Courting the unexpected is often combined with the unabashed apology of subjectivity. Stewart Home states: "For me photography is most alluring when both the person behind the lens and what is being photographed self-consciously manifest their subjectivity. Traveling across 'Britain' to discover 'America' is only one of the many ways in which such subjectivity might remake the world in both photographic and material form. . . . The psychogeographer . . . knows that the world cannot be recorded, it can only be remade."[99] "Remaking the world" is usually done in smoke-filled cafés. If these debates rarely lead to concrete action, what about walking?

2 A Form of Perception or a Form of Art?

The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to a rigorous scrutiny, and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world, of which science is the second-order expression.

—Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*[1]

William Wordsworth used to walk in order to think or write, with phrases spoken adopting the cadence of feet on the ground. Jean-Jacques Rousseau could meditate only when walking: "When I stop I cease to think; my mind only works with my legs."[2] Friedrich Nietzsche was said to value only thoughts that come from walking, while Søren Kierkegaard spent his mornings strolling through Copenhagen, stopping briefly to chat with passers-by in the Ostergade or hail fishmongers in the Gammel Strand before returning home to put to paper what he had composed afoot: "Every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness; I have walked myself into my best thoughts, and I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it."[3] As Saint Augustine put it, *solvitur ambulando* (it is solved by walking).

Walking and Falling

Robots have learned how to roll, dance, move up or down stairs and even hit a ball, but they are still clumsy when asked to move forward on two legs. Walking is not as simple as it looks.

In their table of contents for *La marche humaine: Kinésiologie dynamique, biomécanique et pathomécanique* (Human Walking: Dynamic, Biomechanical, and Pathmechanical Kinesiology), François Plas, Éric Viel, and Yves Blanc give us an idea of the complexity of this task.[4] The process known as the "double pendulum" combines muscular actions (the heel attacks the ground, the sole of the foot is pressed down flat, the heel takes off and is followed by the toes, the lower limbs move forward

and then totally extend) and movements of the skeleton (the pelvis rotates vertically, shifting its weight to the free side, the knee flexes, the pelvis turns to the side, the lower limb rotates one way, the waist in the opposite direction). And this describes only the movement of a Western subject wearing city shoes and walking on level ground.

Bipedal walking mobilizes both a learned competency and involuntary input. A baby who totters across the living room for the first time sets into motion an innate motor program. His performance is played out by the abdominal and dorsal muscles and the osteoarticular system (feet, ankles, knees, legs, hips, arms, shoulders), which receive instructions by way of the peripheral nerves. Each participant responds by informing the nervous system of its state and position. In response to this sensory input, the brain modifies its command, immediately generating more feedback and further adjustments. For a long time, scientists believed that these movements were directed by a single control circuit in the brain. However, recent research has shown that walking involves several distinct networks.[5]

The workings of proprioception are visible in anyone who is learning a new movement skill. Toddlers wobble and sway as they correct their movements, gradually gaining in accuracy and fluidity. When the skill is finally acquired, it becomes automatic. Every time we take a step forward, we start to fall, then by swinging one arm and the opposite leg forward, we regain our balance and catch ourselves from falling. Walking literally embodies the process by which "the live being recurrently loses and reëstablishes equilibrium with his surroundings" (John Dewey).[6]

The ABCs of Movement

The Dance of Ordinary Language

In the early 1950s, San Francisco–based choreographer Anna Halprin developed the notion of task performance, the prescription and execution of improvisations based on everyday gestures. She was interested in the way movement arises from internal sensation. If you are aware of what is happening in your body, you notice that the bodily responses come straight from the nervous system. Responses can happen so quickly that you do not have time to prepare the next step: it is already there.[7]

Among Halprin's students were Simone Forti, Robert Morris, and Trisha Brown. When Forti moved to New York, she attended Robert Dunn's composition class from 1960 to 1962, where she met several dancers with whom she later formed the Judson Dance Theater. Dunn had been a student of John Cage at the New School for Social Research in the late 1950s. He encouraged participants in his Tuesday evening workshop to use constraints or predefined rules to produce new choreographic sequences.

The Judson group, which included Steve Paxton and Yvonne Rainer, explored the mechanics of everyday movements (walking, bending, carrying objects) and through them the fundamentals of motion—weight, verticality, speed, rhythm, balance, and imbalance. This "dance of ordinary language"[8] used methods derived from the sciences to explore basic physical phenomena. Its proponents renounced psychology and expressiveness to investigate experiential data. Yvonne Rainer set out these aims in her *NO Manifesto* from 1965:

> No to spectacle no to virtuosity no to transformations and magic and make believe no to glamor and transcendency of the star image no to the heroic no to the anti-heroic no to trash imagery no to involvement of performer or spectator no to style no to camp no to seduction of spectator by the wiles of the performer no to eccentricity no to moving or being moved.[9]

In her works of this period, the body was treated as an object. *We Shall Run* (1963) features twelve participants dressed in suits and ties, who dart back and forth across the stage for seven minutes.

Robert Morris was involved with Simone Forti, his first wife, in both the Halprin workshop and the Judson group. Influenced by Forti's use of "rules" to generate movement—she would employ "one set of things to generate results entirely different from the first set of intentions"—he began building objects to structure space.[10] Several of his early minimal works, like the 1961 *Column*, were made for dance performances.

These experiments crystallized the qualities of the Judson Dance Theater. Improvisation, chance procedures, and written scores all investigated the possibilities of ordinary movement—interdisciplinary border crossing and the "why not?" attitude. The Judson dancers gave themselves "time to explore, fail, get it right," as Trisha Brown put it. Forgoing the glazed look and robotic gestures of modern dance, performers looked and behaved like human beings who could be fat or thin, tall or short, trained or not. Blurring the distinctions between professionals and amateurs also meant that painters could dance and dancers could make movies.

In Steve Paxton's work *Satisfyin' Lover* (1967), forty-two participants[11] wearing street clothes walk from left to right, stop, stand or sit still, and then return, each at her own rhythm. In a note to performers, Paxton specified: "The pace is an easy walk, but not slow. Performance manner is serene and collected. This dance is about walking, standing, and sitting. Try to keep these elements clear and pure. The gaze is to be directed forward relative to the body, but should not be especially fixed. The mind should be at rest."[12]

Here the score given to each group of dancers is unambiguous, or so it seems. Members of each group walk across the stage one at a time, some pausing after a set number of paces and others sitting on chairs that face the audience. Asimina Chremos participated in the restaging of this dance in 2000 as part of *PastForward: The Influence*

of the Post-Moderns.[13] She described lining up with forty other dancers to "walk down the hall, through the door, down the steps, past the security guard and onto the stage." When and at what point does "everyday life" segue into "art"?

I am #5 in line for *Satisfyin' Lover*. . . .

My score is:

Enter when #1 pauses
Walk to 1/5 across stage
Stand 20 seconds
Continue walk to exit.

My experience of doing this simple work so far, just walking on stage and standing and then walking, is that of being exposed. There's nothing to do but be yourself. A couple of previous performances, I've waited for my cue, entered, and then in the middle of counting start to think: did I walk too fast? Nancy asked us to be calm, relaxed. . . . am I calm? Oops, I'm thinking, not counting. . . . Breathe, sense the space, I remind myself. . . . I stand in the black space of the stage and try not to look directly into the light. . . . People pass by me; I feel as if I am receding. Then I'm done counting and I go. It's not the same walk I do upstairs to go down the hall, away from so many eyeballs.[14]

In 1972, Paxton instigated "a contemporary game" he called *Contact Improvisation* "as a means to explore the physical forces imposed on the body by gravity, by the physics of momentum, falling and lifting."[15] Paxton focused on breathing and becoming aware of one's bones and muscles to explore what he calls "a form of perception rather than a form of art": "I was trying to understand what makes integrity in movement. I thought I spied in CI a form arising from us rather than imposed upon us. It's a game that takes two people to win, so it doesn't create losers; it ignores gender, size, and other differences. It's about attending to your reflexes in a touch communication—faster than words, faster than conscious thinking."[16]

In Trisha Brown's pieces, dancers tried shifting and transferring weight, gravity, and weightlessness. They walked down a ladder (*Woman Walking down a Ladder*, 1973),[17] walked while suspended from a wall (*Walking on the Walls*, 1972),[18] and crawled over Manhattan rooftops (*Roof Piece*, 1971).

Man Walking down the Side of a Building was first performed in April 1970 by Jed Bark. Strapped into a mountain-climber's harness with his arms held tightly to his sides, he moved down the facade of a seven-story building at 80 Wooster Street in Manhattan. Out of the audience's view, an assistant on the roof gradually let out the rope to hold the dancer perpendicular. Brown described the process as a "natural activity under the stress of an unnatural setting. Gravity reneged. Vast scale. Clear order. You start at the top, walk straight down, stop at the bottom."[19]

In May 2006, this gravity-defying walk was reenacted in London: it took the performer less than five minutes to move slowly down the facade of the Tate Modern. Situating the body in the world meant the audience was faced with a kind of split perspective: no matter where they posted themselves, they could see only part of the performance. From the ground, they had to crane their necks to see the performer, while the man manipulating the rope was hidden from view; from the top floor, they could see the rope pulley but were unable to see the man who was walking on the facade.[20]

Repetitive Walking

In the 1960s, practitioners in every field explored repetitive forms. The experimental minimal music made famous by La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass (the New York hypnotic school)[21] often involved the reiteration of motifs and phrases, using drone effects, phasing, and tape looping. Visual artists explored everyday rituals, cultivating obsessive, repetitious actions. From 1965 until his death in 2011, Roman Opalka counted and manually painted numbers as he spoke their names, from one to infinity. Each painting was called *Detail, OPALKA 1965 / 1 – ∞*. Since 1966, On Kawara has made paintings that bear only the date of their execution meticulously painted in white on a colored background (*Today* series). During the 1970s, he traced his daily itineraries on photocopied maps (*I went*), sent telegrams declaring *I am still alive*, and sent postcards on which he stamped the time at which he awoke on the day he posted the card (*I got up*). In an attempt to reconstitute ordinary moments of his childhood, Christian Boltanski produced photographs in which the artist mimed gestures he had made as a young child—sobbing, sliding down a bannister, throwing a pillow.[22]

For Bruce Nauman, the ritual meant making faces or pacing—to inventory the different ways he could walk around his studio, varying parameters like gait, rhythm, speed, angle, balance: "There was also the idea that if I was an artist and I was in the studio, then whatever I was doing in the studio must be art. Pacing around, for example."[23] So he borrowed a Portapak video camera to film himself *Playing a Note on the Violin While I Walk around the Studio* and *Walking in an Exaggerated Manner around the Perimeter of a Square*. The camera stood still in the middle of the room facing a wall. The videotape shows Nauman moving through the frame, disappearing, and reappearing, while in the background, the sounds of footsteps and violin playing continue.

In *Slow Angle Walk (Beckett Walk)* from 1968, he strode stiffly around the studio. Although earlier works were ten minutes long, *Slow Angle Walk* documents an hour of Nauman's antics in front of a camera posed on its side to make it look as if the

artist were walking up the wall. As he explored various ways of keeping his balance, Nauman wavered and wobbled, turned, advanced with difficulty, crawled, rolled, and tripped, evoking the uncertain walk of the title character in Samuel Beckett's novel, *Molloy* (1951).[24] Says the former vagrant Molloy: "'and having heard' that when a man in a forest thinks he is going in a straight line, in reality he is going in a circle, I did my best to go in a circle, hoping in this way to go in a straight line. For I stopped being half-witted and became sly, whenever I took the trouble. And my head was a storehouse of useful knowledge. And if I did not go in a rigorously straight line, with my system of going in a circle, at least I did not go in a circle, and that was something."[25] Like the Judson dancers, Nauman used his body as an instrument to explore the limits of movements and the pull of gravity within the confines of the studio. He said he wanted to make art "that was just there all at once . . .like getting hit in the back of the neck. You never see it coming; it just knocks you down."[26] His videos manage to show space in time while also conveying a sense of "all at once." They are often shown as a continuous loop without beginning or end. The repetitive gestures and lack of any recognizable story line give even a casual viewer the impression after a few minutes that the work has been seen in its entirety, like a fractal in which every part reproduces the whole. In these pieces, he discovered that an effective way of structuring time was to make a work that was ongoing: "there wasn't a specific duration, so where this thing can just repeat and repeat and repeat, and you don't have to sit and watch the whole thing. . . . it became almost like an object that was there, that you could go back and visit whenever you wanted to."[27]

The 1960s were a period of experimentation when artists pushed limits, and boredom was one of those limits. During the same period, Andy Warhol was framing pieces of space-time, beginning with the six-hour opus *Sleep* (1963), and Michael Snow was exploring structure in films like *Wavelength* (1967), in which the camera takes forty-five minutes to zoom into a photo of waves tacked to a wall.

Nauman transposes into time the serial structures of the minimalists. As his contemporary Eva Hesse said: "If something is meaningful, maybe it's even more meaningful said ten times. . . . If something is absurd, it's much more greatly exaggerated, absurd, if it's repeated."[28] Repetition, especially if it builds to a high energy level, as it does in Sufi devotional music (Qawwali), can induce in viewers a hypnotic or ecstatic state of consciousness. Ecstasy comes from the ancient Greek ἐκ-στασις (*ek-stasis*) (to be or stand outside oneself, a removal to elsewhere). In Nauman's videos, however, the repetition creates no such build-up and, if anything, causes energy to be lost.

More than a decade later, Beckett himself made the television ballet *Quad I + II* (1982), which he called a "piece for four players, light and percussion."[29] Accompanied by relentless, polyrhythmical percussion, the cloaked performers in *Quad I* enter the square one by one, each stooped figure following its own itinerary, distinguishable from its fellows only by the color of its cowl. Yellow, red, blue, and white, the

players scuttle around and through the square, tracing triangles with mathematical precision, smoothly avoiding one another as each skirts the center on the left. Then comes *Quad II*, the pared-down second act in black and white. The percussion has been reduced to what sounds like the footsteps of the four now identical ghostlike figures as they shuffle through their movements. All the way through, the figures move like automata. Although the piece is rather hypnotic to watch, there is no build-up: the pace is regular, even slowing in the second part, as if to suggest fatigue or winding down.

A Walk as an Experience

In his 1934 book *Art as Experience*, John Dewey argues that the task of aesthetics is "to restore the continuity between the refined experiences that are works of art and the everyday events, doings and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience."[30] For the last century, artists have developed methods for bringing art and life into closer contact. Robert Filliou sums it up: "art is what makes life more interesting than art."[31]

Responsive Acts: Listen!

Dewey begins by looking for links between art and the everyday. How do works of art emerge out of ordinary experiences? What are "the factors and forces that favor the normal development of common human activities into matters of artistic value"?[32]

As a concert percussionist, Max Neuhaus witnessed "the gradual insertion of everyday sounds into the concert hall, from Russolo through Edgard Varèse and finally to John Cage, where live street sounds were brought directly into the hall." In Cage's silent piece, *4'33"* (1952), listeners were encouraged to pay attention to ordinary ambient sounds. Ironically, *4'33"* relies for its meaning on the concert hall context, with a seated ticket-holding audience that expects a pianist to perform. This method proved to be ineffective. Said Neuhaus: "the audience seemed more impressed with the scandal of 'ordinary' sounds placed in a 'sacred' place than with the sounds themselves." So he decided to take the experiment a step further: "Why limit listening to the concert hall? Instead of bringing these sounds into the hall, why not simply take the audience outside?" So in 1966, he brought twenty participants into the streets of New York to listen to the city, beginning at Avenue D and 14th Street. The word *listen* was stamped on their hands. Neuhaus recounted his first performance, carried out for a group of friends. Walking down 14th Street, they could hear "some spectacular massive rumbling" from a nearby power plant, and when they crossed a highway, they were accompanied by the sound of its "tirewash."[33] Later, he took them to his Lower East Side studio and played some of his percussion music. When invited to lead subsequent tours in other places, he made a point of saying nothing to encourage the

audience to really listen to their surroundings. For the most part, they followed his example.

The idea is promising. But as someone twice removed from the events, I am left with more questions than answers: what did Neuhaus's tour groups take away from their experience?

"[R]eceptivity is not passivity," says Dewey. Nor is it mere recognition, which is perception arrested before it has time to develop so that it can serve some other purpose. In recognition, we fall back on a previously formed scheme. When we recognize a voice on the phone as a friend or a telemarketer, we greet one and hang up on the other. Recognition goes no further. Conversely, complete perception consists of "a series of responsive acts that accumulate toward objective fulfillment." It involves an act of reconstructive doing, in which consciousness becomes alive. This process requires the implicit cooperation of motor elements: "an act of perception proceeds by waves that extend serially throughout the entire organism." It entails "the going-out of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy. To steep ourselves in a subject matter, we have first to plunge into it."[34] I decided to take the plunge in New York.

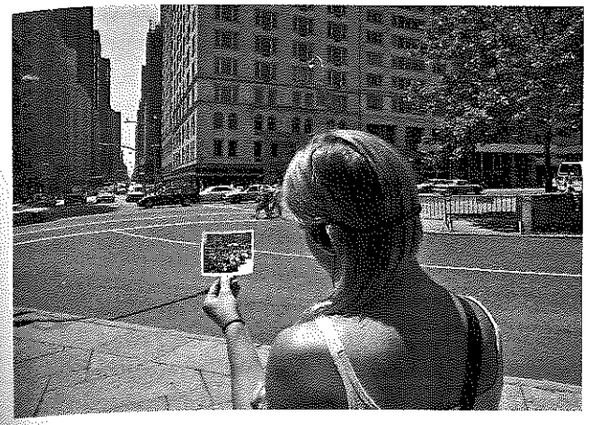
Coming to Terms with Central Park

I began by going into Central Park through the wrong entrance. After collecting Janet Cardiff's audio guide, *Her Long Black Hair*, at the Public Art Fund on East 53rd Street, I entered the park as soon as I caught a glimpse of it, wandering for twenty-five minutes before locating the Jose Marti statue that stood opposite Sixth Avenue. After the merciless grid of city streets outside the park, here the winding paths were irregular and asymmetrical, like those of an English-style garden. Between 1858, when Central Park was started, until its completion in 1873, cartloads of depleted soil and rocks were dug up and replaced by fertile topsoil brought in from New Jersey. Hundreds of families were displaced to make room for over 4 million trees, shrubs, and plants.

Janet Cardiff's low voice in my ear interrupted my reverie: "I have some photographs to show you. Take out the first one. Number one, it says. It was 1965. Almost 40 years ago. Line up the image to the scene in front of us. It's taken from where we're sitting now. The tree is in blossom. Look at the Trump building back then . . . and the women's hats. They're all wearing them."[35]

Trumpets and tubas: is a brass band marching past as I study the seated audience in the photo (figure 2.1)? I had forgotten about pillbox hats with veils. The First Lady was wearing one of those in the Dallas motorcade on November 22, 1963.

"Put the picture away. I hope it doesn't rain again because I want you to walk with me." I look up: there is no band, just a couple of horse-drawn buggies with a cargo of tourists. "Get up. Go to the right. Walk past the statue. Try to walk to the sound of my footsteps so we can stay together. . . . And then down the stairs . . . all the way to the bottom."



(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 2.1
Janet Cardiff, *Her Long Black Hair*, 2004. Audio tour. Janet Cardiff designed the forty-six-minute audio tour for the Public Art Fund in New York City. Visitors to Central Park were given a compact disk player, a map, and a set of snapshots. While walking the route prescribed by the narrator, their experience was augmented by music, spoken text, and sound samples, many of which came from the site being explored. Courtesy of the artist; Luhring Augustine, New York; Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin; and Public Art Fund, New York. *a:* Trumpets and tubas, it sounds like a brass band is marching past. *b:* A snapshot made by Cardiff shows the pond frozen over, yet today is warm. *c:* Near the end of the walk, the narrator points out the Dakota building, where John Lennon lived and died. The found snapshot shows a woman with long black hair standing at this spot with her back to the photographer: "She's frozen by the camera, forever facing the lake."

Map, compact disk player in a bag with a shoulder strap, headset, photographs. These items, though neither heavy nor bulky, occupy my hands and monopolize my attention. It is hard to take notes, make sketches, or take photos while listening and looking. I decide not to try. Even so, I find myself stopping frequently, backtracking on the CD. My son had come with me, but we could not share the experience. If we had each taken an earphone, we would have missed the illusion of three-dimensional sound.

Is that someone sneaking up behind me? Cardiff told me not to look back, but I do so instinctively. No one. The sound of scissors makes me jump. She's cutting hair?

Reading over my notes later, I cannot always distinguish what I saw from what Cardiff's voice in my ear told me *she* could see: A man seated on a bench with all of his belongings in garbage bags, waiting for the park to close. If he had been there when I was, he would have had a long wait. Cardiff admitted to being a bit scared, "but it seems safe." A fleeting, involuntary image, almost a reflex in a woman walking alone. In 1989, a young woman jogging in Central Park was brutally raped and left for dead.

Later on the CD, after a chorus of "hellos," a phone rings:

Janet's voice: Hello?
Man's voice: Where are you?
J: In the park.
Man: Be careful.
J: Don't worry. There's lots of people around. What are you doing?
Man: I just had dinner.
J: Keep to the left.
Man: What?
J: I'm just recording. I'll phone you later, ok?

I noticed people lying on the grass, and Cardiff saw a couple kissing, or was it the contrary? One of her snapshots showed the pond frozen over. Today it was warm. By the time I left, the lawns were littered with sunbathers. She describes squatters walking on a tightrope. Pop!

Do you hear that? They're shooting scavengers, the wild goats and pigs. They were supposed to eat the garbage in the city streets, but they keep coming into the park to eat the grass. So they have to shoot them.

Who are *they*, I wonder? The groundskeepers? The image is jarring. During the building of Central Park, "[t]he political quagmire was matched by the appearance of the park itself, which was rubbish-strewn, deep in mud, filled with recently vacated squatters' huts, and overrun with goats left behind by the squatters. Until they were eventually impounded, the rampant goats were a great nuisance, eating the foliage of the park's few trees."[36]

Charles Baudelaire portrayed the poet as a scavenger who extracts nuggets of art from the chaotic muck of ordinary life.[37] He knew Paris before Baron Haussman demolished great swathes of the city to make way for the *grands boulevards*. In the streets of New York, I did not see the dumpster divers who are often seen in Paris as they sift through detritus for food or salvageable objects. New York churches and libraries have begun to enforce antiloitering policies, relegating bag people to sidewalks and park benches. Some of the homeless camp in the subway and railroad tunnels, where they are virtually invisible. Cardiff's voice in my ear pointed out that during the Great Depression, Central Park housed over two thousand homeless: "Now many live underground in tunnels all over the city. Deep in the many layers, in some areas over ten stories deep."

"At this very moment . . . an organ-grinder in the street . . . wonderful." I strain to make out her words: "It is the accidental and insignificant things in life which are. . . . [The music gets louder. A child is wailing.] Kierkegaard wrote that. He was a walker. Every day for many hours, he would wander through the streets of Copenhagen."

At one point, the path is encumbered by children's strollers lined up in front of the zoo entrance. Negotiating my way around them, I pass the polar bears without a glance, so I need to rewind and turn back. Cardiff's voice tells me that the home range of a polar bear is an area the size of Iceland. There is still no bear. I hear thunder, and yet the sunlight feels warm on my head and arms. Are the bears in the zoo endangered too?

"Thunder. . . rain . . . hotel room . . . yesterday," says Cardiff's voice intermittently. "There are so many layers in front of my eyes." "I saw a woman fall to the ground. How can I really know what I've seen?"

The different layers shift, uncovering others. A lone saxophone player stands on the mall. The voice in my ear gives directions ("The bandstand should be on your right"), warns me sharply ("Watch out for the skaters"), comments ("The ice cream stand ruins the view of the bridge"), speculates on park dwellers that neither of us can see: "There's a whole other city beneath us. It's like in our minds. Deep layers that we only see in our dreams."

She points out The Dakota building, where John Lennon lived. Was Yoko Ono there with him when he was shot? she wonders. I squint at the skyline. She mentions a gondolier singing, but I see a couple of empty rowboats. Construction fences confuse the end of the walk, the path down to the lake, the woman in the snapshot:

My words are here now, just as she was here. They'll disappear even though I try to keep them, record them, play them over and over in my attempts to hang onto time.

I want you to do one last experiment. Match your breathing to mine.

Hard as I try, I cannot keep the rhythm. When I stop to catch my breath, the walk is over.

Artist's Experience and Viewer's Experience

John Dewey defines "*an* experience" as one in which "the material experienced runs its course to fulfillment."[38] This happens when we finish a job, solve a problem, or finish an activity like playing a game of chess or eating a meal. It happens when an action "is a whole with its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is *an* experience."[39] He opposes this to nonaesthetic experience in which we are not concerned with the outcome or the connection with previous events. We yield to outside pressure or evade; we do not complete what we started.[40] The enemies of the aesthetic are the humdrum, the slackness of loose ends. A walk can be an experience in this sense if it is complete. Janet Cardiff designed *Her Long Black Hair* as a whole. If I broke it off in the middle, would I then compromise its integrity? Although I was prevented by construction fences from reaching the edge of the water at the end of the walk, my greatest difficulty came from rewinding the recording. I did this several times. Then on the way back to the entrance, I listened to the beginning again to help me remember it. Although this is probably akin to the approach of professionals (musicians do not listen to music the way the rest of us do), it seemed somehow to minimize the experience. The experience should have to be completed at least once before we can analyze it.

An experience can also be distinguished from other experiences. It is composed of both disturbance and harmony: the passage from one to the other is the moment of "intensest life." If everything were entirely harmonious, it would be impossible to distinguish sleeping from waking. If it were only perturbed, with one interruption after the other, the odds would be too great: "In a world made after the pattern of ours, moments of fulfillment punctuate experience with rhythmically enjoyed intervals."[41] Taking in, responding to, a vital experience requires reconstruction, which may bring pain or pleasure—or both.

Doing/Undergoing: Two Sides to Every Story

Art involves both audience and artist engaging in "the intimate union of doing and undergoing" that makes an experience what it is: "To perceive, a beholder must *create* his own experience. This means ordering the elements into a whole. Just as the "artist selected, simplified, clarified, abridged and condensed according to his interest," writes Dewey,[42] so too the beholder. Both must extract what is significant. Moreover, this operation takes time. There is form because there is dynamic organization. It is a growth through the stages of inception, development, and fulfillment: "What distinguishes an experience as aesthetic is conversion of resistance and tensions . . . into a movement toward an inclusive and fulfilling close." He compares it to the advance of an army where "all gains from what has already been effected are periodically consolidated."[43]

The artist must find the right rhythm, neither too fast (the experience is diluted, "thin and confused") nor too slow (it "perishes of inanation"). The form of the whole is present in every part. The creator "is in process of completing at every stage of his work,"[44] as is the viewer or the listener. Aesthetic satisfaction must be intimately linked to the activity that gave rise to it: the qualities of the result organize the process of production. When the artist succeeds in incorporating the making into the outcome, the perceiver can appreciate the way the medium is being "used structurally" to create an aesthetic whole.

Can I as a listener incorporate the process into the result, since it is I who make the walk? The experience of making *Her Long Black Hair* is described in detail in *The Walk Book*. The audio walk is the medium with which Cardiff is most often associated. Although she is not the first to create a tour as an artwork (she mentions being influenced by Linda Montano's walking tours of San Francisco), she has extensively explored its possibilities.

She began working with sound in the early 1990s. During a residency at the Banff Centre in Alberta, she used a dictaphone to note her impressions as she wandered through a graveyard and stumbled onto the audio walk form after accidentally rewinding the tape. Playing it back to find where she had left off, she heard the sound of her footsteps, her spoken words, her breathing. She immediately began to walk with her "virtual body":[45] "I had found a way to be in two different places at once . . . to simulate space and time travel in a very simple way."[46]

Two weeks later, she produced her first audio work, *Forest Walk* (1991). Since then, she has created more than twenty-four walks for specific places in Europe and North America. Both *Janet Cardiff: The Walk Book* (written with Mirjam Schaub) and Cardiff's Web site offer excerpts from the soundtracks of her walks. Listening to them at the computer is like viewing reproductions of paintings. Isolated excerpts cannot replace perceiving the binaural sound in the setting for which it was conceived. These works are immersive and engage vision, smell, and proprioception as much as listening. Cardiff designed the forty-six-minute audio tour *Her Long Black Hair* for the Public Art Fund in New York City. It ran for a limited time in 2004 and then again in the summer of 2005. At kiosks set up at the entrance to Central Park, visitors were given a CD player, a map, and a set of snapshots. While walking the route prescribed by the narrator, they listened to music, spoken text, and sound samples, many of which come from the site being explored:

> The virtual recorded soundscape has to mimic the real physical one in order to create a new world as a seamless combination of the two. My voice gives directions but also relates thoughts and narrative elements, which instills in the listener a desire to continue and finish the walk.[47]

Wanting to "express the way our minds jump around all over the place," Cardiff has developed a nonlinear method of composition. She slows down the process of

telling a story to build the intimacy that is necessary to create interest (and narrative tension) while still allowing the result to be open-ended.[48]

Begun at the instigation of curator Tom Eccles, *Her Long Black Hair* took six years to make. The artist searched New York to find a place that was quiet enough for the immersive experience she imagined: Manhattan lacks meandering side streets where the listener can be alone.[49] After settling on Central Park, she began filming there with a view to defining an itinerary. The route needed physicality and contrast, variety and texture (like a drawing, she notes, or a landscape), so she wanted to include both small and large spaces, quiet and noisy parts. It was important to "ground the listener's body physically."[50] Although the soundtrack overlays many layers of dialog, Cardiff eliminated the words whenever possible so the sounds themselves could produce the effects she wanted.

Narrative Threads

The recording is divided into six tracks, each one beginning at a place marked on the map—including the Jose Marti statue, the tunnel, the dog's statue and "the last bench facing gnarled tree and lamppost." These places play no structural part, says the artist, but are there only to help orient visitors and allow them to line up what they hear with visible landmarks.[51]

The title comes from a Baudelaire poem, "La chevelure" (The head of hair), which Cardiff quotes several times. The woman in the found photos also has "long dark hair." The narrative is fragmented, as in most of her other works. Cardiff weaves in several parallel stories, juxtaposing collective history (the digging of Central Park in the mid-nineteenth century, when "they uncovered human bones buried a hundred years before"), fiction (the flight of a runaway slave)[52], and mythology (Orpheus and Eurydice), with private memories (her own encounters while taping sounds in the park, fleeting memories of cutting her hair or watching her husband sleep). Other verbal images evoke Cardiff's themes of predilection—a friend whose mother abandoned him when he was small, three pedestrians, Kierkegaard in Copenhagen, Baudelaire in Paris, and a (fictive?) escaped slave in America. At times, Cardiff links the different strands of her narrative: "In 1850 while Harry Thomas made his epic nighttime journey across America, three months of walking, Baudelaire walked the streets of Paris. I like to imagine that at times their footsteps, lined up as if they walked together." To dramatize the experience, a low-pitched voice can be heard singing "Sometimes I feel like a motherless child" a cappella. Elsewhere, opera singers perform airs from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

When a couple asks her to photograph them on the bridge, she notes "A lot of photos have been taken from here. The camera tries over and over to capture it but it can't." Along with the map of the park, the visitor can consult a set of five snapshots—one made by Cardiff during a previous visit, the others found at a flea market. Three of these showed a young dark-haired woman posing in different areas of the park. Cardiff instructs us to stop at each of these locations.

She speculates about the woman and the photographer, her companion. "Why were there no photos of them together?" "We don't know if she's happy or sad, if they stayed together or walked home separately." At the end, before telling us to look at the last photo (where the woman turns her back to the camera), she whispers a bit melodramatically: "Don't look around. I think Orpheus's final glance must have been very much like a snapshot, burned into his retina forever."

A Dialectical Landscape?

In a 1973 essay titled "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," Robert Smithson presents Olmsted, the creator of Central Park, as "America's first 'earthwork artist'."[53]A photograph of the site from 1858 showed that the land used for the park was already degraded, like the strip-mining regions Smithson had seen in 1972 in southeastern Ohio. He declared "the best sites for 'earth art' are sites that have been disrupted by industry, reckless urbanization, or nature's own devastation."[54]

Janet Cardiff's narrator takes a more traditional view: "Olmstead designed this park with the aesthetics of landscape painting in mind. There's a foreground of trees and grass with a winding lane. Then the rough texture of the rock contrasts with the lightness of the tree foliage." These remarks illustrate the way that the artist built her walk to follow the course of a stream that was covered over when the park was created. Like Smithson, she's interested in the multiple narrative layers that anchor her story in the site's past. Sometimes her attempts to create resonance sound strained: "The soldiers who fought during the Civil War could have walked along this path and seen this tree. . . . Perhaps beauty is linked to things that vanish. It's about our sadness at wanting it but not being able to catch it." At other times, simple details set off recognition. When she recounts coming to New York as an art student many years earlier, she adds: "I found everything beautiful then. I would take pictures of garbage on the street, sunlight hitting the concrete, mannequins in a store window. That's one reason I like walking through the city now—to come across those spontaneous moments of magic again." I remember photographing abandoned houses awaiting destruction; they had been ripped open to make way for a freeway. On their walls, several layers of peeling paper recapitulated the physical history of each room: flower prints lay exposed next to flaking paint and psychedelic patterns. Cardiff's sound collage produces a similar effect.

In the 1970s, when Central Park was thought to exemplify an outdated nineteenth-century picturesque aesthetic, "a static formalistic view of nature", Smithson maintained that "[a] park can no longer be seen as 'a thing-in-itself', but rather as a process of ongoing relationships existing in a physical region"[55] An "endless maze of relations and interconnections", it evolves continually and "nothing remains what or where it is."[56] His article begins with an epigraph, in which Olmstead recounts visiting the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont in Paris with the landscape architect who had designed it. When Olmstead complimented him on "the best piece of artificial planting of its

age" he had ever seen, his interlocutor "smiled and said, 'Shall I confess that it is a result of neglect?'"[57] At the time Smithson was writing, New York City was on the verge of bankruptcy and Central Park showed signs of decline:

> In the spillway that pours out of the Wollman Memorial Ice Rink, I noticed a metal grocery cart and a trash basket half-submerged in the water. Further down, the spillway becomes a brook choked with mud and tin cans. The mud then spews under the Gapstow Bridge to become a muddy slough that inundates a good part of The Pond, leaving the rest of The Pond aswirl with oil slicks, sludge, and dixie cups.[58]

By the time Cardiff created her piece, the neglect had been displaced. The lawns in Central Park are now groomed for tourists, yet the homeless man sprawled on a bench evokes the underside of the city's prosperity. Smithson suggested dredging the mud and depositing it "on a site in the city that needs 'fill.' The transportation of mud would be followed from point of extraction to point of deposition. A consciousness of mud and the realms of sedimentation is necessary in order to understand the landscape as it exists."[59] Cardiff's sound-work evokes this sedimentation metaphorically—yet on site, in the real landscape.

Augmented Walking

To build her audio tours, Janet Cardiff "uses miniature microphones placed in the ears of a person. The result is an incredibly lifelike 3D reproduction of sound. Played back on a headset, it is almost as if the recorded events were taking place live." She records the main track and adds as many as eighteen tracks of layered sound effects, music, and voices.

Binaural sound is not new. In 1881, the *théâtrophone* allowed Parisian subscribers to listen to the opera from their homes using a telephone equipped with a special headset and small speakers for each ear. Proust was a subscriber. Forty years later, a Connecticut radio station tried a stereo experience, broadcasting sound for each ear on different frequencies. Listeners needed to have two radios.[60]

In 1930, Walter Ruttmann made a "movie for ears" that used only the sound track on a reel of film. *Wochenende* (Weekend) used sound effects to create mental images and enhance the narrative. It could be either broadcast on radio or projected as a movie without images. Shortly before the onset of World War II, Orson Welles's Mercury Theater on the Air staged a radio performance of H. G. Wells's 1898 novel *War of the Worlds* that was so effective that listeners felt they were "witnessing" an invasion of unidentified flying objects in Grover's Mill, New Jersey.[61]

These works differ fundamentally from Cardiff's, since their listeners stay still rather than moving through space. Her sound walks rely on the mode of perception associated with portable museum audio guides, which date to the cassette tape recorders of the early 1960s.[62] In the 1990s, museums adopted the computerized system Inform using CDs so that users could invent their own path through the exhibition.[63]

Janet Cardiff's walks revert to the earlier linear model, but the listener is not drawn into a structured narrative that moves toward a climax and denouement. Cardiff seems to flirt with narrative to give resonance to the audience's experience. The details are evocative, but the characters are only roughly sketched: the runaway slave flits through the story like the proverbial ghost. Even Cardiff herself is a more of a docent than a character. The intimate details do not add up to anything, unless it is that hair cutting is a form of violence on a par with shooting scavengers. Were it simply a story, the experience would be disappointing. It is not just a story.

One parallel might be surrealist novels. In Louis Aragon's *Paris Peasant* (1926) and André Breton's *Nadja* (1928), photographs are used to replace verbal descriptions just as Cardiff uses sound sampling to evoke events and places we cannot see. The awareness of space is exacerbated by precise indications (Breton gives addresses) that readers/listeners can match up to what they see on the street. It is a story that we perform.

Contemporary artists are often suspicious of straightforward storytelling, thinking it too easy to manipulate the audience. Directors who make films to be projected in darkened theaters have at their disposal a large panoply of rhetorical devices to shape moviegoers' experience. Although Cardiff uses artifice to ground her listeners' bodies in her narrative, she renounces complete authorial control over their sensory experience. *Her Long, Black Hair* depends for its dynamic on what Central Park brings to the mix. And this may change over time.

The Art of Walking

Richard Long was probably the first contemporary artist to see walking as an art form. Hamish Fulton, another British "walking artist," says: "The walking is the constant, the art medium is the variable"[64]

Many artists do projects that involve walking but not exclusively. Indeed, the art of walking has gathered practitioners from nearly every field insofar as it concerns all of us. Walking blurs the borders between the arts, between artist and audience.

The situationists imagined a total art that resembled architecture and was experienced by drifting. Walking structures experience. We perceive ourselves and our environment in interaction as we move along a path. We shape space as we go. Walking may be a form of architecture. Stalker, an Italian collective known for its walks within the landscape at the edges of cities, was founded by a group of architecture students. Francis Alÿs studied architecture. When Heath Bunting and Kayle Brandon take tours of fences and underground paths, they consider this joint practice to be "architectural" as it deals with space.[65]

Here While We Walk is an improvised sidewalk choreography executed by a group of silent participants who move within the limits of an elastic band (figure 2.2). I was among the dozen people led by Gustavo Ciríaco and Andrea Sonnberger through the

(a)

(b)

streets of Paris. The area we explored encompassed small side streets, a park, an expanse of open ground near a building project, and an industrial loading dock on the banks of the Seine.

Without speaking, the group formed a mobile architecture in which the individual parts worked together to create an overall shape, a fluid configuration that was arrived at by subtle negotiation. Both the walkers, who were busy concentrating on being "here" while we walked, and the passers-by, whose remarks were met by silence, perceived the urban landscape differently. Like a line of pupils on a class field trip or the dancers in *Satisfyin' Lover*, we learned to move through space collaboratively. Crossing busy streets, walking up and down steps, sharing the shifting space within the elastic band while keeping pace with each other, we produced a proprioceptive architecture that insiders and outsiders alike could feel as well as see. Were we on our way to becoming an army, swapping our individuality for a group identity? When the walk was over, as we stepped outside of the band, the artists handed us kites they had been carrying in a backpack. We watched the kites soar to the sky. Walking together structured our perception *here*, and as we moved along, the time we spent confined within the elastic band felt like *an* experience. It culminated in a collective letting go. As if birds were free.

◀ **Figure 2.2**
Gustavo Ciríaco and Andrea Sonnberger, *Here whilst we walk (Aqui enquanto caminhamos)*, 2006. A group of silent participants moves through the city streets within the limits of an elastic band. *a:* Walk in Lisbon, Portugal, 2006. Photograph: José Luís Neves. *b:* Walk in Copenhagen, 2009. Photograph: Torben Huss.

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Artists as Cartographers

Karen O'Rourke

The MIT Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England

This book was set in Stone Serif and Stone Sans by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited, Hong Kong. Printed and bound in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

O'Rourke, Karen.
Walking and mapping : artists as cartographers / Karen O'Rourke.
p. cm. — (Leonardo book series)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-262-01850-0 (hardcover : alk. paper)
1. Artists as cartographers. 2. Arts, Modern—20th century—Philosophy. 3. Arts, Modern—20th century—Philosophy. 4. Walking—Philosophy. I. Title.
NX175.O76 2013
700.9'04—dc23
2012020866

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Bernard