

Household

(Commissioned by Cornell University and presented May 3, 1964. There were no spectators at this event, which was to be performed regardless of weather. Participants attended a preliminary meeting on May 2, where the Happening was discussed and parts were distributed.)

Setting:

A lonesome dump out in the country. Trash heaps all around, some smoking. Parts of dump enclosed by old, red tin fence. Trees around rest of it.

Sequence of Events:

1

11 a.m. Men build wooden tower on a trash mound. Poles topped with tarpaper clusters are stuck around it.

Women build nest of saplings and strings on another mound. Around the nest on a clothesline they hang old shirts.

2

2 p.m. Cars arrive, towing smoking wreck, park outside dump, people get out.

Men and women work on tower and nest.

3

People circle dump, out of sight in trees and behind tin wall, wait.

Women go inside nest and screech.

Men go for smoking wreck, roll it into dump, cover it with strawberry jam.

4

People's voices call "Hey! Hey! Hey!" all around dump.

Men go to women, put on shirts, squat down and watch them.

People very slowly start coming in toward car, still calling "Hey! Hey!"

Women screech.

5

Women go to car and lick jam.

Men destroy nest with shouts and cursing.

People, coming in, start to pound pots and blow police whistles in slow unison.

6

Men return to women at wreck, yank them away, eat jam with fingers, slap white bread all over sticky stuff, mouth up the pieces.

Women scream at men "Bastards! Bastards!"

People advance, banging and whistling.

7

Women destroy men's poles and tower, laughing, yelling "Watch this! Watch this!"

Men eat bread.

People advance, banging and whistling.

8

Women go to heaps of smoking trash, call to men sweet-songy come-ons.

Men fan out, creep low to ambush women.

People advance, banging and whistling.

9

Women jump men, rip off shirts and fling shirts into smoking trash, run to men's tower mound.

Men roll on ground laughing loud, "Hee! Hee! Hee! Haw! Haw!"

People advance, banging and whistling.

10

Women take off blouses, wave them over head like hankies, each singing own rock-n-roll tune and twisting dreamy-like.

Men hurl red smoke-flares into smoking trash heap.

People circle smoking jam-car, become silent, squat down, eat jam sandwiches.

11

Men go to wreck, take sledge hammers from people, pick up battering log, begin to demolish car.

Women watch from distance and cheer men for every
smash.

People eat silently and watch.

12

Men jack up car, remove wheels, set fire to it, sit down
to watch, light up cigarettes.

People light up cigarettes, watch car burning.

Women run out of junk yard, waving blouses, gaily
calling "Bye! Bye! G'Bye!, 'Bye!," get into cars, drive
away with horns blaring steadily till out of earshot.

13

Everyone smokes silently and watches car until it's
burned up.

Then they leave quietly.

(FEBRUARY 1964)