

Marilyn Arsem

13 ACTIONS IN YELLOW/description of event

(performed on Boston Common, June 1988, for eight different audiences of a single person.)

13 Actions in Yellow was an Audience of One performance. It involved 13 performers and was performed eight times for eight different people, on Boston Common. The audience sat in a designated seat on a park bench for half an hour. The performance occurred in a full 360° around the bench, involved all the senses, and extended as far as the eye could see and the ear could hear. It was up to each audience person to determine which actions constituted the performance.

Each person was alone with the performance. No one witnessed the event with her/him, and no one was watching the audience while they were involved with the performance. Each had no one but her/himself to rely on in interpreting the event. The videotaped interviews reflect each person's perspective on the experience, revealing the range of interpretations of an event that audiences can have. Each person's understanding of the event was unique, colored by her/his own concerns, undiluted by anyone else's view.

DESCRIPTION OF 13 ACTIONS

TIMING (minute #-#)	ACTION	WHO&POSITION ON MAP
Pre-event	Audience person met at Park St.	Marilyn
	Assistant sits on park bench, holding seat for audience. When Marilyn arrives with audience person, the assistant returns to off-site base.	Assistant
pre - min. 29	C Person sits and reads on opposite bench. She has book entitled The Yellow Fairy Tale Book, a yellow highlighter, a yellow covered notebook, and a yellow pencil box. She leaves shortly after event K.	Maru/Michele 11
pre-event	All other performers are in place, in a large circle throughout the park, for calling the audience's name, except Kris who is at off-site base until assistant arrives, and then she goes to her place.	Mari 2 Julie 3 Steve 5 Kris 6 David 7 Tom 8 Sue/Mark 9 Walter 10 T.W. 12 Nancy 4 Joan 1 Chris 13
min. 0	A Balloons are released when Marilyn returns from taking audience to bench.	Chris 13

min. 1	Audience's first name is called out once by each performer, moving counter-clockwise around the circle.	everyone Joan 1 starts
min. 1 - 3	B Person with gift begins slow-motion approach up long grass slope, framed between two trees.	Joan 1
min. 2 - 3	D Person smelling like lemons walks past bench.	Kris 6
min. 4 - 11	E Person arrives to sit on a bench across the sidewalk and slightly up the hill. He eats food that is yellow in color (popcorn, bananas, etc.)	Walter 10
min. 5 - 10	F Umbrella Dance. Performers start at opposite sides of the park, at the ends of the paths, each holding an open yellow umbrella. They meet where the paths converge, circle each other, then depart down the different paths to end at the opposite sides of the park again.	Nancy 4 Sue/Mark 9 Tom 8 Steve 5 Chris 13 T.W. 12
min. 4 - 20	G Tea Party. Three women in white arrive and set up yellow table with yellow tea pot and cups and saucers. They drink tea, talk, and blow soap bubbles, and have a good time.	Mari 2 Julie 3 Kris 6
min. 7 - 18	H Person meanders down the paths behind the audience, and sits by tree with tape recorder, playing a series of songs that contain the word yellow.	David 7
min. 12 - 23	I Person goes to everyone sitting on benches along the sidewalk, including the audience, showing a photo of a boy in yellow, saying, "Have you seen my son? I'm looking for my son." Further discussion can occur about how the son is with his aunt, and they were supposed to meet, etc.	Sue/Mark 9
min. 13 - 23	J Large yellow balls come bouncing down the hillside into the dry frog pond, the people running and following them to play ball with each other and anyone else in the park who joins them	Steve 5 Walter 10 Nancy 4 Tom 8 T.W. 12 Chris 13
min. 23 - 27	K Person carrying large bag of lemons trips up the path from the audience so that the lemons roll down the sidewalk. Person ad libs under his breath.	Tom 8

min. 27	L Person throws garbage into can, slaps arm and yelps, "yellow jackets!" as he runs past audience.	Chris 13
min. 30	M Fireflies. Everyone forms large circle in park and open and close umbrellas horizontally, so that they face the audience. Each person does five quick double openings, and then pauses.	Mari 2 Julie 3 Nancy 4 Steve 5 Kris David 7 Tom Sue/Mark 9 Maru/Michele 11 T.W. 2 Chris 1
min. 31	B Person arrives at audience, with a gift of a yellow flower, which she gives to the audience. She thanks the audience, saying that it is over.	Joan 1
min. 31	M At that point everyone opens their umbrellas simultaneously, and spinning them for a long moment, so that the audience is fully surrounded by yellow spinning circles throughout the park.	everyone