Bicycles With Elephant Memories Stolen From Our Oasis When We Were The Most Thirsty



Video1(1.4mb)Video2(1.4mb)Video3(1.4mb)
Video4(1.8mb) Video5(1.7mb)Video6(1.3mb)

A PERFORMANCE FOR NEW YORK CITY
(Sunday April 30th, 2000)

In the April of this year artist, Patrick Grenier performed a

new work on the streets of New York City which converged several ideas about memory, loss, vulnerability and reconciliation. The concept was inspired by Duchamp's sculpture,*Large Glass*; a poem by Alfred Jarry titled, *The Passion Considered as a Bicycle Race*; Grenier's observation of a thief carrying Duchamp's modified readymade*Bicycle Wheel* just stolen from the Museum of Modern Art in 1995, over the Brooklyn Bridge; conversations he had with Duchamp's last assistant, Robert Barnes; the theft of three of his own bicycles; and his interest in the ability of elephants to remember things over a long period of time. The idea of bicycles possessing elephant memories alludes to the idea that possessions are imbibed with the owner's energies and when that item is taken, its spirit stays with you, as he believes your own spirit leaves with the object stolen.

Grenier along with two other performers rode on vintage bicycles, similar in design to the one drawn on the page of sheet music in Duchamp's 1914 drawing To Have the Apprentice in the Sun, from the front square of the Brooklyn Museum to the Museum of Modern Art making a total of twelve stops at locations related to the artist for on-site short action performances. The cyclists wore stylized costumes inspired by the work of Duchamp, Jarry and the physiognomy of elephants. Some of the props for the on-site actions included, a bicycle made of thorn branches, a unique chess board with pieces derived from peanut forms and bicycle parts, shadows of bicycles cut out of black velvet, melted chocolate and raw peanuts.

Bicycles are powered by human engines. Muscles and bones work with rubber and metal to become one machine.

CREDITS:

- Cyclists:
  Patrick Grenier as "Peanut"
  Mary Noll as "Padlock"

Claire Pertalion as “Bicycle Wheel”

Video:

Drew Cerria

8mm FILM:

Michael DeRoker

- 35mm Stills:

Laura Moss

Driver:

Julio Lopez

Production Assistant:

Tia Shin

Photographs:

Laura Moss

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