

# An Introduction to Modern Times

Collected Essays and Reviews  
George Myers, Jr.

## 12. Cretean Bull Dancers:

Carolee Schneemann, Terry Kennedy,

Irene Siegel, Linda Montano,

& Barbara Rosenthal

"give the subconscious a camera" comment, from *Clues to Myself*, is an accurate description of what she does with "something forgotten, something once clear but now fading, once true and important but now questionable." Chunks of her life and imagination (including the imaginations of several of her artist-heroes) are thrown together in a neo-narrative and curiously threaded together photo album. Like Montano, Rosenthal has juggled art with life and come up with a kind of action art handbook. To add strength, she quotes Claes Oldenburg: "I have got love all mixed up with art. I am a disaster as an artist because I can't leave the world alone."

Her work is more affective than mimetic, adding to the difficulty in the decoding of pictures and text about trees, fathers, Henry Miller quotes and STP gas treatment. The paradox is to share the ultimately private. The common ground is rocky, treacherous even, but there exists a possibility of identification. The quality of similarity—between the book's "life" and life as we know it—is part unconscious, part archetypal, and partly in its use of a grammatical structure. For all its oddness, hers is a scrapbook in which all can participate, all have participated.

### WORKING DRAWING

The visible comprised of the invisible.

#52. A section of starry sky viewed from space to create an impression of infinity.

#56. Impressions of a soft landing on the moon.

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...And each of them set or drawn in the perfect type, part fun, part solipsism. Daring, courageous, not locked in with any previously existing dogma, these women use texts as a field of action, just as their counterpart performance artists

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For five artists  
breaking out. The  
natural for these  
men, because their subject has been  
conceived and yet prevented by the world in which they  
themselves were conceived. "All my work is but a reflection,"  
one quotes Salvador Dali, "of my total cosmogony."

Some cosmogonies may be rejected. Some confuse and  
reduce the restrictions between art and life, especially the  
case of Linda Montano, a former nun and currently a  
performance artist who might best be described in a  
fluttering of adjectives: gentle, tolerant, naive, undogmatic,