92 Events

Ken Friedman

92 Events
Ken Friedman

Ken Friedman: *92 Events*

Ditte Mauritzon

Ken Friedman joined Fluxus in 1966 as the youngest member of the classic Fluxus group. He worked closely with artists and composers associated with Fluxus including George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, and Nam June Paik,[1] as well as collaborating with Mieko Shiomi, Yoko Ono, and John Cage.[2]

Late in 1966, Friedman established Fluxus West as a gathering point for Fluxus activities in the western United States. Fluxus West extended its activities to projects in Great Britain and Germany in the late 1960s and 1970s.

In that era, the Iron Curtain still divided Europe – and the world – between East and West. Friedman reached across the Wall to work with fellow Fluxus artist Milan Knizak, organizing Knizak's first solo exhibition in the United States. He also corresponded with avant-garde artists in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, and other nations, presenting their work in exhibitions and publishing it in journals and in books.[3] In the late 1970s Friedman donated many of these works to the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.[4]

During these years Friedman was also in active correspondence with Scandinavian Fluxus artists, initiating a long friendship with artist and folklorist Bengt af Klintberg.[5] As with other Fluxus colleagues, Friedman presented and performed af Klintberg's work widely, writing about it as well.[6]

A fascination with the context and production of art led Friedman to engage in research on the sociology of art. In 1976, Friedman finished his doctoral thesis in behavioral science while working as an artist.

Event scores have been central in Friedman's artistic career. Events represent an idea or a thought experiment. Friedman has realized his events in paintings, silkscreen, ceramics, sculpture, performances, and music. He has also presented them as text-based scores printed on paper, as in this exhibition of *92 Events*.

For Friedman, the structure of the *92 Events* exhibition is as important as the works in the show. Like others in Fluxus, Friedman questions the idea of art as a form of monetary value or an investment. *92 Events* are produced as simple text-based scores printed on plain paper. They can be shown in multiple venues around the world at nearly no cost. The exhibition presents 92 works from 1956 to 2019. While Friedman selected the 92 event scores in the exhibition, each museum determines the number of works they will show according to available space. Each museum must also decide whether to display the works only as text or also to realize them in objects or performances. In this sense, each exhibition is collaborative and site specific, and each exhibition reflects the workings of the host museum as much as any decision by Friedman himself.

Stephen Cleland describes *92 Events* this way:

"Friedman's humble texts encompass the Fluxus group's anarchic approach to art making. His attraction to type-written events is consistent with a strategy developed by Fluxus artists (shared by later conceptualists) to dematerialize art making. It offers a radically minimal and irreverent conception of what an art object can be."

Cleland continues: "These instructional texts navigate a fine line between sculptural proposition, absurdist action, and concrete poetry. Through these printed propositions,

Friedman offers a range of actions that can be completed by anyone, or which invite professionals – such as musicians or performers – to work outside or against the constrains of traditional forms of their chosen medium…They are a fitting model to envisage how art might function as a mental game: where the imagination can travel even if our bodies can't."[7]

Friedman began to annotate his event scores in 1966, when George Maciunas planned to publish a Fluxbox of Friedman's work comparable to George Brecht's *Water Yam* or Takehisa Kosugi's *Events*. While waiting for the publication of the box, Friedman gathered a series of his event scores for an exhibition at the Nelson I. C. Gallery of the University of California at Davis. This simple exhibition of event scores on paper toured the world in the 1970s and 1980s, with exhibitions across the United States as well as in Poland, Sweden, Hungary, and elsewhere. The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection at the Museum of Modern Art holds an archival copy of the 1973 events exhibition.[8]

In 2009, Stendhal Gallery in New York exhibited an updated version of the show, titled *99 Events*.[9]

The *92 Events* exhibition began at Tongji University in Shanghai in 2019. After an interruption due to the Covid pandemic, it is touring once again.

In the United States, the exhibition travelled to Lyman Allyn Museum in New London, Connecticut; Samek Art Museum at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; San Diego State University Art Gallery in San Diego, California; CX Silver Gallery in Brattelboro, Vermont; and Torrance Art Gallery in Torrance, California.

In Europe and Asia Pacific, *92 Events* appeared at the Jonas Mekas Visual Art Center in Vilnius, Lithuania; Adam Art Gallery in Wellington, New Zealand; Museo Vostell in Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain; and Sala Uno Centro Internazionale d'Arte Contemporanea in Rome.

Each exhibition was unique. For example, the Roman exhibition took place in the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, the oldest public church in Rome and the oldest basilica cathedral in the West. San Giovanni is also the home cathedral of the Bishop of Rome. This exhibition reached out beyond the exhibition space into the city with a special event titled *Sala Distribuito* – the distributed room. Visitors were free to take specially printed copies of any score that interested them, to place it in their home or office, in a favorite bar or restaurant, or anywhere else.

Friedman's work is represented in major museums and galleries around the world. These include the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, and the Heine Onstad Foundation in Oslo. The University of Iowa Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts is the official repository of Friedman's artwork, personal papers, and research notes. The Getty Institute, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, and the University of California at San Diego hold research collections on his work and papers.

In 1994 Friedman returned to academic life. From 1994 to 2009 he was Professor of Leadership and Strategic Design at the Norwegian School of Management in Oslo. From 2003 to 2009, he served as professor at the Design Research Center of Denmark's Design School in Copenhagen, now part of the Royal Academy. In 2009 he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Design at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne Australia. Friedman stepped down as dean in 2012, serving as University Distinguished Professor through 2017. Today Friedman is Chair Professor of Design Innovation Studies at Tongji University in Shanghai and Esteemed Scholar at University of Cincinnati Ohio in the United States. ■

References

1 See, for example: Hendricks, Jon. 1988. *Fluxus Codex*. New York: Harry N. Abrams. Higgins, Dick. 1997. *Modernism Since Postmodernism*. San Diego, California: San Diego State University Press; Higgins, Dick. 2018. *Intermedia, Fluxus and the Something Else Press. Selected Writings by Dick Higgins.* Steve Clay and Ken Friedman, eds. Catskill, New York: Siglio Press; Paik, Nam June. 1993. *Eine Data Base.* Venice: La Biennale di Venezia; Paik, Nam June. 2019. *We Are in Open Circuits Writings by Nam June Paik*. John G. Hanhardt, Gregory Zinman, and Edith Decker-Phillips, eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

2 Cage, John. 1969. *Notations.* New York: Something Else Press; Ward, Jennifer, and Ruth Young. 2007. Guide to the John Cage Notations Project Collection. Evanston, Illinois: McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives, Northwestern University.

3 See, for example, Friedman, Ken and *Stanley Lunetta, eds. 1972 [1974]. International Sources* (*Source Magazine*, vol. 6, no. 1, issue 11) Sacramento, California: Composer/Performer Editions. [special issue devoted to Fluxus and intermedia, also the catalogue of the exhibition *International Sources*]

4 Bianco, Juliette. "Preface." In: *Fluxus and the Essential Qualities of Life*. Jacquelynne Baas, editor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. ix-xi. (Exhibition and catalogue honored as best university gallery exhibition of the year in 2011 by the International Association of Art Critics, North American Section.)

5 af Klintberg, Bengt. 1992. Friedman, Ken. 1990. "The Quintessence of Fluxus." *Lund Art Press*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1992: School of Architecture, University of Lund, pp. 71-73; Sellem, Jean. 1992. "The Fluxus Outpost in Sweden. An Interview with Bengt af Klintberg." *Lund Art Press*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1992: School of Architecture, University of Lund, pp. 64–70.

6 Friedman, Ken. 2006. "The Case for Bengt af Klintberg." (Supplement: Re-received Ideas. A Generative Dictionary for Research on Research.) *Performance Research*, vol. 11, no. 2, 137–144.

7 Cleland, Stephen. 2020. *Ken Friedman: 92 Events*. Wellington, New Zealand: Adam Art Gallery Te Pa¯taka Toi, Victoria University of Wellington, pp. 2–3.

8 Friedman, Ken. 1973. *Events*. Introduced by Jay Belloli. Davis, California: Nelson I.C. Gallery, University of California at Davis.

9 Friedman, Ken. 2009. *99 Events*. New York: Stendhal Gallery. Permanent link: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.3/65020

Contents

Scrub Piece

Go to a public monument on
the first day of spring.

Clean it thoroughly.

No announcement is necessary.

KF 1956

This is my first event score. Realized at the Nathan Hale Monument in New London, Connecticut on March 20, 1956, I did not think of it as an artwork until I came into Fluxus: it was simply something I did. It was an event in the strictest sense of the word, defined by Merriam-Webster as "something that happens," – an occurrence.[1]

While I engaged in these kinds of events throughout much of my life, it was only when I began working in the context of Fluxus that I thought of events in the sense that I use the term today. Before then, I simply built things, realized ideas, or made models of things that interested me.

Many of these things were acts or works that I repeated, much as I did after meeting the other Fluxus people. When George Maciunas explained the event tradition to me, it gave

a theoretical structure to a practice that had been central to my experience. When George brought me into Fluxus, he asked me to notate the things I had been doing as event scores. I may have done these kinds of things earlier, but this is the first event for which I was able to find notes when George asked me to write up the scores.

Dick Higgins introduced me to what is now termed intermedia, the larger frame of what George described as concept art in the 1960s. This framework made it seem to me that I could accept art as a reasonable frame within which to conceive and carry out my projects.

I have been doing these kinds of events through most of my life. I've been at it for nearly seven decades now, starting with my first event in 1956. I've continued to undertake these projects in art, architecture, design, and music along with whatever else I was doing.

The Light Bulb

Create and perform an improvisational drama.

Present the drama as a radio or television program in which there is a symbolic or physical relationship between the sponsor and the featured characters.

KF 1956

This event dates to 1956. I performed it every week in Mystic and Stonington, Connecticut. Titled *The Light Bulb Show*, it took the form of an imaginary radio program sponsored by General Electric. The star of the show was a light bulb.

In 1965 and 1966, I included versions of *The Light Bulb Show* as segments in my programs on Radio WRSB in Mt Carroll, Illinois.

On occasion, I created variations. These were programs that starred ordinary objects as the characters in the show. Sometimes, the characters were objects manufactured by the imagined sponsor of the show. When I reflect on the television

programs that were broadcast in the 1950s, I think that this was a satirical but logical progression of dancing cigarette packages on some shows, while imaginary physicians recommended smoking a specific brand of cigarettes in the commercials for another show. Another example was the *Lunch with Soupy Sales* show sponsored by Jello, a gelatin dessert now manufactured by Kraft-Heinz. The show invited viewers to watch Soupy Sales and eat Jello with him for dessert.

Later, I translated these ideas across cultures as a bunraku puppet show or a Punch-and-Judy puppet theatre featuring manufactured products for puppets.

Table Stack

Build a stack of tables. Each table should stand directly above and on top of the next table below.

KF 1956

When I was a child, my family lived in a huge house with three stories and a basement. A merchant shipping captain built the house when he retired from the sea. Much of the house was built of rare hardwoods such as mahogany. My mother told me that the captain had purchased the wood as ballast on return voyages from far places. My father and mother had a school on the first floor. We lived on the second floor. The house was so big that we didn't use the third floor.

My sister and I would play with the equipment and toys in the school in the evenings and on weekends. The school was well equipped with blocks and toys. The furniture fascinated me. There were four large, square, sturdy tables with thick, strong legs. It was possible to stack several on top of one another to make a tower three or four high or to build models of multi-level cities. I started building table stacks then, and I've been doing it ever since.

In the 1980s and 1990s, I made the *Table Stack* several times. On some occasions, I built it with different kinds of tables rather than stacking copies of the same table. Once or twice, I've built several stacks next to each other.

Untitled Card Event

Send a postcard to someone every day.

Each card in the sequence should transmit one word or letter.

The series of cards should spell out a word or a message.

KF 1957

On a summer vacation from New London, Connecticut to the Catskill Mountains of New York, I purchased cards along the way and mailed them to myself.

To perform the event, one should gather the cards and read the message aloud. George Maciunas included this work in the unpublished collection of my event scores that he announced and planned.

This piece and George Brecht *Spell Your Name Kit* have an interesting kinship to Maciunas's 1972 *Spell Your Name with Objects* boxes and the *Valoche kits*.

Card Trace

Mail a series of cards during a journey or sequence of activities.

The assembled set of cards becomes a map or chart of the passage through time or space.

KF 1958

The first *Card Trace* sequence was a map I realized during a trip my family made to California in the summer of 1958. It was a map of the journey from New London, Connecticut, to Long Beach, California.

I realized the first time series in 1959 with postcards from the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. For this, I used post cards of dinosaurs.

Card Trace was planned for a Fluxus multiple using sets of commercially printed cards. Each set was to describe a different 'trace' in 1968. It would have been a two-dimensional sequence to the three-dimensional *Just For You* Fluxkit. George Maciunas never produced *Card Trace*.

Green Street

Acquire a Japanese folding scroll.
Keep it in a blank state.

After a minimum of ten years,
or on the death of the performer,
inscribe the name of the performer,
the date of acquisition and the date
at the time of inscription.

The performance continues until
the scroll is filled with inscriptions.

KF 1959

The scroll for this event came from a little Japanese shop on Green Street in New London, Connecticut, where I first bought such Japanese artifacts as ink, folding scrolls, and brushes. I acquired the scroll in 1959. The performance using the original scroll is still in progress in the sense that I have not yet written my name in the scroll.

Nevertheless, I never found anyone willing to take responsibility for accepting the scroll and carrying the piece forward. The scroll is probably at the Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Art collection at University of Iowa.

In the 1960s and 1970s, I wondered what would happen if one gave away a book or scroll to pass from person to person in an ongoing performance. I experimented with the idea by circulating blank books with a request that people contribute to them and pass them on.

Most iterations of the experiment involved blank books, bound books with blank, white pages. On one or two occasions, I used scrolls. On others, I used old journals, account books, or diaries that I managed to acquire at a discount.

Each book contained a request inside the front cover asking the person who receives the book to execute an artwork or drawing in the book, then give it or mail it to another friend. I requested the person who completed the book to return it to me.

Between 1968 and 1974, I mailed or gave away over one hundred books.

The collection in Iowa contains examples of the blank books I used for the drawing project or other projects. None of the books I sent out or gave away ever came back to me.

Over the years, I wondered why no completed books ever returned. Many issues probably come into play. While time, duration, and commitment are the key philosophical notions for a project such as this, choice and voluntary participation in social networks may be why no books returned.

Most of the blank books went to people in the Fluxus network or the mail art network. The book contained the invitation to participate. While I invited people to participate, I didn't ask whether people agreed to take part, and I did not ask them to request the agreement of those to whom they sent the book.

This approach tested the possibility of communication and commitment using open-ended, one-way communication in a social network. This raises an obvious problem: commitment in social networks requires assent by participants along with communication.

In 1967, Stanley Milgram conducted a famous experiment. Milgram asked sixty people in Omaha, Nebraska to attempt to deliver packages to people they did not know by sending packages to people who would be likely to know someone who could move the package closer to its destination.[2] This gave rise to the famous notion of "six degrees of separation", the idea that there are only six degrees of separation between anyone on the planet and anyone else.

As important as the experiment was, it has often been misunderstood. Only a few of the packages reached their destination, and replications of the experiment have had poor or inconclusive results.

Recently, Duncan Watts replicated the Milgram experiment by attempting to get email messages from volunteers to individuals whom they did not know by sending messages through chains of intermediaries. While requests to 61,168 volunteers led to 24,000 started chains, a scant 384 reached their target.[3]

I wasn't attempting to replicate Milgram's work. I was exploring something different and more philosophical. If I were to describe the project in terms of network issues, Albert O. Hirschman's work would be more relevant.[4] Hirschman had a knack for looking at problems from unusual perspectives, bringing social insight and economic theory to bear on a wide range of issues. Hirschman's work on exit, voice, and loyalty offers greater insight into why no books ever came back to me.

While robust networks are stable, hardy institutions, networks require continual energy inputs and development

to remain robust. The wealth and poverty of networks means that the art networks I used for this project were far more fragile than I realized.

These networks were never robust in any genuine sense. This should have enabled me to predict the results. The networks into which I sent the blank books were art world networks. They were a sub-set of the larger world of primarily self-interested economic and social actors rather than the kind of ideal community that we sometimes assume the art world to be.

While Robert Filliou described the art world as an "eternal network," he was wrong. The art world is not a network. It is a social ecology. One defining feature of the social ecology is that the connections that appear to constitute a network do not form a genuine network because they offer no reasonably predictable mechanisms for linkage or the flow of energy. This has given me much cause for thought over the years.

When Norie Neumark and Annemarie Chandler invited me to write a chapter for their book on internet art, I wrote on networks. [5]

Robert Filliou's notion of the eternal network was something between a metaphor and a description of what he believed to be an emerging social reality. While Filliou intended it as a genuine description, the eternal network functioned primarily as metaphor. In one sense, this is not a problem. Filliou developed his concept of "the eternal network" in terms of the human condition rather than art. Filliou held that the purpose of art was to make life more important than art. That was the central idea of the eternal network.

In a large, Taoist sense, Filliou was right. We are all linked in some rich way by robust and indissoluble bonds. But the social ecology of art operates in the opposite way,

built on a market economy that requires the illusion of scarcity. The art market is based on scarce attention, scarce resources, deliberately limited editions of art to create a sense of restricted supply and increased demand at ever higher prices. This is even the case for kinds of art that ought to function in an economy of increasing returns.

In theory, these kinds of art should not be subject to the market economics of scarcity. Even so, they seem to work that way. Perhaps the artists or those who represent their work organize the art of increasing returns through the illusion of scarcity.

In the years after Filliou described the eternal network, the idea took on a life of its own. It signified a global community of people who believe in the ideas that Filliou cherished. This community is fluid, composed of people who may never meet one another in person and who do not always agree on concepts of life and art. While this doesn't diminish the reality of an ongoing community, the community is diffuse and weak. Although this community has exchanged ideas for over three decades, the community has relatively few durable engagements other than artistic contact.

The metaphor is powerful. The reality is not. The eternal network is embedded in an art world that makes it difficult to make life more important than art.

Robert Filliou studied economics at the University of California, Los Angeles before working as an oil economist. At some point, he lost interest or hope in what he saw as standard approaches to knowledge and knowledge production in the technocratic society. In 1966, he published a manifesto titled, "A Proposition, a Problem, a Danger, and a Hunch." [6] His manifesto offered an alternative.

Looking back over the developments of the past six decades, I am less optimistic than I once was. I am far less optimistic about the potential of art to make life more

important than art. Art is lodged in a market economy that embraces and dominates non-profit institutions such as museums and educational institutions such as universities. The art these institutions study and present is embedded in the market economy of dealers, commercial galleries, and art magazines organized around advertising revenue. It may be that I am wrong about the prospects of the larger society.

Even so, the history of the past sixty years gives evidence for pessimism. The redistribution of wealth to an ever-smaller minority of the world's population suggests that we have entered a new Gilded Age. The art world mirrors this, and I have come to a pessimistic view of art markets and their dominant role in the production and consumption of art. Consumption is the rule as contrasted with co-creation.

Robert's manifesto effectively declared social science, natural science, and the humanities to be obsolete. Instead, he argued for knowledge and knowledge production from an optimistic perspective anchored in art.

Robert wrote,

"A refusal to be colonized culturally by a self-styled race of specialists in painting, sculpture, poetry, music, etc..., this is what 'la Révolte des Médiocres' is about. With wonderful results in modern art, so far. Tomorrow could everybody revolt? How? Investigate.

A problem, the one and only, but massive: money, which creating does not necessarily create."

The difficulty, of course, is that the specialists took control of Robert Filliou's work, colonizing it and adapting it to the art markets. These markets include the economy of buying and selling art, and the attention economy for thinking about it. Robert's proposition for a solution made little difference.

Robert proposed the metaphor of a poetic economy:

"So that the memory of art (as freedom) is not lost, its age-old intuitions can be put in simple, easily learned esoteric mathematical formulae, of the type a/b = c/d (for instance, if a is taken as hand, b as foot, d as table, hand over head can equal foot on table for purposes of recognition and passive resistance. Study the problem. Call the study: *Theory and Practice of A/B*."

No one else seems to have solved the problem. The idea of letting artists rather than technocrats make the effort was not a bad idea. Nevertheless, this proposal involved a second difficulty.

While Robert used the terms "art" and "artist" in a different way than the normative art world does, he used the art world to mediate his ideas. The art world seized on Robert's work, rather than his ideas, mediating both in a narrow channel rather than a larger world of public discourse or open conversation.

This short essay is no place to address the broad range of issues embedded in Robert Filliou's manifesto. What I can say here is that these problems are difficult. Solving them is difficult as well. The difficulties are not Robert Filliou's fault. They are embedded in a series of challenges that we are only coming to understand.

Robert's idea of a poetical economics emerged during an era of contest, inquiry, and debate that affected all research fields and most fields of professional practice. Robert Filliou understood this. He sought a way to link thought to productive action – or perhaps he sought to link thought to productive inaction, as it was for John Cage. Attempting this through art suggested a new kind of research as well. Moreover, it suggested "an art that clucks and fills our guts" in the words of Dick Higgins. [7]

Since Robert was trained as an economist. It is interes-

ting to reflect on the work of economists who considered the problem in different ways.

One stream of ideas began in the 1940s when Australian economist Colin Clark laid the foundation for work that Daniel Bell would explore in his discussion of post-industrial society. Others also addressed these patterns, notably the economist Harold Innis (Marshall McLuhan's predecessor and mentor) and the economist Fritz Machlup. Like Filliou, they did better in analyzing problems than proposing solutions. However, their work had a different fate. It gave rise to a slowly evolving public conversation that generates political dialogue in the larger arena of analysis, critique, and proposition.

Today, we also understand a great deal more than we did through the work of micro-sociologists such as Erving Goffman or behavioral economists such as Daniel Kahnemann.

The grand irony of Robert's work is that he was transformed from a public thinker into an artist. As a thinker, Robert Filliou opposed the notion of art as a new form of specialization, subject to the control of dealers, critics, collectors, and the highly specialized institutions that serve them. As a thinker, Filliou worked in the productive border zone between art and public life.

Unfortunately, Robert Filliou became an artist, and the art world linked his ideas to mercantile interests. This was not Robert's fault. Much like specialists and technocrats in any field, the specialists who manage art world institutions also have a difficult time understanding and working with the productive poetic economies that emerge in the border zone.

The concept of the eternal network leads us to alternate between optimism and resignation. The metaphor of the global village has survived for many years. In a healthy

sense, the eternal network foreshadowed networks that would become possible using such technologies as computer, telefax, electronic mail, and the World Wide Web. If it foreshadowed a coming technology, it also foreshadowed the failure to establish existential commitment and social memory as a foundation for durable change.

Networks involve robust links and routing systems. A human network requires commitment and memory. Without them, links and routes are absent.

In a famous article on the strength of weak ties between dense network clusters of friends, sociologist Mark Granovetter demonstrated the importance of weak links that enable information and connectivity to move between individuals in close-knit groups to individuals in other groups that might not otherwise interact. [8] But networks require both kinds of formations.

All human societies have both – and this is true of the art world. What seems to be missing in the art world is the rich series of robust clusters that one could label an "eternal network." Instead, the art world constitutes a series of weak ties with occasional market links or links shaped by the boundaries of the business networks of galleries and dealers. They also include links through the professional networks of curators or people working in universities or art and design schools.

If I were to attempt the blank book project today, I would plan it in a different way.

The project did shape interesting ripples in the pond of art. While none of the books came back to me, I did come across several traces of the books. Traveling across the United States and Canada in the 1970s, I met artists who had received a book, worked on it, and passed it on. They told me wonderful stories about their involvement with the books. Even though the books did not return, I had the sense

that something interesting and useful had happened for people who took the project for what it was meant to be.

On one occasion, I saw a book at the studio of an artist who brought the book out to show me. A dozen or so pages were complete. These pages were wonderful. Many pages showed the traces of careful work in which people had invested real time. I saw this book a year or two after I sent it out. The book was far from complete.

The requests inside each front cover asked the artist who completed the book to return it to me at Fluxus West on Elmhurst Drive in San Diego. I left that address in 1979, and it has been years since mail sent to San Diego reached me. (Interestingly, a woman who lived at the old Fluxus West address tracked me down a few years ago to send me a letter that came for me in 2014.)

Perhaps some books are still making their way around the world. One or two may yet attempt a return journey to a place that no longer has any connection with Fluxus or with me.

Then again, as Stanley Milgram and Duncan Watts learned, it is neither a small world, nor a big world, but a lumpy world linked by different networks located in separate parts of the world. Huge gaps and chasms separate these islands of interaction.

The *Green Street* scroll raises issues beyond the question of what might or might not have happened if anyone had agreed to take responsibility for the scroll. This is the question of what it means to write in such a book.

The books I sent out reached each new artist unsolicited. They came as an opportunity and a request, but they required no prior commitment.

The *Green Street* scroll required commitment. To accept the scroll required the recipient to acknowledge and take on a responsibility.

The scroll was a book of life, or possibly even a book of death. To accept such a book required accepting responsibility that acknowledged the possibility of mortality. This may have been too much weight for a small work of art to carry.

It is probably for the best that no one ever agreed to continue my *Green Street* scroll.

Christmas Tree Event

Take a Christmas tree into an all-night restaurant.

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

Sit with the tree, drinking coffee and talking. After a while, depart. Leave the tree in its seat.

As you leave, call out loudly to the tree, "So long, Herb. Give my love to the wife and kids."

KF 1964

Visiting friends in Manhattan Beach, California, after Christmas, I was startled to see many Christmas trees discarded with the trash. These suggested several events to me that I realized using the discarded trees. This event was first performed at 10 p.m. on December 31.

The Judgment of Paris

An installation presents
three images.

Beneath each image is a shelf
or platform.

Each viewer may choose the
image he judges most beautiful.

A golden apple is placed beneath
the chosen image.

KF 1964

The first versions of this work between 1964 and 1968 consisted of forms or objects such as postage stamps, cans of food, books, architectural models, or furniture. I realized these in San Diego, Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Ventura, California, as well as in Mt Carroll, Illinois, and New York.

In 1989, I built a second version in Oslo, Norway. It consists of objects or images depicting women. These included statues,

pictures from magazines, photo panels, and other images.

The first book I remember reading was *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. It was a gift from my mother. After reading Swift, I moved on to the classics. I read classical authors and mythology in the reference section of the public library.

One of the first books I bought for myself was a collection of Greek and Roman classical myths. I bought it at a bookshop in Laguna Beach on our first visit to California. I was fascinated by Greek mythology. The archetypal themes of the Greek myths recur throughout the literature, drama, and art of the Western world.

While much mythological material is clear and explicit, authors, playwrights, and artists disguise borrowed themes, reworking them or transforming them in different ways. Georges Polti states that the entire history of drama involves only thirty-six basic plots. [9] Most of these first appear in Greek mythology.

The Judgment of Paris was a doubled reworking. First, I used ordinary material artifacts. I explored their nature as objects in a material culture by endowing them with the virtue of actors. Then, I doubled the myth back on itself by dignifying them with the attributes of the original myth.

In *The Judgment of Paris*, the myth tells of three goddesses whom Paris was asked to judge to determine which among the Olympians was most beautiful. The goddesses were Athena, goddess of wisdom, Hera, wife of Zeus, and Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty. Paris was a prince of Troy, son of King Priam and younger brother to Prince Hector. Goddesses in Greece were often tricky, as were most gods, so each offered a bribe to Paris so that she might be declared most beautiful. Aphrodite tempted the prince by promising him the most beautiful among the world's mortal women. Paris rendered his verdict by giving a golden apple to the winner, Aphrodite. Helen of Sparta, wife of King Menelaus, was the most beautiful

of mortal women. Claiming his bribe, Paris eloped with the already-married Helen. Stealing her from Menelaus was the cause of the Trojan War. [10]

Many events create a theater of the object. Objects act or participate in the action. The first version of this event is such a project.

The later version turns the myth back on itself by using images of women. The meaning of the piece changes based on the choice of image, the obvious or subtle nature of the source, the character of the model and the pose. This, too, is a statement on the character and effect of myth.

The piece may be realized with one apple that viewers move as they make different choices in a transformative dialogue among visitors and viewers. Each viewer may change the position of the apple or else accept the verdict of the last viewer to position the apple.

It is also possible to use a large basket of Golden Delicious apples, allowing visitors to stack fruit in front of the chosen object as a referendum or poll on viewer preferences. Every time I realize this piece, I use different objects or images. The choice is often playful.

In 2015, this work was shown at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. For the exhibition, I chose three images. The first was a portrait of St. Ivo of Chartres. It was painted by the Flemish master Rogier van der Weyden or painted in his workshop, probably around 1450. The second was a woodcut of the assassination of Henri IV of France, Henry the Great, king of Navarre and then of France. The third image was a playful trope on John Cage's *4′ 33″* in the form of a revised version of the Christmas carol *Stille Nacht*.

The consideration of theology had me thinking about religious stories, church history, and the intersection of religion with public life. The choice of images was an improvisation on these themes.

The portrait of St. Ivo was a long-lost masterpiece by van der Weyden discovered in an English country home in the early 1970s. It took several years of work to identify and authenticate it as a van der Weyden. I liked the painting so much that I used it for a different event. I hung a paper print of the painting in the window of the second Fluxmobile. I left it there to fade in the sun for many years. Because it is one of my favorite paintings, I chose it as an image for *The Judgment of Paris* at the Pompidou.

Ivo was a theologian and canon lawyer who became bishop of Chartres. Ivo – beatified in 1570 as St. Yves – demonstrated that the dead cannot be tried or refused burial. This interested me, given my fascination with the exhumation and posthumous trial of Pope Formosus by Stephen VI (VII). Stephen was strangled to death soon after the trial, and there have been disputes ever since concerning his legitimacy as a pope. That gave rise to the questions on the numbering of popes names Stephen.

Henri IV of France and Navarre was a great king with a special interest in theology. First a Protestant, then a Catholic, Henri issued the Edict of Nantes and promulgated religious tolerance. Henri is famed for the saying, "Paris is worth a mass."

It is not clear that Henri actually said this, but for an exhibition in Paris, I balanced the image of a saint with an image depicting the death of a king who was both saintly and a libertine.

Stille Nacht is a joke at the edge of Fluxus. It is a play on the work of John Cage and a play on religious music. Zen and silence meet the church choir. *Stille Nacht* is a found work — I discovered it on the internet and it fit together with the other images in my mind.

There is always an element of play when I choose images for *The Judgment of Paris*. It is difficult to reconstruct the

reasons for any choice or the exact relations between the images. There is nothing precise at work. Instead, there is a playful conversation, and that is what I try to create by inviting visitors to choose the image they like best.

Whatever image they choose, there will be no Trojan war, and no gods will take offense. At least I hope not.

White Bar

A bar or tavern in a simple room.
The room is plain, light wood.
The bar is a wooden table.

Only clear liquors or spirits
are served.

The bottles are lined up at one
end of the bar with several rows
of clean glasses.

There is a bowl of limes.

KF 1964

White Bar was the score for several performances and events from 1964 on. The first full realization of *White Bar* took place in 1968 for a party at the San Francisco Fluxhouse on Dolores Street. We built the bar without building the entire room. We

organized a small party serving only clear liquors. The liquors were vodka, rum, and tequila. We mixed the liquors with fresh orange juice and fresh lime juice or served them neat. We had only two visitors, the Italian art critic Mario Diacono, then teaching literature at the University of California at Berkeley, and Mario's girlfriend.

White Bar was the basis of a collection of clear liquors I assembled at Arvid Johannessen's flat in Norway when I lived with him. From 1988 to 1992, I brought back a bottle of local clear liquor every time I traveled to a foreign country. We had loza rakuja from Yugoslavia, bailloni from Hungary, raki from Turkey and ouzo from Greece, kirschwasser and pflumi from Switzerland, grappa from Italy, eiswetter and Furst Bismarck from Germany, brandwijn from the Netherlands, and vodka from Finland. We also had vodka from Iceland, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Norway, and Ireland – long with dozens of different clear fruit distillates from all over Europe. Some of them were quite good. Some were terrible.

One night we had a small party at the flat. Oyvind Storm Bjerke, art historian and chief curator of the Henie Onstad Museum, attended. Arvid proudly pointed to the collection. Oyvind went over, looked over the bottles, judiciously uncorked a few, and sniffed them. After a few minutes inspection, he nodded knowingly and said: "Dette maa bli den definitiv samling av verdens dårligste brennevinner." – "This must be the definitive collection of the world's worst liquors."

The collection disappeared before we could organize a proper realization of the White Bar. A few weeks after Oyvind's comment, we had another party. The filmmaker Jan Schmidt finished the entire collection in one night.

Thirty years after the original *White Bar*, this score led to a project titled *Grappa for the White Bar*.

GRAPPA FOR THE WHITE BAR
Take an ordinary bottle of clear glass.
On the front, sandblast the text:
Grappa
KF 1964–1994

On the back, sandblast the text:
Only clear liquors are served

In June of 1994, Emily Harvey invited me to make a multiple of a grappa bottle for Emily Harvey Editions. Several other artists had already done bottles in the series, some with delightful plays on the idea of drinking or the chemistry of grappa. Most of these involved beautiful, hand-blown glass bottles. I wanted to do a piece that was close to the original context of grappa: humble, a local drink, sold in simple bottles. In September, she reminded me to finish my multiple. I decided to do a piece based on an idea I had for a bar in 1964, *White Bar*, and to some variations on *White Bar*. I also wanted my multiple to be much less expensive and more widely available than the other multiples, a simple edition instead of a rare object.

The multiple was to use commercially available bottles and a simple sandblasting technique. The short line length would have made it possible to sandblast the text without any trouble. For bottles manufactured in Italy, the typeface was to be Bodoni Bold or Bodoni Extra Bold.

A while later, Emily wrote me to say that the sample bottle was ready. Due to strict alcohol control laws, we did not want to ship it to Norway. I did not visit Venice after Emily produced the bottle, and I never completed the edition.

Cheers

Conduct a large crowd of people to the house of a stranger.

Knock on the door.

When someone opens the door, the crowd cheers and claps.

All depart silently.

KF 1965

Copernicus

Build a model of the solar system.

Use different kinds of objects to represent the sun and planets.

Make the model reasonably accurate for relative size, scale, and distance.

There may be six planets as in the Copernican universe, nine planets as there were in 1965, or eight planets as determined by the International Astronomical Association in 2006.

KF 1965 (Revised 2006)

Edison's Lighthouse

Create a passage with
facing mirrors.

Place candles in front of
each mirror.

Vary the nature and intensity
of light by varying the number
and placement of candles.

KF 1965

In 1965, I was living in Mt Carroll, Illinois, as a student at Shimer College. The entrance area to my room had two facing dressers. Above each was a vertical mirror roughly two feet wide and three feet tall. Standing between the mirrors, I would sometimes contemplate the paradox of reflection and multiple images.

One evening, I set up a candle to observe the path of light between the two mirrors. For several weeks, I tried different arrays of candles. Light traveled between the two mirrors in a narrow band roughly ten feet long, two feet wide, and three feet tall. The light spilled out of the path to illuminate the room.

Varying the number of candles and their placement created a great variety of subtle differences in rich, dense light.

The title for this piece comes from a story about Thomas Edison. In the story, Edison used mirrors and lanterns to create enough light to allow a physician to perform emergency surgery. A charming version of this story appears in the 1940 movie *Young Tom Edison*, starring Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter, and George Bancroft. I have never been able to learn whether the story is a genuine account from Edison's life or an artifact of Hollywood biography.

Open and Shut Case

Make a box.

On the outside, print the word "Open."

On the inside, print the words "Shut quick."

KF 1965

The first version of this project was constructed in December 1965, while I was at a meeting at the First Unitarian Church of Chicago. I took a large matchbox that had been filled with wooden kitchen matches. I covered the outside with paper and printed the words, "Open me" on the outside. On the inside, I printed the words "Shut me quick". In 1966, it became my first Fluxbox, the *Open and Shut Case*.

When I first created the piece, it had hermeneutic connotations involving a discussion that was under way at the church meeting. I would not have used the term hermeneutic in those days, but I understood the concept of interpretation. I was attending a meeting of the executive committee of Liberal Religious Youth, Inc., to help plan the annual Continental Con-

ference for 1966. The conference was to take place in Ithaca, New York, and I was to be editor of the daily conference newspaper.

I was on my way to the conference in August of 1966, when Dick Higgins sent me to meet George Maciunas for the first time. I had been corresponding with Dick to make radio programs based on the Something Else Press books of Daniel Spoerri, Emmett Williams, Alison Knowles, Ray Johnson, Robert Filliou, and others for my programs at Radio WRSB. This was a college-based radio station in Mt Carroll, Illinois. Dick and Alison invited me to stay with them for a while at their home in New York, a few blocks away from the press. I was sixteen years old. I'd just finished the first two years of college, and I was in New York to look around. One morning, I made one of the boxes for Dick. He thought I ought to take it to George, so he called George to introduce us by telephone.

George's telephone directions brought me to his fifth-floor walk-up apartment on West Broadway in a decaying industrial section of New York City that was then part of Little Italy. Henry Flynt later took over George's apartment, and the neighborhood became the Soho art district. Back then, it was just a tenement. I walked up the stairs to find a black door covered with violent, emphatic NO! SMOKING!!! signs. I knocked.

The door opened a crack, and a pair of eyes framed in round, wire-rimmed spectacles peered out. That was George Maciunas.

George was a small, wiry man with a prim, owlish look. He was dressed in a short-sleeve business shirt, open at the neck, no tie. He wore dark slacks and black cloth slippers. His pocket was cluttered with number of pens. In current jargon, we'd call him a "nerd" or a "geek". He typified the computer jocks, engineers, and architects at Carnegie Mellon University, his alma mater.

George ushered me into his kitchen. It was a steamy, New York summer day, but the apartment was cool. It smelled like rice mats. I recognized the smell. It reminded me of the Japanese store on Green Street that I frequented as a youngster in New London, Connecticut.

The apartment contained three rooms. To the right was a

compact, well-designed office and workroom. The floor was covered with rice mats. George said not to go in wearing shoes, so I looked in from the door to see drafting tables, desks, shelves, and an astonishing clutter of papers, projects, notebook, and files. It was the most orderly clutter I've ever seen, the opposite of my own chronological project layers. The first time I saw George's workspace, it was rigged out with a marvelous contraption that enabled him to reach up and tap a weight to summon items he wanted. By means of a counterbalance and some strings and rods, whatever he wanted would float into his grasp. At least this is my memory. I am not sure if I saw the working device, or a prototype, or if this is just a memory of a planning diagram that George showed me.

To the left of the kitchen, George had a large, walk-in closet or a small storage room. The room was filled with floor-to-ceiling shelves, like an industrial warehouse. It was an industrial warehouse, the complete inventory of Fluxus editions in unassembled form. The shelves were loaded with boxes storing the contents of Fluxus multiple editions, suitcases, and year boxes. When an order came in for a Fluxbox, George would go to the back of the closet, select the appropriate plastic or wooden container, and march through the room plucking out the proper cards and objects to emerge with a completed work. He'd select the proper label, glue it on, and have a completed edition ready to mail.

The kitchen had a sink, windows, stove, table, and chairs. These were quite ordinary except for the refrigerator. George had painted his refrigerator bright orange. When he opened it, I could see he had filled it with oranges from the bottom clear to the top shelf. The top shelf, on either side of the old-fashioned meat chest and ice tray, held four huge jugs of fresh orange juice. He offered me a glass of orange juice.

George peppered me with questions. What did I do? What did I think? What was I planning? At that time, I was planning to become a Unitarian minister. I did all sorts of things, things

without names, things that jumped over the boundaries between ideas and actions, between the manufacture of objects and books, between philosophy and literature. George listened for a while and invited me to join Fluxus. I said yes.

A short while later, George asked me what kind of artist I was. Until that moment, I had never thought of myself as an artist. George thought about this for a minute, and said, "You're a concept artist".

It always pleased me that I became part of Fluxus before I became an artist.

The first version of the text was a personal injunction, commanding the reader to "Open me" and "Shut me quick." Later versions employ a simpler text reading, "Open" and "Shut quick". My notes for George read: "Make a box. On the outside, print the word, 'Open'. On the inside, print the words 'Shut quick'." The title of the piece was *Open and Shut Case*.

While the original idea had hermeneutical implications related to religious issues, the term also has legal connotations. It's a common phrase in films or theater pieces about police or lawyers. George played with the legal implications of the phrase and prepared the label of the Fluxbox as a subpoena.

Barbara Moore made a new edition of George Maciunas's Fluxus version a few years after George died, using the original labels. Peter van Beveren reprinted it in a 1990s edition in Rotterdam. The Rotterdam edition bears a simple label, much like the Chicago original. The label is a simple paper label and with large, black letters in a sans-serif typeface.

One variation on this piece was planned as an installation. For this version of the piece, the score reads:

"Paint a room in a single color. Paint the door to the room the same color as the room.

On the door, print the words, 'Open'."

"On the inside wall directly opposite the door, print the words 'Shut quick'."

Dark Mirror

Create a dark, mirrored floor in a white, well-lit room.

Apply high-gloss, black enamel paint to a wooden floor.

Sand the floor, buff it, and paint it again.

Repeat the action until the floor is a reflective surface. Subdue the lighting.

KF 1966

Dark Mirror was realized at the Avenue C Fluxus Room in New York in September 1966. The room was later used for most of the projects and exhibitions, which took place there.

Different Card Fluxdeck

Make a deck of cards in which every card in the deck is different from every other card in the deck.

The deck can be made by taking cards from different decks.

It must be possible to assemble all the cards in the deck into the complete and proper sequence of a full deck of cards.

Every card in the deck should have a unique back and a front that is different in some way from the other cards in the deck, whether the difference is large or small.

KF 1966

This idea eventually becomes a deck of cards, each marked individually by its unique back, effectively making them marked cards. It is one of a trilogy of Fluxus card decks based on commercially produced cards: *Single Card Fluxdeck* by George Maciunas and *Missing Card Fluxdeck* by Ben Vautier.

Light Table Variation

Set a wooden table with many candles of different kinds, large and small, colored and plain, ordinary and shaped, normal and scented.

Place the candles on the table.

Stand thin candles in candlesticks and candleholders.

Stand thick candles and square candles directly on the table.

Anyone who wishes to bring new candles may place them on the table.

Light the candles.

KF 1966

In 1964, I decided on a career in the Unitarian ministry. In those years, I was active in Liberal Religious Youth, a community in which I dedicated myself to creating and organizing worship services. The quality of light and the use of space play an important role in worship. Candles are a tool for shaping light and space, and a way to define them in so doing. The use of light to focus the mind and senses are reasons for the ancient role of candles and light in worship and meditation. In 1965 and 1966, I performed experiments with light in Mt Carroll, Illinois. Worship was one source of my interest in light. Physics was another.

In the summer of 1965, I studied at California Western University in Point Loma. Discovering my interest in the history of science, a physics professor asked me to lecture on the life and work of Copernicus. Later, I lectured on Kepler, and then on Newton.

In the autumn of 1965, I transferred to Shimer College. Shimer based its curriculum on the original writings of scientists, philosophers, and thinkers using the great books curriculum developed by Robert Maynard Hutchins for the University of Chicago. We studied natural science by working directly from historical texts to master the principles of inquiry and theory building. Our first text was Newton's 1704 classic, *Optics*. We worked our way through the text, performing Newton's original experiments to debate his findings.

Newton began his work on optics in the 1660s, lecturing on the subject in the 1670s, and publishing his first major papers on optics in the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1672. Controversies attending the publication of his work led him to withhold the final publication of the book on optics until most of his opponents had died. While I was more interested in Newton's ways of thinking about science than his work on light, I remained fascinated by light, and spent many nights alone in my room working with different kinds of light. I kept my prism

long after I completed my replication of Newton's experiments. The prism is now in a box at the University of Iowa.

The first version of this score called for "many candles of different kinds, large and small, colored and plain, ordinary and shaped, normal and scented." Early on, I decided that all candles in this piece should be ordinary, functional candles without novelty candles or joke candles. Later, I came to prefer even simpler ways to perform the piece, concentrating on light rather than on color or smell with white, unscented candles. Now, I use only plain, white candles of different kinds, sizes, and shapes.

Fluxus Television

Paint on the glass screens of television sets.

KF 1966

This piece was first realized in New York using old television cabinets found in the streets. Many early television sets had protective glass screens that were part of the television cabinet – usually a wooden housing unit. The screens were positioned in front of the television tube itself. In those days, cathode ray tube were still common, with a glass screen in front of the tube. Later, television sets integrated the tube with the screen. Today, both of these are obsolete, with large television screens generally based on light-emitting diodes.

The first versions of *Fluxus Television* involved painting on screens enclosed in old-fashioned cabinets. Later, I used free standing screens as well. The sets and screens were created as specific projects.

Most of the screens and TV sets were lost or destroyed. The one surviving screen I knew of was previously in the collection of The High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta screen was painted around 1970. It was exhibited in the Fluxus & Happening show at Kölnischer Kunstverein and several times since. A few years ago, I received a letter from The High Museum informing me that they had deaccessioned

Fluxus Television. It was to be auctioned and they gave me the auction date and location in case I wanted to bid on it. The letter reached me after the auction was over, and I don't know what happened to the last copy of *Fluxus Television*.

Fluxus Television had a precedent in broadcast television. In the 1950s, CBS aired a national television program titled *Winky-Dink and You*. The hero was a cartoon character named Winky-Dink. Every Saturday, Winky-Dink relied on the help of viewers at home to realize his adventures. The company that produced the show sold a special sheet of plastic that could be placed over the screen. Viewers were able to draw on the plastic with a special, quickly erasable crayon. Viewers provided stairs or ladders for Winky-Dink to climb, doors to walk through and so on. I remember the program with fondness. *Winky-Dink and You* was the first interactive video art.

Fruit in Three Acts

1. A peach.
2. A watermelon.
3. A pear.

KF 1966

Imprint

Produce an item bearing a printed identification that describes its own species or genus.

Examples include printed pages imprinted "Printed Matter," a rubber stamp reading "Rubber Stamp," or a pencil imprinted "Pencil."

KF 1966

Mandatory Happening

A card printed:

You will decide to read this score or not to read it. When you have made your decision, the happening is over.

KF 1966

This event was first scored at midnight on May 1, 1966 in Mt Carroll, Illinois. It was first performed at the same time. For the first performance, the text was typed on a sheet of paper. I went around Shimer College, knocking my way from door to door. When someone answered, I handed him or her the paper. Fluxus published this event as *A Fluxus Mandatory Happening*. George Maciunas designed a label with the famous image of Uncle Sam, pointing his finger outward at the person looking at him. The label text read, "Fluxus Wants You … for a Mandatory Happening". Inside, a simple card of heavy white paper bore the text.

There seem to be no extant complete copies of George's edition. Copies of George's label are available, along with some boxes with the label attached. These boxes have no card. In the 1990s, Peter van Beveren published an edition of this in a simple version. It was like the Rotterdam edition of the *Open and Shut Case* and like the original *Mandatory Happening*.

The Wanderer

Wander through the streets of
a city in long robes and a broad
brimmed hat.

KF 1966

Radio Clock

Announce the time at one-minute intervals for the entire duration of a radio broadcast.

KF 1966

This piece was first performed on Radio WRSB at Shimer College in Mt Carroll, Illinois in January 1966 in the Radio Garnisht Kigele series. Many years later, I was delighted to find that some European television stations broadcast a clock showing the time during hours when the channel did not broadcast programming.

Notes for the Bartered Bride

A suitor gives several oxen to the father of his bride-to-be for the wedding price.

The father gives him two sheep, saying, "Here's your change."

KF 1966

Stage Reversal

Go on stage naked,
covered with paint.

Wash.

Dress and leave stage.

KF 1966

In the 1960s, nudity on stage was an aspect of avant-garde performance. Some live performances and happenings featured undressing or being naked on stage. Different aspects of nudity also appeared in work by Fluxus artists. Yoko Ono produced her famous *Bottoms* film in 1966–1967. Charlotte Moorman and Takehisa Kosugi performed Nam June Paik's *Opera Sextronique* in 1967. In 1960, Yves Klein realized his *Anthropometry* paintings with the help of three nude models as living brushes. Carolee Schneemann was exploring erotic performance based on the human body.

This was first performed at the Avenue C Fluxus Room in New York in October of 1966, but only a few people saw it. It was performed again at Fluxus West in San Francisco, where even fewer people were in the audience.

Street Pieces

Make objects.

Leave the objects in the street for passers-by.

KF 1966

This event was first realized in November, 1966 in San Diego, California. It took placed in different versions over the years since.

For the twelve years between 1967 and 1979, I traveled around the United States and parts of Canada in the Fluxmobile. I sometimes worked as a visiting artist and once or twice as a visiting professor. More often, I just traveled, spreading information about Fluxus and the Fluxus artists.

Over the years, I went to 46 of the 50 United States. The only states I didn't visit were North Dakota, Wisconsin, Hawaii, and Alaska. I drove and flew. I went from north to south or south to north at least fifty times, twenty or thirty times from the Pacific to the Atlantic, west to east and east to west. In between driving tours, I made lots of cross-country flights and regional airport hops. During those years, I often stopped at museums and galleries to meet with curators and directors. I made those visits when I came to a city with a museum or art center. I showed

the Fluxkit. I talked with museum people about the other Fluxus artists and their work, and I talked about my own work. While I did exhibitions of my event scores and other work when I was a visiting artist, there was little interest for Fluxus in museums and galleries. Museum directors usually agreed to meet me. When we met, they seemed to see me as a creature from another planet talking about something that made no sense.

Two memorable meetings involved gallery and museum directors at the University of California. At one point, I went to visit Peter Selz when he was director of the Art Museum at the University of California, Berkeley. I brought a complete Fluxkit suitcase, as well Fluxboxes, Something Else Press books, and wooden boxed editions of *Ample Food for Stupid Thought* by Robert Filliou and Wolf Vostell's multiple. I also brought works by Milan Knizak and Ben Vautier. I hoped to interest Peter in a Fluxus exhibition. I made a small display of these for him on tables and chairs. Peter looked at the things for a while without a word. Then he started rocking back and forth on his heels. Spreading his arms wide, he slowly began to clap his hands together forcefully.

He clapped his hands with palms cupped to create a loud, cracking sound. After a few claps, he started to speak with his distinct German accent.

"Well [clap!]," he said, "this [clap!] is [clap!] certainly [clap!] in-ter-est-ing … [clap!] but [clap!] I [clap!] don't [clap!] think [clap!] it [clap!] is [clap!] for [clap!] us." Then he stopped talking and clapping. He thanked me for coming and walked off to leave me surrounded by boxes and artworks.

Another memorable visit took place in 1970 at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Someone had seen my work and told the director of the art gallery about me. That was David Gebhard, the architectural historian. I don't recall how Gebhard heard about me, or even how we got in touch. I was living in Berkeley at the time. I spoke with Gebhard on the phone. He wanted to discuss the possibility of an exhibition at the university.

He invited me to visit him the next time I was in Santa Barbara. He asked me to bring examples of my work and some of the pieces I might like to exhibit. I thought it would be interesting to do a version of *Street Piece* and give the objects away after the show. He suggested that I visit him.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, I drove the Fluxmobile regularly between the San Francisco Bay Area and San Diego. The first time I drove south after the conversation, I went to see David Gebhard. The day that I left, I grabbed a selection of objects and projects from my studio, threw them into a box, and took them with me. When I got to Santa Barbara, we spoke for a while. Then he asked me to bring in my work. I went to the Fluxmobile and fetched the box. I brought the box into his office, opened it, and unpacked the objects, placing them on the floor, along the length of a wall.

He looked at the objects for a while. Perhaps it was a long while. I am not sure, but it seemed that way to me. Finally, he looked at me and said, "But these are just ordinary objects."

At first, I thought he understood my work quite well. Later, I realized that he saw these objects in a very different way than I did.

In the 1960s and 1970s, I had hundreds of conversations like this. I must have visited several hundred galleries and museums without a single sign of interest for Fluxus, and only a couple project possibilities for my own work. Even places that seemed to become interested lost interest. This even took place with a promised major gift to the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art.

In 1973, Sebastian Adler was director of the La Jolla Museum of Art. The museum went through several changes over the years. Now it is the La Jolla branch of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. At an opening, I was talking with Adler about Fluxus. Adler was a big fan of Christo's work, and he lamented the fact that the museum did not have any examp-

les of Fluxus. I'm recalling a conversation from half a century back, so it might not have been that way at all – but one thing led to another, and I invited Adler and the curator – Jay Belloli – to see the material. I offered it as a gift to the museum. Adler welcomed the gift.

I selected a large group of works. There were many original works. There was a large set of multiples from Edition Hundertmark, and many of the Fluxus boxes that George Maciunas had sent me. I took all the material to the museum. The museum didn't have to do any conservation or much organizing. The gift was massive, and everything was in prime condition. All the museum had to do was document the work, register it for the collection, and house it. While I waited for the museum to organize the collection, I kept in touch as I did with the other museums and collections where I gave work. In 1982, Adler was forced to leave the director's post under the cloud of a scandal that involved personal gifts from the artists he had been exhibiting. The museum had not yet done anything with the collection. Year after year dragged on, and the museum did nothing. Not long after Adler was fired, I told the museum that they must either develop the collection or ship the work to another museum. They packed everything up in a few large crates and sent it to Alternative Traditions in Contemporary Art at the University of Iowa. When I went to Iowa to unpack the crates, I found much of the work, but not all. What did come was a disorganized jumble. Some Fluxboxes and a Fluxkit disappeared entirely. At the same time, the people at La Jolla sent strange items that I had never seen. These were odd pieces that never belonged to me – it's as though they threw in anything they came across that seemed to be inexplicable.

In those days, museums didn't seem to care much about Fluxus work. Apart from Joseph Beuys, they treated our pieces like documentary ephemera. If we were lucky, they'd place them in the library or the four-drawer vertical file system

that many libraries used for loose material in the years before the web. At one point in the late 1970s, I found some material on Fluxus in the vertical file system at the library of the La Jolla Museum, including some of the correspondence I had with Adler. The library had a copy of *The Aesthetics*. It wasn't part of the library collection. It was in a folder in a four-drawer file cabinet.

Today, it seems that those decades of my life vanished. All the time I spent crisscrossing the US and Canada, doing performances and shows, presenting my work and performing Fluxconcerts evaporated. So did the hundreds of conversations with museum directors and curators who seemed to think that I was an odd specimen. For them, I turned up uninvited and didn't leave soon enough.

Tavern

Assemble a collection of small liquor bottles. Construct a rectangular wooden box, open at the top.

Set a strip of wood so that the rectangular box has two areas: one square and a rectangle half the size of the square.

Set most of the bottles in the square area. Set one bottle in the smaller area.

Mix plaster of Paris sufficient to fill the box to the edge. Fill the box so that the plaster sets around the bottles.

KF 1966

This object is made of the small liquor bottles that used to be served on airplanes, sold in gift shops, and in tax-free shops. I made the first one in New York in 1966 as a prototype for a Fluxus multiple to have been titled *Fluxtavern*. The multiple was never produced. One of the variations was a collection of gag liquors. I think I sold it to Jon Hendricks for Gil Silverman's collection.

Since I started work on the Fluxus multiple, I collected small liquor bottles when I like the shape or the label. When I have a large enough collection, I assemble them into a version of tavern. There have been several different versions over the years. I probably completed one every three or four years from the 1960s to just after the year 2000. The piece has several variations. Each variation has its own score. This piece is related to several liquor events. One is the 1964 event titled *White Bar*.

For a 1994 exhibition in Toronto, I provided these instructions: Assemble a collection of small liquor bottles. Construct a rectangular box of wood, 18" long, 12" wide, and 2" deep. Set a strip of wood across the box at 12", so that the rectangular box has two areas, an area 12" square and an area 12" by 6" Set most of the bottles in the square area. Set one bottle in the smaller area. Mix a load of plaster of Paris sufficient to fill the box to the edge. Fill the box so that the plaster sets around the bottles.

Variation: Use full-size bottles and a very large box.

Thirty Feet

Find a piece of paper 30 feet square. Inscribe a circle on the page.

KF 1966

The original version of this score was titled *30′ for John Cage*. It was written in Danbury, Connecticut in October of 1966. The score read: "Find a piece of paper 30′ square. Inscribe a large circle on the page. Send it to John Cage."

Zen for Record

Produce a phonograph record
with no sound on it.

KF 1966

The first version of *Zen for Record* was a single, record blank, with grooves but no sound. I found it when I was working at E.S.P. Disk Records in New York in September and October of 1966. It was probably a defective recording. If not, I have no idea what purpose the record had or why anyone would have made a record with no sound on it.

The original score to this object was, "A blank phonograph record with no sound on it."

In those days, I was new to Fluxus. George Maciunas had produced a couple of my multiples, and I was planning more projects. I thought of making a multiple edition of these blank records. In keeping with the Fluxus idea, I hope to make an LP edition at a cost low enough to sell the records for the price of an ordinary phonograph record. My career in the record industry was short-lived, and I never produced the LP.

The title of the piece is an homage to Nam June Paik's *Zen for Film*.

George Maciunas and Dick Higgins introduced me to Nam June's work. I loved *Zen for Film*. Nam June and I saw each other often when we both lived in Los Angeles. He taught at

California Institute of the Arts and I worked nearby as general manager of Something Else Press. We ate lunch or dinner together from time to time, often with Fluxus colleague and video pioneer Shigeko Kubota and engineer Shuya Abe, Nam June's collaborator on the video synthesizer.

In 1971, Nam June commissioned me to write his *Third Symphony*. In 1974, I published the scores to Nam June's complete symphonies in issue 11 of *Source Magazine*, the famous final issue. *Source* was an innovative music magazine edited by composers Larry Austin and Stanley Lunetta. [11] Each issue was spectacular, typified by imaginative scores, rich illustrations, and delightful artifacts. One might find machine-gunned pages for the score to Dick Higgins's *Thousand Symphonies*, tactile pages for a haptic score, or a letter from Joseph Beuys explaining why he did not have time to contribute. There were three guest editors over the years. John Cage was the first, Alvin Lucier the second, and I was the third. I never completed Nam June's *Third Symphony*. Instead of the score, Nam June published a note in *Source* commenting on the commission.

Over the years, I realized several variations on *Zen for Record*. One used blank, empty record jackets that contained no records. Rather, they emblematize the concept of a record with no sound. In the late 1980s, I prepared a set of records with no sound by spray painting them with spray paint to render them blank and without grooves, removing the sound.

There are three unrealized editions of *Zen for Record* I would like to realize. In the 1990s, a record publisher was considering a series of Fluxus projects. His idea for *Zen for Record* was to produce a series of editions that took the piece through a range of recording media from old to recent. I would have enjoyed creating a series of different kinds of *Zen for Record*, moving through such recording media as player piano roll, music box, wax record, Dictaphone band, wire recording, recorded tape, phonograph record, compact disc, and so on.

This publisher was also interested in creating a multiple edition for the CD. I thought of a heavy, square wooden box constructed of massive blocks of wood that would hinge together to form a large cube. The cube would open out in two massive halves. Each half block would contain a small, shallow shelf on the inner face of the half block. The shelf would be just deep enough to accommodate the CD version of *Zen for Record*, with the CD sitting to half its depth in the face.

The idea for the project came from the Ise Shrine. The Ise Shrine is a Shinto temple built on one of two adjacent sites. Every twenty years, the priests of the temple take down the shrine and build it anew on the adjacent site. One face of the open block would embody silence in the physical recording. The other face would embody silence in the empty space.

My favorite unmade version of *Zen for Record* developed at the time of Nam June's 1982 retrospective at The Whitney Museum of American Art. Nam June and I met at the museum one day and he invited me out for coffee. I had been reading a copy of *Art News* with a richly illustrated article on the exhibition that he had not seen. I gave it to him. He thumbed through the article quickly, then put it down, and went back to talking about ideas.

At one point, we must have talked about Nam June's *Zen for Film* and the long-lost *Zen for Record*.

At this point, the story takes a detour. In the 1960s, Advance Recordings released an LP of Richard Maxfield's compositions. Richard was a pioneering composer of electronic and digital music. He took over teaching John Cage's course at The New School when John stopped teaching. Richard worked with La Monte Young, George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, and many others. Toward the end of 1967, I got a postcard from Dick Higgins telling me that Richard had accepted a post at San Francisco State University. Dick urged me to take Richard's courses. I did. It was a wonderful experience.

Richard and I worked together on several projects. We grew quite close, and I often went to Richard's home to read scores, talk about music, and to think. I was probably the last artist or composer to work with him closely.

Richard was too adventurous for the conservative music department at San Francisco State University. They terminated his employment despite many requests and protests from students that he should stay. He moved to Laguna Beach, where he lived with his mother for a while before moving to Los Angeles. I went to see him a few times. He was depressed and unhappy working at a menial job to live while interest in electronic music grew around the nation. Advance Recordings released a phonograph recording of Richard's music for which he asked me to write the liner notes. Soon after I last saw him, he took his own life.

There are two codas to the story. While Richard is best known for electronic music, he wanted me to learn standard music notation to work with him. I learned to use standard notation, but I was never good at it, and I never used it after I completed Richard's courses. Nevertheless, I saved my scores for many years, together with several boxes full of sound tapes. I never produced sound works on tape with Richard. These were tapes from my radio programs in Illinois, tapes of the concerts I created as music director for Karen Ahlberg's dance troupe in San Francisco, and tapes of the concerts I played when screening the Fluxfilms that George Maciunas loaned me in 1966 – later sent on to Jeff Berner for his great 1967 Fluxfest at Longshoreman's Hall. One day in 1986, I listened to the tapes and reviewed the scores. Soon after, I decided that I was a terrible composer. I destroyed the entire collection of scores and tapes.

Now I'll return to the 1982 conversation with Nam June and my thoughts for an edition of *Zen for Record*. The edition would have been a blank phonograph record with a white label

and simple sans-serif type stating title, date, and composer. The jacket would have been white, with the title and composer in sans-serif type at the corner of the jacket. On the back, the liner notes would have been a comment by Nam June, a blank space without words. I tried for years to find a record producer who would publish this edition. No one would do so until Jan van Toorn at Slowscan Editions decided to try it. A few years before I spoke about this with Jan, Nam June had a stroke. I was going to ask Emily Harvey to talk this over with him when he was better, but Emily died and I put the project on a shelf to think about it. Then, a series of opportune letters brought a beautiful set of liner notes by Craig Dworkin. At some point, I hope to return to the edition.

Over the past six decades, *Zen for Record* migrated from a phonograph record to an empty record jacket to a never-produced CD, to the idea of an LP from Slowscan Editions, and now to an LP edition produced by Sean Miller in Florida.

Mozart spent much of his life realizing improvisational concerts that never took shape in written scores. These works remained alive while Mozart lived. When Mozart died, these works died with him. All music ends in silence.

Zen Vaudeville

The sound of one shoe tapping.

KF 1966

White Objects

Objects are painted white.

The objects may be given
away or deposited.

KF 1966

Orchestra

Assemble an orchestra. Each member of the orchestra plays a phonograph for an instrument. The entire orchestra plays the phonographs.

Concerts consist of different kinds of performances.

All performers may attempt to play the same record, perhaps trying to cue up and play at the same time or perhaps simply playing sections at random.

Each performer or different sections may play entirely different pieces of music, and so on.

For a chamber music variation, use a small ensemble.

KF 1967

City

Construct a city of found material.

Let the city grow and change over a span of time. Abandon the completed city where it stands.

KF 1967

This was realized over the span of one week in April of 1967 in the central quadrangle at San Francisco State University. After the city was abandoned, it stood untouched for another week. It was found one morning neatly disassembled, stacked and piled. The stacks stood untouched for another few days. Then they disappeared.

Do-It-Yourself Monument

Build a monument.

KF 1967

The first version of the do-it-yourself monument was built in Point Loma, California, for the 1967 Fluxfest at the Red Shed Gallery. The monument was built of wood, cloth, and paper. An unrealized version was proposed for stone blocks.

In 1970, the Lippincott Foundry held a competition for cast metal sculpture. I proposed an edition of 10,000 cubes, each an inch square, from which versions of the *Do-It-Yourself Monument* could be realized. The foundry did not appreciate the proposal.

Several small-scale models of the project exist. During the Paris Fluxus exhibition organized by Marcel Fleiss and Charles Dreyfus in 1989, I built a version of the *Do-It-Yourself Monument* from sugar cubes in a wooden cigar box. I gave them to Dorothy Selz, an artist who creates work from sugar. A version of the sugar-cube monument was exhibited at Krognoshuset in Lund, Sweden, in 1997. I still hope to realize the 10,000 cubes in full scale.

Empaquetage pour Christo

A modest object is wrapped.

KF 1967

This piece was first realized in March 1967 in Santa Cruz, California, after I began a correspondence and friendship with Christo that lasted for many decades. I planned a version of this piece for a Fluxus edition that was never published, but Edition Vice Versand of Remscheid, Germany, issued the multiple under the title *Eingepacktes* in 1970.

Chair

Mail a chair.

KF 1967

Mailing

Mail an item to yourself prior
to departing on a trip.

Receive it on arrival.

KF 1967

Unfinished Symphony

Find something.

Carry it out
to its most logical conclusion.

KF 1967

Telephone Clock

Telephone someone.

Announce the time.

KF 1967

Boxing Day

Acquire, fill, and distribute boxes in the immediate environment and at a distance.

KF 1968

For the first performance, I acquired one hundred cardboard boxes at a shop in Yellow Springs, Ohio that sold boxes of many kinds. Most were small and medium sized colored cardboard boxes. Some were given away empty, some with contents, some mailed with gifts, some mailed empty, some shipped with gifts or empty. I also used several uncommon boxes of pressed wood, woven reeds, and other materials.

Telephone Event

Take a telephone to someone's door.
Ring the bell.

When someone comes to the door,
hand them the phone, saying,

"It's for you."

KF 1967

A variation on this event involved driving up to someone on a street corner. The passenger in the right-hand side would hold an old-fashioned telephone handset, while holding the part with the mouthpiece and earphone out the window on its cord. The passenger would say to the passerby, "It's for you."

Today, this piece would make no sense. Many people would not recognize an old-fashioned telephone, so performing the piece would generally require a smart phone. But even that would raise a new question.

I suspect that many people would not be startled if someone were to hand them a smart phone while saying "It's for you." They might wonder why someone trying to reach them might call on someone else's phone. For that matter, they might simply assume that this is possible with a new location app.

Contents

Empty boxes.

Each box should be the size and shape suitable for an object.

On each box is a printed word representing the missing contents.

KF 1968

Twenty Gallons

Cook soup for several
hundred people.

KF 1967

Paper Architecture

Hang a large sheet or several large sheets of paper on the walls of a room.

Inscribe the sheets with full-scale architectural features, such as doors, windows, or stairs, or with objects such as furniture, lamps, books, etc.

Use these drawings to imagine, create, or map an environment.

The drawings may create or map new features in an existing environment. They may mirror, double or reconstruct existing features in situ or elsewhere.

To create relatively permanent features with the drawings, apply them directly to a wall.

KF 1968

The term "paper architecture" involves architecture, design, and art. In this event, it is linked to concepts of diagraming, modeling, and representation. I first realized this project at Fluxus West in San Francisco, but I don't recall when I first gave it the title it now has.

Loose sheet editions of the event scores began to circulate as early as 1966. The contents were fluid. The scores were often exhibited in North America and Europe and the loose sheet editions traveled farther than the exhibitions did. They were translated into several western European languages and eastern European languages. Some events were also translated into Japanese.

Because a single event on paper could travel freely, I only learned about some of the translations and circulating pieces long after they were published. From time to time, I continue to discover publications about which I never knew. Some were formal, some informal. Some were semi-legal or illegal samizdat publications that circulated in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s.

Many events were published as single editions of one event score. This might be a printed edition of the score or it might be the realization of an edition based on a score. Most

of my Fluxus multiples realized event scores, ready to install or perform.

George Maciunas always sent me copies of my Fluxus editions. Few other publishers sent copies of the published or realized scores. More than once, publishers asked to publish my work, released it widely, and neglected to send me a copy. One distinguished German publisher of multiples sent me copies of multiples by the other artists he published while forgetting to send me my own edition. This happened in the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, and elsewhere. It was also the case for people who didn't send me copies of samizdat or unofficial editions.

In some cases, this may have been intentional. One Italian publisher released a piece in a widely available edition of T-shirts. I found one in a shop in Milan, along with postcards of the same piece. My guess is that he wanted to avoid paying royalties.

In other cases, people simply seemed to forget. Perhaps they did not think of themselves as publishers. I assume this was the case with publishers of samizdat manuscripts. In some cases, they may not have known how to find me.

This situation was complicated by two factors. On some occasions, my name was separated from the work. This happened with an edition of the scores that traveled as an exhibition of loose sheets. My name appeared on the title page and the preface, but not on the sheets of individual scores. As a result, the event scores appeared without my name and with no attribution. The ideas in many events can be described as ideas using words different than those of the event score. When this happened, my name and attribution of the work nearly always disappeared.

A few years ago, this score was the subject of an email architecture discussion group. One list member wondered whether I created the term "paper architecture." At the time, I didn't know.

When I searched the Web and dictionaries, I was unable to

find the term "paper architecture" prior to the 1980s. While one architect stated that teachers used the term in his architecture school to show contempt for unbuildable projects, there were no published citations.

Since I first used the term "paper architecture," I have seen it in eight ways. It refers to:

1. The philosophical issues visible in this event score,
2. Architectural drawings that no one intends to build,
3. Architectural drawings that someone intends to build and may possibly be built while they have not yet been realized,
4. Architectural drawings that someone intends to build that are never realized,
5. Architectural drawings of imaginary architecture that have never been built but could be built,
6. Architectural drawings that are impossible to build,
7. Architectural models constructed of paper or cardboard,
8. Completed buildings made of paper-based substances.

While some of these ideas date back millennia, the term "paper architecture" has only been applied to them in recent years. While I am uncertain of when I first titled this score with the term "paper architecture," people first saw this piece at the Fluxus West center on Divisadero Street in San Francisco in 1968.

The first public museum presentation of the work was in the exhibition *Intermedia – Fluxus – Conceptual Art* at Montgomery Art Gallery, Claremont College in Claremont, California in May of 1973. It has been executed as drawings or environments in different environments since.

In a sense, this piece began with my mother. Our home in San Diego had a set of windows facing out on a boring view of the neighbor's wall and part of their yard. My mother constructed sliding screens over the windows. Then she painted a bright, tropical garden scene on the screens. After a few years, I thought of the painted garden as the view from that side of the house.

The Three Ages of Man

Three containers stand
on an old table.

A container with four legs or
points touching the table contains
powdered milk.

A container with a solid base
and one large external point
contains sugar.

A container with three legs
or points contains salt.

KF 1968

The Sphinx of classical Greek mythology was a terrible, winged creature with the head of a woman and the body of a lion. She besieged the city of Thebes after the murder of King Laios. The Sphinx posed a riddle to anyone who crossed her path. She killed those who could not answer.[12]

Oedipus met the Sphinx on his way from Corinth to Thebes. She challenged him with a famous riddle.

"What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening?"

Oedipus answered the riddle. The answer is: "A man". A man crawls on four legs as a baby, walks upright as an adult, and hobbles with the help of a cane in old age.

By freeing Thebes from the Sphinx, Oedipus established himself as a hero and ascended the throne of Thebes as king in the place of the murdered Laios. The story of his tragedy and the fate he tried to avoid is told in the Theban plays of Sophocles, *Oedipus the King, Antigone*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*.[13]

This piece presents an object solution to the riddle of the Sphinx. The symbols – milk, sugar, and salt – are transparent in some ways, opaque in others.

Aktual Walk

Retrace steps.

KF 1969

Cloud Chamber

Charter a small airplane.

Take it up into a cloudy
area of sky.

Hold bags and bottles out the
window to collect cloud vapors.
Place the bags and bottles in
an empty, white room.

Open them to release the clouds.

KF 1969

In 1969, I was artist-in-residence at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura, California. My studio was a wonderful little room perched on the top of building. Windows surrounded the room, letting light in from every angle. Rich Harris was the minister. One day, Rich invited me to go flying with him in a small private airplane. I realized this piece with a small, private performance, releasing the clouds in the studio.

In 1970, I proposed this piece as an exhibition for a room that overlooked the sea at the La Jolla Museum of Art, but they declined. Later, I suggested it to the Milwaukee Art Center. I don't know what it was about Milwaukee that led me to suggest it to the museum. I still haven't realized this piece for an exhibition.

Shadow Box

Build a shallow box with a glass top.

Place a piece of paper in the bottom of the box. Lay an object over the paper.

Set the box in the sunlight for a long period of time.

Wait until the action of the sun etches the shadow of the object into the paper.

KF 1969

The first of these boxes was constructed on the back porch of the Dolores Street Fluxus Center in San Francisco. The box was destroyed in 1970, with its shadow page inside it. A second version may have been built a year later for my exhibition at

Vice Versand in Remscheid, Germany. I'm not quite sure about the second box, though. The Vice Versand show was titled *Time, Space, Light, Memory, and Forgetfulness*, and part of my idea for the show was to send instructions for which I did not keep copies. Eventually, the show would be only memories, imperfect, evanescent, fading the in the light.

The General Assembly Social Justice Special

After a lavish meal, the assembled celebrants engage the services of a professional belcher whose responsibility it is to express the group's appreciation to the chef.

KF 1969

Continental Divide

Document or commemorate passage across the Continental Divide.

KF 1969

Heat Transfer Event

Set up a minimum of three glasses. Fill one with ice water. Fill one with boiling tea.

Get one or more empty glasses.

Transfer the liquids from glass to glass until the tea is cooled to drinkable temperature.

KF 1970

First performed in a San Francisco restaurant in 1970, this piece emerged from necessity with a pot of tea served boiling hot and a cup that would not cool down. I wrote the score twelve years later in a Chinese restaurant in New York with Peter Frank when Peter noticed me performing this event.

Around the year 2000, a group of artists in London who called themselves Secret Fluxus made this one of their signature pieces. They performed it together with or in alternation with a *Danger Music* score by Dick Higgins involving butter and eggs.

The New Critic

Publish a column of criticism.
In each column, photograph the critic holding the artwork or a reproduction of the work to be discussed. The critic can also hold up the music recording, the book, etc. The critical opinion is rendered by a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" signal in the photograph. There is no other comment.

KF 1970

The Silent Night

Walk quietly through a residential neighborhood on Christmas Eve with a lantern.

KF 1970

Earth Work

Acquire a parcel of land by purchase or lease. The parcel is comprised of one cubic foot of land at a depth of six or more feet beneath presently owned land. The owned land may be empty, or it may have buildings and improvements.

Acquire no rights for building, leasing, subleasing, mineral, oil, access, etc.

The ownership or leasehold of the land comprises the work of art.

KF 1971

Silent Shoes

Spend the night sleeping on a friend's doorstep. In the morning, leave a pair of shoes behind.

KF 1971

The first realization of this took place at Jock Reynolds's farm in Davis, California while Jock was away. I had gone to visit Jock with Amy de Neergaard, a friend from New York, but I apparently forgot to notify Jock of the date of our arrival.

We arrived in the late afternoon on a summer day. Jock was not home, so Amy and I went to Davis for supper. Later, we returned, but Jock still had not come back.

We decided to spend the night camping out on Jock's doorstep. In the morning, we decided to move on to our next destination.

I had been thinking about this piece for several months, not quite as specifically as sleeping on Jock's doorstep, but the moment seemed right and the piece jelled into the score. I left the shoes behind when we departed.

Water Table

Set a full formal table with
full service for four.

All service is white porcelain
or clear glass.

Fill all objects, utensils, etc.
with water.

KF 1971

Yoko Ono and John Lennon invited me to create a piece for their exhibition, *This is Not Here* at The Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York. Yoko and John invited artists to create works involving water. This was my work. Yoko and John's assistants executed and installed the original version of *Water Table* for me in the guest artist area of the exhibition, along with pieces by artists such as Robert Watts, Larry Miller, and Alison Knowles.

Bill Vazan reconstructed it in 1974 for my solo exhibition at Vehicule, Quebec.

I reconstructed it a third time in Vienna for the exhibition

Fluxus Subjektiv at Galerie Krinzinger. This reconstruction was the first time that I constructed the realization of this score for an exhibition.

The third reconstruction is pictured in a special Fluxus issue of Kunstforum from the early 1990s. The work is misattributed to Daniel Spoerri because the menu pictured on the table came from Restaurant Daniel.

Restaurant Daniel loaned us the dishes and tableware for the installation, and I used their menu as a basis of a drawing placed on the table. The restaurant had nothing to do with Daniel Spoerri.

The title *Water Table* refers to the project, and to the idea of a water table in geological terms.

The alternate instruction score reads, "Set a formal table with complete service for four. All service should be white porcelain or clear glass. Fill all objects, utensils, etc., with water."

Distance

The distance from this sentence
to your eye is my sculpture.

KF 1971

10,000

Mail to friends, people chosen by random processes, or other groupings of individuals, 10,000 objects, papers, events, etc., over the span of a pre-determined time.

KF 1971

Flow System

Invite anyone – and everyone – to send an object or a work to an exhibition. Display everything that is received. Any visitor to the exhibition may take away an object or work.

KF 1972

This event was realized as the exhibition *Omaha Flow Systems* at Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska in April 1973. The *Omaha Flow Systems* exhibition became the model for most correspondence art and mail art exhibitions held since then. The principles that anyone may send a work of any kind to the exhibition and everything received is displayed have become the basic standards for mail art exhibitions since that time.

Replication

Choose a site.

Act upon the site or work on the site in such a manner that after departure the site looks as it did prior to the work.

KF 1972

First executed at Farmington, New Mexico, replicating the white divider stripes on a stretch of road. Also executed near Rifle, Colorado, using road divider stripes, and at Something Else Farms in West Glover, Vermont using a patch of dirt road. No documentation is permitted that would make it possible to trace the changes *Replications* seeks to obscure.

Centennial

In honor of Nicholas Slonimsky's 100th birthday, bury a long line of 100 cases of dynamite in the desert, each at a 200 meter interval from the case before.

Detonate the cases one after the other.

KF 1973

Woolen Goods

Observe an unexplained silence.

KF 1973

The first performance of this work took place in Tucson, Arizona in July of 1973. The original score read, "An unexplained silence is observed."

In Tucson, I worked at Omen Press, a small publishing house specializing in Sufi literature and mystical books.

Walter Bowart was the publisher of Omen Press. Walter had been one of the founders of the New York newspaper *East Village Other*, and a founder of the Underground Press Syndicate.[14] In the late 1960s, Walter married Peggy Mellon Hitchcock and moved to Tucson, Arizona, where he started Omen Press to publish books on Sufism, astrology, and mysticism. I knew Walter from the time when I had lived in New York and ran the Avenue C Flux Room on the Lower East Side.

In 1973, one of the major book conferences met in Los Angeles, and Dick Higgins invited me to join him at a meeting of small press publishers. Presses such as Dick's Something Else Press and Walter's Omen Press struggled to find representation, good distribution, and marketing services. The purpose of the meeting was to see if some of these publishers could join in an association or cooperative network to develop the kind of effective marketing typical of the major publishers. While many publishers at the meeting

had good ideas, none had money or staff to implement their ideas. Everyone seemed to hope that an association of many small, undercapitalized publishes could somehow do for the entire group what none of them could do for themselves. This was not possible, but it did bring Dick and me back in contact with Walter.

At that time, Walter was hoping to find someone who could help him to develop Omen as a functioning organization. Dick recommended me to him. I was the general manager for Dick's Something Else Press in late 1970 and early 1971 when the Press was in California. This was when Dick taught at California Institute of the Arts along with Allan Kaprow, Nam June Paik, Alison Knowles, Emmett Williams, and other Fluxus people during the first years of the school.

Dick was very persuasive, and Walter hired me, promising a modest salary and a place to live. Soon after, I set off for Tucson, Arizona. In Tucson, I found the congenial chaos that had surrounded Walter at the *East Village Other*, but it was chaos writ small. Rather than the bustling EVO office on the Lower East Side with dozens of people wandering in and out at any hour, Omen was a small warehouse behind Walter and Peggy's home.

The warehouse included the press offices and a small but complete printing plant. Walter had purchased a massive printing press and complete bindery equipment so that he could physically produce Omen's books. Even though Walter had facilities for comprehensive book production and manufacturing, his main problem was that Omen had too few books under production to justify the scale of his plant. Even if he had more books in production, he could not find a master printer and the associated staff required to keep the plant working, and he couldn't afford to pay them. The chaos ran deeper than this, though. When we sought a secretary, for example, I interviewed several dozen applicants before proposing three likely

candidates. Walter chose among them by asking me to take their horoscopes to an astrologer whose books he produced.

On arriving, Walter placed me in a small, cozy guesthouse. It was a comfortable pueblo-style adobe building with one bedroom and a private bathroom. At one point, Walter decided that he wanted to do something else with the guest house, so he proposed moving me to a corrugated iron Quonset hut located at the far end of his property. The hut came from a surplus sale at a closed military base. The metal-roofed hut was impossibly hot under the Arizona sun. It was cooled by a noisy air conditioner that infused the hut with a terrible, moldy smell. The place had ancient motel carpets, and 1940s era furniture that may have come with the hut. At this point, I decided to return to California.

My time at Omen had some good moments. Walter was a scattered, impossible boss, but a lovely person and an inventive, congenial friend. We spent hours talking, planning, and inventing. To figure out how to make the expensive printing press pay for itself, I planned a series of a hundred or so books that would have made marvelous multiple editions. Unfortunately, these books required the skills and network of an art dealer to sell them. As an artist, I would have loved to make them. As a manager, I soon realized that Omen could not market them.

I did make a kind of prototype of one series of ideas. The books were to have been based on food, with a print of a steak – obverse and reverse – so printed that the book pages together would be roughly the thickness of a steak. Walter helped me to figure out how to print a prototype. I went to a local supermarket and purchased a number of steaks and chops. We marinated these in a rather nasty solution of type wash, and printed off several dozen different kinds of steaks and cops. These became my meat prints. Because Walter did not have the kind of blind-stamp printer's chop that fine art

printers generally use, I asked him to sign the prints as printer, which he did. A few copies still exist here and there.

In the long run, the meat prints redeemed my trip to Arizona and back. In those days, art dealer and curator Betty Gold had a gallery in Los Angeles. She liked the prints and she took some on consignment. One of her clients was the heir to a meat packing fortune. This client fell in love with the prints and bought quite a few to give to friends. For a year or so, I made a nice living off the prints. Most of the prints were dated 7.7.73, the same date as Dick Higgins's beautiful series of prints with themes from nature, discrete erotic photography, and typography. This conjunction was unknown to either of us when we produced our respective series.

The other great relic of that summer is a series of notes and prototypes for the books.

Another unrealized scheme for Omen Press books involved an idea that would have been quite marvelous. I decided to produce book versions of George Maciunas's Fluxus editions. I called George and secured his agreement for an imprint to be called Fluxus Editions. These would have been George's products, redesigned by George into book formats. I tried to carry this plan forward back in California. Late in 1973 or early 1974, I organized legal papers for Fluxus Editions. I hoped to raise money to fund the editions but I couldn't raise the financing. The idea ended with a set of business papers filed in the San Diego County Courthouse and a few rubber stamps.

The durable result of my Arizona stay involved my encounter with Sufism and Islam. During my stay at Omen Press, I immersed myself in Sufi literature. This was a new world for me.

Here, too, I shared an interest with Dick. For years, Dick had been collecting and recounting Hodja tales, stories of the great Turkish mystic, Nasruddin Hodja. Hodja is a trickster and a folk hero whose antics disguise a deep level of philosophical

inquiry, and – beneath that – a deeper level of epistemological awareness designed to reveal the ontology of being. The Sufi masters engaged with more than epistemology. The search for truth and being typifies their quest.

One side of Sufism involved the archetype of the trickster-epistemologist. Another involved the passionate search for the truth that lies beneath words. The 13th-century poet and theologian Rumi typifies this quest. I met Rumi again when I studied for my doctorate with Anwar Dil at the Graduate School of Leadership and Human Behavior at United States International University. Anwar Dil's courses ranged widely over history and time. In these courses, I had the opportunity to explore the history, theology, and philosophy of Islam in a cross-cultural context. Rumi and his work were a highlight of the courses.

To understand Sufism, one must understand the relations between speech and what is not said. On the side of speech, this inquiry led me through a tradition of epistemology and exegetical hermeneutics anchored in the symbolic interactionism of Herbert Blumer and George Herbert Mead, and through them to Wilhelm Dithey's hermeneutics. On the side of silence, this leads through ontology.

The word Sufi refers to the woolen robes that Sufi mystics wore. That gave rise to the title *Woolen Goods*.

This event may be realized by installing a stack of neatly folded blankets and other woolen goods.

24 Hours

720 clocks are placed in a room.

Each is set to one of the minutes between 12:00 and 11:59.

KF 1974

The literary work of the late Argentine writer and librarian Jorge-Luis Borges explores themes in contemporary life that are visible in the mediation of new technology. Borges explored ideas of the book and the library that we can read as metaphorical predictions of way in which the technology-mediated world of cyberspace engages human consciousness. This piece speaks to the universal, everywhere-all-at-once nature of those notions. While this piece predates cyberspace and the Internet, it engages ideas that were already current among those who shared Nam June Paik's ideas of cybernetics and the information superhighway. It also addresses the ideas of thinkers whose work engages the concept of time, as well as the links across time and space visible in Mieko Shiomi's great series of projects titled *Spatial Poem*.

Over the years, I created several pieces honoring Borges. This piece was originally titled *Altar to Borges*. I changed the title to avoid confusing this with the score for *Homage to Jorge Luis*

Borges, an installation designed for the exhibition *Arte de Sistemas* that Jorge Glusberg of the Center for Art and Communication (CAYC) in Buenos Aires organized in 1970 at the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires, Argentina. My recollection is that one version of *Homage to Borges* was created for the Coltejer Biennale in Medellin, Colombia in the early 1970s for a section that Jorge organized. Jorge showed another in the exhibition *Arte de Sistems* organized at the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires in 1971.

This piece may be executed in several ways. All 720 clocks may be the same kind of clock. Alternatively, each clock may be different than all the other clocks, a selection of alarm clocks, cuckoo clocks, pendulum clocks, grandfather clocks, wristwatches, spring wound clocks, electric clocks, digital clocks, and so on.

From time to time, I have considered other possibilities. These might include all clocks in any hour being the same kind of clock, with the 720 clocks divided among twenty-four different kinds of clocks. These solutions never seemed as interesting to me as all clocks being different or all the same.

While the score to this piece has been exhibited often, the piece itself remains unrealized. It is related to another unrealized project, *Time Piece*, and to an installation at Vice Versand in Remscheid, Germany, titled *Time, Space, Light, Memory, and Forgetfulness*.

While the piece remained unrealized, the score traveled widely, in English and in translation. Over the years, I have seen a number of installations and exhibitions similar to the installation described here. Artists who had seen this score created several of these. An artist who translated and exhibited my event scores created one such installation. When I saw the installation, it seemed to me that he had forgotten this specific work. Even so, he continued to be influenced by the way in which this piece addresses the everywhere-all-at-once nature of time.

Of course, time is an illusion. In his *Confessions*, Augustine wrote, "What then is time? Provided no one asks me, I know. If I want to explain it to an enquirer, I do not know." Newton saw time as uniform and absolute, flowing equally and uniformly of its own accord through the universe. Time formed one axis of the universe, with space – also equal and uniform – forming the other axis. Together, time and space formed a perfect Cartesian frame, an x-axis and a y-axis that together constituted the stage or ground on which everything takes place and against which all can be measured. [15] Einstein's space-time (or time-space) changed all this, just as gravity deflects the flow of time even measured against the short distance between the floor and ceiling of an ordinary room.

Is time everywhere and all at once? Yes, and no. Time is the fabric of everywhere, but it is different everywhere all at once. The time that flows where I am located in space is never quite the same time where you are.

Theft Event for J-C

Please steal this event.

KF 1981

Chair Event for Larry Miller

The performer takes all available chairs in a designated area. The chairs are transported to another designated area where they are set up for seating and left.

KF 1982

Anarchists' Showcase

Invite Nam June Paik, Charlotte Moorman, and Dick Higgins to perform anything twice.

KF 1982

Variation for Food and Piano

A piano is prepared with food.
(The piano may be played.)

KF 1982

The Last Days of Pompeii

A desk or table.

A beautiful calendar or time planner is open on the desk. The book is open to a date selected at random.

Written on the page with 3 p.m. circled: "Destroy Pompeii this afternoon."

KF 1985

The first version of this piece was a memorandum written in an expensive time planner purchased at a shop in Soho. The planner sat on a desk at the front of my New York loft. The planner was part of my struggle to become more efficient. For years, I cherished the hope that I could develop better work habits, wake up promptly at dawn and get to bed on time. In my waking hours, I hoped to write and get work done on the deadlines that other people seem to be able to master. I never managed to do so.

Every now and then, I tried to reach the goal with the help of a desk diary, a pocket agenda or any of the time planning systems that are supposed to help people manage professional and private life more effectively. None of them worked for me. The only one that was reasonably useful was the little Norwegian "seventh sense" pocket-sized diary. I'm told Thor Heyerdahl carried one on his expedition across the Pacific. Later, living outside Lund, I used the Swedish *Lilla Fick* that shows the holidays of the Swedish church. This was more useful to me, being married to an ordained deacon who worked on many holidays. Later, I used a *Moleskin Pocket Weekly Diary*. While the expensive time planners never helped, they did give rise to this event. I got something useful out of them, though I'm not sure what use it is.

For a while, I was closer to my dream of the efficient life than I had been in the past. I owed my first step to my late dog and companion, Oliver. When I settled down with Ditte in 1998, she had a wonderful old poodle named Oliver. Oliver and I fell in love.

As old men do, Oliver had to get up in the middle of the night to pee. We fell into a pattern. Oliver would jump out of bed at 3 a.m. every morning. I'd get up and take him out to the garden. When he went in, he'd stroll back upstairs, hop into bed, and fall asleep. I'd be awake, so I'd go into the study to work. In the quiet of the early morning, I'd usually get three or four hours of work done. Then I'd crawl back into bed for another hour of sleep before starting the day.

This habit continued with our next dog, Jacob, who came to us when he was a middle-aged six-year-old. Even after Jacob was gone, I still woke up in the early hours to work.

For a while, I managed to lead an efficient life in Australia. In January 2008, I moved from a professor's life at the Norwegian School of Management in Oslo to a dean's role at the Swinburne University of Technology Faculty of Design

in Melbourne. One of the tools I used to keep track of what I had to do was a calendar and diary system integrated into the GroupWise software system. I supported this with a *Moleskin Pocket Weekly Diary*. I also had the help of an executive assistant who kept track of my calendar, adding things when new requirements came up, and reminding me to get something done.

Elliott Mintzberg made what was then a groundbreaking discovery by following managers in their daily life. He learned that a manager's role is not the well-organized strategic flow that many once believed it to be. It is a series of flowing encounters in which managers get about ten minutes to work on something before the next task demands attention. After moving from a life in research to a life leading a faculty, I found this to be so.

The reason for the process was easy to understand. A leader does more than set strategy and execute it. Leaders shape a strategy, then develop it together with a senior management team. Together, they work with the people who execute the strategy. Leaders shapes and gives direction to organizational strategy. As managers, they are required to implement the strategy and they are responsible for achieving strategic goals through detailed day-to-day actions.

But the great secret to successful organizations is the fact that everyone drives the strategy forward through their achievements. To function as a successful executive, therefore, a leader spends a great portion of his or her daily work serving the people who make things happen in the organization.

There are practical, theoretical, and philosophical reasons for this. In the past, I addressed these issues in articles I have more to add today after moved from research on leadership in organizations to a managerial role.[16] While I was an entrepreneur, publisher, and organizer as a young man, I did not have the experience I now have combined with the theoretical

perspectives that allow me to integrate experience, theory, and philosophy.

At the coalface where theory, thought, and action intersect, constant engagement with work pushed my thinking forward in the choreography of organizational life. Much of this is invisible to anyone outside a specific organization. This permits self-important leaders to take credit for what their colleagues and co-workers achieve. A good leader is a strategist, but the idea that a leader deserves a salary and bonus hundreds of times greater than the lowest-paid worker in an organization is nonsense. Anyone who genuinely understands what makes an organization work knows that no one person should take credit for an organization that requires the work of hundreds or hundreds of thousands.

The difference a leader makes is to provide strategy and focus. It is the flow of those ten-minute chunks of action that bring the strategy to life, evolving, and changing as people enact and enable it, changing it appropriately, making it their own as they shape the organization in daily action.

That's what I thought about when I looked at my Moleskin.

On a grand level, I still imagine Jove hurling his lightning bolts and Vulcan hammering at the forge as the great volcano covers Pompeii with ash. What I'm not sure about is whether they had it planned and marked in their diary, or whether the cataclysm simply emerged from the daily flow when Juno put a project forward or Mars got something wrong in the workshop.

Rotterdam Exchange

Anyone may bring an
object. Objects delivered are
painted white.

Anyone who brings an object
may take any other object.

KF 1986

First realized at Perfo Festival in Rotterdam.

Rational Music

Take the score of a symphony.

Organize the symphony in such a way that all notes of any given kind are played consecutively.

For example, take all instances of the note B♯. Then, assemble all B♯ notes in series by time value, so that whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, etc., are played consecutively.

The entire series is performed in sequence.

You may score the piece so that work is equally divided among all instruments, or you may use another rational scoring technique,

for example, all violins represented by one violin and so on through all groups of instruments.

Other techniques might permit the entire performance to be realized on piano; notes distributed by section – oboes take A♭, bassoons take A, bass trombones take A♯, and so on; or simple rotation of notes through all performers until the piece is complete.

Refinements may be considered.

KF 1987

In 2016, composer Hans Gurstad-Nilsson scored *Rational Music* for sheet music publication.

Homage to Mahler

Perform a symphony.

Have the different sections of the orchestra march on and off stage as they perform.

KF 1989

Fluxus Balance Piece for Mieko Shiomi

A bowl of water is placed on one side of a balance.

The bowl is filled with water exactly equal in weight to whatever is on the other side of the balance.

KF 1991

This piece was created in July 1991 for Mieko Shiomi's international project, *Fluxus Balance*.

Precinct

Construct a rough slab, cube, or table of natural stone or wood.

Invite people to place hand-made models or objects made of wood or clay on the surface.

KF 1991

Several times over the years, I made pieces that involve exchanging objects or art works with people, giving them works, or creating places within which they exchange or give objects. This piece allows others to give.

Alchemical Theater

Assemble four elements.

Place the elements.

Act upon the elements.

KF 1992

This piece requires a collection of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. These elements may be organized in containers, in some raw form, or in a combination.

The elements may be rearranged in different ways during the exhibition.

Viking Event

Performers enter from stage
right and stage left. Each stands
at the far edge of the stage.

One shouts, "Hail, Ragnar!"

The other shouts back,
"Hail, Einar!"

KF 1989

This event quotes the opening scene of the 1958 movie, *The Vikings*. The movie starred Ernest Borgnine as the Viking chieftain Ragnar, Kirk Douglas as Einar, his son and successor, Tony Curtis as Eric – an English prince whose real identity is hidden, and Janet Leigh as Morgana, a Welsh princess. Parts of the plot were taken from the saga of Ragnar Lothbrok. The scene on which this event is based also includes a famous moment in which Kirk Douglas dances across the oars of the incoming longboat – a story that occurs in medieval Norse sagas as well as in classic sources as far back as Virgil. [17]

The first performance of this event took place in the Fluxus exhibition at the Biennale of Venice. Bengt af Klintberg and Dick Higgins were the performers.

Neck-Tie Party

Borrow an ugly necktie from a friend. Give it to another friend.

KF 1989

Theater Exercise

Stage a play in which the actors carry the scenery with them.

They construct and take down scenery and stage materials while they play is in progress.

KF 1989

Two Second Encore

The performer walks out on stage, looks at the audience with sincerity and passion. The performer cries out:

"O-din! O-din!"

The performer's own national accent should be prominent.

KF 1989

This event is also based on the 1958 movie *The Vikings*. It appears in the scene where Tony Curtis calls on Odin's help in a distinct Bronx accent. I created this event for Meredith Monk after a concert that she gave in Norway.

Exhibition

Arrange an exhibition where a curtain conceals each work of art. Next to the curtain is posted the description of the piece. On payment of a fee, an attendant pulls the curtain aside to display the work. After the viewer has finished examining the work, the curtain is replaced.

The fee may be the same for all works, or it may vary according to size of work, fame of work, market value of work, insurance value of work, etc.

KF 1991

Marching Band

A marching band carries its instruments and sings or hums the music.

KF 1991

New Shoes Dance Theater

Organize a short dance piece. Create choreography to be danced to any classical or modern music. Rehearse in traditional dance costume or leotards. For the public presentation of this work, clothing will be the same as at the rehearsal.

There will be one change: all performers will dance in new boots or new men's black dress shoes. Even the women will wear men's shoes. If the dance is performed more than once, use completely new shoes or boots for every concert.

KF 1991

Selection Event

Prior to the performance, the director selects music and a kind of dancing. The music is played through once for the cast. The cast is invited to conceive of a kind of dance they will perform to the music after only one hearing. No rehearsal takes place.

At the time of the performance, a large paper screen is stretched across the stage or the front of the hall so that when performers stand behind it, only their calves and feet are visible. All the male performers stand behind the screen.

A female performer is selected by some arbitrary method. The female performer selects her dance

partner by choosing the pair of feet that she likes best. The two performers dance together to the music.

KF 1991

This event is based on the Norse myth of the marriage of Njord and Skadi. The giantess Skadi was offered a god as her husband in compensation for the death of her father, a giant slain by the gods. She was told that she might choose any god she wished, but there was a condition. Skadi must choose by looking at the feet of the otherwise hidden gods. She chose the most beautiful pair of feet, thinking that they must belong to Balder, most handsome of gods, but she was mistaken. The feet she chose belong to Njord, the shipbuilder. Njord's feet were beautiful because they were washed by the sea. [18]

Stage Fright Event

Wear a costume that covers almost all of the body from the top of the head to the knees. Only the legs from the knees down should be visible. Examples of the costume: a large, broad-brimmed hat, a scarf, a huge sweater with a very high neck, and a bulky wool skirt; or, a bundle of layered wool blankets; or, a specially sewn sack with holes cut for the hands and legs. The audience may not see the performer and the performer may not see the audience.

Walk out on stage or into the hall, moving about slowly during the allocated time. At the end of the time, two or three cast members come out to guide the performer off.

This may be performed as a solo, or it may be performed by several or many performers who will slowly bump into each other or the audience as they move through the piece. Music may be played, or the event may take place in silence.

KF 1991

Bartholomew in Munich

Green glass bottles and clear glass bottles. Fill the clear bottles with plaster of Paris. Fill the green bottles with salt.

Display on a small wooden shelf.

KF 1992

Bird Call

Make a telephone call to a bird. If you do not know a bird who has a telephone, make a telephone call in which you make bird noises.

KF 1992

This event began with a telephone call to a bird. The artist Jack Ox had a parakeet named Dwight. Every time I called Jack, she said that Dwight wanted to talk with me. She'd hold out the receiver so that Dwight and I could talk.

Dwight was the only bird I knew who had a telephone. From time to time, I still want to make a bird call, so the bird noises are up to me.

Family Planning Event

Get pregnant for 18 months and have twins.

KF 1992

Folk Dance

The dancers perform a traditional folk dance while dancing on stilts. If there are several dancers and some feel avantgarde, they may use stilts of a different height than the other dancers.

KF 1992

Magic Trick #2

Walk on stage with a sledge hammer, an egg and a small tape recorder. Place the egg on one side of the stage. Place the tape recorder on the opposite side of the stage. Turn the recorder on in the playback mode. Walk back to the egg.

Pick up the hammer. Raise it high. Wait 30 seconds and smash the egg. Stand and wait.

After 15 seconds, the tape recorder plays the noise of a chicken.

KF 1993

Magic Trick #7

Walk on stage with a big sheet of paper and a magician's hat. Hold the paper up to the audience to show that it has been painted or printed with the word FLUXUS. Tear the paper into pieces and drop them into the hat. Shake them.

Reach into the hat and pull out a large cloth that reads,

THE END.

KF 1993

A Whispered History

Take a plain wooden table with no metal or plastic surfaces. Unpainted wood is best. Get two ordinary shoes. Place the shoes on the table.

Fill the left shoe with butter.
Fill the right shoe with salt.

KF 1994

Over the years, I created many works based on the conceptual transformation of ordinary objects. These objects often use ordinary wooden tables as platforms or as part of the work. Shoes have been among the objects I've used most. This particular piece is related to a 1993 piece titled *The History of Fluxus*, using two shoes, one filled with salt, and one with sugar.

1994 saw a celebration of Robert Filliou's birthday in his hometown in France. I created the score for *The Whispered History* in his honor. It's partly a play on his work, *The Whispered History of Art* and partly a play on my own piece, *The History of Fluxus*.

This piece begins with a large block of butter. Use winter butter if possible. Cows eat hay during the winter and their butter tends to be firmer than summer butter when the cows eat

grass. Winter butter melts less easily and runs less readily than summer butter.

Let the butter warm up to room temperature. Unless the room is especially hot, it will not melt. When the butter is warm, it will be plastic and easily malleable. Use a spoon to pack the butter into the shoe that goes on the left foot. Packing the shoe slowly and carefully makes it possible to pack the shoe tight without spillover or dripping. The goal is a shoe packed with firm butter. Even though the butter is slightly warm, it will stay firm. As the shoe sits, the butter will evaporate and harden slightly. After a year or two, the butter should be fairly hard, even at room temperature. It is best to pack the left shoe with butter as long before the exhibition as possible. This allows the evaporation and hardening process to begin.

My favorite realization of this piece came at a symposium and seminar on The Body, Culture, and Religion convened by the Center for Theology and Religious Studies at Lund University in Lund, Sweden in October 2001.

The late Professor Catharina Stenqvist was co-chair of the conference. Cattis invited me to present a talk that she described as a cross between a keynote, an after-dinner speech, and a performance. Following the conference banquet, I brought out a table and set a smaller table on it, talking my way through the event while I prepared the object.

Following the realization, I gave the object to Cattis. It was a gift to the Faculty of Theology. Cattis entrusted the object to a theology student. To preserve the shoe stuffed with butter, the student removed the shoes from their table and placed them in a refrigerator in the faculty commons room.

Soon after, a cleaning lady found the shoes in the refrigerator. The cleaning lady decided that no one needed the shoes and threw them out.

Since then, I have often reflected on the links between theology, exegesis, and deconstruction.

Centre Piece

Imagine a life.

Live it.

KF 2003

Decapitalism

A store where people can bring things and leave them. No one can buy anything.

KF 2019

Post-Calvinist Art

Arrange an exhibition.

Close the space and keep it locked for the duration of the show.

Outside the exhibition hall, post a sign with this text:

"There is a wonderful exhibition inside. You are not allowed to see it."

KF 2019

A few years back, my wife Ditte went to visit My Riebe, our niece. My works at ETH Zurich, Switzerland's national university of science and technology. Ditte's sister Eva came with her. One day when My was at work, they decided to see an exhibition on display downtown. When they got to the exhibition, however, a sign informed them that the exhibition was closed for lunch so they were not able to enter.

Hearing this, it occurred to me that this would be a splendid way to organize art exhibitions. This would keep the price of running a museum down. People who wanted to see the art in the exhibition could simply order the catalog.

In the wake of the Covid pandemic, I have come to believe that this is a good way to hold exhibitions. With new variants spreading and many nations struggling with influenza epidemics and other viruses, this is a way to reduce contagion, making art a public service that encourages people to walk to museums but not to go in.

This is the ultimate kind of Fluxus exhibition, removing art from the art market while making what is left accessible to everyone at no cost.

References

1 Merriam-Webster, Inc. 1993. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition. Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, Inc., p. 401

2 Milgram, Stanley. 1967. "The Small World Problem." *Psychology Today*, No. 2, pp. 60–67; Milgram, Stanley. "The Small World Problem." In: Stanley Milgram, *The Individual in a Social World. Essays and Experiments*, Third edition. London: Pinter and Martin, Ltd., pp. 322–335; Blass, Thomas. 2004. *The Man who Shocked the World. The Life and Legacy of Stanley Milgram*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 137–146.

3 Dodds, Peter Sheridan, Roby Muhamad, and Duncan J. Watts. 2003. "An Experimental Study of Search in Global Social Networks." *Science*, Vol. 301, 8 August 2003, pp. 827–829; Watts, Duncan. 2004. *Small Worlds. The Dynamics of Networks between Order and Randomness*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 18–25, 139–153; Milstein, Sarah. 2001. "Using E-Mail to Count Connections." *The New York Times*, Dec. 20, 2001, Section G, Page 8.

4 Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

5 Friedman, Ken. 2005. "The Wealth and Poverty of Networks." *At A Distance: Precursors to Internet Art and Activism*. Annemarie Chandler and Norie Neumark, editors. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 408–422.

6 Filliou, Robert. 2004 [1966]. "A Proposition, a Problem, a Danger, and a Hunch." *Manifestos*, 1966, A Great Bear Pamphlet. Ubu Classics, Michael Tencer, ed. Ubu Web, www.ubu.com, p. 16; Friedman, Ken. 2007. "Filliou's Dangerous Proposition." *Rett Kopi: Manifest*. Ellef Prestsæter and Karin Nygård, editors, p. 122.

7 Higgins, Dick. 2004 [1966]. "A Something Else Manifesto." *Manifestos*, 1966, A Great Bear Pamphlet. Ubu Classics, Michael Tencer, ed. Ubu Web, www.ubu.com, p. 21.

8 Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 78, No. 6, pp. 1360–80.

9 Polti, Georges. 1921. *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations*. Franklin, Ohio: James Knapp Reeve.

10 Hard, Robin. 2004. *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology*. London: Routledge, pp. 437–480, see esp. 441–444; Létoublon, Francoise. 2011. "Homer's Use of Myth." In: *A Companion to Greek Mythology*, Ken Dowden and Niall Livingstone, eds. Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., pp. 32-33; Woodford, Susan. 2011. "Displaying Myth: The Visual Arts." In: *A Companion to Greek Mythology*, Ken Dowden and Niall Livingstone, eds. Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., pp. 168–170.

11 Austin, Larry, and Doug Kahn, eds. 2011. *Source: Music of the Avant-garde*, 1966–1973. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

12 Apollodorus. 1997. *The Library of Greek Mythology*. Translated with an introduction and notes by Robin Hard. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 106; Hard, Robin. 2004. *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology*. London: Routledge, pp. 294–335, see esp. 307–311.

13 Sophocles. 1984. *The Three Theban Plays. Antigone, Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus.* Translated by Robert Fagles. Introductions and notes by Bernard Knox. New York: Penguin Classics; Sophocles. 2004. *The Theban Plays. Antigone*. *King Oidipous. Oidipous at Colonus.* Translation with notes and introduction by Ruby Blondell. Newburyport, Massachusetts: Focus Publishing, R. Pullins Company.

14 Fox, Margalit. 2008. "Walter Bowart, Alternative Journalist, Dies at 68." *The New York Times*, January 14, 2008.

15 St. Augustine. 1991. *Confessions*. Translation, introduction, and notes by Henry Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford World's Classics, p. xiv (17); Newton, Isaac. 1999. *The Principia. Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*. A new translation by I. Bernard Cohen and Anne Whitman assisted by Julia Budenz. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, p. 408.

16 Friedman, Ken 2003. "Leaders for the Knowledge Economy." *Intelligent Management in the Knowledge Economy*. Sven Junghagen and Henrik Linderoth, editors. Cheltenham, UK. Edward Elgar Publishing, 19-35.

17 Ball, Robert J. 2018. " 'Running down the Oars': Gilbert Highet's Reading of Vergil, Aen. 10.290." *Hermes*, Vol. 146, No. 2, June 2018, pp. 235–240, see esp. p. 236–239. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25162/hermes-2018-0019; See also: Douglas, Kirk. 1988. *The Ragman's Son*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 264.

18 Crossley-Holland, Kevin. 1980. "The Marriage of Njord and Skadi." In: *The Norse Myths*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 44–47, 195–196; Lindow, John. 2002. *Norse Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Heroes, Rituals, and Beliefs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 241–243, 268–270; O'Donoghue, Heather. 2007. *From Asgard to Valhalla. The Remarkable Story of the Norse Myths*. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 44–45; Sturluson, Snorri. 1966. *The Prose Edda. Tales from Norse Mythology*. Selected and translated by Jean Young. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, pp. 51–52; Struluson, Snorri. "Njord and Skadi." In: *The Prose Edda. Norse Mythology*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Jesse L. Byock. London: Penguin Classics, pp. 33–34.

The Sound of *92 Events*

Magdalena Holdar

Zen for Record
Produce a phonograph record with no sound on it.
(1966)

Unfinished Symphony
Find something.
Carry it out to its most logical conclusion.
(1967)

Ken Friedman's *92 Events* are richly populated. They reverberate with an entire choir of voices from near and far, like soundtracks from his many decades of work in the name of art and creativity. There are conversations with artist friends, such as the Japanese Mieko Shiomi (*Fluxus Balance Piece for Mieko Shiomi*, 1991), the French Robert Filliou (*A Whispered History*, 1994), and the Bulgarian-born Christo (*Empaquetage pour Christo*, 1967). Anyone familiar with the work of these artists will soon recognize the connections between them and Friedman's events, although a dedication is not always included in the title of his works. In her extensive project *Fluxus Balance*, Shiomi invited friends to participate with texts, which could be metaphorically weighed against each other, while Filliou performed *Whispered History of Art* in 1963, a work that is simultaneously a piece of performance, poetry, and music. But Friedman's soundtrack

also resounds with attributions to historical masters, such as the composer Gustav Mahler (*Homage to Mahler*, 1989).

In the same way that Friedman himself moved between countries and continents, the voices in this choir move between private galleries, public galleries, and museums in different parts of the world. They return in different versions and flow forward over long periods of time. A first exhibition, *Events* (1973), opened at the Nelson I.C. Gallery of the University of California at Davis. It then toured to various other venues for nearly ten years. Some years later, in 2009, the Stendhal Gallery in New York arranged the exhibition *99 Events*. Some events had been added to those from the previous traveling exhibition, others had been removed, while others still had been reformulated. In 2019, the *92 Events* exhibition was set in motion in Shanghai, to move on to both Europe and North America in the following years. Once more, we see the effects of flow and change, because ninety-two events are not seven less than ninety-nine, but a composition of its own, where some events return while others are replaced. An event is not a static thing. It is a kind of proposition that can suddenly take on a new shape through a changed formulation or a new interpretation. Similar shifts also appear in these exhibitions as they slowly move across the globe—seemingly similar, but never identical.

At first glance, *92 Events* may seem like a silent exhibition. Text on paper will not be perceived as a particularly singing format at once. However, the basis of events lies in music, and knowing this makes it easier to acknowledge that these sheets of paper also sound. In the late 1950s, to a greater extent musicians and other artists began to redefine what the very concept of 'music' could be. Circumventing historically established ideas about what sounds should be classified as music, they opened up to a more generous attitude in which all kinds of sounds, and even silence—as in Friedman's *Zen for Record* (1966)—had musical relevance. Not least, they explored new methods of

writing music; scores could take the form of text (such as in the instructions in Friedman's events), or come about merely by coincidence. (Composing *The Thousand Symphonies* in 1968, the American artist, writer and publisher Dick Higgins had machine guns at fired blank sheet music. The holes left by the bullets determined how to play the piece.) In the same way as the sheet music is the starting point for how the children's song as well as the oratorio should be performed, the instruction of the event suggests an action, a carrying out. Ken Friedman's *Unfinished Symphony* (1967) invites you to find something, and use it in its most logical way. Where do you look for your instrument and on what grounds do you choose it? In what way is the symphony you are playing '*unfinished*'?

Often part of a subtle interaction with people around him, the instructions in Friedman's events bear traces of friends from the past, but also of a conversation with those who are now, in this very moment, reading, reacting, and carrying out the instructions. The choir is rich and generous, and includes both friends and strangers.

Pass This on to a Friend

Print a card or paper with the text:
"Pass this on to a friend."
(1963)

Public Notice

Print a sheet of paper or a poster with the text:
If you wish to see your name in print, sign here:
(1964)

Ken Friedman is, of course, the indisputable artist behind the *92 Events*, and thus also the sender of the messages. Like a director or conductor, he instructs you, the receiver of the message, into action. Nevertheless, these instructions also hold

far more complex relationships than that between an (active) sender and a (passive) receiver. On the one hand, they often point out relationships—to friends and acquaintances, artist colleagues, and the visitors to his exhibitions. On the other, the shareability of the printed instructions also means the emergence of relationships to completely unknown people, who follow the directives wherever they come across them, and far beyond the limited time and place constituting the lifespan of an exhibition. Friedman's *Pass This on to a Friend* event—printed, distributed and thus put into circulation—can either be passed back and forth between two friends or, like a chain letter, link a long line of people through the seemingly simple act of receiving a message and then passing it on to someone else. *Public Notice*, on the other hand, addresses the stranger; anyone who feels compelled can follow the instruction and write their name on the paper. The title of the piece, *Public Notice*, gives an official character to the document. Are you in fact signing a form? Can you be held accountable, if so for what? Or do you put your name on an artwork?

Formulated as ideas already when Friedman was in his early teens, these two early events, *Pass This on to a Friend* and *Public Notice*, were not written down until later. Both act as suggestions, or offers, rather than imperatives. They can be seamlessly integrated into people's everyday lives, just as they also sprung from the artist's own observations and thoughts about everyday places, objects, and situations. Although Friedman did not reflect on them as 'art' when first formulating them, in retrospect they have become so. The instructions just needed to find their right context, and it appeared in the mid-1960s, when Friedman became associated with Fluxus: the transnational and complex network that brought together musicians and visual artists, poets, dancers, composers, and people with backgrounds in completely different fields. Robert Filliou, for example, was an economist and the Swedish

Bengt af Klintberg a folklorist. The American artist George Brecht was a chemist, although he also, as well as artists and composers such as Yoko Ono and John Cage, contributed to consolidating events and text scores as an artistic format and a musical possibility. Perhaps it is symptomatic that Friedman's everyday observations found their home precisely in Fluxus, whose artistic point of departure was ephemeral things and everyday actions that, through collaboration, could circulate in an unceasing flow. After all, he eventually got his doctorate in behavioural science, which in a way closes the circle between the exploration of human actions through art, and the analytical and theoretical inquiry into why we act the way we do.

Everyone who became part of the circle around Fluxus has their own story about how that came about. The composer Mieko Shiomi ran into constantly Fluxus-recruiting fellow musician Nam June Paik in Tokyo in 1963. Paik thought her compositions bore strong similarities to material already circulating in the Fluxus network, and made sure she got in touch with the artist and Fluxus promoter George Maciunas in New York.[1] Bengt af Klintberg, in turn, saw a Fluxus concert in Copenhagen in 1962.[2] Afterwards he accompanied the artists to a restaurant nearby, and subsequently became a Swedish cog in the transnational machinery of Fluxus. A few months later, he arranged the first Fluxus concert in Sweden together with the artists Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles, both acquaintances from the dinner in Copenhagen. Ken Friedman, finally, was in need of material for his broadcasts on the student radio at Shimer College, Illinois. He came into contact with Higgins in New York 1966 as his publications on art outside the spotlight of the art world (published by his own publishing house Something Else Press) provided perfect content for Friedman's programs. During a stay in New York, he finally met Higgins, who immediately introduced him to Maciunas—the key figure who tirelessly kept up correspondence and implemented ideas to spread Fluxus in the world.[3]

Though differing in many ways, most artists who came to populate this Fluxus network have one thing in common: the interest in expressing themselves in words. Unimaginable amounts of books of various kinds have been produced over the years, but also theoretical summaries, manifestos, newspapers, posters and, not least, autobiographical texts. Friedman himself has contributed greatly to this extensive material. In the late 1980s, he published twelve descriptive core issues which he found characteristic of Fluxus art, and his list has since guided researchers and writers who try to find an approach to this elusive phenomenon. As for the more personal narratives, the first encounter with and absorption into Fluxus is always described with high precision: when it happened, through which actors, and how the first contact with George Maciunas manifested itself. It comes across as an important point in the person's life. A personal and remarkable event, but also astonishingly typical and following an almost identical pattern: a meeting with someone in the network; an intermediary contact to Maciunas; his desire to have material sent to him that could be distributed under the name 'Fluxus.' The introduction in Fluxus becomes like a message that is passed on to a friend, which is passed on to the next friend, and the next. Perhaps Friedman's art, like Fluxus, is best described in companionship.

Ordinary Objects

Place things on the floor.
(1970)

In Ken Friedman's events, composed over a total of six decades, many of the objects that surround us in our everyday life appear; all equally important and all potential materials for art. They are *ordinary objects*, so discreet that we rarely give them a thought: dinnerware and drinking glasses, salt, butter, watches, and shoes. Unlike conventional artist materials (or

musical instruments for that matter), most of us have easy access to these things and can easily invite them to be our co-actors when carrying out one of his instructions, no matter where we are in the world.

The transnational claim is an important aspect of Friedman's art, as well as in Fluxus in general. In 1989, when he wrote his list of twelve core issues distinguishing Fluxus, the term 'global' came first. Global, he explains, should be understood as the philosophical undertone of Fluxus that "embraces the idea that we live on a single world, a world in which the boundaries of political states are not identical with the boundaries of nature or culture."[1] George Maciunas' thoughts with Fluxus were permeated with the free flow of ideas and things (reflected already in the name itself: *flux* means flow; ceaseless movement). Ensuring the spread of Fluxus around the world was central. Almost immediately after their first meeting, Maciunas appointed Friedman director of Fluxus West, based in San Diego and San Francisco, where the young Fluxus recruit came to live after his studies in Illinois.[2] In practical terms, the commission meant that Friedman arranged concerts and exhibitions, and approached museum directors and art gallery managers, with the aim of consolidating the presence of Fluxus within and beyond the art world.

If the task of the director was to promote Fluxus through targeted information campaigns, so to speak, the same mechanism of dissemination was also built into the format of the artworks. The events were shared through publication in catalogues and collection volumes, or why not as a card handed to a friend. Multiples in the form of small boxes with various contents, so-called Fluxkits, were put together by and by, and could easily be sent to different recipients. Though there was a designated creator behind each box, whose name was clearly marked on the individually and carefully designed cover, the contents could vary. The box entitled *Flux Clippings* (Friedman, 1969) can either contain scraps of paper, or hair

and nails. *Open and Shut Case* (Friedman, 1966) is both an event and a thing: a box with its cover text designed as a legal document, a summons to court. But when you open it, it only holds a card saying: "Shut quick!" The play with words, with the common designation of an 'open case' (box) and an 'open case' in the legal sense, and also the word *shut*, both a verb and an adjective, appears in another version of the same concept. In this version, the cover is reduced to the direct call to "Open me", while the card inside reads "Shut me quick".

Whoever takes the call seriously soon finds themselves in an eternal loop of opening and shutting. Suddenly, the box determines your actions. Unlike *Flux Clippings*, which describes its own content, and *Ordinary Objects*, which leaves it up to you to choose objects to place on the floor in front of you, *Open and Shut Case*, by its imperative, makes you an obedient object rather than a self-determining subject. The thing, the box, commands and has agency. The roles are reversed and the human practitioner is suddenly subject to a non-human client. The object you received in your hand has become a thing that does not accept playing second fiddle, but instead has taken command of the situation, a transformation described by art historian W.J.T. Mitchell as "the moment when the object becomes the Other, when the sardine can looks back, when the mute idol speaks."[3] When the things circulate and you interact with them, as a human you are no longer self-evidently the ruler, nor can the creators maintain control over how their works will behave or be handled as they start moving out into the world. Friedman's implicit references to other artists are also examples of this. They signal togetherness and inspiration. George Maciunas stated that "it's always impossible to decide where the work of an artist or creator finishes and where the work of someone else begins."[4] Dick Higgins, in turn, noted: "In the early sixties, when the first generation of Fluxus artists were doing and giving away their experiences,

it mattered little which of us had done which piece. The spirit was: you've seen it, now—very well, it's yours. Now you are free to make your own variation on it if you like, and the piece and the world will be a little richer for all that."[5]

City

Construct a city of found material.
Let the city grow and change over a span of time.
Abandon the completed city where it stands.
(1967)

Fluxus art is created to be shared with others. A piece can travel between countries and across continents, according to the same nomadic pattern of movement Ken Friedman himself has lived by. Many of the pieces can also be easily adapted to the conditions of different situations and places. Instructions can be carried out both here and there, each time differently and always based on the premises determined by the time, the place, and the interpreter. *City* (1967), for example, starts from a concept known to everyone, and in three sentences Friedman portrays the life cycle of a city: its creation, its change over time, and finally its abandonment. The instruction can, as is often the case, either be an idea taking shape only in your mind, or an action to be carried out, but regardless of which it also involves a series of choices and stances. What materials are needed to build a city and where could we find them? How long should we let the city grow? Where would it be located? It is a well-known fact that many Fluxus pieces explore time in different ways, and Friedman's events and Fluxkits often focus on eternity; an endless chain of actions, as in *Pass This on to a Friend*, or the equally endless loop of *Open and Shut Case*. *City's* short instruction sets off an avalanche of notions and ideas, but the most important of them come to mind only after a while, when the other practicalities have been reviewed.

Exactly what characteristics distinguish a city, and how do we know when it is time to abandon it?

Clearly, Fluxus is better described as an 'attitude' or 'philosophy of life' than an artist group or an artistic style. This small circle of individualists, all of whom had different backgrounds and artistic expressions, were united by an interest in everyday things and cooperating with others. Fluxus pieces could sneak into everyday life by pointing out what we do every day and calling it art, or asking you to handle everyday objects in a completely new manner. An artwork could suddenly appear in your letterbox or be pinned up on a public noticeboard. Creating unique artworks and highlighting the individual originator behind them was less interesting for many of them. Good art often makes us understand the world and the people in it in a new and sometimes unexpected way. The German artist Joseph Beuys, who sometimes participated in various Fluxus activities, argued that since everything could potentially be art, including relationships and all functions of society, anyone could also be an artist. This was the type of creative climate in which Ken Friedman's artistry took shape. His *92 Events* show that the things around us and our everyday actions can be something other than they seem. An event can appear exceedingly simple through its visual form and ephemeral content, but upon closer reflection, simplicity hides radical possibilities. It can challenge the way we see the world, the things around us and our actions, thereby shifting our perspective and calibrating our gaze based on these new insights. As Friedman urges us in *Center Piece* (2003):

Imagine a life.
Live it. ■

Translated by Astrid Trotzig

References

1 Interview with Mieko Shomi, published by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2013.
2 Bengt af Klintberg, *Svensk Fluxus/Swedish Fluxus*, Stockholm: Rönnells antikvariat, 2006, p. 13.
3 Carolyn Barnes, "Ken Friedman; Event, Idea and Inquiry", in *Ken Friedman*, New York: Stendhal Gallery, 2009, p. 9.
4 Ken Friedman, "Fluxus and Company", in *The Fluxus Reader*, Chichester: Academic Editions, 1998 [1989], p. 244.
5 There were also directors of the other cardinal points: the Danish artist Per Kirkeby was appointed Director of Fluxus North, the Czech Milan Knížák of Fluxus East, and the French artist Ben Vautier of Fluxus South.
6 W.J.T. Mitchell, *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, p. 156.
7 Natilee Harren, "Fluxus and the Transitional Commodity", *Art Journal*, 75/1 (Spring), 2016, p. 59.
8 Harren (2016), p. 64.

Text: Ken Friedman, Magdalena Holdar, Ditte Mauritzon
Publisher: Bettina Pehrsson, Kalmar konstmuseum

Editors: Ken Friedman, Bettina Pehrsson, Maija Zetterlund
Translation: Astrid Trotzig ("The Sound of *92 Events*")
Graphic design: William Jokijärvi Andersson, Oskar Laurin
Printed by: Livonia Print, 2023

ISBN: 978-91-519-3271-2