



DOVE BRADSHAW

THOMAS REHBEIN GALLERY

COLOGNE

DOVE BRADSHAW

Thomas Rehbein Gallery
Cologne
2011

The work of Dove Bradshaw works with our changing conceptions of time and space which we have assumed for a long time are two different things. She's involved, as we are in our lives, because of art, with an almost scientific procedure, so that she can experiment in such a way as to prove something. And she can subject us to the results of her experiments, which can open us to the life we are living. It's very curious and very true...

Dove's work is preparing us for a constant loss and a constant gain, and also of not knowing whether it's good or bad.

John Cage





2. $2\sqrt{0}$
1971
Glass, acetone
2 ½ x 5 x 2 ½ inches

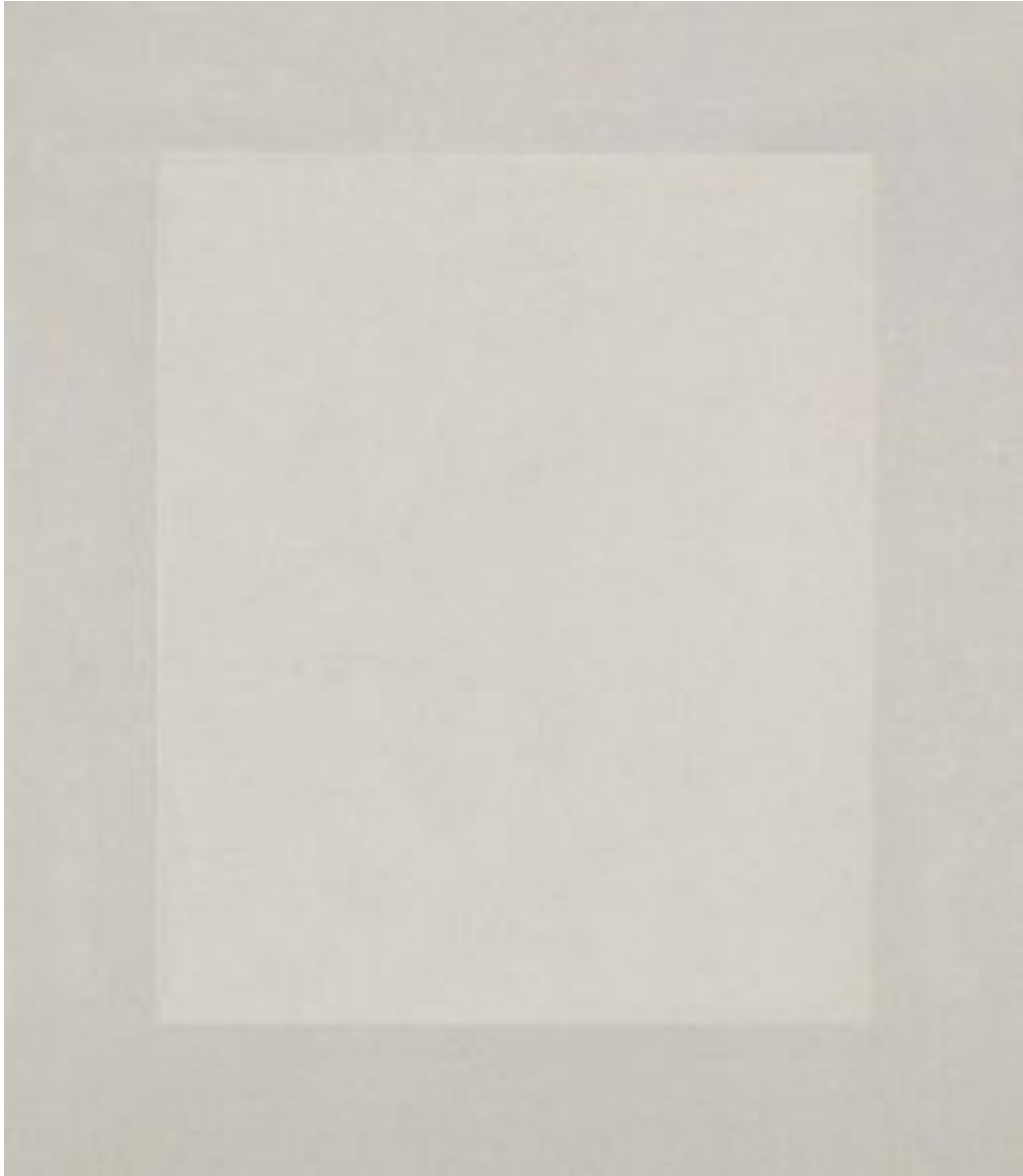
1. Previous page: *SPACETIME*
2011
23 minute DVD in action as a clock and as a level
Accompanied by Ryoanji [for octobass flute and percussion], 1983-85, John Cage

Originally not conceived as art, it was designed to function horizontally as a level, vertically as a clock. Later when left uncalibrated, it became a work by resisting the notion that space and time are measurable. The title is a nonsense mathematical formula -- drawing attention to the Western attempt to define things with a nod to Eastern mysticism.

Dove Bradshaw



3. Home
2008
Honey Locust thorns
29 x 32 diameter



4. Ground

1988

Plaster on wall

32 x 24 inches

Collection of the Mattress Factor Museum, Pittsburg



5. Contingency Jet [Spoletto]
2003 [Activated July; photographed October 2009]
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, beeswax on Arches paper
3 ½ x 3 ½ inches



6. Contingency Jet [Appear]
2003, Activated July; photographed October 2009
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, beeswax on Arches paper
3 ½ x 3 ½ inches

Contingency book, takes literally Duchamp's dictum from his essay 'The Creative Act,' that it is the viewer who finishes any work of art. Bradshaw applied beeswax, varnish, and silver to sheets of linen paper, then sandwiched them between other chemically active works leaving them to oxidize, buried in her studio, untouched, for two years. The resulting book of the bound pages, epic in size and imposingly archaic-like as if it was a medieval, mystical tome, contains the writings and drawings of chemistry from the bleedings of her other works onto these pages. There exudes a strong whiff of alchemy here, though in reverse, especially in the way the silver turns gold briefly during its first oxidation before becoming black. On display, the book continues to change; the open pages oxidize, the closed pages bleed. A viewer's breath or a page-turner's fingers affect and, in the Duchampian sense, "finish" the work.

Mark Swed

Dove Bradshaw, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1998



7. Contingency [Book]

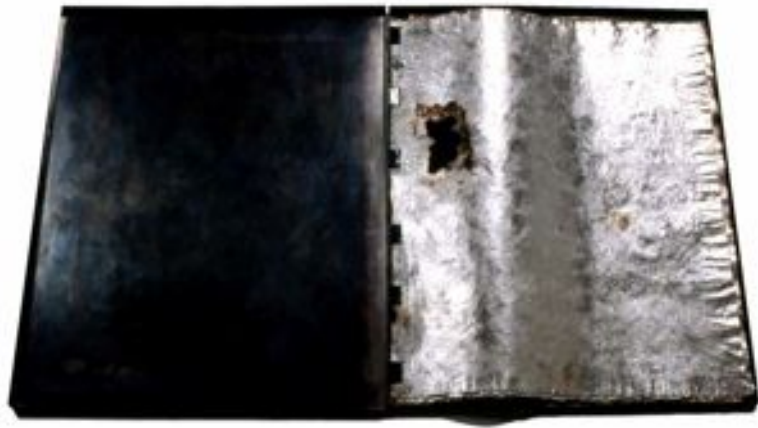
1995, Activated March; photographed May 1998

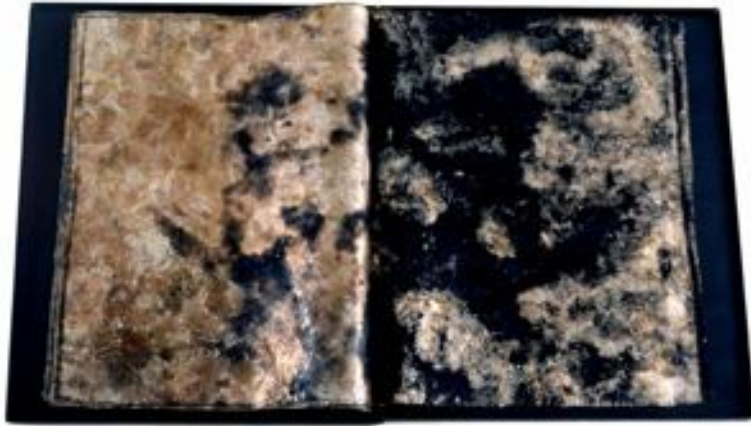
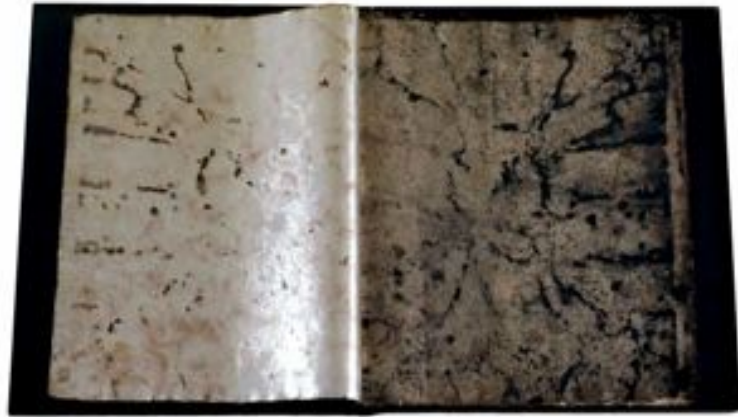
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish, beeswax on linen paper

Seven sheets bound with steel clips housed in steel box

stamped with the artist's name, box and table designed by the artist

Paper: 26 ¼ x 42 ¼ inches







8. Contingency Pour I
2006, Activated October; photographed February 2010
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish on linen
76 x 66 inches



9. Contingency Pour II
2006, Activated October; photographed April 2007
Silver, liver of sulfur, varnish on linen
78 x 66 inches



10. And so. And all.

2004

Edition of 4

Scanned Daguerreotype on Duraclear

12 ¼ x 15 ½ inches



11. Without Title
2006-2010
Pigment, oil on linen
17 x 14 inches



12. Quick Construction [Japanese]

2006

Silver, liver of sulfur, titanium dioxide,
varnish, beeswax on linen paper

25 x 19 ½ inches



13. Without Title
1994
Silver, varnish, gesso on linen
30 x 30 inches

Attracted by her use of indeterminacy, the practice of using chance and natural forces to act upon her work, Merce Cunningham invited Dove Bradshaw, along with William Anastasi, to become joint Artistic Advisors to his dance company in 1984. The resonances between Bradshaw's work and that of Cunningham's are clear; both made extensive use of chance procedures as part of their creation. Bradshaw's Contingency Series abandons traditional artistic practices and uses materials that react differently depending on environmental conditions, just as Cunningham abandons not only musical forms, but narrative and other conventional elements of dance composition—such as cause and effect, and climax and anticlimax.

Stephen Jones
Christies Spring Catalogue, 2011



14. II series, Nothing, 2
2004
18 karat gold
2 ½ x 5 x 2 ½ inches



15. Without Title

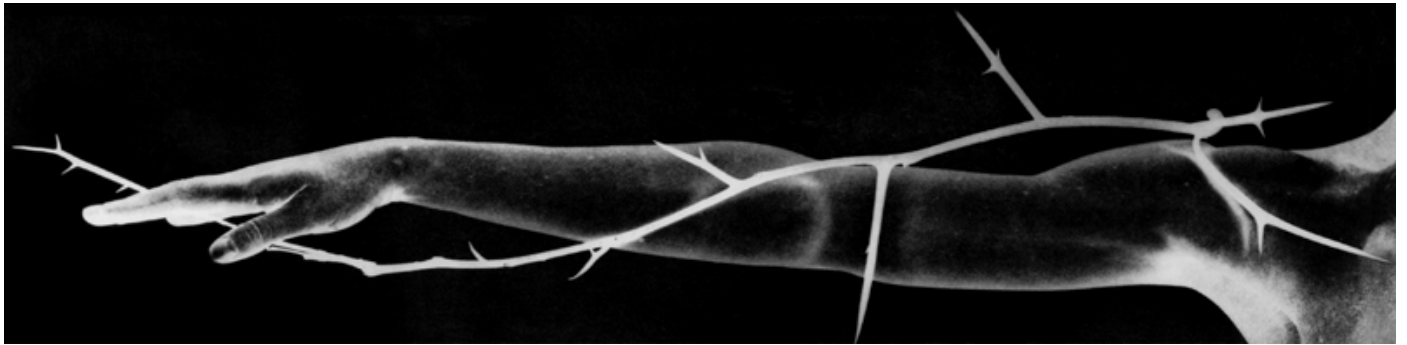
1990 / 2010

Soapstone, incised with the word "indeterminacy," broken by chance

1 3/8 x 36 x 6/8 inches



16. Crack In The Air
2003
Thorn, pigment
39 x 8 x 6 inches



17. Medium
1992
Edition of 4, Duraclear film
8 ½ x 29



18. Negative Ions II

1996

Salt, separatory funnel, water

Salt: 100 lbs; separatory funnel: 1000 ML

SALT

Performing alchemy on geographically informed geological material...Dove Bradshaw romances...the salt crystals—all six continents (Europe and Asia count as one) in her installation. Water drips from Pyrex funnels onto the brown salt from Ireland, pink salt from Chile, gray salt from Egypt [for instance] causing each mound to crater and discolor like a volcano in reverse. Other...pieces also chart the effects of time and tide on the mineral kingdom and humankind alike. Bradshaw's is no mere display of process; it is the physical realm made metaphysical through the contemplation of transformation, by someone whose exploration of such dates back almost as far back as Smithson's.

Peter Frank

Given the materials, obvious associations include global oceans and humanity's tears, while the hoary relationship between art and alchemy as magical markers for change gets yet another outing. However, the most appealing feature of *Six Continents* is its more sober quality as a global time clock—erosion, evaporation, reconstitution, constant transformation—which compresses geological eons into a rhythmic drip, drip, drip.

Christopher Knight

WATERSTONE

...Bradshaw's...Waterstones...focus attention on the ongoing process of disintegration....there are still deeper spiritual implications ...of disintegration, as the entropy theory clearly bears a resemblance to Taoist thought. Tao means "the way" according to the Tao Tê Ching, the classic text attributed to Lao Tzu, the Way may also be called the Valley Spirit or the Water Spirit or the Mysterious Female. The nature of the Water Spirit is that it seeks the low ground. When water has reached the lowest point, it has returned to the state of the Uncarved Block, to the Mysterious Female. Bradshaw, then is using the Way, or the Water Spirit, in the...Waterstones; the liquid flows downward eating away the rock as it seeks the lowest place.

The essence of the Way is ceding control, holding oneself back from intervention as much as possible....[Bradshaw] has said, in reference to her role with her materials, "I like to withdraw," meaning that after setting up the situation she lets the forces of nature take charge and go their own way. Though not the western style, this is nevertheless a strategy for control. As the Tao Tê Ching says, "The sage's way is to act without striving" (LXXXI). "Those that would gain what is under heaven by tampering with it--I have seen that they do not succeed" (XXIX)...A basic image in Taoism is water's ability to wear away stone--a foundational point of Bradshaw's...Waterstone works. "Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water," says Lao Tzu, "but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail" (LXXVIII). A modern text on Taoist art observes that everything is characterized by perpetual motion because everything is infused with a need to return to the Tao; dripping water, for example, is seeking to return to the Tao. This relationship is encapsulated in the Taoist term for landscape painting, shan-shui, mountain-water. "The term for landscape," a modern scholar writes, "...is...symbolic of the [constant interaction of the] Yang and the Yin. Yang and the yin, in turn, come through in Taoist alchemy as mercury and sulfur, the male and the female of the cosmic marriage. Awareness of this fact was supposed to inculcate in the artist painting a shan-shui "a worshipful attitude, making it a ritual act of reverence in praise of the harmony of Heaven and Earth."

There seems a dualism in yang and the yin, yet the Tao Tê Ching says they "produce oneness" and in the Taoist painting tradition this was called I-hua (one-painting or painting the oneness). Extrapolating from this idea one could say that Bradshaw's Waterstones are an attempt to paint the oneness. The disintegrated state of entropy, the eating of water into stone, are symbols of dialectical reality, the abandonment of Identity and Excluded Middle--a glimpse of the other side of the crack."

Thomas McEvilley



19. Waterstone

1996

Limestone, separatory funnel, water

Limestone: 12 x 12 x 12 inches; separatory funnel: 1000 ML



20. Silence Speaks

2009

Plaster casts of the artist's foot, face, left hand embedded flush in the wall

Embedded: foot on floor with hand and face at artist's height





21. Screen II
2011
Oil, gesso on linen
7 ½ x 7 ½ inches



22. Screen I
1990
Gesso on linen
7 ½ x 7 ½ inches



Performance
Dove Bradshaw, American, b. 1949
Gelatin silver print, 6 7/8 x 4 1/8 in., 1978
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Klein, 1989 1989.1095
In 1976, the conceptual artist Dove Bradshaw "claimed" a fire hose
in The Metropolitan Museum of Art by posting a label next to it
that identified it as her work. Next, she had the fire hose photographed,
produced postcards of her piece, and quietly placed them in the
Museum's store. They sold briskly. This postcard reproduces the
photograph, *Fire Extinguisher*, now in the Museum's collections.

Printed in the U.S.A.
01-07482-2 © 1992 MMA

23. Performance Burned
1976 / 2004
Metropolitan Museum postcard, 1992
6 1/4 x 4 1/4 inches



©KunstMuseum, 2011
Düsseldorf, Germany
www.kunstmuseum-dusseldorf.de
THE KUNSTMUSEUM DUSSELDORF
In 1979, the company designed the portable "Kunst" printer
in Düsseldorf, Germany, and it is still in use today.

KUNSTMUSEUM

24. (A)claimed Object
1979
Kunstmuseum, Dusseldorf postcard, 2011
6 ¼ x 4 ¼ inches

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

John Cage, Stephen Jones, Thomas McEvilley, Mark Swed: texts

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