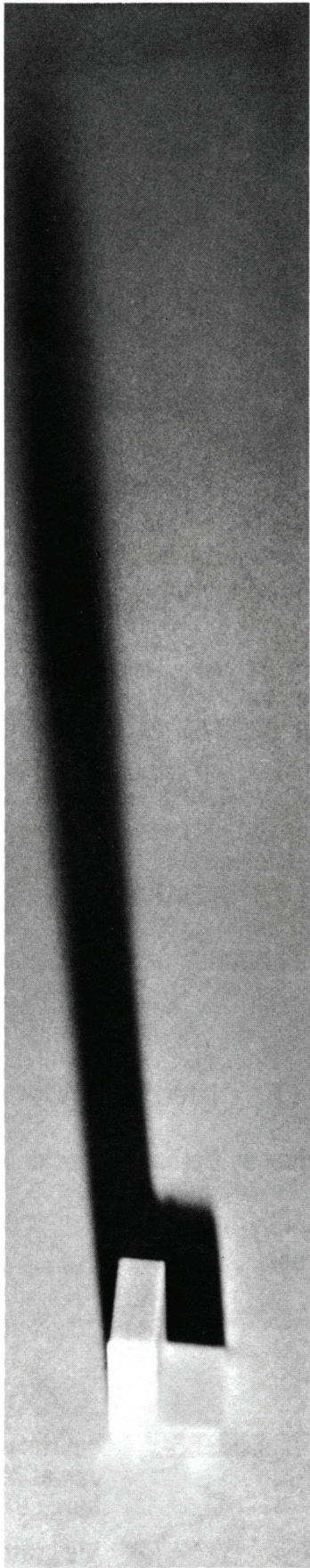
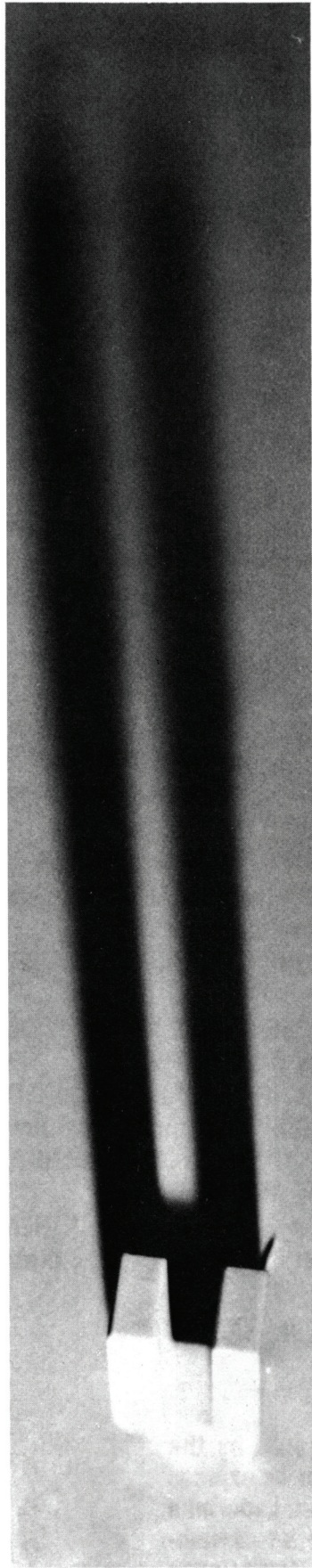


**FRANKLIN**



**FURNACE**



**VOLUME 2**



**NUMBER 1**



**FLUE Volume 2, Number 1**

**Publisher: Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc.**

**Editor-in-Chief: Martha Wilson**

**Editor: Deborah Drier**

**Editorial Contributors: Howard Goldstein, Bill Gordh,  
Jill Medvedow, Barbara Quinn**

**Designed by John Copoulos**

**Production: Ann Rosen, Adrienne Weiss**

**Cover And This Page: Louise Lawler**

**Typesetting: U.S. Lithograph, Inc.**

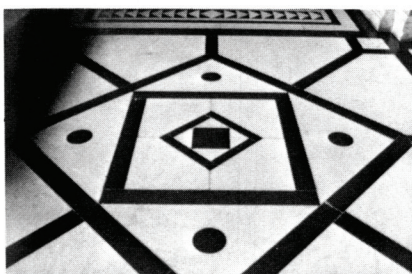
**Printing: Expedi, Inc.**



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

<b>RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE BOOK DESIGN, by Gail Harrison Roman</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Artist's Page, THE GRASS WAS GREENER BUT THE WATER WAS DEEPER, by Stephanie Brody Lederman</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>(CON) TEXTS: UPDATE ON THE COLLECTION/INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART, by Jill Medvedow</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Artist's Page, THEY CAPTURED THE WOODPECKER, by Ana Mendieta</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>LOVE, DEATH, AND FREEDOM IN ROUMANIAN DADAISM AND SURREALISM, a Poetical Essay by Valery Oisteanu</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>"STERILIZATION/ELIMINATION": CHILLING "HOMAGE" TO GENOCIDE, review by Anne Pitrone</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Artist's Page, from RICE/TREE/BURIAL, by Agnes Denes</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Artist's Page, UNTITLED, by Beverly Feldmann</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION: MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE, interview between Linda Burnham and Bill Gordh, piece by John Howells</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PERFORMANCE CRITICISM: STUDYING MAD PURSUIT, review by Barbara Baracks</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Artist's Page, UNTITLED, by Jack McCaslin</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Artist's Page, LYRICS FOR A NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM, by Kay Hines</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Artist's Page, CLOSED DEMOCRATIC CYCLE, by Dieter Froese</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>FURNACE INFO . . . ETC.</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Artist's Page, PISSED OFF, by David Hammons</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>FUEL, by Barbara Quinn</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>BACK PAGE, by Richard Parker</b>	<b>32</b>

Artist's pages were sponsored by the following galleries, to whom we express our thanks and appreciation: Lederman by Kathryn Markel; Mendieta and Hammons by Brooke Alexander, Inc.; Denes by Pace Gallery Publications; Feldmann by Nancy Lurie Gallery (Chicago); Jack McCaslin's page appears through the



courtesy of a publication grant from James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

We gratefully acknowledge support from the New York State Council on the Arts for the publication of this issue of the FLUE.



# Avant-Garde Book

Russian

Design

By Gail Harrison Roman

The overthrow of traditional values—both social and political—that was wrought by the Russian Revolution of 1917 had already begun in the works of Russian avant-garde artists and writers as early as 1910. In April of that year, an anthology entitled *A Trap for Judges* (*Sadok sudei*) appeared. Its provocative title expressed its authors' contempt for the critics who, they had no doubt, would fall into a "trap of misjudgment" about innovative art and literature. Like the Italian Futurists and the German Expressionists, these writers and artists—among them David Burliuk and Velimir Khlebnikov—delighted in shocking conventional taste. Such a gesture of what could be termed "hostile innovation" was translated into an ideological manifesto for progressive artists and writers in a second edition of *A Trap for Judges*, which appeared in 1913. Here, calls were sounded for radical rejection of tradition and for personal freedom in literary creation. This revolt heralded a revolution in painting and sculpture, in poetry and prose (as well as in domestic and industrial design, in photography and cinematography); a revolt that in the realm of Russian avant-garde book design can best be observed in its typography and photomontage.

In the early teens, numerous publications (as well as exhibitions) in Russia demonstrated the new principles of art and literature, while programmatically issuing pronouncements on the new creative arts. A special example is the 1912 anthology-cum-manifesto entitled *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste* (*Poshcheshchina obshchestvennomu vkusu*). Bound in sackcloth covers, it contains a polemical attack on traditional writers and celebrated masterpieces of the past, declaring, for example: "Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy overboard from the Ship of Modernity." The authors whose work appeared in *A Slap* . . . included Burliuk and Khlebnikov, along with Alexei Kruchenykh, Vladimir Mayakovsky, and Vasily Kandinsky. Their works, ironically, fell short of their announced intentions—with the notable exception of Khlebnikov's "neologisms."



Neologisms, new and often bizarre combinations of syllables and words that may or may not make sense, are an aspect of *zaum*. Derived from *za*, meaning "beyond" and *um*, meaning "reason," *zaum* means "beyond reason," or "transrational." *Zaum* aimed at the development of a universal language based on pure abstract ideas, which were to be expressed either by the separate sounds of language or by meaningless combinations of existing phonemes. *Zaum* could express both linguistic texture and affective meaning.

Although familiar with contemporary movements in Western art, the Russian avant-garde vowed to create a wholly Russian art and literature. Even though foreign influences and parallels may be evident in their work, they did achieve this stated goal (although only briefly, in the years surrounding the

Revolution), largely because their language provided the means to create new forms. Experiments in language ultimately led to a revolution in illustration and typographical design.

In order to give concrete expression to their explorations into the root structure and affective meaning of words, the Russian avant-garde produced books employing varied typefaces (occasionally combining manual and mechanical lettering) and dynamic layouts, and exhibiting an experimental fusion of pictorial and verbal imagery. In their rejection of the precision and symmetry of printed type as repetitive and dry, they often preferred to lithograph hand-crafted texts, which were usually composed on the page with greater attention to matters of innovation and design than to questions of narrative logic and readability.



For example, Kruchenykh's 1913 book *Explodity (Vzorval)* was printed by hand and rubber stamp, enhancing Kruchenykh's free language of nonexistent words and meaningless sequences organized aurally rather than logically. Lithographs by Natalia Goncharova, Kasimir Malevich, and others appear as full-page illustrations and as abstract elements that are stylistically integrated with the narrative. Boldly placed linear elements animate the text pages with dynamic lines whose "explosion" in many directions (the "explodity" of the title) can be interpreted as a metaphor for the enthusiasm of the Russian avant-garde in the face of their newborn creativity.

Another lithographed/hand-written publication of 1913, written jointly by Khlebnikov and Kruchenykh and illustrated by Malevich and Olga Rozanova, is *A Game in Hell (Igra v Adu)*, in which primitivist imagery (popular among the avant-garde because of its unsophisticated expression), native Russian sources (including Old Church Slavonic linguistic devices), and peasant woodcuts appear. The text is a poem about a card game between the devils and sinners in hell. It reflects Russian folk traditions about demonic creatures and was printed by Kruchenykh in a style reminiscent of Old Church Slavonic calligraphy. The bold swirling forms of the text and images combine in an amazing and new synthesis of narrative and illustration. Old Church Slavonic, as well as foreign letters and words (a corollary of *zaum*), is found sprinkled among passages written in modern Russian. Kruchenykh was fascinated by both structural and aural properties of language, explaining in *Explodity*: "On April 27, at 3 p.m., I mastered all language in a momentary flash. Such is a poet of modern times." To "prove" this absurdist declaration, Kruchenykh included in his book phonetic poetry whose sounds mimicked those of Japanese, Spanish, and Hebrew!

The Russian Revolution mobilized progressive artists and writers, who sought to transform *all* artistic media—painting, sculpture, architecture, domestic and industrial design, photography and typography—into vital creative agents within the new society. In particular, they were concerned to produce agitprop ("agitational propaganda"), especially in the form of books and journals. The confusion that reigned about the purpose and form of art in the years immediately following the Revolution and widespread scarcity of materials, as well as inconsistent patronage, combined to foster the book form. Happily, because of the small scale of books, the availability of printing equipment, and a pressing need to spread information rapidly, these publications escaped the vagaries and exigencies of early Soviet culture, and many still survive.



У ЗЛАТА ЗАРЕВО  
ОГНЕЙ  
И СЪДНА БОЛЬНЪЙ  
ОНА НИЗТОЖНА И  
СЛАВА  
ПРЕД НѢЙ КОЛЫШЕТ  
СЯ РЪЗЪБА

И ЧЕРТЪ РАСПИЛЕ  
НЪЙ И СТРУЖКИ  
КАКЪ ЗМѢЙКИ В ВОЗ-  
ДУХЪ ТОРЗАТ  
ГЛАВЪ РЪЗВЪЯ ИГРУ  
ШКИ  
ГЛАЗА ВОЖЖЕННЫЯ  
СВѢЖАТ

БЫТЬ ОТПУЩЕННЫМ  
БЕЗ ПѢСНИ  
БЕЗ УТѢХИ И СЛЕЗЫ  
ТОЧНО ПАРУБКИ НА  
ПРѢСНѢ  
КОЛѢБИЩУ ВЫХОДЦЫ  
МЕРЗЛЫ

ЛЮБОВНИЦУ ХОР ОТОАВЫ  
СЪМЪЯ

Velimir Khlebnikov and Alexei Kruchenykh, *A Game in Hell*, 1913. Illustrated by Kasimir Malevich and Olga Rozanova. Interior page. Collection of Robert Shapazian, Inc.





The most prominent group of artists and writers during the 1920s was LEF (Left Front of the Arts), organized by the poet Mayakovsky in 1923 and active sporadically

until late 1928. Their journal, also called *LEF*, was edited by Mayakovsky, its design was planned and partially executed by the artist Alexander Rodchenko, and the official state publisher Gosizdat produced it. *LEF* includes explanations and discussions of revolutionary principles and exhortations to participate in collective agitprop works. The abstract geometric style of Constructivism dominates *LEF*, which included textile designs by Liubov Popova, sports clothing by Varvara Stepanova, and advertising posters by Rodchenko. In addition, the new-art-forms-for-a-new-society are enthusiastically demonstrated in the use of boldface and varied typography (for textual emphasis), in the dynamic arrangements of words (for visual impact), and in the nonobjective geometric elements (for clarification and punctuation of text sections) that figure throughout.

Rodchenko's designs for the covers of *LEF* (1923–1925) as well as for its successor *The New LEF* (1927–1928) are among the most advanced and stunning works produced anywhere during the 1920s. In particular, Rodchenko used photomontage to create unusual combinations of pictorial imagery and his typographical arrangement contrived to call visual attention to the covers' internal construction and dynamism.

For all its artistic and cultural accomplishments, *LEF* met with a harsh fate: it was deemed "incomprehensible to the masses," and funding was withdrawn. Initially, such nonobjective styles as Constructivism (along with Suprematism) were not thought to clash with the utilitarian principles of Soviet art, but increasing official reaction against abstract, "individualistic" tendencies in art and literature belied *LEF*'s contention that its innovative forms would inspire new art forms suitable to Soviet proletarian life and consciousness. Most avant-garde artists and writers, and their projects, fell into disfavor in the wake of the official criticism that began in the middle to late 1920s against "modernist, useless and decadent" work.



"THE GRASS WAS GREENER."



BUT THE  
WATER

WAS  
DEEPER"



||

EVERY ONE KNEW.

(THEY WERE PLAYING WITH

F I R C)

ASIDE: AND

THEY BOTH HAD HAD

DREAMS

IN WHICH

THEY

LOST A

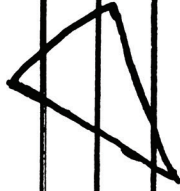
CONTACT

LENS.

|||

BUT NO ONE LEFT

early.



|||

"PERHAPS IT WILL ALL END. IN VIOLENCE,"  
THEY THEORIZED. THEY BROKE  
OFF CONTACT,

BUT

THEY

BECAME

THE

SUBJECT

OF MUCH

ART.



© 1981



## (Con) Texts: Update on the Collection/ International Mail Art

By Jill Medvedow

The permanent collection of artists' books, periodicals, mail art, and reference materials in the Franklin Furnace Archives over the last few years has burgeoned to 9,000 volumes. The quantity of material broadly grouped under the heading of bookworks mandated not only a reappraisal of the past, present, and future of the collection but also the creation of a staff position to carry out this reappraisal. On October 5, 1981 I joined the staff of Franklin Furnace as archivist, salaried by grants from the New York State Council for the Arts Museum Aid Panel and the Tortuga Foundation, and began the task of cataloging and "thinking through" the collection. In just one month, approximately seventy-five books were added to the archives. While this was partially due to an accumulation of material over the summer, it is also an accurate reflection of the quantity of bookworks being created by artists—nationally and internationally.

If much of the attraction of the multiple for the artist can be described by the word "accessibility," this is an equally accurate word to describe our goals, in addition to the prior commitment to catalog and preserve all material entrusted to us. Accessibility relates both to easy access to information and to the actual display and exhibition of works from the collection. Recataloging the collection, including an extensive cross-indexing, will allow the works to be retrieved easily and, therefore, be of value to artists, scholars, and critics. The organization of information will also allow us to begin to curate shows from within and to create an area where books, of which we have multiple copies, may be displayed for perusal and browsing. Practical issues of space and financial considerations inherently impede the program. Nevertheless, for the first time, we expect critical, curatorial, and philosophical issues to be addressed vis-à-vis the use of the page as art.

One of the more arresting changes I've noticed as books cross my desk is the amount of material coming from abroad. Artwork from Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Spain, England, Italy, and the Netherlands forms a large percentage of the total work in the collection. Though artists' books worldwide share certain concerns, different contents, contexts, and preoccupations soon become apparent.

The work from Eastern Europe is, as might be expected, usually political in nature and often harsh in style. Much of the reliance on printing processes and correspondence or mail art stems from the inability of artists to have a significant internal dialogue within their own countries due to political repression and reprisal. Using crudely hand-colored photocopies, Waclaw Ropiecki has created a series entitled, *Art as a Way of Authotherapy*, that describes the progress of his self-realization through art, a process of discovery in which photocopy has figured prominently. He says,

Printed works are well known for a very long time. But the way the young artists use it now is quite different than before. Older generation (sic) use it, so to say, as the medium of secondary importance or parallel to others. For young generation (sic) of artists it is almost the only way to free and independent existence in art field (sic).

A like attitude is presented by the Hungarian artist, Kópany Marton, who also relies heavily on printed modes although, he says, "The possibility of interior communications are almost completely lacking for such a production . . . at the same time, the art 'artistic,' patriotic-loyal is flourishing. Therefore, I try to persist in this state . . . I am looking for the possibility of an exterior communication." Marton's mail works also use photocopies in limited editions of unbound books, which are composed of broken lines, squares, squiggles, and other imagery formally related to the rectangular page.

The categorization of artists by their political dissension, as distinct from the recognition of artists as pariahs from society at large, is in itself a point of dissent. It has become acceptable to suspend any value judgment on the artistic merit of this work, because the artists are working in a climate of political repression and that they are making work at all is understood to be more important than aesthetic considerations. The following is a letter the archives received from Yugoslav artist Goran Djordjevic, unaccompanied by an artwork, which attempts to clarify the predicament of Eastern



self-portrait in the most beautiful landscape  
I have ever seen in my life  
from Autotherapeutical Seance  
autoportret wśród krajobrazu  
najpiękniejszego jaki kiedykolwiek w życiu widziałem

11 05 78



ART AS A WAY OF AUTOHERAPY

Waclaw Ropiecki  
negat 11.05.78  
real 30.08.80

Waclaw Ropiecki

Amy Meadow



Tomasz Schultz, n.t., n.d.

Amy Meadow



Amy Meadow

FE·MAIL·ART

Libellus: A Monthly Mail-Art Publication, no. 7, April 1981.

## European artists:

It is a common practice that the artists invited to the exhibitions of East European artists are those that have no recognized status of the artist in their own environment, which practically deprives their work of elementary forms of social support. Such social status and the lack of knowledge of other cultural/artistic environments does not give them a possibility of choice when invited to any art manifestation (exhibition) abroad. They are practically forced to accept any offer since these are rare occasions when their work has recognized artistic status, and on the other hand, this exhibition should explicitly or implicitly reaffirm the "unlimited" freedom of artistic activities and "universality" of cultural/artistic practise of the West. In that way the significance of such "ghetto" exhibitions is mainly reduced to its political dimension (dissident exotic)...

The situation in the West is not quite as restrictive, though it is hardly Utopian. But here the political content of book and mail art is often less overt than hinted at by virtue of the form itself. United States and Western European artists making book and mail art are reacting against and finding alternatives to the less immediate repression of the art galleries and museums by acting as self-distributors. The chain of mail art offers the possibility for a constant exchange of ideas and information among members of the art community. Also, this exchange is dependent solely on the postal system and, potentially at least, can reach an almost unlimited audience—extending the range, and therefore, the effect of the artists' works.

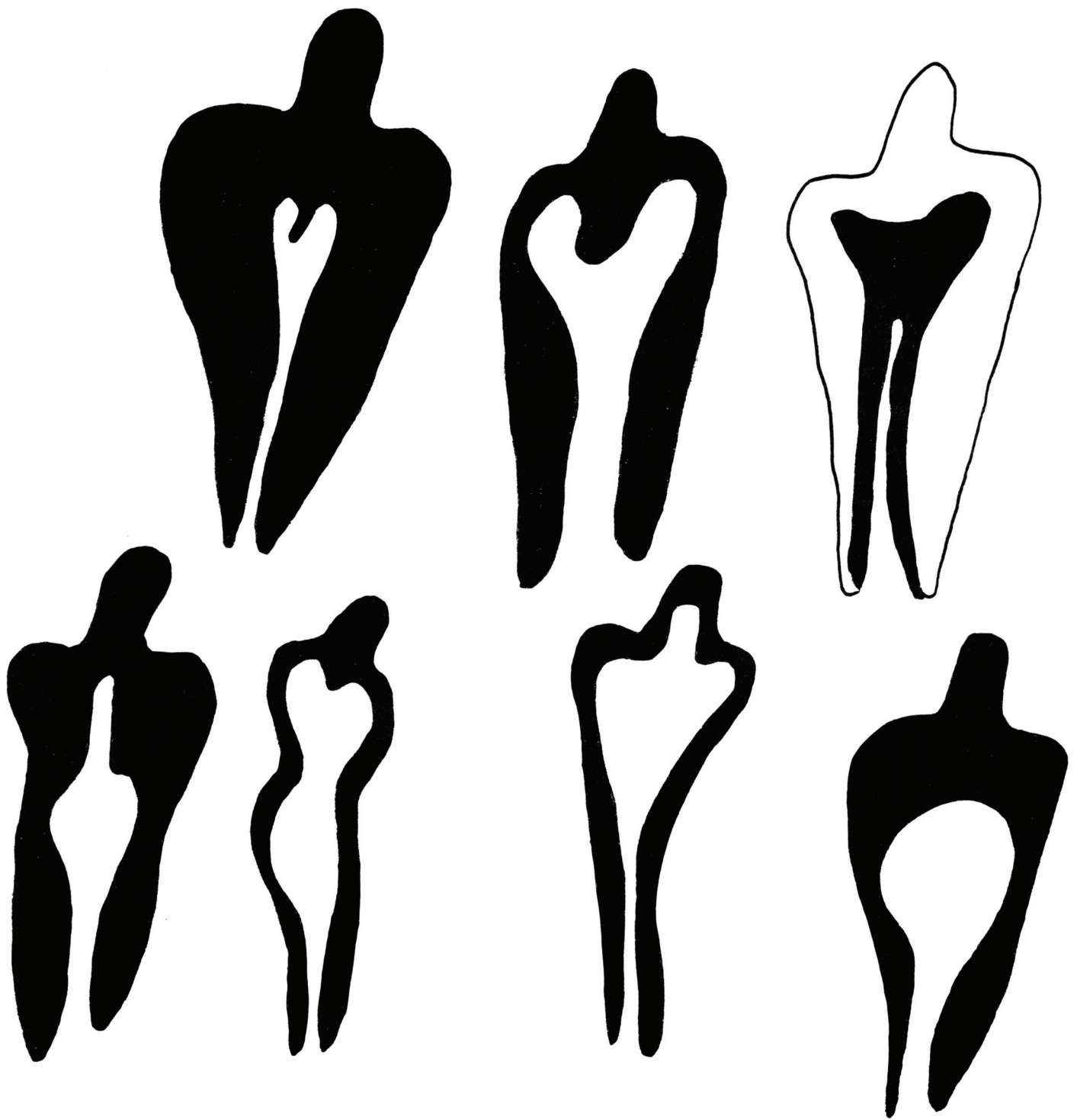
Of course, the use of government-controlled postal services enables artists to use the mail for the propagation of an artform that is inherently subversive. The irony of this situation has not been lost on most artists, and their art goes some way to exploiting it. The Centre de Documentació d'Art Actual in Barcelona, Spain, hosted a Mail Art Exhibition in 1980 and published a catalogue documenting the multiplicity of forms employed by artists engaged in its production—photocopies, postcards, envelopes, stamps, texts, telegrams, and as many other mailable objects as can be imagined. The Netherlands is still the home of much activity in this area. Although De Appel and Void Distributors, both from Amsterdam, are no longer in the limelight, *Libellus: A Monthly Mail-Art Publication*, published in Antwerp, Belgium, provides a forum for mail artists, as well as news of exhibitions and publications.



Each issue of the *Flue* will include an exploration of different aspects of the permanent collection. The next issue, vol. 2, no. 2, will also contain the first in a continuing series of annotated selections from the archives. In conjunction with Franklin Furnace's "Copycat Show," books utilizing photocopy processes will be featured.







They captured the woodpecker, which in their tongue is called INRIRI. And taking the women who had no sex, they bound their hands and feet and tied the bird to their bodies. The woodpecker began the work it is accustomed to do, pecking and piercing in the place where the sex of women is ordinarily located.

© Ana Mendieta 1981



# Love, Death, and Freedom in Roumanian Dadaism and Surrealism

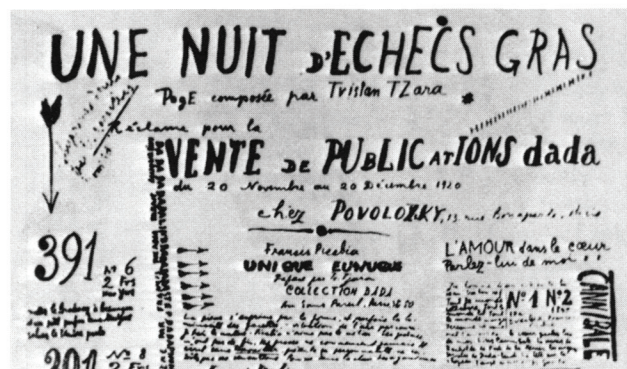
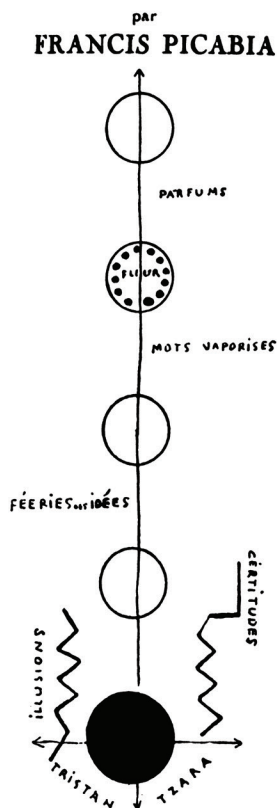
A Poetical Essay by Valery Oisteanu\*

Where does death stop—and suicide begin?

After writing his apocryf to the revolver, "Oh gun you are my god," Urmuz entered history, not as a court clerk or a piano composer, but as a pre-Dadaist with a bullet in his head and a book published in Bucharest. Tristan Tzara took that gun of despair into the streets and cabarets of Zurich, plunging a knife between the leaves of the dictionary that was to give Dada its name. In 1916 the official birth of Dada was celebrated at the **CABARET VOLTAIRE**, where they said, in the words of Tzara, "Every page must explode, every act is a mental gunshot," and then, with a touch of humor, asked a simple question: "Have you **frogs** in your shoes?"

As art declared its freedom, collage of paper, words, and musical sounds came of age. Chance-operation writing and painting preceded computers by half a century. Free-association, automatic writing, simultaneous poetry, all embraced the Dadaist ethic of improvisation. But this was not the limit—the golden Danube had more in store for the world at large.

## Portrait de TRISTAN TZARA



There was Constantin Brancusi, and his **WALKING STICK**, traveling by foot across Europe, leaving behind the most imaginative totems and staircases to the sky inspired by the barbarian gravestone designs of Trachia. Brancusi started his scandal at the U.S. Customs pier, where they tried to charge him for importing marble and to take his work into custody. He insisted the marble was his art. The court ruled in his favor, thus establishing the frontiers of modern sculpture.

By October 1919 close to 9,000 articles about Dadaism had appeared in newspapers and magazines all over the world. But despite its notoriety, the Dadaist revolution died young, and by the early twenties, André Breton had invited Tzara and Marcel Janco to join the group that had formed around the magazine *Littérature* with himself at the head. Students in Paris, incited by Breton, dumped the coffin of Dada into the River Seine. **DADA is DEAD. LONG LIVE DADA.**

"Flow in all colors," said Tristan Tzara. "See the inside of the spontaneous theater of art. No more urinary passages. Spoof as a dogma. Long live pataphysics!" With words such as these, this young Roumanian Jew reached out to many artists, uniting them in a new opposition to the traditional art created for the bourgeois rich. At his death in 1968 Tzara left behind over fifty published books, of which thirty-six are poetry, and many others that remain unpublished. Among these unpublished works are two volumes revealing the **Secrets** of François Villon, as well as Tzara's notes on African and primitive art. Indeed, he was one of the first Europeans to point out the magical beauty and power of African art, poetry, and music. But no matter what the subject, the message in all his work was a significant protest **against** formalism in the arts, **against** rigid logic, and the stupidity of pre-World War II society in Europe. "I shall laugh like a **WATERFALL** and like a blaze," he said. And, throughout his long career of anarchism and buffoonery, he did.

\*The works by Luca and Naum are being reproduced for the first time outside Roumania. In order of appearance: Tristan Tzara, page from *Cahiers Dada Surrealisme*, no. 3, 1963 (Claude Sernet), collection of Jean-Noel Herlin; Francis Picabia, "Portrait of Tristan Tzara," in Tristan Tzara, *Selected Poems* (London: Trigram Press, 1975); drawing by Victor Brauner, in Benjamin Peret, *Main Forte* (Paris: Editions de la Revue Fontaine, 1946), collection of the Museum of Modern Art Library; Gherasim Luca, "Sans Rencontrer d'obstacles," *The Orgies of Quanta* (Bucharest, 1946); Gellu Naum, "Lampile" ("Lamps"), *Partea Cealată* (Bucharest, 1980); from Valery Oisteanu, *Do Not Refuse* (New York: Pass Press, 1980); René Magritte, "The Red Object," poster reproduction used by Roumanian underground band. (Photos: Amy Meadow.)

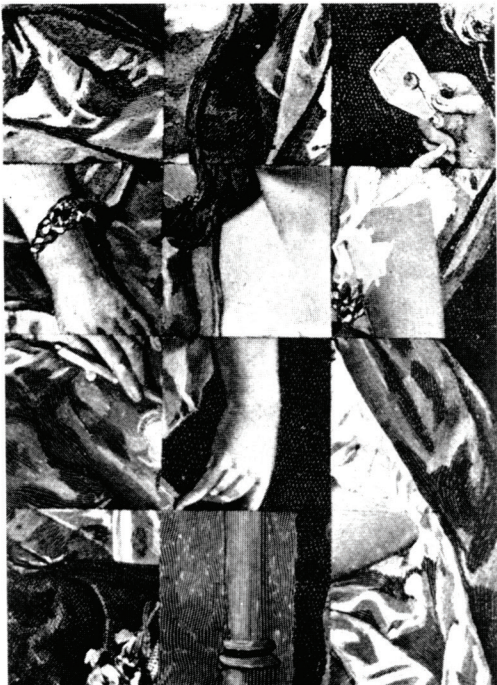


Meanwhile, Janco back in Bucharest, with the support of Tzara, Brancusi, and Brauner, kept alive the Roumanian avant-garde, creating such incendiary reviews as *UNU*, published from 1928 to 1931, and *ALGE* published from 1930 to 1933. Their impact was so great that by 1933 the Dadaists and Surrealists topped the enemy list of the Nazis.



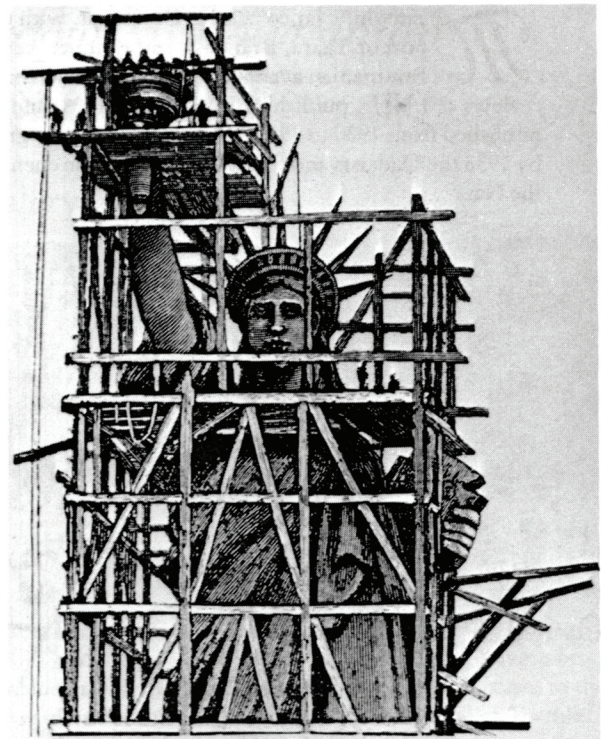
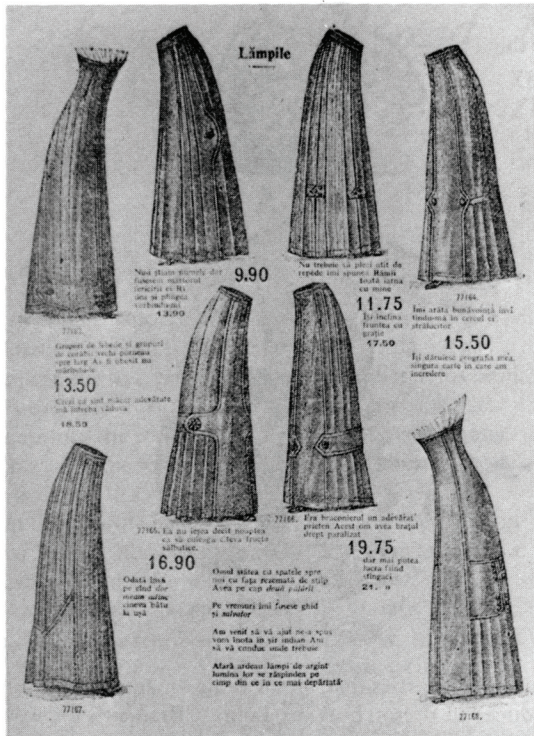
It was during this turbulent decade of the thirties that Victor Brauner, age thirty, came to Paris and immediately was introduced to Breton by Yves Tanguy. Brauner's life was as bizarre as his art—a long-standing obsession with ~~one-eyed~~ self-portraits became a reality when, at thirty-five, he lost his eye in an accident during a fight in a bar. His strange prophecy became a legend: "You will like my paintings," said Brauner, "because its unknown world is peopled with somnambulists, incubi, succubi, lycanthropes, *éphialtes*, phantoms, specters, sorcerers, seers, mediums, and a whole fantastic population." This sentence, plus forty other good reasons why one should like his paintings, was Brauner's manifesto, published as "On the Fantastic in Painting, in Theatre."

Tristan Tzara was the first of this brave new breed of Roumanians to cross the Atlantic Ocean, together with the French-born Picabia. The two drove through New York in a wonderful Mercer, bringing with them a churning aggressivity in art. They were soon followed by Brancusi and David Trost. The latter taught the theory of incommunicability in psychology and art, and apogrypha has it that his body wasn't discovered until two years after his death. A man who took his theories to their illogical extreme, he is credited with the first experiment in ultimate



50LATION





The *UNU* and *ALGE* reviews helped to develop a new generation of Dadaists and Surrealists. The poets Gellu Naum, Gherasim Luca, Stefan Roll, Virgil Teodorescu, and Stefan Baci were its principle architects. Between 1932 and 1939, most of them had traveled to Paris and joined the Surrealist group. Brauner, Naum, and Breton together planned a final issue of *Minotaure* under the working title "Diabolics of the Object." Unfortunately, World War II interrupted their project, which never came into print. The only collective document from the so-called 44.5 Parallel group was "The Nocturnal Sand," published in Paris in *Le Surrealism* in 1947 and signed by Luca, Brauner, Jacques Herold, Teodorescu, Perahim, and Naum, who, paraphrasing Marcel Duchamp, shaved  $\sqrt{1}$  his ~~ear~~,  $\sqrt{2}$  his ~~mouth~~,  $\sqrt{3}$  his ~~head~~, and printed **LOVE Poems** on his face.

The major contribution of the Roumanian Dadaists and especially the Surrealists was their continuous research into ~~the~~ **LOVE** and eroticism. It is to the 44.5 Parallel group that we owe the frenetic activities of the forties, which continued at high energy until the proponents of **SO-CALLED REALISM** censored Surrealism and brought it into disfavor.

Today only a handful of the over fifty important poets and artists linked to Dadaism and Surrealism survive. Janco and Paul Paun live in Israel as mentors of an art kibbutz. Naum is unearthing archeological **PHILUSES** in Roumania; Luca is conducting spiritism sessions in the castle of the Marquis de Sade; and Baci is writing books in Hawaii.

**F**or the Roumanian Dadaists and Surrealists the main goals have always been social justice, sexual freedom, and freedom for art. Unfortunately the only freedom history has granted them in the seventy-five years since the early Dadaist revolution has been **INDIVIDUALISM**. This may not seem like much of an accomplishment for a movement that once had such audacious hopes and influence. Nevertheless, on the aesthetic level, many still follow in the footsteps of Tzara. The International **CONSPIRACY** survives—Dada is not dead. □





# E X H I B I T I O N

## “Sterilization/Elimination”: Chilling “Homage” to Genocide

Review by Anne Pitrone

In the window of Franklin Furnace, a neon sign gaily proclaims the title of Nan Becker's stirring installation: “Sterilization/Elimination.” Visitors enter and can read seven large, black negative photostats hanging underneath three austere red, white, and black banners proclaiming: Sterilization—Elimination—Genocide. Passersby, many of whom work at the New York City Department of Social Services located across the street from the gallery, look at the neon and into the window, staring at the banners and words, but few come in. What an art review can say about a show such as this is limited. It cannot really come near evaluating its success, or failure, as a political statement. But the challenge to the writer of making an effective presentation may, at least, answer some of the confusing formal questions brought up by the show and, thereby, demonstrate the artist's intent.

Why, for instance, is the red and blue neon sign in the window so different in form, character, and feeling from the rest of the show? Neon words can attract attention in a way that black and white words cannot, but there was no reason for Becker to apologize for the strength and austerity to be found inside the gallery.

Once inside, the seriousness of the political question is not masked by whimsy. International symbols for Sterilization, Elimination, and Genocide (traffic symbols adopted by the artist) on large banners hanging from the ceiling convince us immediately that we are in a new country. These are the flags of US Reproductive Rights policy, and they are chillingly reminiscent of the large red, black, and white banners carried through immense halls in Nazi Germany. Now the friendly neon outside makes more sense, especially in red and blue. What looks so American (read well-intentioned) on its face, may hide a core of fascism and genocide.

Underneath the flags, the seven large stats operate as policy statements, broadcasting quotes, figures, and horrific descriptions of the “goings-on” in this mysterious and inhuman nation. With each step across the gallery we are reintroduced to our country through a lattice of facts so well-researched that we cannot escape Becker's true intentions.

Forming the main body of the exhibit, the seven large stats present data in different ways. Three stats contain two side-by-side quotes, each from various judges, doctors, and fact-finding groups. (This technique was used in the poster for the show, which was an effective political tool in itself, as well as a well-designed advertisement.) Another stat lists straight facts about the survivability of and services provided for white versus nonwhite newborn children in the United States.

The layout of the other three panels radically experiments with readability. Two different statements (one in bold and the other in regular typeface) are placed on alternating lines of the panel, making a slight reading adjustment necessary on the part of the audience. This made scanning the panels nearly impossible. But for those who did not walk away from the confusing presentation, the device served to heighten reading concentration, and in one panel, even worked to increase the emotional involvement of the reader. Between lines of a conversation among surgeons, about how to get women for “hysterectomy practice,” Nan Becker has placed a detailed description of the operation itself. “A short mid-line incision is made. . . .” Both statements blend to give a truly horrifying insight into the Republic of Genocide, rarely seen, explored, or researched as well as it has been in this exhibition.



Nan Becker



William Hellermann



William Hellermann



Alison Knowles, *The Book of Bean*. Installation, Franklin Furnace, September 1981.

These two photographs from the show "Time Fuse Attitudes" in Bjerred, Sweden (July 1979), represent documentation of Agnes Denes's Rice/Tree/Burial Project, which "began with a symbolic 'event.' Rice was planted to represent life (growth), trees were chained to indicate interference with life (evolutionary mutation and variation, death) and [Denes's] Haiku poetry was buried to symbolize the idea, the abstract, the absolute and creation itself—thus, thesis, antithesis, synthesis." Of the tree chaining Denes says that it "was mainly about choice, the selection and defining necessary in the creative process. The forest texture interrupted by the fusing and reordering of its fragments (trees), yielded unique structures of isolated or combined sculptural form. The chains, once taut, turned into additional limbs and blended into their surrounding. Thus, the chain drawing as well as the sculptural forms became visible only in certain lights, angles and perspectives."

In 1977 the first ritual was reenacted and realized on a larger scale at Artpark in Lewiston, New York. At this time sections of a forest, which not incidentally is sacred Indian burial ground, were chained. The project is understood as ongoing—and, indeed, the time capsule buried at Artpark in place of the Haiku poems is not to be opened until 2979. © Agnes Denes, 1979. (Photos: Leif Eriksson.)







and fishing and has done most of her traveling in Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana. A disabled veteran, with extensive military service, he has made seventy four Parajump jumps. He spent time in Iran, Vietnam, Japan, Thailand (year), Hong Kong, Manila, England, France.

**He** **was** **fat** **at the eighth grade reunion** **for five hours friends** **finding things common** **looking** **for proof** **that she was better off** **the** **Who do you think you are? Class Artist** **You think you are somethin', always did, but you are back here too, aren't you.**

**She** **was** **nervous** **Why are you so happy?** **Is there something wrong with you?**

THE BARTENDER SAID THEY DRANK MORE BOOZE in the back of a tavern they worked the mills construction workers, firemen and policemen housewives and divorcee

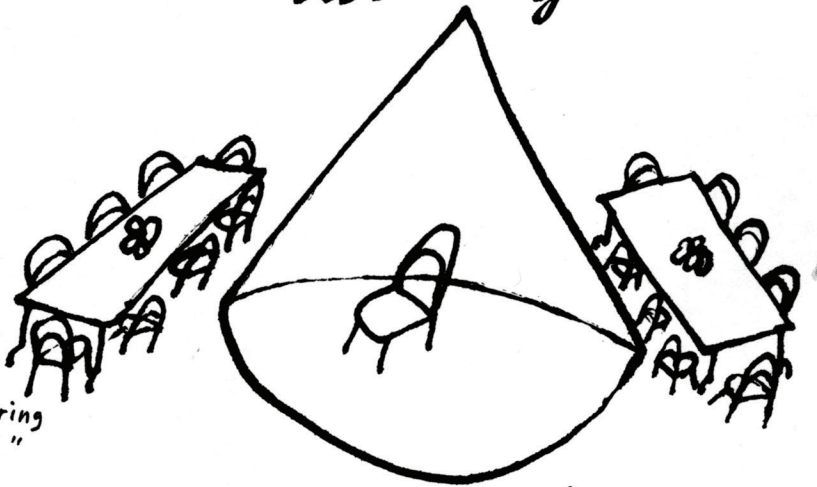
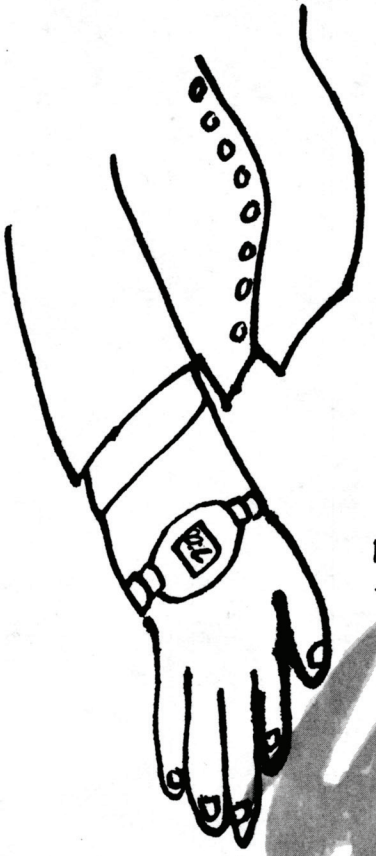
in a three piece suit impressed for the occasion The big man Phil Donahue gave him a watch for being a stage hand. He brags.

"My wife loves art," he said, "go talk to her." "She is sitting over there thinking everyone is talking about her because they are comparing her to my first wife." "I feel sorry for her."

about being there again seen for the first time since 13 could she look better than

"Look at them, washed out hard lives looking for men or holding on to one." "They look like old." At least she thought she looked good compared and she had a career.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN'



A homemaker, she has been married for twelve years and has two daughters. She enjoys camping and fishing and has done most of her traveling in Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana. A disabled veteran, with extensive military service, he has made seventy four Parajump jumps. He spent time in Iran, Vietnam, Japan, Thailand (year), Hong Kong, Manila, England, France.

A bachelor, he is a project engineer who enjoys fishing and reading. He will tell us his most interesting accomplishments when he is sixty-five. Beverly Feldmann 1981 ©

Going back for the reunion was still not enough for her and she now wants you to come too. "Back Where You Belong" is a performance in which Beverly Feldmann and the audience will take a bus tour to South Chicago. The tour will include round trip bus transportation, program aboard bus, lunch and gratuities. Included in the day's activities are a visit to Rainbow Beach, a tour of the Shrine of St. Jude, lunch at Tony's Eatery and time to visit Commercial Avenue shops. Some time will be devoted to seeking out graduates of the 1960 Eighth Grade Class of Immaculate Conception School. The bus will leave at 11 am, January 16, 1982 from the Nancy Lurie Gallery, 1632 N. LaSalle, Chicago IL 60614. For reservations call 312/337-2882. Book: The Twenty Year Eighth Grade Class Reunion (\$6.00 ppd) available through Nancy Lurie Gallery.



## Performance Documentation: More than Meets the Eye

*We sent letters to Linda Burnham, editor of High Performance, and to John Howell, editor of Live, asking them to comment on several issues that consistently come up about performance and its documentation. Among the problems they were asked to consider are that documentation makes live performance appear static; the fact that documenting a performance often disturbs the audience, or disrupts the precious relationship between artist and audience; and the uncomfortable truth that documentation can become more important than the performance itself, simply because, through the media, it can reach a larger audience than would actually have seen the performance. This leads to the question of whether in the artist's mind the documentation becomes the reason for the performance, or vice versa, and the related question of whether the documentation, in view of its increasing importance, "makes" the performance. The results of this interchange are not meant to be definitive. We simply hope to open the way toward a continuing dialogue on the subject. Stay tuned—the Eds.*

*Linda Burnham was interviewed by Bill Gordh, a performance artist and staff member at Franklin Furnace. In the excerpts below, Burnham and Gordh speak in particular about the increasing dominance of documentation and of its potentially disruptive and/or creative effects on performance art.*

**Burnham:** I really think that documentation is completely different from performance. But for me it's just a way of getting these ideas and images out in the world so that they can be shared with others. *High Performance* watches artists from a certain angle. I'm not so concerned about whether things [performances] are good or not. The important thing is that they exist.

**Gordh:** We began by discussing the publication of pictures that might not be of great quality but were the only available documentation of a particular artist's event. Linda said that although she would sometimes publish these in *High Performance*, she preferred strong and clear photographs. She'll even go so far as to accept staged photographs, not just to get good shots but so as not to disrupt the performance as it takes place.

**Burnham:** I don't want performance to change because of the photography. So, I'm willing to take something [a photo] that they [the artists] do separately from the piece, just so we get an image.

**Gordh:** This approach is fine for rehearsed pieces but not so good for performances that take place only once.

Linda pointed out that for many performance artists in California, the only way to reach a New York audience is through documentation, so they spend a lot of time and take great care in the documentation. Obviously, sometimes in these cases, the documentation comes to be more important than the performance. There's a running joke in California

just about this: How many people does it take to make a performance piece? Eight. One to perform, and seven to document it. You do sometimes wonder whether this obsession with documentation is effecting the nature of performance art itself.

I remembered a friend once telling me that as TV camera work—especially close-ups—got more sophisticated, professional basketball players started doing special moves for the camera. Linda's response to this was "if it's effecting professional basketball, it must be effecting art. . . . As long as *High Performance*, or any other organ that accepts things from artists exists, then sure it's gonna effect the performance. It's gonna be done for the camera."

She told me of a performance by Paul McCarthy in Italy. It was on a stage, and there were half a dozen photographers in the room. McCarthy told her that in the middle of the piece, he realized he was "making pictures." So he started doing just that, mugging for the photographers, pulling them into the piece but not losing his relationship with the audience. The results were so terrific in terms of the photos taken and the audience response that this posturing has now entered into his work.

This, of course, brought up the role of the photographer in a piece. A performance photographer, Marty Heitner, tells me that he doesn't move during performances, because he feels that if he does he becomes a participant and would then have a responsibility to both the audience and the artist he is photographing. Of course, other photographers move around freely to get the best pictures. It's a difficult question. As

Linda said, “Pictures sell magazines,” and that gives the photographer added importance.

Despite the problems, though, the quality of performance documentation appears to be improving. As far as Linda is concerned, this is happening because of people’s increasing familiarity with the format of her magazine—they’re begin-

ning to tailor their documentation specifically to fit *High Performance*.

**Burnham:** I guess I’ve changed performance art (laugh), but that’s one of the reasons I did it in the first place. . . . I was sick and tired of looking at all this ephemeral crap in magazines and not being able to tell what really went on. . . .

Σ  
Σ

*In his short piece, John Howells is most concerned with defining and maintaining the difference between the live act of performance and its static documentation.*

New York is full of Art Facts—I mean they’re everywhere, they’re everywhere! So at *Live*, it seems less important to add to the document pile than to comment on those performance artists and events that have the most to say and which say so with the most accomplished means. That is, I want to criticize—to select, point out, and evaluate—rather than only to document, to simply record. I admit to a temperamental liking for the former (I come from a part of the South where there are more opinions than people), but really, the problem as a New York editor is to distinguish between the five performances a night that beg for your attention.

*Live* is a multi-genre magazine; that is, it covers certain kinds of music, dance, fringe theater, and video as well as what is more narrowly thought of as performance art. I call it all “performance,” and the photographic issues are absolutely the same no matter what particular brand of performance I’m looking at.

A photo is stopped-time, a slice of something that exists in time—like performance. Performers are left finally with documents—photos, videotapes, scripts, reviews—as the personal and career residue of their work. But any performance also continues in the minds of viewers; that’s a hardly measurable but clearly powerful influence. Why anybody would choose to have their performance represented *only* through photos is beyond me (unless their work was about that issue). Performance is meant to be live. The rest is evidence.

Because photos freeze a single moment, which may then be a reader’s sole exposure to that performance, photographic evidence is tricky. By simply printing and distributing performance photos, *Live* records the work, but by active editorializing—cropping, layout, number of photos—*Live* critically evaluates this visual evidence. Both operations, recording *and* evaluating, are important if performance is to be *represented*—that is, interpreted through written and visual material—rather than *presented* with neutral description and documentary photos (all photos are not documentary). Certainly the basic fact of performance, that it’s ephemeral, demands that we learn to look at performance photos in the same way as we watch the show, but let’s not think that they *are* the show. You have to be there.



Marty Heitner



Harrie de Kroon, "None/Niemand," performed as part of the De Appel/Franklin Furnace program from Amsterdam at 626 Broadway, November 1980. Lit by a red bulb the artist attempted to draw his shadow with pastels. The chalk was attached to a microphone, so sound accompanied his movement. The piece became a dance to different shadow shapes and drawing sounds. At the end of the performance lights came up and revealed that what had seemed to be a drawing in black chalk was, in fact, multicolored. This photo was taken by Marty Heitner during a special re-enactment for video documentation, which required white light in order to get a strong image.

Lance Richbourg, "Mad Dogs," January 1981. An entire troupe joined Richbourg in his performance, during which he used phosphorescent paint, gun powder, huge sparklers, a ball-peen hammer, exploding signs, skeletons, two-handed dog paintings, autobiographical down-home dog tales, and a huge, explosive, wooden coupling-dogs cutout, which resided on the top of his truck (parked outside). Accompanying Richbourg at various times were a banjo player, a saxophonist, Phoebe Legère on accordion, Arlene Schloss rapping, and a chorus. All this went to make the artist's point that "art is not a mirror. Art is a hammer." The piece was virtually impossible to document.



Franklin Furnace Staff

Peter Lew



Louise Udaykee, "One-Man Show: The History of Killing, Part III," October 1981. Udaykee explored three male personae in her "History of Killing" piece. The "Man in Black," a fearful, violent character, smoked a cigar, drank whiskey, and picked up a girl (see photo). The "Man in White" was a suave, seductive character reminiscing about his war years. And the third, the "Super Hero," was a boy/child, nonchalantly strewing soldiers across the space, or challenging Darth Vader in a fight. The artist's work is often very deliberate and always carefully done—a joy for a photographer.



# Performance Criticism: Studying Mad Pursuit

By Barbara Baracks

You, hungry reader, if you haven't seen the particular performances I discuss here, what have you got to chew on? Photo documentation, as Burnham, Gordh, and Howell point out elsewhere in the *Flue*, can alter the evidence. But what, you may ask, if the form of "documentation" is criticism? Well, criticism isn't documentation at all. Language doesn't even have to pay lip service to the literal. The filter of my perceptions is in charge.

And what kind of critical notation is there for performance, anyway? Performance's setting has ties to the history of theater and art, but its posture is often ahistorical and unimpressed with gallery pretense. Usually scrounged together on a tiny budget, and, no matter how packaged, not collectible like the plastic arts, performance—in alternative spaces dangling on government and corporate thin strings, in clubs, a few galleries, a few private lofts—has to build on its own tenuousness. Writing (and reading) about performance is a study of mad pursuit: you can't pin the nervous thing down.

My brief notes here on performance—notes at times with a necessary acerbity—are in recognition and celebration of this impermanence, outsider status, special regard for communication between performer and audience. That's enough to chew on for starters.



Stephanie Skura is conversant in more forms than normal people would know what to do with. She's a dancer, musician, and raconteur. She even knows how to conduct a reasonable conversation. At the WOW festival she conversed with a sulking piano; in *Boy Meets Girl* at 626 Interaction Arts Foundation she affectionately harassed Ishmael Houston-Jones, who paid her back in kind.

The special pleasure of watching Skura and Houston-Jones work together is that they seem so relaxed about the whole business. Never mind that they may have killed each other putting the piece together. They lie around (and on top of) each other, perform tiny Abbott-and-Costello-type rou-

tines (taking turns making each other look slightly ridiculous), move in the dark during music-and-voice tape overlays, and perform each other's choreography—all the while commenting, complaining, clearly enjoying the wit of each other's presence. Mere proficiency is a cold thing; Skura and Houston-Jones break through that barrier to a public intimacy.

Which was what was lacking in John Greyson's work-in-progress, *Breathing Through Opposing Nostrils*. At P.S. 122 this Canadian artist staged an elaborate fiction: a gay man is producing a government-funded film about the lesbian and gay male community, but the lesbian—a political activist—he hired to narrate the film accuses him of being an undercover agent for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The man charges *her* with being an agent, and so the performance follows: two sets of testimony alternate, presenting data and speculation illustrated by projections of the "film's" storyboard. A framework for a potentially fascinating—and much-needed—investigation into the tendrils of oppression and paranoia making their way these days into all politically active communities. But in Greyson's piece the heaps of contradictory evidence and anger piling up boil down, in the end, into a kind of dull, hopeless paralysis. A great deal of detailed work has gone into assembling *Breathing*. Regrettably, it left us no breathing space for our own conclusions. The opportunity for understanding also needs its place.

No one's entirely figured out what a virus is and does, and the same can be said of performance. Paul Zaloom's *Zaloominations*, at the Theatre for the New City, could be called theater, but then it could just as well be considered performance. Inspired as a five-year-old on a wet Saturday, Zaloom has found just the right objects—bits of plastic, tubes, toy binoculars, lobster claws, the almighty Magic Marker, a jar of "eyeballs," fake dogshit, cardboard boxes—to tell, in the cheerfulest possible manner, political tales of our civilization's upcoming demise. If it weren't a one-person show I'd run away to join the troupe. As it is, settled back amid my own rubble, when the next *Flue* goes around, I expect to go around with it. □



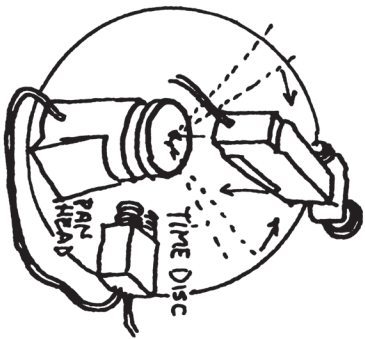




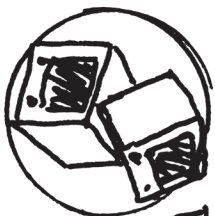
## LYRICS FOR A NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM

The forms of the landscape were now whitened  
and sliced by sleet and Venetian blinds. A  
sort of purplish mirage made us perceive the  
thicket in the distance as a ghostly bruise.  
We peeled freshly boiled eggs, carelessly letting  
the chips fall where they might. Then  
Phil placed the tender white forms, still  
steaming, into ore/ now-drifts. The eggs  
heaved foggy toy a relief. We watched  
as momentary moa' \ snow recrusted  
into ice collar  
lullial. Hooray  
' Hooray! Halle-  
' play ball!

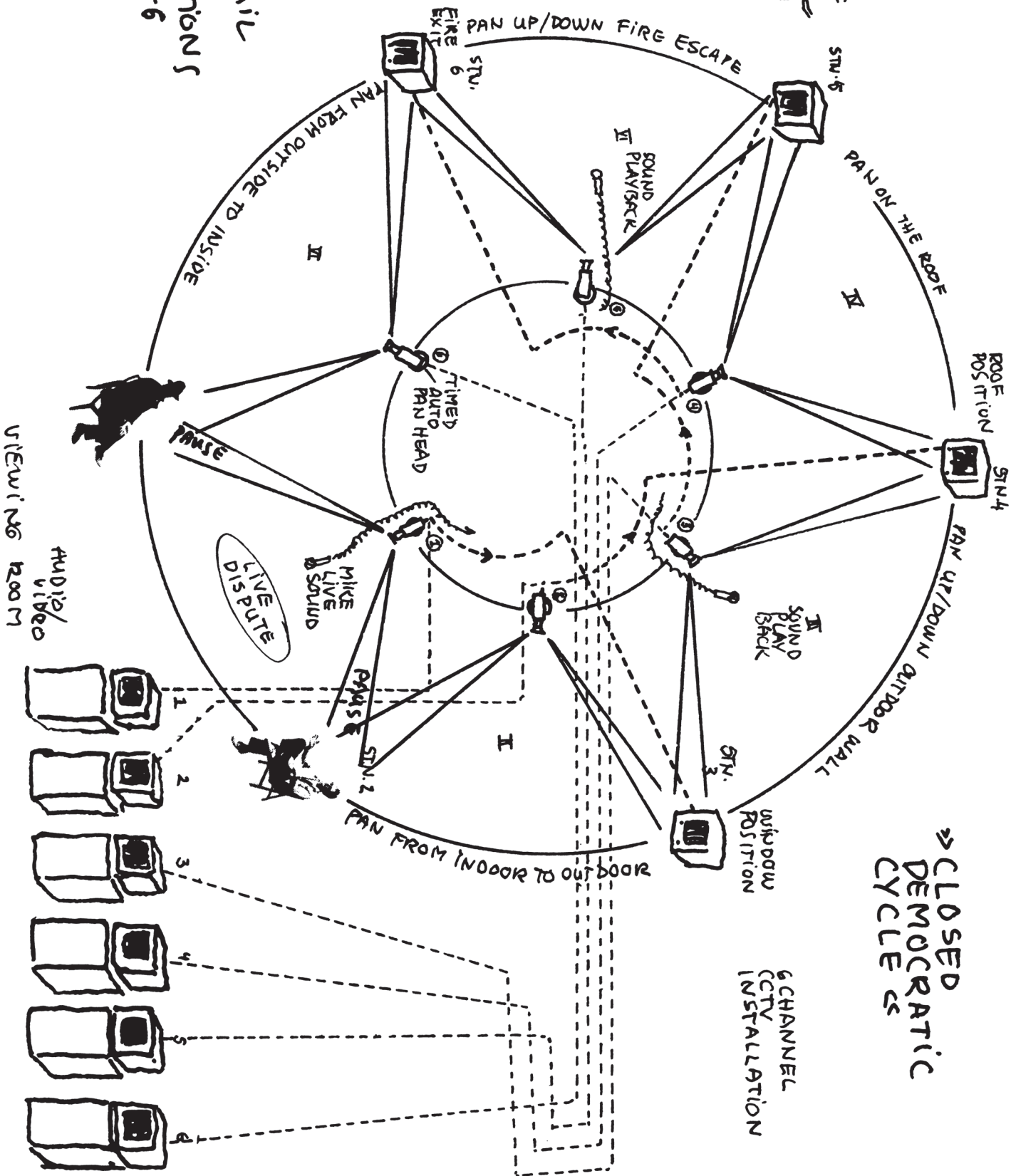




DETAIL OF  
CAMERA  
SET-UP



DETAIL  
OF  
STATIONS  
3-6



» CLOSED  
DEMOCRATIC  
CYCLE «

# FURNACE INFO . . . ETC .

*Artists' Pages:* Franklin Furnace is pleased to announce that we will be able to reproduce artwork for the page FREE in future editions of the *Flue*. We thank all who have sent us pages over the last couple of months and ask that you continue to do so.

Remember work must be camera ready, black and white only, image size 8" x 10½" (to bleed on an 8½" x 11" single text page) OR 16½" x 10½" (to bleed on a 17" x 11" two-page spread). Ideally, single pages would be vertical, double spreads horizontal to conform to the magazine's format.

To key in with the January "Copycat Show" at Franklin Furnace, we urge you to submit black and white images using any and all forms of photocopy reproduction for the next issue of the *Flue*. To be considered, artwork should be received by February 15, 1982. Of course, submission is *not* limited to such work—all media are welcome.

*Proposals:* Proposals for performances, installations, and window works are due by June 18, 1982 to be considered for the 1982-83 season at Franklin Furnace. Panels of artists will review the proposals; notification of their decisions will be made by about June 30, 1982. A SASE, or requisite postage, must be included.

*Franklin Furnace Student Internship Program:* Franklin Furnace welcomes college students (and adults) who would like to volunteer or earn college credit while working in all areas: cataloging, fund raising, arts administration, editorial, technical, and installation. We welcome people with technical skills and those without. If interested, write to Franklin Furnace for further information.

*Wanted:* Submissions are requested for a multinational and multicollaborative issue of *Daily Edition*, an English publication that "effects an open exchange of ideas between the now separated approaches to social questions. It publishes a

reservoir of proposed solutions and plans. The ideas gain form through the logic of art, but they are focused directly on changes in society." For further information or to submit proposals, write to: *Daily Edition*, 140 Hamby East 38th St., New York, NY 10016, USA; H. J. Schmitt Street 58, 5000 Cologne 30, West Germany; or 30 Evelyn Garden, London SW1, Great Britain.

*Wanted:* Artists' records for a monograph and international discography of artists' records by *Peter Frank*. Publication: mid-82 (project funded by a grant from the NEA). Phonograph records only.

Artists' records, tapes, and cassettes for a complete international discography of artists' records, sound art, new music, text-sound, and electronic music being compiled by *B. George/M. DeFoe of One Ten Records*.

For both projects please send ASAP: 1 copy of the record (2 copies would allow 1 for each archive and would be greatly appreciated) or tape. Include information on the label, catalogue number, availability, source, and cost, as well as a biography, personal discography, statement, and visual support material. All material and inquiries should be directed to: *M. DeFoe, One Ten Records*, 110 Chambers St., New York, NY 10017 USA; (212) 964-2296.

*Available:* Book artists note that *Line* is offering 10 grants of \$1,000 each to defray production costs. For information write to *Line*, P.O. Box 570, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013.

*Available:* The new annotated catalog listing over 2,000 artists' books, periodicals, and audio works is available from Printed Matter, Inc., 7-9 Lispenard St., New York, NY 10013, for \$4 postpaid. Provides complete bibliographical listings.

**CORRECTION**

All proposals due  
by April 30, 1982

≡≡



**NOTE NOTE NOTE** Our ad every week in the Galleries section of the *Village Voice*.

**BENEFIT BENEFIT BENEFIT** Yourselves \* Franklin Furnace \* Richard Artschwager \* Dottie Attie \* Alice Aycock \* Linda Benglis \* Christo \* Larry Fink \* Audrey Flack \* Vernon Fisher \* Red Grooms \* Richard Haas \* Jasper Johns \* Alex Katz \* Joseph Kosuth \* Lee Krasner \* Robert Kushner \* Lois Lane \* Les Levine \* Sol Lewitt \* Roy Lichtenstein \* Robert Longo \* Duane Michaels \* Elizabeth Murray \* Alice Neel \* Lowell Nesbitt \* Claus Oldenberg \* Robert Rauschenberg \* David Salle \* Miriam Schapiro \* Barbara Schwartz \* Richard Serra \* Stephen Shore \* William Wegman \* Tom Wesselmann \* and many more by coming to our **SweetART** Sale on Wednesday, February 17, 1982, at Ronald Feldman/Downtown, 31-33 Mercer St., between Canal and Grand. 7 to 10 P.M. Advance sales: individual, \$20; couple, \$35; member, \$15; at the door: \$25 per person. The price of your ticket can be applied to the purchase of a work of art. Proceeds will help match grants from the Institute for Museum Services and the National Endowment for the Arts. Refreshments—wine and hors d'oeuvres—great art, and fun guaranteed. The over 200 works of art will be on public display from Thursday, February 18, until Saturday, February 20, at the Feldman gallery.

**COME COME COME** To Sunday Night at the Performances, a continuing, twice monthly series produced by Ann Rosenthal. This showcase is meant to highlight the diversity of performance art, and through its informal programming, accommodate local, out-of-town, and international artists who want to present new work in New York. \$4 includes refreshment; all proceeds go directly to the artists. Interested performance artists should get in touch with Ann Rosenthal at the Furnace.

For details about our Thursday night performance series, see the insert—Calendar of Upcoming Events.

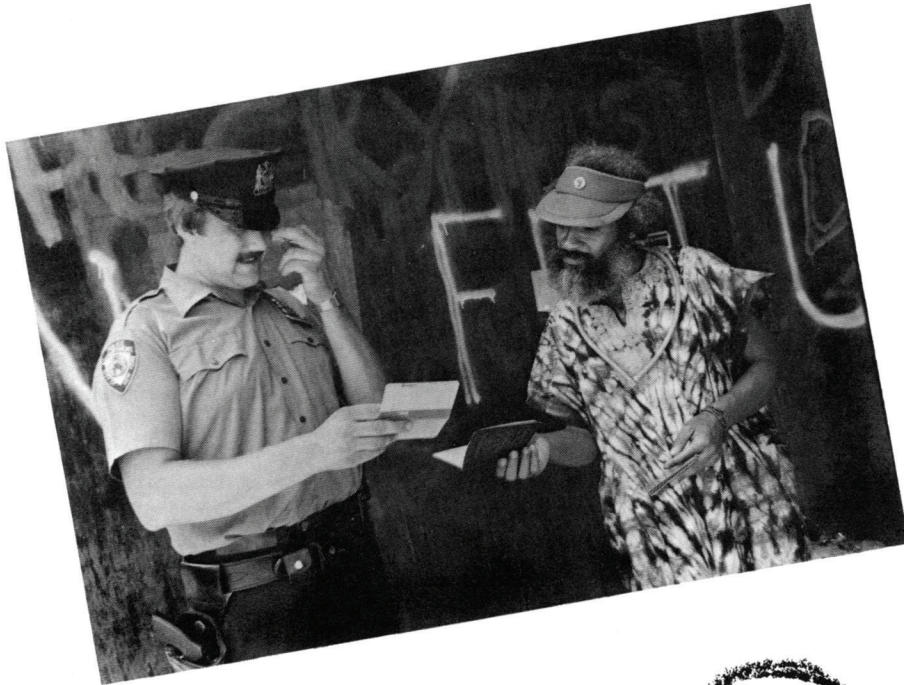
**REMEMBER REMEMBER REMEMBER** This is the *last* issue of the *Flue* that will be available to nonmembers. To become a member of Franklin Furnace—and be guaranteed of receiving the next five issues of the *Flue*—fill out the membership form in the insert, Calendar of Upcoming Events, and mail it to us here at the Furnace.

**EXPECT EXPECT EXPECT** Future issues of the *Flue*—vol. 2, no. 2, Xerox Art; no. 3, Performance; no. 4, Artists' Use of Language; no. 5, Collaboration; no. 6, Political Art. . . .





David  
Hammons  
8/



PISSED OFF



# Fuel

By Barbara Quinn

*As an artist and the person who raises the bucks for Franklin Furnace, I know how hard it is to find the money or time for any art activity, so the purpose of this column is to help you find the "fuel" to pursue the muses' seductive song, "Do your art." Most of the information will relate to visual artists, but some will be of interest to writers, filmmakers, composers, and so on. In this issue we will be focusing on residencies.*

1. There's an opportunity for scholars and artists to spend a couple of months at Cercle Culturel de Rayaumont, 95 Asnières-sur-Oise, France, to carry out independent work and research. Room and board.
2. Writers, photographers, and artists who have had some recognition may stay for one to three weeks in a mansion known as the Creekwood Colony for the Arts, P.O. Box 88, Hurstboro, AL 36860. For information write to Charles Ghigna, Alabama School of Fine Arts, 820 18th St., N. Birmingham, AL 35203.
3. Artists, playwrights, and occasionally art critics who are low on cash and wish to be near the ocean in Montauk, NY, should apply for a month's residency at the Edward Albee Foundation, c/o The Secretary, The Edward Albee Foundation, 14 Harrison St., New York, NY 10013. At present, only housing and studios are paid for.
4. Involved in environmental art? There are fourteen-week residencies at the headquarters of the Artists for Environment Foundation in Delaware. Apply to Box 44, Wallpack Center, NJ 07881.
5. Visual artists, writers, and filmmakers (professional only) of any nationality can apply for a residency of from six to twelve months in Berlin, West Germany. If accepted you receive 2,900 German Marks a month and free transportation to and from Berlin. You pay for your studio but are helped in finding one. Apply to: Mrs. Brigitte Muller, Germany Academy Exchange Service, 535 Fifth Ave., Suite 1107, New York, NY 10017. I was told that most of the applicants this year were from Brazil.

## Fuel Received by the Furnace

I am happy to report that the following funds have been raised as of October 1, 1981:

<b>Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Institute for Museum Services</b>	<b>\$11,907</b>
<b>New York State Council on the Arts, Visual Arts, for:</b>	
Central Administration	10,000
Artist-in-Residence, Alison Knowles	1,600
Flue	5,700
Fees for Exhibition & Performance Artists	10,000
<b>National Endowment for the Arts, Visual Arts Program, for:</b>	
Artists' Spaces	29,000
Services to the Field	15,000
Artist-in-Residence, Alison Knowles	2,000
<b>Tortuga Foundation (for the Archives)</b>	<b>6,000</b>
<b>New York State Council on the Arts, Museum Program, for:</b>	
Archives Expenses	5,000
<b>Traveling Exhibitions:</b>	
Walker Art Center	500
University of Arizona Museum of Art	500
University of New Mexico Art Museum	500
Art Center, Waco, Texas	500
Utah Museum of Art	500





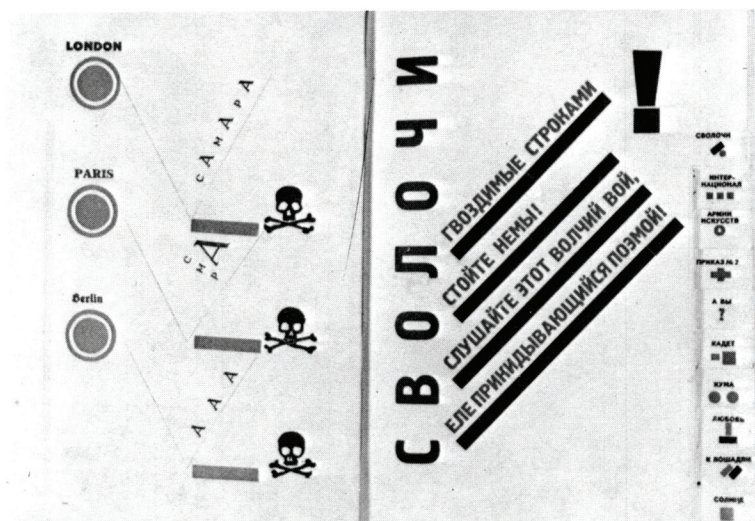
An avant-garde artist who somehow escaped this precarious career path was El Lissitzky who—along with Rodchenko—manifested outstanding creativity and innovation in a variety of media. Perhaps even more than his paintings, architectural designs, and criticism, Lissitzky's exhibition and book designs had a great influence and are largely responsible for the dissemination of information in the West about Soviet Russian culture. During the 1920s and 1930s, he traveled frequently to Germany, where he directed many exhibitions about, for example, Soviet hygiene, economy, and publications. Of special note is his exhibition catalogue for the Soviet Pavilion at the International Press Exhibition held in Cologne in 1928, which contains a fold-out, illustrated section.

Together with the writer Ilya Erenburg, Lissitzky began the first pro-Soviet journal published in the West, *Veshch/Gegenstand/Objet*, which provided an important avenue for Russian-German cultural exchange. Above all, the stunning Constructivist typography of Lissitzky's covers makes *Veshch* a special artifact of design from the 1920s.

In his 1923 manifesto, "The Topography of Typography," Lissitzky invested lettering and its composition on the page with an emotional as well as intellectual task: "The designing of the book space through the material of the type, according to the laws of typographical mechanics, must correspond to the content." Nowhere is this intention made more evident than in the book designs Lissitzky created in 1923 for a collection of Mayakovsky's poems entitled *For the Voice (Dlya golosa)*. This book was thumb-indexed to guide the reader to poems that were meant to be read aloud (hence, "for the voice"). The book was published in Berlin, where the Soviet publishing house had a branch office, and where a German typesetter, who did not know a word of Russian, set the book according to Lissitzky's directions with astonishing accuracy. Lissitzky likened the relationship of text and design in this remarkable book to the accompaniment of a piano to a violin. The agit-prop poems within are dominated by colored graphic constructions that form affective corollaries to the excitement and furor of Mayakovsky's revolutionary writings.







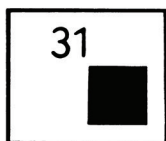
Above left, El Lissitzky and Vladimir Mayakovsky, *For the Voice*, 1923. Interior page showing thumb-index. Collection of Leonard Hutton Galleries.

Also visually and intellectually exciting is Lissitzky's book *Of Two Squares* (*Pro dva kvadrata*), published in 1922. Dedicated to all children, it is a witty graphic representation, using nonobjective means, of the triumph of order (the red square) over chaos (the black square)—a rather obvious (but no less provocative) allusion to the Russian Revolution and to the Bolshevik victory in the Civil War. Lissitzky's goal of creating universal plastic forms through the dynamic arrangement of geometric forms and lettering has been realized in *Of Two Squares*. Lissitzky hoped that children would find the simple ideas and simple forms a stimulus to active play and that adults would indulge themselves in inspired enjoyment of this cinematic unfolding of historical events.

The emphasis on formal qualities of design, no matter how socially or politically motivated, eventually represented a challenge to the official Soviet arts administration, which championed straightforward realism for the artistic expression of didactic content. Following the 1932 "Decree on the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Organizations," the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party declared Social Realism as the only acceptable style: truth and historical concreteness were thereafter to be combined with the tasks of ideological transformation and the education of the proletariat.

In book design, this new official attitude caused a reaction against the experimental work of the Russian avant-garde. "Factography" and straightforward illustration came to dominate Soviet literature and art from the mid-30s to the present day. Luckily, the West has recently rediscovered and is currently reviving interest in the cultural and aesthetic achievements of the Russian avant-garde book designers—whose experiments in radical design and typography have yet to be surpassed anywhere.

The exhibition "Bookworks from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union" is available for travel. Please contact Franklin Furnace for further information.

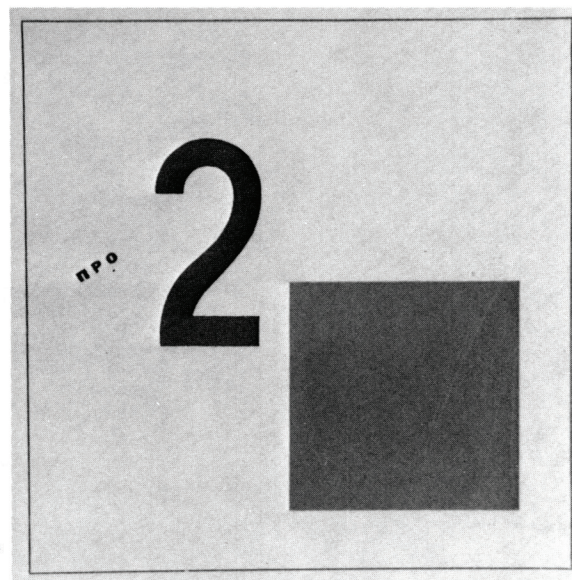


Amy Meadow



El Lissitzky and Vladimir Mayakovsky, *For the Voice*, 1923. Cover.

Amy Meadow



El Lissitzky, *Of Two Squares*, 1922. Cover. Collection of Robert Shapazian, Inc.



Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc.  
112 Franklin Street  
New York, New York 10013

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New York, N.Y.  
Permit No. 9268

