DADA/KAPROW AND THE EMERGENCE OF CHANCE IN 20th CENTURY ART

BY

DAVID ROBERT KATZ

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
(Communication Arts)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

1976

Preface

The first quarter of the current century represents the beginning of a new era of transformation and upheaval. This period has been marked by massive technological developments in the areas of communications, transport, medicine, manufacturing, farming, and weaponry which have so rapidly altered lifestyles and outlooks all over the world that many see this era as the major watershed of modern history. Economist Kenneth E. Boulting states in the opening paragraph of his essay, "The Meaning of the Twentieth Century," that:

> The twentieth century marks the middle period of a great transition in the state of the human race. It may properly be called the second great transition in the history of mankind.
>
> The first transition was that from precivilized to civilized society which began to take place about five (or ten) thousand years ago. This is a transition that is still going on in some parts of the world, although it can be regarded as almost complete. Precivilized society can now be found only in small and rapidly diminishing pockets in remote areas. It is doubtful whether more than 5 per cent of the world's population could now be classified as living in a genuinely precivilized society.
>
> Even as the first great transition is approaching completion, however, a second great transition is treading on its heels. It may be called the transition from civilized to post civilized society.

> We are so accustomed to giving the word civilization a favorable overtone that the words postcivilized or postcivilization may strike us as implying something unfavorable. If, therefore, the word technological or the term developed society is preferred, I would have no objection. The word postcivilized, however, does bring out the fact that civilization is an intermediate state of man dividing the million or so years of precivilized society from an equally long or longer period which we may expect to extend into the future postcivilization.[1]

Mr. Boulting credits this transition to a rapid rise in the expansion of knowledge, an acceleration of change. The rate at which our store of knowledge increases, itself, has been accelerating. The upheaval we have experienced is not an isolated incident, but the beginning of an era based upon such upheavals occurring at an ever increasing rate:

> . . . The twentieth century has seen research and development heavily institutionalized with an enormous increase in the rate of change both of knowledge and of technology as a result. It must be emphasized that the rate of change still seems to be accelerating. We may not even have reached the middle of whatever process we are passing through and there are certainly no signs that the rate of change is slowing down.[2]

Boulting offers the following evidence to support his contention that it is this particular period of history that marks the major transitions between the old and the new:

> . . . as far as many statistical series related to activities of mankind are concerned, the date that divides human history into two equal parts is well within living memory. For the volume and number of chemical publications, for instance, this date is now (i.e. 1964) about 1950. For many statistical series of quantities of metal or other materials extracted, this date is about 1910. That is, man took about as much out of mines before 1910 as he did after 1910. Another startling fact is that about 25 per cent of the human beings who have ever lived are now alive, and what is more astonishing, something like 90 per cent of all the scientists who have ever lived are now alive.[3]

Boulting further contends that these developments in technology are part of a process of accellerated change which occurs in every facet of society:

> The great transition is not only something that takes place in science, technology, the physical machinery of society, and in the utilization of physical energy. It is also a transition in social institutions. Changes in technology produce change in social institutions, and changes in institutions produce change in technology. In the enormously complex world of social interrelations we cannot say in any simple way that one change produces the other, only that they are enormously interrelated and both aspects of human life change together.[4]

It is inevitable, under such circumstances, that the great changes in society would be reflected in the art world, and so they were at the beginning of the current century, with the formation of the Dada movement. This new school of art represents a complete break with the values and traditions of Western Civilization, in particular,

as regards the art world. The Dadaists accomplished this break through rejection of all the "givens" which Western artists had not, up until that time ever questioned, including the assumption that "art," as the concept was currently understood, was of any value to society. This rejection of basic principles meant that the Dadaists were faced with the task of experimenting with new generic forms which would cast new light on such questions as the relationship between art and society, the artist and his world, and the boundaries, if any, which separated art from non-art.

This state of affairs, for many, represents the birth of the Intermedia Movement, as a genre of experimental art dealing with such questions. The history of the Dada movement, viewed in this light, serves as a useful source of information concerning the roots of present day Intermedia critical theory.

One of the most significant critical devices to be developed through the Dadaists' process of experimentation in the areas mentioned above, was a set of loosely defined theories concerning the removal of conscious volition on the part of the artist from the process of creating a work of art. These new theories introduced chance as a major

factor in the exact form the resulting object of the creative act was to take.

During the 1960's, Allan Kaprow, a painter experimenting with environmental art forms which became increasingly theatrical as the decade progressed, developed and published theories of his own concerning the question of how chance may be applied to the creative process. These theories were derived in large measure from Dada theories concerning chance and art, in particular the portion of those theories developed by Marcel Duchamp. Allan Kaprow has devised these theories for use as a critical basis upon which artists may rely as a guide for the use of chance in the creation of happenings, a largely theatrical form of experimental art generally consisting of a collage of selected activities which may occur within a wide range of flexible spacial, temporal, and generic boundaries.

It shall be the purpose of this paper to critically examine these theories of Allan Kaprow's concerning the relationship between chance and the creative process in light of their Dada heritage and draw appropriate conclusions concerning the similarities and differences in the two approaches to the questions of definition, goals, and

application concerning the concept of chance in the context of artistic creativity.

The first two chapters of this paper shall be devoted to a brief examination of the concept of chance within the context of the history and overall theoretical perspective of the Dada movement. Attention shall be focused onto the questions of what the concept of chance meant to the Dadaists, what its relative importance was within their "anti-art" theories, and how they approached the question of application of specific chance techniques to their works. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 shall concern themselves with similar questions as they relate to Allan Kaprow's works and theories: Chapter 3 shall devote itself to an overall examination of Allan Kaprow's life and works, concentrating, in particular, on the conceptual progression which resulted in his work's generic progress from abstract painting, to collage, to assemblage, to environments, and finally to happenings. Space shall be devoted to a detailed analysis of the exact definition of the genre of happenings. In Chapter 4 attention will be devoted to Allan Kaprow's definitions--theories concerning the concept of "chance." Chapter 5 will examine Allan Kaprow's theories concerning

goals, standards, and techniques related to the question of how and why chance should be applied to the creative process which results in the presentation of a happening.

Finally, in Chapter 6 comparisons will be presented concerning the relative approaches the two bodies of theory take concerning the questions of definition, goals, and techniques with regard to the use of chance in the creative process, followed by consideration of some possible implications these theories may hold for experimental artists in general in the immediate future.

I

INTRODUCTION TO DADA

The Dada movement was born in Zurich in 1916 at the Cabaret Voltaire, a nightclub operated by Hugo Ball and his mistress, Emmy Hennings, which he had founded as a forum for the performances and display of works of--

> . . . a few young people in Switzerland who like me were interested not only in enjoying their independence but also in giving proof of it.[1]

This group included Richard Huelsenback, Hans Arp, Marcel Janco, and Tristan Tzara whose displays became formalized into this artistic-political movement during the course of the year. These artists shared a common opposition to the warfare that surrounded them and, with it, the society with its values and its art, that had created modern warfare. Richard Huelsenback states that:

> All of us were enemies of the old nationalistic, bourgoise art which we regarded as symptomatic of a culture about to crumble with the war.[2]

The movement grew over the next few years, expanding into Paris, New York, Berlin, Hanover, and Cologne, after it left Zurich. It included such artists as Francis

Picabia, Marcel Duchamp, Johannes Baader, Max Ernst, George Grosz, Man Ray, Walter Serner, Hans Richter, and Kurt Schwitters; as well as the composer, Eric Satie, and poets and theoreticians such as Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, Tristan Tzara, and Andre Breton.

The Dada Movement advocated the destruction of the givens previously unquestioned with respect to the concept of art, its purposes, its generic definitions, and its goals. "Anti-art" was the central concept which gave Dada its focus: Dada art existed as a contradiction of what was accepted as constituting art. Pictorial imagery was rejected through the production of non-pictorial works and the word and logical thought were rejected through the composition of poetry consisting of sounds without verbal meaning and words arranged so as to convey no logical content.

The following definition of Dada, composed shortly after the movement's demise as an organized entity, emphasizes the nonsensical, anti-logical, and anti-verbal quality of the movement and its works:

> Dada, noun. Denomination deliberately devoid of sense, adopted by a school of art and literature appearing around 1917, whose program, purely negative, tends to render extremely, if not to suppress completely, any relation between thought and

> expression. . . . Aside from humor and mystification, which had a large part in it, we may consider dadaism as the extreme limit of the possible divorce between words and meaning. "Sense," one of them has said, "is not a property of words that is assured." Extract from Larousse du XX^{e} Siecle, vol. 2, p. 619.[3]

The movement was short lived, lasting only six years. During this time Dada succeeded in attracting wide attention as it went about offending the public's artistic, moral, and social aesthetics with its many manifestoes, periodicals, public scandals, and exhibits of its most significant creation, "anti-art."

Anti-art was the central nihilistic artistic philosophy of the movement. All that was regarded by society as "artistic" or "beautiful" was rejected. An exhibit of anti-art was regarded as a success if the public was so angered by the display that they rioted.

This attitude is expressed by Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes in his "history of Dada" in reference to the Dada demonstration in the Salle Berloiz of the Maisson de l'Oeuvre on March 27, 1920:

> . . . Arranged in a mood of collective enthusiasm, it was a complete success. The attitude of the public was one of amazing and unprecedented violence. The uproar which had met Marinetti's futurist demonstrations or Mme. Lara's performance

> of Guillaume Appollinaire's Mamelles of Tiresias (Dugs of Tiresias), would have seemed mild beside this. The public seemed to have found a motive for abandoning itself to the joys of explosion, and whatever took place on the stage, the audience reacted tumultuously.[4]

In the area of painting and the graphic arts, anti-art consisted of the destruction of logic and thought through the creation of works devoid of pictorial content. Tzara explains:

> The new painter creates a world, the elements of which are also its implements, a sober, definite work without argument. The new artist protests;he no longer paints (symbolic and illusionist reproduction) but creates--directly in stone, wood, iron, tin, boulders--locomotive organisms capable of being turned in all directions by the limpid wind of momentary sensation. All pictorial or plastic work is useless: let it then be a monstrosity that frightens servile minds, and not sweetening to decorate the refectories of animals in human costume, illuminating the sad fable of mankind.
>
> Painting is the art of making two lines geometrically established as parallel meet on a canvas before our eyes in a reality which transposes other conditions and possibilities into a world. This world is not specified or defined in the work, it belongs in its innumerable variations to the spectator. For its creator it is without cause and without theory. Order=disorder; ego=non-ego; affirmation=negation: the supreme radiations of an absolute art. Absolute in the purity of a cosmic, ordered chaos, eternal in the globule of a second without duration, without breath, without control. . . .[5]

This sentiment was also expressed in Dada literature, which sought to destroy logic and thought through the creation of poetry constructed so as to convey no logical verbal meaning, but instead communicate chiefly through expressions of sound, rhythm, and nonsense. Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, commenting on the contents of the Dada periodical, "Litterature," raises the following questions:

> . . . What were the aspirations of these young men, André Breton, Phillippe Soupault, Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard? They had made a terrific enigma of life, and to this enigma they sought a solution, or expected one from various writers in whom they successively placed confidence, although an obscure intuition impelled them to scoff at their own hope. The very title of the periodical is a sort of mockery and may be considered the equivalent of "Anti-litterature." Just as Picabia expressed his contempt for what was sensory and "pictorial" in painting, so they succeeded in destroying the usual effect of language and giving it an effect more certain, but also more perfidious, that of dissolving thought. Could the obscure depths of the mind be brought to the surface of consciousness by this means? At the time they merely raised the question. Yet all this had already gone beyond literature. To liberate man seemed to them far more desirable than to know how one ought to write.[6]

Tristan Tzara expressed this anti-cognitive theory of poetry in his "Manifesto on Feeble Love and Bitter Love" by presenting the following argument:

> Is poetry necessary? I know that those who write most violently against it unconsciously desire to endow it with a comfortable perfection, and are working on this project right now;--they call this hygienic future. They contemplate the annihilation (always imminent) of art. At this point they desire more artistic art.
>
> Hygiene becomes puritv oGod oGod.
>
> Must we cease to believe in words? Since when have they expressed the opposite of what the organ emitting them thinks and wants?
>
> Here is the great secret:
> The Thought is made in the mouth.
> I still consider myself very charming.[7]

Hugo Ball echoes this concept in a more analytical manner:

> June 18, 1916--We have developed the plasticity of the word to a point which can hardly be surpassed. This result was achieved at the price of the logically constructed, rational sentence, and therefore, also, by renouncing the document (which is only possible by means of a time robbing grouping of sentences in a logically ordered syntax). We were assisted in our efforts by the special circumstances of our age, which does not allow a real talent either to rest or ripen, forcing it to a premature test of its capacities, as well as by the emphatic elan of our group, whose members sought to surpass each other by an even greater intensification and accentuation of their platform. People may smile, if they want to; language will thank us for our zeal, even if there should not be any directly visible results. We have charged the word with forces and energies which made it possible for us to rediscover the evangelical concept of the "word" (logos) as a magical complex of images . . .[8]

Paul Eluard's "Information Please" offers us an example of how the destruction of literary meaning through nonsense, absurdity, and disorder appeared in practice:

INFORMATION PLEASE

To drink red wine in blue glasses and castor oil in German brandy, distant horizon

A man alive rides a horse alive to meet a woman alive leading on a leash a dog alive.

A black dress or a white? Big shoes or little ones?

Look. There, across there, he who works earns money. I have read "Old shamefaced invalid," "coquettish fortune in Paris," and "this fan with beautiful ribs."

Flame extinguished, your old age is extinguished smoke.

I do not like music, all this piano music robs me of all I love.[9]

The title of this poem has an ironical twist to it in that the work does not convey "information" in the sense of a logically connected series of ideas which, taken together, could be said to constitute a coherent thought pattern. Rather, the poem consists of a series of images whose relationship to each other represents an order outside the realm of causality and logic. The poem is absurd, nonsensical. That is its function.

Whatever is to be found in this poem only appears to one who looks beyond logical verbal meaning and begins to look at the poem as an expression of meaning beyond logic. This meaning is derived from the juxtaposition of images which do not logically belong together, products of a world with an internal system of relationships incomprehensible to one who fully accepts logic as an expression of true reality.

Additional examples of Dada poetry written by Tzara, Ball, and other Dadaists, which we shall examine in Chapter 2, also manifest a total lack of verbal denotative meaning. In the case of Tzara's "Dadaist poems," the act of willful artistic creativity, itself, is rejected.

Taken together, the Dada attitudes concerning both poetry and the graphic arts are most concisely stated by Tzara in the following slogans:

> Dada proposes 2 solutions:
> No more looks!
> No more words!
> Stop looking!
> Stop talking![10]

The removal of the central purpose behind both painting and poetry tended to break down the defining boundaries of these genres which distinguished them from each other, and both in turn from the other arts, as well. This enabled

the Dadaists to begin experimenting with mixed media forms through a process of filling in the gaps left by the removal of the characteristics of one genre with selected characteristics of another. Hugo Ball comments on this phenomena:

> The word and the image are one. Painting and composing poetry belong together. Christ is image and word. The word and the image are crucified . . .[11]

The destruction of defining boundaries surrounding poetry and the graphic arts resulted in the introduction of a new set of generic elements to fill the gaps created by the process of anti-art subtraction: elements of the theatre genre served as a binder which held together Dada works presented as painting, sculpture, poetry, or music. George Hugnet describes a number of results of this process which occurred in Zurich from 1916 to 1918:

> . . . Dada activities originated with writers and constituted a direct attack on the staid morality and sentiments of the public, which raged and swooned at such candor. These activities accelerated the decomposition of what was already rotten. Opposites were brought together: the art-lover that lies hidden in every man was either outraged or forced to submit to do much imbecility, so much genius. A trusting and hopeful audience, gathered together for an art exhibit or a poetry recital, was insulted beyond endurance. On the stage of the cabaret tin cans and keys were jangled as music until the enraged audience protested. Instead of reciting his poems, Serner placed a bunch of flowers

> at the feet of a dressmaker's dummy. Arp's poems, were recited by a voice hidden in an enormous hat shaped like a sugar-loaf. Huelsenbeck roared his poems in a mighty crescendo, while Tzara beat time on a large packing case. Huelsenbeck and Tzara danced, yapping like bear cubs, or, in an exercise called "noir cacadou," they waddled about in a sack with their heads thrust in a pipe.
>
> Tzara invented static and chemical poems. A static poem consisted of chairs on which placards were placed with a word written on each, and the sequence was altered each time the curtain was lowered. For these acts, Janco designed costumes of paper, cardboard and rags of every color, and the costumes were held together with pins, so that anybody might "do as well"; not only were the costumes without artistry, they battled against all semblance of any established art and all the formal rules it implied. Perishable, deliberately ugly and absurd, these materials, chosen at the whim of eye and mind, provided magnificent tatters, symbolizing perpetual revolt, despair that refuses to descend to despair.[12]

The aggressively shocking activities described by George Hugnet served a dual purpose: 1) They attracted attention by providing the public with the unexpected. People who had come to regard art as a somewhat predictable expression of their society's goals, values, and outlook were confronted with sentiments in direct opposition to what they expected. For many, this resulted in anger and rejection of Dada as merely a crazy stunt, but for others, the Dada approach to art and anti-art, expressed through massive violation of accepted artistic standards and values, was

fascinating, original, and even adventuresome. 2) Beyond the shock resulting from the unexpected rejection of standards most people regarded as absolute lay a new world of possibilities which the Dadaists and their successors could exploit once the intellectual barriers of definitions concerning genre, art, and artworks, as well as standards and rules limiting the scope of the arts in relation to the world at large, had been broken. In this manner, the bizzare nature of Dada anti-art activities, and the resulting shocked reaction on the part of the audience serves as a rite of passage into a new Universe of artistic expression which exists beyond the realm of order, causality, and logic.

The abandonment of subject, sense, logic, order, aesthetics, and creativity on the part of the Dadaists reflects the Dada attitude that the distinctions between art and life, artist and layman, were artificial and, therefore, could be set aside.

Richard Huelsenbeck explains this attitude in "En Avant Dada: A History of Dadaism," written in 1920:

> Everyone can be a Dadaist. Dada is not limited to any art. The bartender in the Manhattan Bar, who pours out Curacao with one hand and gathers up his gonorrhea with the other, is a Dadaist. The gentleman in the raincoat, who

is about to start his seventh trip around the world, is a Dadaist. The Dadaist should be a man who has fully understood that one is entitled to have ideas only if one can transform them into life--the completely active type, who lives only through action, because it holds the possibility of his achieving knowledge. A Dadaist is the man who rents a whole floor at the Hotel Bristol without knowing where the money is coming from to tip the chambermaid. A Dadaist is the man of chance with the good eye and the rabbit punch. He can fling away his individuality like a lasso, he judges each case for itself, he is resigned to the realization that the world at one and the same time includes Mohammedans, Zwinglians, fifth formers, Anabaptists, pacifists, etc., etc. The motley character of the world is welcome to him but no source of surprise. In the evening the band plays by the lakeshore, and the whores tripping along on their high heels laugh into your face. It's a fucked-up foolish world. You walk aimlessly along, fixing up a philosophy for supper. But before you have it ready, the mailman brings you the first telegram, announcing that all your pigs have died of rabies, your dinner jacket has been thrown off the Eiffel Tower, your housekeeper has come down with the epizootic. You give a startled look at the moon, which seems to you like a good investment, and the same postman brings you a telegram announcing that all your chickens have died of hoof and mouth disease, your father has fallen on a pitchfork and frozen to death, your mother has burst with sorrow on the occasion of her silver wedding (maybe the frying pan stuck to her ears, how do I know?) That's life, my dear fellow. The days progress in the rhythm of your bowels and you, who have so often been in peril of choking on a fishbone, are still alive. You pull the covers up over your head and whistle the "Hohenfriedberger." And who knows, don't gloat too soon, perhaps the next day will see you at your desk, your pen ready for the thrust, bent over your new novel, Rabble. Who knows? That is pure Dadaism, ladies and gentlemen.[13]

This statement indicates that the Dadaists were more interested in participating in life than in art. Their works, therefore, may have been created largely for the purpose of destroying art, as their term for their philosophy, "anti-art," indicates.

In spite of all their efforts, however, the Dadaists were unable to prevent themselves from being responsible for the creation of a new art and aesthetic born out of the ashes of the art and aesthetics they had destroyed. The agent of destruction, the work of "anti-art" the Dadaist created, filled the place of what it had destroyed and, itself, became a work of art. The Dada movement has left us many examples of the new art it fathered: Hans Arp's woodcuts and poetry, Duchamp's "Large Glass," and Schwitter's Merz art, among others, are examples of art using fairly traditional forms that many Dadaists brought into existence in the name of anti-art. The Surrealist, Abstract Expressionist, and Pop Art movements all reflect their Dada heritage.

The Dada demonstrations which took place at various times during the course of the Dada Movement's formal existence were characterized by elements of theatricality which

mark them as the earliest examples of what today we call "street theatre" or "guerilla theatre." They are landmark events signifying the birth of intermedia-theatre, as we know it today. Noteworthy examples of such demonstrations include the Dada tour of the Church of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre, which took place on April 14, 1921, and a mock trial entitled "Trial and Sentencing of M. Maurice Barres, by DADA," which took place on May 13, 1921.

The nature of the Dada tour of the Church of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre is indicated by this extract from the program for the tour quoted by Georges Ribemont-Dassaignes in his "History of Dada":

> The Dadaists passing through Paris, wishing to remedy the incompetence of suspect guides and cicerones, have decided to organize a series of visits to selected spots, particularly those which really have no reason for existing. . . . It is a mistake to insist on the picturesque (Lycee Janson de Sailly), on historical interest (Mont Blanc) and on sentimental value (the Morgue). . . . The game is not yet lost but we must act quickly. . . . To participate in this first visit is to become aware of human progress in possible works of destruction and of the need to pursue our action, which you will want to encourage by every means.[14]

Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes also describes the "Trial and Sentencing of M. Maurice Barres by DADA":

> The audience was numerous and tumultuous, for by then it was understood that every Dada

> demonstration involved a certain amount of obligatory uproar. But a good deal of water had flowed under the bridge since the Festival at the Salle Gaveau. Scenes had become an amusement; to make a noise had become a method of being a Dadaist oneself. Serious and benevolent citizens defended "these young people" who were offering an inimitable spectacle of intellectual justice. Mme Rachilde, who for a long time had boasted of her weakness for the Dadaists, spoke in their favor and also in favor of Maurice Barres.
>
> Barres appeared on the platform in the form of a dummy. Andre Breton was the presiding judge, a role which doubtless made him feel like the "leader of men" that his temperament more and more impelled him to play. The duties of the public prosecutor were assigned to Ribemont-Dessaignes: the lawyers were called to the bar, including Tristan Tzara, Jacques Rigaut, Pierre Drieu la Rochelle, Renee Dunan, Louis de Gonzafue-Frick, Marcel Sauvage and the poet Ungaretti, sympathetic to Dada, who found an opportunity to demonstrate his cruel and caustic wit. But the witness who made the greatest sensation was the Unknown Soldier, who testified in German.[15]

Both of these demonstrations were a form of environmental theatre in which the audience found itself surrounded by the action and became a part of its environment. In the case of the Dada tour, the outside world was invaded by Dada which took theatre into the streets.

Dada's burst of negative energy ultimately came to be directed against the movement, itself. In 1921, open warfare broke out among factions of the Paris Dada movement led by Andre Breton, Tristan Tzara, and Francis Picabia.

The battle began innocuously enough with Breton's attempts at organizing a conference to provide a forum for rational discussion between the Dadaists, Cubists, Orphists, etc., as a means of determining new directions for modern art. This conference, formally named the "Congres International pour la determination des directives et la defense de l'espirit moderne," better known as the "Congress of Paris," never took place. The turmoil that led to its disintegration resulted in Breton's secession from Dada.

Hans Richter states that Breton's motives for wanting the "Congress of Paris" to take place under his leadership were many:

> Breton was weary of demonstrations which led to nothing. His methodical mind naturally inclined towards orderliness. The process of dissolution, of society and of art, that he had himself supported, he now considered to be accomplished. Apart from this, he now wanted to take over the leadership himself and lead the movement his own way towards his own ends.[16]

Breton called together a central committee which was to organize this Congress. When he invited Tristan Tzara to participate on the committee, Tzara politely refused, saying:

> . . . the objections I expressed to the very idea of the congress are unchanged by my

> membership in it, and that to my regret I must refuse your offer. Please believe me, cher ami, that this is no act of a personal nature, either against you or the other members of the committee, and that I appreciate your desire to satisfy every tendency as well as the honor you have shown me. . . . But I consider that the present apathy resulting from the jumble of tendencies, the confusion of styles, and the substitution of groups for personalities . . . is more dangerous than reaction. . . . I therefore prefer to do nothing rather than to encourage an action that in my opinion is injurious to the search for the new, which I prize so highly, even if it takes the form of indifference.[17]

Breton took this as an insult and responded with the publication of vicious attacks against Tzara. The other Dadaists, angered at Breton for this display of vindictive-nexx, sided with Tzara and the "Congress of Paris" was no longer able to take place. Breton formally withdrew from the movement at this time, since he saw that he no longer had any followers within it.

Picabia began writing articles against Tzara and Dada, causing a mass desertion of Dadaist writers from his periodical, "391," which he replaced with new writers from outside the movement such as Jean Cocteau and Ezra Pound.[18] He did not, however, side with Breton upon his desertion from Dada.

Two years later, in July of 1923, an incident, known

as the "Soiree of the Bearded Heart" took place at the Theatre Michel. The occasion of this incident was a theatrical night that included music by Satie, Milhaud, Stravinsky, and Aurie, as well as films by Man Ray and Hans Richter. The climax of the evening, however, was the first performance of "The Gas Heart" by Tristan Tzara, which literally became a field for the battle which ended Dada for good. Georges Hugnet writes:

> . . . The performance was characterized by indescribable disorder. Aragon, Breton and Peret demonstrated against Tzara and climbed on the stage. Massot's arm was struck by a cane and broken. Peret's clothes were torn to shreds, and both he and Breton were thrown out. Calm had barely been restored when Eluard mounted the stage and assaulted the actors who were weighed down by their cardboard costumes done by Sonia Delaunay. At length, Eluard was overwhelmed by their numbers and fell violently against the footlights, a few of which were shattered. Some of the audience sprang to Eluard's defense, while others called for the police to restore order. At all events, Eluard received the next day an official-looking paper ordering him to pay 8,000 francs damages for offense against public morals. That is what Dada had come to.[19]

Although Dada was dead, its artists were still living and have managed to exert their personal influence on contemporary art movements up until the present day. Breton founded Surrealism and drew many former Dadaists into the

movement, which has passed on its Dada heritage to the Abstract Expressionists, Pop Art movement, and, ultimately the mixed means theatre movement.

Chapter II

CHANCE IN THE DADA MOVEMENT

The Dada movement's philosophy had many facets, including anarchic defiance of accepted artistic aesthetics, revolutionary left-wing politics, a desire to antagonize and embarrass their bourgoise audience, and even a tendency towards self-destruction. Chance, however, stands out as the facet of the movement philosophy that held the other diverse elements together and gave the Dadaist anarchy some semblance of form.

Just how significant the Dadaists regarded their discovery of the power of chance is expressed by Hans Richter in his history of the movement, Dada: Art and Anti Art:

> [Dada came to the conclusion] that chance must be regarded as a new stimulus to artistic creation. This may well be regarded as the central experience of Dada, that which marks it off from all preceding artistic movements.
> . . .
> Chance became our trademark. We followed it like a compass.[1]

Chance was not merely an aspect of artistic theory to the Dadaists, but the central force which guided their minds and lives. Even the daily conversation between the

Dadaists came to be frequently governed by chance in the form of free association.[2]

In order to fully understand what the Dadaists meant when they used the term "chance" and why this phenomena held such a prominent position within their philosophy it is necessary to examine how the Dada concept of chance evolved from their nihilistic outlook and anti-art philosophy. One of the most obvious characteristics of the Dada movement was its negative character. For the Dadaist, creation was not an act of will but, rather, a byproduct of destruction. Dada was, more than anything else, a reaction of disgust against the status quo. Tristan Tzara expressed the extent of Dada's negative attitude towards society in a manifesto he wrote in 1918:

> Every product of disgust capable of becoming a negation of the family is Dada; a protest with the fists of its whole being engaged in destructive action: Dada; knowledge of all the means rejected up until now by the shamefaced sex of comfortable compromise and good manners: Dada; abolition of logic, which is the dance of those impotent to create: Dada; of every social hierarchy and equation set up for the sale of values by our valets: Dada; every object, all objects, sentiments, obscurities, apparitions and the precise class of parallel lines are weapons for the fight: Dada; abolution of memory: Dada; abolition of archaeology: Dada; abolition of prophets: Dada; abolition of the

> future: Dada; absolute and unquestionable faith in every god that is the immediate product of spontaneity . . .[3]

In this statement, we can see a rejection of society and its values that leaves nothing uncovered. Not content to rail against the present day failures of society, the Dada movement had rejected the past and vowed to begin again from nothing. But even here they did not stop. The statement calls for the abolition of logic, prophets, and the future, as well as memory and archaeology. In this, the Dadaists leave us no means of planning anything with the force of will: negation of will becomes a life style in which the only source of guidance is the "unquestionable faith in every god that is the immediate product of spontaneity."

The rejection of the conscious will as a source of progress and the worship of spontaneity necessarily implied the rejection of thought as a prelude to action. To the Dadaists, the rejection of thought and knowledge meant a return to the innocence of childhood. The Dadaists believed that "adulthood" was the corruption that was destroying the world. Hugo Ball wrote down the following plan of action during the first year of Dada's existence

which would enable the movement to combat the evils of the world:

> To surpass oneself in naitivete and childishness--that is still the best antidote.[4]

The rejection of the past and present meant a return to childhood innocence for the entire world. The destruction of all knowledge would mean the dawning of a utopian age. Hugo Ball's diary indicates that this, too, was an active part of the Dada program of salvation:

> We should burn all libraries and allow to remain only that which everyone knows by heart. A beautiful age of the legend would then begin . . .
>
> The Middle Ages praised not only foolishness, but even idiocy. The barons sent their children to board with idiotic families so that they might learn humility.[5]

From the latter part of this statement we can see that the rejection of the use of the conscious faculties created a positive respect for idiocy on the part of the Dadaists. To them, the idiot was the physical embodiment of the childlike mind. The idiot could be trusted to act from his feelings, alone, unimpaired by the evil workings of the conscious mind. Tristan Tzara made it clear in his 1918 manifesto that idiocy was one of the prime objectives of the Dada movement:

> It is certain that since Gambetta, the war, Panama and the Steinhall case, intelligence is to be found in the streets. The intelligent man has become a perfectly normal type. What we need, what offers some interest, what is rare because it presents the anomalies of a precious being, the freshness and the freedom of the great anti-men is
>
> THE IDIOT
>
> Dada is working with all its might to introduce the idiot everywhere. But consciously. And it is itself becoming more idiotic.[6]

"Idiotic behavior" implied illogical behavior, behavior that makes no sense to the rational mind. The Dada emulation of the idiot did not simply require that the Dadaist behave in a manner that would confuse the public, it meant that the Dadaist must completely banish the ability to think logically from his mind. Andre Breton carried the idea of rejection of the intellect to its necessary conclusion:

> DADA, recognizing only instinct, condemns explanation <u>a priori</u>. According to DADA, we must retain no control over ourselves.[7]

In rejecting logical thought and conscious volition as preludes to action the Dadaists created a situation in which action was inspired totally by forces which lay beyond the reach of the rational conscious mind. In this manner each act performed by a Dadaist was linked to the

driving force of chance in that non-control and unpredictability held the position vacated by rational thought as the inspiration which caused the Dadaist to act.

The use of chance as a means of artistic inspiration or creation was only a small part of the Dada utilization of chance as a way of life. It had to become the dominant force of creation if the Dadaists were to honestly try to follow their anti-logical creed. Anti-art was part of anti-logic and implied the use of chance as a negation of the creative process.

Returning, once again, to Tzara's manifesto, we find that Dada considered the logical creative process not only dishonest to their own philosophy, but also highly restrictive--active creation was the destroyer of creativity:

> What we need is works that are strong straight precise and forever beyond understanding. Logic is a complication. Logic is always wrong. It draws the threads of notions, words, in their formal exterior, toward illusory ends and centers. Its chains kill, it is an enormous antipede stifling independence. Married to logic, art would live in incest, swallowing, engulfing its own tail, still part of its own body, fornicating within itself, and passion would become a nightmare tarred with protestantism, a monument, a heap of pondurous gray entrails.[8]

In order to begin analysis of the role which chance played in the creation of Dada art it is necessary to

determine exactly what the Dadaists meant when they used the term "chance" in reference to their work. A serious problem arises here, for although the Dadaists spent a great deal of time using the term "chance" and dealing with their conception of it during the act of creation, they spent very little time discussing the meaning of the term or clarifying their definition of it. There is, in fact, no evidence to support the assumption that any two Dadaists using the term were, in fact, necessarily referring to the same thing. One might go so far as to say that, consistent with Dada anarchy, there was mainly an agreement to disagree, let well enough alone, and allow every man to approach the problem of semantics with the attitude of Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty:

> When I use a word . . . it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less.[9]

The little that the Dadaists have written on the subject indicates that their conception of chance was closely related to the unconscious mind.

Hans Richter explains:

> Chance appeared to us as a magical procedure by which one could transcend the barriers of causality and of conscious volition and by

> which the inner eye and ear became more acute, so that new sequences of thoughts and experiences made their appearance. For us, chance was the "unconscious mind" that Freud had discovered in 1900.[10]

This passage indicates that the relationship between the unconscious and chance was due to the relationship that is implied between causality and conscious volition at the beginning of the passage. Destruction of logical thought (causality) was an agent of the destruction of the conscious mind; that which was the source of logical action. Chance (i.e., that which lay beyond the realm of the conscious will), became associated with the illogical unconscious mind.

Therefore, an act of chance may be defined as an act which lies beyond the powers of causality and conscious volition and does not make use of or reflect the actions of the conscious mind. For purposes of this discussion, we will divide the Dadaist concept of chance into three categories which shall be dealt with separately in detail:

1. Actions due to uncontrollable external forces--"pure chance," i.e., whatever external forces, including forces of nature, determine which way a die falls or whether a coin falls heads or tails. Since these occurrences are

beyond the realm of the conscious will they are within the bounds of the Dada conception of chance.

2. Actions of the unconscious mind--consisting of those actions that are directly caused by the artist, but done so without the benefit of the conscious will. Since the Dadaists equated chance with the unconscious mind, these actions also fall within the realm of the Dada concept of chance.

3. Combinations of the use of uncontrollable external forces with the actions of the unconscious mind--consisting of actions and works which are the result of both "pure chance" and the actions of the artist's unconscious mind. An example of this would be a work of art which was created by means of a combination of techniques that made use of the unconscious mind that were selected from a field of such techniques at random by the throw of a die.

Since these three categories collectively represent the entire field of things which lie outside the conscious mind a discussion of these three areas will cover the scope of the Dada conception of chance.

UNCONTROLLABLE EXTERNAL FORCES

The category of Uncontrollable External Forces consists of those forces which do not involve, or reflect, any

physical control by the artist who makes use of them. This category of chance bears the closest resemblance to the common understanding of the term which links chance to such events as coin tossing, dice throwing, and other such non-predictable physical phenomena.

Tristan Tzara's "Dadaist poem" is an example of the complete removal of physical control by the artist from the content of a literary composition. Tzara's instructions for the creation of the Dadaist poems are quite simple and offer proof of Hugo Balls' statement that "anyone can be a Dadaist," for virtually no one is incapable of creating this form of poetry:

> To make a dadaist poem
> Take a newspaper.
> Take a pair of scissors.
> Choose an article as long as you are planning to
> make your poem.
> Cut out the article.
> Then cut out each of the words that make up this
> article and put them in a bag.
> Shake it gently.
> Then take out the scraps one after the other in the
> order in which they left the bag.
> Copy conscientiously.
> The poem will be like you.
> And here you are the writer, infinitely original and
> endowed with a sensibility that is charming
> though beyond the understanding of the vulgar.

Example:

> when the dogs cross the air in a diamond
> like the ideas and the appendix of the maniges
> shows the hour of awakening programs (the title
> is my Tzara's own)
>
> price they are yesterday agreeing afterwards
> paintings/ appreciate the dream epoch of the eyes/
> pompously they recite the gospel mode darkens/
> group the apothesis imagine he said fatality power
> of colors/ out arches flabbergasted the reality a
> magic spell/ spectator all to efforts from the it
> is no longer 10 to 12/ during digression volt right
> diminishes pressure/ render the madmen topsy-
> turvy flash on a monstrous crushing scene/celebrate
> by their 160 adapts in not to the put in my mother
> of pearl/ sumptous of land bananas upheld illumine/
> joy ask reunited almost/ of the sing this one laughs/
> destiny situation disappears describes this one 25
> dances salvation/ dissimulated the whole of it not
> was/ magnificent the ascent to be gang better light
> of which sumptuousness scene me music-hall/ re-
> appears following instant shakes to live/ business
> that there is not loaned/ manner words come these
> people.[11]

In his creation of the Dadaist poem, Tzara had attacked and conquered the most logical part of our everyday existence--language. The Dada poem follows no rules of grammar, word order or meaning.

This poem makes no logical sense, whatsoever. The reader may assign any meaning he wishes to the juxtapositions of unrelated words, sounds, or ideas. He may, on the other hand, choose to reject the concept of intellectual meaning, altogether, and admit to himself that the emperor is naked: the poem means <u>nothing</u>--which is the

conclusion that Tzara wanted his public to come to about this poem.

Hans Arp made use of a process similar to Tzara's construction of the Dadaist poem for the creation of a series of collages "arranged according to the laws of chance."

Georges Hugnet describes the general process that Arp used in the creation of these collages:

> He placed on a piece of cardboard pieces of paper that he had cut out at random and then colored; he placed the scraps colored side down and then shook the cardboard; finally he would paste them to the cardboard just as they had fallen.[12]

Hans Richter relates how Arp discovered this technique, by accident:

> Dissatisfied with a drawing he had been working on for some time, Arp finally tore it up, and let the pieces flutter to the floor of his studio on the Seltweg. Some time later he happened to notice these same scraps of paper as they lay on the floor, and was struck by the pattern they formed. It had all the expressive power that he had tried in vain to achieve. How meaningful! How telling Chance movements of his hand and of the fluttering scraps of paper had achieved what all his efforts had failed to achieve, namely <u>expression.</u> He accepted this challenge from chance as a decision of fate and carefully pasted the scraps down in the pattern which chance had determined.[13]

In this way Arp made use of forces beyond his physical power to control. Where each scrap of paper fell was totally determined by forces that had nothing to do with the artist's hand once they were released. Creation here was not so much the result of the active creative hand of the artist as it was of the hand of the impersonal forces of Nature.

To say that chance was the only factor involved in these works, however, would be an exaggeration. Many art historians believe that chance in the manner described above was used for inspiration and then slightly modified by Arp to suit his aesthetic tastes. William Rubin has stated that Arp admitted to him that this, indeed, was the case, in a conversation he had with him in 1959.[14]

Such "interference" on the part of the artist did not "ruin" the work. It merely points out a difference between Arp's approach to the realm of chance and Tzara's, which Hans Richter, who has been criticized for overlooking Arp's modifications of chance in the above passage, himself points out:

> Arp adhered to (and never abandoned) the idea of "balance" between conscious and unconscious. This was fundamental to me as well; but

> Tzara attributed importance exclusively to the Unknown. This was the real dividing-line. Dada throve on the resulting tension between premediation and spontaneity, or, as we preferred to put it--between art and anti-art, volition and non-volition, and so on. This found expression in many ways and was apparent in all our discussions.[15]

Marcel Duchamp often made use of external forces as a means of artistic creation. The examples cited here demonstrate well the removal of the artist's hand from his work.

Marcel Duchamp liked to make use of the polluted air that came through the windows of his New York studio as a means of creation by chance. He published the following process in his Green Box Series:

> To raise dust
> on Dust Glasses
> for 4 months. 6 months which you
> close up afterwards
> hermetic/ly= Transparency
> - Difference. To be worked out.[16]

This process went a step further than Arp and Tzara did in the process of removing physical control from the work, for there was no manual handling of the material, even to the extent of shaking or dropping, as had been the case with Arp and Tzara.

The process described above was used by Duchamp as part of the execution of his "Large Glass" (The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even) as Hans Richter

describes:

> His "Great Glass" . . . which is regarded as his most important work, was begun in his studio on Upper Broadway, New York City, and finished there around 1918. With a precise artistic effect in mind, he let the dust of New York settle on one section of the structure. Anyone who knows New York will understand what that means. For a year and a half, the huge sheet of glass lay on trestles in his studio, with dust pouring in through a window opening onto Broadway. Then Duchamp cleaned the glass carefully (after Man Ray had photographed it)--everywhere except the "cones," on which he stuck the dust down with fixative. In this way certain parts of the work took on a slightly yellowish tint, a calculated nuance which distinguished them from the rest of the composition.[17]

Man Ray's photograph shows a grim, moonlike surface with lumpy hills and ridges. The only "order" that appears in the work is the result of the larger amount of dust that collected on the painted surfaces, compared to the unpainted surfaces in some parts of the glass, outlining parts of the work.

This photograph, published in nearly every book on the subject of Dada, makes this the best known example of creation using chance in the form of uncontrollable external forces.

Duchamp also published the following process in his Green Box series:

The Idea of Fabrication
--If a horizontal straight thread one meter long falls from a height of one meter on to a horizontal plane twisting as it pleases and creates a new image of the unity of length--[18]

This process resulted in "3 Standard Stoppages." Each thread was dropped onto a black canvas. Each canvas was then attached to a glass plate, thus permanently holding the threads in the positions they assumed when they fell. Three wooden rulers were made, following the contours of the threads.[19]

Arturo Schwartz has written that this work may be the earliest example of Duchamp's experiments with chance, expressing a relationship between the intended and the unintended, since the threads were held straight before they were dropped.[20]

In all of these works by Tzara, Arp, and Duchamp, we find that the external force, Nature, if you will, has taken the artist's place as the most immediate creator of the object of art.

In order to place the events in this category of chance usage into the overall perspective of the Dada concept of chance, it is necessary to relate uncontrollable external forces to the unconscious mind, since the totality of the

functions of the unconscious. It has already been established by definition that works in this category are not the direct result of the actions of the artist's unconscious mind (which have a category of their own). Yet the Dadaists seem to have believed there was a philosophical, metaphysical link between the artist's unconscious and the external forces that shaped the result of his work.

In Tzara's description of the process of creating a Dadaist poem, above, he mentioned that the resulting "poem" would be like its creator. Hans Arp's chance collages and Duchamp's dust glasses and stoppages also must fit into the Dada model which calls for chance to reflect the unconscious mind of the artist. Hans Richter offers a possible reconciliation between total non-control in a physical sense and harmony between the work and the unconscious mind of its creator:

> Was it the artist's unconscious mind, or a power outside him, that had spoken? Was a mysterious "collaborator" at work, a power in which one could place one's trust? Was it a part of oneself, or a combination of factors quite beyond anyone's control?[21]

In this statement, Richter raises two possibilities: 1) that there is a supernatural force at work as a "collaborator" when uncontrollable external forces are used in

the creative act, or 2) there is some kind of link between the unconscious and the external force. We can never know for sure which of these is indeed the case, but there are theories postulated by some psychoanalysts which suggest that there is a strong connection between psi phenomena (i.e., extra sensory perception) and the unconscious. Emilio Servadio explains:

> Investigations of telepathy have established, among other things, that the optimal, and perhaps indispensable conditions for telepathic transmission are the following:
>
> 1. The unconscious character of the transmission of thoughts, representations and emotions.
>
> 2. A partial or total clouding of consciousness (as in sleep, in hypnoid states, etc.), especially on the part of the receiver.
>
> 3. An appreciable emotional cathecting of the thoughts.[22]

If we view the examples of works created using uncontrollable external forces as manifestations of psychokinesis (a non-physical link between mind and matter), a phenomena which has been a major focus of parapsychological research in recent years, we may be able to reconcile both of Hans Richter's possibilities by saying that the mysterious "collaborator" and the psi powers of the artist's unconscious are not necessarily distinct from each other.

Both may have been at work, cooperatively, in the execution of the works discussed in this section of the chapter.

ACTIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

These manifestations of chance in Dada may often bear little resemblance to our conventional concept of chance. From the Dada point of view, however, these manifestations were every bit as much a manifestation of chance as those that were the result of uncontrollable external forces, since they were equally beyond the conscious control of the artist. Unpredictability may well be the only acid test by which we can separate chance from non-chance in Dada.

For the Dadaists, acts which were the result of the actions of the unconscious mind were those acts in which the physical control that one had over his actions and creations did not make use of, or reflect, any use of conscious volition, although they may have been influenced by the physical powers of the artist's hand. The conscious mind was supposed to have no control or effect, whatsoever, over the execution of such actions.

This definition of the actions of the unconscious mind is in essential harmony with the Jungian approach to the concept of the unconscious mind and its actions. Carl

Jung defines the term "unconscious" as follows:

> In my view, the unconscious is a psychological boundary-concept which covers all those psychic contents or processes which are not conscious, i.e., not related to the ego in a perceptible way.[23]

As in the case of the Dada approach to the nature of the unconscious, Jung views the concept as inclusive: the unconscious contains everything the conscious mind lacks. Jung stresses the inclusive nature of his concept by providing the following list detailing the elements contained in the unconscious mind:

> . . . The unconscious depicts an extremely fluid state of affairs: everything of which I know, but of which I am not at the moment thinking; everything perceived by my senses, but not noted by my conscious mind; everything which, involuntarily and without paying attention to it, I feel, think, remember, want, and do; all the future things that are taking shape in me and will some time come to consciousness: all this is the content of the unconscious.[25]

To Jung, the unconscious mind is a wellspring from which creative energies can flow as it contains at its deepest level elements of mythological archetypes and associations common to all mankind. These elements exist in addition to all the personal elements of the unconscious. Jung refers to this as the "collective unconscious."[26] Like the Dadaists, Jung sees the functions of the

unconscious as a contrast to the kind of mental activity upon which Western technological civilization is built. "Directed Thinking" or "Thinking in words" is a conscious thought phenomena, whereas "fantasy thinking," which is the non-verbal "random play of image upon image,"[27] is largely a function of the unconscious.[28]

Jung goes so far as to relate the non-directed thinking of the unconscious with the concept of artistic creativity:

> There are certainly not a few people who are afraid to admit that the unconscious could ever have "big" ideas. They will object, "But do you really believe that the unconscious is capable of offering any thing like a constructive criticism of our Western mentality?" Of course, if we take the problem intellectually and impute national intentions to the unconscious, the thing becomes absurd. But it would never do to foist our conscious psychology upon the unconscious. Its mentality is an instinctive one; it has no differentiated functions, and it does not "think" as we understand "thinking." It simply creates an image that answers to the conscious situation. This image contains as much thought as feeling, and is anything rather than a product of rationalistic reflection. Such an image would be better described as an artistic vision. . .[28]

Jung's vocabulary, in fact, contains a term covering activity related to unconscious thought whose definition is almost identical to the Dada concept of "actions of

the unconscious mind":

> INSTINCT. When I speak of instinct, whether in this work or elsewhere, I therewith denote what is commonly understood by this word, namely, an impulsion towards certain activities. The impulsion can proceed from an outer or an inner stimulus, which releases the instinctive mechanism either psychically, or through organic roots which lie outside the sphere of psychic causality. Every psychic phenomenon is <u>instinctive</u> which proceeds from no cause postulated by the will, but from dynamic impulsion, irrespective of whether such impulsion has its origin directly in organic, therefore extrapsychic, sources, or is essentially conditioned by the energies whose actual release is effected by the purpose of the will--with the qualification, in the latter case, that the resulting product exceeds the effect intended by the will. According to my view, all those psychic processes over whose energies the conscious has no disposal come within the concept of instinct.[29]

The examples of chance in this form that we shall discuss bear a greater resemblance to conventional theories of what constitutes "art" and "creativity" than do those mentioned in the previous section of this paper.

Here we find an important influence of the Dada movement upon Surrealism. It may be that since Surrealism was a more ordered and academically disciplined movement than Dada, that these more orthodox art forms had a greater appeal to the movement it spawned than its more anarchic forms. In any case, one should bear in mind, as we discuss the examples of art motivated and created by the

actions of the unconscious mind, that the resemblance some of these activities bear to art forms characteristic of Surrealism is more than coincidental.

The examples of acts and works manifesting the actions of the unconscious mind in Dada may be found in two forms:

1. Creation that springs from the unconscious.

2. Selections from life made by the unconscious.

Creation that springs from the unconscious consists of the acts of creation involving a physical link between the artist and his work in which the artist attempts to express communication directly from his unconscious through rejection of conscious thought and decision making in the creative process.

Dada abounds with examples of this form of chance. We shall examine three that offer noteworthy and typical examples of this form of expression by the unconscious.

Perhaps the earliest manifestation in Dada of this form, and certainly among the most theatrical, was the performance of "sound poems" by Hugo Ball at the Cabaret Voltaire during Dada's infancy in Zurich.

Hugo Ball describes the first performance of this art form:

I invented a new species of verse, "verse without words," or sound poems, in which the balancing of the vowels is gauged and distributed only to the value of the initial line. The first of these I recited tonight 1915 . I had a special costume designed for it. My legs were covered with a cothurnus of luminous blue cardboard, which reached up to my hips so that I looked like an obelisk. Above that I wore a huge cardboard collar that was scarlet inside and gold outside. This was fastened at the throat in such a manner that I was able to move it like wings by raising and dropping my elbows. In addition I wore a high top hat striped with blue and white. I recited the following:

gadju beri bimba
glandiri lauli lonni cadori
gadjama bim beri glassala
gandridi glassala tuffm i zimbrabim
blassa galassasa tuffm i zimbrabim . . .

The accents became heavier, the expression increased an intensification of the consonants. I soon noticed that my means of expression (if I wanted to remain serious, which I did at any cost), was not adequate to the pomp of my stage-setting. I feared failure and so concentrated intensely. Standing to the right of the music, I recited Labada's Chant to the Clouds, then to the left, The Elephant Caravan. Now I turned again to the lecturn in the center, beating industriously with my wings. The heavy vowel lines and slouching rhythm of the elephants had just permitted me to attain an ultimate climax. But how to end up? I now noticed that my voice, which seemed to have no other choice, had assumed the age-old cadence of the sacerdotal lamentation, like the chanting of the mass that wails through the Catholic churches of both the Occident and the Orient. . . .

With these sound poems we should renounce the language devasted and made impossible by journalism.

einleitung:

Fümms bö wö tää zää Uu, 1
pögiff,
kwii Ee.

Ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo, 6

dll rrrrrr beeeee bö, (A) 5
dll rrrrrr beeeee bö fümms bö,
rrrrrr beeeee bö fümms bö wö,
beeeee bö fümms bö wö tää,
bö fümms bö wö tää zää,
fümms bö wö tää zää Uu:

erster teil:

thema 1:

Fümms bö wö tää zää Uu, 1
pögiff,
kwii Ee.

thema 2:

Dedesnn nn rrrrrr, 2
Ii Ee,
mpiff tillff too,
tillll,
Jüü Kaa?
(gesungen)

thema 3:

Rinnzekete bee bee nnz krr müü? 3
ziiuu ennze, ziiuu rinnzkrrmüü,

rakete bee bee. 3a

thema 4:

Rrummpff tillff toooo? 4

A page from the score of Kurt Schwitters's Ursonata.

> We should withdraw into the innermost alchemy of the word, and even surrender the word, in this way conserving for poetry its most sacred domain. . . .[30]

This passage indicates that the performance of the sound poem had a hypnotic quality for the performer as well as his audience. The rhythm of the sounds, possessed his body and controlled it. The sound poem, itself, the voice of his unconscious mind, exerted full control over the manner of performance, not the conscious will.

Significant in this passage is Hugo Ball's statements that "we should renounce the language devastated and made impossible by journalism" and that we should "even surrender the word." Here, Ball expresses the idea that language is not an adequate means of expression and has demonstrated this by committing an act that destroys language by replacing it with something better: the primitive sounds and rhythms of the unconscious that are capable of communicating its "message" to the unconscious mind of the listener.

Kurt Schwitter's Ursonate or "Primaeval Sonata" represents one of the most successful attempts at communication directly from the unconscious. The Ursonate is loosely based on "Rfmsbwe," a sound poem by Hausmann, but bears

the mark of Schwitter's more strongly than Hausemann's.[31] Far more than a poem, the Ursonate is the sound poem elevated to the status of music. Schwitters carefully planned his performance, writing a musical score for the work, a portion of which is reproduced on the following page.

As this example shows, the timing was precise and the work shows great discipline. The Ursonate proves that works that communicate messages from the unconscious mind need not be undisciplined.

The first performance of the Ursonate occurred in 1924, several years after the death of the organized Dada movement. This was possible only because Kurt Schwitters was the most independent of the Dadaists, never allying himself too closely with the ideology or organization of the movement. Schwitters went so far as to claim to be the founder and sole practitioner of his own form of Dada, which he called "Merz," and practiced up until his death in England in 1948.

Hans Richter's account of this performance shows how little the strict control and discipline over the work Schwitters had interfered with his ability to communicate

its message--great joy:

> The work was performed at the house of Frau Kiepenhauer in Potsdam about 1924 or 1925. Those invited were the better sort of people--and in Potsdam, the military citadel of the old Prussian monarchy, this meant a crowd of retired generals and other people of rank. Schwitters stood on the podium, drew himself up to his full six feet plus, and began to perform the Ursonate complete with hisses, roars and crowings, before an audience who had no experience whatever of anything modern. At first they were completely baffled, but after a couple of minutes the shock began to wear off. For another five minutes, protest was held in check by the respect due to Frau Kiepenhauer's house. But this restraint served only to increase the inner tensions. I watched delightedly as two generals in front of me pursed their lips as hard as they could to stop themselves laughing. Their faces, above their upright collars, turned first red, then slightly bluish. And then they lost control. They burst out laughing, and the whole audience, freed from the pressure that had been building up inside them, exploded in an orgy of laughter. The dignified old ladies, the staff generals, shrieked with laughter, gasped for breath, slapped their thighs, choked themselves.
>
> Kurtchen was not in the least put out by this, He turned up the volume of his enormous voice to Force Ten and simply swamped the storm of laughter in the audience, so that the latter almost seemed to be an accompaniment to the Ursonate. The din raged round him, like the sea against which, two thousand years earlier, Demosthenes had tried the strength of his own voice. The hurricane blew itself out as rapidly as it had arisen. Schwitters spoke the rest of his Ursonate without further interruption. The result was fantastic--the same generals, the same rich ladies, who had previously laughed until they cried, now came to Schwitters, again with tears in their eyes, almost stuttering with admiration and gratitude. Something had

> opened up within them, something they had never expected to feel: a great joy.[32]

Hans Arp introduced this form of chance into the plastic arts in the form of his "automatic drawings," produced around 1916. These were produced by free association, letting the hand move spontaneously with no thought given to any preconceived subject. Then contours were filled in with black ink and adjustments were made to make the drawing conform to Arp's aesthetic standards,[33] thus producing Arp's characteristic balance between chance and design.

Automatic drawings, having no audience until their publication were a much more private art form than Ball's sound poems and Schwitter's Ursonate. The drawings, being totally non-verbal are a step further away from conventional language than the vocal works described above. The only problem the lack of performability presents in Arp's automatic drawing is the fact that they can be ignored by their potential audience simply by the act of looking away or dismissing the drawing as being unworthy of serious attention. Neither of these factors could be a very great problem during a performance of a sound poem or the Ursonate.

The second form of art resulting from the actions of

the unconscious is selections from life made by the unconscious, which, for the sake of convenience, we shall refer to with Duchamp's term for this genre: ready-made art.

Ready-made art, generally speaking, is the result of a selection of an object or objects made by the unconscious mind. Force of conscious will is not supposed to be a factor in the selection of ready-made art, hence placing this genre within the realm of the work of chance.

Any study of ready-made art must begin with its founder and best known practitioner, Marcel Duchamp, who produced his first ready-made, "Bicycle Wheel," in 1913.[34] This work is the earliest manifestation of Duchamp's theory of art based on the concept that real art does not exist, therefore, anything can be elevated to the status of art.

Duchamp explains his discovery of this new genre:

> . . . I had the happy idea to fasten a bicycle wheel to a kitchen stool and watch it turn.
>
> A few months later I bought a cheap reproduction of a winter evening landscape, which I called Pharmacy after adding two small dots, one red and one yellow, in the horizon.
>
> In New York in 1915 I bought at a hardware store a snow shovel on which I wrote In advance of the broken arm.
>
> It was around that time that the word "ready-made" came to my mind to designate this form of manifestation.[35]

A ready-made, therefore, is any object the artist chooses to elevate to the status of art. The application of unconscious selection to this process was clearly defined by Duchamp:

> A certain state of affairs that I am particularly anxious to clarify is that the choice of these Ready-Mades was never dictated by my aesthetic delectation. Such choice was always based on a reaction of visual indifference and at the same time on a total absence of good or bad taste . . . when all is said and done, a complete anaesthesia.[36]

Duchamp eventually coined terms that defined specific types of ready-mades such as "ready-made aided" (a found object modified in some way by the artist) and "reciprocal ready-made," (the opposite of "ready-made": an object of art reduced to an everyday object. Example: Use a Rembrandt as an ironing board").[37]

Two well known ready-mades by Duchamp not already mentioned are "Fountain," which consists of a urinal mounted upside down and signed with one of Duchamp's pseudonyms: R. Mutt; and "LHOOQ," a copy of the Mona Lisa with a beard and moustache added. The primary purpose of such works was their shock value and ridicule of artistic aesthetics, consistent with the destructive nature of Dada.

Duchamp's work had an obvious, but misguided influence on the "Pop Art" school of the early 1960's. These "followers" of Duchamp interpreted Duchamp's ready-made philosophy to mean that manufactured objects were truly "art." In examining Duchamp's ready-mades, one must bear in mind that the objects, themselves, are not works of art, but, rather, it is the act of finding the object using the subconscious that is of the greatest importance.

It is in the Dada collage that we find objects selected by the subconscious presented in such a way that the result itself may be considered a "work of art."

The earliest example of the Dada collage is to be found in the work of Max Ernst. He relates how he discovered this art form:

> One rainy day in 1919 . . . my excited gaze was provoked by the pages of a printed catalogue. The advertisements illustrated objects related to anthropological, microscopical, psychological, mineralogical, and paleontological research. Here I discovered the elements of a figuration so remote that its very absurdity provoked in me a sudden intensification of my faculties of sight--a hallucinatory succession of contradictory images, double, triple, multiple. . . . By simply painting or drawing, it sufficed to add to the illustrations a color, a line, a landscape foreign to the objects represented--a desert, a sky, a geological section, a floor, a single straight horizontal expressing the

> horizon, and so forth. These changes, no more than docile reproductions of what was visible within me, recorded a faithful and fixed image of my hallucination. They transformed the banal pages of advertisement into drama which revealed my most secret desires.38

This passage shows the process of selection by the unconscious at work. Ernst made his selections using the image of his hallucinations as a guide. The resulting work of art, the collage, was also guided by this image. These "docile reproductions of what was visible within" him were not creations of the conscious will. Yet they were truly works of art in spite of this seeming lack of artistic control over the work, aesthetically pleasing as well as psychologically meaningful.

Perhaps the most extensive work of unconscious selection in Dada was the "Schwitter's Column" in his house in Hanover. The column was a gigantic sculpture-collage constituting a physical record of Schwitter's life from the beginning of the work's construction in the early 1920's until his escape from Germany when the Nazis ordered his arrest in the mid 1930's. It consisted of a large structure of concave and convex forms with holes representing each of his friends, his wife, and his son. In these holes were placed highly personal items relating to these

people that Schwitters had selected: bits of hair, cigarette butts, pencils, shoelaces, anything he could lay his hands on to furnish a record of that person for his column. The column was never finished--it was always growing and changing as life added onto it, placing the relics of the past deep inside. The column was destroyed during the war by the bombing. Schwitters regarded this as a personal tragedy. He began another Merz column during his stay in Norway, abandoning that, too, when the Nazis invaded. This was also destroyed during the war. Schwitters began a third "column" on the side of a barn in England that was removed to the University of Newcastle in 1965, seventeen years after his death in 1948, and is the only remaining record of this form of art today.[39]

The Schwitters-column was a non-verbal diary of the unconscious, a total record of its impressions of life recorded in sculpture. The Hanover column is particularly noteworthy since it was large enough to dominate Schwitter's household and thereby create an environment that became part of his daily existence. Here was a work of art that both "lived in" the artist and allowed the artist to literally "live in" it.

Around 1920, Max Ernst, together with Johannes Baargeld created a form of art that combined elements of ready-made art with elements of art that "spoke" for the unconscious. They would look at a drawing (the found object) and discover in it the suggestion of another drawing which their unconscious suggested and which they could reproduce.[40]

Here we find a marriage of ready-made art with automatic drawing, a combination of both major categories of unconscious art. Both the inspiration (selection) and process of creation were beyond the realm of the conscious mind. Georges Hugnet compares the process of creation used by Baargeld and Ernst to a seance, thus pointing out the occult significance of the communication this process brought about. As with the use of external forces, this form of creation allowed the artist to play the role of medium between the occult and reality.

COMBINATION OF THE USE OF UNCONTROLLABLE EXTERNAL FORCES WITH THE ACTIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

The final category of the manifestations of chance in the Dada movement is that of actions reflecting combinations of the use of uncontrollable external forces with the actions of the unconscious mind. In practice this usually

refers to the performance of a work of art that was produced using some form of chance. The audience represents an uncontrollable external force, since their actions and reactions to the work are beyond the knowledge and control of the artist. The performance causes their unconscious minds to select elements from the work, a process that brings in the element of selection by the unconscious.

The work displayed may be within either of the first two categories: If the work was produced using uncontrollable external forces, the production of the work manifests these forces. Its display brings in the factor of communication using the unconscious minds of the recipients, and, perhaps, the telepathic powers of the artist's mind. If the work is a performance or display of art manifesting the unconscious mind of the artist, the unpredictability of the audience reception and reactions represents the uncontrollable force present in the work.

Examples of the display or performance of art created by uncontrollable external forces illustrate this process.

A display of Arp's collages arranged "according to the laws of chance" or a reading of one of Tzara's Dadaist poems communicates unknown ideas to the audience since the

meaning is determined mainly by the recipient, and therefore, it is unpredictable. The determination is the work of the unconscious mind of the recipient which translates the meaningless symbols into his own language of meaning. The recipient is the real creator. Each person perceives a different meaning which he, himself, has created.

Examples of performance or display of works created by the use of the actions of the unconscious also illustrate the process of combination between external forces and the unconscious.

There is no guarantee that the urinal Duchamp called "Fountain" has the same meaning to the viewer's unconscious that it did for the unconscious of its selector. Schwitters or Ball could not predict what exact "meaning" the sounds they performed in the Ursonate and sound poems would be. The audience in each case is an unpredictable factor. Furthermore, their reactions (laughter, silence, or even rioting), were beyond absolute predictability on the part of the artist.

There is yet another factor which introduces a combination of external forces and the use of the unconscious in the form of selection that is to be found in many Dada

performances: The use of chaos. "Chaos," in this context, may be defined as an overabundance of activity beyond that which one can totally or even largely comprehend. Chaos forces selection by each audience member. The combination of stimuli each recipient perceives is totally unpredictable to the artist who creates the chaos and, therefore, represents an act of uncontrollable external forces for him. The audience member who "receives" the message is forced to select rapidly, without conscious thought because of the furious pace of events. Each recipient is forced into selecting his message by an unconscious process similar to that which creates ready-made art. There are many good examples of this form of chance in Dada. Simultaneous poetry represents one of the best illustrations of the element of uncontrollable external forces in performance. Hugo Ball defined the simultaneous poem as follows:

> . . . This is a contrapuntal recitative in which three or more voices speak, sing, whistle, etc. simultaneously, in such a way that the resulting combinations account for the total effect of the work, elegiac, funny or bizarre. The simultaneous poem is a powerful illustration of the fact that an organic work of art has a will of its own, and also illustrates the decisive role played by accompaniment. Noises (a drawn out rrrr sustained for minutes on end, sudden crashes, sirens wailing) are existentially more powerful than the human voice.[41]

One such poem performed by Tzara, Janco and Huelsenbeck in 1916 was recited not only by three different voices, but in three different languages: French, English, and German, simultaneously.[42] No one could possibly take it all in at once. What any individual heard was almost totally the work of chance. The creative artist had no control over what anyone would perceive and the recipient had to select what sounds and words he was to "hear" as the poem was being performed.

The theatrical performances known as Dada Nights made use of chaos in every imaginable form, including riots. Tzara's account of one such evening in 1916 illustrates the use of chaos in these performances:

> 1916. July 14--For the first time anywhere. Waag Hall.
>
> 1. Dada Night
>
> (Music, dances, theories, manifestos, poems, paintings, costumes, masks)
>
> In the presence of a compact crowd Tzara demonstrates, we demand we demand the right to piss in different colors, Huelsenbeck demonstrates, Ball demonstrates, Arp "Erklarung" (statement), Jance "meine Bilder" (my pictures), Huesser "eigene Kompsitionen" (original compositions) the dogs bay and the dissection of Panama on the piano on the piano and dock--shouted poem--shouting and fighting in the hall, first approves second row declares itself incompetent the rest shout, who is the strongest, the big drum is brought in, Huelsenbeck against 200, Hoosenlatz

> accentuated by the very big drum and little bells on his left foot--The people protest shout smash window panes kill each other demolish fight here come the police interruption. . . .[43]

This chaos included the direct participation of the audience in the rioting. Rioting is a totally unpredictable action that destroys the intellect and replaces it with a mob mentality totally governed by the unconscious. The result of the riot is determined by the combination of people as well as the circumstances and, therefore, is as much the result of uncontrollable external forces as of the unconscious.

The riot itself in this case was a result of the overload of stimulus the chaotic nature of the performance created. Rioting was one of many possible responses the audience could have made to this, however. There was no way to predict a riot, only a reason to expect the possibility.

The final example of the use of chaos in performance we shall examine is Schwitter's Merz Theatre, conceived but never performed during his lifetime. It is particularly significant to us, however, since it bears a very great resemblance to happenings. Schwitters wrote the following

about his conception:

> In contrast to the drama or the opera, all parts of the Merz stage are inseparably bound up together. . . . The Merz stage knows only the fusing of all factors into a composite work. . . . Objects will be allowed to move and revolve. . . . Materials for the score are all tones and noises capable of being produced by violin, drum, trombone, sewing machine, grandfather clock, stream of water, etc. Materials for the text are all experiences that provoke the intelligence and emotions. The materials are not to be used logically in their objective relationships, but only within the logic of the work of art. The more intensively the work of art destroys rational objective logic, the greater become the possibilities of artistic building. As in poetry word is played off against word, here factor is played against factor, material against material. . . . The parts of the set move and change, and the set lives its life. . . .
>
> . . . Make lines fight together and caress one another in generous tenderness. . . . Take a dentist drill, a meat grinder, a car track scraper, take buses and pleasure cars, . . . and transform them . . .
>
> Even people can be used.
>
> People can even be tied to backdrops . . .
>
> Now begin to wed your materials to one another. For example, you marry the oilcloth table cover to the home owner's loan association, you bring the lamp cleaner into a relationship with the marriage between Anna Blume and A-Natural, concert pitch. . . .
>
> And now begins the fire of musical saturation. Organs backstage sing and say, "Futt, futt." The sewing machine rattles along in the lead. A man in the wings says: "Bah." Another suddenly enters and says: "I am stupid." (all rights reserved). Between them a clergyman kneels upside down and cries out and prays in a loud voice: "O mercy seethe and swarm disintegration of

> amazement Halleluia boy, boy marry a drop of water." A water pipe drips with uninhibited monotony. Eight . . .[44]

The chaos of this form is calculated and artistic but totally against rationality and logic. Chance in the form of chaos is used in this performance as a means of creating a totally encompassing environment that demands audience involvement in the performance. It is in Merz theatre that we begin to see how the Dada concept of chance applies to the new genres of theatre.

CHAPTER III

Allan Kaprow is responsible for the production of the first happenings ever presented, the coining of the term "happening" to describe these works, and the only large body of critical definitions, theories, and standards which apply to these forms. Allan Kaprow is the only major intermedia artist of the sixties to have devoted so much of his time to questions of theory and aesthetics as to be able to effectively carry on development of chance theory in art beyond the point at which the Dadaists left it. For these reasons, Allan Kaprow has become the dominant critical spokesman for intermedia theatre in general, and happenings in particular, and as such is of central interest to any who would wish to gain an understanding of these forms.

An examination of the development of Allan Kaprow's theories concerning the definitions, goals, standards, and applications techniques concerning the use of chance as a creative tool, can provide major insight into the current state of theory in these areas. Looking at these theories

in light of their Dada counterparts will provide us with a quantitative and qualitative measure of the progress that has occurred in this theoretical area since the time of the Dada movement.

Such detailed examination begins with a look at Allan Kaprow's background and the genesis and development of his theories and works.

Allan Kaprow, born on August 23, 1927, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, spent most of his childhood in Tuscon, Arizona, before moving to New York, where he attended the High School of Music and Art. Following his graduation, in 1945, he enrolled in New York University, where he pursued an interdisciplinary major in the fields of art, music, literature, and philosophy. While pursuing his undergraduate work he studied painting under Hans Hoffman for one year. Following the completion of his B.A. degree, Kaprow continued his studies at New York University in the field of philosophy, but left the school without completing his M.A. degree, and enrolled at Columbia University as an art history major.[1]

The master's thesis he wrote on Mondrian's works and theories while attending Columbia University begins the

process of the formation of theories which eventually led Allan Kaprow to experiment with art forms demanding a more active involvement on the part of the viewer than traditional painting and sculpture. Mr. Kaprow explains some of the theories he expressed in this work in an interview he had with Richard Kostelanetz:

> KAPROW-- . . . I was examining, at a time when there was practically no literature on the man i.e. Mondrian , what I considered his essential point to be. I conceived of him as a philosophical artist--a painter who used painting to destroy painting, in order to arrive at an essentially mystical state of awareness.
>
> KOSTELANETZ-- Mystical through the experience of rectangular shapes?
>
> KAPROW--No, through the destruction of all visible marks on the canvas, a purpose which his rectangular shapes served; and if you sight Mondrian as I think it necessary to do--with a fixed eye, unblinkingly, for long periods of time, where you begin to see the pictorial cancellations operating, then you arrive at a point where finally the whole canvas seems to eliminate itself and become an operating cypher. You become just another relation to its ever changing proportions, a function.[2]

The Dada concept of anti-art is here focused on the process of "using painting to destroy painting," which is a good description of how Allan Kaprow progressed from abstract painting to happenings. The <u>means</u> by which he was to "destroy painting" are also shown here in his

statement that praises Mondrian for making the spectator a cipher in the negative work of art.

Following the completion of his Master's work, Allan Kaprow, on the advice of his major professor, Meyer Shapiro, decided to leave Columbia to pursue a career as an abstract expressionist painter, rather than continue his studies towards a Ph.D. degree.[3] Allan Kaprow did not immediately become inspired to put the theories he had gleaned from Mondrian's work into practice in his own work as he was still under the European style influence he had acquired under painting instructor, Hans Hoffman.[4]

Around 1955, however, Kaprow ". . . reached a point where there was nothing to do except jump--jump into what was unknown."[5]

At this point he began producing "action collages" in which physical objects were introduced into his canvases, and began constructing assemblages. Assemblages, essentially a transitional bridge between collage and environment, (described below), are very vaguely defined by Kaprow whose explanations seem to indicate that assemblages only differ from environments in size:

> Assemblages may be handled or walked around, while environments must be walked into. Though scale obviously makes all the experiential difference in the world, a similar form principle controls each of these approaches, and some artists work in both with great ease.
>
> This principle may be named simply extension. Molecule-like, the materials (including paint) at one's disposal grow in any desired direction and take on any shape whatsoever. In the first of these works the field, therefore, is created as one goes along, rather than being there a priori, as in the case of a canvas of certain dimensions. It is a process, and one that works from the inside out, through this should be considered merely metaphysical, rather than descriptive, since there actually exists no inside, bounded area being necessary to establish a field. There are only a few elements one begins with, and these at best are located with respect to one's body and the room itself. Thus, if extension is the principle, it "begins" much less definitely than the first mark placed upon a canvas, whose relations to the outer edges are quickly weighed by any competent painter-- However, unless one works out in the open, it must be admitted that old responses geared to a canvas's dimensions and character are probably now transferred to a "field." But it is a different point of departure from the accepted pictoral one, being basically environment.[6]

Essentially the process of development from action-collage to assemblage was simply a matter of making larger and more "active" collages:

> . . . I introduced flashing lights and thicker hunks of matter. These parts projected farther and farther from the wall and into the room, and included more and more audible elements: sounds of ringing buzzers, bells, toys, etc.,

> until I had accumulated nearly all the sensory elements I was to work for during the following years.[7]

In explaining why he chose to abandon traditional painting in favor of "action collage" and "assemblage," Kaprow frequently refers to the influence of the work of Jackson Pollack. The importance of Jackson Pollack's work to the development of Kaprow's theories of art--particularly as they apply to the use of chance in artistic creation, becomes apparent when one examines "The Legacy of Jackson Pollack," an essay Kaprow wrote at the time of Pollack's death in 1956 and later published as an article in Art News in October, 1958.[8]

Kaprow admired Pollack as an artist who, like Mondrian, had used painting to "destroy painting,"[9] in this case by making the painting merely a record of the actions of artist, thus emphasizing the act of painting over the work:

> . . . In the last seventy-five years the random play of the hand upon the canvas or paper has become increasingly important. Strokes, smears, lines, dots, etc. became less and less attached to represented objects and existed more and more on their own, self-sufficiently. But from Impressionism up to, say, Gorky, the idea of "order" to these markings was explicit enough. Then Dada, which purported to be free of such considerations as "composition," obeyed the Cubist esthetic. One colored shape balanced (or modified

> or stimulated) others and these in turn were played off against (or with) the whole canvas, taking into account its size and shape--for the most part, quite consciously. In short, part -to-whole or part-to-part relationships, no matter how strained, were at least a good fifty percent of the making of a picture. (Most of the time it was a lot more, maybe ninety percent). With Pollack, however, the so-called "dance" of dripping, slashing, squeezing, daubing and whatever else went into a work, placed an almost absolute value upon a kind of diaristic gesture. He was encouraged in this by the Surrealist painters and poets, but next to him their work is consistently "artful," "arranged," and full of messo-aspects of outer control and training. With a choice of enormous scales the canvas being placed upon the floor, thus making it difficult for the artist to see the whole or any extended section of "parts," Pollack could truthfully say that he was "in" his work.[10]

The last part of this statement indicates Kaprow's preoccupation with the idea of the artist surrounding himself with his work, causing it to become part of his environment while he worked. Elsewhere in the article Kaprow attributes the concept of "extension" (explained above) to the work of Pollack as well as the concept of viewer participation in the work, which was to become increasingly important to Kaprow:

> I am convinced that to grasp a Pollack's impact properly, one must be something of an acrobat, constantly vacillating between an identification with the hands and body that flung the paint and stood "in" the canvas, and allowing the

> markings to entangle and assault one into submitting to their permanent and objective character. This is indeed far from the idea of a "complete" painting. The artist, the spectator and the outer world are much too interchangeably involved here. (And if one objects to the difficulty of complete comprehension, I insist that he either asks too little of art or refuses to look at reality.)
>
> Then Form. In order to follow it, it is necessary to get out of the usual idea of "Form," i.e., a beginning, middle and end, or any variant of this principle--such as fragmentation. You do not enter a painting of Pollack's in any one place (or hundred places), anywhere is everywhere and you can dip in and out when and where you can.
>
> This has led to remarks that his art gives one the impression of going on forever--a true insight. It indicates that the confines of the rectangular field were ignored in lieu of an experience of a continuum going on in all directions simultaneously, beyond the literal dimensions of any work. (Though there is evidence pointing to a possibly unknowing slackening of attack as Pollack came to the edges of his canvas, he compensated for this by tacking much of the painted surface around the back of his stretchers.) The four sides of the painting are thus an abrupt leaving off of activity which our imagination continues outward indefinitely, as though refusing to accept the artificiality of an "ending." In an older work, the edge was a far more precise caesura: here ended the world of the artist; beyond began the world of the spectator and "reality."[11]

In 1957 Kaprow began studies in music composition under John Cage, another noteworthy figure in the Intermedia Movement, at the New School for Social Research in New York. In June of that year he began work on his first "environment," an extension of his assemblage work, which

was exhibited at the Hansa gallery that winter:[12]

> /The exhibit/ was an extension of these single works. Now I just simply filled the whole gallery up, starting from one wall and ending with the other. When you opened the door, you found yourself in an entire Environment.[13]

Kaprow defines this new genre as ". . . literally a surrounding to be entered into."[14] It was only a short step from this stage into the genre of happenings, our central area of concern. Happenings were the result of Kaprow's desire to further extend the boundaries of his work:

> . . . There was a sense of mystery until your eye reached a wall. There was a dead end. . . . I tried camoflaging the walls one way or another. I tried destroying the sense of bounded space with more sound than ever, played continuously. Hidden up in the lights were all kinds of toys that I had gimmicked up so that it was impossible to tell their identity: bells, tinkles, rattles, grinders, marbles in tin cans that turned over, and so on. But this was no solution, it only increased the discord between my work and the gallery's space and connotations. I immediately saw that every visitor to the Environment was part of it. I had not really thought of it before. And so I gave him occupations like moving something, turning switches on--just a few things. Increasingly during 1957 and 1958, this suggested a more "scored" responsibility for that visitor. I offered him more and more to do, until there developed The Happening. My first Happenings were performed elsewhere, in lofts, stores, classrooms, gymnasiums, a friend's farm and so forth. The integration of all elements--environment, constructed sections, time, space, and people--has

> been my main technical problem ever since. Only now am I beginning to see the results.[15]

Unlike "assemblage" or "environment" the term "happening," which came to refer to this new genre was more the result of accident than decision:

> The name Happening is unfortunate. It was not intended to stand for an art form, originally. It was merely a neutral word that was part of a title of one of my projected ideas in 1958-59. It was the word which I thought would get me out of the trouble of calling it a "theaterpiece," a "performance," a "game," a "total art" or whatever, that would evoke associations with known sports, theatre, and so on. But then it was taken up by other artists and the press to the point where now all over the world it is used in conversation by people unaware of me, and who do not know what a Happening is.[16]

Allan Kaprow's definition of a happening is as follows:

> A Happening is an assemblage of events performed or perceived in more than one time and place. Its material environment may be constructed, taken over directly from what is available, or altered slightly; just as its activities may be invented or commonplace. A Happening, unlike a stage play, may occur at a supermarket, driving along a highway, under a pile of rags, and in a friend's kitchen, either at once or sequentially. If sequentially, time may extend to more than a year. The Happening is performed according to play but without rehearsal, audience, or repetition. It is art but seems closer to life.[17]

As environments came into being as extensions of assemblage, Kaprow's early happenings grew out of a desire

for increased emphasis on the active elements of environments--time, sound, and the presence of people as a part of the composition:

> Though the Environments are free with respect to media and appeals to the senses, the chief accents to date have been visual, tactile and manipulative. Time (compared with space), sound (compared with tangible objects), and the physical presence of people (compared with the physical surroundings), tend to be subordinate elements. Suppose, however, one wanted to amplify the potentialities of these subordinates. The objective would be a unified field of components in which all were theoretically equivalent and sometimes exactly equal. It would require scoring the components more conscientiously into the work, giving people more responsibility, and the inanimate parts roles more in keeping with the whole. Time would be variously weighted, compressed, or drawn out; sounds would emerge forthrightly, and things would have to be set into greater motion. The event which has done this is increasingly called a "Happening."[18]

Happenings, seen in this light, are not conceptually highly different from environments. They exist as a specialized form of environment linked to its source-form by Kaprow's principle of extension, the same linking mechanism Kaprow used to create environment out of assemblage (referred to above):

> Fundamentally, Environments and Happenings are similar. They are the passive and active sides of a single coin, whose principle is <u>extension</u>. Thus an Environment is not <u>less</u> than a Happening. It is not a movie set which has not yet seen

> action (like the blank canvas-arena of the "action" painter). It is quite sufficient in its quieter mode even though in the point of evolution the Happening grew out of it. I suspect that the differences will eventually blur and matter less.[19]

The concentration on extension of the boundaries restricting time, place, and movement have resulted in a medium distinct from other arts-media primarily in its freedom to experiment with new forms involving unrestricted possibilities of movement between formerly distinct arts-media. These merge into inter-media forms particularly suited to communication of unrestricted scale--large enough to encompass the viewer/participant and exceed his ability to perceive it as only a subset of his immediate experience. The medium becomes the viewer/participant's environment; a portion of his life not restricted by the boundaries of "art," but, rather, a total experience that subsumes his existence while it unfolds:

> Fundamentally, what a Happening does, which the other historic arts don't do, is permit you a number of moves through different media and moreover, through times and places that you would have to filter through another medium in the other arts. Even the movies, which are an analogue to Happenings in that the camera can swing from place to place and from past to present in one pan or just a cut, are confined to a screen. Now we can actually do it and say, "Okay, this Happening is going to last three

> years." In that sense, it achieves a liberation that no other art form has yet been able to do. I'm not saying that it is a better form. However, I believe that because of all the complex needs of our time, this is more appropriate for many of us, where it wasn't fifty years ago.[20]

Allan Kaprow believes that these distinguishing characteristics of his work reflect a general trend in contemporary art that moves away from the traditional role of art in society--(that is to say, confined to restrictions of place such as museums and galleries)--in favor of movement towards participation in the mainstream of contemporary life:

> . . . most advanced art of the last half-dozen years is, in my view, inappropriate for museum display. It is an art of the world; enormous scale, environmental scope, mixed media, spectator participation, technology, themes drawn from the daily milieu, and so forth. Museums do more than isolate such work from life, they subtly sanctify it and thus kill it.[21]

As these definitions, clarifications, and elaborations indicate, the term "happening" is quite general and implies grand scale and active involvement in the real world more than any specifics of form and content. This flexibility has enabled the term to apply to a series of sub-genres which have served as stages leading from gallery environments to the art forms of grand scale referred to in the

quoted statements above. A brief examination of these sub-genres will reveal the areas of expansion and extension which have become the central focus of Allan Kaprow's attention and the logical process which has enabled the Happening as it is today to evolve out of the genre of Environment:

> First there is the Night Club or Cock Fight or Pocket Drama style, in which small audiences meet in cellars, rooms or studios. They press close around the performers and are occasionally drawn into the action in some simple way. Jazz may be played, a couple may make love, food may be cooked, a film may be projected, furniture may be battered to bits, paper torn into shreds, dance-like movements may occur, lights may change colors, poetry or words of all kinds may pour forth from loud speakers, perhaps superimposed or in unusual order. Throughout, a mood of intense intimacy will prevail.[22]

This sub-genre is the closest of the series to Environment, only differing from it in an increased emphasis on people and actions. It still maintains boundaries of location (the gallery) and many of the plastic and technical materials and forms of Environment, i.e., flashing lights, music and sounds from loud speakers, film projection, etc. By increasing the scale of this sub-genre Kaprow creates the second sub-genre of Happenings, the Extravaganza:

> . . . Presented on stages and in arenas to large audiences, it takes the form of a fairly lavish compendium of the modern arts--with dancers, actors, poets, painters, musicians, etc. all contributing talents. In basic concept (probably unconsciously) the Extravaganza is an updated Wagnerian opera, a Gesamtkunstwerk. Its character and methods, however, are usually (though not always) more lighthearted, resembling three-ring circuses and vaudeville reviews in the way that these were developed by Dada and Surrealist antecedents. This Happening is the only kind with which the public has any familiarity, and, incidentally, with which it feels some degree of comfort. Watered-down, it has emerged as the stock-in-trade of the discotheque and psychadelic scene.[23]

The third sub-genre in the series, the Event, introduced a conceptual change in content and purpose--minimal art; the performance of a simple act of minimal inherent artistic and aesthetic value repeated over and over again:

> . . . an audience, again usually seated in a theater, watches a brief occurrence such as a simple light going on and off, or a trumpet sounding while a balloon emerges from its bell until it bursts. Or, there is a prolongation of a unitary action such as a man walking back and forth across the stage for two hours. Most frequently, dead-pan wit joins, or alternates with, disciplined attentiveness to small or normally unimportant phenomena.[24]

This sub-genre introduces the element of thought taking precedence over material creation, an idea which has increasingly assumed the role of central focus in

Kaprow's works, much as it did in most of Duchamp's later works.

The fourth sub-genre, the Guided Tour or Pied Piper Happening is the manifestation of the Happening breaking through the gallery walls as its scale increases to a magnitude much larger than that of any of the previously defined sub-genres. The genre of Happenings is thus introduced into the realm of reality--juxtaposing art with not-art (reality) in territory generally outside the traditional places of art:

> . . . A selected group of people is led through the countryside or around a city, through buildings, backyards, parks and shops. They observe things, are given instructions, are lectured to, discover things happening to them--all of both an ordinary and extraordinary sort. In this mode, the intended focus upon a mixture of the commonplace and fantastic makes the journey a modern equivalent to Dante's spiritual one. The creator of this Happening is more than a cicerone; he is in effect a Virgil with a message.[25]

This sub-genre also de-emphasizes the separate role of the audience as merely vicarious participant by making it part of an event which is introduced into the external world, drawing the attention of bystanders to itself. Once the audience is watched in this manner, they are performers, not viewers, and even the bystanders have

become involved in the "thought aspects" of the work. The juxtaposition of art and not-art occurs as a mental process of assimilation and adjustment in the bystanders' minds.

The fifth sub-genre in the series takes the concept of thought over material creation one step further beyond the Event by eliminating the necessity of material creation or performance--an inevitable result of eliminating the necessity of a distinct audience:

> The fifth is almost entirely mental. It is Idea art or literary Suggestion where it is written down in its usual form of short notes. "It's raining in Tokyo"; "Fill a glass of water for two days"; "Over there"; "Red light on the Brooklyn Bridge," are examples.[26]

> They may be enacted, but need not be (and often are not). Following the Duchampian implication that art is what is in the mind of the beholder, who can make art or non-art at will, a thought is as valuable as an action. The mere notion that the world is full of "ready-made" activities permits one quite seriously to "sift" the whole earth or any part of it, without actually doing a thing. The responsibility for such quasi-art is thus thrown entirely upon the shoulders of any individual who cares to accept it. The rest is primarily contemplative, but may lead in time to meaningful action.[27]

The sixth and last sub-genre of this series, the Activity, completes the conceptual development of the Happening as a distinct form by emphasizing scale, thought

and participation in the real world in a coordinated manner.

> . . . It is directly involved in the everyday world, ignores theatres and audience, is more active than meditative, and is close in spirit to physical sports, ceremonies, fairs, mountain climbing, war games and political demonstrations. It also partakes of the unconscious daily rituals of the supermarket, subway rides at rush-hours, and toothbrushing every morning. The Activity Happening selects and combines situations to be participated in, rather than watched or just thought-about.[28]

The Activity is the sub-genre into which all of Allan Kaprow's recent energies have been directed. Mr. Kaprow sees the Activity as a form offering great freedom to the artist, particularly freedom to explore the characteristics of the boundaries separating art from life, which serves as the philosophical stage upon which the Activity-type Happening is played.

> Of the six categories of Happenings, the last appears to me most compelling, if indeed most risky. It is the least encumbered by artistic precedents, is the lease professionalistic and is free, therefore, to confront the question raised earlier, of whether life is a Happening or a Happening is an act of life. This seems preferable to defending the Happening from the very start as an art form. The Activity type, of course, is risky because it easily loses the clarity of its paradoxical position of being art-life or life-art. Habit may lead the Happener to depend on certain favored situations and to perfect them in the manner of the conventional artist. Or his choices may become so indistinguishable

> from daily events that participation degenerates into routine and indifference. Either way, he will have lost the handshake between himself, his co-participants and the environment.[29]

In this statement, Allan Kaprow has set up the critical boundaries which define his recent happenings as an art medium: A boundary exists on one side which, if crossed, results in a quantity of artistic interference in the ready-made process which takes the work out of the territory of the Happening. This results in an art-object which is a copy of the original ready-made, not the ready-made itself. On the other side is a boundary which, if crossed, results in a work which is totally indistinguishable from the objects and activities of the surrounding environment. The work has no artistic content that indicates an artistic mental process or creates any effect on its participants or bystanders due to juxtaposition of life and art, since there is so little "art" present, that no tension exists between the two.

The foregoing approaches, definitions, explanations, extensions, and elaborations concerning Happenings give us a good indication of a total picture comprising a number of conditions which, when met,may be referred to as a "Happening." We may use this to distinguish the

term "Happening" from what the news media and popular arts have often used it to refer to (Allan Kaprow has found the term used in reference to Bobby Kennedy, Christmas, WOR-FM, Revlon cosmetics, the Vietnam War, and the entire year of 1966, among other things).[30] Therefore, within the context of this paper, the term "Happening" shall refer to one or more of the following sets of conditions:

1.) An assemblage of events performed or perceived in more than one time and place.

2.) An art form similar to environment, emphasizing the aspects of time, sound, and the physical presence of people over its visual, manipulative and tactile elements.

3.) A multi-media form unrestricted as to time and place, more appropriate for performance in a public place (i.e., the street) than display or performance inside a gallery, theatre, or museum.

4.) One of a series of six sub-genres (Night Club/ Cock Fight/Pocket Drama, Extravaganza, Event, Guided Tour/Pied Piper Happening, Idea/Suggestion, or Activity), each of which indicates a point along a continuum linking environment with the boundary separating art from life.

5.) A genre which demands movement towards the life

end of the environment-art/life continuum, culminating in a form which can be defined by boundaries separating it from "pure art" on one side and from "pure life" on the other, thus maintaining a constant state of tension between the two within the context of the form.

There remains one aspect of the happenings genre whose nature so colors the overall character of this new art-form as to possess some claim to being its central, most significant characteristic: theatricality. Even though the preceding examination of the process of development of happenings has indicated that the new genre is a derivative of the graphic arts, the introduction of people and actions has given it many characteristics in common with the theatre. Allan Kaprow has, in fact, indicated that the development of the happenings genre has led to a state in which it is now better characterized as a specialized form of theatre than a specialized form of painting:

> These events are essentially theater pieces, however unconventional. That they are still largely rejected by most devotees of the theater may be due to their uncommon power and primitive energy, and to the fact that the best of them have come directly out of the rites of American Action Painting. But by widening the concept

> "theater" to include them (like widening the concept "painting" to include collage) it is possible to see them against this basic background, and to understand them better.
>
> To my way of thinking, Happenings possess some crucial qualities which distinguish them from the usual theatrical works, even the experimental ones of today. First, there is the context, the place of conception and enactment. The most intense and essential Happenings have been spawned in old lofts, basements, vacant stores, in natural surroundings and in the street, where very small audiences, or groups of visitors, all comingled in some way with the event, flowing in and among its parts. There is thus no separation of audience and play (as there is in even round or pit theater), the elevated picture-window view of most playhouses, is gone, as are the expectations of curtain openings and tableaux-vivants and curtain closing . . .[31]

As the foregoing indicates, the existence of any relationship defining happenings as a subset of the theatre genre depends heavily on a very broad definition of the term "theatre"--a definition broad enough to include a wide variety of events involving the essential elements of people and actions (movements and activity), that exist outside the traditional framework of "theatre." Kaprow explains:

> . . . a Pentagon meeting is theater. A guy digging a great tunnel underneath the river is a form of theater. If we go into it that way, then of course my own pieces are theater.[32]

Kaprow lists a number of characteristics which distinguish happenings from the rest of theatre and further

assist us in pinpointing the essential characteristics of the happening that make it a unique form:

> . . . A Happening has no plot, no obvious "philosophy," and is materialized in an improvisitory fashion, like jazz, and like much contemporary painting, where one does not know exactly what is going to happen next. The action leads itself any way it wishes, and the artist controls it only to the degree that it keeps on "shaking" right. A modern play rarely has such an impromptu basis, for plays are first written. A Happening is generated in action by a headful of ideas or a flimsily-jotted-down score of "root" directions.
>
> A play assumes words to be the almost absolute medium. A Happening will frequently have words, but they may or may not make literal sense. If they do, their sense is not part of the fabric of "sense" which other non-verbal elements (noise, visual stuff, actions, etc.) convey. Hence, they have brief, emergent and sometimes detached generality. If they do not make "sense," then they are heard as the sound of words instead of the meaning conveyed by them. Words, however, need not be used at all: a Happening might consist of a swarm of locusts being dropped in and around the performance space. The element of chance with respect to the medium itself is not to be expected from the ordinary theater. Indeed, the involvement in chance . . . will rarely occur in the conventional theater. When it does, it usually is a marginal benefit of interpretation.[33]

CHAPTER IV

In approaching a definition of the term "happenings," attention has been focused upon a foundation based upon Allan Kaprow's "principle of extension"--a concept in which the boundaries of time, space, and genre extend themselves outward until they no longer firmly define a distinction between the happening, itself, and the events and character of that which lies outside the work. Events that belong to everyday life, locations not connected with artistic purposes, and characteristics which belong to a wide variety of artistic genres are juxtaposed and merged within the event, resulting in a fluid, kinetic work. Allan Kaprow's theories concerning chance and its role in artistic expression comprise a critical basis that gives form to this principle of extension, setting it in motion and providing a motivating force which molds the concept of the extensive principle into the form of directed activity. The result is a work which exists upon a firm foundation of philosophical thought, reflecting not only a generic concept, but a conceptual purpose, as well.

In order to effect an understanding of the manner in which Allan Kaprow uses chance in his works as a means of expressing himself, we must first clarify what the term "chance" means in the context of Allan Kaprow's usage of the concept. It is the task of this chapter, therefore, to examine Allan Kaprow's definitions of the term "chance" with reference to his own theories and work, in order that we may be able to perceive the relationship between this concept and the artist's actions of implementation with greater ease.

The first task in approaching Allan Kaprow's definition of "chance" is coming to an understanding of a related concept which serves as the foundation upon which this definition rests: the concept of "change" with respect to his art work.

"Change" as a concept is a manifestation of Kaprow's preference for transitory, non-permanent art over longer lasting forms:

> . . . I can't make permanent art, because it is false to me to make permanent art. It's not real.
>
> I'm not talking about the medium of painting. I'm talking about fact that even in pop art--in say, a painting by Roy Lichtenstein--you have an ironic reference to a moment in the forties

> by the style used. It represents a kind of half-human nostalgia for the Boston Pops Orchestra era or the snap-crackle-pop era, the whole time of soda pop that was the childhood of Lichtenstein and almost every other pop artist. At the same moment, you have an indulgence in a holocaust of commercial attention and publicity that is bound to enervate everybody very shortly, so pop art acquires a built-in obsolescence from this very faddist attraction. I don't mean that it was generated for fad reasons, but the way that it has been caught up in everybody's sensibility is bound to bring on its end.[1]

In this statement Kaprow links permanent art with a past-tense form of communication and establishes a bond between the concepts of "permanent art" and "nostalgia." For Allan Kaprow permanent art is far from "permanent" but instead changes from a present tense form of communication to a frozen memory the moment it has been made immune to destruction by the ravages of time.

Allan Kaprow does not advocate non-permanence in the form of triviality or transitory ideas--only non-permanence with respect to material form: the ideas that art communicates may be "permanent" and outlive the material form that communicates them, in much the same manner that the ideas communicated by the performance of a play live past the time of performance:

If change is to be lived and felt deeply, then the art work must be free to articulate this on levels beyond the conceptual. There is no fundamental reason why it should be a fixed, enduring object to be placed in a locked case. The spirit does not require the proofs of the embalmer. If one cannot pass this work on to his children in the form of a piece of "property," the attitudes and values it embodies surely can be transmitted. And like so many quite acceptable but passing facets of our lives, this art can be considered as a semi-intangible entity, something to be renewed in different forms like fine cooking or the seasonal changes, which we do not put into our pockets, but need nevertheless.

Change, governing both reality and art, has extended, therefore, from the expression of an idea arrested in a painting, to a work in which the usually slow mutations wrought by nature are quickened and literally made part of the experience of it; they manifest the very processes of creation-decay-creation almost as one watches. The use of debris, waste products, or very impermanent substances like toilet paper or bread, has, of course, a clear range of allusions with obvious sociological implications, the simplest being the artist's positive involvement, on the one hand with an everyday world, and on the other with a group of objects which, being expendable, might suggest that corresponding lack of status which is supposed to be the fate of anything creative today. These choices must not be ignored, for they reveal what in our surroundings charges the imagination as well as what is most human in our art. But beyond this is the larger issue of reality understood as <u>constant metamorphosis</u>. This viewpoint, this metaphysics, is more fundamental than our "throwaway" culture. The latter is the topical vehicle for the former and, while important, should become something else in time. The conception of a non-fixed, organic universe, however, has pervaded our thinking for

> a longer historical space. It lies, I am convinced, at the root of our present innovations, and is pointing straight ahead along this road to the near future.[2]

In this statement, Kaprow indicates that the non-permanence of his works is itself a form of metaphorical communication. The non-permanence of the work communicates by means of ever changing forms in a process of constant metamorphosis. One does not have to view this process of physical degeneration as the work's "destruction." One can see it as a process of material change in which materials were arranged into some kind of order by an artistic creative process and immediately entered a process of further rearrangements by the forces of time and nature into a variety of new forms, related to the artist's form as blood relative descendants of it. This view of the work as a process of changing forms is an essential link between change and chance, for its implication is that the artwork's permanent quality of form consists of an almost infinite field of form possibilities, many of which will occur during the process of metamorphosis:

> Change--we may capitalize it in this context--suggests a form-principle for an art which is never finished, whose parts are detachable, alterable, and rearrangeable in theoretically large numbers of ways without in the least

> hurting the work. Indeed, such changes actually fulfill the art's function.[3]

The existence of such a number of form possibilities in a work combined with a constant metamorphosis consisting of a movement through these forms as part of natural process of physical degeneration implies the existence of an uncontrollable external force (i.e., nature) as a second creator of the work, leading it into an unknown future of possible forms. This phenomenon constitutes an important facet of Allan Kaprow's concept of "chance" and its role in the creation of art:

> . . . In utilizing variables more than any art has done for a long time, if ever before, this art must take into account the frequent product of variables: the accidental. Accident, as a trigger of the unconscious and, occasionally, of real freedom, is a common enough feature in much of the art of the twentieth century--but within limits. In current art it looms very large. An artist ostensibly involved with Change may actually be tangling with Chance. Change is closely bound up with Chance but it is not the same thing; for while Chance may palpably reveal some aspect of Change, the latter may also be regularized to exclude the former. If employing Change in one's work is risky at this time because of a probable high percentage of artistic failure due to nothing more than a lack of cooperation from a public invited to participate in the activity of transformation, a conscious of Chance bypasses failure by building non-control into the work as a desideration. Whatever happens by definition happens as it should. Theoretically, every occurrence is as "good" as every other.[4]

Therefore chance serves the function of maintaining an external quality to the process of change by an act of willful non-interference in the process of metamorphosis of the artist's work from the time of initial creation onward.

While change and chance are not necessarily always linked together, Allan Kaprow implies, for the most part, it is highly desirable that Change be enacted through a process of Chance consisting of an analytical breakdown of the elements which constitute the raw materials (physical and conceptual) of the work and using procedural techniques of selection (chance) to assemble them:

> . . . In the uses to which Chance has been put, the analytic tradition characteristic of Western thinking since the Greeks seems to govern its methodology. Art is broken down into basic elements of universals which are believed to hold true for all time. There are dues, shapes, positions, movements from one position to another; sounds in which may be distinguished amplitude, frequency, duration, timbre, attack-decay and where in space they originate; there are heat and cold by degrees, and kinds of touch from rough to smooth; there are also the specific materials comprising these, the relationships between them and, finally, certain very basic meanings that are evoked by them according to cultural training.
>
> Such categorizing may seem antithetical to an ongoing extensional point of view, and one temperamentally inclined to the latter may be

> averse to it. Clearly, these categories have been at the heart of all the form-content, ego-society, body-soul conflicts that have filtered from the past to our day. Yet in the present case, if we assume that all the elements have an equal status, whether or not we actually believe this, then the chance operations (John Cage's expression for techniques designed to produce an indeterminate situation in music) applied to the above elements, if followed diligently, appear to have been able to provide a result close in spirit and the values espoused in the foregoing. The product is something which appears to be on its own, whole and separated from our anxieties, to be brought back into contact with us as though for the first time.
>
> This is the only reason for using highly procedural techniques. It is paradoxical that to achieve a wholeness, self-evident and easy in its being, complicated and apparently unnatural means are sometimes necessary. If chance operations were merely an ingenious way of atomizing art into even more categories than history has accustomed us to, there would be no reason to discuss them. That they have in fact been liberating compels us to understand their use.[5]

Mr. Kaprow here indicates the purpose and importance of chance usage in creation: chance, in the form of procedural methods of selection, assembles the artist's selected raw materials into forms which are at the same time separated from the artist's anxieties while maintaining the values that the use of the selected raw materials are intended to convey. In doing this, chance liberates the artist from repetitive creative patterns his personality

may have led him into.

Taken together Chance and Change exist in Allan Kaprow's theory and works as two forces which interact with each other in proportions determined by the artist as a tool which creates works of art. These two forces exist in Kaprow's mind as an interaction between procedural techniques and artistic intuition formally defined by Allan Kaprow as follows:

> Chance . . . is meant to be a purposive following of rules, whereas Change is the following of intuition and wisdom. The rules of Chance are external to persons and history, while Change (even systemized into rules derived from, say, the Chinese I Ching: The Book of Changes) is dependent upon human experience. Chance operations are nearer to an end in which they are not necessarily inherent, but Change operations reflect a view of nature held by the artist, and as such are revealed in the transformation of the art.[6]

* * *

Chance, as a major element of artistic creation, serves two functions which at first glance may seem mutually exclusive: the introduction of risk and fear into the work on one hand (a result of non-control being exercised in certain areas), and minimization of the possibility of artistic failure (in large measure due to leaving the

question of artistic goals for the work to achieve an open question). Both functions are made possible through the discipline of establishing strict procedures of chance selection, a form of very rigorous control, but one which does not imply any single necessary result. Instead it implies a result that the techniques will choose from a field of possibilities whose number and style are limited and defined by the artist in the process of setting up these chance procedures of selection:

> /Chance/ is the vehicle of the spontaneous. And it is the clue to understanding how control (setting up of chance techniques) can effectively produce the opposite quality of the unplanned and apparently uncontrolled. I think it can be demonstrated that much contemporary art, which counts upon inspiration to yield that admittedly desirable verve or sense of the un-selfconscious, is by now getting results which appear planned and academic. A loaded brush and a mighty swing always seem to hit the ball on the same spot.
>
> The word "chance," then, rather than "spontaneity," is a key term, for it implies risk and fear (thus re-establishing that fine nervousness so pleasant when something is about to occur). It also better names a method which becomes manifestly unmethodical if one considers the pudding more a proof than the recipe.
>
> Traditional art has always tried to make it good every time, believing that this was truer truth than life. When an artist directly utilizes chance he hazards "failure" of being less Artistic and more Life-like. "Art" produced by him might surprisingly turn out to be an affair that has all

> the inevitability of a well ordered, middle-class Thanksgiving dinner (I have seen a few remarkable Happenings which were "bores" in this sense). But it could be like slipping on a banana peel, or Going to Heaven.
>
> Simply by establishing a flexible framework of the barest kind of limits, such as the selection of only five elements out of an infinity of possibilities, almost anything can happen. And something always does, even things that are unpleasant. Visitors to a Happening are now and then not sure what has taken place, when it has begun or when it has ended, or even when things have gone "wrong." For by going "wrong," something far more "right," more revelatory, has many times emerged. It is this sort of sudden near miracle which presently seems to be made more likely by chance procedures.[7]

Chance, then is a source of surprise and revelation in this context; it is a tool the artist may use to see forms and relationships emerge in his work that would otherwise remain hidden:

> . . . The advantage of chance methods, in my view, is that they free one from customary relationships rather than from any relationships. New ones will be noticed by the observant artist, whether he professes to like this or not. Most of the time he seems to like it.[8]

Allan Kaprow, therefore, sees chance not as the master of chaos and disorder, but rather as a technique that an artist may use to renew the freshness of his work, by means of unbiased selection from a field of equally valid form-possibilities. This enables the process of

change to manifest the work of an unknown outside creator (i.e., Nature, etc.) which takes the work beyond the limitations of the artist's preconceptions and habitual actions:

> Hence, as a point of view and a technique, chance methodology is not only refreshing in the best sense of the word; it is extremely useful in dispersing and breaking up knots of "knowables," of groupings, relationships, and larger structures which have become obsolete and habitual through overuse. Everything, the stuff of art, of daily life, the working of one's mind, gets thrown into sudden and startling patterns, so that if old values are destroyed, new experiences are revealed. Chance, therefore, is a dramatic affair involving both our need for security and our need for discovery or risk.[9]

CHAPTER V

It has been established through examination of Allan Kaprow's definition of the term "chance" that this concept refers to a process which breaks up knowables and injects spontaneity into an artwork by means of strict procedural rules of form-selection, which remove direct artistic control from the process of change. While this reveals what chance is and what it does, within the context of Allan Kaprow's work, it does not by itself fully explain the reasons why an artist would wish to remove his direct control from the evolving nature of his work. The desirability of rejecting the results of habitual routine and achieving a spontaneous newness with each work points out a direction towards such basic motivation, but does not alone suffice. In this chapter, a closer approach to the basic philosophical question implied here shall be attempted through detailed analysis of three areas of theory which Allan Kaprow has used to define the specific interrelationships which govern the role that the artist and the chance process

must play in order to achieve a meaningful work. The first area we shall examine comprises a body of theory derived from the work of Marcel Duchamp concerning artistic non-interference in areas of the creative process. This non-interference serves as a means of eliminating the artist as an entity in the context of the work, thus achieving a "loss of self." The second area consists of a theory concerning how to apply the chance process to a creative act according to areas implied by Aristotle's Four Causes (i.e., Efficient, Material, Formal and Final). The third area comprises a series of standards and rules concerning how to use chance in the creation and performance of happenings in such a way as to maximize spontaneity while still maintaining an aesthetic balance.

* * *

Much of the foundation upon which Allan Kaprow's application theories concerning chance rests consists of the influence that the work and theories of Marcel Duchamp has had upon him. Allan Kaprow's view of himself as a "philosophical artist" has led him to see Duchamp as a guide to follow in many respects, the most noteworthy being Duchamp's increasing experimentation with "non-

involvement" in the creation of his own works during the latter half of his career. Kaprow maintains that:

> . . . The most important influence during the course of my studying Dada was Duchamp, because of what he didn't do. After the big glass piece, he deliberately stopped making art objects in favor of little (ready-made) hints to the effect that you could pick up art anywhere, if that's what you wanted. In other words, he implied that the whole business of art is quite arbitrary. I was hoping at the time I went to college, to be a professional philosopher, and Duchamp struck me as essentially a philosopher. I think my only abiding interest in art is philosophical, and thus media and techniques then were of only passing fascination.[1]

The central focus of Allan Kaprow's concern with Duchamp's theories and works is Duchamp's preoccupation with the concept of art as a function of the artist's mind rather than as a process of limited production. Allan Kaprow discusses this aspect of Duchamp's outlook with Richard Kostelanetz:

> . . . When he saw all these tools /common materials from which to select "ready-mades"/ lying around, he suddenly realized that at that moment he had enough material for endless one-man shows. He said in a radio interview that to do that would of course be to defeat the purpose. He really wanted to be very selective and hold his punches for where they would be most effective. His purpose in creating ready-mades in that case was obviously editorial.

> KOSTELANETZ--You mean that Duchamp was more interested in ideas than in objects.
>
> KAPROW--I think so. He feared the objects would be considered works of art venerated for their supposed beauty. He was aware of how easily anything can become aesthetical.[2]

Duchamp's interest in ideas over objects represents a step beyond the emphasis on artists' actions over the resulting work of art that we have already seen in the case of most of the Dadaists whose works we have examined. In the case of Duchamp's ready-made art the thought process of selection is not a physical act which leaves any physical evidence of its occurrence. The elevation of an essentially unaltered object to the status of art may be viewed as an attempt to focus the viewer's attention on the creative process at its most basic level: the formation of a concept in the artist's mind which exists prior to any physical act. The elimination of physical actions bridging the gap between artistic thought and the resulting work constitutes a sort of elimination of the role of the artist in relation to his own work--a goal which Allan Kaprow refers to in his writings as "loss of self."

The act of self denial through willful non-involvement in the creative process is a major philosophical motive

for the use of chance in the creation of art within the context of Allan Kaprow's theoretical system. Kaprow's statement that his interest in Marcel Duchamp for "what he didn't do," that is to say, for his willful denial of an active role in the creation of his works, is highly significant in the light of comments he has made elsewhere concerning the subject of "philosophical artists" which include references to the act of self-denial. In speaking of similarities and differences in the works of Mondrian and Pollack, during his interview with Richard Kostelanetz, Kaprow emphasizes denial of self and art as a common ground between these philosophical artists whose works and theories otherwise stand in sharp contrast to each other:

> /Jackson Pollack/ created a quasi-environment in which reiterated pulsations of flung and dragged paint seemed to cause a trance-like, almost ritual loss of self, first in himself, and, later, in the observer. This is not painting anymore.
>
> KOSTELANETZ--But isn't this a contrary tendency--through the most subjective mechanisms he creates a highly objective field.
>
> KAPROW--It was a frenzied counterpart to the cooler Mondrian, but it ended up with the same kind of idea--a non-aesthetical point of view, which is essentially self-transforming, rather than pictorial.
>
> KOSTELANETZ--Is the serious, perceptive viewer supposed to be removed from himself?

> KAPROW--Presumably so. The difference between Mondrian and Pollack is only apparent in this respect, merely two temperamentally alternative ways of arriving at a loss of self, or an enlargement of self, or self-transformation.[3]

Allan Kaprow views chance as a means of achieving the distance between the artist and his work which is necessary in order to achieve the denial of self through the artist's inaction. Chance, in this context, becomes a major keystone of this form of philosophical thought and action:

> . . . in so far as all art is by implication, a discrimination of some values over others, it becomes the equivalent of philosophical activity. And thus the threshold must not be lost sight of. Any artist working with the main issues of current art must see it clearly. It is essential to know what Change and Chance are, where the one leaves off and the other begins, when to use one, when the other, and when neither; and it is most essential to know that the use of Chance can become a vehicle for the denial of art and self, as much as for their realization.[4]

The use of chance in the form of disciplined compliance with a set of strict procedural rules of selection and decision making when carried to its ultimate extreme achieves an almost total elimination of any possible effect that unconscious conservatism (i.e., repetition of previous forms through habit) may cause:

> Some artists . . . may wish to subdivide the categories /of items for selection/ into many

> more parts and tighten up the whole process of chance operations by analysing the controls, so that the last shred of artistic bias and mere habit will be eliminated and the unforeseen more likely.[5]

The process of setting up parameters and selection categories may become the only artistic creative act in the construction of a work under this system. Wherever chance has been used as a substitute for will, a part of the role of the initiator as "artist" has been removed and replaced with impersonal natural forces. It is in this manner that Allan Kaprow's goal of "loss of self" is achieved through the use of chance in the creative process:

> At this point the "artist" is no longer a real entity. He has eliminated himself (and for one who has genuinely concerned himself with self-renunciation, the decision to do so must be respected). But its great poignancy is that it can never be a total act, for others must be made aware of the artist's disavowal of authorship if its meaning is not to be lost. It is just this which has been the dramatic lesson of the "inactivity" of Marcel Duchamp. And it is the lesson of monastic life in general. This is the threshold upon which aesthetics, ethics, religion, and life per se become indistinguishable.[6]

This statement indicates the point at which "loss of self" ends if the act is to retain communicative meaning: enough "self" must be maintained in the context of the

act to communicate and emphasize the disavowal of an active role in the creation of the work. Here, Allan Kaprow points out that the act of "disavowal of authorship" and the actions of chance usage that achieve it hold an importance within his critical system that is analogous to the position held by the act of construction of a work in more traditional systems: the artist's identification with his work in this case is achieved through recognition of his act of non-involvement. His "audience" is expected to concentrate their attention of this act in much the same way that they could be expected to concentrate on the work if the artist had identified himself with it in a more direct way.

One may view the movement away from the traditional role of "artist" that the act of denial of authorship entails in its positive reflection: if one moves away from the activity of "art," one also moves toward areas outside of the traditional realm of art. In other words, the negative acts of denial of art implicit in Allan Kaprow's self-denial are also positive acts of movement toward participation in the larger framework of "life." Allan Kaprow indicates that the framework within which the artist must

function today is characterized by a general blurring of the boundaries that used to separate art from life--indeed by an intrusion of life into the realm of art that tends to make the person who calls himself an "artist" unable to ever totally escape identification of his role as an artist in anything he does. This state of affairs demands the renunciation of the role of artist as a conscious act in order to maintain balance between art and life in the context of the artist's existence and work:

> The history of art and esthetics are all on bookshelves. To this pluralism of values, add the current blurring of boundaries dividing the arts, and dividing art and life; and it is clear that the old questions of definition and standards of excellence are not only futile but naive. Even yesterday's distinction between art, anti-art, and non-art are pseudo-distinctions which simply waste our time: the side of an old building recalls Clifford Still's canvases, the guts of a dishwashing machine doubles as Duchamp's "Bottle Rack," voices in a train station are Jackson MacLow's poems, the sounds of eating in a luncheonette are by John Cage, and all may be part of a Happening. Moreover, as the "found-object" implies the found word,--noise or--action, it also demands the found-environment. Art not only becomes life, but life refuses to be itself.
>
> The decision to be an artist thus assumes both the existence of a unique activity and an endless series of deeds which deny it. The decision immediately establishes the context within which all of one's acts may be judged by others as art, and also conditions one's perception of all

> experience as probably (not possibly) artistic. Anything I say, do, notice, or think, is art--whether or not desired--because everyone else aware of what is occurring today will probably (not possibly) say, do, notice, and think of it, as art at some time or other.[7]

This statement implies that the act of "denial of authorship" may not actually be a total disavowal of art, but, rather, a disavowal of any contention that the act of creation stands apart from the rest of the artist's existence, or exists as a unique activity, distinct from all others in life because the result is "art" rather than something else. The result of this disavowal of "art's" uniqueness as a special endeavor raises the question of what the role of "artist" means in the context of these theories:

> . . . The identification of oneself as an artist /is/ an ironic one, attesting not to talent for a specialized skill, but to a philosophical stance before elusive alternatives of not-quite-art, or not-quite-life. "Artist" refers to a person willfully enmeshed in the dilemma of categories, who performs as if none of them existed.[8]

Allan Kaprow views himself within this critical system as a person who works on the border between thought and action--not simply a philosopher, but, rather, a philosopher participant: one concerned as much with

participation in life as with ideas. Kaprow compares himself with more purely philosophical artists in the following manner:

> I am vitally interested in those artists who are essentially philosophical, such as Mondrian and Duchamp; but in the end I prefer a more directly experienced sort of activity--one which only later may be examined in metaphysical terms, if one wants to do so.[9]

Active participation is also a principal theme which Kaprow uses as a measure of comparison between himself and other contemporary media-theorists and artists. In speaking of the implication of Marshal McLuhan's and John Cage's works and theories which state that a good happening should be "just like life," in other words, an almost perfect imitation of some aspect of life, Kaprow responds:

> . . . If /good happenings/ were /just like life/, then I wouldn't do them. I'd be terribly thrilled with life just as it is and would, as they used to say in the old hipster days, simply "dig the scene" and that would be it.
>
> There are things which occur that I would never possibly imagine doing so well. For example, that great Alaska earthquake was fabulous, and the other day on a color TV I watched the launching of a rocket. It was a fabulous thing. Now here you have a nature-made and a man-made event, both of which are extraordinary to me. Yet they are not things that happen every day--they aren't "just like life"--and even if they did, I would still feel I had to do something myself just to

> shake hands with reality--just to respond. Here is where McLuhan and Cage present a different argument. Theirs is a more passive position, pressuring a greater and greater acuity of response, while I feel I've got to say, "Gee, that was pretty good. Now, watch my trick," not so much to put it down but to join in the dance. The context, in this case, is life rather than art; and so we come back to the conclusion that it is lifelike but no substitute for life . . . It's a more attentive participation /in life/ /rather than a substitute/ . . . primitive, simple, uncomplicated.[10]

The technique of chance usage in the process of artistic creation, therefore, represents a dual function in Allan Kaprow's life: 1) Achievement of "denial of self" in the context of any unique relationship between the role of "artist" and the resulting work by means of withdrawing from decisions involving will in favor of using chance as a co-author of the work, and 2) using the energy released by this withdrawal from the role of "artist" to increase active participation in the larger framework of life. Allan Kaprow performs these acts due to a belief that art is no longer a unique activity separate from all others, but that by definition anything that an artist does may be interpreted as being "art."

Under this philosophical-critical system one may view the function of "artist" as being more a means of

approaching one's relationship to the world rather than a specific activity--in other words, the role of the artist under this theory is "not so much a job as a way of life."

For the artist who functions in this manner, art and life merge into a coherent unity that holds itself together with the artist's belief that his role is not that of a creator of works so much as one in which he holds a special philosophical view of reality that places him constantly on the boundaries that separate art from non-art. Acting within this context he may function in both areas and act as a liaison between them.

For Allan Kaprow, therefore, his function as an "artist" has become a full time act of being a reciprocal ready-made: his role of "artist" has been turned into an "everyday-ordinary" role in much the same manner that Duchamp's Mona Lisa becomes an ironing board. This process is balanced out by turning the non-art functions of his life into the function of a living ready-made: the ordinary aspects of Allan Kaprow's life are elevated to the status of art.

This, I believe, is an essential quality in Kaprow's theory which one must comprehend in order to understand

the message of his works. One must always view his artistic acts in terms of the philosophical views he holds concerning the implications of his involvement and non-involvement in the "art" and "life" aspects of his works.

* * *

The preceding analysis of theories derived from Duchamp's system of Ready-Made Art has established the ultimate goals that the use of chance techniques of selection in the production of a happening are expected to achieve. In order for these goals to be achieved, one must make use of a theoretical system of chance technique application which will aid the artist in the task of disciplined removal of conscious will from the process of categorization and selection. Allan Kaprow has based his chance applications procedure upon a model related to Aristotelian theory in which he draws coordinates linking each of four basic elements of the creation and performance of a happening to a corresponding element drawn from Aristotle's four causes:

> Chance may be applied to four areas comparable to Aristotle's "four causes": the efficient, material, formal and final causes required of any being. The four areas are: the creator or creators (including nature as a creator), the materials used (including their life

expectancy), the form that the work shall have (including its scale), and its function or purpose in life.[11]

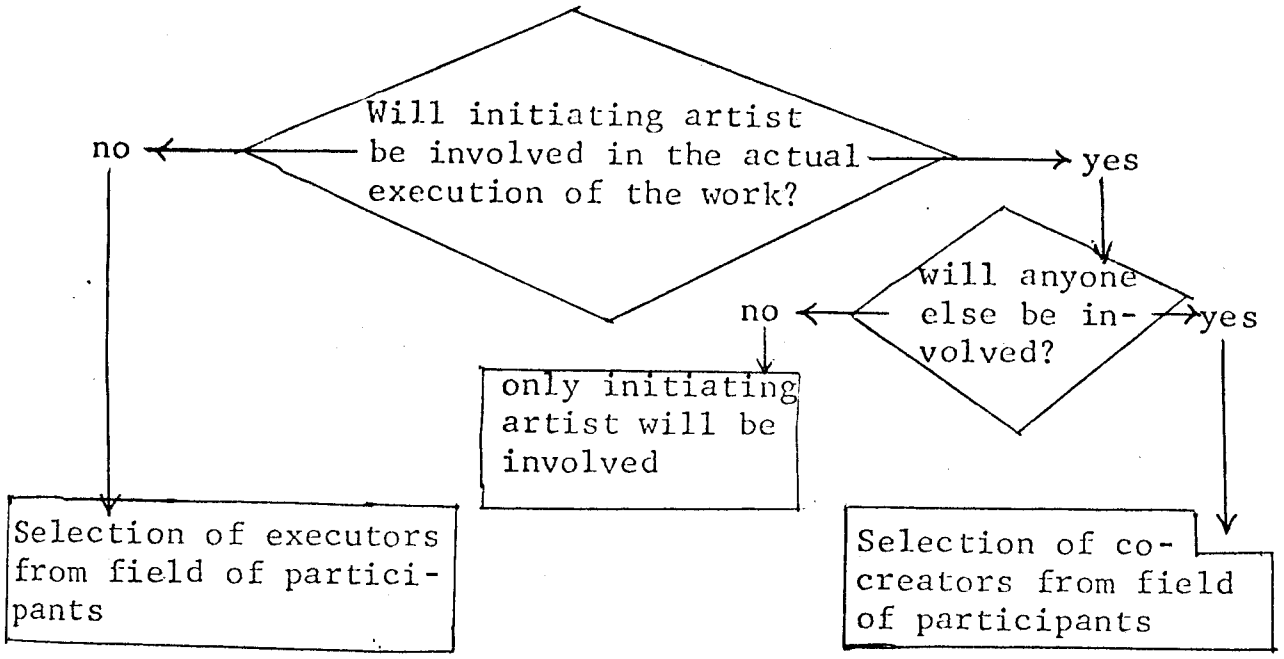
Creator(s):

Since the process of creating any work of are must begin with some act performed by the initiating artist, an analysis of chance applied according to the four categories just named begins with the creator or creators of the work.

The extent to which the artist will remove himself from his traditional role with respect to the work and what shall act in the place of the initiating artist's conscious will are the major decisions which may be dealt with under this category. The outcome of these decisions will define many parameters within which decisions in the remaining three categories shall be made, as the major philosophical questions concerning "loss of self" and "renunciation of authorship," etc., receive a quantitative answer here which must be reflected throughout the process of creation of the work in question.

Therefore, the artist may begin with the question of whether he is to be involved in the actual act of creation at all by a roll of the die or a coin toss and follow this by a selection of others who may engage in the act of

creation as this flow chart indicates:[12]



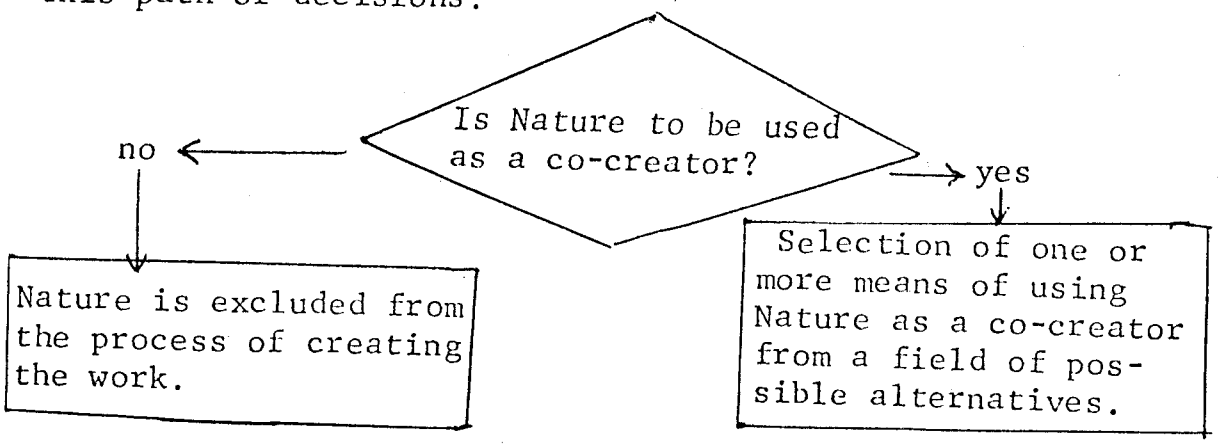
Note: In this case field of potential executors (creators) excludes initiating artist.

= Each diamond shape represents a yes-no decision that may be decided by either chance or conscious will. Each rectangle represents a selection of one or more people from a group of participants who have made themselves available as potential co-creators.

An initiating artist may pursue this path of decisions by a combination of conscious will and chance procedure. This adds one more major decision: which of these questions shall be solved with conscious will and which by chance

selection from the field of alternatives? This too may be solved by chance methods as may be the question of how to deal with this problem, itself (i.e., toss a coin: heads, chance procedures decide which questions in the flow chart are to be dealt with by means of chance procedures; tails, conscious will makes the decision of which questions are to be dealt with using chance procedures).

A second major question which Allan Kaprow delegates to the creator(s) category is to what extent Nature shall take part in the work's creation. The first decision in dealing with this question is whether or not to make use of Nature as a co-creator, followed by selection of possible means of including Nature in the creative process from a field of possible alternatives, if the answer to the first question is "yes." The following flow chart illustrates this path of decisions:



Again, these two decisions may be made either using conscious will or chance procedures. The decision made to the first question is especially significant in that it excludes conscious will as an alternative for many of the decisions to come if Nature is to be included. The second decision selects areas which will be decided solely by means of using uncontrollable external forces.

The second decision in this series--that of selection of means of using Nature--is subject to restrictions beyond the control of the initiating artist: Nature can only be asked for what Nature can deliver--asking for heat in the winter or cold in the summer will not be a successful action. Allan Kaprow expresses this consideration as follows:

> . . . Nature cannot be asked, even by the roulette wheel to furnish icy blasts at the Equator. Taking advantage of what <u>is</u> possible, it is not hard to imagine a rainstorm making a marvelously soggy shapliness of blotters, rags, and papers composed within an apple grove laden with ripe fruit. Long term changes, only approximately foreseeable, can be brought about by insects, rotting, heat and cold, seeds dropped by birds and blown by winds, and so forth. Here again, duration in its protracted form becomes as much an uncertainty as physical constitution and appearance. Nature invited as a chance process could produce a painting on the ground merely by dropping leaves;

> passing cloudscapes could be viewed through plastic film or other structures built against the sky; rabbits and similar garden foes could eat their way right into a masterpiece if it seemed like a vegetable patch to them.[13]

The decision to use Nature as a co-creator in this manner implies a minimum of two specific areas of chance application in the process of a work's creation: 1) Uncontrollable external forces provide an array of possible alternative means of bringing Nature into the creative process that may be narrowed using either conscious will or chance selection procedures. 2) Each selection from this array implies a largely unknown, only vaguely predictable future of form possibilities for the work. Natural forces will determine the changes of form (either due to addition or decay) that will occur in the specific selected area. The question of whether or not to use Nature as a co-creator, therefore, represents a major decision concerning the philosophical goals the work being constructed will fulfill under the theoretical system described in the first section of this chapter. Nature is a major source of unpredictability whose exclusion severely restricts the use of uncontrollable external forces from further consideration in the remaining chance-

applications decisions concerning materials, form, and function for the work.

Materials:

The progression of Allan Kaprow's generic forms from painting and collage through assemblage and environment to the happening has reflected an increasing emphasis in Allan Kaprow's mind on activity (i.e., process) over object (i.e., product). This is not to say, however, that there has been a decrease in usage of material form according to principles derived from Allan Kaprow's painting and collage roots, but, rather, there has been a marked increase in emphasis on the philosophy, theory, and actions that the process of materials selection implies. In this section we shall briefly examine this process of materials selection and its effect upon the form of the total happening.

The process of materials selection, as Allan Kaprow pursues it, can be roughly divided into two categories: the "traditional" method, which we examined during our discussion of Marcel Duchamp in chapter 2, in which the artist selects the object in question by means of inspiration from his unconscious mind; and a more externalized method in which techniques involving the use of uncontrollable

external forces make the final selection.

Allan Kaprow emphasizes the importance of the act of selection, particularly according to the more traditional method which uses the artist's mind and personality as the vehicle of selection. For Allan Kaprow, the ready-made process represents an important link between "art" and "not-art," and therefore, is possessed with major implications concerning the philosophical goals the work is expected to fulfill:

> . . . we find a certain large range of objects and materials employed. They are not, however, indifferently chosen, but represent a recurrent class of things: memoirs, objects of everyday usage, industrial waste and so forth. These firstly represent a further enlargement of the domain of art's subject matter, for in many cases these materials <u>are</u> the subject matter as well as the media; unlike the more neutral substance of paint, they refer directly to specific aspects of our lives. Coming from factories, the street, the household, the hardware store, dump, or garbage can, they force into focus once again the external problems of what may be (or become) art and what may not. . . . Thus attentiveness to the meaning of the materials chosen is essential.[14]

The array of materials selected by the artist using either unconscious mind (active) selection or uncontrollable external force (passive) selection is a major determinant of the boundaries and potentialities within which selection

of form will be performed:

> . . . These materials practically guarantee a new range of forms not possible with conventional means. In fact, one can hardly avoid these fresh potentials. While it is true that many artists become frightened by them and then to sugar-coat everything by recasting it in older molds, the plain fact must stare at one that when a piece of hardware is juxtaposed to some excelsior, and this in turn is placed upon a crumpled rag, a series of abrupt shifts occur with the passage of the eye (and of the touch) that simply are not found in the most highly contrast-full paintings. For in the latter, no matter what may be the shapes and colors, the medium of paint offers a sensible unity in which all other differences may take place.[15]

The effect that these materials have on the form possibilities of the work proceeds not only from the shape and color of physical objects, but also from the activities that the nature of the objects chosen imply:

> When we think of "composition," it is important not to think of it as self-sufficient "form," as an arrangement as such, as an organizing activity in which the materials are taken for granted as a means toward an end that is greater than they are. This is much too Christian in the sense of the body being inferior to the soul. Rather, composition is understood as an operation dependent upon the materials (including people and nature) and phenomenally indistinct from them. Such materials and their associations and meanings, as I have pointed out, generate the relationships and the movements of the Happening, instead of the reverse. The adage that "form follows function" is still useful advice.[16]

Taking this one step further, one can see how activities themselves, as well as actions implied by objects, may be viewed as a constituent element of a happening and therefore as a type of material, itself. The link between materials and the activities that make up a happening combined with the fact that the act of selection links them with the world outside art is the heart of their significance.

Selection by the unconscious occurs in two forms in Allan Kaprow's works: spontaneous recall, and observation-selection as described by Allan Kaprow during his interview with Richard Kostelanetz, while discussing "Self-Service," a happening performed in 1966:

> KAPROW--I generally work pretty much off the top of my head, as things come to me. In Self-Service, I had three ways of building up the material. One source was simply things that came to my mind, which I jotted down in a notebook over a period of eight months.
>
> KOSTELANETZ--By "things," what do you mean?
>
> KAPROW--Images, situations, activities.
>
> The second source of material was things observed over the course of that eight months, such as some little kid putting flowers that she had picked outside in between the canned goods in a supermarket. They were daisies; and since I thought her action was very beautiful, I used

> that image, in connection with a number of others, in the piece.[17]

> Note: the third means of selecting materials involves the use of uncontrollable external forces and is discussed below.

. Allan Kaprow's use of uncontrollable external forces as a means of material selection is a major procedural departure from the Duchampian process for selection of ready-mades, but it is possessed of techniques which are highly reminiscent of uncontrollable external force selection procedures which we have examined in the first two chapters in our study of Triston Tzara and other early Dadaists:

> The third source I very often use when my mind doesn't pour out sufficiently, is the Yellow Pages of the phone book. I've used them for many, many years. I go about it this way: Either I'll flip the book open to some arbitrary point and point my finger down rapidly, and I'll write down what I find. It might say Vacuum Cleaners or something like that. Or else I'll use a chance method of some kind, such as pieces of paper with numbers on them, which in turn tell me what pages to go to. One way or another it makes no difference actually. I fill up page after page with these services and products, and they in turn may completely suggest the activity. Or I may start thinking about what I could do with one item on the list, such as vacuum cleaners.
>
> KOSTELANETZ--At this point, however, you exercise some choice, which is to say some taste. You go to the Yellow Pages to find possibilities; then, you choose from the examples you pick up.

> KAPROW--Either I choose or I subject these to chance choices, which I do not select but simply accept.[18]

Nature provides an array of materials whose choice may be viewed as the act of an uncontrollable external force, (as Nature is beyond human control), from which selection may be made using any of the three methods just described. In this manner, selection of materials from natural sources may be regarded as an example of a technique in the "combination of uncontrollable external forces with selection by the unconscious" category. The use of this technique may be a major factor in determining the overall character of the work since the artist must fit his work to the possibilities that Nature provides and abide by the necessary conditions that Nature requires of him in order to include Nature in the work. (Impersonal forces by definition, have little ability to accommodate themselves to personal needs, therefore Mohammet must go to the mountain.):

> Nature as a source of relatively inert materials--such as tree stumps, dirt, and rocks--rather than as an active agent of events, can be part of one's list, but on its own terms. If rocks and dirt are not readily available, then the creator(s) should go to where they are normally found: the country.[19]

At this point, selections of creator(s) and materials have implied a general structure to the work consisting of decisions setting the degree and manner of chance application to the act of creation and selected materials which imply activities and form possibilities for the work.

Form:

Unlike the previous categories of selection, the form category involves selection from a fairly small array of alternatives which have been provided by means of previous acts of selection of creator(s) and materials. Decisions concerning form, therefore, are really a cleanup process involving elimination of unnecessary form possibilities that have been created by the artist's actions in the first two categories.

Allan Kaprow implies that the decisions concerning form properly consist of an extension of the act of materials selection which involves examination of the implied actions and form possibilities inherent in each selected material unit, making selections from each of these arrays and connecting them together:

> . . . in making a Happening, it is better to approach composition without borrowed form theories, and instead to let the form emerge

> from what the materials can do. If a horse is part of the work, whatever a horse does gives the "form" to what he does in The Happening: trotting, standing, pulling a cart, eating, defecating, and so forth. If a factory of heavy machinery is chosen, then the clanging of motorized repetition might easily cause the form to be steadily repetitive. In this way a whole body of nonintellectualized, nonculturized experience is opened to the artist and he is free to use his mind anew in connecting things he did not consider before.[20]

Since form proceeds from the implications of previous selection acts, there is a minimum quantity of chance present in the act of decisions concerning form. In addition to this foundation of removal of will passed on from the previous selection categories, further removal may be achieved by applying chance selection techniques to the process of narrowing this array of choices and combining the selected units together. Allan Kaprow demonstrates how this may be accomplished using an array of six materials (clothes, gas, spiderwebs, sky, river, and boxes) as an example. Note that whatever input of chance selection techniques occurred during the process of selecting these materials is inherently present at this point since these techniques have presented us with the boundaries implied by the limitation of what these materials can do. Additionally, the inclusion of spiderwebs, sky, and river

in this list indicates that Nature has been included in the work as a co-creator and therefore a source of materials for the work. Allan Kaprow proceeds as follows:

> The ways in which the materials may be arranged can be spelled out for each material: in pattern (A), casually juxtaposed (b), or blended (c) . . . /Each material/ would be written as 1Z, 1B, or 1C; 2A, 2B, or 2C, and so on. How many times each material is to be treated as A, B, or C will have been previously established by turns of the roulette wheel, throws of the dice, or other equivalent methods. Let us say there are twenty moves for clothes, seventeen for gas, two hundred and eleven for spiderwebs, three for river, none for sky, and fourteen for boxes. Six graphs are drawn on large sheets of paper and the proper number of A, B, or C treatments for each of the six materials are indicated thereon by corresponding squares. The graphs are put face up on the floor and a coin is tossed, without particular aim, onto each graph the appropriate number of times, to decide in what sequence each material is to be manipulated. These moves are listed on a sheet of paper. Then the six lists are combined by further chance operations on a single list in order to tell how, say, boxes are to be combined with some other material(s). Now the second material(s) is listed without a qualifying letter A, B, or C, because the first material already tells what is to be done with it. If it comes out the boxes (6) are to be arranged in a pattern A with river (5), then we do not yet know exactly how to do this. For this information another list is completed by the same chance methods, to tell specifically how the materials are to be arranged in pattern, casually juxtaposed, or blended with respect to each of the six materials a very considerable number of possible combinations. Now, the instruction for the compound boxes (A) river might specify:

> The suspended boxes of river water are clustered above eighteen boxes half-submerged in the river just offshore. The space between the boxes above and below, and between each other, will be twice the measurement of the largest member of each.
>
> There are now two more times for the boxes to interact with the river, as determined earlier; but the boxes have eleven times more to interact with the other materials. Toward the end of the preparations, it may be that not all of a material's possible combinations are used up. At such a point the creator or creators simply stop and go on to the remaining materials until all the possibilities are exhausted. . . .[21]

Allan Kaprow provides a further illustration of this process by describing how a happening may proceed from the activities inherent in selected materials juxtaposed into a composition:

> Think of the following items: trees, doughnuts, Cheerios cereal, Life Savers candy, life preservers, wedding rings, men's and women's belts, band saws, plastic pools, barrel hoops, curtain rings, Mason jar gaskets, hangman's nooses--one could go on almost indefinitely. They are all obviously united by a common circular shape (an observation that could be made by a botanist or a standard auto parts salesman as well as by any painter; for the recognition and use of physical resemblances is not the special talent of artists alone, even if the tradition of form analysis would seem to tell us so). By juxtaposing any half dozen of these items, an idea for a Happening could emerge. And from this combination, meanings not normally associated with such things could be derived by minds sensitive to symbols. Here is the score for an unperformed Happening I have written as an illustration:

> Naked women eat giant bowls of Cheerios and milk atop a mountain of used tires. Children disgorge barrels of whitewash over the mountain. A hundred yards away, men and women swimmers in brightly colored plastic pools continually leap out of the water to catch with their mouths rubber gaskets festooned with Life Saver candies that hang from chains of men's belts. The mountain is taken down, tire by tire, and moved into the pools, and the water spills out. The children tie the adults together with the belts. They pour whitewash over the now still heaps of bodies. Then they buckle dozens more of the belts around their necks, waists, and legs. They take the remaining Life Savers to a factory-fresh tire shop and offer them for sale in laughy voices.[22]

Function (or purpose in life):

The fourth and last selection category deals with the central question concerning the juxtaposition of art and life: the relationship the work is expected to have with respect to the surrounding environment, the participants, and spectators (particularly those spectators who stumble upon the work in performance and may not realize it to be a scored work of art, at first).

The element of chance implicit in this category revolves around the elusive character of the art/life boundary, which a work that makes extensive use of ready-made materials and activities lifted out of a "life" context

must have. Allan Kaprow contrasts the uncertain character of such works with the usual setting and implied role of more traditional forms by indicating the philosophical clash which the juxtaposition of an environment or happening with a traditional gallery or theatre setting causes:

> . . . The contemporary artist is not out to supplant recent modern art with a better kind; he wonders what art might be. Art and life are not simply comingled; their identities are both uncertain. To pose these questions in the form of acts that are neither art-like nor life-like, while at the same time locating them within the framed context of the conventional showplace, is to suggest that there are really no uncertainties at all: the name on the gallery or stage door assures us that whatever is contained within is art, and everything else is life.[23]

The lack of defining setting at the time of performance which Allan Kaprow desires leaves the question of function unsettled until the interaction between work, environment, participants, and spectators begins:

> The work of art must now receive its meaning and qualities from the unique expectant (and of the anxious) focus of the observer, listener, or intellectual participant. But in a greater number of cases the responsibilities have at least been reapportioned to include certain outsiders who may or may not be told beforehand exactly what their duties are. The artist and his artist-public are expected to carry on a dialogue on a mutual plane, through a medium which is insufficient alone and in some instances is nonexistent before this dialogue, but which is given life by the parties involved.[24]

A major constituent element of the function a work of this genre performs with respect to life consists of the state of mind of the participants and spectators following the performance of the work, caused by placing objects and activities not normally associated with the arts within the context of "art":

> . . . Conceptual Art reflects the forms of language and epistemological method; Earthworks duplicate ploughing techniques or pattern of wind on sand; Activities replay the operations of organized labor--say, how a highway is made; Noise--music electronically reproduces the sound of radio static; video-taped examples of Bodyworks look like close-ups of underarm deoderant commercials.
>
> Readymade versions of the same genre, identified and usually claimed by an artist as his or hers; are imitations in the sense that the condition "art," assigned to what has not been art, creates a new something that closely fits the old something. More accurately, it has been re-created in thought without performing or making a physical duplicate. For instance, washing a car.
>
> The entire thing or situation is then transported to the gallery, stage, hall, etc.; or documents and accounts are published; or we are taken to it by the artist acting as guide. The conservative practitioner extends Duchamp's gesture of displacing the object or action to the art context, which brackets it as art, while the sophisticate needs only art-conscious allies who carry the art bracket readymade in their heads for instant application anywhere. These moves identify the transaction between model and replica.
>
> Afterwards, whatever resembles the Readymade is

> automatically another Readymade. The circle closes: an art is bent on imitating life, life imitates art. All snow shovels in hardware stores imitate Duchamp's in a museum.[25]

Allan Kaprow believes that the entire happening as well as its constituent elements may achieve the status of reciprocal ready-made in the sense of becoming a mythical event: an event which though transient lives past its execution as a sort of legend, existing as a memory in the minds of the participants and spectators and passed on by the media in much the same manner as historical events are preserved and passed on. In this way the work achieves a new and increased emphasis of idea over object by becoming an entity composed of pure thought:

> . . . To the extent that a Happening is not a commodity but a brief event, from the standpoint of any publicity it may receive; it may become a state of mind. Who will have been there at that event? It may become like the sea-monsters of the past or the flying saucers of yesterday. I shouldn't really mind, for as the new myth grows on its own, without reference to anything in particular, the artist may achieve a beautiful privacy, famed for something purely imaginary, while free to explore something nobody will notice.[26]

As the foregoing indicates there is a fundamental difference between the manner in which chance plays a role in the process of selection in the function category as

opposed to the preceding three categories in that selection has been made purely by means of human interaction rather than, say, dice throws or rainstorms. The process of selection, however, is as much beyond the control of the initiating artist as the previous methods, depending largely on how the attempt at communication is received by those who come in contact with it--a situation similar to that of performance of Dada sound poems, simultaneous poetry, or Kurt Schwitter's proposed Merz Theatre: in other words, an example of the combination of uncontrollable external forces (i.e., the lack of the initiating artist's ability to control the minds of the recipients) and the unconscious mind (of the recipients) acting together to produce an act of creative selection.

* * *

The preceding areas of theory have established both a motivation for utilizing chance techniques in the creation and performance of happenings and a procedure for application of such techniques to the problems of categorization and selection that occur during the course of creation and performance. There remains the task of establishing a

system of ordered values which shall insure that the desired goals will indeed be achieved in the categorization and selection process. To this end, Allan Kaprow has established a system of critical standards, or rules, concerning the creation and performance of happenings. These rules act as a guide in making judgments governing the act of setting up chance procedures in such a way as to insure harmony between the desired ultimate goals of "loss of self" on the part of the initiating artist and interaction between the realms of art and reality with the resulting work.

Allan Kaprow's rules fulfill this linking function by means of setting parameters and boundaries which define the limits of the artist's freedom with respect to the act of composing the array of chance processes, fields of selection, acts of will, and implied purpose of the work which together constitute the initiating artist's role in the creation of the work. These rules are general in nature, always functioning purely as a means of defining a pathway that leads towards the ultimate philosophical goals the work is expected to fulfill. Allan Kaprow describes the functional nature of rules applied to the act of creating a happening

as follows:

> /The function of rules is/ to provide as much liberation from past culture as possible. The rules are very broad and of a "do not" nature. They have to do with the context rather than the specific manipulations of the work or material. For example, instead of recommending that one do one's work in a theater or an art gallery, where most Happenings seem to exist, I recommend that he should not. I recommend "no rehearsals," "no actors," "no roles," "no repeats," etc.[27]

Allan Kaprow lists seven such general rules concerning the creation of a happening in Assemblage, Environments, and Happenings which we shall now proceed to examine in the order in which they appear in the book:

> A) The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct, as possible. The reciprocity between the man-made and the ready-made will be at its maximum potential this way.[28]

This rule is essentially a restatement of the ultimate goal of interaction between art and non-art discussed earlier. The purpose of this rule is to maximize this interaction by removing whatever barriers may exist to impede such interaction. The second rule in this series follows from this premise:

> B) Therefore, the sources of themes, materials, actions, and the relationships between them

> are to be derived from any place except from the arts, their derivatives, and their milieu.[29]

This rule tends to encourage the use of ready-made materials as a means of closing the gap between the work and the world at large. Allan Kaprow indicates that the use of ready-made materials to link this art form closely to a non-art context gives the happening a unique quality which makes it a distinctly original genre: one which has the capacity to generate new forms of communicative structures to meet its own needs. The function of this rule, therefore, is liberation from conventional material forms in order to free the Happening from the conventional language structure of art:

> When innovations are taking place it often becomes necessary for those involved to treat their tasks with considerable severity. In order to keep their eyes fixed solely upon the essential problem, they will decide that there are certain "don'ts" which, as all imposed rules, they will obey unswervingly. . . .
>
> Thus it is not that the known acts are "bad" that causes me to say "Don't get near them"; it is that they contain highly sophisticated habits. By avoiding the artistic models there is the good chance that a new language will develop that has its own standards. The Happening is conceived as an art, certainly, but this for lack of a better word, or one that would not cause endless discussion. I, personally, would not care if it were called a sport. But if it

> is going to be thought of in the context of art and artists, then let it be a distinct art which finds its way into the art category by realizing its species outside of "culture." A United States Marine Corps manual on jungle-fighting tactics, a tour of a laboratory where polyethylene kidneys are made, the daily traffic jams on the Long Island Expressway are more useful than Beethoven, Racine, or Michelangelo.[30]

The third rule in this series asks the artist to make use of multiple "ready-made locales" as settings for the work in order to achieve the goal of juxtaposing the work with a non-art context:

> (C) The performance of a Happening should take place over several widely spaced sometimes moving and changing locales.[31]

Allan Kaprow's commentary on this rule indicates that the space between locales and their possible movement is of particular importance to the art/life juxtaposition goal, as the existence of large expanses of non-art within the outer dimensions of the array of locales elevated to the status of art tends to include them within the art context even though they are not directly used. Similarly, a moving locale keeps changing its context and, therefore, increases the range of interaction between the art activities within the moving locale and the non-art activities that immediately surround it:

. . . A single performance space tends toward the static and, more significantly, resembles conventional theater practice. It is also like painting, for safety's sake, only in the center of a canvas. Later on, when we are used to a fluid space as painting has been for almost a century, we can return to concentrated areas, because then they will not be considered exclusive. It is presently advantageous to experiment by gradually widening the distances between the events within a Happening. First along several points on a heavily trafficked avenue; then in several rooms and floors of an apartment house where some of the activities are out of touch with each other; then on more than one street; then in different but proximate cities; finally all around the globe. On the one hand, this will increase the tension between the parts, as a poet might by stretching the rhyme from two lines to ten. On the other, it permits the parts to exist more on their own, without the necessity of intensive coordination. Relationships cannot help being made and perceived in any human action, and here they may be of a new kind if fixed-and-true methods are given up.

Even greater flexibility can be gotten by moving the locale itself. A Happening could be compared to a jetliner going from New York to Luxemburg with stopovers at Ganders, Newfoundland, and Reykjavik, Iceland. Another Happening would take place up and down the elevators of five tall buildings in midtown Chicago.

The images in each situation can be quite disparate: a kitchen in Hoboken, a <u>pissoir</u> in Paris, a taxi garage in Leopoldville, and a bed in some small town in Turkey. Isolated points of contact may be maintained by telephone and letters, by a meeting on a highway, or by watching a certain television program at an appointed hour. Other parts of the work need only be related by theme, as when all locales perform an identical action which is disjoined in timing and space. But none of these

> planned ties are absolutely required, for pre-knowledge of the Happening's cluster of events by all participants will allow each one to make his own connections.[32]

The fourth rule in this series asks the artist to increase interaction between art and life by means of manipulation of the time:

> (D) Time, which follows closely on space considerations, should be variable and discontinuous. It is only natural that if there are mutliple spaces in which occurrences are scheduled, in sequence or even at random, time or "pacing" will acquire an order that is determined more by the character of movements within environments than by a fixed concept of regular development and conclusion.[33]

Allan Kaprow lists several considerations which indicate means by which manipulation of time may serve as a means of extending the boundaries of the work so far outward as to include much of the real world environment, thus including events and activities that exist within the context of "real life" within the time framework of the happening:

> . . . why shouldn't an artist program a Happening over the course of several days, months, or years, slipping it in and out of the performer's daily lives. There is nothing esoteric in such a proposition, and it may have the distinct advantage of bringing into focus those things one ordinarily does every day without paying attention --like brushing one's teeth.[34]

This technique bears marked similarity to the concept of discontinuous space, discussed above, and similarly tends to include "non-art" context activities within the total framework of the work as part of the process of linking one "art" activity with another. The sole distinction between such a matrix involving space and one involving time is its existence across three dimensional space as opposed to four dimensional space--the function is the same.

> . . . leaving taste and preference aside and relying solely on chance operations, a completely unforeseen schedule of events could result, not merely in the preparation but in the actual performance.[35]

This technique tends to bring "art" and "non-art" activities in the participants' lives especially close together by having the "art" activities pop up unexpectedly on one from some chance occurrence. This forces the participant to pay unusually close attention to the details of his life as he must be ever watchful for the cues that call the happening back into the forefront.

Finally, Allan Kaprow indicates a technique which could make the juxtaposition of art and life in the participants' lives a permanent affair:

> . . . an endless activity could also be decided upon, which would apparently transcend palpable time--such as the slow decomposition of a mountain of sandstone . . . In this spirit some artists are earnestly proposing a lifetime Happening. . .[36]

The overall purpose of discontinuous space and time, Allan Kaprow indicates, is the enlargement of the scope of the work beyond the traditional boundaries of art works which generally tend to place them into the role of constituent subset element submerged into a much larger life-context:

> The common function of these alternatives is to release an artist from conventional notions of a detached, closed arrangement of time-space. A picture, a piece of music, a poem, a drama, each confined within its respective frame, fixed number of measures, stanzas, and stages, however great they may be in their own right simply will not allow for breaking the barrier between art and life. And this is what the objective is.[37]

The fifth rule in this series acts as a guarantee of the work's spontaneity and uniqueness:

> (E) Happenings should be performed once only. At least for the time being, this restriction hardly needs emphasis, since it is in most cases the only course possible. Whether due to chance, or to the lifespan of the materials (especially the perishable ones), or to the changeableness of the events, it is highly unlikely that a Happening of the type I am outlining could ever be repeated. . . . Aside from the fact the repetition is boring to a generation brought up on ideas of spontaneity and originality, to repeat a Happening at this time is

> to accede to a far more serious matter: compromise of the whole concept of change.[38]

At the same time, Allan Kaprow states an exception to prove the rule:

> Nevertheless, there is a special instance of where more than one performance is entirely justified. This is the score or scenario which is designed to make every performance significantly different from the previous one. . . . But since people are creatures of habit, performers always tended to fall into set patterns and stick to these no matter what leeway was given in the original plan.[39]

This rule serves to prevent the work from becoming a set static pattern, an important consideration, for any happening which can be exactly repeated is by definition not interacting with the surrounding environment--unless we are to assume the surrounding environment has somehow remained static, itself. The happening dies under such circumstances because it becomes a conventional theatre-piece; a work of art that, like painting or cabaret singing, "knows its place" and is easily distinguishable from life.

The sixth rule in this series is of particular importance as it deals with a clearly discernable barrier which, when allowed to exist, tends to make a clear distinction between art and life--the dichotomy between audience and performers:

> (F) It follows that audiences should be eliminated entirely. All the elements--people, space, the particular materials and character of the environment, time--can in this way be integrated. And the last shred of theatrical convention disappears. For anyone once involved in the painter's problem of unifying a field of divergent phenomena, a group of inactive people in the space of a Happening is just dead space. It is no different from a dead area of red paint on a canvas. Movements call up movements in response, whether on a canvas or in a Happening. A Happening with only an empathic response on the part of a seated audience is not a Happening but stage theater.[40]

The lack of audience prevents the happening from becoming a work which can be separated from the context of "real life events" in the way that a work of the traditional theatre or dance genres can, since there is no group of people to act as passive recipients to the act--no group of people to single out the work for special attention as an event to be looked at without participation. Whoever comes in contact with the work, therefore, relates to it, not as "art" but as an activity he does; part of the actions of his own life which now become a part of the work.

Allan Kaprow mentions one exception to this general rule--the case of innocent bystander witnesses:

> . . . When a work is performed on a busy avenue passers-by will ordinarily stop and watch, just as they might watch the demolition of a building. These are not theater-goers and their attention

> is only temporarily caught in the course of their normal affairs. They might stay, perhaps become involved in some unexpected way, or they will more likely move on after a few minutes. Such persons are authentic parts of the environment.[41]

As this passage indicates, these witnesses are not an "audience" since they do not come to the work with preconceived attitudes concerning its nature or function in life as an example of performed art, but, rather, the work comes to them and exists within the context of the witness' real life environments. The witness' act of incorporating the event he sees into his life--the act of classifying the unusual event he sees into a function-role within his weltunschang--becomes an act of participation that juxtaposes the witness' life with the work of art in a manner which could never be accomplished by any work which functioned solely as a "work of art."

The use of people as participants, rather than spectators, enables the work to become a dialogue between the initiating artist and the non-artists who become involved in the performance. This situation enables the happening to function as an act of communication between art and life. Allan Kaprow indicates that it is this act of communication which gives environments and happenings the

substance which enables them to exist:

> . . . The artist and his artist-public are expected to carry on a dialogue on a mutual plane through a medium which is insufficient alone and in some instances is nonexistent before this dialogue, but which is given life by the parties involved.[42]

The seventh and final rule in this series involves the philosophical question concerning the form and substance of the happening:

> (G) The composition of a Happening proceeds exactly as in Assemblage and Environments, that is, it is evolved as a collage of events in certain spans of time and in certain spaces.[43]

The purpose of this rule is to remind us that the technique of juxtaposing art and life by bringing ready-made materials from life into the context of art and assembling them in a three dimensional space can be followed in dealing with activities as material constituent elements of a collage constructed in a four dimensional space; the happening becomes the active principle of the concept of ready-made collage as a genre which by definition juxtaposes art and life by means of applying artistic techniques to elements drawn from outside the arts.

* * *

Beyond the seven rules discussed above, there remains one central consideration governing the success or failure of the artist's attempt to apply chance techniques to the creation of a happening: artistic taste governing the balance between the use of chance techniques and conscious aesthetic design. Artistic taste is much more ephemeral than the more technical matters upon which attention has already been focused, and cannot be as clearly defined. The matter of subjective artistic judgment can only be defined as that something which may breathe life into an act of compliance with generic processes, standards, and rules, resulting in a successful work of art. The chance techniques Allan Kaprow has devised for his work do not automatically produce a successful happening, even when applied according to his system of standards and rules. Chance techniques of selection and creation are a useful tool, but a tool which, like any other artistic tool, only succeeds in producing pleasing results when used with intelligence, purpose, and taste. Allan Kaprow explains:

> . . . using Chance is a personal act no matter how much it attempts to be otherwise, for <u>a priori</u>, it is used, not simply given in to.

> Used responsibly, that is to say, with the artist acting as censor when an impossible or impractical instruction turns up and, above all, staying awake to what is taking place, the results can often be astonishing. Used stupidly, Chance will reduce to another confining academism. After all the shock of playing around with chance operations wears off, they seem much like using an electronic computer: the answers are always dependent on what information and biases are fed into the system in the first place. If dullness is built in the chances are that dullness will come out.[44]

Allan Kaprow points out that, like any other artistic activity, the creation of a happening must reflect a purposeful direction on the part of the initiating artist:

> A Happening is always a purposeful activity, whether it is game-like; ritualistic or purely contemplative. (It may even have as its purpose no purpose.) Having a purpose may be a way of paying attention to what is commonly not noticed. Purpose implies a selective operation for every Happening, limiting it to only certain situations out of countless options. The selections made by individual Happeners are as personal as their influences upon lesser figures are obvious. The expressive character of the selection of image-situations may be assertive or passive, but the <u>fact</u> of the choice suggests value: what is present is worthwhile in some way. What is left out by virtue of its very exclusion is less worthwhile for the time being: it is withheld from our attention. If life can be a Happening, it is only a small portion of life that can be apprehended that way; and only a Happener will make the decision to so apprehend it. If we were speaking of painting or music, all this would seem truistic. But in view of the vast and giddy nonsense to point to some of their actual characteristics.[45]

Far from being a substitute for artistic creativity and competence, the use of chance ultimately must be viewed as just one more technique by which an artist expresses himself through creation of works which reflect his personality, style, and competence:

> If one grasps the import of that word "chance" and accepts it (no easy achievement in our culture), then its methods need not invariably cause one's work to reduce to either chaos or a statistical indifference lacking in concreteness or intensity, as in a table of random numbers. On the contrary, the identities of those artists who employ such techniques are very clear. It is odd that by giving up certain hitherto privileged aspects of the Self, so that one cannot always "correct" something according to one's taste, the work and the artist frequently come out on top. And when they come out on the bottom, it is a very concrete bottom![46]

CHAPTER VI

Detailed examination of Allan Kaprow's definitions and applications theories concerning the use of chance in the creation and performance of happenings has revealed a personalized subjective theoretical system derived through experiment and insight by one contemporary artist. In many respects this is a closed system: there is an equilibrium of agreement between Allan Kaprow's works and theories in which each of these elements reinforces the other, as both grow and evolve together as two aspects of one entity. In order to understand the relevance that Allan Kaprow's theories might have for other artists, it is necessary to objectify this information through analysis of these works and theories in light of the previously established theoretical system concerning chance and its uses in the act of artistic creation devised by the Dadaists. In so doing, a measure of progress concerning the development of the concept of chance within the context of artistic expression from the time of the Dada movement to the mid-sixties

and early seventies can be established. This places Allan Kaprow's system of works and theories into a larger perspective that reveals them in a more objective light in which one may choose elements deemed relevant to the future development of research and production in this area. The comparative analysis of Allan Kaprow's works and theories in light of their Dada heritage shall focus its attention upon three principal areas:

DEFINITIONS: A comparison between the Dada approach to the definition of the term "chance" and Allan Kaprow's definition of the term in reference to his own work.

GOALS: A comparison of the philosophical and functional purposes which the use of chance techniques of creation are expected to fulfill under the two critical systems.

TECHNIQUES: A comparison of the actual methods each system allows for as a means of applying chance to the creative process.

* * *

DEFINITIONS: A comparison of the two concepts concerning the denotative nature of the term "chance" reveals one major functional factor both hold in common: the

concept of an act of chance with respect to artistic creativity which involves the removal of conscious volition from all or part of the act of executing a work. The Dada conception of chance approaches this function by linking chance with the rejection of logic, causality, and the conscious mind in favor of acts reflecting the powers of the unconscious, either directly, as in the case of Hans Arp's "automatic drawing," or indirectly through the use of forces completely external to the initiating artist. Allan Kaprow's references to chance as "a purposive following of rules,"[1] "highly procedural techniques,"[2] "the vehicle of the spontaneous,"[3] and ". . . a trigger of the unconscious and occasionally, of real freedom"[4] indicate that he, too, sees chance as a means of breaking the bonds which link conscious volition to the act of creation--in his case through concentration on strict procedures of decision making concerning selection from fields of alternatives which may be the product of forces of metamorphosis and change external to the artist.

The principal factor which distinguishes Allan Kaprow's concept of chance from that characteristic of Dada lies in the philosophical are: while the principal focus of the

Dada approach to chance seems to imply a link to the unconscious mind in every act involving chance, even in the form of uncontrollable external forces, Allan Kaprow's approach seems to emphasize the act of disinvolvement in the construction of a work of art, itself, as the dominant characteristic which makes chance become a factor. For Allan Kaprow, chance may still be a "trigger of the unconscious" but it is not necessarily always an expression of the unconscious. In speaking of the concept of chance as an "unlocking of the unconscious," the aspect of chance which was carried over from Dada into Surrealism, Allan Kaprow has stated that a more recent approach to the phenomena, attributed to John Cage, in which chance is characterized as an "imitation of reality," may be more appropriate to present day needs:

> I think there is more interest now in Cage's point of view than in the Surrealist's, because the everyday world is full of surprises. You don't have to dig into your psyche anymore.[5]

While this statement indicates that for Allan Kaprow chance is not always a reflection of the unconscious, there is evidence that he does not reject the use of the unconscious as a source of inspiration, particularly in the selection of ready-mades. Allan Kaprow frequently

makes use of spontaneous inspiration and selection of observed activities which strike his fancy as techniques for generating images, situations, and activities to be included in happenings.[6] It is likely that the above statement refers to a reduction in symbolic content reflecting performed fantasies which characterized many of the happenings he produced during the early 1960's. "Courtyard," (1962) is a typical example of these symbolic happenings. Much of the action centers around a female figure who represents "a number of old archetypal symbols" including Mother Nature ("either benign, yielding nature or devouring, cruel nature"), and Aphrodite ("a goddess of Beauty").[7] More recent works have abandoned this symbolism in favor of concentration on images reflecting more ordinary, less fantastic, situations. "Soap" (1965) typifies these more recent works, including washing clothes in a laundromat and automobiles in a carwash among the activities which constitute the work. These ready-made activities may reflect Allan Kaprow's unconscious, in that his inspiration and fancy selected them, but they do not reflect a great concern for archetypical symbolic imagery. Allan Kaprow, commenting on this development states that:

> The ordinary, the unspectacular, is emerging as the dominant theme. However, I must say that the ordinary often strikes me as spectacular, so I'm not at all giving up that rather romantic point of view I've always had.[8]

Another major area of retreat from heavy emphasis upon the unconscious which has occurred in Allan Kaprow's work is the breaking of the mandatory link between ready-made selection and the unconscious. While the unconscious is frequently the source of inspiration in the act of selection of objects and actions from life to be elevated to the status of art by inclusion in a happening, selection of ready-made materials using uncontrollable external forces is permissable as well. Examples of this technique include Allan Kaprow's procedure for making final selections of activities to be included in "Self Service" (1966) by taking words denoting activities out of the Yellow Pages, placing them in a paper bag, and selecting from them randomly.[9] This type of ready-made selection procedure becomes permissable under Allan Kaprow's critical system, not because this type of selection somehow reflects the unconscious, but, rather, because for Allan Kaprow, it is the act of removal of the artist's hand from the creative process (the "loss of self" referred to in chapter 5) inherent in

selecting an object, rather than copying it, which Allan Kaprow regards as the ultimate significance of Duchamp's work. For Allan Kaprow, the use of uncontrollable external forces in lieu of use of the unconscious as a selective procedure for generating material for a happening is simply one further step in the removal of conscious volition from the creative act.

GOALS:

Although Allan Kaprow's attitude toward the unconscious reflects a philosophical difference of opinion as to the ultimate nature of chance, his approach to chance in terms of what it is expected to achieve for his work shows a great deal of similarities to the Dada philosophical attitude towards chance as an artistic tool.

The Dadaist's regarded chance as a useful means of releasing their minds and creative process or processes from the restraints of logic and Western art traditions Tristan Tzara's statement that "we need works that are strong straight precise and forever beyond understanding. Logic is a complication. Logic is always wrong,"[10] and Hans Richter's statement that, "Chance appeared to us as a magical procedure by which one could transcend the

barriers of causality and of conscious volition and by which the inner eye and ear became more acute, so that new sequences of thought and experiences made their appearance,"[11] give chance a function in the creative process which is not at all unlike that implied by Allan Kaprow's description of chance as a process which,

> . . . is extremely useful in dispersing and breaking up "knowables," of groupings, relationships, and larger structures which have become obsolete and habitual through overuse.

and in which

> Everything, the stuff of art, of daily life, the working of one's mind, gets thrown into sudden and startling patterns, so that if old values are destroyed, new experiences are revealed.[12]

Another functional parallel between the Dada attitude toward chance as a tool to be used for specific philosophical purposes occurs in the area of what effect chance has upon the artist who uses it. Analysis of the Dada philosophy revealed that chance was one means by which that Dadaists approached a goal which Hugo Ball described as "surpass/ing/ oneself in naivete and childishness."[13] As Andre Breton stated,

> Dada, recognizing only instinct, condemns explanation <u>a priori</u>. According to Dada, we must retain no control over ourselves.[14]

This philosophy is paralleled in Allan Kaprow's critical system by his attitudes concerning "loss of self" achieved through willful noninterference in the creative process:

> . . . it is most essential to know that the use of Chance can become a vehicle for the denial of art and self, as much as for their realization.[15]

Allan Kaprow believes it is possible for an artist, through replacement of willful creative acts with procedural rules of selection and decision making to eliminate himself as an entity with respect to a work through his disavowal of authorship.

Both the Dada philosophy concerning rejection of conscious control over oneself and Allan Kaprow's attitude toward "loss of self," derived from Marcel Duchamp's philosophy, express a common attitude towards chance as an approach to a lifestyle in which one releases himself from the restraints of his own ego, and the effects of his previous experiences which could make his works become less spontaneous and more repetitive.

Chance, in both systems, ultimately serves a revelatory function, one similar in many respects to the phenomenon known as "Stopping the World," described by Carlos Casteneda

in the introduction to Journey to Ixtlan:

> Don Juan stated that in order to arrive at "seeing" one first had to "stop the world." "Stopping the world" was indeed an appropriate rendition of certain states of awareness in which the reality of everyday life is altered because the flow of interpretation, which ordinarily runs uninterruptedly, has been stopped by a set of circumstances alien to that flow. In my case the set of circumstances alien to my normal flow of interpretations was the sorcery description of the world. Don Juan's precondition for "stopping the world" was that one had to be convinced; in other words, one had to learn the new description in a total sense, for the purpose of pitting it against the old one, and in that way break the dogmatic certainty, which we all share, that the validity of our perceptions, or our reality of the world, is not to be questioned.[16]

Chance, as the "vehicle of the spontaneous," can serve as an aid in reaching this goal by enabling the artist to see new juxtapositions of elements revealed by the chance process which he would otherwise overlook. These are then passed on to the viewer or participant in the work. By injecting elements of non-ordinary juxtapositions, as in the case of the reciprocal-ready-made juxtaposition of artistic elements into everyday life, onlookers may be startled enough so as to shake their certainty in the "ordinariness" and stability of an environment they tend to take for granted. This is the

ultimate function which both the Dadaists' and Allan Kaprow's systems' use of chance as an artistic tool share.

TECHNIQUE:

The specific methods of applying chance theory to actual works constitutes the most revealing area of comparison of the two bodies of theory. While examination of the definitions and goals categories mostly involved analysis of statements of theory, the area of applications techniques involves examination of specific works. While statements of theory reveal an artist's desires, his works reveal the reality of his attitudes in practice as well as the practicality of his theoretical goals. Analysis of Allan Kaprow's chance applications technique shall concentrate focus upon each of the three categories of chance established in chapter two: Uncontrollable external forces, Actions of the unconscious, and Combinations of uncontrollable external forces with actions of the unconscious.

Uncontrollable External Forces:

In Allan Kaprow's happenings chance in general may be applied to four broad areas: 1) creator(s), 2) materials, 3) form (i.e., composition), and 4) function

(i.e., purpose in life). Uncontrollable external forces may play a role in all of these areas, and generally occurs in one of two forms: 1) the use of natural forces and 2) the use of participants in the work as co-creators. Natural forces may be used as a selector of co-creators and materials or as a decision-making procedure in selection of form-possibilities or intended function of the work.

Allan Kaprow's random selection of words drawn from the Yellow Pages as a means of generating material, including activities, as part of the act of creating "Self Service" (1966) is one example of this technique. Other examples of the use of Nature as a co-creative force which have occurred in Allan Kaprow's works include:

"Rain" (1965) in which paper mache constructions were made and left in the open to decompose slowly, revealing new forms in the process of their disintegration; sheets of writing were left out on a field to also be allowed to decompose in the rain; and trees were painted red in order to reveal new forms as the rain caused the colors to drip onto the ground.

"Fluids" (1967) in which rectangular structures were

constructed out of ice blocks in and around Pasadena, California and left to melt in the sun.

This use of chance to select elements to be included in a work and to make decisions concerning composition is in many ways similar to the typical uses to which uncontrollable external forces were put by the Dadaists. For example, the Yellow Pages selection method used by Allan Kaprow shows marked similarity to Tzara's "Dada Poem" procedure, and the compositional uses of Nature cited above are quite similar in many respects to Arp's technique of producing collages "arranged according to the laws of chance" or Duchamp's techniques used in creating "Three Standard Stoppages," both of which involved dropping materials onto a surface to which they would be attached. The slow decomposition elements of "Rain" and "Fluids" are paralleled by Duchamp's technique of "raising dust on Dust Glasses" which he used as part of the process of creating his "Great Glass" work in which he allowed dust to settle on a portion of the work for a year and a half, as a "painting" technique.

Allan Kaprow's use of participants in the work as co-creators present some minor contrasts to the Dada

methods of using uncontrollable external forces, in that, frequently the participant himself may be allowed to make conscious decisions, as in the case of "Self Service" in which participants were permitted to select activities they wished to perform out of a field of alternatives. Such actions, while not the result of a force of nature external to men in general, were the result of actions external to Allan Kaprow, and therefore, they enabled him to remove his active participation from the final act of creation of the scenario for the work just as much as if these decisions were to have been made by a roll of the die.

The use of participants as co-creators in Allan Kaprow's work appears frequently as a means of generating materials, and making decisions concerning form and function. An example of participant selection of materials from a field of available alternatives may be found in "Household" (1964) in which participants made constructions out of materials they found in a junkyard: The men constructed towers and the women "nests" out of any materials which they could find that seemed appropriate. Composition decisions were made by participants in "Rain" (1965), in

which they made constructions from paper mache. Selection of locations (placement of people within the overall environment being a form of composition) were made by participants in such works as: "Calling" (1965), in which participants wrapped in aluminum foil or placed in laundry bags were transported in automobiles to be dropped off and picked up in various locations throughout New York City before finally being delivered to Grand Central Station; and "Soap" (1965), which took place, in part, in laundromats and carwashes selected by the participants.

Function decisions in almost any happening produced after "Courtyard" (1962), the last work to be performed for an audience, would have to be made by the participants, the group which would previously have been an audience, but which now became the performers of the work, as well. The work was now something they did as opposed to something they saw. The performance became another moment in their lives which had to be integrated into the totality of their experience. For each participant the work would have a different function in this context. This is especially true in the case of "Self Service" (1966), since this work took place over a period of three months. The work was of such length that the pattern of occasional

acts of participation on the part of each person connected with the work had to be integrated within their lives for the entire time of the work's execution.

These examples of using participants as an uncontrollable force in the creation of a work have no parallel in Dada, since works to be performed were always performed by the artist himself, or by professional performing artists, (unless one would wish to consider the acts of rioting on the part of audiences during one Dada production, discussed under the category of Combinations of uncontrollable external forces with actions of the unconscious, to be an example of co-creativity in the area of composition or function). As such, these techniques of Allan Kaprow's represent significant progress within this category in developing new means of removing physical control by the artist over his work, as well as opening up a whole new area for exploration involving the integration of a work of art into the context of the lives of the participants.

ACTIONS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS:

The manifestations of chance within this category by the Dadaists generally took one of two forms: 1) creation

that springs from the unconscious, generally appearing in the form of sound poems, or "verse without words," such as Hugo Ball's recitations at the Cabaret Voltaire or Kurt Schwitter's "Ursonate," and 2) selections from life made by the unconscious, generally "ready-mades," as in the case of Duchamp's later work, or selections of personal momentos, as in the case of Kurt Schwitter's "Merz" columns.

The first of these subcategories is paralleled only in Allan Kaprow's earlier happenings, such as "18 Happenings in 6 Parts" (1959) which includes recitations by performers which were lyrical and rhythmic, but devoid of denotative meanings. Michael Kirby relates such an example in his description of the work in performance:

> . . . The single standing girl had begun to recite. "Fine cocked-feathered moon, me friend," she began in a soft, lilting style, "over an' up in the moon- . . . Lissen shy Jim, jus' look, jus' look . . .[17]

Also included in "18 Happenings in 6 Parts" is a visual analog to sound poetry (Allan Kaprow calls it a "visual poem") entitled "Mary Had Fleas," described by Michael Kirby as a quick sequence of projected slides containing "decorative, freely-lettered words and phrases."[18]

By the time "Courtyard" (1962) appeared, however, this type of manifestation of actions of the unconscious had all but disappeared to be replaced by expressions of the unconscious in the form of heavy symbolism. The audience, which had now been integrated into Allan Kaprow's happenings as performer/participants, were no longer placed in a recipient role which a performer of a sound poem could use as the object of his recitation. The participants were available to Allan Kaprow as performers of symbolic actions ordered in such a manner as to become performed fantasies--the realization of images and situations reflecting Allan Kaprow's unconscious. Allan Kaprow explains the position of this aspect of the actions of the unconscious mind in his works at this time in a passage written in 1965:

> My works are conceived on, generally, four levels. One is the direct "suchness" of every action, whether with others, or by themselves, with no more meaning than the sheer immediacy of what is going on. This physical, sensible, tangible being is to me very important. The second is that they are performed fantasies not exactly like life, though derived from it. The third is that they are an organized structure of events. And the fourth level, no less important, is their "meaning" in a symbolical or suggestive sense.19

Both the "performed fantasy" and "symbolic" levels may involve direct communication from Allan Kaprow's

unconscious, with the "performed fantasy" level, as described above, having overtones of a "ready-made aided" quality. The nature of their function, however, differs markedly from that of a sound poem or automatic drawing in that there exists an intended denotative or connotative set of meanings to the actions, situations, and events which are included in the scenario in order to communicate on the "performed fantasy" or "symbolic" levels. Heavy emphasis upon these levels tended to inject enough thematic content into such works so as to dominate them completely. We find an example of this situation in "Household" (1964) in which the events and actions advancing the performed fantasy, involving a battle between the sexes, take on many characteristics of a theatrical plot which serves as a fairly rigid framework within which comparatively little freedom of decision can be given to the performer/participants in the areas of choice of activities, as everything included in the work must "fit." As a result of this problem, the happenings produced after "Household" manifest very little in the way of performed fantasies or symbolic imagery and Allan Kaprow's current attitude toward the use of the unconscious in this manner is well

described by the statement, quoted earlier in this chapter, that "you don't have to dig into your psyche anymore."

Currently, the use of direct communications from the unconscious occurs on a much more subtle manner, reflecting the "suchness" and "organized structure of events" levels more than the "performed fantasy" and "symbolic levels." Recent works reflect images, situations, and activities which come to Allan Kaprow's mind and are presented in the scenario to the performers but do not reflect any overt attempts at communication of symbolic imagery. One such example of this new style may be found in the case of "Fluids" (1967), in which the action of constructing structures out of ice merely represents itself--an act of changing forms and impermanence, interesting in itself, devoid of any deeper meaning, but, still, the result of Allan Kaprow's active imagination.

* * *

Ready-mades, that is to say, selections made from life of non-art elements placed into the context of art, occur throughout Allan Kaprow's happenings, reflecting the importance of Duchamp's "denial of authorship" noninvolvement in the execution of artworks within Allan Kaprow's

theoretical system. Allan Kaprow's happenings consist almost totally of actions derived from everyday life, performed as part of a created "work of art" and, therefore, elevated to the status of art by their context. Examples of this process of elevation include:

"Orange" (1964) in which the action of squeezing oranges and drinking the juice, and the action of buying and consuming orange soda play major roles in the work.

"Soap" (1965) in which participants soil articles of clothing and wash them in a laundromat, and cover cars with jam and wash them in a carwash or parking lot.

"Self Service" (1966) which includes numerous everyday activities such as hammering nails into walls, giving paper flowers to passersby, washing clothes, whistling tunes in elevators, and eating sandwiches and drinking soda in a phone booth.

Many of the activities in Allan Kaprow's happenings are bizarre or unusual enough as to qualify as "ready-mades aided" because the activity drawn from life has been altered slightly before inclusion into the happening. An example of this phenomena would be "Fluids" (1967) in which the action of building a structure has been altered

by using ice instead of wood, brick, or concrete as the building material.

Nearly all of Allan Kaprow's works produced since 1964 make extensive use of the reciprocal ready-made process in which a work of art becomes part of the everyday world. These works, occurring in public places for the most part, are frequently witnessed by innocent bystanders who become a sort of "audience" for the work, but with a difference: they do not come to witness a "work of art," but they see the events occur while they go about their business--the work becomes a bizarre event in life which they witness and must attempt to make sense of. Allan Kaprow calls this the "myth making" aspect of the work and explains how this functions, with reference to "Calling" (1965) during his interview with Richard Kostelanetz:

> . . . The most simple group is a part of the normal environment. They are not audiences coming to watch a performance; they may just pass on very shortly to whatever they have to do. Whereas if we go to the theater or the rodeo or the circus, we are sitting there not just to watch a show but to judge it with a whole battery of standards . . .
>
> /In Calling, the witnesses were/ innocent of the fact that it could be called theater. However, their recountering of what happened there is the theater. . . .

> . . . That's what I call the myth-making aspect of a work--the gossip mongering that goes on. If you hear about a Happening but weren't actually involved, it takes on a reality composed of what you imagine, what you brought from your own experience, and what you've heard. If it moves you or if enough people engage in this kind of reportage, or gossiping, be they stimulated by Vogue and these other magazines or just a friend's report, it is always the sort of thing that can begin to spread. If it catches on--if for some strange reason it has its finger on the pulse of everybody's needs--then there is some kind of magic attached to that. It's a tempest that vibrates through the daytimes of everybody and perhaps the nighttimes.[20]

This phenomena points out the essential difference between the ready-made art in Allan Kaprow's happenings and the ready-made art as it appeared in Dada. While Duchamp strived to place the concept of the work over its execution, and, therefore, the idea of the work of art over the physical object, his ready-mades generally took physical form. In other words, Duchamp's ready-mades left a physical residue such as a urinal or bicycle wheel that exists long after the idea has occurred, even after Duchamp, himself, has passed on.[21] Allan Kaprow, by advancing the concept of the ready-made in his theories to emphasize actions as opposed to physical objects manages to create transient works of art which physically exist only a short while, frequently, even self destruct (as in the case of "Rain"

(1965) and "Fluids" (1967) leaving only the idea as a permanent phenomenon. In the case of "Calling" (1965), "Self Service," (1966), "Fluids" (1967), and other works which are "witnessed" by bystanders, this idea becomes a tangible, living, changing phenomena. This aspect of Allan Kaprow's work represents a significant theoretical development in that it enables his happenings enormous opportunities for interaction with everyday life and the unpredictability that comes from such interaction.

Combinations of Uncontrollable External Forces with Actions of the Unconscious:

The Dada manifestations of chance in this category generally emphasized the act of reception on the part of the audience of the performance of a work reflecting the use of chance in either of the preceding categories. In the act of reception, the audience represented an uncontrollable force with respect to the creator of the work whose members used their unconscious minds to assign meaning to what they perceived, as they perceived it. This act of reception of images and assignment of meaning could either involve the simple reception of a non-denotative act or it could be taken one step further by presenting

the audience with a matrix of simultaneous images which each member of the audience would have to select from in real time--an act requiring decisions to be made faster than the conscious mind could make them, thus making the array of perceived images a matter of unpredictability on the part of both the initiating artist and each audience member, as well.

In Allan Kaprow's earlier works, occurring from 1958 until 1962, we find an audience present during the performance of each work, which could act as the receiver of images presented by the performers of the work. Individual acts, such as the recitation of non-denotative sounds (whistles, clucking sounds, barks, etc.) by performers costumed as tarpaper mounds in "A Service for the Dead" (1962), could be assigned meaning by the members of the audience, much as in the case of a Dada performance. Individual images of a non-denotative nature were relatively few in number, however, as the earlier works tended to make much use of orchestrated simultaneity. An example of this form in Allan Kaprow's earliest happenings is "18 Happenings in 6 Parts" (1959) in which actions are performed simultaneously in three rooms with the audience

being divided into thirds and distributed equally among these performance areas. Michael Kirby describes one such three part simultaneous sequence in his description of this happening in performance:

> In the first room one girl was bouncing a ball while the other was going through a series of formal movements: she stood with one hand on her head, the other arm straight in front of herself and one leg raised to the side; she bent the raised leg back at the knee; she reached back with the arm that had been extended and grasped the lifted ankle.
>
> The record in the middle room continued to speak with long pauses between phrases. "They shall ready themselves . . .," it said. "The time is near . . . Now is the time. Number 1, his move . . ." The first man picked up one of the four-inch wooden cubes which were painted white with single red letters on the sides and placed it down on the center of the table. "Number Two shall move," the voice on the record intoned. The other man picked up a block and thumped it down. "Now one . . . Again two . . ." The expressionless men each moved a block when directed to do so.
>
> In the next room, the single standing girl had begun to recite "Fine cocked-feathered moon, me friend," she began in a soft, lilting style, "over an' up in the moon-" When the brief speech ended, perhaps forty-five seconds later, (". . . Lissen, shy Jim, jus' look, jus' look, jus' look . . ."), the blue and white lights edging the room were turned out, and another group of slides was projected rapidly. This time the new spectators--none of whom had seen the slides during the first two parts--looked at photographs of objects: a clock reflected

> in a mirror, a cornflakes box, smoke rising from a pipe, smoke reflected in a mirror as it rose from a cigarette.[22]

Thus a person in the first room would be watching one girl bouncing a ball juxtaposed with her partner going through a series of formal movements while hearing sounds produced by a record player in the second room along with the recitation of a sound poem coming from the third room, and would have to quickly select those elements to focus his perception on, as all of this was occurring around him.

Other examples of simultaneity in Allan Kaprow's early works include:

"A Spring Happening" (1961) in which the performance occurred in three areas: An enclosed audience area with two performance spaces, one along each side of the audience area. Michael Kirby describes a sequence in this work, for example, in which a performer costumed in a large cardboard box was going through a series of movements in the area to the right of the audience, while two performers were miming a jousting match on the left.[23]

"Courtyard" (1962) which includes the following instruction in its scenario:

> VOICES AND ACTIONS from windows . . . apartment noise heard . . . people lean out of

> windows . . . flash lights, rattle dishes and silverware, dust mops, etc. During this, DISHES are thrown out of mountain, breaking on courtyard floor (Bicycle man is still going around, ringing bell.)[24]

These uses of simultaneity strongly reflect the influence of Kurt Schwitter's proposed "Merz Theatre" form. Allan Kaprow explains that,

> I was interested in the ideas of Kurt Schwitters. He actually conceived Happenings but never did them. His writings about possible activities are almost like pre-happenings.[25]

The elimination of the audience as an entity which followed the performance of "Courtyard" in 1962, however, made this category of receptivity much more difficult to achieve. This, combined with Allan Kaprow's period of experimentation with symbolic images reduced the orchestral quality of his works considerably. The works following this symbolic period, however, began to reflect a new form of simultaneity not found previously: the performance of a work over a series of widely spaced locales:

> . . . A single activity is treated exhaustively: /for example,/ digging a hole and filling it in, over and over again. Either one person can do this over a period of weeks, or many persons can do it, once each, in different locales and times. There is a chance that this sort of reduction in range of images may lead to a simpler way of dealing with varied activities in the future.[26]

An example of this form of simultaneity in practice is "Self Service," (1966), in which the activities of the work occurred in Boston, New York and Los Angeles. In this form, simultaneity does not express itself in an immediately present and visible matrix of activities to be chosen from in real time, (in fact the activities in "Self Service" never occurred in more than one city at a time) but the simultaneity exists as a mental state: the realization on the part of the participants that the work is larger than the frame of their immediate perception, that there are parts of the work which occur too far away for them to see, but that they occur just the same and are part of the same work they are participating in. "Self Service" also reinforced this concept by having several activities occur in different parts of each city simultaneously, so that each participant engaging in an activity in Boston, for example, knew that other activities were occurring in other parts of Boston at the same time. In such cases the act of selection and perception is completely internal --an expression of Allan Kaprow's emphasis of ideas over physical entities.

Another phenomenon to occur as part of the performance

of Allan Kaprow's recent works is the effect that the reciprocal ready-made and "myth-making" qualities of such works as "Soap" (1965), "Rain" (1965), "Calling" (1965), "Self Service" (1966), and "Fluids" (1967) have on innocent bystanders, discussed above. The process of reception by innocent bystanders of the reciprocal ready-made portion of the work is a form of reception of the performance of a work reflecting selection by the unconscious. The observers of such activities assign meaning to what they perceive as they attempt to make sense of what they see, a function of their unconscious. This act of assignment of meaning is beyond both Allan Kaprow's and the performers' control.

In addition to these developments in the area of receptivity of non-denotative images, there is a form of chance in this category developed by Allan Kaprow which we do not find in Dadaism: ready-made selection of a class of elements from the everyday world to be selected further by uncontrollable external forces. An example of this form is the selection of radio music as a source of sound images for a work, such as we find in "Courtyard" (1962) in the following sequence, described by Michael Kirby:

> Rock and roll music was heard. A dark-haired girl in a plain pink nightgown was walking through the audience with a small transistor radio held near her ear. ("You're having a love affair with the radio," Kaprow told her.) She strolled langorously and with no apparent goal around the mountain and began to climb one of the ladders. Some of the spectators getting into the habit of moving, changed position so that they could watch her. Once on top, the girl still seemed oblivious of the audience. She lay on the mattresses and struck poses--swinging a leg over the edge, stretching a bare foot in the air--as if for her own entertainment.
>
> (Because the transistor radio lacked power, a larger radio inside the mountain was tuned to the same station. The timing such such that at two performances news was broadcast on that station rather than rock and roll. The girl changed the station and the man operating the larger radio supported the volume as soon as he could find the new channel. One night a Spanish-language rhythm program was used.)[27]

A similar selection of radio programs as a source of sound was used in "A Service for the Dead" (1962) in which several radios were present, distributed in various dressing rooms in the Maidman Playhouse, each tuned to a different station, and in "Self Service" (1966) which included an activity to be performed in Boston, in which transistor radios were placed on shelves in a supermarket, replacing the Muzak with whatever the station was playing at the time.

This new form of selection of a class of items, rather than a single item injects a new life through increased unpredictability into the ready-made, which in this case is not a static object, nor even a repeatable action, but a truly living selection from life which changes from moment to moment.

* * *

The analysis of Allan Kaprow's theories in relation to their Dada counterparts, above, has been a categorical one. This approach reveals a pattern or similarities and differences between the two bodies of theory which indicates the theoretical progress Allan Kaprow has effected in the areas of chance definitions, goals, and applications theory. In the "definitions" category a movement away from relating chance directly to the artist's unconscious mind has occurred accompanied by a corresponding increase in emphasis upon exterior factors, such as the processes of change wrought by natural forces. This movement is related to theoretical developments in the "goals" category which reinforce and amplify the Dada goal of movement away from causality and conscious volition in the creative

process by emphasizing the concepts of "loss of self" and "denial of authorship" as philosophical goals to be achieved through the use of chance in the creative process. This movement indicates a development of chance theory in Allan Kaprow's work which emphasizes Duchamp's philosophical approach to the problem of art and its creator as a foundation upon which to build. Allan Kaprow's work in the "applications" category comprises a most significant development of theory in that a comprehensive system for removal of conscious volition has been achieved. The case of Aristotle's model of causal reality (i.e., the "four causes") to categorize areas for replacement of conscious volition with chance provides a means for an almost complete achievement of non-causality in the creation of a happening by attacking the problem at its heart. It is in this category of applications theory that expansion of the ready-made concept occurs to include events and locales as well as objects. Other significant developments in the applications category include the use of participants as co-creators of happenings and the juxtaposition of happenings with "non-art" aspects of life to assure unpredictability as to the function of the work in the context of

the world at large. These factors give each happening a life of its own independent from its initiating artist.

One could approach Allan Kaprow's works and theories from a chronological viewpoint and perceive a direction of theoretical movement that occurs within Kaprow's system, itself. The knowledge gained from such an observation reinforces our first conclusions. The earliest works cited reflect much greater concern with the unconscious mind and its symbols than more recent works. The progression of works and theories also indicates a decrease in the role of Allan Kaprow's conscious volition in the creation of the scenarios and a corresponding decrease in his control over the events which occur in the course of performance. The most recent works draw their basic energies from the input of the participant/creators and use ready-made locations for their setting, thus making use of interaction between the work and its environment as a means of increasing unpredictability.

The theoretical achievements of Allan Kaprow hold significance for experimental artists today in two aspects:

1) They indicate how unpredictability can be used by an artist as a means of integrating his works into the

overall environment, and the overall environment into his works; a process which democratizes art and makes it interactive.

2) They raise significant questions concerning the role of the artist in relation to both his own work and to society at large, which contemporary artists in all fields, but particularly in such new areas as intermedia, must carefully consider and attempt to answer.

In this manner, Allan Kaprow's work provides an answer to some of the problems raised by the Dadaists' rejection of traditional art forms as to what form the new art must take, but raises new questions concerning what these new forms for art imply. We find that Allan Kaprow has developed a critical basis upon which new art forms can be based involving interaction between the initiating artist and all the unpredictable elements of the world through removal of direct control from certain aspects of his work, but we are now faced with new problems concerning what impact the new art-forms based upon this foundation shall have upon society at large, and the art world in particular.

Allan Kaprow's views on this subject can be inferred

from the title of a continuing series of periodical articles which he has been producing recently which reads, "The Education of the Un-Artist." The term "un-artist" refers to the new role which those who would previously have been considered "artists" must now face. Allan Kaprow explains:

> If non-art is almost impossible, anti-art is virtually inconceivable. Among the knowledgable (and practically every graduate student should qualify), all gestures, thoughts and deeds may become art at the whim of the art world. Even murder could be an admissable artistic proposition while rejected in practice. Anti-art in 1969 is embraced in <u>every case</u> as pro-art, and therefore, from the standpoint of one of its chief functions, it is nullified. You cannot be against art when art invites its own "destruction" as a Punch-and-Judy act among the repertoire of poses art may take. And so in losing the last shred of pretense to moral leadership through moral confrontation, anti-art, like all other art philosophies, simply is obliged to answer to ordinary human conduct; and also, sadly enough, answer to the refined life style dictated by the cultivated and rich who accept it with open arms. . . . Artists cannot profitably worship what is moribund; nor can they alternatively war against such bowing and scraping when only moments later they enshrine their destructions and acts as cult objects in the same institution they were bent on destroying. This is a patent sham. A plain case of management takeover.
>
> But if artists are reminded that nobody but themselves gives a damn about all this, or about whether all agree with the judgment here,

> then the entropy of the whole scene may begin to appear very funny.
>
> Seeing the situation as low comedy is a way out of the bind. I would propose that the first practical step toward laughter is to un-art ourselves, avoid all esthetic roles, give up all references to being artists of any kind whatever. In becoming "un-artists" . . . we may only exist fleetingly as the non-artist, for when the profession of art is discarded, the art category is meaningless, or at least antique. An un-artist is one who is engaged in changing-jobs, in modernizing.[28]

What is the new direction the artist, or "un-artist," if you will, should take in order to become relevant to the needs of society? Allan Kaprow further explains:

> It can be pretty well predicted that the various forms of mixed mediums or assemblage arts will increase, both in the highbrow sense and in mass-audience applications such as light shows, space-age demonstrations at world fairs, teaching aids, sales displays, toys and political campaigns. And these may be the means by which all the arts are phased out.
>
> While public opinion accepts mixed mediums as additions to the pantheon, or as new occupants around the outer edges of the expanding universe of each traditional medium, it is more likely that they are rituals of escape from the traditions. Given the historical thrust of the modern arts toward specialism or "purity"--pure painting, pure poetry, pure music, pure dance--any admixtures have had to be viewed as contaminants. And in this context, <u>deliberate</u> contamination can now be interpreted as a rite of passage. . . .

Among the artists involved in mixed means during the last decade, a few became interested in taking advantage of the arts' blurry boundaries by going the next step toward blurring art as a whole into a number of non-arts. Dick Higgins, in his book, foew & ombwhw, describes in many instructive examples how vanguardists have taken positions between theater and painting, poetry and sculpture, music and philosophy, and between various intermedia (his term), game theory, sports and politics.

Abbie Hoffman applied the intermedium of Happenings (via the Provos) to a philosophical and political goal two or three summers ago. With a group of friends, he went to the observation balcony of the New York Stock Exchange. At a signal they tossed handfuls of dollar bills onto the floor below where trading was at its height. According to his report, brokers cheered, dived for the bills, the tickertape stopped, the market was probably affected, and the press covered the event's conclusion as the cops arrived. Later that night, it appeared nationally on televised news coverage: a medium sermon "for the hell of it" as Hoffman might say.

It makes no difference whether this is called activism, criticism, pranksterism, self-advertisement or art. Intermedia implies fluidity and simultaneity of roles. When art is only one of several possible functions a situation may have, it loses its privileged status and becomes, so to speak, a lower-case attribute. The intermedia response can be applied to anything, say an old glass. The glass can serve the geometrist to explain ellipses, the historian as an index to the technology of a past age, a painter for a still-life and the gourmet to drink his Chateau Latour '53. We are not used to thinking like this, all at once, or non-hierarchically, but the intermedialist does it naturally. Context rather than category. Flow rather than work of art.

It follows that the conventions of painting, music, architecture, dance, poetry, theater and so on, may survive in a marginal capacity as academic researches, like the study of Latin. Aside from these analytic and curatorial uses, every sign points to their obsolescence. By the same token, galleries and museums, bookshops and libraries, concert halls, stages, arenas and places of worship, will be limited to the conservation of antiquities; that is, to what was done in the name of art up to about 1960.

Agencies for the spread of information via the mass mediums and for the instigation of social activities, will become the new channels of insight and communication; not substituting for the classic "art experience" (however many things that may have been) but offering former artists compelling ways of participating in structured processes that can reveal new values, including the value of fun.

In this respect the technological pursuits of today's non-artists and un-artists will multiply as industry, government and education provide their resources. "Systems" technology involving the interfacing of personal and group experiences, instead of "product" technology, will dominate the trend. Software, in other words. But it will be a systems approach that favors an openness toward outcome, in contrast to the literal and goal-oriented uses now employed by most systems specialists. Like the childhood pastime "Telephone" (in which friends in a circle whisper a few words into one ear after the other only to hear them come out delightfully different when the last per- says them aloud), the feedback loop is the model. Playfulness and the playful use of technology suggests a positive interest in acts of continuous discovery. Playfulness can become in the near future a social and psychological benefit.

A global network of simultaneously transmitting and receiving "TV Arcades." Open to the public

24 hours a day, like any washerette. An arcade in every big city of the world. Each equipped with 100 or more monitors of different sizes from a few inches to wall-scale, in planar and irregular surfaces. A dozen automatically moving cameras (like those secreted in banks and airports, but now prominently displayed) will pan and fix anyone or thing that happens to come along or be in view. Including cameras and monitors if no one is present. A person will be free to do whatever he wants, and will see himself on the monitors in different ways. A crowd of people may multiply their images into a throng.

But the cameras will send the same images to all <u>other</u> arcades, at the same time or after a programmed delay. Thus what happens in one arcade may be happening in 1,000 generated 1,000 times. But the built-in program for distributing the signals, visible and audible, random and fixed, could also be manually altered at any arcade. A woman might want to make electronic love to a particular man she saw on a monitor. Controls would permit her to localize (freeze) the communication within a few TV tubes. Other visitors to the same arcade may feel free to enjoy and even enhance the mad and surprising scramble by tuning their dials accordingly. The world could make up its own social relations as it went along. Everybody in and out of touch all at once!

NOTES

Preface

[1]Kenneth E. Boulting, The Meaning of the Twentieth Century (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 1 and 2.

[2]Boulting, p. 6.

[3]Boulting, pp. 7 and 8.

[4]Boulting, p. 9.

Chapter I

[1]Quotation from Hugo Ball, "Diary, Zurich, May 15, 1916," in Dada: Art and Anti Art, Hans Richter (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1965), p. 14.

[2]Richard Huelsenbeck, "Dada Lives," The Dada Painters and Poets: an Anthology, Robert Motherwell, ed., (New York: Wittenborn, 1951), p. 279. Motherwell anthology hereafter cited as DPP.

[3]From George Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," DPP, p. 165.

[4]George Ribemont-Dessaignes, "History of Dada," DPP, p. 110.

[5]Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto 1918," DPP, p. 78.

[6]Ribemont-Dessaignes, pp. 104-105.

[7]Tristan Tzara, "Manifesto on Feeble Love and Bitter Love," DPP, p. 87.

[8]Hugo Ball, "Dada Fragments," DPP, p. 52.

[9]Paul Eluard, "Information Please," DPP, p. 229.

[10]Tristan Tzara, "Manifesto of Mr. aa the Anti-Philosopher," DPP, p. 84.

[11]Ball, Dada Fragments," DPP, p. 52.

[12]Hugnet, DPP, pp. 28-29.

[13]Richard Huelsenbeck, "En Avant Dada, A History of Dadaism," DPP, pp. 28-29.

[14]Ribemont-Dessaignes, DPP, p. 115.

[15]Ribemont-Dessaignes, DPP, p. 116.

[16]Richter, p. 187.

[17]Hugnet, DPP, p. 188.

[18]Richter, p. 188.

[19]Hugnet, DPP, p. 193.

Chapter II

[1]Richter, p. 51.

[2]Richter, p. 51.

[3]Tzara, "Dada Manifesto, 1918," DPP, p. 81.

[4]Ball,"Dada Fragments," DPP, p. 53.

[5]Ball, "Dada Fragments," DPP, p. 53.

[6]Tzara, "Manifesto on Feeble Love and Bitter Love," DPP, p. 94.

[7]Andre Breton, "For Dada," DPP, p. 203.

[8]Tzara, "Manifesto on Feeble Love, etc.," DPP, p. 80.

[9]Lewis Carroll (Charles Dodgeson), "Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There," The Annotated Alice, Martin Gardner, ed., (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1973), p. 269.

[10]Richter, p. 57.

[11]Tzara, "Manifesto of Feeble Love, etc.," DPP, pp. 92-93.

[12]Hugnet, DPP, p. 134.

[13]Richter, p. 51.

[14]Wm. S. Rubin, Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage, (New York: Museum of Modern Art; distributed by New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Conn., 1968), p. 41.

[15]Richter, p. 60.

[16]Marcel Duchamp, From the Green Box, George Hamilton, ed. & trans., (New Haven: Readymade Press, 1957), p. 1.

[17]Richter, p. 93.

[18]Duchamp, p. 7.

[19]Arturo Schwartz, Marcel Duchamp, Ready-Mades, etc. (1913-1964), (Milano: Galleria Schwartz, 1964), pp. 45-46.

[20]Schwartz, p. 46.

[21]Richter, p. 57.

[22]Emilio Servadio, "Psychoanalysis and Telepathy," Psychoanalysis and the Occult, George Devereax, ed., (New York: International Universities Press, 1953), p. 212.

[23]C. G. Jung, "From: Psychological Types," The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, Violet S. DeLazlo, ed., (New York: Modern Library, 1959), p. 283. DeLazlo anthology hereafter referred to as BWJ.

[24]C. G. Jung, "From: On the Nature of the Psyche," BWJ, p. 55.

[25]Jung, "Psychological Types," BWJ, p. 284.

[26]C. G. Jung, "From: Symbols of Transformation," BWJ, p. 21.

[27]Jung, "Symbols of Transformation," BWJ, p. 33.

[28]C. J. Jung, "From: The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," BWJ, p. 153.

[29]Jung, "Psychological Types," BWJ, p. 261.

[30]Hugo Ball, "Fragment from Flight From Time," Eugene Joles, trans., DPP, Intro., pp. xix-xx.

[31]Richter, p. 139.

[32]Richter, pp. 142-143.

[33]Rubin, p. 41.

[34]Schwartz, p. 72.

[35]From Richter, p. 89.

[36]From Schwartz, p. 22.

[37]Richter, p. 89.

[38]From Richter, p. 49.

[39]Richter, pp. 153-154.

[40]Hugnet, pp. 158-159.

[41]From Richter, p. 30.

[42]Richter, p. 89.

[43]Tristan Tzara, "Zurich Chronicle (1915-1916)," DPP, p. 236.

[44]Kurt Schwitters, "Merz-1920," DPP, pp. 62-63.

Chapter III

[1]Pasadena Art Museum, Allan Kaprow, an Exhibition Sponsored by the Art Alliance of the Pasadena Art Museum, (Pasadena, Calif.: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967), p. 20. Hereafter cited as AKE.

[2]Richard Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed Means; an Introduction to Happenings, Kinetic Environments, and Other Mixed Means Performances, (New York: Dial Press, 1968), p. 103.

[3]AKE, p. 20; Kostelanetz, p. 106.

[4]AKE, p. 7; Kostelanetz, p. 103.

[5]AKE, p. 7.

[6]Allan Kaprow, Assemblages, Environments, and Happenings (New York: H. N. Abrahms, 1966), pp. 159-160. Hereafter cited as AEH.

[7]Michael Kirby, Happenings (New York: Dutton, 1965), p. 45.

[8]Kostelanetz, p. 111.

[9]Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollack," Art News, New York, Oct., 1958, p. 26.

[10]Kaprow, "Legacy of Jackson Pollack," p. 26.

[11]Kaprow, "Legacy of Jackson Pollack," pp. 26 and 55.

[12]AKE, p. 21.

[13]Kirby, pp. 45-46.

[14]AKE, p. 11.

[15]Kirby, pp. 46-47.

[16]Kirby, p. 47.

[17]AKE, p. 17.

[18]AEH, p. 184.

[19]AEH, p. 185.

[20]Kostelanetz, p. 127.

[21]AKE, p. 4.

[22]Allan Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," Art News, New York, Oct., 1967, p. 46.

[23]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 46.

[24]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," pp. 46-47.

[25]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 47.

[26]The similarity between these suggestions and Duchamp's "Green Box" notes indicate the origins of this subgenre. This is an example of how the Duchampian philosophy of art and aesthetics integrates itself into Alan Kaprow's works.

[27]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 47.

[28]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 47.

[29]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," pp. 47 and 70.

[30]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 46.

[31]Allan Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," Art News, New York, May, 1961, p. 58.

[32]Kostelanetz, p. 117.

[33]Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," p. 59.

Chapter IV

[1]Kostelanetz, p. 125.

[2]AEH, pp. 168-169.

[3]AEH, p. 169.

[4]AEH, p. 174.

[5]AEH, p. 175.

[6]AEH, pp. 175-176.

[7]Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," pp. 59-60.

[8]AEH, p. 257.

[9]AEH, p. 181.

Chapter V

[1]AKE, p. 8.

[2]Kostelanetz, p. 102.

[3]Kostelanetz, p. 103.

[4]AEH, p. 180.

[5]AEH, pp. 179-180.

[6]AEH, p. 180.

[7]AKE, p. 12.

[8]AKE, p. 12.

[9]Kostelanetz, p. 105.

[10]Kostelanetz, pp. 120-121.

[11]AEH, p. 176. These four areas of application are derived from Aristotle's model of causality as described in the second book of his Physics.

[12]AEH, p. 176 and p. 180.

[13]AEH, pp. 176-177.

[14]AEH, p. 166.

[15]AEH, p. 167.

[16]AEH, p. 198.

[17]Kostelanetz, p. 113.

[18]Kostelanetz, p. 113.

[19]AEH, p. 177.

[20]AEH, p. 202.

[21]AEH, pp. 178-179.

[22]AEH, pp. 202-203.

[23]AKE, p. 13.

[24]AEH, p. 173.

[25]Allan Kaprow, "The Education of the Un-Artist, part II," Art News, New York, May, 1972, p. 34.

[26]Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," p. 62.

[27]AKE, p. 8.

[28]AEH, pp. 188-189.

[29]AEH, p. 189.

[30]AEH, pp. 189-190.

[31]AEH, p. 190.

[32]AEH, pp. 190-191.

[33]AEH, pp. 191-192.

[34]AEH, p. 193.

[35]AEH, p. 193.

[36]AEH, p. 193.

[37]AEH, p. 193.

[38]AEH, pp. 193-194.

[39]AEH, p. 194.

[40]AEH, p. 196.

[41]AEH, p. 197.

[42]AEH, p. 173.

[43]AEH, p. 198.

[44]AEH, p. 181.

[45]Kaprow, "Pinpointing Happenings," p. 71.

[46] Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," p. 62.

Chapter VI

[1]AEH, pp. 175-176.

[2]AEH, p. 175.

[3]Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene," p. 59.

[4]AEH, p. 174.

[5]AKE, p. 9.

[6]Kostelanetz, p. 113.

[7]Kirby, pp. 49-50.

[8]AKE, p. 8.

[9]Kostelanetz, p. 113.

[10]Tzara, p. 80.

[11]Richter, p. 57.

[12]AEH, p. 181.

[13]Ball, "Dada Fragments," p. 53.

[14]Breton, p. 203.

[15]AEH, p. 180.

[16]Carlos Castenada, Journey to Ixtlan, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 14.

[17]Kirby, p. 76.

[18]Kirby, p. 81.

[19]Kirby, p. 47.

[20]Kostelanetz, pp. 117-118.

[21]This set of circumstances is slightly mitigated by the fact that many of these ready-mades exist today only in the form of replicas of the "originals"which have been lost. An object still, however, must exist to communicate the thought.

[22]Kirby, p. 76.

[23]Kirby, pp. 98-99.

[24]Alan Kaprow, "Courtyard," Kirby, p. 106.

[25]AKE, p. 8.

[26]AKE, p. 10.

[27]Kirby, p. 164.

[28]Allan Kaprow, "The Education of the Un-Artist, Part I," Art News, New York, Feb., 1971, pp. 30-31.

[29]Kaprow, "Un-Artist, Part I," pp. 31 and 65.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ball, Hugo. "Dada Fragments," The Dada Painters and Poets; An Anthology, Robert Motherwell, ed., (New York: Wittenborn, 1951), pp. 49-54. Motherwell anthology hereafter referred to as DPP.

Boulting, Kenneth E. The Meaning of the Twentieth Century. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

Breton, Andre. "For Dada," DPP, pp. 199-203.

Castenada, Carlos. Journey to Ixtlan, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972).

Carroll, Lewis (Charles Dodgeson), "Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There," Martin Gardner, ed., The Annotated Alice, (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1973), pp. 165-345.

Duchamp, Marcel. From the Green Box, George Hamilton, ed. & trans., (New Haven, Readymade Press, 1957).

Huelsenbeck, Richard. "En Avant Dada, A History of Dadaism," DPP, pp. 23-47.

Huelsenbeck, Richard. "Dada Lives," DPP, pp. 279-282.

Hugnet, George. "The Dada Spirit in Painting," DPP, pp. 123-196.

Jung, C.G. "From: On the Nature of the Psyche," The Basic Writings of C.G. Jung, Violet S. DeLazelo, ed., (New York: Modern Library, 1959), pp. 37-104. DeLazlo anthology hereafter cited as BWJ.

Jung, C.G. "From: Psychological Types," BWJ, pp. 183-285.

Jung, C.G. "From: The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," BWJ, pp. 105-182.

Jung, C.G. "From: Symbols of Transformation," BWJ, pp. 3-36.

Kaprow, Allan. Assemblages, Environments, and Happenings, (New York: H. N. Abrahms, 1966). Hereafter cited as AEH.

Kaprow, Allan. "Calling," TDR (Tulane Drama Review), New Orleans, Winter, 1965, pp. 203-211.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Courtyard," Happenings, Michael Kirby, (New York: Dutton, 1965).

Kaprow, Allan. "The Education of the Un-Artist, Part I," Art News, New York, Feb., 1971, pp. 28-31; 66-68.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Education of the Un-Artist, Part II," Art News, New York, May, 1972, pp. 34-39; 62-63.

Kaprow, Allan. "18 Happenings in 6 Parts," Kirby, pp. 53-66.

Kaprow, Allan. "Happenings in the New York Scene," Art News, New York, May, 1961, pp. 36-39; 58-62.

Kaprow, Allan. "Household," AEH, pp. 323-324.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Legacy of Jackson Pollack," Art News, New York, Oct. 1958, pp. 24-26; 55-57.

Kaprow, Allan. "Pinpointing Happenings," Art News, New York, Oct. 1967, pp. 46-47; 70-71.

Kaprow, Allan. "Raining," AEH, pp. 340-341.

Kaprow, Allan. "Self Service: A Happening," TDR, New Orleans, Spring, 1966, pp. 160-164.

Kaprow, Allan. "A Service for the Dead," Art International, Zurich, Jan. 25, 1963, pp. 46-47.

Kaprow, Allan. "Soap," AEH, pp. 328-339.