Creation of Destruction

By crater downs
Los Angeles

Survival Research Laboratories

Rapid Transit District Parking Lot

The brightly lit parking lot in downtown Los Angeles thrummed with 2,500 spectators, each of whom had just paid eight dollars and signed a waiver absolving the event's sponsors of responsibility for injury or damage resulting from this piece of performance art. Following a ferocious drumroll of publicity, unprecedented in the history of local performance, San Francisco's Survival Research Laboratories was about to commence an hour of explosions, collisions, destruction, desecration, mayhem, and simulated murder titled Extremely Cruel Practices: A Series of Events Designed to Instruct Those Interested in Policies that Correct or Punish. Egged on by newspaper articles, a televised video, a write-up in People magazine, and posters showing tortured animals and volatile-looking machines, the audience showed up ready for a fearsome spectacle at the Rapid Transit District parking lot next to the Los Angeles River.

"Too bad it didn't work," observed one spectator. But it did work, even beyond SRL's hopes, according to the group's founder, Mark Pauline. And it was profitable, too, according to Joy Silverman and Jack Marquette, directors of the two sponsoring organizations, LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions) and the Ant Club. Those disappointed were looking for good theater with good timing, which was not necessarily the criterion of the artists.

There was a lot of waiting between action segments, but the violent engagements of the 20-odd machines proved noisy, comical, and impressive on a sculptural level. To an ear-splitting soundtrack of screams, groans, and clashing machines, SRL's mechanical creations threw firebombs and rocks, pecked, tore, gouged, pulled, and crushed, and otherwise attempted to obliterate each other. The anthropomorphic constructions parodied human aggression, robbing it of any dignity to which it might pretend. Engaged in ludicrous combat were: Tower of Power, a 2,000-pound machine which swung whips and chains and had two ghoulish faces and an arm span of 25 feet; Sneaky Soldiers, 7-foot-tall creatures crawling on their elbows as it in combat; the Big Man, 25 feet tall with a buzz saw for one hand and a flame-thrower for the other; the Walk and Peck, a three-legged walker designed to peck its victim into a pile of rubble; the Catapult, which threw exploding firebombs; a tug-of-war device which pulled apart a pig carcass; and a motorized display of posters depicting torture and confinement. My favorite—indestructible comical and noisy—was the Screw Machine, a tank with pincer arms propelled on giant corkscrew spiral tracks and liable to hustle off in any direction.

Images of violence and torture were simultaneously satirized and ground into the memory as the loudspeakers belched, roared, and drummed. The two collaborators, Pauline and Matt Fleckner, manipulated remote controls. Amid the smoke and noise of revving gasoline engines, excited, greasy volunteers dashed back and forth in a ragged choreography to free the limbs of machines entangled in combat. Another squad of helpers brandished fire extinguishers. For a grand finale, the artists set off flares which bathed the wreckage in a raspberry neon glow.

The audience excited at any show of power and seemed most pleased with utter destruction. Pauline and his partner claim their purpose in this piece was to urge real contemplation of torture and its consequences. They perceive their society as one bent on pain, destruction, and violence; for them, this was a theater of reality. The title specifically addressed "those interested in policies that correct or punish," Pauline claims, "everybody's interested, but few will admit it." Our ability to ignore man's inhumanity to man is typified, he says, in activist concern for animals, he scoffs at those who criticize SRL's incorporation of animal carcasses with machines. Their time would be better spent, he believes, in protesting the oppression and torture of human beings.

Little of this information was available in the work, however, and SRL relied on arduous esthetics to carve an impression in the viewer's memory. Must Los Angeles performance artists require a more definite clarity of purpose in their work? There is no denying that the SRL stance is problematic, especially in relation to the enthusiastic audience response. I would hope that the audience was not applauding violent spectacle but rather offering appreciation for SRL's audacity, ludicrous anarchy, and powerful integrity.

LINDA BURNHAM
SLASH: How do you get started building your machines?
MARK PAULINE: The whole business of making machines was a reaction to coming across a huge factory that was being dismantled and offered me the possibility for an unlimited supply of mechanical components. It changed the luck so I could get in and put easily and started collecting equipment. I figured out the functions and what I wanted to do with the equipment, and ended up with that first big machine "THE SHREDDER."

THE SHREDDER - automatically remanufactures up to 5 unique objects at a time, and ejects the remains. Equipped with noise making paraphernalia. Also with capability for self-commission, and electrical treatment of objects to be remanufactured.

This was at the beginning of 1978, after I was totally off on my spinning of billboards. I came to the whole thing without any real kind of understanding of what I was doing, despite what you would think about how complicated the machines have become. I just had a basic understanding about how machines worked and I combined that with how my mind worked, which is uncomfortable.

I had a lot from my involvement with the construction of these machines. I can get a better waiting job now. I just rebuilt the transmission on my motorcycle last week. So I'm a man.

SLASH: So you're bettering your mechanical skills?
MARK PAULINE: Absolutely!

SLASH: Can you describe how you feel about your machine?
MARK PAULINE: I hate making them. It's awful. They really bother me when I have to make them. I like to do things with them. If I am not at that level, I would have rather bought them, but that's not the way it works. They're instruments that fit into the way my mind works. I want to get out of ideas.

SLASH: Your machines evolve and go through personality changes; like in your most recent performance, "THE SHREDDER" starting doing that circular dance.

MARK PAULINE: I think my sister is very talented. I like to do things with them. If I am not at that level, I would have rather bought them, but that's not the way it works. They're instruments that fit into the way my mind works. I want to get out of ideas.

SLASH: You've used the symbol of the cat in a lot of your work.
MARK PAULINE: You, there, there, there is a cat, there, that stuck on a tangle in the grid that had some cat talking on it. It was a response to my feeling that no one ever really tells the truth. They always hide behind the "dark", or lies. We always hide when we fuck. I used to read in those books in the daytime.

SLASH: Tell me about your mechanical cat.
MARK PAULINE: The mechanical cat was a stupid one that needed a lot of work. I had to give it more work. The cat was made of wood, with the ability to play electric guitar or paper with new objects, and the ability to write. For the purpose of destruction, with knives positioned in the box, a lot of pain was added.

SLASH: How do you make the cat move?
MARK PAULINE: He is. It weights about 150 lbs. Doesn't move too much. It has a perfect pitch. It can roll a bit. He's not hot or cool. He hides at one show. He's a bit of a pain. I always have a pain at one show.

SLASH: Your shows all have elements of Sex Violence and Politics in them.
MARK PAULINE: I look at things in three different ways. The possibilities of sex, violence, and politics for me. The possibilities for some type of political act. That's the one dimensional. So the show is the same way. I mean. That's what people are truly interested in, not in me. They're not interested in me. They're interested in what's happening. This is what I do. I am interested in what I do. I am not interested in me. I am interested in what's happening. This is what I do. I am interested in what's happening. This is what I do. I am interested in what's happening. This is what I do. I am interested in what's happening. This is what I do.

SLASH: How long has Survival Research Laboratories been in existence?
MARK PAULINE: Well, the original B.R.L. formed in 1978 by some bright wright who asked me in Boston. I didn't make the Survival Research Laboratories. I stole the name from them. They stopped advertising around the same time that I needed people to think of me as an artist. It was important enough for me to steal someone else's name and get this stupid magazine Boulevard into giving me a free page because I couldn't pay for it. I get it from them to me. I just did an ad for B.R.L. and from then on I tried to maintain the front of being an organization and all the advertising that appears on it. In all the things I've had with the establishment and businesses you have to have that and someone's tax number or you won't get answers to important questions, and you won't get response from people. As soon as you have real name, stationery, etc., it really helps. It also helps avoid the one thing. The name. I am the name. I defect things more to an organization which can be as impersonal as organizations can be.

SLASH: Do you think audiences appreciate your sense of humor?
MARK PAULINE: Well, I think people are going to be really happy if they use the stupid machine. I'm not sure they'll like it. They take in a lot of material and work. They can take in a lot of material and work. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material. They're not a material. They're a material.
San Francisco locals were grinning amazement after experiencing Mark Pauline's explosive media extravaganza performed June 31st at the Cadillac parking lot on Van Ness. A new B.O.T.C. concessions stand?" "Trash and Delele Giant Robots" was the theme of this brilliant demonstration of animated flesh on metal framed organic droids. We also focused our "video" on Monte Cassino's ten foot iron crossbow which torpedoes pitchforks into the gaping mouth of some oversized clown? Some dart board.

The "Bunk Broadway" did not shy away from the video cyclorama which was beaming their enthusiastic grunts over the NBC network on "SFO" hosted by Steve Jamison. Celebrities galore at this torching of insulated mumblings. **It was prime time group coverage gang! With not a moment to spare, an average youngster on roller shoes comes within seconds of being premanated (look it up) by a full ton toothpick gone astray.

Talk about lubrication tendencies, later I needed a new fix. I tried but couldn't quite simulate that audio sensation I needed by simultaneously exploding two M-80s in the sewer pipes. It wasn't loud enough, but I got quite a few complaints anyway.

Survival Research Laboratory (Pauline's Organization) has previously performed these mechanical military nightmares with a Los Angeles "industrial" band "Factiva" who has caught NASA's attention with their studies on sound waves. They are hoping to find the frequency which can produce human spontaneous combustion. Band member Joseph Jacobs stated that while performing Factiva intends to alter the listener's state of consciousness, an understandable I'd say.

Mark Pauline is one of the most impressive art performers in the Bay Area and I urge readers to see his post shows recorded on video tape. Personally, one of my favorites is "Machine Sex" which involves a giant exploding Leonid Brezhnev, a mechanical cat playing guitar, an automatic pigeon shredder and background Marzak is played at 120 decibels.

Pauline and Cassino provide an artistic outlet for those who like to hope and hope to hate. They are due to reemerge from their dense woods of mental meccanics in early August, some of us will sell our blood to be there, I'll remember the N20 whippets... Patty Wagon

MARK
PAULINE

**BURN! OFFERINGS**
Photo by Michael Groxnos
LETTER FROM SAN FRANCISCO

David Bienn

I.

Mark Pauline and his cohorts at the Survival Research Laboratory are hard at work here in San Francisco, trying to make megadeth the most popular cultural artform of the next century. A couple of weeks ago, Pauline staged one of his bread and circus affairs beneath a stretch of elevated interstate in downtown San Francisco’s south of Market art enclave. There’s really no way to compete with the masters of violence, exploitation and destruction that inundate contemporary society with endless gore, insult, and drivel, but for Pauline and crew, it’s obvious that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

To set the scene briefly, we have five thousand or so darkly clad spectators waiting for two hours in anticipation of admission to the three bay staging area, which is cordoned off with barricades and steel cable. Inside the three ring circus, we see the massive square concrete columns supporting the highway above festooned with torches illuminating shelves laden with skinned and dismembered pigs, fish, goats and who knows what other unfortunate domestic companions. Vegematic Jones. A glass fronted commercial cooler likewise displays butchered animal remains. Very nice. Let’s see. There’s a big piñata of sorts hung like a giant pustule from the underside of the roadbed. There’s a score of dilapidated pianos stacked up around one of the square columns. There’s a nicely executed backdrop-sized painting of a tidal wave at the end of one of the bays, and of course there’s the famed cast of mechanical characters, a host of beautifully crafted machines poetically motorized into biomorphically animated puppets. There’s no faulting the skill and engineering that go into the design of a set of devices like these; they are the handsome and talented actors responding to the stilted vision of a crackpot dictator. Only to the extent that Pauline was able to facilitate and produce these mechanical objects does his craftmanship and artistry deserve credit.

On to the script... Set the stage with military march music and bagpipe dirge. Overlay with stretches of white and grey noise. Throw in a few taped telephone conversations illustrating the meaninglessness and rapidity of everyday life while underscoring the boorish mentality of the speakers. Throw in an inflammatory racial diatribe by a black male speaker ranting that he doesn’t want whites in his house, doesn’t want to sit at the same table with them, wants nothing to do with them, ad infinitum. Put this dreck on a tape loop and run it throughout the entire performance, which consists of: the flamethrower machine blasting the keyboard instruments into a mute bonfire, the screw machine wrecking the garbage filled piñata, the commercial cooler knocked over thankfully doors side up by the giant magnet machine, the trash spitting machine vomiting its ammo out into the audience, the amputee machine endlessly performing its pitiful dance, all the machines and their keepers chasing each other around in a confused melée annihilating only the inanimate objects (Those toys are expensive!) Guys and gals are goosestepping around with headsets and walkie talkies, or officiously documenting the whole thing with the newest and hippest equipment. Pretty soon fire engulfs the performance arena and maybe somebody sighs deeply. That’s all folks.

Commensurate with the level of mythic depth and cathartic efficacy displayed in the action of the piece, these guys should be issuing dance cards and throwing plastic beads at the crowd. That is to say that what we have here is auto-hype spectacle; it is not serious anything. The show is based on a let ‘em eat cake mentality which exhibits base contempt for its audience and is intended to dull rather than enhance the field of human perception. This is art that does not question; it obeys. There’s a snotty nosed adolescent rebelliousness in the air that disappears as soon as the
II.

Jean Tinguely’s work as a sculptor, constructionist and theorist is sometimes invoked as a precedent and validation of the activity at SRL. The body of Jean Tinguely’s work dates back to the mid-1950’s, and is based explicitly on ideas about the kinetic motion of interrelated forces and materials as well as the dematerialization and transformation of spatial volume through movement and time. Here is an excerpt from a lecture delivered at the ICA in London early in Tinguely’s career. The year is 1959.

Movement is static because it is the only immutable thing - the only certainty, the only unchangeable. The only certainty is that movement, change, and metamorphosis exist. That is why movement is static. So-called immobile objects exist only in movement. Immobile, certain and permanent things, ideas, works and beliefs change, transform and disintegrate. Immobile objects are snapshots of a movement whose existence we refuse to accept, because we ourselves are only an instant in the great movement. Movement is the only static, final, permanent and certain thing. Static means transformation. Let us be static together with movement. Move statically! Be static! Be movement! Believe in movement’s static quality. Believe in change. Do not hold anything fast. Change! Do not pinpoint anything! Everything about us is movement. Everything around us changes. Believe in movement’s static quality. Be static!
- Jean Tinguely “Art, Machines and Motion”

In terms of intention, context, and concentration, Tinguely’s work is built solidly upon modernist inquiry and sensibility, preceded by the likes of Naum Gabo, Antoine Pevsner and Lazlo Moholy Nage.

Alexander Calder’s influence as a contemporary practicing master was not felt or unrecognized by Jean Tinguely; the two men were, in fact, in direct contact and exploring related paradigms. Perhaps the closest working relationship during the early years of Tinguely’s career was with chromatic metamagician Yves Klein, a decontrad theorist who departed in 1963. Throughout the years, the partnership of otherwise undertaken with collaboratrix Nikki de St. Phalle has resulted in projects of rich formal and textural synthesis based on an open ended creative process.

The flexibility and discourse of the work invites experimentation with materials, symbol, variables. The use of animal bones and feathers is polyvalent. In some instances there is a superficial, formal resemblance between Tinguely’s work and the fresh shows staged by SRL, but by and large, the seminal ideas driving Tinguely’s motors derive from qualities of improvisation and anarchy TRANSUBSTANTIATING elements of mass, time, and motion. Rather than being rigidly controlled through the electronic medium, Tinguely’s claptap motors powered machines with missing gear teeth; complete eccentricity of dance resulted from the unpredictable trajectory and performance of the component parts. The primal machine was simply the wheel. In performance, the key principle was sense liberation: perfume was released from atomizing gizmos as business machines learned to play music while mechanical painting and poetry randomly gurgled from the claw of the Metamatiques.

When a piano was destroyed during the course of the 1960 performance “Homage to New York,” so was everything else that had been constructed for that event at the Museum of Modern Art. That was the point. These machines were not precious. They were truly emblematic of the disposable civilization of modern technocracy, in that they themselves were annihilated in process. Posited as an outcry against the suffocation of the individual and the paralysis of chance by the extant and developing socio-political structure, Tinguely’s work exalts the delirious release of the human personality.

Jean Tinguely today remains an iconoclast and stands apart from the hypefed world of consumerist art, publicity and packaging. His catalogue of projects is well documented, and recommended to anyone interested in kinetic sculpture and performance.
III.

It is worth noting that there are artists active in the Bay area who are responding to the challenge of contemporary humanistic and environmental issues working through the medium of robotic design and performance. For the past eight years or so, Chico MacMurrie has been making investigations into these areas, at first as a student in Arizona and later in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Mac Murrie is evolving a mythos addressing socioecological dynamics modeling both the flexible planetary environment and the political and cultural dilemmas resulting from an onslaught of computerized depersonalization in relationship to the multitudinous levels of civilization existing now.

He has created a cast of characters capable of staging an object lesson or passion play: the Rock Thrower represents the retaliation of disenfranchised groups in world politics, from the Palestinians to the Indians of the Americas. He voices a primal protest against the dimensional separation from the nurturing relationship to native soils and their desecration by international commercial concerns. The Tumbling Man, Primitive Drummers 1&2, and Walking Woman, are some other members of the cast. The benign but troubled Spirit of the earth emerges from the interior of a welded steel globe like a chick emerging from an egg...a chick with an axe to grind. These steel humanoids are air powered by pneumatic pumps which create a gasping, breathing sound as they come to life. Mac Murtrie attaches the swinging panels to the various parts of his body which correspond to the moving anatomies of his metal creations. As he triggers the buttons they mimic his motions like beginning ballroom dance students waiting for the approval of the teacher. The nature of this activity creates the very palpable illusion that there is really something going on here, that somehow these beings have a kind of intelligence and personality; this choreography induces the willing suspension that opens magical circuitry. The drummer drums forgotten cadences; the house flies apart.

In addition to the globe and human figures, the artist has created a small forest of trees whose root and branch systems move up and down to create an eccentric, erratic, walking motion. The ecosystem is in flux, this is the waning frontier of the rainforest. In the course of the performance, MacMurrie hands the controls over to members of the audience; they then have the power to guide the path of the ambiant rainforest, in other words, they participate in its preservation or its annihilation.

This is the crux of the matter, the use or abuse of ability and responsibility with regard to the future of our delicate planet, ultimately much more fragile than one made of steel. This is the absolutely quintessential mandate which deserves all the serious attention that contemporary artists can muster. The methodologies and potentials of kinetic artifacts are rich in the ability to explore a potent new synthesis capable of extending the realities of transformation pursued not only by the modern masters of the 20th century by hose of preceding and future millenia. These methodologies and paradigms are strong tools when they are used by strong and attentive hands.
In 1978, in the height of the disco scene, when the presence of pants in S.F. could be counted on one hand, fine art students organized a piece at a local motel. The Motel Tapes was a perfect example of seventeen sensibilities. Art Nouveau Tapes set us between the regular fare of porn, they were a disco, a dance, a chance to get it up again. The system existed. They gummed plugged into it. This made sense. This was Seventies art. Almost a year to the day after the Motel Tapes, this guy from Florida divorced personas up the forthy little Arabs at a S.F. gas station, and sang what he called "Machina Sex," names Martyrs out them. This was done to the accompaniment of a musical arrangement based on a Courrèges' Piquant. This was Mark Pauline. It was 1978 and, as far as I'm concerned, this was the beginning, or rather the re-emergence of "Happening" in "Happened by the Bay." Frank Park.

"Survey 1981, Artists, Writers, Curators, Poll." 
"Issues and Images", Winter 81-82.

"What was the best performance of 1981? Where?"

The ongoing body of work of the... San Francisco's Mark Pauline, otherwise known as Mason, the Gauntlet lot on Van Ness Avenue, and others. Homemade robot metal machines which, when even with their natural and organic Machine, the Scarlett Athlete. The next great artist from the Bay Area...


Take a look at Mark Pauline's performances. One of his pieces this at year's San Francisco International Film Festival included his typical machine animal: large construction of scrap metal, powered by engines so that they flap mechanical arms, move menacing jaws and attack other machines in the parking lot. Monitors are constantly Monitoring the crowd back, trying to keep them away from the flying spite. The smashing machine and general destruction and chaos that accompanies Pauline's performances.

Mark Pauline at Waseda University, Tokyo, December 1980. A rocket launcher opened slowly, and then its rocket at a large, quadrantlike face shot across the stadium.

Pauline and Labat are good examples of '80s performance art. Pauline's use of the bigger-than-life machines and photos of major political figures and his emphasis on violence are all essentially political statements. But they're meant to be seen live, meant to cause terror, meant to question art as well as politics.


Mark Pauline is known locally for elaborately conceived, self-destructive, machine-staged performances. His piece performed in the parking lot across the street from the Boarding House was tough, macho, and fraught with a frenzied sense of purpose. High-tech, with an electronic score supplementing the noise of the machine-performance, the work required analysis by the hermetic nature. Sex, violence, destruction and liberation combined in a metaphor of contemporary existence.

As you may have guessed from the creative vacuum here described, the writer currently lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Nonetheless, I have lived in several other major cities in recent years, including New York (where the last four), Los Angeles, New Orleans and Boston, and consider myself decently well-informed of developments in performance, and would admit that this unfortunate situation prevails nationwide. I have, however, in the last year or so witnessed at least in the Bay Area those exceptions: the work of performance artists Mark Pauline, Jeff Snell and George Coates.

These artists are utterly dissimilar from one another and by no means constitute anything remotely resembling a movement, or even trend. Jeff Snell is a young visual artist who performs small-scale solo events in galleries and underground spaces; George Coates directs higher-budget, professionally-skilled ensembles in larger, more traditionally theatrical settings. Mark Pauline is New Wave who builds and operates physically-dangerous Performance Machinery at various outdoor urban locations. I do not plan to make the obligatory Fauci-family cliche that some kind of an empirical inventory will suffice to smoke out the physical wisdom of an event whose very purpose is to transcend such inventory. Each deserves, indeed requires a separate article unto itself, or at least more than a few easy-to-understand cliches, a discussion of this kind of cultural transgression. and in all honesty I don't believe any art should be reviewed, period, and that's why I have not done so... to any particular artist or work in this essay. Great art doesn't need my dry hand-out, and bad art has already killed itself. That is, beauty is that in which the heart opens, heedless of the assistance of my critical pounding fist, and non-beauty hammers incessantly in vain.) They risk, they labor, they have courage. There is something they'd like us to see; a kind of gift. They give it either because they love us or because they love the world we're in, though of course some of them would admit to such a thing (Who would admit to such an intensity of judgement?!) There is a psychosis which makes us see their dresses and doves and doves and doves, but which at the core is generated by a volcanic event. Still, these are unquestionably the exceptions. What can be done about the rest of this hagiographic spiral, this Thalidomide Blues with neither eyes nor ears but only a gigantic sucking mouth? Easy. Ignore it.

Go to a movie, read a book, attend a concert, dance. Without windows, astrologically-clapping audiences like ourselves to feed on, performance art faces the same choice we do: sustain or die.