

CONCEPTUAL ART: A SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE

Timothy Nye

THE CONCEPT FOR THIS exhibition arose from a sense that the evolution of the postmodern city was affecting the way certain artists perceive the urban landscape. The postmodern city, as distinguished from the modern city, is characterized by the growing erosion of the urban infrastructure; the loss of physical and social equilibrium; and increasingly complex social and physical layers which are barely contained by communication, transportation, and judicial networks. This evolution implicitly demanded that artists respond to the space of the city, whether psychological, temporal, or physical, and to do so in a way that was impossible with conventional forms of representation. The artists in this exhibition do not paint the bright city lights or the lively pedestrian-filled streets. Rather, they seek to analyze and articulate the sensations of vast spaces and of oppressive power structures felt by the urban wanderer. Their works address cognitive representations of the city that are often described through live performance or direct interaction with the urban landscape and its inhabitants.

This exhibition spans the period from 1957 to 1992. Much of the work originated at a moment when art-making concerns turned from the art object to the conceptual record, or mapping. Although the Minimalists had already addressed anti-formalist issues and the abandonment of composition, the art object was still their primary concern. It was the work that came to be termed Conceptual or Performance Art (or a variety of other names such as Idea, Process, or Body Art) which challenged the "object form" that art production had previously assumed.

This period's theoretical debates focused on what has been termed the "dematerialization of the art object"—not always to be understood as a literal dematerialization. Objects, whether photos or texts, often exist for a documentary purpose, that is, to record information or ideas; they are not

necessarily made with the intention of display. This type of documentation tends to come in the form of an ordinary snapshot or an artist's notebook, or even a performance, where the body displaces the object.

The move from the visual to the conceptual marked a shift in art making toward a distinct emphasis on the structures of language as the materials of art. In early Conceptual work, language criticizes the strictly formal/visual approaches to art making found in modernist painting and sculpture as well as the idea of the uniqueness and preciousness of the art object. An entire generation's criticism addressed Clement Greenberg's failure to convincingly articulate the difference between formalist criticism, with its inherent subjectivity, and an aesthetic of taste; such criticism was being presented as if there were a scientific method for evaluating art.

In 1965 Joseph Kosuth, the most vocal in his disdain for modernist, formally based criticism, began exhibiting photostats of entries from the dictionary. In his photostat *Water* (1965), he hoped to present the "idea of water" by removing the image itself and therefore the evidence of the artist's hand. Kosuth was attempting to bridge the gap between materials and ideas through a deemphasis of the vehicle itself, the art object. He became dissatisfied, however, with the viewer's reading of the photostat as part of the "art" and not just the "idea," and began presenting these projects in art journals, as rubber stamps, prints, and, finally, billboards. These new forms and venues were intended to further remove the work from the traditional environs of art. Although other artists made equally important contributions to Conceptual Art, Kosuth's discourse remains the most available because he articulated it in many publications on his work. In America, the same anti-formalist position was being explored simultaneously by several camps of artists (Sol LeWitt, Robert Barry, John Baldessari, Mel Bochner, Dan Graham, and Daniel Buren, to name a few). The early work of all these Conceptualists, whether in this country or abroad, offered a new form of representation, one freed from aesthetic concerns and focused exclusively on the presentation of the concept behind the work. The object was just a device to express the idea.

Most recent major exhibitions and critical writings have primarily explored Conceptual Art's deemphasis of the concern for the aesthetic. In

opposition to these limited interpretations, "The Power of the City/The City of Power" reexamines Conceptual Art and its strategies as they are used to describe and map an experience of urban public space rather than pictorial space. These strategies at times end up articulating a space more psychological than physical, one that exposes the tensions created by various urban power networks. The representation of urban space and symbols of power have traditionally been illustrated through mimetic photography and figurative painting. Such representation, however, is exclusively narrative. The artists in this exhibition attempt to transcend the limitations of narrative depiction by purifying or clearing the passage from the vehicle used to convey the idea to the idea itself.

With this strategy in mind, the exhibition addresses two closely related issues. The first is how the experience of city space can be non-mimetically represented; this is the section of the exhibition dealing with the Power of the City. The second issue is how the often inequitable effects of power structures are experienced by the inhabitants of the city, and how this more psychologically oriented space can be artistically rendered; this is examined in the City of Power section of the exhibition.

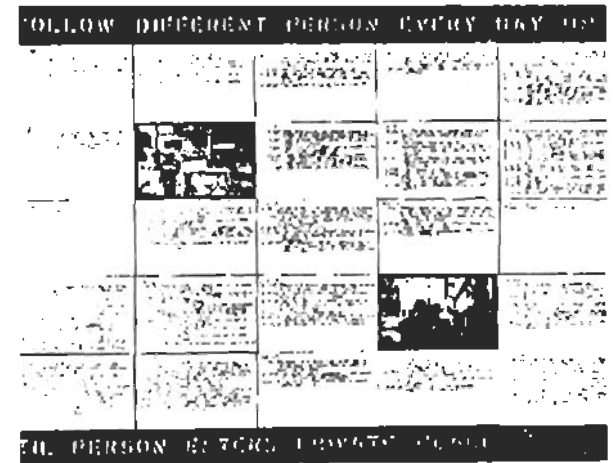
Beginning in the early 1960s, a variety of artists began focusing on these questions. Stanley Broun posed as a disoriented pedestrian to explore the way an anonymous urbanite perceives the city and how this perception can be conveyed without standard systematic representation. *This Way Broun* (1961) consists of scrawled maps drawn by random pedestrians when Broun asked them to direct him to various locations. (He did not reveal the purpose of his requests.) His project forces one to abandon language as a vehicle of communication for a more primitive visual form. The economy of means used in the rendering of the maps encodes the participant's perceptions of urban geography. At the same time, the apparent haste and almost indecipherable nature of the maps traces the city dweller's psychological condition of impatience.

Douglas Huebler's *Duration Pieces* examine an essential issue also revealed in Broun's work: the close association between temporal duration and spatial expansion. Whereas time in Broun's work is defined by the length of the line indicating distance and, by extension, travel time, Huebler

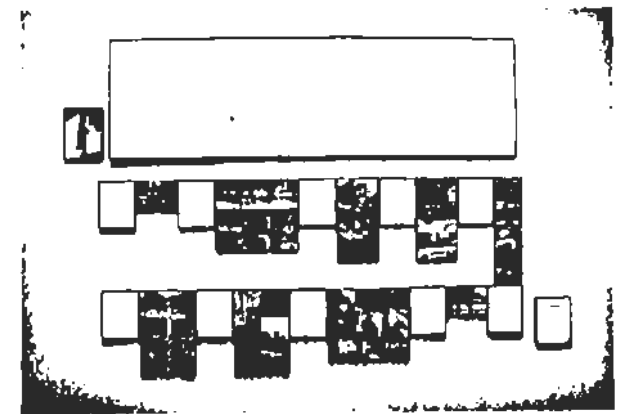
in the *Duration Pieces* describes time and space simultaneously. In 1970 he systematically gridded a small section of the city of Amsterdam. He began by selecting a random point in the city and taking what he calls an "infinite photograph" of it (a photograph focused on the farthest point in view). He then walked in that direction for thirty minutes, turned 90 degrees and took another photograph, walked in the new direction for fifteen minutes, turned 90 degrees, took another photograph, walked for seven-and-a-half minutes...and so on, until time could no longer be divided. Through the use of the "infinite photograph," Huebler implies the complete mapping of a small quadrant of Amsterdam. In Huebler's *Duration Pieces*, the element of time (the duration of time specified to walk in a certain direction) and space (the actual area covered by foot and documentation) become almost synchronous through action and documentation.

On Kawara's illusive sense of personal contact with his subject becomes a device for mapping space and time. For his *I Got Up* series, he mailed out postcards to friends, each stamped with the precise time he awakened, one a day for as long as twenty-seven consecutive days. The time, date, his present location, the addressee, and a stock postcard image of the place he was visiting provided the only information. Traditional associations of the postcard as a sentimental gesture are contradicted both by the form (stamped print) and minimal content. The tendency to depersonalize content in postcards because the message is exposed—further emphasized through Kawara's incorporation of the stamp—directs the recipient's attention to the card's passage through space and time.

Vito Acconci's performance work of the late 1960s and early 1970s examines either the self in public space or his body as public landscape. In *Following Piece* (1969), Acconci randomly follows and photographs pedestrians until they enter a private space (legally defined as one's home or a space where it would be unlawful to enter without the permission of the owner). The project addresses the conflict between public and private space and their respective claimants. Acconci distinguishes this space in a legal sense: he does not follow the pedestrian beyond the door because you cannot enter another person's home. You do have the right, however, to invade



Vito Acconci, *Following Piece*, 1969



Sophie Calle, *The Shadow*, 1985

another individual's privacy as long as you remain in public territory. Acconci's action invades territory that otherwise might be left private, thus subverting the seeming security of neutral space by limiting his subject's enjoyment of privacy to designated spaces.

A different definition of private space is at the heart of Sophie Calle's *The Shadow* (1985). Calle asked her mother to hire a detective to follow her around. The detective is unaware of the collusion. Calle leads the detective through her daily routines and meetings. There is a perverse satisfaction in the sharing of her personal, intimate space. The detective, carrying out his duty, documents the project with photographs and written reports. This documentation becomes a map of Calle's footsteps, a permanent trace of her fleeting presence. Calle inverts the implied power structure of the enlightened detective and the unknowing victimized subject. The detective's invasion of Calle's private affairs is in fact an unspoken invitation to share the intimacies of her daily life. Like Brouwn and Acconci, Calle enlists the participants without their consent, redefining participatory modes in specific terms of social interaction.

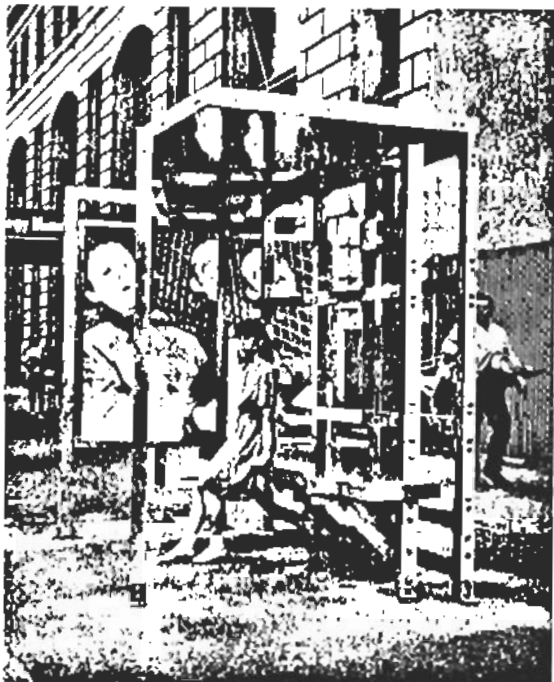
Issues of repossession of the city are examined in Lois Nesbitt's *Gallery Labels* of 1992. On the facades of defunct galleries, Nesbitt discreetly places a label identical to those found in museums and galleries to describe works of art. The label provides the "date of extinction," accompanied by the date and reason for the closing. A map documenting the location of these extinct spaces becomes an evidentiary walking tour of the depressed art world economy. Nesbitt's transformation of these dead spaces into sculptural structures—the space itself is a ready-made sculpture—represents a kind of cultural reincarnation.

The *Rating* projects of Michael Banicki deliberately present subjective decision-making processes as objective and mathematically determined. Banicki has rated, among other things, telephone exchanges, bottle caps, black baseball teams, and storefronts. The list of items to be compared is presented on a huge grid with horizontal and vertical axes. Each item is individually compared to the other items and a preference indicated by a color-coded dot. The selection of subjects rated seems purposely arbitrary, opening Banicki's work to more metaphorical interpretations. Although

his analysis of information pretends to be based on objective considerations, it is in fact a falsified objectivity, reminiscent, for instance, of the urban power network's arbitrary decisions manifested within city space. In the context of this exhibition, the grid form becomes a map of the injustices passed off as the products of intelligent and equitable decisions.

Dennis Adams confronts social injustice overtly through the construction of public structures such as bus shelters and pissoirs that contain metaphoric historical imagery. His works are best described as interventionist sculpture masked as urban furniture. Adams inserts images of controversial historical memories into public spaces to subtly criticize the inadequacies of public assistance programs. He addresses urban power structures by jarring the viewer into thinking about the real function and implication of these structures. *Bus Shelter II* (1984-86), erected near Union Square, seems to be an ordinary bus shelter. Replacing the advertisements, however, are photographs taken at the espionage trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1951. The Rosenbergs were tried and executed for allegedly passing military secrets to the Soviet Union. The case became notorious for the highly questionable evidence used to convict them. To affirm the connection of the case to public life, Adams situated the shelter in the vicinity of the Rosenberg's apartment. The seemingly innocuous utilitarian donation becomes a statement of the brutal injustices of governmental and judicial power, and, more specifically, an aggressive metaphor for the city's inability to really "shelter" its inhabitants. Adams' piece occupies the hidden spaces of memory as well as city life.

Candy Jernigan's *Found Dope* and *Found Dope II*, both of 1986, also attempt to probe hidden spaces. *Found Dope* collages the discoveries of Jernigan's casual strolls through her East Village neighborhood. The detritus of the drug culture that she easily finds is evidence of the rampant use of drugs in the city. *Found Dope II* is a collage of crack vials also found within a ten-block radius of her home. Each vial contains a number underneath, and the location where it was found is indicated on a map of the small quadrant of the city surrounding her apartment. The discovery of the vials in Jernigan's own neighborhood becomes a metaphor for the proximity of this problem to (our) home. The ease with which Jernigan collects the



Dennis Adams, *Bus Shelter II*, 1984-86



David Hammons, *Fitz-aard Ball Sale*, 1983

materials for her project is an indication of the overwhelming magnitude of the problem of drug abuse.

David Hammons is concerned with the difficulties of survival in the city. The photographic documentation of *Bliz-aard Ball Sale* (1983) examines the desperate measures the unemployed must take. Alluding to car window washers at traffic intersections, three-card monte scams on lower Broadway, and the other urban con games, Hammons depicts himself selling snowballs in Cooper Square. Ironically, there is a certain honesty in his con. He makes no effort to conceal the worthlessness of his wares nor is there any bullying insistence on payment for unrequested services rendered. Privileged urbanites are almost relieved that they can channel feelings of guilt into hostility, rather than be forced to confront the ugly spaces of city life.

Krzysztof Wodiczko in his *Homeless Vehicle Project* (1989) constructs a series of wheeled vehicles in which the homeless can store their possessions. The project brings attention to the issue of homelessness by engaging the natural curiosity of middle-class consumers:

The middle classes are well trained as consumers. As good consumers, they know how to accurately evaluate the "value" of new functional and symbolic form that appears before their commodity-tuned eyes. Every time we see a tool, we look at its shape, its details, its movements, and its position in a particular environment. We guess what it does, who would use it, and what situation creates the need for it. How important is [it] to have? If we have not seen such a tool before, we are curiously surprised by its appearance. We examine each movement of its operator in relation to the movement of the tool. We notice how the tool transforms its environment and wonder what this means to the user and to us.¹

Wodiczko is trying to reawaken the sensitivity we have lost through over-exposure. His strategy of arousing curiosity rather than guilt creates a positive forum for confrontation with an urban reality that often is shamefully avoided.

Jenny Holzer also acts as an urban interventionist. One of her electronic billboards installed on Times Square displays the words "Protect me

from what I want." The pedestrian's expectation of a solicitous message or product promotion is confounded by a concise political commentary that alerts consumers to the seductive powers of consumer-oriented messages. Holzer understands that advertising does not fulfill but creates needs. Day-to-day survival is made even more difficult if one is impelled to extravagant desires. Holzer's form of social advertising attempts to awaken us to the problem and fence off those tempting, improvident spaces occupied by boutiques and department stores.

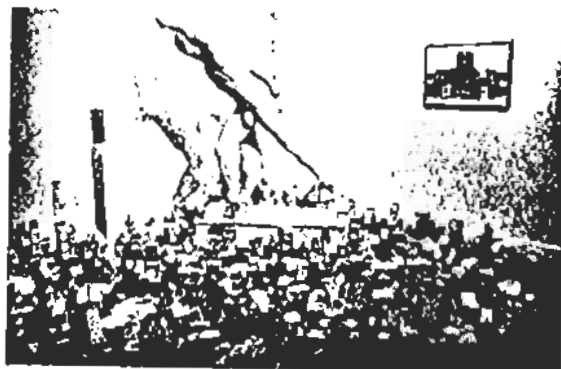
Hans Haacke's real estate pieces expose the unethical composition of corporate America. Yet what he uncovers, though unethical, is not unlawful. His *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* displays the vast slum holdings of the Shapolsky Real Estate Corporation. The piece consists of 142 photos of the tenement facades and vacant lots, documents, and a map indicating the location of the properties in Harlem and the Lower East Side. The vast detail and size of the piece visually reinforces the depth of Shapolsky's contribution to the housing crisis in New York. The photographic documentation, even in its neutral presentation, clearly shows the shameful condition of the buildings, demonstrating the depth of Shapolsky's negligence and unscrupulousness. Haacke constructs his narrative by using only publicly available material. His criticism, therefore, is not only directed at overturning the immaculate corporate image, exposing the corruption behind these padlocked doors and barred windows, but it is also designed to show that part of the problem rests in the public's apathy.

There is another context in which Haacke's *Shapolsky* piece can be viewed. Discussing the work, Rosalyn Deutsche noted that for Haacke "a work's meaning is always incomplete, changing 'as of' different temporal situations; that the work incorporates the responses it evokes and mutates accordingly to the uses to which it is put..."² The idea that a Haacke work can reflect "different temporal situations" is ironically relevant to the present context—that of the last exhibition to be held in this space.

Francesc Torres distances himself from the specific daily traumas of urban existence, commenting instead on a more general urban phe-



Hans Haacke, *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holding, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971, 1971*



Francesc Torres, *Assyrian Paradigm*, 1980

nomenon: "what the people in power fear the most: the chance factor in life and historical processes." His *Assyrian Paradigm*, originally made in 1980 and reconfigured for this exhibition, is a model of a generic city composed almost entirely of playing cards. The title suggests the rapid rise, precarious tenure, and consequent fall of the Assyrian Empire, but in contemporary terms it concerns issues of mutable civic structures and mortality. The card houses, although held together with adhesive, are still extremely fragile. A viewer passing by could easily topple one with the tail of a coat. In fact, Torres fully intends that certain sections of his city collapse. The obelisk at the center contains a clear box housing two dice. The box periodically shakes them, implying that a city's destiny is as unpredictable as a roll of the dice. In the end, civic laws and safeguards can only do so much to circumvent disaster.

Through cognitive mapping, intervention with political power networks, and interaction with urban inhabitants, the artists in this exhibition attempt to eliminate barriers between their conceptions of urban space, the power that the city exerts on its inhabitants, and the materials used to realize these impressions. This has led several of the Conceptual artists in the exhibition to consider the psychological dimensions of city space. The exhibition thus explores the interplay between internal and external spaces, exposing tensions and recording urban pathologies. It suggests that urban planners and architects have a moral obligation to consider our environment in the psychological terms revealed by the artists' diagnoses of our urban condition.

Notes

1. Quoted in *Art Random* (Kyoto: Kyoto Shoin International Co., 1994), p. 2.

2. Rosalyn Deutsche, "Property Values: Hans Haacke, Real Estate and the Museum," in *Hans Haacke: Unfinished Business*, exhibition catalogue (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1986), p. 23.

3. Artist's statement in *Francesc Torres: Field of Action*, exhibition catalogue (Rbac's, New York: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, 1982), p. 32.

FLÂNERIE TO DÉRIVE AND AFTER: THE COGNITIVE
MAPPING OF URBAN SPACE

Christel Hollevoet

THE POWER OF THE CITY

URBAN ROAMING HAS BEEN a recurrent and deliberate attitude among literary and artistic bohemians from Romanticism, via Dada and Surrealism, to the Situationist International and Fluxus, Conceptual Art, and contemporary art practices. The phenomenon of urban drifting, successively coined *flânerie* and *dérive*, is a form of spatial and conceptual investigation of the metropolis pervasive throughout modernism and extending into postmodernism.

The French poet Charles Baudelaire, in his review of the Salon of 1846, exalted the aesthetic of urban transitoriness by describing the ephemeral beauty of the marginal: "the thousands of floating existences—criminals and kept women—which drift about in the underworld of a great city," which fascinated the roaming *flâneur*.¹ Baudelaire exalted the urban dweller's feeling of the sublime in the midst of modern Paris, "enveloped and steeped as though in an atmosphere of the marvellous."² Almost twenty years later, in "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863), he specified: "By 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable."³

Baudelaire's *flâneur* is the point of departure for a long series of artists who tackled the problem of apprehending and representing the situations and atmospheres encountered in the public spaces of the modern city. In the early twentieth century, the fascination for simultaneity in the cityscape and the mythology of modernity were exalted primarily by the Futurists, but the Dadaists in their own way incorporated bits and pieces of urban life through the techniques of collage and assemblage. They were also responsible for one of the first instances of performance in urban space.

Aragon further describes the passages (*passages*) as obsolete icons of the modernist myth and as sanctuaries of the transitory, a concept that became Walter Benjamin's greatest fascination.

In his unfinished project *Passagen-Werk* (1927-40), Benjamin in turn elaborated on Baudelaire's and Aragon's idea of the *flâneur* indulging in aimless strolls in the Parisian arcades and later amidst the crowds on Baron Haussmann's new boulevards. His projected book, dedicated to "Paris, capital of the nineteenth century," included a chapter devoted to the *flâneur*, or rather to the city which was the terrain of the *flâneur*. Echoing Aragon's words, Benjamin likened the *flâneur's* experience of the city to that of a child who perceives it as a collection of places and situations charged with mythical power.

Aragon's text is of seminal importance in Benjamin's 1928 essay, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia."³⁵ Benjamin faults Surrealism's representation of mythology and onirism for their own sakes, while celebrating the revolutionary powers of obsolescence. The enigmas of the present, he explains, can be resolved through the obsolete past, in a dialectical process similar to that of dream mechanisms. According to the Benjaminian dialectical method of history, one awakens to the present by means of reliving the past as if it were a dream—and this past is embodied in places.³⁶ At the time he was writing the Surrealism essay, Benjamin was already developing the *Passagen-Werk*, inspired by the arcades of Paris, in which he replaced the historical approach of the past by archaeology, or topography, substituting the criteria of space for that of time. His inquiry into the past is indeed an anachronistic recollection of places and situations, rather than a linear tracing of moments or events.³⁷ This urban drifting impulse and the mapping of the geographical *topos*, or place, are extremely significant for later artistic practices. They signal a pervasive view of urban geography as locus of the experience of modern life and announce the necessity for new paradigms of artistic representation.

One of the leitmotifs of the *Passagen-Werk* is a vision of the city as an interior, or apartment, where the neighborhoods are like different rooms, and the advertising signs are like pictures on the walls of a living room.

Benjamin contrasted the crowds, the collective, the proletariat of the streets to the bourgeois, imbued with false subjectivity and individualism, in his private apartment. The city was the "interior" of the collective, its home.³⁸

The *flâneur*, the distanced observer of modernity who haunted the city, first strolled through the arcades, then amidst street crowds, and eventually through department stores, where he became a consumer, where his experience embodied commodity fetishism, the seeking of "nouveau-tés" and "spécialités."³⁹

The *flâneur's* investigation of the city is an early attempt to read the essence of modernity in urban spatial configuration.⁴⁰ The topography of modernity was a concern for many artists who depicted the dynamics of the city in two-dimensional representations. However, as opposed to paintings, whose vertical planes evoke the window of the perceptive model, representations of urban space very early on resorted to the horizontality of the map.⁴¹

Cubist-influenced works such as Mondrian's abstract grid compositions—*Broadway Boogie Woogie*, for instance—combine a grid/map system of representation which Rosalind Krauss has described as typical of modernism.⁴² Yve-Alain Bois, writing on Mondrian's painting *New York City* (1942), which the artist worked on with the canvas on the floor, incorporates Leo Steinberg's concept of the "flatbed" to explain the shift from the vertical picture plane to horizontality:

New York City is one of the first "flatbeds," one of the first examples of the horizontal reversal that Steinberg considered in quasi-Lévi-Straussian terms as a passage from nature to culture in Robert Rauschenberg's art: "palimpsest, canceled plate, printer's proof, trial blank, chart, map, aerial view. Any flat documentary surface that tabulates information is a relevant analogue of his picture plane—radically different from the transparent projection plane with its optical correspondence to man's visual field." Steinberg says that the "flatbed"—"traverse section, symbolic—arises from action, as the verticality of the picture plane in the Renaissance arose from vision. There is a fundamental difference—a gulf, however small—between representing action and fulfilling it."⁴³

For this reason, artists hailing from groups such as the Situationist International, Fluxus, and Conceptual Art dismissed painting in their

apprehension of urban space. Their artistic production consists of action — in the case that interests us here, a spatial investigation of the actual city through urban roaming.

Michel de Certeau makes this clear in *Spatial Practices*,¹¹ where he outlines the difference between the scopophilic pulsion in traditional pictorial representations of cities and what he calls the “blind knowledge” one has when walking through urban space. He points out that from the Middle Ages on, cities have been represented in totalizing panoramas seen from an imaginary bird’s-eye view, where the urban complexity is made legible and its opaqueness transformed into a transparent text. De Certeau opposes this traditional scopophilic apprehension to that of the cityscape grasped from below, where the legibility of the urban text(ure) is blurred and its clarity elusive:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live “down below,” below the threshold at which visibility begins. They walk—an elementary form of this experience of the city: they are walkers, *Wandererinnen*, whose bodies follow the thick and thins of an urban “text” they write without being able to read it.¹²

This other field of experience, epitomized by urban roaming, was explored by artists whose work pertains to the field of performance or happenings, rather than to the production of art objects. In these works, reality and representation are merged, as art locates itself in real time and real space, it can only be documented through traces, such as texts, photographs, and maps.

In the late 1950s, the artists’ collaborative Internationale Situationniste (1958–69), an offshoot of the literary group Internationale Lettriste (1952–57), introduced into art a development of the literary concept of *flânerie*.

They called their concept *dérive*, a non-optical apprehension of urban space anticipating what Fredric Jameson coined “cognitive mapping.”¹³ Pronouncing the preeminence of the topographical in postmodernity, Jameson proposed that:

a model of political culture appropriate to our own situation will necessarily have to raise spatial issues as its fundamental organizing concern. I will therefore provisionally define... an aesthetic of *cognitive mapping*... the alienated city is above all a space in which people are... map (in their mind) either their own positions or the urban totality in which they find themselves... Disorientation in the traditional city... then, involves the practical reconquest of a sense of place and the construction or reconstruction of an articulated ensemble which can be retained in memory and which the individual subject can map and remap along the moments of mobile, alternative trajectories.¹⁴

Like the labyrinth wrought by the Greek mythological architect Daedalus, the city invites the *flâneur* to get lost for the sake of grasping its (impenetrable maze, so close to that of our mental space) Walter Benjamin’s chapter on the *flâneur* bore as epigraph the words of a madman: “I travel to know my geography.”¹⁵ This anticipates the efforts of the Lettrists and the Situationist International. The Lettrists advocated the replacement of aesthetics by ethics. Deriving their sense of urgency from Surrealism, they went beyond art, which they found elitist and too individualistic, and promoted a total revolution of everyday life through cultural experimentation. The critique and transformation of everyday life had been theorized by both André Breton and Henri Lefebvre, and the Situationists owe much to the first through the intermediary of the second, but they felt they had to revive the Surrealists’ initial revolutionary urgency and their project of subversive irruption of art in everyday life, which by the 1950s had been abandoned.¹⁶

In 1953, the Situationist precursor Ivan Chitchevlov, in “Formulary for a New Urbanism,” countered the Dadaists’ praise of the banal, claiming the need to counteract the boredom experienced in cities, where the “poetry of the billboards” no longer was effective, where one should seek to discover new mysteries through systematic drifting in urban space. Chitchevlov named this drifting *dérive*. He argued for a new urbanism that would allow for play and experiments, and favor psychogeographical games, which would be an improvement over “the ridiculous labyrinth in the Jardin des Plantes, at the entry to which is written (height of absurdity, Ariadne unemployed): *Games are forbidden in the labyrinth.*”¹⁷

The Situationists defined a specifically urban aesthetic of atmospheres



THE NAKED CITY
 ALL SPACES IN A STATE OF NO FLIGHT
 PROHIBITION OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Guy Debord, *The Naked City*, 1957



Benjamin Patterson, *Invitation-map for Benjamin Patterson's Exhibit at Robert Filliou's Galerie Legitime, Followed by a Fluxus Sneak Preview*, 1962

where Benjamin Patterson and Robert Filliou interacted with the people who had come to the places on the invitation flyer at the times of day indicated. The itinerary, which constituted the exhibition of the American artist Benjamin Patterson at the Galerie Légitime, consisted of a tour of Paris from 4am to 9:30pm, from the Porte Saint-Denis to the café La Coupole, followed by the *Fluxus Sneak Preview* at the Galerie Girardon, starting at 10:40pm. Robert Filliou's Galerie Légitime, created in January 1962, was a hat (*casquette*) bought by the artist ten years before in Tokyo. The "Galerie" was later stolen in Germany, but was replaced soon after by another hat. The Galerie Légitime exhibitions took place in the public space of the street, "under the hat." The idea had come to Filliou as he observed street sellers in the Paris quarter Le Marais, where he lived at the time, who were illegally selling "genuine cheap Swiss watches" hidden under their coats. Filliou liked the idea of a similarly subversive and itinerant art gallery. He maintained that art had to come down from the "high spheres" into the streets—literally. There are no art objects to see or buy in his gallery/hat—only people to meet. The person in the hat, Filliou, accompanied Patterson, the performing artist, as the gallerist.²⁰

This Fluxus itinerary, mapped on the invitation designed by Patterson, is formally reminiscent of Debord's *Naked City* and *Guide psychogéographique de Paris* and stems from a similar practice of *dérive*; it is also close in spirit to the Dada excursions. Fluxus happenings share Debord's critique of the spectator's passivity, as articulated in his book *Society of the Spectacle* (1967). They reflect the Situationist exaltation of systematic intervention, deliberately experimental behavior, and playful, nonsensical gestures, inspired by Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*. Thus the "Psychogeographical Game of the Week" published in the Lettrist journal *Pollack* (no.1):

In accordance with what you are seeking, choose a country, a more or less populated city, a more or less busy street. Build a house. Furnish it. Use decorations and surroundings to the best advantage. Choose the season and the time of day. Bring together the most suitable people, with appropriate records and drinks. The lighting and the conversation should obviously be suited to the occasion, as should be the weather or your memories. If there has been no error in your calculations, the result should satisfy you.²¹

This advocacy of games and everyday life experience (against Surrealism's alleged reactionary escape from reality) is echoed in the playful practices of Fluxus artists. Yoko Ono, for example, wrote scores such as the *City Pieces*, proposing to "Walk all over the city with an empty baby carriage" (winter 1961), or "Step in all the puddles in the city" (fall 1963); or the *Map Pieces*, which read: "Draw a map to get lost" (spring 1964), or (summer 1962):

Draw an imaginary map

Put a goal mark on the map where you want to go

Go walking on an actual street according to your map

If there is no street where it should be according to the map, make one by putting the obstacles aside.

When you reach the goal, ask the name of the city and give flowers to the first person you meet.

The map must be followed exactly, or the event has to be dropped altogether.

Ask your friends to write maps

Give your friends maps

The *Free Flux-Tours* organized through New York in May 1976 evoke both the Situationist use of play in unitary urbanism and the Dadaist *1ère Visite* of April 1921. These tours are inquiries into an "unknown" city, whose mysterious maze has to be penetrated through the guidance of Fluxus gurus. But they also point to the crucial concern in artistic practices from the late 1950s to the 1970s for the topographical apprehension of urban space, or mapping of places and itineraries. They signal a shift from the avant-garde critique of art to the critique of everyday life; from avant-garde opposition to the popular from "outside and above" to participation in it from the inside.

FREE FLUX-TOURS

(EXCEPT FOR LOST OF TRANSPORTATION & MEALS IF ANY)

May 1 MAYDAY guided by Bob Watts, call 776 3477 for transportation arrangements
 May 2 FRAMED AMERICAN TOUR, by Alison Knowles & Robert Fillip, 7pm at 80 Wooster st
 May 4 TOUR FOR FOREIGN VISITORS, arranged by George Brecht, start noon at 80 Wooster st
 May 5 ALLEYS YARDS & DEAD END, arranged by G. Maciunas, start 3pm at 80 Wooster st
 May 6 ALLEGORIC TOUR, arranged by Jonas Mekas, meet at noon at 80 Wooster st
 May 7 MUSIC TOUR & LECTURE, by Yoko Ono & Wanda, start at 7pm at 80 Wooster st
 May 8 GALLERIES, guided by Larry Miller, start at noon at 80 Wooster st
 May 9 SUBTERRANEAN TOUR I, guided by Geoff Hoesly, start at noon at 80 Wooster st
 May 10 & 11 all 6am up in 17 Mott street and eat Whiston soup (says Norm Jones Park)
 May 12 SUBTERRANEAN TOUR III, arranged by George Maciunas, start 7pm at 80 Wooster st
 May 13 SOUVENIR HUNT, meet at noon at 80 Wooster st
 May 14 SAND CURB SITES, guided by Peter Van Rappaport, meet at 3:30pm at 80 Wooster st
 May 15 EXOTIC SITES, guided by Joan Matuszewski, meet 7pm at Ovedo Restaurant, 202 W 14 st
 May 16 ALL THE WAY AROUND & BACK AGAIN, by Peter Frank, meet at noon 80 Wooster



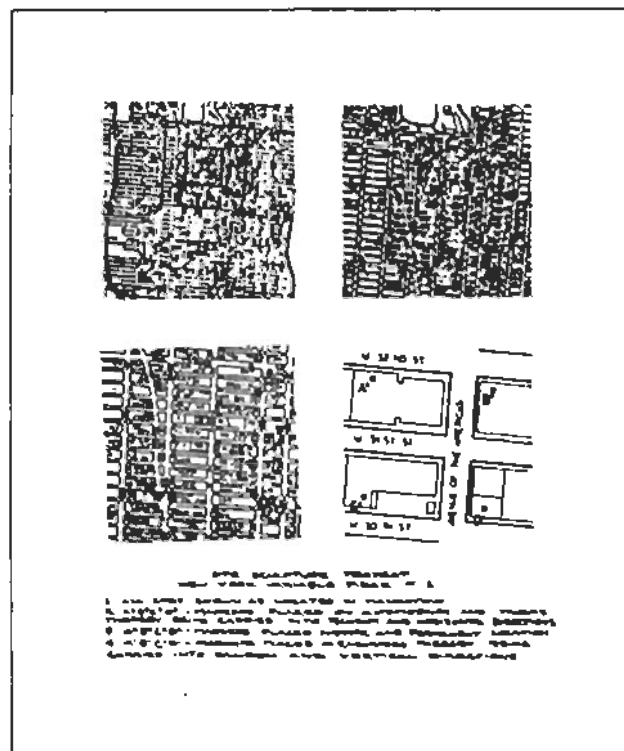
George Maciunas, *Free Flux-Tours*, May 1976

There were similar enterprises among Conceptual artists. In 1962, Stanley Brouwn asked people in the streets of Amsterdam to direct him to randomly chosen locations. He gave them a note pad, on which some drew their proposed itinerary. The pages were then stamped "this way brouwn" by the artist. On the one hand, *This Way Brouwn* epitomizes the city as a maze, eliciting a sense of dislocation and alienation, and the concomitant necessity for cognitive mapping, for an intelligible location of the self in "the incommensurable." On the other hand, as in the collaborative Fluxus tours, social interaction is pivotal, as is the annihilation of the artist/author trope: the drawings are made by the anonymous passersby and no less anonymously signed with the mechanical stroke of a rubber stamp.

In a similar vein, Douglas Huebler, in *Variable Piece #4, Paris, France* (1970) leaves it up to the piece's owner to perpetuate the mapping process *ad infinitum*. This conceptual work juxtaposes a map of Paris, on which a point has been randomly marked in ink, and a photograph taken at the actual site to which the point corresponds. The discrepancy between mapped locations and photographs of the sites is that between the index and the icon. The incongruence between the intelligible and the perceptible elicits something strange and powerful, an effect that recurs in Huebler's work.

Mapping the unmappable seems to be Huebler's aim in *Variable Piece #1, New York City* (1968), where he located the elevators of four Manhattan buildings on a map and used them to form the four corners of a square traced with adhesive tape. This constitutes the mapping of random, mobile, and vertical movement. This square is then duplicated, at double scale, mapping static and permanent locations. A third square in turn duplicates the second one in the same scale relationship. The exact places in the actual city corresponding to the four corners of the largest square on the map were marked by pieces of adhesive tape placed on four moving vehicles. These vehicles ultimately mapped horizontal and changing directions conditioned by chance.¹⁴

Huebler's *Variable Works (in Progress) / Dusseldorf, Germany-Turin, Italy* (1970-71), which consisted in hitchhiking from Dusseldorf to Turin, evokes the Surrealists' aleatory trip of 1924. Huebler's ultimate decision, after failing to reach Italy, to realize instead his *Alternative Piece, Paris, 1970* (1970)

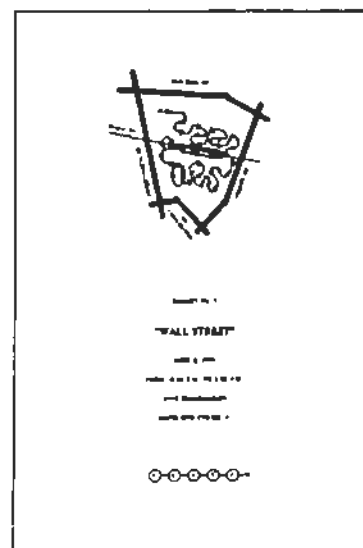
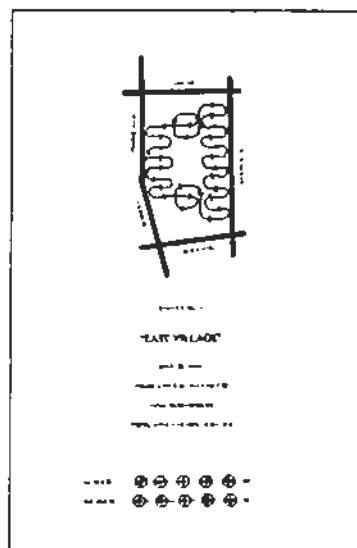
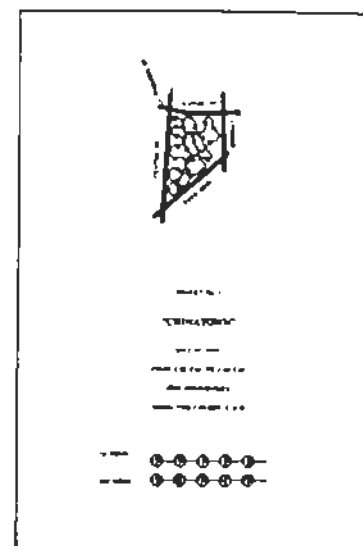
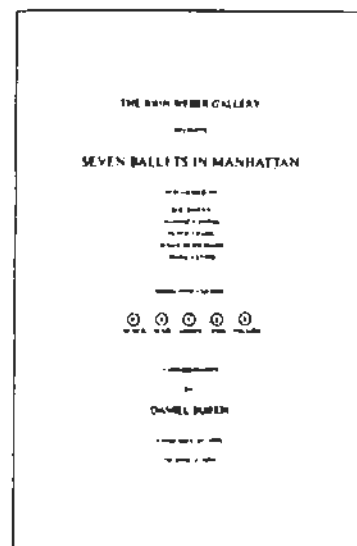


Douglas Huebler, *Variable Piece #1, New York City, 1968*

recalls Debord's essay "Theory of the Dérive,"²⁶ which promoted purposeless displacements. Huebler wandered in the Paris metro, flipping a coin to determine when and where to get out. He took photographs of the site as he saw it, randomly, as he ascended to the street.²⁷ Huebler's take on urban situations thus evokes the Dada technique of randomness, while also echoing Debord's view that "the element of chance is less determinant than one might think: from the *dérive* point of view, cities have a psychogeographical relief, with constant currents, fixed points and vortices which strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones."²⁸ Huebler's subterranean itinerary and sudden emergence to the surface of the city in *Alternative Piece*, however, is randomly determined—for critical purposes: by counteracting the process of selection inherent to photography, he critiques the structural impossibility of objective, comprehensive, realist representation.²⁹

The unique, durable art object created by the artist has been replaced by the concept of transience, by a continual shift between reality and representation, where the art work comprises the documentation of something that occurred in a specific place, at a specific moment in time, in actual reality. In a supplement to Vito Acconci's periodical *0 to 9*, subtitled *Streetworks*, the statement for one of Adrian Piper's performances in the streets of Manhattan (spring 1969) indicates the times and locations she would appear on a certain day. Similarly, André Cadere performed daily urban strolls, carrying incongruous striped poles. Daniel Buren, in April 1968, had two sandwichmen ambulating in front of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris carrying white-and-green striped panels; at the same time, a similar work of huge dimensions was pasted on the interior walls of the museum. Simultaneously, about two hundred billboards had been subversively covered with small white-and-green striped posters throughout the city. Buren's repetitive work—deprived of exchange value, extending from interior to exterior spaces, appearing on both static and mobile supports—questioned the object status of art, presenting it as the fragment of a discourse.³⁰

In *Seven Ballets in Manhattan* (May 27–June 2, 1975), Buren developed the idea of mapping an itinerary—a choreography in this instance. During seven days, groups of five people carrying panels with colored stripes walked



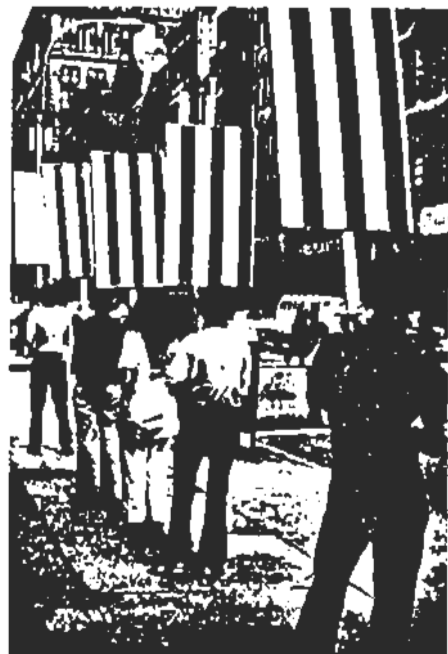
Daniel Buren, *Seven Ballets in Manhattan*, May 27–June 2, 1975

the streets of Manhattan, following certain routines devised by Buren. Each day they performed a different choreography in a new area." Their aimless, purposeless, but regulated strolling intrigued passersby. The uniqueness of the performance resided in its ephemerality, and the significance of the repetitive stripes depended on their place—or itinerancy—in actual space.

Nine years earlier, in his *Bob Hope Mao Tse Tung Demonstration* of 1966, Öyvind Fahlström had performers carry placards of the American actor and the Chinese leader in the streets of New York, while the reactions of passersby were recorded on film and tape. Observers drew their own conclusions about this eruption of world-famous characters in the streets, which parodied the leveling process of media culture. The event, which was part of the series *9 Evenings: Theater and Engineering*, organized by Billy Klüver, Robert Rauschenberg, and others, was conceived as "total theater," fusing art and everyday life through the use of new technologies.

41
 Debord's celebration of the use of maps and the practice of "possible rendez-vous" "is evoked in On Kawara's *I Went*, an archival record on photocopied maps of his daily itineraries in the cities he was in, as well as *I Met*, where he recorded the people he encountered. On Kawara raised spatial expansion to a global scale in the intercontinental *dérives* he engaged in from 1968 to 1979, represented in the *I Got Up* postcards sent from New York to Tokyo, Paris, Berlin, Düsseldorf, and Mexico City; and from New York to Paris, etc. This *dérive* is the end of strolling, whose walking pace is replaced by the "instantaneity of ubiquity." "The material boundaries and perceptive reality of cities have lost power to invisible, immaterial dimensions; the perceptible has given way to the intelligible. The slow *flâneur* who used to roam the arcades with a turtle on a leash" has been replaced by travelers in permanent transit; the boulevards have given way to airline networks. As Paul Virilio puts it: "In all likelihood, the essence of what we insist on calling urbanism is composed/decomposed by these transfer, transit and transmission systems, these transport and transmigration networks whose immaterial configuration reiterates the cadastral organization and the building of monuments." "

The French art historian Jean-Hubert Martin, who traces the *dérive* back to Dadaism and, via the Situationists, to On Kawara, Douglas Huebler, and



Daniel Buren,
Seven Ballets in Manhattan, 1975

Öyvind Fahlström, *Bob Hope
 Mao Tse Tung Demonstration* from
 "Kisses Sweeter than Wine," 1966



Daniel Buren, cites other examples of artists' mapping and drifting processes. Among them are the meticulous daily itineraries traced by Didier Bay and Christian Boltanski, Paul-Armand Gette and Jean Le Gac's happening in Paris, from June 1970 to January 1971. During these seven months, they sent nine invitations for nine different journeys to locations which, like the Dada excursions, were both banal and mysterious.⁴²

Unlike the reified objects produced by individual artists, Fluxus happenings and Conceptual events represent radical intrusions and interventions upon the actual physical configuration of the city. Interaction with the urban dwellers, collaborative performances, integration of art and everyday life can all be recognized as the ultimate results of Surrealist and Situationist theories. This heritage carries with it the continuous and fluctuating practice of aimless roaming through aleatory itineraries in cities, and its corollary, the loss of self to the power of the city.

Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* (1969) documents a performance where he followed people in the streets of New York to the point where they entered their apartments. This is reminiscent of Edgar Allan Poe's story "Man of the Crowd," exalted by both Baudelaire and Benjamin, where the narrator/*flâneur*/detective distinguishes someone in a crowd and follows him for a whole day.⁴³ The narrator of Poe's story reflects that the world cannot be known, "does not let itself be read," an inscrutability also characteristic of Sophie Calle's *The Shadow* (1985). At Calle's request, her mother hired a private detective to follow her for several days. Calle knows she is being followed and chooses a deliberate itinerary through Paris, to places that evoke private memories. The detective, who is systematically recording every move she makes, every place she goes to, ends up producing an "objective" description of her roaming which, of course, totally misses the personal connotations of the sites.

*

The problem faced by contemporary artists tackling urban space was twofold: first, how to best apprehend the experience of urban space not as spectator but

as actor; second, how to best re-present urban space, not in terms of figure and ground, on a two-dimensional plan, but in active physical and mental intervention. The first question was solved through *dérive* and its ulterior forms in Fluxus and Conceptual Art; the second by the topographical mapping of drifting processes, or cognitive mapping.⁴⁴

If at first it was thought that the reality, the essence of the modern city could be known through penetrating visual observation and description and encapsulated in an icon, later urban situations came to be grasped in more conceptual terms. They were represented through a different register of signs: either the symbolic, with conventions based on an arbitrary relation to the referent; or the indexical, with traces based on a physical relation to the referent. The work is an index of an ephemeral situation or immaterial concept; it remains a sign and can never be posited as an art "object." It is hardly ever more than a piece of paper, a relic, archival material. It has the precariousness of an invitation or a poster, of On Kawara's *I Got Up* postcards or his *I Went* photocopied maps; or of Douglas Huebler's ephemeral adhesive tape put on moving vehicles, which extended the mapping of his *Variable Piece #1, New York City*. These forms of apprehension of urban space emphasize the artist's conception and performance of the work, at the expense of the production of a unique art "object"—object quality having been questioned since Marcel Duchamp. The art "object" becomes the city itself: Marcel Duchamp declared in 1917 that the newly built Woolworth Building was a readymade; Arman announced in October 1961 that Manhattan was a giant accumulation, which he publicly "signed" on the Lower East Side;⁴⁵ Daniel Buren in April 1968 used the walls of Paris as support for his striped paper; and the same transformation from object to urban situation determined Robert Filliou's exhibitions at the Galerie Légitime.

Collaboratives such as the Situationist International or Fluxus signaled the end of the centered subject, i.e., the creative artist, the autonomous "bourgeois ego, or monad." "They favored cultural practices that crossed the boundaries between disciplines, denigrated reified commodities, and rejected the mirage of self-expression for cognitive mapping. The deconstruction of the mystique of the avant-garde, the "waning of affect," and the end of idiosyncratic style that characterize postmodernity" contextual-



Ilona Granet. *Curb Your Animal Instinct*, 1986

of the first department stores in the mid-nineteenth century did middle-class women appear in the public sphere—but the strolling woman was then essentially a consumer, her visibility a sign of her husband's social standing."

In recent years, women's exclusion from the public realm has been questioned by artists who commented on the female experience in the gendered spaces of postmodern life. In Yoko Ono's film *Rape*, as the title indicates, the following of women takes on a totally different connotation from that in Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* or Sophie Calle's *The Shadow*. *Rape*, along with Ilona Granet's *Curb Your Animal Instinct* (1986) or *No Cat Calls* (1987), evokes women's experience in public urban spaces through a critique of the male coveting gaze, all too often synonymous with intrusion and harassment.

Urban social geography can also be traced back to the nineteenth century. Reflecting on Benjamin's view of that period as the prehistory of modernity, Susan Buck-Morss wrote: "As Ur-forms of contemporary life, Benjamin avoided more obvious social types and went to the margins. He singled out the *flâneur*, [the] prostitute...."³⁶ One might add to this citation of the marginalized the homeless person who dwells between the city walls, whom Benjamin evokes in the context of his metaphors of the street as interior, describing a bag lady lying under a bridge in Paris, with her belongings gathered around her as if to create "the shadow of an interior."³⁷

The recurrent metaphors of urban dislocation, disorientation, and nomadism in Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk*, which go back to what Georg Lukacs called the "transcendental homelessness" of the modern world and Kra-cauer's "existential topography" of transience,³⁸ conjure up essential aspects of the alienating urban experience."

Under Napoleon III, Paris underwent a drastic transformation. In order to build new boulevards, Baron Haussmann destroyed the old city. The Paris we know today is the result of radical changes wrought by its "Hausman-nization," when the slums inhabited by the street sellers, organ grinders, ragpickers, and other urban nomads who had roamed the streets of the city since the Middle Ages were destroyed and their inhabitants expelled to the *banlieue*. This phenomenon did not escape the attention of the painters of modern life. Among the artistic bohemia, Daumier, Manet, Raffaelli, and



Adrian Piper, *Catalysis*, 1970-72

later Picasso (in his Blue and Rose periods) devoted much interest to the city's nomad outcasts.

Contemporary artists express a similar concern for the socially and economically inflicted nomadism in our post-industrial cities, namely, homelessness.⁴⁰ The urban historian Mike Davis has pointed out that the privatization of urban public spaces in Los Angeles has resulted in the ostracization of street life. The pedestrian is reduced to opprobrium and the homeless nomad to banishment. Relegated to the "outdoor poorhouse" of Skid Row, the homeless are regarded as undesirable, useless human beings, an attitude that testifies to blind capitalist exploitation and inadequate, inhuman social politics.⁴¹ In New York, as Rosalyn Deutsche has argued, "uneven economic and geographical development is a structural, rather than incidental, feature of New York's present expansion,"⁴² since space is produced by and reproduces social relations.⁴³

The gentrification of New York or Los Angeles, reminiscent of the Haussmannization of Paris, implies abandonment and the exclusion of the urban poor. Hans Haacke's *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971*, documents the systematic exploitation, for private profit, of the largest concentration of real estate owned by a single group—slums and vacant lots located on the Lower East Side and in Harlem.⁴⁴ And Francesc Torres, in his video *Belkrite-South Bronx: A Trans-Historical, Trans-Cultural Landscape* (1987-88), shows a devastating parallel between the effects of real-estate speculation and bombings during wartime.

The resulting experience of dislocation and alienation is expressed by Adrian Piper in her performance *Catalysis* (1970-72). Piper roamed the city streets and public transportation systems dressed and smelling like a bag lady—a reiteration of the *dérive* trope with a dose of socially charged criticism that comments very directly on the homeless condition. During Tehching Hsieh's *One Year Performance*, from September 26, 1981, to September 26, 1982, he lived in the streets, never entering a building except when he was arrested by the police, an event documented on videotape. Hsieh's action bridges the gap between, on the one hand, the obsolete deliberate attitudes of intellectual and artistic bohemians or *flâneurs*, the

1. Charles Baudelaire, "The Heroism of Modern Life," in *Art in Paris 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*, transl. Jonathan Mayne (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1965), pp. 118-19.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

3. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, transl. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964), p. 13.

4. Quoted in Maurice Nadeau, *Histoire du surréalisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1964), p. 28, from Baudelaire's "Salon de 1859."

5. Isabelle Monod-Fontaine (ed.), *André Breton: La beauté convulsive*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1991), p. 106.

6. For Max Morise's comments on the group's insufficient awareness of the limitations of chance and the failure of this open-country, intercity excursion to yield excitement, see Jean-Hubert Martin, "Dérives," in *Cartes et figures de la terre*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1980), p. 197, quoting from Morise in *La révolution surréaliste*, no. 11 (March 15, 1928), p. 1. Morise's criticism was later quoted verbatim (as usual without source) by Guy Debord in "Theory of the Dérive," *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 2 (December 1958), in Ken Knabb, ed., *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), p. 51.

7. André Breton: *La beauté convulsive*, p. 170.

8. Louis Aragon, *Nightwalker*, transl. Frederick Brown (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 9.

9. In Walter Benjamin, *Reflections*, transl. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), pp. 178-83.

10. See Rolf Tiedemann's introduction to Walter Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983), I, p. 17 and passim.

11. Burkhardt Lindner, "The *Passagen-Werk*, the *Berliner Kindheit*, and the Archaeology of the 'Recent Past,'" *New German Critique*, no. 39 (Fall 1986), pp. 26-27. On "spatial reification," see also Anthony Vidler, "Agoraphobia: Spatial Estrangement in Simmel and Kracauer," *New German Critique*, no. 54 (Fall 1991), pp. 31-45.

12. Walter Benjamin, "Der Flaneur," *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, pp. 525 [M 1,4], 531 [M 3,1], [M 3,2], 532 [M 3,4], 533 [M 3a,4], 537 [M 5,1]. Also "Pariser Passagen II," II, pp. 1051-52: "The collective is an eternally alert, eternally moving being that witnesses, experiences, perceives and devises as much between the house walls outside as individuals within the protection of their own walls. To the collective, the shining enameled signs of a store company are just as good as or better than the decorative oil paintings on the wall of the bourgeois salon. Walls with the sign 'Défense d'afficher' are the collective's writing desk, newspaper stands its libraries, mailboxes its bronze sculptures, benches its bedroom furnishings, and the café terraces are the alcoves from which it looks down at its home. Where the asphalt worker lets his coat hang on the railing, that is the vestibule. And the gateway, leading out into the open from multiple court yards is the long corridor which frightens the bourgeois; but it is to them the entrance into the chamber of the city. For them, the arcade (*passage*) was the salon. It is in the arcade, more so than in any other place, that the street reveals its identity as the masses' furnished, lived-in interior."

13. See Burkhardt Lindner, "The *Passagen-Werk*," pp. 34-36. The parallel between city and apartment calls to mind Benjamin's contemporary, the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters, who filled his Hannover apartment with found materials and objects brought in from the city. The resulting Merzbau-apartment evokes

1. Charles Baudelaire, "The Heroism of Modern Life," in *Art in Paris 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*, transl. Jonathan Mayne (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1965), pp.118-19.

2. *Ibid.*, p.119.

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4. Quoted in Maurice Nadeau, *Histoire du surréalisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1964), p.28, from Baudelaire's "Salon de 1859."

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6. For Max Morise's comments on the group's insufficient awareness of the limitations of chance and the failure of this open-country, intercity excursion to yield excitement, see Jean-Hubert Martin, "Dérives," in *Cartes et figures de la terre*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1980), p.197, quoting from Morise in *La révolution surréaliste*, no.11 (March 15, 1928), p.1. Morise's criticism was later quoted verbatim (as usual without source) by Guy Debord in "Theory of the Dérive," *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 2 (December 1958), in Ken Knabb, ed., *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), p.51.

7. *André Breton: La beauté convulsive*, p.170.

8. Louis Aragon, *Nightwalker*, transl. Frederick Brown (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), p.9.

9. In Walter Benjamin, *Reflections*, transl. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), pp. 178-83.

10. See Rolf Tiedemann's introduction to Walter Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983), I, p.17 and passim.

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13. See Burkhardt Lindner, "The *Passagen-Werk*," pp.34-36. The parallel between city and apartment calls to mind Benjamin's contemporary, the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters, who filled his Hannover apartment with found materials and objects brought in from the city. The resulting Merzbau-apartment evokes

the city as labyrinth described by Benjamin, see "Der Flâneur," *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, p. 541 [M 6a, 4].

14. The history and meaning of spaces was formulated in the cultural analyses of critics such as Theodor Adorno, Siegfried Kracauer, Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Paul Virilio, Griselda Pollock, Janet Wolff, and others.

15. Svetlana Alpers, "The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Art," *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 119-68, describes a process of topological mapping of landscape in the Low Countries which differed from the Albertian perspectival system of illusionism practiced in Italy, according to which the world was depicted as if seen through a window. In topological mapping, several points of view overlap to produce a comprehensive "description" of the landscape, as if in a bird's-eye view. This multiplication of viewpoints, in addition to fragmentation and the use of symbolic rather than iconic signs, is also what differentiates Cubism from the Western tradition of illusionism; see Yves-Alain Bois, "Kahnweiler's Lesson," in *Painting as Model* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1981), pp. 65-97.

16. Rosalind Krauss, "Grids," in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 3-22.

17. Yves-Alain Bois, *Painting as Model*, p. 182, quoting from Leo Steinberg, "Other Criteria," in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 88.

18. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1988), p. 93.

19. Fredric Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," (1984), in *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991).

20. Benjamin, "Der Flâneur," *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, p. 524, quoting from Marcel Reja, *L'art chez les juifs* (1907), p. 131.

21. *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 1 (June 1958), p. 5; see Peter Wollen, "From Britain to Situationism," *New Left Review*, no. 174, p. 77.

22. Essay published in the first issue of *Internationale Situationniste* (p. 19), in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 3.

23. "Our central idea," wrote Guy Debord, "is that of the construction of situations, that is to say, the concrete construction of momentary ambiances of life and their transformation into a superior pas-

sional quality"; in "Report on the Construction of Situations and on the International Situationist Tendency's Conditions of Organization and Action," in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 22.

24. This idea is explained in Jean-François Marjos, *Histoire de l'Internationale Situationniste* (Paris: Éditions Gérard Lebovici, 1989), pp. 18-19.

25. Guy-Ernest Debord, "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography" (1955), in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 7. The translation used here is from *On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International 1957-1972*, exhibition catalogue (Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1989), p. 139, note 3.

26. Translated in *On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time*, p. 134, from Guy-Ernest Debord, "Théorie de la dérive," *Les Mots nus*, 9 (November 1956), pp. 10-13.

27. Wollen, "The Situationist International," pp. 80-82.

28. Quoted in Marjos, *Histoire de l'Internationale Situationniste*, p. 26.

29. George Maciunas, "Fluxus Manifesto" (1963), in Clive Phillipson and Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lela Silverman Collection*, exhibition catalogue (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1988), frontispiece.

30. Conversation with Benjamin Patterson, March 25, 1992. The invitation was designed by Benjamin Patterson, printed by George Maciunas, and later edited for spelling by Robert Filliou.

31. *Poilsch*, no. 1, quoted by Debord in "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography," in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 6.

32. Yoko Ono, *Group/Work: A Book of Instructions by Yoko Ono* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978).

33. In 1959, the Dutch Situationists planned to transform the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam into a labyrinth. The mini-*dérive* organized on these restricted premises was to correspond to a radioguided *dérive* through Amsterdam—but the whole project was ultimately canceled; see Marjos, *Histoire de l'Internationale Situationniste*, p. 128.

34. Douglas Hurlbert, exhibition catalogue (New York: Seth Siegelaub, 1968), no. 7.

35. Debord, "Théorie de la dérive" (1958), in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, pp. 30-54.

36. Conversation with the artist, February 28, 1992.

37. Quoted in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 50.

38. Similarly Andy Warhol's real-time film *Empire* (1964), which consists of a stable image of the

building, filmed from a unique point of view, during a twenty-four hour period, and merely records changes of light, is a critique of Albertian illusionism, all the more puzzling when applied to the film medium because it reveals more about time than about space. It is an eloquent satire on the alleged possibility of representation equaling real time and real space. Warhol's film echoes Dziga Vertov's *The Atom with the Movie Camera* (1928), where he filmed a large city, from dawn to night, without actors, script, or scenario; see Marjos, *Histoire de l'Internationale Situationniste*, p. 33.

39. See Rudi H. Fuchs, *Disorder/Cohesion* (Frankfurt: Siedelche Van Abbe Museum, 1976), p. 4.

40. The seven successive locations were: Chinatown, East Village, Greenwich Village, Times Square, Soho, Central Park, and Wall Street; *ibid.*, pp. 54-56.

41. Debord, "Théorie de la dérive" (1958) in Knabb, *Situationist International Anthology*, pp. 52-53.

42. Paul Virilio, "The Overexposed City," in *The Lost Dimension*, trans. Daniel Mosheberg (New York: Semiotext[e], 1991), p. 18.

43. Benjamin, "Der Flâneur," *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, p. 532 [M 3, 8].

44. Virilio, "The Overexposed City," p. 21.

45. These locations, in and around Paris, were Forêt de Saint-Germain, Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, Jardin des Plantes, Lac sténieur du Bois de Boulogne, Parc zoologique du Bois de Vincennes, Service Conservation de la Nature, Collection de Minéralogie de l'École des Mines, Musée de l'Assistance Publique, Passage du Caire; see Martin, "Dérives," pp. 197-202. Martin also mentions Robert Longo, whose extra-urban *dérives*, along with those of Robert Smithson, fall outside the parameters of his exhibition.

46. See John Hignall, "Benjamin's *Flânerie* and the Problem of Realism," in Andrew Benjamin, ed., *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 116-19.

47. What is at play in the above-mentioned instances of *dérive* is not influence but intertextuality, which means that, as Fredric Jameson puts it (writing about film), the "awareness of the preexistence of other versions [is seen as] constitutive and essential..."—intertextuality being "a deliberate, built-in feature of the aesthetic effect"; Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" (1984) in *Postmodernism*, p. 20.

48. *Amnon 1955-1991: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Houston: The Museum of Fine

Arts, 1991), p. 120.

49. Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," p. 15.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

53. Janet Wolff, "The Invisible *Flâneuse*: Women and the Literature of Modernity," in *The Problems of Modernity*, p. 141.

54. Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 71.

55. Wolff, "The Invisible *Flâneuse*," p. 153.

56. Susan Buck-Morss, "The Flâneur, the Sandwehman, and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering," *New German Critique*, no. 39 (Fall 1986), p. 103.

57. Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, p. 537 [M 5, 1], quoting from Marcel Jouhanneau, *Images de Paris* (Paris, 1934), p. 62.

58. Vidler, "Agoraphobia," *passim*.

59. Tiedemann, in Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk*, II, p. 1215: "Dialectic of *Flâneur*: The exterior as street (luxury)/the interior (misery)."

60. In this sense, their endeavor, rather than epitomize postmodern art, establishes a continuity with a modernist *avant-garde* which is too often systematically positioned as the incarnation of a Kantian autonomy of culture and aesthetics.

61. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London and New York: Verso, 1990), *passim*.

62. Rowlyn Druce, "Uneven Development: Public Art in New York City," *October*, no. 47 (Winter 1989), p. 4.

63. Henri Lefebvre has demonstrated this point in *The Production of Social Space* (1974), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford and Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1991).

64. See Hans Haacke, *Unfinished Business*, exhibition catalogue (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1986), especially Royallyn Deutsche's essay "Property Value: Hans Haacke, Real Estate, and the Museum," pp. 20-37.

65. Brian Wallis, ed., *If You Lived Here: The City in Art, Theory, and Social Activism: A Project by Martha Rosler* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1991).

66. Deutsche, "Uneven Development," p. 52. She considers *The Homeless Vehicle* as an example of Situationist *détournement*—"the interpretation of present or past artistic productions into a superior construction of a milieu"; see *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 1 (June 1958), p. 13.