

Ken Friedman

The Twelve Days of Christmas

12 Events

The Twelve Days of Christmas

12 Events by Ken Friedman

Christmas Tree Event

Take a Christmas tree into an all-night restaurant.

Place the tree in a seat next to you. Order two cups of coffee, placing one in front of the tree.

Sit with the tree, drinking coffee and talking.

After a while, depart, leaving the tree in its seat. As you leave, call out to the tree, "So long, Herb. Give my love to the wife and kids."

KF
1964
Manhattan Beach, California

The Riddle of the Sphinx

A vessel on four legs filled with powdered milk.

A vessel on two legs filled with sugar.

A vessel on three legs filled with salt.

KF
1968

San Francisco, California



Lully's Toe

Conduct a concert using a 17th century conductor's staff in place of a baton.

Hit your toe.

KF
1976
New York City, New York

La Monte Young Concert Grand Piano

A thin concert grand piano with only one key on the keyboard.
The piano plays only one note.

KF
2017
Kalmar, Sweden



Hanseatic League

A single large cubic stone.

A group of smaller cubic stones, all roughly the same size.

KF
2014
Kalmar, Sweden



Standing Wood Sculpture

Several plain pine boards cut to the same length standing against a wall.

KF
1968
San Francisco, California



In One Year and Out the Other

On New Year's Eve, make a telephone call from one time zone to another so that you are conducting a conversation between people located in two years.

KF
1975
Springfield, Ohio

First performed on New Year's Eve 1975-1976, calling forward to Dick Higgins, Christo, and Nam June Paik in New York, then back to Tom Garver and Natasha Nicholson in California. Celebrated annually since, frequently calling Tom Garver, Peter Frank, Newton and Helen Harrison, Abraham Friedman and Dick Higgins. Performed every year since 1975.

Primate Election

Three people enter.

Each carries a placard on a pole.

The placards bear three large, poster-size photographs.

One placard shows a photograph of the Pope.

One placard shows a photograph of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

One placard shows a photograph of the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The audience chooses a primate by a show of hands.

KF
1993
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Untitled Primate Event

A table.
A bunch of bananas.
A chair.

Another table.
Two chairs.
Two glasses.
A bottle of wine.

A formally dressed dancer enters. (If the dancer is a man, he wears a tuxedo and tails. If the dancer is a woman, she wears a black evening dress.) She or he sits at the table with one chair, slowly eating the bananas.

After a while, two dancers in gorilla costumes enter and sit in the two chairs. A butler or waiter enters and pours the wine with appropriate ceremony and great dignity. One gorilla sniffs the wine and signals approval. The waiter pours both glasses full. Both gorillas drink.

All leave.

KF
1993
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Monkey's Rump Dance

Two buckets of paint, one red, one blue.

A chair.

Three naked men appear.

One paints his rump and genitals red.

One paints his rump and genitals blue.

One paints half his rump red and half blue, his penis red, and his scrotum blue.

A painter may assist.

If the men are shy, they may wear pouches.

A woman appears with a chair. She sits in the chair.

The men dance and cavort to attract her.

The woman chooses one man.

They leave.

The two men remaining gather up the buckets of paint, the painting equipment, and the chair.

They leave

KF
1993
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Ahab's Mast

A wooden mast in an otherwise empty room.

A gold doubloon nailed to the mast at eye height.

KF
1984
New York City, New York

Scriptorium

An otherwise empty room with typewriters standing on the floor.

KF
1968
San Francisco, California

