

# Art, No-Art & Anti-Art

A collection  
of relics



Harry Ruhé











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# Concise report of an

**Burnt lingerie**

**Exploding Mystery Food**

**Books cast in cement**

**Plastic boxes containing God ('God is everywhere')**

**A dildo decorated with artificial pearls and satin ribbon**

**Material able to cut the energy supply in police stations**

**Photographs of taboo breaking performances**

**Letters with Special Stories**

**Printed matter of the Institute for Direct Art set up by Günter Brus and Otto Muehl.**

**Flyers of the NO!art Movement, political instrument of Boris Lurie, Sam Goodman and Stanley Fisher.**

**Posters by Ben Vautier: ground breaking Art Total (Everything is Art!)**

**Manifestoes by Gustav Metzger about Auto-destructive Art; destruction as part of the creative process.**

**Calls for Anti-Art demonstrations by Henry Flynt: DOWN WITH ART!**

**All of this and a lot more can be found within  
the pages of this book: a treasure trove of 'relicts'  
and also some 'normal' art  
collected over the last fifty years.**



# adventurous journey

**I**t started in April, 1968. The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven presented a much talked about artist. I had seen reproductions of his work in art magazines: now I finally had the chance to see his work for real.

Cupboards filled with felt, either rolled up or piled up slices, chocolate covered with brown paint, copper tables, a spade with two handles, walking canes lying on the floor and 'enlarged' with fat, in a corner of the exhibition hall even more fat ...

I really did not get it, but that is not unusual. Normally, my reaction is: I don't understand this kind of art at all and then tend to forget about it quite soon. But the exhibition in Eindhoven was different. In fact, I was flabbergasted and also had the feeling I was part of something truly special. The objects on display weren't lifeless material; these objects told a distinctive story and because of those stories I was drawn into a secretive and adventurous world. A world where ground-breaking art is created; the kind of art that doesn't comply with rules and knows no taboos. The world of Joseph Beuys.

How different were the times and culture I grew up in. I remember the nineteen fifties as a grey and stifling period: as a child you were only told what you were not supposed to do. The Catholic Church was still very influential at the time. Every week we received the bland magazine *De Katholieke Illustratie*. One of its regular columns was titled *Uit de Schatkamers van de Beeldende Kunst* (from the treasure troves of the visual arts). Usually, there was a story about some icon, a stained glass window or medieval woodwork.

One day - it must have been around 1962 - the magazine reproduced a painting by Jaap Wagemaker, who belonged to the so-called matter painting movement. The work looked like a landscape with craters seen from a great height and, if I remember correctly, was titled *Duiventil II* (pigeon hole II). I had never seen anything like it before, but I really liked it. In the telephone directory, I looked up the number and address of the artist. He lived in my neighbourhood. I was around fourteen at the time and I was kind of nervous: after a few days I was courageous enough to give him a call and asked him if I could pay him a visit.

It was a memorable experience. The artist showed me how he mixed sand through his oil paint and explained to me how he used burlap, shells and pieces of wood in his compositions, 'I always put the larger forms just off centre, because it creates more depth.' I was truly impressed. When I was about to leave, he gave me a beautiful lithograph and said, 'this might just be the beginning of an art collection.'

Exciting times were ahead. The Amsterdam based cinema Cineac presented *De werkelijkheid van Karel Appel* (The reality of Karel Appel), a film causing a lot of commotion.

I did not have a lot of affinity with Cobra and Karel Appel in particular – after all, he was already famous and quite old, well over forty and therefore from quite another generation. But I was impressed by the film: through a hole in the canvas journalist Jan Vrijman had filmed how Appel 'tortured' the canvas. 'I paint like a barbarian in these barbarian times.' Fantastic!

In the meantime, I had also visited a show about kinetic art in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Several works of art made noise and could be put into motion by the public. Moving movement! This made me very happy and I wanted to belong to that kind of art. It spoke of a world which allowed you to breathe, far away from this stifling society populated by narrow-minded citizens who only wanted to forbid all the fun things in life. My parents couldn't understand what it was all about. This meant that I was on the right track.

A few years later, the neighbour from downstairs told me exciting stories about a Fluxus concert in which he had taken part as an extra. I wouldn't have minded joining him, but at that time I was still too young. The good thing was that he had written down what had happened.

'A friend of ours (Anthon Beeke, HR), also a friend of one of the Dutch members of the International Fluxusgroup, phoned us recently and told us about a Fluxfestival on Friday, November 13th 1964 in the Kurzaal, Scheveningen.'

But they needed an extra who could perform with four other gentlemen Wim T. Schippers' piece 1. no smoking 2. no eating. 3. smoking 4. eating. It was a very special experience, 'we stood on the stage and performed for about four minutes each time, as indicated by the above numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4.'

A photograph of my neighbour during this performance was published half a year later in an American Fluxus Newspaper.

For more exciting newspaper stories I had to wait until Friday, November 17th, 1967. On that day, the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusuma covered the nearly naked artist Jan Schoonhoven – he had only kept his socks on – with round stains in the Stedelijk Museum in Schiedam. The newspapers just couldn't get enough of this scandal. I cut out all the newspaper articles relating to this event, but of course I would rather have had an art work of this exiting woman on one of my bedroom walls. My time came about half a year later. The gallery/farmhouse of theatre producer Ritsaert ten Cate in the small village of Loenersloot hosted some of Kusama's 'objects'. Clothes and household objects covered with artificial flowers or pasta, everything sprayed with a layer of gold, silver or bronze paint. There were also wall panels covered with penis like shapes of cloth ... Absolutely wonderful!

I bought a bag covered with yellow/black penises for Dfl. 700 (around € 318) and just two weeks later I cycled once more to the gallery to buy a winter coat which had flowers all over it. It was more expensive than the bag, around Dfl. 1100 (around € 500), so I had to borrow this sum.

Wagemaker had been right. The lithograph he gave to me was the beginning of a serious art collection. After buying two works by Kusama, I purchased in Anny de Decker's Antwerp based gallery Wide White Space a small grey striped package by Christo, soon after I got a red Concetto Spaziale by Lucio Fontana from gallery Orez in The Hague, and a small, rather dirty white Achrome by Piero Manzoni, which became kind of greenish when placed near the heating. In gallery Espace in Amsterdam, I bought a small Nana of painted plaster by Niki de Saint-Phalle. At Herman Krikhaar's gallery in the Spuistraat in Amsterdam I discovered an erotic mirror in an oval frame of colourful fake fur, a so-called 'hortisculpture' by Ferdi Tajiri. A great object and a great gallery as well! Lots of international art, an elegant lady behind a functional desk and the owner was quite something. He was a nice and charismatic man, dressed in a stylish suit and tie and could tell the most

beautiful stories. I had no idea yet what I wanted to do later in life, but for the first time I thought: a gallery like this, now wouldn't that be something.

In 1969, I paid a visit to Stanley Brouwn. He had built up quite a reputation in Germany with Fluxus related street acts. I had a thousand Dutch guilders with me, rather a sum in those days, but I had no idea what I could buy for that kind of money. Luckily, the artist had just started making enlargements of his legendary This Way Brouwn's on white painted chipboard. Transportation to my apple green coloured attic was included.

Many of these artists were already internationally quite well-known or even famous - I never 'discovered' an artist - but there was not really a market yet for their works. This was convenient, because it was not as if I had money to burn. The Nana and the Concetto Spaziale cost eight hundred Dutch guilders each, but that was rather a lot of money in those days. Luckily, most galleries also allowed you to pay in instalments.

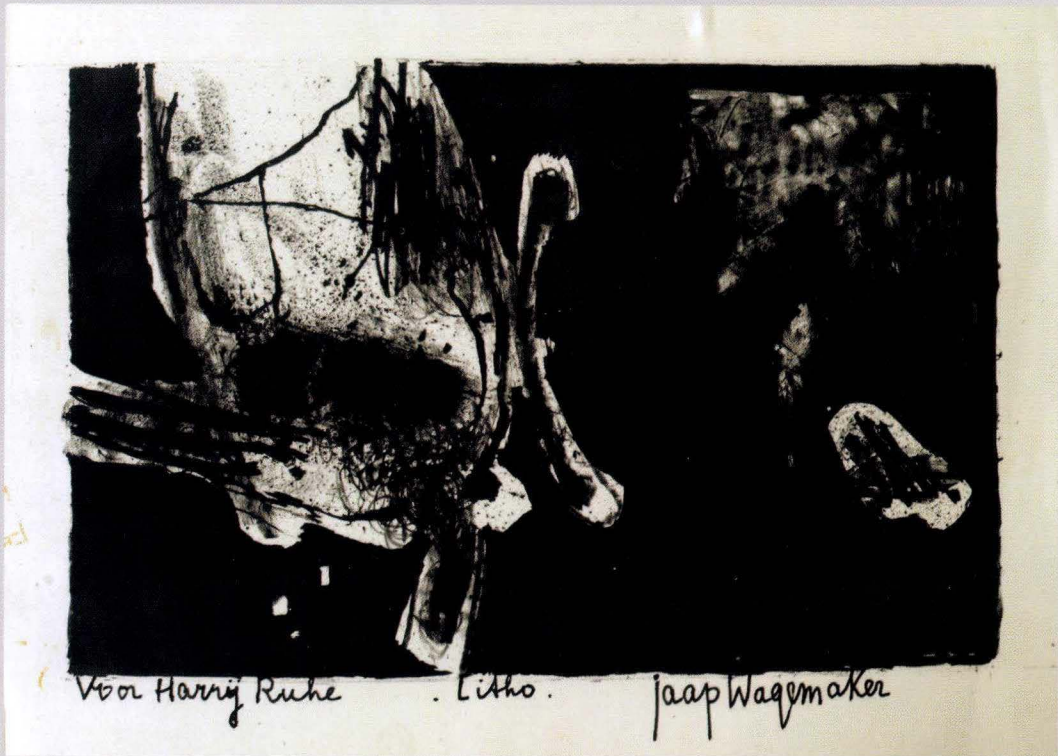
It was really pleasant being surrounded by all these art works and my room was getting quite full. Nevertheless, it became pretty quickly clear to me that it would be impossible to buy a unique work of art from all the artists on my wish list.

In November, 1968 the problem was solved. A small shop opened its doors in the centre of Amsterdam: it specialised in editions of prints, photographs, multiples and artists' books. The owner was Wiesje Smals and she cooperated closely with collector Mia Visser. In the beginning, Ritsaert ten Cate was also involved. For ten Dutch guilders you could buy signed multiples (edition size: unlimited) by Joseph Beuys and Dieter Roth and for twenty Dutch guilders you could get an Inflatable Nana by Niki de Saint Phalle.

In 1973, Gerhard Richter made a wall for SERIAAL - the name of the shop - which consisted of 100 signed paintings measuring 26 x 53.4 cm each; they cost a few hundred Dutch guilders apiece.

The shop also sold beautiful printed matter, for example posters designed by artists, some of these were signed. Also, there were books by Ed Ruscha, James Lee Byars, Sol LeWitt and the concept-catalogues edited by art promotor Seth Siegelau. Books, invitations and posters designed by artists soon became a fast growing part of my collection.





Jaap Wagemaker, lithograph.



Yayoi Kusama, *Flower Overcoat*, 1964, photographed in 1968 in the garden of the psychiatric institution Endegeest in the town of Oegstgeest (I used to work there at the time). The object is now part of the collection of the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC.



Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn, 1606-1669  
 Selbstbildnis, 1654  
 Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel  
 Schloß Wilhelmshöhe

Handwritten notes and signatures in black ink, including names like 'Golden', 'ASK', 'GERRIT', and '74 Gerechtigkeitskassa'. A vertical stamp reads 'Nachdruck nur mit Genehmigung'.

10  
 3000  
 BOSTON  
 12  
 HEILVITA  
 70  
 BILFVERSAND  
 Gallery A  
 Leidse Kruisstr. 10  
 Amsterdam Hol.

James Lee Byars,  
 postcard, 1978.

Door **Thijs Peters**

AMSTERDAM 8 okt. - Harry Rubé (39) is galeriebouder van de galerie A, die onder de Nederlandse avant-gardegaleries een aparte plaats inneemt in tegenstelling tot galeries als Swart (neo-constructivisme en fundamentele kunst), Seriaal (nieuwe expressionisme en foto-projecten), of Art and Project (conceptuele en fundamentele kunst) vindt men bij A uitsluitend kunstenaars bij wie leven en werk zo nauw verband houden dat ze soms door elkaar lopen.

Een ervan is Günter Brus die nu exposeert (tot 21 okt.) en indertijd optien baseerde door zijn Aktionen in het kader van de Weense body art. A was eerst in een minuscule kamertje aan de Amstel gevestigd en is sinds kort verhuisd naar een bijna even kleine halder aan de Leidse Kruisstraat 10.

Mijn eerste kunstwerk kocht ik in 1966, een in dat jaar vervaardigde Wagenmaker. Daarna heb ik een Christo gekocht en Fontana, Kusama, Brouwen, Fluxus vond ik toen ook al interessant, maar ik kon het nog niet recht als kunst zien. Dat kwam wat later.

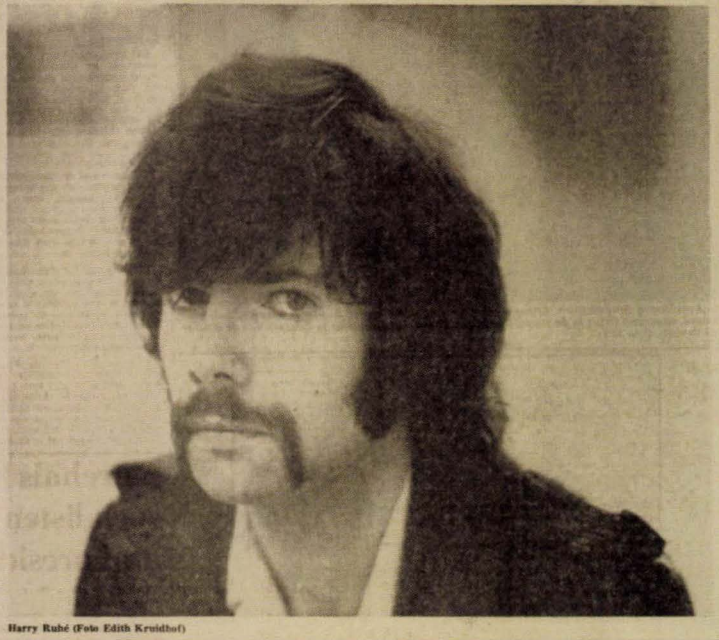
Een van de besten vind ik Wim Schippers, die is zich steeds blijven ontwikkelen en hij is de enige die beter wordt naarmate zijn werk voor het publiek slapper en luzziger lijkt. Ik houd van kunstenaars die de zaken op losse schroeven stellen. Zijn werk is ook geen atelier- of laboratoriumkunst, het wordt echt in de wereld uitgevoerd.

Een voorbeeld voor mij was de Wide White Space Gallery in Antwerpen. Zelfs was ik ook daar, maar dan wat kleiner. De Wide White Space Gallery was een van de weinige galeries die echt kunstenaars ontdekten: Broodtheaters, Panamarenko, Penck, Baselitz, Andre, Flavin. Als museumman zou ik daar gewoon alles hebben gekocht, ze zijn tien jaar later allemaal beïnvloed geworden. Voor 20.000,- had je de hele minimal-beweging goed vertegenwoordigd kunnen hebben, maar nu koopt het Stedelijk ze voor heel veel Geld bij Konrad Fisher.

Ik begon de galerie ook omdat ik het jammer vond dat je bepaalde dingen in Nederland gewoon niet te zien kreeg. Daarom dreed ik een Fluxuspresentatie, samen met Maximas en Hundertmark, dat was nog nauwelijks te zien geweest. Het is er wel vreemd mee gesteld, in de constructivistische traditie kan je nog steeds allerlei dingen maken zonder dat er goeged wordt. Dit heet Mondriaan al gedaan, maar bij de laat ik zeggen meer dachtelijke kunstvormen hoor je dat met heel gauw. Het wordt niet serieus genomen, men beschouwt het niet meer als een gra.

Daarna bracht ik Milan Križak partituren, foto's en bij zijn happening gebruikte materialen. Hij was een van de eersten in Europa die met happening bezig was. Hij was in Amerika maar ging toch weer terug naar Tjechoslowski.

## Galerie A: aparte plaats onder avant-gardegalleries



Harry Rubé (Foto Edith Kruidhof)

Hij dacht dat hij in Amerika een van de zoveel conceptuele kunstenaars zou worden en dat hij in Tjechoslowski meer thuis hoorde. Zijn werk heeft ook alles te maken met de toestand daar: vrijheidsbeperking etc. Hij kan er daar niet rijk van worden. In zulke omstandigheden moet je goed geroutteerd zijn.

Kunstenaars bewerkstelligen ook nooit iets op korte termijn, ik geloof meer in langzame mentaliteitsveranderingen. Ik vind het interessant hoe indertijd de opening van Carl Andre in Den Haag zijn beïnvloedde. Meest werd door de BKK. Andre

de exposerende kunstenaar, heeft het loen voor hun eigenaars, maar niet de museumdirecteur, die alleen maar beïnvloed was over zijn mooie tentoonstelling.

De eenheid van leven en werk vind ik essentieel. Gosewitz de naast een pionier van visuele poëzie ook een goede afsluiter, is die ik heb leen-voorgeleed, maakt die dingen als kunst, maar ook blaast hij glas die hij op straat voor 3 mark ter verkoop aanbiedt; hij maakt daar geen eenzijdig verschil tussen en heeft zich nooit in Den Haag zijn beïnvloedde. Meest werd door de BKK. Andre

ik breng vooral mensen die wel belangrijke zijn maar buiten Nederlande kunstcrisis vallen, zoals ook Tomas Schmit, Erik Anderson, Novak. Ik voel me wat dat betreft het meest verwant met Wies Smals van de Appel. Zij is wel voornamelijk met performances bezig, maar ze is ruim geïnteresseerd in alles wat actueel is.

Deze expositie van Günter Brus presenteert een dwarsdoorsnede van zijn werk. Er is een deel uit zijn Weense tijd: partituren van Aktionen, meestal groepsactiviteiten. Brus en Nitsch waren de mensen met de belangrijkste ideeën. Muchi had

het geld. Schwarzogler kwam er pas later bij; zijn werk was wel wat esthetischer, maar hij is nu zijn dood misschien wel wat gedeïaliseerd.

De mensen denken vaak bij die Aktionen dat het etom te doen is om angst aan te jagen, maar ze waren bezig met heel elementaire dingen: eten, stront, bloed, darmen, de dingen waaruit we bestaan. Je hoort wel eens zeggen 'het is geen kunst want kunst is mooi', maar kunst heeft helemaal niet esthetisch te zijn. Brus was degene die in de jaren zestig het meest intensief in Wenen bezig was.

Wenen is een onverdraagzame stad met licht fascistische trekjes. Hij was op een heel eerlijke manier in de weer met het doortrekken van maatschappelijke taboes in dezelfde tijd dat hier door toedoen van Privo op een iets andere manier gebeurde. Hij woonde nu in Berlijn en is weer gaan leken en schrijven. Daaruit bestaat de rest van de expositie.

Qua thematiek is er niet veel veranderd: het gaat vaak om de meest afschuwelijke en indringende dingen, de manier waarop mensen zichzelf en elkaar kwelen. Hij doet het nu met bedachte situaties en figuren, maar hij is uiteindelijk nog steeds met zichzelf bezig met zijn angsten en frustraties. De Weense groep was altijd al zeer geïnteresseerd in psychopathen en seksueel ontspoorde. Het enige verschil tussen een psychopaat en Brus is dat Brus altijd nog redelijk functioneert, geen problemen maakt.

We leven in een tijd van reïtatie. In de jaren zestig was er veel meer in beweging, al die happeningen, die waren niet van kunstenaars maar wel heel interessant. Nu is iedereen ingepakt en dat irriteert me. Mijn bezigheden inspireren mensen die in die tijd in de weer waren; ze voelen een zekere affiniteit met mijn activiteiten. Er hoort veel boxen- en vakjogging.

Er is geen wezenlijk verschil tussen wat men serieus kunstenaars noemt en mensen als David Bowie of Lou Reed. Toch wordt er bijvoorbeeld in de kranten door verschillende mensen over geschreven. Alles wordt meer door elkaar gaan lopen. Veel Fluxusmensen zijn zowel met serieuze kunst als met popmuziek bezig geweest, zoals John Cale. Ook iemand als Dierik Huth is tussen de kunst met de meest verschillende dingen in de weer.

Het is jammer dat de musea, misschien met uitzondering van het Van-Abbeemuseum, zo weinig werkelijk actuele kunst hebben.

Je kan gemakkelijk elke maand voor weinig geld een expositie maken van iemand met museumniveau, maar de musea zijn niet zeker van zichzelf, ze moeten het ook eerst van een ander horen. Het Stedelijk heeft nu wel een aardige verzameling Amerikaanse abstracten, maar nu zouden ze nog voor praktisch niets werk kunnen aankopen van Walter de Maria. Les Levine en noem maar op.

Als je handig koopt kan je je actuele collectie zo goed als volledig maken, en dat voor een fractie van wat die De Kooning heeft gekocht. Die aankoop van die recente De Kooning ten koste van zoveel andere dingen, terwijl het werk ook nog kwalitatief bedenken de maat is en niet meer actueel, is een bewijs van incompetentie. Je kan niet doorgaan met het kopen van slecht werk, wat op zich is oudewetse kunstenaars, dat is slecht beleid.



These were good times. In 1970, the Kölnischer Kunstverein (Cologne art society) presented an overview of Happening & Fluxus. The exhibition was curated by Harald Szeemann in cooperation with Hanns Sohm. The latter was a dentist who lived in Markgröningen.

I paid him a visit after the exhibition had finished. His Fluxus archive, everything within the context of a great many related movements like the Viennese Actionists, Happenings and Intermedia, concrete and visual poetry, artists' books and mail art, was truly impressive. Sohm was a very passionate collector. He told me that he tried to get at least two copies of everything: the so-called Duplikatensammlung (collection of duplicates) also serving as a means of exchange.

Sohm could tell great stories and behind every snippet of paper loomed a great anecdote. In fact, the man was part of his own archive.

When I set up my gallery programme in 1976, Sohm's way of collecting was a great source of inspiration to me. He was also a very generous person. He gave me the most beautiful books of Dieter Roth and also provided me with addresses of interesting artists and publishers.

In those days, addresses were very valuable. There was no internet and no Art Diary either, Flash Art's handy address guide. If you wanted a book or something else from an artist, you had to write them a letter. Artists like Ben Vautier, Alighiero Boetti, Chris Burden, Lawrence Weiner and James Lee Byars always responded to requests for information. They would say how much a book would cost and what else they had on offer. The market for contemporary art hadn't really taken off yet. Artists still had time to answer their mail.

The address of the Berlin based publisher Armin Hundertmark was given to me by Johannes Gachnang. In the early nineteen seventies, the latter introduced artists like Anselm Kiefer, Ludwig Gosewitz and Sigmar Polke in the Netherlands through presentations in the Goethe Institut/Provisorium.

Hundertmark specialised in Fluxus, Viennese Actionism and such like. He published so-called 'Kartons', little cardboard boxes filled with photographs, printed matter or drawings in limited editions. During my first visit, I bought three of his editions, all incredibly cheap. I also informed Hundertmark that I intended to start selling all these beautiful things via mail. He thought it was a great idea.

In 1973, I dispatched the first order list: a signed edition by Arnulf Rainer, a box with twelve original photographs, priced at 205 Dutch guilders. It didn't work out as planned

because most people had never even heard about the artists mentioned on the order list. It soon became clear to me that, first of all, I had to find a place to show these fantastic works of art.

In December 1975, I rented a small space in Amsterdam, near the river Amstel. I decided to name the gallery: 'A'. About a month later, my FluxShow was inaugurated, an exhibition organised in close cooperation with George Maciunas. I had sent him a list with names I had seen in various Fluxus publications, but he returned the list to me with rather a lot of comments and he had also crossed out several names.

One of those was Henry Flynt, the man who had introduced the term 'concept art' in 1961. Maciunas had published Flynt's essay in 'An Anthology' in 1963, an edition designed by Maciunas himself. According to him, Flynt was nowadays only working on 'economics + bluegrass'.

Henry Flynt was a classically trained violin player, Lou Reed taught him how to play the guitar, for a while he replaced John Cale at the Velvet Underground and in 1964 he demonstrated in New York against Karl Stockhausen's *Originale*, a music theatre work. Flynt also wrote the manifest 'Down with Art' and in 1975 he set up the rock band Henry Flynt and Nova Billy. Shortly, a man with many talents.

I got in touch with him and he sent me some texts. He also asked me to publish a Dutch version of his most recent essay and I soon agreed. Near the end of 1976, I had finished my first book: *Henry Flynt, Voorstel voor een Genieën-Bevrijdings-Project* (Proposal for a "Geniuses' Liberation" Project). I didn't sell any copies and gave most of them away.

During the first few years, I hardly sold anything at all in my gallery, but this was compensated by interest from the press: they wrote positively about nearly every exhibition. This makes you feel self-assured, maybe even cocky.

In 1977, I exhibited drawings by Günter Brus one of the Viennese Actionists, one of my heroes. The entire exhibition was sent to me via mail in a cardboard case. There was no money to frame the works or to illuminate them properly, so I wasn't surprised that the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam had no interest whatsoever. Still, I was annoyed that its director Edy de Wilde had spent a lot of money on some bronze sculptures by Willem de Kooning which were 'not of a very good quality and not even very contemporary either'. 'A proof of incompetence', a statement I made during an interview in a widely read newspaper. With just



a fraction of all the money they had spent, the Stedelijk Museum could have bought works by Walter de Maria and Les Levine, artists I really admired. Rather heavy criticism and not completely correct either: de Wilde had an eye for quality, but only for painting. He didn't have a lot of affinity with conceptual art and such like. Anyway, the journalist wrote down everything I said and director de Wilde wasn't very pleased with the result.

Gallery A didn't only limit itself to Fluxus art. From 1977 onwards, work by the Viennese Actionists was shown on a regular basis as well. Books with pasted drawings by Günter Brus, early actionist relics by Hermann Nitsch, photographs from the legacy of Rudolf Schwarzkogler and erotic paintings from Otto Muehl's commune. The gallery's bookshop offered printed matter from the 1960's by the Viennese Actionists for little money.

From 1978 onwards, I had a second gallery space at my disposal. Performances, video- and film presentations took place in a souterrain located at the Leidse Kruisstraat in the heart of Amsterdam. Reinderwerk (Thom Puckey and Dirk Larsen) showed Behavioural Art, Ulises Carrión presented a telephone project, Nan Hoover presented her latest videos, Paul Sharits came up with films by Stan Brakhage and Lawrence Weiner just couldn't stop playing his LP Niets aan Verloren/Nothing to Lose, both the A and B side.

The squatted caretaker's house, part of a former prison complex at the Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen, was home to exhibitions and installations. Early land-art collages by Peter Hutchinson, artists' books with etchings from Sol LeWitt's private collection and an installation with dices by Peter Downsbrough. Meanwhile, Jochen Gerz had designed a mirror sculpture for the ceiling and the fridge was filled for weeks on end with a block of frozen ink: a 'living room sculpture' by Reiner Ruthenbeck.

As far as sales were concerned, these weren't going very well yet. This changed in 1979, once I had published my book about the Fluxus movement: FLUXUS, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties.

I was visited by Gilbert B. Silverman, an enthusiastic American collector. With the help of Jon Hendricks, he was working on a collection of historical Fluxus works. Not long after, the Italian publisher Francesco Conz came to Amsterdam and his timing couldn't have been better. Happening pioneer Al Hansen was using the gallery as a studio: he was working on an exhibition of so-called 'Venus works' with discarded materials he had found on the street.

They weren't expensive: for seventy five Dutch guilders it was possible to buy a nude made up of cigarette buds and chocolate wrappers. Conz wanted to buy everything he saw, including the work clothes of the artist.

During his first visit, collector Silverman was mainly interested in photographs of Fluxus concerts. Nowadays, documentary photography is presented as Art with numbered editions and priced accordingly, but forty years ago the situation was completely different. In those days, you ordered the copies you wanted directly from the photographer and he would print them for you in his dark room. That was his job. Often, he would write at the back what could be seen on the front, stamped his address on it and sold each copy for a few ten guilder notes.

I bought hundreds of photographs for this American collector and used the commission to buy copies for my own collection. Many important Fluxus concerts had taken place in the Netherlands and in Germany, so most of the time I didn't have to travel too far to get the copies.

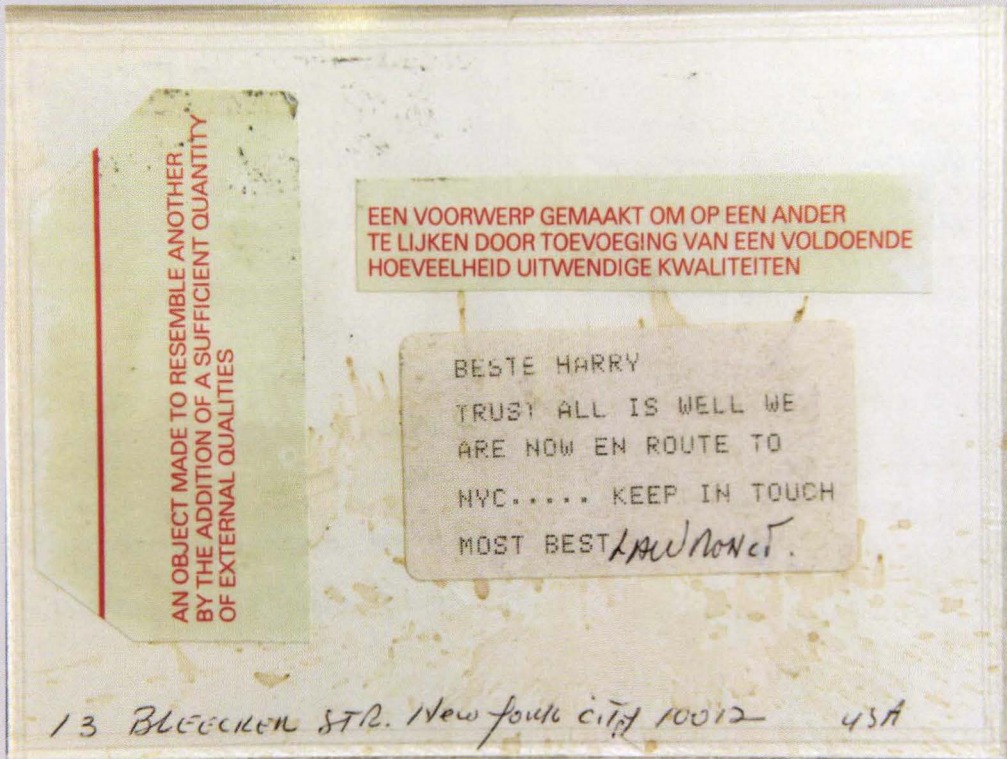
The artists were always willing to supply me with additional information: in fact, most of them were still alive. Sometimes, I would ask the artist to write a story and in exchange I gave them a couple of prints. This happened for example in the case of the French artist Jean-Jacques Lebel. He was one of the most important representatives of Happening, alongside Allan Kaprow (U.S.A.) and Wolf Vostell (Germany). A photograph of Yoko Ono in the nude during a performance of Lebel is intriguing and you really miss a lot if you don't know anything about the context.

In the beginning, Fluxus wasn't taken very seriously. It was called 'Neo-Dada'. (Art, No-Art and Anti-Art is a variation on a book title by Hans Richter, a well-known Dada artist.)

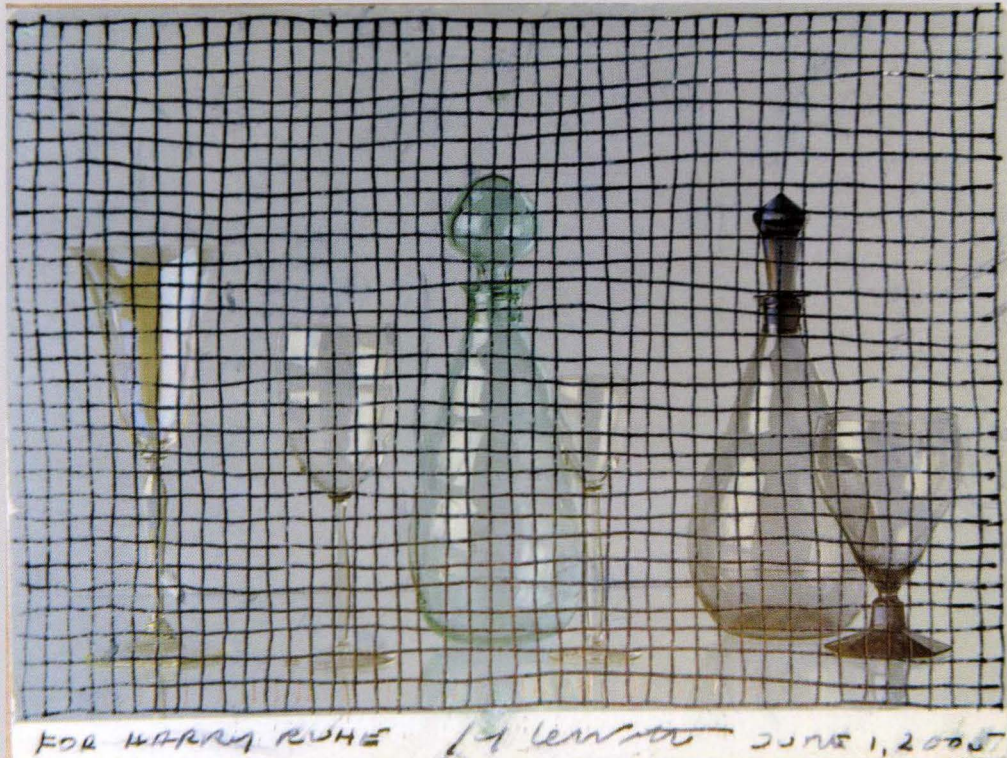
The movement was associated with games in plastic boxes, artists' books and newspapers: mass produced art with prices to match. Lawrence Weiner once said to me, 'really great the way you promote Fluxus, but it doesn't really mean anything.'

Nowadays, there are hardly any doubts about the historical importance of this movement. Also, the largest private collections have been incorporated into important museums. Since 1981, the Archiv Hanns Sohm (Hanns Sohm Archive) belongs to the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart. New York's Museum of Modern Art incorporated the Gilbert & Lila Silverman collection, which focuses mainly on George Maciunas, the figurehead of Fluxus. Fluxus has become an





Lawrence Weiner, collage on postcard, 1984.



Sol LeWitt, ink on postcard, 2005.



integral part of art history.

In 2013, Yoko Ono celebrated her eightieth birthday. I wrote a story for a German newspaper about the importance of her work: does her radical art and that from her fellow Fluxus artists still influence today's art? I mentioned Martin Creed. In 2001, this British artist was awarded the prestigious Turner Prize. His WORK.NO. 227 is an empty space in which every five seconds the lights go on and off. This concept refers to THREE LAMP EVENTS, conceived by George Brecht in 1961: a printed text on a card. Brecht sent such kind of 'events' to friends and acquaintances, the real work was created in the head of the person who had received the card. In later years, some of these texts were used as performance scores. Five years ago, the Tate Gallery acquired Creed's controversial work. My article got the headline: FLUXUS LEBT (Fluxus is alive).

A lot of work in this publication is a continuation of Fluxus and the Aktionskunst from the nineteen sixties. The New York based Guerrilla Art Action Group attacked the traditional art world with radical and politically inspired happenings from the late nineteen sixties onwards. Once, they poured blood on a museum floor: allegedly its Board of Directors sympathised with the Vietnam War.

Fifty years later, the artist Tinkebell shocks the public with her controversial actions and discussions follow. How far can and may an artist go to address alleged wrongs in society and how to represent these?

In 2012, we published the book *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*.

The Viennese Actionist Otto Muehl practised ideas that landed him in prison for six and a half years. His AA Kommune propagated free sexuality and collective property: Selbstdarstellung (presentation of the self) was the central issue. In the beginning of the nineteen eighties, Wencke Mühleisen from Norway - she had lived in Muehl's commune for a while - took his form of group therapy as a starting point for performances lasting the whole evening.

In *Shame & Scandal* I wrote: taboos disappear only to be replaced with other taboos. The person insulting the king is no longer apprehended. An artist who meddles with religion in his work has to be careful. I also wrote: even sex has once more become a delicate subject. Society has already become more prudish. I do not want to propagate the lifestyle of Otto Muehl, but I do not want to return either to the oppressive morals of the nineteen fifties.

At the beginning of this introduction, I mentioned Anthon Beeke. This Fluxus performer became one of the most

important Dutch designers. In 1981, his poster for a theatre show displayed the naked bottom of a woman bending over. By adding a tail and leather straps, it rather looked like the arse of a horse. Of course, these posters did cause a commotion at the time, but at least they were not taken down. After Beeke passed away in 2018, his former colleagues wanted to reproduce a huge enlargement of this poster to be hung on the façade of the Stedelijk Museum. They didn't allow it, but the directors of the city's main theatre gave their permission. Within half an hour the police removed the poster. We have returned to the nineteen fifties indeed.

This book is made up of short chapters, the point of departure always being an art object. This can be a photograph, a book, a letter and occasionally a newspaper cutting. They were chosen from materials collected over the past fifty years. Relicts and the matching stories. There are tales about artists experimenting with new materials and techniques, shifted, disrupted and moved borders, expectations and taboos.

Even nowadays, I still enjoy to be taken by surprise. Like on that spring day in 1968, when I saw things from a world that I didn't know anything about yet. It was the beginning of a very adventurous journey.

Willem de Ridder, artist of ideas, once said, 'the goal of the journey is the journey itself.'

There is still so much to look forward to!



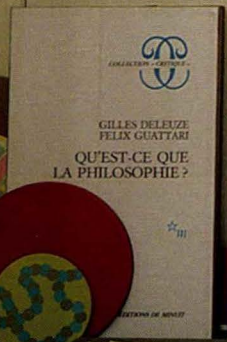
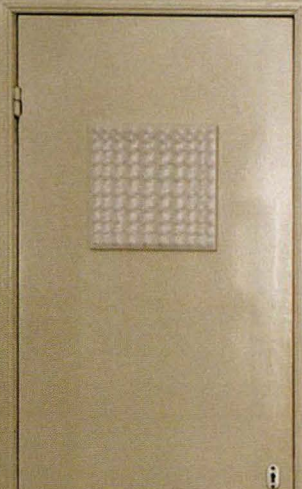


**Hans Eijkelboom in a 10-Euro Outfit**, Galerie A, November 19, 2005.  
(‘From August 2005 to June 2006 I bought 32 new outfits for myself, initially once a week, later once a fortnight. The only criterion for my choice was the price: it couldn’t be higher than ± 10 Euros.’)



**Al Hansen at Galerie A**, Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen 12, Amsterdam, 1979.

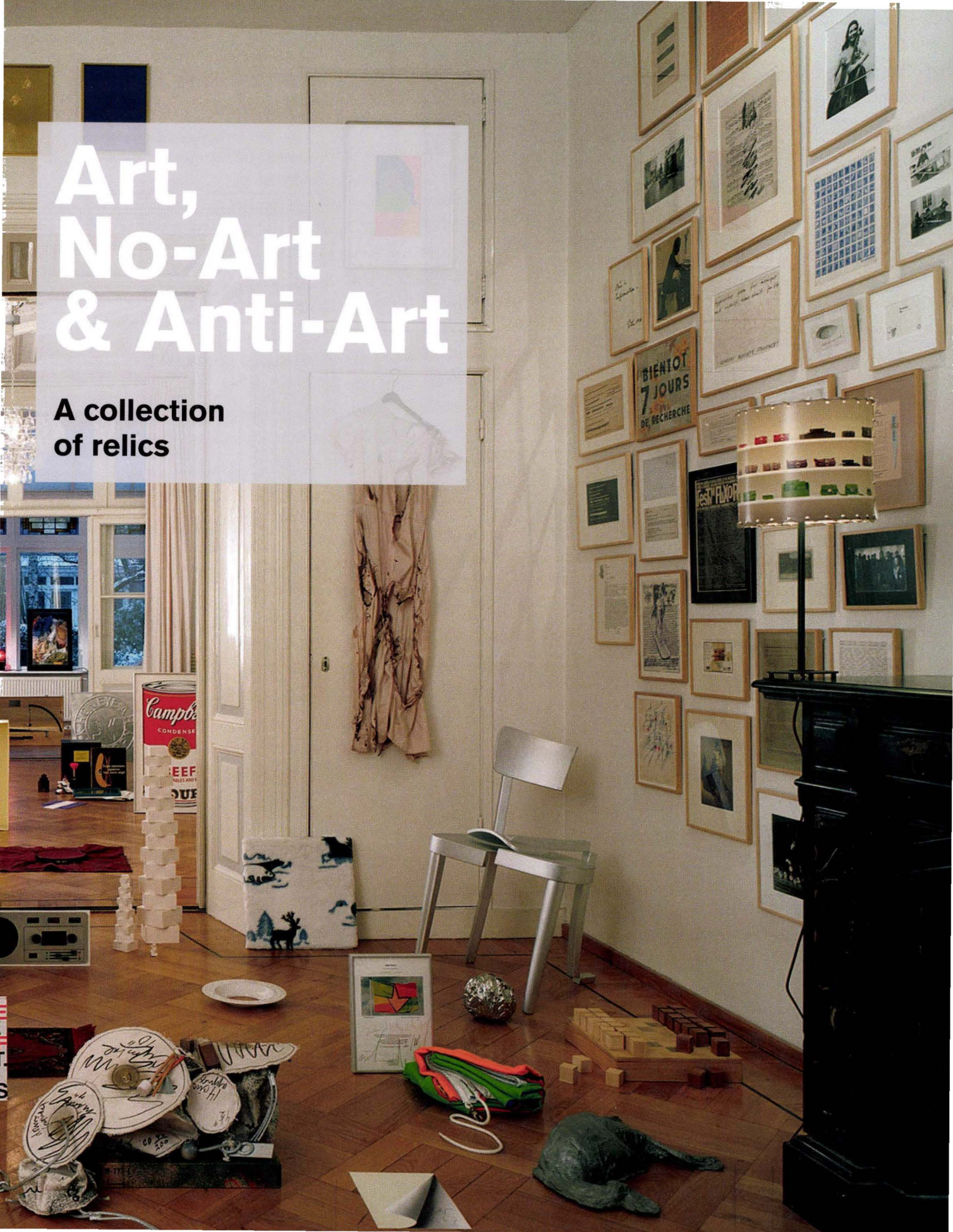






# Art, No-Art & Anti-Art

A collection  
of relics







**Galerie A (with the artist Endre Tót),**  
1976 (photograph: Harry Ruhé).

## A

In the autumn of 1975 I decided to open a gallery in Amsterdam. I found a small shop on the Amstel, close to the Magere Brug. It was not such a large space, therefore I wanted a concise name. I decided to call the exhibition space 'A'.

From the shop a staircase led down to a basement, a candle-lit cavern full of 'antique' tables, chairs and wardrobes. Moreover you constantly tripped over stray shoes, heaps of clothing, piles of books and boxes with children's toys. There were dried flowers everywhere; standing in pots and vases, hanging from the ceiling and even in the toilet.

My landlady lived in this junkshop. She was a rather stout woman who ate raw eggs throughout the day because, according to her, it was good for her skin - and she also had a predilection for walking about the house in the nude. She was besotted with the monarchy; she hoisted the flag on every royal birthday and decorated the display window with large orange bows. Even so I stuck it out for a whole year there.

It was a financially tough time. There was no money for a sign or name plate. I had placed a large plastic letter A in front of the window instead.

Paul Sharits made a new version for me in 1982. The object was sent to me in a plastic bag. With a marker he had written on it: 'A gift for you. I meant to give it to you long ago!'



**Paul Sharits, *Sign for Gallery A*,**  
mixed media, ca. 36.5 x 30.5 x 2.5 cm,  
signed and dated, 1982.



## Marcel Alocco

(1937)

In my 1979 book about the Fluxus movement, I had wanted to include a photograph of the 1966 'event' *La Table*. Marcel Alocco, one of the participants, told me that he had pictures, but didn't remember where he had left them. Alocco did, however, send me the images more than thirty years later, including the following text:

*L'événement "La Table" avait été inventé par Alocco-Bozzi-Ben. Nous avions envisagé plusieurs versions. Il a été programmé par "Art Total" (de Ben) "Identités" (groupe théâtral créé autour de ma publication) et plus généralement "Fluxus", comme l'affiche l'indique. C'est pourquoi les participants "invités" n'étaient pas tous "Fluxus", comme les poètes Jean-Pierre Charles, Régine Lauro, le peintre Ernest Pignon-Ernest, les photographes Jacques et Michou Strauch, le sculpteur Jean-Claude Fahri, quelques amis. Arman arrivé en spectateur vers 21 h 30, nous avait rejoint sur scène. Pour Fluxus, il y avait, Annie et Ben Vautier, Robert Bozzi, Pietropaoli, Marcel Alocco. Les spectateurs, quarante ou cinquante environ, (souvenir vague) restés dans la salle,*

*participaient à une sorte de buffet comme ... pour un vernissage.*

*Notre idée avait été, pour Robert Bozzi et pour moi, de créer un événement **sans autours**, ou bien dans lequel tous les participants seraient considérés comme auteurs. Malheureusement, Ben, comme à son habitude, voulu faire du spectacle. Et comme d'habitude il s'est proclamé l'auteur. D'où la publication, deux jours après, sur feuilles volantes (ou tracts) d'une lettre à Ben intitulée "Salauds d'auteurs", qui se terminait par: **"Nous n'en avons pas fini avec ces salauds d'auteurs!"***

*Il n'y a pas eu d'enregistrement, (je ne connais pas d'autres documents que mes photos) et je ne crois pas que l'événement "La Table" ait été programmé une autre fois comme pièce unique pour une soirée de spectacle. Je vous envoie donc "Fluxus à Nice" (Cadeau), et photocopie du tract.*

*Aussi les 4 photos que j'ai de La Table à me retourner svp (photos archives Alocco) Vous pouvez faire des copies. (Photographiées par ma femme ou mon frère, je ne sais plus).*

## Hans Peter Alvermann

(1931-2006)

The first edition of the *Bundes Notstandsschwein* dates back to 1965. This art object in unlimited edition was first distributed by the artist and later on by VICE-Versand in Remscheid ('Art in the Household'). The object is a plastic piggy bank, covered with the colours of the German flag and a swastika.

At the end of the year 1968, a judge declared it unfit for exhibition and a year later the Cologne Court stated that the unlimited series of piggy banks could not be labelled as 'art'.

In 1969, three copies were confiscated by the police in gallery Intermedia in Cologne. Two years later, in 1971, a verdict was given about sixteen confiscated piggy banks. After five and a half hours, the judge concluded that the piggy banks could undoubtedly be labelled as art. The combination of the German flag and the swastika, however, wasn't acceptable. The objects remained confiscated.

From: Harry Ruhé & Jeannette Dekeukeleire, *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



**Bundesdeutsches Notstandsschwein**, about 10 centimetres high, unlimited edition, signed, VICE-Versand, Remscheid. (The copy reproduced here is dated: 1972.)

**Marcel Alocco, La Table, Nice, 16 Mars 1966** (with BEN, Arman and Alocco).



## Eric Andersen

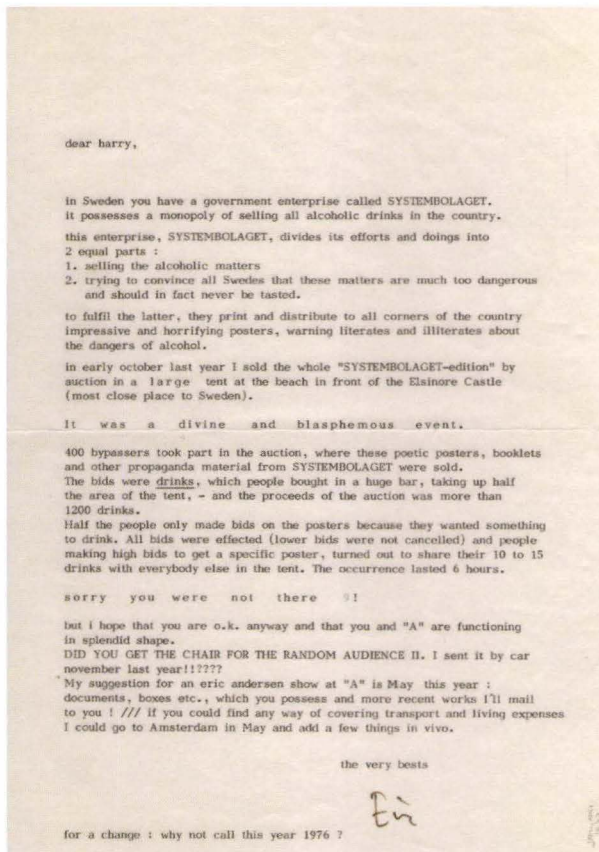
(1940)

The CultClub opened its FluxShop in front of the Museum Wiesbaden in June 2012 – fifty years after the first 'official' Fluxus Festival had taken place in the auditorium of the museum. Various artists and publishers sent books, LP records, and multiples to be sold in the shop.

From the Danish composer Eric Andersen I received a large box containing T-shirts, badges and postcards. In a follow-up email, Andersen noted that *Postcard in four colours 1967 grand version* should be sold for € 5. However the unsigned version of the same card was to cost twice as much. Similarly, a smaller edition of the same card signed by the artist should cost € 10, while the unsigned version would come at a price of € 15.

About the badges, Anderson wrote:

*I have 4 different kinds of badges for you. See attached scan. I can send you 50 each for a start. Each should be sold for € 5.*



Eric Andersen, Letter, January 1997.

<sup>1</sup> FLUXUS, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties, Amsterdam, 1979.

*If there are any left during the last 5 days of the show they should be sold for € 4 first day, € 3 second day, € 2 third day, € 1 fourth day and € 0 last day.*

The box also included two T-shirts meant to be sold at auction. The text on one of these T-shirts read as follows: *IO NON SO CHE COSA STIA FACENDO IL COLTELLO SULLA MIA SPALLA* (loose translation: *I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE KNIFE IS DOING ON MY BACK*).

A small black bag containing a razor-sharp knife was tied to the shirt's backside. When the artist arrived in Wiesbaden on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, the shirt's winning bid was at € 70,02. I handed him hundred Euros in advance to the final payment. The money was returned to me within half an hour: Andersen wished to bid on his own T-Shirt. On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, the last day of the *Fluxus at 50* event, the final bid read as follows: € 100,- (last bid: Eric Andersen, Copenhagen).

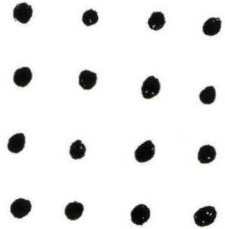
## John Armleder

(1948)

When I published a book on Fluxus<sup>1</sup> in 1979 John Armleder was one of the first to place an order; ten copies.

Armleder himself had cooperated with various Fluxus artists in Geneva. He published and sold their books in the gallery/publishing house Écart, which he had founded with Patrick Lucchini and Claude Rychner in 1969. Armleder and his friends used this location for numerous performances.

He was also into Mail Art. In fact, he was one of the most important artists in this field. His cards and letters are works of art in their own right; they are covered with stamps of colourful images and texts. One of these works hung framed above my desk for a long time.



Geneva Dots,  
portrait of John  
Armleder - drawing  
by Ken Friedman.

Geneva Dots  
portrait of John Armleder  
KF '87



Eric Andersen, *Postcard in four colours 1967* (4 versions).  
*Badges* (4 versions).



# Bernard Aubertin

(1934-2015)

Francesco Conz was an avid collector of 'artists pianos', indeed dozens of artists made one especially for him. In 1987, it was Bernard Aubertin's turn.

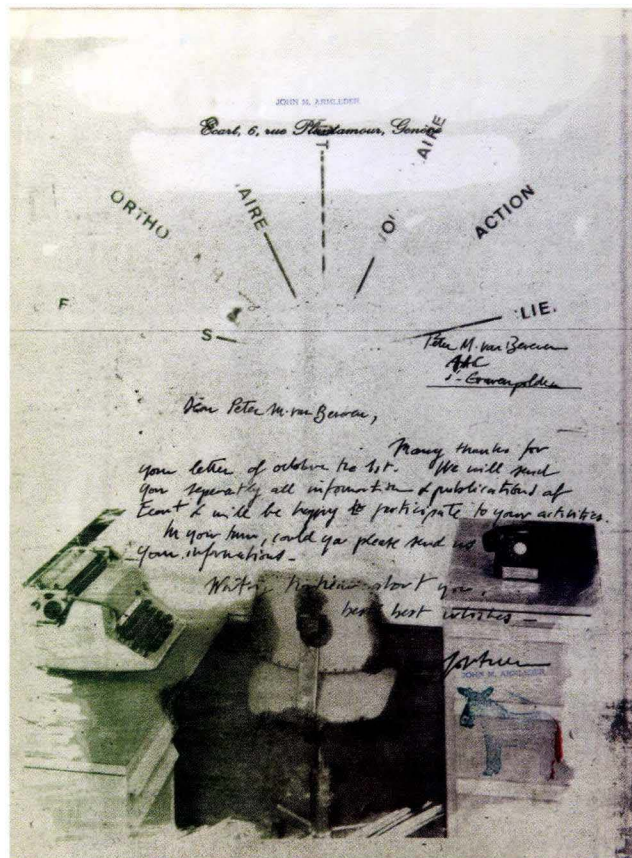
Conz had prepared the scene by putting up a small organ in Illasi, a village east of Verona. I was also invited to attend the event.

First, Aubertin poured some turpentine over its lid and keys and then set the piece afire. After a while, once enough damage was done, he put out the fire and painted and splattered the leftovers with red paint. Finally, by special request of Francesco Conz, the artist signed the organ, the cans of paint, the plastic bucket and even Aubertin's paint-stained jacket. They were for Conz' 'fetish collection'.

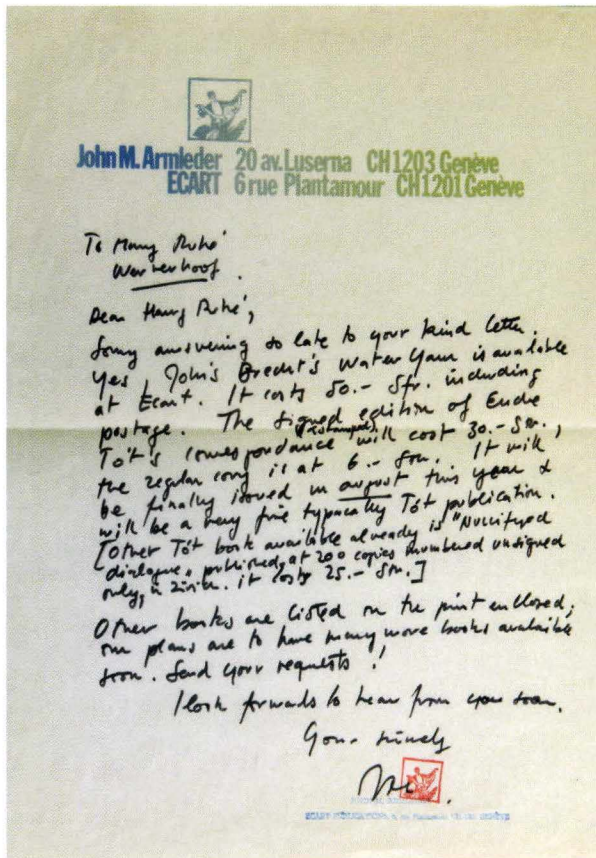
I drew Francesco's attention to Aubertin's shoes, 'you should really have those as well.' Francesco nodded. 'That's already arranged. Tomorrow we're going to buy new shoes for him.'



**Performance du Piano Forte Brûlé, Illasi (Italy), 1987**, one of three photographs by Francesco Conz, 12.6 x 17.6 cm, signed and dated: Reutlingen, 2008.



**John Armleder, letter**, 29.6 x 20.9 cm, to Peter van Beveren, 's-Gravenpolder, postmark: -6.10.73.



**John Armleder, letter**, 29.7 x 21 cm, to Harry Ruhé, Amsterdam, postmark: -1.-7.75.



## Ay-O

(Takao Iijima, 1931)

During an afternoon in either 1984 or 1985 the Fluxus artist Ay-O paid a visit to Francesco Conz, a publisher in Verona. To make the reunion even more of a success, the latter hired Ur, a stripper. The photograph shows Ay-O lost in thought while Ur sits on the table.

## Matthew Barney

(1967)

On Saturday, the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 1995 the Boymans van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam hosted the first screening of Matthew Barney's film *Cremaster 1*.<sup>2</sup> On the same day, an exhibition with drawings, objects and photographs was also inaugurated. A performance with, amongst others, a dildo covered with small beads added lustre to the opening.

Karel Schampers, at the time a curator of this museum, wrote me the following on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April of 2015:

*Through photographs and the list of props I have tried to figure out what this object was used for, but unfortunately I wasn't able to do so. I do remember that he (Barney, HR) held something similar in his hand during part of the parade, but I cannot really say whether it was this specific object. (...) The parade was filmed at the time and the material should be in the archive. I put it there myself. Maybe, because of conservation issues, the film is now being kept in the 'film and video collection'.*

Additional information was provided by Martijn van Nieuwenhuyzen, curator of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam:  
*How funny that Barney's butt plug is part of your collection. The colour on that side is a bit worrying and I do hope that the biological process has been put on hold after so many years. To provide you with some more information: after Barney's request (why me again) I went looking for a model and via a friend in a sports club I got in touch with one of the doormen of the former Yab Yum<sup>3</sup> who didn't mind doing the job in the Boymans Museum. Annie Leibowitz even took a picture of him. I escorted (what's in a name) him by train from Amsterdam to Rotterdam, together with Helen van der Meij, a good friend of Matthew. Later, Barney and I tried to pay the doorman an unexpected visit at Yab Yum, but he wasn't on duty that night. Well, the art historical documentation of your wonderful object is complete if you ever decide to hand it in for an auction at Christie's (from an email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016).*



**Ay-O and Ur**, photograph by Francesco Conz, 15.1 x 21.9 cm, stamp of the Archivio Conz on the reverse, Verona, ca. 1984.



**Dildo**, performance relict, synthetic materials and ribbon, ca. 16.5 x 8 x 8 cm, used in the performance at Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> of October 1995.

Provenance: Rob Malasch, Amsterdam, who states that he wrote an article about the performance for the magazine *HP De Tijd*. He also told me that he once owned a Polaroid made by Annie Leibowitz during the performance - but he was unable to find it.

<sup>2</sup> *Cremaster* refers to the anatomical name for the muscle surrounding the testicles, which contracts in reaction to stimuli such as cold or fear.

<sup>3</sup> *Yam Yum* was one of the best-known and most exclusive brothels in Amsterdam between 1980's and 2008.



## Roland Van den Berghe

(1943)

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January 1973 at 10 A.M., the Belgian artist Roland Van den Berghe sent 'two new galoshes for a president' to Richard M. Nixon, the re-elected president of the United States of America. The shoes were decorated with indented feathers shaped like bombs. In a letter the president was requested to wear the shoes during his inauguration on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January.

Later on, Van den Berghe used similar feathers in boots made of synthetic material. The project, which he named *Adresbeweging* (Address Movement), was inspired by the Vietnam War. A week after Van Den Berghe's artistic intervention the so-called Paris Peace Accords were signed: North and South Vietnam were to be reunited through elections and the United States would pull out its troops within sixty days.

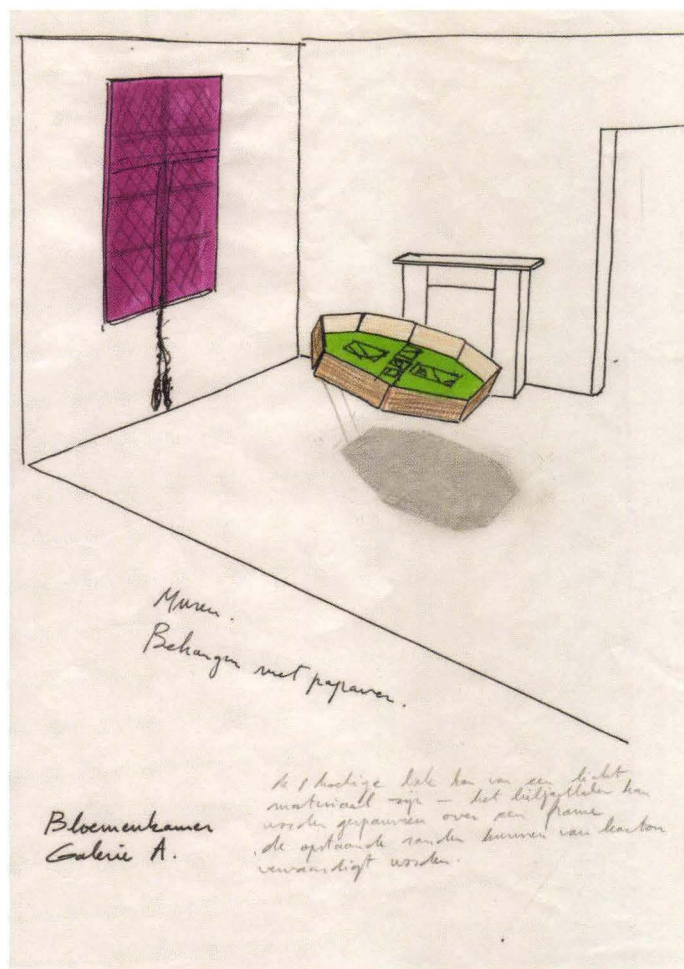
In 1978, Van den Berghe showed his *Study*

for the *Great Seal* in Gallery A. The work consisted of a metal triangle frame. Visitors could place gold coloured burning candles on it: the candles featured paper wings which made them look like airplane bombs. Five years later, in 1983, Van den Berghe came up with a new proposal. He wanted to make an installation with Theo van Doesburg's so-called *Bloemenkamer* (Flower room, 1924/25) in the French town of Hyeres as a starting point. Van den Berghe would only use van Doesburg's secondary colours: green, purple and orange.

The gallery walls were covered with poppy patterned wallpaper. Outside the window, high above the street, he hung a lamp: the window pane on the inside was covered with a curtain of purple plastic and light filtered through. In the middle of the room stood an octagonal dice box, the inside of which was covered with green baize. On this material,

Van den Berghe had drawn a floor plan with chalk of van Doesburg's flower room.

Van den Berghe was an activist and always knew how to surprise you with the way he gave shape to whatever worried him. He was a great artist, but he overestimated the social impact of his work. With every project he thought that it would cause such commotion that 'a bomb would explode'. Nothing ever exploded.



**Bloemenkamer Galerie A (Flower room Gallery A)**, drawing, felt-tip pen and pencil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, 1983; **Polaroid**, 14.5 x 10.7 cm.



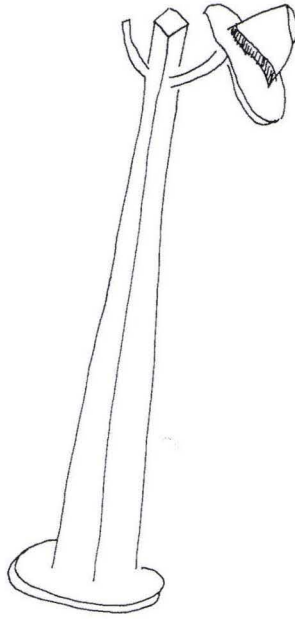
## Joseph Beuys (1921-1986)

In 1984, the Amsterdam based Antiquariaat Schuhmacher published the *Provo Bulletin*, a catalogue itemising printed matter from the nineteen sixties. Several issues of the magazine *Dé-coll/age* published by Wolf Vostell were also listed, among them number 5 which contained the Beuys multiple *Zwei Fräulein mit leuchtendem Brot* (two misses with glowing bread).

These magazines were priced at 200 Dutch guilders each, also the three copies of *Dé-coll/age* number 5. I bought all of them. That same day I sold two copies to gallery owner Erhard Klein in Bonn for 1000 German marks each, but I kept the third.

After Beuys had passed away and with the subsequent rise in value of his works, the antiquarian bookseller discovered that he had sold part of his stock far below the market price. From that moment onwards, he didn't want me to buy anything whatsoever: he was quite an old grumbler. Even if I only looked at some publication, he always told me loud and clear 'everything has been reserved already.'

A Hat



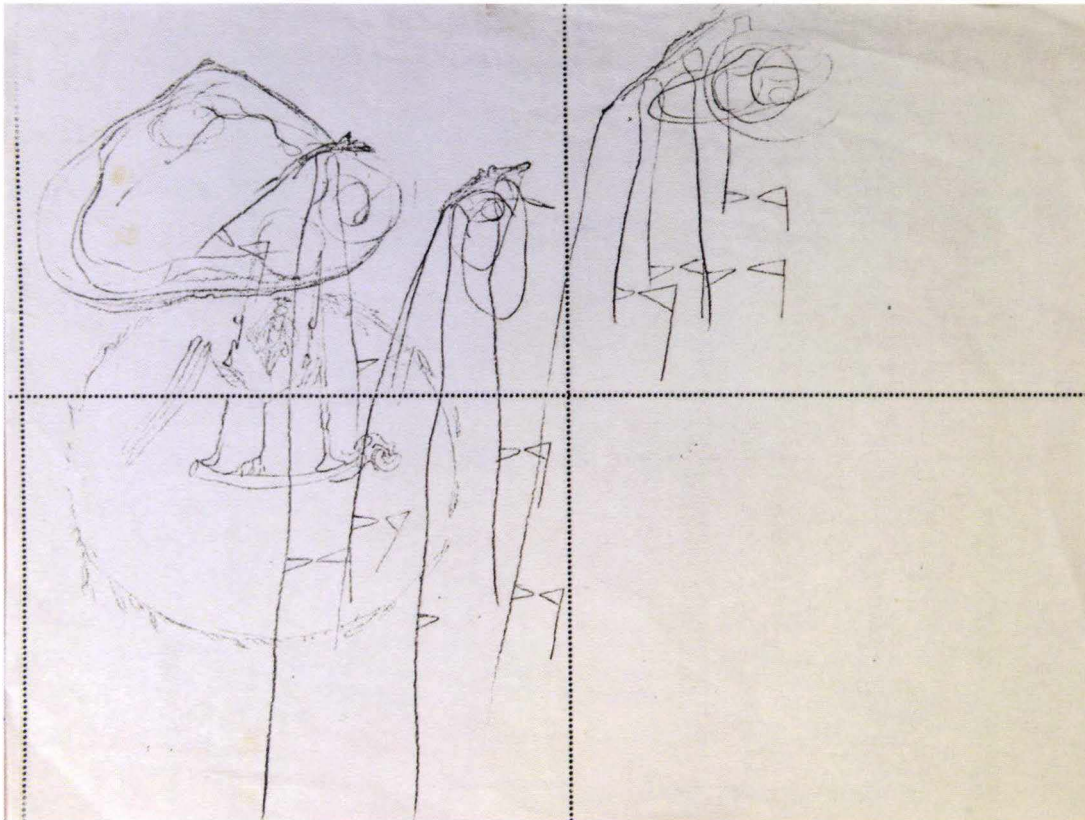
Portrait of Joseph Beuys  
KF 1980

**A Hat, portrait of Joseph Beuys** - drawing  
by Ken Friedman.

## Joseph Beuys

In the spring of 1987, Sotheby's Amsterdam put up for auction several works from the legacy of Piet van Daalen (director of the Zeeuws Museum in Middelburg between 1961 and 1985). I had ticked quite a few numbers in the catalogue, amongst others lot 546. It consisted of a gouache by Gerrit Dekker, an etching and a drawing. According to me, Dekker was an interesting artist and the basic price - established at between 200 and 300 Dutch florins - seemed reasonable.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April I went to the preview, but the gouache by Dekker was nowhere to be found. The etching, showing a peasant woman from the province of Zeeland, was made by R. Schönberg, someone I had never heard of. But the third work, described in the catalogue as 'unknown drawing' made me kind of nervous. The drawing was not signed, at least not at the front. Still, it didn't seem wise to ask one of the employees to take the drawing out of the frame. During the auction on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April there was only one other serious contender. The price went up from



**Joseph Beuys, Aus dem Leben der Bienen, 1958**  
(photocopy).



100 to 3000 Dutch guilders, amid a lot of hilarity. Only then he stopped bidding and I could collect the work the next day.

When I arrived back home with my latest treasure I put it face down on the table. Quite nervously I started peeling the many layers of cello tape from its back. Finally, the glass and the passe-partout gave way and I was able to hold the drawing in my hands. On the backside, written in pencil, it said: *Aus dem Leben der Bienen Joseph Beuys 1958.*

Piet van Daalen had always kept in touch with Joseph Beuys. In 1970, he organised an exhibition with drawings by the artist. Marcel Broodthaers was a friend of van Daalen as well. During the former's 'Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles, Section XIXème siècle' in Antwerp van Daalen performed as a doorkeeper: while dressed in a dustcoat he spoke to the show's visitors. Van Daalen passed away in 1986. I was really happy with my drawing, although

I did build up some debts. Additional financial problems loomed at the horizon, so I decided to sell the drawing.

About two months later an art dealer from the German city of Paderborn paid me a visit. He wanted to buy the work and we soon agreed upon the price of twenty-six thousand five hundred German Marks. He said, 'I only take the drawing and not the ugly wooden frame'. Again I had to wriggle a little bit to remove the drawing from the frame and then the cardboard behind the passe-partout came loose. A piece of paper became visible and slowly I pulled it out from behind the cardboard. It was an unfolded letter from Beuys to Piet van Daalen, written in blue ink on unruled paper. 'Well', the art dealer from Paderborn said, 'that letter has nothing to do with the drawing. And as I didn't want the wooden frame, you should keep the letter.'

One day collector Martin Visser paid me a visit and I showed him the handwritten letter.

He mumbled, 'I should really have it.' 'Please take it and one day I will choose something from your collection', I said.

A few months later Visser invited me to Bergeyck to have a look at his collection. 'I still have to give you something for that Beuys letter', Visser said. 'Look here, a cap once worn by Marcel Broodthaers at the beach. Maybe you would like that?' It was a white cap with a blue visor. On the front it said MUSEUM, written with felt-tip pen. In 1970, Broodthaers and a friend, had apparently held a performance on the beach at Oostende, each with a 'museum cap' on their head. I took the cap home and from that moment on it was shown at several exhibitions, amongst others at the gallery Ronny van de Velde in Antwerp. Van de Velde really wanted to buy the 'casquette' (cap). I used the money to enlarge my collection of multiples by Beuys.



**Dé-coll/age, No.1**, 14 pp., each a double-size fold-out, edited, designed and published by Wolf Vostell, Cologne, June 1962.

**Dé-coll/age, No.2**, 21 sheets, stapled, with banderole, edited, designed and published by Wolf Vostell, Cologne, November 1962.

**Dé-coll/age, No.3**, some pages can be folded to double size, edited, designed and published by Wolf Vostell, Cologne, December 1962.

**Dé-coll/age, No.4**, more than 110 pp., some pages can be folded to double size, edited and designed by Wolf Vostell, published by Typos Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, January 1964.

**Dé-coll/age, No.5**, February 1966.

**Dé-coll/age, No.6**, 174 pp., edited and designed by Wolf Vostell, published by Typos Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, July 1967.

**Dé-coll/age, No.7**, 94 pp., edited and designed by Wolf Vostell, published by Typos Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, February 1969.

**Zwei Fräulein mit leuchtendem Brot**, brown paint on chocolate and text on paper, mounted on cardboard, rolled out: 75.2 x 20.9 cm (S.2), in: *Dé-coll/age 5*, compiled by Wolf Vostell, 500 numbered copies with multiples and texts by Joseph Beuys, René Block, Claus Bremer, Henning Christiansen, José E. Cortés, Manuel J. Cortés, Hansjoachim Dietrich, Ludwig Gosewitz, Juan Hidalgo, Dick Higgins, Bernhard Höke, Allan Kaprow, Walter Marchetti, Tomas Marco, Franz Mon, Ben Patterson, Eckart Rahn, Gerhard Ruehm, Vagelis Tsakiridis, Ben Vautier and Wolf Vostell, Typos Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, 1966.



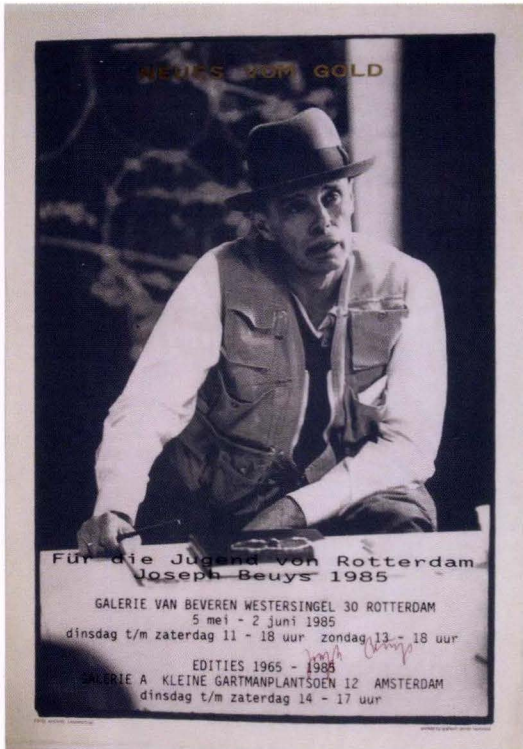
## Joseph Beuys

Both Galerie A and the Rotterdam based Galerie Van Beveren presented works by Joseph Beuys from May 5 to June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1985. The artist was closely involved in designing the poster: a silkscreen print in grey, black and gold. We sent a large number of these posters to our clients. The Staeck brothers in Heidelberg who had helped with the exhibition received several copies. We intended to have a limited number of posters printed on handmade paper without the gallery texts. Beuys would sign these posters; Van Beveren would arrange this with the artist. Galerie A paid half the costs. The posters were finished without delay but for some reason the signing was always held up. Several times I proposed to visit the artist

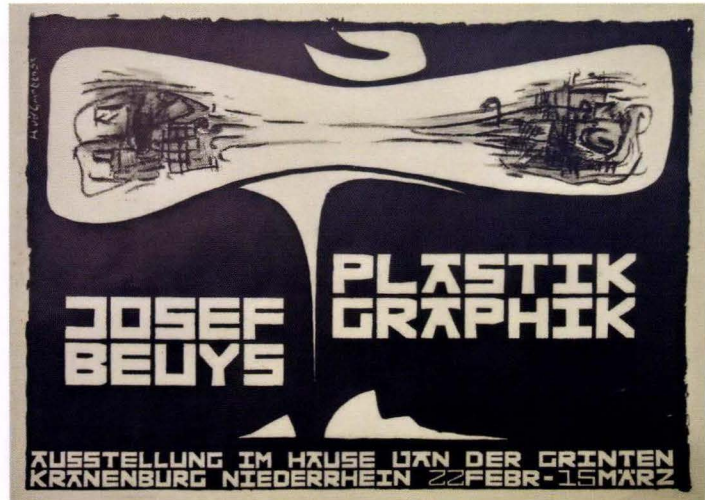
so that we could finish the posters together but all offers were rejected. 'It is being worked on.' Beuys passed away on January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1986. This reduced the unsigned Beuys posters to a stack of paper that was finely printed but hard to sell. Van Beveren partially refunded my share of the printing costs. The entire edition was eventually sold to Klaus Staeck. Several months later I visited Staeck. There I saw the pile of unsigned 'de luxe' posters as well as a few copies of the normal version. Beuys had signed these during his last visit to Heidelberg. They were very rare, according to Staeck. He was willing to sell me one for a few hundred Deutsche Mark.

## Martin uit den Boogaard

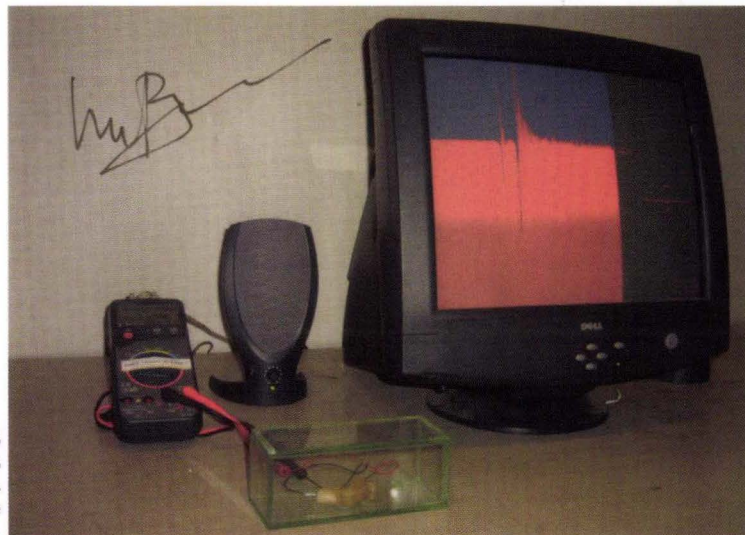
(1944)  
Artist Aldert Mantje is prepared to donate one of his fingers for Martin uit den Boogaard's project *Painting and Singing Artists*. It is kept in a glass case and with the help of electrodes connected to a computer registering 'life' in the amputated finger. Intensifying the impulses causes the dead organic material 'to sing'. The presentation of Aldert Mantje's finger takes place in May 2004, during Kunstvlaai, an alternative art fair in Amsterdam. Artists from all over the world can join the *Painting and Singing Artists Project*, provided they donate a part of their body.  
From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



Galerie A, Amsterdam/Galerie Van Beveren, Rotterdam, 1985, silkscreen, 91 x 64 cm, signed.



Van der Grinten, Kranenburg, 1953, original lino-cut by Hans van der Grinten, 61.3 x 84.9 cm, this copy signed by van der Grinten.



*Painting and Singing Finger*, finger (under glass), voltmeter, computer; signed postcard, 2004. The signed card was inserted in the *Shame & Scandal* book.



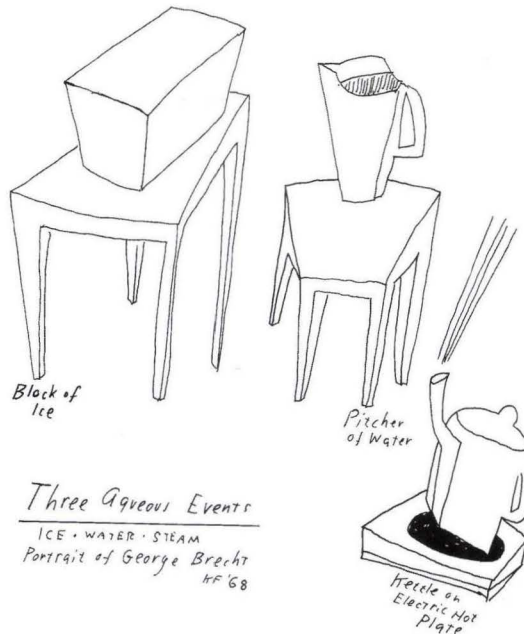
# George Brecht

(1926-2008)

It must have been somewhere towards the end of the nineteen eighties. Together with Francesco Conz I visited fellow publisher Gino Di Maggio in Milan to show him Francesco's latest editions. These were textile, silk-screened enlargements of 'event'-cards by George Brecht. According to Francesco, they were sure to appeal to Di Maggio.

We were admitted by an assistant who asked us to wait: Gino was on his way. This gave us the opportunity to look around at our leisure. The office was tastefully decorated: the walls were hung with an array of Fluxus-art. Di Maggio also ran a sort of export and import business and his various activities, so it appeared, were all amicably mixed-up. After about twenty minutes he came walking in. Wearing a small black hat and a light-yellow scarf loosely about his shoulders, he seated himself behind a large desk. While he made a few telephone calls, Francesco placed the box with Brecht textiles before him and began to unpack it piece by piece. With both hands he held an 'event' aloft – in the original version of 25 years ago not larger than a visiting card – now as 'experimental enlargement', a silkscreen print of one-and-half metres in length. Elaborately and with many expansive gestures he began to explain that this was one of his most important, no most probably his single most important edition. 'And they cost only nine hundred German Marks (ca. € 460, HR) a piece.'

I saw Di Maggio shaking his head in disagreement. 'It's ridiculous to enlarge those cards', he judged. 'It's a very poor idea.' Francesco did his best, he took a new length of material from the box, held it to the light, threw it down, picked it up again, but Di Maggio was clearly not impressed. I also took a piece of textile from the box and regarded it for some time in silent admiration in the hope that this might encourage a sale. With my limited Italian I had soon lost track of the verbal battle being waged, but I continued to hear 'Porco Dio' and 'Porca Madonna', and that meant that the men were still in disagreement. Suddenly it was silent again in the room. 'We're leaving', said Francesco. 'Shall I take the box back with me then?' I asked. 'No,' said Francesco, 'it stays here. He's bought everything.'



▲ **Three Aqueous Events, portrait of George Brecht** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

**George Brecht, documenta 5, Kassel, 1972**; photo by Dick Higgins, gelatin silver print, 20.1 x 29.9 cm, with the photographer's stamp and the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz (with Conz' signature) on the reverse.



**Water Yam**, cardboard box with Maciunas-designed label containing 69 event cards, 15.2 x 16.4 x 4.5 cm, Fluxus edition, New York, 1963.



## George Brecht

*La Cédille qui Sourit / artists' shops*

As a result of my interest in multiples I have also accumulated a sizable amount of documentation on a closely related phenomenon: artists' shops. Many artists set up a shop one day or another, sometimes at the start of their career.

Claes Oldenburg sold objects of painted plaster in *The Store* in 1961. (Six years later Elaine Sturtevant set up her own version of Oldenburg's 'Store' in a rented space.)

Others opened stores when they achieved their first success, like Keith Haring with *Pop Shops* in New York (1986) and *Tokio* (1987). The *Pop Shop* was a boutique where Haring's art could be accessible to everyone, selling inflatable babies, condom badges, T-shirts, baseball caps, puzzles, refrigerator magnets, pocket radios, SAFE SEX stickers, and more.

A lot less known is Yayoi Kusama's business venture. In 1969 she opened a boutique in New York where she sold her own designs (see: Kusama, fashion).

Sometimes coincidence offers a helping hand: while Tracy Emin and Sarah Lucas were looking for a studio in London they found an empty store instead. They used this place to sell T-shirts ('HAVE YOU WANKED OVER ME YET'), badges and small artworks for six months in 1993.

PUNK, late 1970s! *Gallerie Anus* in Amsterdam, set up by graffiti artist Hugo Kaagman and punk poet Diana Ozon was designed as a magazine production site to store the many new underground flyers and pamphlets from the punk wave. But it gradually converted into office management for New Wave groups and a graffiti shop for T-shirts, magazines, posters and clothing. It was also a hairdresser's shop and a bicycle repair workshop. And all this took place on only 20 square metres!

From 1975 until 2015, Hans-Peter Feldmann and his wife ran a store in Düsseldorf, where you could find 'rare' items, such as vintage toys, antiques, paintings, old cameras, et cetera. Feldmann Verlags shop offered 'everyday' objects in boxes. Another 'shop', *The Wrong Gallery*, was conceived by Maurizio Cattelan and his 'curators' Massimiliano Gioni and Ali Subotnick in 2002. It was the smallest exhibition space in New York: an expensive-looking glass door with two and a half feet of floor space. It was located at 516A½

West 20<sup>th</sup> Street in Chelsea. Between 2002 and 2005 more than 30 exhibitions were organized with works by Lawrence Weiner, Andreas Slominski, Elizabeth Peyton, Paul McCarthy and many others. In 2005 *The Wrong Gallery* was produced by CerealArt as an edition in 1000 numbered copies: 1:6 scale. ('Become the curator you've always imagined you could be by organizing your own personal gallery program'.)

*Art Metropole* is a gallery shop in Toronto founded by the Canadian collective *General Idea* in 1974. This nonprofit space in Toronto is specialised in editions such as artists' books, multiples and video.

Another shop for artists' publications was *Other Books and So*, founded in 1975 by Ulises Carrión. Carrión was a fascinating artist who made beautiful books - Wikipedia describes him as 'perhaps Mexico's most important conceptual artist' - but in the 1970s Carrión was first of all known for his activities in *Other Books and So*. In 1979 Karen Kvernenes took over the bookstore and reopened it under the name *Art Something*.

In 1978 *Other Books and So* sold games and books by Fluxus artist Takako Saito. Two years ago, in 2017, Saito set up her own shop. It was part of her exhibition in the *Museum für Gegenwartskunst* (Museum of Contemporary Art) in the German city of Siegen. On the red and white striped awning it said: EXTRA DO IT YOURSELF SHOP "YOU AND ME". Once inside, you could fill a plate, bowl or cup with small works of art. A sign requested the client to sign the 'container'. Saito had written: Ich werde es auch tun (I will do it too).

The artist *Servaas* (*Servaas Schone*, 1950-2001) transformed galleries and museum rooms into shops where he sold fish related products. In his *Int. Fi\$h-handel SERVAAS & Zn.* he offered canned *Fish-Air*, *Fish-Beer* and a perfume with fish aroma: *Eau de Poisson*.

Another artist who sold her own works is *Lucy Sparrow*. In August 2018 she presented her *Sparrow Mart Supermarket* in Downtown Los Angeles. The 260 square-metres space was filled with 31,000 felt groceries. All products could be purchased.



***La Cédille qui Sourit.***  
**George Brecht and**  
**Robert Filliou in**  
**Villefranche-sur-Mer,**  
one of two photographs,  
ca. 1966 (photographer:  
unknown); gelatin silver  
prints, each 8.8 x 12.6  
cm, one of them signed by  
Brecht, with dedication:  
*for Harry Ruhé, une Cédille!*  
*George Brecht.*



Three years earlier she opened a Sex Shop in Soho, London, with more than 5000 sex products made from felt. (No under 18s!)

The FluxShop in New York founded in 1964 and its subsidiary in Amsterdam, Willem de Ridder's European Mail-Order House have both become legendary.

Fluxus was also well represented in Nice. In 1958 Ben Vautier bought a store in the Rue Tondu de l'Escarène. He started out selling gramophone records, but in the sixties the shop became the operating base for many disorderly street actions.

In 1966 Vautier's Fluxus friends George Brecht and Robert Filliou started a shop in Villefranche-sur-Mer, a small town near Nice. They named it: La Cedille qui Sourit. For two years they used this place to invite their friends, sell small artworks, postcards, jewellery, 'and all kind of things which do or do not have a cedilla in their (French) name'. Brecht and Filliou developed 'games' as well and the result of their 'research' was presented in the book *Games at the Cedilla, or the Cedilla Takes Off* (Something Else Press, 1967).

## Stanley Brouwn (1935-2017)

Stanley Brouwn didn't want his work to be photographed or reproduced. And Brouwn certainly didn't want to be photographed himself.

This used to be different. In 1964 the artist commissioned Igno Cuypers to take a large number of photographs. These include pictures of Brouwn asking random passersby for directions (*This Way Brouwn*) and photographs of Brouwn performing in the shop-window of *Amstel 47*. Dorine van der Klei has taken pictures of the latter *anonymous action* too. She also made several portraits of the artist.

Stanley Brouwn appears on more pictures from that time. As evidenced by one photo by Oscar van Alphen, Brouwn also attended a Fluxus concert in the Amsterdam Hypokriterion Theater on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1963. He was sitting in the first row during a performance of *Paper Piece* (Ben Patterson).<sup>4</sup>

Most likely, Brouwn was also present at a film event by Wolf Vostell on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1964. He was there as a participant, no less. One particular photo has a man with a

KLM bag over his head, imitating an airplane passenger. According to photographer Igno Cuypers this man is Stanley Brouwn. He will most likely deny it even though his partially covered head is quite recognizable.

He also wore a plastic bag over his head during an *anonymous action* in the shop-window of *Amstel 47*. A few months earlier he performed in the German Galerie Patio where he pulled a plastic bag over his body. Brouwn had explicitly forbidden Cuypers to reprint the photographs. The photographer agreed to this for a long time. By 2003 Cuypers had enough of it; for a reasonable price he made a number of prints of Brouwn's *anonymous action* for me.

There was a walk.  
It was not announced.  
We don't know when  
he did it. We don't  
know where he went.  
I heard about it  
after he died.

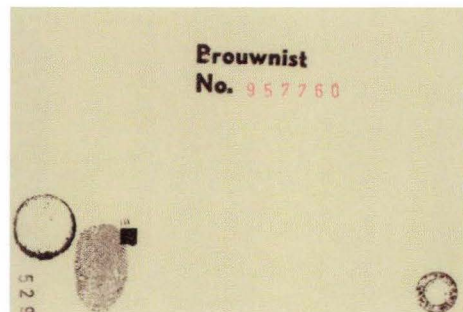


**Stanley Brouwn, *Anonymous action in the shop-window of Amstel 47, Amsterdam, 1964***, from a series of 6 photographs, different sizes, all photos provided with a copyright sticker.

Which Way Brouwn?

portrait of Stanley Brouwn  
KF '18

**Which Way Brouwn?**,  
**portrait of Stanley Brouwn** - drawing by  
Ken Friedman.



**Stanley Brouwn, *Brouwnist No. 957760***, membership card, rubberstamped, with two blind embossed marks, authorised by a fingerprint of Brouwn, 7 x 10.5 cm, early 1960s.

<sup>4</sup> Brouwn always denied his involvement with Fluxus later on. Even so his work is included in one of the most important Fluxus editions: *Fluxus 1* (1964). This object book was compiled by George Maciunas. It contains, scattered among the pages, a number of transparent sheets with images of hair. (In the same year Brouwn created the book *Brouwnhairs* in three hand-made copies, with a hair stuck on each page.) Maciunas also designed a monogram for Brouwn. It can be found on the concertina folder with monogram cards fixed to the book's cover.



## Stanley Brouwn

During the first half of the nineteen sixties, photographer Igno Cuypers lived for a while right behind Willem de Ridder's gallery on Amstel 47. Here he ran into several 'avant garde' artists like for example Stanley Brouwn. Cuypers informed me that Brouwn had asked him 'sometime in 1964' to document several street performances. He had been on the road with the artist during 'two or three days'. Brouwn paid him fifty guilders (€ 22,69)<sup>5</sup>

Cuypers stated that Brouwn intended to make a work with 'a movement from A to B', but the first day the artist didn't really know how such an action should be documented. According to the photographer, this is clearly demonstrated by the picture he took on Dam Square of this 'proof action'. At a certain moment, Brouwn asked a passer-by for a map with directions. Then, as stated by Cuypers, 'things really got going'.<sup>6</sup>

In 1965, one of Cuypers' images was used for the invitation of an exhibition in Galerie Orez in The Hague.

## Günter Brus (1938)

The photo piece *Blumenstück* is dated 1969, but the print was made somewhere around 1973.

Back then publisher/collector Francesco Conz had financed a series of photographs by Brus and other artists printed on linen. Conz had found a factory able to produce the strong photographic linen required for these prints. Each print was unique.

I traded this work with Conz on November 7<sup>th</sup> 1987 in exchange for the manuscript of my book *Fluxus, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties*, along with the photographs and other material used for the publication.

## Günter Brus

- *Invitations*

From 1975 onward Günter Brus designed practically all invitations for his own exhibitions in museums and galleries. They are A4-size pencil drawings that were reproduced in offset.

In 1998 Galerie Heike Curtze published a book with all of them: *Invitationen*.

*Zeichnungen, Bücher und Mappenwerke*

Brus made three invitations for Galerie A. The first was a self-portrait of the artist with 'Rembrandt-beret'; a hundred and fifty copies were sent around in 1977.

I had the drawing printed rich in contrast. The artist commented that designs for possible further exhibitions should be reproduced considerably more smudgy.

*Unruhe nach dem Sturm*

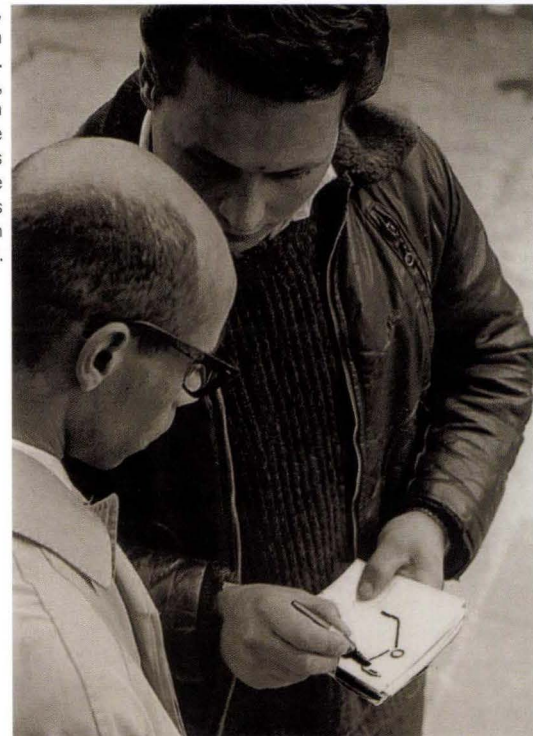
Günter Brus used my surname in the invitation for his second exhibition in Galerie A (My German ancestors were named *Ruhe* rather than *Ruhé*.)



***This Way Brouwn, 1964, Stanley Brouwn on the Dam Square, Amsterdam, 1964,***

photograph by Igno Cuypers, 18.8 x 12.6 cm.

***This Way Brouwn, 1964, Amsterdam, 1964,*** photograph by Igno Cuypers, 17.8 x 12.7 cm. From a series of 32 photographs, some of them with a description on the reverse and dated by the photographer, all photographs with a copyright sticker on the reverse (including 2 photographs of a *This Way Brouwn* exhibition in Galerie Orez, The Hague, 1965).



<sup>5</sup> From a conversation with Cuypers on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> In 1971, Gebr. König in Cologne (Germany) published the book *This Way Brouwn 25-2-61 26-2-61*. These dates are incorrect. *This Way Brouwn* is never mentioned in catalogues and brochures published before 1964.



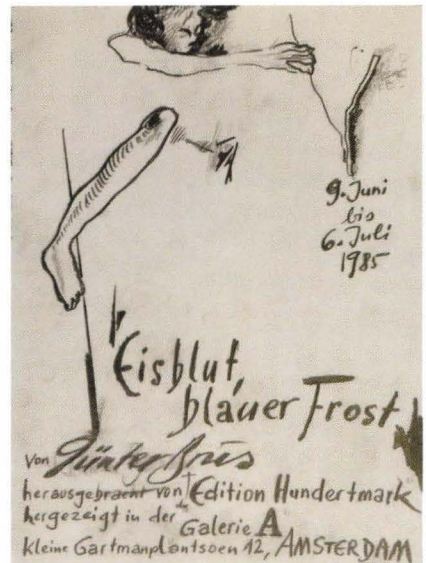


**Günter Brus, Blumenstück (nach einem Gedicht von Gerhard Rühm)**, Berlin, 1969; photograph by Klaus Eschen, printed on photographic linen, ca. 115 x 113 cm, signed and dated.

**Günter Brus, Zeichnungen, Bücher und Mappenwerke**, pencil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, 1977.

**Günter Brus, Unruhe nach dem Sturm**, pencil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, 1982.

**Günter Brus, Eisblut, Blauer Frost**, pencil on paper, 29.5 x 21.2 cm, 1985; with a letter signed and dated by Brus: 16. III 1985.



At that time Galerie A was situated in the squatted gatehouse of the remand prison at the Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen. I did not pay any rent. This was fortunate because I rarely sold anything anyway. Critics did however write very positively about the exhibition. In 2018 the Belvedere Museum in Vienna organised a major retrospective with the same title: *Unruhe nach dem Sturm/Unrest after the Storm*.



*Eisblut, Blauer Frost*

The third exhibition with Brus was also the last one. This was at least partially due to the rapid price increase of his work. Back in 1977 a 30 x 21 cm drawing cost a little over six hundred guilders; by 1985 the price had more than quadrupled.

Furthermore, I could no longer deal with the artist directly. Everything was handled by his representative, Galerie Heike Curtze.



**Günter Brus, Transfusion, 1965** (atelier Otto Muehl, Vienna), bl/w photograph by Ludwig Hoffenreich, gelatine silver print, 23.8 x 18.1 cm, signed by Hoffenreich on the reverse, and with two photographer's stamps.

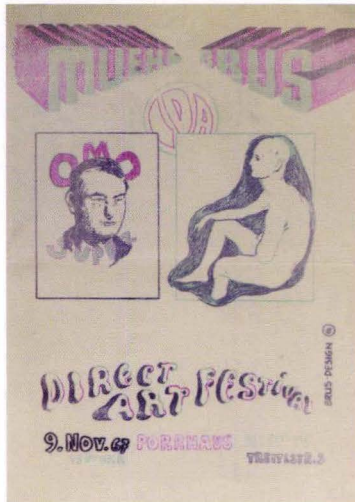
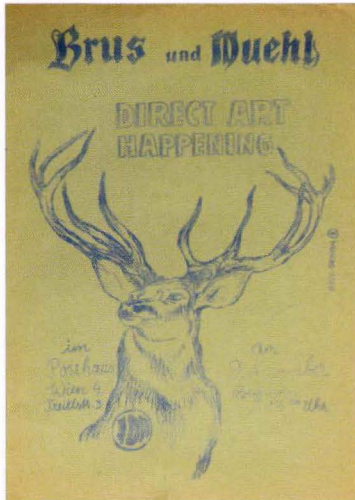
**Günter Brus and Francesco Conz**, Cittadella, 1973, photograph, gelatin silver print, 17.5 x 12.6 cm, and a later print: 25.2 x 18.2 cm, each with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse (photos: Mario Parolin).



# Günter Brus & Otto Muehl

- Direct Art Festival

Participants: Otmar Bauer, Günter Brus, August Fröhlich, Dieter Haupt, Friedhelm Huber, Otto Muehl, Michael Walter Pühringer, Hermann Simböck, Herbert Stumpf, Kurt Zein;  
Porrhaus, Vienna, November 9, 1967.



**Brus und Muehl, Direct Art Happening**, invitation designed by Brus (Brus Design 3), 29.7 x 21.1 cm.

**Muehl Brus, Direct Art Festival**, invitation designed by Brus (Brus Design 14), 29.8 x 21 cm.

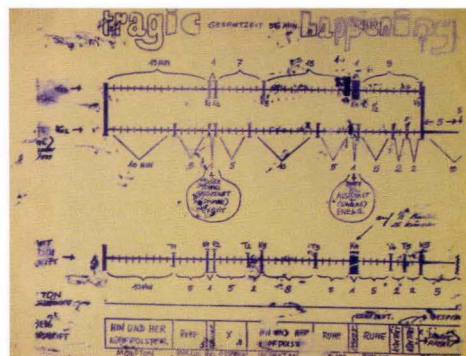
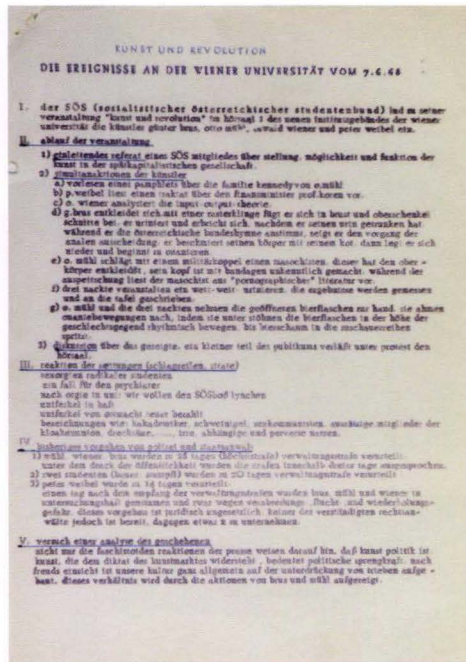
**Günter Brus, Tragic Happening**, 2 matrix prints (of 4), each 21 x 29.6 cm, 1966.

# Günter Brus & Otto Muehl

- Kunst und Revolution (Art and Revolution)

Vienna, 7<sup>th</sup> of June, 1968.

Günter Brus, Otto Muehl, Oswald Wiener and Peter Weibel are invited by the Austrian Socialist Student Society to give a performance in the hall of the University of Vienna. Motto: Art and Revolution. After a lecture by one of the students about 'the position, possibilities and functions of art in the late-capitalist society', several *Aktionen* take place simultaneously. Muehl, Weibel and Wiener are reading out loud. Brus undresses, cuts himself in his chest and thigh with a razor blade, pisses, and drinks his own urine and vomits. Then he starts massaging himself with his own excrements, lies down, starts to masturbate and sings the Austrian national anthem. Meanwhile, a masochist with bandaged head



reads pornographic texts and is whipped by Otto Muehl with a belt.

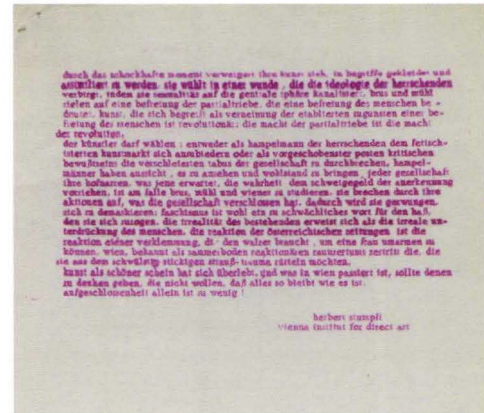
Muehl and three naked men perform with opened beer bottles in their hands: while making indecent movements they spray beer over those watching the act.

Not surprisingly, the show results in a lot of protest and the Viennese yellow press are keen to provide ever more details. Brus, Muehl and Wiener are arrested.

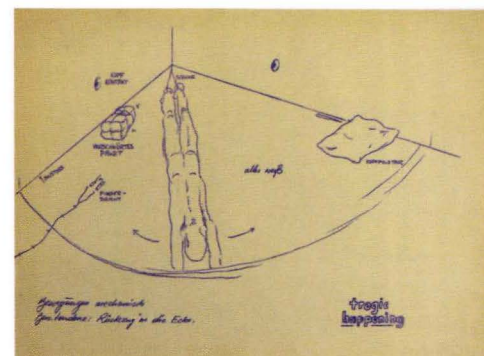
After having been condemned to six months in prison, Brus and his family flee Austria in 1969. In Berlin he sets up the *Österreichische Exilregierung* (Austrian government in exile).

In 1976, Brus' prison sentence is changed into a fine.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



**Herbert Stumpf, Die Ereignisse an der Wiener Universität vom 7.6.68**, 2 printed text sheets with additions in ballpen, each 29.8 x 21 cm, stapled.





## John Cage (1912-1992)

In March 1974, Francesco Conz, Günter Brus and Hermann Nitsch, accompanied by his wife Beate, travelled to New York. They visited, among others, John Cage in his studio in Bank Street, West Village.

On the picture from left to right: Jon Hendricks (standing), Hermann Nitsch, Katie Kennedy, Francesco Conz, Günter Brus, John Cage and Geoffrey Hendricks.



Water Walk

Portrait of John Cage  
KF '04

## Ulises Carrión (1941-1989)

Carrión was a poet, essayist, publisher of many books and magazines and video-maker. He was the founder of Other Books and So, a gallery for artists' books (1975-1979), and the legendary Other Books and So Archive (1980-1989).

Ulises Carrión was also a great artist. Two of his projects were realised in collaboration with Galerie A: *Amsterdam Telephone Calls* (1978) and *Clues* (1981). In 1982 I invited him for the group show *Installations and Performances*. His contribution was: *The Theft of The Year*. A board bearing this title was placed in the Drents Museum in Assen. Right next to it was the entrance to a small space, its walls

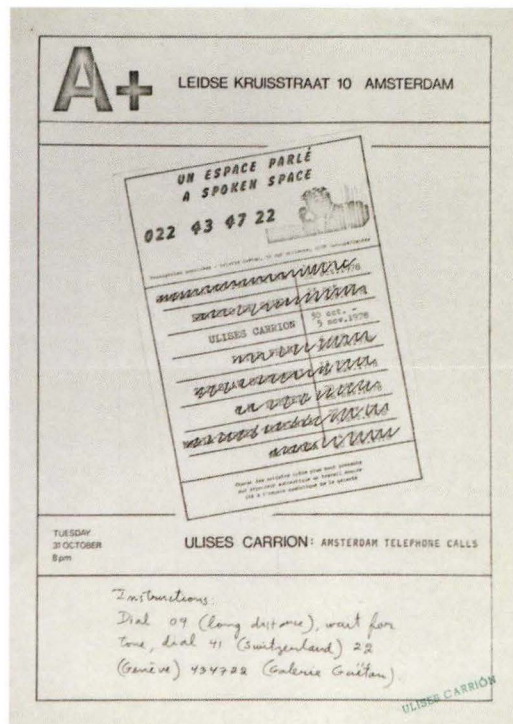
covered with black flannel. In the middle (and barely visible in the poorly illuminated room) was a table. And on this table was a cushion with a diamond lit by a single suspended spotlight.

The diamond disappeared without trace. (At first the theft simply failed to occur. Ulises was extremely disappointed that the public proved far more honest than he had expected.)

In 1981 Carrión decided to use gossip as the basis of an artwork: the *Gossip, Scandal and Good Manners* project. Ten people were asked to spread items of gossip. My gossip: Carrión's 'ex-wife' (whom he married in Mexico) was terminally ill and had come to the Netherlands to visit him one last time but he had refused to see her.

The gossips themselves were allowed to embroider on their stories where necessary. But they had to record their experiences regularly in a kind of diary. A group of passive participants also wrote down whenever they encountered these pieces of gossip. Carrión then transformed the results into a lecture which was held at the University of Amsterdam.

**Water Walk, portrait of John Cage -**  
drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Ulises Carrión, Amsterdam Telephone Calls,**  
invitation for Galerie A, photocopy with rubber stamp,  
29.7 x 21 cm, 1978.



**Visiting John Cage, New York, 1974,** photo by Beate Nitsch, gelatin silver print,  
18.1 x 23.9 cm, with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.



## Carlheinz Caspari

(1921-2009)

In the early '70s, I was searching for documentation on the Fluxus movement. In these years the best place to find such publications was the Archiv Hanns Sohm in Markgröningen, a city in southern Germany. Sohm was very generous. I took him a few Provo magazines and he gave me several rare Fluxus publications in exchange. In Magnum magazine no.47 (April 1963) I found interviews with Jean-Pierre Wilhelm, Nam June Paik, Wolf Vostell and Carlheinz Caspari: 'Die Fluxus-Leute' ('the Fluxus people'). Originally, Caspari worked as an actor and stage director. Dissatisfied with the theatre forms as they were in the early 1960s, he started looking for new possibilities. He participated in several Fluxus (related) manifestations. And he wrote a text for Wolf Vostell's magazine *Dé-coll/age 3* (1962). In 1978, I wanted Caspari to contribute to a book (*FLUXUS, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties*, 1979) and I wrote him a letter.

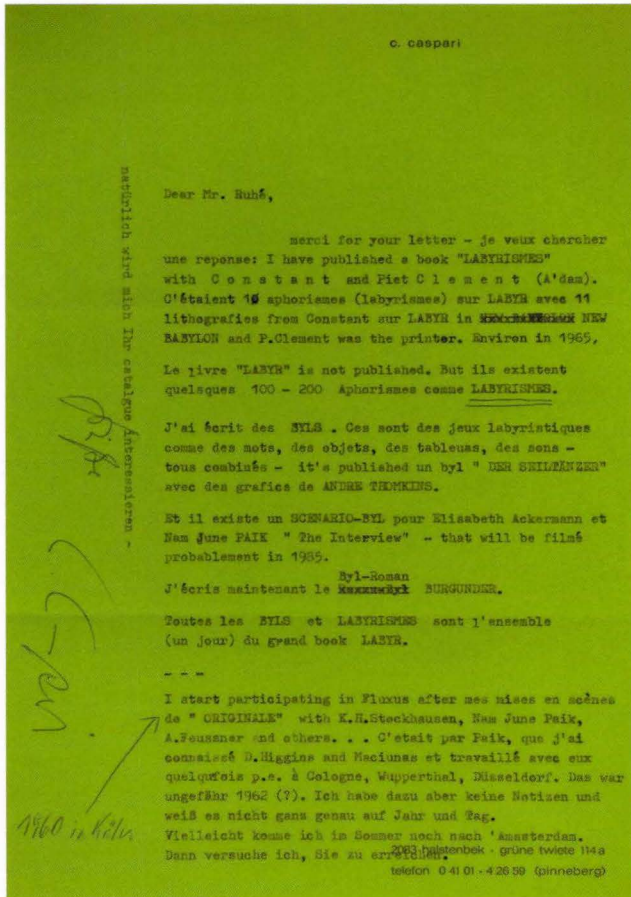
He answered (...)

*I start participating in Fluxus after mes mises en scènes 1960 in Köln de "ORIGINALE" with K.H.Stockhausen, Nam June Paik, A.Feussner and others... C'était par Paik, que j'ai connu D.Higgins and Maciunas et travaillé avec eux quelquefois p.e. à Cologne, Wuppertal, Düsseldorf. Das war ungefähr 1962 (?). Ich habe dazu aber keine Notizen und weiß es nicht ganz genau auf Jahr und Tag.*

*(I started participating in Fluxus after my mises en scènes in Cologne in 1960, the 'Originals' with K.H. Stockhausen, Nam June Paik, A. Feussner and others. Through Paik I got to know D. Higgins and Maciunas and I worked a couple of times with them, for example in Cologne, Wuppertal and Dusseldorf. That was around 1962 (?). I don't have any notes and I do not exactly know which year and day.)*

## Giuseppe Chiari (1926-2007)

The first time I came into contact with composer Giuseppe Chiari was in 1978. I was working on my book on Fluxus and I asked him for some documentation. In 1981 I invited him for the Fluxus Festival that Peter van Beveren and I were organising in the AKI, the art academy in Enschede. One of his finest works: Chiari crumpling and tearing a sheet of paper into pieces at an excruciatingly slow pace. This composition lasted for twenty minutes; I remember numerous visitors getting agitated. Chiari once proposed to make an exhibition in my gallery with a collection of works he described as *bric-à-brac*. I doubt this was a serious offer. Whenever I ordered something from Chiari he always sent me something completely different. Or he sent me nothing at all, but he also sent me things I never asked for. For example a packet of signed artists' books, or an envelope with photo's and printed matter. The exhibition never took place.



Carlheinz Caspari, letter, 29.5 x 21 cm, signed, April 1978.



Giuseppe Chiari, *ART IS EASY*, flyer, 12.3 x 34.3 cm, 1974.

Giuseppe Chiari, *Gesti sul Piano*, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.8 cm, signed, n/d. (1973).





## Christo (1935)

In 1969, I bought an early 'empaquetage' by Christo at the Wide White Space Gallery in Antwerp. Even by then he had already made quite a name for himself. A year before I had seen his *193 000 cu.ft. package*: a gigantic air balloon in the shape of a cigar, at the *documenta 4* in Kassel. And his first large-scale-project, wrapping a piece of Australian coast near Sydney in 1969, had been covered extensively by the Dutch newspapers.

The cost of the 'empaquetage' I bought was not extravagant. Indeed, avant garde art was still relatively cheap: the Wide White Space Gallery offered huge light sculptures by Dan Flavin or floor pieces by Carl Andre for a few thousand US dollars.

Still, the price was a bit more than I had bargained for, namely around Dfl. 3000. Gallery owner Annie de Decker had an easygoing approach: I could take the object home and pay the rest in instalments over a period of two years. In 1983, I sold the work via Sotheby's in London to finance a house. Every now and then I still think about the 'empaquetage'.

Collector Martin Visser worked closely with Christo for a long time. Visser once told me that in the nineteen sixties one of Christo's 'empaquetages' arrived badly damaged at an exhibition: at the border they had opened

the package. There wasn't a lot of time left and they decided to just wrap it up again. It should have been a warning.

In the beginning of 1988, Ken Friedman offered me a small 'empaquetage'. The artist had sent it as a present to him on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1971. We quickly came to an agreement: I would buy the 'empaquetage' and the envelope in which Christo had sent it for US\$ 2500.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1988, I transferred US\$ 1000 as a down payment and subsequently Friedman posted the package. After the package had been delivered to me by Federal Express, I noticed immediately that the piece was irreparably damaged. Friedman had insured the work for a couple of thousand dollars: at customs they wanted to know what kind of valuables were being sent: while unpacking the 'empaquetage' it soon became clear that the contents consisted of a piece of wood.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of March Friedman wrote: *This is weird -- never before has customs even opened an express mail letter I've sent. That's partly why I'm astonished ... when people send express mail to me from US all around the world, the packages are simply delivered, not opened. I thought all customs used X-rays and sniffing dogs, not people who open things and read letters.*

*But, I also found out a few things that make me feel a little better. I asked discretely to a Christo dealer whether he often has trouble with customs. I explained it in terms of some occasional problems shipping my own work. Then, casually, I asked what happens when customs unwraps something to inspect it ... the piece is destroyed, does Christo restore them?*

*He said it happens fairly often. Christo's policy sometimes is to restore the piece if he owns it himself, not otherwise. It's interesting to find it happens often enough with his work to have a standard policy on what to do.*

The news didn't really comfort me. Friedman sent some additional information in later letters:

*It wasn't clear from the telephone if the string was saved or not. The empaquetage had two kinds of string. One was a white string, smooth, with a soft, slightly fuzzy surface. It reminded me of the string maybe a butcher or florist used to use to tie parcels. The other string was thinner, a medium dark brown with very hard surface.*

I was never tempted 'to restore' the work with the materials described by Friedman. It wouldn't be a Christo then. Apart from that: an unpacked Christo is much rarer than a piece that hasn't been unpacked.



**Christo, *Empaquetage*, unpacked**, wood and canvas, ca. 14 x 7.5 cm, signed and dated: 65, and envelope, with Christo's address sticker, sent to: Ken Friedman, P.O. Box 537, Newhall, Calif. 91321, with the postmark: MAR 5 1971.



## Philip Corner (1933)

The composer Philip Corner has a brother who lives in Holland. Once a year Philip pays him a visit. Afterwards he calls on me.

On one occasion he showed me a rubber-stamp. It read: *PIECE OF REALITY*.

'This stamp can be used on anything', Philip explained. 'Photo's, tram-tickets, a bare buttock, a slice of cheese ...'

He picked up the newspaper lying on the table, stamped it and asked: 'How would you translate this in Dutch?'

I was short on inspiration that day but promised I'd look into the matter.

A year later Philip returned to Amsterdam. He immediately reopened the subject. 'Do you still remember that translation?'

'You mean: *PIECE OF REALITY*?'

He nodded. 'A Dutch girlfriend suggested: *DEEL VAN HET GEHEEL*. What do you think?'

'That's an exceptionally fine translation' I admitted. 'I couldn't have thought of that myself.'

'If you ever want to use the expression, be my guest,' said Philip.

He thought for a while. 'Why don't you have a rubber-stamp made of it. A stamp like that will always come in handy.'

## COUM

- Genesis P-Orridge (1950) & Cosey Fanni Tutti (1951)

In 1969 the English performance group COUM Transmissions was founded by Genesis P-Orridge and porn model Cosey Fanni Tutti. The group lasted until 1976. That same year, ICA in London presented a retrospective titled *Prostitution*. The show featured performance photographs and assemblages containing knives, injection needles, bloody hairs and used sanitary towels. There was a discussion in the British Parliament about whether public means should be used to pay for such kinds of events.

*Genesis P-Orridge: In Los Angeles, in 1976, at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (LAICA), Cosey and I did a performance where I was naked, I drank a bottle of whiskey and stood on a lot of tacks. And then I gave myself enemas with blood, milk and urine, and then broke wind so a jet of blood milk and urine combined shot across the floor in front of Chris Burden and assorted visual artists. I then licked it off the floor, which was a not-clean concrete floor. Then I got a 10-inch nail and tried to swallow it, which made me vomit. Then I licked the vomit off the floor and Cosey helped me lick the vomit off the floor. And she was naked and trying to sever her vagina to her navel with a razor blade - well,*

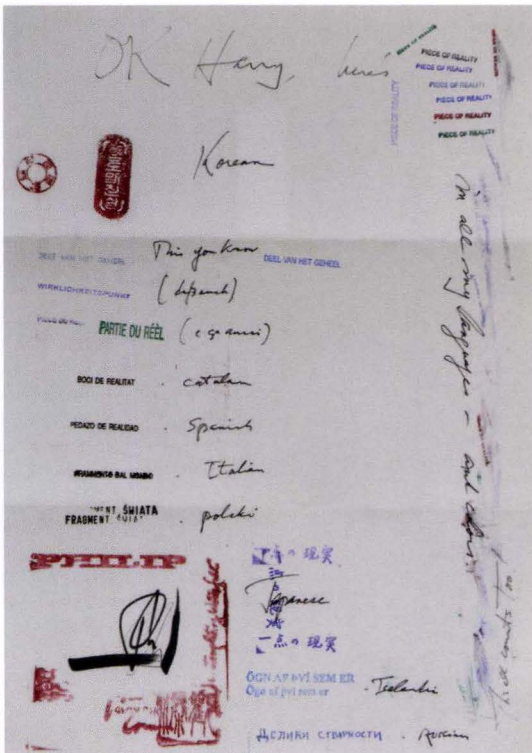
*she cut it from her vagina to her navel with a razor blade, and she injected blood into her vagina which then trickled out, and we sucked the blood from her vagina into a syringe and injected it into eggs painted black, which we then tried to eat. And we vomited again, which we then used for enemas. Then I needed to urinate, so I urinated into a glass bottle and drank it all while it was still warm. (This was all improvised.) And then we gradually crawled to each other, licking the floor clean ('cause we don't like to leave a mess, y'know; after all, it's not fair to insult an art gallery).*

(Source: Axis Archive of COUM Transmissions.)

Performance artist Chris Burden left early: 'This is not art, this is the most disgusting thing I've ever seen, and these people are sick'.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

In 1975 P-Orridge, Cosey, Chris Carter and Peter Christopherson founded the experimental rock band 'Throbbing Gristle' (a Yorkshire slang term for an erect penis). An overview of the work of COUM Transmissions, compiled by art historian Simon Ford, was published in 1998 (*Wreckers of Civilisation, the Story of Coum Transmissions and Throbbing Gristle*, Black Dog Publishing Ltd., London).



COUM, Genesis P-Orridge & Cosey Fanni Tutti, photograph, '70s.

Philip Corner, *PIECE OF REALITY in all my languages - and colors*, letter, 29.6 x 21 cm, signed, postmark: 25.02.08.



# Giuseppe Desiato (1935)

Sex, religion and politics: these were the most important subjects and sources of inspiration for the Italian performance pioneer Giuseppe Desiato. In the nineteen sixties, his street performances included religious objects, flowers and girls in lingerie. Sometimes, the police intervened and the performance was ended there and then. His films, sometimes featuring very young girls in underwear, were controversial but nevertheless shown to the public at large. I met Desiato in the summer of 1994 in Arco, a small Italian town. A local art dealer had commissioned a series of collages. The artist told me that he would be showing two of his movies later that day in the gallery and asked me to come along too.

Desiato started with a short presentation and told us that he had made the movie in 1971, together with his wife Giovanna:

*It is a story about a girl named Maria. Her mother, Adeline, was once a childhood friend of mine but that doesn't really matter now. Maria was regularly beaten by her mother, so the girl took every opportunity she got to run away. Once, a fisherman found her in his nets, between the fishes. A short while*

*after they found her in the Vesuvius: here she both appeared and disappeared in the smoke of the crater. She was seen by several volcanologists.*

*At night, Maria slept in a room measuring five by four metres, together with her brother. The room was next to a very large corridor with nine identical doors. The corridor was blue, celestial blue and only Maria's room was pink. Right in front of the door of her room there was a bathroom. Well, this was the situation as I encountered it. Vasca da Bagno!*

Giovanna dimmed the lights and Desiato switched on the projector.

The first thing we saw was a bathtub filled with extremely blue water. Then there was a man with a black religious vestment with a white cross. He was wearing a mask supposed to symbolise the Virgin Mary. The man got into the bathtub and let himself sink slowly into the water. At this moment the girl Maria appeared. She was wearing a thin white undergarment, a mask and a pointed hat. In her right hand she held a trumpet. Very carefully, she got into the water and then sat down astride on the man's legs. Very slowly, he covered her undergarment with soap. It also seemed as if there was

some movement under the man's vestment. After a while, the girl got up and made a small reverence while still standing in the bath. Meanwhile, the man was playing the trumpet. The end.

Then another film was shown, featuring the same girl.

Afterwards, one member of the public wanted to know whether the artist had ever experienced any difficulties while making this kind of films, 'for example with the mother of the girl?'

Desiato nodded his head and said, 'her mother never knew anything about this. Once, during the presentation of *Vasca da Bagno* a man got up and shouted that my films were immoral and that he would make sure that I was going to get arrested. He was an important and influential public servant.' 'How did that end?'

Desiato laughed and said, 'not long afterwards he was accused of corruption and got arrested.'



Giuseppe Desiato, *Vasca da Bagno*, Naples, 1971, gelatin silver print, 21 x 29.7 cm, signed and dated, 1971.

**Stationary**, with various COUM stamps, 29.9 x 21 cm, '70s.



# DIAS (Destruction In Art Symposium)

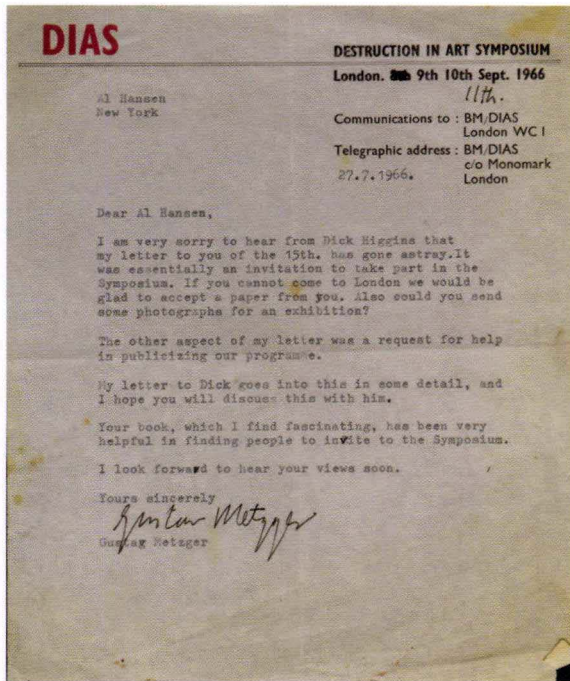
- London, 9-11 September 1966

Gustav Metzger, a German-born artist and political activist, was the initiator of the *Destruction in Art Symposium (DIAS)* in 1966. At the time he had already gained some fame through his manifestos on *Auto-Destructive Art* (1959/1960). In December 1962 Metzger presented a seminar at the Ealing Art College in London. One of the listeners was Pete Townshend who was an academy student at the time. His performances as a guitar player of The Who are legendary; Townshend himself declared that Metzger's radical ideas inspired him to smash his guitar on stage.<sup>7</sup>

The *Destruction in Art Symposium* took place in the London Africa Centre in 1966. For several days participants discussed about the various aspects of *destruction* while actions took place. This manifestation received a lot of coverage in the British press. One paper wrote: *Art that is ripe for destruction*. It meant the international breakthrough for many artists. The symposium started with a slideshow by Mark Boyle. Living insects were showed into a slide projector. The heat from the projector caused death among the insects whose struggle was magnified and projected. The actions by Wiener Actionists Brus, Muehl and Nitsch received much attention. Peter Weibel did a presentation on *Direct*

*Art* and Kurt Kren showed films of Muehl's *Materialaktionen*. Yoko Ono replicated her *Cut Piece*: the audience was encouraged to cut parts of her clothing. John Latham used a construction site for actions with explosives. During the symposium Hanns Sohm from Markgröningen made photos for his archive. A few years later he sent me prints of some of the most important actions.

In March 1968 Jon Hendricks organised a *Destruction in Art Symposium* in New York: *DIAS USA*.



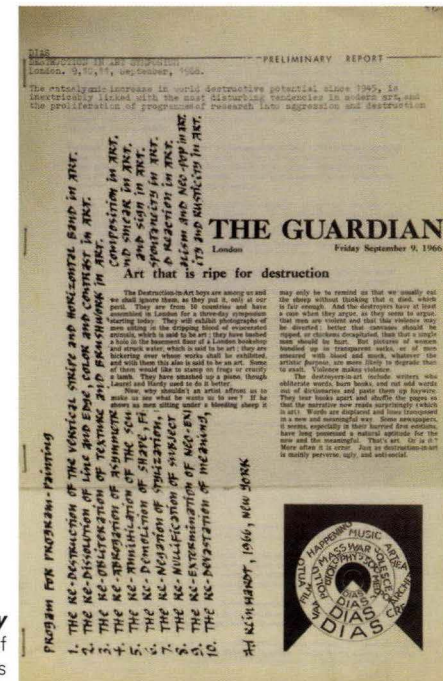
**Gustav Metzger, letter to Al Hansen, signed and dated: 27.7.1966.**



**Pro-Diaz, Painting with explosives, London Free School Playground, 12.9.1966, photo by Hanns Sohm.**



**John Latham, Skook with powder, London Free School Playground, 12.9.1966, photo by Hanns Sohm.**



**DIAS, Preliminary report, overview of activities, 6 sheets (stapled).**

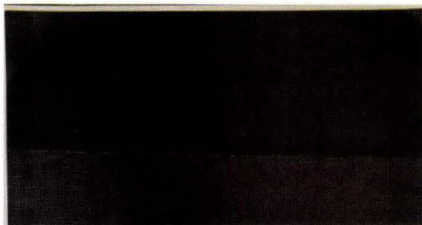
<sup>7</sup>Interview in: *The Guardian*, March 19, 2000.



# DIAS U.S.A.

- New York, March 1968

DIAS U.S.A. took place at Judson Memorial Church in New York, with 'destruction events' by Hermann Nitsch, Nam June Paik, Al Hansen, Bici Hendricks, Jon Hendricks, Charlotte Moorman, Ralph Ortiz and Lil Picard.



## HOSTILE WORKSHOP

THE DESTRUCTION ART GROUP 1968  
THE JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH

*Light - Aggression*

1. A 40"x60" blow-up of the "I ACCUSE" statement placed on the wall, inside the gallery.
2. Next to the blow-up statement, a 750-watt blinding light.
3. Under the light, a powerful police-type siren whines relentlessly for two hours, at the limit of human endurance, making it very hard for the spectator to stay very long in the room. The siren can also be heard in the street for several blocks around.
4. On a low square white box, under the blinding light, and directly in front of the blasting siren, Toche sits motionless for a period of two hours, staring at the public.
5. Printed copies of the statement are handed out both inside and outside the gallery.
6. A tape recording of the statement, in Toche's voice, comes endlessly from a loudspeaker placed in the street, so it can be heard very clearly above the sound of the siren in the adjacent streets.
7. A large sign in the street, at the entrance of the gallery, bears the message: "Where a Change is Needed: Yesterday Was; Today Columbia, Tomorrow the Museum!"

Friday May 10 JEAN TOCHE

I ACCUSE.  
I am a prostitute.  
You are a prostitute.  
He is a prostitute.  
She is a prostitute.  
We are all prostitutes..."

That's what our trivial "Culture" is all about. WE MUST DESTROY THE CULTURE.  
This is the time for a total change.  
This is the time to be concerned with Man's development, not his exploitation.  
This is a LIGHT SITE.  
I will throw the light in your face.  
I will throw the light in your face.  
I will throw the light in your face.  
I will throw the light in your face.  
I will throw the light in your face...

I AM JEAN TOCHE.  
I work with aggressive lights.  
I work with aggressive sounds.  
I work with aggressive situations.  
I am against aggression.

I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE.  
I am a subversive, and I am a saboteur.  
I question the very validity of the Art Establishment.  
I question the very validity of that language called "ART".  
Can art still fulfill our basic human needs, if it continues to compromise with a cultural society which is engaged in the very process of alienation of the masses, and repeatedly ignores, consciously, the very needs of that human race?  
In the early ages, art was not meant as art, but as a projection of the primitive urges of the man, in order to appease the terrifying forces of nature. Did art not lose all the meaning by becoming a merchandise, starting with the patronizing by the Church and the aristocracy, followed by the process of industrialization and business deals of western middle class men, including today's masses? But art not become a weapon for the cultural gangs to corrupt people, a new kind of opium for the people?

To shout fire, when there is a fire, is not enough. It is not necessary "ART" either.  
It is how you do it, which makes the difference.  
But has not the very notion of "ART" become obsolete, because of its constant refusal to face the present crime of humanity? Has coal life, King's death, the shooting of Ruby "THE RED", the destruction of Columbia University, the bomb, made even Destruction in Art inadequate, because of "art" limitations?

I HAVE A PROBLEM TO SOLVE.  
Has the time come for the artist to make a choice:  
Either to stay the adulterated "creative" toy of an aristocracy engaged in the most atrocious hypocritical games of corruption, domination and violence, and so probably become irrelevant and meaningless, like an old rotten core.  
Or, to define himself more directly to human crises, and maybe become something more complete than just an "artist", something which would include today's social problems, and a definite commitment to the development of the human race, as well as a fire stand against Man's exploitation and manipulation.  
This might include bringing the arts into the streets, going on the barricades when this necessary, and playing an active role - how this has to be defined, in this cultural revolution, which is shaking and shocking down, all over the world, and right now, the very foundations of a very decadent western white empire.

When all over the world students are revolting against the corrupt carcan of the Establishment, is it right for the artist to stay passive and indifferent?  
Can art ever evolve in a more mature and human form, or will it disappear in its own innocence and its corruption?  
Can I go on just being an "artist"?

( dedicated to Margot Bredthauer )  
Jean TOCHE,  
Judson Gallery,  
New York, NY,  
May 10, 1968.

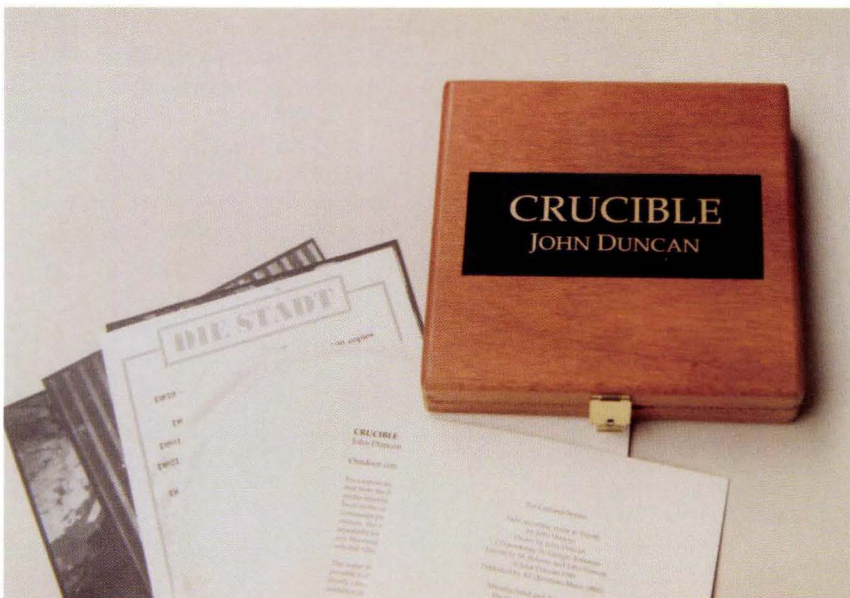
# John Duncan (1953)

I wanted to punish myself as thoroughly as I could. I'd decided to have vasectomy, but that wasn't enough: I wanted my last potent seed to be spent in a dead body. I made arrangements to have sex with a cadaver. I was bodily thrown out of several sex shops before meeting a man who set me up with a mortician's assistant in a Mexican border town (...). (From the tape introduction to *Blind Date* in: *Pleasure-Escape*, 1985.)

In May 1980 John Duncan bought the dead body of a woman in Tijuana (Mexico). He had intercourse with her and

afterwards underwent a vasectomy. He had photographs taken while being operated on. (See: *Out of Actions. Aktionismus, Body Art & Performance 1949-1979*, Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern, 1998.)  
Linda Burnham, publisher of *High Performance* refused to include information about *Blind Date* in her magazine. She made it known that she considered the performance to be reprehensible, also she was rather accused of censorship than publishing the material.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



John Duncan, *Crucible*, box with CD and 2 text cards, ca. 13,5 x 13,5 x 2 cm, 500 numbered & signed copies, All Questions Music (BMI), 1998. (With an email by John Duncan to Galerie A on the edition *Pleasure-Escape / Blind date*.)

DIAS U.S.A., Jean Toche, *Hostile Workshop*, May 10, 1968, flyer with I ACCUSE statement, 32,7 x 19,6 cm.

JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH <small>238 BROADWAY SQUARE SOUTH NYC 10013</small>		
JUDSON GALLERY 238 THOMPSON ST. FRIDAY MARCH 22 1968 7-9 PM		
DESTRUCTION ART SYMPOSIUM D.I.A.S.-U.S.A. 1968 PREVIEW		
DESTRUCTION EVENTS		
COUNTRY	ARTIST	EVENT
AUSTRIA	HERMANN NITSCH	CARCASS MUTILATION
KOREA	NAM JUNE PAIK	SELF MUTILATION
USA	AL HANSEN	SADOMASO
USA	BICI HENDRICKS	JOE BREAKING
USA	CHARLOTTE MOORMAN	DESTRUCTION
USA	RALPH ORTIZ	THE DEATH OF WHITE HEAVY AND BLACK HEAVY
USA	LIL PICARD	SOFT BURNINGS AND COAL
NO ADMISSION CHARGE		
<small>SENHOR MINISTER - HOWARD MOODIE</small>		

*Destruction in Art Symposium, D.I.A.S. - U.S.A. 1968*, flyer, 27,9 x 21,6 cm.



## Jean Dupuy (1925)

This 'Monument for Francesco Conz' is a funeral monument. Its future 'user' can be spotted right above the place where his ashes will be kept. Jean Dupuy, the creator of this special piece, can be seen standing next to Conz.

(Francesco Conz passed away in 2010. His ashes were scattered.)



**Jean Dupuy, *Monumento per Francesco Conz***, Milan, February or March 1990, photograph, with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse, 22 x 15.2 cm (photographer unknown).

## Pieter Engels (1938)

During the 1960s Engels was among the most important and most successful artists in the Netherlands. He was a friend of Willem de Ridder; they studied at the same academy. Many of his early works are related to Fluxus.

Engels had exhibitions in leading galleries like the Antwerp White Wide Space and he was represented at the *documenta* of 1968. All major Dutch museums bought his work. Engels is a great artist. Nowadays, he almost seems to be forgotten. In the early 1990s I asked Rineke Dijkstra for a print of a picture she once made of Pieter. On the back of the photo she wrote: *Peter Engels*. The exhibition *Sixties!* (2007) in the Haags Gemeentemuseum did not include any of his works.

In 2006, I made an exhibition with his early works. Pieter designed a fine poster and during the crowded opening everyone praised the beautiful and relevant works. I sold nothing.

I did, however, buy one artwork for myself. Surely, there are better times ahead.

*ENGELS cuts all valid banknotes in half for f10,-*

I do not remember when I first read about it, but this offer from the '60s has intrigued me for years. When the artist visited my gallery in 1976 I asked him whether he still had a *cut banknote*; I felt this was an omission in my collection.

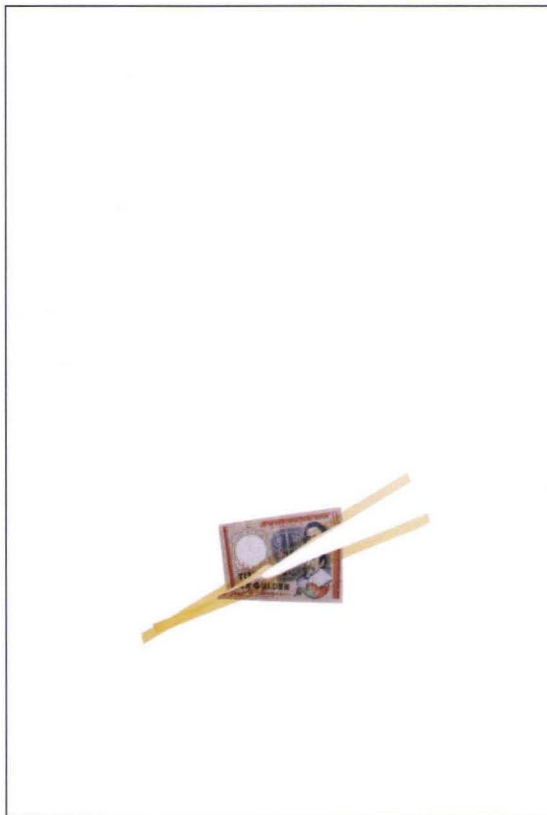
Pieter paused for a moment and said: 'I'll take a look, I might still have one lying around on the attic.'

One week later he returned to me with a large number of *cut banknotes*. They were artistically (read: slightly skewed) pasted on sheets of ivory coloured cardboard.

I chose to buy a 10 guilder banknote. The artist sold it to me for nine hundred ninety-nine guilders and ninety-nine cents.



**Pieter Engels, *Re-paired Chair (prototype)***, wood, metal and silver paint, ca. 82 cm high, signed and dated, 1964 (photo: Ferry André de la Porte).



**Pieter Engels, *Cut banknote***, collage on ivory coloured cardboard, 100 x 65.2 cm, signed and dated, 1965.



**Pieter Engels, 1989**, photo by Rineke Dijkstra, C-print, 28 x 28/43.5 x 30.4 cm, signed by the photographer on the reverse.



## Lawrence Ferlinghetti (1919)

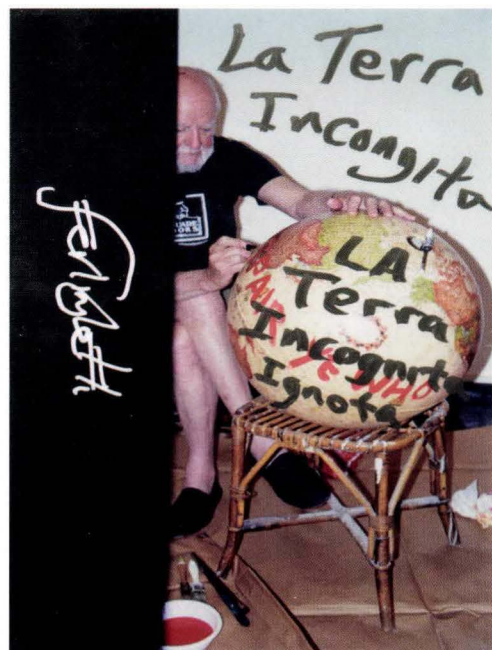
Poet/painter Lawrence Ferlinghetti was co-founder of the City Lights Pocket Book Shop in San Francisco (1953) and also the thriving force behind the writers of the Beat Generation. His City Lights Press published works by Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs, Corso, and many other 'Beats'.

In 1998, he visited Verona after having been invited by publisher Francesco Conz. An exhibition of his work followed three years later: *Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Multimedia Artist. Opere Scelte*.

Back then Conz urged me several times to show Ferlinghetti's work in my Amsterdam gallery. At the time his paintings didn't catch my attention. They were mostly screen prints on canvas that were partially painted over. But I did like the photo's Conz had taken of him. With a marker Ferlinghetti had written texts all over them.

In 2008, Ferlinghetti and Conz presented 'Underwear'. This was a special edition of old fashioned gowns, which were worn by girls and women. Ferlinghetti included texts like: *I DRIVE MEN WILD* or: *CONCEIVE OF LOVE BEYOND SEX* and Conz put every carefully ironed nightgown with a signed and numbered certificate in a cardboard box.

Still, there was not enough material for a proper exhibition.



Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *La Terra Incognita*, felt-tip pen on photograph, with the photographer's stamp on the reverse, 30.3 x 19.9 cm, signed, n/d.

## Robert Filliou (1926-1987)

*Optimistic Boxes*, the best known multiples by Robert Filliou, were released by VICE-Versand. This undertaking was a project of Wolfgang Feelisch, director of a company based in Remscheid, Germany. In the late nineteen sixties, he asked a large number of artists to come up with art objects that could be produced in large quantities against very reasonable prices.

Just like George Maciunas, Feelisch and his artists preferred to work with 'found' materials. Household objects, like scissors, matches and food (a packet of salt, a pickled herring in a jar) were especially favoured: *Kunst im Haushalt* (Art in the Household). Editions were unlimited, but the art objects were signed by the artist. As far as prices went, neither name nor fame of the artist mattered: each object had a price tag of 10 German marks (about 5 Euros). The objects were mainly distributed by mail.

Feelisch once told me that an artist suggested adding another zero to the price, 'so at least we earn something as well'. He didn't fall in with the idea, because the

objects shouldn't be more expensive than a pocketbook, 'in that way they can also serve as a small present'.

Some of the artists mixed up with the project, like George Brecht, Dick Higgins and Ben Vautier, were also involved with the international Fluxus movement.

Around 1980, the American Fluxus collector Gilbert Silvermann paid me a visit in Amsterdam. While perusing my bookshelves, he noticed an *Optimistic Box* and opened it carefully. There was a small stone inside and he read the text on the inside of the box: *we don't throw stones at each other anymore*. He asked, 'was this produced by George Maciunas?' I said, 'no, it is from VICE-Versand. It is very cheap.'

Gilbert hesitated, put the box back and said, 'if it hasn't been produced by Maciunas, it is not Fluxus!'

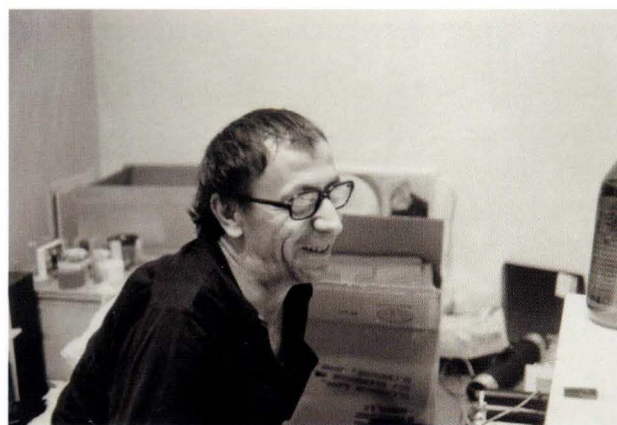
I bought a complete set of *Optimistic Boxes* from Feelisch for the last time on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 1998. As I got a 30% discount I paid 105 German marks (about 52 Euros) for them, instead of 150.

### Robert Filliou,

*Optimistic Box No. 1* (1968), *Optimistic Box No. 2* (1969), *Optimistic Box No. 3* (1969), *Optimistic Box no. 4 and 5* (1981, concept: 1968). (See: VICE-Versand.)



Robert Filliou, *documenta 5, Kassel, 1972*; photo by Dick Higgins, gelatin silver print, 20.1 x 29.9 cm, with the photographer's stamp and the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz (with Conz' signature) on the reverse.





**Fluxus** - Flux-Festival, Kurzaal Scheveningen, November 13, 1964

When I was seventeen my downstairs neighbour was a French teacher called A.J. de Swarte. He was friends with Anton Beeke, a young designer. I lived in an attic room at the front side of the house. In the back side of the attic lived Anna. She was Beeke's beautiful, but also a little mysterious girlfriend.

Anton and Anna knew Fluxus organiser Willem de Ridder. At one point he informed her that he needed an extra for a music performance. He required an 'older person with a neat suit and a neutral expression'. She immediately thought of my downstairs neighbour. Anton and Anna were also invited to participate.

My neighbour returned with passionate stories. They are described in: *FLUXUS, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties* (1979).

**Fluxus** - Flux-Festival, Kurzaal Scheveningen, November 13, 1964  
Cartoon by Rupert v.d. Linden, in: *Kunst van Nu*, December 1964

The FLUXUS GROUP gave their farewell concert in The Hague. Now they are contemplating which New Roads can be travelled. Here follows a small HISTORY + PROGNOSIS of the relationship AUDIENCE – ARTIST

0 AD to ± 1958 - Audience passive / Artist Active

± 1958 - ± 1964 - Audience more active / Artist more passive

± 1964 - ± 1967 - Artists completely passive / Audience very active

± 1967 - ± 1970 - Artists and audience both very active

± 1970 - ± 1972 - Artists and audience both very passive

± 1972 - ± 1973 - Complete discontinuance of the enclosed space and separation of audience and artist. Only the cash register, which can be placed at any random point in the city, marks the difference between normal life and art. People become artists by taking place behind a cash desk, the spot where the cash desk has been placed, has been converted automatically into a work of art. Through the act of paying normal life is experienced as art.

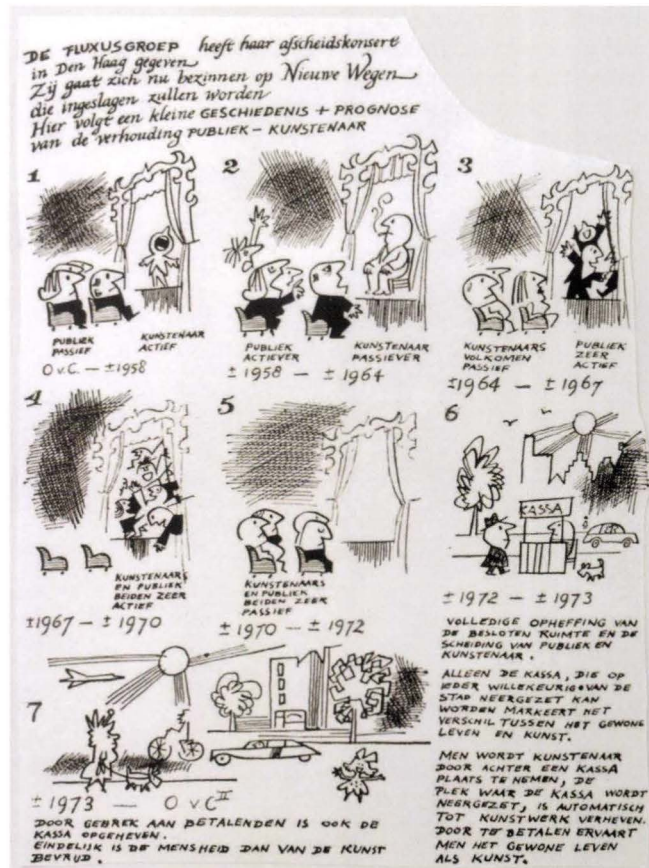
± 1973 - 0 AD II  
Due to the lack of paying customers the cash register has also been discontinued. Finally, humankind has been liberated from art.



**Flux-Festival, Scheveningen, 1964: 1. no smoking 2. no eating. 3. smoking 4. eating.** (Wim T. Schippers), performed by (from left to right): A.J. de Swarte, Addi Köpcke and Eric Andersen. Not visible: Wim T. Schippers and a fifth (unknown) person; photo: ANEFO, gelatin silver print, 12.2 x 18 cm, signed by Schippers.



**Audience during 1. no smoking 2. no eating. 3. smoking 4. eating.** (Wim T. Schippers); photo: ANEFO, gelatin silver print, 12.1 x 18 cm.





# Fluxus - Flux-Festival, De Lantaren, Rotterdam, November 20, 1964

Ten days after the Flux-Festival in Scheveningen another Fluxus concert took place in the De Lantaren theatre in Rotterdam. Ben Vautier, Misha Mengelberg and Bob Lens were among the performers at this event.

From a press cutting, November 24, 1964:

by: Eugène Eberle

## AUDIENCE TRUMPS FLUXUS

Rotterdam - Emotions at the Fluxus-event in De Lantaren rose to such heights yesterday that it required an intervention by chief fire officer Van de Blink to ease the tensions. A outburst of yelling and whistling broke loose upon his arrival but people calmed down eventually.

The programme presented by the Fluxus-companions for the audience was different from the one in Scheveningen. For one, the dominating a-dynamic effect was not present. A piano was demolished in the lobby. Misja<sup>®</sup>, grandniece of the late Willem Mengelberg, was fully committed to this practice. The piano's carcass was thrown onto the stage by the enthusiastic audience only to be further torn apart.

## NOT AMUSED

That was the moment when the mood changed in the predominantly young audience. Many of them rushed onto the stage when the next event started. This part of the programme included a table being smashed to pieces along with some kitchenware. The audience interrupted again when Misja Mengelberg performed his "In memoriam van Zweden", an endless repetition of a few notes. Both Misja and the piano were carried around on stage several times. Normally the Fluxus members like to provoke their audience. They were not amused this time. Their project got out of control repeatedly which they found difficult to swallow.

## TABOO

A surprising conclusion could be drawn that evening as the Fluxus-group apparently does have its own taboos. In a sense Fluxus was trumped by the Rotterdam audience. By the time we left the room an enormous quantity of paper had been unrolled outside. One of the Fluxus members dipped the crest of his hair in a bucket of black paint. On his hands and feet he proceeded to paint on the paper. Onlookers in the Gouvernestraat were watching speechlessly.

After the concert the director of De Lantaren wrote a letter to Willem de Ridder:

Dear Mr. de Ridder!

Herewith we confirm that we agreed to pay to Fluxus a sum of Dfl. 700, a fee and a compensation for the expenses made on behalf of the Fluxus Festival held in (art centre) De Lantaren (in Rotterdam) on Monday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1964. You received Dfl. 250 as an advance payment and after the show ended, I handed Dfl. 450 over to you.

On the other hand, we received Dfl. 25 from you to compensate for the damages caused to the stage opening.

A stapler you had borrowed from the office did not turn up after the show. Maybe, it ended up inadvertently in your belongings. If so, could you please return it? If not, we would have to ask you for compensation.

I believe that none of us have any reason to look back at the event with fond memories. I do not feel that Rotterdam now has a clearer idea about what Fluxus is or wants. It can also hardly be satisfying to you that the initiative was handed over to a subgroup of the 'asphalt youth' of Rotterdam; their wantonness is proverbial and there was no need whatsoever to provoke it.

The badly structured programme only contributed to the general chaos: if before the interval this kind of spirit reigns it is impossible to expect that afterwards one can start quietly with an adynamic concert. The public that flocked to the event because of the programme announced on the posters had an especially bad time.

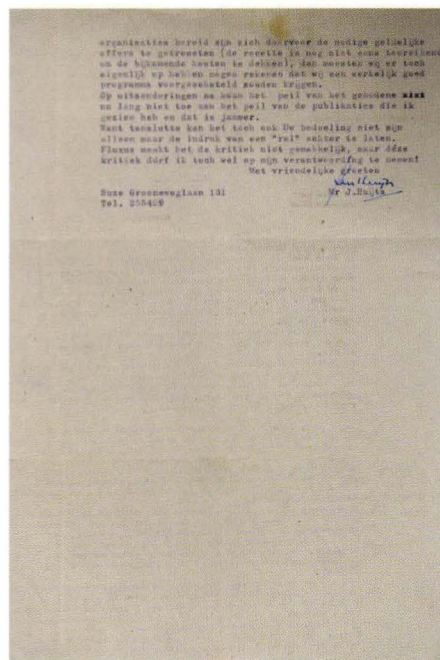
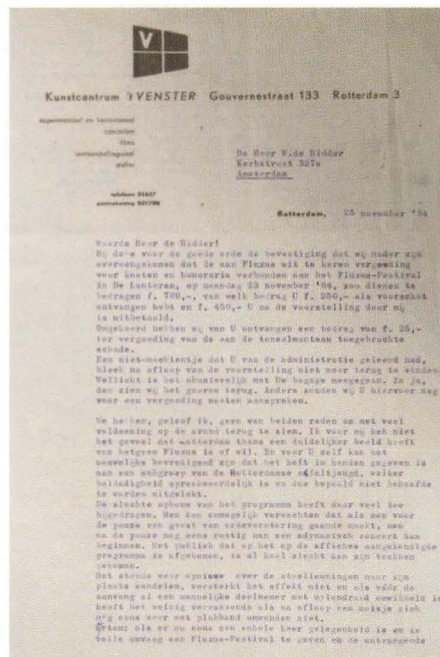
Walking over and over again to one's seat over the armrests doesn't enhance the effect and if before the start of the show a male participant is already bandaged with nylon thread, it doesn't come as a surprise at all that at the end a girl gets wrapped with adhesive tape. In short: with the possibility to stage a comprehensive Fluxus-Festival and with receiving organisations willing to put up money (the proceeds weren't even sufficient to cover the additional costs), then we could and should have counted on a really good programme to be handed to us.

The level of what was shown - with just a few exceptions - did not reach the quality of the publications I have seen. That is a pity.

After all, it can't be your intention either to just leave the impression of a 'riot'.

Fluxus doesn't make it easy for the critics, but I don't mind taking the responsibility for finding fault here.

Yours sincerely,  
(signed:) Mr. J. Huijts



Letter from Mr. J. Huijts to Willem de Ridder, signed and dated: 25 november '64, 26,9 x 18,4 cm.

<sup>®</sup> Editorial note: error in the original article. The correct name is: Misha.



**Fluxus** - Fluxfest, AKI, Enschede, September 21-25, 1981

In September 1981 a Fluxus Festival took place at the AKI, the art academy of Enschede. I was responsible for the program, Peter van Beveren was in charge of the finances.

We invited a large number of artists both from the Netherlands and abroad. They were all promised a fee of 1750 to 2000 guilders. Van Beveren decided that the artists should stay in the best hotel of the city. A brochure was added to the invitation. ('Our chef and his staff guarantee you culinary delights'). The manifestation was supposed to conclude with the release of a catalogue with photographic documentation of the festival as well as a number of contributions by artists. Ludwig Gosewitz, for example, sent zodiac drawings of all the participants: Joseph Beuys, Ludwig Gosewitz, Dick Higgins, Misha Mengelberg, Wim T. Schippers, Ben Vautier and Wolf Vostell. (In the end, Beuys, Mengelberg and Schippers

were absent; Eric Andersen, Giuseppe Chiari and Willem de Ridder took their places.) There were performances, concerts, lectures and discussions. Moreover, the activities were not confined to Enschede alone: on the second day, all of us - students, journalists and other interested parties - travelled by luxury touring car to Wolf Vostell in Gelsenkirchen (Germany). BEN carried a banner reading: *VOSTELL GIVE UP ART*. He had also made a text board: *KEIN VOSTELL*. It was immediately smashed to pieces by the host.

Evenings were spent in the stylish 'lounge' or at the bar in Hotel Memphis. We were regular customers there and it seemed that many artists only drank double whiskies. The Danish composer Eric Andersen ordered a large tray of artfully diced cheese to be served with every round of drinks. The academy director was very enthusiastic about the programme ('It was about time something happened here to shake us all out

of our stupour!'), but became increasingly worried about the steadily rising costs. And when not only funds but also the academy's furniture stocks became depleted - brightly painted chairs that had been used as props in a performance by Eric Andersen were appropriated as souvenirs or sold to the highest bidder in the academy foyer - it was decided that, with immediate effect, artists would have to pay for their own meals. 'As far as drinks are concerned', we were told, 'the academy will continue to foot the bill.' That evening, Peter van Beveren briefed the artists. Once more they had congregated at the 'Memphis Bar', all of them staying very late.



**Fluxfest, AKI, 1981: Wolf Vostell and Ben Vautier, Gelsenkirchen, 22.9.1981**, gelatin silver print, 23.9 x 17.7 cm.



**Centraal Fluxus Festival, 2003: Jean Dupuy, Wedding Piece, Amsterdam Hilton, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003.**



**Fluxus** - *Centraal Fluxus Festival, Utrecht/Amsterdam, October 23-26, 2003*  
In 2003 Willem de Ridder and I organised the Centraal Fluxus Festival. This happened in cooperation with the Centraal Museum in Utrecht and took place from October 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>. The event was concluded with a dinner in the Amsterdam Hilton Hotel on October 26<sup>th</sup>: *Fluxus à la Carte*.

Around 200 guests had arrived by half past seven. There were large round tables where they could enjoy a *Fluxus Menu*. These included the *Caprese Fluxus*, *Grilled Salmon with saffron sauce and roasted vegetables* and *Stoplight Desert*.

There was an additional menu from which guests could choose *Fluxus Events*. The events were performed between the courses at the guests' tables or on a central platform in the middle of the room.

One of the events was *Paper Sound* by Alison Knowles; a composition in which paper instruments are used.

There was also a *Wedding Piece* by Jean Dupuy. It was performed by Hannah Higgins (daughter to Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles) and a French young man. Both undressed completely and then switched clothes. (Waiters were instructed to not let the events distract them.)

Yasunao Tone gave a fine karate performance by smashing a violin on a table; *One for Violin Solo*, a composition by Nam June Paik.

In the middle of the room artist Michael Gibbs and an acquaintance of his were staring down a set of 32 glasses of red and white wine. They were playing *Wine Chess*. It was a contribution by Takako Saito, who can't play chess herself. Japanese artist Ay-O attended to the guests who ordered a *Tactile Event*. He provided a fine collection of *Finger Boxes* that the guests could enjoy at their table. Only by sticking a finger through a hole in a *Finger Box* you can determine its contents; often

with surprising results. Ay-O also fried the guests' money: *Fry*. Elsewhere in the room Willem de Ridder smoked the contents of a cigarette pack in one go (*One Pack a Day*). There were also blindfolded people wandering through the room. In conclusion, it was a fun evening.

After dinner people were welcome to join Ben Patterson's Fluxus Casino: *The Creation of The World*. It was a type of Blackjack with an original collage by the artist as the grand prize.

Patterson said he once played the same game in Madrid where a round was won by the sister of the Spanish king. She was overjoyed with the prize because, as she described it: 'It is the first time in my life that I've won something'. Ay-O gave me the box with *Finger Boxes* as a present afterward.



**Willem de Ridder, *One Pack a Day***, Amsterdam Hilton, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003.



**Ben Patterson, *The Creation of The World***, Amsterdam Hilton, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003.



## Fluxus - Wiesbaden 1962 - 2012

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2012 a variety of events took place in Wiesbaden. Exhibitions, concerts and performances were held to commemorate the fact that in September 1962 this German city was the venue of the first large Fluxus Festival ever.

In case you bought the catalogue *Fluxus at 50* in the museum store you also received a so-called FluxBox: a cardboard box in which the catalogue could be kept plus printed matter and photos.

For the duration of the event, three large sea containers were placed in front of the Wiesbaden Museum. One of them housed the FluxShop, managed by Galerie A. Here

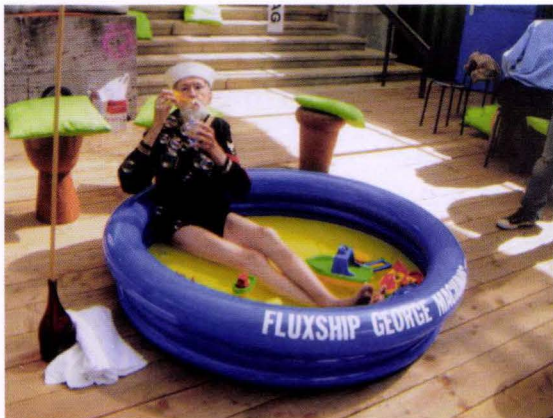
buyers of the catalogue received a FluxBox filled with Fluxus-material like printed matter, photographs and press cuttings related to Fluxus activities in Wiesbaden and other German cities. Later versions of the FluxBox also contained pieces of wood: these were remnants of the piano that was chopped to pieces on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September during the performance of Philip Corner's piece *Piano Activities*.

## Fluxus

- *Photographs: Oscar van Alphen*  
A Fluxus Festival took place in the Hypokriterion Theater in Amsterdam on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1963. George Maciunas and Tomas Schmit were among the participants. Willem de Ridder handled the events' organisation.

There were reviews in the magazines *Vrij Nederland* and *Haagse Post*. Photographer Oscar van Alphen documented this event; his photos are now part of the Fluxus collection in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The programme was repeated five days later in the atelier of Lancelot Samson in The Hague.



**Fluxus at 50 - FluxShop**, Wiesbaden, Summer 2012.  
**Fluxus Wiesbaden: Geoff Hendricks in his Fluxship**, in front of the Wiesbaden Museum, Summer 2012 (photo: Harry Ruhé).

**Fluxus 2012: Ben Patterson and Willem de Ridder in Philip Corner's piece *Piano Activities* (1962)**, performed during a Fluxus Dinner in the CultClub, Amsterdam, an evening organised by Jeannette Dekeukeleire and Harry Ruhé, December 1, 2012 (photo: An-Sofie Kesteley).

(The piano cost us € 50. The remains were sold to a collector who paid us € 1400, rather a bargain. With the proceeds we managed to finance the event).



**Paper Piece** (Benjamin Patterson), Hypokriterion Theater, Amsterdam, June 23, 1963; photo by Oscar van Alphen, gelatin silver print, 18.2 x 25.4 cm.



## Fluxus

- Photographs: Hans de Boer

I started collecting performance photos around 1975. Most of the time I would buy them directly from the photographer. Prints like these tended to be cheap back then. Hans de Boer's photos had extremely low prices; seven guilders fifty per photograph. I decided to pay more than the requested rate. De Boer then gave me extra photos to compensate. As a result I felt compelled to round up the price, but it only led to him giving me even more prints.

Art dealer Joop Smid commissioned De Boer to photograph the *Parallele Aufführungen Neuerer Musik* in and around the *Kunsthandel Monet* in Amsterdam on October 5<sup>th</sup> 1962.

This is one of the photos I bought from him.

## Fluxus, Happening, Actionism

- Photographs: Francesco Conz

I met Francesco Conz in 1981. That year he paid a visit to my gallery in Amsterdam, which in those days was housed in the squatted porter's apartment of the so-called *Huis van Bewaring* (a state-run detention centre).

We spent the rest of the afternoon in a bar in front of the gallery and celebrated the deal. On that occasion I also introduced him to the 'kopstoot' (literally: a head bang, but in fact an old Dutch habit of accompanying a glass of beer with a small glass of jenever, Dutch gin.) The bill he received at the end of the evening was quite impressive: he had it framed and this bill became part of his so-called *fetish collection*.

At the end of 1982, I travelled to Verona to pay Conz a visit. Edizioni Francesco Conz was housed in a beautiful old mansion in the *Vicolo Quadrelli*, a small street leading to the river Adige. In his studio, which doubled as his living quarters, he gave me a long explanation about the editions he was working on at the time.

Conz' editions differed in many respects from those of other art editors. First of all, they were extremely luxurious and, closely related to that, also because of their price. I remember a table-tennis table with five big boxes on top of it. They were all different as the colour of the fabric with which they were covered varied from reddish brown to dark purple. Every box contained signed photographs documenting the *Aktionen* (Actions) of Hermann Nitsch. The box also contained a blood stained piece of cloth, a so-called *Aktionsrelikt* (the relict of an action). The price of each box was 6000 German marks (around 3000 Euros).

But maybe the thing that impressed me most during that first visit to Conz was his firm belief in the artists he was working with. 'Over the last couple of years I have made hundreds of editions', he told me. 'My cellars are chock-a-block. Right now nobody is interested in these editions, but that will change over time.' He banged a catalogue with his hand and lifted it. 'These artists will really make it', he said, 'they are the Picasso's of the future!'



**Wolf Vostell, *Décollage with juke-box, and (sitting on the street)* Tomas Schmit, in front of *Kunsthandel Monet*; photo by Hans de Boer, gelatin silver print, 25.4 x 20.2 cm, with a copyright sticker on the reverse. Tomas Schmit in a letter to Galerie A ('70s):**

'my first contact with fluxus?: in 1961, I met paik and he said: just sent some of your pieces to a certain mister maciunas!; and that is how it started; monet/rokin: they had a vostell exhibition and at the opening there was quite a big performance with lots of people: vostell, paik, alison knowles, gosewitz, emmett williams, me and many others; yes, the guy who is kneeling on the ground is me; the piece is untitled, I believe; and it wasn't very good either...'

**Al Hansen**, with Lisa Cieslik somewhere in northern Italy, n/d., 18.7 x 24.7 cm, photograph by Francesco Conz.

**Francesco Conz, Orlan, Ben Vautier, Carolee Schneemann**, *Out of Actions*, Vienna, June 16, 1998, 15.1 x 21.9 cm; photographer unknown. (The photographs are part of a series of ca. 90 prints, each with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.)





## Fluxus, Happening

- Photographs: Dorine van der Klei

In the Netherlands Dorine van der Klei is mostly known as a singer. For years she performed with her sister Gerrie in theatres; they called themselves The Sissies. Besides her singing career, she also worked as a photographer during the '60s. She worked in the Netherlands and abroad, and documented various Fluxus manifestations. On several photographs by Igno Cuypers you can see her taking photos of Fluxus events. For example the film happening *Sun in Your Head* by Wolf Vostell on the Amsterdam Leidscheplein Theater on January 11, 1964. In the same year she was also present at Amstel 47, where she took pictures of Stanley Brouwn's *Anonymous action*.

## Fluxus - Photographs: Manfred Leve

In the early '80s the American collector Gilbert B. Silverman commissioned me to buy photos from various photographers. He was looking specifically for photos they had made during Fluxus concerts in the '60s. I used the commission fee to buy photos for myself as well. By today's currency the price of a photo ranged from three euro fifty to fifteen Euros.

Only the German photographer Manfred Leve wanted a considerably higher price: a hundred and thirty German Marks for a single photo. He was, however, willing to trade his photo's for works from my own collection: multiples by Ruthenbeck, Rückriem and Paik.

Leve made one of his most special photos in

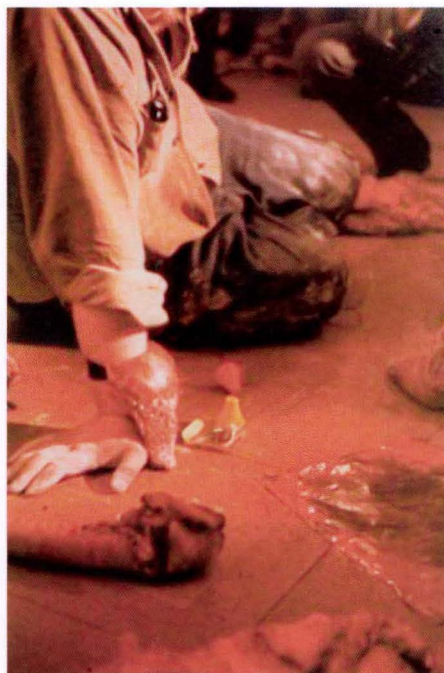
the kitchen of Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal in May 1963. It shows a table with glass jars containing object poems by Tomas Schmit ('Shake well before reading') and walls with *Direction* prints by George Brecht (design: George Maciunas). This display can be considered the first Fluxus exhibition.

## Fluxus

- Photographs: Ad Petersen

Between 1960 and 1990 photographer Ad Petersen worked as a curator for the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. In 1973 he organised a Ben Vautier retrospective: ART = BEN.

Nine years earlier he visited BEN in Nice for the first time. See: Ben Vautier, *regardez moi cela suffit je suis art*.



**Wolf Vostell, *Dé-coll/age Happening***, Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, June 5/6, 1965 (*24 Stunden*); photo by Dorine van de Klei.

▼ **Willem de Ridder & Emmett Williams, in: *13 Façons d'employer la crane de Emmett Williams***, De Kleine Komedie, Amsterdam, December 18, 1963; photo by Dorine van der Klei, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, with a copyright sticker on the reverse.



**Fluxus Exhibition, held in the kitchen of Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, during Nam June Paik's Exposition of Music-Electronic Television**, March 11-20, 1963; photo by Manfred Leve, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.4 cm, with the photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.



**FUCK FLUXUS**, Fluxus concert (with Ben Vautier and Harald Szeemann on stage), Happening & Fluxus, Cologne, 1970; photo by Ad Petersen, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, with the photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.



## Fluxus

- Photographs: Heinrich Riebesehl

The photographs Heinrich Riebesehl made of Joseph Beuys during the Aktion *und in uns ... unter uns ... landunter* (Galerie Parnass, 1965) are among the best known images of this artist.

Riebesehl was a great photographer as well as a nice person. For the photos I ordered from him he only asked about twenty to twenty-two German Marks (roughly ten to eleven Euro) a piece. I ordered 43 photographs and 34 strips of contact prints (at three German Mark per strip). Eventually I sold the majority to Fluxus collector Gilbert B. Silverman from Detroit. I kept eleven prints for myself.



**George Maciunas and Tomas Schmit: *Two Inches*** (Robert Watts), *Festum Fluxorum Fluxus*, Düsseldorf, February 2/3, 1963; photo by Reiner Ruthenbeck, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, with the photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.

## Fluxus

- Photographs: Reiner Ruthenbeck

Reiner Ruthenbeck is among the most important German artists of the second half of the last century. His photographic work is not that well known. In the early '60s he visited various Fluxus events, where he took pictures. After I had shown his work in my gallery in 1984 I asked him for a few prints of his photos. It took a while (*Ich hatte sehr wenig Zeit, mich um die Fotos, vor allem um die Kontaktfotos zu kümmern*), but Ruthenbeck's prices were low (*Pro Abzug kostet es du DM 10,-*).



**George Maciunas and others: *In Memoriam Adriano Olivetti***, *Festum Fluxorum Fluxus*, Düsseldorf, February 2/3, 1963; photo by Reiner Ruthenbeck, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, with the photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.

## Fluxus

- Photographs by Hanns Sohm

The archive of dentist Hanns Sohm is part of the collection of the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart since 1981. The artworks and documents were previously kept in his own house in the German city of Markgröningen. The collection gave a beautiful overview of important experiments and art developments during the '60s and '70s. This includes Fluxus, Happening and Wiener Aktionismus, concrete poetry and related movements. Sohm travelled to New York to visit George Maciunas in December 1969. There he took historical photos of the Fluxus publisher and his 'material archive'. Many years later he sent me some of the prints.



**Nam June Paik's *Fluxus Champion Contest*** (Frank Trowbridge won in 54 seconds), *Festum Fluxorum Fluxus*, Düsseldorf, February 2/3, 1963; photo by Reiner Ruthenbeck, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, with the photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.



**Joseph Beuys, *und in uns ... unter uns ... landunter***, Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, June 5/6, 1965 (*24 Stunden*); photo by Heinrich Riebesehl, gelatin silver print, 23.8 x 30.4 cm, with a handwritten description and the photographer's stamp on the reverse.



**George Maciunas at his apartment at 349 West Broadway, New York, demonstrating an 'object wrapped in rope'**, December 1969; photo by Hanns Sohm, gelatin silver print, 12.4 x 17.4 cm, with the stamp of the Archiv Sohm on the reverse.

**George Maciunas' materials archives, at 349 West Broadway, New York**, December 1969; photo by Hanns Sohm, gelatin silver print, 30.5 x 19.5 cm.



## Fluxus Dinners in Italy

*Notes and Sketches 1964-1966*, a portfolio by Robert Watts, was published by Edizioni Francesco Conz. It consists of twenty hand coloured prints and was presented on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March, 1982 in Verona, Piazzetta Pescheria 9.

A dinner including various performances also took place, the so-called *Cena Fluxus con Bob Watts*.

In June 1982, on the same address in Verona a Fluxus dinner was held in honour of Robert Filliou, the so-called *Banchetto Fluxus in onore di Robert Filliou*. On the photograph, in front in the middle, Robert Filliou with next to him Emmett Williams, behind Filliou are Francesco Conz and, sitting on his lap, Joe Jones.

## Fluxus related invitations

**George Brecht, *Toward Events***, Reuben Gallery, New York, 1959; paper bag, printed both sides, 25.5 x 15.8 cm.

**Internationaal Programma, Nieuwste Muziek - Nieuwste Theater - Nieuwste Literatuur**, De Kleine Komodie, Amsterdam, 1963; programme, 4 pp., 30.9 x 21.3 cm.

**Arman**, Galerie Iris Clert, Paris: 'Open after October 25, 1960' ('Full-Up').

**Arman**, Galerie Lawrence, Paris, vernissage: May 11, 1965 (resin cube).

**Ay-O**, *Rainbow Staircase Environment*, 363 Canal Street, New York, November 20, 1965 (design: George Maciunas).

**George Brecht**, Museum Ludwig, September 16, 2005 (green/red).

**Eric Dietmann**, Galerie 20/d, Amsterdam, December 16, 1966 - January 15, 1967 (envelope).

**Al Hansen**, Gracie Mansion Gallery, New York, opening: September 30, 1995 (invitation with cigarette).

**George Maciunas**, *One ticket for Fluxorchestra*, Carnegie Recital Hall, New York, September 25, 1965 ('*Balloon must be inflated to permit entry*').

**Yoko Ono**, Ubu Gallery, New York, October 28 - December 12, 1995 (2 invitations, each with a key one invitation signed).

**Takako Saito**, Washington Square Gallery, New York, January 8, 1964 (wood).

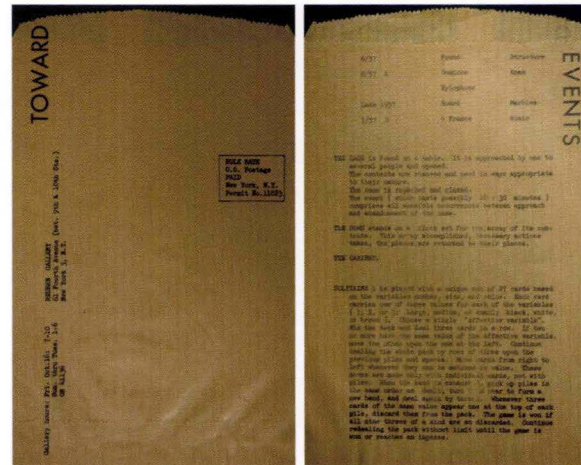
**Takako Saito**, Emily Harvey Gallery, New York, April 20 - May 19, 1990 (3 versions).

**Tomas Schmit**, Galerie Springer, Berlin, January 10 - February 4, 1976 (handcoloured, signed invitation card).

**Daniel Spoerri**, Galerie Zwirner, Keulen, opening: September 12, 1963 (Möbius Band).



***Banchetto Fluxus in onore di Robert Filliou***, Verona, 1982, photograph by Fabrizio Garghetti, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 24 cm, signed by Garghetti, with the copyright stamp of the photographer and the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.





**DE  
KLEINE KOMEDIE**

Amstel 56-58 - Amsterdam

**WOENSDAG 18 DECEMBER 14.30 UUR  
MATINEE**  
Entree f 0.50 (bel. inbegr.)

**ATTENTIE** Zaal sluit i.v.m. filmopname 14.30 uur precies

**INTERNATIONAAL  
PROGRAMMA**

Nieuwste Muziek - Nieuwste Theater  
Nieuwste Literatuur

In samenwerking met en onder auspiciën van  
**AFSRINMOR-International**  
Association For Scientific Research in New Methods Of Recreation

Slechts één voorstelling in Nederland

Worben v.a. v.o.b.  
Mood Engineering Society Holland (MESH)  
Fluxus-International  
High Red Center Tokyo - Dynamical Works zpv.

Algehele leiding  
**Willem de Ridder - Wim T. Schippers**  
**Tomas Schmit - Emmett Williams**



## Henry Flynt (1940)

A short biography on Henry Flynt is included in: *FLUXUS, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties* (1979).

Flynt gained fame for coining the term *concept art*. He was incidentally involved in the Fluxus movement. Since 1964 he is also known for his demonstration against the performance of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Originale* which he considered exemplary of 'cultural imperialism'.

I published a Dutch translation of Flynt's dissertation *Proposal for a "Geniuses' Liberation" Project* near the end of 1976:

*Voorstel voor een Genieën-Bevrijdings-Project*. On November 30 he wrote: *My reader (Jaap van Liere) says the translation is good.*

But Flynt was unsatisfied with his biography in my Fluxus book. He was especially displeased by a Dick Higgins quotation:

*Maciunas had now come very much under the influence of Henry Flynt, who was a former composer and a friend of La Monte Young, who had become politically engagé and radicalized in a very literary way, quite out of correspondence with reality ...*

On November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Flynt wrote:

*By giving the world to understand that I am an extremist clown, you do a profound disservice not only to me, but to all the Europeans who are living through a crisis today (Italy etc.) and who are organizationally and programatically demoralized, disoriented, and bankrupt.*

The book was loose leaf and I offered Flynt the possibility to add a text to this supplement.

He wrote me an apology for the 'overstated language' in his letter. He also promised to send me a text that I could use as a supplement for the Fluxus-book. A few weeks later I received an envelope containing a

*STATEMENT from Henry Flynt, December 1979*

*I suppose the section on me in the FLUXUS catalogue is done as well as can be expected, considering that my association with Fluxus was only a marginal aspect of my work.*

*There is something I must object to, however: your reprinting Dick Higgins' characterization of my politics from 1972. And while the 1968 Realists' leaflet is a genuine document, it's reprinting out of context at this time is also unfortunate.*

*The overall effect is to publicize me as an*



**Henry Flynt, Lecture at Walter De Maria's loft**, New York, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1963 (photo: Diane Wakoski).

*extremist clown. Yet as you should be the first to know (since you have had my dissertation on Socialist Economic Administration since 1975), I have long since stopped being a cliché Marxist-Leninist and have long since outgrown my "gallows humor" phase, and I have for years been engaged in a massive project of rethinking and renewing the Marxist-communist idea. TEXTS ON REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS AND ECONOMICS and "Remarks on War Between Communist Nations" (Feb. 1979) document my recent work in this connection; but really, this direction should have been evident from my dissertation four years ago.*

*To publicize me without emphasizing this work does a disservice not only to me but to all the Europeans who live or will live in a social crisis, and who desperately need to learn communist economics and political strategy at a new higher level in order to master the crisis. Americans can afford to be witless*

*about politics because there is no open class warfare here. But in Europe it is different: once again there is a crisis which can again result in catastrophe and tyranny if the Left fails again. The Marxist-communist idea of progress is one of the few sane and decent ideas in the world today. But decades of adapting Marxist ideology and organization to anti-colonialist nationalism have led the Left in Europe to become totally inadequate to conditions in advanced capitalist society. Further, it is not possible to go back to some Marxism of the past, because early Marxism not only failed to anticipate the anti-colonialist phenomenon, but was hopelessly naive about the organizational and economic problems which communism would face in advanced industrial society. On the other hand, if there is a collapse of democratic capitalism, communism remains the only progressive society-wide solution which is possible. Any so-called revolutionary tendency which does*

**Henry Flynt, Communists must give revolutionary leadership in culture**, 2 printed texts fixed to a styrofoam board with elastics, 14.9 x 23.6 x 2.7 cm, Worldview Publishers, New York, 1966. (Design: George Maciunas, distribution: Fluxus, New York.)





not have a serious, responsible perspective of economic reorganization will easily be crushed by capitalist or state-capitalist forces.

Beginning with the mailing of my dissertation to you in 1975, I have for four years made vigorous and wide-ranging attempts to inform Europeans about my work in revolutionary theory, by mail, by meeting Europeans in New York, and most recently by spending a month in Sweden. I could tell you one anecdote after another about all the heedlessness I have encountered. (Of course, Americans do not even admit that I exist - but there is no prospect of internal collapse here.) What distresses me is that European radicals are so lacking in vision, so unable to see beyond the existing Left and its bankruptcy to the need for massive renewal and relearning. If Europeans do not come to understand the requisite new ideas, either by reading me or by rediscovering my conclusions independently (and the new ideas are not that easy to master), then I cannot be optimistic about the future of democracy in the West.

(It also distresses me to see the amount of energy which the Fluxus crowd is devoting to clowning and little plastic boxes.)

To inform you further about my recent work, I am sending you "From Fundamental Philosophy to Meta-Technology" and "Alternate Perspectives for the African Intellectual."

My Fluxus book was eventually published without any supplement, thus Flynt's text didn't get published then, but I am making up for it now.

## Ken Friedman (1949)

In 1981 I visited New York for the first time. I met a Dutch art transportation agent, who introduced himself as Walter Germans ('actually my real name is Wouter'). He told me he was having a party that evening. I was invited to attend.

It turned out that Walter lived in a luxurious apartment on West Broadway. The walls were hung with works by Andy Warhol, Neil Jenney and Roy Lichtenstein.

Walter's wife sung a long excerpt from a certain opera and there were a lot of intimidating people around. In short: it was very enjoyable.

At a certain point I was accosted by a fat man in a white suit. He wore a tie and a gold necklace and on each of his fingers he sported a large ring. First he wanted to know where I was from. Then he asked: 'And what do you make?'

'I don't make anything', I said. 'I run a gallery.' The man burst out laughing. What he really meant to say was, 'how much do you earn?' I was shocked. Later Walter explained

everything to me. 'In America it's quite acceptable to ask that sort of thing, he assured me. 'Over here we don't make a big issue out of it.'

As the evening progressed I struck up a conversation with the artist Ken Friedman who told me at some length about his recent work. 'Very interesting', I said. 'By the way, what do you make if you don't mind me asking?'

Friedman stared at me in surprise. 'Currently I'm working on a series of large collages', he answered. 'But isn't that what I've just been telling you about?'

## The Riddle of the Sphinx



Powdered milk

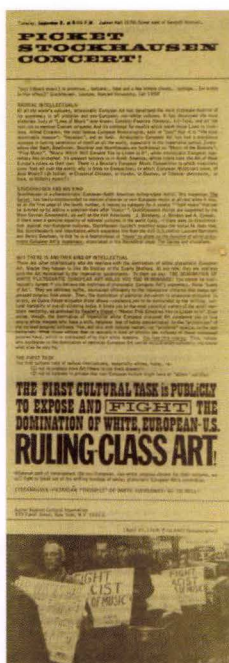
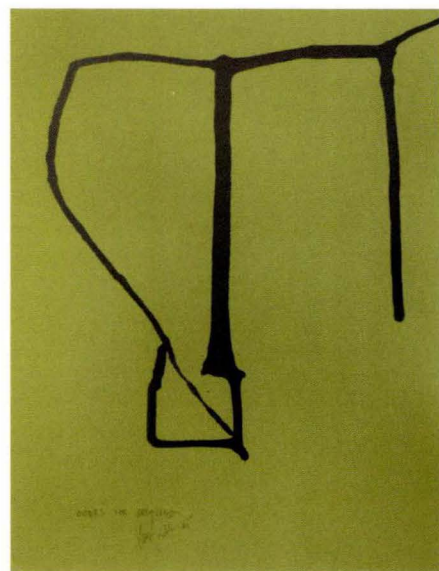


Sugar



Salt

KF 1968  
(a self-portrait)



**Henry Flynt, Picket Stockhausen Concert**, flyer (design: George Maciunas), 1964.

**The Riddle of the Sphinx (a self-portrait)** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

► **Ken Friedman, Oysters for Breakfast**, ink on cardboard, 27.5 x 21.5 cm, 1967, signed and dated, with the handwritten text: *Richard Maxfield and I once planned to do a collaborative opera together, entitled Oyster Ben. I made a number of studies for visual scores also to be used in choreography and set design. This is one of those studies, presented as a gift to my friend, Harry Ruhé, in July of 1979.*

► **Richard Maxfield**, gelatin silver print, 12.5 x 8.3 cm, dated: 11-14-66 (gift from Ken Friedman; photographer unknown).





## General Idea

Felix Partz (1945-1994), Jorge Zontal (1944-1994), AA Bronson (1946)

The works of General Idea (ca. 1968-1994), are mainly made up of art editions. The design for the Jockey short shopping bag - the short's bottom side has been sewn together and a handle has been added, resulting in a shopping bag - dates back to 1991. Texte zur Kunst in Cologne had this object once on offer for 400 German marks. In 2010, I included this multiple in our CultClub exhibition Eat your Art out. It isn't clear from whose mind the idea for the shopping bag sprang. AA Bronson said in an email dated 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2008:

*The policy changed over the years, but at the time we were doing this, if one of us created a work, we said it was by GI. However, after so many years of working together, it was as if we were one extended mind. At any rate, we would meet, and discuss the idea, and sometimes developments would come out of the discussion (for example, how to construct the handle of the shopping bag).*



**General Idea, Jockey short shopping bag**, shopping bag made from shorts, with handle, ca. 70 x 40 cm, 100 (+ 20) copies, numbered on an added card, this specimen signed on a copy of the design sketch, Texte zur Kunst, Cologne, 1998, with a letter by AA Bronson.

## Ludwig Gosewitz (1936-2007)

Several performances took place in and around Kunsthandel Monet in Amsterdam on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Among the participants of these *Parallele Aufführungen Neuester Musik* was also the poet Ludwig Gosewitz.

Gosewitz, who created 'concrete poetry', made a so-called *Wurftext* on the street in front of the gallery; cardboard cubes with texts stamped on all sides (resp. *oben, unten, links, rechts, vorn, hinten*) were thrown on a square piece of wood and glued to the surface where they landed.

Because only two cubes of this work remained (one is part of the Silverman Fluxus collection of the MoMA, the other in the archive of Galerie A), it was decided in 1991 to make a reconstruction. The new version was slightly different with texts in black paint on wooden cubes.

The artist wanted to make ten of these *Wurftexte*. Eventually only three were made; the last copy was signed by Gosewitz shortly before his death in 2007.

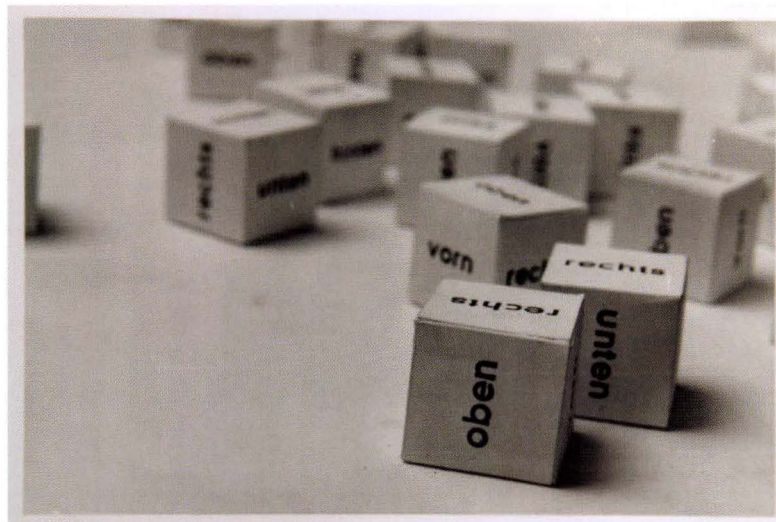
*my stamp activity within paiks moving theatre after vostells parallel performances of very new music, amsterdam, 5.10.1962*

*after throwing papercubes on white 70x70 paper-laminated plywood at monet's (wurftext 1, 1962) there was the pleasure of performing two other samesized cardboard pieces along next gracht (ed: canal) east of rokin, two action pieces in which the audience might create some new graphical values:*

1. wurftext 2, 1962 was realised by throwing about 30 arrows (from dartgame) onto the plate. the piece is actually lost and there are even problems in reconstructing the word(s) held and transported by their wings.

2. stamp activity, 1962: in this piece I was stimulated by some of my new friends at this time to collect hundred little circular black rubber parts on the street and to use them as stamps for anybody's leftover. those participants choose the locations of their stamps which were personally marked and later replaced by rubberstamped names. after more than twenty years this piece is illustrated and edited for the first time.

*ludwig gosewitz* (from a letter to Galerie A, 1986)



**Ludwig Gosewitz, Wurftext**, photograph from a series of five, this copy signed and dated: 1963.



## GAAG (Guerrilla Art Action Group) and Art Workers' Coalition

During the second half of the nineteen sixties, many demonstrations denouncing the Vietnam War were taking place throughout cities in the United States.

The *Guerrilla Art Action Group*, founded by Jon Hendricks and Jean Toche, choose the art world as their venue.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1969, members of this group organised a happening in the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Animal blood was poured over the floor of the lobby and there were demands that 'all Rockefeller's', because of their involvement with the weapons industry, were fired from the museum's Board of Directors.

Ka Kwong Hui took photos of the action, Al Hansen gave me one of the prints, and Jon Hendricks wrote something on the back. The *Guerrilla Art Action Group* ceased its activities in 1976.

*And babies* is the best known anti-war poster made during the Vietnam War. The words came up during the questioning of Paul Meadlo, one of those present at the mass murder in My Lai. The photograph was taken by Ronald L. Haeberle in 1968.

Late 1969, the poster was distributed in

an edition of 50.000 copies. A group of politically active artists, the Art Workers' Coalition in New York, was in charge of the production. The NY Museum of Modern Art had promised to contribute, but after seeing a proof of the poster, they withdraw from the project. The Board of Trustees supporting America's involvement in the war was most probably to the blamed. As a protest, artists took a number of posters to the museum and unfolded them next to Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*.

(One of the participants, the artist Tony Shafrazi - now better known as an art dealer - returned in 1974. With red paint he sprayed the words *KILL LIES ALL* on Picasso's masterpiece.)

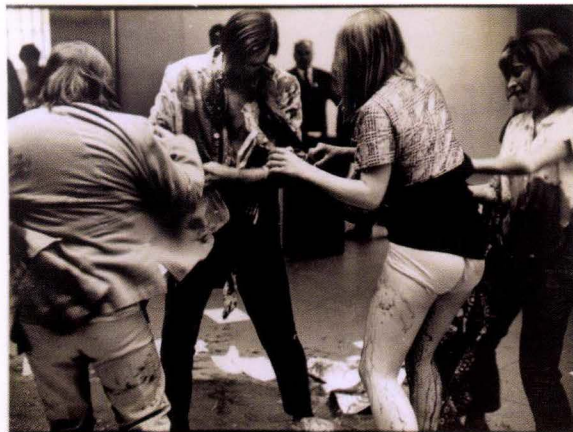
On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1969 the Art Workers' Coalition organised a 'Moratorium of Art to End the War in Vietnam'. Many museums and art galleries closed for the day. The group also called upon New York art museums to shut their doors on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1970 for a one day moratorium. The New York Art Strike Against War, Racism and Repression was inspired by Robert Morris who closed his solo show at the Whitney Museum on May 15<sup>th</sup>, two weeks earlier than planned.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

## Al Hansen (1927-1995)

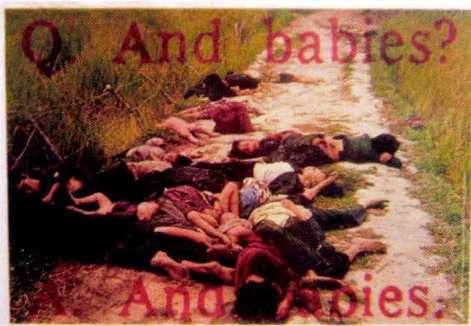
*I tried to get a Provo movement going in New York City based on Simon Vinkenoog and the Dutch Provos of Amsterdam. No one was interested in my thrusts which were more sociological, psychological and in terms of developing and designing a leading edge of potential change that would be a political science/contemporary anthropology oriented movement. David Bourdon in an article on a be-in in Central Park commented on how dull and mechanical the hippie be-in movement had become. He mentioned the fact that Al Hansen was there in a New York City Provo helmet and that that might lead to something more interesting in the near future. It didn't. Everyone was more interested in working out authority figure/parent/corporation rages and rip-offs. My Provo helmet was a childs racing car science fiction thing with a flashlight on top mounted archetectonically atop it all was a stuffed toy sitting dog. Often in an action I would tape a dog atop my head as part of my Viking Dada persona. The Viking dog, the Siberian shaman dog-skin drum, and the Eskimo dog, the dog soldier of the Apache Cherokee and Cheyenne ... It was in terms of the dog as an important symbol fetish of circumpolar people as well as the use of hides, furs, buckskin fringe for repairs to garments, moccasins, tents, kayaks, etc.*

Text by happening pioneer Al Hansen (and these days best known as the grandfather of the singer/songwriter/producer Beck), written for the edition *Flux Flak Pack*, Galerie A, 1979.

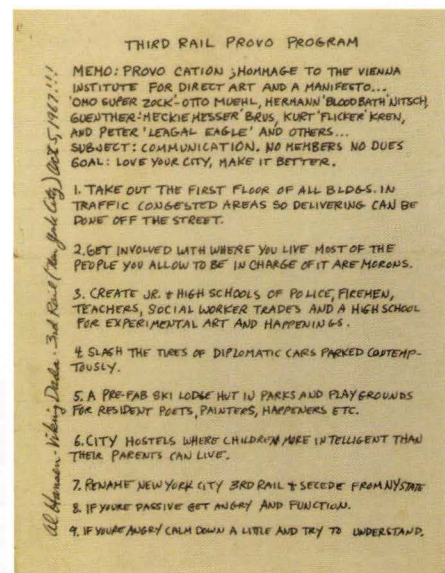


**Guerrilla Art Action Group, Blood Bath**, Museum of Modern Art, New York, the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, 1969.

From left to right: Jean Toche, Jon Hendricks, Poppy Johnson and Silvianna (Silvia Goldsmith); photo by Ka Kwong Hui, gelatin silver print (vintage), 20.3 x 25.2 cm, with a handwritten text by Jon Hendricks on the reverse.

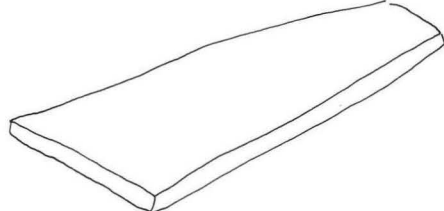


**Q. And babies? A. And babies**, AWC, New York, 1969; poster, 63.6 x 96.5 cm.



**Al Hansen, Third Rail Provo Program**, October 5, 1967, invitation, 27.8 x 21.6 cm.





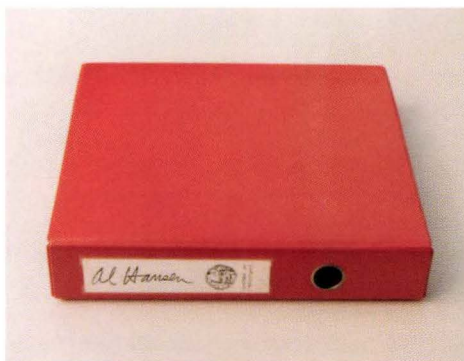
Al Hansen in Cologne  
 Hershey Bar chocolate with  
 paper wrapper off and the  
 aluminum foil still intact  
 partial portrait of Al Hansen  
 HF 192

## Al Hansen

Al Hansen was an artist without a studio for years. He did not have a fixed home or place to stay either. He often worked in pubs, where he found material for his collages in the ashtrays. When he was travelling in Europe he simply stayed over at friends. Most of his possessions were stored in suitcases. These included clothes as well as collages and drawings, notebooks, letters and pictures of his happenings. In 1979 we decided to publish a book with an overview of all his activities. The edition

had to be inexpensive. I bought twenty plastic binders and a large number of clear plastic sleeves at the office supply store Gebroeders de Winter. We filled the binders with original photos, invitations, newspaper articles and handwritten texts from the suitcases, complemented with additional photocopies. Each binder received at least one original collage or drawing. We offered the first books for a few hundred guilders a piece. Later copies were more expensive. Everything was sold by 1983.

**Al Hansen in Cologne, partial portrait of Al Hansen**  
 - drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Al Hansen, Flux Flak Pak**, binder with 40 clear plastic sleeves, filled with documents from the 1948-1979 period (some with signature), and one original drawing (in the copy of Galerie A: the drawing *anna banana*); in slipcase, 22.5 x 19.3 x 6 cm, 20 copies, signed partially, Galerie A, Amsterdam, 1979.

**Al Hansen, Invitation for Galerie A** (original design), collage on paper, 27.8 x 21.6 cm, 1979. (In the *Flux Flak Pak* binder.)

**Al Hansen, Audition** (original design), pencil, felt-tip pen and collage on paper, 29.6 x 21 cm, 1981. (Added to the *Flux Flak Pak* binder.)

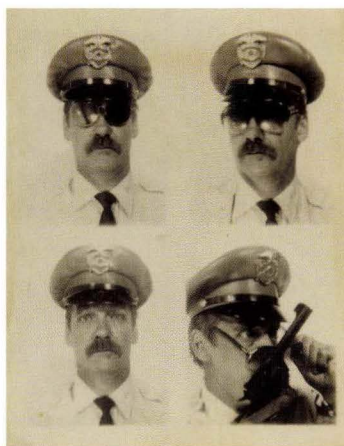
When I was moving from the Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen to the Johannes Verhulststraat in 1986 I found a plastic bag behind the piano. The bag turned out to contain things that belonged to Al Hansen. Two pocket-books, a large number of photocopies, cigarette buds, an unfinished collage, and a notebook.

There was also a draft for an invitation. It described an audition that was to take place in Amsterdam on 1 to 31 December 1981, 9 to 11 PM, with a 10 guilder fee.

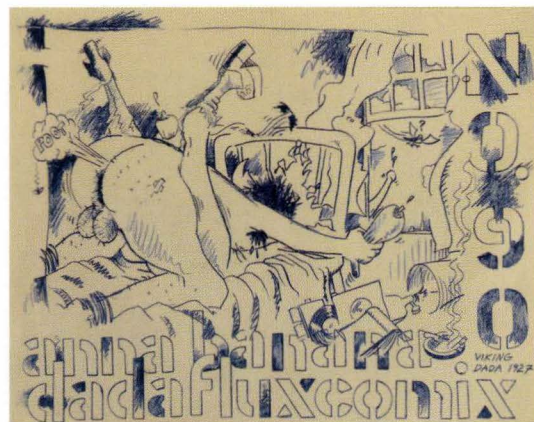
It also said: ... *will absolutely not be performed in Amsterdam. Informations and reservations Gallery 'A' ...* Al never picked up his bag and I never inquired after his intentions with the mysterious invitation.



**Al Hansen, Provo Event**, Judson Church, NY, 1967, photograph by Julie Abeles, gelatin silver print mounted on card by Hansen, 25.8 x 21 cm, with a handwritten text by the artist and the photographer's stamp on the reverse.



**Al Hansen, Passport photographs**, 4 photos on one sheet, 12.4 x 9.8 cm, n/d.



**Al Hansen, *anna banana clacla fluxcomix***, pencil on paper, 27.9 x 21.7 cm, signed VIKING DADA 1927.



## Al Hansen

Yoko Ono and I have always been linked in an odd way. Mavericks. Going against yesterday and today's understoods. Fluxus, Aktion, Event, Performance artists are moving to strange musk. It is a very important undertaking chosen by very odd thinkers, profound and childishly simple. Each time the smoke clears there are still the two intransigent ball busters Al and Yoko. Yoko's early loft gathering events were a model for the first Be-Ins. Late Fifties. In the early Fifties Yoko did all night Zen temple event Be-Ins, Be Theres before there was a Happening/Aktion art movement and Fluxus follows that, the way performance follows conceptual art so she precedes Happenings and Fluxus by ten years or seven or eight and a half. Few artists have been as poor as Yoko and I. Once Yoko was the superintendent of a building. In exchange for an appartement had to sweep and mop the halls, change light bulbs, see to the dustbins, keep track of the garbage incinerator. They had this trash tube down thru the bldg. to the basement. Yoko was busy with a performance program at Carnegie Recital Hall. As any of us would, she ignored her superintendent – janitorial duties for the four or five days preceding the show. It was around easter or Thanksgiving when a lot of trash hits the incinerator tube. The furnace thing in the basement was full and the tube was packed with food bits, paper, boxes, old shirts, cans, etc.



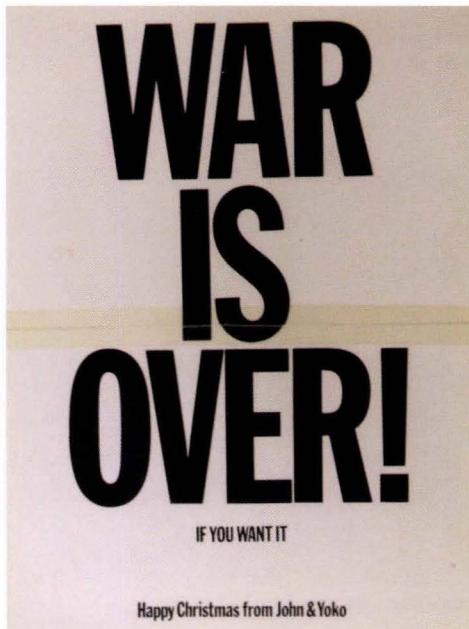
Al Hansen, Yoko Ono, John Lennon, photo and text: Flux Flak Pak, Amsterdam, 1979.

The performance went well and she went directly home to set the building to rights and do all her chores. She went to the basement and lit the furnace. Whoom! It began to burn the garbage. In fact it burned out the center of the building. In an hour or so Yoko, Tony Cox, their baby and everyone else in the building were homeless. Dues. The woman knows all about dues. Why was she so early? She was working off an earlier energy event in her own Japanese back yard. The Gutai Group of Osaka, Japan. I was into Happenings several years before Earl and Carolyn Brown showed me their catalogs from the Martha Jackson Gallery Gutai show.

Like The Loving Spoonful she was peripherally involved in a dope bust. Like The

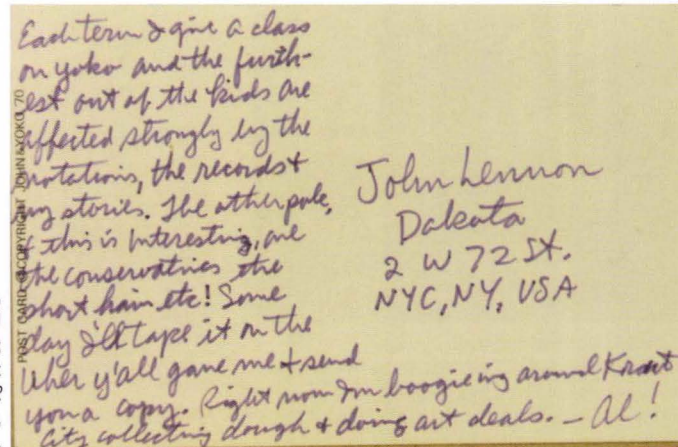
Loving Spoonful there was a mass art world reaction and all the doors in the city closed on her. I was organizing the DIA.S (Destruction in Art Symposium) in London with Mario Amayo and Gustave Metzger. I urged her to forget New York City and just come to London somehow and meet everyone we had been hearing about so long. By boat. The cheapest way. "Something great is bound to happen in London," I said. It did. She says over 100 people have claimed to be the person who got her to go to London-Lennon Land. Each proly gave 5, 10, 50\$ toward the boat fare for her, Tony, + Kuriko.

These pictures are from Yoko's birthday party at the Beatles manager (U.S.) Allen Klein. Or it was Kleins' wife's birthday, John is



**WAR IS OVER,** postcard, 20.2 x 15.2 cm, 1970, divided by Hansen into two smaller cards.

**Al Hansen,** postcard to John Lennon; 9.8 x 15.2 cm, part of a WAR IS OVER postcard (1970), signed, undated.





a libra like me and Lil Picard, David Bourdon, Carolee Schneemann – Yawwwn!  
I have been devising an action/performance art, event workshop outline, framework, program... Yoko's Grapefruit book, George Brecht, Robert Filliou, Jan van Raay, Barbara Smith, Johanna Went, Ralston Farina, Kaprow/Vostell, Diane Holland, my own work and – I became lost in the simple mystery Zen of the Grapefruit book. Wencke Mühleisen, Otto Muehl and Hermann Nitsch are segments of this enterprise as is Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman, Kirsten Ortved and the Billedstof Theater of Copenhagen. How large and vast this forest that was once avant garde seeds lings!

I am not going to tell any me and Yoko and John stories. They gave so much money for bullet proof vests for New York policeman. Bullet proof vests are not in the budget. If only John had kept one and worn it for camp, to publicize the need. But that one, would mean somewhere a new New York cop was on the mad lunatic streets without it. So John took some bullets from a little drip crazy who looks like the model for the guy on a wedding cake. Approached continually about a memorial Yoko had a great odea. To re-name Sheep Meadow in Central Park, the site of many Be-Ins and good vibes gatherings, to re-name it Strawberry Field in his honor. Mutual friends have told me that it is bogged down in red tape, the city refuses etc. and that is just ridiculous. They don't decide. We do. First you have people talking, then you make a grammar. Sheep meadow is Strawberry Fields! And thats all there is to it! Its done.

To pin this down I am doing an endless multiple edition of stones that, like a grave marker, are made flat on one face in which is carved the name Strawberry Fields. Below it an arrow. Wherever these pieces are placed in pads, flats, lofts, condominiums, poolsides or lawns, the arrow will point toward Sheep Meadow in Central Park New York City. I don't have an art dealer for it yet but Bischofsberger in Switzerland is my first choice. Stone No. One is Yoko's of course. I will be very suprised if there is not a New York City tourist map already that does not label Sheep Meadow as Strawberry Fields.

Now I am off again out of Amsterdam where I heard John Lennon was shot dead. Where, out in Holland, some little town was the first to name a street John Lennon Straat. I'm off up to Copenhagen to make a movie. Sheep Meadow is Strawberry Fields.

Al Hansen A.dam July 7, 1982  
De Schutter Bar

## Al Hansen

During the summer of 1979, I spent weeks looking for an affordable gallery space. Finally my search led me to the vacant caretaker's house attached to the Detention Centre on the Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen. I didn't have to pay any rent.

One of the first artists to exhibit here was Al Hansen. It was a large, rather gloomy building. When Al came to visit me – almost a daily occurrence – he invariably suggested we sit outside.

'Outside' meant: the courtyard of the old prison building. It had been furnished by local residents wit old tables and chairs. There was life music, drinks were available and much time was spent smoking and especially talking. Al could while away whole days here.

Another habitu  was Mario Welman. Once Mario had been owner of a trendy hairdressing salon, 'Chez Mario' on Amsterdam's Prinsengracht. He financed his extravagant lifestyle by writing bad cheques. Ultimately he was sentenced to seven months in jail.

Mario told fantastic stories that Al recorded diligently in a thick notebook. They got on well with each other.

When I moved in 1986 I found Al's notebook behind the piano. However it didn't contain transcripts of Mario's exiting tales: he'd never written them down. The notebook was completely filled with unposted answers to personal adverts. ('Hi, K086'). I counted



**The squatted caretaker's house,** part of a former prison complex at the Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen 12, Amsterdam, 1979.

more than sixty. When I informed Al, who now lived in Cologne, of my discovery, he said, 'take good care of that notebook!' When Al passed away I gave it to Italian publisher Francesco Conz. He wanted it for his 'fetish collection'.

I recently uncovered this letter while going through some old correspondence. It was most likely part of the notebook.

From: *25 Fluxus Stories*, Amsterdam, 1999.

Hollywood  
May 25, 1978

Hello N2022,  
You an artist and a writer, I get involved with art & communication projects that sometimes make me feel like a not-so-philanthropic social worker. Between clusters of jobs, being near out here I keep an eye open for a certain someone who, when she does show up, is here for three days from San Francisco, or, turns out to be married and just vacationing with relatives and who often must return to her home & husband in Irving, Colorado, Oregon, Japan, etc. As a matter of fact, and one who has traveled in Europe a lot I don't find this sort of thing shocking but it usually is the end result of a liaison begun drinking & dancing or hanging out with friends. So you, no, have previously jumped out at me, I am well read, considerate, warm, etc. the district and is part of a project to start a museum for art in Hollywood. In the last analysis I am always anxious to make a new friend. Don't know, like children,

and an older creature socially interested, etc. I frequently act in films, though I'm becoming more interested in the package & money end of it. I live in Hollywood and am — how do you describe your self, so, I enclose a still photo (a 3rd of an actual) from my last film.

Please answer, ask me lots of questions, I love to talk and am well read on a lot of my big projects is to bring the gathering and good conversation back.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
Al Hansen  
7021 Hollywood Ave.  
Hollywood 90028

**Al Hansen, Hello N2022,** letter, 24.1 x 15.3 cm, signed and dated.



## Sohei Hashimoto (1943)

*Fluxus Preview Review* (1963) is one of the very first Fluxus publications. It is a 116.6 by 9.7 cm paper roll with photos, scores and a price list of all available Fluxus editions. The edition is designed and produced by George Maciunas. One of the finest contributions is by Sohei Hashimoto:

*Happening No.1 (by which Hashimoto Sohei becomes a millionaire). Performer sends million yen to Hashimoto Sohei.*

This particular piece is also part of *Flux Year Box 2* (ca. 1968), which is a wooden box with multiples and publications. In some copies it is included as a little card that is titled: *COMPOSITION FOR RICH MAN*. This card can also be found in copies of *Fluxus 1* (1964).

I came in contact with the artist in the '90s and asked him for more information about this work.

## Piero Heliczer (1937-1993)

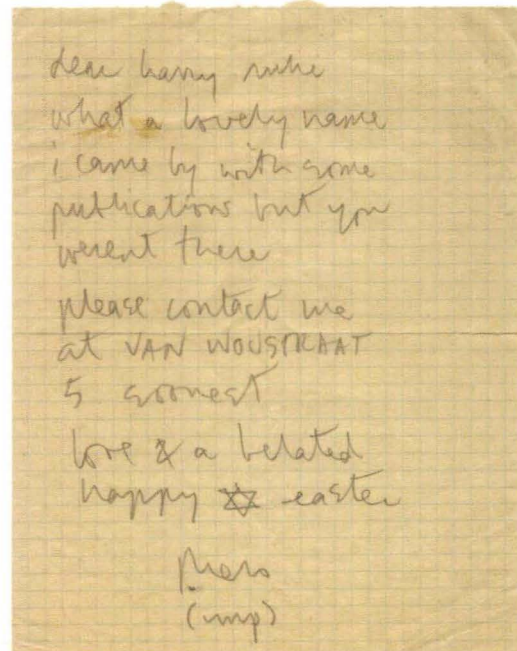
From 1977 till 1980, I lived on the Palmgracht in Amsterdam's Jordaan district. Every day I cycled via the Lijnbaansgracht to and from my house. By the bridge near the Willemstraat I always passed a freight ship that had been converted into a houseboat. It bore a strong resemblance to a floating scrap-metal yard; the deck was covered with buckets, tubs, chairs, old bicycles and indefinable metal objects. I never saw anybody there. One day a crowd had gathered round the ship: seemingly, all the clutter had become too much for local residents. Apparently, some people had thrown flower pots, but I arrived just too late. There was still some grumbling and swearing going on. The owner, a scruffily dressed man, stood on deck of the boat and was grinning at the throng. He gave the impression that he didn't fully comprehend what was going on. A few weeks later, I received a phone call from an American who said he had interesting books to sell. His name was Piero Heliczer and it sounded familiar to me. He

had been a well-known figure, a poet and underground filmmaker, in New York during the years of Andy Warhol and The Velvet Underground. That same day Heliczer paid me a visit - he was the man from the boat. We travelled by tram to a storage depot in the centre of town, a dim little room with a strong mouldy smell. In and on top of cupboards lay large quantities of books and magazines. A rickety table was piled high with old newspapers. I extracted a paperback from the dusty pile and opened it at random: '... The second time I saw Piero was in Paris. He comes up to me and says "You're a great poet - here" and he hands me the majestic staff of Notre Dame. It was a lovely thing, but stolen, stolen because I'd read the papers next day that the sexton of Notre Dame was in a state of fit about the loss of this staff. I was about to return it to Notre Dame when Brion Gysin, Burrough's friend, sees it and says "Lo, this is the wand that the jinn of Fez said I would someday receive!" That was as much as I could read before

### COMPOSITION FOR RICH MAN

Performer sends million yen to:  
Sohei Hashimoto, 2210 Abiko-Machi,  
Chiba-ken, Japan.

Sohei Hashimoto, 1961



Letter from Piero Heliczer ('Empire of Europe'), 19 x 15 cm, end 1970s.

ATELIERS HÖHERWEG E.V. HÖHERWEG 271 40231 DÜSSELDORF

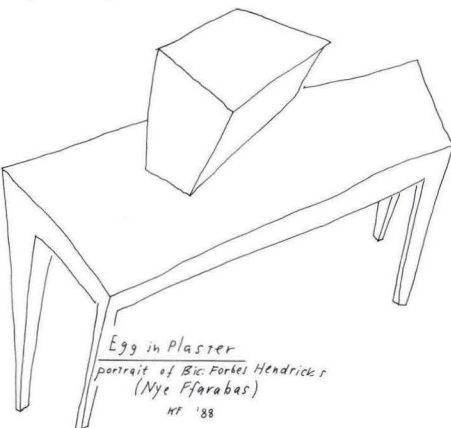
Dear Mr. Riché,  
Thank you very much for nice book.  
I do not remember in which situation  
i wrote this work.  
I was 18 or 19 years old and i do not  
think that i wrote some similar work.  
I work now very different.  
Please visit my Home Page if you interested.  
www.soheihashimoto.com Sincerely yours  
Sohei Hashimoto

Sohei Hashimoto, *COMPOSITION FOR RICH MAN* (1961), card, 5.5 x 8.4 cm.

Sohei Hashimoto, handwritten postcard, 10.5 x 14.8 cm, signed, n/d.

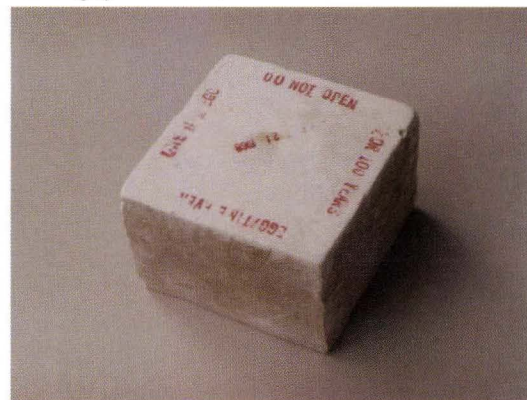


Heliczer pulled the book out of my hands. 'A text by Gregory Corso ...' he grinned. 'Interested?' He looked at me hopefully. 'The cover of the book is missing', I remarked. Heliczer shrugged his shoulders and threw the book back on the pile. 'I should still have a complete edition somewhere in New York', he mumbled. I cast another look around, but because of the rubbish I couldn't immediately find something that took my fancy. Then Heliczer retrieved an old newspaper from the floor. 'This contains a very important text about my films', he said. 'I'll sell it to you for one hundred guilders (ca. € 45,-). It's really worth a lot more but I need money.' 'A hundred guilders seems a bit much to me', I answered. 'Is it really that special?' 'In New York it would easily be worth a couple of hundred dollars', Heliczer assured me. 'But you can have it for fifty guilders.' I gave him the money and took the newspaper. I never saw Heliczer again. A short time after our meeting his boat was towed out of the Lijnbaansgracht.



Egg in Plaster  
 portrait of Bici Forbes Hendricks  
 (Nye Ffarabas)  
 nr '88

**Egg in plaster, portrait of Bici Hendricks**  
 - drawing by Ken Friedman.



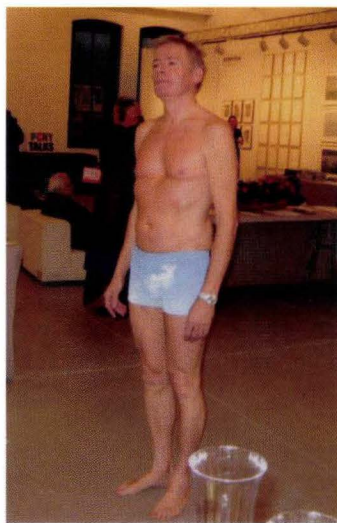
**Bici Hendricks, Egg/Time Event**, egg in plaster, 8.2 x 8.2 x 5.7 cm, with a rubber-stamped text, dated (March?) 21, 1966 (month obscured), edition: ca. 12 copies.

## Bici Forbes Hendricks

/now known as: Nye Ffarabas (1932)  
 From 1961 to 1971 Bici Forbes was married to fellow artist Geoffrey Hendricks. In 1973 they published their *Flux Divorce Album*, a wooden box containing objects of various media. The work was offered as a Fluxus Edition.

During the nineteen sixties, Bici Forbes created several Fluxus related works, amongst others a white plaster block containing an egg. The object is rubber-stamped in red: EGG/TIME EVENT DO NOT OPEN FOR 100 YEARS and dated.

The copy reproduced here was bought at Backworks, New York, in 1982 for US\$ 30 (- 10%)



**Sky Underpants**, acrylic on textile, ca. 30 x 45 x 2 cm, signed and dated, 2009 (photograph by Jeannette Dekeukeleire, New York, 2009).

## Geoffrey Hendricks

(1931-2018)

In the spring of 2009, Jeannette Dekeukeleire and I presented an exhibition about lingerie in art titled *Hidden Delights*. We published a book, visitors could join a *Hidden Delights* dinner and several lingerie shows were held during an art fair in Amsterdam.

About half a year later, we joined the Editions & Artists Book Fair in New York with *Hidden Delights*. We had inquired about some models, but the organisation could only provide two. In the end, the male model didn't show up all. It was kind of annoying, especially because we had promised Geoffrey Hendricks that a male model would be walking around the fair wearing his Sky Underpants. In the end, I decided to have a go. Luckily, the artist approved and was happy with the result.

Hendricks had made four versions. One of them has been incorporated into the collection of the Vostell Museum in Malpartida de Cáceres, Spain. I bought the underpants I wore at the fair.

(See also: Henk Peeters.)



**Geoffrey Hendricks in his Sky Car**, 1979 (collection Wilhelm Lehbruck Museum, Duisburg).





## Mike Hentz (1954)

*The show by Mike Hentz and his performance group PADLT NOIDLTL in gallery De Appel, Amsterdam, in March 1978 is announced as a musical performance. There is a small exhibition as well.*

*During the preparations, Wies Smals, the director of De Appel and her assistants, are taken hostage. Unsuspecting visitors are one by one admitted to the performance space and two pictures are taken: before and after being forced to undress and then locked into a live wire cage. The music is loud and those awaiting their turn have no idea what is going on inside. Finally, one of the visitors manages to cause short-circuit.*

*To avoid confiscation by the police, a video and pictures taken during the event are smuggled out of the country that same evening.*

The above text comes from our book: *Shame & Scandal, The Taboo in the Arts* (2012). I would like to add the following.

In 1978, I lived only a few blocks away from De Appel and I have attended almost all performances in this contemporary art centre. On the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, Mike Hentz and his friends would from about 8 P.M. onward perform the piece THEMATA 7. I ran a bit late because

I wanted to finish a story for the magazine Museumjournaal. Upon entering De Appel there were quite a few naked people walking around. Wies Smals was already dressed. She told me that the artists after their arrival in Amsterdam wouldn't tell her anything about their plans. Wies was a marvellous woman and trusted every artist completely. Now she was having a really hard time. She said that one of the women who had been forced to undress had become completely hysterical. I do recall that one of the artists – if I remember correctly it was Mike Hentz himself – described some of the naked women rather explicitly.

This was in complete contrast to the practice of performances that I was familiar with. I had attended several 'intense' performances, some of them on video (in 1977 the so-called Wiener Aktionismus had been shown extensively), but the presentation itself had always been formal. Until that moment.

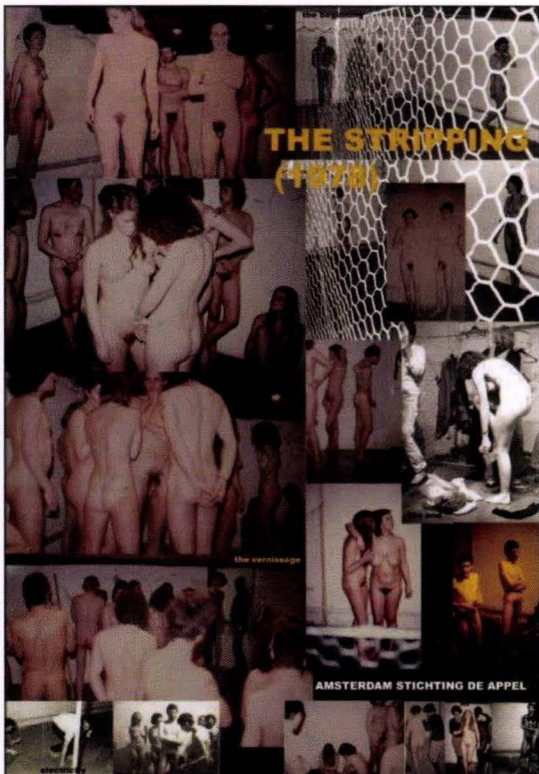
## Sooreh Hera (1973)

In 2007, Sooreh Hera from Iran – or as she herself says: Persia – graduated from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in The Hague. In December of that same year, she intended to present her final project, just like six other young artists, in the Gemeentemuseum (the Municipal Museum in The Hague). A few weeks before the opening, its director Wim van Krimpen found out through an article in *De Pers*, a minor newspaper, in which way Hera meant to deal with the themes sex and religion. Some of her photographs displayed homosexual men with masks symbolizing the prophet Mohammed and his son in law Ali. To Van Krimpen, a ban seemed the only way out. Not surprisingly, this caused a lot of controversy. The artist was threatened by Muslims and was forced to hide.

In May 2008, during the Art Amsterdam Fair, Galerie A presented an artists' book by Hera which included the divisive photographs. This resulted in a lot of publicity, but the directors of the art fair were forced to take costly safety measures.

Hera's work addresses two taboos. To create an image of the prophet is blasphemy to virtually all Muslims and relating it to homosexuality makes it even worse. In several Islamic countries, like for example Iran, it is a sin punishable by death.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



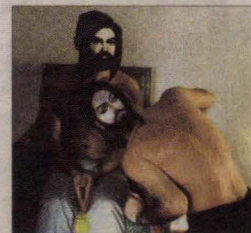
## Expositie homostellen krijgt nieuwe kans

EVELIEN BAKS  
AMSTERDAM

De Iraans-Nederlandse kunstenaar Sooreh Hera, wier foto's in december werden geweigerd door het Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, krijgt volgende maand de kans om een deel van haar werk aan het grote publiek te tonen.

De Amsterdamse galeriehoudster Harry Ruhé zal tijdens Art Amsterdam foto's van homostellen van Hera laten zien.

De gewraakte foto's van twee Iraanse homo's in Nederland, die maskers dragen die de profeet Mohammed en zijn schoonzoon Ali moeten symboliseren, zullen echter alleen te zien zijn in Hera's boek



De gewraakte foto van twee Iraanse homo's komt alleen in het boek.

Adam en Ewald. Zevendedagsgeliefden.

Eind vorig jaar ontstond veel commotie toen museumdirecteur Wim

van Krimpen de foto's te aanstootgevend voor moslims vond en daarom weigerde te exposeren. Museumgouda, dat in een groot gebaar aanbod de foto's alsnog tentoon te stellen, haakte ook af, maar bracht de kunstenaar wel in contact met de galerie in Amsterdam.

Volgens Harry Ruhé verdienen al haar foto's de aandacht: „Ik laat een mooie selectie zien. Door alle ophef is er nauwelijks aandacht geweest voor de kwaliteit van haar werk. De gewraakte afbeeldingen zijn overal gepubliceerd, maar haar andere foto's, die ook over seks en religie gaan, kent men niet.”

De kunstenaar, die na bedreigingen moest onderduiken, woont nog altijd op een geheim adres.

Press cutting with Mohammed photograph by Sooreh Hera, Algemeen Dagblad, April 16, 2008.

Mike Hentz at De Appel, 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1978; documentation.



## Matthias Herrmann (1963)

For Matthias Herrmann his penis is his main source of inspiration and his most important asset. He poses in hotel rooms or nature wearing very tiny, at times transparent underpants. Sometimes, he uses strings or underwear with famous brand names or poses naked. This results in weird and sometimes funny images, material which has been used to produce several books.

Once I bought some of Herrmann's publications. The artist asked me: 'Are you hairy?'

What can you say?

'Uhhh, well, not so much, I think ...'

Herrmann took one of the books and wrote on the first page: *To not so hairy Harry.*

## Dick Higgins (1938-1998) -

*Something Else Press*

I organised a Fluxus exhibition in my gallery in 1976. At the time there were only few publications on this movement, so I thought it would be a good idea to publish a book. I asked several artists for their contributions. Composer and writer/publisher Dick Higgins was one of them. In a three page letter he described the history of the legendary *Something Else Press*.

(The book appeared in 1979: *Fluxus, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties.*)

27 December, 1976

Harry Ruhé --

'A'

Amstel 262

A'dam

Dear Harry Ruhé

Yes, you may go ahead and publish the "intermedia" article -- just please credit me as copyright holder in some way. You know, "Copyright © 1966 by Richard C. Higgins. Reprinted by permission of the author." Or whatever -- that's an awfully complex wording, though it's the usual one. I'd be especially

happy if you'd print the "intermedia" essay in Dutch -- would there be any possibility of that?

As for the dates of the Press, yes it was started in '64 -- by accident, sort of. I quarrelled with George Maciunas of Fluxus -- he was too slow getting things published -- got drunk, took back a manuscript from him that he had promised to do, got drunker, went home, told Alison Knowles "I've started a press." She said, "Really? What's it called?" I told her, "Shirtsleeves Press." She said, "That's no good, call it something else," which I did. The very next day I wrote the *SOMETHING ELSE MANIFESTO*, which sort of summed up my intentions at the time. That all was in early December '63 -- and the first SEP book (*JEFFERSON'S BIRTHDAY/POSTFACE*) materialized the following October -- it would have been sooner, but I did most of the work myself on those early books (or, for that first book, with Lette Lou Eisenhauer) and my time was limited by my having to support myself working for printers and the like.

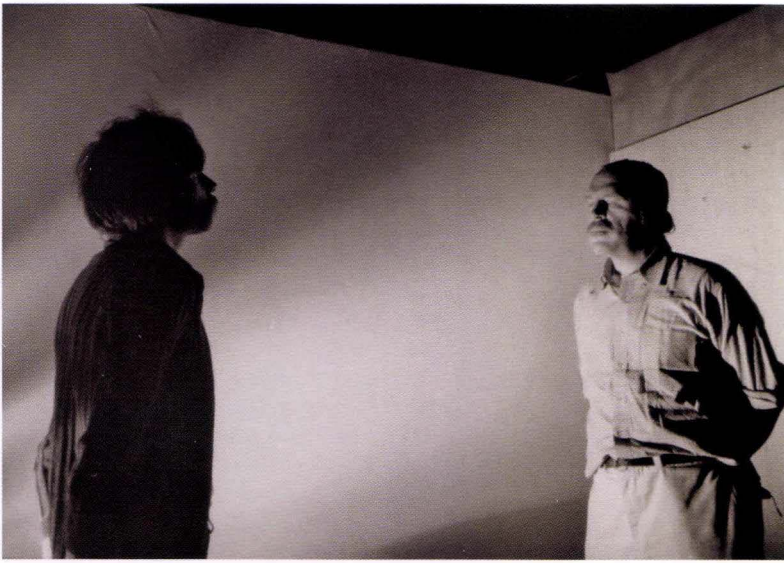
I left the Press in '73 to do a huge graphics cycle, and turned it over to Jan Herman, who was too "professional --" too much an editor,



**Dick Higgins in his Something Else Press office, New York, 1969;**  
photo by Hanns Sohm, gelatin silver print, 20 x 30.7 cm.

**Matthias Herrmann, *Untitled*,**  
photograph, 29.5 x 20.9 cm,  
5 numbered and signed copies,  
2002. (Photo used for an invitation  
card, Galerie Malasch/Serieuze  
Zaken, Amsterdam, 2002.)





**Dick Higgins and Harry Ruhé in *Danger Music Twenty-Two***, van Reekum Galerij, Apeldoorn, June 30, 1979; gelatin silver print, 8.9 x 12.5 cm.

and too little a fund-raiser. His idea of doing business was to wrap books and mail them away -- for that one has assistants (mailing books IS fun if one can afford the time) -- and he spent too little time looking for production money from foundations and wealthy people. So the Press went kaput the following year, triggered by a tax crisis here, but that was only a trigger.

The bound books were bought up by Chris Stephens, who still has some for sale. He also bought the right to use the name -- he could reprint some books, or even do new titles if he chose to. I went back to New York, to Alison and to Graduate Studies at the University (I'm working on a new critical theory to explain both the aesthetics and history of the new arts -- my recent poster essays (do you know them?) are a spin-off of this), but when I got to New York I found the scene there was as bad as ever, so I started a publishing Cooperative -- UNPUBLISHED EDITIONS -- which is in some ways analogous to the Press. Our members are myself and Alison (we're in the first catalog alone, because the others weren't yet ready), and now Philip Corner, John Cage, Jackson Mac Low, Pauline Oliveros, and Geoffrey Hendricks. Our next catalog will be a whopper -- in the manner of the Press. If you'd like to obtain any Unpublished Editions books, you can do this via OTHER BOOKS AND SO, of course, or from our European Distributor, McBRIDE BROTHERS AND BROADLEY LTD., Old Dean Farm, Singleborough, Milton Keynes MK17 ORF, England.

And that's the picture. In case you haven't seen the catalog and poster essays (etc.), I'll send the latter from here and the former from New York.

If you need to reach me, I'm afraid that will be a little complicated for the next months, since I will be travelling.

It is something like this:

January -- New York (you have the address)

February through May --

CENTER FOR 20th CENTURY STUDIES

P O Box 413

Milwaukee, WI 53201

June and July --

P O Box 26

West Glover, VT 05875 (my home)

August -- in Italy

September -- back to New York for a year

I heard of your theft -- very frustrating, it must be. I had a disaster of my own a few weeks ago -- a flood here which destroyed most of my Fluxus things, many letters and manuscripts, all the works I had by my friends Wolf Vostell, Emmett Williams and Ian Hamilton Finlay, etc. No insurance, of course. Much heartbreak, so I know how you must feel. Oh well, we probably need disasters to give ourselves a chance to prove how HEROIC we can be -- no?

Good luck to you -- let me hear how your project(s) develop.

My bests to the good people in A.dam.

Yours truly

Dick

Dick Higgins, Something Else Press, type-written letter, 3 sheets, each of them 28 x 21.8 cm, signed and dated: 27 December, 1976.

#### Something Else Press - books:

- George Brecht & Robert Filliou, *Games at the Cedilla, or the Cedilla Takes Off*, 1967.  
 John Cage, *Notations*, 1969.  
 Henri Cowell, *New Musical Resources*, 1969.  
 Merce Cunningham, *Changes: Notes on Choreography*, 1968.  
 William Brisbane Dick, *Dick's 100 Amusements*, 1967.  
 Manford L. Eaton, *Bio-Music*, 1974.  
 Robert Filliou, *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*, 1965.  
 Peter Finch, *Typewriter Poems*, 1972.  
 Ian Hamilton Finlay, *A Sailor's Calendar*, 1971.  
 John Giorno, *Cancer in my Left Ball*, 1973.  
 Eugen Gomringer, *The Book of Hours and Constellations*, 1968.  
 Walter Gutman, *The Gutman Letter*, 1969.  
 Brion Gysin, *Brion Gysin Let The Mice In*, 1973.  
 Al Hansen, *A Primer of Happenings & Time/Space Art*, 1965.  
 Geoff Hendricks, *Ring Piece*, 1973.  
 Dick Higgins, *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*, 1964.  
 Dick Higgins, *foew&ombwhnw*, 1969.  
 Dick Higgins, *A Book About Love & War & Death*, 1972.  
 Richard Huelsenbeck, *Dada Almanach*, 1966.  
 Ray Johnson, *The Paper Snake*, 1965.  
 Ray Johnson, *The Paper Snake*, special edition with ephemera, 1965.  
 Leon Katz, *The Making of Americans. An Opera and a Play by Leon Katz from the Novel by Gertrude Stein*, 1973.  
 Alison Knowles, Tomas Schmit, Benjamin Patterson, Philip Corner, *The Four Suits*, 1965.  
 Richard Kostelanetz, *Breakthrough Fictioneers*, 1973.  
 Ruth Krauss, *There's a little ambiguity over there among the bluebells*, 1968.  
 Charles McLivaine & Robert K. MacAdam, *One Thousand American Fungi*, 1973.  
 Toby MacLennan, *1 Walked out of 2 and Forgot It*, 1972.  
 Jackson Mac Low, *Stanzas for Iris Lezak*, 1971.  
 Marshall McLuhan, *Verbi-Voco-Visual Explorations*, 1967.  
 R. Meltzer, *The Aesthetics of Rock*, 1970.  
 Claes Oldenburg, *Store Days*, 1967.  
 Bern Porter, *Found Poems*, 1972.  
 Bern Porter, *I've left*, 1971.  
 Ernest M. Robson, *Thomas Onetwo*, 1971.  
 Dieter Rot, *246 Little Clouds*, 1968.  
 Cary Scher, *The Ten Week Garden*, 1973.  
 Daniel Spoerri, *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance*, 1966.  
 Daniel Spoerri, *The Mythological Travels...*, 1970.  
 Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans*, 1966.  
 Gertrude Stein, *Geography and Plays*, 1968.  
 Gertrude Stein, *Lucy Church Amiably*, 1969.  
 Gertrude Stein, *Matisse Picasso and Gertrude Stein*, 1972.  
 Gertrude Stein, *How to Write*, 1973.  
 Gertrude Stein, *A Book Concluding With As A Wife Has A Cow*, 1973.  
 Wolf Vostell & Dick Higgins (eds.), *Fantastic Architecture*, 1970.







## Toshi Ichiyanagi (1933)

Toshi Ichiyanagi, one of Japan's most prominent avant-garde composers, was involved in manifestations by the international Fluxus movement for a short while. His compositions were performed at several historical festivals such as *Neo-Dada in der Musik* (Düsseldorf, 1962), *Festum Fluxorum Fluxus* (Düsseldorf, 1963), and the *Flux Festival* (Scheveningen, 1964).

Ichiyanagi was married to Yoko Ono from 1956 to 1962. Their New York studio, 112 Chambers Street, was used for a series of performances organised by La Monte Young in 1961. Along with the events in Maciunas' AG Gallery in the same year, these manifestations can be considered as the start of Fluxus in New York.

Fluxus distributed Ichiyanagi's scores, but there are hardly any left.

The copy described here came from the Archiv Sohm. (Hanns Sohm had a 'Duplikatensammlung': material he used to trade.) Unfortunately the score was incomplete.

Jon Hendricks, curator of the Gilbert & Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, helped me complete the sheet score with a photocopy in the late '90s.

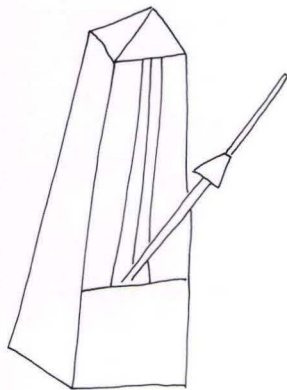
## Ray Johnson (1927-1995)

The exhibition *Fluxshoe* (1972/73) combined work of a great many Fluxus related artists and was presented in several venues throughout the United Kingdom. The catalogue accompanying the show, an edition of the Beau Geste Press, consists of two tomes and contains a wealth of information. I contacted several artists because I intended to buy their publications. They then informed their friends about me and quite soon I was part of an international postal network.

There was also someone else in The Netherlands who contacted artists by mail, but I wasn't aware of his activities. In October 1972, Peter van Beveren started sending postcards to artists and art institutions all over the world with the request to be included in their mailing lists. We exchanged publications with kindred spirits like John Armleder and his Écart group in Geneva, sent art magazines to East European artists and assisted them with practical issues like producing rubber stamps and organising manifestations. Mail was crucial to our undertakings. The American artist Ray Johnson (1927-1995) used mail as a form of art. He

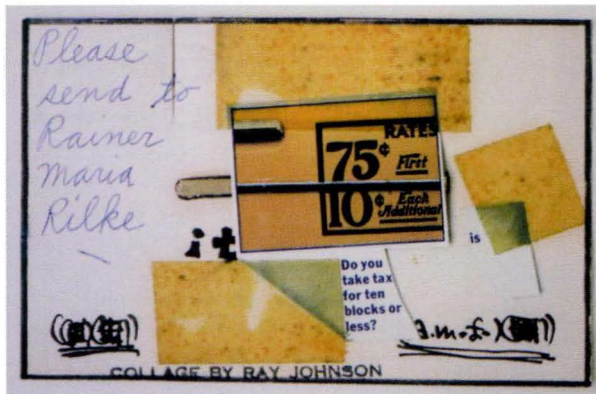
worked with a variety of materials, but is best known for his collages. His New York Correspondence School became legendary: the artist sent a great number of letters (off copies of his drawings) and postcards to friends and strangers with instructions like *Please Add To* and *Return To Ray Johnson*. Every now and then he made a request to forward mail to others. Johnson can easily be considered as the father of Mail Art. Ray Johnson's output was very much appreciated by Fluxus related artists. Still, he never participated in any 'official' Fluxus edition, apart from a contribution to Fluxus Newspaper No. 2 (February 1964). Johnson's *Poem for George Brecht's Dog* was published in my catalogue *Fluxus, the most radical and experimental art movement of the sixties* (1979). Peter van Beveren was in touch with Ray Johnson from late 1973 onward. His visit to the artist in New York in 1978 coincided with Johnson's show *37 Portraits* in the Brooks Jackson/Iolas Gallery between April 11<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup>. On the last day of the exhibition, they took a photo of each other.

### Metronome

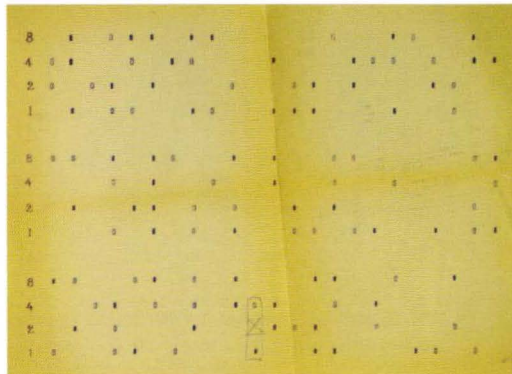


### Portrait of Toshi Ichiyanagi

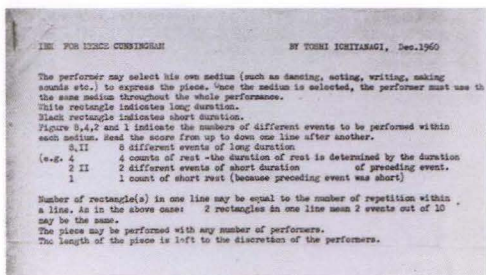
KF 1962



**Ray Johnson, postcard,** signed by Albert Fine, mailed to Ray Johnson who made a collage on the reverse and sent it back to Albert Fine, 8.9 x 14 cm, n/d. (1978).



**Metronome, portrait of Toshi Ichiyanagi** - drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Toshi Ichiyanagi, IBM for Merce Cunningham (1960)**, sheet with instructions, Fluxus, New York, 1963; photocopy with the stamp of the Silverman Fluxus Collection.

**Toshi Ichiyanagi, IBM for Merce Cunningham (1960)**, score (blueprint), 23.7 x 32.9 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1963.



## Joe Jones (1934-1993)

Joe Jones started his career as a jazz-drummer; he was a student of John Cage and Earle Brown. In 1963 he became involved with Fluxus.

Jones never got the credits for his work. His music machines were often praised by his Fluxus colleagues. But unlike artists such as Nam June Paik and Ben Vautier he stayed relatively unknown. Still, his work has been of great importance to other artists.<sup>9</sup>

Publisher Francesco Conz came into contact with Joe Jones in 1972. The artist told him about the Fluxus movement and, through Günter Brus, introduced him to the Wiener Aktionisten. According to Conz, this meeting changed his life.

One of Jones' finest works is the *Music Box*, a wooden suitcase with a guitar that was played 'at random'. The production of this music machine was financed by Conz but the edition was eventually released by Pari & Dispari, which is a publisher in Reggio Emilia. I received the sound object from Conz in the early '80s. As far as I can remember I traded it for Al Hansen's edition of *Flux Flak Pack*, an object-book which I had published myself. At the time the instrument was defective. The *Music Box* was shown in the Centraal Museum Utrecht in 2003 as part of the Centraal Fluxus Festival. Before the exhibition's opening I had the museum's technical services repair the instrument.

## Rolf Julius (1939-2011)

Sound Art pioneer Rolf Julius followed a classical training in Fine Arts. In the 1970s he discovered the works of John Cage, La Monte Young and other avant-garde composers. Since then he worked in the area between music and art.

He showed his works in many galleries and museums - in 1987 he participated in *documenta 8* - but he is best known for his performances and 'low volume sculptures' and installations in public spaces: in a desert, on a lake, in parks ...

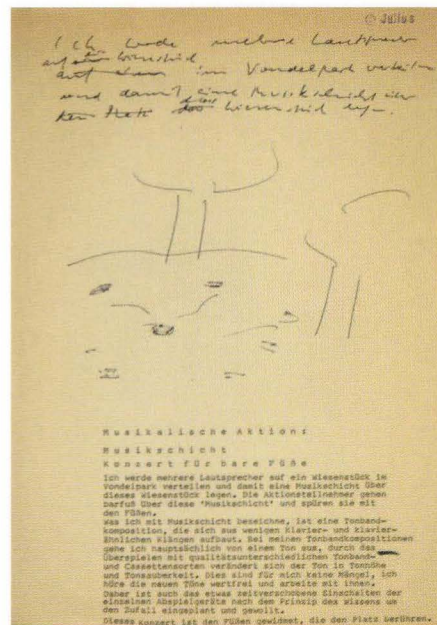
In 1982 Galerie A organised a concert in the Vondelpark in Amsterdam, a subtle sound installation of great beauty.



**2 Polaroids:** *Ray Johnson* by Peter van Beveren - Peter van Beveren by Ray Johnson, New York, 1978 (collection Peter van Beveren).



**Joe Jones and Francesco Conz**, Asolo, 1974, one of two photographs: 23.7 x 18.2 cm and: 23.6 x 17.8 cm, both with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse (photographer unknown).



### Rolf Julius, *Musikalische Aktion: Musikschicht, Konzert für bare Füße*

(project for Vondelpark, Amsterdam):

*I intend to distribute several speakers over a piece of meadow in Amsterdam's Vondelpark and thereby put a layer of music over this piece of meadow;*

2 sheets, typewritten text and ink on paper, 29.7 x 21.1 cm, one sheet signed, the other sheet stamped © Julius, 1982.



<sup>9</sup> Remko Scha, a sound artist who passed away in 2015, once told me how Jones' work had strongly influenced him at the start of his career. Scha became known with his 'music machine concerts' during the '80s. His works were performed in various places including the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Haags Gemeentemuseum and the ICA in London.



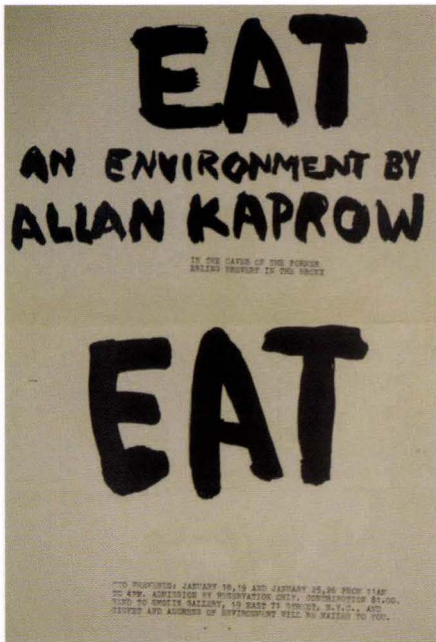
**Allan Kaprow** (1927-2006) - *Happening*

The Fluxus Codex, compiled by Jon Hendricks, barely mentions happening pioneer Allan Kaprow. His only direct involvement with Fluxus is a dialogue with George Brecht on the difference between *happenings and events*. It was published in Fluxus Newspaper No.4 (June 1964). *Brochure for Fluxus Yearboxes* (New York, 1962) mentions contributions by Kaprow to the first Fluxus Yearbook: *FLUXUS NO.1*. These plans were never realised. George Maciunas did, however, design two monogram cards for Kaprow.

**Per Kirkeby** (1938)

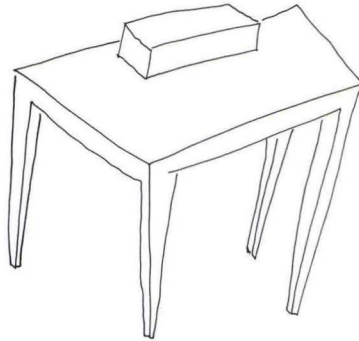
Per Kirkeby is better known for his paintings and sculptures, but during the 1960s he also produced some Fluxus-like works. My first gallery exhibition in 1976 was devoted to 'the most radical and experimental art movement of the Sixties'. I asked the artist for a contribution. He answered: *I'm afraid I have no editions of the kind of the Flux-things at all - but I have given out a lot of books*. I exchanged a few books with him for Fluxus publications from Holland. His most significant publication consists entirely of blue pages measuring 15 x 15 cm.

The title, *Blå, tid*, is printed on a small piece of paper, which is placed inside the book. In 1992 I asked him about his Fluxus edition *Finger Sweater*. He wrote: *"Finger Sweater" is an idea of mine. The "sweaters" were even (in a very small number) knitted by my present wife. But it was also a "oke" meaning "My God, Georges (sic), is this really Fluxus", and so it was.*

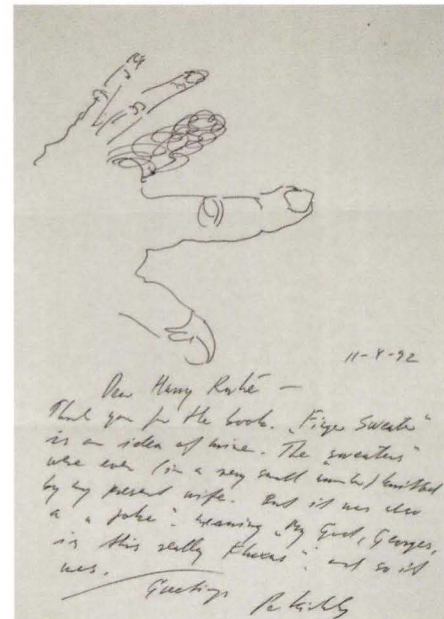


Allan Kaprow, *Eat*, invitation, 33 x 22.8 cm, January 1964.

Fragment of a Monument

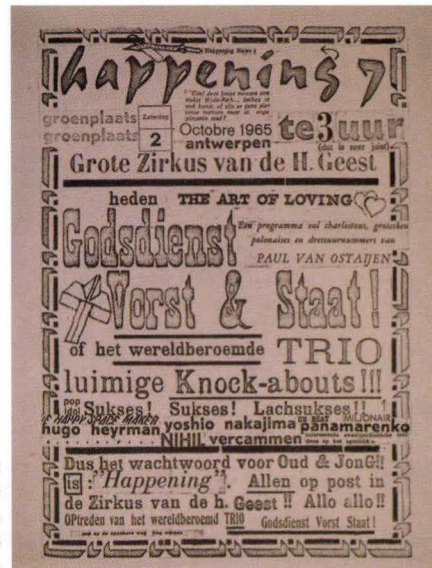


A brick on a table.  
Portrait of Per Kirkeby  
HF 1992



**Fragment of a Monument, portrait of Per Kirkeby** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Per Kirkeby, letter on the Fluxus Edition Finger Sweater**, in envelope, postmark: 12-4.92.



**Panamarenko** (Henry Van Herwegen) (1940): *Happening News. Happening 7* (with Hugo Heyrman, Wout Vercaemmen, Yoshio Nakajima), Groenplaats, Antwerpen, October 2, 1965; flyer, 27.5 x 21.5 cm.

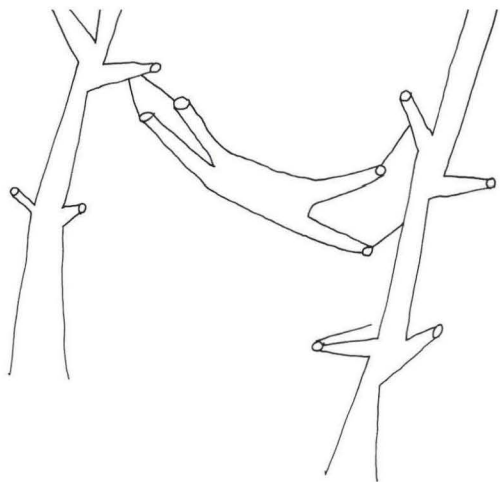


## Bengt af Klintberg (1938)

*That street cleaning piece was my contribution to a world wide event in March 21, 1970.*

*I received the following message from Hannah Weiner, Marjorie Strider and John Perreault in New York: "Worlds Works, march 21, 1970, noon. Artists and people everywhere are invited to do a street work in a street of their choice. A street work does not hurt any person or thing." (My comment today: don't be too sure about that!)*

*It is very likely that Hi Red Center's street cleaning has something to do with this initiative, isn't it? Anyway, I have not heard about it before you mentioned it. My piece was performed with hot water and brushes in order to take away the ice from the street.*



### The Forest Diver

*a wet suit suspended  
between two trees.*

*Portrait of Bengt af Klintberg  
NF '88*

## Jane Knížák

Milan Knížák once told me how he felt little to no connection to the Fluxus editions that were published of his work by George Maciunas. According to Jon Hendricks, who put together the *Fluxus Codex*, Fluxus editions were always based on the artists' ideas. Knížák found these publications to be more 'Maciunas' than 'Knížák' in essence, even though they did carry his name.

This possibly applies to *Flux Papers* by Jane Knížák as well. Jane was a friend of Milan; they lived in New York for a while in the late '60s. This is where they came in contact with Maciunas and other Fluxus artists.

The plastic box contains toilet-paper; a type of material that relates to Maciunas'

fascination with excrements. (He also produced a box with animal excrements once: *Excreta Fluxorum*, and developed ideas for a *Flux Toilet*.)

The box with *Flux Papers* has become rare. It is likely that Maciunas produced only a few due to lack of interest.



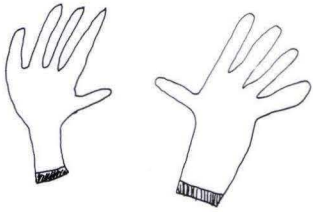
**Jane Knížák, *Flux Papers***, label designed by George Maciunas, 10,8 x 8,2 cm, ca. 1969.

**The Forest Diver, portrait of Bengt af Klintberg** - drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Bengt af Klintberg, letter**, signed and dated: 20.7.81, with a photo by Thomas Tidholm.





### Aktual Hands

Cloth gloves painted blue  
and nailed to a wall  
portrait of Milan Knížák K&F '68

## Milan Knížák (1940)

Milan Knížák is an underrated artist. A lot has been written about him over the years and his work received exposure in many leading galleries and museums. He has, however, not received full recognition for his pioneering. This does not seem to affect him.

A few years ago a newspaper article described Christian Marclay as the first to experiment with 'Broken Music'. This artist, who was strongly influenced by John Cage and Fluxus in his early years, gained fame in the '80s when he started working with gramophone records. He made scratches on them or broke them apart to create new records with the pieces. These 'recycled records' were also played on a turntable. Milan Knížák had already done this in 1963. Knížák reconstructed some of his earlier works for his exhibition in Galerie A in 1980.



**Aktual Hands, portrait of Milan Knížák** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Milan Knížák, Broken Music**, LP record, put together from three different LP records, signed and dated: 1963-79.

**Milan Knížák, Destroyed Music**, LP record, with scratches and burn marks, signed and dated: 1963-79.

**Milan Knížák, Destroyed Music**, LP record, with scratches, burn marks and gold paint, + paper sheet with handwritten text: *These two records are not signed. They are just for playing.* (Over the years the second copy has literally been played to death; it is completely worn out.)

## Jonathan Monk (1969)

*Every Scratch Tells A Story* (2003) is a photographic artwork. It is the photo of a scratched LP record. Each of the hundred photos (30 x 30 cm) in this edition is unique.

*Appropriation is something I have used or worked with in my art since starting art school in 1987. At this time (and still now) I realised that being original was almost impossible, so I tried using what was already available as source material for my own work.* (Jonathan Monk, 2009.)

## Christian Marclay (1955)

Following in the footsteps of Milan Knížák, Marclay employed the technique of 'broken music': he cut and re-joined different LP records. When played on a turntable these re-assembled records combined snippets of different music in quick succession along with clicks or pops from the seams. Marclay, like Knížák, considered these reassembled LP's to be autonomous works of art.

From June 4<sup>th</sup> until July 16<sup>th</sup> 1989, the floor of one of the Shedhalle galleries in Zurich was covered with 3500 copies of a record titled: *Footsteps*. The one-sided LP records, with the sounds of footsteps, were attached to the floor with double-sided tape.

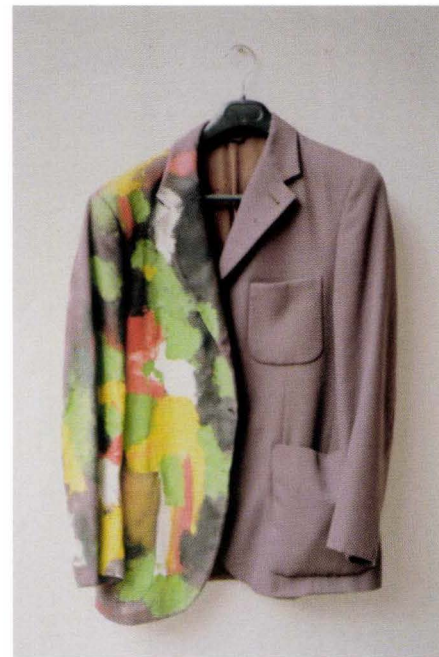
During the six weeks the installation lasted, people were invited to walk on the records: they had to step on them to reach the other gallery spaces.

More than 1500 visitors walked over the LP floor and altered the surfaces of the records with dirt and scratches, thus contributing to the final composition. Once the exhibition was over, the records were removed.

One thousand of these records – the regular edition – were sold in boxes; hundred copies were numbered and signed.



**Milan Knížák, Burned robe**, nylon, ca. 130 x 50 cm, signed and dated: 1963-79 (signature and date faded).



**Milan Knížák, Actualised jacket**, acrylics on cloth, ca. 80 x 60 cm, signed and dated inside the jacket: 1965-79.



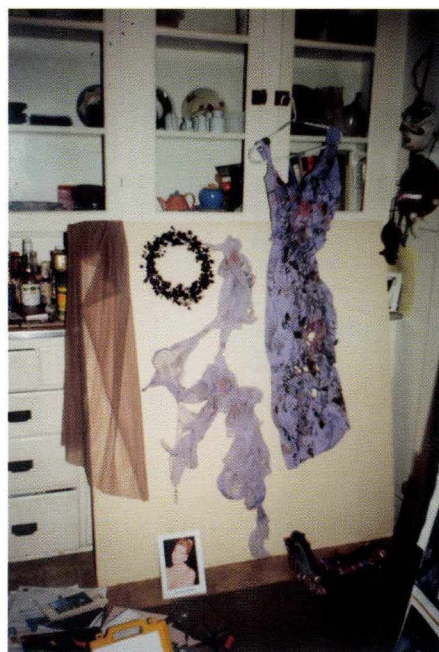
## Milan Knížák

Milan Knížák was a pioneer with his *Broken Music* from 1963 but his *fashion* was also innovative. Photos in Allan Kaprow's book *Assemblage, Environments & Happenings* (1966) show Knížák modifying his clothing by, for instance, using safety pins to fasten a piece of cloth to his jacket.

Men wearing jackets decorated with safety pins, women wearing mismatched shoes, earrings made from everyday objects, recycled clothing; all of these things have been presented as 'new' by others in later years.

Clothes as worn by him and his friends during the early '60s in Prague were shown at his exhibition at Galerie A in 1980. Knížák wrote me that he wanted a thousand German Marks (a bit over 500 Euro) for a nylon dress with burning holes ('you have to double, or whatever ...!') The exhibition also got me a painted jacket. I don't remember how much it cost.

He also sent me some clothing designs when Peter van Beveren and I organised a Fluxus Festival in the AKI in Enschede in 1981. Students of the academy had to carry out the designs: *Proposals for a Fashion Show*.



**Paul Sharits** (1943-1993), *Studio with a FLUX glam burned dress with broken glass + shawl*, n/d.

## Alison Knowles (1933)

The musical score of Nam June Paik's *Serenade for Alison* includes instructions like:

*Take off a pair of red panties, and put them in the vest pocket of a gentleman.*

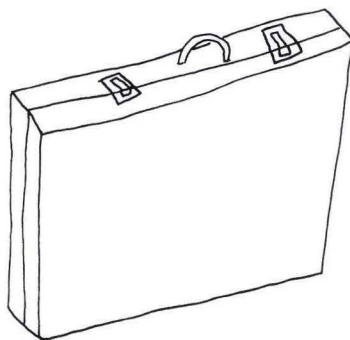
*Take off a pair of nylon panties, and stuff them in the mouth of a music critic.*

*Take off a pair of green panties, and make an omelette-surprise with them.*

*If possible, show them that you have no more panties on.*

However, Alison Knowles didn't go that far during her performance on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962 in Kunsthandel Monet in Amsterdam. She was wearing several panties and, subsequently, dropped them one by one on an improvised podium.

She did add a new element: she had covered herself with numerous transistor-radio's suspended from her body. This was not one of Paik's ideas, she told me, but something she came up with herself.



*Shoes of Your Choice*

*Switzcare full of shoes  
portrait of Alison Knowles  
KR 74*

**Shoes of Your Choice,**  
**portrait of Alison Knowles -**  
drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Serenade for Alison (Nam June Paik),**  
performed by Alison Knowles, Kunsthandel  
Monet, Amsterdam, October 5, 1962; photo  
by Hans de Boer, gelatin silver print,  
25.2 x 17.1 cm, signed by Alison Knowles.

## Alison Knowles

Alison Knowles has a thing for beans. Her *Bean Rolls* (1964) was one of the very first Fluxus editions to be published by George Maciunas. It is a can filled with beans and small rolls of paper with printed information about beans.

*Bean Rolls* was only the beginning; Knowles followed up with a bean exhibition (*Dried Bean Display*, 1964). Then there were several bean performances (like: *Events and Bean Pieces*, 1971). Also, there was an exhibition with a bean filled bathtub (*Bean Bath*, 1975). There are bean multiples (*Sea Bean*, 1978, *Bean Bag*, 1979). And there was also a presentation of a *Japanese Bean Garden* ('A formal Japanese Garden must have sand [pebbles], rocks and water. I am substituting beans for pebbles'). She created numerous books such as *A Bean Concordance* (1983) and prints of beans. In 1981 I visited Alison Knowles in New York with my girlfriend. Alison proposed to visit Dick Higgins too. He lived in a small village





called Barrytown not far from Woodstock. We decided to stay for two days; Alison would be cooking.

We had lentils soup for dinner. Breakfast consisted of a bowl with beans and grains. There was a type of plum duff with beans for lunch. I don't remember what we had for dinner on the second evening but I do remember it contained beans.

Dick proposed to 'show us the neighbourhood' later that evening; Alison stayed home. He drove us straight to an ice cream parlour and ordered a huge sorbet for each of us.

## Alison Knowles

The score for *The Identical Lunch* is as follows:

*A tunafish sandwich on wheat toast with lettuce and butter, no mayo and a large glass of buttermilk or a cup of soup was and is eaten many days of each week at the same place and at about the same time.*

Several of Knowles' friends - Dick Higgins, Ay-O, John Giorno, Philip Corner, George Maciunas - performed this work during the late nineteen sixties.

Photographs were taken at several of these performances. Knowles used four of them for a limited silkscreen edition.

She had each of the images printed one more time on canvas in 1974. These were for Wies Smals of performance gallery De Appel in Amsterdam.

Wies gave me the version with George Maciunas as a gift.

## Jiří Kolář (1940-2002)

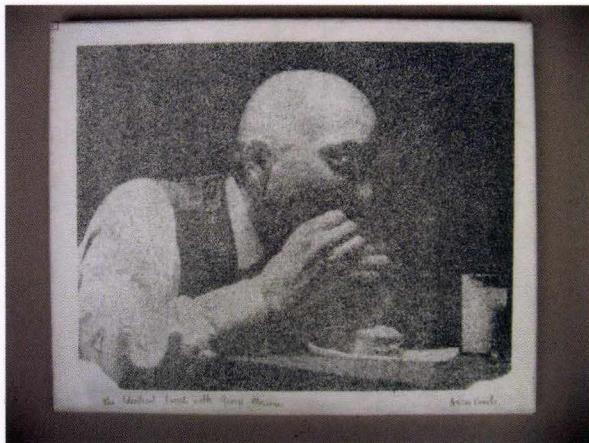
In 1979 I met Milan Knížák for the first time. He was living in Berlin – as a guest of the DAAD - where he introduced me to the Czech artist Jiří Kolář.

Thirteen years later I visited Kolář in Paris to buy a number of his *postcard-collages*. An Italian collector had commissioned me. Each collage consisted of two postcards glued together. Kolář had cut shapes from the postcards on top that made the bottom ones partially visible.

Back in Amsterdam I decided to send the artist a package of postcards with typical Dutch images as a source of inspiration. Within a few days I received an envelope with several collages; they were composed of the postcards I had sent to Kolář.



**Alison Knowles, *Bean Rolls***, can, with a Maciunas designed label, containing 14 rolls of paper and beans, 7.8 x 8.2 x 8.2 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1964.



**Alison Knowles, *The Identical Lunch with George Maciunas***, silkscreen on canvas, 40 x 40.5 x 50 cm, signed, 1974.



**Jiří Kolář, *Magritte/Galerie A***, postcard-collage, 10.3 x 15 cm, signed and dated, 1992.



## Addi K pcke (1928-1977)

Galerie K pcke in Copenhagen was Denmark's primary avant-garde gallery between 1958 and 1963. Here Arthur (Addi) K pcke organised exhibitions by artists such as Piero Manzoni, Robert Filliou (1960), Niki de Saint Phalle (1961) and Dieter Roth (1962). In 1960, the members of the Nederlandse Informele Groep presented an exhibition there.

K pcke designed his own invitations; Hanns Sohm gave me a few of these a long time ago. A lot of printed matter came from Simon Vinkenoog. He used to correspond with the artist during the mid '60s. From Vinkenoog I once bought a K pcke book that was glued shut (*fill: with own imagination*). It is now part of the Gilbert & Lila Silverman Fluxus collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

## Shigeko Kubota (1937-2015)

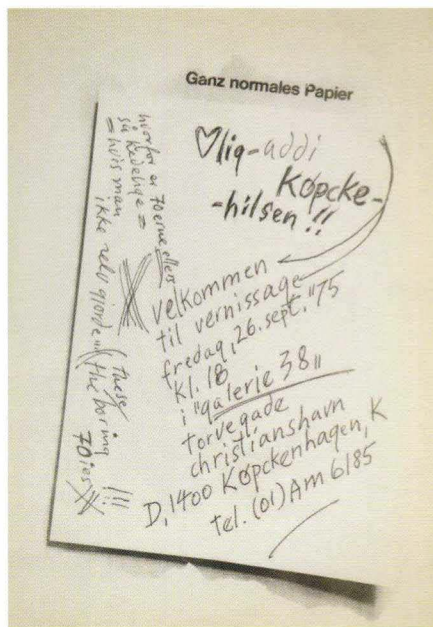
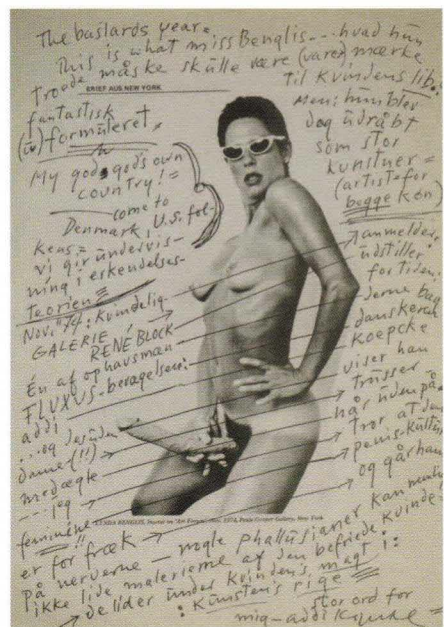
The New York antiquarian *Backworks* in the mid '70s sold rare Fluxus and Happening documents at low prices. Jon Hendricks and Barbara Moore owned this store; it was situated in Hendricks' own house on 488 Greenwich Street.

I bought several Fluxus multiples and a large batch of prints and ephemera designed by George Maciunas. I foolishly did not buy some photos that were also made by Maciunas. These were monogrammed prints at only twenty-five dollar a piece. The collector Gilbert B. Silverman bought everything a few years later. One of the finest pictures shows Shigeko Kubota creating a *Vagina Painting*. Using a paintbrush fastened to her underwear she made markings with red paint on white paper which had been placed flat on the floor.

Silverman didn't just buy the photos; he also bought the negatives. In 1996 he had several fine prints made of *Vagina Painting*; a single large one and two or three of a smaller size. He gave me one of the small sized ones in 2007.



**Shigeko Kubota, *Vagina Painting***, Perpetual Fluxus Festival, Cinemateque, New York, July 4, 1965; photo by George Maciunas, gelatin silverprint, printed from the original negative by Oren Slor, with the stamp of Oren Slor on the reverse (dated: 1996), and the stamp of the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Foundation, 25.3 x 20.2 cm.



**Addi K pcke, invitation** (printed on both sides), 29.6 x 21 cm, Galerie 38, Copenhagen, 1975.

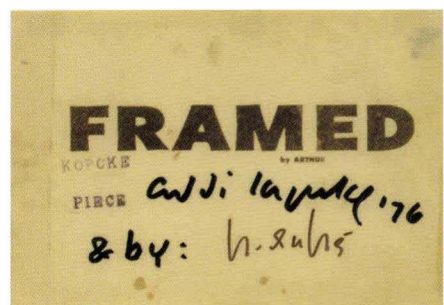
According to the North-American artist Lynda Benglis, women were not sufficiently appreciated in the male dominated world of art. In 1974 she designed several advertisements and the last one, published in Art Forum's November issue, was considered to be the most controversial. Naked, with a large dildo between her legs and wearing sunglasses on her head, she was announcing her next exhibition at the Paula Cooper Gallery.

Comments varied considerably.

In Art Forum's December issue, a letter was published by those editors considering the advertisement to be 'an object of extreme vulgarity'.

Feminists also uttered negative comments. The Feminist Art Journal wrote: 'Benglis has so little confidence in her art that she had to resort to kinky cheesecake to push herself over the top!'

Sex plays an essential part in works by Addi K pcke. In 1975 he designed the invitation for his exhibition in Gallery 38 in Copenhagen. The Artforum-advert by Benglis was integrated in its design: *These Boring 70'ies*.



**FRAMED by Arthur K pcke & by: H. Ruh **, felt-tip pen and stamp on photocopy, 14.3 x 21 cm, signed and dated: '76.



**Addi K pcke, documenta 5, Kassel, 1972**; photo by Dick Higgins, gelatin silver print, 20.1 x 29.9 cm, with the photographer's stamp and the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz (with Conz' signature) on the reverse.



## Tetsumi Kudo (1935-1990)

To discuss an art loan for an exhibition I visited Ad Petersen on February 21, 2011. At some point Tetsumi Kudo was mentioned and Ad said: 'I happen to have a penis on formalin made by him.' Petersen worked with Kudo as a curator of the Stedelijk Museum; the glass jar was a gift from the artist. He was unable to remember when he received it.

The phallus is a recurring element in Kudo's work. In the early '60s he was already building environments with penis-shaped objects suspended from the walls and ceiling. In 1962 he performed a Happening in Paris titled: *Philosophy of Impotence*. The invitation for a Sixties exhibition in Galerie A (2007) had a picture of three condoms, each filled with some sort of 'jelly' and tied shut with a colourful ribbon. They were fastened to a piece of synthetic fabric in a bright green colour: *Instant Sperm*. I wanted to buy the jar. 'Just take it with you!', Petersen said. A day later he wrote me a card:

*I must have received the jar from Kudo in the late nineteen sixties or early nineteen seventies (the exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum took place in 1972). Reviewing my 1972 agenda, I noticed that I had visited Kudo that year at least once in the Rue de Chateau d'Eau). The liquid in the jar has always been turbid, but it has worsened somewhat over the years.*

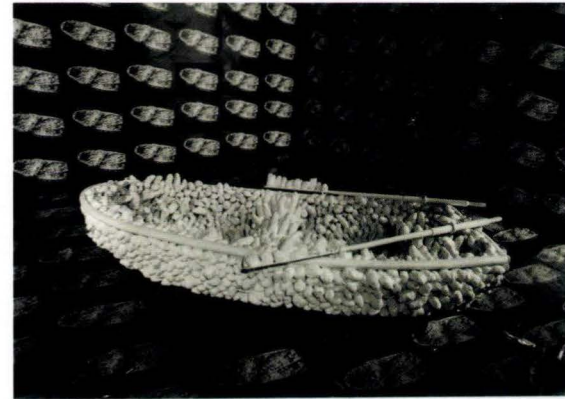
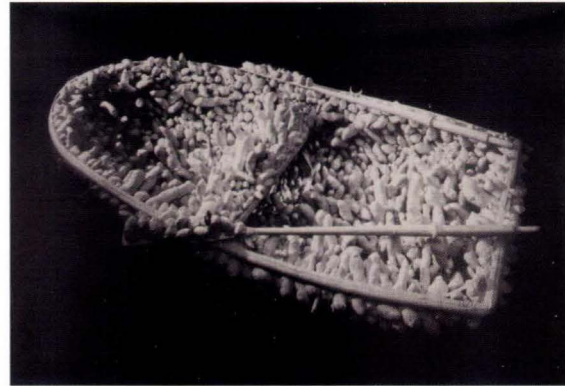
As it turned out the jar was not filled with formalin; it was probably a gelatine-like substance that eventually hardened.

## Yayoi Kusama (1929)

In the late 60's only a few galleries in Amsterdam were interested in contemporary art. For real new art forms one had to leave the city. For me this meant cycling along the river Vecht towards Loenersloot where Gallery Mickery was situated. Jan Dibbets' sculptures of bundled branches and neon could be seen there. There was also a platform filled to the brim with peanut butter, after an early idea by Wim T. Schippers. And also crates containing stones, a work of Land Art-artist Robert Smithson. Outside there were piles of cages for chinchillas, from the artist duo Ben d'Armagnac and Gerrit Dekker. An exhibition that made a lasting impression on me was held at Gallery Mickery in 1968. Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama had previously

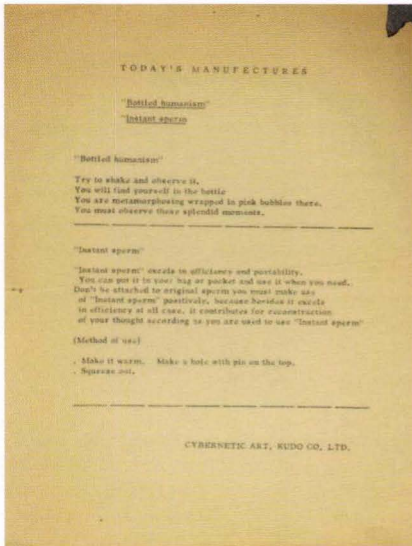
gained nation-wide recognition with her painting of a naked Jan Schoonhoven, decorating his body with lots of colourful dots.

She was now displaying 'objects', such as garments covered in dough and spray-painted gold and silver. There were also household attributes that were overgrown with phallic forms of textile. A tree of several metres high, made of gloves... Every now and then the work of Kusama received positive reviews, but most of it was very negative. One art critic wrote: 'Miss Yayoi Kusama, a Japanese from New York, likes to pull enormous stunts, but unfortunately she hasn't made it to a Rolls yet and despite all her efforts she will have to remain in the gutter.' (Marius van Beek in newspaper De Tijd, 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1968.)



**Yayoi Kusama, *Aggregation Boat Show***, 4 offset prints, each 43.2 x 56.4 cm, one copy signed and dated, 1962.

**Yayoi Kusama, *Aggregation Boat Show***, installation Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1965; gelatin silver print, 17.8 x 23.9 cm.



**Tetsumi Kudo, *Untitled***, jar filled with penis shaped object and liquid (over the years, the liquid has 'petrified'), ca. 7 cm (h) x 6 cm (diameter), n/d. ('60s); with a card by Petersen, dated: 22/11/'11.

**Tetsumi Kudo, *Bottled humanism. Instant sperm***, flyer, n/d. ('60s).



I was determined to buy something and eventually decided upon a 'penis-bag' striped in yellow and black. It cost me seven hundred guilders if I remember correctly. The exhibition kept intriguing me and I paid Loenersloot another visit a few weeks later. This time I bought a coat decorated with plastic flowers and spray-painted in bronze. By the end of the show Ritsaert ten Cate delivered the artwork to me personally in Oestgeest, where I worked at the Endegeest mental institution.

Meanwhile my parents were getting increasingly distressed, 'you'll never regain that money!' (With Peter Blums mediation, *Flowers Overcoat* was sold to the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington in 1998.)

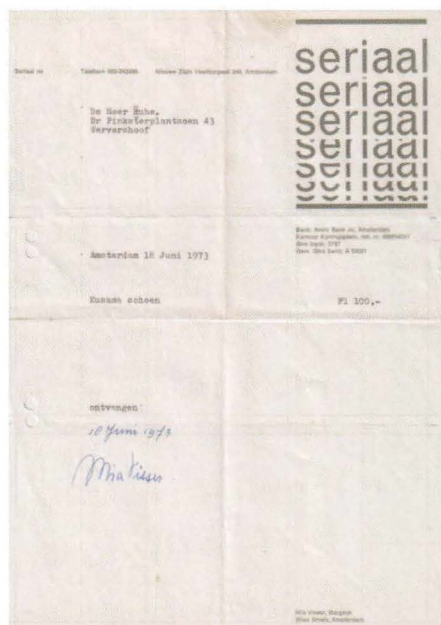
My collection kept expanding. In 1973 one of Kusama's bronze coloured 'shoes' was for sale at the Amsterdam gallery Seriaal. It had been offered at two hundred and ninety guilders for an extended period, until the price was reduced to a hundred guilders. I bought this object as well. Leo Verboon of Gallery Orez in The Hague called me shortly after that; from his stock he had dug up a few prints from the *Aggregation Boat Show* series. Kusama had used prints like these as wallpaper for an installation during the 1965 NUL ZERO show in the Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum. (In 1963 the installation was shown in the Gertrude Stein Gallery, New York, under the title: *One Thousand Boat Show*. It was a NO! art manifestation - see: Boris Lurie.)

## Yayoi Kusama

Kusama had taken notice on my regular purchases of her work. She started sending me letters and documentation once I opened a gallery in 1976. She also let me know that she was interested in holding an exhibition in Galerie A.

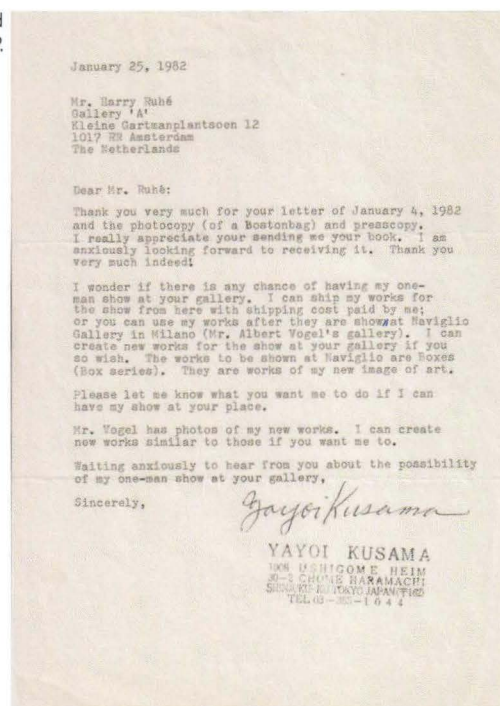
Over the years I kept buying and selling her work. A solo show, however, never took place. Kusama had a reputation of being difficult to work with; I had heard some especially alarming stories from Leo Verboon. Still, this can be a common trait among artists. For me this has never been reason to refrain from an exhibition. In retrospect I am surprised that I did not accept her offers. When I recently decided to read her letters again it occurred to me that she was even willing to pay the fee for transporting her work from Japan to my gallery. On October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1981 she wrote to me: *I wonder if you could arrange my show at your gallery.* And on January 25<sup>th</sup> 1982: *I wonder if there is any chance of having my one-man show at your gallery. I can ship my works for the show from here with shipping cost paid by me.* Had I been influenced too much by Verboon's stories?

I did organise a group exhibition in 1996 with a number of her drawings from the '50s. Kusama had the official invitation for the exposition printed in her autobiography (2002 edition).



**Kusama Shoe**, invoice (June 18, 1973) and photograph.

**Yayoi Kusama, letter**, signed and dated: January 25, 1982.



**Yayoi Kusama beschildert Jan Schoonhoven** (Yayoi Kusama paints Jan Schoonhoven), in: *Vrij Nederland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, 1967 (newspaper-cutting).



## Yayoi Kusama

During many years, happening pioneer Al Hansen didn't have a studio, permanent home or address. He worked mainly in cafes and often encountered the materials for his collages in ashtrays. Hansen would stay with friends whenever he was travelling in Europe. He kept his possessions, like clothes, collages and drawings, notebooks, letters and pictures of his work, in suitcases. Hansen also owned many photographs of works by other artists and this is one of them.

According to Hansen this picture is most likely taken during a fashion show in Yayoi Kusama's studio in 1968. Alternatively the photo might have been taken in the boutique she opened in New York in 1969. This is where Kusama sold clothing designed by herself.

It is not known who made the photograph. In the background a relief by the Japanese artist can be seen, whereas on the left a small part of another work can be glimpsed,

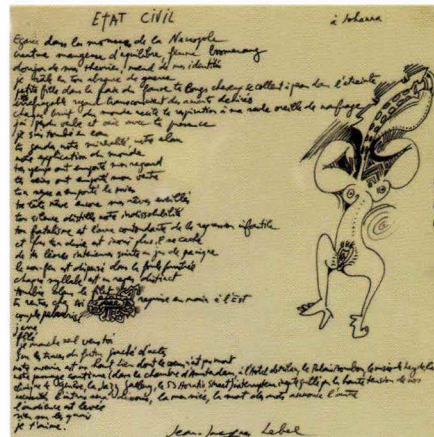
probably a garment sprayed with silver and covered with pasta.

*Kusama: The Kusama Fashion Company produced and sold dresses and textiles decorated in polka dots, which were sold in hundreds of stores and boutiques across the US. The Nude Fashion Company was an offshoot of Kusama Fashions. The idea was that clothes should bring people together, not separate them, without the need to completely disrobe oneself. The goal of the Nude Fashion Company was to expand distribution of these dresses, being based on fresh ideas and (being) practical for enjoying sex, into the mainstream.<sup>10</sup>*

In the same period Kusama published *Orgy* magazine ('Kusama presents an Orgy of Nudity, Love, Sex & Beauty'). A reprint of a 1969 *Orgy*-issue appeared in 2001. The last page has a depiction of 'Orgy Fashion'.



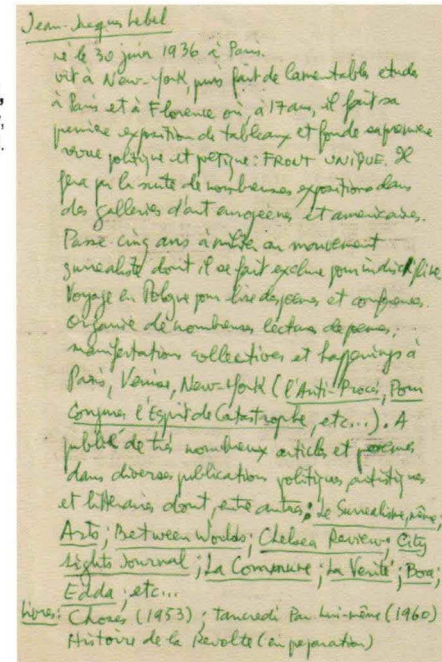
**Yayoi Kusama, *Event in Kusama's studio or shop*, photograph, 10.1 x 13.9 cm, ca. 1968** (photographer unknown); and another photograph, 15.1 x 20.9 cm, this copy with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.



## Jean-Jacques Lebel (1936)

Around 1977, I acquired from the poet/performer Simon Vinkenoog a box with Happening and Fluxus documents. It included a lot of documentation from and on the French happening-pioneer Jean-Jacques Lebel who used to be a friend of Vinkenoog. I sold part of the papers to the Groninger Museum, but I kept a drawing, some correspondence and a few posters. *Etat-Civil* was sent by Lebel to Vinkenoog in 1963. It was meant to be published in *Schrijf-taal II*, a collection of modern poetry from the series *Kwadraat-Bladen* by Steendrukkerij de Jong & Co in Hilversum. Vinkenoog, however, opted to include another work and *Etat-Civil* remained in his archive.

**Jean-Jacques Lebel, handwritten biography, 20.3 x 13.4 cm, 1963.**



**Jean-Jacques Lebel, *Etat-Civil*, ink on paper, 24.5 x 24.5 cm, signed and dated: Février 1963.**

<sup>10</sup> From an interview with Birgit Sonna, *Sleek 42, Fun & Games*, Berlin, 2014.



## Jean-Jacques Lebel

During the 'EXPRMNTL' Film Festival in 1967 Jean-Jacques Lebel presented an *Election de Miss Festival*. Several naked men and women took part in this event.

Lebel: *It took place at the Knokke Casino during the February "EXPRMNTL" Cinema Festival (run by Fernand Ledoux). The main participants were Yoko Ono, Tony Cox, Jean-Pierre van Tieghem, Haroun Faroki, radical students from the Berlin S.D.S. delegation, Italian and Belgian anarchists (on the photos next to Yoko) and many Living Theatre members. The surprise event, which subverted the Festival's price ceremony headed by the Belgian justice minister, created an uproar and an enormous scandal. I was later arrested and locked up in the Mons (Belgium) jail, because of that Happening, accused of "public indecency and violence (sic)".*

(From a letter dated: January 14, 2008.)

Yoko Ono's Fluxfilm no.4, *Bottoms* ('close-ups of famous artists'), was shown during the festival. She also performed a *Bag Piece* with her husband Tony Cox.

Ono was condemned in her absence to three months in prison, as well as having to pay a fine.

I informed Lebel that a friend of mine, Maarten Brinkgreve, had made pictures of the *Election*. Lebel asked me if he could have a copy of the entire set.

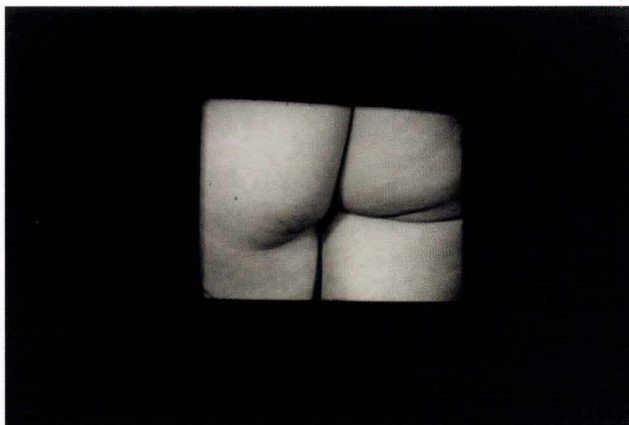
I would gladly pay you for your trouble and, in exchange for your time, authorize you to publish these photos (...) since, as the author of that Happening, I own the copyright.

## Bob Lens (1939)

On Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 1964, a Flux Festival took place in the town of Scheveningen. According to the programme, the festival was made up of three parts: a 'konsert' (concert) in the Kurzaal (the large hall of the majestic Kurhotel), 'a second festival behind closed doors' and 'street events' in the streets of both Scheveningen and nearby The Hague.

One of the compositions presented in the Kurzaal, was the piece *Wekkers* (alarm clocks) by Bob Lens, an artist from The Hague. Every now and then during that evening one of the alarm clocks would start ringing. The title of this piece indicates the number of alarm clocks, namely 40, the date and the starting time.

Ten days later *Wekkers* was performed in Rotterdam.



**Jean-Jacques Lebel, *Election de Miss Festival, EXPRMNTL Cinema Festival***, Casino, Knokke-Zoute, 1967; one of seven photos by Maarten Brinkgreve, gelatin silver prints, 20.3 x 25.3 cm, each with a label with copyright stamp on the reverse.

**Yoko Ono's Fluxfilm no.4, *Bottoms***, Knokke-Zoute, 1967; photo by Maarten Brinkgreve, gelatin silver print, 20.3 x 25.3 cm, a label with copyright stamp on the reverse.

**Yoko Ono & Anthony Cox, *Bag Piece***, Knokke-Zoute, 1967; photo by Maarten Brinkgreve, gelatin silver print, 25.4 x 20.3 cm, a label with copyright stamp on the reverse.



**Bob Lens with one of his alarm clocks in Rotterdam, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1964**; from a letter to Galerie A, October 2008.

THE GIFT  
"STUK VOOR LYNNEN EN 'WEKKERS'"; Bob Lens, FLUX-FESTIVAL,  
"T VENSER/LANTAREN, ROTTERDAM, MAANDAG 23 NOVEMBER 1964 -  
v.l.n.v. Bob Lens, 'LADY MYSTICA', Arthur (Addi) Kijpde.



## Jacqueline Livingston

(1943-2013)

Jacqueline Livingston, a professor of photography and art at New York's Cornell University, was dismissed by the university due to the public outcry about a series of photographs of her six year old son. In 1974, she took pictures of him while naked and playing with his penis. Four years later, she converted the photographs into posters.

### HISTORY OF THIS POSTER

1974: My son Sam, age 6, was looking through my art books and saw many images of female nudes. "But where am I? he said. I photographed Sam and he began playing with himself.

1978: The pictures of Sam masturbating were published as one of 14 posters, images of male nudes: Sam, his father, his grandfather.

October 8, 1979: The *Village Voice* printed the poster of Sam and an article about me.

October 10, 1979: I received a letter which began: "Dear Ms. Livingston: This is to inform you that you are the subject of a report of suspected child abuse or maltreatment received by the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register (State Central Register) on 10/10/79. This report has been transmitted to your local child protective service for commencement of an investigation and evaluation of the report as provided by the New York State Child Protective Services Act." The charges were solely due to the poster of Sam.

Late October, 1979: The Director of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children declared that the poster of Sam is child pornography and suggested that Jacqueline Livingston be tried under existing laws. (At this date, there have been no charges.)

January 27, 1980: A letter arrived from Child Protective Services: "Dear Ms. Livingston, recently you were notified of the existence of a report of suspected child abuse or maltreatment under the above registry number. The original notification explained that the matter was under investigation. We can now inform you that as a result of the assessment made by the local Child Protective Service, no credible evidence was found to believe that the child (ren) has been abused or maltreated. The report has, therefore, been considered 'unfounded.'"

Jacqueline Livingston, *History of this poster*, 28.8 x 17 cm.

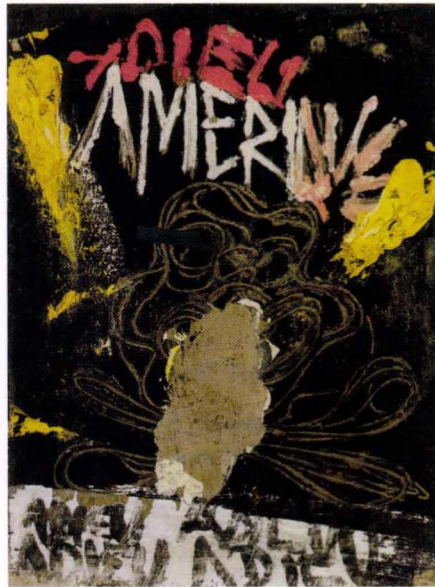
The *Poster of Sam* (58.2 x 42.7 cm, signed) and Livingston's story were published in: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, ed. CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

## Boris Lurie (1924-2008)

Boris Lurie, Sam Goodman and Stanley Fisher founded the NO!art movement in 1960. NO!art took a stand against the de 'worldwide capitalist "investment" art market', and promoted a 'totally unabashed self-expression leading to social action'. Allan Kaprow, Yayoi Kusama and Jean-Jacques Lebel were involved with the movement as well, but its activities ceased in 1964.

NO!art's actions are still relatively unknown. In Milan, gallery owner Arturo Schwarz organised an exhibition with works by Lurie and Goodman<sup>11</sup> and sometimes their work shows up at auctions in Italy.

In May 2006, a small painting by Boris Lurie was put up for auction by Finarte Semenzato in Milan. The work was titled *ADIEU AMERIQUE*, actually the motto of Lurie's one-man show at the Roland de Aenlle gallery in New York in 1960. Another version of this painting (182 x 179 cm) was shown by Galleria Schwarz, Milan, in an exhibition



Boris Lurie, *ADIEU AMERIQUE*, paint on burlap, 42 x 31.5 cm, late nineteen fifties (provenance: Arturo Schwarz, Milan).

titled: 'B.Lurie, S.Goodman', September 29<sup>th</sup> - October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1962.

Lurie had removed part of the paint from the centre of the work and possible quite a lot of people had the impression that it was damaged: the lot fetched no more than a thousand Euro.

The painting was undated and I decided to send Lurie a letter, although I barely knew him. After a short while I received a message from Richard Nadelman, 'Attorney at law': *I am the attorney for Mr. Lurie, who has been incapacitated by a stroke that has deprived him of his speech. Accordingly, I cannot ask him to respond definitively to your inquiry, but I showed him your letter with the reproduction and asked him if this was painted in the 1950's. He nodded his head affirmatively. When I said 1960's, he shook his head as if to say 'no'. I am not sure, however, whether he really understood me, as he has deteriorated considerably.*

Boris Lurie passed away on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, 2008.



Sam Goodman (1919-1967)  
**Sam Goodman - No-Sculptures, exhibition presented by Boris Lurie**, poster for his Shit Show at Gallery Getrude Stein, New York, 1964; with an introduction by Boris Lurie.

<sup>11</sup> Galleria Schwarz, Milan, September 29<sup>th</sup> - October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1962 (with catalogue).



## George Maciunas (1931-1978)

- Fluxus editions

My first gallery exhibition (1976) was devoted to Fluxus. I wrote down a list of names, adding a footnote that a catalogue would be available 'after the show' - it would take three years before it was ready - and subsequently sent the list to George Maciunas in New York.

Two weeks later the list was returned to me with corrections.

According to Maciunas, many of the artists on my list had 'nothing to do with Fluxus - ever', others were 'dead' or 'crazy' or were involved with 'religion'. Charlotte Moorman was not allowed to take part in the exhibition

because she was on a 'Flux-blacklist' ('Please note that inclusion of Moorman will automatically exclude myself - in fact I would not permit any of my objects to be shown or my name mentioned').

I asked Maciunas whether he could send me several Fluxus-editions he had produced.

I intended to sell these on a commission basis, but the Fluxus-foreman informed me that it would be more practical and, moreover, more profitable to buy everything: for a few hundred dollars I would receive a complete exhibition. Maciunas wrote:

*I would recommend the following:*

*Fluxyearbox I (last 4 remaining) \$ 80*

*Fluxyearbox II (last 6 ") \$ 80*

*Brecht - ball game box \$ 100*

*Watts - pebble geography - \$ 100*

*Also a selection of small boxes, worth \$ 50*

I transferred the money. Six weeks later I received three sturdy cardboard boxes filled with Yearboxes, Games and Puzzles, V TRE newspapers and Fluxusletters. The exhibition was opened on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1976. I was convinced that the many wonderful articles I had put on display in my small gallery would be welcomed with a lot of interest. About a week before the opening I wondered desperately how on earth I was going to obtain new stock in time. I needn't have worried because, apart from a couple of postcards, I sold absolutely nothing.

**Cardboard box, ca. 26 x 30 x 17 cm, sent by George Maciunas/New York to Harry Ruhé, Wervershoof, on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1976, with 'a selection of small boxes, worth \$ 50':**

**Jeff Berner, Fluxbook**, plastic box, 11.9 x 10 x 2.6 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 10.8 x 8.1 cm, containing a varnished page from a small bible, Fluxus, New York, 1967.

**George Brecht, Games & Puzzles**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 1.6 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 8.3 x 11 cm, containing a shell and a card, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1965.

**George Brecht, Entrance and Exit Music**, a red plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 1.6 cm, containing a 6 min. tape, no label, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1964.

**George Brecht, Deck**, plastic box, 7.4 x 9.3 x 2.3 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 5.8 x 8.4 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, 1966.

**Albert M. Fine, Piece for Flux Orchestra**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 1.3 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 10.6 x 8.2 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1967.

**George Maciunas, Flux-Smile Machine**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 3.2 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 7.4 x 5.7 cm, containing a metal and plastic spring, Fluxus, New York, 1970.

**George Maciunas, Same Card Flux Deck**, plastic box, 7.4 x 9.3 x 2.3 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 5.7 x 8.4 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, 1966.

**George Maciunas, a 7-compartment transparent plastic box completely sealed up with epoxy, 10 x 11.9 x 2.6 cm, Fluxus, New York, n/d. (1970 or earlier).**

**George Maciunas, HARRY RUHE Spell your name with these objects**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 2.6 cm, containing a text card and objects that spell out the name HARRY RUHE, Fluxus, New York, 1975.

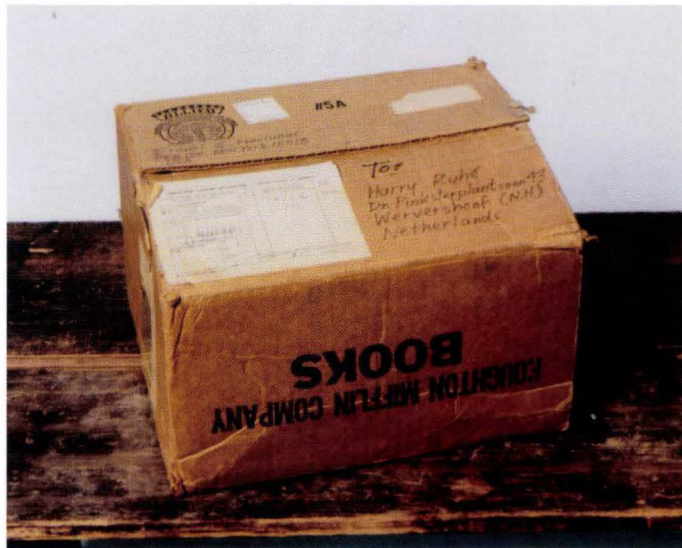
**Willem de Ridder, Paper Fluxwork**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 1 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 8.4 x 10.8 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1964.

**Chieko Shiomi, Events & Games**, plastic box, ca. 18 x 9.5 x 2 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 16 x 8.1 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1964.

**Ben Vautier, Fluxbox containing God**, plastic box, sealed shut, 10 x 11.9 x 1.6 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 8.2 x 10.8 cm, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1966.

**Robert Watts, Events**, plastic box, ca. 13.5 x 18 x 5 cm, with a Maciunas-designed label, 11.8 x 15.8 cm, containing cards and a plastic gherkin, Fluxus, New York, 1964.

**Robert Watts, Fingerprint by Robert Watts**, plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 1.6 cm, with a Maciunas-



designed label, 10.7 x 8.2 cm, containing plaster with a fingerprint, Fluxus, New York, 1965.

Added, Fluxus publications:

**George Brecht, Place one card in each of the five places**, small envelope with printed text containing 5 cards, each 2.6 x 4 cm, n/d. (early '60s).

**Hi Red Center**, poster, edited by Shigeko Kubota, designed by George Maciunas, 1965; printed double-sided, this copy crumpled into a ball.

**James Riddle, DOP**, a small envelope with printed text containing 4 coloured cards, each 5 x 7.7 cm, and an instruction card, 4.7 x 7.8 cm, ca. 1966.

**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem No.2, direction event** - a Fluxatlas, unfolded: 36.7 x 82.3 cm, 1966.

**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem no. 3, falling event**, loose cards, 14 x 10.8 cm, 1968.

(two versions were published: a calendar and cards in a box. This copy was sent by Maciunas to Galerie A without the box ('Make your own box').

**Chieko Shiomi, Disappearing Music for Face**, performed by Yoko Ono and photographed by Peter Moore, 'flip-book', 4.6 x 6.3 cm, 40 sheets stapled, in envelope, 1966.

**Robert Watts**, a small envelope with the name of Robert Watts containing 15 event-cards, ca. 1964.

**Emmett Williams, abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**, scroll, 222.3 x 5.9 cm, ca. 1963.

**Emmett Williams, An Opera**, scroll, 178.2 x 10 cm, ca. 1963.

**Event-cards**, in a small envelope by Brecht (5), Lieberman (2), Watts (3), and a blank card, n/d. ('60s).

**Fluxus Preview Review**, scroll, 166.6 x 9.7 cm, printed both sides, 1963.

Large envelope containing:

**Flux News Letters, Fluxpost (Aging Men)**, print on gummed and perforated paper, 28 x 21.7 cm, 1975,

**Filliou/Spoerri/Topor postcard**, 16 x 10.4 cm, 1967,

**Flyer: Flux-Harpsichord**, 80 Wooster Street, New York, March 24,

1975; 28 x 21.6 cm,

**Flyer: Fluxfest at Hippodrome. Nam June Paik, Fluxsonata 4**, 80 Wooster Street, New York, May 5, 1975; 27.9 x 21.7 cm,

**48 photocopies** (Fluxnewsletters, Fluxfest information, a Flux Mail List, programmes, press-cuttings, etc.).



**George Maciunas** - HARRY RUHE *Spell your name with these objects*  
 The Fluxus edition *Your name spelled with objects* consists of a box filled with all sorts of objects and a card with instructions. It is a concept from the early '70s. This multiple could be ordered at the Fluxshop in New York at the time. To my knowledge Maciunas gave most of the copies away.

Jon Hendricks' *Fluxus Codex* has pictures of *Spell your name...-boxes* from George Brecht, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Knud Pedersen and Ben Vautier.

There is also a version with my name. Maciunas added it to a *selection of small boxes, worth \$ 50* that I ordered from him. The objects in the box represent the letters in a person's name.

My copy contains a piece of yellow plastic (= y as in yellow), a paint tube (raw umber), a hypodermic syringe, a glass vial with rice and several parts that look like mechanical parts.

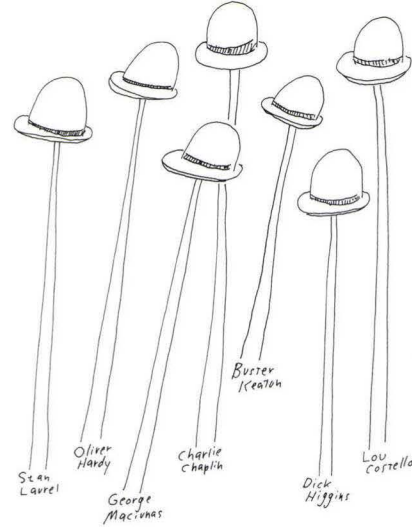


**George Maciunas, HARRY RUHE *Spell your name with these objects***, small objects and an instruction card in a plastic box, 10 x 11.9 x 2.6 cm, 1975.



**Fluxus 1 (Yearbox)**, mailing crate, 24.3 x 22.5 x 5 cm, containing an object book: brown envelopes, held together by screws, with works in diverse media by Ay-O, Brecht, Brown, Gysin, Hashimoto, Higgins, Jones, Knowles, Kosugi, Kubota, Ligeti, Maciunas, Mac Low, Patterson, Schmit, Shiomu, Vautier, Watts, Williams and La Monte Young; edited, designed and produced by George Maciunas, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1964.

**Flux Year Box 2**, compartmented wooden box, 20.3 x 20.3 x 8.6 cm, with the title silkscreened on the lid and a paper pouch attached to the interior of the lid, containing works by various artists in diverse media by Andersen, Brecht, Friedman, Fine, Hashimoto, Kubota, Lieberman, Oldenburg, Patterson, De Ridder, Riddle, Sheff, Sharits, Vautier and Watts. Also containing 15 monogram cards (design: Maciunas) in an envelope, 19 film loops probably by Andersen, Brecht, Cale, Cavanaugh, Fine, Lauffer, Maciunas, Ono, Sharits, Vanderbeek, Vostell, Watts, and a film viewer; edited, designed and produced by George Maciunas, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1966/1968.



*The Memorial to Adriano Olivetti - 1968*  
 Portrait of George Maciunas

**The Memorial to Adriano Olivetti, portrait of George Maciunas - drawing by Ken Friedman.**

Dear H. Rubé  
 In reply to your letter of 1-11-75. \$ #10  
 The other side is self explanatory.  
 Please note that inclusion of *Manman* will automatically exclude myself- In fact I would not permit any of my objects to be shown or my name mentioned.  
 For \$10 I can send you smile machine and something else too.  
 We have everything that is listed in our object list - see from which I suppose you got the price of smile machine.  
 The only item - out of print is Geo. Brecht's Water - Yam. Otherwise there are some 100 objects. I would recommend the following:  
 Flux year box I (last 4 remaining) \$ 80  
 Flux year box II (last 6 " ) \$ 80  
 Brecht - ball game box \$ 100  
 Watts - pebble geography - \$ 100  
 Also selection of small boxes, worth \$ 50  
 I can also send you *An Anthology* - edit. by La Monte Young (designed by me) and a very large chart (still incomplete) showing history of Fluxus - very detailed. Also will send a lot of printed material, recent flux-posters, newsletters etc.  
 With best regards  
 George Maciunas  
 P.C.B. 180  
 New York, N.Y. 10013  
 USA

My remark is on a flux-blood list which means that I suspect and do not cooperate with any capitalist gallery, agent or any program or show, past & future.

Table of the show will be ready after the show (invitation request) I am: Last Fluxus (invitation for the show) or: Black, Red, Blue, Green.

I have circled flux-people  
 I have crossed out people not doing anything anymore, dead or working in other fields  
 I have put a \* in front of names allied to or sometimes involved with fluxus.

unmarked names had nothing to do with fluxus - ever

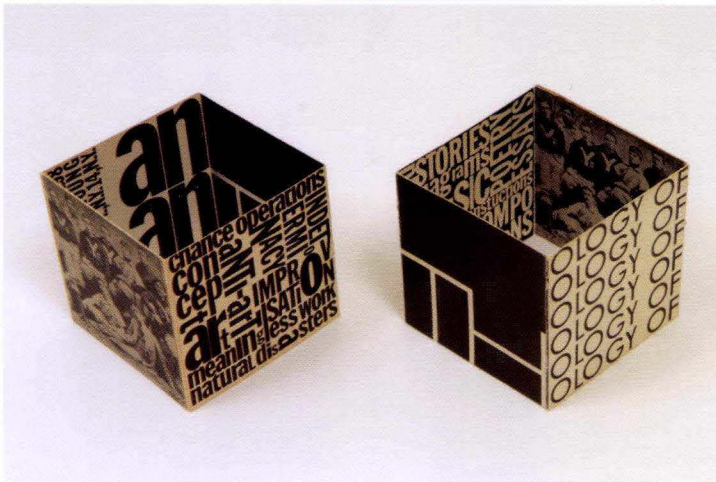
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**Letter from George Maciunas, November, 1975** (copy; the original is part of the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, MoMA, New York).









**George Maciunas, Flux ... Brochure for Fluxus Yearboxes**, 4 pp., 20 x 20.8 cm, in cover, 20.2 x 21.5 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1962.

**George Maciunas, An Anthology**, announcement (could be moulded and glued to form an open cube, with the design on inside and outside), 6.4 x 6.5 x 6.5 cm, ca. 1962 (2 variations).

**George Maciunas, Monogram cards**

These were designed at various times in the '60s to identify the artists contributing to Fluxus editions (particularly *Fluxus 1*, *FluxYearBox 2* and *Fluxkit*), each card ca. 6 x 6 cm:

*Eric Andersen, Ay-O, Jeff Berner, Robert Bozzi, George Brecht, Stanley Brouwn, Sylvano Bussotti, John Cavanaugh, Giuseppe Chiari, Christo, Philip Corner, Anthony Cox, Walter De Maria, Robert Filliou, Albert Fine, Gerry Foyster, Lee Heflin, Dick Higgins, Hi Red Center, Toshi Ichiyanagi, Ray Johnson, Joe Jones, H. Kapprow, Allan Kaprow, Milan Knížák, Alison Knowles, Arthur Kropcke, Jiří Kolář, Takehisa Kosugi, Shigeko Kubota, George Landow, Frederic Lieberman, György Ligeti, George Maciunas, Jackson Mac Low, Jonas Mekas, (HK?) Metzger, Barbara Moore, Robert Morris, Ladislav Novák, Claes Oldenburg, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik, Ben Patterson, Willem de Ridder, James Riddle, Dieter Roth, Wim T. Schippers, Tomas Schmit, Paul Sharits, Chieko Shiomii, Daniel Spoerri, Yasunao Tone, Endre Tóth(?), Stan Vanderbeek, Ben Vautier, Robert Watts, Emmett Williams, La Monte Young.*

(There is an Endre Tóth name card in *Flux Year Box 2*, ca. 1966/1968, but the artist wasn't active yet in those years. Comment by Jon Hendricks: *I would have thought that the card dates from around the mid to late '60s. Maciunas assembled Fluxyearbox 2 over a number of years, but there might be other indications in it that would date the assembly.*)

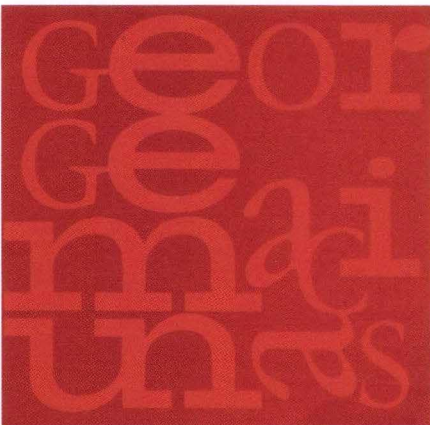
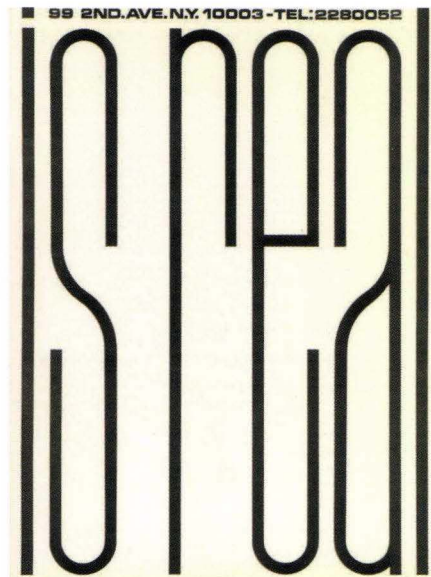
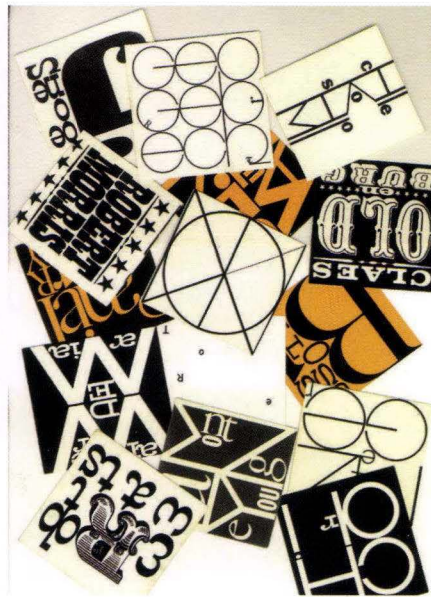
**George Maciunas, ISREAL**, sheet of stationery, 28.2 x 21.6 cm, ca. 1966 ("ISREAL" is Yoko Ono's conceptual gallery, ca. 1966 - John Hendricks in a letter dated: August 20, 1991).

**George Maciunas, monogram**, printed red on red paper, 20.6 x 21.2 cm, n/d.

**George Maciunas, labels for Fluxus editions:**

- Ay-O, Flux Rain Machine*, 11 x 8.3 cm.
- Jeff Berner, Fluxbook*, 8.4 x 10.8 cm.
- George Brecht, Games & Puzzles* (version on card), 4.8 x 6.4 cm.
- George Brecht, Universal Machine III*, 10.9 x 8.4 cm.
- George Brecht, Valoche 1959-1975 A Flux Travel Aid*, 10 x 10 cm.
- Jack Coke, Human Flux Trap* by Jack Coke's Farmer's Co-op, 10.7 x 8.2 cm (never produced as a Fluxus edition).
- Flux Shop List Box 3*, 8.4 x 10.8 cm (unused label; the work evolved into Fluxpack 3).
- Robert Filliou, The Obvious Deck*, 9.5 x 6.5 cm (never produced as a Fluxus edition).
- Flux Furniture*, 10.7 x 8.4 cm.
- Ken Friedman, Cleanliness Flux Kit*, 11 x 8.3 cm.
- Ken Friedman, Garnisht Kigele*, 8.4 x 10.8 cm.
- Ken Friedman, Open and Shut Case*, 8.4 x 10.8 cm.
- Alice Hutchins, Jewelry Fluxkit*, 8.2 x 10.8 cm.
- Joe Jones, Flux Music Box*, 8.4 x 10.7 cm.
- Per Kirkeby, Fluxbox*, 10.8 x 8.2 cm.
- Per Kirkeby, Flux Drinks*, 8.3 x 10.8 cm.
- Per Kirkeby, Flux Drinks*, 10.8 x 8.4 cm (unused label).

**Flux** (flüks), *n.* [OF. fr. *L. fluxus*, fr. *fluere*, *fluxum*, to flow. See FLUENT; cf. FLUSH, *n.* (of cards).] 1. *Med.* a A flowing or fluid discharge from the bowels or other part; esp., an excessive and morbid discharge; as, the bloody flux, or dysentery. b The matter thus discharged. 2. Act of flowing; a continuous moving on or passing by, as of a flowing stream, a continuing succession of changes. 3. A stream; copious flow; flood; outflow. 4. The setting in of the tide toward the shore. Cf. REFLEX. 5. State of being liquid through heat; fusion. *Rare.* 6. A fusible glass used as a base for enamels; also, an easily fusible enamel used as a ground for enamel painting. 7. *Chem. & Metal.* a Any substance or mixture used to promote fusion, esp. the fusion of metals or minerals. Common metallurgical fluxes are silica and silicates (acidic), lime and limestone (basic), and fluorite (neutral). b Any substance applied to surfaces to be joined by soldering or welding, just prior to or during the operation, to clean and free them from oxide, thus promoting their union, as rosin. 8. *Math.* The integral over a surface of the normal component of a vector field. Cf. STOKES' THEOREM. 9. *Photom.* = 1st LIGHT, 18 b. 10. *Physics.* a The rate of flow or transfer of fluid or of energy across a surface. b By analogy, the surface integral of a vector distributed over a surface. Cf. ELECTROSTATIC FLUX, MAGNETIC FLUX. 11. *Plant Pathol.* A slime flux. **Flux**, *v.* FLUXIO (flüks); FLUXING. *Transitive:* 1. To cause to become fluid; to fuse; to treat with a flux. 2. To affect, or bring to a certain state, by subjecting to, or treating with, a flux. *Fluxed* into another world. *South.* 3. *Med.* To cause a discharge from, as in purging. — *Intransitive:* 1. To flow freely. *Archaic.* 2. To become fluid; to melt. 3. To undergo a flux; specif., to bleed copiously. *Obs.* flux (flüks), *adj.* [*L. fluxus*, fr. *fluere*. See FLUX, *n.*] In flux, variable. *Obs.*





Jane Knížák, *Flux Papers*, 10.8 x 8.2 cm.  
 Milan Knížák, *Flux Dreams*, 11 x 8.4 cm.  
 Shigeo Kubota, *Flux Medicine*, 8.4 x 10.7 cm.  
 Shigeo Kubota, *Flux Napkins*, 8.6 x 10.8 cm.  
 Dan Lauffer, *Turn on your Love Light*, 11 x 8.3 cm.  
 Carla Liss, *Island Flux Souvenir*, 8.3 x 10.8 cm.  
 Carla Liss, *Kat.Flux.Kit*, 10.8 x 8.2 cm (never produced as a Fluxus edition).  
 Carla Liss, *Sacramento Fluxkit*, 8.5 x 10.9 cm.  
 Carla Liss, *Sacramento Fluxkit*, 17.5 x 11.4 cm (variant label).

George Maciunas, *Flux Pieces by George Maciunas*, 8.4 x 10.8 cm (never produced as a Fluxus edition).  
 Olivier Mosset, *Flux Dots*, 8.2 x 10.9 cm.  
 Paul & Greg Sharits, *David Thompson, Bob Grimes, Flux Paper Games*, 12 x 6.7 cm.

Chieko Shiomi, *Disappearing Music for Face*, 5.9 x 10.7 cm.

Ben Vautier, *A Flux Suicide Kit*, 8.3 x 10.8 cm.  
 Ben Vautier, *Flux Holes gathered by Ben Vautier*, 4.6 x 6.8 cm.

Ben Vautier, *Flux Mystery Food*, small version: 5.9 x 7.6 cm.

Yoshimasa Wada, *Flux Perfume*, 4.4 x 4.3 cm, and: 3.7 x 2.9 cm; 2 labels (from 3) for a never realized Fluxus edition.

Yoshimasa Wada, *Smoke Fluxkit*, 8.2 x 11 cm.

Robert Watts, *Flux Rock* marked by volume in cc, 10.9 x 8.3 cm.

Robert Watts, *A Fluxatlas*, 10.5 x 8.2 cm.

Robert Watts, *Light Flux Kit*, 10.7 x 13 cm.

**George Maciunas, U.S.A. surpasses All The Genocide Records!** (a flag with skulls in place of stars and a text in place of stripes), screen print in red and blue, 54.8 x 87.8 cm, designed and published by Maciunas, New York, ca. 1966.

(A later modified version authorised by Maciunas, offset print, ca. 40 x 61 cm, was published by Albrecht d., early '70s.)

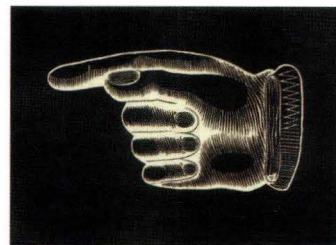
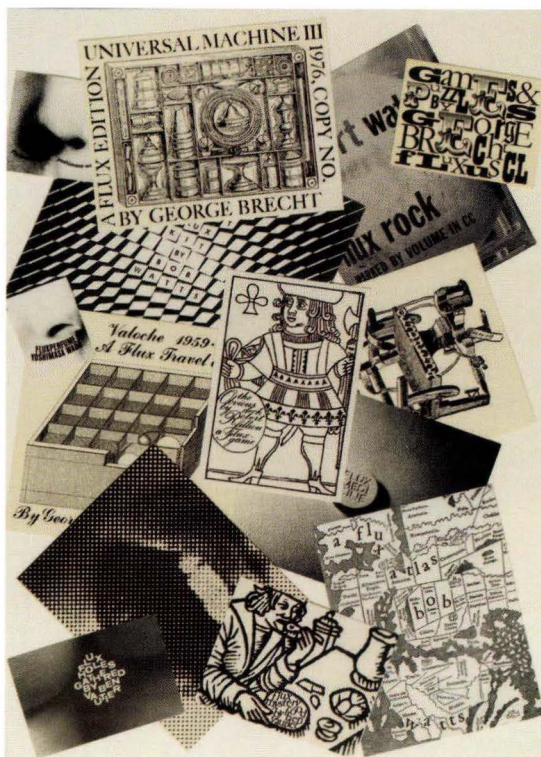
**George Brecht, Direction**, two single sheets designed by Maciunas, one with the text: *george brecht, direction*, the other one with a pointing hand (in white on black printed paper), 14.4 x 19.7 cm, Fluxus, N.Y., ca. 1963. (There is another version: black line on white paper.)

Sheets with this pointing hand were exhibited in the kitchen of Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, March 1963. There is also a book version and a boxed version of *Direction*.

**Anonymous, Tattoo 101**, a sheet of stick-on tattoos with colour reproductions of antique tattoos, 25.4 x 32.4 cm, designed by Maciunas and published by Implosions, Inc., New York, 1967.

Jon Hendricks commented: *Regarding the stick-ons, I suspect that Tattoo 101 is probably Watts. I suspect that George and Bob would sit around and come up with ideas, and Bob probably found images of traditional tattoo designs that he proposed to George to produce, although there's always the chance that George located the designs to produce.*

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## Jackson Mac Low (1922-2004)

In Mac Low's *Vocabularies* a graphic performance notation is composed by marking down all the words possible made from the letters of a given person's name. The first *Vocabulary* was exhibited in 1968.

Mac Low visited Amsterdam in 1978. He gave me some of his *Vocabularies* and *Gathas* as a present and proposed to show them in Galerie A. They were part of the exhibition *Visual Works by Poets* a year later. This presentation was part of the One World Poetry Festival organised by Ben Posset. Unfortunately Mac Low was unable to attend to the event.

Jean-Jacques Lebel however did participate in the exhibition. He had taken one or two

collages with him but he took them off the wall after a day. He felt that they didn't quite fit with the works by Brion Gysin, Henri Chopin and Mac Low.

The opening on October 7<sup>th</sup> was attended by Simon Vinkenoog who wrote poems on the walls. Steef Davidson was also present; he had carved texts in the heels and soles of his shoes and provided the pavement in front of the gallery with stamped poetry as he walked. Michael Gibbs performed one of Mac Low's *Vocabularies*.

The 'Beat Poet' Gregory Corso also brought a contribution with him; a large amount of strong liquor. On most of the pictures taken during the opening he can be seen with a bottle in his hand.

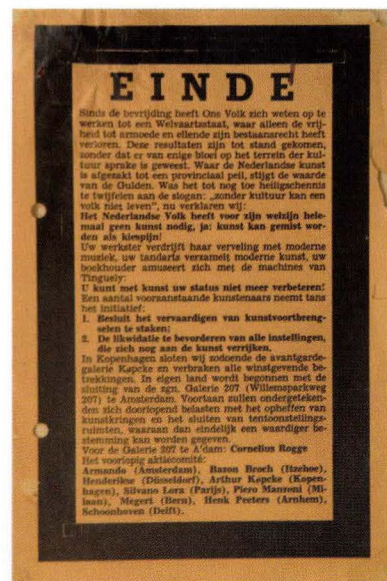
## Manifest gegen nichts

In 1960 art dealer and publisher Carl Laszlo from Basle published the *Manifest gegen nichts* (Manifesto against nothing), on the occasion of an *Internationale Ausstellung von nichts* (international exhibition of nothing). The manifesto was signed by Laszlo and the artists Onorio, Fenkart, Brock, Schuldt, Manzoni, Castellani, Mack and Piene. (A copy was included in *Fourre Tout No.2*, an object magazine published by Ben Vautier in 1967.)

In April 1961 an international exhibition of NOTHING took place in Galerie 207 in Amsterdam. During the opening, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, the gallery was closed.<sup>12</sup> A manifesto was published, undersigned by Armando, Onorio, Laszlo, Brock, Manzoni, Peeters, Henderikse, Schoonhoven, Megert, Køpcke and Lora. In another manifesto, *EINDE*, the artists proposed to stop creating artworks.



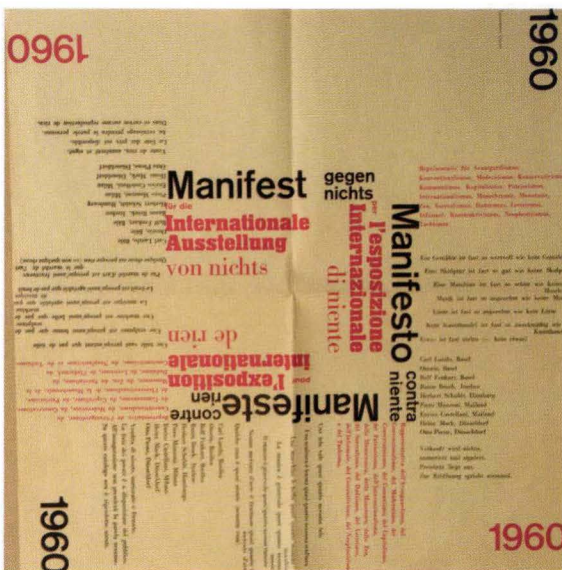
Jackson Mac Low and Milan Knížák, Cavriago (Italy), 1980, photograph by Francesco Conz, 12.6 x 18.7 cm, with the photographer's stamp on the reverse.



*Manifest gegen nichts Manifesto contra niente Manifeste contre rien*, 30.2 x 29.7 cm, Basle, 1960.

*Manifest tegen niets*, 21.5 x 13.8 cm, Amsterdam, 1961.

*Einde*, 20.9 x 13.9 cm, Amsterdam, 1961.



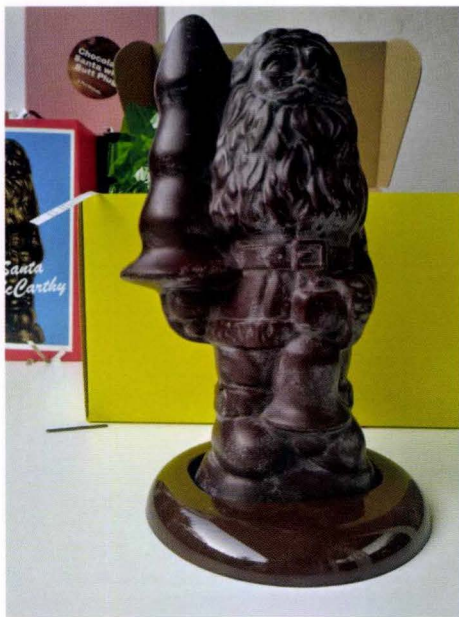
<sup>12</sup> From December 17-31, 1969, Robert Barry had an exhibition at Art & Project, Amsterdam. Bulletin 17, published in conjunction with the show informed the recipients that during the show the gallery would be closed.



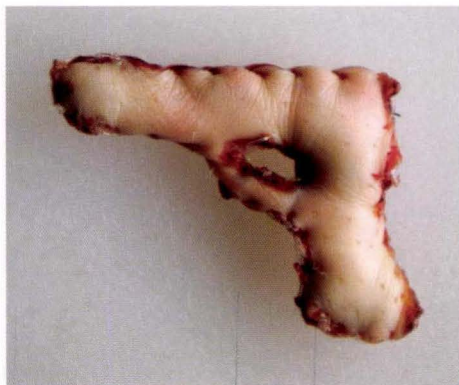
## Paul McCarthy (1945) - *Chocolate*

Paul McCarthy's Santa Claus statue, purchased in 2001 by the city of Rotterdam, was supposed to be erected near De Doelen theatre. But after a lot of upheaval – the city's inhabitants soon dubbed it *Kabouter Buttplug* (Gnome Butt Plug) – it was placed on the inner courtyard of the Boymans van Beuningen museum. (According to Karel Schampers, one of the museum's curators and at the time involved with the purchase, McCarthy wanted the large bronze statue to be painted red). In 2008, the statue was put up at the Eendrachtsplein (the Eendrachts square).

From 2007 onward, Santa Claus was also available in a miniature version. In November of that same year the statuette, made of pure chocolate and put in a beautiful box (colours: red, pink, yellow or black), was presented at New York's Maccarone Gallery (selling price: US\$ 100,-).



**Chocolate Santa with Butt Plug by Paul McCarthy**, chocolate sculpture in a cardboard box, box size: ca. 30 x 18 x 16 cm, 2007.



**Joanneke Meester, Pistol**, colour photograph, 43.5 x 32.4 cm, signed (this copy aside from an edition of 10 numbered & signed copies on metal) (2004) 2011.

## Joanneke Meester (1966)

Joanneke Meester has a piece of skin removed from her stomach, a favour of a befriended surgeon. She uses it to cover a small gun measuring 5.5 x 3 centimetres, made up of synthetic fibres (the design is based on a Beretta). Meester's point of departure: the subdued aggression that is part of every human being.

In May 2004, the pistol is presented during Kunstvlaai, an alternative art fair in Amsterdam.

The art work is simultaneously admired and condemned. Especially, from Germany there are shocked reactions and references are being made to the Second World War. It is also pointed out that lamp shades were made from human skin in concentration camps.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

## Jonas Mekas (1922-2019) & George Maciunas

- *Film Culture*

The first nine issues of *Film Culture* I "designed" (more correctly, "slammed together") myself. Beginning with the issue 10 (1956) I invited George to help me. He did all designing for the issues 10 ending with issue 22-23 (1961). (For issues 21-23 George also designed all of the ads). The title he gave himself, as is listed in the inside cover two, was "layout by George Maciunas." For the consecutive twenty or so issues I did the layout again myself due to the fact that George wasn't in New York most of the time. I brought George back again in 1963, for Stan Brakhage issue (Metaphors on Vision), for which he carries credit "Designed by George Maciunas," and again in 1966 for the *Film Culture: Expanded Arts* issue (issue 43), an issue with no credits to no-one; and in 1967 for Kuleshov issue (issue 44) and same year (1967) for Warhol issue (issue 45) for both of which his credit line reads "Design and Production: George Maciunas."

Original designs for issue 43 and 44 are deposited with Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Center in Vilnius.

Jonas

(Email by Jonas Mekas, March 27, 2014.)



**Film Culture**, vol. III, no. 4, 24 pp. (incl. cover), New York, November 1957.

**Film Culture 30**, issue devoted to Stan Brakhage's *Methaphors on Vision*, 90 pp., 28 x 21 cm, corrugated cardboard covers with die-cut; wraparound on cover a printed strip of opaque paper with an advertisement for available Fluxus editions, New York, Fall, 1963.

**Film Culture 43 - Expanded Arts**, special issue incl. Fluxfest section, 12 pp., 56 x 43 cm, New York, Winter 1966.



## Gustav Metzger (1926-2017)

In January 1992 I was visited by Gustav Metzger, who I knew as the author of a manifesto on *Auto-Destructive Art* (1959). Metzger had also organized the much discussed *Destruction in Art Symposium* in London in 1966. Among it's participants were Al Hansen, Otto Muehl, Hermann Nitsch, and Yoko Ono.

Metzger told me he wished to make an *Earth Minus Environment*, a variant of an earlier installation he had initially planned for *documenta 5* in 1972. That project was discontinued due to technical difficulties.

The new version would start out as a model of wood, Plexiglas, and 120 toy cars of the Trabant model. It's size: 120 x 120 x 30 cm.

Unfortunately, he was broke. I offered to finance his project and we would split any earnings once the work was sold. Metzger was not easily satisfied and it took months to finish two proof models and the

final construction. Meanwhile, the supplier of the Plexiglas components was getting increasingly stressed. Metzger kept rejecting his components, requiring him to start from scratch again and again. When the work was finally completed its construction had cost Dfl 1.331,58, which is roughly 600 Euros.

The finished project immediately caught the intention of Hanns Sohm, a collector of Happening and Fluxus relics. However he did agree with Metzger's price of ten thousand Deutschmark.

Another potential buyer expressed interest several years later. I proposed doubling the price, but Metzger felt it was too low.

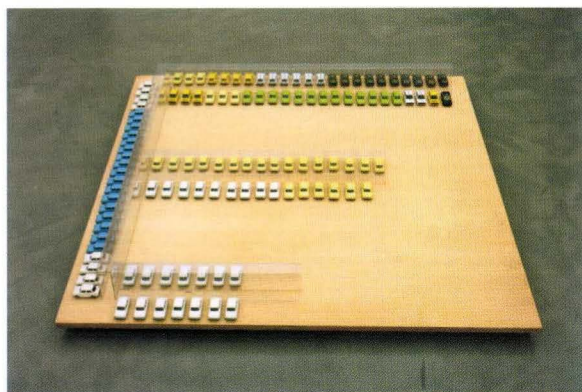
Since then, the installation has been displayed in exhibitions several times and featured in a number of books. Whenever potential buyers would show an interest the price was raised by Metzger. Meanwhile, he appeared to be at an all time lack of funds.

During the spring of 2007 a museum showed its interest in the installation. To Metzger I suggested a selling price of twenty thousand Euro, yet he hesitated. I urged him: 'Gustav, listen. You are an old man, with no family. You won't live forever and at some point I will gain ownership. But if we sell now – let's make it twenty-five thousand – we both get to enjoy the gains.' Metzger agreed at first. Then ...; 'Let's wait. *Frieze* magazine will soon be covering my work extensively, plus the Westfälischer Kunstverein is planning to display the installation. After that we can probably sell it for much more.' In February 2013 the artist paid € 12.500 to Galerie A to get full ownership of the piece.

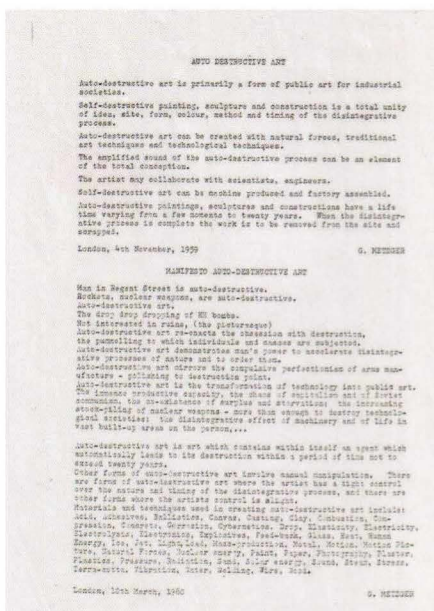


Gustav Metzger, Galerie A, 1992; photograph.

**Gustav Metzger, *Earth Minus Environment***  
(model), wood (ca. 120 x 120 cm), Plexiglas en 120 toy cars, 1992 (estate Gustav Metzger).



**Gustav Metzger, *Auto Destructive Art, 1959 / Manifesto Auto-Destructive Art, 1960*** (from a group of photocopies made by Metzger for Galerie A in 1992).





## Pierre Molinier (1900-1976)

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1976, the French artist Pierre Molinier shoots a bullet into his mouth. Hence, the life of one of France's most controversial artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century comes to an end.

Molinier didn't know about taboos, his life and work were interchangeable. Many of his photographs (often intervened) show him as a woman, an image achieved by wearing nylon stockings and black highheeled shoes and using masks and dildos. He also took pictures of himself as if he were crucified or on his deathbed.

Molinier started to take pictures around 1918. That same year, he took a photograph of his younger sister on her deathbed. Later on, the artist stated that he had intercourse with her when left alone to take a picture. *Even dead, she was beautiful. I shot sperm on her stomach and legs, and onto the First Communion dress she was wearing. She took with her into death the best of me.*

In 1950 Molinier builds a 'Premature Tomb', a black cross with an engraved text: *Ci Çit Pierre MOLINIER né le 13 Avril 1900 mort vers 1950 ce fut un homme sans moralité il s'en fit gloire et honneur inutile de P.P.K.* (Prier Pour Lui). (Here rests Pierre Molinier, born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, 1900 and passed away around 1950. He was a man without any morals; he enjoyed it and was proud of it. It is unnecessary to pray for him.)

In 1969, according to him, he had the body of his father digged up. He kept the bones in a wooden box in the shape of a coffin. Pierre Molinier was much admired by Viennese Aktionists like Hermann Nitsch and Günter Brus and considered to be a soulmate. Performance artists like Jürgen Klauke, Luciano Castelli and Ron Athey were strongly influenced by Molinier's work.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

**Pierre Molinier and one of his models**, gelatin silver print, 13.9 x 8.9 cm, with the stamps of J & J Donguy, Paris and the Archivio Conz, Verona on the reverse, n/d. (The Italian publisher Francesco Conz was befriended with Pierre Molinier. In the early nineteen seventies he bought several of his photographs, amongst others the copy reproduced here.)

## Mood Engineering Society

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1992, an auction was held at the Venduehuis, The Hague. Among the lots were publications and documents from Jaap Spek, co-founder of the Mood Engineering Society<sup>13</sup>.

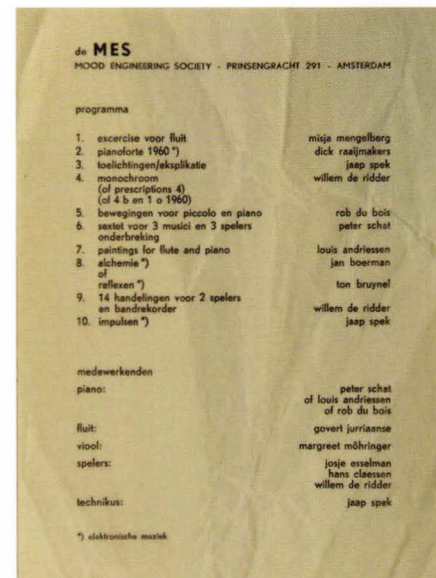
The MES, founded in December 1961, was a joint venture of several young composers like Willem de Ridder, Peter Schat, Louis Andriessen, Misha Mengelberg, Ton Bruynèl, Rob du Bois and Dick Raaijmakers. They propagated 'musical theatre' and wanted to involve the public with the happenings on stage. The MES-concerts were related to Fluxus, and in some ways even preceded it. Concerts took place in Rotterdam (1<sup>st</sup> of February 1962), Utrecht (15<sup>th</sup> of February 1962) and The Hague (19<sup>th</sup> of February 1962).

There is not a lot of material left. At the Appel Foundation, then located at the Brouwersgracht in Amsterdam, I saw a programme and some press cuttings from the archives of Louis Andriessen, but that is a long time ago. MES-founder Willem de Ridder didn't have much left from those days. During the auction in The Hague there was hardly any interest in Spek's documentation. The MES-archive, consisting of a programme book (the cover mounted with an original *Paper Constellation*), musical scores, photographs, press cuttings and letters, only fetched 625 Dutch guilders (around 283 euros).

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2003, during the

Centraal Fluxus Festival, several former members of the Mood Engineering Society gathered in Utrecht. During this reunion they performed several pieces from the MES-repertoire, at least as far as possible. Peter Schat and Ton Bruynèl had already passed away, no one could get hold of Jaap Spek and Misha Mengelberg couldn't make it, but the reason remained unclear. Louis Andriessen was in Berlin at the time, but he didn't mind joining the event. His contribution, by telephone, consisted of a quiz where questions were asked like, 'who invented the *Prepared Piano?*'

The highlights of the evening were the *Exercise voor fluit* (Mengelberg): Govert Jurriaanse gave a fine rendering of this musical piece for flute. Furthermore on the programme: a composition by Dick Raaijmakers where the insides of a pianoforte were being played upon and electronic music by Jan Boerman. *Monochroom*, a piece by Willem de Ridder, should be mentioned here as well. Dick Raaijmakers took a seat behind the piano with de Ridder standing next to him. Raaijmakers played one note and then: complete silence. After a while the public started getting somewhat restless, people started mumbling and coughing and de Ridder imitated these noises. He made quite a good job of it, but he didn't know how to react when museum director Sjarel Ex threw a plastic cup on the floor. It was a fine evening, although this historical event received no press coverage whatsoever.



de MES programma, 1962; 20.1 x 14.9 cm.

<sup>13</sup> Willem de Ridder was the driving force behind MES: he took the initiative and was it's founding father. In his efforts he was helped by Jaap Spek. The latter can therefore be considered a co-founder



# Charlotte Moorman

(1933-1991)

The Annual New York Avant Garde Festival was an event established by Charlotte Moorman in 1963. The festival took place in various locations.

Inaugural Avant Garde Festival, August 20 - September 4, 1963 (Judson Hall).

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, August 30 - September 13, 1964 (Judson Hall).

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 7-11, 1965 (Judson Hall).

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 9, 1966 (Central Park).

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 29-30,

1967 (John F. Kennedy Ferry Boat, Whitehall Terminal).

6<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 14, 1968 (Central Park).

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 28, 1969 - October 4, 1969 (Wards Island) and October 26-31, 1969 (Mill Rock Island).

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, November 19, 1971 (69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Infantry Armory, Manhattan).

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, October 28, 1972 (South Street Seaport Museum).

10<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, December 9, 1973 (Grand Central Station).

11<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, November 16, 1974 (Shea Stadium, Queens).

12<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 27, 1975 (Gateway National Recreation Area/Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn).

13<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, June 19, 1977 (World Trade Center).

14<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, May 14-20, 1978. In conjunction with the Cambridge River Festival.

15<sup>th</sup> Annual Avant Garde Festival, July 20, 1980 (Pier 81, Hudson River Park).

# Charlotte Moorman

(In the parking lot of a garage somewhere in Verona, long ago)

Fluxus collector Francesco Conz: 'This Volkswagen once belonged to Charlotte Moorman. For years she went on tour with it. She drove people like John Cage around in it. This is a car with history ...

It was a nightmare trying to get the bloody thing here. To start with the transport ran via Hamburg; why, I'll never understand. It was completely taken apart by customs there. For months it stood wasting away in a shed. It's cost me a fortune.

When the car was delivered to Verona, it turned out they'd reassembled it incorrectly in Hamburg. There were all sorts of things wrong with it. I took it to a garage and asked

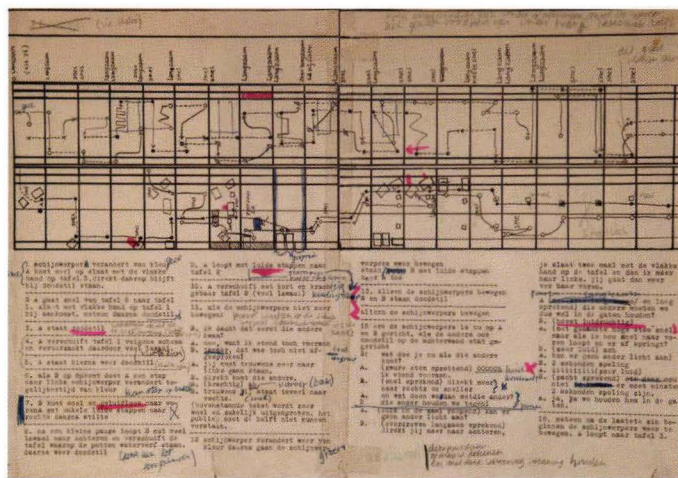
them to give it a complete overhaul. I wanted all the bugs to be ironed out. Then one day they called me to say that the car was all fixed. They said: it's as new. Well, they were right. The car looked as if it had just come off the assembly-line in the factory. They had completely resprayed it. Try to imagine, the original paintwork, the dust from American highways still clinging to it, all the tiny scratches and small defacements; nothing more to be seen.

I've made a deal with the garage that the car remains outside here for a few years. At least till it starts to look slightly used again ...!

From: Harry Ruhé, *25 Fluxus Stories*, Amsterdam/Verona, 1999.



**Charlotte Moorman in her studio watching porno**, New York, 1990 (the year before she passed away); photograph by Francesco Conz, 20.2 x 30.4 cm, signed and dated by Conz, with the photographer's stamp on the reverse.



**Willem de Ridder, prescriptions**, typed text, ink, ballpen, felt-tip pen and pencil on paper, 28.7 x 54.2 cm, stamped: 26 JUNI 1961 (incomplete; the complete musical score has been published in programme *de mes*).



**Francesco Conz in Moorman's Volkswagen** (photograph: Harry Ruhé).



# Otto Muehl (1925-2013) -

*Photographs and documents*

In the early nineteen seventies, when Otto Muehl decided to stop 'making art' he sold two suitcases containing his complete archive to collector Francesco Conz in Asolo (Italy). Muehl used the money to set up the Friedrichsdorf commune in 1972. The suitcases were stored for years in one of Conz's depositories. During one of my first visits in the beginning of the nineteen eighties, I was allowed to have a look. Much of it was at that moment completely unknown, i.e. it had never been exhibited or published like posters designed by Muehl, invitations for the so-called Aktionen (actions), many pictures by the famous photographer Hoffenreich (including many contact sheets), small photograph albums and notebooks, letters, drawings, newspaper cuttings et cetera. Several identical copies of printed matter were also part of this treasure, like the things mentioned below which I exchanged for materials from the archive of Galerie A.

As I had presented work by Günter Brus in my gallery several times and had included 'Aktionsfotos' (Actions pictures) by Otto Muehl and Hermann Nitsch in group exhibitions, I was included in the mailing list of the Friedrichshof, Otto Muehl's commune.

One day, I received a visit by a girl. She was interested in the drawings I owned by Brus and Nitsch. According to her, these belonged in the Friedrichshof archive and she proposed an exchange with recent work by Muehl. I didn't want to make a deal.

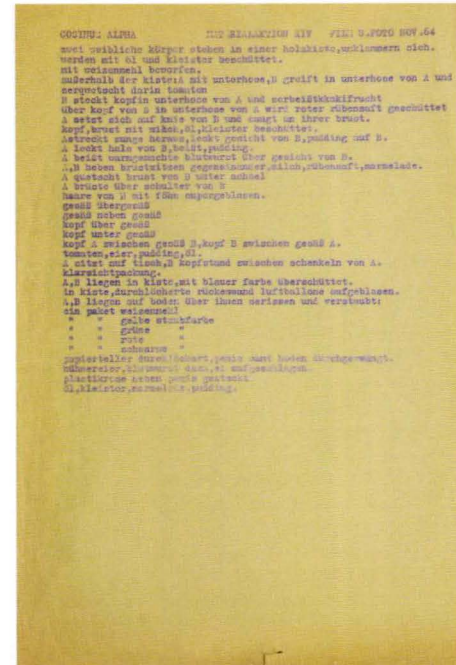
Shortly afterwards, I got in touch with Theo Altenberg, editor of the magazine AA Kommune Nachrichten (commune news). He told me that Muehl intended to make a film about Vincent van Gogh and also said to me that I could be part of the cast, the only condition being that I had to stay in the Friedrichshof commune for a while.

Undoubtedly, it would have been an interesting experience. As I had my sincere doubts about whether my relationship with my girlfriend would be able to withstand a stay in the commune, I decided not to accept this offer. In hindsight, to some extent, I do regret this decision.

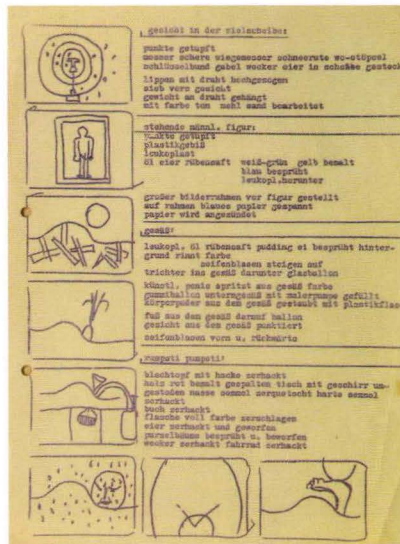
The film Vincent was ready by 1984.



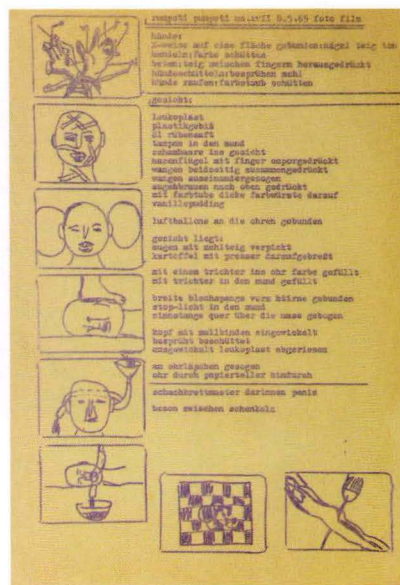
**Otto Muehl, Cosinus Alpha - Materialaktion Nr.15, Oct./Nov. 1964**, photograph by Ludwig Hoffenreich, gelatin silver print, 39.9 x 29.9 cm, signed by Muehl, with the photographer's stamp, and the stamps Archivio Francesco Conz and Friedrichshof on the reverse.



**Otto Muehl, COSINUS ALPHA MATERIALAKTION XIV FILM U.FOTO NOV.64;** matrix print, 29.6 x 21 cm, 1964.



**◀ Otto Muehl, rumpsti pumsti ma.xvll 8.5.65 photo film;** 2 matrix prints, 29.5 x 21 cm/27.3 x 20.6 cm.



**Otto Muehl and some white painted commune members, Friedrichshof**, photograph, 10.1 x 15.1 cm, with the stamp of the Archivio Conz, n/d.







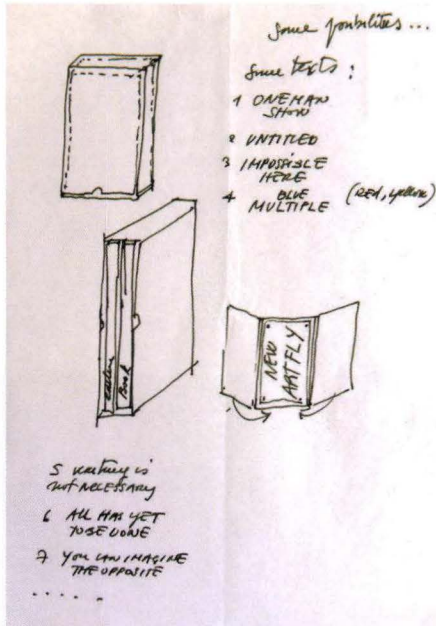
# Maurizio Nannucci (1939)

*some questions on fluxus* was the title of Maurizio Nannucci's contribution to a book I published in 1979 about Fluxus. Twelve years later, he wrote a riveting blurb for my booklet about multiples:

... Multiplication has long been part of the art working process: objects and boxes, video and films, artists' books and records, poster works and graphics, badges and stickers are just a few examples of the multifaceted universe of multiples art ... This is a guidebook for a journey through this glittering landscape ...

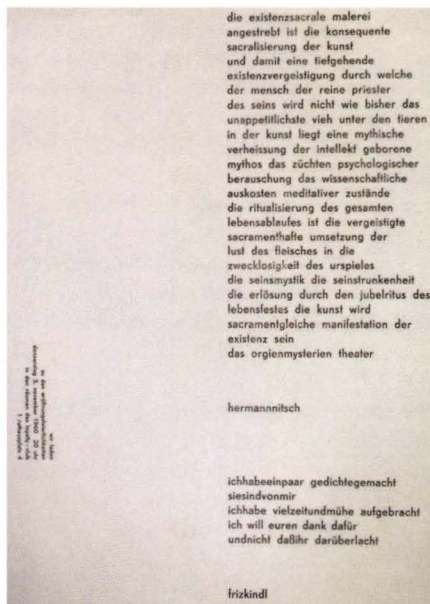
A very good text. (Nannucci hadn't read anything from the book at the time he wrote these words).

He then proposed to make a special edition, for which he would make and produce a multiple. A very good idea, but it was never executed.



**Maurizio Nannucci, *Some possibilities*** (sketches and a handwritten text), ink on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, n/d., and a letter, signed and dated: 30.12.1991.

**Hermann Nitsch, 11. Aktion, 1965**, sheet with contact prints by Ludwig Hoffenreich, gelatin silver print, 23.9 x 18.1 cm, signed on the back by Hermann Nitsch and Hoffenreich, with the *Rudolf Schwarzkogler Nachlaß*-stamp and two stamps by the photographer on the reverse, 1965.



**Hermann Nitsch, *Loyalty-Club, Vienna, 1960***; invitation/manifesto, 28.1 x 20.5 cm.



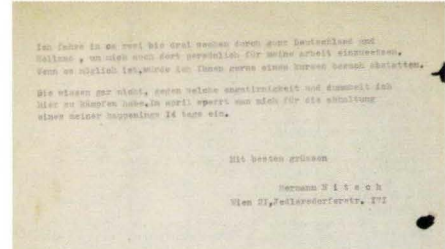
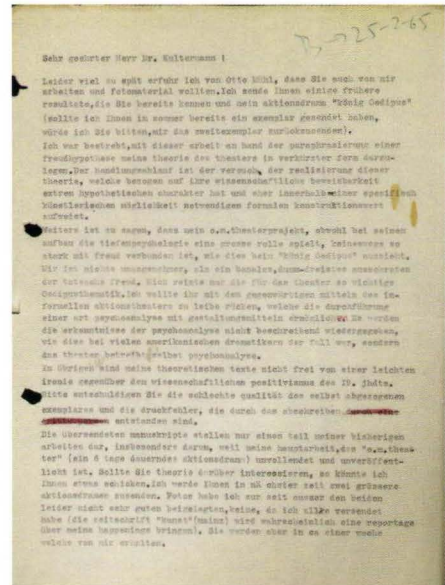
**Hermann Nitsch, 12. Aktion, 1965**, red paint on photographic linen, ca. 129 x 102 cm, signed and dated: 1965.



# Hermann Nitsch (1938)

Rudolf Schwarzkogler performed as a model in the 11. *Aktion* by Hermann Nitsch on June 30 1965. Stern-photographer Ludwig Hoffenreich recorded the events. His photographs were among the things that were inventoried and described by Hermann Nitsch, Günter Brus, Schwarzkogler's girlfriend Edith Adam and collector/publisher Francesco Conz in June 1973. The inventory took place in Cittadella in Italy. All of the photos were provided with a *Rudolf Schwarzkogler Nachlaß* (= estate) stamp.

The 12. *Aktion* by Nitsch was performed in Heinz Cibulka's house in the Kaiserstrasse in Vienna on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1965. Cibulka acted as a model while his wife took photographs. Several of these *Aktion* photos were printed on photographic linen around 1973 and painted on by Nitsch with red paint. For a long time these works were part of the collection of Francesco Conz in Verona. He gave me one of them in 1987. I gave him objects from the stock of Galerie A in return.



**Hermann Nitsch, typewritten letter to Udo Kultermann, February 1965**; signed, 29.7 x 21 cm.



## Yoko Ono (1933)

*Painting to be stepped on* is a work dating back to 1960.

With the permission of Yoko Ono, I had a reconstruction made of this art work in November 2003. It was to be used during the *Centraal Fluxus Festival*, an event Willem de Ridder and I were organising for the Centraal Museum in Utrecht. It was to be laid on the floor and those who wanted could step on it.

Yoko Ono wrote the following about *Painting to be stepped on*:

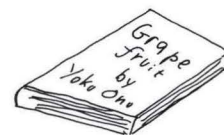
*In the 15th-century Japan, a "stepping painting" (Fumie) was used to distinguish Christians from non-Christians. A person was asked to step on the portrait of Christ. Those who could not were immediately taken away to be crucified. Most Japanese Christians refused to step on the portrait, despite the consequences, which they were aware of. As a young child, I was terrified by the story, but I also promised myself that I would be a person who adhered to her principles just as the Japanese Christians did. Later, in New York, I felt the urge to release myself from that little girl in me and to step on a painting.*  
y.o.

## Yoko Ono

The premiere of *Cut Piece* took place in the Yamaichi Hall in Kyoto on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 1964, but other performances soon followed. In 1966, one was held in the Carnegie Recital Hall in New York, whereas in 1966 it was part of the programme of the *Destruction in Art Symposium* in London. Description of *Cut Piece*: Yoko Ono sits on the stage with a pair of scissors in front of her. She asks the audience to come up one by one and cut away a piece of her clothing. The performance ends the moment there is nothing left to cut away, or when Ono decides that the show has ended.

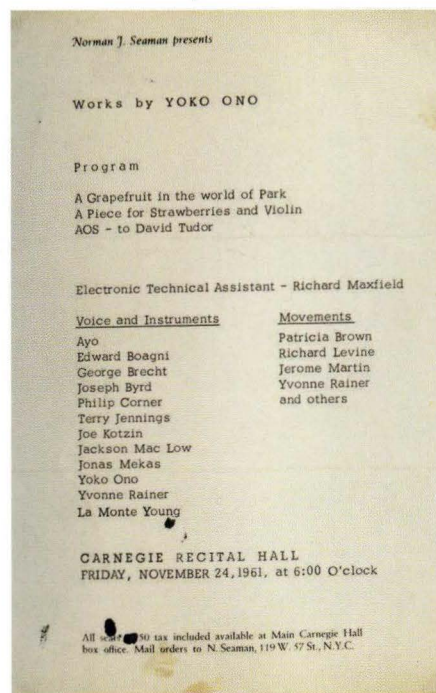
According to her, the audience in Japan was much more discrete than the one in New York while employing the scissors. In London there was a lot of press and much ado: the audience cut all her clothes away. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2003, the Le Ranelagh Théâtre in Paris hosted the last performance of Yoko Ono. Several other artists, like Charlotte Moorman, also performed *Cut Piece*. Moorman's performance took place in the Emily Harvey Gallery in New York in November 1988. It was a celebratory event for the presentation of editions by Italian publisher Francesco Conz.

Book to be Stepped On



Portrait of Yoko Ono  
17F 1971

**Book to be Stepped On, portrait of Yoko Ono** - drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Works by Yoko Ono**, Carnegie Recital Hall, New York, Nov. 24, 1961; invitation, 14 x 21.5 cm.



### Yoko Ono, *Painting to be stepped on*

(1960), reconstruction. One and a half times the original size and especially made for the Centraal Fluxus Festival in Utrecht, 23<sup>rd</sup> until the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2003; wood and canvas, 46.5 x 61.5 x 2.6 cm; press cutting, photo in Utrechts Nieuwsblad, October 25, 2003.



### Charlotte Moorman and Sari Dienes (1898-1992) during a performance of Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* in the Emily Harvey Gallery,

1988; photograph by Mario Parolin, 20.2 x 30.1 cm, with a description and the stamp of the Achivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.





# Yoko Ono

Jon Hendricks organises exhibitions for Yoko Ono and also arranges art loans to museums and galleries. In the early '90s he asked me to help him retrieve one of Yoko's works. It concerned a small bronze apple from which a bite was taken. This sculpture was inspired on another work by Ono: *Apple*. It had been on display in the London Indica Gallery in 1966 and consists of an apple on a socle. When John Lennon visited the exhibition and saw the original piece he decided to take a bite from it. Yoko was initially shocked by this action. She had lent one of the bronze versions from

1988 to an Amsterdam gallery but she was unable to get it back.

I made an appointment with the gallery and Hendricks came over to Amsterdam. Upon arriving at the gallery we learned that the owner was not present. There was however a girl behind a desk. Initially she started to laboriously study the computer archive. Eventually she agreed to let us take the sculpture with us.

Yoko was elated with the good news. She also promised her cooperation when I told her about my plans to dedicate an exhibition to her work. She signed some posters from the '60s and provided additional material to

repair a work in my collection that had been incomplete.

Her most important contribution to the exhibition was an *Add Colour Piece* from which the concept dates back to the '60s. She asked me to provide a baby crib, some paint, brushes and markers. She intended to have visitors of the exhibition paint and write on the object with 'all colours of hope'. I sent Yoko a photographic report after the presentation.

The last contributions to this piece were done by Ay-O, Ben Patterson and Alison Knowles (*to rest my head!*), when they visited me in 2003.



Harry Ruhe, *Fluxus lebt*, in: *der Freitag*, 14<sup>th</sup> of February, 2013, with a picture of Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* as performed in Carnegie Recital Hall, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, 1965 (newspaper-cutting).



Yoko Ono, *Add Colour Piece*. *Add all colours of hope*, wooden baby crib, with contributions by gallery visitors, 1994.



Yoko Ono, *Birthday Party for John Lennon, Syracuse, 1970*, gelatin silver prints, each 10.2 x 15.2 cm, each with the stamp Archivio Francesco Conz Verona on the reverse: Andy Warhol, Al Hansen, John Lennon; Andy Warhol, Yoko Ono; Birthday cake.





## ORLAN (1947)

Mireille Suzanne Francette Porte, better known as ORLAN, uses her body as artistic material. In 1977, during the FIAC in Paris, she presented *Le Baiser de l'Artiste* (The Artist's Kiss). She was standing near the Grand Palais behind a life-size photo of her naked body. She converted the image into a sort of slot machine: if a five franc coin was inserted in an upper slit, the money was gliding down to her 'lower body'. Those who paid were rewarded with a kiss from the artist. Several members of the public thought it was a shocking performance and the happening turned into a scandal.

In 1989, ORLAN created the work *l'Origine de la Guerre*, a comment on *l'Origine du*

*Monde*, the title of an (in) famous painting by Gustave Courbet. In 2011, *l'Origine de la Guerre* was published as an edition.

From the early nineties onwards, ORLAN started introducing plastic surgery into her work. Her face was modelled after famous women in art history, like Botticelli's Venus and Da Vinci's Mona Lisa. The operations took place against a colourful background and the artist and the surgeons wore clothes designed by famous fashion designers. During the operation - only local anaesthesia - ORLAN read texts, sent faxes and held telephone conversations. The performances were recorded on video. Sometimes, these could be followed worldwide via a satellite connection.

## Ralph Ortiz (1934)

The legendary DIAS symposium led by Gustav Metzger (London 1966) included a piano destruction concert by Ralph Ortiz. A few years later Ortiz became an active member of the Guerrilla Art Action Group (see: GAAG).

In 1989 he chopped up a piano in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. An earlier version of this performance could be seen on the wall behind him.

Once, during a visit to the apartment of publisher Francesco Conz in the Vicolo Quadrelli in Verona, the artist used an axe to chop up an antique corner cupboard. The leftovers were included in Conz' collection.



### Multiples by Yoko Ono:

**A box of smile**, original plastic Fluxus box, produced by George Maciunas, goldstamped: a box of smile Y.O. '71; the box was completed 1984 by Barbara Moore by insertion of a new mirror; the box is stamped 'ReFLUX' to distinguish from earlier collations; 5.3 x 5.3 x 5.3 cm; one from the edition of 50 signed copies, white version, and the unsigned black version.

**Onobox**, 6 CD set + booklet, boxed, ed.

Rykodisk, 1992;

this copy with dedication: *To Harry, love, Yoko Ono, Bonn '93.*

**We're All Water**, black plastic box, 12.5 x 14.1 x 4.8 cm, containing 6 event cards, 90 (+ 10) copies, signed and numbered, Gallery 360', Tokyo, 2005.

**We're All Water**, yellow plastic lunchbox, 27.4 x 9.7 x 4.4 cm, containing 6 event cards, 400 copies, Gallery 360', Tokyo, 2005.

**Onochord**, Zurich, 2005; **Buttons**, n/d.

**Imagine Peace**, stencil and coloured pencils in a plastic bag, 881 copies, 2009; signed copy.

**Grow Love with Me**, aluminium can with bean, 2012.

**Arising**, box containing a pebble, ca. 4.5 x 4.5 x 4.5 cm, printed text on lid, edition unknown, 2013 (*a call to women of all ages from around the World*).



▲ ORLAN, *l'Origine de la Guerre*, etching in colours, 26.9 x 37.9 cm, 120 numbered & signed copies, Éditions Jannink, Paris, 2011.

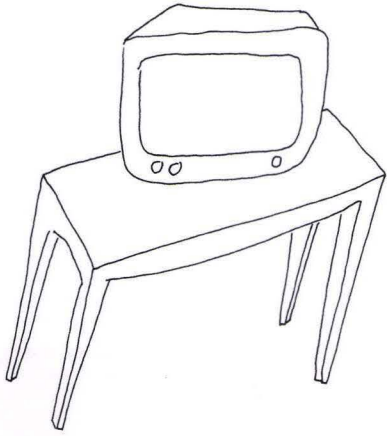


Ralph Ortiz, performance, MOCA, Los Angeles, 1989, photograph by Francesco Conz, 30.3 x 20.3 cm, with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.



# Nam June Paik (1932-2006)

*Empty Television  
(Zen for Television)*



*Portrait of  
Nam June Paik  
1968*

**Empty Television (Zen for Television), portrait of Nam June Paik** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

# Nam June Paik & Charlotte Moorman

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February, 1967, the Film-Makers' Cinematheque in New York hosted the premiere of the *Opera Sextronique*. An explanation by composer Nam June Paik was printed on the posters announcing the event.

*Why is sex a predominant theme in art and literature prohibited ONLY in music? How long can New Music afford to be sixty years behind the times and still claim to be a serious art? The purge of sex under the excuse of being "serious" exactly undermines the so-called "seriousness" of classical art, ranking with literature and painting. Music history needs its D.H. Lawrence, its Sigmund Freud.*

The opera was made up of four parts and cello player Charlotte Moorman would perform them subsequently dressed, topless, bottomless and naked.

The second part of the show was interrupted by the police: Moorman and Paik were handcuffed and taken away. Obviously, the rest of the opera was cancelled.

Moorman was charged with 'partial nudity', but in the end she didn't get sentenced.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

# Nam June Paik & Charlotte Moorman -

*Performances in Italy*

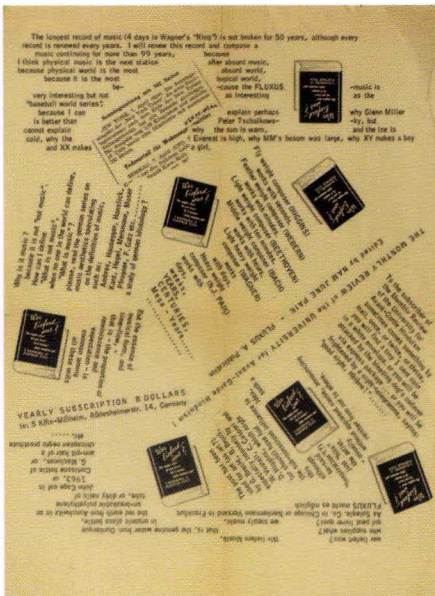
In the early '70s the Italian collector Francesco Conz was the owner of a factory which produced new imitation antique furniture from authentic wood.

In 1973 he met Nam June Paik in New York for the first time. Paik already had a serious reputation as a video-artist. In 1965 he was the first artist to employ a video-recorder, when he made recordings of the Pope's visit to New York. He showed the tape at the CAFE À GOGO; my Paik file documents many television- and video experiments around that year.

In 1967 Charlotte Moorman performed Paik's 'Opera Sextronique', a mixed media seminude performance for which she was arrested.

Another important piece was Paik's 'TV-Bra for Living Sculpture' (1969). Charlotte Moorman played her cello dressed in a brassiere of which both cups were replaced by monitors. The different tones of her instrument kept changing the image on the screens. One year later Paik constructed with the help of Shuya Abe one of the first video-synthesizers.

Conz, deeply impressed by the activities of the couple, invited Paik and Moorman to be his guests at his palazzo in the hills of Asolo.



**Nam June Paik, The Monthly Review of the University for Avant-garde Hinduism**, a single sheet printed on both sides, distributed by Fluxus, New York, 1963; 31 x 21.7 cm.



**Charlotte Moorman in Nam June Paik's Opera Sextronique, aria no.2**, Film-Makers' Cinematheque, New York, February 9, 1967; Peter Moore, gelatin silver print, 29.8 x 24.4 cm, signed and dated: 6/25/75 by Moorman on the reverse.



**Nam June Paik and Charlotte Moorman performing Kosugi's Chamber Music, Asolo, 1974**, photograph by Mario Parolin, 24.5 x 23.9 cm, with the stamp of the Archivio Francesco Conz on the reverse.



In an article for the catalogue 'FLUXUS S.P.Q.R.' (1990) Conz wrote: 'Asolo was still immersed in the memory of former cultural glories. Eleonora Duse seemed never to have passed away and Robert Browning and Malipiero still appeared to be sunning themselves on the terrace of the Caffe Centrale. Those were times in which the Cipriani restaurant had its tables set with silver and linen-cloths, and the Caffe Centrale possessed the romantic aura of a Viennese meeting-place. Asolo, far from the ski resorts and beaches, had remained protected from tourism. A true paradise ...' The New York photographer Peter Moore, who had documented many of Paik's early activities also came to Asolo, together with his wife Barbara.

Under supervision of Conz the two artists and photographer Moore produced in 1974, in fifteen copies: 'Nam June Paik and Charlotte Moorman'. It's the most complex edition that was ever done with Paik and Moorman.

Three black plastic albums in two cloth-covered slipcases were produced, containing 59 historical bl/w photographs and 15 colour photographs by Peter Moore and Mario Parolin, signed and stamped by the photographers, each with a handwritten text by Moorman, and signed by Paik and Moorman.

Also included were 5 screenprints, signed and numbered by Paik, one original drawing, documentation on Moorman's arrest after the 'Opera Sextronique' concert, and a catalogue and a copy of an article from 'the New Yorker', both with intervention by Paik. The colour photographs by Mario Parolin were from 1974. In a vineyard close to Conz' house Paik and Moorman had performed 'Chamber Music' of the Japanese composer Takehisa Kosugi. A naked Moorman and her cello were hidden under a large piece of blue cloth. Now and then the cellist put a leg through an opening in the cloth, a breast or her bottom ...

Also in Asolo itself actions took place. Here Paik and Moorman performed Paik's 'Zen Smile', dealing out coins under passers-by, or just putting money on the streets. Of course everything had to be documented: the action was fully photographed by Parolin.

In 1977, Charlotte Moorman was back in Asolo. She performed an old piece by the Japanese composer Mieko Shiomi, by sitting on the edge of a window at the top of an enormous bell-tower, dangling a cello. Photos of this wonderful event, 'Cello Sonata', made by Gianni Bellini, were published in many catalogues and magazines.

(I wrote this text for Francesco Conz in 2005; it was never published until now.)

## Nam June Paik

1998 was the year of the Monica Lewinsky affair, the intern who had a sexual relationship with President Bill Clinton. That same year, Nam June Paik was invited for an official reception. Paik, who could hardly walk, was accompanied by his cousin Ken Paik Hakuta.

The moment the artist was presented to the President, his pants came down. He wasn't wearing any underpants.

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, Amsterdam, 2012.



**Nam June Paik and Bill Clinton, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1998**, photos from the DVD in: *Shame & Scandal*, 2012.





## Ben Patterson (1934-2016)

*Cover shapely female with whipped cream. Lick.*

*Topping of chopped nuts and cherries is optional.*

According to Ben Patterson, the Danish artist Addi K pcke already wanted to perform *Licking Piece* in November 1962 during a Fluxus Festival in the Nikolai Kirke in Copenhagen. After he had telephoned all the ladies written down in his address book, he tried the 'professionals', but no one wanted to be associated with the project. In 1964, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, finally, North-American Lette Eisenhower didn't mind being the model during a Fluxus concert on 359 Canal Street, New York. The performance didn't cause any problems whatsoever. Only during the feminist revival in the nineteen seventies some women considered it sexist: if a nude man were involved the piece was considered acceptable.

But times have changed. According to Patterson, *now it is part of the programme of every self-respecting nightclub.*

(Patterson's remarks were made during an interview with the artist in the German city of Wiesbaden on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 2012.)

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

## Ben Patterson

Supervised by the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, Willem de Ridder and I organised the Centraal Fluxus Festival in Utrecht in October 2003. We invited composers and artists from the Netherlands and abroad. Ben Patterson had one of the nicest contributions. The artist had once bought an LP record with twelve different instrumental versions of the *Ave Maria*. Some were well known (Liszt's beautiful *Opus 23*) while other versions were more obscure. He intended to use this LP as a basis for the performance of *Composition 1960, #13* by La Monte Young: *The performer should prepare any composition and then perform it as well as he can.*

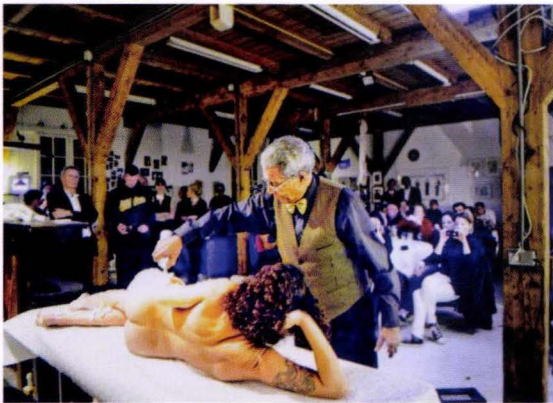
Patterson performed the twelve *Ave Maria*'s in front of twelve different churches in the Utrecht city centre on Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> of October. Every half hour he changed locations. With a music stand, scores, and audio equipment, he sang each version 'as well as he could' accompanied by music from the LP.

There was little enthusiasm for the first performances. The last version however (Schubert), was impressive. Patterson hummed along with the music in a touching way on the Nicolaaskerkhof that was littered with autumn leaves. Mothers with children paused, conversations ceased, and many would spontaneously donate money after it ended.

## Ben Patterson

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, 2006, Ben Patterson performed a piece called *My Tone, Your Tone, His Tone, Her Tone* in Galerie A. The names of the visitors formed the basis. Patterson first converted these to morse code and then combined them to form a symphony. The following text was read by Patterson prior to the performance:

*As we all know, there exists a great popular idea, that music is a universal language - crossing all national, cultural and social borders. Well, maybe yes ....., however, there are a few exceptions ....., and this work is inspired by one of those exceptions. In the late 1960's, when the U.S.A. and the former U.S.S.R. were trying to win the "hearts and minds" of the "3rd World Countries", the U.S. State Departement sent the Juilland String Quartet on a tour to several West African nations. Everything went well for the concerts in the 6 major cities. However, when The Quartet arrived at the final venue, they discovered that they were "deep in the bush" of West Central Africa - in a traditional, pygmy tribal village. After recovering from the initial shock, the quartet decided, that the only thing that they could do, would be to play the best works in their repertoire - the 3 middle Beethoven quartets. So, inspired by this unique situation - playing in the open, in front of the chieftain hut, under a full African moon for about 300 nearly naked pygmies - the*



**Ben Patterson, *Licking Piece***, Fluxus Dinner, CultClub, Amsterdam, December 1, 2012 (model: Cellistine); photograph: An-Sofie Kesteleyn, 15.1 x 21.2 cm.



***Ave Maria (Composition 1960, #13 by La Monte Young)***, performed by Ben Patterson, Utrecht, 24/25 October 2003;

12 photographs (by HR), each 17.6 x 12.6 cm, one of the photos signed, with dedication: *for Harry Ruh  Ben Patterson 2006*, and flyer. (Reproduced here: Dom, Domplein.)







### **Hidden Delights: Lingerie in the Arts**

Harry Ruhé is a curator and writer living in Amsterdam who, in collaboration with art director Jeanette Dekeukeleire, produced the catalogue *Hidden Delights: Lingerie in the Arts*. Their collection suggests there is a lot more relating to lingerie than what we would expect. They consider the work of 25 artists and designers, including Murielle Scherre, Lili Rapp and Itie Langeland. In reviewing the catalogue, I was struck by how many of the artists' pieces involving lingerie aren't associated so much with overt sexuality, but instead with turning terms of desire and beauty aslant.

#### **Q: What drew you to collaborate with Jeanette Dekeukeleire for a book about lingerie in the arts?**

**A:** In November 2009, we – which is, Galerie A and artKitchen Gallery – participated in the E/AB Fair in New York. After shopping, Jeannette came back with a present: a book on Syrian lingerie. For men and women in Syria, other things are exciting compared to us in the West. Lingerie there is baroque and funny, with feathers, lights and music. Some of them look like artworks. And we thought, *What would happen if we invite artists to design something for us.* It was Jeannette's idea to make an exhibition and a book.

#### **Q: As you're considering these terms historically, what do you think of how this work begins to appear in the '60s in North America and Europe?**

**A:** I grew up in the '50s, a grey period. I felt controlled, never felt really free. I found the freedom; I looked for it in art. In the '60s you had Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen, who organised an exhibition on erotic art. Their book was a bestseller. I don't think that many people who came to the show or bought the book were interested in it for the aesthetic reasons. Yet in the early '60s you got the first happenings. Jean-Jacques Lebel and the Viennese actionists in Europe, Carolee Schneemann and others in the United States, events with a lot of nudity. It was a reaction on the '50s.

And sometimes I have the feeling that the situation is changing again. In our book I wrote: "Nowadays, it often seems that the freedom and openness fought for during the 1960s is ever more under pressure." In 1998 Jeannette organised a fashion show in which some models were partly or completely naked. In our book you'll find a picture of a beautiful lady who showed *Bullet Proof Lingerie*. She had bought new breasts and wanted to show

them. Nobody cared. When we did our lingerie shows in the same building last year, one of the first things the director said was: "No nudity." We showed what we wanted to show, of course.

#### **Q: What do you think of how the art movement of Fluxus were exploring lingerie?**

**A:** Fluxus, chairman George Maciunas in particular, always had special interests in art forms that had a direct relation with daily life, such as design. Among the things you could order from the Flux Shop in New York or Amsterdam was lingerie. Underpants with the genitals of John Chamberlain, a famous American sculptor, printed on the front. Or aprons with the image of a nude body. It was funny and provocative – this all happened in the '60s.

#### **Q: I'm curious, how these multiples were perceived in the art context, the contextualizing of underpants, nighties, bras, then and now. Thoughts?**

**A:** Of course, this was taken not seriously by the art world for a long time. When I started collecting and showing this kind of things, mid-'70s, it was the period of conceptual art. I remember Lawrence Weiner, important concept artist, saying to me, "I like very much what you are doing and the way you do it, but of course it is not really important." It's all art history now, and all these Fluxus products including the lingerie ended in the museum. Nowadays you cannot buy a vintage Female Underpants for less than \$1000 USD. At the MoMA in New York there is a special room for Fluxus now.

#### **Q: What do you think of approaches to make sculptural forms with lingerie, aside from more traditional materials?**

**A:** Nowadays there is no gap anymore between "traditional" and "new" materials. At least that's how I see it. An artist can make a painting one day, a sculpture or video the next day, and on the vernissage of his exhibition he might do a performance. Lingerie is one of the materials he can use, but inspiring materials. Look for Vito Acconci, his *Wall Bra* is a monument.

#### **Q: Are you interested in how artists' use of lingerie can contest social-sexual norms?**

**A:** Some years ago Cher performed in a catsuit which was transparent but for a V-shape that only covered nipples and genitals. She got a lot of publicity, and I have seen some variations since then. But the source is an artwork by Man Ray from

the '20s. In 1966 the Italian artist Alviai presented a similar work. It's just one example.

#### **Q: How do you see the Viennese actionists performing volatile actions in lingerie?**

**A:** With their provoking actions they showed their disgust with the Viennese bourgeoisie. What looks like entertainment now – a man in lingerie – was really shocking in Vienna, 40 or 45 years ago. But [Otto] Muehl and [Günter] Brus were different. In the actions of Brus there is a psychological element. Muehl was only interested in sex, even not in love – in his commune he even didn't want that people got into serious relations.

I always saw Brus as more interesting. But I underrated Muehl; he influenced important artists, such as Paul McCarthy. Maybe nice to mention that I was invited once to act in a Muehl film on Vincent van Gogh. I had a new girlfriend then and she didn't like the idea that I had to stay for some time at Friedrichshof, the commune of Muehl. Now, I think it would have been a nice experience.

#### **Q: What do you see differs in Matthias Herrmann's more contemporary photography, which can involve him in underpants?**

**A:** The situation for Matthias Herrmann is completely different from the early '60s, when the Viennese actionists did their controversial performances. The Viennese bourgeoisie was really shocked. Just to give an idea: not long after the first actions around 1962, a ballet girl was murdered. The police immediately interrogated Muehl and [Hermann] Nitsch to see if they had anything to do with the crime. Since then many extreme things have happened in art. Matthias Herrmann works in a different situation. Not that there are many people who like artists who see their penis as their main source of inspiration. But most people are used to the situation that some artists do crazy things, and they don't really care.

#### **Q: What do you think of the humour that can be associated with the image of men in underwear, which seems different from the seductive tones to women clad so?**

**A:** A man in underwear can be seductive. If he is dressed in lingerie (underwear for women), he is in the best case only funny. Look at the photos of Matthias Herrmann, he did both.

**Q: It seems many of the female artists you're considering are interested in lingerie as something not just meant to seduce. What do you make of Murielle Scherre's presentations**



## involving frozen lingerie, milk?

**A:** Murielle Scherre's lingerie and the way she presents it is so original and unorthodox that it perfectly fits in our concept. Some of her lingerie shows are like art performances. But she doesn't consider herself as an artist. She is a designer, which means that everything she makes can be worn. Seduction is very important in her work. I like her bikinis that reveal, when they are wet, an even smaller bikini underneath.

## **Q: What do you think of the mention of a book appearing prior to yours, Secret Life of Syrian Lingerie: Intimacy and Design?**

**A:** We were inspired by *The Secret Life of Syrian Lingerie: Intimacy and Design*. As I told you at the beginning, it was there that our adventure started. After having seen the book on Syrian lingerie I looked for literature on the situation in other countries, but I didn't find much. Taschen published a book that promises "the history of the lingerie," but it's limited to Europe and the United States. And I found photos of beautiful blonde models posing in lingerie between almost naked pygmies in Africa. Fascinating photos, but many people saw them as pornography.

POSTED BY: Louise Bak

May 4, 2010

## People's Flag Show

At the beginning of the year 1970, several New York artists united to discuss the possibilities of a manifestation with this point of departure: the United States flag and the confrontation with the laws regulating its do's and don'ts.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, a poster was issued directed to 'artists, workers, students, women and those living in the 3<sup>rd</sup> world':

*YOU ARE OPPRESSED. WHAT DOES THE FLAG MEAN TO YOU? JOIN THE PEOPLE'S ANSWER TO THE REPRESSIVE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND STATE LAWS RESTRICTING OUR USE AND DISPLAY OF THE FLAG.*

Five days later more than two hundred 'flag works' were taken to the Judson Memorial Church and on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November the

*People's Flag Show* was inaugurated.

A few hours later, the U.S. flag was burned while a *DECLARATION OF WAR* by the 'Belgian Government in Exile' was read aloud, a mutual initiative of the *Guerrilla Art Action Group* and the *Belgian Liberation Front*.

Then a *Grand Union's Flag Dance* took place, with Yvonne Rainer and many others. The evening drew to a close with a seminar about repression.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of November, three members of the organisation, the artists Jon Hendricks, Jean Toche and Faith Ringgold, were arrested for 'desecration of the flag'. The exhibition was closed down right away.

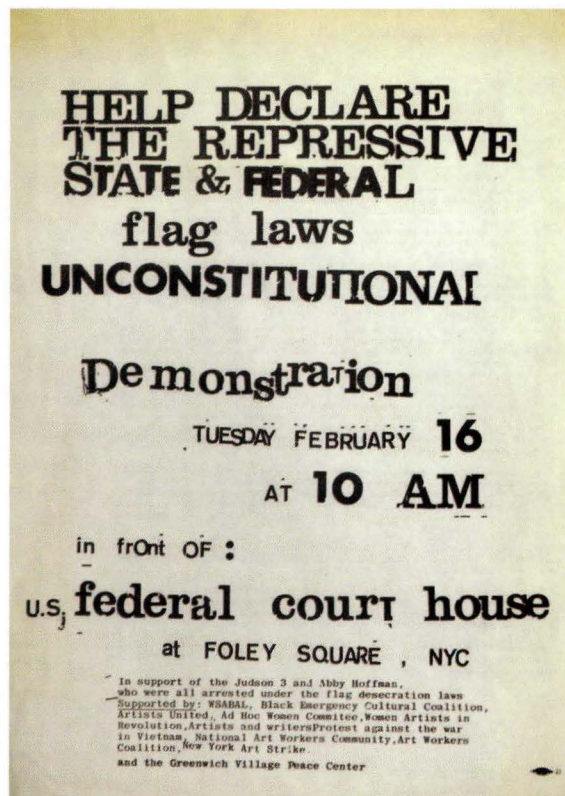
The Judson Three appeared in court on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 1971, the three artists were each sentenced to a month in prison or a US\$ 100 fine.



**Ben Vautier, Je suis toute nue en dessous**, acrylics on dress, 2009, signed and dated on photo (coll. Harry Ruhé & Jeannette Dekeukeleire); 20 photographs of BEN fashion, each 17.7 x 12.7 cm, and a letter signed and dated: 16.1.09.

**Help Declare the Repressive State & Federal Flag Laws Unconstitutional**, flyer, 1971.





## Ine Poppe (1960)

In July 1983, Ine Poppe gave birth to a son. She named him Franz Ferdinand Zoroaster. A few months after he was born, she started milking her own breasts and after about ninety days she had enough milk to start the project. Three litres of breast milk resulted in a cheese weighing 250 grams. The process was registered in photographs and video. Japanese television transmitted a short documentary about Poppe's cheese. From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



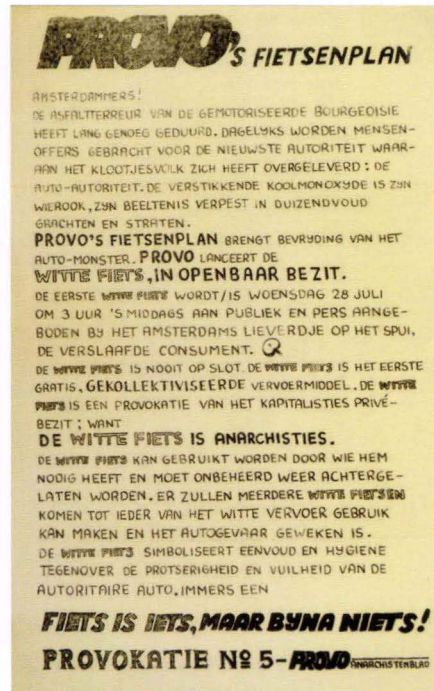
**Ine Poppe, Mother milk cheese (1983)**, from a series of 5 photographs by Jetty Verhoeff, printed on barite paper, each ca. 25 x 20 cm, one of them signed and numbered: 2/3.

## PROVO

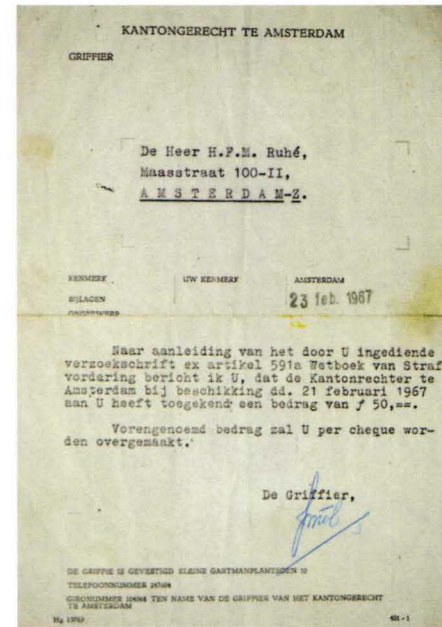
Near the end of the year 2013, Jeannette Dekeukeleire and I organised a CultClub evening dedicated to PROVO and the nineteen sixties. Several former Provo members contributed to the programme. During a 'mind-expanding dinner' films were shown, lectures were delivered, poetry was read aloud and music was performed. Also, several 'events' took place on the street. Exhibitions were held simultaneously at two locations and the pieces on display included photographs, political posters and cartoons from the so-called Magisch Centrum Amsterdam (Magical Centre Amsterdam). Until that moment, my involvement with Provo was limited. I had visited Peter Bronkhorst on the Provoboat in the mid nineteen sixties and had also been selling the PROVO magazine on the corner Utrechtsestraat/Frederiksplein: of every guilder you could keep a quarter. Once I was apprehended by the police while wearing a denim jacket on which I had written: JOHNSON MOLENAAR (literally Johnson Miller – but everyone knew Molenaar was to be interpreted as: Moordenaar (Murderer)). The magistrate set me free - my parents were rather annoyed about this. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 1967, as I had wrongly spent a

night in the police station Lijnbaansgracht, the magistrate decided that I was to receive 50 Dutch guilders in damages. The order hung above my bed for a long time.

In those days, the nineteen sixties, authorities were at a loss about how to deal with the playful and disruptive 'provocations' (hence the name of the movement, Provo) and 'white plans'. Completely innocent actions were met with a tough and exaggerated response. A female student handing out currants was arrested, undressed and interrogated by the police during hours. Initially, also the media didn't have much sympathy for the Provo 'jobs' and 'rebels'. 'Provo happening once more yob riot. The Amsterdam police stop annoying performance', wrote the *Het Vaderland* newspaper on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1965. Due to the clumsy dealings of the city government with Provo and the excessive use of police force and on the other hand the press coverage of the creative 'solutions' and playful actions of the movement, some of the city's inhabitants start feeling more positive about it. Provo obtained one seat at the municipal elections of June 1965.



**Provokatie No.5. Provo's Fietsenplan** (Bicycle plan), pamphlet, 33.9 x 21.5 cm, distributed July 28, 1965.



Order, 1967.



**Provo 2** (with Provo's Bicycle plan), 36 pp., August 17, 1965.

PROVO, magazine:

**Provo 1**, 36 pp., July 12, 1965 (the confiscated first number).

**Provo 1**, 40 pp., reprint by Revo, Brussels, November 1966.

**Provo 2**, 36 pp., August 17, 1965.

**Provo 3**, 36 pp., September 22, 1965.

**Provo 4**, 36 pp., October 28, 1965.

**Provo 5**, 36 pp., December 18, 1965.

**Provo 6**, 40 pp., January 24, 1966.

**Provo 7**, 40 pp., February 25, 1966.

**Provo 8**, 36 pp., April 14, 1966.

**Provo 8**, 36 pp., April 14, 1966

(copy with another cover and with the handwritten text: *Hans en Roel vrij!*) (Free Hans and Roel).

**Provo 9**, 48 pp., May 12, 1966.

**Provo 10**, 40 pp., June 30, 1966.

**Provo 10**, 40 pp., June 30, 1966 (variant with white cover).

**Provo 11**, 40 pp., August 15, 1966.

**Provo 12**, 44 pp., September-October 1966.

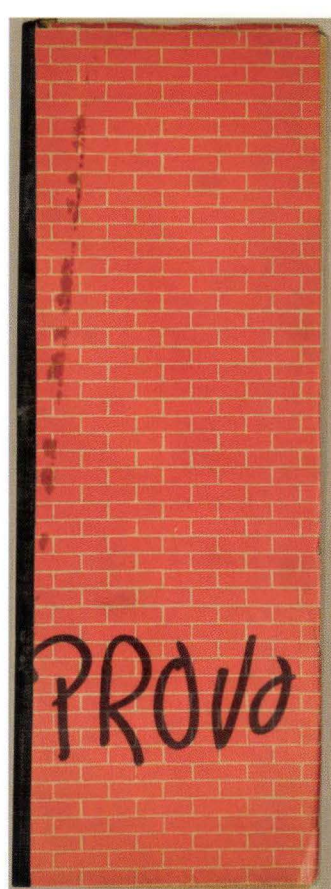
**Provo 13**, large size, folded, 12 pp., January 1967.

**Provo 14**, large size, folded, 12 pp., February 1967.

**Provo 15**, large size, folded, 16 pp., March 1967.



**Robert Jasper Grootveld's Anti-Rooktempel** (The anti-smoke temple three years after the fire on April 18, 1962); photo by Maarten Brinkgreve, gelatin silver print, 14.8 x 10 cm.



**Simon Posthuma, Stoned in the streets, January 11, 1965**, photo by Cor Jaring, gelatin silver print, 30.4 x 23.9 cm, with the photographer's copyright sticker on the reverse, signed with dedication: *Voor Harry. Van je maatje Cor!!!*

**Robert Jasper Grootveld in his Anti-Rooktempel, 1963**; photo by Igno Cuypers.





Also abroad there was a lot of interest in Provo. Quite a few artists were inspired by the movement's anarchistic approach. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1967, Al Hansen, happening pioneer and founder of the Third Rail Gallery of Current Art, published his Third Rail Provo Program. 'Subject: communication. No members no dues. Goal: love your city, make it better.' (See: Al Hansen.)

The Czech artist Milan Knížák - considered an enemy of the state by the Communist authorities - performed a great many happenings and street actions in Prague. He used the word PROVO in many of his texts and collages.

In an interview published in the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2000, the German artist Uwe Laysiepen said that when he was still young he got hold of a newspaper article about Provo, 'for the first time ever I felt in sync with my contemporaries.' He decided to travel immediately to Amsterdam, a city of 'creative inhabitants and other individuals, former and future passers-by'. One of those was 'Unbeat' Nakajima and the story is that he came all the way on foot from Japan to Magisch Centrum Amsterdam (Magical Centre Amsterdam).

In 1966, Gustav Metzger invited PROVO for his Destruction in Art Symposium. Metzger

wrote a letter to Simon Vinkenoog: We want- Representative at Symposium to speak for PROVO.

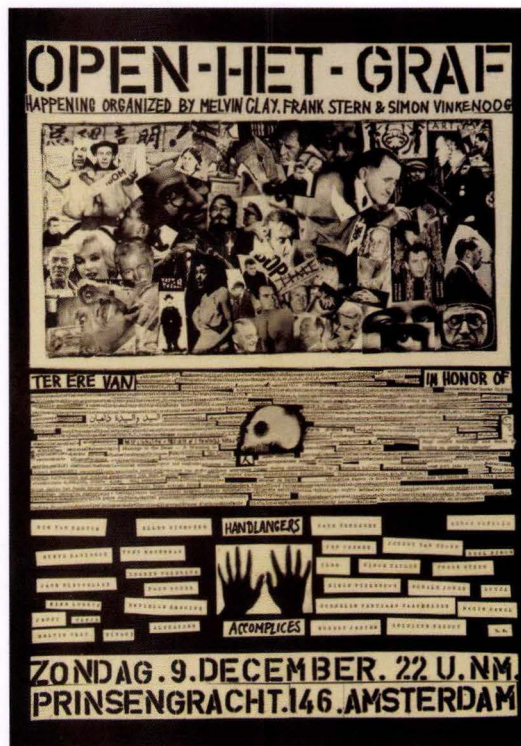
As many Provos as possible to come to London in September - any date. Provo's council member Bernard de Vries and Irène van de Weetering would deliver a lecture at the symposium.

George Maciunas also knew what was going on in Amsterdam. On one of his Flux Mail Lists I saw the name of Provo's figurehead, Roel van Duijn (PROVO, Karthuizerstraat 14, Amsterdam C).

On Friday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 an event was held to commemorate the foundation of Provo fifty years ago. Nicolaas Kroese's restaurant d'Vijff Vlieghe was the focal point with films, lectures, music and a 'nineteen sixties dinner'. Kroese's place is near the statue 'Het Lieverdje', during the nineteen sixties the meeting point of Magisch Centrum Amsterdam (Amsterdam's Magical Centre). This event was also organised by the CultClub.

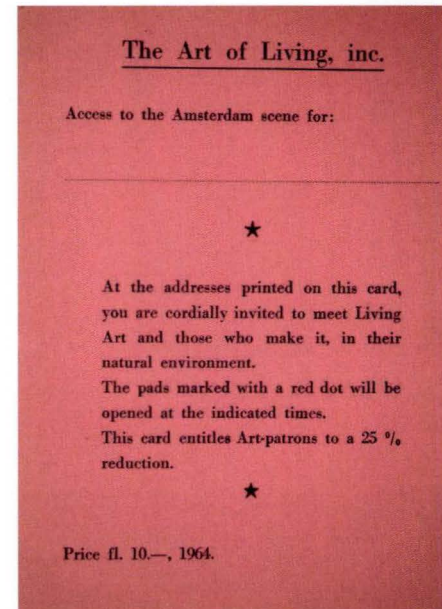
(Restaurant owner Nicolaas Kroese also played a role in the history of the PROVO movement. In 1959, he was part of the 'Committee 1959 for Activity in Amsterdam'. They organised the unveiling on Spui (a

square in the city centre) of Het Lieverdje, a smallish statue that would become the symbol of the 'Rebel City' Amsterdam. Three years later, in 1962, Kroese lent an old building in the Korte Leidsedwardsstraat on a temporary basis to the antismoke magician Robert Jasper Grootveld so that the latter could establish his K-temple. In that same year the place was burned to ashes. Kroese also developed a sort of 'world peace mathematics' in his restaurant. He delivered lectures and also sent hundreds of telegrams to world leaders and scientists. He passed away at the age of sixty five in 1971.)



*The Art of Living,*  
invitation, 14.8 x 10.6 cm,  
1964.

*Open het graf* (happening with Bart Huges, Jean-Jacques Lebel, Robert Jasper Grootveld, Simon Vinkenoog ...), Prinsengracht 146, Amsterdam, December 9, 1962; poster, 61.2 x 84.7 cm.

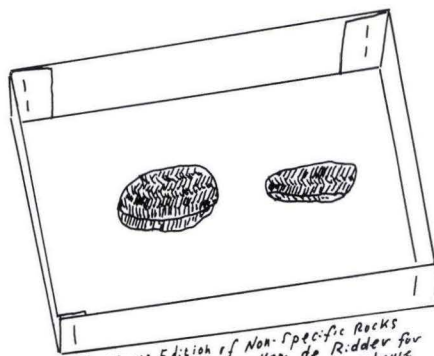


PADS	OPEN	WORKS BY
1. Tanja van der Geest Leidsekafe 43	14.00-16.00 hrs	Heyboer
2. Simon Vinkenoog ●	15.00-17.00 hrs	Veldhoen, Appel, Cornille
3. Robert Jasper ●	16.00-18.00 hrs	Robert Jasper
4. Aafje Oostdijk ●	16.00-18.00 hrs	Davidson (made in Steve)
5. Fred Wessels ●	16.00-18.00 hrs	Wessels
6. Simon Posthuma ●	17.00-19.00 hrs	Posthuma
7. Barbara Huges ●	17.00-19.00 hrs	Huisman
8. Ibe Monsanto ●	18.00-20.00 hrs	various artists
9. Louis van Gasteren ●	19.00-21.00 hrs	Van Bestum
10. Toon Gallée ●	20.00-22.00 hrs	Dielemans



## Willem de Ridder

A double portrait



The Fluxus Edition of Non-Specific Rocks  
Assembled by Willem de Ridder for  
The European Mail Order Warehouse  
Flux shop ca. 1965 HF KF 2017

## Willem de Ridder

Willem de Ridder took part in *Nieuwe Realisten* in the summer of 1964. This group exhibition was held in the Haags Gemeentemuseum. He contributed a number of rather large *Papieren Konstellaties* suspended in the museum hall.

Wim Beeren, curator of the exhibition, asked him during the opening: 'So Willem, what will you create after this?' The answer: 'Nothing whatsoever Wim, I'm quitting art!'

De Ridder told me this story. According to him, Beeren was shocked by his response. He couldn't understand why someone at the start of a promising art career would quit just like that.

For forty eight years de Ridder refused to make sellable art objects. A handful of signed sound works from the early '80s and a few DVD multiples in 2016 are the only exceptions.

## Willem de Ridder (1939)

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1960 Willem de Ridder tore a large sheet of white paper from the wall and formed it into 'a sort of ball', creating his first *Papieren Konstellatie* (*Paper Constellation*). De Ridder presented a PK-installation a few months later. Four large *Papieren Konstellaties* were suspended in a dark room with walls covered in white paper. Visitors received a flashlight when entering the room. The television programme *Signalement* showed *PK-fashion* and a driving *PK* on December 28<sup>th</sup> 1963.<sup>14</sup> Small *PK*'s were offered at De Ridder's European Mail-Order House around 1964. They were packaged in wooden boxes with a small glass window. Only two of these objects still remain. I bought one from de Ridder a long time ago and I still have it. The other one is in the Gilbert & Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection which is now part of the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

**Willem de Ridder, A double portrait - drawing by Ken Friedman.**

**Willem de Ridder with his *Papieren Konstellaties*, RAI, Amsterdam, colour slide, ca. 1964.**

**Willem de Ridder, *Papieren Konstellaties* in the museum hall of the Haags Gemeentemuseum, 1964;** press photo, signed by De Ridder on the reverse.

***Papieren Konstellatie*, paper, wood and glass, 13 x 10.5 x 10.5 cm, ca. 1964;** copy signed by De Ridder around 1980.



<sup>14</sup> Willem de Ridder wrapped a car completely with paper, the idea being to produce a so-called 'driving PK'. This resulted in an 'invisible' car: a huge paperball was seen 'driving' along the Amsterdam canals.



Galerie A exploited a FluxShop during the manifestation *Fluxus at 50* in Wiesbaden in 2012. The shop was part of a Flux Pavilion completely built with freight containers. The complex was designed by Ben Patterson and placed in front of the Museum Wiesbaden.

De Ridder produced seventeen small *PK's* specifically for this Fluxus shop. These were small metal boxes with plastic windows that revealed a crumpled paper ball inside.

These objects were initially sold for one hundred seventy-five Euro a piece. A low price, considering these are unique works. Willem had found the boxes at the household goods section of the department store Karstadt.

The boxes came in three different sizes, the handwritten texts on the boxes are unique and the type of paper used for the balls varied.

## Willem de Ridder

- *European Mail-Order House*

De Ridder: *In 1962, I did an interview with the Korean artist Nam June Paik for the Haagse Post magazine. After I had told him about my own activities, Paik said to me, 'you are Fluxus! Why don't you call George Maciunas?' After I had spoken to Maciunas he also concluded, 'you are Fluxus!'*

(From a conversation with Willem de Ridder on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2016.)

The *European Mail-Order House*, Willem de Ridder's Fluxus Enterprise, was only briefly active. During that period De Ridder published various price-lists. Each article had it's own ordering code. *F-kw* for example stood for: *rocks marked by their weight in kilograms \$ 3.*

In 1966 a Fluxus newspaper was issued, a special publication of the periodical *Kunst van Nu* ('Art Now'), edited by de Ridder and Wim T. Schippers. This appealingly styled

publication included a comprehensive survey of all the items that could be ordered from the *European Mail-Order House*. ('Isn't this what you've been waiting for?')

Order forms were also enclosed. I cut out the forms and sent them off but all I had to show for my efforts was a mutilated newspaper; I received no answer whatsoever.

Only later it became clear to me that de Ridder's activities confined themselves mainly to furnishing a showroom, employing a secretary and circulating order lists; he had not counted on any response.

By adopting these tactics it of course never became a serious artistic enterprise, and that was precisely the idea.

Many years later the American collector Gilbert B. Silverman asked several former Fluxus activists to clarify in ten words what the movement had meant to them, de Ridder answered, 'Fluxus' goal was the journey, but alas it became art.'



**Willem de Ridder, *Papieren Konstellatie***, crumpled paper ball in metal box; 3 copies from a series of 17 unique works, June 2012, each signed; ca. 10 x 14.5 x 6 cm/ ca. 16.5 x 22.5 x 9 cm/ round with a diameter of ca. 11 cm, height ca. 7 cm.



**Willem de Ridder, *European Mail-Order House***, Amsterdam, 1964; price-list, 4 sheets, stapled, in a blue cover, 28.1 x 22 cm; with flyer, 19.5 x 21.4 cm.

**Second Pricelist of the European Mail-Order House**, Amsterdam, 1964; 7 sheets loose in a yellow cover, 28.1 x 18.1 cm; with flyer, 17.2 x 17.8 cm.

**Second Pricelist of the European Mail-Order House**, Amsterdam, 1964; 7 sheets loose in an orange cover, 28.1 x 24.1 cm.



**Kunst van Nu** (edited by Willem de Ridder & Wim T. Schippers), special Fluxus issue, September/October, 1966; 44 x 30 cm.



## Willem de Ridder & Wim T. Schippers

In the spring of 1964 he (Willem de Ridder) asked me to help him arrange a 'March through Stockholm'. He and artist Wim T. Schippers had carried out such a march in Amsterdam with the participation of six persons, and now he wanted to do the same in Stockholm. Large posters gave information about the route (start: Central Station, goal: The Royal Castle). Unfortunately he had no possibility to be personally present, but I walked the announced distance on time with a friend (Karl Rasmusson, HR). We were thus only two, and probably no one noticed that we were performing a piece by Willem de Ridder. (Bengt af Klintberg in: *Svenk Fluxus/Swedish Fluxus*, Stockholm, 2006.)

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2008 Schippers wrote me: *I wasn't present in Stockholm (for reasons of my own) and I don't know if Willem was there, but I do think he was. Apart from a very neatly framed and somewhat damaged Stockholm poster, I also still have half an Amsterdam poster.*

**FREDAG den 29 MAJ**  
**START: KL. 15 PRECIS**

**MARCH GENOM STOCKHOLM**

organiserad av  
**willem de ridder och wim t. schippers**

**ROUTE**  
**CENTRALSTATIONEN · VASAGATAN · KUNGSGATAN · HÖTORGSCITY · HAMNGATAN · KUNGSTRÄDGÅRDGATAN · STRÖMBRON · SLOTTET**

Willem de Ridder & Wim T. Schippers, *March genom Stockholm* (March through Stockholm), May 22, 1964; poster, ca. 100 x 68 cm.

## Willem de Ridder & Wim T. Schippers

- *Organisations.*

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 I want the exhibition in (please describe location):

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 1 day / . . . days  
 1 week / . . . weeks  
 1 month / . . . months  
 1 year / . . . years

FREE INFORMATION ABOUT SURPRISE EXHIBITION serie A to K

**Society for Exhibition Organizing** (with Wim T. Schippers; this organisation offered help to disillusioned gallery owners and museum custodians), ca. 1964.  
**Flyer**, 30.9 x 16.3 cm, ca. 1964.

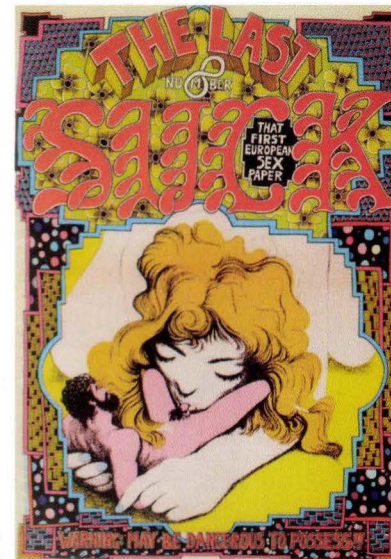
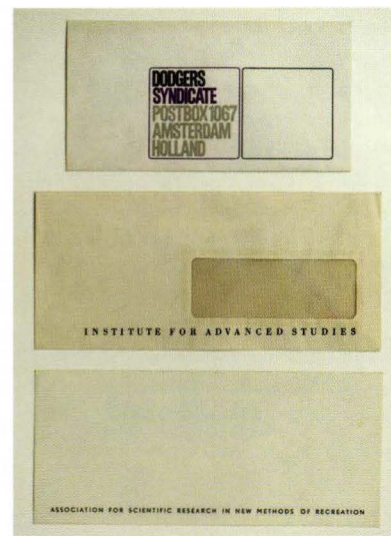
**Dodgers Syndicate** (with Wim T. Schippers and Wim van der Linden; founded for the production and distribution of *Sad Movies*), ca. 1965-66.  
**Envelope**, 9.9 x 18.9 cm.

**Institute for Advanced Studies** (with Wim T. Schippers, who wrote a comprehensive dissertation about *Recreative developments in The Netherlands and The United States*), ca. 1963.  
**Envelope**, 10.5 x 23 cm.

**Association for Scientific Research in New Methods of Recreation - AFSRINMOR** (with Wim T. Schippers; various Fluxus activities were developed within the framework of this organisation), 1963-64.  
**Envelope**, 10.1 x 22.9 cm.

## Willem de Ridder

SUCK, 'that First European Sexpaper', was mainly compiled and produced by Bill Levy, Susan Janssen, Heathcote Williams and Willem de Ridder. The latter was also in charge of the design. Just like Hitweek and other (co)published magazines by de Ridder, SUCK was primarily made up of contributions by readers too. Number 7 featured a rather explicit nude photograph of Germaine Greer, one of the co-workers. The next issue ('The Last SUCK') contained a letter by Greer. In it she protested against the publication of the picture while also renouncing her job. The same photo was, however, published alongside her comments. From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



*The Last SUCK*, 1974. (SUCK, no.1-8, London/California/Amsterdam, 1969-1974.)



## Willem de Ridder

De Ridder has made barely any marketable works of art since the *Papieren Konstellaties* from 1964. George Maciunas, however, did publish a box with *Paper Flux Work* that year. (De Ridder, having 'quitted art', first saw this edition when visiting Galerie A in 1979.) Even so, de Ridder once regained his interest in creating art.

In the spring of 1980 I received a letter notifying me that he had moved.

*Our new address is: Villa Blanc, San Felice Circeo, Latina, Italia, telephone 0773 528057. Be sure to visit if you happen to be around. We are happy to live in an old house again, surrounded by a lush and vast garden. Once the new letter-paper is ready you'll realize the impressive function you'll have in the Cavalieri house. The purpose of this letter is to announce the release of a number of manageable artworks that are easy to handle. They will be handed to you in a week or so when you can receive them personally. The rest is up to you.*

De Ridder later informed me that the AVRO was preparing to broadcast a television programme from Casa Cavalieri:  
*That is how it should be, after all. When building an art career it's best to start off ambitiously. I took great care not to make anything clear. Adriaan van Ravesteijn and Geert van Beijeren are promoted to World Agents. Their gallery (Art & Project, H.R.) is very indistinct and hard to classify. That is exactly what Casa Cavalieri needs. The AVRO was picked for the same reason. Aim as high as you can.*

## Willem de Ridder

After many years of research the Willem de Ridder Institute has found that certain chairs can have significant effects on a persons' life. The chairs that are currently on display here each have quite a history. You are advised to take the instructions into consideration in order to prevent unnecessary risks!!

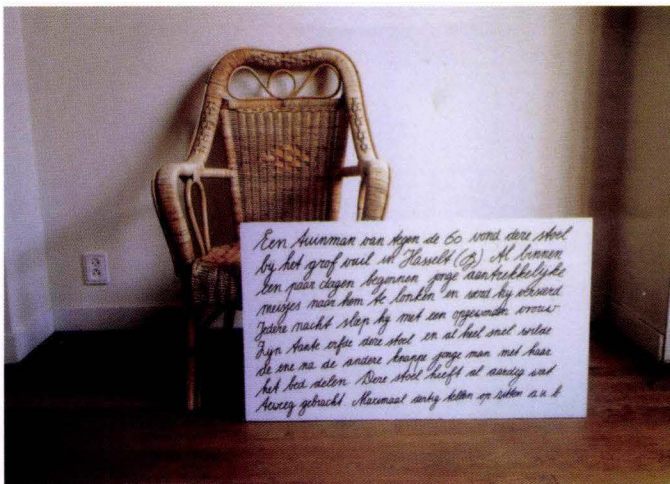
In October 2003, Willem de Ridder and I organised the Centraal Fluxus Festival in the Centraal Museum in Utrecht. The festival also included an exhibition and Willem de Ridder contributed to the event with four chairs. All of them came with a story which he had recorded in beautiful handwriting on large cardboards.

A nuclear physicist from Kansas (U.S.A.) received this chair on his birthday. For years

he had been dreaming of an important job in Los Angeles. Within a week after his birthday his wish came true and so did all of his wishes since then. Personally, he attributed this to pure luck. However history repeated itself when the chair came into his daughters' possession. Close your eyes when you sit down and imagine your wish has already come true. Be advised; can take effect fairly rapidly!!

One of the chairs came from 'a gardener nearing his sixties' and stood for happiness in love. ('Count to thirty maximum while sitting down, please'). Yet another chair was responsible for a lot of misery and had already driven several owners to suicide.

These chairs have also been exhibited abroad: in 2012 they were part of a show in the Museum Wiesbaden.



**Willem de Ridder, chair**, with a handwritten text on foam cardboard (ca. 56 x 95.5 cm), 2003.



**Willem de Ridder in the mansion in San Felice Circeo**, gelatin silver print, 1980.



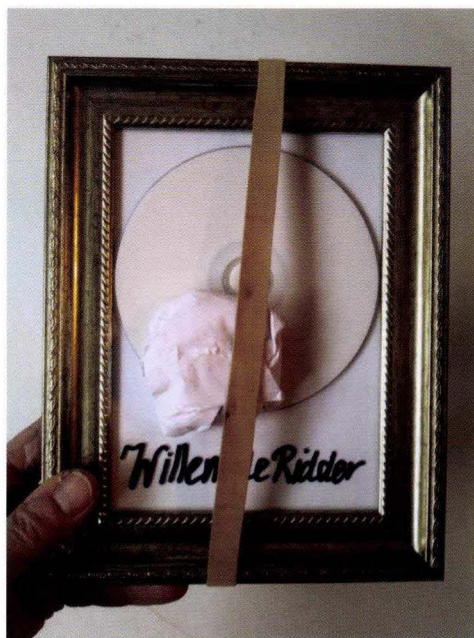
**Willem de Ridder, Sonor Theatrum**, Stadsschouwburg, Arnhem, 1980, photograph by Dick Fokker, gelatin silver print, 12.6 x 17.8 cm, with the photographer's stamp on the reverse.



## Willem de Ridder

In October 1997, you could see people in Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum wearing headphones and staring attentively at a nail in the wall or studying a crack in the railing of the museum's marble staircase. They were listening to Willem de Ridder who was guiding them along his 'secretly installed art works'. Some visitors went to the reception desk because they wanted headphones as well, but the staff was not aware of the event; after all it was 'an illegal exhibition'. Frank Herrebout made a film about the audio tour. The premiere took place in the Stedelijk Museum on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 2016. In the meantime, the museum has been completely renovated and there is hardly anything left from the illegal exhibition in 1997.

The DVD with the film 'De Verdwenen Kunstwerken van Willem de Ridder' (the lost art works of Willem de Ridder) was issued as a series of hand signed art works. Each copy came with a certificate, but it was converted into a crumpled ball (a Paper Constellation). Galerie A was in charge of distribution and interested parties could choose between eight versions.



**De Verdwenen Kunstwerken van Willem de Ridder**, Version 5, DVD with PK, in classical frame, signed 25 copies.

## James Riddle (1933)

In January 1976, I opened my Galerie A with a *Flux-show*. I had ordered a great many Fluxus editions via George Maciunas in New York. From Armin Hundertmark in Berlin I received full documentation including correspondence about the festival that had taken place in the Technische Hochschule in Aachen (Germany) in 1964. Several artists, like Giuseppe Chiari, Alison Knowles and Wolf Vostell sent me art works and documentation.

I had given Maciunas a list of people of whom I thought that they had been involved with Fluxus one time or another. Several of these had been crossed out by the Fluxus leader ('people not doing anything anymore'), others were either 'dead' or 'crazy'. Of James Riddle he said 'religion', which was probably just as bad. Nevertheless, I invited Riddle because I was of the opinion that he belonged to Fluxus. His *E.S.P. Fluxkit (DOP)* was sold for a few dollars by Fluxus in New York.

The edition consists of a small plastic box with six pieces of coloured paper and the text:  
*BLINDFOLD YOURSELF SECURELY AND RUB YOUR FINGERS LIGHTLY OVER THE COLORED PAPERS. WITH PRACTISE YOU CAN LEARN TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT COLORS.*

I contacted the artist thanks to the list of addresses I had obtained via George Maciunas. I asked Riddle whether he had made more 'similar work'.

A couple of weeks later, I received three large boxes with materials: objects to be placed on the floor like plastic Mickey Mouse figurines with ears from which a soapy liquid was pouring, coloured papers with handwritten texts to be hung from the ceiling, slides to be projected on the walls and a large amount of printed matter for distribution: *a collection of raw, natural unrefined, organic seed-thoughts and ideas*. The artist had also given me instructions and drawings of how everything should be presented.

It was, however, far too much to be included in the Fluxus exhibition (and part of it had arrived too late) and that is why I decided to make a single presentation of the work. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 1976, the exhibition was inaugurated: *JAMES RIDDLE, floor pieces, wall pieces, slide pieces*.

After the show finished, I received a letter from the artist in which he wrote that he had been very happy about the event. He had added a black piece of paper on which he had written with black pencil: *See*.



**James Riddle, envelope**, containing a piece of black paper (*See*), 18.7 x 16.7 cm, on the rear with dedication: *to: Harry Ruhé From: James Riddle Best Wishes, 17 June 1976, signed and dated: Riddle '76*, and a letter: *Thanks for your last letter telling about the exhibit at "A". I appreciate your going through the trouble of showing the pieces after arriving late. I liked what you said about art which gives us the opportunity to think about things around us and of changing life in a positive way – giving us a "higher quality". Yes, I like that too. I'm especially interested in art that raises and expands consciousness and therefore, deals with planes of consciousness beyond just the 5 senses!*



**James Riddle, *Instant Happenings***, bottle containing seeds, 6.3 (h) x 3.7 cm; edition produced by James Riddle for Fluxus, New York, signed and dated, 1964.

**A *Psychedelic Happening***, envelope containing (morning glory?) seeds, rubber stamped: *A PSYCHEDELIC HAPPENING* on one side and: *OPEN* and *PACKED FOR 1965* on the other, 11.8 x 17.2 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1965



## James Riddle

Little bottles filled with seeds were sold by New York antiquarian Backworks in 1980. The bottles promised *Instant Happenings* and cost twelve dollar fifty a piece. I ordered two of them.

A few weeks later I was called by the customs service; was I attempting to import prohibited goods? Apparently they were alarmed by the instructions on the label:

A. TAKE TWO TEASPOONSFULL OF MORNING GLORY SEEDS.  
B. HAVE HALLUCINATIONS, EXPAND YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS, ETC.

I sent them some information regarding the creator James Riddle. I also added a page from my book on Fluxus, published in 1979, describing the object as *mind event in bottle*. To my surprise the bottles were delivered to me two weeks later without any further problems.



## Mimmo Rotella (1918-2006)

On the occasion of the 'funerary meal' of the Nouveau Réalisme movement in Milan in 1970 (see also: Jean Tinguely), Rotella's multiple *Petit monument a Rotella*, was executed in sugar and subsequently titled 'Moyen Monument à Rotella'. Ad Petersen made a photo and gave me the (vintage) print. I sent a photo-duplicate to Rotella, for his archives.

Once upon a time I owned a small *décollage* by Mimmo Rotella. It was part of a film poster, pasted on cardboard and then partly torn. After selling it, I decided to buy a new work by Rotella and subsequently made an appointment with the artist in Milan. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2004, at a quarter to eleven, I stood on Rotella's doorstep but I wasn't the only one. A well-dressed man was very busy with his mobile phone and there were also a photographer and a demonstratively sighing journalist - they had probably been waiting for quite a while already.

Every now and then someone opened the door to see how many people were waiting in front of Rotella's door, probably the artist's secretary. Suddenly, a man turned up who shook hands with everybody. Later I found out that he was involved with the Rotella Foundation. Once I was allowed inside the house, Rotella (85) explained to me 'every day is a theatre', 'sometimes visitors even block the pavement'.

I liked Rotella and he gave me the impression that he had been looking forward to my visit for days. Every now and then our conversation was interrupted. People rang the doorbell; some of them were allowed to come in straight away while others had to wait a bit longer. Quite soon the room, which

wasn't large at all, was pleasantly crowded. What struck me was that there were no smudges of paint in this artist's studio, but lots of scraps of paper on the floor and on the furniture.

I liked the new work that Rotella showed me, *décollages* of paper on canvas measuring some 85 x 60 centimetres. I was, however, quite shocked by their price: hardly anything cost less than eighteen thousand euros. It was clear that Rotella was 'hot'. 'Well', I said, 'in fact I am looking for something a bit smaller.' The secretary showed me a beautiful *Marilyn*, forty by thirty centimetres, but still priced at 8000 euros. I just had to ask, 'that is probably the gallery price?' 'No that is the price here', the artist said. 'The prices demanded by gallery owners and art dealers are not my business. But for you, as a good friend, six thousand euros is OK as well.'



***Moyen Monument à Rotella***, contribution to the *Ultima Cena, Banquet Funèbre du Nouveau Réalisme*, restaurant Biffi, Milan, November 1970; photograph by Ad Petersen, gelatin silver print, 22.8 x 16.6 cm, photographer's copyright stamp on the reverse.

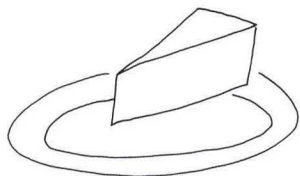
◀ ***Petit monument a Rotella***, small Shell Oil can on a pedestal, 28.2 x 10.8 x 10.8 cm, 100 numbered & signed copies, Galerie Schwarz, Milan, 1962.



I only had 2000 euros with me - I couldn't help feeling like a pauper - but in the end things worked out fine: they let me take the work home and I would transfer the remaining four thousand euros. Before I left, I quickly took a picture of Rotella and his *Marilyn* - I knew that quite a few fake Rotella's were going around.

Three years later, I sold *Marilyn* to an Amsterdam based collector. I then bought a new *décollage* titled *La Strada*. It is just as nice as *Marilyn*, but an edition.

## A Wedge of Old Cheese



*Portrait of Dieter Roth*  
KF 1969

### Dieter Roth

(1930-1998) - *Hundertmark*

Since the early nineteen seventies, I have been working with Edition (Armin) Hundertmark.

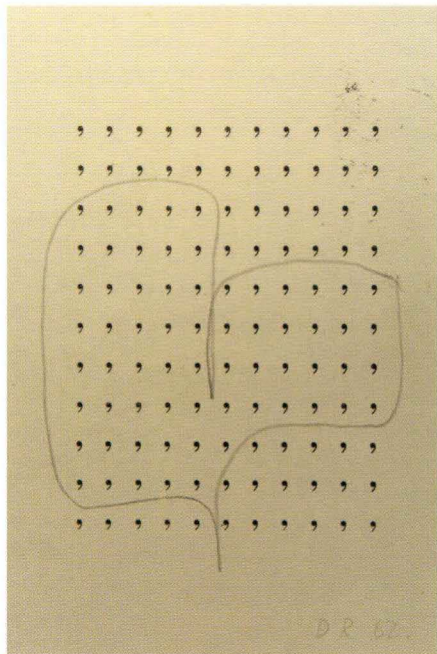
For a long time I thought Hundertmark, which means 'one hundred marks' in German, was an invented name to indicate the price of very cheap editions. Later I found out that it was his real surname. Nevertheless, his publications were relatively inexpensive, at least in the beginning. The idea for these editions came up in 1970. Hundertmark had been collecting art for some time, but he wanted to do something more than just buying it. He contacted a great number of artists and asked them whether they wanted to contribute to his first 'Karton', a cardboard box filled with artworks.

He was a novice in the art world and therefore decided to pay the artists a visit, a strategy that usually worked out very well. While in Düsseldorf he called on Joseph Beuys. The artist took a manifesto by George Maciunas, changed something in it and returned it to Hundertmark, together with a page from a catalogue. He was to reproduce these in 25 copies and return them to Beuys who would then stamp and sign them. After that the artist would forward them again to Hundertmark. He now had another contribution for his 'box'. He also paid a visit to Wolf Vostell in Cologne. At first the artist was willing to participate, but he withdrew at a later stage. Hundertmark had to travel to Copenhagen to get in touch with Addi Kōpcke. Enormous quantities of beer were consumed during this visit and the artist promised to come up with a contribution, but no word ever came through after that. Stanley Broun answered that he always refused to participate in editions.

Sometimes it was even hard to convince artists living in Berlin to join the project. Hundertmark had no telephone and therefore he had to write letters to make appointments.

Finally, after months of hard work, travelling and writing letters, the works of eleven artists were ready. There were signed photographs of actionists like Brus, Nitsch and Muehl, the contribution in two parts by Beuys, collages, objects and handwritten texts by Filliou, Friedman, Gosewitz, Knížák, Rühm, Schmit and Vautier. The edition was ready: twenty five copies, each of them priced at 330 German Marks. Promotional material was sent out. After that there was only silence. Not one single order arrived. This story has been told extensively by Hundertmark in his book titled *10 Jahre Edition Hundertmark* (10 Years Edition Hundertmark), published by DAAD in Berlin in 1980. (See also: *MULTIPLES, et cetera*, Amsterdam, 1991.)

In 1979, Hundertmark moved to Cologne. Five years later, in 1984, he set up a gallery in the Brüsselerstrasse. Towards the end of the year 1999, he invited Galerie A. A central figure in the exhibition was an artist we both admired, but neither of us had ever worked with him, namely Dieter Roth (1930-1998). As a special offer we presented a great many so-called *Stupidogramme*, small prints intervened by Roth with pencil. They went on sale for about 190 Euros each and near the end of the show we had sold them all.

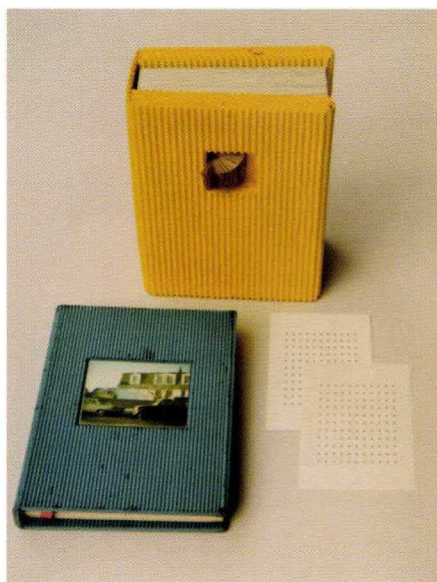


### ▲ *A Wedge of Old Cheese, portrait of Dieter Roth* - drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Dieter Roth, *Stupidogramme***, pencil drawing on print, ca. 15 x 10 cm, signed and dated: *DR 62*, and the invitation for the exhibition in Cologne, 1999.

***Daily Mirror, Gesammelte Werke Bd.10***, artists' book, 472 pp., in a cover made from painted corrugated cardboard with 2 signed miniature books cut out of 'Daily Mirror' newspapers, 100 numbered & signed copies, Edition Hansjörg Mayer, Cologne/London/Reykjavik, 1970.

***Poetrie 5 bis 1, Gesammelte Werke Bd.15***, artists' book, 220 pp., in a painted rubber mat with 2 signed Polaroid colour photographs, 100 numbered & signed copies, Edition Hansjörg Mayer, Cologne/London/Reykjavik, 1969.





## Reiner Ruthenbeck (1937-2016) & Jan Dibbets (1941)

Ruthenbeck: the philosophical/physical original idea is mine; the artistic formal execution is by Dibbets.

After the breakfast in our hotel we stood in front of an exhibition hall and for some practical reason one of us bent a wire. I said that the energy of our English breakfast had now gone into the wire.

Subsequently, Dibbets managed to get two plates and two raw eggs (the only food available), had a picture taken and published the postcard.

(From a letter to Galerie A, January 2002).

### ▼ *The energy of a real english breakfast transformed into breaking a real steel bar by the artists Dibbets and Ruthenbeck,*

postcard, sent by Konrad and Dorothee Fischer to Martin and Mia Visser, December 1969.

### ▼ *Flip Bool and Harry Ruhé working on the construction of the Weisser Papierhaufen,*

Haags Gemeentemuseum (photograph: Reiner Ruthenbeck).

## Reiner Ruthenbeck

In 1987 I exhibited Reiner Ruthenbeck's 1979 sculpture *Weisser Papierhaufen* at an art fair in the Amsterdam RAI. It was part of an edition of four copies.

Rudi Fuchs, who was director of the Haags Gemeentemuseum at the time, expressed his interest in the crumpled paper balls. So the artist requested me to order 600 sheets of 50 x 50 cm 180 gram paper.

In 1988 the work was installed in the museum by the artist, assisted by curator Flip Bool and me. A bill was sent on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There was no payment for a year despite several reminders. Museum director Fuchs was known for being slow with payments. Ruthenbeck however did not accept this. He intended to cancel the sale; he felt the price was on the low end to begin with.

He came to Amsterdam to wrap things up. When he entered the gallery he picked up the mail from the doorman. It included an envelope from the bank. He commented that payment had finally arrived. It was intended as a joke but turned out to be true. I opened the envelope and showed Ruthenbeck that the money for the *Weisser Papierhaufen* had been added to my bank account: sixteen thousand nine hundred and fifty guilders.

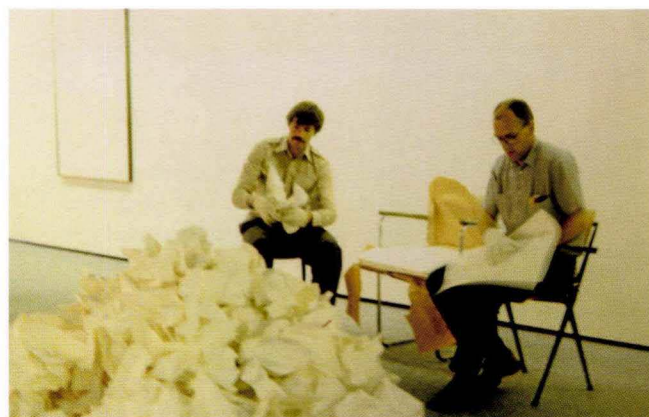
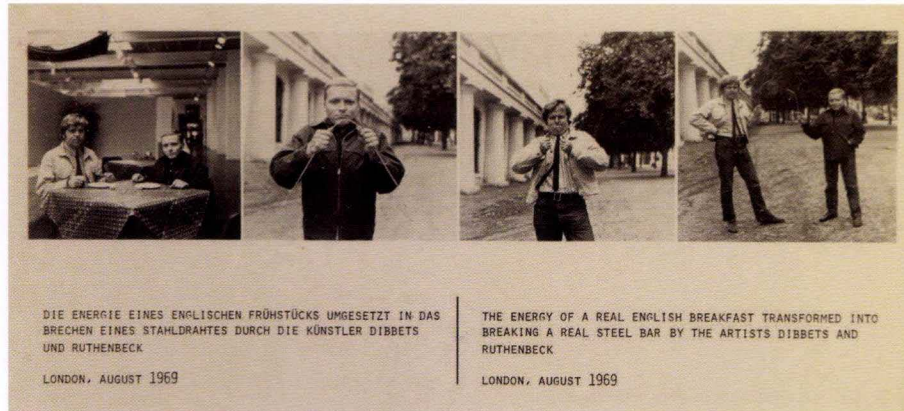
## Takako Saito (1929)

Takako Saito is mostly famous for the variations of chess she made in the mid '60s. She had an exhibition in Galerie A in April 1978, where several of her chess sets were present.

*Sound Chess* had identical cubes of dark and light wood. The nature of the pieces could only be distinguished by their unique sound. Similarly, the pieces of *Smell Chess* spread different scents.

*Weight Chess* was my personal favourite. The pieces are cubes that vary in weight. This chess set was hand-made to perfection by Saito. In fact, many thought it to be industrially produced (consequently it was not sold).

After the exhibition I decided to keep *Weight Chess* for myself. It cost me four hundred and fifty Deutsche Mark (230 Euro), which was a bargain.





## Marja Samson

(1949)

Once upon a time Marja Samson was a filmmaker and performance artist. In 1976, art centre De Appel, converted into a nightclub for the occasion, was the venue for one of her performances. All dressed up in aluminium foil she did a striptease under the name of Miss Kerr.

Samson stayed regularly in the United States and in 1991 she set up a restaurant in New York: the Kitchen Club remained active until 2010.

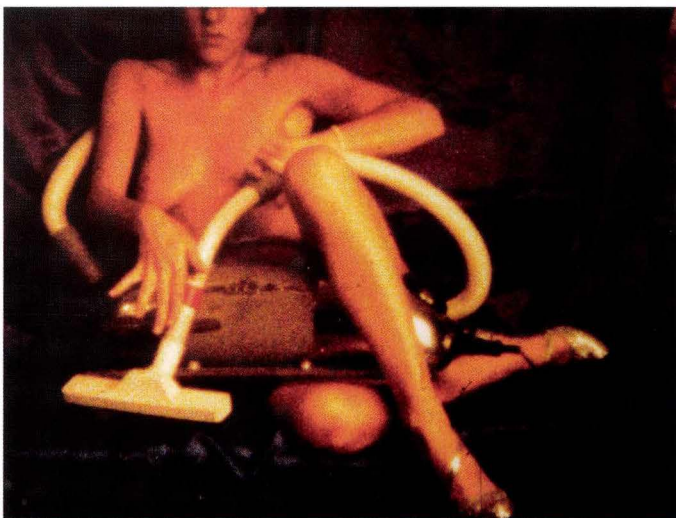
Samson: *With the help of Miss Kerr, I express my sympathy with the still alive and much popular myth of "the woman of the world" and at the same time my deep sorrow about the darker side of that myth, which is not able to function in daily life very well.*

*Visually obsessed with sharp cut-out slick images like superstars, I am psychologically struck by the inability of these images to be real or reveal any inner reflection or depth.*

*This to me is a feeling of humor, cruelty and fascination presenting the question of unattainable perfection.* (Flash Art 72-73, March/April 1977.)

◀ **Takako Saito, *Weight Chess***, 17 copies, hand-made by the artist, numbered and signed, Fluxus edition, New York, ca. 1966.

◀ **Takako Saito, *Food Chess / Wine Chess***, Amsterdam Hilton, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003; photograph.



**Marja Samson, *Reclining nude with vacuum cleaner***, one of three photographs, 13.7 x 18.1 cm, each signed: *Marja Samson / Miss Kerr* and dated: '76-77. (Related photos were published in *Flash Art*, no.72-72, March/April 1977.)

## Hester Lisa Scheurwater

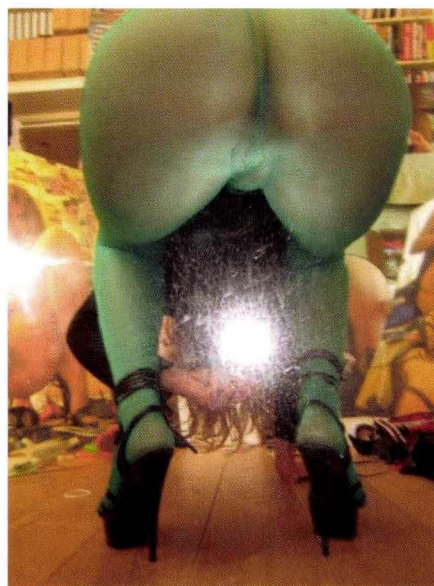
(1971)

Hester Scheurwater creates photographic self-portraits in her living room and describes them as 'lust objects'. She takes pictures of her vagina, partly hidden behind panties or covered by a hand. In August 2009, she started to upload these images on Facebook. Due to their explicit character, the pictures were removed regularly.

Under the name Wild Beamen, Scheurwater projected images of her own body on buildings.

Since 2010, she shows most of her pictures on her website: [www.hesterscheurwater.com](http://www.hesterscheurwater.com).

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.



**Hester Lisa Scheurwater, *Shooting Back* #95, 2010.**

## Wim T. Schippers (1942)

Around 1959 Schippers was studying at the Amsterdam Instituut voor Kunstnijverheidsonderwijs (this would later become the Rietveld Academie).

With the annual Gemeenteaankopen (municipal art acquisitions) for 1960 in mind Schippers sent some of his 'works on paper' to the Stedelijk Museum.

The art works were 'stiffly priced, because I, myself was deeply in awe of what I had made and better no money at all than a pittance or: if I am to sell anything at all then at least for a good price.'

The custodians of the institute Schippers attended declared themselves to be unpleasantly surprised when they learned that study assignments had been offered for sale and now hung in the museum as part of the *Gemeenteaankopen 1960*.

But the director of the Stedelijk, the right honourable Willem Sandberg was interested in more ...

In 1962, Sandberg invited Schippers for an exhibition in the museum's annex Fodor. The offer to fill the museum with art, partly in collaboration with fellow students Ger van Elk and Bob Wesdorp was greeted with ready enthusiasm.



**The artist, with a piece of 'Rouwgebak' (mourning cake) in his hands, at Galerie Amstel 47, Amsterdam, 1963 (in front: *At the Green Fountain*)**, photograph by Igno Cuypers, printed on barite paper, 29.6 x 20.4 cm, edition Galerie A, 3 numbered copies (+ 3 A.P. copies)



Together with his two colleagues, Schippers had founded the *A-dynamic Centre* in 1961. Later that year the three members were offered to publish their first *A-dynamic manifesto* in the periodical *Vrij Nederland* (30.12.1961). From the manifesto it could be learned that the group did not reject a single art movement with the exception of the then popular tachisme (French style of abstract painting) which was considered too 'dynamic'. Instead 'pragmatisation' of art was propagated, 'theoretical and practical slackness' and 'dullness'.

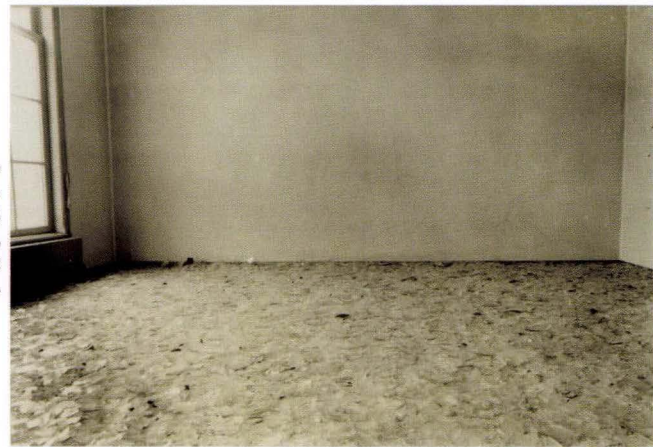
When, at the end of 1962, the presentation in Fodor agreed upon with Sandberg became imminent, Bob Wesdorp opted out. Van Elk had chosen to exile himself in America and could not provide a substantial contribution so Schippers was faced with the task of filling the museum more or less on his own. He selected a number of collages, installed a large number of wall and floor objects, erected a four metre high plastic pudding in the downstairs hall, filled the anterior upstairs room with glass and transformed the room next door into a *Salt room*, with a water fountain at the exact centre.<sup>15</sup>

Schippers' crucial importance for *Fluxus Europe North* is virtually unknown outside his own country. In the early sixties Schippers organised a large number of manifestations, with Willem de Ridder, and his compositions were performed at various Fluxus concerts. But within the Fluxus movement, de Ridder was the one who attracted the most attention as an organiser. Antipodally, Wim T. Schippers became less well-known as a Fluxus artist and exponent of these activities. Although a photograph of one of his events appeared in the July 1965 issue of the Fluxus newspaper *V TRE*, there is scarcely any reference to his name in most of the publications about this movement.

## Wim T. Schippers

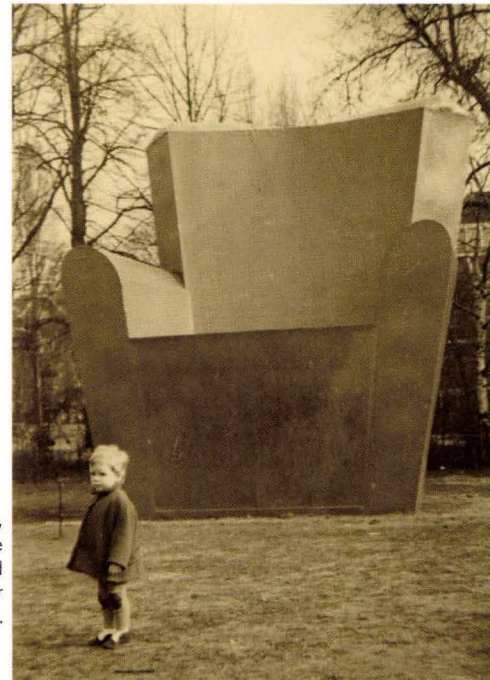
In 1978 Schippers was awarded a commission to create an art work for the Technical University of Twente in Enschede. The artist had once had an idea for a church steeple that was half sunk in the marshy Dutch ground. At a later stage Schippers thought it would be a novel idea to place the steeple in the middle of a pond, that was much more dramatic. As it happened, the university had at their disposal, on their doorstep so to speak, an enormous pond. With the aid of a German cut-out, a sketch design was made. On November 16, 1979 the *Little Tower of Drienerlo* as it had come to be called, was festively unveiled.

**Wim T. Schippers, *Glass Room, Museum Fodor, Amsterdam, 1962***, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 23.9 cm, signed.



**Wim T. Schippers, *Het torentje van Drienerlo***, photo, 14.9 x 17.1 cm (photographer unknown).

**Wim T. Schippers, *De Stoel (The Chair)*, Amsterdam, 1965** (a five-and-a-half metre high arm chair of wood and polyester, painted purple); photo by Harry Ruhé, gelatin silver print, 17.6 x 12.6 cm.



<sup>15</sup> Harry Ruhé, *The Best of Wim T. Schippers*, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 1997.



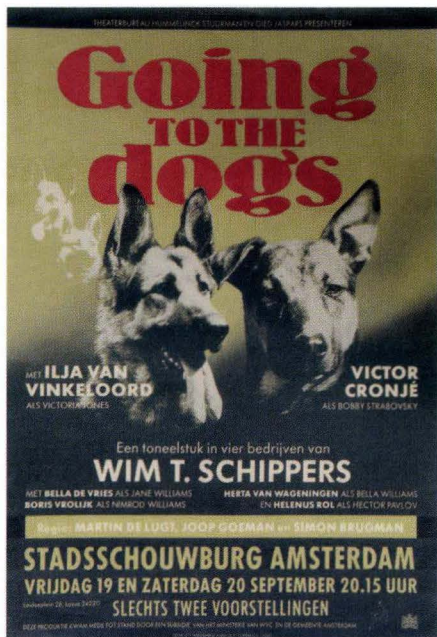
## Wim T. Schippers

In 1981, Wim T. Schippers bought six shaving brushes and drew a face on every one of them. The material was intended for a short animation film for a twelve part television series to be broadcast in 1981-82: The Laughing Shaving Brush.

There is another version as well whereby a transfer was used for the face on the shaving brush. These copies were given as presents to those involved with this television show.



Wim T. Schippers, *De Lachende Scheerkwast (The Laughing Shaving Brush)*, shaving brush with felt-tip pen drawing, about 11.5 high, 1981. (Gift of the artist, 1997.)

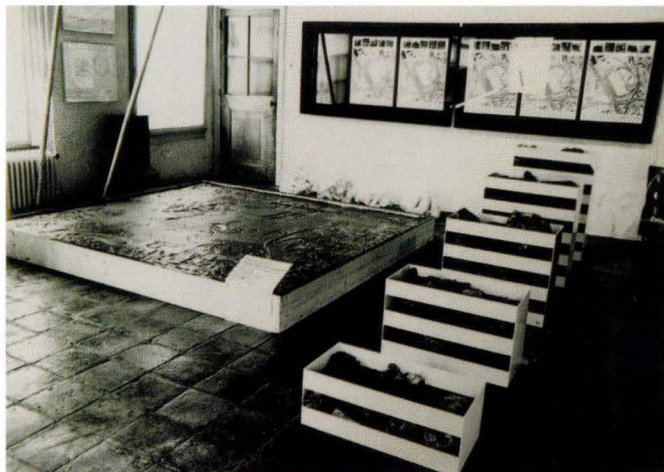


Wim T. Schippers, *Going to the Dogs*, flyer, 28.3 x 19.8 cm, 1986.

## Wim T. Schippers

In September 1986 the Amsterdam city theatre hosted a remarkable play, namely: *Going to the dogs*. It was a play in four acts and the roles were performed by six very well trained German shepherds. Posters announcing the show were covered by protesters with the text: *Schippers doet het met honden* (Schippers does it with dogs), an objection against 'the scandalous abuse of our faithful companions'.

The Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hans van den Broek, stated in parliament that this kind of cultural happenings had 'a rather damaging effect' on the perception of the Netherlands abroad.



Wim T. Schippers, *Peanut-Butter Platform, Gallery Mickery, Loenersloot, 1969*, photograph by Oscar van Alphen, gelatin silver print; listed on the reverse are artists' names: Wim T. Schippers, Robert Smithson, Wim Gijzen, Bill Bollinger, Markus Raetz.

## Wim T. Schippers

In 1967 Schippers was invited to take part in a group exhibition held in Galerie Mickery in Loenersloot. He chose to carry out an old *a-dynamic* plan he had: a floor covered with a thick layer of peanut butter. Gallery owner Ritsaert Ten Cate however was not so eager to cover the entire floor. Schippers was limited to fill up a large platform. A cardboard sign in the artists' handwriting provided information about this *Peanut-Butter Platform*.

A retrospective exhibition dedicated to Schippers could be seen in the Centraal Museum in Utrecht during the spring of 1997. This exhibition was titled *The Best of Wim T. Schippers* and was organised by me. The reconstruction of the *Peanut-Butter Platform* (in Dutch called *De Pindakaasvloer*)

generated a lot of publicity. This time the project was performed as originally intended. Rather than just a small platform, the entire floor was now covered in peanut butter. While the exhibition was being prepared I visited a number of Utrecht antiquarians to see whether they had any of Schippers' work in stock. One day I found Niek Waterbolk in the Schoutenstraat. He told me of a large piece of cardboard with Schippers' name on it, though he wasn't entirely sure of its purpose. As it turned out, this piece of cardboard was the sign made by Schippers for his *Peanut-Butter Platform* in 1969.

The Boijmans van Beuningen museum in Rotterdam bought the concept of the *Peanut-Butter Platform* in 2011. It was priced

at € 30.000,- (as offered by museum director Sjarel Ex, according to Schippers). Many found this purchase to be utterly ridiculous, which generated some debate. I had submitted my reaction to the newspaper *Het Parool* and the article was printed on the 10th of March:

*Peanut butter as proof of genius.*

*Half a page of bickering about the Peanut Butter Floor - it was to be expected. It was also featured in the exhibition I organised in the Centraal Museum Utrecht in 1997. Back then, this artwork was welcomed with commotion as well. And now it is even paid for!*

*It is unlikely that any of the writers actually went to see the exhibition in Rotterdam in person. Or, for that matter, took the trouble to*



get informed (see here: *Boijmans Arttube!*). This is evidenced by the wide range of prices that people mention. The first thinks it's a hundred thousand Euros, the second says several grand. Half a million, according to another. It's a pity the familiar 'all from the taxpayers' money' was not uttered this time. Although 'our money ought to be spent on real art' is a close contender. Still, don't we all pay for things that are not to our personal benefit or that we even oppose? Why don't we stop nagging about this 'waste of money and food'. Most people in the western world have way more food available to them than they need. This is a waste all the same yet it seems to be accepted. But using food to produce art results in an outrage?

Through its purchase of the *Peanut Butter Floor*, the museum *Boijmans van Beuningen* has easily obtained one of the most important and most radical Dutch artworks from the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Schippers developed his first concepts for floors as early as 1962. In the *Fodor Museum* he had a room filled with glass shards; the *Glass Room*. One could also find a *Salt Room* there.

Schippers was a pioneer both nationally and internationally. Only during the late '60s did other artists recognise the floor as a medium which could be integrated in their art. Like the American *Barry Le Va*, who had glass plates dropped on the floor and used the results to 'build' the exhibition. *Walter De Maria* had a floor covered with soil in *Galerie Friedrich* in

*München* in 1968. This project was repeated in 1977 in the *New York Dia Art Foundation*. Schippers was ahead of his time in more than one way though. These are some examples. A chair created by him was stationed in the *Vondelpark* in 1965. It was five and a half metres tall. *Claes Oldenburg*, an artist who received worldwide acclaim with his 'blow-ups' of everyday attributes, had started with his 'large-scale projects' in 1969.

At an exhibition by Schippers in *Hilversum* in 1965 there were no objects to be seen at all. This exhibition could only be smelled; pencil, aniseed, orange, musk. One of the first examples of immaterial art. His only predecessor was *Yves Klein* who showed 'emptiness' in a completely empty Parisian gallery in 1958.

Again in 1965 a 'negative contribution' to a group exhibition in *Zeist*: 'a tidy pit of modest dimensions' in the ground. And that same year; a several metre high pile of glass shards in *Bergeyk*. These are beautiful examples of *Arte Povera*. (Which I will not explain here as plenty of information on the subject can be found on the internet.)

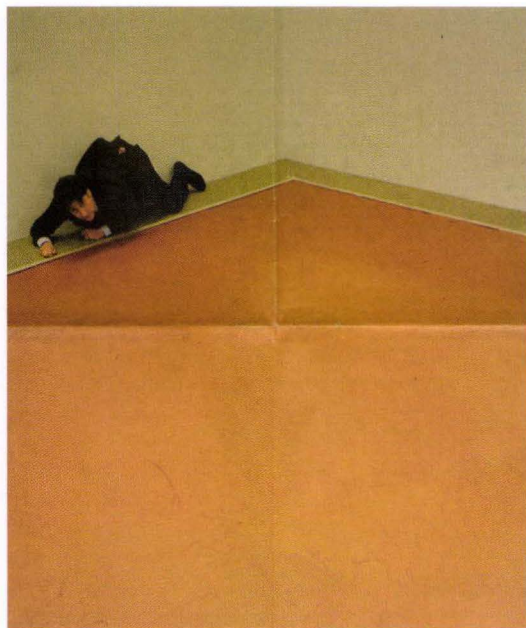
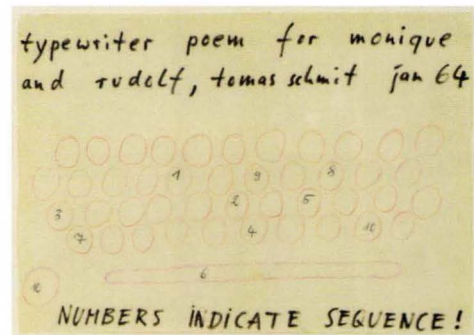
To sum it up; *Wim T. Schippers* is an artist who can be rightfully called a pioneer. He did not attain world fame with his work, but that may be due to himself. He received an official invitation for a large exhibition in the *Guggenheim Museum* in *New York* in 1969. Yet he never responded. We should cherish extraordinary (and extraordinarily wilful) artists like him.

## Tomas Schmit (1943-2006)

During one of my first gallery exhibitions I presented works by *Tomas Schmit*. I had not yet met the artist, but had seen pictures. In the early nineteen sixties, he participated in several *Fluxus* manifestations.

One of his performances consisted of being surrounded by a circle of bottles and only one of these was filled with water. He would pour the full bottle into the empty bottle standing next to it and the emptied bottle would be placed back into the circle. Then the other filled bottle would be poured into the next empty bottle. This procedure was repeated until all the water would be gone by either evaporation or spilling. Schmit had given the performance the title: *Zyklus für Wassereimer oder Flaschen* (Cycle for buckets or bottles).

I had informed *Tomas Schmit* that my gallery was rather small, but he didn't think there would be any problem whatsoever: *da meine sachen 'kleine und schöne' sachen sind, käme ja wohl der 'kleinste und schönste' in betracht, also die amstel 262* (the gallery's address). (as all my objects are 'small and beautiful' objects, the 'smallest and most beautiful' should be considered, namely *amstel 262*.) The exhibition was inaugurated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 1976 with for example drawings



**Schippers and his Peanut-Butter Platform in Utrecht**, front page of the Dutch newspaper *Trouw*, February 28, 1997.

**Tomas Schmit, *Zyklus***, *Kleine Komedie*, Amsterdam, December 18, 1963; photo by *Dorine van der Klei*, gelatin silver print, 17 x 23.9 cm, with a copyright sticker on the reverse.





and publications from the nineteen sixties on display. Almost everything was for sale, but despite the low prices - a box with 24 original drawings for nine hundred German marks - I didn't sell anything at all. It also meant that I couldn't buy something substantial myself.

I had more luck in 1994. Lou Meulenberg, the owner of Gallery Parade at the Prinsengracht in Amsterdam, bought several 'left over works' from Rudolf Peereboom. The latter ran the antiquarian bookshop on the river Amstel in which Willem de Ridder had organised some exhibitions in 1963 and 1964. Amongst these 'left over works' was a *Typewriter Poem* by Tomas Schmit.

Schmit made several of them. One of these so called *Schreibmachinedgedichte* (typewriter poems) has been included in Wolf Vostell's book *Happenings - Fluxus, Pop Art, Nouveau Réalisme* (1965).

In the Netherlands, not many people were interested in Schmit's drawings. Therefore, I didn't have to pay a lot: Meulenberg wanted only two hundred Dutch guilders for the typewriter poem.

◀ **Tomas Schmit, *Typewriter Poem for Monique and Rudolf***, felt-tip pen, ball pen and crayon on paper, 20.9 x 29.6 cm, signed and dated: jan 64.

▼ **Carolee Schneemann, working on the special edition of *More Than Meat Joy***.

The picture was taken in Asolo on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, 1977. At the time, the artist was working on the multiple which was going to be added to the deluxe edition of the book: a perspex box with three compartments containing different materials. Photograph by Francesco Conz, 20.2 x 30.3 cm, with the stamp of the Archivio Conz on the reverse.

▶ **Rob Scholte's wrecked BMW in *Arti et Amicitiae*, Amsterdam**, press cutting, De Volkskrant, 27<sup>th</sup> of January, 1995.



## Carolee Schneemann

(1939-2019)

Carolee Schneemann's most controversial performance took place on the occasion of the exhibition *Women Here and Now* in East Hampton (NY) in August 1975. The public was mostly made up of female artists. The piece was titled: *Interior Scroll*.

The performance went more or less like this: after undressing, Schneemann climbed on a table and told that she would read from her book *Cézanne, She Was A Great Painter*. Then she painted large strokes defining the contours of her body and face, she kept the book in her hand and while reading she adopted various poses. Very slowly she pulled a long narrow strip of paper from her vagina and started to read the text written on it. (In September 1977, during the Telleride Film Festival in Colorado, she performed *Interior Scroll* once more.)

*I thought of the vagina in many ways – physically, conceptually: as a sculptural form, an architectural referent, the source of sacred knowledge, ecstasy, birth passage, transformation. I saw the vagina as a translucent chamber of which the serpent was an outward model: enlivened by its passage from the visible to the invisible, a spiralled coil ringed with the shape of desire and generative mysteries, attributes of both female and male sexual powers. This source of 'interior knowledge' would be symbolized as the primary index unifying spirit and flesh ... the source of conceptualizing, of interacting with materials, of imagining the world and composing its images.*

From: *More Than Meat Joy*, 1997, pp. 234-235.

This book details in chronological order Schneemann's performances from the early nineteen sixties until 1979.

## Rob Scholte (1958)

For the Venice Biennale in 1990 Rob Scholte made a big painting with the image of a Venetian kitsch painter who is trying to render a fragment of San Marco. It was the enlargement of an existing poster. In 1991 Scholte made an edition for Galerie A & Aschenbach, titled 'Venezia', consisting of 13 small copies, 85 x 60 cm, painted by a reproduction painter. Each copy was signed and numbered by Scholte.

Three years later, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1994, Rob Scholte's BMW was blown to pieces with a hand grenade which had been put under the car at the driver's side. The artist lost both legs and his pregnant wife lost her baby.

At the beginning, it was suspected that he was a victim of a case of mistaken identity and that the grenade was meant for someone else. Scholte himself accused Paul Blanca, a photographer known for his aggressive and sexually oriented photographs. (Blanca made self-portraits with living eels in his mouth or with lips sewn together. He also had a portrait of Mickey Mouse cut in his back with a razor blade.) But the motif remained unclear and so far the perpetrator hasn't been identified.

In January 1995 the Amsterdam artists society *Arti et Amicitiae* inaugurated the group exhibition *Bits and Pieces*. One of the objects on show was Rob Scholte's wrecked car.

Showing the wreck as an artwork was considered by many to be a shameless publicity stunt and 'an immoral flirt of the artist with his suffering' (De Volkskrant, 27<sup>th</sup> of January, 1995).

From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.





# Rudolf Schwarzkogler

(1940-1969)

From 1964 onwards, Rudolf Schwarzkogler took part in various *Aktionen* (Actions) by Hermann Nitsch, Otto Muehl and Günter Brus. As far as is known, Schwarzkogler did only six solo performances: five in 1965 and one in 1966.

The photos made at Schwarzkogler's actions were intended as artworks by themselves. For his friends' performances the primary function of photography was just documentation.

Rudolf Schwarzkogler passed away on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969. He had fallen from a window of his house in Vienna. Four years later Günter Brus, Hermann Nitsch, Schwarzkogler's girlfriend Edith Adam and Francesco Conz got together in the North Italian Cittadella to sort out the estate. Joe Jones was present as a witness when all the material was sorted and catalogued.

Francesco Conz had initiated this get-together. His archive contained a large number of Schwarzkogler's Aktion-photos. This collection also included numerous early photos of drawings and texts.

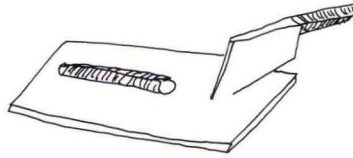
I got to see many of these during my first visit to Francesco Conz' archive in Verona in the early '80s. Most of the prints that I was familiar with had already been published in editions long after the artist died. In this case, however, there were many unique works. A number of photos was signed on the back by Edith Adam, photographer Ludwig Hoffenreich and the artists Nitsch and Brus.

I asked Conz if he was willing to sell me one. Though this was possible, his prices were on the high end. I couldn't afford the smaller sized ones either. Well, no problem. The next morning I found an envelope in front of the door of my apartment. It contained one of the 'Schwarzkoglers' I had selected. Conz accepted no payment from me.

**Günter Brus, Francesco Conz, Joe Jones, Edith Adam and Hermann Nitsch, Cittadella, 1973**, gelatin silver print, 12.7 x 17.5 cm, with the stamp of the *Archivio Francesco Conz* on the reverse.

► **Schwarzkogler 1940-1969**, catalogue, Galerie Nächst St. Stephan, Vienna, 1970, (the first exhibition after the artist's death).

Aktionismus



*A Wiener Sausage  
and a Meat Cleaver  
Portrait of Rudolf  
Schwarzkogler  
KF 1969*

**Aktionismus, a Wiener Sausage and a Meat Cleaver, portrait of Rudolf Schwarzkogler** - drawing by Ken Friedman.



**Funeral Mass in Vienna to honour Rudolf Schwarzkogler, June 27, 1969**, photo by Ludwig Hoffenreich (a later print), 17.9 x 18.2 cm, with the stamp of the *Archivio Francesco Conz Verona* on the reverse.



# Seriaal

- Wies Smals

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1968, Wies Smals and Mia Visser opened a 'revolutionary shop' for 'multiplied art' on the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 348 in Amsterdam and named it: Seriaal.

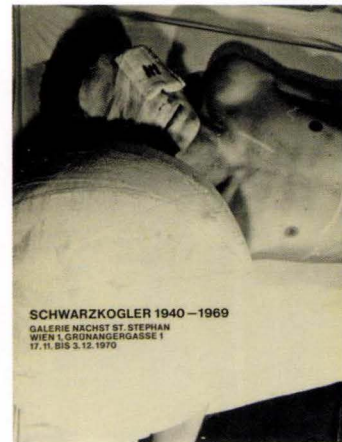
The press release stated the reasons, 'in Amsterdam, strange but true, there isn't such a shop yet. And by the look of it, Multiples are going to be an unstoppable new trend in art.'

Now and then I bought something. Near the end of the year 1974, Wies Smals had had enough (Mia Visser long before that) and the shop was closed. About a year later, Wies Smals set up a gallery for performance art: De Appel.

In 1976, she handed me part of the Seriaal stock, more or less as a present. 'You can put the price on the pieces, but I want 20% of all sales.' Ulises Carrión got a few boxes with books for his shop Other Books and So. The best things weren't offered for sale and one of the multiples I kept was a brick with handle by Immo Jalass, an edition published in 1969.

(A similar multiple offered for sale that same year was a sausage with handle by Robin Page. See: VICE-Versand).

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1983, Wies Smals perished in an aeroplane accident in Switzerland, just like the artist Gerhard von Graevenitz, their three months old son, Josien van Droffelaar, De Appel employee, and her boyfriend. De Volkskrant, a leading Dutch newspaper, asked me to take stock. The story ends as follows:



SCHWARZKOGLER 1940-1969  
GALERIE NÄCHST ST. STEPHAN  
WIEN I, GRÜNANGERGASSE 1  
17. IX. BIS 3. XII. 1970



Contrary to the much talked-about performances during the first years of De Appel's existence, there was less than average interest in the centre's recent project like approach. The press didn't even bother anymore.

Quite recently Wies told me that due to all that painting by the young Italians, Neue Wilden and other young artists from both home and abroad people were seemingly less prepared to make an effort for art that was less easy on the eye. She said it without bitterness, but I knew that she found it hard that the stacks of De Appel magazines, sold on commission by a few good bookstores, could be collected a few months later without even one copy having changed hands.

Then they worked on a new lay-out or thought of other ways to make the magazine more attractive. Despite the odds, she never doubted the kind of art she promoted. Even though Wies, Gerhard and Josine passed away, this kind of art will keep on going. There will always be artists who will do what they think is important, even when nobody seems to be interested in what they are doing. These artists don't go with the flow and don't care at all about what is in vogue at any given moment in art. Now, with the demise of Wies, Gerhard and Josine, De Appel's role in promoting this kind of art seems to have diminished. But I do hope that I will be proved wrong.

## Andres Serrano (1950)

In February 1997, the GPV (acronym for [Dutch] Reformed Political Association), nineteen schools, churches and public organisations started proceedings against the Groninger Museum. They did not want them to spread a poster announcing a show by the American photographer Andres Serrano.

The poster was after a photograph by Serrano: a woman urinating in a man's mouth. The Public Ministry announced they would confiscate these posters the minute they were distributed, whatever the outcome of the lawsuit. The museum gave in and withdrew the poster.

Swip Stolk, the designer of the poster, decided to create a new one with the text: *oordeel zelf!* (Judge for yourself!). It was shown all over town.

## Paul Sharits (1943-1993)

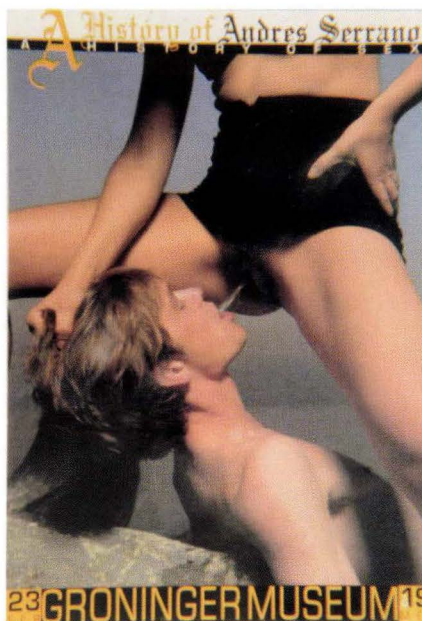
In 1977 Paul Sharits was in Amsterdam to organise an exhibition of his drawings at Galerie A.

*Since I will be showing pieces made during the years I was involved with Fluxus + newer pieces which are conceptually similar, I suggest we call the exhibit something like – Paul Sharits / in the Fluxus mode*<sup>16</sup>

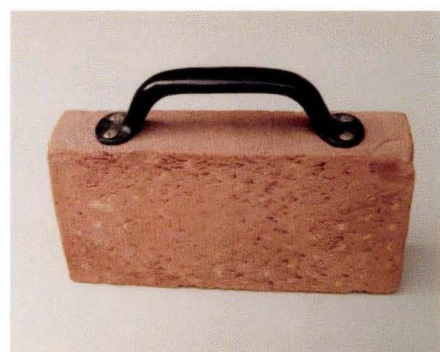
*I have thousands of concept-notes-drawings-journals; some of them are highly personal (and a bit mad, sometimes Fluxmadness and sometimes Heavy Mad); also photo pieces; also a couple of photo+object pieces (one with sound, if possible – best to have a quadrophonic tape play-back with 10" reels... second best, stereo with 10" reels...or, silent); a whole mixture of things. Most from the mid-late 60's to early 70's.*<sup>17</sup>



**Paul Sharits, Unrolling Screen Film Performance**, Galerie A, Amsterdam, July 9, 1977; one from a series of photographs mounted on cardboard (collage by the photographer: Peter Ungerlieder's girlfriend Sally), 74.3 x 99.5 cm, signed and dated by Sharits.



**Andres Serrano, Plassex-poster (Piss sex poster)**, design: Swip Stolk, for the exhibition *A History of Andres Serrano. A History of Sex*, Groninger Museum, Groningen, February 23 - May 19, 1997, edition: 300 copies; this copy signed by Stolk on the reverse. (The poster *Oordeel zelf!* was printed in 100 copies.)



**Immo Jalass, Community Brick**, multiple, ca. 14.5 x 21 x 5 cm, 200 numbered & signed copies, 1969. (Price in 1970: 30 guilders.) In the autumn of 1968 Jalass (Hamburg, 1938) proposed a project to the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam: an average family (man, woman, two children) would live in the museum for a month. Their furniture would be installed at the top of the stairs on the museum's upper floor. The project could not be carried out for practical reasons.

<sup>16</sup> From a letter, dated: April 27, 1977.

<sup>17</sup> From a letter, dated: April 11, 1977.



To pep up the opening, Sharits suggested we accompany it with a performance. I thought it was a good idea. One of his so-called 'flicker films' would serve as a basis. During the film images of toilet paper being unrolled were alternated with words like PULL, DOWN, ROLL and FOLD. Sharits' girlfriend had promised to help. Dressed in a silver-spangled bikini, she would give a demonstration with rolls of toilet paper in the light of the film projected on the rear wall.

Shortly before the performance was due to start, an enormous row ensued between the two of them. Exit girlfriend.

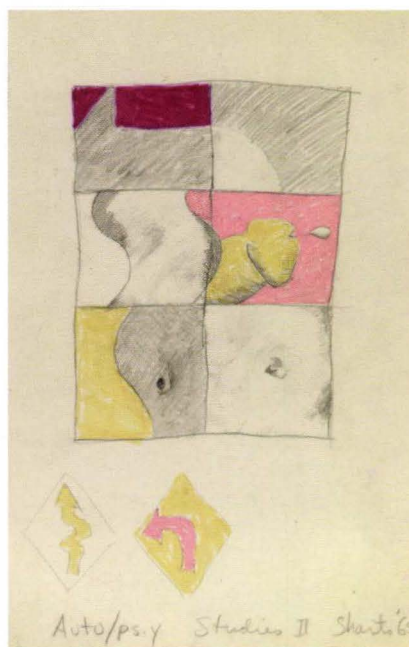
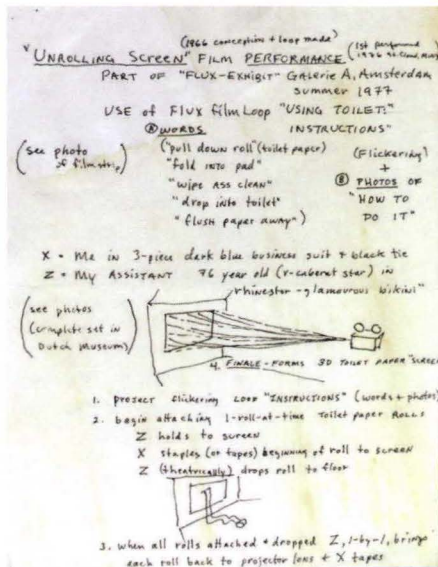
'No problem', said Sharits, 'I'll find somebody else.'

He left the gallery to return twenty minutes later with a seventy-six year old woman. 'My name is Carla', she said. Quickly I explained the object of the exercise. Thereupon the elderly lady retired to an upstairs room to prepare for the performance.

The change of costume posed some difficulty as the bikini had been meant for someone with the vital statistics of a photo model, but ultimately she succeeded in squeezing herself into the minuscule garment. She entered radiantly and Sharits started the film.

She walked towards a metres-high stack of toilet rolls, took one, held it above her head, tore a piece off, threw it in the air and rolled it over the floor. Subsequently she took a new roll. This continued until the film was finished. The audience thought it was wonderful.

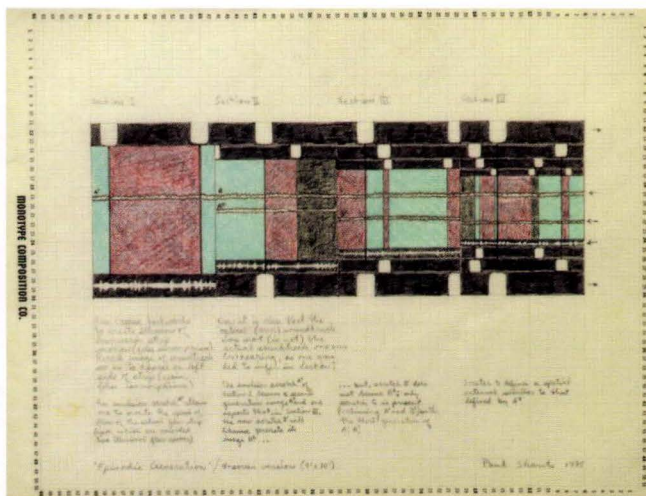
As a token of appreciation the old lady was given a beautiful marker-pen drawing worth \$ 1000, which she liked very much, carefully folding it twice before putting it in her handbag.,



**Paul Sharits, Unrolling Screen Film Performance**, Galerie A, Amsterdam, July 9, 1977; concept (photocopy).

**AUTO/PS.Y Studios II**, coloured pencil on cardboard (with a sketch in pencil on verso), 27.9 x 18 cm, signed and dated, 1965.

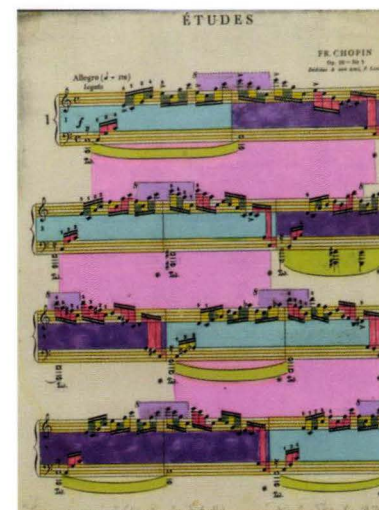
**"Episodic generation"/ 4-screen version (9' x 30')**, coloured pencil on paper, 22.8 x 30.5 cm, signed and dated, 1975.



## Paul Sharits

Paul Sharits is among the most important filmmakers of the second half of the last century. From 1977 onwards, after he had held his much talked about film performance in Amsterdam, Galerie A presented his drawings with regular intervals while also buying quite a few copies. Many of these are reproduced in the catalogue raisonné PAUL SHARITS, published by the Fridericianum in Kassel in 2015.

In 1990, I decided to issue a print in 35 copies. It had to have the look of a unique and exclusive work of art, but should not cost more than a normal print. I opted for a colour score measuring 35 x 28 cm. "Transcription" (Study for Set A), a work from 1975 and based on a score by Chopin, served as an example. Preregistering, the price was established at 175 Dutch guilders. I looked for the sheet music of the etude in question and subsequently started making silk screen prints. Sharits' contribution consisted of numbering and signing the prints. As he wasn't in such good shape at the time, it was up to me to colour them. The artist reacted enthusiastically to the first copy. Colouring in the thirty four remaining copies took me several weeks. In 2014, both the edition and the original colour score were included in the exhibition PAUL SHARITS in Kassel. The curator told me that she preferred the coloured silkscreen print over the original work: the print was displayed on its own at the entrance of the show. In the catalogue from 2015, "Transcription" is reproduced full-page on one of the first pages.



**Paul Sharits, "Transcription" (Study for Set A)**, coloured felt-tip pen on paper, 27.8 x 20.7 cm, signed and dated, 1975.

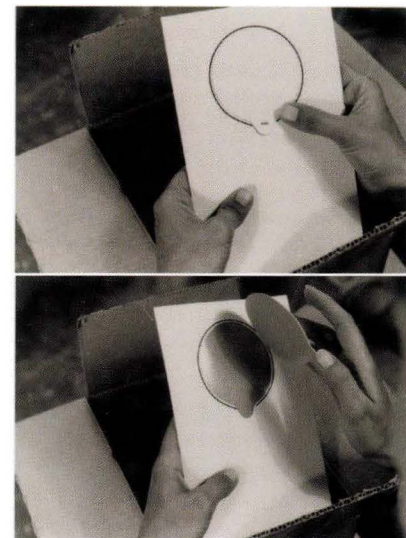
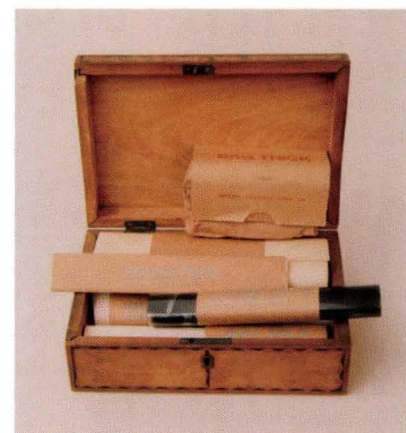


**Paul Sharits, Greg Sharits**  
(1945-'80), **David E. Thompson**  
(1939-1996) and **Bob Grimes**

The Fluxus Codex (1988) that was put together by Jon Hendricks does not mention how many copies were made of *Rolls and Folds*. It can't be a large number as this Fluxus edition is rarely seen.

The normal version has the *Flux Paper Games* in a blue plastic box. For many years Fluxus in New York offered this multiple for 20 dollar a piece.

Fluxus publisher George Maciunas used an antique wooden box for the copy in the Galerie A collection. I had exchanged it with German collector Rolf Dittmar for a number of artists' books in the early '80s. (Dittmar curated a section of *Künstlerbücher* (artists' books) for *documenta 6*, Kassel, in 1977.) *Rolls and Folds* was put together by Paul Sharits. He received help from David E. Thompson, who is also known as Davi Det Hompson.



**Shozo Shimamoto (Gutai)**  
(1928-2013)

During the legendary NUL exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum (1965) a large room was dedicated to works by the Japanese Gutai group. Gutai was founded by Shozo Shimamoto and Jiro Yoshihara in 1954. In some regards this movement was ahead of Fluxus and Happening. Ben Vautier once told me how Gutai has been of great importance to him.

The NUL exhibition showed three blank canvases by Yoshihara; after a concept from 1956 (*Make your own painting*).

Shozo Shimamoto was represented by two horizontal wooden ladders (*Please walk on this work*). The concept was from 1956. One consisted of a series of boards that would sink and pivot a little when stepped on; the other had ridges that made walking more difficult.

In 1999, I decided to present an exhibition of Japanese art. The show was to include works by Ay-O, Kudo, Kusama, Ono and Shiomi. I also wanted to represent at least one Gutai artist. I chose Shimamoto and asked him if it would be possible to reconstruct one of the ladders.

The artist did not object. He asked which version I preferred, and sent me the designs. The exhibition never took place.

**Flux Paper Games:**

**Rolls and Folds**, antique wooden box, 8.7 x 25.8 x 18 cm, containing:

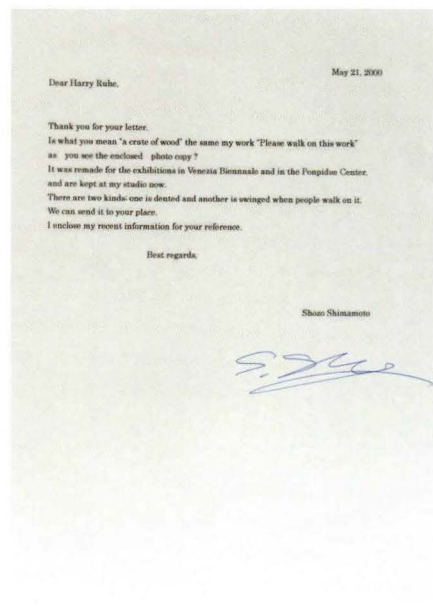
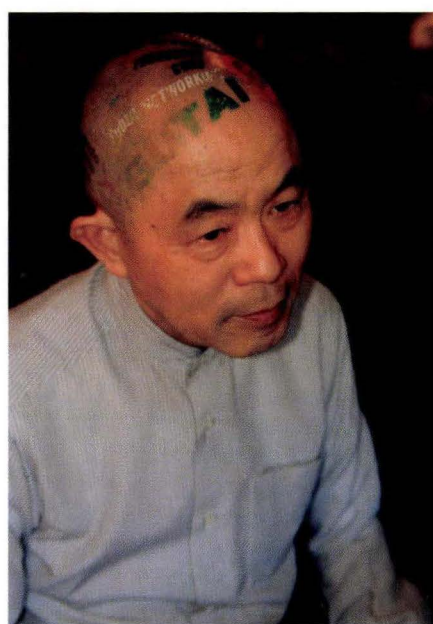
Paul Sharits, *Sound Fold*, 1966; *Unrolling Screen Piece*, 1966;

Greg Sharits, *Bag Trick*, 1966; Greg Sharits, *Roll Fold*, 1966; Greg Sharits, *Roll Trick*, 1966;

David Thompson, *Un Roll*, 1966;

Bob Grimes, *Pull Fold*, 1966 (see: photos); (separate) Paul Sharits, *Pull/Glue*, 1966;

Fluxus, New York, ca. 1966.

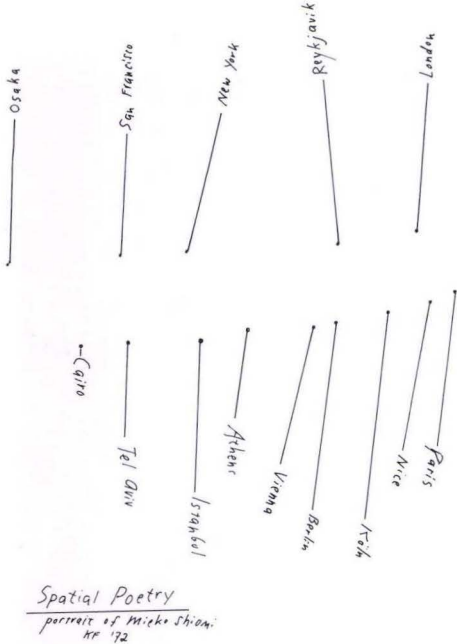


▲ **Shozo Shimamoto**, MOCA, Los Angeles, 1998, photograph by Francesco Conz, 17.6 x 12.6 cm.

**Shozo Shimamoto**, *Please walk on this work*, a letter, signed and dated: May 21, 2000 (with two blueprints, one of them signed, and two posters, in envelope).

**Exhibition NUL, Gutai room**, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1965, press-photograph, 17.7 x 23.9 cm.





*Spatial Poetry*  
 portrait of Mieko Shiomi  
 nr 172

## Chieko Shiomi (1938)

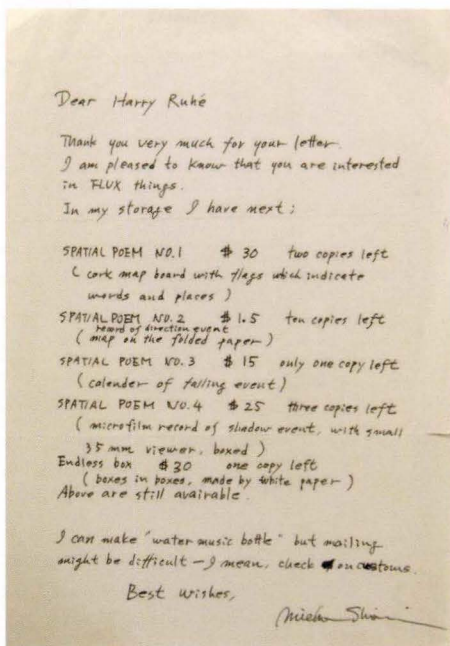
Chieko Shiomi first learned about Fluxus through a magazine article by Nam June Paik in the early '60s. She felt there was a resemblance between Fluxus and her own work. With Takehisa Kosugi she had formed the experimental music group Ongaku, and many of her compositions had an 'event-like' nature.

She decided to send some of her 'event pieces', and one of her objects; an *Endless Box*, to Fluxus frontman George Maciunas. He immediately ordered several of the handmade boxes and invited her over to New York; to join the Fluxus movement.

I asked Shiomi near the end of 1975 whether any Fluxus editions were still available.

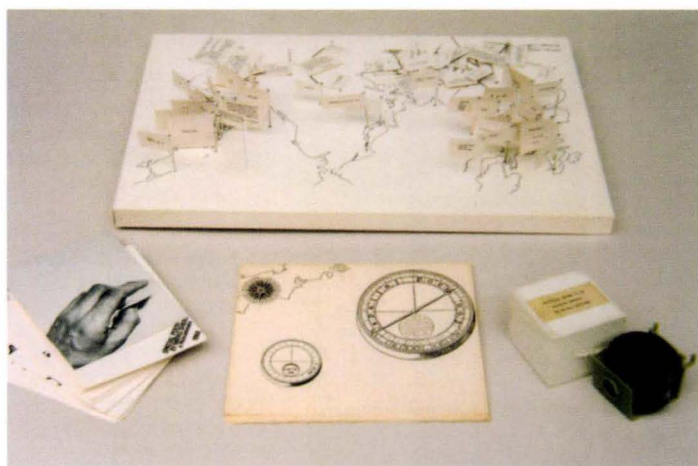
## Chieko Shiomi

From 1965 to 1975 Shiomi invited several friends and colleagues to perform a simple instruction and please could they send her the documentation afterwards. These responses would then constitute the work. Shiomi - she changed her name Chieko to Mieko in the early '70s - created nine *Spatial Poems*. The first four were designed and produced by George Maciunas. In 1975, Shiomi published a book documenting all nine *Spatial Poems* plus the responses to each of these works.



**Spatial Poetry, portrait of Mieko Shiomi** - drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Mieko Shiomi, letter with price-list**, 24.9 x 17.7 cm, signed, 1975.



**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial poem no.1, word event**, 76 paper flags in envelope + map on white glossy cardboard, 30.2 x 45.7 x 2.2 cm. In the version in the Galerie A collection the flags are from the original Fluxus edition (1965); the map was handmade by Shiomi in 1989, with the handwritten text *Spatial Poem no.1* by

Mieko (Chieko) Shiomi 1965-89.

**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem No.2, direction event - a Fluxatlas**, unfolded: 36.7 x 82.3 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1966.

**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem no. 3, falling event**, loose cards, 14 x 10.8 cm, Fluxus, New York, 1968.

(two versions were published: a calendar and cards in a box. One copy was sent by Maciunas to Galerie A without the box ('Make your own box').

**Chieko Shiomi, Spatial Poem no.4, shadow event**, white plastic box containing a microfilm, 6.6 x 6.6 x 5.7 cm, Fluxus edition, New York, 1971/72.

**Endless Box**, wooden box containing 32 interlocking paper boxes of decreasing sizes, 15.1 x 15.1 x 8 cm, Fluxus edition. This is one of the few Fluxus editions that was not produced by Maciunas but by the artist; this particular copy signed and dated: 1963.

**Events**, plastic box with a Maciunas-designed label, ca. 18 x 9.5 x 2 cm, containing cards, Fluxus, New York, ca. 1964.

**Water Music**, medicine bottle, ca. 10.5 cm high, containing water, + event card, n/d; gift from Shiomi, 1975; with a letter by Shiomi, signed.

**Portrait Piece**, event card, 6.3 x 10.7 cm, published by Fluxus, NY, and a crumbled offset-print, 14.6 x 11.1 cm; with an email from Shiomi, January 7, 2007.





## Daniel Spoerri (1930)

Restaurant Spoerri opened its doors at the Burgplatz in Düsseldorf on June 17, 1968. The Swiss Carlo Schröter was in charge. Spoerri's best known *Fallenbilder* originated at this place.

In 1972, Spoerri made a deal with gallery owner Bruno Bischofsberger. Every day for one year he would produce a *Fallenbild*; the remains of a meal glued to a blue 70 x 70 cm table top. (A few years later a fire at Bischofsberger destroyed many of the works that were stored there.)

One of the items that was sold in Düsseldorf was a display of *Restaurant Spoerri Suppen*. Each can contained a small portion of either antelope soup, billy-goat soup, bear-claw soup, pot-bellied pig soup, bison soup, leopard soup, lion soup and camel soup. All recipes were created by Carlo Schröter. The labels were provided with illustrations by Gottfried Wiegand and palindromes by André Thomkins.



**Restaurant Spoerri Suppen**, display with eight cans of soup, 30 x 30 x 6 cm, + booklet, edition of 100 copies, the booklet signed and numbered by Carlo Schröter, Restaurant Spoerri, Düsseldorf, n/d.

## Annie Sprinkle (1954)

In 2009 we, Jeannette Dekeukeleire and I, presented an exhibition about lingerie in art titled *Hidden Delights*. Annie Sprinkle, 'a prostitute and porn star turned sex educator and artist', also contributed to the project. She made a name for herself through performances during which she invited the public to have a look at her womb. In the past, she cooperated closely with Willem de Ridder.

*He was a fantastic medium (channel) for a seance we did not too long ago in France, where we invoked and made love with the spirit of Marcel Duchamp! (...) I always credit Fluxus as my greatest influence.*

(From an email to Galerie A, 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 2009.)



**Annie Sprinkle with Willem de Ridder in her Postmodern One Woman Pornshow**, Amsterdam, 1990; photograph ('Photographing and filming explicitly permitted').



**Annie Sprinkle, Tit Print**, paint on paper, 35.4 x 43 cm, signed and dated (with dedication), 1992.

**The Sprinkle Report, vol.1 no.4** (design: Willem de Ridder), 16 pp., New York, n/d. (early 80s?)



**Annie Sprinkle (with HR), Eco-Sexual Blue Wedding to the Sea**, Fear Society Pavilion, 53<sup>rd</sup> Venice Biennale, 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 2009; from a series of photographs by Mark J. Snyder.



In an interview with the Journal of Contemporary Art (Fall 1992), Sprinkle said: *Willem came to New York to help me work on a one-shot magazine, in which I was publishing my diaries. The night we finished the magazine we were arrested (our typesetter was an undercover police-woman). Eventually all charges against us were dropped and Willem and I fell in love. I then went to live with him in Europe, and it was there that I began learning about Fluxus. To me, Fluxus related to making pornography. So many of the sex scenes I did in porn movies were so bizarre and wonderfully silly that they seemed very Fluxus-like. For example, in one film I was in a dirty basement rowing a boat and sucking a guy's cock whose body was painted red, white, and blue, All the while I recited absurd lines. It was totally Fluxus! I really liked that absurd reality. Through Willem I learned more about Yoko Ono, John Cage, George Maciunas, Alison Knowles, and Nam June Paik. I'm very excited about my new Tit Prints because they are very Fluxus-like (George Maciunas did vagina prints). I began my Tit Prints a couple of years ago – the early ones are collaborations with Willem.* (Vagina Painting is a piece by Shigeko Kubota, George Maciunas made photos. H.R.)



**Wedding Five**, invitation, envelope measuring 15.8 x 23.4 cm containing printed matter, distributed in an edition of 120 signed and numbered copies, August 2009; with stickers.

Around 1983, Sprinkle set up the Sprinkle Salon Mail Order House, an enterprise in which she was assisted by de Ridder. Among the articles that could be ordered was a Golden Shower by Mail. For just \$ 35 clients would receive a small bottle with urine and an instruction sheet how to best treat oneself to a Golden Shower. There was a lot of demand for the Pubic Hair Ritual Kit ('quantities are limited'). During the 2009 Venice Biennale, Annie Sprinkle organised a performance party in close cooperation with her friend Beth Stephens. Stephens is known for her Academic and Porn Star Bronze Panty Collection consisting of panties cast in bronze of porn stars and female academics. The event, dress code blue, was held in the Arsenale Novissimo under the title *Eco-Sexual Blue Wedding to the Sea*. Several friends of the two women performed at the event. My contribution consisted of a lecture about lingerie in art wearing Delft blue underpants designed by Hugo Kaagman. It was not specially made for the event, but colour and image (waves!) went incredibly well with the party's theme.



**Annie Sprinkle, New Year Wish**, photograph and colour, 20.2 x 12.6 cm, December 2018.

## Beth Stephens (1960)

Stephens:

*This series of bronzes juxtapose panties worn by porn stars and academics. Porn stars and academics are cultural heroes. They are both in the forefront of thought and practice around issues such as sexuality, sexism and identity politics and they are laborers in a world where sexual and intellectual currencies are regularly purchased and sold on the open market. In the academic world the brightest intellectuals are fetishized in a manner that bears certain similarities to the ways in which porn fans adore their stars. Both are sexy, powerful and compelling.*

*This work is an homage and a wink to the bravery and chutzpah of porn stars and adventurous academics, be it in the classroom or on the silver screen. They have changed the ways others see the world.*

*I have probably done 35-40 pairs by now. I'm enclosing a picture of the first four I ever did. This picture includes the panties of Sharon Mitchel, Annie Sprinkle, Veronica Heart and Vanessa del Rio.*

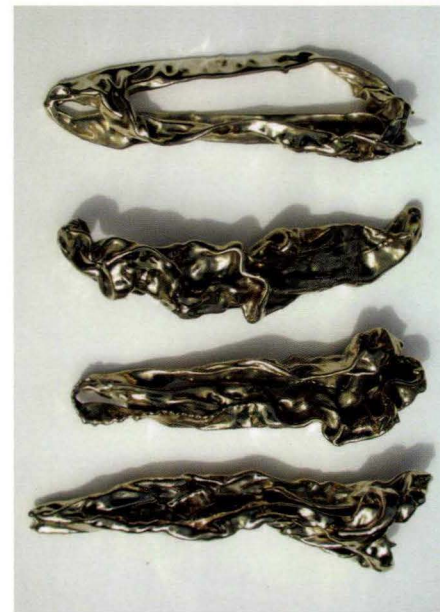


Photo and text from: Jeannette Dekeukeleire & Harry Ruhé, *Hidden Delights. Lingerie in the Arts*, Amsterdam, 2009.



## Stelarc (1946)

The Australian artist Stelarc became known through performances in which he was hung from meathooks. To me it was interesting that, because of the hanging from hooks, the skin becomes part of the carrier system. (Newspaper NRC Handelsblad, 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2005.)

To Stelarc, the human is 'obsolete', outdated, and a construction for which no spareparts are available. According to him, this 'biological machine' can be improved upon, and should be reconstructed.

The artist lived in Japan during many years. In Yokohama an artificial Third Hand was constructed on a robotarm attached to his body; it was made to the dimensions of his

real right hand. The prosthesis was used in performances between 1980 and 1998 in Japan, the USA, Europe and Australia. Once, he wanted to put a third ear on his face, just above his cheek, on his temple. It proved to be too risky: in 2007 an ear of human cartilage was sewn onto his arm. In the nineteen nineties he created Stomach Sculpture, a small capsule which can be directed from outside the body, it opens up inside the body and produces both light and sound.

In 2004, I invited Stelarc for an exhibition of unlimited art editions I curated for the Prague Biennale. He sent me 32 performance cards.

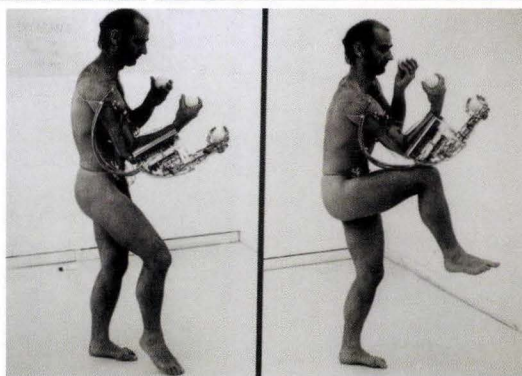
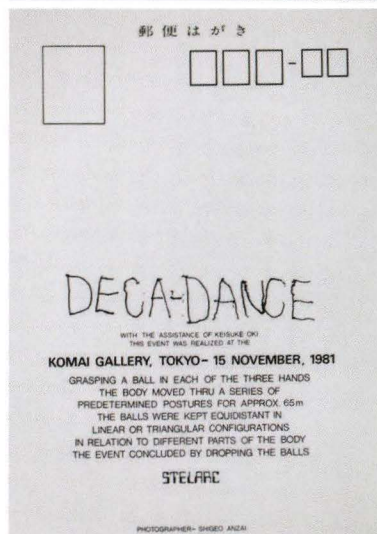
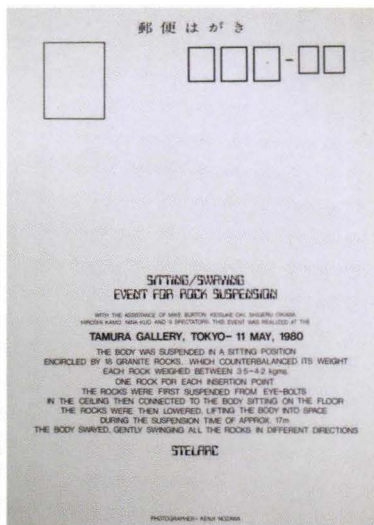
From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

## Petr Stembera (1945)

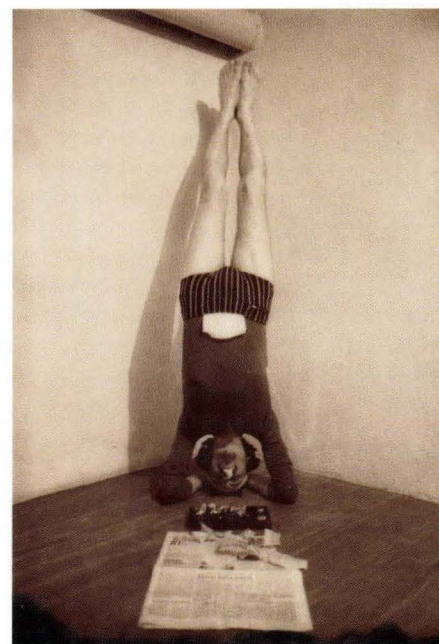
Petr Stembera from Prague is one of the most important performance artists from the nineteen seventies. Still, he has remained relatively unknown although his work was in line with that of Marina Abramović and the Viennese Actionists, mainly Günter Brus. ... *It was the very end of the 1960ies, I think in 1969 with actions, in round 1973 changing it partly into performances. I stopped it completely in the very end of 1980, round Dec. 20 or so.* (From an email to Galerie A dated 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2008).

During the preparation of *Works and Words* by art centre De Appel in 1979, I got in touch with Stembera because Galerie A also contributed to the event. He sent me pictures with descriptions of what he was doing. In the meantime I made sure he received the art magazines he wanted. He was especially interested in *Flash Art* and *Kunstforum*.

Ulay, who really appreciated Stembera, told me once that he 'did' something with Stembera. I never found out what it was.



Stelarc, 2 performance cards, 1980/1981.



Petr Stembera, *Untitled*, April 27, 1979  
(*Staying on my head I tried to swallow a newspaper as long as possible for me*), 24 x 18.1 cm. (From a series of 12 gelatin silver prints, each titled and with the copyright stamp of the artist on the reverse.)



## Jean Tinguely (1925-1991)

In November 1970, the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of Nouveau Réalisme (new realism) was celebrated in Milan with a festive manifestation. Artists did performances in several places of the city. Spoerri for example organised an *Ultima Cena, Banquet Funèbre du Nouveau Réalisme* (Last Supper, funeral banquet of new realism) in the Biffi restaurant (see also: Rotella). Meanwhile, Christo wrapped the Monumento à Vittorio Emanuele II on the Piazza della Scala. César made an *Expansion* on the Rotonda della Besana and Niki de Saint-Phalle took a shot at one of her altarpieces with a rifle. The intended projection on clouds, after an idea of Martial Raysse, fell through because there weren't any around that day.

Jean Tinguely placed a huge phallic like monument in front of the main entrance of Milan's huge cathedral. It was covered with a purple cloth with the letters NR on it. The performance began with a speech by François Dufrêne. After the monument was revealed, the public noticed that the upper part of the gold coloured sculpture began to smoke. After a series of explosions the monument started to burn pretty quickly and within half an hour 'La Vittoria' (The Victory) had destroyed itself. Ad Petersen, at the time curator of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, took pictures of the event. A year later the Amsterdam based gallery Seriaal made an edition with this material. It consisted of a print and a concertina folder; a thousand copies were made. There were two hundred numbered and signed sets, these were offered for 60 Dutch guilders each, and the unsigned copies were 25 Dutch guilders.

Petersen said that there was hardly any interest in this edition by Seriaal. He told me that many years later he had given a number of copies on commission to a gay club, hoping that they would like the phallic like image. They weren't interested either.

**Jean Tinguely, invitation card, Seriaal, Amsterdam, 1971, for: 'La Vittoria' Milan 28.XI.1970**, offset print after a photograph by Ad Petersen, 90 x 68.5 cm, and a concertina folder, folded: 15 x 11.3 cm.

## Tinkebell (1979)

*TINKEBELL provokes by exemplifying the blind spots of modern society. She confronts a public that revels in being indignant about everything that has nothing to do with them, but at the same time is very apologetic about their own actions.* (from a text on the website of TINKEBELL.)



**Tinkebell, Mail with clay from Fukushima.**



**Dearest Tinkebell**, artists' book, 704 pp., 1000 numbered copies, self-published, Amsterdam, 2009; signed copy.

This publication, made in cooperation with Coralie Vogelaar, gives an overview of the hate mail received by Tinkebell between 2004 and 2008. The book also lists the names of the senders. It has also been tried, through search machines, to find out their identity and obtain matching pictures.

Many emails refer to *My dearest cat Pinkeltje*, a project dating back to 2004. After Tinkebell broke the neck of her cat, she converted him into a handbag.

**To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow**, paper bag, 8.8 x 6.4 cm, with seeds from Fukushima, n/d, signed.

In 2015 Tinkebell was invited by Green Cross to attend a study trip to Fukushima, Japan. *I illegally picked some flowers in Tomioka, Fukushima. A completely evacuated city approximately 10 km from the heart of the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. I brought these flowers back to the Netherlands (in her pants, HR) and today, on October 21 in the year 2015, 42 people (a bit random, but mainly politicians, journalists, people who work with nuclear energy and people who believe that nuclear energy is a really good idea) received one of these flowers by mail. (The radiation level of these flowers is approximately 20% higher than the radiation level of a 'normal' flower.)*

**Awesome Bag, made in India**, screenprinted text on synthetic fabric, 45.4 x 30.7 cm, 500 copies, signed, n/d.

Text on the bag:

*So, YEA. There is this really great artist. Her name is TINKEBELL. She is saving the world. Her website is www.tinkebell.com and she is represented by the famous TORCHMeister in Amsterdam at www.torchgallery.com. Pretty awesome huh?! I know! (!) And now I am here, carrying this bag. One out of 500 pieces made. That means double awesomeness for me. Even though I know that this bag was screenprinted in India which means, like almost all screenprinted objects, that the people who did this printing will probably die from cancer. Because screenprinting without proper protection is highly (!) poisonous. But still cool I got this bag. She even signed it for me.*

**Saving the snails**, coloured beads on a snail-shell, in a cardboard box, signed, 2013. In 2012 Tinkebell decorated a large number of snails for an installation in Villa Zebra, Rotterdam.

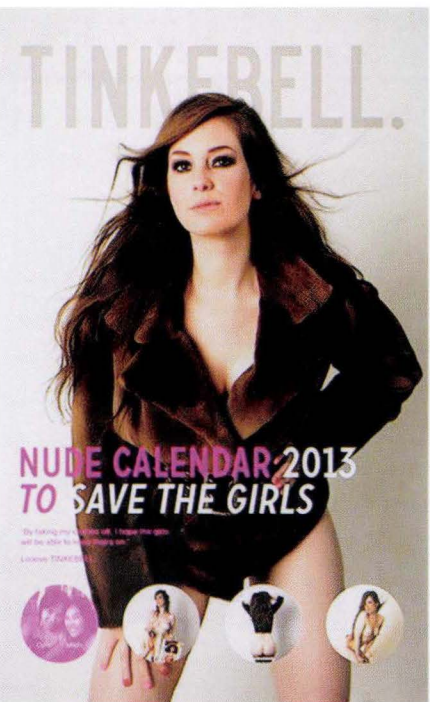
**Almost 18+ (For Your Pleasure)**, 36 pp., 1000 numbered copies, self-published in collaboration with d'jonge Hond, The Hague, 2011; signed copy, with dedication.

**On Amy Taxidermy From A True Fan..**, 32 pp. + inserts, Torch, Amsterdam, 2011.

**Wat allemaal goed zou zijn voor de wereld** (Pietje Bell lezing, Rotterdam), 40 pp., 2011.

**"How on earth should this be art"**, Atlas Contact, Amsterdam/Antwerp, 2016; signed copy





**Tinkebell, Nude Calendar 2013 To Save the Girls**, 13 sheets, 42 x 26 cm, self-published, Amsterdam, 2013; signed copy.

With her 'Save the Girls' calendar, TINKEBELL wanted to help two young girls in Manila who worked as dancers and escorts to support their family. She decided to make a calendar: 'And I'm gonna be the calendar girl.'

In exchange for donations to support the project, her nude poses were dictated by the fantasies of sponsors.

On the calendar sheet 'May' she poses as the porn star Ilona Staller, also known as La Cicciolina.

**Jean Toche** (1932-2018)

Jean Toche and Jon Hendricks were the founders of the *Guerrilla Art Action Group*. This group was causing a ruckus in the art scene between 1969 and 1976 through its subversive actions.

Toche remained politically active. For many years he used to send letters with refined print work or containing digital prints. These letters were his platform for commentary on social developments and criticism on the political establishment.

One of Toche's more frequent victims was George W. Bush.

**Rasa Todosijević** (Yugoslavia, 1945)

During the mid '70s, once it became clear that the prison on the very centrally located Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen in Amsterdam was about to be vacated, a project developer suggested to tear down the prison and surrounding buildings. He intended to construct a large apartment hotel on the site.

In early April 1978, the gatehouse at number 12 was taken over by squatters. Soon after, Galerie A started organising events in that building and kept doing it for many years.

In 1979, De Appel Foundation organised the East-West manifestation *Works and Words*, in collaboration with Galerie A and several other art institutes. Among the invited artists was Rasa Todosijević from Belgrade (his real name: Todosijević Dragoljub - '*Rasa*' is only my nickname).

He performed *Vive la France/Vive la Tyrannie* in the prison chapel.



**Rasa Todosijević, My Fluxus Piano** (created for Francesco Conz' collection of artists' pianos), photograph, 15.6 x 18.1 cm, titled, signed and dated, 2002.

- I know it is not important. But that is what I do as an artist: I piss on those who cannibalize our freedoms in the name of eradicating terror. And please don't say: "Old artists are an embarrassment!" I am aware that with old age the mind tends to go.

- What did you say?

- Pres. Bush denies that he is a cannibal and a WMD terrorist? Really?

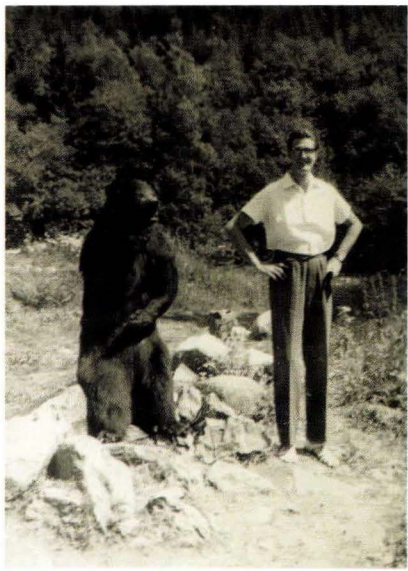
- I am crude and rude?

- No, my two rats are fine. They still sleep with me on the bed at night.

- Yes, at 72, I am in a very good shape and spirit. Ask Bush - that terrorist cannibalizing our freedoms.

Now, if you will excuse me: time that I piss again on those who cannibalize art, artists and our freedom of expression  
August 15, 2004 © jean-toche

**Miroslav Klivar, Event ('My first performance')**, gelatin silver print, 15 x 10.5 cm, signed and dated 1963 on the reverse.



**Jean Toche - I know it is not important...**, digital print, 14.1 x 10.1 cm, signed on the reverse, 2004; from a series of 365 digital prints and cards, all signed, mailed to Galerie A between 2001 and 2005.

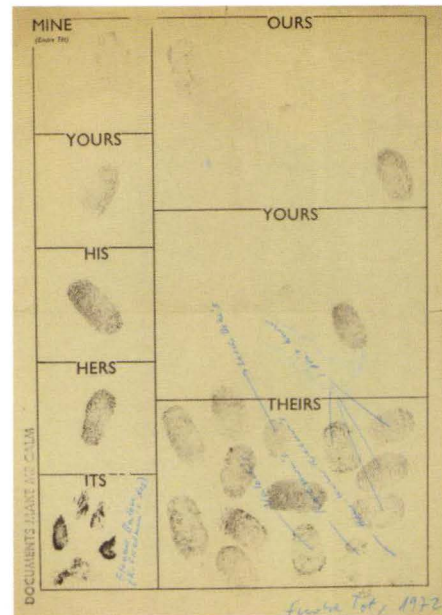


The original concept for *Works and Words* was to inform about the Eastern-European avant-garde. People involved in the workgroup and the research were: Wies Smals, Franck Gribling, Marina Abramović, Ulay, Jan Brand, Harry Ruhé, Karel Schampers, Josine van Droffelaar, Albert van der Weide and Aggie Smeets. Galerie A showed wall drawings by Endre Tót and performance photography by Gábor Attalái (Hungary), Milan Grygar (Czechoslovakia), Tibor Hajas (Hungary), Zdzislaw Jurkiewicz (Poland), Miroslav Klivar (Czechoslovakia), Milan Knížák (Czechoslovakia), Jiří Hynek Kocman (JHK) (Czechoslovakia), Jiří Kovanda (Czechoslovakia), Karel Miler (Czechoslovakia), Ladislav Novák (Czechoslovakia), Géza Perneckzy (Hungary), Jaroslav Richt (Czechoslovakia), Petr Stembera (Czechoslovakia), Janos Urban (Hungary), Nikolaus Urban (Hungary) and Jiří Valoch (Czechoslovakia).

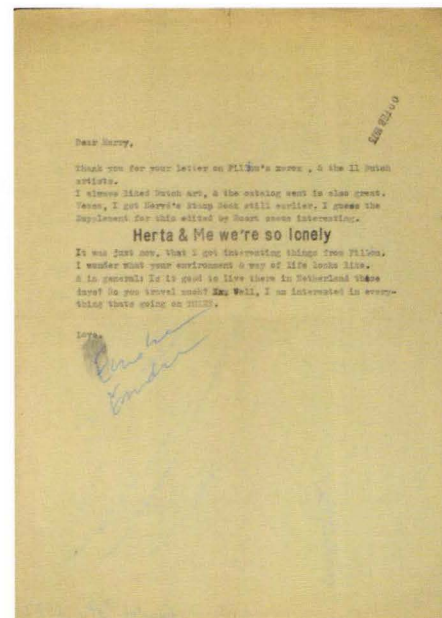
## Yasunao Tone (1935)

*Anagram for strings*, a composition for a random string instrument, was performed during the Copenhagen Fluxus Festival in 1963. Ten years later, in 1973, Hanns Sohm presented me with a part of this musical score. It consists of a constellation of open and closed circles plus a text. From the missing part I now have a photograph. This same composition was also included in the programme of the Centraal Fluxus Festival, an event organised by Willem de Ridder and myself in 2003. After it had finished, Tone sent me a note with some additional information. Apparently, the piece had been performed before, namely during Tone's first solo recital, titled *One Man Show by a Composer*.

Tone wrote: *The date of "Anagram for strings" is Fall of 1961, and first performed Feb 3, 1962.*



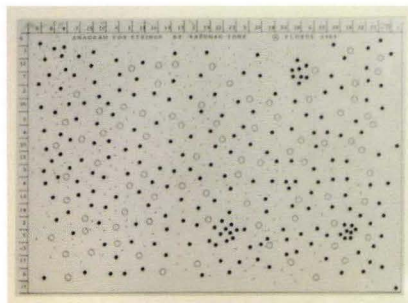
**Jiří Kovanda, *I am waiting for telefon-call***, gelatin silver print, 18.2 x 26.5 cm, titled and dated on the reverse, 1976 (catalogue: *documenta 12*, Kassel, 2007, p.101).



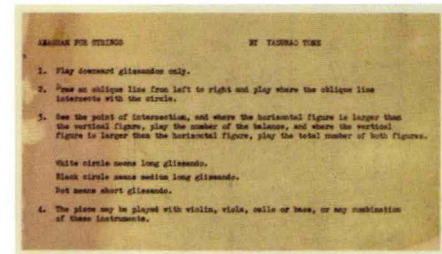
**Endre Tot, letter**, 30.5 x 20.7 cm, 1972/1975.



**Géza Perneckzy, *Der einsame Mensch***, one of three gelatin silver prints, each 17.7 x 12.6 cm, titled in pencil and stamped *GEZA PERNECZKY* on the reverse, n.d. (1973).



**Yasunao Tone, *Anagram for strings***, 1961, score (blueprint), 10.9 x 19.7 cm, distributed by Fluxus, New York, 1963 (provenance: Hanns Sohm, Markgröningen); and a photograph of the visual part of the score. With a card by Tone, in envelope, with information on the piece, signed, 2003.





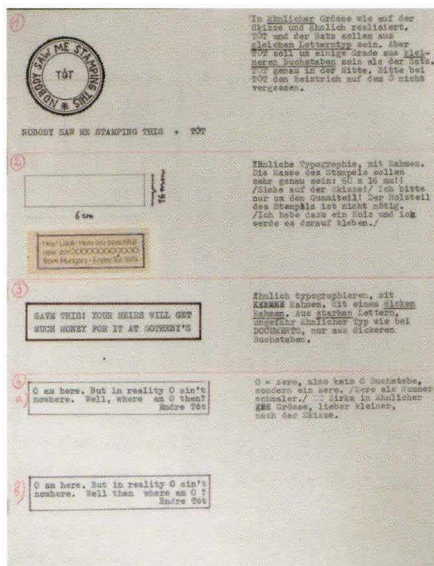
# Endre Tót (1937)

Endre Tót is one of the most interesting Mail Art-artists of the '70s. He used to send letters all over the world from Budapest. He jokingly applied self censorship to the letters; parts of the text were intelligible. (Dear Mr. H. Ruhé, O'o oooo oo O ooo ooooo oo ooo.- Oooo ooooo +ooo?)

His letters and envelopes had stamped texts like *I'M GLAD WHEN I CAN STAMP* and *DOCUMENTS MAKE ME CALM*. For this he required rubber stamps that were practically impossible to produce in communist Hungary. He depended on foreign relations such as John Armleder and his Écart group in Geneva, where an exhibition of his work could be seen in 1974. Galerie A in Amsterdam was also called for help: in 1975 Tót sent me numerous designs. The Posthumus company in the Sint Luciënsteeg made the stamps.

Not all of these rubber stamps arrived at the artist's address. Some were intercepted at the Hungarian border. The largest stamp was 12 cm in diameter and had an imprint of Tót's laughing portrait. This one did arrive in Budapest.

Tót corresponded with various Fluxus artists such as Ken Friedman and Ben Vautier. George Maciunas designed a so-called 'monogram card' for him.

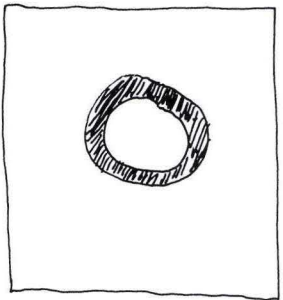


Endre Tót, design for rubber stamps, ink, typewritten text and collage on paper, 27.9 x 20.6 cm, 1974.

Endre Tót, *I'm glad if I can imitate Warhol*, stamps on postcard, 14.8 x 10.3 cm, 1975.

Endre Tót, *I'm glad if I can advertise on posters*, street action, Amsterdam, 1976.

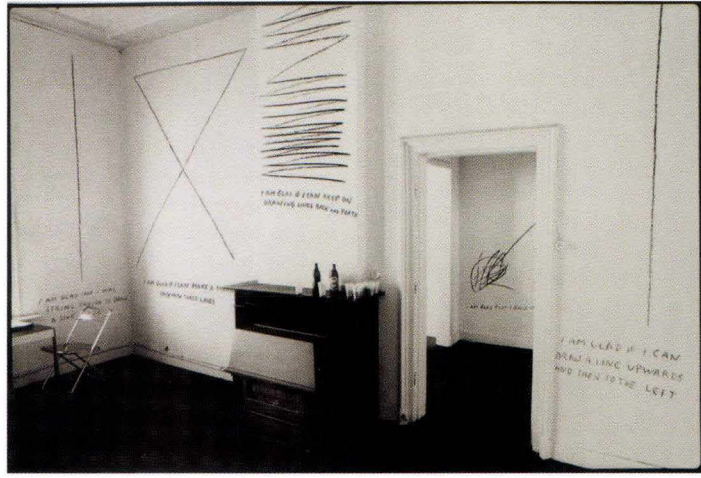
*Gladness Drawings*, exhibition wall drawings, Galerie A, Amsterdam, 1979.



*Nothing*

Card with a printed zero portrait of Endre Tót  
KF 84

**Nothing, portrait of Endre Tót** - drawing by Ken Friedman.





## Toys

**Wim Delvoe** (1965) - *Action Figure and Cloaca* (version with pig)

Cardboard box, ca. 36.5 x 34.5 x 10 cm, containing: a "WIM" Action Figure, a Cloaca Toy, a Tattoo Machine, a Cell Phone, an Outfit for Art Events, an Outfit for Farm Events and a Tattooed Pig, 3000 copies, self-published, Ghent, 2007/2008;

**Mike Kelley** (1954-2012) - *Little Friend*

Toy in a cardboard box, ca 43 x 28 x 17 cm, unnumbered edition of 800 copies, produced by P.A.M. (Perks and Mini) and Medicom, 2007. Little Friend is a blue plush toy with plastic eyes and felt hands and feet. This toy friend speaks twenty different phrases - in random order - when you squeeze the belly. Phrases you don't expect from a toy ('Hurt Me, I Don't Mind!').

Not appropriate for children...

**Cary S. Leibowitz** (1963) - *everyone I know went to the candys carnival and all I got was this lousy t-shirt*

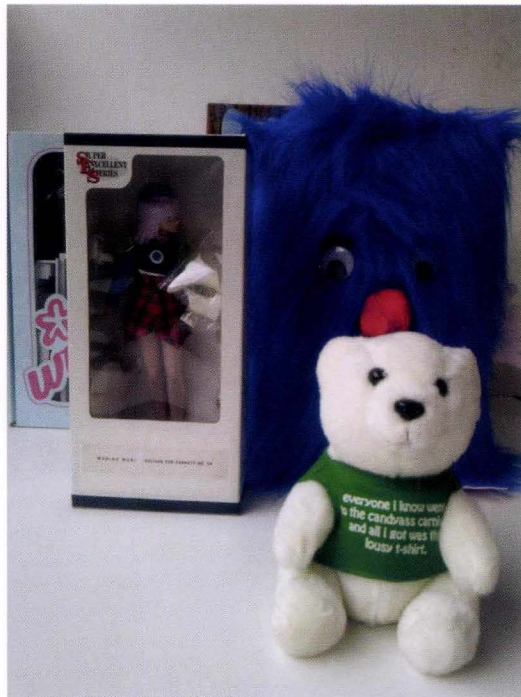
Toy bear, ca. 18 cm high, n/d. (early '90s), signed (from a collection of multiples and publications; gift from the artist).

In 2009 Leibowitz participated in the CultClub manifestation *Hidden Delights, Lingerie in the Arts*. His contribution was reproduced in the book: a six part artwork comprised of six pairs of underwear, each with a photographic self-portrait of Leibowitz masturbating.

**Mariko Mori** (1967) - *Star Doll*

Cardboard box, 32.4 x 14.3 x 8.3 cm, containing a plastic doll, 99 numbered & signed copies (certificate), Parkett, Zurich, 1998.

The piece is based on Mori's *Birth of a Star* (1995), an image in which she is dressed up as a 'virtual pop star'. (A two dimensional reproduction of Mori's installation was published by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, as an offset lithograph in an edition of 500 copies.)



## Spencer Tunick (1967)

At the end of March 2007, I was invited for a 'secret' photoshoot by Spencer Tunick, an artist who rose to fame through his installations with large groups of naked people. On Sunday morning the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, three buses were waiting at the Q-Parking on the Marnixstraat in Amsterdam. They were ready to transport eighty five participants, all selected by Dream Amsterdam, to an unknown location. About seventy people arrived on time.

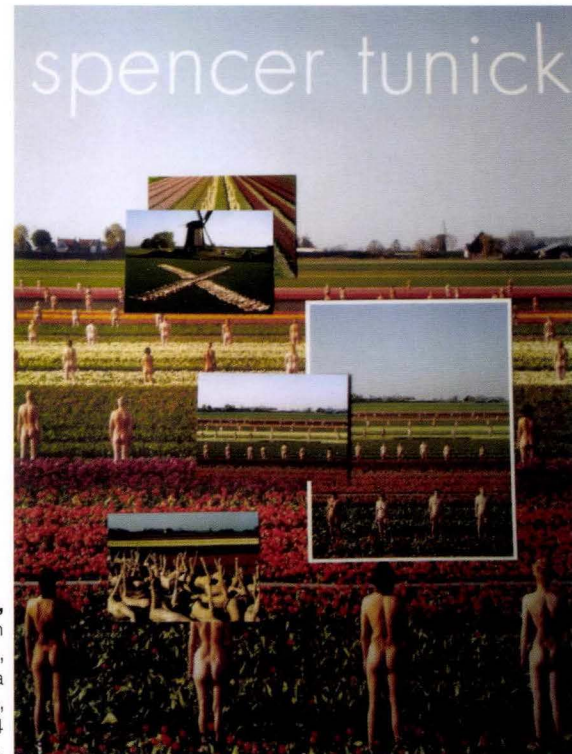
At about 8 in the morning we arrived in the village of Schermerhorn, in the province of North-Holland. Tunick wanted to take pictures of us among the tulip fields. He had four 'installations' in mind. Before taking pictures he asked people with noticeable tattoos and 'tan lines' to come forward: these people were then put at the back. At first, the group was spread out over the tulip field, a surface of a couple of acres. He made two shots: firstly, face forward to the photographer and secondly, showing him the backside.

A little while later, men and women had to form two separate rows on the little paths between the tulips. Everybody was requested to kneel and then raise both arms in the air.

After that, with the tulip field in the background, we were grouped together and everybody had to fall either to the left or to the right (but not forward or backward) on the ground. Tunick asked us all to raise one arm. This last 'installation' took place on a grassy field with a windmill in the background. Men and women, lying together sideways on their backs, formed a line which crossed in the middle. It was really beautiful as far as I could judge from my position as 'artistic material'.

The Dutch press was hardly invited, except the major Volkskrant newspaper and the minor newspaper Spits. There were, however, lots of foreign photographers and several film crews.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, Amsterdam was the venue of several 'installations', amongst others in the parking garage mentioned above. On this occasion about two thousand people joined the event. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, all participants could obtain a copy of the installation picture in which they had taken part in music hall Paradiso. The tulip field photograph was signed by the artist.



**Spencer Tunick, Netherlands 1**, photograph (colour), 25.3 x 20.3 cm, signed on verso, and with a sticker with printed signature, 2007; with the poster and 4 postcards.



## Ulay (Uwe Laysiepen, 1943)

'The thirty three year old artist Uwe L. from Amsterdam' visits the Nationalgalerie in Berlin on Sunday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1976. He removes the painting *Der Arme Poet* by the German Romantic painter Carl Spitzweg and makes a dash for it. The NRC, a Dutch newspaper, comments: *Although he was followed and captured, he managed to escape with the painting. (...) It is not clear yet if this robbery should be interpreted as a performance, and thus as a work of art.* After a while, Laysiepen enters an apartment building which is mostly inhabited by immigrants. He hangs the painting on the wall of a Turkish family. Finally he returns the painting to the museum; its value is estimated to be around two and a half million German marks.

Laysiepen is detained by the police during twenty four hours. At a later stage, he is condemned to 56 days in jail or a fine of 3800 German marks. He prefers to leave the country, but two years later, while in transfer at Munich airport, he is arrested. From: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012.

Ben is  
a pain in  
art's ass.

## Art History After Duchamp

portrait of Ben Vautier 11F'18

**Art History After Duchamp,**  
**portrait of Ben Vautier** - drawing  
by Ken Friedman.

## Ben Vautier (1935)

In July 1958 BEN bought a shop at the Rue Tonduti de l'Escarène in Nice. After this purchase he took a piece of wood and wrote *Discothèque* on it. He placed it above the entrance and started a store in second-hand records. Another sign was added to the first not much later. The records were now sold at half price. More signs were placed in front of his store which eventually gave the impression of a junk shop.

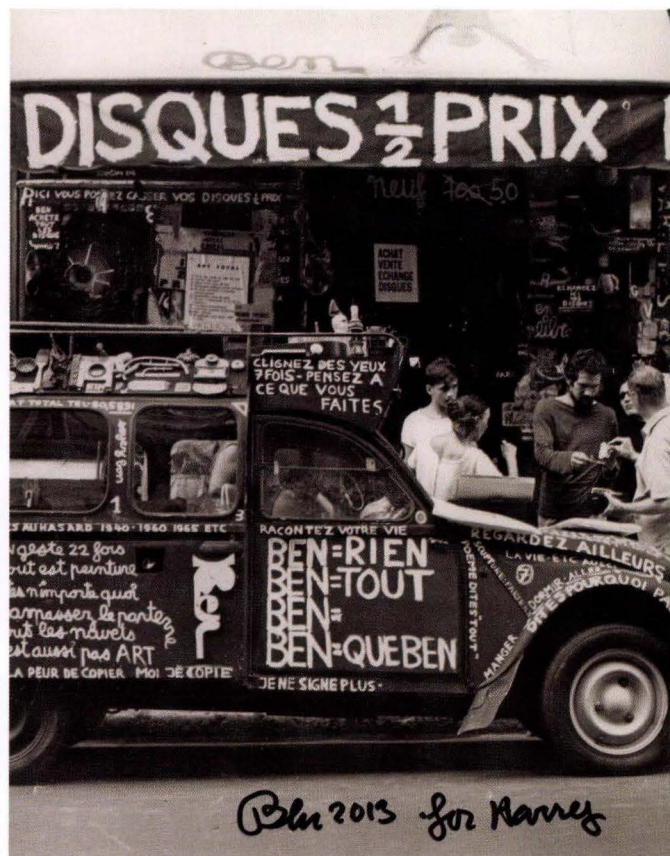
For years BEN could be found at the porch of his store. He had discussions with the people passing by and he also did performances there. Occasionally he could be seen crawling on the hood of his van: *toucher la voiture*. He also crawled on the sidewalk wrapped in a linen bag. Moving in a similar fashion he repeated this performance on a busy street.

In 1964, BEN was visited by Ad Peterson, at the time a curator of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. He witnessed BEN placing a chair on the middle of the road, again with a written text board. He sat down while the traffic raged on: *regardez moi cela suffit je suis art.* (Look at me it is enough I am art.)



**Ulay, *Der arme Poet* (1839) by Karl Spitzweg**, postcard published by Nationalgalerie, Berlin, with press cutting (NRC, December 13, 1976), together in a passepartout, 37.5 x 25.7 cm, signed and dated: 12.12.1976/04.03.2009.

**Ben Vautier in front of his shop, 32, Rue Tonduti de l'Escarène, Nice, 1964**, photo by Ad Petersen, gelatin silver print, 22.4 x 17.9 cm, signed with dedication: *Ben 2013 for Harry.*



Ben 2013 for Harry



## Ben Vautier

*Mystery Food* dates back to 1963 and was also part of the programme of the Fluxus Festival in Nice. George Maciunas converted it later into a Fluxus Edition; it was possible to buy *Mystery Food* for one dollar a tin at the Fluxshop in New York.

The collection of Galerie A also included a copy of *Mystery Food*: the tin contained tomato paste. This piece was part of the *FluxShow* in January 1976. Probably, the tin wasn't airtight and the contents started to ferment: during a warm summer in the nineteen nineties the tin 'exploded'.



Ben Vautier, *Flux Mystery Food*, tin (height around 10 centimetres), the original label has been removed and was replaced with a label designed by George Maciunas, Fluxus Edition, New York, 1966/67; with a Maciunas designed label, 5.9 x 7.6 cm, ca. 1966 - a smaller version of the label as used for the tins. According to Jon Hendricks, in an email dated 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2009, it is unknown whether there are other copies of this version.

Ben Vautier, *Bientôt 7 Jours de Recherche*, silkscreen on wallpaper, 27.8 x 31.8 cm, signed and dated, 1967.



## Ben Vautier

*BIENTOT 7 JOURS DE RECHERCHE* is a silkscreen print on wallpaper. BEN used various types of wallpaper for this edition but he also printed this text on other types of paper. I initially didn't know when it was made. I had the chance to ask BEN when I interviewed him for the book *Nice, Muze van Azuur* (publisher: Bas Lubberhuizen, Amsterdam, 2004).

For nearly forty years BEN has been living in a house at 103 Route de Saint-Pancrease in the high parts of Nice. The plaster walls are barely visible anymore. The house is decorated from top to bottom with sign plates, plaster figures, plastic advertising material and children's toys. This colourful assemblage extends into the garden where bath tubs and toilets serve as flowerpots and an antique bottle rack keeps the memory of Marcel Duchamp alive.

The side of the house is covered with graffiti (*bonne anniversaire Annie, ton Ben!*).

I walked past it and entered a kitchen filled to the brim with texts, household objects, and unrecognizable junk. There was a large wooden table in the centre. BEN shoved some things aside to make room for two cups. 'Coffee?' he asked. He moved into the sparsely lit living room and returned with half a bottle of red wine. He then pointed to the back of the room where there was a desk completely covered with books and papers, 'Annie is here as well'. I waved in the general direction of the desk. 'Annie handles the administration', he said, 'because I'm getting forgetful'. Someone waved back at me from behind the desk. 'Let's start with a drink', BEN proposed.

I realised it would be best not to delay and showed BEN the text that I had brought with me. Without hesitation he took a pencil and wrote on the backside: 1967.

Apparently, one of the first signs of dementia is short term memory loss; old memories are preserved the longest.

I believe 1967 to be the correct year.

## Ben Vautier

In 1973, BEN had a retrospective in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. As a thank you gift curator Ad Petersen received a handwritten text on wood. A couple of years ago I was able to buy it from him.

The work is not dated, but BEN probably made it sometime during the nineteen sixties. There is a poster with the text: Absolutement n'Importe Quoi est Art, designed in 1966. The magazine BEN DIEU (1962-63) features a collage titled: Cela ou n'Importe Quoi.

Ad Petersen in a letter, 2014:

*Not long after becoming the owner of n'importe quoi (1973), I received a letter from Ben with a paragraph which I am sending to you as a copy.*

*In his beautiful handwriting he says that n'importe quoi should be displayed together with a shelf with a dictionary to underline Ben's idea that **everything** can be art. In that sense n'importe quoi is of course also the essence of Ben's work. I thought his shelf idea was a bit over the top and thus I never made it. Ben always likes to emphasize his idea, so that shelf is not really necessary, is it?*



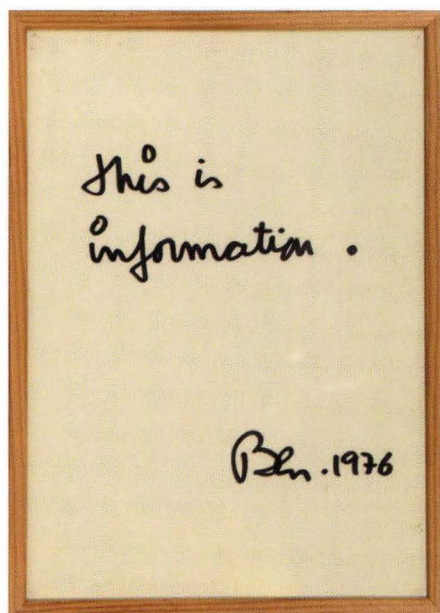
Ben Vautier, *n'importe quoi*, paint on wood, ca. 48.5 x 118.5, n/d; with a signed photo certificate (July 2014).



## Ben Vautier

In October 1972 Peter van Beveren started sending cards to artists and art institutes across the world. He asked the recipients to put him on their mailing lists: *all the information is listed in our card index, please send all your information to the art information centre, p.o. box 318, 4330 ah Middelburg, holland.*

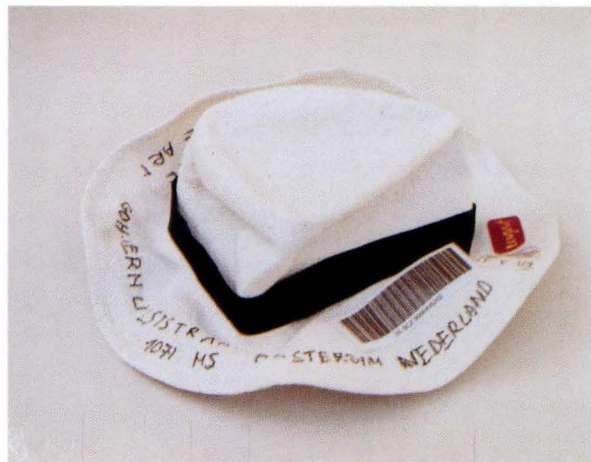
BEN sent him an A4 sheet of paper with a handwritten text: *this is information.*



**Ben Vautier, *this is information***, marker on paper, 29.6 x 21 cm, signed and dated: 1976.

## Ben Vautier, *Summer hat*

ca. 35 x 30 x 12 cm, signed, 2012.



## Ben Vautier

Unlike many other artists who don't appreciate criticism of their work, BEN does not mind. I got to see some of his recent works during a visit in the '90s. There were colourful panels decorated with all sorts of objects (a mirror, paint buckets) as well as texts such as *Rien de Nouveau (Nothing New)*. I mentioned that the panels looked cheerful but lacked the sharpness of his work from the '60s. He nodded in confirmation: 'I hear that more often'. During an exhibition in the Amsterdam Gallery Reflex in 1992 a journalist asked BEN the following question, 'if he was required to choose one item from his own displayed work, which would it be? The artist, who was lying in a bed during the vernissage, took a look around. Shaking his head he noted there was nothing present that he would want for himself.

My address was not included in the gallery's mailing list, but BEN gave me an invitation at the opening. It had a printed text: *to be happy in amsterdam*. BEN added with a marker: *for Harry Ruhé the first man in Amsterdam to invent Fluxus*. This was not quite true as Fluxus was first introduced to the Netherlands by Willem de Ridder. I decided to let it be.

Twenty years later the CultClub invited BEN for a Fluxus dinner on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December in 2012. He didn't come.

A white summer hat arrived by mail on Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> of January in 2013. The name and address were written on it in capital letters. The hat was also properly prepaid and stamped. As it turned out, BEN felt he was not fit enough to travel to Amsterdam. He had sent his hat instead.

## VICE-Versand - *Zeitkunst im Haushalt / Art in the Household*

Wolfgang Feelisch was the owner of a small iron ware factory in the German town of Remscheid. In 1968 he invited some artists to think up art works that could be reproduced in unlimited quantities. They were first priced at 8 German marks each (just over 4 euros). The distribution had to take place through the post: VICE-Versand (VICE-Mailing). Several Fluxus related artists participated, but artists from other movements were also represented with Fluxus-like work. Most works were signed, but since the edition was unlimited this didn't influence the price at all. The low price was part of the project.

(See also: Robert Filliou - *Optimistic Boxes*.)

**Albrecht D.** (Dietrich Albrecht), *Ordnung*, 1969 (not in the Galerie A collection).

**Eric Andersen.**<sup>18</sup>

**Gabor Altorjay**, *Kurzschlussobjekt* (material able to cut the energy supply in police stations), 27.5 x 5 x 5 cm, unlimited unsigned edition, 1969.

**Hans Peter Alvermann**, *Bundesdeutsches Notstandsschwein*, ca. 10 cm high, unlimited signed/dated edition, 1965/68; Gallery A's copy dated: 1972.

**Nino Barbieri**, *Frühstücksstück*, 7.6 x 5.4 x 5.4 cm, unlimited edition, signed & dated, 1969.

**Gianfranco Baruchello**, *TV-Highlights*, 17.6 x 25 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.

**Thomas Bayle**, *Zwangsjacke - Deutsche Charakterfaser*, ca. 40 x 26 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.

**Joseph Beuys**, *INTUITION ... statt Kochbuch*, 30.5 x 21 x 6 cm, unlimited edition, signed and dated, 1968 (in the Gallery A collection: an early 'nailed' copy).<sup>19</sup>

**George Brecht**, *Sonnensalz*. From the anthology of *misunderstandings*, 14 x 7.2 x 4.3 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969. >>

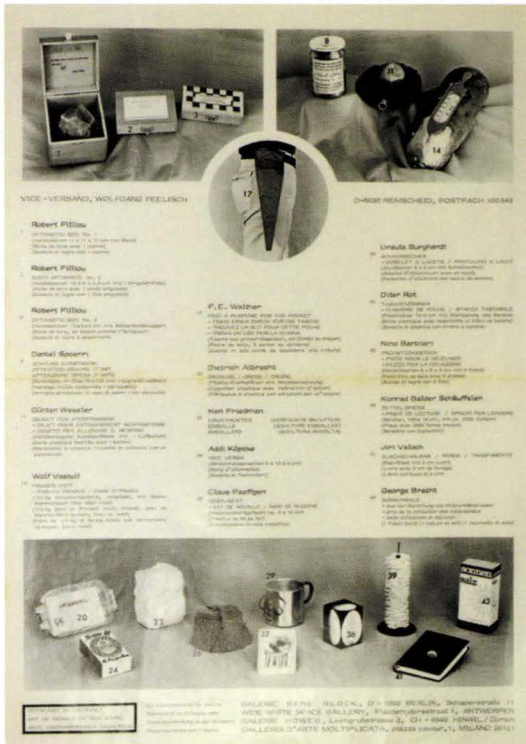
<sup>18</sup> Eric Andersen was also asked to come up with a work for VICE-Versand. The artist decided that the price should be German marks 0.00 and sent Feelisch a box with plastic coffee cups. In the beginning of the nineteen seventies Andersen made a promotion card measuring 20.1 x 15 cm with the image of a small plastic box (DM 0.00). Edition Hundertmark was mentioned as the distributor.

Eric Andersen: *The proposals for VICE-Versand and Hundertmark are indeed the same. The 'cup' is a mini wastebasket and the signatures on selfadhesive labels to be fastened wherever. I was at the time a master in forging other peoples signatures and my favorites were Napoleon, Leonardo da Vinci, Bertrand Russell, Marat, Henry VIII etc. I still have some of these good peoples' signatures around somewhere.* (From an email to Galerie A, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015.)

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Beuys' most popular multiple was *Intuition*, a small wooden box with two pencil lines and a handwritten text. Feelisch once told me that between 12.000 and 15.000 copies of *Intuition*-boxes were produced.

In 1983, two and a half years before Beuys passed away, copies of this particular box were still sold by Feelisch for just twenty seven German marks (as a dealer I got a thirty percent discount). Six years later, during an auction in London two such boxes respectively fetched twelve hundred and thirteen hundred British pounds.





**Ursula Burghardt, Schnürbecher, (h) 8 x 12 cm, unlimited edition, initialed in the metal and dated: 70, 1969/70.**

**Erik Dietman, Projekt, 16.7 x 22.3 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Robert Filliou, Optimistic Box No.1, 10.7 x 10.4 x 10.4 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1968.**

**Robert Filliou, Optimistic Box No.2, 3.5 x 12.7 x 9.7 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Robert Filliou, Optimistic Box No.3, 2.9 x 11.9 x 6 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Robert Filliou, Optimistic Box no.4 and 5, ca. 10.5 x 15.5 x 10 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1981 (concept: 1968).**

**Ken Friedman, Eingepacktes (Verpackte Skulptur), ca. 13 x 7 x 7 cm, unlimited unsigned edition, 1969.**

**Karl Gerstner, Reserviert für, 18 x 18 x 4.5 cm, unlimited unsigned edition, 1969.**

**Dick Higgins, This is not an art work by me, multiple, 25.1 x 19.5 cm, unlimited edition, printed signature, 1969.**

**Jörg Immendorff, Lidl-Sport-Ringmatte, ca. 26 x 19 cm, unlimited unsigned edition, 1969.**

**Anna Maria Jehle, Playsand, 1969 (not in the Gallery A collection).**

**Mauricio Kagel, Saitensprung, 30 x 20 x 2 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1968.<sup>20</sup>**

**Milan Knížák, Halsschmuck, ca. 41 x 30 cm, unlimited unsigned edition, 1969.**

**Addi Köpcke, Vice Versa, 1969 (not in the Gallery A collection).**

**C.O. Paeffgen, Rost-Nest, 13.5 x 5.5 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Robin Page, Bratwurst mit Henkel, 7.5 x 10.2 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Dieter Roth, Taschenzimmer, ca. 10 x 7 x 2 cm, in the original card-board box, unlimited edition, signed and dated, 1968; this copy dated: 80.**

**Konrad Balder Schäuffelen, Zettelspiel, ca. 19 x 8 x 8 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Daniel Spoerri, Achtung Kunstwerk, (h) 13 x 8.5 cm diameter, unlimited edition, numbered & signed, 1968.**

**Klaus Staeck, Wir setzen uns durch, unlimited signed edition, ca. 21 x 11 x 5 cm, 1968; this copy dated: 69.**

**Andre Thomkins, Zahnschutz gegen**

**Gummiparagraphen, ca. 5 x 10.5 cm, boxed, unlimited edition, signed & dated, 1968.**

**Günther Uecker, Do it yourself, ca. 34 x 17 x 8 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Timm Ulrichs, Spiel-Dose, (h) 6.7 x 10.2 cm diameter, unlimited signed edition, 1966/68.**

**Jirí Valoch, Durchschaubar, object-book, 9.6 x 6.9 x 0.9 cm, unlimited edition, stamp-signed, 1969.**

**Ben Vautier, Horizontal and vertical line, 2 printed cards, 12 x 12 cm each, each on a string, unlimited edition, signed & dated, 1968; this copy dated: 69.**

**Wolf Vostell, Prager Brot, this copy: ca. 26 x 15.5 x 10 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1968.**

**Franz Erhard Walther, Find a purpose for the pocket, 37 x 14.5 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Günter Weseler, Objekt für Atemtraining, round with a diameter of ca. 13 cm, height ca. 3 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**Stefan Wewerka, Kleiderbügel, ca. 22 x 19 cm, unlimited signed edition, 1969.**

**(Not reproduced) Wolfgang Feelisch, in'sait, bookobject (wood, paper cover), ca. 20 x 13 x 2 cm, 1969.**

<sup>20</sup> I once visited a performance by Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008): *Zwei-Mann-Orchester*. It took place at De Brakke Grond in Amsterdam on June 27, 1974. Kagel had constructed an orchestra machine as a 'solution to the current orchestra crisis'. It required only two musicians.

Not all critics were convinced. Het Parool described the composer as a muddlehead and the event as an 'evening full of humbug that ended in boredom'. I personally loved it. The construction had horns, washboards and kitchen utensils. It reminded me of the music machines by Joe Jones.

After the performance I asked Kagel whether he had been involved in Fluxus. He denied it. I got the impression that he considered Fluxus to be nonsense. It seemed as if he, being a serious composer, felt he had nothing to do with Fluxus.

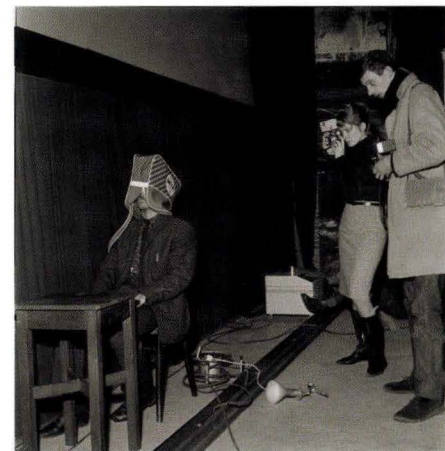
At the Amsterdam gallery Seriaal I bought a *Saitensprung* for twelve guilders and fifty cents. This musical instrument was made out of a piece of hardboard, a number of small metal hooks and four red elastics. By plucking these lightly - somewhat like a violin player plucking the strings - you would create sounds. There was also a manual:

1. While plucking the strings keep the instrument very close to the ear.
2. The order of the hooks on the plank with holes can be changed. Every random combination would be right.
3. In case you want a stereophonic sound, order a second SAITENSPRUNG and hold it against your free ear.
4. In case you own Joseph Beuys' "... statt Kochbuch", you could use it as a resonance object for this plucking instrument. Your intuition will tell you how.



## Wolf Vostell (1932-1998)

Vostell's film *'Sun in your head'*, made in 1963, is also known as *Fluxfilm 23*. Cameraman was Edo Jansen. The film was shown on January 11, 1964, in the Leidseplein Theater, Amsterdam, with participation by the public.  
(See also: Stanley Brouwn.)



**Presentation of Vostell's film *'Sun in your head'*, Leidseplein Theater, Amsterdam, January 11, 1964**, with Stanley Brouwn performing, impersonating a KLM passenger while Hans de Rijk and Dorine van der Klei are taking pictures; photo by Igno Cuypers.



**Audience, with Monique Smit producing *'the noise of an aeroplane'* during the film event *'Sun in your head'***, photo by Igno Cuypers.

**Wolf Vostell, *Prager Brot***, loaf of bread, thermometer and golden paint; this copy ca. 26 x 15.5 x 10 cm, signed, unlimited edition, VICE-Versand, Remscheid, 1968.



## Wolf Vostell

Amongst the multiples published by VICE-Versand during the late nineteen sixties, Wolf Vostell's *Prager Brot* is one of their best known editions. From the upper part of a loaf of bread a strip has been cut in which a thermometer has been inserted. The bread was partly covered with golden paint. Vostell was inspired by television images from the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Their resistance was illustrated by images from a bakery which sold loaves of bread where the upper part was completed with 'baked in' words like 'Dubček', or the Czech word for 'Peace'.

Vostell's bread object, which was released onto the market with the motto *Kunst im Haushalt*, cost eight German marks in 1968. Many copies must have been distributed, but there seem hardly any left. Probably most got lost: they either broke or were eaten by mice. Galerie A's copy was once infested with moths. Apparently, these insects seem to prefer bread over a woollen jumper: it took me a lot of effort to remove the moths from the work of art.

## Wolf Vostell

Wolf Vostell showed his *Décollages* and *Verwischungen* during an exhibition in the Kunsthandel Monet, Amsterdam, in 1962. The exhibition didn't quite match the gallery programme but gallery owner Joop Smid had been told by 'Stedelijk' director Sandberg that the German artist was very promising. The night of the opening saw performances by Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Tomas Schmit and others. Surprisingly, Sandberg never showed any works by Vostell in his own museum. As it turned out, this was still bothering him when I visited the artist in Berlin in the late '70s. Vostell blamed the Second World War; the Germans were still disliked by the Dutch. From this visit I remember, among other things, a number of assemblages with large blocks of concrete. Vostell used this material a lot in his works. An Opel embedded in concrete can be found at a roadside in Cologne: *Ruhender Verkehr*. It was placed there in 1969.

His *Betonbuch* dates from the same period. It consists of the publication *Betonierungen* embedded in concrete.



**Wolf Vostell, *Betonbuch***, book and concrete, ca. 37 x 25.5 x 5 cm, 100 signed and numbered copies, Edition Howeg, Hinwil (Switzerland), 1971. (With the publication: *Betonierungen*, 26 sheets in a transparent plastic box, 400 numbered and signed copies, Edition Howeg, Hinwil, 1971.)



## Robert Watts (1923-1988)

Quite a few artists have designed stamps for their own use. In 1961, Robert Watts was among the first. That same year he invented the *stamp dispenser*: he changed the exterior of an existing stamp machine and filled it with his own stamps.

Around 1964, the Watts-stamps could be acquired in a variety of colours at the New York Fluxshop via mail-order.

The artist kept designing stamps well into the nineteen eighties and sometimes even 'recycled' old motifs.

The Italian publisher Francesco Conz made 'blow-ups' of Watts' designs: sheets of stamps were then reproduced as large silkscreens on textile.

## Robert Watts

*Implosions* was a collaboration of George Maciunas, Robert Watts and Herman Fine.

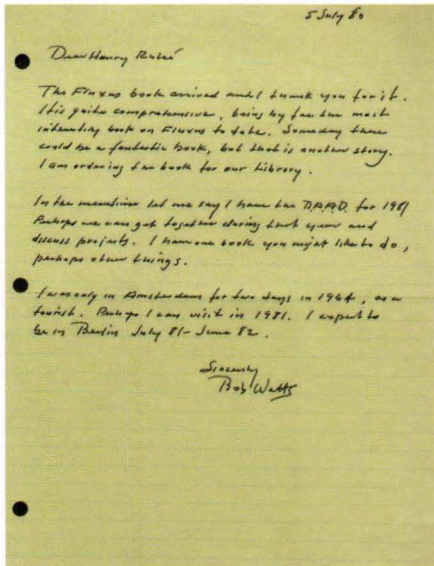
This collective intended to publish large editions of Fluxus products and distribute them commercially. Fine was supposed to arrange the distribution of the materials.

*Model for Implosions* is a transparent bathing suit. It is possibly meant as a prototype. The Fluxus Codex of Jon Hendricks does not list it as an edition.

Hendricks does write about a bathing suit designed by Watts with a picture of a naked female body on it. The woman wearing the suit was supposed to look nude when seen from a distance. It was mentioned in a Fluxnewsletter in 1967 (... *bathing suit*

*imprinted with similar subjects as aprons ...*). According to Hendricks this bathing suit has never actually been taken into production.

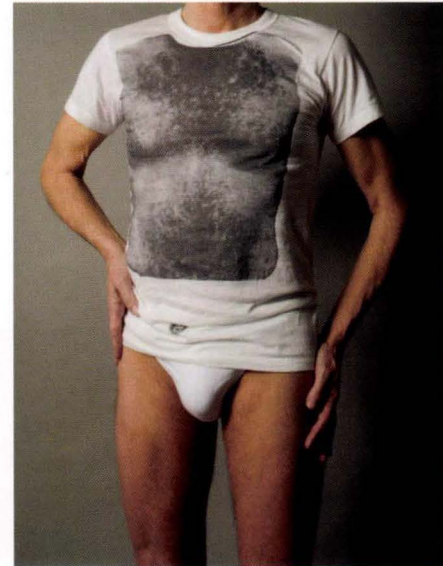
The *Male Undershirt* was worn by the musicians at the Fluxorchestra Concert in Carnegie Recital Hall, New York, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 1965. The shirts were later offered for sale by Fluxus/New York.



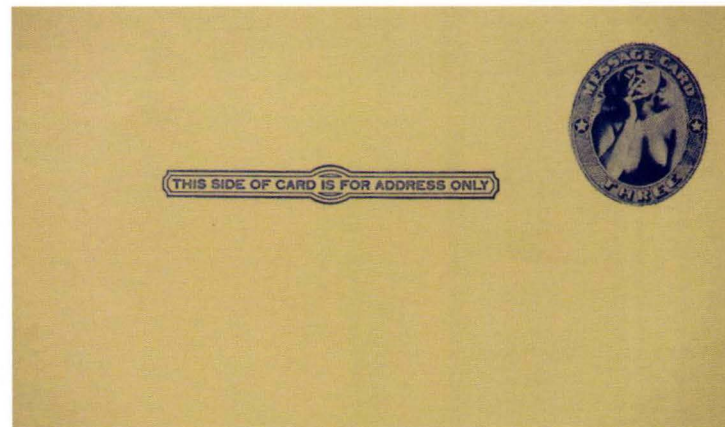
Robert Watts, letter to Galerie A, signed and dated: 5 July 80, and envelope (on the reverse a Watts stamp from the series *SAFE POST*, 1962).



Robert Watts, 1967. *Model for Implosions. Nude Bathing Suit*, original colour slide, 5 x 5 cm, with handwritten title in pencil by Watts.



Robert Watts, *Male Undershirt*, silkscreen print on T-shirt, ca. 73 x 73 cm, 1965 (photo: 2009).



Robert Watts, *Message Card Three*, postcard, 8.3 x 13.9 cm, self-published (later distributed by Fluxus), ca. 1961.



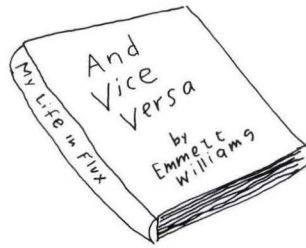
## Robert Watts

In the early '60s Robert Watts took part in many important group exhibitions with his Pop Art related works. He participated in *Assemblage* (MoMA, 1961) and showed in renowned galleries such as the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York.

It wasn't long until Watts started looking for other ways to present his work. He was part of the Fluxus movement from the early beginning. Objects and publications made by him were sold at low prices at the Fluxshop in New York.

His *Signatures* from 1965 are some of his best works. These are yellow, blue or red neon sculptures of signatures by artists such as Goya, Manet and Rauschenberg. I wrote Watts in 1987 because I was interested in having a *Rembrandt Signature* for display in the window-sill of Galerie A. He answered that the *Neon Signatures* were not produced in editions. Although two *Rembrandts* were made, many *Signatures* were also broken. He proposed that I had a new one made in Amsterdam.

In 1988, I let Watts know that the 'Rembrandt' was finished and I promised to send him pictures of the neon object. He didn't answer. Early September I heard that the artist had passed away.



*He told wonderful stories.  
Some of them were true.  
If he liked you, he used your  
name. If he didn't, he did  
not name you - but he made  
sure that people knew who  
the story was about. I  
liked him a lot ... most of  
the time.*

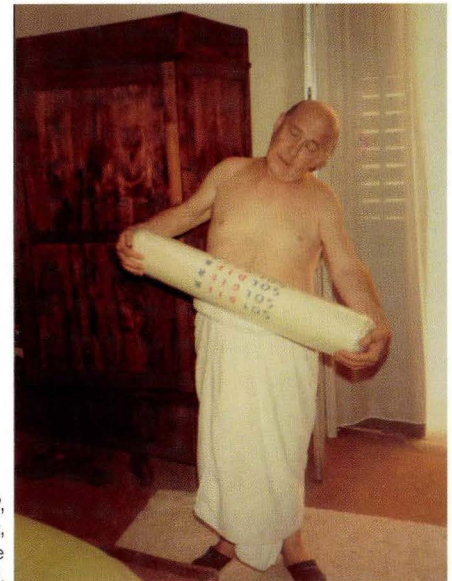
And Vice Versa  
Portrait of Emmett Williams  
KF '93

## Emmett Williams (1925-2007)

*SOLDIER*, a well-known work by Emmett Williams, was released in 1985 by Edizioni Francesco Conz as a silkscreen print on canvas. The photograph shows the artist holding a rolled-up copy in his hands.

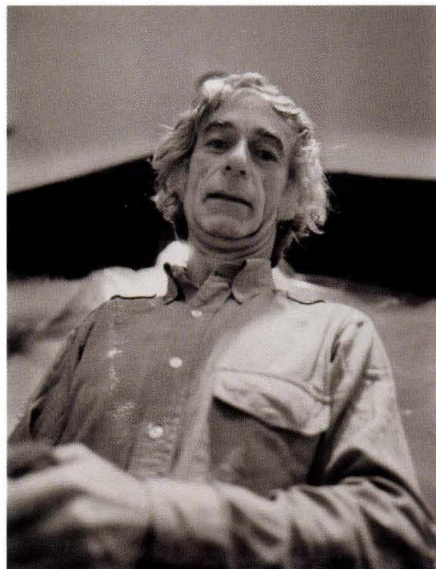
At the time, Williams was staying at Conz' visitors centre located at Vicolo Quadrelli 7 in Verona.

The photo was taken by Francesco Conz; he usually took lots of photos of the artists he worked with.

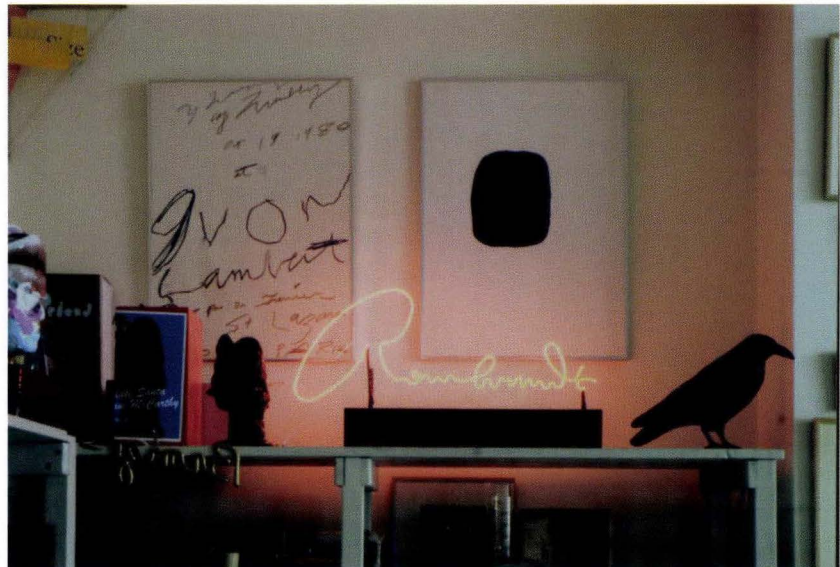


**And Vice Versa, portrait of Emmett Williams -**  
drawing by Ken Friedman.

**Emmett Williams with the edition SOLDIER,**  
photograph by Francesco Conz,  
23.7 x 18 cm, with the stamp of the  
Archivio Conz on the reverse, 1985.



**Robert Watts, documenta 5, Kassel, 1972;**  
photo by Dick Higgins, gelatin silver print,  
29.9 x 20 cm, with the stamps of Higgins and the  
Archivio Francesco Conz (with Conz' signature) on  
the reverse.



**Robert Watts, Rembrandt, neon sculpture, ca.**  
11.5 x 70 x (h) 39 cm, 1965/87;  
with a letter, signed and dated: 12/12/87.



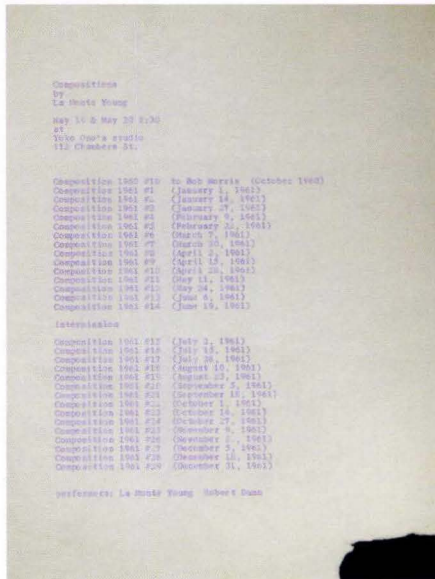
## La Monte Young (1935) & Marian Zazeela (1940)

During one of my visits to New York, Jon Hendricks once took me to a chamber concert by La Monte Young. I was familiar with his drone music from Dream House, the light and sound installation he had presented in 1972, together with his wife Marian Zazeela, during the 5<sup>th</sup> documenta in the German city of Kassel.

The concert took place in La Monte's loft on 311 Church Street: upstairs, just above where he lived on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. According to Hendricks, it was a special occasion and a rare event. Only a few people were present. A real gift!

The beautiful ambience and the sacred atmosphere, the solemn entrance of the musicians and the duration of the concert reminded me of the Roman Catholic masses I had grown up with, notably the hours long High Mass on Sunday. It made me sleepy in a pleasant way.

La Monte Young can be considered as the patriarch of Minimal Music. It is interesting to see how this work relates to his Fluxus events from 1960. Several scores from those days got directions like: 'to be held for a long time', or: 'the composition may be of any duration'. One of the best known works is the delightful *Composition 1960 # 10* - Draw a straight line and follow it.



**Compositions by La Monte Young**, Yoko Ono's Studio, New York, May 19 & 20, 1961; invitation/programme, 27.9 x 21.6 cm.

## Gesamtkunstwerk

Draw a straight line  
and control the  
copyright and all  
performance rights.

Portrait of La Monte Young  
1991

### Gesamtkunstwerk, portrait of La Monte Young - drawing by Ken Friedman.

Not reproduced here: **Composition 1960 #2**, printed score with handwritten annotations, 8.8 x 21.6 cm, signed and dated: 5.5.60.

The legendary exhibition *Happening & Fluxus* in the Kölnischer Kunstverein (1970) largely constituted of material from the Archiv Hanns Sohm in Markgröningen.

I went to visit Sohm not long after *Happening & Fluxus*. Not only did he live in his archive, but he was practically an archive himself. He could talk for hours about the countless special publications that were neatly organised in folders, binders and boxes.

As it turned out he also owned a large collection of duplicates. He allowed me to take whatever I wanted from this 'Duplikatensammlung'. Because, according to Sohm, few people were interested in these type of things either way.

The lengthy trip back to Amsterdam gave me plenty of time to study some of the works. Two event scores by La Monte Young caught my eye. The signature below the performance instructions seemed to be handwritten rather than printed. I checked one of the sheets with a wet finger; my suspicions were confirmed. This particular score is still part of my collection. Unfortunately it still shows the effects of my little investigation. The second copy was also signed. During a financially less successful time I ended up selling it to the American Fluxus collector Gilbert B. Silverman.

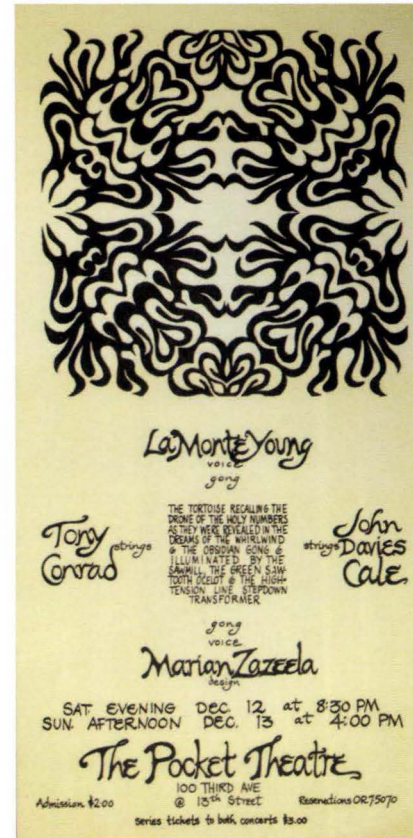
**ZAJ** - José Luis Castillejo (1930-2014), Walter Marchetti (1931-2015), Juan Hidalgo (1927-2018)

The founders of ZAJ were Hidalgo and Marchetti, together with others. If you read carefully *Silence* by John Cage you will notice that Cage mentions Hidalgo and Marchetti and is interested in what they do. He does not mention Fluxus. Hidalgo and Marchetti worked with Cage in Milano in 1959. Zaj was founded in 1964, or before, I do not know. (...)

You should write Hidalgo and Marchetti about ZAJ. They are ZAJ. I am a writer who worked for and in Zaj. But that is past.

From a letter by José Luis Castillejo: signed and dated: February 6, 1977.

Castillejo was a writer and a diplomat. He was the consul of Spain in Germany when I met him in 1977. Castillejo took part in various activities by the Spanish ZAJ; this was a group related to Fluxus.



**The Pocket Theatre, New York, 1964**, invitation, design: Marian Zazeela, 25.9 x 12.6 cm.



## Zhu Yu (1970)

In the autumn of the year 2000, the third *Shanghai Biennale* takes place. Works that are too controversial for this event are presented at the *FUCK OFF* show in the Eastlink Gallery. Ai Weiwei and Feng Boyi are in charge. The inauguration takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November.

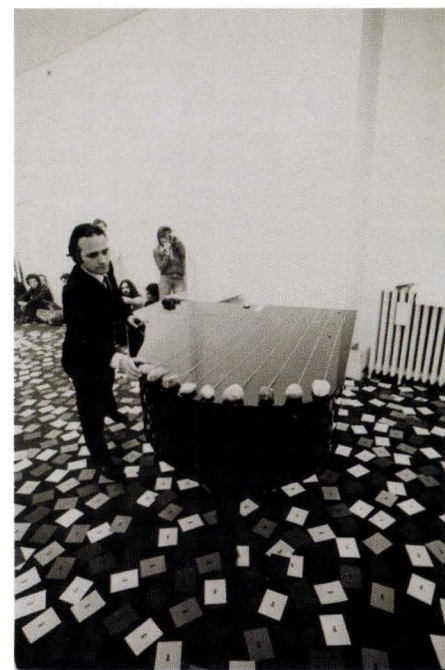
Yang Zhichao, a body-art artist, has grass planted on his back, without being sedated. Sun Yuan also presents a much commented on project, a hermetically sealed glass case with an animal's skeleton inside. According to him, the case contains a poisonous gas. The moment it breaks it will kill everybody nearby. The most controversial work on display at the exhibition is Zhu Yu's *Eating People*. Photographs show the artist preparing a dish and eating what looks like a baby's dead body.

A couple of days after the police barge in. The exhibition, which should have lasted until the 4<sup>th</sup> of December, is prematurely closed. In 2001, one of the images from the series lands on internet and this leads to an investigation by the FBI and Scotland Yard. According to Zhu Yu, he used a foetus stolen from a 'medical school'. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2003, the BBC shows a documentary about new Chinese art: Beijing Swings. Attention is also being paid to Zhu Yu's *Eating People*. The BBC distance themselves beforehand of this particular art work and warn the public in advance for shocking images.

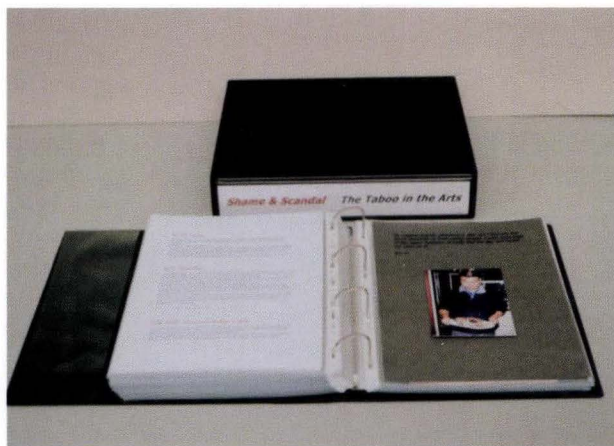
Zhu Yu: *No religion forbids cannibalism. Nor can I find any law which prevents us from eating people. I took advantage of the space between morality and the law and based my work on it.* (BBC News).

## Ai Weiwei (1957)

In November 2011, Ai Weiwei is investigated by the Chinese authorities. The reason: some 'pornographic images', nude photographs of the artist and four women presented under the title *One Tiger, Eight Breasts*. The images are published in the August edition of the South China Morning Post and also several international newspapers. According to the artist, the images were not about sex, but about 'openness'. To support his stance, many Chinese fans undress, are having nude photographs taken and spread these via blogs and Twitter.



**ZAJ, Walter Marchetti performing "Musica per Pianoforte N.5"**, Galleria Multhipla, Milan, April 8, 1975; gelatin silver print, 23.9 x 30.8 cm. (Part of a collection of ZAJ photographs - partly signed - artists' books and printed matter, most of them 1960s.)



**Zhu Yu, *Eating People* (2000)**, photograph and text in: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, by Harry Ruhé & Jeannette Dekeukeleire, published by CultClub, Amsterdam, 2012. (Planned edition: 100 copies, each copy containing original photographs, posters, and invitation cards [partly vintage], and a DVD; no more than 59 numbered copies were produced.)

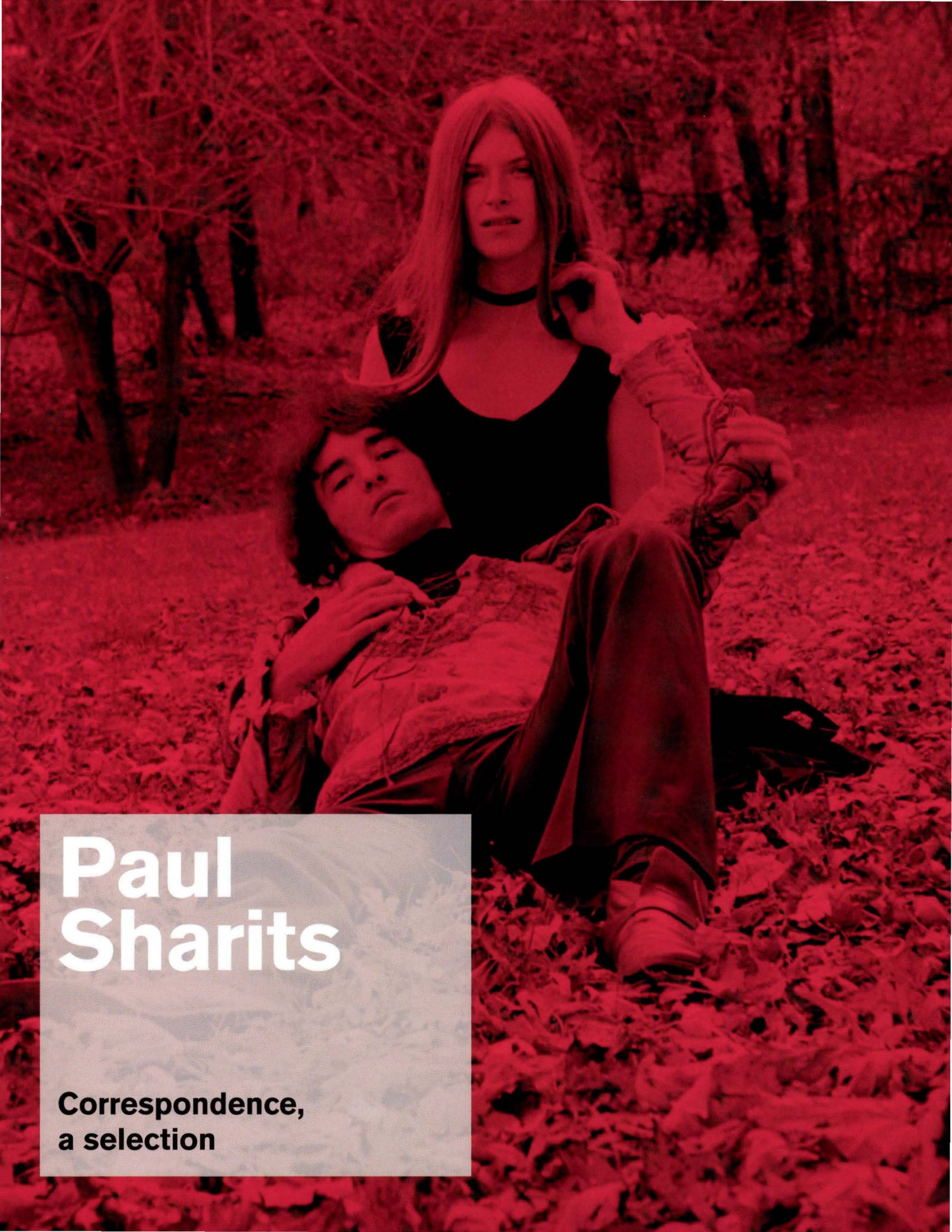


**Chinezen stellen naakte daad**, De Volkskrant, 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2011; 2 pages, included in: *Shame & Scandal. The Taboo in the Arts*, Amsterdam, 2012.





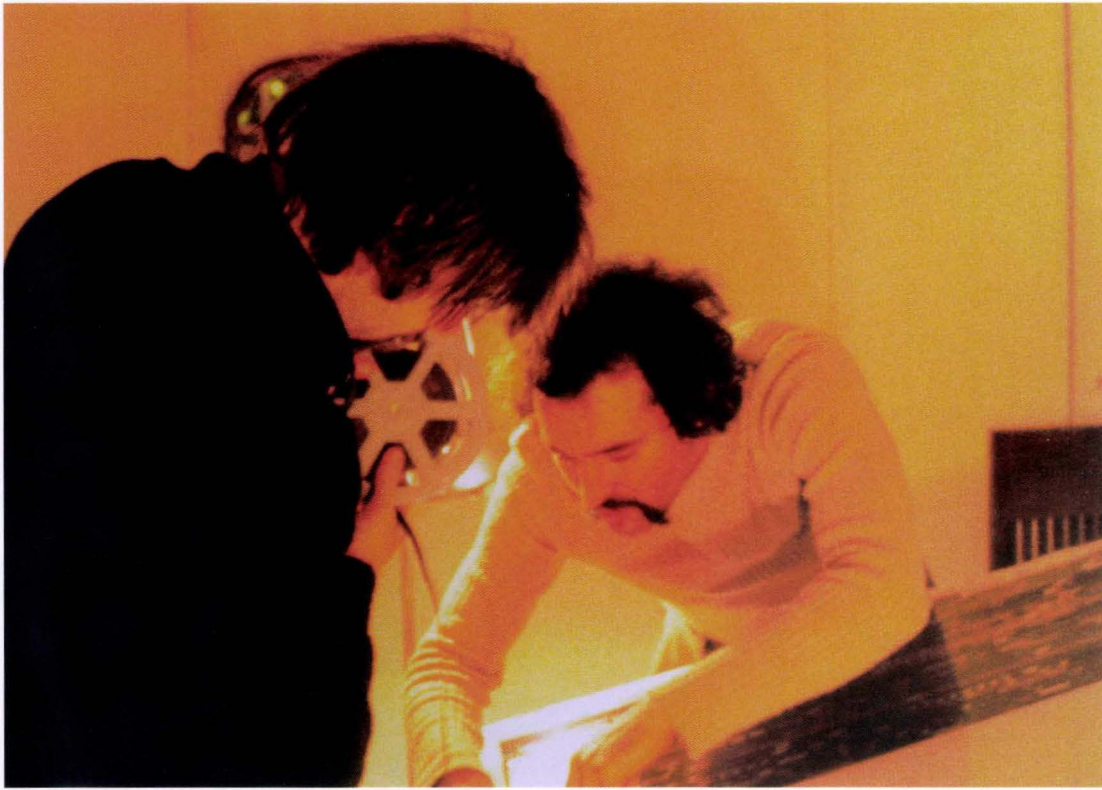




# Paul Sharits

**Correspondence,  
a selection**





**Paul Sharits (with the assistance of Harry Ruhé) working on a *Frozen Film Frame*, Galerie A, ca. 1980.**

**F**ilmmaker Paul Sharits was a prolific letter writer. New ideas, the day-to-day worries about business, his exciting or dramatic adventures: there was always something worth telling. He would often include explanatory drawings, and at times letter and drawing merged into one.

Once, I proposed to him to publish a selection of his correspondence to Galerie A. It would become an edition in Fluxus-style: in a labelled box and every copy would include a handwritten letter. Sharits liked the idea, but to be honest, he usually agreed to everything I proposed. However, it never happened.

The first film I saw by Paul Sharits was *N:O:T:H:I:N:G*, dating back to 1968. It was shown during the open air exhibition *Sonsbeek Buiten de Perken* (Arnhem, 1971). In this film frames of changing saturated colour speed past, jump and blur while now and then a recognizable image - for example a lightbulb - dissolves into light flares during projection: due to the inertia of our eyes, these short sequences of colour are optically mixed. This results in a feast of colour and light and a wonderful film. *Fluxshoe*, the

catalogue of a touring exhibition (United Kingdom, 1972-73), included some of his Fluxus related drawings with instructions.

In the autumn of 1975, I decided to set up a gallery. The opening exhibition was going to be dedicated to Fluxus and Sharits was one of the first people I contacted. He answered me straight away and sent me some sketches for a Comic Book from 1965. A year later, he came by for a visit. Sharits was a handsome man, wearing a fine dark blue suit and a tie. He also had a gold chain at his neck.

The man had a complicated character and work and life were merged into one. He took risks and every now and then he ended up in a dangerous situation: going out for a drink could have quite a dramatic ending. It didn't really bother me: exceptional artists who give so much to the world can be easily forgiven.

Although my gallery was virtually unknown, Sharits supported me from the first year onwards. He could also be cordial and generous. Once, he even offered me his girlfriend for mutual use, but I didn't take up this very charitable offer.

Sharits enjoyed being able to show in Galerie A what he described as his 'highly personal and a bit mad stuff'. His official representative in Europe was the German gallery Ricke, but according to the artist they only focused on his formal and abstract film related output.

Personally, I have never experienced this contrast as such. Maybe, his *Frozen Film Frames* (film strips framed between two sheets of Plexiglas) or his film scores on paper look 'formal', but to me his 'flicker films' and installations like *Epileptic Seizure Comparison* were both subversive and extremely alarming.

Sharits and I hardly ever spoke to each other on the telephone. There was no email yet and we corresponded via letters. His were nearly all handwritten while mine were typed. He kept me well informed and, especially later on, the envelopes were filled to the brim with photographs, slides, copies, newspaper cuttings, letters and additional notes. They provided a striking insight into the way his work was developing and into his many wonderful ideas.



Amsterdam, August 9, 1976

DEAR FRIEND BEFORE I VOTE MY VOTE I WANT TO KNOW SEVERAL THINGS.

The presidential election of 1976 was between Democrat Jimmy Carter and Republican Gerald Ford. On November 2, 1976, Carter defeated Ford.

**Letter on the photocopy of a mailgram from Paul Sharits to Jimmy Carter.**

Buffalo, 1977

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1976, Sharits had written on a postcard, 'got stabbed in back 2 months ago + lung collapsed'.

One year later, I received a large cardboard parcel. It contained a jacket with a note saying, 'This leather jacket is for you. You can barely see the hole from the stabbing. There is a little blood on the lining but no one will notice when you wear the jacket!'

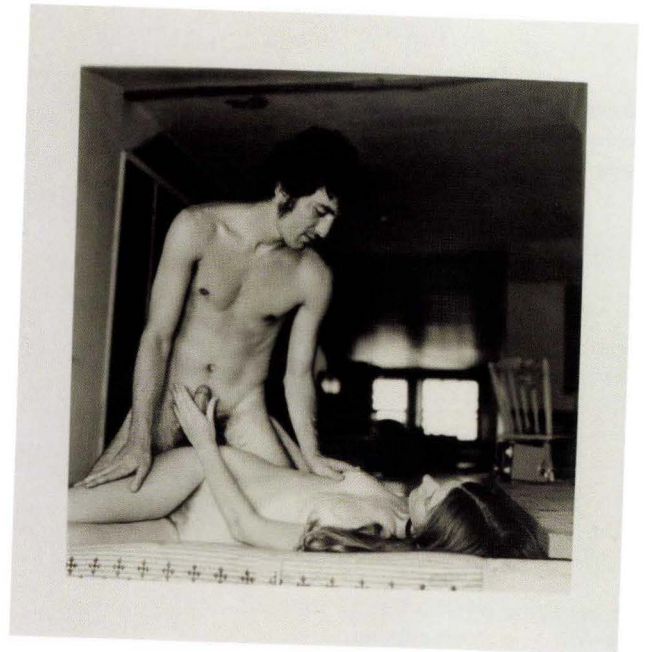
In 1999 I gave the jacket to Francesco Conz as a present. He wanted to have it for his 'fetish collection'.

**Jacket (photo: Maarten Brinkgreve).**

Buffalo, August 1977

A journalist wanting to write a story about the show in Galerie A inquired if I could provide a photograph of the artist. I asked Sharits whether he had one. He sent me two photographs, but they didn't arrive on time. Moreover, the material wasn't really what I had in mind.

**Photograph.**



2-046589E1 88002 07/06/76  
ICS IPMMTZZ CSP BUF  
1 7168850398 MGM TDMT BUFFALO NY 14222

western union Mailgram



Dear Harry,

9 Aug '76

Delightful meeting you + look forward to seeing you next spring-summer. Too bad most of our encounters involved (for me at any rate) large quantities of alcohol - I'm capable of being pretty sober! It was also most pleasurable meeting Marie-Louise, which I owe to your hospitality.

THIS MAILGRAM IS A CONFIRMATION COPY OF THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

7168850398 TDMT BUFFALO NY 148 07-06 0449P EST  
PMS JIMMY CARTER, DLR  
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY HEADQUARTERS  
WASHINGTON DC

Must be off to Mykonos + get to work on the film scores. All very best regards, Paul.

DEAR FRIEND BEFORE I VOTE MY VOTE I WANT TO KNOW SEVERAL THINGS 1. DO YOU ENJOY AVANT-GARDE ART 2. ARE YOU FOR OR AGAINST OR NEUTRAL ABOUT TANTRIC-BUDDHISM 3. DO YOU READ MORE THAN OTHER PRESIDENTS 4. WHAT TO THINK ABOUT PEOPLE WHO APPEAR TO BE GENIUSES BUT SMOKE 5. AND FINALLY, FOR ALL YOUR WORDS SUCH AS ATTACKING THE SO CALLED STATUS QUO GREAT; I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH MY BOSSES AND I ALSO WANT TO HAVE DECISION POWERS SOME STUFF UNDER SEPARATE COVER ARE REGARDING MY BICENTENNIAL FILM PROJECT EMPHASIZING JEFFERSON'S CONCEPTS ABOUT SLAVERY WHICH WERE EXCLUDED BY CONGRESS IN 1776 FROM JEFFERSON'S ORIGINAL TEXT. I CAN GET YOU SOME VOTES. PS LEAVING AMERICA IN TWO WEEKS AND/NEED DATA

SINCERELY YOURS

PAUL SHARITS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ART STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO CENTER FOR MEDIA STUDIES 537 LAFAYETTE AVE BUFFALO NEW YORK NY 14222 (PHONE 716-885-0398 OR 1561 OR 8314800)

1652 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

P.S. Please transmit my regrets to Armin that I cannot get to Berlin this time around.





6.6.78



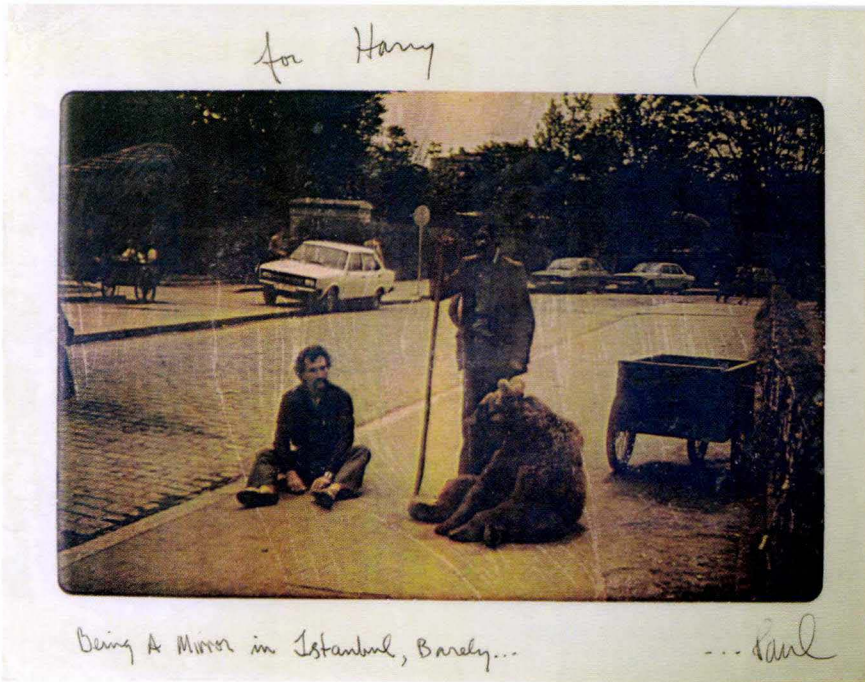
Dear Harry,  
your ideas are catching on here!



please send tennis shoes sometime soon (cheap rate, because 2 will be gone for a month drifting around Mexico). hope all's well.

light, Paul

WENDE HALL, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14214 TEL. (716) 831-2426



Being A Mirror in Istanbul, Barely...

... Paul

Buffalo, June 6, 1978

**A letter with collage.**

Buffalo, n/d.

**Being a Mirror in Istanbul, Barely..., colour Xerox with handwritten text, end '70s or early '80s.**

Buffalo, September 15, 1980

Sharits told me on the phone that his brother, filmmaker Gregory (Greg) Sharits, was killed by the police. He said that he had pretended wanting to shoot the police, but that he was actually unarmed. His story seemed untrue: newspapers declared that Greg Sharits was killed while charging the police with a gun in his hand.

In a letter Paul enclosed two photocopies with his *Last Wishes Re My Funeral/Burial*.

**Paul's Last Wishes Re My Funeral/Burial, two photocopies.**

TO: whom it may concern  
Re: LAST WISHES Re My Funeral/Burial

If there are any services, I prefer it/them to be administered by a Native American (Indian) faith.

I do not care for any Christian services.

I want to be cremated & (all but my bones) remains strewn over desolate Rocky Mountains' (near Wyoming border) area. I want my bones to be used in making my final work of art - to be accomplished by my assistant, according to

Page 1 / Paul Jeffrey Sharits Sept 15, 1980

my plans - either:


Bone-self Project I -

Each bone painted in my manner in multiple pastel tones (4 one vivid blue) - in squeezed on beaded lines of "blobs" of acrylic paint mixed with gel medium. Bones attached with monofilament line in recreation of standing body posture

Bone-self Project II -

grind up bones & mix with gel medium (as if a pigment) -

Apply to mirror surface in this pattern of beaded lines



Thanks, Paul Jeffrey Sharits Sept 15, 1980



Buffalo, July 19, 1982 (letter in photocopy)  
In July Paul Sharits was hit by bullets. There was a misunderstanding; he had been taken for someone else. ('Error in identification leads to shooting of UB Professor.')

From the hospital he sent me a letter, 2 press cuttings and some photos.  
Dear Harry,  
Forgive this xerox form - you will understand why it is necessary when I tell you I am in very serious physical condition. Over 1 week ago I underwent a 7 hour operation stemming from a large rifle bullet wound through my stomach (some very bizarre, unprovoked attack late one night).

You will also realize that all my current projects are suspended - including the new films I've tried to prepare for screenings in Hyères + Paris. None will now be finished until October. My next probable time in Europe will be Nov 22 - 27 (with painting opening Galerie 'A', Amsterdam) (and possibly a coordinated film installation at the Stedelijk).

I truly regret not being able to see you and to show new work in France. In any event, I will be O.K. pretty soon.

Light + cheer,  
Paul

This doesn't effect our show but did want to keep you up on news.  
I'll figure things out regarding painting exhibit - got data I needed (almost)

Paul Sharits - patient  
Intensive Care Section  
Erie County Medical Centre  
462 Grider St.  
Buffalo, NY 14215

- or - better just c/o my home address + my assistant will get replies to me

**Paul Sharits in the Erie County Medical Center, Buffalo, after being shot in July 1982, 5 contact sheets.**

Buffalo, September 15, 1982

**PAUL GETS WELL, a letter with a printed text on the reverse.**



**PAUL  
GETS  
WELL**

well. sorta...



Buffalo, November 1985

**A note with two pasted photographs of Sharits' 'Last Piece'.**

Buffalo, June 1990

Documentation with regard to a *Flux Wall Poem* (1966/67), shown by Galerie A in 1990.

**Photocopy.**

Last Piece - on canvas except one part helix image  
"INSECTUAL"  
fall '95  
opi purple shag rug  
↓



Buffalo, December 1991

A letter dated, 30 May 91 ('BIT LATE'), photocopies (incl. a 'chapter of "X" FLUX GUIDE BOOK THE HIDDEN ITALY'), and an invitation card. On one of the photocopies a partially burned 20 German marks banknote can be distinguished.

In the summer of 1977, Sharits' film installation *Epileptic Seizure Comparison* was shown at the documenta 6 in Kassel. We were supposed to meet there. One afternoon we decided to have lunch somewhere and were joined by Nam June Paik and René Block. After we had finished our meal, we asked for the bill and all of us put some German marks on the table. It took quite a while before one of the staff members came to pick up the money. After a while, Sharits and Nam June Paik got out their lighters and started burning the edges of some banknotes. After signing them they handed the banknotes to each other and also to some other guests. In the end, René Block paid the bill.

**Photocopy with handwritten text.**

Jon

"NON-WALL" (FLUXWALL)  
Harry Ruhé version, 5-6.90  
(Galerie A, Amsterdam/Art Fair)

Harry's version  
- main one different &  
different from George's  
(book) & (book)  
- but same do  
- and - want  
- find - so find  
- for something

Paul Sharits  
1967

Some of  
my lesser  
known  
stuff

Some nice  
drawings  
of this

4

1 1/2

1 1/2

etc

Set to  
Ken F's  
Europe  
show

Harry has some  
similar (maybe)  
drawings

He'd like to  
do a lot of  
drawing in NYC  
& do set  
of photographs  
Some nice  
drawings

Harry - the "Fluxbox" I have may not be The Fluxbox  
as it actually was - it's just full of boxes etc  
George gave me (in that box) - so see the bunch of  
Xeroxes attached to the xerox of the Flux suit case -

Also for SALE - offers?  
Burned & signed by Nam June Paik  
1977  
(did one also for him Documenta)



Buffalo, March 1, 1992

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1991, Sharits sent a telegram to Brian Henderson, professor at the department of media study from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

The telegram ends with, 'DROP DEAD' and there is also the line, 'HOWEVER I RESIGN!'. The telegram was interpreted as a letter of resignation.

An envelope stamped on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, contains a copy of the aforementioned telegram, a copy of a letter from Tony Conrad and other colleagues to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Letters and a copy of a letter to Francesco Conz, an Italian publisher and collector.

*Dear Francesco,*

*Not feeling good – my most extravagant (and stupid) Fluxus "piece" was to send a long telegram of "resignation" of my teaching job (of 19 years) at State University of New York at Buffalo – Oct. 30 – now the university accepts my resignation and my whole life may collapse (I verbally withdrew the telegram but N.Y. State is in Huge \$ problems + wants to get rid of anyone possible – so, "we" are fighting to get me reinstated (who knows what will happen?). The telegram is amusing but the reality of my situation may be tragic – I attacked the university for being sexist/racist against true education – which is true. I've received my final paycheck + wonder how I will go on, the school is being extremely cruel towards me. I'm happy you want to show paintings but: (1) April 28 may be too early, if the school rehires me (May 20 onwards better); (2) WHICH paintings? Some I have, some are in NYC + some in Miami (3) how can they be crated/ shipped + what TIME FRAME (by boat = 8 weeks plus the time it will take to recover them) ... + I'm broke + don't know what to do – SCARED!*

*Better to fax me c/o Dr. Gerald O'Grady, (716) 831-2266 than Harry. Light! Paul*

**Photocopy of the telegram sent to professor Brian Henderson, 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1991.**

PAUL SHARITS  
537 LAFAYETTE AVE  
BUFFALO NY 14222 30AM

WESTERN UNION MAILGRAM®



1-001201S303003 10/30/91 ICS IPMBNGZ CSP BUFB  
2 2125681158 MGM TDBN MANHATTEN NY 10-30 0454A EST

BRIAN HENDERSON  
S.U.N.Y. AT BUFFALO, DEPT OF MEDIA STUDY  
BUFFALO NY 14214

THIS IS A CONFIRMATION COPY OF A TELEGRAM ADDRESSED TO YOU:

DESPITE MY SUCCESS IN IMPLEMENTING HIGH LEVEL FILM MAKING AT U.B. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS TOTALLY AGAINST MEDIA EDUCATION YOU CONTINUE TO HARASS AND THREATEN ME. HOWEVER I RESIGN. YOU AND THE WHITE MALE POWER ACADEMIC MAFIA CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE ME AS PERSON AND AS A MENTOR OF YOUNG PERSONS BY INSISTING THAT I CALL YOU. I AM STRUGGLING WITH MY HEALTH AND TRYING TO BRING ABOUT AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE WHITE ART/FILM ESTABLISHMENT AND THE BLACK CULTURAL COMMUNITY IN NEW YORK CITY, TORONTO AND BUFFALO. A BEAUTIFUL MODEL AND TOP GRAPHIC DESIGNER FOR THE WORLDS FORMOST BLACK FASHION JOURNAL IS "ESSENCE" WILL MODEL MY NEW FLUXUS NEW CONSCIOUSNESS CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES IN THE EFFORT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE NEW YORK FILM MAKERS COOPERATIVE WHICH IS AS YOU KNOW THE WORLDS VORTEX OF FILM DISTRIBUTION. YOU SUPPORTERS OF BANKRUPT MONEY HUNGRY WHITE MIDDLE CLASS SEXIST, RACIST FACIST DEGENERATES HATE TRUE EDUCATION. I AM WORKING HARD IN THE REAL WORLD TO ESTABLISH A BETTER AMERICA. YOUR ESTABLISHMENTARISM INGRATTITUDE AND PIOUS SELF RIGHIOUS FONINESS NOT ONLY HURTS ME BUT HURTS THE REALLY TALENTED STUDENTS THAT WE HAVE.

I AM SENDING COPIES OF THIS TO THE NEW YORK TIMES, LOS ANGELES TIMES AND LA MONDE, HARVARD FILM ARVHIVE AND ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVE, ROBERT DE NIRO FILM CENTER, THE VILLAGE VOICE, THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION AND AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, SPIKE LEE CENTER.

DROP DEAD,

PAUL SHARITS

04:53 EST

MGMCOMP



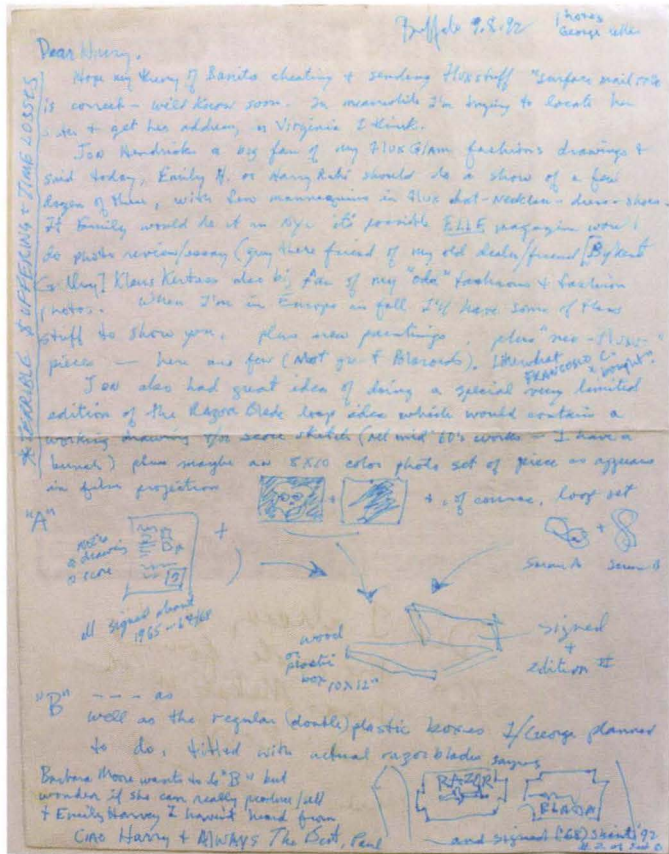
Buffalo, 1992

In 1992, a great many 'vintage' Fluxus editions were put up for sale by Sharits. I gave him advice about prices and he sold several works to collectors. Then I told him which objects I wanted to buy and made a down payment of US\$ 2000. I also requested a Japanese gallery and an American collector to send the money they owed me (respectively US\$ 1000 and US\$ 750) directly to Sharits.

In May, I received a fax in which he informed me about his dire financial situation and asked me to transfer the rest of the money, if possible.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, I told him that I would rather wait with further payments, at least until after the arrival of the works in Amsterdam. Sharits assured me that he had handed over the works to a friend plus enough money to ship the works to Amsterdam - everything would turn out fine. He was confident about the outcome, but after a while it also became clear to him that the friend had run off with the money and the Fluxus art.

**A letter (dated: 9.8.92), and the concept for an edition, a photocopy with vintage material from the two-screen film *Razor Blades* (1965-68).**



RAZOR BLADES - final titles

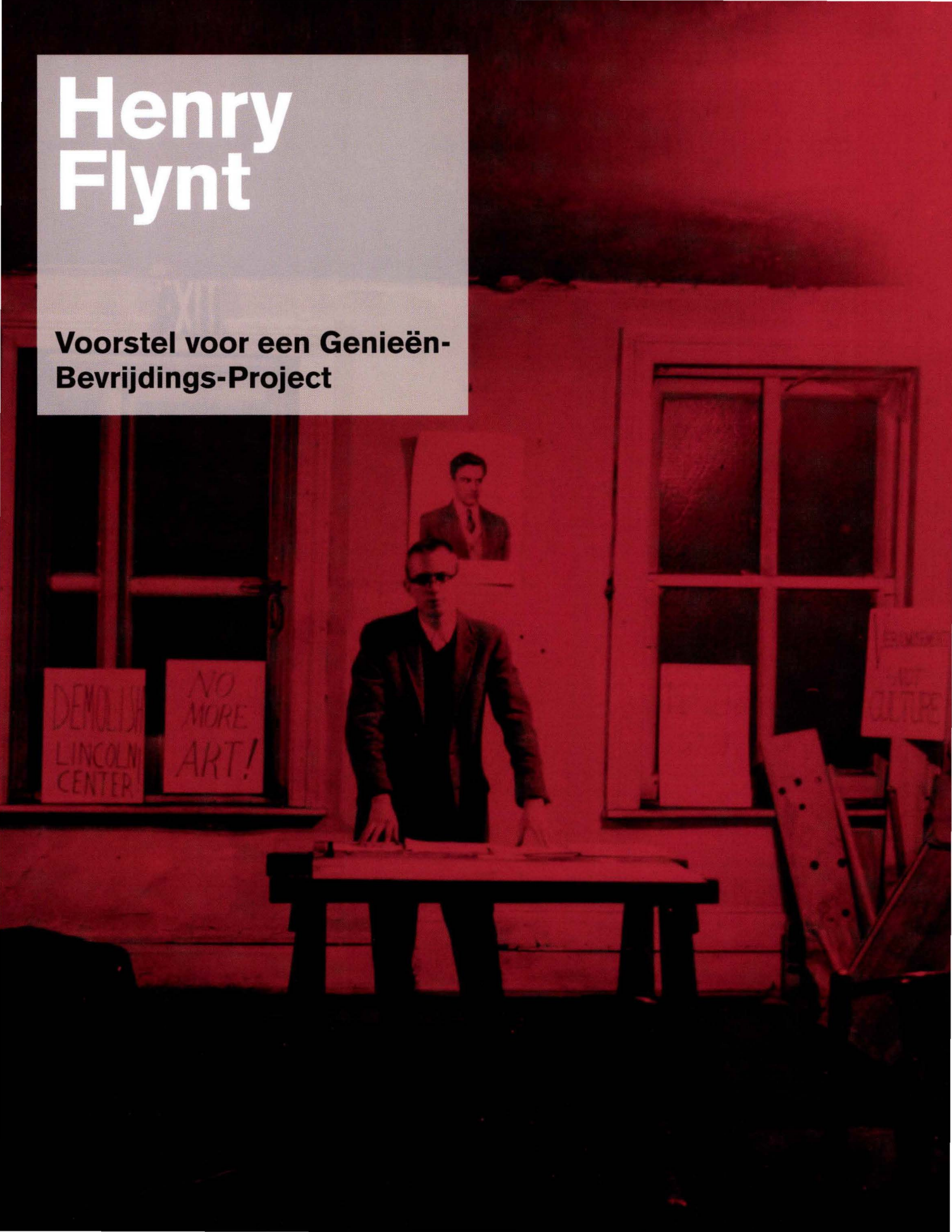
discard →	LEFT	titles	titles	RIGHT SCREEN
	TOOTHBRUSHING # I			* DISCARD INTRO to ABSTRACT CIRCLES
	DOTS I			TOOTHBRUSHING # II
	ASTROBABY			DOTS II
	HERMAPHRODITE: SCILED			HERMAPHRODITE: BAREO + BARREP
				HERMAPHRODITE: BARED + BARREP
				INSTRUCTIONS
	FLUXFACE			
				WRIST TRICK
	STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE			ASTRO-MANDALA
	FLUX SHAVE			
				WORD VIRUS
discard →				* DISCARD TAIL ABSTRACT CIRCLES at end - or use if wish

The complete correspondence is reproduced in: *Paul Sharits - Letters to 'A', 1975-1993*, published by Galerie A, Amsterdam, 2017.



# Henry Flynt

Voorstel voor een Genieën-  
Bevrijdings-Project





## Voorstel voor een Genieën-Bevrijdings-Project

**H**et is heel goed mogelijk dat het corporatieve en in staatszaken ingrijpende kapitalisme voor onbepaalde tijd het overheersende maatschappelijke systeem over de gehele wereld zal blijven. Maar het is niet langer mogelijk voor te wenden dat dit systeem onverdeeld weldadig of garant voor een sociaal evenwicht is. Het is onmogelijk de geloofwaardigheid van de traditionele Amerikaanse ideologie nog op te houden, die persoonlijke hebzucht gelijkstelt aan gemeenschapsbelang en sociale vooruitgang. De samenleving wier meest gezaghebbende cijfers de zelfverheerlijking bejubelen als de enig geldende norm van menselijk gedrag moge dan in staat zijn die norm voor onbepaalde tijd te bestendigen, maar van nu af aan zal die samenleving niet meer in staat zijn de consequenties daarvan te ontlopen of te negeren -- zoals: semi-feodale dictatuur van militairen, massale werkloosheid, massale armoede, de massamoord op 'lastige' volkeren, massale hongersnood, en misschien zelfs massaal kannibalisme. De autoriteiten die ons voorhouden dat hun enige motieven corruptie en zelfverheerlijking zijn, kunnen niet anders dan deze massale armoede, hongersnood en massamoord verdedigen als onvermijdelijke en zelfs wenselijke sociale beleidslijnen.

De doorslaggevende omstandigheid die deze stand van zaken laat voortduren is de bereidwillige medewerking die de niet-bevoorrechte klassen aan hun eigen dupering en ondergang verlenen. Hardnekkig verdedigen gewone mensen de ideologie van het particulier initiatief, samen met al de religieuze, racistische en nationalistische vooroordelen die het ondersteunen, ondanks het feit dat zij zelf ontegenzeggelijk de voornaamste slachtoffers ervan zijn. De erkenning dat een meerderheid van de mensen bereidwillig berust in de eigen dupering en ondergang, is de grondgedachte van dit essay. Deze stelling hebben wij elders al uitvoerig uit de doeken gedaan, en daarom zullen wij de redenering niet nog eens herhalen: wij schrijven voor degene die al tot diezelfde conclusie gekomen is en niet meer bekeerd hoeft te worden.

Het monsterverbond van massamoord en massale hongersnood, met de instemming van de mensen zelf in hun eigen ondergang, maakt alle begrip van sociale verantwoordelijkheid zinloos. Het is onmogelijk het collectief belang op te houden als ideaal waarmee

roofzuchtig gedrag kan worden aangeklaagd, zolang de slachtoffers van dat gedrag het principe van de roofzucht hardnekkig blijven verdedigen. Bovendien wordt iedere variatie van sociaalvormingsgezinde politiek ontzenuwd wanneer de niet-bevoorrechte klassen aan dezelfde kant staan als degenen die hen uitknijpen. Er ontstaat een situatie waarbij elk mensenleven, sociaal gezien, van nul en generlei waarde is.

Eén aspect van deze situatie is dat de cultuur, in de meest omvattende betekenis van het woord, een mélange wordt van de aantrekkingskracht van de meest vulgaire impulsen waartoe mensen in staat zijn. We zullen de Village Voice ter hand nemen als bevestiging van deze stelling, daar dit blad min of meer regelmatig aandacht besteedt aan praktisch elke publiekelijk zichtbare culturele trend. Wat wij in de Village Voice aantreffen is de verheerlijking van apathie, bestialiteit en zelfmoord in de popcultuur; de herleving van duidelijk oneerlijke en benauwende vormen van bijgeloof; leveranciers van kant-en-klare zaligheid die duidelijk oplichters zijn; aanvaarding van het feit dat de omkoopbaarheid van de oplichter de gepaste motivering is voor een bekende persoonlijkheid; en dat 'hype' de intentie van de intellectuele activiteit is; en de snel toenemende gebruikmaking van natuurwetenschappen die bewijzen dat destructieve sociale privileges noodzakelijk en wenselijk zijn. In deze kontekst doet de poging van niet langer invloedrijke figuren als Bertrand Russell, om de hoge intellectuele eisen die zij aan zichzelf stellen te combineren met een sociale opbouwendheid, aan als een anachronisme; en terecht. Intelligente mensen hebben geleerd te accepteren dat een cultuur die hen duidelijk misbruikt en vernedert, de enige is die ze zullen krijgen. Ze hebben geleerd zich te verlekken op het feit dat ze misbruikt en vernederd worden, en de angst om een 'square' genoemd te worden te gebruiken als rationalisatie van hun aanvaarding van het uitgesproken beledigende en vernederende.

Er bestaat geen twijfel dat deze cultuur van vernedering de belangen van de autoriteiten in de kaart speelt, hoewel het persoonlijke imago van die autoriteiten die van de 'square' is. Als je je imperium opgebouwd hebt door mensen te vertrappen die in de goot liggen, dan is het ook in je eigen belang hen ervan te overtuigen dat het tof is om in de goot te liggen en vertrappt te worden. De autoriteiten zijn er heel wel mogelijk in geslaagd om iedere constructieve sociale



hervorming, die een authentieke basis voor een sociaal evenwicht zou kunnen creëren, tegen te gaan. Wat zij ons, in plaats daarvan, geschonken hebben is 'het recht om krankjorum te worden' (zoals Susan Sontag het uitdrukte). Ze hebben beestachtige en apatische rebellie aangemoedigd, omdat zij geen rebellie kunnen toestaan die gemotiveerd is door de hoop op zelfrespect.

Amerikanen uit de provincie, die getuige zijn van de opkomst van de vernederingscultuur, en van een algemeen gevoel van irritabiliteit en onbeschaamdheid, geven af op het prijsgeven van de traditionele waarden en geven de schuld daarvan aan de linkse politieke partijen. Maar de werkelijke oorzaak van deze situatie is dat een van die traditionele Amerikaanse waarden, het ondernemingsrecht, zich zozeer ontwikkeld heeft dat het de lippendienst, die traditioneel bewezen werd aan andere deugden zoals naastenliefde, heeft gesaboteerd. Per slot van rekening, wanneer iemand mij te kennen geeft, dat het enige wat hij wil, is alles wat ik heb van mij weg te nemen en mij te laten verhongeren, dan moet men niet verbaasd zijn als de enige vraag die mij overblijft is hoe ik hem overhoop kan steken.

Het is mogelijk dat de lezer mijn karakterisering van de huidige sociale voorwaarden als pessimistisch interpreteert. Maar een dergelijke interpretatie is noodzakelijk. Als onze karakterisering pessimistisch lijkt, is dat omdat de lippendienst die traditioneel werd bewezen aan de sociale verantwoordelijkheid en het ideaal van het sociaal evenwicht, de lezer met volslagen onrealistische verwachtingen omtrent zijn maatschappelijk bestaan heeft opgezaald. De waarheid is dat er helemaal nooit een garantie bestaan heeft dat de samenleving evenwichtig zou zijn, of zelfs maar het elementaire instinct van collectief zelfbehoud zou hebben. Integendeel, de situatie die ontstaan is, is er een waarin alle mensenlevens, sociaal gezien, van nul en generlei waarde zijn. Het cruciale daarvan is dat er nadrukkelijk niet uit volgt dat ieder individueel leven daarom ook tragisch of van geen waarde zou zijn voor de persoon die het leeft. Ik kan een bestaan leiden dat voor mij de moeite waard is -- maar een eerste vereiste is dat ik de intellectuele en politieke onafhankelijkheid moet hebben om mij te kunnen losmaken van alle verwachtingen omtrent een sociaal evenwicht, en om aan alle overwegingen van verantwoordelijkheid voor een krankzinnige samenleving, als

richtlijnen voor mijn gedrag, te kunnen verzaken.

Op die manier is het mogelijk om een beschermende enclave te creëren binnen die krankzinnige samenleving. En binnen deze enclave kan ik weigeren op het niveau te opereren dat gezamenlijk wordt ingenomen door meester en slaaf, oplichter en opgelichte. Ik kan mijn waardigheid bevestigen, en de hoogste vormen van directe persoonlijke bevrediging, zoals die afleidbaar zijn van het hele scala van mijn gevoelsleven, onderzoeken.

Er is één onontbeerlijke bijkomende overweging. De potentieel meest bevredigende compensaties in het leven kunnen worden gevonden in verhoudingen tussen mensen onderling. Natuurlijk kan deze overweging vervagen doordat de verhoudingen die in de krankzinnige samenleving nog mogelijk zijn zo vernederend zijn dat men er beter aan toe is als kluizenaar. Desondanks is het probleem voor diegenen die hun levens het leven waard willen maken, het creëren van een beschermde enclave waarin een hele groep mensen collectief de hoogste vormen van directe bevrediging kan onderzoeken.

Laten we ons echter geen illusies maken over dat wat wij voorstellen. De beschermde enclave kan geen voorbeeld zijn voor de samenleving als geheel. De enclave kan zich niet gaan bezighouden met productieve arbeid, iets wat onder deze omstandigheden belemmerend en zinloos zou zijn. Economisch gezien zou de beschermde enclave een parasitaire moeten zijn. Aanzienlijke financiële en sociale privileges zijn noodzakelijk om aan de onwaardigheden van de samenleving te kunnen ontsnappen. Het spreekt vanzelf dat de leden van het project geen scrupules mogen hebben ten aanzien van het toeëigenen van die privileges: de niet-bevoorrechte klassen hebben, door hun medeplichtigheid aan de krankzinnige samenleving, ons al meer schade toegebracht dan wij hen ooit kunnen toebrengen, en dwingen ons om gebruik van hen te maken teneinde onszelf tegen hen te beschermen.

Het is nuttig er op te wijzen dat, hoewel financiële en sociale privileges wenselijke attributen voor de leden van de groep zijn, zij beslist niet voldoende zijn. Essentiëler is het om op een bepaalde manier psychologisch bevrijd te zijn. Ik verbaas mij constant over kennissen uit de betere kringen die maatschappelijk gezien een conventioneel bestaan lijden, met al de bijgaande onwaardigheden en beperkingen, hoewel zij het geld hebben om zich uit een dergelijk bestaan te kopen.



Verder moet het vanzelf spreken dat dit project bedoeld is voor bevoorrechte en zorgeloze mensen die een bestaan buiten de geconformeerde maatschappelijke stratificatie als een vrije keuze kunnen aanvaarden; en die veel grotere eisen stellen aan hun oprechtheid dan de publieke opinie ooit zou kunnen gedogen. Het project heeft niets te bieden aan al die verguisde en verstoten intellectuelen uit New York die de bedwelming van de religie zoeken, bijgeloof, of een kant-en-klare zaligmaking zoals die door de vernederingscultuur verschaft wordt.

Meer specifiek gezegd, waar wij aan denken is een soort van 'zwevende' commune, in New York's Lower East Side, voor mensen die zich bewust zijn van, en zich ingesteld hebben op, de punten die in dit essay naar voren gebracht worden. De commune zou haar activiteiten kunnen uitoefenen in de woningen van haar leden, en zou financiële steun van de meer welgestelde leden ontvangen. (Ik ben zelf bereid zulke steun te verlenen, en zou dit voorstel anders ook niet opschrijven.) Ze zou niet in de openbaarheid moeten treden, omdat haar leden dit niet zouden zoeken, en zou er naar moeten streven die openbaarheid te vermijden.

Maar met welke activiteiten zal en kan de commune zich bezighouden? Deze vraag te stellen is zoveel als het opwerpen van de kwestie welke activiteit of bezigheid rationeel is voor mensen die zich realiseren dat de enige manier om hun levens de moeite waard te maken ligt in het zich wijden aan de hoogste vormen van directe persoonlijke bevrediging. (Natuurlijk zijn voor deze mensen algemene bijval of zelfs achtenswaardigheid geen punt van overweging meer.) Dit essay wil niet proberen zo ambitieus te zijn om alle mogelijkheden te onderkennen. Per slot van rekening zou ik de anderen niet kunnen respecteren als ik hen alles te leren had en niets van hen kon leren, en zou ons genootschap niet werken. Mijn doel is in alle bescheidenheid aan te tonen dat er tenminste één mogelijkheid bestaat van een rationele, direct bevredigende activiteit. Mijn verhandeling zal zich richten op het 'psychologische' aspect van het leven, en is bedoeld voor mensen die New York City als hun arena van activiteiten beschouwen. Ik zal mijn antwoord benaderen door te beginnen met bepaalde conventionele beroepen te bespreken en, aan de hand van het geven van een steeds ruimere kritiek ervan, naar mijn positieve voorstellen leiden.

Een van de gebruikelijkste vormen van tijdverdrijf van de recreatieve intellectueel is de kunst. Wij echter verwerpen de kunst als activiteit in al de gedaanten waarin het zich aan de lezers van dit essay kan voordoen. Kunst blijft vandaag de dag hardnekkig voortbestaan omdat de academische kunsttraditie het publiek nog steeds intimideert; en omdat de instellingen van de 'moderne' kunst gemakkelijk gemanipuleerd kunnen worden door de kunstenaar teneinde publiciteit en geld te verwerven.

Eén aspect van de 'moderne' kunst bestaat uit het produceren van doorwrochte pakjes met niets erin -- pure 'hype' gekanaliseerd in een reeds bestaande gevestigde orde die de kunstenaar met publiciteit en geld zal belonen. Nog een ander aspect daarvan is het ervaring-karakter van de kunst. Hier treffen we triviale vormoefjes aan die opzettelijk verarmde en ontmenselijkte communicatievormen constitueren -- communicatievormen die ons in contact brengen met minder menselijke mogelijkheden dan die van het leven van alledag, niet meer. Verder zijn er natuurlijk de trends in de eigentijdse kunst die de apathie, bestialiteit en zelfmoord verheerlijken. Een feit is dat al deze dingen gewoonweg geen betekenis hebben voor diegenen die de hoogste vormen van bevrediging zoeken die zij kunnen aantreffen in het hele scala van hun gevoelsleven.

Vervolgens richten wij ons op het gebied van het denken of de geesteswerkzaamheid met een waarnemende functie. Een onderzoekende kritiek van dit gebied kan het verschil tussen activiteiten die zich bezighouden met sociaal conformerende compensaties en activiteiten die zich bezighouden met directe persoonlijke bevredigingen enorm verhelderen. In het bijzonder zullen wij ons inlaten met wis- en natuurkunde, en elke innerlijke compensatie die zij beweren te verschaffen; zowel als met hun algemene verenigbaarheid met een activiteit die gemotiveerd wordt door het streven naar een directe persoonlijke bevrediging. Een wis- of natuurkundige te zijn heeft enige zin wanneer men erop uit is de Nobelprijs te winnen, of in de academische hiërarchie vooruit te komen, of het leger wil helpen grotere atoombommen te maken. Maar heeft het ook enige zin die verwant is aan enig ander doel dan het genoemde? Het is een cliché om te beweren dat natuurkundige wetten werken. Maar het is net zo waar om te beweren dat de wetten van de slavenprijzen werkten in het



Zuiden van de Verenigde Staten van voor de Burgeroorlog, of dat de wet van de samengestelde interest vandaag werkt. Al deze wetten 'werken', maar zij werken door te appeleren aan een denkbeeldige objectiviteit die gecreëerd is door sociaal afgedwongen conventies. De wetten van de slavenprijzen werken, geven een bepaalde sociaal afgedwongen realiteit weer, maar het is de vraag of wij de dingen die deze wetten voor ons kunnen bereiken ook wensen, en of wij ook in de ontmenselijkte conventies, die een voorwaarde voor de geldigheid en bekrachtiging van deze wetten zijn, willen berusten.

Het is geenszins willekeurig om een kritiek van de natuurwetenschappen te beginnen met hen in overeenstemming te brengen met de sociale wetenschappen. Een van de meest belangwekkende trends van onze tijd is de gebruikmaking van wiskunde en de natuurwetenschappen om de noodzaak en 'optimaliteit' van de destructieve sociale privileges aan te tonen.<sup>1</sup> De bewustwording dat de natuurwetenschappen zichzelf lenen aan de rechtvaardiging van destructieve sociale privileges, zal ons helpen te erkennen dat de objectieve werkelijkheid van de natuurwetenschappen een denkbeeldige objectiviteit is die gecreëerd is door de handhaving van ontmenselijkte conventies.

Om ons eerst op de wiskunde te concentreren: het is een wetenschap van abstracte formele verbanden, gebaseerd op de overtuiging dat deze verbanden objectief ook bestaan (op een kwasi-platonische manier). Vele wiskundigen beschouwen de aantrekkingskracht van hun beroep als een innerlijke: zij stelt hen in staat om te ontsnappen aan de onverkwikkelijkheid van de maatschappelijke wereld naar een wereld van pure vorm. Deze motivering is zeker begrijpelijk, maar waar wij op willen wijzen is dat de vlucht van de wiskundige in vele opzichten mank gaat. Het bewustzijn van de mens kent de mogelijkheid om veel meer typen van structurele verhoudingen te ervaren dan die welke door de wiskundige als legitiem beschouwd worden. De wiskunde wordt beperkt tot verbanden die zuiver mechanisch zijn, en die kunnen worden weergegeven met behulp van de mechanische manipulatie van tegengestelden. Maar voor mensen is het mogelijk het logisch-onmogelijke te ervaren (in illusies, dromen en natuurlijke taalconcepties van tijd en beweging). Ook heeft het menselijk bewustzijn de potentie om zgn. onbepaalde wisselwerkingen

met de 'objecten' van het bewustzijn aan te gaan. Want, het belang van het beginnen van een commune in een beschermde enclave is het leggen van persoonlijke contacten die niet onverkwikkelijk zijn en waarvoor men niet hoeft te vluchten. In die omstandigheden bestaat er geen reden om je begrip van structurele verbanden streng te isoleren van emotie, erotiek, sociale tevredenheid, enzovoorts. De wiskundige brengt zijn vlucht tot stand door zijn potentiële mogelijkheden drastisch in vakjes in te delen, door ze te verminken en te censureren. En dit nu is precies wat wij willen vermijden.

Het zijn de natuurwetenschappen die de meest explorerende onderzoeken vereisen. Onze eerste observatie is dat de natuurkunde niet verdedigd kan worden als een eenvoudige registratie en collatie van ervaringen. Om uit vele voorbeelden er een te lichten: iedereen die filosofie heeft gestudeerd moet zich realiseren dat er geen ervaring bestaat, noch ooit heeft bestaan, die ons bewijst dat de wereld een half uur geleden bestond. Net als bijna al het andere in de natuurkunde, is de materiële tijd een door het intellect verschaft structuur -- of, beter gezegd, een mythe -- die ontoegankelijk is voor het empirische bevattingvermogen. Natuurlijk kan hetzelfde gezegd worden over het verstandelijke begrip van verleden tijd, omdat de natuurwetenschap en het gezonde verstand in dit opzicht gelijk oplopen.

Een nog algemener observatie is mogelijk. In Philosophy and Logical Syntax onderkent Rudolph Carnap dat zelfs een dergelijke elementaire bewering als 'Deze staaf is van ijzer' een oneindig aantal beweringen als 'empirische' inhoud behelst in de vorm van uitdrukkingen van directe ervaringen<sup>2</sup>. Waar Carnap niet bij stil staat, is dat bijna al deze beweringen net zo effectief verstoken zijn van staving als de beweringen die hij, Carnap, als zinloos verwerpt. Zelfs de meest empirische aspecten van de wetenschap, de aspecten die het meest het empirische gezonde verstand benaderen, bestaan uit door het intellect verschaft structuren of mythen die alleen op een te verwaarlozen aantal ogenblikken de ervaring raken.

Aangenomen dat de meest primitieve gebieden van de wetenschap, om niet te zeggen de meest duistere, uit door het intellect verschaft structuren bestaan die empirisch bevredigend te noemen zijn, dan volgt hieruit dat het onmogelijk is een niet-wetenschappelijk empirisch



kennismodel te formuleren. Met betrekking tot het verleden zouden we, bijvoorbeeld, een kennismodel kunnen aannemen dat een meervoudig verleden toestaat teneinde al de in tegenspraak zijnde 'herinneringen' die wij in dromen hebben, te verenigen; of we zouden een model kunnen aannemen dat het idee van de lineaire tijdsbeleving helemaal weglaat. Deze overwegingen zijn relevant, want wij willen betogen dat de vlucht uit de wetenschappelijk-pragmatische werkelijkheid een nuttige en zelfs noodzakelijke stap is in de richting van het verkrijgen van directe persoonlijke bevrediging van het hele scala van ons gevoelsleven. Maar er valt nóg een les te leren uit het geval met de verleden tijd. De opmerking dat er geen door de ervaring bewezen bestaan in de wereld van het verleden kan zijn, is een opmerking die niet betwist kan worden, en zelfs een filosofische gemeenplaats. Niettemin zullen de meeste intellectuelen, die intellectuelen wel te verstaan die erop uit zijn Nobelprijzen te winnen of hogerop te komen in de academische hiërarchie, zich buitengewoon onbehaaglijk voelen wanneer deze zaak wordt aangeroerd. Ze zullen vinden dat ik een ernstige sociale blunder bega door haar aan te roeren. We zullen merken dat de motieven en sociale conventies van de mensen alles te maken hebben met de mate van oprechtheid waarin zij, voor zichzelf, geïnteresseerd zijn. Juist omdat ik een bevoorrechte enclave kan betreden waarin sociale achtenswaardigheid niet meer noodzakelijk is, en juist omdat het enige motief dat ik daarbij in gedachten houd een directe persoonlijke bevrediging is, kan ik het mij veroorloven om de consequenties van het besef dat de wetenschappelijk-pragmatische werkelijkheid bevredigend is, ook te 'leven'.

Laten we nu eens de aspecten bekijken van de procedure die de natuurkundige volgt om zoiets als zijn ervaring van een steen die volgens de wet van de zwaartekracht op de grond valt, te beleven. De natuurkundige heeft besloten dat hij wil ontdekken dat er een onpersoonlijke ordening in de natuur bestaat. Uitgaand van het experiment met de steen die op de grond valt, moet hij hieruit een gebeurtenis die puur uitwendige objecten behelst, extraheren. Deze gebeurtenis dient zijn eigen gevoelens buiten te sluiten, evenals alle persoonlijke betekenis die hij aan de ervaring ontleent, en alle verschijnselen die niet intersubjectief herhaalbaar zijn (volgens de criteria van zijn kennistheorie).

Daarna plaatst hij deze puur uitwendige gebeurtenis in een equivalente klasse met andere onpersoonlijke zwaartekrachtexperimenten die het gevolg waren van een overeenkomstig proces van abstrahering. Hij heeft op die manier een natuur-in-het-algemeen gefabriceerd waaraan hij nu een onpersoonlijke ordening kan toekennen.

Maar er is nog een andere betrekking waarin de zwaartekracht-experimenten gefabriceerd worden. De verstandelijke conceptie van de ervaring van beweging is paradoxaal, zoals men al sinds Zeno weet. Voor de natuurkundige bestaat er geen enkele mogelijkheid om deze paradoxen de baas te worden. Wat hij doet, is beweging te vervangen door een nabootsing daarvan die uit statistische elementen is samengesteld, en waarin de meeste bekende paradoxen niet zo op de voorgrond treden. M.a.w., hij neemt oneindig onderverdeelde elementen van tijd en ruimte, en vervangt beweging door een ('statistisch') functioneel verband tussen deze elementen.

Er volgen ook nog andere stappen nadat de natuurkundige zijn verzameling onpersoonlijke ervaringsnabootsingen en hun functionele beschrijvingen heeft verkregen. Het begrip aantrekkingskracht wordt geïntroduceerd, en de theorie begint zich los te maken van niet alleen de directe persoonlijke ervaringswereld, maar ook van het empirische gezonde verstand. En het is op dit niveau, en daar voorbij, dat we de processen van begripsvorming en abstrahering aantreffen waarmee de natuurkundige zich beroepsmatig inlaat. Andere stadia van zijn methode die we zouden kunnen bespreken (de aantijging van de causaliteit in de klassieke natuurkunde, de veronderstelling van onzichtbare entiteiten en de opvatting dat ons bestaan daaruit is afgeleid, de beschuldiging van een statische natuurlijke ordening in de quantum-mechanica) zou het gefabriceerde karakter van de onpersoonlijke, geobjectiveerde werkelijkheid die de natuurkundige ontdekt alleen nog maar op een voor de hand liggende wijze bekrachtigen.

Het uiteindelijke nut van de methode van de natuurkundige is de identificatie met onpersoonlijke manipulatiemogelijkheden -- resultaten die van het ene bestaan naar het andere overgeheveld kunnen worden en die de ene persoon macht kunnen geven over de andere. (Geen wonder dus dat de wetenschap gebruikt kan worden



om de noodzaak en optimaliteit van de destructieve sociale privileges aan te tonen.) De wetenschap 'werkt'. Maar wij moeten ons door deze bluf niet zodanig laten intimideren dat wij de kritische principes waarmee wij begonnen zijn laten varen. Zoals de bewering 'Deze staaf is van ijzer' laat zien, is de pragmatische rechtvaardiging van wetenschappelijke kennis afhankelijk van en vooronderstelt zij precies hetzelfde proces van mythevorming als het blootleggen van kennis. Ervaringen legaliseren de wetenschap niet; maar de door het intellect verschaft structuren van de wetenschap doen dat wel.

Evenals de wiskundigen stellen natuurkundigen zich de compensaties van de zuivere research voor als iets innerlijks. Toch zou het irrationeel zijn, voor mensen wier motieven een directe bevrediging van het hele scala van hun gevoelsleven inhoudt, om te berusten in de ontmenselijkte mythevorming van de wetenschap (en in het pragmatische gezonde verstand, waar die twee evenwijdig lopen). Het zou alleen maar zelfbeschimping zijn om een dorre 'wetenschaps-freak' te worden, of voor mijn part de conventies te aanvaarden van welke van de erkende academische disciplines dan ook of van het pragmatische verstand.

Voor ons is de vraag welke activiteiten rationeel zijn voor een commune die zich wil wijden aan de hoogste vormen van directe bevrediging en een die niet beantwoord kan worden met een lijst van recreatieve mogelijkheden als kamperen, getallenspelletjes of schermen. Het gaat om veel diepere zaken, en een daarvan is de vraag in welke realiteit wij zullen leven. M.a.w., door welk type van collectieve wereldconceptie de commune de compensaties van denken en bewustzijn denkt te verwerven? Wij houden vol dat dit punt in deze kontekst niet willekeurig of facultatief is. Om door te gaan met het uitbeelden van de mythen van de wetenschappelijk-pragmatische werkelijkheid, wanneer het in vakjes indelen, het buiten de wet stellen en manipuleren het uiteindelijke doel ervan is, en wanneer men financieel en maatschappelijk zo bevoorrecht is dat men zich niet hoeft te onderwerpen aan de vereisten van achtenswaardigheid, zou zoveel zijn als de poging om bevrediging van het hele scala van het gevoelsleven te verwerven zonder ook maar begonnen te zijn.

Mijn voorstel is dat een waardevol model van het geschikte type van wereldconceptie dát type is dat in dromen

gevonden kan worden. Ik zal een aantal gedachten over de rol van dromen in de commune verder uitwerken; wat op zijn beurt verbonden zal worden aan voorstellen die andere dimensies van activiteiten betreffen, zoals de plundertochten van de commune in de omringende samenleving. Maar voor ik daartoe overga, dient het verschil tussen mijn voorstellen en bijgelovigheid goed begrepen te worden. Bijgeloof is het omgekeerde van het principe van de spaarzaamheid van kennis; zij vergt meer lichtgelovigheid dan het gezonde verstand, niet minder. Net als de wetenschap levert zij inhoudelijk objectieve (en intersubjectief consequente) causale verbanden, maar het verschilt van de wetenschap waar haar enige staving afgeleid wordt van het inlevingsvermogen van degene die erin gelooft. In tegenstelling daarmee, vraag ik om minder lichtgelovigheid dan wetenschap en gezond verstand vergen. Gedroomde ervaringen lijken even 'werkelijk' als ervaringen in wakende toestand, en ik stel voor dat er geen verschillende graden van werkelijkheid worden toegekend aan de twee (gescheiden) ervaringstypen, een voorstel dat dichter bij het literaire empirisme staat dan wetenschap en gezond verstand. M.a.w., mijn eerste voorstel is dat het idee dat dromen slechts subjectieve illusies zijn, terwijl de wakende toestand objectief werkelijk zou zijn, verworpen moet worden. Dezelfde graad van werkelijkheid moet gelijkelijk worden toegeschreven aan gedroomde of wakende werelden of episoden; of liever, het onderscheid tussen de verschillende graden van werkelijkheid moet worden afgeschaft. (Tussen twee haakjes, dromen hebben al ontelbare keren gebruikmaking gevonden in religie, zaligheidsrages, kunst, experimentele of Freudiaanse psychologie, enzovoorts. Het is uitgesloten dat wij op deze plaats de verdiensten - of, oprechter, de wanverdiensten - van al deze gebruikmakingen bespreken. We kunnen alleen maar een beroep doen op de lezer om aandacht te schenken aan dat wat wij voorstellen, en dit niet te verwarren met andere gebruikmakingen van dromen. Lezing van ons essay 'Dromen en werkelijkheid' zal daarbij helpen.)

Mijn tweede voorstel is dat men bepaalde aspecten van zo'n wereldconceptie, die spontaan aanwezig zijn in dromen, moet overhevelen naar de conceptie van de wakende wereld -- naar de wakende werkelijkheid waarin men binnen de beschermde enclave leeft. In dromen zijn objecten niet geabstraheerd van mijn gevoelens, van hun persoonlijke



betekenis voor mij, of van hun sociale kontekst. Situaties zijn doordrongen van een emotionele sfeer. Er treden afwijkende persoonlijke ervaringen op die misschien niet intersubjectief herhaalbaar zijn, en die niet gecensureerd worden door het bewustzijn. Het lineaire tijdsverloop van de natuurkunde is niet van kracht. Het logisch-onmogelijke wordt ervaren. Men komt verschijnselen tegen die enkele van de werkelijkheidsclausen van stabiele object-structuren missen, en die gecensureerd worden door het bewustzijn. Al deze omstandigheden doen zich zowel in de wakende wereld als in dromen voor, maar onze wetenschappelijk-pragmatische indoctrinatie heeft ons gedruild om ze door het bewustzijn te laten censureren. In gedroomde episoden waarin deze verschijnselen niet gecensureerd zijn, kunnen we ook gevoelig voor hen gemaakt worden, en kunnen we daarbij leren ze ook in het wakend leven te identificeren.

Mijn derde voorstel is dat dromen opgenomen dienen te worden in de collectieve 'actuele geschiedenis'. Leden van de groep dienen hun dromen aan elkaar te vertellen, en wel in het bijzonder die over ontmoetingen met elkaar in hun dromen. Het zou van speciaal belang kunnen zijn te kijken of, terwijl er een poging wordt gedaan de gedroomde episoden van de leden in de collectieve 'actuele geschiedenis' op te nemen, de gewoonte om verschillende graden van werkelijkheid te onderkennen in ervaringen, die zowel optreedt in de gedroomde als in de wakende wereld, veranderd is.

Terugkerend naar de kwestie van de zwaartekracht in de natuurkunde, meen ik dat ik in dromen mijn angst om te vallen kan overwinnen, en zonder enige ondersteuning mij door de lucht kan bewegen. Nu kan ik de gelegenheid die het zich in een droom bevinden op een richel mij biedt herkennen, en ik raak steeds zelfverzekerder bij het gebruikmaken van de mogelijkheid om door de lucht te bewegen of omgekeerd over het plafond te lopen. Deze activiteiten zijn opbeurend. En er kleeft geen enkele bijgelovigheid aan hen: om je af te vragen of ik werkelijk ervaar dat ik in mijn droom door de lucht wandel, is net zo absurd als je af te vragen of ik het schrijven van dit essay werkelijk beleef. Voor mensen wier enige motieven de directe bevrediging van het hele scala van hun gevoelsleven zijn, is het vluchten in dromen nu precies wat wij zouden moeten doen, in plaats van ons te verdiepen in de natuurkunde van de zwaartekracht.

Nu we toch blijven stilstaan bij het onderwerp van de activiteiten die binnen de beschermde enclave van de commune uitgevoerd kunnen worden: er zijn nog twee andere mogelijkheden die ik elders al eens verklaard heb, en die ik voor de volledigheid zal noemen. Het zijn kwasi-riskante groepsspelletjes en collectieve 'brend'.<sup>3</sup>

Ten slotte zullen we de plundertochten van de commune in de omringende samenleving beschouwen, en meer in het algemeen, de verhouding met de omringende samenleving wier motivering ook directe persoonlijke bevrediging is. In de grond van de zaak is de situatie alsof een kleine groep mensen leeft in een wereld van achterlijke, waanzinnige vervreemden -- en gelukkig genoeg zijn om lichamelijk niet te onderscheiden te zijn van die vervreemden.

We zullen enige gedachten wijden aan het probleem dat men zichzelf dient te beschermen tegen de omringende samenleving, terwijl men er zich tegelijkertijd in voortbeweegt en haar manipuleert, met het doel om persoonlijk winstbejag na te streven. De autoriteiten beoordelen individueel succes en individuele merites aan de hand van ontegenzeggelijk clichématige maatstaven, waarvan de belangrijkste die van onderwerping en gehoorzaamheid zijn. De maatstaven van het succes moeten gemakkelijk bevredigd kunnen worden -- per slot van rekening moet het establishment het grootste gedeelte van haar personeel recruteren uit de grote groep van gewone mensen. Op die manier wordt ieder clichématig type van succes-- iedere bureaucratisch bepaalde prestatie of rol -- een spel dat gemakkelijk gewonnen kan worden als je maar bereid bent om je les te maken van de mystificatie die het omringt.

Hoe staat het nu met de mogelijkheid om ongestraft activiteiten te plegen die afwijkend zijn, of die de autoriteiten bedreigen? De autoriteiten zijn tot in het hysterische waakzaam om bepaalde bekende, nauwkeurig omschreven typen van afwijkend gedrag te onderdrukken. De autoriteiten zullen beslist reageren op elke vorm van moedwillige, uitdrukkelijke insubordinatie; op alles wat de controle over hun eigen verdrongen lustgevoelens bedreigt; en op elke aanval op privileges waarover zij een verdrongen schuldgevoel hebben. Aan de andere kant zullen de autoriteiten onverschillig blijven jegens vormen van afwijkend gedrag die verborgen blijven achter een facade van conformiteit, en die hun verdrongen



schuldgevoelens niet provoceren. Zo zullen zij, zolang ik de voor de hand liggende, uiterlijke symbolen van non-conformiteit achterwege laat, aannemen dat ik ongevaarlijk ben, of mij op z'n minst negeren. Als ik de symbolen van conformiteit vertoon, zullen ze mij zonder meer accepteren.

Nog een aspect van deze zaak verdient het benadrukt te worden. In een wereld waarin al het leven, sociaal gezien, geen enkele waarde heeft, en waarin niemand zich iets van anderen aantrekt, zal niemand spontaan aandacht aan je schenken (tenzij je afwijkt, op de nauwkeurig omschreven manieren die we al genoemd hebben). Tenzij je jezelf op een agressieve manier adverteert, zal niemand je opmerken. De meeste mensen willen er niet van weten dat er onder hun ogen iets gaande is dat hun eigendunk in twijfel trekt. Ze zullen proberen zich, zolang ze kunnen, vast te houden aan hun dagelijkse routine, hun eigendunk en hun zelfvoldoening. In die zin zijn de autoriteiten buitengewoon kwetsbaar voor subversieve activiteiten die zij niet kunnen blootleggen zonder hun eigendunk in twijfel te trekken -- voor gaven en doeleinden die hen boven het hoofd stijgen en die zich terzelfdertijd vermommen als een oppervlakkige conformiteit.

Op die manier heeft men de mogelijkheid om zich door de spleten van de sociale orde te wringen, geruisloos bureaucratisch gedefinieerde rollen aannemend, met het doel om hen uit te buiten en dan te verdwijnen; en gebruik makend van de sinecures om toegang te verkrijgen tot faciliteiten

die voor de activiteiten van de commune noodzakelijk zijn. Een meer speculatieve mogelijkheid is die van het voor eigen doeleinden manipuleren van locale of gedeeltelijke instabiliteiten in de sociale structuur. Met betrekking tot die mogelijkheden is het voor de leden van de commune nuttig om hun verschillende ervaringen op dit gebied grondig te bespreken, en gezamenlijk plundertochten te beramen. Een laatste speculatieve mogelijkheid zou kunnen zijn om die geheime researchprojecten van de regering te infiltreren waarbij er inherent een kans betaamt dat het project zich tegen de belangen van de sponsors zelf zou kunnen keren en hun hegemonie overweldigen. Twee van zulke projecten zouden kunnen zijn de pogingen van voor de regering werkende astronomen om contacten te leggen met buitenaardse intelligentie, en de pogingen van voor de regering werkende neurocybernetici om kunstmatig supermensen te construeren (voor gebruik bij het beheer van wereldomvattende wapensystemen of het beheer van economische bronnen).

Oorspronkelijke titel: *Proposal for a "Geniuses' Liberation" Project*.

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Vertaling: Peter Nijmeijer, 1976.

Uitgave: Galerie A, Amsterdam, 100 exemplaren, 1976.

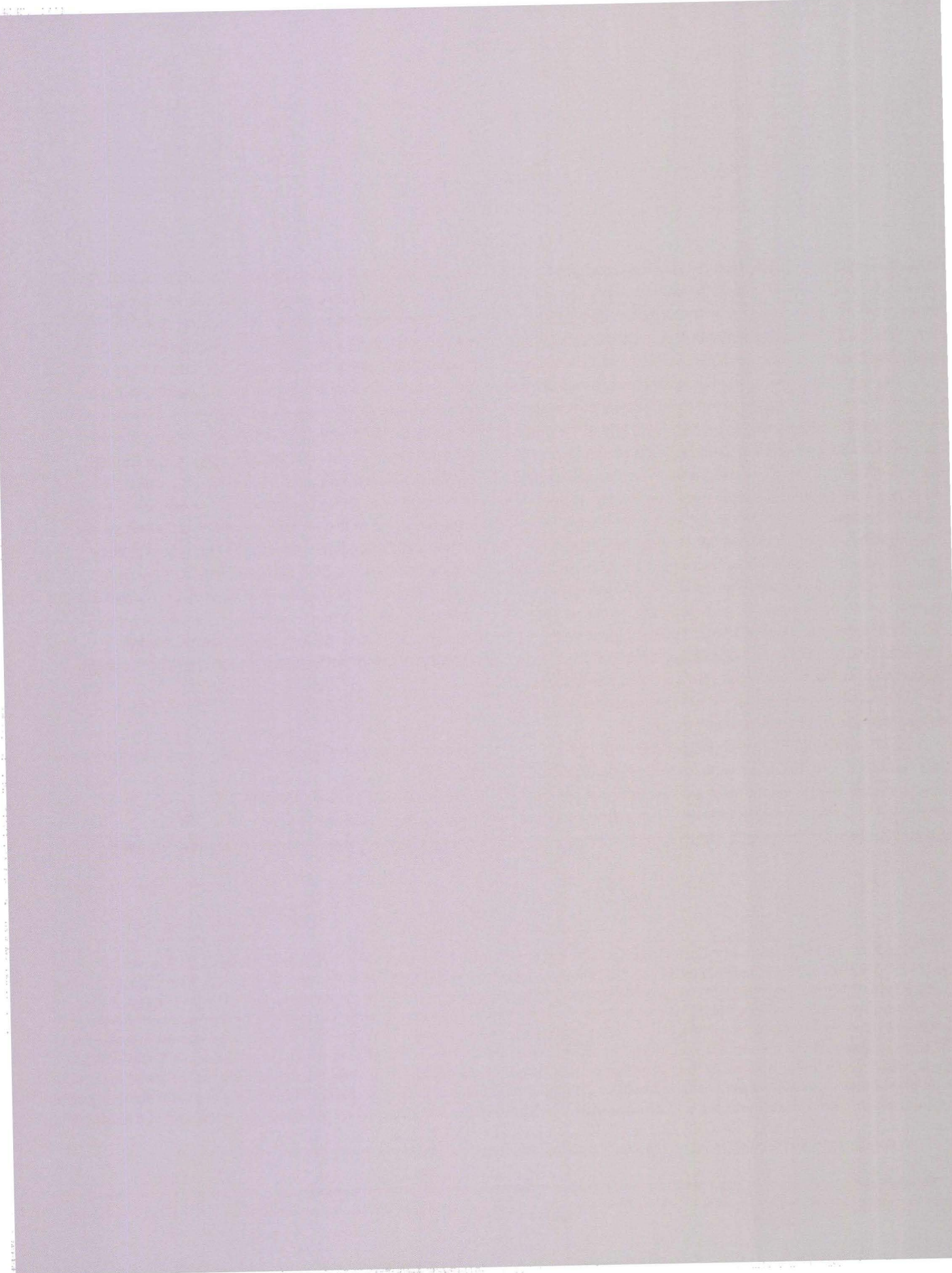
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<sup>1</sup> T. Bergstrom, 'On the Existence and Optimality of Competitive Equilibrium for a Slave Economy', in *Review of Economic Studies*, Vol. 38 (1971), blz. 23-36, toont de optimaliteit van de slavernij aan met behulp van algebraïsche topologie. Robert Fogel en Stanley Engerman, *Time on the Cross* (Little, Brown, 1974), toont de optimaliteit van slavernij aan met behulp van cliometrie (= historische statistiek). Gerard Debreu, *Theory of Value* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959), toont de optimaliteit van het kapitalisme aan met behulp van algebraïsche topologie. L.I. Rozonoer, 'Large Scale Systems and Operations Management', in *Avtomatica i telemekhanika* (mei 1973), blz. 115-132, en Nicolas Rashevsky, *Mathematical Principles in Biology*, analyseren de natuurlijke wereld als een winstvergroterend systeem. Paul Ehrlich, *The End of Affluence*, Jay Forrester, *Blueprint for Survival*, en Donella Meadows e.a., *The Limits to Growth* (New York, Universe Books, 1972), tonen aan dat de ecologiecrisis een achteruitgang in de levensomstandigheden van de armen noodzakelijk maakt, terwijl de privileges van de rijken bewaard blijven. Zie ook de artikelen in *Scientific American* en de 'papers presented to the American Association for the Advancement of Science' die zich bezighouden met sociale vraagstukken.

<sup>2</sup> Deze passage komt voor in de bloemlezing *The Age of Analysis*, samengesteld door Morton White (Mentor, 1955), blz. 210-211.

<sup>3</sup> 'Brend' is een door Henry Flynt zelf bedacht woord dat betekent: spontaan zelfvermaak waarvan de waarde zuiver subjectief is, en daardoor ook absoluut persoonsgebonden en origineel. Zie Henry Flynt, *Blueprint for a Higher Civilization* (Milaan, Multhipla Edizioni, 1975), blz. 6-7 en 64-65.







**M**y gratitude goes out to all those artists, composers, filmmakers, authors and poets with whom I have worked together during the last forty years and whose texts and visual material I have included in this book.

Many of them – particularly Paul Sharits and Günter Brus – have supported me from the start, also when I didn't manage to sell any of their works for a long time. The same goes for publisher Armin Hundertmark: our cooperation dates back to 1973.

Henry Flynt has also been important to me. In 1976, I published one of his essays in Dutch. It has been added to this edition.

Yoko Ono's work is no less radical. Her *Painting to be stepped on* was one of the highlights during the Centraal Fluxus Festival, an event organised by Willem de Ridder and myself in 2003.

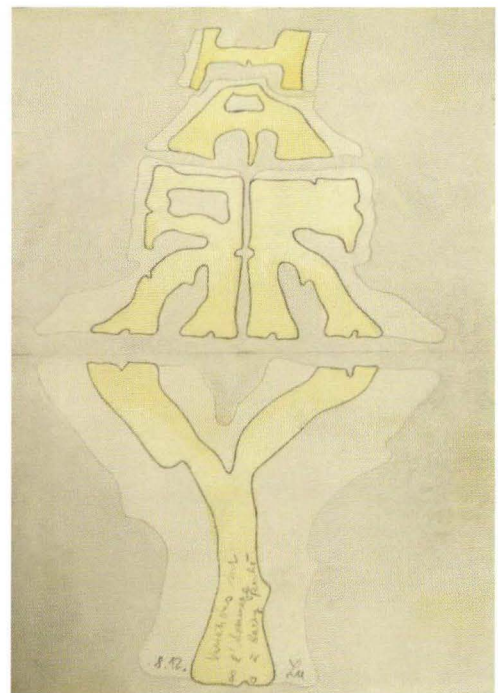
The following persons have also played a major role in this edition. Jon Hendricks, my help and stay from 1975 onward. Ken Friedman, who made the portrait drawings for this book. There is also Liz Dautzenberg: she knows everything about Jonas Mekas & Film Culture. Peter van Beveren and Rafael Vostell provided additional information.

I would also like to mention Jeannette Deukeleire: I have described some of our mutual CultClub adventures in this book. Tuja van den Berg has always stood by me, my projects and ventures. Thanks to translator Marjan Groothuis and graphic designer Leander Lammertink for the quality of their work and their patience with me.

Last but not least: Franck Gribling. Many years ago, he visited my small private museum located near the IJsselmeer, accompanied by a group of students. Now, forty five years later, he made his own space available to me, both for the presentation of this book and the exhibition of the same name.

Unfortunately, this book comes too late for some of my friends, like publisher Francesco Conz. He might have been an impossible man, but I remember him with a lot of fondness. The same applies to artist and political activist Gustav Metzger. I owe many thanks to archivist Hanns Sohm: several of the reproduced documents in this book were once part of his legendary 'Duplikatensammlung' (collection of duplicates). Gilbert B. Silvermann should be mentioned here as well. He, his wife Lila and John Hendricks put together a rare and outstanding collection of Fluxus art which now belongs to the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

*Harry Ruhé*



**Ladislav Novák, from the series: *Variations sur l'hommage à Harry Ruhé*, 1980.**



## Colophon

### **ART, NO-ART & ANTI-ART** **a collection of relics**

was published by:

Galerie A

Roosevelttlaan 197, 1079 AP Amsterdam

[www.multiples.nl](http://www.multiples.nl)

Translations: Marjan Groothuis

Portrait drawings: Ken Friedman

Design: Leander Lammertink

Distribution: Idea Books, Amsterdam

© 2019: Harry Ruhé, the artists and photographers

ISBN: 978-90-819024-1-0

Front cover: Ralph Ortiz, MOCA, Los Angeles, 1989

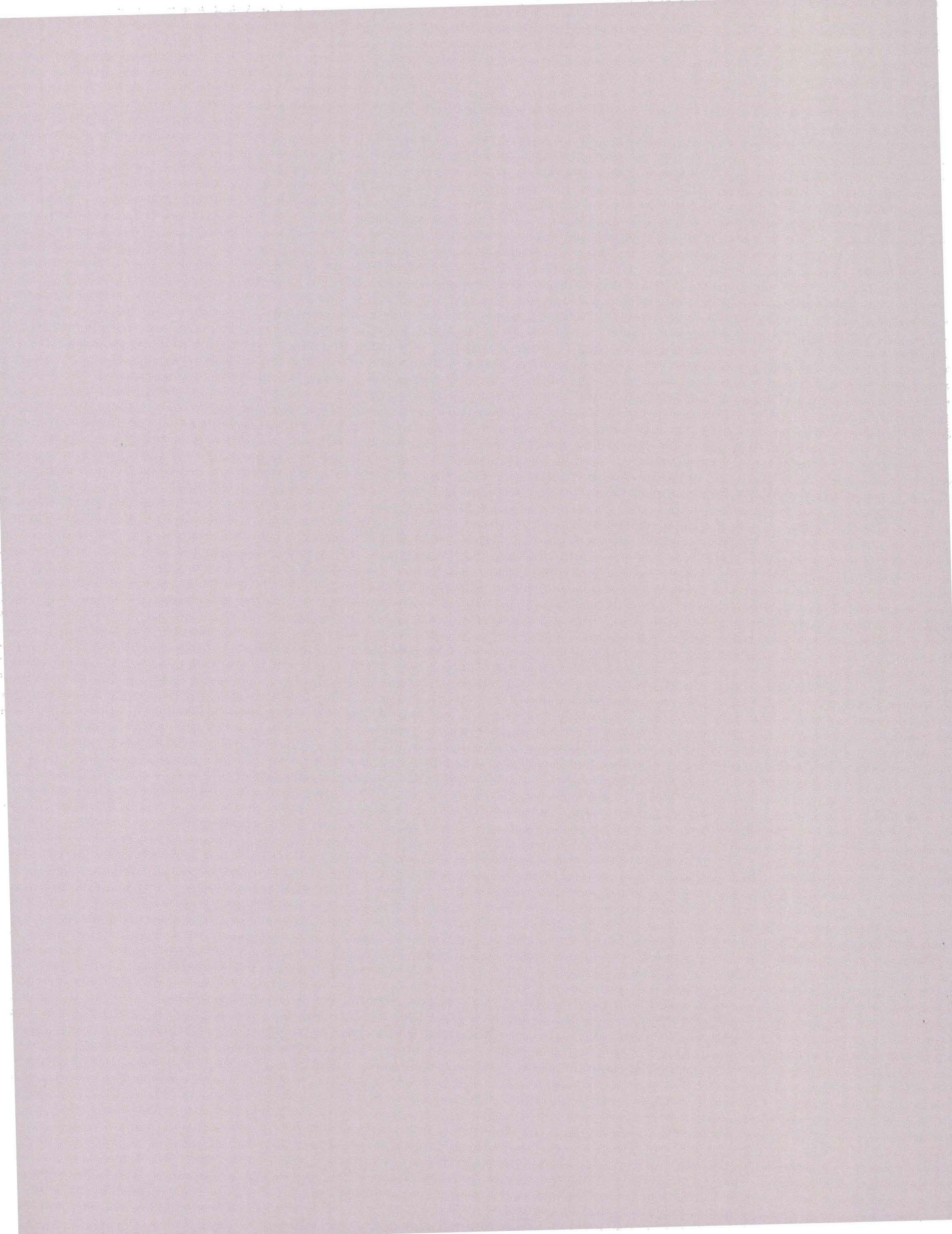
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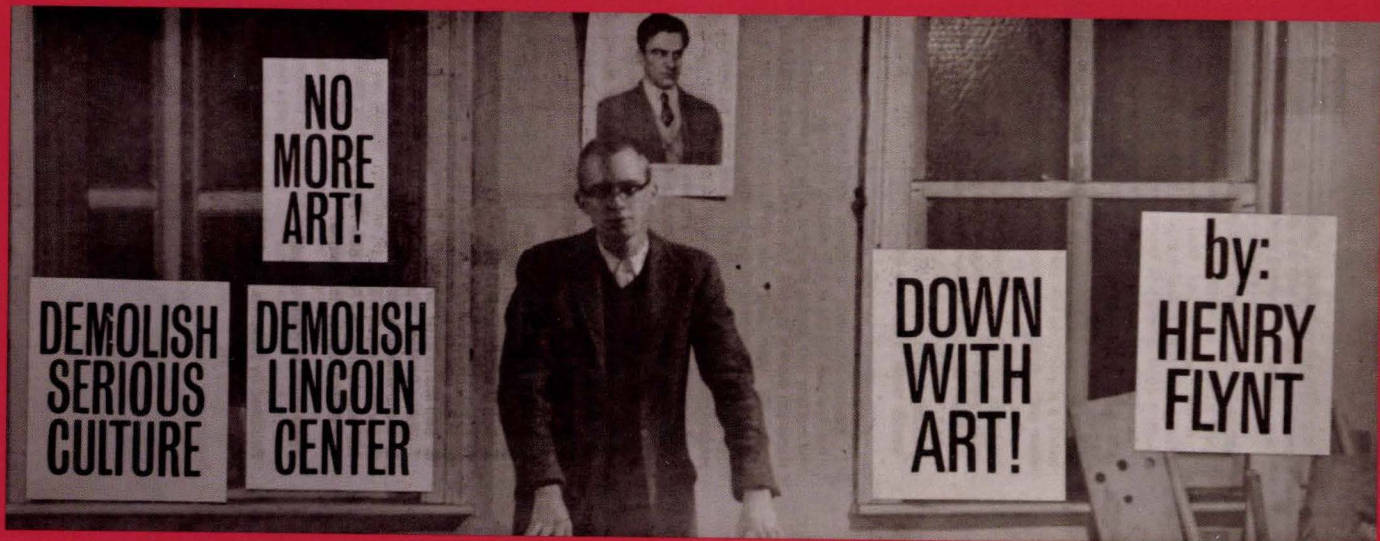












**Burnt lingerie**

**Exploding Mystery Food**

**Books cast in cement**

**Plastic boxes containing God ('God is everywhere')**

**A dildo decorated with artificial pearls and satin ribbon**

**Material able to cut the energy supply in police stations**

**Photographs of taboo breaking performances**

**Letters with Special Stories**

**Printed matter of the Institute for Direct Art set up by Günter Brus and Otto Muehl.**

**Flyers of the NO!art Movement, political instrument of Boris Lurie, Sam Goodman and Stanley Fisher.**

**Posters by Ben Vautier: ground breaking Art Total (Everything is Art!)**

**Manifestoes by Gustav Metzger about Auto-destructive Art; destruction as part of the creative process.**

**Calls for Anti-Art demonstrations by Henry Flynt: DOWN WITH ART!**

**All of this and a lot more can be found within  
the pages of this book: a treasure trove of 'relicts'  
and also some 'normal' art  
collected over the last fifty years.**

