

und
Ondoro

Berliner
Notizen

Arthur Wicks
1983



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**BERLIN
NOTIZEN**

**UND
ANDERES**

**ARTHUR
WICKS**

1983

10 Februar bis 4 März 1984

Künstlerhaus Bethanien

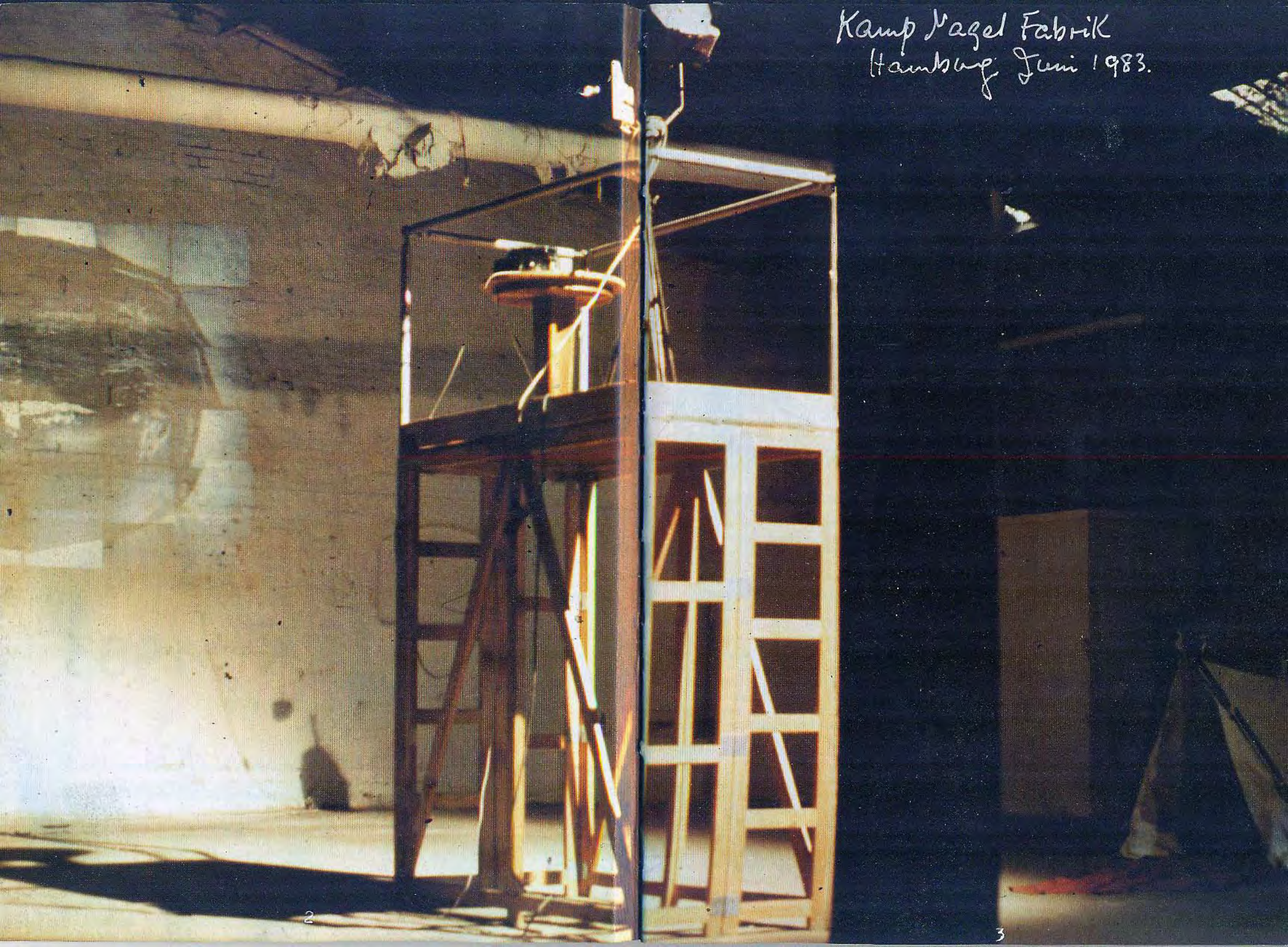
Studio 2

Mariannenplatz 2

1000 Berlin 36

Telefon 614 80 10

Kamp Nagel Fabrik
Hamburg Juni 1983.



Arthur Wicks ist aus Wagga Wagga in Australien zu uns gekommen, aus einer rauen und rätselhaften Landschaft, wie er einmal sagte, deren Wirkung auf die Menschen und die Organisation ihres Lebens zu untersuchen, Ausgangspunkt und Motor seiner künstlerischen Arbeit geworden ist. Er versteht sich als Beobachter und Voyeur, der Geheimnisse aufdecken will, die sich nicht entschlüsseln lassen – die Erinnerungen des Sandes, die Macht des Mondes und der Gezeiten, den Weg der Sonne, die mögliche wenngleich unwahrscheinliche Rückkehr des Christopher Columbus ... Arthur Wicks entwirft Projekte und Konzepte mit dem Ziel, der Natur auf die Schliche zu kommen: dem Universum, der Erde und der Natur des Menschen. "Was ist meine Rolle," befragt er sich selbst, "Beobachter oder Manipulierer?"

Zum Künstler vor allem macht ihn, daß er seinen Konzepten eine existentielle Dimension gibt, indem er sich ihnen vorbehaltlos selbst aussetzt. Wir sehen ihn eingeschlossen in einen versiegelten Raum, verurteilt zum Auswendiglernen fragmentarischer Texte und den Blicken Neugieriger ausgeliefert (the Canberra Lesson). Wir sehen ihn ausgesperrt auf einem Dach inmitten von Sydney, Berlin und Hamburg zur Zeit der Sonnenwende, in vierundzwanzig Stunden die Wege des Tagesgestirns und Merkmale der umliegenden Städte registrierend (Solstice Project). Wir sehen ihn in adamitischer Nacktheit ausgespreizt auf ein Balken-X an einem Strand in New South Wales und dem Ansturm der Flut preisgegeben (Against the Tide). Arthur Wicks ist Beobachter und Handelnder zugleich, er ist Zeuge und Opfer, der sich und uns die Zerbrechlichkeit des Menschen vor Augen führt.

Tod und Vergänglichkeit sind dabei stets gegenwärtige Elemente seiner Kunst. Ist er als "Ruderer" in seinem Projekt "the Boatman" nicht Charon, der die Seelen in den Hades geleitet? Er ist ein Abenteurer auf der Grenze zwischen unserer fragilen Gewißheit und dem großen Unbekannten, das uns umgibt. Das X ist so etwas wie ein Markenzeichen von Arthur Wicks, in all seiner schillernden Bedeutungsfülle. Es steht auch, meine ich, für den romantischen Aspekt seiner Kunst, für sein Streben nach jener "Blauen Blume", worin Zeit und Raum mit dem Traum des Künstlers verschmelzen. Vielleicht finden wir hier etwas vom deutschen Einfluß auf sein Werk?

Was uns betrifft, hat Arthur Wicks mit seinen globalen Projekten ein Stück von der Weite, Rätselhaftigkeit und Bedrohlichkeit seines Kontinents in unser Haus gebracht. Sein Atelier gleicht einem Alchimistenlabor, worin Strategien für den ungleichen Kampf des Menschen mit der Erde und den Sternen entworfen werden. Das Künstlerhaus Bethanien und das Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD sind dankbar für diesen fruchtbaren Beitrag im Rahmen unseres Austauschprogramms mit dem Visual Arts Board des Australia Council.

Arthur Wicks has come here from Wagga Wagga in Australia, from a harsh and enigmatic landscape, as he once said. To explore its influence on human beings and the organisation of their lives has become the origin and motor of his art. He sees himself as Observer and Voyeur willing to uncover secrets that do not yield - the memories of the sand, the power of the moon and the tides, the track of the sun, the possible but improbable return of Christopher Columbus ... Arthur Wicks conceives projects and concepts with the aim of catching onto the universe, the earth and the nature of humans. "What is my role," he asks himself, "observer or manipulator?"

What makes him an artist is that he gives an existential dimension to his concepts by putting himself at their mercy. We see him enclosed in a space, condemned to learn by heart fragments of texts and exposed to the curious eyes of observers (the Canberra Lesson). We see him shut out on the roof in the middle of Sydney, Berlin and Hamburg at the time of the solstice to register within twenty four hours the track of the sun and the landmarks of the surrounding cities (Solstice Project). We see him, naked as Adam, spread out across the San Andreas fault-line in California, as a buffer between the gigantic masses of huge plates (the San Andreas Project) or crucified on a timber X on a beach in New South Wales, vulnerable to the power of the tide (Against the Tide). Arthur Wicks is Observer and Actor at the same time. He is witness and victim who demonstrates to both himself and to us, the frailty of being human.

Death and transience are always present in his art. As the Boatman in the project for the First Sculpture Triennial, is he not Charon guiding the souls into Hades? He is an adventurer on the border between our fragile certainty and the unknown around us. The X is a trademark of Arthur Wicks, with all its various connotations. I believe it also stands for the romantic aspect of his art, his striving for his own "Blue Flower" where time and space interweave with the dream of the artist. Maybe here we find a touch of German influence on his work?

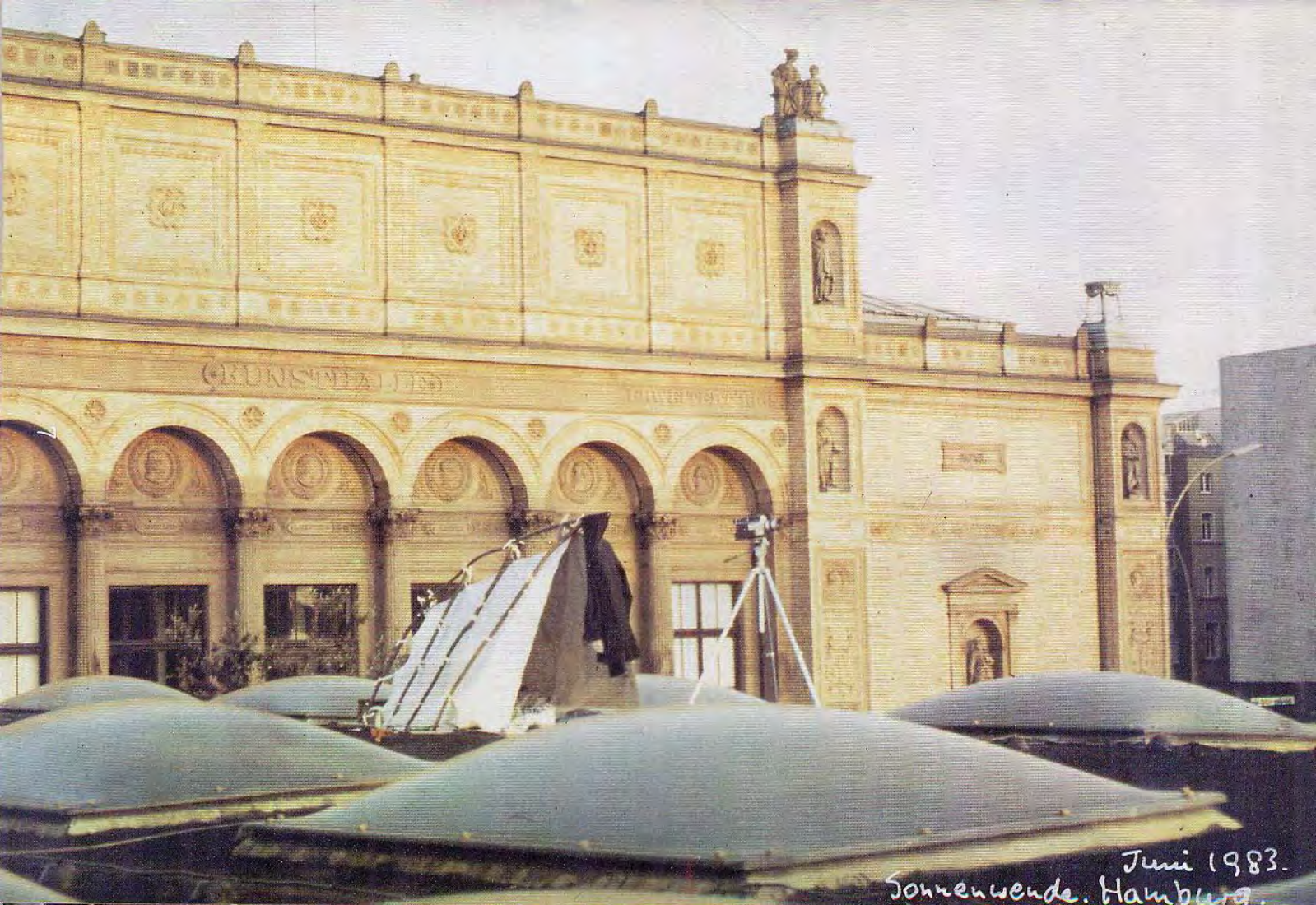
For us, Arthur Wicks has brought with his global projects something of the vastness, mystery and menace of his continent into our Künstlerhaus. His studio resembles an Alchemist's laboratory where strategies are conceived for the unequal struggle between man and the earth and stars. The Künstlerhaus Bethanien and the Berlin Artists's Programme of the DAAD are grateful for this enriching contribution to our exchange programme with the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council.



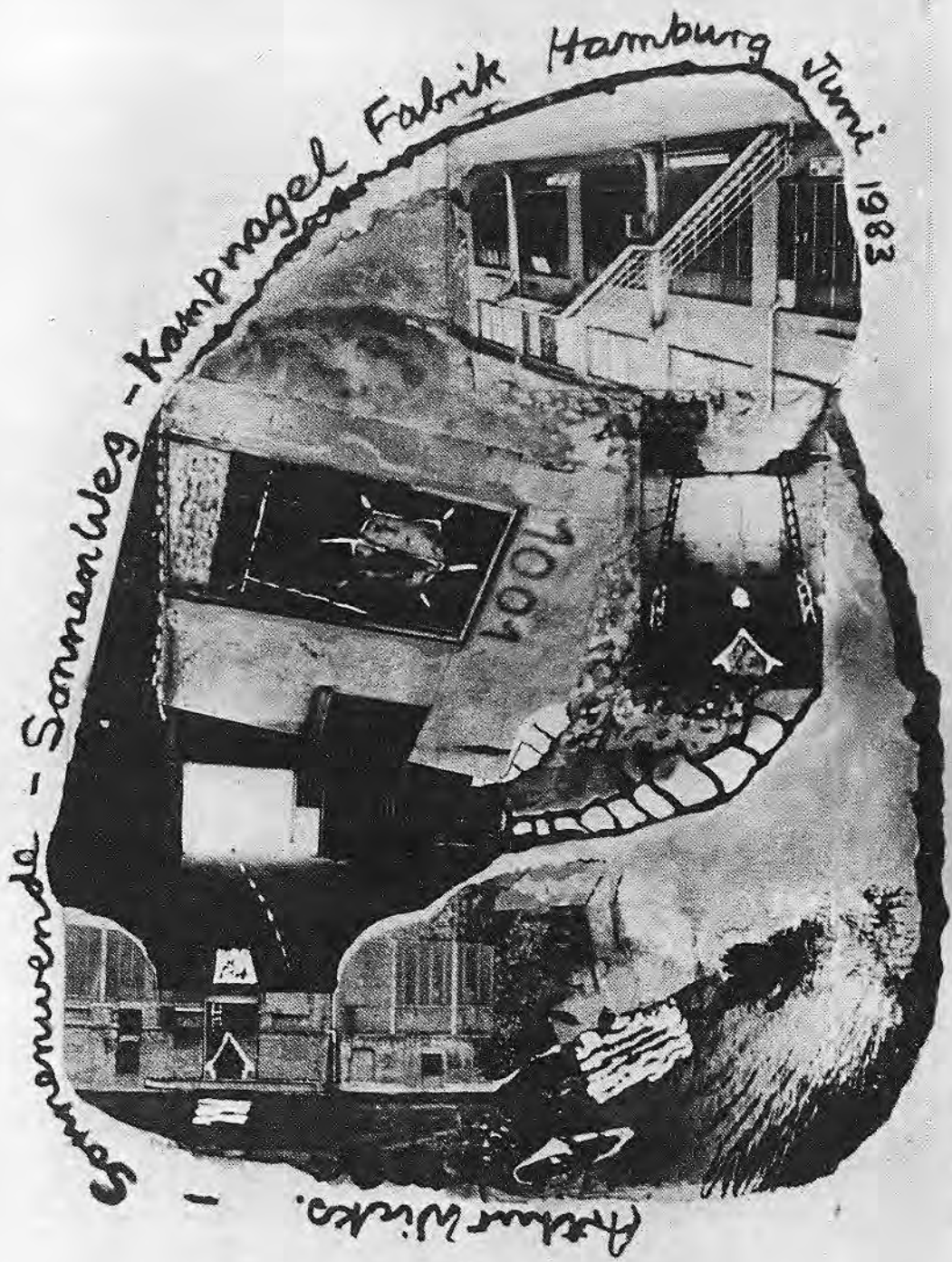
Künstler-Räume

KUNSTVEREIN

Hamburg
1983.



Juni 1983.
Sonnenwende. Hamburg.



Kamp Nagel Fabrik Aktion Juni '83.



Sonnevriende Installation. Berlin '83.



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Bedin 1983.



Sonnenwende Berlin
Juni '83.



Waiting for Columbus
Amada 1983.





Waiting for Columbus Alameda 1983



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Almada '83

Almada 1983.



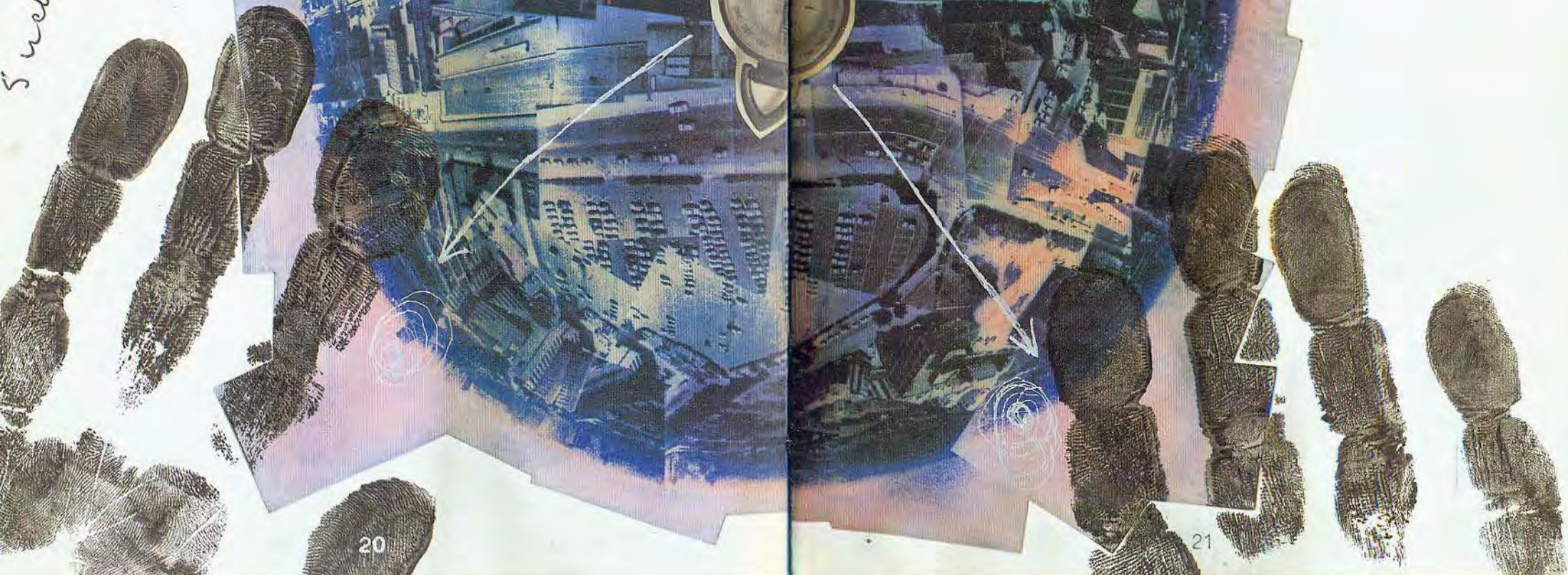
Lin Theatre - Hoboken Theatre Aug. 1983.

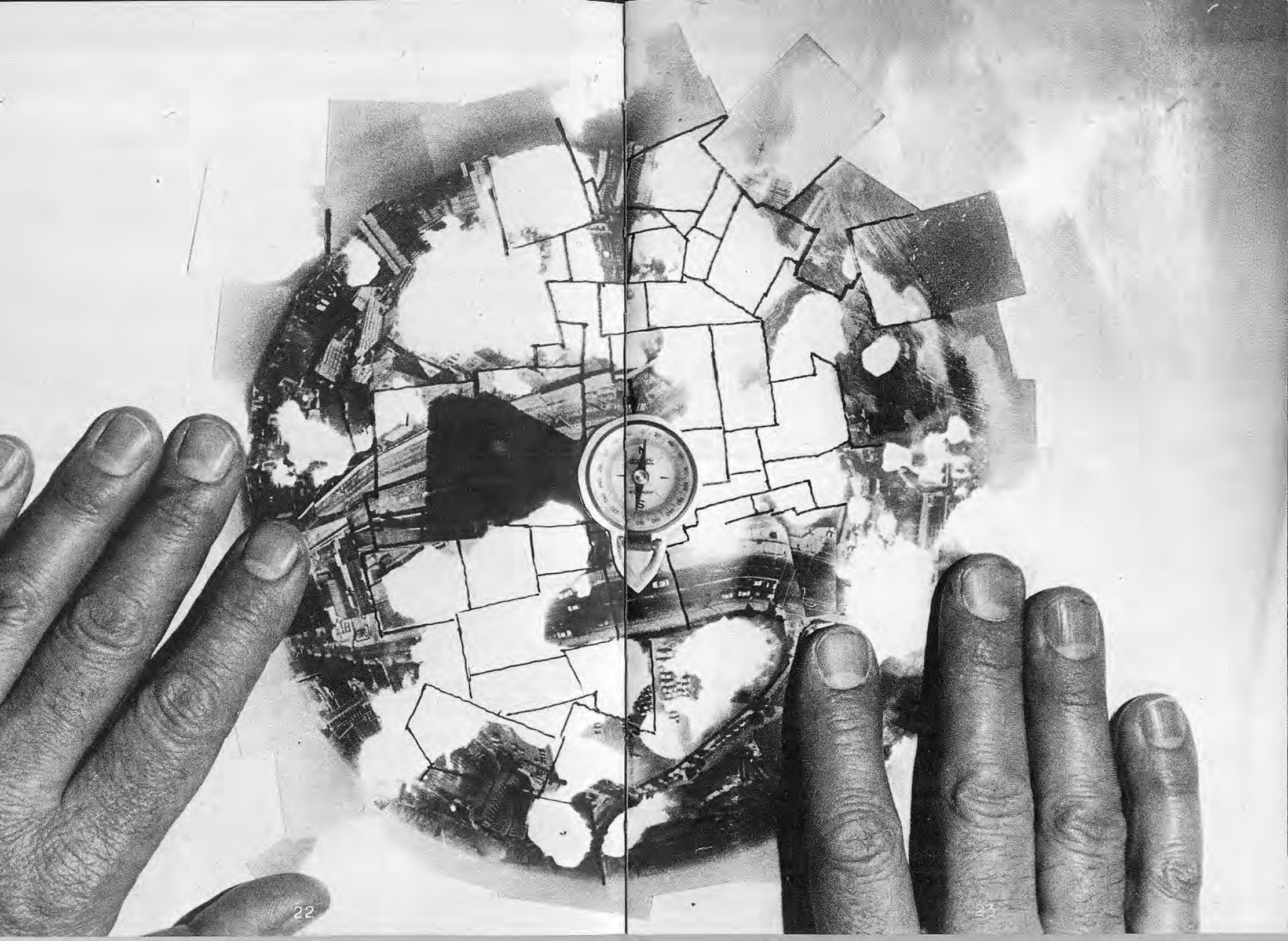


Lin Theatre - Nobel Theatre.
August 1983.



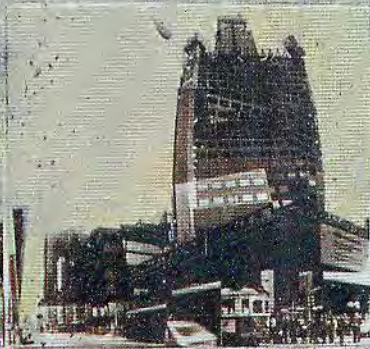
Suchen
Sonnenwende
Berlin.





Für die Sommerwende
Bethanien 1983.





BOOK



27

San Andreas
San Bernardino 1981

**San Andreas series
San Bernardino 1981**



26



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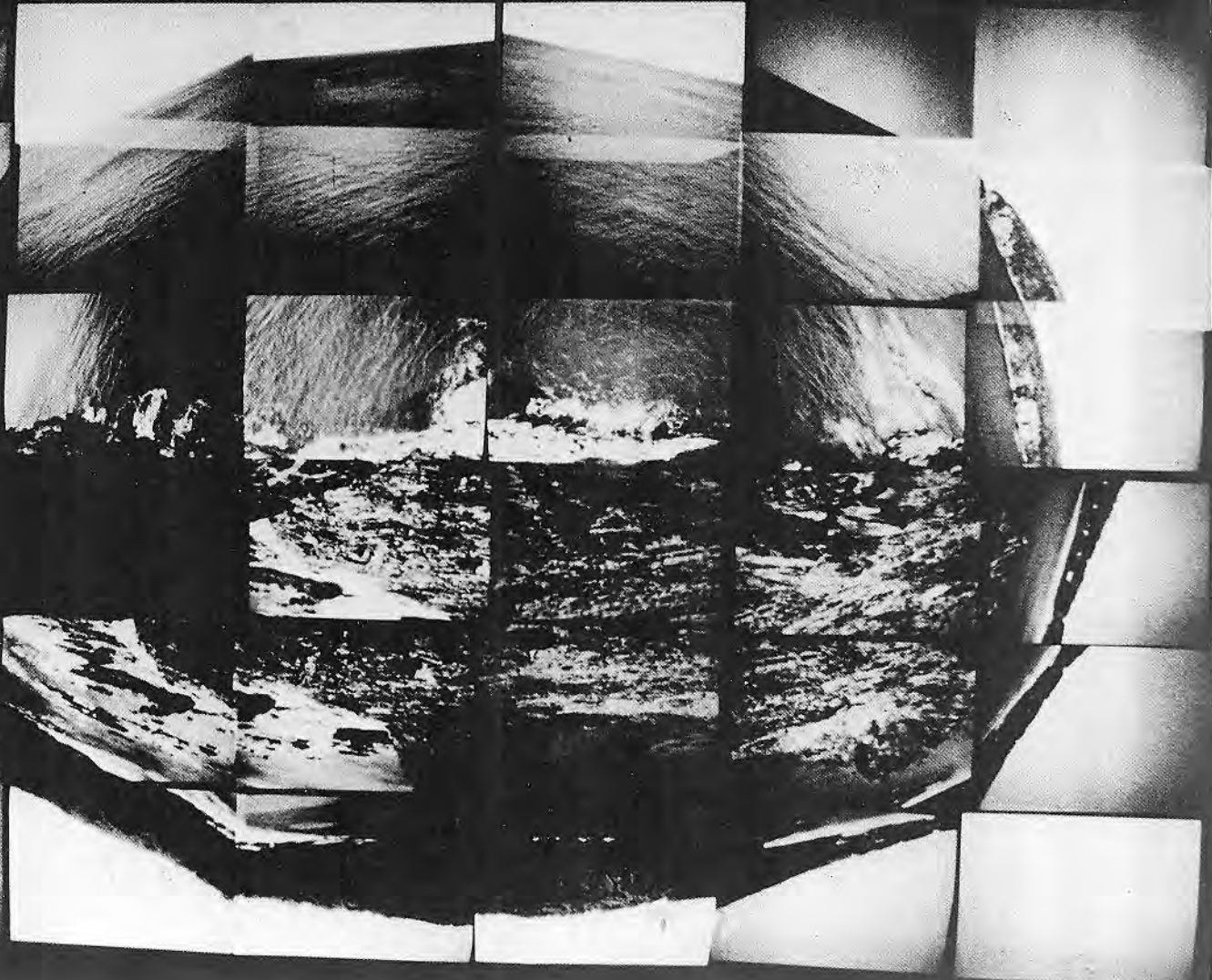
San Andreas, Cholame Calif. 1981.

Eye of the witness
Melb. March 1981.



For 'Edisse!

30





**Boatman
Melbourne 1981**

Boatman Melbourne 1981.



**Boatman
Melbourne 1981**

Boatman. Melb 1981.

THE BOATMAN'S FOOTNOTES FOR THE EIFFEL TOWER.....

is a proposed action in the space of the disused Boulainvilliers railway station which leads directly to the Pont de Grenelle across the Seine and next to the Eiffel Tower. There are two railway tunnels at each end of the old station.

The action will consist of "rowing" a specially constructed boat along the old railway track, beginning from just within one of these tunnels along the railway station and into the second tunnel. The boat will contain a specially constructed mechanical device connecting the rowing action to a forward drive mechanism. Each stroke of the oars will propel the boat forward only a few centimetres at a time. The result will be considerable rowing effort and a very slow motion of the boat.

Once inside the second tunnel the action will be reversed and the boat will be rowed back to the original tunnel. This action will continue till darkness. The audience will be able to see the action from the road bridge (rue de Fontaine) above one of the tunnels, and be able to look down into the old railway station.

The audio to accompany the action will consist of actual and synthesised rowing sounds amplified within the space of space of the railway station.



The action would co-incide with a static installation of models and drawings in a gallery space.

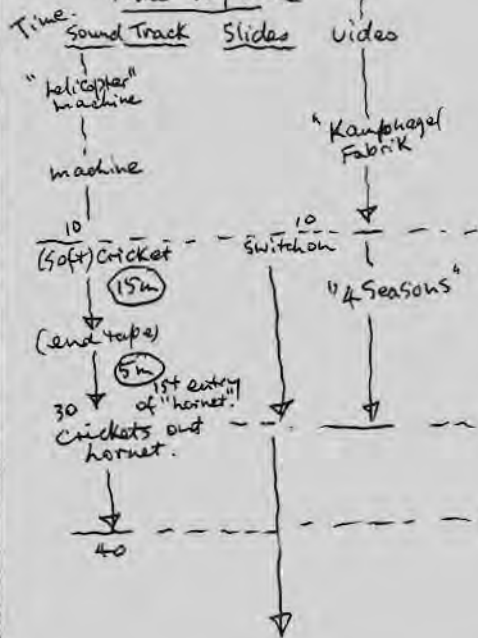
After the action, the boat would be added to this installation.



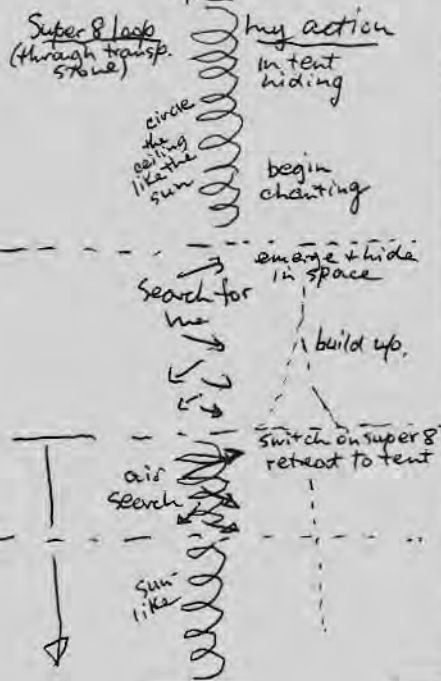
May 1983

Kampnagel Fabrik

Time Sequence



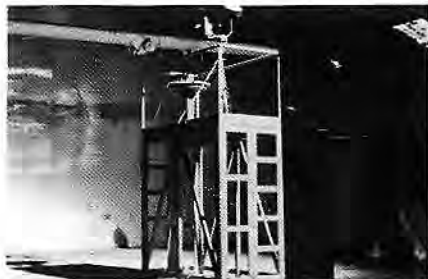
Spotlight



Ritual Incantation

Monday	lunedì	Montag	Maan	Monday	Mondstag	Segunda
Tuesday	martedì	Dienstag	Dins	Tuesday	Martstag	Tersa
Wednesday	mercoledì	Mittwoch	Woens	Wednesday	Wodenstag	Quarta
Thursday	giovedì	Donnerstag	Donder	Thursday	Thorstag	Quinta
Friday	venerdì	Freitag	Wry	Freier day	Freierstag	Sexta
Saturday	sabato	Samstag	Zatter	Saturday	Saturstag	Sábado
Sunday	domenica	Samstag	Zon	Sunday	Sonnestag	Domingo

August 1983



... an action developed from the Sonnenwende (Solstice) project. A spotlight, instead of the sun and as a light to hunt me down; slides showing a global image slowly being formed and then disintegrating in repeated cycles; a super 8 image projected through a transparent stone and onto the slide images, like the corona of the sun; a sound track using synthesised machine sounds warring with cricket sounds from the earth and later a synthesised metallic "hornet" sound belonging to the air; video using the old

Kampnagel Fabrik (an old fork-lift factory) as the space for my confrontation with technology and its culture; with myself hiding in the tent and emerging dressed in a suit; being hunted by the spotlight; hiding in the space and behind the audience; at times moving very quickly through the space; slowly stripping off my clothes while chanting the days of the week in different European languages; redressing and returning to the tent.



..WAITING FOR CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.....

...an action performed on the bank of the Tejo River at Almada, across from Lisbon and just above the Tagus bridge, on the 25th July, 1983.

Over several days I had constructed an earthen cone about 1.5m high and loaded with wood for firing, with the help of the local Portuguese people. The action began at 8.30pm; at dusk. Naked, I smeared my body with the clay from the earth cone and then lit the fire in the cone. Within minutes it was blazing fiercely. I crouched among the green rocks and occasionally fed the fire with more wood. After about 20 minutes I washed the clay off in the Tejo and quickly dressed into a suit. In the meantime my friend Carlos Sarti, who had been quietly waiting, prepared a table with a cloth, wine and glasses and two chairs. I then joined him and we sat in silence, filling each other's glass with wine, light-

ing each others' cigarette and occasionally waving and beckoning to nearby ships and boats. We were waiting for the return of Christopher Columbus; caught in a time and space between the Old World and the New.



Columbus never did arrive and at nightfall we got up from the table and quietly left the space.

This work was done for the Alternativa 3 Festival of performance art, organised by Egidio Alvaro.

16 August, 1983. 36

SONNENWENDE (SOLSTICE) JUNE 1983

Hamburg

In Hamburg I lived for 24 hours on the roof of the Kunstverein between midday Tuesday 21st June and midday Wednesday 22nd June. During this period I witnessed and recorded the Summer Sonnenwende.



Berlin

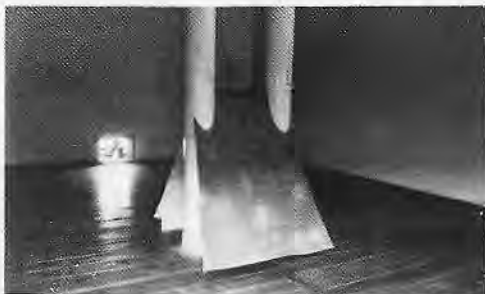
On the 26th June between 4.30pm and 9pm I made an action in Berlin for the Sonnenwende. I had prepared an installation of 3 tents in one of the rooms of the Künstlerhaus Bethanien. One of the tents was sited on the floor, another on the wall, and the third on the ceiling. On



the roof, I erected a fourth tent and made several ritual actions relating myself to the sun's movement. These gestures and the Berlin skyline were relayed by closed circuit to a video monitor below, in the installation. The monitor was situated on the floor. A film projector beamed a film loop through a hole in the tent on the floor and the image was projected onto a transparent stone inside.



July 1983.




„ICH WOHNE AUF DEM DACH DES KUNSTVEREINS ZWISCHEN
DEM 21 JUNI MITTAGS UND DEM 22 JUNI MITTAGS,
UM DIE SOMMER-SONNENWENDE ZU BEZEUGEN UND
AUFZUZEICHNEN, UND GEBRAUCHE DABEI WAHRZEICHEN
IM HAMBURG RAUM“



SOMMER SONNENWENDE HAMBURG
22 JUNI, 1983

"I WILL BE LIVING ON THE ROOF OF
THE ART GALLERY OF N.S.W. BETWEEN
NOON 20 JUNE AND NOON 21 JUNE TO
WITNESS AND RECORD THE WINTER SOLSTICE,
USING LANDMARKS IN THE SYDNEY AREA."



WINTER SOLSTICE
21 JUNE, 1981

SOLSTICE



PROJECT

The proposed SOLSTICE PROJECT is to map selected cities from the roof of an art gallery or art institution, identifying landmarks of that city as markers for a possible astronomical clock.

The solstices occur roughly on 21 June and 22 December and represent the most northern or Southern sunrise and sunset points.

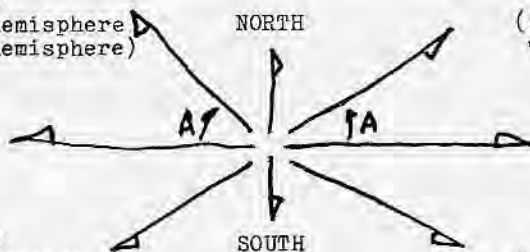
SOLSTICE SUNSET

(summer-North.hemisph.
winter-South.hemisph.)

SOLSTICE SUNRISE

(summer-North.hemisph.
winter-South.hemisph.)

WEST



EAST

SOLSTICE SUNSET

(winter-North.hemisph.
summer-South.hemisph.)

SOLSTICE SUNRISE

(winter-North.hemisph.
summer-South.hemisph.)

The (magnetic) compass points of the Solstice points (the angle A in the diagram) are influenced by the latitude of that city and the regional differences of true north from magnetic north. This information is well documented for each region.

With the aid of a magnetic compass, a detailed map of each city and the local magnetic information it would be possible to identify the solstice points and those between, across any 24 hour period. The sunrise and sunset points from that 24 hour period could be used as starting points in the calculation. The most dramatic time to undertake this activity would, naturally be at the solstice times.

This activity of identifying and predicting sunrise and sunset points is very old; witness Stonehenge and Avebury in England and Carnac in France. But to apply the same process to a highly developed city of the 20th century, and reduce it to a series of basic marks representing sunrise and sunset points, is an ironic destructive gesture.

The choice of an art building is intentional. The project is not a scientific measurement but remains within the activity of art making. By using a public building, the gesture becomes overlaid with problems peculiar to the 20th century, (eg "you will have more chance of spending 24 hours on the roof of a bank than an art gallery" and, "we cannot ensure your safety- someone may shoot at you there").

For each city the SOLSTICE PROJECT will be documented by a series of adjusted photo collages, drawings, maps, plans and video. The project will generate objects for exhibition. Eventually, the SOLSTICE PROJECT would take place in a number of cities chosen from a wide range of latitudes and social contexts, from both the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

January 1982.

SOLSTICE



PROJECT

Box 348 P.O.,
Wagga Wagga
N.S.W. 2650
AUSTRALIA

Attached is a proposal for the work SOLSTICE PROJECT.

The action is very simple; to spend 24 hours on the roof of a gallery or art institution. During this period I will record elements of the landscape of the city as markers for an astronomical clock, using drawings, photos and film. I would pitch a specially made tent on the roof and use this as my "base camp" for making the recordings.

As an Australian artist I have directed my energies to exploring the relationship between the environment and human presence. All Australians, from the earliest aborigines, have had to cope with the harsh and enigmatic landscape. My work reflects the dilemma and frustration of this situation.

As an extension of my Australian experience I am now making art using the problems of people living in other hostile landscapes. From October 1981 I spent 3 months making projects along the San Andreas faultline in California.

The SOLSTICE PROJECT provides local astronomical clocks which are the links between the modern and ancient landscapes. I plan to perform the SOLSTICE PROJECT in other cities. As each SOLSTICE PROJECT takes place I will produce drawings, altered photo collages and video. These records will provide the bases for exhibitions. When the SOLSTICE PROJECTS are concluded, the work will be published.

I would like to perform the SOLSTICE PROJECT from the roof of your Institution. I appreciate that it could raise awkward administrative problems but I am sure these could be solved. I am willing to be locked onto the roof for that period to preserve security. I am also willing to sign an insurance indemnity to free the Institution of any legal responsibility for my safety during that period.

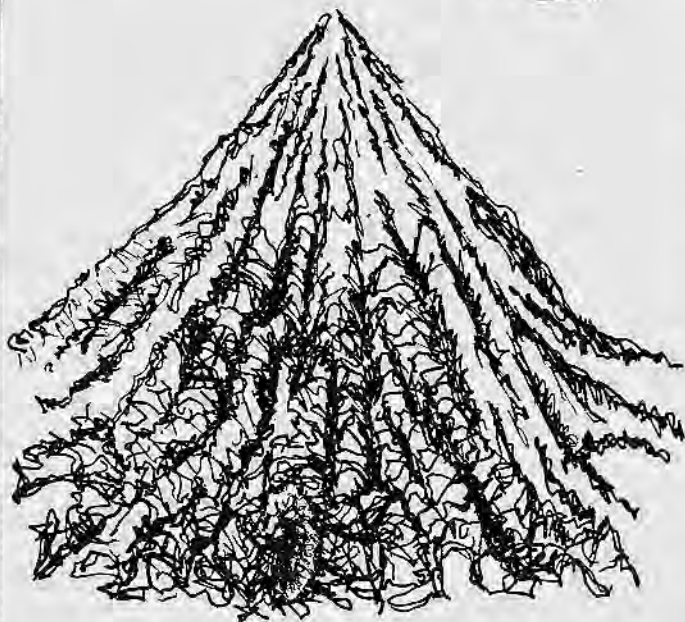
I would appreciate a reply to this letter, or preferably a personal meeting, so that all aspects of the SOLSTICE PROJECT action can be worked out in advance of the proposed work.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Arthur Wicks

26 Nov.



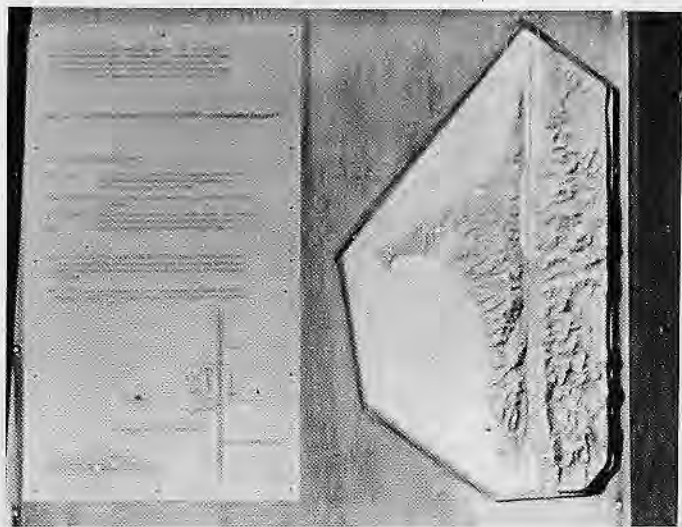
Inceca Hills.

Just north of Salton Sea.

San andreas faultline squeezing
up through the old mud lake
bottom.

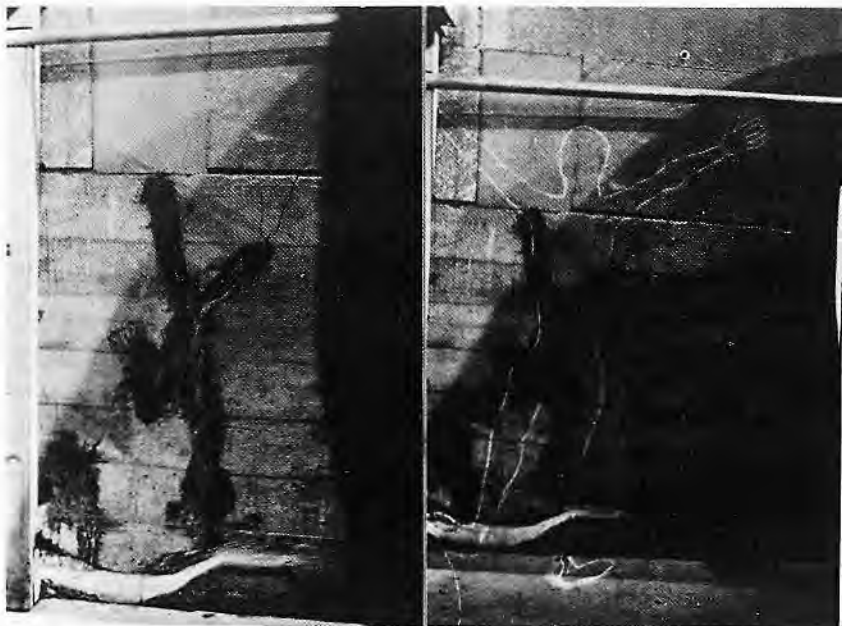
Red (gouge) clay in between the
two plates. Bright red.

6. Point Reyes, 30 miles North of San Francisco is the most northerly land location of the San Andreas and the epicentre of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. On the "Earthquake Trail" I located my body directly along the rift created by the fault zone.



January 1981.

4. Hollister, 80 Miles S.E. of San Francisco. Here a winery has been built across the San Andreas. I made a chalk drawing on the fractured walls.



5. Mussel Point, 10 miles South of San Francisco on the coast. My body is fractured by a rock seam of the San Andreas as it dips under the sand and into the Pacific Ocean; land/ land and land/water.



SAN ANDREAS PROJECT

A Preliminary Statement

The San Andreas faultline represents the junction of two tectonic plates on the earth's surface. One is the Pacific plate moving roughly in a northern direction; the other, the American plate moving roughly in a southern direction. The San Andreas stretches the length of California, from Mexico in the south, along the West Coast and across the Pacific Ocean to Japan. In California the San Andreas is responsible for the dislocation of the rock and mountain masses in its path.

Over a period of nearly a month from 26 November to 21 December 1981, we travelled along the faultline in California from Salton Sea in the south to Point Reyes in the north; a distance of 500 miles.

A series of six installations and actions were made during this period. Each of the works reflects the frailty of human presence in contrast to the potential power of the earth's plates.

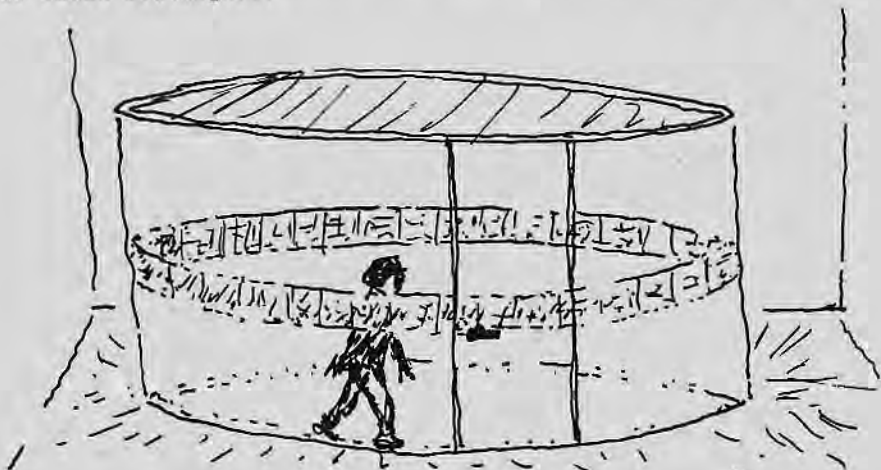
1. At Salton Sea, 130 miles S.E. of Los Angeles, the San Andreas is forming new mountains from the old sea bed. These clay mountains contain drainage systems of tunnels through their interior. One of these tunnels became my refuge from the harshness of the low desert.
2. San Bernardino, 75 miles N.W. of Salton Sea. I made an installation across one of the scarps in the earthquake zone; on a new development in the foothills of the San Bernardino mountains.

3. Cholame, 75 miles West of Bakersfield. The San Andreas has caused some slippage of the land along the fault zone. My body became a buffer between the two plates.



ECLIPSE

This work consists of 73 colour xerox photos, each constructed by multiple exposing an original set of 36 slides. The xerox images have been transferred to paper; a length of about 15m. The xerox strip will be fixed at eye level in a specially made cylindrical space. The content of the 73 images represents a series where a global image is gradually formed and then degraded. Each image contains 36 smaller rectangular fragments in which the original 36 slide images are either present or absent. Each successive image on the wall will differ from its neighbour by one of these small rectangles.



At each extreme of the images there will be a black rectangle and a rectangle representing a composite similar to the earth's global shape. There is a gradual progression from one to the other in an even and uninterrupted pulse.

Associated with this visual sequence will be an audio mixture, playing from a continuous cassette. This mixture will contain a variety of sounds including footsteps treading out the circumference of the circular space (measuring the circumference of the earth's surface?) and among other sounds NASA space conversations. The audio element will gently intrude into the space like a whisper.



The entrance to the space will be easily found but the exit will not be so obvious.

First proposed February 1982

CHECKPOINT ROHRDORF

This action took place in the Bavarian village of Rohrdorf, 80km south-east of Munich. It was sited on an intersection at the centre of the village. One of the roads from the intersection leads directly onto the autobahn into Austria, the border of which is only a few kilometers away.

The work began by laying a sheet of heavy paper, one metre square at the centre of this intersection. I then sprinkled this paper with water and plaster. I positioned myself on a chair by the side of the road acting as a guard over the paper. During this period I gradually encased myself with wet plaster bandages and plaster until I was entirely covered with plaster and as white as the paper on the roadway. In the meantime, the traffic (which was relatively heavy) was squashing the paper and spreading the plaster in all directions. A small crowd of curious onlookers gathered and I was told later that there was a lively dialogue concerning the event and its possible meaning. People also came out onto the balcony of the Gasthof opposite to see what was happening. The Burgermeister drove past twice but there was no interference in the work.

By coincidence, on that same day, road work was being done on one arm of the intersection and traffic was being diverted through one of the other roads of the intersection. In an odd way my work was caught up (in the minds of some of the onlookers) as part of



the road repairing activity. Contributing to this was the fact that I was wearing a workman's protective helmet.

After about three hours, the paper on the intersection was becoming dry. I left my guard's chair, rolled the paper up from the roadway and carried it away with me.

This action was sponsored by Hannee Clerico and photographed by Margit Jacobi from Rohrdorf/Rosenheim. It took place in May 1982.



June 1982



NOTES FROM THE BOATMAN

A Videotape

(Originally shot on super 8 and transferred to U-matic video format by Rank Cintel; 20 minutes; colour; PAL & NTSC)

The main content of this tape is derived from an

installation and action made for the First Australian Sculpture Triennial in Melbourne in 1981. A large hollow sand-bag structure was built in the middle of the lake at Preston Institute of Technology. Entry was possible through a small opening in the side of the structure. My role was to row each individual to this cone, and when they were ready, or I was ready (rarely did these times coincide), to row them back to the bank.

The evening of the Equinox of 22 March was marked with a special installation in a nearby tent. Inside the tent was hung a subterranean cave cast from fibreglass. Inside this cave were placed a group of identical (cast) rocks. One of these became the screen for an endless super 8 film loop that was projected through a hole in the side of the cavern. I continued to row each person to the structure in the lake and the rowing was transmitted by radio microphone to a speaker hidden inside the cavern.

This tape contains references from this installation and action. Some of the images were taken from film shot at this time using special assistance to achieve the specific imagery and close-ups that were required. Images of and from the cavern were taken separately under special lighting conditions. The third source came from my library of related natural images (of rocks, caves, blowholes, etc).

The final tape, mixed from all three sources, was roughly structured in three sections: the journey out, the interior and the return. The imagery moves freely from the "real" to the "constructed" and back again; from specific incidents (such as the presence of the Governor-General in the row boat at the beginning of the journey) to the overall pattern of movement and back again.

The constant activity throughout the tape is rowing. The audio dub is the sound of oars in rowlocks, of waves slapping against the bow of the boat. Some of the audio track has been synthesised. The real and synthetic sounds alternate with one another. They are carefully meshed with the electronic images.

The time sequence of the images belong to another world; one where dream, time and space interweave. A dreamtime space.



Jan 1982

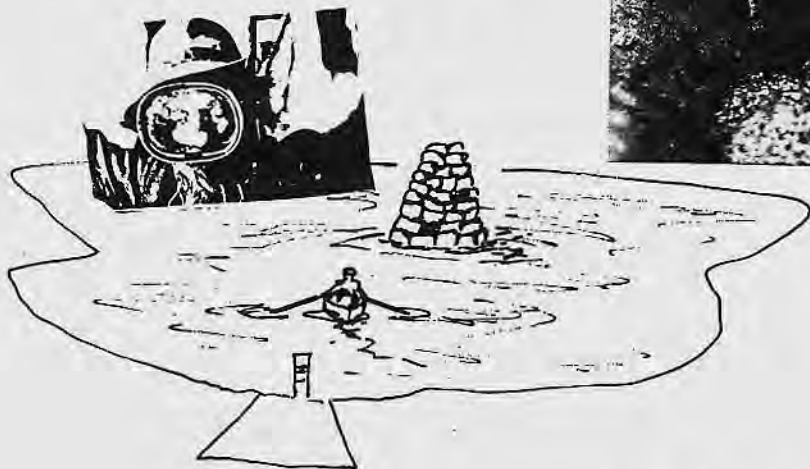
STATEMENT ON INTENTION - PROJECT FOR THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN
SCULPTURE TRIENNIAL

In the recent work for Equinox '80, cones were built from sand bags at intervals from the edge of low tide to the edge of high tide. During a six hour walk/crawl along horizontal planks resting on the top of the cones, I worked my way slowly from low to high tide. Each hollow cone was a station of rest in my journey. But the equinoxial moon was pulling the ocean and destroying each of the cones behind me. The journey was irreversible.

I can imagine a similar cone in a lake. This cone is for the MOON; to remind it of the tides; to taunt it to repeat the destruction on the beach IF IT CAN. The moon's power will be at its strongest at the March equinox.

To reach the cone, you will need to cross the lake by boat. You can trust the boatman? He will row you to the cone, help you climb into the structure where you can rest inside the installation. The boatman will return you to the edge of the lake again.

Away from the lake, in an enclosed safe space, the EYE OF THE WITNESS is observing the events outside; without the power to intervene; simply trying to unravel the secret memories of the sand and water.



Dec. 1980

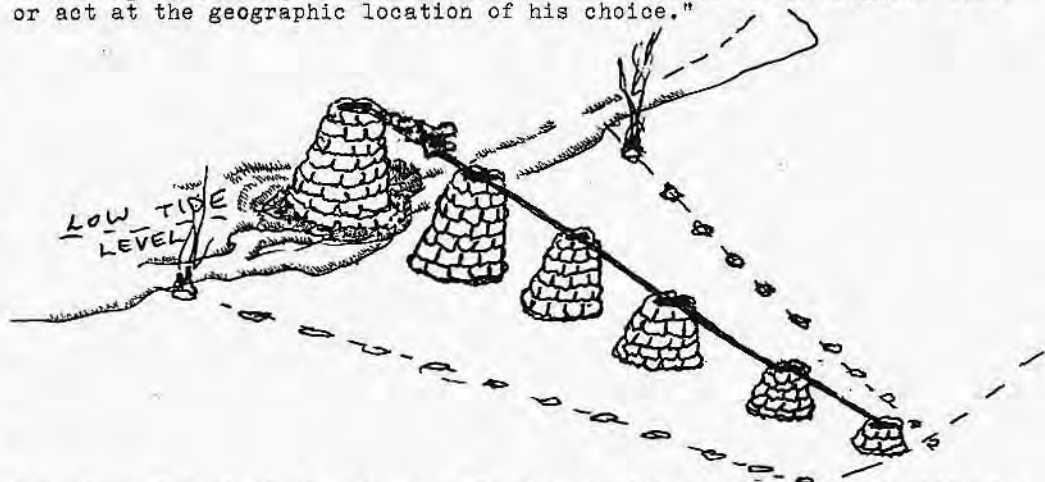
From this I propose two works- the BOATMAN for the duration of the Triennial and then concurrently for the afternoon and evening of 22 March the installation, the EYE OF THE WITNESS.

I would like to be an alchemist surviving at the close of, but still very much in touch with, the last days of the twentieth century.



PROPOSED WORK FOR OPERATION EQUINOX '80 (A collaborative work organised by Pierre Restany, Guy Lozac'h and Bernard Huin)

General Description: "It constitutes an artistic event taking place within the time-space continuum of a natural phenomenon: the TIDE. All around the globe, the equinoxes are moments of maximum amplitude, of the greatest variation between low and high tide. To verify this phenomenon, we have chosen several geographic areas in France, Australia, Argentina, the United States (California) and Japan. We are asking an artist from each of these five countries to make a video recording of this equinoxial phenomenon in the form of an original work or act at the geographic location of his choice."



A series of conical structures made from sand bags whose height will rise just above high tide level. Beginning at low tide, to work my way methodically from structure to structure along a narrow plank, till dry land is reached; to safety and comfort. On my journey I can take refuge and rest within the conical structures. But the space through which I'm moving is not friendly; the conical refuges are blow holes and the sea is combustible. In this situation the voices of the sea are very strong.

The work was constructed and the performance made on the beach at North Durras on Thursday 25 September; commenced at low tide at 3.05pm (0.0m) and ended at high tide at 9.10pm (1.8m).
October 1980.





NOTES FROM THE
BEACH INSPECTOR

A Videotape

(an edited mix from 3/4" Sony Portapak and super 8 transferred to U-matic video format by Rank Cintel; 20 minutes; colour; PAL & NTSC).

This videotape refers to the sun-baking ritual that takes place annually on the Australian beaches. It is made purposeful by allowing some of these sun-baking bodies to be subjected to the quality control of a beach bathing contest under the watchful eye of the Beach Inspector.

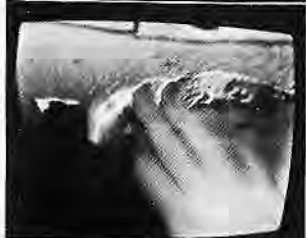
There are three basic independent sources for the imagery. One is derived from a private performance made in early 1978 where my own body was marked off in convenient camera-frame rectangles and systematically sun-tanned with a synthetic instant tan lotion. A woman student assistant was videotaped with her body marked off with the same rectangles, and then "sun-tanned". In the final tape the image of male and female alternate without warning and with minimal visual signs. The section of the body revealed on the video monitor rarely exceeds 9"x6" and creates ambiguity.

The second source of the imagery comes from a "Peters Pet" beach beauty contest. Some of this sequence was taken on time-lapse, the remainder at the normal speed of 24 frames/second on super 8 in January 1980 and 1981. The third source comes from a series of stills photographs taken from these beauty contests and a life-size black and white collage built up from about 200 photographs of a man sun-baking. These latter images were videotaped in a studio.

The final video image is a mixture from all these sources. The scale of the imagery keeps moving from detailed close-ups of skin, pores and instant tan lotion to a beach setting where beauties "parade", are photographed and in turn return to photo print scale.

The audio is dubbed from the patter of the commentator at the beach contest. This is banal and ceaseless, and is mixed with the ceaseless crash of breakers on the beach. The diverse images of the video are unified by this patter and the entire video event appears to take place in the one time and space.

Jan 1982.



Meine Welt ist auf
 einen Raum 2x1.5x
 im beschränkt zwi-
 schen Ebbe und Flut.
 Ein verdichteter
 Raum, ein isolier-
 ter Platz, eine
 beschränkte und ver-
 einfachte Welt. Ein
 unsicherer Platz, am
 Rande von Vorhersag-
 ung und Bestimm-
 heit, in diesem Küst-
 enbereich zwischen
 Ebbe und Flut in der
 Zeit des Gezeiten-
 flusses. Der Druck
 des Wassers und des
 Sandes auf die schüt-
 zende gläserne Haut?
 Falls sie zusammen-
 bricht, wieviel zusam-
 menhängt,
 nassen Sand um ihn in
 kann mein Form zu halt-
 Körper zu- en, um ihn zu
 ruckhalten? trösten.
 Niemand Meine
 kann Taucher-
 mir maske, die
 das dritte
 sag- die
 en. ich
 Das besaß,
 muß ich eine
 selbst er- andere wurde
 fahren, ange- bereits vom
 bunden an meine Meer weggeholt.
 hölzerne X-Form. Mein Schnorchel
 Warum ein X? Ich mit der Maske
 bin nicht sicher. brauche ich, um
 Es könnte dutzende das Meer klarer seh-
 von Gründen geben. en zu können. Eine
 Das X erzeugt eine Zeitung, Adelaide
 andere Einschrän- Anzeiger vom Freitag,
 kung in meinem Leben, 21. März 1980. Viel-
 aber es ist angenehm; leicht frißt und verdaut
 gemacht für die Form das Meer diese
 meines Körpers. auch. Eine Rolle
 Dies ist das dritte Bindfaden, um
 X, eines wurde vom meinen Besitz
 Meer bereits weg- an das X anzu-
 geholt. Mein per- binden; eine
 sönliches X mit Rolle wurde vom
 Arm und Beinläng- Meer schon
 er vermessen. bereits weggenom-
 Das X persönlich men. Eine Schere
 zugeschnitten. um den Bind faden
 Geradezu wie ein zu durch schneiden.
 altmodischer Anzug, Ich halte
 für jemand anderen noch aus,
 geschneidert, aber ich verdränge
 ich finde, immer noch das
 er paßt Eigengewicht in
 mir per- meiner Welt...

fekt. Vielleicht
 hatte diese Person
 auch ein X in
 Auftrag gegeben,
 zu blauen Anzug
 passend. Ich könnte
 ihm sogar mein
 eigenes X leihen.
 Der Anzug kostet
 jetzt \$6 in einem
 Second-Hand-
 Laden. Bequem,
 behaglich. Um-
 geben mit ver-
 trauten Eigentüm:
 Meiner Pfeife,
 15 Jahre alt,
 ein alter Freund.
 Ein Kleider-
 bügel, der
 mit dem Anzug
 zusammenhängt,
 um ihn in
 Form zu halt-
 en, um ihn zu
 trösten.
 Meine
 Taucher-
 maske, die
 dritte
 die
 ich
 besaß,
 eine
 andere wurde
 bereits vom
 Meer weggeholt.
 Mein Schnorchel
 mit der Maske
 brauche ich, um
 das Meer klarer seh-
 en zu können. Eine
 Zeitung, Adelaide
 Anzeiger vom Freitag,
 21. März 1980. Viel-
 leicht frißt und verdaut
 das Meer diese
 auch. Eine Rolle
 Bindfaden, um
 meinen Besitz
 an das X anzu-
 binden; eine
 Rolle wurde vom
 Meer schon
 bereits weggenom-
 men. Eine Schere
 um den Bind faden
 zu durch schneiden.
 Ich halte
 noch aus,
 ich verdränge
 immer noch das
 Eigengewicht in
 meiner Welt...

THOUGHTS FROM THE LITTORAL ZONE

Restricting my world to a space 6'x5'x3', between the high and low water level; quite a compressed space, an isolated space, a world restricted and simplified. An unsafe space, sited at the edge of predictability and certainty- in that littoral zone between high and low tide at the time of the tidal flow. At the mercy of the water. What pressure will the water and sand exert on the glass skin protecting me? If it collapses how much wet sand can my body hold back? No-one can tell me. I owned; have one to find has out for myself, tied onto my wooden X. Why an X? I'm not certain. I think there could be dozens of sons. The X creates another restriction in my world, but it is comfortable; made for the shape of my own body. This is the third X, one already been claimed by the sea. My personal X, with arm and leg length and crotch measured to fit; the X personally tailored. Just like an old-fashioned suit, tailored for someone else, but I find that it fits me perfectly. Perhaps that person also made an X to order, to fit the blue suit. I could even lend him my own X. The suit now only costing \$6 from a second-hand clothing shop. Comfortable, comforting. Surrounded with friends. I recently purchased a pipe, 15 years old, an old friend. A coathanger that goes with the suit, to keep it in shape. To comfort my body. Diving mask; the third I've owned; one has to find has out for myself, tied onto my wooden X. My snorkel used with the mask to read the sea clearly. A newspaper the Adelaide Advertiser of Friday 21 March 1980; perhaps the sea will claim and digest this also. A ball of twine to tie all my possessions onto the X; a previous ball of twine was taken by the sea. A pair of scissors to cut the twine. I am still holding on; still displacing my own weight in my own world.....

.....MEASURING STICK.....

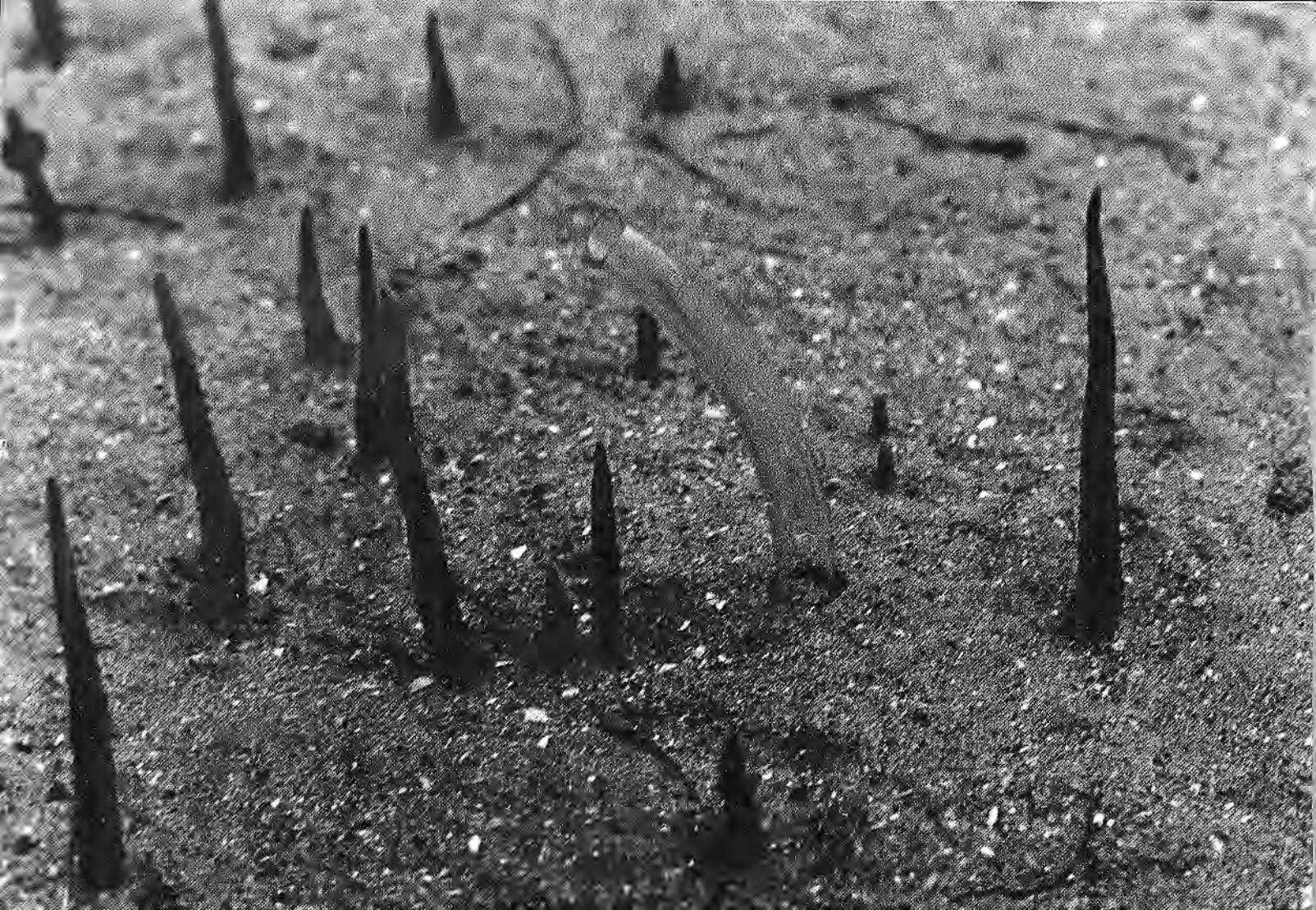
The body as a tidal measuring stick measuring the individual's displacement of water (for Archimedes).

Performed at: (a) Durras Beach, New South Wales on February 1980, and
(b) Glenelg Beach, Adelaide, South Australia, during a week of performance art organised by Noel Sheridan director of the Experimental Art Foundation Adelaide, for the Adelaide Festival of Arts in March 1980.



March 1980.





.... AGAINST THE TIDE

Following on from the "Sand Memories" work: what is my role (or anyone's role) in such activities- observer or manipulator?

I had the idea of constructing a large X (with all the significance that such a shape carries with it) from saplings and also from dressed timber from trees within the N.S.W. South Coast area (as at Durras); transposing one of these into a trench in the tidal sand where my own body (strapped to the X) can measure the tidal flow. The sand particles between high and low tide experience this change with regular frequency. It seems a natural corollary from "Sand Memories" for my body to associate directly with these memories.

In the gallery a similar X (from dressed timber) is used to explore, in a series of actions the connotations of the X shape, which are considered in turn and then rejected. In a sense this parallels the progressive cleaning by the tide as it flows into the tidal trench. The cultural links that I have with the past can be severed and a new understanding of my world can be made in the presence of the grains of sand surrounding my body. This process implies a violent severing with the past and reconciliation with the present.

8 July.

The X:

the Unknown. the Christ.

~~IXTHUS.~~ IXΘΥΣ ICATHUS.

IX.

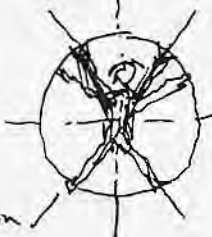
X the deletion ^{against} cancel. ✓ the connection. acceptance.

the Kiss, sign of love object.

TEN.

the perfect proportion of the human figure (Divine proportions)

da Vinci? Vitruvian Man. Perfection Multiplication. 4 X 3.



Railway crossing.

St. Catherine on the wheel.

Klu. Klu. Klan burning cross.

Nov. 1979.



Proposal for an installation.

The sand compressed into a rock.

The sand's experience from eons of time are frozen into an object.

The object exists as exact copies, memorials to this event.

The observer is a voyeur, trying to uncover secrets that do not yield.

The wind, the water, the earth are constantly changing each of the stones.

The memories of the stones are fading, taken over by each of these

The sand is set free. elements.

the installation consisting of castings of a sea-cavern, one containing identical stones, another the latex skin cast from my body, and so on.



March 1980.



SAND MEMORIES.....

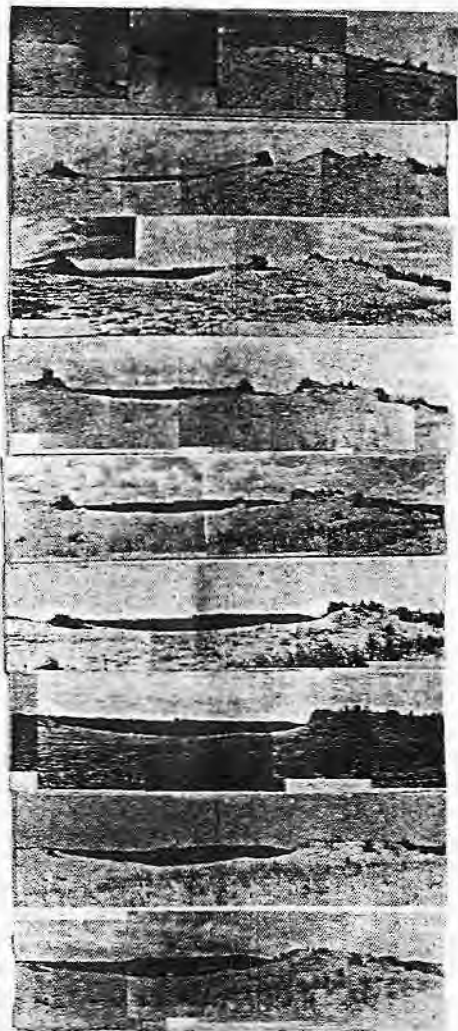
Sand Memories began as a private exploration of some sand dunes on the South Coast of New South Wales. I photographed them twice a year over four years. I felt that I had to come to terms with the changes that I was witnessing- more than just the observed effects of rain, wind and heat on the sand particles.

My activities on the sand dunes developed. I buried, at one point in time earlier photographs taken of the dunes. Over a period of several years these photos reappeared, totally transformed by the dunes themselves. They had digested their own history. From this performance "Sand Memories at Durras" emerged. On the gallery floor ritual activities were developed using sand, water and the photos of the dunes. This took place around a large canvas on which sand had been glued. Simultaneously, there was shown a pre-taped video of the photos being buried in those sand dunes.

While in New York in 1977, I had the idea of transposing my ideas and sentiments from "Sand Memories at Durras" onto an intersection of that city. It was as if that metropolis, with all the commercial & social agglomerate associated with it, had sprung from the sand. I wanted to reverse the process; to excavate back to the foundations. In practical terms this had had to be done through a process of the imagination- within mental space. From this came the performance "Sand Memories at Durras at Broome St."



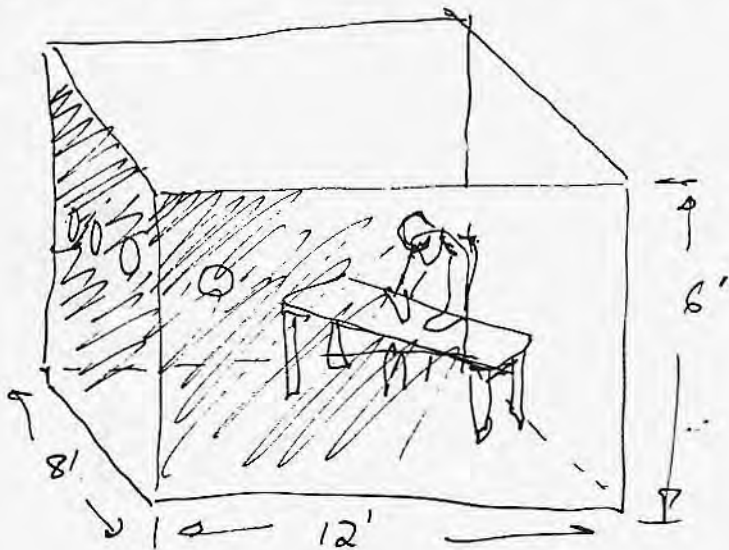
February 1978.



THE CANBERRA LESSON

My initial response to exhibiting at ACT 1 in Canberra in November 1978 was to resort to using a work that I was entirely familiar with; SOMETHING ALREADY TESTED AND PROVED. But the lessons from Canberra don't allow us to take things for granted so easily.

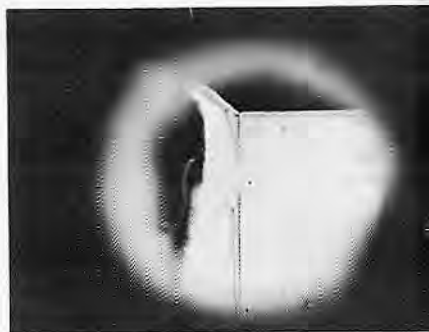
Why not develop a sealed space in which certain pieces of information (like fragments from the Australian Constitution) are LEARNED by HEART, like the old lessons.



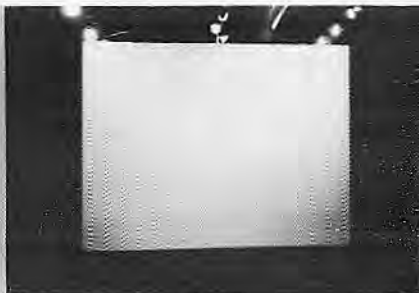
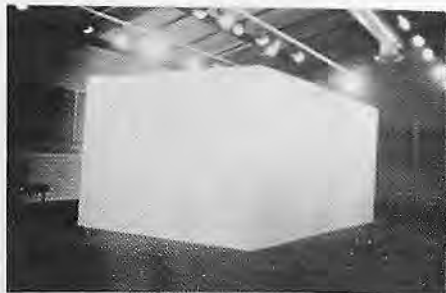
A dialogue would be set up with other voices TAUNTING, REPEATING, REMINDING as the lesson proceeds.

The only access to the work would be through peep-holes in the partitions.

Eyes would be WATCHING as I make my mistakes, repeat the lines, SLOWLY learning them. My ANXIETY would show through, my FUMBLINGS, my ERRORS; and this would become
THE CANBERRA LESSON.



Oct 1978.



FOUR SEASONS

A Videotape

(Originally shot on super 8 & transferred to U-matic video by Rank Cintel; 22 minutes; colour; PAL & NTSC)

This videotape is a diary of a block of land taken from one vantage point.

Movement is restricted mostly to zooming and panning. The camera resembles a surveilling eye-focussing on specific objects and events, rolling from side to side picking up changes and movement in the peripheral vision.

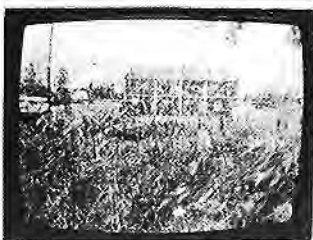
The film was made using time-lapse with the time interval varying from one frame per second to one frame per hour. Small sections were shot at the "normal" speed of 24 frames/second. The video begins at mid-summer; shadows and clouds roll by relentlessly. The passage of each day can take from one second to several minutes, with night as well as day being included in the imagery.

Editing was restricted to maintaining a general chronological flow of time.

There are several incidents and accidents that are incorporated into the tape. Early in the work for example, workmen can be seen repairing the road between the block of land and the apartments beyond. A little later it was necessary to use a replacement camera. In this camera, as the batteries lost power, instead of opening and closing at each pulse, the shutter opened at one pulse and closed at the next. Street lights flare and hallate into the lens.

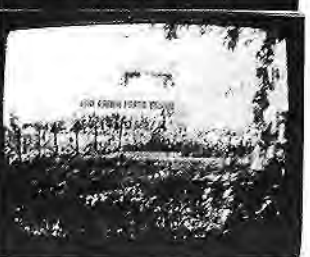
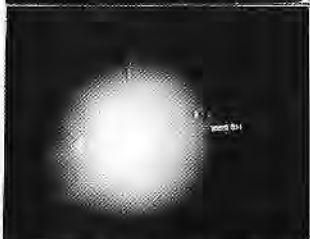
The audio track was carefully dubbed over the final video image using natural insect and bird sounds; cicadas and galahs for the warmer months and currawongs for the bleaker winter. Some of these sounds were transformed using a synthesiser. The natural and synthesised alternate without warning and are tightly woven into the electronic image.

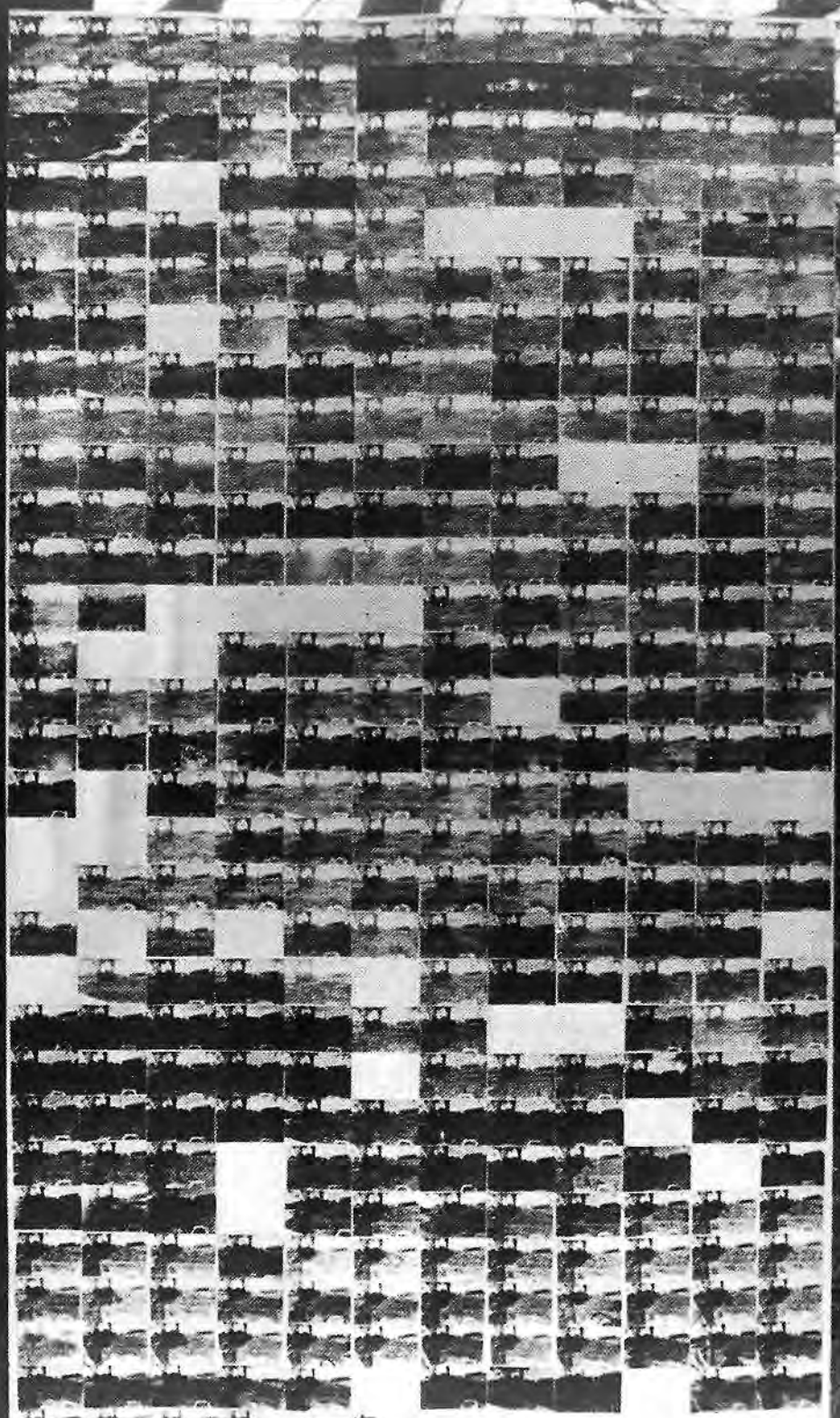
The seasons proceed predictably but the final images of the following summer are barely a reminder of the previous one.



Original photo montage
from 1976-77.
Vides Completed 1981.

Jan 1982.
60





SOLO EXHIBITIONS AND ACTIONS - selected

- 1966 - Nundah Gallery, Canberra
- 1967 - Cité des Arts, Paris
- 1968 - Qantas, Paris
- 1969 - Sculpture Gallery, Canberra
- 1970 - Sculpture Gallery, Canberra
- 1971 - Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1974 - Abraxas Gallery ("Systems Feedback" action), Canberra
- Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney
- Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne
- 1977 - Canberra
- Central Street Gallery, Sydney ("4 Seasons" installation)
- 1978 - Pratt Graphic Center ("Sand Memories" action), New York
- Experimental Arts Foundation, Adelaide
- 1979 - Sculpture Centre Gallery, Sydney
- 1980 - Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne
- 1981 - University of Illinois
- 1983 - Sonnenwende (Solstice) Project, Kunstverein, Hamburg
- 1984 - Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin

MAJOR COLLECTIONS WHERE WORK IS INCLUDED

- Australian National Gallery, Canberra
- New South Wales Art Gallery, Sydney
- Regional Art Galleries in Australia: Manly, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Tamworth
- Sam Pees collection, Philadelphia, USA
- Australian National University Collection, Canberra
- Latrobe University collection
- Deakin University collection
- PCA collection
- Foreign Affairs collection
- Preston Institute of Technology collection
- Victorian Education Department
- Flinders University collection
- National Film (lending) Library, Canberra

PUBLICATIONS WHERE WORK IS FEATURED

- "Directory of Australian Printmakers" Melbourne 1978 & 1982
- "Art and Australia" (ACT 1) July, 1979
- Cantrills Filmnotes, Nov 1979 & April 1982
- "Artists and Galleries of Aust & New Zealand", Lansdowne Press 1979, 84
- Artweek (California) 12th Jan 1980
- High Performance (Los Angeles) August 1981

COMMISSIONS

- Print Council of Australia Member's print
- Künstlerhaus Bethanien Edition '83

BIOGRAPHY

- 1937 - born in Sydney
- 1959 - Bachelor of Science and Diploma of Education, Sydney University
- 1966 - Bachelor of Arts, Australian National University, Canberra
- 1967 - preliminary Master of Arts, A.N.U., Canberra
- 1967-68 - French Government scholarship to study printmaking at Hayter's studio 17, Paris
- 1967 - first occupant of the Sydney University Power Institute Studio, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris
 - Dyason bequest, N.S.W. Art Gallery
- 1977 - lived and worked in New York
- 1980 - Visual Arts Board project grant to execute work for "Operation Equinox '80"
- 1981 - series of actions and installations along the San Andreas faultline, California
- 1983 - Visual Arts Board grant and DAAD assistance to work at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin

GROUP EXHIBITIONS - selected

- 1967, 71, 76, 78, 80, 82 - Print Council of Australia (PCA) touring exhibitions within Australia
- 1977 - PCA exhibition "Contemporary Australian Prints" in Tokyo, Suva and Fremantle
- 1978 - Second Western Pacific Print Biennale
 - ACT 1 performance art festival, Canberra
- 1979 - PCA "Contemporary Australian Printmakers I & II" to the East and West coasts of the USA
 - Sydney Biennale Alternatives
 - "Artcore Meltdown" Sydney University Union
 - "Video Australia" tour of the USA organised by the AGDC
- 1980 - "Video Australia" shown at the Venice Biennale
 - performance "Measuring Stick" at the Adelaide Festival of the Arts, Adelaide
 - PCA exchange exhibitions to Sweden and the UK
 - Frechen International Graphic exhibition
- 1981 - participation in "Equinox '80", a world-wide collaborative event using the tide, Pompidou Centre, Paris
 - First Australian Sculpture Triennial, Melbourne
 - "Land Rites" exhibition organised by the Vic. College of Arts
- 1982 - Arteder 82, Bilbao
 - week of performance art, Donguy Galleries, Paris
 - "Australian Screenprints" PCA show touring Australia
- 1983 - Hamburg Performance Woche as part of the Art Week, Hamburg
 - DAAD Berlin Performance Weekend, Künstlerhaus, Berlin
 - Alternativa 3, Almada, Portugal
 - A.U.S.T.R.A.L.I.A. show, Zona Gallery, Florence
 - "Im Theatre" 24 hours of performance in the Hebbel Theatre, Berlin
 - Frechen International Graphic exhibition

DANK AN

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