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CONTINGENCY

D O V E B R A D S H A W

There's an idea I had in the 40's, and now that I'm a little bit older I still have the same idea more or less: that one of the ways of saying why we make art is to help us in the enjoyment of life. The way of enjoying life keeps changing because of changes in our scientific awareness. The way you enjoyed life say in 1200 is different from the way you enjoy it now, and that accounts for the changes in art. There is a close connection between art and religion or what we call a spiritual life because of the enjoyment, because the religion or philosophy expresses itself in words whereas the artist uses materials. So in the Middle Ages, art was called the handmaiden of religion. I think that relationship of art to the spirit continues.

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. For instance, the works on which she applies silver then liver of sulfur so that what she's putting on the canvas is not necessarily what you're going to see there in a few days or in a month.

John Cage*

C A T A L O G U E

1969 - 1993

JOHN CAGE AND THOMAS MCEVILLEY

A CONVERSATION

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opening statement from the catalogue

SANDRA GERING GALLERY 476 BROOME STREET NEW YORK
212 226-8195 PHONE 212 226-7186 FAX