

# A Day at the Station

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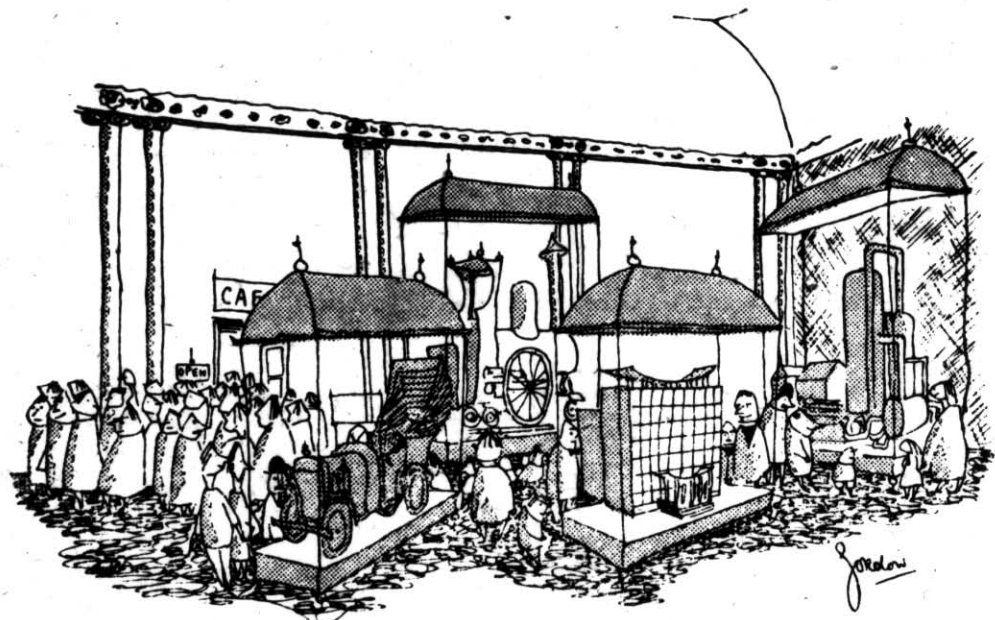
I was running late Sunday to meet my friends at Grand Central but heard the enchanted hoot music from the cross-country trains and hoofed still more briskly across the marbly expanse of the terminal as they came into view. Outside of tracks 34 & 35 they were tapping their respective toes, impatient to get into the 10th Annual Avant Garde Festival.

The First Exhibit was actually all of us banging on make-shift xylophones and covered coffee cans, clacking up a frensy with a dozen or so rapt percussionists. We were the charming element for the "Snake Dance"...The agile adders in white coveralls and T shirts with "BOA", "COBRA", "WATER MOCISAIN", "ANACONDIA" stencils were randomly twining and untwining to the cacaphony. As we caught the rhythm we were joined by staffers of the first Box Car (of 20 odd.) They took our hands and gingerly waltzed us to their show. (The commuters who had wandered in, curiously agape mingled along, too.) A rag clad dancer was contorting in front of a full-blowing amp blasting blibs and drawn bow sounds composed by "your brain waves".

Yoko Ono had serenely interior decorated her box car which is astonishing enough contrast. Her flower arrangements on top of lucite boxes with type written inscriptions describing themselves, just did not sit in a box car comfortably.

"Edible Art" by Miralda was mauve and chartreuse bread and iridescent rice layed out buffet-style under heat lamps. We waited a long time to get in to the holographic projection car and the woman in front of us was raving "HOW beautiful!!!!" and how she had to "have one more insy weensie peek". The wait had me conjuring all matter of spacey bucolic scenes in 3D. The vision of lovliness was...probably the exhibitionist's father staring reproachfully at the peep hole...but so life like!

One of the rampless cars was like an historical diorama: Two men, in turn of the century garb, the one seated (as if for a tin-type) reading the Wall



A man-made organization called an exhibition, which allows men to look at man-made organizations

Street Journal, the other moving in slow motion, with a zeppelin in hand. The "scenery" was a 1800's break front against chalked wall numbers (freighters keep milage or tonnage counts on the doors). From left to right, suddenly, a sinister looking nanny-archetype (in full length, pleat fronted bustle dress) crosses the scene, goes through the crowd and into the other door of the car.

My friends beckoned from a video car asking me as I approached if I wanted to do video painting or see the fortune teller. I choose the latter as the "painting" looked like freaking out on the dials of a color T.V. The fortune teller line was too long. Well, perhaps I'd like to name the box car, over there. On 20 feet of shelf paper, stretched the length of the car, people had written: "CIVILIZA

TION TAKES A STEP...BACKWARDS" "HOT TRANE" (like Coltrane), "THE WATER GATE 18 MINUETS". I wrote "The fotune teller wasn't Inn" and went back to the flight of the zeppelin as the crowds had thinned, giving me a view of the inside of the car. It was wall-to-wall macabre nannies, looking like authentic wax figures in a model of the "Last Supper at Donner's Pass", already to spring and walk across the scene of the slow flight. The viewers at the other end were muttering "Bad vibes".

I was sorry to have missed John Cage's exhibit. He's the pioneer of these affairs. Once, he played Satie's *Gymnopedies II* for 24 hours straight, way back in the 50's! I guess that the truly Avant Garde art will always be slightly odd.