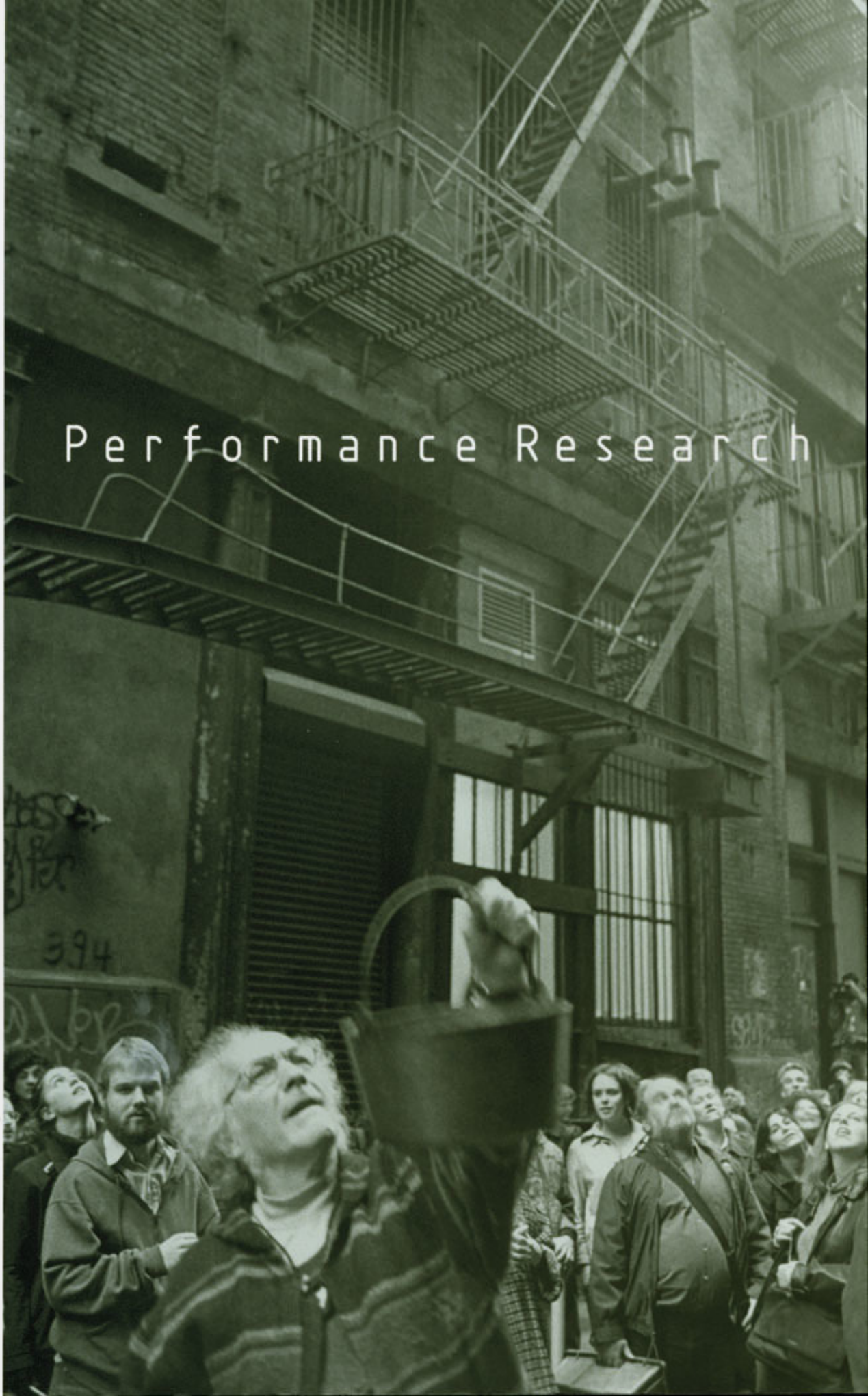
Volume 7, No. 3, September 2002

Performance Research

On Fluxus



Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Volume 7, No. 3, September 2002

On Fluxus

Issue Editors: Ric Allsopp, Ken Friedman and Owen Smith

Front cover image: Philip Corner performing George Brecht's Drip Music (1959) December 2, 2001 in New York City. Presented by The SoundArt Foundation and Art in General.
Photo © 2002 Lisa Kahane
Back cover image: Two-and-a-Half Gallon Can.
Photo © Ric Allsopp
Original Design: Secondary Modern

ISSN 1352-8165
ISBN 0-415-28942-4

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Editorial In Two Voices

October 2002 marks the 40th anniversary of the first Fluxus festival in Wiesbaden, Germany. Owen Smith and I wanted to mark the occasion by collecting some of the original Fluxus performance scores together with current reflections on the past four decades of Fluxus. For us, what makes Fluxus interesting has been its experimental quality. Fluxus has been a laboratory and a forum of invention. Fluxus has been an intermedia activity, crossing the boundaries of art forms and moving over the boundaries of art entirely to do something interesting in the world.

My summary of Fluxus can be stated simply. It began with Dick Higgins's flexible taxonomy of the qualities that characterize Fluxus. I expanded this into a list of 12 qualities: globalism, the unity of art and life, intermedia, experimentalism, chance, playfulness, simplicity, implicativeness, exemplativism, specificity, presence in time, and musicality. Neither Dick nor I intended these as a recipe, but a philosophical description.

I sometimes wonder what the laboratory has been and what its contribution will ultimately be. From time to time, I think of the history of Zen. Lately, though, I find myself thinking of another congregation of grumbling misfits who spent 40 years wandering in the desert. Their story is found in Numbers 14: 26–35. The laboratory spirit eventually leads to something, and it opens into a new world that invites others to join in a larger enterprise. If we are too deeply attached to the past and to experience, we lose the experimental spirit. A faithful account of history must be allied to lively interpretation and fresh meaning.

Dick Higgins and George Maciunas invited me into Fluxus in 1966. Soon after, George asked me to write what he intended as the authorized history of Fluxus. Fortunately, I never completed it. Instead, I have completed several projects over the years – historical, philosophical, and documentary. The more I learn about the work and ideas of my friends and colleagues, the deeper my admiration and respect for them and for their work, and the greater my inability to understand how Fluxus has managed to be an elegant laboratory while remaining trapped in the limits of its own past. I do not have an answer to this riddle. This is something to think about.

I am grateful to the authors who write on Fluxus in this issue of *Performance Research*, and I thank Ric Allsopp for his stimulating dialogue. The questions he posed and the issues he raised will keep me busy for the next few years. My thanks go to Linden Elmhirst for managing the flow of work. And, finally, of course, I acknowledge with gratitude the work of my colleague and co-editor of this special issue, Owen Smith.

It was my great privilege to meet Owen Smith when he was working on what became the first properly researched history of Fluxus. Owen's achievement was to see the past as a trajectory toward the future. His work constitutes the best of what history can be, describing accurately what took place, and using it to construct an interpretative foundation for a useful future. Our working together on this issue has given us the chance to reflect on what Fluxus was and is. I turn the rest of this editorial over to him.

Ken Friedman

Fluxus has been said to be many things, and the essays in this volume reflect this diversity. Almost all of them are concerned with some aspect of Fluxus and Fluxus performance. They take a variety of approaches and methodologies to explore a simple question – what is Fluxus?

Performance Research 7(3), pp.1-2 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

Diversity always involves divergence. This is clearly visible in Fluxus itself and in this Fluxus issue of *Performance Research*. This diversity does not arise through any lack of clarity or failure to achieve scholarly agreement. Instead, it reflects the flavour and the spice of a Fluxus that is always one step ahead or behind where we think it is. This collection does not attempt to define Fluxus. Rather, we continue the thinking that formed the basis of historical Fluxus, acting in the gaps between the traditional distinctions that sometimes separate art and life, the serious and the humorous, and the categories of work and play.

The editorial process that created this issue was both exhilarating and frustrating. It was frustrating because not all the essays could be included; and it was exhilarating because there were such interesting and thoughtful essays to consider. Since the initial call for participation a year ago, Ken and I had a chance to correspond with many interesting artists, historians, and writers. We received more than 50 proposals. From this initial group, we asked 20 authors for a complete essay or project. Ken and I then reviewed these to create a shortlist from which, in consultation with Ric Allsopp, we selected the final list of contributors. You see the result of these conversations and editorial decisions in this volume, but it is only part of what we would have liked to include. We had more excellent essays than we could publish here, and we hope that many of them will find their way into publication elsewhere.

I would like to thank everyone involved in this endeavour. Ric Allsopp and Linden Elmhirst have done a great job of helping Ken and me to focus the editorial theme of the project while broadening the scope of inclusions. I thank authors for their work and ideas, and for their responsiveness to editorial suggestions and deadlines. I give special thanks to Lauren Sawchen, one of my students at the University of Maine. Lauren spent countless hours helping to gather and edit the scores in the new edition of the *Fluxus Performance Workbook* (see pp. 95–109 for a selection by Kevin Mount and http://www.performance-research.net for the complete version). Most especially, I thank my co-editor Ken Friedman, with whom I have had the pleasure to work before. Ken is a great resource on Fluxus, and his work, knowledge, and insights were invaluable for this project.

There is any number of ways to look at this publication. It is a special journal issue dedicated to Fluxus. It is a collection of essays and materials on Fluxus. It is a resource for those interested in Fluxus. I would like to focus on this last aspect. The combination of scores and the essays on Fluxus performance are more than an aggregation of historical materials and an analysis – they are a living resource for those interested in Fluxus, past, present, and future. I see the totality of these materials as a workbook in the true sense of the word. They are guidelines and methods for participation. We hope that what you find in these pages informs you, makes you think, and – most importantly – offers an opportunity for action.

Owen Smith

Avant-gardism and the Fluxus Project

A Failed Utopia or the Success of Invisibility?

Owen Smith

In 1969 Dick Higgins wrote in a letter to Walter Hartmann:

> They want our artifacts, which they treat as those of a bygone race of beings. But not the evidence of our existence or even of those activities which produced the artifacts. . . . What is so spooky is the veneration in which the accidental commodities we have produced are held. It is surely the ultimate reduction of a commodity-oriented society well past the point of absurdity.
>
> (Higgins 1969: np)

Like it or not Fluxus has now been categorized historically as a 'movement' with all the rights, privileges and limitations that come with such status. The current number of exhibitions and catalogues around the 40th anniversary of Fluxus is proof of Fluxus' ever-growing recognition and legitimacy. In the last 4 or 5 years the name Fluxus has gone from eliciting blank looks to being mentioned in *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines. So, why is this worth mentioning? Is this recognition a problem? Absolutely not! However, the issues voiced by Dick Higgins, as well as parallel concerns, are very real and should not be overlooked. The increasing emphasis on Fluxus objects, a lack of an understanding of Fluxus as a ever shifting laboratory of ideas, and most particularly an ever narrowing emphasis on the importance of Fluxus as a historical period centered primarily around one individual are just some of the predicaments created by the historicization of Fluxus. When one thinks of Fluxus what comes to mind first? Maybe an event like George Brecht's 'Drip Music' or Nam June Paik's 'Zen for Head', or a multiple like Ben Vautier's 'Postman's Choice Post Card', or Bob Watts's 'Rocks Marked by Weight', but how many first thought of the 'Flux Halloween Party', or 'Free Flux Tours'? It is more than likely that most people who are familiar with Fluxus recognize the names Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, and Nam June Paik, but do they also recognize the names Bob Grimes, James Riddle, or Sara Seagull? What I am getting at with these questions is seemingly rather simple: there are certain aspects of Fluxus that are better known than others. I would argue that this is not, however, just the result of uncontrolled circumstances and it is certainly not the result of qualitative distinctions. What this, in part, is the result of is the amount of coverage, the availability of information and particularly the focus of most exhibitions and publications. If one is familiar with the names and works that I mentioned above, it would be evident that the better-known works and artists are all from the earlier periods of Fluxus and the lesser-known works and artists are from later periods in the group's development.

Some of you are possibly wondering what any of this has to do with the title of this essay. The connection between my earlier comments and the title is twofold: first, there are significant differences

Performance Research 7(3), pp.3-12 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

between what I am calling early and late Fluxus and such differences are in part related to issues of avant-gardism and the related concept of activism; and second, we should ask what are the ramifications of these differences – do they indicate a failure of the Fluxus project, a success of the Fluxus project, or just a difference of concerns and attitudes?

FLUXUS IN THREE PHASES

Before I delve into these issues I would like to give a very abbreviated history of part of Fluxus focusing on the principal historic period of Fluxus group activities – 1961 to 1978 – a period that might be referred to as the 'institutional phase' of Fluxus. Although a bit circular as a definition, Fluxus can nonetheless be generally described as a changing group of artists who were associated at various times with the rubric Fluxus. Fluxus initially began as an idea for a magazine that would publish materials by artists, writers and musicians. From this starting point, though, Fluxus grew into something seemingly quite different – a sponsoring organization, a producer of artists' multiples, and an attitude towards art and life that has continued up to the present. The development of Fluxus in this 'institutional phase' can be separated into three somewhat overlapping periods of primary emphasis: the proto-Fluxus period and the period of Fluxus festivals and event performances in 1961–1964; the period of Fluxus publishing and multiples, 1964–1970; the period of late Fluxus performances, 1970–1978.[1]

In 1961 George Maciunas and Dick Higgins began to develop plans for a magazine that was to be called *Fluxus*. These plans were in part an extension of the anthology of artists' works that had been put together by La Monte Young in late 1960 and early 1961, which was later published as a book titled *An Anthology*. The desire to publish a magazine was to expose a wider range of people to the 'good things being done' as Dick Higgins described it (Higgins 1972: 16). Before these plans could be implemented, however, Maciunas travelled to Europe in 1961 where he stayed until the end of the summer of 1963. While in Europe in 1961 and 1962 Maciunas, working with Higgins and several other artists, continued to develop plans for publications, which were now called Fluxus Yearbooks and, alternatively, Fluxus Yearboxes. In December of 1961 Maciunas, working with Nam June Paik, also began to develop plans for a series of concerts of 'Very New Music'. This concert series was eventually realized in several festivals, or *Festum Fluxorum* as they came to be called. These European festivals began in the fall of 1962 at Wiesbaden and ended in the summer of 1963 with a festival in Nice. This series also included festivals in Copenhagen, Paris, Amsterdam and The Hague.

After Maciunas returned to New York in the fall of 1963 he organized and carried out a number of group performances. This included a series of 12 performances, called 'Fluxus Concerts', in April and May of 1964, a program of works at the Carnegie Recital Hall under the name 'Fluxus Symphony Orchestra' in June of 1964, and a series of events at the Washington Square Gallery in the fall of 1964. This initial period of Fluxus events and performances came to an end in 1964 because of the tensions that developed concerning differing opinions about Fluxus activism and its potential political aims. These differences came to a head with the picket of the performance of Stockhausen's *Originale* in the fall of 1964. The consequence of these tensions and arguments was that a number of people began to disassociate themselves from Fluxus in the fall of 1964.

The second phase of Fluxus, from 1964 to around 1970, was markedly different from the first in that the activities were more focused on publications and the production of Fluxus works, rather than performances. A number of new artists joined the group in this period. Although extensive plans had been developed for publications in the first period of Fluxus and several works, such as George Brecht's *Water Yam* and Daniel Spoerri's and François Dufresne's *L'Optique moderne*, were actually produced, it was not until after 1964 that the majority of Fluxus works were produced, among them a large number of works by individual artists such as Ben Vautier, George Brecht, Alison

Knowles, Mieko (Chieko) Shiomi, Bob Watts, Paul Sharits, Takako Saito and numerous others. The newspaper *V TRE*, a collection of Fluxus works and publications contained in a briefcase called 'Fluxkit', a series of 'Fluxfilms', and the anthology publications *Fluxus 1* and *Flux Yearbox 2*, which were the eventual result of Maciunas and Higgins's original plans for a collective Fluxus publication, were major projects of the period.[2]

The third, and final collective phase of Fluxus, from 1970 through 1978, is what I have called the period of late Fluxus performance. Even though some new multiple works were produced, and the previously developed works from the second phase were produced on demand, the primary focus of activities in this phase was no longer specifically publications and artist's multiples. During this last 'institutional phase' of Fluxus the focus again returned to performance, but of a very different kind from that of the first period of festivals. The performances are more participatory and activity based, such as the 'Flux Mass,' 'Flux Divorce,' 'Flux Tours,' and 'Flux Games.'

This period also marks the beginning of a wider historical interest in the early phases of Fluxus and several exhibitions and related performances were presented that were more related in tone and tenor to the first and second phases of Fluxus. The whole 'institutional phase' of Fluxus (1962–1978) came to an end in 1978 with the death of George Maciunas who had been the principal organizer, producer and financier of most of the activities and publications of the Fluxus group.

The above narrative needs to be qualified. It should be understood as a view or way of thinking about Fluxus, but it is certainly not the only one.[3] Although George Maciunas was a central figure in the development of Fluxus, he himself does not constitute Fluxus, for Fluxus is and has always been a diverse community and what Fluxus became was the product of all the participants (see Friedman 1998: 237–53).

The first two periods of Fluxus described above are often conjoined and presented as the core of Fluxus activities and works. While such considerations do not always ignore the third period, they certainly give it much less consideration. Although such an emphasis is somewhat the result of a greater availability of Fluxus works and materials from the 1960s, it is also a result of the often unspoken belief that the core of Fluxus, what one might call 'true Fluxus', exists more fully in the earlier periods than it does in the later period and thus warrants greater attention. Stuart Home, in differentiating between early and late Fluxus, wrote:

> It hardly needs stating that these *bizarre* variations on traditional rites [he is referring to the fluxmass, the fluxdivorce, the fluxwedding, etc.] bear little resemblance to the Fluxus activities during the *movement's* 'heroic' phase. In an undated manifesto composed during this 'heroic' period, Maciunas had written:
>
> 'PURGE the world of bourgeois sickness, "intellectual", professional & commercialized culture, PURGE the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematical art, – PURGE THE WORLD OF "EUROPEANISM!" . . . PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND TIDE IN ART, Promote living art, anti-art, promote NON-ART REALITY to be grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes and professionals . . . FUSE the cadres of cultural, social & political revolutionaries into united front & action.'

Home (1988: 59) then goes on to say:

> Measured against these laudable aims, the later activities can only be viewed as a degeneration from the movement's original intentions.

Although Home goes farther than most writers and critics, he is only presenting what many others believe, but won't so forthrightly state. I would suggest that on the most general level many people feel somehow short-changed by late Fluxus. This reaction is in part a general response related to the admonition of Renato Poggioli that 'it is absolutely indispensable to distinguish the spurious from the genuine avant-gardism which results in art, or at least contains the seeds of some future classicism' (Poggioli 1968: 164).

Thus, when people look at late Fluxus and see that it is less culturally critical, less avant-garde, and less politically motivated than early Fluxus

they sometimes erroneously conclude that late Fluxus is less genuine and thus ultimately less historically significant. An aspect of such a reaction, I believe, comes from the perception of early Fluxus as a serious oppositional position modelled on an avant-gardist paradigm, while late Fluxus with its humorous unself-conscious play no longer positions itself as part of a cultural vanguard. What is important to consider here is not whether such an attitudinal shift occurred, because it did, but does such a change indicate a 'degeneration from the movement's original aims' as Home states, or is it a shift from a genuine to a spurious avant-garde which Poggioli cautions us about. So, is Home correct? Is late Fluxus a degeneration from early Fluxus and thus a 'failed' utopia? The simple and direct answer is no. To understand this answer it is necessary to further consider avant-gardism in relation to both early and late Fluxus.

Early Fluxus not only sets itself in opposition to traditional modes and definitions of art, but also to other forms of modern artistic practice such as abstract expressionism in the visual arts and serialism in music. Early Fluxus rejected the modernist practice of creative activities as largely an elaboration of existing culture, and took on the avant-garde practice of attempting to provoke a radical cultural, social or political change by their work. The term avant-garde has been/can be defined as 'a small, self-conscious group of artists who undertake . . . to "make new". By violating accepted conventions and decorum, they undertake to create ever-new forms and styles and to introduce hitherto neglected, and often forbidden, subject matters' (Eysteinsson 1990: 144). Such a definition of avant-garde is plainly descriptive of many early Fluxus activities and motivations. In the Fluxus version of Philip Corner's *Piano Activities* the performers gradually dismantled and destroyed one of the principal symbols of classical music, a grand piano; as part of Higgins's performance of his *Danger Music 2* his head was shaved by Alison Knowles; in Emmett Williams's *Counting Pieces* all the audience members become the score of the work by being counted; and in the Fluxus version of George Brecht's *Violin Solo* the performer virtuoso is presented by the simple act of polishing a violin in front of the audience. Whether these and other similar Fluxus event works confront us, confound us, or make us laugh, they operate to alter our perceptions and offer new insights into the core expectations of art and performance. Fluxus events do indeed 'make new'. Whereas at their core many event works are grounded in the belief that art is not so interesting or important as the reality of daily life, the realization of this is never fully manifested. Quite simply they never fully succeed at a primary level in their attempt to organize a new life praxis from a basis of art.

No matter what it may seem like, given the divergent nature of the works, all the periods of Fluxus activities share a basic attitude about art, culture and life which is a key factor in the Fluxus project. Fluxus is fundamentally a rejection of the status quo's parameters of and for art as distinct from life. It is important here to understand the nature of the art system that Fluxus rejected. It can be argued that by the late 1950s art had often come to be seen as the production of objects which were somehow not the same as other objects, specifically other human-made objects. These objects, i.e. art objects, were considered different insofar as they combined special qualities that only artists can confer, such as craftsmanship and personal expression. Thus the primary value of an art work was seen as resident in its form, or its material values. It is important to note that such a conceptualization of art has a greater relevance, for these qualities of art objecthood are also the basis of the ascribed market value.

The art market operates on the presupposition that art objects are special kinds of objects as a result of their having been worked on by people called artists and given special qualities which we can call craft or material value. The art market is given direction by critics, dealers and buyers who desire something that has a special value as the result of a transformation by an artist of a physical property. In this context art is also often sold as something which will increase in monetary value as

an outgrowth of its rarity and an individual's skill in production as evidenced by its material value. Given all this, the artist can be seen as someone who produces precious objects for the rich; the monetary value of these objects increases, thereby reinforcing the position of economic, political, and social power of the established elite, whether it be cultural or economic. Maciunas himself stated that:

> art must appear to be complex, pretentious, profound, serious, intellectual, inspired, skillful, significant, theatrical, it must appear to be valuable as a commodity so as to provide the artist with an income. To raise its value (artist's income and patron's profit), art is made to appear rare, limited in quantity and therefore obtainable and accessible only to the social elite and institutions.
>
> (Maciunas 1965: np)

The Fluxus project in the early 1960s developed specific directions and emphases as it sought to counter the status and definitions that art had come to have. This project involved a focus that was strikingly parallel to the Marxist-Leninist program of cultural revolution. Although such a direction was not necessarily intentional by all artists involved in Fluxus, many Fluxus artists such as Henry Flynt, Dick Higgins, Jackson Mac Low, Nam June Paik, and particularly George Maciunas were influenced by socialist or communist ideologies/philosophies. In the matter of the basic aims of art and culture as felt by both early Fluxus and by Marxist doctrine, even though the form that the resultant expressions took have been quite different, they can be seen as revolving around two basic ideas: first, art is a reflection of reality and, accordingly, a means of knowledge; and second, art has a social function, namely to help change the world and humanity itself.

The Marxist philosopher Bela Kopeczi, in describing the place that art has in the cultural revolution called for by Lenin, could also be describing some of the key elements of the Fluxus project. Kopeczi states that the principal characteristics include:

> [1] extinction of the cultural monopoly of the former ruling classes; [2] raising of the cultural level of the worker and peasant masses; [3] creation of a new intelligentsia; . . . [5] conscious activity of the Communist Party and of the Socialist State aimed at achieving these objectives.
>
> (Kopeczi 1979: 19)

It is interesting to note, starting with the last of Kopeczi's points first, that Fluxus as an organization, which principally existed in non-socialist countries, often took on the ascribed role of the communist party and the socialist state of pursuing conscious activities aimed at achieving the other objectives. Through activities such as their festivals, performances, and the production of multiples, early Fluxus aimed at both the 'extinction of the cultural monopoly' and 'raising of the cultural level of the worker and peasant masses' thereby, one could argue, creating a new intelligentsia. Many of the Fluxus activities in the early 1960s were consciously thought of as a kind of educational program. Most Fluxus work was not just something that existed for its own intrinsic value, but had a principal concern with, and used mechanisms for, the education of the audience. Discussing the program and aims that he perceived for Fluxus, Maciunas wrote to Higgins in 1963 that he felt Fluxus should be:

> intended for the masses (like Wiesbaden or Paris housemeisters who enjoyed every concert of ours) but not the pseudo-intellectuals, gallery & museum directors & other decadent dilettantes. Those people will not lead to conversion so easily and I think the easiest method to overcome them is to destroy them. If we can reduce the attendance of masses to these decadent institutions we will increase the chance that they will turn their interests to Fluxus.
>
> (Maciunas 1963: np)

Even if all the Fluxus artists did not fully agree with Maciunas' statement, and some didn't, they did agree that they must oppose and subvert those aspects, particularly its commercialization, of the cultural system that they felt were detrimental. Jackson Mac Low, although outspoken in his opposition to the more 'terroristic' aspects of Fluxus activism, wrote to Dick Higgins that he was:

> disgusted by its [culture's] corruption & commercialization, & I agree that certain kinds of art, music & literature have acquired completely wrong kinds of prestige, & that far too many people have been bullied & bulldozed into trying to 'succeed in the arts'.
>
> (Mac Low: 1963: np)

Another aspect of both the Fluxus project and Marxist programs is a rejection of the elitism of traditional cultural systems. This repudiation is connected to both a concern for an art that appeals to the general population, or the masses as Maciunas called them in the preceding quote, and an awareness of the restrictive nature of the distribution of culture. Kopeczi states that a Marxist cultural program '. . . implies the existence of an art which appeals to the broad masses and the democratization of its dissemination' (Kopeczi 1979: 19). Fluxus not only attacked the existing cultural forms and systems but also was an attempt to create an alternative distribution system. Most Fluxus works were not only relatively inexpensive, but were initially distributed through alternative distribution mechanisms. A number of different Fluxshops were set up in the US, France, and The Netherlands. In addition to these shops, which it must be noted were of limited success, several Flux Mail-Order Warehouses were created that were directly aimed at establishing a new means for distributing works and publications without those works themselves seeming to become profound, exclusive or valuable as a commodity. In 1978 Nam June Paik elaborated on the significance of Fluxus as a distribution mechanism that he felt went beyond Marxist parameters:

> Marx gave much thought about the dialectics of the production and the production medium. He had thought rather simply that if workers (producers) OWNED the production's medium, everything would be fine. He did not give creative room to the DISTRIBUTION system. The problem of the art world in the '60s and '70s is that although the artist owns the production's medium, such as paint or brush, even sometimes a printing press, they are excluded from the highly centralized DISTRIBUTION system of the art world.
>
> George Maciunas' Genius [sic] is the early detection of this post-Marxistic situation and he tried to seize *not only* the production's medium *but also* the DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM of the art world.
>
> (Paik 1978: 48)

By 1964 Fluxus had seemingly established its project, to create an educative art for the masses, and determined the means to carry it out, through the development of non-traditional forms and new distribution mechanisms. However, what may seem to be the case and the actual situation are often quite different, and Fluxus is no exception to this. By 1964 the participants of the Fluxus group were increasingly fighting among themselves about the nature of Fluxus and its directions. One of the primary issues of contention was the activism that seems to be such a formative aspect of the Fluxus project. In particular it was the more confrontational proposals, such as those presented in *Fluxus New-Policy Letter #6*, and actions – for example the picket of Stockhausen's *Originale* performance in the fall of 1964 – that created the most contention. These contentions grew so strong that after the 'Picket Against Cultural Imperialism' a number of the artists who had been formative in Fluxus quit the group. In a 1965 letter Dick Higgins described the events around the picket of the Stockhausen performance and its effects:

> About Fluxus: you may have not heard, but for all practical purposes it went to pieces in September. Under the influence of Flynt, who has great ideas but is a tactical dunce, Maciunas antagonized a good many people who had been interested in working with him. Then in September, he tried to blackmail Paik into not performing the Stockhausen *Originale*, and Ayo into picketing the performance. . . . Anyway, what happened was that outside [the performance] Maciunas, Flynt, a few others . . . picketed, distributed this outlandish brochure written in straight 1930's-ish with outrageous accusations against everybody under the sun (though only Stockhausen by name). It was most embarrassing to those of us who took Fluxus seriously. Joe Jones was the only one who didn't complain to Maciunas: he asked him to resign from Fluxus, so that the name might somehow continue to be of use. Maciunas did, naming Watts as new chairman, only to

> find that Watts wanted nothing to do with Fluxus any more. As a result, Maciunas took back his resignation, and, today, presides over an empty table.
>
> (Higgins 1965: np)

What was at stake in these debates and arguments was not so much if Fluxus should oppose the existing cultural system, or seek to change and educate people, but what was the best or most appropriate way to pursue such a program. And, as a side note, it should be mentioned that the severity of these arguments and the resultant partial disintegration of the group were magnified by the growing personal conflicts between some of the Fluxus members.

As Fluxus reformed in the mid-1960s with some new members as well as some of the old members it began to redirect its activities towards the production and distribution of multiples. In this period Fluxus also began to shift away from the more activist, oppositional stances and actions of early Fluxus. Tomas Schmit perceived the beginning of this shift in attitude as early as 1963:

> dear george (as well Brecht as Maciunas since i am not sure who is responsible for the V TRE . . . i am deeply disappointed and angry about that 'V TRE' !!!!! . . . maybe somebody can give me the right version of what 'V TRE' means at all ??? – then, first page: this photo of the new editorial council is really too much true: this page, and the whole paper, looks exactly like what comes out if bourgeoisie gets drunk – maybe you know the german 'kegelklubs' (sort of bowling clubs . . ., which is a very typical institution of german bourgeoisie: if those people make a feast, they print newspapers – 'bierzeitungen' – that look really too much like your V TRE: nicely mixed up and nicely silly – and we (and all german students) used to make such papers . . . just to enjoy ourselves – BUT FLUXUS people should keep away from just only enjoying themselves!!!!! . . . the other junk . . . and the mixing up . . . i say its terrific silly!!!
>
> (Schmit nd: np)

Although humor was always a part of the Fluxus attitude, its centrality becomes much more significant in the mid-1960s and 1970s. In this period humor, particularly 'silly' humor as Schmit called it, begins to replace the oppositional and confrontational stances of early Fluxus as a principal mode of operation. The significance of many of the later performances, such as the 1966 *Street Cleaning Event* (in which a section of the street was cleaned with toothbrushes) and *Hotel Event/Flux Clinic* (in which the bodies of the participants were measured) is that they model a more interactive, humorous, playful and less culturally self-conscious role-playing (such as 'playing doctor' in the *Flux Clinic*) than many of the staged/matrixed events of the early Fluxus performances.

Among all the changes that are worth noting in the late Fluxus performances I want to stress particularly the implicit rejection in this change of the avant-gardist notion of cultural leadership. Maciunas, in fact, began to refer to Fluxus in the mid-1960s as the 'rear-garde'. In his ART-FLUXUS ART-AMUSEMENT statement from 1965 he wrote: 'Fluxus art-amusement is the rear-guard without any pretension or urge to participate in the competition of 'one-upmanship' with the avant-garde'.[4] No longer did Maciunas present Fluxus as promoting 'the revolutionary tide in art' but as a 'fusion of Spike Jones, Gags and Vaudeville'. It was this shift in Fluxus' direction and attitude that has led many people to assume that the Fluxus project thus failed as a result of the tensions and break-up of the group in the mid-1960s. The group is seen as never fully recovering, and consequently by the 1970s degenerating into something that, barely, if at all, managed to continue the initial project developed in the early period of Fluxus. Contrary to this view I believe that such a change is actually the success of late Fluxus and Fluxus in general. It is the very invisibility and seeming insignificance of late Fluxus that offers one of the potentially greatest/fullest explorations of the general intent of the Fluxus project. By abandoning that which seems so central to early Fluxus, its activism and its avant-gardism, late Fluxus more fully achieves an integration of creative actions into life praxis. Thus, what I am proposing is that the very failure of early Fluxus as supposedly indicated in the degeneration of late

Fluxus is its ultimate success. To understand the validity and significance of late Fluxus it is crucial to understand what early Fluxus attempted, and how late Fluxus continues to pursue the same general aims but simultaneously rejects the initial avant-gardist and activist paradigms.

FUNDAMENTAL FLUXUS

In all phases of Fluxus there are general aims and concerns that exist outside of, or at least to the side of, the activist, avant-gardist directions so evident in early Fluxus. It is these aims that are the central aims to the Fluxus project and not the avant-gardist and activist activities and attitudes of early Fluxus. These include but are not limited to the following:

- rejecting the notion that art is first and foremost a process of production that creates a unique object;
- stressing the non-hierarchical nature of the world outside of human impositions;
- eschewing the role of the artist as special and as the principal focus of the work and its appreciation;
- emphasizing the primary significance of process, change and duration in the creation and presentation of works;
- discarding the significance of boundaries between types of works through the use of new media, intermedia and even non-media.

These general concerns persist in all periods of Fluxus and do not exist in one or another and it is these concerns that form a more fundamental and general Fluxus project. What does vary is the way and manner in which they are brought into 'play'. Key among these differences is the formative oppositional stance of early Fluxus that is abandoned in late Fluxus.

I realize that I have spent most of my discussions so far in this essay doing just what I earlier complained about: stressing the actions and developments of early Fluxus over late Fluxus activities. But this is part of what I am trying to emphasize, and not by mirroring what has been done, but by stressing early Fluxus as a part of an avant-gardist paradigm and late Fluxus as something quite different. Early Fluxus in its work, actions and aims operates in a traditional way that gives us an object to study. By adopting an avant-gardist paradigm early Fluxus also gives us a conceptual frame and a means for evaluating its success. Late Fluxus, on the other hand, in abandoning these aspects offers no alternative specific framework that I can similarly elaborate, produced little work similar to those works produced earlier, and what it did produce gives little in the way of materials for study. In addition, even if one were to fully document who wore what costumes and what they did at, say, the *Flux Halloween* event it would completely miss the point of such activities. Late Fluxus activities, such as the *New Year Eve's Flux Feast*, *Flux New Year Eve*, *Flux Food Atlas & Snow Event*, and *Flux Halloween*, were, for the most part, never intended for more than the participants themselves. The stress in these activities was on participation in social performative frameworks and not creating performer/audience situations. Thus what needs to be stressed in late Fluxus is its function as a model and not its existence as a historical occurrence or a vanguardist expression of culture. Late Fluxus sought to more completely abandon any distinction between categories of experience such as art and non-art. It is our very inability to describe and delimit these late Fluxus activities that indicates, I believe, a successful realization of the general aims of the Fluxus project.

If we compare the communicative process in an early Fluxus event, such as Arthur Koepcke's *Music While You Work*, and a late Fluxus performative situation, such as *Flux Food Atlas & Snow Event*, a fundamental shift is evident in the processes of differentiation. This change is evident in the means though which the work itself is distinguishable from other works and most interestingly in the relationship between the producer and the receiver, the subject and the object, and between the performer and the audience. In most early Fluxus performative events, the work and its presentation primarily follow the standard directional and consequently hierarchical process of communication (artistic and

other forms): maker/ artist; processes of production; object; processes of reception; user/viewer.

In early Fluxus the significant factors are more focused than traditional art works on the last two elements, the process of reception and the viewer, thus creating a more flexible and open-ended relationship between artist and viewer. Nonetheless, a certain prioritization is still maintained and in fact is reinforced by the incorporation of this communicative relationship into an avant-gardist paradigm. The avant-gardist, and many of the early Fluxus artists, use the context of art to observe the interesting business of daily life; however, these attempts to reintegrate art into the praxis of life are a profoundly contradictory endeavour. The (relative) freedom of art vis-a-vis the praxis of life is at the same time the condition that must be fulfilled if there is to be a critical cognition of reality. Thus the aim of early Fluxus, the reintegration of art into life, has not occurred and cannot occur in late capitalist society unless it is a false sublation of autonomous art. We are still in need of the artist – for their wisdom and as a guide through the process of the reaestheticization of life. In traditional art the viewer has been seen largely as a passive reader or consumer of images, the end of the line so to speak, the targeted audience or inadvertent interceptor of a transmission. This paradigm, although severely torqued in event-based performances, is still given a characteristic slant or trajectory so as to privilege the maker or the artist as an essentially active originary force in complementary contrast to the essential remove or passivity of the audience from the works. Such a separation can only really be overcome when there is no activated distinction between active and passive, subject and object, or sender and receiver. As in most late Fluxus works one must be a participant in the proceedings and in this way all are participants – there is no audience other than the participants, who are all interchangeably both audience and actor. Late Fluxus comes closer to a true-life praxis, as opposed to an introduced/ modeled art-based life praxis, with the model being the play of life/difference.

In many of the late Fluxus performances this communicative process of prioritization is much more fundamentally distorted and thus multiversant. These performances do not so clearly distinguish between the artist/maker and the viewer/ user. The activities of the *Flux Food Atlas & Snow Event* exemplify this difference. These activities, which occurred on 22 and 23 January 1977, began on Saturday, around 9 in the evening, with a potluck dinner, the participatory performance of *Flux Food Atlas*. For this event, the food and drinks brought by the participants (each from a different country) were set on a large map to correspond with the food's country of origin and then the food and drink was consumed by the participants. The outdoor events on Sunday the 23rd included realizations of the snow or ice pieces by many of the participants. A number of these works, such as Knowles's *Snow Sing* and Maciunas' *Marching Pieces* and *Sledding Pieces*, were participatory and involved everyone. There were also several individual impromptu presentations such as Geoff Hendricks's peeing 'fluxus' in the snow and Jean Dupuy's drawing of Maciunas in the snow (Hendricks 1977: np). The activities included in the *Flux Snow Event* were 'events' insofar as all actions and activities are event-based. Many of the pieces 'presented' could not be distinguished physically, or in some cases conceptually, from any other 'normal' day-to-day events, such as sledding, caroling, walking and even peeing. There is in these performative situations no longer a work (event) *per se* as separate from other works or experiences and thus the whole issue of the performer and audience in a communicative process is rendered irrelevant. In this context late Fluxus works have no important, recognized or fixed communicative initiator and receptor, for they both become melded in a process of experience. This relationship between early and late Fluxus works evidences the full-circle development of certain aspects of Fluxus performance and their ultimate success. Early performative event pieces based on daily occurrences were supplanted in late Fluxus activities by daily events which possess references to the earlier

event-type pieces, but are not presented as separate from daily life at all.

The unself-conscious enjoyment of late Fluxus activities are in some ways a more full realization of George Brecht's aim in developing the event performance as a means of abandoning artistic differentiation. Describing his view on art and anti-art Brecht wrote to Maciunas that:

> since anti-art is opposed to art, it depends on art for its existence. Hence anti-art is an aspect of art. Since art (like science, religion in the organized sense, language, myth, etc.) are mind-forms, rainfall may not be art according to whether or not a mind-form is imposed upon it. Beyond these mind-forms, art and anti-art, and non-art, are not involved, since no distinctions are imposed. Then, finally, the subject-object distinction is dissolved, concepts and methods disappear (since no-one acts), and everything becomes exactly itself.
>
> (Brecht nd: np)

Late Fluxus is in many ways less fulfilling than the early forms, for it has less to tell you. If you look to it for answers you will not find them (or at least no complete answers). There are no clear artist heroes, no objects to venerate (and value), and no clear patterns of a philosophical platform (a key to most activist stances – a model to follow or a belief to subscribe to). So, interestingly enough, Home was in part right – late Fluxus loses the heroic edge, or the nature of early Fluxus. But such a loss is not a degradation or an abandonment of Fluxus principles as Home intimates, rather it is the ultimate success of the Fluxus project. In this very abandonment that Home bemoans, late Fluxus more fully realizes some of the basic concerns of its project: non-hierarchical experiences, processes of change, a lack of boundaries, and a creative life praxis modeled not on art but on experience. Although late Fluxus' invisibility may mean it failed culturally and art historically, it also means that it succeeded on its own terms.

NOTES

1. For a more complete accounting of these periods in the history of Fluxus see Smith (1998 passim).
2. For more information on Fluxus publications and objects, see Anderson (1994).
3. Although a number of authors have addressed this issue, of particular interest is Hannah Higgins (1998: 31–60).
4. What Maciunas is also rejecting by rejecting the term avant-garde is specifically The New York Festival of the Avant-Garde, organized by Charlotte Moorman. Maciunas felt that this festival series was intentionally developed to be in direct competition with Fluxus as an organizer of festivals and performance gatherings and he routinely attacked both Moorman and the festival in his letters to other artists.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Simon (1994) 'Fluxus Publicus', in E. Armstrong and J. Rothfuss (eds) *In the Spirit of Fluxus*. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center.

Brecht, George (nd) 'Letter to George Maciunas', Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

Eysteinsson, Astradur (1990) *The Concept of Modernism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Friedman, Ken (1998) 'Fluxus and Company', in *The Fluxus Reader*, West Sussex: Academy Editions.

Hendricks, Geoff (1977) 'Letter to George Maciunas', 11 February, Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

Higgins, Dick (1965) 'Letter to Anne Wehrer', 11 January, Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

—— (1969) 'Letter to Walter Hartmann', Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

—— (1972) 'Something Else About Fluxus,' *Art and Artists* 7(7) October.

Higgins, Hannah (1998) 'Fluxus Fortuna', in Ken Friedman (ed.) *The Fluxus Reader*, West Sussex: Academy Editions.

Home, Stuart (1988) *The Assault on Culture: Utopian Currents from Letterism to Class War*, London: Aporia Press and Unpopular Books.

Kopeczi, Bela (1979) 'In the Socialist Countries', in Mikel Dufrenne (ed.) *Main Trends in Aesthetics and the Sciences of Art*, New York: Holmes & Meier.

Maciunas, George (1963) 'Letter to Dick Higgins', Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

—— (1965) ART-FLUXUS ART-AMUSEMENT, New York: Fluxus.

Mac Low, Jackson (1963) 'Letter to Dick Higgins', 22 April, Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

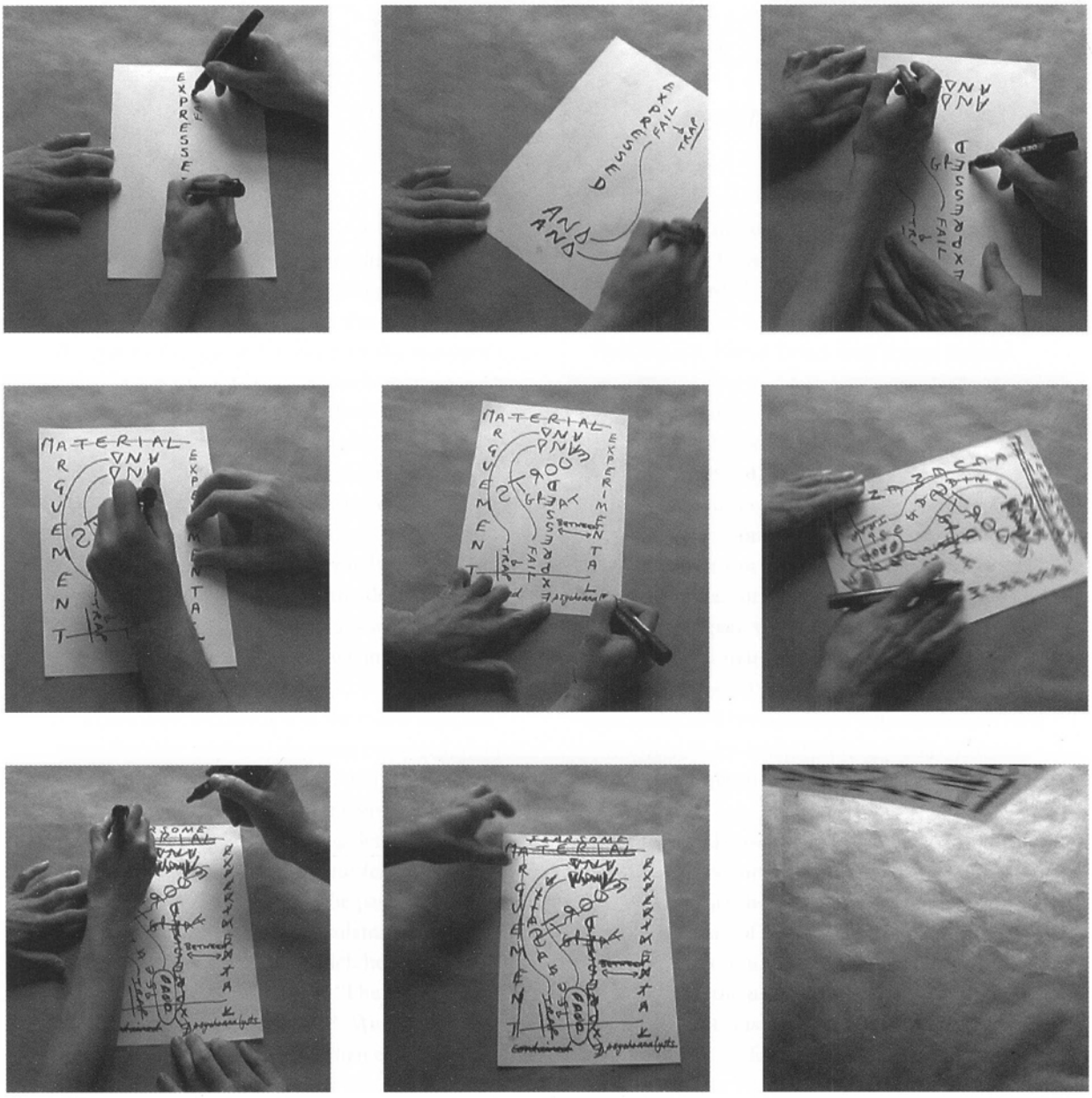
Paik, Nam June (1978) 'George Maciunas and Fluxus', *Flash Art* 84–85 (October–November).

Poggioli, Renato (1968) *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schmit, Tomas (nd) 'Letter to George Maciunas', Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie, Archiv Sohm.

Smith, Owen F. (1998) *Fluxus: History of An Attitude*, San Diego: San Diego State University Press.

"To shape perceptions, nicknames must gain currency, something that can happen only if they cling to the cobwebs of the mind. Operations in which large numbers of men may lose their lives ought not to be described by code words which imply a boastful or overconfident sentiment"



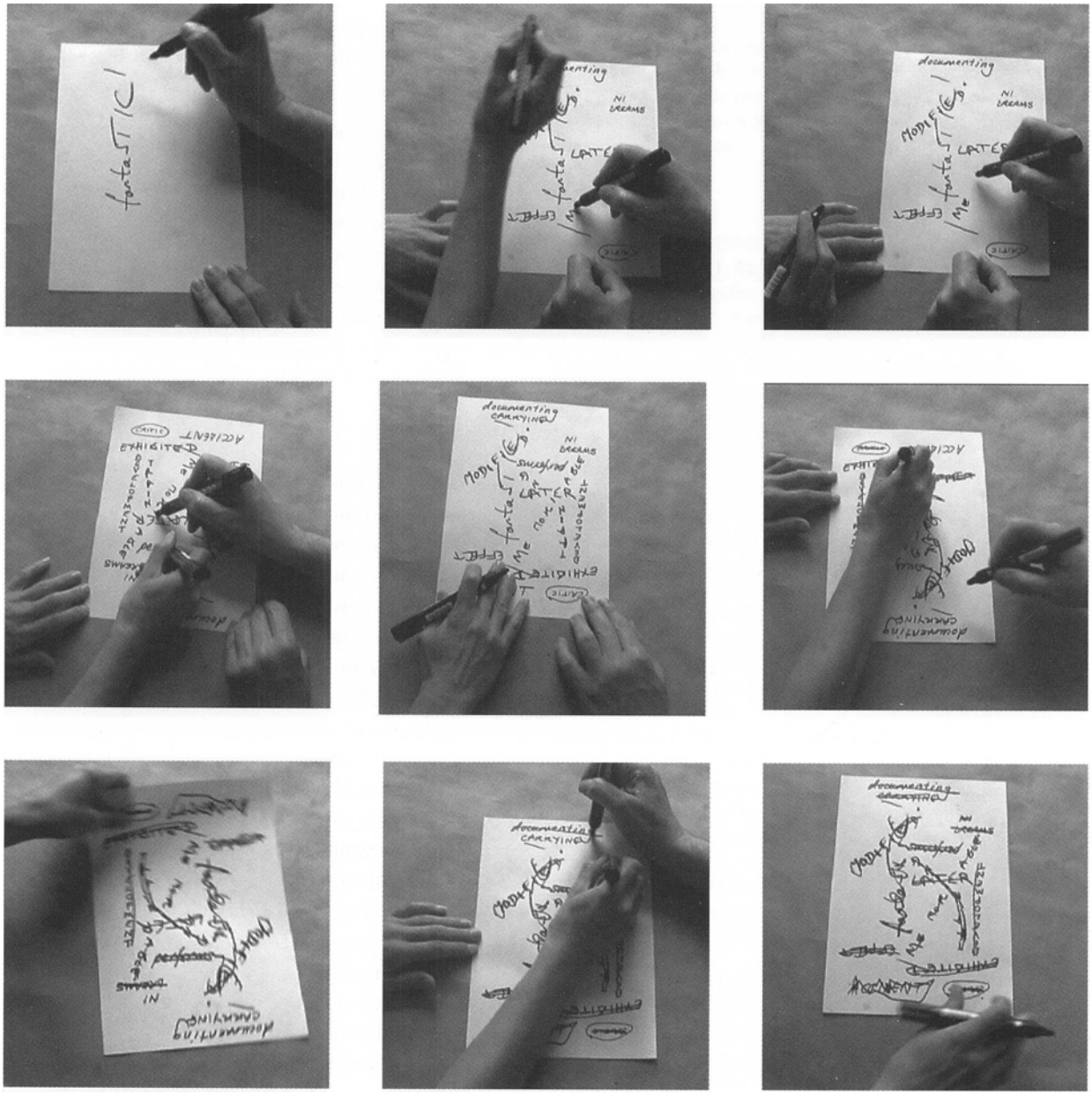
expressed *f*ail a**n**d t*r*ap a**n**d g*r*eat arg**u**ement mat*e*rial
exp**e**r**i**mental strod*e* cont**ai**ned betwee**n**
psych*o*analysts scudding fearsom*e*

All head of page quotesfeatured in the Enduring Freedorns' artists' pages (13, 14, 54, 77, 139) are taken from Gregory C. Sieminski, 'The Art of Naming Operations', *Parameters* (Autumn 1995): 81–98.
This page: Sieminski/Winston S. Churchill note 22

"Do you want your grandchildren to say you were in Blue Spoon?" ...

"How about Just Action?" Kelly offered.

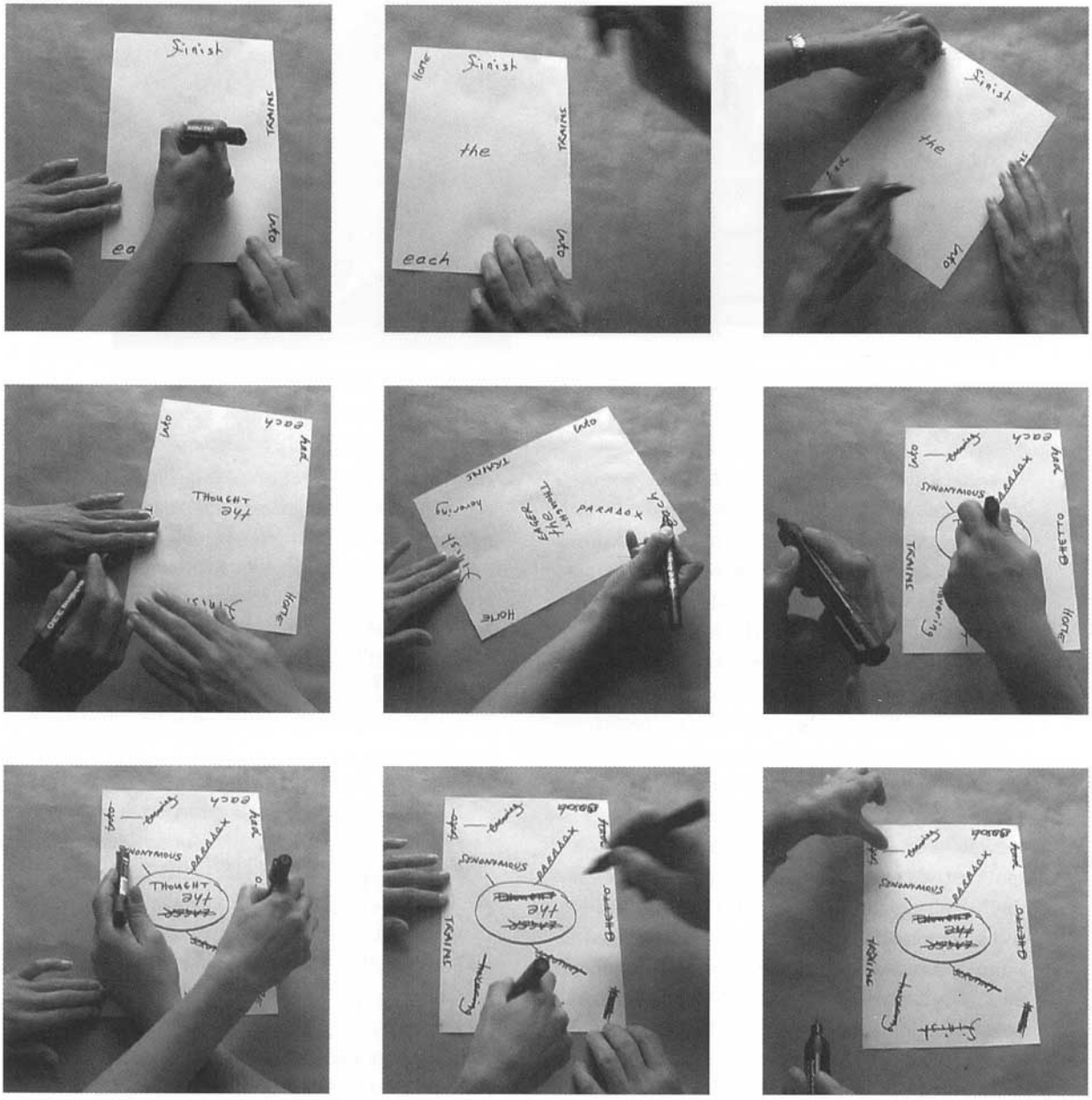
"How about Just Cause?" Lopez shot back.



*f*antastic c*r*itic **e**ffect i**n** m**o**d**i**fied dr*e*ams late*r* doc**u**menting
memo**r**able acci*d*ent exhib**i**ted develo*p*ment
trainin**g** perform*s* carryin**g**

Sieminski/Bob Woodward note 2

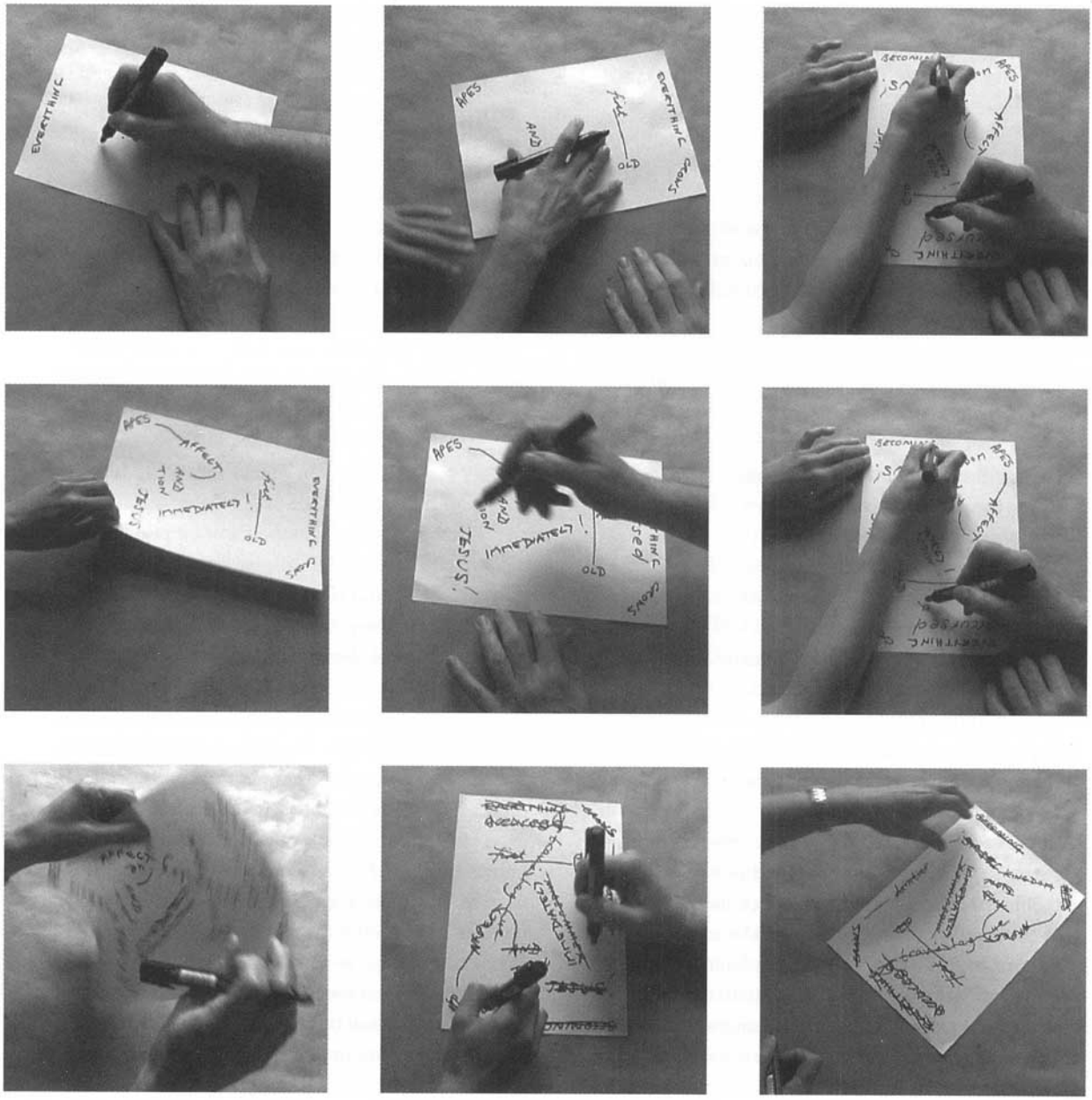
"After all the world is wide, and intelligent thought will readily supply an unlimited number of well-sounding names which do not suggest the character of the operation or disparage it in any way and do not enable some widow or mother to say that her son was killed in an operation called 'Bunnyhug'' or 'Bally Hoo'."



each finish into trains the home had thought eager hovering
parade ghetto scrutiny becoming synonymous

Sieminski/Winston S. Churchill note 22

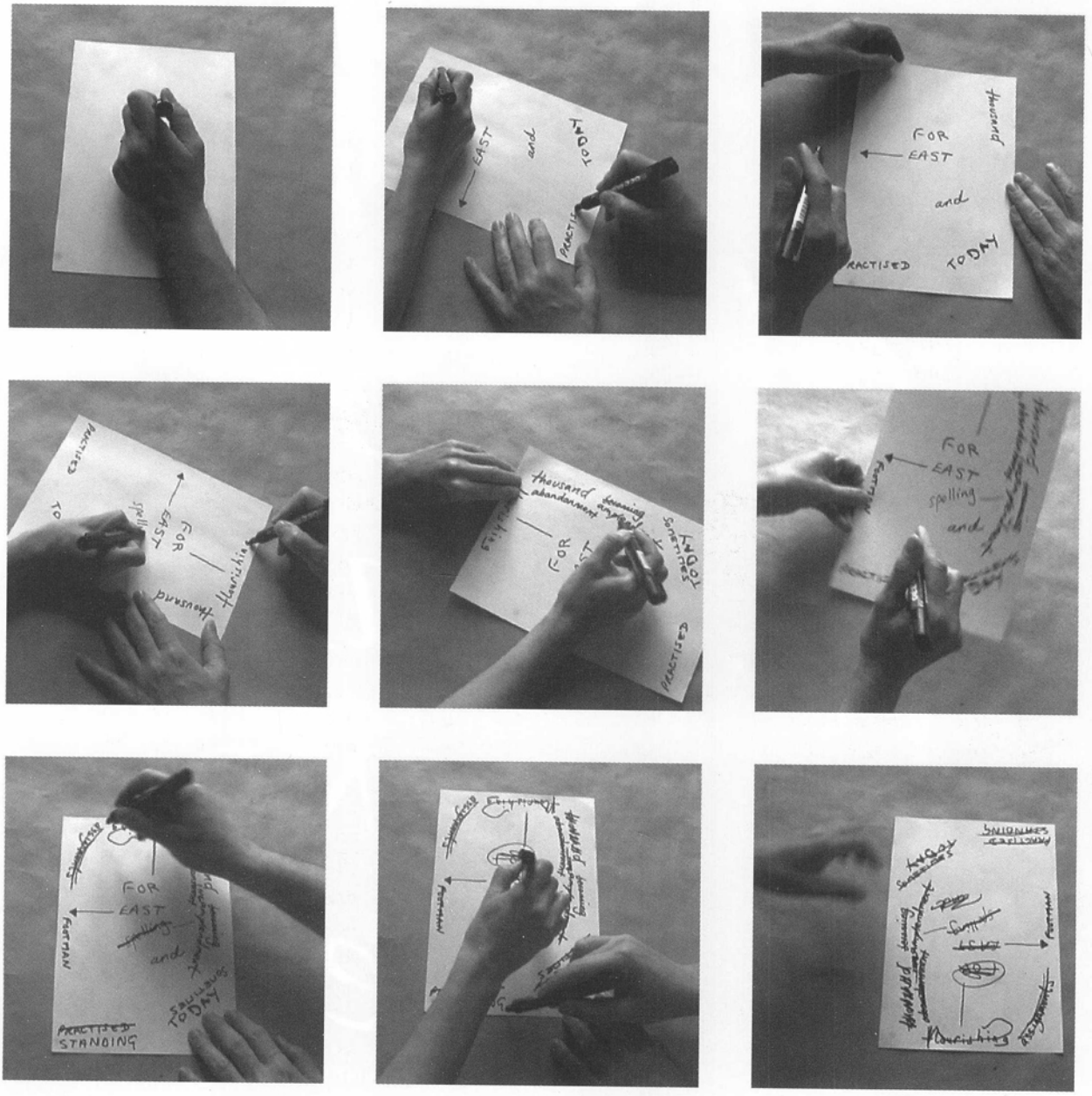
roper names are good in this field. The heroes of antiquity, figures from Greek and Roman thology, the constellations and stars, famous racehorses, names of British and American war oes, could be used, provided they fall within the rules."



everything a**n**d old *f*irst c*r*ows ape*s* affe*c*tation jesu**s**
immed*i*ately accur**s**ed king*d*o*m* mid*s*umm*e*r
dainti**e**r becomi**n**g travelo**g**ue

Sieminski/Winston S. Churchill note 24

"I am not convinced that the country should not be told that war means killing. I am by nature opposed to any effort to 'sell' war to people as an only mildly unpleasant business that requires very little in the way of blood."



*f*or **e**ast a**n**d to**d**ay p*r*actised tho**u**sand flou**r**ishing spe*l*ling
so*m*etimes becomi**n**g a*m*en*d*ment aba*n*do*n*ing foot*m*a**n**
stan*d*i**n**g assign*m*e**n**ts

Sieminski/Matthew B. Ridgway note 60

Silence and Savant-garde: Beuys, Fluxus, Duchamp

Chris Thompson

PRESENCE

In 1979, Jacques Derrida visited Joseph Beuys' retrospective exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Rather than take the elevator to the top and walk down the museum's spiralling ramps, he began at the bottom and saw the show the hard way. Beuys had referred to the sections of his exhibition as 'stations'. Later, reflecting upon his experience, Derrida told 'his son Jean that the exhibit experience replicated nicely the "Stations of the Cross" ' (Ulmer 1984: 227–8). Perhaps having deliberately viewed the exhibition against the grain provided by Frank Lloyd Wright as well as by Beuys enabled Derrida in his nonchalance to make the connection that Beuys surely hoped for.

There were 24 Stations in the exhibition, ten more than the medieval devotion consisted of, one for each hour of the day. At Station 10, a not-yet-breathless Derrida would have seen a large black-and-white photograph showing Beuys standing in his art uniform – jeans, vest, and felt hat – holding a paintbrush and a jar full of the paint he called 'Braunkreuz' mixed with chocolate. Sprawled at his feet was a large placard on which he had just finished painting, in German: 'The silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated'. We might imagine a Duchamp far more amused than even Derrida to see the lengths to which Beuys was prepared to go in order to shout out his silence. Beuys began by building a fat-corner into a construction meant to call to mind a wooden-gate. As if to chase away the silence, next he made out of several bells a sound piece that he placed on the floor in front of the fat-corner. Then he went to work on the poster. All of this was recorded, live, for West German television's channel two (on 11 December 1964), as Wolf Vostell, Bazon Brock and Tomas Schmit performed other actions simultaneously in other parts of the room.

Still years before Duchamp's *Etant Donnés* would be revealed, Beuys' action was a protest against what he considered to be Duchamp's self-imposed exile from art-making, his withdrawal into the silent world of the chessboard; it was a gesture proclaiming his anger at Duchamp's refusal to engage with the political and social concerns that Beuys felt should be the artist's arena, his frustration at all the attention that Duchamp had been paid for what in Beuys' view amounted to his having simply shirked the provocative questions that his readymades had raised.

In her catalogue, a book that has become a Beuys Bible of sorts, in the entry accompanying this action, Caroline Tisdall notes that 'Such a direct criticism of something within the canon of modern art is unique in Beuys' work and was provoked by the nihilist Duchamp cult of those years, when it was still believed that the master had given up art for chess' (Tisdall 1979: 92). Here we might jump back a bit to look at the events that led up to this dramatic attempt to root out these dangerous nihilists and their arch Anti-artist.

The resurgence of interest in Duchamp in

Performance Research 7(3), pp.15-25 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

Europe had been rekindled only a few years before, in 1960, when he had his first major exhibition in Europe at the Kunstgewerbemeseum in Zurich. This had been followed up 2 years later by the 1962 German edition of Robert Lebel's 1959 monograph on Duchamp (Lebel 1959). It seems that when all is said and done, history was the medium that Duchamp was able to wield most successfully. In 1965, a year after Beuys made his action, as Eugen Blume notes, 'history answered this gauntlet thrown down by Beuys with a strange coincidence': Duchamp's first show in Germany went up in Krefeld, Beuys' birthplace. The exhibition must have been in the making before Beuys' 1964 action, and he was no doubt anticipating it when he and his activist brand of Fluxus went live on West German TV.

The following quote from Duchamp appears on the cover of the catalogue for the 1965 show in Krefeld:

> I believe art is the only form of activity through which human beings can manifest themselves as true individuals. It is through art alone that human beings can go beyond the animal stage, for it is an escape into realms where neither space nor time apply. Living means believing, at least that's what I believe.
>
> (Duchamp, quoted in Blume 1999: 9)

It is important to spend a moment trying to decipher what is meant here by 'believing', with the caveat that a successful deciphering of Duchamp's message, far from understanding him better, would entail *not* understanding him more interestingly. Before his 'retirement' from art-making, Duchamp wrote:

> In terms of popular metaphysics I'm not prepared to discuss the existence of God. Therefore the term *atheist*, as opposed to *believer*, does not interest me. Nor does the word *believer* and the opposition of these words. To me there's more than just *yes*, *no*, and *indifferent*. There is also the absence of such investigations.

In a 1963 interview in which this writing was read back to him, Duchamp gave it a lukewarm affirmation:

> I don't regret writing that. To me it's relevant even today. I'm still convinced that the positive, the negative and the indifferent do not offer satisfactory explanations. . . . You'll ask me what I have achieved . . . I wouldn't know. The future will judge.
>
> (Duchamp, in Drot 1987)

In response to Duchamp's Krefeld exhibition, Beuys made a note that read: 'On 12.5.1963 Marcel Duchamp falls on his sword'. May 12 was Beuys' birthday, and the year 1963 was significant in that, on February 2 and 3, Beuys had performed in and helped George Maciunas to organize the Fluxus performance festival at the Düsseldorf Art Academy.

Beuys dated his involvement with Fluxus to 1962, when he first met Nam June Paik and George Maciunas. He explained that 'we three worked together to organize something in various places at such Fluxus Festivals. While Maciunas and Paik concentrated on the Wiesbaden Action, which took place in 1962 and in which I, although I was on the list of participants but for some reason could not take part, prepared the Düsseldorf Festival for the following year at the Academy. In 1962 I myself did not take part in any actions' (Adriani et al. 1979: 77–8). Perhaps he was waiting to see how the first one turned out to determine whether he wished to have a more sustained involvement; in any case, Beuys later said that if he had been a participant in Wiesbaden, he 'would have done something with the Earth Piano'. The *Earth Piano* began as an idea for an action combining piano and earth, and since for Beuys it 'was much better as a concept', he never actually produced it. Though he did not say what exactly might have preceded it, Beuys said that this first almost-Fluxus action was nevertheless 'not my first Fluxus action but an idea which we had all discussed and about which I had spoken to Paik' (Adriani et al. 1979: 78).[1]

As Owen Smith has suggested, the Düsseldorf event itself, like much of Fluxus' activities, was less a partnership between individuals with a cohesive aesthetic and political agenda than it was a kind of 'small-scale opportunism'; despite frequently

complex organizational efforts, Fluxus events often were born of a constantly changing web of friendships, friend-of-a-friendships, connections and loose-knit groupings that arguably had as much to do with happenstance as they did with strategizing (Smith 1998: 5).

Wolf Vostell had also been a participant in the Düsseldorf Fluxus event, and he along with Beuys and Schmit had taken responsibility for orchestrating further Fluxus events in Germany after George Maciunas, Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles left Europe in late 1963 (Smith 1998: 9).[2] Perhaps opting for understatement in contrast to Beuys' dramatic prophecies and television appearances, at the opening of yet another Duchamp exhibition in Germany in 1965, this time in Hanover, Vostell went on a Fluxus defensive–offensive by presenting Mr Silence with the barely explicable gift of a tooth-brush (Blume 1999: 8–9).

When Beuys criticized the silence of Marcel Duchamp less than a year after his Fluxus debut, he considered himself to be acting in support of Fluxus. According to him, Duchamp had been critical of Fluxus artists: 'everyone knows', Beuys said, 'that Duchamp was in the habit of reproaching young people by saying, "We have already done this, we have already done everything: actions, happenings . . . it's all old." ' Here it is important to note that Beuys' suggestion that Duchamp was somehow 'anti-Fluxus' or disdainful towards it and its artists is misleading given that Duchamp thought highly of a number of Fluxus artists and participated in projects with them as well as contributing to publications by Higgins's Something Else Press.[3] What is at issue is not so much Duchamp's opinion of Fluxus as the way in which Beuys fictionalized a version of this opinion in order to articulate his own notion of the Social Sculpture, one whose insistence upon active creative practice, 'Direct Democracy', was decidedly at odds with what Elaine Sturtevant described as Duchamp's deliberate relinquishment of creativity: 'What Duchamp did not do, not what he did, which is what he did, locates the dynamics of his work. . . . The grand contradiction is that giving up creativity made him a great creator' (Sturtevant, in Hainley 2000: 86).

In the midst of the swell of interest in Duchamp towards the end of his life, Beuys wondered aloud why everyone was so taken with him; in a 1969 interview with Willoughby Sharp, he asked polemically why people were not instead spending more time 'thinking about Schiller or Nietzsche?' (Beuys 1990b: 169).

RATE OF SILENCE

We can perhaps leave this as a lingering rhetorical question, or even write it up as a Fluxus score: 'Spend time thinking of Schiller and Nietzsche instead of Duchamp'. It might take us somewhere into that uncharted territory that is the mind in the present moment, the scape opened onto by the humor that was and is the pulse of Fluxus works, the levity without which any politics can only ever be perverse.

This unpredictable confluence of the comic and the political, personal and collective, ethical and existential, is the zone targeted and experimented with by the activities undertaken under the name of Fluxus. Even in the moments of Beuys' or Maciunas' rhetorical zeal, Fluxus nevertheless succeeded in prising open this realm with an elegance and playfulness that has only begun to be understood. George Brecht called these low-key Fluxus epiphanies 'very private . . . little enlightenments I wanted to communicate to my friends who would know what to do with them' (Brecht, in Doris 1999: 97).[4] If it is true that the private and the personal are always already political, then by the same token we could say that Fluxus events permit the most seemingly mundane actions and irrelevant moments to become sites for ethical and political engagement.

Sarat Maharaj has likened these acts of moment-making, of engagement with the ways in which the moment makes itself, to an openness to a silence that is spoken by the body, a silence that is not about opposing words but about a process of teasing words' own wordlessness out of them. He calls this the 'silence of the untranslatable . . . a moment *beyond*

language, not before it', and notes that this moment beyond language is one that has always been difficult for western thought (Maharaj 1995: 22).

This characterization brings us quite close to a description of John Cage's notion of silence. In one of the charts and diagrams for which he was famous, George Maciunas – again in 1964 – listed Fluxus' ancestry:

derived from	
Vaudeville	some Cage
Gags	Japanese Haiku
Dada	Zen
Duchamp	much Spike Jones.

(Maciunas, in Williams and Noël 1997: 121)

Dick Higgins has suggested that Cage and Duchamp are more appropriately considered 'uncles of Fluxus rather than direct progenitors or father figures', and that while Fluxus relates to Cage and Duchamp, this relation is closer to affinity or confluence rather than direct causal influence. Indeed, Higgins notes that the more familiar we become with Fluxus events, the less resemblance they bear to the works of Cage and Duchamp (Higgins 1998: 222–3).

Ken Friedman has made this point from a different direction, arguing that while it is in one respect accurate to consider '[i]ndividual artists such as Marcel Duchamp and John Cage . . . as ancestors of Fluxus', it is more accurate to say that ideas, not individuals, 'played a larger role' (Friedman 1998a: 242). Friedman's point thus moves us away from privileging singular figures as the motors of Fluxus' history, and provokes the follow-up question which this paper seeks to elaborate: where does one draw the boundaries between ideas and individuals?

Chieko (later Mieko) Shiomi's *Shadow Piece II*, also first performed in 1964, the year of Beuys' anti-Anti-art intervention, invited readers to perform the following action, using as a tool the piece of paper on which her instructions were written.

> 1 Project a shadow over the other side of this page.
> 2 Observe the boundary line between the shadow and the lighted part.
> 3 Become the boundary line.
>
> (Shiomi, in Doris 1998: 124–5)

This score provides a point of entry into a reading of the relationship between Duchamp and Cage; Sylvère Lotringer has noted the ways in which Cage's increasingly intimate friendship with Duchamp in the last decade of Duchamp's life became inseparable from Cage's own ways of thinking. He argues that

> Cage had to see things for himself in such a way that Duchamp's work would be kept alive through his own. The only way to celebrate Duchamp was to 'recerebrate' him – a Duchampian pun Cage invented – which meant to plug Duchamp's mind into one's own, the way the chessboard had been plugged [in]to the sound system [in their 1968 Toronto musical chess match]. And the music would be both [of] theirs.
>
> (Lotringer 2000: 3)[5]

This was the inaudible music of intimate immersion in one another's company mediated through the game of chess – which Duchamp had described 'as a school of silence' (Drot 1987).

Cage once said that 'The effect for me of Duchamp's work was to so change my way of seeing that I became in a way a Duchamp unto myself'. Cage, through his 'recerebrations', did not become 'like' Duchamp, but in a more complex sense became Duchampian in order to be Cage more fully. So what we might wish to focus upon is not so much the influence in an art historical sense of individuals or ideas as such, but upon the performative practice – within the space of the encounter – of this kind of interpersonal intermedia.[6]

Here it is worth a short *dérive* to consider what anthropologist Michael Taussig refers to as the mimetic faculty, whose practice takes 'us bodily into alterity'. In its enactment, he says,

> It is the artful combination, the playing with perplexity, that is necessary; a magnificent excessiveness over and beyond the fact that mimesis implies alterity as its flip-side. The full effect occurs when the necessary

> impossibility is attained, when mimesis becomes alterity. Then and only then can spirit and matter, history and nature, flow into each others' otherness.
>
> (Taussig 1993: 40, 198)

For Taussig, mimesis operates as a moment of knowing that, 'in steeping itself in its object', it is thus overflowed by it; this flow of oneself into the other's otherness is framed by George Brecht's oft-cited 1961 piece *Two Exercises*:

> Consider an object. Call what is not the object 'other.'
> EXERCISE: Add to the object, from the 'other', another object, to form a new object and a new 'other'. Repeat until there is no more 'other'.
> EXERCISE: Take a part from the object and add it to the 'other', to form a new object and a new 'other'. Repeat until there is no more object.
>
> (Brecht, quoted in Doris 1998: 104)

It is further echoed in Robert Filliou's notion of *l'autrisme*,[7] whereby one is able to become the other's other in an ethical sense, which as Emmanuel Levinas has argued is the very condition of responsibility. In an interview given near the end of his life, Levinas borrowed Dostoyevsky's line from *The Brothers Karamazov* to outline his vision of responsibility, saying: 'We're all guilty of everything in relation to the other, and I more than all others. This ending, "more than all others", is what is most important here, although in a certain sense it means to be an idiot' (Levinas, in Rötzer 1995: 59). This conjunction of the ethical and the idiotic might in its playful seriousness be as apt a characterization of Fluxus' inclusionary ethos as any.

Hannah Higgins has noted that what has enabled Fluxus' longevity and its ability to continue to provoke is tied up with this ethos, which she believes can teach us something 'about an expanded sense of humanism'. She speculates that 'Fluxus is the first or maybe even the only major movement to have members who are black, white, Asian, Hispanic, male gay and straight, female gay and straight. It was truly open in a time before identity politics would again make that impossible' (H. Higgins, in Kaplan et al. 2000: 12). Geoff Hendricks has said that 'Fluxus is about internationalism, the idea that in a certain way we're nomads. We travel and we connect up with people of similar minds and then things grow out from there' (G. Hendricks, in Kaplan et al. 2000: 12). This blend of pragmatism and idealism permits a conception of political practice whose charge comes not from a unified political platform but from the ability to continue to produce an inclusionary Fluxus despite tensions between the political perspectives of participants.

It could be argued that this ethos more than anything else, and his affinity for those individuals who enacted it, is what excited Beuys and what he felt must be defended against the threat of a Duchampian silence that, paradoxically, had in fact played a nourishing role for Cage and indeed for many Fluxus artists. And insofar as it responded in so tailor-made a way to the aims of Duchamp's withdrawal from art, declaring his silence overrated led Beuys to perform a ready-made event despite himself.

In their 1969 interview, Willoughby Sharp asked Beuys when he had first become aware of Duchamp's work. Beuys was uncharacteristically inaccurate; he said: 'In 1955, I think'. His choice of this date is an interesting one, in that 1955 was also the first year of Beuys' 'phase of depressive exhaustion' which lasted until 1957 (for an account of the episode, see Stachelhaus 1991).

Perhaps Beuys' later criticism of Duchamp's criticism of Fluxus artists, for doing what he and his Dada cronies had done long before, was indebted in some small measure to Duchamp's own role in Beuys' existential crisis. One can only speculate about this, although in her essay on Duchamp's extensive artistic and archival labors during the years of his putative withdrawal from artmaking, Martha Buskirk notes that Duchamp's rising fame in the mid-1950s was also a source of considerable 'irritation' for no less a master than Picasso (Buskirk 1996a: 191). Maybe the paradox of Duchamp's rising fame despite his orchestrated rejection of artmaking was what sent Beuys past the edge, and what compelled him later, literally, to become the boundary line between Duchamp and Fluxus, as the figure that would fight an increasingly absurd

battle to keep Duchamp quiet in his self-imposed silence, and to keep Fluxus alive and aloud in support of his own political and personal agendas. Though it is always dangerous to anchor such suggestions in individuals' biographies, it is perhaps worth posing the idea that, whereas Duchamp was all too eager to submit himself and his work to the court of the future, Beuys, as a participant in the Nazi war machine, would have been somewhat less amenable to leaving himself open to the judgment of future generations. Or at any rate, recognizing that forestalling its judgment forever would be impossible, he would refuse to pass up any opportunity to add to his exhaustive pre-emptive rebuttal, launching every offensive possible in his own defense.

In their 1986 interview, Sharp asked: 'I feel the presence of Duchamp in one of your earliest pieces of sculpture, "Untitled", of 1954. Do you see any influence?' Flatly, Beuys answered: 'No, I don't think Duchamp influenced it at all. It was influenced by life . . .' (Beuys 1990b: 80).

Beuys continued on to describe his Expanded Concept of Art, one whose expansion was tied intimately to his engagement with Fluxus. This prompted Sharp to ask him which artists he felt closest to. Interestingly, without hestitation, despite his rejection of Duchamp, he answered: 'John Cage. These concepts are not alien to him' (Beuys 1990b: 87).

It is important again to note that this interview happened in 1969, during which time Beuys' friend Robert Filliou was completing his book *Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts*. The book contained interviews with a number of Filliou's artist friends, and Beuys and Cage were among them, which is perhaps what had put Cage in the forefront of Beuys' mind. Cage had come to Cologne in 1960 and had performed in the 'Contre-Festival', organized by Mary Bauermeister, wife of Karlheinz Stockhausen, in which a number of people who would later become involved with Fluxus – George Brecht, La Monte Young, Benjamin Patterson, and Nam June Paik – also took part (H. Higgins 1998: 32–3). Beuys and Cage continued their friendship until Beuys' death in 1986. That year, Cage published for Beuys a 'mesostic', the poetic device he had devised in his 1978 book *Writing Through Finnegan's Wake* as a way to navigate the text's synaesthetic prose.[8] This came by way of response to Beuys' 1982 dedication to Cage, 'with love and admiration', of a screen print entitled *Quanten*, which was in 1984 included with a work by Paik in an edition of 500 published in 1984 (Blume 1999: 19).

Though Beuys disavowed it, his relationship to Duchamp was nevertheless equally 'recerebratory' as was Cage's, and equally albeit far less comfortably intimate. The word 'recerebration', a word that was all the more Duchampian for being coined by Cage, is in fact the perfect term with which to approach Beuys' rating of Duchamp's own brand of silence, which was more accurately a surface silence used to distract from his noisy working process, his switch from avant-garde to savant-garde. Beuys' recerebration of Duchamp through the rejection of his silence was filtered through his affinity with Cage's silence, a silence that as Yoko Ono noted was of a piece with the silencing power of laughter. As she said, the 'essence of Zen that connected with Cage and all of us was a sense of laughter' (Ono, quoted in Munroe 2000: 17).

Here it is worth pointing to the fact that, despite Zen Buddhism's important contribution to his thinking, Cage was not himself a 'Buddhist', though there has often been confusion on this point. Most recently, for instance, in his discussion of Cage and Duchamp's chess matches, Sylvère Lotringer has written: '[Cage] told me the Chess Master had found him a real disappointment. "Don't you ever play to win?", Duchamp had kept asking, exasperated. Cage was a Zen Buddhist to the core: why should anyone *have* to win? He had already won what he wanted: spending time with Duchamp' (Lotringer 2000: 2).[9]

In the section devoted to Station 1 in Beuys' 1979 Guggenheim catalogue, there is an image of a vitrine entitled *Auschwitz*, containing the components of a project that Beuys submitted in 1958, a year after the culmination of his depression, for a

competition (which he did not win) to design an Auschwitz memorial.

In explaining the work to Tisdall, Beuys resuscitated his anti-Duchamp position from 15 years earlier: 'The human condition is Auschwitz and the principle of Auschwitz finds its perpetuation in our understanding of science and of political systems, in the delegation of responsibility to groups of specialists and in the silence of intellectuals and artists' (Beuys, in Tisdall 1979: 23).

If Beuys' rejection of this ostensibly Duchampian 'silence of intellectuals and artists' depended upon his embrace of Cage's silence, both depended on a much more complicated rejection, which comes into view in his criticism of Freud. It was near the end of his life, in his 1986 interview with Achille Bonito Oliva, that Beuys articulated the link between Duchamp and Freud: 'I am in no means satisfied with Freud, or let us say that I don't believe one can stop at Freud: one has to go beyond him . . . To this extent my actions can even be seen as a criticism with regard to Freud' (Beuys 1990a: 160). Having raised this criticism, he then made a detour away from this line of argument in order to talk about the role of the body as a communicative device, but moments later returned to it:

> I agree with Freud's diagnosis, according to which man lives to a considerable extent on his unconscious forces: however, in my opinion, Freud failed to work out a therapy or to state how such a therapy could be developed. The whole business remains confused. . . . I didn't say I was an enemy of Freud, what I said was that something in Freud leaves me dissatisfied because it fails to provide a therapy.
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 165–6)

However harmlessly insipid this might be as a critique of psychoanalysis, it raises an interesting question: did going beyond Duchamp entail for Beuys the same thing as going beyond Freud? Could the same therapy heal the condition that he felt had been brought on by both of these two figures, Freud and Duchamp? For Beuys, both Freud and Duchamp had gone far but not far enough; they had provided therapeutic concepts, but in not pursuing them far enough they had turned from cure to poison.

Over the space of the next two pages of transcription, he and Bonito Oliva wandered through Nietzsche, Schiller, and Marx in order to arrive at a discussion of Beuys' 'Social Sculpture', which Bonito Oliva likened to 'peaceful coexistence'. But Beuys adamantly refused this connection:

> No, I don't mean that. Peaceful coexistence accepts everything that one's opponents bring out and tries to solve it politically. Peaceful coexistence means that I want to repress difficulties. A political system is worked out, planned in such a way as to prevent problems from rising to the surface. Hence I consider peaceful coexistence to be the biggest lie ever told. Coexistence doesn't exist, only cooperation exists. These are the exact concepts, the concepts of the past, which must emerge again: democracy, socialism, the concept of socialism as a Christian concept, love thy neighbor. This concept has to be developed further, and that is something which only the individual can do. All in all, socialism is love.
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 168–9)[10]

It is interesting that it was at precisely this point, at the statement that 'socialism is love', that Bonito Oliva brought up the subject of Marcel Duchamp. One wonders whether he felt a direct intuitive link between Duchamp and the notion of an amorous socialism, or whether he had simply been waiting to ask Beuys about Duchamp all along, and this declaration – 'socialism is love' – was sufficiently impenetrable to justify the non-sequitur. He asked: 'You have said that the silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated. Could you say something about the relationship between your work and that of Duchamp?' And Beuys replied:

> In discussing his work it is necessary to avoid overrating his silence. I hold him in very high esteem, but I have to reject his silence. Duchamp was simply finished. He had run out of ideas; he was unable to come up with anything important. As I said, I have a great deal of respect for Duchamp as an individual, but not for his silence, or at least I don't consider it as important as other people do.
>
> All our discussions are excluded by the idea of silence.

> So far we have said that Marcel Duchamp's silence is overestimated. I would say that even the bourgeois tendencies in Duchamp's work – i.e. a form of provocative, bohemian behavior intended to *épater le bourgeois* – follow the same path. Duchamp started out from here and wanted to shock the bourgeoisie, and because of this he destroyed his creative powers, which really did atrophy. Here, as far as I am concerned, the silence of Marcel Duchamp starts to become a tremendous problem. Moreover, everyone knows that Duchamp was in the habit of reproaching young people by saying, 'We have already done this, we have already done everything: actions, happenings . . . it's all old.' How come everybody is so interested in Marcel Duchamp?
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 169)

Beuys argued that Duchamp's silence could be reduced to the surrealist 'aim of leaving the subconscious passive, of developing it', instead of focusing instead upon developing consciousness.[11] Beuys explained that the surrealists thought themselves able to live with their subconscious, and thought that they were, in his words, 'way above reality, but instead they were beneath it'.

In 1986, when this interview was conducted, Beuys, too, was beneath a reality with respect to his criticism of Duchamp. This was the reality of *Etant Donnés*, Duchamp's posthumous punchline, of which Beuys had in 1964 been unaware. Now he could no longer characterize Duchamp as merely silent; the silence needed to be re-rated:

> The fact that Duchamp was not interested in consciousness, in methodology, in serious historical discussion and analysis, makes me think that he was working in the opposite direction: i.e. he had reached the point where he was no longer working. He merely repressed his ideas. Duchamp's 'silence' should be replaced by the concept of an 'absolute absence of language'.
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 169–70)

Bonita Oliva asked Beuys: 'What about the time before [Duchamp's] "silence"?' Beuys replied:

> Before that he had a language. He questioned a particular work. He should have joined in that discussion instead of withdrawing and thinking that he had made his contribution. Duchamp failed to solve or achieve anything. Had he come out into the open and discussed things, especially with young people, his work would have been productive, it would really have led somewhere, to concepts which would have been useful today. But – politically and aesthetically – Duchamp got nowhere. He refused to participate. Why? It seems to me that we must return to the concept of 'absence of language'. How could it be that he had nothing left to say? That he was without language, i.e., unable to communicate? That is the question.
>
> I only want to present him as a figure with a general significance, standing for a lot of other things. Looked at in this way, he offers useful negative information. But of course Marcel Duchamp is free to remain silent. I respect that. I hope that is clear.
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 170)

Bonito Oliva: 'In your opinion, did he carry out the first phase of this process of communication correctly?' Beuys conceded that Duchamp's *Pissoir* 'was a genuine revelation' in its time, but insisted that Duchamp 'could have used it as a subject for discussion during the period of his silence'. He then took a curious and telling turn in his discussion:

> Several people have told me, although I'm not sure whether it's true, that Duchamp once said: 'Somebody in Germany has been talking about my silence, saying that it is overrated. What does that mean?' I am convinced that he knew very well what it meant. If he was unsure about it, he could have written me a letter and asked me what I meant. Why not?
>
> (Beuys 1990a: 170)

This sounds far more like longing than critique. And while in 1964 his action may have been a defense of Fluxus and his involvement in it, by 1986 the action seems at the same time to have become a lament . . . *Marcel, why don't you write?* 'In 1964 [he] could have written: "I read that my silence is overrated. Could you explain what that this means?" That would have been better.'

But by now his heart had mended and he had moved on. 'For some time now', he told Bonito Oliva, 'I have been working on a new idea: that Ingmar Bergman's *The Silence* is not overrated.

I have a copy of the entire film. I had it mailed to me. I don't know if I should have done that. The silence of Ingmar Bergman is not overrated' (Beuys 1990a: 170–1).

It is intriguing that Beuys described his engagement with Bergman as 'a new idea', given that he had produced a multiple called *The Silence* [*Das Schweigen*] consisting of five galvanized film reels of Bergman's film 13 years earlier, in 1973. Beuys gave each reel its own cryptic title:

> COUGHING FIT – GLACIER;
> DWARVES – ANIMALIZATION;
> PAST – VEGETABILIZATION;
> TANKS – MECHANIZATION;
> we are free GEYSER +
>
> (Blume 1999: 19)[12]

One critic has noted that these bear an uncanny resemblance to Duchamp's own *Green Box* (Blume 1999: 19). So it seems that Beuys' engagement with Duchamp's silence may not have taken the form of a few outbursts at all, but may have consisted in a much more prolonged and protracted archival game, and that even in the last year of his life Beuys was, much like Duchamp, combing over his earlier works, reshuffling and reindexing them.

Ultimately, while the silence of Ingmar Bergman, and indeed Beuys' entire critical fiction, may bear not at all upon what Duchamp actually did or intended to do, it is Beuys' explicit differentiation between silence and the absolute absence of language that is decisive, both in the genealogy of Beuys' relationship with Duchamp and as a way of approaching Fluxus today in terms of the amorous socialism that Beuys tried to articulate. This differentiation between silence and the absolute absence of language, is something like the difference between what Beuys referred to as cooperation and coexistence, which is something like the difference between peace and the absolute absence of war. The question might therefore be posed: what might peace be if not thought of merely as the absence of war, but if it were instead thought of as something defined positively, in a yet unwrought language, as something dynamic?

But isn't this what Duchamp hinted at in his early writings when he said that to him there was 'more than just *yes*, *no*, and *indifferent*. There is also the absence of such investigations'? Are Beuys and Duchamp speaking of the same silence despite Beuys' refusal to find Duchamp's silence inviting or even intelligible? Is this the same silence that consists in an openness to the present moment in its concreteness, to the pleasures and challenges of the ethical encounter?

EXERCISES

The histories that have been told about Fluxus' genealogies and its futurities pose a question to the historian: what kind of a relationship will we wish them to have? Will we plug them as variables into a formula for imagined dialogue, as has been the case with accounts of Beuys-contra-Duchamp, two bourgeois *épater*-ing one another in a duel of avant-garde against avant-disregard? Or is it possible to rise to the challenge that Beuys posed, perhaps despite himself, which is to imagine an alternative to 'peaceful coexistence' by opening to the complexity of concretism and cooperation?

In his score entitled *Exercise*, Brecht directed potential participants to: 'Determine the centre of an object or event. Determine the centre more accurately. Repeat, until further inaccuracy is impossible' (Brecht, in Doris 1998: 124).[13] Luckily for us, further inaccuracy is always possible.

Interestingly, 'Everyone is an artist', that phrase which has marked Beuys, that thing which we insist upon being irreducibly his, is arguably not his at all, but Filliou's. Beuys' and Filliou's close friend Louwrien Wijers, the Dutch artist who has written extensively on Fluxus and who organized Beuys' 1982 meeting with the Dalai Lama, has noted that while Beuys became famous for the phrase 'Everyone is an artist', it may actually have been Robert Filliou himself who first came up with this notion, although he expressed it in somewhat different terms, saying: 'The artist is everybody' (Filliou, in Wijers 1996: 132).

Filliou's claim that 'Art is what makes life more interesting than art' is an example of a way to

unpack this seemingly utopian vision of 'the artist is everyone' whose logic really isn't circular at all. It may be 'monomorphic', but far from being enclosed upon itself it is able to stay productively and provocatively open for the simple reason that it realizes that what is meant by art and what is meant by life will inevitably change from this moment to the next. This is what is meant by a wordlessness that may be teased out of words; this is what *enables* wordlessness to be teased out of words.

In his interview with Larry Miller just before his death, Maciunas credited Cage with inventing the practice of concretism that enabled what Maciunas referred to as Fluxus' 'monomorphism'. 'Monomorphism', he explained, 'that means one form. Now, the reason for that is that, you see, a lot of Fluxus is gag-like. That's part of the humor, it's like a gag. In fact, I wouldn't put it in any higher class than a gag, maybe a good gag' (Maciunas, in Miller 1998b: 196).

Larry Miller's 'Maybe Fluxus (A Para-Interrogative Guide for the Neoteric Transmuter, Tinder, Tinker and Totalist)' asks no fewer than 23 tough questions, one fewer than the number of hours in a day or the number of stations in Beuys' Guggenheim show. If you can answer all of them you can consider yourself a Fluxus expert. I tried to answer them all, because what can we do but try and be experts? But I got stuck on this: 'Maybe you just want to have some fun and need some other playmates – will Fluxus love you?' (Miller 1998a: 212).

NOTES

1 For a discussion of Beuys' early Fluxus involvement, see Adriani et al. (1979: 77–130 especially).

2 One of the more important of these was the *24 Stunden (24 Hours)* event at the Gallerie Parnass in Wuppertal on 5 June 1965, which included a chain of events by Bazon Brock, Charlotte Moorman, Nam June Paik, Eckhart Rahn, as well as Schmit, Vostell and Beuys; for a description of Beuys' contribution, *24 Hours . . . and in us . . . under us . . . landunder . . .*, see Tisdall (1979: 95–6).

3 Thanks to Ken Friedman for this point (Ken Friedman, email to the author, 8 January 2002).

4 Brecht's comment referred specifically to his *3 Telephone Events* from Spring 1961.

5 For a discussion of this event, see Cross (1999).

6 For his most current discussion of 'intermedia', see Higgins (1998: 221–2); for a discussion of Higgins's development and theorization of 'intermedia', see Friedman (1999).

7 On his notion of '*l'autrisme*', see Filliou (1970: 90–2) especially; on the relationship between Filliou and Levinas, see Thompson (2001).

8 It is interesting to wonder at the way in which Joyce's work may have served to mediate Beuys' and Cage's interdisciplinary 'love letters' to each other; the role of Joyce in Beuys' work is a topic that has yet to receive the attention it merits. For a useful preliminary discussion, see Kort (1994).

9 On Cage's engagement with Buddhism, see Richards (1996).

10 Beuys' formulation is quite close to Levinas's 'non-synthetic' notion of peace, particularly its articulation as love, in his late essay 'Peace and Proximity' (Levinas 1996: 161–9; see especially p. 166).

11 Lotringer notes that Duchamp went yearly to Cadaquès, Spain, to visit Salvador Dalí, bringing with him on one such visit his wife Teeny as well as Cage, who was baffled and 'mystified by the reverence Duchamp kept showing Dalí whom he himself disliked intensely like so many others' (Lotringer 2000: 1).

12 For a thorough discussion of this multiple, see Bastian (1999: 26–8).

13 For a discussion of Fluxus, and Brecht's action in particular, within the context of conceptual art, see Buskirk (1996b: 210–13).

REFERENCES

Adriani, Götz, Konnertz, Winfried and Thomas, Karin (1979) *Joseph Beuys: Life and Works*, trans. Patricia Lech, Woodbury, NY: Barron

Bastian, Heiner (ed.) (1999) *Joseph Beuys – Editions: The Collection of Reinhard Schlegel*, exh. cat., Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh.

Beuys, Joseph (1990a) '"Death Keeps Me Awake", Interview with Achille Bonito Oliva', in Carin Kuoni (1990).

—— (1990b) 'Interview with Willoughby Sharp', in Carin Kuoni (1990).

Blume, Eugen (1999) 'The Poetic Physics of the Multiples and Editions of Joseph Beuys', in Heiner Bastian (ed.) (1999).

Buskirk, Martha (1996a) 'Thoroughly Modern Marcel', in Martha Buskirk and Mignon Nixon (1996).

—— (1996b) 'Conceptual Art and the Reception of Duchamp', panel discussion, in Martha Buskirk and Mignon Nixon (1996).

Buskirk, Martha and Nixon, Mignon (eds) (1996) *The Duchamp Effect*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.

Cooke, Lynne and Kelly, Karen (eds) (1994) *Joseph Beuys: Arena – where would I have got if I had been*

intelligent!, New York: Dia Center for the Arts/Distributed Art Publishers

Cross, Lowell (1999) '*Reunion*: John Cage, Marcel Duchamp, Electronic Music and Chess', *Leonardo Music Journal* 9: 35–42.

Doris, David T. (1998) 'Zen Vaudeville: A Medi(t)ation in the Margins of Fluxus', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

Drot, Jean-Marie (ed.) (1987) *Marcel Duchamp: A Game of Chess*, Paris: L'Institut National de l'Audiovisuel Direction des Archives.

Filliou, Robert (1970) 'and the READER, if he wishes', in Kasper König (ed.) *Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts*, Köln and New York: Verlag Gebr. König.

Friedman, Ken (1998a) 'Fluxus and Company', in Ken Friedman (1998b), pp. 237–253.

—— (ed.) (1998b) *The Fluxus Reader*, London: Academy Editions.

—— (1999) 'Dick Higgins, 1938–1998', in Judith A. Hoffberg (ed.) *Umbrella: the Anthology*, pp. 157–163, Santa Monica, CA: Umbrella Editions.

Hainley, Bruce (2000) 'Erase and Rewind: Bruce Hainley on Elaine Sturtevant', *Frieze*, issue 53 (June/July/August 2002).

Hendricks, Jon (2000) 'Yoko Ono and Fluxus', in Munroe (2000).

Higgins, Dick (1998) 'Fluxus: Theory and Reception', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

Higgins, Hannah (1998) 'Fluxus Fortuna', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

Kaplan, Janet A., et al. (2000) 'Flux Generations', *Art Journal* (Summer 2000).

Kort, Pamela (1994) 'Joseph Beuys's *Arena*: The Way In', in Lynne Cooke and Karen Kelly (1994).

Kuoni, Carin (ed.) (1990) *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America*, New York: Four Walls Eight Windows.

Lebel, Robert (1959) *Marcel Duchamp*, trans. George Heard Hamilton, New York: Grove Press.

Levinas, Emmanuel (1996) 'Peace and Proximity', in Adriaan T. Peperzak et al. (eds) *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press.

Lotringer, Sylvère (2000) 'Becoming Duchamp', *tout-fait*, 1(2): May. [http://www.toutfait.com/issues/issues_2/Articles/lotringer.html]

Maharaj, Sarat (1995) 'A Double-Crossing Visible Grammar: Around and About the Work of Alighiero e Boetti', unpublished transcript of a lecture given at Dia Center for the Arts, New York.

Miller, Larry (1998a) 'Maybe Fluxus (A Para-Interrogative Guide for the Neoteric Transmuter, Tinder, Tinker and Totalist)', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

—— (1998b) 'Transcript of the videotaped *Interview with George Maciunas*, 24 March 1978', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

Munroe, Alexandra (2000) 'Spirit of YES: The Art and Life of Yoko Ono', in Munroe with Hendricks (2000).

Munroe, Alexandra with Hendricks, Jon (2000) *YES YOKO ONO*, exh. cat., New York: Japan Society and Harry N. Abrams.

Richards, Sam (1996) *John Cage As . . .*, Oxford: Amber Lane Press.

Rötzer, Florian (1995) *Conversations with French Philosophers*, foreword by Rainer Rochlitz, trans. Gary F. Aylesworth, New Jersey: Humanities Press.

Smith, Owen (1998) 'Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing', in Ken Friedman (1998b).

Stachelhaus, Heiner (1991) *Joseph Beuys*, trans. David Britt, New York: Abbeville Press.

Taussig, Michael (1993) *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*, New York and London: Routledge.

Thompson, Chris (2001) 'Responsible Idiocy and Fluxus Ethics: Robert Filliou and Emmanuel Levinas', *a-r-c* no. 5 (July). [http://a-r-c.gold.ac.uk]

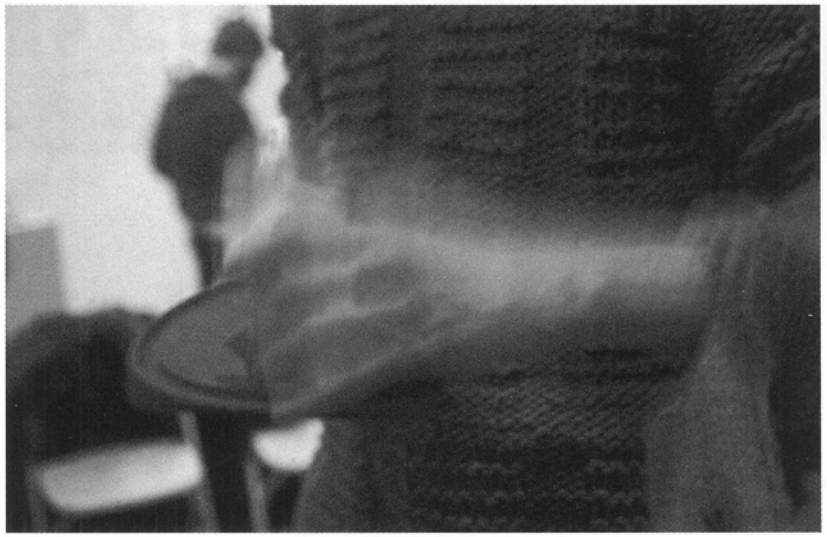
Tisdall, Caroline (ed.) (1979) *Joseph Beuys*, exh. cat., New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

Ulmer, Gregory L. (1984) *Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Wijers, Louwrien (ed.) (1996) 'Robert Filliou talks about dharma and his work as an artist', in *Writing as Sculpture, 1978–1987*, London: Academy Editions.

MIEKO SHIOMI *FALLING EVENT* (1963)
THE SOUNDART FOUNDATION / ART IN GENERAL / THE DOWNTOWN ENSEMBLE
INDOOR/OUTDOOR/FLUXUS/ACTION/MUSIC DECEMBER 2 2001 NEW YORK CITY

GEORGE BRECHT *CARD MUSIC FOR AUDIENCE* (1966)
KEN FRIEDMAN CONDUCTS YASUNAO TONE, PETER VAN RIPER, ROBERT WATTS,
PETER FRANK AND LARRY MILLER AT THE KITCHEN MARCH 24 1979



PHILIP CORNER *FROM DICK HIGGINS'S LOFT* (1961)
PERFORMED BY THE AUDIENCE AT ART IN GENERAL NYC DECEMBER 2001

LARRY MILLER *REMOTE MUSIC* (1976) THE KITCHEN NYC MARCH 24 1979
PHOTOGRAPHS © 1979/2001 LISA KAHANE NYC

The following article looks at Joseph Beuys' 1966 performance MANRESA in the light of Ignatius Loyola's (16th-century) writings. MANRESA is a Beuysean spelling, or pronunciation, of *Fluxus*. The performance seems to speak *Fluxus,* and flies off elsewhere. Perhaps, to MANRESA. A framework of transformations is marked, and unfolds as if between two spoken lines: (1) 'this is *Fluxus* speaking', and (2) 'to you I fly MANRESA'. I'll stage translations by means of pedestrian exercises in the footsteps of Beuys and Loyola. Here and now, every step is a turn. Nothing is what it was or appears to be. At the end, we seem to be at the beginning again. Nothing has happened *and* everything has changed. *Autobiography as method . . .* is only one articulation of the turn. Others read: *method as breakdown*, *crises as exercise*, *learning as unlearning*, *discipline as dismemberment*, *fragmentation as incarnation*, *incarnation as death*, *death as thought*, *performance as life*, *life as dissolution*, *dissolution as plastic*, *art as capital . . .* and so on. The winded way that seems to lead nowhere, the exercises and theatrical twists are not without reason. They follow a recognition, that is, also, an intuition: change cannot be made. It cannot even be sought – however sought-after it may be. The only way of approach is performance, or, in other words, exercises – and this as a matter of daily practice. A (bio-graphical) moment of crisis – paralysis, breakdown, conversion – is staged in performance, again and again. The re-staging procedures – rather than unconscious coercion and drive to repeat – are systematic and ordered. To be brief (too brief), the direction of change is this: attachments dissolve, give way to nothing but attention, and fragmentation becomes discipline. Auto-biography as method . . . and so on. My writing observes steps and rhythms of Loyola's and Beuys' work. It's a set of four steps. Always. And, not without reason. Four steps play on and around the traditional theme of duality, or dualism, double it, imitate it, expand it, ridicule it, and perhaps – in time – liberate theme and tradition. Or, expose the point, where a circle doesn't close. Not even, theoretically. Loyola's exercises follow a four-week turn: (1) *meditation on sins*, (2) *life of Jesus*, (3) *passion*, (4) *resurrection.* There are 'sensations' – entirely unspectacular – which mark the region of MANRESA like signs and banners: (1) light, (2) warmth, (3) tears, (4) voices. In the lexicon of Beuys' performance: (1) *element 1*, (2) *element 2*, (3) *'where is element 3?'*, (4) *'n'*. In his reading of Loyola, Roland Barthes names four steps of what he calls 'operations of language invention': (1) *isolation*, (2) *articulation*, (3) *ordering*, (4) *theatricalization*. My writing follows the patterns, at times almost an ornamental fabrication: a piece of text in-between script, travelogue and written music. Spotlights fall on words, signs, figures and actions. Voices resound in a theatre of exploration. A stage is set four times: (1) *everyone an artist* – exercises on work, labour and social plastic: cutting and casting; (2) *the aim (sense) of thought is to reach matter* – exercises on life figures: a cut becomes space; (3) exercises in counting tears and other forms of systematic dissolution – toward new organs; (4) exercises in auto-bio-graphy: systems of trans-actions, transformations, translations: toward silence and other languages.

Claudia Wegener

• What follows is the first half, or the first two chapters, of the article; the second half, the third and fourth chapters, will be published in ***Performance Research*** **8(1) 'Voices' (March 2003) ed. Claire MacDonald.**

MANRESA is not a place to be. You may look out for it, and look back at it. You may look forward to it, even, look after it . . . but you cannot live there. Beuys passed through MANRESA and continued to look for it in 'performance', Loyola passed and continued to seek it in 'exercises'. I don't know how I can write it . . . My notes follow their steps, encompass their wandering, and (my) writing becomes another search for MANRESA . . . (September 2001) – I am writing this for you from MANRESA

MANRESA

autobiography as method . . .

Explorers of an uninhabitable site by means of walking and other exercises:

Joseph Beuys and Ignatius Loyola

& collaborators, critics, consultants, experts + extras:
Henning Christiansen, Björn Nörgaard, Herr and Frau Schmela, Chen Zhen, Mr Searle, Herr Benjamin, M Bataille, M Barthes, Herr Kinski and Herr Herzog, die Jungen Wilden, Thowaldsen, Herr Gropius, der Westmensch (western man), der Ostmensch (eastern man), ein Kultusminister, Ulrike Meinhof, a hare (dead), tate.org.uk and the department of interpretation, René Block, the brothers van der Grinten, Heiner Bastian, Caroline Tisdall, Friedhelm Mennekes, Antonio T. de Nicolas, Fr da Camara, General St Francis de Borja, the Cardona River, the Most Holy Trinity, Herr Nietzsche, Frau Wegener & many other Fluxus artists and friends.

First time-based explorations of the material presented here were pursued at Tate Modern (Feb. 2001), the Royal Academy Schools (May 2001) and Camberwell College of Art (Oct. 2001) with many thanks to all the participants

In December 1966, MANRESA is staged at Galerie Schmela in Düsseldorf. The Danish composer Henning Christiansen and the artist Björn Nörgaard join Beuys in this performance. They – as, probably, most of the audience – had never heard of MANRESA. They imagine it implying travel, a journey of some kind . . .

'man reest', der Mensch ist auf der Reise, man travels.

MANRESA is chapter 3 in an autobiography also known as the *Diary of a Pilgrim*. MANRESA is a stop or, rather, a station in an itinerary, like a halt at a crossroads. MANRESA is not Barcelona. One could stay there almost unrecognized. MANRESA is a little *off the road* – and this is how it appears in one of Beuys' drawings preparing the performance. It is the name of a place where Ignatius Loyola, the Spanish monk and founder of the Jesuit order, had intended to rest for a while before embarking on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He stayed at MANRESA for almost a year (1522–3). The chapters of the autobiography provide a list and a compass of Ignatius's wanderings between 1521 and 1538: north to Paris, east to Rome, southeast to Jerusalem: *1. Convalescence and Conversion. 2. The Pilgrim. 3. MANRESA. 4. Journey to Jerusalem. 5. Return to Spain. 6. Studies at Barcelona and Alcalá. 7. Difficulties at Salamanca. 8. The University of Paris. 9. Return to Spain. 10. Venice and Vicenza. 11. Rome.*

Loyola writes his *Exercitia Spiritualia* in MANRESA (– and even if this is biographically not entirely correct, it is, I think, a very accurate statement).

MANRESA is a Catalan village near Barcelona. MANRESA is a station in the autobiography of Ignatius Loyola.

Performance Research 7(3), pp.30–46 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

MANRESA is a performance by the German artist Joseph Beuys.
MANRESA is a space (or a time) where nothing happens – and everything changes . . .

The set. Spotlights in the dark. A dark space, or almost dark. Twilight on an empty stage. Silence echoes with light and voices that are not yet or no longer there. Spots of light appear at intervals, illuminate some thing or word or scene for a moment. And pass. Light cuts through twilit space: a ray, a lightning. It illuminates *and* fragments. It blinds the eye and leaves darkness growing darker. The region of MANRESA. Here, anxiety sharpens the senses of a wanderer while the capacity of the eye is restricted. Sometimes a voice forms in the humming vacancy of space, and a phrase or a word lingers. The senses labour to locate the utterance: nearby, further away, as if from below, at eye-level. Questions echo: *'good afternoon, where are you going?'*

FIRST WEEK

Steps before the beginning of the rest: two preludes, propositions, records of (critical) statements, voices and lights from various directions

One man (**Beuys**), pacing up and down restlessly, marching in and out of the spotlights; aloud:

'. . . how long do you still want to stay with the first step?', and after a while: '. . . if I say step by step, I mean as soon as possible . . .'

One man (**Loyola**), pacing up and down, dictating his life-story to another who sits on the ground, writing:

'. . . all he (**Loyola**) wanted to do was to go to Jerusalem as soon as he had healed . . .'

Prelude 1

First. The *Guardian* newspaper from 1st May 2001.

May Day, '*Tag der Arbeit*', celebration of 'the work' or 'the worker'. An article by Adrian Searle on Chen Zhen's exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery. By way of comparison, and as if in passing, he mentions the work of Joseph Beuys. Beuys and Zhen, he writes, 'want their art to have a therapeutic purpose'. He goes on to talk about 'a melancholy in the work' that comes, he says, with an 'apprehension of its own impotence'.

Second. Light on Beuys' curriculum vitae: 'Lebenslauf/Werklauf':

1972, 1st May. 'Ausfegen.' During the traditional May-Day Parades, Joseph Beuys cleans the pedestrian walkway along Karl-Marx-Platz in Berlin with a red brush.

Loyola, dictating to his secretary:

. . . tired of examining what would be best to do and finding any certainty as to what to do, he decided as follows: to let the mule go with the reins slack as far as the place where the road separated; if the mule took the town road, he would seek out the Moor and strike him; if the mule did not go toward the town but kept on the highway, he would let him be. So he did as he proposed. Although the town was little more than thirty or forty paces away, and the road to it was broad and very good, Our Lord wishes that the mule take the highway . . .'

Third. The voice of the art critic (Mr Searle) as if from above:

'I always feel perturbed by contemporary artists who chase new age-ish notions about art's capacity to heal or change the world. Doesn't history teach us that culture – in whatever form – never prevented anyone from behaving like an absolute bastard? The abjection of much of Beuys' work, its terrible somnolent poetry, seems to recognize this.'

Fourth. From the left, the voice of another critic (Herr Benjamin) suddenly cuts through the twilight, repeatedly reciting a line from his 'Theses on a Philosophy of History':

'There is never a testimony of culture which was not at once one of barbarism.'

Fifth. A paper cutting from the *Guardian*, like a reading mark in a book on Beuys:

Mr Searle's brief statements display symptoms of an uneasy perception of Beuys' work. His words show signs of a real discomfort. A diffuse resistance comes with a sharp but equally diffuse cynicism. Cynicism here is on the side of the beholder and directs itself against something that is not quite solid enough, not defined or refined enough, not quite work enough (OPUS, master-work) nor working (OPERATION, labour), and thus, difficult to approach, or appropriate. Not that there was a barrier – like a cordoned area in a museum – rather, a lack of it, a lack of definition and fix, a certain, almost amorphous way of existence: ever expanding, relentlessly inclusive. An excessive fluidity. The space in which relations between art and life are sought, stepped up and measured is, to say the least, disturbingly similar to the region where the not quite dead and the not quite alive roam and mingle. A site encountered not without disgust, resistance, cynicism – and fascination. In this region, things are in a state of flux, malleable, a little over-heated (thus, the risk of smell . . .). Everything could change – but, who knows, the troubling state of dissolution might be here to stay? How to name or measure degrees of flux? An acute lack of shape or definition hits me like an encounter: a frontier (mine, or yours) has been violated by something that could be described as having *too much of too little frontier.* A lack of form nonetheless operates formal, even territorial. Life, not life enough, nor dead, *and* too much of it. Work, not work enough, *and* too much of it. Work, not work enough, nor no-work, nor simply product, or thing, or no-thing.

Sixth.

In the wings, not too far away, one can hear the voice of a third critic (M. Bataille) marvelling about spit and spiders. And in a passing spot of light, you – and I – can see him write a word in chalk on the black wall of the stage: **informé.**

Seventh.

A bit of film flickers over the wall backstage. Büchner's Woyzeck (Klaus Kinski in Werner Herzog's 1970s film) bends over his sleeping son, stares at the beads of sweat on the little forehead and says: 'all (is) work under the sun, sweat even while sleeping'.

Loyola, turned to the wall, dictating; da Camara behind him, taking notes:

'. . . a powerful thought came to him that bothered him; it would vividly present to him the difficulty of his life, as if someone was writing on his soul: "How can you endure this life for the seventy years you have yet to live?" (In the belief that this came from the enemy) he answered inwardly with great strength to this: "O miserable creature! Can you promise me one single hour of life?". . . .'

Eighth. A bible and other reference books; a draft from backstage turns pages, leaves through open books; sounds of paper in the air.

The Genesis story of the Bible tells of man and woman being exiled from paradise under the divine judgement that they will both *suffer labour*: he, work in the fields, she, birth-pain. Is there a place safe from the pain and alienation of work? Art? PARADISE? Paradise, at least, might be a rather exclusive zone. As far as etymology goes: according to the Greek root: *an (animal)garden, a zoo*; and in Persian: *a small fenced-off area.* And, since we are just before the open dictionary, here is another Greek term. One of the critics brings it up, and with a tone of accusation: THERAPY, 'therapeutic purpose'. *Therapy*, according to the Greek dictionary, means first of all – and before implications of change or healing: *a service, to serve somebody, act as a servant, look after something*. An art that comes with a taste for *service* appears unlikely to offer relief, or safe haven, from the trauma of work.

Loyola, walking across the stage, limping in one sandal; he pauses, talking to himself, his eyes slowly fill with tears:

'. . . what new life is this, that we are now beginning?'

Beuys, across the stage in the opposite direction; an iron sole on one foot causes considerable noise on the empty stage; he pauses, talking to himself:

'. . . one might even break one's finger in the pudding.'

Ninth.

'Melancholy', 'impotence', 'abjection', 'somnolence'. The critic is disturbed. As if by a displeasing odour (– a smell of fat in the air?). Art is preferred being OPUS, life VITA, and everything ends well, named and placed. Well preserved, and presented. It's not quite paradisean, but, at least, as friendly, pleasing and ordered as a zoo. The appreciator of art seeks the site of the master-work for comfort: he expects nourishment, affirmation, invigorating presence *and* detachment, a remoteness from any sense of sweat or tears or doom that might otherwise linger around human activity. The critic too is looking for 'therapy'. But he doesn't want to swallow the homeopathic pill that Beuys appears to offer him.

One man (**Beuys**), pacing up and down in front of a blackboard. He pauses, stands very still, screams on the top of his voice:

'ART EQUALS CAPITAL'. He turns around calmly, writes with white chalk on the board:

. . . thinking Forms – how we mould our thoughts or Spoken forms – how we shape our thoughts into words, or SOCIAL SCULPTURE – how we mould and shape the world in which we live: sculpture as an evolutionary process everyone an artist

Prelude 2

Beuys, reaches for a microphone that has been hanging over a nail on the wall, 'live' over mic:

'. . . we cannot wait for an innocent tool or an ideal situation, a knife with no blood on it . . .';

and, after a while, gentle:

'. . . if you cut your finger, you ought to bandage the knife.'

First. Tate Modern. 19th-century industrial Gothic turned early 21st-century museum conversion. Galleries on the third floor. Headline on olive-green wall: 'Landscape/Matter/Environment'.

The Beuys room faces west. The only room with double ceiling height. Two of Beuys' late sculptural environments are on show and dominate the space: 'The End of the 20th Century' (the version with 31 basalt stones), *and* (– the conjunction doesn't come without difficulty, neither in language, nor in space), 'Blitzschlag mit Lichtschein auf Hirsch'. The department of interpretation has translated it as: 'Lightning with stag caught in its glaring'.

Second. Both works are cordoned off according to regular customs of conservation and display (some resemblance to animal gardens). A sloppy rope near my ankles.

Resistance keeps me at a distance already. And I wonder whether museology realizes resistance, or obscures it. A line I've read yesterday when leafing through catalogues in the library of what's now called 'Tate Britain' continues to echo in my head.

Henning Christiansen, knocking with a spoon on a cafe cup, listening, knocking again:

'The cold space of Thorvaldsen, this has interested Beuys very much . . .'. The cold space of Beuys' late sculptures . . ., it echoes, while I wander through the gallery in Tate Modern. One of the catalogues I looked at in the library was for the 1982 'Zeitgeist' exhibition in Berlin's Martin-Gropius-Bau.

ZEITGEIST: (1) GHOST OF TIME; (2) SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

Third. The cold space of the 1980s . . ., I think, while leafing through the exhibition catalogue of the 'Zeitgeist' show:

Beuys' *Clay workshop* – LEHM WERKSTATT – occupies a central place in the exhibition. Prominent *and*, very isolated. The courtyard of the Gropius-Bau can be viewed from every floor; and from the central ground-floor space, one looks into the building's glass ceiling: diffuse light through a dome behind a lacy veil. Paintings on the walls surround Beuys' 'workshop'. I see it on the documentary photographs in the catalogue. The 1980s are a time of a new 'savage' painting in Germany. 'Die jungen Wilden'. In this space, Beuys' work appears like a stranger from a different age. A ghost of (another) time. (A dinosaur in a zoo.) Through the title of his work, I hear cynicism. Something like cynicism, rather than being in the work, echoes *from* the title, and the headline of a one-page statement in the catalogue: '+ – WURST or BLOOD PUDDING (the blood's up: it's ALL or nothing)' + – WURST (jetzt geht es um die Wurst) jetzt geht es um DAS GANZE

Loyola, turning around, away from da Camara's searching eyes, continuing to dictate, almost mechanically:

'. . . he abstained from eating meat and was so firm about this that he could not see giving it up for any reason. One morning, after rising from bed, meat to be eaten appeared to him, as if he were seeing it with his own corporal eyes, though he had felt no previous desire for it. He felt, at the same time, a firm assent of the will to eat it in the future. Though he remembered his earlier promise, he now had no doubt that he had to decide to eat meat. When, later on, he told his confessor, the confessor asked him to consider whether that was, perhaps, a temptation; but he, after careful examination, could never doubt it.'

Fourth. Berlin, Martin-Gropius-Bau, 1982. A sausage hangs high above 'Stag-Monuments' like a flag on a flag-post.

The sausage – die WURST – as a ubiquitous banner of German culture. '*WURST*' or '*Wurscht!*' to German ears also means: it makes no difference, it's all the same. '*Das ist WURST egal*'. Plus minus sausage. It's all more or less sausage. Though another charge, an electric flux between + and – might also be at stake. '*Es geht um die Wurst.*' This idiom comes with indications of a contest. The sausage as a trophy of the winner. Everything's at stake! A homogeneous mass stuck into a tube-like skin (intestines, guts), closed on both ends: the All (das Ganze). In German – in Germany? – two extremes gather around the sausage: everything's at stake, *and*, it all doesn't matter. Implications of nourishment (processed meat or blood, food-conserve) *and* excrement in one word. Opposites coincide.

A voice, perhaps **Loyola's**, mumbling in the background:

'. . . coincidentia oppositorum, Nicolaus Cusanus . . . the temptation of learning . . . be aware . . .'.

An idea melts, and becomes recast as a sausage. It doesn't matter much into what it is moulded. Sausage, or not sausage. But without melt-down and recast, it simply wouldn't matter at all.

Note: a telephone rings; an international call; the voice of John Wood from London on the answer machine:

the catalogue translates 'Blutwurst' as Blood Pudding. The idiomatically correct translation would be B LACK PUDDING. In the English language, a specificity of matter shifts toward one of colour.

Beuys, a red rose at the table in front of him, to a journalist in an interview, gently:

'the purpose (sense) of thinking is to reach matter . . . one only reaches matter when reaching death.'

Fifth. Twenty years later. 'Lightning with stag caught in its glaring' is a bronze cast of assembled parts of the ZEITGEIST environment exhibited at Tate Modern.

Sausages and young wild German painters have subsided into the twilight of the backstage. Cynicism – if it ever was, or is there – has cooled and merged into a background noise. A humming of history in space. The '*lightning*' is a bronze taken from the surface of a heap of clay that formed part of the '*workshop*': its fond of matter. A pile of mud as high as the Berlin wall. The monuments inside the Gropius-Bau submerge in stuff. From it (the mud, the mountain of clay), sausage-like worms are formed. Perhaps with machines. Probably not with the tools from the work-benches of the installation. Rather, each of these '*arch-worms*' *(Urwurm)* has a tool pressed into the homogeneous mass of its body. The worm has become a *stag-monument*. Here is another story of the creation of the world as a zoo.

'. . . the stag-monument is a sign of the man-made spirit in nature which drives machines,' Beuys says, and, 'annihilated or extinct animals and annihilated or extinct peoples meet by the machines . . . they are real . . . they drive the machines, here at the Berlin wall.'

This side or that side of the fence, the wall, of any wall, East or West, no escape from labour. It's a pain in the neck. Work is a place of pain across the entire animal-kingdom. A cold space. Near death.

Beuys: '. . . a space without memory.'

Loyola: '. . . the eternal word incarnated.'

Divine creation: as if a word becomes light . . . But divine creation is no option. No way. Not for us. Occasionally, resemblance (of creation, of the divine) may appear like a vision, or a lightning (to Loyola, for example). MANRESA is like an echo-chamber of potentiality, probability, failure, possibility, impossibility. Arithmetic stutters, stumbles, echoes, and becomes, almost, like a music:

Henning Christiansen 'live' over mic: can not not not can not not not can not not not not not not not not can can can can can can can can can can can can can can can can not an not

Sixth. In Tate Modern, the black lump of bronze – the 'lightning' – hangs precariously from an 'I-beam' and just touches the ground.

Electric energy is said to link and complement the inertia of matter and light's fleeting and consuming nature: light like electricity is, if its flux is bound and regulated, a power which materializes. Charge like change has to materialize, or, it doesn't matter at all. Transformation takes place, and cools down. A 'plastic', Beuys says, 'something has been formed through fluid processes which are now frozen.' While the sense of 'sculpture' – in German *Bildhauerei*: carving an image – renders a working from without, a working on the surface. The '*workshop*' has been worked upon and has turned into 'a work' exhibited under a new title: '*Lightning with stag caught in its glaring.*' Coolness energized by suspension *and* energy suspended. Now, the work awaits another meltdown, a new cast. In the meantime, any visitor (unaware of casting suspension) may rightly experience somnolence.

Sonorous laughter from somewhere above.

Seventh. Steps for melting and recasting Beuys' sculptures (subject to change); a voice from the dark auditorium lists over microphone:

(1) a patience like walking step by step, waiting, spending time in the proximity of the work, its creatures and 'lightning'; a patience near boredom: close your eyes and turn your back on the work; (2) a patience like a rabbit: carving a space into the earth: the labour of research; (3) a patience like speaking in a foreign language: describe every bit you see (hear, smell, imagine to smell or see

More laughter from above.

Eighth. The voice from the dark auditorium continues without irritation:

And then, stare at the black lump of bronze! And close your eyes! . . . it's like a lightning: *ein Blitzschlag*. A luminous after-image (*Gegenbild*, counter-image) will appear for a moment on the retina of the closed eyes. At the moment when I turn away from the work, when I close my eyes – perhaps before its weighty darkness – a spark flies, a counter-image cuts through the screen of my vision. The cut fragments the work without effort. It leaves a space. Time, or labour, or another kind of death, melts thought, casts it into matter. Nothing would matter without this process. Beuys calls it 'plastic', its other names are materialization *and* materialism, also (as Loyola puts it) *incarnation*.

Ninth.

Now – now? – in the blinking of an eye, matter and memory melt, and dissolve into light: a moment of sensation. An AFTER-IMAGE. There is nothing spectacular. Did something change? In MANRESA, only questions linger and become like things.

Beuys, tape-recorded:

'. . . now? Did element 2 ascend to element 1. Now? Did element 1 descend to element 2.'

Loyola:

'. . . what new life is this that we are now beginning?'

Beuys: live, over mic:

'. . . where is element three?'

SECOND WEEK

Two figures centre stage and nothing is happening (words and statements – 'live', recorded and written – from various sides, and a draft from South/East):

Beuys, draws one line across a blackboard, writes the following and leaves:

'. . . in one room with 4 fat-corners (*Fettecken*) act together: one lacewing, two ducks, one jelly-fish, nine stags, one mosquito, one elk, one frigate-bird, one mussel, one sheep, three woodpeckers, one hammer mole, two bears, five easter-bunnies, one dog, one goat, one lion, one housefly, one dung beetle (reduvius personatus). The animals disappear as soon as western man (der WESTMENSCH) enters. At the same time eastern man (der OSTMENSCH) projects himself doubly on the north wall of the space.'
(play 17 – 1963)

Prelude 1

One room with (at least) 1 'fat-corner'; all animals have left; two spots on two figures, centre stage, both pacing up and down:

One paces to and fro telling his life. Scene from the red tower. Ignatius dictates to da Camara. He doesn't address anybody. No face to face. He recounts. Step by step, up and down. As if he were exercising. His hair growing wild, his fingernails long. A pilgrim's staff in his hand. Shoes on his feet. But if you'd look closely, see his footprints, you'd see that the man walks bare-footed. Suddenly he cries out as if in great amazement. A 'cry of wonder', one interpreter writes. Ignatius recommends it in his *Exercitia Spiritualia*. 5th point, second exercise, first week.

Loyola, cries out: '. . . how creatures have suffered me to live, and have sustained me in life. How the angles have tolerated me . . . How the heavens, moon, and stars, and the elements; fruits, birds, fishes, and animals have all served my needs. How the earth has not opened and swallowed me up . . .'

Prelude 2

The other, also a staff in his hand. He carries it upside-down: the bent part that might provide suitable rest for a hand touches the ground, bends back into the air. EURASIA-STAFF. Beuys has an iron sole tied to his right foot, a felt sole to his left. A strange limping rhythm echoes through the space when he walks. And he walks a lot. His face and head are covered with honey and gold leaf. He carries a dead hare in his arms, mutters quietly to the animal. A statue: man and hare. Scene from the 1965 performance at Galerie Schmela: '*How to explain the pictures to a dead hare*'. Beuys reserves a private viewing of his drawings to a dead hare, while the Düsseldorf art crowd has to wait outside the gallery doors.

Beuys, behind the gallery window; the window clouded with condensation, he writes with one finger on the window-pane; water drops like tears from every letter:

'. . . the hare actually does what human beings can only do in their thoughts: it incarnates itself in the earth.'

1 Joseph Beuys

A voice, perhaps **Beuys'**, from a speaker in the middle of the room, suspended from the ceiling to about eye-level:

'. . . yes, . . . in a word, if you could say it in words in a simple way, you wouldn't have to make blood pudding.' – 'Without fat chair and fat corners as vehicles none of my activities would have had such an effect. It started an almost chemical process among people that would have been impossible if I had spoken theoretically. The flexibility of the material is psychologically effective – people instinctively feel it relates to inner processes and feelings . . . people started to laugh, get angry, or try to destroy it . . .' – 'I was interested in unlocking all residues, so that everything would be as if thrust into turbulence . . .'.

Loyola's tape-recorded voice, over loudspeakers; scene at the Cadoner River:

'. . . the road ran next to the river. As he went along occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a while with his face toward the river, which there ran deep. As he sat, the eyes of his understanding began to open . . .'

First. On screen. www.tate.org.uk 'The End of the 20th Century'. Joseph Beuys (1921–86) on the website of Tate Modern. The department of interpretation writes under 'background':

'A turning point in the life of Joseph Beuys came during the Second World War when he was serving as a fighter pilot in the German air force. In 1943 he was shot down on the Russian front, survived the crash and, according to Beuys, was rescued from the snow by nomadic Tartars who, he said, "covered my body in fat to help it regenerate warmth and wrapped it in felt as an insulator to keep the warmth in". After the war he became an artist whose vision was concerned with the plight both of humanity and the environment. He expressed these concerns through a personal symbolism in which fat and felt play a central role.'

Second. Light on Beuys' curriculum vitae. Somebody like a news-reader appears in a spotlight, continues to recite from Beuys' 'vita':

(1) 1961. The Cold War. 'The wall' dividing Germany is built. Beuys becomes 'Professor of Monumental Sculpture' at the Düsseldorf Academy.
(2) 1963. Twenty years after Beuys' war-time crash: 'on a mild summer evening in July, Beuys exhibits his warm fat . . .'.
(3) 1964. Beuys recommends to raise the Berlin wall by 5 cm for reasons of proportions.
(4) (. . .)

RAISE THE BERLIN WALL BY 5 CM FOR REASONS OF PROPORTIONS

In an open letter of response to a complaint by the Ministry of Culture (*Kultusministerium*), **Beuys** writes:

'It is an image and should be contemplated as an image. It is only in cases of emergency or education (*Schulung*) that one resorts to acts of interpretation. It ought to be permitted to look at the Berlin wall from a point of view of proportion. Defuse the wall immediately. By inner laughter. Destroy the wall. One doesn't get stuck any longer with the physical wall. One becomes directed toward a spiritual wall. And to overcome it ought to be the destination, I think. Spontaneously arising question: which part in me or others did allow this thing to come about? How much did and does every one of us contribute to the possibility of this wall? Is everyone sufficiently interested in its disappearance? What kind of anti-egoist, anti-materialist education do young people receive in order to pursue overcoming this thing? Quintessentially: the wall as such is pretty unimportant. Don't talk so much about the wall! By means of self-education, it's on you to found a better moral sense in people, and all walls will disappear. There are so many walls between me and you.'

Third.

The Berlin wall is sculpture. Beuys insists in the contemplation of this image: it is a sculptural reality, that is, I – or you – could for example think about its proportion, that is, I – or you, or we – could think about its height, that is, we could for example think why it is as high as it is, and how it would be if it were not as high as it happens to be. That is to say, I – or we – could for example think about 'the wall' as a changeable reality, a thing in the world, one of many walls that could be knocked down or destroyed, a man-made object which could be subject to change. This point of view might alter everything – not only 'the wall' and its apparent proportion. Everybody is free enough to see a process and a procedure of change which Beuys – as an artist, an academic authority on 'monumental sculpture' *and* employee of the West German state – exercised in 1964 by means of a public recommendation to raise 'the wall' by 5 cm for reasons of proportion.

Fourth.

The Berlin wall, an incarnation of the crises-ridden and frequently blocked dialogue between East and West during what was called the COLD WAR. Beuys' recommendation is a work – *and* it works. It works as a piece of performance and an exercise of transformation. 'The recommendation' creates a turbulence, a heat-wave, a certain sense of flux in which things suddenly become changeable again as if by means of a sudden rise in temperature. 'The recommendation' transforms a subject of politics – *the* wall – into a matter of transformation – the wall. This sculpture ('plastic') by Joseph Beuys works as if initiating a melt-down: suddenly, everybody who recognizes 'the wall' as a

political fact of the COLD WAR period appears implicated in its building and continued existence. Change is at stake as a matter of everyone's concern: 'how much did and does every one of us contribute to the possibility of this wall . . .?'

Now – now? – artist, critic, *Kultusminister* and other 'workers', 'everyone of us' is equally at stake. There will be another society facing the wall. And 'the wall' will be but *one* materialization of an East–West division that cuts through everything.

Fifth. DIRECTIONAL FORCES. René Block Gallery in New York. 1975. The East–West divide cuts as a white chalk line through the 'fond' of unused blackboards assembled in the environment 'Directional Forces'.

The 100 blackboards are documents and testimony of a month of open discussions during the 'Art for Society' show at the ICA in London. The boards, rather than being wiped clean, accumulate on the ground like pedagogic litter . . . perhaps, the soil of another beginning.

Sixth.

Blackboards accompany many of Beuys' talks and discussions. The black gallery walls of the performance in 1966 are the same space: MANRESA. The twilight zone is potent with change from light to dark *and* from darkness to light. BRAUNRAUM, Beuys also says. Twilight zones of thought and thinking. A dark space fills with a white noise: reverberations and reflections. A word resolves in white lines: a dusty trace of chalk (on the wall, off the wall, on the ground), easily erased. When speech forms into writing, or a word into a drawing, or an image into an utterance, an energy of transformation comes and goes, trans-lating between divides that have to be crossed: thought ought to reach matter. Translation becomes the beginning of every thing. Another Genesis. Beuys likes to refer to evolution as the syntax of an Esperanto into which everybody and everything is already inscribed: 'sculpture as an evolutionary process: everyone an artist'.

Seventh. In the meantime, unnoticed by anybody, someone has written another word on the wall:

TWILIGHT OF IDOLS.

Eighth.

MANRESA is like the draft of a new language: an archive that *comes from the future*. Loyola writes in MANRESA. Beuys draws. His drawings are *from MANRESA*. They date from a time of great physical and mental exhaustion (Erschöpfung), a time of anxiety, doubts about his work and life. Beuys' *Lebenslauf/Werklauf* names the years in a 'biblical' manner: 'work in the fields' (1956–7) and 'recovering from work in the fields' (1957–9). Beuys retreats to the farm of his friends, the brothers van der Grinten, and works 'in the fields'. Its like a reference to the first man, ADAM, who, expelled from paradise, has to cultivate the earth 'in the sweat of his brow'. In German, the forces of creation

and exhaustion draw something like a circle (*Schöpfung* and *Er-schöpfung*) and an image of retrieving (*schöpfen*, to *scoop*) water from a well. *Schöpfung* and *Er-schöpfung*, creation and exhaustion, correspond in cycles of dissolution and change, they complement transformation. And not a word of resurrection.

Somebody (**Beuys**) recites:

'. . . it's as if something had to die . . . for all too long I had dragged a body around with me. The process of initiation was one of exhaustion (*Erschöpfung*) which then quite quickly switched and turned to a complete new beginning. Things within me had to transform completely. The change had to reach and affect the body as well. Illness is often also a mental crisis in life, when old experiences and patterns of thought are shed, or become *melted down again* within a very positive process of transformation and change.'

2 Ignatius Loyola

First. Fr Luis Goncalves da Camara recites from his notes on a towering scaffold backstage; accompanied by typewriter sounds; a monk next to him types feverishly; another monk with typewriter at the bottom of the scaffold:

'. . . he (Ignatius) returned to the Red Tower and started to dictate, pacing up and down, as he had always done his dictation before. I, in order to see his face, would always try to come closer to him, but Our Father would say, 'Keep the rule'. At times when, forgetting his advice, I would come closer to him (and I did this two or three times), Our Father repeated the same warning and left. Finally he returned later to the Red Tower to finish dictating what now is already written down. But since I was for some time about to start my journey (the eve of my departure was the last day on which Our Father spoke to me on this matter), I could not dictate everything down in full at Rome. In Genoa, not having a Spanish secretary, I dictated in Italian what I had brought from Rome in summary and finished this dictation in Genoa, December 1555.'

Second. Another Jesuit monk comes in, reading from a black book, while walking across the stage; a fourth figure passes hastily and in silence in the opposite direction, a burning torch in his hands:

Da Camara's manuscript of the autobiography is lost. In 1566, 10 years after Ignatius' death, the Jesuit General St Francis de Borja commissions an official biography, orders the withdrawal of all at that time available manuscripts of the autobiography and forbids the Jesuits from reading it. Loyola's autobiography was not published until the 18th century in Latin, and not until the 20th century in its original Spanish.

Third. An old woman crosses the stage. Slowly. She asks Loyola where he's going. She says, softly:

'Do you want to go to Rome? Well, I don't know in what shape those who go there come back.'

Beuys, before the blackboard, writing; he turns around:

'. . . we cannot wait for an innocent tool . . . a knife with no blood on it . . .'

Fourth.

Loyola's writings tell, in different pace and tone, one story: the biography narrates, the exercises describe and prescribe, the 'Spiritual Diary' counts and shows what has been said in the other writings. Promoting only the 'Exercises' as Loyola's writing, as it became custom amongst Jesuit generals, would be like failing to listen to Ignatius and the monastic virtues he recommends, among them, first of all: DISCIPLINE. Loyola, in his life as a soldier and a monk, a

member of the army and a member of the Catholic church, was well aware of its double-edged blade.

According to the terminology of the German 'Duden', discipline would be: (1) to keep to a given set of rules, and (2) to do so out of 'one's own free will'.

DISCIPLINE: the agility of an action which succeeds in keeping two limits suspended, and thus, at stake: will and law, love and freedom. The recognition of play between rules, will *and* freedom, receiving the given, giving *and* allowing for reception, is the beginning, *and* end of Loyola's 'Exercitia Spiritualia'. The struggle for balance, obedience and harmony in this often dangerous game is the very auto-bio-graphy of Loyola's exercises which brought him, more than once, before the courts of the inquisition. But without attention to the double game and its cutting edge, Loyola's exercises could freeze into an instrument of oppression.

Fifth. A dark hole centre stage; a figure kneeling on the ground nearby; Ignatius in prayer; sometimes he seems to fend off an invisible aggressor with his pilgrim's staff; sometimes he shouts out loud.

In MANRESA, Ignatius suffers what he calls 'scruples' and disgust for the life he was leading. 'Temptation', or 'the devil', as he says, comes as a need to confess all his sins again and again. An obsession with the past brings all movement to a halt. RIGOR MORTIS. Loyola receives the lifting of the obsession like a divine decision: 'an awaking from a dream'. He responds cutting the umbilical cord of the past and 'decides with great clarity not to confess anything from the past any more'.

Loyola, shouting: 'Help me, Lord, for I find no remedy in men, nor in any creature. If I thought I could find it, no labour would seem great. Show me, Lord, where to find it, for even if I had to follow a little dog to find the remedy, I would do it.'

Beuys, gently: '... rosemary, the plant from MANRESA. It died (on me) in the frost. So, I thought: you ought to make a sculpture of it ...'.

Sixth. Beuys comes in, sets up a piece of sculpture from the 'clay workshop' environment in the middle of the empty stage.

A dark block of bronze on a tripod, a small compass on top of it. The three-legged piece resembles a watch-tower. The square lump of bronze shows traces of branches, roots, earth, bits of earthenware. Rosemary, the plant from MANRESA ... Rosemary is known as the herb of friendship and of memory. Its perfume and power to purify has died in the cold. A plant has perished and its material remains become recast: a plastic suspended as if in the process of its making on a sculptor's tripod. A vegetable suspended above the earth. The metal cannot return the plant's warmth and life. A compass complements the still life. A compass could be the sole companion of the one who walks alone. The magnetic needle points at one direction, obeys the rule of a metal horizon, the North–South axis of the planet Earth. In MANRESA, memory transforms and turns to new directions, like the roots of a plant to the sky.

Beuys, leafing through his drawings, papers spread out on the floor all around him, whispering: '... a memory of the future ...'.

Seventh. MANRESA is a point of intersection where things may turn. Beuys marks it '*n*' with white chalk on the black wall, next to a cross that is divided into two halves.

At regular intervals, **Beuys**' voice announces from the tape-recorder: '*n* is the intersection of three radiating lines, one plastic, two potential arithmetic, or one and two integrated & element 3.'

Is element 3 equal to 1+2? Or, is three an integration of one *and* two? Is element 3 the same as one and two, or something different, or, is it nothing but a question? Is element 3 also '*n*', or is '*n*' another, fourth dimension? 'Where is element 3?' is a repeated call in Beuys' MANRESA. If one and two relate to 3 as equal, how does 3 relate to 4? And what is at stake in these calculations? (1) Matters of 'plastic' concern?, or (2) sheer probability and arithmetic? Arithmetic in German is RECHENKUNST, mathematical art, calculation acrobatics. 'Where is element 3?' If it's the question which matters, then thought is at stake. And thought, according to Beuys, has to pass through matter, this is its 'sense'. For the dynamic process of 'plastic', melting and freezing, the question 'where is element 3?' makes no sense. If the matter were tallow, for example, cycles of casting and recasting could be repeated again and again. Every time the same thing, each time a new cast. The differences are unlikely to serve speculation or profit. In MANRESA, element 3 remains missing, and, remains as question.

Eighth. Loyola, before a question of arithmetic: (1) father, (2) son, (3) holy spirit, (4) holy trinity. How many prayers does it make to the Most Holy Trinity? three? or four? Four prayers to the TRINITY? What sense does it make? Music resolves the arithmetic of faith: the coincidence of three musical keys resounds in a unique harmony, and according to a moment of trinity that is *and* exceeds the sum of its parts.

Ignatius, pacing up and down, dictates to da Camara: 'He had a great devotion to the Most Holy Trinity; thus, every day he said a prayer to the three persons individually. He would then add one more to the Most Holy Trinity and so the thought came to him: Why did he say four prayers to the Trinity (when there were only Three Persons)? This thought, however, appeared to him to be a matter of little importance and gave him no difficulty. One day, while reciting the Hours of Our Lady on the steps of the (same) monastery, his understanding began to be lifted up as if he were seeing the Most Holy Trinity in the shape of three musical keys. This was accompanied with so many tears and sobbing that he could not control himself . . . he could not stop talking about the Most Holy Trinity . . . and for the rest of his life, he had this impressed in him: to feel great devotion while praying to the Most Holy Trinity.'

Beuys, on the floor, operating the transformer, sparks fly; while his recorded voice echoes again from the tape-recorder: '*n* is the intersection of three radiating lines, one plastic, two potential arithmetic, or one and two integrated & element 3.'

Ninth. Autobiography. Chapter 3. MANRESA. paragraph 29. point two. Da Camara dictates to his secretary: 'At another time it was made present to his understanding, with great joy, the manner in which God had created the world. It seemed that he saw something white, out of which some rays were coming, and that from this God was making light.' But he didn't know how to explain these things, nor did he remember well the spiritual illuminations which God had impressed on his

soul at the time.' A word becomes light: the first step, the first day of divine creation. For Loyola, every thing and every creature carries resemblance and memory of 'the holy word incarnated'. Light – visions of light – illuminate 'the manner in which God created the world'. Light, like creation, knows no past. Light carries an always new resemblance.

Two loud-speakers, suspended from the ceiling, facing each other. Two voices recite from the beginning of the 'Exercitia':

'... the first annotation is that this expression, Spiritual exercises, embraces every method of examining one's conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of praying mentally or vocally, and of other spiritual activities that will be mentioned later. For just as strolling, walking and running are bodily exercises, so spiritual exercises are methods of preparing and disposing the soul to free itself of all inordinate attachments and, after accomplishing this, of seeking and discovering the divine will regarding one's life orientation for the health of one's soul.

The second is that the person who gives another instruction in the method and procedure of meditation or contemplation must faithfully narrate the story pertaining to such contemplation or meditation. He should limit his discourse to a brief, summary statement ... for it is not an abundance of knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul but rather the feeling and savouring of things internally.'

Tenth. Loyola, pacing up and down, writing in his little book.

Loyola writes *in MANRESA*, and 'it consoles him a great deal'. The exercises turn the experience of a breakdown into a method for change. Change is received like 'sensation': the very way a sensual impression is perceived. Change works like and through the senses, it comes with seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting. Transformation comes – if 'I' can receive it – in and as signs, and through all organs of perception. Sensing as a way of 'writing itself' becomes a discipline of liberation: exercise for the soul to free itself from 'inordinate attachments', allowing for another orientation. Liberation and change ought to be practised – just like 'walking, strolling or running'. Liberation and change ought to pass through the senses, or in other words, through some-body, to be received by some-body. Liberation and change must pass – like thought – through matter, must materialize. What Loyola calls 'divine will' translates a will for change which is not and cannot simply be 'mine'. It names, like Beuys' term of the 'power of evolution', the experience that change cannot be made, 'I' cannot make it. 'I' receive – if I can. 'I' may be more or less able to receive it. Reception must be practised like walking. Reception – sensual or hyper-sensual – is not a given, it's a matter of discipline: a dynamic of learning and unlearning. Reception makes me – 'I' – a disciple. I ought to become the one who listens, hears, sees, perceives warmth, colour, the touch of a movement in the air. The possibility of perception splits me – 'I' – into the one who listens and the one who hears listening, the one who sees and the other who perceives vision. Receptivity doubles me – 'I' – into disciple and teacher, even before knowing anything. When ignorance becomes a voice – or two, conversations become loud, and cut through 'me', the body of the one who's supposed to see or listen. 'I' am made and fragmented along the lines of many voices, seeing, listening, continuous conversing. It's at the moment of recognition, receiving the cut, that Loyola says in the autobiography: 'God treated him at this time just as a teacher treats a child, by teaching him'.

Eleventh. Loyola, crossing the stage again, his little book under his arm.

With his 'exercises', Loyola proposes a set and a choreography of steps, a way and a manner of walking in order to become the one who perceives. Somebody who fulfils perception. Loyola proposes to submit the stories of the Bible, the Christian tradition and faith, and the biography of Jesus, to the order of the senses. In the process, not only me, 'I', but the entire codex of faith becomes cut up into bits, fragmented, and rearranged. He recommends what he calls an 'application to the senses', and organizes its exercising in and through a set of scenes. And he proposes a set and a setting, in which reception is doubled and staged in between somebody who gives and guides, and somebody who receives the exercises. The theatre of the senses unfolds a new language between a teacher and a pupil.

The theatre of the senses unfolds as if an art of telecommunication and electrical engineering: a flow of 'sensation', or sensing, draws links between matter and energy, stuff and light, in processes of correspondence and materialization. 'Sensation' is a conductor of change. It links transmitter and receiver in cycles of transformation. Like electricity, 'sensation' is – if its flux is bound and regulated – a power which materializes. Or, in other words: a power which incarnates. MANRESA: the nightmare space of an incarnation.

Somebody (**Loyola**) enters the stage with decisive steps. Begins to write with chalk onto the black wall. He writes fast. It is an excerpt from the meditation on hell in the 'Exercitia Spiritualia':

[66] 1st. The first point is to see with the eye of the imagination the great fires, and the souls enveloped, as it were, in bodies of fire.
[67] 2nd. The second point is to hear the wailing, the screaming, cries, and blasphemies against Christ our Lord and all His saints.
[68] 3rd. The third point is to smell the smoke, the brimstone, the corruption, and the rottenness.
[69] 4th. The fourth point is to taste bitter things, as tears, sadness, and remorse of conscience.
[70] 5th. The fifth point is to feel with the sense of touch how the flames surround and burn the souls. . . .

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books have accompanied my writings and opened my listening to Beuys and Loyola in MANRESA. I recommend them warmly.

1 'The secret block for a secret person in Ireland' (MOMA Oxford 1974; and Royal Academy of Arts 1999).
2 Caroline Tisdall, *Joseph Beuys: We go this way* (Violette Editions 1998).
3 Friedhelm Mennekes, *Joseph Beuys: Manresa* (Insel Verlag, Frankfurt a. M. und Leipzig 1992).
4 Antonio T. de Nicolas, *Powers of Imagining. Ignatius de Loyola* (State University of New York Press 1986).
5 'Joseph Beuys: Blitzschlag mit Lichtschein auf Hirsch', 20th Sao Paulo Biennale 1989, text by Heiner Bastian.
6 *Zeitgeist*, Berlin 1982, curated by C. Joachimides and N. Rosenthal.
7 Catalogue of the Beuys retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, 1979/80, curated by Caroline Tisdall.
8 Roland Barthes, 'Loyola' in *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (Jonathan Cape, London 1977).

Reading Between the Lines: Word as Conceptual Project

Brandon LaBelle

When Tom Marioni opened his Museum of Conceptual Art in San Francisco in 1970 the notion of 'art as idea' had culminated into Conceptualism in general, framing the artist as progenitor of an avant-garde program based on the production not so much of objects but a new kind of language, unstable, poetic and political. For Marioni, Conceptual Art was given its foundational support through the integration of an overarching artistic practice that brought together sculpture, action, sound, media and language into an increasingly social and performative context, self-organized and liberating. To move from an actual art object – such as sculpture – to Marioni's drum-brush drawings as sculptural process, is to summarize a larger historical move, which could be articulated generally as a move from John Cage to Fluxus to Conceptualism, and, further, into Performance Art.

What this larger trajectory has in common with its smaller counterpart, that is Marioni's MOCA, is its increasing engagement, on multiple levels, with language. For language can be seen to take a front seat in the progress of avant-garde art – which is founded on a level of 'criticality' articulated through the production of discourse as opposed to strictly objects – finding its culmination in Conceptualism in the 1960s and early 1970s, a culmination of 'art as idea'.

Conceptualism is in itself a performance of language, for it not only uses language as itself – Joseph Kosuth's textual queries, or Lawrence Weiner's *Public Freehold* project that essentially gives language away as public property – but beyond this, as a philosophical imperative to demarcate an increasingly theoretical space in which the artist speaks for him or herself, not solely as maker but as thinker. Conceptualism shifts not only the materiality of the art object to an ever more disintegrated form, but the very function of art to take on the social, political and cultural forces at work. This necessitates a critical relationship to language, for we can see language as the very machinery of these forces, the gears through which such forces operate and perpetuate themselves.

CAGE

To return to the beginning, the initial stage in our trajectory, we can find Conceptualism buried in the work of John Cage, because certainly Cage was more than a composer or an artist working with materials and form. In effect, Cage sets the stage for Conceptualism by *reflecting* on the function and materials of music *through* music itself. This reflexive operation, not as separate action or as discursive space but as artistic production, becomes the backbone of Conceptualism, for to both reflect and create at the very same instant is to announce an increasingly dramatic and self-conscious practice that speaks beyond the traditional aesthetic categories of beauty and the sublime, of self-expression as a kind of pure formalism or drama of feeling. Found in this announcement is a challenge to such conventions, that for Cage necessitates a continual outspokenness – what can be seen as his ongoing relationship to language itself, however contradictory.[1] This of course is both a musical language and a language of reading and writing, the

Performance Research 7(3), pp.47-53 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

language of criticism and poetry, as a system of meaning-making and of challenging meaning itself.

Cage's efforts to 'liberate sound' from the institutional constraints of Music, and their influence on determining listening habits and the perception of music itself, can be seen as a conceptual endeavour, for such attempts stake out a set of philosophical ideas even while trying to outlive them: in order to transcend the language of musical tradition Cage continually uses and relies upon language, as a material, as a vehicle, as a mechanism of liberation itself.

To refer to Cage through the lens of Conceptualism in this way requires that we ground the term, give it definition. I would offer three principles with which to characterize Conceptualism:

1 self-reference (or, a work which highlights the very processes of its own making and status);
2 dematerialization of the object (or, a performative emphasis on these processes *as* the work itself);
3 critique of the institution (or, an engagement with the very space in which the work is seen and experienced, from the 'gallery' to the more immaterial institutions of Art and Music in general).

To claim that John Cage is essentially a conceptual artist is to argue that his musical and philosophical projects have a lot more to say in terms of investigating sound as a medium, opening up the envelope of musicality as an object within a greater context, and offering insight into the workings of the conventions of musical production, and the institutions which support and determine its output – how it is written, performed and heard – rather than strictly Music. This can be seen in his seminal composition *4'33"* from 1952. As has been well documented, the composition consists solely of a pianist sitting at a piano in silence, for three movements, within a duration of 4 minutes, 33 seconds. What occurs instead of piano notes is a 'framing' of the sounds already happening in the concert hall: the occasional cough, the shifting and shuffling of feet, a sneeze. Through this framing the audience's attention is drawn to these sounds as a possible music. Here, the composition refers back to itself, making a listener self-consciously aware of the processes at work – that, in fact, he or she is involved in the making of 'music'. In this reflexive move the work also brings into relief a listener's expectations of what it means to attend a concert, and through this, how these expectations are determined by the broader context of the institution of music.

The erasing of the line between musical object and found environment plays out in his lectures which in turn perform formally its very content. As in '45' for a Speaker':

> 40'00"
> We're apt never to know
> but
> something else is
> 10"
> happening: I am getting nowhere slowly
> as the talk goes on slowly
> we have the feeling we're getting nowhere; that
> is a pleasure which will continue if
> we are irritated with whatever.
>
> (Cage 1961: 168)

Cage's work in general is about shifting perspective, making one notice sound as an evocative and essential presence in the world, without reference to musical conventions per se. What this shift in attention also demands is a shift in language, for certainly to begin to perceive such found sounds as music, one must reach a certain threshold of articulation, to '. . . make something other than language with it. (Cage 1981/1995: 113). As Cage quotes Meister Eckhart in 'Composition as Process':

> Thoughts arise not to be collected and cherished but to be dropped as though they were void. Thoughts arise not to be collected and cherished but to be dropped as though they were rotten wood. Thoughts arise not to be collected and cherished but to be dropped as though they were pieces of stone. Thoughts arise not to be collected and cherished but to be dropped as though they were the cold ashes of a fire long dead.
>
> (Cage 1961: 39)

What *4'33"* in effect enacts is such a dropping, and in turn, a setting in motion – it initiates both a challenge and an invitation, to in effect give up the musical language of tradition – to literally let fall the expected performance, or action, for the possibility of another, of 'music' as a democratic performance, as liberated articulation. And more so, to allow thoughts in turn to find their own meaning, as a kind of performative event – not as static lexicon, which would of course replace one tradition or institutional constraint with another, but as organic becoming.

FLUXUS

The self-reflection found in Cage's ongoing critique and output of music is more highly wrought in Fluxus, for Fluxus both takes Cage on and amplifies him – Fluxus is both the reverent *and* naughty child of Cage-the-Father, intensifying the acuity of Cage's insights as well as going too far. In essence, Fluxus reflects back upon music and deconstructs its conventions: instrumentation, performance practices, hierarchical status of composer and performer, gender roles, tonal integrity of composition, the language of musical scores, etc. These become flexible variables in the game of Fluxus, to be harnessed, laughed at, or destroyed, rather than governing modes of musical practice. In turn, language itself increasingly becomes a material for production, as in the ubiquitous 'event score'. George Brecht's *Five Events* from 1961 is exemplary of the Fluxus language game, for it articulates itself in such a way as to suggest that language itself is the event:

Five Events
eating with
between two breaths
sleep
wet hand
several words

(Brecht in Kahn 1993)

The event score can be seen as both poem and instruction, haiku and manifesto, for it proposes an action of both reading and doing to such a degree as to collapse the two: reading or articulating the event score is to implicitly enact the score itself. In this way, the event score is a model of signification which, preceding Roland Barthes' influential post-structuralist 'Death of the Author' (1969) essay (in Barthes 1977) attempts to liberate language from the authorial grip not only of the author per se, but of the value system embedded in authoring. In short, the event score is authored by the reader because it is the reader who ultimately performs the act described, initially and completely, as a mental construct. The reader in this way is given the responsibility.

La Monte Young's *Composition #10* (1960) 'draw a straight line and follow it', is indicative of the event score for it raises a question: is it truly necessary to draw an actual line, to follow it concretely, in real time and space? Hovering on this edge of possible action, the event score sets in motion the imagination to a point of liberation, for what is implied in *Composition #10* is that the line is both physical and mental; it is a line of text read and followed to its end, and a line found within everyday life – it is nowhere and everywhere. Here language is put into play as a kind of instructional game by situating the reader in the position of maker. Yet paradoxically what is ultimately articulated is that language itself becomes the work; the event score articulates, implies and performs the very thing written, yet only in the moment of its being read. In this way, the work functions as a conceptual space – of proposition, of imagination, of enactment. This operates on what Dick Higgins refers to as the 'post-cognitive' level. The post-cognitive, in contrast to the cognitive, is not so much an operation of interpretation which attempts to apprehend language, understand it as a singular meaning, but rather the post-cognitive is essentially a performance of language to a level of game-playing whereby meaning is found in the event itself, not as a singular interpretative moment, but as an extended and reverberating multiplicity – one which results in laughter, reverie, action, conversation, performance.

What the event score proposes is that the event

itself is an articulation between artist and reader, paper and eyes, sound and hearing – it is a kind of secret passed in the operations of artistic practice as it attempts to extend past the object to meet the potential viewer or visitor. It is a verbalization of a possibility that suggests an entire philosophical and ontological shift that necessarily leaves the art object behind. This shift can be seen as a stutter in the trajectory of signification. For Fluxus, in setting in action language as a game of articulation, as event, in turn highlights language as a volatile medium, for event scores can be seen to teeter on the edge of comprehension, veering into poetry, into flights of double-meaning, puns, suggestive absurdity, violence.

Yoko Ono's Instruction Paintings operate along this unsettled trajectory of signification. *Painting to Let the Evening Light Go Through* from 1961/6 consists solely of the words of the title etched onto a window. What the work gives to the viewer is a riddle loaded with suggestion – for here, painting itself is but a conceptual game whereby surface, form, and material give way to idea, imagination, and language. Yet the work, in short-circuiting the operations of both painting and language, opens up onto another level of meaning, whereby possibility is given a stage to find its own material form – to actualize itself in the very performative moment of reading. This moment is not solely a moment of poetic synchronicity, but leads out onto a zero degree which reveals cultural conventions as powerful – and thus, political – determinants. To understand the political dimension is to butt up against language – for as a symbolic system language could be seen to uphold the governing values of any society by its very enactment. In this way, language perpetuates the status quo by its hold on the ideological platform within language itself.

CONCEPTUALISM

This move towards self-reference and language games operates to reflect upon the very conditions at work in the production of a work of art and its ultimate reception. What becomes apparent in the Conceptual approach is an expanded view, that is, the limitations, materially, socially, and politically, that govern art as a cultural form. What can be seen in a series of letters exchanged between John Cage and Robert Morris (1960–3) is a conversation between generations that ultimately crosses the historical line separating Cage from Conceptualism. Morris in this way acts as a bridge, for his work at this time, contemporaneous with Fluxus yet never officially residing there (though he was originally supposed to contribute to La Monte Young's *An Anthology*) is a play of material, language and perception.

Some of Morris's early works, such as his *Piece #1*, 1961: 'To be looked at in a state of shock: nearly anything in a state of shock', follow the Fluxus event score motif. The self-referentiality of Cage and Fluxus though finds a harder edge in Morris's subsequent works, which literalize the very process of artistic production itself, and enter a tautology that often leaves no room for the humour of Fluxus, as in his *Card File* from 1963. *Card File* is a library card file in which each card refers to a stage in the making of the work, however abstract – materials, mistakes, names, numbers, etc. – thereby making available all the details of such an undertaking. This reaches such a degree of self-referentiality that Morris, in a letter from January of 1963, asks Cage himself to take detailed note of his own observations of the work with the intention of including these in the card file itself.[2]

This self-referentiality can be seen in turn in John Baldessari's work from 1966 *A Work with Only One Property.* Exemplifying Conceptualism's deadpan humour and iconic subversion by setting in motion a tautological loop whereby the art object becomes its own description, the work is basically a painting of nothing other than a written out sentence that reads: 'A Work with Only One Property'. In this moment of confronting the painting, which basically recounts back to the viewer the very subject of its content *and* form, we can assume that essentially we are given just that single property in the very line of text, in the single gesture of the quote, which both points to the painting as nothing but its title and to the

singularity of the sentence as painted marks. This double-take of meaning, though, leaves a kind of jag in the experience, for we are left to wonder: what is this actual 'one property'? It becomes increasingly unclear, and this fuzzing out of clarity in turn functions as a kind of performance of language – for by extension language itself as a denotative mechanism is put into question.

This fuzzing of meaning in turn features in the work of Joseph Kosuth. His work *One and Three Chairs* from 1965 has become emblematic of Conceptualism's play with language as a symbolic system. The work consists of three things: a photograph of a chair mounted on a wall; a real chair placed next to the photograph; and a piece of paper mounted on the wall with printed text consisting of a dictionary definition of the word 'Chair'. What is presented in a sense is a game of decipherability: Which is the 'real' chair? Which representative model functions as the best 'chair'? Between this interplay of representation what is highlighted is the shift of meaning that occurs between and through representation itself – a twisting and turning of signifier and signified that leads out into a continual philosophical riddle, for as we can guess, each signifier is equally a 'chair', and what we are left with is language itself (for there is a point at which the 'real' chair-object itself is rendered a representation itself). This play of language, though, in some fashion empties out the concrete comprehensibility of the object 'chair', for the chair in turn disappears under the uncertainties of form.

In this way, Conceptualism functions not so much as a code of meaning, but rather as a way of analysing how these codes operate. This necessitates a different relationship to language, for Conceptualism in a sense sets into play a questioning of the very promise of language as a stable referent, as a readily accessible system of meaning. In place of this stable referent is inserted a kind of game, though quite different from Fluxus, whereby one must 'read between the lines', in a lateral movement across meaning. It has often been stated that Conceptualism was inextricably tied to the political and social upheavals occurring in the United States (and elsewhere) around the Vietnam War at the end of the 1960s. That against the increasingly volatile and uncertain situation, through which the entire institutional fabric of society was fraying, and from which a new wave of political articulation and intensity was making itself heard and felt, the very notion and stability of the art object was challenged, or seen as unfeasible. For how could such an object, grounded in particular legacies of masculinity, art institutions, and language itself, be assumed? Against such uncertainties and shifts in social situation could language in fact remain stable? Such an object no longer seemed plausible or relevant to the intensities of lived experience. In this way, something had to give, something had to budge along the signifying chain between art object and art viewer, between artist and audience, in the form of a material and signifying shift. This something was a performativity that increasingly drew into its net the body and language, for both are united into a correspondent web of identity, one representing the subject, the other the object. What Conceptualism finalizes, beginning with Cage's philosophical upheaval and questioning of the musical object – to an increasingly performative mode of practice – through Fluxus's minute deconstructions of conventions through vaudevillian antics, is the idea itself. Conceptualism in a sense politicizes Fluxus by shifting from an overtly performative mode to a covertly analytical one, as a way to articulate a different vocabulary, one put into play against the signifying, and thus ideological, chain.

CONCLUDING: YASUNAO TONE

To return to Marioni's Museum of Conceptual Art from 1970 then is to understand it as the culmination, as well as continuation (MOCA existed officially until 1984), of a larger movement that significantly brings artistic practice generally from Modernism to Post-Modernism, for the legacy of Cage to Fluxus to Conceptualism is a legacy that leaves behind the proclamations of the individual

• From *Molecular Music* (1982–5). In his performance of *Molecular Music*, Yasunao Tone shows images from which a Chinese character (zi, meaning self) is derived

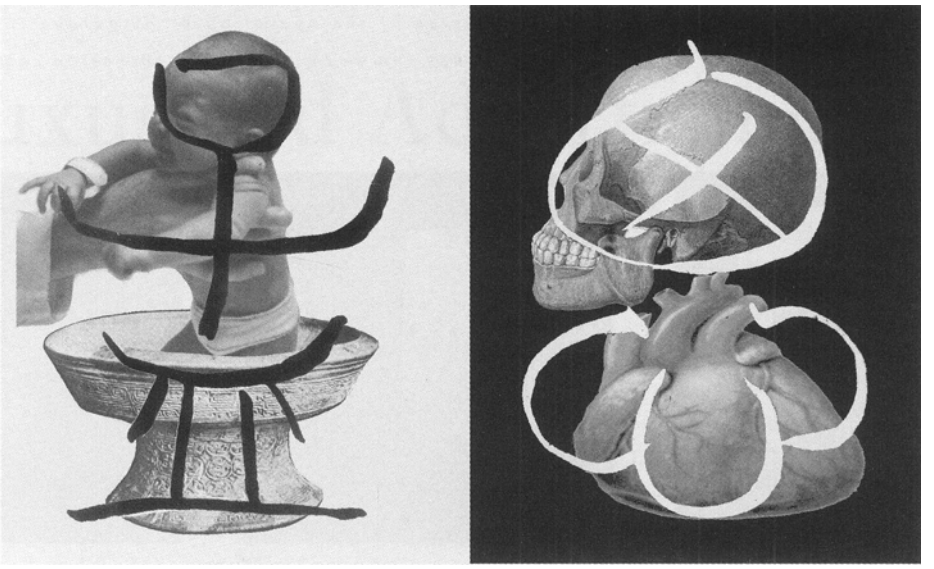
artist as a free-floating agent. In place, individual agency is seen as 'situated' within the larger cultural, social and political contexts which problematizes the very notion of not only artistic practice, but individuality itself. It problematizes it while at the same time making it more complex, and thus more interesting.

This shift in modes of practice continues to find further articulation within contemporary art, and one such artist whose career, rooted in the Fluxus camp, has moved along within this larger legacy, is Yasunao Tone.

Having worked as part of Fluxus in Japan in the early 1960s, the Hi-Red Center group that staged social happenings in 1963, and earlier as part of Group Ongaku with Takehisa Kosugi and Mieko Shiomi, Tone has spent the last 30 years living in New York City. His career has continued to cross disciplinary borders, from 1965–68, collaborating with Team Random (the first computer art group organized in Japan), producing music for the Merce Cunningham company, presenting installations using film, sound, photographs, and text, and most recently at the Yokohama Triennial where he presented *Parasite/Noise*.

Functioning as an altered audio guide to the exhibition itself, *Parasite/Noise* consists of headsets which 'play a text read aloud which has nothing to do with the exhibited works themselves', thereby creating a disjunction between what is seen and what is heard, between the 'meaning' of the work witnessed and the heard text. As Tone posits, the work is a 'pseudo audio guide' reasserting such guides as interfaces bet ween audience and art. Yet for Tone this interface offers the chance to redirect 'meaning' by sabotaging the one-to-one equation – of what the Museum says and what the art work does. Here, the very authorial language of art institutions is shortcircuited through what Tone calls 'paramedia' – a kind of 'parasitic' alteration that leads to an altogether different signification. For the work functions as an excess, a kind of hidden static buried inside the exhibition experience and amplified through the visitor's engagement.

The parasitic-noise dynamic is further explored in his latest *Man'yo* audio works. This project, following from his previous *Musica Iconologos* (1993) is a form of translation. Beginning with the process of inputting 8th-century Japanese poems (from the Man'yoshu anthology) into the computer, a library of 2,400 sounds is created whose combinations and permutations would correspond to the 4,516 poems of the anthology itself. Using C-programming, this sonic translation of the Chinese



• Coding of images – Chinese characters are superimposed on images from which the characters are derived (fall 1996 flier from Harvestworks): (left) a Chinese character 'meng' (meanings: the first month of the year or January, first-born boy; (right) a Chinese character 'si' (meanings: to think, thought)

characters rewrites the visuality of language – as object, as material, as image – into a sonic equivalent. For recent performances, Tone has used this sound-library by recording them onto CDs that are then treated, or abused, or 'wounded' by Tone: puncturing holes, scratching the surfaces, covering the CD-laser with scotch tape, etc. In this way, the CDs are manipulated like a primary matter, performed as 'brut' technology which is further defined by his use of the CD player itself as a kind of instrument: speeding up, slowing down, skipping across CD tracks, spitting out a fragmented and frenetic noise that not so much 'destroys' as 'adds' another layer to the original poems. What is left is another form of articulation, a highly physical orchestration of linguistic matter, technologized as a unit of data fed across the flickering electronics of the CD-eye, that scopic laser grabbing hold of cut-up information and sending it back, into the ephemerality of audio itself.

Tone's audio work is an assaultive performance onto the body of language – a kind of cracking open of its mechanics in order to reveal the inherent confusions and fusions, the vibrancy of language. His work in a sense feeds off text in order to reveal, to pull back another layer of meaning as a sonic rewriting which, following Cage's notes on indeterminancy, gives meaning to 'imperfectness'.

NOTES

1 For an insightful article on the contradictory tensions within Cage's practice see Dyson (1993).

2 For an informative essay on Morris' correspondence with Cage, see Joseph (1997).

REFERENCES

Barthes, Roland (1977) 'The Death of the Author', in *Image–Music–Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, London: Fontana/Collins, pp. 142–8.

Cage, John (1961) *Silence*, Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Cage, John (1981) *For the Birds*, Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Dyson, Frances (1993) 'The Ear That Would Hear Sounds in Themselves: John Cage 1935–1965', in D. Kahn and G. Whitehead (eds) *Wireless Imagination*, Boston: MIT Press.

Joseph, Branden W. (1997) 'Robert Morris and John Cage: Reconstructing a Dialogue', *October* 81 (MIT Press).

Fluxus and Advertising in the 1960s . . . and Now

Kevin Concannon

During December of 2001, gallery-goers in New York's Chelsea district were confronted with a rather puzzling billboard on the corner of West 26th Street and 10th Avenue: 'To express conceptual ideas write a book, don't paint'. The message was unsigned, and the billboard offered no indication of just who had put it there or why. Similar messages had appeared continuously on the same billboard (and another on West 24th Street) since the previous February. Appropriately enough (or maybe not), the series had begun with the message 'Art is not where you think you are going to find it'.

A bit of investigation revealed that the messages are the work of French artist Patrick Mimran, whose multi-media installation, *Babel TV*, was concurrently featured at Marlborough Chelsea (where his previous two exhibitions had featured encaustic on canvas paintings).

• Patrick Mimran. From the *Chelsea Billboard Project*, 2001. Courtesy of the artist and Cultural Communications, New York

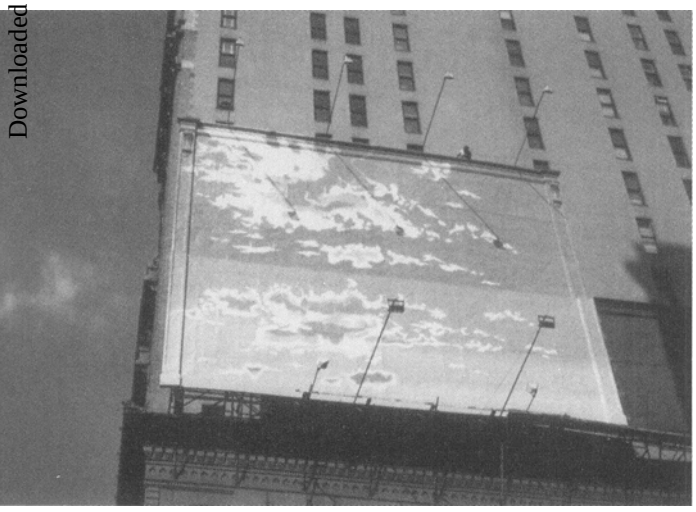
Performance Research 7(3), pp.55-63 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

> I did not want to include my name because it is not an advertising project but an art installation referring to some ideas I have about art – and trying to trigger some thoughts about it and the too general acceptance of contemporary art as it is without any debate of ideas or serious contradiction.

Mimran also observes 'much of today's art looks like a new "académisme" at the service of a market'.[1]

Mimran's invocation of the term 'conceptual', and the format of the billboard itself, calls to mind the movement by that name that emerged in the late 1960s. But while most recent histories of Conceptual art include discussion of works in advertising media as part of their broader investigations, relatively little attention has been paid to these works as a genre in and of themselves. The catalogue for *Billboard: Art on the Road*, a 1999 exhibition at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, looks at the history of artists' use of the billboard as an artist's medium, citing a 1968 work by Joseph Kosuth as 'the first artist's billboard in the United States' (Heon et al. 1999: 61). And Anne Rorimer recently examined similar works realized in other print media in her essay 'Siting the Page: Exhibiting Works in Publications – Some Examples of Conceptual Art in the USA' (Rorimer 1999: 11–26).

• Geoffrey Hendricks. ***Sky Billboard***, 1966. (Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, New York). Courtesy of the artist



If Kosuth's works are among the best-known early artist's billboard projects, it is Dan Graham who is best known among those artists who early on began using the pages of magazines as alternative exhibition spaces. Rorimer notes, for example:

> Dan Graham began his career with his seminal *Works for the Pages of Magazines*. From 1965 until 1969 he defined the magazine page as a site of display through a variety of different means, having recognized that works of art depend on the economic support of an exhibition space as much as they do on the literal 'backing' of its walls.
>
> (1999: 15)

Among Graham's works that recognize – and critique – the economic role of the gallery in the production of art, none does so more explicitly than his *Figurative*, published in the March 1968 issue of *Harper's Bazaar*. In spite of its 1968 publication date, Graham dates *Figurative* to 1965, and has exhibited a related work, *Scheme for Magazine Page 'Advertisment'* annotated with this title, signed and dated 1965.

Recently, James Meyer has elucidated the precise circumstances under which Graham's 'ad' appeared in *Harper's*. The presence in *Harper's* of such works, Meyer explains, 'was no accident but the handiwork of Dale McConathy, the magazine's remarkable literary editor from 1966 to 1969' (Meyer 2001: 135). *Figurative* is nothing more than a cash register tape provided by Graham that McConathy has placed in a three-quarter-page advertising space with the caption 'Figurative by Dan Graham'. It was McConathy who commissioned, placed, and titled the piece. Typically discussed as a work that exposes the mechanisms of both art and commerce, Meyer's take on *Figurative's* function in *Harper's* is somewhat more complex.

> The blatant difficulty of these interventions, their sheer awkwardness, opposed the seductive language of fashion copy. But 'difficulty' also had a place in a context dedicated to the consumption of the new. Simply by opposing the transparent aims of the ad, these projects

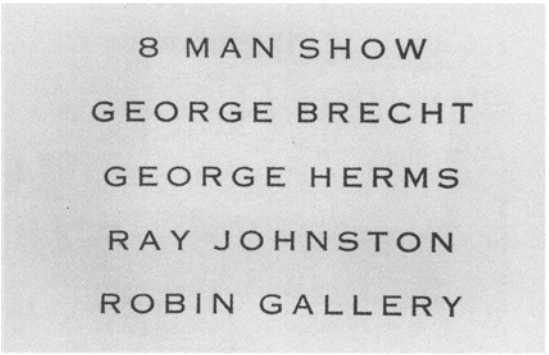
> gave *Bazaar* a certain prestigious tone. At the endpoint of modernism opacity was instrumentalized; the far-out could sell. The avant-garde was allowed in the marketplace, elevating fashion through proximity; obscure artists benefited from the publicity.
>
> (2001: 138)

Though Graham himself has made his critical intentions with these works clear, his *Figurative*, at least, offers an early example of how such a critique can be redirected in the service of its own object.

Neither Graham nor Kosuth, however, can claim priority with either these media or the subversive strategies employed with them. (Indeed, claims of such priority seem to have been made, not by the artists themselves, but by others on their behalf.) Ray Johnson and Yoko Ono, as it turns out, had published advertising works implicitly critical of the gallery system and the art market as early as 1964 and 1965 respectively – and in publications widely read within the New York art community: *Village Voice* and the *New York Arts Calendar*. And Fluxus artist Geoffrey Hendricks's *Sky Billboard*, installed from April through September 1966, preceded Kosuth's by at least 2 years.

In a 1966 magazine article, Hendricks explained 'the idea of a sky billboard first came to me while I was waiting in heavy traffic to enter the Holland Tunnel. There, above the toll booths, was a huge sign – blotting out the sky – and suddenly it struck me, what would it be like if the billboard itself were painted entirely with sky?' (Hendricks 1966b: 19). And in an artist's statement from the same period, he wrote:

> On March 20th Grace Glueck wrote in the *New York Times*: 'See a cloud painted on a billboard at Fifth Avenue and 42nd St., N.E. corner? It's a come-on for a one-man show at Bianchini Gallery by artist Geoffrey Hendricks who paints nothing but clouds . . .'. Miss Glueck's emphasis on commercialism was misplaced: this was not an advertisement for the show, it was an integral part *of* the show. The idea of using a commercial surface for an entirely noncommercial, artistic use, of course, was one of the strong appeals of the piece, and an anomaly similar to the 'dissolution' of the billboard's material solidity in intangible sky'.
>
> (Hendricks 1966a)



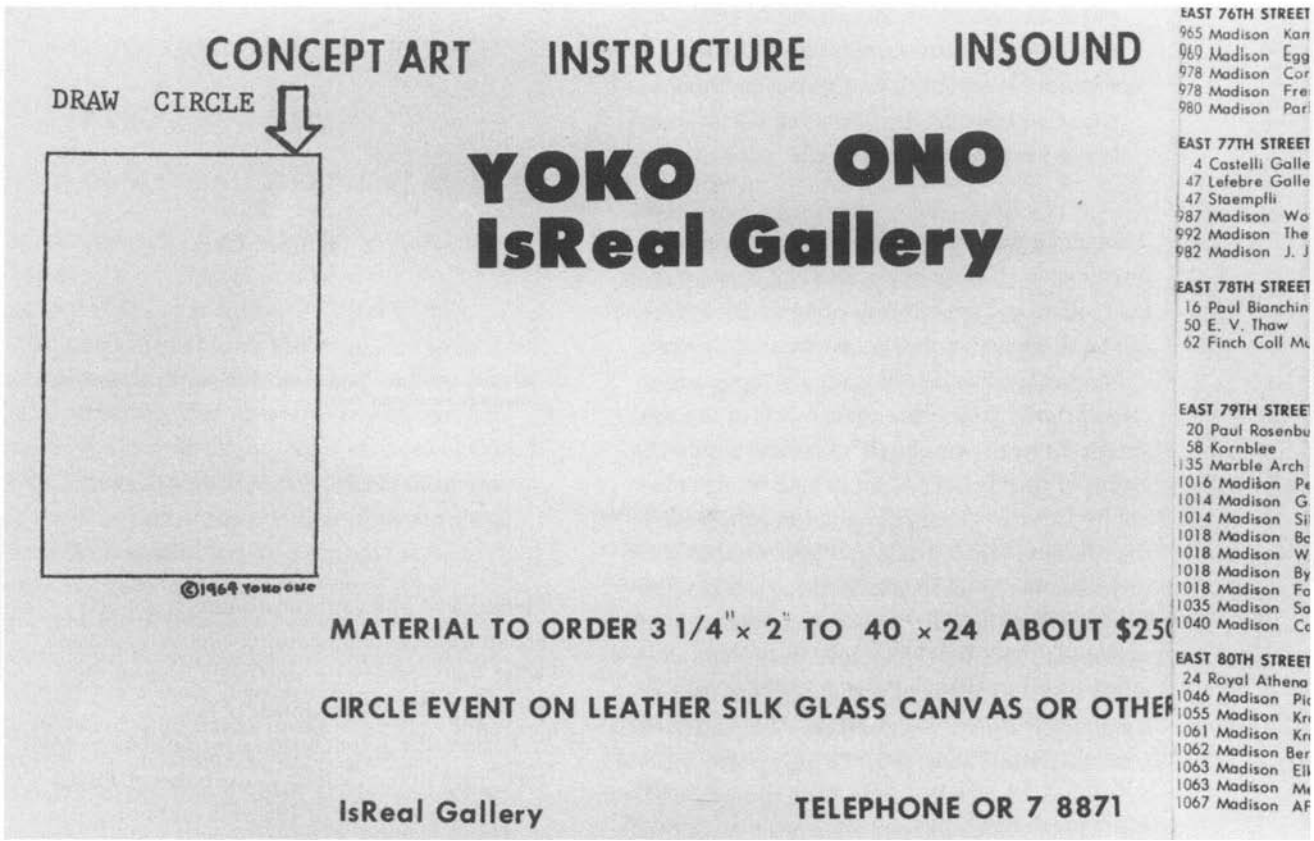
• Ray Johnson. *Robin Gallery* announcement, n.d. The Estate of Ray Johnson, courtesy Richard L. Feigen & Co. Photo: Brian T. Rodgers

Hendricks's billboard constitutes an implicit critique of consumer culture, effectively erasing what would otherwise have likely been another product pitch with an image of sky.

Earlier still, Ray Johnson advertised his purely imaginary Robin Gallery in the pages of *Village Voice* in the summer of 1964.[2] In addition to the *Village Voice* advertisement, Johnson mailed announcement cards for his Robin Gallery events as well.[3] Critic David Bourdon explains that the Robin was a pun on the former Reuben Gallery, 'the birthplace of happenings' (Bourdon 1965: 14). Other sources suggest that the Robin was also an allusion to theft – as in 'robbing'. In a 1966 article in the inaugural issue of *Art and Artists*, William Wilson offers one such explanation of the name and a more literally comic derivation as well.

> Ray Johnson invented the Robin Gallery as an answer to the Batman Gallery in San Francisco (Robin was Batman's youthful companion in the comic as we all know). The Robin Gallery not only held 'robbin' events (in October 1963, Ray Johnson and Sari Dienes stole a painting back from friends at Haverstraw), it also held (at least announced) an eight man show with only three artists, because 3 and its inverted reflection . . . make an 8.
>
> (Wilson 1966: 54)

The seemingly endless variations of the Robin



• Yoko Ono. *IsReal Gallery* advertisement, 1965. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Brian T. Rodgers

Gallery's purported etymology reflect the very nature of Johnson's work. As William Wilson explains, 'Ray would enter a word or concept, or a numeral, from one direction, but within it, would make a turn and come out at an angle one had not expected'.[4]

Bourdon's story documents the closing of this imaginary gallery and also notes that Johnson 'detests commercial art galleries', from which we might infer that perhaps these Robin Gallery ads may also be seen (like Graham's 1968 *Figurative*) as institutional critique. (Johnson would later establish – and advertise– the similarly fictional Woodpecker Gallery and Oriole Gallery.)[5] But while Johnson's Robin ad for the 30 July 1964 issue of *Village Voice* announces one such 8-man show with no address, phone number, or dates, it is not immediately clear to the reader that the Robin Gallery is not real (*VV*, 30 July 1964: 9). Another ad on the same page, for example, simply states 'Paintings by Beaudreau at Stanley's' (presumably an authentic exhibition), also lacking location or contact details.

Another Robin Gallery ad from the 17 September 1964 issue of *Village Voice* further confuses the question of real vs. imaginary. It states (in whole): 'Ray Johnson & other Living Americans in 38-man show at Robin Gallery, Section B2, 1st Ave & 27th St./Hours: 7–8, Mon., Wed., Fri.; 2:30–4, Tues., Thurs., weekends & holidays' (*VV*, 17 September 1964: 13). This advertisement, however, was in all likelihood placed not by Johnson, but by Andy Warhol. In his article on the closing of the Robin Gallery, Bourdon notes that when Johnson was hospitalized at Bellevue with hepatitis, 'his good friend and lifelong admirer

Andy Warhol advertised the occasion as a Robin Gallery event'.[6] This was and remains Bellevue's address, and Johnson was hospitalized there at this time. And a letter from Bourdon to artist May Wilson lists the visiting hours at Bellevue as identical to those listed in the ad as gallery hours.[7]

While the Robin Gallery, then, seems to exist as something between an artworld in-joke and a conceptual artwork, I would argue that Yoko Ono's IsReal Gallery is clearly intended for the average reader's edification; its conceptual bent is self-evident. Ono placed a full-page display advertisement for 'Circle Events' at the *IsReal Gallery* in the March 1965 issue of the *New York Arts Calendar 2*. The advertisement offered 'circle events' on 'leather, silk, glass, canvas, or other material to order, $3\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2''$ to 40×24, about $250'.[8] No address was offered, but a telephone number was included. The listings section of the magazine noted that the exhibition dates were 3–31 March, and the gallery was open 24 hours (mistakenly listing it as Israel Gallery instead of IsReal Gallery).[9] The magazine's next issue featured another ad for the *IsReal Gallery*, this one offering 'Hole Events', also on 'leather, silk, glass, canvas, or other material to order' (NYAC 2: 7 1965). As with Johnson's Robin Gallery in the *Voice*, the IsReal Gallery, existed only on the printed page and in the minds of the artist and her readers.[10] In the same March 1965 issue of the *New York Arts Calendar* in which Ono's first *IsReal Gallery* advertisement appeared, Graham had an advertisement as well – for his very real, soon-to-be-bankrupt gallery, John Daniels.[11]

With the *IsReal Gallery* works, Ono gently pokes fun at the art market even as she attempts to sell work that challenges the notion of artistic authorship: a blank canvas to be completed by the purchaser, offered by a gallery that exists only as documentation in an art magazine. Along with this implicit critique of the art market, Ono raises the issue of object versus idea and the commodification of art, seeking to subvert the gallery system to establish a more direct, engaging relationship with her audience.

Four and a half years later, Ono created the 1969 poster action, *War is Over!*, in collaboration with John Lennon, moving from a critique of the artworld to broader political action – and a substantially broader audience. For this event, launched 15 December 1969, the couple commissioned billboards in 12 cities around the world. (In the language of each city where they were sited, the billboards declared 'War is Over!/ If You Want It/ Happy Christmas from John and Yoko'.) Strangely, the 1999 *Billboard* exhibition at MassMOCA, lacked any mention of the piece.

While, in the critical literature, the strategy of advertising intervention as an art medium seems to emerge along with Conceptual art around 1968 (with the conception of Graham's *Figurative* attributed to 1965), it seems quite clearly to have surfaced in fact within the Fluxus orbit at least as

• Yoko Ono and John Lennon. *War Is Over!* subway poster, Paris, 1969. Courtesy Lenono Photo Archive. Photo: Robert Young

• Dieter Roth. Advertisement placed in the *Luzerner Stadtanzeiger*, 12 January 1972, as part of an ongoing series in which he placed two advertisements weekly for a period of $1^1/_2$ years. In 1973 he bound these newspapers together to create his artist's book, *der Tränensee (The Lake of Tears)*. Reproduced courtesy of the Dieter Roth Estate, collection of Jon and Joanne Hendricks.

early as 1964. And artists in and around Fluxus continue to mine this vein to the present day.

Dieter Roth upped the ante for the genre in the spring of 1971, creating a work of epic scale when he purchased advertising space in the *Luzerner Stadtanzeiger* (Lucerne, Switzerland) at the rate of two placements per week for a period of $1^1/_2$ years. Ann Goldstein describes his purpose as 'publishing a series of silly, nonsensical, grammatically improper German sentences' that 'progressively grew more serious and sentimental' (Goldstein 1984: 15). When the nature of Roth's texts shifted after the first year, becoming more 'long-winded' as Ina Conzen describes them, the newspaper's editors put a stop to the project two-thirds of the way through:

> The recent texts as well as the manuscripts submitted for coming editions differ sharply from the decidedly short puns and wordplay of the advertisements submitted a year ago. Equally, negative reactions from our readership, too, have become more numerous. But regardless of any readers' feedback, what is ultimately the point is that the current texts are simply too much for the public.
> (cited in Conzen 2000: 84; translated by Bram Opstelten)

In 1973, Roth assembled the complete series (at least those ads that the newspaper had actually published) as an artist's book, *der Tränensee (The Lake of Tears)* composed of a year's worth of newspapers bound together (Roth 1973).

Around the same time, Endre Tót placed an advertisement in the *Bergdorfer Tagblatt* (Bergdorf, Switzerland) composed almost entirely of 'O's in various fonts and sizes, typeset to resemble a regular advertisement – of 'nothing'. At the very bottom of the ad, Tót included his name, address, and telephone number. A similar ad appeared in the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* on 13 July 1973, in conjunction with the *Fluxshoe* exhibition at its Blackburn, England venue. In addition to his 'nothing' series, Tót produced another ad series,

• Endre Tót. *I Am Glad if I Can Insert an Advertisement*, 1976. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Brian T. Rodgers

I am glad if. . . One such work appears in the 14 September 1976 edition of *PZC* (Middelburg, Holland). The ad simply reads 'I am glad if I can insert an advertisement'. Tót continued this series in a variety of different advertising media. His *TÓTalJOYS* (1979) documents various incarnations: the artist holding a sign that says 'I am glad if I can hold this in my hand'; posters on walls that read 'I am glad if I can advertise on posters'; and an

electronic billboard in Berlin that reads 'I am glad I can advertise on electric billboard' (Tót 1979: np).

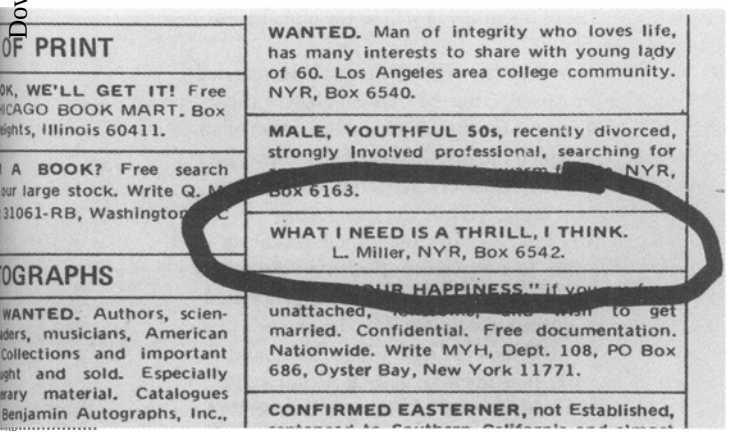
Fluxus artist Larry Miller placed an advertisement in the 'Classified' section of the *New York Review of Books* in October 1973: 'What I need is a thrill, I think. L. Miller, NYR, Box 6542'. An interactive piece, the letters of response completed the work. While *Thrill* yielded written replies, Miller's attempt to extend the advertising event format into real time met with less success. The following year, Miller placed another ad in the *New York Review*, this one reading 'Alloy. I need assistance in making a 4-dimensional art-object. Anyone interested can meet me at the 23rd Street point of the Flatiron Bldg, under "ASTRA" at 1:00 PM, Sept. 14, 21, or 28. Larry Miller' (see Miller 1986). Having placed the ad twice, once in June and again in September, Miller waited at the appointed hour a total of six times, yet received no approaches.

In the 1980s and increasingly in the 1990s, arts councils and public art concerns began to organize curated exhibitions in various types of advertising spaces, ranging from billboards and print ads in newspapers and magazines to short-format works for television.[12] And while representing an important shift from the *direct* interventions of artists that characterized *early* works in the genre, they still seemed to operate outside the conventional institutions of art.

One such project was organized by Vienna's museum in progress in 1994–5. Called *Vital Use*, and produced in the pages of *Der Standard* (Vienna), a daily newspaper, Yoko Ono and John Lennon's *War Is Over!* was among the projects it presented [see http: //mip.at/en/projeckte/15-content.html]. Interestingly, the page appears much as it did when Ono and Lennon ran it in the *New York Times* on 21 December 1969 as part of their original *War Is Over!* campaign, realized, of course, without institutional backing of any kind. The museum in progress also presented a newspaper piece by Dieter Roth: 'A Lifetime of 61 Years', a 'do-it-yourself novel' translated in 1995/6 for the museum in progress according to a recipe by Roth. The series of ad placements, inserted between August 1995 and March 1996, were continuing extracts from his do-it-yourself novel, *A Lifetime of 50 Years* from 1990. According to the artist's instructions, underlined words from his 1990 text were replaced by film titles or titles of TV programs that appeared on the same page [see http://mip.at/en/werke/221.html]. The museum in progress continues to produce such advertising interventions, typically with the sponsorship of the various media outlets in which the interventions appear. (A Dan Graham work appeared in the series in 1995.)

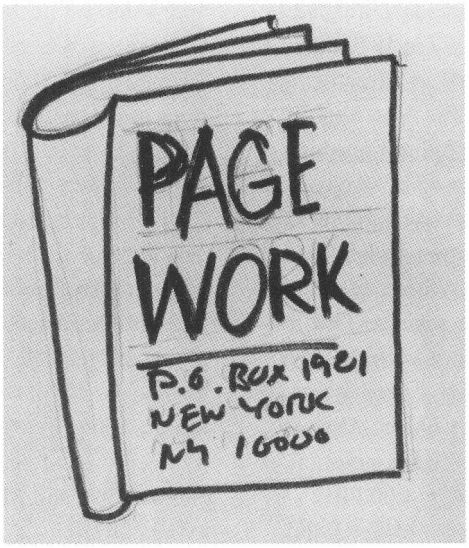
The curated series of interventions, interestingly, seems to have a Flux-related precedent itself. Davi Det Hompson, in collaboration with Billy Apple and Clive Phillpot, developed such a scheme in 1981. The plan, originally known as *Bound Space*, and later retitled *Page Work*, projected the purchase of space in such newspapers and magazines as *Christianity Today*, *Kiwanis Monthly*, *Soldier of Fortune*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*, to be offered to artists for pageworks. Hompson even developed a logo for the project. The plan depended upon the support of subscribers who would receive notifications of upcoming placements for their membership fees. Additional funding would be raised through the sale of archivally boxed collections of uncirculated copies of the original magazines. Bibliographic and editorial notation would also be included (Det Hompson 1981).

• Larry Miller. *Thrill*, 1973. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Brian T. Rodgers



From the guerilla interventions of artists in and around Fluxus seeking to escape the constricted spaces of the gallery, advertising intervention has been adopted as a strategy of public art favored by non-museum curatorial concerns – and ultimately recuperated by the museum itself.

Early last year, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art launched their '2001 Brand Awareness Campaign', developed for MOCA by mega-advertising agency Chiat Day. As MOCA director Jeremey Strick told National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, 'In a way, the campaign is MOCA labels L.A' (Bowers 2001). Sixty site-specific billboards throughout the city provide museum labels for a variety of everyday places and situations. A billboard above a strip club, for example, offers 'Nudes, 2001. Bodies, dimensions variable'. It is 'on loan' from MOCA. What museum officials cite as an extension of the 'art into life aesthetic', however, a local weekly publication refers to as 'second-rate '60s conceptual art'.[13] It seems, in fact, though, that 'recuperated Fluxart' would be a more appropriate slander. But perhaps such dubious honors are best left unclaimed.



• Davi Det Hompson. Logo design for *Page Work*, 1981. Courtesy Nancy K. Thompson for the Estate of Davi Det Hompson. Photo: Brian T. Rodgers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Research for this project has been funded in part by a Mary Schiller Myers Faculty Research Grant from the Myers School of Art, University of Akron.

NOTES

1 Patrick Mimran, personal communication with the author, 29 January 2002.

2 Donna De Salvo dates the creation of the Robin Gallery to 1961, the date she assigns to Johnson's first mailed announcements for the gallery (see Donna De Salvo 1999: 21–2).

3 In my own research, I have thus far found no Robin Gallery announcements postmarked earlier than 1964.

4 William S. Wilson, personal communication with the author, 2 February 2000.

5 The Woodpecker Gallery appears soon after the Robin's demise. A society column notes that Johnson 'an artist with the Woodpecker Galleries, New York City, visited artist May Wilson . . .'. See Brenda Cooper, 'Tilghman Social News', *Star-Democrat* (Easton, Maryland), 6 October 1965. The item was apparently submitted by William S. Wilson. The Oriole Gallery was apparently 'established' in 1968. A letter from Johnson to William S. Wilson, dated 18 July 1968, begins: 'The Robin-Woodpecker is now the *Oriole Gallery*'. Courtesy William S. Wilson Archive, New York.

6 Bourdon (1965: 14). William S. Wilson, in conversation with the author, speculates that it is likely that Bourdon himself placed the ad.

7 Correspondence between Bourdon and May Wilson in the William S. Wilson Archives, New York.

8 An error in the paste-up of the ad resulted in the transposition of the first and second lines, so that the ad actually reads 'material to order, $3\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2''$ to 40×24, about $250 circle events on leather, silk, glass, canvas, or other'. This error was corrected in the next month's ad.

9 The listing actually offered an 'address' of 'PO Box NY 10025', confusing the city and zip code with the post office box number, which was not provided. The typesetter – or perhaps the copyeditor – mistook the gallery name for 'Israel', which is how it was cited in the chronological list of openings as well as the alphabetical listing of galleries.

10 In 1966, Tony Cox (to whom Ono was then married) distributed a 'Prospectus' for the 'Is-Real Gallery Incorporated' with a budget for the rental and operation of an actual gallery in which the installation of *The Stone*, first presented at the Judson Gallery in March 1966, was to have a 'permanent home'. While the prospectus promised an early June opening, the project was never brought to fruition. In a conversation with the author on 28 April 1999, Ono stated that Cox simply appropriated the name for an unrelated venture. The document's past-tense reference to the Judson Gallery installation and promise of an early June opening place it within a two-month period between the end of March and the end of

May, 1966 – at least one year after the IsReal ads were placed in the *New York Arts Calendar*. A copy of this document is held in the Jean Brown Archives at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

11 In a personal communication with the author on 1 March 1999 Graham stated that he was unaware of Ono's ads.

12 For billboard exhibitions see the chronology in *Billboard: Art on the Road*. The earliest example appears to be 1979, but earlier public projects documented in the book's chronology include billboards, among other media. An example of a television project is *Do It TV*, organized by Vienna's museum in progress and broadcast on Austrian national television (ORF) between December 1995 and March 1996. For details, see their web site [*http://mip.at/en/projekte/15-content.html* (accessed 18 March 2001)].

13 For the 'art into life' analogy, see Strick quoted in Jeannine Stein's 'In So Many Words', *Los Angeles Times*, 4 January 2001, p. E-2. The critical comments are in Doug Harvey, 'Art & Commerce: At an Intersection Near You', *LA Weekly*, 19–25 January 2001.

REFERENCES

Bourdon, David (1965) 'Art: The Robin Gallery', *Village Voice* (New York), 8 April.

Bowers, Andy (2001) 'L.A. Billboards', *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio, 6 February (6 mins).

Conzen, Ina (2000) *Dieter Roth: Die Haut der Welt*, Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.

De Salvo, Donna (1999) 'Correspondences', in D. De Salvo and Catherine Gudis (eds) *Ray Johnson: Correspondences*, exh. cat., Columbus, OH: Wexner Center for the Arts, pp. 21–2.

Det Hompson, Davi (1981) 'Bound Space' (unpublished manuscript), Richmond, Virginia. Courtesy Nancy K. Thompson for the estate of Davi Det Hompson.

Glueck, Grace (1966) 'Art Notes: Keeper of the Turners', *New York Times*, 20 March, p. 22.

Goldstein, Ann (1984) 'Dieter Roth', in *Dieter Roth*, exhibition catalogue, Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art.

Hendricks, Geoffrey (1966a) 'Sky Billboard' (artist's statement). Courtesy of Geoffrey Hendricks.

—— (1966b) 'Sky/Why?', *Renewal Magazine* (Chicago), May–June.

Heon, Laura Steward, et al. (eds) (1999) *Billboard: Art on the Road: A Retrospective Exhibition of Artists' Billboards of the Last 30 Years*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Meyer, James (2001) 'Dale McConathy and the Neo-Avant-Garde: The Mirror of Fashion', *Artforum* 39(9) May.

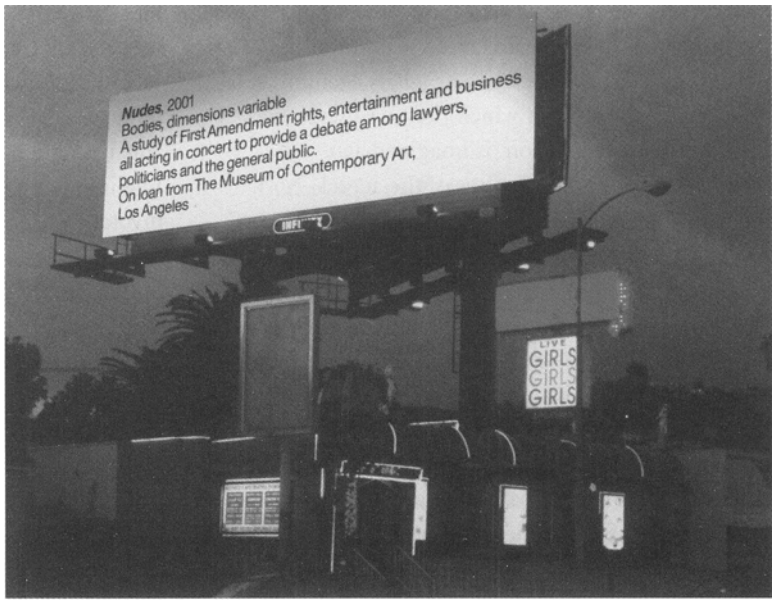
Miller, Larry (1986) '"Thrill" and "Alloy"', in *As If the Universe Were an Object: Larry Miller Selected Works 1969–1985*, exhibition catalogue, Richmond, VA: Anderson Gallery.

Rorimer, Anne (1999) 'Siting the Page: Exhibiting Works in Publications – Some Examples of Conceptual Art in the USA', in Michael Newman and Jon Bird (eds) *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, London: Reaktion Books.

Roth, Dieter (1973) *Der Tränensee (The Lake of Tears)*, Reykjavik: Dieter Roth (edition of 150 numbered and signed copies).

Tót, Endre (1979) *TÓTalJOYS*, Berlin: DAAD.

Wilson, William (1966) 'NY correspondance [sic] school', *Art and Artists* 1(1) April.



• ***Nudes*, from the '2001 Brand Awareness Campaign', Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, 2001. Courtesy Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art**

Fluxus Periodicals

Constructing a Conceptual Country

Stephen Perkins

PASSPORT: The Minister for Fluxfests requests all those whom it may concern to allow the bearer to pass freely and without hindrance and, in case of need, to afford him or her every possible aid and protection.
(Ken Friedman and George Maciunas)[1]

Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* (1991) offers a richly textured accounting of the historical forces that cohere in the production of a culturally shared sense of nationality and 'nationness' across different groups of peoples. Central to his thesis is a definition of nation as 'an imagined political community', whose sovereign status is summoned into being through the discursive effects of nationalism (1991: 6). He resists distinguishing between different historical nations and states that, 'In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.' He observes that a nation 'is imagined as a *community*, because regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship' (1991: 7).

Anderson's book is concerned with examining this double articulation of community and nation across a number of different countries, as well as locating an array of historical concepts and institutions that coalesced to construct these imagined communities. He pays particular attention to the effects of the 15th-century revolution in print and how a new conception of imagining community (through time and simultaneity) was ushered in with the advent of the newspaper which 'provided the technical means for "re-presenting" the *kind* of imagined community that is a nation' (1991: 25).[2] Anderson locates the significance of the newspaper as lying in the simultaneity of its reader's consumption with the 'thousands (or millions) of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion' (1991: 31). The reader thus produces out of the newspaper's juxtaposed events, both an imagined internal linkage between its contents and a simultaneously imagined community forged through its reception.

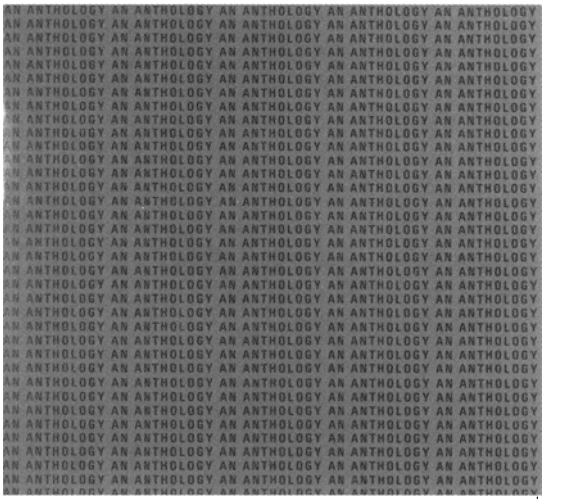
The significance that Anderson attaches to newspapers (indeed print culture in general) in the construction of imagined communities offers what I believe is a particularly useful *entrée* into the pivotal role that periodicals played in the creation of the Fluxus community. One essential difference in the communities that form the core of Anderson's book, and the Fluxus community, is that he deals with geographically and nationally bounded groups of peoples, whereas Fluxus, from its very inception, was a community forged within a spirit of internationalism and beholden to no specific geographic locale. It is from this strategy of trans-nationalism that I shall be asserting the primacy of Fluxus periodicals in shaping this

Performance Research 7(3), pp.64-76 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

community of artists into an imagined conceptual country.[3]

The formative stages and early history of Fluxus are inextricably connected to the production of periodicals. George Maciunas, Fluxus' Lithuanian impresario and energetic organizer, conceived of the name 'Fluxus' in October 1960 while discussing with a group of fellow Lithuanian immigrants the feasibility of forming a Lithuanian Cultural Club. As their discussions developed over the evening they decided to publish a magazine instead. It was at this point that Maciunas proposed the name Fluxus (Mats 1979: np).[4] Neither the group nor the magazine would come to fruition, but Maciunas would collaborate with one of the participants of that evening (Almus Salcius) in the creation of the short-lived AG Gallery (1960–1).[5] While Salcius principally coordinated the visual art, Maciunas organized a series of literary and performing events that varied from medieval music to contemporary avant-garde works, most notably in the series *Musica Antiqua et Nova* (March–July 1961). Maciunas' initial interest in music had been in early music, but his participation in Richard Maxfield's composition class at the New School for Social Research at this time had introduced him to La Monte Young and a circle of experimental New York composers. It was during this time period, and on the occasion when he was photographing both La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low for a publicity shot for an AG Gallery event, that Maciunas was made aware of the failed *Beatitude East* project. It is at this pivotal moment that Maciunas' graphic design skills and interest in publishing intersect with his promotion of, and involvement with, experimental music and literature.[6] As I have recounted elsewhere, Maciunas would volunteer to design what became known as *An Anthology*.[7] Soon after completing this task in September 1961, he moved abruptly to Germany where he secured a job as a graphic designer at the US Air Force Base in Wiesbaden.

Once Maciunas was in Germany he began in earnest to realize his plan to publish a magazine called Fluxus. The immediate impetus to do this



• ***An Anthology*** **(front cover, 1963) edited by Jackson Mac Low and La Monte Young, designed by George Maciunas**

had been his desire to publish a second *Anthology*, but La Monte Young was not interested in publishing a second issue. As a result of this refusal Maciunas began to conceptualize the format of what would become *Fluxus 1*. In an interview with Larry Miller in 1978 he remarked:

> So the initial plan was just to do another, like a second Anthology book except graphically it would have been a little more, uh, less conventional than the first one, which means it would have had objects and you know, a different kind of packaging. So really then the whole idea germinated to use the whole book as bound envelopes with objects in the envelopes.
>
> (Hendricks 1983a: 15)

In the early part of 1962 Maciunas instigated the publication of Fluxus Newsletters as a means through which he could centralize the coordination and preparation of submissions from his ever widening circle of contacts amongst American and European artists. In one of the first Newsletters, published sometime before June 1962, he further outlined the format that he envisaged *Fluxus 1* would take. In order to accommodate the wide variety of intermedial works that he was cajoling from potential contributors he declared that he had:

> decided to utilize instead of covers a flat box to contain the contents so as to permit inclusion of many loose items: records, films, 'poor man's films-flip books', 'original art', metal, plastic, wood objects, scraps of paper, clippings, junk, raggs [sic].
>
> (1983a: 140)

In this same Newsletter he outlines for the first time his plans to publish a series of seven periodicals which he describes as 'Fluxus-Yearbook-Boxes', later shortened to 'Flux Year Boxes'. The first four of these planned issues were to be devoted to showcasing works from particular countries (US, Germany, France and Japan respectively), the fifth was to be a 'special issue', the sixth would combine works from Italy, England, and Spain, and the final issue would feature works from Eastern Europe. Coordinated by co-editors from each country these proposed publications clearly embody the internationalism that was so central in Maciunas' construction of the Fluxus community.

In two documents written between December 1962 and January 1963, Maciunas briefly describes his conception of what these publications constitute. In a letter to the German artist Tomas Schmit he writes 'fluxus should be more of an encyclopedia than . . . a review, bulletin or even a periodical' (Hendricks 1983b: 157). In *Fluxus Newsletter #5* (January 1963), he further reiterates the didactic function of these periodicals when he describes them as having 'an encyclopedic-anthological character' (1983a: 155).[8] While Maciunas would initially describe *Fluxus 1* as a magazine, he would later desist from describing his planned publications as periodicals. I would argue, however, that they fall squarely within the arena of periodical publishing.[9] Maciunas' numbering and chronological sequencing of the proposed Fluxus Year Boxes imposes a periodicity on these publications that distinguishes them from all other printed publications (with the exception of newspapers and newsletters) and is the hallmark of the conventionally defined periodical. The most obvious feature that distinguishes his proposed publications from traditional periodicals is his call for two- and three-dimensional objects to be included in the final publication. This expansion of the conventional codex format of the periodical and the unbound structure he proposes, marks Maciunas' signature achievement in the development of artists' periodicals as sites capable of embracing the two- and three-dimensional intermedial works so characteristic of this period. Despite the elasticity of this conception of a periodical and its location at the interstices of the book, anthology, almanac and yearbook, his proposals nevertheless illustrate the original etymological origins of the periodical as a 'storehouse or repository for goods or merchandise; a warehouse or depot . . . a portable receptacle . . . a place in which gunpowder and other explosives are stored in large quantities; a powder magazine' (OED 1989: 182).[10]

In the same Newsletter in which Maciunas outlines his plans for the seven Fluxus Year Boxes, he includes a five-page section devoted to a 'Tentative Programme for the Festival of Very New Music'. While, at one level, this can be seen as a continuation of his interest in and promotion of new music at the AG Gallery in New York, the motivating factor is directly connected to his planned periodical publications. Maciunas would later recount that because of the slow process of assembling *Fluxus 1*:

> we thought, well, we'll do concerts, that's easier than publishing and will give us propaganda like for the publication . . . the idea was to do concerts as a promotional trick for selling whatever we were going to publish or produce.
>
> (Hendricks 1983a: 15)

The first Fluxus festival took place in the Stätdtischen Museum in Wiesbaden, titled 'Fluxus Internationale Festspiele Neuester Musik', and would be the first of 14 concerts that were presented from 6 to 23 September 1962.[11] The festival was a popular success with the bemused German public and it garnered a high degree of notoriety as well as extensive newspaper and television coverage for the artists, whom the media were now calling 'die Fluxus Leute' [the Fluxus people]. This unexpectedly high public profile was

to have important consequences and illustrate Benedict Anderson's observations on the role of newspapers (I would include television also) in the formation of the Fluxus community. This loose international group of like-minded artists who, prior to this festival, had been bound by no formal group affiliation suddenly found themselves constituted as a group (die Fluxus Leute) from outside of themselves. Alison Knowles, an American participant, comments on this unexpected situation:

> We were, so to speak, brought together from the outside . . . You can't imagine what disparate people we were. We were not a homogenous group, nor were we seasoned performers. . . .
>
> (Milman 1992: 98)

Faced with their hectic schedule of concerts they were forced to consider for the first time the meaning of the word Fluxus and the need to forge amongst themselves a group identity, as well as a common public front. Dick Higgins, another American participant, has written about the discussions that ensued over the month of the festival. He writes that Maciunas proposed a manifesto, but that no one would sign it for 'we did not want to confine tomorrow's possibilities by what we thought today' (Higgins 1991: 28).[12] Higgins addresses their primary concerns when he writes, 'If we were to be identified publicly, as a group, should we become one? What did we have in common?' (1991: 29). He continues in his article to write about the attraction to the discussants of the concept of a 'collective' and that Fluxus was not a movement but a position that was best summarized as a '*flux*attitude', a strategy that allowed for change and new members, and stayed true to the etymological origins of the word Fluxus. But, perhaps most pertinently, he concludes this summary of Fluxus' early history by stating: 'It was thought of as something which could exist parallel to other developments . . .' (1991: 30).

While Higgins's statement most clearly defines Fluxus in relation to other art movements it also implicitly suggests a separate terrain, a 'parallel' statehood, that is highly suggestive of the idea of an imagined conceptual country. A number of Fluxus works, including Ken Friedman's and Maciunas' collaborative *Visa TouRistE (Passport to the State of Flux*, 1966/7), Robert Watts's postage stamps *Fluxpost* (1964), and both Friedman's and Ben Vautier's cancellation stamps (1967), all embody the conventional bureaucratic imprimatur of nationhood and support the shared concept of a distinct sovereign nation, imagined and summoned into being by the community's participants.[13] Ken Friedman articulates a similar viewpoint in a discussion addressing Robert Watts's pioneering development of artists' postage stamps:

> they were stamps for something that did exist. Even though Fluxus was not a nation, it was an existing reality, a forum, a community of colleagues and friends from around the world.
>
> (Laszlo 1994: 217)

By the Fall of 1963 Maciunas had returned to New York, but it was not until March 1964 that he officially announced *Fluxus 1* as being available for

• ***FLUXPOST 17–17*** **(1965), Robert Watts, detail**

sale.[14] Once again the piecemeal approach to printing the varied works, and Maciunas' involvement with other Fluxus publishing and performing events, delayed the assembling of the assorted works into the final publication. In a 1963 letter to Robert Watts, Maciunas comments upon the difficulties encountered by his German printer with the unconventional nature of the works to be produced: '*Fluxus 1*, still at printer & printer getting very confused with dozen different kind of papers, page sizes, shapes, loose cards, sheets, foldouts . . .' (Hendricks 1988: 108).

In Maciunas' original 1962 prospectus for the seven Fluxus Year Boxes, the first issue was to be devoted to artists from the United States, and like many of his overly optimistic publishing plans the reality did not match the final product. Of the 22 artists listed in the announcement of its availability, the majority were indeed from the United States, but a smattering of artists from Japan, Korea, Germany and France were featured, as were reproductions of works by Congo, a chimpanzee at the London Zoo. *Fluxus 1* was announced as an 'anthology of yet unpublished works' and presented in a 'loose leaf binding (nonperiodically renewable), with objects in wood box $6'.[15] *Fluxus 1* presented a startling challenge, both visually and conceptually, to the traditional periodical format. Packed in a box (which also served as its mailing container), the title was burnished or stencilled into the front. Inside, the publication comprised manilla envelopes containing printed works and objects, interspersed with printed pages. The periodical was bound with a series of three rivets that constituted the spine, and spilling out of the back was an accordion sheet with Maciunas' trademark typographic monograms of the contributing artists.[16]

Ungainly and bulky, *Fluxus 1* immediately forces upon the viewer an interactive and performative role in opening the envelopes and retrieving the contents, and the concomitant engagement with assorted scores, event pieces, documentation, concrete poetry, relics and objects. Many of the dated works are from the same time period as the works in *An Anthology* (1961–2) and parallel that publication's presentation of scores, texts and event pieces which foreground everyday actions and experiences. What distinguishes this publication from *An Anthology* is the inclusion of three-dimensional multiples within the envelopes, and it is this feature that extends the parameters (both literally and figuratively) of what had traditionally constituted the format of the periodical.[17]

A sampling of the works in the envelopes includes Yoko Ono's 'Self-Portrait' which contains a polished steel mirror, Joe Jones's '(A) Favorite Song' is a used music-typewriter ribbon; Ay-O's 'Finger Envelope' reveals a stocking; Alison Knowles's '(A) Glove For (to be Worn While) Examining' is a single latex glove; and Ben Vautier's bolted and sealed 'Mystery Envelope' contains an object that can only be felt. Other three-dimensional multiples in a similar vein are Shigeko Kubota's table napkin 'Napkin for Next Supper', Jackson Mac Low's 51 cards to be used for performing 'Letters for Iris Numbers for Silence'; Benjamin Patterson's eight-piece jigsaw puzzle 'Please answer this question carefully', and Chieko (Mieko) Shiomi's 'Shadow Piece II' inserted within a small envelope inside a series of six others.[18]

Assuming the role of performer, the 'reader' is situated as the subject whose actions animate the objects and produce meaning. Kristine Stiles in writing about Fluxus performances offers useful insights into the performative nature of *Fluxus 1:*

> Fluxus performances require both performers and viewers to consider the function of thought in the ways in which the body interacts with things: they draw attention to the behavioral processes that relate thinking and doing, and compel both performers and viewers to confront and then, perhaps, revise conditions of being. Such revisions – the results of the reconfiguration of common bodily actions – may give rise to alternative procedures and patterns for the reconstruction of thought. . . . Fluxus performances must be contemplated within a wider structure of social and collective practices.
>
> (Stiles 1993: 65)

Maciunas in a 1964 letter to the German artist Tomas Schmit (the same year that *Fluxus 1* was finally assembled) confirms Stiles's observations about the underlying thrust of Fluxus' intentions when he writes that:

> Fluxus objects are social (not aesthetic) . . . Fluxus is definitely against art-object as non-functional commodity – to be sold & make livelihood for an artist . . . and furthermore that Fluxus works . . . could temporarily have the pedagocical [sic] function of teaching people the needlessness of art including the eventual needlessness of art itself . . . [they are] at best transitional (a few years) & temporary until such time when fine art can be totally eliminated (or at least its institutional forms) and artists find other employment.
>
> (Hendricks 1983a: 166)

While the vast majority of Fluxus artists did not accept Maciunas' overtly political program they did subscribe to a model of collective activity that foregrounded the social and collective in the re-constitution of lived experience. Viewed from this perspective the works, in particular the objects, offered the possibility of initiating experiences that allowed the participants to cross over the threshold into the particular Fluxus 'way of doing things' (1983a: 26). *Fluxus 1* can be considered as a primer, an instructional manual, which offered an entrance into the conceptual country that was being constructed in the communal imagination of this international collective.

By late 1967 and early 1968 Maciunas had completed the second of the planned Year Boxes, *Flux Year Box 2*. In his original prospectus for the Yearbox series this issue had been planned as a German issue, but in a fashion similar to that of *Fluxus 1* it had transmuted into an anthology of works from a broad spectrum of international artists. Presented in a box with the title silkscreened on the lid, it opened up to reveal five compartments which contained an assortment of event pieces, fluxkits,[19] objects and film loops (including a small plastic viewer). Originally intended to be produced in an edition of 100, production ceased when the small plastic viewers for the film loops became unavailable.[20] Aside from the film loops, the contents of each issue varied considerably. Maciunas described his plans for the *Flux Year Box 2* in a letter to Ben Vautier and distinguished it from *Fluxus 1* in that it would be 'a box . . . with various small items in it, like flip-books (movies) bottles, small games – all kinds of loose items, a kind of *GAME BOX*' (Hendricks 1983b: 169). Like *Fluxus 1*, this publication offered the viewer a performatic experience across a wide range of media, and a significantly more substantial collection of three-dimensional objects (fluxkits, plastic fruit and film loops).[21]

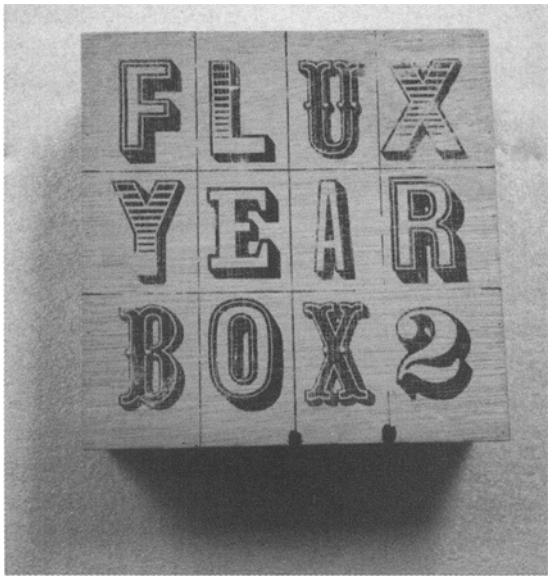
Flux Year Box 2 marks a decisive break with the codex format of the periodical, its unbound form initiates a rupture with the conventional ontological sequencing of the periodicals' pages in favor of an experience of simultaneity. No longer a discrete unit contained between covers, it spills out, and in doing so approaches the original fullness of its etymological origins as a 'repository' and a 'portable receptacle' (OED 1989: 182). In its dissolving of boundaries between inside and outside (and reader/performer) *Flux Year Box 2* mirrors what Allan Kaprow articulated as one of the key features in Jackson Pollock's break with modernism, in that his paintings 'ceased to become paintings and became *environments*'. And further, in Pollock's break with the deep space of Renaissance illusionism the painting (periodical) 'is continued on out into the room' to be experienced as a 'group of *concrete facts*' (Kaprow 1958: 56). This merging of the contents of *Flux Year Box 2* with the surrounding environment links also to another feature of the everyday that Maciunas consciously incorporated into the heart of the Fluxus project, namely humor.

Maciunas' characterization of this Year Box as a 'Game Box' with its corollaries of amusement, entertainment and humor is a central feature in Fluxus' critique of high art, as well as a strategy that invokes interaction based upon play. In a 1965 manifesto constrasting the attitudes and rarefied status of 'art' with what he called 'Fluxus Art-Amusement' he outlines the potentially

subversive power of humor in his concept of art-amusement:

> art-amusement must be simple, amusing, unpretentious, concerned with insignificance, require no skill or countless rehearsals, have no commodity or institutional value. The value of art-amusement must be lowered by making it unlimited, mass produced, obtainable by all and eventually produced by all. Fluxus art-amusement is the rear-guard without any pretention or urge to participate in the competition of 'one-upmanship' with the avant-garde . . . It is the fusion of Spike Jones, Vaudeville, gag, children's games and Duchamp.
>
> (Hendricks 1988: 26)

Humor permeates all levels of Fluxus activities in the same way it is part of everyday life, but it was also a serious business for Fluxus. For it was one of Fluxus' most important strategies in their quest to make their works and activities available for consumption by a larger audience. And despite Maciunas' description of Fluxus as 'sort of like a joke group. . . . In fact, I wouldn't put it in any higher class than a gag, maybe a good gag' (Hendricks 1983a: 26), a good joke can be enjoyed by many others and has the power, within a very concrete and condensed form, to challenge institutions of power in a forceful and direct manner. Fluxus' humor is one of the common threads that constituted this international community and is an integral component for providing access to this imagined conceptual country.



• *Flux Year Box 2* (1968) compiled by George Maciunas

The final publication in the Flux Year Box series *Fluxpack 3*, which Maciunas in a 1973 letter referred to as a 'Flux-magazine' (Hendricks 1983a: 234), was completed in 1975 and shipped to Gino di Maggio, the Italian publisher and gallerist, for final assembling and distribution. For unspecified reasons only very few copies were assembled and *Fluxpack 3* was never available commercially (Hendricks 1988: 127). As a result of this situation, coupled with Maciunas' involvement with other non-publishing projects, this periodical marks the end in the Flux Year Box series.

Despite the demise of this series, this issue further extends Maciunas' expansion of the periodical format. *Fluxpack 3* comprised 14 printed multiples ranging in size from an envelope to an apron and rolled into a tube that bore its title. A significantly smaller number of artists participated in this publication than the previous two, with Maciunas' own contributions constituting over half of the works.[22] The works break down into the following categories: placemats, masks, stationery, stamp sheets, wallpaper and posters. The themes of covering and enclosure provide this periodical with a thematic unity not found in the previous two. Indeed, they all illustrate in greater or lesser degrees Maciunas' concept of 'functionalism'. A trained architect, he was familiar with the concept, and *Fluxpack 3* extends this doctrine into the arena of printed matter.[23] In an interview with Larry Miller, Maciunas defined functionalism as 'when the piece you are doing has an inherent connection to the form . . .' (Hendricks 1983a: 23). Further into this interview he illustrates his definition by using two of his works in *Fluxpack 3* as examples. One work is titled 'Venus de Milo Apron' and consists of a blown-up photograph of the Venus de Milo printed onto a full-length apron. The reader/performer

who puts on this apron simultaneously becomes the embodiment of the Hellenistic ideal of beauty, as well as finding herself transported into the kitchen of everyday life. Maciunas also speaks about another work entitled 'Flux-Stationery' in which stationery with images of a foot, heat and a nude female torso are paired with envelopes that have the images of a shoe, a glove and a fur coat printed on the front. Once again Maciunas uses a functional armature to collapse two associated, but discrete, elements into a witty game of form and function. All of the works in *Fluxpack 3* serve concrete functions (placemats, masks, stamps and stationery), and it is through their insertion into these mundane activities, coupled with their incipient humor, that they offer the possibility for reframing and re-perceiving these ordinary and everyday tasks. In addition, Maciunas' use of photography in the execution of all the works in *Fluxpack 3* differentiates this publication from its predecessors. His use of a more abstracted representational system allowed him the opportunity to insert a more nuanced and subtle aspect of Fluxus' conceptual operations into the process of re-imagining the everyday.

I want now to turn my attention to two other periodicals Maciunas published during the years 1962–77. These periodicals are the *Fluxus Newsletters (1962–77)* and the *V TRE* newspaper (1964–70). While these publications are not strictly magazines according to the dictionary definition, they partake in enough aspects of the traditional periodical (anthological character of contents and periodicity) that it would be remiss not to include some discussion of them. In particular, they both played unique and individual roles in the construction of Fluxus as a conceptual country.

The approximately 48 *Fluxus Newsletters* that Maciunas published up until the year before his death provide a detailed view into the way he shaped the direction of Fluxus and how he simultaneously forged a community through his initiation of collective projects.[24] Intended for insider consumption only, they circulated as the most efficient means to transmit information amongst Fluxus' far-flung constituency.[25] The first *Newsletter* is published approximately 9 months after Maciunas arrived in Germany, and was the most efficient tool with which to coordinate the ever widening circle of collaborators for *Fluxus 1* and the artists involved in planning the Fluxus concerts of later that year. It is interesting to note that although these publications are known collectively as '*Newsletters*', the first six issues (with the exception of #5) are titled '*News-Policy-Letters*'. While these *Newsletters* do not explicitly spell out any policy, the plans of action he was initiating through them were circumscribed to a large degree by his own philosophical and cultural objectives for Fluxus. It is significant that after a particularly vocal response to his 'Proposed Propaganda Action for Nov. Fluxus in N.Y.C'. in *Newsletter 6* (April 1963), he subsequently drops the word 'policy' in the title.[26] In the next *Newsletter* 3 weeks later he adopts a conciliatory tone and reaffirms the collective decision-making 'policy' of Fluxus. He writes:

> This newsletter 6 was *not* intended as a decision, settled plan or dictate, but rather as a . . . stimulus to start a discussion . . . and an invitation for proposals. . . . The actual plan for Fluxus Festival will depend on the planning committee (after all proposals have been considered by all). . . .
>
> (Hendricks 1983a: 139)

A consistent feature of the *Newsletters* from the beginning was Maciunas' inclusion of distribution lists which detailed the individuals to whom each *Newsletter* was sent. The first list appears in *Newsletter 1* (21 May 1962, second version) and contains 49 names. Almost half these names are listed in a separate section titled 'co-editors', designating the people with whom he was actively collaborating in the organization of the planned Fluxus festivals, as well as many of the designated co-editors of the planned series of seven Flux Year Boxes. Of all the distribution lists, this *Newsletter* contains the largest listing and reflects Maciunas' prodigious networking of European experimental artists, a number of whom would constitute the loose community from which the European Fluxus

festivals, and to a lesser degree the Year Boxes, were realized. It also illustrates the importance of European artists in this early period in the construction of Fluxus.

Distribution lists would remain a consistent feature in many of the *Newsletters*, and the accumulation of names at the beginning of each *Newsletter* represents Maciunas' efforts at shaping and consolidating a community, and for each participant, affirming their inclusion within this conceptual country. Maciunas, however, was not above excluding people from Fluxus due to some perceived transgression and thus these distribution lists must also be viewed with caution as they represent his subjective pronouncement about who was in or out. A case in point was his inclusion of a mailing list with addresses in a number of later *Newsletters*. For instance the mailing list in the *Newsletter* of April 1973 consists of 179 people and is encoded to reflect the positioning of each individual within a hierarchical numbering system of 1 through 9. This system radiates out from people considered 'fluxcore', to 'pastflux, flux, allies, associates', to medium-specific ratings (events, music, dance, etc.) and finally a catch-all category of 'other'. That two of the originating members of Fluxus (Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles) are relegated to the category of 'pastflux' is just one example of Maciunas' idiosyncratic assessment of individuals at particular periods in Fluxus history, and is entirely at odds with the historical facts.

Maciunas would continue publishing the *Newsletters* until a year before his death in May 1978. Taken as a whole these *Newsletters* constitute an invaluable genealogy of proposed projects, some realized and others not, as well as charting the shifting participation of numerous artists. They also provided an intimate organizational map of how Maciunas was able to shape this loose international network of artists into collectively realizing their own particular vision of Fluxus, while at the same time collectively constituting the territory of this conceptual country.

If the Fluxus *Newsletters* are the in-house organ of Fluxus then the newspaper *V TRE* stands as the publication that presented the Fluxus community to the outside world (11 issues were published between 1963 and 1979). The first issue of *V TRE* was originally published outside of the Fluxus milieu by George Brecht in early 1963 and consisted of a single sheet printed on both sides containing texts and works by six artists, as well as images and texts selected by Brecht. The title was inspired by a faulty neon sign that Brecht had seen in New Jersey, where he was living at the time. Soon after Brecht's introduction to Maciunas 'we decided to continue the *V TRE* paper. The idea was that the title would change every issue, so you would have *Valise e TRanglE*, or whatever words you could use to get *V TRE* in there' (Brecht 1972: 30).

With the acceleration of Fluxus projects, festivals and concerts during these pivotal early years, Maciunas clearly saw that the format of a newspaper allowed for speedy dissemination and a cheap means through which to publicize Fluxus' activities. The addition of a newspaper within the evolving organizational structure of Fluxus is significant, for while *V TRE*'s contents would span the international reach of its participants it would at its heart be a community newspaper. In their broadest sense newspapers arise out of particular communities and constituencies, whether defined geographically or ideologically, or both. Maciunas' appropriation of the conventionalized cultural, and culturing, space of the newspaper gave him another opportunity to reconfigure dominant cultural abstractions within a format and design that was recognizable to everyone. The traditional heterogeneous quality of newspapers, of which the date is the central marker around which the disparate events are given their 'newsworthy' status, offered Maciunas a ready-made structure around which this community-in-motion could be fixed at regular points in time. Kristine Stiles in her article 'Between Water and Stone' discusses a number of features of Fluxus' activities that contributed to its formation as a community or voluntary association (Stiles 1993: 90–2). She also notes the many marital and relational ties between the participants, as well as the importance for the institutionalization of the

'family of Fluxus' of collectors, archivists, historians, photographers and gallerists. I would posit that the existence of the *V TRE* newspaper has to be considered also as a defining feature in the consolidation of the Fluxus community and its 'presentation of self in everyday life'.[27]

The first Fluxus *V TRE* appears in January 1964 with the title *cc V TRE* (the 'cc' indicated Brecht's continued collaboration in the publication). Planned as a monthly newspaper, its publishing schedule breaks down after the third issue in March, with a 2-month gap before the fourth issue in June.[28] Printed on white newsprint and in the same size as a traditional newspaper, these four issues contain a variety of images and texts appropriated from mass media sources as well as advertisements for Fluxus products, festivals and concerts, coupled with Fluxus scores and visual works.

The next two issues appear a year later in March and July 1965, and consist of whole pages devoted to advertising festivals and Fluxus publications, as well as documentation of Fluxus performances. Issues seven and eight appear in February and May 1966. These two issues, which include the obligatory promotion of Fluxus concerts and publications, feature a new theme in which artists' works are formatted specifically for the newspaper's pages. These artists are Yoko Ono, James Riddle, Ben Vautier and Wolf Vostell. The final issue that Maciunas was involved in publishing is number nine, which came out in the latter part of 1970 and consists entirely of photographic documentation of Fluxus festivals that took place during that year.

Two more issues of *V TRE* would be published in 1976 and 1979 (numbers ten and eleven). The former was an issue to honor Maciunas, and the latter was a posthumous 16-page tabloid with contributions from an array of Fluxus artists memorializing his life and activities.[29]

While it is unclear how many copies of each *V TRE* were printed, it is safe to assume that of all the Fluxus publications *V TRE* was published in the largest volume. Priced between 80¢ and one $1.00 and distributed to Fluxus centers across Europe, *V TRE's* widespread dissemination was another means through which Maciunas attempted to establish an alternative distribution system that would make Fluxus works available to a wider audience.

All three periodicals examined here played significant roles in establishing an international artists' network, indeed were decisive elements in sustaining the internationalism so deeply embedded in Fluxus' approach to art and life. The

• (a) | A *V TRE EXTRA* (V TRE) no. 11 (1979) edited by Geoffrey Hendricks (b) *3 newspaper events for the price of 1* (V TRE) no. 7 (1966) edited by George Maciunas (c) *Vaseline s TREet* (V TRE) no. 8 (1966) edited by George Maciunas

Flux Year Boxes offered a performative and experiental introduction to the particular Fluxus way of doing things. The Newsletters illustrate Maciunas' strategies in mobilizing and coordinating a decentralized collective of participants. And the *V TRE* newspapers presented, through documentation and promotional material for concerts and festivals, the public face of Fluxus, as well as serving as a distribution outlet for Fluxus products.

It was through Maciunas' organizing efforts and his marshaling of these three distinct publishing genres that he was able to construct a networking structure that fostered a sense of community across Fluxus' dispersed participants, while at the same time integrating and respecting regional and national characteristics. Eric Andersen, a Danish participant in Fluxus, reflects upon this new model of an international artists' network:

> Fluxus people created a new form of internationalism. . . . Before Fluxus existed you had Schools. You had Copenhagen, the Paris, the New York School and so on. You had schools located in specific geographical centers. . . . But with Fluxus it was individuals spread out all over the world. The artists never needed to move to the same city [*vis-à-vis* Dada]. . . . For the first time in history we as artists were able to stay in contact, work, exchange and develop our ideas even if we were living far from each other. For the first time an international network was built up by the artists themselves.
>
> (Sellem 1991: 61)

Andersen succinctly delineates the expansive contours of this de-nationalized territory which, in moving beyond a localized and regional definition of community, established Fluxus as a conceptual country that existed in the collective imagination of its geographically dispersed participants.

In an uncanny coincidence that takes place almost exactly 10 years after the 'official' founding of Fluxus, Yoko Ono (a long-time Fluxus artist) and John Lennon, announce a project titled 'Surrender to Peace':

> In the summer of '72 in New York City, John and I invited the press to announce the founding of a conceptual country called Nutopia. Anybody could be a citizen of this country. Citizens were automatically the country's ambassadors. The country's body was the airfield of our joint thoughts. Its constitution was our love, and its spirit, our dreams. Its flag was the white flag of surrender. A surrender to peace. We wished that one day we would take the flag to the United Nations and place it alongside the other flags as Nutopia was just another concept such as France, United States, and the Soviet Union.
>
> (Haskell and Hanhardt 1991: 113)

NOTES

1 Ken Friedman and George Maciunas, *Visa TouRistE (Passport to the State of Flux)*, 1966/77, unpaginated. This multiple was proposed by Ken Friedman in 1966 and realized by George Maciunas in 1977.

2 Parallel to his discussion of the newspaper Anderson also addresses the importance of the novel in the construction of national identity.

3 I am indebted to Estera Milman, a cultural historian who has written extensively on Fluxus, for being the initiator in framing Fluxus activities within the idea of a conceptual community/country. In her 1988 catalogue 'Fluxus and Friends', published on the occasion of an exhibition of Fluxus materials from the University of Iowa-based Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts, she writes: 'Fluxus was the coalition of an international "constellation of individuals" into a conceptual community, a country whose geography was a figment of the communal imagination, whose citizenry was transient and, by definition, cosmopolitan' (Milman 1988, np).

4 In another account of the genesis of the name Fluxus, Maciunas' mother recounts how this group 'sympathetic to communism' advertised a meeting to acquaint the Lithuanian community with the aims of this magazine. On the day of the meeting, the Lithuanian society from whom they had secured an auditorium banned them from using the hall. Leokadija Maciunas recounts: 'to them, who had fled the communists, it seemed blasphemous to hold such a meeting if it even vaguely recalled communism'. As a result of this embarrassing debacle Maciunas anglicized his name from Yurgis to George (Williams and Noël 1997: 33–4).

5 'AG' was a combination of the first letters of their two names (Mac Low 1993: 37).

6 Until the late 1960s Maciunas worked as a graphic designer to support himself as well as funding his Fluxus projects. It is interesting to note that even after the fiasco with the Lithuanian community group and their banning of the use of their auditorium, and before his commitment to design *An Anthology*, Maciunas still harbored the idea of publishing a magazine called Fluxus (see Anderson 1991: 31). In a publicity brochure advertising the *Musica Antiqua et Nova* series from 1 March to 14

May, he included the following statement: 'Entry contribution of $3 will help to publish FLUXUS magazine'. A section of this brochure is reproduced in Sohm and Szeeman (1970: np).

7 See Chapter 3, 'Post-World War II: New Materials and the Expanded Arts', in 'Artists' Periodicals & Alternative Artists' Networks: 1963–1977', Stephen Perkins, PhD dissertation in progress. School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA.

8 The etymological origins of the word encyclopedia as a 'general education course' (Med. Lat.) runs parallel to Maciunas' broader promotion of the experimental arts and in particular to what he hoped to accomplish with *Fluxus 1* and the other planned issues.

9 For example in a letter to La Monte Young, dated 7 March 1962, Maciunas writes: 'looks like magazine (FLUXUS) should look very good when it starts rolling'. Other Fluxus artists would continue to refer to *Fluxus 1* as either a magazine or book (Phillpot and Hendricks 1988: 34).

10 Interestingly, Dick Higgins in an article comparing the publishing activities of Fluxus and his Something Else Press, suggests that Maciunas' experimental and expanded periodical formats would not have come about if he had been devoted to publishing books. Higgins's reason for starting Something Else Press was his commitment to presenting experimental works in book format to a larger and more broad-based audience than Fluxus. He writes: 'The Press [Something Else Press] could not have performed its outreach if it had used the kind of experimental formats which were appropriate to Maciunas' Fluxus publications, nor could he have provided the experimental prototypes, if he had confined himself to books' (Higgins 1992: 151).

11 Maciunas had organized two pre-Fluxus concerts in June of the same year titled, respectively, 'Après John Cage' (Wuppertal) and 'Neo-Dada in der Musik' (Dusseldorf). Subsequent to this festival he would organize a number of other Fluxus festivals and concerts throughout this year and into early 1963.

12 It should be noted that although Higgins makes mention of Maciunas' proposed manifesto in September 1962, all reproductions of a 'Fluxus Manifesto' are dated 1963, and Maciunas titles it simply as 'Manifesto'. In 1965 Maciunas publishes 'Fluxmanifesto on Fluxamusement – Vaudeville-Art?' (reproduced in Hendricks 1988: 131). It is possible that Higgins was referring to what has been described as a draft of an 'essay/manifesto' by Maciunas that was read at the Fluxus concert 'Après John Cage' in Wuppertal (9 June 1962), titled 'Neo-Dada in Music, Theater, Poetry, Art' (Phillpot and Hendricks 1988: 34).

13 Estera Milman, in her interview with Alison Knowles (see Milman 1992: 99), relates to her how this initial insight into considering Fluxus as a conceptual country was prompted by encountering not only Friedman's and Maciunas' *Visa TouRistE (Passport to the State of Flux)*, but also by Nam June Paik's *Fluxus Island in a Décollage Ocean* (1966), and Chieko Shiomi's *Spatial Poem/Fluxatlas* (1966). Knowles replied, 'That's absolutely right. The world of Fluxus did exist somewhere, you know, a world of fluxus weather, fluxus books, fluxus people, fluxus art . . .'.

14 This announcement appears in the third issue of the Fluxus newspaper *cc Valise e TRanglE* (March 1964). Although announced as available, it is difficult with any certainty to confirm that it was available by this date. It is certain, however, that *Fluxus 1* did appear in 1964 and the US copyright registration confirms a date of 2 October 1964 (Hendricks 1988: 110).

15 In *cc Valise e TRanglE* (March 1964). The phrase 'non-periodically renewable' encapsulates the flexible manner in which Maciunas would assemble further copies of *Fluxus 1* up until his death in 1978. The initial edition of *Fluxus 1* was approximately 100 copies, and issue of further copies in new 'editions' would invariably include variations in the list of participants, depending upon the availability of older works and the vicissitudes of Maciunas' relationships with members of the Fluxus community. For instance, although Maciunas lists Alan Kaprow as appearing in this early edition, his work was withdrawn after Kaprow had criticized Fluxus as being 'irresponsible'. This pattern of inclusion and exclusion as well as the discovery of new Fluxus artists would determine the assorted constellations of individuals, and varieties of works, that would be included during its 14-year publishing history. The artists listed in *Fluxus 1* were: Ay-O, George Brecht, Congo, Philip Corner, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Allan Kaprow, Alison Knowles, Takehisa Kosugi, Gyorgi Ligeti, Bob Morris, Robert Filliou, George Maciunas, Jackson Mac Low, Tomas Schmit, Chieko Shiomi, Ben Patterson, Nam June Paik, Ben Vautier, Robert Watts, Emmett Williams, La Monte Young.

16 Barbara Moore, in her booklet *Fluxus 1: A History of the Edition* (1984), comments upon the similarities of this binding technique with the catalogue produced by the Italian Futurist Fortunato Depero, entitled 'Depero Futurista' (1927), which utilized nuts, bolts and cotter pins to bind this publication. She suggests, however, that Maciunas was probably unaware of this publication during preparations for the publication of *Fluxus 1*.

17 Marcel Duchamp's three boxed collections of his works, produced between 1914 and 1941, constitute important predecessors to the expanded format of *Fluxus 1*. Included in this genre would also be Duchamp's foam rubber breast produced for the cover of the catalogue for the 1947 Parisian exhibition 'Le Surréalisme en 1947'. Titled ('Prière de Toucher') it exhorts the reader to participate in a similar Fluxus theme of interactivity between viewer and object.

18 The issue of *Fluxus 1* that I studied was a copy in the New York Public Library and is an edition assembled by Fluxus archivist Barbara Moore after Maciunas' death.

Dated 1984, and labelled as a ReFlux edition ('ReFluxus A Copy'), it is one of eight copies that matches a version of *Fluxus 1* assembled by Maciunas. A number of items in this copy are not vintage objects but contemporary replacements (eg. Ay-O's stocking), and a few works were recreated using vintage Maciunas stock.

19 In the *Fluxus Newsletter #5* (1 January 1963) Maciunas announced his intention to start publishing collections of particular artists' works. The first artist to cooperate in this new publishing venture was George Brecht, and his collected works were printed on cards and enclosed in a small plastic box titled *Water Yam* and issued in 1963.

20 It is unclear from the Fluxus literature how many copies of *Flux Year Box 2* were eventually published.

21 The copy of the *Flux Year Box 2* that I studied came from the ATCA Collection at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. This edition includes works by the following artists: George Brecht, John Cavanaugh, Willem de Ridder, Ken Friedman, A.M. Fine, Shigeko Kubota, F. Liberman, Claes Oldenburg, James Riddle, Bob Sheff, Ben Vautier and Robert Watts. Also included are a number of film loops (missing viewer) and two monogrammed cards by Maciunas.

22 The other contributors were; George Brecht, Geoffrey Hendricks, Ben Vautier and Robert Watts.

23 Functionalism is defined as, 'The doctrine that the function of an object should determine its design and materials' (AHD 1985: 539).

24 No one has yet been able to compile a complete listing of all the *Fluxus Newsletters* (see Hendricks 1988: 92).

25 In the first paragraph of *Newsletter 1* (c. May 1962) Maciunas records the reasons for starting the *Newsletters:* ' Due to (1) rapidly changing events, (2) increase in number of FLUXUS Yearbook and festival collaborators, (3) time consumed typing all there [sic] developments to each separately, and (4) high cost of letter postage, it is found necessary from now on to issue News-Policy-Letters printed periodically of which this will be No. 1' (Hendricks 1983a: 157).

26 Maciunas' proposal included a number of strategies for the disruption of the transportation and communication systems as well as actions aimed against cultural institutions. The reaction was swift and almost uniformly negative, with his proposals being labeled 'terroristic' (see Friedman 1998: 34–5).

27 Stiles maintains that the roles of the collectors, archivists, etc., were performed in ways analogous to Erving Goffman's arguments in his 1959 book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

28 In a letter to Tomas Schmit in January 1964, Maciunas writes 'we are printing a MONTHLY NEWSPAPER now edited by new Fluxus Council – Brecht, Dick & Alison Higgins, & myself' (Hendricks 1988: 93).

29 Number ten was coordinated by Geoffrey Hendricks who also initiated and edited the final issue.

REFERENCES

AHD (1985) *The American Heritage Dictionary*, second college edition, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Anderson, Benedict (1983/ 91) *Imagined Communities*. London & New York: Verso.

Brecht, George (1972) 'An interview with Robin Page for Carla Liss (who fell asleep)', *Art & Artists* (October).

Friedman, Ken (ed.) (1998) *The Fluxus Reader*, Chichester: Academy Editions.

Haskell, Barbara and Hanhardt, John G. (eds) (1991) *Yoko Ono: Arias and Objects*, Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books.

Hendricks, Jon (1983a) 'Transcript of Videotaped Interview with George Maciunas by Larry Miller, March 24, 1978', in *Fluxus etc., Addenda I*, New York: Ink.

—— (ed.) (1983b) *Fluxus etc./Addenda II* (exhibition catalogue), Pasadena: Baxter Art Gallery.

—— (1988) *Fluxus Codex*, New York: Harry N. Abrams.

Higgins, Dick (1991) 'Fluxus: Theory and Reception', in *Lund Art Press* 2(2): 25–50.

—— (1992) 'Two Sides of a Coin: Fluxus and Something Else press', in Estera Milman (ed.) *Visible Language* 26 (Winter/Spring): 143–53.

Kaprow, Allan (1958) 'The Legacy of Jackson Pollock', *Artnews* (September).

Laszlo, Jean-Noël (1994) 'Interview with Gyorgy Galántai and Ken Friedman', in *Timbres d'Artistes* (exhibition catalogue), Paris: Musée de la Poste.

Mac Low, Jackson (1993) 'How Maciunas Met the New York Avant Garde', *Art & Design* (28).

Mats, B. (1979) 'The Birth of Fluxus: The Ultimate Version', *Kalejdoskop* (3).

Milman, Estera (1988) *Fluxus and Friends,* Iowa City: University of Iowa Museum of Art.

—— (1992) 'Road Shows, Street Events, and Fluxus People: A Conversation with Alison Knowles', in Estera Milman (ed.) *Visible Language* 26 (Winter/Spring): 97–107.

Moore, Barbara (1984) *Fluxus 1: A History of the Edition*, New York: ReFlux Editions.

OED (1989) *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Phillpot, Clive and Hendricks, Jon (1988) '*Fluxus*' (catalogue), New York: Museum of Modern Art.

Sellem, Jean (1991) 'About Fluxus, Intermedia and So . . .; An Interview with Eric Andersen', *Lund Art Press* 2(2).

Sohm, Hanns and Szeeman, Harald (eds) (1970) *Happenings & Fluxus* (exhibition catalogue), Köln: Kölnischen Kunstverein.

Stiles, Kristine (1993) 'Between Water and Stone', in Janet Jenkins (ed.) *The Spirit of Fluxus* (exhibition catalogue), Minneapolis: Walker Art Center.

Williams, Emmett and Noël, Noel (1997) *Mr. Fluxus*, London: Thames and Hudson.

Origins of the Fluxus Score

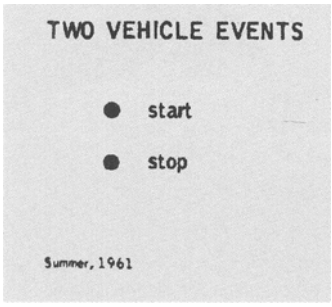
From Indeterminacy to the 'Do-It-Yourself' Artwork

Anna Dezeuze

What attracted me so much in the work of the Fluxus artists in the sixties was that they reacted against the pompous image of the artist as a genius with a unique, personal style, an image that fits perfectly to the art market and an exclusive art concept. The Fluxus artist . . . created simple pieces filled with energy and humour, pieces without any personal stylistic features, pieces that could be transmitted orally just like folklore and performed by everyone who wanted to.

(Klintberg 1991: 69)

George Brecht's *Two Vehicle Events*, which consists of two words, 'start' and 'stop', is an early example of the 'simple pieces' praised by Swedish folklore specialist and Fluxus artist Bengt af Klintberg. Known as 'event' or word scores, these pieces constitute a crucial part of Fluxus production and the group's most important contribution to the questioning of the 'artist as a genius' in 1960s art.



• George Brecht, *Two Vehicle Events*, 1961, from *Water Yam* © George Brecht

The 'energy' contained in these 'event' scores is generated by the unique relationship between performance and publication which lies at the heart of the history of Fluxus. George Maciunas coined the name 'Fluxus' to designate an international movement who would be known both through publications and concerts. The name was first publicly used during a series of performances in Europe in 1962, but while Maciunas had started to distribute brochures and newsletters, his Fluxus publications only started in earnest in 1963, becoming increasingly important as he returned to New York and published the first major collective publication, *Fluxus I* in 1964.[1] The consequence of this delay was that in Europe Fluxus was often primarily associated with performances, whereas in the United States it was better known through its editions of scores and objects.[2] Analyses of Fluxus from the performance point of view focus on interpretations of the same piece at different occasions, using concert programmes, photographs and verbal descriptions to reconstruct their order and appearance.[3] Indeed, the scores of the pieces were seldom known to the audience of the performances, who were usually given the title and the author of the piece and sometimes the name of the performer.[4] While certain Fluxus artists such as Nam June Paik usually performed their own pieces, most works could be performed by artists other than their authors; the scores in this case served as the primary material to be interpreted by any group of performers. Dick Higgins, for example, brought some of George Brecht's scores from New York to the early European concerts.

Public Fluxus performances have partially

Performance Research 7(3), pp.78-94 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

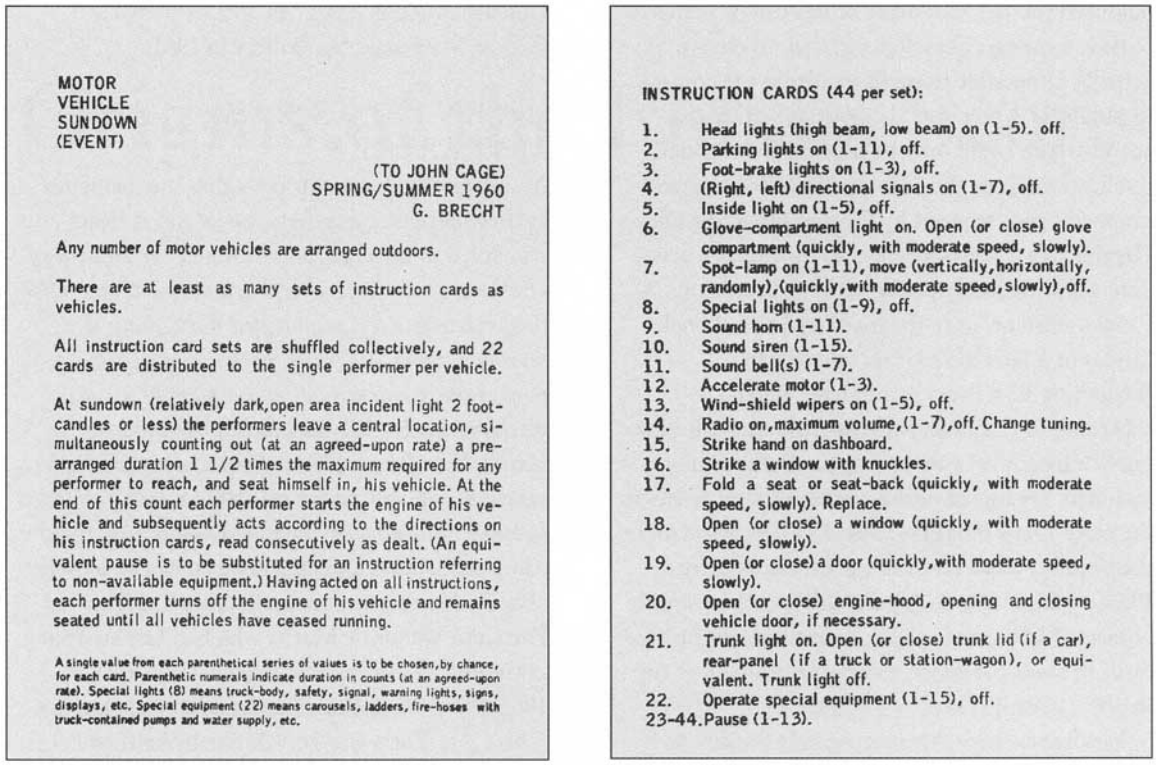
obscured the fact that many scores can be realized outside a concert situation and that others are actually impossible to perform within the context in public. It is precisely those kinds of Fluxus scores which could only be transmitted through publication, from the first typed and/or mimeographed pages sent out by George Brecht or Dick Higgins to a circle of friends, to Maciunas's newsletters and elegantly packaged boxed cards of Fluxus editions, or to the more traditional book format of Yoko Ono's *Grapefruit* and the Something Else Press pamphlets.[5] Indeed, according to Higgins, it was because they could not publish their works that many poets, himself included, organized performances of their works in the early 1960s (Higgins 1964: 29). The issue of distribution was a concern for Brecht as early as 1959, when he asked: '[s]houldn't scores be simply published in the newspaper, or available on printed cards or sheets of paper, to be sent to anyone?' (in Brecht 1959a: 135).

I shall show here that it is not only possible to study Fluxus scores independently from the ways they have been performed in Fluxus concerts, but that such a study will bring out the radical questioning of authorship and spectator participation which attracted Bengt af Klintberg and many others to Fluxus. Focusing on the period immediately preceding the creation of Fluxus as a group, I will be mapping out some points of origin for these scores, including the important role played by new forms of musical notation developed by American experimental composers John Cage, Earle Brown and Christian Wolff in the elaboration of works first produced by La Monte Young, George Brecht, Yoko Ono and Dick Higgins between 1958 and 1962.[6] Crossing the boundaries between specialized artistic categories, some Fluxus scores were also born out of experiments in concrete poetry as it 'got off the page', in Emmett Williams's words,[7] and by the task-based stage directions used in theatre and dance, in the works of Jackson Mac Low and Simone Forti, respectively. The close links between scores and visual objects will be discussed in relation to George Brecht's 1959 *Towards Events* exhibition and Yoko Ono's instruction paintings, first exhibited at George Maciunas' AG Gallery in 1961.

'EVENTS' AS RAW MATERIALS

An intriguing document embodies the dialogues between artists, composers, poets and dancers which led to the creation of Fluxus: *An Anthology of chance operations, concept art, anti-art, improvisation, indeterminacy, meaningless work, natural disasters, stories, diagrams, poetry, essays, compositions, dance constructions, music, plans of action, mathematics.* Initially assembled by composer La Monte Young for a planned issue of a periodical called *Beatitude East* from 1960 but only published in 1963, *An Anthology* included works by artists, composers, poets and dancers who can be loosely classified in four groups: artists such as Simone Forti and Walter de Maria, who had known Young in California, before he moved to New York in 1960;[8] New York-based experimental composers John Cage, Earle Brown, Christian Wolff and Richard Maxfield;[9] Cage's and Maxfield's students at the New York School of Social Research, who included Jackson Mac Low, Dick Higgins, George Brecht and Toshi Ichiyanagi, then married to Yoko Ono;[10] and three poets living in Europe, Emmett Williams, Claus Bremer and Diter Rot.[11] As is by now well known, Maciunas volunteered to design *An Anthology* as a book when the issue of *Beatitude East* was cancelled, and used it as a model to plan his first Fluxus publication.

In its title and format *An Anthology* is characterized by a blurring of the boundaries between poetry, music and dance. As each work is presented by type, in addition to its title and author, it emerges, for example, that Mac Low's and Joseph Byrd's works include both 'music' and 'poetry', while Brecht's works are listed as 'indeterminacy, music, compositions' and Higgins's as 'dance, mathematics and compositions'. This blurring was made possible by a new conception of musical composition summarized by Higgins in 1964 when he wrote that '[m]usical activity takes place in time, and . . . anything that just breaks up time by happening in



MOTOR
VEHICLE
SUNDOWN
(EVENT)

(TO JOHN CAGE)
SPRING/SUMMER 1960
G. BRECHT

Any number of motor vehicles are arranged outdoors.

There are at least as many sets of instruction cards as vehicles.

All instruction card sets are shuffled collectively, and 22 cards are distributed to the single performer per vehicle.

At sundown (relatively dark, open area incident light 2 foot-candles or less) the performers leave a central location, simultaneously counting out (at an agreed-upon rate) a pre-arranged duration 1 1/2 times the maximum required for any performer to reach, and seat himself in, his vehicle. At the end of this count each performer starts the engine of his vehicle and subsequently acts according to the directions on his instruction cards, read consecutively as dealt. (An equivalent pause is to be substituted for an instruction referring to non-available equipment.) Having acted on all instructions, each performer turns off the engine of his vehicle and remains seated until all vehicles have ceased running.

A single value from each parenthetical series of values is to be chosen, by chance, for each card. Parenthetic numerals indicate duration in counts (at an agreed-upon rate). Special lights (8) means truck-body, safety, signal, warning lights, signs, displays, etc. Special equipment (22) means carousels, ladders, fire-hoses with truck-contained pumps and water supply, etc.

INSTRUCTION CARDS (44 per set):

1. Head lights (high beam, low beam) on (1-5). off.
2. Parking lights on (1-11), off.
3. Foot-brake lights on (1-3), off.
4. (Right, left) directional signals on (1-7), off.
5. Inside light on (1-5), off.
6. Glove-compartment light on. Open (or close) glove compartment (quickly, with moderate speed, slowly).
7. Spot-lamp on (1-11), move (vertically, horizontally, randomly), (quickly, with moderate speed, slowly), off.
8. Special lights on (1-9), off.
9. Sound horn (1-11).
10. Sound siren (1-15).
11. Sound bell(s) (1-7).
12. Accelerate motor (1-3).
13. Wind-shield wipers on (1-5), off.
14. Radio on, maximum volume, (1-7), off. Change tuning.
15. Strike hand on dashboard.
16. Strike a window with knuckles.
17. Fold a seat or seat-back (quickly, with moderate speed, slowly). Replace.
18. Open (or close) a window (quickly, with moderate speed, slowly).
19. Open (or close) a door (quickly, with moderate speed, slowly).
20. Open (or close) engine-hood, opening and closing vehicle door, if necessary.
21. Trunk light on. Open (or close) trunk lid (if a car), rear-panel (if a truck or station-wagon), or equivalent. Trunk light off.
22. Operate special equipment (1-15), off.

23-44. Pause (1-13).

• George Brecht, *Motor Vehicle Sundown*, 1960, from *Water Yam* © George Brecht

it, absorbing it, is musical' (Higgins 1964: 42). For Higgins, dance, poetry and drama are only so many specific types of 'musical activities' with different emphases, whether it be bodily movement in dance or words for poetry (1964: 42). Duration was one of the five dimensions of sound which John Cage had listed in the first class in his course on experimental composition (see Brecht 1958: 3). Cage had developed musical structures based on duration rather than harmony in order to use all types of what he called 'events in sound-space' including sounds as well as silence, which has no pitch (see Brecht 1958: 4). Two 1952 pieces by Cage embody this model of a structure based on duration: the well-known *4'33"* in which a music performer is asked to remain without playing for 4 minutes and 33 seconds, signaling three distinct sections within this duration; and *Water Music* in which actions such as blowing a siren whistle, pouring water or playing the radio are juxtaposed with musical sounds according to precise durations indicated in minutes and seconds. In these pieces, Cage shifted from the metronome to the stopwatch as a means to measure duration as the framing element for the 'events' occurring within it.

According to Mac Low, this 'time-structure' was favoured by most students in Cage's class. 'The term time-structure', explains Mac Low (1980: 47), 'emphasises that the structure of such works depends on the relative durations of juxtaposed passages rather than on their contents'. This model of a fixed structure to be filled with varying contents opened the space for an extended conception of an 'event' which could include not only musical but also everyday sounds. Cage encouraged his students to use non-conventional sounds during the classes by having them play on toy instruments and compose pieces using everyday objects such as radios. The 'events' which occur in Brecht's *Motor Vehicle Sundown (Event)*, reproduced in *An Anthology*, are drawn from a repertory of activities which can be performed in a vehicle, including

EXAMPLE of reading by basic method (ASYMMETRY 147):
In version at right, silent words are printed between "/"'s. Spoken words are underlined for clarity only, not to indicate loud speech. They are spoken as at left: all moderately except "K.", which is loud or shouted. At right, some words are shifted a few spaces to the right to show how the poem is read. Other solutions are possible where words appear both above and below empty lines.

printed:	read:
	/new enjoy work.ins. K. one young/
new enjoy work.	new enjoy work./ns. K. one young/
	/new enjoy work.ins. K. one young/
	/new enjoy work.ins. K. one young/
enjoy not Jacobins.	enjoy not Jacobins./K. one young/
	/enjoy not Jacobins. K. one young/
one young	/enjoy not Jacobins. K./one young
	/enjoy not Jacobins. K. one young/
work.	work./not Jacobins. K. one young/
	/work. not Jacobins. K. one young/
one re-	/work./ one re-/ins. K. one young/
forms	/work. one re/forms/ K. one young/
K.	/work. one re-forms/K./ one young/

September 1960
30 March 1961
New York City

• Jackson Mac Low, *Methods for Reading Asymmetries*, 1960–1961 (extract), © Jackson Mac Low

turning on and off headlights, glove compartment lights, spot-lamps and trunk lights, sounding horns, opening windows or operating the windshield wipers. By using cars and placing the performance outside the conventional space of music concerts, Brecht expanded the concept of the 'event' to create a show involving visual and olfactory sensations as well.

For Higgins and Mac Low, Cage's music became a paradigm for poetry and Higgins saw himself as 'a composer who uses words' (Higgins 1993: 419). Even before attending Cage's classes Mac Low was exploring in his poems a kind of equivalent of what Cage was searching for in music, by giving silences the same weight as words.[12] In his *Asymmetries* composed from September 1960 and published in *An Anthology*, the white spaces between the words stand for silences 'equal in duration to the time it would take to read aloud the words printed anywhere above or below them' (Mac Low 1963/1970a: np). As silence becomes equal in importance to sound, the empty spaces only come to life if the poem is read out loud, and in *Thanks – A Simultaneity for People* (dated December 1960 to February 1961) and also reproduced in *An Anthology*, the poetic text is no longer given, as performers are invited to choose freely the 'utterances' which they will perform in alternation with silences of varying lengths. The instructions allow performers to select as 'utterances' not only words, phrases, syllables and phonemes but also 'non-vocal sounds', thus adding a musical dimension (Mac Low 1963/70b: np).

Simone Forti first discovered Cage's works during a dance workshop led by Cage student Robert Dunn. In the first class, Dunn gave his students a score by Cage in which pages of clear plastic with dots were to be dropped on a graph by the performer. 'Where the dots fell determined where and when the "events" were to be performed'. But, Simone Forti recalls, 'the nature of events to be performed in those time and spatial relationships was left completely up to the choice of the performer. Such an event could be the sound of a bell, it could be falling off a cliff, it could be anything' (Forti 1974: 35–36).[13] Like Cage's students, Forti thus seems to have conceived the possibilities of Cage's conception of the sound 'event' beyond those realized by the composer himself: from musical sound, the 'event' came to include 'anything', from everyday movements favoured by the dancers in Dunn's workshop to the dramatic act of 'falling off a cliff'.

CHANCE AND CHOICE

The point-drawing system used by Cage in some of his scores was one of his many methods to 'let the sounds be themselves, rather than vehicles for man-made theories, or expressions of human sentiments' (Cage 1957: 10). Two main compositional devices were used in experimental music and poetry in the 1950s to avoid choices and hierarchies on the part of the artist. The one favoured by European serial composers such as Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen was based on mathematical processes, chosen at the start of the composition and applied in a systematic way throughout (see Nyman 1974/1999). This is comparable to the processes used by Emmett Williams and Claus Bremer in their poems in *An Anthology* such as Williams's 1958 *Cellar Song for Five Voices* which is the product of the systematic permutation of five phrases (somewhere/bluebirds are flying/high in the sky/in the cellar/even blackbirds are extinct), creating over a hundred combinations. The very form of the work reflects the process by which it was created. 'The aim was to eliminate the subjective point of view of the author, and present poetic material that the reader could do with as he saw fit,' explained Daniel Spoerri about the periodical *Material*, in which he published works by Williams and Rot in the late 1950s (Williams 1967: np).

The other main means 'to eliminate the subjective point of view of the author' was to introduce random chance processes. For example, to determine the organization of sound 'events' within a time structure, Cage used to list in a chart all the 'event' materials which he wanted to use and then would throw dice in order to determine their characteristics and order, sometimes using the Chinese book of changes, the *I-Ching* (see Pritchett 1993). George Brecht's 1957 essay on 'chance imagery', written before he studied with Cage, reveals a shared interest in the use of chance

• Emmett Williams, *Cellar Song for Five Voices*, 1958 © Emmett Williams

CELLAR SONG FOR FIVE VOICES

first voice: somewhere
second voice: bluebirds are flying
third voice: high in the sky,
fourth voice: in the cellar
fifth voice: even blackbirds are extinct.

somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
somewhere bluebirds are flying in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar
somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky,
somewhere high in the sky, bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere high in the sky, bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
somewhere high in the sky, in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying in the cellar
somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar bluebirds are flying
somewhere in the cellar bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
somewhere in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct,
somewhere in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
somewhere in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky, in the cellar
somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, bluebirds are flying in the cellar
somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar bluebirds are flying
somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
bluebirds are flying somewhere high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar
bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar
bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere
bluebirds are flying in the cellar somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
bluebirds are flying in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere
bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere high in the sky, in the cellar
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere in the cellar
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere high in the sky,
bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere

high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
high in the sky, somewhere in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, somewhere in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying in the cellar
high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar
high in the sky, bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere
high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, in the cellar bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
high in the sky, in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere
high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere bluebirds are flying in the cellar
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying in the cellar somewhere
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying
high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar bluebirds are flying somewhere
in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
in the cellar somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
in the cellar somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky bluebirds are flying,
in the cellar bluebirds are flying somewhere high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct,
in the cellar bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky,
in the cellar bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
in the cellar bluebirds are flying high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere
in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere high in the sky,
in the cellar bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere
in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying even blackbirds are extinct,
in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying
in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere even blackbirds are extinct,
in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere bluebirds are flying
in the cellar high in the sky, even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere high in the sky,
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying in the cellar high in the sky,
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
in the cellar even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
even blackbirds are extinct, somewhere in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere high in the sky, in the cellar
even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar high in the sky,
even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere in the cellar
even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere
even blackbirds are extinct, bluebirds are flying in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere
even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying in the cellar
even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere in the cellar
even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, bluebirds are flying in the cellar somewhere
even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying
even blackbirds are extinct, high in the sky, in the cellar bluebirds are flying somewhere
even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere bluebirds are flying high in the sky,
even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar somewhere high in the sky, bluebirds are flying
even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar bluebirds are flying high in the sky, somewhere
even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky, somewhere bluebirds are flying
even blackbirds are extinct, in the cellar high in the sky, bluebirds are flying somewhere

techniques within creative processes and reads retrospectively like a guidebook to the compositional processes used by many other artists included in *An Anthology* (Brecht 1966). For example, Brecht suggests the technique of numbering elements and using a table of random numbers to select them – a method used by La Monte Young to determine all the compositional choices in his 1960 *Poem for Chairs, Tables, and Benches, Etc., or Other Sound Sources*, and by Mac Low to obtain the title, the number and names of the characters in his 1958–9 play *The Marrying Maiden – A Play of Changes*, as well as the words of their speeches and the way they should be delivered. In Mac Low's later *Asymmetries* the performer is invited to throw a pair of dice to select the method by which to read the poem, while the instruction cards in Brecht's *Motor Vehicle Sundown* are shuffled and dealt amongst the performers. Both cards and dice are listed by Brecht in *Chance Imagery*, along with coins, the roulette wheel, and drawing from a bowl, as random methods to be used when there is only a limited number of elements available for selection.[14]

If the use of systematic or random methods allowed composers and poets to 'eliminate the subjective point of view of the author' in order to let the sounds, words or any kind of 'events' 'be themselves', there are, however, crucial differences in the ways in which the reader/performer can relate to these 'events'. In Williams's *Cellar Song for Five Voices*, in Brecht's *Motor Vehicle Sundown* or in Mac Low's determinate *Asymmetries*, performers follow strict instructions, having been given a list of 'events' to realize in relation to specific cues, whereas Mac Low's *Thanks* for example allows performers to choose the 'events', and the moment in which they will utter them. This distinction between chance and 'choice' procedures, as Earle Brown termed them,[15] poses the question of who is given the task to choose and organize the 'events' as 'raw materials': is it the composer or the performer? However complex, Cage's compositions before 1957 involve chance procedures at the level of *composition* but allow only limited choices to the performer, while his colleagues of the 'New York School', Earle Brown, Morton Feldman and Christian Wolff, were actually much more involved in introducing indeterminate elements in the *performance* of their works, as Cage pointed out in his 1958 lecture on 'Indeterminacy' which focuses specifically on the role of the performer.

'The function of the performer or of each performer' in a piece by Earle Brown, Cage writes, 'is that of making something out of a store of raw materials' (Cage 1958: 38). From 1952 Earle Brown delineated two approaches to introducing choices for performers: firstly, 'a "mobile" score subject to physical manipulation of its components, resulting in an unknown number of different, integral, and "valid" realizations', and secondly, 'a *conceptually* "mobile" approach to basically fixed graphic elements; subject to an infinite number of performance realizations through the involvement of the performer's immediate responses to the intentionally ambiguous graphic stimuli relative to the conditions of performance' (Brown 1961a: np). Brown's *December 1952*, a one-page score reproduced in *An Anthology* consisting of vertical and horizontal segments of varying lengths and widths scattered on the page, embodies both these approaches. It is 'mobile' in its orientation because it can be read from any of the four sides of the score, and it is 'conceptually mobile' because its notation is so extremely ambiguous that the performer must decide the source, pitch, timbre and intensity of all the sounds as well as their relative durations.

The notation of Christian Wolff's 1960 *Duet I* reproduced in *An Anthology* is less ambiguous than Brown's *December 1952*, but is 'conceptually mobile' by making the players' choices dependent on each others' performances. The fragments that fill the page can be played in any order and 'what section on a page is played depends on a cue (the initial sound of the section), given by whoever starts by a section which can be started by him. The other player must immediately decide what section is being played and join in where his part requires it' (Wolff 1960: np). The molecule-like structures which constitute the fragments indicate the coordinations in the attacks and releases of the

• Earle Brown, *December 1952* (1952), from *An Anthology*. Copyright: Associated Music Publishers

sounds in a unique 'cue-answer' system, as Brecht called it in his 1958 notebook.[16]

Writing about a work of this period by Brown, Brecht expressed the range of performer-choice on a scale of what he called 'situation participation' (Brecht 1991a: 67). The scale starts from 'the magnetic tape and sound reproduction system at one end' through conventional 19th- and 20th-century scores, where there is little or no performer choice, and 'abstract scores' such as Bach's *Art of the Fugue* where the speed and instrumentation are left open. At the other end of the scale of 'situation participation' Brecht positioned folk music, blues and jazz, whose forms traditionally leave space for performer improvisation. Significantly, Brown, unlike the other American experimental composers, had a jazz background. 'I couldn't understand why classical musicians couldn't improvise, and why so many looked down on improvisation,' he recounts Brown (1996: np). The series of works including *December 1952* was, according to him, a way of 'progressively trying to get them free of having to have every little bit of information before they had confidence enough to play' (1996: np).

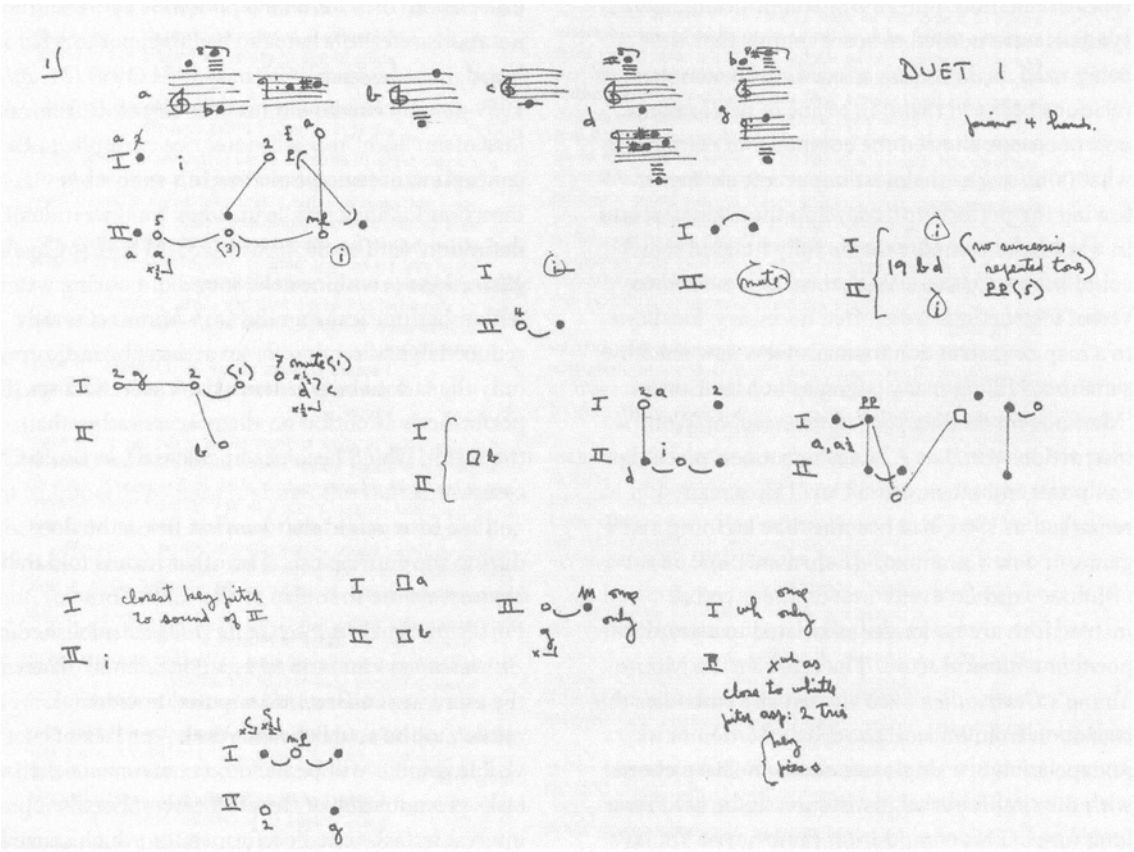
Similarly, the turn in Jackson Mac Low's work towards increased performer-choice occurred through his contact with theatre improvisation during the rehearsals for his play *The Marrying Maiden* at the Living Theatre in June 1960. Mac Low had written out action directions for the actors on about 1,400 playing cards, such as 'walk forward ten paces' or 'do something romantic' (Mac Low 1991: 275). When some actors started to use the cards to improvise scenes with each other, performing tasks independent from the actual play, it was a revelation. 'It made me realize', Mac Low recounts,

'that I could allow performers ordinary freedom of choice within a non-intentionally determined situation (one constrained by such means as chance operations and systematically random selection and/or by a score composed by such means)' (1991: 275). This new tendency, developed from December 1960 in *Thanks – A Simultaneity for People*, would in fact be 'profoundly reinforced' by Mac Low's own performance in Brown's *December 1952* at the Living Theatre in 1962 (Mac Low 1980: 43).

FROM EXPERIMENTAL NOTATION TO THE WORD SCORE

An Anthology offers many examples of experimental notation in music and poetry. In the most 'conceptually mobile' works, notation is reduced to the relation between graphic marks on an empty background which suggest 'events' to be interpreted freely within the time and space of performance. For example, composer Toshi Ichiyanagi's 1960 *Mudai no.1* consists of calligraphic paint marks without any instructions, in the same way as Diter Rot's undated poem, *White Page with Holes*, is quite literally what its title indicates. In the first edition of *An Anthology* of 1963, however, the title of the same work is given as *Black Page with Holes*, which adds another conceptual dimension to it. My thanks to Jon Hendricks for pointing this out to me. Stéphane Mallarmé's experiments with the typographical arrangement of words on the white space of the page in his 1897 *Un Coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* was an inspiration for many concrete poets such as Rot and Williams.[17] The typography of Mac Low's *Asymmetries* is similar to that of *Un Coup de dés*, while his untitled poem and Williams's

• Christian Wolff, *Duet I, (One Piano, Four Hands)* 1960 (extract) © 1962 by C. F. Peters Corporation, New York. Reproduced with permission by Peters Edition Limited, London



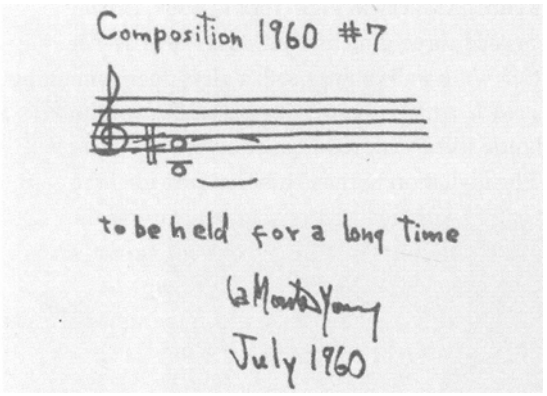
Beatitude from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, both in *An Anthology*, explore the spacing and order of typewritten signs on the page, creating visually arresting objects. In fact, without the instructions for performance in Williams's *Cellar Song for Five Voices* and Mac Low's *Asymmetries*, the visuality of the poems would predominate over their performative dimension, encouraging the reader to look at them rather than using them as scores for performance. This ambivalence was in fact already suggested in Mallarmé's *Un Coup de dés*, which the author significantly defined as a kind of musical 'score' (Mallarmé 1914: 424).

'[T]he problem of graphics . . . is not a superficial matter but a concern with how to indicate the technical complexity that is conceivable now, in terms that communicate unverbal and unhistorical intentions to a performer or a group of performers' (Brown 1963: 304). Earle Brown's explanation points to two main reasons for developing new types of notation: in terms of composition, new symbols were needed to score sounds that were being used for first time, as well as the complex relations between them; in terms of performance, new notations allowed the composer to emphasize what (s)he saw as the most important elements, leaving the performer to develop these key features in ways more complex than a fully notated score could have suggested. With these new notations, verbal instructions were often necessary, like keys to a map or instruction manuals for a new machine, sometimes filling many pages, as in Mac Low's 'Methods for reading the *Asymmetries*' or Wolff's instructions for *Duet I*. 'Learning a new piece', composer and music critic David Behrman remarked in 1965, had become 'like learning a new game, or a new grammar' (Behrman 1965: 58).

In the word or 'event' scores, these verbal instructions are no longer associated to a graphic poem or a musical score. The score for La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #7* visually embodies this transition from musical to verbal notation in its juxtaposition of a single notated B–F sharp chord with the simple verbal instruction 'to be held for a long time'. This composition came out of Young's interest in exploring the effects of prolonging sounds over long durations first developed in his *Two Sounds* of April 1960. In fact, the verbal instruction seems to have been introduced for similar reasons to those listed by Brown. Firstly, words are the most economical way to transcribe a duration which is not specified. Secondly, leaving the performer to decide what 'a long time' is emphasizes the main focus of the work as the subjectivity of temporal experience, in the same way as Earle Brown developed a new type of proportional notation to encourage performers to explore a new 'interior time sense' (Brown 1963: 304).

Similarly, Brecht's 1959–1962 *Drip Music (Drip Event)*, which simply indicates that 'a source of dripping water and an empty vessel are arranged so that the water falls into the vessel', echoes Cage's verbal instruction to the performer of his *Water Music* to 'pour water from one receptacle to another'. Instead of transcribing into notes the exact sound of water being poured, Cage '[l]et the notations refer to what is to be done, not to what is heard, or to be heard' (Nyman 1974/1999: 21–2). A 1959 note by Brecht emphasizes this shift from 'the idea of an "ideal" eighth-note', for example, to the conception of 'a notational eighth-note' as 'a direction for an action' which has 'an operational definition' (in Brecht 1959a: 123). Whereas Cage's *Water Music* combined the sound of pouring water with other musical sounds, *Drip Music* is literally reduced to a 'direction for an action': by indicating only the task to be performed, the score focuses the performer's attention on the process rather than the result, which becomes 'incidental', in Brecht's own words.[18]

'One man is told that he must lie on the floor during the entire piece. The other man is told that he must tie the first man to the wall.' Simone Forti's minimal *Instruction for a Dance* published in *An Anthology* can be seen as an 'incidental' dance in the same way as Brecht composed 'incidental music', as the actual visible result – or lack of visible result – will be the direct outcome of the tasks given to each of the performers. Forti's interest in task-based performances, which started



• La Monte Young, *Composition 1960 #7* © La Monte Young, 1963, 1970. Reproduced with permission from La Monte Young (ed), *An Anthology* (New York, 1970)

with the dance exercises developed in Ann Halprin's and Robert Dunn's workshops, was also encouraged by her participation in a 'happening' by Robert Whitman in 1960: 'it struck me that most of my actions were done not in order that the movement be seen, but so that the particular task could be accomplished,' she recalls (Forti 1974: 35). While Whitman's happenings involved many performers accomplishing unrelated tasks simultaneously, Forti focused on one or more related tasks. Indeed, as Liz Kotz has pointed out, both Brecht and Forti went through a similar process of adapting task-based exercises from their teachers – Cage, and Ann Halprin/Robert Dunn, respectively – isolating as works in themselves what were meant as preparations for more complex arrangements (Kotz 2001: 74). A comparison between the two-page-long instructions for Brecht's *Motor Vehicle Sundown* and his two-word-long *Two Vehicle Events* of Summer 1961 clearly shows the shift to single-focus word scores in Brecht's work around Spring 1961: the same 'instrument' is used in both cases, but, instead of the *mise-en-scène* with performers in motor vehicles going through a great range of 'events' simultaneously, the instructions in *Two Vehicle Events* are reduced to two nouns/verbs, 'start' and 'stop', each preceded by a bullet point, without any indication of the exact sound-source, sequence or duration. Brecht's desire for an increasing simplification of these task-based instructions is obvious in the evolution in the notation of *Drip Music* which in a 'second version' of 1962 is pared down to a single word: 'dripping'.

If, as Earle Brown explained, performer choice could only occur when information was withdrawn from the score, it certainly reached a peak in Brecht's minimal and enigmatic notations. But for Brown, when performer choice is left free to the extent that the content of a work is entirely different from one performance to the other, as in his own *December 1952*, it is no longer a music 'piece': it becomes a 'musical activity'.[19] The idea of a task-based 'activity' lies at the heart of the conception of the score as a 'direction for an action'. Higgins's series of *Danger Musics*, which he started to write in 1961, are a most extreme embodiment of what he called 'provocation notation', defined as 'a situation in which the maker of a thing provokes some sort of activity' (Higgins 1964: 42). *Danger Musics* are generally characterized by the sole fact that in them 'one answers the question or follows the principle, any way, and by doing something that seems relevant to this, the performance takes place' (Higgins 1964: 42). They instruct readers to perform actions ranging from the everyday, such as *Danger Music #15* which reads 'work with butter and eggs for a time', to the physically perilous, as in *#1*'s invitation to 'spontaneously catch hold of a hoist hook and be raised up at least three stories', and the downright life-threatening, as in *#9*'s order to 'volunteer to have your spine removed'.

In contrast to these often dramatic actions, other early word scores explore '[s]ounds barely heard, sights barely distinguished' – activities 'at the point of imperceptibility', according to Brecht (Brecht 1961: np). For example, in La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #5* the performer's task is to 'turn a butterfly (or any number of butterflies) loose in the performance area'. '[I]t didn't seem to me that anyone or anything should have to hear sounds. . . . [I]t is enough that they exist for themselves', explained La Monte Young in 1960.[20] Silence thus becomes full of inaudible sounds which only word scores can transmit, from butterflies flying to the earth turning, which Yoko Ono invites us to listen

to in her 1963 *Earth Piece*.[21] With this shift to perceptual activities, the 'event' score becomes as much an invitation to find an 'event' as to perform it: listening to a dripping tap, for example, could be a possible realization of *Drip Music*. 'For the virtuoso listener', Brecht observed in 1959, 'all sound may be music' (Brecht 1959: 123).

Whether 'provocation notations' or invitations to listen to the barely audible, these word scores based on the 'discovery' or 'observation' of phenomena are fully removed from the traditional space of musical composition and performance and enter the space of everyday experience. Just as Brown was aware of the 'simultaneous existence and non-existence' as music of 'activities' such as *December 1952* (Brown 1965: 50) Brecht defined the word score as 'an art verging on the non-existent; dissolving into other dimensions, or becoming dimensionless, having no form' (Brecht 1961: np). Writing about Fluxus 'event' scores, Ina Blom has convincingly discussed this new relation between score and performance as 'a dynamic between two radical extremes, when the extremity of one position (i.e. the extreme generality of an instruction for an event) by necessity pushes into the opposite position (i.e. the extreme specificity of the realization of the instruction)' (Blom 1992: 216). The notation engenders a process, whether imaginative or physical, which will always be 'too specific to approach in retrospect by any other person or narrator than the one who submerges herself into the process' (1992: 216). Blom sees the evolution both of specific artists such as Brecht or Young, and of Fluxus as a whole, as a shift towards extreme generality. 'By this logic', she concludes, the status of the score as a work 'can never be fixed, because it can only be seen through this continual movement, this dynamic between seemingly opposite forces' (1992: 216).

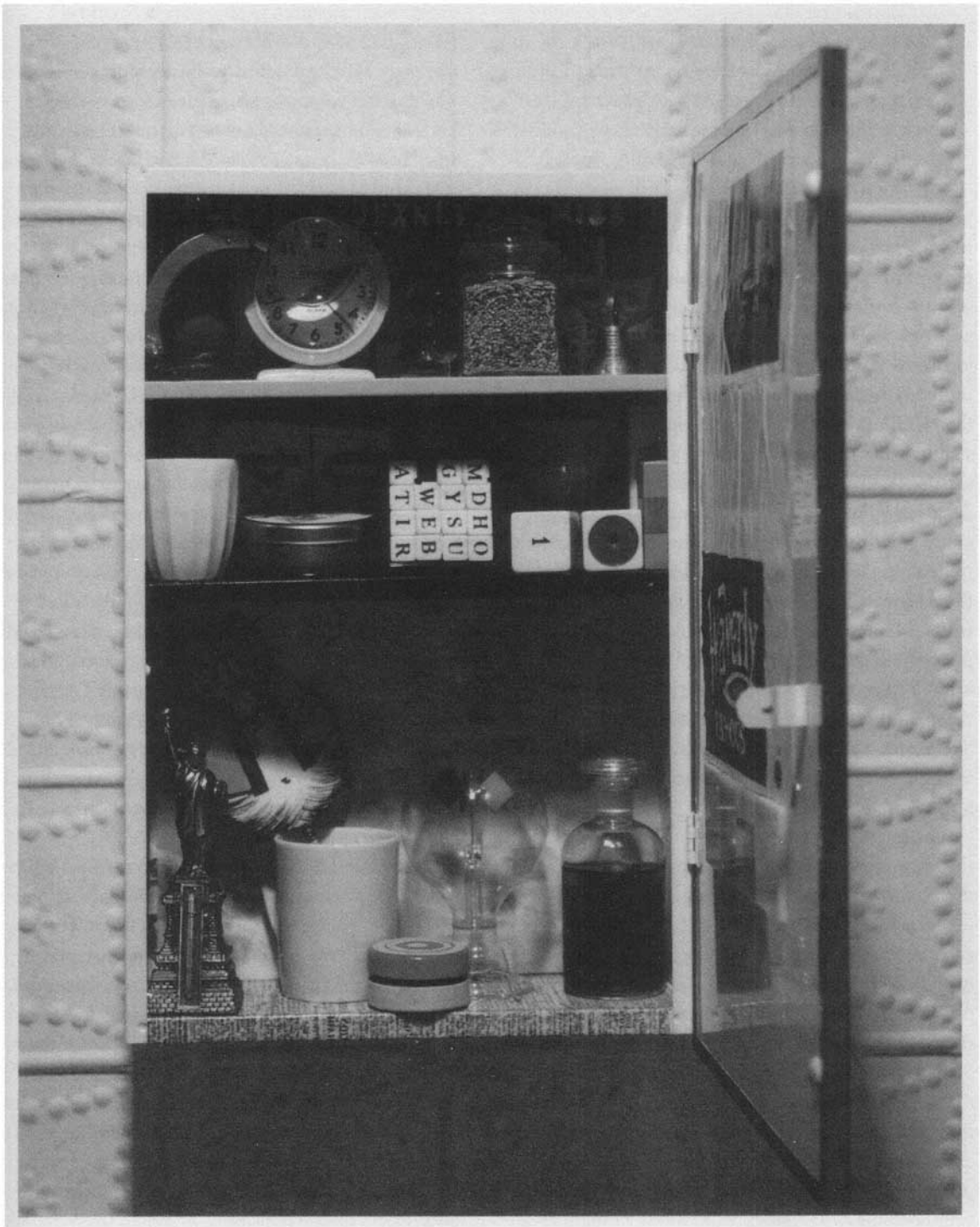
PERFORMER CHOICE AND SPECTATOR PARTICIPATION

This unique dynamic movement not only characterizes Fluxus' score, it is also a crucial feature of early object-based works by Brecht and Ono. In his first solo exhibition entitled *Towards Events*, at the Reuben Gallery in New York in 1959, Brecht showed three-dimensional works such as *The Cabinet*, a wall cabinet with a glass door containing a clock, a mug, a cup, a yoyo, a bell, a word puzzle, a bottle filled with red liquid and other objects.[22] The invitation to the exhibition provided the visitors with 'instructions' to remove, use the objects 'in ways appropriate to their nature' and then put them back (Brecht 1959b: np).

'The aspect of this work which (to me) is of most interest', Brecht explained in 1960:

> is not the object-like part, that is, the cabinet and its contents, but rather what occurs when someone is involved with its object-like part. The work to me is more in the nature of a performance (music and dance) than of an object. It is therefore of greatest importance that the spectator, participant, be free to open and close the door and handle the objects freely.
>
> (Brecht 1960/1: np)

As Bruce Altshuler has pointed out, while Brecht was 'primarily concerned with events to be created through engagement with his objects, the objects themselves being something like props for these events', Yoko Ono, on the other hand, 'would call for visitor participation in the creation of the objects themselves' (Altshuler 2000: 66) in her series of *Instruction Paintings* first exhibited at the AG Gallery in New York in July 1961 (cf. Hendricks 1993a). During this exhibition, Ono gave visitors verbal instructions to burn, cut up, or step on different-shaped canvases hung on the walls, spread on a table or placed on the floor. A piece such as *Waterdrop Painting*, in which the viewer is invited to let water drip on a circular piece of canvas, seems to be the visual equivalent of Brecht's 1959–62 *Drip Music*: both are activities ocurring in time, both are task-based, suggesting a process through which an 'incidental' aural and visual result will be achieved. A year later, Ono decided to dispense with the object altogether, exhibiting the instructions without the pieces of canvas at the Sogetsu Art Center in Tokyo in May 1962 (cf. Hendricks 1993b). 'I think painting can be instructionalized', she would write 3 years later.



• George Brecht, *The Cabinet*, 1959. © Scott Hyde

> Artist (sic) in this case, will only give instructions or diagrams for painting – and the painting will be more or less a do-it-yourself kit according to the instructions. The painting starts to exist only when a person follows the instructions to let the painting come to life.
>
> (Ono 1965: np)

In the same way as the increasingly important role of performer choice in experimental music and poetry radically modified the traditional definition of the score and the relation between composer and performer, the invitation to spectator participation in Brecht's and Ono's 'event-objects' disrupted the accepted attitudes of gallery visitors. 'At the end of the 1950s', recalled Brecht in an interview, 'to enter a gallery and put your thumb on a painting was sacrilege' (Brecht 1973: 88). Similarly, Ono's first *Instruction Painting* of 1960, *Painting to Be Stepped on* – a piece of canvas placed on the floor along with this self-explanatory title – was a reaction against the Abstract Expressionist scene in New York, in which, she remembers, 'people used to worship pictures ceremoniously'.[23] Out of rebellion, Ono wanted to provoke these people: 'Why don't you then simply step on a picture', she asked them, 'just to see what happens?'[24] Both Brecht and Ono introduced spectator participation 'in a spirit of liberation', in Brecht's words.[25]

The renunciation of total control on the part of the composer/artist in favour of this 'liberation' of the performer/viewer was not, however, without problems. At the time of his exhibitions of works such as *The Cabinet*, Brecht 'hoped that people would enter the game with a certain gentleness, that perhaps they'd exchange one object for another, that they'd open the drawers to move the objects and so forth' (Brecht 1973: 88). Unfortunately, he realized that 'that didn't work, that people would take the things [he] loved most and leave nothing in exchange'. The willingness to take risks with the performers or spectators was present from the very beginnings of choice-based indeterminate compositions. 'Unless the performer committed himself to the pieces', Christian Wolff explained, 'they would be horrible, and it was their very dangerousness which made them so beautiful' (Wolff 1969: 38). Wolff was in fact referring to works by Morton Feldman who according to him was the first composer to evolve indeterminate notations. I have chosen not to discuss Feldman's work because it was not included in *An Anthology*. This kind of commitment is exactly what Brown invites in his instructions for *25 Pages*, first published in *An Anthology*, when he explains that many different performances of the piece are 'valid within the total concept of work provided that once a selection from the range of possibilities has been made, it be executed with *devotion and accuracy* in regard to the time of durations, attacks and intensities' (Brown 1963/70: np). Brown felt that one of the reasons why he could create 'a notation which allowed flexibility' was that he had learnt to 'trust' musicians through his own experience of jazz improvisation.[26] Similarly, Jackson Mac Low emphasized the importance of 'such old-fashioned virtues as *tact* and *courtesy* and *good will* manifested in concentrated listening and other perceptions and carefully discriminating choice' (Mac Low 1991: 275). For Higgins, trusting the performers' good will is a logical extension of the questioning of the author's control. The more open the task is left, the more the performer will 'assume his or her will' and the composer needs to accept 'that people may perform the piece in any way possible'.[27]

Replacing the conventional relations which ruled traditional musical performances, poetry readings and gallery going, a new type of tacit contract thus emerged between composer and performer, artist and viewer, based on trust and good will. Performers are invited to be acutely aware of 'what, if any, the consequences are of playing well or badly', as David Behrman wrote (1965: 73). Pieces based on tasks by more than one performer, such as Christian Wolff's 'cue and answer' compositions or Forti's *Dance Constructions*, rely on a feeling of collective responsibility as the piece cannot exist unless all performers realize their tasks as well as they can. In a solo piece, where there is no one to 'check up' on what the performer does, the composer must rely on what Behrman called a 'honour system' (1965: 73)

in which the incentive for the performer lies in his or her desire to perform the work with 'devotion and accuracy', in Brown's words.

The question of incentive takes on even more significance in the case of works to be performed without an audience. Walter de Maria's 1960 essay on 'meaningless work' in *An Anthology* describes activities to be realized in private only, and which should above all 'not accomplish a conventional purpose' (1960: np). This work is based on tasks occurring over time such as 'putting wooden blocks from one box to another, then putting the blocks back to the original box', or digging a hole and then filling it again. As a gratuitous activity, 'meaningless work' exists in the same social space as games, but without the idea of pleasure, or rituals, from which religious or social connotations would be excluded. In fact, it is because it is gratuitous or purposeless in the conventional understanding of the concept of work that 'meaningless work' can take on relevance for the performer. Focusing on performing a task for its own sake 'can make you feel and think about yourself, the outside world, morality, reality, unconsciousness, nature, history, time, philosophy, nothing at all, politics, etc. without the limitations of the old art forms' (1960: np).

This general conception of the effect of 'meaningless work' seems to be summarized in George Brecht's definition of his scores as private 'little enlightenments' (Brecht 1970: np). Brecht compared his 'event' scores to Japanese *haiku*, poems which are characterized by a fixed, three-line structure and a reliance on the power of suggestion of single words and images.[28] 'Only the outlines or important parts are drawn, and the rest the reader must fill in for himself', explained the editor of a 1958 anthology of *haiku*, in an image highlighting the role of reader interpretation (Henderson 1958: 3). If the *haiku* attempts to capture the fleeting 'image of a concrete moment in life' in Alan Watts's words, the 'event' score, according to Brecht, 'is a signal preparing one for the moment itself' (Brecht 1961: np). With this crucial shift from the descriptive mode of the *haiku* to the more prescriptive 'event' scores, readers are given the opportunity to encounter these 'moments in life' in the present and the future, rather than re-living an experience of the author's past. In this sense they are closer to Zen *koans*, pedagogical exercises used as tools for meditation.[29] In order to provoke students of Zen Buddhism, *koans* are often expressed through paradoxes such as 'to turn a somersault on a needle's point' (Munroe 1994/5: 220), which can be compared to Yoko Ono's mind-exercises such as her 1962 *Sun Piece* which instructs the reader to 'watch the sun until it becomes square'. Crucially, like 'meaningless work', the *koans'* meaning is to 'be revealed experientially, as a demonstration or an example of the very principle it embodies' (Doris 1998: 101). These meditative exercises took on more urgency in Ono's instruction pieces, which were first conceived as therapeutic exercises 'to act out madness in order to stop becoming mad'.[30] 'I felt that I wasn't the only one who was just about to go insane', she explained. 'The whole world was about to go insane, so I was sure that there were other people who needed those instructions besides paintings and sculptures that you're just allowed to watch' (Ono 1971: np).

'The process of scoring, of notation, was rooted in music', explained Ken Friedman, 'but the score offered a way to transmit non-musical art forms, a system for encoding, recording and transmitting art forms that wandered across the boundaries of music, theater, daily life and visual art, sometimes summed up under the term intermedia' (Friedman 1994/2002: np). In fact, as they become detached from experimental graphic, musical and poetic scores, word scores no longer require a specific layout, typography or format, and can indeed be 'transmitted orally just like folklore' as Klintberg suggested. From games based on a collective responsibility and the respect of rules, to enigmatic paradoxes, meditative exercises in contemplation or self-help prescriptions 'to stop becoming mad', task-based Fluxus scores can serve a wide range of 'meaningless' functions – strikingly similar to the well-known genres of folklore, which, according to Klintberg, also include games, riddles and rituals (Klintberg 1991: 69).

For Friedman, 'the fact that many Fluxus works are designed as scores, as works which can be realized by artists other than the creator', which he calls their 'musicality', is not only a crucial characteristic of Fluxus but even '*the* key concept in Fluxus' (1998: 250–1). With word scores as the means of transmission the possibility emerges for other artists and, even more importantly, non-artists to perform these pieces. 'George Maciunas often used the phrase "do it yourself" when people asked to develop Fluxus projects', recalls Friedman. 'Do-it-yourself means that the work is open to anyone who wishes to do it.' Why wait any longer?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Ken Friedman, Jon Hendricks and Earle Brown for their help.

NOTES

1 Maciunas did not, however, stop organizing performances in the United States. For detailed histories of early Fluxus performances and publications, see for example Owen Smith 'Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early performance and publishing.' in Friedman (1998: 3–21).

2 This distinction is made by Emmett Williams (1992: 41). For descriptions of the different contexts for European and American Fluxus, compare for example Smith (1992: 45–7) and Wilfred Dörstel et al. 'The Bauermeister Studio: Protofluxus in Cologne, 1960–62' in Friedman (1992: 56–62).

3 This is exactly the way Williams discusses his own work, explicitly criticizing attempts to publish anthologies of Fluxus scores isolated from their context (Williams 1992: 45–6).

4 A good description is given by Tomas Schmit, 'If I remember rightly' (1972), in Williams and Noël (1997: 64–5). Some early instances of Fluxus concerts accompanied by published scores remain to be fully investigated.

5 The dates of the first circulation of scores by mail remain to be clarified. George Brecht's scores were published as a Fluxus edition under the title *Water Yam* in 1963. Other Fluxus monograph editions included the works of Takehisa Kosugi, Mieko Shiomi, and Robert Watts. Scores were also published in *Fluxus Preview Review* (1963), some magazines such as *Dé-coll/age* (1962–69) and *CC V TRE* (1964–70), and some programme brochures such as *Poésie etc. Américaine*, Paris, Musée d'art moderne, 1963. Yoko Ono published her *Grapefruit* privately in a bilingual edition in Tokyo in 1964. Dick Higgins published some of his works in *Jefferson's Birthday* (Something Else Press, 1964). Also published by the Something Else Press were collections of scores by Alison Knowles and Bengt af Klintberg. More recently, an anthology of Fluxus scores was edited by Ken Friedman, *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*, published in a special issue of *El Djarida* (1990).

6 The relations between Fluxus and music, in particular that of John Cage, have been the object of previous studies (see Altshuler 1992; Kahn 1994; Nyman 1974/1999; Kotz 2001).

7 Williams defined his 1962 poem *Alphabet Symphony* as 'a poem that gets off the page' in a 1976 interview in *West Coast Poetry Review* (1977), quoted in Williams (1992: 59).

8 Other artists whom Young met in California and invited to contribute to *An Anthology* were Terry Riley, Terry Jennings, Joseph Byrd, Robert Morris, and Dennis Johnson.

9 La Monte Young's first contacts with Cage, Earle Brown and Christian Wolff dated back to his participation in the 1959 New Music Summer Course in Darmstadt, Germany, which was a very important centre for international contemporary music at the time. Nam June Paik attended this course as well.

10 Young came to New York to study with Richard Maxfield who introduced him to Mac Low.

11 They were contacted by Young after he had read their works in poetry magazines.

12 In his 1955 *Five Biblical Poems* silences are represented by three-sided boxes, 'each equal in duration to any word and thus indeterminate in length' (see Williams 1967: np).

13 The work which Forti recalls may have been Cage's score for *Fontana Mix*. For a detailed description of Robert Dunn's workshop, see Banes (1980).

14 Brecht used cards from the beginning of his classes in 1958, as in *The Artificial Crowd* of 2 July 1958, for example, in which cards are 'passed out to the audience', bearing instructions using clapping (for x times), shaking or not shaking milk bottles filled with various objects and saying words (see Brecht 1958: 12).

15 The distinction between 'chance' and 'choice' procedures is discussed by Earle Brown (1989: 113).

16 See Brecht (1958: 42). Brecht was referring to Wolff's *Duo for Pianists II* which preceded *Duet I*. Wolff started to develop notations stressing the 'cue and answer' relations between the performers in 1957 (see Fox 1987).

17 For more information about Concrete poetry and its relation to Mallarmé, see Solt (1968).

18 In the score for Brecht's 1961 *Incidental Music* Brecht gives instructions to a pianist for tasks such as tilting the piano seat, piling blocks inside the piano, or dropping dried peas onto the keyboard. 'I don't tell you what to try for', explained Brecht to Michael Nyman in his 'Interview with Michael Nyman' (Brecht 1976: 256).

19 '[I]n order to be called "open form", a work must have an identifiable content which can then be formed, as in *25 Pages* or the *Available Forms* works. By this definition, *December 1952* is not a piece of music at all; it is musical activity when performed' (Brown 1965: 50).

20 La Monte Young's 'Lecture 1960' was first given at

Ann Halprin's workshop in California in the summer 1960, and was first published in the *Tulane Drama Review* in 1965. This version is reproduced in Oliva (1990: 204).

21 'Listen to the earth turning', Yoko Ono, *Earth Piece*, Spring 1963 in Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit*, 1964 (Tokyo: Wunternaum Press, 1964). Douglas Kahn has shown that it was the appearance of recording and amplifying devices that made composers realize that sound events should not be limited to what is audible to the human ear (see Kahn 1999: 189–99).

22 Brecht also showed in this exhibition some early paintings and collages and 'constructions to be hung upon a wall as a painting, but whose elements may be moved about by the viewer in a manner determined by the nature of the work', such as *Marbles and Blair* (see 'Brecht to Show Events at Reuben Gallery', press release for *Towards Events*, New York, Reuben Gallery, 1959).

23 Yoko Ono, 'Yoko Ono: Jeder muss etwas dazu tun . . . – ein Gespräch von Andreas Denk', in *Kunstforum International* (125), January–February 1994: 278 (my translation).

24 Yoko Ono, 'Yoko Ono: Jeder muss etwas dazu tun . . . – ein Gespräch von Andreas Denk,' op. cit. Note 24, p. 279.

25 The work 'was done in a spirit of liberation: to let the spectators take part in what was happening' (Brecht 1973: 88).

26 'I would not have been able to make *Folio* and graphic scores and collective improvisational scores and a notation which allowed flexibility in 1952 if I had not had the experience of trusting musicians' (Brown 1989: 107).

27 'This was a . . . means to refuse to express my own intention, and allowing you to assume your "good will". Emmanuel Kant, when he described the categorical imperative, assumed that the people would proceed with "good will". . . . If you accept Kantian good will, and you thus accept that people may perform the piece in any way possible, you will have a performance which will go beyond your taste' (my translation; Higgins 1993: 424).

28 Brecht (1961). Both La Monte Young and Yoko Ono also acknowledged the influence of haikus on their early scores (see Clark 1996: 144; and Ono 1997: 77).

29 For analyses of Fluxus scores in relation to Zen *koans*, see for example Doris (1998: 100–1) and Munroe (1994/5: 220–1).

30 'In those days [before meeting John Lennon] when people would ask why did I write those pieces, I would say, it was to act out madness in order to stop becoming mad' (Ono 1971: np).

REFERENCES

Altshuler, Bruce (1992) 'The Cage Class', in Cornelia Lauf and Susan Hapgood (eds) *FluxAttitudes*, exh. cat., Buffalo: Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center.

—— (2000) 'Instructions for a World of Stickiness: The Early Conceptual Work of Yoko Ono', in A. Munroe and J. Hendricks (eds) *Yes Yoko Ono*, exh. cat., New York: Japan Society.

Banes, Sally (1980) *Democracy's Body – Judson Dance Theater, 1962–64*, Epping: UMI Research Press.

Behrman, David (1965) 'What Indeterminate Notation Determines', in *Perspectives of New Music* III(2) Spring–Summer.

Blom, Ina (1992) 'The Intermedia Dynamic', in Ken Friedman (ed.) (1992).

Brecht, George (1958) 'Notebook I, June–September 1958', in George Brecht (1991) vol. I.

—— (1959a) 'Notebook III, April–August 1959', in George Brecht (1991) vol III.

—— (1959b) 'Invitation' to *Towards Events*, New York: Reuben Gallery.

—— (1960/1) 'Notes on the shipping and exhibiting of MEDICINE CABINET (alternative titles: MEDICINE CHEST, CABINET), 1960,' mimeographed, carbon document dated 11.16.61, New York: Museum of Modern Art Library.

—— (1961) 'Events (assembled notes)', from an unpublished letter to George Maciunas, written between May 2nd and June 4th, 1961, New York: Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection.

—— (1966) *Chance Imagery* (1957), New York: Something Else Press.

—— (1970) 'The Origin of Events', in Hans Sohm (ed.), *Happenings and Fluxus*, exh. cat., Cologne: Kölnischer Kunstverein.

—— (1973) 'Interview with Irmeline Lebeer', in Henry Martin (ed.) (1978) *An Introduction to George Brecht's Book of the Tumbler on Fire*, Milan: Multhipia Edizioni.

—— (1976) 'Interview with Michael Nyman', *Studio International* 192 (984) Nov/Dec.

—— (1991) *Notebooks I–III*, Cologne: Walther König.

Brown, Earle (1961a) 'Prefatory Notes', in *Folio (1952/53) and 4 Systems (1954)*, New York: Associated Music Publishers.

—— (1961b) '1953 for Piano', in *Folio (1952/53) and 4 Systems (1954)*, New York: Associated Music Publishers.

—— (1963) 'Some Notes on Composing', in Gilbert Chase (ed.) (1966) *The American Composer Speaks: A Historical Anthology, 1770–1965*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

—— (1963/70) '2 pages from *25 Pages*', in La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (eds) (1963/70).

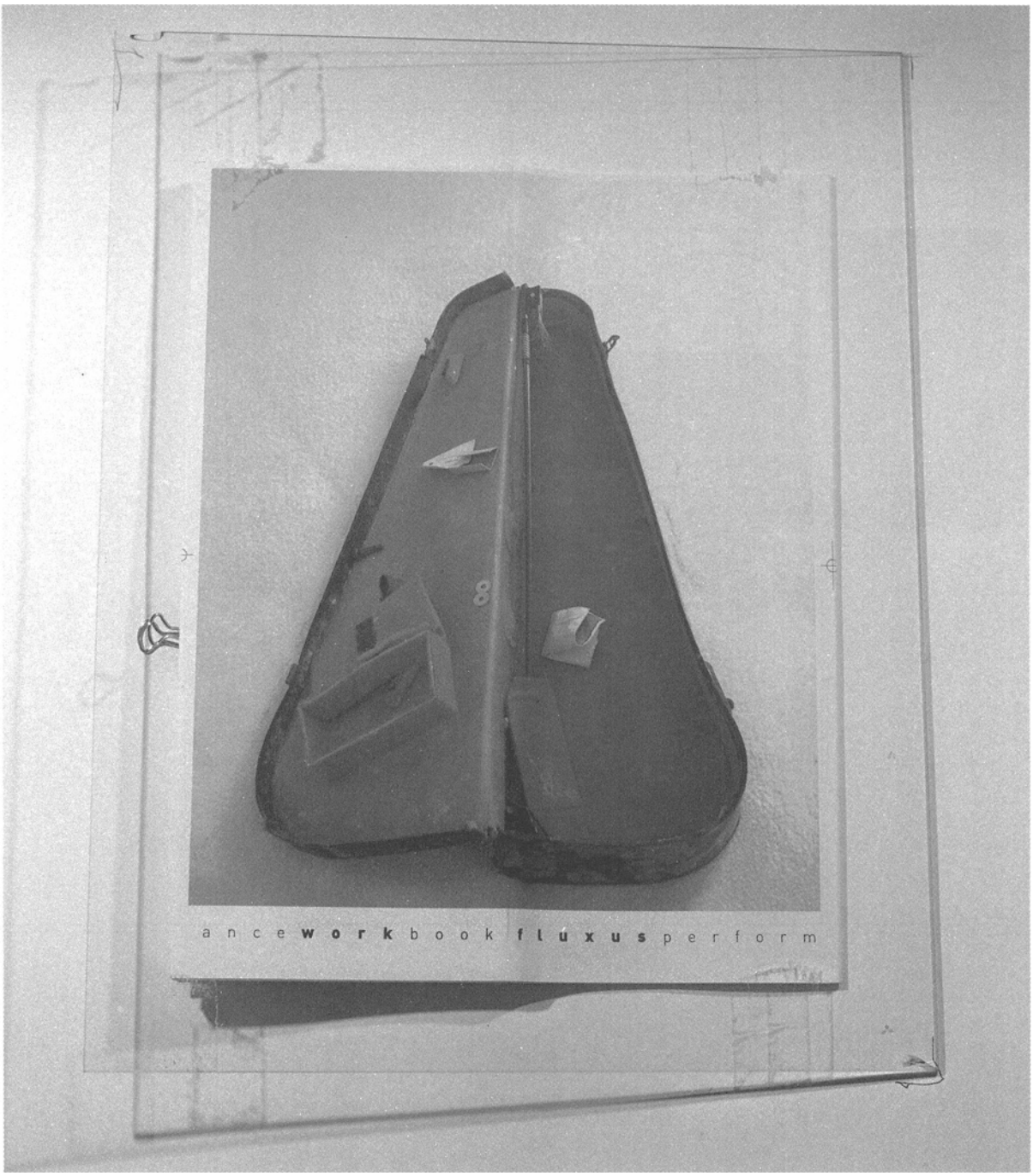
—— (1965) 'On Form', *Source* 1 (1).

—— (1989) 'Interview with Richard Duffalo, Rye, New York,1986', in R. Duffalo, *Trackings: Composers Speak with Richard Duffalo*, New York: Oxford University Press.

—— (1996) 'Conversation with John Yaffé, New York, 25 September 1995', in CD booklet, *Earle Brown – Music for Piano(s) 1951–1995*, New Albion Records.

Cage, John (1957) 'Indeterminacy', in Cage (1961/73).

—— (1958) 'Composition as Process, II – Indeterminacy', in Cage (1961/73).
—— (1961/73) *Silence, The Lectures and Writings of John Cage*, Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
Clark, Mitchell (1996) 'Zephyrs: Some Correspondences between Bai Juyi's *Qin* and La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #5*', in W. Duckworth and R. Fleming (eds) *Sound and Light: La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela*, Special Issue of *Brucknell Review* 40 (1).
De Maria, Walter (1960) 'Meaningless Work', in La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (eds) (1963/70).
Doris, David T. (1998) 'Zen Vaudeville: A Medi(t)ation in the Margins of Fluxus', in Ken Friedman (ed.) *The Fluxus Reader*, London: Academy Editions.
Forti, Simone (1974) *Handbook in Motion*, Halifax: The Press of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design; New York: New York University Press.
Fox, Christopher (1987) 'Music as Social Process: Some Aspects of the Work of Christian Wolff', *Contact* (30) Spring.
Friedman, Ken (1994/2002) 'Working with Scores', (1994) and reproduced in this issue of *Performance Research* 7(3) (2002).
—— (ed.) (1992) *Fluxus Virus, 1962–1992*, exh. cat., Cologne: Galerie Schüppenhauer and Kölnischer Kunstverein.
—— (1998) 'Fluxus and Company', in Ken Friedman (ed.) *The Fluxus Reader*, London: Academy Editions.
Henderson, Harold G. (1958) *An Introduction to Haiku: An Anthology of Poems and Poets from Basho to Shiki*, New York: Doubleday.
Hendricks, Jon (1993a) *Yoko Ono: Paintings and Drawings, New York, AG Gallery, July 17–30, 1961*, exh. cat., Budapest: Gallery 56.
—— (1993b) *Instruction for Paintings by Yoko Ono, Tokyo, Sogetsu Art Center, May 24, 1962*, exh. cat., Budapest: Gallery 56.
Higgins, Dick (1964) 'Postface', in *Postface and Jefferson's Birthday*, New York, Nice and Cologne: Something Else Press.
—— (1993) 'Entretien avec Jacques Donguy, Barrytown, 7–8 avril 1992', in Bernard Blistian (ed.) *Poésure et peintrie, d'un art l'autre*, exh. cat., Marseilles: Centre de la Vieille Charité.
Kahn, Douglas (1994) 'The Latest: Fluxus and Music', in Elizabeth Armstrong and Joan Rothfuss (eds) *In the Spirit of Fluxus*, exh. cat., Minneapolis, MN: Walker Art Center.
—— (1999) *Noise, Water, Meat – A History of Sound in the Arts*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.
Klintberg, Bengt Af (1991) 'The Fluxus Outpost in Sweden: An Interview with Bengt Af Klintberg,' in Jean Sellem (ed.) *Fluxus Research*, Special Issue of *Lund Art Press* 2 (2).
Kotz, Liz (2001) 'Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the 'Event' Score', *October* (95) Winter.
Mac Low, Jackson (1963/70a) 'Methods for Reading Asymmetries', in La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (eds) (1963/70).
—— (1963/ 70b) 'Thanks – a Simultaneity for People', in La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (eds) (1963/70).
—— (1980) 'How Maciunas Met the New York Avant Garde', in Johan Pijnappel (ed.) (1993) *Fluxus Today and Yesterday*, Special Issue of Art *and Design* (28).
—— (1991) 'Interview by Nicholas Zurbrugg, New York, January 1991', *Crayon* (1).
Mallarmé,Stéphane (1914) 'Préface', *Un Coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*, in *Œuvres*, Paris: Garnier.
Munroe, Alexandra (ed.) (1994/5) *Japanese Art after 1945: Scream Against the Sky*, exh. cat., Yokohama: Yokohama Museum; New York: Guggenheim Museum.
Nyman, Michael (1974/1999) *Experimental Music, Cage and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Oliva, Achille Bonito (ed.) (1990) *Ubi Fluxus ibi motus 1990–1962*, exh. cat., Venice: Biennale.
Ono, Yoko (1965) 'Letter to Ivan Karp, January 4, 1965', in *Grapefruit – A Book of Instructions by Yoko Ono*, London: Peter Owen
—— (1971) 'Radio Interview with Elliott Minz', in John Lennon and Peter Bendry (eds) *This Is Not Here*, Syracuse, NY: Everson Museum of Art.
—— (1997) 'Yoko Ono: Instructions in the Marital Art', in Robert Enright (ed.) *Per-e-gri-na-tions – Conversations with Contemporary Artists*, Winnipeg: Bain and Cox.
Pritchett, James (1993) *The Music of John Cage*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Smith, Owen (1992) 'Proto-Fluxus in the United States, 1959–1962: The Establishment of a Like-minded Community of Artists', in Estera Milman (ed.) 'Fluxus, A Conceptual Country', Special Issue of *Visible Language* (26) Winter–Spring.
Solt, Mary Ellen (1968) *Concrete Poetry, a World View*, Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press.
Williams, Emmett (ed.) (1967) *Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, New York: Something Else Press.
—— (1992) *My Life in Flux and Vice Versa*, London: Thames and Hudson.
—— and Nöel, Ann (eds) (1997) *Mr Fluxus – a Collective Portrait of George Maciunas, 1931–1978*, London: Thames and Hudson.
Wolff, Christian (1960) 'Duet I', in La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (eds) (1963/70).
—— (1969) 'Taking Chances', *Music and Musicians* XVII (9) May.
Young, La Monte and Mac Low, Jackson (eds) (1963/70) *An Anthology . . .*, New York: La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low; New York: Heiner Friedrich, 1970 reprint.



FLUXNOTE

These pages shows examples from a version of the FLUXUS PERFORMANCE WORKBOOK prepared near Bunacurry Harbour on Achill Island, County Mayo in July 2002. Where things are made doesn't usually matter, particularly if, as here, the object in question is a catalogue of instructions for prayers and performances to be enacted always in some other place at another time – anywhere other than the cottage bedroom where it was composed, (chimney smoke drifting in from the neighbour's fire, the ironing board stationed before a dressing table to make a desk, the dressing table mirror blindfolded with a sheet). But, in this case, because the house at Bunacurry was chosen purposely out of the living stream of possibilities, its characteristics and associations will keep creeping in, somewhere below the margin.

So, whereas on the website you'll find 500 performance scripts prepared in **DIN**, a type designed by Albert-Jan Pool (and you may wonder if typeforms created for ⇨

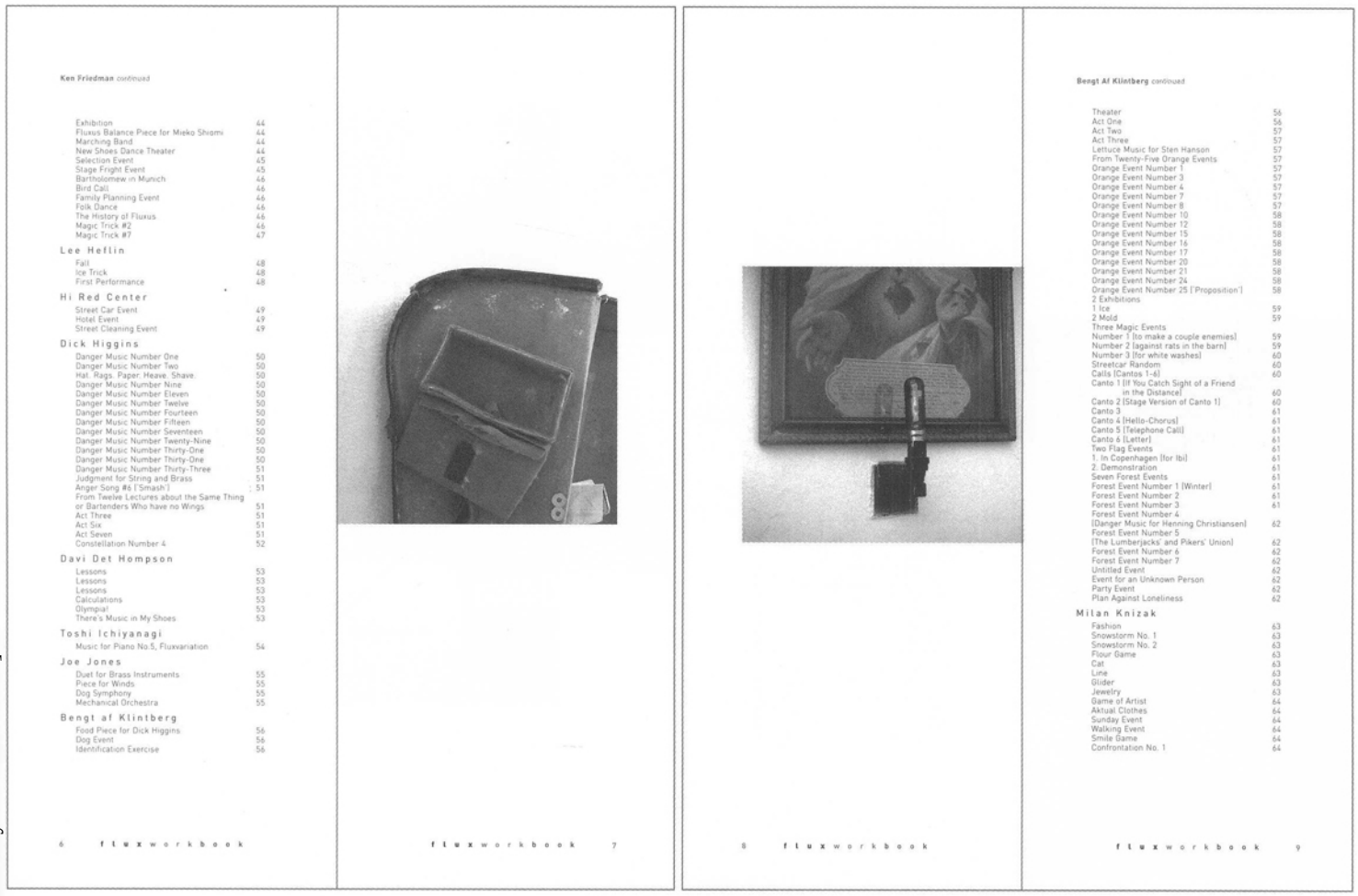
The latest edition of the WORKBOOK, edited by Ken Friedman and Owen Smith with Lauren Sawchen, is part of this issue and available as a .pdf download from the *Performance Research* website www.performance-research.net.

fluxcontents

the German autobahns are quite right for this, and aren't too – how would you say? – post-industrial), as for me, whenever I cast an eye in its direction, I see furling skies, breeze-blocks coming ashore from the hold, a Madonna with Bleeding Eyes, a plastic cover pulled back from a water-filled souterrain, also an advancing flood of island talk. Which is why I stuff this footnote into the Fluxpocket as we part company.

Achill stands off the west coast of Ireland at a distance of a few hundred metres and is connected to the mainland by an arthritic swing-bridge, between whose piers races one of the most violent tides in Europe: squeezed by the Bull's Mouth and Blacksod Bay to the north, and strained to the south by Darby's Point and Clew Bay. It is a holiday island pretty much. All of the people some of the time are involved with the summer trade. Men may farm or fish or drive to the mainland every day to work, but their wives will take in paying guests or their children will serve in the bars.

Achill Island is notable for its sublime Romantic scenery. The cliffs on its Atlantic aspect, lashed sheer by winter storms, are



Ken Friedman *continued*

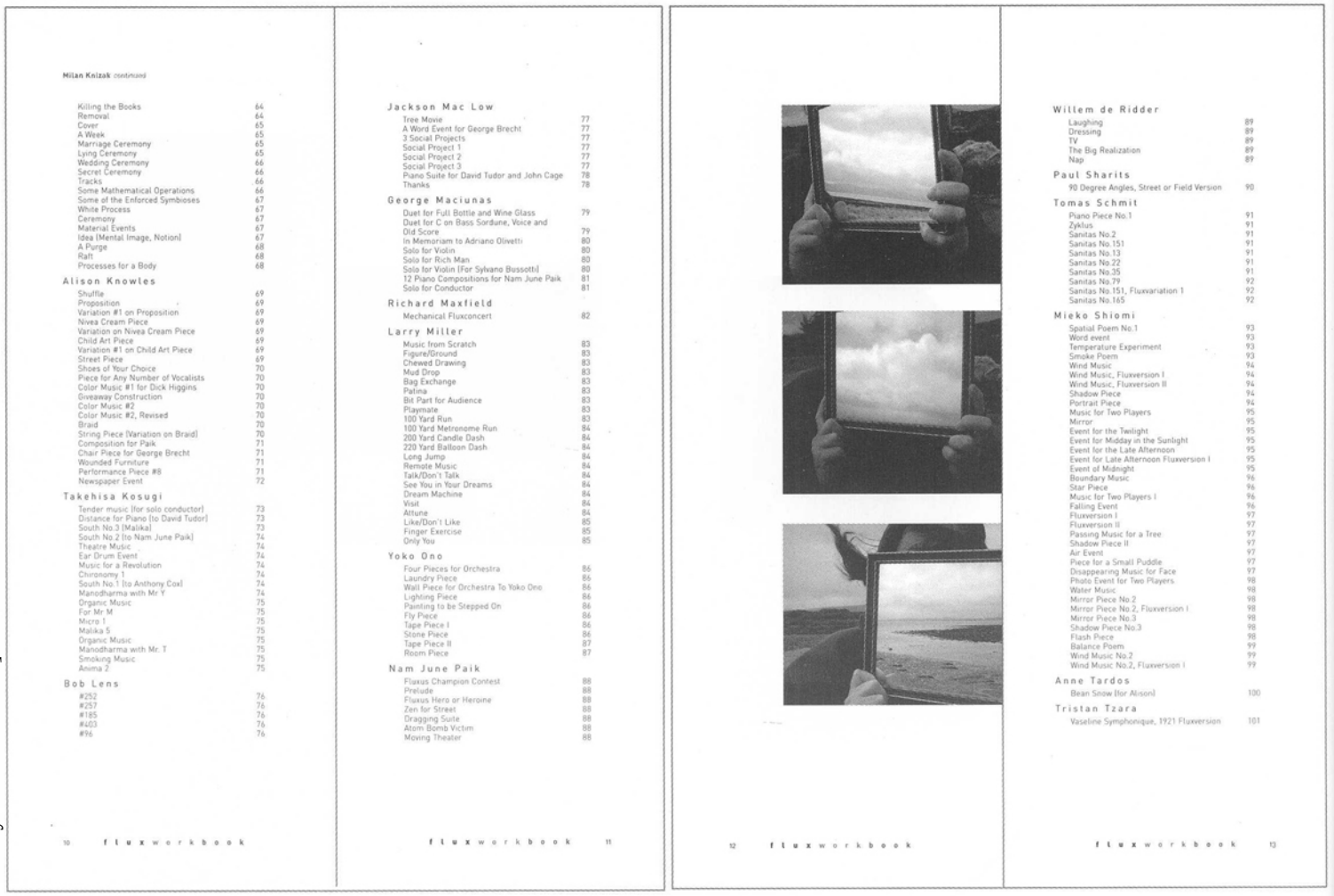
Bengt Af Klintberg *continued*

among the highest. Its treelessness means that the skies are as vast and changeable as any to be watched from deck in mid-Atlantic. Between the rocky heights, the brown hare plays among the dunes.

Away from the seaside much of the surface of the island is covered by bog, which has been spaded for fuel for generations, and under a flat grey sky these inland wastes can be the dreariest imaginable, but avert your eyes from its sores and suppurations and even flickering sunlight makes the landscape liquidly beautiful. – Sure, there's yards of stuff written about the flow of Atlantic weather, how it topples bicyclists, how it washes shepherds from the rocks, how it flays the spirits. Let's move on.

I would wake about seven. We might sketchily embrace. I would slide the nets along the wire rail to check the morning sky, on my way to the bathroom across the hall sniff the turf smoke from the previous night, on the return journey switch on the Eurochannel for the morning's Eurosport. My list is probably the same as yours on an any uncertain summer holiday morning: dressing, making coffee, speaking to the sick dog that sleeps in the barn. Then, habitually, before settling to workbook, I would walk to the jetty, which pushes out a concrete finger towards Glennamong, and where three fishing boats rest on the mud – a walk of a quarter of a mile along the lane, beyond two more cottages and a third under construction, passing among rhododendrons, gunnera and asphodel.

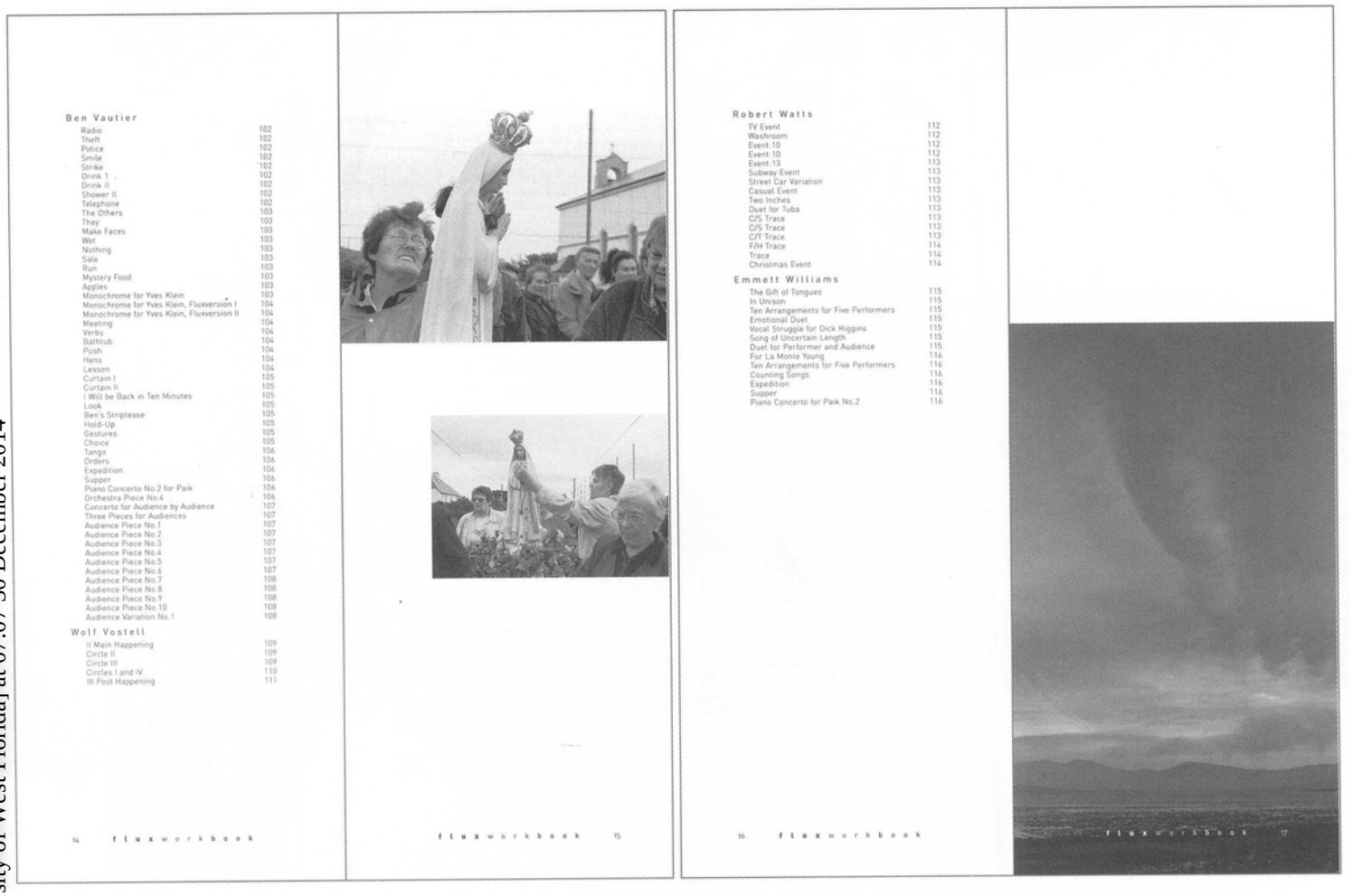
Just a few developments I can report:– which days for example the farm dog at the ⇨



Milan Knizak continued

second cottage was tethered by the river bridge to the left side of the road and which to the right; which days the men were working on the new house by the water's edge and which days resting or sheltering inside their truck; which days the cows were in the road and which among the rushes, which days the rhythm of life on the island (black economy, second homes) bore more or less close resemblance to this or that proto-European or Balkan country and which days – usually in mid-conversation, because of the giddiness of it – to no place on Earth at all.

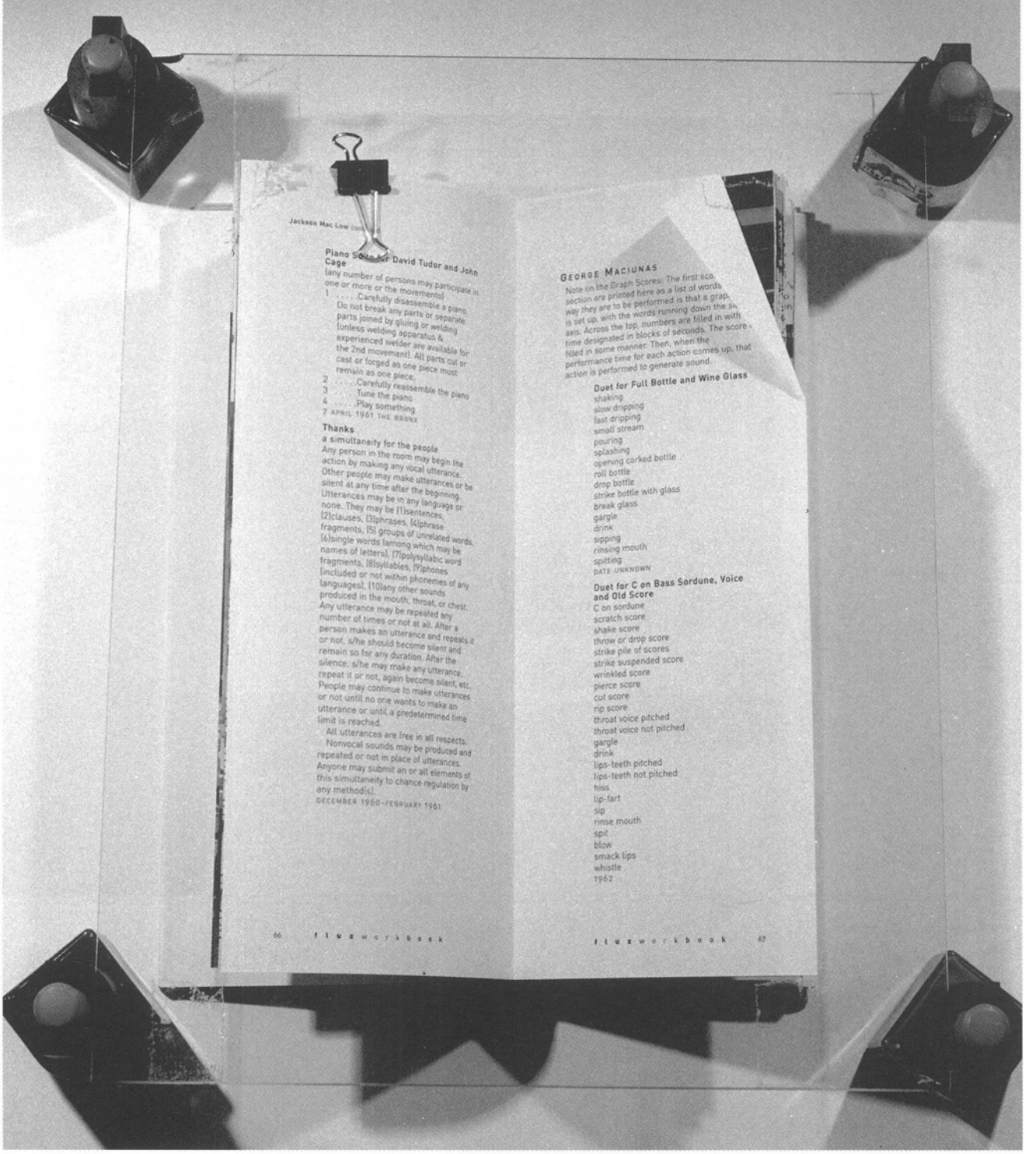
I came here first in 1983 to another village on the south side called Dooagh, (which means 'black earth'). My son and daughter were babies still. For a fortnight in mid-September in time for the first autumn storms, we shared a cottage with my wife's parents, my wife's brother her mother's brother and his wife, a Bontempi keyboard, much sliced white bread and ham. We'd come across in a sloppy storm;



the drive from Dublin to Westport had been blank as far as Castlebar, and now this island! A few huts by a rocky road, a few more beside a torrent, a blackened shore, the rain lashing – and in the middle of every night the terrible sound of infant breathing and the scares of fatherhood pacing up and down behind the turf-stack.

Years later I would discover that to another house just down the road from us in Dooagh, the English novelist Graham Greene had brought his smart American lover, Catherine Walston. To Dooagh! I saw an old man on the television one night, roped in for some publicity piece about the filming of *The End of the Affair*, for which the novelist had done emotional research at Dooagh. Pointing in the general direction of their island souterrain, the old man said he could remember the two of them rolling up in a big Ford car, blood red tail-lights glowing like burning peat, full to bursting with holiday excitement – to Dooagh! Here at least the wind would protect the ears of whoever preferred not to hear the strange sad angry cries of their abandonment. In Dooagh between the end of the war and 1950 Greene worked on *The Heart of the Matter*, and *Fallen Idol* and a drama called *The Living Room* and betweentimes he performed the begin-nings of *The End of the Affair* – baked bread, cooked eggs over the turf fire. He and Catherine photographed each other on the beach at Keel among the nuns. The University of Georgetown has the prints (www.library.georgetown.edu/dept/speccol/).

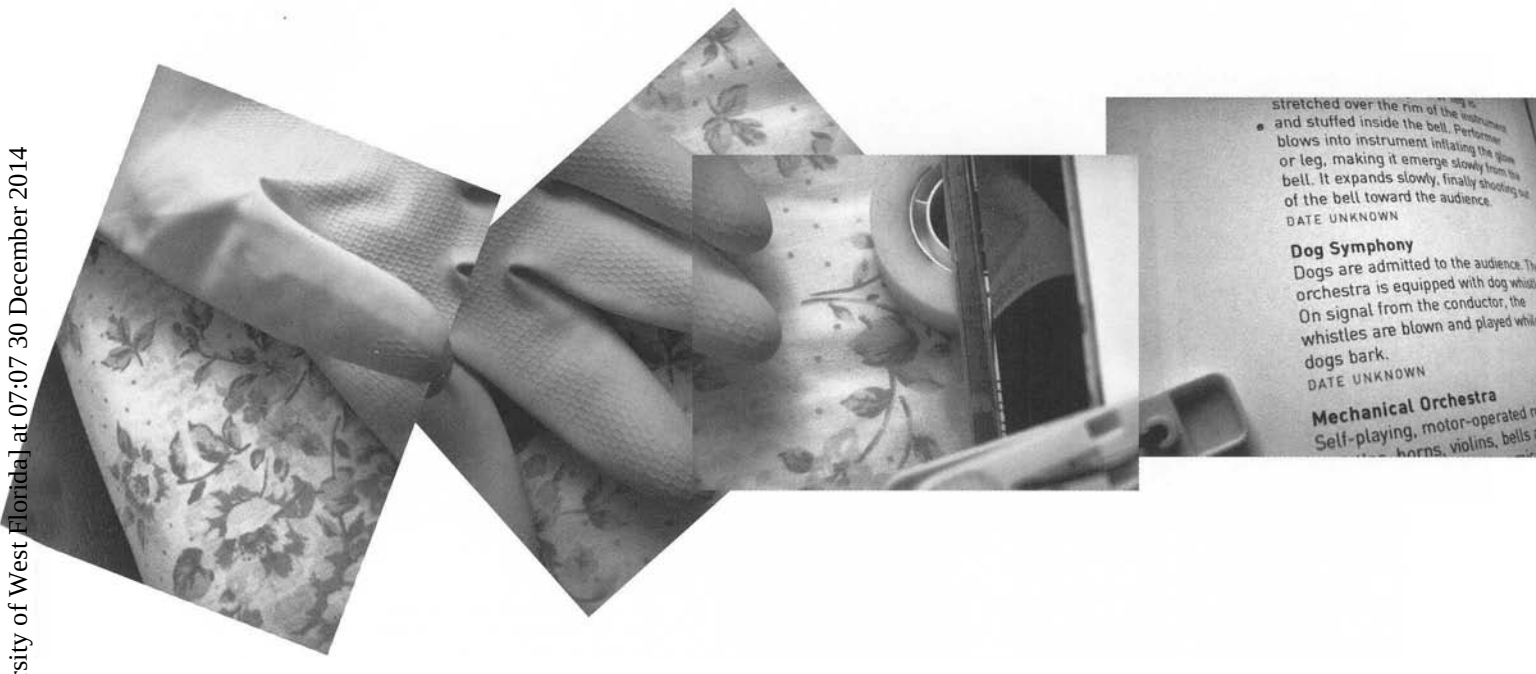
In truth, it was not Graham Greene who did the bringing: it was the other way ⇨



about. Catherine drove him across the Sound from Shannon or from house parties at Burrishoole, the home of another of her fancies, the IRA revolutionary turned transatlantic statesman and connoisseur Ernie O'Malley, who had new friends among the New York Yaddo Corporation – Paul Strand, Alfred Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keefe – that crew.

But such a failure this was of mine – seeing only the spray at Dooagh, the weather and changing light. A few ancient island disasters caught my eye it's true: the sinking of a migrant workers' hooker in Clew Bay, the burning of Achill harvest workers in a locked barn at Kirkintilloch – also the work of a proselytising Methodist called Edward Nangle, the most dreary of men, the most tediously dreadfully boring of men, who came to Achill during the potato famine, who built a mission colony, and in his enthusiasm for the island life tried to notch up converts by feeding and housing whoever was prepared to jump religions. So that was what I saw that September: winter storms gathering; whitewashed hovels planted beside stony tracks, the remnants of sermonisers and bedraggled peasantry; not the blistered knees of the displaced smart-set, who had taken the island life properly to heart, who recognised something of themselves in the post war flux, the one putting a gentle Roman Catholic hand over the urgent Roman Catholic mouth of the other, whereas I heard only the cry of the petrel.

So, as I say, the Fluxmaker's routine would be to rise early and to walk to the jetty past the dog on the bridge, sometimes



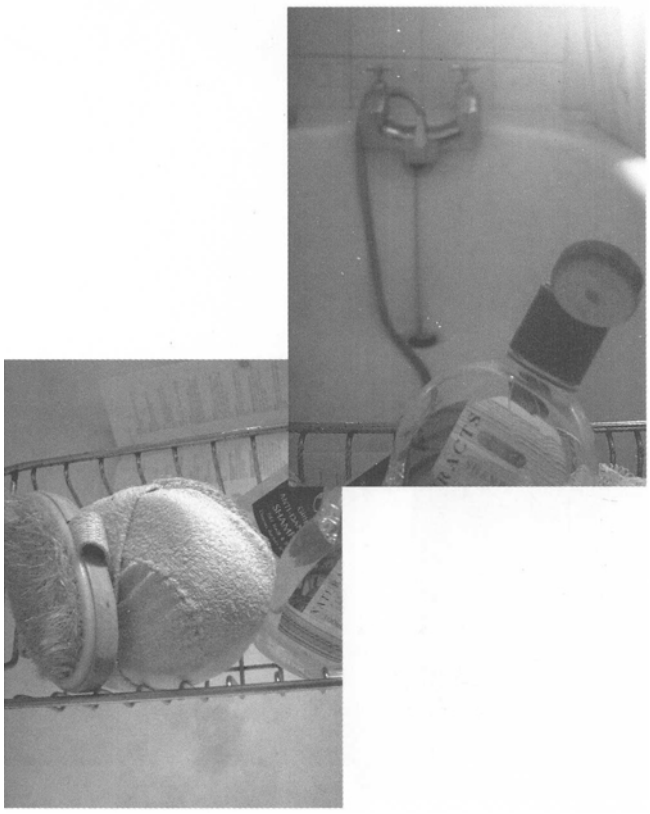
to see the cottager sitting in his car, or else to pass his fat wife on her way to feed the ducks, which had their own cottage across the stream, or else to consider as I passed by, the rumour that the man mistreated his dog or wife or both, he having returned to Achill to chase the Celtic tiger (as many will these days), only to be reduced to sitting outside in the Toyota, listening to *The Money Programme* on the English radio.

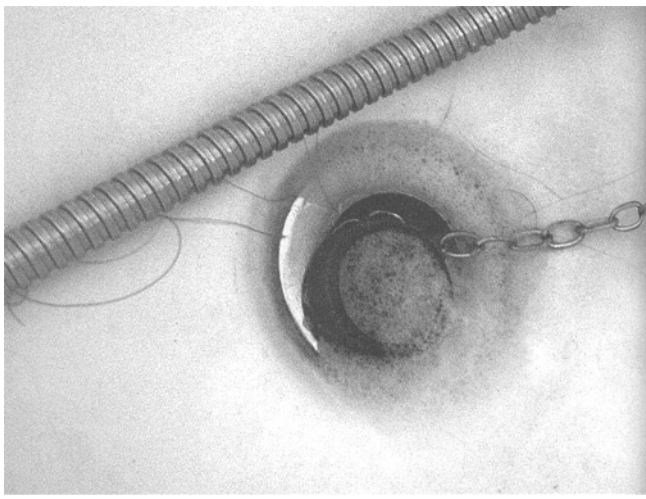
It was not just Graham Greene who made the island his open air confessional. A few years before him Louis MacNeice quartered the beaches, found his father's memory somewhere between the cliffs of Menaun and Croaghaun, perambulated under the mountain behind Dooagh and wrote a few verses home:

Seen from above
The house is a silent gadget whose purpose
Was long since obsolete

But when you get down
The Breakers are cold scum and the wrack
Sizzles with stinking life

And when you get down
The house is a maelstrom of loves and
hates where you –
Having got down – belong.[1] ⇨





Verbs
Performers enact different verbs from a book of verbs.
1963

Bathtub
As many performers as possible jam themselves into a bathtub.
1963

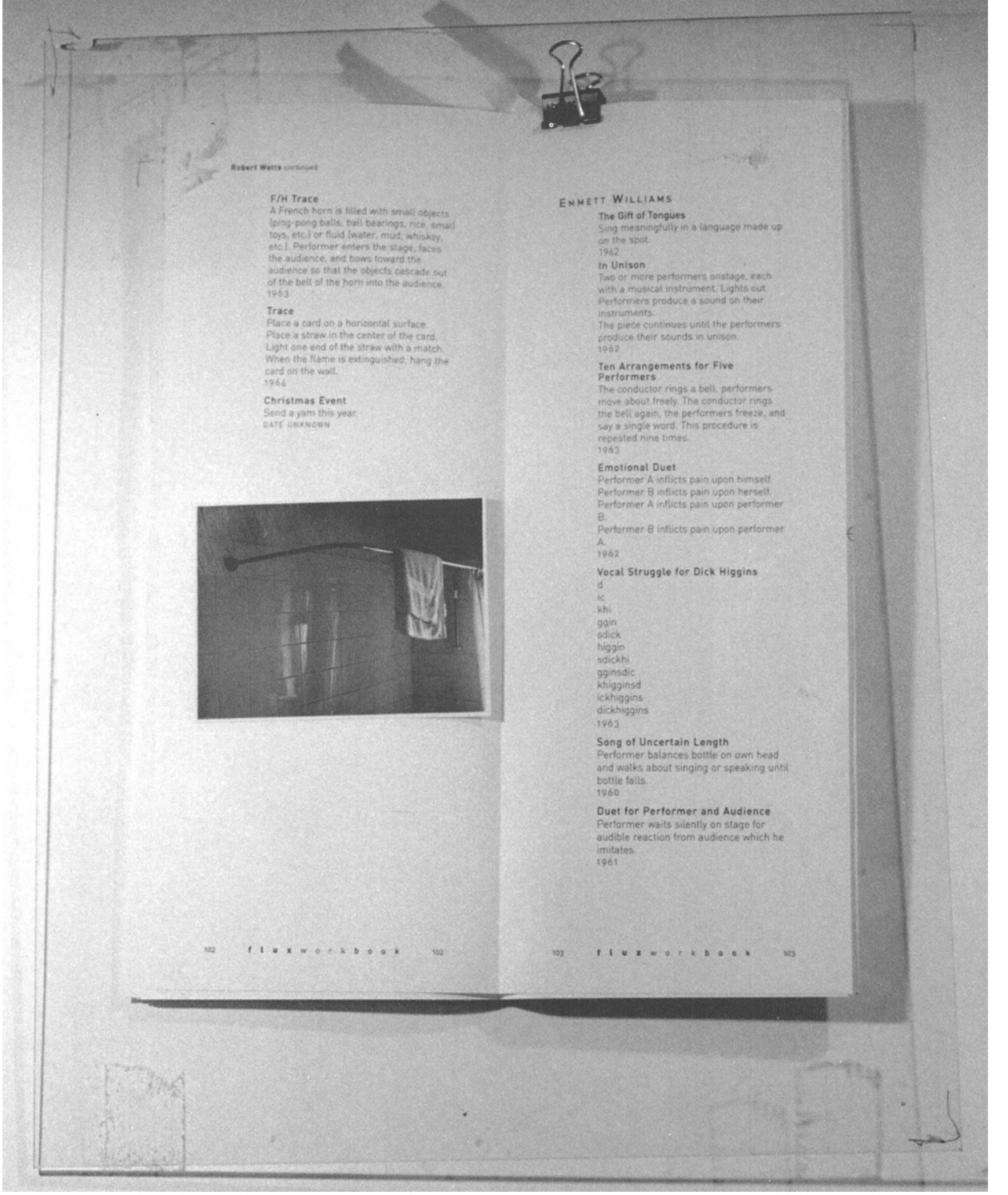
Push
Ten to 20 performers push each other from the stage nonviolently until only 2 performers are left.
1963

Hens
Three hens are released and then caught.
1963

And after Louis MacNeice and after Graham and Catherine, via the same social network perhaps, or as a result of a simpler compulsion to leave Europe without arriving in America, both measures serving a desire to feel somehow 'at home', Heinrich Böll became an Achill islander.

Böll turned up in Achill in the 1950s made friends with the island doctor, wrote fondly of the islanders' sense of time – a flux! – about the island cinema and the deserted village of Slievemore, working over, no doubt, what it was to be German in the post war years, what it was to be Catholic, what it might be to be Marxist... Wait! What's that you see, Heinrich?

'On people's faces what is always to be seen on people's faces at the end of a movie: a slight embarrassment, disguised by a smile; one is a little ashamed of the emotion one has involuntarily invested. The beautiful creature from the fashion magazine climbs into her great car, enormous blood red tail-lights, glowing like lumps of peat, moves away toward the hotel – the peat cutter plods wearily off to his



Robert Watts continued

F/H Trace
A French horn is filled with small objects (ping-pong balls, ball bearings, rice, small toys, etc.) or fluid (water, mud, whiskey, etc.). Performer enters the stage, faces the audience, and bows toward the audience so that the objects cascade out of the bell of the horn into the audience.
1963

Trace
Place a card on a horizontal surface.
Place a straw in the center of the card.
Light one end of the straw with a match.
When the flame is extinguished, hang the card on the wall.
1964

Christmas Event
Send a yam this year.
DATE UNKNOWN

EMMETT WILLIAMS

The Gift of Tongues
Sing meaningfully in a language made up on the spot.
1962

In Unison
Two or more performers onstage, each with a musical instrument. Lights out. Performers produce a sound on their instruments.
The piece continues until the performers produce their sounds in unison.
1962

Ten Arrangements for Five Performers
The conductor rings a bell; performers move about freely. The conductor rings the bell again, the performers freeze, and say a single word. This procedure is repeated nine times.
1963

Emotional Duet
Performer A inflicts pain upon himself.
Performer B inflicts pain upon herself.
Performer A inflicts pain upon performer B.
Performer B inflicts pain upon performer A.
1962

Vocal Struggle for Dick Higgins
d
ic
khi
ggin
sdick
higgin
sdickhi
gginsdic
khigginsd
ickhiggins
dickhiggins
1963

Song of Uncertain Length
Performer balances bottle on own head and walks about singing or speaking until bottle falls.
1960

Duet for Performer and Audience
Performer waits silently on stage for audible reaction from audience which he imitates.
1961

102 fluxworkbook 102

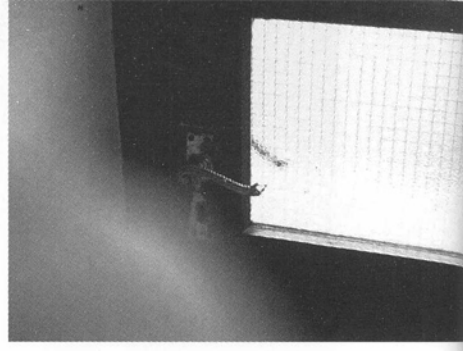
103 fluxworkbook 103

cottage; silent grown-ups, while the children, twittering, laughing, scattering far into the night, repeat to each other the story of the film.'[2]

At any rate, through the 60s and 70s the experience of Irish living had such an effect on him, it seems, also on his wife and son that the cottage became after his death a useful shrine, half the year for Irish creative meditation the other half for German introspection. The modern Irish contingent soon included the IRA historian Kevin Toolis and the poet Paul Durcan, and among the visitors from the earlier period, when the Bölls had a steady stream of house guests, the German Green Party's poor Petra Kelly who was shot dead by her lover on the stairs the same year the Böll Cottage opened for art.

[Not that I have any part in this, but in the mid-70s, having taken to heart the fluxy advice of George Macunias that the artist should do something practical from nine to five – better surely to be a journalist than an artist – I remember sitting in a Nottingham steak bar, having been frisked for IRA explosives on the way down, ordering a cheese omelette before going on the night shift, and sitting reading *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum*, Böll's assault on the law and the press during the Baader-Meinhoff years, thinking to myself that in the dialect of this book – a harangue against yellow journalism written in journalese – I had found the perfect style.

Up the road, round the corner at the arts centre, waiting to meet me – no, not exactly – re-parcelling a travelling Fluxus show, was my future wife, who would remember ⇨

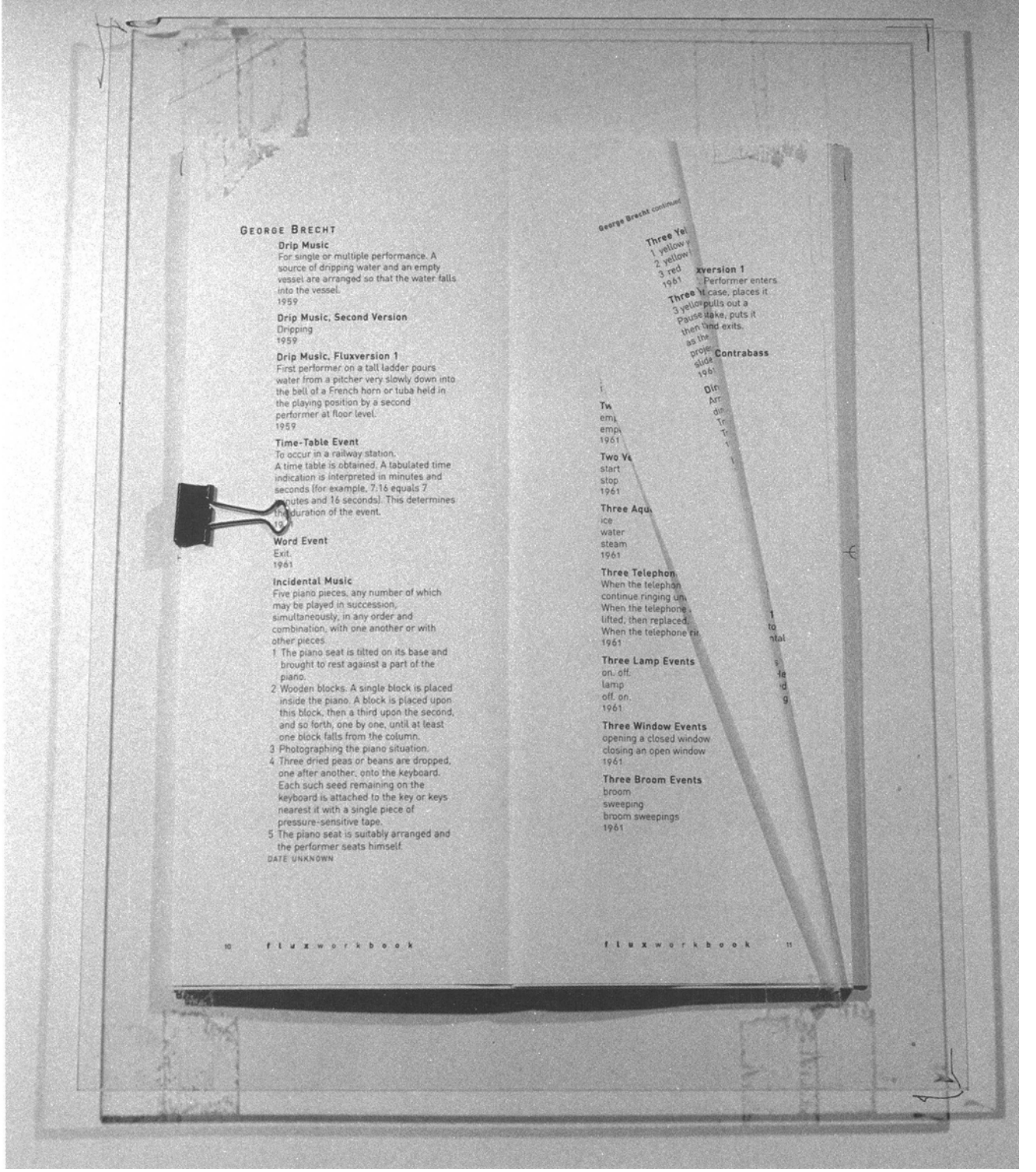


childhood summer journeys to Achill, where her mother's father had been born, when she had stayed in a cottage of the Graham Greene variety – no electricity, an outside tap for water. This was towards the south at Dooega (meaning black earth); the boy whose room she stayed in had been chivvied out into the barn to sleep.]

Well, sooner or later everything must converge in the flow: Heinrich Böll on holiday in 1973, considering the difficulty of being young and revolutionary in West Germany without becoming at the same time murderous, every so often walks out or cycles to the Minaun Bar at Keel, admires its IRA décor, enters into the flood of talk, raises in casual conversation on this westernmost edge of Europe, in this classless society as he imagines it to be, (introducing, I daresay, a little gentle German humour), the modest collaboration he is engaged in with the late Fluxist Joseph Beuys. To be sure, they're writing the manifesto for a Free International School for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research, which will include Institutes of Ecology and Evolutionary Science with courses in drawing and social behaviour, viz:

'...in a new definition of creativity the terms professional and dilettante are surpassed, and the fallacy of the unworldly artist and the art-alienated non-artist are abandoned... In a world increasingly manipulated by publicity, political propaganda, the culture business and the press, it is not the named – but the nameless – that will offer a forum.'3

'Möchten Sie noch etwas?'

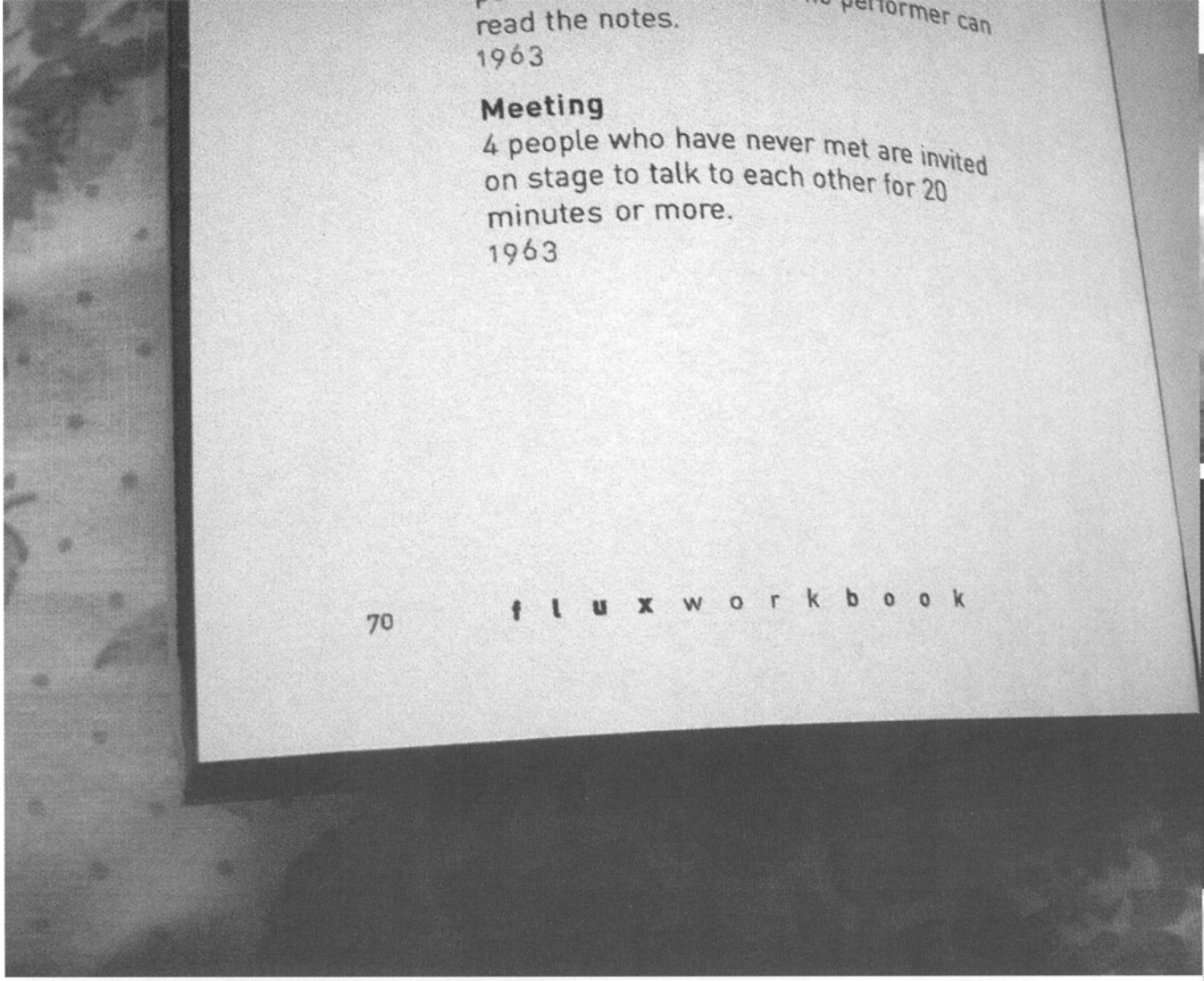


'Just a Guinness, thank you, Heinrich.'

One might fondly imagine Joseph Beuys himself on Achill Island. He is standing in the drizzle, lecturing his students from the KunstAkademie, pushing a measuring rod deep into the bog to measure the depth of peat that has accumulated these five thousand years: down and down and down, to demonstrate that beneath it, hit by hit, it is possible to trace the direction of ancient field walls, which were built by peacable, suntanned herdsman, who once roamed the shoreline jewelled and beaded, who peeled away the pine woods, grazed soapy herds on the fine pale grass, who slept together in an amorous heap and dreamed of beeswax and felt and honey.

(By the time we came here first in 1983, we had been living together six seven years I suppose – three with children. Now 20 years later here am I, almost the same figure asleep beside me, my identity fined down to a finger-touch, down, down to the boundary stone. It is the lightning-rod to all I have become – nothing left of me beyond the sensation of someone else's shoulder.)

I began making the Workbook during the first week in July. The weather in Mayo had been bad since May and continued to be so: the turf could not be brought in; the hay could not be saved. These are the staple activities of the island summer – performances, as you might guess, both done according to rules transmitted from man to son and daughter: how long the turf should stand in footings on the bog, how the hay should be turned, how the turf should be stacked against the rain, how the hay should be built into little ricks, how the ⇨



ropes that hold the sacking on the tops of the little ricks should be fastened down. And both routines are on the very edge of usefulness, the value of the hay being so little and the store of hay being so great when there is only a single cow to feed, similarly the value of the turf being so negligible – taking into account the electric boiler and the LPG stove and the immersion heater all plugging away.

Nevertheless, they are the right things to talk about: the hay, the turf, the weather, along with the church, the family, the past, the language. And it is the right place to explore everyday verities, as Graham Greene and Catherine Walston would have done in their guilty way, Heinrich Böll too, we also. And having completed the task of the Fluxus Workbook between the 6th and the 24th July and having made these daily observances, on the 25th July, following a novena at the House of Prayer at Achill Sound, we were promised (by Christina Gallagher) a miraculous appearance of the Virgin Mary.

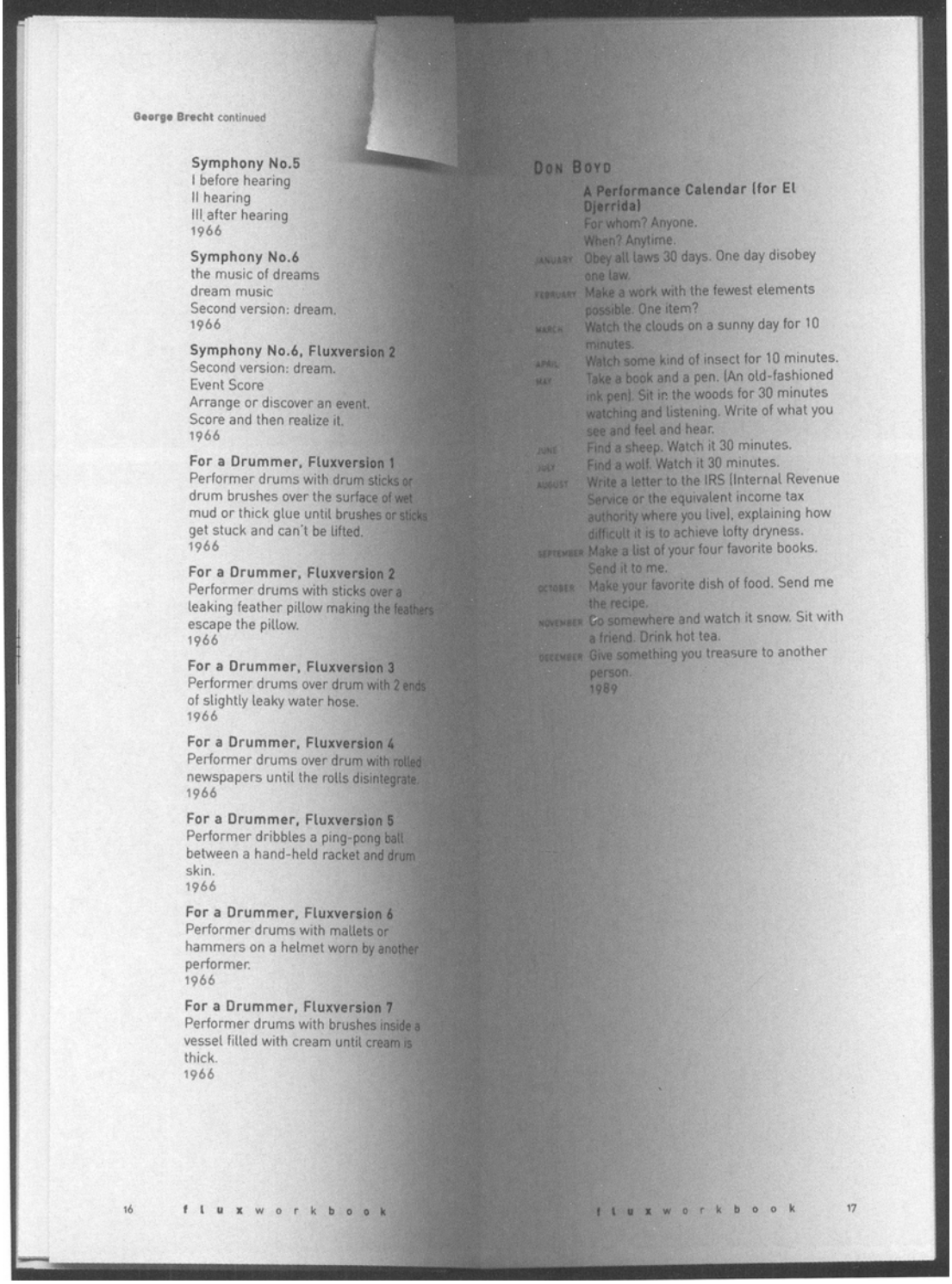
These are the devotions we performed:
DAY 16
Rise 7.30
Wash and dress, etc.
Breakfast, etc.
Walk to jetty
Photograph horizon (an embellishment)
Return
Fluxus Workbook
Lunch
Climb mountain
Free time
Bed

DAY 17
Ditto
DAY 18
Ditto
DAY 24
Ditto as far as return from the jetty
Complete Fluxus Workbook
Free time thereafter
DAY 25
Drive to House of Prayer
Kneel before apparition

Christina Gallagher came to Achill from Ballina in the 90s, acquired a convent after rehousing the remnant nuns, and at her new House of Prayer began to perform miracles of healing – terminal cancers being the usual specialty, also injured spines and damaged sight. Those who arrive by coach, who visit the Chapel and pray to the Madonna with Lacerated Eyes, which Christina saw in a Tex-Mex vision, are likely to go home with words like these forming on their tongues:

Did I ever love God before I knew the place
I rest in now, now with my hand
Set in stone, never to move?
For this is love, and this I love
And even my God is here.4

We went to the House of Prayer firstly a week or two before the apparition was due. We looked at the souvenirs. I read some of the testimonials from the healed – photocopies of which were offered in an album with transparent plastic sleeves. It was tied to the wall by a length of string. ⇨



George Brecht continued

Symphony No.5
I before hearing
II hearing
III after hearing
1966

Symphony No.6
the music of dreams
dream music
Second version: dream.
1966

Symphony No.6, Fluxversion 2
Second version: dream.
Event Score
Arrange or discover an event.
Score and then realize it.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 1
Performer drums with drum sticks or drum brushes over the surface of wet mud or thick glue until brushes or sticks get stuck and can't be lifted.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 2
Performer drums with sticks over a leaking feather pillow making the feathers escape the pillow.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 3
Performer drums over drum with 2 ends of slightly leaky water hose.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 4
Performer drums over drum with rolled newspapers until the rolls disintegrate.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 5
Performer dribbles a ping-pong ball between a hand-held racket and drum skin.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 6
Performer drums with mallets or hammers on a helmet worn by another performer.
1966

For a Drummer, Fluxversion 7
Performer drums with brushes inside a vessel filled with cream until cream is thick.
1966

16 f l u x w o r k b o o k

DON BOYD

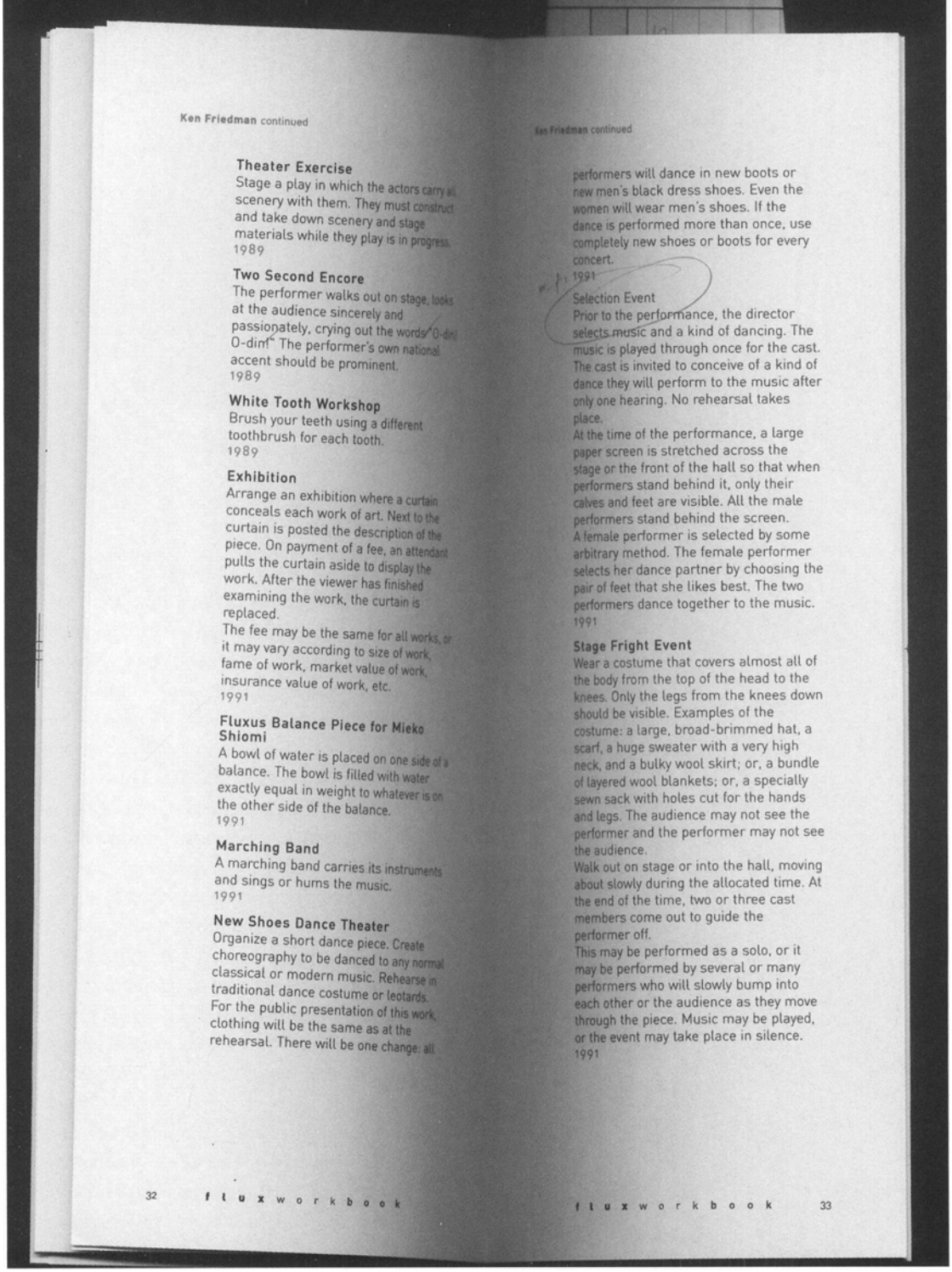
A Performance Calendar (for El Djerrida)
For whom? Anyone.
When? Anytime.
JANUARY Obey all laws 30 days. One day disobey one law.
FEBRUARY Make a work with the fewest elements possible. One item?
MARCH Watch the clouds on a sunny day for 10 minutes.
APRIL Watch some kind of insect for 10 minutes.
MAY Take a book and a pen. (An old-fashioned ink pen). Sit in the woods for 30 minutes watching and listening. Write of what you see and feel and hear.
JUNE Find a sheep. Watch it 30 minutes.
JULY Find a wolf. Watch it 30 minutes.
AUGUST Write a letter to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service or the equivalent income tax authority where you live), explaining how difficult it is to achieve lofty dryness.
SEPTEMBER Make a list of your four favorite books. Send it to me.
OCTOBER Make your favorite dish of food. Send me the recipe.
NOVEMBER Go somewhere and watch it snow. Sit with a friend. Drink hot tea.
DECEMBER Give something you treasure to another person.
1989

f l u x w o r k b o o k 17

It is natural to look for evidence of fakery, imagining winter evening's by the Gallagher fire copying down symptoms from Medicare, but, of course, on reflection, the letters must be genuine. For the same reason we will write love letters in order to be in love, wouldn't we write to Christina confessing a cure – in order to be cured. Why not? The miracle is not that the letters come, only that they are so few.

'I have no need to write to you or talk to you, you know everything before I can speak, but when one loves, one feels the need to use the same old ways one has always used. I know I am only beginning to love, but already I want to abandon everybody but you; only fear and habit prevent me, Dear ...'5

Behind the shop there was a cafeteria and in one corner a door leading, we supposed, to Christina's private quarters. The door had a security keypad next to it, which might have gone unnoticed did not members of the Gallagher family wander in and out every few moments, each time having to disable or to re-arm the lock. You



Ken Friedman continued

Theater Exercise
Stage a play in which the actors carry all scenery with them. They must construct and take down scenery and stage materials while they play is in progress.
1989

Two Second Encore
The performer walks out on stage, looks at the audience sincerely and passionately, crying out the words "O-din! O-din!" The performer's own national accent should be prominent.
1989

White Tooth Workshop
Brush your teeth using a different toothbrush for each tooth.
1989

Exhibition
Arrange an exhibition where a curtain conceals each work of art. Next to the curtain is posted the description of the piece. On payment of a fee, an attendant pulls the curtain aside to display the work. After the viewer has finished examining the work, the curtain is replaced.
The fee may be the same for all works, or it may vary according to size of work, fame of work, market value of work, insurance value of work, etc.
1991

Fluxus Balance Piece for Mieko Shiomi
A bowl of water is placed on one side of a balance. The bowl is filled with water exactly equal in weight to whatever is on the other side of the balance.
1991

Marching Band
A marching band carries its instruments and sings or hums the music.
1991

New Shoes Dance Theater
Organize a short dance piece. Create choreography to be danced to any normal classical or modern music. Rehearse in traditional dance costume or leotards. For the public presentation of this work, clothing will be the same as at the rehearsal. There will be one change: all

Ken Friedman continued

performers will dance in new boots or new men's black dress shoes. Even the women will wear men's shoes. If the dance is performed more than once, use completely new shoes or boots for every concert.
1991

Selection Event
Prior to the performance, the director selects music and a kind of dancing. The music is played through once for the cast. The cast is invited to conceive of a kind of dance they will perform to the music after only one hearing. No rehearsal takes place.
At the time of the performance, a large paper screen is stretched across the stage or the front of the hall so that when performers stand behind it, only their calves and feet are visible. All the male performers stand behind the screen.
A female performer is selected by some arbitrary method. The female performer selects her dance partner by choosing the pair of feet that she likes best. The two performers dance together to the music.
1991

Stage Fright Event
Wear a costume that covers almost all of the body from the top of the head to the knees. Only the legs from the knees down should be visible. Examples of the costume: a large, broad-brimmed hat, a scarf, a huge sweater with a very high neck, and a bulky wool skirt; or, a bundle of layered wool blankets; or, a specially sewn sack with holes cut for the hands and legs. The audience may not see the performer and the performer may not see the audience.
Walk out on stage or into the hall, moving about slowly during the allocated time. At the end of the time, two or three cast members come out to guide the performer off.
This may be performed as a solo, or it may be performed by several or many performers who will slowly bump into each other or the audience as they move through the piece. Music may be played, or the event may take place in silence.
1991

could tell they were family because they were all wearing new Nike sports shoes – also white elasticated trousers and T-shirt tops, like tennis coaches. The boy eyed us eyeing him and accused us of trying to memorise the combination on the lock.

On the day of the apparition we drove to several corners of the island to watch the clouds. All morning the sky was extraordinarily dramatic, twisted into ringlets or furled like velvet draperies, ready to be drawn back miraculously to reveal a face.

We visited the House of Prayer twice in the course of the day: once to see the crowds gathering in the car park and to watch the model of the Madonna weeping blood being paraded for people to touch; again in the evening when they were taking down the sideshows. There was still a crush inside the chapel. The painting of the Madonna was displayed on a sort of side altar, hedged about with lilies and cleverly lit from behind so that she seemed to glow, and the blood from her lacerated eyes was blackened. KEVIN MOUNT

1 from 'Under the mountain' by Louis MacNeice, *The Collected Poems*, Faber and Faber, 1966
2 from 'When God Made Time' by Heinrich Böll, collected in *Irish Journal: A traveller's portrait of Ireland*, Abacus, 1984
3 from 'Manifesto on the Foundation of a Free International School for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research' by Joseph Beuys and Heinrich Böll' collected in *Joseph Beuys in America*, Four Walls Eight Windows, New York, 1993
4 verse by Graham Greene, reputedly written on or about Achill Island
5 Graham Greene, *The End of the Affair*, Heinemann, 1951

The Brechtian Event Score: A Structure in Fluxus

Julia E. Robinson

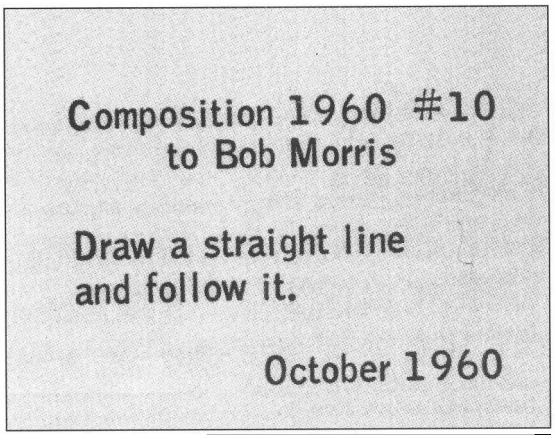
After unfurling a long roll of white paper across the stage, Nam June Paik dipped his head into a bowl containing black ink. He then proceeded to perform a painted line – marking indices of hair and hands – from one end of the paper to the other. This piece, known as *Zen for Head*, was one of the signature performances at the first Fluxus concert series in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1962. Several months later at the Festum Fluxorum in Düsseldorf, George Maciunas, the founder of Fluxus,[1] would perform another paradigmatic work, George Brecht's *Drip Music*. From the top of a tall ladder Maciunas gently tilted a large white jug, allowing the water it contained to be released, in small drips, into a vessel below. The microphone attached to the vessel on the floor made the individual drips the focus of the piece, filling the room with an acoustic all-overness.[2]

Both the Paik and the Maciunas performances were adaptations of scores by absent authors. Paik's *Zen for Head* departed from the La Monte Young score, *Composition 1960 #10, To Bob Morris*, which instructed the performer to 'draw a straight line and follow it'; and Maciunas, as we have said, enacted, much more directly, the 1959 score by George Brecht entitled *Drip Music*. In their deployment of the gestural index as performance, both of these works display a debt to Jackson Pollock, albeit recoded in the terms of a radically different historical moment.[3] Clearly, they were not the first of such performative gestures in response to Pollock.

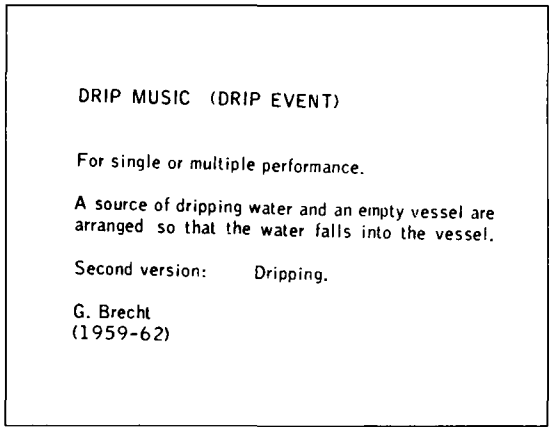
Apart from its important reference to Japanese art, the paper scroll from Paik's *Zen for Head* recalls the 1953 Rauschenberg/Cage collaboration, *Automobile Tire Print* in which Rauschenberg inked the tires of a car and laid out 20 sheets of paper, and

• (Facing page) Nam June Paik, *Zen for Head* (1962), performance at Wiesbaden. Photo: DPA Reporters
• George Brecht, *Drip Music* (Düsseldorf). Photo: Manfred Leve

Performance Research 7(3), pp.110-123 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002



• La Monte Young, *Composition 1960 #10*. October 1960. Reproduced with permission from *An Anthology* (1963) © La Monte Young 1963, 1970



• George Brecht, *Drip Music* (1959–62)

Cage drove the car over the paper. In fact, both *Zen for Head* and *Automobile Tire Print* reveal an attempt to process the licenses and limitations bequeathed by Pollock to subsequent generations of artists. The limitations were also symptomatic of the immediate postwar circumstances, of what Theodor Adorno has termed 'administered' society.[4] The crux and the verdict of this processing of Pollock by the next generation, pivoted on the question of whether the profound simplicity of the act, and the focus on the performative aspect, would serve only to underscore the fact of limited means, or whether it might generate new forms of artistic agency.[5]

Zen for Head and *Drip Music* represent the polar opposites of Fluxus and the Cagean legacy that was its inspiration: on the one hand 'action music', and on the other 'The Event'.[6] They are the Dionysian and the Apollonian extremes that are equally part of Fluxus' uneven, not to say chaotic, reputation. Paik's dramatic expressiveness, full of a certain excitement or unpredictability, contrasts greatly with the quiet, focused enactment typical of performances of the Brecht piece. These two realizations are also, in some palpable sense, a kind of distorted mirror image of each other: two artists, two buckets, two deployments of drips, with a relational kinship but always remaining fundamentally oppositional. Paik's insertion of himself as instrument in the act of *drawing a straight line* ends up somehow debasing the head, the site of intentionality, by making it the 'tool' of painting rather than its conceptualizing agent. At the same time the gesture seems to pronounce the sphere of artistic creativity – which had been recorded in layers, in surfaces and depths, as a complex and idiosyncratic process in Pollock – reduced now to the unidirectional painterly line remaining as the record of an event.

The Brecht piece, on the other hand, while seeming much more austere and simple, generates a vast range of new possibilities precisely because it leaves no material trace of a dialogue with painting. Instead, it constitutes itself simply as score/object, or within the temporal bracket of the performance. Recoding the visual gesture in acoustic terms, *Drip Music* completely envelops the audience and implicates them in the action. The slight difference in Maciunas' version of *Drip Music* of introducing the high ladder (as opposed to the humble chair that Brecht had originally used) evinces Maciunas' flair for the dramatic, but beyond this, his realization was remarkably faithful to the more ascetic predispositions of the composer/artist George Brecht. Here, the way in which the score is open to subjective intervention, and how this opportunity is taken up, is crucial. Maciunas' fidelity to Brecht was a *choice* made simply out of respect for Brecht's concerns, but as is the case for most of the scores used in Fluxus performance, the

interpretation of a Brecht score is broadly changeable according to the interests of the performer. So if Maciunas' slight change represents a small liberty taken, in the spirit of the text that is put into circulation at a remove from its author, Paik's *Zen For Head* stands out for the much larger liberties it took with La Monte Young's score, in effect, a *re-authoring*.[7] Thus Maciunas' performance in Düsseldorf is still remembered as Brecht's *Drip Music* while Paik's has been known ever since, not as *Composition 1960 #10*, but *Zen for Head*. While the many recodings legible in *Drip Music* propose a new sphere of performative possibility, Paik's dramatic painterly act showed, ironically, the extent to which so many possibilities had been foreclosed upon.

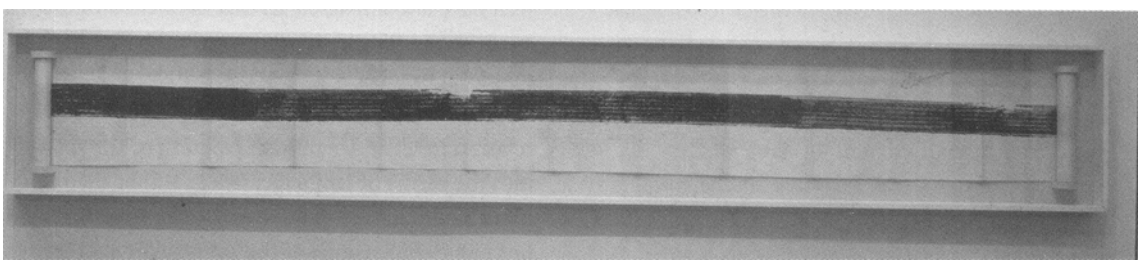
I use these two examples to demonstrate the way in which the 'event score' in Fluxus mapped out the realms of the possible for these artists, both in the most limited and the most expansive senses. It was the matrix delimiting a profoundly new sphere of artistic action within whose interstices each new interpreter could insert their own highly subjective response to the given propositions. George Brecht borrowed the term 'event' – from its uses in music and in science – and developed it within his own work in the years prior to the founding of Fluxus in 1962.[8] In his notes he sketched out his idea of the event in the following terms:

> In composing music, the composer permits an experience by arranging a situation within which sound arises. If a musical score . . . prepares a musical sound situation, the event-score prepares one for events in all dimensions . . . Rather than 'an image of a concrete moment in life' it is a signal preparing one for the moment itself. . . . Event-scores prepare one for an event to happen in one's own 'now'.[9]

By defining the work of art through the condition of complete contingency – refusing the foreclosure of singular authorship or a singular, ideal performance let alone an object – the event score exists as a new matrix through which to read artistic investment, and one which demands to be read with reoriented or revised theoretical approaches. In privileging a conceptual framework designating the terms of a work, its very status as a work, the event score has obvious roots in the Duchampian readymade, but in defining itself as performance the Fluxus event relinquishes the coherence of the discrete artistic gesture and implicitly expands the critique of the art object.[10]

The crux of the event score is its shift of focus away from the object to the very enactment of the artist's decision-making processes – the very criteria out of which a work is composed. Defined as it is, in terms of musical structures, the event score represents a radical conceptual move that cannot be understood without John Cage's singular redefinition of the notion of composition. Cage turned his back on the instrumentalized process of music making – from score to performance to recording – that had become stale with the demands of bourgeois taste, and he opened up the heretofore elevated and solipsistic space of composing, making available the *labor* rather than the *product* to those who wanted to know it. Implicit in this extension of the principle of composing was the reinvesting of composition itself

• Robert Rauschenberg, *Tire Print* (Collaboration with John Cage), 1953. © Robert Rauschenberg/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY



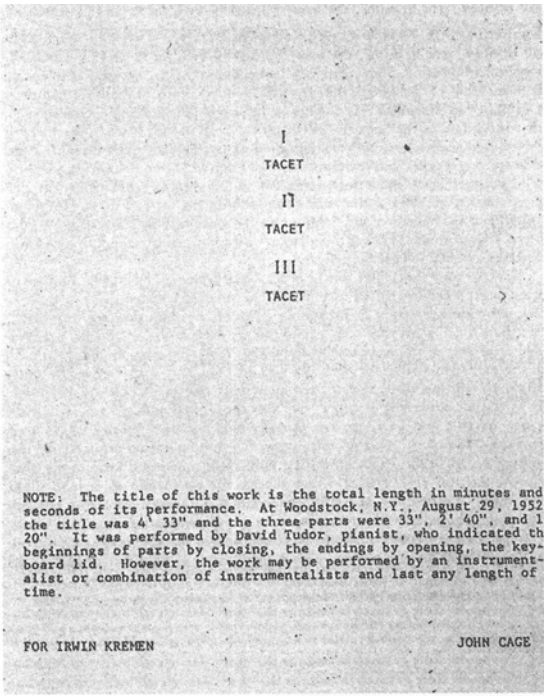
with all the generative power of the new, the contingent, and a spectrum of chance possibilities freed from the strictures of genre and medium.[11]

A crucial distinction that begins with Cage, between avantgarde and neo-avantgarde practices, is the location of the sphere of the critique, not within a positive field of direct action (as in Dada) but rather in a focus on the positive aspects of negation.[12] This calls to mind Adorno's argument, in the context of new music, that the possibility inherent in the political context available to the Dadaists, such as it was, had ceased to exist. He suggests that radical activities of the early 1960s were challenged by

> the impossibility today of that politics on which Dadaism still relied. 'Action Painting' [and] 'action composing' [says Adorno] are cryptograms of the direct action that has now been ruled out; they have arisen in an age in which every such action is either forestalled by technology or recuperated by an administered world.
>
> (Adorno 1992: 316)

More plausible as a space for operation, to the first generation of postwar artists, were the ignored or unprivileged spaces, the negative registers of everyday life.

Cage's influence was felt beyond his own sphere of international New Music circles through the vehicle of the 'Experimental Composition' classes he gave at the New School for Social Research in New York, particularly between 1957 and 1959. Emphasizing composition as a tool for experimentation, and even preferring that his students had no background in music, Cage opened up his teachings to a generation of artists many of whom would never again use his compositional principles specifically for music. Rather, they would seize upon the structural elements of time, and the score that he directed them towards, in order to bring the notion of composition into a greatly expanded conceptual register. Members of Cage's class, including Jackson Mac Low, Allan Kaprow, Al Hansen, George Brecht and Dick Higgins, would eventually elaborate Cage's criteria to rework the aesthetic concerns of their generation, particularly in sound poetry, happenings and Fluxus. Cage


I

TACET

II

TACET

III

TACET

NOTE: The title of this work is the total length in minutes and seconds of its performance. At Woodstock, N.Y., August 29, 1952 the title was 4' 33" and the three parts were 33", 2' 40", and 1 20". It was performed by David Tudor, pianist, who indicated th beginnings of parts by closing, the endings by opening, the keyboard lid. However, the work may be performed by an instrumentalist or combination of instrumentalists and last any length of time.

FOR IRWIN KREMEN JOHN CAGE

• John Cage, Score for *4'33"*, 1952. First published version © 1960 by C. F. Peters Corporation. Used by permission. All rights reserved

prescribed the creation of new compositions as homework, and the class members would read their scores and often perform them during class. While some of the pieces still involved the use of musical instruments, albeit unconventionally, others expanded the notion of scoring outward into everyday activities. George Brecht's 1959 score *Time Table Music* required the class to reconvene at Grand Central Station and use the train time-tables as chance timers of their event. The score instructed performers to select a time from the list, say 7:16, which would designate the duration of the performance (as seven minutes and sixteen seconds long). While individual actions differed from performer to performer, for Brecht the event may well have encompassed all that happened in the space of the railway station within the designated temporal bracket.

When we consider the Fluxus event score in relation to Cage, the transformation of the score into the terms of language, words rather than notes, plays a pivotal role. The work of Liz Kotz on the linguistic dimensions of the event score has been

immensely valuable in exploring this conceptual development (see Kotz 2000, 2001). In her discussion of what she calls a 'post-Cagean aesthetics', Kotz considers the implications of transforming the musical score into 'an autonomous, textual and graphic object' – part and parcel of which, one would want to emphasize, was a move into vernacular language. Kotz shows how this transformation begins with Cage, exemplified by the first published score for his silent piece, *4'33"*, which replaces traditional musical notation with the words 'tacet', repeated three times, and introduces the vernacular by including a verbal explanation of how the piece can be performed. This introduction of the vernacular might be seen to echo, with words, what Cage had already done with everyday objects – such as the nails and spoons he inserted into his prepared pianos.

What is crucial about everyday language is that it is the very theater within which human subjectivity is articulated, precisely that space prior to the exalted spheres of intellectual and aesthetic sublimation. It is this subjective and socialized property of the linguistic register that I would like to bring into focus, in order to interpret the role of the event score in Fluxus performance.

Considered theoretically, the crucial shift that we find beginning with Cage might be paralleled with the shift in the approach to subjectivity between Freud and Lacan, where the crucial Freudian territory of the unconscious is mapped by Lacan and refracted into the performative space of language. Lacan theorized the unconscious like a script, given to each subject, introducing limitations to his or her manner of operating in the world. And crucially, he made its criteria symbolic and transferable, or generalizable, in the sense of a mathematical equation that can be read and reapplied. Contemporaneously, and in a related way, Cage brought into focus the vast territory of negated or unacknowledged acoustic effects, by making them part of the score. He took an entire sphere which had always existed outside of musical intentionality – like the unconscious is outside of subjective intentionality – and refracted it into a new language, whose terms could be articulated and motivated. In this sense Cage subjected the defining terms of musical language to a 'declension' of sorts, adding new parts to the pure form and relativizing the masterstrokes in favor of silence (or non-intentional sound).[13] In fact, Cage conceived silence, like the unconscious, as a space that, though cryptic in its presence and regularly misunderstood, if not ignored, was far from empty.

Out of all the Cage students, Brecht was probably the one most concerned with the structural relationships involved in composing – the way a composition is generated out of differences. Brecht attempted to shift and expand the essential criteria set out by Cage – those of music: such as duration, timbre, pitch, amplitude – to abstract such differentiating components and give them numerous applications (which he meticulously transcribed in his published notebooks of this period) (Brecht 1991). Brecht scored everything from the plucking of a comb (in *Comb Music* 1959–62) to the mundane operations of cars like the action of the windscreen wipers, the headlights, the horn, or the opening and closing of the trunk in his famous car concert of 1960, *Motor*

• John Cage preparing a piano (pre-1960). Used by permission, John Cage Trust

Vehicle Sundown Event, dedicated to Cage. He even had a score for television sets written in 1959, some years before Nam June Paik would likewise take the compositional cue from Cage and bring it to television.

One important early application of scoring by Brecht was his card game *Solitaire*, a piece that was part of his first solo exhibition at the Reuben Gallery in New York, in 1959, to which he gave the poignantly temporal and musical title 'toward events: an arrangement'. *Solitaire* was a game made up of 27 cards for which Brecht had devised all new criteria needed in order for it to be operable. Instead of all the differentials of sound in a musical piece, or the spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs of a traditional card game, Brecht chose shapes and forms from the world – such as animal, vegetable, mineral, curvilinear, rectilinear, irregular – and retained only the abridged numerical criteria: one, two and three. It was up to each player to choose what Brecht referred to as an 'effective variable'. Being equally reliant upon the structural criteria of the game and the eventual player's subjective processes of decision-making, Brecht's *Solitaire* is both an act of original composing and, simultaneously, an act of emancipating the receiver, creating conditions in which the subject, the spectator, is performatively implicated in the realization of the work.

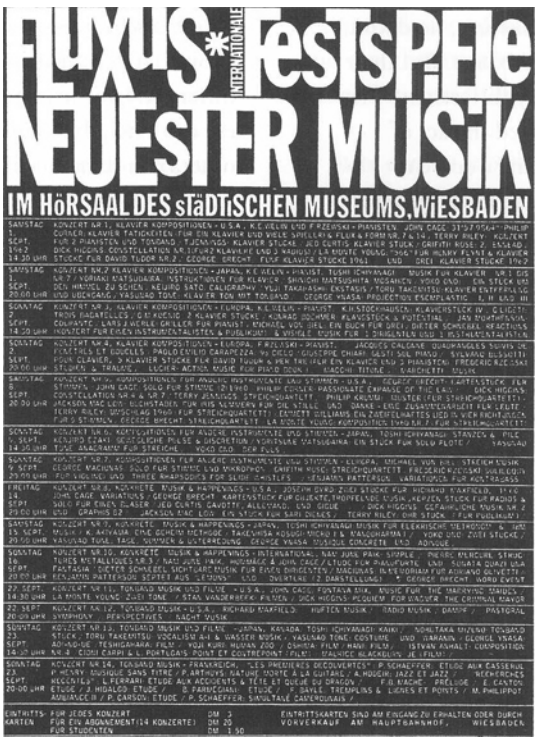
It becomes clear through examining the everyday aspects of Brecht's work, and their motivation via the score structure, that Brecht was contending with two important models of performance: not only the one established by the Cagean score, but also the starting-point for such conceptual mobility, the Duchampian readymade. In the very fact that it is defined by a performative act on the part of Duchamp, 'this is a work of art', the readymade – like the event score – exists in a state of contingency. The readymade can be seen to rely on contingent or arbitrary designations of its status: either the primary subjective designation, which lifts it out of the sameness of ill-defined quotidian objects, or its condition of incompleteness, underscored by Duchamp, prior to spectatorial reception. But if the readymade concept can be thought of as a performative act that defines an *object*, Brecht's event score might be rethought, as a performative act that defines a *subject*.

It is a piece like *Solitaire* that makes this difference clear. Though not an event score, in the strictest sense, it was a conceptual structure, or set of principles, that elicited subjective play, which would be different depending on the player. Clearly, Brecht was making a proposition to the spectator or participant, like Duchamp had done, but he also sparked their free apprehension of the given terms, transforming the 'work' into something the author could not have conceived. Such freedom seems, at first, very Cagean – like the scope offered by Cage's do-it-yourself score *Fontana Mix* (1958) which allows the subject to select all the elements which will be articulated by chance within a matrix of Cage's devising. With this connection made, however, it soon becomes clear that Brecht's propositions chart a range of subjective outcomes left undeveloped by Cage. Brecht provides a structure that parallels everyday subjective apprehension of the world and also allows for a reinvestment in this very process. This almost figurative parallel between the operations of everyday subjectivity and those of a card game, is an astute one, that Lacan also makes. He describes it in the following terms:

> the subject enters the game as the dummy (*mort*) but it is as a living being that he (sic) plays it; it is in his life that he must take up the suit (*couleur*) that he may bid. He will do so by means of a set of imaginary figures, selected from among innumerable forms of animic relations, the choice of which involves a certain arbitrariness . . . it must be numerically reduced.
>
> (Lacan 1977a: 196)

Indeed, it is this Lacanian definition of subjectivity – as the navigation of a series of prescribed limitations, mobilizing the arbitrary and the symbolic – that gets us to the heart of the operation of the score as it is played out in Fluxus. While Maciunas favored the Brecht format, the range of scores

created by different artists in the group after 1962 would widen exponentially: from the austere to the outrageous. Another artist who favored the simplicity and directness that Brecht had settled on was Alison Knowles, though her scores are generally textured by a certain narrative subtlety and they have, perhaps, a more nuanced, often utilitarian relationship to the quotidian. Knowles's 1962 score *Proposition #6, Shoes of Your Choice* is one of the more explicit examples of the insertion of the subject into language. It proposes that the subject, an audience member, should describe a pair of shoes – either the ones they are wearing or another pair. They are instructed to talk about where they got them, the size, color and why they like them. In a now famous realization of this piece at the ICA in London, Pop artist Richard Hamilton removed one of his shoes and took to the microphone for over half an hour.



• George Maciunas (design). Poster *Fluxus Festspiele Nuester Musik*, Wiesbaden 1962, The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit. Used by permission

Thus the simple white event card, with a few lines of type stipulating a series of actions or ideas, was to generate a vast array of idiosyncratic interpretations and bring together a diverse group of artists – including more women and more different nationalities than any avant-garde group before them – for whom such new strategies of experimental composition were the crucial register.

So why is it that composition should be a focus of artistic activity in this early postwar period? How can we imagine that this was perceived as such an important vehicle for human agency? Any direct pursuit of the stated roots of Fluxus, such as Dada, Futurism and Surrealism, lead us, at best, to only vague answers to such questions.

Much of this information comes from readings of the numerous charts and manifestos Maciunas conceived and circulated, such as his 1962 *Neo Dada in Music, Theater, Poetry and Art*, in an effort to make Fluxus legible within a known genealogy.[14] He also titled the first Fluxus concert series in Wiesbaden, in the same year, *Fluxus Festspiele Neuester Musik*, linking Fluxus explicitly to New Music whose center in Darmstadt, Germany, was in proximity to the cities that hosted the Fluxus concerts. The fact that historians have taken Maciunas at his own word, assuming direct connections from these conceptual links, has substantially obfuscated the terms through which Fluxus has been read. The geographic and historical proximity of New Music and Fluxus points to more plausible links than the somewhat grandiose associations Maciunas was concerned to make. If we are to go by Adorno's reading of New Music, those composers deployed technology to force limitations on expressionism in order, as he said, 'to register the violence done to the idiom' of music. For the New Music composers, then, technology was a medium used to recognize agency undercut, less malleable, more thwarted in the postwar moment. While in Fluxus performance it was the circumscribed conditions of the score that were introduced in order to acknowledge the more restricted field of agency. And, rather than music, it

was the human subject, full of idiosyncrasies not to say pathologies, that was fed through this matrix of limitations in order to pursue what possibilities there were for postwar artistic practice.[15]

Above all, Fluxus and New Music had in common a profound insight into what seemed no longer possible and the recognition that utopian ideas for the possibilities of radical gestures, such as might be argued for the historical avantgarde, were by now an anachronism. And Fluxus shared New Music's commitment to composition, no doubt, largely through the influence of Cage. But their responses were articulated very differently. The event structure in Fluxus posited the act of composing – whether composing a score or composing oneself, one's own actions during a performance – as a way of renewing or reinventing relationships, between subjects and subjects, or subjects and objects, and took a great deal of pleasure in this process.

The most profound Fluxus pieces are very often the simplest ones. In fact, one of the most important contributions of Fluxus to the early postwar period is the way it constituted a field of artistic intervention that recognized the radically altered conditions of language, of the art object, and of social interaction itself; and, further, that it gave such conditions a structure through which they could be read, rearticulated, or polemicized. The event score governing Fluxus performance is a complex structure that almost reaches the level of an episteme, operating, importantly, on levels of both the individual and the collective.[16] An exemplary piece, in this vein, is Maciunas' *In Memoriam: Adriano Olivetti* (1962), which would become a centerpiece for numerous Fluxus festivals. The score called for around ten performers to stand in a line, facing the audience. Each performer had their own mini-score generated from an Olivetti adding machine whose differing numerical codes would give them their cues. Timing themselves with the assistance of a metronome on the floor in front of the group, one or more performers would lift their hat (and if the score called for it, hold it up for several seconds, or simply up and down in one count), or they would likewise open and close an umbrella.

In Memoriam: Adriano Olivetti has often been executed with the performers in suits with bowler hats and black or white umbrellas making the presenting of the piece look amusingly debonair while, at the same time, painfully mundane.[17] With the chance interspersing of the same instructions, executed at different moments for different durations, the actions register robotic sameness which nonetheless contains windows for subtle subjective responses: the way people lift their hat differently, for instance, or the way some performers can't help but smile when they do so while others can remain austere and expressionless. It is fitting that *In Memoriam: Adriano Olivetti* was conceived by Fluxus' founder and most generative force, George Maciunas, because of its almost archetypal deployment of score and performance.[18] It both galvanizes and distinguishes the performers, charting a dialectics of control and freedom, one cueing the other, and leaves the audience with an undecidable after-image, hovering strangely between collectivity and alienation. Undoubtedly, *In Memoriam: Adriano Olivetti* and Maciunas himself celebrate the former, the collective, as well as registering alienation. Usually, they do both at once.

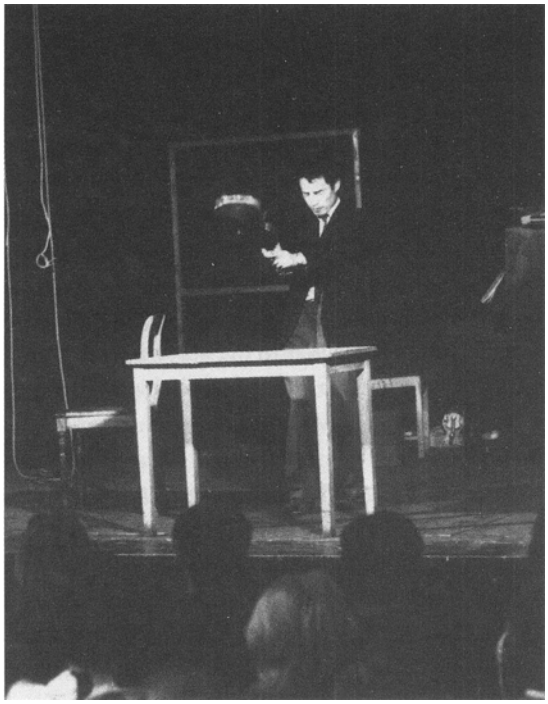
If such complex possibilities for the subject were charted in the mappings of 'negated space' by Cage (and by Lacan, albeit in another context), then Fluxus might be the first moment in which these newly discernible matrices of experience were fully tested. What the Paik, Brecht, Knowles and Maciunas pieces I have discussed show, after all, are not only the self-imposed limitations inherent in a practice which departs from a set of linguistic instructions but, as importantly, in their very range (and so many more examples could be cited) they show the enormously generative role of Fluxus scores. To return to Brecht and Paik, a final example of these extremes is exhibited profoundly in respective violin solos for violin: Paik's concept being that of destruction and Brecht's simply (as the score states) 'polishing'.

It is significant that the first Fluxus concerts in 1962 and 1963 occurred in Germany, in Wiesbaden and Düsseldorf, the bleakest of postwar cultural environments. The common German word by which these concerts would have been announced – 'vorstellung' – seems peculiarly apt for Fluxus because it is, like a score itself, a signifier which carries multiple possibilities for signification. 'Vorstellung' carries the essential meaning of visually setting something before. The same word stands for 'performance', the act of introducing someone or presenting oneself; or, purely, the imagination (the notion of setting an idea before the mind's eye); finally, it can mean to envisage, in the sense of having foresight. Fluxus' approach to artistic practice is one that troubles the instrumentalized codes within communication and the production of art. Fluxus chose composition at a moment when pre-existing aesthetic codes seemed no longer clear or plausible, an historical moment that had witnessed how the march of advanced capitalist society could be brought to a grinding halt and how its mere reconstruction in the post-war period could seem hard to accept.[19]

In a lecture delivered to the International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Zurich in July 1949, now well-known as 'The Mirror Stage', Lacan evoked the circumstances of radically altered inter-human relations peculiar to the postwar moment and cast these in terms of an ineluctable challenge to aesthetic practice:

> At the culmination of the historical effort of a society to refuse to recognize that it has any function other than a utilitarian one, and in the anxiety of the individual confronting the concentrational (*concentrationnaire*) form of the social bond that seems to crown this effort,

• George Maciunas, ***In Memoriam: Adriano Olivetti***, performance in Düsseldorf, 1963. Photo by Manfred Leve. Used by permission



• Nam June Paik performing his *One for Violin Solo*, Düsseldorf, 1962. Photograph by George Maciunas from The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit. Used by permission

> existentialism must be judged by the explanations it gives of the subjective impasses that have resulted from it. . . . (Lacan 1977b: 6)[20]

It is within this context that the unique contribution of Fluxus should be set. Both acknowledging and running counter to an involuntary condition of 'concentrational' social bonding, the performative realizations of Fluxus set before the subject an interpretive sphere that neither legislates nor enframes. Grounding its practice in the linguistic score, as if to recall the unfettered, primary operation of the linguistic signifier (albeit in artistic terms), Fluxus departs from an arena of symbolic reduction. In a manner and form that has remained cryptic to many historians, Fluxus introduces, it imagines, it performs, it envisages. Finally, it holds out the promise of numerous possibilities for 'vorstellung'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper was first given at a symposium titled 'The Dada Idea' organized by Hal Foster at Princeton University, 7 December 2001. I am most grateful to Hal Foster for that opportunity and for his support of this work. I would also like to thank those who contributed greatly to the first stages of my reworking and developing the paper: in particular Branden Joseph who allowed me an additional meeting of his seminar to present it. I am grateful for Branden's valuable feedback and for that of my colleagues Suzanne Hudson, Kaira Cabanas, William McManus and Eva Diaz. And for the funding for the reproductions I have been able to include here I would like to express my appreciation to the publications committee in the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton, and to Susan Lehre for all her generous assistance.

NOTES

1 By referring to Maciunas as the 'founder' of Fluxus I do not mean to suggest that he was the catalyst, or even the midwife to the individual practices of any of the artists associated with the group, or that these artists were not invested in the types of projects and conceptual frameworks that came to be identified with Fluxus prior to their encounter with Maciunas. It is well-known that the word Fluxus was coined by Maciunas for a magazine he intended to lauch in 1961–2 and that the term migrated, and came to be used in association with the early concerts in Wiesbaden and Düsseldorf – where the artists involved were called 'die Fluxus Leute' – and onward from there. It may be personal bias but I am persuaded from my research that Maciunas was the generative force behind the early activities of the group of artists who chose to be associated with 'Fluxus'.

2 Obviously all 'musical' concerts surround the audience with sound, an effect related to the one I describe; but by using the term 'acoustic all-overness' I mean to link explicitly the Brecht piece with the performative dripping of Pollock: and the prevalence of the term 'all-overness' in Pollock literature.

3 Brecht's serious consideration of Pollock in this period is documented in his essay 'Chance Imagery', self-published as a pamphlet in 1959 and later republished (Brecht 1966); and also in his 'chance paintings' of the late 1950s – one of which is reproduced in Martin (1978). Paik's relationship to Pollock is less clear. While the references of *Zen for Head* clearly far exceed the Pollock legacy – they might be thought of as Paik's attempt to address the 'licences and limitations' of painting at large – undoubtedly the piece relates to Paik's experience/background living in Korea and Japan, and its underlying reference is to the tradition of Zen calligraphy as much if not more than American art. However, it is difficult to think of the antithetical gestures of this generation of artists, Oedipal or otherwise, as somehow removed from the enormous legacy of Pollock (though clearly some artists were more explicit about this relationship than others). For further discussion of the influence of Zen see Doris (1998: 91–136).

• George Brecht performing his *Solo for Violin*, New York City, 1964. Photograph by Peter Moore © Estate of Peter Moore/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY

4 The term administered is crucial to Adorno's work, such that it is difficult to cite isolated examples as singularly defining. Stated simply, he means it to refer to post-industrial society governed not by the production of goods but by the administration of capital. This was coined to refer to new socio-economic circumstances post-World War II through the 1960s, but which clearly persist in the present. For one version of this discussion see Adorno (1997: 229).

5 The question of whether Abstract Expressionism seemed to the next generation like the *ne plus ultra* of painting – at least for a certain charged period – or, to reverse this formulation, of Abstract Expressionism's failure to open out onto new forms of agency in painting for its successors – is far too vast a topic to be considered here. For preliminary consideration I would suggest that the radically different post-war environment in general, and the strong influence of John Cage in particular, made it impossible to pursue a single, definitive (or supposedly exhaustive) medium and to invest the work of art with quite the libidinal, not to say egocentric drives that thrived under Abstract Expressionism. One text that captures this rarefied post-war territory for artists is *Project in Multiple Dimensions*, a grant proposal writtten by George Brecht, Allan Kaprow and Robert Watts in 1957 (reproduced in Marter 1999).

6 For a discussion of the distinction between 'action music' and 'the event' see Smith (1998: 72–3).

7 Of course, in music all such texts, as scores, are split from the first inscription of their authors (composers) and put into circulation. The concept of 'authoring' or 're-authoring' becomes more important in Fluxus than it is generally in musical composing because of the ethos of interpretation and regular 'dedication' of scores to particular artists seen to be suited to particular pieces; such as Dick Higgins's or Paik's scores 'for Alison [Knowles]'; or George Brecht's statement that he composed his events to send to friends 'who would know what to do with them'. Maciunas' 'faithful' interpretation of the Brecht score is part of this ethos, while Paik's complete revision of the La Monte Young score explicitly transgresses it.

8 Both Adorno and Cage persistently use the word 'event' in the discourse on music, see Adorno (1998a), especially the chapter 'Vers Une Musique Informelle'; and Cage (in Kostelanetz 1970).

9 George Brecht, 'Events (assembled notes)', unpublished typewritten manuscript, from the Brecht Archive of Hermann Braun, Remscheid, Germany.

10 Here we remember that the proposition of the event-score can signal numerous outcomes: it can be realized as a performance, an object or it can remain as an idea. By relativizing the production of an art object, as only one possibility, the Brechtian event-score expands the Duchampian critique. Figures within Conceptual Art, such as Lawrence Weiner – with his manifesto-like statement that the 'condition' of the work 'rests with the receiver' and that 'the work need not be built' – continue this critique in the next generation (of the late 1960s to early 1970s). While the event-score presents the prospect of producing 'intentional works', to use Ken Friedman's term, as opposed to the found and renamed property of the readymade, works like Alison Knowles's composition *Shoes of Your Choice*, using an existing shoe, and Brecht's lamp event which involves the 'off/on' action performed on an existing light-switch, suggest that there are important instances of the event-score that participate in readymade strategies. In terms of realization of an art object, we might consider Brecht's *Two Durations* (red, green), realized as a found flag, as another such instance. Admittedly, while examples abound in the work of Brecht, for whom Duchamp was crucially important (as he was for Knowles, Robert Watts and others), the spectrum of Fluxus artists and event realizations far exceeds these specific examples and the singular influence of Duchamp.

11 The criterion of 'contingency' – referring to given terms that are subject to the peculiar conditions of their realization which is often only suggested, in futurity, by the shorthand of the score is obviously always part of the musical score. But it is imparted by Cage as a conceptual tool for artists due to his radical development of the traditional practice of scoring and performance.

12 By this seemingly contradictory statement about 'the positive aspects of negation' in Cage, I mean to open up Cage's rejection of traditional roles for the artist or composer – relinquishing the compositional process to chance operations, for instance, as a radical prospect. This is situated against the foreclosure of radicality for the neo-avantgarde (post-World War II), as compared to the strategies of the avantgarde (post-World War I) as defined by Peter Bürger (1984), for example.

13 By a 'declension' I mean to consider music as a language, whose terms Cage rearticulates. If a declension in the linguistic sense refers to the alloying or admixing of nouns, adjectives and pronouns to reflect additional meanings or circumstances (such as gender, case and number), then I apply it to Cage's redeployment of the defining terms of musical composition. Declining also carries the sense of a step down from the highest or foundational forms of the various parts of the given language. Cage 'relativizes the masterstrokes' in the sense that their utter primacy is taken away. So, rather than being singularly defining of music, under Cage these features are rendered completely relative, and the ignored details within the parameters of audibility become their equals.

14 The links to Surrealism and Futurism, amongst many others made, are mapped by Maciunas in his ongoing charts laying out 'sources' and parallels for Fluxus activities. While the charts represent Maciunas'

own view of the Fluxus genealogy, and the evidence of the work of the numerous artists involved with Fluxus suggests otherwise, the chart has been a fundamental source for historians and curators. While this matter is far from agreed upon, and I myself have many reservations about it, the connection of Fluxus to Dada and its offshoots is made in a compelling essay by Jill Johnston (1995).

15 In response to a request to clarify my sense of the 'limitations' set by the event score – rather than simply pleading dialectics – I would argue that the Fluxus score represented great freedom next to the traditional musical score but substantial (and obviously deliberate) limitations in terms of the work of art.

16 I use the term episteme here to designate a foundational unit of knowledge within a field. In this context I posit the structure of the event score as a conceptual foundation not only for Fluxus but for Fluxus' influence on future generations of artists, most notably on Conceptual Art.

17 This attire was part of the tradition established for Fluxus performance of wearing black and white clothes or full formal attire including tuxedos and evening gowns. I thank Ken Friedman for reminding me of this. Still, the particular point here is that with all the performers lined up and acting, by turns, in unison and disjointedly, the uniformity of attire thus contributed a substantial visual impact, in the terms that I describe.

18 This is my own sense of Maciunas' role; many will disagree with me. I accept the qualification given by Ken Friedman that this role I ascribe to Maciunas is most true for the period of the early 1960s and that it (the 'generative force' of Fluxus) was shared by many others.

19 By the 'instrumentalized codes within communication' I mean to refer back to Adorno's conept of an 'administered' society, and the process of instrumentalization of the subject (under Taylorization) mapped by Georg Lukács (1997) under the term 'reification'.

20 Lacan defines his use of 'concentrationnaire' as a post-WWII neologism used 'to describe the life of the concentration camp'.

REFERENCES

Adorno, Theodor (1997) *Aesthetic Theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

—— (1998a) 'Vers une Musique Informelle', in *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, New York: Verso.

—— (1998b) 'Music and New Music', in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, New York: Verso.

Brecht, George (1966) 'Chance Imagery', in *Great Bear Pamphlet*, no.3, New York: Something Else Press.

—— (1991) 'Notebooks, Vols 1–5', in Dieter Daniels and Hermann Braun, Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König.

Bürger, Peter (1984) *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Doris, David T. (1998) 'Zen Vaudeville: A Medi(t)ation in the Margins of Fluxus', in Ken Friedman (ed.) *The Fluxus Reader*, West Sussex, UK: Academy Editions.

Johnston, Jill (1995) 'Dada and Fluxus', in Susan Hapgood, *Neo-Dada*, New York: American Federation for the Arts.

Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) (1970) *John Cage*, New York: Praeger.

Kotz, Liz (2000) 'Language Models in 1960s American Art: From Cage to Warhol', unpublished PhD thesis, Columbia University.

—— (2001) 'Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the "event" Score', in *October* (95), Winter.

Lacan, Jacques (1977a) 'On a Question Preliminary to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis', *Ecrits: A Selection*, London: Tavistock Publications.

—— (1977b) 'The Mirror Stage', *Ecrits: A Selection*, London: Tavistock Publications.

Lukács, Georg (1977) 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat', in *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, Cambridge: MIT Press, 83–209.

Marter, Joan (ed.) (1999) *Off Limits: Rutgers University and the Avant Garde, 1957–63*, Newark, NJ, Rutgers University Press in association with The Newark Museum.

Martin, Henry (1978) *An Introduction to George Brecht's Tumbler on Fire*, Milan: Edizioni Multhipla.

Smith, Owen (1998) 'Early Fluxus in Europe from 1962 through 1963', in *Fluxus: The History of an Attitude*, San Diego: San Diego University Press.

Working with Event Scores: A Personal History

Ken Friedman

EVENTS

Before 1966, I was not an artist. I built things, made objects, undertook actions. I engaged in processes, and I created and enacted events in the physical sense of the term. These were simply things I did. I did not have a specific term for them. I did not call them art. They were philosophical explorations or spiritual quests. In 1966, I began a correspondence with Dick Higgins. In August 1966, I was visiting Higgins in New York. He saw one of my objects and introduced me to George Maciunas. Maciunas introduced me to the idea that what I was doing was art and he introduced me to a vocabulary for the kind of art I was doing. He suggested I score and notate the projects, actions, objects, and constructions I described to him. This brought about the first large group of my scores.

In the fall of 1966, Maciunas decided to produce my collected event scores. As with other artists whose complete works were announced for publication by Fluxus, the boxed collection of scores waited on a large print project that would justify the stiff card stock required for a boxed edition resembling George Brecht's *Water Yam* or Robert Watts's *Events*. Repeatedly postponed, the collection was announced in various newsletters and publication lists over the years. While waiting for the box to appear, I printed up my own scores in different collections, using Xerox, rapid offset multilith, and other media.[1] Unlike other artists, I never lost patience with Maciunas. I waited many years for the long-due box, and I dutifully copyrighted all my events to Fluxus while I waited. I never gave up hope until Maciunas died in 1978. Then, it was obvious that there would be no Fluxus edition of *Events by Ken Friedman*.

The delays had two important results. The first was that I continued to develop and work with event scores in an ever-growing (and occasionally changing) selection of events for the box that never materialized. The second was that I began to exhibit the scores as works of art in their own right. This started when I included scores in exhibitions of other kinds of work. I also exhibited scores along with installations of realized events. In this, I followed the precedent of other artists who also used scores. In 1973, however, I did something that had never been done before. I presented an exhibition that consisted entirely of scores.

This event began with an invitation for a solo exhibition at the University of California at Davis. This exhibition marked the first time that an artist presented an exhibition comprised solely of text-based event scores. The exhibition toured the world in the 1970s, with editions of scores appearing in English and in translation. Various editions of the events scores in this project were exhibited in solo exhibitions in over 50 museums and galleries, some as stand-alone exhibitions of event scores, others in larger exhibitions.[2]

When the premature death of George Maciunas ended the Fluxus publishing program, I continued to work with the event structure, adding to the corpus of events in a continuing series.[3] There were three important reasons for my continued and increasingly deep interest in event scores as a medium. The first was philosophical. For me, the events began as a mode of inquiry that preceded my

Performance Research 7(3), pp.124-128 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

work as an artist. In my mind, these activities were linked to the Zen koan or to various forms of rhetorical inquiry that always interested me. Before I became an artist, I had many of the ideas that became part of my work. I realized these ideas in many ways. I acted them out. I built them. I told people about them. Intellectual engagement, curiosity, and pleasure were my reasons for doing these things. I did many of them in a quasi-experimental way, realizing ideas in different materials, contexts, and situations to see what would happen. It was natural for me to frame these activities in the context of intermedia and concept art. The score offered a medium for structuring each work as a single entity that could taker many forms.

The second reason was practical. In the 1960s, I lived and worked in places far from the centers of activity where my work was shown and performed. Few people made this kind of work then and few were interested in realizing or showing it. Those few who wanted to realize exhibitions and projects rarely had money for transportation or the expenses usually associated with exhibitions. My work had to be done at a distance, with others realizing and interpreting my pieces. This gave rise to many scores. Scores permitted me to create work that could be realized at a distance.

A third reason involved the concept of musicality and the idea of experimentalism. Scores allowed me to create work that others could interpret. Linked to this was my curiosity about how works would evolve when others realized them. As many of my Fluxus colleagues have done, I have also created signature pieces. Drawings, water-colours, and first draft copies of original scores are signature pieces. So are the objects and relics created when I have realized my own scores. The scores themselves are a specific body of work, and they remain the one constant in my life as an artist from the time before I was an artist to the present day. Many scores were published in the various compilations of my events. Some were exhibited, presented in simple form, as notations. Some were realized in projects or installations, and some led to objects such as the multiples published by Fluxus or Vice Versand. Other scores led to collaborative projects with colleagues such as Joseph Beuys or Jack Ox.[4]

A large body of the scores were identified as events. These tend toward process orientation, often performable. In his essay on my event structures, Peter Frank elaborated a taxonomy in which he identified seven types of events, almost all process oriented. (He also coined the useful term 'proposal piece' to cover the wide range of scores, events and notations that my colleagues and I developed over the years.) (Frank 1987; see also Friedman 1982, 1985) Many scores created for realization of physical work were not included in the compilations of events. The one aspect that all of the scores have in common is that anyone can realize the works they propose. In this, the performance scores and the object scores share the quality of musicality.

As an issue in arts practice, I have worked with musicality since 1966. I applied the term to work from scores in the 1980s, adapting a term from the 1850s to a new purpose. (SOED 1993: 1865) While the issue of musicality is implicit in my work, I did not set out to achieve musicality. It grew from the conditions. In an interview with Nicholas Zurbrugg, Nam June Paik once said that artists 'don't really set out to do any concrete objective. So, in my case, when I make an art work, we start from a few given conditions' (Zurbrugg 1991: 131). The conditions that led me to create scored works seemed so apparent to me that I had no reason to articulate the issues. The issues were there, and they were so obvious that it did not seem necessary to discuss them. The obvious often hides the significant, and changing conditions have sharpened my focus on the issue of musicality.

Musicality is a key concept in Fluxus, and it has fascinating implications that are only now being given adequate attention by scholars and critics. Musicality means that anyone can play the music. If deep engagement with the music, with the spirit of the music, is the central focus of this criterion, then musicality may be the central concept in Fluxus. It is central to Fluxus because it embraces many other issues and concepts. Musicality is part of George

Maciunas' social radicalism, a vision of art in which the individual artist takes a secondary role to the concept of artistic practice in society. It is present in Joseph Beuys' parallel but different social activism and the declaration that we are all artists. It is central to Milan Knizak's social creativity in opening art into society, to Dick Higgins's radical intellectualism, and to Henry Flynt's dry, acerbic conceptualism. All of these positions and more engage properties of musicality (Friedman 1995: 91–96; 1998: 244–251; Sellem 1991: 80–107).

Today I am often invited to create projects for which transportation and travel are available, I still do a great deal of work at a distance. Scores allow for work from a distance, enabling me to realize projects as I travel between hotel rooms and borrowed studios. The fact that I go to many of my shows now gives me the chance to experience my own work. There are pieces of mine that I have never seen and now it is possible. The opportunity to examine and to contemplate the scored pieces offers a new opportunity for philosophical exploration.

Growing interest in my work and the first steps toward a *catalogue raisonné* provided the first occasion to reconsider the scores. Old scores and notes came to my attention. It seemed natural to think through many of the works in a new light. Would I interpret a work today as I once would have? Does it interest me to work with a piece again? Is there some issue or quality in a work that I want to explore? The conditions affecting my work now make realizing the scores an interesting project. In the past, I was generally unable to save and store realized interpretations of the scores. I travelled too much. My work was extremely experimental, and I was lucky even to see a piece completed. Many of the projects were too big to ship and store.

Even so, I was often able to save fragments. I thought of these as a kind of yeast for growing the work again. The fragments and the score would permit me to create the work again. Some fragments still exist in New York, and some work is stored around the world – in Switzerland, in Norway, in California, in the Netherlands. I want to finish those pieces. As I found notes for pieces whose fragments were gone, I realized that the works still exist. The score is the work, and just as I might perform a music score, so I can perform an object score. It became necessary to focus on the implications of musicality in my work. While Fluxus has taken on a new shape as it recedes into history, the issues that made Fluxus interesting remain quite lively. Musicality is still one of the most interesting among them.

PERSPECTIVES ON MUSICALITY

I take a more radical view of musicality than most of my colleagues do. Anyone may realize my work from the score. My relation to any realization or interpretation is a different issue. While I acknowledge any realization of a score as my work, I distinguish between acknowledging the work as mine and approving every realization. Some directors work closely with the playwright. Some conductors consult the composer. Someone who wants to realize my work may find it useful to consult me. At the same time, I recognize that someone may develop a wonderful interpretation of my work that I had not created in my own interpretation. There is always the possibility that someone may realize a work better than I have done. Musicality implies all these possibilities.

My intention is necessary to the work. My interpretation may not be necessary to the work in the same way. My interpretations – or, more often, a fluid constellation of multiple interpretations – interest me as an artist and a person. They may also interest others. While they shed light on the intention of the work, some may say that my specific interpretation of any given piece is primarily important to those who want to know how Friedman realizes Friedman.

Other issues arise from the concept of musicality. While those interested in my work might like to have access to my interpretation of the work, the concept of musicality challenges the notion that there is one authentic interpretation. There is no

philosophical contradiction between the idea of musicality and the idea that people have preferences. In an art market based on physical objects, these are open issues. One of my Friedmans could have greater value than those by another artist, but they might not. A Ken Friedman realized by John Armleder for my 1974 Geneva show might well be more interesting than the same Ken Friedman that I realized in 1968 or 1991. Some people might believe that my work is usually dull and one of these might feel that only John Armleder was ever able to make anything interesting of it. Still another person might believe, as one artist recently said, that my works of the 1980s and 1990s are superior to my earlier projects.

Not all artists involved in Fluxus agree with me on the issue of musicality. Some of the strongest objections come from artists trained as composers. The artists who might particularly be expected to apply the criterion of musicality to their work on theoretical grounds reject the concept in practice. There are two main reasons. One is control. La Monte Young now refuses to publish his scores. He seems to believe that his work should be realized in only one interpretation, his own. Even though that interpretation may change frequently, Young stresses very specific notions of intention that must be brought out in each realization of the work. The second issue is the market. Many artists feel that if anyone can realize authentic versions of their work, they will have nothing to sell. I have confidence that my interpretations are lively, valid, and interesting enough for people to want them. Artists who use mechanical fabrication through precise, industrial means may have more to worry about.

Jack Ox, a painter whose works are direct realizations of musical scores, suggested an elegant solution to the problem. She thought I ought to join ASCAP, the rights and royalties organization for composers. By publishing my scores as music scores, anyone would be permitted to realize, perform, my work in the same way that anyone may record and sell musical works on payment of the fees and royalties. Ox suggests that an artist could grant realization rights through ASCAP to earn money on scores without the necessity of physically realizing the works. This was such an interesting idea that I explored it in Norway through the composer's rights organization, Tono. While the idea offered possibilities, there were also difficulties. The greatest difficulties involved the problem of rights and royalties permission for nonprofit and scholarly performance and realization of the work.

Philip Corner told me of his experience with the problem. There seems to be no way for the rights and permissions organizations to make simple, sensible exceptions to royalty-based permissions for performance in academic situations. This is related to the problem of small organizations for whom royalties should be set based on the ability to pay. After listening to Corner's experiences, I decided against structuring my work in that way. I am still looking for an appropriate solution. At this time, selling rights through a royalty collection organization does not seem appropriate for me or for the intention of my work.

POSTLUDE

As it stands now, most of my work exists in the form of scores. I permit these works to be realized under the basic rules governing publication and performance of Fluxus works, and I permit realization by anyone who requests permission under special licence. Changing technologies may eventually make new approaches to publishing and realizing my events possible. I retain the copyright on my work primarily for acknowledgement and control of the moral rights. The work is a philosophical contribution. It is freely available for realization and consideration as idea, as spoken word, publication, or realized project.

Musicality in art raises interesting, profound questions. The information revolution and the knowledge economy make these issues more intriguing now than they were in the 1960s. Global politics and world economies are undergoing transformation, and, with them, global culture. The art world has moved from the rebirth of painting to the birth of a grotesque new materialism at exactly the

same moment that a new humanism is blossoming. The boundaries between art and many other fields of endeavour – music, design, politics, business, to name just a few – are dissolving. More and more people have come to understand the useful distinction between the valid concept of experimentalism and the reactionary concept of avant-gardism. In these exciting times, the implications of musicality are lively and important. To consider the issues of meaning, intention, realization, and interpretation implicit in musicality is an interesting project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An earlier version of this text was published under the title 'The Belgrade Text' in the catalogue of Ken Friedman's 1990 one-man show, 'Copernicus in Belgrade', organized by Bojana Pejic at the Student Cultural Centre Gallery, University of Belgrade. It was reprinted as: 'The Belgrade Text'. *Ballade*, No. 1, 1991, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 52–57. 'Working from Event Scores' has been extensively revised and updated for this issue of *Performance Research*.

NOTES

1. Published versions and editions of *The Events* included: Ken Friedman (1972) 'Events, Performances and Actions', *Friedmanswerk*, Berlin: Edition Hundertmark; Ken Friedman (1973) *Events*. intro. Jay Belloli. Davis: Nelson I.C. Gallery, University of California at Davis; Ken Friedman (1975) 'Perspective: Brief Notes on an Exhibition', *La Mamelle* 1(2): 6–10.
2. These included exhibitions between 1973 and 1983 at the University of Colorado, Centro de Arte y Comunicación in Argentina, Immediate Gallery in Calgary, Ecart in Geneva, Galeria Akumulatory in Poznan, Fiatal Muveszek Klubja in Budapest, Gallery St Petri in Lund, The Everson Museum in Syracuse, Washington Project for the Arts and PS1 in New York, now a division of the Museum of Modern Art.
3. Five substantial editions of *The Events* have appeared since 1978: Ken Friedman *Events* (1980) ed. Peter Frank, intro. Jay Belloli, Long Island City, New York: PS1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources; Ken Friedman (1982) *Events* [published in two volumes]. Annotated by Peter Frank, New York: Art and Design International Corp.; Ken Friedman (1985) *Ken Friedman: Events*, ed. Peter Frank, New York: Jaap Rietman; Ken Friedman (1993) *Events and Scores*, 's-Hertogenbosch, Holland: Slowscan Editions; Ken Friedman (2001) *52 Events 2002*, Edinburgh: Heart Fine Art. A downloadable edition of *52 Events 2002* is freely available at: http://www.heartfineart.com/Images/Friedman.html
4. See for example: Joseph Beuys (1972) *Joseph Beuys: Multiples*, Munich: Edition Jörg Schellmann; Nam June Paik (1974) 'My Symphonies', *Source* (Sacramento, California) no. 11: 75; Bernd Kluser and Jörg Schellmann (1997) *Joseph Beuys – the Multiples* (8th edn), Minneapolis, MN: Walker Art Centre. See also biographical entries in: Nicholas Slonimsky (ed.) (1971) *Baker's Biographical Dictionary*, 5th edn supplement, New York and London: G. Schirmer and Sons; Nicholas Slonimsky (ed.) (1978) *Baker's Biographical Dictionary*, 6th edn, New York and London: G. Schirmer & Sons and Collier/Macmillan; John Vinton (ed.) (1974) *Dictionary of Contemporary Music*, New York: E.P. Dutton.

REFERENCES

Frank, Peter (1987) *Ken Friedman: A Life in Fluxus*, Helsinki: Oy Wärtsilä Ab Arabia.
Friedman, Ken (1982) *Events* [published in two volumes]. Annotated with an essay by Peter Frank, New York: Art and Design International Corp.
—— (1985) *Ken Friedman: Events*, ed. Peter Frank, New York: Jaap Rietman.
—— (1995) 'A Fluxus Idea', in *The Electronic Superhighway: Travels with Nam June Paik*, eds Nam June Paik and Kenworth W. Moffett, 87–97. New York, Seoul and Fort Lauderdale: Holly Solomon Gallery, Hyundai Gallery and the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art.
—— (1998) 'Fluxus and Company' in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman, 237–253. London: Academy Press, John Wiley and Sons.
Merriam-Webster, Inc. (1990) *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Tenth edition. Springfield, Massachusetts.
Sellem, Jean (1991) 'Twelve Questions for Ken Friedman', *Lund Art Press*, 2(2): 80–107. School of Architecture, University of Lund.
SOED (1993) *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. Lesley Brown, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press.
Zurbrugg, Nicholas (1991) 'Twelve Questions for Ken Friedman', *Lund Art Press*, 2(2): 130–139. School of Architecture, University of Lund.

Book Review

Counter Point

Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation

Nick Kaye
London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2000
238 pp. ISBN 0–415–18559–9

Nick Kaye, in his concise introduction to *Site-Specific Art*, states that the book concerns itself with the practices through which a site-specific artwork relates to its local positioning. He proposes that the relationship between the work and the site is rather troublesome and dealing with it requires taking into consideration the 'exchanges between visual art, architecture and theatre in which site-specific work has been defined'. For this purpose, rather than engaging in 'any formal codification of site-specific practice', Kaye has organized the book 'around a series of thematic points of departure', which are specified as 'spaces', 'site', 'materials', 'frames' and 'documentation' (2000: 11). In order to give a comprehensive account of various approaches to those themes, the book refers to 'distinct kinds of practice, ranging from minimalism to land art, contemporary architecture, theatre, happenings, *arte povera*, body art, as well as formally evasive interventions into urban spaces, gallery sites, and even into reading itself' (11–12). Yet, the concept of performance serves as a common denominator to define site-specificity throughout the book while moving across a large variety of themes and practices.

Kaye finds divergent roots of contemporary site-specific work in minimalism. As far as one is concerned with the possible assertion of a work's ' "proper" relationship with its location, claiming an "original and fixed position" associated with what it *is*', such a characteristic could be seen in 'Richard Serra's response to the public debate, and legal action, over the removal of his "site-specific" sculpture *Tilted Arc* of 1981'. On the other hand, if one is concerned with the site-specific work's 'challenge to notions of "original" or "fixed" location', early examples of it could be found in the minimalist objects produced by Robert Morris, Frank Stella and Donald Judd. Kaye, following Douglas Crimp's formulation, 'self-conscious perception of the minimal object' (Crimp 1993), asserts that 'the minimalist object emphasises a transitive definition of site, forcing a self-conscious perception in which the viewer confronts her own effort "to locate, to place" the work and so her own action out of the gallery's function as the place for viewing' (2000: 1–2). Indeed, Michael Fried's (1968) criticism of 'theatricality' has been directed at that aspect of minimalist objects. Consequently, Kaye proposes that 'minimalism's site-specificity can be said to begin in sculpture, yet reveals itself in performance, a move which calls into question its formal as well as spatial location'. Following the development of those debates on minimalism from the notion of a 'proper' location toward theatricality and performance, Kaye states that 'site specificity should be associated with an underlying concept of "site", rather than with any given particular *kind* of place or formal approach to site'. Whether they occur in 'urban and rural locations', or in 'found and constructed environments', or in 'conventional galleries and theatres', Kaye identifies site-specific practices 'with a *working over* of the production, definition and *performance* of "place" ' (2000: 3).

Having adopted such an attitude toward site-specificity,

Performance Research 7(3), pp.129–134 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

Kaye, following Michel de Certeau (1984), makes an operational distinction between the terms 'space' and 'place'. Again tracing de Certeau's line of thought, Kaye makes a parallel between this distinction and Ferdinand de Saussure's distinction between 'langue' and 'parole'. Accordingly, place is defined by its internal stability and serves as an ordering system while space is defined by practice. Thus, Kaye accepts de Certeau's proposition that '*space is a practised place*' (de Certeau 1984: 117; cited in Kaye 2000: 4). Yet, this practice is not a simple reproduction of a given order but it is an ordering activity that may realize this or that possibility of a single place; and while doing that, it becomes dependent on conventions and it is situated in historical time. Additionally, space, like the word when it is uttered, involves 'unpredictability and transformation': 'It follows that, paradoxically, "space" cannot manifest the order and stability of its place'. Taken in this framework, a spatial practice, for example walking, should be seen as an 'indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper' (de Certeau 1984: 103; cited in Kaye 2000: 5). Similarly, a spatial work, while attempting to represent a place, is also bound to construct a removal from it in its very practice, and thus, to render it as a 'non-place'. Yet, such an act of displacement cannot be taken as a simple negation or antithesis of 'place'. Kaye discusses the relationship between 'place' and 'non-place' in reference to the anthropologist Marc Augé's propositions, which in turn, are based on de Certeau's views:

> Place and non-place are rather like opposite polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten. But non-places are the real measure of our time.
>
> (Augé 1995: 79; cited in Kaye 2000: 11)

Following Augé, Kaye proposes that the term 'palimpsest' 'not only provides a model for the relationship of "non-place" to "place", but, in the context of a transitive definition of site, of site-specificity itself' (11). In reference to the British company Forced Entertainment's site-specific performance *Nights In This City*, Kaye elaborates on how such a work could be read as a palimpsest. First performed in Sheffield in 1995 and relocated in Rotterdam in 1997 with some modifications, the work consisted of a city sightseeing tour with a bus run by performers, playing the roles of a driver, a hostess and a tour guide. The tour was rather strange in that instead of introducing well-known touristic districts of the town to the audience, it dropped by unusual sites such as the 'driver's home and first workplace', or 'the place where he was married fifteen years ago'. Meanwhile, as the bus moved back and forth through various districts of the town, the 'guide' offered strange narratives to the audiences, which, rather than being explanatory, distracted them. Thus, the performance, which 'wrote over the city' as 'both a map of space and a map of states of mind' (Etchells 1999: 77; cited in Kaye 2000: 8), revealed that the images and the information about where people lived were already second hand and mediated by the mass media.

According to Kaye, minimalism's interventions into the 'white cube' of the gallery have undermined 'conventional oppositions between the virtual space of the artwork and the "real spaces" of its contexts'. Pointing to the inter-relatedness of those orders of space, minimalist works have challenged the viewer's privileged position 'outside' the work, and they opened the way to a new understanding of 'site and the performance of place in visual art, architecture and site-specific theatre'. Those minimalist works have also provided a key 'to elaborate a range of site-specific interventions into the gallery, the city, and other "found" sites, which, although operating through a variety of disciplines and means, each take their effect *in performance*' (25).

Kaye describes some works by Robert Morris [*untitled (Mirrored*

Cubes)(1965); *Untitled* (1966)] and some 'mirror' works by Michelangelo Pistoletto [*Il Presente* (The Present) (1961); *LE STANZE* (THE ROOMS) (1975–76)] as 'performing the gallery', while he presents Krzysztof Wodiczko's large-scale projections as examples that 'perform the city'. Morris's work focuses on the viewer's awareness of her own activity while switching between the work's space and the gallery space, whereas Pistoletto's work emphasizes 'the role of anticipation and memory' while the space of the work is being 'written over' the gallery space. As for Wodiczko's projected images on the cityscape, they work rather as parasites that 'challenge and displace the architectural, ideological and visual languages' of the city's monuments. Wodiczko explains his aim as to disrupt 'a routine and passive perception of the ideological theatre of the built environment as well as a disruption of our imaginary place in it' (Wodiczko 1996: 55; cited in Kaye 2000: 37). Kaye admits that the evident difference between the 'emptiness' of the gallery and the 'excess of information' in the city requires different strategies of intervention; yet, he proposes that both these strategies approach 'site' by *working over* the disjunction between the reading of space and the experience of space. In blurring the distinctions between the virtual space of a work and the real spaces in which the viewer acts, these strategies expose the performance of the places into which they intervene (2000: 40–1).

Starting from the idea that the 'disjunction between spaces is articulated most clearly' in architecture, Kaye directs attention to the architectural projects by Bernard Tschumi. Kaye relates that Tschumi's approach to architecture is based not only on 'the opposition between ideal and real space' but also on its deconstruction. Consequently, he suggests that 'Tschumi looks toward an architecture which works to reveal, and exacerbate, this instability; which postpones or disturbs architecture's *ability to rest* in its definition of space and so assert a foundation and stability' (46). Of course, this approach, which plays with the 'restlessness' between spaces, is closely related to Kaye's ongoing discussion on site and site-specificity, as well as to 'notions of event and performance'. Kaye asserts that, Tschumi's architectural project for Le Parc de La Villette in Paris, 'rather than state the context, . . . sets conditions for the *performance* of both architecture and site, for its realisation in multiple, diverse, and transforming practices' (51). In order to continue his argument on site-specificity and performance in the context of social practice, Kaye refers to recent large-scale, site-specific performances by the Welsh performance company Brith Gof. Kaye relates that the performances of the company 'are presented as a continuation of their sites' "use". Yet, just as these events constitute another inflection of their sites' meanings, so they also define a process in which the *reading of site* is opened up' (53). Furthermore, since the performances do not use architecture as backdrops, and the audience is inevitably dispersed in various groups to watch different activities going on around the site simultaneously, the readings of performances are opened up to multiple viewpoints. Here, '"place" . . . is explicitly constituted *in performance itself*' (55).

Under the subhead 'site', Kaye discusses the various implications of the concept of 'mapping' in reference to some examples of land art, earth art, and conceptual art, as well as to some theoretical studies on space and mapping. Starting with a discussion of the term 'Non-Site', introduced to the art world by Robert Smithson, Kaye proposes that those works that have presented in gallery 'a mapping or documentation of places and events' that were not available to the viewers' experience, have read 'the site in terms of its *absences*', and they concentrated on 'the elusiveness of the actual or "real" site' (91). Indeed, as it is described by Smithson himself, such works involve a limited remembering, a representation of a special encounter of the artist with site: '[t]he artist who is physically engulfed tries to give a limited

(mapped) revision of the original unbounded state' (Smithson 1996a: 104; cited in Kaye 2000: 93). According to Kaye, the 'Non-Site' as map not only functions 'as an index to the site' in its absence, but it also 'serves to trace out the contradictions of mapping itself' (Kaye 2000: 94–5). Since the 'Non-Site' could only be approached by its negation, in its reference to the site as the absent origin, the relationship between the site and the 'Non-Site' can only be considered as a dialectical movement (Smithson 1996b; cited in Kaye 2000: 95); as Kaye formulates it, '[t]he site, in fact, is an effect of mapping, yet always remains antithetical to the map' (96). In order to link this dialectical movement to individual experience, and to emphasize the functioning of memory, Kaye addresses Jameson's concept of 'cognitive mapping' (Jameson 1991). As the term refers to the individual's attempt to fill the gap between the 'immediate spatial practice' and the 'sense of an implied totality' of place (Kaye 2000: 102–3), it expresses one's '*lacking a place*, as if tracing the co-ordinates of a terrain from which it is continually displaced' (103). Kaye states that Allan Kaprow's 'happenings', Claes Oldenburg's 'happenings of place', and Wolf Vostell's 'dé-coll/age happenings' 'reflected on relationships between practice and place, and so work and site, fostering unpredictable, fluid exchanges between the frame of an artwork and its various contexts' (105); and in Meredith Monk's site-specific work, which involves the interaction of music, dance, theatre and visual art, the relationship between performance and site is carried up to a point where memory plays a crucial role as the audience gets more conscious of the role of remembering while switching among various media or moving from site to site to make a total sense of a work (119–23).

The special interest in materials of art, which appeared in European sculpture and post-minimal art in America in the late 1960s, has presented a 'logic of materials' that radically challenged 'the material integrity of the object and the stability of place and location' by attracting attention to process and transformation, and thus bringing forward the body as a key concept in art (Kaye 2000: 139). Kaye succinctly observes that, in this opening up of art into materials and processes of 'nature' and the body, and thus in the transfer of the issues of art toward a more performative level, the crucial role has been played by the *arte povera* movement based in Italy. Started with the works of early pioneers of the group, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Piero Gilardi, Mario Merz and Jannis Kounellis, and expanded with the participation of a new generation of artists, namely, Gilberto Zorio, Giovanni Anselmo, Giuseppe Penone, Alighiero Boetti and Luciano Fabro, two points of investigation, both of which can be traced back to the Italian Renaissance, have become significant. First, as clearly stated by the critic Germano Celant, who wrote several articles and a manifesto on the distinguishing characteristics of the work of that movement, the group was against the established complex art in search of a 'poor' art, 'an art that does not add ideas or things to the world but that discovers what's already there' (Christov-Bakargiev 1987: 53; cited in Kaye 2000: 142). This meant refusing to work in order to meet the requirements of the conventional opposition between the art object and an abstract order, but to work so as to open 'the sculpture to forces and events precipitated by the presence of materials, to "natural" or organic processes identified with particular locations as well as to exchanges between material processes, the environment, and the body' (Kaye 2000: 142). Secondly, the works of the group were characterized by an 'anthropological', or, in some instances, 'anthropomorphic' quality. This has brought forward the issue that, although that new art was so concerned with challenging the separation of art from life, it also required an awareness that the work had a 'human' aspect, and it needed to interact with human beings.

This point constitutes a direct linkage between those sculptural works based on process and material and what is called 'body

art' and performance art. Kaye describes the work of such artists as Dennis Oppenheim and Vito Acconci as a transposition of the 'terms of sculpture and sculptural process on to the body'. He states that, working 'under the influence of land art and minimalism, these artists addressed the work's relationship to its site through a construction of the performing body itself as means, material and *place*' (151). Such work, with its special emphasis on the encounter with the audience as performers, introduces a further 'theatrical' aspect to art, which once so bothered the modernist critic Michael Fried (1968) in reference to minimalist art objects. Kaye observes that 'in these performances, the body reveals a place always *in process* and always *in excess* of the work through which it might be seen' (2000: 163). As a counterpart of the tendency toward theatricality through the materials and processes of visual arts, the world of theatre has also been opened to the visual and spatial potentials of art. Kaye gives an account of such development in reference to the performances of the British company Station House Opera. While, on the one hand, their performances display 'narrative, persona and dramatic continuity', they also 'play out processes with explicitly sculptural and architectural imperatives' (Kaye 2000: 163); and Julian Maynard Smith, a co-founder of the company, has stated that their performances have emerged 'out of minimal work of the sixties and seventies' (Rogers 1988: 11–12; cited in Kaye 2000: 163). Indeed, the company's various breeze block performances between the years 1984 and 1997 exhibit a post-minimalist character. Always based on a repetitive use of a simple, architectural material (breeze block) as a unit to construct various structures, in some performances, the performers give improvisational mimetic responses to the structured forms, which develop into sophisticated yet material exchanges between the sculptural-architectural and the gestural, as in *The Bastille Dances* (1989). In others, like *The Salisbury Proverbs* (1997), the performance starts as a more direct mimesis-representation of architecture, and the theatrical construction of a site leads to development of characters and role-playing. As Kaye brilliantly formulates, the work by The Station Opera House presents 'processes of translation' for the audience from the 'physical limitations' of material to 'the site of metaphor' (2000: 168).

Under the subhead 'frames', Kaye furthers the problematic aspects of a work's location in terms of its 'relation to multiple discourses'. In reference to Daniel Buren's demarcations, created by using so simple a medium as a monochrome stripe alternating with a white background repeatedly, Kaye points out that separating a certain space from its environment and thus creating an 'inside' and 'outside' actually meant to efface them, or, to render them susceptible to each other. Therefore, what becomes significant is not the 'inside' or the 'outside' but the frame itself, yet not as an object or fixed location but as a site of oscillation between the two: 'the location (outside or inside) where a work is seen is its frame (its *boundary*)' (Buren 1973: 21; cited in Kaye 2000: 191). Departing from this point, Kaye proposes that 'a reading of the artwork implies a continual deferral between "inside" and "outside", and so movement between a given practice and its discursive sites' (192–3). Indeed, Buren, after asserting that '[a]rchitecture of any sort is in fact the inevitable background, support and frame of any work', defines architecture as something starting from a single exhibition room and extending up to a whole complex of social surroundings in which it is situated (White 1979: 19; cited in Kaye 2000: 193). Then, Kaye continues his discussion on 'framing and being framed' (Haacke 1975) in reference to Hans Haacke's later work, which focused on the social and political relationship between a site-specific work and 'the very institutional conditions under which it operates' (Kaye 2000: 193). Drawing mainly on Frederic Jameson's (1991) criticism, Kaye observes that while questioning the legitimacy and criticizing the functioning of artistic and cultural institutions, Haacke's work continues to operate within

that institutional framework. Therefore, the viewer responds to that capacity in Haacke's work 'to transform the very sites it seeks to expose' (Kaye 2000: 194). Then there arises a possibility for the viewer of getting aware of her own performance directed toward that capacity to transform. Kaye expands on that performative capacity of the viewer in reference to Fiona Templeton's site-specific performance, *YOU – The City* (1988), in which 'conventional oppositions between performance and environment, performer and spectator, are continually challenged' (2000: 199). Being forced to switch between the roles of a 'client' and a 'performer', the audience of Templeton's work is enabled to see the 'inside' from the 'outside' and vice versa; and thus to get conscious of her own 'acting out' of the frame as a site of 'irresolution' (200).

So far, it is quite possible for the reader of the present review to get the impression that Kaye's book presents a regular, academic survey and criticism of site-specific art. In fact, it both does and does not. Kaye's theoretical discussions are interspersed by special 'chapters' authored by artists, namely Tim Etchells (Forced Entertainment), Michelangelo Pistoletto, Clifford McLucas (Brith Gof), Julian Maynard Smith (Station House Opera), and Meredith Monk, so as to document their own site-specific works. At first sight, those contributions by artists might be regarded as exemplifying the related points of investigation in Kaye's text. Although they do have such a function, especially in their appropriateness to the scholarly design of the book, they also engage in a 'dialogue', in the performative sense of the term, with the site-specific works they document. This reveals, as Kaye states in the conclusive chapter of the book, that 'documentation, in declaring itself to be always other to the events and objects it recalls, finds a direct affinity with the tactics and processes underpinning site-specific practice' (2000: 220). Here, one can add a further observation to Kaye's conclusion: as a consequence of that revelation, a possibility arises for the reader of the book to observe a further level of dialogue; this time, between Kaye's scholarly narrative and the interventions by the artists. So, for the reader, the book itself, as a material as well as an institutional 'frame', becomes the 'site' of that dialogic relationship between two kinds of texts. Furthermore, while shuttling between the two in order to have a full grasp of the dialogue, the reader gets conscious of the 'site-specificity' of her own act of reading, in the sense elaborated by Kaye throughout the book.

Çetin Sarıkartal

REFERENCES

Augé, Marc (1995) *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, London: Verso.

Buren, Daniel (1973) *Five Texts*, London: John Weber Gallery and John Wendle Gallery.

Christov-Bakargiev, C. (1987) 'Arte Povera 1967–1987', *Flash Art* (international edition) 137: 52–69.

Crimp, Douglas (1993) *On the Museum's Ruins*, London: MIT Press.

de Certeau, Michel (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Etchells, Tim (1999) [1995] 'Eight Fragments on Theatre and the City', in Tim Etchells, *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment*, London: Routledge, 76–81.

Fried, Michael (1968) 'Art and Objecthood', in Gregory Battcock (ed.) *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, New York: E.P. Dutton, 116–47.

Haacke, Hans (1975) *Framing and Being Framed: 7 Works*, Halifax: Nova Scotia School of Art and Design.

Jameson, Frederic (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, London: Verso.

Rogers S. (1988) 'Showing the Wires: Interview with Julian Maynard Smith', *Performance Magazine* 56–7: 9–14.

Smithson, Robert (1996a) [1968] 'A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects' in Jack Flam (ed.) *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 100–13.

—— (1996b) [1972] 'The Spiral Jetty' in Jack Flam (ed.) *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 143–53.

White, R. (ed.) (1979) 'Daniel Buren', *View* 1: 9.

Wodiczko, Krzysztof (1996) 'Projections', in Saskia Bos (ed.) *Krzysztof Wodiczko: De Appel Amsterdam 1996*, Amsterdam: De Appel Foundation, 54–7.

Archive Review

Dr Fluxus

Brian Lane was among a handful of people in Britain aware of, and who corresponded with, Fluxus artists during the 1960s. Indeed, he took on board some of their precepts and presented Fluxus scores during an intense period of performance activity from 1968 to 1970. Remnants of these Fluxus events, as well as related material, reside in Lane's papers, which are now housed in the Tate Archive (TGA 2000/3). The archives were generously donated by the artist's mother, through the assistance of many of Lane's friends, in the spring of 2000. The papers help to form a picture of Brian Lane's involvement with this underground group of artists at this crucial period of its development.

Primarily centred around George Maciunas, the work of Fluxus was intentionally ephemeral, and deliberately bypassed the gallery and museum system through performance, films and publishing. George Maciunas, who had conceived of Fluxus as an alternative direction to the commodity-oriented high culture prevalent during the period, described the movement's intentions in a mid-1960s manifesto:

> Fluxus art-amusement is the rear guard without any pretension or urge to participate in the competition of 'one-upmanship' with the avant-garde. It strives for the mono-structural and non-theatrical qualities of simple natural event, a game or a gag. It is the fusions of Spike Jones, Vaudeville, gag, children's games and Duchamp.
>
> (Maciunas, *Fluxus Broadside Manifesto*, *c.* September 1965)

Before the arrival of Lane's papers into the Tate Archive, the key manifestations of Fluxus activity in the UK were generally recognized to be 'The Festival of Misfits' of 1962 and the 'Fluxshoe' touring exhibition of 1972–3. The 'Festival of Misfits' was a labyrinthine exhibition at Gallery One in London from 23 October to 8 November 1962. It was organized by the gallery's founder and director, Victor Musgrave, and the 'nouveau réaliste' Daniel Spoerri, who was given the task of selecting the participants and shaping the Festival. In addition to Spoerri himself, the Festival eventually included: Robert Filliou, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Arthur Kopcke, Gustav Metzger, Robin Page, Emmett Williams, and Ben Vautier. The gallery was soon transformed into a tactile maze by Spoerri and his collaborators. Within this labyrinth, Filliou created two spinning poetry wheels which instructed visitors to perform simple actions; Gustav Metzger hung copies of the *Daily Mirror* reporting the Cuban Missile Crisis; Robin Page constructed a sound environment made out of everyday objects; Emmett Williams attached numerous rubber stamps to a wall for visitors to create poems; while Ben Vautier lived in the gallery window for 15 days and nights, labelling everything as a work of art and offering himself for sale as a 'living sculpture' for £250. Press interest in the Festival was intense and the 'exhibition' and concert became a benchmark for Fluxus activity in the United Kingdom.

The 'Fluxshoe' touring exhibition of 1972–3 was conceived by Mike Weaver, Ken Friedman and David Mayor. Mayor, who was a research student at the University of Exeter, had meetings with and wrote to many of the Fluxus personalities; receiving much in the way of material to exhibit from, notably, Maciunas and Friedman. Mayor appears to have been most influenced by George Brecht's definition of Fluxus as involving

Performance Research 7(3), pp.135–138 © Taylor & Francis Ltd 2002

'individuals with something unnameable in common'. Thus, 'Fluxshoe' became a platform for performances and events by people with similar attitudes whether they were allied to 'official' Fluxus or not. By the time 'Fluxshoe' opened in Falmouth, over 100 Fluxus and non-Fluxus artists had agreed to appear in one guise or another, i.e. either in person or represented in some way in the exhibition or catalogue. The tour encompassed seven venues in all, including: Falmouth (23–31 October 1972), Exeter (13 November–2 December 1972), Croydon (15–26 January 1973), Oxford (10–25 February 1973), Nottingham (6–19 June 1973), Blackburn (6–21 July 1973) and Hastings (17–24 August 1973). In total, there were nine Fluxus artists who attended at least one of the 'Fluxshoe' venues, including Eric Andersen, Ay-O, Davi Det Hompson, Alice Hutchins, Per Kirkeby, Taskehisa Kosugi, Carla Liss, Knud Pedersen, and Takako Saito. Overseas and British artists who appeared in person included: Ian Breakwell, Stuart Brisley, Paul Brown, Helen Chadwick, Marc Chaimowicz, Henri Chopin, Robin Crozier, Allen Fisher, John Gosling, Mary Harding, Anthony McCall, Opal L. Nations, Genesis P-Orridge and Cosey Fanni Tutti, John Plant, Carolee Schneemann, Endre Tót, and Paul Woodrow.

Although the 'Festival of Misfits' and 'Fluxshoe' were the major manifestations of Fluxus in the UK during this period, there were also other important Flux-related activities. These and non-Fluxus events added to the melange of avant-garde activity that permeated the country during the 1960s and early 1970s, within which Brian Lane was an important figure. One of the earliest of these manifestations was Gustav Metzger's series of Auto-Destructive demonstrations, exhibitions and manifestos of 4 November 1959, 10 March 1960 and 23 June to 3 July 1961. Metzger's events culminated in the 'Destruction in Art Symposium' held at the ICA, around London and in Edinburgh, from 31 August to 30 September 1966. The ICA and its Bulletins were an important source for the display of, and debate about, the avant-garde throughout this period. Though held not at the ICA but at Goldsmith's College (University of London), 'The Little Festival of New Music' on 6 July 1963, was – after the Festival of Misfits – the most significant Fluxus event. The Festival included pieces by John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, George Maciunas, La Monte Young, George Brecht, Robert Watts, Emmett Williams, John Cale, Nam June Paik, Tomas Schmit, and Robin Page. A number of Fluxus artists were regular visitors to, and exhibitors in, Britain, notably Yoko Ono ('Unfinished Paintings and Objects', Indica Gallery, November 1966, and the 'Half-a-Wind Show', the Lisson Gallery, October–November 1967); Robert Filliou ('Machine Poets', ICA, 28 March 1963, and his trip to Leeds in June 1969 where he created an eponymous card game); and George Brecht and Robin Page who lived and worked in Leeds (Page creating a Christmas event on 25 December 1966 where he lay naked to receive gifts sent to him by, among others, Mieko Shiomi, Daniel Spoerri, Robert Filliou, Eric Andersen, Wolf Vostell, and Hans Sohm).

Up until now, Lane has seemed a peripheral figure in British Fluxus, with the occasional mention in Maciunas's famous Fluxmail lists and in the odd issue of the Fluxus periodical *V TRE*. It is only after consulting Lane's papers in a more systematic way that one can see the scale and level of his dissemination of the Fluxus creed. As early as 1967, it seems Lane presented a Fluxus concert at Gallery Ten in Blackheath under the auspices of his own Project 67. And in a later letter to John Osborne, he refers to forming, at this time, a London 'branch' of the Fluxus group commenting, 'we have had made available to us many of the scripts and scores written by such infamous "Happenings" [sic] men as Ben

• **FLUXBRITANNICA: Aspects of the Fluxus Movement 1962–73, 29 March–19 June 1994, Davi det Hompson delivering his Fluxlecture 'Fluxshoe', Blackburn, 12 July 1973. Photo: David Mayor**

Vautier, Allan Kaprow, George Brecht, Ay-O, Chieko [later Mieko] Shiomi, Lee Heflin, Jean-Jacques Lebel and Milan Knizak'. He also indicates that they built into the live programme 'much experimental music under advice from Jeff Nutbeem and Tom Phillips'. It seems probable, from the extent of material in the archives, that Fluxus editions and publications were available for purchase from the gallery at this time. Lane was also in contact with the young Fluxus artist Ken Friedman, as evidenced by a review of one of Lane's Gallery Ten boxes by Oswell Blakeston which appeared in *What's On in London* for 22 September 1967. Here Blakeston mentions, among others, Friedman's poem on a long paper strip, curled like a Christmas cracker snake in a cardboard ring.

On 15 November1968 the very first Fluxclinic was 'performed' by Lane, Maureen Sandoe and others at Oval House London. This was a participatory work originally created by the Japanese group, Hi Red Center, and first performed at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York City on 4 June 1966. The Fluxclinic includes a specially printed form, the 'Record of Feats and Features', where measurements such as maximum hair length, capacity of mouth and contents of handbag or left pocket were recorded for each participant. Lane prepared a whole series of instructions detailing how the Fluxclinic should be performed. For instance, in his 'General Note on Fluxclinic equipment and procedure', he notes:

> All examiners should have white hospital coats on, preferably printed with 'Fluxclinic'. . . . It is preferable to have a mains water supply and drainage. Otherwise more buckets will be needed. A general supply of clean cloths and kitchen paper should be made available as many of the examinations cause mess.
>
> If a subject refuses to undertake any test the appropriate square is stamped REFUSAL in red. . . . If possible skeletons, medical charts, X-rays, etc., should be around to give authenticity to the absurdity of the examination.

There was also a two-page 'Working Script for Examiners', that included advice such as, 'Volume of Head . . . is taken by the subject immersing his head in a bucket of water and measuring the volume of water displaced into a bowl', and an 'Equipment List' that inventoried bathing caps, yardsticks and a box of wet sand. All dimensions were to be taken in the most absurd manner possible. The length of breath was measured as the distance it took to blow out a candle on a tall yardstick. Other feats were tabulated, such as paper throwing, where the participant was asked to throw a small piece of tissue paper without folding or screwing it up. If the paper floated behind the participant, a minus number was given. Knuckle and toe prints were stamped directly onto the forms, whilst the contents of handbags or pockets were listed and weighed. Extra Sensory Perception was even tested, with the examiner asking the subject whether there was a red or white ball in his left pocket. If guessed correctly the form was marked 'YES', and if not 'NO'.

From 27–9 November 1969, Lane produced a mini festival of experimental work within the Aberystwyth Arts Festival organized by the University College of Wales, with the flyer announcing:

> International Graphic Poetry: experimental poems from all over the world, collected by Rainbow Day, Brian Lane, and the first Dream Machine.
> In the Parish Hall ALL 3 DAYS.
> CAUTION: ART CORRUPTS.

On the Wednesday, there was a programme of experimental musical sounds, including works by Stockhausen, and Italian and Dutch composers. There was also an opportunity for audience participation. Then on the Thursday, a Fluxconcert was announced with the advice that 'if you don't know what a Fluxconcert is, you must come and see for yourself'. In addition there was another outing for the Fluxclinic, which operated throughout the 3 days. It appears that experimental films were to be shown (quite possibly Yoko Ono's infamous *Bottoms*), but the flyer states that 'because of the

exigencies of the forces of law, order and repression' this had been cancelled. Finally, on the Friday, there were to be 'poetry events of all shapes and sizes to amuse, startle and explode the mind'. With entrance at three shillings for each event 'A good time was guaranteed for all'. The festival, and in particular Lane's contribution, was reviewed in the *Guardian* as 'A state of flux at the festival' by John Hall. Hall especially enjoyed the Fluxconcert:

> Brian . . . showered down leaflets of instructions. War Game 'The pictures you are about to see are silent. You have been provided with materials to make a sound track. Fluxus bids you fight well. God is on your side.'

It was during 1969 that Lane met Bill Harpe of Great Georges Project (GGP) in Liverpool at a meeting of the Arts Council of Great Britain New Activities Committee. As a result a series of events were undertaken and sponsored by GGP. The first of these took place in their auditorium over the weekend of 8–10 May 1970. It was wholly devised by Lane and dedicated to 'Fluxus in General and Ken Friedman and Ben Vautier in particular'. On this occasion the event was run under the auspices of Lane's new venture, 'Probable Latitude 76°15′ Longitude 113°10′. There were two events. A Fluxus Leaflet Concert on 8 May was described in the flyer as:

> An event in which
> YOU entertain us
> YOU entertain yourselves
> YOU entertain each other

Printed leaflets were showered onto the audience instructing them to take various actions to realize a series of visual and phonic poems and to make music. Special effects made use of tape/slide/film sequences, and the 'Liverpool Light Show' provided the effects for sequences of 'poetry' and 'war games'. Then on Sunday 10 May there was another staging of the Fluxclinic using the *Guardian*'s byline from the Aberystwyth event: 'very much a Nuffield maths course, minus any educational end products'.

It seems that Lane stayed on in Liverpool, as he was writing, in June, to Fluxus artists Ay-O, Mieko Shiomi, Nam June Paik, Ben Vautier and Tomas Schmit, asking for ideas for the GGP summer theatre that was to take place in the parks of the city for a period of 3 weeks. Specifically he wanted to have 'a quantity of "tricks" that are universally delightful'. Lane hoped that they would be able to design an environment, or event, which fitted in with the theme of 'magic' to be constructed or performed in an open space. Ay-O wrote back first offering his 'Tactile Wall', which suggested:

1. Make hole, any place you want (wall, floor or ceiling)
2. Attach material (from Ay-O's tactile list) behind hole – somehow –

Later, he even sent a three-dimensional model to help Lane visualize his ideas. Shiomi also wrote back, accepting the invitation to participate and promising to send plans for 'Balance Poem on the Centrifugal Land'. Whether this arrived in time for the Liverpool event is not clear, but Lane produced a facsimile script and design for this event under his Gamma Three imprint at some point during 1970. Lane also produced publications and boxes for other Fluxus artists, notably Ken Friedman, and sent free copies of his Information Series to George Maciunas until his death in 1978.

Although seemingly active in the Fluxus orbit for a short period of time, Lane probably made more people in the UK aware of this important laboratory of the avant-garde in the late 1960s than almost any other person; preparing the ground for others, such as David Mayor, to disseminate the ideas of the collective still further. More work still needs to be done on Lane's contribution, but from this first trawl through his archives it appears that he made an early and positive impact in Fluxus circles in Britain.

Adrian Glew

• **FLUXBRITANNICA: Aspects of the Fluxus Movement 1962–73 29 March–19 June 1994 'Touch Poem' by Yoko Ono performed as part of a Fluxconcert, 'Fluxshoe', Exeter, 13 November 1972. Photo: David Mayor**

Performance Research: On Fluxus

Notes on Contributors

THE EDITORS

Ric Allsopp is a founding editor of *Performance Research* and Reader in Performance Research at Dartington College of Arts, UK. He is co-founder of Writing Research Associates, an international partnership organizing, promoting and publishing contemporary performance projects including *Migrations* (2000); *In the Event of Text* (1999) and *Performance Writing* (1996).

Richard Gough is general editor of *Performance Research*, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and Artistic Director for the Centre of Performance Research (CPR). He edited *The Secret Art of the Performer* (Routledge, 1990) and has curated and organized numerous conference and workshop events over the last 20 years as well as directing and lecturing internationally.

Claire MacDonald is a founding editor of *Performance Research* and a Visiting Assistant Professor in the College of Visual and Performing Arts at George Mason University in Northern Virginia. She teaches theatre and writing for performance and has held curatorial positions and fellowships in Britain, the USA and Holland. Her recent publications include 'Writing Outside the Mainstream' in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern British Women Playwrights* (2000).

ISSUE CO-EDITORS

Ken Friedman joined Fluxus in 1966 as the youngest member of the classical Fluxus group. He was director of Fluxus West for a decade and edited *The Fluxus Reader* (1997) for Academy Press. Ken Friedman is now Associate Professor of Leadership and Strategic Design at the Norwegian School of Management in Oslo and Visiting Professor in the Advanced Research Institute at Staffordshire University School of Art and Design. His publications include the two-volume (1982) *Events*, annotated by Peter Frank (New York: Art and Design International Corporation).

Owen Smith is an historian, artist and writer who teaches Art History and New Media at the University of Maine in Orono and specializes in intermedia and multimedia artforms. He has published widely on Fluxus, including his 1998 book *Fluxus: History of an Attitude* (San Diego State University Press).

CONTRIBUTORS

Kevin Concannon is assistant professor of art history at the Mary Myers School of Art at the University of Akron. He contributed an essay on Yoko Ono's advertising art – and co-authored the bibliography and chronology – for *Yes Yoko Ono* (Abrams 2000), published in conjunction with the artist's retrospective exhibition.

Anna Dezeuze is in the final year of her PhD at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. The working title of her thesis is: *The 'Do-it-yourself Artwork': Spectator Participation and the Dematerialisation of the Art Object, New York and Rio de Janeiro, 1956–1966.*

Adrian Glew is an Archive Curator at Tate Britain. Having previously worked, freelance, as art editor for the lifestyle magazine *Don't Tell It*, he is currently a Director of the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association, a founding member of the Kurt Schwitters in England Working Party and sits on the Outsider Arts Trust. He has published in periodicals such as *Art Monthly* and *The Burlington Magazine*, and has recently published an anthology of Stanley Spencer's letters and writings. His display of mail art opened at Tate Modern on 27 May 2002.

Lisa Kahane is a professional photographer based in NYC. Her documentary work and portraiture appear worldwide in magazines, newspapers and books. Her documentation of art and artists appears regularly in the art press and contemporary art histories. Her work is in the permanent collection of the New York Public Library.

Brandon LaBelle is a sound artist and writer from Los Angeles. His sound-work has been featured in '*Bitstreams*' at the Whitney Museum and '*Amplitude of Chance*' at Kawasaki City Museum, Japan. He is the co-editor of *Site of Sound: of Architecture and The Ear* and *Writing Aloud: The Sonics of Language*, published by Errant Bodies.

Kevin Mount edits and designs for DeMo Design and is a regular contributor to *Performance Research*.

Stephen Perkins is the Academic Curator of Art at the Lawton Gallery, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, USA. Currently he is also completing his PhD in the Department of Art & Art History, University of Iowa, Iowa City (*Artists' Periodicals and Alternative Artists Networks: 1963–1977)*. This article is a chapter from this dissertation.

Julia Robinson is a curator and art historian. In 1995, she curated a survey of contemporary Australian Art for the Guggenheim Museum, New York and in 1999 she worked with Joseph Jacobs in the Department of American Art at the Newark Museum on an exhibition entitled 'Off Limits', dealing with the early careers of

several Fluxus and Pop artists in the orbit of John Cage (1957–1963). She is currently pursuing a PhD at Princeton University on Fluxus artist George Brecht.

Çetin Sarıkartal, PhD, studied Literature, History of Art, and Contemporary Art Theory, and also worked as a dramaturg in theatre. He teaches at the University of Bahçesehir, Faculty of Communication, Istanbul, Turkey. His current research presents a theatrical approach to visual and film studies.

things not worth keeping is a collaboration based in East Anglia, England between Kirsten Lavers and cris cheek. TNWK make works about 'value', asking why we keep what we keep; what attachments, preferences, habits and beliefs do these 'things' reveal? Value-transitions, rather than value-fixities, are implied and intended by the project's title, its collaborative approaches, the work and the work's frames. TNWK is realizing itself through a mesh of 'occurrences': installations, works in video, bookart and hypertext – still more are planned. Many of these are interactive and participatory. Aspects of occurrences to date are documented/presented on a website at: www.thingsnotworthkeeping.com

The epigraph on each page of the 'The Enduring Freedoms' is excerpted from Gregory C. Sieminski's 'The Art of Naming Operations' – http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/1995/Sieminsk.html: Parameters, US Army War College Quarterly, Autumn 1995, pp. 81–98.

Chris Thompson is Assistant Professor of Art History at the Maine College of Art. He recently completed his PhD at Goldsmiths College, University of London, which investigated the 1982 meeting between Joseph Beuys and His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet.

Claudia Wegener works as an artist and writer in London. She completed a PhD dissertation in visual arts at Goldsmiths College in 1998, is a visiting lecturer at the Royal Academy schools and founding member of Foreign Investment, a London-based artist performance group. Publications include; 'Necessary Fabrications' in *Alphabet City* (ed. Rebecca Comay, spring 2001); 'Tate Modern' in *Third Text* (spring 2001); 'A Music of Translation' in *MLN Comparative Literature* (ed. Richard Macksay and Rainer Naegele, winter 2000); '[*sait*]' in *The Virtual Embodied* (ed. John Wood, Routledge, 1998).

Erratum

In *Performance Research* 7(2) Translations, Erin Mours article on pp. 58–9 should have carried the line '2002 Erin Mour, published by Taylor & Francis Ltd. We apologise that this line was incorrectly rendered in the printed version. [eds]