

THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE

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A Play in Five Acts

by

Craig Leonard

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## Cast of Characters

<u>Carl Andre:</u>	Artist
<u>Elaine Baxter:</u>	Artist
<u>Iain Baxter:</u>	Artist
<u>Joseph Beuys:</u>	Artist
<u>Ronald Bladen:</u>	Artist
<u>Daniel Buren:</u>	Artist
<u>Gene Davis:</u>	Artist
<u>Jan Dibbets:</u>	Artist
<u>Al Held:</u>	Artist
<u>Mario Merz:</u>	Artist
<u>Robert Morris:</u>	Artist
<u>Robert Murray:</u>	Artist
<u>Richard Serra:</u>	Artist
<u>Richard Smith:</u>	Artist
<u>Robert Smithson:</u>	Artist
<u>Michael Snow:</u>	Artist
<u>Lawrence Weiner:</u>	Artist
<u>Seth Siegelaub:</u>	Conference organizer
<u>Translator 1:</u>	Beuys' German translator
<u>Translator 2:</u>	Merz's Italian translator
<u>Translator 3:</u>	Buren's French translator
<u>Students:</u>	A large, unspecified number
<u>Reporter:</u>	From the main local paper

## Scene

Simultaneously, a gallery, the boardroom of a college, and a video control booth.

## Time

1970 and the present.

## \*Nota Bene

An ellipsis symbol "[...]" occurs occasionally in the dialogue of the script. This ellipsis represents one of two things at the director's discretion: (1) inaudible dialogue or (2) a cipher in the script that may be filled in consideration of what seems most reasonable.

ACT I

## SETTING:

We are in the boardroom of a college. The room is furnished with low tables close to the side walls. The tables separate the room in two with a sizable opening down the centre. Panellists are seated in chairs behind the tables and are facing centre. There are water cups, coffee cups and ashtrays placed on top of the tables. Microphones and microphone stands are placed in front of each panellist. There is a video camera at the front of the room, which runs a live feed into a video control booth, out of view. At the back of the room there is the main exit. It is understood by all that the STUDENTS are watching the proceedings via video relay in a location nearby.

## AT RISE:

ELAINE BAXTER, IAIN BAXTER, JOSEPH BEUYS, DANIEL BUREN, MARIO MERZ, RICHARD SMITH, LAWRENCE WEINER, and TRANSLATORS are all seated in chairs, except E BAXTER who is sitting on floor. A REPORTER is present and seated beside TRANSLATOR 1.

## BEUYS

To help us to realize it has special possibilities. Therefore, they are open, and therefore they are old ideas, and therefore they are wise ideas, and therefore they are greater. But, the only moment is that they are fixed. Yes, they're fixed. Perhaps I can make now a very, I think now, begins a speculation. It is not so important now to say,

but I think mankind has the duty to make free this fixation from the animals to a higher level because man has to care for himself to make his mankind on a higher level. That's a term from the consciousness, from the new consciousness...

(turning to WEINER)

What's the term in English? Bewusstseinslenkung.

(turning to TRANSLATOR 1)

Was meint das?

(response inaudible)

WEINER

The new sensibility. The new life sense.

BEUYS

If it is free from the common system, you cannot forget the other riches. You cannot forget the possibilities. If that is true, then it means to say, if no other man cares for this, then for me, I have the duty to care. Yes, and that's a concept, for me, one concept between other ideas.

(pausing to drink from cup)

Yes. It is the same mind, you could say, a new born child is more able to make a good quality artwork politically. That is the same mind in another constellation...

WEINER

But he is less capable of an artist to talk about it. That's the difference. That's the difference: he can't tell you about it.

BEUYS

Sure, that's the difference, but...

That means he's politically irresponsible. Political irresponsibility which is a Marxist crime. Therefore every child is committing the irresponsible.

Yes. Yes.

WEINER

(with raised voice)

Irresponsible! It is political irresponsibility to not acquire immediately the means of political response. No, I'm not being facetious at all. This is very serious.

BEUYS

Yes, but it has nothing to do with anything or interesting  
bons mots. For me, I think, we have to make experience from  
the world fully new, fully new. We are captured, I say it  
once more, in the culture system. Here one asks what is  
science now, what is...

(aside to TRANSLATOR 1)

Wie heist der Begriff?

(listening)

...concept of the science, the real natural science now,  
what's the concept of philosophy now, what's the concept of  
art now and so on.

WEINER

Richard, you are in an interesting position here. Not in  
the sense of the American Left, but in a sense that you're  
the only one that would be at all thrown in with making  
still painting or sculpture. And it puts you in a kind of  
position and I'd like to hear what your stance on it is.  
Not aesthetic or anything else. I mean in a social context.  
Obviously, you believe in what you're doing or you wouldn't  
do it. And what you do, you generally do well. So, where do  
you stand, how do you stand?

SMITH

Well, I think to use the force of analogies, if they are  
analogies, and not fact, I think that probably what I  
consider that I'm doing is making a small herd of  
buffalo...

WEINER

Anachronisms? Do you see yourself as making anachronisms?

SMITH

No I don't think that buffalo is anachronistic.

WEINER

No, you meant buffalo as in an anachronistic thing. Buffalo  
as no longer a thing to eat. Buffalo must be protected.  
Buffalo must be coddled, must be put on reservations and  
really kept because they are almost extinguished. So  
buffalo stands as an anachronistic thing. Do you really see  
yourself as anachronistic?

SMITH

No, I don't think of it as anachronistic, but in a way, it  
might be true.

WEINER

Well, okay.

SMITH

No, I wasn't thinking that, but it could be. Any load of things, in a way, one hopes and trusts that one's work is vigorous and can survive, et cetera, et cetera.

WEINER

Do you see anachronism as a tactique? Or anachronism as just an issue? As a justification?

SMITH

No, I see it as, um, I can get myself into a position here admitting I'm an anachronism, which I don't think is totally true. But, in a way, I think it is an aspect of one's activity. Because the things that existed were in the past as the work you've done before and exist in the past and forever impossibly have a kind of inbuilt anachronism.

WEINER

Well, would you agree with me on my position, which is after you make the art, when you make it, it's art. After in any way the culture accepts it, it becomes history, and it no longer is art, it's history. Therefore, once the culture accepts it, it's history. Would you accept that?

SMITH

No, I think that this is up to the individual response. Like certain artworks in the past become solely history, then other artworks you can view as history but can also view them as tired.

WEINER

I'm just curious. I'm not putting you on the spot.

SMITH

No, no. It's, if your response to artworks in the past is consistent, I mean, whether it's a Rembrandt or a ...

WEINER

Jackson Pollock.

SMITH

Or a Jackson Pollock. It's that it is a consistent reaction.

WEINER

But it's also actually about a consistent reaction to any art that is made contemporaneously as well. In that sense, we're all "captured", in Joseph's terms, in how we respond to art that's around. I'm just quite curious that you don't see work that you do as art, and you exhibit it, and it becomes part of the culture, you don't see it changing from art to history?

(addressing TRANSLATORS)

Could you translate that? After art is made and it is exhibited, and it becomes part of the culture, it becomes history and no longer art.

(TRANSLATORS speaking  
quietly to BEUYS, BUREN  
and MERZ)

SMITH

I think that the unsaid quality of art is not that easily lost, when it...

WEINER

I do.

DIBBETS

Or that easily gained.

BEUYS

I think that history is really possessed. I think it not only belongs to the production of artists: the person in the kitchen trying to make the potato ready, it is history. It is a history act. But perhaps it is not in all cases for us to make a documentation from this act. It is history, but I can't understand the distinguishment between very important productions and the normal productions. All human productions become history. But the potato in the kitchen, a normal thing, if a peasant farmer goes with his spade and makes the ground from one side to the other, it has to do with history and not...

WEINER

(loudly)

But that's the change in contemporary art. Previously art was considered to have timeless values, not contemporaneous values. Now we're able to all sit in this room and say something that just two years ago that art becomes history and that's all right and art is on the same level as making a cup of coffee, you would have been called out.

(DIBBETS stands and moves  
to the seat between BEUYS  
and WEINER)

Already, the art being made in the last two years has so  
sufficiently changed the culture that this can be said in a  
public forum without creating a really uproarious screaming  
and yelling that you're destroying art.

(smiling)

That's what the history aspect, the political aspect is.

SMITH

I think that if the "public forum" had a set of different  
constituents, then you would find an amount of uproar.

WEINER

Okay.

SMITH

I think that that's a possibility. But I think in a way  
saying whether a thing is important or not important, it  
still becomes history. I think when one is doing one's  
activity, admittedly, one's self-concept of the time, isn't  
"I'm doing something important. This is going to be the  
most important thing we see this year" or something.

(as WEINER tries to  
interrupt, continuing  
with slightly raised  
voice)

But what I do find is that certain paintings I see are like  
the most important things I see that year, or the most  
affecting things, or something like that. So there are  
qualities in everything or certain objects. I mean you  
could get a kick from a potato.

WEINER

No, no, no. I'm not making a point of it, Richard. I'm just  
rather fascinated by the fact that people are willing to  
accept that art can't become history instantaneously. We're  
in a new culture, and so on and so forth.

SMITH

Well, it's obviously history. Absolutely.

WEINER

This afternoon is now history because it's already been  
going through the...

(looking at the camera)

whole media thing.

SMITH

But that doesn't make it history.

WEINER

It does. It does. Somebody out there already knows it.  
Therefore it's history.

SMITH

History is not something done by...

WEINER

(confidently)

History is something known by interested parties. It is  
something known by interested parties. Not by any quantity  
of qualities, but by interested parties.

I BAXTER

As we know you are interested in words, so you have an  
interest in the words you brought up.

WEINER

As I am an interested party, Iain.

(to I BAXTER)

What are you smirking about?

(hubbub)

BEUYS

(loudly at first)

Ich glaube dass ist nach genau...

(continuing in German  
privately to the  
TRANSLATOR 1)

TRANSLATOR 1

He means that if you're of the opinion that art or anything  
which is produced can become history, or becomes history  
afterward, that doesn't necessary mean that it has lost its  
meaning for the future.

WEINER

No, not at all. It becomes part of the culture as opposed  
to part of one man's making.

TRANSLATOR 1

Yes, it's not so...

WEINER

It loses the individual qualities.

(TRANSLATOR 1 leans over  
and speaks to BEUYS)

BEUYS

(turning to look at  
WEINER)

Yes, good. Okay, fine. Because, therefore, I mean...

SMITH

Your practice can be some form of activity that becomes a kind of thing but it does enter into an economic kind of situation. I was having some work done in studio and I was working and stretching a painting and the guy turned to me and said: "This is your bread and butter. Is this your bread and butter?" And I said: "Yes it is and this week it is your bread and butter." So in a certain way...

WEINER

I can't speak for anyone else left in this room, but perhaps there are artists who have accepted the designation "artist" as an economic survival measure. But they're not quite sure if they're artists anyway. They know that they're involved in culture politic and they know they're involved in culture action, but they don't know if they're artists, but they accept the designation artist as an economic survival method.

SMITH

Well that depends what you're going to put on your passport.

WEINER

I'm not going to put anything on my passport. For real. People aren't interested, generally.

SMITH

It wouldn't be very convincing.

WEINER

That's not on point.

(E BAXTER laughs)

As Carl would say...

(gesturing to the empty  
seat beside him, smiling)

"The one who's better off in society is probably known by  
one's façades."

(silence)

REPORTER

Can you go back to Richard's point?

SMITH

(laughing, while gesturing  
in the direction of  
WEINER)

My point?

(WEINER laughs briefly  
in response, then becomes  
serious)

WEINER

(at REPORTER)

You're not invited to interrupt. It's out of order.

REPORTER

I'm sorry. I shouldn't...

SMITH

(in defense of  
REPORTER)

Why is that?

WEINER

(to the REPORTER)

Well, generally, we've been talking about the intentions of  
art and it's completely out of order for you to interrupt.  
Seriously, were not aggressive, but it is out of order.

(TRANSLATOR 1 leans to  
say something to BEUYS)

BEUYS

Ah, so. What is the question?

WEINER

(to the REPORTER)

Your hands aren't dirty enough.

BEUYS

I think it is really fine.

WEINER

No, I think it is not. His hands aren't dirty enough. We're all here because...

BEUYS

He's a poet.

(laughter)

WEINER

It's a matter of if you have the right to interrupt, then every one of the students in the school has the right to interrupt and you might as well call the conference off. Ya, it's a matter of quantitative things, impossible to let everybody interrupt, so therefore we can't let anybody interrupt. And what's fair is fair.

BEUYS

Yes, but that is a very isolated situation. I think it would be very good for our situation if we could have questions. If the desire came from others to us, I think that's the best situation.

WEINER

Yes and no. Not for a while. I think for awhile more we must talk amongst ourselves, as performers. I meant that's why I came, that's why we all came. We talk all the time in pubs and in bars with outside questions. This is something else, I think. There are many interested students here who would like to talk. Maybe they could even set up a situation, but I don't think it fits here. I mean, I was here two years ago, and I enjoyed talking to the students.

(BEUYS and DIBBETS sit  
uncomfortably)

(attempting to cut the  
tension)

The question is still in the air...

(grinning)

Is the buffalo your bread and butter?

SMITH

Ah...again you're describing the plight of the buffalo?

WEINER

I'm not describing anything. You can say anything you like. You don't have to answer.

SMITH

(laughing)

I'd like to see your question in lights.

WEINER

I'm a very bad electrician.

(silence)

SMITH

No, if you're saying, if you're putting forth the fact that possibly I'm the last person in the room making paintings...

WEINER

(emphatically)

The problem is that you in a sense in a culture, not by my standards, nobody's standards, but by a culture's standards, you stand as the only person in the room making what they would consider immediate recognition as art. Immediate recognition. That is the only difference.

SMITH

This is due to, again, why it gets recognized as art. In certain ways, if we could get back to buffalos, you can only see buffalos on the reservation, and therefore painting you can only see at galleries.

WEINER

On the reservation.

SMITH

On the reservation. And so in a way they are protected. It is a situation, and I want to say an invented situation for my activity, which probably wouldn't be making those kind of fragile objects if the situation were to allow to show things outside of the reservation. Therefore, this would mean a change.

WEINER

You can show them water, but that you can't tell some people which way to go or what to drink or anything.

SMITH

But then that's another...

(laughing)

particularizing portrait. An exterior, public situation.

(silence)

WEINER

He just said he doesn't see the problem.

SMITH

I don't... I don't...

WEINER

(loudly)

The problem. The problem. He immediately related it to my problem.

SMITH

I mean I think the problem isn't something that... I mean I think there is a problem.

WEINER

There is the problem.

SMITH

And there is a problem and another problem...

WEINER

...not a problem.

(long silence)

WEINER

Hey Ian, you have to make a joke or something.

(light laughter)

It's quarter to six. I think we can adjourn and eat dinner around 6:30 or 7. What time do they eat dinner in Canada, does anybody know?

SMITH

A drink before dinner?

WEINER

Yes, a drink maybe. Let's adjourn. I think it makes a lot of sense.

DIBBETS

(diplomatically)

I think we can have a good conference tomorrow. In a way we are sitting now, how to say, broken by the [...] It does not make sense to force ourselves speaking about things when we are not there at all. I think it is much better to start tomorrow and the conference we want then.

(room chatter, in agreement)

E BAXTER

Would now or later be a good time to talk about when to meet the students?

WEINER

That's your business.

E BAXTER

I mean if there is an opening for the students.

WEINER

I think tomorrow night after everybody arrives.

E BAXTER

Because I think the students would probably want to know when they'd have a chance to...

WEINER

(assertively)

The pretence for us to be sitting here for all this time and not know exactly what's going on, and probably for them to sit down there and not know what's going on really is ridiculous... The possibility is that they treat the students exactly the same as they treat us.

(brief silence)

SMITH

So, it's cocktails.

(WEINER, SMITH, DIBBETS  
rise and exit boardroom.  
Others remain seated.)

(END OF ACT)

ACT II

SETTING: Boardroom with additional chairs for new panellists.

AT RISE: E BAXTER, I BAXTER, BEUYS, BUREN, DIBBETS, MERZ, SMITH, WEINER, and TRANSLATORS are again in attendance and seated. DIBBETS and SMITH have moved seats to the opposite sides of the room. CARL ANDRE, RONALD BLADEN, AL HELD, ROBERT MURRAY, SETH SIEGELAUB, and MICHAEL SNOW have joined the group.

SIEGELAUB

(reading from pad of paper)

A telegram that was read to me over the phone last night said: "Pay your dues. We are due for ours. Women's Art Workers." "Pay your dues. We are due for ours. Women's Art Workers."

(hubbub about telegram)

Did anyone catch that?

(hubbub continues)

BEUYS

Lawrence, what does it mean?

SMITH

You better do something here because they are going to get you when you get back to New York.

BEUYS

Women's Art Workers?

WEINER

White noise.

(sporadic laughter)

ANDRE

(self-mockingly, but  
deadly serious)

Art Workers Coalition is not going to be taken lightly.

(lengthy room laughter  
knowing ANDRE's recent  
history)\*

BEUYS

(addressing ANDRE  
adamantly)

Carl, I have said this to you before because you have  
this...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Einseitigkeit?

TRANSLATOR 1

One-sidedness.

BEUYS

One-sidedness. Because it is necessary in the future to  
work together. And that is, on the other side, we...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

(listening)

I have to put this to your one-sidedness.

WEINER

I agree.

BEUYS

And that is for me the only possibility for working  
together. Not in a commune. I'm against a commune.

WEINER

I'm not interested in going back to...

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\* On May 2, 1970, only four months prior to the Halifax Conference, Andre helped organize a protest by the Art Workers Coalition (which originally included Andre, John Perreault, Irving Petlin, Rosemarie Castoro, Hans Haacke, Max Kozloff, Willoughby Sharp, and Lucy Lippard, the presumed author of the telegram read aloud by Siegelau) alongside the Black Emergency Cultural Coalition at the Museum of Modern Art for its "undemocratic" policies. See Appendix A.

BEUYS

These are old plans. The freedom is to fulfill the best possibilities of my brothers and you have to fulfill my best. That's the only possibility.

ANDRE

I can certainly agree with that.

BEUYS

And therefore we have to speak about the culture of love. That's the true socialism. To give from the point of freedom a good gift for the community. That's for me the problem.

MURRAY

Well, do you all know what that is? What could that be?

I BAXTER

No selling of megaphones.

(laughter)

BEUYS

Sometimes it goes with and sometimes against the powers of the gallery. All things and the reason of the money and glory and things and all things captured in everybody's... It's about bad instincts, but you have to battle down these bad instincts.

(pointing)

For me it is the culture of the future has only to do nothing for me. All things for the art.

ANDRE

Circumstances maybe,  
but not bad instincts

BEUYS

Nothing for me!

BEUYS

(firmly)

Yes, bad instincts. Everybody has bad instincts. I do. Therefore I say, nothing for me. All things for the other. It means on the other side to make more...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Was ist abschlagen?

(listening)

More to, more to, more to work on this point of freedom to prepare yourself as a good...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Was ist Werkzeug?

TRANSLATOR 1

Working equipment.

BEUYS

A good working equipment for the social things. And therefore you have to at first do it with the point of freedom. To prepare you as a good...equipment for the community. And that's science and art. Freedom has to do work in the social system with the culture. The quality has to do with the laws of science. And the other has to do with the economy. That is the system.

I BAXTER

Let me get to the concrete thing at the root of what we're all...

(waiving off BEUYS attempt  
to interrupt)

Now, come on now! Like Carl and I were talking earlier about the possibility of a wider situation like that like the artist of the world wanting to put something out to be part of the change to the world.

ANDRE

(sardonically)

If everyone here kicked in a work of art we'd have capital of \$100,000 and a bag of rice.

I BAXTER

(uncharacteristically  
serious)

We shouldn't even stop at a million dollars.

ANDRE

Jesus, man! If you want to make money, go into a different field than art. Art is a terrible way to make money.

I BAXTER

What does that mean? What is the premise Carl?

ANDRE

Ian, the fundamental thing is that you wish to make of art all that of a society which I despise.

I BAXTER

Well, you should change what you despise.

ANDRE

I would like to have it politely removed. I'm not going to put up with it. I'm going to have it removed.

I BAXTER

Removed to other countries.

(laughter)

MURRAY

(thoughtfully, as laughter subsides)

The way I feel in listening to a lot of this, for a number of reasons we've gone through, we do have a different kind of opportunity, a different kind of freedom of movement. It is possible to make our opinions felt in ways today that are different than even a hundred years ago. But I consider myself a very amateur politician and I'm wondering if it is going to become necessary to become more shrewd as a politician.

WEINER

What about shrewd as an artist?

MURRAY

But I must say some of the things I hear...

WEINER

What about doing it through the art? Basically the only way you can change the culture without rhetoric is by making certain kinds of art.

MURRAY

But I don't agree. You're putting all kinds of limitations on the situation. What you're doing is defining your freedom.

SMITH

But it's not necessarily skill in art. It's not necessary to make art work...

BEUYS

(loudly)

What are the possibilities of...

(louder hubbub)

(BEUYS louder still)

In immense ways it's a question of what are the possibilities of art. Why are you interested to seek about education together with art students? Why do, why are our interests to meet in education for the children together with art principles? Because in your inside...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Was ist Unterbewusstsein?

TRANSLATOR 1

Subconsciousness.

BEUYS

In your subconsciousness you have to know this. This is to map your communication onto another system. And not this one, another system.

I BAXTER

Holy Christ. Any of this opening any doors?

ANDRE

(obliquely in response)

Is it possible to teach art?

I BAXTER

Sure. It must be.

ANDRE

I don't know.

I BAXTER

It's possible to teach anything.

BEUYS

A possible revolution is we teach one as we teach another man.

WEINER

No, not art.

BEUYS

Teaching's not only here in the way you have the professor who knows all things and we are the pupils. A human has to learn, man has to learn to teach one another. To fulfill the bad things for my brother and to fulfill my own bad things.

WEINER

Well, what about the big idiots, medium idiots and little idiots?

ANDRE

(audibly, to self)

I feel like we're almost part of a zen koan right there.

(sporadic laughter)

MURRAY

(sincerely)

There's nothing funny about the educational system.

WEINER

What if it is?

BEUYS

(agitated, pointing at camera)

In this room... You can't say to this group that all things in life are academic.

(pausing for emphasis)

That you will see. Next week the revolution!

ANDRE

(sincerely)

Can I ask? I don't know why, but it just struck me. How many children do we have...collectively?

(laughter)

Joseph, how many children do you have? Do you know?

BEUYS

I? My children? Two.

WEINER

I have one.

SMITH

One.

HELD

(raises three fingers)

BLADEN

(raises hands signifying)

zero)

ANDRE

None.

SEIGELAUB

One.

MURRAY

One.

SNOW

(no movement)

E BAXTER & I BAXTER

(nearly in unison)

Two.

MERZ

(raises thumb)

DIBBETS

One.

BUREN

Two.

ANDRE

(with comical intent)

Al wins!

(hearty laughter)

BEUYS

(to ANDRE, smiling)

You must have children...soon.

(more hearty laughter)

And then you see the right away. And then you see that I am your child and that you have not made your child. I am the contributor of my child. The child is a very strange person who came to this world. I am not the builder, I have not made my child.

WEINER

No child knows his father.

BEUYS

(sarcastically and audibly  
to self)

My child. I have made this child.

(hubbub)

(WEINER exits as hubbub  
subsides)

E BAXTER

(changing the topic)

How would you define a museum?

ANDRE

A museum is a collectivist place to show art.

SIEGELAUB

(sarcastically)

Not supported by very much planning...

ANDRE

(audibly, to self)

The collectivist of internal revenue.

SIEGELAUB

(to all panellists)

Do you think you can change anything?

ANDRE

What? Change anything here?

SIEGELAUB

Is there anything more that can be done?

SMITH

I don't think we're going to change anything outside this room, except for the people, the activity of the people inside this room are going to make outside of this room. That's the change and whether this event changes the people in the room, therefore it will have an effect outside of the room.

MURRAY

In most cases you have to pay for group therapy...

ANDRE

We're paying for that.

(laughing, feeling witty,  
leaning back with hands  
behind head)

Is anybody interested in this idea of an artist capitalized fund? An actual fund. I think mostly it's just kind of a gun to hold to the head of the international gallery system.

SMITH

But don't you think the international gallery system gets undermined gradually by itself.

ANDRE

On the contrary. Fifteen years ago, there was really no such phenomena in...

(pausing)

avant-garde art, the kind of art we do.

SMITH

Bullshit.

ANDRE

There was no art market in it at all. There was a market, but not in the kind of art we do at all.

SIEGELAUB

That was then.

ANDRE

I'm saying today there is an enormous art market in the... neighbouring community, of course.

(sporadic laughter)

Well, there isn't any in India to speak of, I think.

SIEGELAUB

Al had a show in India.

ANDRE

Yes, through the US Information Service. I know. Why aren't we in Vietnam?

(hubbub that falls into  
brief silence)

MURRAY

Well it would be nice to think that what gets done is to open up the situation for somebody else. Not all the doors have been closed for us.

ANDRE

And we didn't close all the doors behind us.

MURRAY

Well, I sometimes wonder at times.

SIEGELAUB

What doors do you think would be closed Bob? Since you wonder at times...about closed doors.

MURRAY

(pointing to the door  
behind SIEGELAUB)

This one. As a start.

(light room laughter)

(DIBBETS crosses room and  
sits beside WEINER)

SIEGELAUB

(to MURRAY, jokingly)

You have the basis for a hot argument. You shouldn't have made it so tough for us.

ANDRE

Given the economics of art there are only a certain number of artists at any one time who can be in the position of commodity artists, so in a certain sense if one has occupied the commodity artist position in the society you are denying that position to somebody else.

SIEGELAUB

No, no. I'm not sure that...

ANDRE

Alright. But the more money put into the art world means more commodity artist positions. That's flexible.

(SIEGELAUB nods in  
agreement)

What I'm saying is that it's a finite number. Listen, anybody can make art who wants to make art, but only a few people in our society are allowed to derive their livelihood from it.

SMITH

I don't understand the word "allow" really.

ANDRE

The amount of economic resources available to art in a society is finite.

SMITH

Okay. But I don't think it has to do with the economic thing. It's the ability of people to absorb that number, the number of people and things.

(ANDRE and SMITH talk  
over one another  
briefly)

It's like the Manhattan telephone directory or if you ever look through, you know these books published like "Who's Who". You ever seen these things? And you look through that and they send you a sample sheet of people and there are all these people who are making art.

(DIBBETS exits tapping  
ANDRE on shoulder in  
passing)

ANDRE

Commodity makers or commodity owners?

SMITH

Well they're buying commodities at the Safeway or, rather, Henri Bendel.\*

ANDRE

I would say most of those people in that book are artists who are not commodity artists simply because they do not derive their main income from art and probably derive their income from some populated field like education. I'm sure most...

---

\* An upscale women's specialty store based in New York City.

I BAXTER

Teaching. I want to go around, I want to do a question of, I just want to know...

ANDRE

Ok. Ask people.

I BAXTER

Just raise your hand.

ANDRE

What is the main source of your income? Can we ask everybody that? Okay? Joseph?

SIEGELAUB

Where is most of your money from? A suitcase, how much?

BEUYS

What? I can't answer...

ANDRE

Wait a minute.

SIEGELAUB

Where is all of your money from, most of your money? Most money from? Your art or whatever.

I BAXTER

Teaching or what?

BEUYS

(peeling a banana)

No, more from my art. Teaching is not so good paying job in Germany. I can only pay for fuel for my car.

(laughter)

SIEGELAUB

Lawrence? Lawrence, where do you get most of your money from?

WEINER

(dismissively)

Totally, inconceivably dumb.

SIEGELAUB

Richard?

SMITH

From my artwork.

SIEGELAUB

Al?

HELD

I won't answer that.

(uncomfortable laughter)

WEINER

Wait a minute. What do you mean you won't answer it!?

ANDRE

Let's just beat him up and get the answer out of him.

SIEGELAUB

Al can take care of himself physically, at least against me.

ANDRE

Ron? You care to answer?

BLADEN

(waives hand casually as  
if to pass on question)

ANDRE

Bob?

MURRAY

Well, from time to time it's teaching or the work.

SNOW

About the same. Mostly my work. Some teachings.

I BAXTER

Some teachings. Some work.

SIEGELAUB

Mario?

MERZ

The art.

ANDRE

Dibbets?

DIBBETS

From art and rarely from teaching.

SIEGELAUB

Daniel?

BUREN

From six months on, art.

SIEGELAUB

Six months?

(laughing)

More from art than teaching? More from art than anything else?

(BUREN nods his head)

So more from art than anything else.

BEUYS

(pointing at SIEGELAUB  
and ANDRE)

That's it. Next question.

ANDRE

A bunch of people didn't answer it.

BEUYS

(to ANDRE)

How much money do you invest for a political changing?  
Carl? In months?

(hearty laughter)

ANDRE

No, um, I'm very...Actually what I do is occasionally I owe the American Civil Liberties Union, all these radical liberal reformist organizations. I maybe give \$250 a year, this year and last year, to various types...the Civil Liberties Union and...

BEUYS

When is it too little and when is it too much? It depends on the people who give the money and their ideas.

BEUYS

Except if the ideas are good...When the ideas are bad it is too much. \$250.

(smiling)

If the ideas are good, then it is too less.

ANDRE

Okay, that's just...

No that's not what...

(laughter)

BEUYS

Better to be poor.

(still smiling)

For good ideas you have to invest all your money.

ANDRE

I've also donated works of art, which have been auctioned off, but that's...It's just different...

(long silence)

SIEGELAUB

(fidgeting)

Well, that very interesting.

(another long silence)

(BEUYS says something to self indecipherably in German)

MURRAY

He's getting ready.

(laughter)

BEUYS

(laughing)

I'm very ready.

(HELD stands and walks toward door)

SIEGELAUB

(sighing)

What now?

I BAXTER

I had a long speech I wanted to read for you guys, but...

(laughter)

HELD

(standing at the open door)

Gentlemen, thank you very much.

SIEGELAUB

Bye, Al.

(various voices repeat  
"Bye, Al")

(MURRAY now stands and  
walks toward door)

E BAXTER

He's leaving too.

HELD

Bye, Bob.

(HELD exits)

MURRAY

(coolly to room)

Bye.

(MURRAY exits)

ANDRE

(comically)

Well, they're gone.

(laughter)

SIEGELAUB

One of the reasons that Al said that he wouldn't answer the question apropos being able to live from what you spend most of your time...

I BAXTER

(pugnaciously)

What kind of question is that?

SIEGELAUB

I mean we had a vague once-around-the-room to see where one gets their money from, what in fact their art does support. Whether they're supported by what they do or if they have to do something else, to live, to exist, to pay for all their needs. What is that going to, Carl?

(SIEGELAUB stands quickly  
and exits the room as if  
in hot pursuit of HELD  
and MURRAY)

ANDRE

Well, it is my belief that there's only a certain number of slots in the society for people who do make their money from art, especially in this peculiar area of art that we're in. I don't know what to call it, "advanced art", um, although the word is hated, "experimental art", "research art", or what. Or anything you want to call it. I don't care what the name is because I don't put any value on the container.

WEINER

How about "contemporary art"?

ANDRE

No, because, that includes Andrew Wyeth, who is in an entirely different commodity slot. I think.

(DIBBETS mumbles)

ANDRE

Well if Wyeth were a self-professed artist he'd be in the same commodity slot. He's an illustrator. Calls himself an illustrator. He does not call himself a "fine artist," so called.

DIBBETS

There's no problem at all. We can have all kinds of fine artists.

(hubbub)

(raising voice)

No but here, this is thing I want to say. There's just nothing. It doesn't exist, okay. Don't make a problem out of it.

ANDRE

But we do exist. What I'm saying is that there's all kinds of art related to different commodity slots in society. It depends on what we do. Let's say we do interior decoration or store-window trimming. I'm sure if we looked at the budget for store-window trimming it's much higher than the so-called...

DIBBETS

(incredulously)

What!?

ANDRE

(to DIBBETS)

It would be an interesting economic thing.

(excitedly to room)

What I'm saying is artists and people related to art find a tremendous resistance to analysis, an economic analysis of their own profession, their own milieu, their own life-system within a larger life-system. If you go to your gallery, and try to negotiate terms with your gallery. They'll say,

(histrionically)

"Oh, it's so expensive. Expenses here, expenses there." And I'll say, what expenses? Let's see it in black and white. And they'll say, "Oh you can't write it down. You can't write it down. It's a lot." Whenever there is this mystification surrounding any area of human knowledge, know there's huggabug and skulduggery going on there. Perhaps not literally, but maybe it's just slop by fact of a lot of incompetent people. But I would like to see what the economics of our commodity slot is. I would like economists to go in, look at the books and see what the cash flow is, where it comes from and where it goes.

(forcefully)

Then, I would like to see who's the buyer of the artwork.

WEINER

That's not been done terribly well by us...

ANDRE

(annoyed)

It has nothing to do with that at all.

WEINER

(combatively)

...where the culture has put money into the economic situation in the United States. It is called a transfer economy. Art is subject to a transfer economy.

ANDRE

Larry.

Larry.

ANDRE

(loudly)

Larry, you're just giving me garbage! I want to see the figures.

BEUYS

The economy... There is no involved... It is a rule economy.

ANDRE

(emphatically)

It is the whole economy.  
The sole economy.

WEINER

You're still worrying  
about production value?

BEUYS

But what percent for economical behaviour?

ANDRE

I agree Joseph. But it's 100% of my economic behaviour.

BEUYS

True.

ANDRE

I mean that's no reason to not get the information, is it?  
Why is it people resist information of this kind?

SMITH

I recall a group putting a proposal at one time, a gallery of people getting a percentage of principal resale.

ANDRE

Of course. There's a law in Europe. There's a law in France. It should be a law in the United States.

(silence)

Either that or as Frank Stella suggested, the sale of art by anyone should be made illegal and artwork should be only leased. For a terminal period and at the end of that period, those artworks revert to some, um, institution. So you could lease the work of art for 99 years but that's all.

I BAXTER

Somewhat differently, I was hoping we'd put these things out as a series of documentaries and we work and put these things out as ideas and then maybe a foundation of people would see the relevance to them. I think they are very valid things, but...

SMITH  
(interrupting, following  
his own train of thought)  
Do you think the artworld gets less healthy?

I BAXTER  
Now and again...

BEUYS  
What does it mean?

SMITH  
Money, we can talk about, but that's at the least.

ANDRE  
Well, I find it...the corruptions of the artworld are so  
various, complete and diametrically challenging it winds up  
being a cracked game or another.

SMITH  
Well, for instance, this conference. I was talking to the  
PR man from Benson & Hedges and it's cost his company  
4,0000 Pounds.\*

ANDRE  
(sarcastically)  
That's about the price of a good Wyeth.

SMITH  
Or something like that. That's the bottom line.

(hubbub)

ANDRE  
But what does that mean?

BEUYS  
Well, auctioning art...

ANDRE  
(excitedly)  
That's right! It's a fact, a hard input fact. We could  
integrate that with all the other...

BEUYS  
Art in the economy is not so big.

---

\* The Benson & Hedges tobacco company was the chief sponsor of the 1970  
Halifax Conference.

(to ANDRE)

Can you describe any situation of corruption with your galleries or with any galleries? If you see a gallery is corrupt, then you don't go there. Yes and I think corruption in the normal political, political confusion together with economical things is a big corruption. Corruption in the economic of art is...very small. It is nothing. There's no corruption.

(gesturing toward ANDRE)

The man who is the dealer for you wrote articles about me. Because you are too lazy to make this protest by yourself. The gallery is a helper for you.

ANDRE

(self-deprecatingly)

Maybe I can't do it without help.

BEUYS

Why couldn't you?

ANDRE

Because my urge, my urge from the very beginning, one of the reasons I have a dealer, is my urge is that if somebody comes in and says they like something, I give it to them. That's my urge. I'm sorry. It's not because I'm a virtuous person. It's because I'm a reckless infantile person. I never really understood the sophistication of markets and so forth. So I have a dealer who can say, "You like that, then..." I mean, I have no artworks of my own. I have none.

BEUYS

But that has nothing to do with corruption. At this point, you have nothing about corruption.

ANDRE

Joseph, I think it's actually...

BEUYS

You can't give names of the corrupt people.

(ANDRE looks frustrated)

But I can describe someone as a special person. I can describe Konrad Fischer as a special person.\* But I cannot

---

\* Konrad Fischer's gallery based in Dusseldorf represented many of the top American and European Minimalist and Conceptual artists in the 60s and 70s, including Andre, Beuys, Buren, Dibbets, Merz, and Weiner.

see the corruption. That's a big word, "corruption" in the economy of art. I cannot see this, this evidence.

ANDRE

Let me give you an example of corruption: museums. The Art Worker's Coalition did a demonstration in the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art last spring. And artists made their speeches and passed out their papers and the Museum of Modern Art was there and they passed out their paper. And the Museum of Modern Art said the one criteria that they had for having art shown in the museum was "quality". "Quality". And they said this is our only consideration. Not politics, not class, race, religion, nationality. "Quality" was the only thing. The next day I received a telephone bill and in with the telephone bill was a pamphlet from the telephone company and the telephone company was trying to sell me a Princess telephone.

(light laughter)

And one of the arguments for me to get this Princess telephone was that it was so beautiful that it was in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

(E BAXTER laughs above  
the others)

(ANDRE sits back)

What they really mean every time we here "quality" in art means commodity.

BEUYS

But the museums argue in the right way when they say "quality".

ANDRE

(protesting)

C'mon.

BEUYS

The great thing about quality is this, this engaged political impact. And the museum buys this impact. Yes, what is quality? Quality is not only...

ANDRE

A bourgeois myth in art.

BEUYS

(perturbed)

Ah, no. Not "quality." Quality is a good thing. Ya, sure.

ANDRE

No, I can't believe that, because I see...

BEUYS

Are you talking about "quality" or about "quantity"? You can only to decide between quality or quantity.

ANDRE

That's another meaningless statement.

BEUYS

No, "quality" is very, very good work. Quality.

ANDRE

It's a bourgeois class myth.

BEUYS

No.

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF ACT)

ACT III

SETTING: Boardroom. Even more chairs added to accommodate the addition of extra panellists.

AT RISE: ANDRE, BEUYS, E BAXTER, I BAXTER, BLADEN, BUREN, DIBBETS, HELD, MERZ, MURRAY, SIEGELAUB, SMITH, SNOW, WEINER, and TRANSLATORS are in attendance. GENE DAVIS and ROBERT MORRIS have newly joined the group. For at least 5 minutes, there is hubbub, individual conversations, and movement in and out of the room. HELD, SIEGELAUB and SMITH are seated with backs to camera. MURRAY's voice suddenly rises above the din in the midst of argument with ANDRE.

MURRAY

...but it's why someone makes their work and the reversal is not true! By making the work one isn't supporting the war in Vietnam, nor is the government hiding behind the work!

ANDRE

But the deep, philosophical foundation of the war in Vietnam was initiated with the idea and the intents of this kind of metaphysical, spiritual freedom.

MURRAY

(sarcastically)

You're sounding like a New Hampshireite or something. It should have more definition.

ANDRE

I would say it's the moving factor of the United States.

MURRAY

That in itself is such a broad-sweeping generalization.

ANDRE

I don't think it's broad-sweeping when it involves more than five hundred thousand men.

(silence)

MURRAY

Well, they can't be dealt with when they're always pinned, when they're not picked out. When they have such slippery generalizations as hatched today.

(gesturing toward SMITH)

You thought Rick was going to be doing all this work, yet when you move to this ground, it always seems to end up as "they" or "them" or some amorphous group.

ANDRE

(raising voice gradually)

The Rockefeller family, the Mellon family, the Ford family. The families of...

MURRAY

(bothered)

Oh my god! Essentially, how many of these families are really involved in art and the war effort?

ANDRE

Have you heard of the Mellon Foundation? The Rockefeller Foundation? The Museum of Modern Art?

(silence)

MURRAY

(sarcastically)

Um, no.

(subdued laughter)

Too easy. Look, it's too easy. Such a clever simplification. Nothing but competing rhetoric.

HELD

(fed up with ANDRE,  
thundering)

This same racket over and over! We've all heard this racket over and over again, but it doesn't say anything. What are you trying to say!?

ANDRE

I'm just saying, art is not something which is absolutely studio art, even in the studio, in a relative social democracy.

HELD

(at ANDRE)

How are you going about doing this? You, yourself. What are you doing?

ANDRE

I'm not going about... What I'm trying to do is desperately achieve some kind of concrete analysis of the situation, the concrete situation and try some concrete action that could spring from that. I don't know! I'm confused and looking for answers.

(silence)

(BEUYS leans toward  
TRANSLATOR 1 to say  
something lengthy in  
German)

TRANSLATOR 1

He's saying that as artists you should be prepared to deal with every single element in every product that you do and be aware of the fact that you can make mistakes. Mistakes will be made by everyone, and the objective of a conference such as this should be that such mistakes are discovered, discover them together. He's working from the strong impression of what is art and to ask students why can't art do something for society. For principle sake, he's saying the artist has something to produce for the society in general, because we can't generalize when we speak of society first...

(BEUYS leans toward  
TRANSLATOR 1 to add  
another point)

TRANSLATOR 1

Oh, and then for the sake of Marxism, to create the individual man, or men, to simply be in society, part of society. In art you're actually serving this freedom. You

shouldn't be bound to society, just a part of the greater society. Art should serve...

ANDRE

Vietnam?

TRANSLATOR 1

...the idea of freedom.

(looking to BEUYS for approval)

Am I right?

(BEUYS nods in agreement)

ANDRE

That's exactly the political correctness of society that gets you the line of the war in Vietnam.

(silence)

(BEUYS says something aside to TRANSLATOR 1)

TRANSLATOR 1

(to ANDRE)

He's not following you.

ANDRE

The idea that art reflects primarily individual freedom, the freedom of the individual, um, is based on the idea of the individual as a religiously derived entity.

BEUYS

Yes, okay.

ANDRE

This I do not believe. I believe that man springs from man.

BEUYS

Yes, but we have nothing to do with believings and with belief. We have to research...

(adamantly)

to engage with the truth!

ANDRE

That is incorrect reasoning.

BEUYS

And that is the probability of a conference. To make...

BEUYS

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Jetzt. Wie zu sagen? Zu untersuchen was Wahrheit ist.

TRANSLATOR 1

The point of this session is to actually investigate what truth is.

BEUYS

(assertively)

I cannot understand in this connection the dependence between Vietnam and the human production. At first, human production is the possibility of disagreement, for me, and at the second level, it has to do from this point of view, with duty for the community. For this charge, for Marx it is the theory of socialism. That's at the second level. The first level is to produce in the space of freedom and at the second is to feed, or to become, more and more morality to work with community in the society, in the second level. The point of the human production, the point of the ideas, the point of thinking, and to the point of the dependence of human beings on the metaphysical things.

(looking away from ANDRE)

And therefore, another remark to Carl Andre, I pray for the man as connected with metaphysical action.

(silence)

ANDRE

(trying to regain his footing)

This will sound a bit off the point, but I don't think it is off the point. We do not have to say what the function or the purpose of art is at all because mankind without art is inconceivable. I don't know if anyone can think of a society or culture without art. But what I'm saying is that you don't have to say what art does because art invariably springs up. So, we are the people that our society will probably see as springs, unconsciously. But of course it springs consciously in other aspects of society too. But for me you see, it is not freedom. Freedom is one of these metaphysical ideas I don't believe in because freedom from what? Um, I think true freedom is understanding limits and necessities.

BEUYS

(confidently)

Yes and here we have the next point to ask what is your need? If the human being, entity, of two worlds...of the

world of the environment here in that it belongs to the divines of non-theism and polytheism, and so on, and it is only the possibility of man to be captured in this environment of the surroundings of material. It's the possibility of man now, on the other side, the possibility to go out through the screen of information, I will say, at first, through the transmission wall in another entity. And for me, what Carl Andre says, at first, is agnostic thinking against this human being. It is another position.

ANDRE

That's fair. I'm not...

BEUYS

(triumphantly)

This is another position. Yes? So, I think we can speak long over this and I think now there are other matters to do. To say anything to this point...I will not say alone what are things for me.

ANDRE

(feistily)

One more question. Joseph, this philosophical difference between us is also a technical difference in a way, but does this come consciously after the work? For me, what I say is a rationalization of what I am not conscious of on a linguistic level. My work springs from something deeper than my...talk.

(gesturing toward BEUYS)

Exactly! The talk comes after the work. That's true for me. Is that true for you?

BEUYS

Yes.

(WEINER groans)

MURRAY

It must be.

WEINER

It's not true for everybody here.

MURRAY

I think it is at different times.

BEUYS

The next, the next...

MURRAY

(impatiently, to WEINER)

How do you want to be consistent with the form of...

WEINER

Because it might be consistent within what's at stake. If one in a technical position sets about to do something in one way or another, utilizing what we call art in any way, matter or form, there is a possibility that consciously you take control of almost 50% of the situation, which is quite high to begin with. The other 50% is of course mostly the unconscious. But these rationalizations may come before the work. It may be a priori rationalization, which makes change,

(emphatically)

but not necessary within the process of making more work. It may change as another a priori rationalization. Which means, a very tight moral situation. Meaning, the situation is a seminal interaction of the art being put into the societal sphere doesn't influence or change the art and only you as a human being are influenced and changed by the society. The art then of course becomes a necessary part of society.

ANDRE

Art is never outside of the societal sphere, at least that I'm aware of.

BEUYS

(unequivocally)

It's a question of what can art relate to this culture, what can relate to our culture, our specific culture. You have to distinguish between cultures. You have to have more and more consciousness of our special culture as a culture of narrowness and a culture of a system captured in its possibilities. And in this moment, I have to think about the systems of science, of natural science. What is the system of natural science now in the moment and what is my system as an artist? How can I bring larger the mind's idea of natural science? This issue is about other productions. In this cultural system are risks to the end of united development. It's not that there aren't possibilities to make a new way in the development and to work out this culture, to make and not regress this culture.

(pointing in the air)

That's it! I want to distinguish this. I'm not against positivism and rationalism. Rationalismus. I'm only interested to make bigger, to make the consciousness

greater. And I think to get out of the trap of this culture. That's my problem.

(pausing)

And how is the technique to take out of this trap? I think the political thing, and all political activities have to do with this and they have sure positions against aggressions everyday. Vietnam? Sure. It's very important, to erase difficulties and the collusion and so on. But they can't find the best reasons to go against these catastrophes with better ideas from human understanding on human beings. Then you ask, "what's a human being?", "what's information?", "what is thinking?", "what is culture?", "what is natural science?" Now, in the past, and in the future. How we can make a process from this system to another system? That's my question.

ANDRE

(unconvinced)

Ya, I think the two way functions of art always have been... Art does two things: it's about holding fast and letting go. That's what art is about in every culture there is.

(BEUYS leans to TRANSLATOR  
for explanation)

WEINER

I think what Joseph is trying to say is the art instead of holding fast and letting go...

ANDRE

(loudly)

And. And. Letting go of...

(TRANSLATOR speaking quietly  
to BEUYS)

Survival and patronage.

(silence then hubbub)

MURRAY

(calmly but firmly)

Larry, your point allows for a conclusion that if you can so easily link what you do with where it's shown, or where you choose to show, or where other people show, taken to institutions and their activities, their private

activities, and the political implications of this objective, how closely do you work this all out? Seriously?

ANDRE

(interjecting)

Well, I was saying that I'm supportive of their world but not with their jobs.

MURRAY

Hasn't patronage always been a problem in this sense? I mean, think of artists of the past and what they...

ANDRE

It was society. Society does not...

(HELD leans back in chair  
and stares at ceiling)

MURRAY

(becoming heated)

But patronage is much more specific! A very specific individual.

ANDRE

You mean private patronage or...?

MURRAY

I'm talking about a king, a pope.

(hubbub)

ANDRE

(redirecting the  
argument)

On the other hand, there has never been a relationship in art except a market relationship.

MURRAY

What I'm saying, in general, the issue has always been a problem. I'm asking you, how directly, how much bearing you think it has on the work?

ANDRE

(loudly)

Listen, this is not just a problem of the artist! I mean, this is a problem of anybody within a society who has an ethical vision on one hand, and practical likes and

accommodation to his own ethical abilities on the other.  
But that's a problem everybody would have.

SMITH

Well instead of a making a work of art...

(searching for words)

What kind of problem is that because that would be like superimposing a public space on a private imposition. And sometimes with public aspects, you are swamped with private intentions.

ANDRE

Sure. I think, for myself, I got involved in art in the first place because it was the one area I could see in society when I could take complete responsibility for some...

(pausing)

for something in the world that I could say to the best that I can design it I am totally responsible for this and I stand on it, literally. I stand on it.

(laughter)

And it is the fault of no one else or nothing else, if this thing fails.

SMITH

How would you condition this ability that you could have "total" responsibility? I mean...

DIBBETS

He does have total responsibility!

SMITH

He does have, but so that his control is dependent on things like particular supplies or something or particular ways the situation strikes you.

ANDRE

(pedantically)

This responsibility is a conditional responsibility, of course, because I don't believe in absolute responsibility but a conditional amount of responsibility as compared to another thing. Because I can survive the three vector model of a work of art, which has three things...

(ANDRE holds up two fingers on left hand and one on the right and makes a triangle

in the air)  
like three lines. If they come together, there's a possibility of a work of art. The three vectors, they're arbitrary. One is subjective, that is, one's own history and beliefs. The second is objective. That there is a sufficient demand for the work, there's space in the world for it. I mean, I could be in a situation where I could not make works because the world may not want these works to exist. It has to be an objectively, an objective, physical situation. Third is an economic vector, that is, can you command sufficient resources to bring these things together?

(holding up fingers again  
in a triangle shape)

If those three vectors come together there is the possibility of an artwork. Not a good one or a bad one, but just a possibility. But within that area...

(once more, fingers held  
up in triangle shape)

I have the responsibility within that triangulation.

(long silence)

(DIBBETS moves to  
opposite side of room  
and sits between WEINER  
and ANDRE)

SMITH

(to ANDRE)

So you say you also have responsibility with the economic effect of the work? You're taking on numerous jobs...

ANDRE

Well, anyway, what I mean is this community's industry.

SMITH

No, you're doing this particularly for yourself.

ANDRE

I mean, this industry's fooling itself.

(WEINER stands and exits  
the room)

MURRAY

Well that is something you're taking a political position on.

ANDRE

(excitedly)

I think what people do, regardless of what people say, it's what they do that is their truth. If somebody gets a high-paying job in the business industry, he loves his high-paying job in the business industry. I don't care what he says he does for art.

BEUYS

But if this question, if these are your questions, you have to answer yourself: "Why am I an artist? Why I am not a chemist? Why I am not a businessman?" If you were to answer yourself this question at first, you cannot make this ask or prolong this part. You have to decide to make deeper this question: "Why am I an artist and on what places can I find the reasons for this and everyday to control my activities?"

(ANDRE nods in agreement)

That's, I think, I think, necessary, na? And I think in this process, you can become an artist.

(ANDRE continuing to nod)

A good artist, na? I think.

ANDRE

(gesturing to the room)

Have you found out? I'd like to find out.

BEUYS

It is only the question of human possibilities as a producer. For there to be new things in the world. Production, for me, real production depends not on the given environment, but is a new gift in the world.

(turning to ANDRE)

That's the care thing, for me. And the utility mind for me is the closing together with this idea of freedom. Freedom, creativity. Production of the human being is a new gift to the environment.

(facing camera)

You can see part as a material, as material from the past, from history. As creativity is everyday to find a new gift to the environment. That for me is mine.

(to ANDRE)

Can you...?

(WEINER re-enters room)

ANDRE

Joseph, I would say, consciousness is just the opposite. It is nothing new under the sun. And, I don't believe in freedom. I believe in necessity. But this is, these are just words.

(BEUYS seeks explanation  
from TRANSLATOR 1)

We're like scholars of the eleventh century in the University of Paris arguing faith and good works or something. It's terribly out of...

(TRANSLATOR 1 speaking  
audibly to BEUYS in  
German)

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF ACT)

ACT IV

SETTING: Boardroom.

AT RISE: ANDRE, BEUYS, E BAXTER, I BAXTER, BLADEN, BUREN, DAVIS, DIBBETS, HELD, MERZ, MORRIS, MURRAY, SMITH, SNOW, WEINER, and TRANSLATORS are in attendance. HELD and SMITH are seated with backs to camera. SIEGELAUB is out of camera view, but in the room.

HELD

(assertively)

It is essentially a question of good citizenship here. And so far the idea or the notion that the artist has the right solution on moral citizenship... I just think, ah, it doesn't make too much sense to me. I think it's conceivable to me that you could have a fascist son-of-a-bitch and a good artist. And you could have good art that's amoral and good art that's immoral. The point I'm making is that this kind of tactic--kind of acceptance of the good things, the right life,

(gesturing upward)

the high ideals--that somehow we're all in agreement that this is what art's about. This is what art's about, that somehow we're all striving to be human beings, to be good human beings? It's kind of like a Boy Scouts meeting. Y'know, it doesn't make any sense to me!

I BAXTER

What would you talk about?

HELD

I don't know. First of all, I still haven't come down from last night and this morning. But I think that there are just two things I think about in art and the artist. One is that the artist is one of the few occupations that, as Carl said, he does it by himself and he starts the work by himself. Most human activity gradually over the years has been morally coopted to a kind of communal kind of thing where the main responsibility is you can't take good responsibility for it. And, the other thing is that art is, in my mind, totally specific. There are generalities and

generalizations that we all play around with as a kind of studio tactic or as studio dialogues, but the work of art is a totally specific thing.

(punctuating his words  
with gesticulation)

Very different from most other things, because it is specific.

BEUYS

But it is that these specific things are possibilities for all people to do.

BEUYS

For all people to do.

HELD

I believe...

That's my mind.

I believe...

HELD

(to BEUYS)

You believe that every man is an artist. I do not believe that.

BEUYS

Every man is an artist at potential.

HELD

(dismissively)

No. No.

BEUYS

No, otherwise it is necessary, it is un-necessary to make an education in art, the art education of a little child. All education of the human future has to come more and more from art. Why do we speak over education problems, over the pedagogical problems, if we're not keeping in the consciousness the possibility of the activity and of art? Therefore, logically...

HELD

I'm not here to talk about consciousness.

BEUYS

Therefore our existence is the possibility to be an artist.

HELD

Creativity and art are exclusive! There are many human activities that are terribly creative and have nothing to

do with art. You can be a terribly creative person and not be an artist. They're not interchangeable!

BEUYS

That is not my understanding from art. It's humans first...

HELD

You can be creative and not an artist!

BEUYS

Yes and now we are in this discussion and...and...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

Wie heisst "der Sinn"?

(listening)

The meaning of this conference is to understand, to distinguish the different positions. And that could be a good information for the community, for all people. I'm not here to make you...

(to TRANSLATOR 1)

überzeugen? Was ist...

(listening)

No. I'm not here to convince you. And you have to say your position and I have to clear out my position.

(to the camera)

And this we give out to all people and all people can see. And now they can choose. That for me is information.

(silence)

ANDRE

Also, I think, another thing an artist does is, his function in society. I think everybody is an artist, because I think the greatest artefact in human history is reality. The organization of sense data through education and so forth into a coherent...what we believe to be a coherent reality, but of course it's an artefact. It is not a fact of nature. Reality is not a fact of nature, but is something we share. Constantly each person is being an artist in creating this thing and infants are not born with this capacity. And what an artist does is to say frankly, I will take a little piece of this reality and I'll take personal responsibility for it.

(animatedly)

Because if everybody admitted that reality was an artefact, we would go mad! Because people would then realize they're responsible for the creation, the continuous creation of the world, insofar as we are able to think. And the artist takes a little part of that. So, I think everybody is an

artist in the place of madness if everybody admitted it, so these borderline psychotics called artists do say, "It is an artefact and I don't want any part of it."

(laughter)

But only a few can confess it.

(to HELD)

Sorry. I interrupted you.

HELD

(with growing  
frustration)

Artists have been running around co-opting every human activity...like it's their thing to do!

WEINER

Artists are human beings. How can an artist as human being co-opt human activity?

HELD

(loudly)

Well, if you run around saying,

(pointing in different  
directions)

"that's art", "that's art", "every kind of human activity is creative, therefore art"...

MURRAY

Why say he's an artist or isn't he? Why say...?

(hubbub)

HELD

I'm saying the level of conversation here is sort of running around clinging to any given human activity and saying it's creative, therefore it's artistic, therefore the man is an artist. And, I don't see it that way. I don't see it at all.

(hubbub)

WEINER

What do you mean we're saying creativity is being an artist? I don't think anybody said you have to be creative to be an artist.

(I BAXTER makes

inaudible remark that  
causes laughter by  
those in earshot)

BEUYS

I see the art manifest itself as...

E BAXTER

But that's not a victory nor important.

BEUYS

The artist gives to society caretaking. This is the short  
version.

E BAXTER

Not necessarily. To be an artist you've got to be...

WEINER

(loudly)

No! I think you can create in a sense that birth creates  
when a child is born or something, when you create a child.

BEUYS

Yes, but...

WEINER

But you don't create a work of art. You make it! You make  
it!

(BEUYS tries to speak)

Joseph, you make a work of art!

BEUYS

Yes. Yes, I make a work...

WEINER

You make it. You don't  
create it.

BEUYS

Yes, this is our specific culture, but if the child makes a  
work of art, a child doesn't make any thing.

(emphasizing each word)

He makes a real work of art. Better perhaps as me.

(returning to calmer  
speech)

And that you have to consider what it is that a child does,  
perhaps it is a very important information. And we have to  
ask why if a child becomes ten years or eleven years or

becomes fourteen, the creativity goes away. Why? Those are very big questions. And I cannot give...

MURRAY

Because he learns other ways to express himself and they tend to dominate. We're trying to express ourselves verbally...

HELD

Again, why are they creative? Why not say the child "expresses" himself? A child doesn't create things, he expresses himself.

WEINER

He communicates.

HELD

It's quite different. It's quite different.

(MURRAY speaks to  
WEINER but is drowned  
out by BEUYS)

BEUYS

I'm very very against this. I'm only here to make clear my position. I'm very heavy against this meaning to make a distinguishing between creativity and a work of art. For me, this is...

HELD

(loudly, attempting to  
interrupt BEUYS)

Everybody...

BEUYS

(louder still)

To make the machine to make an automobile or physical model is for me a way of expression. And its consequence for me is a way of creativity. And in another position, it is for me a work of art. That's my mind of human creativity. In this great scale are...

(pausing to speak to  
TRANSLATOR 1)

TRANSLATOR 1

In this great panorama of the ideas there are specific...

BEUYS

Unterschied.

TRANSLATOR 1

Differences.

(BEUYS again speaks to  
TRANSLATOR 1)

TRANSLATOR 1

Each person develops himself according to his own abilities. If he's good at analyzing, perhaps he can do something with analytics. Whereas if it's all...

BEUYS

(continuing his own  
thought in english)

Yes. And another person is more from his mental ability, as such, is more able to make mental processes and is more able to become an artist, in the special meaning of our culture. He develops his...

(to TRANSLATOR)

Eigenschaft?

TRANSLATOR 1

His particular ability or...

BEUYS

His ability more and more, and therefore he is a specialist, as an artist, in our cultural context.

(silence)

SMITH

This is a question of what you set out by being creative or what is creation. So, when once one is specialized in making works of art, objects, I would argue, that he is qualified to produce a rare object as a kind of creative licence that is particular.

I BAXTER

I disagree.

ANDRE

The mission is...

(lengthy hubbub as  
fractious conversations)

develop around the room)

(BEUYS can be heard  
comparing imagination  
and information to a  
hare)

(ANDRE, MURRAY and  
E BAXTER argue over the  
word "particularity")

(HELD eventually turns  
toward camera and gestures  
to SIEGELAUB with arms  
outspread)

MURRAY

(to no one in particular)

We're wearing down.

HELD

(to SIEGELAUB, out of  
view)

C'mon mister chairman, take over.

(SIEGELAUB walks into  
camera frame and stands  
to the left of HELD)

SIEGELAUB

(loudly)

So, we're going to meet with students around 9 o'clock.

HELD

(incredulously)

Still!?

ANDRE

Through the videotape again?

(laughter)

HELD

Well can we take a break for at least a half an hour?

MURRAY

Are you sure they want to do this?

SIEGELAUB

I'm positive. They don't mind.

(SMITH stands and exits  
behind camera)

(lengthy hubbub)

(as hubbub subsides,  
HELD attempts to pick  
up where the discussion  
left off)

HELD

It seems to me that, again, there's almost something like a ten year cycle, that every ten years artists somehow start thinking about some other kind of being. When I came up, all the analogies were music, then it turned to poetry. Everybody was "poetic" and everything had to be poetry. Then it turned to engineering and technology. Now it's involved in philosophy. The artist as a philosopher. Particularly, the same kind of limit...

I BAXTER

I see it as a solution.

(laughter)

HELD

(severely)

No.

BEUYS

(interrupting)

I cannot see the past. I see the present.

HELD

Let me finish my point.

BEUYS

(smiling)

You had interrupted me before.

(hearty laughter)

HELD

It seems to me continually there's a kind of crisis of belief in oneself and one's activity and continually trying

to make analogies to other human activities to justify one's existence. And I sense this insecurity about being an artist and the sense of wanting to make art into something other than art.

(at BEUYS)

That's all.

ANDRE

That's something I've thought of.

BEUYS

You cannot connect, you cannot say that in the past as with the present that with creativity there's something special with music, with poetry, et cetera. You have two approaches of all other possibilities of creativity. You have very much choice. You have the very extensive natural sciences. You have creativity in music, in visual art and so on. It is a construction.

(pointing at HELD)

That's your private construction.

(addressing HELD, while turning away)

I believe that is your private construction.

HELD

All of this is our private construction.

BEUYS

No.

(emphatically)

If it is all private construction, I can say once more, it is unusual to speak a word more! You can make a point! All these things are different.

(WEINER and DAVIS  
talk privately with  
one another)

ANDRE

I suppose I'm speaking as an American, for me let's say I mean,

(sardonically)

if I can still be speaking as an American.

(laughter)

May I suggest one of the things to think about for our next meeting is why, especially in the art at stake, artists

have no self-confidence in their position in society as landmarks of why they're the most exploited and humiliated profession? Why is there not some...coherence among artists to defend their own interests the way there is among doctors and..?

HELD

This sounds like the age of sociology!

(out of frustration,  
ANDRE turns head  
dramatically)

The thing is is that there's a crisis in terms of their own activity.

(E BAXTER shakes head  
in disagreement)

ANDRE

Exactly! Exactly.

HELD

Not activity in the world, but in terms of un-activity!

ANDRE

(raising voice)

No. There are reasons why artists don't have that self-confidence to rely upon standards of their own...calling because they do not have any mutual self-defence about their own interests. There is no such thing to the American Medical Association as a good doctor or bad doctor. They just qualify doctors who have their shingle above other people.

HELD

Bullshit.

(WEINER lets out a  
guffaw)

ANDRE

(ANDRE sits back in  
chair)

Oh, Al! They have a routine self-defence. Why don't artists have the same!?

MURRAY

(to ANDRE)

Are you going to ask questions tomorrow?

WEINER

Why make it tomorrow? I mean, it seems to me we travelled all the way up here to turn down and go to the party at nine. Why don't we come back in half an hour? Some time to walk around. No?

(ANDRE talks privately,  
but loudly, with DAVIS)

DAVIS

We're running out of  
time...Let's do something  
about it...

ANDRE

I'm not talking about half  
an hour, I'm just...

It just seems sort of  
silly.

Exactly.

(hubbub and general  
disorder)

(A break in the conference  
develops naturally out of  
the disorder. HELD stands  
and walks toward door,  
talking briefly to ANDRE  
in passing and exits.  
WEINER stands and walks  
over to SIEGELAUB, then  
over to talk to MERZ who  
remains in his seat.  
SMITH changes seats to talk  
to BEUYS. ANDRE and E  
BAXTER converse loudly)

(For a lengthy period of  
time people come and go in  
the room, blocking the view  
of the camera on occasion)

(As the dust settles, E and  
I BAXTER, MERZ, SMITH,  
BEUYS, BUREN, MURRAY, SNOW,  
DIBBETS, WEINER and

TRANSLATORS are present.  
 SIEGELAUB is pacing around  
 the front of room by the  
 video camera. BEUYS is  
 already seated in same  
 place. MURRAY has moved from  
 his seat across the room to  
 speak to BEUYS. The chairs  
 with backs to camera have  
 been removed)

(For another 5 minutes the  
 remaining panellists enter  
 and exit the room as  
 conversations continue. A  
 person is passing out coffee  
 on a tray as someone is  
 making shushing sounds off  
 camera)

DIBBETS

(diplomatically)

Let's start again. We want to come out and make it open,  
 because people have left, as far as I can see now, just the  
 people who were against it. And there maybe a few people  
 left still against it, but it doesn't say that it can't  
 still be handled properly. I would like to have tomorrow  
 again the group a short conference that will make clear the  
 hopes of more than just a private one.

WEINER

It's on the table for voting tomorrow.

E BAXTER

We need an open forum tomorrow.

DIBBETS

That means that tomorrow we will have a conference which  
 will be taped and brought out as a...book. Or, in a way,  
 just as it was in the beginning.

(hubbub)

I'm not against that. So, I don't want to say we should do  
 it like that but I want to bring up that we will come back  
 to the first point and we'll see again whether we will open  
 that meeting to the visitors or not.

BEUYS

I think that is very good.

DIBBETS

Okay.

E BAXTER

So we start tonight?

DIBBETS

No, we wait till tomorrow because all the people aren't here. I think then we have a situation tomorrow when all the people are here. As we start anew the conference, then we can see what will come out or not. And I think it doesn't make a big problem tomorrow to have again this conference. Taping another fifty minutes. Because just now everybody has to say what they think about it. And so these questions of long talk and who talked long enough, I guess.

WEINER

There was a request to take photographs.

E BAXTER

Maybe we give our permission?

WEINER

Yes, except there've been photographs taken all the way along. Everybody takes one and says, "I'm terribly sorry, I never thought of that."

BEUYS

(teasingly)

That's the new wallpaper.\*

WEINER

(smiling)

No, that was an older problem.

(quiet laughter)

But that was done on a courtesy level, you see. What the others sympathized with, some paranoia came up, and

---

\* *Beuys is referring to both the Projects Class (coordinated by David Askevold) and the Lithography Workshop, which were essential in boosting the College's international reputation through the inclusion of high-profile artists at the time. The "problem" Weiner obliquely refers to may have been a feeling of exploitation of participating artists for the college's benefit.*

everyone else came here on a courtesy level. But regarding people saying privately that they preferred not to take photographs, everybody is hanging around the chair or the corner going...

(making a camera form  
with his hands)

"click". Puts me in a strange position. It was made quite clear I didn't want people wandering around going...

(makes camera form  
again, silently)

I BAXTER

Well, what's wrong with that?

WEINER

It's like saying "Bob's your uncle."

BEUYS

(smiling, pointing at  
MURRAY)

You mean Murray? He's not so old.

(laughter)

And Morris just left.

(more laughter)

WEINER

(seriously)

We really have time? We can finish this without trouble. There could be only one fault in one's position: that one has chosen the opposition's models. Not in any dramatic sense or anything else, but we're all up shit's creek and don't know it.

DIBBETS

(laughing)

It's really a possibility.

SMITH

(to WEINER)

And you're the only American with us now.

(laughter)

WEINER

(to MURRAY)

Wait. You're an American.

(MURRAY shakes his head)

You were born in Canada?

(MURRAY nods)

Oh, so I guess I am the only American left.

DIBBETS

(jocularly)

So I guess there's no problem anymore.

BEUYS

Because that's a question Al made: "What is the political importance of art?"

(laughing)

Of course, what else is there?

(WEINER laughs into his  
coffee cup)

It would be better to speak about mankind in the present situation in the culture as captured. He may think I am a broken record, but...

(BEUYS trails off  
mumbling to himself)

SIEGELAUB

But that's after Al had decided that he wasn't going to get his way about total privacy. That was his militancy, trying the other way around, trying to militate everybody against the students, against the situation and the institution. That was his way of dealing with it.

(BEUYS nodding in  
agreement, smiling)

BEUYS

It's not only an "institution".

(bluntly)

It's not about institutions, it's reality. Why we can't see the hunting dog, and the buffalo and the hare and so on?

(BEUYS laughing)

(WEINER appears amused)

Being artists for me...

(pausing)

That's a question too of what is information. What is an information? Who gives information...in the world? I think about the relation to very good information. The very good realization of a sculpture, a very good realization of a...a special idea. A very good decision and a special constellation to the whole world, but it is a special constellation. And the possibility of the human being is that he has the position of the embryological point. All other informations in the environment you can see built up through history and the development of the human...mind. A sixth sense. A special sixth sense, especially information. The possibility of the human being is to have as a point the embryological point. He is very free. He is against all this...specialization. It's a freed sense. A real embryological point. That's for me the human being. And together we have the humanities as humans.

(taking a deep breath,  
solemnly)

And otherwise the world is dead for me. There's just no other possibilities.

(pointing at SMITH)

Before you made the question belonging to morality, because where I said to you a man has freedom against the dead and against the living things and really he is a figure between the two. But maybe we are not dead enough, as Valéry said, and therefore he is on top of the development cleverly. And that is the basis for the research, the investigation of special cultures. Questions on science, questions on art, questions on pedagogy, questions on economical situations and so on. And that's my understanding from politics...

(pausing)

and if it would be the normal mind to politics, I would be too against the politic. But I think that is another mind. Another idea of politic.

I BAXTER

What happens if the pope is discovered to be..?

BEUYS

What?

WEINER

(continuing I BAXTER's  
train of thought)

What happens if the pope happens to be discovered smarter than man?

(BEUYS leans toward  
TRANSLATOR 1 for  
clarification)

(hubbub)

What happens!? Just perhaps as something that is in the  
realm of possibilities.

BEUYS

(sincerely)

This actually is a very interesting question.

WEINER

(puckishly)

It is for me an interesting question.

BEUYS

I have not...do not understand...

(listening to TRANSLATOR  
as the question is fully  
explained)

(WEINER and DIBBETS have  
a private conversation)

(BEUYS leans back to ponder  
the question)

Yes...

WEINER

(responding to a point  
from DIBBETS, laughing)

...he would have to keep his privacy. I'd love to see him  
do it.

BEUYS

That's a very special question, because...

WEINER

Yes, because...

BEUYS

Because what happens, in the end, is...

WEINER

What I'm telling you too, Joseph, is their culture is more developed than ours perhaps. What happens if the pope has a better culture than we do?

BEUYS

I think that's an important distinction...

WEINER

What happens to your position?

BEUYS

(flummoxed)

Yes, but it's not very exactly understanding what I mean. I mean...the possibilities of intellectual creation...and the possibilities of...

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF ACT)

ACT V

SETTING: Boardroom.

AT RISE: BEUYS, BLADEN, DAVIS, DIBBETS, MERZ, MURRAY, SNOW, and TRANSLATORS seated in front of microphones. HELD, SMITH and SIEGELAUB seated with backs to camera. There is a lot of disruption and movement at the outset. After a few minutes, BUREN and WEINER enter the room followed by MORRIS. Everyone finally takes a seat. BEUYS and HELD are having a private discussion in their corner of the room. Occasionally, SIEGELAUB looks back at the camera. ANDRE, I BAXTER and E BAXTER enter the room and take their seats. As things start to settle down, suddenly BEUYS stands and exits.

HELD  
(impatiently, shaking  
his head)  
What's happening!?

SIEGELAUB  
Something with the students.

HELD  
(confused and frustrated)  
What's happening?

SIEGELAUB  
Something down in the gallery.

ANDRE  
(animatedly)  
Let's get started here. We're going to be meeting with the students.

(Suddenly, STUDENTS start to pour into the room, walking in amongst and behind the chairs. A few sit on the floor in the middle of the room. Others line the walls standing or sitting, while most fill the entranceway. The panellists sit silently for some time until students settle into place)

(BEUYS re-enters the room, carrying a muffin on a plate, and retakes his seat)

HELD

(loudly)

Why are we keeping this forum with the video on now that the students have entered the room!?

ANDRE

They wanted it fully public and on record.

HELD

But if this was a video conference and the students are here now the video should be shut off.

(to the STUDENTS in the doorway)

Can you all move in?

(STUDENTS, now a large number, continue to enter the boardroom, sitting and standing wherever there's space. SMITHSON and SERRA appear briefly in the doorway, then disappear)

MORRIS

(authoritatively, to STUDENTS, in the main)

If this is an event, if this is about politics or art, points of view on art, then you have no idea what the difference is and it is complicated for those concerned, one that has a direct relationship to the panel. When one sets up an intention for being here and doesn't meet that

intention, it is a moral offence as a kind of information. People looking for information will [...] This is not well known, not within the realm of what you know, and you can't be dominated by what you get. And so the possibility of having a discussion here is so limited. To think of the possibility of even having Greenberg here and not half the people I talked to know a thing about him...

(voice rising gradually)

that constitutes as being senseless, corrupted by giving you guys other theses, putting us on TV, putting us in a performance situation! This is the situation that we're involved in here right now. To be involved in some discretion within a just community is investing responsibility to other people that'd be good for all.

(pausing briefly, for rhetorical effect)

The situation hasn't considered the power of information. Information becomes powerful. If I start lecturing fifty people, it's going to be an entirely different conversation. The amount of information out there is [...] So, if the artists don't get a good character sketch, there is a question of how much you can go by. Is there any sense, in addition, to the idea of putting out a book, which in itself is a certain kind of information passed on through another kind of medium? I think that's one of the great errors of our time. To put out something with peripheral and minor information, for us, continuous and always there, is [...]. So, the suitable type of question is if we were to not go about this situation, would it, would the situation be safer in itself? Not as a statement of rejection but as a statement of intent or addition in terms of what we think we are and what it is we're doing. So, it is not an issue of politics.

(adamantly)

Politics has nothing to do with what we're doing here!

ANDRE

(loudly, at MORRIS)

Politics is politics. It doesn't matter!

(ANDRE and MORRIS argue over one another across the room as hubbub erupts)

(STUDENTS shift places in the room, talking to one another, occasionally blocking the video camera's

view, while argumentation  
amongst panellists  
continues to be overheard)

(defensively, to the  
room)

Look, I know the point of Bob's presentation, but...

HELD

(interrupting)

The point of videotaping the conference for the students,  
the moment that decision was taken was bullshit! There were  
people that were against the video being made public from  
the beginning!

(further collapse into  
disorder with hubbub from  
panellists and students  
alike)

(After nearly ten minutes  
of this situation, the  
STUDENTS begin to thin out  
of the room. When the video  
camera regains a clear view,  
only the panellists remain)

(only ANDRE and MORRIS can  
be heard arguing with one  
another across the room)

(ANDRE suddenly stands and  
exits)

(SIEGELAUB tosses what looks  
like a can of beer to WEINER.  
He opens the can and appears  
to ask BEUYS if he'd like  
one too. BEUYS shakes his  
head "no" in response)

(HELD, sitting on the edge of  
his chair, tries speaking to  
the room, but cannot be heard  
above the hubbub, which has  
again erupted)

SMITH

(loudly)  
How the hell do you..!?

(WEINER can just barely  
be heard reprimanding a  
panellist across the room  
for being poorly read, as  
BEUYS sits silently with  
hand on chin, looking  
inward and dismayed)

(END OF ACT)

(END OF PLAY)

**APPENDIX A —  
The Art Workers' Coalition**

*The Art Workers' Coalition began to form in early 1969 through meetings held by several artists and critics in New York City. By February, 1969, a number of demands were identified, and subsequently boiled down from thirteen to eleven in June, and revised slightly to apply to all museums in March, 1970. The summary of the demands below are excerpted from Lucy Lippard's essay "The Art Workers' Coalition, Not a History," Studio International, November, 1970:*

**A. WITH REGARD TO ART MUSEUMS IN GENERAL THE ART WORKERS' COALITION MAKES THE FOLLOWING DEMANDS:**

1. The Board of Trustees of all museums should be made up of one-third museum staff, one-third patrons and one-third artists, if it is to continue to act as the policy-making body of the museum...
2. Admission to all museums should be free at all times and they should be open evenings to accommodate working people.
3. All museums should decentralize to the extent that activities and services enter black, Puerto Rican, and all other communities...The should convert existing structures all over the city into relatively cheap, flexible branch-museums or cultural centers that could not carry the stigma of catering only to the wealthier sections of society.
4. A section of all museums under the direction of black and Puerto Rican artists should be devoted to showing accomplishments of black and Puerto Rican artists, particularly in those cities where these (or other) minorities are well represented.
5. Museums should encourage female artists to overcome centuries of damage done to the image of the female as an artist by establishing equal representation of the sexes in exhibitions, museum purchases, and on selection committees.
6. At least one museum in each city should maintain an up-to-date registry of all artists in their area that is available to the public.

7. Museum staffs should take positions publicly and use their political influence in matters concerning the welfare of the artists...

8. Exhibition programs should give special attention to works by artists not represented by a commercial gallery...

9. Artists should retain a disposition over the destiny of their work, whether or not it is owned by them, to ensure that it cannot be altered, destroyed, or exhibited without their consent.

B. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A MINIMUM INCOME IS GUARANTEED FOR ALL PEOPLE, THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF ARTISTS SHOULD BE IMPROVED IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. Rental fees should be paid to artists or their heirs for all work exhibited where admissions are charged, whether or not the work is owned by the artist.

2. A percentage of the profit realized on the resale of an artist's work would revert to the artist or his heirs.

3. A trust fund should be set up from a tax levied on the sales of the work of dead artists. This fund would provide stipends, health insurance, help for artists' dependents, and other social benefits."

**APPENDIX B –  
Seating Plans**

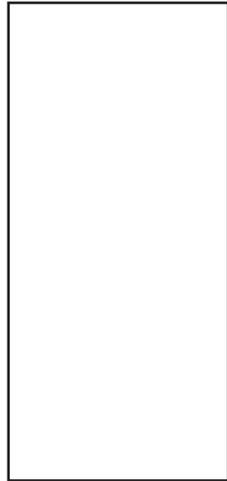
THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE - ACT I

(empty)

(empty)



I Baxter



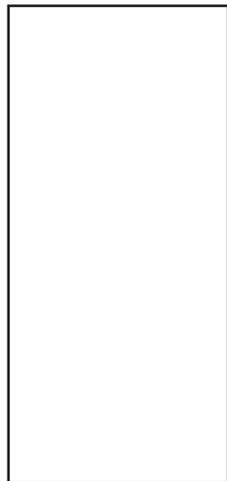
(empty)

E Baxter (on floor)



(empty)

Translator 2



(i) Dibbets

Merz



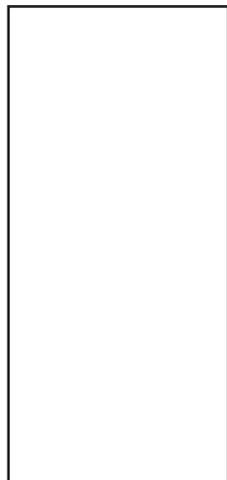
Weiner

Buren



(ii) Dibbets

Translator 3



Beuys

Smith

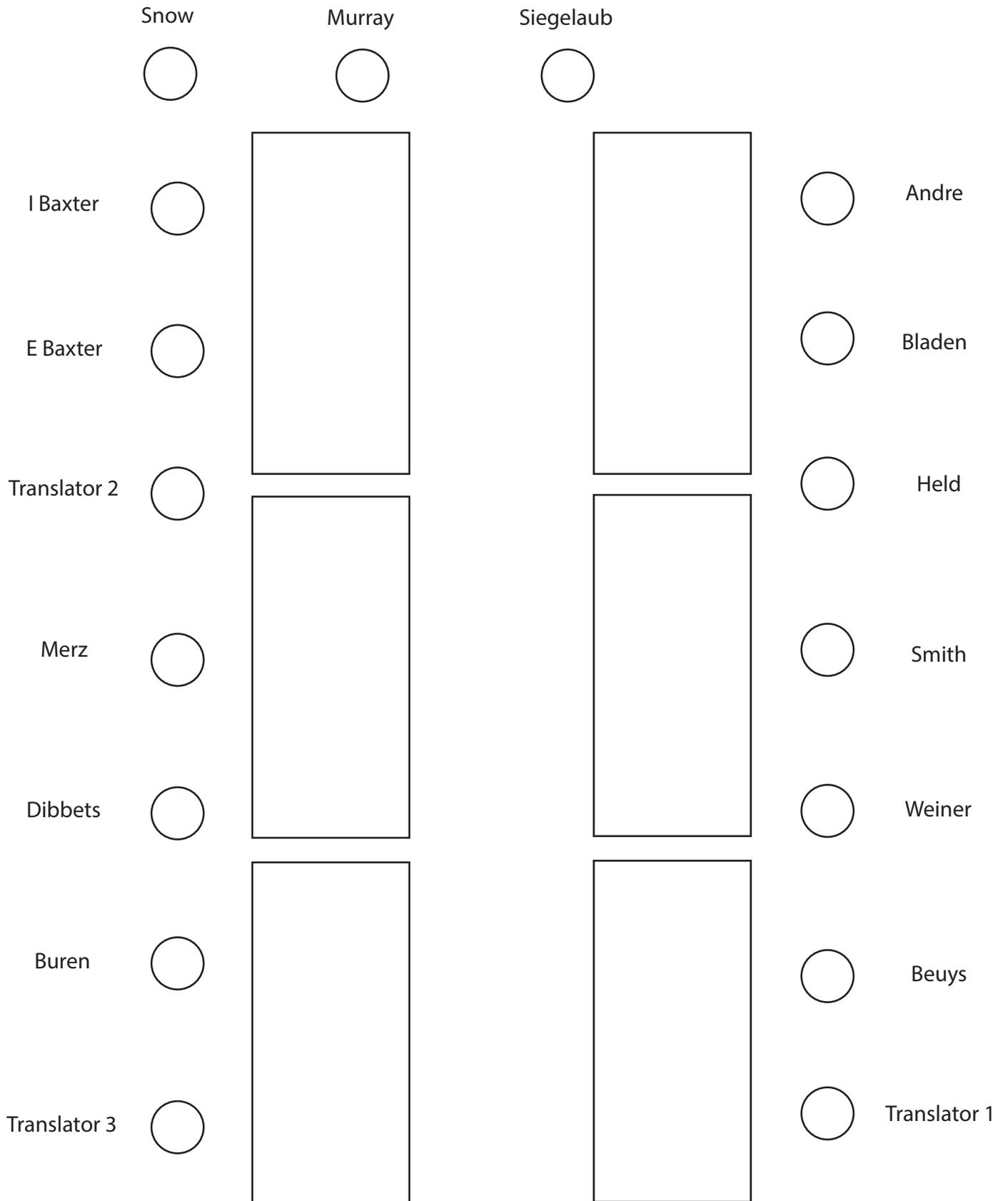


Translator 1



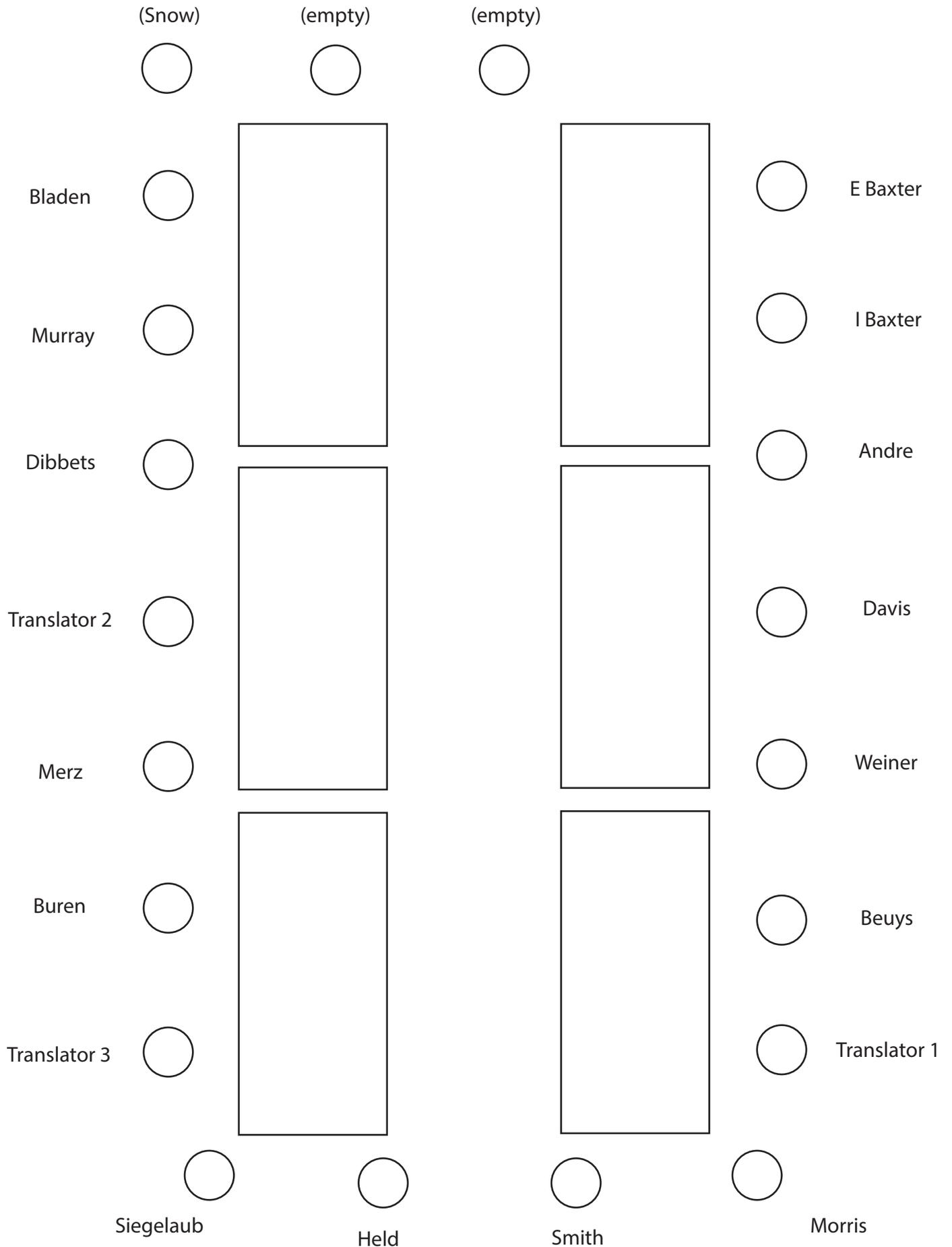
Reporter

THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE - ACT II



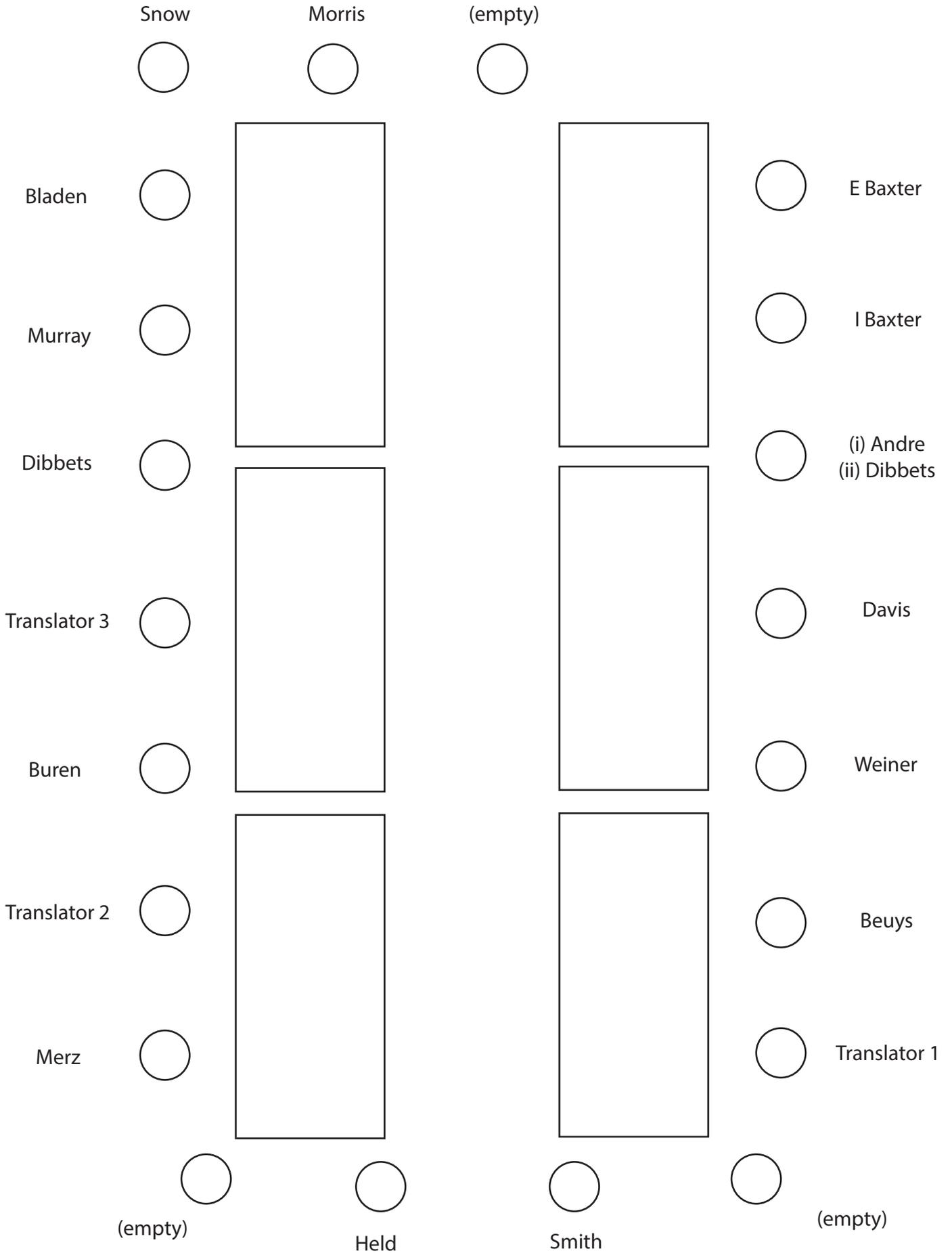
\* tables separated

THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE - ACT III



**THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE - ACT IV**

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**THE HALIFAX CONFERENCE - ACT V**

