

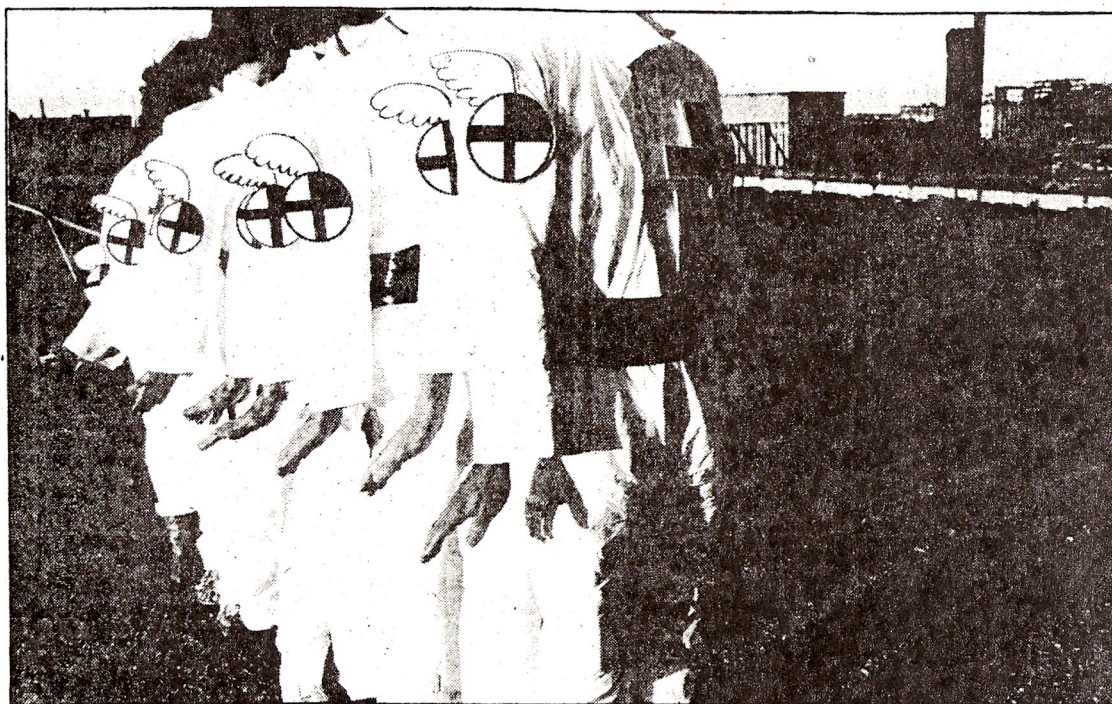
Roping in an audience on Georges Island

PERSPECTIVES

By Christine Temin
Globe Staff

The event will have a captive audience — literally. Tomorrow night the audience for part one of Jerry Beck's new series of site-specific installations and performances will step off a ferry boat at Georges Island in Boston Harbor and be lassoed by performers dressed as guards. This is no arbitrary trick, mind you: The ropes will serve as a reminder of the prison that once operated on the island, also the site of Ft. Warren, a fortification used as late as World War II.

Beck is the most flamboyant entrepreneur on the Boston art scene, the founder and head of The Revolving Museum, an intentionally homeless organization that in the past has staged events that are part guerrilla confrontation, part carnival, in sites including a string of old railway cars. Beck and his pals, dressed in white mechanics' uniforms, perform their newest extravaganza over the next 10 days, first on Georges Island, then at various sites around Back Bay and the suburbs, and finally at the burned-out former Brattle Book Shop at 9 West St. in downtown Boston. Beck calls the unclassifiable chain of events "Flying Wing." "You know how museums are al-



Kathy Chapman photo

Performers from The Revolving Museum in part of the "Flying Wing" series.

ways adding on wings?" he asked the other day. "Well, I decided that The Revolving Museum should have a wing, too." No matter that it doesn't have a building on which to tack said wing.

Tomorrow's episode of "Flying Wing" is titled "Woman in Black — A Night on Georges Island," after the famous female ghost thought to haunt the place. (She accidentally murdered her husband, but that's another story.) The ferry, graciously donated by Mass. Bay Lines, will carry two batches of 250 people each to the island, where, once they're roped in, they will be led to the old Ft. Warren bakery, where they will get a drink and bread "so they can make it through the event," which will last a grueling four hours. As the audience munches, an opera singer impersonating the phantom (Beck couldn't pin the real ghost down to a predictable appearance) will perform doleful songs. Beck says "many heads of lettuce" also play a significant role here.

Onward. Five hundred candles will light the way to "Pygmalion," a performance piece by Dare Dukes, which "deals with our culture's hostility to nature and to women," Beck says. He himself has set up shop in the old prison, with its dirt floors and cages, where he has constructed a living space. "It's a parody of artists' imprisonment by institutions like museums," he says, adding that

replacing the nails. Artist Patricia Thornley offers projections and operatic arias dealing with nuclear waste (she's against it) in the fort's powder magazine, which has a perfect half-dome ceiling and echoing acoustics. Meanwhile, out on the grounds, Katy Schimert "relates to Robert Lowell's poem 'For the Union Dead' by creating a kinetic sculpture using a bubble machine and 1950s car fins," Beck explains. In the fort's hospital, Constanza Aguirre offers pictures of animals and recorded sounds of a newborn's heart. Sandwiching these events on the island are performances on the boat by Sally Greenhouse (going to the island) and Yasha Bamberg (coming back.) The ferries leave Rowe's Wharf, 344 Atlantic Avenue, at 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. tomorrow night; the cost of the event is \$5. Call 268-3884 for more information on this or the other "Flying Wing" events.

On to The Flying Wing Artmobile, a rented van sprouting big silver wings, which will show up in and around Boston Wednesday (As of this writing, the schedule is missing.) Sculptor Mark Humphries will inflate a 25-foot skeleton of a pyramid around 7 p.m. at the Park Street MBTA station. Then filmmaker Cindy Kleine will spirit the Artmobile to various locations, where she will project

portable screen.

The Flying Wing's final takeoff is next Friday through Sunday (call for exact hours) at the Brattle Bookshop, which will have a new facade — a 16-foot book whose spine forms the entrance to the shop. Inside the building will be the George Gloss Gallery, named for the former owner, which features art by Alan Michelson, Ilene Sunshine, Pam Sinotte and Orly Azran, much of it dealing with the desecration of nature.

Beck says he has received lots of support from individuals and organizations, including the Metropolitan District Commission and the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, in bringing to life a project he describes as "drenched in meaning."