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November 1979

NEW YORK AND ROCHESTER: on the road with jah

28 October

Almost didn't get off the ground because of high winds which did not allow any planes to land or take off, but finally whipped by jet winds, we left an hour later—a restful flight, arriving in a fairly warm, sunny dawn in the Big Apple. It was too good to be true: shimmering in the sunlight, New York City appeared to be the biggest toystore, and Judy was ready to take it all in, knowing full well the necessity of making decisions—which toy to buy, even if they were free. At least, the airline magazine had given me an education on holography (and they seem to be covering the art scene on a concerted basis)—so laser beams aside, I had the best painter in town to enjoy, Jack Frost, and that is truly hard to beat!

Staying in SoHo made it easy to visit Jaap Rietman's right away. Monday is an off-day for most art in the City, but a good day to stop and browse, trying to catch up on the European books and periodicals I hadn't seen, as well as gossip in and around town. Really good to read the *New York Times* with my breakfast instead of five days later, and to meet old friends who briefed me on what was going on in town during the week (the week of Beuys, the week of the arrival of the 1980s to America, the week of reunions and new friends), and who was in town and where were the best gallery shows, etc. Monday was people day, ending at the Performance Workshop which Arleen Schloss offers in her space each Monday night.

29 October

Chatted with Dick Higgins in the morning about publishing, Rochester, new books, etc. Then off to see photography and art in the galleries, even meeting Robert Graham in the Robert Miller Gallery. Here is a neighbor in Venice, but I had to come to NYC to chat with him. Also saw Gloria Kisch (another Venice neighbor) who was installing her show at Touchstone Gallery—like old home week. At Sidney Janis Gallery, a perfect museum-style installation of works by Miro, Braque, Giacometti, di Chirico—a fine example of how it should be done! Jeffrey Lew's paintings of books brought home how much I liked his artist's book, *Book Articulations*, a favorite of mine in my own collection, then Anne Ryan's collages at Emmerich, Kenneth Snelson at Zabriskie, and so much more.

I ended the workday buying books at Printed Matter for my bookshop, examining their new catalog, and talking shop with all the staff, while Ingrid Sischy was preparing



slides for her talk in Rochester. Then back to Franklin Furnace for openings of friends Nicole Gravier, Fernando de Filippi, and Terry Braunstein, the same Braunstein who has been hooked by the Xerox 6500 and is now making multiples of her one-of-a-kind notebooks, mounted on rag paper and beautifully bound! In a strange way, Southern California takes the blame for her sudden change in medium. Nicole's beautiful color photographs tell very personal stories of love and separation and longing and despair—and how good to see her after two years! So many artists were there at the opening, with surprise visits by Gino di Maggio and family from Milan (he is Multhipla Publishers) and Germano Celant, as well as Karen Shaw, Jim Collins and so many more. Then off to Cooper Union to hear Clive Phillpot give a lecture on artists' books, where Susan King from Venice, critic Alexandra Anderson, bookmakers Richard Minsky, Norman Colp, Bruce Schnabel and so many more attended. Had a late snack at Elephant & Castle in the Village with another bookmaker, Ivy Sky Rutzky. What a joy to talk shop instead of just read about it!

HALLOWEEN

What a tradition Halloween has become for me in New York. Last year the Empire State Building was lit up like an orange pumpkin, and I anticipated a repeat performance this night. Bumped into Nicole gallery-hopping, with Larry Poons at the Emmerich, Chuck Close in all his "close-ness" at the Pace, portfolios and Cadillacs at Witkin, Esteban Vicente at

Grunebaum, Jeffrey Lew at Multiples, and one-of-a-kind books at Kathryn Markel's. Lunch with friends from MOMA and upon return from lunch, saw a gorilla walk out of a taxi! Yes, New York City celebrates Halloween seriously and in costumes--and trick or treating usually necessitates a gift of money, even on 57th Street.

The Whitney Museum once again outdid itself with the Hopper Show, the permanent collection from the 1930s with many revelations, but to top it all was the photography show called *Photography Rediscovered*, the best of the shows in town in photography. (See Exhibition Catalogs for more information). Masami Teraoka on the first floor, an artist living in L.A., satirizes American society in the eyes and in the style of the ancient Japanese painters--and comes out as a surprise to New Yorkers, who want to see more of him. He was on the first floor, and I felt proud to know him.

Stopped off at Ron Feldman's Gallery to see about invite to party at P.S. 1 on Saturday night, and whom should I see there but Joseph himself. Greeted Beuys, since I had met him in Kassel and spent an afternoon in dialogue with him at Documenta two years ago, and there I was shaking the hand of the man who was in *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, on the cover of the *SoHo Weekly News*, who was featured in the *New York Times Magazine* section! A human with a smile a thousand miles wide, in the limelight, fatigued with interviews and publicity, yet ready to greet an acquaintance with a warmth and humanity that reflects his own personality.

Walked down Madison Avenue, popped into a few more galleries, and then watched the twilight bring out the costumed wonders of the New York world, all going to parties, all dressed to kill, no tricks, just treats!

Drinks with an old friend who just bought a loft and is fixing it up--wonderful Old Chelsea Pub which is a Victorian dream! Then off to party for newly weds, Peter Frank and Jack Ox, at Nobe Gallery, after which some of us proceeded to A.I.R. in SoHo for Mary Beth Edelson's rite and ritual on Halloween, where Suzanne Lacy of L.A. was among the audience, as were Miriam Schapiro, Carolee Schneemann, and many more.

1 NOVEMBER

Bought some gifts at the MOMA shop, while I watched the crumbling of the Beaux-Arts building, making way for progress, a new MOMA building, another skyscraper. Then bumped into Harry Lunn obviously in town for the photo auction at Parke-Bernet, coming from the Light Gallery with their new show of Arnold Newman and Nicholas Nixon--and their beautiful gray walls.

After long lunch with a friend, I stopped by the New Museum and the Grey Gallery--from the avant-garde to the 19th century in a very short time--and bumping into people anticipating seeing each other at the Beuys opening at the Guggenheim this night. Between drinks and friends, I had to choreograph my itinerary at the Museum itself, where Joseph was greeting people at the bottom of the ramp. Starting at the top (the drinks and snacks were up there), one met half the art world who had come to see the show (the



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German government had chartered planes to bring German artists, gallery dealers and critics to NYC for this occasion), so with half of Germany, half of Italy (publishers and artists) and half of California, it seemed, there was a long list of meetings from Dennis Oppenheim, Sarenko (the Italian publisher), Giancarlo Politi (Flash Art), Gino di Maggio, J.-F. Bory from France, Donald Kuspit, Gail Levin from the Whitney, Alan Ruppertsberg (late of L.A.), Mike Robinson, editor of *Art Letter*, Paul Shanley (publisher of *Art in America*), Hannah Wilke, Peter Frank, Ken Friedman, Willoughby Sharp, Liza Bear, Jenny Holzer, Rosalie Onorato, and so many more. A catalog of the art world, wending down the ramps of the Guggenheim to watch the 1980s roll in with Joseph Beuys.

2 NOVEMBER

Very warm day in New York--75 and going strong. Hard to believe this was not California, except for the dyed-in-the-wool Easterners who never change clothes after October, no matter how warm it gets! Fur caps in 75 degrees, well, say now! Met Janet Newell who works with umbrellas on a large scale in New York, using found umbrellas in the streets and weaving them together as a sixty-foot canopy, for instance. We became fast friends. She's almost as obsessed as I am.

Weather changes rapidly here. Found several vendors on the streets using umbrellas as their display mechanism for buttons and hand-made jewelry (as well as a protection against inclement weather and a quick departure in case the police start asking questions!)

Off to P.S. 1, where Gary Lloyd's piece using the QWIP machine was in operation, transmitting from P.S. 1 to the window of ARTWORKS, the artists' bookshop in Venice. I, in fact, transmitted two pieces to the shop, talked to my

partner, talked to Gary, and felt we were really making history. What we were transmitting were documents—and in two minutes, we finally did transmit hard copy. The visuals collected from P.S. 1, Franklin Furnace, Gary's studio and Artworks will make a very interesting book indeed. The Sound Show at P.S. 1, an expanded version of the Sound Show in Los Angeles was a joy to behold, to hear and to experience. Everything was functioning, everything was in order, and in beautiful order, I might say, and it was a splendid grand place to experience the Sound Show with its New York exponents.

Talked to Tom Johnson about his forthcoming trip to California and the possibilities of putting on his *9 Bells* for a few audiences in Southern California.

Then off to hear Artists Talk on Art, a series of panel discussions throughout the year, dealing with issues vital to the New York art community. This time it was gallery dealers talking about their business and relationship to artists. There was an overflow crowd, which did not seem to ask the right questions of these most happy gallery dealers, finding that because of the nature of the American public who no longer wants to hide their valuables in vaults for posterity, but wants to live with their investments on their walls, this is the most propitious time to be in the art business. Chuck Close was in the audience, as was the incisive and perceptive Irving Sandler.

3 NOVEMBER

Well, the rain that had begun to fall last evening increased in volume to a full-fledged storm. Although I do not find rain very pleasant in the Big Apple, there were still errands to do and art to see. Finally got to the Metropolitan, bumping into friends all the way, and saw the Aegean show. Beautifully installed, I really didn't have to get past the first two rooms with the best of Cycladic sculpture, and enough to fill an aesthetic month. New acquisitions were eye-openers, since the Met has been buying lots of Art Deco furniture—and has received many gifts of 20th-century art. Also saw the Met's new shop, or rather emporium. F. A. O. Schwarz has nothing on the Met anymore. There are gifts for all ages, well displayed and beautifully illuminated. The art market reaches all ages, believe me! But it feels like a department store. Well, museums have to make money in any way they can. I, however, kept my hand on my purse. Just couldn't be wiled.

Saw the Sam Francis show at Brooke Alexander's (The Litho Shop) and then his early work at Elkon, with some interesting discoveries. Chatted with Gabe Austin at Wittenborn Books about the price of art books, had a great charge at the Dorothea Tanning show at Gimpel Fils (her whole photographic history in cases and on the walls and in the vault downstairs—an amazing art history with Ernst et al), then to see the de Koonings (seems I'm always in NYC when de Kooning is showing his new work at Fourcade), and finally again to Ron Feldman's to see the Coyote installation again. The whole world was converging either at the Guggenheim (where Joseph had gone to visit, since the crowds were long) or at Ron Feldman's. However, my discovery was upstairs at Leonard Hutton Gallery, where Ilya G. Chasnik was on the walls in this elegant, tasteful, beautiful gallery.

Disciple of Malevich who lived only 27 years, he was prolific, from book designs, to porcelain, from fine painting to book art. I was overwhelmed by this artist who had left his works in a box upon which his paralyzed widow had lain for many years. He has only recently been re-discovered and how fortunate to see the show in New York!

Had the good fortune to see the William Copley Collection of Surrealist, Dada and Contemporary Art, which was being auctioned at Parke Bernet. The auction rooms the weekend before were packed! In fact, auction rooms seem to be as important as museums in New York, and this was the last time anyone could see the history of a man's taste all under one roof. Seems Copley just got tired and wanted to get rid of them all. What a shame to see them dispersed all over the world, when the collection itself could become the foundation of a museum. At any rate, it was good to see Man Ray, Duchamp, Oldenburg, Penrose, Christo, and so many more available at such a close range. What a shame!

Went to several openings, including the Doo-Da Postage Works painting show (auction to be 1 December), met up with Betsi Brandfass and Ray di Palma, then on to Bob Kushner's fashion show for his *New York Hat Line* at Holly Solomon's. Then a gang of us went to P.S. 1 to the party given by Ron Feldman for Joseph Beuys. Luckily, just as Joseph was coming into the building, I cornered him, reminded him of Gary Lloyd, whom he had met at Documenta, and asked him to transmit a piece to Gary in Venice, which he did on the QWIP machine. He was as entranced as I.

The party was very well attended by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, John Cage and Merce Cunningham, the many other artists, collectors, and publishers who had been at the Guggenheim. I met bookmakers Terry Berkowitz and Francesc Torres, as well as Helyn Goldenberg, publisher of *National Arts Guide*, with whom a group of us had dinner. Ended up at the loft of Douglas Davis and Jane Bell for a night-cap and a bit of a post-mortem on the art scene in NYC. Had the great pleasure of going out and buying the Sunday *Times* for three of us early Sunday morning. It felt like I were rolling logs, since they were so heavy, but what fun to get into the New York Sunday syndrome.

4 NOVEMBER

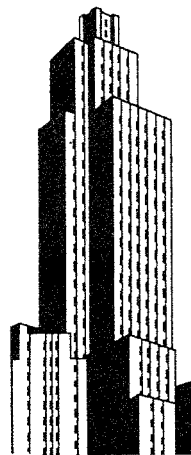
What a beautiful, clear, sunny day! Had Dim Sun with René Bloch, his father Werner, Alison Knowles and Jessie Higgins, and Phil Corner! Had a talk with René about Joseph's capability of flying to Los Angeles, about the art scene in Germany and the one in Southern California. The food was great, the company excellent, and a good time was had by all!

Then on to see Mayor Koch signing autographs on the street in SoHo, a mannequin (live) never blinking her eyes in a boutique window on West Broadway, the most beautiful collage notebooks that John Evans has been doing for the past 20 years (first time I've ever met him), and then on to spend some time with my family.

Upon returning, we passed by Bloomie's (the infamous Bloomingdale's department store) where the windows

were truly works of art. All that were in the window were black theater chairs, row after row, with quilted theater jackets either set on the seats as if filled by humans, or on the backs of the seats, with a tuxedoed male figure on the left with grotesque head, such as a walrus or a bull. They were theater sets themselves, and very striking settings to advertise quilted theater jackets. I was struck!

Made lots of phone calls, then packed for Rochester.



ALTERNATIVE ART PUBLISHING CONFERENCE

5 NOVEMBER

Arrival was earlier than anyone's, largely because I wanted to help the Visual Studies Workshop in some way, also because I wanted the lustre of Manhattan to sink in with a less active day in Rochester too.

31 Prince Street looked might good to me, with its two stone buildings, and its inviting feeling. The vibes were wonderful, and I thereupon ordered lots of artists' books for my shop from the Book Bus, with Joe Flaherty at the helm. The Book Bus, itself, is now for sale, and only rolls on the wheels of UPS, I believe. The shop itself is packed full of wonderful books, and it was heavily visited during the course of the week. It was an inviting place to look over the products of the VSW and those of other artists too.

Slowly old friends and new friends arrived, and with name tags we recognized each other and embraced. Old correspondents became acquainted, new self-publishers introduced each other, and the feeling of camaraderie, like an United Nations of Art Publishers came to be felt throughout the week.

NEW NEA GUIDELINES FOR 1981

Going out to lunch with Nathan Lyons on Monday allowed me to be apprised of some very good news, before the opening of the Conference. Due to Nathan Lyons' persuasiveness on the Advisory Committee of the NEA these past two years, the National Endowment for the Arts will make **ARTISTS' BOOKS** a funding category! That means, that

- 1) With the 1981 Guidelines, Individuals and collaborative projects can request project support for artists' books, and
- 2) Artists' Books will come under Prints & Drawings under the Artists' Fellowship Program.

It is hard to imagine a more important announcement at the outset of a Conference on Alternative Art Publishing, but Nathan did make this announcement, seemingly to deaf ears. We just think that the import of this announcement did not sink in until later in the week, but we know that this began one of the most comprehensive and significant conferences in alternative art publishing ever launched.



RICHARD MINSKY & SHEILA DE BRETTEVILLE

The first day heard Richard Minsky, recently out of London and founder of the Center for Book Arts, talking about the history of the book from stone tablets until new formats of today, with an emphasis of course on innovative binding. Sheila DeBretteville of the Women's Graphic Center in the Woman's Building in Los Angeles, spoke on the development of the Center with courses, presses, production, and projects including exhibitions and motivations of the women she has trained and inspired.

Lunches, by the way, if purchased at the Workshop were catered by a remarkable chef who made humus sandwiches or fine roast beef, with cannoli for dessert, or home-made sourcream brownies, and the price was quite right as well. Since the weather in Rochester left a little to be desired, but certainly wasn't as bad as anticipated (just a little rain), no one was unhappy to find a good lunch available at reasonable terms at noon.

ULISES CARRION

Among the honored guests during the Conference, Ulises Carrion, founder of the first artists' book shop in the world in Amsterdam gave a theoretical talk about books and their logical verbal-visual import. The talk was illustrated on a blackboard with diagrams showing how the book has developed on a verbal basis just like a newspaper, which represents the spoken language and a space-time structure. So too have film and video developed (the visual) into Mail Art and likewise spoken language is countered by photography and eventually Performance.