

Institute_Institut

3 MAINSTREET MOMMIES (*need not all be women, they are guardian/gatekeeper figures, in neat and tidy outfits which match*)

3 GEORGES (*1 high voice [tenor/baritone], 2 medium voice [baritone], 3 low voice [low baritone/bass]*)

SALLY

3-6 ANIMALS (singers, dancers)

AUDIENCE

1.) Sense/Non-Sense and Institutions

*A public space/stadium/assembly hall/parade grounds. A podium, all open, metallic fringe in blue, white, and orange edges a bandstand, folding chairs are set up all around $\frac{3}{4}$ of the perimeter of the grounds. **The chairs are numbered.***

The audience is admitted to the space. MAINSTREET MOMMY low humming chorus, pre-recorded (institutions are the long arms of the sensible, reaching out to seize the day...)

Also in the space when the audience enters are four tables, outfitted with many wedding photos, a collection of butterflies/insects (paper but in a glass case), and a dirty white landline phone. Thirdly, there is a simple metal shop cabinet or road box, etc.

SL, someone naked except for an apron and rubber boots makes American cheese grilled cheese sandwiches. He/She is wearing headphones and every so often repeats what she/he hears.

Audience members are passed through the space in a line.

They are asked to answer a questionnaire delivered by one of the MAINSTREET MOMMIES measuring institutional affects and effects

1 chair for interviews (photo taken with photo booth at the end)

MAINSTREET MOMMY 1:

Hello, I'm going to ask you a series of questions. You may answer yes, no, or pass on the question. I must warn you that passing on questions will give you a zero score for that question.

(NO= 1st number, YES = 2nd number)

Have you gone through elementary schooling? 0, 2

Have you gone through middle and/or high school? 0, 2

Have you been in college or university? 0, 2

Have you been in an advanced degree program? 0, 2

Did your mother breast-feed you? 0, 1

Have you ever been in foster care? 0, 2

Have you ever been hospitalized? 0, 1

Have you taken medication for longer than a year at any point in your life? 0, 1

Are you currently taking any medication? 0, 1

Do you practice alternative medicine and/or follow an exercise or physical health regime? 0, 1

Do you have any form of insurance? 0, 1

Are you in debt? 0, 1

Do you have any credit cards, a checking or savings account? 0, 1

Have you ever been arrested? 0, 1

Have you ever been in court? 0, 2

Have you ever been imprisoned? 0, 2

Have you ever served in the military? 0, 2

Do you have any children? 0, 1

Are you married? 0, 2

Are you 'straight'? 1, 2

Do you identify as a member of an organized religion? 0, 2

Have you ever played or followed an organized sport? 0, 1

Do you vote in local and state elections? 0, 2

Do you vote in federal elections? 0, 2

Do you identify as a Republican/Democrat? 0, 2

Do you identify as a member of another political party that has more than 100,000 members? 0, 2

Have you voted on or signed any petitions, lobbies, props, or other motions in the last year? 0, 2

Are you currently employed by another entity full time? 0, 2

Are you currently employed by another entity part-time? 0, 1

WORK SUB-SECTION: If employed:

Do you currently work as a part of the legal system, the U.S. federal government or any of its other agencies and systems, including the educational system, parks and recreation, primarily government-funded endowments, councils, and foundations for the arts, state or local governments, or as part of U.S. monetary systems including any non-co-op banks or money-lending agencies? 0, 2

If no, do you work for a corporation? 0, 2

If no, are you an agricultural worker, service industry or retail employee? 0, 2

If no, do you work for a not-for-profit without funding from the government? 0, -4

Are you a free-lancer or self employed? 0, -2

Are you a member of a union? 0, 2

Have you ever hit anyone in the face? 0, 4

Are you afraid of fire? 0, 5

Are you a woman, a person of color, insane, an elderly person, a child, or an animal? 0, -10

Another MIDWESTERN MOMMY 4 roughly tallies the score and gives the audience member a number corresponding to seats. Highest numbers center, lower numbers to the stage right, lowest numbers to stage left.

MAINSTREET MOMMIES in tassels and puffy hair, may also give compliments and insults. During the interviews, MOMMIES and ANIMALS sing/speak. Each actor slips between a very presentational, "false" attitude when speaking directly to the audience members in the PUBLIC lines, and a panicky, vulnerable, "realistic" character for the PRIVATE lines. (right and below):

ANIMALS, PUBLIC (various during the questionnaire portion to those waiting in line)

Improvisational conversation, beginning with hellos and how are yous and ending with:

What is an ideal institution

what is barter

what is collaboration

what is intuition

what is empathy

The following repeated three times (or more) over the course of the interview process, triggered by a certain image or position

ALL

One, Two, Three

what should I do with my time while I am alive? (repeated, emphasized)

What is the good life?

what is the best life?

Those of us who agree, form a community

Those of us who want to control the situation

Form an institution

ALL (IN UNISON, PRIVATE sound Q: meat grinder, 1 per time the sequence happens)

Wait, why am I being advised to grow my incisors back?

ANIMALS and MOMMIES

(PRIVATE operatic:)

I am made of glue
sensations are the glue
holding me together
hooves and all
hoof and mouth disease

MOMMIES *(Private)*

Best in show

Are we rivals?

my only companion

so lonely (in a round)

so cold in here

so cold in here

so cold in here

And so on and so forth...

ALL, *PUBLIC*

Hello, hello

I think we would like to we care about you

it seems that we are your neighbors and friends

I think we understand

oh see, there is no limit to my empathy

ANIMAL 1

*in center spot, a commercial, cool, clean, Wells Fargo backdrop of
grasses, a live-feed*

This year

our hope is to justify our excuses for being here

Our hope is to be able to stand up here and say to you

here is an institution I am proud to belong to

here is an institution I am proud to believe in

sometimes

when everything is so confusing

construction is the only option

I must live inside something

I can't survive on my own

Please please participate with me

help me construct my identity

it's so cold in here

(End Questionnaire portion. Moment of silence.)

*(3 young clean-cut men, GEORGES, enter the grounds, It's early
morning, sunlight.*

*There is a single podium but three microphones on stands,
GEORGE 1 takes the podium, a hipster GEORGE 2 stands at
attention in a suit, GEORGE 3 is playing with a corsage.)*

GEORGE 1

Ok ok...Thank you for entering into this institution

You have been duly recorded as participants

ANIMAL 2

I'm very self conscious right now

ANIMAL 3

Having never been here before

it just doesn't look the way I thought it would

ANIMAL 2

Some conception of little beings

and larger beings

And hoping to be the latter

keeps me brushing my teeth in the mornings

You will now receive responsibility and benefits

ALL GEORGES and MOMMIES

(operatic)

welcome!

GEORGE 1

Even though you are now in a theatron

This event does not begin as a play

it is not even the index of play

I do not know how to make play

Only love war and products

Can we capture any of our experiences on a smaller scale and if so will this help us to see them more clearly?

And if so, will seeing them more clearly help us to pursue better choices

GEORGE 2

This institution, played out on the stage,

takes as many viewpoints into account as possible

combining conceptions

in attempts to make the institution itself,

(which is a

a composite of many subjective relationships with institutions)

EMERGE

GEORGE 3

Past the space age into an age of relativity

into the endless space of cyberactivity

GEORGE 2

There is no playing around in a democracy

Each man woman and child must focus most seriously

GEORGE 3

Good morning

it is difficult to believe that we can build an ideal institution

yet here it is, gleaming like a goat's eye

GEORGE 2

Yet on the 'ladder of participation' it is crucial to note
that in the institution of this 1 hour event
You the audience
are balancing on rungs below 4
Manipulation, education, therapy
I don't know how to get you to listen to me

GEORGE 3

(dreamily)

It's hard to believe we've made it past the space age isn't it

(a goat's eye, a goat's head, video of a goat)

GEORGES pace the perimeter, hitting the podium for their lines.

(diagram)

GEORGE 1

so the public performance of theater and politics
poses itself as a mirror but is really just another product
(he bangs his head on the lectern)

GEORGE 3

Good morning

it is difficult to believe that we've transcended our animal nature
yet here we are
clothed and organized, ready to build an ideal world for ourselves and for our children

HIGH PITCHED MOMMY VOICE (pre-recorded)

institutions are the long arms of the sensible
stretching out to seize the day

SUNG BY GEORGES (3 men)

I have often wondered
what is holding us together
I have often wondered

I have often wondered
what is sensible
what makes sense

GEORGE 1
and how can we use sensibility to get better?

spur on horse's flank

HIGH PITCHED MOMMY VOICE (live, major, melodramatic, soaring, drawn out)
institutions are the long arms of the sensible
stretching out to seize the day

ANIMALS
judgment
approval
stepping in and out of a kiddie pool

ANIMALS
the social desires of human beings
create a horror vacui
In my body
when I am all alone

HIGH PITCHED MOMMY VOICE (pre-recorded)
institutions are the long arms of the sensible
stretching out to seize the day

(goat sounds)

HIGH PITCHED MOMMY VOICE (pre-recorded)
institutions are the long arms of the sensible
stretching out to seize the day

ANIMALS
reflection
appreciation

acceptance

(GEORGE 1 at the pedestal, GEORGES join him, they wave like candidates or drag queens)

MAINSTREET MOMMIES ALL

(rhythmic chorus, harmonic, calmish, building suspense throughout)

we have been so concerned
there is a dangerous lack of difference
between the sensible and the senseless

MOMMIES 2 and 3

candles held up in the cellar cast light on the gory violence of subconscious urges
dangerous perceptions create perverted criminal subversions
it becomes increasingly important
to insist on reality's most beneficial versions

MAINSTREET MOMMIES ALL

I am in favor of relying on common sense
and the universal moralities that make sense
in pursuit of a Just society
a unified society
We know we make
A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF SENSE

GEORGE 2 *(stepping down from the podium)*

I need a certain amount of substance to sustain
My faith in reality

MOMMY 1 *(very solemnly)*

institutions are the long arms of the sensible
stretching out to seize the day

GEORGE 1

wait, we can figure this out

(the MOMMIES come and take their sons, the GEORGES down from the podiums and set up tables for them in each corner, each with a tablecloth.

MOMMIES 2 and 3
(beneath the next)
for my baby
the best schools
the best dreams, the best tools
for my baby
the best jobs
the best hobbies
in exchange for this life
my baby is happy to follow some rules
take shelter in the sensible
it's clear that all sensible people agree

GEORGES *(random, PRIVATE)*
O, is this my spot?
Ok
yeah this is fine
thanks mom
yeah I have a good view
Thank you

MOMMIES
how could I trust my children
to the wide wide wide world
if there were no guaranteed structures
to secure his treatment and his privilege?

OK: if you are going to be a part of this institution
There will be
Rules for everyone.

When you see the words onscreen, you must speak them as loudly and clearly as possible. These are your lines, as long as you learn them, everything will be fine.

*ONSCREEN: GROUP LOGIC
IS A HIGHER ORDER OF LOGIC*

MOMMY 4
don't you understand
my only desire
is both sensible and instinctual
as natural as motherhood itself

MUSIC, PICNIC

MAINSTREET MOMMY 1
I don't like this attitude that some people have
this snotty intellectual air of anti-establishment, you know what I'm talking about, right?

MAINSTREET MOMMY
Heck, I'm articulate too

MAINSTREET MOMMY 1
don't throw the baby out with the bath water

MAINSTREET MOMMIES
Institutions are structures which aim to keep the emotional chaos of human behavior organized and channeled into that which is most productive for the human species.

GEORGE 2
man is a mad animal

MAINSTREET MOMMY 3
institutional criticism, as Pat Buchanan says, can only weaken those who waste their time composing it

MAINSTREET MOMMY 4
I hate this academic language

MAINSTREET MOMMY 3
that means 'think before you speak'

MAINSTREET MOMMY 4
If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all

MAINSTREET MOMMY 3
Take that foot out of your mouth!

GEORGE 3
miracles are impossible! It's the attempt that matters

MOMMY 4
You're only digging yourself a deeper and deeper hole...

MOMMY 1
you get what you give

MOMMY 2
you shouldn't expect society to give two shits about you
if you're not willing to work

MOMMY 4
you know what I always say
I had a childhood too you know
I remember when my mother said as much to me
I understand now why she looked so worried for me

MAINSTREET MOMMY 1
yes there may be flaws in fairness

MAINSTREET MOMMY 4
we strive for perfection and justice everyday

MAINSTREET MOMMY 1
we are only human, can our errors not be forgiven?

MAINSTREET MOMMY 3
don't waste your time sorting garbage

MAINSTREET MOMMY 3 (*sung*)
don't go swinging your arms into gestures
that knock the heads off the statues that your forefathers erected around you

MAINSTREET MOMMY 2

don't go spinning out on unpaved roads that the county doesn't even plow anymore
those are not real roads
yours is not a real house

GEORGE 1

Institutions are structures which aim to keep the emotional chaos of human behavior organized and channeled into that which is most productive for the human species.

MOMMY 3

in every day language, PLEASE!

GEORGE (2)

Now look, it is likely that I am living in a reality defined by my own interests which are mutant versions of instincts disguised as pets
it is likely that your reality is as dense and inscrutable as anyone's

ALL MAINSTREET MOMMIES

your discontent is adolescent
this is a modern age.
who was it, Gandhi said, be the change you wish to see

MOMMY 1

There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch!

MOMMY 4

if everyone would just *engage* in their community
and follow its ethical codes

MOMMY 2

Anything that doesn't kill you makes you stronger

ALL:

Institutions are structures which aim to keep human behavior organized around what is perceived as productive for the human species.
This productive state may not be immediately apparent to an individual,
an individual may not be able to get the whole "sense" of the big picture
he or she must rely on those who can see the big picture

and the institutional memory which stores the implications of past actions

ALL MOMMIES

you may not know what to do all the time
but believe me, you will always be able to find someone to tell you what to do

MOMMIES:

- 1.) everyone stand up
- 2.) everyone raise their hand
- 3.) everyone take out an ID
- 4.) everyone show it to me

onscreen: INSTITUTIONS ARE THE LONG ARMS OF THE SENSIBLE, STRETCHING OUT TO HOLD ME TIGHT

sit down!

(all do)

2.) Individuals

(darkness. SALLY appears at the 3rd desk) SALLY 1 (for the duration of section 2) Lights focus around her.

SALLY

institutions are structures which aim to keep human emotional forces and behavior organized and focused onto that which is presumed productive for more than one individual or familial group

A human airplane sound, a burr

GEORGE 3

I AM AFRAID OF criminals

MOMMY 2

permutations/will not be permitted/in my bathroom/or in my car

SALLY

Shhh! institutions are the constructions of a late capitalist society which has turned the emotional pressure of the will to survive into laws of being

MOMMY 1:
something must have happened to you in your childhood

MOMMIES

Dear Sally, you are a product of social constructions not the author of them, please do not consider your conceptions sensible, by any measure of the word

MIDWESTERN MOMMIES ALL
people are basically stupid!

ANIMALS:

Conceptions, the really big ones, belong for the most part to the upper classes. They build them and they live in them, while others maintain them.

GEORGE 3

Consider that as a conception.

MOMMY ONE and TWO:

I feel sorry for her

GEORGES

Slack Sally, big bald and barefoot

SALLY

Modern institutions survive by enforcing competition,
Increasing productivity
and encouraging homogenization

MOMMIES 1 and 4

When Sally was small she ate cheese in aluminum foil and never returned her library books.

She cut other children with shards of glass

She ate the heads off of frogs

She had dirty feet, no prevention of brain damage, paint fumes, the bad schools

Plastic false eye when the barbed wire fought back against her attempts to get over the fence

An uncorrected hair lip

MOMMIES 2 and 3
No donations of clothing
False teeth needed after, as a starving baby,
an attempt to eat stones

Slack Sally's conceptions, big, bald, and barefoot

MOMMIES 1 and 4
Sally is a smaller version of a constructed whole
frantic
existentially confused
living in a cardboard box now and then
4 years in the army
and other times taking advantage of the penal system

SALLY
Institutions are dedicated to industrializing the power of human life
They are emergent entities which have lives of their own

MOMMY 1 and 4
billions of human beings
with their instincts and nerve endings frayed
must be organized and appeased in some kind of way
I agree that many of you are distressed

We can determine your illness through many a census
But let us take care of you
Fragile animal

SALLY
Institutions form individuals
Into destructive living ouroboros' of misery and dysfunction
gorging on their own psychological and emotional distress

MOMMY 4
why is she so messed up?
is it because she is biologically weak

MOMMY 3

I do blame the education system
for not making her into a productive citizen

SALLY

This is a small space
surrounded by atmosphere
Home is an open empire

Maybe it's just this constant change
That makes me jerk my arm suddenly and discover
The smallness of this space
Also,
Its funny smell.

SALLY and ANIMALS

To what extent can I choose my experiences
To what extent can I choose my reactions
to what extent can I control my emotions

SALLY

Why bring your fair here
Our bees don't sleep
We don't buy

I am told that this is the fairest state
underwavered and unrevered
subjective
forgivable
privately overlooking the streets below
privately leaning out the window
Everything is as/ we all agree to know

ANIMALS and SALLY

Is it just the dribbling naiveté of self-loathing
that poisons my fluids and hacks at my ego

The dilation and constriction of my focus

SALLY

the internal and external vacillation of my locus of power
The rise and fall of my self-security and self-consciousness

Pendulums of nauseating swings
disorienting, alienating, no chance of reconciliation

ANIMALS

is it because she is told to raise her hand before speaking

MAINSTREET MOMMIES 2, 3

sally contributes nothing
vacant vessel to fill with anything
she supports the economy through consumption of products
part of the crowds who give up more than they deduct

ANIMALS and SALLY

I am de-humanized
I am stigmatized
I am not an animal
I am a human being

GEORGE 2

slack sally big bald and barefoot, is deemed by others to be unfit to make her own decisions
based on her general lack of common sense

OUT SALLY! OUT!

ONSCREEN: OUT SALLY, OUT

She doesn't budge, eventually the MOMMIES give up and begin to do something else, merely scorning her.

GEORGE 1, 2, 3
why hello Sally

SALLY
Hi

GEORGE 1 2, 3
how have you been? What are you up to these days?

SALLY
Oh fine
waiting on tables
singing for soup
doing drugs and
lounging about in my underwear
you?

GEORGE 1
Working, paying back grad school
trying to get people to pay attention to me

GEORGE 2
jumping up to hit my head on glass ceilings

GEORGE 3
Stealing fire extinguishers from public libraries

SALLY
I always feel like I don't belong
I'm not part of any culture
Or what culture I do have has been turned into a shiny plastic identity,
just another object, manufactured

MOMMY 4:
to urge the masses towards deep consideration of their conceptions is
to be elitist
they don't have the time

MOMMIES
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot
slack sally big bald and barefoot

they don't have the strength
they ought to let better men undertake problem solving

GEORGE 1

Look Sally, and I hope this is of comfort to you...this institution is constructed to be perfect, it's a reflection of reality

GEORGE 3

human beings, human individuals
are the ones who decide the fates of others

GEORGE 2

HUMAN BEINGS construct and deconstruct institutions
and play or do not play the games of participation, subordination, and cause and effect
trust other people like you would trust your own uncles

ANIMALS (*beneath*)

Pits and piles/ wooden crates/bandages

MOMMIES 2 and 3

of course no system can satisfy her
she wants it to be an extension of herself
she is selfish
I'm not sure why we really want her
To live with us
Or even at all

MOMMIE 1 (*blowing a whistle*)

Security! Security!

GEORGES (sloooooow build to a small climax)

THE ANIMAL

INSIDE OUR BRAINS BENEATH OUR IDEALS

BENEATH OUR STRUCTURES

BENEATH OUR RESOURCES

is panicking in its cardboard box

Clutching its yellow towel

THERE IS A WAR OF ALL AGAINST ALL

CAUSED NOT BY INSTINCTS BUT BY

Our own ability to turn living things into stone
And to turn into stone

SALLY

turn into yourself and acknowledge that the cosmos is born of you
Emergent from your consciousness
my sense of sight is sensible
(*repeat*)

ANIMALS

sense is in sight
sense is in sight
sense is in sight
(*repeat*)

GEORGE

UGLY ANIMALS HUMANKIND
READY TO RIP INTO OTHER HUMANS
I WANT AN INSTITUTION TO PROTECT ME
FROM ALL OF YOU
AND YOUR JUDGMENT OF ME
ALL OF YOUR EYES ON ME

MOMMIES

YOU AND ME
DISAGREE
ABOUT THE NATURE OF REALITY
AND THE NATURE OF THE DANGER

MOMMIES AND SALLY

Ok there isn't enough room on this stage for the all of us
It is clear that our viewpoints contrast
The audience must decide
Should the mummies or the animals determine the structure of this performance
We will each make a statement and then you will decide who is fit to tell the story

A Statement from THE MOMMIES

The story we would tell would be the truth
the total reality, the objective truth.
We really want to wade through all of this bullshit, pardon my French,
And get to resolving this problem we seem to have here
This is becoming a farce
and everyone is making claims without any substance or sense. Thank You.

A Statement from SALLY and THE ANIMALS

dream-sense and non-sense are more useful now than ever
if somebody is going to make wild claims, why not us
our battles are relative now, delegated now, the argument now
is positivism vs. anti-positivism
relativity vs. empiricism
if you listen to our story, we promise to give you nothing but subjectivity and philosophy.
Thank You.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXpart 3 will be told by either Sally or by the Mommies.

**MOMMIES
version**

MOMMY 2
I designed and stacked up bricks for you
The Building with all its floors for you
The first of its height
The first without static equilibrium

Documentary Voiceover:
*Although each brick has not been examined and some
Of the individual bricks are of a rather low quality,
The Building itself*

*With its red stone cornices, corbels, decorative brackets
and balustrades beneath the windows
Is an architectural marvel*

MOMMY 1

I demand the duplicity of good vs. evil

MOMMY 3

Free thought is a rash on the ass of morality

MOMMY 4

Let only the most perfect of beings live here

MOMMY 1 and 2

You see, some of us disagree

MOMMIES ALL

Yet over and over our narratives cohere

To insist on the sense of a danger here

MOMMIES

WE AGREE

Formulas and metaphors

Are our allies now

one flag-bearer must be placed

on each side of the ditch

along the road leading up to The Building

many may perish

the road leading up to The Building

Is paved with glory and sack lunches

The road leading up to the edge of the fences

Is treacherous

MOMMY 2 and 3

Institutions are strongholds of sense

SALLY
AND FALSE DICHOTOMIES

GEORGE 2

Though I am wary of Communists, I do wonder if what Marx said is true, that "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."

GEORGE 3

and perhaps institutions are our only way of changing these relationships
allowing men to come together
in the right kind of atmosphere

And create something larger than themselves

Think of geodesic domes

MOMMIES 1 and 2

No, no, no, the building is brick

MOMMY 3

Its stones are red the color of rusting
Its angles are sharp but the red, and the stone,
And all else, soft.
Curtains as light as an eyelash, attached to the curtains, more curtains

MOMMY 1

Electric lights warm the windows

MOMMIES

NOW some may argue
It was the social contract, the collective act
That brought us all together to build a positive structure

MOMMY 3
yet over and over again
enemies have reared their heads

SALLY
and etcetera

MOMMY 3
You shut up! This is our story! And it hits Here (*Head*) and Here (*Heart*)

MOMMY 1
You can have your De-colonialisation, if we can have our selective unity

MOMMY 3
What you don't realize is that you live here
And...(*what happened in India...*)

MOMMY 1
I've put out all your little fires
in all your little rooms
while you were smoking in there

Voiceover
*In 1998 the young architects dissected a cat that they thought was dead.
When they got to the heart, they were surprised by its pulverizing enthusiasm*

MOMMIES
What happened in India
What happened in Babylon
What happened in Egypt
What happened in Mexico
What happened in China
What happened in Greece, in Rome
What happened there may sometime happen here.
American civilization may perish and disappear

over flooded by barbaric tribes
our population crushed by disease
our languages, and fashions, and ways, and beliefs
mostly lost

MOMMY 4

I am afraid of a dystopian future
In my dreams
the small town I grew up in
has become one sprawling slum,
boards stolen/tvs stolen
severed fingers in the birdbaths
fungus growing on the carcasses of upturned trains
hobos hacking symbols into my doorway
gangs of teenagers crouching in hideouts made of plywood and old cardboard boxes
feral children climbing over old washing machines
feral children drowning in giant ragweed stalks and twirling maple seeds and amorality
floor of dirt
bare feet
taxidermied shrews
crawling with maggots

MOMMIES

Only The Building would look proud.
sometimes one feels as if it's all for nothing but that's what Eleanor Roosevelt was fighting against, and you don't want to disappoint her do you?

MOMMY 4

at the ends of times
human beings will be four feet tall
women will bear children at age 10

MOMMY 2

And any one believes that we are safe from such catastrophes
he is perhaps yielding to an all too optimistic delusion.

MOMMY 3

YOU MAY SAY that there are no barbaric tribes in our neighborhood to be sure — but let no one be deceived, the instincts of barbaric tribes lie latent in the populace of our every state.

MOMMIES

You want our heads
for your walltops
for your battlements
for your parades

Our Building is your enemy
your very home, your very local territory
Our shared history, your enemy
Over and over again, this is the story

MOMMIES

Now it is important to change with the times

MOMMY 1

I will re-use my shopping bags

MOMMY 3

I will support local and global initiatives to send goats to the third world

MOMMY 2

If you agree to a truce
if you agree to a little abuse

MOMMY 4

there's no class war
there's no meat here

MOMMY 2

It's not so bad
come home

MOMMIES (in lovely four-part harmony)

We wait inside The Building
for your footsteps
Leading up to our door
Oh see
There is no limit to our empathy

3.) The building as told by Sally

SALLY
the building is too big to see all of it
from any single vantage point

The civilizing process
has turned us into bricks
constructing it
and we can no more see out of our positions in mortar
than a cell can see out of its skin
yet now is the time, if ever the time, to re-build ourselves again

ANIMALS
The Building as we know it now
Is merely a metaphor
an overall sense
Of an overwhelming
existence

SALLY
and because of this, we can re-arrange it with a little effort
this is the story of a movement
heart-warming, isn't it, exciting, isn't it...

GEORGE 2
Though I am wary of Communists, I do wonder if what Marx said is true, that "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant

opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.”

GEORGE 1

I think I read that story, the one with the young man, changing society?

GEORGE 3

and perhaps institutions are our only way of changing these relationships
allowing men to come together
in the right kind of atmosphere

And create something larger than themselves

Think of geodesic domes

SALLY and THE ANIMALS

No, no, no, The Building is brick

Its stones are red the color of rusting
Its angles are sharp but the red, and the stone,
And all else, soft.
Curtains as light as an eyelash, attached to the curtains, more curtains

ANIMAL 1

Electric lights warm the windows

SALLY

NOW some may argue

It was the social contract, the collective act
That brought us all together to build a positive structure

but then we wonder why it IS PARALYZING US

EUTHANIZING US

Fogging us slowly to death in its EXHAUST

ANIMAL 3

You promised it would be a time machine

SALLY and ANIMALS
IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SOMETHING
ON THIS VERY SPOT
WE WILL TAKE THE OTHER INTO ACCOUNT
WE WILL TAKE THE BODY INTO ACCOUNT
WE WILL TAKE TECHNOLOGY INTO ACCOUNT
WE WILL TAKE THE LACK OF A CONCRETE REALITY INTO ACCOUNT
EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE WILL COUNT

ANIMALS and SALLY and GEORGES
I can't stop watching The Building and smoking.
I want to control what happens next.
If only I could afford some gas
maybe my fingers would be warm long enough
so that I could begin to destroy the building

SALLY +
ANIMALS
(practically breathless, anticipation, youth)
I have built a Pulley
made of maple wood and painted black
Bailer's twine is twisted into the pulley's greasy channel
cheap rope like this spins and vibrates when stretched tight
yet with this system I hope to lift The Building
from a new Building across the street

GEORGE 3 (all one note)
all 6 billion floors into the air
all 6 billion types of disrepair

Documentary Voiceover:
this might be a lie

SALLY
The Building would swing as it rose... more like a metronome than a piece of meat on a hook

Documentary Voiceover:

*Contrary to what most people believe, she did not tell the lie that Eleanor Roosevelt was her mother.
Everyone knew that her mother
was in the county home
that she was in fact, an alien,
in fact, a nobody*

SALLY

It would heavy and difficult to replace, like a tooth,
Into the cinder block gums of its foundation.
I could let it down slowly, somewhere else
far away, to become a playground for woodland animals
or let it crash to the ground and smash into pieces beyond recognition...

ANIMAL 3

But what about the people inside?

ANIMAL 4

and if we can't use the bricks from the remains of The Building
what materials can we use and where will we live in the meantime
while we're building something new?

ANIMAL 3

Not to mention that the Building across the street
judging by our resources
and the institutions which control them
would have half as many stories as the original Building
and the Pulley will never have the leverage it needs
To lift it in the first place

ANIMALS

Or we could go at it with hammers
And bloody our fists on The Building's rough chest

GEORGES

GODBRAIN

The force of habit
Genetics
reaction

Laughter, the expression of joy
Ludicrous ideas
The secretion of tears during loud laughter
The expression of love
Devotion

Decision or determination
The firm closure of the mouth

Hatred
Rage
Anger and indignation
defiance—
baring of a canine tooth on one side of the mouth

Guilt, deceit, and pride
Contempt
scorn and disdain
Disgust

Helplessness or impotence
Patience
Shrugging the shoulders
Confusion of mind
Causes of blushing
Self-attention, the fundamental element
Shyness
Shame, from broken moral laws and conventional rules

Modesty

Surprise, astonishment
Elevation of the eyebrows
Opening the mouth
Protrusion of the lips
Throwing up of the hands

Admiration

Fear—Terror—Erection of the hair—Contraction of the platysma muscle—Dilatation of the pupils—
gasps and screams
causes of transcendence
as in repeated cries of sexual or spiritual ecstasy

(instrumental interlude)

GEORGES

oh dear god
I'm coming apart at the seams

who will protect me
who will champion my dreams

Get it together man

GEORGE 2:

(lists the US presidents in chronological order, beginning with George Washington)

GEORGE 3:

Sings

GEORGE 1:

Lists Oscar-winning movies since 1950

(They list throughout>)

MOMMIES

Now look what you've done, the heroes will have to be committed

SALLY

they're not the heroes, I am!

MOMMIES

Don't be silly dear

4.)

Throughout Section 4, MIDWESTERN MOMMIES remove their costumes to reveal another costume, which is more individualized. Second SALLY.

SALLY 2

I'm going to be straight with you

I'm not really sure what a dichotomy is

We need each other

Your participation

And my participation

Are perceived as opposing factions

And perhaps you don't like me

Some of you participated in the creation of this institution

Performed here tonight

Some of you are strangers

And I am sorely afraid of your judgment

But let's resolve something

Once and for all

Right here and now.

(Constituents clap and cheer and wave little flags)

CAMPAIGN VIDEO:

SALLY

an institution is not a building
the "building" metaphor relies on a conscious architecture
when an institution is really a pattern
emerging from a complex system of persons.

If Institutions are patterns of humans
which may transcend time and their individual minds,
If a person is a pattern emerging from behaviors,
then an institution is a pattern emerging from operations

institutions are a wonderful meeting place outside the self
where more than one person may enter
and learn to get along
Now some of you may ask

ALL OTHERS (*choir*)
then why do I constantly feel
that my person is all wrong
(*duet*)

These institutions are not patterns which emerge from what I see
I am not a part of this computer or this model of society
I process overwhelming information endlessly
finding no record of me...

SALLY
Well, you may not be conscious of your role in things
But if you follow your heart, and your dreams
And if you find yourself a purpose
You will find yourself extended
Throughout time and culture.
Now some of you may ask

ALL OTHERS (*choir*)
then why do I constantly feel
that my person is all wrong
(*duet*)

where may I file my complaint?
where may I file my complaint?
Where may I file my complaint?

SALLY

Quite simply, there is no where to file your complaint
Because there is no one to blame

(One of the MAINSTREET MOMMIES [4] has become a CELEBRITY. She approaches the podium, also smiling and waving, lots of lipstick)

CELEBRITY

Hello, I would just like to endorse this institution, and the wonderful things it's doing for the world.
I know it's given me a sense of purpose
and purpose is what keeps the great empty pit in my lower chakra
covered over with sticks and leaves.
Thank you.

(all begin arranging their three table "booths," small installations of objects, identities, like an altar, a fair booth, or a grave. They collect personal objects from the audience and try to conjure with them. Audience members are invited to speak whichever things they choose from THE AUDIENCE SCRIPT.

Interview clips and statements by cast members

All are citizens, the structure emerges

ALL

The only thing we can say for sure is that the opposite of an institution is madness

ACT 1 of the first play performed by this institution: (in legal language) the entire cast.

WE UNDERSTAND

that not all institutions treat cancers of the pores
and the poor cankers on the social tongue
with mutual respect
or bring them plastic lilies
on rape-your-lover-with-a-broken-wine-bottle day
or on arrange-words-to-mean-as-little-as-possible day

and other holidays for ruling out rules
that might restrict the number of new baths a murderer
can drink or draw in any given day
no matter how many Spots on the hands
or elsewhere that
he or she may have incurred

WE ARE APPLAUDING
the ideals expressed by the abacus of indifference
and the low, loosely religious chants of symposium attendees

under fluorescent lights
with Styrofoam cups of lukewarm water in hand
in a white room with carpet splashed
with flowers that never existed
and vines that never existed
and entrails that never existed

WE ARE APPLAUDING
artistically arranged matches made in heaven (white sulfur)
where there is nothing to incite,
just patterns that lead somewhere,
satisfying patterns that lead somewhere
and industry,
and barrels and barrels and barrels and BARRELS of
coarse false teeth stained with wormwood and hatred
shipped as a new industry into the middling modern west

APPLAUDING
the acts themselves, in general, overall, and with a mouth infinitely
full of pus, ground chuck, and wax
which prevents speaking out on behalf or even mentioning the acts at all

NOTING
the spelling errors, which may cause
unintended confusion during implementation
and the cool syrup of panic

poured over each syllable of this legal act and others
for which no amount of wet paper and
no amount of crusting fluids and

no amount of excruciating tenderness can account

NOTING ALSO

the numerous loopholes which allow us to:

Sing songs tunelessly under the breath which staple
open hands to the raw plywood wall
with the pneumatic sound

of memory hacking up reified functionality
or

Repeat phrases that undermine the security of minors
through minimization and lack of quote "positive" unquote examples

as those in authority encourage us to
think about heaven as a match factory where there is nothing to ignite
or incite and

as the press covers only the Baiting of the Bears
who live in the holes in the walls of the larger holes
(which are gravel pits)

Also as the politics and sensibilities

Which we are told exploded long ago

Evolutionize us or geneticize us and normalize us into
veracious wood-chopping

We are blackmailed into immoral behaviors
just because we need some kind of
reassurance and affection

WE ARE REGRETTING

the loss of family

WE ARE FURTHER REGRETTING

that applause of the ideals

applause that hammers at our bodies
long after the curtain has gone down

EVEN FURTHER REGRETTING

that beds and cots and bunks and piles of rags and all other sleeping
places
are places where
insects writhe in foamy piles of their own eggs and

grass clippings and glass
and that these are supposedly the homes of
an underclass
comprised of many philosophers and scholars

APPALLED

that heaven is not more like this
or that this is not more like heaven
if indeed there is a barrel where regret can go
Instead of a slim envelope usually reserved for secret bribes

WE ARE BELIEVING

that the ideals in the world deserve
better protection than those afforded by this act
or any other

WE ARE DISAPPOINTED

in general, overall, and after all
by the smell of nostalgia still rotting in the nasal passages.
On returning to what we call 'inside' (air in a box) or 'history' (dust in a box)
Or 'theater' (emotion in a box)

WE ARE

Disappointed by a failure to get out of them
finding ourselves inside them
again and again

WE ARE STILL DISAPPOINTED

after having raised the level of psychotropic substance coursing
like lukewarm tea across our teeth

SALLY and the GEORGES

I had not expected the stench to have absorbed itself like a shadow
Into the wall when the light is switched on
But I had hoped so hard that I passed out,
hitting my head on the wall, furthermore momentarily blacking out
and waking to find myself lying on the filthy ground of a public square
drenched in blood
covered in roach bodies
and smeared with catshit

WE ARE NOW APOLOGIZING

For the personal nature of that last paragraph
and for all complaints both private and disturbing

WE ARE

praying for one more sign
encouraging self sacrifice

WE ARE

WAITING FOR SOME SUGGESTIONS

Regarding action that could be useful and/or beneficial

AND FINALLY

WE ARE ASHAMED

That we are not sensible

And that we are not an authority

On any of these issues

ONSCREEN:

ALL

Each person enters into a social contract of their own free will....

Submitting themselves to the common mind of the polity

participating and performing their shared values and laws

ALL

institutions must be constructed to benefit each participant
this benefit is generally the support each individual's ability
to perform consciously within the sense
of his or her own reality

ALL

The only thing we can say for sure:
an isolated sense that does not relate to any other senses is madness and thus it is nonsense.
but now we understand that this also means that any SINGLE, ISOLATED sense is just this useless, as it is non-sense when it is alone
it is madness to be alone
thus this attempt to cause an ideal institution must ask
how can we be a multiplicity of sensibilities,
envisioned and distributed evenly?

ALL

participants must have visions and act on them
institutions must have participants who act together as them

(worklights on)

AUDIENCE SCRIPT

in this institution, the concept of "mental illness" has been replaced by a concept of individual desires for the way the self functions, and auto-directed programs towards fulfillment. In other words, people decide if they're sane or not, and we all help them become the people they want to be

in this institution there is no concept of "normality" at all

form to function

this institution is a CSA and has a completely community-supported labor structure

this institution provides communal childcare

this institution provides space and resources to artists

this institution provides resources TO THE POOR

this institution offers group emotional support

this institution is not exclusive in any sense, it adapts to the people that comprise it

in this institution there are no laws

only social values

this institution has its own money

it has its own building

This institution is Non-corporate, non-commercial

Empathy is crucial, only institutions small enough to maintain human empathy

Should be allowed

in this institution people manage their own time

It doesn't cost anything

There are no genders

There are no jobs

There are no food shortages

The healthcare is free

The education is free