

Dec. 3, 1979

Memo to Meg, Mandy, Michael, and Tony

from Wendy

We should all meet with our ideas before we scatter for NRT, but until then, here are a few possibilities for interview questions. I offer them not to force my ideas on you, but to start discussion between us, to try to find out what we are trying to find out. Ideally, every interview will be different: the information gathered will depend on the interviewee, the interviewer, the relation between them, the feeling in the room, etc. Use the following questions as a guideline to form your own guidelines:

What do you remember about the atmosphere that you made pieces in ^{in the early 60's} ~~at~~ that time? Where did you do your work? What was that place like? What were the people around you like? In what way was the Judson Dance Theatre, or Judson, or downtown performers/artists a cooperative?

What were the performances like? The audience? The relation between audience and performers?

Was the work affected by the political tone of the early 60's? Can you describe that tone? Were you active in politics at the time?

Who and what were the major influences on you? on the Judson group in general? Do any of these continue to be major influences? What are your (other) influences now?

Did your activity at Judson and with the other artists there help in eventually defining what your own work has become? How?

Do you still feel ^{an artistic aesthetic} ~~an artistic aesthetic~~ connection with any of the people you worked with?

How has the role of your art work in your life changed since then?

Were performances at Judson were part of an ~~xxx~~ ongoing stream of activity. What other ~~xxxxxx~~ performances ~~were~~ during that time were important to you?

Do you see anything going on now that is comparable to what happened at Judson--for experimentalism, adventurousness, good ideas? If not, why not? Have things gotten too diffuse? Does it seem that people have separated themselves out of the "stream"? Doesn't it seem that the contagiousness, the excitement or something, is lacking now?

(Of course, you don't have to be as inarticulate as I'm being here.)

Remember: Interviewing is improvisation. Be ready to drop a question you had planned as irrelevant and to follow up on something interesting that you hadn't foreseen. Be aware of how you affect the person and vice versa. ~~Interxxxxxxx~~ Be aware of how you enter into it, the questions you choose to start with, and how trust develops between you. Interviewing is a complicated art, even if you feel confident and have an instant rapport. There will always be things that later you realize you didn't get enough of. Maybe try it out on a (preferably eccentric) friend first. Also, obviously, know as much as possible about the person before you go--educate yourself from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd hand sources.