

(tentative title: Nightwalks)

~~An "open rehearsal"~~ of a new, as yet untitled piece, a work in progress, directed by Joseph Chaikin. Contributing writers: J.-C. van Itallie, Sam Shepard, Megan Terry. Performed at the Space for Innovative Development in April 1973.

The set is a grey-blue, nondescript screen confronting us, set out a little ways from the back-wall. A low bench with a variety of stuff on it, e.g. a frisbee that was never used in the show, against the back-wall protrudes slight on both sides behind it, but does not diminish the general effect of an empty²/clean space, only vaguely backed by the screen. A wheeled metal frame, with a short strap on each of the vertical poles has been laid down on the glistening blond floor as though to emphasise the absence of spatial definition. To the right of it on the floor there is a small collection of objects, an apple, a knife, a small story^m-lamp, a long, brown, narrow St. John's bread, of the kind used as rattle in the Islands. The collection seems to be awaiting an action there. A tall rolling-cart has been shoved up against the wall stage-right, to the rear of it there are some ~~xxxx~~ musical instruments on the floor, a bongo drum, two bells, a flute; a smaller rolling cart is aligned with the stage-left wall. Both carts have removable wooden covers. There is a small stack of stools by each side-wall. A good many of the over-head lights are on. The lighting does not delimit the performance-space from the audience space. The audience is packed into a tight structure of tiered narrow benches, going quite a ways up. It is a very young audience, mostly teen-agers, & mostly girls.

Shami Chaikin ~~xxxx~~ walks out from behind the screen, informally dressed in mild blues (faded blue is the color of the costumes),

to welcome us. She tells us that the piece is as yet unfinished & untitled, & that its duration is now about an hour & a half. She does not use the term "rehearsal", misapplied to the performance by the program-sheet. The lights go out.

When they go back on (except for one scene, the lighting is the same throughout the piece, neutral, without colors, fairly bright, leaving no shadows), we see a dark, handsome, haggard, poetic-looking individual (Zimet) with big blue eyes, wearing slightly light-ragged, faded/blue with colored patches at the chest, seated to the right of the metal frame on the floor, one leg folded under him, his expression pensively vacuous but vacuous, a little sad, but not worried (it is the same expression throughout the show). It is hard to say what if anything he is looking at. We will take him for a beautiful natural fool with his own kind of wisdom, he is congruent to the cliché. Stage-right, a small, alert female person (Tina Shepard) has appeared, in darker blue, bare feet apart, hands in the front pockets of her smock, leaning forward as though just alighted, from her feet & from her waist, head constantly turning, slightly shifting the angle of vision, as ~~covering the circle or almost~~ though to cover the circle, in easy jerks, eyes keenly observant, an expression of pleased, ever renewed curiosity on her face, her stance unafraid, though a stance of acutely expecting something new to turn up. After a moment we realise it's a bird, - mostly a sparrow. With quick to^a-skips (tiny invisible bells on ankle-bracelets under the tight pants-bottoms

tinkle, accentuating every skip), pecking head-movements, unblinking eyes ~~darting~~^{wheeling}, it crosses to investigate the cart stage-left, hops - bent over - into it, making it slide a little ways across the floor, peers out, straightens up, throwing off the wooden platform across the top, which clatters to the floor, - neither this nor the movement of the cart frightens the bird, hardly surprises it, - hops off, hops across - pitter-patter of the balls of her feet, tinkling of bells, - to examine the cart stage-right, looking into it, bent from the waist, hands energetically ~~shoved~~ stemmed into the pockets, jumps up & hangs from one hand, turning slowly in the air, looking about, makes its first sounds, nearly muted (from the back of the throat, mouth open), "uh uh uh", smoothly swivelling slips up on top of it horizontally, sits, legs crossed, - the cart making a moment after she has jumped on it, when she is already seated, a surprise effect, - stands small & tall, erect, feet apart. Shepard spreads her arms, raising them slowly (wide-meshed triangles of netting appear under them), undulates them in wave-motions, up on her toes, her head up proud, with small content openings & closings of her slightly pursed mouth, smoothly pulls herself up on one of the pipes under the ceiling, giving a faint "quack", hangs from it by her crossed ankles, looks at the fool, one arm dangling. He is gravely preoccupied by the peeling of an apple. She gets back down on the platform, on her belly, leans over it, looks inside, tumbles down onto the floor, ~~xx~~ feet smacking down, skips over to the fool, legs in a wide split, picks up an apple peeling from the floor with her mouth, skips back across, stands munching it open-mouthed, but very daintily, with quick chews, head pecking from time to time,

with hints of swallowing, continuously observing around her, goes "hah", stretches her neck, skips back to the fool, nudges him from behind with her body (thank you, or, I feel fine), jumps back into the smaller cart, back out, makes strutting arm movements as though feeling her wings, always observing. (This whole performance of Shepard's is on a very high level: mimically very rich, partly imitative of the movements of different kinds of birds, & even other animals, partly ~~providing~~ acrobatically providing visual metaphors of them, - precise & sustained, pretty, funny, graceful, poetic, but though in all its detail unsentimental, by its selections & omissions limited, ~~tainted~~, by a cuteness reflecting an idealised, sentimental conception of nature.) The fool has eaten half the apple, he puts the remainder & the peelings away in a belt-pouch, lights the storm-lamp & hangs it from the metal frame, which he has uprighted. She skips into it, stands impatiently waiting, he hooks the strap on one of the uprights into her belt, similarly straps himself onto the other upright, they stand side by side, facing us. With a quick ^{movement} ~~gesture~~, not looking at him, she puts out the hand nearest him, he reaches for it, holds it, - a touching gesture, this is an oft-repeated game they are playing, one she is very fond of, - &, Maddow, who has been there, up-stage, stage-right, by the wall, for a while, starting a slow soft beat on the bongo drums, they start a skipping dance, he first (he also has ankle-bracelets with bells, they seem of a slightly lower pitch than her's), alternately lifting his feet, heel first, then she, with similar movements, but just from the toes & more rapidly. The dance is essentially in place, but in the course of it, the frame & they move forward a distance, sideways, back again.

The others come on & clear the stage. (Despite its apparent awkwardness, the device of the couple, - friends & observers, - fixed into the movable frame works visually, & conveys both the essentially mobile creature's trust in the man, & their union, & the idea of a fixed view-point on a changing scene, especially one, the change in which is not worthwhile.)

A cart is wheeled on from behind the screen by one of the performers, on it two large, strong fellows, the one more big-boned, broad-chested, wide-shouldered, tall, with strong light-blue eyes in a ~~man~~ large, handsome red face (Raymond Barry), the other heavier, ~~ø~~ barrel-chested, thickset & big-armed, with a heavy, dull face (Tom Lillard), both leaning on the side-bar confronting us as the cart moves past, looking dull & irate, mean. As they move past us, looking down, in one direction, another cart is pushed past us, behind them, coming out from the other side of the screen, in the contrary direction, with a couple on it, a frail, weakish, slightly seedy, foppish-looking older fellow (Ralph Lee) who's with a housewifely, softly dumpy younger woman (Ellen Maddow)/. The couple is conversing (under their voices) intimately, but with some affectation of nicety, some restraint, acting out the unconsummated intimacy of conventional provincial or lower-class courting, with steady little smiles, looking out rather than quite at one another. We cannot make out ^{wh} ~~what~~ they are saying, but they are doing nicely, in the semblance of having a good time in one another's company. Before the first cart disappears, the large, grossly handsome fellow gets off it, disappears, the duller guy, arrested in place for a moment, goes "aaaarrrrrrr" loudly, a growl, distinguished by

only by its belligerence, if not its exasperation, from a groan. Both carts disappear. The ordinary human element has been introduced, distinguished, on the male or friendship side, by its grossness & dullness, on the female or courtship side, by its insincerity & pettiness, from the simple grace & poesy of natural creatures, human or not, demonstrated in the preceding scene. Also, beauty has been relieved by humor (this scene is greeted with guffaws, while the last one had been met with some appreciative laughs. The whole show, incidentally, is very successful with the audience as comedy, there is almost continuous & much laughter).

The bird & the fool, who have been watching, he only vaguely, she intently (but with observing looks, devoid of empathy or recognition), again begin their dance, the sounds of their feet & of the bells quicker now (Barry in the back occasionally hitting the drum), the frame around them with them moving to stage-right (at a right angle to us now), from where they observe:

the large cart being wheeled on, with all the performers on it, some half off, hanging on, all wearing leather helmets like those of old-time pilots or car-racers, & goggles, crowded around Lillard, seated in front on a stool, writing-board in hand, taking dictation from them, as they excitedly, in indignant voices, correcting one another, babble out ~~xxxxx~~ the counts of an indictment of an unnamed & unnameable someone, "you", the "you", - also "he", ^{that} the indictment is addressed to, charging this despicable

party with all that is wrong with them & all that they never had, trying him, & condemning him to never having been, & to be forgotten, not even remembered by an ~~indifferent~~ judgment, - the indictment is torn up, as the cart slowly ^{retreats} ~~retires~~ back behind the screen, on the same side it had come in on, the ~~sheet~~ crumpled sheet fluttering to the ground.

The fool & his friend are again in their frame in front of the screen, watching Barry, standing & declaiming (in a hollow, slightly sad, portentous voice) & Chaikin, seated next to him on a stool, rising to deliver each of her statements (made in a light, reporting tone) pass on a cart, both talking about themselves, more or less alternately, Barry telling us, "Now I am in the process of standing up...Now I am being flamboyant...Now I am eating...", Chaikin, "Now I am standing up...Now I am sitting down...Now I am speaking these words". They both repeat themselves. Out. - A sad little scene, true to life.

The fool frees himself & the bird, comes forward, she skips all around to the sound of her tiny bells, they stand side by side out front, holding hands, he starts talking-singing, while they both begin their slow dance movements in place (the bongo drum & a fife accompanying him): "Hold my hand, I'll show you people & pieces of people, & work, & pieces of work, & what do you see with your different eyes?", - three times, more & more excitedly, finally wildly. He releases her hand & dances by himself, lifting his feet sideways, knees close ~~to~~, from time to time lightly slapping his chest with one or the other open hand, an unemphatic,

not unjoyous, but definitely not exuberant dance. She sort of imitates his movements fragmentarily, hands pushed into her front-pockets. He arranges the two of them back into their frame, repeating snatches of the ~~xxx~~ song & other things in various distorted voices. It gradually dies down, they are doing their steps more & more slowly.

The two buddies of the second scene reappear, again standing grimly side by side, leaning on the side-bar of the moving cart, but something funny comes into the more active-seeming one's mind, & his big hard face slowly grows humorous, it is worth telling, & he does, in a gravelly voice, something he has seen or an anecdote, he tells it emphatically, making the point, but you can't make out the words, his slow-witted buddy accomodatingly anticipating the joke, his mouth distorting into an appreciative grin at what is to come as he recognises his pal's comic intent: then they both break out in heavy rumbling laughter: & then they both wax serious again, even grimly ferocious, or at any rate dumbly despondent, Barry more quickly, Lillard following suite (Lillard's weighed-down mien has a grand quality of cosmic despair). This repeats itself three or so times over as they slide past. As they circle from left to right, another cart crosses from right to left, on it the pudgy sweetheart of before (Maddow), her slightly absent-minded face stiffly creased into an appreciative cute smile expressive of enjoyment, while she is listening to her wildly chattering older woman-companion (girl friend) (Schmidman) tell of something hysterically funny ^{that happened to her} (again you cannot quite make out the words, but it seems at one point to have to do with a very large cock in her ~~mouth~~).

mouth). They both break out into paroxysms of screams & giggles. Both carts (moving continuously) out.

Barry back on, very erect in the front of his cart (moved to downstage, standing there), gives a solemn, sad, perhaps moving recitation, finally tragic, about night: he lives in a house on the sea shore from where he sees a ship out at sea on which he is also, & under it there is a blind snake-fish sucking at the ocean-bottom, ~~& he is inside that fish as well...~~ "I sink, I sink, I don't want to die in my sleep, the house cuts me off from the boat, the boat cuts me off from the fish. I am inside that fish." Behind him, the long, thin, dark & ~~xx~~ sallow Schmidman slowly crosses while he tells his dream, staring out of her dark eyes, making low mutterings, moaning, - an illustrative accompaniment. Both out.

Cart on with Dillard, slumped down next to Chaikin, both seated, he is morose, troubled, even deeply troubled, not looking at her or at anything, as in a mutter, heard as though through a door or in half-sleep in a railroad carriage, they discuss, or he confers with her on, his troubles, or something related to them, but without his being consoled or even comforted, - not that she tries, she seems to be dealing with the practical aspects of his situation only. Once she gives a short sharp laugh, but there is clearly nothing to laugh about, ~~xxx~~ even for her. Off.

For some reason, the bird & the fool seem strongly agitated. The fool unstraps them both, they stand in the frame, the high cart is wheeled up, covered, they get on top of it: while at the same time a long

~~throatle talk~~

threstle-table is put together down-stage in front of their
 observation-platform, stools are put around,^{2*} facedown, celastic
 bibs on top of it. The bird & the fool, - the bird is puzzled, -
 watch four of the party entering together stage-~~right~~ left,
 the ⁸engaged couple ~~mf~~ (Lee, Maddow) of the second scene, now, I
 would say, married, used to one another, he more dour, she more
 assured, & the two pals from that same & the 6th scene⁵, now
 decidedly convivial, in a party-mood, but very proper, Barry
 almost, in a slyly timid way, outgoing, Dillard, the dumb ox,
 more just trying to be passively agreeable, &, stage-right,
 the hysterical chatter-box of the 6th scene (Schmidman),
 apparently the gracious (if slightly overwrought) hostess,
 conversing with Chaikin, now playing her younger protégé, timid, sen-
 sitive, - overly sensitive. While Schmidman is gushing &
 Chaikin is shyly responsive, the two men on the right are (if I
 remember correctly) civilly ^{coming up with} ~~debiting~~ some muscle-bound humor (Dillard
 in this scene is in fact muscle-bound, his arms hanging heavily
 away from his body) to the nice couple they are doing their
 pre-dinner chatting with. Having come through this ordeal,
 everybody ⁰approaches the table - characteristic combination of
 heavy tread & shuffle, - ~~x~~ & the hostess seats them, the
 marrieds next to her, the two men at the other end of the
 table, but with young Chaikin, with some awkward joking, - she
 affects a crush on the imperceptive Dillard, keeps turning big
 round, helplessly adoring eyes up at him, - seated between them.^m
 They ¹don the bibs which turn out to have festive ^{clothing} painted on them
 in pastel-c@lors, pray. Strong-man Dillard at the end of the
 table is asked to carve (there is nothing on the table), which

he proceeds to do in a workmanlike fashion, not forgetting to inquire as to everyone's preferences. The indications are accumulating that it is a Thanksgiving Dinner. While he carves, everyone keeps (& keeps) passing. Barry gives the first indications that he is a powerful glutton, - some slight excess of specificity in his expression of preference for dark meat & in the length of time he holds out his plate, - but as we soon notice, they are all (except perhaps in-love little Chaikin) big eaters, - very big eaters, serious eaters. (At some point during the banquet, the fool & the bird, their appetites apparently stimulated, share & eat the remainder of their apple.) The hostess, a lady-like eater, encourages ^{the party} ~~them~~ to eat. Maddow eats with both her little fingers out, meticulously, but efficiently, maintaining a shading of self-effacement relative to her husband in their social intercourse with the hostess. Barry seems a little cramped between the two women, he passes the salt, salts his food delicately, has ~~a~~ some little trouble with the cutlery, cutting the meat on his plate, doesn't eat greedily, but tremendously steadily. There is a working-class exchange, all contempt, vehemence & agreement, from one end of the table to the other, between the married guy & the steady dumbbell Dillard, - Barry chiming in with one of the very few intelligible phrases of the whole party, "five of them to do the work of one white man", which tells us what they are talking about, then proceeds to tell an apparently slightly off-color story about something he did at the plant, involving one of Them, - he put his hand where she would sit down on it, - which is variously appreciated by the others, - whereupon the married couple, the ones really concerned with this, start vehemently talking.

talking, at the same time, he in a steady growl, she in a pressed, passion-laden voice, - the others not distracted from their eating, - vicious diatribes, altogether in half-understandable dirty words (motherfucking, sucking, ~~damming~~,...), apparently on the subject of Their immorality. (Much laughter & clapping from the young hippy audience.) Barry politely (not failing to help himself, in a judicious manner) helps the demure Chaiking (who ignores him, he is too crude) to mashed potatoes, heaping them on her plate. Chaiking suddenly goes into an offended rage, - something Barry did or said? - terribly indignant, screaming, getting up (overturning her chair as she rises), we can make out "how dare you", "I am a lady", - close to tears, walks away from the table. They all sit silent, embarrassed, trying not to notice, to be nice about it, understanding (Barry's slow facial mimicry here is a masterpiece of stylised naturalism), - Barry sends off his friend Dillard, who presumably has an in with her, to pacify her, - he circles her, a little helpless^{ly}, heavy arms gesturing weakly in a slight awkward gesture, not getting too close, his arse out, bent forward from the waist ~~a little~~, supplicating the little ^{woman} lady, a grand comic portrait, but she explodes again, blasting the poor guy off her, he scurries - legs stiff- back to his seat at the table. Maddow gets up to see if she can do better, puts her arm around her, holds her hand, keeps on almost agreeing ~~with her~~ (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) with ~~the~~ Chaikin's steady low-voiced indignation, gradually leads her back to her seat (Chaikin's ~~xxx~~ vocal mimicry at times gets away from her into experimental abstractions). Except for Chaikin, they are all eating again. Barry turns to talk to her, very - very - sweetly, in fluted

tones, she ignores what he says, he suddenly ends up tough.

The hostess, trying to restore the party atmosphere, spies an occasion for going into her hysterical ^{outburst of laughter} ~~braying~~, but has misjudged, it is not yet possible, she stops suddenly, in dismay & confusion, when she sees the little lady is still mad. She goes into a long speech (in a not altogether succesful Cinesy voice), about meat & meat-eating (the only words you can make out), in commendation of ~~th~~ them, gets up & brings a "surprise", - pie. They keep stuffing themselves, though it is getting to be hard going. - The fool & the bird get off the platform, back into their frame. ~~∅~~ The feasters all get up, - with considerable difficulty, - & clamber onto the cart, now minus the platform on top, Barry inobtrusively patting Chaiking on the arse as he helps ~~her~~ ^{brings out} get on (which she feigns not to notice) ~~∅~~. Barry ~~has gotten~~ a little violin, on which he, ^{at} ~~in~~ the center of the little party, proceeds to produce the semblance of a tune, stopping to tune a string, ~~doing~~ in preparation for "doing a little pizzicato", entertaining them (they are all conversing amiably), as they move out. The fool & the bird are softly dancing, he is rattling his rattle, they are alone, the bongo comes in, they dance faster & faster, then slow down.

Now the fourth scene is repeated, but as a sleep scene, - Barrying goes "Now I am in the process of sleeping...Now I am in the process of talking in sleep...".

The bird & the fool, standing up, are also nodding off, though she keeps up her watchfulness.

The two carts are wheeled in together, as one, everybody, except for the husband-figure (Lee), who wheels them, on the^m in various recumbent positions, asleep, sounding a continuous very low, untracable buzz. Lee proceeds to lift some of them off the carts, depositing them on the floor (tearing his shirt each time he does this), where, in different, sometimes odd positions, after a while some of them standing up, they continue to sleep. Others get off by themselves, as though in their sleep. - The fool also falls asleep, standing behind the bird, his arms & one leg around her, leaning on her, ~~this~~ head on her shoulder. - Chaikin, lying down, one arm up in the air, from time to time calls out something in her sleep, Lee, now also asleep, standing up, his shirt in tatters, is talking in a rapid whimper/. Dillard & Schmidman are sleeping standing up in line with him. The three of them perform a slow dance in place, lifting their left feet, moving their left leg in the air. The bird is now ambulating among them, inspecting them, the fool dozing by one of the poles of the frame. Schmidman slowly propels the sleeping Dillard, herself asleep, to stage-right, near Chaikin. Nightmare screams from Dillard. Barry~~m~~, standing stage-left, bent ~~forwar~~ over, arms dangling, head hanging, goes into a hoarse staccato, "Gotttagottagotta getupgetupgetupget toworkgettowork, gotta-gettowork,..." each sequence straightening him up a little more, till, erect, he almost-wakes with a start & an amazed "hu^{nh?}", nodding off again, slumping forward, repeating. After quite a while of this agony, the sleeping Maddow gets him up on a cart & wheels him over to the others stage-right. The bird is skipping about, skips up on the platform of the high cart. They are now all moaning, talking rapidly in their sleep etc., only Chaikin is lying down,

but now she joins Barry on the cart, where they alternately scream out terrified (unintelligible) protests. Dillard does his nightmare scream again, Barry his "gottatgottagetto work...", Schmidman & Zimet have left, the bird is watching the eery scene. The half-asleep Maddow wheels Barry around very slowly, he is keeping up his ullulations, "gottagetto...", while Chaikin & Dillard, side by side, are insensibly slipping off, backward, ^{as though into deep slumber.} Maddow & Barry out. The fool has disappeared also. Only the bird is left.

She starts running around ~~excitedly~~ excitedly, looking for her ~~friend~~ friend, rushes behind the screen, Ø - after a moment he rushes onto the stage from behind the other ^{end} ~~end~~ of the screen looking for her. They search one another (pitterpatter of feet, tinkling of bells as they run), they keep missing one another. She is out front again, alone. She gets in her place in the gate, waits for him, - quick, impatient foot tapping, - puts her hand out as though the ritual could compel his appearance, moves to his side of the frame, tries it from there, gives up, rushes out, he rushes in, - renewed search, - she sees him, ~~xxxxxxx~~ runs after him & catches up with him out front. They are together, facing, astonishedly looking at one another as though they had never seen one another before, heads forward. She bends down from the waist, gently pecks at or licks his wrist, he ~~xxx~~ opens & looks into her mouth as though to see if she had found some food, - not understanding the gesture of affection, - they join hands, now side by side, let go, he starts his solo dance, on his toes, lightly slapping his chest from time to time, in rhythm. He gets behind her, embraces her with arms & one leg, their sleeping ritual, she makes a near-

cooing sound. They separate, dance (fife, bongo), a jumping, skipping dance, as though to celebrate the reunion, the bird getting more & more excited. He goes into the gate, she jumps on his chest, arms around his neck, legs around his waist, head on his shoulder, he^h holds ^her up, & starts a slow stately speaking-song while holding her, taking small steps in place (she coos a little, trying to imitate the melody), "In beauty I walk...with beauty above \forall & about me I walk...with beauty before me I walk..." He stops singing, she stops cooing, the fife & bongo stop, he is still holding her, his feet moving a little.

Chaikin on, on a cart, stops out front, without accompaniment assertively half sings, half speaks the Dylan ballad, "My parents raised me tenderly, I was the only ~~xxx~~ one...I'm a long time coming & I'll be a long time gone". Off.

with mock loveliness

Barry \forall wheeled in, in a dirty mechanic's over-alls,/sings a song "I've had so many girls", didn't have any trouble leaving them, but now he is caught, - in love. Chaikin comes on with a torchy "I am in the mood for love", followed by Maddow with another hit, followed by Lee, giving us a sentimental ditty, followed by Dillard, in a grand pose, chest out, negligently leaning against the rear-side side-bar of his cart, giving a rendition of a heroic drinking song. Schmidman wheels in, holding a big ^splac^tti^s rose, in a gown of pink, white & red veils, singing "My S^sweet Embracable You", head back, body arched, with much

feeling, gets off the cart, - "come to the garden of love while the dew is still on the roses". While she continues singing (with, so far as possible, all the appropriate gestures of a rending heart, longing etc.), not paying any attention to him, Barry is wheeled out, stuffed belly, filthy mechanic's over-alls, with a dapper, but much too small white jacket over them, buttoned by one popping button, flask in one pocket, plastic flute in ~~another~~ the other, torn pants showing his behind, top hat over a small wig of thick, dirty-blond hair (^{they} ~~hat & wig~~ keep slipping off together), his face dirty, standing in relaxed solitary majesty on his cart, evidently in a merry, mischievous mood, fingers of one hand in a gesture of ease (where is the action? what have we here?) drumming on the side-bar at the sight of the lovely apparition, with some slight stiffness (due to his girth, his inebriation or some past incapacitation) stands off his vehicle, approaches her (occasionally during the following emitting W.C. Fieldsian words of gentlemanly appreciation or of fumbling annoyance), kisses her hand, which happens to be extended, stuffs it into his crotch, holding ~~there~~ it there firmly, starts humping her, gets on his knees behind her, holding her, one of his hands ~~in evidence~~ on her crotch under her dress, masturbating her, moves around on his knees to in front of her, lifts her dress, tries to get his head, top hat & all, in under it, - she is not resisting, she is singing, but he has trouble with his hat, - gets up, finds the solution, turns her upside down, she is still romancing, holds her upside down, goes down on her (while genteely draping her dress around her legs so she won't expose herself indecently). The bird has been hopping around excitedly, all the eroticism getting to it, peeks at his barse arse, sort of

tries to hump him from behind, hop-crawls through his spread legs & through his victim's or beloved's downward though still gesturing arms, confusing him, "what is this?" He gets on a cart with his lovely prey ("gotcha now"), they are wheeled off.

Barry strides back in, still in his clown's outfit, "Now I am being flamboyant!" (jumps about, showing off, lifting his hat), "Now I am blowing my whistle!" (blows it, tiny sound), "Now I am showing you my behind!" (does so, through his torn pants). - Chaikin & Lee walk on, face to face, in one pair of red & white plastic baby pa/nties, talking rapidly. - Schmidman on, in a pose on somebody's shoulders. - All off.

Everybody suddenly back on in two carts from opposite sides, wheeling across rapidly, talking excitedly. Off.

The fool, grave as always, from the bench stage-left is watching the bird imitating their quick high talk, then doing other imitations, - falling asleep while standing up, the dirty talk of the nigger-hating married couple (in crow croaks), Barry's "Gottagottagottagetup, hunh?" (her arms swinging in front of her like his). She lifts her wings (wave-motion of her arms): she's having a good time. She gets into the gate by herself, catching both straps, stands, arms stretched wide. The lights are lowered, during the following oscillate between two shades of dimness. Barry is wheeled in, very upright, as he steps off the cart raises & spreads his arms, undulates them (flapping of wings), does pecking bird-motions, stands one foot up, toes pointing down, as though about to scratch, coos. He is another

bird. A bell, then another one, lower, is struck in the rear, glassy sounds, night sounds, - this is repeated ^{during} ~~being~~ the following. The little bird/ (Shepard) has come out into the center of the playing-area, the two birds confront one another, he (Barry) is twitching his left foot raised backward, he seems to be courting her, their beaks are very close as they approach & lean forward from their waists, both cooing a little. The fool on the bench has lit the storm-lamp, is holding it up, it sheds a little aura of light (the moon). Suddenly the big bird makes a loud explosive noise, the little bird hops off a little ways, not far, they approach again, in silence except for occasional coos, another raucous sound, ... they are both getting more excited, she scurries short distances, he does little rushes, there are loud screams from them. Suddenly she jumps on his back, he screams & screams, falls, crawls into a dark corner stage-right down-stage with her on his back, more screams, moans, you can't see what is going on, but he stays there, rolled up, as she gets up & struts away a but not too far, then in a sudden flurry (the fool has approached holding up ~~the~~ lantern) attacks him again, pecking him, - he is screaming, - she gets off him again, he is moaning. The cart comes in, he crawls on it, on his knees, moving his head painfully from side to side, moaning, she attacks him one more time as he is taken off on the cart. - She lets the fool attach her to the frame, she is simmering down, her rough throat noises are gradually becoming less frequent. Having attached himself to his side of the frame, & having taken her hand, extended toward him as usual, he starts their dance, accompaniment to a long, incoherent recitation of his, alternating between wild folly & calm serenity, all in all

perhaps also a kind of declaration of love to her/: "Hold on to my hand. All through the night the light was changing...", - the plaint ends with an evocation of death at the edge of the world. The bird seconds him ~~a little~~ with small sounds, - the song is done, they continue dancing a little, advancing & retreating once with the frame to the sound of their ankle-bells. Only now do the lights turn up again.

A cart passes w/ Maddow, Schmidman & Lee talking together in low tones, apparently enjoying nature. Off. Chaikin crosses seated on a cart, vigorously slapping & rattling a tambourine, - hard, loudly, aggressively. Off. A cart with all of them, looking sad, trobbled, pensive, - no sound, - crosses. Off. - Barry crosses alone on a cart, speaking gravely, quietly, "There was herself. There was himself. And between us...", with a slow cross-slide of a hand on either side for each of them, & a forward flurry in the middle for their separation. Off while he repeats this for the third or fourth time.

Bongos. A quiet, slow dance by the bird & the fool, looking at us, in place. The storm-lamp is lit, hanging on the frame. Their bells tinkle faintly. Lights out.

~~XXXX~~ Ovations from the audience.

The play contrasts the delicate simplicity (naturalness) of two friends or lovers at & across the limits of humanity to the grotesque grossness & the misery of artifact humanity (poor, lonely & desperate within, vicious or hypocrites with one another). An idealisation (troubled only by the bird's cruel nightmare combat) confronts a caricature, both of personal relations: love &/or friendship: as test & realisation of inner substance & purity. The dichotomy between the inner man & the relating man (& woman), the turning of which into a discontinuity & an incongruence is presented as defining - together with a like exasperation of a parallel dichotomy between inner sadness & convivial serenity into private dejection & artificial social gaiety, - our misery (or theirs), with its parallel provides not only the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ themes of the scenes, but the subject & view of sleep, private state & moment of truth, (the imperfect integration of which into the play at ~~xxx~~ its present stage of development may be a major reason why the company regards the play as unfinished):

- 1 The simple fellow & his curious friend. Their friendship.
- 2 Preposterous, repulsive humanity, dumbly irate, affectedly gay. Friendship as desperation shared; love as artifice.
- 3 Projection of bitterness in vindictiveness. The disregard of the other.
- 4 Petty self-awareness.
- 5 The observers.
- 6 Inter~~l~~course as sick humor.
- 7 The abyss of dreaming, the self is elsewhere.
- 8 No aid in trouble: dejection unconsolated.

9 Thanksgiving Dinner, or The Meat Eaters: care for the belly & hatred of one's fellow men.

10 The regurgitation of petty self-awareness in sleep.

11 Troubled sleep.

12 The fool & his friend: separation & re-union. (Sleep does not separate true lovers?).

13 Assertiveness in loneliness (Bob Dylan).

14 Romantic love.

15 The social scene as circus.

16 ~~Mumble~~ The social scene as hubbub.

17 The fool's friend at night: her bravery & cruelty.

18 Loneliness & false intercourse.

19 The simple fellow & his observant friend looking at us.

By making the natural friends the observers of ~~that~~ humanity - this is their role in the show, formally underlined by placing them in a stable frame, a stand- & viewpoint, & by flashing humanity onto the stage in a series of exhibits, - ~~it~~ the play invites us to take a view such as theirs might be of ourselves or the general condition. The integral style of this theatre excluding a gesture of representation, this gesture in this play has been incorporated as (concrete, hence complex) element of the content. We are invited not only to reject a mode of existence, but to endorse an ideal (which we have to divine from a phantasy image), & not only to endorse it, but to make it our stand-point, from which to observe. Not inconceivably, the wise fool & the mobile bird are to stand for the guiding spirits of this theatre, Mr. & Mrs. Chaikin; embodying observation, contemplation & monstration, & moving gracefully, they

stand for the Artist, who, as observer & lover of beauty, is put into ideal contrast to a worried & busy humanity, the preposterousness & ugliness of which the Open Theatre exposes by a satire - specifically - on the working classes. The social satire of the play is unequivocal on this point: working class conduct & mentality aremplify what's wrong with humanity. The Artist's way to be is the right way to be. Compassion & compassionate action are not part of this right way to be. Folly & melancholy do not abrogate its rightness. The sublimity of the artist vs. the degradation of the hard-hats. This is reactionary and trite.

Though ^{this} basic banality of vision & ungenerous sentiment vitiate the poetic splendor of the actors' images, it is a successfully poetic play. The stage-craft is simple & superb, both (over-looking some messy spots) the ordination of the whole, - colors, rhythms, durations, contrasts, - & the acting (Schmidman may as yet be a little off, both in her speech & because ~~xxx~~ her satire is occasionally ~~not/not at all~~ inspecific, her mimicry occasionally monotonous; Barry reveals himself to be a superb clown & fully as good a performer as Lillard, though Lillard to my mind has an additional grandiose quality, namely a tragic quality; Shepard is beautiful, though her precision & grace may be faintly vitiated by a cuteness of approach (selection), though not of performance; Chaikin is not as good a comedian as the others, but her sloppiness buys her moments of inspired liveliness).

The two salient formal undertakings of this production are its
~~use of carts & th~~

use of carts & the substitution - except for occasional words & phrases, & certain speeches & the songs, - of non-verbal sounds & mimetic distortions of speech for intelligible language.

The former device creates a theatrical species of mobility & lends an emblematic quality to the passing actions, momentarily put on exhibition. Visions come on, grotesques are taken off, the performers are presented & rise into performance. The device ~~keeps intact~~ maintains the self-containment of the theatrical event ~~in its place intact~~: where entrances & exits performed on foot & in character tend to violate it by their suggestion that the theatre-world extends ^{beyond} what is created on the stage, for us, that it is more or other than phenomenon & made. (Cunningham achieves something similar to what this device achieves when he has his dancers enter or leave the stage in ordinary (informal) motion.) The proto-verbal vocal acting in this play is not so much the substitution of a theatrical, created language for ordinary language, but rather makes the points that rational persuasion & the conveyance of information are secondary of not negligible functions of language, its primary functions being the expression of & impact on emotion, appetite, fear, & that pre-verbal utterance is adequate to these functions, relating, if of the proper sort, to the emotions, appetites & to fear directly. But the effect of this device is a heightened theatricality, the same effect achieved by the poetic language (metre, rhyme, metaphor) of the classics: though the means is opposite.

Joe Chaikin's work is finally paying off. It has proved one way of restoring to theatre its traditional humbly arrogant sovereignty, temporarily lost in the 19th century.