

The More The Media

By GRACE GLUECK

"IT'S really going to change a lot of the students' heads, experiencing all those people," hip John Brockman said happily the other day. Brockman, a young impresario sometimes known as Intermedia's intermediary was referring to "Intermedia '68," a two-month, touring festival he is producing with support from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Council on the Arts.

The festival, opening Feb. 15 at the State University of New York's Stony Brook, L. I., campus, amounts to nothing less than a current anthology of intermedia ideas. Its dozen or so performers (backed by a couple of engineers) all work environmentally, using space, light, sound and other elements to provide multi-sensory effects. They include Nam June Paik, a young Korean composer who scrambles TV images, Al Carmines, composer, actor and swinging minister of the Judson Memorial Church, Happeners Allan Kaprow, Dick Higgins and Carolee Schneeman. Action Theater man Ken Dewey, Electromedia Theater man Aldo Tambellini, environmental sculptor Les Levine, "acoustic space" musician Terry Riley, Trisha Brown Schlichter, a technologically-oriented dancer, the poet/engineer group USCO, actor/dancer/choreographer Remy Charlip and dancer/choreographer Aileen Passloff.

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"These people traffic in experience, not objects or products," says Brockman who sometimes sounds like the book he is writing on the subject (with USCO's Gerd Stern). "Their performances result from an awareness of the reality inherent in the new technologies. Their function is to make visible the perceptions of science. They use the environment as an art form, and have abandoned the notion of art as metaphor to deal with man in time and space."

Among the performances already hatched are (a) Les Levine's "Photon: Strangeness Four" (the title is a play on a very advanced mathematical equation) in which spectators interact with a roomful of vibrating wires and fisheye mirrors that skitter randomly about the floor; (b) USCO's "Fanflashtick," a see-through plastic cylinder 10 feet in girth, whose entrants will experience strobe flashes and a powerful wind; (c) Ken Dewey's "Elm City Garage Works," a walk-

through environmental sculpture.

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"Intermedia '68" will touch down at seven campuses—the State University of New York's Stony Brook, New Paltz, Albany and Buffalo branches, Nassau Community College, Rockland Community College, Nazareth and St. John Fisher Colleges in Rochester—plus Buffalo's Albright-Knox Gallery. Six events will make a public appearance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (March 8 and April 12), involving Charlip, Passloff, Carmines, Dewey, Riley, Schlichter, Schneeman and Tambellini. On March 4, the Museum of Modern Art's Junior Council will sponsor an invitational preview, for members only, of three events (Dewey Levine, USCO), at 210 West 65th Street.

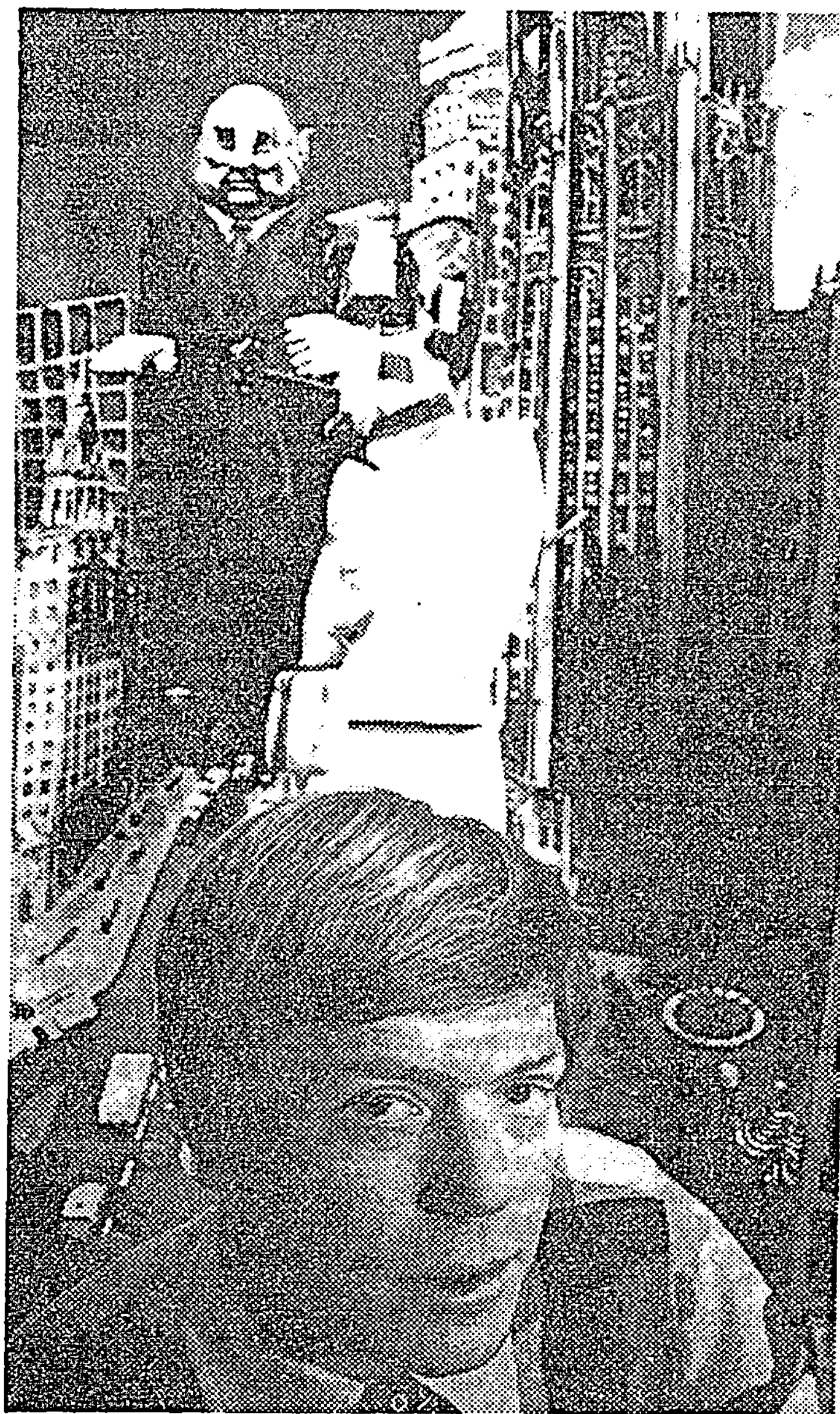
ZAP!

Meanwhile, painter Lowell Nesbitt's been minding the easel at home. For his new show at the Stable Gallery, the young Baltimorean (who still works on canvas with a brush) has tackled an ambitious project—limning the studios of his artist friends.

The impetus for Nesbitt's new series (which includes the studios of painters Charles Hinman and Robert Indiana, sculptors Louise Nevelson, Claes Oldenburg, George Sugarman and John Willenbecher) was a group of monochrome paintings he'd done of his own studio. So well did they succeed that he decided to branch out, in color. Before he started working from photographs, as is his wont, Nesbitt went around to "absorb" the studios he wanted to paint. He had two restrictions: "One, I only did artists who were friends or acquaintances, and two, I had to like their work."

The 15 or so paintings he produced are regarded by Nesbitt as a kind of "reportage," that are also portraits of the artists themselves. "John Willenbecher, for instance. His tightly-arranged working space is indicative of his highly mental approach." Nesbitt found that Oldenburg's studio, dominated by half of a giant billiard ball that was a work in progress, revealed that the artist "likes to stumble over things. The disparate objects, strewn around randomly, reflect the sense of unexpected confrontation you get from his art."

After he had finished the studios (last summer), Nesbitt invited their owners in for a look. "Mostly,"



Declan Haun from Black Star
Red Grooms and Windy City
Go-go Chicago went ga-ga

he says, "they liked them. George Sugarman sat a long time and talked about how the painting really represented his work. Oldenburg went through the painting, picking things out, then accused me of having invented one form that really wasn't his. May Wilson (a sculptress) just sort of jumped up and down."

Nesbitt was also pleased by the artists' reactions to the studios of others. "Oh, my God, you got him!" they'd say. "Like, I zapped."

CHICAGORAMA

The go-go Second City's agog over New York artist Red Grooms's latest extravaganza, "An Installation: The City of Chicago." A brightly painted, plywood and poster-board pop-up version of Chi, it crams the Allan Frumkin Gallery wall to wall; boasts the Wrigley Building, the Tribune Tower, an 11-foot section of the Michigan Avenue bridge, an aerial view of the Chicago River. Two nearly life-size figures, Mayor Richard J. Daley and Playboy publisher Hugh Hefner dominate Michigan Avenue. In one animated section, Sally Rand waves a fan, the Potter Palmers quarrel, and a cow kicks over Mrs. O'Leary's lantern.

Grooms, a one-time student at the Chicago Art In-

stitute, was lured back to Chicago last October by gallery director William Struve, who wanted a show that would strongly reflect the city. He spent three and a half months on the project, aided by his wife Mimi and two other assistants. The hardest part, Grooms says, was the Chicago River. "It was overwhelming. We made lots of trips there, trying to see how the bridges lined up." As for Chi itself; "A terrific city. Everyone's responded so warmly."

Several prospective buyers, including Hefner and the Institute itself, are reportedly also willing to respond with cash (the asking price is \$40,000). In fact, Chicago may see a Grooms boom. His next project is a 48x18-foot billboard (subject undecided), sponsored by Foster & Kleiser, an advertising outfit, which plans to donate the work to the city.

COLLAGE

Ars Medica Center, an international medical art and research reference center, has been established by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The complex, made possible through a grant from the Smith, Kline & French Foundation, houses prints by artists ranging from Durer and Rembrandt to leading contemporary Americans.