

An document under Endurance. Jumper

ENDURANCE: The Information is an international survey exhibition tracing work of thirty-eight visual and performance artists who, individually and collectively, test the physical, mental, and spiritual endurance of the body. Included are works derived from performances, body art actions, and conceptual pieces from 1916 to the present.

At the turn of the century, artists' desire to transcend traditional art forms led to a re-thinking of the modes of presentation. Performance, sometimes known as body art, has since taken innumerable forms, drawing from dance, theater, music, poetry, cinema, painting, sculpture, and the advancement of new communications technology. Influences have included the European avant-garde (the Futurists, Dadaists, and Surrealists), Theater of the Absurd, Abstract Expressionism, vaudeville, cabaret, athletic events, parades, the circus and numerous other forms of public spectacle. During the twentieth century, many styles and modes of performance have evolved from private, introspective and autobiographical investigations to include social actions, site-specific or environmental works and large-scale, multi-media productions.

The theme of endurance in performance lends itself well to both aesthetic experimentation and social and cultural criticism. The artists have used performance to focus on issues of identity and the body, temporality, ritual, spectacle, site and institutional critique, among other criteria. Some of the artists in the exhibition take an adversarial posture, where their confrontational acts or auto-destructive performances are intended to shock, using "their own bodies to explore the outer limits of physical and psychic experience, expanding the parameters of art to

include therapeutic, obsessive, and transgressive acts”¹ often exploiting the idea of pain in a masochistic tradition and acknowledging pain as a precondition of humanity. Other artists focus on issues of power and control, cooperation and compassion. Certain artists use the body as both the subject and object of actions, emblematic of the idea that the artist and the art work are one and the same. Many of the artists are interested in experiencing a task which is outside the accepted norms of behavior.

The works included in this exhibition have played a significant role in how art is made, presented, and received. *Endurance: The Information* asks us to confront questions about the nature of artistic inquiry, the relationship of art to society, and the role of innovation in the human enterprise.

Curated by Jeanette Ingberman and Papo Colo.
Directors of EXIT ART/ The First World

This exhibition is presented in chronological order and will be shown in two segments.

¹ Marjorie Talalay and David S. Rubin, *Outside the Frame: Performance, Art, and Life* (Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, 1994): 44.