

*Act One: The fun of becoming a work of art.*

## APPAREL SCULPTURE

*By Sarah Booth Conroy*

NEW YORK—"We need your body," announced a poster issued by the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, "for acts — a series of participatory exhibition events for total involvement."

And several hundred people seeking the opportunity to use their bodies as art objects came to the preview Friday of "Act One"—a show including evanescent shadow sculptures, phosphorescent inflatables and apparel sculptures.

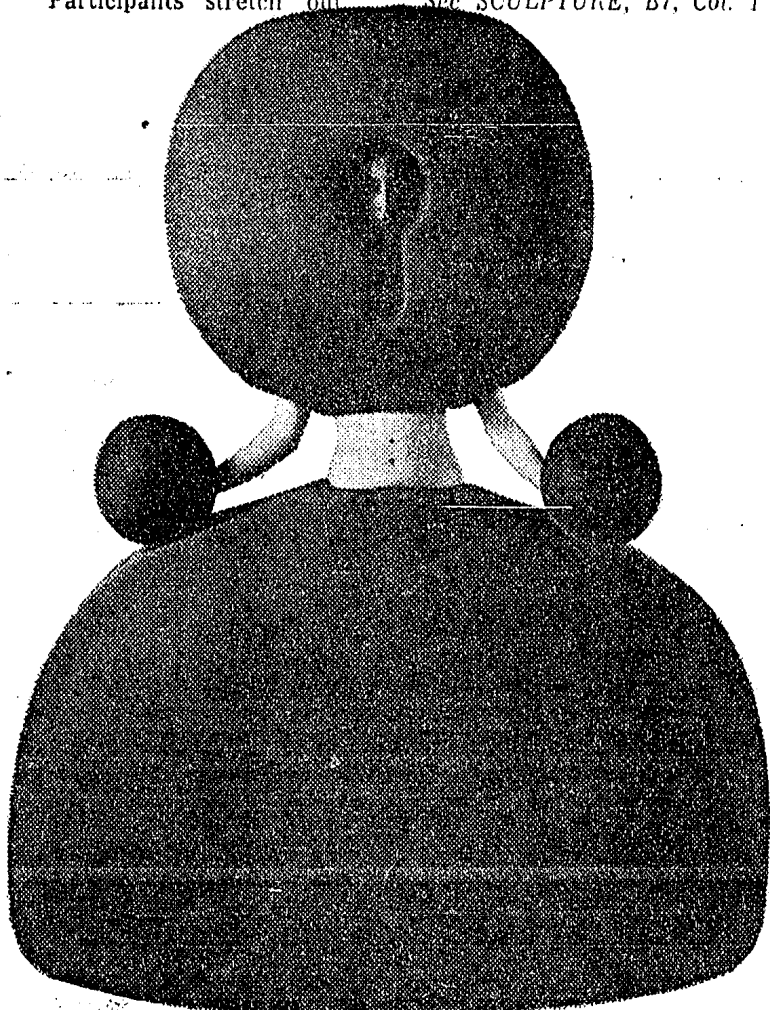
All were invited to loll on king-sized mattresses made by Carl Bucher, soft foam blocks covered with a vinyl treated with a phosphorescent paint. In the upper gallery of the museum, four eight-foot long mattress blocks were set end to end; others stood upright.

Participants stretch out

on the mattresses in whatever pattern they devise (girls with long legs and hair made the most intricate designs at the opening.) The lights go on for two or three minutes while everyone lies still and watches the birdie. Then the lights go off, and the people tumble off the mattresses. In the phosphorescent glow, they view the shadow shapes cast upon the mattresses. The shadows persist (the mattress sections not covered by people glow eerily) until the lights go on again.

The most popular activity at the preview was making a shadow stretching the full length of the mattress. These shadows were formed by lying with heads touching toes, arms reaching out, in sort of a spirit world circus acrobat act.

See SCULPTURE, B7, Col. 1



*Sculpture you can wear.*

# Sculpture

SCULPTURE, From B1

The crowd seemed to take seriously the making of shadow forms, with a minimum of giggling and a general unity of purpose in making shadow sculptures. The result, with about eight performers working together, was a 32-foot-long head stand shadow.

Downstairs, in a dark gallery, the phosphorescent inflatables developed by Carl Bucher looked like astronaut's nightmares. They are roughly the shape of an inflatable plastic chair which has unaccountably sprouted legs and feet. The transparent vinly shapes can be worn (they are unexpectedly heavy and constricted) over your head and torso, leaving legs free to run about.

The plastic glows, the people disappear, and the whole room becomes a moon-mad mood indigo.

Heidi Bucher, Carl Bucher's wife, is chiefly responsible for the apparel sculptures in the museum show.

"I stole the form from my husband's work," she said at the opening. "He calls the basic shape a 'landing.' It is sort of wheel shaped, among other things."

Just inside the front door stands the first of the apparel sculptures: a purplish blob almost eight feet high and about the same width. The puffy oval is hollow inside with a round hole near the top and an arched opening at the bottom.

At the opening, the purple blob was worn, experienced, even inhabited by Victor Lopez, a pantomimist from Cuba. He crawled into the form, wiggled out of most of his clothes, passed them outside the blob, and tried out life as an art object.

He stuck a leg out of the opening. His two hands appeared through the circle. Turtle-like he then retracted his limbs and poked his head, a mass of kinky curls, out of the circle.

One gray-haired lady in rubber-soled oxfords touched the purple form so forcefully that the object, with Victor in it, fell over. Lopez wasn't upset—"falling in this is really nice, you feel good," he said—but like Humpty Dumpty, putting

him together again wasn't easy.

Victor could barely get his hands outside to reach for help. So it took about 12 people, pulling, pushing, and poking to put him up.

The Bucher show at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (29 West 53d St., New York) continues through April 19. The sponsor is the Pro Helvetia Foundation, a Swiss government agency, which also is currently sponsoring a Swiss Avant-Garde exhibition at the New York Cultural Center.

At the preview, the gallerygoers obeyed the poster's admonition to "wear casual clothing." Josephine Rogers, a fur designer in fur hot pants, looked like hold-over from the museum's previous show, "Fur and Feathers". She wasn't the only one wearing hot pants, though blue jeans won in a walk as the most popular attire.

If Mrs. Rogers reflected the museum's past, Pat Oleszko suggested its future. She wore a greatly exaggerated bra and pantaloons of an shocking pink silk. "I am a visual editorial," said Mrs. Rogers, who works as a waitress to support her artist endeavors (sewing satirical body coverings.)

Her masterpieces, she thinks, were the 70 ensembles she made to satirize homecoming queens at the University of Michigan, her alma mater. Pat will be part of Act Three at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts: Costume Statements, May 21 through June 6.

Act Two, titled City Scenes, will include a "score" written by Marilyn Wood with Jim Burns. It is scheduled for April 24 through May 16. The "scores" are activities designed to increase your awareness in the city. For example:

"Choose someone else's walking style on the street. Imitate it accurately for two blocks. Observe two blocks of streetscape in terms of color. Collect three distinctive sounds to bring."

Finding the fun of such experiences might be needed as much as the Museum says it needs our bodies.