





Variations V

Choreographed in 1965 Filmed in 1966 50 minutes black & white sound

rental: \$50 purchase: \$415

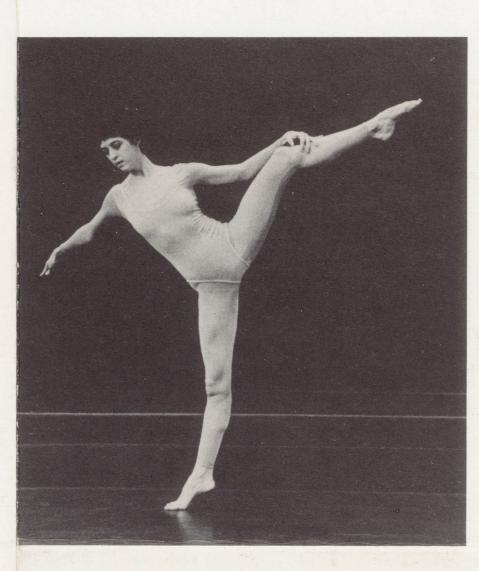
16mm film Dancers:

Carolyn Brown Merce Cunningham Barbara Lloyd Sandra Neels Albert Reid Peter Saul Gus Solomons, Jr.

Directed by Arne Arnbom Produced by Studio Hamburg

"The French-American Festival commissioned John Cage to prepare a score and myself to make a choreography to this score. John decided to find out if there might not be ways that the sound could be affected by movement, and he and David Tudor proceeded to find out that there were. The first was a series of poles, twelve in all, like antennae, placed over the stage, each to have a sound radius, sphereshaped, of four feet. When a dancer came into this radius a sound would result. Each antenna was to have a different sound, and some had several. The second sound source was a series of photo-electric cells, figured out by Billy Kluver of the Bell Laboratories, which were put at the base of the twelve poles throughout the area and this seemed to function. The general principle as far as I was concerned was like the doors opening when you go into the supermarket. The dancers triggered a sound but the kind of a sound, how long it might be, or the possible repetition of it was controlled by the musicians who were at the various machines behind us. The effect was of a count-down when they count down to three and then stop. There was another element in this piece, the use of film. Stan Vanderbeek and his assistant Tom Hewitt had in the weeks ahead of this made a number of reels of film of us, myself dancing, my company doing movements out of the piece. Stan came to the studio one day while we were rehearsing and without disrupting the dancers at all shot through and around them; he shot my hands and feet several times. He said the feet would look marvelous blown up. Stan used other images, still shots and shots from movies, a montage of contemporary scenes, automobiles, a man in space, nature, buildings. Nam June Paik, the Korean composer who has developed ways of changing the images on a television screen, used some of these ways to change the images. There were a number of non-dance activities that I figured out for the dancers to do. I potted a large plant and Carolyn Brown repotted it. The plant had a cartridge microphone attached to it so that any quiver could produce sound. Barbara Lloyd put a towel on her head which had a contact microphone attached to it and proceeded to stand on her head and then was moved gently back and forth by Gus Solomons, while upside down. At the end of the piece, I rode a bicycle through the space, around the poles and the photo-electric

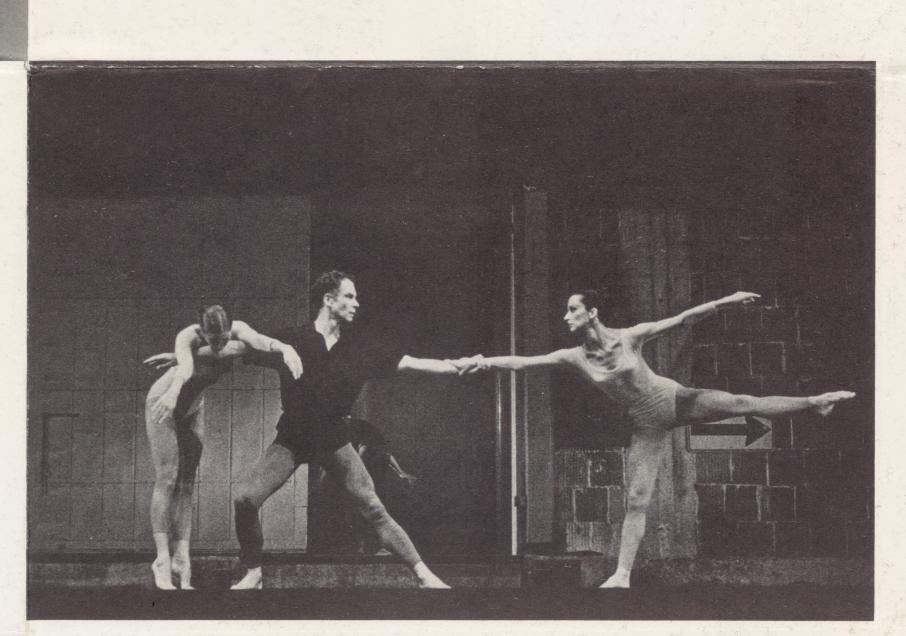
- Merce Cunningham



Fractions

1978 33 minutes color and black & white sound rental: \$50 purchase: \$225 U-matic 3/4 inch video cassette and 16mm film

> Dances choreographed by Merce Cunningham now available on film and videotape cassette



Story

20 minutes black & white sound

l6mm film

Produced by the Finnish Broadcasting Company Music by Toshi Ichiyanagi: Sapporo Decor by Robert Rauschenberg

A film of a performance of the dance in Finland during the company's world tour in 1964. This dance, first performed in July, 1963 while Mr. Cunningham and his company were in residence at the University of California in Los Angeles, is indeterminate in its composition. It is made up of sections of varied character, none of which need be performed twice in the same way. Specific directives and freedoms have been given the dancers and they receive cues from one another. The continuity within a section is thus altogether unpredictable. The title refers not to any implicit or explicit narrative, but to the fact that every spectator may interpret the events in his own way.

Westbeth a work for video

1974 32 minutes black & white sound

U-matic 3/4 inch video cassette and 16mm film

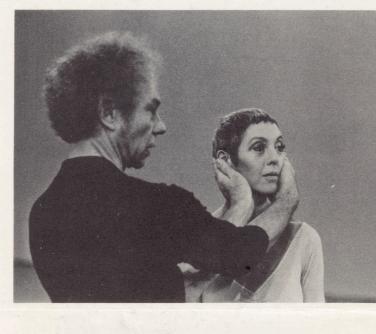
rental: \$40 purchase: \$135

A videotape made at the Merce Cunningham Studio in New York in the fall of 1974.

Dancers:

Karole Armitage Ellen Cornfield Meg Harper Cathy Kerr Chris Komar Robert Kovich Brynar Mehl Charlie Moulton Julie Roess-Smith Valda Setterfield George Titus

Directed by Charles Atlas Costumes by Mark Lancaster, from a design by Jasper Johns (for Un Jour ou Deux, 1973)



cells, and then exited."

"It begins and ends with views of the studio and has six major sections, each visually linked: I) the dancers are introduced in a shifting set of lingering closeups counterposed with distant patterns by the others; 2) the sculptural effect of their massed bodies is explored in closeup; 3) they dance an 8 minute sequence of shifting duets, trios and quartets that build into and out of several sculpted formations; 4) they are seen in conversational profile, four at a time, while two others hop out a chipper pattern in the distance; 5) five of them stroll into the studio for a sequence of simultaneous solos, each contrasting spurts of movement with calm poses; 6) shots of group clusterings (some photographed from above) are alternated with shots of members of the group zigzagging their way closer and closer to the camera along the right frame edge until, at the end, the camera itself joins in the frolic.' -John Mueller, "Films,"

Dance Magazine

"What George Balanchine observed as the essential perceptual problem in translating his dances for television — 'They don't go away and come back; they just get larger or smaller' - Cunningham and Atlas have exploited in Westbeth for formal tensions and graphic impact."

> - Richard Lorber, Dance Scope

1976 27 minutes black & white sound U-matic 3/4 inch

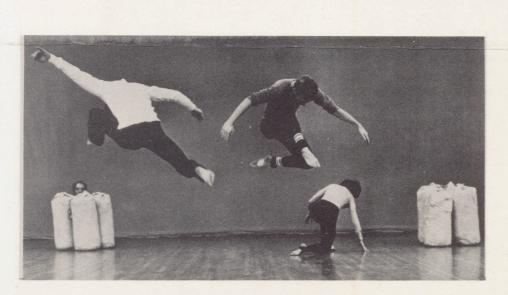
video cassette and 16mm film

Dancers: Karole Armitage Karen Attix Merce Cunningham Morgan Ensminger Susana Hayman-Chaffey Chris Komar Robert Kovich Raymond Kurshals Julie Roess-Smith

Squaregame Video was videotaped at the Merce Cunningham Studio in May, 1976. The first performance of the piece was given on March 24, 1976 at the Festival Theatre, Adelaide, New South Wales, Australia.

"A work of complex playfulness, with confrontations through barely defined games, involving duffle bags, that give way to sudden, spasmodic action." -Stephen Godfrey,

Toronto Globe and Mail



Squaregame Video

Directed by Charles Atlas

Music by Takehisa Kosugi: S.E. Wave/E.W. Song Decor and costumes by Mark Lancaster

"Cheerful scrimmaging and scrabbly movements on the floor are followed by a duet between Cunningham and Susana Hayman-Chaffey in which he steadies his partner lightly, her long probing legs connected only loosely to the rest of her, as if they were some kind of liability which rendered her unsuited for simple locomotion.'

rental: \$30 purchase: \$115 Ellen Cornfield Meg Harper Cathy Kerr

Fractions I is a video/dance, taped at the Merce Cunningham Studio in November-December, 1977. The first performance in a theatre was given at the Boston English High School, Boston, Massachusetts on February 26, 1978.

"Fractions, as it unfolds, has the concentrated energy of a great signature work. When it is over, it seems to have summed up everything important in the Cunningham canon and yet to have weighed not an ounce ... It is the finest piece of video choreography anyone has yet made, the closest any choreographer has yet come to working with absolute integrity in two medias at once. Cunningham, alone of the choreographers who have worked with television, has assumed that defining TV space is necessary to the projection of a dance in TV terms. The same factors that make Cunningham choreography as interesting to watch close up as from a distance make it televisable. To watch the videodance Fractions is to watch the medium find its dancing master. Fractions may be the most successful of Cunningham's videodances because it's really about dancing and "television" is metaphorically present in its conception - a part of the real world of change which Cunningham believes in and makes dances about."

-Arlene Croce, "Quintessence," The New Yorker

Directed by Charles Atlas Music by Jon Gibson: Equal Distribution Decor and costumes by Mark Lancaster

Karole Armitage Louise Burns Graham Conley Ellen Cornfield Meg Eginton Lisa Fox Chris Komar **Robert Kovich**

rental: \$50 purchase: \$135

Carolyn Brown Merce Cunningham William Davis Viola Farber Deborah Hay Barbara Lloyd Sandra Neels Steve Paxton Albert Reid

Dancers:

The dancers are involved with objects that change from evening to evening. They are things found by Robert Rauschenberg in or outside the theatre, when and where the dance is performed.

The music by Toshi Ichiyanagi carries the title Sapporo, the name of the northern Japanese city in which it was first performed. The sounds that are produced have different qualities: either they are sustaining sounds, begun without attack, sometimes constant in pitch, sometimes sliding; or they are vibrant, sudden and shocking. The performers under certain circumstances exchange parts not only among themselves, but on occasion with the conductor too, who, like them, is also free to produce sounds.

Dancers: Carolyn Brown Merce Cunningham Ulysses Dove Douglas Dunn Meg Harper Susana Hayman-Chaffey Chris Komar Sandra Neels Chase Robinson Valda Setterfield

"Marcel Duchamp, Merce Cunningham and Jasper Johns were guests at the same New York party one night. Johns had an idea of a way in which Duchamp's The Large Glass could work as decor for a dance for Cunningham's company. Cunningham was enthusiastic and Johns crossed the room to approach Duchamp with the proposal. Duchamp frowned, "Who will do the work?" Johns said, "I will." Relieved, Duchamp readily agreed. Duchamp attended the premiere of Walkaround Time in Buffalo, New York on March 10th, 1968. The dance is atypical in the Cunningham repertory. Though the choreography, the music and the decor were each independently conceived, they share a common thematic purpose: an homage to the work of Marcel Duchamp. In more typical Cunningham fashion the music was first heard when it was performed with the dance on the opening night, and the set was incorporated into the piece shortly before the premiere.

"The choreography makes reference to Duchamp in concept (composition) and in detail (physical image). Cunningham has translated Duchamp's concern with transparency in terms of movements into a dance composition which explores the possibilities of lateral movement back and forth across a proscenium space. In addition to the "transparent" clarity of this way of shaping space (as against, for example, the use of a swirling space) this is movement that retains its visual integrity as the dancers pass behind the see-through vinyl inflatables of the set. The stillnesses that penetrate and surround the movement have a definite Duchamp flavor. Cunningham's readymade is the "laissez-faire" movement during the "entr'acte", and when he changes costume on stage it is a nod to the famous nude. The viewer is left to complete the dance with discoveries of Duchamp on many levels." - Charles Atlas

Torse

1976-77 55 minutes color sound

Meg Harper Robert Kovich Chris Komar Iulie Roess-Smith

Dancers:

Lisa Fox

Karole Armitage

Louise Burns

Ellen Cornfield

Morgan Ensminge

Torse was designed as two synchronous hour-long films to be projected simultaneously on adjacent screens. The purpose was both to provide a complete archival record of the choreography and to approximate the spectator's experience of the dance. The contrapuntal structure of the dance and Cunningham's asymmetrical use of space also suggested a two-screen presentation. Either film may be viewed separately, but their combination provides a more complete record and experience of the dance.

This film was produced by the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The choreography of Torse utilizes the numbers I to 64, taken from the I Ching, The Book of Changes. These numbers are used both in the spatial plan, conceived as a square eight by eight, and the movement phrases, which constitute the language of Torse. All aspects of the continuity were chance-determined, the sequence of phrases, the number of things happening at once and the number of dancers involved in a given phrase. The rhythm is sometimes metric and sometimes not. Torse refers to the use of the torso throughout the dance. There are five basic positions utilized-upright, arch, twist, tilt and curve. The dance in live performance is ordinarily given in 22minute sections. This film presents the dance in its full length.

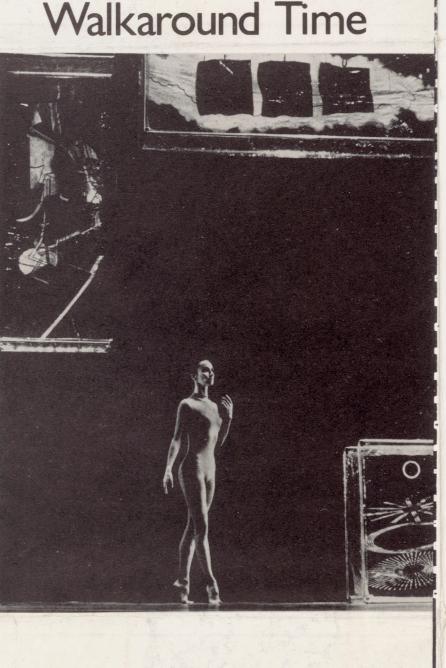
A movie by Charles Atlas

Cameramen: Charles Atlas, James Klosty, Michael Norberg Music and soundtrack by David Behrman: (. . . for nearly an hour . . Decor, after Marcel Duchamp's The Large Glass in the Philadelphia Museum, supervised by Jasper Johns Lighting by Richard Nelson

1973 48 minutes color sound 16mm film

rental: \$60 purchase: \$750

"I think Walkaround Time is, purely and simply, a masterwork. In its quiet, ambling way it illustrates many of those elements that go to make up Cunningham's greatness as a choreographer. The film shows what Cunningham is all about and it can make lifetime converts of those who can learn to meet the choreographer on his own terms. Among its values is that it preserves the performances of some extraordinary Cunningham dancers no longer with the company. There is Valda Setterfield at her brightest and wittiest, the beautifully controlled Sandra Neels and Susana Hayman-Chaffey, the forceful Douglas Dunn, and Carolyn Brown, who can make an event of cosmic proportions out of simply standing still."



Directed by Charles Atlas Cameramen: Merce Cunningham, Charles Atlas, Niels Melo Costumes by Mark Lancaster Music by Maryanne Amacher: Remainder 18.] R[] D[=afterimage



Blue Studio: Five Segments

151/2 minutes color U-matic 3/4 inch

video cassette

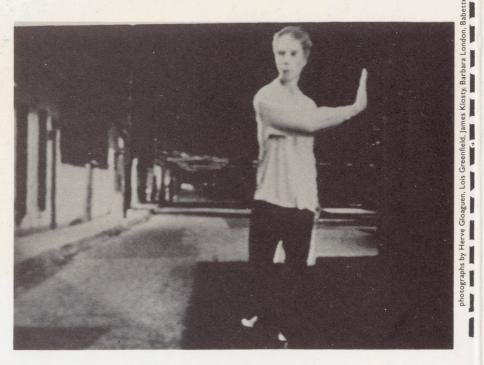
An intimate piece using video as its "set". Produced at the WNET TV Lab in October, 1975.

rental: \$50 purchase: \$170

"Extensive utilization of chromakey as well as mirrors in real time allowed Cunningham's movements to be transposed against various realities: Caracas, a solid blue background, among members of his company, and, near the tape's end, several images of himself dancing among, though not with, each other. Throughout Blue Studio Cunningham developed a vocabulary of movement; from walking, to intimate hand gestures, to large movements of the body. By the end the vocabulary could be demonstrated simultaneously by the same performer, concentrated, in total silence. Now and then a frog, a monkey, and a small dog, each moving in its own way, were chromakeyed in-surprising as Cunningham usually doesn't work with untrained dancers.

- Barbara Baracks, "Merce Cunningham, Carl Soloway Gallery," Art Forun

A videotape by Charles Atlas and Merce Cunningham



Jim Self rental: \$70 purchase: \$1500

-John Mueller, "Films: Merce Cunningham's Walkaround Time," Dance Magazine

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video	film □	Westbeth	request date	alternate date	rental \$40 □	purchase \$135
video		Blue Studio: 5 Segments	request date	alternate date	rental \$50	purchase \$170
video	film	Squaregame Video	request date	alternate date	rental \$30	purchase \$115
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Dances choreographed by Merce Cunningham now available on film and videotape cassette

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