Flux us now! Fluxus explored with a camera

FluxUsNow
Dorothee Richter

For this short article, I will enlarge summaries of the film's chapters, and provide a bit more historical background. The material came together from many different sources, shot by different camerawomen and from material the artists gave me. *Flux Us Now!*, the research-based film by Dorothee Richter and Ronald Kolb, was published in 2013. It is based on a large collection of formal and informal interviews and conversations with artists Ben Patterson, Alison Knowles, Hannah Higgins, Letty Eisenhauer, Carolee Schneemann, Jon Hendricks, Geoffrey Hendricks, Larry Miller, Eric Andersen, Jonas Mekas, Daniel Spoerri, and Ben Vautier, and historical material featuring Yoko Ono, Jackson Mac Low, Ken Friedman, Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik, Philip Corner, Henry Flynt, Emmett Williams, and La Monte Young.[1]

With this diverse material, I asked myself how to work with it, since a compilation of artistic portraits would be exactly contradictory to the important message that emanates from Fluxus material. So, working with Ronald Kolb for three years on the filmic material, we decided to edit the film according to different themes that emerged through our conversations with the artists, as well as categories that I developed as the backbone of my PhD on Fluxus, including authorship, distribution, reception, gender, community, and the relation of politics to both daily life practices and artistic events.

Interview situation at Alison Knowles' studio. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

We used historical material in the manner of Roland Barthes, not as illustrations, but as part of a complex meaning production for our research:

> Mythical Speech is made of a material which has already been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication. It is because all the materials of myth (whether pictorial or written) presuppose a signifying consciousness, that one can reason about them while discounting their substance. This substance is not unimportant: pictures, to be sure, are more imperative than writing, they impose meaning a tone stroke, without analysing or diluting it. But this is no longer a constitutive difference. Pictures become a kind of writing as soon as they are meaningful: like writing, they call for a lexis. We shall therefore take language, discourse, speech, etc., to mean any significant unit or synthesis, whether verbal or visual: a photograph will be a kind of speech for us in the same way as a newspaper article; even objects will become speech, if they mean something.[2]

What is Fluxus, who is Fluxus, when and where was Fluxus? Hardly any other art movement is as difficult to define. Various writers have seen this as the reason why the movement has not become better known or met with greater success on the art market. Yet, this supposition itself prompts a number of questions: 1. Was Fluxus an "art movement" at all? 2. Did the Fluxus artists actually aim for commercial success? In light of this, it is not exactly surprising that Eric Andersen, one of the very first Fluxus artists, declared as recently as 2008 that no such thing as Fluxus ever existed, and that the widely diverging forms of expression that are now referred to as Fluxus would be more accurately characterized as "intermedia." There is also a lack of agreement as to which artists could be described as belonging to or even just associated with Fluxus. Consequently, "Fluxus"—whatever is meant by it on any given occasion—is a term that provides a perfect basis for association with mythologems and elaborate narratives. This is all the more true in view of the fact that "actions" and ephemeral objects, editions and newspapers produce something more complicated than the object-based, art-historical trail that traditional artistic activity normally lays down for its interpreters. Certain key phrases often used in connection with Fluxus take the place of traditional art objects, serving to bracket together a variety of disparate practices, places, participants, and relics. These key phrases solidify as quasi-images. The slogan "art equals life," for example, is a particularly effective verbal image that is frequently cited in the context of Fluxus. The combinations of art and politics, art and the everyday, or action and chance are also often mentioned.

Chapter 1: Before Fluxus (10min 17 sec)

George Maciunas initially called this accumulation of performative forms of the newest kind of music "Neo-Dada," but Tristan Tzara did not much like the term, as Ben Patterson told us. As a result, "Fluxus" (originally intended to be the title of an anthology) came to be adopted as the new name. Activities developed in New York around John Cage's classes, and there were other experiments with happenings and New Music performed at a variety of locations. These new forms were brought to Europe by George Maciunas. (Maciunas, on the run from creditors, safely joined the US Army as a designer). In Germany in particular, following the cultural disruption brought about by National Socialism, there was still a certain barren emptiness that even the German "Informel" of the early 1960s had not filled. In post-war Germany, there was therefore an opening for Fluxus as an American import, mediated by the Lithuanian Maciunas, a brilliant organizer who had emigrated to the USA via Germany. As Maciunas was employed as a designer by the military, fellow Fluxus artist Emmett Williams likewise drew a salary from that institution. Indirectly, one could accurately state that the US Army funded certain radical artistic experiments.

Chapter 2: Beginnings of Fluxus (9min 33 sec)

Fluxus made its first appearance in Wiesbaden in 1962, after which a number of festivals of varying magnitudes took place within different European cities. As an extremely dynamic phenomenon, it changed over time: to begin with, the focus was on scores and events. Scores can be defined as short sets of instructions, while events simply as structured performances—as opposed to the more complex and theatre-like Happenings. "Early Fluxus" consisted of performances inspired by New Music and Concrete Poetry. What part was played in this by Maciunas's "manifestos," and who coined the term "Fluxus"? As these examples clearly indicate once again, Fluxus was not only transmitted through objects and relics of the performances, but also existed from the start through the media of photography and language—although (paradoxically) Fluxus events were noted down in the form of scores. Diedrich Diederichsen calls the notation of visual art the unspoken constant of Fluxus. He regards this kind of notation as a framework that locates "actions" and visual art in a new concept of material. This corresponds to the relationship between a composition and the score, which is the recording of music as musical notation. In this way, unlike other art forms, it is essentially a mediated process which does not directly give expression to the thing itself but first sets down symbols (notation) that point towards a potential outcome. Composition is thus based on an abstraction of music/sound that follows its own laws and its own logic.

Insert: Some Thoughts on the Historical Situation in Postwar Germany

The reformulations introduced by revolutionary art movements such as Fluxus, Happenings, and Gutai imply an altered positioning of art towards politics, and of the private sphere towards the public. They exploded genre boundaries, questioned the author's function, and radically changed the production, distribution, and reception of fine arts. Artist groups organised their own opportunities for public appearances. Their scores were performed jointly and differently in each revival; they took charge of distribution, of publishing newsletters and newspapers, and of establishing publishing houses and galleries. Audiences were now directly involved and subject to provocative address. The inversion of terms instituted by Fluxus, by mapping their methods of composing music onto all aspects of the visual, made it possible to consider everything as material and as a basis for composition.[3] They challenged hitherto prevailing cultural hegemony and manifoldly anticipated on a symbolic level the 1968 student riots and protest movements.

In Philip Corner's *Piano Piece*, an alternating number of performers dismantled the piano on the subsequent weekends of the festival; the event score suggested various activities with the piano, such as "drop objects on strings on other parts of piano or draw chains or bells across, act in any way on underside of piano"[4] (two out of nine instructions). The individual parts of the instrument were auctioned at the end of the festival.

"Fluxus" spread via newspaper reports and photographs and thus became known to a large number of people. This black-and-white photograph shows eight people, of which six are intensely busy with a piano, while two are sitting at the right edge of the picture observing the proceedings. The first impression of the photograph is one of extreme artificiality. It looks so forcefully composed that at first one believes it is a photomontage. The hard, high-contrast lighting and the jutting of a ledge or wall into the picture on the left makes it seem decomposed by a series of cuts. Its upper right part looks curiously blurred and cloudy, the traces of irregular image development, and its coarse-grained character convey spontaneity and the "documentary" as a subtext, since its technical development is somewhat amateurish. The photograph has obviously slid from a horizontal position, thus adding to its dramatic effect together with the hard shadows of the figures.

Wiesbaden Festival of New Music, Pictures of Philip Corner's *Piano Piece,* September 1962.

The opened-up piano, into which we look from above, reveals its partially wrecked inner life. The arrangement of the figures around the piano recalls the imagery of medical operations or anatomy classes familiar from throughout art and film history. This concentration and the serious faces of the actors support these associations. The seriousness of those involved simultaneously resembles children dismembering an animal or disassembling an alarm clock; it seems quite obviously incommensurate with the dismantling/destroying of a piano. The two spectators on the right side of the photograph are the only figures[5] facing the photographer, or rather the present-day viewer. Both are smiling rapturously, almost ecstatically, and their expression reminds me of the concept of *jouissance*, that is, of (female sexual) pleasure.

The actors destroying/disassembling a piano can be easily read as an attack on one of the symbols of the bourgeois conception of education and morality. The photograph, which appeared on the front cover of a catalogue in 1982, must have been considered an enormous affront against the bourgeoisie and its values when it was originally taken in 1962. Justin Hoffmann has also suggested that in the 1960s art frequently involved the destruction of musical instruments, for instance Nam June Paik's *One for Violin*, Terry Riley's *Guitar Piece*, and so forth. Hoffmann sees this as a destruction of the status symbols of bourgeois culture.[6]

In retrospect, we can read the piano as a symbol that, just like classical literature, provided the bourgeoisie with a certain noble possibility to withdraw from the boredom [humdrum] of everyday politics, that is to say, with an innocent—that is, blameless—retreat from the memories of Nazi crimes against humanity and the latent question of guilt. Without doubt, the piano is a complex symbol in postwar Germany. Those advocating reactionary positions have repeatedly had recourse to timeless cultural values. One prominent example is Hans Sedlmayr, who claimed that he had never adopted another position other than harmony and timeless values.[7]

Fluxus artists took up educated middle-class concepts in both their choice of venues (museums, universities, galleries, concert halls) and the terms employed in their events, such as score, composition, symphony, or concert—only to subsequently subvert them. Silke Wenk has shown that in the postwar period the need of Federal Germans for a clearly structured order organized in terms of stable values, which found only partial expression in political discourse, was displaced onto high culture.[8] Hierarchized high culture therefore appears as a refuge from the collapse of a collective nationalist identity at the end of the Hitler regime and the aggressions and sense of guilt bound up with this breakdown. Adorno, a contemporary of the Fluxus movement, concluded "that secretly, unconsciously, smouldering, and hence particularly powerful, those identifications and the collective Nazism [here Nazi-ideology] were not destroyed at all but continue to exist. The defeat has been ratified within just as little as after 1918. [meaning here after the First World War]"[9] The destruction of the piano under the "misleading" headings "concert, New Music, score, etc." shattered precisely this bastion of retreat to "timeless" hierarchical high culture. The Fluxus actions revealed a fissure in the imagined unassailability and sealing off of this cultural sphere. When gazing into this fissure, the contemporaries perceived an atmosphere of gloom: excessive sexuality, guilt, and violence.

Already in 1965, Fluxus artists began publishing sarcastic articles that had previously appeared in the *Bildzeitung* (Germany's major tabloid) and middle-class feuilletons, together with photographs of their performances and reports penned by the artists. Reprinting a *Bildzeitung* article, a paper known for its popularist right-wing tendencies,

in a Fluxus publication, as it were, situated the artists' actions as left-wing and potentially revolutionary. The description of the audience in this article as "bearded young men, demonic looking teenagers, and elderly women" carries sexual connotations. Precisely those individuals most likely to be of an age in which they would be living in a well-ordered sexual relationship, namely a middle-class marriage, are conspicuously absent from such a description. Even the "elderly women" appear to have come without elderly men (sic!). Each of the groups mentioned implies a certain sexual openness, not to mention availability. The suspicion of sexual debauchery, at least by way of allusion, underlies the description as a subtext. Press comments varied from mere boredom to derisive comments. Reprinting the articles in documentation published by artists foregrounds the narrow-mindedness of the press and buttresses the mythologization of Fluxus actions as those of a protest movement. Moreover, conducting a negative discourse on a work of art also produces meaning (and ultimately enhances its value), as the artists realized.[10]

One further connotation of the piano is virginal innocence, since learning to play the piano was still considered one of the virtues of the unmarried daughters of middle-class families. Since the eighteenth century, rooms were increasingly classified along various parameters: public vs. private, work vs. recreation, and male vs. female. In this respect, we can bear in mind the determining of gender roles, which consigned bourgeois women to an extremely restricted sphere, comprising not only sexual unfreedom but also a general subordination to their fathers' and later husbands' needs and affairs, as well as economic dependency.

The aggressive assault of the Fluxus artists resembles a violent prying open: the piano seems naked, innocent, and raped. The actions of the all-male attackers are brutal; the only figure whose entire body is visible can be seen thrusting his full bodyweight onto the strings; another is gripping a hammer; and yet another is captured halfway through encroaching upon the piano with an unrecognizable instrument. The enchanted faces of the two spectators appear to support the sexual connotations. One level of meaning within this image would thus be the dismantling of bourgeois values and sexual morality, without, however, abolishing gender hierarchy. The spectators' enchanted faces bestow upon events the aura of excitement and fascination.

Dick Higgins commented on one of the pieces performed on that particular weekend as follows: "By working with butter and eggs for a while so as to make an inedible waste instead of an omelette, I felt that was what Wiesbaden needed."[11] Wasting food was another affront in postwar Germany. The latter remark certainly applied to the entire performance. The festival also provoked comments from the Wiesbaden population in response to the re-education to which they were exposed: (when we see the willingness of the authorities to present "American art" to the population as a will to re-educate people, for example, instead of reinstalling persecuted Jewish and non-Jewish artists). This poster was reprinted three years after the event as an instance of self-positioning in *Happenings, Fluxus, Pop Art, Nouveau Réalisme* (eds. Becker and Vostell):[12]

As mentioned, the artists organized their own performance opportunities. Below, I will quote from the letters of George Maciunas, which are largely concerned with organizational details, but also have an ideological streak. Astonishingly, Becker and Vostell's abovementioned publication already blended a variety of different texts as early as 1965, displaying these without further ado in the art context. Not only reports of the participating artists (predominantly male), but also details of the "making of an exhibition" were included. Disclosing organizational processes implies institutional

Poster, Wiesbaden Festival of New Music, Scribbles, 1962.

critique. The conventional notion of a closed, presentable, image-like performance is subverted. "Backstage" affairs are laid bare, thereby dismantling the aura of a work and of the idea of the authentic, spontaneous, and ingenious artist-as-subject.
In 1963, George Maciunas wrote to Joseph Beuys before the latter became a member of the Fluxus movement:

> "To Joseph Beuys, 17 January 1963
> Dear Professor Beuys:
> I received your letter yesterday evening, and herewith respond to your questions.
> 1. Coming to Düsseldorf already at 10am on 1 February would be somewhat uncomfortable as I would have to stay away from work and would lose 80 Marks. I could come on Friday evening towards 11pm. I must consider the same problem that Emmett Williams has. I will come on 1 February at 10am if it absolutely necessary. Actually Saturday would be enough to prepare things.
> 2. Our manifesto could for instance be a quote from an encyclopedia (enclosed) on the significance of Fluxus. I enclose a further manifesto.
> 3. We would be delighted if you could perform at the Festival. Wolf Vostell, Dieter Hülsmanns, and Frank Trowbridge will be also be taking part as performers and composers. I have revised the programme once more and have included your compositions, although I don't know which of Trowbridge's compositions can be performed. I would need to see them before I could agree .
> [....]
> 5. We will not destroy the piano. But can we distemper it (that is, paint it white) and then wash off the paint afterwards?
> 6. My daytime telephone number in Wiesbaden is 54443.
>
> Regards
> G. Maciunas."[13]

This letter, politely phrased and keen to assure Beuys that the piano will suffer no damage, undermines the image of the wild and revolutionary artist-as-subject. Prevailing social conditions, however, become apparent in the avant-garde artist's addressing Beuys as "professor." The publication conveys the hiatus between revolutionary impetus and polite, bourgeois manners, and makes plain the changing roles of artists, organizers, and collaborators. And as mentioned before, Fluxus exists in this conglomeration of events, texts on events, letters, printed matter, relics, scores, photographs, editions, and films, as we see in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: What is Fluxus? (13min 40 sec)

Fluxus artists explain precisely what, in their view, constitutes Fluxus: the nature of the collaboration, "chance music" (compositions involving chance), humor, etc. According to several contributors, this means that Fluxus consists of entirely contradictory elements. Is Fluxus primarily a network or a style? And how were these close associations reflected in the works? Performances, event scores (scores/instructions for actions), graphic works, boxes and editions, newspapers, objects, and reports accompanied by "documentary" photographs are all part of the meaning of Fluxus. What is more, any given event score was open to very different interpretations. Also, is a distinction made between art and life? What part is played by the ego in Fluxus? To what extent did George Maciunas define and market Fluxus? Hannah Higgins shows how Fluxus has always been subject to more or less arbitrary definitions. Artists in the film explain scores and present editions, including the famous Fluxboxes and other ephemera.

Chapter 4: Who was Fluxus? (16min)

For the film project, a number of the Fluxus artists produced new diagrams—inspired by Maciunas's historic Fluxus diagrams—to show the relationships between the artists in Fluxus. Not only is Fluxus difficult to categorize or define, it is even unclear which artists belonged to it. An illustration of this circumstance is the fact that the participants named on posters and invitations used for the early Fluxus concerts were often different from the artists who actually took part. How were individual artists included in Fluxus or excluded from it, and whose decision was it? Names? Some artists such as Yoko Ono, Henry Flynt, and Daniel Spoerri took part in early performances and

perhaps belonged to the inner circle of Fluxus for a time but would now, for various reasons, no longer describe themselves as Fluxus artists. Other artists who stayed close to Fluxus, like Eric Andersen and Ben Patterson, never subscribed to George Maciunas's Fluxus manifestos

Chapter 5: Authorship in Fluxus (12min)

Authorship in Fluxus is usually more complicated than it appears at first sight. Thus, for instance, Daniel Spoerri describes how *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance* came into being. For that book, Spoerri, Emmett Williams, and Dieter Roth wrote sections that interlock and comment on one another, and the book now exists in several different versions. Many Fluxus artists, among them Emmett Williams and Robert Filliou, produced works jointly, stimulating and inspiring each other and often, for example, named their works after other artists as a way of alluding to their qualities. Performers likewise enjoyed (and still enjoy) a great deal of latitude in their realization of event scores, thereby automatically becoming co-authors. The production of the editions (boxes) typical of Fluxus was usually the responsibility of George Maciunas and a small supporting group of artists. They created both boxes and films based on brief instructions formulated by other artists. Here again, the process was multi-authorial, but the boxes were marketed under the names of specific artists and sold with the typical Maciunas design styling. A quasi-fictitious Fluxus Mail Order Warehouse was also set up, and later re-created.

Chapter 6: The Something Else Press (7min 7 sec)

The Something Else Press became another hub, a center of production in which many Fluxus artists were involved. Some of them lived for a time at the home of Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles, where the SEP was located. Hannah Higgins, the daughter of Higgins and Knowles, demonstrates how extensive the overlap was between the networks of Fluxus and the SEP. Nevertheless, the two were fundamentally different types of organizations; one a press, with a more conventional structure, with Dick Higgins as the publisher, and Fluxus, as an amorphous collective, chaired, at least in his own understanding, by George Maciunas.

Chapter 7: Gender and Sex in Fluxus (12min 25 sec)
Fluxus also played a part in the social reconfiguration of the "dispositive of sexuality" which took place from the 1960s onwards. Gender identity and the attribution of fixed roles were called into question in both the private sphere and in art: subjects such as cross-dressing, heterosexual relationship models, and homosexuality were acted out in important events such as the Flux Divorce, the Flux Wedding, and finally the Flux Funeral. Male Fluxus artists were involved in their children's upbringing to an extent that was surprising for the 1960s. Other elements of everyday life such as eating together also featured in a variety of "actions" and works.

Chapter 8: Mr. Fluxus: George Maciunas (15min 33 sec)
Art historians tend to tie Fluxus to specific individuals, as this corresponds more closely to the idea of individual artistic creativity and genius that generally informs the writing of art history. Surprisingly, however, Maciunas's role was in many ways what we would now describe as curatorial: he organized performance opportunities,

arranged accommodations, and decided sequences. This gave him a measure of power regarding definition, although this authority was repeatedly called into question by other artists. The artists interviewed here record a confusing variety of aspects of Maciunas's personality. The latter is also reflected in the works themselves: in the editions, for instance, one can see his incredibly meticulous handiwork. Another surviving object that reflects his life, a door with cutting blades on the outside—now accorded the status of a work of art in the Silverman Collection in the MoMA archive—demonstrates his fear of the SoHo police. He also devised grand, utopian, unrealizable projects, which were often thwarted by unfavorable circumstances.

Chapter 9: Stars in Fluxus (14min 30 sec)
Taking Wolf Vostell and Yoko Ono as examples, we investigate the extent to which Fluxus and an individual artistic position are compatible. Both artists were temporarily part of the Fluxus movement, but over the course of time, both—in different ways—claimed a special status or once more identified themselves with the role of a singular artistic "genius." Vostell adopted the traditional stance of the great painter, while in the case of Yoko Ono the mere fact of her marriage to John Lennon catapulted her into the position of a star, which inevitably altered her relationship to the other artists. Yoko Ono is (like Nam June Paik) one of those whom critics treat as individual artists in their own right.

Chapter 10: Politics and Fluxus (10min 29 sec)
Political motivation was a fundamental element behind the changes in artistic content, the integration of everyday culture, and the (mass) production of editions as promoted by Fluxus. In a 1965 publication, for example, Wolf Vostell drew parallels between occurrences in art and in politics. An art movement like Fluxus is inconceivable without such political motivation, even if (or perhaps precisely because) political attitudes were anything but consensual in the group; on the contrary, they were always highly controversial. The artists negotiated their positions in newsletters and semi-public letters. Precisely this gesture of a (semi-)public discussion endowed the controversies with a truly political dimension if one considers politics above all a venue for the articulation of interests and standpoints.

Chapter 11: Gentrification (8min 30sec)
Shel Shapiro and Roslyn Bernstein carried out in-depth research on the legendary 80 Wooster Street and the changes that came about in SoHo. Shel himself lived for a time in the building that housed Maciunas's studio as well as Jonas Mekas's cinematheque; expensive boutiques have since taken their place. The artists and their contemporaries come to widely different assessments of these changes. Whereas Jonas Mekas emphasizes the social character of Maciunas's cooperatives, Letty Eisenhauer also addresses the problematic aspect of gentrification. Mekas explains that Maciunas founded eighteen housing cooperatives and sold them, loft by loft, to artists without making any money on them. By far exceeding the boundaries of art, Maciunas changed the development of SoHo and Tribeca, both key districts of Manhattan. And even today, the former housing cooperatives have to house at least one artist in the building.

In Retrospect

In retrospect, I am still amazed by the ways Fluxus laid the foundation for topics including the future of acting collectively, intervention into political questions, and the questioning of ascribed binary gender roles. This was revolutionary, even if the group struggled, fought with each other, and could not in many ways overcome the "objectification" that is forced upon us in capitalism. As Johan Hartle recently explained in a talk in our PhD in Practice in Curating programme[14] in detail, it is implied in Marx's concept of fetishism that the very act of commodity exchange functions as such, because it's implied in the principle of the exchange of equivalence. The concept of objectification (*Verdinglichung* in German) is broadened by the most renowned Marxist cultural critic Georg Lukács, when he writes *History and Class Consciousness* in 1923. In this book, he develops the idea of objectification further and stops speaking about fetishism, instead speaking of reification, meaning to turn social relations or processes into things. This concept implies that something is turned into a thing that shouldn't normally be treated as a thing, and in fact one could say that Marx's understanding of commodity fetishism already implies such a dynamic of turning society into things because of the very act of commodity exchange and ascribing a necessary value to an object, and that this commodity is equivalent to a monetary value. What Lukács states means that, under capitalist circumstances, more often than not we tend to take processes and relations as what they are *not*, namely as

things. They are being reified, and we do so by acting as individual commodity processors; and it means that we act as individual market agents rather than seeing ourselves as the collective producers of our own lives. Despite the desire of individual protagonists to be seen as brilliant artists, despite all antagonisms, and despite the art historical tendency to reduce attributions to individuals, despite all this, Fluxus gives us something that reminds us that we are more than individual commodity processors, that we can be the collective producers of our own lives—let's keep this in mind and reactive it!

Daniel Spoerri in his studio. Filmstill, *Flux Us Now,* 2013.

In the studio of Shel Shapiro. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Early location of Something Else Press.
New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Studio of Letty Eisenhauer. New York, 2009.
Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Carolee Schneemann. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

In the studio of Geoffrey Hendricks. New York, 2009.
Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Fluxus Edition

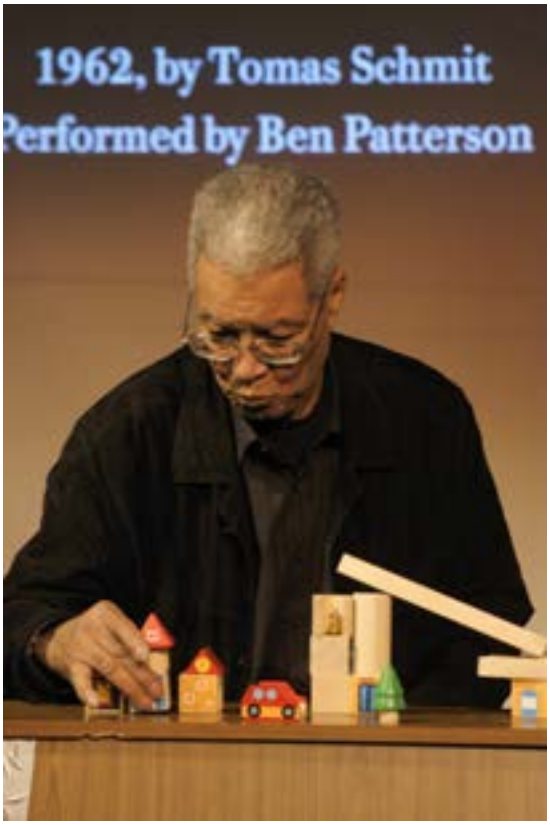
In the studio of Geoffrey Hendricks. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Location of Joe Jones' JJ Music Store.
New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

In the studio of Jonas Mekas. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Jon Hendricks. New York, 2009. Photo by Christoph Schreiber.

Fluxus Festival at Cabaret Voltaire. Zurich, 2008.
With Alison Knowles, Hannah Higgins, Ann Nöel, Eric Andersen,
Ben Patterson, Larry Miller. Curated by Dorothee Richter and Adrian Notz.
Photos by Adrian Notz.



Notes

1 See http://www.fluxusnow.net/. Here, you will find chapters and the list of venues where the film has been shown and discussed up until now.
2 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), p. 110.
3 See Diedrich Diederichsen, "Echos von Spielsounds in Headphones. Wie Kunst und Musik einander als Mangelwesen lieben," *Texte zur Kunst* 60 (December 2005).
4 See *1962 Wiesbaden Fluxus 1982*, ed. Harlekin Art(Berlin and Kassel: Museum Wiesbaden and Daad Program, 1982), p. 194.
5 Different artists have identified the two as Bazon Brock and Vera Mercer, a photographer at that time married to Daniel Spoerri.
6 Justin Hoffmann, *Destruktionskunst, der Mythos der Zerstörung in der Kunst der frühen sechziger Jahre* (Munich: Verlag Silkw Schreiber, 1995), p. 126.
7 Sedlmayr was an especially early follower of the Nazi regime; in his postwar lectures, his attitude is typical for beneficiaries of the Nazi regime and their line of right-wing argument: "Above and below are not only spatial relations, but symbols of intellectual ones. [..] It cannot be that one refers to the upper as the lower. You will never call the upper instinctual life and the intellect the lower? This are entirely objective observations. Just don't feel attacked all the time and constantly take offense! I believe that I take modern art more seriously than all the whitewashers and embellishers who run to its defense. [Applause – stamping and acclamations: Heil Hitler! Acclamation: Pfui!] All I can reply is that I have presented the same matters before and during Hitler, in precisely the same way, with the same avowal of the power of the mind and without the slightest concessions. [Applause]." Hans Sedlmayr: "Über die Gefahren der modernen Kunst," Lectures delivered in 1950, in *Darmstädter Gespräch: Über das Menschenbild in unserer Zeit*, ed. Hans Gerhard EVERS (Darmstadt: Neue Darmstädter Verlagsanstalt, 1959), pp. 48-62, quoted in *Kunst/Theorie im 20. Jahrhundert* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003).
8 See Silke Wenk, "Pygmalions moderne Wahlverwandtschaften. Die Rekonstruktion des Schöpfer-Mythos im nachfaschistischen Deutschland," in *Blick-Wechsel, Konstruktion von Männlichkeit und Weiblichkeit in Kunst und Kunstgeschichte*, eds. Ines Lindner et al. (Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 1989); and Barbara Schrödl, *Das Bild des Künstlers und seiner Frauen* (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2004).
9 Theodor W. Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften, Volume 7: Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1970), p.135.
10 See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Die Regeln der Kunst*, trans. Bernd Schwibs and Achim Russer (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2001), p. 276.
11 Dick Higgins cited after Owen F. Smith, *Fluxus: The History of an Attitude* (San Diego: San Diego State University, 1998), p.74.
12 Jürgen Becker and Wolf Vostell, *Happenings, Fluxus, Pop Art, Nouveau Réalisme, eine Dokumentation* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965).
13 George Maciunas in Becker and Vostell, *Happenings, Fluxus*, p. 197.
14 Johan Hartle, *Corona/Spectacle***,** October 2, 2020, see https://www.curating.org/johan-hartle/ .

Screenings

27 April 2019, Museum Ulm, as part of the exhibition *FLUXUS*
17.–19. Juni 2018, *Defragmentation – Four-Day Convention on Curating Contemporary Music,* Darmstadt
20 April 2018, Kino Toni, Zurich University of the Arts, ZHdK, as an event in the exhibition *Revisiting Black Mountain*
28th of April 2017, LENTOS Kunstmuseum Linz, accompanying the exhibition *ICH KENNE KEIN WEEKEND. Aus René Blocks Archiv und Sammlung*
5 November 2015, Museum Tinguely in cooperation with the exhibition *Ben Vautier. Ist alles Kunst?*
24 June 2015, Hochschule fuer Gestaltung Karlsruhe, in cooperation with Seminar Kunstwissenschaft: *GLOBALE Renaissance 4.0* (Prof. Dr. Beat Wyss/Sebastian Baden)
2 June 2015, Kibbutz College Tel Aviv, a cooperation of the Petach Tikva Museum and Curatorial Studies Certificate Program, Faculty of Arts, Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and Arts Tel-Aviv
22 May 2015, Kunstakademie Stuttgart
21 May 2015, Ostwall Museum Dortmund and Leonie-Reygers-Terrasse, Dortmund
19 May 2015, Leuphana Universität Lüneburg
10 July 2014, Moonlight Lounge, Kunsthaus KuLe, Berlin
March 2014, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien
6 February 2014, Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst Bremen
19 January 2014, Kunstverein Wiesbaden
23 November 2013, Kunsthalle São Paulo
15 October 2013, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart
4 October 2013, Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich
13 April 2013, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

Dorothee Richter is Professor in Contemporary Curating at the University of Reading, UK, and head of the Postgraduate Programme in Curating, CAS/MAS Curating at the Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland; She is director of the PhD in Practice in Curating Programme, a cooperation of the Zurich University of the Arts and the University of Reading. Richter has worked extensively as a curator: she was initiator of Curating Degree Zero Archive, Curator of Kuenstlerhaus Bremen, at which she curated different symposia on feminist issues in contemporary arts and an archive on feminist practices, Materialien/Materials; recently she directed, together with Ronald Kolb, a film on Fluxus: *Flux Us Now, Fluxus Explored with a Camera.* She is executive editor of OnCurating.org.