

The Kitchen Center for Video and Music

press release

MIKE KELLEY

September 18-19 8:30pm
\$3.00 / \$2.00 members
The Kitchen, 484 Broome Street
Reservations and information: 925-3615

On September 18th and 19th, The Kitchen's Performance Series will present The Parasite Lily, a performance by Los Angeles artist Mike Kelley.

The Parasite Lily is a short (45 min) performance which utilizes the manipulation of props and language. The piece weaves through a diverse group of themes and situations in the manner of free association but, at the same time, takes care to stress the connecting points so there is a sense of step-by-step progression, analogous to deductive logic. The logic structure functions only as a container, however, allowing for the free flow of irrationality--like a boat sailing wild but still plotting its course. The Parasite Lily is an attempt at putting the mind's random-coupling-of-ideas-by-association into a logical structure, and is, in that sense, a comedy.

Mike Kelley (b. Detroit) was brought up in the Catholic faith. It was while attending Catholic elementary school that he was first introduced to 'sacred mysteries' and 'that which is un-understandable except through faith.' Perhaps it was his uneasiness with the inexplicable that led to his infatuation with comic books, especially ones with mystical religious overtones such as Doctor Strange, with their impressive pseudo-scientific explanations of the impossible. At this point he switched to public school and became involved with the scene surrounding local rock bands, which included interests in anarchistic political movements. During high school, however, Kelley became more and more hermetic, losing interest in these youthful follies, probably because of an awareness of having lost the battle with puberty. This tendency led him to interior pursuits and fine art. Kelley pursued surrealist painting throughout his college career, thinking this to be the most democratic and proletarian because of its involvement with the self and its similarities to folk art. Occasionally during this time, he would become re-interested in band activities, playing in 'noise' bands. In fact, his first performances were semi-musical in nature, involving simple relationships between object and sound. From this work, Kelley developed his later, more literary performance style.

Mike Kelley now resides in Los Angeles and has done numerous performance in the area including ones at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Foundation for Art Resources, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, and several universities. His work has appeared in several group exhibitions in New York City.