

From Carola Dertnig
To Yvonne Rainer

9 May 2012

Dear Yvonne,

I hope this finds you well.

I just travelled from Vienna with a group of students to see your show in Bregenz.

I said to them: 7 hours on the train is long, but there have not been many Yvonne Rainer Retrospectives on offer yet, not in Europe and not in the States."

So off we went... during the Easter holidays.

It was so interesting to see the films and performances "all at once," and to better understand the relationship between the performance and films and, later on, the relationship between your early performances and your more recent performances. One of the students, Janine Schneider, came to our opening in Bregenz. I think she spoke with you? Maybe you remember meeting her in 2007, when you were in Vienna—I think—for *Continuous Project Altered Daily*.

Two first-year students had the idea to interview you, and met you at the hotel. Of course they were excited to meet you and ask the questions they had prepared for the interview. In the middle of talking and getting the camcorder ready for recording, the fire alarm went off, and it was SO loud that you all had to leave the hotel. It was quite an exciting "fire alarm." The two students were so embarrassed, they had just started to study Performative Art at the Academy—and were just hoping that there would be no failure—and certainly no fire alarm! Anyway, Janine was one of these two students.

I often think of this funny beginning.

Meanwhile, Janine is my student assistant and I remember you loved the "fire alarm interview." They showed the video at the students' end-of-the-year presentations.

The Performance Class, which I have been teaching at the Academy since 2007, has continued to develop ever since, and I still find it very challenging!

I remember when you and I once spoke about teaching and the question came up: how does one teach performance? This still seems to be a very crucial question to me!

Well, last year Felicitas Thun and I organized a symposium on the topic at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna called *This Sentence is Now Being Performed – Research and Teaching in Performance and Performative Art* (<http://blogs.akbild.ac.at/performancesymposium>). It was a great symposium. For instance, Simone Forti came to hold a workshop and teach us her famous Huddle. Carrie Lambert Beatty and Simone Forti had a really interesting public talk on Simone's work! Martha Wilson gave a great lecture, as you can imagine, on the history of Franklin Furnace.

We are currently working on the reader *Mapping Research and Teaching in Times of Performative Fine Arts* (working title), a collection of the contributions from the symposium that also includes further international perspectives on research and teaching in performance art. And I still have a question in mind that we once spoke about: how does one teach performance today?

And since Carrie (Lambert Beatty) and I were in the same year of the Whitney Program (1988), your Performance Talk had quite an impact on both of us! I can (or cannot) imagine how busy you are! I know your show just opened in Cologne and that you also spoke on a panel there!

We would be extremely pleased if you would consider contributing a text to this publication! It would be a great honor

to publish a text of yours on teaching performance. And these are the other contributors we have asked so far. Most, but not all, of them took part in the symposium: Margarit von Büren, Barbara Clausen, Sabine Gebhardt Fink, Simone Forti, Andrea Fraser, Judith Hopf, Amelia Jones, Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Marie-Luise Lange, Susanne Neuburger (MUMOK), Constanze Ruhm (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna), Heike Roms, Martha Wilson (Franklin Furnace) and so on.

I hope to hear from you soon, and I also hope you are very well!
All the best for now!

From Yvonne Rainer
To me
18 May

Hi Carola: Great to hear from you in such detail. The more I teach my "Materials for Performance" course, the less I know. It is like handling jello. In the 60s at least we knew what previous expectations of "dance," "painting," "music," and "theater" were, so all you had to do was knock your head against those walls and come up with something interesting. Now that all the walls have been torn down, where does one begin? I am very old-fashioned, in a sense, in that I continue to work with trained dancers and while using their technical skills, try to push them into other modes of behavior beyond their training. Which is not always a stretch for them because they already, as mature dancers, have already been exposed to all kinds of stuff. At the university where I teach, I deal mostly with visual artists who have no dance training, so my starting emphasis is on texts, which doesn't always lead anywhere. Sometimes I'm ready to throw up my hands and quit. But I'm willing to investigate the issues involved in more depth given I have enough time. Thanks for thinking of me,
Yvonne

From Carola Dertnig
To Yvonne Rainer
1 June 2012

Sorry for writing so late, but I had to figure out the deadline situation first, and it has been extended! Surprise! Well, we would love to have you in the book and I think this would be a great contribution. We thought the deadline is earlier, but applying for funding is taking longer than we thought (as usual). So let's put it this way: is there a possibility for you to write a text this year?

That sounded so familiar: The more I teach my "Materials for Performance" course, the less I know. (I thought this it is only me who has this problem). At which art school are you presently teaching performance? When I started teaching performance at the Academy, the faculty and the dean believed performance to be an elusive medium, one that does not require a fixed space. So, when the school had to rent out a space for the class, we were repeatedly asked to leave the space! Then there was a university strike around student fees across Austria, in which our school was also involved. So, the performance students started to build a wall out of car board to create their own space, which they needed. The wall turned out to be quite well designed. We have kept the cardboard walls since the strike (even though it is over). The cardboard walls are still part of our space and the faculty loves them now, and the performance department has become quite popular... (And, in general, performance has become quite a central topic within the art context... which makes me wonder...) I started teaching performance to visual artists, but then some dancers registered for the course and said: "Where is the rehearsal space in this school for visual art? Why don't we do any kind of warm-up?" And so we began doing just that... Although we still don't have a rehearsal space, I realized: "Oops, I need to integrate some warm-up training or have more practice focused on the body..." But it's not so easy for people with a visual arts

background.

It is nice that the texts in your publication from Bregenz are translated into German, so we can read them in both languages... I like that, sometimes I understand certain aspects better in English and others better in German...

Until soon,
Carola

To Carola Dertnig
From Yvonne Rainer
1 June 2012 at 6:42 PM

Hi Carola: Interesting to read your experiences teaching Performance in a Visual Art department. I've been teaching my performance course for the last five years at UC Irvine, an hour south of L.A. Space is a crucial issue. A new art center building opened up this year, but the Theater and Dance departments seem to have the black box sewn up. It's a turf thing. In 1975 when I taught for a semester at Cal Arts, my art students who wanted to work in video had to steal a key to the Film department and go in at midnight in order to have access to equipment. So it goes. I have so much on my plate till the end of this year—have to make two new dances. Would an e-mail conversation, such as this one, suffice? Yvonne

Carola Dertnig
To Yvonne
6 June

Dear Yvonne,
Hm: "the black box." It sounds a bit difficult, doesn't it? I have

worked with a black box setting only once in Oslo and, although the productions at the event were quite diverse, they all felt a bit similar. So, I was wondering if this might be a black box "issue," or, perhaps I have not fully understood it?

Also, your work has been presented in several frames, but not set up for presentation in a black box setting.

That is an interesting story about Cal Arts ... (Today they seem to have quite a huge film and photo department.) In 2008, I taught performance for a semester there at photo department for master students! I was quite impressed to see that all the students prepared a "live performance" at the end of the semester, some of which were very interesting. Were I teach now there are often so many questions, and by the end of the course, their works turn out to be something totally different than a live performance.

I often give them this kind of assignment, because those working in the context of visual arts are often a bit shy to perform... but it is good training.

While I was teaching in LA there was a show on Kaprow at MOCA. Some of the Cal Arts students were part of the reinventions there. And one student even had the opportunity to be part of the "reinvention" of Kaprow's happenings in L.A.

Already then I was thinking if the same assignment from a Kaprow reinvention would be given in Vienna that it would probably become something totally different ... sometimes I would like to ask them: "Can you just do the assignment I asked for?" But maybe these are just different ways of doing and reflecting issues.

Well, this semester we were invited to do a Kaprow reinvention at a former commune called Friedrichshof. (The commune was run by Viennese actionist Otto Muehl.)

It broke up in 1989, due to its entanglements with issues around power as well as child- and drug-abuse.

Paradoxically, at the same time, the whole of Eastern Europe broke down as well...

Otto Muehl ended up in prison for seven years. Since I remember the commune from my childhood, it always seemed to me to be a place that was tightly-packed. Seven hundred people lived there. Loads of artists came to visit, people like Joseph Beuys and others... Towards the end, the commune self-destructed...

Now, the commune feels a bit empty, although it's still there... it's been turned into a kind of wellness and ecotourism-style hotel! Some of the artists still live there and rent "living and working spaces." They also built a new exhibition space where they feature work by many artists, and now it's Allan Kaprow! So, they asked the performance class that I teach to reinvent Kaprow's *Stockroom* happening.

The plan was to stay there for three days and work on the piece. Well, after half a day, the students did not feel like dealing with hidden and unreflected issues of the commune and make them into a Kaprow piece. So we cancelled the project, which (again) was not the original assignment, but I thought it was quite an interesting move for the group to cancel the project and decide to work on something else.

So my semester plan ended up being "Monday bike tour scores / performing through Vienna," which I guess were influenced a bit by Kaprow's instructions. The students decided then to create a bike tour through the city... A performative bike tour... One student took us to a parking garage, we walked down below and he danced for us between the cars... As he came back to the ground level he fainted... The garage had some resemblance to Tati's *Traffic*. At the end of the semester I often ask myself: "did

we not start with different question at the beginning of the semester than what we had at the end?"

In a visual arts department it is hard to work on one performance piece together, since there are all these personalities... I once invited Simone Forti to do a workshop and I can still feel how we have benefitted from the experience today. For instance, I would also like to invite Sara Wookey to speak, as a preparation for *Trio A*.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the symposium in Cologne, but Sabeth Buchmann told me it was very good.

How did you produce two dances in one year? That's quite amazing! It is so nice that your work touches so many people now, this (sounds a bit silly) but true. It makes me happy. I still think of when Carrie and I were in the Whitney Program 1997/98, and we heard one of the first lectures on performance that you had given in a while... Anyway, it was an inspiring lecture for Carrie and I! Because it brought up both historical and contemporary issues...

Yvonne Rainer
6 June
To me

Carola: I think we have already begun.
My problems in teaching performance these days circle around students who want to use their bodies but not only have no dance training, but who, when I steer them to some basic movement classes, end up being "the worst in the class!" So what they are doing seems to revolve around notions of "failure." Foregrounding of awkwardness, much visible effort invested in minimal or self-deprecating results. I'm thinking specifically of video artists, who have an advantage in making these efforts

"work" via framing, close-ups, off-screen, etc. -- all the devices that one can utilize in film and video.

As soon as one student suggested doing her movements live, I tried to convey to her that live performance is a totally different ball game. Whether you like it or not, the traditions of dance come into play and have to be considered. This may seem doctrinaire, but the postmodern challenges to the borderlines between disciplines only work when those borderlines are somehow acknowledged within the performance so the spectator trusts that the performer knows what she is doing. OK, I'll pose it as a question:

"If you're going to knock your head against a traditional wall, should you show a couple of those bricks?"

As I articulate this, I feel very old-fashioned. The "bricks" for New York dancers in the 60s were contextual, that is, all kinds of people performed on the same program and in each others' work: dancers, visual artists, composers. Sometimes it was clear who the trained people were, sometimes not. But back then it was easy to see the borders that had to be crossed or erased. Now it's impossible to say anything prescriptive, so please take my question with a grain of salt.

Later, Yvonne

Carola Dertnig
11 June
To Yvonne

Dear Yvonne,

I will try to develop my thoughts here regarding your last e-mail. In Europe, historically, the term "performance" was originally more situated within a visual art context. The term was defined by performances, for example those by VALIE EXPORT, Peter Weibel, Günter Brus's *Spaziergang*, and Abramovic / Ulay. In the States, I came to understand that the term "performance" had various meanings in different fields, for example in theater, dance, or plays... Today, performance may be at its "highest point," and now it has come to be a term I sometimes still have a hard time understanding.

I think--at least, as far as I understand it (so please correct me if I am wrong) -- the Judson period was a time when artists from different fields interfered with each other's work. The main point I see is that it was clear from which background the artists were coming. Perhaps the problem we have today is that it no longer matters what one's basis or roots are... So today might be that the very modern practice of transgressing borders and fields could make it all appear a bit mushy.

Now I seem old fashion too, but I do think being precise matters.

Regarding teaching performance:

I wonder since "performance" became quite a wide ranging mix within different art genre, if university programs for performance need to develop specific courses. Students could choose variations of performative techniques offered within the framework of a curriculum for studying performance.

On the one hand, creating a curriculum for performance would institutionalize performance even more. (?) On the other hand, it might provide a deeper basis and foundation for performance education. The curriculum might include courses on language, spoken word, movement, dance, live /performance, and documentation (performative video documents).

Since I work at a school for visual arts, we do not have any of the courses on live performance or dealing explicitly with the body, (but we do have classes on video)...

For instance, the students and I have collectively begun collaborating with tanz quartier. We develop the curriculum together, more or less, in learning by doing! Our schools is based around the visual arts and, meanwhile, in comparison, isn't UC Irvine now more oriented toward dance or drama? Maybe this has is also something that needs to be considered?

When I started teaching performance in Vienna after living in New York—or rather, when I began to understand that I did not know what or how to teach--I realized it was because there was no visibility for what I wanted to teach: I couldn't find anything on it in the library or archives! There was no material to be found except for what I had in my memories. Viennese Actionism was an important moment in art history, but I grew up in artistic circles in Vienna in the 1970s, and I knew that there was a different local history of performance that needed to be uncovered, documented, and worked with. And, after living abroad for many years, when I returned to Vienna for teaching, I was struck by how little value was placed on archiving performance art. There was a serious lack of documentation. That's when I began a project with Stefanie Seibold called *Let's Twist Again, If You Can't Think It, Dance It: Performance History in Vienna from 1960 until today*. We used a sort of "snowball system" to build a structure to create an awareness for this lack of performance history. We started asking artists from younger generations who they were influenced by from the older generations. We gathered images and material about these works. Connecting these points and material enabled us to approach the history of performance art in Austria in a non-linear way. In the end, after five years of research and two exhibitions on this

subject, we also published a book. For me, it is an important resource for teaching. It is an important part of my theoretical grounding.

Regarding live performance: I agree that when dealing with live performance it is, as you say, a totally "different ball game." Yes, dance comes into play, but so does the notion of language and the spoken word, in addition to a certain kind of "live presence" in the moment. I think this is why, often within a visual art context, students sometimes end up first doing "a video performance" and then a live performance--and sometimes I find this can be a bit boring. In a visual context it is often so important to take a serious performative risk!

My mother was a feminist who began to dance at the age of 35 and then later, in her 50s, became a Feldenkrais trainer. She had a somewhat of a non-linear dance career!

Ever since I was little, she would always say about doing something live: "Don't be afraid of embarrassment! Just do it with passion!" I think she said it for the first time when we were traveling with a circus. The whiteface clown -- Circus Roncalli's main attraction -- fell ill, and I took on his role over night. I was thirteen at the time, and was supposed to be the show's opening act. (And perform in front of 3000 people over night) Accompanied by a drum roll, I was supposed to jump out of an egg, but my nerves got the best of me and when I stepped out of the paper maché egg, I fell flat on my nose. The audience thought this was "part of the performance" and roared with laughter! So, one thing I learned from this moment, especially about live performance, was that one has to deal with awkward moments/failure, but with a certain kind of "stage presence," which is where the body comes into play!

Regarding video / documentation / performance: I think these are different settings -- live performance / a video or film of a performance, a documentation of a performance. How does one document a performance? What is a documentation of a performance?

Is it a film? Is it a score? Is the documentation of the performance itself - of the live event?

Babette Mangold and Peter Moore come to mind here. Kurt Kren documented the actionists and made his own famous films. And, of course, your films and your book...

So I find it very challenging and important to think about the issue of performance documentation as a subject in itself. It might at least be a "good exercise" for video artists to also perform live.

Regarding the self-deprecating results of students: sometimes I think / performance is often the best tool for self-deprecating results, and hopefully to finally overcome them and move on!

Good Night!
Carola

Yvonne Rainer
11 June
To me

Carola:

You're quite right. The term "performance" didn't really appear until the 70's or 80's. In the U.S., before that there were "Happenings", "Theater Pieces", "Dances", "Concerts", etc The difference in structure and content was an individual matter and not bound by nomenclature. And it was fairly clear who was a "dancer" and who was not, what was dance-based and what came out of the visual arts. Now, whatever happens in a museum

context becomes "performance" regardless of content or creator. The term "performance" has become a catch-all.

At UCI the pedagogy remains primarily border defined. The Dance Department teaches traditional techniques which are then utilized in what is "choreographed." The Drama Department is a little more adventurous: Annie Louie teaches "Movement for Actors", which incorporates dance-like movement within scene and dialogue exercises. I have seen some interesting material come out of that. I teach in the Studio Art Department and try to encourage mixing up traditions of movement and literary material. It is mostly visual artists who take that class. These pedagogical separations are characteristic of big universities, whereas smaller or autonomous art schools tend to be more flexible, or should I say less turf-bound.

That's amazing that you were a circus clown at such a young age! And that your mother is a dancer -- a perfect background for thinking about and teaching performance. I have used early cinema with its vaudeville influences, as did people like Claes Oldenburg and Red Grooms. In dance, the shenanigans of people like Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy are a rich resource for performance ideas and movement. As I've indicated before, the problem is that students get attached to one manifestation or idea and think they've made "a piece," whether it's live or video. They are easily satisfied with short-term or single results rather than accumulation and distribution over a longer duration. Installation art is very often reductive in that the repetition of images on multiple channels does not deepen the meanings. "Mix it up" I like to say. Some people call me heavy handed, and it's odd I have a reputation for being a minimalist, maybe because of the damn "No Manifesto." I prefer the use of "radical juxtaposition" as an aesthetic and pedagogical pointer.

Carola Dertnig

19 June
To Yvonne

Dear Yvonne,

I started to write a week ago, but then I was not even able to read my e-mails. At the moment it's the crazy time of final exams. Now this one has gotten a bit long...

It was quite interesting because we had some performances as final diploma pieces. The commission is made up of art teachers who are more accustomed to evaluating works in painting, sculpture and--in more recent years--film and video. Performance, however, is a new medium for most of them. Performance also needs a commission that is sensitized to the fact that they are indeed evaluating a performance.

In the middle of a performance for a student's final piece, a member of the commission said, "the commission is here now, are you ready for our questions?" The person performing her final piece for her diploma said: "I'll be ready for questions when the performance is done." This was a good answer, but it made me realize that there needs to be a process that creates greater awareness for a medium like performance within the art institution.

It's interesting how it works at Cal Arts. It sounds quite perfect that everything is in one school. Dance. Drama. Visual Arts. When I was teaching at Cal Arts, I also really liked that the dance, music, and visual arts departments at least crossed paths in the hallways! Dancers danced in the hallway, musicians played music and visual artists did their work there. Even though, pedagogically, this took place more or less on an "unconscious level," I still think it would be an interesting premise for putting together a serious performance program. In Austria, performance is studied at an academy for visual arts, so would a performance program need to

be conceptualized? What would the perfect circumstances for teaching performance? And what would the curriculum be like?

It's really funny what you say about the "damn" NO MANIFESTO. I think the NO MANIFESTO influenced the worlds of conceptual art and dance. In the last decades, the concept and thoughts of famous choreographers like Jerome Bell, Xavier Le Roy, Tino Seghal and Andrea Fraser and many others are also based, so to say, on the NO MANIFESTO idea.

So you are teaching studio artists, is it a bit like at the Whitney? I remember when you said this to me about "mixing up results" and other contents. I'm still thinking about it, but it doesn't work for everyone. I guess I am not a good mixer.

I mean, I am not so young anymore, but I am often very interested in simple results. I do not like too many ingredients when I cook, and there are some similarities to my process of making art.

Would you say that "Happening" was defined by Allan Kaprow's writings and/or through his Happenings? "Happening" was defined around the same time that postmodern dance Judson Dance at Judson Church? The early 60s... what a time!

Simone Forti said that people who went to happenings might not go to dance pieces and vice versa.

Patty Mucha gave a talk in Vienna during a big retrospective on Claes Oldenburg at the MUMOK. Patty spoke about the first major pieces she sewed for/with Claes Oldenburg. She said Oldenburg's early pieces, for instance the *Storefront Pieces* at Ray Gun Theater, were called theater rather than a happening.

(In retrospect, Claes Oldenburg's early work seems quite collaborative, I think Claes Oldenburg sees it this way too, but this would take us to another subject all together).

As a child in the mid 70s I remember that Hausrucker Co (an important Architect Group in Austria) created a large room space with a giant inflatable mattress and lots of clear balloons. The visitors were allowed to jump on them, and of course us kids loved it! None of us ever forgot it. This event remained in my memory as a happening. I am not sure though if I understood it as such already then, or if this came later on.

Today, in retrospect, I would consider the Hausrucker Co experience to be a happening.

I have other memories of things I grasped as performance. I am not sure anymore if the term performance arrived later, but I guess it did. It did not actually matter then, but it does today. Maybe, that's because as you said, "performance became this over all term" for whatever one does with the "body or voice" within an institutional context. Now an opening without a performance is no opening at all! This makes me suspicious, because I still feel very strongly about performance history.

I see performance as a liberating feminist-queer political tool! As Leslie Hill once said: "Suffragettes invented performance art!" Through the early twentieth century dance and particularly the female choreographers like Isadora Duncan -- and later also through modern and postmodern choreographers (like you, Simone Forti and Anna Halprin) -- performance snuck in and became a strategy in its own right. The strategy is to use performative techniques for political, feminist and queer issues, and performance art (which has its roots in feminism). It also includes the work of Pussy Riot, who are in prison now because they performed a song against Putin's politics in a orthodox church in Moscow. It's quite harmless actually. In Europe, they would not have gotten any attention at all from the media.

I remember when I was in my first year of studies and a television crew came to the art school. We all had to come up with something fast for television! I remember seeing performances in

my childhood and finding them embarrassing, because the performers were often naked. At that moment, I couldn't come up with anything other than wrapping myself up in toilet paper and jumping out naked.

In my memory this was a performance. It included being naked and doing something. Although it may have not been the best idea, I remember that it was my idea of performance at the time. The television crew was pleased, but I was not. I am still trying to figure out when the term performance became part of my set of concepts.

Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy! I am big fan of Jaques Tati and Buster Keaton as well, even though Laurel and Hardy are a good resource for movement. I also think slapstick and comedy are an interesting field for feminist thought and issues. I studied dance too, so I have some training, but I am dyslexic. Here is a link to a small video of mine, *A Car* (2007, 7 min.), based on slapstick. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foHTjidgZgk>)

Carola

p.s.: I would also add Simone Forti's "dance reports" to the terms from the 60s and 70s, don't you think?

Yvonne Rainer

19 June

To Me

Carola: That's a hilarious video. I call it a car poem or car performance.

I am finally back in LA and able to address some of the many issues you brought up in your last e-mail a month ago. I spent the month making a dance that required the performers to do intricate foot work while reciting various texts, from left political

tracts to bad jokes to newspaper stories. It was a difficult challenge, but they ended up doing it to my -- and their -- satisfaction.

I may have given you an inaccurate impression of the situation in the School of the Arts at the University where I teach. Although the actual buildings dedicated to the respective arts -- dance, visual art, theater, music, etc. -- are near each other, there is hardly any collaboration. The Dance Department is especially entrenched in teaching traditional techniques, training the body, etc, but as far as I can tell, the choreography that comes out of there is married to that training. On the other hand, some of my students in Studio Art have, with my encouragement, taken rudimentary technique classes either in Dance or Theater -- Annie Louie teaches "Movement for Actors" -- and are developing what I would categorize as a kind of hybrid physical practice. It is very body oriented, very primitive. What I would like to see is fourth year dance students taking some video or performance history courses that would give them ideas outside of the conventional dance histories. I don't see that happening. And since I'm retiring next year, it won't come from me.

When I first came to UCI, my performance course drew people from various disciplines -- dance, art history, comparative literature, and studio artists -- and the mix of people paid off in some interesting collaborations. Although the course continues to be cross-listed, I have not had that mix of people since then, I'm not sure for what reason. I have often thought that trained dancers are doomed to re-invent the wheel if they are not exposed to a community of like-minded rebels. In New York there are now many enclaves of cross-over choreographers that verge on being called "performance artists," that is, they use a mix of body types and training. From the little I've seen, it is not always successful, but I am glad it is happening.

You are quite right about my bias for "mixing things up." It doesn't work for everyone, but I find it's sometimes necessary pedagogically when students come in with one idea and think they've made "a piece," especially in video. Repetition and extended duration are two-edged swords and must be used judiciously, or with a degree of knowledge about how they've been used historically.

About the term "Happening": As far as I know it was Kaprow who first used it, to the displeasure of some of his contemporaries, like Robert Whitman, who call his work "Theater Pieces." Simone Forti is half right: Happenings and dance concerts were somewhat separate in terms of audience, but I remember going to all kinds of events -- music, dance, happenings, Fluxus, gallery openings -- and seeing some of the same spectators there. Remember, the New York art world was a much smaller place in the 60s, and we who were studying with Cunningham and Robert Dunn were especially interested in our contemporaries' work, whatever their medium.

I love the paragraph in which you quote Leslie Hill: "Suffragettes invented performance art"!! Just so! I'm not so sure about my own forebears, Isadora, Graham, Humphrey, etc., who can be seen as continuing in a straight historical dance line. There's a way in which the history of performance art begins in political interventions and resistance -- gay, feminist, civil rights, etc. Groups like Act Up, Guerrilla Girls, Gran Fury, Pussy Riot (new to me) all extend the parameters of performance art. Duchamp and Cage of course were influential. Could Act Up have happened without them?

Thanks for the video. When I get a decent video of my recent dance *Assisted Living: Do You Have Any Money?* -- I shall send it to you.

Very best
Yvonne