



THE KITCHEN

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The
Kitchen
Center
for
Video
Music
Dance
Performance
Film
and
Literature

For immediate release,
October 16, 1992
Contact: Eric Latzky or Meg Daly
212-255-5793

AGRIPPA *(a book of the dead)*

Wednesday, December 9, 1992
7pm
Tickets: \$6, Members \$4

The Kitchen is pleased to present a one-time fiber optic transmission of *Agrippa (a book of the dead)*, a collaboration between writer William Gibson and artist Dennis Ashbaugh. *Agrippa* exists in various forms: a computer disc, a battered old book, and a global fireside chat. The "story" is told in words, pictures, sounds, smells, and the passage of time, and will be broadcast to dozens of sites around the world at the same moment. The live presentation of *Agrippa* will be, by its nature, a mutation of the original book project, presented in a form radically different from traditional ways of experiencing literature and art. *Agrippa*, the transmission, should not be confused with the published version of *Agrippa*. The book is an art object with weight, smell and texture, while the transmission tells another aspect of the story and hastens a new form of "tribal storytelling."

Agrippa comes cased in a metal container of relics suggesting rural Virginia in the 1920's and the author's family past. Among the relics is a tattered old book with a secret recess in the middle that contains a computer disc. Gibson's story is on the disc, and it holds clues that link Ashbaugh's artwork, the relics, and the story together. However, the disc is encrypted with a specially designed program which will destroy the text after the first reading. The reader must make an irreversible decision, for the story cannot be stopped, copied, or printed once it is set in motion. Ashbaugh's etchings, bound within the pages of the book, are printed in inks which mutate and change when exposed to natural light.

Award-winning author William Gibson first coined the term "cyberspace" in his trilogy: *Necromancer*, *Count Zero* and *Mona Lisa Overdrive*. His latest book, *The Difference Engine* (co-written with Bruce Sterling) was released in paperback in January, 1992.

Dennis Ashbaugh has been a Guggenheim Fellowship recipient, and his work has been exhibited in solo and group shows at The Whitney Museum of American Art, P.S. 1, The Seattle Art Museum, among others. Ashbaugh is known for his large computer virus and DNA portrait paintings.