




DANSPACE PROJECT PLATFORM 2012:

JUDSONOW

*Exploded car
with golden
mirrors*

Christoph Hermann

80



The work is never done.
Sanctuary always needed.

-Steve Paxton

In Memory of Reverend Howard Moody (1921-2012)

Published by Danspace Project, New York, on the occasion of PLATFORM 2012: *Judson Now*.

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Inquires should be addressed to:

Danspace Project
St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery
131 East 10th Street
New York, NY 10003
danspaceproject.org

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Judy Hussie-Taylor

EDITOR AND SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE

Jenn Joy

MANAGING EDITOR

Lydia Bell

CURATORIAL FELLOW

Katrina De Wees

RESEARCHER

Adrienne Rooney

PHOTOGRAPHER-IN-RESIDENCE

Ian Douglas

WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE

Huffa Frobes-Cross
Danielle Goldman

PRINTER

Symmetry

DESIGNER

Judith Walker

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JUDSONOW

**JUDSON
PARTICIPANTS
1962-66*:**

Carolyn Adams
Charles Adams
Olga Adorno Klüver
Felix Aeppli
Ustad Ali Akbar Kahn
Seth Allen
Susie Allen
Toby Armour
Becky Arnold
Styra Avins
Joan Baker
Ansel Baldonado
Jerri Banks
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Pandit Chatur Lal
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Nancy Christofferson
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Hunt Cole
Richard Colton
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Philip Corner
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Gretel Cummings
_____ Danziger
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Cecily Dell
Nanette Deminges
George Dennison
Pamela Denver
_____ Dewey
Ken Dewey
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Harry Diakoff
Bill Dixon
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Johnny Dodd
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Pamela Dover
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Rachel Drexler
Jeff Duncan
Judith Dunn
Robert Dunn
Carol Ehrlick
June Ekman
Larrio Ekson
Maurice Elanc
Michael Elias
Frank Emerson
Ruth Emerson
Beverly Emmons
Ed Emshwiller
Joe Evans
Jose Evans
Abigail Ewert
Joan Fairlie
Viola Farber
Lulu Farnsworth

_____ Feinberg
Crystal Field
William Fields
June Finch
Jim Finney
Pamela Finney
George Flynn
Simone Forti
Maria Irene Fornes y
_____ Collado
Barbara Forst
Hollis Frampton
Laura de Freitas
Eugene Friedman
Robert Frink
Cynthia Full
Mark Gabor
Thomas Garland
Tom Garland
_____ Gatti
_____ Gebelein
Trudy Gertler
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Richard Goldberg
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Red Grooms
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Mark Guache
Lee Guilliat
Clinton Hamilton
Suzushi Hanayagi
Al Hansen
Fred Harris
Johnny Harris
Walter Harris
Mimi Hartshorn
Alex Hay
Deborah Hay
Wendy Heckler
E. Hendricks
Jon Hendricks

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John Hoppe
Jerry Howard
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_____ Jacob
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_____ Jenkins
Alex John
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Jill Johnston
Jee Jones
Joe Jones
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_____ Juskowitz
Michael Katz
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Isamu Kawai
Masato Kawasaki
Elizabeth Keen
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B. King
Kenneth King
Teresa King
Barbara Kleinberg
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Shielah Komer
Lawrence Kornfeld
Takehisa Kosugi
Judith Kummerle
Al Kurchin
Julie Kurnitz
Marcia Jean Kurtz

Ka Kwong Hui	_____ Morita	Charles Ross	Twyla Tharp
Toni Lacativa	Robert Morris	Arlene Rothlein	Jennifer Tipton
Tony Lacativa	Roger Morris	Charles Rotmil	Robin Toast
Stephen Lamb	Dorothy Moskowitz	Sheila Roy	Sheindi Tokayer
Eliza Lamb	Elizabeth Munro	Arnlene Rubawsky	Anne Tolbert
Arthur Laysen	Bill Myers	Sara Rudner	Roy E. Towl
_____ Lechay	Sandra Neels	Mark Saegers	Jack Van Osten
David Lee	_____ Neels	Mark Saffron	Kenneth van Sickle
Deborah Lee	Novella Nelson	Barbara Salthe	Johanna Vanderbeek
Ro Lee	Max Neuhaus	Stan Salthe	Stan Vanderbeek
_____ Lerner	Phoebe Neville	Marian Sarah	Steve Vasey
Ellen Levene	Peter Nevraumont	M. Sarakhova	Fred Vassi
Suzanne Levine	Phil Nibloch	Kenneth Sarch	David Vaughan
Ira Lieberman	Sabina Nordoff	Peter Saul	Jean Venable
Frank Lilly	Alex Ogle	_____ Scaubu	Charlotte Victoria
Billy Linich	Frank O'Hara	David Schiller	Joanna Vischer
William Linich	Edward Oleksak	Joseph Schlichter	Laura Vogel
Eugene Lion	Per Olof Ultvedt	Beverly Schmidt	Marlene Wallin
Victor Lipari	Olen Orr	Carolee Schneemann	James Waring
Carol Lipis	Michael Orrell	Evelyn Schneider	Glen Wayne
Katherine Litz	Sandy Padilla	Carol Scothorn	Theodore Weichers
Benjamin Lloyd	William Pardue	Larry Segal / Siegel	Zena Weiss
Barbara Lloyd / Dilley	Aileen Passloff	Valda Setterfield	David Whitney
_____ Loren	John Patton	Andrew Sherwood	Arthur Williams
Clare Lorenzi	Steve Paxton	Linda Sidon / Billy Name	M. Williams
Gretchen MacLane	Andrew Peck	_____ Siegel	Judith Wills
Jackson MacLow	Richard Peppitone	Nanette Sievert	James Wilson
Michael Malcé	Rudy Perez	Bob Sievert	Shirley Winston
Claire Mallardi	Lauren Persichetti	James Simpson	Margaret Wise
Castro March	Nina Petrucelli	David Skelnik	Philip Wofford
Carol Marcy	Katherine Pira	Jack Smith	Marilyn Wood
Norma Marder	John Porche	Sue Smith	John Worden
Allen Marlowe	Lanny Powers	Michael Smith	John Wright
Elizabeth Martin	Neville Powers	SNCC	Vincent Wright
_____ Martinsons	John Quinn	Gil Solomon	Margaret Wright
Paula Mason	Yvonne Rainer	Burt Spilk	Michae Wylie
Jack Matlaga	Ellen Rand	Malcolm Spooner	Jamil Zakkai
Ira Matteson	_____ Ransom	Sally Stackhouse	Daniel Zellman
Richard Maxfield	Robert Ranieri	Bob Stanford	Paul Zimet
Martha McCauley	Jerome Raphael	Charles Stanley	
John Herbert McDowell	Elna Rapp	Polly Stearns	
Taylor Mead	Chris Rauschenberg	Ruth Sternfeld	
Irene Meltzer	Robert Rauschenberg	Regina Stroff	
Annette Mendel	Gregory Reeve	Constance Sullivan	
Ellen Messing	Eric Regener	Carol Summers	
William Meyer	Albert Reid	Elaine Summers	
Christine Meyers	Diana Reil	K. Summers	
Otto Mjaanes	Lucy Reisman	Burton Supree	
Meredith Monk	Joshua Rifkin	Linda Talbot	
Thelonious Monk	Richard Robbins	Florence Tarlow	
Peter Moore	Dorthea Rockburn	Cecil Taylor	
Charlotte Moorman	Lou Rogers	James Tenney	

** Provisional list.
"_____" indicates
name not found at time
of publication.*

*This list, compiled with
the help of researcher
Adrienne Rooney, is an
attempt to gather names
of participants in Judson
Dance Theater and affiliated
concerts from 1962-1966.
We recognize that such an
endeavor invites omission—
please let us know if you
have additional names to
contribute.*



Yvonne Rainer. *Parts of Some Sextets* (1965). Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, March 6, 1965. Performers: Robert Morris, Lucinda Childs, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer, Deborah Hay, Tony Holder, Sally Gross, Robert Rauschenberg, Judith Dunn, and Joseph Schlichter. Photo by Peter Moore © Estate of Peter Moore/VAGA, NYC.

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JUDY HUSSIE-TAYLOR, executive director of Danspace Project is artistic director of PLATFORM series and editor of a new series of catalogues published by Danspace Project. She is a former Director of the Colorado Dance Festival (CDF), served as Artistic Director for Performance Programs at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art and was Deputy Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art/Denver. From 2000 - 2004 she taught in the Department of Art & Art History at the University of Colorado-Boulder and served as faculty and interim director of the Department's Visiting Artist Program. She is advisor at the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance at Wesleyan University and recently participated in the Making Time Symposium organized by Arts Research Center at UC Berkeley.

SANCTUARY

Judy Hussie-Taylor

For those originally involved in Judson Dance Theater, the 50th anniversary provokes a mix of vivid memories, diverse histories, and intense emotions. Reaching out to many of the original Judson artists I hoped to alleviate some of the weight of the past by asking what they were interested in right now. In some cases re-visiting past work was of interest; in many instances the artists were more excited about making a new work or representing past work in newly configured ways. When I asked Steve Paxton how he wanted to participate he said he just didn't know. "There's never been a 50th anniversary before." In the end he curated a Danspace *Conversation Without Walls*, a four-hour event comprised of Judson Memorial Church's social history presented by Joanna Steinberg and Judson Dance Theater's artistic history through Peter Moore's images presented by Barbara Moore. In a subsequent email he added "and maybe some dance. . ." The result was a rare afternoon with scholars and performances by Paxton's former students Stephen Petronio and Yves Candau.

In the months leading up to the above event Paxton recounted his memories of Robert Rauschenberg's performance *Spring Training*, not technically part of Judson Dance Theater but part of the New York Theater Rally curated by Paxton in 1965. Describing the event in a phone conversation he said "The shadows on the walls made the turtles look like dinosaurs." It was such a haunting image that I asked about re-performing it. He thought that the entire piece would be impossible to reconstruct but that it would be worth the effort to try to re-create the "turtle section." In an email he wrote:

The ordinary flashlights were taped to the turtle shells. During the turtle event, Bob walked around in the space on homemade wooden stilts . . . dressed in a flannel shirt with a plaid pattern, the normal sort, sleeves rolled up, in white under pants which just barely showed beneath the shirt. . . On the St. Mark's floor, I'd advised a rubber sole for the stilts, both for floor protection and of course for non-slippery treads. There is an implied danger to the turtles in this setup, only a threat... of course the turtles are clearly visible to the stilt walker due to the flashlights.

I imagined the turtles' waddling dance, their giant shadows, the flickering lights on the wall. I found two zoologists who located 20 turtles and artist Arturo Vidich agreed to help them safely tape flashlights on the turtles' shells. He also agreed to perform Rauschenberg's role on stilts. In the end, it was not to be. This is just one of many performances by seminal artists *not* included in PLATFORM 2012: *Judson Now*.

The Danspace PLATFORM series was launched in 2010 as a way to ask questions about artistic process and research in contemporary dance. How does dance right now relate to the 50th anniversary of Judson Dance Theater? Is its history over determined? How could we revisit it in relation to its multidisciplinary elements—visual art, music, poetry, film, and theater? How could we present so many artists and conflicting aesthetics as a collective movement? Can we do justice to their many divergent artists and their ideas? Probably not. But what a joyful obsession it has been to try. The artists, performances, and ideas *not* addressed this fall at Danspace point to the impossible proposition of an encyclopedic program.

Before Wendy Perron approach me about the 50th anniversary I was already talking to David Gordon and Deborah Hay about their participation in the Fall 2012 season. When Clarinda Mac Low approached me about her idea to celebrate the late Jackson Mac Low's 90th birthday something clicked. During that conversation I decided to present Clarinda's idea in the context of Judson Dance Theater because Jackson, as an active member of Fluxus, pointed to the complexities and idiosyncrasies of the Judson narrative. In a recent conversation I had with Simone Forti she said "we were talking to each other all the time about what we saw, what we were doing—that is the way we were disseminating ideas." This generative quality of the scene seemed critical to understanding the entire period. Jackson's book of dances/poems/scores *The Pronouns: Forty Dances for the Dancers* exemplifies the interdisciplinary exchanges of the time. Mac Low was inspired to write a poem, "Nuclei," after seeing Simone Forti (then Simone Morris) perform at Yoko Ono's loft in 1961. Eventually Mac Low wrote 40 such poems inspired by many choreographers of the time.

PLATFORM 2012: *Judson Now* doesn't provide a unified narrative because there isn't one. The Judson aesthetic is oft recounted as minimal, neutral, and democratic, yet some artists were neo-vaudevillian, explosive, and authoritative. Two artists representing opposite ends of the aesthetic spectrum are Lucinda Childs and Carolee Schneemann. Childs' solos exhibit physical exactitude and impeccable comic timing. Then, as now, ballet was essential. As Childs describes, "we took

ballet class in the morning and moved mattresses around in the afternoon,” a reference to Yvonne Rainer’s use of mattresses in *Parts of Some Sextets* (1965). Childs’ sensibility stands in direct opposition to Schneemann’s insistence on contact, materiality, and movement through space as a multi-dimensional “exploding collage.” (Schneemann’s *Score for Banana Hands* (1962) has been reproduced on the cover of this catalogue.)

In order to address the complexities and multidisciplinary nature of Judson I invited writer and performance studies scholar Jenn Joy to co-edit, really to co-curate, this catalogue. I am grateful for her brilliance and depth of commitment to this work. We organized the catalogue into three sections: conversations, essays, archives. We invited writers and scholars who’ve been recently attending Danspace events and performances and allowed them to focus on a particular artist or current area of interest. We wanted to forefront conversations between artists across decades, generations, and disciplines and in so doing reveal multiple aesthetic and political contexts, and resonances. We decided to feature images, archival, and other visual materials that have rarely appeared in print. We sought to underscore the impact of West Coast artists and experiments given the fact that so many artists either influencing or participating in Judson hailed from or spent significant time in the Western United States: Merce Cunningham (Washington), John Cage (California), Anna Halprin (California), Yvonne Rainer, (California), Trisha Brown (Washington), Simone Forti (California), and Steve Paxton (Arizona). The conversations also affirm influence of particular artists and movements on Judson artists: Artaud, Cage, Cunningham, Rauschenberg, Halprin, Forti, Kaprow, Waring, Black Mountain College, The Living Theater, The Beat Generation, The San Francisco Dancers’ Workshop, experimental film, Happenings, the Judson Gallery, and Fluxus.

While there are about a dozen artists who historians consistently associate with Judson between 1962 and 1966, there were a staggering 400 plus artists listed in Judson Dance Theater programs. I recently asked our curatorial fellow, Katrina De Wees, to post all the artists’ names (research was conducted by curatorial research assistant Adrienne Rooney) to the Judson Dance Theater Wikipedia page. Within hours someone removed all the names and wrote Katrina to say that the page was only meant for “significant artists” who participated in Judson Dance Theater. But Judson was inclusive, contradictory, and generative; the sheer number of participants is a testament to the Judson zeitgeist—a dazzling diversity of artists working in New York City in the early 1960s. Some may have only appeared once (Cecil Taylor and Thelonius Monk, for example) but they were indeed part of the larger Judson matrix. (This list is located on the front of this catalogue.)

I extend my deepest gratitude to all of them, especially those who generously gave us their time, insights, histories, opinions, corrections, and art. There are many artists who could not be here due to scheduling conflicts, limited time, health concerns, and lack of resources. There are more artists to recognize, conversations to be had, and influences to consider. We hope that these conversations will generate future contestations and considerations.

We have been reminded that the work would never have happened without Judson Memorial Church's Reverend Howard Moody who fiercely defended free speech and artistic experimentation as part of the Church's mandate. On September 8, 2012 as scholar Joanna Steinberg recounted Reverend Moody's heroic history as part of Paxton's program we learned that Moody was in intensive care. He passed away at age 91 on September 12, 2012.

Beginning in 1950 and continuing through most of the second half of the twentieth century, Reverend Howard Moody embarked on a radical program to use artists and their art to question conventional ideas of freedom, morality, and Christianity. Art historian Robert E. Haywood has written, "In the stifling aftermath of McCarthyism, Howard Moody represented a determined challenge to authority and an assertive voice of dissent."

Moody and his assistant pastor, Bernard (Bud) Scott, created an outreach campaign directed at the artists who lived nearby, making space in the church basement available for use as studios and exhibition sites. In March 1960, Bud Scott outlined the reasons for inviting artists into the church: they were part of the community the church served, and they shared humanity's search for the spiritual and mystical. "I know of nothing more pressing and more crucial to the future of the Protestant Church in America than this problem of restoring spiritual vitality of the arts to the life and witness of the Church," he wrote. Moody and Scott invited visual artists, musicians, poets and dancers to use the space. The dancers would eventually create the Judson Dance Theater.¹

What do these revolutionary artists, ministers, writers, and organizers offer us now? As Paxton says, "The work is never done. Sanctuary always needed."

Judy Hussie-Taylor
Executive Director
Curator, PLATFORM 2012: *Judson Now*

ENDNOTE

¹ *Happenings: New York 1958 - 1963*, Mildred Glimcher, The Monacelli Press LLC (New York, 2012), 40 - 41.