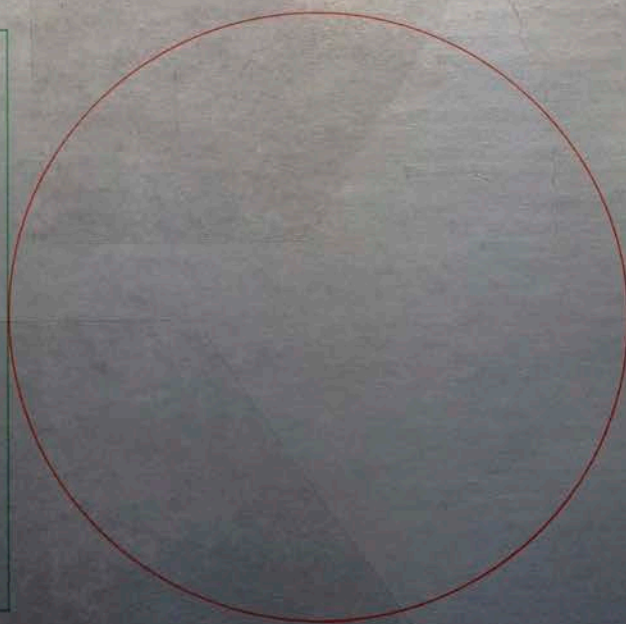


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to Read

Poetry to be Seen

Museum of Contemporary Art



WITH NATIONAL
POETRY READING
SERIES
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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237 East Ontario Street
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Pictures to be Read - Poetry to be Seen

An exhibition organized by the
Museum of Contemporary Art
Chicago

October 24-December 3, 1967

1967
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Pictures
to be read

Poetry
to be seen



Shozo Arakawa
Marcel Broodthaers
Mary Ruefle
George Swartz

Oyvind Fahlström
Ray Johnson
Allan Kaprow
R. B. Kila

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Alison Knowles
James Null
Gianni-Emlio Simonetti
Wolf Vostell

Pictures to be Read/Poetry to be Seen

An exhibition organized by the
Museum of Contemporary Art
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October 24–December 3, 1967

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James Nutt
Gianni-Emilio Simonetti
Wolf Vostell

Acknowledgments

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Contemporary Art, I would like to thank the many individuals who assisted in the organization of the museum's opening exhibition "Pictures to be Read/Poetry to be Seen."

I am grateful to the artists whose works are shown in this exhibition and to their galleries, Dwan, Cordier & Ekstrom, Bonino, Fischbach, Sidney Janis, Marlborough Graphics, New York, Richard Feigen, New York and Chicago, and Galleria Schwarz, Milan, who cooperated with us in every possible way. Special thanks are due to Allan Kaprow and Alison Knowles for reconstructing or setting up their works in Chicago as an integral part of the exhibition as well as to

Mr. and Mrs. D. Franklin Königsberg, Mr. W. M. Bollenbach, Jr., and Mr. Dick Higgins for granting essential loans from their private collections. Mr. William S. Wilson graciously permitted us to reprint an essay on Alison Knowles which he wrote for *Décollage* 6, Cologne, 1967. Miss Barbara Berman, Assistant Curator of the Pasadena Art Museum communicated the biographic and bibliographical data she prepared for the current Kaprow retrospective. Mrs. Stephen Goldman helped on the research of artists' bibliographies.

For cooperation in all aspects of the exhibition and catalogue I wish to thank Karin Carlson. She shared with me the task of organizing a complex show under difficult circumstances. Her skill and dedication have been essential to the success of this effort.

The catalogue design and other graphics related to the exhibition were in the able hands of Sherman Mutchnick. The museum's image, all those months during which there was neither building nor program, has been largely determined by its graphics. It was our good fortune to have Mr. Mutchnick's professional services available to us.

In the typesetting and printing of this catalogue we were aided by the generous cooperation of Bertsch and Cooper and Wilmar Printing Corporation respectively. Contemporary Art Lithographers Inc. in Minneapolis donated the printing of a poster.

I hope that our first exhibition will underscore the ambition with which we set out six months ago; to provide a forum for current activity in the arts, to emphasize new trends and experiments and to offer both education and excitement.

Jan van der Marck
Director

Introduction

The title "Pictures to be Read/Poetry to be Seen" attempts to paraphrase, but by no means defines the subject of this exhibition. The inversion of *Read* and *Seen* is a mere allusion to the breakdown of traditional categories in all the arts. What sets reading apart from seeing is that the former involves time and direction while the latter is instantaneous and wholistic. Words as a temporal element increasingly invade the spatial domain of the image.

If we consider language and pictorial representation as two species of the genus *sign*, they can be wedded with varying degrees of intimacy, either conveniently, by matching illustration to text, or so completely that individual identities are no longer discernible. What characterizes the majority of works in this exhibition is their complex permutation of words and images. The resulting visual language tends towards poetic rather than communicative functions inasmuch as the artist's attention focuses on the sign itself rather than on what it signifies. The meaning of a work is to be found in its overall perceptual organization and not necessarily in its potential to convey information.

The liaison of visual and descriptive elements has become a distinctive trend in recent art. The tendency toward visualization of music and poetry has a counterpart in the growing emphasis on narration in painting. Critics have variously identified it as "Figuration Narrative" (Gerald Gassiot-Talabot) and "Imagine Fredda e Poetica" (Arturo Schwarz). Although applicable, up to a point, to the majority of works in this exhibition, these terms fail to take into account different but related propositions advanced by Allan Kaprow and Wolf Vostell or Alison Knowles.

More important to the subject of this exhibition than the joint occurrence of words and images is the nature of their relationship and their extension in space and time. Arakawa's diagrams which exist on the borderline between word and image are as pertinent on account of their metaphysical references to space and time, as Kaprow's *Words and Knowles' Big Book*, which actually operate in space and time. In analyzing the nature of the varied word-image relationships we discover that the artists in this exhibition have treated them in terms of simultaneity rather than causality, association rather than equivalence,

effectiveness rather than sense. The result is pseudo-legible in that it frustrates reading or offers multiple readings; further, it is illogical, discontinuous, non-sequential and non-explicit. Because of the deliberately complex interrelations between pictorial and literary sign systems, and the absence of reading direction and reference points, the works presented invite speculation but resist interpretation.

A written story this hermetic would remain incomprehensible for the lack of a "code." Works of visual art, on the contrary, still stimulate, aesthetically and intellectually, even though they allow only partial decoding. Their surface coherence overrides content and message and they act like linguistic prisms, refracting and scattering visual information with disregard for immediate comprehension. Assuming a certain amount of shared information, the artist presents us with elaborate stratagems that engage the mind, the eye and the imagination.

Marcel Duchamp was the first artist to attempt and achieve a visual integration of the work of art with non-art elements from the surrounding world. In his *Large Glass* (1915-23) the pictorial composition and the activity behind the transparent picture plane are fused as we view it. Because the subject is painted on glass, the background is supplied "ready-made" and each situation presents a new context for the painted elements. This open-ended work, capable of absorbing its chance environment, has fascinated artists for half a century and it is particularly pertinent to this exhibition. We find the same attitude of combined attachment and detachment on the part of the artist, the same irreverent attitude toward the idea of art as precious and unique, the same delight in destroying conventional meanings and substituting new or counter meanings for them, and the same attack on our intellectual and perceptual faculties.

The *Large Glass* has inspired Arakawa's diagrammatic divisions of the canvas into imaginary spatio-temporal and sensorial-psychological zones; Baruchello's stratification of meaning by spreading his cryptograms and micro-images over several layers of plexiglass; Bauermeister and Brecht in their exploitation of the "double imagery quotient" (i.e. the fact of one image being contained in another) in either an illusory

or literal way; Fahlsröm and Simonetti in their topographical organization of images on neutral backgrounds and their use of game structures and chance imagery. Duchamp's proposal of the "assisted ready-made" is crucial to the work of Ray Johnson whose fondness for combs is just one of many tributes; Kltaj treats obscure texts and photographs as ready-mades and juxtaposes this found imagery in a non-sequential way; George Brecht poses the logical question whether the "assisted ready-made" concept would not also apply to literature, the theater and perhaps life itself.

John Cage, through his work, his teachings and his friendships, is another major influence on the artists in this exhibition. Paralleling Duchamp's integration of art and environmental phenomena in the *Large Glass*, Cage admits integration of accidental, external sounds in his musical compositions. The shift of emphasis toward non-auditory elements in his concerts reflects painting's increasing incorporation of non-painterly elements. Cage advocates above all the elimination of boundaries between art and life and he favors chance operations and indeterminacy over conscious composition. He agrees with Marshall McLuhan that in the electronic age everything happens at once, that communication has shrunk the world into a global village. Music, therefore, is no longer a "stream falling over rocks," proceeding from start to finish, but a "vibration complex" as James Tenney has put it. Similarly, art, formerly a definable individual expression is now a multi-focus, total-field experience. George Brecht, on whom Cage left an indelible impression (other artists influenced by Cage are Bauermeister, Fahlsröm, Johnson, Kaprow, Knowles and Simonetti), predicts a future state of mind in which divisions within the arts and between art and life no longer exist.

In the field of linguistics this attitude is shared by Ludwig Wittgenstein who commands attention among artists disproportionate to the technical nature of his writings. Unlike the positivists who analyzed what could be said in an ideal language, Wittgenstein concentrated on what is said in actual language. If, in his earlier writings, he contended that language was an exact picture of reality, later, aware of the various language uses, he reevaluated it as a pawn in an indefinite

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number of language games. His aphoristic arguments have been relieved of their philosophical burdens, as his vivid, rather plastic imagery (chess boards, graphs, pencils, apples, number series) ceased to serve a demonstrative purpose. There is an obvious appeal in such opaque or categoric statements of Wittgenstein's as "What expresses itself in language, we cannot express by means of language," and "What can be shown cannot be said." Wittgenstein has lifted language from its restrictive mold much as Duchamp has freed art and Cage has freed music. His motive was delightfully pragmatic: to someone asking him "What is your aim in philosophy?" he replied, "To show the fly the way out of the fly bottle."

The greatest breakthrough in the use of media and the commingling of art and life came with Allan Kaprow who acknowledges a debt to Duchamp and Cage. In Kaprow's view there are no clear distinctions between drawing and painting (cf. Arakawa, Baruchello, Bauermeister, Simonetti), painting and collage (cf. Johnson), collage and assemblage (cf. Bauermeister, Nutt), assemblage and sculpture (cf. Brecht, Fahlström), sculpture and environmental sculpture; between environmental sculpture, displays and stage-sets (cf. Brecht, Knowles); between these and environments (cf. Kaprow's own *Words*); between art of any kind and life. In a recent article on experimental art Kaprow asserted that "the American melting pot has become a global stew, and the American mind an assemblage."

In the late 1950s Kaprow expanded his art of wall hung assemblages into an art of environment, including light and sound. Attempting to give structure to spectator participation he developed his "action collages," which extend Pollock's gestural approach and total field painting and are governed by Cage's ideas about chance and indeterminacy. The Happening, as it became known, has the makings of a new form of theater. It combines environment and action into compartments of varying size and duration; there is no single focus and no separation between actors and audience.

Alison Knowles, author of the *Big Book*, aligns herself more with Cage than with Kaprow. Four years of creativity, as a writer, silkscreen camera technician, housewife, performer and friend to

the inner circle of the Something Else Press, have been crammed into a unique three-dimensional assemblage. Radiating from a central axis, the door-size pages create compartments which function, literally, as rooms of a house, metaphorically as "stills" of an everyday existence, and metaphysically as nooks and crannies of the mind. "Reading" the *Big Book* takes as much time and willingness to become involved as it does engaging in a personal relationship. Crawling through the *Big Book* resembles a physical and spiritual tour of discovery. Unlike Kaprow's *Words*, one can walk in and out of any given page as one would consult a dictionary or sample an anthology. A sequence may be indicated but is never enforced. In a way, the *Big Book* concretizes Alison Knowles' "event pieces." It not only sets the stage for, but, through various additive devices such as light, taped sound and a live telephone and hot plate, partakes in the action. Offering art within art, life within life and a world within a world, the *Big Book* comes closer than any work in this exhibition to a radical dissolution of the barriers that separate art from life: It proposes life as art.

Introduction and essays on individual artists
by Jan van der Marck.

Born Nagoya City, Japan, 1936. Studied medicine and in 1959 went to Tokyo where he became associated with Yomiuri Independents and "Neo-Dada Organizers." In 1960 participated in Tokyo Arts Festival with "Anti-Happening." In 1961 came to New York City where he now lives. One-man exhibitions: Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo, 1959; Mudo Gallery, Tokyo, 1961; Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf, 1963, 1965, 1966; Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1964, 1966; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1964; Minami Gallery, Tokyo, 1965; Galleria dell'Ariete, Milan, 1965; Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart, 1965; Dwan Gallery, New York, 1966; Wide White Space Gallery, Antwerp, 1966; Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 1966-67; Von der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal, 1967. Group exhibitions include: The Yomiuri Independent Exhibition, Tokyo, 1958-61; "The Adventure in Modern Art," The National Museum of Art, Tokyo, 1961; Gordon Gallery (with Ay-O, Robert Morris, Yoshimura), New York, 1963; Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1963, 1964 (with Tinguely, Raysse, Kienholz), 1967; "Seven New Artists," Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1964; "Contemporary Trends in Japanese Painting and Sculpture," National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, 1964; "Young Seven," Minami Gallery, Tokyo, 1964; "Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture," Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, 1965, 1967; Dwan Gallery, New York, 1966, 1967; "Recent Acquisitions" and "The New Japanese Painting and Sculpture," Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1966; "Tradition und Gegenwart," Städtisches Museum Schloss Morsbroich, Leverkusen, 1966; IX Tokyo Biennale (National Museum of Modern Art Award), 1967; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967.

Arakawa says he wants to make "diagrams of the unknown," discover the essential relationship between imagination and reality, trace the sources of the imagination and propose a reality that exists only as a name. That he would present the seven-letter word MISTAKE as a picture indicates that Arakawa's investigations extend beyond semantics or linguistic analysis. Rather, he is declaring summarily that the world is a flawed environment and life is an unaccountable passage in the continuum of death.

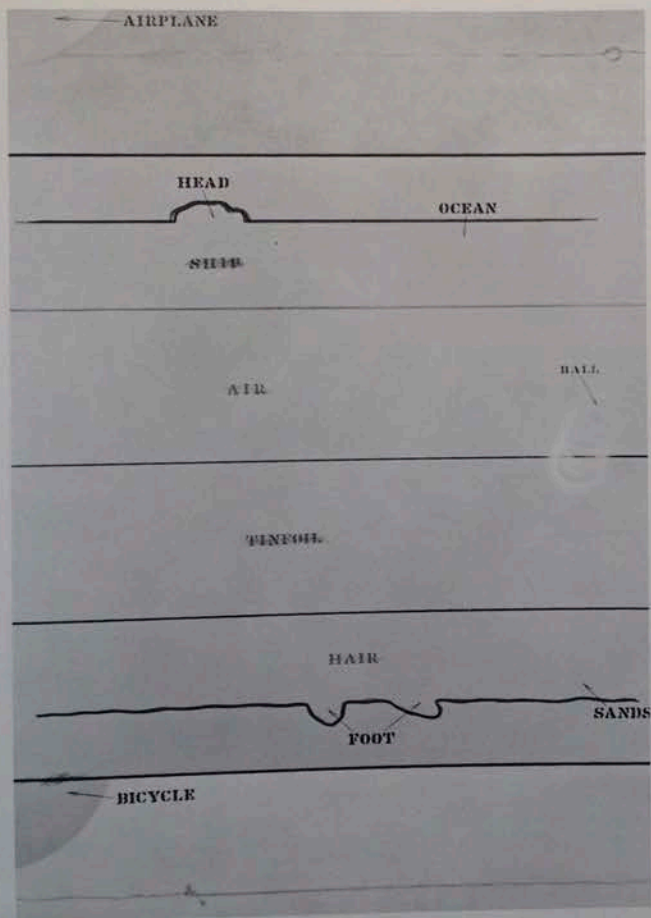
Arakawa's world is conceptual to the extent that he never fully allows idea to become image. Admittedly, he attempts to pictorialize the state of things and feelings before the imagination intervenes. Yoshiaki Tono refers to Arakawa's paintings as "pregnant vacuums" from which a number of possible pictures can spring into existence, a pre-imagery quite different from the study or sketch for a painting. This pictorial limbo or never-never-land of the imagination results from the artist's abstract consciousness of what surrounds him. He asks himself "How can we find the blood of nature, how can we paint a point?" Moments in time, to him, have a "front" and a "back." He is more interested in the shadow than in the object, in the echo than in the sound. Death to Arakawa is a reality to which he gives a great deal of thought for, unlike the reality of life which we take for granted, it is not yet within our grasp.

Since 1963 Arakawa's works have been "diagrams," in which the silhouetted outlines of feathers, footprints, combs, tennis rackets, umbrellas, fans, egg beaters, and so on, have been transferred with an airbrush onto canvas. In 1965, Arakawa pushed the idea of "conceptuality" one step further, substituting stencilled words for his silhouetted outlines. As they alternate between description and allusion, these words refer to fact and to feeling. The diagrams are topological in a non-literal way; movement is indicated by trajectories and bouncy repetitions, people and things by curved or straight line boundary markings. Knots in ropes of an ethereal substance signify connections and relationships. "If you consider nature as a series of connections," Arakawa explains, "it falls naturally into a diagrammatic form." The artist sees people's lives as a series of "separate continuums," like

electric-current passing through parallel wires. Nothing happens until the wires are short-circuited—this is a "connection." Judging from the evidence in Arakawa's painting, the "connection" is a potential that rarely becomes a fact.

Arakawa believes that his paintings can be explained like poetry. By describing their genesis he facilitates our reading. First he makes a sketch (pre-image) of nature by translating it into language. With words that correspond to facts he draws a diagram of the *visible* world. Then, with words that correspond to feelings or ideas, he draws a diagram of the *invisible* world. The painting's effectiveness depends on the artist's ability to establish a connection between the *visible* and the *invisible*, allowing us to "see his feelings . . . touch them and know what they are."

Shusaku Arakawa
A Self-Portrait

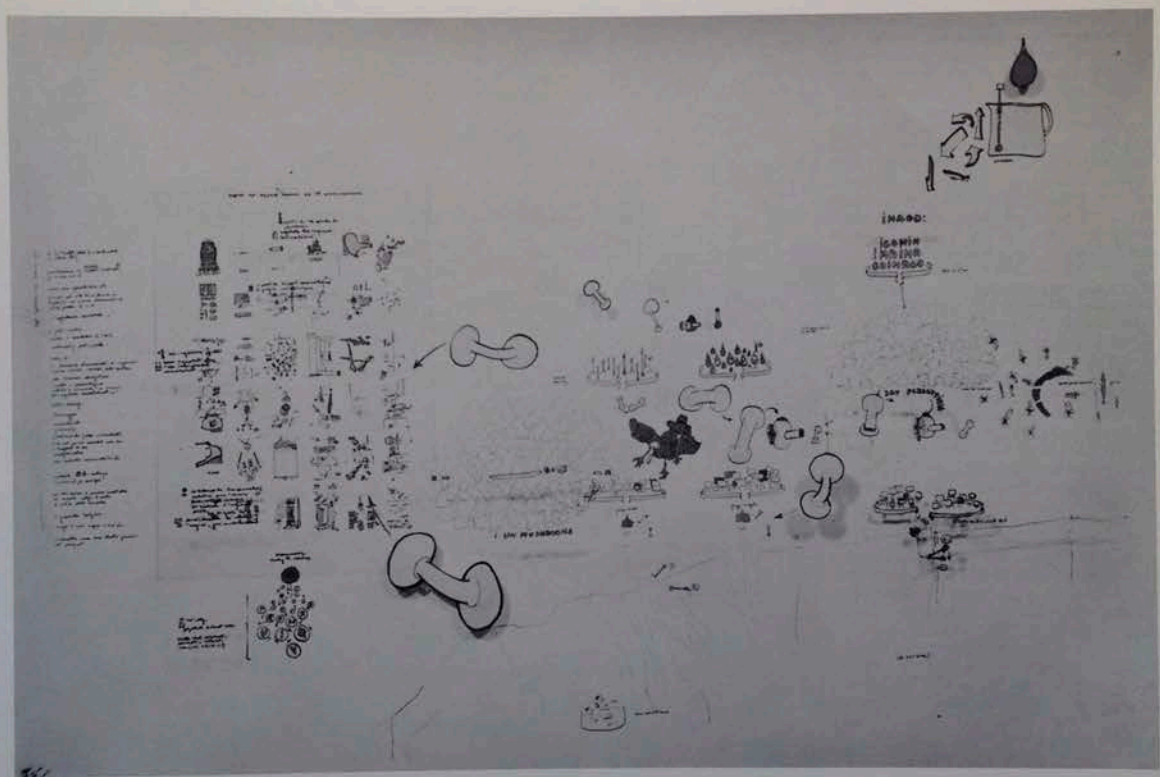


Born Livorno, Italy, 1924. Collaborated with Alberto Griffi on a film "La Verifica Incerta," 1965, with Edoardo Sanguineti on a "visual continuum" entitled "Traumdeutung Cancellato," 1967, and wrote television scripts including "L'avambraccio Letterario" and "Enoncé." Lives in Rome. One-man exhibitions: Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome, 1963; Cordier & Ekstrom, New York, 1964, 1966; "Uso e Manutenzione," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1965; Galleria Il Punto, Turin, 1966; "Ionomiss," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1966; Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels, 1967. Group exhibitions include: "Collages et Objets," Galerie du Cercle, Paris, 1962; "New Realists," Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1962; Biennale di San Marino, 1963, 1967; "Recent Acquisitions," The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1965; "European Drawings," The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1966; "An Italian Way of Art," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1966; "Dada in Italia 1916-1966," Civico Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, 1966; Salon des Realités Nouvelles, Paris, 1966; "La Lettura del linguaggio visivo," Castello del Valentino, Turin, 1966; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967; "Il Tempo dell'immagine," Il Biennale dell'Arte Giovane, Museo Civico, Bologna, 1967; Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1967.

Baruchello writes, paints and thinks in micro-imagery and moves freely from the realm of written and spoken discourse to that of paint and color. He creates in a stream of consciousness and his paintings read like the jiggling track of an electroencephalograph. With their myriad of ciphers, reference points, scribbles, dotted lines, cryptograms, arrows, equations, telescopic and microscopic, biomorphic and mechanical elements, Baruchello's canvases and layered boxes provoke as much as they frustrate, stimulate as much as they negate perception. They allude to physics, mathematics, and ballistics, as well as to biology, pathology and neurology and invite comparison with the Renaissance attitude that man can master all known arts and sciences. The put-on is deliberate for Baruchello admittedly offers "erroneous solutions with a tendency to probability." He heaps mock praise on scientists, chessplayers and psychoanalysts for having discovered the key to a three-penny truth. In his own work he is intentionally ambiguous and prefers to withhold the key, for he knows that there are no easy explanations. Taking great delight in paradox, he aligns himself with those worldly philosophers who advocate "the abolition of solutions in the proven absence of problems."

Baruchello's mirages of the mind are elegant shams but strangely intriguing. With the pertinence of an alchemist's philosophical ruminations, they weave a network of non-causal relationships. Yet, how can we write off an artist "ready to cover the Sistine Chapel with a second, a third layer of dotted lines" as opaque and inexplicable? While he may not propose a one to one relationship to the world of fact, Baruchello conveys a poetic truth more fascinating than reality. Images, to him, are as complicated as sounds: since the world communicates in complicated images, he feels at liberty to communicate in complicated images. A creative atmosphere is emerging all around us that is based on a new relationship between space and image, scientific theorem and game, object and hypothesis, necessity and chance. Avowing himself part of that atmosphere, Baruchello seeks to integrate information and perception; painting is his language.

Gianfranco Baruchello
It Comes to my Mind



Born Frankfurt, 1934. Studied mathematics and astronomy. Went to Amsterdam in 1953 and to New York in 1962. Presented concert-exhibitions with Karlheinz Stockhausen, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1962, and Mac-Millan Theatre, Toronto, 1964. Lives in Kuersten, West Germany, and New York City. One-man exhibitions: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Museum van Stad en Ommelanden, Groningen, Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam, 1962, Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague and Stedelijk van Abbeemuseum, Eindhoven, 1963; Galeria Bonino, New York, 1964, 1965, 1967. Group exhibitions include: Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, 1961; Atelier Neufert, Cologne, 1961; "Ars Viva," Kunstverein, Oldenburg, and Kunsthalle, Bremen, 1962; "2 Sculptors 4 Painters," Galeria Bonino, New York, 1963/64; Whitney Annual, New York, 1964; "Stone and Crystal," Staempfli Gallery, New York, 1965; "Kinetic and Optic Art Today," Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1965; "Retinal and Perceptual Art," Art Museum of the University of Texas, Austin, and Fort Worth Art Center, 1965; "Highlights of the 1964-65 Art Season," The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Conn., 1965; Premio Nacional e Internacional, Instituto Torcuato di Tella, Buenos Aires, 1965; "Young America," The Whitney Museum, New York, 1965; "American Painting 1966," Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1966; "European Drawings," The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1966; "American Landscape: A Changing Frontier," National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1966; "Art in Process," Finch College Museum of Art, New York, 1966; Ile Salon International des Galeries-Pilotes, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland, 1966; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967; Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1967.

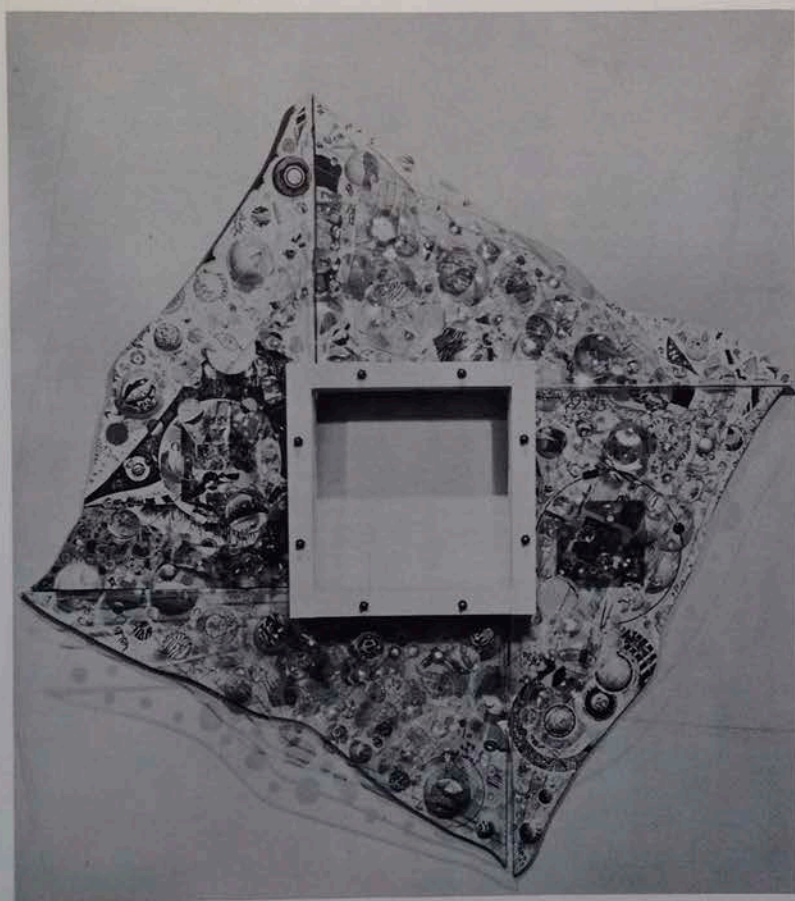
Discovery is a key word for the mathematician-turned-painter Mary Bauermeister. "To find out what I know or want is the actual reason why I paint," she declares. Her works chart mental voyages, record the process of creation. In one construction she may juxtapose pebbles harvested on the beaches of Sicily, photographs of pebbles stacked in the same graduated tier formations, illusionistically treated drawings of pebbles, and her own arm and hand, either drawn or photographed, performing the operation of collaging the pebbles. The intermediary space is frequently filled by a wavery, elongated handwriting which, in places, skirts or embellishes the painted wood hemispheres and, in others, is magnified or distorted by optical lenses glued to the picture surface.

Mary Bauermeister plays word games in three languages, interchanging them, wedding parts of words to make new words, rearranging sentences and creating nonsense, setting up ambiguities and contradictions ("This is not the right corner"). She uses words where writing is quicker than painting or the idea is better expressed in writing than in painting. Usually, however, her writing (i.e. in a calligraphic all-over fashion on a prepared surface), drawing and painting are combined and integrated with collage and assemblage.

Mary Bauermeister abhors a vacuum. Her crowded and encrusted reliefs teem with the ambiguous and indeterminate emanations of a mind that operates on several levels simultaneously. Objects, images of objects, images of images and images of processes combine with non-linear, non-sequential, straight, reversed and mirrored writing in creating an infinity effect through accumulation, permutation and repetition. The artist holds a pluralistic view of the world that is anti-Aristotelean and anti-Euclidean. It should surprise no one that physicists like Heisenberg and Einstein were her earliest heroes. She remembers that as a child she painted to better understand things. She tried to paint infinity but gave up and she did a painting of time in the form of a spiral. Marcel Duchamp's work was a revelation to her; she especially identified with his attempt at creating not new objects but new attitudes to familiar objects. Mary Bauermeister paints the idea of things rather than the things

themselves. Her visionary world is a universe onto itself with its own rules and its own justifications.

Mary Bauermeister
V.I.P. Very Important Picture



a universe
own

"I think being born is one of the great fictions of modern times, hence I allow myself to reinvent my birth-place & time whenever anyone asks me, though my mother doesn't appreciate this very much. . . . I suggest we compromise by saying I was conceived on or about November 27th, 1925. As for the place if you want to be really accurate, you will have to ask my mother . . . what she was doing at or about that time and where." (George Brecht in correspondence with Jan van der Marck, July 23, 1967)

"Brecht, at that time (1958), still described himself as 'you might say, a painter,' though most of his work was already marvelous objects, usually with moving parts, things for adults to play with. He made a living as a scientist in the suburbs in New Jersey, in Metuchen, and his life and his aesthetic seemed connected with that. For hours in class (New School for Social Research, New York) he would talk with Cage about the need for spiritual virtuosity and abdication from technical virtuosity, both of which were very attractive to Cage. . . . Brecht picked up from Cage an understanding of his love of complete anonymity, simplicity, and non-involvement with what he does." (Dick Higgins, *Postface*, Something Else Press, New York, 1964, 48-51)

George Brecht lives at "La Cedille qui Sourit," Villefranche-sur-Mer.

One-man exhibitions: "Toward Events," Reuben Gallery, New York, 1959; "The Book of the Tumbler on Fire (Pages from Chapter I)," Fischbach Gallery, New York, 1965; "The Book of the Tumbler on Fire (Pagine scelte dal Capitolo II a VIII)," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967. Group exhibitions: "Below Zero," Reuben Gallery, New York, 1959-60; "New Forms—New Media I & II," Martha Jackson Gallery, New York, 1960; "Bewogen Beweging," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Louisiana Museum, Copenhagen, 1961; "Environments, Situations, Spaces," Martha Jackson Gallery, New York, 1961; "The Art of Assemblage," The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1961; "The Popular Image," Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 1963; "Pop Art USA," Oakland Art Museum, 1963; "Scissors Bros. Warehouse," Rolf Nelson Gallery, Los Angeles, 1963; "∞ -Man Show," Robin Gallery, 1964; "For Eyes & Ears," Cordier

& Ekstrom, New York, 1964; "Black, White and Grey," Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1964; "Boxes," Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1964; "Eleven from the Reuben Gallery," The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1965; "Ten from Rutgers," Bianchini Gallery, New York, 1965-66; "Object Poems" and "Intermedia," Something Else Gallery, New York, 1966; "Games Without Rules," Fischbach Gallery, New York, 1966; "The Other Tradition," Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1966; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967. Performances: "Gossoon," Reuben Gallery, New York, 1960; "Avant Garde Monday Nights," Living Theater, New York; "Palindrome," Maidman Theater, New York; "Yam Day," Hardware Poets Playhouse, New York, 1963; "A Play," Pocket Theater, New York; "Fluxus Concerts," 363 Canal Street, New York; "Festival of the Avant Garde," Judson Hall, New York, 1964; "Fluxus" and "Libre Expression" Festivals, New York, Wiesbaden, Paris, etc.; "Musikfestival," Galerie Block, Berlin, 1966. Sets and music for the James Waring Dance Company, New York.

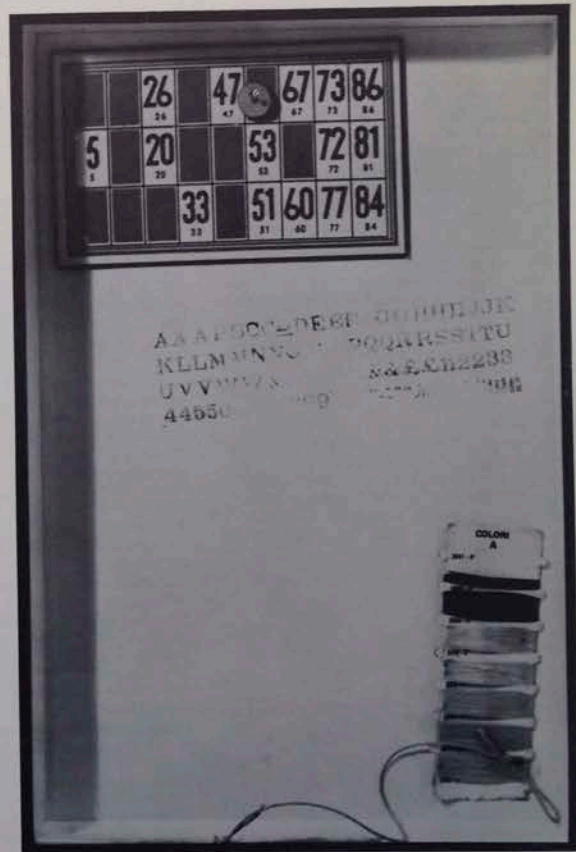
Emmett Williams calls Brecht a "practitioner of art for life's sake (and vice-versa)." Since life's demands on art go beyond esthetics, Brecht won't allow himself to be pigeonholed as a painter, sculptor, composer or playwright. Well-versed in the requirements of these roles—but resisting the temptation of virtuosity—Brecht meets his real challenge as an inventor of subterfuges for art. He agrees with Cage that it is art, not life, that has obscured the difference between art and life. George Brecht investigates the relationship between art and life as well as between words and objects by making signs and wall hangings that spell SILENCE and NO SMOKING. In *The Book of the Tumbler on Fire*, a continuing work begun in 1964 of which eight chapters and over 200 pages have now been completed, Brecht "researches the continuity of un-like things, of objects, of events in time, of objects and styles, etc."

Brecht does not admit to the conventional distinctions of media and to him they have already ceased to exist. "We don't know, for example, where music ends and theater begins

(and vice-versa, no matter what is on stage)." Subscribing to Cage's ideas about indeterminacy, he writes "event pieces" that may be composed of as little as one word (e.g. EXIT). George Brecht is the only painter who has translated, in plastic terms and a figurative method, the practice and ideas concerning chance proposed by Cage. Like Marcel Duchamp he isolates things that appeal or simply occur to him. Ready-made objects present themselves to him to be linked together with a sense of real necessity. Since all these objects relate to his experience, the result capsules the world in terms of autobiography. Thus, his works are personal entries in the book of painting, forever preserved under glass in shallow boxes.

Despite the familiarity they inspire (we recognize familiar objects and brandnames or pictures of familiar art and artists), Brecht's boxes remain strange and puzzling. The critic David Bourdon calls them a kind of "object-taxidermy in bijou-scale." This does not imply, however, that Brecht's works have a jewel- or surprise-box character relating them to such masters of metaphor as Cornell, Samaras or Westermann. Wishing neither to please or transform, the artist keeps his works at safe remove from the beauties quite clearly within his reach. For his real interest is in proving, as Daniela Palazzoli has written, that *things* are more difficult to understand than the metaphors they evoke. At his most effective, Brecht demonstrates the gap between the verbal and the object level of the things he combines and arranges and he shows us the fatal inadequacy of word and thing equations.

George Brecht
Three of Swords
Knight of Clubs



Born 1928, São Paulo, Brazil. Moved with his family to Sweden in 1939. Studied history of art and archaeology. Lived in Paris in mid-fifties and came to New York in 1961. Organized, directed and participated in various intermedia events, among them "The Ingrid Thulin Story," "Ur Mellanöst," and "Fahlströms Hörna, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1964, and "Kisses Sweeter than Wine" in Theater and Engineering, New York, 1966. Lives in New York. One-man exhibitions: Galleria Numero, Florence, 1952; Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris, 1959, 1962; Galerie Blanche, Stockholm, 1959; Cordier & Ekstrom, New York, 1964; XXXIII Biennale, Venice, 1966; Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1967. Group exhibitions include: Galerie Aesthetica, Stockholm, 1955; "Phases de l'art contemporain," Galerie Creuze, 1955; V São Paulo Bienal (honorable mention), 1959; II Biennale de Paris, 1961; "New Realists," Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1962; "Exposicion Phases," Museo Nacional de Belles Artes, Buenos Aires, 1963; Guggenheim International Award, New York, 1964; "Mythologies Quotidiennes," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1964; "Alternative Attuali/2," L'Aquila, 1965; "La Figuration narrative dans l'art contemporain," Galerie Creuze, Paris, 1965; "European Drawings," The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1966; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967.

For Fahlström the world has so many facets and variables that no one picture can give a complete image of reality. The problem lies, of course, in the artist's view of reality: it is discontinuous, alogical, non-causal, asymmetric, non-sequential and unstructured. Fahlström proposes a more fitting parallel: the variable painting with a game structure. He forces the viewer to involve himself, to make choices and to join in creation.

The variable in Fahlström's pictures is the "character-form" by which he means an abstract form of a particular individual shape, conspicuous as a type, regardless of varying proportions, shades of color, style qualities, and so on. The "character-form" is composed of two or more elementary forms (line, dot, bow, etc.), differing in shape, but of one prominent color. It is recognizable when repeated, varied, dressed or rearranged.

The association of disparate elements presupposes rules of the game and the work of art assumes a game structure. Equipped with magnets, Fahlström's cut-outs can be juxtaposed, superposed, inserted or suspended; they can slide along grooves, fold laterally through joints, and frontally through hinges. They can also be bent and riveted to permanent three-dimensional forms.

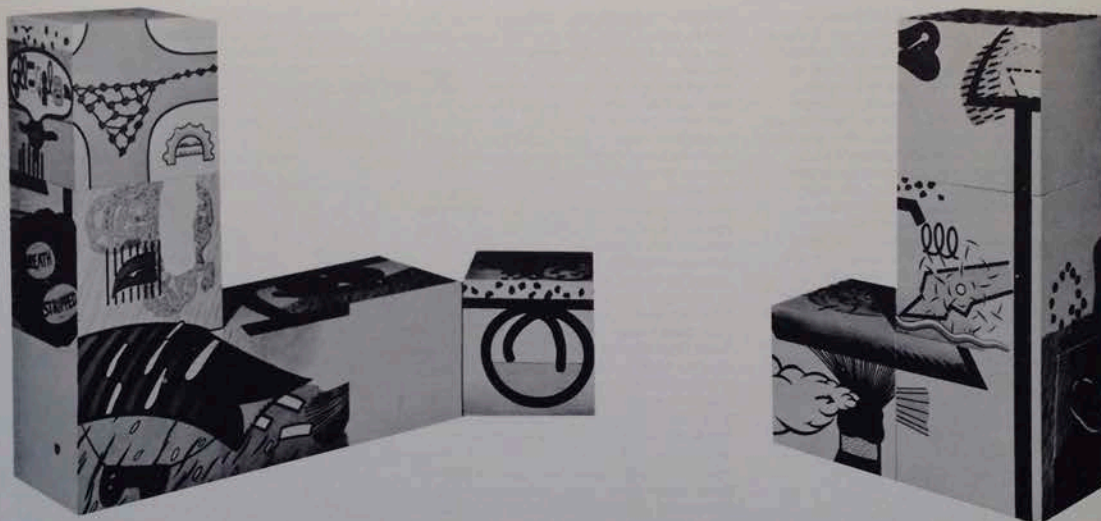
The arrangement of Fahlström's works depends on the combination of rules (based on chance) and intentions (the artist's); a score in the form of a drawing, photograph or small painting is provided with the work. While the individual elements are the mere "machinery" that compose the picture, the finished picture stands somewhere in the intersection of painting, games and puppet theater. The artist sees a similarity between his techniques and the blank scores of composer John Cage who also provides the performer with a chance to improvise.

Fahlström's sources are popular photography, comic strips and diagrammatic illustrations. The figurative elements, compressed factual images, often of an erotic or political nature, coexist in Fahlström's pictures with the more abstract "character-forms." The style is non-dialectic, accretive and cryptic. No attempt is made to communicate, there are no moral commitments, no causal connections, no metaphors and no

symbols. Presenting his works as "models of reality" Fahlström refuses to focus the viewer's attention; rather, the attention is allowed to focus itself, while the artist assumes a stance of amused, and sometimes cynical, non-involvement.



Oyvind Fahlström
Sitting . . . Blocks



Born Detroit, 1927. Studied at Art Students' League, New York, and Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, N.C., with Josef Albers, Robert Motherwell, Mary Callary and Ossip Zadkine. Associated with American Abstract Artists, 1949-52. Started *New York Correspondance School of Art*, 1962. Published *The Paper Snake*, Something Else Press, New York, 1965. Received National Institute of Arts and Letters Award, 1966. Lives in New York. One-man exhibitions: Willard Gallery, New York, 1965, 1966, 1967; Feigen Gallery, Chicago, 1966, 1967. Group exhibitions include: "Cool Ages," Boylston Street Print Gallery, Cambridge, Mass., 1955; "Out of the Ordinary," The Contemporary Arts Association of Houston, 1959; "Gang-Bang," Batman Gallery, San Francisco, 1961; Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1961; "Nothing Concert," AG Gallery, New York, 1961; "Pop Art USA," Oakland Art Museum, 1963; "Art in the Mirror," The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1966; "Art in Process," Finch College Museum of Art, New York, 1967.

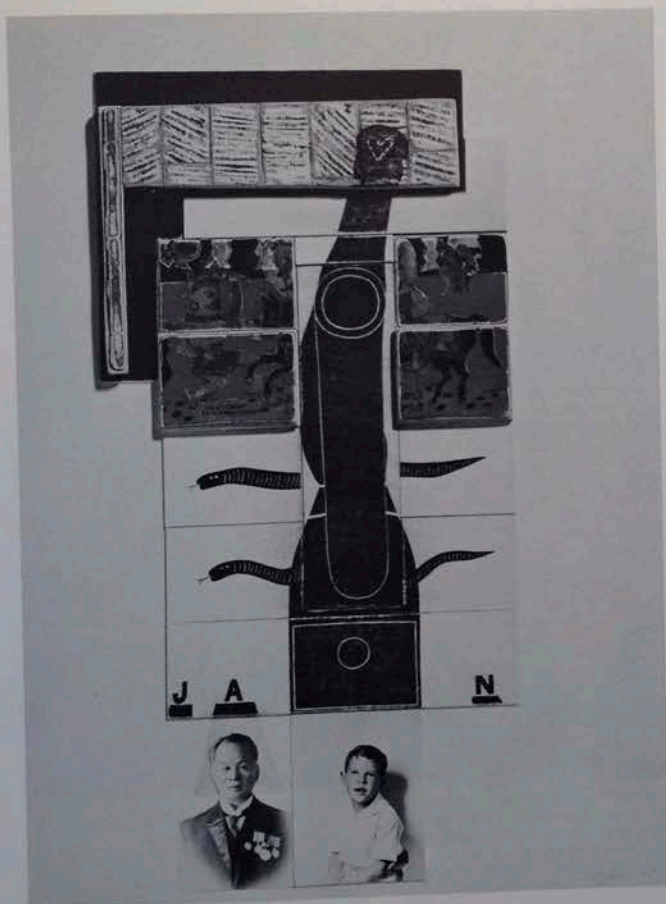
"Johnson is conscious," Dick Higgins wrote, "that a hole in the ground, a hole in the doughnut, and a hole between the walls of a room are not the same thing." Yet, all holes have a recognizable affinity and to the poet one hole rhymes with another. Ray Johnson rhymes scraps of everyday information with people to whom he dispatches them. If "connection" is the key to Arakawa's diagrams, "correspondence" is the sesame to the understanding of Ray Johnson's collages.

According to William Wilson, three principles operate in Johnson's world of parallels and resemblances: identity or almost identity (LICE not only resembles, but is identical to, a LIFE magazine logo after we lower the crossbar in the r), analogy ("Massage Ball" derives its title from the black circles which resemble the rubber balls used in Japan for massage purposes) and focus (two dissimilar images may offer a striking likeness when seen from a certain angle or in a certain frame of reference: e.g. a snake and a condom—or conundrum as Ray Johnson prefers to call it). A mind which proposes metaphors and a world that yields them are the artist's resource.

Ray Johnson discovers correspondences and corresponds with people. Consequently, the term refers to process and method. The artist has a fondness for filing, and, true to his nomadic Finnish heritage, likes to carry things around. In fact, there was a time when his whole production fit in his pockets. Then he discovered that most obsolete of communication methods, the mails, which allows him, for the price of a postage stamp, to "file" whatever hits his phantasy with friends, acquaintances or strangers. The tissue of correspondences thus woven extends in time and space, has no material reality and exists in the mind of its designer only. "The New York Correspondance (sic) School" as Ray Johnson has called it, is a spoof both on the School of New York as an invention of art historians and institutions that employ "famous" artists to teach people through a correspondence course. Related to the missives he sends and receives, Johnson's meticulous collages, in which everything is suggested and nothing defined, communicate with anybody and nobody in particular. They are the solidifications of essentially

fleeting paper scraps, like notes, letters, scribbles, poems, drawings, photographs, menus, announcements, and so on, all "assisted," modified or transformed to look like gameboards and rebuses of another culture (oriental characters) or another era (faded photographs). They have the plaintive quality of children's toys that are "ditched" or lost in a garden, and they make people comment "His Art Looks Old."

Ray Johnson
Jan



Born Atlantic City, N.J., 1927. Studied at New York University (B.A. 1949), Columbia University, New York (M.A. 1952), with Hans Hofmann (1947-48) and John Cage (1957-59). Co-founder Hansa Gallery, New York, 1952. Taught at Rutgers University, 1953-61, State University of New York, Stony Brook, 1961 to present. Received Copley Foundation Fellowship, 1962 and Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, 1967. One-man exhibitions: Hansa Gallery, 1953, 1954, 1957. In 1957 ceased to exhibit as painter-sculptor and concentrated on Environments and Happenings. Retrospective exhibition The Pasadena Art Museum, 1967. Group exhibitions include: Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1958; "Out of the Ordinary," Contemporary Arts Association, Houston, Texas, 1959; "New Forms—New Media," Martha Jackson Gallery, 1960; "Bewogen Beweging," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1961; "Hans Hofmann and His Students," Museum of Modern Art Circulating Exhibition, 1963-65; "Eleven from the Reuben Gallery," The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1965; "Ten from Rutgers University," Bianchini Gallery, New York, 1965. Environments: Hansa Gallery, 1958; *Garage Environment* (fragment) in "New Forms—New Media II," Martha Jackson Gallery, 1960; *An Apple Shrine*, sponsored by Judson Gallery, 1960; *Chapel*, sponsored by University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1961; *Yard* in "Environments, Situations, Spaces," Martha Jackson Gallery, 1961; *Words*, sponsored by Smolin Gallery, New York and State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1962; *Push and Pull: A Furniture Comedy for Hans Hofmann*, 1963; *Eat*, sponsored by Smolin Gallery, New York, 1964. Happenings include: *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, 1959; *The Big Laugh*, 1960; *Coca Cola, Shirley Cannonball?*, 1960; *A Spring Happening*, 1961; *A Service for the Dead I & II*, 1962; *Courtyard*, 1962; *Bon Marché*, 1963; *Birds*, 1964; *Paper*, 1964; *Household*, 1964; *Calling*, 1965; *Self-Service*, 1966; *Gas*, 1966.

About "Words"

Words is an "Environment," the name given to an art that one enters, submits to, and is—in turn—influenced by. If it is different from most art in its impermanence and changeableness, it is like much contemporary work in being fashioned from the real and everyday world, a world it celebrates, probes, comments on, perhaps, and surely dreams about.

I am involved with the city atmosphere of billboards, newspapers, scrawled pavements and alley walls, in the drone of a lecture, whispered secrets, pitchmen in Times Square fun-parlors, bits of stories and conversations overheard at the Automat. All this has been compressed and shaped into a situation which, in order to "live" in the fullest sense, must actively engage a visitor.

This may be difficult for those bound by the habits of respectful distance essential for older art. But if we temporarily put aside the question of the sacred in aesthetic matters and see in "Words" activities analogous to some in which we might normally engage—doodling, playing, anagrams, or scrabble, searching for just the right word to express a thought, climbing a ladder to hang a picture on the wall, listening to records, leaving notes for someone—then the accessibility of the work may get across and its art as much as its mystery becomes apparent. I doubt that mere passive observation is very rewarding.

Of course, being active, we can misuse any environment, natural or artistic. We can destroy a landscape through carelessness, and here we can refuse to consider what responses are appropriate to the nature of the idea. For instance, it is inappropriate to staple word-strips askew, onto the floor or anywhere in the smaller room; and it would be just as unfit to write with the colored chalks in the larger room. There are freedoms for the visitor (as there are for the artist), but they are revealed only within the limits dictated by the art work's immediate as well as underlying themes.

On one level, "Words" is light-hearted, jazzy, flip. Within this mood, there are contrasts. The larger room is public, bright and more formal in both the character and also in the placement of lettered strips, cloth-rolls and red and white blinking lights. The small room is more subdued,

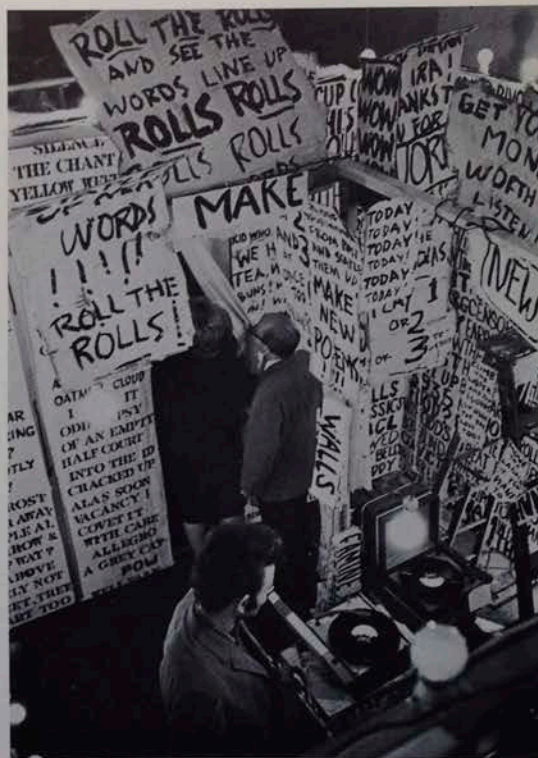
private, organic and less "arranged." On another, less obvious, level, the composition of the environment is intended to confer upon this "pop" material a sense of a Special Place. The rooms within a normal room, their centrality and squareness (9'x9' and 6'x6'), the repeated words and phrases, the passage in gradual degrees from an outer world into an inner one, may suggest to the sensitive participant a sanctuary or tabernacle of sorts, an enshrinement of The Word. In this presence, our acts become ritual and our everyday is transformed.

Allan Kaprow

(Reprinted from Smolin Gallery catalogue)



Allan Kaprow
Words as shown at Smolin Gallery, 1962



Born Cleveland, 1932. Studied at Cooper Union, New York, Academy of Fine Art, Vienna, Ruskin School of Drawing, Oxford University and Royal College of Art, London. Since 1958 has lived in London; presently teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. One-man exhibitions: Marlborough-New London Gallery, London, 1963; Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York, 1965; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1965; Cleveland Museum of Art, 1967; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1967. Group exhibitions include: John Moores Exhibition, Liverpool, 1961, 1963 (award); Premio Internacional de Pintura, Instituto Torcuato di Tella, Buenos Aires, 1963; Documenta III, Kassel, 1964; Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1964; "La Figuración narrative dans l'art contemporain," Galerie Creuze, 1965; Whitney Annual, New York, 1965; "Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture," Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign, 1967.

Kitaj is included with screenprints because they are more pertinent to the theme of this exhibition than his paintings. For most artists the print medium affords an opportunity to summarize or generalize past achievements, but for Kitaj it has the freshness of drawing and the challenge of painting. In a recent issue of *STUDIO INTERNATIONAL* the artist wrote: "Printmaking (which is not what it was) is as close to SPONTANEITY as I've managed to come—I can get manifold *ulterior* premises visualized, on sheets; premises, false starts, suppositions, what have you, which would take me many months to commit to oil painting. I've been able to engage at levels of sensibility through this printmaking counterpoint which cut across the dour path of painting . . . and sometimes lodge there."

In England where the American Kitaj developed a reputation alongside native artists Eduardo Paolozzi, Peter Blake, Joe Tilson and Allen Jones, printmaking was revived through the skill and enthusiasm of Christopher Prater. Improvisational attitudes, unheard of ten years ago, are now a legitimate part of that medium. In Kitaj's case, images appear in his prints before they will enter his painting. His repertoire derives from political manifestoes, violence and injustice, esoteric tracts on history and science, past art and literature. Philosophy, central European culture and the history of anarchy in particular are a treasure-trove for his inquisitive mind.

As of the early 1960s Kitaj made prints in which he collaged found and "assisted" texts and photographs, pulled from obscure sources. Like Brecht he is not interested in esthetic effect or compositional brilliance. Nor can his prints be construed as information structures or metaphors of reality. Fired by the associational value of things, Kitaj jumps from one presentation technique to another, gives the viewer nary a clue as to what to look for and undercuts all logical relationships. Lawrence Alloway writes of Kitaj that he has a deep sense of the endless permutations of word and image, of source and modification, observing a pictorial code of diagrammatic statements and elliptic condensations of events that are set down as a scatter of discrete, ideographic centers.

Some notes by R. B. Kitaj on his screenprints: *POGANY* is a print I like very much. Pogany is of course that *Mlle* of Brancusi fame. The Brancusi installation in Paris floored me last year and I made this female print. The drawings I made in my own way after photos of the *Mlle* Pogany heads in a Brancusi book.

WHAT IS A COMPARISON? is a line from I. A. Richards—the literary critic . . . I read him to great advantage from time to time and find his ideas quite available to my occasions.

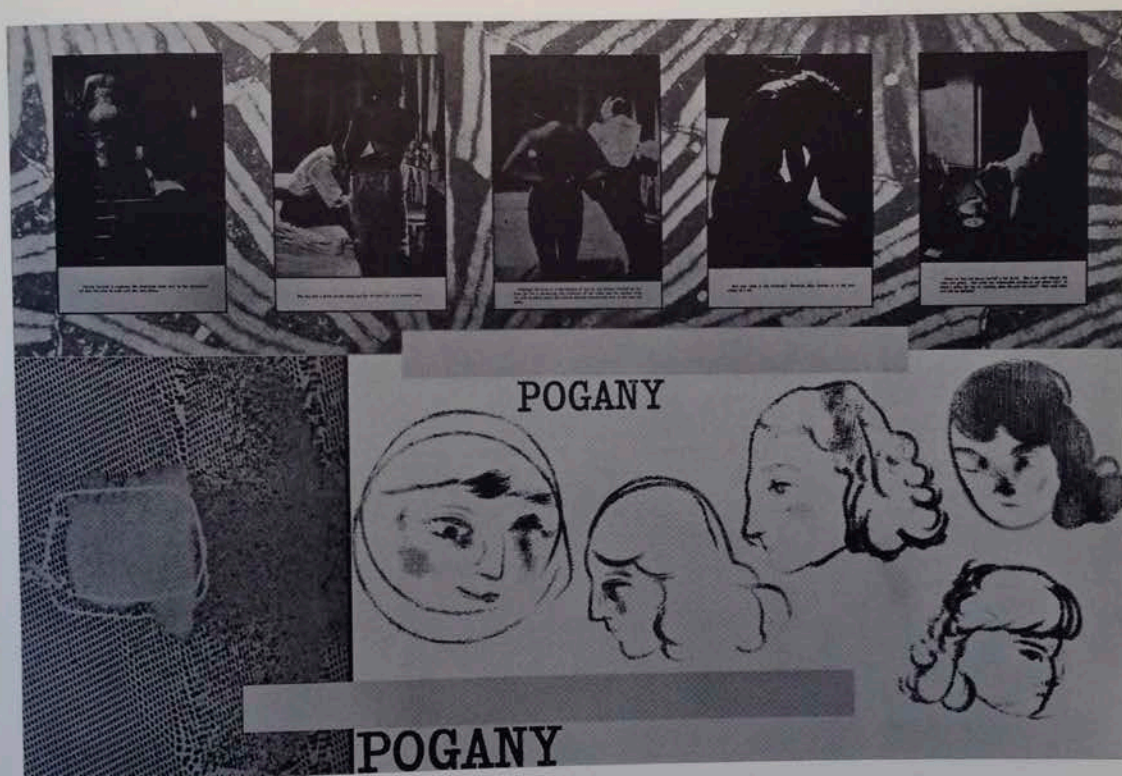
MORT and VERNISSAGE COCKTAIL are *mates* and you might hang them next to one another. They seem complete enough not to have to say anything about them just now . . . except that I had kept the photos involved for 10 or 15 years before *using them up* in a matter of weeks.

GO AND GET KILLED COMRADE . . . is what is reputed to have been said to Stephen Spender by one of the communist politicians at the time of the Spanish war—it may not be true but it says much about an activist art. This print was intended as a memorial to the young Scholls who organized the (Christian?) White Rose movement in Germany and were beheaded just before the war ended.

Berkeley, California 1967



R. B. Kitaj
Pogany



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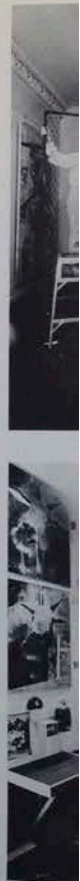
ornia 1967

Born New York, 1933. Studied Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, Pratt Institute, New York, Manhattan School of Printing, New York. 1959-60 large canvas "Mother" using massive blow-ups and enlargements; 1960 series of canvases using silkscreen, direct photographic emulsion and chemical transfers; 1961 and 1962 environmental printed works on plastic; one such work was constructed at East Hampton, summer 1962. In autumn and winter of 1962, active in starting the Fluxus Movement in Europe; concentrated on performance aspects of her work. Directed her own Happenings and performed in those of William Meyer, Dick Higgins, Emmet Williams, George Brecht, Nam June Paik, Al Hansen, Robert Watts and Allan Kaprow. 1964 began "The 'T' Dictionary" and "The Big Book." Lives in New York City. One-man exhibitions: Nonagon Gallery, New York, 1958; Judson Gallery, New York, 1962; Phase II Gallery, Toronto, 1967. Group exhibitions: "4 Environments" (with Higgins, Koepcke, Vostell), Studio Spichernstrasse 28, Cologne, 1963; "Scissors Bros. Warehouse" (with George Brecht and Robert Watts), Rolf Nelson Gallery, Los Angeles, 1963; Fluxhall, New York, 1964; "The Arts in Fusion," Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1966; "Object Poems" and "Intermedia," Something Else Gallery, New York, 1966; "Arty-po," Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 1967. Performances of Alison Knowles' works at Fluxus Festivals, Wiesbaden, Copenhagen, Paris, Düsseldorf, Stockholm, New York, 1962-64; Yam Festival, New York, 1963; Douglas College Happenings and Events Festival, New Brunswick, N.J., 1963; Monday Night Letter Series, Cafe a Go Go, New York, 1964-65.

The Big Book is not a product, but a process, and the person using the Book must accept himself as part of the process, discarding enough reserve to bend over and enter the Book—flexing, flowing, discarding stances. The Big Book cannot be known without being entered, and it cannot be entered without being modified—so that getting to know it alters it, even as it alters us, and there can be no one interpretation.

So down on hands and knees then, and through the cover, on through a hole burned in a vinyl page, and down onto belly to crawl through a tunnel in a wall of artificial grass and water, a realm of pleasingly overt artifice. After wiggling through the tunnel, one enters the apartment, an illusionless reality, a world without artifice, the unpretentious Manhattan living-loft of the 1950s and '60s. This underworld, such as an epic hero usually enters, presents the processes of life nonchalantly, without varnish, and involves one immediately. Everything seems useful here: easy communications out of the book by a working telephone, while the eggs are frying on the hot-plate, or perhaps a glass of wine while we peruse the library under the window. One escapes for a moment here, leaves the pages of the Book to retreat and view the gallery of goats on page four. These goats, originally screen printed on newspaper by Alison Knowles, have been transformed by many artists and hang here, lighted with black light and tungsten, rising above the grass tunnel and forming pages three and four. Back to the apartment, we may swing out the baby chair and rest a moment before continuing through the pages by climbing out the window and up a short ladder. When the apartment was felt to be sufficient, it ceased to be an underworld and became a means toward elevation. Descending the ladder with a jump, one passes easily through the final opening, which is a silk screen mounted to the eight foot page with cross-bar and slip hinges. Others who read the Big Book who take this journey through metaphors, will be on a different quest and will arrive at different goals, but necessarily while they are in the Big Book they will be as mobile, kinetic, aural, visual, energetic, and beautiful as it is.

William S. Wilson
(Written for *Décollage* 6)



Alison Knowles
The Big Book



James Nutt

Born Pittsfield, Mass., 1938. Studied at School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Lives in Evanston, Illinois. Group exhibitions include: "Sunken City Rises," 1964, "Eye on Chicago," 1964, "Phalanx 3," 1965, all at Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago; "Chicago Painting," Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, 1965; "Hairy Who," Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, 1966, 1967; "Artists of Chicago and Vicinity," The Art Institute of Chicago, 1967 (Viehler Award).

"Phalanx 3," a 1965 exhibition in Herman Hall of the Illinois Institute of Technology, contained works of surprising vigor and originality by a group of young Chicago painters who, the following year, were to be launched as the HAIRY WHO. Don Baum, the sympathetic director of the Hyde Park Art Center, sponsored their venture and a Chicago critic and radio commentator became a cryptic part of their name. Two HAIRY WHO comic books, reminiscent of Joe Brainard's "C" Comics, were issued to accompany the 1966 and 1967 HAIRY WHO exhibitions. Art Green, Gladys Nilsson, James Nutt, Suellen Rocca and Karl Wirsum in those exhibitions presented full-scale versions, skillful elaborations or wild transmutations of the cartoon images filling the HAIRY WHO comic books.

Franz Schulze sees HAIRY WHO as a new outcropping of the dark, myth-haunted imagery preeminent among the painters of the 1950s—generally reflected in the pervasive post-war love of surrealism and dada among both artists and collectors in Chicago. While there may be parallels, the differences are no less evident. If abstract art can be said to have an esthetic and surrealism and dada an anti-esthetic objective, then the HAIRY WHO shares with pop art a lack of concern with esthetics. The group imagery relates to Peter Saul and Robert Hudson who both had considerable exposure in Chicago. HAIRY WHO could perhaps be construed as a pictorial counterpart of "funk art," the simultaneous West Coast development in sculpture.

James Nutt adopts with great delight—and pushes *ad absurdum*—the cartoonist's short-cuts to expressiveness and plasticity. He uses color in the most unabashed fashion. Glossing over the weirdo effects and sideshow flavor his subjects afford him, he amplifies the initial imagery with misspellings, cut-outs from cheap novelty house mailers, personal hygiene ads, anatomical monstrosities and physical flaws in every shade and color. Yet, there is more nostalgia and raffishness in these works than erotic and scatological interest. Nutt loves malapropisms, has a cool sense of humor and a low-brow interest in the big-city subculture of tattoo parlors, flop-houses, wrestling arenas and cut-rate stores. With a delight in excess and exaggeration Nutt re-interprets the unconscious and unregenerate

iconography of an adolescent and semi-literate society.

James Nutt works on the reverse side of plexiglass and uses collage overlays to enhance the physical and pictorial dimensions of his freely shaped paintings. In spite of the hardhitting impression they make at first, these paintings are private, inner-directed and more concerned with intensity of feeling than with clarity of communication. Nutt demonstrates with wit and defiance how Chicago's surrealist hang-up can be given a comic slant, played up in hip fashion and tied in with visual and literary ideas that have currency the world over.

James
Snoopy
Miss

James Nutt
Snooper Trooper
Miss C. Knows



Born Rome, 1940. Studied at University of Milan. Intermedia experiments include theater and film direction, avant garde publishing (the edition of objects *da-a/ u delà* begun in 1966 and the magazine *b-t arte oggi* in Italia this year), writing poetry, musical scores and scenarios for Happenings ("Feigned Targets," Galleria Blu, Milan, 1964 and "Fluxus Concerts," Turin, Genoa, Gallarate, 1967). Participated in Destruction in Art Symposium (DIAS), London, 1966. Lives in Milan. One-man exhibitions: Galleria Apollinaire, Milan, 1966; Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967; Galleria Il Punto, Turin, 1967; Galleria La Chiocciola, Padua, 1967; Galerie Le Zodiaque, Brussels, 1967; Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa, 1967. Group exhibitions: "Gesto e Segno," Galleria Blu, Milan, 1964; "Adami, Baruchello, Cavaliere, Simonetti," and "An Italian Way of Art," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1966; "Dada in Italia 1916-1966," Civico Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, 1966; "La Lettura del Linguaggio Visivo," Castello del Valentino, Turin, 1966; "Il Giuoco degli Artisti," Galleria del Naviglio, Milan, 1966; "La Fiera del Disegno," Galleria l'Annunciata, Milan, 1966; "Artisti Italiani Contemporanei," Studio Marconi, Milan, 1966; "Aspetti della Pittura e Scultura a Milano," Galleria Nuova Pesa, Rome, 1967; "Salone della Giovane Pittura," Civico Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, 1967; "Towards a Cold Poetic Image," Galleria Schwarz, Milan, 1967; "Il tempo dell'immagine," II Biennale Internazionale della Giovane Pittura, Museo Civico, Bologna, 1967; Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, 1967.

Simonetti's canvases "read" like a network of signs, abbreviated and diagrammatic images. While the structure is lucid as an overall design or program, the individual elements comprising the structure are opaque and ambiguous. Any attempt at translating the minute signs in this pictographic fabric is doomed from the start. They originate in, but no longer relate to, the iconology of a technological and consumer's world and they are extremely dense with respect to linguistic, philosophic and literary references. To the extent that Simonetti's secretive imagery is decodable, we find references to the idea worlds of Marcel Duchamp, James Joyce, Lewis Carroll and Laurence Sterne.

Simonetti's paintings operate on several levels. This complexity springs from the artist's conviction that perception and interpretation no longer rely on the rules of traditional logic and monocular vision. Non-Aristotelian with a vengeance, Simonetti insists that we consider the world not as a universe, but as a multiverse of hypotheses, ideas, and dialectically inter-related situations.

The artist makes his point through the lucidity of intellectual discourse rather than the raptures of emotion. Therefore, our first impression of his paintings is one of coldness, detachment and calculation; they reveal elaborate schemes and a "strategy" borrowed from chess, that most rigorous of all games. Unique to Simonetti and setting him apart from John Cage or Allan Kaprow is a lack of interest in creating a new or intermediary genre. He makes it clear that he wants to operate within the genre of painting, and the rules of that genre, because to him it is not yet exhausted.

His paintings are like "stills" of a mind in constant operation. Moving about on an indeterminate white surface, an idea may run from association to association, digging its path through the maze of literary-poetic and pictorial semiotics. The artist's memory is mined in these works like in an open pit where layer after layer is bared, allowing us to read the history of the site by concentrating on the vertical rather than the horizontal. Simonetti's imagery, in the main deriving from illustrations in dictionaries, mechanical drawings and gameboard pieces, alludes to subject-matter in an emblematic way.

The composition of these elements is based on the artist's permutations of intellectual choices and game situations. Simonetti creates a legible discontinuity that repudiates narrative conventions while suggesting another, time and space oriented possibility: the theatre. The painting-score equation is an interesting potential but it will take more than the artist's general assurance that "any of my pieces can be performed any-time, anyplace and by anyone" to convert pictorial opacity into theatrical clarity.

Gianni-Emilio Simonetti
L'eau de Giotto diventa usqueadbaugham



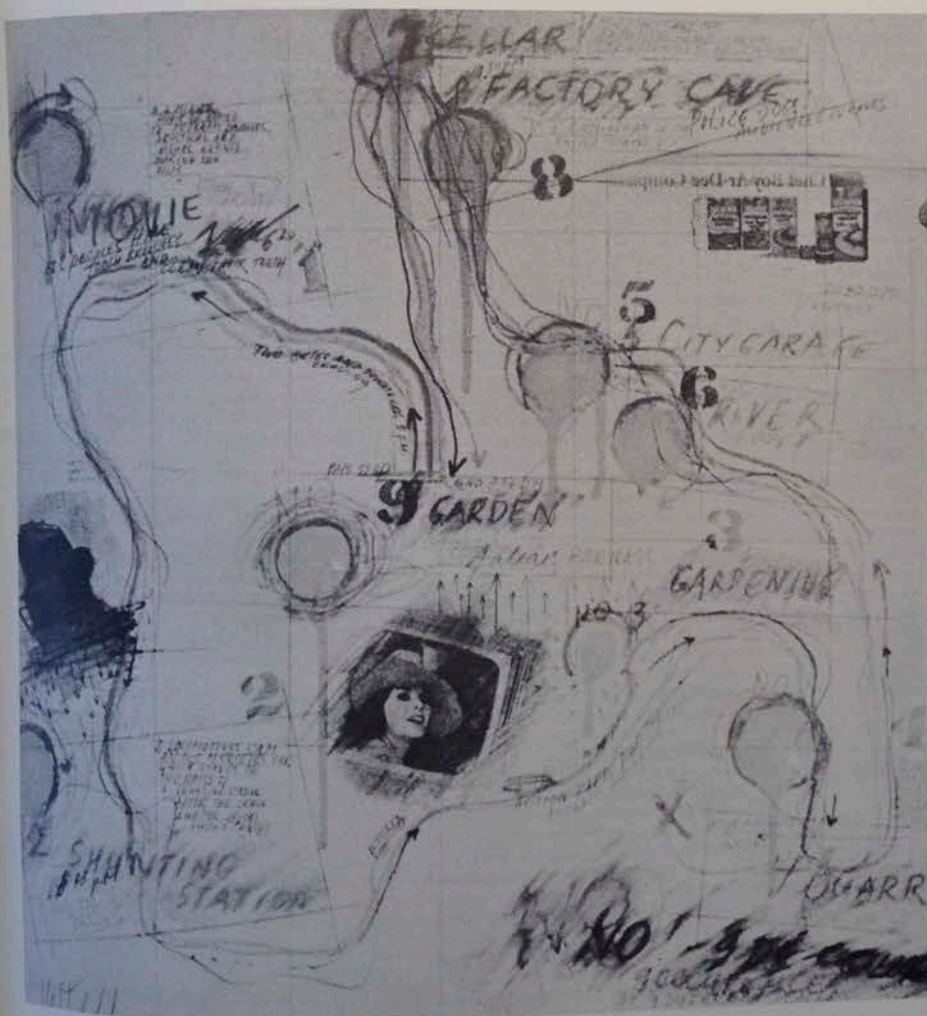
Born Leverkusen, 1932. Studied at the Werk-kunstschule, Wuppertal, 1954-55, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1955-56 and Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf, 1956-57. In the mid-fifties began his "Dé-coll/agen," which originated in posters being torn off walls and developed into "Dé-coll/age Events" and Happenings. Active in European Fluxus Festivals since 1962, YAM Festival, New York, 1963, Destruction in Art Symposium, London, 1966. Lives in Cologne. One-man exhibitions: Educacion y Descanso, Cáceres, 1958; Galeria Sala Lux, Cáceres, 1959; Galerie Le Soleil dans la Tête, Paris, 1961, Galerie Haro Lauhus, Cologne, 1961; Galerie Monet, Amsterdam, 1962; Smolin Gallery, New York, 1963; Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, 1963; Galerie Loehr, Frankfurt, 1964; "Phänomene," Galerie René Block, Berlin, 1965; Galerie Studio F, Ulm, 1965; "Notations and Erasures," Something Else Gallery, New York, 1966; "Bilder, Verwischungen, Happening-Notationen 1961-66," Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 1966; "Dé-coll/agen 1954-61," Galerie Tobières & Silix, Cologne, 1967. Group exhibitions include: Salon des Comparaisons, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1961; "Anti-Process 3," Galleria Brera, Milan, 1961; "Donner à voir 2," Galerie Creuze, Paris, 1962; "4 Environments" (with Higgins, Knowles and Koepcke), Studio Spichernstrasse 28, Cologne, 1963; "Schrift en Beeld," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, 1963; Deutscher Künstlerbund, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 1964; "Neodada, Pop, Dé-coll/age, Kapit. Realismus," Galerie René Block, Berlin, 1964; "Phänomene & Realitäten," Rowohlt, Reinbeck, 1965; "Hommage à Berlin," Galerie René Block, Berlin, 1965; "Phänomene & Realitäten," Kunstakademie, Hamburg, 1965; "The Arts in Fusion," Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1966; "Object Poems," Something Else Gallery, New York, 1966; "Junge Generation," Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 1966; "Auto/Hommage an Henry Ford!" Cologne, 1967; "Kunst des XX. Jahrhunderts," Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf, 1967; "Konstruktion & Destruktion," Galerie Tobières & Silix, Cologne, 1967. Dé-coll/age-Happenings include: *Skelett*, Wuppertal, 1954; *Das Theater Ist Auf Der Strasse*, Paris, 1958; *Kleenex 1-4*, Fluxus Festivals, Wiesbaden, Copenhagen, Paris, 1962, Düsseldorf, 1963; 6 TV *De-coll/agen*, New York, 1963; *In Ulm, Um Ulm*

Und Um Ulm Herum, 1964; *Phaenomene*, Berlin, 1965; *24 Stunden*, Wuppertal, 1965; *Dogs and Chinese Not Allowed*, New York, 1966; *Rebellion Plus Minus Dekomposition*, London, 1966; *Miss Vietnam*, Cologne, 1967; *21 Projektoren, Film-Happening*, Cologne, 1967.

Wolf Vostell's Happening career was launched in the mid 1950s when he tore posters off walls in Paris and Düsseldorf and proposed the result (de-coll/age—the artist's spelling) as an art form similar to collage though arrived at by reverse methods. Other artists—Raymond Hains, Mimmo Rotella and Jacques de la Villeglé—were engaged in the laceration of posters and Vostell's de-coll/ages were a product of the same time and climate. Passing beyond the "New Realists" Vostell turned from product to process: out of a preoccupation with torn posters for the sake of raw and unexpected imagery, grew the de-coll/age presented as event. Vostell's ambition to create an art that would transcend the boundaries of time and space and no longer be tied to traditional materials and concepts became a fact in the "De-coll/age Happening."

In French "décollage" has the double meaning of "unsticking" and the take-off of an airplane. In his "De-coll/age Happenings," Vostell plays heavily on the second meaning. The idea of a take-off from posters to events is an attractive one. Vostell asserts that life and people are art, that Happenings and events are frames of reference for experience of the present, a do-it-yourself reality. Jet-age transportation and the electronic communications media, violence, brutality and annihilation prompt and are evoked by Vostell's Happenings. The artist takes an anti-war and anti-discrimination stand and holds us spellbound by the self-dissolving, self-destroying and self-exhausting factors in human experience. The Happening notations in this exhibition are to be read as scores or, more precisely, as the aggregate of pre-Happening instructions and post-Happening reflections. All preliminary ideas about and workplans for a particular Happening are written down in combination with renderings and pictures of the places mapped out for action. As scores they do not lend themselves to repetition or repeated interpretations. Instead, Vostell calls them "erasures" and "idea fields" that can be activated by the viewer's imagination.

Wolf Vostell
Nein-9-De-coll / ages



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Checklist of the Exhibition

Shusaku Arakawa

1. *Separate Continuums, No. 2 (At the Corner of Central Park)* 1966-67 Ink and acrylic on canvas 62¾ x 187"
2. *A Couple* 1966-67 Ink and acrylic on canvas 93½ x 125½"
3. *A Self-Portrait* 1967 Oil, fluorescent magic marker and pencil on canvas 90 x 62½"

All loans Dwan Gallery, New York

Gianfranco Baruchello

4. *Persuasione contro Necessità* 1965 Mixed media on photo paper 54 x 65"
5. *La costituzione del NOI* 1965 Mixed Media on photo paper 54 x 65"
6. *I tre ordini maggiori del Verace Amore* 1966 Mixed media on layered plexiglass 20 x 29 x 3"
7. *L'insieme delle non-disponibilità* 1966 Mixed media on layered plexiglass 20 x 29 x 3"
8. *Il ritenutino* 1966 Mixed media on layered plexiglass 20 x 29 x 3"
9. *It Comes to my Mind (Mi viene in mente)* 1966 Mixed media on layered plexiglass 20 x 29 x 3"

All loans Cordier & Ekstrom, Inc., New York

Mary Bauermeister

10. *I'm a Pacifist, but War Pictures are too Beautiful* 1964-66 Mixed media 48 x 95"
11. *Writing* 1966 Mixed media 33½ x 33½"
12. *V.I.P. Very Important Picture* 1966-67 Mixed media 64 x 64"
13. *Always Something Lying Under* 1967 Mixed media 20 x 29½"
14. *Pictionary II* 1967 Mixed media 21 x 40"
15. *N-Ever* 1967 Mixed media, mixed size
16. *Fes-Moll II* 1967 Mixed media 20 x 29½"

All loans Galeria Bonino, Ltd., New York

George Brecht

17. *King of Cups* 1966 Mixed media 7½ x 5 x 2"
18. *Three of Coins* 1966 Mixed media 5 x 3¾ x 2¼"
19. *Two of Clubs* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
20. *Three of Swords* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
21. *Knight of Clubs* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
22. *Valet of Cups* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
23. *Six of Swords* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
24. *One of Clubs* 1966 Mixed media 10 x 15 x 2½"
25. *Six of Clubs* 1966 Mixed media 15¼ x 19½ x 2½"
26. *Knight of Coins* 1966 Mixed media 15¼ x 19½ x 2½"

All ten pages from *The Book of the Tumbler on Fire* (Chapter VII) lent by Fischbach Gallery, New York

Oyvind Fahlström

27. *Sylvie* 1965 Variable painting Tempera on board, vinyl and metal 78 x 78"
28. *Sitting . . . Blocks* 1965-66 Variable sculpture Tempera on vinyl and wood, 10 blocks 15 x 15 x 15" each
29. *Eddie in the Desert . . . Dominoes* 1966 Variable painting Tempera on plexiglass and board 58 x 70"
30. *Life-Curve No. 2 (Snowfield) Oswald* 1967 Variable painting Oil on photo paper on vinyl and metal, fur on board 33 x 138"

All loans Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, with exception of No. 27 Collection Mr. and Mrs. D. Franklin Königsberg, Los Angeles

Ray Johnson

31. *Stele* 1966 Collage-painting 28¾ x 12½"
32. *Comb Knife* 1966 Collage-painting 20 x 20"
33. *Lice* 1966 Collage-painting 22 x 16"
34. *The Snake has a Heart* 1966 Collage-painting 13½ x 27"
35. *Ice* 1966 Collage-painting 30 x 30"
36. *Massage Ball* 1967 Collage-painting 14½ x 16½"
37. *Wanda Gag* 1967 Collage-painting 13½ x 16½"
38. *Walrus Urinating* 1967 Collage-painting 14 x 20"
39. *His Art Looks Old* 1967 Collage-painting 15 x 20"
40. *Jan* 1967 Collage-painting 14¼ x 20"

All loans Richard Feigen Gallery, Chicago, with exception of Nos. 31 and 35 Collection W. M. Bollenbach, Jr., St. Paul, Minnesota

Allan Kaprow

41. *Words* 1967 Mixed media environment 8 x 9 x 9' and 8 x 6 x 6'

Reconstruction by the artist of a 1962 environment

R. B. Kitaj

42. *What is a Comparison?* 1964 Silkscreen print 30 x 20"
43. *World Ruin Through Black Magic* 1965 Silkscreen print 54 x 38½"
44. *Heart* 1966 Silkscreen print 23½ x 32"
45. *Pogany* 1966 Silkscreen print 40 x 27"
46. *Mort* 1966 Silkscreen print 40 x 27¾"
47. *Go and Get Killed Comrade—We Need a Byron in the Movement* 1966 Silkscreen print 32 x 21½"
48. *Vernissage Cocktail* 1966 Silkscreen print 41 x 27¾"

All loans Marlborough Graphics, New York

Alison Knowles

49. *The Big Book* 1964-67 Mixed media
8 x 8 x 8" Lent by the artist
Note: The Big Book incorporates the "Goat Gallery," an array of works of art by Robert Watts, Emmett Williams, Robert Filliou, Wolf Vostell, Takako Saito, Carolee Schneemann, Al Hansen, Philip Corner, Cyrelle Forman, George Brecht, Claes Oldenburg, Hansjorg Mayer, Ray Johnson, Dieter Rot, Billy Apple, May Wilson and Dick Higgins. Alison Knowles executed silkscreened images of a mountain elk and an exercising man which she printed on sheets of newspaper and sent to a number of her friends to be transformed and returned.

James Nutt

50. *Stampeed* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, aluminum, wood 36 x 55½"
51. *Andy Groth* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, aluminum 17¾ x 23"
52. *She's Hit* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, wood, enamel 36½ x 24½"
53. *Snooper Trooper* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, wood, enamel, aluminum, steel 39½ x 21½"
54. *Miss C. Knows* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, aluminum, wood, rubber, enamel 75¼ x 51¾"
55. *Why Did He Do It?* 1967 Acrylic on plexiglass, wood, enamel 60¾ x 36¾"
All works lent by the artist

Gianni-Emilio Simonetti

56. *Apres lo Smarxt-Set "Inter-nazionale"* 1966 Mixed media on canvas 36 x 36"
57. *Classificazione dicotomica dei sessi in base agli elementi secondari dell'abbigliamento* 1966 Mixed media on canvas 36 x 36"
58. *Les fruits du champ de mon pere ("Multi-verse of the Young Shandy")* 1966 Mixed media on canvas 40 x 60"
59. *Lips-Vago, Tenax* 1967 Mixed media on canvas 50 x 50"
60. *Turn.in.in money-moon a ll'hotel Desolazione ("ANnalyse du vir.age")* 1967 Wash with a wet sponge 40 x 40"
61. *We s.how it one's tit ("ANnalyse du vir.age")* 1967 Wash with a wet sponge 40 x 40"
62. *LUV ("ANnalyse du vir.age")* 1967 Wash with a wet sponge 40 x 40"
63. *L'eau de Giotto diventa usqueadbaugham ("ANnalyse du vir.age")* 1967 Wash with a wet sponge 40 x 40"
All loans Galeria Bonino, Ltd., New York, courtesy Galleria Schwarz, Milan

Wolf Vostell

64. *Television De-coll/age for Millions* 1959 Happening in excerpts Cologne 1959 and New Brunswick, N.J. 1963 Notation no. 2 March 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
65. *Cityrama* 1961 Happening Cologne 1961 Notation no. 2 March 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
66. *Nein-9-De-coll/ages* 1961 Happening Wuppertal 1963 Notation no. 2 March 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
67. *In Ulm um Ulm und um Ulm herum* 1964 Happening Ulm 1964 Notation a/b no. 2 March 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
68. *In Ulm um Ulm und um Ulm herum* 1964 Happening Ulm 1964 Notation d/e no. 2 April 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
69. *Never Again* 1964 Happening Aachen 1964 Notation no. 2 April 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
70. *You* 1964 Happening Great Neck, N.Y. 1964 Notation no. 2 March 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
71. *Phenomena* 1965 Happening Berlin 1965 Notation no. 2 April 1966 Mixed media on paper 18 x 18"
All loans Collection Dick Higgins, New York

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