

PROFILE: center for book arts

The Center for Book Arts, located in New York City, is involved in a variety of work, including classes and workshops in papermaking, calligraphy, typography, printing and bookbinding; a program of exhibitions and public lectures; and the encouragement of writers, poets, painters and other artists to develop the making of books into an exciting contemporary art form. No other institution provides these cultural services, or makes these contributions.

An apprenticeship program attracts serious students from all over the country who wish to make this field their career. One of America's most outstanding craft apprenticeships, the students receive stipends from the NEA Master Craftsmen's Apprenticeship Program and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. Work has been done by the apprentices on commission for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Opera and the White House, as well as book repairs for individuals and the construction of books for artists for exhibitions.

The Center's first president was Richard Minsky, who founded the organization in 1974. He has recently resigned to accept a nine month residency in the United Kingdom awarded by the US/UK Exchange Program, which is jointly funded by the National Endowment and the International Communication Agency. He is one of five artists throughout the United States to receive this honor.

The Center's Board of Directors is Nicholas Caraccio, bow-maker; Joan K. Davidson, President of the J.M. Kaplan Fund and former chairman, New York State Council on the Arts; Fabio Coen, Divisional Vice-President of Random House for Children's Books; Hermann Greissle, engraver and illustrator; Ken Milford, Vice-President of the Book Press; Richard Minsky; S. R. Shapiro, rare book dealer and lecturer on the history of books; Rose Slivka, editor of *Craft Horizons*; and Kathleen Weldon, Executive Director of the Center.

This year the Center begins a relationship with the Cooper Union School of Art, teaching bookbinding to Cooper students for credit as part of the regular curriculum, with the classes taking place at the Center. This fall the Center will offer its first calligraphy course, taught by master calligrapher Estrella Moll. This course is open to the public.

After four years on Bleeker Street the Board is now looking for a larger space in which to establish artists' workshops, facilities for students and apprentices, a permanent exhibit on the history and techniques of the book arts, an exhibit space for contemporary work, and a research library.

The Center for Book Arts has helped many artists learn the techniques of papermaking and bookbinding. They published a journal called *Book Arts*, another issue of which should be out later this year or early 1979.

Located at 15 Bleeker Street in New York City, the Center has been a vital force in perpetuating the art of bookbinding and papermaking. Several publications are available from the Center and requests should be made to the CBA, 15 Bleeker Street, New York, NY 10012. (212) 260-6860.

Our books are big on art, long on tradition

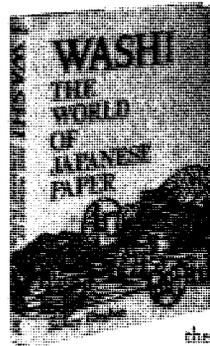


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ASK NOT WHAT OUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR US, BUT WHEN WILL WE REALIZE THAT WE ARE THE COUNTRY—OR—WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

Nine individual artists' views after the New Artsspace Conference
Compiled by Dorit Cypis, April - July 1978

It is not an issue that these reactions come several months after the fact. Nor should the attitudes expressed here be seen in a limited context, rather, as exemplifying frustrations which permeate many levels of this culture.

The statement "Do You Really Think You are a Part of It?" drew over 60 people (April 20). Not bad considering the mailing was to 100 artists, and the city was Los Angeles. The occasion was to discuss implications of the First National Alternative Artsspace Conference, sponsored by the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, to be held April 26-29, 1978. That statement obviously pinched a lot of nerves. The feeling, exemplified by that statement, was my reaction after having read the conference brochure. It seemed to me another blatant example of an administrator assuming the organizational responsibility for many, and passing it off as open, innovative, alternative, "what's good for you." Patronism is subtle castration. This time, I noticed my own complacency. Rather than take my questions, as an individual artist, to the institution, I chose to take them to artists in the community. This resulting meeting was the first of several, at which artists' grievances were aired, argued, clarified, honed, with the objective of presentation to the paid participants of the conference. Our efforts culminated in a demonstration of protest, after the inaugural dinner. Let it not be forgotten that well over 100 artists appeared in support of the protest. What actually did happen is hard to say—it probably warrants an in-depth sociological/psychological study. Suffice it to say here, that beyond causing disorientation and confusion, we actually were, faced with the reality, numb. We are oversocialized, and that is an important message! It's scary to speak out, to rock that boat which we trusted would be steered for us. It's not enough to realize that we don't like the course it is taking us on. It's not enough to realize that without us there would be no need for a boat. We are here. We must learn how to steer. We cannot wait to be taught. We must teach ourselves. We must accept the actuality of our own power and take every opportunity to use it. We can order our own meal. That is innovation.

The following views are offered by some of the artists still concerned with making their view public. As editor, I decided that the main issue was to support and nurture that concern. Everyone who chose to participate was included, unedited. If you are sensitive to redundancy, keep in mind the importance of speaking out.

—Dorit Cypis



That the New Artsspace Conference, a nationwide alternative space conference, funded by the N.E.A. and planned by the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, excluded artists, (via allocation of N.E.A. funds; from the planning of the conference; by requiring registration fees), indicates that the government and local alternative space organizations are coopting public arts monies for institutional ends. It appears that one of the dangers which can occur when alternative spaces become institutions is that they become economic bureaucracies capable of functioning entirely indepen-

dent of artists. From the nature of much of the discussion at the conference, it became evident that there is great concern about how to become bigger and more powerful institutions, how to get more funding.

Never was the question of the artists' participation or economic relationship to these institutions brought up or examined. Alternative space administrators, not by design but by function, neglected one of the fundamental issues inherent in the notion of radical alternative space—that of the new economic relationship of artists to exhibiting institutions. This omission exemplifies the danger of alternative spaces functioning independent of artists and underscores the fallacious idea that these spaces offer a new economic alternative or alternative of any kind.

And it punctuates the necessity for artists themselves to become a functioning part of arts exhibition systems, responsible for decisions which determine economic policy and exhibition philosophy. Artists must begin to function on their own behalf within these institutions if their needs are truly to be met.

—Sheila Pinkel



Being and Usefulness

I've been on many panels. It appears to be that no matter what the name of the panel I am on (or other panels during the conference) the panel will drift to a topic that is really on the minds of the panelists. This observation may or may not be generally true, but a recurring concern of the panels I attended at the Alternative Space Conference was this: what do we do when the money runs out? Not once did anyone conclude (other than myself) that perhaps an alternative space should stop functioning—that perhaps it had outlived its useful life, and that a new space might arise that would address then-current urgent issues. The best way to test if a committee is still useful is to disband it. If a reason to be is still there for that committee, it will certainly arise again. I suppose it is much like a vote of confidence for government. It makes one wonder how many spaces really need to exist (that is, are they still serving the needs of artists?) or are they still going mindlessly on, simply because they are there. Mere existence doesn't mean usefulness, nor does a smoothly running ship.

—John Baldessari



It seems fitting that an art conference should manifest as many layers of meaning and be as subject to multiple interpretations as a work of art itself; yet on the other hand a few common threads seem to emerge from and even dominate the content of this conference and its ensuing debate, just as we are beginning to observe similarly pervasive ideological strands converging in the structure of art per se.

COMPETITIONS & EXHIBITIONS

International, Multi-media Mail Art Show at Lincoln Gallery, Santa Rosa, CA. All entries will be exhibited. Non-returnable. **DEADLINE: 31 October 1978.** Send to La Rose Station, P.O. Box 4678, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. La Rose Station is a newly formed unit interested in intercontinental message exchange.

Toys Designed by Artists Exhibition. The Arkansas Arts Center, McArthur Park, Little Rock. Open to any U.S. artists: Artists may submit 3 entries. No color slides required. Media is "open" and may include 2- or 3-dimensional works in paper, wood, glass, ceramics, fabrics, enamels, and all metals. A handling fee of \$5.00 per artist is required. Purchase award of \$1,000. **DEADLINE: 10 November.** Write Townsend Wolf, Dir., The Arkansas Arts Center, MacArthur Park, Box 2137, Little Rock 72203.

Second Annual Eyes & Ears Billboard/Art Competition. Open to members only (\$15.00 membership). The suggested theme for this competition is "THE CHILD" to recognize 1979 as "The Year of the Child." The show will consist of 40 prize winning works of art, to be displayed in every major city in the United States. Each category has an Amateur and Professional section: Painting, Photography, The Written Word, Children and Mixed Media. All works must be 10 inches by 20 inches, maximum or in proportion to these sizes. **Deadline: 20 November 1978.** For more information and entry form, write to Eyes and Ears Foundation, 1978 Billboard Competition, P.O. Box 36679, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

International Self-Portrait Invitational. Open to all. Submit one print or piece, no slides please. No size or process limitations. A label with name, address, dimensions, process, title and sales price must be attached to the back of each piece. Include return postage (no stamps or postmarks please) packaging and insurance both ways. **Deadline: 30 September 1978.** Prints or purchase awards will be returned by 31 January 1979. All submissions will be treated with care but Northlight Gallery and its staff will not assume responsibility for damaged or lost work. Northlight Gallery, Art Department, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85281.

SOCKS: a personality profile through a common inanimate object is an international survey being conducted under the auspices of ART SPIES, INC., an art information resource service. Statistics and photographic documentation drawn from the participants will be published in early 1979. All socks submitted will be photographed. They will be returned if an envelope with return postage is included. Archival copies of this documentation will be placed in the Contemporary Art Archives of La Mamelie Inc., San Francisco and the Otis Art Institute Library, Los Angeles. An exhibition of the actual socks and their documentation will be presented in Gallery B of the University of California, Riverside in the early part of 1979. Please send one sock and a completed form which you can get from Socks, Art Spies Inc., P.O. Box 5014, Riverside, CA 92517. **Deadline: 20 December 1978.**

Robin Crozier Blue Show, Reykjavik, Iceland, 7 - 22 October 1978. The theme is blue, and Robin Crozier, mail artist from England, invites you to send **anything blue** to Iceland between now and October. Write to Robin Crozier Blue Show, c/o Ingolfur orn Arnarsson, Galleri Sudurgata 7, Sudurgotu 7, 101 Reykjavik, Iceland.

Zona Post Card Show will be held in Florence, Italy in December 1978. If you wish to participate, send your postcards to Zona, Box 1486, Firenze, Italy. It is expected to be a very large show, so send your postcards soon.

Visual Poetry and Language Art exhibition to be displayed at the Julian A. McPhee Galerie, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. The show is sponsored by A.S.I. and is scheduled to run from 26 March through 13 April 1979. **Deadline: 1 December 1978.** All submissions must have self-addressed, stamped containers. Send slides, copy prints and/or clean Xeroxes in lieu of original material where applicable. All media will be considered including visual poetry, photography, painting, graphic design, sculpture, video, film, performance as well as visual poetry and language-oriented artist books. All material submitted will also be considered for publication in a forthcoming language art issue of *Cafe Solo*, series two # 4 and *Kaldron*, a magazine of visual poetry. The show will be curated by David Arnold, Patty Arnold, Karl Kempton and Stephanie Langley, in collaboration with Trike Books, Rainbow Resin Press and Solo Press. In addition, a selected bibliography of concrete and visual poetry, language art books and periodicals is in preparation. Contributions to the bibliography are requested and will be published and available at the show. All material and requests for additional information should be addressed to SHOW, c/o David Arnold, P.O. Box 732, Pismo Beach, CA 93449.

Posters, Postcards, Books—By Women, an exhibition to be held 16 December through 16 January 1979 at the Woman's Building Community Galleries, 1727 North Spring Street, Los Angeles.

A juried show, this exhibition is open to all women artists, designers and printers on all levels of experience from the U.S. and Canada. Entries in all three formats must have been created in multiple though exceptional work planned for but not yet executed in multiple will be considered. Entries in all three categories must be woman-made—their form and content must have been created by women. Each submission must include a summary of the intent and principal features of the entry and be accompanied by the entry form and a self-addressed envelope, and an entry fee of \$5.00 per entrant regardless of number of submissions. Entry blanks and more information can be obtained by writing to Sheila L. de Bretteville, The Women's Graphic Center, 1727 North Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012. This is a juried exhibition. **Deadline: 1 November 1978.** Applicants will be notified by 1 December 1978.