

THE MIND IS A MUSCLE

by

YVONNE RAINER

at the Anderson Theater April 11, 14, 15, 1968

with

Becky Arnold
Gay Delanghe

William Davis
David Gordon

Harry De Dio
Barbara Lloyd

Steve Paxton

Yvonne Rainer

The approximate running time of the evening is one hour 45 minutes

interlude #1: Conversation (*Lucinda Childs, William Davis*)

1. Trio A William Davis, David Gordon, Steve Paxton
2. Trio B Becky Arnold, Gay Delanghe, Barbara Lloyd

interlude #2: Dimitri Tiomkin (*Dial M for Murder*)

3. Mat then Becky Arnold, William Davis
Stairs David Gordon, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer

interlude #3: Henry Mancini (*The Pink Panther*)

4. Act Harry De Dio
Group

INTERMISSION

- interludes #4: *The Greenbriar Boys (Amelia Earhart's Last Flight)*
#5: Silence (6 minutes)
#6: Frank Sinatra (*Strangers in the Night*)
#7: Conversation (continued)

5. Trio A1 William Davis, David Gordon, Steve Paxton
6. Horses Group

interlude #8: John Giorno (*Pornographic Poem*)

7. Film Group
Foot Film by Bud Wirtschafter; Hand Film by William Davis
8. Lecture Yvonne Rainer

interlude #9: Jefferson Airplane (*She Has Funny Cars*)

STATEMENT

(It is not necessary to read this prior to observation.)

The choices in my work are predicated on my own peculiar resources – obsessions of imagination, you might say – and also on an ongoing argument with, love of, and contempt for dancing. If my rage at the impoverishment of ideas, narcissism, and disguised sexual exhibitionism of most dancing can be considered puritan moralizing, it is also true that I love the body – its actual weight, mass, and unenhanced physicality. It is my overall concern to reveal people as they are engaged in various kinds of activities – alone, with each other, with objects – and to weight the quality of the human body toward that of objects and away from the super-stylization of the dancer. Interaction and cooperation on the one hand; substantiality and inertia on the other. Movement invention, i.e. "dancing" in a strict sense, is but one of the several factors in the work.

Although the formal concerns vary in each section of THE MIND IS A MUSCLE, a general statement can be made. I am often involved with changes as they are played against one or more constants: Details executed in a context of a continuum of energy (Trio A, Mat); phrases and combinations done in unison (Trio B); interactive and mutually dependent movements done in a singular floor pattern (Trio A¹); changing floor patterns and movement configurations carried out by a group moving as a single unit (Film, Horses); changes in a group configuration occurring around a constant central area of focus (Act); and more obvious juxtapositions that involve actual separations in space and time.

The condition for the making of my stuff lies in the continuation of my interest and energy. Just as ideological issues have no bearing on the nature of ^{the} work, neither does the tenor of current political and social conditions have any bearing on its execution. The world disintegrates around me. My connection to the world-in-crisis remains tenuous and remote. I can foresee a time when this remoteness must necessarily end, though I cannot foresee exactly when or how the relationship will change, or what circumstances will incite me to a different kind of action. Perhaps nothing short of universal female military conscription will affect my function (The ipso facto physical fitness of dancers will make them the first victims.); or a call for a world-wide cessation of individual functions, to include the termination of genocide. This statement is not an apology. It is a reflection of a state of mind that reacts with horror and disbelief upon seeing a Vietnamese shot dead on TV – not at the sight of death, however, but at the fact that the TV can be shut off afterwards as after a bad Western. My body remains the enduring reality.

Yvonne Rainer
March, 1968

No to spectacle no to virtuosity no to transformations and magic and make-believe no to the glamour and transcendency of the star image no to the heroic no to the anti-heroic no to trash imagery no to involvement of performer or spectator no to style no to camp no to seduction of spectator by the wiles of the performer no to eccentricity no to moving or being moved.

Original source: *Tulane Drama Review* (1965) 10, 2: 178. Also in Banes (1986)