



LIZ GLYNN

LIZ GLYNN: In the first performance, I asked if you would be my “waker”, as you couldn’t join us to sleep during the day because of your job. I had taken more sedatives than the other sleepers. What was this experience like for you?

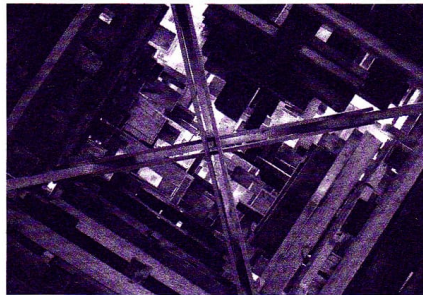
COREY FOGEL: Being your waker was fairly vulnerable and intense. It was everyone’s first experience of III, and you were under the influence of heavy drugs. The environment was extremely heavy, and I felt its weight resting on my shoulders: the enormity of time and scale of the site’s creation; its anticipated premiere; the complexity of this performance; your sedated absence. Success hinged on my ability to wake you. ▲ I was anxious when I nudged you repeatedly and you would not wake. I could not separate the performative responsibilities from personal sentiments and my duties as your friend.

LIZ: It was strange for me, as someone who has a rather limited tolerance of substances, to do this. Many key elements of the performances tested my own limits, including the 7-foot long boa constrictor. The site was to create a different, more emotive experience of performance work.

COREY: I think you inspired us all by staking out a destination off the grid, creating a structure overlooking everything we’d escaped, and staging your own happenings. You demonstrated maximal creative ownership over something more basic than many of us can comprehend, what with rent, fences, zoning, permits. Because

you take ‘performance’ to a more integrated and experiential place than most, the spectrum of events, discussions, and ideas inspired feelings of empowerment, exploration, and emotional liberation.

LIZ: For me, a lot of the experiences in III relied upon my friends who had worked with me in the past trusting me enough to try whatever experiment was at hand. Each performance was untested, and I entered without knowing how people would react.



COREY: Trust functioned differently than most work with a collaborative element, and was never to be taken for granted. The more esoteric and scripted events found me overcome with a pressure to perform correctly. I usually jumped in head first, knowing I was in your hands, open to a transformative and educative experience. Seeing familiar faces assured me that we were at least in the same boat, ready to support each other. ▲ The idea of community as a foundation of trust was diluted by the shape-shifting quality of the site. Each event had a new orientation, day and time, even a new climate. Participation always varied in number, responsibility, mobility, function, and interactivity.

▲ Regarding the pyramid scheme, can you describe the progression or the overarching narrative of the performances, and how new audiences could access the various themes?

LIZ: Each invitation stated “you must bring a guest.” As pyramid schemes go, the audience doesn’t necessarily grow exponentially; rather, it almost folds in on itself. Many who came frequently in the beginning were absent until the end, replaced by a new group. The audience grew far beyond the circle of people I see regularly, but I was pleasantly surprised that the newer guests seemed to have some deeper understanding of what was going on, though how this happened remains somewhat mysterious. In the final performance, you created music that was intended as an kind of funeral march, an elegy — what was it like from your position?

COREY: Watching the destruction of the pyramid while playing music, I tried fill the space with sound without commanding an audience. Elegiac in my approach, I remember feeling that the music did not match the driving pace and candid mood of the workers. I had anticipated a solemn process that would see the pyramid die a slow death. Instead, it was bustling. I felt unable to ground that energy, but insisted on my slow dirge, hoping to balance or anchor the assembly line.



In the summer of 2010, LIZ GLYNN built a pyramid out of wooden pallets on a hillside in Lincoln Heights. III was the site of nine performances based on themes from the Egyptian Book of the Dead to address contemporary notions of irrational fear, the financial crisis, and the desire to cheat death. COREY FOGEL participated in many of the performances as a musician, collaborator, and friend.