the demolition. Supply bundles assembled, the main body of paratroopers fixed explosives to the aqueduct and took cover to await the blast. They hardly could have hoped for greater success. A great gush of water poured from the aqueduct to course down the valley of the little Tragino creek.

The next part of the operation was more difficult: to traverse some fifty miles of mountainous terrain and gain the west coast near the town of Salerno, where four nights later His Majesty's Submarine *Triumph* was to be lying off the mouth of the Sele river to spirit the raiders away. Breaking into three parties, the men moved by night and took cover by day, but for all their precautions, none of them reached the coast. The countryside had been alerted to their presence, and Italian troops and carabinieri were too diligent in their search.

Perhaps it was just as well that all were captured, for had they reached the mouth of the Sele, they would have encountered cruel disappointment. By incredible coincidence, one of the Whitleys that had participated in the bombing to create a diversion had made a forced landing near the mouth of the Sele. Unaware of the plans for the submarine, the pilot radioed his plight. Because the British command assumed the Italians had intercepted the signal and would send troops to the Sele, the orders to the submarine were cancelled.

Born in 1946, my work is post-preemption,

British offensive in the Western Desert - fifty-four men of that battalion set out in five obsolete Bombay aircraft to execute sabotage against Axis airfields. A wind that came up after the troops were airborne grew so strong that none of the men came to earth any closer than ten miles from an objective. Only twenty-one of the fifty-four men subsequently made their way to a planned rendezvous

with a long range desert patrol and thence to safety. Although Greek and Iraqi troops trained by this battalion executed several other small-scale airborne raids in later months along the coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean, the battalion itself restricted its remaining operations to the ground.

Three months after the desert raid, on 27th February 1942, the British staged their third parachute assault, again in the tradition of the Commandos. The commander was a man who was to distinguish himself in many another airborne assault as the war went on - John D Frost, at the time a major. The objective was an underground concrete shelter near the village of Brunéval, one of several along the French Channel coast containing a radio-detection apparatus that British intelligence was anxious to learn more about. Major Frost and 118 others were to parachute almost atop the German installation, photograph some parts of the radar device, dismantle others for scientists in England to study, then take German beach defenses in rear and rendezvous - **immediately preempted by World War II.**

Two of three contingents of Frost's force landed right on the target, while the third came to earth close enough to enable the men to join the others after only a brief delay. Paratroopers were astride the radar shelter before the Germans awoke to what was happening. In a sharp exchange of small-arms fire, two of the British parachutists were killed; but a few hours later all the others, except for six men who got lost in the darkness, were clambering aboard landing craft on the nearby beach, vital parts of the enemy's radar set in tow.

As the British executed their third airborne assault, most American airborne troops had become a part of either the 82nd or 101st Airborne Divisions and were entering their first weeks of divisional training. An exception was the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry (later to be redesignated the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion). In April 1942, that battalion arrived in England to complete its training alongside the British airborne units.

When Allied planners in early fall of 1942 began creating the design for invading French North Africa - with the goals of bringing the French protectorates back into the war, eventually linking with British forces in Libya, and making the Mediterranean safer for Allied shipping - they included no provision at first for airborne troops in the assault. The target date of 8th November was only a month away when the vital necessity for gaining aerial superiority in case the French should remain loyal to their puppet government in Vichy and oppose the invasion, focused attention on two airfields in western Algeria near Oran.

The assignment of seizing the airfields fell to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Edson D Raff. Raff's men were to fly 1,500 miles from England to North Africa. Ironically, in what was destined to be the longest uninterrupted flight by airborne troops during the war, the crews of the C-47s were woefully inexperienced. Most pilots were civilian airline pilots hastily mustered into uniform; some had received their planes only a few hours before the flight; many had never flown in night formation; and some of the navigators had joined the crews only a few days before. Furthermore, after flying such a distance, the planes would have to land close behind the paratroopers or else run out of fuel.

Just what kind of a reception the paratroopers might expect at the two French airfields - La Senia and Tafaroui - was in doubt. As the men took off in thirty-nine C-47s after nightfall on 7th November, they had no inkling whether they would land to the accompaniment of French cheers or drop by parachute on a landing zone between the two fields and march against French guns. They were supposed to learn the answer by a radio signal as they flew across the Strait of Gibraltar, but that signal was never heard.

In the face of fog and the difficulties of night flying, the planes early began to lose formation, but with the coming of dawn thirty-two of the thirty-nine were at least still within sight of each other. Of the others, one landed at

Marcella Bienvenue. 1978.

DON MABIE

this review by BROOKS JOYNER
first appeared in The Albertan

The art of Don Mabie aka Chuck Stake has been on exhibit at the Dandelion Art Gallery for the past two weeks. This is my first broad exposure to his drawings and paintings and I must say I was pleasantly surprised to find a technical excellence and imaginative prowess in them.

For some reason, still unknown to me, I had prematurely formed some reaction to them even before I had seen the works. This anticipated reaction about the character of his work must have formed from my greater familiarity with his widely known correspondence art which has crossed my desk over the past two years.

His exquisite works are still an enigma to me. They are so many things at once. Linguistic on the one hand, pictorial on the other. They speak of intimate personal expressions and of more universal statements peculiar to art critics and art historians. His works are saturated with language, jargon and diatribe, merged into beautiful surface decoration, meticulously rendered and executed.

They are, of course, more than flippant commentary about art. They embody a larger philosophy of life and action. They are truly autobiographical paintings. Mabie is the first person to satirize his own work, a sort of reverse psychology, intended to put the casual connoisseur of imagery off. Make no mistake though, for Mabie it's not a joke. His message is quite clear but requires some effort and concentration.

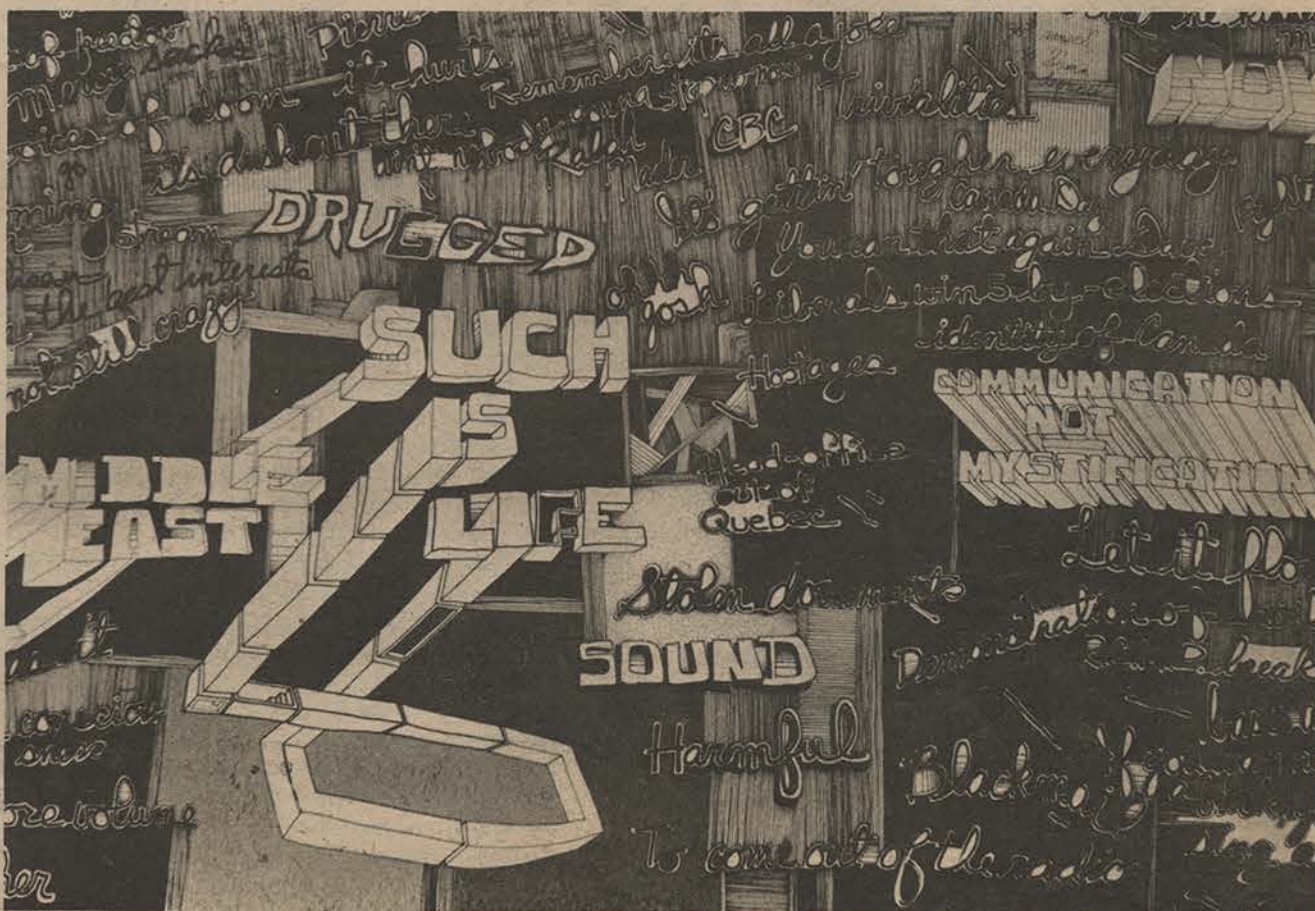
Mabie sums up his feelings in short unself-conscious language. "Drawing is a drug: it's addictive, it's enjoyable, it's relaxing, it's stimulating, it's entertaining, it kills time, it expands consciousness, it provides meaning, it keeps one off the streets, it beats money, it helps (somewhat) to sort things out - sometimes it does all these things at the same time (hey, that is Magic!)."

Couched in all his classic exaggerations, understatement and overstatements about the function and formal consequences of art are a few real superlatives, the pen and ink drawings themselves which are superbly assembled, carefully composed, delightfully

witty images. His work radiates artistic maturity. He has arrived at a means of expression, both intellectual and emotional, that confirms his own creative integrity. This man has not capitalized on someone else's style consciousness. He has evolved his own pictorial message, but in a format that does not deny the traditional picture frame. He has mastered the double image and the dual intention.

"Drawing has always been an obsession with me, it underlies everything I've done/do. As a kid I filled book after book with pencil/pen drawings which were usually shown only to my parents, and rarely anyone else. This was not art for art's sake, but art for Don's sake - and it still is; (it helps me maintain that tenuous grip on sanity ... sort of)."

Remember: it's all not a joke.



"Such is Life", 1977. Don Mabie

CRITERIA and the Case of the 'Genuinely interested General Reader.'

Criteria

GETTING THE ART RIGHT
Too many criteria, too little purpose - save one.

Volume 3, Number 3 issue of Criteria came in the mail (complete with an enlarged and more scrambled version of the ad. that appeared in the last issue of Centerfold) heralding a five page article by one Russell Keziere titled: **Cdn Art Mags - Implications and consequences of the proliferation of art periodicals in Canada.**

Criteria as a magazine I have never felt that strongly about - one way or another. I know that it doesn't choose to represent Western Canada as an objective, was associated with Willard Holmes who took it away from Vanguard when he left the Vancouver Art Gallery and is now edited by Ardele Lister with whom I have had no contact save for an 'innocent' brush at a periodicals conference when I asked her if she had ever considered whether there was any connection between the major role played by women in art journalism in Canada and the insipid nature of same.

As this is the first major article on new Canadian art publications the task of balance was not an enviable one, specifically as Criteria itself is in the same 'subsidy' market as the rest - what a glorious but foolish opportunity for a roast and unfortunately that is exactly what Keziere attempts to do. Of course it's very cleverly worded under lengthy academic guise, categorizing glossy magazines from house organs, non-glossy independent magazines, from magazines that primarily expose art, as well as magazines with a personal aesthetic, he certainly weaves himself a nice mess. Magazines covered are **ArtsWest, ArtsCanada, Vie des Arts, Vanguard, Centerfold, A.C.E., Parallelogramme, Only Paper Today, Imprint, Parachute, Impressions, OVO, Queen Street Magazine, Impulse, Voicespendence, File and Artmagazine.**

Basically Criteria aligns itself with Parachute magazine at least designwise as being 'simple, upfront and accessible', this allegiance being somewhat unfair to Parachute but Criteria believes in being bold - see its comparison - one page ad., comparing itself with ArtsCanada. Generally speaking Keziere waggles his finger at the big bad glossy, jostles with the artist-run mags but keeps his hair in place so that all the small 'l' liberals that make up Criteria's 'genuinely generally interested readership' can recommend Criteria for their next publications grant. After all the intellectual exercise does prove that the problems of art-communications can be defined. As an academic package it looks initially very convincing. It ends peacefully by saying that if there is fulfillment of the (stated) objectives of the newer art magazines in Canada ... "the consequence for the state of the arts in this country would be inestimable." As its wrapping up it quotes one-liners from the new art magazine editors, disbelieving their larger statements quoted earlier in the piece by saying your merely "TRADITIONALLY (caps mine) performing the functions of education, information and criticism."

The new magazine editors however are allowed to shine despite his knife, all with quite different attitudes towards magazine production and editing. **Amerigo Marras** for instance at last conveys A.C.E.'s position with clarity defining its anti-thetical approach and its alternative to the alternative position of supposed promotion from underground to legitimacy. With reasonable quotes from **Bronson (File), Coleman (Only Paper Today), Garnet (Impulse), Robertson (centerfold)** and **Marras (A.C.E.)** he without fail injects a cynical spatter into each of the statements. The fact that the magazine in which his article appears can only 'answer' with "a desire for honest evaluation within an atmosphere that is more inter-personal than entre-nous", doesn't seem to set his critical wheels in motion - he is, so-to-speak stuck in the mud of his own vehicle.

The 'independent' stance that Criteria claims and of course destroys for itself in this article is littered with inaccuracies if we look for a moment elsewhere in this issue. Rather than being independent it is non-dependent and somewhat out of touch. **Avis Lang Rosenberg's** review of Women's Interart Co-op at Helen Pitt Gallery states that **Powerhouse** in Montreal "is functioning with the relatively solid, funded status of a Parallel Gallery (like A Space in Toronto and Western Front in Vancouver)." **Powerhouse**, unfortunately, does not receive core-funding from the Council. **David MacWilliam** begins another review in this way ... "Certainly the most exciting of Vancouver's fall season, is **Judy Lodge's** "The Walls of Eden" at the **Pender Street Gallery.**" With all due respects to Judy Lodge and her work, Vancouver was also graced with **Robert Filliou, Cioni Carpi, N.E. Thing Co.** etc., etc. and it just so happens that the most exciting show happened at Pender Street? (**Pender Street's** director: **Willard Holmes**) Hardly independent and the calibre and 'language' of that same review is banal trash that a high-school newspaper would refuse to print. To close this segment the same writer just happens to pan a show at the Vancouver Art Gallery - pure independence!

Criteria, obviously, has some but it is quite evident that it is different to the work produced at **Pumps, Western Front, Video Inn or Open Space** who are left to rely on the generosity and 'crumbs' from Vanguard for any west-coast coverage. Before I leave this mess to deal with a more relevant aspect of what the article does bring up I should mention in passing that in the last issue of Criteria in an advertisement for a Criteria sweat shirt was the following line ... "and if you're a true Westerner (regionally speaking) you wouldn't be caught, shouldn't be caught in an Eastern-inspired FETISH T-Shirt." Well, that same T-Shirt happens to be an Image Bank edition from Western Front, Vancouver

My reasons for dealing with Criteria and this specific article did not include sports. My reasons also do not include that both in this magazine's article and in a previous review on the book **Video by Artists** my comments about video and publishing were taken out of context to formulate some argument that was posed as mine (unfortunately by the same writer in both cases) and yet this separate argument bore absolutely no logical relationship to the quoted segments.

Subjective interpretations abound but basically we are attempting some objectivity. Artist-run spaces and following that artist publications seem to be still having a hard time getting recognised for an 'objectivity.' In some cases we are left to come to the conclusions that some of this rejection is politically based. National Museums, as a current example, recently refused an artists-administrators panel to go ahead with a massive study on/towards a definition of contemporary art as it exists in public galleries, artists' spaces and in some cases museums. Part of the

reasoning was: "we felt that the 'artist' in the artist-administrator could not be objective."

Similarly many of the initiatives that caused Russell Keziere to 'snicker' ... "FILE: either a large joke-in for those who know or ... slightly jealous celebration of contemporary sensibility" underlines an often called for quality that we could call 'an ignorance with objectivity'. Running a magazine like Criteria is 'fun', it gives one a sense of responsibility, it's awkwardly patching up a fabric but basically it is unglamorously decadent 1. Because it is irrelevant to that which it is supposedly responsible and 2. Because it has the potential of being an objective independent amongst its 'sub-objective' dependent 'peer' group. Keziere was quite right in groping for **Parachute** magazine. Parachute magazine, which I, in many ways, respect, is in that same dangerous position of being a political wedge because it is independent (in comparison with 'house-organs' either attached to a space or artist group) and therefore 'politically' objective.

The observation that artists are continually pushing for political supremacy over curatorial, critical and in some case funding matters is an established fact. It is in Canada as much an efficiency mechanism as it is a social or hard-line political matter. If this is any way sweeping the employment board of curators, critics and magazine editors who are merely becoming the 'deposed' intermediaries who are 'fighting' back, the Canada Council, amongst others are going to have to take some stand. Unfortunately the 'objective-independent' faction in the arts do not keep themselves informed, they are mercenaries fighting on foreign ground: an excellent example can be seen in the Canadian Conference on the Arts. They are for the most part killing what could be an 'art'. Artists in almost all cases will settle for production, their 'political' fight is of a primary nature, they don't wish to remain alienated from their own production. Russell Keziere believes ... "Mr. and Ms. General Reader are not interested in incomprehensible ideological debates on aesthetics which are more personal than rational" which is another smoke-screen in the guise of a problem. Two tautologies (or more) do not create a solution or provide any substantial intellectual excuse. Artists' publications arose long before the availability of State funding in Canada. They arose to achieve immediate results. They very rarely outlive their intended purpose, their vitality is unquestionable, their potential calcification into 'institutions' is impossible and their value?

Who do you wish to evaluate them? The man on the street? Mr. or Ms. General Reader? ArtsCanada? The Leader for the Opposition?

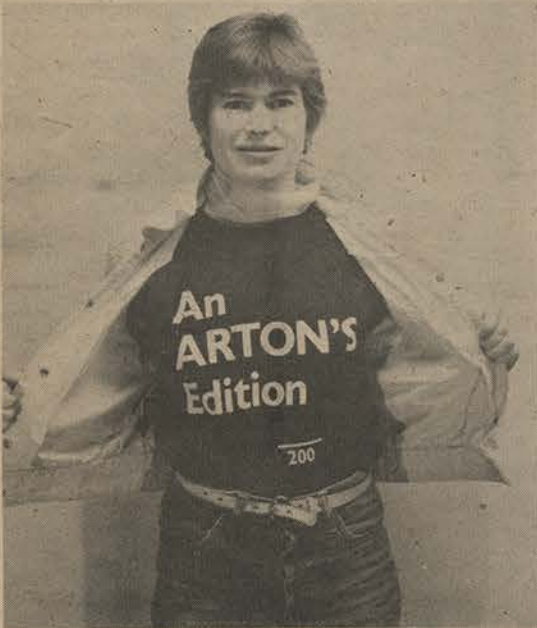
We know their value but why should we be so non-objective' as to give you our evaluation?

Clive Robertson

(to prevent unnecessary antagonisms: my remark on women art editors in Canada - including those involved in many daily newspapers abhors the lack of feminist intentions. These editors mimic a male chauvinism with an equally offensive license, that being the traditional 'woman's touch' with its decorative aesthetics, its matching color co-ordinates. A decorative intellect is hopefully what we are all attempting to avoid as editors, female or male.)

Getting the Art Right' will continue in the next but one issue with a look at AUDIO ARTS, as promised.

WESTERN FRONT VIDEO



Kate Craig is the Video Director at The Western Front, Vancouver. Known in the past in her role as Lady Brute she has also been involved in many radio theatre projects and is occupied on a day-to-day basis with assisting other artists delicately transferring their work onto the video medium.

The Western Front is probably the most prolific video production center of art-tapes in Canada with well over 200 hours of tapes on their shelves. The interview took place on the 27th November, following a regional meeting of Anne Pack (Association of Non-Profit Artist-run Centers in Canada).

Centerfold: The Western Front of late has been playing a lead role in Video Productions. Do you find that they are becoming easier to do or are you constantly ahead of yourself?

K.C.: It certainly becomes easier to do with experience; at one time I would be approached about doing a production and not even consider doing it in colour although we have colour cameras here; now I'm loathe to pull out the black and white camera - so it gets easier to do but at the same time you become more critical of every single aspect of the production. In that sense it becomes harder because you're tending to work out how you can upgrade all those different kinds of things. It's not as if there is much practice with any one type of production because every single person that comes approaches the whole production in a completely different way.

C.: What have been some of the productions that you have dealt with in the last year?

K.C.: It might be easier to go from the most recent back. The last colour production we did with **Robert Filliou** was certainly, I found, the easiest to do; I produced it - the lighting, the sound, all the camerawork - because we just went into the video studio and we played, essentially, and ideas developed as we spent more and more time in there. I had never done that before with anybody. **Rodney Werden**, he was experienced enough with video equipment and lighting - I didn't have to do anything; he did the whole thing. That was a treat too because it was nice to be able to sit back and

watch somebody else produce without having the responsibility of technical authority. His lighting techniques further helped me with documentary productions as in the **Cioni Carpi** production. The two-camera productions obviously become more complex.

I'm surprised that a lot of artists haven't wanted to use that two-camera & switcher facility more. I don't know whether they sense that we aren't as experienced as we could be or if in fact they don't have a need.

The **Granada Gazelle** production that we did was the most demanding that any of us have dealt with and that was a production which in some ways was a mimicry of T.V. production and required sets, actors that had to be prompted - we learn a tremendous amount from that kind of production. In a way I regret that the studio isn't set up all the time and that we constantly have to be moving that equipment around. I would ideally like now to be producing every other day. We just did a **Robert Young** documentary; actually it's a lecture with slide and sound put onto tape, which again is a variant that works very well on tape.

We dealt with your production which again was different, you just took over and did it.

C.: I dealt with the post-production of that project which PCV deals with perhaps more than the Front. I think the variation of productions produced here is useful not only because of the different artists but in the approach. How about the **Dick Higgins** tape, did you work on that?

K.C.: Yes, I produced that. Again it was a very simple tape; Dick scored the sound track - it was video wise a very tight detailed situation where there wasn't any problem with light, one camera black and white done right in the editing room.

I'm personally becoming more interested particularly in colour two-camera shoots of getting into very detailed things. I'm dying for someone to come along who wants to do that kind of thing because I think we're capable of very high quality production in a situation like that.

C.: You also did General Idea's last taping in Winnipeg?

K.C.: That was an exciting experience for all the video people involved: Paul Wong from the Video Inn, Dana Atchley from ACE TV and myself, because we were hired as technicians and were freed from that responsibility that we all have as producers in other situations. Here I start from inviting the people, setting up the programme, looking after the equipment, getting the crew together, being ultimately responsible for the quality that comes out, whereas for this production we were freed of that organizational responsibility.

C.: What about the short G.I. piece you did at the Front for their tape 'Pilot'?

K.C.: That was an early production in terms of us using our own colour facility - at that time we were pretty bogged down with how to use light properly. One of the biggest problems were the red curtains which I knew in advance would bleed on the tape. Also with that tape the longest distance shots were problematic in terms of our inadequate lighting. I may be being too fussy in terms of the quality I would like us to achieve. When we do these kind of productions you really do need experts: lighting experts, sound people, etc. For sound we have an amazing resource of people. The type of cameras are designed for outdoor work and we are pushing their capability in artificial light - we need better cameras but we make do.

C.: Have your documentaries of performance tapes changed in light of your newfound production experience? It seems very speedy when someone comes into town to do a performance and you don't necessarily know exactly how they present their work live ...

K.C.: I have to admit I have become much less precious with documentary tapes, less concerned with the quality of the light. Before we started doing special productions (residencies) all of our energy was going into Documentations so we were much more careful about the way we did it; I don't know if that's reflected - I haven't spent time lately going over those tapes. I was telling your earlier that my camera work of late has been getting sloppier as I do camerawork less and less, which can be corrected as it's one aspect I enjoy the most.

It's always so diverse, the room itself has so many possibilities that artists always place themselves in a different position so you can never have a constant set-up. I'm in two minds about that - I was at the C.B.C. facilities here recently and was absolutely wowed by their facility - it's just the most beautiful space you can imagine. But coming home I felt really good about our facility; there are certain luxury items that we would like to have. Artists, however, can really do what they want here; it's the flexibility that's built-in. I don't think there's much intimidation.

C.: Vancouver certainly is fortunate in its sense of a community of video which for instance just does not exist in anywhere near to the same degree in Toronto.

K.C.: The trade-off that we have here with people is that although we do have money budgeted for technicians, we can never pay what they're worth, but on the other hand we offer people who are willing to put a lot of energy into productions the facility. I think that's most important. When those people come in as crew - most of them are video artists or artists of some kind that need that kind of facility they really care about the equipment and they look after the equipment because they can use it, and they do use it extensively.

I wish we could train more people or that more people could train themselves. That's really what's happened here; none of us have had any professional training; we've all learned how to do these things by our mistakes.

C.: How would you go about improving the programme or who would you like to work with?

K.C.: Always the biggest problem is money; you obviously would like to invite as many people as possible. I am always torn between developing a group of people who do come back, who can learn by their past experiences of working here and then continue - on the other hand you want to spread it and bring newer ideas in. Also the other category that I find fascinating is introducing



Gathie Falk
'RED ANGEL' May 1977
WFVP
(photo: K. Craig)



Granada Gazelle
UNTITLED May 1977
WFVP
(photo: K. Craig)

other artists who have had no previous experience with the medium - I think that's been successful. Another problem that we have is that there are a lot of people outside the country that could come in and do productions and we do have to be careful about that.

C.: In what sense?

K.C.: That there's a good balance.

C.: The reality with the Western Front is that it is one of the a very few facilities like Arton's where production is at all possible. Most other places are libraries or just post-production. I suppose CEAC and Lab 15 and perhaps Vehicule are set up with studio-like facilities and I hear that A Space may be about to do the same. Production-oriented spaces have to overcome conflicts with other programming and the Front is big enough to accommodate production though I think it's about time that the Front did a big re-design job on itself.

K.C.: I have been shocked to find that the production capability as a rarity is true - Vancouver is remote for many people and it's a pity that others aren't a little more committed to the production potential. I agree with you about the re-design. The studio that we use for production is also used for all the performances.

C.: Is the dance studio downstairs every likely to be re-allocated?

K.C.: We can't really do that because the revenue of that space covers the operating expenses of the building. I personally would like to tear out the whole corridor system that runs parallel to the performance space that we use and put the whole video facility in the middle and then go straight through the wall. It would be much simpler, not as draining.

C.: What else has evolved in terms of artists' attitude towards documentation?

K.C.: It's very interesting what has happened here with the education of performers with video. Two or three years ago you would say to them tactfully, it would be wonderful if we could document the event and they would say, "Fantastic, I've never had a tape made of my performance", and then once you got that enthusiastic response you would then say to them - well, if we are going to document it we need a certain quality which means hanging lights and they weren't used to that. You would then present the problems of light and invariably they would freak out, especially electronic musicians who love to hide in little dark corners. So you would slowly persuade them using the light dimmers - put them up really bright to which they would say "I can't deal with that", and you would slowly bring them down until you reached an agreement about it and of course it would all go ahead because you were shooting with a low-light level camera. They were for the most part pleased with the results, just apart from the fact that the event has been documented artists find it extremely instructive to be able to watch and see just how they really are presenting themselves. Today, 95% of the performers that come here just accept video, it's just going to happen, they know that about the Front.

The other problem in dealing with performance at which there is an audience is of course having a respect for the audience. As I get bolder, particularly with music events where the camera does have to move around, you're getting in the way, blocking the audience viewlines. Audiences too have been educated; before I would hear a sigh as the camera rolled across.

I think as the performers and the audience become more excited about the medium new avenues open up in terms of production.

It's slow but when you think that we started off with a portapak that Michael and Glen bought in the fall of '73 and ever since then we've been at it and it becomes more sophisticated all the time.

It becomes more important when you think of what is going to happen to the (video) archive; hopefully that stuff is eventually going to be put out on the air. It's hard enough for people out there in the real world to look at home-made TV but to expect them to sit through black and white productions is getting less and less possible. I don't know if that's true.

C.: My attitude towards colour has changed from an initial experience with (one-inch) seemingly insurmountable technical problems, heightened by colour, which lead to a belief in greater flexibility in B&W for obviously much less capital output especially in terms of my priority which is post-production. Now I can see that the definition of almost every B&W situation can be improved by colour in terms of readability. All the same I would rather be able to get a wider light spectrum in B&W than a mid-range clarity in colour. Both of course are possible but our budgets definitely allow for the former option.

Talking of budgets how does Western Front Video see its financial future?

K.C.: Well we probably are going to go to three-quarter inch. There's two reasons for that. One being electronic editing capability, and of course the format is more viable in terms of broadcast. So let's assume that that is obtained, I would then put some money into re-designing a studio so that we wouldn't have to move equipment so that it would be really fast. Updating our lighting system, install a large tracked curtain for colour projection and for the creation of an infinite space backdrop. A time-base corrector is possible here shared between the different groups to transfer material prior to editing for good clean broadcastability.

C.: I was thinking of programming development rather than hardware. For instance, would a mobile unit be of benefit in Vancouver?

K.C.: In terms of Cable TV, rather than programme our archives I would be more excited by live programming from the Front, but then again that's documentary rather than production. I would like to be able to bring in not only more people that do the productions themselves but perhaps more groups of people around the country who have a specialized knowledge; Winnipeg was an example of that type of short-term compacted collaboration.

We need as much diversity as possible including such options as guerrilla broadcasting with microwave. What we've been kicking around here in Vancouver is not so much making inroads into Cable access but straight to an Alternate Video Channel where we are not concerned with censorship control. One of the things that I feel very strongly about in terms of Video in broadcasting is that there's no way that I want to compete with the CBC or even broadcast constantly on a network like CBC because I think it would be very dangerous for us all. In order to do those kinds of things, the number of concessions that you are going to have to make are going to be so broad that what you are going to end up with putting on the air is pablum. I would never as a producer want to deal with that kind of equipment that is needed to put out that kind of broadcast quality.

C.: What are your views on the distribution of the video material you have helped to produce? Are you quite willing to sit on it as a bank until the right time comes?

K.C.: I'm getting less - well, a year ago I would have been quite willing to sit on it for quite some time. Now I feel that there's more of an urgency to try and deal with it somehow. Both from a pure distribution point of view getting them simply outside of this place, broadcast or not. Distribution, the meaning of it overwhelms me. We have here an extensive sound archives that also should be going out. But I am not the person who wants to deal with the distribution mechanism itself, the immense labour involved would have to be very carefully planned.

CCMC



To say that there is a polarity breaking out in improvisational music and to say that the CCMC are the center of one faction is both true and untrue. True in the sense that unfortunately the CCMC lately has been getting listened to and written about by people (or not written about by people of the same leaning) who 1) Basically cannot listen because they have been conditioned to one narrow interpretation of creative music that fans the mythology of individual creative genius at the expense of a possibility of social communication through music including through musicians to each other; 2) That believe that the presence of a graphic notation, simple in design (easy enough to remember) is the security blanket of an intellectual toilet training without which improvisational music in this era cannot proceed in a creditable manner.

The untruth (pausing for a soft drink) is that whilst the CCMC is justifiably irate at such stupidity the problem lies more in the jazz tradition, whence one aspect of the CCMC creative music emanates and to which often an audience, complete with diapers, comes expecting that tradition, just that tradition and only that tradition. Again it is not the music's fault, jazz or otherwise but the D.J. rattle, music rags and cover sleeve hype which so mesmerizes the avid listener to cream him/herself everytime the words SOLO, CHOPS, SPEED, FEROCITY come into print. This is further complicated by the 'avid listener' one day waking up and becoming a musician, struggling, weighted down by all this flotsam and jetsam trying so hard to emulate what the music through the cover notes tells him/her is real, failing and then having the naive audacity to turn on other musicians who obviously are trying something else and saying to them, Hey Bananas, you stink!

The CCMC's musical context, thankfully, is more complex than the inspiring but limited jazz tradition with its black and white pretenders to the throne. Supposedly we had reached times where mutual co-existence of acoustics had taken place but in reflection who were we to suppose?

The CCMC's third album came out just prior to their extensive Canadian tour which physically, at times,

must have been like trying to take Stalingrad. The three

pieces are **October 4th** on one side and **September 20th** and **June 7th** on the other. Conveniently, the titles also tell when they were recorded, all dates refer to last year. The record is well-pressed not over compressed, and their recording techniques are improving. Which is to say that you can adequately recognise the acoustics of the space - The Music Gallery, which if you've been there and heard the CCMC and can now hear them & the space on record gives the publication that extra plus.

I, as they know, would rather see and hear them live than listen to their record and whenever I do hear them I would rather be playing with them more than just through my blood circulation and as they say who takes notice of reviews, but reviews are hopefully to interest others in gaining accessibility - at least music reviews.

The album is a pleasant surprise, the music sounds exceptionally fluent and though I 'hate' to admit it, the sonic balance seems to work better on this record than it often seems to live, helped most likely by the absence of visual attract/distract-ions.

October 4th is a cut in point where the brushes of Dubin and the vibrating foil (trumpet) mute of Snow become one and the same and in the second section where the bass of Mattes and Peter Anson's guitar match perfectly. (The bass in the first section registers almost as a cello.) Further in, the music goes into genetic multiplications with marimbas and piano's and a hammered guitar and becomes much more interesting than the cut's cover notes imply - Dubin's marimba playing joined by Kubota's soprano, a phased bass and guitar.

The other full ensemble piece - **June Seventh** is quite different with two unexpected gaps: one when the piano goes 'dead' (silence) and another further along. Spatially it's perhaps the most challenging of the three pieces.

September 20th is unashamedly beautiful with sensitive communication between Anson and Sokol, the guitar adding to Sokol's plucked piano and autoharp. This work excellently highlights the interactions of Larry Dubin, Al Mattes, Peter Anson and Casey Sokol.

The CCMC's music is ultimately layered and without suffocation, this third album accurately displays their hard workings as a homogenous social unit with homogenisation, so drink it up - the protein and carbohydrate components are about equal and there's very little fat.

A FREE MUSIC ORCHESTRA



DENNIS TOURBIN

AN INTERVIEW WITH DENNIS TOURBIN
BY LEILA SUJIR AND VICTORIA WALKER



DT: With the work that I'm working on now, FLQ-CBC, A PAINTED PLAY, which is in progress right now, I want to look at the whole idea of rhythm in poetry, not so much according to meter, but according to shape, so I use irregularly shaped canvases. I take a big piece of plywood and I just take an electric saw and cut it at random, with no idea of shape. Then I take those various shapes, and stretch canvas around them. They appear as fragments, just fragments of information, and a lot of people are confused. They think that all of my words come from newspapers, but they don't, they come from poetry, the poetry that I write.

VW: I was talking with D'Arcy this morning, and he mentioned that when you were talking last night, you said that you weren't political in your work, and yet the FLQ-CBC slide show was very political.

DT: Yes. No, I think my work is political. O.K., let me explain that just for a bit. I think that having been to Quebec just this month with my FLQ-CBC play, the thing that I noticed that was different about the Quebec artists, and about me particularly, was that their work emanated from a certain class ideological political point of view, whereas mine does not begin from that point of view. Mine begins primarily from an aesthetic point of view, although I do deal with politics in a very straightforward way. Back to the political aspects of my work. When galerie Media approached me about bringing FLQ-CBC to Montreal in October 1977, seven years after the October Crisis, it not only excited me profoundly, but it scared the shit out of me. Because I was taking primarily an English-Canadian point of view about very important historical Canadian fact, crisis, in fact, right into the heart of the matter, during the crisis month, as they call it. How they do things at Media is very interesting: the vernissage, the opening week on a Wednesday night, and then the audience, or the public, is given one week to look and study the work, and then the artist comes back to the gallery for a rabbatre-rencontre, which is a debate and discussion with the audience. That, I was very nervous about. I wondered how it would be received. Particularly, because I was talking about something that's very close to their hearts in terms of the disappearance of a language, the disappearance of a culture, and, ah, the crisis itself. I wondered what kind of reception I'd get, and it was marvellous. It was wonderful, in fact. It was the most profound, thrilling experience I've ever had in art. The differences between the cultures really came through in terms of my approach to art in a purely aesthetic way. After I had painted THE WRITING OF THE PAINTING OF MARTHA, A PAINTED PLAY, which deals with aesthetics, and outer space, and beautiful pastoral, and very intense media images, I really felt I wanted to paint another play. But I wanted to deal with something that was, ah, historical and Canadian, so that I could analyze the subject. I think in Canada we have a tendency not, a tendency to not want to look at the vivid details of a particular crisis. We like to say, "O.K., it happened, let's put it aside. Let's forget about it." But, I feel that to know ourselves even more, we have to look at these things and we have to analyze them very critically, and very closely, and that's what I attempted to do with FLQ-CBC. I made no excuse for what I was doing, the fact that I was English-Canadian. I mentioned at galerie Media that what I'm doing comes from a deep feeling about Quebec and then I asked Denis for la traduction s'il vous plait and he translated, and there was a silence that went over the people and they packed 45 people into a small space. They have a bar at Media, of course, and so we were all drinking beer and ah, the discussion was so fantastic, so amazing. It was in two languages, it was just incredible, and I was really surprised the thing they found difficult to understand about me was what my political stance was. I obviously had painted an extremely political, profound play in a very colourful fragmented media way, and they wanted to know politically where I stood.

VW: Is that why you say that you aren't political then, because your politics are...

DT: No, I am political. Very much. I think the simple fact that I paint words on canvas is an extremely political act.

VW: Uh huh. But that's not like, for them they wanted to know your beliefs...

DT: Yes. They have an ideology primarily.

VW: Yes, they wanted to know what yours was...

dt: I explained to them that I felt that artists were free spirits, that artists should never be forced to invade the community they live within, that they should inhabit the wind. And that, in a sense, is poetic.

VW: Did they interpret that then?

DT: They interpreted that in a very strange way, simply because in the translation, the French translation, artists inhabiting the wind implies that artists are cool. You see, (laughing) it was very different, the English and the French translation. But gradually, with different translations, different people's, three people were translating the whole time, they, in a sense, really understood. The other thing that I noticed was that, well, at the opening, I would be sitting with maybe five or six of these young, very intense, exciting artists who were dealing with things that excited me, and they would have to speak mostly in English because, of course, I speak just very little French, so I would say to them that I don't want you to speak English, I want you to speak French, because if you speak French, then I will learn. And if I don't understand a word, then I can ask you and somebody can do that. It was very funny, there was a guy from Algeria there, his name was Amid, and he was a very interesting man. He was quite taken with the exhibition and I was trying to explain a certain aspect of my work in French and he said, "Dennis, speak English." This other woman, Andree, said to him in French, "He does not want to speak English. He will speak

French, "He does not want to speak English. He will speak French and we will learn it that way and we will understand and he will understand and that's it!" And so everything went on in French and English and, of course, I would go to the gallery the next day and I would be sitting there with a young painter named Serge Bruneau, who is very similar to me, similar to the kind of work I do, because he paints words. And he uses newspapers, but not the image of the newspapers in a painterly way like I do. He uses it in a collage kind of way and we found quite a lot in common. So I would be at Media from twelve o'clock in the afternoon until five o'clock in the evening and sitting there with Serge, and Serge, of course, cannot speak English and I, of course, cannot speak French. Well, we talked about everything, absolutely everything; it was amazing what we were able to communicate about, I mean, everything possible, the most peculiar aesthetics regarding our art. I consider my work the exploration of the area between painting and literature and I would be able to explain to him in broken English and it was a most profound friendship that developed between him and me that is very precious to both of us.

VW: When you say that your work is exploring the area between painting and literature, have you run across many artists, do you know of any artists, that work in that area?

DT: No, I think it's a relatively unexplored area. I know artists that are using words within painting. In fact, you can go right back through centuries of art and always see words, but for the most part, I'm approaching it from a poetic point of view. I don't consider myself a painter, although I use paint and canvas. I consider myself a poet, a visual poet, in that sense, and so in terms of that area between painting and literature, I am approaching it from a literary end, using paint and canvas. There are other artists in Canada and in Britain, particularly, who are using words primarily from a painterly end.

LS: And now that you've completed the paintings for FLQ-CBC...

DT: They're not completed yet.

LS: Oh, you haven't, but you have a partial show...

DT: Yes, I decided to exhibit it in progress. At this point, I've completed 85 canvases which would probably not be able to fit into all of Artons.

VW: Is it the same size as the MARTHA play?

DT: No, it eventually will be quite a large, quite a mammoth piece when it's finished. I expect there will be over 200 individual canvases. At this point I'm building the props -- a door, a trunk of a car, a telephone, a chair -- various props that I would like the actors to use. THE WRITING OF THE PAINTING OF MARTHA, A ONE ACT PLAY, I did as a one-man show. I considered it an exploration of the area in between painting and literature, involving performance. In this one, I don't want to be a performer. I want to be able to sit back and see what it is I've created. With MARTHA, I was inside it always and I couldn't get a picture of it. It's like that. We were talking about it last night. The first time I ever saw myself on T.V., I was floored. You know it gave me a whole new idea of who I was. With this Theatre in Toronto, which is a very unique and interesting theatre group, they will put together, I think, three or four actors and actresses and in a collaborative way, working with me and perhaps a director, do the stage production of THE PAINTED PLAY.

LS: Could you describe the performance of the play you just spoke of,

DT: The play is really broken into five scenes. Four scenes contain eight canvases, and one scene contains four canvases, and I move between the canvases, amidst the whole 50 foot long set. There is a constant movement there.

LS: So all the canvases would be on the stage?

DT: The canvases are on the stage and I'm constantly referring to them. In the section that I read here last night, I think that there was the reference to the image of the earth as seen from the moon and gradually the earth begins to disappear. It's that kind of serial imagery that's contained. There are 36 individual canvases (3'x3'x2"), alternating words with the image of a ripped newspaper and straight image, ah, the image of a spaceship going off into outer space, and then a capsule into outer space, and then the image of T.V., earth and moon, and then the last canvas, of course, is just the straight lines across the T.V. as if it's out of focus. So I begin in one scene.

LS: Is that behind the T.V. screen?

DT: Well, it starts there. I use the whole set. Movement, of course, is a very important aspect in this. Yes, I'm all across the stage. The first scene ends with a moon launch, which is a poem called "Listening to Walter", about the Apollo 17 moon launch, which I read in accompaniment with a vacuum cleaner. So the first scene ends on the moon and the second scene starts on the moon. It looks at the whole idea that we have always thought that somewhere way out there in outer space, there was an edge, or an end. Now there is the thought that there is no end, that what in fact we are living through is an explosion. So, in a sense I've taken the idea, that if at one time we thought there was an edge, or an end, and now there is no edge or end, in terms of that supernova explosion that we're living through, then where we thought we were, wherever that is, is most definitely somewhere else. I deal with those spatial interplanetary subjects quite often, and bring them right back to earth by using news and media events.

LS: Literally back to earth.

DT: Yes, absolutely.



THE PORT DALHOUSIE STORIES (1970-77) was recently published on audio cassette by Dennis Tourbin.

Published in conjunction with the Niagara Artists' Company by ABCDELEVISION P.O. Box 1575, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada K9J 7H7. Price: \$6

HP/RELICAN Getting the Rite Right.

HP ON RADIO CORA

H:
Greetings and welcome to the Religious Section of our show. As many of you regulars out there know, HP recommends the new religion Religion Canada, as it's called in Canada, Relican. And today we're going to look for the origins of this new religion. I was trying to think before the show just how it all began, Patrick. Can you remember?

P:
Yes, my recollection is that I was sitting in a chair and it came to me in a flash -- Ah! We should start a new religion.

H:
Is that true?

P:
No, because what really happened is that it came from the spirit of collaboration, the Third Man. We had a correspondence going at the time, and we were living in different parts of the country.

H:
You were in the mountains and I was by the ocean.

P:
And it came from spontaneous generation. I think you came up with the idea we should start a new religion and you should be god.

H:
I really can't remember whether it was your idea or my idea.

P:
I think I came up with some of the stuff for it, but you came up with a lot of it because: you are the son of a preacher.

H:
So I've always thought about religion.

P:
You have a strong psychological bent in that direction.

H:
Yes, and I'm not the only one who's spent years trying to get in touch with God.

P:
Well you've also had to look up to your father who's in the pulpit.

H:
And wake up on Sunday morning to the sound of bells... The Reverend K Borde was personality of Religion Canada, an altar ego perhaps, and his main characteristic was that he was always dying.

P:
He would be killed by various means. He was killed by cutting, he was killed in the manner of San Sebastien, with arrows.

H:
He was devoured by sharks.



HP blurring their origins at Radio Cora. (photo: Brad Struble)

P:
I think he was thrown from a great height in one piece. At any rate he continued and is now the head preacher of the new religion Relican.

H:
It's interesting actually that I started out as the Reverend K Borde and now you're the Reverend K Borde.

P:
Well during the performance we couldn't have you being both the Homunculus and the Reverend K Borde, and we felt that Jet, my earlier title, lacked significance.

H:
Well who is the Homunculus?

P:
God.

H:
Right.

P:
The Homunculus is god in Relican. Other Religions have other names for their gods. The Hindus call him Brahma.

H:
K Borde of course means Keyboard.

P:
I never knew that! That's amazing, after all these years...

H:
That's what we call at HP the posteriority effect: additional insight into something you thought you already understood. We build it in.

P:
... That's really something...

H:
There were other ideas present at the bindu creation point of Relican. One was the idea of Religious Art, that religion feeds on art and art on religion. For example, the picture of a woman standing in front of a snowman that is actually in the shape of a church -- that's Religious Art.

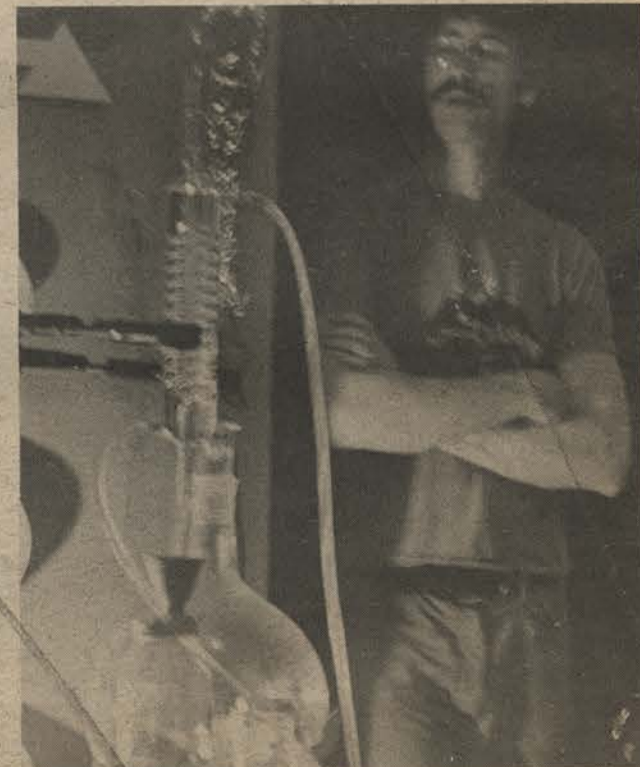
P:
And when it's defined as religious art it's merely because you're looking at it from a religious point of view. And when you define that religious point of view many things that Christianity wouldn't have considered religious become religious. I must apologize for using the word Christianity. I'm not trying to put Christianity down to any of you Christian listeners out there.

H:
But there are a lot of rituals around.

P:
And we're looking into them. The idea of money was certainly a strong element in the founding of our religion.

H:
And Canadian content is a good way to make money, and a funny idea. Hence Religion Canada.

THE HUMUNCULUS, NOT YET BORN, flew in a low arc out of cosmic background radiation and around the planet. He decided to change into a new religion so the Canadians who, though they felt belief in spirits and esp, needed clear biological understanding. He would be transformed for them like electricity and considered his look. Black clothes seemed appropriate, and black cloven shoes. He invented the Goddess of Drugs from whom he purchased black dye for his hair. He invented the God of Machinery from whom he procured a haircut. He dyed his hair and, looking for a place to land, he chose Calgary.



ENJOY The MINISTRY of TANGIBILITY

In 1949, in the town of Calgary, a babe was born to Mrs. Bull, the mother of God. The child was the Homunculus and had a spiral crease upon its belly. The Homunculus showed itself to be unique at a very small size. Once while Mrs. Bull's husband, who was a good man and a prophet, was lost in a city in Asia Minor while carrying the babe in his arms, he was directed by the insistent whines of the child to the house of a long lost cousin, who was able to direct the husband back to Mrs. Bull. This was the Homunculus' first miracle. At the age of ten,



FIG 174: The Homunculus.

when the Homunculus was thicker, but no taller, than he was at the age of five, he raised himself from the dead for the first time. A group of older but more foolish children had tied the Homunculus to ropes and pulled him apart, delimbed him, and left him dead in five pieces. But after they'd left him, long threads grew from each of the limbs to the other limbs, and the threads contracted and drew the Homunculus back together and the Homunculus was live. On June first we celebrate the Feast of the Reassembly.

That same year the Homunculus left Mr. and Mrs. Bull to begin his work, and realize his true nature as god, shaman, law-giver and chief musician of his new religion, what we now call Religion Canada. The Homunculus traversed the entire globe and never spoke in order that he might understand humanity without falling victim to its foibles. Of all the places he went, Saskatchewan, that is to say Poland, was designated as being one level below the worst of the rest of the rest of the world, which is to say, Rawalpindi. And so Saskatchewan became his Hell.

The Homunculus quickly learned to separate the subtle from the dense, quickly and with great ability. He realized Mrs. Bull as the moon, and his father as the earth and by directing his favour to the ground and then to the heavens he quickly learned to go from earth up to the moon and return again and derive energy from both the outer and the inner sources.

(an excerpt from The Book of Rites)

(first appeared in FUTURE ISSUE, Vancouver.)

THE TRUE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT

A problem that a lot of us face today is that death. Thinking about the changes from fire we find ourselves, here, in the church of and the changes from death. Thinking about Religion Canada, even though we're scienc-how much better roast pork was than raw tists, musicians, rational people, and wonder pork. Perhaps they even considered the effect why we've come here. Why bother when we of fire on death. know there is no afterlife and we have so And what more fitting refreshment could much to do? We could be at home. We could there be for these primitively clad men (dark be watching T.V. or reading a book. Why is it outlines silhouetted against the flames, con-that we come here today? A lot of us are sidering the nature of death) than the very asking ourselves this question. juices of dead vegetation, the putrid ferment-

We know that it must have been a problem tation of rotted fruit? The curious effect of for the cave man, who found himself cooking this 'food for dead thoughts' was that it made some rocks on a fire, yes. He knew he the fire watching a tolerable, even pleasant, couldn't eat rocks -- they were harder than his task.

teeth. Why was he there? What was he doing Time passed. More sophisticated means of it for? What benefits could he possibly hope carrying out research with fire were devel-to gain from cooking rocks? The cooking of oped, marked by the invention of the pot, the rocks was a difficult task, unlike cooking crucible and the alchemic seal. The vapors today. The cave man had to find dry fuel. He given off by substances being changed by fire had to find or make the fire. He had to cook were collected. Ghoulis, but picturesque, his rocks away from the tribe in order to avoid attempts were made to capture the essence of accusations of madness. He even had to a man's body by distilling it into a vial. It is in convince himself that there was purpose in fact suggested that the still was first used to doing it. They couldn't eat, drink, wear, or collect man's vapors and that vials of these even touch the hot rocks, and yet we know spirits still exist in European cellars. Spirit. that some cave man or cave men must have The breath, yes. Was the spirit of man first cooked rocks, and probably did it quite often, thought to be his breath, his vapors, from in order to find out that the rock could which we get such modern words as 'con-change. He would have to have done this in spire' and 'inspiration'?

order to change the rock into metal. How else What we do know with certainty is that the could it have happened? attempts at capturing the essence, the spirit,

Yet, not knowing about metal until he had of fermented fruits were met with absolute made metal, what made him sit there? Was it success. Proof of which is in the vial which the fire itself, which was so different from we will be passing around at the time of the everything else he had around him, which collection.

turned raw pig into a roast pig, burned only I will be brief and conclude today's sermon when wood turned into charcoal, and cast by noting that the split between science and shadows like the sun did, and the moon? Fire religion was caused by science's heretical must have been a curious element in the cave insistence on analytical proof. RELICAN is man's life. based on the proof in that vial of spirits - one

Death, too, must have been a curious hundred and ninety-five. Our religious para- element in the cave man's life, marking the phernilia is as pure and without preconceived cessation of a body's activities, marking very bias as it was in the Devonian forest where the serious changes in the body's substance. As cave man did his research. The purity of our the wood disappeared when it burned, so the approach, and its potential, is therefore sym- body gradually disappeared after death in the bolized by the presence of alcohol at all same manner a fruit rotted and went when it religious functions. Oh praise be the great fell to the ground. And so these cavemen may belly of the Homunculus!

Ah yes, yes yes. Why are the pangs of hunger so sharp within the poor while your belly is fat beneath its strumpot? Oh Homunculus, What is the answer to the mystery you promised to tell us? Oh Homunculus, Oh Great Homunculus. Ah yes, yes yes. Where is the pleasure we

RELIGION

CANADA



Relican Chant #1

Repeat: Devil with a red dress on
1) everyone in unison, blues style,
OR
2) continuously while breathing, Tibetan
man-
mantra style,
OR
3) all mumbling together like common prayer.
Do this until you get a vision of Saskatchew-
an.



The Devil with the, in black and white, red dress on.
(photo: HP)

Relican Chant #2

WHO CAN WE BE?

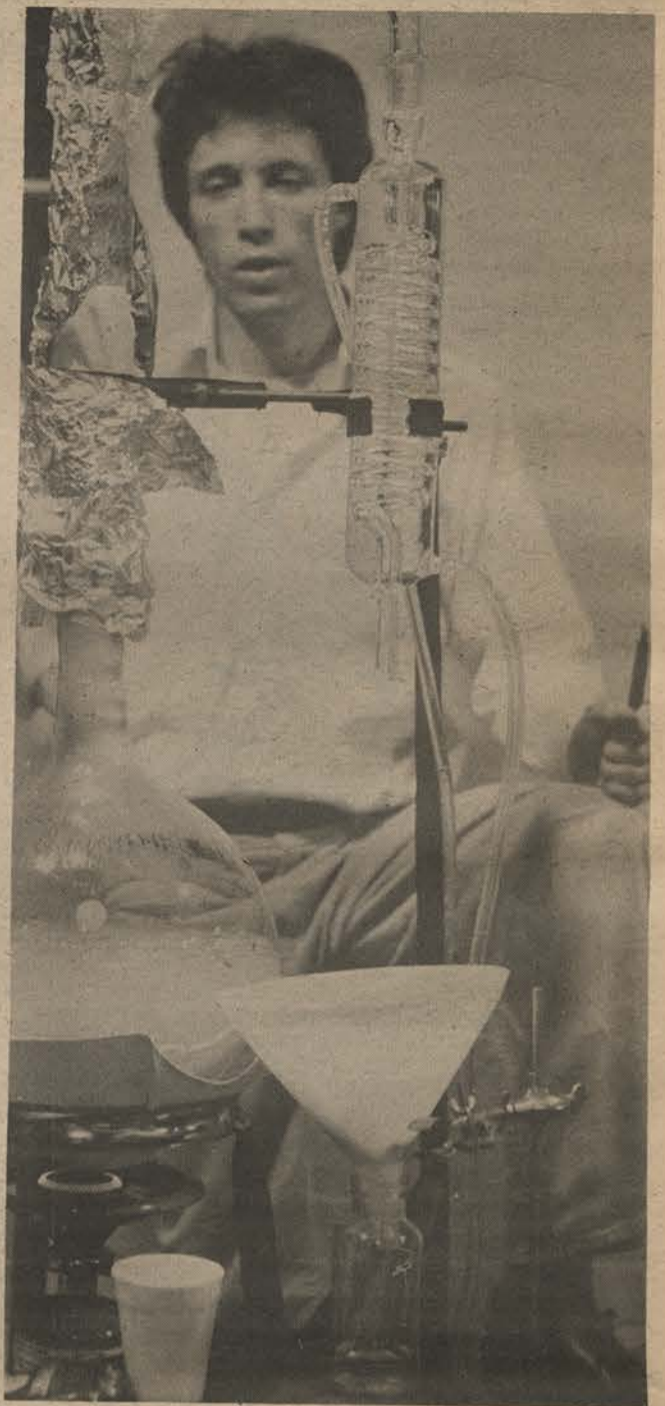
Alaska to the north of us
The U.S. to the South of us
Greenland to the East of us
China to the west of us.
Who can we be, who can we be?
Colder than Anartica
More mosquitoes than Siberia
Wider than Patagonia
And wilder than Wales.
Who can we be, who can we be?

A thousand salmon hatcheries
And Eastern Cranberry patcheries
Pine wood and arbutus trees
And twenty artist run galleries.
Who can we be, who can we be?

(N.Y.C. accents)

H: Say, listen dame. You wanna make a deal?
M: What kind of deal do ya mean, weiner
nose.
H: Spend twenty minutes wit me watchin'
T.V. (Nudge Nudge) Know wot I mean
go'geous?
P: Excuse me?
M: Who are you?
H: Yeah where'd you come from (DEROGA-
TORILY) Pal?
P: I'm a Canadian.
H: Yeah? Well den, butt out!
M: Yeah den beat, whyncha.
P: But...
H: Go on, beat it! Yo hoid da lady! And take
yo dog sled wit you.

Never fought in Viet Nam
Don't drink beer from a can
UIC for every man
And the new religion, Relican.
Who can we be, who can we be?



MIRACLE WORD

CLOVEN
TONGUES

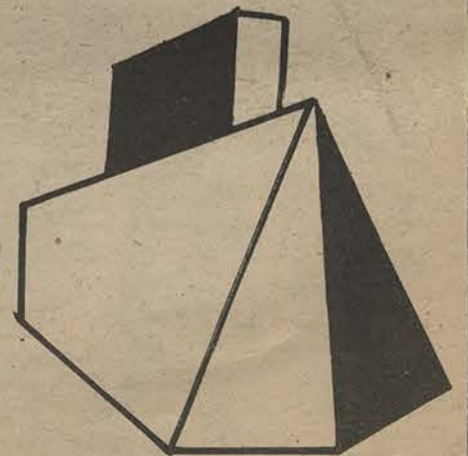
HEALING
WINGS

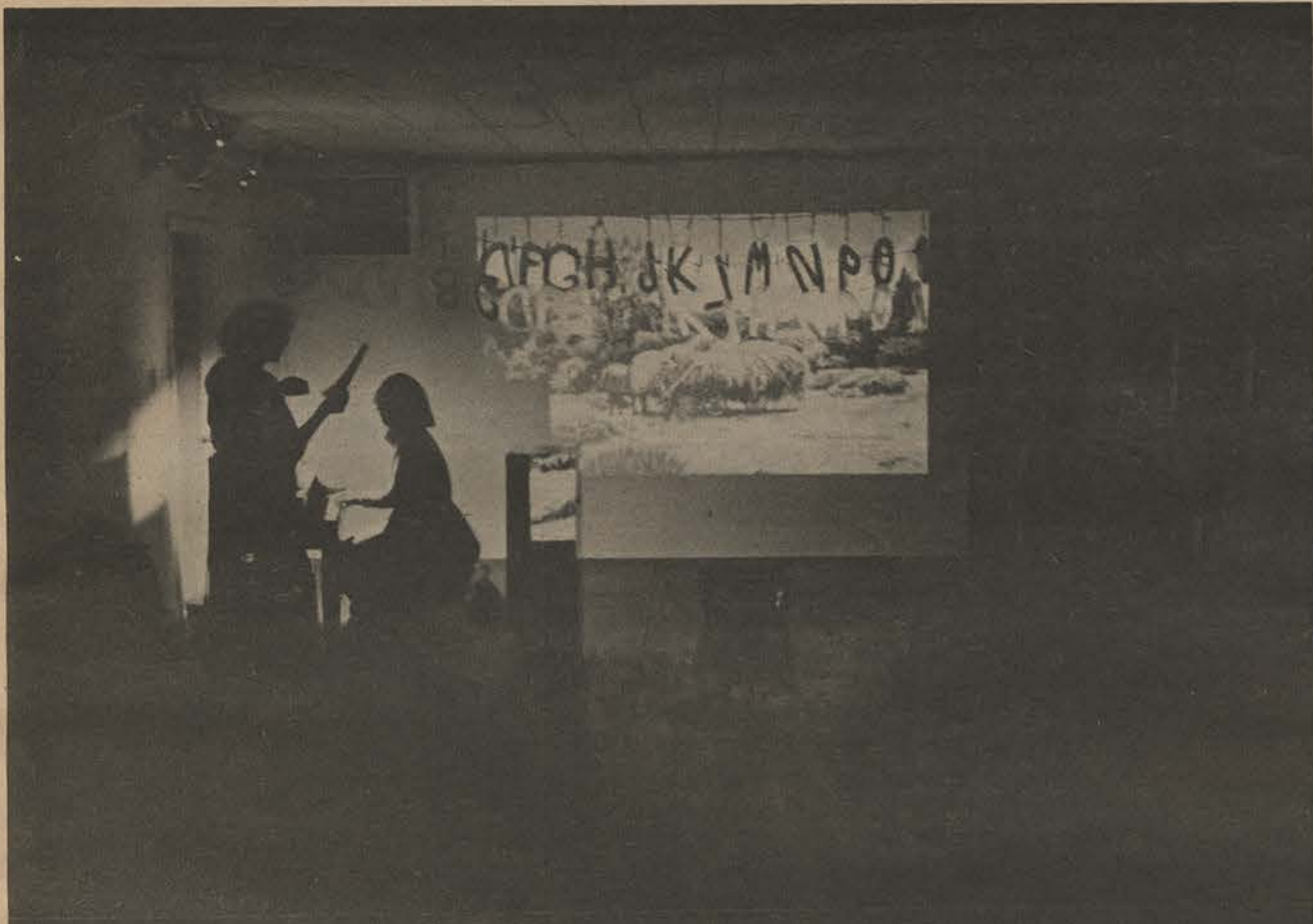
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Victoria Walker.	Opal L. Nations.
Eric Metcalfe: Video Showing	Nancy Cole.
'The Death of Television as Entertainment' from A SUBTLE SHADE OF VIOLETS, (v/tape), Clive Robertson, 1977.	John Oswald: a/tape works.

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**CARL LOEFFLER -
LA MAMELLE INC.,
Marketing a new line of Products.**

Centerfold:

I would like to ask you a number of prepared questions in light of our discussions. Perhaps you could outline some of your new objectives for La Mamelle, the space and the publications, and at the same time answer the hostilities that those changes could provoke.

Carol Loeffler:

Before I get into any in-depth discussion I'd like to state that the word 'hostility' might be something that we can change to misunderstanding. On that base, and even before we discuss where it is that we're going I just want to briefly outline what it is that we have been doing since 1975. First of all we began our corporation as a publishing concern, our magazine is *La Mamelle Magazine: Art Contemporary*. We also maintain an exhibition and performance space in the city of San Francisco which is directed in the primary operational model that I see functioning in such spaces as this one here [Arton's] and *A Space* and *and/or* gallery and *Los Angeles Institute for Contemporary Art (LAICA)* and *The Kitchen, N.Y.* ... Also we programme three to two hours a week of video art and art documentation on Cable in the city of San Francisco with viewer potential of somewhere around 50,000.

We have developed an archive of new art periodicals and artists' books; we also have an archive of marginal artworks - we also keep archives of all the correspondence that is sent to us. We have a video archive and an audio archive. We've been working within this operational range for the past two years. I think within that range we have been successful in what it is we have been attempting to do - the presentation of contemporary art. But we see now after being involved in that mode for two years that really it does not represent fully the struggle for us. It isn't enough to present it. Our concern is the internalization of what it is that we are presenting. Although we can say that presentation mode does function within a certain range of internalization - and that is true, the fact is that the model from which we are operating - which I've just briefly described is, in our minds, primarily a passive role. We are much more interested in taking a leading aggressive role towards the internalization of information and the ideas that we are involved in. That means that we're having to develop a new operational model - we're discarding the model that we previously used in the past two years. Our new model is that of production concerns. What we mean by production is, first of all, let's look at some of the programmes.

Take an archive for instance. It's again a beneficial situation one one hand - we know, meaning all of us that are operating within this spectrum of information, we know that such archives are an invaluable reference for us. However, again it does little good culturally to keep developing and accumulating and not at the same time developing a programme where all of this accumulation can be directly internalized into the culture - and therefore can effect a change in cultural consciousness.

So what we intend to do with our archive is very thoroughly index all of the materials that we have and develop a means of disseminating this index. The dissemination will be directed towards those institutions which develop the historical structures of art. Primarily museums and publishing concerns and art institutions (educational): What we intend to do then is to make this index available on something that is very transmittable such as microfilm or microfiche. That way what we are doing with our archive is not sitting in there looking at these materials, say we're collecting, but rather developing access ourselves to the information, developing a mode of dissemination so that this information can be inserted within those key structures which I outlined within the system of contemporary art.

If we look at a performance situation or an exhibition situation and I do want to state that we're re-defining both exhibition and performance as to what they are. I think it's quite well understood that a book can function as primary art and therefore can be an exhibition of contemporary art. So our exhibition programmes will be developed to function as publications, which are so structured that they can function adequately within an academic situation and again lead toward the internalization of that information. What we intend to do with performances is develop a production situation where the performance will not be necessarily done for a live audience. We no longer believe in the value of the primary importance of performance art being a live audience. We feel in a certain way that to continue functioning in that mode is to be more or less duped by the culture. We want to take those ideas that are happening within the range of performance art and packing them within video or audio and have them so structured and so credentialed that again, like our books, they can be inserted into those structures and generate the history and development of cultural consciousness.

C.L.:

So, that's the point where you are implicating yourself with a fundamental change. Could this change perhaps be due somewhat to the fact that you are situated in, and surrounded by, a mass of artists some of whom will go along with your plans. The other performance artists if they feel alienated by your suggestion of cutting out the live audience can presumably go elsewhere in San Francisco?

C.L.:

Our position is not that we are taking something away but we feel we are adding something to the situation. This hostility that you refer to, which we call misunderstanding, is based on a notion that you are taking something away. The fact is that when we started operating there was not a wide range of exhibition spaces in San Francisco, so our role in that presentation mode was something of primary importance for

the cultural situation of that time. However, after operating like that for two years, we, in a certain way, legitimized that activity. Our magazine which is published, roughly, quarterly also legitimized that activity - so that now there are performance or presentation spaces around us that can carry out that operation. We see that what it is that we CAN do, that they can't do, at this time, is to develop products. And again we may see that at this point that only through the development of very keenly structured products can we develop the system that can lead toward the internalization of that information. This misunderstanding that has been directed towards us is primarily that pertaining to the fact that artists tend to think that we are losing a public dialectic, right? But we feel that what it is that we are developing is an even stronger dialectic. I think artists place a great deal of importance on that public response within a performance situation and have a considerable difficulty understanding how a videotape of a performance can be directed towards a larger audience and can lead towards a greater internalization of their concerns than a live presentation mode.

C.:

Could perhaps one of the fears be that, if for a minute we substitute the term 'internalization' by the word 'consumerism', perhaps a well-founded traditional anxiety by the artist that, what it is that you are aiming for is merely to satisfy a fickle consumerism, rather than the re-structured growth through internalization.

C.L.:

We have heard certain flack which has been directed towards the fact that we are moving towards developing a consumer situation. On one level we do have to look at this as a business situation but that is not our primary orientation. Our primary orientation is again the dissemination of information and if you examine the presentation mode closely I'm sure that you may agree with us that that mode is not an effective way. For instance, if someone comes in to do a live performance - we know that the majority of audiences range from 15 to 75 people, we also know that in San Francisco that performance, depending on the political stature of the artist, that performance has a fair chance of being reviewed. Artists tend to place a lot of importance on the review situation. But we feel that even though we can look at reviews as a certain internalization of information we feel that that in itself is not taking enough responsibility for the internalization of the situation. Our primary review vehicle in San Francisco is that of *ARTWEEK*. We also know that although although *ARTWEEK* is a widely distributed magazine it is not necessarily considered a scholarly publication and is not taken very seriously on an information level by those systems and structures which develop history.

C.:

You would say that those same institutions react more favourably to the ways in which *La Mamelle* presents its information?

C.L.:

Well I don't think our magazine right now is working in such a favourable historical mode, in fact I don't see that for its current model. We see that we have to develop a whole new range of products which will do what it is that we want and part of that is books. We do intend to publish a book on performance art, one on video art, one on contemporary concerns in photography and additional other titles. These publications, rather than appearing as what we may refer to as 'alternative' publications will be so structured so that they will not alienate academic situations, and they will not alienate historicizing situations and also they will be structured internally so that the information contained therein can be readily assimilated and understood within a historical framework.

C.:

O.K. but again you're preparing vehicles that would appease

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or appeal to that historical institutional mould. Whereas the argument that a lot of us would make would be we have no wish to be responsible to that linear and totally inaccurate way of thinking, that is historical-time; We require a total re-estimation of the historical mode, without epoch's, movements and other cursory glances.

Both you and I know of the problems experienced by *Something Else Press*, to name one, in terms of problems of academic internalization. I agree with your approach to presentation of information, in terms of efficiency and perhaps even with its realism, but 'textbook' is still a dirty, slippery, evasive term and idiom. S.E. Press books failed on more than just a distributional level even though I certainly would not question their accessibility or quality of production.

C.L.:

On one level I think that S.E. Press books are a good example here, I do agree with you that in part they were constructed to deal with the concerns that we are outlining here. Also too I think that in our minds that part of the reason why there was failure of S.E. Press books to function as we want our products to function was primarily a certain notion of timing. I think it was unfortunate in some ways that they appeared in the time that they did - they were ahead of their time. The culture wasn't necessarily ready for them. And, also, too, being that Higgins was primarily involved in the generation of those books, the manner in which they were presented was somewhat out of context in a certain way. I mentioned that our other projects include the very thorough dissemination of indexes. So that when we present these books, when we present these videotapes they will be presented within a broader contextual range than what the S.E. Press books were presented within. I stress that contextualisation because I see that as a very important aspect of what it is that we are involved in. I think that if we were too, say, just generate a book on performance art it might be a success in terms of economics but I don't necessarily think it would be a success in terms of cultural conscienteness. I see the struggle as being much more horizontal than that and maybe we are being far too ambitious in terms of our cultural responsibilities, but we deem it absolutely important that these publications be presented within a very thoroughly defined, documented and disseminated context. Only that way can we effect a change that we want, and only that way can we effect a situation where that which we are presenting cannot be overlooked.

C.:

Perhaps also we are now in an era ourselves, like *La Mamelle*, and are not the only ones with the capability and perspective to publish informations which are in a specific historical mode. For instance, within performance art there are many points of interpretative departure that can be followed. You and I know of at least four or five monographs on performance art presently in production, all of which have their own justifiable art-political interpretations. That means you will have to have another sub-system to interpret the 'value' of each one of these interpretations. But maybe we can leave this and go to my second question.

C.L.:

I just want to say that we are aware of these other publications and our stance is not one of competitive situation. We're interested in cultural collaboration and contextualisation. We are aware of a definite appalling lack of critical analysis, not only of performance art but all of contemporary art in general. Again, we don't want to appear over ambitious but we feel that it is extremely important on our part not only to generate a historical text but also additional materials (video & audio) which then can lead towards development of the critical analysis that we deem so necessary. We don't think that single-handedly we can change culture.

C.:
The second question again is something that you and I have discussed in greater detail and at this time it's as much a question of defining the problem as it is providing a solution. You read the Strategist Manifesto that appears at the beginning of this issue. What is your relationship to:

1. The real political nature of art?
2. The somewhat apolitical network?
3. The somewhat temporary solution as outlined in the Manifesto?

C.L.:
First I don't think we would reject places or people right? As I mentioned in relation to our book on performance art, we are not in an antagonistic or competitive situation in fact we see that the development of that kind of attitude is completely counter-productive and destructive to our point of view.

C.:
I just meant in terms of this brief discussion. If we start discussing factionalism which as you say you don't want any part of, but it does still exist, however focusing on that is not what I had in mind when asking your relationships to these approaches - for want of a better word.

C.L.:
Our relationship to the real political nature of art, and before I get into this these are very loaded terms 'the real political nature of art' and the somewhat apolitical network. I want to take certain objections to those viewpoints because even though we may look at the network as being apolitical we don't want to load the situation where we think there's an *us* and *them* situation; or there's a real or non-real situation.

C.:
But as we have discussed we obviously have objections to rhetoric about rhetoric.

C.L.:
Right, and we have published statements that we have seen social practice presented as decorative art, we have seen the new formalism, and it just obviously is the new formalism to us. To approach it philosophically as you requested, again, we don't want to create any gap between a real and non-real situation although on one level it may seem that we can point to an apolitical or immediate somewhat temporary solution

which you are referring to. We look at all the manifestation that is happening right now across the entire network as being political. I am sure that we can point our fingers at certain situations with great suspect but also too it's important to note that that suspicion that we have in our minds is in relation to the intent inherent to the source. In our minds what happens is that once this information becomes removed from the source then who's to know whether it's true or not true. It like people do interpret that situation as real (Television). So once the information becomes extended beyond the original source then in a sense, this rhetoric which we refer to, does become real to those out there who are not familiar to the source, in that way it becomes very loaded and very political and very capable of effecting consciousness.

C.:
But again we cannot argue ourselves out of the intent of not attempting a critical perspective.

C.L.:
OK to deal with that: our relationship to the real political nature of art, we again see, not to be redundant, we see the struggle as the access to information and the dissemination of information into those structures which lead toward historification. So our relationship is the development of *actual* projects which are leading towards that direction. We are all aware of situations out there that are rhetoric by design - and again on one level we are willing to accept this and we can see that as a viable political tool. However, our position is, again, we are not choosing to generate rhetoric, we are choosing to maintain and develop what I referred to before as a responsible position. Our projects are real. Our involvements are actual involvements. Our products are actual products. So our relationship to the real political nature of art is to actually assume responsibility for an actual political stance.

C.:
The last question - I noticed in your presentation two evenings ago, the other word, apart from corporation, that kept appearing was 'consciousness'. This surprised me because the word seems very loaded with a mystified realm of knowledge with which our generation - in its broadest sense - has been overdosed. That 'consciousness' that I get from the word signifies a crumbled political and cultural aspirator. Aren't

you a little concerned using such vague terminology? Aren't we now attempting to be more specific?

C.L.:
I think we are concerned with that reality of being specific and for us to issue such words as consciousness on one level does in a certain sense reek, as it were, of the generational situation from which we originate. But nonetheless that's our choice of vocabulary and if I were to break that down as to what that loaded term means for us would be to go back over the first half of this tape.

C.:
OK maybe I should be more specific myself. Last night in transcribing a lot of *Robert Filliou's* historical statements, Filliou in my mind being one of the prime sources of inspiration and direction for many of us, yet, for the moment, I can see a difference within these artspaces where in some cases your vague term consciousness would be applicable: It is a simplified and often misunderstood phenomenon that is easy to utilise. I see another group which does understand 'consciousness' as applied to the activities that came from the sixties - I see them engaged in many different projects one of which is the self-organised space/publication phenomenon. I see the third possibility which perhaps is what you are directing La Mamelie to, as perhaps a fresh position. We both share a need to be specific and platitudes like consciousness as they are understood in our activities seem somewhat out of date. We obviously need a radical change in terms of our attitudes towards alternate or artists publications?

C.L.:
I think when we refer to the term consciousness we refer to it in a Wittgenstein sensibility, the limits of our world is that of our language. We are very concerned that so much of the knowledge, information or language that we are ourselves are involved in are not even being disseminated within our own network. The filter through which we experience and analyse reality can be altered to adjust itself to this new critical ability that we deem necessary. So for us to continually talk about consciousness is an avid concern on our part - not only to effect the definition of reality within our own network but within a greater cultural sphere.

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