

**AN INTERVIEW WITH  
CHARLES HENRI FORD  
WHEN ART AND LITERATURE COME TOGETHER**

by Clive Philpot and Lynne Tillman

CP: How did you come to start *View*, why did you want to start it, how did it get off the ground, and what did you intend to do?

CHF: Well, the impulse was because in 1940 many of the surrealists that I'd known in Paris were refugees in NY and had no organ, because *Minotaur*, their big thing, in Paris had stopped so I began. There were practically no numbers of *View* in which they were not represented. We gradually expanded from the very small newspaper format to something more ambitious. From 1940 to 1943 it was being edited out of my penthouse bedroom at 360 East 55th. In 1943 I decided to take an office and found a great space at 1 E. 53 St. right above the Stork Club. I needed a little capital to begin that office because I was going to have to pay a secretary and started off with Parker Tyler, then we hired Betty Cage and she graduated to the NY City Ballet and she's still there as one of the managing directors. Then an eager beaver from Buffalo by the name of John Myers came in. And he wanted to be taken on and I said OK, John, can you solicit ads? He said, yes I can. I said all right, then you can be managing editor.

CP: You say you started *View* because the surrealists came to town, yet the first issues seem to be more literary and less surrealistic.

CHF: Less visual. These early 1940 numbers...

CP: It's as if you had a different concept at the beginning and it changed...

CHF: In any case a Greek refugee surrealist contributed to the very first issue. He was the no. 1 Athenian surrealist in Paris, very up and coming... also spitting a lot, more like an Egyptian camel than a Greek...

CP: Did you see yourself covering not only literature but art from the beginning?

CHF: *View* began as a poet's paper. "Through the Eyes of Poets." It evolved into something more visual, the more money we got.

CP: It was just a matter of money then when you made the switch with the magazine?

CHF: It was both... what do you mean?

LT: There's a real sharp switch from the first numbers and then from about 1942 or 43 on, when you do the color covers...

CHF: Yes, the more money we had, the more pictorial we could get. I was always attracted to the visual, in number 2 there's Matta. He was a young surrealist who brought a lot of vitality and enthusiasm to the whole movement, and he did something especially for me, which comes under the category of the page as alternative space. He did this for no other purpose than to be printed in *View*. It's a portrait of Federico Garcia Lorca. The caption says, 'from the memory of Matta.'

LT: I was reading Parker Tyler's biography, *The Divine Comedy of Pavel Tchelitchev* and he says you considered *View* a popular front of transatlantic elements and neglected aspects of American talent. Do you remember that part?

CHF: Well yes, that could be... the best of both worlds.

LT: You were traveling back and forth between America & Europe before the War.

CHF: Yeah... I knew the surrealists in Paris, I became friends with Breton, I'd been seeing Leonor Fini before that. She was one of the first female surrealists.

LT: Tyler says you were a member of Breton's group called FIARI.

CHF: Not exactly a member, but I was sympathizing and even tried to raise some money for him. It was a politically oriented paper, pro-Trotsky. And as you know, later Breton went to Mexico to visit Trotsky. I think the reason *View* is so

often cited nowadays is that we did launch and sponsor the surrealists in America. They had nothing else going for them during the war. I took them up, put them forward.

CP: Did you have some conscious models for the design of *View*, if not the first issues, the later ones?

CHF: I remembered *Minotaur* and *London Bulletin*. I was American editor for the *London Bulletin*. There's a connection. Some of the people from Paris also went to London. Mesers was a surrealist, he was the *London Bulletin* editor and I knew him.

LT: Do you consider yourself a surrealist?

CHF: From my early teens I was inspired by surrealism, though never an 'orthodox' surrealist, because I never hewed to the line. Breton was full of ex-communications. One day Breton was invited to the office at 1 East 53rd Street... I told him, 'Je ne suis pas orthodox surrealist.' And his reply was: 'I'm an orthodox atheist.' 'Anyway,' I said, 'I want to bring out your selected Poems in a *View* Edition. 'Vous etes malin,' he replied.

CP: And he started his magazine VVV in 1942.

CHF: He wanted me to be the editor and I knew he would be looking over my shoulder, so I said, thank you very much but I think I'll continue with *View*. The result was they got out 2 or 3 numbers and *View* lasted for 7 years. So VVV really didn't take off... Even the title VVV was sort of an echo of *View*, and when Marcel Duchamp did our cover he put on it a kind of VVV by making the last W in the word *View* two big V's.

CP: The center foldout page is interesting in the Duchamp number. Was it Kiesler who designed that?

CHF: Yes. His was one of the main page experiments in *View*. He nearly broke the magazine, it cost so much to print and cut. But anyway we did it.

CP: Was it Duchamp's conception or Kiesler's conception?

CHF: Kiesler's creation totally... In *View* Vol. 1 #6, we attack Dali. Dali couldn't have been more pleased, he quoted from the blast in his autobiography.

LT: This attack was because of your going along with Breton.

CHF: I was anti-Dali, we never did anything about Dali. I had my group, and couldn't be going over to do something about Dali.

CP: Doesn't that mean you were an orthodox Bretonist?

CHF: No, it means I would go along with him in certain excommunications. I didn't defy him in any way because I didn't feel the need. But I just had my own original contributors without asking anyone's approval. In the case of somebody like Dali, I didn't feel it was worthwhile to an-

tagonize Breton and the other surrealists who were collaborating so closely with *View*.

LT: Yes. There were also writings by Sartre, Camus, Genet, and the others... Did you ask them for pieces you could publish?

CHF: No. Mary Reynolds sent us the original French versions and we had them translated. When Sartre came over we arranged a lecture for him at Town Hall and he was introduced by Claude Levi-Straus. Sartre gave me a copy of Genet's book *Notre Dame des Fleurs* after I started raving about Genet, saying Genet's a genius. Sartre said yes he's a genius and he's very short. When he sits in a chair his feet don't touch the floor. Then he said I hope you'll do the same for Camus as you did for me when he comes over.

CP: Do you remember what he spoke about?

CHF: Yeah, existentialism... We also did a special surrealist number including an interview with Andre Breton; this has been translated into French.

CP: Who did it?

CHF: I think it was totally the Athenian. We published Kurt Seligman. Seligman was a Swiss newcomer to the surrealist movement. We were very friendly with him and his wife, Arlette, who used to make buttons. When I wanted to extend the magazine, I said how am I going to raise money? One day I was taking a warm bath and I was thinking and then it suddenly occurred to me, oh, I'll sell stock... \$100 a share. The first share I sold was to Seligman...

LT: Did Tyler do a lot with the typography?

CHF: He did everything finally. We were just hit or miss in the beginning, but he became the designer completely.

LT: What I think is so interesting about the early *View* and what makes it unique was that you pulled together all these different elements: literature, the arts, gossip, film; none of the other literary magazines at that time...

CHF: Not in America... but that was the French tradition to mesh these things... if you know *La Revolution Surrealiste*... that was another predecessor and model... We began gradually to have a total surrealist ambience... We published Joseph Cornell and he was the American surrealist... par excellence. He did this extraordinary piece on Hedy Lamarr... with a photograph. I didn't realize when I published this photograph, that it was Cornell's collage... the original photograph was not like that and he made it into a Renaissance 'page.'

LT: How many did you print of each issue?

CHF: I don't know.

LT: First you had them printed in Prairie City and we were wondering...

CHF: That printer was the one who printed my *ABC's*. In 1940 I had it published with a special collage cover by Joseph Cornell. Now that was a definite work on paper.

LT: It's called surrealist quatrains, is that right? That's how I've heard it described.

(continued on page 2)

**THE PAGE AS ALTERNATIVE  
SPACE — 1950 TO 1969**

by Barbara Moore and Jon Hendricks

In *TriQuarterly* 43, an issue devoted to "The Little Magazine in America", Michael Anania points out that earlier researchers had estimated a total of 600 little magazines being published in English between 1912 and 1946. He calculates that at least 1500 such magazines were published in 1978 alone. These figures represent only one segment of the alternative press scene—the segment with a literary bias, periodicals rather than one-time publications, and material in one language only.

There are no such statistics available for the relatively recent phenomenon of artist-produced bookworks, very few of which fit neatly into the categories above. With hindsight it is possible to trace the trend back 20 or more years, but the vocabulary to describe it is not older than 10. Definitions of the term "artists' books" are as plentiful as the books themselves. Being given the title "The Page As Alternative Space" has allowed us the freedom of ignoring all criteria save one: that the works exhibited represent an artist or artist's colleague in control of their own work, outside of the galley system.

If the publications are arranged chronologically, some surprises emerge. Try as we might, we could find very little published by American artists in the early fifties that was designed as an expression of their work rather than a statement about or reproduction of it. Original art was synonymous with "fine art", the mediums of painting, drawing and hand-pulled print. Publications were for expressing ideas (sometimes accompanied by photographs or paintings) or showcasing literary

talent. *Trans/formation*, edited by artist Harry Holtzman (who had taught briefly with Hans Hofmann in the thirties and was also an official of the Federal Arts Project from 1936-37), had an international board of consulting editors that included Nicolas Calas, Le Corbusier, Stuart Davis, Marcel Duchamp, Buckminster Fuller, S.I. Hayakawa, S.W. Hayter and Nelly Van Doesburg. Its intention was to "cut across the arts and sciences by treating them as a continuum." In its once-a-year issues published from 1950 to 1952, it carried essays on everything from current music (by John Cage and others) to quantum theory (by physicist Werner Heisenberg). Aside from an Ad Reinhardt art comic in each issue, the visuals were illustrations of the texts, albeit often eccentric in choice such as children's drawings or commercial comic strips.

*Semi-Colon* (10 issues?, 1952-56) was primarily a poets' newsletter, edited and published single-handedly by John Bernard Myers, who throughout the fifties and sixties exerted considerable influence in bringing together the poets and artists of the New York School in collaborative fine art prints and in theatrical works as producer of the New York Artists Theatre. *Semi-Colon* thus was also a vehicle for poetry by artists, as in the example by Fairfield Porter in the exhibition.

Group ideas could be effectively disseminated through print. Publication of the first issue of *Reality* triggered more than 4000 letters to the editorial committee, which consisted of realist artists Isabel Bishop, Edward Hopper, Henry (continued on page 7)

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**AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES HENRI FORD (Continued)**

CHF: People call me a surrealist poet so that's why it's called surrealist quatrains... Joseph took visual motifs which he found in the ABC's and made a striking collage. I wish I'd kept the original. He did another collage for our Max Ernst number, but sent us only a photostat of the original. I gave the photostat to someone as a present—it later sold for \$10,000—or so I heard.

LT: It's interesting how you got from Blues (1929-1930) to View. In looking through copies of Blues, some of the people reappear and there's a kind of continuation... you also made certain experiments in Blues... your first 'little magazine'...

CHF: Verbally, sure. We were truly avant garde—more so than I realized. And I was surprised at the repercussions. People used to praise View, too, beyond what my own estimation of it was... It's better known now than it was then, because the circulation was very limited and now references may be found in art books the world over.

CP: Did you actually have fun editing View?

CHF: Oh that was my enthusiasm. I talked much too much about it. Tchelitchev once remarked that I talked about nothing but View! At the same time, he told me that I was responsible for his American career because there wasn't one single issue in which I didn't do something about Tchelitchev. He was grateful for that and I was pleased to do it.

LT: OK, Getting back to the 'Papessse Jeanne,' Pavlik's name for Breton you've told me, we can sort of psych-out Breton if we can figure out at what stage your relationship was with him, when you proposed publishing his selected poems.

CHF: Cool.

LT: Cool. So perhaps he thought you were doing this in order to ingratiate...

CHF: Well maybe... but I forget what came first. The Breton poems, or a special number on Marcel Duchamp which was totally collaborated on by Breton and whoever; the first monograph ever on Duchamp! He was not even recognized to that extent in his own country... the forgotten man! And then of course 20 years later, Life takes him up like a new discovery.

CP: A similar case, but perhaps not the first reference was the mention of Pollock in View.

CHF: I did that to please Peggy Guggenheim, I couldn't stand Pollock's work and still can't. And the last time I saw Peggy I said, my dear, Pollock is zero. She didn't reply. Clem Greenberg was partly responsible for Pollock's reputation. He used to put down Tchelitchev's 'Hide and Seek,' the most vulgar picture you've ever seen, he wrote—which is total rot. I mean there's not the slightest vulgarity in that painting... and Clem was hyping Pollock and all those Abstract Expressionists, I remember what Parker Tyler said in View about Pollock: baked macaroni. Then somebody leaving Peggy G's party one night, saw this huge Pollock in the foyer and said, I knew I shouldn't have eaten that lobster!

LT: I was wondering about the politics in View. You said you were involved with Breton somewhat.

CHF: At the time of the crisis about View and VVV, one of the ones who went on the VVV side was Matta... whom I'd invited to design the cover of my 1941 book of poetry *The Overturned Lake*. He had no money, and I introduced him to Tchelitchev, who asked his own clients to buy a Matta because Matta was starving...

Anyway Matta went over to Breton so after that I never did anything about Matta in View. Still I was unprejudiced because he voluntarily sent something in for the Duchamp number, and I've printed it. But otherwise Matta was sort of out.

LT: But politics outside the magazine, or what you brought into the magazine—I was thinking about your relationship with Breton in Paris in '38 and FIARI... I'm curious about what kind of politics you had. You had people like Harold Rosenberg and Meyer Schapiro... writing... Paul Goodman...

CHF: But no politics! And no literary politics except that I thought we should be better than boring *Partisan Review*; we shared some of the same writers, but our things were much more far-out... I didn't think anything about the Left, except that it could take care of itself and more power to the anti-Stalinists to the Trotskyites.

CP: The question then is why the magazine did stop when it looked like it was on-going...

CHF: We stopped at the height of our success, but we had the least money and were more in debt. People were drifting back to Paris and I wanted to drift to Europe, I didn't want to be tied down in an office. It was my war work. The war was over. So we just went bankrupt, and we owed about \$10,000, that's all...

LT: Aren't you going to do a Blues #10?

CHF: Yes, I'm sending the material to Cherry Valley Editions because they already have Edward Germain's choices from Blues 1-9... Blues 10 will be all new material, so everything should be published in one volume, and I'm checking that out with Cherry Valley Editions very soon.

CP: I'm interested in your antipathy to Pollock.

CHF: Well, I mean, my attraction has been to mastery, not to splashery. I mean, to be a master of the paint bucket, I don't see that that gets us anywhere... I just can't be fascinated by Pollock.

CP: OK, I take the point. But it seems that View and VVV are two of the magazines which are seen as seed-beds of ideas for the abstract expressionists.

CHF: Not View, not View... definitely not. No. If they were inspired by some of the shining examples, it doesn't mean that he was anything but surrealist... he couldn't be labeled abstract expressionist. If they took off from him or from others in View they made their own detour, and to me it was boring. I was away from New York during most of the '50s when the action painters were in full swing. When I came back in '62 and pop art was taking over I was delighted. I said this is the new surrealism, and I related immediately and I was right. Claes Oldenburg is great and I still admire Andy's Marilyn Monroes. Surrealism can take many forms, but pop art was the visual form with identifiable images treated in whatever outrageous or novel way.

CP: But you wouldn't accept the idea that, since one has to rely on magazines for so much visual information, View magazine was source material?

CHF: Yes, you mean for what?

CP: The abstract expressionists...

CHF: Oh yes, yes...

CP: So you're only saying they didn't have a home in your magazine.

CHF: Oh I see, I didn't mean that... Well sure, because even when I did my poem poster show in 1965, for example, somebody told me, it looks like abstract expressionism... so maybe I myself had

been unconsciously influenced by the whole shebang.

Pop art sometimes combined reality with the abstract expressionistic technique. I think they're very successful from that point of view. And I know that without abstract expressionism, Andy's *Portraits of the 70's* wouldn't be what they are... you know, the swirls and smears and slaps and all that. It's abstract expressionism, but it has an anchor in the image, and I think that's much more interesting than something like the Blue man, who was the one who did all the blue? Yves Klein. It's just too tiresome. De Kooning... I like his crazy women... but, I don't relate to all these people whose prices are astronomical and talent minimal... like Rothko, total blow up, *Emperor's New Clothes!*

CP: There were two camps at this time... the abstract and the surrealist.

CHF: Yes.

CP: In fact one of the people who's talked about in the magazine, Herbert Read, was very consciously bridging this gap... he had a foot in each camp somehow...

CHF: In our country Sidney Janis was doing the same thing... He did a book on it, *Abstract and Surrealist Art in America*...

LT: Julian Levy, in his gallery, he only showed the surrealists... or...?

CHF: He launched also the Neo-Romantics over here, Tchelitchev, Berard Berman, Leonid Fini. He was one of the impressarios of surrealism, definitely. His gallery was in the forefront. And Iolas gallery followed. I organized the first show for the Iolas gallery—I called it 'Fantastic Art' and included both the Surrealists and the Neo-Romantics.

LT: Who was in that?

CHF: There were Max Ernst and Tanning, Tanguy, Masson, Tchelitchev—all the ones who were here. It was a midnight opening at... it used to be called Hugo Gallery... but it was really Iolas's gallery. He took up the people that I gave him and went on from there...

LT: What year was that?

CHF: It was in the '40s, when View was going. Iolas got into Magritte, who'd done a special cover for View.

LT: Were you no longer in contact with Gertrude Stein?

CHF: No, no, we... broke up the moment she knew that I had been visiting Tchelitchev and his sister. Because Gertrude had broken up with Pavlik. When I went to see Gertrude and Alice in 1933, for the second summer visit she asked, What have you been doing in Paris?, and I said well for one thing I visited Pavlik and his sister, then she said, oh if I'd have known that I wouldn't have invited you.

CP: I often wonder just how much one magazine is influenced by another... do you think that's a valid thing to suggest?

CHF: Yes, I can name two magazines besides VVV that were inspired by View during the '40s in New York, *Tiger's Eye* and Bern Porter's *Circle* from California.

LT: I was wondering if interview in the 60's was taking off from View... Inter and view.

CHF: In the beginning, yes, they put a bar between Inter and view and printed view as if it were View...

LT: You knew he was doing this?

CHF: Yeah, sure... I was Inter-Viewed!

CP: So there were more progeny. There's a continuum in fact...

CP: Getting back to View, what other

things were you reacting against specifically.

CHF: Well, I felt that I had the flair to do the visual thing and the others just didn't. And Matta and the surrealists agreed that with my French experience, and my identification with the surrealist movement... I was the one to do the job.

LT: There was no other American really who was bridging those two worlds...

CHF: No, no, so I did.

LT: When you edited Blues you were in Mississippi, and you were very young in your teens, and had just started writing.

CHF: Yes, well I'll tell you what inspired my surrealist writing... the Paris magazine, *transition*... that's where I first read surrealist texts. I was instantly turned on by surrealism. *transition* came my way, and Gertrude Stein was in *transition*...

LT: So you, in Mississippi, after reading *transition*, decided you wanted to do a magazine of your own and you started writing these people?

CHF: Yeah.

LT: How did you get William Carlos Williams as an Associate Editor?

CHF: Wrote him.

LT: Just wrote him?

CHF: That's how you do it! At that time I didn't realize how avant garde Blues was and it's become historical also. It got together a whole new generation of writers, some of whom were in their teens, some of them were just beginning to be known. Harold Rosenberg was published first in Blues.

LT: William Carlos Williams in your very first issue wrote: 'All of the extant magazines in America being totally, thoroughly completely dead as far as anything new in literature among us is concerned...'

CHF: I was singing the blues, huh?

CP: But I notice that he later sent you a kind of a cautionary letter when you were publishing View saying, keep away from dogma, more or less, keep away from orthodox surrealism...

CHF: Uh-huh.

CP: What do you think of that?

CHF: Well, he didn't want me to get involved with being dictated to, that's all... to be independent. He was sort of a mentor, because you know he wrote the introduction to my first book of poems, *The Garden of Disorder*.

CP: I was going to say how far did you shape the content of View. How much did you let things flow through.

CHF: Well I shaped it by choosing, totally...

LT: What kinds of things did you turn down during that period...

CHF: Just boring things.

LT: Do you want to name some names.

CHF: No. I have forgotten them. But we made a lot of discoveries also. Most of my literary discoveries were in Blues, I was the first to publish Paul Bowles, Edouard Roditi, Harold Rosenberg, Kenneth Rexroth, James T. Farrell, he was a 19-year-old-student at the University of Chicago. I published his first short story and then I recommended him to *transition*; he was published there subsequently, a piece called "Calico Shoes," one of his stories which became famous. Oh, then there was Erskine Caldwell. Erskine Caldwell was another of Blues' 'first magazine' publication. Can you believe it? Farrell, Caldwell and Bowles... not to mention Kay Boyle!





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## EXHIBITIONS

### Mark Mendel

Installation, December 20-January 3, 1981  
Opening reception, Saturday, December 20, 4-6 p.m.

Porta-signs, inside and outside of Franklin Furnace, with poetic messages changing daily.

Mendel currently resides in Massachusetts. He is an instructor in environmental art at MIT, and is self-employed as a stonemason and bricklayer, working in Maine and Massachusetts. His poetry has been published in countless publications; his art has been exhibited at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson, the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., Documenta 6 in Kassel, Germany, at the Galerie Nina Dauret in Paris, the Vienna Biennial, and he has participated in Poetry on the Buses in several cities.

### Ann Sulkovsky

"TRUE ZERO-SUM STORIES" for video, room installation, and books  
Installation January 7-17, 1981

Game strategies and theory applied to real life situations. The zero-sum form for decision making in mathematical game theory creates a situation in which the gains of the winner are the loss of the opponent. In real life, factors influencing outcomes are too complex for the simple zero-sum game. The resulting stories are at times comical, banal, and in some cases, attempt to break away from the confining form.

Sulkovsky has exhibited her work at the Sixth Atlanta International Video Show, in Hartford, Connecticut, and in Washington, D.C.

### Jim Casebere

Installation January 21-31, 1981  
Opening reception, Wednesday, January 21st, 5-7 p.m.

Casebere's photos and reliefs are extracted from a narrative which has as its central theme, exile. Other parameters with which the artist is concerned include fortune, comfort, rejection, and re-entry. The artist is interested in creating a geometry of recognizable objects, one that carries meaning specific to these events and images.

Jim Casebere lives and works in New York and has shown photographs, films, and other work in New York at Artists Space and more recently at the Annina Nosei Gallery. His photographs have been shown at the Albright-Knox in Buffalo, the Newport Harbor Art Museum, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, among other locations.

### John Fekner

"STENCILS FOR THE COMMON MAN"  
Installation February 4-14, 1981  
Opening reception, Wednesday, February 4, 5-7 p.m.

Slide presentation and video installation documenting over 100 stencil projects executed over the past four years.

John Fekner, a New York artist living and working in Queens, has executed outdoor work in the South Bronx, Queens, Toronto, and Sweden. A portion of the projects were realized through the combined efforts of Mr. Fekner and Queensites. Fekner has said that "through *Words-Signs*, I want to illustrate the urban environment by pointing out the areas which need a more careful scrutiny, so we can all work toward the betterment of our environment."

### Daile Kaplan

"THE RED DOG"  
Installation, February 18-28, 1981  
Opening reception, Wednesday, February 18, 5-7 p.m.

Four photographs with the central image of a dog presented in different photographic media, wall drawings, and the artist's new book of solarized photography, "Marie Cherchant Son Père."

Kaplan has exhibited at The Kitchen in New York, De Appel in Amsterdam, and at Video Free America, in San Francisco. Her photos are part of the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Originally educated as a Russian linguist and historian, the artist has been involved with film, video, performance, music, and photography.

### Vernon Fisher

Installation, March 4-14, 1981  
Opening reception, Wednesday, March 4, 5-7 p.m.

One-of-a-kind books, dating from 1974-1976, mostly about conceptual/psychological games, and recent narrative wall pieces which grew out of the books.

Vernon Fisher lives and works in Texas. Recently he has had an exhibition in Dusseldorf at Galerie Hans Mayer and was seen in New York in "Investigations" at the New Museum. Narrative pieces will be included in the Solomon R. Guggenheim's "19 Americans" Exxon National, in January, 1981.

### Deborah Whitman

"THE DEFINITIVE'S SHADOW"  
Installation, March 4-14, 1981  
Opening reception, Wednesday, March 4, 5-7 p.m.

The audience walks through this sculpture incorporating film and sound, becoming part of a three-dimensional narrative. The experience is like reading a story yet having the choice to be a character in it at the same time. The plot is circular. The action loosely revolves around a core of commentary and concentrates on the significance of the structural enclosure.

Deborah Whitman lives and works in N.Y.C.

## PERFORMANCES

Thursday evenings at 8:30 p.m.  
Admission \$2.50; free to members

### Claire Fergusson

December 18  
"MIRROR IMAGE"

"This performance will use mirrors as an analogy for our eyes reflecting the world around us. Mirrors of different sizes and shapes will be used as keyholes into and outside of ourselves. Fairy tales and myths that use mirrors in their story will be woven into this performance. Sets of slides will be projected onto mirrors that are of mirrors. I will speak the story they tell and act the activities they reveal. Mirror to eye paint performance. I will look into the different mirrors and paint upon myself the image I see."

Fergusson's first performance was at Franklin Furnace in 1978. She has since performed with Theatre for the New City, the Wooster St. Gallery, A's, and at the Betty Parsons Gallery, in N.Y.C. Exhibitions include Betty Parsons, the Barry Lett Gallery in Auckland, New Zealand, Franklin Furnace, and Prints on Price Street in N.Y.C.

### Gina Pane

January 8, 1981  
"LIEUX de l'action COCAINA FRA ANGELICO"

Two performers enact this work by well-known French performance artist.

### Beverly Feldmann

January 15, 1981  
"ART IN SOUTH CHICAGO"

Drawings are made while a story is told about situations that contribute to the blue collar worker's attitude toward art. Feldmann isolates experiences from her own childhood in the immigrant, steel-making area of Chicago in the 50s and 60s.

Feldmann, who lives and works in Chicago, also makes drawings and books which distinctly relate to her performance work. She is represented by the Nancy Lurie Gallery in Chicago.

### Lance Richbourg

January 22, 1981  
"A MAD DOG SHOW"

How creating consumes energy. A demonstration of art-making techniques disconcerting in their appearance of being basically destructive.

Richbourg is a painter and performance artist. His most recent solo show was at O.K. Harris, N.Y.C., September, 1980. He has performed at A's, N.Y.C., the Fleming Museum, and the Francis Colburn Gallery of the University of Vermont. He teaches art at St. Michael's College, Winooski, Vermont.

### Denise Green/Elizabeth Sacre

January 29, 1981  
"STRIPED"

Collaborative piece about belonging and outsidership, enclosure and disclosure, responses to the artists' Australian past. Ostracized as a penal colony, Australia witnessed the darkest side of civilization. STRIPED is about the containment of bodies, the corseting of space, the telling of secrets. It is based on fantasies formed in part by a school system which bound imaginations but did not destroy the capacity to dream.

Green is a painter who shows at the Max Protetch Gallery. She has also shown at the Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum. She is an editor of *Semiotext(e)*.

Sacre is a photographer and filmmaker who has worked collectively with a media collective called SYNC in France, Austria, and the U.S. She is a New York correspondent for *Extrablatt*, an Austrian culture/politics journal and is an editor and member of the publishing collective of *Heresies* magazine.

### Eric Bogosian

February 5, 1981  
"THAT GIRL"

A series of persona, ranging from stand-up comics to rapists, cowboys to schoolteachers, in a group of short monologues. The subject is love, desire, and romance, or, what some men think they want. A composite male is created and presented for examination.

Bogosian is well-known as a performance artist. Recent performances in N.Y.C. have taken place at The Kitchen, Performing Garage, A's, Mudd Club, Artists Space, 75 Warren St., and Franklin Furnace.

### Schuldt

February 12, 1981  
"VOICING"  
A voicel audio performance with four other voices

Shapes of language are evolved (and options exercised) between sound and meaning, ranging from rhythmic noise to intelligible speech. Pacing, rhythm, volume, sequence, and repetition are used for structure. Timbre, pitch, accent, etc. are the material. The performer's writings are combined with words from everyday sources to create an acoustic syntax.

Schuldt, a bilingual writer, performer, and visual/verbal artist from Germany, now living in New York, is known for his work pioneering multi-voice tapes (on German radio) and three-dimensional textbodies. (VOICING is an English language performance.)

### May Stevens

February 19, 1981  
"ORDINARY. EXTRAORDINARY."

Stevens, who is best known as a painter, will read from her recently published artist's book which juxtaposes the life of Rosa Luxemburg with the life of the artist's mother. The reading will be counterpointed with images that flash between the revolutionary European communist's prison letters and radical exhortations to the intimate notes and observations of the Canadian-born American housewife whose life was untouched by politics or public notice.

May Stevens lives and works in New York, where she teaches at the School of Visual Arts and is represented by the Lerner/Heller Gallery. She will have a one-woman exhibition there in March.

### Howardena Pindell

February 26, 1981  
"FREE, WHITE, AND 21"  
Performances at 8:30, and 9 p.m.

This video performance piece concerns a series of personal experiences—a dialogue between two people, one white, one black. Tape distributed by Downtown Community Television, New York.

Pindell lives and works in New York. She teaches at SUNY Stony Brook. The artist has been the recipient of an NEA Bicentennial Creative Artist Fellowship to Japan. Her next exhibition in New York will be at Monique Knowlton and Lerner/Heller.

## WINDOW WORKS

at 102 Franklin Street  
Courtesy of Freund & Freund & Company

### December

#### The Struggle Collective, December 3-30

A Christmas window in celebration of anti-racist fighters who have, over the centuries, given us the gift of their strength, moral tenacity, and heroic love aimed at building a more just world.

The Struggle Collective is a recently formed group of artists and writers committed to fighting racism in their personal lives as well as in the culture at large.

### January

#### Dominic Alleluia, January 3-31, 1981

Alleluia is a visual and sound artist born in N.Y.C. who has been living in San Francisco since 1959. He has shown at various galleries including Gallery Paule Anglim and a one-man exhibition at 63 Bluxome Street. Since 1976 he has been associated with La Mamelle Inc. and was part of the Alternative Space Retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. His sound works have been exhibited in Europe, Canada, and the U.S., and are now being included on a new music recording. He has participated in mail art exhibitions world wide and his latest works, which are moving toward theater art, are constructions to be used with dancers, light, and sound.

His machine-like window work is made up of T.V. motor parts, light bulbs, a ship lamp, fuse box, wood, and plexiglass.

### February

#### Kenneth Coutts-Smith, February 4-28

A window aimed at setting up contradictory tensions between the various textural statements which are aimed at questioning and demystifying bourgeois cultural standards on the one hand and the deliberately excessive "beaux-arts" qualities that would appear to reinforce those standards on the other.

Coutts-Smith has literally exhibited his work world-wide and has published two books and over 300 articles. Born in Copenhagen of British parents, he currently resides and teaches in Canada.

### March

#### Richard McGuire, March 4-28

Ixnae Nix has appeared in secret corners all over the streets of Manhattan and is now becoming more public than ever. Within recent months Ixnae have been popping up in places such as Fashion Moda's Graffiti Show, on the walls of Club 57, and in the elevator of 626 Broadway. And these Ixnae are bigger than ever!

McGuire, Ixnae's creator, is also founding member of Liquid Idiot, a band the Soho News called "an eclectic modernist trio." Recently he had a one-man show in the Deharo Gallery in San Francisco.

## LECTURE SERIES

In conjunction with our exhibition, "The Page as Alternative Space 1909-1980"

All Lectures are on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm except where indicated

- Jan. 6 Benjamin Buchloh, "The Books of Marcel Broodthaers."
- Jan. 13 Edit De Ak, "Prototype: Publishing Art-Rite."
- Jan. 20 Ronny H. Cohen, "Presenting the Punching Page: F.T. Marinetti and the Futurists' Use of the Page."
- Jan. 27 Lucy R. Lippard, "Print and Page as Battleground."
- Feb. 3 Tonia Aminoff, "Performance of the Text."
- Feb. 4 Barbara Moore and Jon Hendricks, "The Page as Alternative Space, 1950-1969." Wednesday, 8 p.m.

"As we drove through the Lincoln Tunnel, we talked about going on another trip, to Franklin Furnace; there one might find minerals that glow under ultraviolet light or 'black light.' The countless cream colored square tiles on the walls of the tunnel sped by, until a sign announcing New York broke the tiles order."

—Robert Smithson



# FRANKLIN FURNACE

*archive, exhibition & performance*

112 Franklin Street  
New York, NY 10013 (212) 925-4671

## Exhibitions

Tues.-Sat. 12-6 PM

MARK MENDEL	Dec. 20-Jan. 3, 1981
ANN SULKOVSKY	Jan. 7-17
JIM CASEBERE	Jan. 21-31
JOHN FEKNER	Feb. 4-14
DAILE KAPLAN	Feb. 18-28
VERNON FISHER	March 4-14
DEBORAH WHITMAN	March 4-14

## Performances

Thursday evenings at 8:30 PM

Admission \$2.50; free to members

CLAIRE FERGUSSON	Dec. 18
GINA PANE	Jan. 8
BEVERLY FELDMANN	Jan. 15
LANCE RICHBOURG	Jan. 22
DENISE GREEN/ ELIZABETH SACRE	Jan. 29
ERIC BOGOSIAN	Feb. 5
SCHULDT	Feb. 12
MAY STEVENS	Feb. 19
HOWARDENA PINDELL	Feb. 16

## Window Works

at 102 Franklin St.

courtesy of Freund & Freund & Co.

THE STRUGGLE COLLECTIVE	Dec. 3-30
DOMINIC ALLELUIA	Jan. 3-31
KENNETH COUTTS-SMITH	Feb. 4-28

## Lecture Series

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- LUCY R. LIPPARD, "Print and Page as Battleground." Jan. 27
- TONIA AMINOFF "Performance of the Text" Feb. 3
- BARBARA MOORE and JON HENDRICKS, "The Page as Alternative Space, 1950-1969" Feb. 4, Wed., 8 p.m.







### The Wardrobe

I killed my husband by mistake, that is, for a joke. I pointed a pistol at him which I thought was unloaded and pulled the trigger, with the announcement: 'Now I'm going to kill you. Bang!' The maid who was waiting at table smiled at the gesture I made; but my husband started laughing outright. Because, so it seems, if someone is shot through the heart, the first effect is a burst of laughter. My husband laughed and then slid down from his chair, very slowly, seeming to disintegrate as he fell. Of course I was arrested; they made searching enquiries into our life and found that my husband and I loved one another in a manner that was almost excessive. I was acquitted without a stain on my character.

I went to live provisionally with my parents, in the provinces. I was an only child; my father and mother loved me and were full of consideration for me: my life was wrecked; I had been the victim of a terrible misfortune. Those were the things that my parents said and thought. They were right. I had indeed been the victim of a misfortune and my life was indeed wrecked. But the misfortune occurred many years ago. And as for my life, it was they themselves who wrecked it.

As a child I had been of an excessive and, so to speak, pliable, sensibility. If I loved somebody, I loved him immediately and I loved him too much, and my feeling of love mounted suddenly, like a fever, to scorching temperatures;

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and the more I loved, the more I effaced myself, driving myself from my mind and forcing the beloved person into it. At that time this person was my mother. To say that I loved her is putting it mildly: to such an extent had I identified myself with her that, at certain moments when we were together, it almost seemed to me that there was only one single person present: my mother. During those years she appeared to me to be very unhappy; in reality she was happy, but in her own way, that is, thanks to a married life scrupulously spaced out with quarrels and equally passionate reconciliations. I understood nothing of it; and when, at table, I was present at a brawl between my parents I was vehement in taking my mother's side. One day my father's hand crossed my visual field and landed, with violence, on the face of my mother. A moment later she and I were together in my bedroom. My mother sobbed and hugged me convulsively to her breast; all of a sudden she cried: 'Get ready, take your belongings, put on your coat. I'm going to pack my suitcase. We're leaving this house, for good.' She went out. Full of excitement and zeal I put my favourite toys and some underclothes into a bag, slipped on my coat and then ran to my mother's room. The door was only half closed; I had a jumbled view of my mother and father on the bed; they were one on top of the other; and her voice, languid, faint, annoyed, called me by name and told me to go back to my own room.

I was mortified, hurt, horror-struck. I had the hateful sensation of having placed myself blindly and completely in unworthy hands. I do not know what happened. Instinctively and without effort I divided myself, so to speak, into two persons, of whom one, the real, the genuine one, continued on her own account; while the other, a successful imitation of the first, was delegated to have relations with the world. Thus I no longer ran the risk of being implicated

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and absorbed by others through the fault of my excessive sensibility. It was my other self which loved; it was also my other self which suffered disappointment. My first self remained at a distance, impassive, ironical, and watching.

I no longer suffered. But, on the other hand, I felt myself more and more alone, through the years; I no longer communicated with anybody, it was the other self, invented by me and delegated for that purpose, which communicated. I must admit that the other self managed extremely well: she was quick-witted, active, uninhibited, aggressive. But action is one thing, to watch action is another. For fear of mortifications of the kind that my mother had inflicted upon me, I had condemned myself to a sort of paralysis. I watched the life of my other self, but I myself did not live. I felt more and more isolated, more and more restricted and impotent. For my defence I had built a fortress for myself. And now this fortress was being transformed, more and more, into a prison.

I was invited to a big villa in the country. Among the guests was a young man of very serious aspect who had recently taken a degree in engineering and who paid court to me in a timid way. For years I had moved amongst people without having relations with anyone. This time I told my other self that I had no need of her; I wanted to be myself, without intermediaries and without delegates, to love and be loved. To give an assessment of the violence of my need for love, all I need do is to describe the manner in which I forced the hand of my over-cautious wooer. One evening after supper he stayed downstairs playing billiards; and I went upstairs. I went to my bedroom, put on my prettiest nightdress and hurried to his room, where I shut myself up in his wardrobe, among his coats and ties. Possibly this wardrobe, in which, in the dark, with anxiously beating heart, I waited for him to come up to

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bed, was intended to be an unconscious symbol of the psychological prison in which I had immured myself alive. I would at the same moment come out both of the wardrobe and the prison and would throw myself into his arms. And that, indeed, is what happened. That same year we were married.

I loved him passionately; he, on the other hand, loved me in a normal manner, like the reserved, discreet man that he was. After a year of married life, I began to be afraid of my love. As had happened with my mother, I drove myself from my mind and had placed my husband there; thence arose a complete identification in which I mimicked him, adopting his accent (I am a Tuscan, he a Milanese), imitating his gestures and, exchanging my skirt for trousers, dressing like him. Seen from behind, both of us blond, he with rather long hair, I with rather short hair, in identical clothes, we looked like a pair of twins. This imitative pliability on my part frightened me. And what if my husband, whose reserve I often mistook for coldness, should some day play the same trick on me that my mother had once played? What would I feel about it? What would become of me? So I made up my mind and called upon my other self. 'You carry on,' I said, 'take my place. I'm too frightened.' My other self, of course, needed no persuading. She literally threw herself, like a starving woman, upon my husband. And so I went back, of my own will, into the prison from which love had rescued me. My other self and my husband loved one another. And I watched them like someone who has been driven from home and is unable to get into the house again and presses his nose against the window-panes and sees, from the dark, cold night that surrounds him, the warm, brightly lit scene of life in the rooms which once were his.

I endured this situation for some time; then I decided

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to be rid of my other self and to re-assume direct relations with my husband. This time, however, I did not succeed in my intention; my other self flatly refused to go away. I tried to convince her politely, I threatened her, all was useless. Now, between my husband and me, there was this other self, with her make-believe passion; and I, with my genuine, discreet, delicate feeling for him, could not compete with her. Sometimes, cunningly, she would say to me: 'All right, I'll stand aside, you're free'; trembling, awkward, I would try a first timid approach; but my husband, accustomed by now to the indecent passionate behaviour of the other, would not even notice it. Then she would say triumphantly: 'Now are you convinced? What he needs is my falseness, not your sincerity. So leave us in peace.'

One day my husband, talking on the telephone to his mother, announced that he was leaving for Paris. I listened to him from the next room, and heard him add: 'Of course I'm taking Silvia with me. I can't leave her here. She's too deeply attached to me. She'd sink into despair.' I did, in fact, immediately sink into the blackest despair. My husband would be leaving for Paris with my other self. And I would be left truly alone, this time. Without even the questionable comfort of seeing them, of watching them as they made love.

I rallied my forces and faced my other self in a frank discussion. She must let me go to Paris with my husband. If for no other reason, because she had enjoyed him long enough; now it was my turn. I do not intend to relate my long discussion with her—she who was far more of a dialectician than me, far more subtle. Quite unexpectedly, she suddenly gave way. 'All right,' she said, 'go to Paris, then, but remember, I'm handing him over to you merely

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for the trip. When you return, you must give him back to me.'

My husband and I spent a week in Paris; and it was a second honeymoon. Someone, perhaps, will wish to know how I managed to recreate our former love relationship. It was simple: I repeated the scene of our first encounter. As soon as we arrived in Paris, I sent my husband out of the hotel on some pretext or other; then I undressed, put on my prettiest nightdress and shut myself up in the wardrobe. Once again the dark, stifling wardrobe, stuffy-smelling and encumbered with clothes, seemed to symbolize the psychological prison in which I had immured myself. I waited a long time, then heard my husband come in and call me; and then, with a shrill cry of joy, I opened the wardrobe door and threw myself into his arms. I was saved.

But as soon as we got back to Italy, there was the other one, pushing herself forward actually at the airport, placing herself at my side as we walked across the runway and enjoining me to give my husband back to her. I refused firmly. That murderess (the moment has come to call her so) next morning left the house uttering vaguely threatening remarks. I followed her, saw her enter a gunsmith's shop and acquire a pistol. I understood her plan and decided to thwart it. At a time when she had gone out, I went into her room, searched and found the pistol, removed the magazine and took it away with me. Then I felt calmer and went to join my husband at table.

The rest you know. We were sitting at table; I was contemplating my husband with melting tenderness and the other one was watching us with gnawing jealousy. Then she took out the pistol and pointed it at him, saying: 'Now I'm going to kill you. Bang!' I did not move. I knew it was not a joke, as it was intended to appear; but I was sure of

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my facts: the pistol was without its magazine. I had not reckoned with the perversity of the other one, who had taken the precaution of slipping a bullet into the breach. The pistol went off and my husband fell to the floor, dead.

As I have said, I asserted that the pistol went off by mistake, and thus I saved the other one from certain conviction. Why did I save her? Because I do not trust myself; it might happen to me once again to love too much, and then I should have need of her. But, in saving her, I have tied myself to a murderess. I am her accomplice and I know for certain that the killing of my husband is only the first of a long series of crimes. Impunity will encourage her. In the meantime my parents are looking for a new husband for me. I tremble for him even before knowing him. Once I am married, I shall have to give him over to the other one and isolate myself; or else run the risk of seeing him killed before my eyes.

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What is the same?

By Alberto Moravia  
Barbara Kruger  
Louise Lawler  
Sherrie Levine



## THE PAGE AS ALTERNATIVE SPACE (Continued)

Varnum Poor, and Raphael Soyer, among others. Subtitled "A Journal of Artists' Opinions", its three issues (1953-55) rage against the "ritual jargon" and newly-abstract taste of a "dominant group of museum officials, dealers, and publicity men." Interestingly, it preceded the publication of *It Is*, the most famous organ for the Abstract Expressionists, by five years.

Small press activity in the United States in the decade following the mid-fifties was distinguished by a progression of influential poetry magazines that to varying degrees incorporated the work of artists. Among them were Robert Creeley's *The Black Mountain Review* (not as exclusively linked to the famous college as its name implies), Gilbert Sorrentino's *Neon*, LeRoi Jones' *Yugen*, and Marc Schleiher and Lita Hornick's *Kulchur*. But none attempted to turn the magazine into art with the exception of *Folder*, edited by Daisy Aldan and Richard Miller between 1953 and 1956. Each of its four issues has at least one original serigraph plus a serigraph cover, and consists of loose printed sheets of fine laid paper, enclosed in a paper portfolio. Aldan credits a major influence on the format of the magazine to Caresse Crosby's *Portfolio* series that was published by the Black Sun Press in the forties.

On the West Coast, Wallace Berman painstakingly created nine issues of *Semina* between 1955 and 1964. Each issue was put together literally from scraps of paper, the printing done by Berman himself to avoid censorship problems that had plagued him from the beginning, as well as high costs. Working alone, out of the mainstream, he published poems, drawings and photographs by himself and others in editions of about two or three hundred. Fewer exist today as many copies were destroyed along with his home in a 1964 landslide.

In the mid-fifties widespread attempts to disassociate photography from the mass-media were still nearly fifteen years in the future. The most notable alternative publications by photographers adapted to (and sometimes revolutionized) the mass market, in particular the books of William Klein, beginning with *New York* in 1956, and Robert Frank's *The Americans*, the American edition of which appeared in 1959. Klein was an established fashion photographer as well as a painter who composed his photographic layouts in highly personal ways. Frank, a Swiss who had emigrated to the United States in 1947, has been called the "graphic spokesman of the Beat Generation."

These photographic books eliminated the language barrier (Frank's book had initially been published in Paris a year earlier, Klein's was printed in Switzerland for an English publisher), but most of the above developments were somewhat isolated in the United States, largely concentrated on the East Coast, with particular energy surrounding the New York School of painters and poets. Independent development was taking place in Europe and South America.

From 1949 to 1951, eight issues of *Cobra*, "Organe du front international des artistes expérimentaux d'avant-garde," were published, with rotating editorship and printers (the review and subsequently the group took its name from the three main centers where its contributors worked: Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam). This lively journal covered areas of pop culture (Charlie Chaplin appears several times) and anthropology as well as art. Its subtitle indicates two important impulses that motivated some of the publications already discussed as well as many later on: the possibilities of being an organ for a group and of linking individuals in different countries.

In contrast to much of the literary orientation in the United States at this time, some Europeans relied more on a concept of limited editions going back at least to Vollard. The work of two prominent individual artists is a case in point: Bruno Munari and Diter Rot. Munari, a painter, sculptor, photographer, and graphic and industrial designer working out of Milan, began in the late forties to make a variety of "Libro Illegibile," which were handmade combinations of stitched and cut pages, using different colors and textures of paper, that were bound as a book. In the fifties he rejected "craft" and successfully adapted some of his ideas to the manufacturing process, as in his cut-page *Quadrat Print* produced in an edition of 2000 copies in 1953 or, a few years later, his mass-market children's books, which contain different-size pages, die-cuts, overlays and books-within-books, very much an extension of his handmade works.

The Icelandic artist Diter Rot, schooled in Germany and Switzerland, was only 23 and already skilled at graphic experimentation when he published his work in the first issue of *Spirale* (9 issues, 1953-64), which he co-edited with graphic designer Marcel Wyss and concrete poet/designer Eugen Gomringer. In 1957 he founded his own press (with Einar Bragi), Forlag Ed, in Iceland, and began publishing books with elaborate hand-cuts and die-cuts that create different effects as the pages are turned. Bindings are notebook-style spirals or loose-leaf rings, or the pages are loose in a folder; editions were small and signed. The large majority of Rot's books have been self-published, first through Forlag Ed and, from the mid-sixties on, via his partnership in Edition Hansjörg Mayer.

In 1957 Rot's friend, Daniel Spoerri, began the review *Material* (4 issues, ca. 1957-59). In contrast to *Spirale*, which is oversize in format

but finely printed on colored papers, and which includes woodcuts and lino prints by established artists such as Hans Arp, *Material* is completely unpretentious. Devoted to concrete poetry, its issues were composed on the typewriter and avoided conventional sewn or glued bindings; the first and second issues, an international anthology of concrete poetry and Diter Rot's "Ideograms" respectively, are held together by rivets; the third issue, Emmett Williams' "Konkretionen", has an ingenious rubber band binding designed by André Thomkins. Although published in a very small edition of 200 copies per issue, *Material* only cost three Deutschmarks (about 60¢?). Early issues of *Spirale*, published in editions of 600 copies each, had cost ten Swiss francs each (about \$2 or \$3?). A few copies were signed and sold for more. So while *Spirale* represented an attempt to make fine art available at a price far lower than in a gallery, *Material* made an even more radical break with the past by being produced cheaply and made available at the lowest possible price.

But *Spirale* and *Material* had other things in common. One of *Spirale*'s editors, Eugen Gomringer, has been called the father of concrete poetry, having written his first poems in that style in 1951. Haroldo and Augusto de Campos and Décio Pignatari formed the Noigandres group in São Paulo in 1952 and, unbeknownst to them or to Gomringer at the time, Oyvind Fahlström had published his manifesto for concrete poetry in Stockholm in 1953. In Vienna Friedrich Achleitner, H.C. Artmann, Konrad Bayer, Gerhard Rühm and Oswald Wiener were experimenting with sounds and concrete forms, most intensely in the period from 1954-59, although their publications didn't begin appearing until the late fifties. Concrete poetry, whose practitioners should be considered both artists and poets, was becoming a truly international movement.

By the beginning of the sixties the variety as well as the quantity of what were soon to be called artists' books was steadily increasing, and the trend toward publishing one's own work was becoming world-wide. There had been a subtle shift from the derogatory concept of self-publishing-as-vanity-press to the possibilities inherent in an artist controlling his or her own work.

Distribution systems underwent parallel changes. As early as the mid-fifties Ray Johnson began using the mails to disseminate his artwork. In addition to the collages for which he is best known, he sent small but bulky sculptural pieces and even, circa 1965, page-by-page, *The Book About Death*, for which complete sets of pages were never sent to the same person.

From about 1957 into the early sixties George Brecht printed, at first by himself on a ditto machine, later by offset, small numbers of copies of his analytical and carefully footnoted essays, *Chance-Imagery* and *Innovational Research*, plus, on small slips of paper, the first of his tersely worded scores and events that would later be collected and republished by Fluxus as *Water Yam*. These were given or mailed to friends, sometimes accompanied by small objects or collages.

Graphic designer George Maciunas, who was responsible for publishing and designing most of the Fluxus editions, experimented in other ways with the mails. The yearbook *Fluxus 1* (1964) could be mailed without additional packaging just by stamping and addressing its integral container of wood or masonite. In 1965 he paired Henry Flynt's essay, *Communists Must Give Revolutionary Leadership In Culture* with some of his own architectural plans, the two folded sheets sandwiched between samples of the plastic materials to be used in construction, which made a self-con-

tained package. The design did not please the post office, which refused to mail it.

The significance of *Fluxus 1* goes far beyond its role in mail art. Maciunas designed this anthology to accommodate a wide variety of objects as well as printed matter. Most of the pages are manila envelopes with loose items inside; the whole is held together with three nuts and bolts. (It is uncertain whether, at that time, Maciunas was aware of Fortunato Depero's bolted book of 1927, *Depero Futurista*, but he sometimes openly cribbed other formats, noting that he could improve them by a better alliance of form and content.) Aside from taking the book form as far as possible into object form, *Fluxus 1* represents the performance scores and conceptual pieces (many of them "gesture pieces" inherent in the format itself) of artists and musicians from half a dozen countries.

This growing internationalization was also apparent in most of the seven issues of *Dé-coll/age*, edited and designed by Wolf Vostell in Germany from 1962 to 1969. Vostell, who had been a commercial book designer, was considered a rival by Maciunas, both for his strong graphic sense and his vying for publication material from more or less the same group of artists.

Publications in this period could be as small as Diter Rot's two-centimeter-cubed (*Daily Mirror Book*) of 1961, a 150-odd page, spine-glued chunk of pages cut from the newspaper named in the title; or as large as Alison Knowles' *Big Book* of 1968, an 8-foot high unique construction with a pole for a spine, "pages" on casters, and each page a three-dimensional room.

They could be as meticulously printed as publisher Hansjörg Mayer's early oversize portfolios of fine prints with typography, or perfectly laid out concrete poems, each numbered and signed in small editions; or as immediate as the mimeo miniatures of Peter Schumann, which could be cranked out on the spur of the moment, sold for a dime or given away free, created by Schumann himself or by any of his associates, always anonymously.

Some books were obscure and (at the time) unmarketable, such as Jack Smith's *The Beautiful Book* of 1962. An unknown number of copies were handmade of 2 1/4-inch contact-printed photographs mounted one to a page. An even smaller number in the edition have added hand-written text.

At least one book even got mass-produced, although its published version presents a somewhat slicker aspect than the artist's rough-hewn maquette. Allan Kaprow's *Assemblage, Environments and Happenings* was published by the commercial artbook publisher Harry N. Abrams, Inc. in 1966 in both hardcover and paperback editions, the former about 1500 copies, the later 5000 or more.

Esoteric books could also be made to look mass-produced, as with most of the publications of the Something Else Press, founded by Dick Higgins in 1964 to promote avant-garde material. Higgins' somewhat subversive approach was to manufacture the most radical texts in conventional, high-quality bindings so that standard libraries would be more willing to put them on their shelves.

Some books were banners, propagandizing for aesthetic or political points of view. Such were the publications of the Czech happenings group *Aktual* which, beginning in 1964, published a magazine of that title, then a "newspaper" (edition of 50 copies!), as well as elaborate near-object-like books by two of its leaders, Milan Knížák and Robert Wittman. Their extensive use of hand-printing and collage was less from a desire to make precious objects than due to the "unofficial" nature of

their work; as with the underground samizdat that began to appear in iron curtain countries in the early sixties, *Aktual*'s manuscripts had to be hand-typed in carbon duplicates or otherwise handmade in order to be published at all. Printing equipment of any kind was totally inaccessible and illegal. The frustration and compulsion behind these publications can perhaps be read into the title of the third and last issue of *Aktual* magazine, "Necessary Activity."

The variety of formats, contents, purposes, processes, and distribution systems begins to seem infinite. Unrestricted by conventions of size, for example, and seeking the cheapest, fastest means of offset, some artists published in newspaper format. Painter Alfred Leslie edited and published *The Hasty Papers* in 1960 in tabloid size printed on newsprint with a newspaper-style masthead, but bound as a book. This "one-shot review" contains essays, poems, playscripts, reprints and the photographs of Robert Frank.

*Scrap* was more of an actual newsheet; in its eight issues published between 1960 and 1962 editors Anita Ventura and Sidney Geist summarized the meetings of the Artists' Club and allowed a forum for the artists' circle of which they were a part.

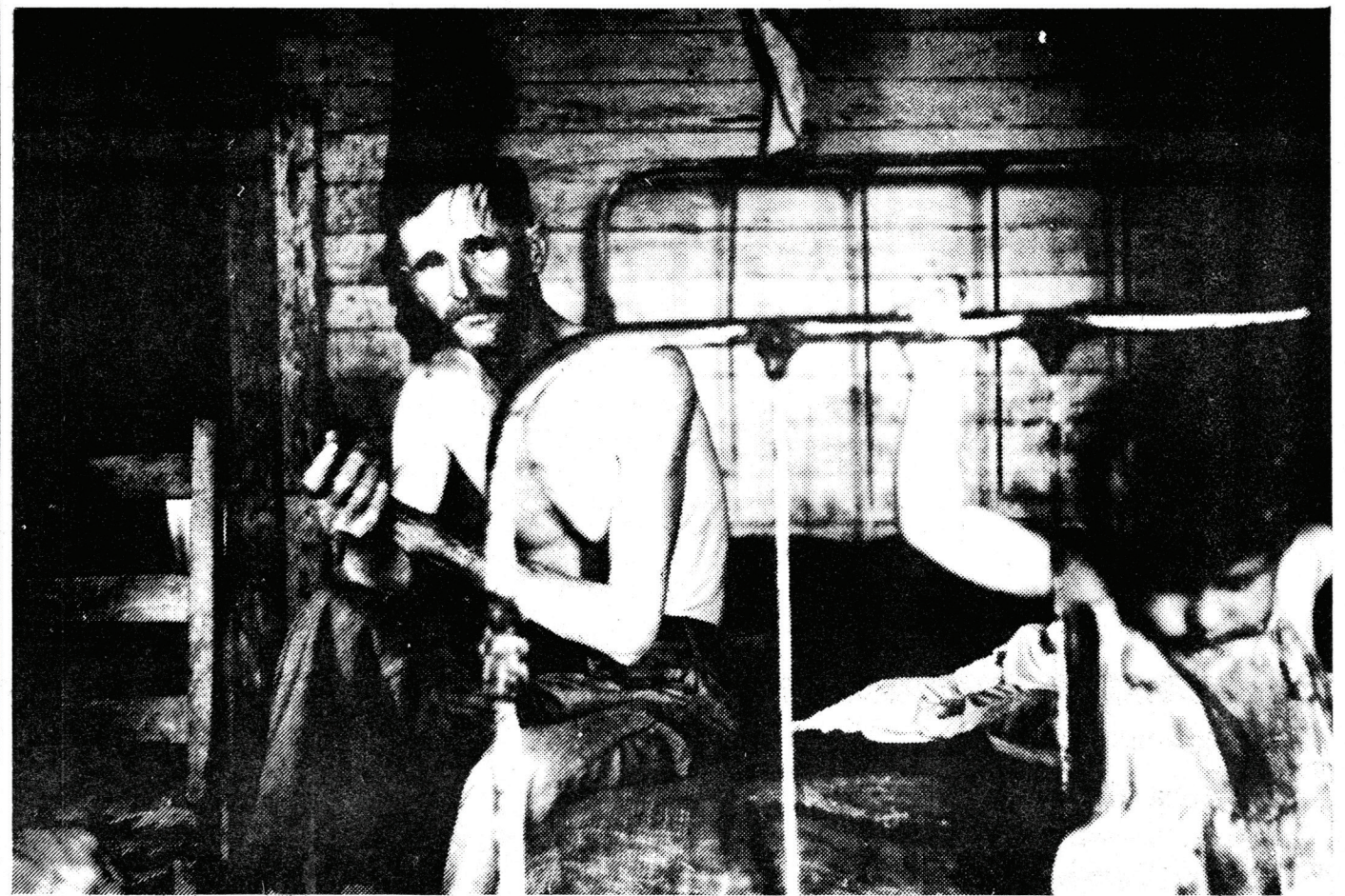
Also in 1960, in Paris, for a Festival of Avant-Garde Art, Yves Klein published his one-day newspaper, *Dimanche*, which mimicked the real life *Dimanche Soir*, and features his manifesto "Théâtre du Vide."

The newspaper format was particularly well-suited for putting forward the work of a group. In 1964, George Maciunas turned a small double-sided sheet that had been published by George Brecht two years previously into the official Fluxus organ. In its expanded, four-page, *Times*-size format, *V TRE* displays occasional poster-like announcements of concerts or pictures of past events, plus scores that can be performed and pages that can be cut up to form self-contained "editions." All material was created expressly for the printed page by contributors from all over the globe. There were nine issues of *V TRE* under Maciunas, a tenth edited by Robert Watts and Sara Seagull with Geoff Hendricks, and an eleventh edited by Hendricks, the latter in 1979.

To herald the first Bloomsday event in 1963 at the Dorothea Loehr Gallery in Frankfurt, Bazon Brock, Thomas Bayerle and Bernhard Jäger had their *Bloom-Zeitung* handed out at a major intersection of the city. This newspaper was a transformation of a common scandal paper, *Bild-Zeitung*, by the insertion of the word "Bloom" throughout the front page, with a poster double spread inside.

By the end of the decade Steve Lawrence in New York was publishing a newspaper called simply *Newspaper* that contains pictures but no text. And the artist's newspaper came full circle as a conveyor of news and gossip with the founding of both Les Levine's *Culture Hero* and Andy Warhol's *Interview* in 1969.

Discussion of newspapers inevitably leads to the issue of artist politicization in the mid and late sixties—in the United States over racism and the Vietnam War, in Europe in disgust with materialism and later in sympathy with the student movements of 1968. *Guerrilla*, "a broadside of poetry and revolution," (1966-?, number of issues unknown, begun in Detroit by John Sinclair and Allen Van Newkirk) became part of a world-wide counter-culture press. Publications such as the *East Village Other* in New York and *International Times* and *Oz* in England drew from local and international communities of artists and poets for contributions. Among the most direct political publications were the Dutch *Provo* (15 issues plus one bulletin, 1965-67) and later, the hundred or more single sheets issued by New (continued on page 7)





**AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES HENRI FORD (Continued)**

York's Guerrilla Art Action Group, which began in 1969.

Unconsciously at first, then deliberately, the self-published artwork had become a way of circumventing the entire gallery system and, taking a cue from the literary small press revolution, subverting the traditional publishing/distribution system as well. In 1962 artist Ed Ruscha published his first book, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, in an edition of 400 numbered copies. Five years later he reprinted it in an unnumbered edition of 500 copies. A third edition of 3000 copies came out in 1969. Ruscha was by then a well-known artist, whose paintings and drawings were being promoted in a major establishment gallery. His decision to keep old titles in print while regularly creating new ones was acknowledgement of the irrelevance of the limited edition.

Other artists found they could use the independent book form to supplement an exhibition, in place of a catalogue. The most famous of these was Daniel Spoerri's "catalogue" for his 1962 exhibition at the Galerie Lawrence in Paris. This unassuming little pamphlet, *Topographie Anecdotee du Hasard (An Anecdoted Topography of Chance)* used the objects on Spoerri's table at a particular moment as the springboard for a series of autobiographical musings, a text that amplifies the same concerns evident in his table-top assemblages. In addition to the original French the *Topographie* has appeared in English and German (expanded and re-anecdoted by various of the artist's friends) plus Dutch, making it, one of the most widely published artist's books.

Another example of the catalogue-as-artwork is Marcel Broodthaers' *Moules Oeuf Frites Pots Charbon (Mussels Eggs French Fries Pots Coal)*. Created for his 1966 exhibition at the Wide White Space Gallery in Antwerp, this shows the same attention to typography and layout as any of his more elaborate publications.

Taking this idea one step further implies doing away with the gallery exhibition altogether. *January 5-31, 1969* by Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, and Lawrence Weiner is just one of several publications issued by Seth Siegelaub in New York in the late sixties that takes this conceptual approach. This book is the exhibition, easily transportable without the need for expensive physical space, insurance, endless technical problems or other impediments. In this form it is relatively permanent and, more than ten years later, is still being seen by the public.

Economics played, and still plays, a large role. The "mimeo revolution" that began in the fifties provided quick, cheap and very direct methods of printing. One could even draw directly on the stencil, as Claes Oldenburg did for his *Ray Gun Poems*, one of a series of "comics" made by the participants in the 1960 Ray Gun Spex. Works could be produced frequently without subsidy, and therefore could exist outside the commercial marketplace.

Poet Ed Sanders edited and published thirteen issues of *Fuck You* magazine, plus at least fourteen other publications, plus an assortment of flyers and catalogues between 1962 and 1965. In England, Jeff Nuttall's *My Own Mag* had a run of at least seventeen issues between 1964 and 1966. Compare this with a typical publication of the early fifties. *Transformation* had been carefully typeset and offset by a regular printer, a time-consuming and expensive process. Originally planned as three issues per year, it only appeared three times in three years. And while *Fuck You* ran into serious trouble with the New York police, in which several issues were confiscated, the majority of such mimeographed publications avoided advance censorship by typesetters and printers.

Another economic short-cut is to have each artist in an anthology actually produce his or her own page in the requisite number of copies for the edition, in a predetermined size. An early example of such an "assembling"-type work is *Eter*, which was coordinated by Paul Armand Gette beginning in 1966 in Paris. Not all of the issues used this method of publication, but under somewhat different titles (*Ether*, *Eter Contestation*, *New Eter*) the magazine continued publication into the early seventies.

This article has barely touched on a whole range of other possibilities that can turn an ordinary page into alternative space. The Situationists, Group Zero and the Lettrists are only a few more of the groups that made significant use of printed matter in the two decades covered here. If any trend is discernible as one approaches the seventies, it is the tendency away from limited editions toward making work available cheaply to as many people as possible. But back in 1969, this was not so clear cut. Because of sheer quantity, efficient distribution was still a problem.

But that's another installment, so stay tuned.

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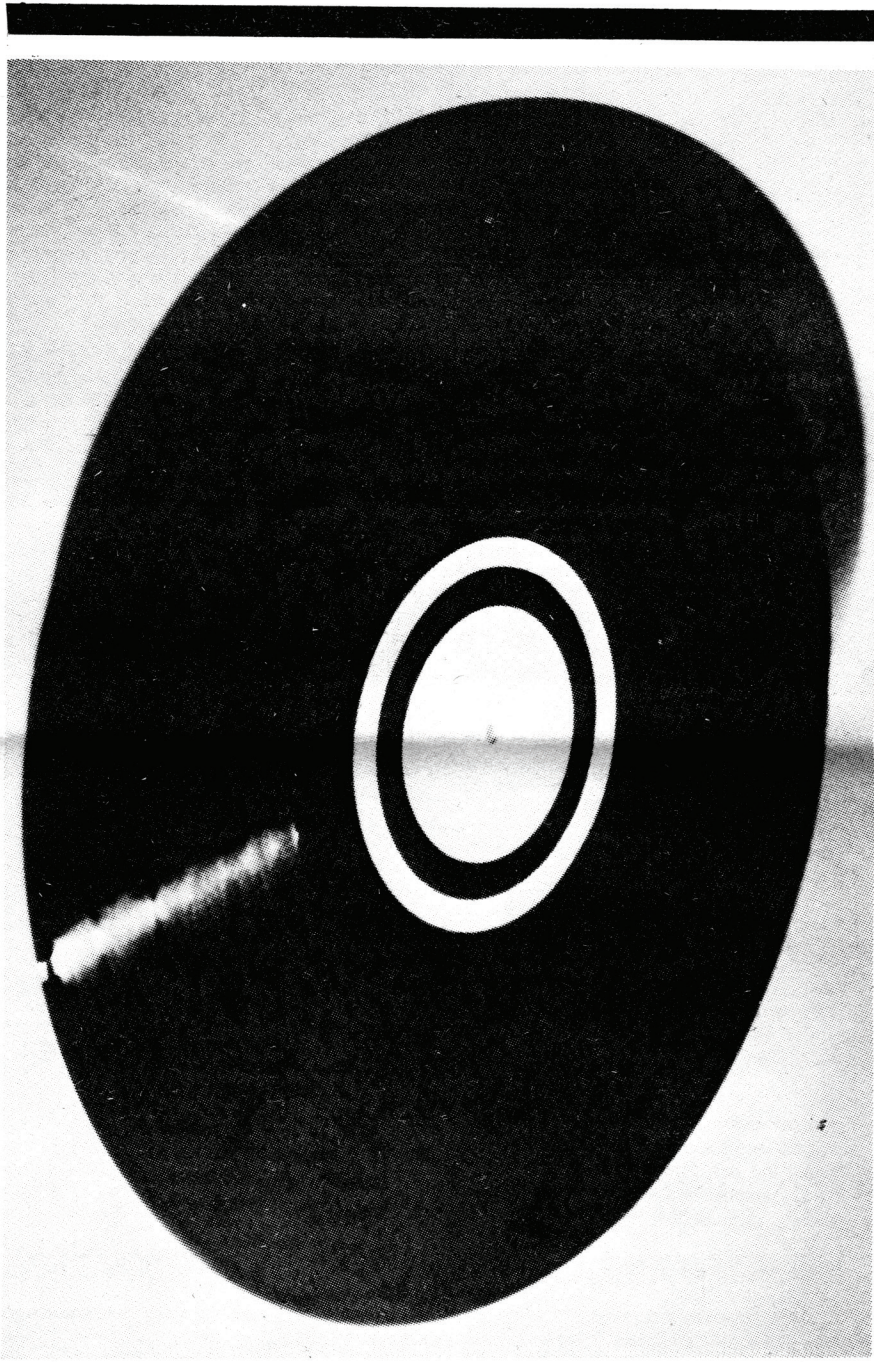
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Individual artists working in non-traditional forms who wish to be considered for installations, window works or performance dates at Franklin Furnace next season should send their proposals by April 30, 1981. Panels of artists will review proposals, and artists will be notified by June 30, 1981, of their decisions. Proposals should include a statement of intent, visual or aural representation, a resume, and other supporting materials. Please, no original visual work. Slides and photographs, 3/4" cassette tape, 1/2" reel-to-reel tapes, and Super-8 film will be accepted. Postage or a self-addressed envelope should be included for return of material.

The following works were included in an exhibition prepared by Franklin Furnace for the lobby of Citibank, 55 Wall Street, N.Y.C.

- Andre, Carl, *Eleven Poems*, 1974.
- Andre, Carl, *144 Blocks and Stones*, Portland, Oregon, 1973.
- Applebroog, Ida, *I Pretend to Know, A Performance*, 1979.
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- Clemente, Francesco, *Undae Clemente Flamina Pulsae*, 1978.
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