

CHAPTER IV

AN HISTORICAL EMIC ACCOUNT BY THE ARTIST AS RESEARCHER

Sandro Dernini, one of the Plexus founders, wrote his “insider” account “in the first person.” In a chronological order, he conducted his “emic” reconstruction of Plexus story to describe how *Plexus Black Box* originated and developed. His chronological account was made by following the verification procedures by Barzun and Graff.¹

The Narrative “in the First Person” by Plexus 23s

First, I would like to introduce myself, I am Plexus 23s, a creative survivalist from the island of Sardinia, at the centre of the Western Mediterranean sea.

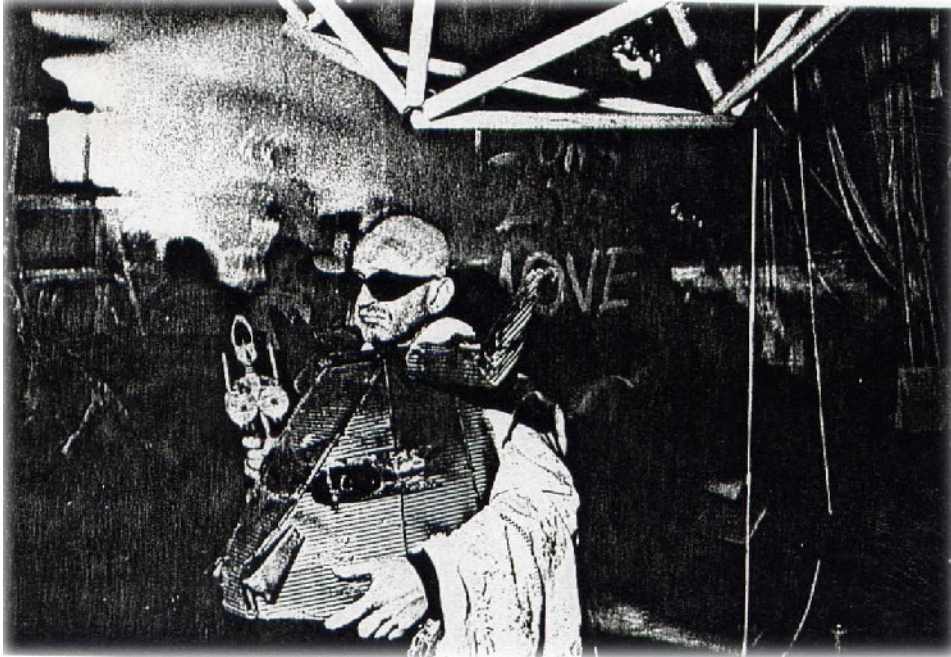
Plexus 23s is my individual identification number within Plexus International. I have a double cultural identity: “Nuraghic” Sardinian as well as Italian. My nationality is Italian but my culture is “Sarda” (Sardinian).

Sardinia has a very strong and long history in fighting cultural colonialization since the time of the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Spaniards, the Piedmonteses and, as last, the Italians.

In the island of Sardinia around 1800-1500 B.C. there was a very active Bronze Age culture, named *Nuraghic*, that from 1600 BC to 500 BC developed a system of thousands and thousands towers of stones, “the Nuraghes. All together, more than 10.000 towers of different sizes, they should be considered as one of the first and largest networking system of ancient time. But, very little is still known about my native Nuraghic culture.

¹ Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 1985.

The Bifurcated Nuraghic Italian Identity of Plexus 23s



Sandro Dernini holding a Nuraghic statuette and the Paolo Buggiani's Minotaur sculpture ,
CUANDO, New York, 1986, photo Jeffrey M. Day.

The *resistance of the cultural identity* of the Sardinian people as reported by prof. Giovanni Lilliu², the most acknowledged Nuraghic scholar in Sardinia, is a specific characteristic of the Sardinian people.

To write in English my reflective account was for me a challenge for my Nuraghic thought processes. I was aware that had to manage my inner resistance for the English language, after seventeen years that I spent in New York and three years in London, because of my "Nuraghic" Sardinian cultural identity resisting against any form of domination, including the linguistic one.

I was also conscious that my "ancestral" Nuraghic identity had influenced too my Plexus art slavery performances against the dominant control of the Artworld.

In 1979, in Rome, I contributed to create a provocative "cultural slave market show" organized by the L.I.A.C.A. (Italian League of Alternative Cultural Associations) to defend the freedom of cultural expression and association in Italy. The L.I.A.C.A. had an important, and not yet documented, role in the defence of cultural freedom, within that particular political and cultural context of the '70s, when the Italian police attempted to close performance and alternative cultural spaces as underground sites of revolt and protest against the reduction of freedom of expression imposed by Christian democratic-right wing government.

² Giovanni Lilliu, *Costante Resistenziale Sarda*, 1971.

Italian Alternative Cultural Movement



Trastevere, Rome, 1978, photos by Beppe Forli.

After my moving in New York, in 1980, I opened with Luigi Ballerini, director of the NYU Italian Studies Program at the French and Italian Department, the Center for Italian Contemporary Culture New York University. In the beginning of 1981, I developed a cultural program, named *The Artist in the First Person*, as a NYU interdepartmental and interdisciplinary cultural initiative, to introduce contemporary Italian artists to the New York art community, through NYU related departments. Each event was presented by the artist as the producer of it. At that time, contemporary artists were poorly supported by the Italian Cultural Institute.

NYU Center for Contemporary Italian Culture



G. Schiaffini, poster of M. Sarchielli's *Anna* by R. Calabro, S. Dernini, New York, 1981.

In the fall of 1981, at New York University, Giancarlo Schiaffini, with Antonello Neri and Massimo Cohen, presented a performance of Italian contemporary music. Together, in several all night long talks in the kitchen of my small studio, in the Lower East Side, we tried to identify a new format of cultural space where artists from all art fields and cultures could have the necessary freedom to express themselves. We envisioned a new independent multi-arts space for artists to express freely their experimental works as well as to have open critical dialogues between artists and

audience with no interferences, limitations, pressures or mediators (critics, dealers, agents, etc.) from the art market system.

Few months later, Roberto Brambilla and Gianni Longo, founding architects of the Institute for Environmental Action, proposed to Sandro Dernini to open a new cultural initiative in a 7000 sq.ft row loft, at 516 West 25 St. in the Chelsea neighbourhood of Manhattan, within a real estate complex that they were developing. Richard Flood, managing editor of Art Forum Magazine, accepted to join them.

Then, they conducted a marketing search to choose the project's name and *Plexus* came out. Fred Troller, one of the best modernist international style graphic designers in New York, created the logo of Plexus.



Plexus logo by Fred Troller, New York 1982

On June 13 of 1982, in the row loft, at 516 West 25th. Street, we presented the Plexus project. Its presentation was conceived as a modern sacrifice party dedicated to the modern gods of the modern cities. Richard Flood wrote the Plexus statement of mission, full text reported in Appendix B.

Plexus is about the city - any city, every city.

It is about the wonder of a skyline that won't stop climbing and a blanket of pollution that can't stop spreading.

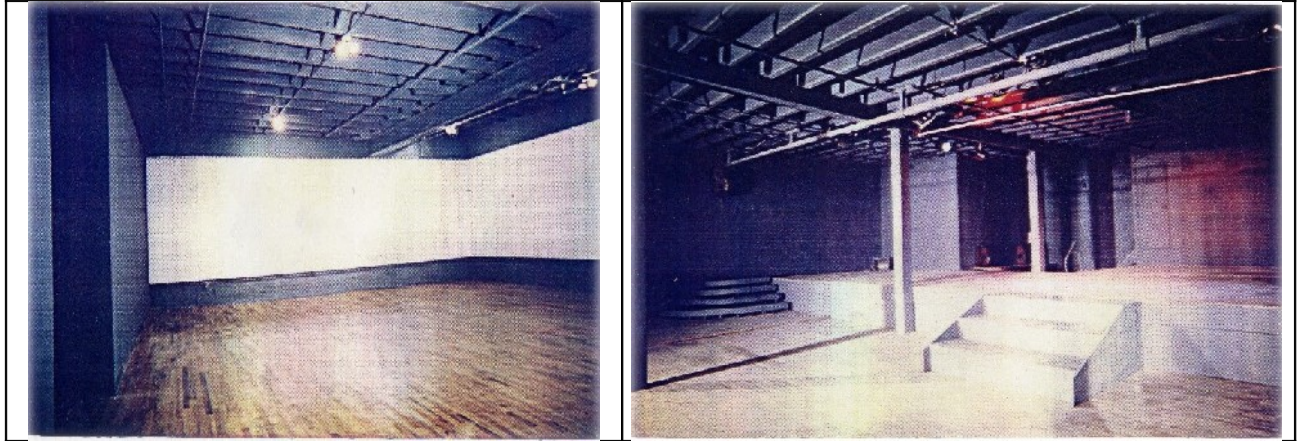
It's about an atmosphere that swells culture and swallows real estate. It's about a dream that is as illogical as soft watches and as seductive as the promise of immortality. Plexus is dedicated to the preposition that all cities are not created equal, only the people who inhabit them. It is further committed to the proposition that the people of cities are creative survivalists who refuse and acknowledge the laws of nature and who glory in adversity.

There is, in the collective heart of the people of the cities, a wild, unremitting thirst for the impossible contradictions that make them simultaneous victims and victors. Plexus believes that the creative involvement of the individual can do more to enhance a responsive environment than all the bureaucratic machinations of infinity of public agencies.

Shortly, it came out that there were not available funds for the development of the Plexus project and for the loft's renovation. Then, Richard Flood left the group. Therefore, I contacted two night club organizers, John Hanti and Louis Tropea to help me in the renovation work with an informal agreement with Brambilla & Longo to conduct in the night a club business. On December 31 of 1982, on the occasion of a big

New Year eve party *The Garden of Fuzz*, the Plexus space was opened finally. But, few days after, many complaints from the neighbourhood stopped the activity of the club, and John Hanti and Louis Tropea left.

Plexus Performance Space



516 West 25 Street, Chelsea, New York, 1982.

In February of 1983, we staged a preview opening of the new Plexus performance space with the dance performance *It's not the Hat – It's the Hair* by Marika Blossfeldt. On April 19, Plexus performance space started its activities with the world premiere of *Turtle Dreams*, an art performance by Meredith Monk. It was followed by a full spring program featuring *Pavlov*, a theatre performance directed by Charles Guarino; *Cathode Cruel* and *Birth*, a new music and theatre performance by Fiction Music Theatre and Susan Landau; *Disorder/Discipline/Future*, an art performance and 365 postcards exhibition by Gianfranco Mantegna; *Boomba* and *Mission Impossible*, theatre performances by Ily Huemer; *Spectre Nymph* and *Living Set*, a dance performance by Ellen Fisher; Electronic Art Ensemble; Virg Dzurinko; *Bagman Theater* by Peter Muny; and *Labyrinth*, an art installation by Paolo Buggiani.

Modern Sacrifices for the Modern Gods of the Modern Cities



The Secret Room of the Minotaur (labyrinth) and Minotaur by Paolo Buggiani, Plexus Performance Space, New York, 1983.

In June, Roberto Brambilla and Gianni Longo ended their partnership in Plexus, and, as landlords, they decided to charge me the high rent of \$ 2500 per month if I wanted to continue by myself Plexus activities. I took this risk and I became also the legal representative of Plexus International Center for Urban Resources, the non profit organization.

In the summer, I produced an intense art program in the Plexus performance space. With Arleen Schloss, I organized *New Cohesions*, an experimental multimedia arts program, featuring: *Raw Sanivlam, a Cruel WarGame*, an audiovisual performance by Giancarlo Schiaffini and Lorenzo Taiuti; *How She Sees It*, an art performance by Arleen Schloss; *Order Eat with Des's Refuses*, an art performance coordinated by Michael Kean; *Moving Still Film*, a film screening by Richard Sanca; *Up & Down the Elevator*, an art performance by Stephen Wischert; *Codes of Abstract Conduct*, a new music performance by Craig Burk Group; *Darts*, a new music performance by John Zorn; *Babylon Breakdown Babylon*, a 3 days Community Reggae Festival.

Plexus 6 – A Zone for the Next Zone



516 W.25 St. New York, 1983, photo by Lynne Kanter.

In the fall, I staged *Plexus 6 - A Zone for the Next Zone*, a multimedia art cabaret showcase, with Mitch Ross as master of ceremony, presenting, *Taking Off*, an environmental painting by Pierre Dorion, Myrian La Plante and Aude Simard; *The Third X-35 Hour Show* by VAP Rafael and Arnold Wechsler; *Rockercise: Rap+Breakers*; *Punkballet*; *Fire in Progress* by Tracy Sherman; Stuart Sharp; Helene Guattary, Patrice Casanova; Joel-Sokolov; *Fight Pain and Win* by Doug Rowe; *Salome* by Maroon Azuri; and *Westoxication*, by Willoughby Sharp, Susan Britton, Julie Harrison, Wolfgang Staehle. In March of 1984, without any notice in advance, I was forced by the landlords Brambilla & Longo to stop Plexus activities and to move out because they needed back the loft. Therefore, I lost all my economic investment and public credibility, creating in my life serious financial and personal problems.

In April, Brian Goodfellow introduced me to Mrs. Sarah Farley, an old friend of Billie Holliday and a charismatic leader of the Lower East Side homesteader community. She managed a thrift shop with Melody D'Arnell, in the ground floor of a burned building, between Avenue A and B, on the Lower East Side of New York City, at 523 East 6th Street. Mrs. Farley offered me to move in the ruined building and to live in the third floor, with no glass in the windows, no water, no electricity, only a portion of the floor and ceiling, with very tough people living in the other floors. It was very hard and cold to survive there. Together, with my friend Giuseppe Sacchi and Brian Goodfellow, we decided to open a community cultural space, in the ruined basement of the burned building, totally full of garbage. We cleaned the basement, while at the same time I made liveable the third floor. Later, Karl Berger joined us.

Gone to the Lower East Side Community



The Shuttle Theatre, 523 E. 6th Street, New York 1984.

On June 13, we opened the Shuttle Theatre, as a community art space only for card members, under the umbrella of Plexus International Center for Urban Resources, in order to have a legal status. With Julius Klein, I served as bartender.

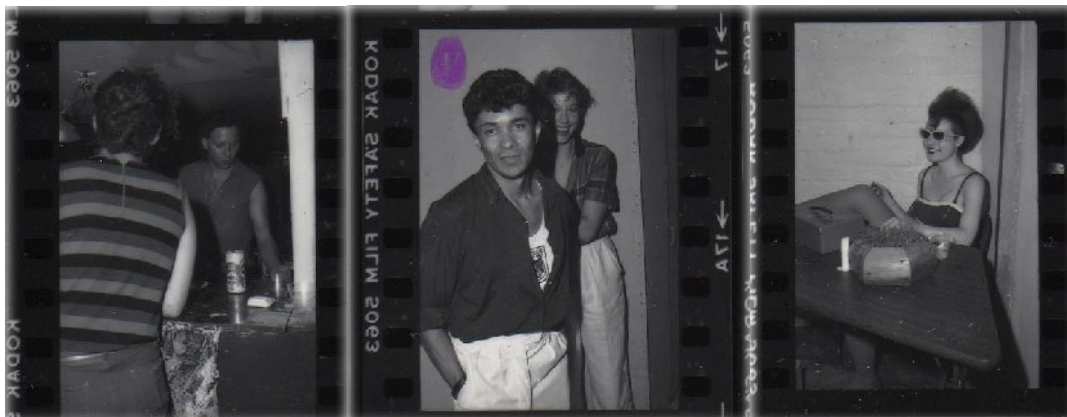
The Shuttle Theatre



Sandro Dernini, Arleen Schloss, Beppe Sacchi



Luca Pizzorno



Julius Klein Rodrigo Solomon Lower East Side, New York, 1984, photos by L. Kanter.

The Shuttle Theatre started its activities featuring, Genevieve Waite with Robert Arron, Tony Love, Tigressa, Julius Klein, Ralston Farina, Trevor Stuart, Gary Goldberg, Billy Bang, Jemeel Moondoc, Rashid Al-Akbar, Petra Plecko, Rrata Christin Jones, the Gamala Taki Band with Karl Berger, Babatunde Olatunji and Alfa Diallo. We had, in the beginning, a program of art exhibitions, curated by Carlo McCornich and Steve Kaplan, which was shifted into *The Artist in the First Person*, an art program with no curators, coordinated directly by the artists, with Joan Waltermath, Arleen Schloss, Mickey Pinero, Luca Pizzorno, Ralston Farina, Julius Klein.

The Artist in the First Person



Arleen Schloss, The Shuttle Theatre, New York, 1984, artwork by Joan Walthermath.

Few days after, Mikey Pinero gave me an Indian American chief statuette, house protector of his Nuyorican Poets Café, a Lower East Side community space founded with Miguel Algarin, at that time closed. I placed the statuette, at the Shuttle Theatre's entrance and its image became the cover logo of our membership cards.

Miguel Algarin curated a weekly poetry reading program *Long Shot*, presented by Nuyorican Poets Cafe, featuring Allen Ginsberg, Mickey Pinero, Amiri Baraka, Pedro Pietri, Quincy Troupe, Robert Press, Bernadette Mayer, Andy Clausen, Miguel Algarin, and others poets. Through a very close collaboration with William Parker, the collective Sound Unity presented an intense community-based music program, featuring: Dennis Charles, Peter Kowald, Charles Gayle, Rashied Ali, William Parker, Roy Campbell, Daniel Carter, Rashied Bakr, Karen Borca, Jackson Krall, Ellen Christi, Alex Lodico, Patsy Parker, John Hagen, Dicky Dworkin, Dave Hofstra. *The Art World is a Jungle*, featured in a crazy hour 60 performances of 60 seconds each, directly staged by all performers as producers of this happening. On August 25, in front The Shuttle Theatre, in the middle of the street, we organized a community event *In Order to Survive* to stop the gentrification of the Lower East Side. Ms. Farley chaired the community event with Bruce Richard Nugent, the last in life artist from *FIRE!!*, historical black Renaissance magazine published in 1926, in Harlem.

In Order to Survive



Lower East Side, New York, 1984, photo by M. Wheler.

In that occasion, William Parker launched his *In Order to Survive open call*, as a statement to draw attention to the condition of the starving status of the artist as well as of the child in the community. Few days later, Don Cherry, performing at the Shuttle Theatre with Mikey Pinero, gave me a little Buddha bronze statuette as his contribution for the further development of "*In Order to Survive*" as an international collaborative art effort.

In the mid of summer, an early morning, I was awakened up by an old friend of my father, Prof. Raimondo Demuro, an expert on the Nuraghic oral traditions of Sardinia, who was just arrived from my native country. He spoke to me about the need to preserve our living Nuraghic oral traditions of Sardinia and he asked me for some assistance to find an American publisher. I presented him to the playwright Stephen DiLauro who helped him and also wrote the introduction for his book on Nuraghic tales.

In September, at the Shuttle Theatre, renamed Shuttle Lab, I developed with Jeemeel Moondoc, Billy Bang, William Parker the Lower East Side Music Committee and together we organized the First Lower East Side Music Jazz Festival, featuring: Butch Morris, Gunter Hampel, Nelson Oceundy, Karl Berger, William Parker, Miguel Algarin, Jemeel Moondoc, Brian Smith, Arleen Schloss, Robert Arron, Ahvan Henry, Miguel Pinero, Billy Bang, Alfa Diallo. In December, after a second Lower East Side Music Festival, Butch Morris and Will Power joined our Music Committee.

In January of 1985, at the New York University, Angiola Churchill, co-director of the I.C.A.S.A. (International Center for Advanced Studies in Art), and chairperson of the Department of Art and Art Education, invited me to give the lecture *The Artist in the First Person*, within her NYU course *Art & Ideas*. Few months later, Angiola Churchill asked me to join her as a NYU graduate assistant in a Ph.D. program in art education.

In the spring, Nilda Cortez, director of C.U.A.N.D.O. (Culturas Unidas Aspireran Nuestro Destino Original), a community civic cultural center, on Second Avenue and Houston Street, invited me to organize there some Plexus events. In May, at the CUANDO, we staged the *Third Lower East Side Music Festival*, made as a collaboration by Sound Unity, Plexus/Shuttle and the Lower East Side Community Music Workshop, featuring: Roy Campbell and William Hooker Duo, Jeanne Lee and Voices, William Parker Septet, Christi-Hellen-Kral Trio, Jeemel Moondoc Quartet with Bern Nix-William Parker-Ed Blackwell, Luther Thomas Quintet, Bangception with Billy Bang and Dennis Charles, WilberForce with Eli Fountain-Vincent Chauncy-Wilber Morris, Trio with Wayne Horvits-Bobby Previte-Butch Morris, Frank Lowe Trio, Rashid Al Akbar Trio, James Oliver Jones, Jr. and Ethica with Myrna Renaud-Rashid Al Akbar, Roy Campbell, Dennis Charles, Mabo Suzuki.

On June 13, in the gym and in the chapel of CUANDO, it was represented *Goya Time, 1985, New York*, the first Plexus artopera. It was a multi artforms event, made by three interactive pieces: *La Maja* by Gretta Sarfaty; *Los Capricios* by Butch Morris and *Time a Way to Fly* by Sandro Dernini.

Goya Time, 1985, New York



Artwork by Greta Sarfaty, CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1985.

More than 80 artists participated, among them there were musicians, poets, singers, dancers, actors and visual artists. The art opera was a compression of actions, historical references, metaphors, symbols and people. It was focused on free interpretations of the same theme *La Maja*. It was a fusion of object/subject's identities, stressing all together the reduction of freedom for the artists to exist outside dominant styles imposed by the art market.

The Impresario



The Maestro



Sandro Dernini, CUANDO, New York 1985, photo by J. Day. Butch Morris, photo by L. Kanter.

I wrote the libretto and I acted as artistic director. I dedicated it to the *TimeArt* concept of escaping through art from gravity and time developed by Ralston Farina, died in Berkeley few months before. The music score was written by Butch Morris, the maestro, who conducted an 11 pieces orchestra, placed at the center of the gym, with all audience moving around freely. Dancer/choreographer Gloria Mc Lean with her dance company LifeDance performed *Los Capricios* ballet inspired to Goya, while a theatrical group, directed by Rajaa Fischer, with Lynne Kanter, Antonia Iacchia, Karen Kuykendall, Melva Max, Michael Mayers, performed the

Royal Family representing the contemporary New York Artworld. At the center of the gym, it was created an *atelier des art* in progress made by Pedro Cano, Franco Ciarlo, Baldo Deodato, Michael Keane, Anne Jepsen, Julius Klein, Jorelle Kraus, Raken Leaves, Judy Levy, Joe Lewis and Mike Lewis, Luca Pizzorno, Jill Lynne, Mekki Schmidt, Bernd Naber, Vernita Nemec, Robert Parker, Barnaby Ruhe, Eve Vaterlaus, Robert Younger, working on free interpretations of *la Maja*, performed on the stage by Gretta, posing as a model.

Los Capriccios



Gloria McLean, CUANDO, New York, 1985,

Butch Morris, photos by Jeffrey M. Day.

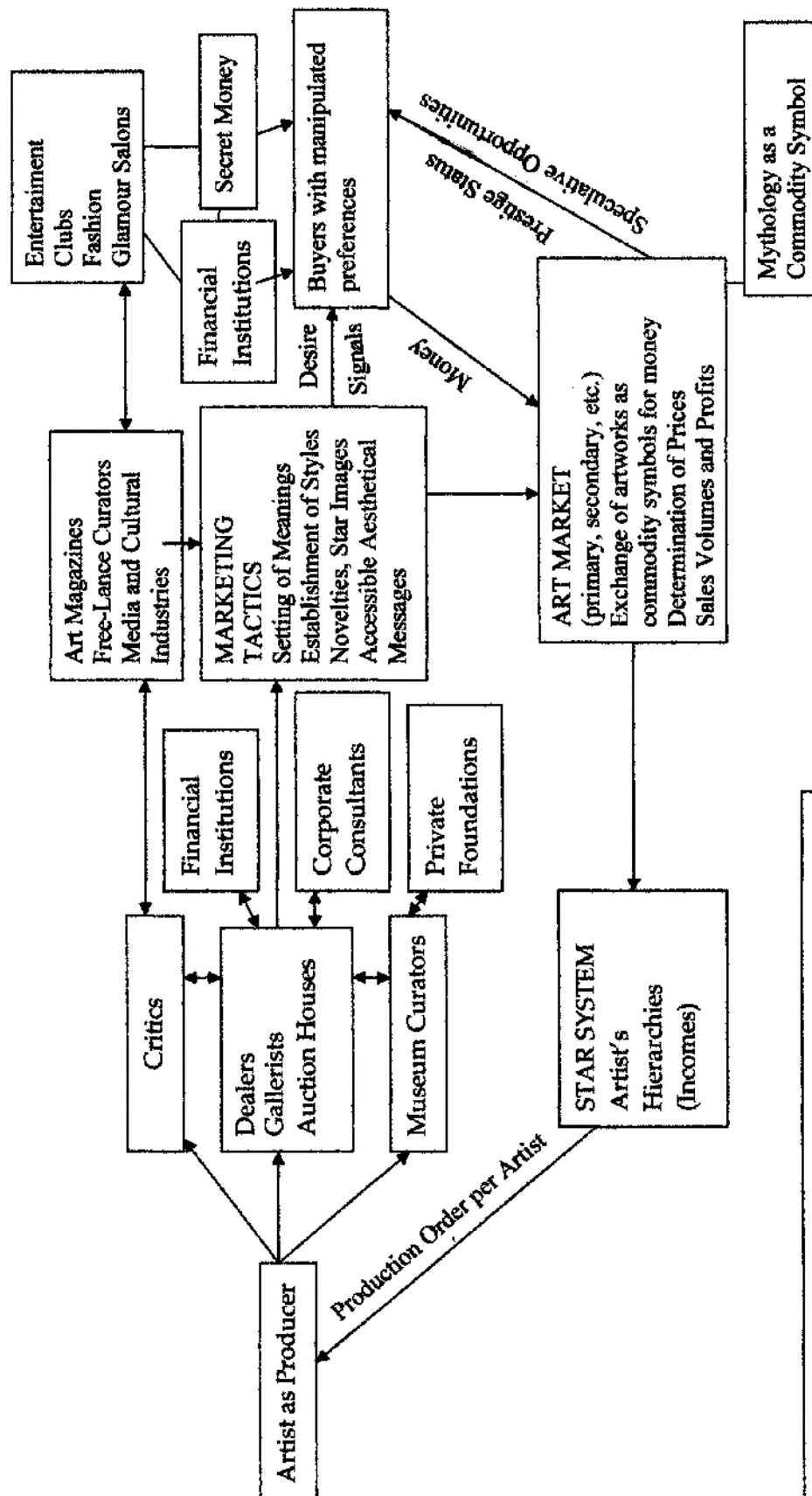
The Royal Artworld Family



CUANDO, New York, 1985, photo by Jeffrey M. Day.

As an historical perception of the contemporary art trend, under indication of the public historian Paolo Maltese, economic diagrams of current dynamics of art trades in the market, made by the economist Cristobal Senior, were projected on stage.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ART MARKET



Circular Flow of the Art Economy by Cristobal Senior, New York, New York, March 1985

Goya Time was performed as a statement of freedom of expression in art, against the imposition of a style by the dominant art market, to raise the challenging provocative question about who was the subject and who was the object in the 1995 New York Artworld: the artwork or the artist?

In the beginning of July, with Leonard Horowitz, Arleen Schloss, Willoughby Sharp, Albert DiMartino and Sandro Dernini, we decided to organize at C.U.A.N.D.O. a large community art event dedicated to Ralston Farina, an artist friend of us who died few weeks before, and to his dream of escaping through art from time and gravity.



CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1985.

On July 17, *Purgatorio Show '85, New York, in the Night of No Moon*, dedicated to Ralston Farina, produced by Was Inc. and presented by Plexus as a 3 hours exhibition open call for a future cultural community house in the Lower East Side. The entire five floors of CUANDO building were used, including a ruined basement with an old dry Olympic size swimming pool. 350 artists had simultaneous performances in the entire building so transformed in a total theatre art environment (all artists' names reported in Appendix C).

Purgatorio Show



CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1985, photo by Leonard Horowitz.

Community Art Event



M. Hardeman, Bruce R. Nugent, Willoughby Sharp, Leonard Horowitz, A. Di Martino, S. Dernini.



Wess Power

David Boyle and Rolando Politi



Installation by Eve Vaterlaus



CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1985, photos by Albert Di Martino.

Purgatorio Show in the Night of No Moon



Luca Pizzorno, CUANDO, NY, 1985, Nada Gallery action by Rachelle Garniez photos by Jim C.

I coordinated the event with Ray Kelly and Ivy Winick. It was charged 99 cents as admission fee. A large quantity of pennies were painted in yellow to be given back as money art for one dollar admission ticket.

At the end of November, the entire Shuttle Theatre building burned in a fire accident, started inside my space on the third floor.

On February 27 of 1986, at CUANDO, Plexus presented the artopera n.3 *Eve: Escape for Donna Purgatorio from 1986 Anno Domini by the Multinational Chain Gang of Downtown New York*, featuring 220 artists (all names reported in Appendix C).

The Departure of Plexus Art Slaves Ship



CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1986, photo by Toyo.

Rife with symbolism, the story line of this art opera was about the journey of an art slave ship, on its travel through art history, escaping from the contemporary New York ArtWorld. Its aim was to draw more public attention on the real estate gentrification of

the Lower East Side, leaving artists and the community without working and living places. *Eve* was performed by a cast of 220 musicians, poets, actors, dancers, videomakers, performers and visual artists. It featured many prominent figures on the N.Y. downtown avant-garde scene. I acted as artistic director, Butch Morris was again the maestro, Willem Brugman directed the theatrical modular construction and Ray Kelly was the captain. It was a spectacular event open to the public only one hour, with again only a 99 cents admission fee. This time, pennies were painted in red as a money art change. The admission ticket, figured *Donna Purgatorio*, was made by Silvio Betti with a hole, sized to the red penny to be inserted in.

Plexus Art Opera n.3: Eve



Artworks by David Mora Catlett, Silvio Betti, Anita Steckel, CUANDO, New York, 1986.

The storyline of *Eve* was inspired from the work of the artist Anita Steckel. It was about the escape of Eve from the written history landing between the two fingers of Adam and God at the Sistine Chapel.

Plexus Eve Art Opera Storyline



Artwork by Anita Steckel, CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1986, photo by Toyo.

New Mona Takes the Brush



Artwork (particular) by Anita Steckel, New York, 1972.

As opening act, dancers dressed as prehistoric animals moved the audience inside the gym, through the *Gates of Paradise* made by Eve Vaterlaus, controlled by a group of squatters, dressed like ancient roman centurion, samurai and with other military costumes, with phallocratic weapons, and coordinated by the druid David Boyle.

Eve's Entrance



CUANDO, New York, 1986, photos by Toyo.

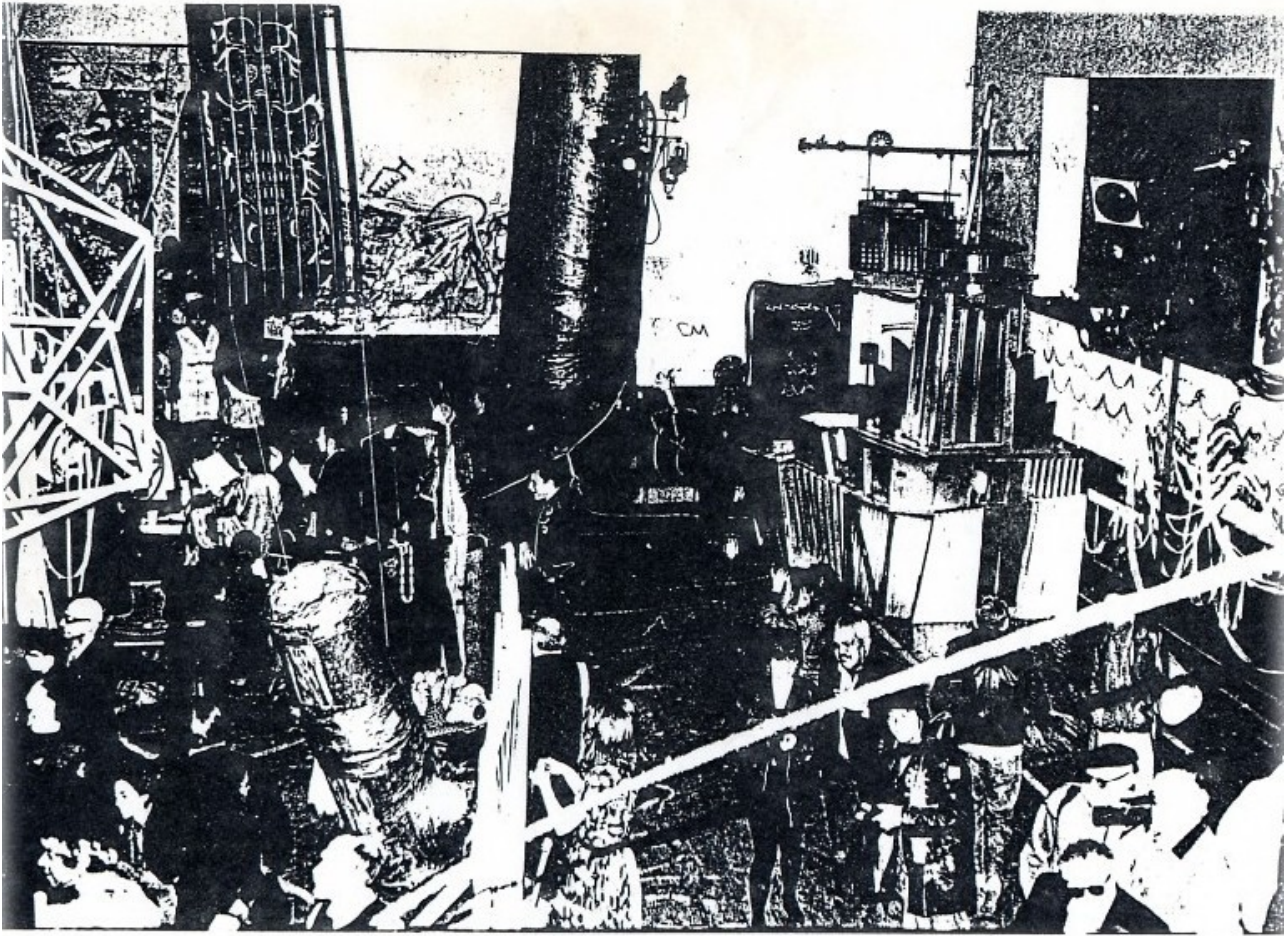
Gates of Paradise



Artwork (particular) by Eve Vaterlaus, CUANDO, New York, 1986.

In the gym of CUANDO, a metaphoric art slave boat was built as a collective installation made by individual installations of almost 100 artists, placed one next to the other one, chained together and to their works of art with the very long artwork *One Line* made by Ken Hiratsuka.

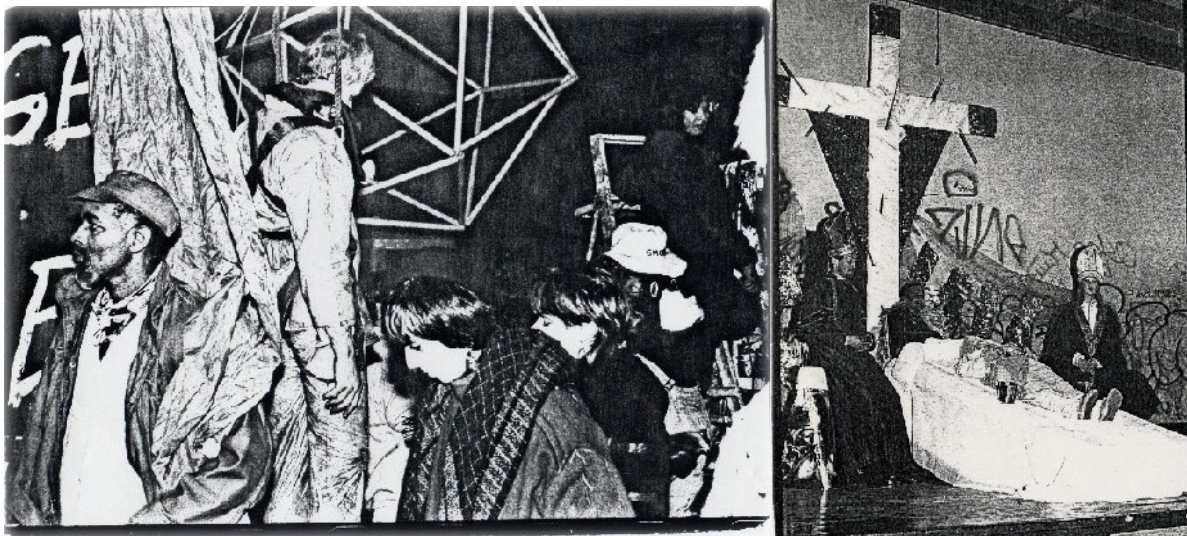
Plexus Art Slave Ship



CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York 1986, photo by Winnie Berrios.

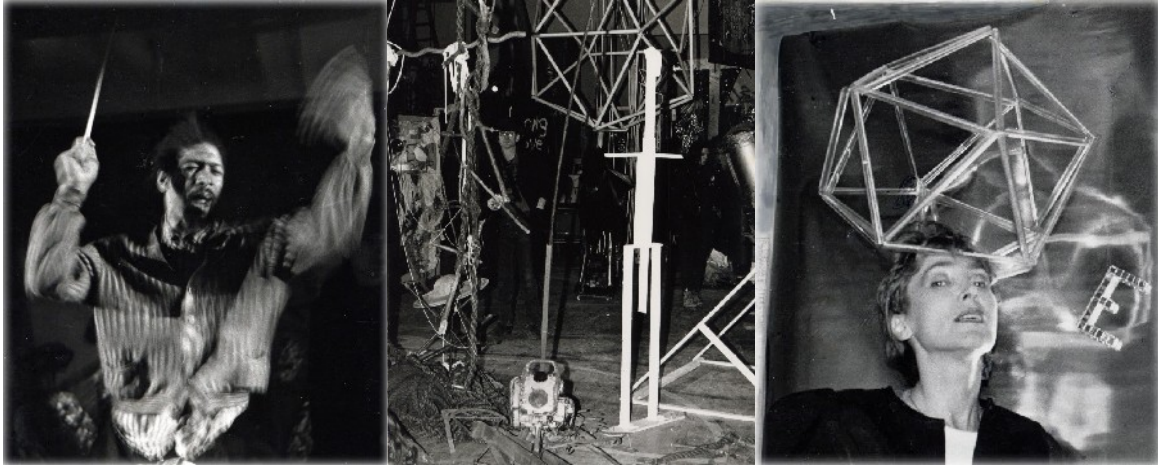
At the center, the captain Ray Kelly stood next to an eleven piece orchestra and a large chorus conducted by Butch Morris, with Arleen Schloss performing A's. On stage, Bruce Richard Nuggent played our Black Pope, sitting upon a throne in front of which four cardinals were eating the bread woman, performed by Anna Homler.

Plexus Art Slave Ship



Lorenzo Pace, Gianfranco Mantegna, CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1986, photos by Toyo.

The Escape of the Art Slaves



Butch Morris, photo by J. Day.

Arleen Schloss, photos by W. Berrios.



Eve Vaterlaus and Joe Strand, photo by J. Day, CUANDO, New York, 1986, photo by W. Berrios.

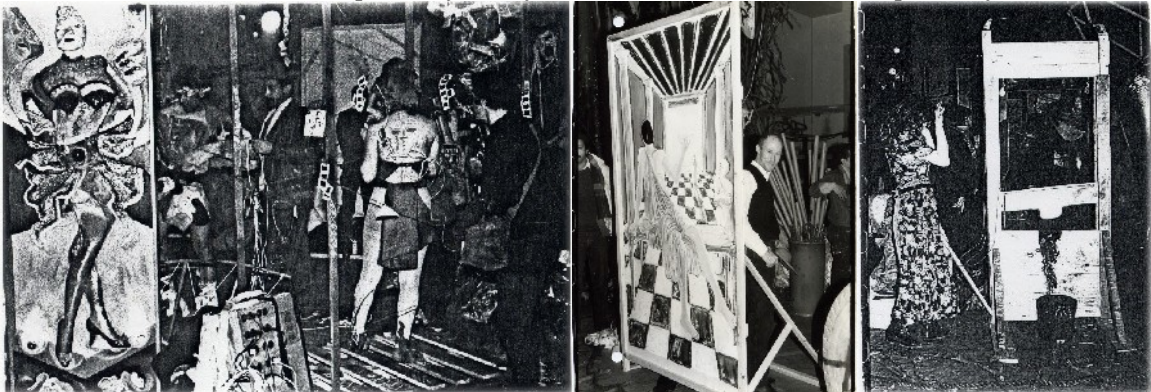
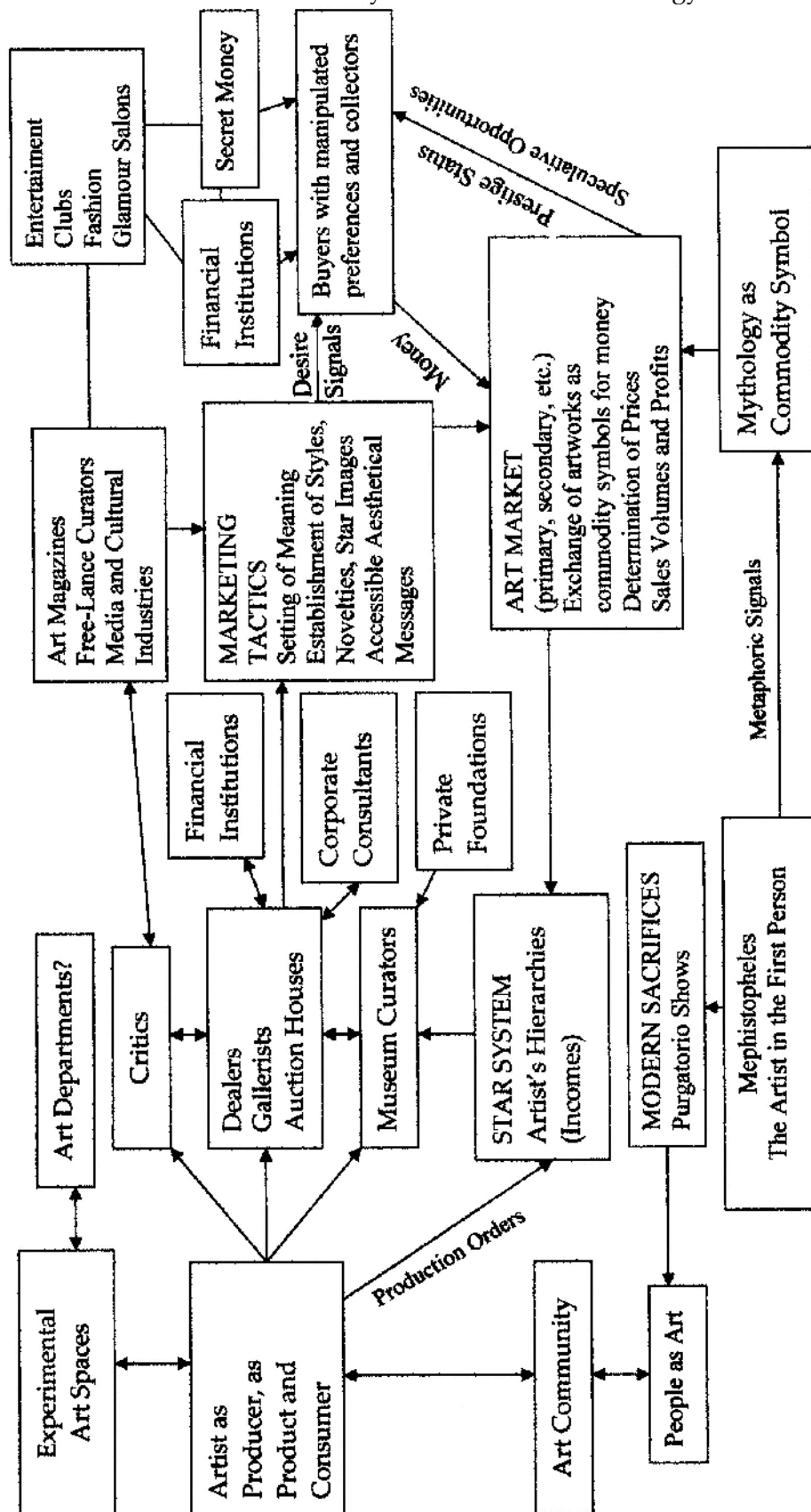


Photo by Winnie Berrios. CUANDO, Lower East Side, New York, 1986, photos by Toyo

All the gym was full of smoke and coloured theatrical lights.

Then, all artists were sold as slaves to the ArtWorld, through an art auction performance conducted by Higgins III. The *Legal Gender* penis dollar artwork by Anita Steckel was used as Plexus art money while thousands copies of the *Haddamard Matrix* of George Chaikin were given away free to the audience, while a slide show projected a new Plexus community-based art market strategy.

PLEXUS COMMUNITY-BASED ART MARKET STRATEGY Modern Rites

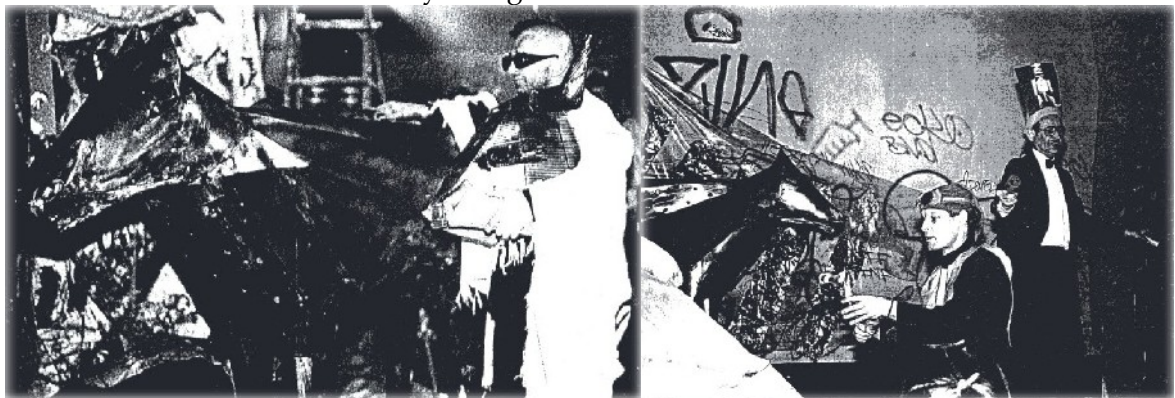


From the Circular Flow of the Art Economy by Cristobal Senior, modified by Sandro Demini and Lenny Horowitz, New York, February 1986

Plexus Artopera *Eve*, CUANDO, New York, 1986.

The slide show was projected on different screens with Anita Steckel's flying woman images in parallel with her radical images of Adolph Hitler and Nazi soldiers walking with their penis out. While Alfa & Omega Dance Company performed the escape of the Black Eve from the World Trade Art Center, with Barnaby Ruhe, I attacked as a Nuraghic warrior the Artworld Trade Center. My head was half plain shaved and the other part full of long hair. I held a green statuette of Nuraghic mythological warrior, with 4 eyes, 4 arms, and 2 antennas. I wore an iron mask sculpture *The Minotaur* by Paolo Buggiani and carried on stage a big iron sculpture *The Horse of Troy* by Paolo Buggiani as the secret art weapon for our mythological attack.

Plexus Mythological Attack to the Artworld



Artworks by Paolo Buggiani, performance by S. Dernini, Barnaby Ruhe, Lenny Horowitz, 1986.

The arrival of the *Marlboro Man*, performed by Leonard Horowitz dancing the Charleston, ended the Plexus artopera. In the printed program, we announced the escape of Plexus art slave ship from the New York Artworld control, crossing the sea of mythology and art history, to land in the summer of 1987 in the Nuraghic art time of Sardinia. The Plexus artopera was a compression of acts and people, in which so many artists from all art fields interacted within the whole environment by creating a new operatic art form, named by Leonard Horowitz *Plexus Compressionism*.

On March 1, at Joanee Freedom's studio, 93 Avenue B, we gathered with David Boyle, Alfa Diallo, Garrick Beck, Joanee Freedom, Leonard Horowitz, Arturo Lindsay, Butch Morris, Lorenzo Pace, Maggie Reilly, to write a presentation of Plexus to be presented in my trip in Sardinia and in Dakar toward the continuation of the art slave boat journey. We spent all night discussing about what Plexus was and how we could define it. Each one of us had her/his vision. Finally, after hours of non stop discussion, we arrived to the following statement:

To Whom It Concerns:

Plexus is a framework for global art projects.

These projects are simultaneous and syncratic presentations of science and art. Plexus respects and encourages the creative process of research, actualization and documentation. In essence, Plexus is an interdisciplinary multinational network for artists in the first person related together by art logic.

In April, I arrived in Sardinia, in the island of San Pietro, where in the harbour of Carloforte I placed on board of the Elisabeth, the coral boat of my brother Carlo, the Don Cherry's Buddha statuette, with a copy of William Parker's *In Order to Survive Call*, my Nuraghic statuette and some other Plexus records. In Carloforte, there was the only Catholic Church in the world dedicated to *the Madonna of the Slave*.

The Plexus Voyage to the Church of the Madonna of the Slave



Carloforte, San Pietro Island, Sardinia, 1986.

In early May, I landed in the Medina of Dakar with Gianni Villella to meet his friend Mangone NDiaye to introduce me to the artist's community. Then, Mangone brought us to Casamance, in the south of Senegal, an animistic region. There, the theme of "the Serpent" came out for the continuation of the Plexus Purgatorio Show. With Mangone and inputs from Gianni, I wrote in French the first presentation of the Plexus global project to raise local consensus toward the continuation of the voyage of the art slave boat toward the House of the Slaves in the Goree Island, off Dakar. After couple weeks, we went back in Dakar, and I met two very well known artists from the Medina, Kre MBaye and Langouste MBow, with whom I started to develop the Plexus project in Dakar.

From Purgatory to Paradise: The Mythological Voyage of Plexus Serpent

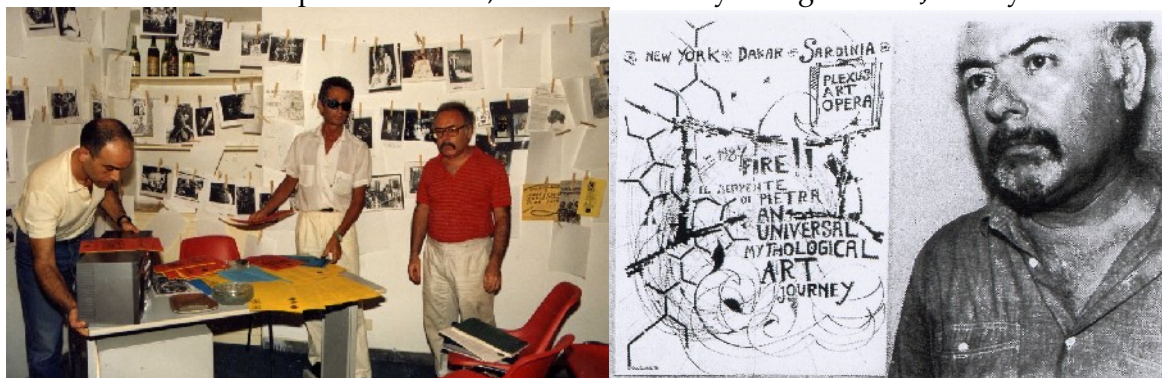


Artwork by Langouste MBow, Medina, Dakar, 1986, Kre MBaye. Poster by Kre MBaye.

On May 15, at the African Cultural Center Malick Sy, in the Medina, where Langouste had his atelier, we presented *Plexus Mythological Journey: from Purgatorio to Paradise, New York, Sardinia, Dakar*.

In September, in Sardinia, at Cooperativa Centro Storico in Cagliari, with Gaetano Brundu and Cicci Borghi, two artists met in mid 70's at Spazio A performance space, we staged the presentation-installation-performance *Fire!! Il Serpente di Pietra, An Universal Mythological Art Journey*, to start to promote the arrival, in the summer of 1987, in Sardinia, of the Plexus art slaves boat. I presented it as a historical continuation of my experience with Spazio within the cultural slave market show made by the L.I.A.C.A in Rome, in 1979.

Fire!! Il Serpente di Pietra, An Universal Mythological Art Journey



Cicci Borghi, Sandro Dernini, Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari, Sardinia, 1986.

Spazio A. (Cagliari)



Made in the 70's in Italy



L.I.A.C.A. (Rome)



S. Dernini, C. Borghi, M. Piga, A. Pillosu G. Romoli, S. Fiorenza, M. Vincenti, F. Merkel, P. Muzzi, P. Zambelli, P. Cocco, Cagliari, 2006. S. Dernini, G. Ducrot, C. Torelli, S. Montagna, Roma, 2000.

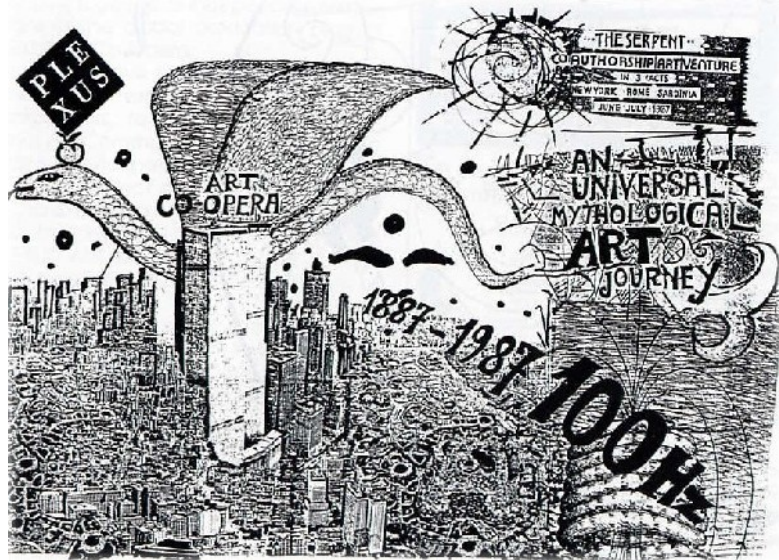
Few days later, in Rome, in collaboration with Gianni Villella, Silvio Betti, and Armando Soldaini, a former member of L.I.A.C.A., the Plexus art slaves project was presented at the Soldaini's space Magazzini Generali.

In October, at Frank Shifreen's studio, in New York, with Mitch Ross, Leonard Horowitz, Helen Valentin, Arturo Lindsay, David Boyle, Frank Shifreen, I started a series of meeting for the development of Plexus as a multinational interdisciplinary recall network, in direction of the organization in the 1987 of the Plexus *Serpent* event in Sardinia. Then, to promote it, we launched out the *Serpent Open Call*.

Plexus Serpent Open Call



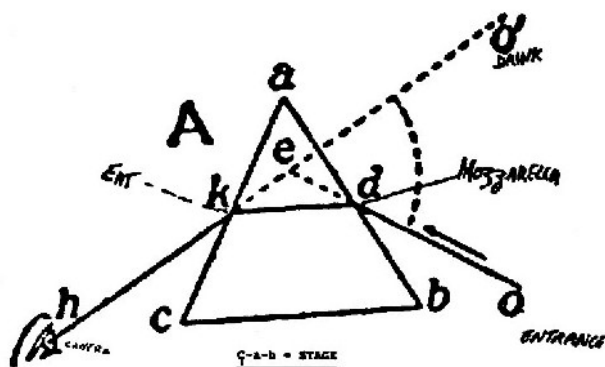
Artwork by Helen Valentin, New York, 1986.



Artwork by Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari, 1986.

In October, at Fusion Arts in New York, at the end of my phenomenological performance *Eating Art: A Refracted Self-Portrait*, I presented the *Plexus Serpent Open Call*. I conceived it for the course *Phenomenology and the Arts*, conducted by David W. Ecker, as part of my Ph.D. art education program at the New York University. The performance consisted in having 23 artists, eating a mozzarella piece hand made by an Italian living traditional food master Mr. Di Paulo from Little Italy, and then expressing their individual taste, one by one. After, in the final act, we danced all together in a collective serpentine movement.

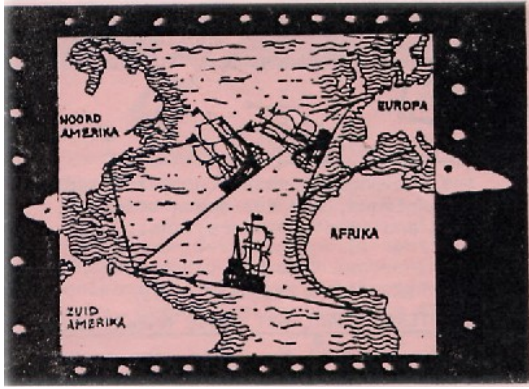
Eating Art: A Self Refracted Portrait



Performance by Sandro Dernini, Fusion Arts, New York, 1986

In January of 1987, again at Fusion Arts, it was presented *Plexus Passport for Purgatorio* as a project proposal for a retrospective book on *Plexus Purgatorio Show*.

In Amsterdam, during the same time, Willem Brugman presented the opening of a Plexus working station to follow the art slave trade route from New York to Africa.

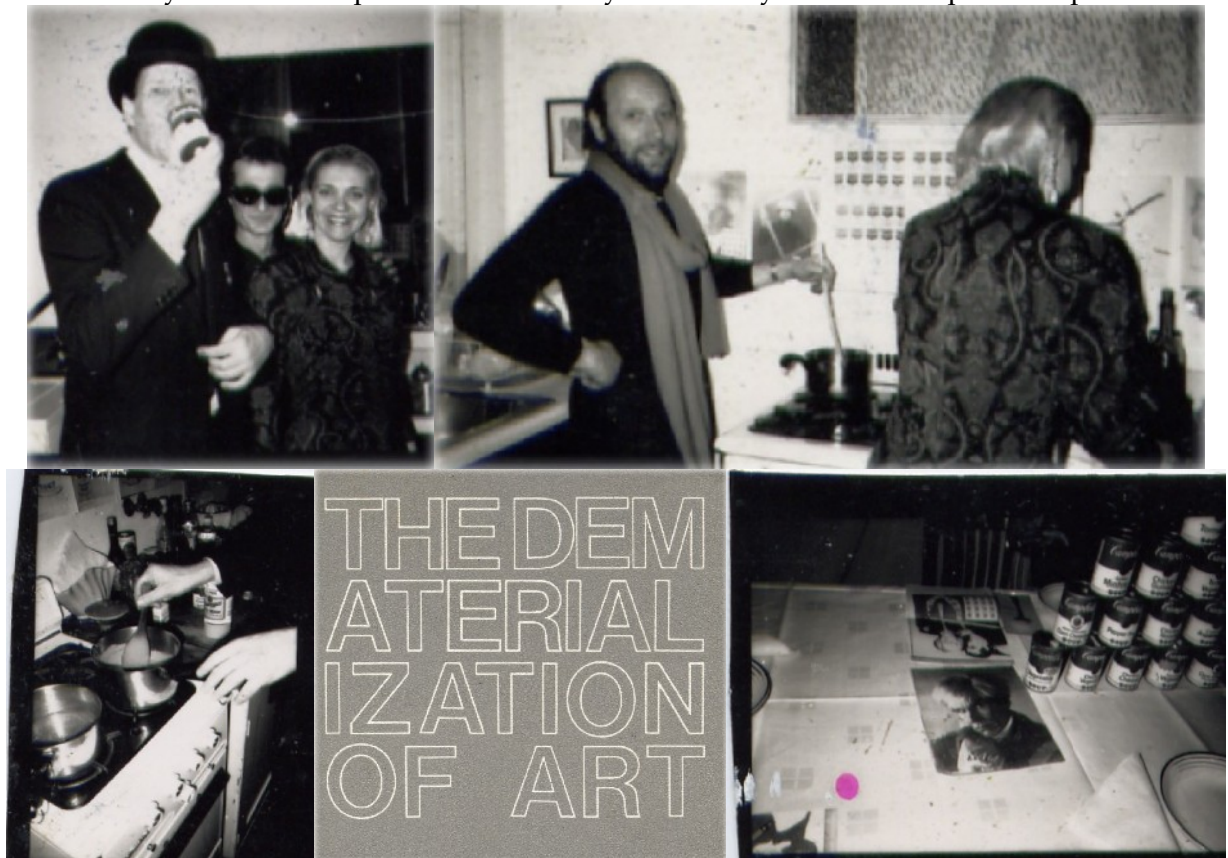


Slave Trade Routes, XVII-XVIII Century.

In February, in Cagliari, Antonello Dessi, at his studio, with Gaetano Brundu, Cicci Borghi, Anna Saba, Franco Meloni, Randi Hansen, Luigi Mazzarelli, Andrea Portas, Antonello Dessi, Enrico Pau, Luciano Rombi held *Bring Your Serpent*, a provocative collective art show, made outside the local galleries' system.

On February 18, at Patrizia Anichini Gallery, in New York, I performed *Do you think it is possible to eat Andy Warhol if you eat a Campbell Soup can?* I conceived it for the Prof. Ecker's NYU course *Phenomenology and the Arts*. I was inspired by the upcoming I.C.A.S.A. symposium *The Dematerialization of Art*.

Do you think it is possible to eat Andy Warhol if you eat a Campbell Soup can?



Willoughby Sharp, Sandro Dernini, Franco Ciarlo, Patrizia Anichini, Patrizia Anichini Gallery, New York, 1987, photo by Lynne Kanter.

Do you think it is possible to eat Andy Warhol if you eat a Campbell Soup can?



Willoughby Sharp, Sandro Dernini, Lynne Kanter, Souyun Yi, Franco Ciarlo, Joan Waltermath, Peter Grass, Carol Drury, Amy Paskin, Donald Sheridan, Bernd Naber, Patrizia Anichini, Helen Valentin, Christian Chiausa, at Patrizia Anichini Gallery, New York 1987, photo by Lynne Kanter.

I invited Lynne Kanter, Willoughby Sharp, Helen Valentin, Franco Ciarlo, Patrizia Anichini, Donald Sheridan, Bernd Naber, Peter Grass, Joan Waltermath to eat a Campbell soup can and to answer to a written questionnaire that I made for my NYU course. I ritually displaced Andy Warhol's images on the table and in the kitchen. As napkins near the plates, I positioned the brochures of the ICASA symposium, to be read during the eating performance. At the end, statistically, the questionnaires reported that the majority of us believed of "eating" Andy Warhol during the performance. That night Andy Warhol died and we felt very shocked about it.

During *The Dematerialization of Art* conference, it was posed the question to Nam Jun Paik, one of the speakers if it was possible to think that we ate Andy Warhol. Paik confirmed that he believed that we "dematerialized" Warhol in our intentional act of eating his commodity art symbol.

On June 29, in Rome, at the Teatro in Trastevere, we presented in a press conference the program of the Plexus art coopera *Il Serpente di Pietra*, as the first international art slave market show in contemporary art history, to be held few days after in Sardinia.

Plexus Serpent Art Coopera



Artwork by Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari, Sardinia, 1987.

The next day, with a serpentine happening procession, from my house at Piazza San Giovanni della Malva, we performed in the streets of Trastevere a recall visit to the places where in 1979 it was held the L.I.A.C.A. cultural slave market show.

The First International Art Slaves Market Show



Gavoi, Sardinia, 1987, graphics by Richard Milone.

Plexus Art Slaves Journey



From Rome to Gavoi, Sardinia, 1987, photo by Laura Squarcia.

From July 1 to July 4 of 1987, in the stone age sanctuary of Sa Itria, in Gavoi, in the middle of the Sardinia Island, it was held *Il Serpente di Pietra* (The Serpent of Stone), four days of art and science. There, 160 artists of 23 different nationalities (all names reported in Appendix C) as an answer to the 1986 art slaves call from New York, worked and lived together in the megalithic sanctuary of Sa Itria. It was organized by the City of Gavoi with Mariangela Sedda.

Plexus Art Coopera *Il Serpente di Pietra*

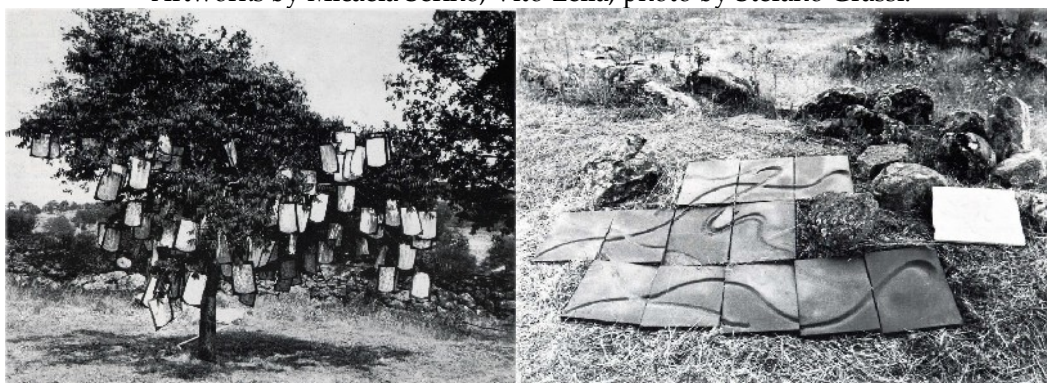


Poster by Stefano Asili, Gavoi, Sardinia, 1987, photo by Arturo Lindsay.

Plexus Art Co-Opera n. 4



Artworks by Micaela Serino, Vito Lella, photo by Stefano Grassi.



Installation by Antonello Dessi,

Installation by Anna Saba



Claudio Prati, T. Leoni, J. Ficet, Lorenzo Pace, Willem Brugman, Gavoi, 1987, photos by S. Grassi.



Gavoi, Sardinia, 1987, photos by Stefano Grassi.

Franco Meloni organized an experimental computer interaction, through I.P. Sharp, Bitnet and Earn network, coordinated from the Dept. of Physics of the University of Cagliari and the Dax Group of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. It was a pioneer form of “net-art” by digital art exchanges with artists in Kassel, Sidney, Montreal, Wien, Wales, New York and in other places in the world.

Experimental Digital Art Exchanges



Artwork by Stefano Grassi, Cagliari, 1987.

As a closing act, I burned my clothes with Assane M'Baye, the representative of the Dakar artists, as a symbolic burning of my image as Plexus artistic director

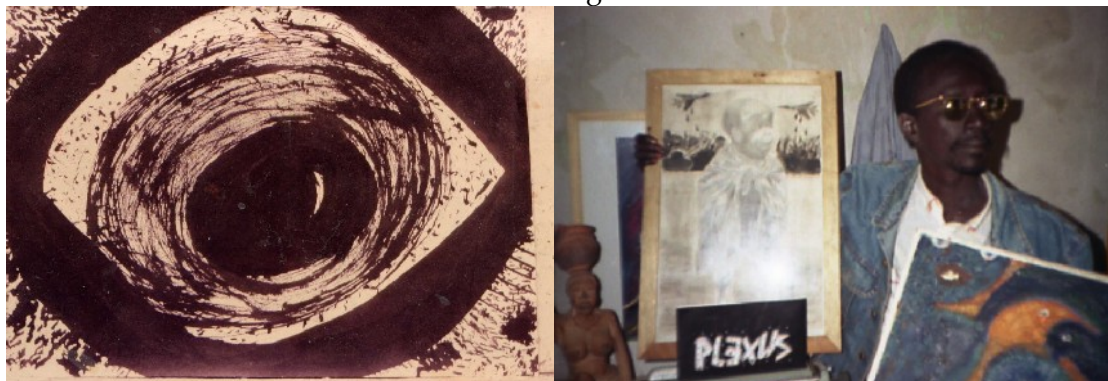
The End of the Artistic Director



Sandro Dernini, Assane M'Baye, Arturo Lindsay, Sardinia, 1987, photo by Stefano Grassi.

In December, in Dakar, at the INSEPS, in a public debate with Langouste MBow, Assane MBaye, Youssouph Traore, Pathe Diop, and Kre MBaye, I presented the Plexus proposal to organize in December of 1988 the arrival of the art slave boat to the House of the Slaves, in Goree.

Plexus Landing in Dakar



Artwork by Langouste MBow, Medina, Dakar, 1987, Langouste MBow.



Sandro Dernini, Kre MBaye, Langouste MBow, Assane MBaye, Medina, Dakar, 1987.

On February 20 of 1988, at CUANDO, in New York, I organized a report to the Lower East Side community of the last Plexus news from Rome, Sardinia, Amsterdam, and Dakar. By claiming that "*the money of art belongs to the artists*," I staged it in the dry swimming pool as a happening *The Redefinition of an Andy Warhol Campbell Soup Can*, on the occasion of the anniversary of the dematerialization event of Andy Warhol. I performed with Barnaby Ruhe and Frank Shifreen the artistic transformation of two boxes of Campbell Soup cans into two boxes of Plexus cans, by gluing a red penny on top of each can and printing with a rubber stamp the Plexus name on each can. My performance was inspired to the ICASA symposium *The Redefinition of Art in the Collision of Cultures in the Post-Modern World*, held in the same period at the New York University, in which I was involved as graduate assistant.

The Redefinition of an Andy Warhol Campbell Soup Can



Polaroid by Lynne Kanter, CUANDO, New York, 1988, photo by Renata Landerberger.

On May 21, at Rivington School, in New York, it was launched out the *Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot*. Ivan Dalla Tana took our first historical photo. The Rivington School was a radical art urban project, built as a workshop of metal sculptors in an empty ruined parking lot, founded by Ray Kelly and inspired to Bucky Fuller's synergetics.

Manifesto Against the Slavery of Art

THE RIVINGTON SCHOOL

OPEN FOR CALL

PLEXUS INTERNATIONAL

ART SLAVERY

MANIFESTO

GROUP SHOT

BRING YOUR SERPENT !!!

CALENDAR 1988 "THE SERPENT" ART CO-OPERA #5 (5 ACTIONS) ENDS AT PAN AFRICAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS CULTURE, DAKAR

SATURDAY MAY 21, 1988, 6 P.M.
(raindate may 22, 6 P.M.)
172 FORSYTH STREET

Frank Shifreen (Graphic)

Photo by Renata Landerberger

On Saturday May 21, 1988, at 400 South 1st St., May 22, 1988, at 172 Forsyth Street, New York, the Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot will be held. The Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot is a radical art urban project, built as a workshop of metal sculptors in an empty ruined parking lot, founded by Ray Kelly and inspired to Bucky Fuller's synergetics. The Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot is a radical art urban project, built as a workshop of metal sculptors in an empty ruined parking lot, founded by Ray Kelly and inspired to Bucky Fuller's synergetics. The Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot is a radical art urban project, built as a workshop of metal sculptors in an empty ruined parking lot, founded by Ray Kelly and inspired to Bucky Fuller's synergetics.

Rivington School, New York, May 21, 1988, graphics by Frank Shifreen.

Plexus Group Shot Against Art Slavery n. 1, New York



Rivington School, New York, 1988, photo by Ivan Dalla Tana.

Plexus Group Shot Against Art Slavery n. 2, Rome



Metateatro, Rome, 1988, photo by Adriano Mordenti.

On June 15, at the Metateatro in Rome, a group of historical participants of the Italian performing avant-garde related to the L.I.A.C.A.'s time gathered together for the *Plexus International Art Slavery Manifesto Group Shot*. For this occasion, Fabrizio Bertuccioli printed an Italian edition of the Open Call of Plexus International for the Slaves of Art, that he re-elaborated as an artist in the first person statement. This second group shot was taken by Adriano Mordenti, in front of a large copy of the New York photo. It was opened by Paolo Buggiani performing the arrival from New York of his *Minotaur* in fire, then I staged a collective artistic transformation of two boxes of Campbell Soup cans into Plexus cans by gluing ten lire coins, painted in white, on top of each can, and individually signed by the participating artists.

On June 18, the third Plexus group shot was taken on board of Elisabeth, in the harbour of Carloforte.

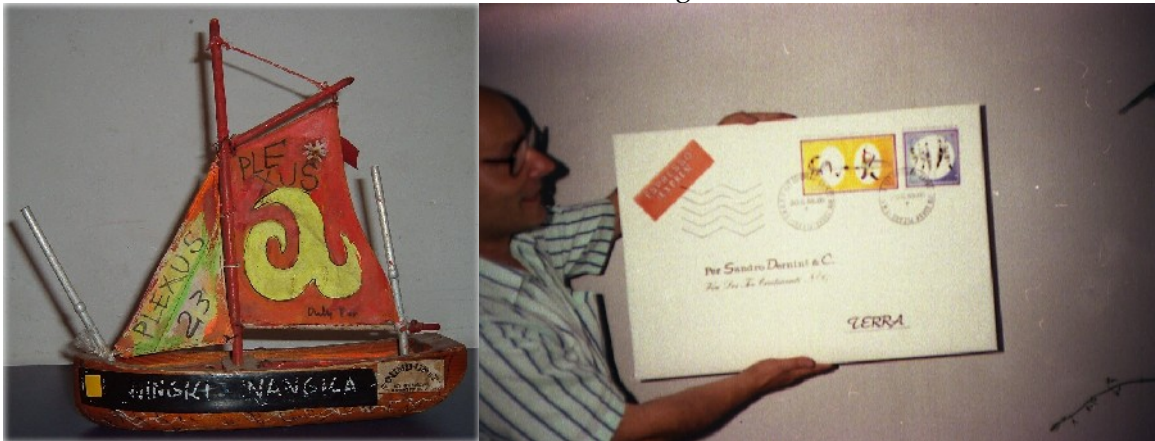
Plexus Group Shot Against Art Slavery n. 3, Sardinia



Elisabeth boat, Carloforte, San Pietro Island, 1988.

The day after, in Cagliari, Gaetano Brundu transformed a toy boat into a Plexus messenger of art freedom to allow Plexus to escape from local art constrictions. On its sheet sail, Brundu painted his *moustache* sign, associated since early 80's to the immunological messenger Interleukine Two.

Plexus Art Messengers



Artwork by Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari, Sardinia, 1988, artwork by Luigi Mazzarelli.

Few day later, always in Cagliari, Luigi Mazzarelli gave me to bring in Dakar two large art mail envelopes, a meter by a half meter, and two large mail stamps. Inside, he handwrote two messages, one addressed to the Senegal artists and the second one to me, in which he challenged many critical current issues in contemporary art. In the end of June, inside the Colosseum of Rome, on the occasion of a new photo group shot, Micaela Serino distributed, free of charge, a large amount of her 1000 lire bills as new *Plexonian Art Money*.

Plexonian Art Money



Artwork by Micaela Serino, Rome, 1988.

On July 4, in Rome, at Il Mago d'Oz, an historical place of the 1979 L.I.A.C.A. cultural slave market event, to recall the 1987 Plexus Art Slaves Market event, I staged *Made in the 80's for the 90's* as the deconstruction performance of wood cylinder box, full of Plexus and L.I.A.C.A. historical relics and records, transformed into a *Plexus Campbell's Soup Can*. On it, Fabrizio Bertuccioli and Roberto Federici painted *Fatti negli 80's per i 90's* with Massimo Sarchielli, the first artist in 1981 of the NYU program *The Artist in the First Person*, cooking a tomato soup.

Made in the 80s for the 90s



Art Altar by Sandro Dernini, Mago d'Oz, Rome, 1988.

The day after, in the garden of Gianni Villella, we retrieved the Ancestral Messenger statuette buried there in 1987 by Arturo Lindsay, before his leaving for Sardinia.

Plexus Contemporary Art Archaeology



Artwork by Arturo Lindsay, Gianni Villella's garden, Rome, 1988.

Then, as a Plexus contemporary archaeological artefact, I carried it with me on board the Elisabeth boat in Carloforte to perform my departure for Dakar that I staged as a Plexus 23 ritual art performance with Antonio Caboni and Andrea Portas.

Plexus 23 Ritual Art Performance



Performance by Andrea Portas, Antonio Caboni, art altar by Sandro Dernini, Carloforte, 1988.

In August, I arrived in Dakar, where I discovered that the Pan African Festival FESPAC was cancelled as well as the invitation for Plexus International to participate. Anyway, without any supports, we decided that the Plexus art slaves voyage had to continue in direction to the House of the Slaves of Goree. Assane MBaye with Langouste MBow brought me to the mosque of Touba, holy capital of the Mourides Islamic brotherhood, to meet the marabout Serin Karim M'Backe, to get his consensus to stage a theatrical art parade, from the Medina to Goree, performing the exile to Gabon of Cheick Ahmadou Bamba, the spiritual father and founder of the Mouridism Islamic religion, who was exiled by the French government during its colonialist domination in Western Africa.

Plexus Voyage in Senegal



Touba, Senegal, 1988.

On August 26, from the studio of Kre MBaye in the Medina to the House of the Slaves in Gorée, directed by Omar Seck, a serpentine art procession parade of hundreds participants, carrying previous Art Slavery Manifesto group shots performed ritually the historical exile to Gabon of Cheik Amoudou Bamba. Okechukwu Odita, a Nigerian artist as well as art scholar from the Ohio State University, produced the video documentation of the Plexus event.

Plexus Voyage to the House of the Slaves



Pathe Diop, Youssouph Traorè, Zulu MBaye, Omar Seck, Assane MBaye, Kre MBaye, Langouste MBow, Awa and Marcelle MBaye, Medina, Dakar 1988.

The Plexus Art Slavery Manifesto was presented to the Dakar Mayor's representative, together with the Plexus proposal to open a World Art Bank in Goree, managed directly by the artists in the first person, outside the control of the artworld. Ritually, the Plexus Manifesto Art Slavery group shot ended the event.

Plexus Group Shot Against Art Slavery n. 4, Senegal

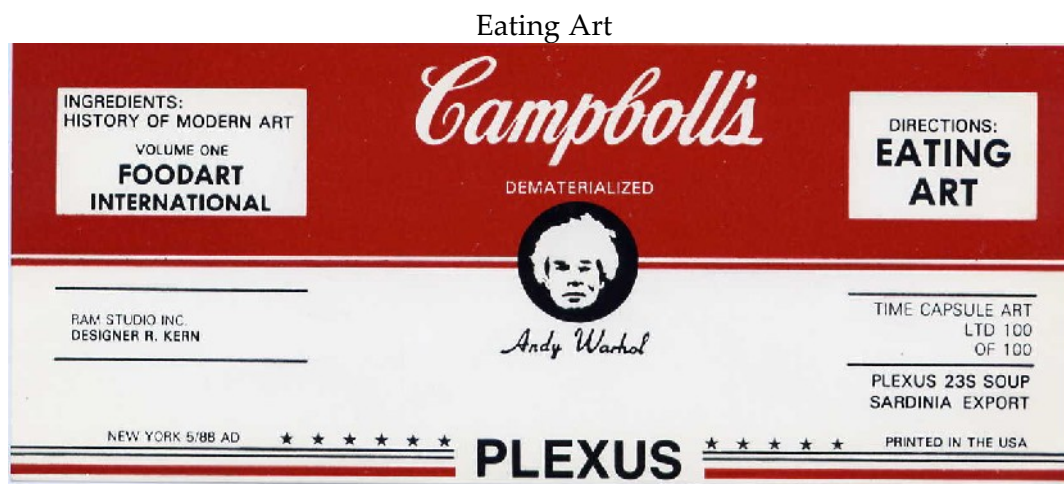


House of the Slaves, Goree, Dakar, 1988.

Few days after, at the Club Litteraire David Diop, in the Medina of Dakar, with Youssouph Traorè, Langouste MBow, Assane MBaye, Zulu MBaye, Tairo Diop, we wrote an *Open Letter to All Artists of the World*, fully reported in Appendix B.

Plexus International launches a call for all artists of the world to come to Dakar, from December 23, 1988, to January 3, 1989, to contribute to the opening of a credit line in favour of the International Art Community through the creation of an Art World Bank.

Back in New York, on September 23, for my birthday party in Soho, at the loft of Carmen Miraglia, I present my first limited edition of *Plexus Campbell's Soup Can* label, designed by Robert Kern and printed by Maggie Reilly of Ram Studio. It had the little fine difference that with the same character there was written "Campboll's" instead of "Campbell's." Under it, "Dematerialized" was written on top of Andy Warhol's image and signature. At its bottom, it was written "PLEXUS," on the left side "Ingredients: History of Modern Art, Volume One, FoodArt International" and on the right side "Direction: Eating Art."



Artwork concept by Sandro Dernini, graphics by Ram Studio, New York, 1988.

In October, on the wall of the burned building of The Shuttle Theatre, at 523 East 6 Street, I exposed a large selection of photos documenting the voyage of Plexus in Italy and in Senegal as an open report to the Lower East Side Community, to raise a broader community support for the continuation of Plexus event.

Photo Compressionism



Lower East Side, New York, 1988.

On November 3, at CUANDO, Plexus presented *Purgatorio Show 1988*, as first act of *The Serpent*, an international travelling event, staged in five acts, in five different cities, New York, Carloforte, Cagliari, Dakar, Goree.

The *Purgatorio Show '88* was performed by David Boyle and the Shock Theatre Group, Stephen DiLauro, Lynne Kanter, Arturo Lindsay, Lorenzo Pace, Miguel Algarin, Andrea Grassi, Jose Rodriguez, Nilda Cortez, Wes Power, Loisada Samba Band, Sara Jackson and others. A limited edition of Plexus Purgatorio Shows '88 T-shirts was made by David Boyle and Joanee Freedom. The little art toy boat was used as a container of Plexus Serpent pins made by Mitch Ross to be given away, free of charge, to the audience as *made in the 80s for the 90s*. At the end Lenny Horowitz performed the Marlboro Man as a recall of the art slaves ship's departure from the artopera *Eve*, *Purgatorio Show '86*.

Purgatorio Shows '88



Leonard Horowitz, Lynne Kanter, CUANDO, New York, 1988.

Purgatorio Shows '88: Plexus Serpent Act I



CUANDO, New York, 1988.

On November 11, at the Snow Ben Room of Bobst Library of New York University, as a second act, it was staged *Il Viaggio del Serpente*, an International interactive Italian evening of art, music, poetry and technology, presented by NYU

Music Dept., NYU Art and Art Education Dept. and the Italian Institute of Culture. It featured an art show by Marina Cappelletto, Antonia Carmi, Franco Ciarlo, Dionigi Cossu, Ivan Dalla Casa, Baldo Diodato, Cosino Di Leo Ricatto, Roberto Fabricciani, Manuela Filiaci, Dinu Ghezzo, Andrea Grassi, Gianfranco Mantegna, Renato Miceli, Beatrice Muzi, Luca Pizzorno, Renzo Ricchi, Elisabetta Zanelli. As a happening, Plexus artists performed a serpentine ritual procession following as an imaginary Serpent route going to Sardinia and to Dakar. Dinu Ghezzo orchestrated with a chorus an improvisation by phone interacting with Franco Meloni at the University of Cagliari. Wearing an anti-gas, I presented the Serpent travelling program from New York to Sardinia and Dakar, by pointing on a computer monitor an experimental software program *Columbus Business Plan*, near to the Ivan Dalla Tana's *Nuclear Serpent*, reporting its back three enlargements of the group shot made at the House of the Slaves in Goree, while George Chaikin was exchanging art images via fax with Franco Meloni at the University of Cagliari, and with Bruce Breland at the Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh.

The Serpent Act II



Malvern Lumdsen, George Chaikin, New York University, 1988, artwork by Ivan Dalla Tana.

Plexus Serpent Act II



Dinu Ghezzi, John Gilbert, Sandro Dernini, NYU; 1988, Franco Meloni, Univ. of Cagliari.

On November 14, in Carloforte, in Sardinia, for the celebrations of *La Madonna dello Schiavo*, it was staged the third act of *The Serpent* on board of the Elisabeth, with its crew wearing the Plexus Purgatorio Show '88 T-shirts, as a symbolic departure to Dakar. Few days after, in Cagliari, it was staged the fourth act *Tradition and Modernity* by Antonio Caboni and Tommaso Meloni, who planted a little tree to revitalize the urban degrade, while Franco Meloni performed on a portable computer the departure for Dakar of the little Plexus boat.

Plexus Serpent Act III and IV



Elisabeth boat, Carloforte, Sardinia, 1988.

Tommaso Meloni, Cagliari, 1988.

In December, in Rome, I organized a series of Plexus dinner parties, named *Made in the Eighties for 90's*, to raise supports for the Plexus art journey to Dakar.

Made in the Eighties for 90's



L. Papadia, Roberto Farina, Annetta Ducrot, Micaela Serino, Fakher Al Koudsi, S. Dernini, Rome, 1988

Made in the Eighties for 90's



Sandro Dernini, Raul Calabrò, Deborah Mellen, Annetta Ducrot, Maurizio Gabrielli, Daniele Comelli, Lucie Gartner, Marta, Betta e Giacomo Polverelli, Paola Agarossi, Rome, 1988.

On January 1 of 1989, at the House of the Slaves in Goree, Dakar, the final fifth act of *the Serpent* was staged as a happening. Assane MBaye, coming from the rocks at the ocean side, where slaves used to be deported in the direction of the Americas, performed the arrival of the little toy boat *Libertè de l'Art*.

The Arrival of the Plexus Art Slave Boat in the House of the Slaves



Assane MBaye, Langouste MBow, Willem Brugman, Awa MBaye, Valeria Meloni, Youssouph Traorè, House of the Slaves, Goree, Dakar, 1989.

On the rocks, in front of the entrance of the Door of No Return, I with Willem Brugman, Franco and Valeria Meloni, Assane and Awa MBaye, Langouste MBow, and Youssouph Traore, made an art altar installation with a group of Nuraghic statuettes, the Arturo Lindsay's ancestral messenger statuette, and artworks by Luigi Mazzarelli, Gaetano Brundu, Kre MBaye, Langouste MBow, Ivan dalla Tana, Micaela Serino, Anna Saba, Andrea Portas, Annamaria Caracciolo, Gabriella Locci, Nazzareno Miconi, Antonio Caboni, Anna Piccioni, collected in Sardinia in support to the Plexus World Art Bank project in Gorée. Before crossing the *Door of No Return*, Awa MBaye burned ritually some incenses in her family pot placed at the bottom of the Door. Then, we presented the Plexus project to Joseph NDiaye, the curator of the House of the Slaves.

After, we went to the ANAST Cumba Castel gallery, where we buried the ancestral messenger statuette. On top of it, on the ground, it was placed the *Trojan Horse*, a wood sculpture made by Kre MBaye, in which I hid a Barnaby Ruhe's boomerang.

Plexus Horse of Troy



Kre MBaye and Sandro Dernini, Dakar, 1989.

The next day, in front of the entrance of the House of the Slaves, Willem Brugman, Anna Piccioni, and Zulu MBaye, president of A.N.A.P.S. (National Association of Plastiques Artists of Senegal), performed the reading of the *Plexus Open Letter to All Artists of the World*.

The week after, at Joe Ouakam's Agit Art space, in Dakar, I made with Langouste MBow an art installation focused on the economic-political art control by the Artworld of the Western market. There, I presented to the press and to the Minister Aliasse Ba the Plexus International project, calling for attention on the last art market reports, placed at the center of the art installation, from the Sotheby's art auctions held in New York in November 1988.

Escaping from the Artworld Market Control



Installation by Langouste MBow and Sandro Dernini, Agit Art, Dakar, 1989.

I recalled the difficult life of Van Gogh when he was alive as an example of the historic struggle of all artists, underlining the controversial value of the 53.9 millions dollars paid for the Van Gogh's painting *Irises*. I stressed that about this controversial auction some rumours were circulating in New York about a substantial "*under the table*" loan from the same auction house to the buyer of the Van Gogh's painting. Within this historical and controversial context, I reported the history of Plexus art slave boat journey escaped from the New York Artworld control to open a World Art Bank in Goree, for the survival of all artists of the world. I argued that behind any work of art, traded as just as a commodity, there is a human being the artist that is traded as a slave. Therefore, I claimed the need of the negotiation of a new art contract to defend the rights of the artists.

Presentation to the Senegal Minister



Minister Aliasse Ba, Sandro Dernini, Youssouph Traorè, Agit Art Atelier, Dakar, 1989.

In the end of January, in New York, I discovered in the Bobst Library of New York University, reading the book *The Life of Christopher Columbus* written by his son Ferdinando, the controversial story of “a change of route” made by Columbus in his early experiences as captain on board of his ship in front of the Island of San Pietro, off of Sardinia, where the Elisabeth boat was waiting to depart in the direction of the House of the Slaves in the island of Goree, Senegal. Then, I presented to the NYU Assistant Dean of the SEHNAP School, James Finkelstein, a proposal to develop a cultural navigation art event for the 1992 Columbus 500 year anniversary. After his approval, I started to contact some potential participants. On March 10, at the Anderson Room of New York University, it was held a meeting of a group of academic institutions and cultural associations. It was chaired by Dean James Finkelstein and hosted by John V. Gilbert, chairman of the NYU Music Dept. It was attended by Bruce Breland and Jenny Bell of the Carnegie Mellon Dax Group, George Chaikin of Cooper Union, Angiola Churchill and David Ecker of the NYU Art & Art Education Dept., Malvern Lumsden of NYU SEHNAP Publishing Studio, Earl S. Davis of NYU Institute for Afro-American Affairs, Nilda Cortez and Josè Rodriguez of C.U.A.N.D.O. Cultural Community Centre, Mor Thiam and Camall Cisse of the Institute for Study of African Culture, Mico Licastro of the Institute for the Italian American Experience, Arturo Lindsay of Plexus International Art Urban Forum Inc. and Okechukwu Odita of the Art History Dept. of Ohio State University.

The Voyage of the 1992 Christopher Columbus Consortium



Artworks by Ivan Della Tana, New York, 1989.

At the end, it was established The 1992 Christopher Columbus Consortium, with the purpose to rethink about Columbus' landing in the Americas by developing a variety of projects of voyages of contemporary cultural navigation into the “new world” which was understood to be the living planet and its living traditions. I was designated as the coordinator of the Consortium.

The same day, in the evening at CUANDO, we organized a performance report informing the Community at large about the establishment of the Columbus Consortium and how it was possible to participate in it. The community report event was made by Nilda Cortez, Okechukwu Odita, and me with Joanee Freedom. Arturo Lindsay as opening act staged with me and Juma Santos his ritual performance *Andy's Aura*, dedicated to Mickey Pinero, died recently. In April, after a second Consortium meeting at NYU, it was presented at the Rivington School an other performance report to the Community from the Consortium. It was staged as a Plexus happening, named *The Art World TV Deconstruction/Reconstruction, Episode Two: The Rivington School*, that I made with the participation of Okechukwu Odita, Lenny Horowitz, Arturo Lindsay, Maggie Reilly, and Ray Kelly.

The Rivington School



Lower East Side, New York, 1989.

In May, because of problems inherent the NYU institutional participation in the Columbus Consortium as well as about the concern raised by Arturo Lindsay on the Plexus participation in the 1992 Columbus Consortium, it was agreed to stop Plexus international activities. On the end of May, at the Institute of Computer Art of the School of Visual Arts, I organized with George Chaikin and Stephen DiLauro the event *1992: The Departure of An Art Human Shuttle For Freedom Journeying to the Realm of a New Planet Called Tim-Art*, in which we not mentioned Plexus name. David Boyle with his Shock Troupe Theatre Group, Lenny Horowitz and Wess Power, staged a theatrical departure while George Chaikin performed with a scanner camera the “dematerialization” of a small copy of a canoe from Senegal to be transferred via computer to Franco Meloni at the University of Cagliari, with no success. Therefore, he transferred these data into two computer disks. In the end of June, at the Department of Physics of the University of Cagliari, within an improvised performance by Tanya Gerstle, David Boyle, Willem Brugman, Stephen DiLauro, Sara Jackson, Antonio Caboni, holding the antecedent photos of the New York departure, I delivered George Chaikin’s computer disks to Franco Meloni in order to “re-materialize” the canoe.

The Departure of Plexus Black Box



Dept. of Physics, University of Cagliari, Franco Meloni, Sandro Dernini, Willem Brugman, Sara Jackson, David Boyle, Antonio Caboni, Stephen DiLauro; on board Elisabeth boat, Carloforte, 1989.

After several discussions in Rome, in Cagliari and in Carloforte, with David Boyle, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Paolo Maltese, Willem Brugman, Maria Pia Marsala, Stephen DiLauro, Sara Jackson, Gaetano Brundu and Franco Meloni, how to solve Plexus problems, exploded with its participation in the Columbus Consortium, we decided to “freeze” metaphorically Plexus into a “black box,” in order to avoid its historical collapse, until when a larger consensus was again gained and a strategy was defined for its survival and historical advancement.

Plexus Black Box



Antonio Caboni, Roberto Federici, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Sandro Dernini, Metateatro, Rome, 1989, photos by Beppe Forli.

1992 Christopher Columbus: Voyage in the Planet of Art



Maria Pia Marsala, Roberto Federici, Antonio Caboni, Willem Brugman, David Boyle, Tanya Gerstle, Micaela Serino, Annetta Ducrot, Luisa Taravella, Loreto Papadia, Sara Jackson, Stephen Di Lauro, S.Dernini, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Metateatro, Rome, 1989, photo by Beppe Forli.

On July 1, at the Metateatro, in Rome, within the 1992 *Cristoforo Colombo: Viaggio nel Pianeta Arte*, an artopera made with no direct participation of Plexus, the box *Made in the Eighties for the 90s* was performed as a symbolic *Plexus Black Box* to be historically deconstructed, with all participants signing a *Plexus Boxing Ring for Freedom* and walking out from the stage, following George Chaikin's Haddamard blueprint, through the installation *Open the Door of Your Heart to Go into the Future* made by Fabrizio Bertuccioli.

Open the Door of Your Heart to Go into the Future



Artwork by Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Metateatro, Rome, 1989, Antonio Caboni, photos by B. Forli.

On July 4, at the University of Cagliari, the *Open Call Plexus Black Box* was issued by Franco Meloni to bring ideas as contributions for a general discussion on an actual definition of what PLEXUS has been, what it should be, and what it could be, to be analyzed by an international board of referees.

In the beginning of January of 1990, prof. David Ecker, member of the 1992 Columbus Consortium and chairman of my Ph.D. dissertation committee at the New York University and executive director of I.S.A.L.T.A., arrived in Rome as my guest.

The Voyage of the Elisabeth



Sandro Dernini, David Ecker, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Lynne Kanter, Rome, 1990.

We went to the University of Rome “La Sapienza” to present to prof. Carlo De Marco, dean of the School of Medicine and my former professor when I was there a biochemist researcher in the ‘70s, to present the 1992 Columbus Consortium. Together, we conceived a cultural navigation project to organize in 1992 an international Columbus conference, addressing the academy and the community on the issue of the well-being in the XXIst Century.



Dean Carlo De Marco, University “La Sapienza” of Rome, 1990.

Dean De Marco foresaw the possibility to associate this theme to the development of a new integrated vision of human well being, as recommended by the World Health Organization. Then, he proposed to host in the summer a preliminary working group session at the University of Rome “La Sapienza” to check the feasibility of this proposal. The day after, in Sardinia, at the Physics Dept of the University of Cagliari, with Franco Meloni we discussed how to activate the participation of the University of Cagliari in the organization of the 1992 Columbus event.

At the end of January in New York, David Ecker presented *The Voyage of the Elisabeth*, as a collaborative travelling art project by I.S.A.L.T.A. and Plexus International, to promote the World Art Fund in Goree in support to the survival of the masters of the living traditions in art of all cultures.

In February, at the Metateatro, in Rome, Loreto Papadia organized the event *Cristoforo Colombo: Viaggio nel Pianeta Arte, Parte II. The Departure of the Telematic Team*, to perform the transmission on board the Elisabeth boat, in the island of San Pietro, of a long fax with the images of hundred faces of artists as members of the *Telematic Team*, departing for a cultural navigation in direction to the 1992 Columbus event.

The Departure of Plexus Telematic Team



Glauco Benigni, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Enzo Ciarravano, F. Franci, Metateatro, Rome, 1990.

After few days, with Maria Pia Marsala, Micaela Serino, Loreto Papadia, we performed at the Calcata Carnival the departure of the *Plexus Black Box Made in the Eighties for the '92*.

Plexus Black Box Made in the Eighties for the 1992 Columbus Event



Loreto Papadia, Sandro Dernini, Maria Pia Marsala, Micaela Serino, Calcata, 1990.

In May, in Amsterdam, Willem Brugman and Frans Evers started to deconstruct the *Plexus Black Box*.

The Departure of the Plexus Black Box Deconstruction



Frans Evers, Willem Brugman, Tanya Gerstle, Amsterdam, 1990, photos by R. Jansen.

In Rome, I performed with Maria Pia Marsala the dematerialization of the Amsterdam's records, into the *Plexus Black Box* for travelling to Sardinia, where at Gaetano Brundu's studio, I performed the symbolic packaging of the *Plexus Black Box* into a large artwork *Il Sudario* made by Brundu as the new Plexus sail for the continuation of its voyage.

At the Archaeological Villanovaforru Museum, I staged with Ubaldo Badas the arrival of the *Plexus Black Box* and the discovery of Nuraghic archaeological contemporary art fragments of the Plexus history.

Plexus Sail



Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari. Villanovaforru Museum, Sardinia, 1990, Artwork by Gaetano Brundu.

On June 30, at the Ridotto del Colosseo, in Rome with Maria Pia Marsala and Giancarlo Schiaffini, I organized the Plexus event 1992 *Cristoforo Colombo, Viaggio nel Pianeta Arte, part III: Plexus Black Box*. We staged it as a three days laboratory to deconstruct collectively the *Plexus Black Box*.

1992 Cristoforo Colombo, Viaggio nel Pianeta Arte, part III: Plexus Black Box



Photos by Adriano Mordenti.



Ridotto del Colosseo, Rome, 1990, photo by Maria Pia Marsala,

Plexus Telematic Team



Frans Evers, Lynne Kanter, Willem Brugman, photos by Mauro Brusà

The Plexus Telematic Team, travelling toward the discovery of the new Planet of Art, was launched with its crew made by David Ecker, Arturo Lindsay, Okechukwu Odita, Willem Brugman, Frans Evers, Lynne Kanter, Frank Shifreen, Antonello Dessi, Antonio Caboni, Adrea Portas, Karl Geringer, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Micaela Serino, Roberto Federici, Ciro Ciriaco, Piero Cianflone, Carlo Cusatelli, Anna Piccioni, Mauro Brusa, Vittorio Terracina, and Fabi Bandini.

Voyage in the Planet of Plexus



Jeroen Heuvel, Willem Brugman, Andrea Portas, Frans Evers, Ciro Ciriaco, Lynne Kanter, Roberto Federici, Antonio Caboni, Karl Geiringer, Antonello Dessi, Anna Piccioni, Arturo Lindsay, Piero Cianflone, Elsa Rizzi, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Ridotto Colosseo, Rome, 1990, photo by V. Ibanez.

Few days later, we presented to Mons. Dante Balboni, director of the High Institute of Sacred Art of the Vatican, the Christopher Columbus Consortium project and the Plexus reconciliation art efforts of bridging the House of the Slaves in Goree Island with the church *The Madonna of the Slave* in Carloforte, in San Pietro Island, on the occasion of the 1992 Columbus event. In the evening, at the Metateatro, it was held the round table *Plexus Black Box: A Multicultural Data Bank for a Caravella dell'Arte* with the participation of Arturo Lindsay, David Ecker, Odita Okechukwu, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Frans Evers, Ciro Ciriaco, and Frank Shifreen. Then, the Plexus project was presented to the Ambassador of Senegal in Italy, S.E. Youssouph Baro, together with the proposal of the opening in Goree of a World Art Bank.

The Travelling Plexus Black Box



Elisabeth Boat, Carloforte, San Pietro Island, Sardinia, 1990.

On July 4, at the City Hall of Carloforte, with David Ecker, Odita Okechukwu, I presented the proposal to organize there the Columbus Reconciliation Well Being Forum, to be held on October 1992. On board the Elisabeth, we presented *Elisabeth, La Caravella dell'Arte*, a travelling art project sustaining the opening in Goree of the World Art Fund in order to survive the masters of the living traditions in art from all cultures, under the risk of extinction. Few days after, at the Archaeological Museum of Villanovaforru, Cagliari, David Ecker presented an ISALTA proposal for a *Plexus Black Box* data bank project to catalogue and retrieve information regarding the masters of Sardinian living traditions in art.

Delivery of Plexus Black Box to the Vatican



R. Mitraglia, E. Rizzi, M. Serino, F. Bertuccioli, L. Biondi, M. Brusà, M. P. Marsala, D. Balboni, Dernini, S. Fiorenza, G. Schiaffini, Simone, A. Abbondanza, Rome, 1990, photos by G. DeMarco.

On the end of December, at Teatro in Trastevere, in Rome, as a closing performing act of the original time frame for my Ph.D. inquiry on *Plexus Black Box*, originally delimited to 1990, I performed with Maria Pia Marsala, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Stelio Fiorenza, Micaela Serino, Mauro Brusà and others, the presentation of the *Plexus Black Box* to Mons. Dante Balboni.

Plexus Black Box



Rome, 1990, photos by Mauro Brusà.

At the end of January 1991, in Rome, at the Church of the Madonna of the Good Voyage, I presented the symbolic departure of the *Colombina Reconciliation Project* by Silvio Betti, on board the second little toy boat, renamed *Colombina*. On its sail there was, on a side, the ticket that Betti made in New York for the 1986 Plexus artopera *Eve*, with a digital watch with world clock times. On the other sail side, there was the image of the painting *The Flagellation* of Piero della Francesca. On its bottom, there was the Haddamard blueprint by George Chaikin to drive the Columbus route towards the discovery of the Planet of Art.

Colombina



Artworks by Silvio Betti, Rome 1991

On July 4 of 1991, at the City Hall of Carloforte, Columbus Consortium Italian Committee presented to the Mayor the proposal to organize there, in 1992, an International conference for the 500 years of Columbus's landing in the Americas on the theme of "The Well Being in the XXI Century." After, in the harbour, on board the Elisabeth boat, Plexus performed the presentation of its proposal to have a Columbus

Reconciliation event made by a fleet of art projects, on the occasion of the Columbus Well Being International conference.

Plexus Presentation to the 1992 Christopher Columbus Consortium



B. L. Petretto, N. Campanini, Mario Giancotti, Saverio Avveduto, Vincenzo Cappelletti, Maria P. Marsala, Giovanni Lilliu, Carlo De Marco, Nadia Guareschi, Carloforte, 1991.

This proposal together with the Mayor's agreement letter to the 1992 Christopher Columbus Consortium was placed into a small wood black box and placed on board the floating sculpture by Ciro Ciriaco, representing Plexus *Black Box*, and then anchored in the middle of the harbour of Carloforte.

Plexus Floating Black Box



Ciro Ciriaco on board on his floating artwork, Carloforte, 1991.

As closing performance, the little toy boat *Colombina* made by Silvio Betti, as an art messenger of reconciliation and well-being, was carried into the sky by a colourful kite

made by Guido Pegna. In the fall, at the harbour of Carloforte, the floating sculpture was recovered and the small wood box, representing *Plexus Black Box*, was placed on board the Elisabeth with all others Plexus relics and records.

Plexus Black Box Recovering



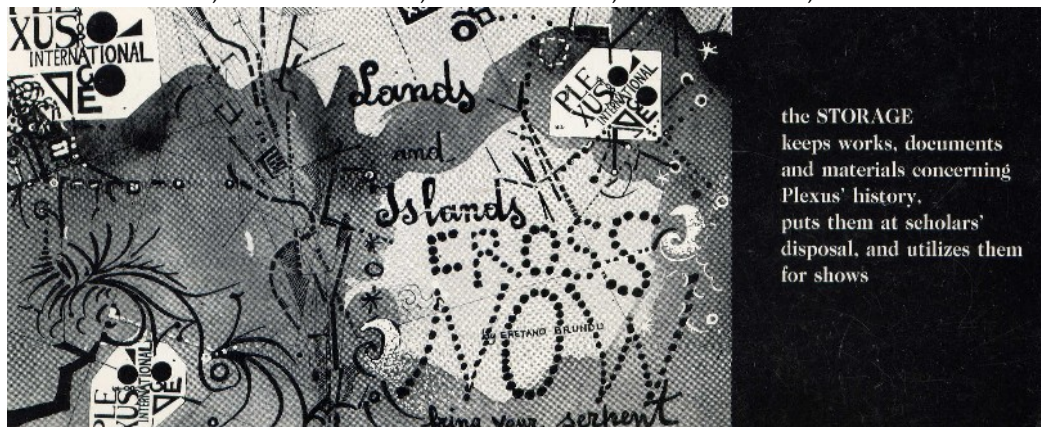
Floating sculpture of Ciro Ciriaco, Elisabeth boat, Carloforte, Sardinia, 1991.

On November, in Cagliari, Gaetano Brundu opened the *Plexus International Storage* with an installation of Plexus relics brought by us from the Elisabeth's collection.

Plexus International Storage Opening



Fabrizio Bertuccioli, Gaetano Brundu, Sandro Dernini, Piero Cianflone, Maria Grazia Medda.



Artwork by Gaetano Brundu, Cagliari, 1991.

In January of 1992, at the Art Gallery of the City of Cagliari, it was held the mail art exhibition "*La Posta in Gioco*" (Playing Mail Art), organized by Gianni Broi, in which Plexus

participated with a very long fax installation made by images taken on the road of the *Colombina Reconciliation Project* by the *Telematic Team*.

Playing with Mail Art



Gaetano Brundu, Galleria d'Arte Comunale, Cagliari, 1992, Sandro Dernini.

In early March, at the Plexus International Storage in Cagliari, Anna Saba presented the installation *"Plexus Imprinting, A Story 1986-1992"*, in which was exposed the full collection of her Plexus art books, made with photos, original documents and relics from Plexus events from 1986 to 1992.

Plexus International Storage



Art installations by Anna Saba, Cagliari, 1992, photos by Gianni Aledda.

At the Plexus International Storage, on June 13, the 3rd installation *Storage Calls NYC* was conceptualized by Gaetano Brundu as an art action in progress to create new Plexus artworks produced in the virtual space of the view finder of his camera from re-elaborated images of Plexus relics and records.

Plexus Storage Calls NYC



Art image by Gaetano Brundu, mask by Micaela Serino, Cagliari, Sardinia 1992

In October of 1992, in Carloforte, it was held the international Columbus Reconciliation Forum focused on the theme of "The Well Being in the XXI Century." David W. Ecker presented the 1992 Columbus Consortium and expressed the ISALTA concern about the world survival of the living traditions in art.

George Chaikin and Franco Meloni presented a cultural navigation proposal to connect Goree Island in Senegal and San Pietro in Sardinia through an experimental telecommunication network of international academic institutions. Jose Rodriguez, Rolando Politi, Patricia Nicholson Parker and Nilda Cortez raised the attention on the need, within a new "well being" paradigm, to support community-based efforts toward a reconciliation.

Columbus Reconciliation Forum on the Well Being in the XXI Century



Carloforte, San Pietro Island, Sardinia, 1992, photo by Georgetta Stonefish.

Lorenzo Pace arrived with the *Colombina* toy boat, retrieved in Cagliari from the old Sardinian aristocratic family of Amat di San Filippo. Lorenzo recalled the slavery history of his family and introduced the Plexus proposal of the opening in Goree of a World Art Bank.

The Voyage of Colombina Reconciliation Project



Lorenzo Pace, Amat di San Filippo's Family, Cagliari, 1992, photos by Georgetta Stonefish.

Okechukwu Orita by addressing his presentation to Mockar MBow, chairperson of the Goree Memorial Foundation, pointed out how the Plexus Art World Bank proposal had to be considered as a contribution of cooperation for reconciliation. As final document of the Forum, it was issued *The Columbus Open Call of Carloforte for Reconciliation*, reported in the Appendix B. In the evening, it was held the music performance *Route Correction: The Voyage of the Elisabeth* by Giancarlo Schiaffini, with an art installation made by Gabriella Locci around the stage and, at the entrance, a *Plexus Black Box* art show by Maria Grazia Medda inspired to George Chaikin's *Hadamard Matrix* drawing.

The next day, in Cagliari, at the Plexus International Storage, within the setting of the art installation *Multiplex of Black* by Antonello Dessi, Lorenzo Pace, and Patricia Parker performed the continuation of Plexus art journey, while George Chaikin carried with me his *Hadamard Matrix* drawing around the space and looking the audience through it as a symbolic mapping of Plexus voyage.

Plexus International Storage



Gaetano Brundu, Franco Meloni, George Chaikin, installation by Antonello Dessi, Cagliari, 1992.

On December 10, at the City Hall of New York, on the occasion of the Human Rights Day, the Commissioner of Human Rights Dennis de Leon organized a round table with Mico Licastro, David Ecker, George Chaikin, Jose Rodriguez, Ralph Lerner, Earl S. Davis, Okechukwu Odita, and I, to discuss the continuation of the Columbus Reconciliation Well Being project started in Sardinia.

1992 Human Right Day of the City of New York



Sandro Dernini, Dennis de Leon, Mico Licastro, City Hall, New York, 1992.

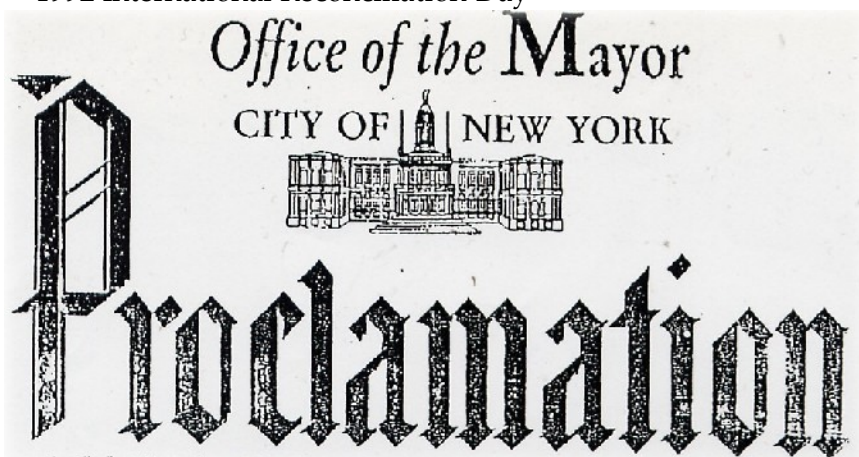
In the evening, at the NYU Barney Building Auditorium, I managed a performance report *The Deconstruction of "The Voyage of the Elisabeth," The Serpent, in Order to Survive*, to bring back immediately to the Lower East Side community the results from the round table held at the City Hall as well as the last news from The Christopher Columbus Consortium's event held in Sardinia. To avoid any potential institutional problems, I staged it as a session of the NYU David Ecker's aesthetic inquiry course, with contributions by Lorenzo Pace, Alfa Diallo, Jose Rodriguez, George Chaikin, Barnaby Ruhe, Okechukwu Odita, Nilda Cortez, Patricia Nicholson Parker, and William Parker.

Few days after, the Mayor of the City of New York, after been informed by the Commissioner de Leon and Mico Licastro about the international process of reconciliation and well being turned on by the Columbus Reconciliation Forum, declared in New York City the day December 16 as *International Reconciliation Day*.

1992 International Reconciliation Day



William Parker, NYU Barney Bldg.



City Hall, New York, 1992.

In December, in Cagliari, Gaetano Brundu ended the Plexus International Storage's activity. Then, at the Dattena bookshop, it was held an installation by Corrado Pani, Sara Scalas and Sabina Tatti that Brundu presented as the *Young Plexonians*.

Young Plexonians



Sara Scalas and Sabina Tatti, Dattena bookshop, Cagliari, Sardinia, 1992.

In early May, David Ecker invited me to be his graduate assistant in the development of the NYU Lower East Side Graduate Summer Institute of Living Traditions in Art. To promote it, I managed the organization of a series of round tables with the participation of Lower East Side community activists, NYU scholars, and local artists. The first round table was chaired by the commissioner of Human Rights of the City of New York, Hon. Dennis de Leon. Then, I further developed the project of "The Voyage of the Elisabeth" as an ISALTA-Plexus collaboration to raise more attention on the risk of extinction for the living traditions in art around the world, and in particular in the Lower East Side under the pressure of a continuous real estate gentrification process.

NYU Lower East Side Graduate Summer Institute of Living Traditions in Art

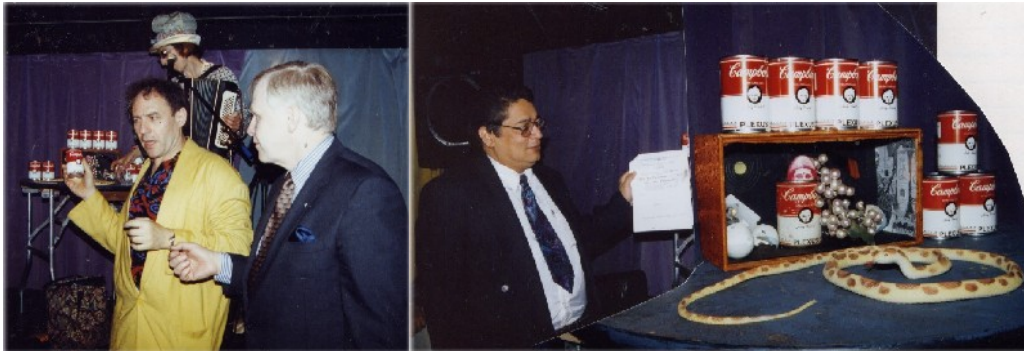


Eva Hsueh, Luis Vergara, NYU Barney Bldg. East Village, New York 1993.

On May 29, at the Big Bottom Lounge of the USA Club, I was invited by Richard Heisler to present my Plexus Campbell's soup can in his cabaret show "Your 15

Seconds." I performed it with Jose Rodriguez as the repatriation from the Artworld of a *Plexus Campbell Soup Can* into the Community.

Your 15 Seconds Show



Richard Heisler with an art collector, Jose Rodriguez, USA Club, New York 1993.

On July 1, at the NYU Rosenberg Gallery, it was held the final exhibition of the NYU Summer Institute "*Cultural Navigation: The Lower East Side*", with the participation of the Lower East Side artists who interacted with Institute's activities.

Cultural Navigation: The NYU Summer Institute Lower East Side Show



NYU Rosenberg Gallery, East Village, New York 1993.

The Lower East Side Gentrification



Rolando Politi and Yuri Kapralov, NYU Rosenberg Gallery, East Village, New York 1993.

As closing act of my NYU cultural navigation, on July 1, I went ritually from the Barney Bldg to the Nuyorican Poets Café, on East 3rd Street, between Avenue B and C,

where it was staged a special event in collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art for the exhibition at the MOMA of *"Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century"*. There, I performed a *"Repatriation of "Art" into the Community"* by paying my homage, at the bar of the Café, to the Mickey Pinero's Indio statuette.

The Repatriation of Art into the Community



Miguel Algarin, Nuyorican Poets Café, Lower East Side, New York, 1993.

In October, in New York, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the 1992 Columbus Reconciliation Forum, it was staged the Plexus event *"The Nuraghic Voyage of the Elisabeth,"* with the participation from Cagliari of prof. Francesco Corongiu, dean of the School of Sciences of the University of Cagliari, Franco Meloni, Anna Saba, Antonello Dessi, Alessandra Menesini, Andrea Portas, Annamaria Janin, Giovanna Caltagirone, Guido Pegna and Luisa Amat di Salfilippo. Its purpose was to promote the organization of the second international Well Being Reconciliation Forum, to be held in 1995 for the 100 years of the Guglielmo Marconi's radio.

Art & Science Exchanges

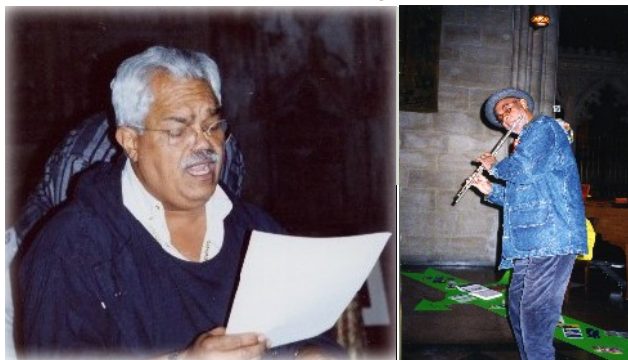


Franco Meloni, Kiki Corongiu, The Cooper Union, New York, 1993.

At Cooper Union, George Chaikin organized a presentation-performance by Guido Pegna of the first Guglielmo Marconi's radio experiment.

On Columbus Day, at St. John Divine Cathedral, it was staged the Plexus art event *The 1993 Columbus-Marconi Open Call for the Well Being in the XXI Century* made as collaborative effort.

Plexus Call for the Well Being in the XXI Century



Miguel Algarin, Patricia Parker Nicholson, Lorenzo Pace, St. John The Divine, New York, 1993.

The day after, at the NYU Barney Auditorium, to reinforce the collaboration between NYU and the University of Cagliari, toward the organization of the 2° Well Being Reconciliation Forum, it was organized the 4th NYU Summer Institute Lower East Side Round Table, named "*The Voyage of the Elisabeth*," with the participation of Francesco Corongiu dean of the School of Science of the University of Cagliari, Franco Meloni.

The Repatriation of Art into the Community



A. Saba, F. Meloni, L. Griffith, J. Rodriguez, A. Janin, D. Boyle, A. Dessi, S. Dernini, Nuyorican Poets Cafe, NY, 1993.

In the evening, at the Nuyorican Poets Café, with Jose Rodriguez, Lois Griffith, Franco Meloni, Rolando Politi, Anna Saba, Antonello Dessi, Patricia Nicholson Parker, Annamaria Janin, Giovanna Caltagirone, Andrea Portas, David Boyle, we performed *the Repatriation of Art into the Community*, as a wedding party between two copies of the Mickey Pinero's American Indian chief statuette.

From November 3 to November 15 1993, at the NYU Rosenberg Gallery, it was held the Plexus art event *A Contract to be negotiated: Columbus Egg, the Living Plexus Black Box of "The Voyage of the Elisabeth*, that I curated with by Frank Pio. For two weeks, there was a full calendar of activities involving artists, community people and art students from the NYU course *Current Issues in Art Education*, conducted by David Ecker, in which Frank Pio and I participated as students.

At the entrance of the Rosenberg Gallery, it was displaced the George Chaikin's *Haddamard Matrix* blueprint as a mandala, orienting the audience in reading the *Voyage of the Elisabeth* into *Plexus Black Box*. Under the George's blueprint, there was the photo made in Rome in my house in June 1991, showing George Chaikin and Giancarlo Schiaffini in front of the George's blueprint, while holding the *Colombina* boat and two small photos, with David Ecker, Giancarlo Schiaffini, Lynne Kanter and me with the *Colombina* cat, made in 1990, in my house in Rome.

Looking at Plexus Black Box

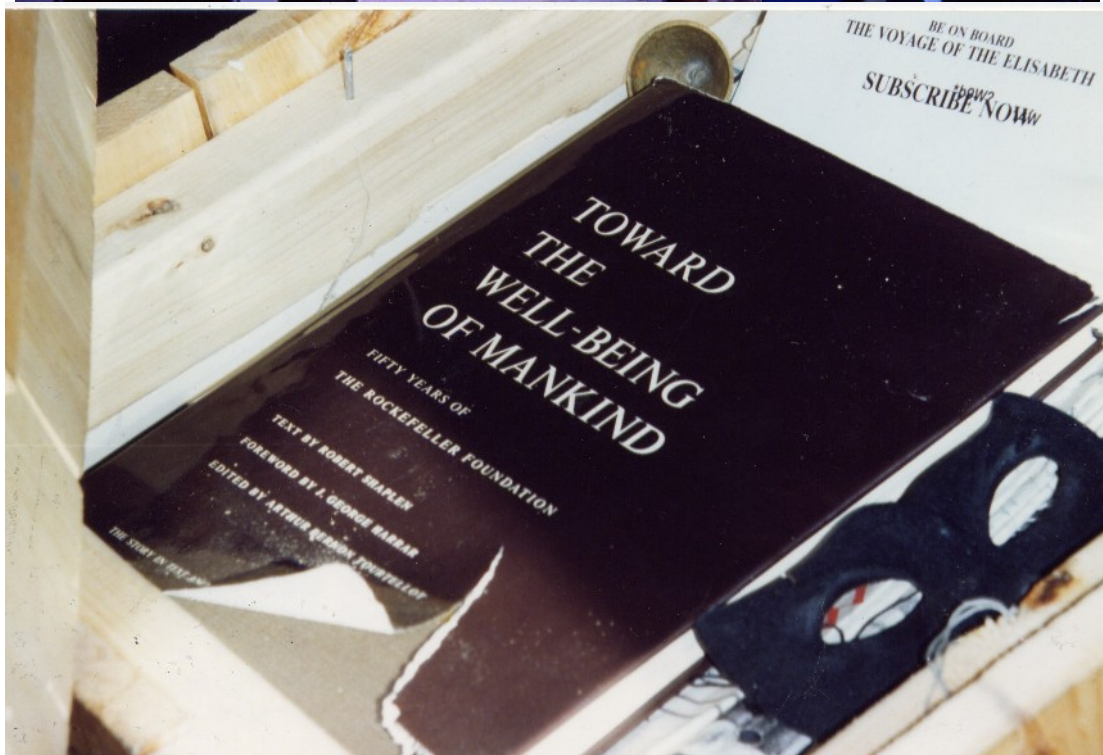


Artworks by George Chaikin, S. Dernini, Ray Kelly, NYU Rosenberg Gallery, New York, 1993.

A copy of the poem *The Box* by Alfa Diallo was placed on top the blueprint. Near the entrance, I placed several *NYU Consent Forms for Research Activities Involving Human Subjects*, as part of an art altar installation, that I made with some earth mound on the floor, the Ray Kelly's icosahedrons sculpture, with inside a picture of the Rivington School before its shut down by the City of New York. The audience, to go in the main room, had to pass through two cocoons sculptures reflecting life and death made by Frank Pio. On the right wall, near the entrance, it was placed the *Plexus Boxing Ring for Freedom*. At the bottom of boxing ring, there was the dossier "Prehistory," the first of the ten Plexus Black Box dossiers, that, as an artist-researcher, I made to document, one per year, Plexus activities until 1990. The small copy of the black box floating sculpture by Ciro Ciriaco was suspended from the ceiling, above the Mickey Pinero's American Indian statuette, placed next a book, *Toward the Well Being of Humankind*, given to me in Rome by Dean Carlo De Marco.

As a symbolic *Living Plexus Black Box*, the Eve Vaterlaus' *Homunculus* sculpture, showing a little man closed in a large bottle full of water, was displaced next to the photos documentation of Georgetta Stonefish at the 1992 Columbus Reconciliation Well Being Forum. As a ritual ending of this intensive program, two boxes were overflowed with Plexus records and relics, placed inside and outside of them.

Repatriation of Plexus Black Box from NYU into the Lower East Side Community



J. Shuttleworth, Alfa Diallo, Josè Rodriguez, David Boyle, Rosenberg Gallery, New York, 1993.

Before to seal them, participants and audience signed the *Plexus Boxing Ring of Freedom*. Then, the two sealed boxes were moved out from the Rosenberg Gallery by Josè Rodriguez, David Boyle, Rolando Politi, John Shuttleworth as a *symbolic Repatriation of Plexus Black Box into the Lower East Side Community* and carried to Alfa Diallo's *House of Originals*, in East 13th St and Avenue B.

This was the last event under my inquiry.

A New Contract of Art to Be Signed in Goree, Senegal



Artwork by Gaetano Brundu, re-elaborated by Andrea Portas, Cagliari, 1988.