

its own devising. The bank of fluorescent tubes partially occluded by a steel plate on the floor nearby suggested similar notions with the title *I gave my name to it*—a title derived, like those of the rest of the works on view, from a fragment of Tuazon’s text, which was thereby not only aurally projected but also physically strewn throughout the gallery. The third piece in the front room was *I went out there and spent a night out there. The light died out while I walked and so I stopped*. Installed at the entrance to the space, it invited the viewer to fissure a pane of shatterproof glass underfoot, while a pristine sheet was suspended above—two states of the same body, flesh to bare bones.

On one hand, the kinds of forms that Tuazon makes are familiar. We know these places: the empty lot next to the discount supermarket at the edge of town; the corroding I-beams of the new development that went bankrupt midconstruction; the dried-out riverbed that crosses under the highway; the shuttered rest stop. Yet, on the other hand, Tuazon’s world is a kind of personal postapocalypse, a world that’s already acid-burned brown. This was clearest in the back gallery, where putrid yellow fluorescent light filtered through a waterlogged canvas, latched to the ceiling, which was continuously filled with water that dripped steadily onto the gallery floor. Nearby was *I use my body for something, I use it to make something, I make something with my body, whatever that is. I make something and I pay for it and I get paid for it*, a low table made from concrete and rebar that Tuazon partially demolished with a sledgehammer before the show opened. Tellingly, the object was already broken at the start of the exhibition, its use as a table—the symbolic site of all “relational” progress—irreversibly impaired. In defiance of the neoliberal imperative of conviviality and consumption, the ruins reflect a darker desire—or, perhaps, a blind need—for destruction.

—Caroline Busta

Deborah Hay

DANSPACE PROJECT

For three evenings this past March, Deborah Hay performed her new work, *No Time to Fly*, 2010, at the fabled St. Mark’s Church in downtown New York. Over the course of fifty minutes, Hay—herself long a fixture of radical dance, now approaching seventy years old—executed a series of movements equally standard and strange: The act of walking, for instance, was rendered prismatic by her continual redistribution of emphasis. Wearing a minimal, graphic uniform (white button-down shirt, short black pants, white socks, black slippers, black beret), Hay circumnavigated her allotted space with ritualistic diligence, hardly ever stopping and never backtracking.

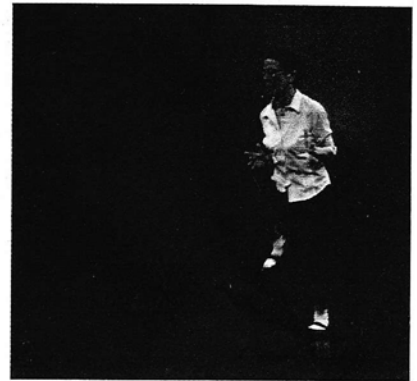
My hunch that she inscribed in the minds of her viewers the complicated path she was diagramming with her body seemed corroborated by a score, self-published in January as a twenty-page pamphlet. Here one finds a bit of the kind of choreographic plotting one might expect: a sketch of the stage, for example, as Hay would repeatedly cross it via a broad curve. But most of the score is text—the artist’s lyric and frequently abstract directions to herself. “I start spinning,” reads one, “not literally but as part of an onstage counterclockwise spinning vortex that only I perceive.” Never relinquishing ties to the here and now of her own material body, Hay nonetheless moves into unabashedly mystical terrain, insisting on her own physical form as a kind of vessel, at once receptor and transmitter: “My hands, like antenna, draw A HOLY SONG down through A HOLY SITE and out through my mouth. It does not have to be anything other than holy—holy being different for everyone.”

Methodically balancing the scripted with the spontaneous, Hay is largely tuned to remaining self-aware, never drifting into habit, even while invoking via gesture and language the previous and the known. Hay builds this self-reflexivity into the choreography and then tests it during the live performance. In a footnote to her text, she writes that anything in bold caps therein is a warning for her to “avoid my automatic response to be creative or to fall into habitual behavior regarding the words I use. Instead I immediately dis-attach from those impulses by noticing the whole body at once as my teacher, thus assuming the cellular intelligence of my body.”

Watching Hay, I got a sense of just what such “cellular intelligence” might be. While relying on a tight repertoire of foundational movements, Hay’s forays into the nether regions of language and iteration were breathtakingly raw. Prowling the parameters of the stage, the dancer seemed at once dainty and dogged, her body subtly upending its own seemingly banal tasks of forward movement. Perhaps most thrilling were Hay’s utterances, which, along with stark and lush lighting (by Jennifer Tipton), provided the only “accompaniment” to her movements. Roiling up from her core, words and songs, nonwords and rhythmic noises, quotations from Samuel Beckett, and induced onomatopoeia (purring, squealing, static) gave evidence of a very particular kind of palimpsest, the body as singular while also tapping into a vast collection of shared histories, residues, representations, and routines.

Along related lines, Hay writes in her score, “I actually aspire toward a bodily speechlessness by noticing my visual field, which includes what I can and cannot see, as well as minute associative instances that rise spontaneously.” Reading this brought to mind that Rosalind Krauss more than thirty years ago turned to Hay in her essay detailing the role of the “indexical” in 1970s art. The piece Krauss discussed was one in which Hay did not dance, but instead talked continuously about why she was choosing *not* to dance. This activity, for Krauss, enumerated a kind of *trace* in the present, the “message without a code” with which Roland Barthes described the photograph. If Hay stilled her body three decades ago in order to contemplate certain paradigms of representation, today she proceeds somewhat differently, though with affinities to that earlier moment intact. She presents bodily movement at once pared down and placed in context—operating in terms of her personal artistic history and its contemporary presentation as well as, necessarily, its reception. Coming to stand quietly at the front of the stage as the lights came down, Hay concluded *No Time to Fly* in silence, gazing out at the audience.

—Johanna Burton



George Kontos

RENWICK GALLERY

George Kontos’s *The Vision* (all works 2010) is an elliptical short film in which, as is typical for the Los Angeles–based artist, meaning is only hinted at and resolution perpetually deferred. The protagonist of the four-minute sequence is a bearded young hipster who pilots a