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Performance Art in Front of an Audience Ought to be Entertaining

medium: *written work, performance, (coming soon: video)*

duration/run-time: *approx. 45 min.*

date: *2008/2009*

Performance Art in Front of an Audience is both a written work and a performance; a heavily researched one-act-play about the turbulent relationship between artist couple Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta. Fletcher and Reichert use the event of Mendieta's death as a catalyst to discuss the conflict between The Institution that heavily depends on the salability of art and the Idealistic Artists who spend their lives searching for the rare and enlightened audience.

While the dialogue attempts to be earnest, in terms of what Mendieta and Andre might have said to one another, the direction of the play follows its own path -- departing from the necessity to recreate history. The argument, which starts out being about the weather then turns into an argument about what people want from art and ends up being about an illicit affair, reaches a crescendo (in narrative terms, the climax) and at this point the play ends. (The play is not allowed to reach the next stage of the narrative structure, the fall, and consequently leaves Mendieta's death a mystery.)

True to the experimental nature of theater, the authors insist on being present and involved during the performance. They direct the action and periodically block the scenes, causing frequent interruption and a repetition of several theatrical beats. The resulting effect on the audience is a conflict between allowing oneself to be drawn into the production and then suddenly forced to evaluate and critique its effectiveness.