

The

FLUXUS

Reader

EDITED BY KEN FRIEDMAN

AE ACADEMY EDITIONS

THE FLUXUS READER

Edited by KEN FRIEDMAN

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Much Fluxus research has been made possible by four individuals who have been responsible for publishing the three largest series of publications of Fluxus material: objects, scores, and multiples, books and catalogues. George Maciunas' Fluxus editions launched Fluxus publishing as an organized phenomenon. Dick Higgins' Something Else Press books brought Fluxus to the larger world. Gilbert Silverman and Jon Hendricks are responsible for the catalogues that have become the largest series of Fluxus research documents.

Several collections are central to the research on Fluxus. Three major collections are now readily accessible. Hanns Sohm's Archiv Sohm is now located at Stadtsgalerie Stuttgart and Jean Brown's collection has become The Jean Brown Archive at the Getty Center for the History of the Arts and Humanities. The collections and archives of Fluxus West and my own papers have been distributed among several museums and universities. The largest body of material is located at Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Art at University of Iowa, the Tate Gallery Archives in London and the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College. Substantial holdings that once belonged to Fluxus West are now part of the Museum of Modern Art's Franklin Furnace Archive Collection, the Museum of Modern Art's Performance Art Archives, the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, the Ken Friedman Collection at the University of California at San Diego and the Henie Onstad Art Center in Oslo. All of these holdings are available for research, publication and exhibition under the normal conditions of research archives and museum collections. A number of important private collections are available under restricted access or by special appointment. Most notable among these are the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Foundation in New York and Detroit, Archivio Conz in Verona, and MuDiMa in Milan.

The documentation section was edited by Owen Smith. I developed the first versions of the documentation at Fluxus West in 1966 and supported improved versions over the years since. Project scholars and editors included Nancy McElroy, Kimberley Ruhe, Matthew Hogan, Judith Hoffberg, Giorgio Zanchetti, and James Lewes. Hoseon Cheon, Dick

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Here, I thank also Ditte Mauritzon Friedman. Canon and deacon of Lund Cathedral, psychotherapist-in-training, and wife, Ditte has enriched my perspective on Fluxus and on life. And I thank Oliver Mauritzon, walking companion, philosopher and the first taster of whatever I happen to be cooking for Ditte.

Another wise man made this book possible in many ways. He was the secret patron of Fluxus West. The Fluxus West projects in San Diego, San Francisco and around the world did more than anyone thought possible on limited resources and money. As creative and resourceful as it was possible to be, however, money often ran out. That was when our patron stepped in. He made it possible for me to follow my passion for knowledge. He helped me to organize and preserve the collections that are now housed in museums and archives around the world. He was profoundly generous, the more profound considering that he was a patron of the arts on a college professor's salary. I dedicate this book to an outstanding human being: advisor and patron, friend and father, Abraham M Friedman.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The scholarly content of *The Fluxus Reader* has been the product of a laboratory of ideas, a virtual colloquium. It has been my pleasure here to work with a number of the leading scholars now writing on Fluxus. The authors of the history chapters wrote doctoral dissertations on various aspects of Fluxus. **Owen Smith** is associate professor of art history at the University of Maine. He wrote on George Maciunas at University of Washington. Simon Anderson is head of art history, theory and criticism at the School of the Art Institute Chicago. He wrote on Fluxshoe and British Fluxus at the Royal College of Art. **Hannah Higgins** is assistant professor of art history at University of Illinois at Chicago. She wrote on the interpretation and reception of early Fluxus at University of Chicago.

The authors of the theory chapters have specialized in different aspects of intermedia. **Ina Blom** is doctoral research fellow in art history at the University of Oslo. She has written extensively on Fluxus and intermedia. Craig Saper is assistant professor of criticism at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. He has written on intermedia, multimedia, artist publishing and visual poetry. **David Doris** is a doctoral fellow in art history at Yale University. The chapter on Fluxus and Zen was adapted from his award-winning master's thesis at City University of New York.

The chapters on critical and historical perspectives have been written by three internationally renowned scholars in art history, art theory and literary theory. **Stephen Foster** is professor of art history at University of Iowa and director of the Fine Arts Dada Archive. **Estera Milman** is associate professor of art history at the University of Iowa and founding director of Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Art. **Nicholas Zurbrugg** is professor of English and head of the department of English, Media and Culture Studies at De Montfort University.

The section titled 'Three Fluxus Voices' is the result of two unique collaborations. The first is an extensive interview between Fluxus artist **Larry Miller** and Fluxus co-founder George Maciunas. Made just before Maciunas's death in 1978, it sheds important light on Maciunas' view of Fluxus. The second is the only known interview with Maciunas' wife, Billie. This interview was recorded by **Susan Jarosi**, doctoral candidate in art history at Duke University. The section ends with Larry Miller's own thoughts on what it is to think about Fluxus. Here, I beg the reader's indulgence. There could have been, perhaps there should have been any number of other views, other chapters. Time and space limit every book. I selected these three voices because they are unique and because they form a conceptually elegant triad. If there is a clear message in the sections on history, theory, critical and historical perspectives, it is that there no way to encapsulate Fluxus in any neat paradigm. On another occasion, and for other reasons, I will present other voices: here, time, a page limit and circumstance dictate a useful choice that makes available an interview with ideas that have never before been published.

The section titled 'Two Fluxus Theories' makes available the thoughts of two Fluxus artists who have attempted to theorize Fluxus and place it in a larger intellectual and cultural framework. The first is by **Dick Higgins**, Fluxus co-founder and legendary publisher of Something Else Press. The second is my own: as editor of this book, I feel obliged to put my thoughts on the table here, too.

FLUXUS READER WEB SITE

The World Wide Web is making a vital difference to many fields of human endeavor. The arts and scholarship have been particularly well served by this medium.

One of the most important developments for research and writing on Fluxus is a consortium of five major universities and museums with a key focus on Fluxus and intermedia. These five are developing a Web-based series of virtual resources for scholarship and reflection on contemporary art. University of Iowa's Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Art, the University of California Museum of Art at Berkeley, Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth, Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and Franklin Furnace in New York maintain the site. ATCA at University of Iowa will be hosting a wide variety of scholarly and pictorial materials that dovetail with the material in this book, and a portion of the site will be dedicated to expanding and reflecting on the specific chapters presented here.

The URL is: <<http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/spec-coll/resources/atca.html>>. Please visit the site.

INFORMATION AND IDEAS

I welcome queries and idea on any of the subjects covered in this book. If you have questions or thoughts you would like to pursue, please contact me at:

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KEN FRIEDMAN: INTRODUCTION: A TRANSFORMATIVE VISION OF FLUXUS

A little more than thirty years ago, George Maciunas asked me to write a history of Fluxus. It was the autumn of 1966. I was sixteen then and living in New York after dropping out of college for a term. George had enrolled me in Fluxus that August. Perhaps he saw me as a scholar, perhaps simply as someone with enough energy to undertake and complete such a project.

Not long after, I grew tired of New York and I was ready to move back to California. That was when George appointed me director of Fluxus West. Originally intended to represent Fluxus activities in the western United States, Fluxus West became many things. It became a centre for spreading Fluxus ideas, a forum for Fluxus projects across North America – outside New York – as well as parts of Europe and the Pacific, a travelling exhibition centre, a studio in a Volkswagen bus, a publishing house and a research programme. These last two aspects of our work led George to ask me once again to take on a comprehensive, official history of Fluxus. I agreed to do it. I didn't know what I was getting into.

This history project was never completed. In part, I lacked the documentation, and despite gathering documents and material for years, I never did accumulate the material I should have done to carry out the job. Moreover, I found that it was the ideas in Fluxus that interested me most, far more than the specific deeds and doings of a specific group of artists. While I am a scholar in addition to being an artist, my interest in Fluxus does not focus on documentation or archival work.

The documents and works I did collect have not gone to waste. They found homes in museums, universities and archives, where they are available to scholars who do want to write the history of Fluxus, as well as to scholars, critics, curators and artists who want to examine Fluxus from other perspectives. The history that I never finished gave rise to several projects and publications that shed light on Fluxus in many ways. This book is one of them.

The key issue here is explaining a 'how' and 'why' of Fluxus. Emmett Williams once wrote a short poem on that how and why, writing 'Fluxus is what Fluxus does – but no one knows whodunit.' What is it that Fluxus does? Dick Higgins offered one answer when he wrote, 'Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death.' For Dick, as for George, Fluxus is more important as an idea and a potential for social change than as a specific group of people or collection of objects.

As I see it, Fluxus has been a laboratory, a grand project summed up by George

Maciunas' notion of the 'learning machines'. The Fluxus research programme has been characterised by twelve ideas: globalism, the unity of art and life, intermedia, experimentalism, chance, playfulness, simplicity, implicativeness, exemplativism, specificity, presence in time and musicality. (These twelve ideas are elaborated in the chapter titled 'Fluxus and Company'.) These ideas are not a prescription for how to be a Fluxus artist. Rather they form a description of the qualities and issues that characterise the work of Fluxus. Each idea describes a 'way of doing things'. Taken together, these twelve ideas form a picture of what Fluxus is and does.

The implications of some ideas have been more interesting – and occasionally more startling – than they may at first have seemed. Fluxus has been a complex system of practices and relationships. The fact that the art world can sometimes be a forum for philosophical practice has made it possible for Fluxus to develop and demonstrate ideas that would later be seen in such frameworks as multimedia, telecommunications, hypertext, industrial design, urban planning, architecture, publishing, philosophy, and even management theory. That is what makes Fluxus so lively, so engaging and so difficult to describe.

We can grasp the phenomenon through the lens of several disciplines. One such discipline is history, and there is a history of Fluxus to be told. While the core issues in Fluxus are ideas, Fluxus ideas were first summarised and exemplified in the work of a specific group of people. This group pioneered these ideas at a time when their thoughts and practices were distinct and different from many of the thoughts and practices in the world around them, distinct from the art world and different from the world of other disciplines in which Fluxus would come to play a role. To understand the how and why of Fluxus, what it is and does, it is important to understand 'whodunit', to know what Fluxus was and did. History therefore offers a useful perspective.

Fluxus, however, is more than a matter of *art* history. Literature, music, dance, typography, social structure, architecture, mathematics, politics ... they all play a role. Fluxus is, indeed, the name of a way of doing things. It is an active philosophy of experience that only sometimes takes the form of art. It stretches across the arts and even across the areas between them. Fluxus is a way of viewing society and life, a way of creating social action and life activity. In this book, historians and critics offer critical and historical perspectives. Other writers frame the central issues in other ways.

The ideal book would be three times as long as this one is and impossible to publish. I therefore chose to focus on issues to open a dialogue with the Fluxus idea. Rather than teaching the reader everything there is to know about Fluxus, this book lays out a map, a cognitive structure filled with tools, markers and links to ideas and history both.

Fluxus has now become a symbol for much more than itself. That companies in the knowledge industry and creative enterprise use the name Fluxus suggests that something is happening, both in terms of real influence and in terms of fame, the occasional shadow of true influence. Advertising agencies, record stores, performance groups, publishers and even young artists now apply the word Fluxus to what they do. It is difficult to know whether we should be pleased, annoyed, or merely puzzled.

Tim Porges once wrote that the value of writing and publishing on Fluxus rests not on what Fluxus has been but on 'what it may still do'. If one thread binds the chapters in this book, it is the idea of a transformative description that opens a new discourse. A new and

appropriately subtle understanding of Fluxus leaves open the question of what it may still do. That's good enough for me.

Owen Smith and I were discussing this book one afternoon. We reached the conclusion that it is as much a beginning as a summation. If, as George Brecht said in the 1980s, 'Fluxus has Fluxed', one can equally well say what someone – Dick? Emmett? – said a few years later: 'Fluxus has not yet begun.' There is an on-line discussion group called Fluxlist where the question of what lies between those two points has been the subject of much recent dialogue. One of the interesting aspects of the conversation has been the philosophical subtlety underlying the several positions. Those who believe there is a Fluxus of ideas and attitudes more than of objects feel that there is, indeed, a future Fluxus. This Fluxus intersects with and moves beyond the Fluxus of artefacts and objects. This vision of Fluxus distinguishes between a specific Fluxus of specific artists acting in time and space and what René Block termed 'Fluxism', an idea exemplified in the work and action of the historic Fluxus artists.

Beginning or summation, this book offers a broad view of Fluxus. It is a corrective to the hard-edged and ill-informed debates on Fluxus that diminish what we set out to do by locating us in a mythic moment of time that never really existed. Fluxus was created to transcend the boundaries of the art world, to shape a discourse of our own. A debate that ends Fluxus with the death of George Maciunas is a debate that diminishes George's idea of Fluxus as an ongoing social practice. It also diminishes the rest of us, leaving many of the original Fluxus artists disenfranchised and alienated from the body of work to which they gave birth. In the moments that people attempt to victimise us with false boundaries, I am drawn to two moments in history.

The first moment occurred in sixth-century Chinese Zen. It reflects the debates around Fluxus in an oddly apt way, and not merely because Fluxus is often compared with Zen. It involved the alleged split between the Northern and Southern schools of Zen. The real facts of the split seem not to have involved the two masters who succeeded the Sixth Patriarch, one in the North and one in the South, Shen-hsiu and Hui-neng. The long and tangled stories of schism seem rooted, rather, in the actions of Hui-neng's disciple Shen-hui and those who followed him. It has little to do with the main protagonists who respected and admired each other to the point that the supposedly jealous patriarch Shen-hsiu in fact recommended Hui-neng to the imperial court where he, himself, was already held in high renown. This is like much of the argument around Fluxus. It seems that the protagonists of one view or another, the adherents of one kind of work or another, those who need to establish a monetary value for one body of objects or another, seem to feel the need to do so by discounting, discrediting or disenfranchising everyone else. That makes no sense in a laboratory, let alone a laboratory of ideas and social practice.

The other moment I consider took place a few years ago, when Marcel Duchamp declared that the true artist of the future would go underground. To the degree that Fluxus is a body of ideas and practices, we are visible and we remain so. To the degree that Fluxus is or may be an art form, it may well have gone underground already. If this is true, who can possibly say that Fluxus is or isn't dead? We don't know 'whodunit', we don't know who does it and we certainly don't know who may do it in the future.

PART I
THREE HISTORIES

HANNAH HIGGINS: FLUXUS FORTUNA

Round and round it goes and where it stops nobody knows.

*George Brecht*¹

Fluxus artist George Brecht has compared Fluxus to a Wheel of Fortune, as moving in place and time, as an object of some uncertainty whose stopping point is not yet clear. He is certainly not alone in the assignation of a gaming spirit to the group. There are many artists working in the rich tradition of Flux-games. Robert Filliou, for instance, made a spinner of twenty-four different hands and a dial in 1964. Filliou's wheel exposes the irony in Brecht's statement. Where the wheel of Fluxus stops is not the point, since the hands are both different and the same. Fixed ends, it seems, are anathema to the idea of 'fluxing' or flowing, as many Fluxus scholars and artists have pointed out over the years.

It does not follow, however, that Fluxus is anything and everything. In the words of Kristine Stiles, Fluxus is a 'voluntary association' of people.² As such, Fluxus is as diverse in its beliefs and practices as any sociality is. Thus, unless the artists are subject to an overriding ideological interpretation of their beliefs and actions, they will show themselves to be both highly pluralistic and in some form of communication (both by agreement and disagreement) with each other. Testimony for Brecht's truism lies in and around the variety of Fluxus activities described by my colleagues in the preceding two parts of this historical survey.

Clearly this sociological description of Fluxus is limited as to interpretive frameworks – this despite my using it in several other contexts over the years. For this construction only allows the group to be a group – another 'art clique'. What is more, the sociology of Fluxus does not begin to address the more significant issue of why we care about it. Stiles helps us to untangle the bigger issue here, of how this collective body engenders specific forms of art. She writes that 'Fluxus artists place their living bodies between the material and mental worlds . . . [which] negotiate degrees of human freedom in relations between the private and social worlds – directions that recall philosophical descriptions of the phenomenological character of the body as an instrument acting in the world'.³ A provisional unpacking of these insightful lines would go something like this: as private individuals and members of a social grouping, the specific performance actions of Fluxus artists embody a range of potential experiences that connect them socially and philosophically to the world at large. It follows that, both by being Fluxus artists and by performing as a group in 'voluntary association' over time, layers of connections between 'the material and mental worlds' and the world at

large, are made. If this connectedness is turned to objects, Filliou's wheel, which is performative when a viewer turns it, embodies both an abstract conception of philosophical and experiential open-endedness, as well as a viable application of that concept in life lived.⁴

STRUCTURE OF THE FLUXUS COMMUNITY: A HISTORICAL DIGRESSION

The elasticity and diversity of Fluxus gives us, I think, some idea of how this structural open-endedness might play itself out as a *modus operandi* of a group of artists. To understand this variability, some background in the sociology, politics and practices of Fluxus is necessary.

As Owen Smith noted in his survey of early Fluxus, the experimental composer John Cage taught a course in musical composition at the New School for Social Research in New York City in 1958. Several artists (later identified with Fluxus) attended the course. In particular, George Brecht interpreted Cage's idea of ambient sound as music – his Silence – and invented the event type of performance. In the Event, an instruction may be realised in the mind of the reader as an idea or, conversely, as live performance with or without an audience. For example, Brecht's Word event (1961) consists of the word 'Exit'. Word event can be realised in the placement of an Exit sign, the making of one, the reading of an existing sign in a public place, or the imagining of possible realisations. Since the majority of Fluxus performances to the present moment contain events like this one, one can sketch a community of Fluxus performance back to the Cage class and the various groups that formed temporarily around that time. Significantly, as the activities of various performers vary over time, the nature of the event varies as well – artists have sent letters, made salads, projected fantasies about climbing into the vaginas of live whales, and watched the sky – all this under the deceptively simple rubric of the Event. Clearly the event format is highly flexible – as its various manifestations by different artists clearly suggests.

The community of artists that expanded on the implications of work developed in the Cage class would include, in the late 1950s, the New York Audio-Visual Group (Al Hansen and Dick Higgins), the participants in a series of performances organised by La Monte Young and Yoko Ono at her loft in what would become SoHo, and, from 1964 to 1972, the activities of the Something Else Press, in New York, Los Angeles and Vermont. In addition, a European wing of Fluxus was developing, though from different roots. European activities included not only the various Fluxus-titled and other concerts and festivals, but also many of the activities around the German artist Wolf Vostell's Cologne-based magazine, *De-Coll|age: Bulletin Aktueller Ideen* (1962–1969).

The setting in Cologne is significant. Since the early 1950s the serial composer Karlheinz Stockhausen had been at the centre of avant-garde music and performance. His composition course in Darmstadt and his work at the electronic music studio of WDR in Cologne, as well as the influential performance atelier of his wife, Mary Bauermeister, also in Cologne, suggest a point of receptivity for later Fluxus work there. Stockhausen worked with Fluxus artists Nam June Paik and Ben Patterson in a series of historic concerts at Bauermeister's atelier, and when Cage visited Cologne in 1960, these artists performed what would become Fluxus pieces originally written for his composition class.

[Bauermeister] organised a 'Contre-Festival', to be held in Cologne over four days in June ... The performances included works by John Cage, Toshi Ichihyanagi, Sylvano Bussotti, George Brecht, La Monte Young and Christian Wolff – performed by David Tudor – as well as two concerts by Nam June Paik ... [In October] Merce Cunningham and Carolyn Brown danced to pieces by John Cage, Christian Wolff, Earle Brown, Toshi Ichihyanagi and Bo Nilsson, performed by David Tudor and John Cage. One day later, again in the attic studio, one heard and saw compositions by Cage, La Monte Young and Paik – the interpreters were Cornelius Cardew, Hans G. Helms, David Tudor and Benjamin Patterson.⁵

Given these precedents it is not surprising that when George Maciunas was organising the first Fluxus-titled concerts for a German tour in 1962, he contacted Mary Bauermeister to see if she might host a Fluxus concert in her atelier.⁶ Maciunas also listed Stockhausen in the first four lists of possible contributors to his *Fluxus* magazine.⁷

However, these overtures to Stockhausen represented a degree of compromise on Maciunas' part. Paik, who had studied with Stockhausen and who performed in the Bauermeister atelier, aided Maciunas in organising the first festivals identified with the name Fluxus, so Maciunas' connection to Stockhausen results in part from Paik's professional debt to him.⁸ Correspondence during 1962 between Paik and Maciunas confirms this claim. Paik supported Stockhausen's inclusion in *Fluxus* magazine on the grounds of this debt and the merit of his work, while Maciunas criticised Stockhausen's professional ambition. This early disagreement as to Stockhausen's relevance suggests that Fluxus might later be divided with regard to Stockhausen.

And divided it was when Stockhausen's multimedia opera *Originale* was performed at Charlotte Moorman's 1964 Annual New York Festival of the Avant-Garde. On one side of the divide, a 'list of participants' in the concert programme names Fluxus members Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Jackson Mac Low, Joe Jones and George Brecht as performers and exhibitors. On the other side of the divide, there is a photograph showing Fluxus members Ben Vautier, Takako Saito, George Maciunas and Henry Flynt protesting against the same concert.⁹ Contributing to the confusion, at least two artists – Dick Higgins and Allan Kaprow – both demonstrated against and performed in the concert, indicating a high degree of fluidity between the choice of entering or not.¹⁰

In contradistinction to this pluralistic situation, the press described a uniformly activist Fluxus. For example, *Time* magazine reported on the demonstrators:

The opening at Judson Hall could not have been more auspicious; it was picketed by a rival group calling itself 'Fluxus,' bearing signs: 'Fight the rich man's snob art.'¹¹

Albeit from the other side of the political spectrum, *The Nation* responded in similarly homogeneous terms, where "they" means Fluxus:

They are also against 'the rich U.S. cretins [Leonard] Bernstein and [Benny] Goodman.' Their aim is to promote jazz ('black music') and not to promote more art ('there is too much already').¹²

It is accurate to say that both articles about the demonstration imply a point of contact between one faction of Fluxus – consisting of the demonstrators – and the press, who describe the actions of the demonstrators as indicative of a group ideology: 'Fluxus, bearing signs' against 'rich cretins'. Thus the coverage of the demonstration, while originating from

very different ideological orientations, reflects the demonstrators' version of Fluxus as a united, politically motivated and anti-art group. Not surprisingly, this version of Fluxus constitutes the ideational core of how Fluxus has been historically defined. For simplicity's sake, the term 'Maciunas-based paradigm' can be applied to this framework, since this model defines Fluxus exclusively in terms of Maciunas and his politics.

That this paradigm is overly reductive is apparent even beyond the sociology of the group as it has been mapped out so far. Even where the collective and anti-art elements of Fluxus initially seem the most uniform, as in Maciunas' political demonstrations, there is considerable internal variation. The Stockhausen demonstrators called their initiative an 'Action Against Cultural Imperialism' – a title invented by Henry Flynt, who describes himself as tangential to Fluxus. Because Maciunas adopted Flynt's title, the name of the demonstration itself represents a variation in nomenclature that suggests multiplicity even within Maciunas' sense of the group, despite the identification of the demonstration with the name Fluxus in the press. Similarly, since all Fluxus members who participated in the concert faced expulsion from Fluxus by order of Maciunas, and since demonstrators did not face that threat, the demonstration functioned as a site of difference within Fluxus, as it did in Maciunas' mind¹³

This paradox discloses the core tension within the Maciunas-based paradigm. The political core of Fluxus, even if it were located within the single person of Maciunas, is highly unstable. This discrepancy within Maciunas' vision did not, however, result in ideational flexibility on his part. His attitudes were rigid and his behaviour occasionally tyrannical. Thus, while one might argue for variability within his internal logic – a variability that would make a change in nomenclature necessary on the occasion of the Stockhausen concert – those artists who took offense at Maciunas' dictatorial behaviour failed to perceive such flexibility.

More importantly, the Stockhausen incident suggests a model for thinking about Fluxus as politically multiple and socially elastic in terms of its avant-garde heritage. Each artist had three options – to demonstrate against Stockhausen and thereby to maintain ties to Maciunas (though the former would not necessarily be predicated by a desire for the latter), to participate in the concert and thereby maintain a group identification that preceded identification with Maciunas, and to do both, thereby occupying a dynamic middle ground. If each option is transferred to a definition of Fluxus, then the first would illustrate the Maciunas-based paradigm which, as I have stated, locates Maciunas at the fulcrum of Fluxus; the second – a historically based definition of the group – allows for some other contemporary (to the 1960s) practice, as embodied in the person of Stockhausen; and the third – a present model – where the historic ties preclude but do not necessarily preempt current and future identification. Since Fluxus is still active today in varying degrees, it is the last approach that is the most historically accurate.

The same pattern of options exists elsewhere. The people participating in or attending the Stockhausen concert – the anti-demonstrators – correspond almost exactly to those involved in an earlier dispute within Fluxus. The controversy around *Fluxus News-Policy-Letter No. 6*, dated 6 April 1963 and written by Maciunas, sparked a legendary Flux-battle. Where earlier newsletters had referred to organisational details regarding specific concerts or projects, this letter detailed an ideologically determined series of propaganda actions such as sabotaging museums and the New York postal service. It was also the first newsletter to combine the

terms 'Fluxus' and 'Policy' in the title, so it pretended to speak for the group as 'Fluxus' while it described a 'Proposed Propaganda Action for November Fluxus in N.Y.C.' This action, while only 'proposed', nevertheless indicated a potential intersection of policy and practice that was precisely terrorist and identified with the group name Fluxus.

The responses of members to *Fluxus News-Policy-Letter No. 6* were generally negative. Jackson Mac Low, for instance, wrote a lengthy critique dated 25 April 1962:

I'm not opposed to serious culture – quite the contrary. I'm all for it & I hope & consider that my own work is a genuine contribution to it ... [N]o blunderbuss attack against culture (serious or otherwise) as a whole ... will do anything to remedy what's wrong in the present situation. I am not at all against art or music or drama or literature, old or new. I'm against the overbalance of museum culture ... as against present-minded and presently 'useful' cultural activities and would certainly like to see the balance tipped the other way, but I would not want to eliminate museums (I like museums).¹⁴

Similar sentiments are echoed in other letters to Maciunas from, among others, George Brecht, Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik and Tomas Schmit. A letter to Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles indicated Maciunas' opinion of these responses. He wrote:

I do not understand your statement (& Jackson's) that 'there is no point in antagonizing the very people and classes that we are most interested in converting.' Terrorism that is very clearly directed ... can reduce the attendance of the masses to these decadent institutions. We will increase the chance that they will turn their attention to Fluxus.¹⁵

In the context of the saboteur's agenda laid out here, to 'understand' would mean to accept the equivocal positions against *Fluxus News-Policy-Letter No. 6*, which assumed a uniformly oppressive relationship between all cultural institutions and the unenlightened public. Mac Low's criticism of the newsletter's policy suggested, on the other hand, that this relationship is not necessarily oppressive, although it may be in some cases, and that an effective critique of it does not necessarily extend to its destruction. The criticism of the newsletter's policy contradicts both Maciunas' ideology and the uniform radicalism traditionally ascribed to avant-gardes, where artistically expressed social or aesthetic criticism metamorphoses into a critique specifically aimed at the institutions of art.¹⁶

Other responses indicated a multivalent politics of Fluxus. A letter from Maciunas to Emmett Williams, Daniel Spoerri and Robert Filliou describes the situation:

Brecht blew his top off because proposals were getting too terroristic and aggressive, Henry Flynt thought they were too 'artistic,' too much 'serious culture' as he calls it. Jackson Mac Low thought they were not serious enough. Each is pulling in different directions ...¹⁷

In a transparent attempt to diffuse the situation, Maciunas wrote in the next newsletter that:

This Newsletter 6 was not intended as a decision, settled plan or dictate, but rather as a synthetic proposal or rather a signal, stimulus to start a discussion among, and an invitation for proposals from – the recipients.¹⁸

If we are to take Maciunas at his word here, then *Fluxus News-Policy-Letter No. 6* intended to generate a polyvocal Fluxus. However, such democratic interests, if they ever existed, were clearly temporary.

When the demonstration flier against Stockhausen employed the same terminology as the earlier *Fluxus News-Policy-Letter No. 6*, it naturally irritated many of the same people. The flier called for all radical thinkers to protest against Stockhausen in the interests of non-racist, revolutionary thinking; according to an over-determined identification of Stockhausen with philosopher Theodor Adorno's anti-ethnic claims for the separation of modern art and mass culture. Maciunas probably knew, or might have anticipated, that this language would activate the conflicts created by the newsletter a year earlier.

Maciunas charted these conflicts in his 'Fluxus (Its Historical Development and Relationship to Avant-Garde Movements)', which marks the expulsion of several of these artists at precisely those moments when they challenged his leadership of Fluxus. These artists' names appear under the rubric 'Fluxus Group' above the year 1961 marked at the bottom of the chart. A vertical line concludes the memberships of Jackson Mac Low, Tomas Schmit and Emmett Williams in 1963, the year of the newsletter controversy. Later exclusions, this time of Philip Corner, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Ben Patterson, Nam June Paik and Kosugi, occur in 1964, the year of the Stockhausen incident. Finally, a prehistory for Fluxus appears in the historic section to the far left of the chart, which establishes a history for Fluxus in jokes, gags, collage, the historic avant-garde and Brutism, among other things. With a basis in movements and activities traditionally described as uniformly outside of modernist traditions, this pre-history prefigures the exclusion of artists who chose a complex relationship, as opposed to a merely reactive one, to those traditions.

However, all of the eliminated artists participated in later Fluxus events, meaning that they continued to work with other Fluxus artists, including Maciunas. This situation suggests that Maciunas attempted to purge Fluxus in order to realise the ideal of a 'united front' of Fluxus, but that he never had the power to permanently expel anyone. Thus, although this graph is misleading as an index of those working within the group, it does index relative adherence to Maciunas' position.

What is more, the chart shows ideological placement and positions Fluxus within a historical avant-garde thematic. Accordingly, Maciunas' activist vision, his dynamic conception of the relationship between the historic and contemporary avant-garde, and his ability to define this relationship for a given member, determined Fluxus membership. The diagonal lines of influence that move along the timeline into and out of Fluxus imply the historicist aspect of this determinacy. This chart is, therefore, the graphic equivalent of Maciunas' representation of Fluxus to the world as a historically validated form of avant-garde activism. If these judgements are taken for truth, the chart is also a justification for the historicist aspect of the Maciunas-based paradigm, which ends with his death – the last judgement.

The activist and united features of Maciunas' representation of the group to the media, as demonstrated in the media coverage of the Stockhausen incident, as well as the subsequent exclusion of work that was inconsistent with this representation, may explain why critics in the United States then and now take a point of view that corresponds to Maciunas' very public publications, advertisements, and demonstrations. For example, although several artists have exhibited in galleries prior to and during their association with Fluxus, and even though the first Fluxus concert in Germany took place in a museum concert-hall, *Artforum* critic Melissa Harris wrote that 'though the opportunity to see this superb work is more than

welcome, this exhibition is inevitably somewhat problematic, given that the gallery context feels antithetical to ... the work'.¹⁹ The inevitability of the work's being 'antithetical' to the gallery setting suggests that this critic has internalised the vision of Fluxus established by Maciunas. As the various examples in this introduction suggest, Fluxus is inevitably problematic in, but not antithetical to, the gallery setting. Furthermore, the comparison of early and recent criticism indicates that what critics applaud today – the anti-institutional antics of Fluxus implied by Harris – is precisely what most frustrated critics in the 1960s.

In conclusion, the anti-institutional reading by critics reflects a version of Fluxus constructed by Maciunas and supported by some Fluxus artists. What remains to be seen, however, is the relationship between the values implicit in this reading and a broader context – more specifically, the place of this reading in the socio-political climate of the world today. Fluxus is simultaneously a diverse and deeply committed group of artists who disagree on much, but who continue to find each other's company valuable, useful and fertile. The only way to understand Fluxus today is to accept this untidy ideological and practical package. Few curators or critics are willing to do so, and as they seek to homogenise, delimit and contain Fluxus work, they do a certain kind of violence to its most noteworthy success – its endurance over time and its ability to sustain difference within itself as a source of vitality.

RECENT FLUXUS

There is no disputing that interest – both from the artists and public – in Fluxus waned somewhat throughout the 1970s. Indeed, many Fluxus artists developed successful independent careers throughout that decade – Nam June Paik, Joseph Beuys, Wolf Vostell and Yoko Ono all come to mind. As the 1970s drew to a close, however, Fluxus came together once again as a community alliance, certainly in part owing to the death of George Maciunas. Thus, since my period in this three-part chronology of Fluxus incorporates elements from immediately prior to the memorial events and publications following Maciunas' death from pancreatic cancer in 1978, to the anniversary festivals of 1982 and 1992, the time-frame of this section is not properly Fluxus for those people who effectively close the historical narrative at 1978. It is this author's opinion, however, that Fluxus continues to exist, because Fluxus artists continue to choose each other as collaborators and muses. However, outside forces such as publishers, curators and enthusiasts of Fluxus have also played significant roles in creating contexts within which this remarkable group of artists can continue to survive as a body politic.

Italy

The role outside forces in helping to maintain the vitality of Fluxus is especially strong in the Italian and German contexts. Notably, the publishing venture called *Pari & Dispari*, which was run by the collector and dealer Rosanna Chiesi in the 1970s in Reggio-Emilia, Italy, consisted essentially of a rambling house, courtyard and delapidated barn where artists could go and produce editions. Not just Fluxus artists, but also Hermann Nitsch (of Vienna Actionism) and others, could be found living and working at Reggio-Emilia often for several weeks or months during a larger sojourn. The editions were often difficult to produce, and

occasionally work was stretched out over several years, requiring artists to make several return trips. In this manner, Pari & Dispari constituted an artists' community that consisted in large part of artists associated with Fluxus. It played a pivotal role in the continuation of the Fluxus community and continues to do so today as a relocated and renamed Fondazione Chiesi in Capri.

Also pivotal in understanding the backbone of activity throughout the 1970s is the comparatively larger function of Conz Editions, run by Francesco Conz in Verona, Italy. For several Fluxus artists, Fluxus in the 1970s was held together by Conz, a committed publisher, collector and publicist for the group. Like Chiesi, Conz has an interest in other groups; Viennese Aktionismus (Austria), Gruppe Zaj (Spain) and the artists of Image Bank (Canada) are all arguably linked to the greater community of Fluxus through the concept of intermedia (meaning work that falls between traditional media, such as visual poems and so on).²⁰ In particular, Conz has produced close collaborations with individual Fluxus artists, as well as with the entire group. While Conz at one time produced paper editions, his most significant contribution has been the translation on to large cloth panels of a wide range of Fluxus artists' work such as games, recipes and object images, under the name Edizione Francesco Conz.²¹

In addition to these editions, Conz has explored the individual identity of each artist in his commissioning of artist 'fetish' objects. These are collections of performance detritus and articles from the lives of Fluxus artists that were not originally intended for exhibition. With a wink toward the self-deprecating stance of many collectors that is often coupled with a strong desire to interact in the lives of the artists they collect, these objects exemplify Conz's close personal relationship with a remarkably broad range of Fluxus artists. Significantly, Henry Martin, an American expatriate, critic and supporter of Fluxus, has written in several contexts for Conz as well and has produced a significant commentary on George Brecht's *Book of the Tumbler on Fire*.²² For the anniversary year of 1992, Martin organised a Bolzano Fluxus, called rather fetchingly 'Fluxers', which moved to Molvena, Italy, under the auspices of the Fluxus collector Luigi Bonotto. For that exhibition, Martin curated a print portfolio by twelve Fluxus artists.

These examples alone suggest that Italy has produced extensive and expansive support for Fluxus since the mid-1970s, when Conz and Chiesi became highly active. The greatest degree of visibility for Fluxus in Italy, and perhaps in the international art world, came through the exhibition 'Ubi Fluxus, ibi Motus', which occupied a pavilion at the 1990 Venice Biennale. Gino DiMaggio, a major and comparatively recent supporter of Fluxus whose MuDiMa Museum in Milan features Fluxus, coordinated the exhibition and published a catalogue for the show. Achille Bonito Oliva, a well-known Italian curator and historian of the avant-garde, curated the show. His curatorial statement in the catalogue suggests that an Italian heritage, namely, Futurism and the Italian Renaissance, was as essential for Fluxus as the more commonly evoked German Dadaism. 'The synthesis of the arts', he wrote, 'is an ancient aspiration of the modern avant-gardes, ranging from Futurism to Dadaism, but it was also included in the classical dimensions of the Italian Renaissance.'²³

In contrast to this primarily historic justification for Fluxus, the 'Presentazione', or opening statement, by Giovanni Carandente, suggests a point of entry specifically aimed at the Maciunas problem. He writes:

To push Fluxus toward the twenty-first century means to grasp the group's anti-historicist spirit. Hence the decision to invert history, the chronology and the itinerary of the exhibition: not from 1962 to 1990 but from 1990 to 1962. *In this way prejudices favouring noble fathers or the past do not exist.* It is the present that becomes the point of departure.²⁴

While this statement attempts to eradicate the historicity of Fluxus, it does reflect the 'futurist' impulse of the historic avant-garde, which attempted to break with the past to reinvent the present, and, by extension, to redefine possibilities for the future. Perhaps because there was comparatively little Fluxus activity in Italy in the 1960s, the contemporary present dominates the catalogue almost entirely, insofar as Oliva theorises Fluxus as a reverse chronology of practices that looks to the past without being determined by it. The elastic social frameworks that underlie Fluxus practice, particularly as located in the contexts of Italy (through Conz and Chiesi), supports such a reading.

In summary, 'Ubi Fluxus, ibi Motus' as a whole conveyed the palpable diversity within Fluxus by emphasising present work in the exhibition and a mix of present and historic work in the catalogue. The latter tries to historicise the present moment of Fluxus while the group's ongoing internal dialogue creates tension within the historic framework. Thus, in the same catalogue, the Fluxus artist Joe Jones stated that 'Fluxus = Maciunas = Fluxus = Maciunas = Fluxus',²⁵ while Henry Flynt writes that 'Late Fluxus extends through the Eighties to the present'.²⁶

The United States

This account of Fluxus since the 1970s would not be complete, however, without due mention of the very extensive support of Fluxus given by Ken Friedman, Fluxus artist and editor of this anthology, first in the form of Fluxus West in California and later from the seat of his professorship in Oslo, Norway. There have been others. Bill Gaglioni, for instance, runs the Stamp Art Gallery in San Francisco and has given consistent support to Fluxus works since the 1970s.

Given this continued productivity, it is surprising that the definition of Fluxus established in the 1970s in the mainstream American art press continues to determine the nature of the most visible Fluxus collection in the United States, the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, housed in Detroit, Michigan and New York City. The Silverman Collection is organised and curated by Jon Hendricks, a friend, collaborating artist and supporter of Fluxus since the mid-1960s. The Silverman Collection is the only collection in the world based solely on the Maciunas-based paradigm for Fluxus. In an article called 'Aspects of Fluxus from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection', Hendricks describes Fluxus as Maciunas' project:

At its inception, Fluxus was intended by George Maciunas to be a publication ... Following are several quotations taken from George Maciunas' letters to various Fluxus artists which clearly demonstrate the underlying political purpose of Fluxus.²⁷

This proprietary perspective has determined the content of five catalogues, two of which are available to the general public as definitive materials about Fluxus. Four of the Silverman Collection catalogues are mainly listings of the collection's holdings along with useful reproductions of the collection's primary materials and Maciunas' publications. Typical of

the process of artistic canonisation, the collection's 'Fluxus'-titled materials narrow with each new publication, as non-'Fluxus' work is increasingly excluded. As might be expected, the production values of each catalogue also increases according to the prestige of the publishing house or museum.

The first catalogue, *Fluxus Etc.*, is comparatively open in its inclusion of materials that fall outside of Hendricks' definition – what he calls 'etc.'²⁸ Cranbrook Academy in Michigan produced this catalogue using cheap materials such as newsprint and no-gloss card stock. The statement on the Cranbrook flier, which accompanied the book and exhibition, notes that the vitality of Fluxus lay largely outside of Maciunas' domain. The 'etc.' in the catalogue title, therefore, reflects Hendricks' early attempt to include material outside of his own strict definition of Fluxus, and to which he attributed much of the group's energy.²⁹

Fluxus Etc., Addenda I followed the Cranbrook catalogue. Also printed on newsprint, it represents a definition of Fluxus that privileges Maciunas materials; roughly 10 percent of the book consists of a transcript of a deathbed interview between Maciunas and Larry Miller, and the other 90 percent of the book contains reproductions of newsletters and proposals almost exclusively by Maciunas.³⁰

The third publication of the Silverman Collection, *Fluxus Etc., Addenda II*, appeared under the auspices of the prestigious Baxter Art Gallery in Pasadena, California.³¹ *Addenda II* appeared a few months after *Addenda I*. Its production values are higher still, the print appearing on a higher grade of paper and with a heavy, glossy stock cover on which appears Maciunas' 'Purge Manifesto', which was never signed by Fluxus artists. This final edition of the *Etc.* and *Addenda* catalogues marks the endpoint in the gradual process of equating Fluxus with Maciunas and packaging Fluxus for the art world in increasingly luxurious publications and through decreasingly marginal institutions. The glossy red cover of *Addenda II*, which is also a reproduction of Maciunas' manifesto, signifies the union of these elements both conceptually and physically.

Albeit not a catalogue of a particular collection *per se*, a sixth publication on Fluxus belongs to the lineage of Silverman catalogues, in part because Hendricks effectively co-authored it, and in part because it reaffirms his bias within the more general world of commercial publishers, in this case Thames and Hudson. In the unambiguously titled *Fluxus* (published in 1995), roughly two-thirds of the images derive from the Silverman collection (versus one-third from Archiv Sohm, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart).³² The lead essay, curator Thomas Kellein's 'I Make Jokes! Fluxus Through the Eyes of "Chairman" George Maciunas', offers the reader quotations that seem to undermine the absolute category of 'chairman'. However, the work shown merely reasserts what has clearly become the dominant framework of Fluxus in English-language publications.

The same development occurs in the publicity for each museum and thus in the reviews of each show. Commentators repeatedly bring up the paradox of Maciunas' stated politics versus the institutionalisation of Fluxus. In 1983 an exhibition flier for the now defunct Neuberger Museum at the State University of New York at Purchase presented a version of Fluxus that mirrored Maciunas' historicist vanguard iconoclasm and politics:

Fluxus was an international art movement founded by George Maciunas in the early 1960s. Inspired by such art movements as futurism and dada, the artists, poets, musicians and dancers who embraced Fluxus were held together by the idea of an art

for every man, a non-academic art, which encompassed satire and humour in order to poke fun at materialism, 'fine art,' and even itself through a series of exhibitions, festivals ... etc.³³

The *New York Times* reviewed the show, making the predictable observation of the paradox of Maciunas' anti-institutional stance (taken as a Fluxus stance) and the work's institutional viability: 'One of the ironies of our time is that throwaway art becomes archivable, collectible, pricey (A Fluxus Year Box 2 ... would now fetch \$250) and institutionally embraceable.'³⁴ More importantly, a reviewer of the Pasadena stop of the same exhibition, taking note of the transformation of Fluxus from (what it is) a chaotic entity to (what it is not) compatible with the basic tenets of modernist art history, stated that, 'the practice of art history abhors a messy drawer in the art kitchen ... so the territory of the utter chaos known as Fluxus has begun to be straightened out'.

The art-historical project was successful, if a highly legible show in 1988 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York is any indication. The publication produced for that exhibition, 'Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection', contained an essay by the museums' book curator Clive Phillpot, written in the mid-1980s, 'Fluxus: Magazines, Manifestos, Multum in Parvo'. The essay defines Fluxus by way of the unsigned manifesto produced by Maciunas before the first Fluxus-titled festival in Wiesbaden in 1962. As with *Addenda II*, the 1962 Manifesto is physically and conceptually fused with the name Fluxus, as it appears on the inside cover of the title page of the catalogue – a symbolic and material fusion of the single word 'Fluxus' on the title page with the manifesto verso. Phillpot writes: 'The aims of Fluxus, as set out in the Manifesto of 1963, are extraordinary, but connect with the radical ideas fermenting at the time.'³⁵

The movement of this version of Fluxus into the mainstream of art-historical consciousness in the United States, while virtually guaranteed by the Museum of Modern Art show, made further inroads with the first deluxe coffee-table book of Fluxus, *Fluxus Codex*, published by Harry Abrams in 1988. The appeal of the show for MoMA appears to have come in part from the future Abrams publication as indicated by a letter from Hendricks to the museum.³⁶ The affirmative response came from Clive Phillpot, whose library had exhibition space. The main galleries had been previously slated for exhibitions.

Like the Stockhausen reporters, critics either praised the ensuing exhibit by using a predictably narrow political framework, or, conversely, criticised the exhibition (correctly) for lacking vitality, given the same historicist perspective. What matters most is that the premise of the show was overly narrow and therefore anathema to the vital pluralism of Fluxus. For example, Catherine Liu's review in *Artforum* objected to the placement of the show in the MoMA library: 'The do-it-yourself wackiness of the objects might have been lost in an over-aestheticised setting, but that is no reason to marginalise the work by stuffing it into the vestibule of a library.'³⁷

Independent curator and critic Robert Morgan described it differently:

One of the delights at seeing this exhibition is that it's in the Library of the Museum of Modern Art and not in the regular exhibition space. This makes the show somewhat of an adventure. One gets the opportunity to hunt, to peer around the card catalogues and to look between the shelved books on reserve. Fluxus emphasised such an approach.³⁸

Morgan explicitly addresses the problem of Maciunas' role as organiser and 'central figure'

in the production of these multiples. The question of other work, therefore, remains open for discussion, since Morgan asserts Maciunas' centrality by comparing him to the central figure of an earlier movement: 'Through it all it was clear that George Maciunas was the central figure. His relationship to Fluxus was comparable to Breton's relationship to Surrealism.'³⁹

Like the MoMA catalogue and *Addenda II*, the *Codex* begins with a fusion of the name Fluxus and the Maciunas-based paradigm by means of two photos of Maciunas' studio from 1969 on two pages preceding the main title page of the book. The *Fluxus Codex*, a *catalogue raisonné* of Fluxus projects linked to Maciunas either by mention in a letter or in his project notes, functions as an index of that portion of Fluxus activity, although it contains no scholarly or interpretive writing *per se*. The book's objective or scientific quality may obscure the specific nature of its curatorial system.

Bruce Altschuler notes this problem in his critique of the *Codex* that appeared in *Arts Magazine* in 1989. Altschuler's simple misgivings about the book produce a critique not only of the book but also of the Silverman Collection, which sponsored the book. In the concluding statements Altschuler notes that

Restricting Fluxus to Maciunas-related material, then, creates an arbitrary division within the work of many artists. More importantly, to follow Maciunas in taking a narrow view of Fluxus is to limit our understanding of its significance. For much of the importance of Fluxus lies in its connections with the art of its time, both as influence and as concurrent expression.⁴⁰

By the same token, where a community-based and multiple understanding of Fluxus existed in American institutions, it was systematically obscured. Eric Vos, the organiser of the Jean Brown Collection of the Getty Centre for the History of Art and the Humanities, radically restructured the collection to accommodate the Maciunas-based paradigm. This reconfiguration reflects Brown's understanding of Fluxus, though not of her collection. Brown recalled the beginnings of her collection in terms that define Fluxus as Maciunas' project: 'If I was going to do Fluxus, I would have to have lots of objects, because George made them all.'⁴¹ She continues, 'I wanted the history, the background, very good archival material . . . *I don't think I was rigid about that at all.*'⁴² Eric Vos, on the other hand, organised Brown's materials at the Getty, stating:

[T]he previous 'Fluxus Archive,' which appeared to have been organised on the basis of Jean Brown's original files, also included many files labelled 'Non-Fluxus events' etc., containing non-Fluxus work by Fluxus artists.

But, he continues:

[S]ince the demarcation of Fluxus as a group of artists (rather than as a canon of works) has meanwhile been 'codified,' with Jon Hendricks' Fluxus Codex . . . the Fluxus Codex formed the basis of the organisation of this series.⁴³

To date, few scholars have used the archive extensively, since the Getty requires notice and invitations to use the materials. However, the Getty Archive does constitute the second-largest Fluxus holding in this country, and its restructuring according to the Maciunas-based paradigm is not without its implications. First, the centralising principle has simplicity, which we saw in the formation of the Silverman programme. Second, other institutions have adopted that programme because of its organisational appeal.

The Maciunas-based paradigm also determined the basis of Elizabeth Armstrong's and Joan Rothfuss' curatorship of 'In the Spirit of Fluxus', which opened at the Walker Art Centre in Minneapolis in 1992. After Minneapolis, the show followed an extensive itinerary, including the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Wexner Centre for the Visual Arts in Columbus, Ohio, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Santa Monica Museum and the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona. As the most visible and largest exhibition to date in the world, 'In the Spirit of Fluxus' has defined Fluxus for most people for the immediate future.

Based primarily on the Silverman Collection and therefore essentially unable to be critical of the Collection's curatorial policy, the curators limited the bulk of the show to work produced during Maciunas' lifetime in general and to the 1960s in particular. This principle led to significant omissions, particularly of those artists who differed with Maciunas on issues of policy or practice in the early 1960s. Most notable among these exclusions were Philip Corner, Dick Higgins, Jackson Mac Low and Wolf Vostell, to name only a few. Albeit gesturing toward new work by other Fluxus artists in the form of interactive sound installations by Yoshi Wada and Alison Knowles, what there was of recent work was left floundering in contrast to the simple narrative of the rest of the show.⁴⁴

Significantly, the Walker symposium, 'Fluxus Publicus', in February 1993, made noteworthy efforts at broadening this scope. Fluxus scholar Karen Moss, who now works for the Walker, described the California Fluxus projects; 'I treated Fluxus variability in New York; Eric Andersen discussed the movement of Fluxus throughout Europe before and after Maciunas as Intermedia; and Alexandra Munroe examined the nature of Fluxus in Japan. In this manner, the exhibition organisers made space for opposition within the ranks of their scholarly format. The dominant narrative reigned, however, in the material document of the exhibition – its catalogue, *In the Spirit of Fluxus*. With the exception of Kristine Stiles' analysis of the event 'Between Water and Stone' (already cited in the introduction to this article) and Andreas Huyssen's 'Back to the Future: Fluxus in Context', each article in that volume confirmed a point of view established by the majority of exhibition artefacts.⁴⁵

In conclusion, the version of Fluxus that dominates in the American context affirms the mythology of Fluxus as it was perpetuated by Maciunas since the 1960s. The ideological definition is activist, but narrow politically. In stylistic terms, Fluxus is rather traditionally iconoclastic, made of ephemeral materials and fragments of existing matter. Finally, Fluxus functions socially as a benevolent dictatorship ruled singularly by Maciunas and is suspiciously devoid of messy social terms like internal argument, ideological differentiation and stylistic breadth. What is more, by locating Fluxus almost exclusively in the 1960s, this dominant model systematically upends any possibility of Fluxus artists surviving economically as a group, since it makes the viability of current Fluxus work as 'Fluxus' untenable. For this reason, the Maciunas-based paradigm of Fluxus is both historically inaccurate and morally indefensible.

THE ANNIVERSARY EVENTS OF 1992

Much of what I have written here concerns the written history of Fluxus. The viability of Fluxus through the present moment relies, however, on the physical evidence of work made by

Fluxus artists as Fluxus art. While there are important differences between early and recent Fluxus work, looking at current work by Fluxus artists allows for a highly elastic representation of the self-construction of Fluxus artists today. For this reason, the last section of this survey of 'Fluxus Fortuna' is told through the 1992 anniversary exhibitions and performance festivals of the 1962 concerts in Europe. Significantly, 'In the Spirit of Fluxus' was included in the remarks on the United States because it belongs essentially to an unproblematic absorption of the Maciunas-based paradigm, whereas the other festivals did not.

In summary, the recent fortunes of Fluxus can be described using the anniversary events of 1992.⁴⁶ After a description of three of these ('Fluxattitudes' in New York City, 'Fluxus Virus' in Cologne, and 'Excellent "92"' in Wiesbaden-Erbenheim, Germany, and Copenhagen, Denmark), I will address some current work by Fluxus artists as an aspect of Fluxus Fortuna. This is, I hope, a manner of approach appropriate to Fluxus Fortuna – the fortune of Fluxus, or its history – through its contemporary manifestations. That these works were chosen by Fluxus artists to represent themselves as Fluxus artists mitigates against the objection that these are not Fluxus works. They certainly are, although there are works by Fluxus artists that do not necessarily 'belong to' Fluxus. It was because of Owen Smith's insight that I have placed these comparative descriptions at the end of the essay – to end, as it were, at the beginning. Thanks, Owen.

Excellent

Storming the doors of the Good Buy Supermarket, mauling the shelves for bargains and barrelling to the cash registers, the surging throng resembled an open-admission rock concert more than a market place or an art opening. Neither brand name 'Excellent Festival' shopping bags and register receipts, nor UPI codes on all the products made this market super – at least not in their own right – rather, the Good Buy Supermarket demands comment because it sold inexpensive and potentially mass-produced art objects by Fluxus artists, many of whom performed using innovative formats in the main space of the Nikolai Kirke next door.

This was all part of 'Excellent "92"', a festival of twelve artists celebrating thirty years of Fluxus activity. It began at Michael and Uta Berger's Fluxeum (November 22–24), and travelled to the Nikolai Kirke in Copenhagen, Denmark (November 26, 28 and 29) and the Malmö Konsthalle in Malmö, Sweden (November 27). This international Flux-blitz was organised by Danish Fluxus artist Eric Andersen and a loyal, longtime supporter and sometime contributor to Fluxus in Denmark, Knud Pedersen. Even if twelve artists in three cities in one week with an Art Supermarket at one location and four performance formats sounds like an organisational nightmare, it did not show.

The variable aspect of the 'Excellent "92"' festival in place, time and production speaks to the lack of uniformity, or put positively, the pluralism, of Fluxus, already suggested its social formation. Furthermore, new and old work was incorporated into the festival so that whatever Fluxus is or was for a given artist could determine that artist's contribution. In the tradition of Andersen's market of 'Anonymous Merchandise' at Årthus, Denmark, in 1971, Andersen and Pedersen conceived of the Good Buy Supermarket as an inexpensive venue for mass-produced Fluxus multiples, which would in turn further support the handsomely funded 'Excellent "92"'. With the exception that each multiple could be potentially mass-

produced, their character was completely determined by the individual artist – with no prerequisite style or content.

Some resembled unique objects by the same artists, others resembled historic multiples, and many pieces had one element in each place. For the former two possibilities, one might look to Geoffrey Hendricks, who produced both a sky card multiple and a series of Flux-relics, such as shrink-wrapped last cigarette butts from important Fluxus situations or last bottles of wine from others. For the final possibility – of new work that is distinctly continuous with a historic multiple – one might look to Alison Knowles, who produced *Bean Rolls* (rolled texts in a square can full of dried beans) in 1963, and produced, among other things, a very different bean multiple here – a *Pocket Warmer*, or thumb-sized bean-bag chair for fingers.

The multiple produced for the Good Buy Supermarket named each artist on its label, a gesture toward the authorial integrity that is intrinsic to Fluxus as a multifaceted whole. This would not be necessarily worthy of note, except that it has negative implications for at least one exhibition of Fluxus work in the United States, namely, 'Fluxattitudes' at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in Manhattan (26 September–3 January 1993). At that exhibition, the artists contributed their words to the project of self-construction.

Fluxattitudes

Sympathy with Maciunas' politics has lead curators and critics to determine the content of shows from the point of view of political sympathy with the prescriptive, centrist and old-fashioned leftist rhetoric that is all too often attached to Fluxus as a whole. 'Fluxattitudes' required that a host of undifferentiated Fluxus and non-Fluxus artists provide work anonymously and for free and orient it towards the American presidential elections. Thus, 'Fluxattitudes' was determined by a party-political, no-value concept with utter disregard for the international character of and variability within the group. The results were suggestive in that they indicate lasting tensions within Fluxus, tensions which have historic counterparts in, for example, 1962, which Owen Smith describes in terms of the ambivalent reactions to the famous *Purge Manifesto*, as well as in the debate surrounding the *Fluxshoe* and a number of other Fluxus events and exhibitions.

Responses to the prescriptive ideological basis of 'Fluxattitudes' created debates along these lines. Some loved the idea, agreeing with it fully as the basis of Fluxus ideology, while others rejected it with equal passion. This confusion made 'Fluxattitudes' extremely interesting from a didactic point of view. When most of the artists responded negatively to the prescriptive elements of the invitation, its curators, Cornelia Lauf and Susan Hapgood, included the negative correspondence in the show. Albeit probably accidental and woefully indicative of America's funding problems and misconceptions about Fluxus, this correspondence won the show an important place in the history of Fluxus exhibitions. It is to the curators' credit that this debate took a public form. The correspondence shows how varied Fluxus is internally, and how the ideologically narrow view of Fluxus has overdetermined its reception in the United States.

Fluxus Virus

The problem of scale lay at the root of Galerie Schüppenhauer's 'Fluxus Virus', Cologne (1–27 September 1992), where forty-one Fluxus artists and twenty-one intermedia artists were

represented by historic and new work. The historic objects section, curated by the Gallery's owner, Chrystal Schüppenhauer, was basically a show of early work by each of the Fluxus artists shown elsewhere in 'Fluxus Virus'. This small exhibition, unpretentious in its purpose, held many wonderful, early Fluxus works, although one piece by Geoffrey Hendricks was misidentified as Ken Friedman's, and some of the more fragile work seemed to suffer from exposure to the wind and rain that blustered through the austere, semi-exposed exhibition space.

More problematic, however, were the new works, which were commissioned for the show in the space contributed by the Kaufhof Parkhaus, a parking garage. In keeping with the nature of the site, the artists were invited to produce an automobile, so that, as at 'Fluxattitudes', the prescriptive curatorial concept overrode the various means and methods of each artist. The most successful installations were built by artists who rejected the car concept but built an installation anyway. Takako Saito, for instance, ran a book-making stand replete with carnivalesque canopies and the fine paper work typical of her production. Milan Knizak produced a three-metre cube covered with square-cut records, and Dick Higgins produced an ink-splattered dinosaur of wooden chairs in a blacklight darkroom.

However, the cars were the centrepiece of the exhibition and were produced too quickly and with faulty materials – the artists had almost no assistance or access to materials until just before the opening. The most notable exception to this was Ben Patterson's duck car, a green Citroën that was turned on a welded spit while real ducks roasted on a fire below it. This aside, several wonderful ideas were so poorly executed that they broke during or soon after the opening. This was the fate of Joe Jones' orchestral car of instruments (activated by turning on the lights, wipers, ignition and so on) and Eric Andersen's skateboard car, designed to spin on four skateboards placed perpendicular to each other under the wheels of the car.

Wolf Vostell, the most car-oriented Fluxus artist of all, was excluded for political reasons – city officials felt he had been overexposed in two recent, major exhibitions in Cologne. This exclusion rendered the exhibition much less useful historically. As an independent curator of photographs for catalogue and exhibition, I made efforts to correct this inaccuracy in a timeline of performance photographs since 1955 and portraits, which was exhibited at the Kölner Kunstverein (1–20 September). On one wall, photographs were placed sequentially by year and above each other, according to how much activity occurred in that year – creating a sequence of broad or narrow bands of relative activity along the time-line. On the facing wall, single portraits of Fluxus artists making work or performing, most of them by the Frankfurt photographer Wolfgang Träger, were hung in an ellipse, whose curving form contrasted with the historic development of the group on the opposite wall.

The Excellence of A la carte

This idea of presenting Fluxus dialectically, as a site of contention instead of unanimity, returns us to November's 'Excellent "92"' in Wiesbaden-Erbenheim, Copenhagen, Malmö and New York, but this time to the area of performance. Despite the cattle-market feel of presenting the artists in a room-sized Nam June Paik Television sculpture, when the festival opened at Michael and Uta Berger's Fluxeum on 22 November 1992, a new page was written in the annals of Fluxus performance. This was the first evening ever of performance using the *à la carte* format, with Ben Patterson acting as head waiter, circulating among the audience

and taking their orders.⁴⁷ The visitors sat at small tables, where a menu listed various old and new pieces by present and absent Fluxus artists alike.

The toylike, mechanical music of rotary-motorised rubber bands on violins, super balls on tom-toms and bouncing-ball drumbeats in the choir loft of Berger's church museum announced that someone had 'ordered' Joe Jones' big band of self-propelled musical instruments. Meanwhile, Dick Higgins on a ladder pouring water into a basin meant that someone else had ordered George Brecht's *Drip Music*. Two live hens were released into another part of the room – Ben Vautier's *Hens*, and Alison Knowles performed a new work that involved shaking a metal tray full of beans and toys around the room. Most striking of all, perhaps, in the context of this apparent chaos, were tables of people listening to hand-held tape recorders carrying out instructions to (among other things) 'Suck on your finger', 'Stick your finger in your ear', 'Lift your chair over your head' or 'Stand on your chair' – requests given in the privacy of a headset by the Dutch artist Willem de Ridder.

What seemed a general chaos at first is specifically audience-driven, and without chaos – for each audience member controlled their order and had direct contact with each artist. This allowed for multiple frameworks regarding Fluxus to coexist. Those artists who base Fluxus in the past performed historic works and others new ones. This was the most successful performance format at the 'Excellent' festival because, like the multiples produced for its Good Buy Supermarket, this format most emphasised the coexistence of various points of view.

All three evenings at Wiesbaden followed this format, while in Copenhagen, the *à la carte* approach was used only once. The other Nikolai Kirke evenings consisted of two other formats: 'Hire an Artist', whereby the audience could hire an artist by the minute or hour to perform with or for them, and a marathon twelve-hour event consisting largely of duration pieces – where a single note might be played on the organ for an hour (Philip Corner), or every single note played cumulatively with each other (Eric Andersen). In the first, the audience was not sufficiently acquainted with each artist to make confident choices, so many of them wandered to the work stations looking for artists to hire. This aimless quality also characterised the marathon, except that on this occasion it functioned positively as people felt free to come and go as they got tired and to return whenever they wished. Especially successful on this day was Ben Vautier's piece. Sitting on top of a pillar high above the audience, he spent the afternoon writing and changing cardboard signs in front of him on an easel. These read, among other things, 'Look at me', 'Don't look at me', 'Forget me', and 'Sometimes I think Fluxus is boring'.

Like Da Capo, the 'Excellent' festival, the *à la carte* process, and Good Buy Supermarket, opened a way for various ideas of Fluxus to coexist within the space of one context. Here it was permitted to be past for some and present for others, interactive with the audience and its own entity as well, inexpensive but with sufficient backing to generate an honorarium for each artist, and distinctly international in character. Yet it had the sociological cohesion of each artist determining their own work and interacting with the other artists, performing in each others' pieces and talking about them. This expansive yet comprehensible, varied yet integrated impression seems to be at the heart of Fluxus as a whole. It is an impression that – though sometimes more successful than others – is almost entirely limited to European exhibitions and collections.

Why Europe? Perhaps because there countries are forced to interact with each other and

the myth of the individual of genius is more easily tempered – or perhaps the opposite is true; that the American taste for individual genius leads us to look for a single leader and a single reason for things being as they are. Perhaps, too, it has something to do with the German need to re-create the avant-garde in the wake of its destruction by the Nazis, and a tradition of group action within that context.⁴⁸ At the same time, pluralism and group identity might also be convenient art-critical foils for ideologically evacuated formalism and the heroic 1950s. These possible explanations for why one version of a story is told at one site while another dominates elsewhere indicates that the study of reception tells as much about the subject as it does about the object of inquiry.

It is at this point that what is at stake in a given version of Fluxus becomes painfully clear. What makes an exhibition excellent? It might include the strongest aspect of each exhibition of 1992. It would include acknowledging the internal variations and conflicts within Fluxus artists' ideologies – like 'Fluxattitudes'; at the same time as it would deal across concepts in the spirit of the 'Excellent' festival and the Good Buy Supermarket. It is, after all, the enduring, dynamic character of Fluxus that speaks to diversity and community at once, that belongs to various formations, and thus functions as a site of education about art and the world and – where possible – yourself. In the pages of this volume you may find a Fluxus that is truly 'excellent'.

What you will certainly not find is extensive critical writing on very recent work by Fluxus artists, because this work has been largely ignored by the art-writing establishment. This is not the fault of the editor at all, since almost no coverage of this work exists and cannot therefore be placed meaningfully in an anthology. That is not to say that there is not coverage of new work by Fluxus artists, but it does suggest that these individual works are seldom viewed through a lens of Fluxus concerns. It may initially seem like a digression, but these current works cast light and shadows on past work in interesting ways. I have sketched only a few of these out for you in the space of these very few pages. There remains much work to be done.

Da Capo: new Fluxus works

German gallery owner René Block took great interest in Fluxus and related activities and represented many Fluxus artists in his Berlin-based gallery in the 1960s and 1970s. Later, Block became a major organiser of support for the group, as, among other things, Director of the DAAD Künstlerprogramm, the organiser of the eight Annual Sidney Biennial in 1990, and finally as Director of the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (IFA) exhibition and catalogue of 1995 – an immense travelling exhibition and catalogue of historical and recent Fluxus work.⁴⁹ This exhibition, entitled 'Fluxus: A Long Story with Many Knots. Fluxus in Germany, 1962–1994', indicates that Block prefers a strict beginning point (1962), but allows for contemporary production by Fluxus artists and avoids a seamless, narrative thread.

Nonetheless, geographic and temporal specificity constitutes the curatorial premise behind the anniversary festivals that Block has organised in Wiesbaden and which then moved to other German cities, most notably Berlin and Kassel, home of the internationally acclaimed *Dokumenta* art fair. A comparison of the catalogues produced by Block for these exhibitions goes a long way towards establishing a history of Fluxus activities through to the present. The artists function with relative autonomy at these events. However, the choice of Wiesbaden, though historically defensible as the first Fluxus tour locale, does create a sense

of arbitrariness. With the exception of a small, privately owned Fluxus Museum, called the Fluxeum and run by Michael and Uta Berger, Wiesbaden is more a run-down bathing resort than a Mecca of contemporary art. Nevertheless, Block's festivals and catalogues have done much to keep Fluxus vital by providing much-needed material and moral support.

Unlike many English-language catalogues and exhibitions that close Fluxus off at 1978, when Maciunas died, the catalogue titles of Block's festivals are temporally vast and therefore auspicious: *1962 Wiesbaden FLUXUS 1982*, and *Fluxus Da Capo: 1962 Wiesbaden 1992*. For my purposes, it is significant that in both cases the responsibility for defining Fluxus lay with the artist. The artists chose recent work themselves, thus making each choice significant in terms of each artist's self-construction as a contemporary Fluxus artist. In the 1992 catalogue, this effort was expanded to include artists' favourite texts about their work, which resulted in autobiography and self-criticism, as well as biography, criticism and philosophy by others. In a rather arbitrary attempt to expand the number of artists beyond those present at the first Wiesbaden Fluxus festival, Block included an additional artist from each of the cardinal points (north, south, east and west) as well as 'one surprise'.

Listed on the poster, designed by Fluxus artist Benjamin Patterson as a 'Shopping List', are artists who were present at the 1962 festival, including Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Nam June Paik, Ben Patterson and Emmett Williams. The historic dimension was introduced with the invitation of John Cage, who unfortunately died shortly before the opening. Henning Christiansen, a sometime Fluxus adherent from Denmark, represented the north; Joe Jones, an American expatriate Fluxus artist who spent much of his life in Italy, represented the south; Milan Knizak, a Czechoslovakian artist with long-standing ties to Fluxus, represented the east; and Geoffrey Hendricks, a Fluxus artist from New York City, represented the west. Notably, the historic premise combined with these rather arbitrary additions meant that some consistently active members of the Fluxus community could not be included. Absent were Eric Andersen (Denmark), Philip Corner (America), Takako Saito and Mieko Shiomi (Japan), and Ben Vautier (France), not to mention a long list of sometime cohorts – Jean Dupuy (France), Ken Friedman (Norway), Willem de Ridder (Holland) and Bengt Af Klintberg (Sweden). Artists long out of touch with Fluxus for various reasons were also essentially absent. These include George Brecht, Yoko Ono, Arthur Kœpcke, Robert Filliou and Robert Watts – the latter three deceased. The 1982 Wiesbaden festival included many of these and more, but offered less exposure to each artist. Exclusions and numeric limitations notwithstanding, Block's decision to limit the number of artists in 1992, while alternately historic (the original artists) and arbitrary (the cardinal directions), did provide for a rare opportunity to see some scope in each individual's work.

The choice of additional artists also provides for interesting examples of the type of issue inherent in the long-term practices of a group of artists. Certainly Fluxus artists can and do make work that they do not consider Fluxus-related. Significantly, many artists long associated with each other in New York or elsewhere, simply did not make the fateful trip to Wiesbaden in 1962. This would include Joe Jones, the representative from the south, and probably the least contestable direction-based participant. The case for inclusion of Knizak is more complex. He was in close contact with some artists and not others – a fact that extends the scope of community beyond the network of regular and extensive group contact. Similarly, as a Czech artist he was often held to constraints of censorship, which meant that

much of his contribution to Fluxus was confined to what he could send by mail, in particular a magazine called *Aktual*. His recent work reflects these difficulties. Thus it requires some analysis as Fluxus, but also as eastern bloc, work. Third, Block's addition of Geoffrey Hendricks recognises the issue of serial generations of Fluxus artists. Unlike the other direction-based additions, he was not yet closely associated with the group in 1962 and did not begin a regular and intensive association until later. However, he has been a vital and active associate since that time. His inclusion implies difficulties in too strictly associating Fluxus participation with a particular moment in time. Similarly, Hendricks is a painter of sky images, which, though painted on a variety of surfaces that range from objects to canvases, complicate the habitual association of Fluxus with iconoclastic, fragmented or ephemeral practices.

During the historic tour of 1962 Joe Jones remained in his native city of New York, house-sitting for Alison Knowles and Dick Higgins in their loft on Canal Street. While there he produced his first self-playing instruments. These consist largely of stringed instruments but have also included pianos, drums and wind instruments. They have changed very little over the years. The most dramatic change came with the introduction of solar power. Jones used solar cells to rig up the instruments to the environment itself. The machines work like this. A small rotary motor is attached, usually by a wire, so that it hangs in close proximity to the instrument's primary sounding area – for example, over the strings in the middle of the body of a violin, guitar or harp, or just above the skin of a drum head. Attached to the rotary motor, a sounding device, such as rubber bands or balls, spins across the sounding surface of an instrument. In an example in the Wiesbaden Fluxum, a small guitar is played by a rotary motor equipped with rubber bands. The sound, a tinkle punctuated by whispering caresses and the occasional thwack, communicates an expanse of musical experiences that range from the lyrical to the startling. At the 1992 festival in Wiesbaden, Jones conducted a solar-powered concert of these instruments at a magnitude far exceeding the assembled sculptural 'orchestra' shown here. At this greater scale, what was lyrical in one instrument became a complex web of sound in many, and what was merely startling in a single instrument became sublime.

A constellation of critical issues lies at the core of Jones' instruments. Uppermost among them is the concept of musical genius in orchestral performance. That machines can generate significant sound places the culture of virtuoso performance in doubt. There is a history of such associations. Luigi Russolo was a Futurist composer who built noise instruments in 1913, called 'Intonouori', that ground, sputtered and screeched in imitation of the sounds of the modern city. These Intonouori clearly differ from Jones' instruments insofar as Jones' mechanical sounds are not imitative *per se*. Both Jones' and Russolo's work, however, threatens the culture of musical virtuosity and offers a viable alternative.

The same might be said of the contribution to Wiesbaden in 1992 offered by Dick Higgins. *His Gateway (for Pierre Mercure)*, 1992 consisted of a hallway filled with large and small metallic refuse objects (rusty car parts, springs, coils, fan blades, and so on) that would sound against each other when disturbed by the passage of a visitor. By way of contact microphones placed on the objects, the sounds were 'amplified and broadcast, rather loud, through two loudspeakers'.⁵⁰ At the crowded opening, the metal objects sounded alternately like massive gongs and car accidents, brushing rusty metal and deadened thuds into the walls of the hallway. Distinctly industrial sounding, this massive sounding-box cum hallway more closely

recalls the effect of Russolo's machines, albeit minus the imitative or representational feature of the Futurist experiment. Significantly, the *Gateway* requires visitors. In a rare glimpse of the relationship between bodies and machines, alone and in crowds, the visitor/performer may be made critically aware of this art experience as of a piece with life experience.

Higgins has written several theoretical and philosophical essays about Fluxus, as well as producing his own visual and sound poetry. He is also a performance artist, painter and composer. It is significant that he chose this sculpture for the Wiesbaden show. It relates to other works, particularly performance and composition. Higgins is perhaps best known for his 'Danger Music' performance scores and his 'Thousand Symphonies' musical compositions. These symphonies originate in music paper being shot through with a machine-gun and then spray painted. The resulting score (not shown) occurs when the spray paint passes through the machine-gunned paper and on to another sheet of music paper. The violence of the symphonic score is palpable in the shreds of ballistic evidence that in turn evoke instrumental music. Gone is the composer's will in calibrating the effect of each note as it is handwritten. Instead, the composer's will as direct gesture, simultaneously of destruction and creation, creates a visceral image for the viewer and listener. A similarly direct encounter, this time between the performer and the 'instrumentalist' can be felt in Higgins' *Danger Music #2*, which was performed in Wiesbaden in 1962. In that piece, the artist had his head shaved by his wife, the Fluxus artist Alison Knowles.

On the other side of the *Gateway*, the visitor encountered an installation by Geoffrey Hendricks entitled *For Wiesbaden Fluxus, 1992*. There was the extreme contrast between the flailing junk instruments and a room full of representational images of skies in various degrees of sunshine, cloudiness, darkness and moonlight. Hung from ladders, the sky paintings seemed all the more real *vis-à-vis* their proximity to earth strewn across the floor and a pile of stones. Representation has, as it were, come home to roost in Fluxus. Like Higgins, Hendricks has a long-term interest in direct encounters between the body and its environment, for example his *Body/Hair, May 15, 1971*, in which the artist shaved his body. However, in the case of installations like this, Hendricks has chosen the path of representation to state his cause.

The watercolour paintings moved with the gentle breezes they encountered in the exhibition space. They are, moreover, exquisitely and traditionally painted. Each sky testifies to the artist's great skill at capturing fleeting moments in the ever-transforming landscapes of the sky. Hendricks clearly belongs to an esteemed canon of landscape painters that would have to include Joseph Cozens and Joseph Mallord William Turner – two historical figures who excelled in capturing these fleeting effects.

This fleeting subject matter and the installation of the images as appendages of construction elements, a ladder, and earth elements, soil and stone, reference the ephemerality and environmental contingencies that belong to the works discussed thus far by Jones and Higgins. But what are we to make of their insistent representational character? What place might this historic reference have within Fluxus? Critics repeatedly consign the avant-garde to a site of critical practice within traditional culture – what the author Thomas Crow calls the 'research and development wing of the culture industry'.⁵¹ According to this line of argument, avant-garde work fails as it approaches official culture, and, where it succeeds at all, it does so because of its unilateral critique of the industry – this despite

Crow's description of said critique as always cooped by an official culture industry. Avant-garde artists are, then, at best naive for thinking they might effect culture or at worst counterfeit in their anti-institutional pose. Within this context of valuation, Hendricks' work offers food for thought. His sky paintings and the objects that surround them testify to the recuperation of a variety of practices within an avant-garde thematic. The uniform rejection of culture traditionally associated with the historic avant-garde has been given over to a nuanced and complex system of affirmation (the paintings) and rejection (the ready-mades that display them). Thus, Fluxus cannot be defined as an avant-garde in Bürger's institutional sense, nor as a strictly neo-avant-garde in the pejorative sense of the term. The visitor struggles in vain to locate these paintings in a closed, stylistic category of iconoclasy or anti-virtuosity.

Another explanation for the strange power of these paintings might be their placement relative to a typology of Fluxus. Toward this end, I turn to the Hegelian frame of argument, a thesis is made, then an antithesis, and, finally, a synthesis of both positions. As the complex structure of Fluxus history indicates, these phases need not be in sequential relationship to each other, but rather might coexist as structural elements in the argumentative character that is Fluxus. Thus, despite variety in early Fluxus performance and production, one can still speak of a family of practices – performative, multiple and often ephemeral – that characterise much early Fluxus work – a thesis in short. Owen Smith's piece characterised this as the 'useful' performance and publications basis of early Fluxus work. The antithesis of this performance and publications (or multiple) basis would lie in the push for variety of performance techniques and unique object production that is immediately contingent on the earliest expressions of Fluxus, such as Ay-O's rainbow paintings, for example. These would reflect the movement towards unique objects and group definition that lies behind the rejection of the Fluxshoe and which typifies Fluxus in the 1970s in Anderson's piece – though the relationship is not chronological as the dates of my examples might suggest.

Hendricks' sky works, then, would constitute the resolution or synthesis of these possibilities. The ladders, stones and earth are found objects in the tradition of Duchamp's ready-mades, while the sky images bespeak a painterly tradition, albeit a tradition of representing the fleeting effects of the weather. What is more, historically Hendricks has covered many objects, including his own body, with sky paintings. Thus these paintings are literally (the ladders) and figuratively (as image supports) constituted by the ready-made tradition. In what amounts to a conflation of the ready-made and painterly traditions of the twentieth century, Hendricks' paintings seem to imply that all modes can be appropriated to a traditional art-object status. These works imply that in an art context it may well be that all objects are representational insofar as they represent a reality outside of the art context.

Milan Knizak's contribution to the Da Capo 'New Paradise' consisted of a display of gilded, composite creatures and silver-toned futuristic airplanes on a mirrored platform. Composite creatures included a snake with a lion's head, a shark with an elephant's head, a duck with a bulldog's head, and a dragon's body with kangaroo feet and a goat's head. The airplanes look like composites of fighter jets and heavy-metal guitars. Like the composite creatures that people the margins of medieval manuscripts, these beings bring together two mutually exclusive objects. In bringing these elements together, Knizak engages in an

alchemical marriage of opposites. Inverted in the mirror base, the possibilities for organic reconfigurations seem limitless.

Particularly with regard to the problems of the organic human body in an artificial or urban environment, these creatures evoke familiar Fluxus territory. And yet their insistent representational character and the gaudy use of gold and silver and the hyper-static plane of mirror, place Knizak's works here in a materialistic aesthetic quite alien to many of his Fluxus comrades. It is significant that he comes from Czechoslovakia. This reconciliation of opposites may speak to a grotesque reconciliation of eastern and western cultures, of a grossly material capitalism on one hand, and a grotesque of oppression on the other. What is more, to represent the world of myth, of fantasy, and of conglomerate creatures as 'real' – insofar as they inhabit real space as sculptural miniatures – has implications for the persistent socialist realism that dominated the official art scene behind the Iron Curtain for much of the twentieth century.

While Knizak was particularly vulnerable to the oppressive cultural policies engendered by officials in his homeland, between 1963 and 1968 he was engaged in street performance in Prague and Marienbad, which included a Prague Fluxus in 1966 and most of which took place under the coordinated organisational auspices of his group *Aktual* (founded in 1964 with Jan Mach, Vít Mach, Sinoa Svecová, Jan Trtílek and Robert Whitman). Hand-produced newspapers, objects and posters accompanied these activities, and it is largely through these publications that Knizak participated in the extended community of Fluxus artists. Despite threats to his security, Knizak travelled frequently to the West, beginning in 1968, when he went to the USA at George Maciunas' invitation. Among other things, Knizak won a DAAD award for residence in Berlin, and, like many Fluxus artists, was supported in the receipt of that award by the programme director René Block. Since 1990 Knizak has been Director of the Academy of Visual Arts in Prague.

In his recent institutional affiliation, his threatened past as a clandestine artist in a totalitarian context and his movement back and forth between the two sides of the cold-war border, Knizak literally embodies the possibilities and problems of eastern-bloc artists in a Western context. The transition is uneasy. How is Knizak's new-found power and recognition emblematic of a transformed dominant political ideology? Is there an inherent problem of official recognition of previously 'outsider' artists as an affirmation of political and aesthetic orientations commonly associated with the West throughout the cold war? Is this why he chose to produce these disturbing, even tacky, figurines that look like so much department-store kitsch in the West?

Fortunately, the audience cannot resolve these dilemmas so easily. Kitschy as the figurines are in material and presentation, they represent disparate animal creatures fused into single, grotesque bodies. In studying the creatures on a mirror, one is invited to look at their undersides, at the range of distortions in the figure that result in our looking closely at them. What is the old adage about an unexamined life? Research and examination make it worth living, and, at least in the context from which Knizak evolved, these practices could threaten life itself.

And yet, in our context – more specifically in mine as an American – these objects lose their critical edge. They seem to conform to a long trajectory of representational and freakish objects that merely affirm the commodity status of art, or even worse, fetishise the estranged

object itself. That may be why these figurines seemed so strange in the context of Da Capo, though they no doubt had as much right to stake a claim as Fluxus as anything else there. Moreover, the reconciliation of opposites characteristic of these figurines reverberates with the restructuring devices inherent in some of the poems of Emmett Williams.

In Four Directional Song of Doubt – ‘a concrete poem, a song, an instrumental quintet, instructions for dancers and a picture’ by Emmett Williams, performed at the Wiesbaden Fluxus in 1962 – a chorus of five readers read from cards at different orientations words from the statement ‘You just never quite know’,⁵² The cards are divided into one-hundred square grids which are then marked with ten signal dots (each of which replaces a word) placed in linear progression. A metronome ticks for one-hundred ticks, and the words are either spoken or substituted with sounds or gestures. The doubt, a *double entendre*, lies in the negative statement about cognition (to doubt) as well as in the chance performance of the text itself. The fragmentation of the phrase, a linguistic unit, has an august history in the Dada Cabaret poems of Tristan Tzara, where words were pulled from a hat and spoken at random. However, in Williams’ case, the deconstruction of the phrase is matched by a careful reconstruction along spatial lines, through the introduction of the hundred-square grid and mathematical progression. Thus Williams differs from the poets of the historical avant-garde in his introduction of an alternative structure to the text.

A similar sense of order within disorder (or the opposite) inflected Williams’ contribution to Da Capo. *His Twelve Portraits, 1992* portray artist colleagues (significantly, there are no women), through objects loosely associated with their lives and practice. Again, the issue of a representational practice with an avant-garde thematic becomes significant. For instance, the portrait of George Maciunas, whom Williams identifies as the leader of Fluxus, signifies Maciunas by way of a set of blocks that spell out Fluxus, an anti-tobacco sign (Maciunas was allergic to smoke), a gilded piece of shit (Maciunas collected excrement and used scatological imagery in much of his work), and a face wearing an eyepatch (Maciunas lost his right eye in a brawl with some mafiosi), among other things.

The surface to which the materials are attached has been carefully measured, and the objects attached at seemingly random coordinates over that surface. Because of the generous spacing of the objects, there is a palpable sense of order, either numerical or determined by aesthetic considerations, underlying these seemingly randomly placed objects. Thus the portrait objects, contrary to the institutional prerogatives of Duchamp’s ready-mades, this time serve the cause of representation both because of their presentation on a smooth, painterly ground and by virtue of their ‘representing’ a personality. In this transformation, then, Williams’ portraits belong both at the end and beginning of twentieth-century art. Perhaps this is the essence of Maciunas’ admonition that Fluxus belongs to the rear-garde: these portraits appear to invoke an avant-garde thematic, yet they also resist the linearity inherent in the furthering of the avant-garde role. What, after all, could be more backward looking than a formal portrait, more historically avant-garde than a ready-made, or more confusing than a resolution of these traditionally oppositional categories? What is more, Francis Picabia was already doing this in the 1910s, albeit strictly through line drawings of ready-mades as portraits, rather than through assemblages of ready-made objects.

And yet there is something quite disturbing about the series as a whole. They were produced for a gallery – Carl Solway in Cincinnati, Ohio – which means they were produced

specifically for a commercially defined audience of high-end art multiples. Moreover, they were produced within the context of Solway's 'Kunstfabrik'.⁵³ There are twelve portraits. These are of Joseph Beuys, Marcel Duchamp, Richard Hamilton, Jasper Johns, Allan Kaprow, George Maciunas, Claes Oldenburg, Nam June Paik, Robert Rauschenberg, Daniel Spoerri and Jean Tinguely. What do these artists have in common? For one thing, 'I know them all personally', writes Williams.⁵⁴ For another, these are all famous male artists, and, as such, have already received extensive institutional sanction. Thus, while the argument might be made that these objects parody the fame game of the art system itself, the slick presentation of the portraits makes them eager participants more than hucksters in the art game. As Owen Smith pointed out to me, this Williams piece bears comparison to a situation parodied by George Maciunas in his *12 Big Names*, an advertised concert in which the names of famous artists were projected in large format on a movie screen.⁵⁵ If the audience came to see twelve big names in one evening, they were gravely disappointed!

There is a connection with early work by Williams himself. His *Alphabet Symphony* was performed soon after the original Wiesbaden festival, and consisted of activities using objects as letters. Williams describes one performance:

This is a symphony where you can spell 'love' by smoking a cigar, blowing a silent dog whistle, eating a chocolate éclair off the floor on all fours doggy-fashion, and tooting a little ditty on the flute. That's the way it was spelled during the first performance in London in 1962.⁵⁶

The *Alphabet Symphony* resulted in a highly provocative and often-exhibited portrait series (by Williams' friend Barney Kirchoff) of Williams performing the symphony.⁵⁷ And yet the slick manufacture and choice of famous personages suggests a vast expanse of distance between the *Twelve Portraits* and the simple, alphabet and language pieces typical of Williams' earlier work. Thus, there is something strangely academic, official, sanctioned and empty about these portraits. We are looking at late-twentieth-century academic portraits that use the accepted terms of our present academies – rupture, found object, chance operation and institutional self-consciousness.

To deny the desire for success in the art world and the compromising potential of artists is naïve at best and dehumanising (for the artist) at worst. There is a part of Fluxus that has always received some kind of official sanction, even as an officially unofficial art. Never forget that the very first Fluxus-titled concert in Germany took place in a museum in Wiesbaden! Thus, depressing as I personally find these images, they mark a part of Fluxus history that is intrinsic to understanding the group in its complex affirmations and criticisms of the art world.

Also addressing a relationship between found objects and the practice of representation, or, more precisely, between presentation and representation, Alison Knowles introduced the print series 'Bread and Water, 1992' and an *Indian Moon*, a white circle filled with found objects tagged for sounding as instruments at Da Capo. It takes Knowles months to locate the moon objects on the street. They must have certain sounding or visual qualities. They must also be clean of organic materials. In short, they are not garbage recycled for use in the gallery – at least not in the sense often inferred where the thing was once part of a heap of debris. Rather, the objects have a definitive quality of specificity of purpose, which suggests a connection to another person in another time. Knowles' task is to find those physical traces of someone else's experience and to relocate them to the art context.

The audience then approaches the moon, a circle of white on a floor, sits at the edge, and sounds the objects. By reaching for an object, they too become part of the sequence of objects found, but not lost, from the momentarily intersecting links with an unknown life. In order to sound the object, the reader or performer reads a ticket, a ticket that makes oblique reference to a page in a book. The imposition of a strict substructural order, as in the grid of the Williams portraits, has been given over to the patterns of use in *One Big Sunday Moon*. Similarly, in the print series, the artist has printed from bread bottoms and overdrawn maps by hand that place the relationship between use of a thing and its epistemology in high relief. As Robert C Morgan notes, Knowles' work sets up an archaeology of epistemological elements wherein 'real knowledge comes from a specific examination of the things laying nearby'.⁵⁸

These prints display the bottoms of bread loaves and note their approximate parallels with the geographic sites of rivers. Thus the bread becomes the earth, and the water, the rivers of the earth itself. Viewed in relation to the intimate relationship set up between bodies and objects in the moon piece, the 'Bread and Water' images reform the body along the lines both of microcosm (who eats the bread) and of macrocosm (the bread as body, as earth). Thus the body becomes highly ambiguous in these prints. It is stretched between the most and least intimate scales it can be.

This problematic of physical engagement with the objects and the idea of manipulated scales has a long history in Knowles' work. An early example of the physical interaction with elements of a deconstructed sculptural object is Knowles' first book object, the *Bean Rolls* (1961). This book consisted of a cigar tin within which there were texts that could be pulled out, unrolled and read in any order. Like the objects of the *Indian Moon* that fall into a sequence and placement determined by the use of a visitor, the page order of the *Bean Rolls* is determined by the reader. The scrolls contain information about beans such as bean proverbs, recipes and names. A reader might sit on the floor and unscroll them all, surrounding herself with page strips. Texts tangle physically in what seems to be a chorus of variable literary snips, their physical order traceable only to their use by the viewer. Like the bread of the 'Bread and Water' series, beans are a subsistence food, nutritious and inexpensive. Information, then, in the context of the 'Bread and Water' and *Bean Rolls* pieces, serves the health of the body – and the mind

Ben Patterson's poster for Da Capo, 'Zufällig nicht im Museum', parodies the standards of healthy living and lifestyles that a work like Knowles' implies are overly standardised. Parodies of the standardisation and institutionalisation of human experiences, as expressed through a consciously obsessive measurement of bodies and their functions, their consumption and excreta have a long-term presence in the work of many Fluxus artists. Of course, no two bodies are the same and the clinical apparatus is exposed as somehow absurd. At the famous Fluxclinics of 1966 and 1977, the first set up by Hi Red Centre at the Waldorf Astoria in New York and the second, a mobile clinic set up by Maciunas and located in a truck in Seattle and its surrounds, the idea of measuring 'each visitor's height, weight, volume (in bathtub), also volume of mouth, head etc ... strength of fingers ... ability to stand still, etc etc' was expressed in clinical detail. The description here comes from a letter from George Maciunas to Milan Knizak, where, Maciunas continues, 'Then a Fluxpassport will be issued with all this data noted down ...'.⁵⁹

With Knizak present, what may have been coincidence became an irony of circumstances

when Ben Patterson set up a similar clinic called 'The Clinic of Dr. Ben (BM, MS)' at Da Capo. The parody of measurement, with no apparent applicability except as information for its own sake, would surely not have been lost on the citizen of what was once called Czechoslovakia. The eastern bloc countries were famous for their bureaucracies.

Other Fluxus artists have sustained a long-term interest in the clinical and medical reference in Fluxus. Of particular note is the work of Larry Miller. For example, Miller has consistently produced 'Orifice Flux Plugs', collected assortments of orifice plugs for the human body that range from ear plugs and wax to cotton balls, condoms and bullets, since 1974. These resemble many of Maciunas' 'Fluxkits'. However, the clinical dimension has evolved with new technologies in Miller's work. In Cologne in 1992, Miller could be found copyrighting the genetic code of his friends, comrades, fellow artists, and audience members. Miller's genetic-code copyrights from that year in Cologne were based on his knowledge that such codes could be copyrighted before they were known, and that they could be owned and protected before the technology of cloning had even been developed.

Now, five years later, a sheep has been cloned in Scotland. Admittedly, there is scientific value in reproducing animals that are genetically identical to limit animal testing for random samples. Yet there is a certain anxiety relieved by Miller's contract and simultaneously invoked by it. The technological and sociological circumstances provoked by this particular Fluxcontract are distinctly of this moment, though in the not too distant past they seemed more the world of science fiction (or science friction?), of a distant future or paranoid present. The genetic Copyrights become a remarkably elastic document in space and time. They evoke a clinicism in Fluxus that is at once earnest and humourous. Copyrighted, we become as documents ourselves – measured, contained and ordered in place and time, yet moving beyond the present moment.

Clearly, this is not a group of 'artists' (there are those who would contest the term still!) that can be categorised, packaged according to some stylistic or ideological principle, and neatly placed on the shelf of a library. As long as the nature and history of Fluxus remain debatable, contested and unstable, the spirit of flux in Fluxus remains alive. This is true even when the debate takes place in academic venues, as it does here. There will, however, no doubt come a time when some well-meaning, academic type will come along and can Fluxus. In being canned, it will be preserved for all time but will lose much of its flavour. It may be that this process is inevitable if anything of Fluxus is to survive the lives of the artists. The canning process is, however, unnecessary as long as the artists and those who know and love them are alive. This does not mean that rigorous histories of this or that Fluxus cannot be written. It merely means the history of all of Fluxus cannot be. Readers like this one are a good place to begin thinking about the histories of Fluxus, since they give substance to a variety of perspectives.

When George Maciunas was very poor he bought cans of food from the grocery store that had lost their labels. They were, understandably, sold at a considerable discount. There was certain adventure to be had in taking meals with him during that period. Dinner might be string beans, chicken soup or corned-beef hash. The adventure lay in opening the can to see what was inside. Ben Vautier had these cans relabelled as 'Flux Mystery Food'. If Fluxus is to be canned, at least for the moment, let it be canned in such a way as to leave the labels well enough alone and to maintain the sense of mystery inside.

NOTES

- 1 George Brecht, 'Statement', René Block, ed, *1962 Wiesbaden Fluxus 1982*, Wiesbaden, Harlekin Art, and Berlin, Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD, 1982.
- 2 Kristine Stiles, 'Between Water and Stone, Fluxus Performance: A Metaphysics of Acts', in Elizabeth Armstrong and Joan Rothfuss, eds, *In the Spirit of Fluxus* Minneapolis, MN, Walker Art Centre, 1993.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p 65.
- 4 For this insight I am indebted to the work of my student Laurel Fredrickson for her work ('The Upside-Down World: The Not Made in the Work of Robert Filliou', MA thesis, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1997).
- 5 Wilfried Dörstel, Rainer Steinberg and Robert von Zahn, 'The Bauermeister Studio: Proto-Fluxus in Cologne, 1960–1962', in *Fluxus Virus 1962–1992*, Ken Friedman, ed, Cologne, Verlag Galerie Schüppenhauer, 1992, p 56.
- 6 Maciunas to Bauermeister, undated, Archiv Mary Bauermeister, Historisches Archiv Köln (HASTK, inv 1441, no. 25).
- 7 Stockhausen was to include the score for *Originale* and other works in *Fluxus No. 2, Western European Issue No. 1*. George Maciunas, Notes for Projected Issues, 1962, Archiv Sohm, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart. Unless otherwise indicated, all listed subsequent archival materials are at Sohm.
- 8 Maciunas initially conceived of the festivals as financial engines for the projected *Fluxus* magazine, which explains in part why he included Stockhausen in both places. George Maciunas, Notes, 1962. Paik to Maciunas, undated.
- 9 Photograph by Peter Moore.
- 10 Author's notes. Public conversation between Alison Knowles, Allan Kaprow and Dick Higgins, 'Fluxforum', The Wexner Centre for the Arts, Columbus, OH, 25 Feb 1994.
- 11 'Avant-Garde: Stuffed Bird at 48 Sharp', *Time* (18 Sept 1964).
- 12 Foubion Bowers, 'A Feast of Astonishments', *The Nation* (28 Sept 1964), p 174.
- 13 I am using these behavioural categories as structural models for the various definitions of Fluxus. The behavioural choice made by a given artist does not necessarily constitute conscious choice of a definitive model for Fluxus.
- 14 Mac Low to Maciunas, 25 April 1962.
- 15 Maciunas to Higgins and Knowles, 1963. Located at Archiv Sohm.
- 16 See Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans Michael Shaw, Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, pp 22–3.
- 17 Maciunas to Williams, Spoerri and Filliou, 1963.
- 18 George Maciunas, *Fluxus News-Letter No. 7*, 1 May 1963. Located at the Silverman Archive, New York.
- 19 Melissa Harris, 'Fluxus Closing In: Salvatore Ala Gallery', *Artforum*, 29 (Jan 1991).
- 20 See Ina Blom's contribution to the present volume.
- 21 See the exhibition catalogue, *Francesco Conz and the Intermedia Avant-Garde*. Brisbane, Queensland Gallery, 1997.
- 22 Henry Martin, *An Introduction to George Brecht's Book of the Tumbler on Fire*, Milan, Multhipla Edizioni, 1978.
- 23 Achille Bonito Oliva, 'Ubi Fluxus, ibi Motus', in Bonito Oliva, Gino Di Maggio and Gianni Sassi, eds, *Ubi Fluxus, ibi Motus*, Venice Biennale and Milan, Mazzotta Editore p 26. Emphasis added.
- 24 Giovanni Carandente, 'Opening Statement', *ibid.*, p 12.
- 25 Joe Jones, 'Fluxus', *ibid.*, p 15.
- 26 Henry Flynt, 'Mutations of the Vangarde', *ibid.*, p 99.
- 27 Jon Hendricks, 'Aspects of Fluxus from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection', *Art Libraries Journal*, vol 8, no. 3 (Autumn 1983), pp 8–13.

- 28 Jon Hendricks, ed, *Fluxus Etc.: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*, Bloomfield Hills, MI, Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, 1981.
- 29 'Although the group was held together by Maciunas, the movement's strength was its diversity and independence of the many artists involved.' Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus, Etc.* (flier), Cranbrook Academy of Art, Cranbrook, MI.
- 30 Jon Hendricks, et al., ed *Fluxus Etc., Addenda I: the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*, New York, Ink & Press, 1983.
- 31 Jon Hendricks, ed, *Fluxus Etc., Addenda II: the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*. Pasadena, CA, Baxter Art Gallery, California Institute of Technology, 1983.
- 32 Jon Hendricks and Thomas Kellein, *Fluxus*, London, Thames & Hudson, 1995.
- 33 Jon Hendricks, 'What is Fluxus?', exhibition flier for Neuberger Museum, State University of New York at Purchase, Purchase, New York, 1983.
- 34 Grace Glueck, 'Some Roguish 60's Art Achieves Museum Status', *New York Times* (13 Feb 1983), Section C.
- 35 Clive Phillpot, 'Fluxus: Magazines, Manifestos, Multum in Parvo', C Phillpot and Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*, New York Museum of Modern Art, 1988, p 11.
- 36 'I would like to discuss with you the possibility of a small Fluxus show at the Museum of Modern Art next Fall that would coincide with the publication of *Fluxus Codex*.' Hendricks to Rive Castleman, 3 Nov. 1987, Gilbert and Lila Archive, New York, NY.
- 37 Catherine Liu, 'Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection', *Artforum* 27 (May 1989), p 89.
- 38 Robert C Morgan, 'Fluxus, Museum of Modern Art', *Flash Art International*, 146 (May-June 1989), p 14.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Bruce Altschuler, 'Fluxus Redux', *Arts Magazine*, vol 64 (Sept 1989), pp 66-70.
- 41 Jean Brown, interview with Richard Candida Smith in *The Fluxus Movement: Jean Brown, Art History Oral Documentation Project* (Oral History Programme, University of California, Los Angeles, and the Getty Centre for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1993), p 41.
- 42 Ibid., pp 57-61. My emphasis.
- 43 Eric Vos, *A Checklist of Archival Material for the Jean Brown Collection*, The Getty Centre, p 6. The list was completed in September 1990. My emphasis.
- 44 Information based on the exhibition checklist for 'In the Spirit of Fluxus' provided by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; courtesy of Karen Moss.
- 45 Armstrong and Rothfuss, eds, 'In the Spirit of Fluxus', Minneapolis, MN: The Walker Art Center, 1993.
- 46 Thoughts on the significance of these festivals have been developed from an earlier description of them that appeared as a review entitled 'Totally Excellent: Fluxus 1992', *New Art Examiner* (May 1993).
- 47 The *à la carte* performance format was repeated during Fluxus Festival Chicago at the Arts Club in Fall, 1993.
- 48 For a general introduction to West German cultural policy during these years, see Rob Burns and Wilfried van der Will, 'The Federal Republic, 1968 to 1990: From Industrial Society to the Culture Society,' in *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995.
- 49 René Block, *Fluxus: Eine lange Geschichte mit vielen Knoten. Fluxus in Deutschland, 1962-1994*, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1995.
- 50 Dick Higgins, 'Gateway (for Pierre Mercure)', in René Block, ed, *Fluxus Da Capo: 1962 Wiesbaden 1992*, Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden, 1992, p 91.
- 51 Thomas Crow, 'Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts', in *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, New York, Harper and Row, 1985, p 257.

- 52 Emmett Williams. *My Life in Flux and Vice Versa*, London and New York, Thames & Hudson, 1992.
- 53 This is the term used by Emmett Williams in 'Zwölf Porträts', in Block, ed, *Fluxus Da Capo*, p 148. It translates roughly as 'art factory'.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 The event occurred at 80 Wooster Street, home of the Filmmakers' Cinematique, on 21 April 1973. Special thanks to Joanne Hendricks for locating that information for me in Hendricks and Phillpot, eds, *Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*. New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1988.
- 56 Williams, *My Life in Flux and Vice Versa*, p 58.
- 57 Reproduced in *ibid.*, p 79.
- 58 Robert C Morgan, 'The Art and Archeology of Alison Knowles', in Block, ed, *Fluxus Da Capo*, p. 124.
- 59 Maciunas to Knizák, 19 May 1966. Quoted in *Fluxus Codex*, ed Jon Hendricks, New York, Harry N Abrams, 1988, pp 267-8.