

UPFRONT

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PADD Office, 339 Lafayette

EDITORIAL

A MOVEMENT- IN-THE-MAKING

As PADD nears its fifth anniversary, it is evident that profound changes have taken place nationally in the movement for cultural democracy. When PADD was formed, at the onset of the Age of Reaganism, political art was largely isolated from the artworld and mainstream cultures. There were few alliances among cultural groups that cut across political and social organizations and networked effectively for progressive social change. Though many models for successful art activism existed (particularly among women's groups), we were only beginning to develop an emergent theory and practice for organizing cultural work that could reach and change the consciousness of large groups of people.

In this situation PADD—like the fragmented cultural left in general—saw the period as one for providing artists with an organized relationship to society, for building cultural coalitions, and for raising the level of understanding of the central role of art as a powerful ally for other politically aware forces.

In the intervening years a broad national movement—encompassing avant garde, media, community arts and minority activists—has come into being. This emerging—and as yet uncoalesced—network includes hundreds of art groups in rural and urban communities. (Many are under the aegis of The Alliance for Cultural Democracy.) These groups work in various media and artforms—visual art, dance, performance, theater, literature. They share not only progressive political ideals, but also the belief that the cultural expressions of all peoples can play a cogent role in helping to reshape society.

Another heartening manifestation has been the proliferation in New York and elsewhere of art coming from within a social/political context. Created by non-political as well as socially-conscious artists, political art has spilled over into the terrain of the artworld itself—Soho, Uptown, the museums. One of many examples was the recent Artist Call exhibits which took place in galleries in New York and over 20 other cities. Without overestimating the staying power of this phenomenon, PADD welcomes the opportunity for greater interaction with the artworld, and with the mass media, as effective means of conveying our oppositional messages and image.

Still another manifestation of this cultural upsurge are the radical concepts relating to demonstration art. The Women's Pentagon Action, the Seneca Women's Encampment, and the anti-nuclear march in New York on June 12, '82, have shown that the imaginative use of different genres—dance, song, images, sculptures, ritual—can release tremendous energies and transform the nature of the event itself. At the November 12, '83 anti-intervention demonstration in Washington, D.C., the Ad/Hoc/Artists crossed another threshold by converting the event into a medium in which culture was the major organizing force—serving as a political and aesthetic score for orchestrating the diverse voices of the participants.

PADD is proud of its part in this burgeoning cultural movement. We have networked with groups in and beyond New York; demonstrated the effectiveness of innovative image-making at our exhibits, public actions and presence at political events; opened our office as a center of activity for various art groups. Our Archives brings together an extensive body of socially relevant art, now largely invisible, which we hope to make available to individuals, groups, and institutions. Our Second Sundays are popular forums for dialogue between large audiences and art activists, among them black, third world, Native American, feminist and community groups. UPFRONT is an important theoretical resource for linking up culture, aesthetics, and experimental artforms with the broader political struggles.

Looking ahead, PADD sees bright perspectives for the growth of cultural democracy. No one is under the illusion that art activism by itself—without basic advances in the level of American politics—can bring about the necessary social changes. We are convinced, however, that a culture that rings true . . . that gives voice to the authentic aspirations of the people . . . is indispensable to the realization of a truly democratic future. Meanwhile, we urge you—wherever you are—to add your creative talents to groups like PADD. Together, we can make the long and convoluted project of liberation happen a little sooner.

UPFRONT

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Cover: Sue Coe: *No White People's Republic*, from *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa* (RAW Books and Graphics, 1983). Reprinted courtesy of the Edward R. Broida Trust, Los Angeles (photographed by Adam Rich).

STATE OF MIND STATE OF THE UNION

Counter-Visions; An Inaugural Challenge



OUTDOOR/STREETWORKS

The PADD State of Mind/State of the Union Outdoor/Streetworks Committee, believing that the election hasn't been won yet, is encouraging artists to join with us in saturating the city with images aimed at stripping away the facade of mystification that Reagan and his supporters have so successfully built up around his policies *before the election*, as well as to continue working with us through to the State of the Union address and the culmination of the overall project.

With just a few weeks to go before E-day, we've got little time to waste. We therefore encourage all of you who are interested to get out there and get your images onto the streets, walls, subway cars—anywhere and everywhere you can.

Works can address the administration's attacks on social programs, environmental, work safety and other regulations, civil liberties, civil rights and affirmative action programs, and anti-trust and other economic regulations; its promotion of "religious" family life at the expense of women's rights, reproductive freedom and gay rights; the whole question of militarism, including the arms race and intervention in Central America and elsewhere, and the general macho, chauvinistic, racist/imperialist mindset that dominates our foreign policy; and the unprecedented degree to which the administration has succeeded in the manipulation of information and imagery to affect public opinion.

Works can take the form of posters, sten-

cils, and stickers, geared either for general use or for specific locations; conceptualist/propagandist graffiti and other modes of billboard alteration; street theatre/performance; video showings in storefronts; guerrilla slide shows/film screenings on the sides of buildings; etc.

Works done after the election might deal with broader questions on the nature of the culture, and how the militarist/imperialist/capitalist/consumerist imperatives of our economic system and class structure—not to mention the sexism and racism—impact on our consciousness(es).

No one ever said streetworks had to be lightweight.

Due to the time element, we're encouraging anyone interested in doing works before the election to work on your own. We'd like to hear from you, though, to receive copies of any works you do for archival and documentational purposes, as well as for possible use in the State of Mind/State of the Union exhibitions slated for after the election, and to plan together what we might do together after the election. Pieces can be mailed to the State of Mind/State of the Union Outdoor/Streetworks Committee, c/o PADD, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003.

All who are interested in joining us can drop us a line c/o the address above, or call 420-8196 and leave a message on the PADD machine, specifying that you're calling for this committee.

During the presidential inaugural period, PADD will organize and produce a three-month long multimedia program including exhibits; outdoor events from painting, posters and constructions to activist intervention; a national image-gram campaign; and a performance series. The purpose of this project—PADD's most ambitious to date—is to provide artists with an opportunity to convey, through a broad variety of media and formats, their views on where we are in this critical moment of history, and where we should be going.

As artists and citizens, we have witnessed in this presidential campaign the distortion or bypassing of the real agenda that faces our nation—from unemployment and cutbacks in social welfare, to environmental destruction and nuclear arming, to the need for an egalitarian and pluralist culture.

We at PADD feel that the inaugural period is an opportune occasion for socially aware cultural workers to express their opposition to the fraudulent agenda offered by both major parties...and to project imaginatively their political/personal vision of a world and nation free of all forms of human oppression. In view of the intense media coverage that will capture the attention of millions of Americans, we want this event to utilize the high interest and energy that will be generated during this period to reach the broadest possible sector of the community.

STATE OF MIND

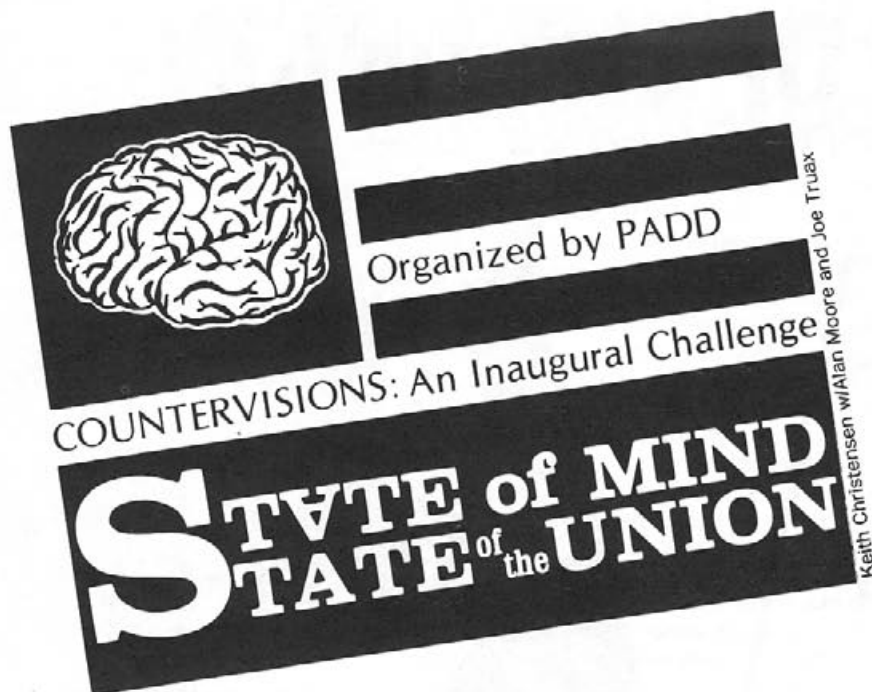


IMAGE-GRAMS

As part of the State of Mind project, we plan to have artists throughout the nation deluge our next President with mail-order "image-grams" which present their state of mind and agenda for the kind of society they would like to see.

The image-gram provides artists with the opportunity to look inside themselves—their own psyches—and outside themselves—the world at large. To see, in other words, how society affects the artists and culture in general; and in turn how the artist's images can positively affect the world.

We want to dramatize the multiple voices of those usually unheard, to make visible to our misleaders their needs, aspirations and visions. We see the image-gram, like the other aspects of State of Mind, as a form of art-activism, that is: pro-working class, anti-racist, pro-feminist, internationalist and anti-war.

We encourage the most diverse forms of mail art—from collages and drawings, to

xeroxes, photos, texts, etc. Hopefully the image-grams will present the broad variety of styles, social, political and cultural perspectives that is characteristic of our nation.

Please send your image-gram to: The President/White House/Washington, D.C. We strongly urge that they be sent immediately after the election of the next President to well into the month of January. We would like the period around the State of the Union and Inaugural Address to be the main focal point.

We would also appreciate your sending copies to your local media. Also be sure to send a copy to PADD Image-Gram/339 Lafayette St./New York, NY 10012 by the beginning of January. We will include your work in one of the State of Mind/State of the Union exhibits and artbooks during the month of January.



there's something wrong
with a country...
whose national symbol
is an endangered species...

Elizabeth Kulas

EXHIBITIONS

We're in a proposal pending phase. After discussions with a number of galleries and alternative spaces we have submitted proposals to: PS 1 (a project room), PS 122, Windows on 8th., Ronald Feldman Gallery, the Judson Church, the Dance Theater Workshop (DTW), and the City Gallery (at Columbus Circle). We will continue discussions through the summer and finalize our schedule in September. Our plan is to spread the exhibitions from election week in early November to inaugural week in late January. Each site presents different relations and requirements. Some exhibitions will be totally curated by PADD members (50% by invitation and 50% by slide review), others will be co-curated by PADD members and the gallery or institutional co-sponsor.

The PS 1 exhibition will offer collaborative pieces. We plan to invite NYC art activist groups such as: Colab, Group Material, Artists Call Against US Intervention in Central America, Art Against Apartheid, and PADD to install pieces that present their State of Mind and vision of the State of Union. The DTW exhibition will most likely be photography.

The Mailgram project described on page four will be installed in one or more of the exhibitions. While our resources disallow more material participation by artists outside the city we encourage everyone to produce similar activities at home. Artists Call Against US Intervention in Central America provided a wonderful example where artists across the nation produced exhibitions and events in solidarity with the NYC activities. Let's do it again.

For information contact: Jerry Kearns, 183 East Broadway, NYC 10002.

PERFORMANCES

The performance series will take place in a number of different spaces in Manhattan... We are also planning an evening of performances in BedSty or the Bronx (possibly at the Hodson Senior Center). Such a project would be coordinated with the community involved and would include artists from the area. Our prime dates will be around the week of the 21st to the 26th of January, 1985.

In a real sense, the performance aspect of State of Mind was inspired by the example of Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America. Their series of evening performances gave us a chance to see a wide spectrum of socially oriented work by new and established artists, ranging from the intensely personal to the baldest of agit-prop. It was, on the whole, one of the most exciting examples of performance art produced not only to move and entertain large audiences, but as a means for organizing artists and other cultural workers around important social and political issues. Looking back at these evenings, some of us believe that the most effective works were

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those that achieved a dialectical fusion between the personal and the political.

In connection with our State of Mind project, we feel that the performance format is an ideal vehicle for expressing socially relevant themes to a substantial audience. In a microcosm of space, artists can create through collage, pantomime, drama, dance, slides, images and other visual devices a whole macrocosm of the world. We would like State of Mind performances to utilize the full resources of this artform...to be beyond the standard definitions of political art...to break new ground, hopefully, in form and content.

Like all other artforms, performance is not beyond ideology; it is not value-free. Performances can be, as they often are, bastions of high art, pure formalism, personal mystification, strictly showbiz, or dazzlingly technical pizzazz. Without in the least denegrating any

performance approach or format, we would like to demonstrate anew that socially relevant performances have the capacity to engage audiences on every level: aesthetically, politically and as sheer entertainment. Given the quality of the artists we can call on, we have no doubt that the State of Mind performance will be innovative and successful.

A Call for Participation

Clearly, like all of the State of Mind projects, the performance events will be major undertakings. We will need not only performers, but technical people, writers, publicists, etc.

Performances should be no longer than twenty minutes. There is no limitation on theme, beyond the fact that the work should center around specific issues which the artist sees as germane to the overall perspective of

our project. We encourage the broadest definition of socially concerned art—from sexism, racism and homophobia, to alienation, the search for community, to the most personal of statements.

Performance artists who are interested should send some form of proposal for the projected work—from a work-in-progress to a complete script, with photos and drawings. Please indicate, if appropriate, the specific kind of audience you would prefer to perform for: elderly, labor unions, communities, etc. Send your material to: PADD Performance Committee, 339 Lafayette St., N.Y., N.Y. 10012. Those interested in helping with organizing the evenings, or with publicity or technical work can contact Herb Perr at: 255-9192.



Jerry Kearns

ART AGAINST APARTHEID

The Art of Resistance

Gale P. Jackson



George Smith

i dream of escape. of the distance from south africa to botswana. to tanzania. to england. to america. of the diaspora and of exile. of underground railroads and overground passage. of refugee camps and capsized boats. my mentors and contemporaries are so often jailed poets and graffiti writers on the lam. i dream of escape but i have begun to consider the stance, the standing, the holding of ground.

apartheid illegally occupies south africa. it is legislatively sanctioned white supremacy. it is a contagion of homelessness, poverty, imprisonment, brutality and genocide. the liberation struggle of the south african people, their resistance, begins with day to day survival. it extends itself; millions of hands reaching out internationally; with words with arms with the face of human dignity.

we are taking up the cultural arm of the liberation struggle. could we occupy this city, many cities, the nation with this question of injustice, inhumanity, our own, unknowing, complicity? art against apartheid is laying the groundwork for all people doing anti-apartheid art work to get out there; to speak to perform to teach.

present u.s. policy props up the travesty of apartheid's 'legitimacy'. as does our ignorance. the vision of artists can help to pull it down.

founded in 1983, art against apartheid is an independent, multiracial and politically diverse coalition of artists and arts organizations working around the issue of apartheid. this effort was sponsored by the foundation for the community of artists and continues with the support of the u.n. special committee against apartheid and that of each participating artist. each of us. when ever the work: calling individual artists to send slides of a work for exhibit, calling performer artists to set programs and dates for october, calling other arts organizers to encourage that they do their own anti-apartheid cultural events, whenever the work begins to seem tedious or less than important i think of zinzi mandela, a poet too, a young Black woman poet too, and the odds against which she continues to make her voice heard. and i get back to work.

about 25 churches and community spaces will participate in the core of this action by exhibiting and or showcasing visual, literary, and performance art against apartheid. among them are: harlem school of the arts, the schomberg center, jamaica arts center, langston hughes community library, abyssinian baptist church, basement workshop, bronx museum, the otto rene castillo center, p.s. 1, henry street settlement, 22 wooster gallery, teachers college at columbia and a place apart gallery in williamsburg.

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Giovanni Fontana (Italy): *Conoscenza Sottile, Sottile Inganno*, 1984 (oil and collage on paper); a selection from the Art Against Apartheid mail-art collection

about 300 artists have actually filled out the coupon attached to our 'artist call' and we expect at least another hundred to remember at the last minute. the vision, the potential of this movement is incredible. chicago artists are organizing art against apartheid actions. . . los angeles artists are organizing actions. . . atlanta artists. . . boston area artists. . us. . you. . the distance. . closing.

FROM SOWETO TO LOISAIDA:

The Art of Sue Coe and Anton van Dalen

A PAD/D SECOND SUNDAY FORUM



Edited by Stuart Garber

April's "Soweto / Loisaída: The Work of Sue Coe and Anton van Dalen," was one of the most well-attended Second Sundays in PADD's history, thanks in part to *The Voice's* centerfold plug, as well as the reputations of our evening's two guests.

British-born Sue Coe has lived in New York since the early seventies. Her work appears regularly in *Mother Jones*, *The Progressive*, and *The New York Times*, and was shown this summer in "The Human Condition" show at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and featured as well in an exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Contemporary Art. Her first book, "How to Commit Suicide in South Africa" (RAW, New York), with collaborator journalist Holly Metz, sold out its first printing of 5,000 copies and is being reprinted in England. They are currently working on a second book, "The Crystal Night—Bearing Witness: War Resisters of the Twentieth Cen-

ture," to be published next spring by The Real Comic Press in Seattle.

The Dutch-born Anton van Dalen has been living on the Lower East Side since 1967. His work in recent years in shows with Group Material, ABC No Rio, Carnival Knowledge, PADD and other groups had made him a familiar presence in NYC's alternative cultural community. Van Dalen is represented by the Edward Thorpe Gallery.

While the evening's program focused on the work of two individuals, an uncommon tack for Second Sunday sessions, the strength of these artists' work and the depth of their feelings about the subjects they work with stirred a spirited discussion that touched on a wide range of issues that many of us who have been making socially concerned art have been grappling with. Our spatial constraints again limit the extent of the evening's proceedings we've

been able to include here; on the whole, though, the choicest moments remain.

One final note: Because Sue Coe's opening presentation was so closely tied to her slides, her remarks have been supplemented here by comments from a conversation which took place in June. — SG

Sue Coe: I'll be showing two sets of slides tonight, one from the book "How to Commit Suicide in South Africa," and one from a book in process, which is called "The Crystal Night: Bearing Witness—War Resisters in the 20th Century."

This first image is from the new book. It's called "England Is a Bitch." When I did this the English riots were going on, and Rupert Murdoch, the Prince of Darkness, wasn't covering the riots at all. It was just the mating rituals of the royal family. So I decided to do a



Sue Coe: The Message

picture of Princess Di giving Prince Charles a blowjob at the same time as the riots. When I did this painting they said I had no taste, it was vulgar, but I think the royal family is vulgar, and I think they should be executed in the classic style.

This is one I did for *Mother Jones* magazine shortly after the New Bedford rape (in which a woman was gang raped on a pool table while bystanders watched for several hours). I was thinking about this and I was thinking about snuff movies, and how the soldiers going to the Falklands were shown these snuff movies before they went into battle. They showed women being decapitated and cut up before they go to fight. And in New Bedford the local porno house was showing "Woman Raped on Pool Table." That issue of *Hustler* was showing "Woman Raped on Pool Table." These men were merely imitating what they see to be the norm. That's Ronald Reagan behind the bar.

Now I'm going to show you what commercial art means (cropped version of the same drawing from a Boston magazine article on the case). This magazine is full of naked and semi-naked bodies of women advertising coats and soft drink products, but when they do a real journalistic article on rape, they cannot print the naked body of this woman.

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This is Steve Biko. He was a student who was a leader in the South Africa resistance movement who was killed while in prison. My partner Holly Metz and I read about this and decided to start the South Africa book. The South African officials had said that Steve Biko committed suicide by clubbing himself over the head, which was obviously a lie (and later came to be exposed as such in the international press). Steve Biko was an articulate, humane person; he wasn't a criminal. All he cared about was justice, and they murdered him for that. He could be any one of us; any journalist or any writer, any artist, any poet. So here we put Steve Biko, and the doctor saying this looks like suicide, and they've beaten him to death with clubs made out of gold.

This is a picture of a woman in South Africa who was tied to a pole and raped by the white army, and... they forced one of the black soldiers to rape her at gun point. It's the same game here. Dividing the people, always dividing them to get the money, so they can't organize together.

This is the cover of the book, which looks like someone jumping out a window; on the back of the cover, though, you see he is being pushed. Because another way you can commit suicide in South Africa is you can throw yourself out an 18th story window; you can

slip on a bar of soap during the night; you can get attacked by a wild chair during the night. And the book is a document of all these people that are concerned with justice that suddenly got hit with a chair during the night.

Holly Metz (her collaborator) is brilliant. She gets all the facts. It's not hyperbole like my work. It's real facts. I'd never just do images like this and let them float, because any art image can be used by any class, and we know the class that buys art images. So it always has to be tied down with text.

This book isn't good enough by the way. It was just something we did, but it could've been done a lot better.

This is a piece about vivisection—live animals are cut up and experiments are performed on them. I'm surprised that most people in America don't know that these experiments have to do with war. Of course they have to do with war—it's a war economy. This is a death culture.

It was totally natural since I was a kid at school to do this sort of imagery. It was my reality and the reality I grew up in, and it still is what I see. It seems so normal for me to do this work. . . . Some people say my work's too violent. But if you look at the real photographs of this, this is nothing.

I don't want my work to just shake people up. That's a very surface idea, shaking people up. I see lots of images that shake me up, but then I don't know what to do next. I like the facts and I like information to be able to work

with. So, although a lot of my work verges on the sensationalistic, I like it to be backed up with real content that people can use—like an organizing tool, which I'm told people have used the South Africa book for.

I was reading yesterday (late-June) the miners' newspaper in England, about how the army (illegally) and 7000 cops went down to break up the pickets on June 19th. The leader of the union was beaten up; they said he accidentally fell on the railway tracks. If Thatcher's reelected, she will take away people's constitutional rights, their right to demonstrate, their right to freedom of speech.

So, I'm going to go to England and I'm going to do the miners' strike to investigate all the stuff that Thatcher's doing and do a pamphlet or get it published in RAW, so people know exactly what's happening.

There can't be revolutionary culture without a revolutionary proletariat. In England there's a definite revolutionary proletariat. In America I'm not so sure. I think that working people here are aware of the nature of oppression, but they're not aware of how they can change it. And the unions—if you look at the history of America, unions have been busted all the way through American history.

I was just thinking of the movie industry. Every movie that comes out of Hollywood is anti-working class. Every single one. The only way you can be human in those movies is to elevate yourself from the working class into the land of the bourgeoisie, otherwise you're a total failure. And that's wicked, evil propaganda, put with such force against the people that create the wealth of this country, the laborers.

This is a cover of an English magazine about Greenham Common, the women's peace camp in England, which is located by a cruise missile base in England. I first went there because my sister went there.

They were evicted... for breaking the peace. Can you imagine this? They go down to protest war, and they get arrested for breaking the peace—they get put in prison, lose their jobs—my sister, too. And these women have kids, they have families. They're all different women from different classes, different races, different creeds—all different.

It's against the law of the world to make weapons of genocide. Anyone who knows what weapons of genocide are has to protest; it's their moral right. Weapons of genocide kill civilian populations.

I feel that living in this capitalist place, the idea is to make people be parts, to fractionalize people, to shatter them, and I feel the really strong people and the good people are whole, they always remain whole, and they have all the contradictions and all the love and hate of being whole human beings, and that in itself is revolutionary, to have all those elements. And people go to an 8-hour-a-day job and they're something else, and they go home and they're something else, and they deal with their

"Some people say my work's too violent. But if you look at the real photographs of this, this is nothing."

—Sue Coe

families and they're something else, and they're ten different people in one body.

And to address all the issues we've talked about to me is to be totally human. To ignore things is to be dehuman, to be against humanity, by destroying part of yourself. So I consider people like the Berrigans and people like Martin Luther King as being whole human beings, which in itself is so inspiring.

The second book will be interviews with war resisters who are in prison in the United States and Europe. It will be an open dialogue be-

tween all types of resisters. Some are coming from a religious viewpoint—god told them to resist; god told them to spill their blood on missiles. Some are coming from a political view. Some are doing it just because they think that morally it's the correct thing to do. But again, these are people that have been in prison. These are graffiti artists, but they spray weapons instead of walls. If you spray on a weapon you get two years; if you spray on a wall you get in *Art News*. Remember this; don't get them confused.



Sue Coe: Pretoria, from *How to Commit Suicide in South Africa* (RAW Books & Graphics, 1983). Reprinted courtesy of the collection of Curt Marcus (photo: Adam Rich).

Anton van Dalen

I was born in 1938, just outside Amsterdam. I guess the war was really my childhood, because we were almost immediately displaced by the war. Nothing really serious, but it did effect everyone of my generation that was born in Europe at the time. And I think it also very much shaped the way I see things now—the way I see this country and the way I see my neighborhood on the Lower East Side.

Our family emigrated to Toronto when I was 16 years old, and then I came here on my own to New York in 1966. When I first came here I was drawn into this whole success syndrome that we are all drawn into as an inevitable part, as a fly drawn into the light. After I saw the city and began to walk the streets, though, that whole ambition that brought me here seemed very silly. I began to see in the street things that I had never really seen before; I was really shocked to find out how the world lived. The street was also home, it was also the bedroom, it was also the bathroom. It seemed that everything that I had seen in photographs or that I had heard about I was seeing suddenly right in front of me. And it took some time—in fact, I think, five or six years—before I eventually found a way to incorporate this impression of human life on the street into my work.

The drawings that I'm going to show tonight I began in 1975. They're relatively small, mostly around 23 x 29 inches, and done with pencil from very hard, like an H pencil, all the way to 6B. They're all about living on the Lower East Side, specifically about living in the intersection of Avenue A and East 11th Street.

... There was something that, because of what was happening out on the street—the burning down of the neighborhood—that made me look back into the street and realize that's really where I had to be, because what was going on there was just so much more demanding of my attention and my trying to deal with it than anything that I could think of by myself.

So I began this whole series of drawings that I'm still involved with today, which I really view as a social document of the neighborhood and the street where I live. Again, I think that because I've grown up in Holland and the war

social document. I really perceived myself as a war correspondent. I think those were the terms I was approaching it with, and also with that kind of wanting to make it extremely believable and truthful and accurate.

At that time robbery was a daily reality for a lot of us and was very, very difficult. In fact, we were broken into once, twice a year for a number of years; so that was a very traumatic reality and something that we all lived with in constant fear. And I think that's what this drawing also dramatizes—the night, the strong shadows, the tilted landscape, like it's all going to slide right out of the picture.

"What was going on there on the street was just so much more demanding—than anything that I could think of by myself."

—Anton Van Dalen

was like my childhood as I said earlier, the only way I could relate to all these burned-out buildings and the people cut down from drugs and you name it and families coming down fire escapes in the middle of the night because of a fire; these were all things that I only could address in terms of war.

You people know all about Mickey Mantle and Babe Ruth. Well, you know, growing up in Holland we knew all about Rembrandt and Van Gogh. To us, artists were primarily humanitarians; what moved us about their art was their social concern, and their primarily human subject matter, and that to me is still what personifies being an artist. So, going to the street was really again for me embracing what I was born into in Holland.

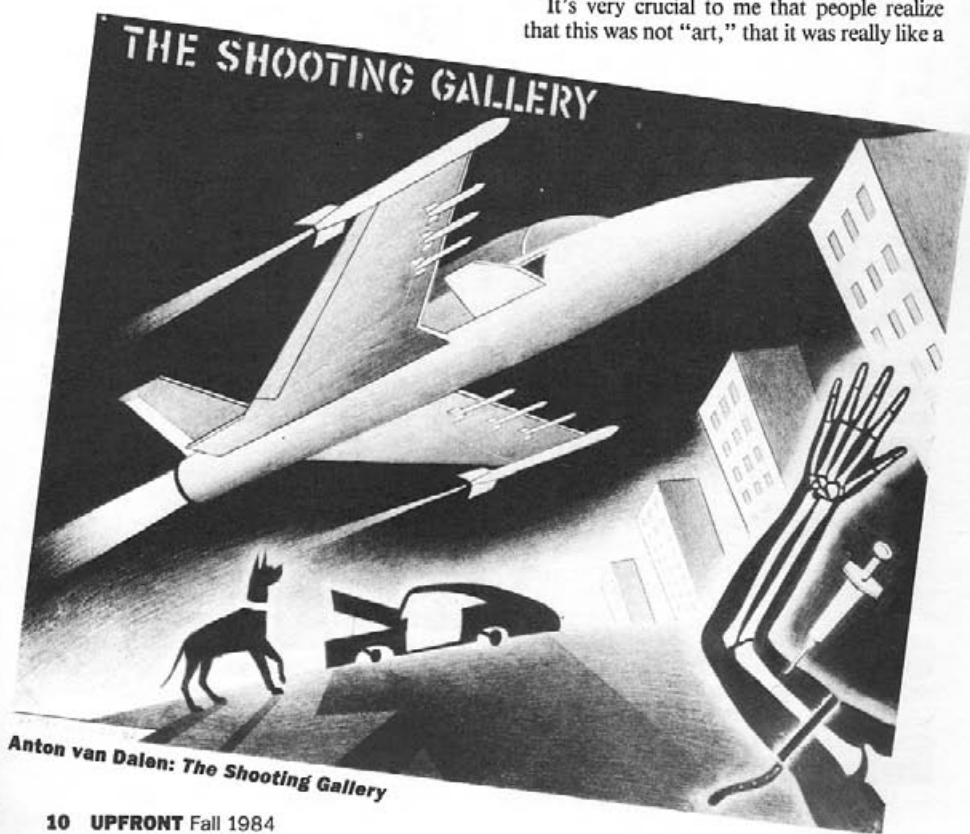
It's very crucial to me that people realize that this was not "art," that it was really like a

This is an abandoned building that has since become Buelah Land, an art bar. So now we're caught between a cross and a cocktail bar, something that we're still trying to live with with a lot of difficulties. Because they've kind of dropped in there with very little sensitivity to what went on there before, and especially I feel difficult about it because it's a place young artists see as a place to show their work. Yet for me it's something that, also as an artist, I'm having a very, very difficult trying to accept.

These are of wood cutouts, dioramas, about 20 inches across and about 15 or 16 inches deep. . . . They were an attempt to make those drawings come to life, to create the illusion of reality, like a little set—because for me it was also like theater, kind of a detachment that artists are renowned for, looking at things like a voyeur through a plate glass window. It was also for me a way to reach through that, and to try to touch that reality that was really kind of silencing my own feelings about these things.

Now, as you're looking at these slides you're probably getting the same recognition that I have that a lot of the subject matter has already become dated, certainly in our neighborhood. I'm now trying to find a way of absorbing and finding a way of dealing with this whole art bar situation. But again, it's not something that you can just sit down and do, because many of these drawings have really grown out of a concern for what was going on there for a long time. And as we all know, it takes a long time before you can actually realize these very complex issues of the Lower East Side and make it into a very successful graphic image that reads.

The "Shooting Gallery" drawing is very important to me because it was really the first time I found a way of dealing with what was going on in the country as a whole. . . . I wanted to create this context. . . because you can't just use images, you've got to relate it to issues that are really important to people. That might mean jobs, that might mean places to live—these are very important issues, and I



Anton van Dalen: *The Shooting Gallery*

think we often share a concern for how to use these very strong images without just giving people a hype.

My son and I made up silkscreen prints of this image and we put them all along Avenue B from 14th Street to Houston Street. Every block I would find a building or two that was abandoned—just sitting there, you know, while everybody is asking, “Where can we live tomorrow,” plus the shooting galleries that were being used—again housing misplaced, you know, not for people, but for exploitation. So this was a way of dealing with this subject matter and trying to return it to the street, where it came from to begin with.

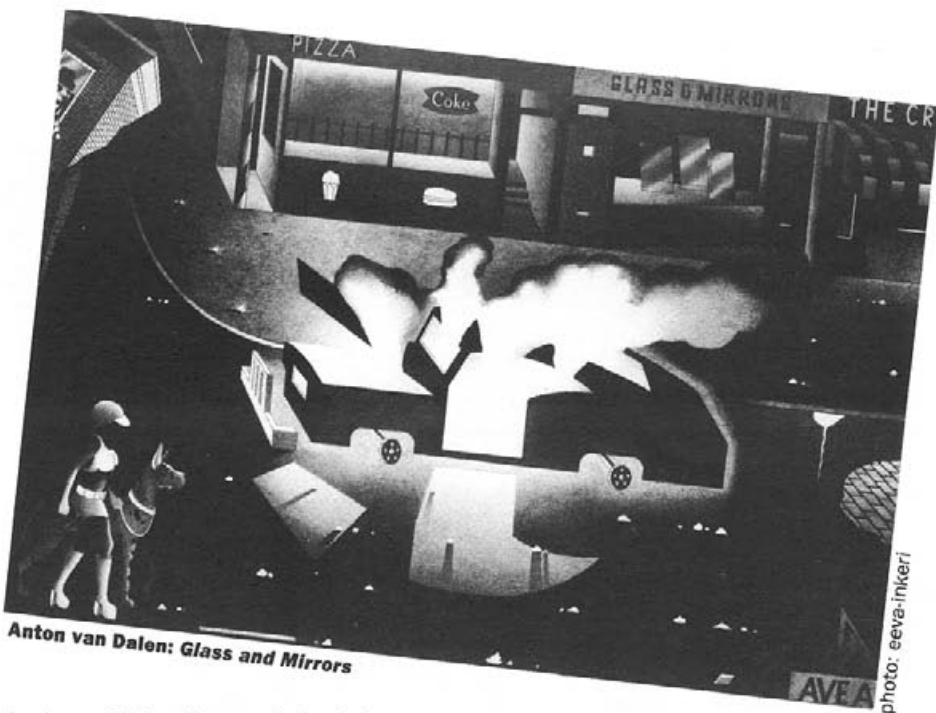
[UPFRONT Cover, June 1983]—This was originally in *The Survival Show*, in the summer of 1981. It was something that I saw as a way to try to kind of channel all these concerns and interests and work that I'd done about the neighborhood into that one wall. I spent a lot of time on that building trying to figure out the appropriate thing to do, because it was a school and there's a long history of murals in schools; people like Ben Shahn and many other artists in this country have done very important pieces in public places like that. So, when I made this piece I felt that it should really be about the neighborhood and the issues of the neighborhood. So at the top I put the text “Lower East Side—Portal to America,” which is a term that's been around, I guess, since the turn of the century, when all the immigrants initially came over there before they fanned across the country. And of course I've ironized it with the real estate exploitation, represented by a giant cockroach stirring up the neighborhood.

The whole picture is built up out of stencils that were made at home, and the cockroach is painted on the place. The rest of it is really assembled. The way I work these pieces is sort of as if I have these separate motifs and then link them together like hieroglyphics.

[Anton also displayed and discussed works that he made for ABC No Rio's “Real Estate” and “Crime” shows and for Group Material's “The People's Choice” and “M5 Shows.”]

All of these groups have been very, very important to me, because having shown in commercial galleries since I was twenty-four or so, and having shown on Madison Avenue over the years and you-name-it, I feel I've slowly grown away from this kind of grassroots support that I think gives all our art a kind of vitality that seems to often slip away from artists as they get older and get showing more and more. It was for me really a kind of rebirth of intention of what I felt my work should be about, and I really must give these people a lot of credit.

[Arm with plant painting]—Now this painting was also done in the last year. I'd become so kind of poisoned by this drug subject matter that it has taken me a long time, really almost ten years, to find a way of using it in my work. I've no experience with heroin myself, and to see heroin needles lying on the street, which is a very common sight on the Lower East Side, or



Anton van Dalen: *Glass and Mirrors*

photo: eeva-inkeri

has been—I felt really compelled to find a way of dealing with that subject matter.

And I think that this was always the case—that much of the material I worked with was never because I thought it was interesting subject matter—that I was in love with how things looked. It was really out of the feeling that this was subject matter that was neglected and that somebody should do something about it. So that's really how I came to approach a lot of the themes that you've seen in the work.

So this work of the plant growing out of the arm was really a way of cleansing myself of that subject matter, because it had become to be something I had to set aside at a point—I just had to—and go on to other things that were also important to me.

DISCUSSION

Q. (to Sue Coe): I wonder how you feel having a large paper like the *Times* publish your work. You said they'd censored a couple of things that you'd done. What do you feel you're gaining through that? Do you feel at all that you're sort of selling out?

Sue Coe: I absolutely don't feel I'm selling out. I feel my work is the norm. I feel my work is natural, normal. I'm always being used at the *Times*; I know I'm being used as a political oddity. A few of us are (considered) the political oddities—actually, we're in the majority. My sort of work and Anton's work is the majority of art in the world. There is nothing abnormal about it. Selling out—absolutely not.

I went into commercial art because of my background. It was assumed you had to make a living; you couldn't be a fine artist. So commercial artists I find have a lot more integrity—they make a living and they get the work out to the mass of people. So, if I do something for *Mother Jones*, a person can buy

that for \$1.95. If do something for a newspaper they can buy it for thirty cents or whatever.

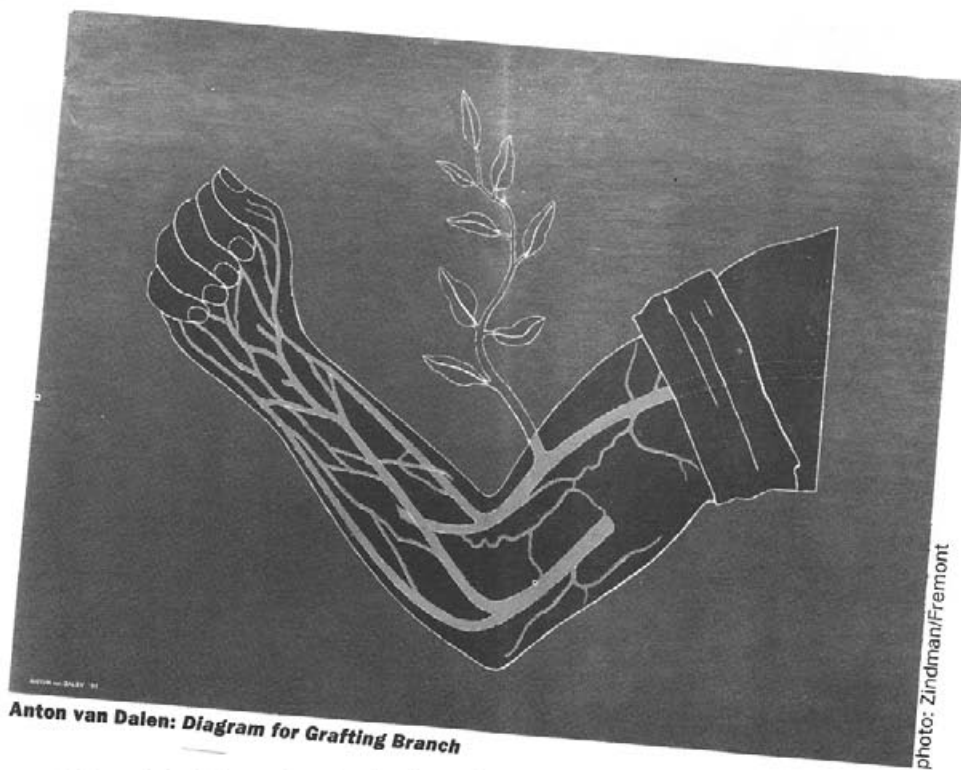
I consider selling out more like being in the gallery situation. There I don't feel too clean.

Q. (to Anton): You mentioned at one point that you tried, particularly in your pictures where you have metaphors of cars and so on, to keep a surrealist tone out of it. And yet what's curious about your work is that, though it's really rooted in the material, real objects of the streets, it has a dream-like, surrealist quality in spite of that.

Anton: Well, I think that one of the things that I had to come to terms with in the work was how to represent that world out on the street that seemed terribly unreal to me. I really had nothing in my own background to find a way to deal with that. And I think that surrealism that you speak of has in part grown out of my own sense of displacement about what was happening there. And it seemed like even though (the life of the street) was the sum of many parts, it was very hard for me to really grasp on to how all these parts fit together, and that's really what the struggle was in the work. To try to create a context, to create all these things together.

Jerry Kearns: I wanted to respond to what (another speaker) was asking about showing in the galleries. I think we miss the whole point if we start worrying too much about whether or not artists are clean or unclean and whether or not you can show or not show. Because the real issue is that the whole scene . . . is being used by the real estate brokers in the city, the people who run the city, and by the money and the power elite to dress the joint up so that they can come in and raise the rents and drive the poor people out who live there, and make condominiums and rebuild the place, and pretty soon it's like all this white middle class thing.

And the artists and the art bars and the gal-



Anton van Dalen: *Diagram for Grafting Branch*

photo: Zindman/Fremont

leries and all of that stuff, we're all being used as a sort of marines or shell-shockers, or people who go in and get mugged for awhile, until the place gets sort of settled out and pictures get up on the wall, and then the rents go up and people get driven out.

And we miss the point if we don't understand that—that as cultural people, we are constantly used. Soho was developed that way, Brooklyn is being developed that way, and the Lower East Side is being developed that way. Now the thing to do is not all get pissed off at each other and say we shouldn't show our work at little art galleries. We *should* show our work in places. Whenever we go in any situation, though, we have to realize there are much larger forces at work than our little careers that are being built in these places, and that we are being used to reshape this city in a very specific kind of way, and we are being used to oppose the poor, whose pictures are in our drawings, which are being sold to the people who are riding in the big limousines down to the Lower East Side, and then they're going to buy the apartment and hang the picture in it.

Sue Coe: It's capitalism. We live in capitalism; we have to make a living in capitalism. We do work to make a living. We create, we labor to have money so we can live. What we have to do is change the economic system so that art has its correct place, which is part of the community. Art is life, art is life to people.

Now I do a commodity art object because I love painting, I love drawing. They're not going to deny that from me, they're not going to make me stop doing that. I enjoy working for publications that are mass publications. That's beautiful...

So what we have to do is not bother about

who owns these galleries, we have to change the structure of this—this is so obvious isn't it? I mean we shouldn't talk about artwork or art commodity or limos or Mary Boone. Who gives a damn? We have to change this death culture...

Tim Rollins: I want to bring up an issue that's been in my mind, that's been in Group Material's mind, and something tells me it's been in political artists' minds in general, especially in the last few years, and that is one about the connotation of the imagery.

... This is something that I've been going through a lot of changes with in my own work, working up in the South Bronx. You want to document reality, and you want your work to be a document of the times. But then, it gets to a point where you maybe—and this sounds very 19th century romantic—try to take the image and make it transcend the muck of the day into some type of contingency that builds up into a kind of hope. And, if you want to build socialism, I think maybe we should start thinking of building the type of images that would make people instead of looking back on god, (or just saying) it's awful, I can't stand it... and ground this back almost into passivity—if there's a way we can start thinking of constructing new images...

The arm with the plant growing out of it, Anton—that's like a breakthrough image for me in terms of looking at your work, as well as in that type of imagery in general. I think it's something that all of us (should) begin to talk about, just as an open issue.

Irving Wexler: Tim raised a very important issue about negative images of despair, images of violence, of rape, of disembodiment and surrealism and alienation, which are largely some of the work that were shown to-

day—very brilliant work—that brings up an important question of critical realism. Here you are in a country in which, if you look at any issue which is of great importance, if you're an artist and try to transliterate it into imagery, the first thing that strikes you is precisely the violence, the alienation, the disembodiment, the savagery, the oppression of America—internally and externally. At the same time, if you are socially minded, you are aware that there is another aspect. There is an aspect of courage, of strength, of humor, of wit, of irony. So, the two images jostle dialectically in you—the kind of life and death images—and the question is a very complex one.

How do you combine in your whole body of work, if you are a critical realist, a correct apportionment as it were of imagery which represents your own psychic state honorably, honestly? That is, at times it's full of death and despair and self-abnegation, hatred; at times it's lyrical and flowing. And sometimes other curious things are sometimes in the work, which appears to be negative (but) it's so glowing with a kind of anti-oppression spirit that comes out that a negative work, like (Sue Coe's) Steve Biko being tortured, has a transcendence that bespeaks of something that's life even though it apparently is death. So it's the dialectic of the positive and the negative, it seems to me, that the authentic artist has to look for.

Sue Coe: We have one big problem now and that's not a lack of good political social content artists. What we have is a lack of merchants. We have no merchants. And this is what differentiates us from the Weimar or that political state where Heartfield was working... We have no distributors. We have the freedom of speech to do a book like South Africa, but we can't get a distributor. We have freedom to do a video but it won't be on TV. We have freedom to do art, but it's not widely distributed and that's what we need—we need merchants to open up the galleries that can deal with that content. There aren't any merchants. The merchants were wiped out in the 1950's along with the artists.

Audience: But you have to introduce it into the society first before you know whether you succeed or fail. It's not a difficult thing to do.

Sue Coe: No, it's not that simple. It's not difficult to market the South Africa book for 5000 copies. It's difficult to go to 10,000. It's difficult to go to 15,000—when every damn cat book in this city can go to half a million, just churned out. You can buy a cat book in every bookstore in the world. I can't buy anything on the Soviet Union, I can't buy anything on South Africa... I can't get any information, but I can get anything you want on a cat.

Now that's the way they're getting us. This is the only issue we have to discuss. We don't have to discuss the content of work or negative imagery or any of that... That's already been talked about. What we have to discuss is getting these merchants, getting the hustlers, who can hustle this work and get it out. ■

WHERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Not For Sale, The East Village Art Scene, and The Lower East Side

By Stuart Garber

For May's Second Sunday Session, Not For Sale, PADD's anti-gentrification committee, presented a slide show/discussion on their spring action—"Out of Place: Art for the Evicted," a month-long "exhibition" at a group of outdoor "galleries" in the Lower East Side which exhibited work commenting on neighborhood issues and the (not unrelated) growing East Village art scene.

What follows is a look at the group's work since its inception in early 1983, beginning first with an overview of the real estate crisis in the Lower East Side and the role of the art community in the neighborhood, followed by an historical overview of the group's efforts, and concluding with excerpts from written responses to a questionnaire and from a discussion with the group which took place this summer.

INTRODUCTION: The Lower East Side Today

The Lower East Side is not the only neighborhood in New York being rocked by the pressures of gentrification. Throughout the five boroughs, the pressures of the city's housing shortage are driving rents through the ceiling and low-income tenants out of their homes and businesses. For socially concerned artists and cultural workers, though, the situation on the Lower East Side is of special significance.

While the traditionally Eastern European and, for the past two decades, Hispanic neighborhood has been a home for artists for many years, its artist population has grown steadily since the late seventies, as Soho became more and more attractive to the managerial classes—and less affordable to the artists who'd originally transformed it into a residential neighborhood just a few years before.

Few others besides the neighborhood's existing community wanted to live in the Lower East Side then, where the hundreds of abandoned buildings, the highly visible drug trade and the high crime rate kept rents low and real estate investors away. As other parts of the city began closing off, though, and as more people began moving in, the neighborhood became the site of what has probably been some of the most frenetic real estate speculation in America today.

With the neighborhood's residents already reeling from the area's rising rents and accelerating evictions, the city's plans to auction off the bulk of the Lower East Side's unoccupied buildings to private developers for luxury housing has the city's progressive community up in arms.

One of the most heated battles to date was in early 1983, over the city's proposed Artist Home Ownership Program (AHOP), in which the city sought to sell units in unoccupied buildings to artists as well as private developers in what many saw as a blatant attempt by the Koch administration to use artists to help enhance the saleability of the neighborhood. The plan was soundly defeated.

In the year-and-a-half that followed, more than thirty art galleries have moved into the neighborhood, accompanied by at least a dozen new cafes, boutiques and bars catering to the neighborhood's growing artist community. With them have come the eyes of not only the local and national, but the international press, focused first on



NOT FOR SALE Logo, 1983

the art and the "exciting" new culture surrounding it, but also, invariably, on the money to be made by investing in the neighborhood.

The new crop of artists have come not for profit, but for affordable housing and the growing community of like-minded people. Many of the galleries, though obviously in business, have come for similar reasons. Some are sensitive to the existing community; many are not.

And while it's hardly been their intention, their very presence there is helping to hasten the destabilization and dispersal of the neighborhood's existing community.

NOT FOR SALE: A Historical Overview

Not for Sale (NFS), PADD's anti-gentrification subcommittee, grew out of the PADD study group in early 1983 when the group was invited to put together a show for a local (non-East Village) gallery. The group had been studying the interfacings of radical thought and aesthetic theory and were growing hungry for a way to involve themselves, their theories, and their artwork with issues of the community.



Not for Sale Committee: *Out of Place: Art for the Evicted* poster (printed by the Lower East Side Printshop)

The issue of gentrification seemed a natural selection. Several of the group's members had been involved in housing struggles with the city and with landlords. In addition—and perhaps more significantly—the AHOP battle mentioned above had fostered heated tensions between a large number of artists and the area's existing community, as well as among various segments of the art world itself.

The members of NFS saw a need to address the community as artists who were, in fact, interested in their struggles, and to address other artists living and moving into the community as to the importance of seeing what they had in common with its existing residents.

In the Spring of '83, after several months of preparation, planning, and networking with fellow artists and neighborhood community groups, the group thrust itself into the public eye with an ambitious month-long series of events revolving around an exhibition at the CHARAS-run El Bohio community center on East 9th Street. The show, which included the work of over 50 artists, was accompanied by a film and video night, musical performances, and outdoor work, as well as by related exhibitions at ABC No Rio and Printed Matter, and drew the attention of the art world as well as of the community at large.

“One of the things we were really trying to do was to get artists to see themselves as tenants, as having similar interests to the rest of the community—to realize that common ground is there, despite our cultural differences.”

NOT FOR SALE

The NFS group had very mixed feelings about the show. While some members describe it today as “effective... in pinpointing the artists' role in gentrification,” and feel that “the community has benefitted by having the group give expression to the experience of gentrification and the struggle... to slow it down,” others feel that the show actually helped contribute to the problem, making the neighborhood “even more ‘the place to be’ for those on the cultural edge.”

After the show closed, the group decided to concentrate on developing their relationships with the local community groups, joining, among other things, the Cultural Committee of the Joint Planning Council. They began to develop a proposal for a community park and sculpture garden “which would stand as a pro-Loisaida anti-gentrification symbol,” to be designed by artists in conjunction with the established residents of the community. They also began to attempt to approach the owners of the various galleries that were beginning to move into the neighborhood, with the hopes of getting them to be responsive to the needs of the community. With a few exceptions, though, they met with little success.

This past Spring the group staged a month-long exhibition/event called “Out of Place: Art for the Evicted.” Works by 37 artists commenting on the issues of gentrification and the growing popularity of the East Village art scene were displayed at outdoor “galleries” mounted on the sides of unoccupied buildings and graced with such names as “The Guggenheim Downtown,” “The Discount Salon,” “Another Gallery,” and “The Leona Helmsley.”

After the show, the group disbanded. They were, in turn, discouraged by the accelerating pace of the neighborhood's gentrification, the misperceptions and lack of responsiveness on the part of the local art community to their efforts, and their own doubts about their effectiveness.

The following month, in what *Village Voice* writer Roberta Smith called “The East Village Art Wars,” *Art in America* ran a 28-page ar-

Out of Place: Art for the Evicted, April 1984





STOP GENTRIFICATION

Leslie Bender: *Stop Gentrification*, Stencil poster, 1983

ticle championing the rise of the East Village scene in which the issues NFS had struggled to bring to the fore were completely ignored, followed by a two-page rebuttal by editor Craig Owens in which the group's efforts were held forth as "exemplary," with images from their final show illustrating the text.

This summer, the members of Not For Sale—Michael Anderson, Ed Eisenberg, Janet Koenig, Greg Sholette, Glenn Stevens and Jody Wright—got together to reflect on their work as a collective. What follows are some highlights from their discussion, supplemented by excerpts from the group's answers to a questionnaire given to them by the UPFRONT editorial committee.

"Leona Helmsley" site of "Art for the Evicted" show, April 28, 1984

THE DISCUSSION

The Second Show—Art for the Evicted

Janet Koenig—We chose the street galleries for a number of reasons. The show would be seen by more people, including people who don't go to galleries. Part of our critique of the show at CHARAS was that we had done another gallery scene—and in fact we really didn't attract the people of the community, which is what we had set out to do. We were also presenting a critique of the East Village scene.

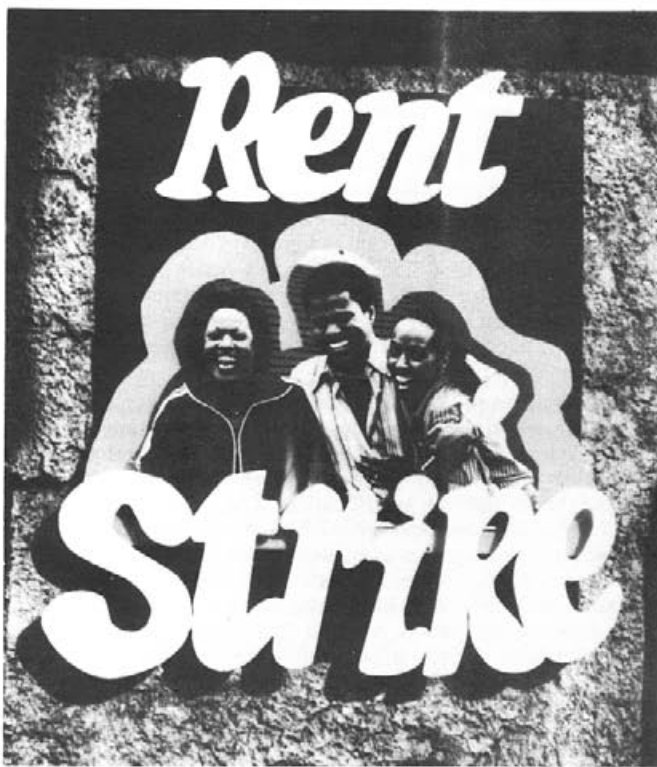
Greg Sholette—Basically the later exhibit was the result of what we learned in the first—that is, that as a group of artists, some of whom live on the Lower East Side, we were in a better position to reach other artists and try to ally them with the community . . . than to take a pedagogical role of educated, privileged people revealing "the truth" to the poor Lower East Side residents—to give an exaggerated description of our original thrust.

Michael Anderson—I think, at least, we wanted our audience to know that artistic opposition does exist and that NFS continued to be active. At best, we hoped to get artists and galleries to seriously think about their positions and get involved with their community groups and neighbors fighting gentrification. The old neighborhoods in N.Y.C., the blocks, were very cohesive and supportive places to live; we wanted to promote that as an ideal for the Lower East Side. It is a case where people can become organized socially and politically when the need arises on a local level, which can be a very effective way to resist gentrification. As far as the effect of our show, I'm sure we accomplished the least of our expectations. Who knows about the rest. I didn't hear about artists flooding community meetings, though.

The show was more supported by the community organizations than the first show. We had done outreach for the first show, had sent letters and made calls to all the community groups, but they didn't know who we were. We'd never been involved with their organizations in terms of going to their meetings, and half of us weren't even from the Lower East Side. So there was definitely some



photo: Michael Anderson



Greg Sholette: *Lucky Strike*

hesitation from the community about what we were doing, though it seemed to me that they all came to the show—at least the community organizers. By the time of the second show, though, they knew who we were; they knew how we thought. We were going to meetings; we were involved in the Joint Planning Council [the coalition of housing groups on the Lower East Side]. We were active members of the cultural committee of the Council—and so we had a lot more support.

Ed Eisenberg—Also, we did reach an audience that doesn't go into galleries. A lot of people who live in the neighborhood who don't go into galleries, but who do read posters on the sidewalk from time to time, did take this in—as well as your general East Village yuppie.

Greg Sholette—One lesson to draw from this would be that, if you're going to start doing this kind of work, and you're coming in from an outside position—if you're not so-called organically part of the community—first present something on a humbler scale than what we had in mind. Sort of set the credentials for the group in the community structure that's there, with the community groups, and then go about something more ambitious once they see that you're serious. I think that would be the best thing to do—to take a little step first and then go on and take a bigger step. We took the big step first and then we put the little step in the end, in the more recent show, and it was more supported.

Possibilities for Further Work

While the group said that it has dissolved, they have not stopped actively thinking about the issue.

Greg Sholette—The “Art for the Evicted” show was a kind of warm-up or opening for a dialogue, and in that sense it was effective. What we had hoped was to develop a more organized role for the arts community within the neighborhood—for galleries to participate in voter registration, to make available materials on neighborhood issues and to support pro-neighborhood legislation, and to get galleries and artists to work with block associations.

There is a role for artists to create a counter text(s) to what is happening on the Lower East Side. We would be doing a lot if we just further opened the fissure... I think this was the gist of Craig Owens' piece in *Art in America*. This is a role in which PADD should be at the forefront, even with the demise of NFS, and I can't stress this enough.

“The question is, how does it go beyond the art world? That's the tough part.”

A unique opportunity exists that should already be in the planning stages of PADD, and I'm afraid it's not, and that is a major effort to support the election of a pro-housing, etc. mayor and the elimination of Koch. Frankly, I think that this far outstrips the value of a huge project about national issues that will be held *after* the polls close in November. Contrast this to the real impact a project of such scale would have for the political landscape of the city we're living in. I hope that PADD will learn enough from *State of Mind/Union* and have enough time and energy to bring its creative self to that issue next year. I also hope that PADD will take the risk of continuing the NFS group work on housing in some form.

Michael Anderson—I have one regret (over NFS's demise), and that is that we are leaving behind a noticeable vacuum. The polarity between artists and the community which existed during the AHOP proceedings is still there and is getting worse. Artists and galleries are one of the most important manifestations of gentrification in the neighborhood. That polarity will alienate the community unless a pro-community artists' group mediates.

Reflections

Michael Anderson—I get the feeling that some people think that we're completely against all artists and all galleries that are coming into the neighborhood, but that just is not the case. We've always said that we don't across-the-board condemn all galleries that come into the Lower East Side, and we recognize that there is a need for a certain way that these galleries function for us as artists. But we *do* condemn artists and galleries that are not conscious of what's going on around them. That was the distinction.

An important part of what we are bringing up in this situation was that, as an artist, you have to start thinking about what's going on around you. For me, that's the bottom line of what we were talking about. You can't just be your little individual self away from everything else and believe that you don't have an effect on your neighborhood, and believe that you don't have an effect on your world. That's what we were really confronting, what we were really trying to bring home to artists.

Jody Wright—It doesn't seem to be an idea that's very attractive to many artists. As a matter of fact, it tends to be antithetical to the whole gallery scene. I feel that a lot of the galleries—as well as a lot of the artists—feel very threatened by the whole PADD idea of community involvement, like it's a very, very alien idea.

The thing that artists have in common with the community is that we are all tenants. One of the things we were really trying to do was to try to get artists to see themselves as tenants and as having similar interests to the rest of the community, and to realize that common ground is there, despite our cultural differences. We tried to show the process of gentrification—to show that while an artist could afford to pay more than a tenant who was just kicked out, that just down the road the same thing could happen to him or her—unless they join together with the rest of the community and start to organize.

Greg Sholette—We did help to interject another point of view into the discussion, even if it was only at the level of the art world to a certain extent. I think that's a beginning—a kind of opening that could be expanded. We did become the nemesis of the East Village scene—in a simplified form, unfortunately. It has potential. The question is, how does it go beyond just the art world? That's the tough part.

ARTISTS

ASIAN AND HISPANIC



photo: Alan Kikuchi

Peaceflsh Performance, Basement Workshop, 1983

Edited by Lucy R. Lippard

The March 11 Second Sunday Forum was the second in PADD's ongoing "Out of Sight, Out of Mind" series, exploring cultural diversity, the art of "minority" communities, and the possibilities of cross-cultural coalition work to make visible that art which is virtually invisible in the mainstream. (See *UPFRONT*, No. 6-7, 1983, for coverage of the first panel, with Native American and Black participants.) The series is focused on the ways culture expresses, resists, and transcends oppression. The speakers were artists/muralist Tomie Arai, poet/artist Fay Chiang, (representing the Basement Workshop in Chinatown) and artist Marcos Dimas (representing the Taller Boricua in East Harlem).

As introduction, we want to quote from a letter recently received from Texas/California Chicano filmmaker Willie Varela: "Since I consider my experiences as a minority artist fairly typical . . . , I feel that I can speak with some authority when detailing various grievances. (Of course, most, if not all, of my white artist friends think I'm just paranoid, or overly sensitive. It seems that none of my experiences are ever valid. They always have some kind of excuse to make for a fellow curator or programmer. It is accepted that we are systematically excluded from significant participation in contemporary culture, but to bitch about it is bad form.) As a subtext, if we can raise serious doubts in their mind as to the possibility that maybe a minority artist was excluded because of latent racial prejudice or ignorance, then there is always the old, 'Well, you know, man, the art itself just isn't really that good.' So you see, there's always a way out."

Tomie Arai: My involvement in the Asian American community had a lot to do with relevance. The antiwar movement really influenced my life and was a turning point in my development as an artist. About seven weeks after I went to a march on the Pentagon, I left art school to look for alternatives to the mainstream. In 1972 I was working with the Asian coalition against the war. I did leaflets and posters, trying to find ways to use my art to help people become more self-sufficient in the area of culture. As an Asian growing up in America, it was the first time I made the connections between what had happened in Hiroshima, what was happening in Vietnam, and what was happening in Chinatown. I could see the thread of racism running through my life and the need for us to get together. It was also the first time for me that there were heroes. Because of various historical conditions, we just didn't have the same kind of heroes that Afro or Latin Americans had. I began to see that Madame Binh, Ho Chi Minh, Chou en Lai—these were heroes. With the antiwar movement and the women's movement, and the opening up of relations with the People's Republic of China, I began to see there was a way to talk about being an Asian woman in America and using my art to express that.

Yellow Pearl was an anthology of Asian American poetry, writing, art, and songs. It was the first time a group of us had gotten together to do something about our experiences here. We met in a basement in Chinatown. It was through *Yellow Pearl* that I began to see there was a community I could work with. It wasn't just a geographical community—in Chinatown—but a real community with other Asian Americans who shared the same goals, concerns, and feelings about who

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they were. For me, a Japanese American with no real community, this was very important.

Basement Workshop grew out of these meetings. I did posters and things. I wasn't deeply involved, but was touched by what was going on. The main question at the time was talking about the experiences of Asians in America, as opposed to Asians in general. Asians have been here over 100 years. I am a third-generation Japanese American and I still feel like Americans think I don't belong here, that I'm a foreigner; I still feel like people think I should go back home. We wanted to dig up a positive history of Asians in this country and portray Asians in a positive, dignified way, as opposed to the stereotypes seen everywhere in the media.

In about 1972, Allan Okada, who worked on *Yellow Pearl*, directed a mural project on Chatham Square with Cityarts Workshop. The following year I was coming out of Basement and I looked up and there he was again, painting another mural. He asked me to paint some fish in a fish store window and I was very nervous, but I ran around the corner to a fish store, did some drawings, and it was a really exciting experience for me. The mural was called *Chinatown Today*. It was on the corner of East Broadway and Pike; it's been removed now. It was designed and painted by a group of kids from a gang program called Project Reach. It's Chinatown seen through their eyes as they walk down the street. On one side you see the daily images of their lives, and on the other you see prostitution and gambling and some of the problems they have to live with.

When I got up on the scaffolding, it confirmed for me that this was a wonderful way to get a message out in a very public way and I began to work with Cityarts. The first mural I directed with the program was removed this year—it was on East Broadway and Rutgers, on the wall of the Garden Cafeteria, which is gone now too. This was the first time I did masonry work, put together scaffolding, but we learned to do it. The mural was done by young women from the community, none of whom were artists. The title—*Wall of Respect for Women*—was inspired by a wall done by Bill Walker, a Black artist in Chicago, which became a rallying point for the community.

The murals were made for the people of that neighborhood, not to be hidden away in galleries and museums. Cityarts involved the community in all aspects of planning and design. There was a lot of research involved. We used an opaque projector and a grid to transfer the drawing to the wall. Then it was pretty much like a coloring book. You could participate whether you were a good artist or not. This method was developed so non-artists could overcome their inhibitions and get involved in making art. I had come to the project with a lot of preconceptions about how to work with people and what art was for and these were all thrown out the window in the process of working. A lot of people in the movement have a tendency to talk at people. I came to do this very political women's mural and found I was involved in a dialogue with nine other women who had their own strong feelings about what they wanted. It was a very good collective process and the piece also became a history of the Lower East Side, all the waves of immigration, early unionizing. I still hear from people about how much this mural meant to them.

It was around for ten years and in the course of that time so many things had happened. Conditions for doing murals have changed a lot; the murals themselves have changed a lot. Another mural I worked on—*Chilai, Arriba, Rise Up*—was the first attempt to work collectively with artists. Copies of the design were circulated in the community to get feedback. There are scenes of the Rock Springs Massacre of Chinese miners in the 1800s, and Japanese American relocation camps. At the time they were building Confucius Plaza and they weren't hiring any Chinese or minority workers. I was arrested while protesting at the site and we included that issue in the mural. We tried to arrive at a language that was easily readable to everybody. But after all the process, people on the street still didn't understand the image; they saw it as an exploding PT boat. It taught us a lot about political rhetoric and clichés.

There was a lot of discussion about whether the murals should passively reflect community feelings, which sometimes could be very conservative. The mural *Seeds of Progressive Change* was an attempt to talk about socialism and included a portrait of Ho Chi Minh. But the owners of the parking lot adjacent to the mural were Vietnam vets and they were very disturbed by it. To compromise, the artists removed the

victory scene but included the portrait, which was later defaced by those guys. The artists left the defacement there as a statement.

[Arai also show her personal work, including a series of masks, self-portraits, and "nuclear portraits" of friends and family.]

Fay Chiang: I'll talk a little about the Basement Workshop first. I got involved in fall of 1971, but my quest started before that. I grew up in Queens, by La Guardia airport. My parents had a laundry and we lived in back of the laundry. I felt kind of strange because after school the other kids would go home and I'd go to my father's store and kind of disappear behind a curtain. Through high school I always felt different. I did volunteer work in Chinatown to help the kids of new immigrants. I'd lived there when I was two, and I could still remember the smells and images. In college I got involved with the antiwar movement, and with getting ethnic studies—Asian American and Black studies—into the city colleges. I also did a lot of organizing around day care issues.

But that didn't feel right either. So I saved up a lot of money from my job at Macy's and took a trip to Taiwan and Hong Kong. If I had problems about identity before... when I went over there, Oh my god. Everywhere I went I fit in, I looked like them and I could understand the dialect, but people were so polite and had a grasp of the ancient culture I didn't know. I thought, I'm an American. I have to go back to New York. At that crucial point, someone told me about *Yellow Pearl*. I started hanging out at Basement after work and we put this project together by having three benefits and hand-collating and boxing everything. Then I got involved in Basement's other projects, including *Bridge Magazine*, which is still being published.

At the time, Basement was called the Asian American Resource Center. It was collecting oral history, artifacts, old photos, clothing from the community. A lot of it was found in the garbage, because of the bachelor society that existed in Chinatown from the turn of the century until recently, due to discrimination against Chinese men bringing their wives and families. When bachelors died off, people just tossed their documents and everything out, and we went around at night raiding the dumpsters of Chinatown. The resource center has become the New York Chinatown History Project and *Bridge* is now housed with Asian Cinevision, both on East Broadway.

We got some funding from the NEA and started construction and training classes with the community after school which my sister Jean coordinated. We taught dance, guitar, and slowly we put together a summer youth program, from 1973-78. We were also involved with employment organizing and the police brutality issue, with poster-making and demos. In '75 the programs had gotten so large we moved to a loft at 199 Lafayette Street, where we had a sound recording studio and a dark room. We lost that space in '79 and moved back to Catherine Street where we had a children's program and an adult English education project and helped people go through the immigration process.

From '79 to '80 we closed to reorganize and see what we could do with limited resources, looking at the community to see what was needed. By then the Chinatown Planning Council and social services had taken on some of projects we'd started and Asian American Dance Theater had incorporated. The kids we'd been working with for ten years, a lot of them went away to college, and came back and asked us, well, what next? That's the phase we're in now, trying to support that art and make it visible to a larger audience. John Wu started the gallery in 1977. We have 8 to 10 shows a year, mostly Asian American artists but also others whose sensibility is similar to ours. In our literature program we have a poetry reading series and writers' workshops. We have an in-house dance company and collaborations between writers and artists and performers. I think in a year or two we may go back to community work. This summer I'm working on a video project designed by Don Kao who left the children's project at Basement to go into the public school system and got funding for a multi-ethnic resource center. This video project is to work with teenage girls from the local junior high school, to do interviews, role playing with their families, and particularly to hear the women's stories.

Marcos Dimas: I'm a co-founder and member of the Puerto Rican Workshop—Taller Boricua. We formed in 1969-70 after trying to deal with the art establishment. At that time the Artworkers Coalition was around dealing with the Vietnam war, the galleries, and all systems of art in New York. There was a small faction of Blacks and a small faction of Puerto Ricans. One of the actions was to close the museums in reaction to the Kent State massacre. A lot of the issues involved trying to get the



WALL OF RESPECT
FOR WOMEN

L. WILLIAMS	C. HOMANN
C. TAYLOR	E. GONG
R. SEEBOL	H. DAVIS
N. JANNUZZI	M. COLON
A. HERNANDEZ	T. ARAI

Wall of Respect for Women, Community Mural Project directed by Tomie Arai.

museums to decentralize their programs, to get the culture out to the neighborhoods, to spread it around New York. We had a series of meetings with the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, but they just led to quiet appeasement—"Cool down, we'll take care of you in a little while."

The Puerto Ricans decided not to let the idea fall, so we formed a group of artists and located a space in East Harlem—not on the Lower East Side, because the cultural scene there was moving too rapidly and we wanted to decentralize culture. We had a space across the street from

the then-existing Young Lords Party, which was a revolutionary group of Puerto Rican activists. We decided to work collectively, share the space and whatever resources we could muster and do political/cultural work with the existing groups.

We initiated a silkscreen program that produced a lot of the graphics that were used by the PSP party, community organizations, cultural in-

OUT OF MIND (II)



stitutions, festivals, etc. And we started to take outdoor portable exhibits to the community; we set them up on walls and in parks and in the Bronx, Williamsburg—wherever there was a large Puerto Rican community. Our philosophy was to instruct through art. Esthetic-wise, the group decided to deal with the Pre-Columbian and African esthetics of the Caribbean which were negated throughout our history, first by Spanish colonialism till 1900, which suppressed indigenous and African culture. Then the second colonialism came after the Spanish American War, the US mandated that English was taught in the schools and began the commercialization of the island.

Although we always did a lot of political art, posters, collaborations, at the same time the members were creating their own art. I'll show slides of personal work. We've moved three times and we lost a whole bunch of slides, so I can't show you much of the past. The workshop's philosophy has been more in the collective idea. We have a nucleus of two or three members. Everybody else comes in, does work, and leaves, so it's an on-moving place, sort of like a pit stop. We did silkscreen for a long time but after awhile it becomes a little too dangerous health-wise. We've had workshops with children, young adults, and senior citizens. We're located now in the East Harlem Arts and Education Complex, which houses about 15 cultural and educational organizations for theater, art, etc. One of our main victories was getting the Museum of the City of New York nearby to do some programs related to the community. It's usually a showcase for old Dutch art and the art of the colonies. We got them to open their doors to the Hispanic community and contemporary New York. They've had exhibitions on the history of East Harlem and on drug addiction.

DISCUSSION

Q: What were some of the problems for artists working with the Young Lords Party?

Dimas: Our workshop functioned as the troops of the movement. If there were things to be done we would do it. We didn't participate in the decision-making, though there were some artists who were involved directly in the party. Our philosophy was to educate and the tool we had was our art.

Q: I noticed that in all your presentations there were periods of intense community work and then turning inward toward the intense personal. Anybody involved with social practice has to go through that.

Dimas: We always did both at the same time.

Chiang: There was a whole period at Basement when some of us felt we had to deal with the community and others were more involved with politics. In 1975 there was a huge split over whether the organization was

"Three Medicine Bags to Go" by Marcos Dimas, acrylic, clay, feathers and rope on paper bags, 1974.

going to be political or cultural. We thought we might have to close up. It was like a heavy divorce, but over the year we learned to respect each other's thing.

Q: Where do you think your groups are now?

Dimas: Right now we see ourselves in different times. There's not that need for us to be out on the streets. Our group chose survival. Now we're trying our best to become self-sufficient.

Q: How can you say you don't have to be out in the streets anymore, given what's going on now?

Dimas: It's true there's more of a need, but there's less of an effort. The whole political scene is diluted, not as vibrant as it was in the '60s.

Arai: There's no mass movement like there was in the '60s. Cityarts is facing a financial crisis. There used to be tremendous community support for murals, but when that support began to dwindle, funding took on more and more importance and it changed the character of the murals. 1977 was very different from 1974. Censorship became a crucial problem. I was very disturbed by that. For me, turning to more personal work was a very conscious decision. But it also grew out of the fact that for me, after I left Cityarts, I was no longer connected to a community in a concrete way.

To do political work, you have to be involved in people and organizations. You have to be doing something. My life had changed to where I was more self-involved, more cut off. I also felt I didn't have the answers. I couldn't get a hold on what was happening with the Left. Working on the murals I felt we had to make a statement. Half the group would say we should have socialism and revolution and the other half would say, well, we should talk about it. There'd be confusion. Of course it was always the artists who worked next to political organizations who had the clearest points of view. I didn't have that kind of conviction.

Q: I was moved by the power of all your work, especially when you combined politics with esthetics... "Personal" seems to mean more abstract, more mainstream. Is that how you mean it? I found your political work to be more vibrant.

Dimas: How do you read mainstream?

A: The market, the dominant culture, a certain interpretation on contemporary art history... A kind of recognition, the visible part of the visible/invisible thing we were talking about. You're either in the mainstream, or trying to be in it, or creating some kind of alternative.

Chiang: Maybe this is answering at an angle, but if we look at art as a body of art over a lifetime, there may be a political phase and a personal

OUT OF SIGHT,

abstract phase, but usually artists go through a third or fourth phase where there's a combination. Also in terms of survival—my parents came from China where they owned land but when they came here they had to rebuild. I'm a survivor too, but what I'm fighting for is cultural survival and psychological survival, for myself and my community.

Arai: It's funny you should phrase your question so delicately. It automatically makes me feel defensive. I think a lot of political artists feel their art has to look a certain way, communicate in a certain way, and if they're not doing that they're being selfish, trying to make it in the mainstream. The opening up of China created standards for what political art should look like, that the artist should serve the people by being essentially egoless. But what was once very exciting, progressive and spontaneous in murals became a formula, images became clichés, the easy way of dealing with very complex problems. An innovative force became rigid. My own work was trying to see if there was a different way to do it. Political artists have to do this.

Q: Does the difference between the Asian and the Puerto Rican work stem from the difference in the socio-economic and psychological positions of the two groups?

Chiang: We're touching now the first large generation of Asian American artists who are putting their lives in the work.

Arai: Historically, Asian Americans have not had the same kind of indigenous culture as the Afro Americans and Chicanos have had. Because of immigration laws that prevented families, you don't have that kind of tradition here. I was at a panel at the Japan Society where Milton Glaser said Japanese design is influencing the whole advertising world. They showed slides, and the art that's coming out of Tokyo is so modern—it's a blend between Asian and American and 20th century. It was more American than a lot of the work being done here. I can't really define Asian American culture or what it will be.

Dimas: In our work there is a sense of creating a mental awareness of duality, of two ideas, and not scaring the people, the masses, away. The obvious political message tends to turn some people off. Maybe it's the hidden message that we're trying to clarify.

Q: The notion of a schism between personal and political is misleading. It depends on what's going on at the time. If you get disenchanted with the rhetoric and move to another way of ordering your life, that brings another sort of vision. One isn't inherently more political than the other. The step out of one practice to another is a very political step. It's an option taken in relation to political practice to undertake another kind of practice, not in total ignorance, but as a choice to develop a different kind of imagery.

Arai: I believe that the personal is political, but deep down inside I also believe you have to be an activist to be political, to show what you can do about things. In your studio, by yourself, you can neglect your feelings about urban decay or whatever, but to be a progressive artist you have to do something beyond that.

Q: To be creative in your studio is also activist, but it's not quite as structured.

Arai: For a minority artist to paint or be a dancer or an actor is in itself something. There are so many things to hold you back that to go out and do it is a good thing. . . . Being alone in the studio is part of the process of getting to another place.

Q: There are very clear boundaries to the esthetics that can develop in a directly political artmaking situation. There comes a point when you begin to repeat yourself and make your own stereotypes. Marcos is talking about looking for other ways of saying these things, not hitting people over the head, developing a more complex visual language that may become more abstract for a while because you're getting away from the specificity of the initial language toward a more psychological one. There are a million factors, and I'm very suspicious of a left cultural position that doesn't recognize the process you're talking about. It's short-sighted.

Q: But let's also do the dialectic thing with this, and remember there are also stereotypes in studio work. I agree that there's a sort of cycle people go through where you bring the consciousness of one situation into the consciousness of the next situation, and a lot of people do tend to go back and forth. But you can get just as buried in repetition in the studio. I hate to hear the community work and the left part of it being blamed for having all the rhetoric and stereotypes, because there's every bit as much of that stuff going on in the other half. The really politically conscious and esthetically ambitious artist is caught in the contradictions of these cycles. Sooner or later you internalize your politics until they come out in your esthetics whether you want them to or not. Ideally, you're not constantly dragged between these two poles.

Q: One of the reasons the question of racism has to be dealt with so specifically and continually in different situations is that the culture we live in is such an onslaught. Psychic survival has to be continually re-found in different situations, given what the history is around us at the moment. Since we live in a society that continually alienates every group from one another, every occupation from one another, every private or public feeling from one another, we're continuously in this *incredible* battle to create articulation which insures the personal psychic survival of a community we've attached ourselves to.

Q: We're trying to survive *and* to create a new world. We know we can't do this alone. Working in the studio alone makes the odds against you. There are other alternatives. . . . Graffiti art came not out of schools, but from someplace *else*, and it's those other places we have to explore.

Q: The problems seem to me to get right back to distribution. The problem of distribution for minority artists is how do your work and experience fit in with mainstream taste.

Q: Or how do you make that mainstream taste reflect everybody else's tastes without us all being melted down? ■

The Basement Workshop is located at 22 Catherine Street, NYC 10038 (212-732-0770). Taller Boricua is at 1 East 104th St., NYC 10029 (212-831-4333).



Papo Colo and collaborators: Octopus

Abortion, Africa, African-Americans, Alternative
Art, Architecture, Archives, Argentina, Armenia, Artists' Books, Art
Australia, Austria, Autobiography, Banners, Bicentennial
Brazil, C. J. A., Cambodia, Canada, Capital Punishment,
America, Chile, Censors, Chicago, Cuba, Culture,
Colombia, Communes, Consumerism, Cuba, Cultural
Collectives, Czechoslovakia, Demonstrations, The
Issues, Education Art, El Salvador, Emigration, England,
Fascism, Feminist Artists, Feminist Issues, Film,
Education, Germany, Graffiti, Graphic Artists, Greece,
History of Art, Holland, The Holocaust, Housing, Human
Services, Installations, Iran, Ireland, Israel,
Kent State, Korea, Labor Issues, Latin America, Lesbians,
Mass Transit, Mexico, Militarism, Mozambique, Murals, Music
papers, Nicaragua, Non-Violence, Northern Ireland, Nuclear
Performance, Philippines, Periodicals, Photography, Poets,
Propaganda, Public Art, Puerto Rico, Racism, Rape, Religion,
Ideas, Sculpture, Senior Citizens, Sex, Sexism, Shopping,
Socialism, Society-Artists Relation to, South Bronx, Surrealism,
Surveillance, Taxation, Television, Terrorism,
Iran Issues, Uruguay, Video, Vietnam, Violence, Weapons,
#, Xerox Art, Yugoslavia.

Spaces, Anarchism, Anti-Nuclear, Anti-War, Architect
Artists' Rights, Asian-Americans, Attica, Audio Art,
Antennial, Billboards, Black Artists, Black Issues,
Bishment, Capitalism, Cartoons + Comics, Central
DRY FOR
China, Chinese-Americans, Criminal Behavior,
Colonialism, Communities, Community Art Projects,
Depression, The Draft, Drugs, Ecology, Economic I
EVERY
Environment, Issues, Erotic Art, the Family,
France, Galleries, Gay Issues, Genocide, Gentrifi
ce, The Handicapped, Health Issues, History, American,
Humboldt, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Information
ART NEED
Italy, Japan, Japanese-Americans, Jewish-Americans,
Korean Artists, Luxembourg, Machismo, Mail Art, Marxism,
Museum Reform, Music, Native American, Networking, News
Nuclear Issues, Organizations Artists', Penal Systems, Per
Poland, Politics Artworld, Pornography, Posters,
Religion, Reproductive Rights, Revolution, Right Wing
Shopping Bag People, Slide Registries, Slides, Social Realism,
the PADD Archive
Socialism, Thailand, U.S.S.R., United States, Unions, Urb
apons and Weaponry, Windows and Storefronts, World War

Feminism, Art & Pornography



photo: Robert Foster

Scene from "Live Mudwrestling" performance with Jennifer Miller and Susan Seizer

Edited by Anne Pitrone and Elizabeth Kulas

In January Carnival Knowledge presented "The Second Coming: Could There Be a Feminist Porn?" at Franklin Furnace. For a month, works by over 150 visual and performing artists were presented in a main floor "Adult

The January PADD Second Sunday was a presentation by Carnival Knowledge that included a performance by Sara Safford and Jane Goldberg, Tapping and Talking Dirty; a dance by Diane Moonmade, Limbic Love; and discussion with the members of Carnival Knowledge. The following excerpts were combined from an interview with Carnival Knowledge by Elizabeth Kulas for UPFRONT and from the discussion at Franklin Furnace. The Carnival Knowledge Organizing Committee: Jodie Fink, April Ford, Suzan Frazier, Ame Gilbert, Sabrina Jones, Anne Pitrone.

Bookstore" featuring artists' books and small objects for sale; and, downstairs, in a "house" with special rooms—kitchen, living room, bedroom, etc.—all with large environmental sculptures and paintings. Twice during each week performing artists played to packed houses in such diverse programs as tap-dancing, mud-wrestling, and a special event called "Deep Inside Porn Stars," which featured some of the sex industry's top female headliners in a re-creation of a meeting of their women's group. After it was over Franklin Furnace reported audiences exceeding that of any show in their ten-year history, as well as angry letters from Moral Majority constituents to FF's major funding sources and Board of Directors.

Carnival Knowledge is an artists group founded in 1981 in response to the Moral Majority's anti-abortion campaign. Prior to this show, Carnival Knowledge had been mainly concerned with bringing reproduc-

tive rights issues to a broad audience through the use of educational games, shows, and sculptures, in the form of a real carnival which traveled to street fairs and demonstrations.

Elizabeth Kulas (EK): Why did you decide to do the show?

Anne Pitrone (AP): It was partly because of the status of the women's movement at the time. We noticed there was some kind of dichotomy growing around the issue of sexuality. There was a rift between lesbian S&M groups who thought that sexual liberation was at the core of women's liberation, and the anti-porn groups, who had been working against sexual oppression in their own way.

April Ford (AF): We're an activist group in that we respond to what's going on around us. We were alarmed by the anti-porn groups within the feminist movement, and

we had a specific incident happen to us which led to this show. We were invited to participate in SEXPO—the first East Coast sex industry exposition held in October of 1982. We were interested because the organizers were not “biggies” in the sex industry, and people exhibiting there were a very diverse group. We thought it would be interesting to bring reproductive rights issues to this audience... to connect Sexual Freedom with Reproductive Freedom. The organizers wanted to change the sex industry by bringing it “above ground.” But before we, or anyone else had a chance to perform, the whole thing was closed down by Mayor Koch’s “Morality Task Force.”

AP: The police and the fire department.

AF: There was also a demo outside by WAP (Women Against Pornography), who had actually been invited by SEXPO’s organizers to participate in a debate/panel discussion and show the film “Not a Love Story.” They chose to picket instead. It was scary for us to see people who had always been “us” on the other side. It seemed that a completely different line of thinking had developed within the women’s movement because people had been assuming—and not talking—about feminist sexuality.

AP: I think this was mainly a problem for heterosexual women, because there is a wealth of literature and theory on the subject developed by lesbian feminists, a lot of

Diane Moonmade performed “Limbic Love” for the PADD Second Sunday.



photo: Mel Rosenthal

which led us to do this show—from a *hetero* point of view.

Jerry Kearns: I’d like to join those people who have accolades for this show. I know the realities of this culture and the exploitive, sadistic, brutal aspect of pornography in this society. In order to manifest a kind of healing aspect in the schism within the women’s movement, I think women such as yourselves who are doing a really positive thing—giving positive imagery to sexuality—have to entertain their critique, certainly Andrea Dworkin’s critique, the very powerful one that it is. You’ve talked about the excitement of power relations, but some of those power relations aren’t very exciting when you’re being brutalized by them.

Anita Steckel: Violence against women is a valid thing that needs to be talked about.

AP: Although we make a criticism of their work, we are in fact fighting alongside them. Both they and we want to have power over pornography. Our methods differ.

Judith Levine: The world is man’s domain. When women are sexual in it, we are putting ourselves in danger. What feminists can do and what this show does is make the domain of sexuality women’s domain.

Sabrina Jones (SJ): One aspect of their [WAP’s] work that disturbed us was their failure to understand or communicate with people working in the sex industry, especially in their tours of the Times Square area. We also felt the biggest threat to us from the anti-porn movement was that it would close down rather than open up discussion on feminist sexuality—people would feel in



photo: Marty Heitner

Window installation for “Second Coming”

“We were looking for that synthesis of politics and sexuality that would make sense out of the entire human being.”

—Sabrina Jones

order to be politically correct, it would just be better to leave your sexuality home. It was becoming more or a mystified subject matter... The minute you saw a female body nude people would tell you it was sexist. We’re all born with bodies that initially have no political context. But when you put up a simple photograph, it has political implications for a lot of people. We wanted to examine where all this came from and how we can keep our bodies from being used against us. We also wanted to provide a positive imagery. We wanted to *replace* rather than repress.

SJ: A lot of men, producers and consumers of porn, came to the show because they genuinely wanted to know what women thought was sexy. I’d love to do a show on what women think is sexy.

EK: How did you decide what to put into the show?

SJ: We were looking for that synthesis of politics and sexuality that would make sense out of the entire human being.

AF: We chose things that we felt came from people’s real experience, things with a sense of humor, or that presented plain old sex in a new way.

Ame Gilbert: We spent a year talking about porn and are still very confused, but one of the things we all agreed on was that when there was a context to something it became more erotic to us. This distinguished the women in the group from the men we talked to. Men were more able to look at a cunt or a prick and get turned on. We needed to know a story and who the person was and if they were happy....

EK: If you were interested in a broad context, why did you call the show pornography? I mean, I know of good women artists who would not even see the show, let alone do a piece for it because they felt it did not reflect their conception of their sexuality. Why not “Towards a Women’s or Feminist Sexuality”? Or you could have broadened it by including in the title the variety of ways that we women do in fact see our sexu-

ality. In terms of my own sexuality, I may think *erotic*, or *sexual*, or *sensual*, but never pornographic. To me porn is something that developed in reaction to things like repressive religions, ideologies, or social conditions. I would not claim the term as my defining form. Rather I would support something healthy, that would take a step out of the closet or the underground, something that lifts the distortions as it steps out.

SJ: We see pornography as referring to visual imagery and sexuality or sensuality as activities inside you. We could have called it sensual or erotic art, but we felt the connotations were vague, not sexually explicit. We wanted to do something that was down and dirty, yet not degrading.

AP: We thought of it in terms of getting a broader audience. Pornography is something that is known to all people.

AF: It's also a buzz word. It's definitely made to turn you on...that's where it begins and that's where it ends. We were just trying to say that that's okay...

SF: For women as much as for men.

AF: And you don't have to have a "higher purpose." But I don't think any of the artwork in the show didn't aspire to something else as well. The point is that it was a turn-on. We were trying to prove that you could get turned on by something that had other things to it.

Diane Milder: I expected the show to be educational but I think what happened inside me really identifies what's going on. I found myself really turned on by something I was looking at and all of a sudden I realized that someone was standing next to me, watching. Then I realized, "Well, I'm not doing anything bad, I'm just looking at this picture." I tried to disassociate the shame from doing it in a public space and immediately my mind said "that's part of the challenge that's going on here."

Daniel Del Solar: Thank you for this oppor-



Sara Safford and Jane Goldberg in "Tapping and Talking Dirty".

tunity to exchange. I was moved by the beauty; I was unblocked; I was titillated; I was sensualized; I was eroticized. I don't think I was pornographized. I think I was eroticized. But I don't want to give the word up because I think it's our word, I think pornography is the front line. I don't want to lose it.

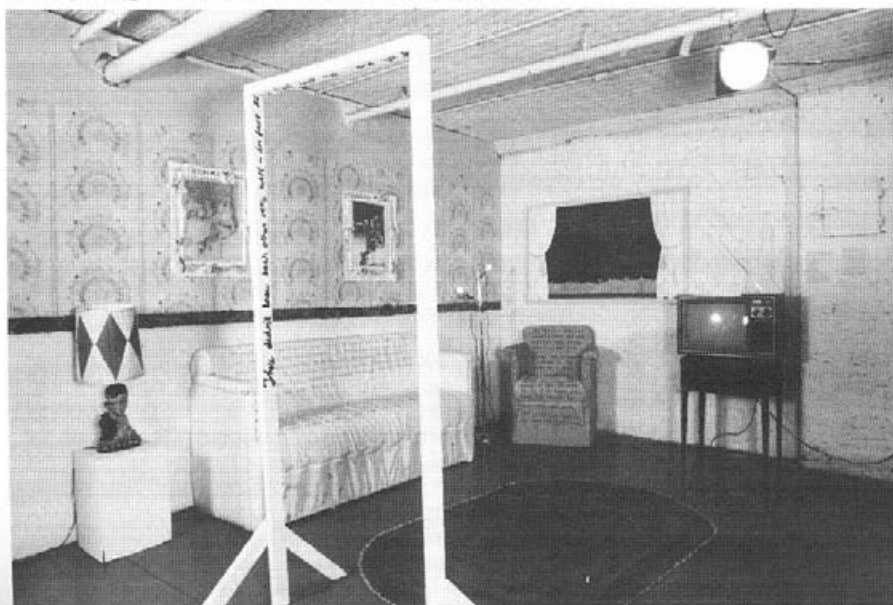
Joel Cohen: I thought the performances were erotic towards the pornographic, but I got turned on by very little of the artwork. It wasn't very lusty, except for some of the books upstairs. Also, what I really would like to see is a more real, wholesome, loving sexuality, with real people and real kinds of

images. That's what would turn me on.

Ira Shore: Earlier Irving Wexler talked about the show not being daring enough, in that pornography has to have some taboo, some fetishism, some objectification and fantasy to carry it into areas that are forbidden. I wanted to talk a little about the forbidden. One of the things forbidden to us is not to tie each other up and beat each other black and blue, but to have a meaningful, happy relationship. One of the things that is daring is to discuss what it means to construct relationships, heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, whatever. How to carry them on with less anxiety and more satisfaction. In this experiment you're doing I feel that the sex we're pointed towards gets more and more exotic because of the contortions we go through in a society where sex is so screwed up. To unscrew sex so you can screw more easily, that's the goal.

AP: I was disappointed that people didn't get the joke, the irony, about our use of the word *porn*. We were raiding the men's camp in a good-humored way. We took on a dare, and we were coming up with the goods. I don't know what people were looking for. Some people wanted to get turned on; other people wanted to see if the Porn Stars, or we for that matter, were sluts, or see if we used men's bodies in the same way as men used women's bodies. Other people wanted to see some brand new interpretation of what goes on between men and women. But all we were trying to do was take pornography into another context, and allow people to get more power over it by seeing it in a new way. Unfortunately, all of our theory aside, I really don't think people enjoyed the juxtaposition of the words *feminist* and *pornography* as much as we did. It resonated to us and gave us a lot to think about.

Installation by Ame Gilbert from the Carnival Knowledge exhibition at Franklin Furnace. Erotic passages were written on the room's furniture.





Discussion at PADD Second Sunday, January 1984 photo: Mel Rosenthal

Jane Goldberg: It's one thing to tap and talk about it. It's another to bring it out into the public. And I've paid for it in that you get negative feedback too because sex is such a taboo subject. The issue of power may be one of the key things. Our view of power and the way we've seen it distorted is a destructive thing. And in pornography and pornographic zones of the city it is used that way, by those who believe the only way to gain power is by hurting others. The best way we can battle against that is by presenting the other side. I think power can be potent, in making people feel good. I think Diana made people feel good. She was dignified and unembarrassed, and so was I.

mystification of women's sexuality, and the notion that only men have sexual feelings. Like when women get dressed up they're doing it for men or that pictures of naked women are all for men. We are so deluded by society that we can't see that these bodies and images belong to us. That is why we are trying to reclaim "pornography." It blows my mind that a feminist can say that a naked woman's picture is degrading. It's so ironic.

EK: Those images weren't made by us. They weren't images of us as we see ourselves or even as our lovers see and experience us. Those images were commercial products made by some men for men. Sure, they

"Our point in the show was to generate more positive imagery about women's sexuality" — April Ford

Phyllis Yampolski: I was very refreshed by the tap dancing and the sisterhood here. It strikes me that my daughter was here and that I would share this with her. What I find interesting is that the issue is not so much about the union of men and women but about sisterhood, which is such a beautiful thing, and a whole other discussion. This is very different from the competitiveness between women that was in the society in which I grew up.

SJ: I'm still haunted by something someone said about the show: that it was not liberating because we did not get beyond the usual stereotype of women's bodies being the locale of sexual activity.

AF: A lot of that has to do with the

might be pictures of women. Woman as subject/object. But do we reclaim our sexuality through a visual depiction some commercial entrepreneurs defined, or that we as men and women experience? So much imagery has told us not enough about what we are, and too much about what we're not. I've often heard, "That's what we have to do? to be? to look like?" Well, that's all there was . . . the forbidden taking on the characteristics of being forbidden. But that's not all there is and that's what I think this show was all about and why we're here. We want to talk about what it's really like. We want images of that. Images that reflect our experience. I've heard about how we were even afraid to make them, to go public. But we've started. We've been depowered for reasons we've hardly touched on here. And there are

reasons. Anyways, it's high time we take that power back. Our bodies will be our own when we direct them . . . the images will belong to us when we make them.

AF: You know, you never see stories on television, in films, in movies or in books about women's personalities, women's problems, women's sense of humor, about women's lives, about giving birth. Sometimes I look at a crowd and I can't believe that every one of these people came out of a woman's vagina because it's a totally mystified, non-existent, repressed story. Women — and also minorities — do not have lives in the media. Our point in the show was to generate more positive imagery about women's sexuality — strong imagery — and also to communicate directly to those who are usual consumers of pornography.

Aline Mare: As a woman working with sexual imagery for years, I've reached a point of commitment to working with men, feminist men, in creating art about a new form of sexuality that can exchange roles, and works towards a new definition of eroticism that could perhaps include pornography. Without the same implications of oppression, I think that this is the time when women and men must work together to achieve that.

EK: I like "What Women Think Is Sexy." If you were to do the show again would you call it feminist porn?

AP: Actually we're planning on expanding the whole question of *sexuality* into one of *morality*. We have been thinking about doing a "Morality Amusement Park." We would also like to do more street work this year. A lot of us miss that, and that was something we definitely could not do with this show.

SJ: Yes, "What Women Think Is Sexy" on the street is still a few years off . . . maybe we'll try it when the revolution comes.

CARNIVAL KNOWLEDGE

Franklin Furnace
112 Franklin St.
New York, NY 10013
Tel: (212) 333-1111

Jan. 6-Feb. 4 1984

2ND COMING

Poster for "Second Coming"



photo: Dora Ann McAdams

PERFORMANCE: Elena Alexander

Elena Alexander's "Uncle Sam".

October, 1983. I was called "belligerent" in print, in "The New York Times" was a review of a piece called "WEROLD (is... IS)." Me? Belligerent?

(Another) Election Year, 1984. The R(onald) R(eagan) train comes thundering down the track. Under its wheels are the corpses of thousands. Mind you, this particular death vehicle is not the in(ter)vention of one man. It's been the preferred mode of transportation of many. Me? Belligerent?

January, 1984. I made a piece called "Uncle Sam Talks Back" to be performed as part of the month long events sponsored by Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America. I performed it monthly through June of 1984 in various places, as asked. "Uncle Sam..." is an eight minute live political cartoon. The Frankenstein *cum* Uncle Sam mask is meant to suggest the mistakes of a government when they try to impose their vision on other countries/cultures and end up creating death and destruction. The piece is done with the back to the audience as an indication of the expression "to have [one's] head screwed on backwards." It's accompanied by a pre-recorded audio tape (vocals and lyrics, Elena Alexander; drums and electronically created sound of helicopters, Mick Oakleaf; bass guitar and melody, Alan Uglow).

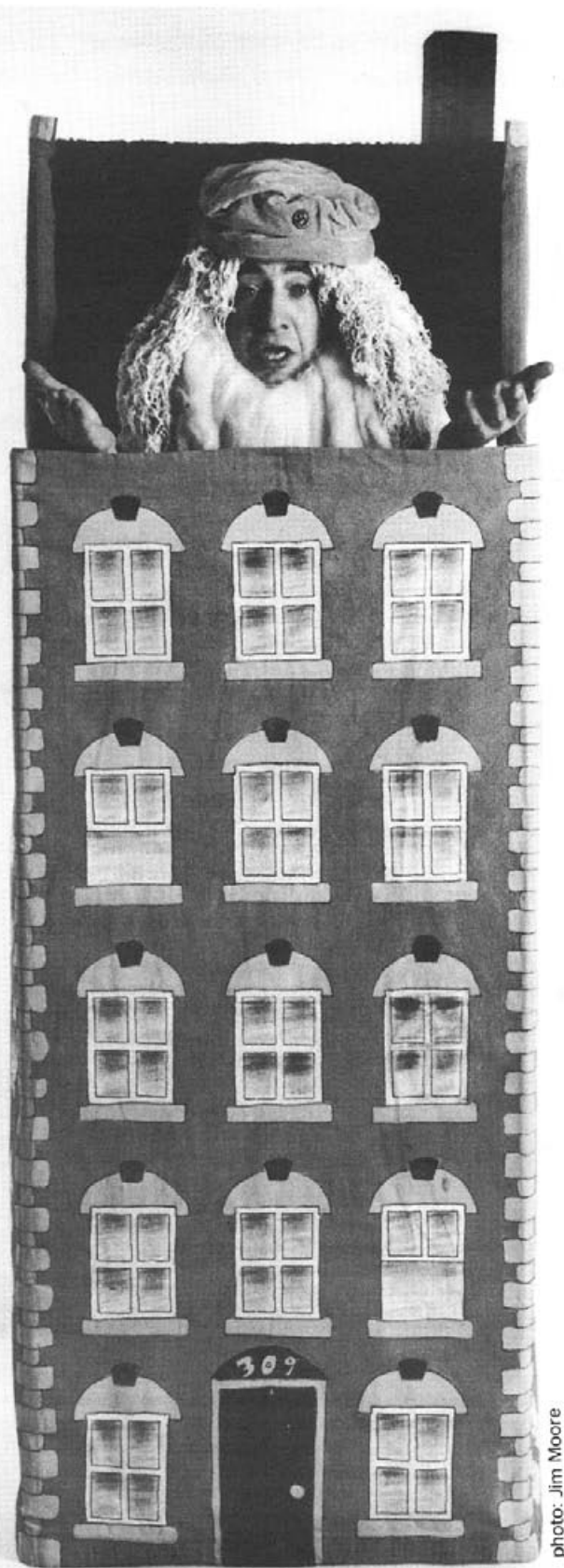
Now. The conditions that make a piece such as "Uncle Sam Talks Back" a necessity are life threatening to all. People get suckered into fighting cynically determined wars. You die so that they can grow richer. A poor exchange; business as usual. I don't care if artists don't make overtly political art. But if, as a human being, you aren't aware, or choose to remain uninvolved, you're living a luxury that too many others can't afford. And, everybody gets a turn. Democracy? Hypocrisy. Me? Belligerent? Of course.

"Leonardo's Revenge" is a hand puppet show about gentrification on the Lower East Side. A typically eccentric artist is kicked out of his place. His landlord tries to screw him; his doctor tries to kill him. They want his space. The landlord tells him that an artist's role in America today is that of a "mobile urban renewal unit." He's made the neighborhood chic; now he must go. In the end of the show, the artist is able to exact a form of revenge and then moves on to Hoboken (where, of course, the process will repeat itself).

The story is told with six hand puppets, and the stage is an apartment building. I use a lot of oversized props and several cheap special effects. The artist, Leonardo, is basically a modern adaptation of the Punch/Kaspar/Guignol/Petrushka characters. Traditionally these puppet shows have had a strong undercurrent of political commentary; puppets could say and do things that actors would not be allowed to perform. Puppet shows should agitate.

There is really nothing inherently funny about what is happening on the Lower East Side today. It is actually ugly, wrong, and tragic, and will eventually destroy one of the most interesting and important neighborhoods in New York. But maybe in order to understand what's going on there, to resist and fight this disgusting process, we need to laugh about it. Humor can allow audiences to change their perceptions.

— Paul Zaloom



Leonardo's Revenge

PERFORMANCE: Paul Zaloom

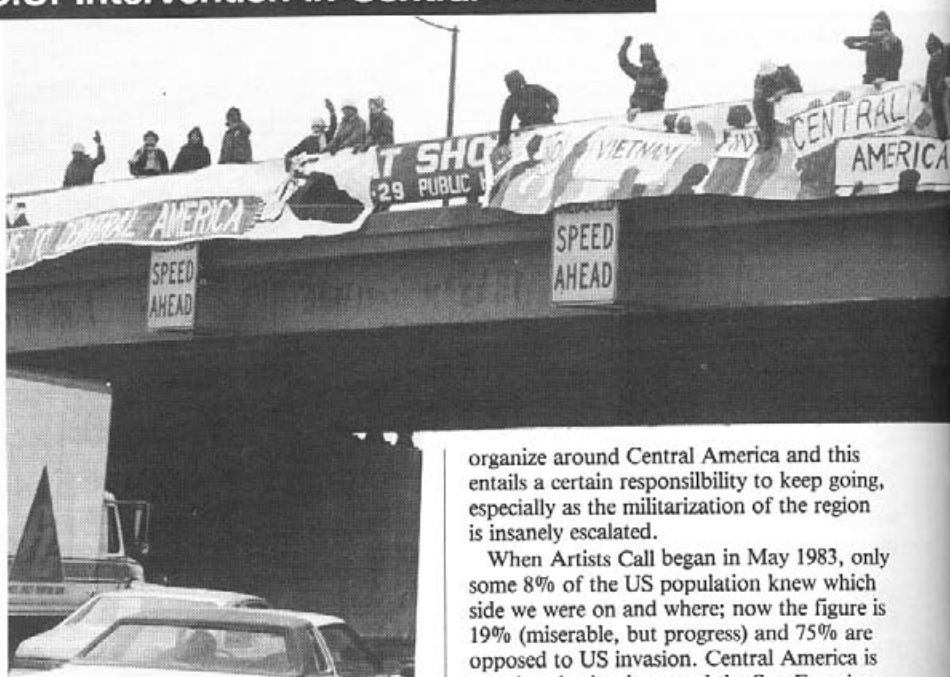
ARTISTS CALL Against U.S. Intervention in Central America

UPDATE



Since the last issue of *UPFRONT*, Artists Call against US Intervention in Central America's January-March campaign took place—and was a huge success—in New York and 27 other cities across the US and Canada, with San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia mounting particularly extensive projects. Close to \$100,000 was raised to send to Central America, and a lot of consciousness were raised to stay here and continue to educate US public opinion through images, visions, and facts.

In this brief update it's impossible to list what each city did. A show called "Artists Call: Round Two" at Franklin Furnace in April was filled to the brim with posters, flyers, photos, press clippings, buttons, t-shirts, video, slides, and banners from across the country. A typical campaign included one or more art shows, poetry readings, concerts, radio shows, dance parties, nights of film and video, and public events. In Burlington/Winooski, Vermont, a downtown storefront was rented for a week and performances took place in a shopping mall. In Cleveland, banners lined freeway overpasses and university balconies. In Chicago, for a Federal Building vigil called Big Pine II, participants brought pine trees. There were processions for peace in Raleigh, N.C. and New York. Angela Davis and breakdancers (at separate times) were on the program in San Francisco. Many of the national organizers reported that Artists Call brought together elements of the arts and politics communities that had rarely met before.



Artists Call Action in Cleveland, January 20, 1984

In June, New York Artists Call held an 8-day, 15 concert Music Festival with jazz, rock, folk, classical and new musicians. We also helped organized the June 9 demonstration against intervention, which featured four giant puppets of Reagan, Kirkpatrick, and Kissinger. They were put on trial, with William Kunstler prosecuting. A huge people's cultural festival accompanied the trial. Two days before, some 500 people blocked the entrance of the Federal Building (home of the CIA, Immigration, and other charmers) in a major civil disobedience action. Over 300 were arrested. Artists led the procession carrying a giant injunction and subpoena. One of the chants for the successful blockade: "The CIA Is Closed Today." (But not, alas, tomorrow.)

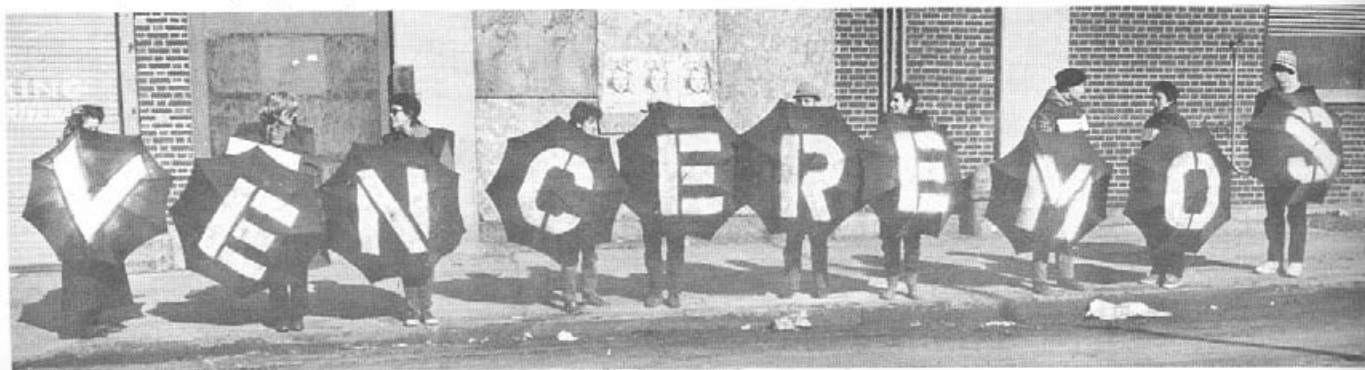
New York Artists Call still calls itself a "campaign" and not an "organization," but we have decided to continue our activities as long as we can be effective. Other cities made the same decision and new branches continue to spring up. We have now acquired a credibility and a visibility as one of the first professional communities to

organize around Central America and this entails a certain resiliency to keep going, especially as the militarization of the region is insanely escalated.

When Artists Call began in May 1983, only some 8% of the US population knew which side we were on and where; now the figure is 19% (miserable, but progress) and 75% are opposed to US invasion. Central America is a major election issue and the San Francisco group will be active around the Democratic convention. LA will be visible around the Olympics and plans an art show for the fall. Artists Call members in Philadelphia have formed the Neighborhood Arts Project, which incorporates their anti-intervention work into grassroots organizing. Their travelling El Salvador photography show has been seen at some 100 churches, unions, etc., and has been instrumental in the Sanctuary movement. (Contact Connie Chimes, 521 South Melville, Philadelphia, PA 19104.)

An increasing number of cultural workers and Artists Call participants are going to Nicaragua to work, paint, teach and perform. (Contact Ventana in New York, CANTO in Seattle, Arts for a New Nicaragua in Boston, or Friends of Nicaraguan Culture in San Francisco.) If you are interested in starting an Artists Call project in your area, contact Lucy R. Lippard, National Coordinator, 138 Prince St. NYC 10012. Each local project is autonomous, but we like to know what people are doing and we all use the same logo. Artists Call people will also be meeting at the fall conference of the Alliance for Cultural Democracy in Washington D.C. Sept. 28-30.

Venceremos, directed by Papo Colo, from Artists Call's Procession for Peace in Central America, New York, January 20, 1984





Demonstrations, from an 11-panel work

THE I AND THE WE

We have been making art together for as long as PADD has existed—nearly five years. In that time we have collaborated on a wide variety of artworks—paintings, photomurals, window installations, posters, constructions, drawings, performances. Looking back on our first collaborative work (a photocollage for PADD's Death and Taxes project), it seemed perfectly natural for us as socially concerned artists to pool our imaginative resources in the creation of a visual artwork. What we did not realize then was that this initial collaboration was to develop into a major mode of expression for both of us—and that it involved a whole new way of looking at the process of art making itself.

In place of the arthistorical notion of supreme individualism—each artist as the unique fountainhead of creativity—collaboration is essentially an agreed-on articulation and fusion of two (or more) aesthetic visions into a single art statement.

How does this work in practice? It means, first of all, a shared conceptualization of the artwork that can originate in any number of ways—on the level of discussion; by one or both doing rough preliminary sketches, collages, cut-ups, etc.; by looking at suggestive images from outside sources—other artworks in books, visual media, exhibits, etc.

It is at this point that the problems of collaborative projects arise. Bringing as we do different aesthetic perceptions, art backgrounds, political experiences, how are we to deal with the inevitable conflicts between our individual imaginations? Can we arrive at a creative consensus in matters such as color, texture, composition, style, imagery, emphasis, degree of abstraction or figuration? Is it possible for us to synthesize these elements into a unified artwork that avoids serious compromise and thereby dilutes our unique and separate strengths? Somehow or other, the concept is eventually agreed upon. And once this happens, it is astonishing how quickly we both internalize it to the point where we cannot recall how or with whom it originated.

Whose idea, for example, was a twenty-foot long series of painting/photomontages which illustrated the impact of artwork on political demonstrations? Or an image-poem collage entitled "Good to the Last Drop" painted with coffee grinds as a metaphor for U.S. exploitation of Central America? Or of a performance on male sexuality in which the erotic psychohistories of three men are seen in the cruel light of women's liberation? The truth is, at this date, the concepts seem to have come simultaneously from a single source—ourselves. The same goes for the actual art-making process. Working in one or another's studio, we interchangeably paint, cut, prod, paste, rearrange, reinvent, discard, refine, tear up, redo, caption and finally complete an artwork which is magically not *mine, his, hers*, but a seamless *ours*.

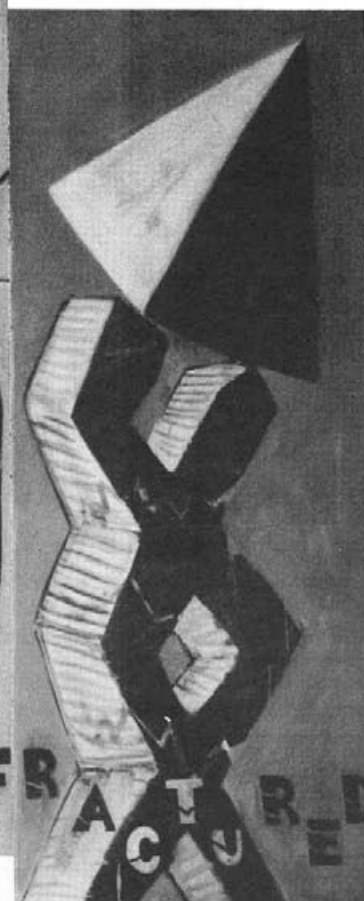
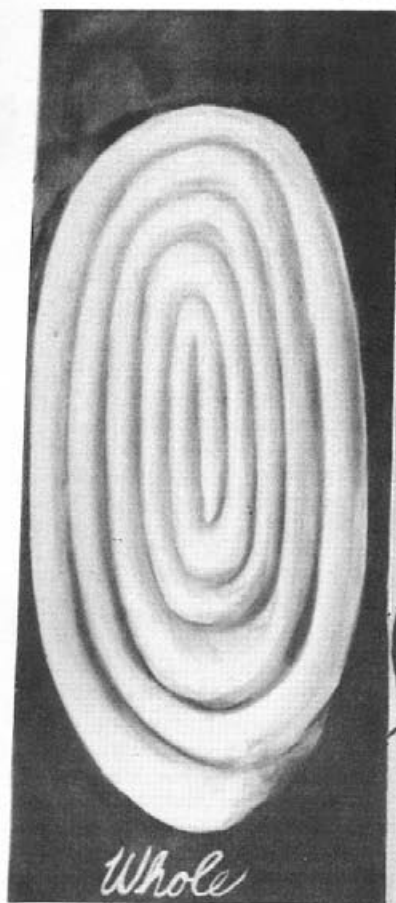
When the collaboration is going well, we catch fire from one another, absorbing and transforming the best of each other's creative imagination, praising, encouraging, goading, learning from and complementing one another's strengths. At worst, when the work isn't jelling, we're all despair, compromise or dogmatic, listless, sullen, quarrelsome. . . wanting to resume our individual projects as soon as possible.

On balance, then, the collaboration between us has been an extraordinary experience. If it entails some surrender of the ego—of the total autonomy which, we pride ourselves, is the artist's birthright—the gain is in the excitement of a participatory activity in which socially conscious art is created in a consciously (and unconsciously?) social process.

Finally, collaboration gives us the benefits of a double vision—of being able to anticipate the quality of the work-in-progress by our separate and joint responses to it. . . of being at the same time the artists and the audience. . . the critics and the criticized.

We look forward to many more happy collaborations.

INDIVIDUAL WORK: Keith Christensen



Between Living Whole and Fractured Living, oil on canvas,

1984

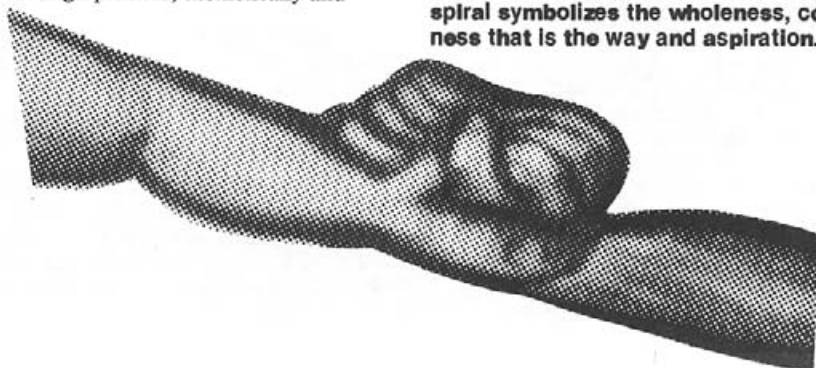
photo: Brigitte Barthele

In 1984 the need for *Peace* is the *overriding* issue and challenge. The Midnight clock is ticking. The only real solution is through social justice. A better social structure/system is demanded. I look to Nicaragua, the Greens, and feminism, as the front guard. I think the major component of the new order has to be a culture that is participatory and life-feeding. The present Death Culture speaks for itself.

As an artist, I'm resolved to relate to the times both *personally* and *communally*. My way of working is to mix experiences into a whole. Everything has potential value and use. My way of developing is to act and to learn through practice, aesthetically and politically.

In my work I'm concerned with saying something in the full sense. I mean to do this in a structural way, building with the pictorial elements, oil, the figure, symbols and words. I try to strike a balance between what I'm saying and how. I aim to be positive.

The piece here is structured in three parts. On the right is a symbolization of what's wrong. I've made a metaphor of the fractured society we live in. I depict the hierarchy's support cracking up. In the middle the figures struggle, suffer, sing and hold on. It's my belief that it is how things will have to change. And on the left lies the hope. The spiral symbolizes the wholeness, collectiveness and openness that is the way and aspiration.



INTERESTED
PARTIES
MAY
APPEAL

NATIVE LIFE
PROTECTION
UNDER
THE
SURFACE

"PROJECTIONS NATIVE SURVIVAL" by EDGAR HEAP of BIRDS 1984

Many Tsistsistas (Cheyenne) were killed during the fight. The air was full of smoke from gunfire, and it was almost impossible to flee, because bullets were flying everywhere. However, somehow we ran and kept running to find a hiding place. As we ran, we could see the red fire of shots. We got near a hill, and there we saw a steep path where an old road used to be. There was red grass along the path, and although the ponies had eaten some of it, it was still high enough for us to hide.

In this grass we lay flat, our hearts beating fast; and we were afraid to move. It was now broad daylight. It frightened us to listen to the noise and cries of the wounded. When the noise seemed to quiet down and we believed the battle was about to end, we raised our heads high enough to see what was going on. We saw a dark figure lying near a hill, and later we learned it was the body of a Tsistsistas woman and child. The woman's body had been cut open by the soldiers.

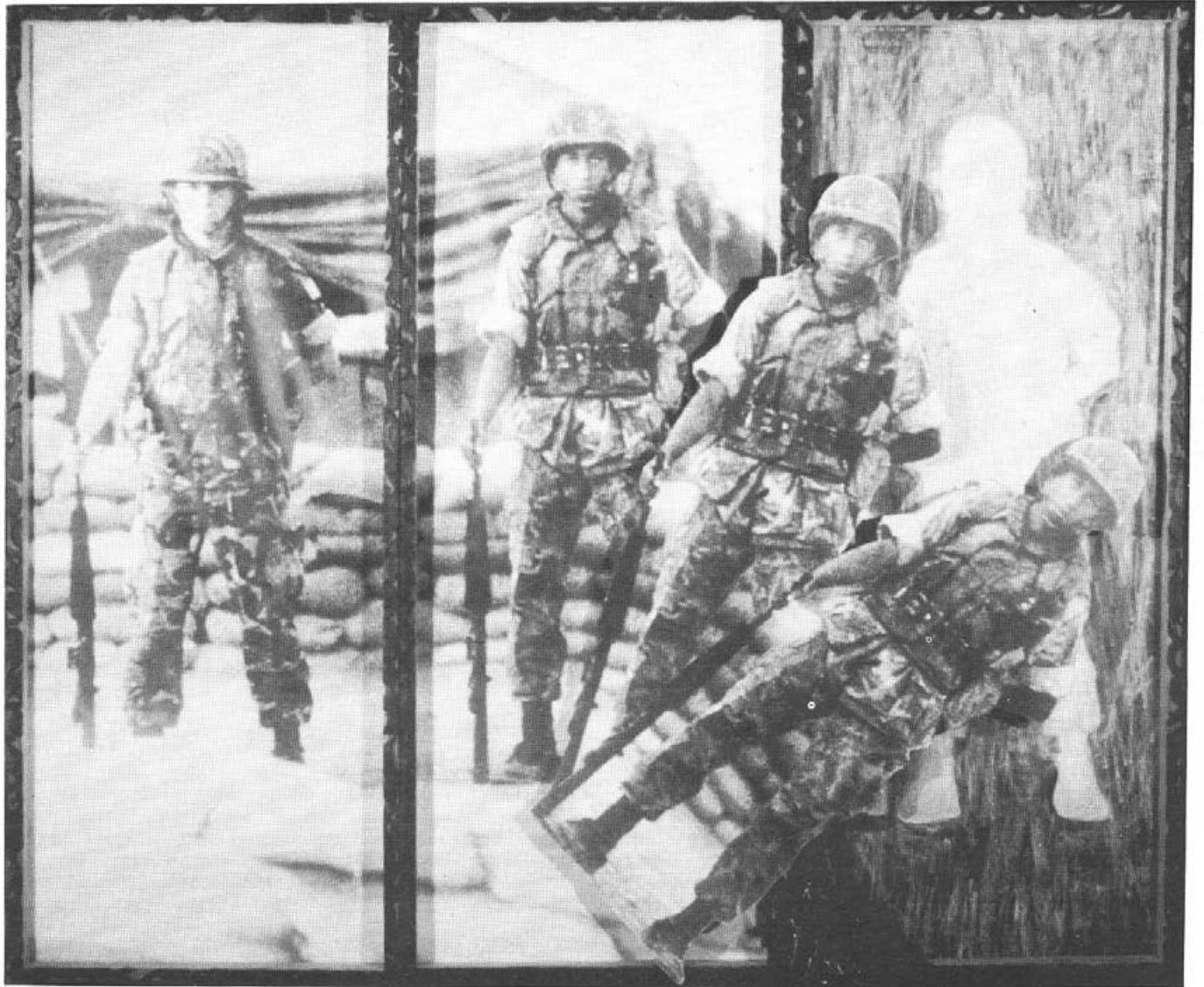
—Quote from *Moving Behind*, a fourteen year old Tsistsistas woman survivor of Colonel George Custer's Massacre of the Washita people on November 27, 1868, near what is now called Cheyenne, Oklahoma.

For we the Tsistsistas (Cheyenne) people to be able to continue our native life, we have formed two survival tactics used simultaneously for our precious preservation. The sickening fact of the United States of America hunting down and murdering our women, children and warriors is still fresh in our minds. The quiet plan of self-imposed isolation from the white man has brought us to this day—living people, thus escaping the brutal swords and gunfire. As a second and less popular tactic we find it effective to challenge the white man through our use of the mass media. As in American business and culture, in order to survive one must communicate a mass appeal.

Edgar Heap of Birds
Cheyenne Arapaho Nation 73040

INDIVIDUAL WORK: Edgar Heap of Birds

INDIVIDUAL WORK: Rae Langsten





HAKE IT UP: Some Thoughts on Deconstruction and Art

It is not surprising that the Reagan administration has moved to "stabilize and secure our borders" from uncontrolled alien immigration. His government could be said to represent the erecting of a visible and stable presence that dreams of centering itself within the slippery, multifaceted world. What is amusing is how this demand for a center comes when the institutions and privileges associated with white male authority and Western hegemony are being hollowed out from within. For example, bank loans to developing countries threaten to destabilize the Western financial system. (There is a saying that if you owe the bank a few million dollars the bank owns you, but if you owe the bank a few billion, then you own the bank.) The distinction between lender and borrower, host and parasite, self and other becomes ambiguous. Within the Left, feminists have broken with centralized models of party formation. Their critique could be called a deconstruction of phallogentrism. Phallogentrism is the structuring of language and forms of representation around a (dreamed of) uncorrupted origin (organ).

Too often, politically concerned artists overlook non-economic factors determining representation or, conversely, leap into an emotional protest ignoring all historical determinations of subjectivity. By challenging the organization of meaning in Western rationalism, deconstruction offers another approach. It is the effects and potential of deconstruction of political art practice that will concern this essay. Because of limited space, a certain amount of ground work is taken for granted. The short bibliography below is provided for this reason.

"The viruses, instead of being single-minded agents of disease and death, now begin to look more like mobile genes. . . . We live in a dancing matrix of viruses; they dart rather like bees, from organism to organism, from plant to insect to mammal to me and back again, and into the sea, tugging along pieces of this genome, strings of genes from that, transplanting grafts of DNA, passing around heredity as though at a great party. They may be a mechanism for keeping new mutant kinds of DNA in the widest circulation among us." (Lewis Thomas, *Lives of the Cell*)

"There are thus two interpretations of interpretation, of stucture, of sign, of play. The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which escapes play and the order of the sign, and which lives the necessity of interpretation as exile. The other, which is no longer turned towards the origin, affirms play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the name

of man being the name of that being who, throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology—in other words, throughout his entire history, has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring foundation, the origin and the end of play." (Jacques Derrida, *Structure, Sign and Play*)

"The mulatto is the mark of death." (Ku Klux Klan)

Fears of insurgency and contagion mark the repression of *original heterogeneity*—the spiralling tangle of differentiation that is not contained or returned home; the hybrid which is neither this nor that; the grotesque/erotic free-play at the margins of medieval texts; viruses which shake the definition of living and non-living, inside and outside, and, like language, harbor the possibility of a surplus which cannot be contained with the horizon of Man. What might be a practice which has the playfulness of a virus, the polluting and pollinating effect of a hybrid? Consider the site of this infusion to be a graphic emblem of economic, political, sexual hierarchies.

CITE SEEDING

A cite may be a site (or sight) of control, an image or text reinforcing the maintenance of privilege and power, such as a speech by the President, declarations from the State Department, commercial or news photography, state or corporate medallions, logos, stamps. Its authority hinges on the reconstruction of a definite and unified meaning. This means that the medium of representation must become transparent, its historical and technical materiality reduced; any multiple meanings suggested by certain words, phrases or gestures not permitted to proliferate; slips of the tongue, pen, or fragmented imagery relegated to incidental status along with typographical errors; the citation appearing in different contexts must be shielded from interference with its ideal meaning. In short, anything that would detour our reading of the text/object from a return to the proper meaning (the Father) is rejected.

A number of deconstructive operations is suggested by the itinerary of this phallogentric desire. A partial list would include (1) not reading the phallogentric image or text as a unified one but, instead, seeing it as radically split and as a fragment of a larger text not present to the viewer/reader; (2) to begin infesting the center of the chosen citation with what it has tried to exclude by picking the point in the text/

object which most adamantly prohibits the play of otherness or difference, then interrupting or superimposing on that point of exclusion an image or text which resists containment and represents the other—a contamination of the inside with the outside. (3) Another tactic would try to overload the image with a surplus of meanings, making it an aberration or monstrosity no longer containable within the authority of the original image.

All of these strategies involve something other than revealing the *truth* of an image or text which has been hidden behind an ideological facade. There is no simple, natural origin of uncorrupted meaning waiting for a correct analysis. How then does a radical deconstruction avoid the pre-verbal ambivalence of neo-expressionism or of much "post-modernist" art?

THE AMBUSH OF AMBIGUITY

Throughout the work of Jacques Derrida (whose writings from 1967 to 1972 inform this essay) there are a number of explicit warnings about ambiguity. In *Positions* (page 41) he writes of the danger of "immediately jumping beyond oppositions, and of protests in the simple form of neither this nor that" which would leave one *no hold on the previous opposition, thereby preventing any means of intervening in the field effectively*. In the *Ends of Man* (*Margins of Philosophy*, page 135) he suggests interlacing two motifs of deconstruction together: one which works with the tools and language of phallogentrism to locate its contradictions and fractures, and the other which tries to push beyond this language, generating a play of possibilities not prescribed by the text. Unlike classical dialectics, this double writing or plurality of styles does not reground us in the truth of its interpretation. But against the current fashion of ambivalence, a political/critical appropriation of deconstruction is like a tactical graft added to the object of criticism and yet permanently altering our sense of it. The outcome of this grafting cannot be prescribed by a theory or pruned by a party line.

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Derrida, Jacques. *Positions* (University of Chicago, 1981).

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory* (University of Minnesota Press, 1982).

Ryan, Michael. *Marxism and Deconstruction* (John Hopkins Press, 1982).

THE TOUCHING OF RAW NERVES

When the *Angry Arts Against the War in Vietnam* took place in 1967, it grew out of a deep emotional commitment to the plight of the Vietnamese people; even the names of the events were banners of pained anger: *Napalm Poetry Reading; Collage of Indignation; Leaderless Concert at Midnight; Silent Vigil*. But the *Angry Arts* swept in after the protest movement had already made strong inroads into the American conscience, three years after the first "End Your Silence" manifesto.

Artists Call (Against U.S. Intervention in Central America) was much more unexpected, for it ran ahead of the general protest movement and was remarkable in every respect: the unity of the art world seemed almost complete, participation massive, the organization efficient, the results impressive. It was as if opposition to our administration's policies in Central America was a self-understood thing, a matter of course, a *de rigueur* stance. The emotions have not yet set in (though the death squads have been working on it for years) but they grew as Artists Call unfolded. At the culmination of the January 28th Procession for Peace in Central America, young (North) Americans stepped up to a platform one after another and each read the name of a disappeared person in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, to be answered by the crowd, in the fashion of Latin America, "Presente." They shouted the names, some with audible tears in their voices, and they rolled the *r*'s as well as they could in respect for the language of the Hispanic peoples—they, the grandsons and granddaughters of gringos who in their time thought of Latin America in terms of Carmen Miranda and Chiquita Banana. A week earlier giant banners of campesinos, revolutionary leaders, poets, and national liberators flew high against the wintry skies over the main street of Soho, a pledge by the La Verdadera Avenida de las Americas group that we are not only against intervention, but that we are with the people of Latin America in their struggles for social and national liberation.

Then, slowly, came the responses. It became clear that some fashionable segments of the art world participated with reservations: support for the people of El Salvador (They are suffering...) doubt about the people of Nicaragua (By God, they won—

will they stay democratic?). Then the art press started to make things clearer. Four months after the event an extensive reaction appeared in *Art in America*. On the surface the magazine gave Artists Call good coverage: an article by Jamey Gambrell on the events in general and an article by Eva Cockcroft on Latin participation. But it was Gambrell who consciously or otherwise gave the first signals as to what extent militancy will or will not be sanctioned by the official art world. In her generally sympathetic article, one action of Artists Call came under special scrutiny: The True Avenue of the Americas. Writing in the form of a critique of the execution, the reporter actually criticized the intent. She seemingly regretted that the symbolic cutting of a chain took place when the protesters "huddled on the corner of Prince and West Broadway," but she failed to mention that it was the police, who arrived in several squad cars, who pushed them there. Not understanding the idea of an informal spontaneous action, she missed mikes, cameras, and closer coordination with the city authorities. Thus it remained unrecorded (by her, but not by Channel 5 TV) that it was Carmen Sanchez, young artist from the Indian lands of Peru, who cut with a blowtorch the heavy rusty chain which lay, to block understanding, between the peoples of North and Latin America. Gambrell complained that she could not hear Dore Ashton "at a mere five feet," but other reporters, who cared, found out and secured texts, and a historic statement, made by one of the veterans of all the moral causes in the arts, is being reprinted in Nicaragua, Mexico and Cuba.

Clearly, one would not care whether Jamey Gambrell is a good reporter or not. But one must notice political undercurrents. Actually, Gambrell gave her antagonism away when she compared the Avenida action with another event "more powerful for its lack of rhetoric." "Rhetoric," of course, is what we call militancy we dislike.

In *Arts*, the subtleties of *Art in America* gave way during the same month to a curious outpouring of venom against Artists Call. Earlier, the January *Arts* gave Artists Call respectable space: a cover by Oldenburg, an interview with Dore Ashton and a group of Artists Call activists. In May *Arts* repented—or perhaps not, since *Arts* is hardly an edited magazine. At any rate, it

printed a pretentious literary essay by Dan Cameron, called "Mary Boone and the Sandinistas," in which he grappled with any and all possible motives to denigrate the intention of Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America.

But let us first look at the narrow world from which Cameron dares to judge our concern for the peoples of Central America. Here is the first sentence of Cameron's piece:

"It is ironic that the year 1984 finds more people in the art world confused about the nature of power than at any moment of recent history."

What power is Cameron talking about? The answer comes quickly. He goes on: *"We are currently experiencing an influx of raw talent, investment capital, and creative energy into the fine arts market that has sparked an intense bitterness within factional disputes that had been previously relegated to mere stylistic skirmishes."*

In the miserably petty world where the horizons go no further than West Broadway, it is natural to equate talent and investment capital. No wonder that Cameron continues with a lament that—

In addition, the issues of ethics and sincerity, once foreign to the cultural vanguard of America, are being revived with reformers' zeal in certain very unlikely quarters—"

But Cameron is only warming up. The real pain of the art world comes from not knowing how to describe Julian Schnabel: "highly successful artist," "outrageously successful artist" or "obscenely successful artist." It comes from finding out that your 33-year-old friend, whose paintings sell "for \$90,000 on the auction block," now snubs you on the street. It comes from an "eagerness to walk a thin boundary area between vitriol and libel..."

Such are the concerns of Dan Cameron, who then tries to rise from the depths of triviality by passing judgment (moral, no less!) about Artists Call. He says:

"There was something about the co-opted look of most of the Artists Call gallery shows, its general lack of impact on the art world and the sheer invisibility of its more tangential activities which made me angry, because I thought that it represented less of a united cultural front than an opportunistic excuse for a lot of artists to jump on an

ideological bandwagon and satisfy their social consciences as well."

Here Cameron is simply repeating the old cliché in which every artist who takes a morally committed stand through his or her art is described as doing so for careerist reasons. Then he engages in a strange analysis of two categories of socially conscious art: he tells us that for every Diego Rivera there is a Picasso, and for every Hans Haacke there is an Oyvind Fahlstrom, and for every Rudolf Baranik there is a Robert Morris—the first being didactic, the others poetic. Since critics always found my work to be formalist and illusive, I was amused to find myself being lined up with, of all people, Rivera and Haacke, and I even wondered: does Cameron know my work? But that is answered in another part of his article, where he says that he can close his eyes and see my paintings!

As we leave the rubbish heap of Dan Cameron, we come to the banalities of Corinne Robbins, who wrote about Artists Call in *The American Book Review*. Her thinking is embodied in the headline, "Dumb Artists and Smart Marxists." This is her scenario:

"The Marxist or 'left' sector of the art world rallied a number of these prestigious establishment places who responded, per usual, by donating their space and time while artists of almost every political and non-political humanitarian stance, per usual, donated work."

Does Robbins, who herself worked for decades for feminist and populist causes, realize how she now resembles congressman George Dondero (not "Donero"), who in the fifties saw another conspiracy: modern painting destroying America through designed disorder?

Finally, *The New York Times*. The *Times* haughtily ignored Artists Call, but later published an article by Michael Brenson, which in a sense was an ideological response. In discussing contemporary political art, Brenson focussed on a seemingly minimal piece which was not minimal at all: a replica of one of the boxes the U.S. invaders used in Grenada to imprison captured radical activists for interrogation. This piece (by Haacke) touched a raw nerve, and well it should. Perhaps the same could be said about Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America.

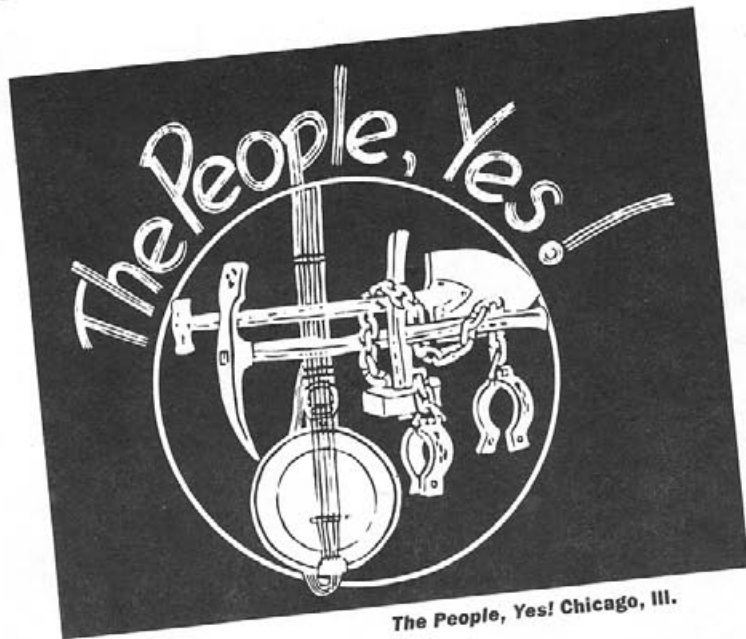
Peruvian artist Carmen Sanchez cutting chain symbolizing the barriers between the peoples of North and Latin America in the ceremony initiating Artists Call activities in New York, January 21, 1984.



photo: Dona Ann McAdams

We Will Not Be Disappeared!

The Directory of Arts Activism



The People, Yes! Chicago, Ill.



Group Unidentified



Cartoon from *World War III* Illustrated by Seth Tobocman and Peter

WE WILL NOT BE DISAPPEARED

The recent publication of the "Directory of Arts Activism," by *Cultural Correspondence* provides valuable information on the work and perspectives of hundreds of alternative cultural groups in the U.S. and abroad. Shown on this page are a few of the many powerful images accompanying the text. They attest to the visual explosion currently underway in the movement for cultural democracy.



From *Literatura Chilena*, by Ricardo Badtke Epple

THE JUNE 9th RALLY

Letter to Nicaragua

NYC, June 1984

John:

As I write this, you've been in Nicaragua less than a week. By the time you receive it you'll be readying to leave. The strange tension in this tugs at me. I try to picture you in your life there. I imagine exhilaration, struggle—the opening up inside of unnamed places, through which words and action will flow for some time.

The June 9th rally here (against U.S. intervention in Central America) was wonderful—the best rally I've ever been to. The energy was so high it was incredible. A major factor in this was the extensive input by artists/cultural workers, which was coordinated by a group called Ad/Hoc/Artists, who also helped to organize the November 12 rally in Washington and worked with the organizing groups of this one from the very start.

The affects of their input were in particular evidence at the day's starting point at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza by the UN. Everywhere were the great, beautiful banners which the folks from Artists Call had originally made for La Verdadera Avenida de Las Americas in January—some, say, 6' x 10', hand-painted or silkscreened with the highest caliber design quality I've ever seen in this medium/format, depicting renowned cultural figures of Central and South America like Vallejo and Jara, and workers and their daily worlds. There were placards and puppets seemingly everywhere one looked, and not one but three stages with wildly differently styled performance artists or musicians at each, all going on at the same time.

At first the effect was dizzying, but after we oriented ourselves, it was exhilarating.

I mentioned to you, I believe, the last time we spoke, of how so often for me in Manhattan so much of what fills my visual field is offensive or oppressive or deadening or sad. To be surrounded by these images and sensations that I've mentioned and, of course, by all the people, so many of them so familiar even if never seen before—this was extraordinary!

The formalities began about noon, as the defendants—for the day's action was set as a trial—were led to the main stage—huge, amazingly lifelike puppets, 15' high, of Reagan, Kissinger, Weinberger and Kirkpatrick. The charges were read by William Kunstler and a woman from CISPEs and, after a dance of struggle by members of Dancers for Disarmament, the defendants were herded off into a pickup truck, in which they would ride through midtown to the trial site at Times Square.

The energy of the march itself was tremendous. Grace and I joined with the



Photo: Erika Munk

dancers near the front of the march, behind the truck of puppets, and danced the simple, forceful choreographed steps through the Manhattan canyons. Each of us held a bright red strip of cloth which served as the unifying visual element of the dance as we waved them this way and that in our strides.

Each of the dozens of groups had great banners declaring themselves, and joined together and called back and forth in different cries of "No Pasaran" and so on.

The Times Square rally went on a little long, as these things generally do, and the summer sun was hot and tiring. Still, I think, the sense of bonding that the morning's energy and imagery had brought on remained evident, and there was a subtle sense of fusing that held the crowd together, and drew people in as well. Just imagine walking by this great throng in the middle of Times Square and seeing these great puppets of Reagan and such!

So many other rallies I've been to have felt anti-climactic. After months of work we look around and wonder why there aren't twice as many people there. The speeches always sound like things we've heard before, if not said ourselves. We content ourselves with knowing that we've added to the head count.

This time, though, it was different. We could see and feel and hear our passions articulated and echoed back to us, not merely in speeches and banners of words, but in murals, in music and song, in the rhythms of pounding drums and dancing bodies, in the eyes of those around us and

in the cries of their voices as they called out against the bastards that assail us. The whole atmosphere seemed to be infused with a spirit of camaraderie, of community, of cultures being wed, of a new culture being born as it struggles to help sustain another.

Tell your friends in Nicaragua this: Yes, the powers against us are strong, but the power we have is strong as well, and growing stronger. With energy like this flowing forth, we will be all the more able to sustain ourselves in our struggle, long and hard as it will be. The alternative is not worth mentioning.

Be well, my campanero—will see you soon,

Stuart



Photo: Stuart Garber



Janet Koenig

Orders are being taken now for PADD's 1985 calendar (our first), which is being printed courtesy of Grassroots Press (NYC). To reserve your copy send \$5.00 to PADD at 339 Lafayette St., NYC 10012.



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The Directory of Arts Activism

Cultural Correspondence is proud to announce the publication of **We Will Not Be Disappeared! The Directory of Arts Activism**. The book contains over 600 listings by activist groups and individuals, describing their work and aspirations in their own words. **We Will Not Be Disappeared!** works as an art book, a reference book, and a political intervention. It has 160 fully illustrated pages in an 8½" x 11" format. It covers all the arts in an easy to use regional structure. Articles discuss arts activism in 1983, demonstrations as works of art, and the organization of culture in Nicaragua. **We Will Not Be Disappeared!** only costs \$5. (\$4 for 2 to 5 copies, \$3 each for 6 or more.) Available from *Cultural Correspondence*, 505 West End Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10024. Please make checks payable to *Cultural Correspondence*.

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P A D D A C T I V I T I E S

The PADD ARCHIVE is the organization's oldest continuous activity, having been one of its stated goals when PADD was formed. To date we have collected and catalogued thousands of items from all over the world documenting socially conscious art and art-related activities on many issues in a variety of media. The categories displayed in the design in our centerfold represent a generous sampling of the subjects included.

The Archive is housed in the PADD office at 339 Lafayette Street, New York 10012. We welcome use of the files for research—for lectures, dissertations, exhibitions, etc., though no material can leave the office. Consider the Archive as a reference source and starting point for making contact with the individual artists and organizations whose work make up its contents.

We also encourage individuals and organizations involved in making and exhibiting socially concerned art to use the Archive as a channel for exposing your work to a larger audience of like-minded people. We prefer that materials be sent presorted in a letter-size (8½" x 11") file folder marked with your name, and welcome all materials except for original artwork—slides, posters, xeroxes, clippings, and other documentation, etc. Put us on your mailing list for exhibition announcements. Materials should be sent to "The PADD Archive," care of the address above.

We also welcome volunteers.

For more information contact Barbara Moore at 212-564-5989 or Mimi Smith at 212-228-3017.

LETTER

Dear Friends:

Your Winter 1983-4 issue carried a long excerpt from our essay "Reflections on Cultural Democracy," commissioned by Real Comet Press for its upcoming book *Cultures in Contention*. Today, Real Comet returned our manuscript, saying it was cut from the book for reasons of cost.

We won't bore *UPFRONT* readers by recounting the horror story of our association with this book project in the two years since the essay was first commissioned. Suffice it to say here that anyone who planned to buy the book in order to read the full text of our essay shouldn't bother.

Thanks for running this letter.

Best, Arlene Goldbard and Don Adams

CORRECTION

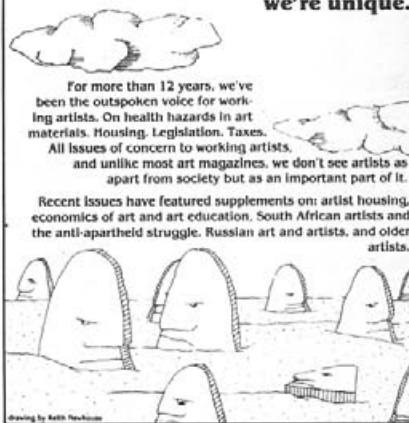
Apologies to Quimetta Perle from Minneapolis, whose nuke image appeared on p. 22 of *Upfront* No. 8 with no credit. The title is *Tishe B'Av—Nagasaki Day*.

PADD: Distribution is our last name. If you know of a place (bookstore, etc.), in your area that you think would carry *UPFRONT*, why not share this copy with them or drop us a line and let us know how we can reach them. After all, the more we get around, the more we get around. . . .

WANTED: Designers and writer/editors to lend their ideas and energies to *UPFRONT*. Call us. (212) 741-0656 or (718) 789-2315

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

● The "Buy and Sell Show" at the John Slade Ely House in New Haven was a product of the Papier Mache Video Institute, founded by Paul Rutkovsky, now in Tallahassee. He also made a series of Dada xerox posters about shopping for Central America Week in March.

● The *What about War?* project included an anthology (a special issue of *territory of Oklahoma: literature and the arts*; 12 East California, Oklahoma City, OK 73104), an art exhibition at Individual Artists of Oklahoma, and films about war and Central America.

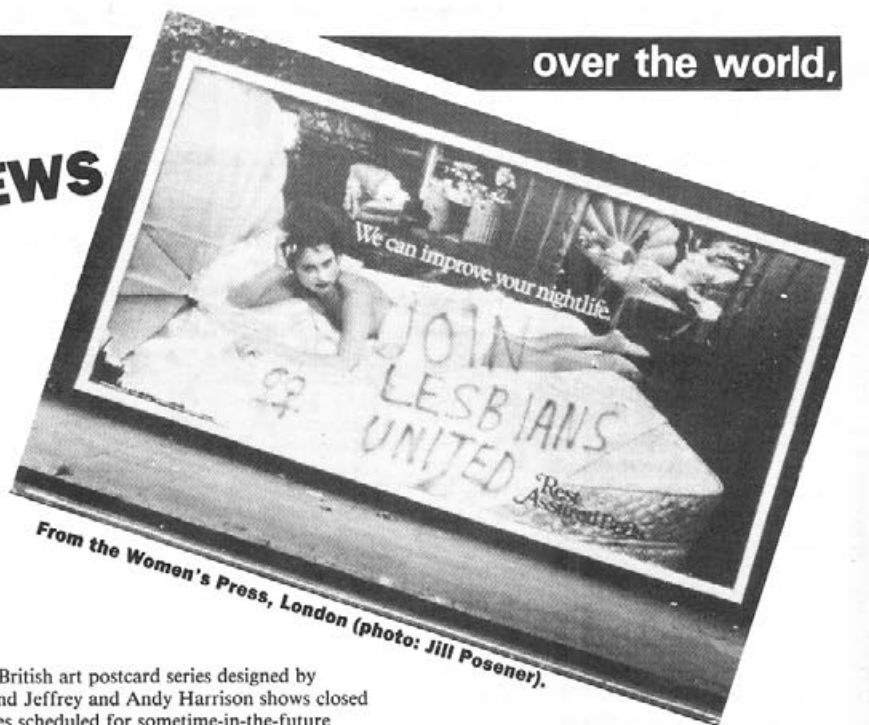
The magazine is introduced by Edgar Heap of Birds: "The Tsistsistas (Cheyenne) people maintain offerings to the Earth as one of their primary acts. . . . The dominant white culture maintains the strange custom of offering poisons to the Earth. Nuclear missiles and nuclear wastes are offered and placed within the Earth. All people must take part in the eternal renewal of the Earth for the better. . . ."

● In New York's Lower East Side, Adam Purple's *Garden of Eden*, a lovely local sculpture/garden on beat-up Eldridge Street may be going down for the last count after years of struggle against the City, which has chosen *this*, of a myriad vacant lots in the area, to develop. Another casualty of bureaucracy and neglect was artist Betty Klavun's imaginative and popular playground in the South Bronx. "Village" was commissioned by the NY Housing Authority for the Betances Child Care Center. Despite enthusiastic community involvement with the park, the City abandoned it after one summer to the vicissitudes of neglect and vandalism, thus abandoning their own responsibility for its safety and maintenance.

● A call for papers for a conference to be held January 26-27, 1985 at Wichita State University (Kansas): "Our Hidden Heritage of People's Culture—Marxist perspectives on oil, wheat, and peace." Focus is on the interactions between culture and people's movements, including trade unions, the anti-nuke movement, and Third World solidarity movements. Contact Fred Whitehead, Box 5224, Kansas City, Kansas 66119.

● North American artists continue to hone in on consumerism. The latest, "Shopping America, an art performance by the Girl Artists" of Portland, Oregon, is about "money, the struggle to earn it, and the pleasure as well as the pressure to spend it." These 22 humorous skits move from "the price of your last meal to world economics." "Shopping" follows up on the feminist collective's previous works, "Split Shift Cafe" and "T.V. Guidance," which, according to reviewer Barry Johnson, "For us boys, was a window into the world we really didn't know about, an explanation of what had been empty gestures, an excuse to plunge into our own high-school memories and compare notes."

42 UPFRONT Fall 1984

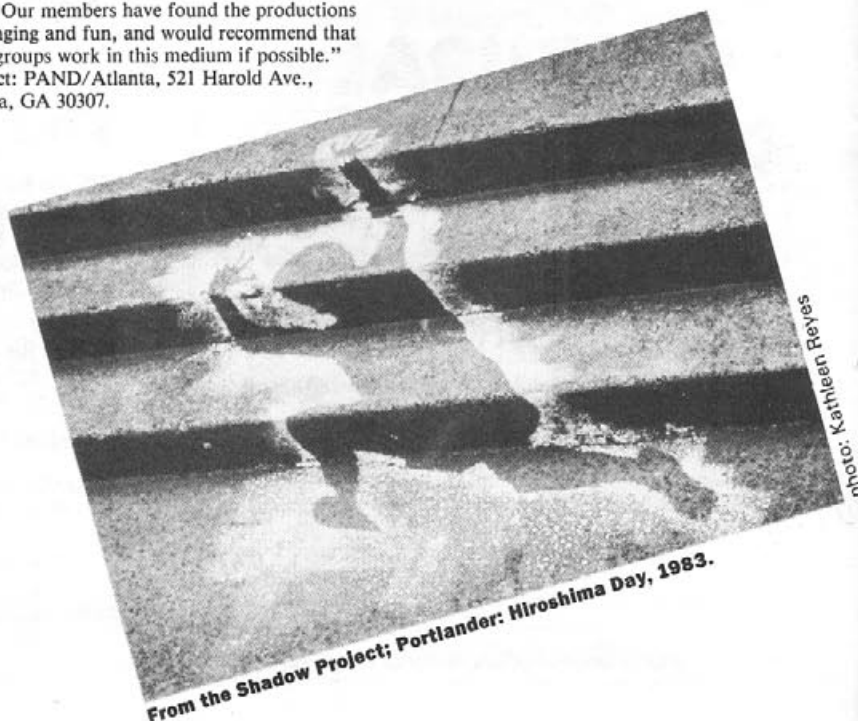


From the Women's Press, London (photo: Jill Posener).

● A British art postcard series designed by Roland Jeffrey and Andy Harrison shows closed houses scheduled for sometime-in-the-future demolition, each "one of the 617,000 empty houses and flats in England," with a red-circled stamp "USE IT!" It is part of "Waging War on Empty Property, a Year of Action," sponsored by the Housing Emergency Office, 157 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8UU. Another particularly biting British political postcard series comes from Leeds Postcards, 13 Claremont Grove, Leeds, LS3 1AX.

● In January, the Atlanta Chapter of Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament (PAND) began production of a 13-week video series for Atlanta's public access channel. The first 12 shows were in a talk-show format, spotlighting local disarmament organizations, with PAND performances cut in for lively viewing. The second series documented disarmament events and PAND performances. Dubs of the shows are available for use by groups nationwide on public access television, or for education and promotion. "Our members have found the productions challenging and fun, and would recommend that other groups work in this medium if possible." Contact: PAND/Atlanta, 521 Harold Ave., Atlanta, GA 30307.

● "Re-Presenting Work" is a photo project initiated by the Workers Health Centre in Lidcombe, Australia. The project aims "to document aspects of working life in conjunction with workers and their unions, with an emphasis on health and safety issues. At the same time, it hopes to raise questions about workplace photography and to encourage the use of photography by unions and rank and file groups."



From the Shadow Project; Portland: Hiroshima Day, 1983.

Review by
K. J. ...

● In Santa Cruz, owners of a local liquor store bowed to the pressure of a lively performance/demo by militant feminists and signed a pledge not to sell *Hustler* magazine. Led by Nikki Craft of the infamous Preying Mantis Brigade, the protestors threatened to present a large gold-painted dildo trophy (the M.U.S.H. award—Merchants United to Save Hustler) and used psycho-drama and porn images in their sidewalk display/action. "Sexual torture of women," their flyer read, "is after all as American as apple pie. . . and besides, 'it pays the rent.'" The next day the brigade painted "Violence in the media equals violence in society" on downtown sidewalks. By displaying pornography openly in their demonstrations, the women emphasize that they are not for censorship. Their aim is to expose *Hustler's* racist "political progadanda against women's freedom and women's rights."

● Mari Border's exhibition at LAICA in Los Angeles in May documented a public piece executed around CalArts in 1982-83. She selected local newspaper accounts of women who had been raped and murdered in the area, located the sites, and erected at each a plaque describing the crime. (Police, expecting a murder rather than an artwork, uprooted the plaques.) In reviewing Border's show in the *LA Weekly*, Kathi Norklun noted, "It is not our protest" against such violence that must be investigated, "but our fascination" with crime.

● Also in Los Angeles, SPARC's California Chicano Mural Documentation Project received a grant to fund four special events on Chicano art and muralism in spring-summer 1984. The project is documenting the thousands of California Chicano murals and producing postcards, mural maps, and education slide packets. The murals are "public art with a secret code" that speaks of ethnic pride, oppression, the Mexican mural tradition, and local issues—among them, the lack of mainstream art exposure for Chicano artists, which led them into the streets. In the early '70s, despairing of ever being shown at the L.A. County Museum, some Chicano artists "went over there and spray-painted our names on the outside of the building. We felt that if we couldn't get inside, we would just sign the museum and it would be our piece." Things haven't improved since, but in the interim the murals have come a stronger and more public art form than any museum shows could have been. One artist recalls that galleries and museums weren't part of his childhood, but all he had to do was walk out his front door "to see visual images all around me. Graffiti was everywhere, and it helped me develop a sense of what I wanted to do." SPARC director Judy Baca says, "Graffiti is a monosyllable. But a mural is a whole paragraph, a story."

Baca recently completed an Olympic freeway mural celebrating the Women's Marathon. A "People's Museum of Peace" is also being organized for the Olympics in Los Angeles. "Concerned artists such as John Heartfield also used the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936 to focus the world's attention on the rise of fascism in Germany."

● A chain-postcard action went all over the world unbroken with the message from woman to woman: "We wish for peace in the world." The variety of images, the unity of the call, made the daily mail more heartening than usual over several months.

● Canada's censorship problems proceed apace, particularly in Ontario. Film and video are the main targets, and now it's spread to British Columbia, where the director of the Vancouver Art Gallery cancelled a media show called "Confused/Sexual Views." For further info, see *Fuse*, Spring 1984, and *Parallelogramme*, Feb.-March 1984.

George Blair; Mind's Eye, London

Daddy
What Did You Do
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P A D D A C T I V I T I E S

PADD WORK MEETINGS are on the third Sunday of every month at 339 Lafayette St. There are various levels where you can get involved—as a full voting member, working on UPFRONT, on RED LETTER DAYS, on special projects, or by becoming a supporting affiliate member. Come and see what good clean fun all the dirty work can be.

PADD's SECOND SUNDAY FORUMS take place at Franklin Furnace (112 Franklin St.), the second Sunday of every month at 7:30 P.M.

WE WANT TO LIVE! A 15-minute slide/tape show produced by PADD and Cultural Correspondence, on the visual imagery of the June 12th march for disarmament. Accompanied by a stirring text and music by Serious Bizness, others. Rent for \$35 or buy for \$100.

RED LETTER DAYS: A Monthly Listing of Left and Socially Concerned Cultural Events in New York City—an attempt to build a cohesive audience for all of us (especially those who can't afford to advertise). It includes films, performances, plays, conferences, musical events, rallies, art exhibitions, workshops, and notices of upcoming national exhibitions and projects. Send info to PADD by the 20th of the previous month

PADD is a progressive artists' resource and networking organization coming out of and into New York City. Our goal is to provide artists with an organized relationship to society, to demonstrate the political effectiveness of image making. One way we are trying to do this is by building a collection of documentation of international socially concerned art. The PADD Archive defines social concern in the broadest sense: any work that deals with issues ranging from sexism and racism to ecological damage and other forms of human oppression. The PADD Archive documents artwork from movement posters to the most individual of statements.

PADD is also involved with the production, distribution and impact of progressive art in the culture at large. We sponsor public events, actions and exhibitions. These are all means of facilitating relationships between (1) artists in or peripherally in, or not at all in the art world, (2) the local communities in which we live and work, (3) Left culture, and (4) the broader political struggles.

We hope eventually to build an international grass-roots network of artist activists who will support with their talents and their political energies the liberation and self-determination of all disenfranchised peoples.

PADD STATEMENT

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