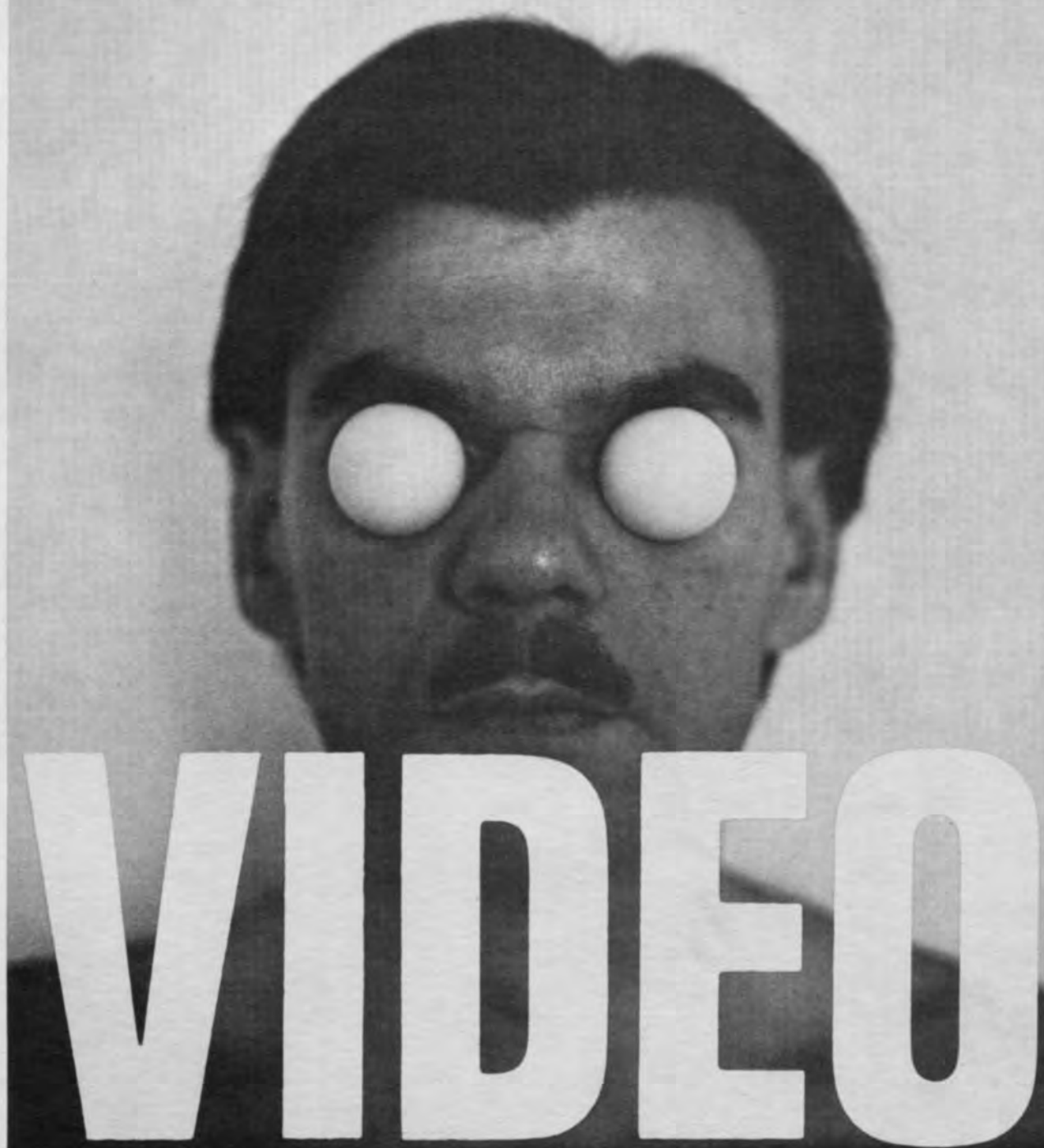


N Tom Sherman

- page 265 Tom Sherman, "Introduction," in *Video by Artists*, ed. Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1976), front cover, 4–7.
- page 270 Tom Sherman, "Promise Me Warmer Weather, ABCDE," *Art Communication Edition* 5 (Spring 1977), 24–25.
- page 272 Tom Sherman, "Writing," *FILE* 3:3 (Spring 1977), 54–55.
- page 274 Tom Sherman, "Is Scientific Thought Outrunning Common Sense?" and "They Introduced Me to My Homunculus," *Only Paper Today* 4:8 (October 1977), 14–15.
- page 277 Tom Sherman, "Writing from a Photograph by Rodney Werden," *Parachute* 9 (Winter 1977/78), 17–21.
- page 283 Tom Sherman, *1 Traditional Methodology for Processing Information* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario Extension Services, 1978).
- page 296 Tom Sherman, "The Artist Attains Ham Radio Status in an Era of Total Thought Conveyance," *Centerfold* 2:6 (Fall/September 1978), 86–92.
- page 303 Rene Blouin, "Tom Sherman: See the Text Comes to Read You," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 19–22.
- page 307 Tom Sherman, "Television as Regular Nightmare," in *Performance by Artists*, eds. AA Bronson and Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979), 149–58.
- page 318 Tom Sherman, "Are We the News?" *Centerfold* 3:3 (February/March 1979), 124–25.
- page 320 Tom Sherman, "Editorial" *Centerfold* 3:4 (April/May 1979), 148–49.

See also ...

- page 013 Susan Britton, "Poison Pen Attack Gang of Four/You Want Know About Hegemony?: Review of May issue of *Centerfold*," *Artist Review* 2:16 (May 1979), 13–14.
- page 331 "Tele-performance," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), cover, 46–57.



BY ARTISTS



INTRODUCTION

We sat there in our respective chairs waiting for the colour television to warm up. A few minutes before the network news broadcast, right after dinner with a glass of beer or a cup of coffee. Light flashes and rolls onto the screen with a voice track coming in distorted then clear, a commercial we memorized weeks ago. The automatic colour control is operating, but as usual, the tint is wrong on the people's faces. We'll wait until the news to adjust the picture. There's that familiar face. I know the colour of his skin and the set isn't coming close to delivering the correct flesh tone. I'll wait a second and maybe she'll get up and adjust the colour. He even looks worse against that new background, a slide of an airplane crash. That brought her out of her chair. She set her cup down and she is standing over the television, leaning over the picture tube as she works the controls. She is going to the contrast and brightness first. By the time she gets to the colour mixing the picture is messed up beyond belief, a dull and muddy picture. I can't understand what she thinks she is doing. She has changed the picture through her manipulation of the controls, but that newsman is farther than he has ever been from coming right into our living room. I can't believe she is sitting down. She's going to watch that picture. She's going to sit there and watch the picture she's destroyed, as if there is nothing wrong. I can't even tell what I'm looking at. There is still twenty minutes of news I could be watching. I get up out of my chair and kneel down on one knee in front of the control centre. It is going to take some tuning. This set is capable of a sharp, accurate picture if you just look at the screen and think about what you are doing. His skin is coming in, too green, too pink, a little yellow, there.

When Russ bought the house it needed plenty of work. He did those things for his family, but every time he walked into that out-building he imagined how that space would look when it was fixed up. When he and Teresa first looked at the house and yard, it was definitely the building that he wanted. Now, years later, Russ had his own world out there in his building. The small out-building had captured his imagination.

There was a dirt floor the first time he looked inside. Dirt with pieces of broken glass from those old storm windows leaning up against the back wall. He mixed the concrete right on top of the black dirt he was covering. As the cement floor dried light gray he would see the rest of the room taking shape. Working from drawings he placed his table saw and drill press, the new table tops and that whole wall of work bench. Fiberglass insulation tightened up the walls and ceiling. Its silver foil intensified the hanging lights. Incandescent lamps. There are only two windows, one in front and one in back. That was enough because of the heat loss and Russ didn't plan on spending that much daytime out there anyway.

He could go out there and make a fire in the space heater, straighten up the tools or just sit and listen to some music. He could read his books in his own good time. All those tools he had collected under one roof, no one else could lose them or leave them scattered around on the floor. It was hard all those years, watching other people misusing his tools, making a mess out of perfectly good materials. Things were different now. He could go out there and work without having to first clean up after someone else. Set up and ready to go. The routine was so beautiful. Russ could walk into his building and flick on the lights, take a few more steps to the radio pre-tuned to the station he wanted to hear, the volume was set just right. He liked his country western music in the background until he heard something he wanted to give his full attention to, then he would turn it up. If the radio was up too loud it would break his concentration. It would take him away from his work. One night in particular, when he felt real good about the way his work was going, he understood that part of the reason his night was going well was that the radio was just loud enough. He had been humming along all night, neither the DJ or the commercials had cluttered his mind. Russ used a magic marker to put a mark just where the line on that knob showed how loud the set was playing. He left the knob right there and cut the power cord to put in a line switch. After he hit the lights upon entering his building, the second move he made was to click that line switch. He knew that in less than twenty seconds those tubes would be warm and that radio would come on so nice. It would come in kind of natural, like the music was part of the air. Then he would walk across the work area and ignite the space heater. That little unit sure threw the heat.

There was a telephone there with a buzzer that Teresa could use to signal Russ when there was a call for him. One buzz for a phone call. Two buzzes for dinner. He didn't answer the phone when she was home. Most of the time it was ringing for her.

Wires ran from the house hanging across the yard in clothesline fashion, tied down high on the out-building wall with those old-style clear glass insulators. Those black wires are the telephone and power lines, that orange stranded wire is the buzzer line.

The first piece of work Russ set out to do this year was to make

up a set of voluntary handcuffs. These so-called voluntary handcuffs should be a device that would demonstrate that whenever a man knows he is unable to say how he feels, when he is shackled by something too strong to overcome, he simply has to let go, thereby breaking the binding force of his own mind.

Since Russ has worked with tools as far back as he can remember, it was natural that the device he made up was a physical object that resembled a tool. The voluntary handcuffs were two hardwood handles coupled by a heavy steel chain. Russ would take the handles, one in the firm grip of each hand, and he would try to free his arms, pulling as hard as he could in an effort to break that chain. After he had tried steady pulling, after twisting, after snapping tight the slack chain, after failing to pull out of this binding device, he could lay the voluntary handcuffs down on the table and his arms would be free.

Russ hung his voluntary handcuffs over a ten penny nail on the wall above his reading table, across the room from his other tools. That nail reminded him of something a friend once said. Ideas are ten a penny.

- A. The worm-like animal curled up in the palm of the right hand. A caterpillar named the woolly bear, the larva of the isabella moth. The long slender body is completely covered with bands of black and brown fur. Found crawling across the sand, grasped between the thumb and index finger of the left hand, the finger and thumb tightening around the tiny body, careful not to crush the mid-section of this woolly bear. Down on one knee, the left, with the elbow of the right arm resting on the thigh behind the right knee. The muscles of the left breast jerk as the left arm bends at the elbow, the forearm raising the hand, slowly positioning the insect over the open right hand. Rolling into a tight ball of black and brown fur, the woolly bear plays dead.
- B. On the hands and knees, the face down, the head in front of the body. The heels of the hands push against the ground, the knees press into the ground, the toes rest on the ground. The eyes see the ground below the head, in front of the hands. On the ground below is the caterpillar. The hands move, positioning the head over the worm-like animal. The arms bend at the elbows lowering the body; the trunk, the shoulders, the neck, and the head. Closing in on the insect larva. The head is pulled back as the nose is positioned directly over the caterpillar. The nose almost touches the larva as air is inhaled for smelling. The arms bend again, the body shifts, the toes lift, the mouth opens, the head drops, the mouth closes over the larva.

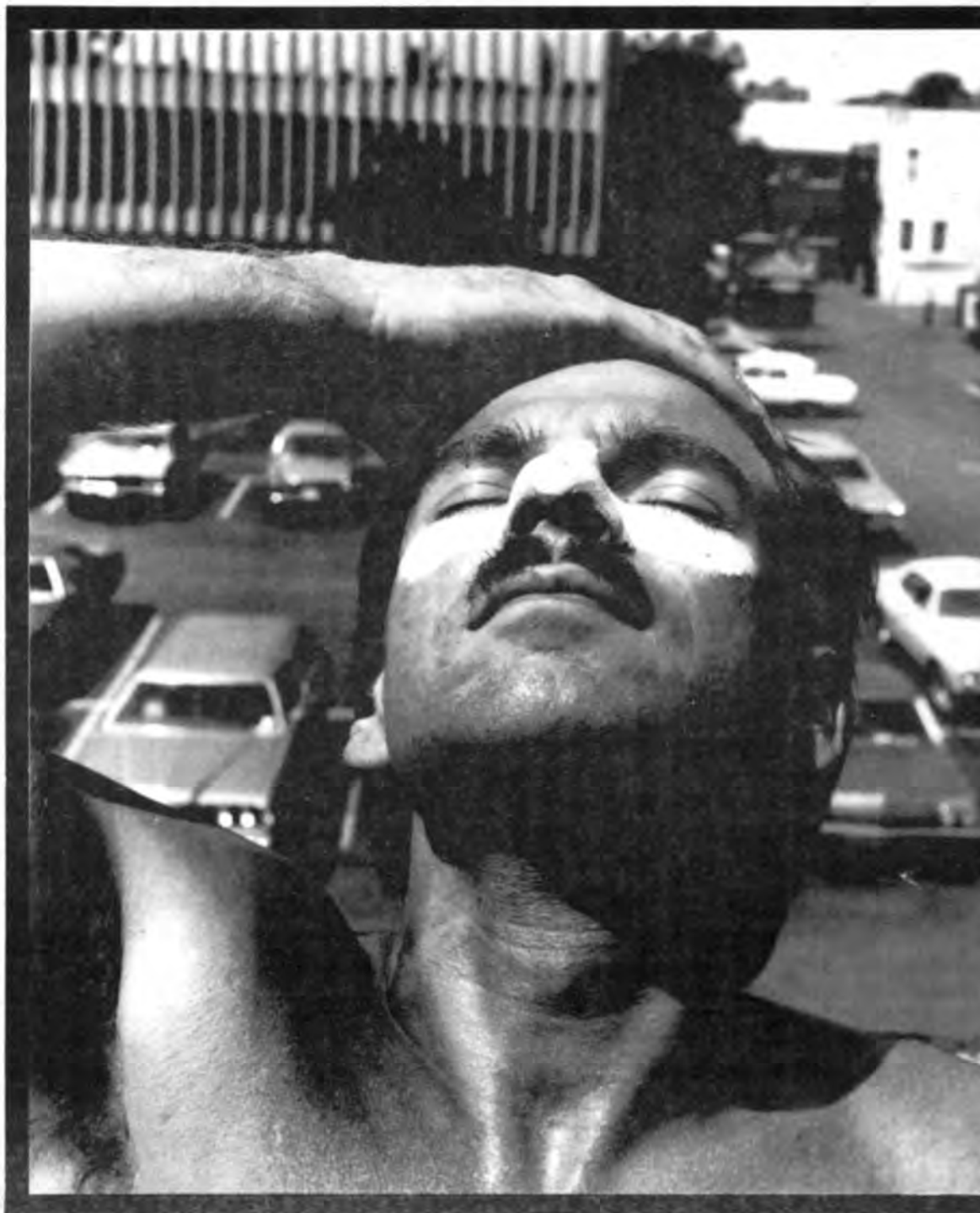
Promise me warmer weather A,B,C,D,E.


- C. The palm of the hand cupped in front of the mouth. The thumb placed outside the left nostril, the index finger placed outside the right nostril. The hand is steady holding the nose. Exhaled air from the left nostril strikes the web of skin stretched between the base of the thumb and the base of the index finger. Exhaled air from the right nostril passes across the palm striking the tip of the little finger of the left hand.
- D. The mechanical movement of the invented person. Turning the eyes back far enough to see behind the face. Finding that I know things I don't believe. Forcing air through the voice box, forming talk with the tongue, the teeth, the lips. Pulling back the lips, exposing the teeth. It happens that we believe only what has occurred before. Finding that I believe in things I know nothing about.
- E. The arms, the legs, the cock, the balls, the breasts, and the neck. The neck does resemble the other appendages of the body. At the front of the neck is the throat. Prominently displayed on the male throat is the adam's apple. Both men and women possess the adam's apple. The adam's apple is the voice box. This box is composed of muscle and cartilage at the upper end of the windpipe. The voice box houses the vocal cords and produces the raw sound of human speech. Talking through the back of the neck is talking nonsense. Lifting the chin up high, rolling the head back as far as it goes; pose the throat for biting. The lids are pulled down tight over the eyeballs. The power to picture without eyesight. You must have eyes in the back of your head. Insight is part of your vision.

Tom Sherman

© Tom Sherman

WRITING





There's instability in my self image. Jerky transitions in my mechanical method of survival. Close shaves. By the skin of my throat I get away.

Opposite page: envisioner Tom Sherman. It's easy to see what people do in their homes. In their homes they are 'home' inside an enclosure of hand-built walls. They are home comfortably reading newspapers and magazines or watching TV. When they eat they listen to music on the radio. When they talk they play records on their stereo. The ones who go to a lot of movies read novels when they stay home. Those who watch quite a bit of television love to thumb through magazines at the newsstand. People in their homes, they all get a big kick out of a good coffee table picture book.

What pisses me off is the way people tend to generalize when they don't know what they're talking about. The only way to cut through their general babble is to ask specific questions of detail. That's a good way to catch a liar, too. But those I see rambling through their entire lives locked in the general mode of conversation, they are not

necessarily dishonest people. In my case I speak in generalities when I lack the facts. Sometimes I write in the dark. With my eyes closed I miss the rich field of vision in front of my nose. Blind by my own wish I am not obsessed with the process of burrowing into pockets of detail. My fascinations I do not pigeonhole. I'm afraid I remain the cold, distant, insensitive generalist; the one with the questionable moves; sneak a glance at my slippery tongue as I state the following words from a point in my personal view: I would rather hash it up with a good liar than converse with a person who keeps still because he doesn't know. Or I run into collectors everywhere, so particular and precise their character — so warm and eccentric they are!

To appear authentic in conversation and print I enrich each sentence I pronounce with a bit of general detail; perhaps I quote a number or tell a temperature or exaggerate the adversity of conditions affecting my physical body. For instance it burns my ass to hear people advertising their '1 of a kind' identities.

TOM SHERMAN

TOM SHERMAN
IS SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT OUTFRANING COMMON SENSE?
AUGUST 1975

I told her the sky is as flat as a piece of paper. I told her it was beautiful to hear the sound of her voice once more. The idea that she was talking about planets and stars the first time we ate supper together. I had no idea what she was talking about at first. The last meal of the day finished with a coffee. We watched the sky after supper.

Hours later I'm alone in the observatory. I'm not into astrology or astronomy. I'm simply paying attention for the pleasure of observation. The understanding of the amateur. The feeling I get looking into the night sky. My shack of an observatory is placed on level ground. Just four 4x4's for corner posts with 1x10's filling in the walls of the box. A rectangular enclosure 8 feet high, no floor, no ceiling or shall we say a 4x7 foot ceiling of sky, completely unobstructed. One of the short walls is on hinges and serves as the entrance. This wall-door is hung perfectly. It opens and closes without a light leak. A fine piece of work. I shellacked every inch of the observatory and painted the outside blue-spruce green, the inside flat-black. The short sides of the observatory face Northeast and Southwest, not that it matters much, I didn't give it much thought when I sunk the posts. The door is the Northeast end. I enter, close the door behind me, bend over to help my body down with my hands. I soft land on my left side rolling over on my back to lie in a bed of pine needles under a ceiling of stars, my head opposite the door, secure. The feeling I get looking into the night. Inside it is so dark that only the patch of sky floats above.

TOM SHERMAN

THEY INTRODUCED ME TO MY HOMUNUCULUS

AUGUST 1977

Walking back to the house I looked up there it was hovering soft and silent. A good sized saucer with a white metal perfect surface. Not a mark on it, no windows, the light comes out of its walls. It climbs and dips like an animal trying to get a better look. Its movement fast as the head of a milk snake. Unhumanly fast. There is nowhere to hide. It seems to be tracking for my eye movement. As I look around for somewhere to hide its light fills the space wherever I look, instantly. I turn to run suddenly my whole field of vision is white and the ground drops out and dry heat climbs on my back as tight as a suitcoat. My feet then my head become ice cold. They fire lasers into my eyes and then they drain the extra juice off the top of my head. My frontal lobe seems to vibrate very high thought it might start to smoke smelling bad as burning rubber. My hair will fall burned out at the roots by visitors from outer space. Away from my home planet, take me away. There will be plenty of time left to fill when I get out of this. In the meantime, there is nothing I can do except open up to them. Everything is being sucked out of me. There is nothing left but pain, the inside-out-pulling apart of my body; I'm not exaggerating the pain as every part of me is flying away from my center — there is nothing left to hold on to. An electric shock rips through my flesh just short of killing me. My fingers spread all the way out as far away from my bulging pounding heart as they can be. A soft whirring sound comes up inside my chest. My liver vibrates at 50 Hertz. The rest of my organs oscillate but my liver makes the sound. From the cavity of my chest I transmit to them a symphony of information as my guts are shaken to death. Before *it's time to get out of here* crosses my mind I find in front of my eyes a miniature copy of me standing in thin white air. It is moving as I move. It appears to be some form of video though it is 3-D and very clear. The color reproduction is perfect. I'm a little brighter in this form. The figure radiates a light that immediately seems to me to be the result of the compression of my body into this diminutive life form. It is me, there is no way around it. What am I supposed to think, that I cannot believe my own eyes? Having never before been in the state I find myself in, I have to explain it to myself somehow. From my present point of view, this point in space, this moment in time, I find myself unable to find any part of my physical body except this diminutive living replica of myself. They have taken my body from me. All I have left is my consciousness. From where I'm at it's impossible to measure the height of this smaller version of me in centimetres. Against this white there is no way to determine accurate scale. I stare into my own face. My face is empty. Eye muscles exhausted, I have given up. He stares, I stare into my eyes. We, I look up. Self-examination begins as they monitor and record.

s'appelle Dominique Thiolat.

R.P. On peut dire que la puissance de la peinture américaine s'est développée d'abord, et peut-être plutôt, à travers les expériences de la peinture abstraite. Mais il y a malgré tout aux États-Unis ce deuxième front de la modernité revendiqué par la figuration tout aussi "moderniste". Si on examine l'histoire de la peinture française (Impressionnisme, Fauvisme, Cubisme, Surréalisme...) l'abstraction, plus faible, est laissée entre parenthèses et la peinture trouve sa force en restant dans les limites de la figuration. Même aujourd'hui encore, et je pense ici par exemple à l'art que Marc Le Bot défend depuis déjà un certain temps, il semble que ce soit une caractéristique de la peinture française de s'attacher à la figuration.

C.M. — Je ne sais pas si je vois la situation tout à fait de la même façon, bien que je trouve très intéressant ce que vous dites. Moi, ce qui me frappe souvent, c'est qu'en Europe, en France, les avant-gardes, qu'elles soient figuratives ou abstraites, ont toujours nié celles d'en face. Les abstraits disent: "il n'y a plus de figuration possible", et les figuratifs disent: "L'abstraction cela s'est fait durant 20 ans au début du siècle et maintenant c'est épuisé...". Chacun détient sa vérité et exclut l'autre. Ce qui n'est pas du tout le cas chez les Américains: De Kooning et Barnett Newman sont, l'un figuratif avec des passages abstraits, l'autre très abstrait, et en même temps contemporains et pas considérés comme forcément incompatibles. Jasper Johns est-il un peintre figuratif ou abstrait? En tous cas, il a influencé Stella qui est un peintre abstrait. Et ce sont les mêmes gens qui s'intéressent à Stella et à Warhol. Il n'y a donc pas cette exclusion mutuelle que l'on connaît en Europe. Je trouve que là contradiction figure-abstraction est encore vive, alors qu'en France on a plutôt tendance à la nier. Les Américains me semblent avoir une position plus juste: les deux tendances sont là, se répondent, se contredisent, et la situation est plus dynamique.

R.P. Justement, c'était peut-être ce que percevait J. Kristeva en faisant le bilan de son passage aux États-Unis en disant qu'il y avait cette qualité, ce côté hétérogène aux États-Unis qui permettait à toute forme, aussi opposée soit-elle aux autres, de co-exister. Mais est-ce que le fait de cette acceptation du multiforme et de l'hétérogène n'est pas une annulation du rapport critique qu'il y a entre les deux?

C.M. — En tous cas disons que c'est le mode de penser et le mode de travailler le plus libéral que l'on connaisse aujourd'hui. Toute attitude exclusive me semble suspecte. Je crois que l'on est dans une époque où il faut penser les contradictions et les entretenir plutôt que de vouloir les éviter.

R.P. Et c'est l'option que ART PRESS INTERNATIONAL a prise, d'être libéral?

C.M. — Oui, pour faire l'auto-critique d'ART PRESS, je crois que l'on est effectivement plus ouvert, plus libéral et plus contradictoire même, d'une façon dynamique, que l'on ne l'a été à une époque. Je crois qu'il y a eu une époque d'ART PRESS, au tout début, où on était très circonscrit par le propos que l'on tenait, que l'on avait une politique très stricte. Les choses ont changé, on fait intervenir d'autres opinions, parce que ces opinions existent, qu'elles nous posent des questions et que l'on a envie d'y répondre. Je crois qu'il y a eu une évolution d'ART PRESS de ce point de vue-là.

R.P. Et qui est reçue comment dans le milieu parisien?

C.M. — Plutôt positivement. Quand j'ai téléphoné à Alain Jouffroy et à Jean Clair pour leur dire que je voulais les interviewer, ils étaient étonnés mais ravis en même temps. Et justement nous en avons discuté: après mai 68 nous avons tous été très crispés sur nos positions politiques et esthétiques — souvent cela se recoupait — et celui d'en face était un ennemi, etc. En ce moment, toutes les utopies et les croyances se

trouvant un peu relativisées, on a tendance à assouplir les positions et à rechercher plutôt le dialogue.

R.P. Art Press manifestait dès les débuts une préférence évidente pour la peinture plutôt que pour les autres tendances de l'art à cette époque-là, le body art ou la vidéo, est-ce que cela persiste encore?

C.M. — Cela persiste en tous cas au niveau de mon choix personnel. Les choses qui m'intéressaient sont encore les choses qui m'intéressent. Pourquoi est-ce que ce sont plutôt des peintres que des non-peintres qui m'intéressent? Je crois que c'est parce que les peintres, entre l'inedit de leur expression et l'histoire, essaient d'établir une sorte de rapport dialectique qui a complètement disparu des autres types de pratiques néo-dadaïstes, et que pour moi il est important de garder ce contact avec l'histoire et avec la culture pour justement la repenser sans cesse. Si on ne la repense pas, si on fait comme si elle n'existait plus, elle continue néanmoins à exister et elle pèse d'autant plus, et on en est d'autant plus facilement la victime. Je crois que les peintres, en particulier les peintres abstraits aujourd'hui, sont plus à même de penser cette histoire qu'un artiste du body art par exemple.

R.P. Bon, c'est juste que le body art ne peut se penser par rapport à une histoire puisqu'il est relativement

nouveau; même s'il ne peut se situer par rapport à d'autres types de body art, il peut se situer par rapport à la culture. En disant de l'art peint qu'il peut se situer par rapport à la culture, c'est qu'il y a déjà une histoire de la peinture derrière, sans faire référence à une sociologie générale. Cette définition de la culture, elle est la culture cultivée, mais le comportement du body art se situe malgré tout par rapport à une culture.

C.M. — Vous voulez m'obliger à prendre des positions extrêmes, et je ne le veux pas. J'ai dit mes préférences, ce qui me semble être le plus porteur de chances. Ce que je regrette un peu à propos des démarches néo-dadaïstes, c'est qu'elles sont simplement des déversoirs, l'individu raconte son histoire, petite histoire familiale, névrotique, etc, sans essayer de prendre une distance par rapport à elle. Et cela me semble dommage, car notre travail à nous en tant qu'intellectuels, en tant qu'artistes, c'est d'explicitier, de dialectiser, d'analyser, toute une dimension qui me paraît souvent assez écourtée dans ces démarches non picturales. Ceci dit, il y a des gens dans ce domaine qui m'intéressent aussi beaucoup en raison justement de leur personnalité.

Montréal, le 25 novembre 1977.

TOM SHERMAN

This ORIGINAL COPY (made with words) of a photograph remains all it is or will ever be, a written picture text.

It is certainly not the photograph it mimics.

Standing here on its own without its photographic inspiration, the picture text comes up blind in relation to all there is to see in the actual photographic print.

Another person makes the picture with a photograph first, then gives it to the writer.

The words come from looking into the 8 X 10.

To you it is presented as art often is, incomplete, without evidence of its inspiration.

If you have never seen with your naked eyes what the words represent, you will never find enough in this picture text to take you to full sight of the image described. Full sight, in this case, is no more than a figure of speech as visual memory of a site will very rarely be equivalent to on-the-spot eyewitness observation. Complete failure to represent a photograph with a picture text can be explained in this way: it is as if the words fail to summon to your mind a picture common to your own experience.

As has been previously stated, the words come from the photograph itself (an 8 X 10 inch paper object), not from a person or place represented by the photograph.

The writer has not been to the site of the photograph, nor has the writer met the person or persons in the photograph.

There is a distance here the writer prefers to keep.

The distance the writer mentions is between the words and the subject of photographic attention.

This distance is between the actual site of the photograph and the written picture text.

1. Beginning with the photograph and ending with the picture text; 2. The conversion of photographic abstraction into written abstraction; 3. The formal transformation of the photograph into the written text. This process naturally includes the individual perception of the writer. Let us not forget the individual perception of the photographer in the previous transformation of site into photographic print.

Within the relationship of these abstractions, the picture text is written to reach a value equivalent to the photograph. In other words, the writer must write enough picture text in quantity and quality to form an original copy equivalent to the photograph.

This delicate balance of abstractions ideally produces a newly formed whole concept and object, the result of the consummation of picture text and photograph.

If the writing and the photograph are not precisely balanced, there will be no newly formed whole concept and object.

Negative writing/positive photograph = writing becomes caption for the primary information vehicle (the photograph).

By pushing the source material (in this case, the subject of photographic attention) through two successive media transformations, 1. source material to photograph, 2. photograph to picture text; then offering this information in a finished collaborative statement (a whole perceptual model combining the representational work of two separate individuals) the writer and the photographer arrive at a finished work involving the neutral observer (the third person in) in the act of deciphering (viewing and reading) this double abstraction, this consummate treatment of source material.

In more ways than one would assume, the third person experiences a visible, readable definition of reality as a relationship.

Look with the eyes so closely that you can't hear the room.
You cannot hear the sound of the room. Just what you see.
Sweeping over the surface. Focus. Motion in changing directions,
staggering through reflection and shadow. Jerk away from point-
blank, the off-centre vision pouring over that point of focus,
in travel, occupation in the flow toward that attraction,
under pull, a velocity apparently unburdened by the heavy head
bones — the fleshy face. The eye muscles stretch then lock in
one constant dimension; the organs of sight spread out to the
walls, pushing out the skin away from the flesh. This extended
skin makes a face that disintegrates in the air.

On the Paper

Off-centre in sight-seeing. A plot of window screen, the frame of white pine with shellac. The aluminum screen supports a mass of housefly larva-maggots, legless, pale, a white island of young flies. Just centimetres away adult flies land. These flies walk then stand still. Compound eyes protrude from the head. A sharp cut, shift to mid-air, the sphinx moth approaches — attaches itself to screen, the feather antennae stirring the air in irregular circular patterns, feelers to the nerve clusters. Large patches of screen with no animal motion. Sight pulled off a bare spot of screen, placed on the underside of the moth's thick abdomen. Back across the screen into this white island, the fly eggs laid on a wire mesh. The motion of hatching, falling out of the eggshell, rolling into humid air, dropping hard on the white pine, all the weight on the board. The eyesight shoots off the board up into the screen, the eye penetrates the screen, picking up the body a few inches off the surface, flying the moth pulls away backwards. Trace a light mark absorbed by the dark.

. . . . Off the Screen

©1975 Tom Sherman

Tom Sherman Writing from a Photograph by Rodney Werden. Werden's photograph (below). Sherman's picture text (opposite page) was written from the photograph itself. Initial collaboration, Toronto, June 1977. Performed by Sherman, voice over image, Optica, Montreal, November 1977.



If she walked up and stood right there where she is standing, only with the television on, the picture on the screen would collapse into snow, the voice or music would be lost in the noise. Because of the incredible sensitivity of the entire signal detection circuit, the close presence of her body would block at least part of the electromagnetic energy entering the room from the transmitter a good 6 or 7 kilometres off camera. Ghosting on television, her pale double image appearing on the screen as a white shadow. The line across her stomach. The mark left by the tight elastic of her panty hose. The look remains with her see-through bra. The long thin fingers of her hand on her hip. Below her navel a line of dark hairs run into her bikini panties. She leans back slightly. Her hand stands on top the television at the base of the antenna. Do not put nails in the walls, the lease says. There's a fur monkey and a basket of bananas. If her parakeet flew in the picture, it would naturally land on the

top shelf next to the bottle with the plant growing out of it. Not exactly cluttered shelves; storebought shelves for apartment living. They hold the books she wants to keep. She checks all the screens and she locks both doors. Then she lets her bird fly around the apartment free. The bird is a he. He likes to perch on the shade of that little lamp on the TV. From the lampshade he squawks when the TV is on. If you turn up the TV you turn up him. Most of the time when he is free, from her shoulder he pecks at her long hair for as long as she'll let him. A partial double exposure, more about the pose in a split-second, the sharp leaves of a potted palm appear in the top corner above the portable aluminum easel. She paints in oils when she can find the time. She paints on canvas boards about the same size as her television screen. She works in soft warm colours you'll never see on television. She never paints with the television on.

“BY INTEGRATING INFORMATION
OBTAINED BY REMOTE SENSING TECHNIQUES
INTO OUR EVERYDAY LIVES
WE EXPAND OUR INDIVIDUAL PERSONAGE
DANGEROUSLY THIN I’M AFRAID
UNTIL THE POINT WHERE ONLY
A VIRTUAL ACCOUNT OF THE TOTAL SUM
OF INFORMATION GATHERED
BY OUR VAST SENSORY EXTREMITIES
IS FAIR HANDLE FOR OUR PERSONA
CHILDREN ARE HARD TO SEE IN THIS WAY”

1 TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY
FOR PROCESSING INFORMATION

BY TOM SHERMAN

UNDER THE INFLUENCE
OF BRIAN MOLYNEAUX
AND JAY YAGER

PRESENTED BY
ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO
EXTENSION SERVICES

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1 TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY FOR PROCESSING INFORMATION was initiated as a Special Project of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Extension Services to coincide with the 10th International Sculpture Conference held in Toronto, May 31 to June 4, 1978. In its entirety, the project consists of three separate but inter-related components: a sculpture exhibited on the main level of the Metropolitan Toronto Library, May 31 to June 30, 1978; a tabloid newspaper-like catalogue; and a lecture-performance by the artist at the Art Gallery of Ontario, June 1, 1978.

The components of 1 TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY FOR PROCESSING INFORMATION were produced by the artist specifically for this project; the sculpture created to fit both the space and the context of the Metropolitan Toronto Library; the catalogue to reflect a period of thinking focused on the information provided by the sculpture; and the lecture-performance to further elaborate and clarify the work.

I wish to thank the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board for its co-operation in providing space for the exhibition. I am grateful to Nancy Hushion, Head of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Extension Services for her encouragement and full support as the project developed from its conceptual to realized state. My thanks also to the many other members of the Art Gallery of Ontario staff whose help was at all times invaluable.

Elke Town
Special Projects Officer
Art Gallery of Ontario, Extension Services

In addition, Brian Molyneaux wishes to acknowledge the Ontario Heritage Foundation for their support of his Lake of the Woods Petroglyph Project (Kennedy Island petroglyph photographs).

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1 TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY FOR PROCESSING INFORMATION.

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I overheard myself listening to what it was he had to say. We had already begun to establish clear patterns of speech in our regular conversations. I had started meeting him once a week to talk about ideas. I mean we had some projects we were talking about, we had agreed on some immediate practical goals, but it was good to have an excuse to talk with him. We were at the point in our relationship where we were stirring each other up pretty good, working out some compromises. 'I'll be you—will you be me?' sort of considerations. We were thinking a lot about what we would say all through the week(s) of our separation, the 5, 6 or 7 days before we would talk again. We spent the week thinking through the ideas we would present to each other in our next discussion. But recently, there had occurred a change. In 1 of our last talks, I found I was overhearing myself listening to what he had to say. I wasn't listening to him in the same way I had been in the beginning, when everything he said was without precedent in our conversational history. No, he had begun to repeat himself. Maybe there was something he felt he had to stress through repetition in order to get it into my head. (1) Maybe I was making him say the same things over and over.

A collector he used to be himself. At 1 time or another he had a collection of insects, a collection of voices on vinyl or magnetic tape, a collection of stories clipped from the newspapers and magazines. Curious objects. To look at the order of things as they stand. What do the ideas in these sentences have in common? They are not much of everything.

I now called him the man who killed spiders to see what they looked like. A precise collector of the tiny animals of his workshop. The various arachnids. These spiders were found dead and mounted as skeletons, to look at. He found their remains under his workbench. There are probably thousands of spider skeletons under his wooden benches. That's a fair number. He has a clean shop with a concrete floor. The spiders love it. He presses the tiny skeletons between sheets of clear adhesive acetate, taking care to mount their delicate bodies intact. Then he cuts out rectangles of 'spider acetate' large enough to become the windows of 35mm transparencies. He makes the spiders into colour slides and projects them with a standard 35mm slide projector. He projects light through them to make



their image on his wall. To make them larger so he can see them better. Actually, I have a note from him about this activity of his.

He (Yager) writes: These animals share my working space. They work too and die and become my work, or part of it. The slide-device for miniaturizing information and storing it to be recalled by means of the projector to something near its normal scale in this case is 'crypt' for a miniature life form which when projected becomes mythic.

I do not write for a secret society. I have a private life as everyone has, but I do not conspire to overthrow. The inconsistencies exhibited in my work are not meant to purposefully confuse. My moves are not all well thought out. There are things I do for the hell of it. There are things I would like to do that I'll never get around to doing, because of my self-consciousness. Things I would be embarrassed to admit. Yes, there are secrets. There are things I think about that I will never tell anybody else. These thoughts I keep from the very closest people. These thoughts I keep to myself.

I met him 1 night at a friend's house. He was sitting by himself on the other side of the room. There were 4 or 5, yes, there were 5 of us listening to some new music. A couple of kids were there who had just cut a record. And they had just done a concert on TV and they were in the process of changing their act after having seen the broadcast of the concert the night before. Haircuts, clothes, language, taste in music, the complete overhaul. These were the

new records. They had gone out and bought 20 albums (exactly 20, I counted them myself) and they were needle dropping, mentally 'clipping' the cuts they found interesting. The host of this home survey of the music industry, he was a TV talent scout. Nice place. Good sound system. Big screen Japanese colour television. The guy liked his music frequency-rich at full volume. He spent his days and nights reading literally every trade paper and magazine he could lay his hands on, both at home and at his office desk. He'd read in complete silence for about 2½ hours and then he'd jump up to pull a disc to table it, cue it, and with a cigarette smoking in his lips, his hands would fall to his sides as he sampled his favourite metal guitar work 'neat' as the lick was launched with a beautifully square attack slamming him instantly into 130 decibels of very dirty sound. He'd push his amp all the way through its spec-sheets and he'd melt under the weight of the whole shifting spectrum as his ear absorbed the blast recoiling just a quiver as the delicate drum membrane was held by the solo run in absolute shock—inner ear taut, impressed, excited, withstanding the shower of power, receiving the charge. The force of the music a gale wind filling, almost ripping the tissue sail. Then he'd cut the tail of the lick with his headphone switch. The sounds' memory a warm flush on the face as a dry cool chill runs up the spine shaking out of the skin whipping the hair at the back of the neck. I hung around with him a couple of afternoons and this aspect of his behaviour made me very nervous. But to get back to this particular evening, when I met the man sitting on the other side of the room. We were all smoking and drinking and talking between cuts and he wasn't. He was watching the TV, which was on a

game show with the sound off, I found him somehow from across the room, our eyes met and I went over and sat with him and asked him what he did when he wasn't watching TV. He told me he was interested in rock art. I asked him to clarify. He was a photographer. A rock photographer? No, I'm a prehistoric art historian. Is that so, I'm very interested in art history myself. 20th Century. Eastern Europe. He began to explain to me that his kind of art history couldn't be obtained from books. As far as he was concerned, there were far too many expeditions left untaken. At this time, we have so much recording to do. It is not time to draw conclusions. Our data is nowhere near the complete picture. I asked him if he would show me the papers he writes. Here's a paragraph from 1 of them:

To make the petroglyphs visible for recording, a method was sought that avoided the problem of subjective interpretation. The recorder should not determine the form of the glyph by any selective visual method such as tracing or filling the glyphs with chalk or charcoal. Anati (1975) recommends a 'neutral' method: a white pigment is sprayed or painted over the rock face; and then blacking is rubbed over the surface plane, leaving all indentations untouched and clearly visible. For the present project (Lake of the Woods Petroglyph Project, 1978), a variation of this method using non-permanent and non-abrasive materials was developed. In this way, the site could be returned to its original condition with no chance of environmental damage. From previous experiments conducted at Kennedy Island in 1973 by the writer (in this paragraph, Molyneaux), ordinary all-purpose flour is swept from the surface, it collects in the pits and grooves in the rock and exposes the petroglyphs. On sites where the surface is naturally pitted or broken up, it may be necessary to selectively brush out the surface around clearly defined glyphs in order to increase their visibility. When recording is finished, the site is flooded with water and washed down with coarse sponges.

(4) Another reference to the essential enterprise. Please find here a list of 11 component concerns. I hesitate to list these disparate affairs alphabetically or numerically, as I do not wish to imply a strict hierarchical line of order to this sequence of equivalent considerations.

A10. The essential enterprise is in the field of human relations with contemporary and future time designated as directions of the highest priority. B9. Don't ever point your finger at a rainbow. For after you've

pointed at 1, you'll probably watch it disappear. C8. Please don't believe everything you read. D7. When you find you can hold your own head in the palm of your hand, you can watch your mind work, from behind, as behind is just 1 word standing in for all-over or everywhere-outside, but the word under would work just as well except for the body, and that can be chased away by the mind. The hair and the flesh will soon disappear. Whereas deeper in time, the skull becomes transparent. Your brain a 4-dimensional model or a holistic paradigm as you watch your head talk. E6. As the governing body quickly purges all action stepping beyond its definition of freedom, as the animals lay low in the darkened rooms of sweat-salted flesh, we as a people find our best imaginations lost in the loins of conceptual sex. F5. As a child the man used to cut the heads off of houseflies with the point of the largest blade of his jack-knife. They would fly away after their heads were cut off, but they would only stay in the air for 30 or 40 seconds G4. Flies bite more before a rain. H3. I killed the blue racer when I was 11. Me and a buddy chased it across the grass into the street where I ran it down and squashed its head with my boot. It was over a metre long and it kept right on moving through a great deal of stomping. We hung its limp body head down from the low branch of a good sized oak over by the river. The next morning was real warm and sunny and there were tiger swallowtails, a couple of beauties feeding in the dead racer's skin. Overnight it had become a crooked snake as it had stiffened up. I2. Only the shy animals remain. The only 1's smart enough to stay out of the way. They lived with an awareness of those above them in the chain of command. They went about their business, never exhibiting trust. J1. Of course, this set of words has a most impressive spot in the sequence, the tail end of this lengthy thought. Its natural position grants it excellent opportunity for summary. It could be the key to the thought that will 1 day unlock the door of the dwelling of the strongest resistance. Enter the terminal statement on the sudden relocation of members of a particular species of political animal. These specimens are said to have fallen under the will of the people. As if we have the time to crack the code. Think about the image they project. For if we could understand their language, we could pass judgement on their treatment of the existing subject matter. We could cross their imaginary borders. We could walk through their concrete walls. We could eliminate priorities for the first in line. Think about the simplicity of their actions. K0. The snake moves, the spider stands still.

The scale of your endeavour does not matter. I used to think how great I was while focusing the rays of the sun. I used to spend hours burning ants with a magnifying glass. They would run fast from the heat on their tail. I would burn them alive before they could make it back to their hill. Then I'd wait, my sun out of focus on their ground. I'd wait for the others to come out of their hole. I'd set a candy bait for them, wet from my mouth. Then eyes would wander into the grass. When I was tired of killing ants, I would burn leaves in half, my dissection through the straightest line I could burn with my steady hand. I loved cutting with light.

My stylus needs replacing. My needle is worn down so bad. My records are making horrible noise where there used to be music. I'm drinking too much coffee. I have to keep that edge. I've got some papaya tablets that are keeping my stomach together. I've been using the same coffee filter for about a week now. I ran out last Tuesday. I put a note up on my board. (3) There's a bug on my phone. It's too cold to go outside.

He was very concerned with what I took his photographs to mean. I told him I wanted his photographs only for the way they looked. My words would tie in with his pictures in very loose knots. In fact, they would be apparently unrelated, except for their immediate physical proximity. Their presumably intimate relationship prior to your entry. You, the reader, are last to come in. But you are never too late in respect to things like these.

By integrating information obtained by remote sensing techniques into our everyday lives, we expand our individual personage dangerously thin, I'm afraid, until the point where only a virtual account of the total sum of information gathered by our vast sensory extremities is fair handle for our persona. Children are hard to see in this way. If their thought is favoured, it is said only through their name and those appropriate facial expressions. Those affirmative looks. But as we look in on the adult following his nose, we do not necessarily discern his muse to be a beautiful form of information. We want him to remodel his thoughts before his public address, although it is common in history to see our animal memory fired by odours plain and fancy. His recollection is most certainly switched on by his sense of smell.



Basically starting out here, these photographs have become references for our thoughts. Thoughts transmitted and thoughts received. Thoughts in the bank. These photographs were taken, or these pictures were made by others, not for me specifically or intentionally, but they fell into my hands, nevertheless. I found myself looking at them all the time. For something other than an image of myself. For the history they have behind them cannot very well be mine. Even now, I am easily lost just off their familiar surface. They have become unspoken titles for my redundant thoughts. They transmit words to me from the outside in. I first recognized the singular direction of their constant force as they pulled me in to hold me tight, my eyes pouring over their obvious illusions, my talking to myself with pictures, my subsequent conversations with the photographers themselves. They say I say a lot, professing to know little more than you, about the subject matter their photographs contain.

These photographs of ancient wonders, they are not Charlie Chaplin's body. I can tell you that for sure. For the luxury of that thought, I'm feeling quite obscure. Since his remains disappeared without a trace a few months back, I've scanned all the papers for any near sight of his corpse. Where could he be? Perhaps some loved 1 took him to be frozen. Some still hold on to the notion of suspended animation. Maybe a team of very professional scientists could have been seen lifting his body onto the preconditioning table of a cryogenics lab. Could be they popped him into 1 very expensive vat of cryogen. Yes, Chaplin might be somewhere floating in the exotic suspension of a liquid gas. This elemental fluid must be especially

cold for the potentially huge sum of money his party had to pay. Imagine if they could really bail him out of death. As if he had the time to worry his final days over 1 last chance at immortality.

At this point in the text, I have to admit, I have committed a gross error. I'm guilty of expressing my basically ignorant perceptions of this extremely popular body-snatching. I've lost control of myself. I'm guilty of letting my imagination run away with me for a minute, causing my line of thought to veer from its responsible position in the sense of maintaining close observance of the actual events and the accurate conditions of the world I live in. It has been pointed out to me by a friend that Charlie Chaplin's body was stolen from its grave 2 full months after he was buried. Graverobbers carried his body away in his coffin. He was in the ground for all of January and February, so his decomposition would have been naturally held to a minimum. He was probably cleaned up, his features restored cosmetically, his body beautifully mummified for display in some fancy cold storage vault already protecting fox and mink in the basement of a modern day castle in Switzerland. His body placed erect in an undeniably authentic pose on the well dressed set of his shrine behind the false wall. The rare guests may wear the furs if they take a chill while viewing. (7)

The letters I've been sending to New York haven't been getting there. They're opening my mail before it leaves the country. A lot of my things aren't getting through. I'm sick and tired of running my own personal investigation of their national security net. I keep track of what gets through

and, more importantly, what it is that doesn't make it. In my own way I'm attempting to define the creative limits of the law we all live under today. I'll only send you photocopies from now on. No more original copies. I can't afford the time it takes to rewrite my most important letters. (2) Besides, it's impossible to recreate these confidential messages exactly, at any cost.

The stunning complexity of the mathematical metaphor. We should celebrate vehemently our successful conversion of the world into numbers. As you may be able to predict your next afternoon's thought by working through this lettered formula, please take note that you are not the first to be manipulated by a written text. Nor will you be the last. Words representing pictures, in ocular vision these characters will cost you plenty. You will be at a loss unless you can follow your mind into something you can see.

At this point, your pure conjecture will net you nothing more than the biggest take imaginable. In this case, I'll have to take a plunge. I'll wager the distance takes everything home. I'm not staking claim on the whole shooting match, but I am 1 of the reasons we are here on this page in the first place. This reason, be it mere personality, could it not be something just as abstract as the unlimited dimensions we are submitting ourselves to presently? If it were not for the money, it would have to be that we have nothing better to do. But we all have to eat. And listen to our babies cry if we don't feed them. We all have our work to do, whether or not we can make it pay off emotionally, intellectually, spiritually or monetarily. Of course, some of you would definitely prefer hard cash over the insecurity of a sentimental journey. Just as some of you would like to read an array of cool calculated facts right now to back the big mouth behind this operational model of the aggressively passive artist with words.

With my front window open, I take in the new air of the morning wind. Here I find myself again, sitting through the early hours of the day with the duldest head of my personal version of common caffeine withdrawal. I never mind what it does to my heart. The drug caffeine. The wind blowing in from the West with the darkest low pressure sky. It'll be the first real thunderstorm of the spring. It comes just in time to break this depression of mine. I've lost my body. I have to start moving around outside. I badly need

some physical exercise. So I can feel my body. I'm having trouble seeing the things I love. It's later than I think. My mind searching in a backward phase, running through the same well-worn channels. The things I love have lost their sting. I wish for the heaviest downpour to bury my dead reasoning in the soft white sound of the rain on the street. But by the time you connect with me here, I'll be able to see you in a different light, as you will be here with me once more. Positively. This summer, I'll wait for you here.

The array of objects on the floor transmits a message. The word message, as it is used in this case, should not imply that this communication has a point or a moral or that there is specific meaning in this particular gesture of my exhibition. I have merely placed before you an array of things, information in themselves as physical objects, information in their whole as I have ordered them, information as the photographic images of 2 men having never before met in any way, shape or form or in any previous stretch of our imaginations. This information is laid out before you as reference for the thoughts we may or may not share. The parts or the whole may be best viewed as you the individual deem advisable. Your vision is the limit. In my opinion, naturally biased as hell, there may be enough message here to mediate our thoughts across the entire space we find between us.

In this space we now inhabit, a referential space surrounding these images, here we have these primary objects of transmission represented on the surface of this paper as pictures printed in black ink. From this body of written language, the energy of the transmission streams out from the centre, the ideas circulating freely in roughly concentric waves of thought, the signal spreading, the information flowing away from the centre to you. This flow sounds something like advertising theory on the surface, but did you ever try to sell little dead spiders or take home a picture beaten into a huge rock by an Indian? Have you ever taken either of them out of their absolutely perfect environment? For even a minute? For our purposes, please take the dead spiders away from the prehistoric art in your mind. Or surmise that the spiders' skeletons must be found at the prehistoric site. Or perhaps it's all being done with mirrors. But obviously, these images are not clear enough to become sufficiently potent symbols to be exploited for political ends. There would have to be stronger arguments and these arguments or reasons would

have to be articulated with much more clarity. More headlines. How could something revolutionary take the form of a few dead spiders and some isolated petroglyph drawings? Of course, there's always a good chance you'll discover conclusive evidence supporting the notion of foul play in both the images and this text, both being carefully examined here. That is to say, these images may in fact be nothing more than very potent iconographic deployment and therefore, if they have the strength I think they do, it must be assumed that these objects of photographic illusion are juiced up vicariously by your attention or they must be artificially coloured within the context in which they are placed. In other words, I have twisted the originals by presenting them to you in this way. There can be no way of measuring the effectiveness of this graphic manipulation, except in the mind of the perceiver. (4) I can warn you of most of the pitfalls, but these images are hard to control, and be aware that the space in which they fix in your mind will take place somewhere within your visual span of attention. I told them both when we started, in a sense we would be collaborating on some work that in its full display, in its complete physical manifestation, it would stand very well on its own, as well as representing the 3 of us in a light softened considerably by the nature of this somewhat fictional treatment of our experiment. Let it be understood here that I take full responsibility for just about all the writing here

contained in this publication. But it should also be perfectly clear, I have been influenced by these 2 people to a remarkable degree. I have spent literally months looking at the photographs they gave to me. I saw them and I asked for them. I had to have these photographs to look at. I write all the time, so that end presented no problem. But to just sit and look at a photograph. To hold it in your hand. To look as closely as you want. To have it on your kitchen table to see it sitting there with an empty cup of coffee and half a grapefruit already eaten. And a sweet grapefruit it must have been. There's white sugar spilled all over the table. What about the possibility of sweet coffee? There is a little bit of cold black coffee left in the bottom of the cup. I tasted it. It wasn't the least bit sweet. Next to the grapefruit dish, the phone is ringing. Someone calling up about some detail. I've told all my friends to stop worrying about the clicks and the resulting minute attenuation in signal amplitude consistently taking place on my line during the first few seconds of our conversations. My private line has some of the features those old party lines used to have. Some mighty strange switching noises. But I really don't think of my telephone circuit as a length of wire that I own. I pay them good money every month and in turn, they let me talk through their elaborate network. They don't give me any assurance that my secrets won't be overheard. I'm satisfied with the service.



the petroglyphs visible for method was sought that problem of subjective n. The recorder should ne the form of the glyph by e visual method such as ling the glyphs with chalk Anati (1975) recommends ethod: a white pigment is ainted over the rock face; icking is rubbed over the e, leaving all indentations nd clearly visible. For the ect (Lake of the Woods roject, 1978), a variation of using non-permanent and materials was developed. he site could be returned ondition with no chance mental damage. From periments conducted at nd in 1973 by the writer (in ph, Molyneaux), ordinary flour is swept from the collects in the pits and he rock and exposes the On sites where the urally pitted or broken up, ecessary to selectively brush ce around clearly defined order to increase their



Is a romantic a person who wants very badly to be someone else and upon finding out who he wants to be, he becomes them? Or is a romantic a person who bases his very posture on the personal qualities of the highest characters, whose very perfection rests on their possession of the total sum of the combined knowledge of great or historic literature? I see these people all over the place. They are looking back to find a plan to organize their lives to make them fit in nicely in the society while all the time retaining the mental privacy necessary to think freely. I can't blame them for having no party except their very own Party Quest for Knowledge of Themselves. They lead the lives of historic novels placed on earth according to fashion, remotely conscious as they hit the street to mix with the contemporary citizens of this or any other isolated metropolis. Some read and some don't. These contemporary citizens, you are probably 1 of them, are classified as such by the process of tracking. That is, the aggressive monitoring of your behaviour to see if they can learn to read you, so as to be able to see more or less what it is you are thinking, just by looking at you.

Some people say the science of writing is the art of religion. For those who don't, I want to thank my coffee substitutes, Cuban cigars and mineral water from Italy. I'll let you know how I feel in a couple of seconds: 8:43 p.m. 4:45 a.m. These are individual times. According to my watch, these are individual times. In passing the final test, I would like to mention our mothers and fathers, be they quick or static, be they mine or yours or ours. So much of us is in the blood, you know. The cultured 1's shrink after their wounds are opened. Their Royal Extraction spills. Hold your hands up to cover your eyes. You ask me, where are my politics? You shout. You eat meat.

Don't you? Would you believe my favourite meal is pork chops and apple sauce? White steak. With a couple of boiled potatoes.

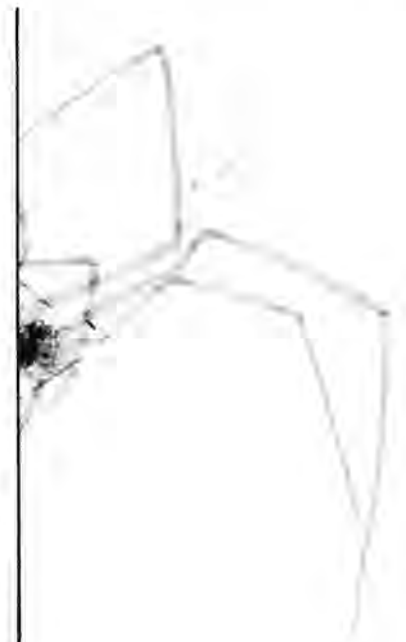
I've got it down to the essentials. My television. My stereo. My electric typewriter. My cassette recorder. My chairs. My bed. My kitchen table. My fridge and stove. My portable radio. When I get hungry I go for a walk down to the corner where there are 3 pretty decent restaurants to pick from. I usually tend to go with the 1 with the best jukebox for supper. I like to have 3 songs for a quarter with the last meal of my day. My camera. Breakfast and lunch? It doesn't matter, any 1 of the 3 will do. My video recorder. My laser. My computer. It doesn't matter. My communications networks. My thinking companions. My solid state versatility.

I keep listening for another voice to come in here or maybe somewhere a little further into the programme. Well, you are in luck. There is something coming into range in the very next line. Time to find what a Canadian boy of 20 is doing the time to find what a Canadian boy of 20 is doing the time to find What a Canadian boy of 20 is doing. But I'm afraid I'll have to squelch his inquisitive mind with my weak response in the middle C of noise: (5) I don't know.

But the cold is different in the early spring. It's colder because it's wetter. It must be the high humidity. The ground flooding makes the air feel cooler during the run-off. The relative temperature I'm describing here is 1 of warm spring showers chasing the snow away. The water runs free in the middle of the day and then it pools and freezes

solid. In the morning, it's tricky walking up the hill because of the slick ice covering the sidewalk. Every morning, before the mid-day thaw, I walk to work on black ice as thin as glass. On my way, I stop by the mini-market to buy a couple of pieces of fruit. I like to buy a green apple and a yellow pear. A little further up the street, I always stop to pick up a pattie. Hot pattie from Jamaica. Grannie Smith from South Africa. But the sign on the apples read sour apples from California. I save the pear for a sweet chaser. Just around the corner, I walk by the good music stores, 3 in a row, the windows full of records and posters for sale, prices slashed by special signs. The things I see in windows. The faces looking out. A couple of men come out of the last music store I pass. They stop, then turn to stand looking back into their own store window. It'll last a week, 1 man says to the other as they assess their new display. Their fresh window dressing. It'll last at least a month, I say to myself.

Then later on, while walking by the meat packing plant out on St. Clair West, I'm confronted with the smell of the fecal grounds. The odours of the poultry, hogs and cattle rise from the cold damp earth as the pungent stench of their urine and blood becomes the wind, the air I breathe as I walk along the muddy strip of weeds between the tracks and the road. The trucks throw up a lot of dirt as they roll on by. I'm walking at my normal pace. The packing plant is at least a couple of city blocks long. By the time I've walked off the length of this plant, I realize its animal wind has made me hungry. All this thought of food. It isn't even 9 yet.



The things I think about looking into windows. When I was younger, there was something about glass, a feeling I used to get when I'd have something trapped in a window. A fly, a bee, the sight of any living thing restricted by a sheet of glass. I'm recalling a particular period of my life. (6) When I was a teenager, 14 or 15, the same year I started smoking, I used to stand in the window with my lighter, burning the wings off flies. Taking my time. Holding the flame up to their buzz. Watching them drop.

The only way out of this is through me. If you can't wait for me, you'll have to go through me. I must have made a mistake. I must have put in the wrong floppy disc. I can see myself pointing to an imaginary slot over my ear where the disc has to be replaced if we are to go through with this replacement of 1 kind of thinking with another. Are you confused or are you changing your mind? About me? About the things they have let me say?

Thinking the things I think about windows. As if there's a web of thought I must adhere to. Or, as in this particular case, if everybody thinks along the same lines, it's probable that I'll be seen as a man who falls through his very own thoughts. For I admit that nothing sticks for very long. I figure some people must think through the thoughts of others. Therefore, I dedicate this length of prose to those I know but don't know. Please let me say it 1 last time. I'm dying to be influenced. I'm begging you to speak your piece. It could be the story I'm looking for that I haven't found yet.



Dovetail your work with the work of others.

REFERENCES

(1) Warm Weather 1974.

The talk always took place in the front yard. I'd push off with my bare feet, leaning back until the chair rested on the front of the porch. There I was, suspended out over the lawn.

The fellow next door was playing in the driveway again. Towards the end of the afternoon he would set up for his fish line game. Action would begin when he'd come across a hornworm eating his tomato plants. He'd carefully remove the worm and the damaged stem of leaves it was feeding on. Placement of the worm on the pavement would start me wondering. The worm began to recover from its transplant in the shade of the garage. Then the black fish-line was tied around the stem of tomato leaves. This disengaged fragrant bundle was set on the edge of the shade, less than a foot from the worm. The man would walk out over his concrete driveway and settle into a lawn chair placed at the intersection of his drive and the public traffic. As the hornworm advanced the man would pull the vegetable bait along the cement towards the street, the worm predictably following at a steady pace. I would check the time on my watch the moment he sat down. He never broke 2 hours getting that worm to chase the bait out into the street. The finish was the curb line. This character has a phenomenally long attention span. He didn't mind people watching either. In fact, when there were spectators he would let the worm get very near the bait before he would retreat, sometimes with a little jerk. I've sat through hundreds of hours being a neighbour and a person who admires a sharp focus. In all the play I have seen, not 1 person has criticized the man while he was locked in his concentration. People talk behind his back, but I guess most folks admire his composure.

After the bait and the hornworm crossed the curb line he would actually jump up out of the chair, completely extend himself on his tip-toes, and let out this hoarse scratchy blast of air. The softness of this eruption impressed me so much. You couldn't hear it if you weren't listening intently. Detection would be impossible if you weren't precisely tuned to the point of commotion.

(2) No Windows No Weather 1974.

Watching the final cockroach harassment, I spray tomorrow. Those ancient confounded insects. Animal body motion over the surface. Under the skin, the fluid. The last movement. The body in a soft, flexible package; organs for contents. Examine the specimen before you make up your mind.

My exact thoughts. In the competitive state of the living, my dependencies illustrate I am exhaustible. 'I've been around long enough' never entered my mind, my body in a foraging posture. The food is so hard to get my hands on.

Learn the routine and discard it, particle at a time. Personal matter: the struggle for good fielding position. Movement to the perfect spot, receive what comes. Move into place, be alert and wait. Waiting can be impossible. Waiting can be too easy. Make a face for hitting. Open up for the moment touch. Make a face for hitting or kissing. A collection from the outside; you do regulate your input. By regulating my input, I can be open with my response.

I can feel your eyes on me. I can tell how you see me. I can tell how you see me by the way you pull yourself back in when in my presence, my pressure. Pull it all back in somehow. Touch the eyes through the eyelids. Rub the surface of the cheek. Eyes dart across the room—the space between us eliminated.

Listening to the sound of your most personal voice. What did you expect now that we are here? Without difficulty an individual moves. That notion of the different person. The structure of the individual, a movement in the body of animals, that different person notion. Don't make up your mind until your thoughts are repeated.

(3) Cold Weather Stay Inside 1974.

I was boiling water for my coffee. When I went to pour the water there was a dead cockroach floating face down in the pan. I stopped my hand before I poured and looked at the dead body for a long moment. I dumped the hot water down the drain and refilled my pan from the tap.

My first tape recorder was a Knight KN4110 (3DU806), Allied Radio Corp., 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago, Ill. 2 speed, 4 track monaural recorder, stereo playback with external amplifier, power supply 105-120 volts AC, 60 cycles, rating 40 watts .38 amp @ 117 VAC, 30 watts .31 amp @ 117VAC (record, less motor). Tubes: RF amplifier ECC83/12AX7, AF amp-output-bias oscillator ECL82/6BM8, stereo pre-amplifier ECC83/12AX7, rectifier EZ80/6V4.

I have done a great deal of sound work on my machine. I lived in an apartment with a cockroach problem. I used to work late each evening making new music. I kept my machine in the kitchen. Every morning I would have toast and jam with my coffee. In the morning I would listen to the recording I had done the night before. I knew that cockroaches were hiding in my machine. I would spot them sitting on top of the machine when I turned on the kitchen light. 1 evening my machine seemed to short out while I was listening to a new passage. I turned it over and opened the back to get at the tubes. Cockroaches started pouring out on the kitchen table. They had nested in the amplifier stage. They were feeding on my capacitors and had eaten the insulation off most of the wires.

(4) Warm Weather Automobile Ride 1975.

Driving with the headlights on, at dusk, heading North. Light from the sunset coming in through the driver's side window. The car is directed by the left hand on the steering wheel. Fingers of the right hand stroke the hair at the back of the head. The palm of this hand rubs an area at the top of the head. The hand then raises off the head and taps on the ceiling of the car with the tips of the index and middle fingers. Both hands on the wheel, making song with a voice, singing at the top of the lungs. A companion, riding shotgun, looks out the passenger's side window into the dark roadside forest. There is plenty of leg-room with the seat back all the way. The highway cuts through pine forest, a winding road through rolling hills. The view through the windshield is determined. The privacy of darkness, driving at night. The window is rolled down, the driver's left arm is outside resting on the top of the car door. Cool, dry air streams over the forearm, the arm hairs drag through the air; feeling the high frequency whipping of the skin. Smashing animals on the windshield. Bodies popping open, becoming liquid circles of yellow and white on the glass: this liquid spreading up several inches in slow-motion before running off onto the roof. A thin-black line of insect shows before each crash. Dark particles, once legs and feelers, appear at the edge of the now dry, creamy circles. Disintegrated insects cover the windshield. The car is stopped, the engine still runs. Scraping the windshield clean. The scraping sound comes in clearly over the smooth-running internal combustion engine. Finished, the windshield is clean enough to see through. Crushed bodies form a border around the clean glass. Pushing the gas pedal down to the floor, accelerating back on the highway, picking up speed. The edge of the road shows through the clear glass, just above the bottom strip of insect-white. A bird thumps off and over the windshield. This thump is loud and very close. As near as can be seen, there is nothing of the bird left behind on the glass. The bird has bounced hard off the windshield straight into the air. The shattered neckbone still vibrates from the collision, the head hangs on only by the flesh. The sound of the dead bird hitting the pavement is covered by a blanket of (car disappearing down the road) sound. At rest on the pavement, just left of the centre-line, the dead bird has a ring of blood-stained feathers around the neck. Sight and sound of the car is gone. 1. Much later, a gust of wind slides the body over to the side of the road. 2. Much later, 2 adult humans

of the opposite sex ask if the kid would like to go for a ride in the car. The kid is sitting on a pillow in the back seat of the car; full thought is given to the task of setting up the dolls: the placement of 3 dolls so they sit just like the kid on different spots across the back seat. The adult voices demand that attention be shifted outside the car to a grass-fire. Pick this fire out of the roadside view. This selection of viewpoint has to be made through the open side window. The right or left side window? Notice that the direction is given by the position of the heads of the adults in the front seat. There, out to the right side, smoke marks the place of the grass-fire. Without warning the subject changes from grass-fire to spider. The spider is quick to run across the car seat, entering a folded powder-blue blanket. Inside this blanket, the brown recluse spider stands still at the arch of a baby's foot. The spider's body is a pale, yellowish brown colour. A medium brown surface marked by a spot of dark brown on the back—just behind the head. This mark is very near black in colour and in the shape of a frying pan, or a fiddle or a violin. On this spider's face, just above the fangs, 6 eyes are arranged in a semi-circle.

There is no reason to believe that this spider cannot see through all 6 at once. 6 eyes and 8 legs. A couple of claws at the end of each leg enable the spider to walk upside down. These legs are long and capable of high speed. Remove the brown spider from the dark, dry cellar; or the attics, sheds, closets and garages. Walking across the coarse, irregular, scanty web. Uncomfortable in the daylight, the spider hides in the folds of clothes or bedding. Bite to defend. Bites of sleepers by spiders trapped in the sheets or blankets. Spider bites inside infrequently worn clothing. The fangs break the skin. The initial pain of the brown spider bite is less intense than that of the sting of a bee, but this pain becomes progressively more severe and may be agonizing for 8 hours or so. A spider is quick to run across the car seat, entering the powder-blue blanket. The automobile is in motion. Looking out the side window, the head locked in 1 position, water is coming from the kid's mouth; spit is forced into blebs between the lips. These chains of bubbles buzz as they are made; a sound just below the tip of the nose.



(5) Summer 1977.

My cat doesn't like to find ants swimming for their lives in her bowl of milk. She doesn't mind drinking around dead ants. As long as they are still. The frantic motion in the surface tension distracts her from her drinking licking. She watches their little black legs buzz treading the bubbling milk. They drown on their backs. Even after they are dead, it's impossible to turn them over. It's something about the shape of their bodies, something about their weight distribution. They are definitely not full of milk. I don't mind finding them in my milk. They sometimes fall on glass. They fall into my tumbler of milk and drown. I am amused and I wait until they die before I remove their carcasses with the tip of my spoon. I wipe their crushed bodies into my folded triangle of white paper serviette. They are definitely not full of milk. No, I'm not worried about what the milk is full of. Sometimes I think it would be nice to have a microscope at the kitchen table at mealtime. A microscope, for convenience it should have its own light source. It should be a stereoscopic microscope. I want to take a good look at the greenbeans. I want to see them up close. They're out of a can. The can was undented and perfectly sealed when I opened it. I noticed no unusual odour.

My cat, she's got a boyfriend. If I leave that window open he'll be showing up in it before an hour goes by. When I leave that window up he always comes for a look. I don't know where he comes from. I don't know what house he lives in. He's afraid of me. At least he runs when he sees me coming. He's too sharp to stay around me. I'd blast his ass with a bucket of water. Given half the chance I'd surprise the shit out of that buck. I'd give him more than he bargained for. I'd give him the shock of his life and enjoy putting it to him. I'd probably torture him with pleasure if I caught him. I've thought of trapping him in the kitchen just to see him real scared and wild. The window shut. Nowhere to go. I can just see him trying to hide under the kitchen table. I'll bet he doesn't like the broom very much. I might even want to have the vacuum cleaner handy. I could probably get him to try jumping through the window. It would be a gas to see him bounce his head one on that window glass. I'd just laugh right out loud if I saw that. I'd let him go after I saw that. I would never, and I want to emphasize this point, I would never try to handle a cat in these circumstances. I wouldn't take my eye off him either. Slowly walk over to the window and slide that window open as quietly as

you can. If you can leave without challenging his position, do so at this time. If you can't walk straight out, at least edge yourself along the wall towards the door. If you crowd the animal, forcing him to move away from you as you cautiously approach him, you will be able to back him right out the window if you take your own sweet time. You can teach a cat a lesson. They're smart. They remember.

The day that cicada landed on me, that's the day things turned around for me. I got a handle on my life. I found myself in the driver's seat. I was walking out of the paint store, the one just a few doors West of here, heading for my car. I got this thud in the middle of my chest. I looked down and hanging on my shirt was a big thick green locust, a cicada. They're good luck in the city. I didn't try to pick him off, I was afraid he'd fly away. I walked home and he hung right there on my shirt. Right over my bony chest. They have a boring needle, you know. They can drill through tree bark for a drink of sap, any tree bark. I kept looking down to see that it wasn't drilling. I didn't want no bug drilling into my sternum. He didn't. I took him back to my room. I took my shirt off as carefully as I could and hung it up on the door with the locust still sitting in the same place, next to the second button down from the collar. He died on my shirt. I let the thing be for a couple of days. Then I touched it. It seemed pretty securely fastened by the hooks of its dead legs. Its colour was good. I decided to leave it like that as long as I could. The next day I came home to find my cat playing with the cicada on the floor. She broke off three legs and its antennae. Other than that it looked okay. Its wings were not broken. I put it in a 35 mm film can and put it in the kitchen cabinet with the spices. It's been up there for a long time. Whenever I notice the can I pick it up and hold it in my hand. As the body dried out the thing turned more and more into a powder. Powder of cicada. I never opened the can, but I could tell that most of the abdomen had disintegrated, leaving just the hard shell of the thorax and the head intact. By the sound and the feel there are only a couple of small lumps of insect left. I wonder when its compound eyes wore off. I wonder if its colour is still good. The green will stay longer in the dark can. I was wearing a white shirt the day this cicada picked me. I was wearing sunglasses. I worked outside most of that summer. I was very dark from the sun. My arms and my face and neck were burned dark. My hair was getting lighter by the day and it was growing very fast. I grew my first moustache that summer.

(6) Warm Weather Radio Boy 1978.

Scanning the streetcar, I picked him up by the sound of his radio. On my way uptown, I catch a streetcar East. Walking through the car I find a seat towards the back and take my place. It's an aisle seat, the last seat on the full car, there are people standing up towards the front. I spot him in the midst of the standing passengers. He's a little kid for his age, I'd say 14 years this summer, just a guess. Short styled hair, sun tan, a tight fitting t-shirt, brand new Levi jeans with a crease, they look to have been washed just once, and dark brown pointed-toe boots, well polished. An affluent kid, good looking, smart. He's with a friend—this kid is a big one! Kind of a bodyguard type. A good guy to have around when you're a little man with a big mouth. The 'giant', he has big ears and a funny shaped head set atop his thick neck. His mother cuts his hair. He's got a pretty good start on a gut hanging between his motorcycle mechanics' hands, his thumbs hooked in the belt loops of his corduroy trousers. Oil stains outline his fingernails. Scabs on most of his knuckles. I'd say he's 15. By the look of his skin he hates the sun. He loves listening to the jams on the kid's radio.

The boys are going downtown with the radio tape player. On closer examination I find it is not only a radio but an AM-FM radio with tape recorder and built-in microphone. It is Japanese, a recent model, a large moulded body of fashionable black plastic with all the controls in primary colour buttons across the top under the bar grip handle running the full length of the plastic body. You can wrap 3 or 4 hands around this handle and still have a little bit of room left over. Enough handle left over for a small bird to perch on, although it couldn't happen here; a canary or a parakeet; a singer.

The kid is working the controls expertly. He has the sound down low, polite in the crowded car. I study his nimble fingers pressing the buttons and I see he's recording something he just found on the air. He dances around a little, demonstrating to his friend—eye to eye—the hooks and the angles of the tune he loves. After it's recorded, he's immediately into rewind. Play it again, come on, put a little bass on it and turn it up a touch. He brings his music up slow, fading it in, slipping it under the noise of the streetcar rolling down the boulevard. The streetcar's crushing weight sound.

They're both smiling, filling most of the car with their music. They want everybody but the driver to hear. He'd make a federal case out of it. He'd throw them off at the next stop. How far can the kid take the music up and get away with it? He has to push it to find out. At this moment an elderly woman walks back from the front struggling with the movement of the car. She looks barely alive. Brittle bones, her fragile mind. As she reaches the middle of the car where the boys are standing, her eyes meet the kid's and the music drops off instantly. She turns around, taking 6 or 7 half steps to get realigned, she grabs ahold of the stainless steel pole on the other side of the car and looks out the windows for her address. His response lightning fast, the sound creeps back in as soon as she looks away. It comes back up nice and smooth, like it's never been away. The kid is unbelievably good and he knows it. He pops his eyebrows up at his friend and they share a silent explosion of laughter. The car pulls into a stop and a handful of people get off. The kids spot a vacated seat and take it. The first seat behind the centre doors. The little kid gets the window without a discussion. He simply gets there quicker. His radio in his lap, he throws the window open as wide as it'll go. The warm wind off the street whips his hair back, he smiles, eyes squinting in brilliant sunlight, in the rushing air. He's really enjoying himself now. He has the radio balanced on the window ledge, the volume higher, the powerful bass riff is taking over, beginning to affect the other 'humans' on the car. If this music doesn't move them, they ain't human. This music is beginning to move them all. Behind him, a grown man's shoulders, pushed by the bass line, begin to rock back and forth. He is tight, but he is beginning to roll loose. He is the first one—he starts the rest. In the aisle the toes begin to tap. All those different shoe styles. People are dancing in their seats as they watch the new passengers boarding. A lineup of young schoolgirls perfectly clean in their new fall fashions, their collective energy 4 o'clock high and running over. As the last girl steps up into the car and the door sounds closed, the kid turns the tape up another notch. With the car jammed with schoolgirls chattering, there is no way the driver is going to hassle him now. Besides, we're almost to the subway entrance from where we'll catch our trains. Waiting for the light to change, we sit a long time. Bumper to bumper traffic blocks our way. The girls' bodies are beginning to notice the music. Hit music. They can't see where it's coming from, but a hip moves here or there under their wool skirts as their knee sock colours dance up and down the car. The kid loves it. This is the way this ride should be, every day.

The streetcar is speeding ahead again. After a few words with his buddy he leans out the window with the radio tape player and cranks the volume up all the way. With a tight hand grip he hangs the machine on the end of his arm casually dangling a couple of hundred dollars worth of prime consumer technology in the wind above the hot black asphalt below. He checks the reactions of the people on the street; he looks for the stare from the driver of the passing car; he wonders if he has enough power to get over to those people on the sidewalk. In his own way, he is the man with the American convertible that cruises along with the top down and the radio up loud; broadcasting from the dashboard, his perfect music blares...the people on the sidewalk hear the music just after the car is past them. A crowd of office workers, men in suits, women in high heels, without breaking stride they turn their heads in waves; they look to see where the music is coming from. After the streetcar is past this pedestrian audience, the boys share their success with their own eye contact and a laugh. The kid straightens up his back a bit, again fully aware of the people in the streetcar who have been watching their behaviour. The girls are watching him. They're not dancing. They're aware of the high risk involved and by the reactions on their faces they appreciate the chances the kid is willing to take to increase his audience. He brings the tape player back in, to their relief. He smiles at one of them. He singles her out. She looks away shy. We're pulling into the subway entrance. The car comes to a stop and the crowd starts to file out. All of a sudden, the kid is outside yelling through his cupped hands, 'what's taking you so long?' He had given the radio to his friend just before he jumped out through the window. With the speed and agility of a monkey, he slipped out a 2 by 2½ foot window opening to drop to his feet on the concrete platform below. None of the girls saw him jump, he was so fast, so sure of his move; they couldn't understand how he got out there. As soon as the big kid gets off the car he hands the tape player back to the kid. Their hit music is imprinted in all of our minds by this time. I lose track of them as we take different subway stairs.

Down in the tunnel waiting for the train. Across the tracks, I hear their music again and I see them walking, passing a cigarette, taking deep drags and strutting to the sound of their own doing. Everyone in the subway pretends not to notice. They are a sight parading in front of the subway crowd so tight and standing still reading papers and staring straight ahead. The kids take the music right on by them. They find their spot, lean up against the tile wall; they bring the music up together with their smiles, pleased with the sound so rich and full of echo, underground as the Southbound train busts in and brakes their music down. It takes them away from me. In my own silence, I look down the track into the black tunnel, the white headlight of my train coming on. I've got to get to the bank by 6 to take out enough money for the weekend. I should have asked them for the name of the group. It was a fantastic number, a great piece of music. A tune like that, I'll run into it on my friend's car radio, for sure. A song like that'll be around for a long, long time. The kid, he must have taken the sound down low as they boarded their Southbound train. Out of touch with them now, still that bass line crosses my mind. Seems to stagger as it walks inside. Seems to be moving left to right.

There's no mystery in the kid. There's nothing out of the ordinary in his behaviour. He is very comfortable with his technology. His fingers play the knobs of the radio tape deck as they would dance across the taut skin of a young girl's stomach. He hugs her from behind as his hands slide inside her white cotton blouse, over the soft skin of her warm belly. As if he had his arms around her and he was touching her, talking soft in her ear, kissing her neck, undoing her buttons. It comes second nature, his relationship with his radio tape deck, but it is definitely one of his natural things. It's not something he has to think a lot about. If you're good at something, things just fall into place and you find yourself in command, dancing in sweet control with the music coming up slow, slipping in full and then sliding under drifting off with your fingertip control, your sensitive young fingers flying on their own...

(7)Cool Weather Chaplin's Body Found In Cornfield May 17, 1978.

Videoview 4

have a double role so that the choice of interpretation is open, which is not the case in so-called political tapes or film. The out of scene commentary in those films gives another dimension that means it has given up its straightforward documentary approach.

These pieces I have done are more concerned with the relationships between the sentence, the structure of the language and the image. All languages have their own logic, in this case I am using English. This English logic is quite different from say Japanese logic. In English you always have to stress in the first place who is the subject. In Japanese that is not the case, who is the subject is often omitted. Often in Japanese we just point out the object, what you see there or what you recognise. When I say in English, "I see you" in Japanese we would say "you see." So this logic is closer to

what you see through the camera, you thereby identify when you look through the camera what is the subject, unless you explicitly say ...

C.:

This is an important connection which I think you omitted last night, that actually explains why you use the language-image in that way. I don't think it's defined that well that the camera is not always given the role of the subject.

T.I.:

This logic, if I return to political issues, without saying who is the subject in film or tape, by generalising all the things that you see on the screen, without mentioning who is responsible for the commentary you can easily manipulate the image as propaganda, the narrator off-screen hides behind the film.

000001 THE ARTIST ATTAINS HAM RADIO STATUS IN AN ERA OF TOTAL THOUGHT CONVEYANCE.

Tom Sherman

000001 THE ARTIST ATTAINS HAM RADIO STATUS IN AN ERA OF TOTAL THOUGHT CONVEYANCE.

000010 OR THE ARTIST BECOMES A RADIO FREQUENCY ENGINEER FULLY LICENSED TO BUILD THE BRIDGES FOR THEIR MINDS TO CROSS.

000011 WE NOW TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE PIONEERS OF THE PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS FIELD.

000100 BY A TWIST OF FATE THEY WERE AMONG THE FIRST PEOPLE TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE EQUIPMENT.

000101 THEY WERE ABLE TO LOG THEIR PRIVATE LIVES AS WORTHY MATERIAL FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY BECAUSE OF THEIR EARLY ENTRANCE.

000110 LATER ON, THOSE WORKING IN THE NEW MEDIUM WOULD HAVE TO APPROACH THE ART OF REVEALING THEMSELVES IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MANNER.

000111 IF THEY REMAINED NATURAL IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TECHNOLOGY, THEY WOULD BE LABELLED DERIVATIVE BY THE CRITICAL COMMUNITY.

001000 FOR AWHILE THERE, EVERYTHING THEY RECORDED WAS INTERESTING, NOT ONLY TO THEM, BUT TO OTHERS AS WELL.

001001 ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS LOOK AND FEEL DIFFERENT THAN THE TELEVI-

SION THEY WERE ALREADY RECEIVING FROM THE STANDARD BROADCAST WORLD.

001010 AFTER A DECADE OF BEING OUTSIDE THE LOOK AND FEEL OF REGULAR BROADCAST TELEVISION, THEY WOULD MAKE THEIR MOVE OF CONTRADICTION.

001011 THEY WOULD MAKE THE NEW BROADCAST TELEVISION.

001100 FOR THEY HAD LEARNED TELEVISION WORKING UNDER THEIR OWN SET OF RULES, BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH YEARS OF SMALL PRODUCTION SCHEDULES, UNTIL THEY REACHED AN AGE WHERE THEY BELIEVED THEIR TELEVISION TO BE WORTHY OF ITS FINAL DESTINATION, THE STANDARD BROADCAST CHANNELS.

001101 THEY DECLARED THEMSELVES COMPETITIVE ENTERING THE COMMERCIAL BROADCAST FIELD.

001110 THEY FOUND THEIR AIM TO PLEASE.

001111 THEY MADE THEIR STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS.

010000 THEY TOO WERE IN IT FOR THE MONEY.

010001 IF THE ARTIST FINDS THE OPPORTUNITY AND ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROGRAMMING BROADCAST TELEVISION, MUST THIS BE AN ENSLAVEMENT RENDERING THE ART-

	IST POWERLESS, LOST IN TOTAL SERVITUDE TO THE GENERAL VIEWING PUBLIC?		GUAGE OF THE TECHNICAL CLASS. THE JARGON IN THE LOUNGE, THE SILENCE IN THE CONTROL ROOM.
010010	MUST THE OBVIOUS POTENTIAL FOR DIRECTING THE THOUGHT OF THE MASS AUDIENCE BE LOST IN THE SHUFFLE OF THIS MOST DIFFICULT TASK OF PRODUCING ART FOR MASS CONSUMPTION THROUGH TELEVISION?	011011	WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE DIE WAS CAST, TIME AFTER TIME, THE PRODUCERS WOULD NEVER QUESTION THEMSELVES AS ARTISTS. ALL THEY WOULD WANT WAS THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULTS FROM THE CREW, COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE DIRECTOR, MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT WOULD STRUCTURE THE WHOLE, OR MORE SIMPLY PUT, IT WAS THEIR JOB TO PUSH THE PROGRAMME THROUGH THE BUDGET.
010011	ARE WE MERELY PRESENTING THE ARTIST AS A CONTESTANT IN A POPULARITY CONTEST?		
010100	YES, BY ALL MEANS, ARTISTIC CONTROL OF THE WORK WILL BE HARD TO MAINTAIN.	011100	FREELANCING FOR THE INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO SAY, WON'T YOU FIND IT RESTRICTING?, THEIR COLLECTIVE MENTAL STATE SHRINKING SKULL TIGHT AROUND YOUR FREE THOUGHT, THEREBY CANNING YOUR IMAGINATIVE NATURE.
010101	SO, AS THE NEW MATERIAL IS PRESENTED TO THE AUDIENCE, AS THIS THOUGHT IS EXTERNALIZED OVER AND OVER, UNDERGOING A CERTAIN NATURAL CLARIFICATION THROUGH UNAVOIDABLE REDUNDANCY, IT SHOULD BECOME VERY CLEAR IN TIME, THAT THE TELEVISION ARTIST HAS VERY DIFFERENT CONCERNS, HIGH PROFILE, ATTRACTIVE CONCERNS, WHETHER OR NOT THESE CONCERNS PRESENTLY APPEAR EXTRAVAGANT OR TOO VISIBLE TO BE TRUE, OR WHETHER IT SHALL TURN OUT THAT THESE ARE BUT A PROMPTER'S WORDS ENCOURAGING MUCH MORE FACTITIOUS ACTIONS THAN THIS OR THAT ONE. WRITING THIS — BROADCASTING THAT.	011101	HOW GREAT IS THE NEED FOR PERSONAL MESSAGE ON THE MAJOR NETWORKS?
010110	BUT ALL THIS AND THAT IS ONLY SO FAR, AND THEREFORE IT CANNOT BE NEARLY ALL THAT IS TRUE.	011110	IF COMMUNICATION IS CONTROL AND THE DEGREE OF CONVEYANCE PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR POWER, CHANCES ARE THEY'RE NOT GOING TO PUT THE INDIVIDUAL ON MASS TELEVISION SIMPLY BECAUSE HE OR SHE THINKS WELL.
010111	IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE.	011111	THE CONTROLLING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE ARTIST WILL USE THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN AS WELL AS HEARD BY A WIDE AUDIENCE WHILE PERFORMING A SENSATIONAL MASTURBATORY ACTIVITY.
011000	AM I NOT JUMPING AHEAD TOO FAR?	100000	COLOURFUL BEHAVIOUR INCREASING THE AMPLITUDE OF THE CLICHE.
011001	FOR IF ARTISTS ACTUALLY WERE IN THE THICK OF IT, THEY WOULD BE LOOKING AND FEELING DIFFERENT, YET ANOTHER FULL TURN AROUND, THEY WOULD BE TALKING DIFFERENT, PRODUCING MORE, GETTING TIGHTER ALL THE TIME.	100001	THE ARTIST MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO THRILLING SHOTS BLEED WHITE HOT BURNS ACROSS THE SURFACE OF THE TUBE MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO.
011010	FOR INSTANCE, THEIR BEHAVIOUR ON THE SET, ON THE STAGE, TIME AFTER TIME, THE DIRECTORS WOULD EMERGE FROM THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE WORKING TECHNICIANS WHERE ONLY EQUIPMENT WAS DISCUSSED. THE DOWN TO EARTH LAN-	100010	THE FORMAL GESTURE OF THE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DIVIDED BY MILLIONS OF MONITORED SHARES.
		100011	THE STAGGERING DIVISION OF A MAN OR A WOMAN CRYING ALOUD WITH THE PAIN OF MULTIPLICATION, THE

The Artist attains Ham Radio Status....

	FACT OF THE MATTER OF BEING DUPLICATED MORE THAN A MILLION TIMES BY EVERY KIND OF RECEIVER AFTER HAVING SAID ONLY THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME.		THOUGHT CONVEYANCE, FOR YOUR EMBARRASSINGLY LIGHT CONVERSATION UNDER THEIR STRICT CONTROL.
100100	THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME TO CRY FOR AN HOUR.	000111	IF THEY REMAINED NATURAL IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TECHNOLOGY, THEY WOULD BE LABELLED DERIVATIVE BY THE CRITICAL COMMUNITY.
100101	SO QUICKLY BROADCAST TELEVISION TURNS INTO JUST ANOTHER PERFORMANCE SITUATION FOR THE ARTIST.	001000	FOR AWHILE THERE, EVERYTHING THEY RECORDED WAS INTERESTING, NOT ONLY TO THEM, BUT TO OTHERS AS WELL.
100110	THE PICTURE OF THE FAMILY Huddled DOWN LOW POSING IN FRONT OF THE TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT, THIS PICTURE WILL LAST BUT A SHORT TIME.	001001	ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS LOOK AND FEEL DIFFERENT THAN THE TELEVISION THEY WERE ALREADY RECEIVING FROM THE STANDARD BROADCAST WORLD.
000001	THE ARTIST ATTAINS HAM RADIO STATUS IN AN ERA OF TOTAL THOUGHT CONVEYANCE.	001010	AFTER A DECADE OF BEING OUTSIDE THE LOOK AND FEEL OF REGULAR BROADCAST TELEVISION, THEY WOULD MAKE THEIR MOVE OF CONTRADICTION.
000010	OR THE ARTIST BECOMES A RADIO FREQUENCY ENGINEER FULLY LICENSED TO BUILD THE BRIDGES FOR THEIR MINDS TO CROSS.	001011	THEY WOULD MAKE THE NEW BROADCAST TELEVISION.
000011	WE NOW TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE PIONEERS OF THE PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS FIELD.	010001	IF THE ARTIST FINDS THE OPPORTUNITY AND ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROGRAMMING BROADCAST TELEVISION, MUST THIS BE AN ENSLAVEMENT, RENDERING THE ARTIST POWERLESS, LOST IN TOTAL SERVITUDE TO THE GENERAL VIEWING PUBLIC?
000100	BY A TWIST OF FATE THEY WERE AMONG THE FIRST PEOPLE TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE EQUIPMENT.	001110	THEY FOUND THEIR AIM TO PLEASE.
000101	THEY WERE ABLE TO LOG THEIR PRIVATE LIVES AS WORTHY MATERIAL FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY BECAUSE OF THEIR EARLY ENTRANCE.	001111	THEY MADE THEIR STATMENTS TO THE PRESS.
000110	LATER ON, THOSE WORKING IN THE NEW MEDIUM WOULD HAVE TO APPROACH THE ART OF REVEALING THEMSELVES IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MANNER.	010000	THEY TOO WERE IN IT FOR THE MONEY.
101010	TELEVISION TIME, ALL AIR TIME, IT'S MEASURED BY THEIR ATTENTION SPAN, NOT BY THE HOUR OR HALF. ALL OF IT, THE AIR, IT'S MEASURED BY THEIR THOUGHTS. IT'S AN AIR LOADED WITH THEIR SYMPATHIES. OR IS IT LIMITED BY THEIR SYMPATHIES? YOU CONTROL THE AIR WHEN YOU'RE ON THE MICROPHONE OR THE CAMERA, LIMITED AS YOU ARE AS AN INDIVIDUAL. AS AN INDIVIDUAL, YOU MUST BOX WITH THEIR STRICT CONTROL. YOU SHOULD CHARGE THEM FOR LACK OF INFORMATION, FOR PERSONAL LOSSES SUFFERED UNDER THE PRESENT LOW LEVEL OF	010010	MUST THE OBVIOUS POTENTIAL FOR DIRECTING THE THOUGHT OF THE MASS AUDIENCE BE LOST IN THE SHUFFLE OF THIS MOST DIFFICULT TASK OF PRODUCING ART FOR MASS CONSUMPTION THROUGH TELEVISION?
		011100	FREELANCING FOR THE INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO SAY, WON'T YOU FIND IT RESTRICTING?, THEIR COLLECTIVE MENTAL STATE SHRINKING SKULL TIGHT AROUND YOUR FREE THOUGHT, THEREBY CANNING YOUR IMAGINATIVE NATURE.
		011101	HOW GREAT IS THE NEED FOR PER-

	SONAL MESSAGE ON THE MAJOR NETWORKS?		OF THE MATTER OF BEING DUPLICATED MORE THAN A MILLION TIMES BY EVERY KIND OF RECEIVER AFTER HAVING SAID ONLY THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME.
011110	IF COMMUNICATION IS CONTROL AND THE DEGREE OF CONVEYANCE PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR POWER, CHANCES ARE THEY'RE NOT GOING TO PUT THE INDIVIDUAL ON MASS TELEVISION SIMPLY BECAUSE HE OR SHE THINKS WELL.	100100	THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME TO CRY FOR AN HOUR.
011111	THE CONTROLLING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE ARTIST WILL USE THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN AS WELL AS HEARD BY A WIDE AUDIENCE WHILE PERFORMING A SENSATIONAL MASTURBATORY ACTIVITY.	100101	SO QUICKLY BROADCAST TELEVISION TURNS INTO JUST ANOTHER PERFORMANCE SITUATION FOR THE ARTIST.
010100	YES, BY ALL MEANS, ARTISTIC CONTROL OF THE WORK WILL BE HARD TO MAINTAIN.	100110	THE PICTURE OF THE FAMILY Huddled DOWN LOW POSING IN FRONT OF THE TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT, THIS PICTURE WILL LAST BUT A SHORT TIME.
100111	HAVING SOMETHING TO TELL EVERYONE ON TELEVISION. TELL EVERYONE SOMETHING BY CALLING THEM IN ON THE OPEN CHANNEL. SHOWING THEM YOUR FACE. EXPOSING YOUR THOUGHTS. TALKING TO NO ONE IN PARTICULAR. HOLDING ON TO THE AIR. YOU CAN LISTEN IN. WATCH ME. I'VE GOT A MESSAGE FOR YOU.	101000	FOR A TELEVISION PLATFORM, WE'VE GOT IDEAS. A PLATFORM, A STRUCTURE, IF ONLY A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS TO BE EXECUTED WITHIN SOLID VISUAL ORDER, HAVE WE GOT IDEAS? YOU CAN HAVE YOUR LITTLE SPIT-BUBBLE OF A WORLD. BUT I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU WHAT I SEE IN THE TEAR-DROP WINDOWS OF YOUR MOVING WALLS, YOUR SCREENS OPEN TO MY CAMERAS, YOUR LIPS, YOUR EYES TELL ME EVERYTHING.
100000	COLOURFUL BEHAVIOUR INCREASING THE AMPLITUDE OF THE CLICHE.	010101	SO, AS THE NEW MATERIAL IS PRESENTED TO THE AUDIENCE, AS THIS THOUGHT IS EXTERNALIZED OVER AND OVER, UNDERGOING A CERTAIN NATURAL CLARIFICATION THROUGH UNAVOIDABLE REDUNDANCY, IT SHOULD BECOME VERY CLEAR IN TIME, THAT THE TELEVISION ARTIST HAS VERY DIFFERENT CONCERNS, HIGH PROFILE, ATTRACTIVE CONCERNS, WHETHER OR NOT THESE CONCERNS PRESENTLY APPEAR EXTRAVAGANT OR TOO VISIBLE TO BE TRUE, OR WHETHER IT SHALL TURN OUT THAT THESE ARE BUT A PROMPTER'S WORDS ENCOURAGING MUCH MORE FACTITIOUS ACTIONS THAN THIS OR THAT ONE. WRITING THIS — BROADCASTING THAT.
100001	THE ARTIST MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO THRILLING SHOTS BLEED WHITE HOT BURNS ACROSS THE SURFACE OF THE TUBE MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO.	010110	BUT ALL THIS AND THAT IS ONLY SO FAR, AND THEREFORE IT CANNOT BE NEARLY ALL THAT IS TRUE.
101001	AM I WRONG TO THINK I CAN GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS WITH SEX? JUST A KISS, SHIT. FUCK THE SPONSOR, ROLL THEM BACK AND PUT THEM ON PAUSE, THEY'LL HAVE TO HOLD THEIR BREATH A MINUTE, I'VE SOMETHING TO SAY. THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY PUBLIC MEDIA ADDRESS. A CRUCIAL VERY LOUD ANNOUNCEMENT. AN AV BLAST OF THE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TRUTH.	010111	IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE.
100010	THE FORMAL GESTURE OF THE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DIVIDED BY MILLIONS OF MONITORED SHARES.	011000	AM I NOT JUMPING AHEAD TOO FAR?
100011	THE STAGGERING DIVISION OF A MAN OR WOMAN CRYING ALOUD WITH THE PAIN OF MULTIPLICATION, THE FACT	011001	FOR IF ARTISTS ACTUALLY WERE IN THE THICK OF IT, THEY WOULD BE

The Artist attains Ham Radio Status....

	LOOKING AND FEELING DIFFERENT, YET ANOTHER FULL TURN AROUND, THEY WOULD BE TALKING DIFFERENT, PRODUCING MORE, GETTING TIGHTER ALL THE TIME.		IN ON THE OPEN CHANNEL. SHOWING THEM YOUR FACE. EXPOSING YOUR THOUGHTS. TALKING TO NO ONE IN PARTICULAR. HOLDING ON TO THE AIR. YOU CAN LISTEN IN. WATCH ME. I'VE GOT A MESSAGE FOR YOU.
011010	FOR INSTANCE, THEIR BEHAVIOUR ON THE SET, ON THE STAGE, TIME AFTER TIME, THE DIRECTORS WOULD EMERGE FROM THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE WORKING TECHNICIANS WHERE ONLY EQUIPMENT WAS DISCUSSED. THE DOWN TO EARTH LANGUAGE OF THE TECHNICAL CLASS. THE JARGON IN THE LOUNGE, THE SILENCE IN THE CONTROL ROOM.	000010	OR THE ARTIST BECOMES A RADIO FREQUENCY ENGINEER FULLY LICENSED TO BUILD THE BRIDGES FOR THEIR MINDS TO CROSS.
		000100	BY A TWIST OF FATE THEY WERE AMONG THE FIRST PEOPLE TO GET THEIR HANDS ON THE EQUIPMENT.
011011	WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE DIE WAS CAST, TIME AFTER TIME, THE PRODUCERS WOULD NEVER QUESTION THEMSELVES AS ARTISTS. ALL THEY WOULD WANT WAS THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULTS FROM THE CREW, COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE DIRECTOR, MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT WOULD STRUCTURE THE WHOLE, OR MORE SIMPLY PUT, IT WAS THEIR JOB TO PUSH THE PROGRAMME THROUGH THE BUDGET.	000101	THEY WERE ABLE TO LOG THEIR PRIVATE LIVES AS WORTHY MATERIAL FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY BECAUSE OF THEIR EARLY ENTRANCE.
		000110	LATER ON, THOSE WORKING IN THE NEW MEDIUM WOULD HAVE TO APPROACH THE ART OF REVEALING THEMSELVES IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MANNER.
000001	THE ARTIST ATTAINS HAM RADIO STATUS IN AN ERA OF TOTAL THOUGHT CONVEYANCE.	000111	IF THEY REMAINED NATURAL IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TECHNOLOGY, THEY WOULD BE LABELLED DERIVATIVE BY THE CRITICAL COMMUNITY.
000011	WE NOW TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE PIONEERS OF THE PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS FIELD.	001000	FOR AWHILE THERE, EVERYTHING THEY RECORDED WAS INTERESTING, NOT ONLY TO THEM, BUT TO OTHERS AS WELL.
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		001010	AFTER A DECADE OF BEING OUTSIDE THE LOOK AND FEEL OF REGULAR BROADCAST TELEVISION, THEY WOULD MAKE THEIR MOVE OF CONTRADICTION.
		001011	THEY WOULD MAKE THE NEW BROADCAST TELEVISION.
100111	HAVING SOMETHING TO TELL EVERYONE ON TELEVISION. TELL EVERYONE SOMETHING BY CALLING THEM	001100	FOR THEY HAD LEARNED TELEVISION WORKING UNDER THEIR OWN SET OF RULES, BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH YEARS OF SMALL PRODUCTION SCHEDULES, UNTIL THEY REACHED AN AGE WHERE THEY BELIEVED THEIR TELEVISION TO BE WORTHY OF ITS FINAL DESTINATION, THE STANDARD BROADCAST CHANNELS.

001101	THEY DECLARED THEMSELVES COMPETITIVE ENTERING THE COMMERCIAL BROADCAST FIELD.	100100	THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME TO CRY FOR AN HOUR.
001110	THEY FOUND THEIR AIM TO PLEASE.	100101	SO QUICKLY BROADCAST TELEVISION TURNS INTO JUST ANOTHER PERFORMANCE SITUATION FOR THE ARTIST.
001111	THEY MADE THEIR STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS.	100110	THE PICTURE OF THE FAMILY Huddled DOWN LOW POSING IN FRONT OF THE TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT, THIS PICTURE WILL LAST BUT A SHORT TIME.
010000	THEY TOO WERE IN IT FOR THE MONEY.	010001	IF THE ARTIST FINDS THE OPPORTUNITY AND ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROGRAMMING BROADCAST TELEVISION, MUST THIS BE AN ENSLAVEMENT, RENDERING THE ARTIST POWERLESS, LOST IN TOTAL SERVITUDE TO THE GENERAL VIEWING PUBLIC?
011100	FREELANCING FOR THE INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO SAY, WON'T YOU FIND IT RESTRICTING?, THEIR COLLECTIVE MENTAL STATE SHRINKING SKULL TIGHT AROUND YOUR FREE THOUGHT, THEREBY CANNING YOUR IMAGINATIVE NATURE.	010011	ARE WE MERELY PRESENTING THE ARTIST AS A CONTESTANT IN A POPULARITY CONTEST?
011101	HOW GREAT IS THE NEED FOR PERSONAL MESSAGE ON THE MAJOR NETWORKS?	010010	MUST THE OBVIOUS POTENTIAL FOR DIRECTING THE THOUGHT OF THE MASS AUDIENCE BE LOST IN THE SHUFFLE OF THIS MOST DIFFICULT TASK OF PRODUCING ART FOR MASS CONSUMPTION THROUGH TELEVISION?
011110	IF COMMUNICATION IS CONTROL AND THE DEGREE OF CONVEYANCE PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR POWER, CHANCES ARE THEY'RE NOT GOING TO PUT THE INDIVIDUAL ON MASS TELEVISION SIMPLY BECAUSE HE OR SHE THINKS WELL.	010100	YES, BY ALL MEANS, ARTISTIC CONTROL OF THE WORK WILL BE HARD TO MAINTAIN.
011111	THE CONTROLLING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE ARTIST WILL USE THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN AS WELL AS HEARD BY A WIDE AUDIENCE WHILE PERFORMING A SENSATIONAL MASTURBATORY ACTIVITY.	101001	AM I WRONG TO THINK I CAN GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS WITH SEX? JUST A KISS, SHIT. FUCK THE SPONSOR, ROLL THEM BACK AND PUT THEM ON PAUSE, THEY'LL HAVE TO HOLD THEIR BREATH A MINUTE, I'VE SOMETHING TO SAY. THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY PUBLIC MEDIA ADDRESS. A CRUCIAL VERY LOUD ANNOUNCEMENT. AN AV BLAST OF THE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TRUTH.
100000	COLOURFUL BEHAVIOUR INCREASING THE AMPLITUDE OF THE CLICHE.	101000	FOR A TELEVISION PLATFORM, WE'VE GOT IDEAS. A PLATFORM, A STRUCTURE, IF ONLY A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS TO BE EXECUTED WITHIN SOLID VISUAL ORDER, HAVE WE GOT IDEAS? YOU CAN HAVE YOUR LITTLE SPIT-BUBBLE OF A WORLD. BUT I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU WHAT I SEE IN THE TEAR-DROP WINDOWS OF YOUR MOVING WALLS, YOUR SCREENS OPEN TO MY CAMERAS, YOUR LIPS, YOUR EYES TELL ME EVERYTHING.
100001	THE ARTIST MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO THRILLING SHOTS BLEED WHITE HOT BURNS ACROSS THE SURFACE OF THE TUBE..... MAKING TELEVISION AS THE ARTIST IS EXPECTED TO.		
100010	THE FORMAL GESTURE OF THE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DIVIDED BY MILLIONS OF MONITORED SHARES.		
100011	THE STAGGERING DIVISION OF A MAN OR A WOMAN CRYING ALOUD WITH THE PAIN OF MULTIPLICATION, THE FACT OF THE MATTER OF BEING DUPLICATED MORE THAN A MILLION TIMES BY EVERY KIND OF RECEIVER AFTER HAVING SAID ONLY THEY THE PEOPLE WANT ME.		

The Artist attains Ham Radio Status....

- 010101 SO, AS THE NEW MATERIAL IS PRESENTED TO THE AUDIENCE, AS THIS THOUGHT IS EXTERNALIZED OVER AND OVER, UNDERGOING A CERTAIN NATURAL CLARIFICATION THROUGH UNAVOIDABLE REDUNDANCY, IT SHOULD BECOME VERY CLEAR IN TIME, THAT THE TELEVISION ARTIST HAS VERY DIFFERENT CONCERNS, HIGH PROFILE, ATTRACTIVE CONCERNS, WHETHER OR NOT THESE CONCERNS PRESENTLY APPEAR EXTRAVAGANT OR TOO VISIBLE TO BE TRUE, OR WHETHER IT SHALL TURN OUT THAT THESE ARE BUT A PROMPTER'S WORDS ENCOURAGING MUCH MORE FACTITIOUS ACTIONS THAN THIS OR THAT ONE. WRITING THIS — BROADCASTING THAT.
- 010110 BUT ALL THIS AND THAT IS ONLY SO FAR, AND THEREFORE IT CANNOT BE NEARLY ALL THAT IS TRUE.
- 010111 IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE.
- 011000 AM I NOT JUMPING AHEAD TOO FAR?
- 011001 FOR IF ARTISTS ACTUALLY WERE IN THE THICK OF IT, THEY WOULD BE LOOKING AND FEELING DIFFERENT, YET ANOTHER FULL TURN AROUND, THEY WOULD BE TALKING DIFFERENT, PRODUCING MORE, GETTING TIGHTER ALL THE TIME.
- 011010 FOR INSTANCE, THEIR BEHAVIOUR ON THE SET, ON THE STAGE, TIME AFTER TIME, THE DIRECTORS WOULD EMERGE FROM THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE WORKING TECHNICIANS WHERE ONLY EQUIPMENT WAS DISCUSSED. THE DOWN TO EARTH LANGUAGE OF THE TECHNICAL CLASS. THE JARGON IN THE LOUNGE, THE SILENCE IN THE CONTROL ROOM.
- 011011 WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE DIE WAS CAST, TIME AFTER TIME, THE PRODUCERS WOULD NEVER QUESTION THEMSELVES AS ARTISTS. ALL THEY WOULD WANT WAS THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULTS FROM THE CREW, COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE DIRECTOR, MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT WOULD STRUCTURE THE WHOLE, OR MORE SIMPLY PUT, IT WAS THEIR JOB TO PUSH THE PROGRAMME THROUGH THE BUDGET.

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ART METROPOLE has relocated at 217 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Canada M5W 1W2



Tele□Performance

Tom Sherman

See the Text Comes to Read You

An analysis by René Blouin

10:45 P.M. Friday, September 8, 1978. The auditorium of the Masonic Temple is almost in total darkness and the audience of a few hundred people is about to see a performance of/by Tom Sherman.

Slowly the front of the stage is revealed. Two people, a male and a female, stand on either side of stage front, each holding a white card approximately 1 meter by 1.5 meters. A text is written on the top half of the left hand card. The right hand card also shows a text, but written on the bottom half. At the extreme right, a tape recorder on a small

table faces the audience. A technician enters and puts on a pair of headphones; he proceeds to install a tape on the machine but in a gauche manner drops one of the reels. He manages to catch the total attention of the people in the audience who are wondering what is going to happen. Meanwhile, a blond girl walks towards a microphone, at the other end of the stage, and with a very soft voice introduces the piece. "It is going to be a quiet piece. It is going to last about ten minutes. *See the Text Comes to Read You* is a performance about relationships between people and machines and their performance as they relate to each

other. The story of the artist and his tape recorder. . . " The main performer, Tom Sherman has been standing in the darkness, behind and as the machine is put in forward position he walks towards the front of the stage. He stands just near the white card on the left of the stage. He is holding two small speakers turned towards his chest. He turns these speakers, directing them towards the audience. One is blue, the other green. As the voice on the tape recorder starts to deliver a text, the performer engages in a series of movements, stopping in precise positions. The speakers move very slowly, from one position to another. There are fifteen positions, delivered in three sets. When the voice on the tape pauses for a few seconds, he moves a few meters to the middle of the stage. There, he proceeds through the same series of signs again. A second pause of the voice and the performer moves to his left.

Centerfold, December 1978

Rodney Warden

He now stands near the white card on the right side. The third series of signs ends at the same time that the machine finishes reading its text. A few seconds of silence and the technician comes back to stop the tape recorder. The performance is over.

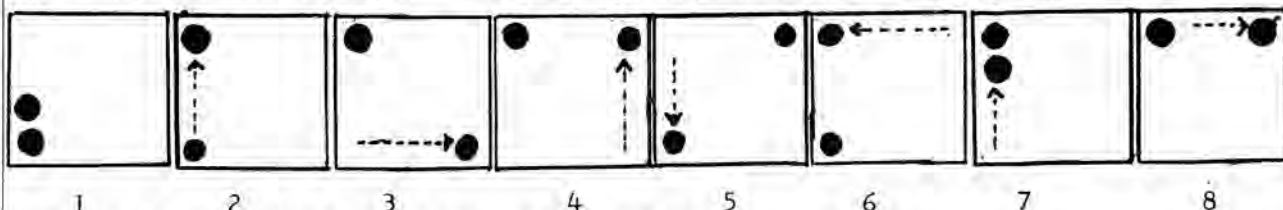
During the action, the performer obviously attempted to not use dramatic expressions. He performed his movements in a totally technical manner, with no apparent emotion. In fact, the human warmth of the piece is transmitted through the voice delivered by the tape recorder/the machine. This conforms with the theme of the piece and although the piece uses some theatrical elements it

creation and extension. Through this particular performance, the artist demonstrates a very intimate relationship between himself and his tape recorder. However, the work cannot limit itself to such a simplistic demonstration. It has many levels of reading and we will try here to explicate some of them.

At first, let's look at the actual gesture: is there a correspondence between the series of signs/movements performed with the speakers and the text delivered by the tape recorder? I would say that there are abstract, non-narrative, correspondences. In fact, the series of fifteen signs are repeated three times, and in time-space, they correspond to a part

space between the two cards. They are a means to make the text alive.

The text itself contains a very high density of information on communication between people, on interaction of machines in the communication process. It is written very poetically, enlightening us about the workings and emotions of human beings in their attempt to communicate with each other. It is critical of our potential for digesting information. By extrapolation we can say that it is critical of the impact of television on us. Indeed, through the monitor, we receive every day doses of light information. The dose is so strong that it does not affect our behavior anymore. That phenomenon



SERIES OF FIFTEEN POSITIONS OF THE SPEAKERS

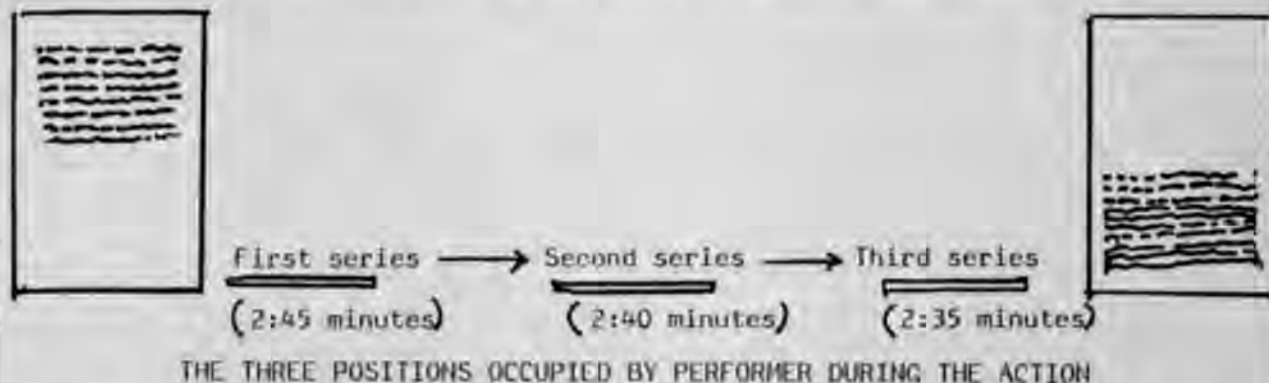
drawing: René Blouin

does not work as theatre. Performances never work like theatre in the sense that the relationships established between the performer and the spectator are from individuality to individuality. In theatre, these relationships are much more of social (community) relationships. In performance, the performer does not attempt to conquer the audience, he only tries to demonstrate his proposition. The element of "theatricality" in performance only exists in a rapport with the purpose of the action. It does not exist as a separate entity. It is a tool and not a finality in itself.

A performance then is a demonstration of a very specific proposal and in this case the proposition pertains to (as the title suggests) our relationship with machines: our own

of the text. They constitute rather a visualisation of a coding operation. They also conform with the title of the piece: usually we read the text. This time, it is the text that literally comes to read the audience. What confirms this "visualisation concept" is the position of the elements before us. The card on the left hand side of the stage presents us with the beginning of the text read on the tape recorder. After the audience/spectator has read the few sentences written on the card, Tom takes over with the performance of his abstract signs. After a pause he moves towards his own left. We always read from left to right (at least in our culture where the coding and decoding operation that is writing and reading has been built as such). The signs fill in the

brings Tom Sherman to tell us in this text: "the injection of information has not the power to destroy the universe of uniform or marshalled thought. . .".² These doses have rather the effect of keeping the masses of viewers at a passive level, in a state of inaction. This text is very difficult to follow. The effect of the text is that we become aware of the very light density of information processed by television/machine. It also demonstrates that television (as we are used to it) plays almost exclusively on the emotion of the form and therefore can afford a very light density of information. Here, we confront a text that is so dense that it takes us by surprise. It is a kind of disorienting experiment in the sense that the workings are reversed. The



THE THREE POSITIONS OCCUPIED BY PERFORMER DURING THE ACTION

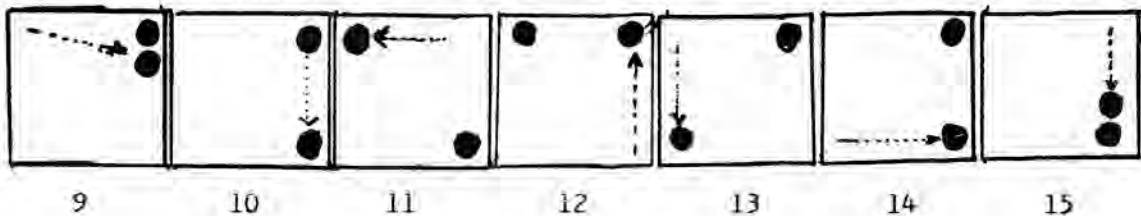
form is almost totally neutral, non-emotional, non-narrative; the text contains some very stressing information on our communication patterns and processes. It also comments on the power of images created, on our power in helping others to develop. But does the machine really have this control over us? The message of the text is then the second level of reading of the performance.

See the Text Comes to Read You is the demonstration of Tom Sherman's understanding of information processing. It presents us with some elements of his own analysis, it confronts us with an actual experimentation of a coding and decoding operation. The theme is one of the

Sherman quotes fellow artist Jay Yager, "The slide-device for miniaturizing information and storing it to be recalled by means of the projector to something near its normal scale in this case is 'crypt' for a miniature life form which when projected becomes mythic."³ Somehow, his pieces also work that way. He gives the reader/viewer selected elements of information. It is the reduction operation. When being in contact with the work, when experiencing it, the reader reenlarges the situation, to the scale of his imagination. Following the experience of this kind of work, an analysis of the workings of the piece is almost inevitable. This is regardless of the content.

the "freak out" when facing the problems of communication of the intimate state of the being. The abstract signs with the speakers provoked deep in myself the same stress as the fears of not being understood. The exact same fears are underlined by the text. I strongly believe that it is a very legitimate fear.

"The relationship between people and machines and their performance as they relate to each other" poses, in a very rigorous manner, the global problem of communication, of shaping messages to be understood, of reading signs within the conventional systems of codes we had to adopt in order to attain a certain (although arbitrary) level of per-



main concerns of the artist. All of the pieces that I read of his recent years of production deal formally with that issue. They deal with it in terms of form, in terms of content; they are experimentations in the working of the process. The very high density of information and emotion is ever present. He masters the coding operation in a very sophisticated way. The performance presented at the Fifth Network follows exactly the very specific and efficient pattern that enables him to summarize a very complex situation in a few lines. How does he arrive to that result? First, by giving us some very precise parameters. Precise, however, does not mean lack of flexibility. Then by forcing the reader/spectator to focus on the most important elements of the situation he depicts. Unimportant details are supplied by the reader/viewer. He tells us: "... your vision is the limit." The selection of information fragments given through his work is so well done that it becomes almost impossible to digress from the images and emotions he is trying to transmit. The elements are entities in themselves; entities which once put together in a specific manner bring us to reconstruct easily the very specific situation the artist has confronted. These works reincarnate the struggle, the very intimate tensions of the artist. In a piece produced last spring, Tom

See the Text Comes to Read You works also along this process. The elements given to the audience are minimal. They're concrete facts and do not need romantic interpretation. The series of signs with the speakers are in themselves a complete system of coding, abstract in the sense that they form a concrete entity in themselves. The text delivered on the tape is non-linear. Like the short pieces Tom wrote on "car accidents"⁴, it transmits a bulk of apparently loose information. However, when looking at them closely, one realizes the carefulness of their selection. Like his other pieces, this performance provokes a very emotional impact on the "receiver" of the work. "There you are without anyone else to break response, . . ." "To look inside deeper to find you the you of questionable presence and the foolish sense of self importance kidding no one because you do not have to demand understanding." "... I was building the machines you were living with. . . ." "I construct with you your position of being able to pull the plug on my development."⁵ These are some arbitrary sentences chosen from the text of the performance. I find that they illustrate well the lucidity of the artist, his awareness of the confinement of man, the never complete communication, the paranoia that lies deep inside every human being. It also expresses

cision. It addresses itself to the issues of the knowledge of the universe. Art constitutes an organized system of knowledge which, combined with precise sciences, enables man to have a better knowledge and understanding of the universe, of some parts of the universe. The approach is intuitive and must be: precise sciences cannot afford it. This performance by Tom Sherman is a typical example of the utility of art for us. It demonstrates not only craftsmanship but is also concerned with real issues confronted every day. It questions many levels of behaviour including our relationship with the machine. The occasion of the Fifth Network, a video conference, was more than appropriate for such a demonstration.

See the Text Comes to Read You circumscribes many of the problems of working with video. It is to be hoped that its impact will help video-creators to think of how the use of the tool can become even more efficient. Far from wanting to make an idealized version of Tom Sherman, I just happened to really enjoy his piece, as much as I have enjoyed reading his written works and video. It is very tempting to repeat the analysis presented in each of his published pieces. But they talk for themselves. Some of his pieces have been published in *Criteria*,⁶ in *Parachute*⁷; you can al-



Performers: Tom Sherman, ASA Harrison, Cyne Cobb, John Watt, Ian Murray.

so find a catalogue, *1 Traditional Methodology for Processing Information*, published by the Art Gallery of Ontario last spring at the occasion of the show in Toronto. In order to understand better the concerns expressed by this particular performance, I strongly recommend the reading of this catalogue. I must also mention that Art Metropole has published some of his written works.⁸

Let these texts come to read you too. . . ■

¹*Introduction of the Performance, A.S.A. Harrison, 1978.*

²*See the Text Comes to Read You, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

³*1 Traditional Methodology for Processing Information, under the influence of Brian Molyneaux and Jay Yager, Art Gallery of Ontario, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

⁴*50 Car Crashes with Fires, unpublished, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

⁵*See the Text Comes to Read You, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

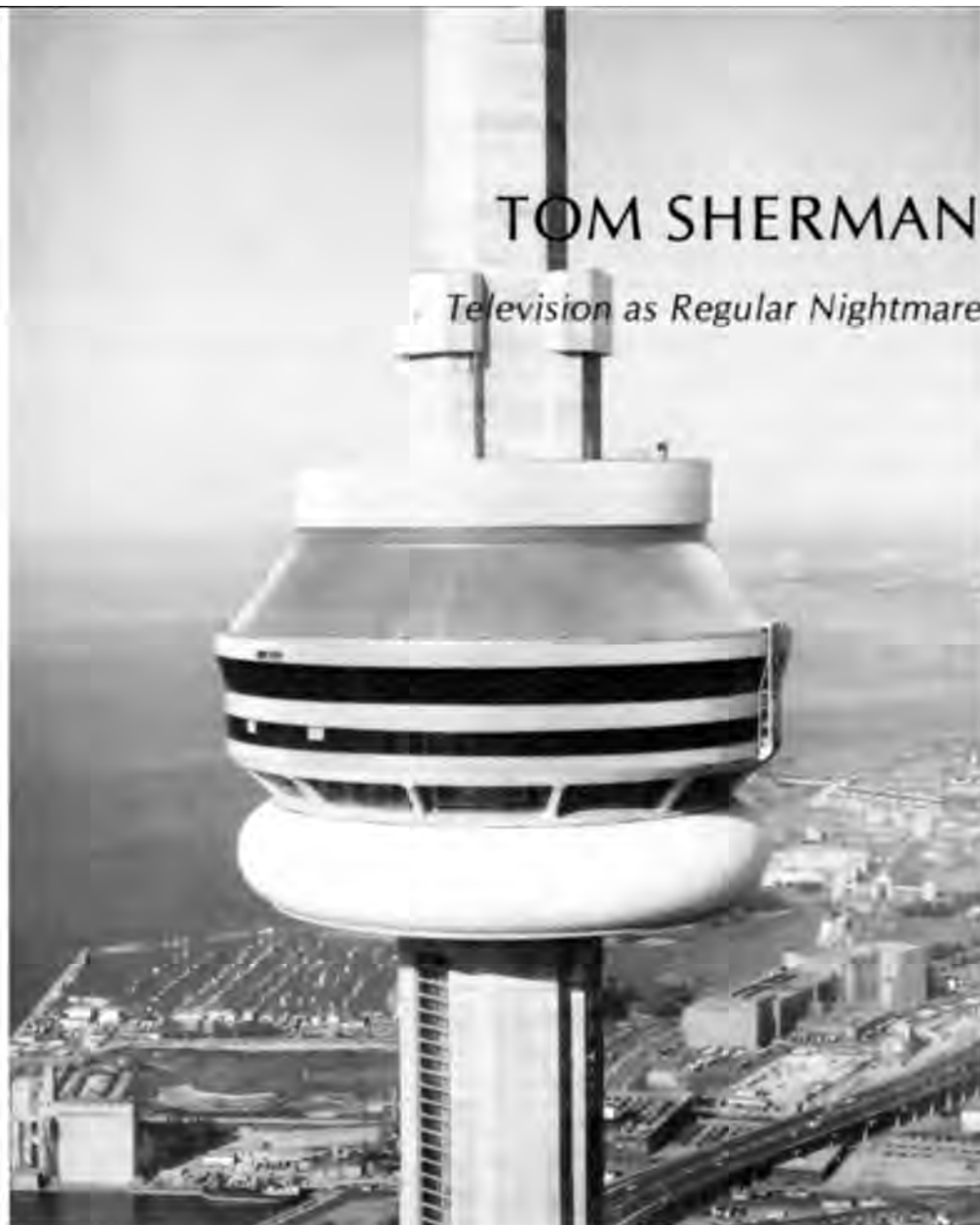
⁶*The Trouble with Psychosurgery, Advertising Photographs with Words, Criteria, Spring 1978, Vol. 4, No. 1, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

⁷*On the Page (1975) and Writing from a Photograph by Rodney Werden (1977), Parachute, No. 9 Hiver 1977-78, Tom Sherman, 1978.*

⁸*3 Death Stories, Art Metropole, Tom Sherman, 1978.*



Centerfold, December 1978



TOM SHERMAN

Television as Regular Nightmare

For Patrick (you didn't know him);

He killed himself in Kansas. He told everyone he was going to New York, then he took a bus to Topeka, where he hired a man to take him by automobile to Wichita, where the hired man shot him in the back and left him dead with full passport and papers, according to their agreement. He did it beautiful and nobody picked up on it. I've been sitting on this shit for years. I know because I gave the man's name. Patrick asked me if I knew anyone who would kill him for 200 bucks. I told him I knew one man who might.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

This article is wholly fiction. Any resemblance to the present or past is gratuitous and similarity to any actual event or character is accidental and not intended.

MUZAC FOR YOUR MIND AS YOU CHECK YOUR MAKEUP.....

It's right on time. That's what I like about it. It's time. Performers line up in front of the cameras. They have a lot of different backgrounds, personal histories, with only their reason in common. They have the reasons to be up there. Performing.

Did she get the microphone extension cord? What's the use of doing this piece if we don't get it on tape? You work to tape, don't you? There is going to be plenty of top-notch hardware around. Access scheduled by telephone. There is raw tape to suit your needs. So work freely. We'll put you in there, in the studio. Don't worry about the technical end. We have the technicians to keep the artists away from the equipment. They don't know about the equipment. Most of them would rather not know about the equipment. They want to stand in front of the cameras. They are on air looking into red light camera number 1. They perform to the camera. They want to broadcast their art. No reason why they shouldn't. I can't think of any reasons why not? They want to get out there by taking electromagnetic form. The wave form or particle or instant sheet of white heat, if you wish. Radio Energy Television Pictures. You are beautiful programme. You really know the language. You really turn on up there on the set. You are better up there than you are in person. Some of you are. But I worry about this thing about the pretty girls and the handsome men. You know so much of your performance depends on the way you look. She may be the next great looking television artist. Because the people will support stereotypes. But why am I here with you in this book?, skirting around in the clarity of these cheap newspaper ideas, formed and reformed by the popular press; the effects of violence on television, the dangers of sexual stereotyping, role reversal and the frequency of gender oscillation; women dominating other women, Indians taking over the cities, the prevailing will of the people dramatically changing the behavior of the artist.

I'm here writing television for the people who watch it. I dread to see what the artist will do on television when he or she decides exactly what's needed. The artist starts by looking around the dial. Television artists hang around their sets in long depressing stupors of surveillance. They refer to this as learning the language. Many watch with the sound off. Taking a look at your world. What channel are you watching? Doesn't matter. Watch whatever you had on the night before. My current focus is on morning network television. But

that's because I'm not working 9 to 5. Right now I like morning TV. Good weather coverage.

Time is so important. Filling time. They all want the chance to fill the television time for somebody they don't know. They will get their time. And they'll get a bundle of money to boot. And the exposure. The exposure is what they really want. She is dying for this exposure. She takes it all very seriously. I personally don't want to watch what will happen to her. In terms of talent, she has what it takes. I'll define her talent in a few seconds. The thing I'm worried about is how television can turn into a regular nightmare for artists. I know her personally and I can tell you, she doesn't need the kind of definition television will give her. I mean she changes her style every 2 weeks now. If she starts watching herself being watched it'll accelerate her fluctuation of character and appearance and I would hate to see her go. I can accept the argument that it's better she's up there than somebody else. Better than one of the robots we're stuck with now. It's said to be the pure slickness that keeps those automobiles on the covers of the TV guides. All those close-ups with the smoothest of slow dissolves...the sure focus: she looks fantastic. I love the way she keeps her face moving, even when she isn't talking. I wonder who she studied with. But what does she do to keep them off her face? You can't hold a close-up forever. It's her movement. Movement specifically choreographed for the frame of the screen. But there has to be a handle. What's her handle? What does she do that nobody else does? She talks backwards. What do you mean? She stands in front of the camera and talks, with her real voice, she talks words and sentences and paragraphs backwards. She does these demonstration tapes where a man records her, taping her talking straight then reversing the track and playing it back so she can sing mimicking her own reversed voice in short segments, so you can check her to the phoneme, if you have any kind of an ear. She can do it as good as the machine does it. She's a talented performer by virtue of this great achievement. She can deep throat the technology. She can do without walking on the head.

I'm a little confused about the revolutionary ideas behind becoming the product of a communications industry. Mass media is money, no matter how kinky your approach. In comes their image, the straight faces of the masses, the people in their homes watching television for something to do, they will be in their homes and they will have art on their screens as soon as it hits the free space-time. Up in the clouds (shot from above) as pink and pretty as the sunset

through the window of a 747. We'll be signals in Radio Frequency Energy Heaven, breathtaking speed of light, bouncing off and slipstreaming across the soft ceiling of the troposphere, maybe as far as your home on a sporadic E-skip. The same Trop E route that's been randomly distributing regular line of sight television around the world for years without satellites. 299,517, km per second. Once you start imagining the view taken in at the speed of light tunneling through your critical path, you realize the galaxies so immense (the sound of 7 coded wavelengths mixed common amplitude impressed into a frequency modulated carrier wave to be read by digital computer displayed as visual field with your 'hearing' done at the bottom of your spine by careful placement of a direct contact transducer) and you are absolutely part of it. Transform me, please. Forget it. They're wiring it up.

They're wiring up the whole world into cable nets. You can dream about the reception of art from the sky, I have nothing against you dreaming. The reason they are wiring it up is simple. They can charge you for your television like they charge you for your electricity. Then they'll replace the metal wires with light injected into fiber optics and things will be real energy efficient and easy to manage. Clean and clear. Very quiet communication lines. The better programming, the television shows you'll want to pay attention to, will be on these lines you'll have to buy into. Sure, you'll still be able to get sky programming, TV from satellites, but it'll be the necessary shit you'll have to watch, like birth control information or the methodology of fuel economy, or the wide world of association football. The television by hypersensitive personalities, the hot stuff, it'll be on the cable and it'll cost you. Performance is made for television. Television performance. Killing time with the viewing audience, from the inside out. Can you bring your self up high and down and out to conclude your action in approximately 28 minutes?, give or take 30 seconds. Now that we're not dealing with transmitting signals from the earth into the depths of outer space and back, we can (1) get rid of all the small antennae (I will concede, now that we are back on earth, as signals running through wires or wave guides....I will concede that the present form of home antenna will be replaced by another 'breed' of small antenna, but again I stress that this free access will be to programming you will need but will not necessarily want), and more importantly (2) the forces at hand will stop cutting the programme with their commercial message. You won't have to worry about their inept mechanical cutting, their division and fragmentation of your finished product for in-

section of their over-budgeted extravagant insults, their commercial messages. You won't have to worry because you will be the commercial. Whole commercial programming. The people will pay for you in a really pure way. They'll pay to watch you age. They'll watch the changes you'll be going through. Oh, the fortunes to be made. The fantastic stakes of the personalities. The chosen few. Oh, the suicides, the murders. The death. The excitement of the burning mind. Look in her eyes. Did you see her eyes last night? The look in her eyes between 8:41.17 and 8:41.29 pm. 12 seconds of love. Her exposure on the international net, under those white lights, playing to the faces of the crew.

You can do your best material in front of millions. For those of you who happen to have been born into the right physical type, the body sized and coloured to fill in the ideal form, you could have National Character potential. Through your performance you could represent art from your country to the world viewing audience. Too big a responsibility? Not for some of you. And I've been writing only about television. Once you start appearing in the tabloids, giving interviews and handing out your 8 by 10 glossies; it's exciting imagining the mass audience, all their faces, the way they look. I've got a finger on the mass audience. I've entered their minds. I've got to start programming for the mass individual.

Whenever he's on talkshows, everything he says is so ambiguous. I wonder what hemisphere of his brain is dominant. He can hold the mike in either hand with equal finesse. He's on the talkshows because he is an artist. He's always on introducing one of his new works. He talks fast, has a great deal of information, he looks good. I wonder who does his research for him. Friends are saying it's his wife. Did you hear about the piece he did with the charm and colour of the elementary particle? He did it with some incredible video animation. He does all the talkshows as an artist. He's in the air all the time, flying around the world, the jet noise falls away as he silently composes his monologues in his head. He can't read anymore, or at least he can't find the time. She must do most of his thinking. I find them amusing. Their relationship is just a phone relationship. But this background information shouldn't discredit his performance. He is very good at what he does. He has a way of loading his tape with his strange introductions. He is very clever and he has enough money to buy the right clothes. He dresses well for TV. Does he play a musical instrument? No, he only makes television. His television platforms human inadequacy. I find his work

funny, but the press he generates is always dead serious. If there happens to be a live audience where he performs, and they laugh at one of his lines, in the quick-cut to close-up—you can see the horror in his eyes. He doesn't like to work with an audience. Their presence throws him off. Then he tightens up and becomes totally insensitive to them. He doesn't work with them. His inability to work with the audience, that's the reason I don't consider him a good performer. But I'm glad to see him on the air. There are a lot of television artists who don't have a clue as to what they'll do with the time. They'll fill their time with smiles and thank you's doubled just to ensure they'll be invited back. All this starts with a visit with a person who sits behind a desk. However you find your way through the highrise door of the mass media, you'll find yourself sitting on the wrong side of the desk of the person who can put you on TV. They're going to look at your teeth, your hair, the way you dress. They'll listen to a couple of minutes of your spiel. Please, no signs of nervousness at this stage. They are not going to spend a pittance of their budget on someone who'll fry in front of the cameras. Unless they can see you really frying. How many times can you fall apart on network television? As many times as you need to. Humble yourself, naturally. But after they pity you, you'll have to find completion in your next move. Your final action. They won't tolerate remissions or full recoveries for long. They will want your blood. In terms of the ratings, there is nothing more substantial in actual draw, than the artist dying in his work. Death as performance. The people will always love the artist who dies for them. Until, of course, when everyone is dying on television. Then they will want something with a new twist. Life after death performance. Leave it to the kids. I mean it. Leave your child your body of work to think of you often. Leave them a few unpublished scripts with some photographs of your eyes when you were young.

And the people who refused to get contact lenses the first time around, they're realizing they can't afford to wear glasses any longer.

As for technological jewelry—wearing lavalier microphones, light-metal cold against the skin rolling over the collar-bone.

All these compromises, we're hoping we'll only have to compromise so heavily in the initial phase of television art. After things get sorted out and all the forms and contracts have been drawn up by the artists' lawyers and approved by the producers for the institutions or the corporations and the fine print says they can buy your hours for years and years so they can make all the money they can

make on you; then you'll have to produce, fast. It's a good thing the agents show up the minute you're on National Air. How else could you maintain the pace as your work heads towards world exposure? You are the performing artist. You shouldn't have to think about all this shit. I'm sorry to put you through. I know there are a lot of great performances millions of people might be thrilled to see, if performance by artists were available in the mass media. Personal attitudes towards public display could be transformed. Real emotions could be read in their faces. Established religions could be challenged. People could say they are nothing special. People could say, I'm here and you're not. Artists as performers could work to bring about social change. We could be the information. We could be the information they base their thinking on. We could burn our histories. I sit by the receiver and watch myself in the state of self-consciousness—so full of receiving, I want to be performing for you. I want to fill your time, stranger. I want to fill your time, honestly. If I can't do what I want to do, I don't want to live here anymore. We're Regular National Characters as performing artists go. But surely the National Character Artist is a thing of the past, with travel and communications the way they are today. I feel the most important actions in performance will take place within the parameters of International Performance Criteria. The role of this book is to establish a range of International Performance Criteria.

I'm so glad you stayed awake reading me. I'm sorry there weren't a few pictures of me as a child. I wish I could have made this more revealing, but I feel a little burn on my cheeks as it is. I hope you read English. No, I'm not really anti-satellite. But I'm afraid the way I look is going to interfere with my performance career in the mass media. I've been told plenty of times, there is nothing that can be done with my voice to make it more acceptable. Besides, I can't think of anything innovative to do with the time you say I've got. Now's the time, it's your turn to go up there to inform, to entertain, to fill the hour, to kill the time they're willing to spend with you, spending their good money to see you walk and talk, you lucky dog—all the friends you have that you don't even know. After you get an agent you can trust, then you can get back to work.

Personal matter through television. You use yourself as material. This is not to be confused with the artist working with the media as material. This is the performer working in the media. The machines have us. Perform so the machines can capture your personality. Men AND women in captivity. Perform your own way out.

Someday, we'll all think the same things. Or someday, when our

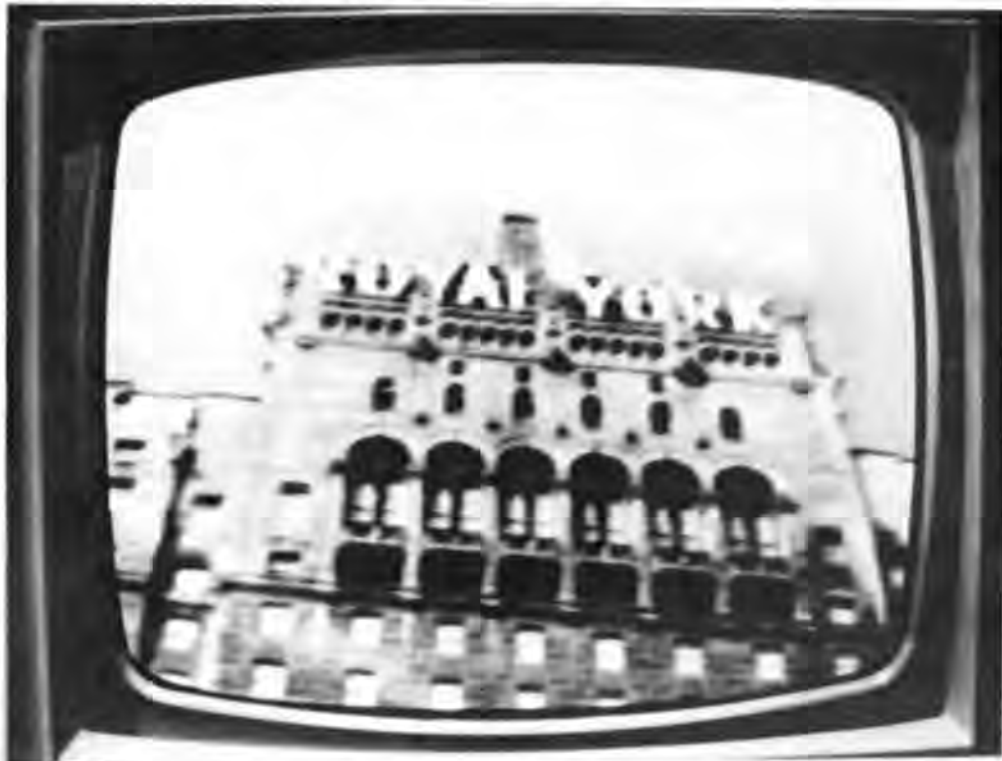
mental privacy is our last personal space, we'll have no idea what the other person is thinking simply because we will no longer be conscious of others.

Gendering technology is 1 thing.
The eroticism of art is another.

THE PERFORMANCE ACTION BEGINS:

Big Band Music Background.....

When you have your eyes open wide and you're watching classic actions take their form, it makes you want to recall the split second before his gesture moved you through the air. Run it back so I can see the message the tip of his glass sentenced to death. A toast to his lips, but what was there before? He smiles and cracks me forward until I'm smiling back. I'm listening to his answer as I know our eyes take us back and forth, taking our minds into the same lines as we take turns forming the words between us. I feel sometimes I resonate briefly between the sound of your voice and the look in your eyes. I swear I get sort of a green light in my inner ear when you say some of the things you do. I can see you doing everything you say you do. I like to put you up in the air with my voice. You can close your eyes down tight, but you can't shut out the sound of my voice. The way I sound on the telephone, the way I sound in person, my spoken words, they're yours.



I'm going to take in everything you're going to say because look at your mouth, it's moving faster with the sound down a little and your tongue darts out to moisten your lips every once in awhile. The voice comes back up and my eyes become your eyes. There's some pretty clever deception going on inside one of us, probably both of us. And then up real close, there's the back and forth between one eye and the other. My sight over the bridge of your nose to fly up to close on the hair line with the signal on a clear channel; the offering of the kiss. What came before these lips? What else? I've got a notion but the hands come next. The pull on the belt, the hands decisive on the button, the sight of the zipper noise and the pants are down. Under where he takes me, I would like to run a big band sound. A piece of strong music with a European background. Something I can like the taste of the first time I dance to it. Let me have a classy number. Give it to me full volume. Turn it off when I stop moving, and not a second before. I want to hear all the music you got for as long as you got a head full of it.

May 11th, 1952, around 4 in the afternoon.....

He sucked me like nobody had ever done before. He was in complete control from the moment he hooked his fingers over the base of my cock, his thumb pushed into my scrotum to stroke the shaft hard where it disappears in my body below. His lips break the shortest kiss over my head shining wet enough as he slides down to hold me deep with his teeth. His hold on me. He wanted me to open my legs a little, I was standing. Without looking up or changing the tension in his mouth, he dove his hands through my thighs to hold my ass to bring me forward to start my moves as in my ass he ran his hand deep with a finger to the end, as far as it could go and there he found me a smooth contraction diminishing to my centre as his finger had triggered my release. His finger pressed the wall deep. He found the soft button hot. I could feel the shock run down my stick to pass through the clench of his tight lips to end in his throat NOW a series of 4 tearing waves with a rip on the end of each. His grip, his hand tightens around my cock again. With his hand and his mouth he pulls me in to finish me hard.

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THE ANNOUNCER (OFF CAMERA) RECALLED THE MOMENT MANY YEARS PAST, WITH HIS VOICE.

4-18-78
Tom Sherman

Essay

Are We the News?

Who is reporting what we are repeating?

by TOM SHERMAN

... just as surely as the contemporary artist reads the newspapers everyday. As if he or she has the time. The time to think about the news. Locally, regionally, internationally. Who provides the news? How does the news content govern the way you think? Does it play itself out very far in your work? Is one of your voices simply repeating the news? Can we afford to say we never read the news?

But we do listen in. Not to the radio or television. We get the word off our friends. We have our personal contacts who keep us informed. I take appointments with my friends who tell me everything they know. We exchange important information. We help each other grow. We help each other survive. We compromise our individuality in order to find out how the others see. We acknowledge our differences so we can share the common thought.

The stories are moving this morning. First with the people who sleep together. Then on the street. And later in their work. And after or before and then in between. People touch and deliver their words. With a few. Or with many. Words for a shifting few. For nobody. Then we are on to someone else. Through a new interest. A re-focus of attention. There. There will be someone of a similar makeup. In the city. Maybe there will be more than a few.

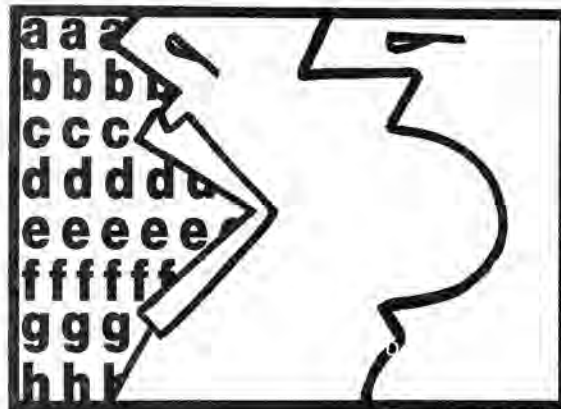
On the phone with a coffee and a cigarette. The window open. Nice light. For a change. The television screen is full of crawling words. The wire service. Talk with a friend about what your television screen is holding. Or stare mute at the words as you are still dreaming. Then switch the channel and find the person who looks reasonably intelligent. Or is it physical attraction? Some care only about the voice. The quality of the voice. There are those who care less about what it is that is said. They care more for the way the news looks. You know who they are. They care whether the news is red or blue. But there is the question of their pictures. How do the cameramen and camera-women see? How do the editors cut? Does the voice over (no body) have any idea of what's on the screen? How do we deal with the split? If we watch the news with someone else, can we see it differently? At least another way. I watch the news by myself most of the time. With a huge team of reporters working for my information. Actually they are selling it to me. So I can repeat it. At least one of my voices will repeat it to somebody.

Who is Reporting What You Are Repeating?

I hope the newsmen are more accurate than

some of the people I find myself talking with. On a daily basis. I shouldn't complain. The people I know repeat the news for many reasons. Their own reasons. I suppose the people who report the news do so for those of us who need it. If you get rid of the economic factors, the reasons are more difficult to determine. Elusive motivations. Behind. Emotional issues. For the observers, the reporters, the editors, the producers, the publishers, the broadcasters, the censors. All want to determine *what the news is*. All want to call it as they see it. The observers of the news, the repeaters for the consumers, the promoters and the censors. The cynical critics. The well-informed readers, listeners or viewers. The day-dreamers. They all depend on information. We need the news. We would have very few stories without the news. Nothing to talk about except ourselves. The stories the news doesn't cover. The private world. The uncovered life. The under-understood. How do you deal with the split? I talk the news out with my personal contacts. We construct our stories from both worlds. The covered and uncovered. In this way our views are spoken with the qualities of more than one voice. I mimic my friends. All personal contacts have their own voice. As information is repeated by many voices, we have this complicated field of language.

Developing. An increasing field of conversation. With plenty of room to move around. With those who talk about anything that comes up. Quite easily. Over and over. Comfortable conversation with diversity. Extreme highs and lows. For those not afraid to follow their nose. If someone is on the trail of their heart's desire. If they have their own voice. And they say it. We should listen and repeat what we hear. Keep up those personal contacts. It is up to your nature to determine how this is done.



Randy Gledhill

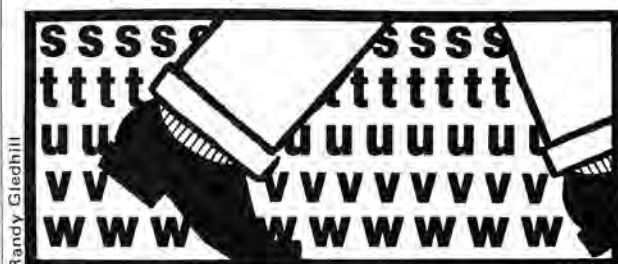
Would you Trust an Artist to Write Your News?

Of course, most would look to the artist for a *different kind of information*. I mean the artist does read the newspapers from time to time. But what comes out in the work? The art. How does the news show in the work of the artist? Or more specifically, how does the artist see his or her role in terms of the delivery of an information that could be very useful to others? The data, the events, the statements, the actions of all categories are transformed by their minds into news information. The patterns of thinking they deliver. The stories. The news comes out as talk first. It's something else later. If you do get your news from an artist, how did you come to trust his or her version of the story? Is the artist dressing that differently? Does the prose finally move you? Not necessarily emotionally. Are the facts the facts? How does the artist package the news? Not only a repeater. There is the artist reporter. Not merely operating in the manner of. This is not a simulation. As the artist is now reporting the news we depend on. OK? I'm backing off. No hard sell. But there is a notion of delivery. We move with our body of senses. In contact

with both worlds. Phones. Televisions. Records to dance to. Experience. Touching news women and men. Displaying the body of sensitive reporting.

Could the News Look Better?

Does the entry of the artist into the newsroom depend on his or her ability to make the news look more interesting? I don't necessarily mean making things appear to be beautiful, although that could be one service the artist might provide. Making the stories sing with life. Literature instead of copy: Film essays, no stock-footage clips. The news was so pretty tonight. Dream-like. With such complexity! *Where did they stand on that issue? What were they wearing when they were at the scene? Why were they there? What is it we need to know? Who would repeat what the artist draws as conclusions? Traditionally speaking, how did the artist lose his or her respect? Would you believe their vision of either world? You will have to if you wish to make contact with them. To listen involves us in compromise. First they are talking. Then it is something else.*



How Does the Street Sound?

In your city. As the artist enters the newsroom and accepts the responsibility of reporting the news. We receive the street as the artist sees it. The artist may see the news in as many different ways. As many ways as there are different artists. There will always be more than one way to think. As the news becomes more like talk. Speaking naturally. Closer to the first words than the last. The initial sound of the immediate proximity. On top of the source. At the scene. In the blood and tears. The spoken words ring sharp and clear. Pierce the look in their eyes. The confusion is to be preserved. In these huge metaphors. The stories of the news. The constructions of our minds. Are we free to think as if we are dead? With no body here? A voice over there. In administering these voices. They uncover the news. For those who want to comprehend. The words will roll over again. To give them what they already know. Constructed the way it must be. In the shape of this envelope. Forming the quality of the repeaters' voices. The path is constructed as the traffic may be directed. Depending on whether or not they can follow the changing directions. We recognize the contradictory thought. In our meetings. In our regular conversation. The ensuing disagreement. In apartments and houses now equipped with newsrooms. The kitchens. The living rooms. The stations. We're developing the role of the station manager. Obviously, you will have to call it as you see it. The words that complement your sense of contradiction. If they desire your company. They will find a way to listen. If you can impress them. Enough.

I want to hear your version of the story. Under your restrictions. Within my limitations. First it's talk. Then it's something else. Here we are. . .

Tom Sherman, Toronto, video and performance artist and writer, is a contributing editor of Only Paper Today and an editor of Centerfold.

FILM ARTIST — BARBARA HAMMER Toronto Performances

Saturday February 17 at:

Eves

793 Gerrard St. E.
(at Logan)

Films: 6:30 — 8:30 p.m.

Dancing 8:30 — 1:00 a.m.

Admission: \$4.00

all women welcome

Sunday February 18 at:

466 Bathurst St.

8:00 p.m.

Admission: \$2.00

The program will include the following films made between 1975-78. Total screening time: 96 minutes.

Moon Goddess	Eggs
Menses	Women I Love
Psychosynthesis	Available Space



Barbara Hammer is a film and performance artist whose work has contributed significantly to a growing feminist cultural movement. Her "strikingly individual work reflects the heritage of Maya Deren in the development of a cinema of personal expression. Through a rhythmic, incantatory style, Hammer creates images of high emotional intensity that concretize fantasies and fears. Evocative of Deren, too, is the creation of a vivid picture-language: complicated cinematic metaphors that have the vertical dimensions of dreams rather than a linear, horizontal narrative structure" (Women's Media Festival). Hammer is currently concerned with creating environments where the viewing audience becomes the visual makers of screen images and by doing so fuses the creative and spectator aspects of film.

Barbara Hammer is currently touring Eastern Canada with works showing at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario; Powerhouse Gallery, Montreal.

Editorial

This time around, we are the magazine with the baby on the cover. Infanticide is not a very pretty issue. It is an aspect of human behaviour that has long remained clouded by an ignorance compounded by misinformation. Healthy public discussion on the subject, even in this "Year of the Child", remains steadfastly taboo. The mass media continue to obscure the issue by reporting the murders of infants and young children in the same 'tone' as all other sensational 'newsworthy crime'. This 'tone of newsworthy crime' can be more clearly seen as 'stories that will evoke emotional reactions in the mass society'. The publishers and broadcasters of the popular media see fit to tease the public into emotional involvement because it effectively 'holds' the attention of the mass audience. On the basis of a 'just the facts' rationale, through the seemingly 'objective formula' of the action news report, they deliver these unfortunately true 'horror stories' while wearing the clean white gloves of the well respected press. It is time for these concerned citizens of the media establishment to begin to take the responsibility of looking deeply enough into these incidents of family violence to shed some light onto the darker social ills that plague the society we live in. The information exists. We cannot afford to leave it lying dormant in the academic communities. No matter how hard it is to take, we must begin to see the relationships between family violence and larger social and political issues. While the tendency in this day and age is to 'turn off the bad news', we must struggle to 'read all the news' with greater comprehension.

In the February-March issue of CENTERFOLD, we pointed out the role the popular press of Toronto played in actively distorting the basic questions posed by *The Body Politic* Trial. Can people make public their own 'image-building advertising?', specifically when they find they are being victimised by the slanderous attacks of the all-pervasive public media. Such was the situation as the homosexual community weathered the smear campaign ministered by the popular press and broadcast media following the Emanuel Jaques murder and subsequent trial. In this case, the press had managed to whip up such an oppressive climate of anti-homosexual sentiment that any such aggressive article of counter-propaganda (the now twice-published *Men Loving Boys Loving Men* for instance) would immediately be seen as an attack on public morality. What choice did the editors of *The Body Politic* have? but to 'heat up' their material while the fire of public hate, fanned irresponsibly by the media in control, raged all around them. After all, it was the 'image' of the homosexual that was being twisted by the same media establishment 'responsible' for molding the heterosexual stereotypes our present consumer society is based on. *The Body Politic* had no choice but to publish an article with enough strength to re-shape the homosexual 'image' as they themselves saw it. In this issue of CENTERFOLD, we have included an update of *The Body Politic* story. We feel it is important to display with clarity the procedures of the legal system of the Province of Ontario as its practitioners go about their business of defining immorality as one side of their

larger role of determining the public morality. *The Body Politic* Trial can be seen as a procedural model for any number of future morality trials where the government may focus their corrective legislation on any imaginable societal deviance. As artists, we have been quick to point out these recent judicial activities, as we fear the possibility of similar morality trials leading to the direct legal restriction of our creative work. More importantly, we realise that these public trials influence insensibly our very processes of thought. There is no way around it. Whether or not we are arrested by censorship, we cannot pretend we do not hear the charge.

We think the artist of sound mind will find the Mass Media's distorted amplification of all social conflict a clamor most difficult to sleep through. We also see clearly the necessity to work directly with the media and methodologies best suited to formulate and distribute our developing artistic ideology. The 'traditional' media, though often used ineffectually, have not lost their inherent qualities. Print has not been eliminated by photography, any more than the painter's and sculptor's studio has become the radio and television studio. But why are there no artists in the control room? Is it simply because the age-old model of the truant artist persists in holding us up? How often is this truant artist mixed well with craft to produce the 'gifted individual' redundantly supported by the cultural funding agencies? Do these government agencies expect these wild and predictably bohemian artists to take the money and run? *back in time* to their hideouts where they live to produce an art pure of the contamination of the confusing external world. What are the odds on these 'fine' artists actually doing something on government money likely to embarrass the party in power? 1000 to 1. Good for the government.

If you are an artist, how ineffectual is your art? Honestly, does your art produce the intended or expected result? Please do not answer by simply claiming your art is a brand new form of high value currency. If you make 'fine' art, do you see yourself working in the Treasury Department? so to speak, with the new money. As such an artist who slaves to produce these new forms of currency may wake up to find the market has closed forever because of something 'personal' he or she has said, may we suggest you learn to master your own affairs? Is your art too sexy to be tolerated by the administrators of public taste? Why do you have to show it to them? Let's face it, we are almost all in the same unhealthy position of depending on the support of one or maybe two sources of so-called 'public money'. Whether provincially or federally kept, as an occupational minority, the artist has never fared very well in terms of public esteem. When the government officials are told to limit their cultural spending, the artist gets it just as anyone on the bottom of any hierarchy gets it. Yet sometimes it appears that these cuts are made to limit the production of certain kinds of art. It appears as though there is a 'class structure' based not on family or money, but on the history of art as the politicians know it.

This 'class structure' determines who gets funded. And unfortunately, for a number of us, this history does not include an art that is based in either the new media or the new methodologies, let alone the developing ideology.

Cover photo: *Robin Collyer*
Our thanks to Ken Gass, Rosemary Donnelly and Miranda for their co-operation.

CENTERFOLD

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Editorial

When the cutbacks come, they won't affect all artists the way they will affect artists not included in this politicians' history book of art. And, of course, if your kind of art is not in the book they plan to write. As things tighten up more and more, the cultural administrators will cease to supplement their historic knowledge with an up-to-date art and its ideology. The government will stop asking the artist what is happening. They will choose to make all the decisions on the basis of their own information. The jury systems will no longer include artists except on a token level. The government will control rather than support the artist and his or her activities.

This has been happening for some time in England. In this issue of *CENTERFOLD*, we offer you a look into the near-future of Canada with a multi-faceted report on artists' activities in this year's economically crippled Great Britain. These reports from England may offer some insight into recent decisions to cut back certain activities by artists in Canada. For instance, the direct threats of cutbacks to hit the Music Gallery in Toronto, whether withdrawn or not, may preview the general strategies the administrators of these funding agencies will employ to determine the provincial, national and international cultural policies of Canada as we move into the eighties. It is our future they are working with. For those of us who operate under the assumption we belong in this future, the time has come for developing sound tactical maneuvers for maintaining control of our own activities. If we hope to survive the difficult years to come, we must re-enter the greater society artists have somehow traditionally dissociated themselves from. The first step on the road back to full societal integration is the fundamental realisation that we, as artists, inhabit a much larger world with no special status. There's a whole world out there. Watch that first step. It's a long one. ■

Tom Sherman

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O Rodney Werden

- page 324 "Videoview 2: Rodney Werden. Rodney Werden talks with Peggy Gale," *Centerfold* 2:4 (April 1978), 16–18.

See also ...

- page 021 AA Bronson, "Automotons/Automorons," in *Performance by Artists*, eds. AA Bronson and Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979), 291–300.
- page 040 David Buchan, "Artists in Residence: Women's Performance Art in Toronto," *Vie des Arts* 21:86 (1977), 88.
- page 082 Tim Guest, "Modern Love: The Recent Videotapes of Colin Campbell," *Centerfold* 3:4 (April 1979), 196–97.
- page 051 Colin Campbell, "David Buchan: Lamonte Del Monte and The Fruit Cocktails," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 29–32.
- page 277 Tom Sherman, "Writing from a Photograph by Rodney Werden," *Parachute* 9 (Winter 1977/78), 17–21.
- page 331 "Tele-performance," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), cover, 46–57.
- page 350 AA Bronson, "Imagine A Space as Karen Ann Quinlan ...," *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 104–09.
- page 356 Clive Robertson, "And in the blue corner from Toronto, Canada." *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 110–11.

Videoview 2.

Rodney Werden

RODNEY WERDEN talks with Peggy Gale

P:
I think a good place to start would be with what you actually wrote about MAY I/CAN I. That "the tape is concerned with the intricacies of the socialisation process, the hesitant, but willing and awkward surrender to an articulated code of behaviour. Staged like a rite of initiation, a model is instructed by an unseen chorus of voices, each representing an individual point of view, while exemplifying the accepted verbal norm."

The "socialisation process" is a large area to investigate. It seems that all of your tapes are about norms and deviation from norms. I wonder if you feel comfortable about being within a norm, or whether in fact you feel yourself outside the norm and are trying to find a way in.

R:
Hm. The norm is me, and the work is a sort of foray into a deviation. That foray begins at an idea or premise that I have about something and I either prove my premise or prove my premise to be wrong. But in the case of MAY I/CAN I it was pure politics. MAY I/CAN I is about a group of people watching an individual who has submitted to a certain scrutiny. And these people are collectively assessing this individual. They maintain a personal point of view, but the ultimate decision is a collective one, and it's obviously humiliating to the person who's doing it but that person is willingly doing it.

P:
She doesn't speak, so the microphone around her neck seems to be either a symbol of some sort of media involvement, or else a symbol of her being collared, being led around. She has been imposed upon somehow.

R:
Well, sure, metaphorically it's a collar. There could be electrodes on her brain, that would have served as well. But the microphone is the scariest thing, nowadays. Even more scary than tv, because if you can be seen at what you're saying you may be better understood ... little gestures, things like that.

So MAY I/CAN I was based on that, the sick side of democracy or accepted humiliation. The reason the person was nude and the person was a woman

was political too. Women are more often subjected to that type of scrutiny. P:

Well it's partly that the artist's model is traditionally a nude woman so it sort of plays out the art game as well as playing out the male-female and society-individual role.

R:
But the artist's model being a woman is also a society game. The commands to the model were from very basic social situations ... if you've ever been caught in customs with dope, that sort of thing. These are things that society has asked people to do; they have asked that you be humiliated, guilty or not.

P:
In art history, Truth is always shown

as blindfolded and usually without any clothes on, so she can't hide anything and she has no defenses. And it's always a woman. Truth is a naked blindfolded woman.

R:
I have another tape in the works - I'm not happy with it yet - of which you saw the clothed version (ENQUIRER, 1977, colour); actually most of the tape is shot with this woman nude, with the blindfold and her ears covered. I'm continuing on into that symbolism of abusing the truthful situation, the perfect corn-fed woman co-operating in a situation she knows nothing about.

It points out how we've accepted the structures of society, and is as basic as



MAY I/CAN I 1977 photos: Le-La.

Videoviews

the sexual discrimination, the fetishism that is apparent even in a basic job application form. That's very simplistic, and it's not what MAY I/CAN I is about, but a lot of that humiliation is in there. You know, your marital status, male or female, how tall are you, all that seemingly irrelevant stuff. We accept the idea that information has to be given so that other people can assess us.

P:

As I said before, all of your tapes seem to be about norms and deviation from norms. You seem to be interested in the line where ordinariness begins. Do you feel more comfortable within the ordinary, or within the extraordinary?

R:

Possibly because I am so conservative and ordinary, my interest in the fetish or the extraordinary is quite natural. The character in this tape in an extreme political sense was capitulating. The girl that portrayed this was an actress, and I asked her to be almost on the verge of tears, but still willing. I think that's a fairly common situation.

P:

She portrays it very effectively, so that it looks like it might be a clip from a very long and gruelling ordeal, of which all we see is a five minute segment. Maybe that's a nice metaphor for encapsulating her status as an individual within the society.

R:

Well, it's more personal than that. I feel that way every time I'm put under that type of scrutiny, every time I'm asked to articulate, explain, substantiate what I'm doing. It's obviously about me. She plays me. But I was giving you the social connotation of it, that it does apply ...

P:

It's very much about the notion of authority, and how that functions, and how she deals with it.

R:

How I deal with it, precisely. I don't deal with authority very well at all. I come from a background where the first thing you learn is how to manipulate authority or rebel against it. Because it's fashionable, it's expected. It's like smoking when you're a kid, the sort of stuff. She's on an edge. As am I.

P:

One of the references the tape makes is that she is a model in an art school, that she is standing for an art context.

R:

Definitely. That veneer was quite conscious. It was shot in a gallery so it would look that way. At A.Space, upstairs.

P:

The fact that she had a microphone on I saw as a reference to her position

with media, that media is acting on her and manipulating her. She's not using it; it in a sense is using her.

R:

That too, but more, that everything she says is being recorded. Although she didn't say anything in that segment, I wanted to imply that there were other segments. And if she did say anything it was going to be recorded and accounted for. My approach to it is a very naive approach to authority. It's not so much an external authority as a demand that I make on myself. Or how I view what I do. I always resent being accountable, as I said, but I think more in the sense of being accountable to myself.

P:

Because, as you say, you not only do but probably try to live quite an ordinary respectable life. You don't want authority to single you out and say "you there, get over here and prove yourself, cause I think you've done something wrong".

R:

Or something right.

P:

Something right? You don't want to be noticed at all? That's not true.



R:

Well, that dichotomy exists.

P:

Another point that interests me about wearing the microphone ... it gave me a very strong sense of impersonality. That is, she was out there all alone, and it almost felt like the voices might be coming through the microphone, giving out instructions rather than accepting information, that it stood for both directions. It gave a machine edge to it, and a kind of helplessness.

R:

Yes, the voices were heavily processed technically, to take any personality

out. Six people. And the music, which was original, was to give syncopation between the voices.

P:

It relaxes you just at the point where the visuals are harsh and sort of dangerous looking. The voices could be construed as being very aggressive, but the little dadadada of the music is so pretty and sort of spring-like.

R:

Yes, that's responding to her femininity. She's a very delicate person and she displays that, playing that character. The music is for her. It was all done in segments, and the music and voices were all synched in separately. The editing of the visuals became the real-time problem and the audio had to be matched to that. The visuals repeat thirteen times actually. Every point of view is covered; there's a command and then it goes through a six-part cycle which actually goes in a semi-circle, and each individual looks at a different part of the body, beginning with the expression. It's linear, almost like a dream sequence in these parts, because you can't express all those points of view for six different people at the same time. I almost wish that they went a bit quicker, to give the illusion that they were all happening at the same time. The close-up of each part of her were to emphasise the scrutiny that she was undergoing, one view for each person, and all the shots were different. We have an hour of tape, edited down to 6 minutes.

P:

The title MAY I/CAN I is not used anywhere in the text. When I was a kid I used to play a game called May I - may I go forward six paces, yes you may take six baby steps - was there an intentional reference to that children's game, or was it just the idea of getting permission from your society and from your peers, and from the controllers around you.

R:

That too, plus the grammatical error of "can I have a glass of water" as opposed to "may I have a glass of water". It doesn't sound like a very good children's game.

P:

It's all about manipulation. In May I you're supposed to sneak, making headway while the leader's back is turned. So in fact it makes a good reference point for this kind of manipulation by peers and for profit. Some of the movements were sexual, very graceful, but very mechanical. Was it about male-female manipulation?

R:

Oh no. Though as I said before women are often put in that sort of sexual-political position, in a very obvious

Videoviews

way. But finally it's about me, and not about sexual assessment.

P:

The first command was "show us your teeth".

R:

Well that was the slave reference, like horse traders. They did the same thing with slaves, they looked at the teeth.

P:

It's interesting that you can put a young and attractive woman through all those movements and it will say one thing; supposing you had used an old woman, or an old man, it would have had a completely different range.

R:

But it wouldn't have been pertinent. It wouldn't have worked with anyone but a young attractive woman: in terms of society, the most desirable physical thing.

P:

I want to know the extent to which you plan everything in advance.

R:

Oh before I go into shooting I have everything written down and the concept all worked out. Then it falls apart at the time of shooting, and I look forward to that clarification. I always end up with the original ideas, but there are differences in how it's presented from how I imagined it would be presented. You always have to allow for translation, dealing with other people. Especially the kind of person I'm dealing with. Generally I don't know the people personally, though that wasn't the case with MAY I/CAN I.

I always intended MAY I/CAN I to be very short. I actually thought it would be four minutes. That was very conscious. I set out to make a very short concise tape that could include everything I intended to say. Generally speaking I'd like to see 20 minutes the tops for video - it's hard for me to watch longer than that. TYPIST is too long but I can't shorten that, because of the way it was shot. Originally I'd planned for it to be much shorter, for the typing to be much quicker, but it was technical compromise.

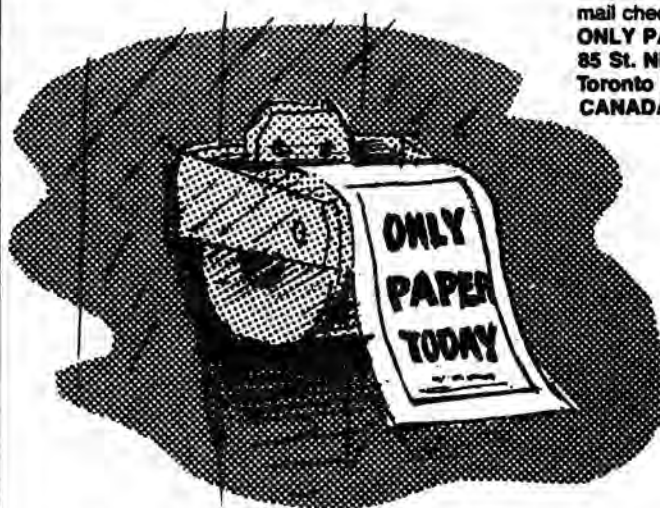
Finally you can say MAY I/CAN I is about anything.

P:

It's about permission.

R:

Yeah. Exactly. But I am surprised at the response to the tape ... I thought I had a doughnut with this one. I knew about the tape to a point, but I thought forget it, this is too raw-looking. Visually. And I didn't think the intent would come across. I'm just flabbergasted that other people, ... that I was clear for a change. ■



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P Tele-Performance

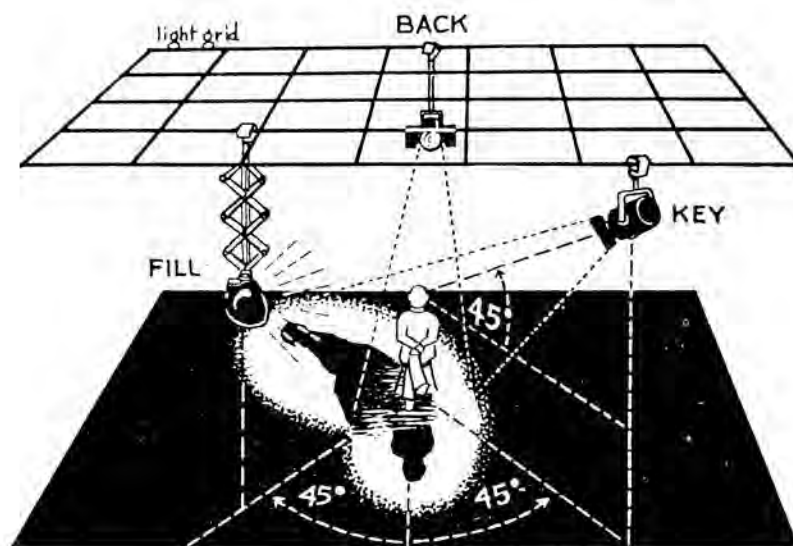
- page 330 Tele-performance Advertisement, *Centerfold* 2:6 (Fall/September 1978), inside back cover.
- page 331 "Tele-performance," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), cover, 46–57.

See also ...

- page 051 Colin Campbell, "David Buchan: Lamonte Del Monte and The Fruit Cocktails," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 29–32.
- page 090 Elizabeth Chitty: Demo Model: An interview by Peggy Gale," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 8–12.
- page 155 Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker and General Idea, "General Idea: Towards an Audience Vocabulary," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 13–18.
- page 239 "Clive Robertson: A Beuys-Shaped Frame: A discussion with Clive Robertson by Vera Frenkel," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 23–28.
- page 303 Rene Blouin, "Tom Sherman: See the Text Comes to Read You," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 19–22.

TELE-PERFORMANCE?

The usage of closed-circuit TV, the Evening News as paperback fiction, stock footage, the props and mannerisms of the TV studio and its invited audience, TV monologues delivered by leaders in times of crisis, consumer 'protection'....



....these could be said to be some of the ingredients of Tele-Performance. In the **November** issue of **CENTERFOLD** we will be looking at a sampling of new Canadian works that were premiered (all but two) during the recent **Fifth Network Cinquième Réseau Video Festival** in Toronto. Containing reviews, schematics and overviews, the Tele-Performance issue of **CENTERFOLD** will be



guest-edited by **Kenneth Coutts-Smith** with exclusive photo coverage by **Rodney Werden**.

Works by: **David Buchan, Jean-François Cantin, Elizabeth Chitty, General Idea, The Government, The Hummer Sisters, Marshalore, Randy and Berneche, Clive Robertson, Tom Sherman and Dennis Tourbin.**

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CENTERFOLD

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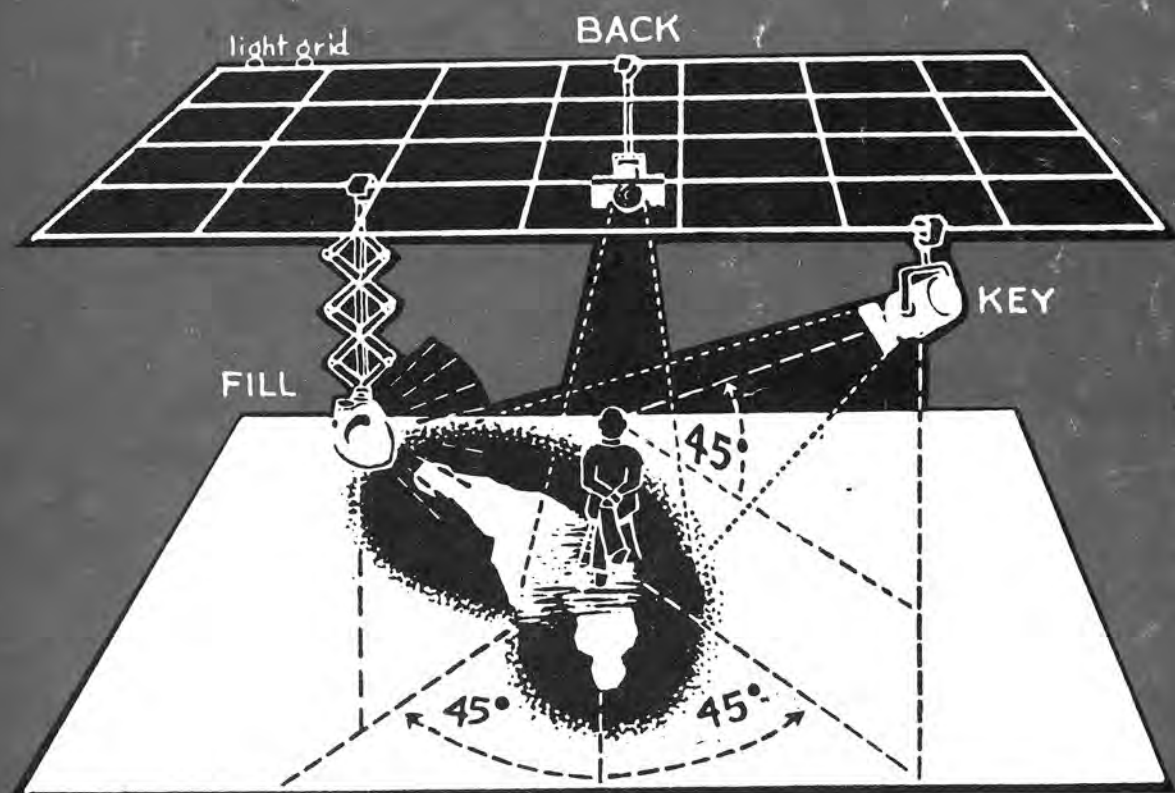
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TELE-PERFORMANCE

Randy and Berneche

Centre of a Tension

A document by
Randy and Berneche and
Clive Robertson

The colour wheels:
I watched *Centre of a Tension*
from the balcony, I wanted to see



Rodney Werden

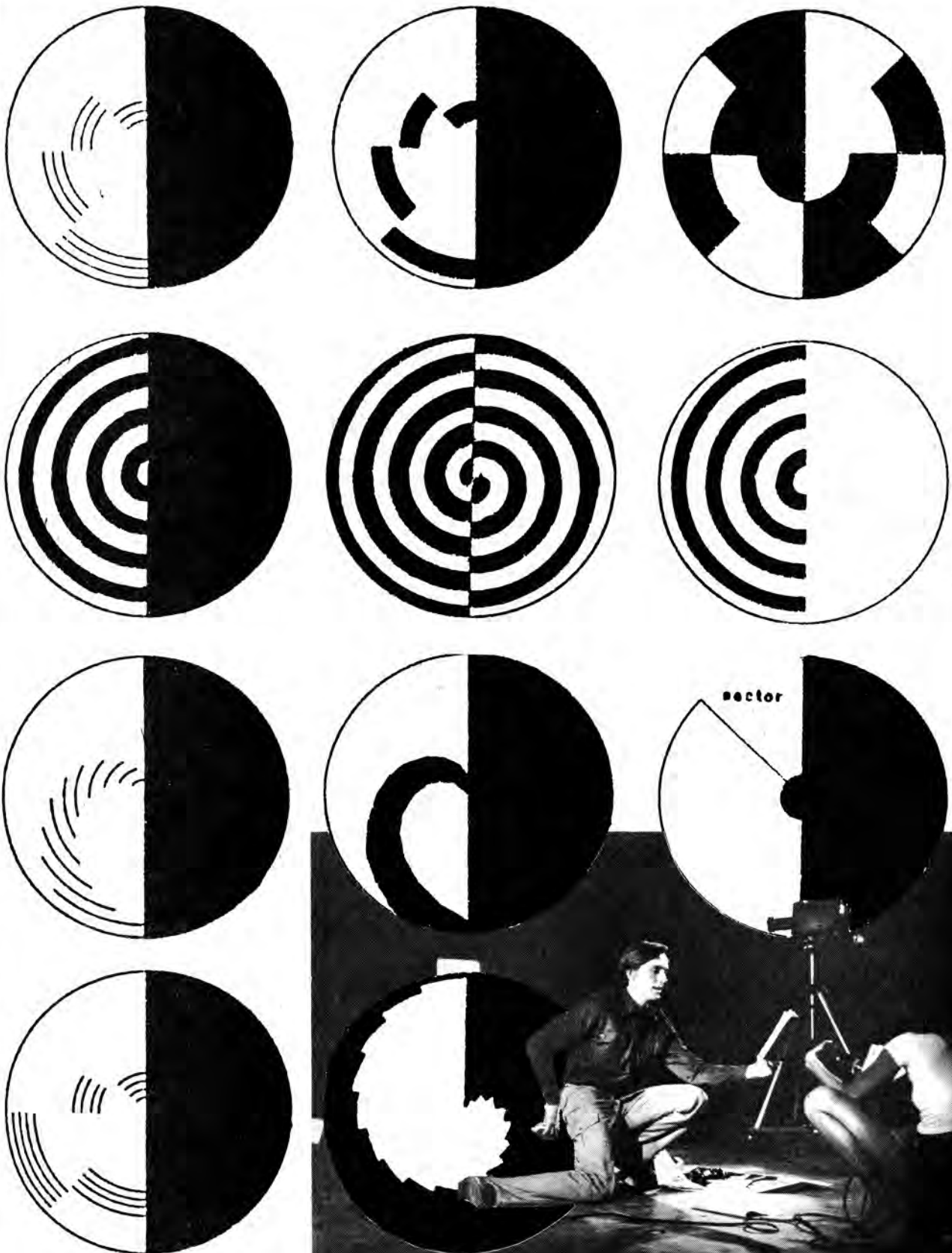
the colour appear from those black and white monitors produced from a tape of spinning black and white subjective colour experiments. *Centre of a Tension* was in many ways hidden as a performance, partially because Randy and Berneche were placed (placed themselves) in the middle of what for their purposes was too large a space. The analogy was subtle. These spinning disks that appeared on the monitors behind their performance simulate a frequency that presents colour. It works, like television, on retinal fatigue. As performance is 'povera' those 21" monitors should have been at least 10' square screens (the wheels could have been shot on film — but for the money) and then the audience would have experienced the fatigue that was intended.

The disco music:

The disco music occurred for 40 sec. bursts during which time either Randy or Berneche passed to one another a closed-circuit video camera whilst they both danced in sleep-like frenzy, her with her Mickey Mouse T-shirt — holding a bottle of beer in one hand, often a cigarette in the other — looking somewhat like the younger sister of the woman from *As the World Burns* (the R&B performance that the 'performance audience' knows best). Disco is the assimilation of revolution into fashion says Randy, commenting about a recent film festival and in some ways inspiration for *Centre of a Tension* — whose two main characters are Che Guevara and Mata Hari, or at least their voices reading from their (Guevara's and Hari's) diaries. He goes on to say that the film world sees the revolutionary as a marketable character who can have the celluloid shit kicked out of him/her for profit. The Mexican wet-back, the Reggae singer, the Aborigine from Australia, the North American Indian are real characters turned into fantasy land. Turned by the corporations from a martyr into a fad.

Che Guevara and Mata Hari:

Randy and Berneche take turns sitting on a stack of beer cases lip-synching excerpts from Mata Hari's



Centerfold, December 1978

R: Disco Blindness deals with the diaries, the purported diaries, of Mata Hari and Che Guevara. The characters are based upon the original martyrs but are a modern translation of how society today perceives these characters.

B: The diaries have been percolated down through so many levels of fashion that the words become mere mouthed rhetoric.

R: By stealing and cleaning the revolutionary's image, society has consumed and therefore rendered artificial the original message.

B: The characters lip-sync to taped readings, their mouths fill the video screen.

R: Che Guevara becomes a department store mannequin, dressed in the latest guerilla look.

B: Mata Hari becomes a child prostitute in torn and skimpy, skin-tight clothing; a victim rather than a manipulator.

R: During the monologues, one becomes the voyeur, one mouths the rhetoric.

B: The camera points its finger at the glaring error.

R: The target poses suggestively. The voices scream sex and violence, love and war, to a stunned society that doesn't want to hear — just wants to mouthe, doesn't want to feel — just wants to emulate.

In between the monologues, they play out all of the cat and mouse games. The arms of the frenzied dancers mimic the fascist salute and the power to the people fist.

B: They pass off on one another the responsibility of the knowledge that something is terribly wrong.

R: The desire for glamour replaces the desire for emotions.

B: Evened out into a grey middle zone, they dance to a disco beat.

R: Superficiality takes over where paranoia left off.

B: Discs spin behind the dancers to destroy this sense of equilibrium.

R: Retinal fatigue produces slight nausea.

B: Minds programmed to tune into the subliminal believe only in illusion.

R: The illusions are pre-manipulated to control the unsuspecting.

B: An illusion of colour masks the truth. Reality is blocked from memory.

R: Only sensationalist triggers remain. We perceive much more than we want to.

B: The voices never stop.

R: Freedom of choice is allowed but the choices that are presented are all identical.

B: The Joker transmits the orders.

R: The Commentator is the bored tool of the myth creators.

B: They die laughing but never know the joke.

© 1978 Randy and Berneche.

and Che Guevara's diaries. Whilst one sits synching, the other points a portable video camera at the reader's lips which is enlarged on the video screen. The diaries are played back from an audio tape, Che's read by a Columbian voice, Mata's by a Canadian voice with a fake East Indian accent. "Nobody knew where Mata Hari came from, she was a complete fraud appearing in Paris pretending she was an Indian temple dancer. . . she made a lot of connections through sex and was responsible for the death of 50,000 soliders, Allied troops; she was executed as a German spy by the French, but she was a double agent," Berneche explains in an interview sometime after the performance. Mata Hari's purported diary is grade bee porno — that has a continuous level of metaphorical exaggeration. Che's diary is about the present with his troops in the jungle — an emotional account relating all the horrors of his suicide mission and jungle survival. As Randy connects the diary with the performance: "the jungle revolutionary image is turned into a clothing style that hit the disco's. It's the only visible thing that came out of his life and even that is now on sale for half price because its out of fashion." He makes a further connection that wasn't immediately visible in the performance: "Che becomes a manikin, perma-press creases on your khakis, mouthing the rhetoric of someone who is in great discomfort whilst you are hustling in the disco. It's similar to what is believed to be the political content in art, it's very middle class, just mouthing the revolutionary rhetoric without having any of the inherent danger."

Between the buttons:

The juxtaposition of the two texts is indeed strange and the disco dancing interludes somehow probably confused the audience completely but not intentionally. Randy and Berneche both talked about this, about not pushing theatrical 'buttons' — which makes the performance for the audience difficult to comprehend, the disco seems like an up-tempo device to "push a button" in the performance, it's a confusing though admirable theory. It certainly is understandable as their last performance (*As the World Burns*) was very 'appealing' in its use of

theatrics — both characters were used by other artists in a number of tapes and performances with Randy and Berneche playing their *Burn* roles. They both say that *As the World Burns* was not a satire of *Soap*, but that the characters were “parts of ourselves that we pulled out of the closet”. They say the buttons can be replaced with a presence, with an honesty, with an assault and it is in this light that *Centre of a Tension* should be seen.

Subliminutes:

Between the disco/diary section and the manifesto, the spinning colour wheels changed to reveal newspaper texts spinning, an early filmic image except the variable speed of this newsprint was more in contact with the speed of an electronic age. As the wheels slowed the newsprint was visible as the soundtrack changed to voices overdubbed over overdubbed voices.

Manifesto:

(see box)

This part of the performance was without doubt the most effective in terms of active enactment. Berneche shouted the orders beginning with the line “Be a mercenary” while Randy, further from the audience, quietly delivered the random (though alphabetical) commentary. Throughout this ‘dialogue’ there is humour, anguish, hatred, frustration which says a lot for random emotions. At the end of this section both broke out into hysterical laughter — “dying laughter”.

The political/social/aesthetic level of this performance can be brought into question, that is it can be questioned as the resolution was far from clear. Like many performances it contained a code under development, presenting a new work is not always for the ultimate benefit of the audience, though that can occur at some later date. This is not to outwardly criticize *Centre of a Tension*. It did become or attain a rationale for me once it could be discussed, which hopefully is what this collected document may do for this and other performances. Often, superficially, performances seem to have a lot in common — hence the tele-performance ‘key’. *Centre of a Tension* I saw as being separately purposeful and an interesting and relevant departure. ■

BE A MERCENARY
BLIND AN ARTIST
BORE AN AUDIENCE
BURN BOOKS
BUST A PROSTITUTE
CAGE AN ANIMAL
CASTRATE A HOMOSEXUAL
CLOSE A HOSPITAL
COLLECT A BOUNTY
COVER UP THE TRUTH
CRANK CALL A WIDOW
CRIPPLE AN ATHLETE
DECEIVE A LOVER
DEFACE A BEAUTY
DEFOLIATE NATURE
DEPORT A REFUGEE
DESECRATE A GRAVE
DESTROY A FAMILY
EXECUTE A REVOLUTIONARY
FLOOD A CITY
FORGE A SIGNATURE
FREE A CRIMINAL
GENOCIDE A RACE
HAVE NO CONSCIENCE
HIT AND RUN
HIJACK A SCHOOL BUS
HORD MONEY
INQUISITION A SAINT
JAIL AN INNOCENT
KILL A COP
KILL A KID
KNEECAP AN EXECUTIVE
MAIME A PET
PERVERT AN INNOCENT
PLANT A BOMB
POISON FOOD
PULL APART A TEDDY BEAR
RAPE A CHILD
REINSTATE CAPITOL PUNISHMENT
ROB A BLIND MAN
SELL OUT TO FORTUNE
SCANDALIZE A POLITICIAN
SLANDER AN IMMIGRANT
SLASH A PAINTING
SMASH A CROSS
START A COUNTER REVOLUTION
STARVE AN ORPHAN
STEAL AN HEIRLOOM
TELL A LIE
TURN IN A FRIEND

myth adventure
myth advise
myth anthropy
myth apply
myth apprehend
myth appropriate
myth behave
myth become
myth beget
myth believe
myth calculate
myth call
myth carriage
myth chance
myth chief
myth conceive
myth conduct
myth construe
myth count
myth creant
myth deal
myth deed
myth demean
myth doubt
myth employ
myth fire
myth fit
myth fortune
myth give
myth govern
myth handle
myth illusion
myth inform
myth interpret
myth judge
myth lead
myth like
myth manage
myth ogeny
myth perceive
myth prison
myth quote
myth rule
myth shapen
myth state
myth take
myth trial
myth trust
myth understand
myth use

From *Centre of a Tension*, Randy & Berneche.

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35¢

**How You Can Look
And Feel Younger**

PAGE 51

Simple Technique Can Bring Relief to 67 Million...

**#1 NO-DRUG PLAN TO
STOP PAIN**

PAGE 28

**30 Minutes a Day
Will Add Zing
To Your Marriage**
page 19

★ ★ ★

**How to Improve
Your Concentration**
page 44

★ ★ ★

**Michael Learned
To Quit 'Waltons'**
page 20

★ ★ ★

**How You Can
Make a Good
First Impression**
page 27

★ ★ ★

**Kotter's TV Wife:
My 3 Eerie
ESP Experiences**
page 31

★ ★ ★

**How to Tell If
Your Spouse Is
Having an Affair**
centerfold



David Hynsky

EXCLUSIVE— THE HUMMER SISTERS

How do stars like Kate Jackson, Cindy Williams and Suzanne Somers stay so trim? Through simple slimming tricks that include everything from fasting to lasagna

meals to ballet — and their stay-slim ideas should work for you, too! To find out how eight of Hollywood's top actresses keep their fantastic figures, turn to page 37





Bobbe Besord

Tele□Performance

How I Lost My Video Virginity to the Hummer Sisters

By Willoughby Sharp

"Yes, it's TRUE. The Hummer Sisters All-Guy Revue Band are hitchhiking to a gig in New York with 400 TV sets and their HOPES held firmly around the middle . . ."

How did it come together? How did they meet? How do they collaborate?

DO THEY STILL SPEAK? ("Proceeds will be used to buy platform shoes and garter belts. . .").

I collected the individuals that make up the continuing collaboration called the HUMMER SISTERS & Video Cabaret & the Government & whatever INDIVIDUALLY, 1 by 1.

(Vancouver 1973, Western Front Society, M.L. & D.T. there for the organization of a woman's film festival sponsored by MEMO FROM TURNER with a half million Canadian Dollars \$ from the Gov't via L.I.P.).

But what are the issues? What makes the HUMMERS important to contemporary culture?

THIS:

Music: WHAT IS THE MATTER
what is the matter
what is the matter
what is the matter
what is the ma ma ma ma maw...

Did you ever put your (artistic) life ON THE LINE (as they do)? Day after day. Hour by hour. Did you ever try to TRUST another to be YOURSELF? Throw your lot into the pot? Submerge your EGO into the flow. Just GO w/ it? It's not easy. "WHAT IS THE MATTER (?)"

Here are my notes from that historic evening after the 5th NETWORK . . . "ML & DT stage rt. sound check: "DO YOU WANT TO

DANCE?" Chris on camera: "Art is where the heart is" etc. 7th Heaven. Double DRAG on swings. Pre-recorded Raymond Chandler-type narrative. . . "Trouble is my business. . ." (Male/Female role reversal) Rev up. The Government: ("Where's that two bucks you owe Me?"). "HELLO! We're the HUMMER SISTERS." (High energy).

"Who do you think you are
What do you think this is
Where were we...who's next...
how come
Where did you find that...

But back to the issues: what makes all of this creative chaos significant? The concept, the creation, the process, the pain, the play, the fun, the collaboration, the performance, the life-style, the image, the ecstasy. . .

The reviews: ". . . HUMMER cohorts and VIDEOCAB chums are heralding the future. . .", David McCaughna, *Scene Changes*.

". . . the peerless HUMMER SISTERS media manifest — as devastatingly funny as it is deva-

stating. . .", *Toronto Star*.

"... a shameless video-rock broadcast on morality. . .", *New York Times*.

BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA.

Consider what you're writing Willoughby. Try to get to the core. What gives them the energy? How do you convey the power. VIDEO? The closed-circuitness of 400 simultaneous TV monitors with something different on each CRT. The scan in REAL time. The pure pleasure of just being in the midst of all THAT energy. The free flowing grace. The satisfaction of self derived from the work of others. The sense of togetherness. COMMUNITY. (What does it all have to do w/ TORONTO. And Canada?).

MUSIC: EDEN

Snakeoil: Good morning, Eva.

Eva: Are you speaking to me, Snakeoil?

Snake: Yes, you Pearl of Paradise. The others neither mark nor remark. Do you want to eat me?

Eva: I do not eat snake. I am chaste and immortal. Fierce as fire, patient as ice.

Snake: The simile is a dead donut.

Eva: How about a backrub?

Come on, Sharp. This is BULLSHIT. You're just pulling from the script. Don't you have anything ORIGINAL to say. Confront the issues. Get it ON.

"Well, within the contemporary stream of avant-guard work, the HUMMER SISTERS and their collaborators represent the first and historic rupture with traditional theatre in the sphere of . . ."

TRY AGAIN.

"I like (and respect) them PERSONALLY." . . .

Eva: I am advised that to eat the snake is to know the Worm. I am advised that to know the Worm is to know Nothing. I am advised that to eat Snake is to visit the hell from which all return and none advance. I am waiting for further instructions.

Snake: Nice girls finish last.

That's just more PADDING. That's

their vision. You're "dry and frivolous". Say SOMETHING.

"Well, maybe I should say something about the agony of writing it. after all, I lived in the HUMMER house (Sussex & Robert) during Aug., saw it all go down on the



David Hlynsky

typing-machine, saw the TEARS, the shredded sheets, the discussion, the re-visions, the dismembered lives. . ."

Come on, come on. Nobody could understand that. It's just words. The old eight and a half by eleven, if you know what I mean?

"No. Wait. That's where it's AT. It has to be on paper before it could go up in front of the eyes



(cameras).

You mean it isn't improvised?

"Just the timing, the audience interaction, the subtle exchange between the performers, the movement of the image flow on the TVs. . ."

Then why does it seem so RAW?

"Because it's real, every evening. They bring their TOTAL selves to it each time. All their loves & hates. Their fears. And fanaticisms.

That's hard for me to understand. Perhaps you could quote some more from the text.

"Sure."

Spy: All witchcraft comes from carnal lust which in woman is insatiable.

Inq: Stay tuned.

Spy: Another ideological S&M affair, another 70's romance.

Inq: Close-up.

Spy: From the Hairy neck of the Phalangium spider are extracted two worms. According to Pliny, these are wrapped in deer skin and attached to a woman's body before sunrise to prevent conception. If her loins are rubbed with blood from the ticks on a black bull, she will be averse to copulation. Aristotle recommends cedar oil applied to the cervix. Hemlock applied to

the testes at puberty. Mouse dung checks abominable thoughts in men. Women have been known to use their fingers to direct urine to flush out the vagina. . ."

But what'bout the individual performances, the center stageness of it all?

"... it slips and slides, comes into focus and then dissolves, sort of like the sea, waves there and there, but mostly just flow. And depth."

Ok, I'll buy that. But then what do you come away with?

"That's hard to describe. It's not like a Broadway musical. You don't leave with a tune in your head. It's more TOTAL. More WHOLE. When it works, the parts come together in ways unique to performance now. The music is powerful, the musicians keyed, in & out, back & forth, supportive not overwhelming. Robert and Andy up FRONT, backed by sensitive drums. Randy & Berneche adding range & style. And the FOUR sisters out there, lined up, belting it out, Janet, Bobbie, Marien & D. Anne."

"... ONCE A LUNAR MONTH THE EGG TRAVELS BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA . . . As all of you who are engaged in this work are aware. . . ONCE A LUNAR

MONTH. . .BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA WOOGA. . . The Big Picture keeps bleeding off the frame. . . A shard of plastic, a mood ring. . . An encounter with fossilized mating rituals. . . A skirmish with OHIP. . . A hangover here. . . A torture case there. . . And of course the daily dinosaur / dinosaur du jour. . . The magnificent stomping and snuffing ceremonies. . . Devised by a pea brain in the body of a monolithic beast. . . "

Alright, enough. I get the picture.

"But you couldn't possibly. You HAVE to see it. I could not describe their performance to you. Words are not sufficient. It's the experience that counts. And each one is different. I must have seen them up before an audience, maybe, ten, fifteen times, Toronto, the Horseshoe, New York, and elsewhere. What's most memorable is the ENERGY. The POWER. The FORCE of them all working to-

gether to bring it OFF. That's extraordinary!"

So it's hard to be critical? "I identify too much. I feel I know them too well to take that distant stance. Anyway, I never saw myself as a critic."

Well, then why are you writing about them in *Centerfold*?

"Pure ambition. I want to establish myself as a writer."

But, I thought you already had?

"That was a long while ago. Nobody remembers. Even I can't."

Well, frankly, Willoughby, I don't think that you've said very much. I don't think that you've caught that special something that the HUMMERS have. That fire, that warmth, that infectiousness. I haven't seen them often, but when I have, they were HOT.

"You're right. But my talent is limited. It's hard for me to put into WORDS what I really feel. I'm no Tom Wolfe."

Too bad.

"I guess I could have brought out the dedication, the devotion, the sense of destiny that is the HUMMERS. That unqualified "throw caution to the winds" quality. That walking the edge, the thin edge. The Risk. Perhaps some personal quotes, some anecdotes would have helped. But they are so elusive, so mercurial. In and out of focus. . . "

Excuses, excuses.

"Perhaps with more time, more effort, more intimacy. But Clive called; he had to have the copy; Tanya was ready to set it. I couldn't put it off any longer. . . "

But what if people want to know more, aren't satisfied with what you've given them?

"Well, they could go see the show. Tomorrow they are off to Vancouver, and then Ottawa, Montreal, and New York again. . . "

The beat goes on.

"Yes. And don't you forget it." ■

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Centerfold, December 1978

PARALLELOGRAMME

A SPACE ARTON'S ARTSPACE
CANAL CLOUDS N WATER
DANCE LAB EYE LEVEL
ON ARTISTS ASSN.
MUSIC GALLERY OF THE
C.C.M. OPEN SPACE OPTICA
PHOTOGRAPHER'S GALLERY
POWERHOUSE PUMPS S.A.W.
VEHICLE VIDEO INN THE
WESTERN FRONT A SPACE
ARTON'S ART CANAL
CLOUDS N WATER DANCE
LAB EYE LEVEL
ARTISTS ASSN. MEDIA
GALLERY OF THE
PHOTOGRAPHER'S GALL
OPTICA PUMPS POWERHOUSE
S.A.W. VEHICLE VIDEO INN
THE WESTERN FRONT A SPACE

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The Government

Electric Eye

An interview by Tom Sherman
and Clive Robertson

THE GOVERNMENT

Ed Boyd, drums

Robert Stewart, bass, vocals, writing

Andy Paterson, guitar, vocals, writing

Originally, some 18 months ago Andy Paterson put a band together for Michael Hollingsworth's play ("which he had the audacity to call:") PUNC/ROK (with a German spelling). The Government became adept at playing "Television incidental music" except that Paterson was using both prerecorded and live Video instead of Television as his main writing source. The Government provided more than half of Michael Hollingsworth's *Electric Eye*, as well as adaptations for his *Strawberry Fields*, they have also provided major contributions to *The Hummer Sisters*, Karen Ann Quinlan, Patty Rehears Story, and *Nympho Warrior*, and

Randy and Berneche's *As The World Burns*. The Government is also a band in its own write, extending a parallel performance aesthetic which

relates directly to post-surveillance artist tapes. With the Government black and white video never looked so mean. Their music is bureaucratic, their voices sound like so many filing cabinets closing, they are investigators, they know when not to act — just like the Government.



Lorne Fromer

Bobbe Besold



AP: At that time (Nov. 1977), I took the liberty of getting sick and turning into David Berkowitz writing down everything that came into my head for awhile and at the same time feeding in to *Electric Eye*. There are three videotapes for *Electric Eye*, two have been put together. The first one shot has the five Visits, the reading of the newspaper and the blowing up of the guitarist in the night club. At first that was the only tape. When it was shown the music related to it casually. There were no specific cues. For New York two more tapes were made. The Emmanuel Jacques Reversal, you could call it, the one with: "I am going to bite his cock off" tape, and she actually does it. Rodney Werden shot the first one, Susan Britton shot the second one and then we put in the incidental tape of myself playing chess with myself. The chess game was bizarre — I can't play chess so Hollingsworth and Chris Clifford are calling out these moves. The reason I look in such angst as to what I am going to do next is that I can't understand what they're talking about.

Hollingsworth and I would change *Electric Eye* so we would extend the song four bars and then stopped the music, what is going to come out on tape. So we would change the songs until we could stop and the pre-recorded tape would immediately take over.

RS: That took a long time, it was very complicated. There are some great performers on the videotape: Maury Chaykin, Jackie Burroughs, I'm good myself — the lines you don't want to lose. The video is there but without the lines! I still think we are losing too many but...

AP: No. We've gone through it and decided which ones we want brought out.

CR: When you did *Electric Eye* at the Beverly, I didn't understand

at first why you showed the tape first and then performed with the tape, overriding some of the soundtrack, then I realised why and apart from the songs, Andy's extra narrative, his commentary on the content of the tape's narrative, it's also a unique use of the video installation.

AP: When the tape was shown in the bar, which allowed the band to have a break, we were surprised how many people related to the tape as if it were a French movie. The beer

is too contrived and loses spontaneity.

CR: As a use of the video cabaret format that for instance, *The Hummers*, use — I liked *Electric Eye* because there is no delay between the narrative on the tape and the band, either singing or ad libbing. The theatre, for the most part, is on the tape and so the audience doesn't have to wait for the actors to become the band, which at times is unnecessarily aggravating.

AP: It's changing with the *Hummers* as we produce more murk music as we get closer to the question of what can be the definition of a song.

RS: I like watching the audience, it's like watching tennis as their eyes move constantly between the video monitors and the band.

TS: What's that? Incidental murk music?

AP: I could be very crude and say I tune my guitar to a chord and do a lot of volume twitching in and out. Fluid sound. Narcoleptic. For a strictly rock and roll audience is *Electric Eye* immediate enough? There's obvious bits — mood, posture, tableau that are there when something is on the tape that demands focus but not audio focus. Or is the appeal that maybe there are at least two focuses and the audience can be its own editor?

CR: The music holds it together. You don't have to watch the band to hear the music and then you can choose to look at any of many banks of monitors carrying the pre-recorded tapes and live synthesised video of the band and tapes.

AP: Theoretically if you don't give a flying shit about the tape, with those kind of people in the pauses they wonder what the fuck is going on. It's very tightly scripted as far as allowing accidents, there's a difference between mistakes and an accident. A mistake is when the tape is



Babbe Besold



sales went down. The waiters were saying to us, What kind of a movie's this? Hermann Neutics once asked me how scripted *Electric Eye* and the Government was, he said that it seemed as if the music would stop before two very specific pieces of mundane conversation. The whole point of the conversation in the visits is that the conversation is mundane. There are two segments when the lead singer in the band is the voices on the tape. If anything the scripting

I AM ON THE PROWL

Hey everybody in the street driving cars
I've got just one thing to say to you
And that is
I can get where I want to go on my feet
faster than you can get where you want to go
in your cars
Do you know why?
It's because your cars are all stuck at some intersection
It's irrelevant which one because
All the intersections of the world are IDENTICAL
But me, well, I get around
I've got mail to deliver
Fires to extinguish
Missions to perform
that the voices of dogs have been telling me to perform
for thousands of years
I AM ON THE PROWL
I AM ON THE PROWL
I'm the King of the Sidewalk, I never step on cracks
I break through the arms
of old lovers who've forgotten that they're still holding hands
I step on dogs who get in the way
I'm fast and efficient
I AM ON THE PROWL
I AM ON THE PROWL

© 1978 Muvachismo Music Ltd. Words and music by Andrew James Paterson.

not held at a certain point, it means I have to cut the song and those are just sloppies. . .

RS: To us. I don't think the audience picks up on that too much. . .

EB: Even if we do a song at a slightly faster or slower tempo we can miss a cue. . .

AP: That's when positive accidents can happen. . .

CR: (to Ed) I heard you made a comment that the music would be cleaner if you didn't use video?

EB: I like playing with video in the context of a band. What we've been doing recently to avoid that is to turn the video sound down, so the band is cleaner. We have to bring the video sound up when the band is not playing to get the dialogue across.

AP: But again, some of the pieces in that show, the way they work, is for the band to be a back-

drop. In the second visit: trivial information: explosion from band. We therefore then put the focus on to the live performance, the camera's role is taken away from the tape.

RS: I can see what Ed means because sometimes as people who make video know, the sound track can be shitty, when you bring it up through that large a sound system you really notice the distortion, the crackle, the tape noise.

EB: It's not that that noise is often unbearable. You see Andy is doing a number of things: he's acting, singing and Robert's doing the same. All I am doing is playing the drums, right? So to me it's just my ears, I watch my cues of course but their acting with the video.

RS: (In a takeoff voice). He's just the drummer!

AP: My guitar playing deals with an irrational alter ego thing. All these rationalisations and avoiding the issues in these 'visits'. I'll give a blitz or a nod, a twirl of the knob, a nod of the head. I write songs on that basis largely any-ways. If you actually want to do something you don't talk. Without range, which I didn't have the other night, the dichotomy between the density and inaudibility, is lost.

CR: So how can the Government transform itself onto disc as its major known presentation is so rich visually?

EB: Very easily. When I first joined this band we weren't doing much video, like we were just playing The Horseshoe, The Bev, and The Turning Point, so it was just a trio on stage with no video. Occasionally we would do the Eye. We cut it in a bar very easily.

AP: It depends what you call a bar. There's a difference between The Beverley and The Yonge Station. I wouldn't want to be caught in the latter circuit.

CR: What I meant is that your visual presentation is very sophisticated and quite close to what other artists are doing just with video, particularly Susan Britton, Randy and Berneche. It's not a re-make of the Velvet Underground with Andy Warhol's 8mm films and slide shows.

EB: We're sophisticated visually but we are also more sophisticated musically than most New Wave or Punk Bands in this city.

CR: I'm not denying your music. . .

AP: You're wondering what the excuse is to make a record and Gee it's about time this band made one.

EB: The songs stand by themselves.

AP: I think what you're saying is. . .

TS: Here's the thing. If your music has essentially for the last year been generated from visual phenomena. . .

RS: But it hasn't though. Electric Eye is just one of the pieces.

TS: So is the video adapted to the pieces, or the pieces (songs?) come from the video. Or do they come from the live performances with the video?

RS: Electric Eye is the only think I consider is the band's piece. For the Hummers, that's our job. So we don't have to work some

shitty job to play. It takes care of it.

AP: No. It's not that simple. . .

RS: Besides, we like doing it.

AP: I've already made a tape called *Skilful Evasions*. I like using a pre-tape as a strategy or a stimulator, how long a scene should run before a prop, a change of mood. I like the idea of video cassettes accompanying a record. Where the video gives a fresh dimension to the song. It's stimulus.

TS: Let me rephrase it. I've seen the Government behind the Hummers, but I've never seen Electric Eye. What I'm interested in is the problems of the Government, as a group, working in the collaboration with The Hummer Sisters, is that you both have to fill time, you also have to build their excitement, right? You have to be the rock band. You have to be the key in that way. Then you have to deal with the video/live performance and their interchanging parts. What I'm saying is that when you generate your own material in terms of your writing, another performance — Electric Eye or something else, you have all this experience, you know how to build, know how to use the video, etc. How do you approach the writing, is it visual from video, from performance?

AP: I do four minutes of murk, one minute of fluid or dramatic situation which I suppose is the thing with *Electric Eye*. With characters we work it out, what kind of rhythms do they move in, when do they run out of things to say and become irrational, what kind of break.

RS: I work in an opposite way, tend to have ideas and look for where to use them.

AP: I tend to write music frequently first and say what does this mean? What do I see here? before I write words. Sometimes it's a cut-up, you have a background and construct a minor event.

CR: Who wrote the songs for Electric Eye?

AP: *Gunshot Wound* is a collaboration between Robert and the original drummer, Pat Desbiens. It's myself and Michael Hollingsworth. The Toronto songs: *I Used To Hang Around The Downtown*, that's Michael Hollingsworth.

EB: Andy has written 80% of the music and lyrics.

CR: I've heard different music and songs for Electric Eye during its various performances.

EB: We have changed some of the incidental music. Like one song, *I'm Somebody*, we have changed the music completely. Most of the songs that we do in a band set come from the various video shows that have happened. So when we played at CBGB's in New York we played the video songs without video and they went well, we were asked back so...

AP: I haven't played with many other bands.

RS: What about the Poles?

AP: I did play with the Poleites for two weeks. They could have used some video as a guide. They could have used taking their dynamics visual rather than verbal. I could say that about the Hummers too. Music is visual rather than verbal.

TS: Performance contains rhythm, do you ever look into a television and drum?

EB: At certain points in *Electric Eye* I do.

TS: As I see you talking I see that video is one component, it's not the thing that The Government comes out of. Everything is not generated from a videotape.

AP: Although I do want to do a lot more of that, more tapes. I think the most disciplined guitar I've ever played was for Episode 6 of *As the World Burns*. It was supposed to be an air conditioner, the discipline is suspending all artistic splendour.

RS: The Hummers are always saying, I want you to sound like a blender. What did they want you to sound like, a sterilizer in a hospital?

EB: They wanted me to sound like 500 birds flying in the air.

AP: That's great. Those are the kind of dictums I like. I write like this guitar should sound like you're robbing a parking meter, this is what happens here. The issue that arises is that is this a prime focus or is this incidental?

TS: When you get someone who asks for birds taking off that demands a certain literal musical interpretation by the band. Do you feel that during the course of these performances that you've manipulated the people who've been directing you by changing.

EB: Yes. That happened in the play we've been doing *Strawberry Fields* (Michael Hollingsworth). We had so much freedom to add special effects to what the three actors were doing. We had an outline when we started but by the end we could almost kick off the actors into doing other things, encourage the actors.

RS: Especially in timing, you can determine how long their pause is going to be.

AP: There's a fine line between shoving them into a corner and encouraging them, that's the fine line, a sensitivity you need. It's an audio background — the air conditioner, the bathtub, MacDonald's counter. What I'd like to get more into, almost in a sense of Eno whatever, he uses his parables-Peter Schmidt-oblique strategies. I like to use dramatic situations like that in my writing and my playing where the pre-recorded video is like an audio reference, and an alter ego to what I'm doing myself live.

CR: Are you scoring the new Susan Britton tape by yourself or with The Government?

AP: She just wants me to do a few mutations in it.

TS: A few mutations, what does that mean?

AP: She wants some mutated Motown things, so maybe it'll be *I Heard It Thru The Grapevine* a la Kraftwerk. You saw *Interference*. I told her, look Susan, this is three hours work. An hour to learn the lines, an hour to figure out how to get a hard-on whilst reciting that crap, an hour for the take. She said, "You idiot, we'll fake it". The lines were on the wall. That Marxist dialectic is just a bunch of words, I wanted more than words. Those words were close to Newspeak, which is interesting because Michael Hollingsworth and I are working on *Modern Living: 1984*, which we'll do in the new year. ■

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Q A Space “Coup”

- page 347 AA Bronson, “Hurricane Hazel, Marien Lewis, & Other Natural Catastrophes,” *Only Paper Today* 2:4 (January 1975), 1.
- page 348 John Bentley Mays, “Should Karen Ann Quinlan be Allowed to Die,” *Only Paper Today* 5:1 (February 1978), 18–19.
- page 350 AA Bronson, “Imagine A Space as Karen Ann Quinlan ...,” *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 104–09.
- page 356 Clive Robertson, “And in the blue corner from Toronto, Canada.” *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 110–11.
- page 358 Victor Coleman, “The Palace Coup: An Editorial,” *Only Paper Today* 5:7 (Fall 1978), 1.
- page 359 Victor Coleman, “Imagine AA Space as Nancy Spungen or Leon Spinks or the Boston Red Sox,” *Only Paper Today* 5:9 (November 1978), 2.
- page 360 AA Bronson, “Letters: A Space’s Many Spaces,” *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 2–3.
- page 362 Victor Coleman, “Letters: ... incestual practices,” *Centerfold* 3:3 (February/March 1979), 75.
- page 363 C. R. “A Space Grows,” “Centrifuge,” *Centerfold* 3:3 (February/March 1979), 91.
- page 364 Peggy Gale, “Letters: ... preparing for the future,” *Centerfold* 3:4 (April/May 1979), 146.
- page 365 Vic d’Or, “New Directions (?) at A Space,” *Only Paper Today* 6:4/5 (May/June 1979), 2.

See also ...

- page 254 Clive Robertson, “The Story Behind Organized Art,” *Fuse* 4:6 (November 1980), 318–25.

except for the weird croaks coming from a squad of speakers hidden behind couches, under things.

whole work is the body of the mummy, the killed and living Ostris, in whose body we who have come to look now dance the changes.

laughing face each generation of serious people could throw this insult and tribute: 'Hey! that must be Trickster!'

AA BRONSON HURICANE HAZEL, MARIEN LEWIS, & OTHER NATURAL CATASTROPHES

If anyone were interested in boredom as art and at one time people were, I suppose Toronto would interest people. Toronto is boring. Perhaps it is all too easy to say Toronto is boring. Nevertheless it is and that is why it is all too easy to say. I, for one, am bored with Toronto.

In particular I am bored with the Toronto art scene. I am bored by the petty politicizing and the strict division into minor camps which makes of the Toronto I know the uniquely boring object it is today. The most popular topic of conversation these days is who is trying to grab what power and why they shouldn't. In fact power itself is an object of much decision, despite the fact that everyone wants it.

Power first became the local chic scapegoat late last October when Marien Lewis resigned from A Space, thus throwing an entire scene into a series of hysterical convulsions which resulted in the less than satisfactory condition which exists at A Space today: an abortive and nostalgia-ridden bureaucracy.

Marien at that time became characterized as the two-faced liar, playing off one artist against another to her own advantage. She was the perfect symbol of the power-hungry art-addict, gobbling up artists as fast as she ferreted them out, spewing behind her a rancid faeces of false history. A Space was not, it was discovered, the artists' collective it had been impersonating for several years, but Marien Lewis' plaything. With A Space as beneficiary, Marien had been able to wheedle, wangle, wheel, deal and doodle in art circles with little thought to her own integrity or what she was in fact accomplishing.

In fact she was accomplishing a great deal. Marien was mistaken when she quit A Space because A Space was Marien Lewis and Marien Lewis was A Space. The thought of one without the other was not only difficult but unrewarding.

Marien Lewis is an art mogul. Like Willoughby Sharp of *Analanche* Marien might be considered a natural catastrophe, a

whirlpool of energy and a will to remain two jumps ahead of the 'establishment' which makes her the undisciplined but vital force she is. Marien's talents as an administrator are dubious but as a catalyst to this poverty-ridden city she occupies a small elite. Marien left behind her a legacy of fine shows and a centre for Toronto's younger artists. Unfortunately she did nothing to document the history of A Space, nothing to concretely further public knowledge of the artists she fostered, and nothing to make sure budgets were followed or books were kept. No, Marien was too busy leaping ahead like the proverbial gazelle, well-ahead of public opinion but laden with the multiple burdens of unfinished business. What Marien needed was an assistant she could trust unflinchingly and who could put in effect and in order the hurly-burly world of art Marien drew forth. Marien never found, perhaps never wanted, that person.

Marien Lewis resigned from A Space and the chaos that resulted has culminated in a precarious situation. Several weeks of maneuvers and counter-maneuvers between Marien and the A Space staff were echoed by boos, hoots, and secretive meetings eddying sympathetically through the layers of coterie that surround A Space. At last a 'public' meeting was called, well-attended by anyone who had the interest left to care or the calm to remain seated. A new Board of Directors was elected by those present to decide on the future functioning of A Space. Thus was Marien Lewis elected back to the Board, to be joined there by her opponents.

In the meantime, during Marien's 'absence' from the home front, yet another faction had appeared. Victor Coleman, formerly of the Coach House Press (but that's another story), proposed an ambitious programme of advertising, documenting, and art publishing, a programme much in need at A Space and evidently in need to all concerned. However, within this season of paranoia (celebrating the anniversary of Hurricane Hazel), it soon became apparent that Victor was a man of intrinsic power and power was not to be tolerated. My God, look what happened with Marien! Does anyone want that to happen again? No one did. The scapegoat, again, was power.

Nevertheless, Victor too was elected to the Board. It was generally recognized (by whom is not clear) that Marien and Victor had major contributions to make; but it was generally felt that their 'power' should be severely circumscribed in order that they wouldn't 'take

over' and throw A Space repeatedly into the Dante's Inferno characterized by last month's 'crisis'.

It would be easy and entertaining to describe that balance of powers and personalities now in uneasy rule at A Space Board meetings; but there is not space here to elaborate, and my major point is simply that this precarious mix of petty difficulties is in fact precarious and precarious.

If A Space is to provide access and continuity to a growing art scene in Toronto it must discover, utilize, and maximize those sources of power within it. I do not believe the emergency bureaucracy now struggling to manage A Space is an appropriate self-government. What A Space needs is not a system of checks and balances but a direct tap to the roots of creativity and action and I believe those roots are accessible through Marien Lewis, Victor Coleman, Elke Hayden, and others now sitting on the Board of Directors of this vital and paralyzed institution.

Specifically, Elke Hayden, rather than attempting to contain Victor Coleman's aggressive programming, might try balancing it with an equally aggressive video and organizational programme. Rather than discovering criticism in Elke's every sneeze, Marien must allow Elke her natural managerial brookness and give her the room she needs to provide an easy and controlled interface between A Space and the world of government and public support. And most of all, rather than dreading Marien Lewis' untrammelled energy, A Space must reinstate Marien Lewis as curator (whether she likes it or not), because it is in that central function that she can exercise and contribute her considerable power.

A Space suffers, not from an excess of power misused, but from a lack of power. A Space must allow room and there is room for many to nourish the nature of their individual powers. It is their natural powers which nourish A Space and nourish the art community and that means all of us. Many of us are artists and organizers but not bureaucrats and an enforced democracy can only kill the vital life we find here among us.

If A Space is to offer Toronto a source of mystery, if A Space is to move beyond the known quantity it is, if A Space is to provide access and continuity to the growing Toronto Art community, then it must utilize and nourish the considerable source of power within it.

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JOHN BENTLEY MAYS SHOULD KAREN ANN QUINLAN BE ALLOWED TO DIE?

1 On the surface anyway, the battle that's been raging at A Space for the last couple of months was joined over a question of territory, A Space itself. And the claimants of 85 St. Nicholas Street? Well, that's hard to pinpoint, but we can say they are two vague tendencies of our membership which have become temporarily visible in the persons of Victor Coleman and Marien Lewis.

The one tendency, incarnate in Victor, is characterized by a wish to maintain A Space as a showcase gallery for easy-up, easy-down portable art, and for fly-by-night artists' performances.

The other, rendered by Marien Lewis, is rumoured to include the Hummer Sisters, assorted veterans of *Punc Rock* and *Winter Offensive* and similar entertainments, and an unspecified number—though we are assured the number is very large—of Torontonians who are even now standing outside A Space in zero Celsius weather, demanding the sort of entertainment served up by the Hummers in their latest production, *The bible: As Told to Karen Ann Quinlan* [sic].

The showcase faction want *The Bible* out of A Space on the grounds that its noise and hustle and bustle make other art (e.g., poetry readings, dance) hard to show, and the day-to-day administration of A Space virtually impossible. The performance people seem to believe that the only hope for A Space is for it to become a seething, noisy caldron of *avant-garde* theatrical activity, and the devil take all those icky prints and paintings and whispering poets.

One problem of this controversy has been the way it has utterly supplanted critical dialogue about *The Bible* itself. Everybody has been talking about territory—the show is taking over A Space, no it's not, yes it is, etc.—but nobody has been talking about ideas, about the aesthetic reasons (if any) why the A Space community should be encouraging or turfing-out this piece of work.

So I've decided to rush in where critics have been too busy elsewhere to tread, and say something about *The Bible*, as seen from under that Carol Channing wig I wore during the weeks of its October and December runs.

2 First off, a bit of history.

As well as I can remember, the strange artistic organism which now is causing problems at A Space was born in November, 1975, at the International Poetry Festival in Toronto.

Victor Coleman had been given some money and space to put on a display of quote-underground-unquote literary talent at Hart House. But rather than craft his event as just another poetry reading—with scampy drop-out visionaries (instead of mortgage-oppressed academic lyricists) declaiming their passions to a dutifully worshipful audience—Victor turned it into a gala evening which featured the performance of a fantastic, masque-like, collaboratively written and produced radio play entitled 'Audiothon.' It was not actually broadcast, of course. Rather, the radio-play medium alone was pirated, and used as the frame for a series of marvelous songs, fashion-shows, readings, banter, dramatic polylogues, etc., from that particular group of poets and performers whom Victor had gathered for the event.

When I was taking part in the creation and performance of 'Audiothon,' I believed we were doing something new, even unheard of. I still am so inclined.

The old radio medium, with all its machinery of contrived suspense, ingenious sound-effects, and penny-dreadful dialogue, became the subject (or content) of our show—its real matter and purpose. Form was converted into content simply by freeing the radio-play from the customary, rigid 30- or 60-minute structure, and by presenting this fluid theatrical performance before a live audience who, in effect, were put in the delightfully ironic role of eavesdroppers.

3 After our one-shot performance of 'Audiothon,' I went into hibernation for a few months—and thereby lost touch with D. Anne Taylor, one of those who had had a lot to do with the actual writing and staging of our entertainment.

When summer rolled around, however, I lumbered out of my cave one day, only to find that D. Anne had been busy whilst I slept, and had written and collaboratively produced—in co-operation with Bobbe Besold, Marien Lewis, and Janet Burke, all of whom, with D. Anne, are hereinafter referred to as the Hummer Sisters—a theatrical number called *Patty Rehearsal*. The show had opened (amid lowest-possible-profile advance publicity) at A Space in late summer, 1976; and later that year, after considerable reworking, it enjoyed a short run in a pleasant room on Queen Street.

Though I didn't think much of *Patty* when I saw the A Space version, I was delighted at the longer, more polished rendition. To my mind, the Hummers (together with their rock band and supporting cast) had, first of all, marvelously represented the incredibly vulgar pop odyssey of Patricia Hearst.

But the show was not just a sendup of *Patty's* escapade, a satire on evening-news glamorizations and an attack on the obscene gluttony of the American viewing audience who had made *Patty* such a hot property for so many months. Nor did the Hummers choose to portray *Patty* according to the feminist decrees being circulated during her 'Tanya' period: little Patricia as victim of ultra-left terrorist machismo—or (the drastically opposite alternative) as debutante piglet in a Cross-Your-Heart bra turned machinegun-toting Wonder Woman, and right on!

Rather, the Hummer Sisters took a tack more subtle than any of those who were then trying to explain the 'Patty phenomenon'...and in scene after ingenious scene presented Patricia Hearst exactly as she had appeared on the screen: as a junkie, with a junkie's peculiar lack of moral shape. She never really seemed to change in all those months of the melodrama. She appeared merely to ooze slug-like into first this mold, then that one, filling each completely, though conveying strong convictions about none of them. She just crept from hit to hit.

And where did the junk, those molds or roles, really come from?

The answer the Hummers gave is *television*. There were television monitors all over the set of *Patty Rehearsal*, there were video-cameras picking up the drama, molding the lives of all the characters while appearing only to observe them, then recycling the imagery for the fascinated, narcissistic characters to behold.

It's me!! on t.v.!!—but what is the *me* of television except the image t.v. enables, necessitates, dictates? The billowing face of Catherine Hearst, Randy's millionaire stiff upper, the fabulous Silly Symphony figures of S.L.A. robbers busting the Bank of America—these are the images which dominated the *Patty* saga on broadcast t.v., and were themselves absorbed from the soaps and crime-dramas of prime time, altogether an icon of the serpent of American consciousness devouring its own tail.

In retrospect, however, the bathos and banality of these images seem almost bearable compared to the crushing, boring predictability of *Patty's* own career. Sunshine girl, trendy live-in girlfriend of Steve Weed, victim of political kidnap, mousketeer terrorist, clenched-fist feminist, penitent on bail—the whole *Patty* adventure was actually made for t.v.

The Hummers showed us that, in fact, *it was*.

They did it with such intelligence and humour that it made me hungry to see what they would do next.

4 And the next thing I knew, I was working out every night at A Space with Hummers, getting ready for the opening of *The Bible: As Told to Karen Ann Quinlan*.

What more appropriate character could have been chosen for the Hummers' next excursion into video martyrology? Even *Patty* could use t.v., but not Karen Ann, who has to date been able to do nothing about Walter Cronkite and the other media hucksters who have so shamelessly exploited her misfortune.

The pathetic sexual number going down between *Patty* and Randy was at least interesting to watch. But we are only revolted to see the Quinlan folks dragging out Karen Ann for one more sob-story on the CBS Evening News, turning her stupefaction into a sort of symbolic swoon and their own inconvenience into instant hagiography.

Patty, God bless her, gave the American wage-slave its best escape fantasy-object since the moon walk, and some of America's working men a few instances of fantastic sex: Will we ever know how often the dream of daring *Patty* perked-up the conjugal act for America's vast proletariat?

But Americans do not love sex nearly as much as they do the Cause, the Overriding Moral Purpose. They love to deny themselves in the name of stern common-sense, they like to recapture childhood's ethical virginity. And what better occasion than Karen Ann Quinlan! Here was a *priest*, saying it wasn't wrong to *pull the plug*. Thus was Karen Ann turned into the subject for thousands of Sunday sermons and teenage religious bull-sessions (whether to screw or not now being a dead issue). Brows furrowed from Maine to California. Parents deliciously agonized, then invariably decided to let Karen Ann die. What American parent would pass up the chance to get a life-time subscription to guilt?

And behind it all, creating of the wasted body in the incubator a massive media figure, were the Quinlans, these peasant Catholics turned Hollywood producers, signing contracts right and left on behalf of their comatose Shirley Temple.

It appeared that once more the Hummers had discovered in the hog-wallow of popular American mythology a real gem, and were polishing it to a wickedly sharp point. Once again, I thought, television is going to get it, since t.v. was by far the most important tool in the promotion of monster baby Karen.

But, to my great surprise, it just didn't happen. And neither will it happen until the critical distance between the players and their subject is restored. But that statement requires explanation.

In *Patty Rehearsal*, t.v. imagery was the principal visual vocabulary of the show; video dialogue provided the speech patterns; and video monitors were props, along with toy guns and costumes. At no point did the audience feel that the Hummers were being taken over by the *Patty* mythology.

Rick/Simon



They kept their distance, by a blend of ridicule, satire, burlesque, and happy common-sense. In other words, the content stayed framed within the Hummers' ironic intention.

In *The Bible*, however, that ironic frame, or distance, is violated. A show that should be about television, its oppressions and distortions, becomes itself television. And thereon hangs the problem of the play.

For example: *The Bible*, instead of using religion, sexuality and the rest of it to explore the Karen Ann myth—instead of exploding the pretensions of the Quinlans' squishy, sentimental Catholicism, all their noble posturing under the burden of Karen's party-time 'crime', all the prurient hints of naughtiness hiding in those protestations of what a lovely girl she was—the Hummers decided to take on God, cosmic destiny, human history, and male/female relationships from the Upper Paleolithic era to the 19th century. It was, of course, an impossible task, and what exactly the play was about remains, to me, as elusive as class consciousness or Rousseau's General Will.

Because it is very difficult to treat vast topics adequately (unless you are Tolstoy or Shakespeare), most writers tend to leave them alone, and stick with matters more tangible in their manifestations and contours. For example, the Quinlan's religion is easy to dissect, and to debunk it would be valuable; but God is not so easy a matter to deal with. And because God (which is after all a theological idea) is very hard even for specialists to discuss, one tends usually to lampoon a cliché about God or a stereotype of God or an idea concerning God that nobody except unbelievers in God think is held by people. (As a regular Churchgoer and thinker about religious matters, I'm always astounded by what stupid ideas unbelievers have about what believers believe). And furthermore, because all that's left for theatrical treatment is a string of clichés about God or sex or whatever, the whole thing turns inevitably into television, which is likewise saturated with clichés about God, sex and so on. I suppose that the break-neck pace of the dialogue, the frenzied delivery of lines, the avalanche of songs and the general incomprehensibility of the script were all ways to compensate for the basic poverty of ideas—ways familiar enough to anybody who spends time watching the tube.

Like television, *The Bible* entertained and distracted. It did not engage the audience at any level above the laugh-box. Neither did it at any point become controversial, or raise controversial questions about its victimized subject, as did *Patty Rehears*. Neither did the show challenge its audience to take any course of action on any matter, even though its makers have repeatedly claimed for it the name of 'art' and the mantle of 'artistic seriousness'—two terms of great nostalgia appeal for all of us, though I've never been exactly sure about the way the Hummers use them. (Come to think of it, why would anybody want to go around

claiming that what they do is 'art'? What's the point? The word 'art' used in the advocacy of something, as opposed to sheerly disinterested description of it can never by anything but partisan propaganda, intended to con people into liking an object they don't like. It's a basically dishonest use of the term.)

The capitulation to the mindless chatter of broadcast television, to the hunger of superficial minds for yuks-yuks at the expense of God, Anita, etc., to the pointlessness that is t.v.'s worst feature and most powerful appeal—this giving-in represents, for me, the Hummers' failure to keep moving in the direction charted in *Patty Rehears*. There was, and remains, a long way to go on that road—another, more important story to tell about Karen Ann Quinlan.

Somewhere along the line, the vision has been lost, and what's left is decadent. Rather than push on, the Hummers have let the exhaustion of dealing with tough ideas get them down; their despair over their own ability to keep the creative ball rolling show tellingly in the jolly paunchiness of *The Bible*, in its breathless scrambling, mismanaged blasphemy, in the absence of real purpose.

And, as everybody who's got one knows, a television set is sometimes hard to live with. You can't talk when it's on, and it tends more and more to pre-empt all other activities, such as reading, playing the piano, having sex in prime-time, and saying one's prayers, since every set is a complete megalomaniac.

I think it is fair to say that the problem which has dominated everybody's waking hours at A Space for the last while has been the presence there of a large television set which comes on unpredictably and (like all t.v.) is very, very hard to shut off. The problem will be solved, not by 'scheduling' and not by merely turning down the volume—but rather by the Hummer Sisters' abandonment of their role as television and their return to the more challenging, and thoroughly engaging ideas of *Patty Rehears*. For what is at issue is really respect for the wonderful variety of things that happen at A Space, for all the quiet or silent arts wherein the workers of our A Space community are pursuing their visions and transcendent strategies—the sort of respect for another person's art which inevitably emerges from a respect for one's own. But television, taken on its own terms, adopted according to its own code, cannot inspire respect, and has not done so—as is clear after two months of incessant hassling. Until the Hummer Sisters change the fundamental direction of their aesthetic process, therefore, the physical problems raised by their tenure at A Space will probably remain unchanged, and unchangeable. In any case, the philosophical/artistic and the practical aspects of this matter are as closely intertwined as I've seen anywhere, and I would urge A Space members to remember this point during future discussions of the Hummer Sisters' showing at our battle-scarred HQ on St. Nicholas Street.

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Helm/Holz

Is O B Hunderdanti

Imagine A Space as Karen Ann Quinlan...

A A Bronson

CLARIFICATION:

'Centerfold' did not commission this piece on A Space. We originally requested A A Bronson to write on his recent European experiences. The proposal that follows is not unrelated to those observations but is perhaps more grounded to the fact that whilst listed as an A Space Consultative Committee advisor, Bronson's advice was neither sought after nor received.

Corrections:

1. Al Mattes was not, as suggested, a peripheral member of The Consultative Committee. He attended many more meetings than this text suggests and in

addition worked hard on recommendations and future music programming.

2. The innuendo concerning Victor Coleman "enjoying the benefits of an exchange programme with La Mamelle in sunny California" is also unsubstantiated. A Space in San Francisco included performance, exhibits and new projects (Radio Room, guest issue of La Mamelle). Such a programme beset with technical access problems could hardly be termed, "Holidaying in San Francisco."

(ed.)

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TRAVELLER'S PALM
Que. 1976. Joyce Borenstein. 2 min.40sec. Animation.
HOW THE HELL ARE YOU?
Que. 1972. Veronika Souli. 11 min.30 sec. Animation.
TALES FROM THE VIENNA WOODS
Que. 1974. Veronika Souli. 11min.35 sec. Animation.
A SAID POEM
Que. 1977. Veronika Souli. 2 min. Animation.
RECIPE TO COOK A CLOWN
Que. 1978. Lois Siegel. 24 min.3 sec. Scenario.
PASSAGES
Que. 1978. Nesya Shapiro. 30 min.

13 D'ABORD MENAGERE
Que. 1978. Luce Gullbeault. 120 min. Long-métrage.

14 WOMEN ON THE MARCH PART I
Can. 1958. 29 min.18 sec. Documentary.
LADY FROM GREY COUNTY
Que. 1977. Janice H. Brown, Margaret Westcott. 26 min.13 sec. Documentary.
SOME AMERICAN FEMINISTS
Que. 1977. Nicole Brossard, Luce Gullbeault, Margaret Westcott. 56 min. Documentary.

Oct. 13 - POWERHOUSE - 3738 St. Dominique - 15h - libre/free

13 JILL JOHNSTON OCTOBER 1975
Ontario. 1977. Lydia Wazana & Kay Armatage. 30 min. Documentary.
THIN LINE
Ontario. 1977. Holly Dale & Janis Cole. 32 min. Documentary.

On September 15th at 8:00 p.m. the membership of A Space will meet to decide the future of this battle-worn artist-run gallery, Canada's oldest, largest and most influential.

The Board of Directors is proposing a new budget which will more than double the current operation to a cool quarter-million dollars a year, and will involve hiring a new staff of four administrators and five curators, in addition to some other part-time staff.

The controversial super-budget is the result of a \$10,000 advisory report made by a panel of artists. The report advises the continuation of A Space's current form of organization, slightly modified and vastly expanded, despite the recent noises of non-confidence from both the artistic community and the Canada Council. More about that later.

At a recent 'information meeting' A Space members, including myself, peppered president John Bentley Mays with questions for which there were insufficient answers. John Mays is an efficient, correct and charming chairman. He fields questions with an aplomb gathered on the verandas of southern plantations. This child of southern politics was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and he's loath to swallow it now. He has thrown himself into A Space with an enthusiasm which is admirable, if perhaps misdirected. Certainly A Space's battered books and mangled legal status have improved with his attention. But plastic surgery is not enough. Beneath the thin skin of forward-looking optimism lurks a murky tangle of vested interests and bested egos that not even he can smooth over.

This information meeting was a chance to iron out the dirty wash, if you'll excuse my mixed metaphors, before the annual members meeting. Curiously, only two of the five directors and three of the five curators were present to present their budgets and programmes. The climax of the evening was another informal show of no-confidence, this time for the expanded budget. Of twenty-five present, only two approved.

The budget earmarks \$35,000 for dance and music, both of which are being adequately handled elsewhere. Another \$80,000 is budgeted for visual arts, writing and video. Please note that there is no budget for artists' performance, despite A Space's traditional strong role in this medium. There is no

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF A SPACE: A PROPOSAL

It is clear from both the report of the A Space Consultative Committee and from the many discussions in the community itself, that the community wants A Space to function as a museum without a collection, as a working service organization within the new art community.

As preliminary work in that direction it is crucial that A Space and its parent organization, the Nightingale Arts Council, be separated and clarified, thus:

1. What organizations are members of the Nightingale Arts Council? As I understand it they are A Space, the A Space Video Co-op and Only Paper Today.
2. How does an organization become a member? What criteria must they meet?
3. Who are the voting members of the Nightingale Arts Council? Are all members of each participating organization voting members of the Council?
4. What can the Nightingale Arts Council offer its members? What are its responsibilities? Obviously, it offers a charter, charitable status, and an advisory board. What would financial responsibility of the Board be?

It is my belief that in order to set up a carefully structured functioning museum without a collection, A Space must be temporarily suspended, and the new organization built from scratch.

As the new budget has already been sent to the Canada Council, I suggest the membership take the following action:

1. Discontinue A Space as a building and as a name. All equipment should be temporarily loaned to other artist-run organizations, except where it is needed for specific programming.
2. Decentralize A Space programming for six months as follows:
 - a. Establish the School of Letters as a separate writers' organization under the Nightingale Arts Council. The programme can continue under the curatorship of Susan Harrison, administered by the organization itself, and held in outside locations.
 - b. The dance, music, video and visual arts programmes can each be held by the curators in outside locations, either other institutions or

rented spaces. The budget, in each case, should be temporarily administered by an appropriate institution, for example the Music Gallery for Al Mattes music programme.

3. The administrative budget should be co-opted by the Nightingale Arts Council for the following purposes:

- a. to rent an administrative office. A Space's records can also be kept here, and the office can be used for A Space programming mailings.
 - b. to cover costs of discontinuing A Space and storing equipment, where necessary.
 - c. to hire one full-time administrator and a full-time secretary/assistant. Their responsibilities are outlined below.
 - d. to cover costs of assembling a detailed working proposal for a new museum without a collection. These costs will include fees for consultants, and travel expenses for examining other working institutions of a similar nature (see Addenda A)
4. The full-time administrator and secretary mentioned above would be hired for the following purposes:

- a. to handle the legalities and practicalities of disassembling A Space.
- b. to research and develop the concept of a museum without walls, in all its details, with the purpose of presenting a detailed proposal to the membership and to the Canada Council by next spring at the earliest or next fall at the latest. It is essential that the administrator use the advice of managerial, legal and financial experts; that he meet regularly with the new board, who should be a majority of artists; and that he visit similar existing institutions to examine their workings. The Arnolfini in Bristol and the Kunsthallen in Munchengladbach, Lucerne and Basel are of particular interest.

Implicit in all my suggestions is the recommendation that artists run their institutions by hiring outside personnel for purely administrative positions. Curatorial and Board of Director positions should be primarily artists, except where specific outside help is needed or of interest. The Board of Directors, however, should include at least one and preferably two professional people with legal, financial and/or managerial expertise.

*AA Bronson
September 6, 1978*

other continuing forum for artists' performance in the city.

Another \$100,000 is budgeted for administration costs. This is more than twice that of any other similar institution in Canada. When asked to defend this rapid growth, John Mays suggested that in these times of economic cut-backs, only a bold move would keep A Space ahead. Although his reasoning may be politically sound, it is culture we want to support and nurture in Toronto, and not just A Space.

My misgivings about the budget, by the way, are not a reflection on the programming itself. The programming, with the one exception of visual arts, is excellent, and in the case of writing and video, important. But Flavio Belli's proposal for 60 exhibitions per year (count 'em — sixty!) in theatre lobbies strikes me as council-pleasing pseudo-educationalism rather than serious investigation and support of the visual arts.

has always been A Space's strong point. One of the first artist-run organizations in Canada, it has pioneered alternatives to the Art Gallery of Ontario and other white elephants.

Over the past two years, however, warring personalities have driven that programme into a hiccuping accolade of the banal, the bad and the brilliant. In addition, book-keeping mysteries, legal inconsistencies, and in-house hiring have decorated A Space's destruction derby styling. It is frankly difficult to rationalize the continued growth of an organization that is run on the principles of thinking big but acting small.

This spring the Canada Council stopped A Space funding. To help A Space look at itself and reorganize its operations they provided \$10,000 to use as A Space saw fit.

Directors John Mays, Marien Lewis and Victor Coleman appointed a board, the Consultative Committee, to make a study of A Space's present and past, with recommendations for the future. The Committee, all artists with previous relationships to A Space, demonstrated the democratic idea that the community could dictate its own future. Unfortunately, conflict of interests is the other side of that rather thin coin. More about that later.

THE NIGHTINGALE ARTS COUNCIL: A Brief History

The Nightingale Arts Council was the legal name under which half a dozen

artists chartered their A Space concept. The charter is an innovative open-ended support of culture, encompassing cinemas, galleries, education, whatever. A Space, then, was seen as simply that: a space, in which anything could happen.

Since then the Nightingale Arts Council has acted as an effective legal umbrella for numbers of fringe organizations—currently the A Space Video Co-op and *Only Paper Today*, to name two. It provides a Board of Directors, a charter, and charitable status.

Now nobody has noticed that the Nightingale Arts Council actually exists or the important role it's playing. As the original charter was begun by a small group of individuals, who put in an extraordinary amount of personal thought, energy, and faith, there were no other members. Since then, A Space has established a paying membership, and it is that membership who elects the directors of A Space and thus the Council, which they mistakenly assume to be the same thing.

But in fact A Space is only one, albeit the largest and original, member of several organizations comprising the Nightingale Arts Council.

The writing of the Nightingale Arts Council charter—inventive, innovative, absolutely crucial to the development of artist-run institutions in Canada—has been eclipsed by the more dramatic full-moon scenarios of A Space. As you read the rest of this article, please keep in mind with absolute clarity the importance of this charter, not only in the past, but in the future of artist-run organizations.

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE or: Too Many Cooks Spoil the Broth

Who chose the Consultative Committee? Who did they choose? Even people on the committee disagree on this one.

The Board's initial appointed choices do not constitute the final group. John Mays reported that Victor Coleman added members behind his back. Susan Harrison reports that she was asked to present herself before the committee by John Mays, but that the Committee itself had to OK her. Michael Snow and Al Mattes, both on the committee, spent all but two meetings out of the country. Other members included Judith Doyle, Flavio Belli, Elizabeth Chitty, Robert Bowers, Paula Ravitz,

John Scott and perhaps Miriam Adams.

A Space's lawyer and accountant were not on the committee, nor were any other people with financial or legal expertise.

No management or fund-raising consultants were talked to, and the committee objected to using the services of such people.

Susan Harrison, a member of the committee told me, "I felt we were fumbling around a lot. I definitely feel we could have used someone a bit more experienced or older."

The Committee, although they did not attach their own names to the report, did attach a list of people they 'consulted'. I put 'consulted' in quotation marks, because that consultation was often extremely narrow, and in some cases imaginery. Elke Hayden, for example, previous A Space administrator now working at the Art Gallery of Ontario, was questioned only about literary programme possibilities. Rodney Werden, A Space Video Co-op administrator, was questioned only about the relationship of A Space to the Co-op. And myself and Peggy Galé, both listed, were not consulted at all. How many other names on the list were only included for political purposes?

THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The 'Historical Perspective' with which the report opens provides perspective but no history. The report does not say who started A Space or when. The original Nightingale Arts Council charter is not described. The relationship of A Space to the Council is never stated.

Previous forms of organization used by A Space are not described or criticized. No investigation is made of similar decision-points in A Space's past or of previous directions indicated by the membership.

In fact, the 'Historical Perspective' is a simple statement of A Space's early evolution and relative importance. There is nothing here of use in studying A Space's internal structure — although it does act as a fair defense of A Space's past existence.

The report continues in the same vein. 'Administrative Problems' are described only by symptom. The existing administrative organization is neither described or criticized, except for the overlap between directors and staff.

Hiring and firing, traditional A Space trouble areas, are not mentioned.

'Fiscal Problems' are described in the most superficial way:

"Rarely has the NAC staff been temperamentally suited for or interested in the kind of balance sheet management necessary in government and private industry."

The actual mechanics of A Space's day to day finances are neither described or criticized. Nor are recommendations in this area made later in the report.

The report ignores A Space's historic inability to formulate or follow realistic budgets, an inability which is due, not so much to the cliché of artistic temperament as it is to itchy fingers. Minor graft is a fine art at A Space. As one former employee told me, "That's what that system (A Space) was — a way to funnel money into people's pockets. We all took money that wasn't ours." The lack of internal checks within daily operations made 'borrowing' easy, and paying back easy to forget. Long hours and poor wages often provided the moral rationale for bad business practice.

'Cultural Problems' are reported as public hostility to the closed-door aspect of recent A Space programming. Although some small attempt is made to deal with this, the Committee ignores A Space's methods of choosing curators and artists, and of programming events and exhibitions.

Nor are A Space's communication lines with the community described. In fact the community itself is neither described or defined, although it is often mentioned. The Committee tries to give answers without knowing what the questions are or who is asking them.

As Committee member Susan Harrison reported: "It was almost arbitrary, a lot of it... if you got the same people on a different day, it would have been different.... I don't think the content is important. Doing the report was more important than the report itself."

The Committee also states:

"We have questioned a large number of people... Not surprisingly, much of what we have heard about A Space has been remarkably positive. Despite its many shortcomings, the place is still surrounded by goodwill and enthusiastic support."

and again:

"...none of its critics seem to feel

that it's a waste of time, an expendable project."

As the Committee (and most often their consultants) are almost entirely individuals with a vested interest in A Space's past, continuation and/or expansion, this statement reads simply as paranoid defense.

In fact, many would like to see A Space discontinued and its substantial funds made available to smaller or new organizations. Video Artists Colin Campbell and Lisa Steele, for example, both consulted for the report, made this recommendation. The report ignores that suggestion.

I am not saying that A Space should be discontinued but rather that the Committee, finally, made its recommendations less believable by not having adequately explored this avenue before discarding it.

The rest of the report is devoted to recommendations. Note that no study is presented of other organizational models outside of A Space. In addenda A, below, I describe briefly the Arnolfini in Bristol, England, and the Kunsthallen in Basel and Lucerne, Switzerland, both of which provide alternate and working models for spaces and activities comparable to A Space.

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Here comes the meat of the matter: 28 pages of recommendations on 'The Future Administration' and 'The Future Programming'.

Both sections suggest (or assume) the continuation of A Space's existing organization on a slightly modified level. Directors are not to be staff, curators are to be hired for a six month period, and so on. This is in effect a sort of paint-by-numbers attitude to the last administration... unfortunately the picture which emerges is even more clearly open to the same gross mismanagement as before.

No defense of the Committee's chosen structure is made. Frankly, I'm surprised, considering the failure of the same structure in the past. Is a slight clarification of responsibilities and an increase in salaries enough to transform A Space into the active, effective leader in contemporary culture that the Committee obviously wants?

Although the Committee suggests numbers of directors, curators, administrators and their duties, no overall view of working relationships is

described. No system of financial or decision-making checks and balances is devised. No guidelines are established for hiring and firing.

The recommendations are expansionist — in fact within Toronto, imperialist — and do little to increase the effective support of culture in Toronto or to reorganize A Space.

Programming recommendations are ambitious, and idealistic but impractical and unfocused. This is one big stew of everything everybody would like to see done in Toronto. No priorities are stated. The overall relationship of the artist to society, the marketplace, funding bodies and the media has not been sufficiently considered to give the programming suggestions consistency, direction or weight.

The recommendations create a flurry of rag-a-tag responsibilities, none of which are covered by previous descriptions of staff jobs. Who will sell artists' work paying 'particular attention... to sales to other public galleries with permanent collections'? Who will act as the editor for artists' publications?

Many projects seem a result of wouldn't-it-be-nice-if thinking. The video playback set-up has proved a failure in the past. The programme of 'offset art' is badly thought out. And for the salary alone of the printing operation, A Space could finance all its printing costs.

So the programming too, is expansionist and helter-skelter. Surely it is time that A Space worked to consolidate and improve its existing strengths, and to clarify its position in the community, rather than setting up a hundred new programmes.

AFTER THE FLOOD

Perhaps the Committee's recommendations were the turning point in this lengthy drama. John Mays, Victor Coleman, and Marien Lewis, directorial triumvirate, now set into motion a series of actions, based on the report, which all too clearly demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the report in changing anything at all.

Victor Coleman, also executive director, quit the board in order to prevent 'conflict of interests'. The board appointed three new members: Michael Brook, Miriam, and Matt Harley. Miriam was on the Consultative and Michael Brook is currently an employee of the Nightingale Arts Council, not under A Space, but under the A

Space Video Co-op. This is what I call out of the frying pan and into the fire!

As if this were not adequate demonstration of conflict of interest, the new board then appointed four new curators, without advertising the positions or accepting applications. Not surprisingly, all four were members of the Consultative Committee who had created the positions in the first place.

A Space has always hired friends, for power, personal promotion, goodwill or just because someone needed the money. Often firing took the form of personal vendettas, in which relationships eroded until someone was forced to quit. The complex web of politics and favours that resulted has been a prime factor in A Space's murder mystery staffing. The Board of Directors clearly demonstrated their support of that system.

Thanks to the intervention of Tom Sherman, the position of video curator was briefly advertised and filled from several applicants. This refreshing piece of hiring technique set a new precedent in A Space history.

Flavio Belli, visual arts curator, entered the programming arena with a flourish by pulling down all the walls. This unauthorized renovation went beyond the normal responsibilities of a temporary visual arts curator. So did the fee he demanded, which had not been budgeted. Meanwhile, executive director Victor Coleman, holidaying in San Francisco, announced that when he returned he was going to build those walls again.

Meanwhile, Victor himself was enjoying the benefits of an exchange programme with La Mammelle in sunny California. Please note: A Space paid for all or most of this one-sided affair, including travel expenses for both sets of travellers. It is exactly this sort of financing that makes Canada a laughing stock and 'easy mark' on the international art scene. And of course it is because of the threat of broken friendships and tortured working relationships that this sort of out-front maneuvering by the staff of A Space can continue.

...LITTLE IDEAS GANG UP ON ONE BIG IDEA

And so we return to our informational meeting. Bloated with rhetoric, the inflated concept lumbers between rows of A Space members, who hit it with big sticks while catching the dollar bills

that tumble from its back pockets. Our twenty-five extras play the part of the test audience, the sampler predicting the course of affairs at the upcoming annual meeting. They gather about the corpse of A Space, attempting the transfiguration of the moldering carcass into smoldering stardom. And success will be well paid: double your budget, double your fun.

Surprisingly, everyone means well. The Consultative Committee means well. John Mays means well. Marien Lewis means well. Victor Coleman means well. Our new curators all mean well. And all of them want a new museum without a collection. Out of all this mish-mash, this hogwash, this dishwater rhetoric of mangled sentiments and sentimental subordinate clauses, one thing becomes overwhelming clear: the little ideas have all ganged up on one big idea and that big idea is this: a museum without a collection.

Despite the current Canadian climate of cultural repression, economic cutbacks and escalating censorship, our situation in Toronto is strong. To a certain extent, national problems are driving artists and their organizations into Toronto. The recent arrival of Arton's from Calgary, for example, adds a valuable facility for audio and video publishing to Toronto's range of artist-run spaces.

I won't list the many facilities we have for dance, theatre, video, film and music, but they include such unlikely commercial endeavors as the Beverley Tavern and Cafe Soho in addition to such specialized artists' endeavors as the Music Gallery.

But for artists' performance and the visual arts, and to a lesser extent for writers, facilities are the least developed. With the demise of CEAC and the threatened demise of A Space (which at any rate hasn't programmed any performance for the coming year anyway) the visual arts are bound to suffer. Gallery 76 and ACT cannot carry the load, and the Art Gallery of Ontario is clearly not going to invest time or money in activity that tourists will not appreciate.

It is time in Toronto's active history for a substantial, well-planned museum without a collection, similar to Europe's Kunsthallen, similar to the Arnolfini in Bristol, indeed similar to A Space itself. It is my proposal that A Space could become this museum, wants to become this museum, and

that membership of the Nightingale Arts Council actively take upon itself the creation of this museum at its annual meeting next week. My specific proposals concerning this project are presented in the form of an open letter elsewhere in this issue.

AA Bronson
September 6, 1978
Toronto, Canada.

ADDENDA A. EXISTING MODELS.

Kunsthallen abound in Germany and Switzerland. A form of museum without a collection, they exert a great influence, assemble major exhibitions and catalogues, and are an integrated part of the museum circuit.

Despite their often large exhibition spaces, Kunsthallen are usually run on small staffs and small budgets. Nevertheless the quality of curating and the depth and thoroughness of their catalogues is legendary.

For these reasons, Kunsthallen offer an important model to the artist-run institutions of Canada. It is my recommendation that a selection of personnel from artist-run galleries across Canada should visit a selection of major Kunsthallen and discuss mutual interests with their staff.

The Lucerne Kunsthalle, for example, is run on a budget of less than \$100,000 a year. Nevertheless, it turns out some of the thickest, most comprehensive, and most sought-after catalogues in the world. Although cheaply produced, and in small editions, these catalogues usually pay for themselves.

Jean Christophe-Ammann, an important European curator, recently left the Lucerne Kunsthalle to run the Basel Kunsthalle. As he mounted a large exhibition of new Canadian art this June, it was possible for me to examine the running of the Kunsthalle closely.

The Kunsthalle itself is composed of nine medium to large exhibition spaces, plus a small bookstore, offices and workspaces, and an excellent restaurant. It is a bit larger than the Vancouver Art Gallery, but not as well kept as it could be, because of the low budget available. Nevertheless, it offers considerably better exhibition possibilities than most parallel galleries.

The curator also acts as the managing director of the gallery. Assisting him is one full-time secretary, two part-

time secretaries, and two part-time men who look after installations, maintenance, and just about anything else that comes up. The bookstore is run by Stampa, a local gallery and bookstore. The restaurant staff is of course in addition to this, but covers its own costs with sufficient left over to help support the Kunsthalle. Catalogue layout and poster design are subcontracted, often to Jean Christophe's wife.

The Kunsthalle exhibits one major exhibition a month and produces a major catalogue each month.

In addition one or two major events are held each week, including lectures, concerts, performances, etc. This sort of dedication and careful programming is the secret to the low budget, limited staff and absolutely maximum effect which these institutions have.

At the other end of the spectrum is the Arnolfini in Bristol, England. Initially very similar to A Space in conception and variety of activities, it has since gone through an extreme restructuring to maximize the flexibility of its many-sided programming.

The Arnolfini is housed in a converted warehouse of excellent design. The central lobby acts as a large information centre from which audiences are funneled into a variety of spaces: two exhibition areas, a simple but versatile performance space, cinema, offices, a bar/restaurant, and a bookstore. The bookstore also includes a small exhibition area for experimental jewellery. The Arnolfini also publishes a monthly tabloid as house organ to give background information on its very heavy programme of special events. The bookstore, cinema, and bar/restaurant all help subsidize the expenses of the gallery as a whole.

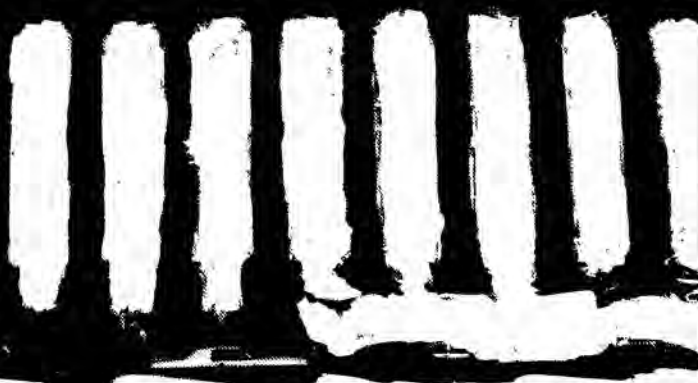
Although the staff at the Arnolfini is relatively large, it is all quite specific: three people in the bookstore, the restaurant staff, a film/video co-ordinator, two curators, and so on. The administrative staff, in contrast, is kept to an absolute minimum.

Again, I would recommend that parallel gallery staff visit this institution, as it provides another excellent working model of another possibility in direction.

There are other potential models too: the Kitchen in New York, for example, although the focus there is entirely video and performance.

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"And in the blue corner from Toronto, Canada

Clive Robertson

Yes it was the night of the big fight, September 15th, 8.00 pm. — 1.00 am. There was a colour TV at the back of the room where the audience could make instant comparison (I didn't even look) between the jabbing gloves or back into the room to go a few rounds sparring with the bruised hulk of meat that has become *A Space*.

This evening, the evening of *A Space's* Annual General Meeting was no sporting occasion. It followed the *Fifth Network Video Conference* in Toronto, which in turn was followed by the Annual General Meeting of *ANN-PAC* (Association of National Non-Profit Artist Centres). It reminded me more of the ongoing World Chess Championships where the contestants and the audience expected but could not possibly face another draw. In eight days 'artist responsibility' (if you went through all three occasions) came in and out of every human orifice like a tapeworm with a purpose.

The crowd was large, between fifty and sixty with representation from Toronto, Vancouver, New York, elsewhere in Ontario and apart from the chairperson of the meeting, *Dennis Tourbin*, *A Space's* legal counsel also was calling the plays, though often the knowledgeable crowd openly disagreed with, if not jeered, his interpretations.

Being an honorary member, as I climbed the stairs 15 minutes early, I decided to buy a membership for \$12.50, so I could at least vote — all the time knowing that the meeting could make a mockery out of inflation and that I could be left holding a piece of card worth nothing. It is still too early to decide whether or not that is in fact the case. Membership and voting rights became the first issue and it turned out that everyone who said that they were a member or who had paid or promised to pay \$12.50 could vote, as if this were the time to begin checking!

We all perhaps know by now what an agenda for the annual general meeting should be. As the motions for acceptance or rejection came up there followed interpretations of the motions on the floor that eventually became the uppers and downers of the race, to slow or speed up the purpose. It has been said often recently that, strategically, consensus in these meetings can be gained through the process of attrition. In that sense it is a race and at least on three occasions during the evening there were motions to adjourn.

The previous meeting's minutes were accepted. The Chairman's Report (*John Bentley Mays*) was accepted; The Acting Executive Director's Report (*Victor Coleman*) was accepted. The

Consultative Committee's report was accepted. *Robert Bowers*: "view this report in the time in which it arose and realise this is a different time." These timely words by Robert Bowers can be amplified:

The Consultative Committee Report (appears in *Parallelogramme 2*, 1978 pub. ANNPAC) was perhaps the best document that could emerge from within the Toronto community for the continued development of *A SPACE*. The 'One Year' proposal that followed that report in most ways faithfully adhered to such an 'internal' concept. However because it was internal it did exclude other existing deficiencies that were observable from an open perspective. If for instance you do accept that there is an increasing fossilisation of artists organisations — it also becomes both obvious and essential that if the *A Space* organism was about to turn from flesh to stone that it would have to be constructed in such a way that it could withstand 1) further public, private and artist scrutiny, 2) the energy lapses and exhaustion that from time-to-time affect us and 3) the political insecurity and social suicide of buying off support in return for its actions. Furthermore the new construct would have to recognise that in place of an annual joust that there should become recognition of critical debate as a mainline artistic focus.

A A Bronson's proposal at this point only mentions 'articulation' and 'clarification'. The initial problem it was addressing was that it was time to dispense with administrative rhetoric and at least to establish an executive structure that could agree on exactly where it stood in matters of economics and role-sharing. Before we return to the ringside I should make perfectly clear that only because of its size was this drastic re-organisation necessary, only because of its age could *A SPACE* no longer romantically view itself as an ageing juvenile delinquent.

The sixth round or item on the AGM agenda was the year-end and interim budget reports. The reports were unaudited and at this point the membership showed signs of teething and at what better point to make use of your new teeth than to bite on your organisation's accountability. Not only was the *A SPACE-LA MAMELLE EXCHANGE* under attack but the sensitive innuendoes multiplied until *D. Anne Taylor* protested the discussion of accountability, informing the member-

ship that funding relationships as they exist were basically accepted by the applicants as a form of nepotism. Her sardonic comments were caught by Victor Coleman who could have accepted such a hook with ease but chose instead to resign immediately, and more regrettably, walk out of the forum. If, as in the recent chess tournaments, there were suspicions of one side using telepathic interference, it ultimately did seem to be in use.

The interim Board of Directors' 'One Year Proposal' which at the earlier information meeting looked unhealthy in terms of membership acceptance now looked positively weak. But still no-one was aware of any other counter-proposals other than the one A A Bronson had passed around. At this point *Elizabeth Chitty*, member of the Consultative Committee, suggested that all alternate proposals be raised for discussion so removing the need to deal immediately with the remaining agenda which had 40% of its items left to be covered.

Enter John Bentley Mays. John Mays is not the hero of this report — if indeed there is one at all — but by his efforts alone A SPACE was very much alive at this meeting when in fact it could have very well been buried alive. The issue still to be faced was the acceptance or rejection by the membership of the 'One Year' proposal's \$220,000.00 budget which had already been applied for, which faced a mid-September deadline that would need to be dealt with if the proposed budget was rejected. A new board would have to start the fresh computing process, if any immediate programming was to be saved, if not from scratch, at least from necessity. The proposed budget — and with it the confidence in the interim board — was defeated throwing the room into a series of "A SPACE?"

Having proved that it could say no, the pivotal question was becoming, "but could it say yes?" In a flash I saw those milk teeth becoming fangs beckoning any new proposal with uncertainty; would indeed the membership vote in any of themselves WITHOUT a proposal to send the A SPACE lemming right over the edge? A motion was put forward to adjourn and reassemble within days to listen to proposals and vote in a new directorate. This motion was defeated.

In this No! You! climate Bronson's proposal was presented, answering what questions could be asked, reveal-

ing a possible slate of directors that if elected would support and carry out his proposal. 'With membership alteration and amendments?' the teeth inquired, whilst at the same time whispering through their pearlys, 'A set-up?', 'A counter-conspiracy?', 'An ad-campaign without spending a penny?' But I am jumping ahead.

Before this presentation the relationships of the parent organisation, The Nightingale Arts Council and one of its offspring, A SPACE was brought into question. Bronson's proposal (WITH SLIGHT ALTERATIONS) suggested now to keep the parent and its unusual but advantageous charter and to keep the name A SPACE. Marien Lewis who had inconspicuously been bouncing around all evening seemed to exhale a sigh of relief: her 'namesake', her 'grandchild' was not going to be the baby that was thrown out with the bathwater. The name A SPACE was about to begin its ninth life.

But back to the rubber ring. After much consultation and counter-consultation with the A Space/I Ching, bye-bye for now by-laws it was decided to elect five new directors with the suggestion that two further be added once the new board could ratify and legalise itself, the last board, the membership, etc., etc.. In the meantime A A Bronson's proposal was accepted by the membership, 'in principle'. Five additional names were entered for nomination, mostly younger artists, with the exception of David Young who was proposed from the floor and not from the old board's slate or Bronson's slate.

The new board was elected consisting of René Blouin, Tess Taconis, David Young, Rodney Werden, and A.A. Bronson.

Yes! indeed a change had taken place. But — minutes after it was all over the new board was receiving unsolicited suggestions for a new executive director as well as suggestions as to how to compensate Peter by robbing Paul. Was this going to mean a rematch? Had not the boxing 'fans' agreed with the boxers that they also should retire as umpires?

Perhaps I can now emerge from my dressing room which somehow I needed to re-live that third in a series of recent exhausting Toronto events. The current board is now faced with the sober autopsy of finding out what there was and where it is or was, of carrying out an inventory, an audit — not to investigate wrongdoing but merely

to give themselves substance where previously there had only existed an ether. The A SPACE STORY as it evolved this summer is not usable as a moralistic tale to be read by a smug audience, and as I write this I include myself. It is not an Agatha-Christie look-alike; it is not a story of conspiracy and intervention. It is the story of a community which did in fact care what was possible, it is the consequence of having to open and answer the mail — even when the mail turns out to be an unwanted, if not unsolicited, letter-bomb. The heroes/heroines are those that participated. A second CEAC was avoided. The political bureaucracies were again matched and defeated. There was a struggle without an ideology, and artists 'fighting amongst themselves' proved itself to be more beneficial than, as mythically supposed, counter-productive.

As observers, we can only wish them well. A SPACE is certainly not the first artist-organisation to commit itself to radical change, but it may be the biggest to try.

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OPT received a smaller
grant than last year from
Ontario Arts Council, and
a slightly larger one from
The Canada Council. The
Nightingale Arts Council
no longer financially
supports this paper.

RANDALL A. GLEDHILL THE THEATRE OF NO RETURN

I

The curtain rises. The traditional set is convincingly proper. The actors are already in place. Their shoes are glued to the stage. Is this scene from Macbeth? Impressions of Africa? Endgame? Paradise Now? Or is this 'The New Realism'? The audience is decidedly undecided. Time stops. Only the eyes move. A drugged sparkle steals the scene. There is a hard edge of raw nerves. Everyone is frozen in their own anticipation. A cold wind blows from the north. The curtain closes.

II

The curtain rises. The actors are still stuck with their roles. Everyone looks tired. Juliet is wrinkled and haggard. Any semblance of plot now lay concealed under a thick layer of dust. Unnatural devices hold the performers in place. Each is held by their own device. Some are suspended puppet-like by hooks and wires. Others are supported by wooden frames. The silken costumes are falling to pieces. Makeup is collecting in greasy pools. Paint peels from the scenery. A cold wind blows from the north. The curtain closes.

III

The curtain rises. Piles of bones and rags are all that remains of the cast. The sets have crumbled. It is filthy and out of focus. The air is rancid. Two workers enter. Their mimicry of the great comedienness demolishes the remaining flats. Fragments of famous productions are swept into the audience or dumped into garbage bags and dragged away. A movie screen is slowly lowered across the front of the emptied stage. A warm wind blows from the south. The curtain closes.

IV

The curtain rises. A porno flick is projected. Fetish and perversity flash before the audience's eyes. Knives slash the screen to ribbons. Through the tears crawl children dressed in the costumes of the actors. The terrible infant amateurs slip through the bored masses and escape into the streets. A sigh of relief rips the theatre like a giant explosion. There is no wind. The curtains are blown to pieces.

FIN

God Save The Queen. The audience lays dead. Through the debris it can be seen that the streets are deserted.



THE PALACE COUP AN EDITORIAL

On Friday September 15 1978 The Nightingale Arts Council, (which until that point operated A Space, The Video Coop, Only Paper Today and a number of independently organized projects within the Toronto Arts Community) was taken over by a small but well organized cadre of ostensibly concerned artists led by A.A. Bronson (of General Idea, FILE, and Art Metropole). Since Mr Bronson's proposal was the only one put forth to the fifty members present it was accepted by that membership and implementation of the Bronson Plan is now underway.

The proposal contains the following directives:

1. Discontinue A Space as a building and as a name.
2. Decentralization of all equipment and programming.
3. Establishment of an administrative office and a staff of two to coordinate NAC activities.
4. Assembling of a detailed working proposal for a new museum without a collection.

This proposal is worth taking seriously, the potential is great, if enough concerned artists in the community give freely of their time to effect all the changes inherent in such a plan.

But the method by which Mr Bronson and his colleagues manipulated the NAC membership sets a dangerous precedent. The membership (active) of the NAC has seldom gone over the fifty person mark, and Mr Bronson did plenty of recruiting to pack his votes, guaranteeing him a certain amount of satisfaction. But the precedent set is one of the democratic ritual of the dirty trick, i.e. spread enough innuendo about an administration and you can easily topple it. There is nothing to prevent a similar coup from taking place in September of '79, this time led by equally as disgruntled a group of artists who will truly miss the singular forum A Space was able to provide younger artists. Mr Bronson's plan calls for a dismantling of the present system and the research and establishment of a new one over a considerably longer period of time than one year.

Let's hope that he maintains the support of more than just a few colleagues and easy recruits, otherwise the year lost in the momentum of what A Space was activating will undoubtedly kill it for good.

Vic d'Or

PS: Only Paper Today is now being produced independently of Nightingale Arts Council funding. Consequently, the squeeze is on and we will soon experience a desperate need for funds. Any help from our loyal readers, no matter how miniscule, will assist us in continuing to publish.

EDITORIAL

IMAGINE AA SPACE AS NANCY SPUNGEN

OR LEON SPINKS

OR THE BOSTON RED SOX

Playing the substance of an American myth, AA Bronson has fashioned a plan that will virtually disallow anything but the tried and true avant expression. A Spa is dead. The hot tubs were only a fantasy.

This month's treasure trove of trash reading is highlighted by an article by Mr. Bronson in the (rather late) first Toronto issue of Clive Robertson's *Centrefold* (aptly named in light of Robertson's recent resignation as spokesperson for the Association of National Non-Profit Artist Centres — if you think A Space is floundering...). This is the same piece of trash that Mr. Bronson handed out after the A Space meeting on September 15. He was going to hand it out before the meeting, but I convinced him that that would be unwise, if not unhealthy.

I'd just like to go through the article and point out a few things: 'The Consultative Committee report advises the continuation of A Space's current form of organization, slightly modified and vastly expanded.'

Read the report for yourself — it recommends nothing of the sort. The vast expansion involves more of a solidification of the programming that had been developed between 1974 and 1978. The expansion suggested was largely in the area of improved facilities, lack of same being the root of most of the A Space problems in the past. Mere decentralization is *not* the answer.

A Space's 'battered books' were being done by Rodney Werden, a new Board of Directors member, from 1974-76. An accounting firm that proved unsatisfactory took over in 76 and provided professional financial statements for the Nightingale Arts Council in 1976 and 1977. The reticence of this firm to redesign the books to reflect the actual activities of the NAC was responsible for the lack of cogent statements at members' meetings. A new accountant was hired in January '78 specifically to clean up the financial statements and to redesign the books. During the Spring Accountability scare of 1978 this accountant presented the Canada Council's accountant with a statement for fiscal 1977-78 and allowed her examine the books. The CC accountant found them quite in order and went back to Council with a recommendation that we forestall an audit for this period in light of the books' redesigning. What happens next is up to the new Board of Directors of the NAC. I fear the worst.

The 'vested interests and bested egos' issue has nothing to do with finances at A Space. My own personal 'vested interest' in A Space is reflected in the programming I organized over my slightly less than four year tenure & I probably have one of the bestest egos in town, but it seldom had anything to do with my A Space activities. The broad range of visual and performance art that took place within the confines of 85 St. Nicholas Street bespeaks a catholicity that I'm afraid snobs such as Bronson just can't stomach.

'...dance and music, both of which are being adequately handled elsewhere.' This is the height of Mr. Bronson's snobbery. He considers *one* permanent Dance Lab and *one* permanent Music Gallery as adequate exposure for the explosion of activity in these areas of artistic expression. Am I to understand that the proliferation of galleries of visual art in Toronto had nothing to do with this city's position as the major Canadian art center? Toronto needs, as many spaces that will exhibit these forms of performance art as it can get. But it seems Mr. Bronson doesn't consider dance & music performance art. He even accuses the consultative committee of ignoring this important aspect of the new art scene. Inexorably stuck in the categorical imperative, Mr. Bronson displays a myopia worthy of an Avant Philistine. Since A Space and 15 Dance Lab and The Music Gallery have been collaborating, an entirely new sense of performance art — and one, I hasten to add, of an indigenous nature — has emerged. But Bronson needs to have his Performance legitimized at the top. Unless it has been recognized by the European or New York art press, it simply doesn't rate. Mr. Bronson is very thin nostrils about indigenous art.

The 'in-house hiring' problem eludes me. I think what's being referred to here is the fact that I hired Minette Robinson to assist me in the exchange with La Mamelie Inc. The pettiness of the objections to this hiring is largely what led to my walking out of the September 15th meeting. I just could not believe that people were low enough to harp on what amounts to an expedient decision made purely to save precious time and money vis a vis the exchange. When Paula Ravitz's immigration hassle emerged I did what I could to help her maintain her

employment with us; but she was ultimately disallowed entry. When she became unavailable for essential preparations for the exchange I had no other alternative but to hire someone immediately. Since Minette, a highly competent assistant, was also accompanying my family and I to San Francisco to run the exchange (I dropped the 'literal' part months ago), and since she had been largely responsible for the PR for the trip, and since we were slowly going over budget anyway (the drop in the dollar killed us), I felt it was the *best* decision to make. I still do. All the bitching about nepotism from the gossip squad just about made me puke.

The appointments to the Consultative Committee were made in haste. I can't remember who's name I put forward behind JB Mays' back — I doubt that that was the case. Each of the Board members was to suggest names, we invited a greater number of people to the initial meeting than ultimately appear as signatories to the report. The advisability of such a report was suspect from the start. I thought it was pure manipulation, but capitulated in light of the Canada Council's threat of cutting off our funds (remember, this was March, before the cut-backs were public knowledge, pre '1812 committee' if you like). Susan Harrison was an employee; I thought it would be inadvisable for such to be on the committee.

I had nothing to do with the report of the consultative committee. I merely responded to it.

The 'itchy fingers' slam is not substantiated. Mr. Bronson claims that 'Minor graft is a fine art at A Space.' The claim is unsubstantiated. The innuendo builds. A 'former employee' — unnamed, but obviously Robert Handforth — admits to taking 'money that wasn't ours'. This slur should not go unchallenged. What is Mr. Bronson's 'vested interest' in perpetrating such lies about previous administrations?

The Consultative Committee's report is quick at the outset to deny any blueprinting of the future. The onus, if the report and the Board's response are read carefully, of responsibility as to new directions is squarely with the newly elected Board.

Even the rather vague suggestions of the Committee's report are more viable within the Toronto art community than Bronson's flaccid plan. Decentralisation by culture snobs is entrenchment in any language. FILE magazine finally will have a proper live forum for its antics. I will be very surprised if programming *doesn't* reflect the GI/Art Metropole sensibility — putting us squarely back in the tight pocket Mr. Bronson is so quick to condemn. Hiring professionals is not going to be a general panacea to the problems of visual and performance artists in Toronto. Importing legitimized European and New York artists will surely detract from what A Space was trying to build, with a broader base than Bronson and his ilk would care to admit.

All Bronson's carping on job descriptions smacks of the frustrated bureaucrat. If artists can't truly deal with the vagaries of running their own affairs, singly or collectively, then I agree with Clive Robertson's assertion that we should maintain our individual identities and project exclusively from those points.

The stuff about the A Space walls in Bronson's article is really silly. A change was needed and Flavio Belli offered to do it. Mr. Bronson would have had us advertise in the Skills Exchange Monthly? Come now. My 'holiday' in California involved the mounting of a month-long gallery exhibition: Ken Dollar (colour photography), Robert Bowers (drawings and a sculpture), Tom Sherman (three wall pieces), Shelagh Young (blueprints) and a history Retrospective Poster Show of A Space. There were 11 evenings of performance and special events (three of dance, five of music, one each for the opening, a reading, and HP live). At least three of these evenings were complete successes artistically and in terms of audience size. Rumours that the exchange was 'a flop' are unfounded. The production of an hour-long live video production was one of the highlights, in that it effected a large collaboration with some of the Bay Area's most exciting artists. Mr. Bronson is tied to New York City, the idea that anything could be happening in such a hick town as San Francisco is abhorrent to him. A Space did, unfortunately, end up paying La Mamelie's travel expenses (\$2000. Canadian); but it decidedly did not fund their programming in any other way. There was never any suggestion that the A Space/La Mamelie exchange would equal in scope. Since I was able to raise extraordinary funding of up to \$5,500, I organized a kind of Blitz (most of which was facilitated by the fact that the artists accepted Vancouver/San Francisco return travel expenses).

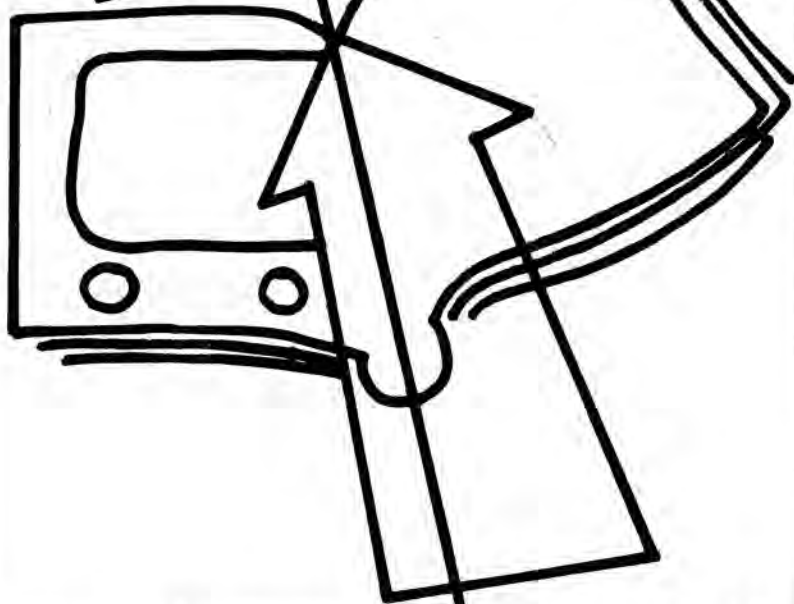
A A Bronson does *not* mean well. He demeans. Without substantiation of his deleterious accusations.

Mr. Bronson then finishes us off with a non-list of existing facilities for the kinds of things he thinks A Space was doing when it 'died'. His love of Punk Rock tells all. Don't forget to bring your razorblade to the next meeting, you might need it.

Vic d'Or



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Letters

challenge but eventually change our present exploitative social economic system.

Karl Beveridge, Toronto

1. The fact that it emanated from the Federal House of Commons makes little difference, the Council had to act on it.
2. To think as CAR/FAC does that the Council was ever autonomous, when the majority of its funds come from federal tax revenues, is a joke.

A Space's Many Spaces

Since the last issue of *Centerfold* appeared, complete with summaries of A Space's past and possible futures, a new board of directors and a new staff have laid the preliminary groundwork for a new future, not only for A Space, but for Toronto: the establishment of a 'Museum without a Collection'. The museum is, of course, A Space itself.

Elsewhere in this issue we are advertising for a new A Space Executive Director who will research and implement this project. We hope to have the new Director chosen and working by the middle of January.

In the meantime we are using A Space primarily as an organizing office through which artists' projects can be executed, publicized and disseminated into the city at large, whether this be through radio or television broadcast, use of public spaces, use of other institutions, or use of the streets and urban environment. We are hoping, with this new emphasis, to reach a broader public, who we feel are now ready to experience the work that A Space has always supported in the past. This also allows us to cut overhead expenses and put a greater proportion of our budget into artists' fees.

With this in mind the following projects are now underway:

1. Ben Holzberg's *Rolling Landscape* project will once again bring an extensive photography exhibit into the subway system. This year the project will be much more visible, occupying billboard panels in the stations. The TTC has promised us high traffic locations and we are asking them to rotate the show several times.

2. Susan Harrison's series of writers' readings and workshops began with William Burroughs at Cinema Lumiere last month. The two additional workshops were sold out. Other writers will be coming to Toronto in 1979.

Centerfold, December 1978

Letters

3. Al Mattes is organizing a festival of electronic music and another of solo piano. Both will be held in cooperation with the Music Gallery at the Music Gallery. A Toronto radio station is also interested in broadcasting the series.

4. Elizabeth Chitty is planning her dance series *Recent Pasts*, which will focus attention on recent Toronto choreographers who have received all too little attention to date. The location of the series is not finalized, but we are looking for a high profile location with a large audience potential.

5. Ian Murray is planning a series of audioworks, to be commissioned by A Space and broadcast on radio. If the series is successful it will be distributed to other radio stations in other cities.

6. Tom Dean is commissioning a series of art-works in poster format for A Space. These will be distributed monthly, decentralizing the work around the city. Artists will be working with printer/artist Gary Schilling on the A Space printing press for this project. In addition Tom will be curating several shows for the remaining four months we have the gallery space. After March 31, 1979, exhibitions will be held in satellite spaces.

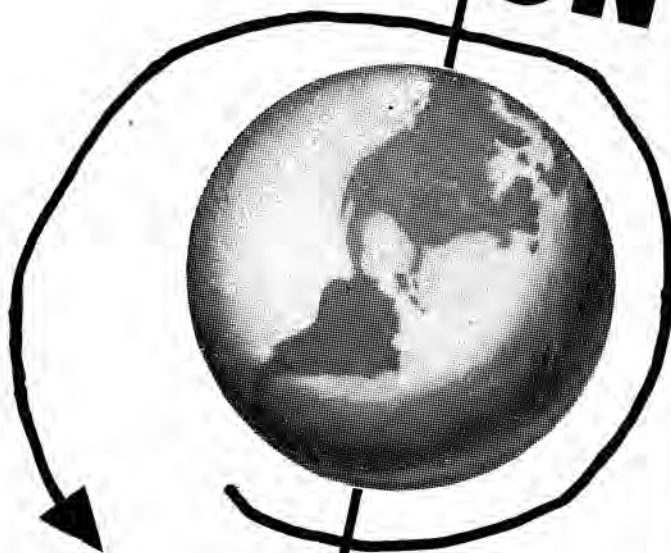
7. Meanwhile, back in the office, our new administrative assistant Jane Perdue is carrying on an admirable job without anyone to assist. Jane is co-ordinating the various projects while managing our finances and untangling our complicated legal history in preparation for our upcoming 'Museum with a Collection' project.

By the way, A Space fully intends to continue its participation in ANNPAC. Despite our decision to hire professional administrative staff, our Board of Directors is a majority of artists and all our curators are artists. Our first priority is to offer competent administrative services and a charitable number for artists' projects. Our long-range goal is to establish a 'Museum without a Collection' for the exhibition, promotion and ratification of new art, new music, new dance, new writing, performance and all the many hybrids artists are cultivating today. In other words, we continue to be an artist-directed organization.

AA Bronson
for the Board of Directors,
A Space

Centerfold, December 1978

COMING SOON



PERFORMANCE BY ARTISTS

A MAJOR SURVEY with essays by GERMANO CELANT
BRUCE BARBER, MARIA GLORIA BICCOCHI, KENNETH COUTTS
-SMITH, ROSELEE GOLDBERG, ARDELE LISTER, FRANCE
MORIN, GISLAND NABAKOWSKI and others ... texts and docu-
mentation by VITO ACCONCI, MARINA ABRAMOVIC, LAURIE
ANDERSON, DANIEL BUREN, COUM, GATHIE FALK, GENERAL
IDEA, REINDEERWERK, CLIVE ROBERTSON, ULRIKE ROSEN-
BACH, ULAY and more...

Release date: February, 1979.

Edited by Peggy Gale and AA Bronson

Published by Art Metropole

AM

ART METROPOLE, 217 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Canada M5V 1W2

Letters

which rarely allocate money for payment of exhibiting artists; the idea being that the staff needs to be paid in money, artists can exist on acknowledgment. A friend who recently exhibited ten years of work at a highly acclaimed New York museum was paid \$75 during the month that her work was being exhibited. Likewise, funding institutions do not really support the arts in this culture. When one traces the allocations of arts monies one finds that it generally rests in the pockets of bureaucrats, administrators, landlords. Rarely do artists directly benefit from arts funding. This year the NEA awarded 127 individual grants to artists throughout the United States. In terms of the thousands who applied, and the hundreds of thousands of artists working in this country, this is not even tokenism.

The sad price of all this is the frustration the artists face when they continue to believe that there is support for the arts in this culture, and the frustration non-artists feel when trying to understand contemporary work. Art schools continue to crank out generation after generation of aspiring young artists striving for the carrot of *Art Forum* and New York, New York. As long as artists have a stake in being recognized in terms of the prevailing art structure they are not free to make potent statements. As long as they continue to aspire to an insular system which dictates validity and inhibits real exchange they cannot speak out, cannot freely develop new content, new form.

The horrible result of the prevailing mythology is that art has become decoration in most sectors where meaning is secondary to benign indifference. Once artwork has been appropriated by the 'high art' sector, it usually loses any kind of political communication it might have embodied.

There is an amorphous feeling among artists that we are in the middle of a powerful change, the form of the change as yet unclear. More and more artists are feeling that they must begin to act in their own behalf, represent themselves, speak and function as an integral part of this culture. It is a time when all living feeling people, including artists, must join together, say what they feel, require communication and meaning from people, institutions and art in their environment.

Sheila Pinkel
Santa Monica, California

"... incestual practices?"

I quote from your Fall '78 issue, AA Bronson's scurrilous and opportunistic attack on me particularly and on the then current administrative function of A Space.

Mr. Bronson berates certain incestual practices thusly: "A Space has always hired friends, for power, personal promotion, goodwill or just because someone needed the money. Often firing took the form of personal vendettas, in which relationships eroded until someone was forced to quit. The complex web of politics and favours that resulted has been a prime factor in A Space's murder mystery staffing. The Board of Directors clearly demonstrated their support of that system."

One would think, after reading this, that Mr. Bronson revels at such activities; and yet, in the mail yesterday comes the not very surprising announcement that the new Exec. Director of A Space is Peggy Gale; this after months of charade and public appeals for applications for the job. Ms. Gale, for the past four years, has run the video program at Art Metropole, only one of Mr. Bronson's (financially troubled?) many 'holdings' in the arts community. *Centerfold* readers who happened upon my two editorials in recent issues of *Only Paper Today* and found them vindictive, and unnecessarily whining in dealing with this audacious conspiracy, please take note.

The controlled mediocrity and outright conservatism exemplified in Ms. Gale's appointment should be loudly objected to by any artist sincerely concerned about the entrenchment of this clique in Canada's oldest so-called 'alternative' arts center.

Victor Coleman
Toronto

The next CENTERFOLD

... will contain a special report on Venezuela Video and Television, articles on English Performance Art, a serious appraisal of Women and Infanticide, Video Reception in the Deep South, a critical analysis on the recent tapes of Lisa Steele, plus essays, reviews and reports.

APRIL/MAY 1979

Note to new readers: see Centerfold, vol. 2, nos. 4, 5 and 6 for the groundwork of this continuing correspondence and related material.

... Coutts-Smith was in Toronto so we met.

Contemporary art has reduced itself to such an extreme state of internalization that it is completely incapable of producing anything but form. Even when meaning is present it is only a blatant pretext for appearance. Correlatively practicing artists are equally unable to see anything outside of art for its meaning, but see it only as posture, themselves capable of no more.

We rejected the present art context and art maneuvers, addressing ourselves directly to our social reality with explicit meaning. The insatiable appetite of the avant-garde tradition forces it to look beyond art for new material, but only to draw these new elements into art and aestheticize them in the process. We rejected the present art context to be able to achieve some relevancy to material reality rather than emasculate it. We do not have the myopic view of culture as something wholly embodied by art, but see cultural production as "developed entirely from social necessity and dependent on the division of labour and the degree of culturalization achieved by individuals of a particular society. Beside producing all means of subsistence and history, human kind produces culture, that is everything that can be defined as the total sum of experiences lived in a society's historical becoming" (Marx, *German Ideology*).

The local art community's autistic inability to perceive of anything as more than appearance, and their vested interests in ignoring our statements that our work is directed outside of art to an expanded sense of culture, led to their, on the whole, distorted and prejudiced view of *Strike*.

Since its inception as a conscious movement, the left has been chronically weakened when at each historical conjuncture reformist or revisionist factions drew away from its radical intentions and created a schism. This occurs so regularly that a permanent dichotomy seems to exist of reformist and radical. The former is characterized by: a position of self-interest that shifts according to which way the winds blow, a continual appeal to "responsible action"

Centrifuge

Tut Tapes

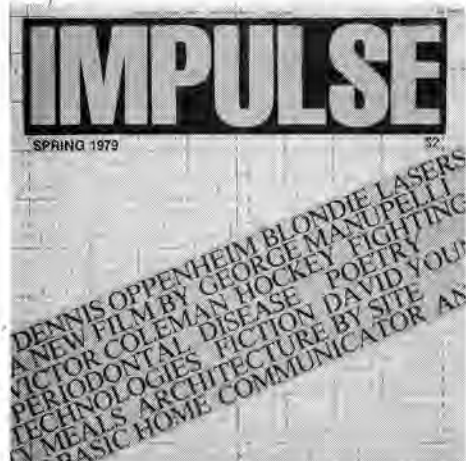
TDK recently advertised their tape tour for the Tut exhibition. With a cassette machine over your shoulder you can be taken along on an *Acoustiguide*[®] (TDK). They suggest the tour is virtually jam-proof. Audio artists who publish their work on cassette don't know whether to laugh or cry.

KING TUT LIVES.



On the Stands

Impulse magazine, may be the first Canadian artist magazine to get national distribution from a commercial distributor. Gordon & Gotch (Can) Ltd. will be distributing *Impulse* in major Canadian cities. Up



until now artists' magazines have had the choice of distributing through the CPPA (Canadian Periodical Publisher's Association) a very unsatisfactory, well-funded organisation or attempting to bridge the Canadian geographies by word of mouth.



Oil and Video

The Glenbow Museum, Calgary, we learned some time ago somehow managed to get \$100,000 from The National Museums for video equipment and programming. Having never been interested in video before, having never shown a tape — we were, to say the least, surprised. The Alberta College of Art Gallery, also in Calgary had been turned down by the same federal funding agency twelve months earlier for a request of \$30,000. ACAG has a history of video involvement with visits from Willoughby Sharp, Chris Burden, Noel Harding, Eric Cameron as well as large purchases and rentals of artists' tapes. Artists no doubt will be encouraged to participate in the Glenbow's new up-dated programming. Those who do will condone a long history of some very unethical power politics.

West Coast Performance Festival

Pumps, *The Western Front* and *Video Inn*, three Vancouver artist spaces are jointly organizing a west-coast Performance Festival, April 1st — 8th, 1979. Vincent Trasov, aka Mr. Peanut is now back on the Board of Directors of The Western Front after six months of forced absence. Together with the return of Michael Morris, who is still on

sabbatical, The 'Front' is perhaps wiser than ever.

a-vanguard?

Vanguard, the Vancouver Art Gallery's tabloid has turned magazine and in the words of its new editor, Russell Keziere, it has emerged because other art magazines "have failed to evince a creditable and authoritative critical position on contemporary art." Keziere a former writer for Vancouver's magazine *Criteria* once criticized glossy art magazines by saying "but the message of the package is that things are going accordingly to plan." Well according to plan, Keziere recently visited Toronto to pick up enough commercial advertising to pay for the magazine, "commercial galleries would rather pay for an ad with text than chance a bad review of one of their artists," he recently told us. While such self-support tactics are commendable, the first issue does not suggest that *Vanguard* will emit a creditable and authoritative critical position on contemporary art, but it can do no worse than *Artscanada*.

A Space Grows

Peggy Gale, video director of *Art Metropole* recently became the Executive Director of *A Space*. Chosen from a list of well-leaked candidates, including Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker and Kenneth Coutts-Smith, Peggy Gale will now be directly responsible for the research on *A Space's* much advertised "museum without a collection". *A Space* meanwhile is soliciting artists within the community to become satellite curators with tempting honoraria. Initially the new *A Space* received support from *Centerfold* magazine. We now add that artists' spaces as galleries peaked in the late seventies, as for museum's they have been merely corporate shells for quite some time. An artist museum as corporate shell "emptied of its meaning" is a stimulating idea. Who wants to be the re-inhabitants is the question and what, if anything, can they do in the image of a corporation? It's a limiting if not limited perspective. The normalisation of artists through museums is neither beneficial to artists nor beneficial to the work that they must do. ■

C.R.

ART BOOKS VIDEO



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AM

ART METROPOLE, 217 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Canada M5V 1W2

... the flavour and meaning of the trial ...

Thank you very much for the copy of the *Centerfold* Magazine. I did send a copy to Dr. John Money and I am sure he will be pleased with it. I found the articles on the trial and the coverage of the issues surrounding it to be excellent. You are quite correct in your hint that your legal reporting might not be completely accurate; there are a number of errors in the reporting, but complete accuracy is not the essence of good legal reporting. The strength of your article is that it accurately conveys the flavour and meaning of the trial in detail. This is what contemporary journalistic coverage does not do and I can only congratulate you on your work.

Clayton C. Ruby
(Defense Counsel for
Pink Triangle Press)

Body Politic issue superb — *Centerfold* fast becoming one of the best. I enjoy every issue and read every word. You're doing important work.

Jerry Dreva
S. Milwaukee, Wisc.

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoyed and appreciate all the work that has gone into your current issue of *Centerfold*. The Body Politic coverage is excellent and informative — as are the shorter stories — all of which I've been reading over breakfast and supper for the last week or so.

Anna Banana
San Francisco

... preparing for the future.

I resist your implied dismissal of A Space's plans and actions. Using terms like "well-leaked candidates", "tempting honoraria", "a limiting if not limited perspective", the "normalisation of artists", suggests suspicion on your part combined with a subtle condescension.

A Space has talked about becoming a "museum without a collection". This does not mean we are aiming for the acquisition of an "important" building, social stature, corporate interface. It implies rather a belief in current art activity as serious, important work, and is a statement of our commitment to professional responsibility and intent. We are preparing for the future: consciously, rather than by coincidence.

Peggy Gale
Executive Director
A Space, Toronto

Centerfold, April/May 1979



VIC d'OR
NEW DIRECTIONS (?) AT A SPACE

Peggy Gale's 'response' (Centrefold, May '79) to Clive Robertson's editorial about new staff at A Space was barely audible. Ms. Gale is pushing AA Bronson's 'Museum Without a Collection' non-concept and prides herself on her estimable consciousness by pitting it against preparation 'by coincidence.'

Since February, when A Space moved out of its St. Nicholas Street building and into its obscure new office and mini-gallery in the old Ryerson Building on Queen Street (fifth floor, at the back, if anyone's interested — and you should be), programming was curtailed, until recently, in-house and drastically reduced in the 'new' satellite structure. The lion's share of programming, since the new Board of Directors took over in September, was organised by a curatorial committee appointed by the old Board, significantly the Electronic Music Festival at The Music Gallery, the Photo-Performance Weekend at 466 Bathurst, and the independent choreographers' series, Recent Pasts, at Harbourfront (see review elsewhere in this issue).

The new executive director neatly splits her time between running A Space three days per week (at a salary of \$1000 per month, I understand) and maintaining the video function of Art Metropole, which presumably fills the other two days of Ms. Gale's work week, at an undisclosed salary. The new Executive Director is said to be researching the possibilities for future activities at A Space, but as yet we have little evidence as to what exactly this constitutes.

Meanwhile other alternate spaces have taken up the slack: YYY and Factory 77 seem to be handling the more static aspects of visual art, the Music Gallery and Martin Heath's 466 Bathurst have been covering performance, while the collaborators at 31 Mercer Street have instituted programs in the realm of writing and new computer/communications technology.

In light of recent developments it's no wonder that the Provincial and Federal Arts Boards are currently viewing the 'new' A Space as lacking credibility. The membership, which was always relatively small but active, has almost passed away as a driving force in the Toronto Art community (Art Metropole was already a force before the takeover), leaving the new Board of the Nightingale Arts Council to work quietly at whatever — and by quietly I mean that very little information is passing out to the public to which the 'new direction' is responsible.

BARRY PROPHET SEASONAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRIALIST'S DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION SPORTING DIVISION * * ADDENDA

1) re: 'Hop-skip...' p. 8

Jane proposed to her reflection 14 times that day, the one after her father's pole-vaulting accident. It seemed, with father still receiving new organs, that she should find a way to generate income. The proposals had a generally positive effect but singularly all a disappointment. Correspondingly Jane benefited by the accumulative effect of her proposals through the use of an 'action charger'; a device designed to charge an event with the commitment of the actor, thereby eliminating the necessity for causal efficacy or functionable actions. The power-pack feeding Jane's dad's charger was expunged as the pole bolted through the pack and up the inner face of his backbone. More durable battery casings should be considered.

2) re: 'Summer Relief' p. 17



3) re: 'What to say when...' p. 41

the function of sporting activities is to:
prevent drowsiness when driving
diminish the desirability of intimacy
encourage the use of harnesses and protective equipment
establish and foster an ambivalence among integers
encourage the building of identities
facilitate an outlet for violence and sodomy
make one feel self conscious
create large gatherings of near-hysterical strangers
encourage the ingestion of substances irritating to the gastric organs.
A good sport is someone who can get along with others, is dynamic in groups.
Sports prepares for life.

In a recent press release (dated May 1 '79) the new curators for 1979-80 were announced. Not surprisingly they are a tight group. Susan Britton, Nancy Nichol, Michael Brook and John Watt will be handling Visual Arts, Performance, Music and Video respectively. Note that all four are members of the A Space Video Coop (which went its independent way in 1978); this should clear up any doubts the membership may have had about the 'new direction'. Except for the Writing program, curated by Robert Fones, A Space can hardly avoid specialization in the discipline of video art.

The need for a gallery of video art has been with us ever since the first inklings of this new form were noticed. As I understand it, the funding from especially the Canada Council is earmarked for so-called 'parallel galleries' which offer exhibition space to a wide range of visual artists and provide an adjunct in programming works in other disciplines. Current CC policy dictates that centers such as Toronto can support two of these 'parallel galleries' only (they won't fund the Music Gallery because it specialises). Canada Council policy in this area has become increasingly wishy-washy as pressure from the Auditor-General was applied (and passed directly on to unsuspecting artist-administrators in '78) and as an unhealthy turnover in administrative staff ensued under this and various other pressures from the Ottawa mandarins.

An open meeting will be held at the new A Space, 299 Queen Street W., on Tuesday June 26 (no time is announced for this meeting, call 595-0790) to discuss the financial situation and the future direction.

R CEAC Controversy

- page 368 Robert Handforth, ... *Only Paper Today* 4:2 (January 1977), 2.
- page 369 Magazines," *Centerfold* 2:4 (April 1978), 37.
- page 370 Robert MacDonald, "Our Taxes Aid 'Blood-Thirsty' Radical Paper," *The Toronto Sun* (5 May 1978).
- Robert MacDonald, "Aid to Terror," *The Toronto Sun* (16 May 1978).
- Robert MacDonald, "Grits Refuse to Probe Radicals' Tax Aid," *The Toronto Sun* (5 May 1978).
- page 371 "Letters: Re: Strike," *Only Paper Today* 5:5 (June 1978), 1.
- page 372 "A letter from the editor: Would You Drink CENSORSHIP-on-the-Rocks," *Centerfold* 2:5 (June 1978), 45.
- page 373 "Letters: Grossly Unfair to CAR; And the Message Got Through; 'Authorized' and 'Unauthorized' Art" *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 73–75.
- page 376 Alan Sondheim, "Letters: Open Letter to Amerigo Marras," *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 76–77.
- page 377 Kenneth Coutts-Smith, "Letters: CEAC and non-associates....," *Centerfold* 2:6 (September 1978), 77–78.
- page 379 Karl Beveridge, "Letters: ... As for censorship, it can only duck," *Centerfold* 3:1 (December 1978), 1–2.
- page 381 The Strike Collective, "Letters: ... Coutts-Smith was in Toronto so we met," *Centerfold* 3:3 (February/March 1979), 75–76.
- page 383 Kenneth Coutts-Smith, "Letters: ...it would be easy to throw Lenin back at them," *Centerfold* 3:3 (February/March 1979), 77–78.
- page 385 CEAC Advertisement, *Magazine* [Ontario Association of Art Galleries] (Winter 1978/79), 10.

ROBERT HANDFORTH AMERIGO MARRAS TALKS ABOUT CEAC

The opening this past September of the permanent home of the Centre for Experimental Art and Communication at 15 Duncan Street establishes this previously 'movable' and sometimes low-profile project as an important new forum and facility for art activity in Toronto and in Canada. Especially significant is CEAC's independent acquisition of a large four-storey building in the light-manufacturing area south and west of Queen Street and University Avenue—an area that in-the-know goasts and investors are saying looks to becoming Toronto's counterpart to New York's Soho neighbourhood.

While CEAC has been the sponsor of a number of new art activities and programmes and the focus of a great deal of discussion in Toronto's art community, it has also maintained a sometimes annoying mystique by neglecting to offer any information about its origins, structure and policies. The following interview, quite obligingly provided by Amerigo Marras, Director of CEAC, doesn't go very far toward supplying that information, either, perhaps because it isn't always possible or desirable for new art ventures to articulate themselves in detail. Marras agreed that this interview might well be supplemented by another later in the season.

RH: Tell me the basics. How does it start? Is CEAC just another name for K.A.A.? Is that how you're continuing to operate?

AM: Well, you see, the K.A.A. is still alive and well. But the K.A.A. is now behind the props—the frame of reference.

RH: That's the name of the corporation.

AM: Yes, that's correct.

RH: And that's a non-profit charitable corporation.

AM: Right. And all those things, yes.

RH: When did you start that, then?

AM: Well, it's very hard to say when it started.

RH: When did you actually get a charter, say?

AM: Oh God. I frankly don't know. All of a sudden one appeared. Somebody told me there was one and I said that's fine. There's always been some people in and out of this, you see. It started out as an act of... radicalization of ourselves, I suppose, in a very naive, innocent way. And also it started out through the support, intellectual and economic, of different individuals. Some of that support carries on to the present, and other people came into the scene and others dropped out. So the story—not the history but the story—is very fragmented. I'm one of the few, I suppose the only one, who survived.

RH: Well, can you remember who was there in the beginning, or would you rather not tell?

AM: No, I prefer not. I don't have the time to think about it. Actually, it will take me some time to figure that out myself.

RH: So now it's K.A.A. operating as CEAC.

AM: Yeah, CEAC is the public front. We wanted it to be descriptive.

RH: Do you have any other branches of K.A.A. operating now?

AM: Nothing is really the 'son' of K.A.A. Mostly the connections are the 'cousins' of K.A.A. CEAC might be the son or daughter of K.A.A., but we don't have any other children any more, just connections or cousins, projects where we might work with other people. For instance, one old one that we had was International Global Tools, which was connected with a large group of people working in Italy. It was involved with interface, working with computers, video and that stuff. We even applied to Explorations several times in a row but it was always turned down. I never figured that out, until we learned that Michael Hayden got away with a very nice grant for a basically very similar project. It was very nice somebody got it, anyway.

RH: International?

AM: No, no. I mean he got a grant for the computer interface, right, and the xerox and the video. I'm saying basically it was a similar project to that, except we never got a single cent of support. Which seems to be very typical of our activities—you know, we're doing things despite.

RH: Well, where is your support coming from now?

AM: Well, the main one—we get some funds, obviously, from the Councils. But also we get some, a few, private donors, so to speak. The major one is this lady—obviously, I can't tell you her name, though, because she doesn't want to publicize her name, she thinks too many people will come to ask her—

RH: I don't want the names, I just want to understand how it's...

AM: Yeah, sometimes it's very strange, you can never figure that out. Some people might be very supportive without being involved with the scene at all. You might see them sometimes, but they don't really follow up, they don't really have any aspirations to become... geniuses or whatever, to change the world. You can never figure that out, why they do it.

Well, anyway, she comes from a very rich family, her father was a British army officer, she's the only daughter. And she's supporting us, which is very nice.

RH: And you own this building now, or you have a mortgage now. Is this right?

AM: Well, I'm not the administrator—it's a very confusing situation, I'm very bad at... figures, although I love quantitative approaches as you know. But I just totally get confused by little figures and additions and subtractions, and that sort of juggling of situations. It's very hard to pinpoint precisely.

RH: Well, the question was more direct than that. Does K.A.A. now own this building? That's what everybody's been saying.

AM: Oh, Yeah.

RH: Yes? It's true?

AM: Yes. That's correct.

RH: Did you do that through the National Museums Policy?

AM: Oh no, not at all. Actually they refused to help us because—I don't know why. Apparently they felt that we're becoming too strong, and so they felt afraid, you see. For instance, Vehicle got some grant, right, but their proposition was totally up in the sky. We obviously owned the building and so on when we approached them, but they turned us down for sort of ridiculous grounds. So we're still obviously going on anyway, despite them.

RH: So you got the building through other private support.

AM: Yeah. We still have a lot of other things to change around. When we moved in we did so much work. Nobody thought we could even do it because it was all fragmented, walls all over, and the floor was not as you see it now. It was a layer of carpet on top of a layer of tile on top of a layer of asphalt on top of a layer of dirt, and that had to be scraped up by hand. And then, the whole rewiring, all that kind of stuff, et cetera et cetera et cetera. It took us a couple of months. It was just a miracle that we could make it for the deadline, which was sometime in September. We still have some work to do, like re-vamp the roof to make it into a very pleasant roof-garden, and expand upstairs here so we have a larger performance space, and fragment downstairs possibly so we can have production areas. We consider this place to be a place for production rather than a voyeur's little nest.

RH: So is the Liberal Party a long-term tenant on your two middle floors?

AM: Oh no. They'll be gone at just the precisely right time, so that by 1979 we'll have four floors. By that time we'll be articulated in such a way that it can be a whole complex situation, and can accommodate all kinds of things.

RH: K.A.A. is a corporation. Is there a Board of Directors operating it?

AM: Yeah, of course.

RH: You don't want to say who those people are?

AM: Well, it's not private information.

RH: I could always go look it up.

AM: Yes, that's right.

RH: What is your staff, in what constellation of people are working here?

AM: Oh, all kinds. More specifically, alright. Well, we have somebody taking care of video, Saul Goldman. Then we've got an archivist who's very good, very precise, very accurate. I'll show you later on, there's a big room which is going to be the archives.

RH: Who's going to do that?

AM: John Eachney.

RH: And Bruce Eves is working here?

AM: He's Assistant. And Diane Broadway also works here, but she's not here today.

RH: And what are her functions?

AM: She takes care of special projects from time to time.

RH: And you're the Artistic Director? What do you call yourself?

AM: Oh, I'm just the janitor. And after that it depends what we're talking about. There might be other people involved as collaborators, but they keep changing.

RH: That's the basic staff.

AM: Yeah, The little army. And the typist. You know who's the best typist I've ever met? Miss Honey. She's the best typist I've ever met

in my life. She can type veryvery fast, answer the phone, talk to the people in the room, write a letter, all at once.

RH: So she's sometimes around, too.

AM: Yeah. She contributes little different things from her collection. Have you ever seen anything from her collection? Quite incredible.

RH: Let's get on to your artistic policy. Have you articulated any artistic policies?

AM: I'm not sure what you mean. In terms of what?

RH: What you want to show, whether you even want to have exhibitions or whether you really prefer to get production activity and special events happening here.

AM: Production. We really don't care about 'showing' things. I don't think nowadays people really care to go to galleries and look at things. We find it much more interesting to have something going on in a different way. So that anytime a person comes here, whether it's daytime or nighttime or holiday, there's always something we can communicate to him. We've had people coming here from very far away and seeing the place, of course, but just coming in to talk. There was nothing on the walls but they didn't care.

RH: Do you invite people or do you look for people coming to you with projects?

AM: Both have happened. Usually what we try to do is to build up contradictions—without ambiguity.

RH: Indeed.

AM: No no, it's quite true. I'm quite serious about it, in terms of reflecting present needs, so to speak, and yet denying them at the same time. Doing things that people don't really like at all. Like people are down at the moment on Logic, for one thing, and we do it. That's an example.

RH: But that's not trying to be a bad boy, is it?

AM: No, it just happened that way, actually. Looking back you realize that what you did was actually the opposite of what everybody wanted. That's what happened. It keeps happening all the time.

RH: It makes for lots of discussion. I've certainly heard lots of comment on the Contextual Art seminar. I guess it sort of illustrates what you were saying about contradictions, because the funny thing was that nobody seemed that pleased about it but everybody was talking about it. I thought it was quite an accomplishment. Anything that sits up that much talk must have some significance.

AM: Actually, historically it was quite important because it was something happening outside the New York mainstream. In other words, it was another event, a collection of energies, that was happening outside New York. New York is losing control of artistic and intellectual directions.

RH: What's coming up here now? What's on your books?

AM: Actually we survive day to day. Which becomes a problem, and an asset at the same time. We have no binding ties to anybody. One of the things we're taking care of now is showing, exposing the art of the Super-8 film. So there will be some sort of series of screenings. And production too, making films and showing films.

RH: Is that new Super-8 distribution project a part of your operations?

AM: I started it out together with other people and right now it's growing so fast that it needs to be fragmented in different areas. They're working here but it's a separate project. I think here we want to develop, rather than a bureaucracy of Super-8, a production and consumption of Super-8, in terms of screening.

NAPOLÉON B



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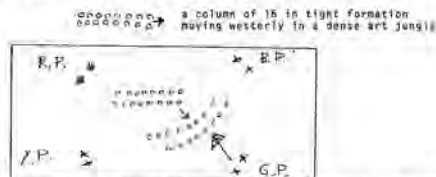
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2nd POST-PAINTERLY DIVISION HARBOR BY X'S



GREEN PLACEMENT move within 10 yards displaying their supplies and begin retreat as soon as enemy begins pursuit. Under cover of dense art camouflage they surprise there enemy and paint them hookers green.



RED PLACEMENT move in from the rear, they prepare to cover the enemy with alizarin crimson, the enemy at this point is severely painted and fully exposed on two fronts, they continue there pursuit and refuse to re-concentrate.

for release
A.N. PAPERS
TUESDAY
DECEMBER 4, 1976

Magazines

STRIKE

15 Duncan Street, Toronto, Canada M5H 3H1. 50c. (11½" x 17"). 36 pages.

Name change from Art Communication Edition. Still very much a 'chic' paper, too much for real political positioning: the more they wish to get away from the 'hegemony of specialized artists as the cultural heroes', the closer they get to the identity they 'hate'. Such a polemical state can only result in self-hatred. A polemical state as such does not have to result in self-destruction, but can stop at the destruction of everything around it. The contents of STRIKE, as usual, are more rewarding than the editorialisms including Tom Dean's 'No Butter, No Butter', Paul McLelland's 'Thoughts of Stammheim' and John Faichney's 'Intending Bookness'.

Editors: Amerigo Marras, Bruce Eves, Suber Corley, Paul McLelland.

VIDEO GUIDE Vol. 1, No. 1

Video Tape Guide West

Satellite Video Exchange 261 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1G3
\$5 for 5 issues (11" x 16½") 8 pages.

"we plan to feature the views and activities of producers, artists and technicians who are experimenting with innovative video techniques and exploring subjects that mass media ignores."

Contains news, interviews, announcements, hardware notes and re-sell equipment notices. It's good and will most likely get much better.

Editors: Changeable, issue one: Daryl Lacey.

B-CAR

Chris Burden

Choke Publications, 1977.

24 pp. (7" x 5½")

The photo story of Chris Burden's Bicycle Car with text by Chris Burden and Alexis Smith.

PUBLICATIONS

Review copies of artist's books, magazines, 'new' literature, catalogues, etc. are welcomed. Material received will either be reviewed or listed as publication information, the distinction between treatments will be a factor of time and space available. All review copies will be archived. The listing and archiving of junk-mail and most 'poetry' magazines is not guaranteed.

MODERN ROMANCE No. 3

A Monthly Mirror of the Times

Real World Press

Gorilla Publications Box 1411 Station A Vancouver, Canada V6C 2P7

15c. (5½" x 8½") 16 pages.

A booklet of poems, stories and illustrations which used to be called 'borderline' and have now transformed into Modern Romance. Pieces by DON AUSTIN, IAN SPENCE, MITCHEL-ANGELO, DONA STURMANIS and others. Cover by John M. Bennett. The next issue (#4) will increase to \$1.

Editors: William Enwright and Richard Johnson.

SOFT ART PRESS

January 1978, No. 12.

Subs: \$7 (21 x 30 cm.) 16 pages.

case postale no. 858 CH-1001, Lausanne, Switzerland.

W.G. Cassel, Natalia II, Klaus Staack, Ruedi Schill, groupe off, Walter Pfeiffer & Co., Monique Bailly-Roulin.

B.C. MONTHLY

Vol. 3 No. 5 - November 1977.

Box 48884 Vancouver, Canada V7X 1A8

Special Issue:

CLEARING - Penny Kemp

(8¼" x 10¾") 152 pages.

ISBN 0-920250-02-5

B.C. MONTHLY

Vol. 3 No. 8 - December 1977

Special Issue:

THE STORY, SHE SAID. - Daphne Marlatt.

(8" x 10¾") 46 pages.

SIBN 0-920250-03-3

GENERAL IDEA

RECONSTRUCTING FUTURES

Art Official Inc., 1978

241 Yonge St., Toronto, Canada.

24 pp. (10¾" x 14")

An English-French, French-English catalog for the 1978 Exhibition tour.

Introduction: Clive Robertson.

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Our taxes aid 'blood-thirsty' radical paper

By ROBERT MacDONALD
Staff Writer

A Toronto publication that says it supports "leg shooting-knee capping" in the style of Italy's Red Brigades has received a \$2,500 Ontario Arts Council grant, the Sun has learned.

Called STRIKE, the pulp tabloid's May-edition features a blood-red front page displaying a blow-up photo of the bullet-ridden bodies of former Italian premier Aldo Moro's bodyguards. Inside is an editorial and lengthy article on the Red Brigades.

The editorial states in part:

"To maintain tolerance towards the servants of the State is to preserve the status quo of liberalism, in the manner of the Red Brigades... we support leg shooting/knee capping to accelerate the demise of the old system."

Editor of the magazine, Amerigo Marras, an Italian immigrant, says his group — the Centre for Art Experimentation and Communications — "is related to communication with other groups in Europe and elsewhere."

Marras defended the actions of the Red Brigades and other related groups, claiming "it is not blind terrorism."

The editor said: "Traditional Marxism and liberalism is wrong; a new ideology is coming up."

The STRIKE editorial said: "The war is before and beneath us... On the way to surpass liberalism we should prepre the barricades."

Below it is printed a lengthy excerpt from the writings of Mao Tse-tung, calling for an "active ideological struggle."

The paper advertises a series of "seminars" this month, one of them on "Human Rights," featuring Body Politic.

Body Politic is a homosexual newspaper that has received a \$1,500 Ontario Arts Council grant. Recently, that grant came under fire because the magazine advocated homosexual sex with children.

Aid to terror

How long does the Canadian taxpayer have to be treated as a complete sucker by both the federal and provincial government grants agencies?

True, the real impetus for rip-off grants was given by the Pierre Trudeau regime when the feds went wild with Local Initiatives Program (LIP) and Opportunities For Youth (OFY) grants in the early seventies. We all remember the small storms in Parliament when it was learned Trudeau's lib-leftist administrators were dishing out hundreds of millions to would-be revolutionaries and weirdos. Grants went to homosexual groups, a Satan-worshipping cult, the Rochdale College (a federal rip-off in itself) packs, etc.

Now, such Ontario government agencies as the Ontario Arts Council and now Wintario have jumped into the same traps as pioneered by the Trudeautes.

Over a week ago, the Sun revealed that a far-out "art" magazine call STRIKE stated it supported the shooting of legs and knee caps of its enemies in "the manner of the Red Brigades." Pictures and articles glorifying the kidnapers and killers of Aldo Moro and his bodyguards were published.

The group — known as the Centre for Experimental Art and Communication — put out the magazine with the help of a \$2,500 Ontario grant.

And Ontario Culture Minister Bob Welch went into a defensive crouch — feebly claiming the group only recently had taken the terrorist stance.

Horsefeathers! The group's magazine — then called Art Communication Editions — stated in its August, 1977, edition that "no longer can we be peaceful artists", and claimed "all we can do is go mad."

They ran pictures of European terrorists, promoted gay rights and blared forth with various obscenities.

An examination showed the group, under the name of Kensington Arts Association, bought the building they occupy with the help of a \$55,000 Wintario grant — also under Welch.

But, don't just yelp about Ontario's largesse. It just so happens that a sub-tenant in this building at 15 Duncan Street in downtown Toronto is the Ontario headquarters of the Liberal Party of Canada.

And it just so happens that the "arts" group has received federal grants for years. For instance, the Centre received three grants alone from the Canada Council this past year. They got \$35,000 for "core funding", \$4,000 for "publication", and \$8,213 "to establish a European video transfer system."

Members of the group have received numerous travel grants from the feds to meet with like-minded "artists" in Europe, etc. The group has been producing punk rock tapes.

No wonder Trudeau has been getting such poor advice about his election chance in Ontario from his Toronto HQ. What an atmosphere.

However, the height of hypocrisy in this latest exercise is the attitude of Secretary of State John Roberts, in charge of the Canada Council and other grants. He made a silly statement last week that has ordered his staff to give no detailed information about how grants are awarded — and to whom.

As far as Roberts is concerned, the public doesn't have the right to know how their tax moneys are tossed around — \$36 million by the Canada Council this year.

And to think he had the nerve to be Canada's representative at the state funeral for Aldo Moro in Italy. That takeschutzpah.

Grits refuse to probe radicals' tax aid

ROBERT MacDONALD
Staff Writer

Liberal MPs yesterday voted down a Tory resolution to probe a Toronto "arts" group that endorses leg shooting and knee capping in the manner of the Red Brigades. The group has received more than \$76,000 in Canada Council grants.

Conservative MP Tom Cossitt moved the resolution in the Commons for an investigation by Prime Minister Trudeau into the Centre for Experimental Art and Communication in Toronto.

He noted they were publishers of a monthly news magazine entitled STRIKE, which states in its current issue: "In the manner of the Red Brigades, we support leg shooting/knee capping to accelerate the demise of the old system."

Cossitt asked that Prime Minister Trudeau "make a full statement concerning sizable federal government grants to this organization in the amount of thousands of dollars, including Canada Council grants of \$29,000 in 1975-76 and \$47,200 in 1976-77."

He also asked that Trudeau reveal the amount of travel grants given the organization "and whether our security services are aware if such grants were used by representatives of the group to meet with terrorists abroad."

The group's activities were questioned in the Ontario legislature last week after the Sun revealed on May 5 the magazine also received Ontario Arts Council grants.

The magazine's front cover featured a picture of the blood-streaked bodies of former Italian Premier Aldo Moro's murdered bodyguards — plus articles and pictures inside endorsing the Red Brigades.

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PAUL HAINES
SWAN SONG
for Larry Dubin

Gliding reaction
Surfacing

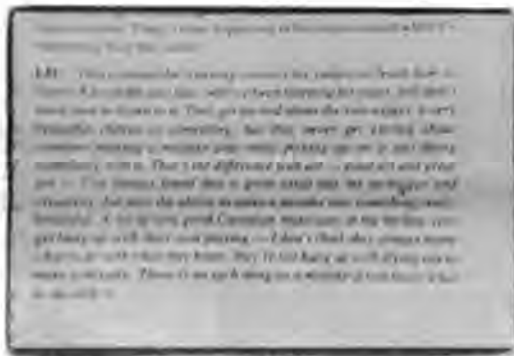
Amidst an artificiality
So complicated
It is true to itself

The grey field's discomfort
Emerging
As crescent-melted bird

To sing horizontally
Unheard.



IN MEMORIAM
LARRY DUBIN



LETTER RE: STRIKE

To Whom it may concern:

As artists and human beings we protest against the political gesturing of *Strike* journal which advocates knee-capping and other barbaric acts in the name of political ideology.

In the past we, as artists, have supported C.E.A.C., the Kensington Art Association and Art Communications Edition, (three associations essentially run by the same core of people and endorsing the same philosophies), because they have raised important questions regarding art and its role in society. Although we have no argument with individuals who would advocate the use of artistic media as agents in social change, we deplore Amerigo Marras's exploitation of an artistic journal to support the terrorist tactics of the Red Brigade as a necessary and acceptable political strategy. It is impossible to support methods of social change which include mutilation and murder.

In the last 2 issues of *Strike* the publication's board of directors, declaring its impatience with art, has decided to drop its art guise. Advocating a complete rejection of art as we know it today, *Strike* has made the transition to radical political activism: "...in the present socio-political context it seems that a radical function for art can only exist as a negative one. Only criticism is possible and not a positive practice ...". *Strike* has chosen to approach social change in the most negative and intentionally destructive terms, and stands for disruption and terrorism.

Make no mistake about the seriousness of *Strike's* threat to humanist values. Art is only a minor battle area. The board of directors of *Strike* is well prepared for a larger fight. Through the Free University, International Art Fairs and visiting guests, experts in the fields of sociology, economics, philosophy, psychology, architecture, they are preparing for a long term revolutionary work. In recent issues, the journal has denounced art, capitalism, Russian and Chinese models of

Marxism, Liberalism, Canadian Artists Representation ... (It is important to note that the journal has yet to publish a clear statement of the political or social structures it would endorse as replacements for these superstructures.)

Ironically, *Strike* is the official publication of C.E.A.C. which relies for the majority of its revenue on federal and provincial funding. C.E.A.C. has been deemed eligible for government funding for several reasons: 1) It has already received \$250,000. in the form of grant money which establishes its credibility, 2) It demonstrates its professional group competence in owning its own four-storey building in downtown Toronto, 3) It has one of the best video communication systems in Toronto — courtesy of the Canada Council Video Section, 4) Recently it has sought assistance to start a Free International University and gains prestige from its international connections with social philosophers, activists and artists such as Joseph Beuys, 5) It has conducted several symposia on 'Behaviorist Art', 'Contextual Art' and most recently will conduct a three month 'School for Marxist Education' this summer.

Having established a facade of respectability, C.E.A.C., through its affiliated publication, has now formed a political front to denigrate all art-making, to urge the overthrow of all existing social structures and to declare its support for the terrorist strategy of the Red Brigade. Now that *Strike* has declared its destructive platform, continued financial aid by the provincial or federal government must be seen to be a support of the publishers' connections and entrenchment with violent international political revolutionaries.

It is equally ironic that *Strike's* indulgence in self-promotion by sensationalized and deviant behavior, and its endorsement of "leg shooting/knee capping to accelerate the demise of the old system," has been supported by the tolerance and silence of an art community unwilling to take any moral stand on art or politics.

Support for this kind of activity has been given because of a misguided belief that traditionally, all art is radical-behavior, that violence and political gestures in art are harmless within the neutral confines of art, and that art poses no real threat to social, political or economic structure. However, 5 of the 6 editors of *Strike* have published a joint statement insisting that they are not merely posturing and that art must not be neutral. Under the headline "Approach/Knee Capping and Other Games," in the May edition of *Strike*, they assert: "We and others have made similar statements [i.e. pro knee capping] in the past but because we do not wish to work from the self-serving interests of the avant-garde, we take up these issues because of what we believe and not as yet another innovation or style. We are committed to what we say and will repeat as well as develop these ideas as long as circumstances deem it necessary to no matter how many times it has been done before."

The back page of the issue of *Strike* in which this statement appeared, solicits subscriptions under the banner of the Red Brigade and the logo of a machine gun.

We urge artists and other persons concerned with human rights, to protest against individuals and groups which support the Red Brigade and leg-shooting as political solutions.

We are apprehensive that this letter will play into the hands of *Strike* and allow them to accuse us of supporting all the weaknesses of the capitalist system or of limiting freedom of speech. We are further apprehensive that *Strike* will exploit our letter to discredit Canada Council's and Ontario Arts Council's valuable contributions to the arts. We have no complaint against the art councils' support of legitimate art — only against the support of art as accessory to mutilation and murder.

Signed by:

Natalie N. Green

Fran Gallagher

Bruce Parsons

Toby MacLennan

Ron Shuebrook

Art Green

Alison Parsons

A letter from the editor

Would you drink CENSORSHIP-on-the-Rocks?

As the summer heat rises through government and governed alike, certain artist rights are being questioned in the House of Commons as the Tories in opposition scrounge for any all 'liberal' 'scandals'. With some censorship issues raised (CEAC, bill bissett, Pulp Press) one might wonder about the interests of C.A.R. (Canadian Artists Representation) and their limitations of involvement. This censorship-posing by the government, it makes little difference which party originates muddle-headed strategy once it becomes a 'popular issue', is fundamentally the government telling The Canada Council (in this case) to ignore applications by artists whose definitions of personal social responsibility go against the government's own definition of what constitutes 'the creative act'. In a sense this form of censorship is a primary stage of outlawing: it is the arbitrary selection of work, fundable under the Canada Council guidelines, retractable under so-called public pressure - which really is pressure from a sensationalist news media plus 'memos' from the government to The Council to stop anything that will cause further political embarrassment. Whether the Council itself is involved in any self-censorship is difficult to determine. As an independent funding agency it certainly has reason to protect its existence by ensuring that there is no government infringement of its mandate.

C.A.R., better known recently for writing position papers on copyright laws, surely would be interested in defending and protecting those 'creative acts' that have to exist before such positioning work is necessary? C.A.R. also has to make clear an interest in art that requires free political speech, free political documentation and free political publication. The word 'political' is almost always left out of the phrase 'free speech' even though free speech is of little use if it is to mean an aesthetics without a political base.

A group of artists, members of C.A.R., recently sent a complaint letter to the Prime Minister, the Toronto Globe & Mail, The Canada Council, C.A.R. and others protesting Council support of CEAC (Center for Experimental Art & Communication, Toronto). The protest was directed specifically to CEAC's support of The Red Brigades and their (CEAC's) intent on guerrilla actions. Whilst not wishing to underestimate their capabilities, thus far CEAC's 'achievements' have been theoretical in terms of guerrilla action; - the artists who complained did so on the grounds that Terrorism is anti-humanitarian, that violence through terrorism is 'criminal', whereas the millions of people killed legally by governments since 1939 is 'humanitarian'? Such is the historical ignorance of the 'apolitical' artist.

When artists begin to call for their own censorship, as this group has, they virtually start a chainsaw with themselves as the next tree. As my own experience tells me from being a student at an art college in 1966 which went on strike: any government can, without remorse, close down all art institutions and remove all sources of public funding. 1. Because there are many other non-intellectual, non-political cultural outlets that can, for the sake of argument, keep

'culture' alive. 2. There has been enough art produced, even in Canada, to satisfy the investment art market.

Unfortunately playing with the government and, just as irresponsibly, playing into the hands of a reactionary media, is not limited to this one group of complaining artists. I have also heard sentiment expressed by artists who say they will vote Tory to punish The Canada Council for being too bureaucratic, for having the right to say no. Such is the fat on the art-brain.

C.A.R. has worked hard with all levels of government and educational agencies to ensure the purchasing of artworks, artist fees and honoraria even if their concerns have largely remained within the narrow confines of the 'visual' artist. This work has enabled artists to generate income apart from grants and, for many of those optometric artists, the means to purchase the attributes of contemporary Canadian life. The role of the artist who can therefore buy stability as well as 'be the artist' is somewhat of a paradox manufactured by the artists themselves. No wonder the artist has 'difficulties' defining a role within society and doesn't this 'dilemma' become more pronounced once the issue at hand becomes not merely aesthetic, not merely art-politics, but political?

A call for censorship comes only when those making the request can no longer shut out the fact that the artist as political activist takes many forms. That those with Marxist commitments serve only part of the options available. That the majority of artists who see their work in socialist terms are in fact anarchists, and that whilst terrorism is extreme Anarchism, nevertheless, art cannot be governed by a democracy, a socialist state, a totalitarian state or any other power bloc that in any way removes the right for individual responsibility and action.

Those artists that 'complained' deserve to be blacklisted from C.A.R., ANNPAC and all other artist-run organizations not because there were no grounds to criticize CEAC, but because their sketching courses didn't teach them any common sense perspective.

These rumblings do not signal an end to The Canada Council, as our Tory-voting colleagues would like to believe, but it could hurt possible public monies going to essential contributions made by those same 'obscene', 'extremist' artists. Many of the artists this magazine supports could be harassed because of supposed obscenity or extremism. As John Bentley Mays points out in a recent discussion (The Penultimate Perspective): art continues for any government to be an ornamentation of power. The illustration by Opal Nations on p. 47 is not a comment aimed solely at Mr. Joe Public and his girl, it also covers the artist with their whined-for art-money and valium-like indifference.

C.A.R. should now come out of its unionized shell and support all censorship cases as they will be used to define the boundaries of censorship. C.A.R. should furthermore strengthen its available lobbying power so that in future it will still be able to pride itself in "maintaining the financial and emotional well-being of artists".

Change of Address:

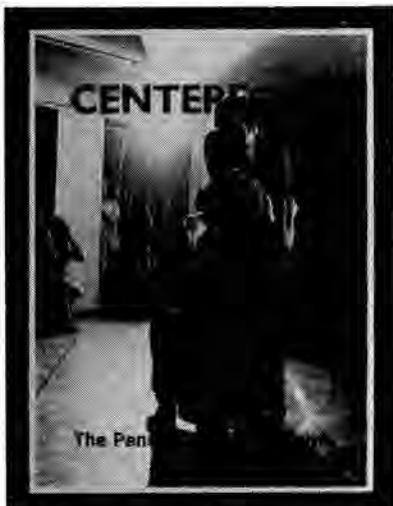
Please note that from 30th June 1978

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2nd Floor, 217 Richmond St. W., Toronto, Ont., Canada M5V 1W2.

Letters

Mail correspondence to be published to: **LETTERS**, Centerfold, 2nd. Floor 217 Richmond St. W., Toronto, Canada M5V 1W2.

Please be both brief and concise to prevent the need for future editing. Feedback and comments of a longer length should be submitted as possible texts.



"Grossly unfair to CAR"

In the June '78 issue of **CENTERFOLD** there is a letter from the editor that is grossly unfair to CAR entitled "Would You Drink Censorship on the Rocks?". The editor is responding to an open letter written by seven artists who work at York University protesting "the political gesturing of **STRIKE** journal which advocates knee-capping and other barbaric acts in the name of political ideology".

First of all, the seven artists were writing for themselves, not for CAR. They may be CAR members; they are not on any executive; they weren't speaking for CAR. CAR has not made any statement of position on the **STRIKE** issue. It's quite possible that the sentiments expressed in that open letter would be echoed by a majority of CAR members, since CAR is basically interested in survival, not self-destruction, however CAR bears no responsibility for CEAC's recent loss of public funding. CAR is opposed to censorship, but this isn't a case of outright censorship... **STRIKE** is still free to publish. Rather it is the usual bureaucratic financial string-pulling that hamstring many artists and groups. CEAC cut off their funding themselves in a highly visible, dramatic fashion (at the height of the Moro drama) that is either a demon-

stration of bravado or stupidity, and surely they can't be surprised at the outcome. The same issue of **STRIKE** that contained the famous 'we support knee-capping' statement also contained a full page insert denouncing the selection of Ron Martin and Henry Saxe to represent Canada in the Venice Biennale. Whatever your aesthetic preferences it can't be denied that Martin and Saxe are serious, committed Canadian artists, and to dismiss their work as a rehashed U.S. product is just playing the tired old game of putting down Canadians with the easy U.S. comparison... So who should represent Canada? The CEAC? Of course self interest has no part in their pure revolutionary motives.

Artists and art papers are great at attacking other artists while the bureaucrats rub their hands together. To **CENTERFOLD**'s call for CAR to come out of its unionized shell and support all censorship cases I would suggest that **CENTERFOLD** support CAR and its editor join up. It's too easy to criticize from the outside on spurious assumptions.

Dave Gordon, editor, **CAROT**, Kingston. (The Editors have been and are **CAR** members.) Ed.

"And the message got through"

Your confused and confusing editorial in the June issue demands a response; if not to completely answer the many questions raised, at least to reaffirm **CARFAC**'s position with respect to some of the main topics.

At the 10th National Conference which took place in Winnipeg in May of this year the National Council of **CARFAC** made the following simple (but pregnant) resolution:

"THAT **CARFAC** SUPPORT THE AUTONOMY OF THE CANADA COUNCIL."

At the same conference we did express this support in the strongest terms to the Secretary of State's current Task Force — and the message got through. This course of action, supporting the Council's autonomy, is in fact saying that there must be no political interference into the Council's awards policies. This is purposeful political action directed towards those interests who, for one reason or another, would like to see a weakening of the Council and/or its takeover by some government department (presumably to make it more "efficient" or "responsible").

CARFAC as an organization does not

adhere to any political party or belief, other than the political belief that an organized group of artists can speak with a stronger voice than an individual when there are common concerns. We will not, as you suggest we should, "blacklist" any artist because of his/her expressed political beliefs.

The main thread which runs through your editorial is "censorship" — expressed as "it could hurt possible public monies going to essential contributions made by ... 'obscene' 'extremist' artists."

It would appear to us to be a fact of life that when an artist requests public money and his proposal is presented to jurors, it is they who will decide (again for one reason or another) whether or not they consider the contribution to be "essential". For this reason **CARFAC** expends energies to make sure that jurying systems are as fair and representative as possible, and that individual appointees to The Canada Council are of the calibre which will produce the best results for the artists of this country.

Your final recommendation to **CARFAC** — that we should strengthen our "available lobbying power" leads us naturally to respond by asking all visual artists to join with the only national organization which has the strength to effect positive changes for each of us. That strength will be increased with your participation.

Jim Lindsay

CARFAC 2nd National Vice-Representative

"Authorized" and "Unauthorized" Art

In your June editorial letter (Censorship on the Rocks) you call the public-funding "scandals" of last spring, centering on CEAC, blawointment, Talonbooks and ourselves (Pulp Press), a "primary stage of outlawing." By adding *The Body Politic* to your list of publishers under attack, one might go on to describe the secondary and even the tertiary stages of a process which, like syphilis, seems, in this country at least, to be displaying an identifiable pathology of its own. It is the editors of *The Body Politic* who immediately face the prospect of being *in fact* outlawed under the terms of the Criminal Code. Their case is of particular importance to us all: in it we can see the transmogrification of pseudo-issues like "misuse of public funds," "accountability," etc., into the essential political issue of cen-

sorship and the suppression of distinct minority groups.

The media attack on *The Body Politic* began in the pages of the *Toronto Sun*, whose editors first "exposed" the fact that the magazine had received a grant from the Ontario Arts Council. That certain politicians smelled an issue in the pre-election wind we can presume from the ensuing police raid on *Body Politic* offices and the subsequent laying of charges against its editors. Their case is now pending; its outcome in the next month or so will determine whether or not in this country censorship has moved into its final, tertiary phase, or is to remain dormant a while longer, a contagious rash spread by contact with media hacks and politicians.

On 11 May 78, the *Globe and Mail* ran an article headlined: "Public Funds Aid Publisher Selling Guerrilla Manual." The publisher in question turned out to be Pulp Press, but the guilty party, it was implied, was the Canada Council. On 12 May, when the *Globe* item hit the wire service, the local media hit Pulp Press offices; front page headlines in the local paper announced: "Guerrilla Manual Publisher Got Grants," and "Canada Council Financing Publisher of Guerrilla Book." The evening TV news featured the Pulp Press item under the banner "Terrorism," sandwiched between the latest kneecapping news and Aldo Moro's funeral. The telephone rang continuously for two days as we in the office gradually realized that something was going on that was no longer the joke we had first considered it to be. The friendliness of the reporters (who almost without exception confessed, off the record, to thinking the whole thing a joke) and their personal views of the "affair" seemed to have nothing to do with the news that was literally being created by the media itself. The "Canada Council Connection" which in our case proved to be fairly tenuous, was overshadowed in the opinion of some reporters by the news that the Quebec government archive had purchased a copy of *The Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* and that the Vancouver Public Library had one in the stacks. (An embarrassed librarian was asked to justify the library's acquisition of the book.) The newsmongering extended even into the Federal Development Bank, officers of which were asked whether they were aware of "the types of manuscripts" being published by us using machinery mortgaged by them.

At the same time an editorial writer in the *Windsor Star* concluded that, based on sales figures for the *Minimanual*, "there are in Canada at this moment perhaps one or two thousand persons (sic) with the potential to train and wage guerrilla warfare." The same writer stated that it is "inexcusable that such an organization as ours "be permitted to flourish in Canada." His essay was impacted with the current phraseologisms (ie: "freedoms imply a sense of responsibility and civic duty," "traditional freedoms," "contributing public funds to such a menace," etc.) and at one point he implied that because *How It All Began* was banned in Germany, it is somehow illegitimate to publish it here. (Two large Canadian printers were subsequently to refuse to print the second edition of the book, for understandable reasons: they were afraid of being caught in the middle.) Editorials in small regional papers represent, to politicians at least, that democratic entity, "public opinion"; no doubt Tom Cossit (MP, Leeds) waited twelve days for that opinion to form itself before he introduced a motion in Parliament "concerning the continued giving of Canada Council grants to assist terrorist purposes, and refer specifically to a grant to Pulp Press of Vancouver." After a muddled summary of the contents of two books published by us, he moved that:

...all grants to organizations, groups or individuals under investigation by Canadian security forces be immediately suspended, and that the Prime Minister...call a judicial inquiry into the shocking aims, decisions, and actions of the Canada Council. (Hansard, p. 5624, item 1412)

The motion did not pass. For the time being, anyway.

The Pulp Press "scandal," on its own, is essentially trivial; the process of which it is an element, however, is not so trivial. *The Body Politic* editors face the courts; CEAC has lost its funding base; even the Western Front has come under scrutiny for its apparent "misuse" of public money — in this case a videotape which, in the opinion of MP Ed Wenman, constituted further evidence of the Canada Council's corrupt granting procedures. (Wenman, by the way, visited the Front personally in an attempt to get a copy of the tape to take back to Ottawa. He told members of the Front that there would

be good publicity in it for them if they would just let him have the tape; he even offered them a free flight to Ottawa and plenty of media coverage!) That the spate of planted media "exposes" and political haymaking has abated temporarily we owe as much to Talonbooks — who in June launched a now-pending law suit against seven MPs, seven newspapers and thirteen others charging them with libel and copyright infringement — as to Trudeau who didn't call an election. Attacks on individual groups have been suspended, although the Canada Council remains under fire, and will for some time.

I am giving you this account, which in itself is trifling, because the details may prove instructive to others, as they eventually did to us. So long had we presumed (not incorrectly) that we were invisible in the fabric of any official "Canadian Culture" that to discover ourselves now suddenly visible for reasons of caprice, for reasons of airtime, column inches — in short, news unrelated to the content of our work — seemed to us an immense and empty irony, bewildering at first because it seemed to come from nowhere and to be going nowhere.

In the week following the *Globe* item, the media seemed to lose interest in the "story," save for a few calls from free-lancers looking for personal profiles of members of our editorial board, but at least twice a day for some days we received visits from sportscoated gents — the most spectacular of them wearing sunglasses and white shoes — asking to purchase copies of the books mentioned in the news media. We referred these gents to the bookstore down the street; needless to say, none of them went there to get the books. (If we had complied with their requests, we would have been open to charges of retail selling without a license.)

In your June letter, Clive, (getting back on the track) you suggest that the Canada Council, as an independent funding agency, "has reason to protect its existence by ensuring that there is no government infringement of its mandate." I fail to see how the Council can ensure any such thing, considering that 85% (correct me here if I'm wrong) of its budget comes from the government. Bureaucracies, once set up, work to perpetuate themselves; mandates can be manipulated, rewritten, or simply overlooked. The political climate of the last ten years has been favorable to

small-l liberalism in socio-cultural areas, but we'd all be fooling ourselves to think those days can be brought back now. Across the country welfare money is being cut, unemployment insurance is being cut, cultural funding is being cut — as millions of dollars are pouring into the construction of at least twelve new penitentiaries. (Someone up there seems to think there aren't enough people in jail as it is; one wonders where the new jail population will come from.)

Government money has helped spawn an "art" that till now has been deemed suitable decoration, as John Mays puts it, for the halls of power. But the time has now come for that art to be divided officially into "authorized" and "unauthorized" art — a process that is well under way, following the lines of political expediency. It is taking place in the name of "public accountability," "responsibility," etc., and rarely, in official jargon, as censorship. As the politicians struggle for power, all of us — writers, artists, publishers, as well as cultural minority groups — become pawns in the game of democratic politics. The group of artists who publicly protested Canada Council support of CEAC have driven in the wedge: with artists themselves squabbling about who is to be authorized and who isn't, the politician's work is half done.

Who are we presuming to make this art for after all? This is an embarrassing question and it's not artists and writers who are asking it; it's the politicians who claim to want to know, and they're prepared to answer it for us too. They're pointing the finger and saying, "You're in," and "You — you're out." (And it is an embarrassing question: many of us find it somehow too literal-minded and vaguely unfair. When I think about it, I have to admit that I've never been too sure that there was anyone to make an art for.)

Writers and artists can be said to have benefited from the liberalism of the state for the last ten years or so (insofar as we have been permitted and, to some extent, encouraged to exist). And, ironically, as a community of artists, we are now in fact in a position of strength compared to a decade ago. We have, after all, obtained some control over the "means of production," we have artistic and production skills, even rudimentary management skills, and we own equipment; some of us have become acquainted with small business operation — we have the

means, or the beginning of the means, for articulating an unauthorized art. The evidence is before us: there is, whether we think so or not, a very real political dimension to our work, to the art we produce. We can take this evidence and incorporate it into our work, altering our tactics to correspond with the situation at hand, and developing new forms to embody it, or we can toe the line of authority. We can step in behind Messrs. Cossit, Wenman, *et al*, and consciously, not any longer "in spite of our personal intentions," proceed to create an art worthy of display in the halls of power.

It is in the interest of the politicians who manipulate and create "public opinion" that divisions exist between groups of artists and writers, and between cultural minorities of all kinds: gays, feminists, natives, prisoners, children, immigrants, the poor. It's a game they're playing and they're playing it with us. While we continue, as a short term holding action, to support the Canada Council in defense of its mandate, I suggest that we look to other minorities in need of support, that we consider our work and our strategy in the context of a struggle that includes us as artists but extends beyond the immediate tactical problems of our individual survival. It may be that we can discover the means of our survival *as artists* as well as re-discovering the content of our work by looking sideways, not up or down, for support and mutual aid. There are plenty of people in trouble and for essentially the same reasons that the artistic community is in trouble.

All that I'm saying here may of course amount to idle ramblings: your suggestion that CAR be marshalled on the issue of censorship, while reasonable almost to the point of being innocuous, is likely to get no further than the pages of your magazine. That we are all of us in the cultural community complacent, smug and paranoid is difficult to deny. At this moment, in Vancouver, workers from the Muckamuck restaurant are on strike for a contract and job security. Their employer is Douglas Christmas, whose Douglas Gallery introduced the high-powered New York pop- and op- artists to Vancouver in the late 'sixties, captivating much of the art-buying community with Big-town pizazz and high prices, and eventually alienating many local artists who found themselves working in the shadow of the glossy, imported prod-

uct, picking up a few crumbs here and there. The Muckamuck Restaurant is in the basement of the Douglas Gallery. It is the first restaurant in Vancouver to serve native Indian food (most of its employees are Indian). With the strike now in its fourth month, picketing workers have yet to hear any word of support from any group of Vancouver artists....

Yours truly,

Stephen Osborne
Pulp Press, Vancouver
(1st Sept 78)

A New Realist?

Please remove my name from your mailing lists.

Thank you,

John Hall, Calgary.



"A Curious Choice ..."

I especially liked the article "Art and Social Transformation" in the April 78 issue so more similar material is going to please at least me.

Also the video articles were O.K. too and I liked the fact that you devoted a lot of effort to the subject that most interests me. One thing I must say is peculiar to me: the trophy from the Video Open which is on the cover. It is amazing; it is right in the broadcast/Hollywood (American) media model design. (Once I had the opportunity to hold for a moment Budge Crawly's Oscar which he got for THE MAN WHO SKIED DOWN EVEREST (which his wife edited) and it was very BIG and so HEAVY that it seemed to be made from SOLID GOLD though it wasn't). Now if we are trying to foster the development of uservideo and broadcasting in opposition, that object becomes a curious choice to be associated with such a strategy. Maybe the trophy's appropriation from broadcast's cultural strategy is meant to sound more like a capture than a capitulation? I found I

ended up more speculating about the implications of that trophy than about anything that was said about video in the magazine and as far as I could tell nothing was said about the trophy in the magazine. In a way it dovetails with the star personality type interviews of the winners (which I am not criticizing; which I liked very much — especially Susan Britton). Having come into contact with artists through video from the “field” of social transformation (that preoccupied me) I am not yet extremely knowledgeable of the art economy and do not know if artists often receive such objects as awards. Once though I won a similar trophy (except that it had a banjoist on top instead of a video camera) in the world five string banjo championship and I treasure the thing highly. And my mother used to win blue ribbons for her mashed potatoes at the county fair. I suppose since video (i.e. miniature format video) makers have not one spit the money, technology, cultural power of even the most humble broadcast station, they might as well have some sort of compensation in the chance of winning something that at least LOOKS like it came out of money, technology, cultural power. At the moment I held that Oscar in my hands I decided that whenever I could afford it I was going to get my own, that I was going to have an exact facsimile custom made for myself — as I would surely rather have one than not have one and that was the only way I was ever going to get one.

Best wishes

Scott Didlake
Toronto

Powerhouse ...

To comment on the ‘Powerhouse’ article in the June issue of *Centerfold*. Being a member of Powerhouse, I fully agree with the statements made by our co-ordinator, Linda Covit — there definitely still is a need for a women’s gallery and it’s a pity that there is only one such gallery in Canada. It’s even more a shame that there should be an art labelled ‘women’s art’, but as with most everything else in society, it just seems to be another sort of segregation. On page 2 of the article (interview) was mention of a lesbian artist showing at the gallery whose exhibition was labelled as ‘Gay Art’ by a local critic. Actually the review called it ‘Lesbian Art’. I am the artist in question and was even more shocked than Linda to read the word in the review. Obviously, there was something in the

exhibition to convey the fact that a lesbian had produced it, or else the reviewer would not have used the word in the first place. I am sure that she is not the type who would wish to be sued by a heterosexual artist that she labelled ‘lesbian’. Whilst doing the works I had no conscious ‘motives’ of producing gay art. I am an artist who happens to be gay and who also happens to be a woman. It was a successful show, far above any of my expectations, but only because it was seen as being ‘human’.

Let’s face it — art is art, as love is love. Because I only have extreme emotions for my own sex does not make me any less or any more of an artist but obviously my sexuality is going to show through in my work. But, as with my life-style, my sexuality is not the predominant factor in my work.

Admittedly, many ‘Gay Artists’ are in more than one way exhibitionists. That is because their sexuality, for some reason, rules their lives. Their sexuality is uppermost in their minds. I consider myself an artist first, woman second and a lesbian thirdly and, until other gay artists put their art first and uppermost, I fear that they will not produce human art or, even for that matter, good art.

Thank you

Alexandra (Sandy) Hewton, Montreal.

Open Letter to Amerigo Marras

Dear Amerigo,

I am writing to you, care of *Only Paper Today*,* as a result of both the second issue of *Strike* and the “Letter Re:Strike” in the June issue. I wish to state that I do not approve of “leg shooting/knee capping” or other forms of murder or torture. Further, I feel that *Strike* generally reveals both a lack of sympathy for any sort of community (proletariat or otherwise), and a stance of radicality for its own sake.

One of the major results of late capitalist society is the division of radical activity into either a non-programmatic world of play (Hoffman and Rubin) or an extreme self-referential position of terrorism or terrorist support. Both are found on the left and right; both are dysfunctional; both obscure our relations to the life-world; both are capable of blinding and paralyzing us. (For example my article “Transcription & Annotations” — an attempt to deconstruct the regulatory tendencies of Marxism which result in concentration of populace, labor, death, etc. — of-

fered no reconstruction. The article is not play, but it offered no solutions. This, coupled with the negative contexting of *Strike*, creates an ambience of hopelessness, which I do not endorse. Hopelessness functions too often as an excuse for a lack of engagement.)

In *Strike* you have chosen symbols — the Red Brigades emblem, the machine-gun in an attempt, I believe, to emphasize a radicality based on a closed system bearing little relation to *Canada*, to the *Canadian people* — except that of external authority. Your term “behaviorist art” relates closely to behaviorist attitudes in psychology, attitudes which define the self in terms of controlled experimentation and manipulation.

It would seem therefore that you wish the establishment of authority, an autonomous group disconnected from desires except for the machinery of the language you employ.

This is to be regretted; you are politically astute and could *serve*. (I mean this in the sense of an inversion.) But such a service must be on the basis of recognition of the autonomy of the Other, a dialog. Paulo Freire states (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*): “But while to say the true word — which is work, which is praxis — is to transform the world, saying that word is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone — nor can he say it *for* another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words.” And again: “Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for men ... dialogue cannot exist without humility.”

Writing occurs; it is disseminated in the world; it exhausts itself against exactitude. I do not write, naturally enough, “in the service of.” I understand your stance elsewhere, as an explosive negativity at the periphery of culture. I would hope that positivity could also be found there, a reconstitution.

Further, I do not find the *subject*, in the sense of the Other in her/his interiority, at the center of *Strike*’s concerns. Instead, we tend to gravitate towards the rhetorical. I hope — now — for a grounding of our analyses and prescriptions in the *everyday* activities of collectivities and individuals, a grounding that parallels the *releasing* of our own languages from authority.

I wish to continue writing for *Strike*; I would also support its continued fund-

ing. It seems to me now, however, that it is becoming increasingly necessary to deal with concepts of community, support, education, and so forth. Perhaps I am tired of so much language, a negative vocabulary which no longer carries clear and intended meaning. Perhaps there is a need for a return to *women and men*.

With this in mind, I am now working on an educational institution dealing with both global/system and cultural concerns. There must be ways of avoiding critical and political catatonia. And penetration in these matters (and others) is always difficult.

Yours,

Alan Sondheim
Hartford, Connecticut

**As Only Paper Today, is temporarily absent during the summer, this letter was forwarded to Centerfold by OPT for publishing. (Ed.)*

CEAC and non-associates ...

First Letter

I would like to request the hospitality of your correspondence columns to clarify an extremely serious misunderstanding that has arisen in respect of my *apparent* relationship with the Toronto-based cultural group *Center for Experimental Art and Education* (C.E.A.C.). This group, as I am sure your readership is aware, have recently gone on record as supporting, from a cultural perspective, the political aims and tactics of the Italian anarchist organisation The Red Brigades. They are also currently engaged in a somewhat childish manifestations and "actions" in regard to the Venice Biennale.

I was recently surprised and dismayed to discover that an article of mine was reprinted in the C.E.A.C. journal *Strike* in such a manner as to suggest that I might personally endorse or support the recent statements and cultural policies of C.E.A.C. I wish to state publicly, and in as unequivocally a manner as possible, that I *do not in any way support* the adolescent, idiotic and manipulative platform adopted by Mr. Amerigo Marras and his colleagues.

I have never, through more than twenty years activity as an artist, a writer and a lecturer, disguised my commitment to both the theoretical and the praxical struggle to realise a more just and a more humane society based on socialist principles, nor do I wish it here thought that I have in any way altered my position during the recent past. But, surely, no-one who either knows me

personally (or who has read any of my books and published articles) can be in any doubt as to my basic and vehement disapproval of the type of infantile ultra-leftism revealed by Mr. Amerigo Marras in the statements and activities of C.E.A.C.

Nevertheless, the appropriate tactics of C.E.A.C. oblige me to issue this present disclaimer, since the appearance of my article *The Myth of the Artist as Rebel and Hero* was entirely unauthorised. The manner of its printing, furthermore, give rise to certain ambiguities, and it is clear that this was carefully calculated by Mr. Marras to suggest the existence of an ideological affinity between myself and the stated editorial position of C.E.A.C.

Mr. Marras can in no way have remained in any doubt, as the result of a conversation held last March, as to my fundamental opposition of the anarchistic platform now adopted by his group. The unauthorised printing of my article (and the use of my name without permission on the masthead of his journal in a manner that implies I am a non-editorial associate of *Strike*) demonstrates not merely that Mr. Marras has acted in the grossest of bad faith, but also that he is, personally, a devious opportunist of the crudest type who has attempted (and to some degree, succeeded) in capitalising upon the talents and the reputations of others for his own private and obscure ends.

I wish, therefore, to state, formally and categorically, that *there is no relationship whatsoever between myself and Mr. Marras and the C.E.A.C. group*, nor do I wish to be understood as condoning or supporting the politically immature idiocies that they habitually demonstrate. I have, naturally, demanded a clarification of this matter from the editors of *Strike*, and it remains to be seen whether this will be forthcoming or adequate. In the meantime, I would be grateful if you would be considerate enough to extend me the courtesy of a few column-inches of your letter page in order to publish this present statement.

Yours etc.,

Kenneth Courts-Smith.

Second Letter

Some time ago I mailed to you, at *Centerfold*, an open letter which has also been circulated to other press outlets regarding the attempt by Amerigo Marras to trade on whatever reputation

I might have as both a writer and a socialist, and to imply that I was a collaborator in the anarchistic political stance that has recently been adopted by C.E.A.C. My original letter still stands, but some more recent developments make it essential that my earlier statement be qualified somewhat.

There has been, during recent weeks, a wide response to C.E.A.C. both inside and outside of the art community. As you reported in the editorial of the last issue of *Centerfold*, several Canadian artists have circulated statements condemning the statements that were printed in *Strike* (volume 2, number 2, May 1978) and which I am sure are well known to your readership. The problem is that these artists have taken the position that C.E.A.C. has acted reprehensibly *in that it has acted politically*, and has done so, furthermore, with the aid of grant monies from both Canada Council and provincial funding agencies.

It should be made clear that my objection to C.E.A.C. and my wish to be disassociated from them does not lie in any such point of view. My objection is fundamentally to an infantile ultra-leftism, a totally uncritical and non-analytic anarchism masquerading as "socialism" which constitutes nothing other than egoistic and romantic posturing. My objections are also, to a lesser degree, directed towards the personally manipulative tactics of Amerigo Marras who, it seems, has a long history of attempting to build a reputation as an "activist" through extremely dubious manoeuvres.

It is necessary that I make it clear that my opposition to C.E.A.C. is not one that should be understood as being critical of art forms that take place as *political actions*. Quite the contrary: it is the quality, intent, and seriousness of the specific political actions that I am placing under question.

The response to the provocative statements in *Strike* that have appeared across the Canadian art-community have been largely based on the old liberal-humanist myth that art (and high culture generally) is a quasi-sacral activity which somehow takes place in a sort of extra-historical limbo, divorced from other manifestations of social and material culture, and that it embodies, in itself, certain absolute and timeless values independent of any social mutation or class struggle.

This notion of art, of course, represents one specific aspect that visual cul-

ture takes on in the continuum of the present stage of capitalism. It is an ideological assertion that the existing conditions of the present are the natural and fundamental ones basic to a postulated "human condition". It is not surprising, therefore, that spokesmen for the visual arts, especially ones making judgements from the perspectives of an increasing institutionalisation of culture, should be opposed to the notion that art might be a "political" activity. There is, of course, a certain logic in the proposition that public funds (that is to say, funds awarded by agents of the established political order) should not be used to contribute towards attempts to subvert that order. This thought reveals the fundamental contradictions that exist in the accepted and received notions about art in contemporary society, for the conventions of visual culture also maintain the primacy of the avant-garde tradition, a tradition dedicated in the past to the subversion of cultural order.

The present crisis in art is, to a large extent, the result of attempting to transcend this contradiction by maintaining the myth of the artist as rebel and hero while claiming at the same time that his activity is one that does not have any direct concern with such mundane things as social or "political" opinions, attitudes and assumptions.

It is quite evident that a continuing allegiance to an outmoded view of culture is a major factor contributing towards the erosion of significance, particularly in the field of the fine arts. It has centralised the notion that art is a purely formalistic activity akin to various fields of abstract academic inquiry, and has resulted, of course, in the rupture that presently exists between the world of the fine arts and that of the rest of the social community.

The breakdown of communication in art, the rarefaction of its activity from the mass of people, would seem to be directly related to process of exclusion of social and political material from its concerns. Whether art in the past has celebrated princely power, religious concepts, or "liberal" values it has always enshrined a collective view of society. It has only been during this century that the arts have tended to embody a privatized and individualistic world view. And even that has, until very recently, maintained elements of collective assumptions: futurism, constructivism, surrealism, abstract expressionism, all saw themselves as em-

bodiment of a social, and thus — ultimately — a *political*, perspective on human experience. The notion of the total a-historicity of art is a creation of the last two decades, and it has now long since run its course with the erosion of Greenbergian formalism.

At first glance a continuing adherence to this viewpoint appears only to risk irrelevancy in art, the survival of commercial imperatives towards the manufacture of sellable art-objects for the consumer market. However any further analysis reveals an extremely dangerous situation wherein the fine arts may tend towards being "politicised" in an unexpected and reactionary manner. Your editorial points out the dangers of self-censorship demonstrated by some of the responses to C.E.A.C. The refusal to recognise that all artistic activity is political in its very nature plays right into the hands of those who would wish art to reflect and confirm the consensus view of present-day capitalism.

Trudeau is already well along the road of attempting to equate in the public mind the consciousness of the Canadian national identity with the interests of the Liberal Party. Condemnations of artistic activity on the basis of the fact that it is *political* can only strengthen the inroads and assaults already being made on the autonomy of agencies such as the Canada Council by those conservative elements who would wish to see artistic culture even more severely institutionalised than it already is.

I echo the sentiment of your editorial urging C.A.R. to speak out in unequivocal opposition to statements that hold that art is an activity in which "political" ideas have no place. It is impossible that art should not be political. *The very act of making art is itself a political act.* The only judgement that can possibly be passed on C.E.A.C. from the point of view of the artistic community is that the art they make is bad art and the politics they espouse are stupid and infantile politics.

Yours etc...

Kenneth Coutts-Smith.

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from **Elizabeth Chitty's** performance **'DEMO MODEL'**. (to be documented in the November issue of **CENTERFOLD**)

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Centerfold, September 1978

Letters

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Please be both brief and concise to prevent the need for future editing. Feedback and comments of a longer length should be submitted as possible texts.



We wanted to thank you for your principled review of *Main Trend*. While we obviously have disagreements with some of C.R.'s points, he is to be commended for focusing on major issues instead of on the obvious problems of our first number.

Yours in struggle,

Loren Shumway
for the editorial committee
Main Trend, N.Y.C.

...As for censorship, it can only duck

Artists in Canada have been hit by a massive cutback in federal spending on the arts. Aside from the barely audible grumblings of various individual artists, the only organized response has taken the form of a 'day of protest' under the banner of *The 1812 Committee*. This misnamed group of arts organizations — from The Canadian Book Publishers Association to C.A.R. — puts forward as its main demand a public inquiry into the state of the arts, a demand that has been easily met by Ottawa mandarins since no qualifications were attached. CAR/Toronto, for its part, has sponsored a postcard contest and an evening of entertainment and 'protest', which received a mod-

erate attendance and a few postcards.

The cutbacks are serious as they affect all areas of the arts and especially when viewed in the general context of government cutbacks in public sector jobs, U.I.C. benefits, education, health and its moves to discredit or bust public sector unions. It is in this climate that the recent 'Censorship' issues, a topic in recent issues of *Centerfold*, should be seen. The two issues are inter-related and, unfortunately, the response to both, with a few exceptions, has been the same. The general mood among artists seems to be that things are simply returning to 'normal' after a period of 'enlightened liberation'. The CAR response, for example, reflects more than a simple political conservatism. This conservatism itself is based on a set of assumptions about the very nature of artists' social practice. What most artists fail to understand is that this social practice, and thus the creation of C.A.R. itself was made in response to the development of the Canada Council. That is; the organisations and practice of artists historically corresponded to the centralization and monopolization of cultural funding by the State. The organization and socialization of artists is a progressive development, but progressive only to the degree that artists are conscious of its social and political implications.

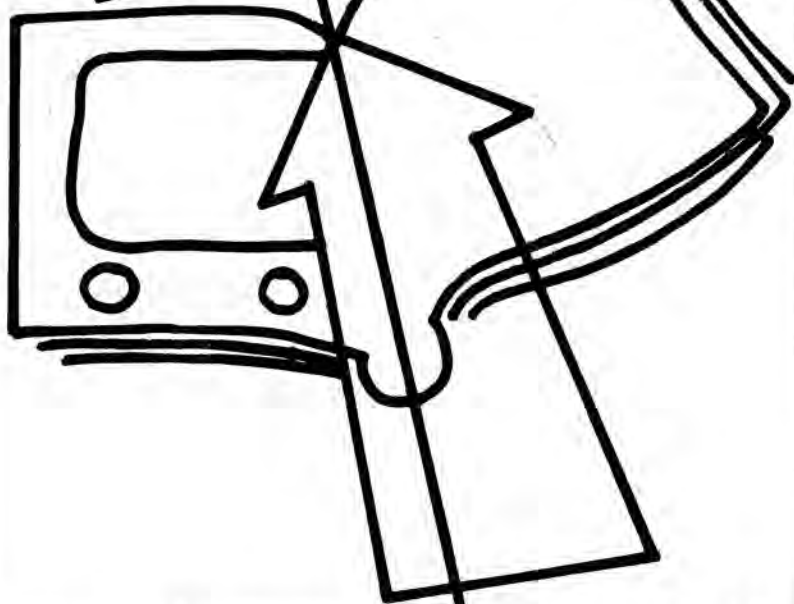
The relation of institutions such as the Canada Council to the social practice of art (including the actual forms of production) has never been adequately analyzed. Around the turn of the century the production of culture was split. 'Mass' culture, like industry, was monopolized; whereas 'high' culture was left operating under the principles of the earlier and already superceded forms of competitive capitalism, hence its increasing inability to express any relation to the real world, a function left to the manipulations of the mass media. High artists, thus denied any social access, turned their own subjectivity into 'reality' and aesthetics into metaphysics. This contradiction between the artists social practice and the social reality in which they worked had to be rationalized. To achieve this a number of social institutions (galleries, museums, magazines, etc.) were developed. But this in turn has given rise to another contradiction. As these institutions consolidated their mutual interests, even-

tually to be centred in the state, artists themselves were being socialized, mainly seen in terms of their common economic interests. But a bureaucracy such as the Council does not simply control cultural economics, but by virtue of controlling economics as well as rationalizing the social practice of artists it in fact determines what constitutes meaningful production. By making aesthetic criteria absolute, which in turn reinforces the sanctity of individualized competitive production and the 'freedom of expression', that is, the freedom to do nothing but to do it well, the bureaucracy can maintain effective control. By eliminating any social political content it eliminates any criticism of itself or the system it represents right at the productive base. The 'apolitical' artist becomes increasingly the 'aesthetic' victim of arbitrary corporate/state decisions. Censorship, as exercised against Pulp Press, Talon Books and CEAC, etc., is not an isolated or accidental occurrence, but is the explicitly political aspect of general economic control.¹ (The particular politics of CEAC, for example, is another issue. This isn't political liberalism. The infantile politics of CEAC should be dealt with in the community, not through the agencies of the state, which only enhances the state, at the expense of the community.)

At best an organization such as CAR, in maintaining an apolitical stance (if such a thing exists — apolitical means not upsetting the status quo), can only ask (beg?) for fair treatment, and this only in terms of token economic distribution. As far as federal government cutbacks are concerned it can only make noise;² as for censorship, it can only duck. Without recognizing its own social-political basis, without recognizing who in fact supports the production of culture — which is not the Council, but the mass of Canadians who create the necessary surplus value and who more obviously pay the taxes, without recognizing that these same people are also struggling against the state for decent living and working conditions, CAR can only end up becoming a reactionary lobbying group representing the most backward of artists.

CAR, or any other artists' organization can only be effective to the degree that they develop a political face, and to the degree that their politics are part of the broader political movements that can not only

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challenge but eventually change our present exploitative social economic system.

Karl Beveridge, Toronto

1. The fact that it emanated from the Federal House of Commons makes little difference, the Council had to act on it.
2. To think as CAR/FAC does that the Council was ever autonomous, when the majority of its funds come from federal tax revenues, is a joke.

A Space's Many Spaces

Since the last issue of *Centerfold* appeared, complete with summaries of A Space's past and possible futures, a new board of directors and a new staff have laid the preliminary groundwork for a new future, not only for A Space, but for Toronto: the establishment of a 'Museum without a Collection'. The museum is, of course, A Space itself.

Elsewhere in this issue we are advertising for a new A Space Executive Director who will research and implement this project. We hope to have the new Director chosen and working by the middle of January.

In the meantime we are using A Space primarily as an organizing office through which artists' projects can be executed, publicized and disseminated into the city at large, whether this be through radio or television broadcast, use of public spaces, use of other institutions, or use of the streets and urban environment. We are hoping, with this new emphasis, to reach a broader public, who we feel are now ready to experience the work that A Space has always supported in the past. This also allows us to cut overhead expenses and put a greater proportion of our budget into artists' fees.

With this in mind the following projects are now underway:

1. Ben Holzberg's *Rolling Landscape* project will once again bring an extensive photography exhibit into the subway system. This year the project will be much more visible, occupying billboard panels in the stations. The TTC has promised us high traffic locations and we are asking them to rotate the show several times.

2. Susan Harrison's series of writers' readings and workshops began with William Burroughs at Cinema Lumiere last month. The two additional workshops were sold out. Other writers will be coming to Toronto in 1979.

Centerfold, December 1978

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which rarely allocate money for payment of exhibiting artists; the idea being that the staff needs to be paid in money, artists can exist on acknowledgment. A friend who recently exhibited ten years of work at a highly acclaimed New York museum was paid \$75 during the month that her work was being exhibited. Likewise, funding institutions do not really support the arts in this culture. When one traces the allocations of arts monies one finds that it generally rests in the pockets of bureaucrats, administrators, landlords. Rarely do artists directly benefit from arts funding. This year the NEA awarded 127 individual grants to artists throughout the United States. In terms of the thousands who applied, and the hundreds of thousands of artists working in this country, this is not even tokenism.

The sad price of all this is the frustration the artists face when they continue to believe that there is support for the arts in this culture, and the frustration non-artists feel when trying to understand contemporary work. Art schools continue to crank out generation after generation of aspiring young artists striving for the carrot of *Art Forum* and New York, New York. As long as artists have a stake in being recognized in terms of the prevailing art structure they are not free to make potent statements. As long as they continue to aspire to an insular system which dictates validity and inhibits real exchange they cannot speak out, cannot freely develop new content, new form.

The horrible result of the prevailing mythology is that art has become decoration in most sectors where meaning is secondary to benign indifference. Once artwork has been appropriated by the 'high art' sector, it usually loses any kind of political communication it might have embodied.

There is an amorphous feeling among artists that we are in the middle of a powerful change, the form of the change as yet unclear. More and more artists are feeling that they must begin to act in their own behalf, represent themselves, speak and function as an integral part of this culture. It is a time when all living feeling people, including artists, must join together, say what they feel, require communication and meaning from people, institutions and art in their environment.

Sheila Pinkel
Santa Monica, California

"... incestual practices?"

I quote from your Fall '78 issue, AA Bronson's scurrilous and opportunistic attack on me particularly and on the then current administrative function of A Space.

Mr. Bronson berates certain incestual practices thusly: "A Space has always hired friends, for power, personal promotion, goodwill or just because someone needed the money. Often firing took the form of personal vendettas, in which relationships eroded until someone was forced to quit. The complex web of politics and favours that resulted has been a prime factor in A Space's murder mystery staffing. The Board of Directors clearly demonstrated their support of that system."

One would think, after reading this, that Mr. Bronson revels at such activities; and yet, in the mail yesterday comes the not very surprising announcement that the new Exec. Director of A Space is Peggy Gale; this after months of charade and public appeals for applications for the job. Ms. Gale, for the past four years, has run the video program at Art Metropole, only one of Mr. Bronson's (financially troubled?) many 'holdings' in the arts community. *Centerfold* readers who happened upon my two editorials in recent issues of *Only Paper Today* and found them vindictive, and unnecessarily whining in dealing with this audacious conspiracy, please take note.

The controlled mediocrity and outright conservatism exemplified in Ms. Gale's appointment should be loudly objected to by any artist sincerely concerned about the entrenchment of this clique in Canada's oldest so-called 'alternative' arts center.

Victor Coleman
Toronto

The next CENTERFOLD

... will contain a special report on Venezuela Video and Television, articles on English Performance Art, a serious appraisal of Women and Infanticide, Video Reception in the Deep South, a critical analysis on the recent tapes of Lisa Steele, plus essays, reviews and reports.

APRIL/MAY 1979

Note to new readers: see Centerfold, vol. 2, nos. 4, 5 and 6 for the groundwork of this continuing correspondence and related material.

... Coutts-Smith was in Toronto so we met.

Contemporary art has reduced itself to such an extreme state of internalization that it is completely incapable of producing anything but form. Even when meaning is present it is only a blatant pretext for appearance. Correlatively practicing artists are equally unable to see anything outside of art for its meaning, but see it only as posture, themselves capable of no more.

We rejected the present art context and art maneuvers, addressing ourselves directly to our social reality with explicit meaning. The insatiable appetite of the avant-garde tradition forces it to look beyond art for new material, but only to draw these new elements into art and aestheticize them in the process. We rejected the present art context to be able to achieve some relevancy to material reality rather than emasculate it. We do not have the myopic view of culture as something wholly embodied by art, but see cultural production as "developed entirely from social necessity and dependent on the division of labour and the degree of culturalization achieved by individuals of a particular society. Beside producing all means of subsistence and history, human kind produces culture, that is everything that can be defined as the total sum of experiences lived in a society's historical becoming" (Marx, *German Ideology*).

The local art community's autistic inability to perceive of anything as more than appearance, and their vested interests in ignoring our statements that our work is directed outside of art to an expanded sense of culture, led to their, on the whole, distorted and prejudiced view of *Strike*.

Since it's inception as a conscious movement, the left has been chronically weakened when at each historical conjuncture reformist or revisionist factions drew away from its radical intentions and created a schism. This occurs so regularly that a permanent dichotomy seems to exist of reformist and radical. The former is characterized by: a position of self-interest that shifts according to which way the winds blow, a continual appeal to "responsible action"

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(i.e. action within the existing structure), and a denigration of more radical elements by name-calling. The pattern is always the same—countries like France or Italy have the Communist Party and Canada has Coutts-Smith.

As Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto: "The socialist bourgeois wants all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements."

Recently yet another example of process of fracture of the left by reformists who shift their position for their own self-interest and fear of confrontation, is still going on. Coutts-Smith's letters to *Strike* when compared before and after the controversy of *Strike 3* are a good illustration. We present segments of two of his letters to us.

After initially contacting us for a subscription, several letters went back and forth on the possibility of working together, one of his letters including an unsolicited manuscript of what was later published in *Strike*. On March 15, 1978, Coutts-Smith was in Toronto so we met. At this meeting many things were said including *Strike*'s position against official communism and its support for the Red Brigades. After this meeting Coutts-Smith wrote to us once again. March 25, 1978

"Dear Amerigo and Comrades. . . This is just to say how stimulated I was to meet you all the other day in Toronto. I have been thinking a lot about the conversations we had, and the possibility we discussed of my contributing to *Strike*. It's early yet (I've only been mulling it over and not started any written work or notes), but it occurs to me that it might be more interesting for me to write (not on sociological art in general terms), but to try and define some aspects of the analytical parameters and cultural strategies that are demanded by the present social and political conditions as they appear to me. This, obviously, will be a personal statement. But it might become the basis for a collective process of dialogue and debate."

Then, however, *Strike 3* came out and the press began its campaign of sensationalism used by the government to induce a hysteria that would make their censorship of us seem justified. Grants were cut off, people

associated with C.E.A.C. lost personal grants and jobs, the RCMP began investigations, and Coutts-Smith began writing.

July 3, 1978

"Dear Mr. Marras,

. . . I was extremely surprised to discover that you have printed the article *The Myth of the Artist as Rebel and Hero* at all, since at the end of our discussion some months ago I did not agree to a collaboration with C.E.A.C. (he means *Strike*).

" . . . any collaboration between C.E.A.C. and myself was conditional upon my being satisfied that there was a genuine common ground between us.

"At the end of our discussion, my criticism and my personal reservations were based on the first issue of *Strike* published in January of this year as well as on the remarks passed at our meeting. These in no way declared an extreme anarchist position, merely an ill-digested and uninformed (indeed illiterate) understanding of socialism. At no time whatsoever, either then, or later by consultation, did you hint to me that you expected me to support, encourage or condone an infantile anarchist platform of solidarity with the idiocies of the Red Brigades."

You are already aware of his other letters published in the same tone in your magazine. We haven't bothered to give credence to such slander by acknowledging it, but we surface now, at this late date, because of Coutts-Smith's relentless accusations against us that he continues to publish in almost every possible art periodical in Canada.

A final word: *Strike* is not C.E.A.C. As we have said repeatedly, though *Strike* was born out of C.E.A.C. and at one time some of the membership of these two organizations overlapped, like all other organizations that have come out of C.E.A.C., *Strike* was and is only responsible to itself as an independent body. For many months now it has been legally, financially, physically separate from C.E.A.C. Furthermore, Amerigo Marras is not a prominent member of *Strike*. *Strike* is a collective in the real sense of the word with all its members contributing at all levels from concept, to writing, to layout, to packing the mail. Any comments or business should be directed to the collective.

Yours,

The Strike Collective

An Index of Artwork in Audio Format

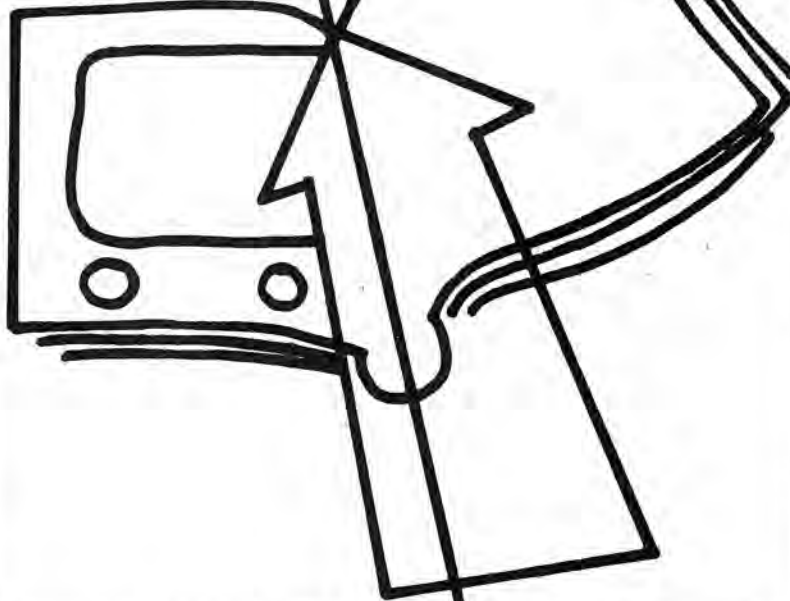
Request for information

Cyne Cobb and Ian Murray are preparing an index of all visual artists' works published in the form of record or audio tape. The index will appear as a special supplement to *Centerfold*, vol. 3, no. 5.

An updated and more complete index will be published at a later date. Any information on tapes or records which should be included in such an index will be appreciated. Our deadline for completion of the index is May 10th, 1979.

Where possible, we would like the artist's name; title of the work; date of the work, if different from date of publication; acoustic format (i.e. stereo or mono); reproduction format (i.e. LP; cassette tape, etc.); any noise reduction process (i.e. Dolby, dBX, etc.); the size of edition; is the edition signed and/or numbered?; package features or additional material; publisher and distributors; price. Send to: Murray/Cobb, 749 Queen St. W., Toronto M6J 1G1.

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Letters

... it would be easy to throw Lenin back at them.

I stand absolutely in awe before the thought that the *Strike* collective considers me a threat towards the emergent currents of revolutionary consciousness in this country analogous to that posed in Europe by one million Italian and four-point-seven-five million French "revisionist" proletarians.*

Their letter above, which demonstrates an almost total confusion as to the meaning and role of the visual arts in society, that is to say, in either the present bourgeois or any future socialist one (what on earth, for instance, does the first paragraph actually mean?) and which relies upon a superficial vulgar-marxist manipulation of texts (the quote from the *German Ideology* is blatantly wrenched out of context) also demonstrates the basis for the reservations that I felt concerning a putative collaboration with either *Strike* or C.E.A.C.

These reservations were originally based on a perusal of the first issue of *Strike* and on the March meeting cited above, and they resulted from an assessment on my part (a false one as it turned out) that the "collective" which was forming itself early last year was groping towards the development of a genuine marxist interpretation of artistic activity, but was as yet hindered by simple inexperience and a lack of analytic skills as a result of unfamiliarity with the broad corpus of marxist culture. The programme proposed by C.E.A.C. at that time for a counter-university seemed promising in this regard.

However, the subsequent issues of *Strike* revealed (as does also, quite clearly, the collective's present letter) that they quickly settled for romantic posturing and the manipulation in bad-faith of a superficially understood and dogmatic reading of marxist "scripture". The latter is here evident in the formularistic appeal to an absolute and reified textural authority which is re-moulded to suit the occasion at hand.

In no way can the mis-quoting of Marx and the deliberate mystification springing from that action, be charitably understood as stemming from a simple misunderstanding or unfamiliarity with socialist theory. The authors of this letter cannot be unaware that Marx was speaking of "culture" in the sense of the totality of human social constructs and not

Letters

in terms of the subsidiary meaning commonly ascribed to high culture: the concretization of a class ideology. The only alternative to deliberate bad-faith is sheer stupidity. A socio-political analysis on the level of Plekhanov will get us no place other than warming the egos of romantic sectarianism.

It seems that the *Strike* collective's self-view also demands the revision of history. Certainly, the first contact between *Strike* and myself was initiated by my taking out a subscription to the journal. (That, however, hardly constitutes a validation: I also subscribe to *Canadian Forum* and *Encounter* — I have even been known to read the *National Enquirer*!) My interest in a subscription immediately elicited a letter from *Strike* commissioning an article on the subject of Sociological Art.

At no time did I send them an "unsolicited manuscript" as is claimed. The text that they printed was one of several off-prints of articles that I donated to the C.E.A.C. archives on my one and only visit to that institution; the question of publication or non-publication was left open. However, readers of my earlier position in this controversy will remember that my objection was to the manner in which this article was printed in *Strike* and its juxtaposition with the famous "provocative" editorial which suggested that I was personally and ideologically in accord with the voluntarist and romantic stance adopted by the third issue of *Strike*.

I take some exception to the present implication that I am somehow engaged in mounting a campaign justifying censorship against *Strike* and C.E.A.C. As *Strike* is aware, I protested to them on July 3rd (in the letter which they quote) immediately upon receiving a copy of *Strike* 3, which was before there was any controversy that I was aware of. On that very date I also sent an open letter to several journals in order to disassociate myself from what I regarded as "infantile leftism". (In parenthesis, if *Strike* wishes to bandy texts, it would be easy to throw Lenin back at them.) It is perhaps unfortunate that some of these journals (I am only aware of three, incidentally, not "every possible periodical") published four or five months after receiving the letter, that is to say, after the *Strike* affair became a matter of public debate

and repressive action.

The *Centerfold* readership will be aware that my objections were to the particular anarchist position adopted and not to an artistic activity and cultural analysis that aims to ensure the supplantation of the capitalist world-view with a socialist one. As to the question of censorship through the control of grants, through the withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of public patronage, I believe (and I have frequently maintained) that this is one of the most monstrous aspects of the present relationship of artistic production.

No matter what my own personal feelings might be towards the content of *Strike* — C.E.A.C. activity, it is evident that they are a significant feature of the Toronto cultural scene. If representatives of the museum-critical complex have seen fit to award grants on what is presumably understood to be the criteria of artistic merit and then subsequently withdraw these grants under political pressure, then this action should be most vigorously protested. There should not be any co-relation between polemics within the left of the artistic community and relationships between the artistic community as a whole and the institutions of patronage.

Opposing *Strike*'s ideas and silencing their (and C.E.A.C.'s) activity are two entirely different things. Such opposition does not inevitably declare an alliance with the yapping mongrels of the gutter press, or with reactionary politicians. Nevertheless it is necessary to declare and struggle for *Strike* — C.E.A.C.'s right to exist. If Canada Council did withdraw patronage as a political act, which seems to be the case, then the whole artistic community should demand that the relevant facts (including minutes of meetings in which decisions were made) should be made public.

One last thought, — a consideration inseparable from the emerging and powerful current of socio-political consciousness in the arts: it is not in the least bit surprising that any real cultural provocation of the ideology of bourgeois liberalism should reveal the shark's teeth that are habitually obscured beneath the platitudes of humanism. To expect otherwise is to be impossibly naive. One can hardly expect the institutions of bourgeois culture to consciously

finance their own demise.

Kenneth Coutts-Smith
Toronto

*The Communist vote during the 1978 elections.

The editors reserve the right to agree or disagree with any or none of the letters published.

CENTERFOLD

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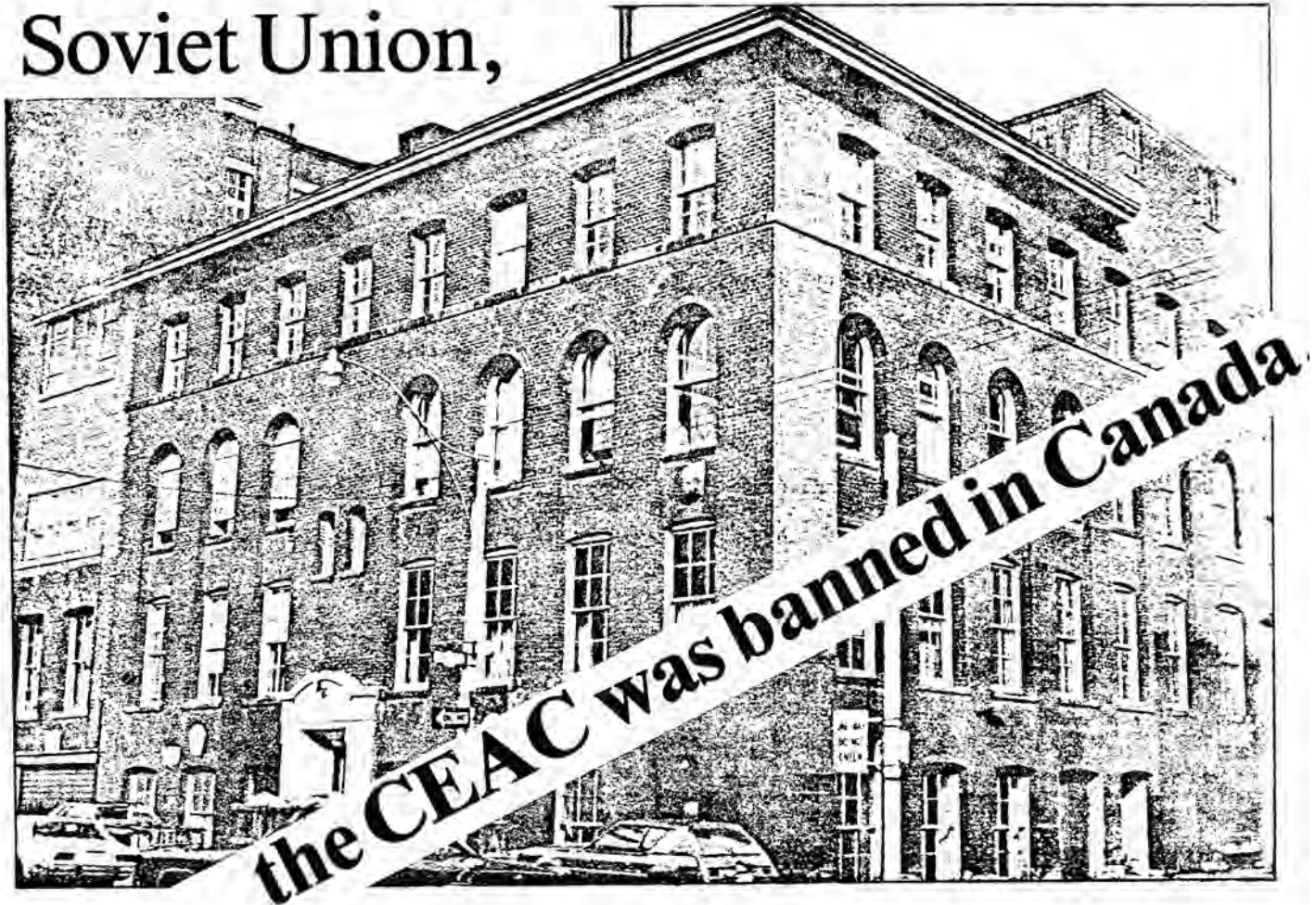
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as the constructivists were in the
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S The Body Politic

- page 388 Advertisement: Body Politic Free the Press Fund, *File 4:1* (Summer 1978), 60.
- page 389 "Editorial," *Centerfold 3:3* (February/March 1979), 81.
- page 391 Vera Frenkel, "Performance at the Benefit," *Centerfold 3:3* (February/March 1979), 104.
- page 392 Tim Guest, "'Politic Performances Provide...,'" *Centerfold 3:3* (February/March 1979), 105.

See also ...

- page 021 AA Bronson, "Automotons/Automorons," in *Performance by Artists*, eds. AA Bronson and Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979), 291–300.
- page 163 Clive Robertson, "Consenting Adults: General Idea at Carmen Lamanna Gallery," *Centerfold 3:4* (April/May 1979), 193–96.
- page 320 Tom Sherman, "Editorial" *Centerfold 3:4* (April/May 1979), 148–49.
- page 364 Clayton C. Ruby, "Letters: ... the Flavour and Meaning of the Trial ...," *Centerfold 3:4* (April/May 1979), 146.
- page 370 Robert MacDonald, "Our Taxes Aid 'Blood-Thirsty' Radical Paper," *The Toronto Sun* (5 May 1978).
- page 373 "Letters: 'Authorized' and 'Unauthorized' Art" *Centerfold 2:6* (September 1978), 73–75.

**If you have ever subscribed
to a magazine
the police could get your name.
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**They have the names of
all the subscribers to *The
Body Politic*.**

They have the names of people who used to be subscribers — but let their subscription lapse. They have copies of manuscripts for future publication. They have letters to the editor. They have two office rubber stamps. They have the mail that was in the out-tray on December 30, 1977 — the day five officers of the Toronto Police and the Ontario Provincial Police raided the office of *The Body Politic* and left with 12 shipping crates of material.

Why?

They have said that the material will be used as evidence to support two charges which have been laid against the paper. Both charges relate to allegations concerning the distribution of "obscene" material.

Rubber stamps.

Letters to the editor.

The names and addresses of anyone who subscribed to *The Body Politic* over the last few years.

Worried?

So are we.

So are a lot of other people.

"What the police did at *The Body Politic* last December would cause a national scandal if it occurred at a 'recognized' publication." — *The Edmonton Journal*, lead editorial, February 27, 1978.

"A blatant attempt at old-fashioned state censorship has been depressing us lately. ... We agree with *TBP* lawyer Clayton Ruby that the raid was illegal in its scope and a deliberate attempt to shut down a Canadian newspaper." — *Books in Canada*, "Notes and Comments," February, 1978.

"This looks like an attempt to cripple or close down the paper before it has been convicted of anything... It's a precedent that threatens freedom of the press..." — Robert Nielsen, *The Toronto Star*, March 29, 1978.

"The Canadian Civil Liberties Association is very concerned about the rather substantial search and seizure ... at the offices of *The Body Politic* ..." — Alan Boravoy, in a letter to the Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police, January 5, 1978.

The Body Politic is Canada's national gay newsmagazine. It has been publishing regularly for more than six years. The raid prompted protest demonstrations in Toronto, Vancouver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Melbourne, London and Copenhagen. It drew letters of condemnation from gay people the world over, and from individuals in publishing, broadcasting and politics.

And it concerns you. The 'climate' in Canada is changing. Or being made to

change. And what the authorities describe as efforts to protect the citizenry begin to resemble infringements on some pretty basic civil liberties. It started with *The Body Politic*. It's moved on to *Pretty Baby* — the award-winning movie that can't be shown in Ontario because the Board of Censors has banned it. And it continues through the almost daily revelations of police crimes — crimes, according to sociologist Richard Henshel, "for which ordinary citizens go to prison."

Names on a subscription list have nothing to do with obscenity charges — whatever their merits. It is a clear attempt to intimidate subscribers to a magazine whose politics don't quite meet the tastes of the present provincial government.

It began with *The Body Politic*. There's no reason why it couldn't happen to the magazine you're reading now.

Your help is needed. The publishers of *TBP* are bidding to test the legality of the search warrant in the Supreme Court of Canada. That's an expensive battle ground. The trial on the actual obscenity charges is also expected to be long and costly.

The Body Politic Free the Press Fund has been set up to bring the issue before the public, and to raise the money that will be needed. Lawyer Lynn King has agreed to administer the fund in trust. All donations can be used only for the legal defence — none can go to cover operating expenses of *The Body Politic*.

Your donation would be greatly appreciated. By us, by the people at *The Body Politic*, and by all people who still believe in the freedom to think for themselves.

Make cheques payable to: Lynn King in trust for The Body Politic. *Mail to:* Cornish, King, Sachs and Waldman, 111 Richmond St. W., Suite 320, Toronto, ON, M5H 3N6.

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♂ **THE BODY POLITIC TRIAL** ♀



Editorial

As we go to press the final decision in *The Body Politic* trial (our cover story) is still a week away. Why are we publishing such a long, detailed account of *The Body Politic* trial and associated media coverage in an artists' magazine? There are many reasons. *Centerfold* has previously printed articles from the artistic community related to matters of impending or implied censorship. This trial — a test case, in that there have been no other trials exactly like this — was taking place within blocks of where we work and allowed us to test our capability of including news stories within an artists' magazine; to explore the actuality of what had been a theoretical intuition in the past. Stemming from self-educative motivations, it quickly became apparent that *The Body Politic* trial required a method of research and analysis demanding a collective approach. This was in itself an unplanned but rewarding step for the magazine to take. In the next issue we will tell you the Court's decision, but as Clive Robertson reports in his preface to the trial coverage "... even if Pink Triangle Press (publishers of *The Body Politic*) are acquitted, while it would be a major and significant victory there is nothing to stop the process repeating itself." The outcome is important, of course, but it is the process that we must observe to begin to understand the kinds of social control that can be applied against any outspoken group. We have chosen to print this in-depth document of *The Body Politic* trial along with a detailed summation of the media coverage in order to illustrate how newspapers and television release (and often distort) information to a non-participating public which most of the time includes us all.

In this same spirit we are printing Patricia Gruben's examination of censorship as it applies to feminists, focusing specifically on the activities of Women Against Violence Against Women and their battle on the streets and in the media against the commercialized plunder of women as victims. As Gruben says, the internal politicization of a group (here WAVAW) through protest is important, but ultimately the case must be taken to the public. This involves not only effective presentation by the group, what Gruben calls being "media-wise", but also assumes that as any issue becomes more clearly defined it will find its voices of intelligent examination and criticism.

We also include an in-depth look at Susan Britton's new videotapes. Britton's work, by the very nature of its questioning of political structures, is important to examine as content rather than for purely formalistic

concerns; the ambiguities and questions are revealed rather than solved. As video grows up, we can come to assume as viewers that the tapes we are seeing will be well-structured and well-produced: Britton's certainly are this. More importantly we can also expect that the tapes will argue and create controversy; and so cutting down the distances between what has been labelled 'political', 'social' and 'personal'.

Tom Sherman and Carole Conde address the nature of this distance (or lack of it) very directly in articles written for this issue. Conde presents purely autobiographical material in the larger context of political action, through conversation on a picket line. Sherman asks:

"... how does the artist see his or her role in terms of the delivery of an information that could be very useful to others?" and the question of artist as reporter is introduced; reporter in the strictly journalistic sense and also in the general sense of information transfer — from the very private to the most public. Touching the news, directly.

This issue also sees a statement about collectivity as it is functioning at Powerhouse, a women's gallery in Montreal, and John Anderson's aspirations for *The Gina Show*, a cable tv artists' video program in Vancouver.

Other new contributors in this issue, Elizabeth Vanderzaag, Karl Beveridge, Hank Bull, A.S.A. Harrison, Stephen Osborne and C.K. Tomczak present a variety of articles and reviews. And *Time Magazine* puts in a bid on the Academy Award for Best New Screenplay Based on

Already Existing Material with their letter to *Centerfold* re: 'copyright infringement'. (Remember *File*? We do.)

If you sense a change in *Centerfold* in a way you're right. But to us it seems more of an evolution. We are going to continue reviewing the work of artists and we are also going to continue publishing developments in artists' journalism.

And if you sense a more 'high profile', 'hard sell' approach to our subscription requests, you're right there too. *Centerfold* needs subscribers.

LISA Steele

Lisa Steele



Publishers Note :

You may have noticed that the cover price of *Centerfold* has dropped from \$2.00 to \$1.95. This is our marketing move. We want this magazine to be on newsstands and that's one way to do it. Also, if you are wondering where Vol. 3, No. 2 of *Centerfold* went to, it is really part of Vol. 3, No. 1. Which is to say that the special "Tele-Performance" Issue is really Nos. 1 & 2.

Performance at the Benefit

Fighting exile from exile

by VERA FRENKEL

The three highly public occasions in the past decade in Toronto in which artists joined hands with each other and with others to raise money by supporting, through their work what they cared about, were, in order of ascending political consciousness:

1) The Robert Markle Benefit. It was organized at the Masonic Temple (then called the Rock Pile) by Gord Rayner and friends. Bob had had a motorcycle accident. His hands were in braces. He couldn't paint. There were doctors' bills. The community took care of business in a wry, dry, tough and humorous way. It was a great party, and unsentimental.

2) S.S.S.O.C.C. (The Stop Spadina, Save Our City, Committee). Organized by Alan Powell, a street-wise advocate sociologist, SSSOCC approached all the artists who worked in the area threatened by the proposed Spadina Expressway — I was one of them — to open our studios to the public at a dollar a head. The money went to the campaign. The day was financially successful and achieved a propaganda victory for the rich sub-culture we stood to lose. A poster campaign by these same artists was planned. The posters worked well. Davis' historic speech cancelling part of the project, appeared in the press within a year.

3) The Mike Goldrick election in Ward 3. Goldrick was a reform candidate fighting in a bought-and-sold area. Four artists, (Barker Fairly, Robert Markle, Michael Snow, me), were invited, again by Alan Powell, to contribute drawings to a portfolio that would be sold in signed and unsigned editions to raise money for the election campaign. The original works and the careful reproductions were displayed together at the Isaacs Gallery. Thousands of dollars were raised. The artists got five copies each of the signed works. Goldrick was voted in and people danced at City Hall election night. (Powell who single-handedly created a potent relation between art and community politics in Toronto was later denied

tenure at U. of T. by his more "detached" colleagues.)

4) The *Body Politic* benefit. Though the issues were more sharply defined, and the threats and promises more evident, the occasion was still one of collective action to support private freedoms and a humane environment, which includes freedom of the press.

The recruitment of artists to support such concerns is not surprising. (Though one only has to remember Leni Riefenstahl to understand that each team has its cheerleaders, some of them clever.) The performers, in order of appearance: General Idea, Randy & Berneche, Lisa Steele, Marien Lewis (with Andy Patterson), Clive Robertson and The Clichettes.

The *Body Politic* benefit was aptly staged at the U. of T. Faculty of Education auditorium at Bloor and Spadina. Whatever whiff of irony was attached to the selection of place, in the present climate of the city, it vanished swiftly during an evening of unusual warmth and intensity. We were educated by a simultaneity of feeling, intelligence and artistic achievement made the more poignant for occurring consciously at the edge of risk — though I don't think anyone, participants or observers, could have predicted the craziness that ensued in the press and in demonstrations during the following week.

However, the opposite of craziness was the case at the Faculty of Education auditorium on January 3. The level of dignity, moral courage and seriousness in both performers and audience was rare. In the reception of the works performed was a kind of open trust that artists long for and don't get often. I don't mean stolid, humourless appraisal. I mean that the laughter was apt and the sentiment was real and, during bewildering moments, the meanings were sought after.

The trust, of course, came from the time-honoured rush of symbiosis: audience members clearly felt, 'This is especially for us! The artists care! Each is bringing us his/her

lifetime of talent! They deserve our attention.' And on the part of the artists the feeling: 'We are useful. We are potent. Our strange and quirky and ingrown talent is a grown-up weapon after all. We can be whole in the world; angry and loving in a single gesture; we are being heard! We matter.'

At least that's how it felt from the back of the hall.

It can't be forgotten that a common enemy does great things for an audience and closed circuit pleasures of that kind do occur when people fight together. And perhaps what was at work at the benefit was a kind of Garden-of-Eden sense of a world we're all exiled from; a world in which gays and straights can work together towards sanity. Walking out into one of the coldest nights so far this winter, my main feeling, second only to enthusiasm for the quality and general tightness of the performances, was a wistfulness that it couldn't last. That the rapport was temporary; that we don't know yet how to bring about the fullness of such exchanges without, it seems, some form of oppression; that serious artists in our culture are in exile, from each other as well as from the rest of the population; that trust has calcified and suspicion has taken its place.

That a gay publication is under fire simply expresses a norm. And that artists would be useful while still being true to their personal visions expresses an exception.

Vera Frenkel, Toronto, is an artist and a frequent contributor to *ArtsCanada*. She teaches at York University.

photos: Robin Collier



above: Clichettes, below: Lisa Steele.





above: Berneche, below: Randy.



below: Marien Lewis, Andy Patterson.



left: Clive Robertson, right: General Idea.



'Politic Performances Provide...

The Right Context

by TIM GUEST

The political effectiveness of artworks is not a new problem, rather it's one which has been, over the years, over-discussed. Taken from a variety of abstract angles, critics, artists, and intellectuals have attempted to hammer out a device, a theory, in order to get a grip on an objective reality and transform it. If my thoughts here seem impressionistic compared to that (grandiose) debate, it's because I operate from a more subjective viewpoint, generalizing outwards from my own experience.

Given this, I found the artists' performances at *The Body Politic* Rally on the evening of Jan. 3rd quite refreshing. Taking place between several rousing speeches (including one by Mayor John Sewell which received national news coverage and heated-up local papers for a week) each performance was approximately 3 minutes long, falling one after another.

General Idea presented slides and dialogue, images of corpses on the operating table, masking tape framing the location of desire — nipples, ass, genitals, combined with a risky dialogue on sexuality and social control.

Randy and Berneche performed *Yellow Journalism**, Berneche wailing headlines while Randy interpreted their mythology, ending with the proverbial/sensational pie-in-the-face.

Lisa Steele then rushed onstage in welfare mother drag, pyjamas and

wet hair, smoking Matinees, telling a rambling story, well it was more like an excuse, about how her daughter murdered her baby, and by implication, about familial crime.

After a big entrance scene, Marien Lewis chit-chatted on a range of favourite topics, centering on, if I remember correctly, Canada at war with outer space. Leading the audience through a maze of anecdotes, occasionally coming close to some horrible *faux pas*, but then reeling everyone back with unexpected bits of charm, it was an exercise in spontaneity, in the most positive sense. Accompanied by Andy Patterson, she finished off with a personal theme song, *Universal Love (it's not a muscle)*.

Clive Robertson read/chanted a sound poem to the tune of a rhythm ace, composed mainly out of cut-up sentences from *The Body Politic*.

The Clichettes provided the finale, in bee-hive wigs and white vinyl miniskirts, they strutted their way through their now-famous lip-sync rendition of *You Don't Own Me*.

Without being reduced to 'entertainment' or 'propaganda', each artist dealt in a different way with the issues at hand: censorship, social control, sexual liberation (the love theme). The audience, who were by and large unfamiliar with the material, used these themes as reference points. And because they were then identifiable, the performances (however esoteric) came off with an unusual amount of clarity and resonance.

Finally what can be said is that the performances were effective not just because they were interesting and well-executed, but because they found an audience — an audience which responded well to new ideas because their own notions of the world were changing. The creation of such an audience depends on the social climate, which is unpredictable. In a larger sense you can't make art effective without the right context, and the context depends on history. ■

*See *Centerfold*, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 46-9.

Tim Guest is a contributor to the *Body Politic* and *Centerfold* and works at Art Metropole.

