

OTHER MINDS PRESENTS

SOMETHING ELSE
A FLUXUS SEMICENTENARY

September 15–17, 2011

San Francisco, California

Other Minds presents

Something Else

A Fluxus Semicentenary

September 15 – 17, 2011

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OTHER MINDS, INC., is dedicated to the encouragement and propagation of contemporary in all its forms through concerts, workshops and conferences that bring together artists and audiences of diverse traditions, generations and cultural backgrounds. By fostering cross-cultural exchange and creative dialogue, and by encouraging exploration of areas in new music seldom touched upon by mainstream music institutions, Other Minds is committed to expanding and reshaping the definition of what constitutes “serious music.”

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333 Valencia Street, Suite 303, San Francisco, CA 94103 USA
phone: 415.934-8134 **fax:** 415.934.8136 **email:** otherminds@otherminds.org
web: otherminds.org **webradio:** radiom.org

Something Else? Something Else!



George Brecht: *Solo for Violin* (1962)

Inevitably I am asked, “What is Fluxus?”

I’ve always (for the decade I’ve been aware of the term) thought of a Fluxus performance as attention paid to something rather ordinary.

Of course many of the most iconic Fluxus pieces involve extraordinary events: smashing a violin or screaming repeatedly are hardly everyday occurrences. Then again, neither is sitting still while listening quietly for four minutes and thirty-three seconds.

Dick Higgins writes in *Postface* (some of which is reproduced at the end of this booklet) that in the spring of 1961, George Maciunas “had an art gallery on Madison Avenue, where terrible modern art was shown, but he wanted a good series of goings-on.” To me, the critical ideas are all contained in this statement: there is a space, desire for an antidote, and something “going on.” Does there need to be more?

Fluxus sculptures and events are often characterized as anti-art, but I prefer to think of them as extraordinarily simple in their means, and surprisingly complex in their meanings. Why does the polishing of an instrument (above) constitute a work of art? Who cares if it does?! Refreshingly, with Fluxus the event occurs whether or not we think it’s art or find it meaningful.

What I do find, however, is that the way I watch, listen, and experience performances of all kinds is always challenged and renewed by a Fluxus performance. For our series of events celebrating the 50th anniversary of Maciunas’s series at the AG Gallery, we have selected films of historical performances, rare recordings, and event scores old and new to offer as a prophylactic for whatever your time-based disease may be.

Our celebration begins by acknowledging the progenitor of this and so many Other-Minded experiments: John Cage. His *Water Walk* kicks off an evening screening of rare performance and rehearsal footage featuring many of the artists who have been associated with Fluxus (see page 4).

Among them are Alison Knowles and Yoshi Wada, each of whom we’re thrilled to feature as part of our events. Like nearly all of the artists associated with Fluxus, Knowles and Wada have developed individual styles and methods far from the mainstream of any performance method; perhaps we use the word Fluxus because there is simply no better phrase.

We’ll also shed light on the little-known Danish artist Henning Christiansen with Charles Amirkhanian’s broadcast on “Music From Other Minds,” and welcome to the stage three younger artists—Luciano Chessa, Adam Overton, and Tashi Wada—who are continuing in the spirit of their predecessors.

And while there are generally no rules when it comes to Fluxus, my only request to each of you comes, again, from George Brecht: Silence. No vacancy.

Adam Fong
Associate Director

Thursday, September 15, 2011, 7:30pm

Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, San Francisco

Water Walk

by John Cage

Performed on the TV show "I've Got A Secret," 1960

Water Walk was composed in 1959 for the Italian TV show "Lascia O Raddoppia" (Double or Nothing) using the *Fontana Mix* as a composing means. Cage used 34 materials, as well as a single-track tape, 7.5", 3 minutes. The materials are all related to water, including: bath tub, toy fish, grand piano, pressure cooker where steam is being released, ice cubes and an electric mixer to crush them, rubber duck, goose whistle, five radios, etc. The score consists of a list of properties, a floorplan showing the placements of instruments and objects, three pages with a timeline (one minute each) with descriptions and pictographic notations of occurrence of events and a list of notes "regarding some of the actions to be made in the order of occurrence." Timings are interpreted graphically: "Start watch and then time actions as closely as possible to their appearance in the score."

Courtesy of the John Cage Trust

Running time: 10 min.

Some Fluxus

Larry Miller, 1991

Performances from Miller's extensive archive, including works by Ay-O, Eric Anderson, George Brecht, Philip Corner, Jean Dupuy, Ken Friedman, Al Hansen, Geoffrey Hendricks, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Milan Knizak, Alison Knowles, Larry Miller, Takako Saito, Mieko Shiomi, Yasunao Tone, Yoshi Wada, Ben Vautier, and Robert Watts.

Electronic Arts Intermix

Running time: 40 min.

Rare Performance Documents 1961-1994 Volume I: Paik-Moorman Collaborations 1965-1973, compiled 2000

Newly restored, rare performance material from Nam June Paik's personal archives, including collaborations with Charlotte Moorman. These documents trace the evolution of Paik's eclectic and at times eccentric performance work over three decades, beginning with a haunting, silent 1961 film (*Hand and Face*). Volume 1 includes documentation of Paik's emblematic collaborative pieces with Charlotte Moorman, including *TV Bed*, *TV Cello*, and *TV Bra*. These works are performed at venues that resonate in video art history, such as the Howard Wise Gallery, the Everson Museum (where David Ross joins Moorman on the *TV Bed*), and the WGBH television studio.

Producer: Stephen Vitiello. Editor: Seth Price at Electronic Arts Intermix. All footage courtesy of Nam June Paik.

Electronic Arts Intermix

Running time: 25 min.

Films curated by Peter Esmonde

Tonight's program will be followed by a brief Q & A in the theater, and a no-host reception in the Balcony Bar

Something About Fluxus

George Brecht, May 1964

Now that Fluxus activities are occurring in New York it's possible for statesiders to get some understanding and, relatively, some misunderstanding of the nature of Fluxus. (A report on last year's Fluxus activities in Europe, Dick Higgins' *Postface*, is to be available this summer.) From my point of view the individual understandings of Fluxus have come from placing hands in Ay-o's *Tactile Boxes*, from making a poem with Dieter Roth's *Poem Machine* published in the Fluxus newspaper, from watching Ben Vautier string Alison Knowles-on-the-blue-stool to objects in the room and to the audience in Kosugi's *Animal*...

The misunderstandings have seemed to come from comparing Fluxus with movements or groups whose individuals have had some principle in common, or an agreed-upon program. In Fluxus there has never been any attempt to agree on aims or methods; individuals with something unnameable in common have simply naturally coalesced to publish and perform their work. Perhaps this common something is a feeling that the bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed, or that art and certain long-established bounds are no longer very useful. At any rate, individuals in Europe, the US, and Japan have discovered each other's work and found it nourishing (or something) and have grown objects and events which are original, and often uncategorizable, in a strange new way:

Alison Knowles' *Bean Can*: Early Red Valentines, Early Mohawks, Long Yellow Six Weeks, English Canterbury... Bean's Insulated Boot Foot Wader (Suspenders extra)... Ich bean ein Starein Kino-Star... The US bean crop would make enough bean soup to run Niagara Falls for three hours...



Bean Rolls (1963) by Alison Knowles

Bob Watt's *Box of Rocks* marked with their weight in kilograms.

Tomas Schmit's *Zyklus*; the performer, surrounded by a ring of bottles, pours water from one bottle into the next, until all the water has evaporated or been spilled.

Ben Patterson's *Two Movements from Symphony n. 1*: the audience stands in line. One person at a time sits at a stool across the table from Ben, who whispers: "Do you trust me?" Ben puts yesses on one side of the room, noes on the other. The lights go out. Waiting; possibly tensions. Then, the smell of coffee, ground-coffee-rain, in the air, dusting over the floor. Medaglia d'Oro.

Ben Vautier's *Bottle of Dirty Water*, *the Street Composition Lie Down on Your Back*, *Total Art Sculpture Pick up Anything at Your Feet*, *Total Art Poetry Just Say Anything*...

Daniel Spoerri's *Optique modeme*: collection of unknown spectacles, with Dufrene's useless notes.



Dick Higgins

Dick Higgins' lectures, like "The day begins. After a time the day ends. The day begins. After a time the day ends. The day begins..." (repeated the number of times that a day appears in a common span of time)

Emmett Williams *Piece for La Monte Young* - "Is La Monte Young in the Audience?"

Brooklyn Joe Jones' chair, switchboards on the arms. Lower the white translucent hat over your head, and flip the switches. Lights here and there, and sounds from peripheral radios on, off, news, static, twist music, commercials...

George Brecht's *Bead Puzzle*. "Your birthday."

La Monte Young, *Composition 1960, n. 2*: "Build a fire in front of the audience..."

Ay-o's *Exit Events*: the audience leaves the performance room through a narrow hall, over a large mirror on the floor, or over a bed of upward-pointed nails, with foot-sized gaps in the bed, or through rows of taut, knee-high strings.

Nam June Paik's *Zen for Film*. (See it, then go to your neighborhood theater and see it again.)

Henry Flynt's professional anti-culture and down-withs (paying culture a sort of inverse compliment), making Alison Knowles' bean-sprouts seem even lovelier.

Whether you think that concert halls, theaters, and art galleries are the natural places to present music, performances, and objects, or find these places mummifying, preferring streets, homes, and railway stations, or do not find it useful to distinguish between these two aspects of the world theatre, there is someone associated with Fluxus who agrees with you. Artist, anti-artists, non-artists, anartists, the politically committed and the apolitical, poets of non-poetry, non-dancers dancing, doers, undoers, and non-doers, Fluxus encompasses opposites. Consider opposing it, supporting it, ignoring it, changing your mind.

This article was first published in Fluxus Newspaper #4, June 1964.

Friday, September 16, 2011, 11:00 PM

A Fluxus Radio Semicentenary Special Broadcast

"Music from Other Minds"

KALW 91.7-FM

kalw.org and archived at otherminds.org/mfom



Charles Amirkhanian introduces an unusual audio document: *Abschiedssymphonie*, Op. 177, by the Danish Fluxus composer and visual artist Henning Christiansen (1932-2008). Having studied music formally, as did Nam June Paik, Christiansen later took a turn toward experimentalism when he encountered in Copenhagen some of the NY Fluxus stars, including Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, and others who were presenting an entire week of performances.

A concert by Paik and Christiansen was scheduled in Hamburg on November 29,

1985, and visual artist Joseph Beuys was supposed to be a member of the group. The occasion was the opening concert of a large exhibition, "Art of Peace Biennale/ The Art School of Hamburg" curated by René Block, who as a young gallerist, had promoted the work of Joseph Beuys, essentially making his career with his devoted attentions.

However, as Beuys had become too ill to travel, he phoned in his participation--a novelty in those days-- and is heard speaking by telephone from time to time. One quizzical sentence Beuys uttered is reproduced in large bold letters, occupying the entire 12 x 12 inch cover of the LP, released by Edition René Block in 1988. It reads,

**BEI EINEM WESENGEMÄSSEN BESCHREIBEN DES
GESCHEHENS ZUR BEFREIUNG DER VON DER FÄHIGKEIT
GETRAGENEN ARBEIT IS ES DOCH LOGISCH, DASS DAS
TRAGENDE ZUERST BEFREIT WERDEN MUSS.**

The best effort I've seen so far to translate this was submitted by my friend Greg Lutz: "If you want to free the work resulting from ability, it's logical to first free the ability."

During the 44-minute composition you will hear Paik playing Chopin and other classically-based phrases. He also played on the violin and projected parts of the Tokyo Concert "Coyote II" by Paik and Beuys. The rougher sounds--beating and knocking the piano, and roaring, clapping, whipping, bell sounds, and electronics are from Christiansen.

There were three pianos onstage, but as Beuys was absent, a telephone was placed on top of his piano and, as he requested, an oxygen tank was placed underneath it. The oxygen was released from the tank from time to time on cue from Beuys. He also

asked for a blackboard where somebody could write down the sentence (above) that he spoke by phone.

Some time later, René Block requested that Christiansen take the performance recording and make it into a continuous hörspiel. So from his audio archive, Christiansen added water sounds, moving stones at the beach of the Baltic Sea, hammering, and bleating sheep. Some of the episodes from the performance were displaced in time in the final mix.

Since Joseph Beuys had died shortly after the concert on January 23, 1986, Block named the resulting composition after Haydn's Farewell Symphony (Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp Minor) – "Abschiedssymphonie" in German. The final mix was produced in Berlin at Studio Cue by Henning Christiansen and Jean Martin on February 20, 1987. The result is a hypnotic blend of chaos and lyricism with never a dull moment.

The recording was released on Edition Block EB 118 in stereo in association with Edition Lebeer Hossmann (Hamburg/Brussels). Thanks to Ursula Block and René Block for contributing their recollections for these notes.

SAVE THE DATE

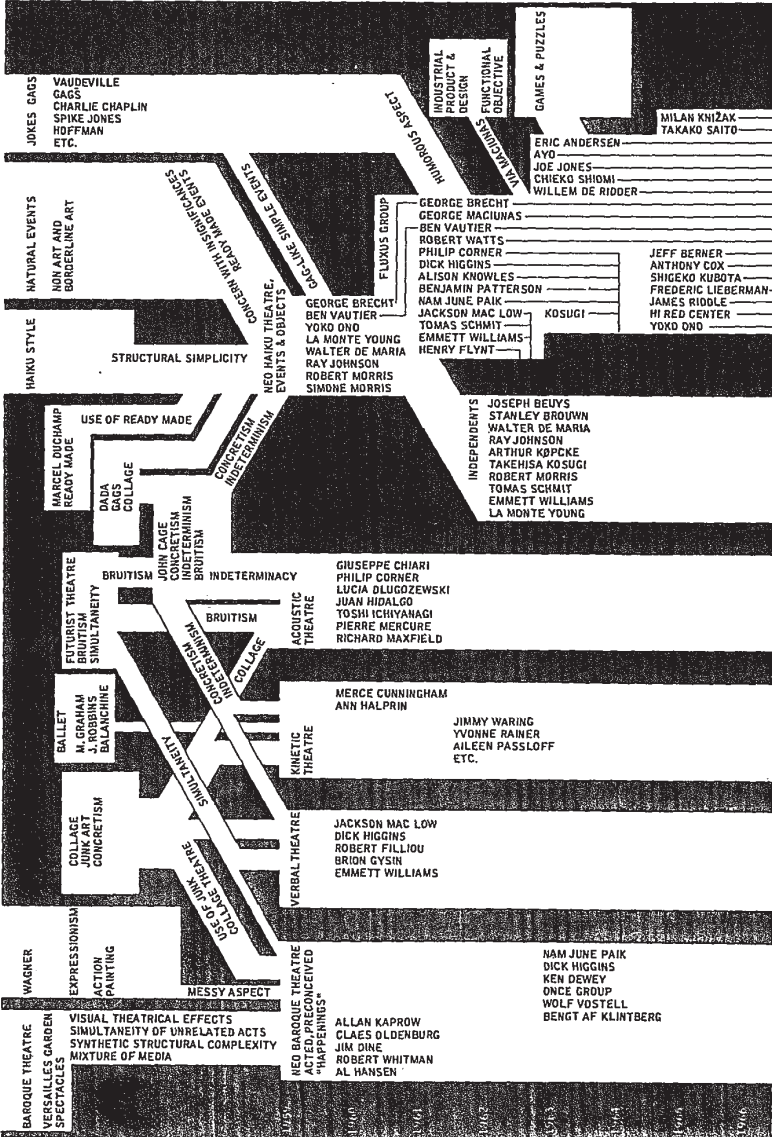
17th OTHER MINDS FESTIVAL CONCERTS

THURSDAY – FRIDAY – SATURDAY, MARCH 1 – 2 – 3, 2012

Within fluxus group there are 4 categories indicated:

- 1) individuals active in similar activities prior to formation of fluxus collective, then becoming active within fluxus and still active up to the present day, (Only George Brecht and Ben Vautier fill this category);
- 2) individuals active since the formation of fluxus and still active within fluxus;
- 3) individuals active independently of fluxus since the formation of fluxus, but presently within fluxus;
- 4) individuals active within fluxus since the formation of fluxus but having since then detached themselves on following motivations:
 - a) anticollective attitude, excessive individualism, desire for personal glory, prima dona complex (Mac Low, Schmit, Williams, Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Kosugi),
 - b) opportunism, joining rival groups offering greater publicity (Paik, Kosugi,
 - c) competitive attitude, forming rival operations (Higgins, Knowles, Paik).

These categories are indicated by lines leading in or out of each name. Lines leading away from the fluxus column indicate the approximate date such individuals detached themselves from fluxus.



Fluxus chart by George Maciunas

<p>PUBLISHING MASSPRODUCING & PERFORMING WORKS BY:</p> <p>GENPEI AKASEGAWA ERIC ANDERSEN AYO GEORGE BRECHT STANLEY BROUWJN GIUSEPPE CHIARI PHILIP CORNER ANTHONY COX WALTER DE MARIA WILLEM DE RIDDER ROBERT FILLIOU HI RED CENTER DICK HIGGINS TOSHI ICHIYANAGI JOE JONES ALISON KNOWLES JIRI KOLAR ARTHUR KOPCKE TAKEHISA KOSUGI SHIGEKO KUBOTA FREDERIC LIEBERMAN GYORGI LIGETI JACKSON MAC LOW GEORGE MACIUNAS JONAS MEKAS ROBERT MORRIS LADISLAV NOVAK CLAES OLDENBURG YOKO ONO BENJAMIN PATTERSON JAMES RIDDLE DITER ROT TAKAKO SAITO WILLEM T. SCHIPPERS TOMAS SCHMIT CHIEKO SHIOMI DANIEL SPOERRI BEN VAUTIER ROBERT WATTS EMMETT WILLIAMS LA MONTE YOUNG</p>	<p>PUBLICATIONS:</p> <p>Periodical newspaper: V TRE (4 times per year) Periodical yearbook Complete works: (supplemented yearly) of: George Brecht, Takehisa Kosugi, Chieko Shiomi and Robert Watts. Individual compositions by: Eric Andersen, Giuseppe Chiari, Dick Higgins, Hi Red Center, Alison Knowles, Gyorgi Ligeti, Jackson Mac Low, Yoko Ono, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Tomas Schmit, Daniel Spoerri, Ben Vautier, Emmett Williams, La Monte Young. Films by: Eric Andersen, Ayo, George Brecht, Walter De Maria, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Alison Knowles, Authur Kopcke, Takehisa Kosugi, Shigeko Kubota, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Chieko Shiomi, Robert Watts, La Monte Young.</p> <p>MASS PRODUCED OBJECTS BY:</p> <p>Ayo, George Brecht, Joe Jones, Shigeko Kubota, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Claes Oldenburg, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Takako Saito, Tomas Schmit, Chieko Shiomi, Daniel Spoerri, Ben Vautier, Robert Watts, La Monte Young.</p> <p>boxes, cards, chess & checkers, clocks, clothes, fingerprints, flags, food, holes, machines, music boxes, organs, postage stamps, puzzles, rocks, signs, sporting goods, suitcases, tablecloths, etc.</p> <p>art, amusements, circus, compositions, concerts, events, everything, films, gags, games, jokes, music, non-art, nothing, objects, paintings, plans, poetry, theatre, vaudeville, etc.</p> <p>FLUXSHOPS & WAREHOUSES:</p> <p>New York, P.O. Box 180, New York, N.Y. 10013 Amsterdam, Postbox 2045, Holland Nice, 32 rue tonduiti de l'escarena, France Le Cedille qui Sourit, 12 rue de May, Villefranche- sur-Mer, France o/o Akiyama, 3-814 Matsubaracho, Setagayaku, Tokyo, Japan.</p>	<p>FLUXUS FESTIVALS, CONCERTS:</p> <p>WIESBADEN, W. Germany, Sept. 1962 at state museum, 14 concerts.</p> <p>COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Nov.23 to 28, 1962 6 concerts.</p> <p>PARIS, FRANCE, Dec. 1962, 7 concerts. DUESSELDORF, W. Germany, Feb. 2 & 3, 1963, at Academy of Art.</p> <p>AMSTERDAM, Holland, June 1963, 2 concerts. HAGUE, Holland, June 1963, 1 concert. NICE, France, July 27 to 30, 1963, 1 concert & 7 street events.</p> <p>COPENHAGEN, *2 internationale koncerter for nyeste instrumentale teater og anliart", Sept. 1963.</p> <p>AMSTERDAM, *Internationaal programma nieuwste muziek, nieuwste literatur, nieuwste theater", Dec. 1963. AMSTERDAM, *16th. Fluxus Film Festival", 24 Feb. 1964.</p> <p>NEW YORK, *Fully Guaranteed 12 Fluxus Concerts", at Fluxhall, April 11 to May 23, 1964.</p> <p>NEW YORK, Fluxus Symphony Orchestra Concert, June 27, 1964, at Carnegie Recital Hall.</p> <p>MILAN, Italy, Nov. 16, 1964 at Galleria Blue.</p> <p>ROTTERDAM, Nov. 23, 1964 AMSTERDAM, Holland, Dec. 6, 1964 WARS COPENHAGEN, Dec. 3 to 23, 1964 NEW YORK, Sept. 1964 to Jan. 1965, at Washington Sq. Gallery.</p> <p>NICE, France, 7 concerts Oct. 31 to Nov. 7, 1964</p> <p>MARSEILLES, France, Mar. 8, 1965 at Marseille University theatre</p> <p>NICE, 1965 perpetual Fluxfest NEW YORK, Perpetual Fluxus Festival, weekly concerts since June 27 '65 at Cinematheque.</p> <p>NEW YORK, the 83rd. Fluxus concert: Fluxorchestra at the Carnegie Recital Hall, Sept. 25, 1965</p>
<p>ART</p> <p>To justify artist's professional, parasitic and elite status in society, he must demonstrate artist's indispensability and exclusiveness, he must demonstrate the dependability of audience upon him, he must demonstrate that no one but the artist can do art.</p>	<p>FLUXUS ART-AMUSEMENT</p> <p>To establish artist's nonprofessional status in society, he must demonstrate artist's dispensability and inclusiveness, he must demonstrate the selfsufficiency of the audience, he must demonstrate that anything can be art and anyone can do it.</p>	
<p>Therefore, art must appear to be complex, pretentious, profound, serious, intellectual, inspired, skillful, significant, theatrical. It must appear to be valuable as 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.</p>	<p>Therefore, art-amusement must be simple, amusing, unpretentious, concerned with insignificances, require no skill or countless rehearsals, have no commodity or institutional value.</p> <p>The value of art-amusement must be lowered by making it unlimited, massproduced, obtainable by all and eventually produced by all.</p> <p>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 strives for the monostructural and nontheatrical qualities of a simple natural event, a game or gag. It is the fusion of Spike Jones, Vaudeville, gag, children's games and Duchamp.</p>	

Listing of Fluxus publications and festivals as of 1965, and a position paper defining Fluxus by George Maciunas

Saturday, September 17, 2011

SOMArts Cultural Center, San Francisco

7pm Panel Discussion

George Brecht

Solo for Contrabass (1962)

Yoshi Wada

Yoshi's Sound Store (2011 ; world premiere)

8pm Concert

Dick Higgins

Danger Music No. 17 (1962)

Alison Knowles & Hannah Higgins

Fluxus With Tools

intermission

Yoko Ono

Lighting Piece (1955)

Sweep Piece (1955)

Wall Piece for Orchestra (1962)

Philip Corner

An anti-personnel CBU-Type cluster bomb unit will be thrown into the audience (1969)

Tomas Schmit

Sanitas No. 35 (1962)

Alison Knowles

Loose Pages (1983)

Also presented in performance, installation, and display:

George Brecht – Chair Event (1962), Drip Music (1959, Second Version), Five Places (1963), Ladder (1963), Stool (1962), Table (1962), Two Signs (1962)

Alison Knowles – Bean Turners

Adam Overton – The Topless Spectator (2010)

Performers: Luciano Chessa, Adam Fong, Hannah Higgins, Alison Knowles, Adam Overton, Tashi Wada, Yoshi Wada

Our thanks to Jeff Maser, Bookseller (ABAA) who has large numbers of the original Something Else Press books for sale in the lobby. A full listing of his first editions of experimental literature is available from his Berkeley outlet at detritus.com

Something Else is presented at SOMArts Cultural Center as part of the Affordable Space Program, which is supported by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

The Origin of “Events”

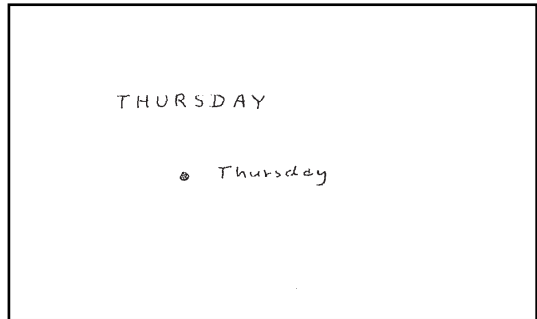
George Brecht, August 1970

In 1958 and 1959 I was attending John Cage's classes in experimental music at the New School for Social Research in New York. My interests then were in such problems as making musical pieces with built-in chance durations rather than pre-determined ones (*Candle Piece for Radius*), or using game elements such as playing cards as musical scores (*Card Piece for Voice*). The pieces turned out quite theatrical when performed, as interesting visually, atmospherically, as aurally, though they were performed with as much economy, with as little fuss, as possible.

I was increasingly dissatisfied with an emphasis on the purely aural qualities of a situation, so that by the Fall of 1959 I had decided to call my first show (at the Reuben Gallery, of my more object-oriented work) “Towards Events,” my thought being that the word “event” was closer to the multi-sensory (total) experience I was interested in than any other.

In the Spring of 1960, standing in the woods in East Brunswick, New Jersey, where I lived at the time, waiting for my wife to come from the house, standing behind my English Ford station wagon, the motor running and the left-turn signal blinking, it occurred to me that a truly “event” piece could be drawn from the situation. Three months later the first piece explicitly titled as an “event” was finished, the *Motor Vehicle Sundown (Event)*.

In 1960 the event-scores came copiously and arrived for several years after that (I still write one now and then). Curiously, the later ones became very private, like enlightenments I wanted to communicate to my friends who would know what to do with them, unlike the *Motor Vehicle Event* or a happening.



George Brecht, May 1963

Later on, rather to my surprise, I learned that George Maciunas in Germany and France, Cornelius Cardew in England, Kosugi, Kubota, Shiomii in Japan, and others had made public realisations of the pieces I thought you had to wait for. (Pleasant surprise that the possibilities of realisation could not be foreseen.)

TO THE READER – A NOTE OF CAUTION

This is the first and probably the last time that I will write about “events.” I have avoided it up to now out of a horror of being called an (or worse “the”) “event-artist,” as, for example, Allan Kaprow, who deserves more enlightened treatment than that, has been called a “happener.” Events have always been a mode of experimenting, I only found a form (for myself) of putting them on paper (for others too).

Biographies

George Brecht (1926–2008) was born George MacDiarmid in New York. His father, a flutist who played in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the NBC Radio Orchestra, died when his son was 8. Mr. Brecht changed his last name to Brecht—not in reference to Bertolt Brecht, but because he liked the sound of the name—around 1945 while serving in the United States Army in Germany. After the war, Brecht studied chemistry at the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science in Philadelphia, and he supported himself as a research chemist from 1950 to 1965. In the mid-1950s, Brecht produced paintings using chance operations and materials like bed sheets, ink and marbles. In 1958-59, he attended a class in experimental music composition taught by John Cage at what was then the New School for Social Research in New York. In the early 1960s, Brecht taught in the art department of Rutgers University, along with Jon Hendricks, Allan Kaprow (who became known as an inventor of the “happening”) and Robert Watts, who also became a Fluxus artist. Brecht’s first solo exhibition, “Toward Events: An Arrangement,” was at Reuben Gallery in New York in 1959. During the next five years, he participated in many group exhibitions and performances in New York. His work “Repository” (1961), a wall cabinet containing a pocket watch, a thermometer, rubber balls, toothbrushes and other objects, was included in “The Art of Assemblage,” the famous 1961 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, and the museum later bought it. In 1965, Brecht left New York. He lived in Rome, the South of France, London and Düsseldorf, Germany, before settling in Cologne in 1972. Brecht’s most important and original contribution was a form he called the “event score,” which typically was printed on a small white card that he would mail to friends. The event score consisted of a title followed by eccentric instructions. The directive for “String Quartet,” for example, read simply, “Shaking hands.” The musicians would perform it by doing just that. He created event scores for sculptures as well. Instructions for “Three Arrangements,” for example, read, “on a shelf/on a clothes tree/black object white chair.” Brecht said that he did not care if any of his event scores were realized and that he did not think that there was a correct way to perform one. He once described his art as a way of “ensuring that the details of everyday life, the random constellations of objects that surround us, stop going unnoticed.”

As a composer, pianist, and musical saw / Vietnamese dan bau soloists, **Luciano Chessa** has been active in Europe, the U.S., and Australia. Among his compositions are a piano and percussion duet after Pier Paolo Pasolini’s *Petrolio*, written for Sarah Cahill and Chris Froh and presented in 2004 at the American Academy in Rome, *Il pedone dell’aria* for orchestra and double children choir, premiered in 2006 at the Auditorium of Turin’s Lingotto and subsequently released on DVD, *Louganis* (San Francisco, Old First Concerts, 2007), for piano and TV/VCR combo, *Inkless Imagination IV* (UC Davis, Mondavi Center, 2008) for viola, mini-bass musical saw, turntables, percussion, FM radios, blimp and video projection (both works in collaboration with artist Terry Berlier), *Recitativo, aria e coro della Vergine* (Concert Hall of the San Francisco Conservatory, 2008), and *Strelitzia*, a newly published work for amplified baritone and string orchestra. The San Francisco-based label Strawberry Hill Records has released three recordings as part of a collection of eleven issues of his music: *Tom’s Heart* for two-pianos-one player and video by Terry Berlier (DVD), *Tryptique pour Gérard* for quartet (CD), and *Money is Money and Time is Time* for Vietnamese dan bau (CD), which includes two pieces written in collaboration with LA-based singer Christine Morse. Chessa is also a scholar of Italian Futurism: his work includes Luigi Russolo *Futurista. Noise, Visual Arts, and the Occult*, forthcoming from the University of California Press, and the first complete reconstruction of Russolo’s *intonarumori*. He has been performing Futurist sound poetry for more than a decade, and his recording of Francesco Cangiullo’s poem *Piedigrotta* is forthcoming on Strawberry Hill Records. Chessa taught and lectured at St. John’s College of Oxford, Columbia University, Sydney’s and Melbourne’s Conservatories and Universities, the Conservatory of Music in Bologna, UC Davis, UC Berkeley, Stanford University, EMPAC (RPI), among others, and currently teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His music is published by RAI TRADE, the Italian National Broadcast Channels’ music publishing company.

Philip Corner (b. 1933, New York), who has lived in Italy since 1992, is an active performer, visual artist, writer, and composer of interdisciplinary works. He studied at the City College of New York, at Columbia University with Henry Cowell and Otto Leuning, and at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris with Olivier Messiaen. He was drafted into the US Army in 1959 and sent to South Korea in 1960. He has participated in various concerts, exhibitions and festivals with the name Fluxus since 1961. As a performer of new music, he has been active as a pianist, trombonist and vocalist and has also played Alphon and various natural objects, including resonant metals. He served as a resident composer and musician to the Judson Dance Theatre in New York from 1962 to 1964. With Malcolm Goldstein and James Tenney, he co-founded the Tone Roads Chamber Ensemble in 1963, a new music group that performed until 1970. He co-founded with Julie Winter the music-ritual ensemble *Sounds out of Silent Spaces* in 1972 and with Barbara Benary and Daniel Goode *Gamelan Son of Lion* in 1976 and often played with both, as well as with the Experimental Intermedia Foundation in New York. He is featured in the book *The Four Suits* (1966, Something Else Press) and an overview of his life and work is presented in the book *LifeWork: A Unity* (1991–93, Frog Peak Music). He has written numerous articles, essays and poems, and his major publications include the book *I Can Walk through the World as Music* (1966, unpublished; 1980, Printed Editions).

Hannah Higgins is the author of a history of the Fluxus movement, *Fluxus Experience*, published in 2002 by the University of California Press. The *Grid Book*, her interdisciplinary history of this defining form in Western culture, was published by MIT Press in early 2009. With Douglas Kahn, she is co-editing an anthology of computer art (1960-1970) called *The Muse in the Mainframe*. Higgins received her B.A. in 1988 from Oberlin College, her M.A. from the University of Chicago in 1990, and graduated with her Ph.D. in 1994 from the University of Chicago. She is an associate professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Alison Knowles was born in New York City in 1933. She is a visual artist known for her soundworks, installations, performances, publications and association with Fluxus, the experimental avant-garde group formally founded in 1962. After briefly attending Middlebury College, Knowles studied with Joseph Albers and Richard Lindner and graduated from Pratt University in 1954. With John Cage and Dick Higgins, she joined the New York Mycological Society, frequently hunting for wild mushrooms around New York City from the late 1950s-60s. During this time a close and fertile exchange of affection, food, and ideas developed between Knowles and Cage. With Fluxus she made *Bean Rolls* by invitation of George Maciunas, a canned book that appeared in the Whitney Museum exhibition *The American Century* (2000). In 1967, she expanded the scale of her book projects with the *Big Book*, an eight foot tall book of environments organized around a spine. In 1968, *The House of Dust*, programmed with the help of composer James Tenney, was recognized as the first computer poem on record, winning her a Guggenheim Fellowship. Knowles' *The Identical Lunch* (1969) is a score based on her habit of eating the same food at the same time each day—"a tunafish sandwich on wheat toast, with lettuce and butter, no mayo and a cup of soup or a glass of buttermilk." This meditation on the everyday was performed at MoMA as a part of the *Selections from the Collection* series curated by Gretchen Wagner. Other often performed Events by Knowles include *Make a Salad* (1962) most recently performed at the Baltimore Museum of Art "Work Ethic" exhibition and *The Wexner Center* (2004) and *Shoes of Your Choice* (1963) which invites the audience to talk about their shoes and to tell the stories they evoke.

Yoko Ono was born on February 18, 1933, in Tokyo, Japan, the eldest of three children born to Eisuke and Isoko, a wealthy aristocratic family. Her father, who worked for the Yokohama Specie Bank, was transferred to San Francisco two weeks before she was born. The rest of the family soon followed. Her father was transferred back to Japan in 1937, and she enrolled at the elite Peers' School in Tokyo. In 1940, the family moved to New York, then back to Japan in 1941 when her father was transferred to Hanoi on the eve of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Ono remained in Tokyo through World War II, including the great-fire bombing of 1945. At age 18, Ono moved with her parents to Scarsdale, New York. She studied at Sarah Lawrence College, but left to elope with her first husband, Toshi Ichiyanagi. Settling in Greenwich Village, she developed her interest in art and also began writing poetry. Considered too radical by many, her work was not well received but she gained recognition after working with American jazz musician/film producer Anthony Cox. Cox financed and helped coordinate her "interactive conceptual events" in the early 1960s. Yoko's work often demands the viewers' participation and forces them to get involved. Her most famous piece was the "cut piece" staged in 1964, where the audience was invited to cut off pieces of her clothing until she was naked, an abstract commentary on discarding materialism. Ono first met John Lennon of the Beatles November 9, 1966, when he visited a preview of her exhibition at the Indica Gallery in London. He was taken with the positive, interactive nature of her work. He especially cited a ladder leading up to a black canvas with a spyglass on a chain, which revealed the word "yes" written on the ceiling. Following Lennon's death, Ono continued her career and has recorded albums, performed concert tours, and composed two off-Broadway musicals. She exhibited her art internationally, and in 2002 the first U.S. retrospective of her work opened in New York City. On October 9th that year, to commemorate what would have been Lennon's 62nd birthday, she inaugurated the Lennon Ono Grant for Peace prize.

Adam Overton is a living artist, composer and performer of experimental action and music, a teacher of various subjects, and massage therapist based in Los Angeles. Through experiments in rhythm, presence, and contact, my work plumbs the depths and abilities of the bodymindperson, and playfully maps the intimate distance between individuals. I am continually fascinated with and fueled by the transformative practices and radical challenges of awareness, acknowledgment, and [co]existence.

Tomas Schmit is one of the pioneers of the Fluxus movement of the early 1960s. During the subsequent 40 years, he developed a ramified work of drawings, texts, books and concepts of artists' books. Schmit has played a considerable role in shaping the radical questioning of civil art and approaches to new aesthetics. It was his correspondence with George Maciunas that made a theoretical discussion on the political and aesthetic concept of the Fluxus period possible. As an artist, he took part in Fluxus events that are nowadays considered milestones in the art of the 1960s. As organizer, he arranged for the legendary event "20th July TU Aachen" 1964 (with Beuys, Köpcke, Vostell, Paik amongst others). In 1982, in the book 1962 Wiesbaden Fluxus 1982, he wrote the theoretical text "about f" which represents one of the rare profound evaluations of the ideas of Fluxus from the artist's perspective. Schmit pulled out of the active Fluxus actions early, as he

was against an adulteration of the radical potential. It is also this potential which his probably most important working principle is based on: "what I learned from f., along with many other things: what can be mastered by a sculpture, doesn't have to be erected as a building; what can be brought by a painting, doesn't have to be made as a sculpture; what can be accomplished in a drawing, doesn't have to become a painting; what can be cleared on a scrap of paper, doesn't need to be done as a drawing; and what can be settled in the head, doesn't even require a paper scrap!". In the following decades, he developed works that comprise several thousand drawings. He published editions and books. His topics are language, logic, paradoxes, biology, cybernetics, cerebral research, behaviour research and apperception theory.

Tashi Wada is a composer and performer based in San Francisco. His recent work focuses on sound perception as a basis for direct listening experiences. Wada's work has been performed throughout the United States and Europe, and for several years now he has performed alongside his father Yoshi Wada.

Yoshi Wada (surname Wada; born Yoshimasa Wada, Japan) is a sound installation artist and musician living in the United States. He lived in New York for many years but now lives in San Francisco, California. Wada joined the Fluxus movement in 1968 after meeting George Maciunas. He frequently performs his own compositions, which feature much freedom of improvisation, on Scottish highland bagpipe and voice, and also employs a number of homemade instruments. These include "pipe horns" (very long horn-type instruments made from metal plumbing pipe) as well as large reed instruments involving multiple bagpipe-like pipes connected to a large air compressor; due to their appearance, Wada named these latter instruments "Alligator" and "the Elephantine Crocodile". Wada's works often incorporate the use of drone and are usually performed at very high volume, allowing for the music's overtones to be heard very clearly. His music has been scarcely released on recordings, having seen only two LP releases, never reissued, on the India Navigation and FMP labels. He has created mechanical and robotic installations. In Pittsburgh in the mid-90s, he performed a whimsically entitled piece, "Lament for the Rise and Fall of Handy-Horn," in which several compressed-air "auditory flare" signals used for nautical emergencies (the "Handy Horn" brand named in the title) were sounded for the duration of their usefulness, giving rise to an alarmingly high-decibel air-pressure environment and charged psycho-acoustic environment.

Selections from “v. towards musical activity,” in *Postface*

Dick Higgins, Something Else Press, 1964

It's always seemed to me that music is more a matter of activity than anything else. What is done is done. When the sound is gone, the string ceases to vibrate, the bell stops its resonating, and the activity is over. Unlike a poem or a painting it has no life without a constant activity taking place.

Of course one could debate that paintings have their identity when they are not being looked at.

But musical activity takes place in time, and it seems to me that anything that just breaks up time by happening in it, absorbing it, is musical.

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Essentially the problem with such pieces as [Feldman's] *Projection 4* is that the analogy between quietness and a state of grace has been mistaken for an equation. The a priori, idealistic approach has led to a new situation where the main spiritual value required is the restraint on the part of the audience to keep from being annoyed by the piece. Naturally there will be many people also to whom quiet sounds are the only beautiful ones, and to them the music will be soothing, a sort of good liquor to go with one's after-dinner benevolence. But if one likes all sounds and goings on that don't actually hurt, if one considers the possibility that any sound can be lovely, then the piece is conventionalized and standardized, no more or less marvelous than any other International Style piece.

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In any case, the problem is that the mathematical approach is not giving a noticeably dissimilar result from the graphic one, and that taken in aggregate, Feldman and Babbitt, Byrd and Nilsson, Pousseur and Cardew, Stockhausen and Berio all sound the same, all arrive, by any number of different routes, at the same place. Is this desirable?

There are very few independent, very few who just follow their own course, such as Earle Brown (who, as Cage once remarked, fills in a time-unit the way a painter fills a canvas, with the result that everything in his work is a clear, aural presence and no more) or Christian Wolff (who makes listening very hard and therefore rewarding, usually by separating his sounds with incredibly long silences, whose music seems to be all about listening and not at all about composing) or Philip Corner (who works, usually through graphics, with relative momentums and weights, sculpting his sounds, so that an extraordinary variety of things become possible at any time: one day I would like to detail his work more fully).

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At that time Al Hansen, George Brecht and myself [sic] met in John Cage's composition class at the New School for Social Research. The year was 1958. Kaprow had studied with him the previous year. For us, it was an odd coming together from many ways of many very different people.

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Cage used to talk about a lot of things going on at once and having nothing to do with each other. He called it the autonomous behavior of simultaneous events: I called it independence.

In fact, the beauty about studying with Cage was that he brought out what you already know and helped you become conscious of the essence of what you were doing, whether or not it was noble (and, thus acceptable to him). Though my own inclinations were always rather antithetical to Cage, I was able, through him, to become conscious of my love of autonomy, variety, some sorts of inconsistency, rationalism, etc.

In the same way Brecht picked up from Cage an understanding of his love of complete anonymity, simplicity, and non-involvement with what he does. And Hansen got his anarchy enforced and accepted his own love of letting people be just as they are. Is Hansen the ultimate in philanthropists?

To us, Cage's ideas about indeterminacy and all that seemed very democratic and just fine, because we had each other and all of us seemed to think a little the same way. We even took indeterminacy farther than Cage without his ever having told us about it.

About the second meeting of class Cage, who had previously written down all aspects of performances he could think of, passed out pencils and paper and asked us to write pieces, since none of us had done our homework and brought pieces to class. The pieces we wrote were done with words. Perhaps they were about the first notationless non-improvisatory music.

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Around May of 1960 I began to be conscious of La Monte young's activities out on the west coast. He sent copies of *A Vision and Poem for Tables, Chairs, and Benches*. *A Vision* was very technically involved, but easy to hear. I liked his lengthiness and suggested he expand the piece enormously. I would like to see it published burned into sheets of lead. However, La Monte complained that it was boring: this suggests something very interesting in him. He is fascinated by a lot coming from a little. The *Poem* is very concrete. One drags the objects over the performance area at given rates, as described in the text. La Monte answered a remark I sent him, that everybody ought to do the *Poem* pretty often, with the reply that everybody was doing the *Poem*, did I know anyone who wasn't but that it was too entertaining and so he wasn't interested any more.

These pieces were followed by the best-known pieces, clear-cut sentences that are simply provocations for events, usually reflecting a taste for the most poetic sorts of imagery and almost always implying an orientation towards either useless or extraordinary activities. Throughout 1961 the same piece, "Draw a straight line and follow it," was written over and over twenty-nine times, and also a sort of jazz that he liked, indian ornaments and modal effects over extremely monotonous rhythmic patterns, usually a triple time of some kind and a drone; this sort of jazz has almost completely taken over his attention. Except for new ways of looking at the earlier pieces and the "Death Chant" I do not know of anything new he has been doing for a couple of years now. He cooks, and he plays his jazz with a drone and a drum-player and a soprano saxophone. This music seems part of his life, which is deliberately alienated, if not outside, the social environment of our times. My only objection to his

work is that it makes a body feel insulated against the world, which is a sensation I do not care for.

There is just enough of his work to give you a taste for it. Then it stops.

We in the states didn't know that already at that time Benjamin Patterson was beginning to do marvelous pieces in Koln, such as the *Paper Piece for Five Performers*," the "Sextet" from *Lemons*, and the pieces in *Methods and Processes*. Patterson's pieces are the most concrete of dissociated pieces, the most dissociated of concrete pieces. You get nothing out of doing any of them that doesn't disappear afterwards. While they happen, they are a joy to do, but afterwards, who knows why? I remember liking a piece called *Stand Erect*, doing it several times, writing to Patterson that it made me feel religious, and then I forgot about it. Last winter I wrote a piece called *Gangsang*. It turned out to be nearly a duplication of *Stand Erect*. Occasionally Patterson makes pieces that are simply entertaining, such as the *Variations for Contrabass Viol*, in which the performer, working with a bass viol, attaches things (e.g. clothespins) to it, shoots with it, and writes a letter, among other things. A piece like this has some appeal to one's sense of the fantastic, but since it depends primarily on the visual aspects of the actions, no matter how short, it always seems too long, since the ideal length of time for any of the particular events would be no longer than it takes to recognize what is going on, and any longer amount of time is not very economical.

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But Patterson more than hardly any other composer, seems to understand that for a composer to divide activities into musical and non-musical, what-I-do and what-I-do-not-do is to accept the dualism of good and evil, of black and white, and ultimately, to place one's work on a level of purely theoretical relevance. Patterson goes for the grey, and he seems to accept, even to encourage, the non-memorable, disappearing aspect of his work. In pieces such as *A Lawful Dance*, where you follow the directions of a traffic light from corner to corner, back and forth, ad lib, till you are through performing, Patterson gets somewhere that nobody else is. Marvelous things happen to you while you cross the street. The last time I performed this piece at Times Square I met and was, briefly, joined by Bea, Lindy, and Shirley, three overdeveloped young ladies with colossal hairdoes. They saw me (and a group of others) crossing back and forth, and it occurred to them that it would be fun to join in. So they did, no questions asked.

And afterwards the piece blurs, crossing the street is remembered as crossing Times Square, it is inexorably connected with Bea, Lindy, and Shirley. Or was Lindy really Jackie? Have I forgotten their names?

So far we are from Germany. Patterson did these things for maybe two years before any of us heard about them. Cage and Brown made their trips there, and I asked them what was going on, but it was always officially Stockhausen and the International Stylists: Cage never told about Paik till I had read about him and asked specifically. And very few people had any idea at all what Patterson was doing. Only Paik and Vostell really cared.

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Around 1959 or 1960 Paik began to do those pieces where he chops John Cage's necktie off or knocks the piano over and operates on it. In 1961 he began to think

about moving the audience around, visiting this or that display of sounds. He did—or began to talk about (which for him, like Soerri, is about the same thing)—his *Symphony for Twenty Rooms*, and his *Omnibus Music No. 1* in which the sounds sit down and the audience visits them.

These things have to do with this phenomenon that fascinates La Monte Young too—that you can really get inside a sound. In the same way, I used to say, when I played bridge, that I liked to get inside the cards. It is all the same phenomenon, and it is very much in the air.

In 1961 he did his last big performance piece, *Simple*, for Stockhausen's *Originale*. Here he peeps, covers himself with shaving cream, works with an ancient Norwegian phonograph, and dumps water over himself in an old tin bathtub. Also he did a piece—is it called *Solo for Violin*?—where a violin is raised very slowly above his head, then it is suddenly smashed onto a table and shattered.

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Most European critics ... do not see that only Hansen and Brecht have anything at all to do with indeterminacy, that I am a moralist in the school of Bunyan and perhaps Genet and that my techniques have nothing to do with indeterminacy, that Patterson's medium is experience and his style is, like his message, disappearance, that Young takes things aesthetically and avoids anything at all mechanistic. As an observer and thinker Paik is totally commonplace with a bizarre style and a joy in the perverse, a German outlook on the current scene and a fascination for himself, the Artist, imposing Platonic ideals on implicitly hostile (or is the word "philistine"?) society.

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In Paik, as in abstract art, art (or anti-art) becomes not just a way of life but a form of suggestion, necessary to bring up short those who might otherwise be very complacent. At best this turns people on. At worst it makes enemies of those who might have been persuaded by other means. In the middle between these ends lies the typical—newspaper articles appear which pretend to be shocked (even when the reporter knows better), word gets around, the sort of activity becomes typed (thus blinding the observers to what is actually going on)—and so the artist who does this kind of thing finds himself merely being exploited in this most bizarre aspect for his newspaper-selling ability.

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And so one sits in the audience, and one observes. One may or may not be annoyed by the self-consciousness of the presentation, by its slickness (they are the same thing). For all his messiness, is Paik any different from Tudor? There is so much ballyhoo, so many people writing down what is going on, there are so many photographers, big-wig Herr Doktors, document-makers, etc. But the orthodox will be denied, possibly without useful implications, but surely in an inspiring way. Something ordinarily secret will be revealed. The presentation will be at least unorthodox, and possibly cathartic.



Search for “Fluxus” on radiOM.org to hear programs including interviews with Dick Higgins, George Maciunas, and Charlotte Mormon.