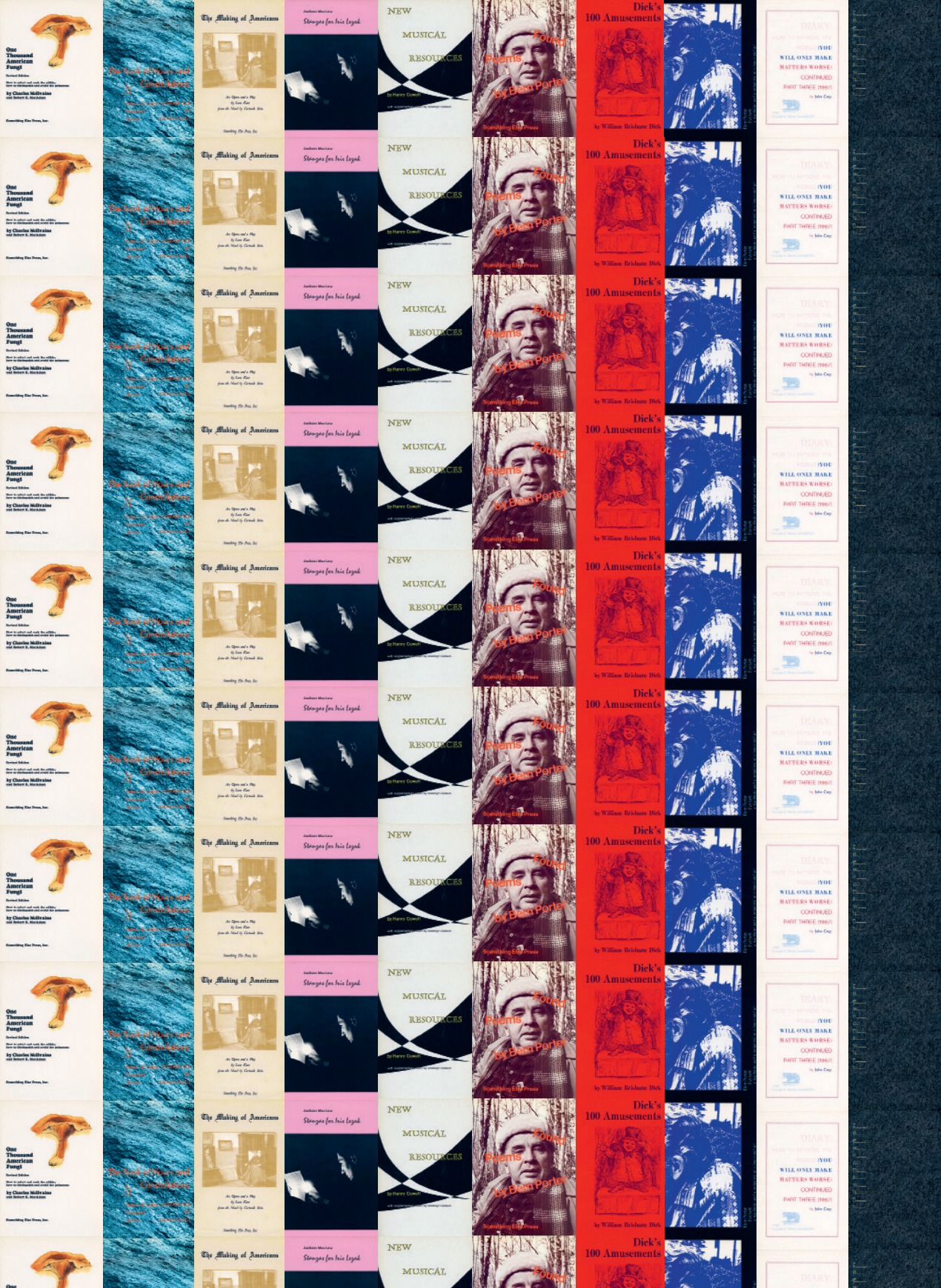
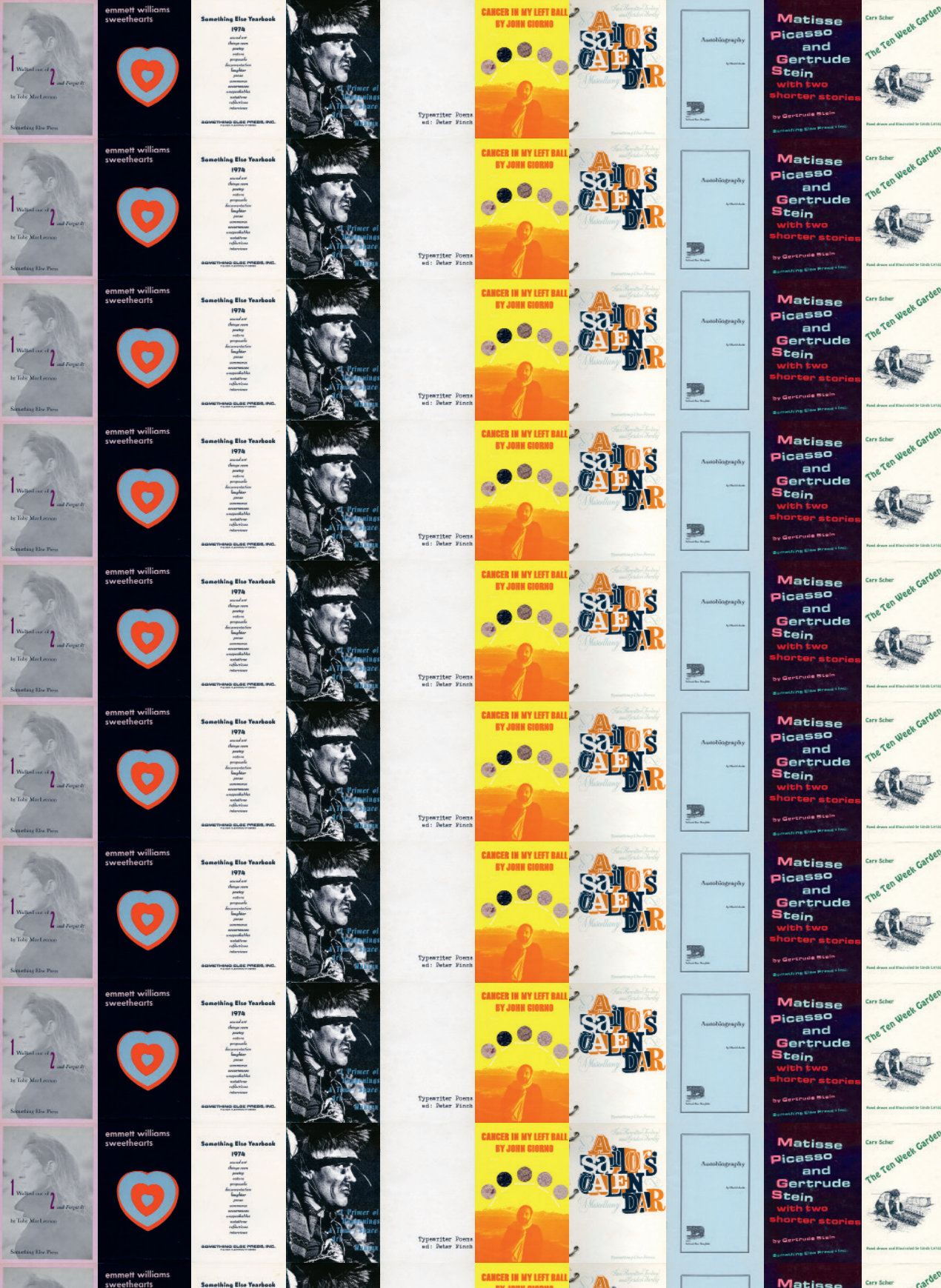


**Call it
something
else**







SOME THING
? !
ELSE

*I think of an animal totem for this man
and it is difficult*

*was it the great white polar bear?
the African lion—
the elephant!*

*I think I have it—the zebra—yes
language and power in black and white*

Alison Knowles reflecting on Dick Higgins
a few days prior to his memorial,
letter to Christian Xatrec, 1998

Hans Sohm
*Dick Higgins at the Something Else Press Offices,
238 West 22nd Street, New York, 1969*





Call it something else

Something Else Press, Inc.
1963–1974

Be something else. Be something more than just a magazine, be something more than just a publisher, be something more than what art has been so far. In the 1960s many creatives felt the need to reset and expand the notion of the artistic, pushing beyond its traditional boundaries and seeking to address a wider audience. This tendency was defined not just by the Fluxus movement in the first half of the decade and conceptual art in the second but also by the multifaceted publishing project the US artist Dick Higgins established in late 1963 and maintained until 1974: Something Else Press.

Throughout those eleven years, this publishing platform released original books and monographs by artists, writers, philosophers, and musicians that registered the creative and theoretical experiments taking place at the time, from John Cage and Robert Filliou, to Philip Corner, George Brecht, Alice Hutchins, Alison Knowles, Marshall McLuhan, and Emmett Williams. Higgins also put considerable energy into promoting the work of figures linked to the artistic avant-gardes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for he considered it essential that the genealogy of contemporary art practices be made known and valued. Drawing upon a robust network of collaborators, Higgins managed to maintain, throughout Something Else Press's trajectory, an intense and heterogeneous artistic-publishing output, conceiving of and implementing alternative models of not only publication, but communication, promotion, and distribution.

This exhibition features a wide and diverse range of materials linked to Something Else Press and its various creations and spin-offs, demonstrating the huge variety of practices that the project encapsulated and highlighting that this was no ordinary publisher. As its very name indicates, it was a publisher that always aspired to be "something else." In this conscious intention lies its pioneering spirit and the radical, exceptional nature of a project that made a decisive contribution to redefining the artist's book.

Miquel Iceta i Llorens
Acting Minister of Culture and Sport

The US artist Dick Higgins founded the publishing house Something Else Press (SEP) in late 1963, its first publication being *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*, a collection of pieces written by Higgins in the preceding months. These included an essay in which he analyzed the artistic happenings he'd witnessed in the early years of his career, a time when he was an active member of an effervescent, creative avant-garde scene that ranged from John Cage's experimental composition courses to the development and launch of Fluxus, the Lower East Side New York poetry scene, and the international concrete poetry movement. In its eleven years of existence, the SEP published over fifty books (by artist contemporaries of Higgins and creatives linked to historic avant-garde movements), produced a variety of distribution and promotional material, and even ran its own public space, the Something Else Gallery, which hosted a variety of activities: exhibitions, presentations, workshops, concerts . . .

The book *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*, which had originally been planned for publication by George Maciunas as part of the Fluxus Editions list, featured a manifesto on the backside of the book jacket that explained the guiding principles and aims of the new publisher. The name itself was a clear statement of intent, for the search for "something more," for "something else," provided the project with its particular disruptive potential. It was a project positioned at the intersection between art and publishing, maintaining a close but critical relationship with both worlds, while keeping a sort of strategic distance.

The Something Else Press emerged at a moment when language was acquiring an increasingly central place in the artistic realm—the art historian Liz Kotz speaks of a "turn to language" in 1960s art—and many artists, seeking to realize the avant-garde aspiration of fusing art and life, began to prioritize generating processes and experiences over creating objects, thus critically confronting the elitist and objectifying logic of galleries and museums. All this led to the appearance of numerous projects that conceived of the book as a tool and an artistic medium, "as art in itself," in Lucy Lippard's words. She published a seminal essay in 1977 on the phenomenon of artist's books, although the essay did not in fact mention the SEP.

Despite Lippard's omission, it's clear that many of the Something Else Press's publications can be defined as "artist's books," as indeed numerous academic studies have since recognized. Examples include *Ample Food for Stupid Thought* by Robert Filliou, a box of postcards that presented the reader with confounding questions, and *The Paper Snake* by Ray Johnson, a set of drawings, collage fragments, and short poems that he mailed to Higgins between 1959 and 1964.

Besides, as this exhibition underlines, the Something Else Press can be understood in and of itself as an "artistic intervention," one in which, as Alice Centamore—joint commissioner of the show, alongside Christian Xatrec—points out, each component part acted as a "discursive component." It was an intervention that, furthermore, allowed Higgins to define his own position as an artist, fusing his identity with that of the publishing house and his voice with the multiple voices connected to it.

Driven by the desire and aspiration to offer "something more," the Something Else Press would also serve as the paradigmatic example of what Higgins himself defined as "intermedia." Higgins saw intermedia as a means of conceptualizing artistic

practices that were positioned in between different media and specific modes of production, transcending disciplinary boundaries and dissolving the personal into the collective. As Trevor Stark notes, it's worth qualifying that for Higgins the specificity of such practices lay not in simply combining distinct mediums but in exploring and occupying liminal spaces. Furthermore, he understood "intermedia" not as a historic rupture but as a buried cultural tradition, one with illustrious predecessors such as Plutarch, Giordano Bruno, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (from whom he took the term), and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Besides books, the SEP produced an array of publications to announce SEP news, to intervene and take a stance in the artistic debates of the time, and to seek to expand or diversify its potential audience. These publications included the *Something Else Newsletter* (featuring an explanation of the theory of "intermedia"); the Great Bear Pamphlets, which were small, offset-printed budget booklets; and *Camille's Reports*, a series of bulletins chronicling the latest artistic developments signed by Camille Gordon, a pseudonym disguising Dick Higgins himself.

It's interesting to consider this alter ego as an example of Higgins's determination to dissolve his own identity into that of the publisher, but also as a side effect of the invisible role women played in the project. One of the particular objectives of this exhibition is to undo that invisibility by highlighting the female artists who contributed to the SEP's publications and the activities at the Something Else Gallery. In this regard, it's worth noting the SEP's efforts to recover and disseminate the work of Gertrude Stein, who in fact contributed more works to the publisher than any other author.'

Eager to make the ideas and artistic practices that the SEP supported available to the widest possible audience, Higgins also opted for collaborative distribution models and to impart his project on an international scale. This meant that from very early on the SEP extended its area of attention and activity beyond the United States, and, by the time it ceased operations in 1974, it had managed to exercise considerable influence over various groups of artists and theorists around the world, including those in Canada, Germany, France, Mexico, and Japan.

Call it something else. Something Else Press, Inc. (1963–1974) shows us that, rather than fading, this influence has gained in relevance over time. By considering the SEP in all its multiplicity and heterogeneity, at the conceptual as well as the organizational level, as the embodiment of intermedia experimentality, reflecting the publisher's wish to exist as a "collaborative collage," the exhibition does not simply aim to raise awareness of the SEP's exceptional nature and the important role it played in art in the second half of the last century. It also highlights its relevance and capacity to speak to the present, both as an operational model and as referent for contemporary artists who seek to infiltrate and intervene, critically, in the hegemonic media platforms of today.

10 Introduction

Alice Centamore and
Christian Xatrec

12 Essays

- 14 **The Making of Something
Else Press, Inc.**
Alice Centamore
- 30 **The Something Else Gallery
and the Space beyond the Page**
Danielle Johnson
- 48 **Passionate Expanse of the Law:
Intermedia and the Problem of
Discipline**
Trevor Stark
- 62 **Intermedia Res: The Something
Else Press as Real Time System**
Johanna Gosse
- 78 **Christian Xatrec Interviews
Dick Higgins**

84 Press

168 Intermedia

178 Gallery

217 Annexes

218 Chronology

242 List of images

Introduction

Alice Centamore and
Christian Xatrec

In conceiving an exhibition on a publishing house that is the work of an artist but not, *stricto sensu*, a work of art, one may ask: What is the *object*? That question is especially apt for a subject like the Something Else Press (hereafter SEP). The multivalence of that word resonates across the field of interpretation, splitting into many pertinent questions and a spectrum of possible answers. Defining *object* as “aim” allows us to become more specific and ask: What was Higgins’s object when he launched the Press in the early 1960s, calling it a “necessity”? What was he taking on (in the sense of *supporting* as much as *confronting*)? And to what did Higgins object? The usual answer points to a 1963 dispute he had with George Maciunas, who had delayed publishing Higgins’s *Jefferson’s Birthday* (soon to become the first SEP book) to focus on preparing works submitted by artists for collective publication under the imprint of Fluxus. That Higgins’s frustration with Maciunas led to his decision to found a press is not in doubt. But this story is almost anecdotal in comparison to the entire, decade-long history of the SEP, which this exhibition seeks to illuminate.

The SEP’s object from the start was to seize and build upon the burgeoning creative experiments by composers, dancers, authors, and artists of all kinds (many in Higgins’s circle) and to give their ephemeral work the *necessary* buttressing to carry it into the future. If the book itself is an object (a fact Higgins made impressively concrete when he noted that four hundred pages equals one inch in thickness), its covers, paper, and binding, like canvas and primer, constitute its support. Could high-quality paper, striking layouts, and new distribution methods imbue creative gestures and statements with enough substance to be graspable? At the time, advanced art (in certain circles) was avoiding the object at all costs. In committing himself to book-objects, Higgins confronted object status, including but not limited to the objectification of the creative act and the rise of art as a commodity object.

Decades ago, when asked if the apparent conformity of the SEP’s forms (as opposed to the radicality of its content) was a strategic decision on his part to allow the avant-garde to infiltrate the establishment, or whether it was purely an aesthetic decision, Higgins’s pithy response was that one could not “infiltrate

the establishment for any length of time”: the best one could do was to act as if one were already part of it.¹

One last aspect of our initial question about the object begets another, which will bring us into the present. What was/is the museum’s object—above all, *this museum’s*—in mounting an exhibition on the SEP? Indeed, what are the museum objects for such a show? That we all (the entire team) have addressed these challenges has not only *made* the project, but made it hold up, we hope, as a Reina Sofía project.

Already by 1960, artists in the downtown New York scene had begun to distrust galleries and to seek out more neutral spaces to present their developing work. It remains striking that Higgins had already been deeply involved for a good five years in dissolving the boundaries between the individual arts, in seeing (and activating) one *through* another, before he bore down on his concept of intermedia, which he formulated in 1964/5 and published on in 1966. Split off from the terms then in use, *mixed media* and *multimedia*, intermedia would gain ground in lockstep with the mandate of the SEP.

In 1966, Higgins wrote a score titled *Intermedial Object #1*. He intended this piece to be the first of a series that never materialized.² Insofar as it exceeded the conventional limits of any one medium or platform—including that of publishing—the SEP aligns with the concept of intermedia. In the final analysis, we might even call it the example of intermedia par excellence. Perhaps we could go so far as to think of the Something Else Press as the *Intermedial Object #2* Dick Higgins never deemed it necessary to name.

¹ See transcript of the Dick Higgins interview by Christian Xatrec, 1993, published in *Art Press*, no. 188 (February 1994) [pp. 78–83].

² Dick Higgins, “About My Intermedia Object #1,” unpublished note dated January 28, 1995, box 19, folder 20, Dick Higgins Archive, McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University.

SOMETHING ELSE PRESS

America's Qual

DICK HIGGINS

Sales Manager

WATKINS 9

S, INC.

ity Avant-Garde Pub

160 FIFTH AVE
NEW YORK, N. Y.

The Making of Something Else Press, Inc.

*We can talk about a thing,
but we cannot talk a thing.
It is always something else.*

"A Something Else Manifesto" (1964)¹

One evening in late 1963, Dick Higgins stormed out of the Canal Street office of his prospective publisher George Maciunas, manager of Fluxus Editions, with his manuscript in hand. *Jefferson's Birthday 1962–1963* was a collection of Higgins's compositions dating from April 13, 1962, through April 13, 1963, which concluded with the essay "Postface."² The specific start date was that of Higgins's score *Danger Music Number Thirteen* and the birthday of America's founding father, Thomas Jefferson.³ The catalyst for Higgins's dramatic exit from Maciunas's office was the news that *Jefferson's Birthday* would not be released until 1965. His frustration was such that he resolved to take matters into his own hands by founding a publishing house to put out the volume himself.⁴ After an incubation period of almost a year, the manuscript would become the first publication of the Something Else Press under the title *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*. The first book of the newly founded house was a compendium of practice and theory reconfigured as two books in one, printed in opposite orientations that offered a choice of which one to begin with. On one side (*Jefferson's Birthday*), the cluster of Higgins's art pieces, on the other (*Postface*), an essay-length overview of artistic developments

between 1958 and 1963 that Higgins himself had witnessed. The dust jacket mirrored the dual structure of the book. The cover of *Jefferson's Birthday* was a close-up of Higgins's face performing *Danger Music Number Seventeen* (1962); that of *Postface* was a silkscreen image of the Statue of Liberty (by Alison Knowles). The two came together as one jacket/sheet. On its verso, Higgins printed "A Something Else Manifesto" announcing his intentions for the new press. He expressed his commitment to covering a range of "essential" topics—at once uncategorizable and novel—from a plurality of sources. They would be produced in a variety of formats, from large and high quality to small and modest, and would aim to have a broad reach. All this was premised on one vital condition: *it is always something else*. From the first book/manifesto of 1963, until its final year of activity in 1974, the Something Else Press published forty-nine books (most issued in both hard- and softcover with occasional reprints);⁵ distributed pamphlets, catalogues, promotional materials, as well as other presses' publications; and produced seven artist's editions. Parallel to the Press's activity, the Something Else Gallery was launched to present related exhibitions, events, workshops, and concerts. In its wake, a trail of administrative, legal, and personal documents spans several archival holdings.

Higgins surely could not have imagined, at the outset, all that the Something Else Press would achieve. In retrospect, we see that the scope of the project expanded almost immediately. The initial exigency of outpacing Maciunas's publication schedule quickly became an ambitious, inclusive initiative that would see his book juxtaposed with and complemented by original works by many others.

The practice of casting artistic propositions into language, formatted for publication and wide distribution—in explicit opposition to rarefied, one-off artworks—is among the most significant results of 1960s experiments, from Fluxus in the first half of the decade through conceptual art in the second. To support this claim, we could invoke a plethora of variations on the book medium, including Ed Ruscha's *Twenty Six Gasoline Stations* (1962), Ray Johnson's *Book about Death* (1963–1965), and *The Xerox Book* (1968), to list but a few. This much acknowledged, we must now note that Higgins's artistic project differed radically from the handful of examples that tends to be cited. In what follows, I argue that the Something Else Press stands out as a multifaceted historical intervention initiated and overseen by one artist, a structure in which books, pamphlets, and promotional materials act as discursive components. To fulfill his vision, Higgins reappropriated and retooled the operations of the publishing industry by creating an entire press—rather than proceeding from one book project to the next—and linked the Something Else Press to his own artistic identity. At this juncture, a few preparatory questions are indispensable to guide us. First: How did Higgins

develop the Press, an aesthetic and intellectual, commercial, and social system for the arts? What were his motivations? Second: What was the historically urgent role he discerned for the artist/artwork in that moment that could be best channeled through a sophisticated, perhaps unprecedented publishing initiative? Finally, what can be made of the total output of the Something Else Press, across which Higgins developed a diffuse artistic statement? To address these questions, I will examine the historical context of the Something Else Press, highlight some of its strategies, and discuss some of the books. The effort, here and in the exhibition, to illuminate the rich, informed, and eclectic output of the Something Else Press seeks to restore its position not just in its moment but in the history of postwar art.

In the early 1960s, Higgins was a writer and composer in his twenties, earning his living as a designer and/or printer for companies such as Zaccar Offset and the trade publisher Russell & Russell.⁶ He had obtained a degree from Columbia University (majoring in English) and a professional diploma from the Manhattan School of Printing. While at Columbia, he attended classes given by the composer Henry Cowell. In 1958, he discovered and enrolled in the New School class of one of Cowell's disciples, John Cage. (The Something Else Press would publish work by both composers.) In Cage's "Experimental Composition" courses—crucible of some of most radical transformations of art taking place at the time—Higgins witnessed and partook of many pivotal experiments.⁷ In the context of the Cage courses of 1958 and 1959, Higgins, along with Al Hansen and other classmates, founded the New York Audio Visual Group. Filling the void after Cage quit teaching to tour, the group sought to bring pieces that originated in the classroom into the real world. Higgins also began to experiment with 16 mm film and made his first and only feature-length work, *The Flaming City* (1961–1962).⁸ Curiosity about cutting-edge "composing" practices, and his contact with artists of all stripes, drew Higgins into the Lower East Side poetry scene. This led to the inclusion of one of his poems in one of the defining Beat poetry anthologies (from Corinth Books) and an epistolary exchange with Maine-based poet Bern Porter resulting in the publication of his first book, *What Are Legends* (1960).⁹ From early on, Higgins was aware of the international concrete poetry movement—burgeoning in South America and across Europe—whose publications he had discovered at the Wittenborn & Company bookshop. He also began corresponding with poet Emmett Williams, and musicians Nam June Paik and Benjamin Patterson, all expatriates living in Germany. In summer 1962, at the invitation of Maciunas, Higgins left New York for Europe to participate in the founding Fluxus activities; indeed, it was in December 1962, in the German town of Ehlhalten, that he first discussed with Maciunas the possibility of

publishing *Jefferson's Birthday 1962–1963* under a Fluxus imprint.¹⁰ Upon his return to New York in 1963, Higgins was eager to make known all that he had witnessed during his formative years and to advance his own practice. However, with a foot in virtually every emergent artistic tendency—such as New Music, concrete and sound poetry, Fluxus, innovative forms of writing, intertextuality, simultaneities, and performance—Higgins's position as an artist was yet to be defined.



Dick Higgins
Stills from *The Flaming City*, 1961–1962

At once a writer, composer, experimental filmmaker, and printer, Higgins refused to be identified with any one activity. Instead, he would define a new authorial model in order to intervene differently in the cultural field of the time; he became a publisher. With the founding of the Something Else Press and the launch of *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*, he cleared a path for circulating what he found relevant, most ignored, or most misunderstood. Books on or by artists, writers, philosophers, and musicians of his time, with whom he had crossed paths or deemed worthy of greater exposure, were published along with works by the historical avant-gardes of the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, a priority of the Press was to highlight artistic and literary precedents that had informed contemporary practices. A point to which we will return. On a practical level, Higgins's work at the Something Else Press consisted of various tasks such as selecting content, often in consultation with the Press's editors, and arranging access to materials, from the documentary and archival to artworks. He was also in charge of justifying editorial choices, projecting costs, publicizing the Press's titles, and finding appropriate distributors—all the while making a sufficient profit to keep the operation afloat. Higgins's design skills were reflected in

almost all the Something Else Press's output: from books to letterhead and logo. Always seeking sharp solutions for the lucid appearance of text on the page, the publisher had a hand in format, layout, and even typesetting. The kaleidoscopic list of responsibilities that came with the self-appointed position of publisher represented the extent of Higgins's artistic engagement for the better part of a decade. At this point, we should attend to the operations and inner workings of the Something Else Press, before zooming out to all Higgins envisaged for the Press.

Stock certificate
of Something Else
Press, Inc., 1965



The history of the Something Else Press unfolds along three temporal and geographical axes. It operated in New York from 1963 to 1970. Then, between 1970 and 1971, Higgins had a teaching gig at CalArts (California Institute of the Arts) and ran the Press out of his temporary home in Newhall, California, while the books remained in New York. The Something Else Press's final chapter takes place in Barton, Vermont, where it operated from mid-1971 to 1974, when it went bankrupt. Each period is defined by a different “team” and by new and innovative editorial directions, marketing, and distribution strategies.

The Press was officially incorporated in 1965 as a subchapter S corporation, Something Else Press, Inc., and an office was rented at 160 Fifth Avenue, in a commercial building located in the then heart of New York's trade-publishing district.¹¹ From the get-go, Higgins sought help with administrative and editorial tasks by offering jobs to his friends and other collaborators, most of whom were artists or poets in their own right. In the period of the Flatiron District office, Higgins hired the first editorial director, Barbara Moore, who

stayed on only until 1966. Moore was replaced by Emmett Williams—the US poet/composer/artist (and founding member of Fluxus) then based in Germany—who returned to the US specifically to work at the Something Else Press. Williams’s tenure lasted until 1971, when he was succeeded by Jan Herman. Between 1967 and 1969, Williams worked with an assistant editor, Frances Starr, whose projects at the Press included George Brecht and Robert Filliou’s *Games at the Cedilla, or the Cedilla Takes Off* (1967) and Merce Cunningham’s book *Changes: Notes on Choreography* (1968).¹² Notably, throughout its existence, the Press hired a succession of highly committed female assistants/collaborators whose contributions have been overlooked: Ann Brazeau, Lette Eisenhauer, Marilyn Harris, Meredith Monk, Judy Padow, Nelleke Rosenthal, Ann Noël Williams (née Stevenson), and Sherry Urie, among others. These women’s input may have been neglected because of the ubiquitous and uncanny appearance of Higgins’s own alter ego, Camille Gordon, who signed official Something Else documents whenever he wished to remain anonymous.¹³ Far from a mere pen name, Gordon loomed large, credited as a book editor, a “gossip columnist,” and the eponymous figure behind the *Camille’s Reports*, newsletters issued by the Something Else Press (1967–1973). As of 1965, the Press publicized its titles through the *Something Else Newscards*, humorous, sometimes sardonic, advertising blurbs condensed into the format of a postcard. They were progressively replaced by the more formal *Something Else Newsletter*. These 8½-by-11-inch bulletins ran from four to eight pages, bringing together reportage, publicity, criticism, aesthetics, and art. They were distributed by subscription; at its peak, the newsletter had around six thousand subscribers.¹⁴ Higgins used the newsletters to canvass and disseminate his theory of “intermedia,” to circulate essays such as “Boredom and Danger” and “Blank Images,” and to lay the ground for the new reception of overlooked authors like Bern Porter and Gertrude Stein.¹⁵ The *Newsletter* also advertised the activities of fellow publishers in the United States and Europe, like Editions Hansjörg Mayer (Stuttgart), Typos Verlag (Frankfurt), Nova Broadcast Press (San Francisco), and posters by ED.912 (Milan). In addition to its own marketing strategies, the Something Else Press frequently advertised in magazines and newspapers such as *Publishers Weekly*—a trade paper for publishers, librarians, and booksellers—and the downtown alternative newspaper the *Village Voice*. The effort invested in promotion did boost the circulation of the Something Else books. They also attracted some high-caliber reviewers, who wrote about the Press’s activities in the *New York Times*, *Vogue*, and *Artforum*. One of the most compelling write-ups, which coincided with the Press’s 1966 publication of Gertrude Stein’s *The Making of Americans* (1925), asserted: “art libraries would do well to pass up the next fifty-dollar multi-colored version of ‘Picasso at Work and Play’ and buy instead the complete list of Something Else Press publications so far released.”¹⁶

A year after “A Something Else Manifesto,” Higgins published a declaration of intent centered on the material and technical aspects of producing books, with the catchy title: “What to Look for in a Book—Physically” (1965). Functioning as the introduction to the Something Else Press’s first promotional catalogue, this text was a guide for evaluating the quality of hardcover editions. After offering directions on paper quality, page design, and binding, the manifesto explained: “Because of our specialization, our prices have to be relatively high. [. . .] We are not interested in built-in obsolescence. We want our books to be as fresh ten years from now as they are today, and as much of a joy to behold.”¹⁷ Higgins knew that his books had to be of the highest quality if the Press was to compete with conventional publishers.¹⁸ This led to elevated production costs and, thus, relatively high prices for the time (books ranged between four and ten dollars). In late 1965, the Something Else Press launched an inexpensive series of offset-printed texts titled “Great Bear Pamphlets”; presumably this was a subtle move to compensate for the cost of the books.¹⁹ The name was inspired by Higgins’s favorite astronomic constellation—Ursa Major, or the Great Bear—and, closer to home, to the brand of the watercooler leased for the Something Else Press’s Fifth Avenue headquarters.²⁰ The sixteen-page pamphlets—priced between forty cents and two dollars—were devoted to “short but important works, without regard to medium, by the major artists of [that] time, in an inexpensive form which could go places our more elaborate books could not.”²¹ The Something Else Press published twenty Great Bear Pamphlets in three years, at which point the series was stopped due to increased costs and the labor-intensive nature of the project. To circumvent this, the resourceful publisher came up with a third kind of low-cost publication, which he dubbed Threadneedle editions. These editions were facsimiles and manuscripts that required neither editing nor typesetting; they were simply printed on 2½-by-4-inch pages and stapled into manila folders with rubber-stamped titles. Higgins had planned to issue ten to fifteen Threadneedle editions, but they never made it into production. The single prototype that survives is a collection of Higgins’s plays: *Act: A Game of 52 Soaphorse Operas*.²²

The dynamics of these publication strategies found an equivalent, content-wise, in the Something Else Press’s alternation between contemporary and historical works. By 1966, Higgins saw the need to clarify continuities and differences between contemporary art forms and their forerunners.²³ Tired of hearing underqualified critics likening Fluxus to Dada, he reissued the 1920 Erich Reiss Verlag edition of Richard Huelsenbeck’s *Dada Almanach* (in German).²⁴ Around the same time, Higgins entrusted Robert Filliou to translate the futurist music manifesto by Luigi Russolo, *L’Arte dei rumori* (*The Art of Noise*), for publication as a Great Bear Pamphlet.²⁵ The publisher also committed himself to revitalizing the reception of Gertrude



Corporate sticker,
c. 1966

Stein, whose books had become scarce and/or inaccessible due to limited-edition print runs and high prices.²⁶ After the publication of the unabridged edition of *The Making of Americans* (1966), five other Stein volumes followed; the six books made the expatriate American the Something Else Press's most published author.²⁷ As Higgins had found his way into the Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas Papers at Yale University's Beinecke Library already in his student days, it is entirely plausible that he developed an affinity with the couple for their brave venture into publishing (inter alia).²⁸ He was surely aware of the Plain Edition imprint, which Stein and Toklas founded and operated out of their Paris apartment at 27 rue de Fleurus (1930–1933). In this relatively short period, the couple managed to publish five of Stein's books.²⁹ The Something Else Press would issue three Plain Edition books in facsimile: *Lucy Church Amiably* (1930; 1969), *How to Write* (1931; 1973), and *Matisse, Picasso & Gertrude Stein* (1933; 1972). Sure to drum up interest with these volumes, a Something Else Press advertising blurb announced: "Our Patron is Gertrude Stein and we're republishing everything she wrote. She's the mother of us all and satisfies all our need for roots. We're the branches."³⁰

Higgins's enthusiasm extended to reviving obscure figures—all but unknown in the 1960s—whose work he considered relevant to contemporary practices. An example of this tendency is William Brisbane Dick's anthology of amusements for social gatherings, *Dick's 100 Amusements* (1879, reissued 1966), which the Press promoted as a precursor of happenings and Fluxus. Dick was a key exponent of nineteenth-century Americana, and, like Higgins, he owned a publishing house, Dick & Fitzgerald. A related impulse of drawing the past into the present saw historical avant-garde works interspersed throughout anthologies of contemporary projects. For instance, in *Fantastic Architecture* (1970)—the compendium of utopian architecture proposals Higgins edited with Wolf Vostell—Richard Hamilton's, Claes Oldenburg's, and Carolee Schneemann's works are juxtaposed with those of Buckminster Fuller, Raoul Hausmann, and Kurt Schwitters.

Something Else Press,
Inc, warehouse in
Barton, VT, c. 1973



No matter how brilliant the editorial intuitions or how savvy the publication strategies, they could not sustain a press unconcerned with business, finances, and book sales. The first effort to rein in expenses came in 1968, when the Something Else Press moved from the Fifth Avenue office to a brownstone at 238 West 22nd Street (in Chelsea), Higgins and Knowles's family home. Around this time, sales increased, and Higgins joined a cooperative of small publishers to consolidate the handling of orders and distribution. Chaired by Michael Hoffman, editor of *Aperture*, the Small Publishers' Company (renamed The Book Organization in 1971) contracted sales representatives all around the country and concentrated their collective stock in a storage space at 276 Park Avenue South.³¹ The Something Else Press kept its address in New York even when Higgins relocated to California to teach at CalArts from summer 1970 through mid-1971.³² It was only after the July 1971 move to Barton, Vermont—where Higgins owned a farmhouse—that the Something Else Press changed its address and was reincorporated in West Glover (a town adjacent to Barton). Once reincorporated in Vermont, it withdrew from The Book Organization and rented a warehouse to store stock and facilitate independent distribution. At this point the enterprise took the name *Something Else Farms* and announced a forthcoming (still yet to be realized) edition of maple syrup produced in a sugarhouse on Higgins's property.³³ The books published at that time reflect a new editorial sensibility, which saw titles on art, poetry, and music alternating with botany manuals and how-to volumes. Two exemplary publications were *One Thousand American Fungi: How to Select and Cook the Edible; How to Distinguish and Avoid the Poisonous* and *The Ten Week Garden* (both 1973). The first was a republication of the revised 1902 edition of the American mushroom

collector's guide by mycologists Charles McIlvaine and Robert K. MacAdam. The second was a gardening manual for low-temperature climates, like that of northern Vermont, written by Cary Scher and hand-illustrated by his wife Linda Larisch (Higgins's neighbors). The new editorial direction evinced in the books published toward the end of the Press's life was encouraged by the arrival of Jan Herman, appointed editor in chief in July 1972. Herman was a writer and publisher who had worked with poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti at City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco. He was an editor of the magazine the *San Francisco Earthquake* (1967–1969) and ran his own publishing house, the Nova Broadcast Press (1969–1973).³⁴ Herman's responsibilities at the Something Else Press quickly grew when Higgins resigned and appointed him director. To justify his withdrawal, Higgins cited his interest in making visual works and writing theory, which his prominent role at the Something Else Press had prevented him from doing. Aggravated by a dire financial situation and legal issues, Higgins's departure proved fatal; the entire operation collapsed by late 1974. In February 1975, Higgins sent out a card announcing the end of the Something Else Press. Notwithstanding its somewhat abrupt demise, by the early 1970s, the Press had a remarkable influence on diverse groups of artists and theorists in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, and Japan. In a folder of rejected book proposals dated 1972–1974, one can find unsolicited manuscripts from hundreds of artists and writers—including conceptual photographer Fred Lonidier, and poet, filmmaker, and performance art pioneer Stuart Sherman—hoping to add their names to the Something Else roster.³⁵ A curious example of the interest the Press incited across artistic communities is the request of poet and essayist Kathy Acker, who reached out to Herman asking if she could feature the most recent Something Else Press books on her radio show in San Francisco.³⁶

As I noted at the outset, the use of the book as an artistic tool has been examined thoroughly in recent scholarship.³⁷ It is thus all the more surprising that Higgins's enterprise has received so little attention. We are left with the question: If one had to describe the position of the Something Else Press in the history of the book medium, what would it be? From an art historical perspective, artists' uses of publications/publishing as medium have gained a standing in a specialized branch of scholarship, namely the study of artist's books. In one of the first texts on this topic, written in 1976 (published 1977), critic and curator Lucy Lippard defined the "artist's book" as a "work of art on its own, conceived specifically for the book form and often published by the artist him/herself."³⁸ A fitting example would be the Something Else Press edition of Filliou's *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*, a box-shaped collection of loose postcards, each confronting the reader with a puzzling question.

The format of *Ample Food* was developed by Higgins in consultation with the author; the individual postcards were often used for mailings among artists, leaving each edition progressively more “incomplete.” In her essay, Lippard uses different examples, including the photobooks of Ed Ruscha, experiments with magazines (e.g., Brian O’Doherty’s *Aspen*, nos. 5+6), and group exhibitions (such as those of Seth Siegelaub) curated across the pages of a booklet rather than being mounted in the conventional white cube space. Lippard concludes her article on a utopian note: “One day I’d like to see artists’ books ensconced in supermarkets, drugstores, and airports and, not incidentally, to see artists be able to profit economically from broad communication rather than from the lack of it.”³⁹ Her idealistic, almost naive, wish bears a striking resemblance to the well-known anecdote that Higgins recounted proudly and often about the extent of the Something Else Press’s distribution. It is indeed rumored that Great Bear Pamphlets were propped up for sale next to the vegetable counter at the Berkeley Co-op.⁴⁰ Despite the conceptual similarity of Lippard’s and Higgins’s ambitions, and the fact that some of the Something Else publications correspond quite closely to her definition of “artist’s book,” the Press’s titles appear nowhere in Lippard’s account of the phenomenon. And yet it would be foolish to demand that Lippard consider Something Else publications merely as artist’s books. Since her foundational essay, many volumes have contributed to expanding the genealogy of artists’ publications, and Higgins’s Something Else titles have been tepidly recognized as precursors to the booming phenomenon of “bookworks” or “book objects”⁴¹ that we have witnessed since the late 1960s. However, when scholars write on the Something Else Press volumes as instances of artist’s books, or as case studies of what has been branded “publishing as artistic practice,”⁴² they tend to take the individual publications at face value and thus lose sight of the entirety of Higgins’s project.

Less prescriptive and more fitting than the art historical category of the artist’s book might be what art historian Liz Kotz has defined as the “linguistic turn” in the arts of the 1960s. In her critical study, *Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art*, Kotz devotes her attention to language-based scores and notational structures that have come to characterize the aesthetic practices of the decade.⁴³ The “linguistic turn” refers to the proliferation of language, and artists’ growing interest in text, as the crux of new aesthetic propositions. Through the examples she invokes—which include Cage’s *4’33”* (1952), Dan Graham’s *Schema* (1966), and Andy Warhol’s *a: a novel* (1968)—Kotz demonstrates that the reception of artists’ interventions in language would be impossible without the mediation of a support surface, be it a book, a magazine, or a loose sheet of paper. Seen in this light, the Something Else Press—in its attention to innovative publications and printed matter—would seem to be an integral constituent of this “turn.” Borrowing

from Kotz's theorization of the score, we could look at the Press as a kind of empty structure or container, a set of "brackets," in which practices, histories, and (art) forms could be inscribed. In fact, only a broader perspective, considering the importance of the Something Else Press's wide-ranging activity, could begin to grasp the scope and stature of this project.

If Kotz often resorts to the image of the "bracket" to convey the inner workings of the language- and time-based models she examines, we could posit a literary device, the anthology, to analyze the set of publications that is the object of our inquiry. An anthology is a conceptual framework that organizes the materials between its covers, connecting elements whose shared qualities are often overlooked or unknown. It is thus not surprising that, among the Something Else titles, almost a dozen publications are samplers cast in different formats and focused on a wide range of topics, including *The Four Suits* (1965), *Manifestos* (1966), *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* (1967), *Notations* (1969), *Breakthrough Fictioneers* (1973), *Something Else Yearbook 1974* (1974), and more. Nevertheless, anthologies lead, inevitably, to exclusions, and their structure and function can sometimes become rigid to the extent that a once-groundbreaking ensemble risks being crystallized into a canon. To evade this trap, Higgins focused his energies on the entire publishing system—rather than a single, self-referential unit—and devoted himself to turning the work of fellow artists into books. In other words, he created space for others to *fill in*, and, whenever he desired to eclipse his position as author, he used Camille Gordon to cover his tracks. Working in this way, he fused his identity with that of the Press, which appears as a collective artistic statement in which the "I" results from the combination and redistribution of an inclusive "they." In the multiplicity of identities that coalesced to form the Press, the "something else" factor, literally and figuratively, acted as the sole common denominator. Consequently, by letting others speak, Higgins removed himself from institutional pressures and defined positions for himself through the variety of practices he intended the Something Else matrix to support. This *modus operandi*, I would contend, becomes more compelling when we remind ourselves that, since Higgins was still defining his position as an artist, publishing might constitute his first mature intervention into the art scene.

The Something Else Press is made up of a multiplicity of components—Higgins, Gordon, the authors, editors, and collaborators, and the support structure that made it all possible. It can be confusing to disentangle these elements and, as result, to write about them. I believe that what emerges most strikingly from Higgins's project is the network of genealogies, self-fashioned relationships, links, equivalences, and renewable possibilities, which extend far beyond the life of the Press, destined to be updated and constellated anew by ever-mutating reading publics. Each publication then, must be considered part of a circuit of signification that is

rearrangeable and suspended, and whose meaning becomes tangible, though never fixed. Only when taken together do the books, pamphlets, catalogues, issues of the *Something Else Newsletter*, *Newscards*, *Camille's Reports*, and editions acquire coherence in their heterogeneity. The Something Else Press endures through the artists, art practices, theories, and histories Higgins brought together as his lived and imagined community.

¹ "A Something Else Manifesto," in *Manifestos* [Great Bear Pamphlet] (New York: Something Else Press, 1966), 20.

² "Postface" was an extended version of an earlier essay called "What the Theater Can Be"; see Dick Higgins, *Selected Early Works, 1955–64* (Berlin: Editions Ars Viva, 1982), 199–227. Higgins sent Maciunas a meticulous proposal for *Jefferson's Birthday 1962–1963*, conveying all its details, from content to typography; see photocopy of typewritten letter, April 3, 1963, Jean Brown Papers, box 31, folder 4, Getty Research Institute.

³ In the 1963 letter, Higgins explained that he discovered Jefferson's birthday fell on April 13 (like *Danger Music*) in a *People's Almanac* he had casually bought that year. This coincidence prompted him to choose "Jefferson's Birthday" as the book title; see letter dated April 3, 1963, box 31, folder 4, Jean Brown Papers, Getty Research Institute.

⁴ The story behind the Press's name, though quite well known by now, is worth recounting. Higgins's first idea was "Shirtsleeves Press." When he shared this with Alison Knowles, she said: "Call it something else." So he did. Another name originally tossed around (and

eventually decided against) was "Fluxus Annex"; see Higgins, letter to Jeff Berner, photocopy, August 22, 1966, box 31, folder 4, Jean Brown Papers, Getty Research Institute.

⁵ The total forty-nine excludes the still higher number of unpublished titles the Press privately discussed with its authors.

⁶ On Zaccar Offset, see typewritten letter, July 24, 1991, box 23, folder 1, Dick Higgins Papers, Getty Research Institute. More on Russell & Russell is found in Higgins's CalArts faculty file: box 2, folder 8, Institute Archives, California Institute of the Arts School of Design Records 1966–1976, Valencia, CA: <https://designschoolarchive.calarts.edu/post/162066698043/biography-richard-higgins-subject-faculty-files>.

⁷ The most comprehensive record of the transformative practices of these years, distilled as a collection of texts, is *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, gathered and selected by La Monte Young in 1961, designed by Maciunas, and published by Young and Jackson Mac Low two years later. In it, Higgins published two pieces: *Constellation for Five*

Performers (CONSTELLATION NO. 1) and *Telephone Music* (CONCRETION NO. 6). Higgins reports on the importance of Cage's experimental composition courses for him and his fellow artists in the essay component of *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*. Al Hansen would weigh in on this in *A Primer of Happenings & Time/Space Art* (New York: Something Else Press, 1965).

⁸ Even after *The Flaming City*, Higgins continued to experiment with film in the Something Else Press period. For a complete filmography, see the unpublished document "About My Films," box 8, folder 26, Dick Higgins Archive, McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

⁹ For Higgins's piece in the Corinth Books publication, see "The Pendulum," in *The Beat Scene*, ed. Eli Wilentz (New York: Corinth Books, 1960), 122; for Higgins's first book, see *What Are Legends* (Maine: Bern Porter, 1960).

¹⁰ In a confrontational letter on the rivalry between Fluxus and the Something Else Press, written to Maciunas in 1966, Higgins discussed the details of their first conversation about *Jefferson's Birthday 1963–1963*; see typewritten letter on

Something Else Press official stationery, August 23, 1966, box 31, folder 4, Jean Brown Papers, Getty Research Institute.

¹¹ A subchapter S corporation allowed for corporate income and credits to pass to its shareholders and for losses to be written off (i.e., to be tax deductible). Higgins was the sole financial backer of the Something Else Press for its entire existence and the majority shareholder (95 percent was his; 5 percent was signed over to editor in chief Emmett Williams in 1966). For the complete legal and financial documentation of the Something Else Press, see binder "Corporate Records," the Something Else Press Collection, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, NY.

¹² Starr's credit was omitted from the Cedilla book at Williams's request, even though Brecht and Filliou fought to keep her name in the colophon.

¹³ Higgins developed a whole personality and history for Camille Gordon. She became so present in the life of the Something Else Press that people became increasingly curious about her. Judy Parlow once went to an art opening pretending to be Camille; see Higgins, "The Something Else Press: Notes for a History to Be Written Some Day, Part 1," *New Lazarus Review* 2, no. 1 (1979): 36.

¹⁴ It would be impossible now to prove this figure with exactitude. Higgins cited this number in a 1993 filmed lecture on the history of the SEP; see minute 21:00 in *Something Else Press & Since: A Lecture by Dick Higgins* (Vancouver, BC: Western Front Productions, 1981). <https://vimeo.com/139749434?login=true>.

¹⁵ New York-based publisher Primary Information has digitized and uploaded free PDFs of all issues of the *Newsletter*, *Newscards*, and *Camille's Reports* on their website, see <https://primaryinformation.org/product/something-else-press-newsletters-1966-83/>. The titles/topics I listed are taken, respectively, from *Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (February 1966); *Newsletter* 1, no. 9 (December 1968); *Newsletter* 2, no. 1 (April 1971); *Newsletter* 2, no. 2 (December 1971); and *Newsletter* 2, no. 4 (September 1972).

¹⁶ See the Books Received section, "Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans*," *Artforum* (March 1967): 66–67.

¹⁷ Higgins, *What to Look for in a Book—Physically & Catalogue 1965–66* (New York: Something Else Press, 1965).

¹⁸ This approach echoes the strategy that Seth Siegelaub would adopt a few years later to introduce conceptual artists on the scene. Siegelaub claimed that for conceptual artworks to operate in the public sphere, they had to follow a specific system of presentation and communication that was accessible to the public. In other words, the artist's idea—what Siegelaub called "primary information"—had to be accompanied by a supporting material system (e.g., a catalogue, which Siegelaub defined as "secondary information") that would make that idea available and understandable to an audience. For the materials and strategies of Siegelaub and conceptual art, see Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art: The Politics*

of Publicity (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), especially "Primary and Secondary Information," 55–59.

¹⁹ If one wanted to identify a precedent to the Great Bear Pamphlet series, one could think of the series *The Documents of Modern Art*, published by New York-based bookstore Wittenborn & Schutlz. Starting in 1943, in partnership with artist Robert Motherwell and MoMA's librarian Bernard Karpel, the bookstore translated into English and published for the first time major European texts on modern art or by modern artists, including Guillaume Apollinaire, Marcel Duchamp, and Wassily Kandinsky among others.

²⁰ Higgins recounted the anecdote that led him to the pamphlet series's name in many essays and interviews; see, for example, Higgins, "The Something Else Press: Notes for a History," 29–30. The name "Great Bear" is reminiscent of the almost contemporaneous magazine piece, though very different in scope, *The Domain of the Great Bear*, written by Mel Bochner and Robert Smithson and published in the fall 1966 issue of *Art Voices*.

²¹ *Something Else Newsletter* 1, no. 4 (August 1966): 5. The exception to the sixteen-page format is pamphlet no. 8, which, at thirty-two pages, counts as a double edition.

²² In a letter to Williams, Higgins proposes to start Threadneedle editions "like unedited, unpretentious Great Bears." He explained that the production cost of eight Threadneedle editions corresponded to one pamphlet; see typewritten letter, July

28, 1967, box 55, folder 10, Dick Higgins Papers, Getty Research Institute.

23 Another instance of combining and supplementing contemporary practices with their foundations comes to mind. In issue 5+6 of *Aspen* magazine, guest editor Brian O'Doherty included—alongside recent works by Bochner, Graham, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, and others—recordings of Naum Gabo and Noto Pevsner's *The Realistic Manifesto* (1920) and some texts from Marcel Duchamp's *À l'infinif* (1912–1920), films by Hans Richter and László Moholy-Nagy, and a history of Russian constructivism. Coincidentally, in the advertisements section of this issue of *Aspen*, the Something Else Press promoted its activities with a checklist of books and Great Bear Pamphlets published to date.

24 Huelsenbeck was a family friend of the Higginses and, especially, of Dick Higgins's aunt Ilse Getz, who was an active figure in the 1940s and 1950s New York avant-garde art scene. Additionally, having attended school with André Breton's daughter, Higgins had been familiar with Dada and surrealism since a very young age. For a longer description of his early exposure to the New York art scene, see typewritten letter to Ken Friedman, September 30, 1981, box 11, folder 1, Dick Higgins Papers, Getty Research Institute.

25 It is curious that Higgins would ask Filliou, a native French speaker, to translate an Italian text. For the Great Bear Pamphlet *The Art of Noises*, Filliou used the 1954 French edition, published by Richard-Masse and translated by Maurice Lemaître.

26 A 1964 catalogue of Gertrude Stein publications, published by Gotham Book Mart, a bookstore in New York's downtown, sold Stein's books for thirty dollars on average (and up to seventy-five), which is the equivalent of a few hundred dollars today; see *Gertrude Stein: Catalog 1964*, compiled by Carl Van Vechten (New York: Gotham Book Mart, 1964).

27 A seventh book was in the works, *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded Friendship Faded*, with illustrations by Wolf Vostell; see details of the book in the note "About This Book," box 61, folder 33, Dick Higgins Archive, Northwestern University, which is transcribed for the first time in this catalogue [pp. 158–159].

28 Higgins's university career began in the mid-1950s at Yale, before he transferred to Columbia. During the period he spent visiting the Beinecke reading room, Yale University Press released eight volumes of Stein's unpublished writings (1951–1958).

29 Stein scholar Ulla E. Dydo suggests that Plain Edition was funded through the sale of paintings (including at least one by Stein's friend Pablo Picasso) from the Stein Collection. Ulla E. Dydo, *Gertrude Stein: The Language That Rises, 1923–1934* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2003), 418–19. A loose, typewritten card from the Stein and Toklas Papers at Yale, which I found inside the Plain Edition printing of *Lucy Church Amiably*, seems to confirm this by reporting: "In 1930, Miss Stein and Miss Toklas gave up the struggle to find publishers for Miss Stein's writing, sold a Picasso, and set up 'The

Plain Edition and Edition of First Editions of All the Works Not Yet Printed of Gertrude Stein.' Five volumes appeared in the series between 1930 and 1933"; see item Za St34 930L, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

30 This slogan was used on the occasion of the December 1972 Modern Language Association (MLA) meeting in New York; see Israel Shenker, "Bookstalls Sprout at Language Parley," *New York Times*, December 29, 1972, 12.

31 On the creation of the Small Publishers' Company, see "Five 'Little Presses' Form Small Publishers' Network," *Publishers' Weekly*, July 28, 1969, 37.

32 One of Higgins's main motivations for the move west was the prospect of converting the Something Else Press into a publishing project subsidized by CalArts. In March 1969, Higgins discussed this opportunity at length with Herbert Blau, CalArts' founding provost and the dean of its School of Theater and Dance. It is unclear whether they ever reached an agreement. What we do know is that the plan fell through when Higgins made the hasty decision—after an earthquake—to pack up his two daughters and leave California for Vermont. See Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Directors of Something Else Press, Inc., 1968, Something Else Press Collection, Emily Harvey Foundation.

33 In an undated note in the Archive Sohm, Higgins announced: "We want to 'publish' an edition of maple syrup. Our new place happens

to be in the part of Vermont that produces the very finest Grade A in the USA—so we do it too, and we do it completely organically. No formal dehyde [*sic*] tablets here. We don't know yet what our prices will be, but we'll sell by pint, quart and gallon, on the same terms as we sell our books. [. . .] Watch our next mailings for prices"; see "Odd sneds" [*sic*], typewritten sheet, n.d., Binder D. Higgins, SEP, Misc., Archive Sohm, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Germany.

34 For Herman's experiences in the underground publishing and art scenes during the 1960s and 1970s, see Herman, *My Adventures in Fugitive Literature* (New York: Granary Books, 2015).

35 A vast collection of letters turning down the extensive pile of manuscripts that the Something Else Press received is now part of the Something Else Press Archives at the Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York, NY. For Lonidier, see his undated typewritten letter explaining that Eleanor and David Antin had suggested that he submit his book project to the Something Else Press, folder 353; for Sherman, see the handwritten letter of inquiry sent to Higgins on September 12, 1973, folder 354.

36 In exchange for receiving Something Else Press books, Acker sent Herman copies of issues 1 through 5 of her serial work *The Childlike Life of the Black Tarantula*; see typewritten note-o-grams and handwritten postcard exchanged between Acker and Herman (November–December 1973), in folder 7, Something Else Press Archives, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.

37 A foundational study of artistic interventions in printed media (including the book) contemporaneous to the Something Else Press is Lucy Lippard's book on conceptual practices, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*. Coincidentally, the opening title of the first chapter, "1966," is George Brecht's text *Chance Imagery* (1957), published by the Something Else Press in the Great Bear Pamphlet series. Curiously, Lippard omits any mention of the Something Else Press, though later in the book, she includes other titles published by Higgins; see *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973). A more recent survey of artists working with books is Andrew Roth, Philip E. Aarons, and Claire Lehmann, eds., *Artists Who Make Books* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2017). Even in this recent and comprehensive account, which extends our understanding of this medium well beyond conceptual art, Higgins's enormous contribution is absent.

38 Lucy R. Lippard, "The Artists' Book Goes Public," in *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook*, ed. Joan Lyons (Layton, UT / Rochester, NY: Visual Studies Workshop Press / Peregrine Smith Books, 1987), 28.

39 Lippard, "The Artists' Book," 31. A few years later, in summer 1983, Lippard wrote a second essay on artist's books in which she reflects on her disillusionment with the possibility of this new format and its complicated entanglements with commodities; see "Conspicuous Consumption: New Artists' Books," in Lyons, *Artists' Books*, 31–36.

40 The Berkeley Co-op, now defunct, was a market in that university town in California. Higgins supposedly saved a photograph of the rack of Great Bear Pamphlets next to the green peppers; see Higgins, "Two Sides of a Coin: Fluxus and the Something Else Press," in Steve Clay and Ken Friedman, eds., *Intermedia, Fluxus, and the Something Else Press: Selected Writings by Dick Higgins* (Catskill, NY: Siglio, 2018), 147n24. In late 1976, when Lippard wrote her text, she was most likely not aware of this fact.

41 In the essay "Some Contemporary Artists and Their Books," Clive Phillpot makes a distinction between these two genres by explaining that "bookworks" are "artworks dependent upon the structure of the book," whereas "book objects" are "art objects which allude to the form of the book." He also adds a third category, which he does not name: "books by artists that, however, do not differ from the traditional format." See Clive Phillpot, "Some Contemporary Artists and Their Books," in Lyons, *Artists' Books*, 106.

42 Annette Gilbert has assembled an anthology dedicated to "publishing studies"; see Gilbert, ed., *Publishing as Artistic Practice* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016).

43 Liz Kotz, *Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

The Something Else Gallery and the Space beyond the Page

An Introduction

Founded in 1966, the Something Else Gallery is one of the lesser-known initiatives of the Something Else Press. It was located at 238 West 22nd Street (“behind the Chelsea Hotel”) in the home that Dick Higgins shared with his partner, the artist Alison Knowles, their two young children, and a cat. Sometimes intersecting with, but not tethered to, the activities of the Press, the SEG mounted exhibitions at will from 1966 to 1972.¹ The decision from a founding member of Fluxus to start a “gallery” may seem surprising. It even seems unlikely on a practical level, given that Higgins presumably had his hands full running the Press. By the time of the Gallery’s inaugural shows, in April and May 1966, the SEP had put out seven volumes: Higgins’s own *Jefferson’s Birthday/Postface*, *Ample Food for Stupid Thought* by Robert Filliou, *A Primer of Happenings & Time/Space Art* by Al Hansen, Ray Johnson’s *The Paper Snake*, Richard Huelsenbeck’s *Dada Almanach*, Daniel Spoerri’s *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance*, and *The Four Suits* with work by Alison Knowles, Ben Patterson, Philip Corner, and Tomas Schmit. Yet from the outset, Higgins was clear about the SEG’s motivations:

In the Spring we are going to open the Something Else Gallery to show work which falls between media [. . .] or which otherwise would [. . .] be considered unshowable. Our first [exhibition] will be of art-objects by poets and composers. The Gallery expects to present a program of five shows [. . .] and then go on an indefinite vacation, until such time as it seems necessary to open again.²

A number of details are critical here, but above all, the idea of *necessity*. Clearly this initiative was not meant to endure as a gallery proper; it was at no point seen as a commercial enterprise. Higgins conceived the SEG as complementary to the Press's function, and his "necessary" reflects the stance of a figure acutely attuned to the needs of artists (his peers in particular). Higgins understood the paucity of platforms for the radically postdisciplinary practices in which he was so implicated, the most common—if now overused—moniker for which is *experimental*. For our purposes, the more useful term is Higgins's *intermedia*, which he famously advanced in the very newsletter that announced the SEG. An exhibition space, performance venue, living room, bookstore, classroom, and, in all of this, what we now (more fluidly than then) might call a community space, the SEG was *necessary* in the truest sense. For artists risking nonconformity it became a crucible of activity; one that is ripe for renewed attention and a revisiting of the period at large. Acknowledging with excitement that there is a whole lot more to say, this text focuses on the group exhibitions and performances of that first year, and the impetuses that launched the space.

The Scene—1966

Much has been written about the critical stances of artists in this period of the 1960s toward the constructs of gallery and auditorium alike. And certainly, the SEG belongs in a lineage of artist-initiated programs that, to name only a few indispensable precedents, extend from the Judson Gallery (1958–1960), La Monte Young's loft concerts (1960), George Maciunas's AG Gallery (1961), George Brecht and Robert Watts's *Yam Festival* (1962–1963), and the *Fluxshop* (1963), through to Ray Johnson's Robin Gallery (1965), which ran for one season with neither a show nor a space.

If it is quite logical to connect the SEG to these earlier projects because many of the same protagonists were involved, it would be insufficient to stop there, and we would do well to look more closely at still other initiatives of the mid- to late 1960s to situate it in a larger framework. For instance, we could ask: How might the SEG project relate to or anticipate Seth Siegelaub's exhibitions and publications or to Vito Acconci and Bernadette Mayer's serial volumes of *0 to 9* and the supplement *Street Works*? What is crucial here

is to reconsider the artificial boundaries—not in place in 1966—that have since categorized and separated so many intersecting practices. A corrosive process that, notably, in the present context, relegated Fluxus and the artists associated with it, to the margins of art historical analysis for decades. In his foreword to *The Four Suits* (SEP, 1965) Higgins’s point that “the idea is the thing here” identified the very criterion that would be taken up in conceptual art. In the original version of *The Dematerialization of Art*, Lucy Lippard and John Chandler include what they identify as “the more literary side: Dan Graham’s concrete poems and his poem object [. . .] ‘one,’ [. . .] Ed Ruscha’s books, [. . .] Bruce Nauman’s unassuming book of his work and his projects in collaboration with William Wiley, [. . .] George Brecht’s ‘events,’ Ray Johnson’s ‘mailings,’ and innumerable other books, objects, and projects listed in the Something Else Press’s catalogues.”³ These key reference points are often excised in later reprints of the essay. Tired as the grievance is, it may not be exhausted—the works of the artists around the SEG, Fluxus and otherwise, seem to confound all efforts at forging a neat historical record. For others on the scene, the links between practices were clear. One would be hard-pressed to find a more trustworthy perspective on this precarious moment than the disinterested observer Tony Conrad, who stated: “During this decade I isolated myself from the art world, as from all appearances the ‘in’ fashion had reverted to the conceptual juncture of early Fluxus [. . .] that had been put forth succinctly, and largely without gallery hoopla, a half dozen and more years earlier.”⁴ Conrad’s take illuminates the value of Higgins’s commitment to tearing down the walls of categorization in order to reveal *something else*.

As distinct from Higgins’s *intermedia*—indeed closer to Lippard’s *literary*—the appearances of the term *poetry* through the decade (prior to the honing of linguistic propositions as conceptual art) provide a point of entry, a vantage from which to begin to chart shared ground. Given that Graham, Acconci, and other artists identified as poets throughout the 1960s, and still others like George Brecht were mistaken for one, asking what the designation accomplished for artists seems worthwhile.⁵ For those who aimed to subvert assumptions about art and break with its disciplinary limits, poetry was a nonart category from which to build new artistic models centered on language before it was accepted and formalized as an artistic *medium*. Thus, linguistic propositions were honed as one more base of de-aestheticization, or what Robert Morris famously called “aesthetic withdrawal”—that is, work “Not Necessarily Meant to Be Viewed as Art.”⁶

The Exhibitions

So conceptually cohesive were the first three SEG shows, *Object Poems*, *Intermedia*, and *The Arts in Fusion*, they now “read” like three chapters of the

same book; each propelled by the principle of intermedia, albeit approached from different angles. Higgins saw that to elaborate fully on the idea, he needed to move beyond the book—however radically conceived—to engage with work that refused to conform to the printed page.⁷ When contending with the same issue during the preparation of the first collective publication, *Fluxus 1* (1964), Maciunas devised a striking solution: a book that exceeded the usual two dimensions. Using manila envelopes for its pages, each artist's work was physically inserted into the book rather than just reproduced. For the later *Fluxkits* (1964–1965), Maciunas accommodated three dimensions via the decidedly Duchampian valise—in lieu of galleries, museums, and other conventional frames—making the *Fluxkit* a model of radical defiance that would be hard to follow. However, for both Fluxus and the SEP, conveying the full ramifications of the works necessitated forays in real time and space.

Something Else Gallery

238 W. 22nd St. (opening Apr. 15)

It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's Something Else. Gallery, that is, opening this Friday and planned as a haven for works that are neither painting, sculpture, music, or poetry—but something else, hence the gallery's name, of course.

Originator of the plan is Dick Higgins (the gallery will be located in his home), whose other prodigy is the Something Else Press, which also caters to intermedia publications. Some of the S.E. Press's products include "An Annotated Topography of Chance," a history of all the objects on the table of the room of a Paris artist, and a book by Higgins himself, "intended to be read aloud by at least two people . . . it is not important whether they read to each other or to an audience."

Higgins feels that "since a good

part of the artists who are doing the most interesting far-out work being done live in Chelsea, why not have a really important gallery in Chelsea? Something comparable to what Tenth Street once was."

The gallery will open Apr. 15 with its first show, entitled "Object Poems," work created by poets and composers. Among the works by Higgins, Robert Filliou, Wolf Vostell (resident of the Chelsea hotel), and others, will be one by Emmett Williams, S.E. Editor, entitled "Fish Poem." It is a large tank of alphabetically-tagged fish, which swim around creating music, poetry, and perhaps anything else.

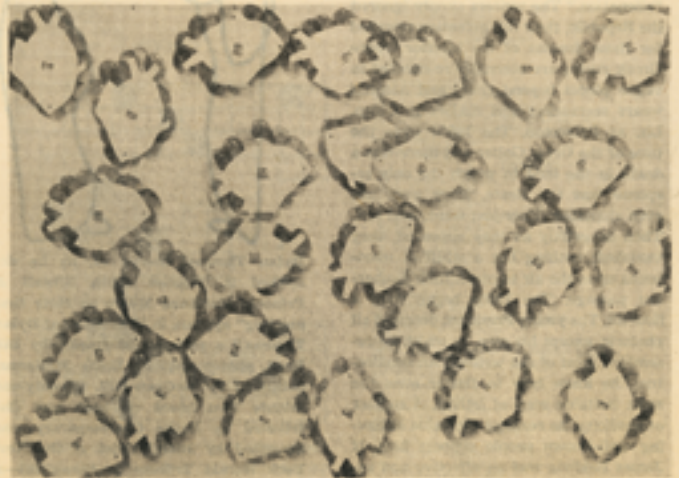
"Something Else Gallery,"
announcement published
in the *Chelsea-Clinton*
News, New York, NY,
April 14, 1966

In the announcement for *Object Poems*, Higgins stated: "the poet and the visual artist alike are interested in exploiting all the resources needed for the realization of a particular idea."⁸ Foregrounding concept over any single medium, Higgins's assertion reverberated beyond the walls of the SEG. Though not an "attempt at definitiveness," *Object Poems* was no meager statement, featuring around twenty-five artists, including Brecht, Knowles, Aram Saroyan, Johnson, Jackson Mac Low, and Carolee Schneemann.⁹

A number of works in the show engaged specifically with ideas we might call anti-institutional or were otherwise concerned with undermining

the notion of art as a commodity. Take Dieter Rot's *Banana* (1966), a decomposing, desiccated banana peel mounted behind that quintessential museological apparatus of glazing. The latter, privileging the stable condition of the work to the detriment of all else, seals it off from the world. In Rot's work, the peel contaminates its container, marring its pristine surface to make visible that material that is intended only to be looked *through*. Or, Robert Filliou's *Galerie Légitime*, a selection of diminutive works installed in the portable space of his hat (a play on *chef-d'oeuvre* and *couvre-chef*). Filliou wore the hat around Paris offering impromptu displays of the art installed inside it to any interested passerby. Whether his own work, or that of other perspicacious artists—attuned to the *Galerie Légitime*'s *raison d'être*—like Benjamin Patterson, the spontaneous actions wittily redefined the notion of the exhibition, with a view to displacing art “from its heights into the streets.”¹⁰

Emmett Williams
Fish Tank, published
 in *Books*, Jerome B.
 Agel, ed., April 1966



Twenty-six alphabetized swimming carp in a large pool—they are tagged with letters painstakingly through their gills—create ever-changing words and “sentences” in Emmett Williams’ *Fish Poem*, to be seen in the Something Else Gallery, 238 W. 22 St., NYC, beginning April 15. Sketch is by Mr. Williams.

One of the more surprising inclusions in *Object Poems* was Johannes Cladders, then a museum curator in Krefeld, Germany, who would become the director of the Städtisches Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach the following year.¹¹ In a letter to Brecht dated April 8, 1966, Higgins explained: “for years I received mysterious communications out of Germany, with no return address, signed with a thumbprint and a letter C. Marvelous things. [. . .] Finally I managed to track them down. They are sent by a Dr. Johannes Cladders [. . .] who, apparently unknown even to most Germans in our world,

makes what he calls ‘object poems.’ Which is what they are.”¹² Higgins goes on to describe the piece Cladders submitted for the show, entitled *Original Handdruck*, (also a pun in the German): “he has rubbed his hand over a rubber stamp pad, and printed it on rice paper, labeling it *Original Handdruck*. [. . .] But he’s also made an edition of it. The copy he sent me is 26/35. Which immediately transforms the situation.”¹³ Canceling the traditional markers of value, Cladders utilizes the conventions of the print, the space for the title and edition, to lampoon the qualities of the original and the imprimatur of the artist’s hand.¹⁴

For *Object Poems*, as for all the SEG exhibitions, it is worth looking not only at what was shown but *how* it was shown. To set up the display in contradistinction to that established by traditional “exhibition furniture” —eluding the reifying and rarifying effects of the pedestal— called for the innovative repurposing of the existing architecture at the SEG. Quite aptly, the space of a built-in bookshelf, populated with small-scale works, was made central in the installation, its function both deflected and retained, to reorient and reinforce the works’ status, that is, as object, as *not-sculpture*. This attention to each piece’s nonconformity was integral to the SEG’s singular and necessary furnishing of support, literally as much as conceptually. Among the works that appeared in the bookshelf’s niches was Takako Saito’s 1964 *Game*, a small wooden box with plastic facing subdivided by wooden ledges upon which rest small, unanchored ball bearings. Saito exploited the familiarity of this modest, handheld game and the implicit invitation to reach up to the shelf, as one might for a book, and to engage, participate, and play. The piece, when handled, produces sounds resulting from the clinking of the ball bearings against one another and as they descend between the wood ledges. The game model, taken up frequently and in various ways in Fluxus, hinges on the word *play*, i.e., that activity proper to both games and music. Michel de Certeau’s study of practices applied in everyday life is germane here. He explains: “games [. . .] give rise to spaces where *moves* are always proportional to *situations*, [. . .] they are *repertoires of schemas of action*. [. . .] These mementos teach the tactics possible within a given (social) system.”¹⁵ Taking up the game form for its condition of being deeply inscribed, socially and culturally, Fluxus artists opted to construct games with ambiguous aims, deinstrumentalizing the activity and removing the premise of competition. In Saito’s game, the experience of engagement and the resulting production of sound are the only bounds of what playing might mean.

The second SEG show in the spring of 1966, *Intermedia*, narrowed the focus down to just three artists: Joe Jones, Alison Knowles, and George Brecht. With this exhibition, Higgins shifted the scope from the panoramic view taken up in *Object Poems* to a more granular perspective, selecting artists for the way their work moved through the interstices of

accepted disciplines. Knowles and Brecht had played important roles in the development of the linguistic score that became central to Fluxus. Brecht's "events" and Knowles's "propositions" represent the artists' distinct approaches but also reveal a greater affinity to each other than to other forms (Higgins's *Danger Music*, or Nam June Paik's *Action Music*, for example). Insofar as the score restored function to the readymade, reestablishing the object's proper position in everyday life, we might read their instructions through the lens of *use*.

Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, his formulation of the autonomy of linguistic meaning, has often been invoked in relation to conceptual art. Our subject brings with it an opportunity to complicate and enrich the base of (post-Wittgensteinian) language models of the 1960s. To begin to map the resonances between Wittgenstein's thought and the aims of the score warrants quoting a younger Wittgenstein at some length:

Nothing could be more remarkable than seeing a man who thinks he is unobserved performing some quite simple everyday activity. Let us imagine a theater: the curtain goes up and we see a man alone in a room, walking up and down, lighting a cigarette, sitting down, etc. so that suddenly we are observing a human being from outside, [. . .] it would be like watching a chapter of biography with our own eyes, —surely this would be uncanny and wonderful at the same time. We should be observing something more wonderful than any playwright could arrange to be acted or spoken on the stage: life itself. —But then we do see this every day without its making the slightest impression on us! True enough, but we do not see it from *that* point of view. [. . .] But only an artist can so represent an individual thing as to make it appear to us like a work of art. [. . .] A work of art forces us—as one might say—to see it in the right perspective.¹⁶

One could hardly imagine a more apt set of terms to characterize the language-based score (particularly the event and the proposition), considering how, as Julia Robinson has argued, the score aimed to "take momentary hold of the kind of attention we give to a work of art and to turn that attention to the details of everyday perceptual experience."¹⁷ The later Wittgenstein would elaborate it this way: "The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something because it is always before one's eyes.) [. . .] And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful."¹⁸ Training us on the everyday, Wittgenstein illuminates the fundamental concerns of artists working with the ordinary, instantiated in real time, through language.

The Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* elucidates how language produces meaning—that is, through its *use*.¹⁹ Further, these uses are proper to “forms of life” within which they are applied, like tools, by users in what the philosopher called “language-games.”²⁰ As Trevor Stark has argued convincingly in the case of Lawrence Weiner, artists harnessed “the way language is always in relation, pointing outside itself (to objects and people), waiting to be converted into meaning, action, material, or more words,” inextricably linked to the world beyond the page and to those that put it to use.²¹ That the nineteen silver prints of Alison Knowles’s *The “T” Dictionary*, presented at the SEG (and published in the pages of *The Four Suits*), are themselves a realization of her language-based score *Performance Piece #8*, is a testament to that quality of language the versatility of her model permitted: its generative potential and its capacity to be realized so variously. Further, with the prints she posits words and images as the two different groups to be merged and recombined according to the text. Here the relationship between the words and pictures shifts and reconfigures across the evolving series. “What really comes before our mind when we understand a word?” Wittgenstein asked, “Isn’t it something like a picture?”²² But in Knowles’s dictionary, as in the *Philosophical Investigations*, the relation between word, picture, and meaning is tenuously mapped.²³ If we read more closely, we notice that Knowles has revised and adapted the definition of each word as it appears in her dictionary, illuminating the ways meaning can shift from context to context. Her dictionary does not insist that words are undefinable; on the contrary, it instantiates the multiplicity of meanings that come from the use and circulation of words in the world.²⁴ With *The “T” Dictionary*, she represents the condition of contingency between words and the pictures used to illustrate them, their interplay in the prints reveals how an image may fit or fail to fit the meaning of a particular use of a word.²⁵

The SEG’s *Intermedia* show also featured Brecht’s *Water Yam* (1963), the boxed collection of his event scores (1959–1963) Maciunas produced as a Fluxus multiple. The box, with its implicit invitation to open and engage with it, harbored an array of cards with printed textual propositions to be picked up and tried out. Through the formal structure Brecht had honed in the event score—a title and then bullet-pointed verbal prompts that quickly became a system of its own—the reader/viewer/performer was initiated into a language-game, had a guide on how to *use* it. For example, *Three Aqueous Events* (1961) consists, succinctly, of the words *ice*, *water*, *steam*. As in the case of Wittgenstein’s famous “slab” uttered between builders on a worksite, Brecht’s score takes up the capacities of language to convey new meanings and implications through its contexts and uses.²⁶ However, as Brecht’s conception of the event was far from an order, he both anticipated

and invited the indeterminate multiplicity of applications and situations words potentially, not to say inevitably, generate. From these works by Brecht and Knowles, and their engagement with advanced models of composition, innovative printing techniques, performance, and philosophy, we begin to intuit how this installation exuded the mercurial notion of “intermedia.”

The apposition of the aforementioned text-based practices with the work of composer Joe Jones brought to the fore what the principle of intermedia provided as a basis for taking stock of wildly disparate practices. Like a mechanic, Jones built his self-playing *Music Machines* from the spare parts of musical and toy instruments sourced on Canal Street.²⁷ His electronically wired system of mini motored kinetic “beaters,” powered by model-train transformers, produced sound according to a programmed score. Each *Music Machine* strikes a delicate balance between engineered sounds and the ever-present and welcomed possibility of accidental ones. Two years prior to the 1966 *Intermedia* show, this work took center stage at the pivotal *For Eyes and Ears* at Cordier and Ekstrom, New York. When reviewing the latter, Lippard lauded Jones’s work as the “most successful” in the show for the way it united the visual and the aural, making good on the conceit of the exhibition, which “promise[d] synesthesia as environment.”²⁸

A departure from the others, the third SEG show originated elsewhere. Higgins surely recognized *The Arts in Fusion* as complementary to his ongoing effort to convey the vital artistic impulses intermedia sought to map, if not to unify. It may have even struck him as all the more convincing that the show did not emanate from his thinking or that of his immediate circle. Conceived by the artist and poet Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim and installed in Philadelphia earlier in 1966, *The Arts in Fusion* brought together an international group of artists and emphasized developments running through poetry, art, language, and technology.²⁹ Fernbach-Flarsheim’s astute references to Gertrude Stein and Wittgenstein in the text he wrote to accompany the show traced these key precedents, whose approaches to language provided a basis for understanding the works of the “fusionists” he had brought together.³⁰ In his argument for the show, as in his own work, Fernbach-Flarsheim did not avoid the age-old utopian forecast of “an eventual full fusion of the arts and sciences.”³¹ The artist-curator’s own performable *Conceptual Clouds*, his invocation of Boolean set theory, and mobilization of computer programming, reveal how keen he was to posit the ways that science, mathematics, and poetry could exist in mutual relation, and spur untold innovation.³² Essential to the present account is Fernbach-Flarsheim’s assertion in his text that “a new language [was] in the process of being created,” a point to which I will return.

The Performances

In addition to the exhibitions presented in its inaugural year, the SEG hosted two performances. These were collaborations with the Tone Roads Chamber Ensemble, a New Music performance group initiated by Philip Corner, Malcolm Goldstein, and James Tenney. The first concert, on June 15, 1966, featured music by Henry Cowell and Charles Ives. The engagement with the works of these two composers is but one indication of the aims and effects of the SEG's erudite programming. To the extent that it traced a lineage of experimental music in the US, it implicitly contributed a historicization across four generations still largely lacking to date.

Tone Roads, the name a reference to the eponymous pieces by Ives, was formed in order to perform the composer's vocal music, which had been neglected in traditional concert programs. Cowell and Ives were connected to an "American rogue tradition" of New Music, exploring unorthodox playing techniques and advancing strategies of dissonance.³³ Cowell's *Aeolian Harp* (1923), performed at the SEG concert, is a prime example, as it called for the pianist to lift the lid of the instrument, reach inside, and play its strings directly, the clear precedent for Cage's prepared piano.³⁴

Ives's use of quotation, a consistent feature in his music, was a major source of derision from the musical establishment of his time. "Quotation has been a literary device for generations," Cowell insisted, "but music has frowned on it."³⁵ Here, he was defending Ives, who embedded quotations in his work from a vast spectrum of sources—from Beethoven and Wagner to popular music (including ragtime, barn dances, and hymns).³⁶ Ives also used a range of strategies for incorporating them—including collage, paraphrase, and quodlibet. The quotations sometimes had a humorous effect, if only for their defiance of expectations. Admiration came from the ways Ives's references carried with them external associations, allowing for the generation of "meanings in extramusical terms."³⁷ It is no coincidence that Erik Satie, the subject of the next concert, also employed, even relished, borrowing and repurposing existing sound in his work.

Infinitely more ambitious, the concert devoted to Satie started on June 18, 1966. The first portion of the program, which began at 5:30 p.m. and went until midnight, spanned the gamut of his output, including compositions from the 1880s through the 1920s, with a particular emphasis on his use of repetition. The program itself emphasized this further by repeating certain works over the course of the evening. It is useful to consider an anecdote that provides insight into Satie's deployment of repetition: *musique d'ameublement* (furniture music), intended to be heard but not listened to, had its premiere during the intermission of a 1920 concert in Paris at Galerie Barbazanges, coinciding with an exhibition of paintings by

Vexations (undated, c. 1893–1894), which continued until 6 p.m. the following day. Never published or performed during Satie’s life, Cage had organized its world premiere at the Pocket Theater three years earlier, enlisting both Corner and Tenney as performers. Cage had been instrumental in the postwar reception of Satie. Compelling to Cage was Satie’s treatment of the auditory field—his eschewing narrative development and thematic progression, his disinterest in harmony, and his acute sense of the matrix that music (unlike art) had at its disposal: namely, time. Cage made this clear as early as 1948 in his Black Mountain lecture, “Defense of Satie”: “It is very simple,” he announced, “[i]f you consider that sound is characterized by its pitch, its loudness, its timbre, and its duration, and that silence, which is the opposite and therefore necessary partner of sound, is characterized only by its duration, you will be drawn to the conclusion that of the four characteristics of the material of music, duration, that is, time length, is the most fundamental.”⁴¹

Given Higgins and his collaborators’ sustained practice of scoring the everyday, Satie’s radical aims could hardly have been lost on them. In 1966, Higgins and Tone Roads created an ideal setting for this music at the SEG. In Higgins and Knowles’s active living room, over twenty-four hours, the necessities of daily life—cooking, eating, sleeping, caring for the young children present, meetings and goodbyes among friends—lent a new context for achieving that integration. The directive on the SEG invitation to “bring sleeping bags” underscores this. Framed by Cage’s, perhaps anachronistic, assertion that Satie’s music was not intended to “distract us from what we are doing” but to prompt “us to pay attention to whatever else we are doing,”⁴² the SEG presentation realized the full social and political implications of this, something the artists, poets, and musicians involved were uniquely poised to do.

The short composition, written in enharmonic notation on one page, is accompanied by an enigmatic instruction: “Pour se répéter 840 fois de suite” (To be repeated 840 times in a row). In its extreme duration—anywhere between eighteen and twenty-four hours—depending on the players’ interpretation of “very slowly,” the *Vexations* exemplifies the static qualities fundamental to Satie’s oeuvre. However, far from being merely a long—to the limits of endurance—sequence of immobile, unresolved yet flowing sounds, crucially, it begins again and again. In this respect, the structure, and its instantiation of a continuous present, might remind us of that other early twentieth-century figure who loomed large at the SEP: Gertrude Stein.⁴³

Repetition seems to operate in Satie’s work as it does in Stein’s writing, insofar as it “does not intensify or heighten meaning. On the contrary, the reappearance [. . .] creates a peculiar gap.”⁴⁴ It is a gap to mind and to mine. This urges us to consider the function of repetition as





structuring principle in these cases. For one possible answer, we could consider an interpretation by the author William Gass, which catapults us back to the everyday:

Life is repetition, and in a dozen different ways Gertrude Stein set out to render it. We have only to think how we pass our days: the doorbell rings, the telephone, sirens in the street, steps on the stairs, the recurrent sound of buzzers, birds, and vacuum cleaners [. . .] everything to the last detail is composed of elements we have already experienced a [. . .] thousand times. Even those once-in-a-lifetime things [. . .] are merely unusual combinations of what has been repeatedly around. [. . .] We are not clocks, designed to repeat without remainder, to mean nothing by a tick, not even a coming tock, and so we must distinguish between merely mechanical repetition, in which there is no progress of idea [. . .] and that which seriously defines our nature, describes the central rhythm of our lives.

Almost at once she realized that language itself is a complete analogue of experience because it, too, is made of a large but finite number of relatively fixed terms which are then allowed to occur in a limited number of clearly specified relations, so that it is not the appearance of a word that matters but *the manner of its reappearance*.⁴⁵

From this we glean the implications and resonances for the field in focus, from Cage to Fluxus and the artists present at the SEG—a trajectory for the framework of how linguistic structure and time came to be exploited for their deictic potential—the ability to point to and to index a context of everyday experience without limiting it.

Whys and Wherefores

The efficacy of the Something Else Gallery program was twofold: It took stock of contemporary practices, forcing a radical reconsideration of the perceived separation of diversely categorized work, doing so by elucidating the foundation on which the range of practices were built. To make an essential, if far from new, observation, the SEG illuminated time as a structure that had been imported into art via music—the score's

ability to store time and yet-to-be-determined situations. But our analysis would be insufficient were it not to comprehend that other vast matrix of quotidian ordering drawn out unequivocally through the SEG: language. Higgins's category of "intermedia," drawing at once from advanced music composition models and from poetry, promises a realignment of the relationships governing the logic of the broad array of work (far exceeding the framework of Fluxus, significant though it was) that constituted the field of this protoconceptual moment.

Returning to Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim's assertion that a new language was in the process of being created, we can now think further about the stakes of that collective project. Indeed Wittgenstein identifies that in the case of language, its "diversity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language-games [. . .] come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten."⁴⁶ If we extend his use theory of language, its intimate connection to and structuring of ordinary experience, then it follows that "the capacity to experience the emotion of," for instance, "love is, in part, dependent on [a] capacity, granted by language" and this is but "one example of how language vastly enlarges our cognitive and affective horizons, thereby giving rise to new forms of human behaviour which are dependent on it."⁴⁷ Through the development of that "new language," its new moves and new meanings, language-games became an auxiliary to that dimension of Cage's project that Branden Joseph has compellingly cast as the attempt "to actualize an anticipatory form of existence that would be the prerequisite for a new form of sociability."⁴⁸ The Something Else Gallery urges our rethinking of the linguistic proposition at this moment, the function of the tactical deployment of language, which encompasses the practices of countless others harnessing how "*a way of using* [an] imposed system" could "transfor[m] it into a song of resistance."⁴⁹ After all, Higgins was not shy about his ambitions for Something Else: "I want to be on my little farm in Vermont and redesign the world from there, as best I can."⁵⁰

I want to extend my deep gratitude to Julia Robinson for her conversation, her generosity, and her assiduous editing of this text.

¹ The Something Else Gallery also moved to Vermont when the Press resettled there in July 1971.

² Dick Higgins, *Something Else Newsletter* 1 no. 1.

³ Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," *Art International* 12, no. 2 (February 1968): 33.

⁴ Conrad is here referring to the period of the mid-1960s to

the early 1970s. Tony Conrad, "Progress," in *Introducing: Tony Conrad*, ed. Cathleen Chaffee (Buffalo, NY / London: Albright-Knox Art Gallery / Koenig Books, 2018), 137.

⁵ *Some/Thing* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1965).

⁶ From Mel Bochner's exhibition in 1966 at the School of Visual Art: *Working Drawings and Other Visible Things on Paper Not Necessarily Meant to Be Viewed as Art*.

⁷ Not often recalled, this confrontation with the obstacles between dimensions resurfaces yet again when Albert M. Fine submits an object, a scale, entitled *Scale Piece for John Cage*, for inclusion in John Cage's *Notations* (New York: Something Else Press, 1969).

⁸ Exhibition announcement for *Object Poems* at the Something Else Gallery, 1966, offset lithograph on paper.

⁹ Exhibition announcement.

¹⁰ Robert Filliou, *Galerie Légitime*, black beret with small boxes containing various objects, and printed pages, c. 1962–1963, box 153, Jean Brown Papers, Getty Research Institute.

¹¹ As director he was known for the landmark exhibitions he supported there (including the first exhibition of Brecht and Filliou's *La Cédille qui sourit* in 1969, as well as shows on Hanne Darboven, also in 1969, Marcel Broodthaers in 1971, and Lawrence Weiner in 1973) and for the catalogue boxes produced with artists for each show. With a limited budget, he chose to make "a virtue of necessity." In his words: "I wanted something for the

bookshelf, something with volume. A box has volume. You can put all sorts of things into it." Hans Ulrich Obrist, *A Brief History of Curating* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2008), 69.

¹² Letter from Higgins to Brecht, April 8, 1966, "George Brecht—Korrespondenz," Archive Sohm, Stuttgart.

¹³ A word meaning both block print and, literally, handprint in the German.

¹⁴ In 1967, Robert Filliou would also take aim at the artist's hand in his work *Hand Show*, which consisted of a series of photographs of the hands of artists. These projects are doubtlessly indebted to Duchamp, and his unwavering fight against the hand.

¹⁵ There is a large body of relevant literature on games from Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* to Roger Caillois's *Man, Play and Games*. However, key for us is de Certeau's engagement with the game's integration in everyday life, as opposed to the model of the game as a hypothetical test space. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 22–23.

¹⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 4e.

¹⁷ Julia Robinson, "From Abstraction to Model: George Brecht's Events and the Conceptual Turn in Art of the 1960s," *October*, no. 127 (Winter 2009): 77.

¹⁸ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 56e, §129.

¹⁹ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 25e, §43.

²⁰ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 11e, §19.

²¹ Trevor Stark, "Lawrence Weiner's Materialism," *October*, no. 180 (Spring 2022): 111.

²² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 59e, §139.

²³ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 59e, §139. "To have understood the explanation means to have in one's mind an idea of the thing explained, and that is a sample or picture. So if I'm shown various leaves and told 'This is called a "leaf,"' I get an idea of the shape of a leaf, a picture of it in my mind. But what does the picture of a leaf look like when it does not show us any particular shape, but rather 'what is common to all shapes of leaf'? What shade is the 'sample in my mind' of the colour green the sample of what is common to all shades of green?" Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 39e.

²⁴ "And that's why definitions usually aren't enough to resolve them; and even less so the statement that a word is 'indefinable.'" Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 79–80e.

²⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 59–60e, §139.

²⁶ "But what about this: is the call 'Slab!' in example (2) a sentence or a word? If a word, surely it has not the same meaning as the like sounding word of our ordinary language, for in §2 it is a call. But if a sentence, it is surely not the elliptical sentence 'Slab!' of our language. —As far as the first question goes, you can

call 'Slab!' a word and also a sentence." Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 11e.

²⁷ Joe Jones, *My First Book of Computer Drawings* (Berlin: Tone Deaf Music Company and Rainer Verlag, 1990), 4.

²⁸ Lucy Lippard, "New York," *Artforum* 2, no. 9 (March 1964): 18.

²⁹ The show was first installed in January of 1966 at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia.

³⁰ *Fusionist* was the term Fernbach-Flarsheim employed to escape the confines of the disciplinary categories of artist, poet, etc.

³¹ Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim, *The Arts in Fusion* (Philadelphia: Tyler School of Art of Temple University, 1966), 2.

³² In this respect, we cannot but think of contemporaneous initiatives, most notably E.A.T. But even within the SEG, artists would continue to explore these intersections. The following year, James Tenney, sensing the import of the developing field, would hold a lecture series at the SEG on computer programming, resulting in, among many other works, Alison Knowles's landmark *House of Dust* (1967).

³³ James Tenney, interview by Douglas Kahn, *LEA* 8, no. 11 (November 2000): 2.

³⁴ Cage studied with Cowell in 1933, as would Corner and Higgins later on.

³⁵ David B. Robinson, "Children of the Fire: Charles Ives on Emerson and Art," *American Literature* 48, no. 4 (January 1977): 570.

³⁶ Christopher Ballantine, "Charles Ives and the Meaning of Quotation in Music," *The Musical Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (April 1979): 181–82.

³⁷ J. Peter Burkholder, "The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field," *Music Library Association* 50, no. 3 (March 1994): 854, 857.

³⁸ Herve Vanel, "John Cage's Muzak-Plus: The Fu(rn)ture of Music," *Representations* 102, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 107.

³⁹ Vanel, "John Cage's Muzak-Plus," 107.

⁴⁰ Other works were also repeated throughout the first portion of the concert, including *Trois Gymnopédies* (1888), *Choses vues à droite et à gauche (sans lunettes)* (1914), and *Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien)* (1912).

⁴¹ John Cage, *John Cage*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Praeger, 1970), 81.

⁴² Vanel, "John Cage's Muzak-Plus," 107.

⁴³ It may seem a great leap to move so quickly from music to writing. However, this reading takes as its basis the analogy in Cage's "Defense of Satie," where he also maps structure across music and poetry: "Besides having structure and form, a piece of music must have a method; that is, a continuity producing means. In poetry this is syntax. [. . .] A piece of music has not only structure, form, and method, but it also has material, its own sounds. [. . .] In poetry, this is language. [. . .] The advent in our time of a Joyce, of a Stein, of a cummings. [. . .] is possible only because of a variation in the normal syntax." Cage, *John Cage*, 79.

⁴⁴ Marjorie Perloff, *The Poetics of Indeterminacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 97.

⁴⁵ William Gass, introduction to *The Geographical History of America or The Relation of Human Nature to the Human Mind*, by Gertrude Stein (New York: Vintage, 1973), 24–25.

⁴⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 14–15e

⁴⁷ Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey, "Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy," in *Wittgenstein, Theory, and the Arts*, ed. Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2001), 21.

⁴⁸ Branden Joseph, "John Cage and the Architecture of Silence," in *John Cage*, ed. Julia Robinson (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 93.

⁴⁹ De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 18.

⁵⁰ Dick Higgins, interview by Richard Friedman and Anthony Gnazzo, KPFA Radio, 1971.

Passionate Expanse of the Law: Intermedia and the Problem of Discipline

Like the rise of abstraction in the early twentieth century, the explosion of avowedly “intermedial” art practices at mid-century provoked, often simultaneously, both utopian visions of vastly expanded aesthetic possibility and the compulsive codification of categories and camps. Having severed ties to visual resemblance or, later, to the inheritance of competence and coherence promised by the traditional mediums, certain artists set about deriving laws that would stave off the lapse into the merely haphazard while others could exalt in the arbitrary. And in both cases, the discourse of rupture and the proliferation of competing claims to have been first masked an anxious drive to recuperate the historical breakdown of contingent cultural norms as a matter of individual invention.

With greater self-awareness and historical perspective than most, Dick Higgins wrestled with these contradictions all his life. On the one hand, his essay “Intermedia” published in the *Something Else Newsletter* of 1966 celebrated new forms of artmaking that operated between previously constituted aesthetic and social forms: rather than merely combining distinct media, these “intermedial” works conducted practical research into

the spaces between visual art and poetry, between music and philosophy, even “between sculpture and hamburgers.”¹ Higgins also announced, with a sincerity that might later have made him blush, that these works heralded a new era overthrowing the hierarchies that industrial capitalism carried over from feudalism: “We are approaching the dawn of a classless society, to which the separation into rigid categories is absolutely irrelevant.”²

Yet, on the other hand, Higgins devoted much of his life precisely to the task of categorization and historicization. In his writings, “intermedia” most often appears less as an epochal break than as a quasi-permanent cultural condition, one intuited by figures as far-flung as Simonides of Ceos, Plutarch, Giordano Bruno, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Friedrich Nietzsche.³ Moreover, it was most often a temporary state on the way to cultural codification, at which point the “intermedium” would resolve into a recognizable “medium.”⁴ And, while Higgins was a prodigious inventor of technical terminology, he never failed to lay the credit for “intermedia” elsewhere: “Every so often some pudgy would come along and say, ‘you didn’t invent the term,’” he recalled, “and I was delighted to be able to say that I had *found* it in Coleridge.”⁵

This genealogical drive was a central part of Higgins’s search for criteria with which to judge artworks operating in the seemingly lawless terrain of intermedia. Just as the abolition of present social relations would not itself guarantee the emergence of better ones, Higgins was well aware that “intermediality” alone was not a sufficient condition of value: “No work is good or bad, simply because it is intermedial.”⁶ Rather, he insisted, from the very moment he adopted the term in 1966, that “having discovered the intermedia [. . .] the central problem is now not only the new formal one of learning to use them, but the new and more social one of what to use them for?”⁷

If, Higgins insisted, “I, as so many of us do, was asking to be judged socially among other things,” what were the criteria for social judgment?⁸ To answer this question, I will take up Higgins’s attempts to confront the twin senses of what Philip Corner called the “problem of discipline” raised by intermedia art:⁹ first, the ever more stringent requirement, as Higgins put it, to “fix [. . .] boundaries” faced with the sheer openness of intermediality, to establish disciplinary bulwarks against the artwork’s oceanic dissolution into “anythingness”;¹⁰ and, second, the need for the disciplined establishment of “intentions and systems” to ward off what Higgins saw as the threat of cathartic or expressionistic subjectivism.¹¹ One of Higgins’s major contributions to the theory and practice of Fluxus and of intermediality more broadly, this essay will argue, was his argument that the systematic institution of laws was a necessary means for the artwork to freely “establish a community of participants” and thus to stand up to social judgment.¹²

The Four Suits, a book published by the Something Else Press in 1965, was advertised as “a collection of intermedial art” and featured primarily linguistic notations, simple diagrams, and some vestiges of musical notation by Corner, Tomas Schmit, Benjamin Patterson, and Alison Knowles.¹³ Knowles was alone in presenting a “graphic work,” which she titled *The “T” Dictionary* (and which made use of her skills, in Higgins’s words, as a “silk-screen camera man”):¹⁴ across forty pages, images of a tooth, geese in a trap, a suitcase, two cloaked figures, an elephant, and a photograph of three unknown men permutate and combine with text and blank pages.¹⁵ This graphic section is preceded by what initially appears to be photocopied pages from a dictionary or illustrated encyclopedia, with entries from *T* to *typewriter*.¹⁶ But the text is quickly revealed to be Knowles’s invention: the entry for *technique* describes a conversation between Corner and a piano student, *tourist* recounts Knowles’s search for a bathroom in a Turkish marketplace, and *time* is defined via a Canadian who devoted his life to the study of otters.

The work, then, appears to occupy an intermedium between collage, poetry, book design, and the dictionary. But matters are further complicated when, near the end of Knowles’s pages, it is revealed that the work is in fact a “graphic performance” of a score. Titled *Performance Piece #8* and initially published in the first Great Bear Pamphlet of 1965, Knowles’s score reads:

Divide a variety of objects into two groups. Each group is labeled “everything.” These groups may include several people. There is a third division of the stage empty of objects labeled “nothing.” Each of the objects is “something.” One performer combines and activates the objects as follows for any desired duration of time:

1. Something with everything
2. Something with nothing
3. Something with something
4. Everything with everything
5. Everything with nothing
6. Nothing with nothing¹⁷

The mixture of images and words in *The “T” Dictionary* is then but one possible iteration of this score, which is a machine for producing intermedia. Almost any conceivable kind of object might be a candidate for combination: paintings and poems, newspapers and sheet music, beans and dancers, red objects and blue objects . . .

But what Knowles’s score generates most of all is categorical confusion.¹⁸ What kind of system could label two distinct groups “everything”?

Presumably the initial division into groups itself would strip each of its claim to be “everything.” And, in theory, the category of “everything” would render whatever “something” that enters it fungible or replaceable, stripping it of its particularity as a “something.” Knowles’s system effects the seamless passage from something to everything to nothing.

Knowles’s work dramatizes one of the major hazards of intermediality that occupied Higgins in his critical writing: the borders between disciplines abolished, the work might be “something,” “everything,” and “nothing” all at once. When troubling over this issue in his 1966 essay “Games of Art,” in the *Something Else Newsletter*, Higgins might have had Knowles’s piece in mind. There, he describes a state of “assumed nothingness,” a blank field of potential like a stage or a table awaiting something to be put on it or “a mind just waiting to think about supper.” He says that this might be called “somethingness [. . .] or anythingness (a very dangerous thought).”¹⁹ Why is “anythingness” “dangerous” for Higgins? And with what means should the Fluxus artist confront it?

Any artwork involved a decision made by an artist to add to or delimit the open potential of emptiness, Higgins averred—like the area marked “nothing” in Knowles’s score. This decision, he imagined, involved staking a place along what he called an “arc of invitingness” that stretches from the empty possibility of “anythingness” to the fixed specificity of an articulated “something.” While all artworks might be situated along this arc, a work like Knowles’s is the product of a historical stage in which the artist “becomes extremely conscious about the projection of artistic choices onto this arc of invitingness,” perceiving the possibility of maintaining the work at a state much closer to “nothing” than ever before.²⁰

Higgins calls this a “blank form” (with a tacit nod to Robert Morris, who first used the term in 1960–1961), in which the artist encloses a boundary around a patch of nothingness and establishes rules of engagement for subsequent realizations.²¹ Knowles’s “Piece #8” is a self-reflexive paradigm of the “blank form,” requiring the determination of categories, the parsing out of relations between everything and nothing, and the careful maintenance of a balance between the concrete and the abstract, while allowing for an infinite number of distinct possible iterations. Higgins later elaborated on this notion of “blankness” as a kind of aesthetic transparency: “the work should acquire its meaning by what you can see through it.”²²

Yet the blank form was by no means free of aesthetic pitfalls, Higgins knew. If the artist posits a “something” (via a score, for example) that is designed to remain open to becoming an unspecified “something else” according to the decisions of the performer or reader or context of realization, then the artwork always might devolve into an arbitrary “anythingness.” Higgins saw his share of performances in which the “work” lost any

coherence and became an empty pretext for the interpreter's spontaneous self-expression.

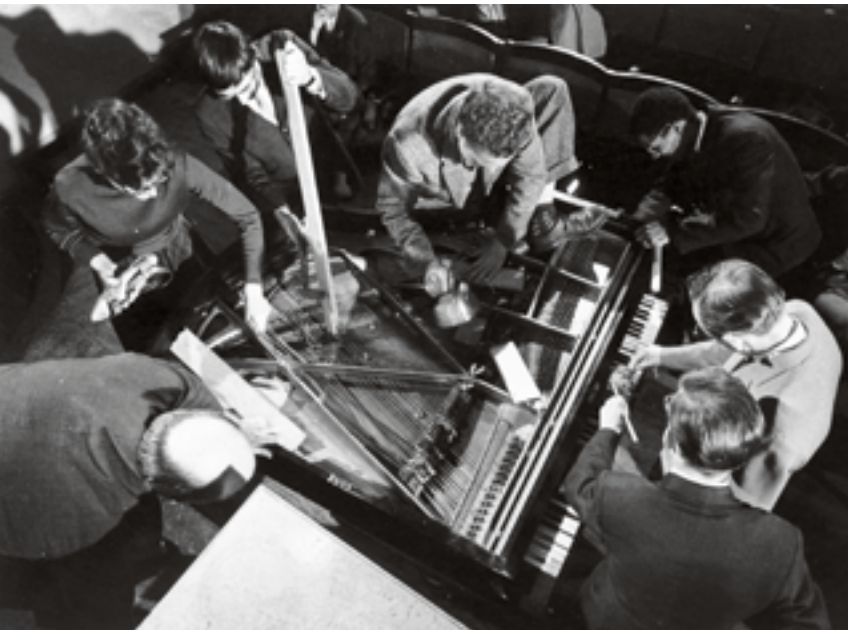
That the artwork might become an empty vessel to be filled with almost any meaning whatsoever, becoming a launching pad for the reader's own interpretive creativity without any court of final appeal—this was a common charge against the allegorical form since Romanticism. It is all the more striking, then, that Higgins not only drew the word *intermedia* from Coleridge, but even more specifically cribbed it from his definition of allegory. Coleridge used the term in a lecture on Edmund Spenser from 1818, which Higgins found in a rather obscure volume of *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism* published in 1936. There, Coleridge coins the term *intermedium*, apparently a hapax legomenon in his work: "Narrative allegory is distinguished from mythology as reality from symbol; it is, in short, the proper intermedium between person and personification. Where it is too strongly individualized it ceases to be allegory."²³

While Coleridge clearly employs the term *intermedium* in a manner distinct from its later usage, Higgins might have found in his definition of allegory an exact anticipation of the aesthetic terrain opened up by intermediality: for Coleridge, allegory is the "employment of one set of agents and images [. . .] so as to convey, while in disguise, either moral qualities [. . .] or other images, agents, actions, fortunes, and circumstances, so that the difference is everywhere presented to the eye or imagination."²⁴ While a fable or myth depends on the naturalization of an association between a thing and a meaning over time, the writer of an allegory may forge connections between previously disparate phenomena for the first time, in an unfamiliar fashion, so that the "difference" remains evident. Like Higgins, Coleridge worried that the allegorical form might generate only "empty echoes which the fancy arbitrarily associates with apparitions of matter."²⁵ In contrast with the symbol, where form is unified with content, in allegory the relationship is empty, disjunctive, arbitrary, imagined either to go on forever in a ceaseless burgeoning of meanings or to be secured once and for all by a dogmatic authorial fiat.²⁶

If Higgins found and frequently announced the patrimony of *intermedia* in Coleridge's critical definition of allegory, to what extent did he share the latter's misgivings about the allegorical form?²⁷ Fredric Jameson has recently categorized the enemies of allegory into two groups: "The first condemns the multiplicity and dispersal of allegory with the unity of the living symbol. The second denounces everything cut-and-dried, abstract, desiccated in the allegorical narrative, with the concreteness of reality itself and the perceptual three-dimensionality of realism."²⁸ Clearly, Higgins falls into neither camp: his project was precisely to stage the convergence of allegorical multiplicity with the "realistic and concrete" nature of the everyday.²⁹ Yet, he was clearly troubled by the risks of allegorical dispersal,

the possibility that the work might stray beyond judgment, into chaotic subjectivism or into the mere agglomeration of multimedia.

While the fragmentary and disjunctive nature of allegory would become a critical tool in the 1970s and 1980s, Higgins seemed to insist on its most retrograde or conservative dimension, namely what Coleridge calls its capacity to “convey moral qualities.”³⁰ Indeed, Higgins put himself in the lineage of John Bunyan, one of Coleridge’s exemplars of the allegorical mode: “I am a moralist in the school of Bunyan and perhaps Genet.”³¹ If radical art and philosophy have seen various “ethical turns,” a moral turn sounds slightly less palatable. How did Higgins square the circle between the maintenance of “invitingness” and his assertion of the “moral” as a criterion for “social judgment”?



Unknown photographer
Philip Corner's *Piano Activities*, performed
by Philip Corner,
George Maciunas,
Emmett Williams,
Benjamin Patterson,
Dick Higgins, and
Alison Knowles during
Fluxus Internationale
Festspiele Neuerster
Musik, Hörsaal des
Städtischen Museums,
Wiesbaden, Germany,
September 1, 1962

These tensions exploded with Philip Corner's *Piano Activities*, 1962. It was given its iconic first presentation, without Corner present, at the Wiesbaden Fluxus Internationale Festspiele Neuerster Musik in 1962—that moment of encounter between the European and US wings of Fluxus. Performers including Higgins, Knowles, George Maciunas, Patterson, and Emmett Williams engaged in the methodical destruction of a piano. Broadcast on German television, the work cemented the impression of Fluxus as a sheer unleashing of raucous, anarchic energies against the great symbol of bourgeois musical culture: the grand piano.³²

The performers never read Corner's score, which was forgotten in New York, and instead took instructions from Maciunas.³³ Maciunas's intentions were clear: "We did Corner's *Piano Activities* not according to his instructions since we systematically destroyed a piano which I bought for \$5. [. . .] German sentiments about this instrument of Chopin were hurt and they made a row about it."³⁴ Maciunas evidently interpreted Corner's work as an exemplar of "neo-Dada in music," as he described it that same year. "The striking of a hammer on a piano or someone stumbling into it," he proposed, would exemplify "anti-art" or "art-nihilism" "against the purposefulness, formfulness and meaningfulness of art"—a first step toward "purg[ing] the world of bourgeois sickness."³⁵

Corner distanced himself from this performance of his work, which he regarded as "a dangerous play": "this catharsis will not save us from aggressions in the larger world."³⁶ Indeed, Corner specifically stressed in his score for *Piano Activities* that his key concern was to confront the "'problem of discipline'—improvement, self-discipline, realization—without abridging the free situation."³⁷ The score includes instructions to the performer to "[s]how restraint and extremity in both inactive and active aspects of your participation." One could imagine an event score reading simply "destroy a piano" or some variation thereof. However, the word *destroy* appears but once in the score, in an instruction regarding the relation between performers: they were to "enhance, destroy, or transform their actions"—that is to say, to destroy the *action* of another performer, rather than the piano itself.³⁸ In this situation, destroying an action might be a conservative gesture: to stop someone from hammering the strings too forcefully, for example. To that effect, the score includes a series of "Impositions of Order" to limit its infinite openness of possibility, conceived first as instructions for rehearsal that might progressively be dropped "to the extent that 'Form' is not obliterated in so doing." In something of a mission statement, Corner wrote, "In the direction of the restrictions will come the removal of what impedes freedom. [. . .] The *ideal situation* would permit working back to the point of total freedom (comprehension of the full range of possibilities)."³⁹

Higgins and Corner evidently shared this conception of the score as a structure activating the dialectic of freedom and constraint. Both set this model against what Higgins called (referring to Nam June Paik), a "violently expressionistic nihilism [. . .] doing the incredible at the expense of the daily."⁴⁰ Contrast Maciunas's "neo-Dada" with Higgins's description of the works in *The Four Suits*: "[It is no] longer sensible to pretend at outrage (or tedium) over what is obviously not intended to be either outrageous or tedious. [. . .] This is not, after all, dada."⁴¹ Higgins sought to differentiate Fluxus from the myth of Dada that Maciunas cultivated, insisting in 1965 that Fluxus was not "anti-art, since it is not an attack on art, but a simple entity in its own right. It is,

perhaps, non-art just as a baker is a non-welder or a shoe is a non-vegetable, but to call such work non-art is not particularly relevant.”⁴² Against the false freedom represented by destructive negativity—which too often, despite the rhetoric, was ultimately a form of autarchic individualism—Higgins argued that the new scope of possibilities available on the arc of “invitingness” brought the artist “a point where the rules become paramount.”⁴³

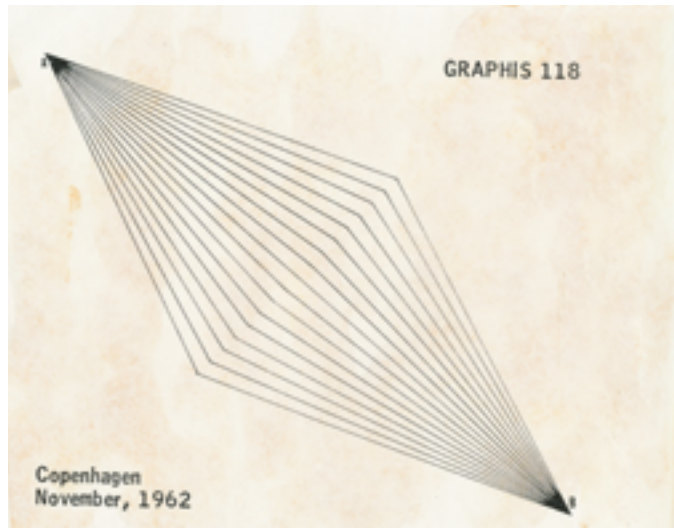
The emphasis Higgins and Corner placed on “discipline” and “rules” indicates the terrain of postserialist composition into which they intervened, which could be mapped between Karlheinz Stockhausen and John Cage. Higgins, like many others, found in Stockhausen a “willed-structural-imposition” that was “both arbitrary and requiring the subservience of the performer’s own knowledge to the composer’s will, and therefore implicitly fascistic and undesirable.”⁴⁴ And, despite the openness of Cage’s indeterminate compositions, he too struggled with the “problem of discipline”: “I must find a way to let people be free without their becoming foolish. So that their freedom will make them noble. [. . .] [M]y problems have become social rather than musical.”⁴⁵ For Higgins, an alumnus of Cage’s New School course of 1958, it was precisely the fact that Cage “strove toward ‘nobility,’” meaning “the impersonal or the transpersonal,” that was at issue.⁴⁶ Against the ideal of impersonality at work in both serialism and indeterminacy, Higgins insisted on the importance of affects and of “emotional impact” on the performer and audience.⁴⁷



Dorine van der Klei
Performance of *Zyklus
for Water-Pails (or
bottles)* by Tomas
Schmit. Amsterdam,
1963

Higgins thus attempted a challenging triangulation: not the serialist imposition of the composer's will on the performer or the noble negation of subjectivity, but the maintenance of structure and discipline; not individualist spontaneity, but the cultivation of freedom, passion, and perpetual change. The way that an artist navigated these tensions defined the character of their works as social or even "moral" allegories for Higgins: "Watching these things, one is to look for the moral whys. [. . .] Because they are moral pieces."⁴⁸

Dick Higgins
Graphis 118, 1962



Corner's work again emerges as paradigmatic. Higgins insisted, "In Corner's work, a music critic would do well to analyze the relationship between the conductor and the individual performers. [. . .] It is a model for effective and democratic leadership."⁴⁹ As an example of a work that would eschew nihilism, valorize the concrete, and establish a precarious tension between the discipline of the score and the freedom of the performer, one might contrast the Wiesbaden performance of *Piano Activities* with Corner's score for *Reconstititutional*, which consists of a duet between a piano tuner and a mechanic. The mechanic is instructed to "wreck" the parts of the piano that may possibly be repaired and to "invent uses which are subtly and not totally destructive—just impairing tone and intonation."⁵⁰ The tuner, on the other hand, "restores" or "reconstitutes" the piano as quickly as possible to perfect working order. This collaboration involves restraint on the part of the mechanic (who cannot allow the tuner to fall too far behind) and openness to the unpredictable on the part of the tuner (whose activity is bound to the destruction it counterbalances). In this precarious balance, Higgins saw the creation and maintenance of an "emotional community" in Corner's work.⁵¹

To grasp the form of social and moral judgment that Higgins insisted upon, one should consider a negative example. In Schmit's *Zyklus for Water-Pails (or bottles)*, 1962, the performer sits at the center of a circle of containers of various kinds, each empty except for one filled with water. The performer pours the contents of the one container into its neighbor to the right and continues in the same direction until all the containers are empty, whether due to evaporation or spillage. It is likely that Schmit had in mind Stockhausen's similarly named composition, *Zyklus für einen Schlagzeuger* from 1959, in which a percussionist sits in the titular circle, surrounded by a sequence of percussion instruments. Even compared to Stockhausen's score, Schmit's is prescriptive in the extreme: the work allows no deviation from its banal course and locks the performer into a cycle that might approach endlessness depending on their care with the task (which might decrease with exhaustion or exasperation).

Without noting the riff on Stockhausen, Higgins argues that "Schmit's *Zyklus* is unfortunately arrogant in its use of time."⁵² Though Higgins values the piece's intention to transform "a meaningless act into an interesting one through repetition," he notes a degree of hierarchical superiority in the work: "The unfortunate extreme length of the piece—which is inherent in it—seems to be saying: look how much richer in time I am than you, look how much more patient, how I can afford to do this endlessly." The audience is acutely aware of their temporal poverty, becoming restless while they observe the extravagant expenditure of the performer.

If Higgins dreamed in 1966 that the rise of intermedia in Fluxus heralded "the dawn of a classless society," with almost sixty years of hindsight we may perceive a different sort of political allegory at play in his work: not only is the scope of the allegory more restricted, but it posits restriction itself as a precondition for the development of the "free situation," in art as in any form of social organization.⁵³ In one of his earliest compositions, from 1959, Corner had already formulated just such a principle under the title "Passionate Expanse of the Law."⁵⁴ In this work, the conductor and performer alike are "bound only by the musical characteristic given" in the form of a collection of graphic elements, text instructions, and musical indications: "The rest is up to them. [. . .] Each is responsible for the conditions."⁵⁵ The imposition of law, in the form of the score, does not *impede* passion, Corner implies, but secures the conditions for the expanse of its territory. Freedom is not an initial state or a Crowleyan "do what thou wilt" but a passionate relationship between people—an "emotional community" as Higgins calls it—who collaborate on formulating a structure and its laws so that their passion may gain coherence, persist in time, and be iterated and altered.

This might be described, following Frédéric Lordon, as a "structuralism of the passions."⁵⁶ Building on Spinoza's "passionate antisubjectivism," Lordon

seeks to overcome the “antinomy of emotion and structure” in order to arrive at a model of the affects that are “not monadic, not free, not self-determined, but turned over to their institutional environments and connected to a whole world of social determinations.”⁵⁷ Conceiving of affect and structure as human invariants, for Lordon, allows us to grasp not only how the reigning regime of infinite capital accumulation conscripts human passions, but also how its overcoming cannot take the form of a spontaneous escape from laws and institutions as such. Lordon argues against various horizontalist or anarchist models of politics by pointing out a paradox: “by aspiring to a world beyond laws, they are also asking us to move beyond the passions,” beyond antagonism, divergence, and change, as well as the structures that might sustain affective coherence.⁵⁸ Denying the possibility of “spontaneous harmony,” Lordon views politics as the precarious emergence of forms of order amid the “interplay of the antagonistic affective tendencies which both bring people together and drive them apart—the interplay of convergences and divergences.”⁵⁹ It is, in other words, rather like Higgins’s *Graphis 118* (1962) where a group of performers strictly follow lines drawn on the ground forming the two points of a rhombus, beginning together, dividing into two camps, converging, and diverging again. Henning Christiansen sharply described what Higgins might have called the piece’s “moral”: “A cross-section of what happens to people every day: they assemble and scatter and assemble again.”⁶⁰

This dialectic of discipline and freedom played out with political directness in the realization of Higgins’s *Danger Music Number 12* (“Write a Thousand Symphonies”) by Corner, Knowles, Geoffrey Hendricks, and others in 1967.⁶¹ Hendricks hired a captain from New Jersey’s South Brunswick Police Department to fire a submachine gun at pages of blank sheet music, which were then performed by a symphony conducted by Corner. In his performance notes, dated July 12, 1967, Higgins reflected that every symphony ever written has been “the result of violence on the part of its makers, and each exemplifies a clear power relationship among the performers which characterizes our understanding of the exertion and imposition of one will over another in the most dictatorial and technical way. The relationship may be taken as an exemplum, tragic or heroic or repulsive or wonderful, but it is to be followed to the fullest.”⁶²

What could the “moral” content of such a work be? Higgins reflected, “the USA police seemed to have nothing better to do than to chase down teenagers for possessing minuscule amounts of marijuana and throwing them in jail, thus ruining their lives. [. . .] I decided it could be more worthy if one could set all the policemen in the USA to composing symphonies themselves.”⁶³ In the shadow of police violence and domination by the state, the imposition of discipline by the symphonic form or conductor dwindles into inconsequentiality—along with aesthetic matters in general. The artwork, for

Higgins, should not seek to enact the dissolution of power in a circumscribed realm of symbolic freedom, nor fall prey to visions of aesthetic revolution subtending a future political revolution. Instead, modestly, the intermedium as allegorical exemplum would begin with the constraints of the law and demonstrate their reorientation into something else, guided by passions other than domination.

¹ Dick Higgins, "Intermedia" (1966), in *Intermedia, Fluxus, and the Something Else Press: Selected Writings by Dick Higgins*, ed. Steve Clay and Ken Friedman (Catskill, NY: Siglio, 2018), 26. Henceforth, this anthology will be cited as *IFSE*.

² Higgins, "Intermedia" (1966), 25.

³ Higgins cites each in a letter to Jürgen E. Müller, October 30, 1993, box 51, folder 25, Dick Higgins Papers, Northwestern University.

⁴ See Dick Higgins, "Intermedia," *Library Journal* 93, no. 11 (June 1968): 2214.

⁵ Higgins, "The Something Else Press: Notes for a History to Be Written Some Day," in *IFSE*, 158.

⁶ Higgins, "Intermedia" (1968), 2213.

⁷ Higgins, "Statement on Intermedia," *dé-coll/age* 6 (1967): 35.

⁸ Higgins, publisher's foreword to *The Four Suits*, by Philip Corner, Alison Knowles, Benjamin Patterson, and Tomas Schmit (New York: Something Else Press, 1965), xiv.

⁹ Philip Corner, "Impositions of Order," in *The Four Suits*, 163.

¹⁰ Higgins, "Intending," in *IFSE*, 37; "Games of Art," in *IFSE*, 31.

¹¹ Higgins, "Intending," 38–39.

¹² Higgins, "Games of Art," 33.

¹³ Higgins, "Games of Art," 26.

¹⁴ Higgins, publisher's foreword, xii.

¹⁵ Alison Knowles, "Performance," in *The Four Suits*, 6–46.

¹⁶ Knowles, *The "T" Dictionary*, in *The Four Suits*, 2–6.

¹⁷ Knowles, "Performance," 35.

¹⁸ See Natilee Harren, "The Crux of Fluxus: Intermedia, Rear-Guard," in *Art Expanded, 1958–1978*, ed., Eric Crosby and Liz Glass (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2015). <https://walkerart.org/collections/publications/art-expanded/crux-of-fluxus/>.

¹⁹ Higgins, "Games of Art," 31.

²⁰ Higgins, "Games of Art," 32.

²¹ Morris first uses the term in 1960–1961, in a statement intended for La Monte Young's *An Anthology of Chance Operations*. See Natilee Harren, *Fluxus Forms: Scores, Multiples, and the Eternal Network* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 127.

²² Higgins, "Blank Images," *Something Else Newsletter*, 2, no. 1 (April 1971): 2.

²³ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed. Thomas Middleton Rayson (London: Constable & Co., 1936), 33.

²⁴ Coleridge, *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, 30.

²⁵ Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual* (1816) cited in Jeremy Tambling, *Allegory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 78. Thank you to David Sigler for pointing me to Tambling's book.

²⁶ On allegory and dogma, see an author that Higgins profoundly respected: Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Continuum, 2004), 64–70.

²⁷ Nicholas Halmi notes that Coleridge's disparaging comments about allegory in contrast to the symbol date from between 1816 and 1825 and hardly reflect the full scope of his remarks on allegory. Halmi, "Coleridge on Allegory and Symbol," in *The Oxford Handbook of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Frederick Burwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 346.

²⁸ Fredric Jameson, *Allegory and Ideology* (New York: Verso Books, 2019), 2.

²⁹ Higgins, "Postface," in *IFSE*, 64.

- 30** Coleridge, *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, 33. I am thinking in particular of the models of allegory developed in Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "The Allegorical Procedures: Appropriations and Montage in Contemporary Art (1982)," in *Formalism and Historicity: Models and Methods in Twentieth-Century Art* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2015), 173–226, and in Craig Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism," *October*, no. 12 (Spring 1980): 67–86.
- 31** Higgins, "Postface," 57.
- 32** See Diedrich Diederichsen, "The Piano," in *Henning Christiansen: Freedom Is around the Corner*, ed. Lawrence Kumpf, Joe Bucciario, and Mark Harwood (Brooklyn: Blank Forms, 2018), 49–64.
- 33** See Gunnar Schmidt, *Klavierzerstörungen in Kunst und Popkultur* (Berlin: Reimer, 2012). Translation from the German by Philip Corner: <http://piano-activities.de/englindex.html>.
- 34** Schmidt, *Klavierzerstörungen*.
- 35** Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus Codex* (Detroit: Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, 1988), 24.
- 36** Cited in Schmidt, *Klavierzerstörungen*.
- 37** Corner, "Impositions of Order," 163.
- 38** Corner, "Piano Activities (Piece for Many Pianists)," in *The Four Suits*, 168.
- 39** Corner, "Impositions of Order," 163.
- 40** Higgins, publisher's foreword, xii.
- 41** Higgins, publisher's foreword, xvi.
- 42** Higgins, "Postface," 80.
- 43** Higgins, "Games of Art," 32.
- 44** Higgins, "Intending," 38.
- 45** John Cage, "How to Pass, Kick, Fall, and Run," in *A Year from Monday: New Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), 135–36.
- 46** Higgins, "Fluxus: Theory and Reception," in *IFSE*, 97.
- 47** Higgins, "Intending," 39.
- 48** Higgins, publisher's foreword, xv.
- 49** Higgins, publisher's foreword, xiv.
- 50** Corner, "Reconstititutional," in *The Four Suits*, 145.
- 51** Higgins, "Intending," 39.
- 52** Higgins, "Games of Art," 32.
- 53** Higgins, "Intermedia" (1966), 25.
- 54** Corner, "Passionate Expanse of the Law," in *The Four Suits*, 153–58.
- 55** Corner, "Passionate Expanse of the Law," 153.
- 56** Frédéric Lordon, *La société des affects: Pour un structuralisme des passions* (Paris: Seuil, 2013), 8.
- 57** Lordon, *La société*, 10.
- 58** Lordon, *Imperium: Structures and Affects of Political Bodies*, trans. Andy Bliss (New York: Verso Books, 2022), 228.
- 59** Lordon, *Imperium*, 5.
- 60** Henning Christiansen, "They Must Have Wondered: Paik's Piano (Piano Story)," in Kumpf, Bucciario, and Harwood, *Henning Christiansen*, 43.
- 61** See the documentation in Geoffrey Hendricks, ed., *Critical Mass: Happenings, Fluxus and Performance Intermedia at Rutgers University, 1958–1972* (New Brunswick, NJ: Mason Gross Art Galleries / Rutgers University Press, 2003), 98–111.
- 62** Hendricks, *Critical Mass*, 99.
- 63** Hendricks, *Critical Mass*, 102.

Intermedia Res: The Something Else Press as Real Time System

If one of the central problems of the recent arts has been that of how could one live one's life in art, it is no wonder that a major work of mine, the Something Else Press (1964–1974, collage, various collaborators) should reflect this. [. . .] But from the very beginning as the old stories say, I thought of the Press as a performance, a gesture, a statement, and a word—never as a frozen thing, an organization, a business. And thus my choice of titles.¹

Defining it as both a decade-long “performance” and a collaborative “collage,” Dick Higgins described the Something Else Press (henceforth SEP) as a response to the intractable problem of how to “live one’s life in art.” It was never intended to be a “frozen thing, an organization, a business”—and fortunately so, since the Press’s remit and mission are hard to pin down, and it rarely, if ever, turned a profit. That said, as the following will attempt to show, the SEP’s poetic and performative status as “a gesture, a statement, and a word” and its functional, day-to-day operations were fundamentally inextricable, a Gordian knot tied as tightly as the cord binding art and life. Higgins’s overriding goal for the Press was to search for “something else,” as fugitive and mercurial as that category might be; likewise, that will be this essay’s primary concern.²

Founded in late 1963, the SEP was a relative latecomer to the so-called paperback revolution, which brought inexpensive editions of avant-garde, modernist, and countercultural literature into the hands of the general public. Relevant models include publishing houses like New Directions and Grove Press, as well as the latter’s magazine, the *Evergreen Review*. Meanwhile,

in the years prior to founding the SEP, Higgins was active in the ongoing “mimeo revolution” coalescing around cheaply produced, limited-edition avant-garde and underground periodicals like *The Floating Bear* and *Fuck You*.³ And yet, Higgins’s stated editorial methodology for the SEP ran against the grain of both mainstream trade publishers and the underground press, as he described in the quasi-heroic third person: “After all, ‘something else’ described the editorial policy that would interest him—to notice carefully whatever avant-garde materials that other publishers were doing, especially the major trade houses, and always and no matter what else might happen, always to publish ‘something else.’”⁴

Always and no matter what else might happen. As the founder of his own, personal publishing revolution, Higgins doggedly pursued the Press’s eponymic mission to publish “something else,” which he saw as a provisional solution to the existential question plaguing his artistic generation—less of *what* to make than of *how* to live. This shift from *what* to *how* echoes broader shifts in 1960s art, from object to method, and from *artwork* to *art system*. Indeed, Higgins’s editorial turn aligned with the emergent postformalist discourse of “systems aesthetics,” announced by Jack Burnham in his landmark 1968 essay of that same name: “We are now in transition from an *object-oriented* to a *systems-oriented culture*. Here change emanates, not from *things*, but from *the way things are done*.”⁵

Situated at the intersection of art and publishing but not categorizable as exclusively either/or, Higgins’s system was engaged with both an art-world context and the broader ecology of trade publications, yet still maintained a certain critical distance and strategic alterity with respect to both worlds—it was stubbornly, ineluctably “something else.” Under the SEP mantle, Higgins carved out a hybrid role as artist-editor-publisher that allowed him to intervene head-on (rather than indirectly, representationally, or metaphorically) in what Burnham described, in his 1969 essay on “Real Time Systems,” as the art world’s “metaprograms.” These “business, promotional, and archival structures of the art world,” encompass all forms of art writing and publishing, not just scholarship, criticism, and publicity *about* art and artists, but texts authored *by* artists themselves.⁶

Later in “Real Time Systems,” Burnham writes about the secondary importance of objects within systems art:

A major illusion of the art system is that art resides in specific objects. Such artifacts are the material basis for the concept of the “work of art.” But in essence, all institutions which process art data, thus making information, are components of the work of art. Without the support system, the object ceases to have definition; but without the object, the support system can still sustain[sic] the notion of art.

So we can see why the art experience attaches itself less and less to canonical or given forms but embraces every conceivable experiential mode, including living in everyday environments.⁷

As a “real time system,” the SEP engaged with the art world’s metaprograms by anchoring its production of “artifacts” (books, catalogues, exhibition announcements, periodicals, correspondence, mailing lists, paperwork, and related ephemera and promotional objects) within the container of a supporting infrastructure (the business of the Press, its offices and warehouses, as well as related offshoots like the Something Else Gallery) which Higgins maintained through active social relations between himself, his personnel, authors, and audiences. The Press thus encompassed a wide range of processes (editorial, production, distribution, financial, promotional), constituencies (editors, authors, artists, readers, critics), and media (epistolary, book, periodical, ephemera, exhibition), all complexly intertwined, interdependent, and irreducible.

Poised between two discrete systems—on the one hand, art, and on the other, the contemporary “revolutions” in avant-garde periodicals and trade publishing—the SEP was engaged equally with both worlds but did not exclusively belong to either. Insofar as the Press aligns with Burnham’s definition of a “real time system,” it also participated in a broader turn away from medium-specific art objects and toward conceptual, performative, dematerialized, process-based, and otherwise “expanded” approaches often involving direct intervention into existing social, technological, economic, political, and environmental systems.⁸ This defining paradigm shift in late 1960s art took many different shapes and forms, and provided the backdrop for Burnham’s “systems aesthetics,” as well as Allan Kaprow’s “Happenings,” Lucy Lippard’s “dematerialization of the art object,”⁹ and perhaps most salient to the SEP, Fluxus. But, besides this lexicon of terms invented by artists and critics to describe current advances in 1960s art, it is Higgins’s own influential neologism, “intermedia,” which debuted in the very pages of the inaugural *Something Else Newsletter*, that best captures the hybrid identity of Higgins’s art/publishing system.

The SEP’s editorial remit was largely focused on intermedia, whether Fluxus or otherwise, as Higgins makes clear: “Whatever we did, it would have to follow with our name, to be ‘something else’ from what the commercial publishers were doing. [. . .] But if the purpose of the Press always would be to publish the valuable work that differs from the fashionable or the conventions of the times, then to fulfill its role, however, the Press would have to include *other kinds of intermedia* than simply Fluxus.”¹⁰ Moreover, because SEP publications qualify as both books and art at once, they exemplify Higgins’s concept. Yet, beyond its primary role as a *distributor* of intermedia,

the Press was also designed as an intermedia system in its own right, one in which the pursuit of “something else” was its guiding methodology.

To make the case for the SEP as an intermedia system, it helps to return to Higgins’s original intentions. The story of Something Else’s founding is, by now, as familiar as it is charmingly mundane: According to Higgins, sometime in 1962, George Maciunas approached him about publishing a book of his writings.¹¹ Higgins proposed a manuscript of 365 daily entries spanning a full year (a fusion of writing and performance that anticipates his nascent theory of intermedia). The book was to be called *Jefferson’s Birthday*, a reference to the project’s start and end dates. Accompanying this text was a historical essay, entitled “Postface,” that summarized key artistic developments from the mid-1950s up until the year of publication, 1963. When progress on his book stalled, however, Higgins grew determined to publish it independently under his own imprint. An afternoon spent drinking hardened his resolve, and when he stumbled home to share the plan with his spouse, Fluxus artist Alison Knowles, she asked what he wanted to name the new publishing venture. “Shirtsleeves Press,” replied Higgins, a title that evokes the muscular self-reliance of manual labor, with a note of Popular Front-era populism. Disapprovingly, Knowles replied, “That’s no good. Why don’t you call it something else?” According to Higgins, this “almost-serendipity name” stuck due to its “double entendre colloquialism” which “suited my editorial purposes perfectly.”¹²

Or did it? Barbara Moore, the Press’s first editorial assistant, disputes this folksy and likely apocryphal tale, countering that Higgins had initially planned to call the Press “Fluxus Annex,” possibly in an attempt to regain some authorial control over the Fluxus name.¹³ Whereas Maciunas was prone to policing the boundaries and membership of Fluxus, often through threats of ostracism or expulsion, Higgins rejected such programmatic orthodoxies, as evidenced by the SEP list. Higgins published his Fluxus associates alongside a wide range of artists, poets, and theorists, their common denominator being an appeal to his interests rather than adherence to any specific principle or movement. In this sense, the SEP—both its title and its products—offers an exemplary counterexample to what Hannah Higgins has aptly identified as the “Maciunas problem,” in which “Pope George” (as Dick called him) has played an outsize role in how Fluxus has been written about and interpreted due to Maciunas’s self-appointment as its impresario-spokesman.¹⁴

Regardless of whether the title “Something Else” was a product of happenstance domestic banter or a convenient fiction, the name is arguably more in keeping with Higgins’s open-ended editorial sensibility than “Fluxus Annex,” which would have marked the press as a direct subsidiary of a specific movement.¹⁵ That said, “Something Else” is still quintessentially Fluxian in its parodic subversion of the very conventions of artistic naming

itself. Akin to the Warner Bros. cartoon's use of the "Acme" brand name for all varieties of zany and malfunctioning products, "Something Else" is a purposefully deflationary and self-ironizing designation that conjures up the intriguing prospect of "something," anything, different from what is expected—perfectly befitting a system for the promotion of intermedia.

However tempting it is to read "something else" as an explicit refusal to align with Maciunas's programmatic vision for Fluxus, such an interpretation risks exaggerating the divisions between the two artists. Arguably, the SEP was as much a product of consensus and collaboration between Higgins and Maciunas, as one of friction. Indeed, during their initial discussions about publishing Higgins's writing in 1962, Maciunas and Higgins were in full agreement that the single biggest problem facing Fluxus was that of distribution: how to bypass institutional gatekeepers and deliver the work directly to the audience. Maciunas's solution was to manufacture inexpensive facsimile editions of Fluxus publications for select distribution to insiders and fellow travelers. Higgins set out to produce the reverse: high-quality, sturdy trade-press books that could be sold in any mainstream bookstore to general audiences. And, unlike Maciunas, Higgins's tastes were catholic—he commissioned unique artist's books and edited anthologies, such as Emmett Williams's *Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, alongside reprints of hard-to-find early modernist and avant-garde literature by the likes of Gertrude Stein and Richard Huelsenbeck. Nevertheless, the fact that both Higgins and Maciunas took up publishing during the same moment supports a reading of their endeavors as anchored in a shared Fluxus sensibility.

After *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface*, Higgins's first commissioned title was Ray Johnson's *The Paper Snake* (1965), a slim hardcover volume comprised of drawings, collage fragments, and short poems that Johnson mailed to Higgins between 1959 and 1964. The book acts like a disjointed introduction to Johnson's mail art, a practice he launched in the mid-1950s and codified as the New York Correspondence School (NYCS) sometime in 1962. Prior to founding this "school," Johnson also invented a neologism for his collage practice, *moticos*, a free-floating term that applies equally to finished collages, incomplete works, collage fragments, and india-ink silhouette drawings of these fragments. More alias than identifier, the term *moticos* was just as fugitive and mercurial a descriptor as "something else."¹⁶

Higgins's determined efforts to shepherd *The Paper Snake* to publication reflects the artistic kinship between him and Johnson, but also speaks to the ways that Johnson's enigmatic practice—his *moticos* collages and the poetic, often inscrutable mailings of the NYCS—perfectly fulfilled Higgins's criteria for "something else." Taking a cue from Johnson's correspondence art, the SEP would become an increasingly social, collaborative, and networked endeavor with the addition of its periodicals, the

newsletter and Great Bear Pamphlets. Like the NYCS, the SEP harnessed the mass distribution apparatus of the postal service to cement its dispersed yet linked audience, bound together through shared intellectual, social, and artistic commitments. And, just as Johnson distributed art disguised as mail, the Press similarly ran a kind of mimetic interference with an existing communication platform, in this case, by adopting the seemingly conventional format of the trade-press book as a vessel for “something else.”

In the words of Barbara Moore, SEP books acted like “artistic wolves in sheeps’ clothing infiltrat[ing] the art establishment, laying the groundwork for the artists’ book revolution to come.”¹⁷ Yet, if the books were the proverbial wolves passing through the establishment’s gates, what kind of threat, exactly, did they pose? As we’ve seen, a rhetoric of serendipity, ambivalence, and subterfuge was baked into the Press’s origin story, which Higgins envisions more like an illicit crime scene or chance discovery: “Late one night in December 1963,” he states, “I founded the Something Else Press by mistake.” This aura of fugitivity also permeates Higgins’s signature theory of intermedia, a term he coined in the very first issue of the *Something Else Newsletter* of February 1966. Funnily enough, even though Something Else was the venue through which Higgins’s “Intermedia” essay first circulated, the Press itself has rarely, if ever, been discussed in terms of Higgins’s most influential theoretical contribution to artistic discourse. The “Intermedia” essay opens with an attack on the art-world establishment:

Pop and Op are both dead, however, because they confine themselves, through the media which they employ, to the older functions of art, of decorating and suggesting grandeur, whatever their detailed content or their artists’ intentions. None of the ingenious theories of Mr. Ivan Geldoway combine [*sic*] can prevent them from being colossally boring and irrelevant.¹⁸

Higgins indicts a chauvinist, elitist, and provincial cadre of art-world insiders personified by the figure of “Mr. Ivan Geldoway,” a composite of Ivan Karp, Henry Geldzahler, and Lawrence Alloway—a biting caricature of the dealer-curator-critic troika. Yet, the “underground” and countercultural subset of the institutional art world fared no better under Higgins’s harsh gaze—elsewhere, he coolly dismisses *Village Voice* columnist Jill Johnston as a “journalist of the Hip Establishment (for all her radical lesbian stance, she’s still just that).”¹⁹ These editorial gibes have a performative purpose, by enabling Higgins to distinguish his own publishing activities under the auspices of his self-funded imprint from the three major domains of the arts publishing ecology—museum and gallery catalogues, legacy media like *The New York Times*, and the underground press—in one fell swoop. Distancing himself from both the

A SOMETHING ELSE MANIFESTO

When asked what one is doing, one can only explain it as "something else. Now one does something big, now one does something small, now another big thing, now another little thing. Always it is something else.

We can talk about a thing, but we cannot talk a thing. It is always something else.

One might well emphasize this. It happens, doesn't it? Actually, everybody might be in on this Something Else thing, whether he wants it or not. Everyman is.

For what is one confined in one's activity? Commitment on a personal level can be plural. One can be committed to both salads and fish, political action and photographic engineering, art and non-art. One does, we hope, what seems necessary, or, at least, not extraneous, not simply that to which one has committed oneself. One doesn't want to be like the little german who hated the little menshevik because the little german always did his things in a roll format, and when the little menshevik did that kind of thing too, the little german got into a tizzy. If one is consistent and inconsistent often enough nothing that one does is one's own, certainly not a form, which is only a part of speech in one's language. One must take special care not to influence oneself. Tomorrow one will write Schubert's Fifth Symphony, cook some kohlrabi, develop a non-toxic epoxy, and invent still another kind of theater; or perhaps one will just sit and scream; or perhaps...

When you touch a fact it is a fact. No idea is clear to us until a little soup has been spilled on it.

So when we are asked for bread, let's give not stones, not stale bread. Maybe we have no bread at all, anyway. But why not give a little chicken?

Let's chase down an art that clucks and fills our guts.

institutional establishment and the “hip establishment,” Higgins frames the SEP as neither/nor, unorthodox and independent, “something else,” and thus better equipped to resist censorship, co-optation, and commodification. Understood as rhetorical speech acts, Higgins’s self-promoting polemics also testify to the critical autonomy afforded by owning and operating his own publishing house.

As an antidote to “boring” and “irrelevant” genres like pop and op, Higgins advances intermedia, or, artworks situated *between* specific mediums and modes of production.²⁰ While his formulation anticipates a flourishing of postformalist, systems-oriented, process-driven, conceptual, and “dematerialized” practices that came to define late 1960s art, the category’s debut and circulation *within* the pages of an SEP periodical has had the paradoxical side effect of obscuring the Press’s own status as an active, evolving intermedia system. Likewise, Higgins’s critique of the art-world establishment’s instrumentalization of critical and scholarly writing as publicity (or as Geldoway’s “ingenious theories”) actually effaces the SEP’s own role as an existing countermodel to this tendency. Clearly, the SEP offered more than just a platform for Higgins’s uncensored commentary; it also, as a direct application of his rhetorical demands, instantiated intermedia as both medium *and* message.²¹

Though Higgins stopped short of defining the SEP as intermedia, his “Intermedia” essay does deploy the phrase “something else” to describe intermedia’s art historical precedents, a coincidence that implies he regarded these terms, “something else” and “intermedia,” as analogous, quasi-synonymous, though not interchangeable: “Who knows when [intermedia] began? There is no reason for us to go into history in any detail. Part of the reason that Duchamp’s objects are fascinating while Picasso’s voice is fading is that Duchamp pieces are truly between media, between sculpture and *something else*, while Picasso is readily classifiable as painted ornament.”²²

Instead of defining the Press as intermedia, Higgins frequently characterized it as a collaborative “collage,” coauthored by himself and the authors he published, wherein the books themselves act more as “spin-offs,” material traces of these collaborative exchanges:

The beautiful thing about doing a publishing company as a collage is that I could include major works by other artists and in so doing help call these to the attention of the general public. In traditional collages one can take a work here or there—usually a minor one by another artist and incorporate it bodily into one’s work. But the *spin-offs* of the Press were its books (though it, like most art works, had a life and an identity apart from its production)—these continue to exist, to be interesting in their own right and, hopefully, will remain available for

some time to come even after my own departure. The situation of the Press is analogue to that of Oldenburg's store (which is why I was adamant in wanting to publish *Store Days*, notes and memorabilia from Oldenburg's Store period), if *The Store* had followed its own premises to that logical conclusion and actually supported its founder through the sale of its candy bars, shirts, plants, etc.²³

His comparison between the SEP and Claes Oldenburg's *The Store* (1961–1964) is especially instructive (not least because Higgins, somewhat contradictorily, dismissed pop art as “boring and irrelevant” in his essay on “Intermedia”). Like the SEP, *The Store* involved two nested layers of intermedia: a series of objects for sale that combine the mediums of painting and sculpture with the forms of everyday objects, all presented in an environment that splits the difference between a conceptual performance and a conventional retail shop. Higgins's reference to Oldenburg's soft sculptures in his 1966 “Intermedia” essay, where he praises them for opening up new intermedial possibilities, together with the Press's publication of Oldenburg's *Store Days* in 1968, indicate that Higgins regarded Oldenburg's work as an exemplary instance of intermedia.²⁴ And yet, unlike *The Store*, and before that, Robert Rauschenberg's “combines,” Higgins remained far less interested in exploring the space between two conventional artistic mediums (painting and sculpture, music and poetry) than in carving out a liminal zone between art and everyday systems, objects, experiences—hence why *The Store* is a fuller example of intermedia than Oldenburg's soft sculptures on their own. This distinction becomes especially clear in “Intermedia,” when Higgins admires Oldenburg as one of the few contemporary artists who comes close to making work that has “consciously been placed in the intermedium between painting and shoes,” and similarly, when he notes that the lasting impact of Marcel Duchamp's readymades rests on their position “between sculpture and *something else*.” In short, intermedia, much like “something else,” points to a condition of radical heteronomy, which rejects high modernism's strident boundaries between art and commercial, popular, and industrial cultural production and other “real time systems”.

Like most things Something Else, it remains curious—considering the amount of ink Higgins spilled on both intermedia and his founding of the Press, plus the clear affinities between these respective projects—that he never explicitly designated his Press as intermedia. Indeed, besides his own prolific writing on the topic, the SEP makes scant appearances in the literature on Fluxus and on postwar art history, and is far more likely to appear in the endnotes, bibliography, or image captions of art historical scholarship than analyzed or historicized on its own terms.²⁵ Yet, if the Press's





reputation as one of the first independent publishing houses specializing in artist's books has eclipsed discussions of its position within Higgins's body of work and correspondingly, within art history, this may have been by design, another of Higgins's acts of subtle subterfuge. While Higgins instrumentalized the Press to produce, promote, and distribute intermedia, these day-to-day operations and its impressive roster of publications worked to obscure the Press's broader, conceptual intervention at the intersection between art and publishing. A wolf in sheep's clothing, or better yet, a Trojan horse smuggled through the gates of established narratives, settled canons, and art-as-institution, the SEP's status as an intermedia system has thus remained hidden in plain sight, or more accurately, buried in the back matter of its various "artifacts" and "spin-offs."

Never a "frozen thing," constitutionally ambivalent and difficult to pin down, the Something Else Press is far more productively described as an intermedia system than simply a collection of intermedia publications. Framing the Press in such terms is no mere semantic quibble, for it helps lead us toward a fresh conversation about the Press's legacy in contemporary artists' publishing, and specifically, artists' publishing via experimental platforms. Following the example of the SEP-as-system, many contemporary artists' publishing platforms are less invested in the production of tangible "artifacts" than in harnessing the concept and cultural logic of a "press" as a basis for experimental curatorial, programming, and pedagogical initiatives that respond to the constraints and possibilities of the digital age, and, most notably, are often unabashedly political in ways that the SEP was not.

The contemporary artists' publishing scene features a wide range of small independent presses that commission everything from original artist's books and periodicals to reeditions of historical publications; a few prominent examples include *Ulises* (named for Ulises Carrión, leading theorist-intellectual of the international mail art movement), *Primary Information*, *Ugly Duckling Presse*, and Paul Chan's *Badlands Unlimited*. Such initiatives exist alongside ones that are more aptly described as hybrid publishing-curatorial-pedagogical platforms, such as Martine Syms's *Dominica Publishing*, Yusuf Hassan's *BlackMass Publishing*, and Kandis Williams's *Cassandra Press*, all of which prioritize Black art and artists, theory, and politics.²⁶ Although both models of artists' publishing can be traced back to the SEP, and the former are arguably closer in outward appearance to the SEP, comparisons

between SEP and the latter, platform-based examples prove more instructive and illuminating. Mirroring the SEP's response to the shifting concerns of its moment—from *what* to *make* to *how* to live—the recent surge in Black artist-led publishing platforms responds to a decidedly different set of questions, namely, that of *who* has the capacity and the authority to speak, and *whom* will be listened to.

Kandis Williams's Cassandra Press illustrates this shift. Whereas the SEP breached the gates of the art and publishing establishments like an intermedia Trojan horse, Williams's press borrows its name from another illustrious Trojan, the cursed priestess whose prophetic visions were doomed to never be believed, in spite of their accuracy. Cassandra Press is a curated information system that takes shape via printed publications and social media content (especially long-form Instagram stories, which are visible temporarily and occasionally archived), as well as public programming, online courses with influential artists and curators (Hannah Black, Manuel Arturo Abreu, Ebony Haynes), and exhibitions. Cassandra describes its aims as "producing lo-fi printed matter, classrooms, projects, artists books, and exhibitions. Our intention is to spread ideas, distribute new language, propagate dialogue centering ethics, aesthetics, femme driven activism, and black scholarship because . . . y'all ain't listening."²⁷

Cassandra's emphasis on Black scholarship and politics, combined with its second-person address, encapsulates its corrective and restorative mission. Whereas Higgins's voluminous writings on the SEP often utilize the first-person "I" or the third person singular or plural, Cassandra/Williams uses the second person: "y'all ain't listening," the "y'all" naming a white-dominated (though not exclusively, nor ideally, white) art-world public. This grammatical shift in person thus also entails a shifting deictic, in which the editor-as-"I" adopts a more confrontational stance toward its audience, the "y'all." Embedded in this shifting grammar is a new set of existential priorities—in other words, the main question is no longer what to make, or how to live, but rather, whose words will be listened to, whose testimony is to be believed, and whose work will be remembered, questions that are not exclusive to art and artists, but are fundamental matters of survival.

Apart from Gertrude Stein, Alison Knowles, and Ben Patterson, the SEP's author list was almost exclusively white and male, a mirror of the art world and publishing landscape of the 1960s. Reimagining the SEP list as more than a canon of intermedia publications, or an ossified set of curated selections "frozen" in history, but rather, as just one component of a complex, evolving intermedia system, helps open up new tributaries of influence for contemporary artists' publishing. Put more simply, the SEP's dual intervention into two existing systems of communication—art and trade publishing—marks a key precedent for how contemporary artists occupy and infiltrate

existing media platforms today—namely, on and through the internet. With “something else,” Higgins constructed a self-ironizing editorial methodology that set its sights on alterity, *always and no matter what*. And in doing so, he set the stage for experimental publishing platforms that prioritize not just something, but *someone* else, by carving out platforms for radical politics, marginalized voices, and especially, experimental Black art and thought. To borrow Judith Rodenbeck’s phrase, the Something Else Press is thus a “radical prototype” for what artists’ publishing can be, do, and become, as long as we know where, and how, to look.²⁸

¹ Dick Higgins, “Something Else Press—Reflections,” unpublished manuscript, August 21, 1974, box 31, folder 23, Dick Higgins Papers, Northwestern University.

² Thanks to Alice Centamore for patiently thinking through these entangled questions with me, and for pinpointing how the “fugitive and mercurial” quality (her words) of “something else” has stymied deeper art historical analysis.

³ Though both “revolutions,” paperback and mimeograph, shaped the extant publishing landscape of the early 1960s, the SEP was unique in combining avant-garde content with the high-quality production values and wide distribution networks typically associated with trade publishing. See Peter Frank, introduction to *Something Else Press: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: McPherson & Company, 1983), 2–3. For more on Grove Press’s role in the 1960s counterculture, see Loren Glass, *Counterculture Colophon: Grove Press, the “Evergreen Review,” and the Incorporation of the Avant-*

Garde (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

⁴ Dick Higgins, “Whatever Happened to the Something Else Press?” unpublished manuscript, January 21, 1975, box 31, folder 23, Dick Higgins Papers, Northwestern University.

⁵ Jack Burnham, “Systems Esthetics,” *Artforum* 7, no. 1 (1968): 31, quoted in Johanna Gosse and Timothy Stott, “After the Breakdown: Sixty Years of Systems Art,” in *Nervous Systems: Art, Systems, and Politics since the 1960s* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2022), 14.

⁶ Jack Burnham, “Real Time Systems,” *Artforum* 8, no. 1 (1969): 49.

⁷ Burnham, “Real Time Systems,” 50.

⁸ See Gosse and Stott, “After the Breakdown,” for a comprehensive discussion of this history.

⁹ Interestingly, Lippard does not specifically mention the SEP in her landmark book *Six Years*; however, Dick

Higgins is included in a few entries and is misidentified as “Higgins, Ed” in the entry for *Pop Architecture/Concept Art*, the 1969 German-language edition of *Fantastic Architecture*, a book Higgins coedited with Wolf Vostell, which the SEP published in English in 1970. See *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 69.

¹⁰ Dick Higgins, “Two Sides of a Coin: Fluxus and the Something Else Press,” reprinted in *Intermedia, Fluxus, and the Something Else Press: Selected Writings by Dick Higgins*, ed. Steve Clay and Ken Friedman (New York: Siglio, 2018), 145–46 (emphasis mine).

¹¹ Dick Higgins, “The Something Else Press: Notes for a History to Be Written Some Day,” originally published in *New Lazarus Review* 2, no. 1 (1979) and 2, nos. 3–4 (1980). Reprinted in Clay and Friedman, *Intermedia, Fluxus, and the Something Else Press*, 151.

¹² Higgins, “The Something Else Press: Notes,” 151.

13 Barbara Moore, "Some Things Else about Something Else Press," brochure accompanying the exhibition *Something Else Press* at Granary Books, New York, 1991: 2. See also note 4 in Alice Centamore's essay in this catalogue, which discusses how Higgins also considered the name "Fluxus Annex" for the press.

14 Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 182.

15 Hannah Higgins, renowned Fluxus scholar and Dick and Alison's daughter, regards "Something Else" as indicative of the "flexible nominalism" of a loosely organized artistic movement whose associates often invented nomenclature as a method for distancing themselves from Maciunian dogmatism. "No doubt Fluxus would never have cohered in the first place without Maciunas. However, persistent resistance to the name within the group itself indicates resistance both to Maciunas's efforts at inscription and the idea of a specific definition for Fluxus." See Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience*, 179.

16 For more on how *moticos* is an unstable term and concept characterized by fugitivity, see Johanna Gosse, "Moticos," in *Ray Johnson c/o* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022), 160–64.

17 Moore, "Some Things Else," 1.

18 Dick Higgins, "Intermedia," *Something Else Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (February 1966), n.p. For a discussion of this passage, see Stephen Moonie, "A Poet of 'Non-ressentiment'? Lawrence Alloway, Ray Johnson, and the Art World as a Network," *Getty Research Journal*, no. 8 (2016): 166.

19 Dick Higgins, "Introduction by Dick Higgins," n.d., box 82, folder 1, Dick Higgins Papers, Northwestern University.

20 See Trevor Stark's essay in this catalogue for an extended exploration of Higgins's concept of intermedia, in which the author warns against reading Higgins's "intermedia" as a consistent and transparent theoretical project and advises we should instead understand it as one sliced through with skepticism and internal contradiction.

21 A McLuhanian interpretation of the SEP is buttressed by its publication of Marshall McLuhan's *Verbi-Voco-Visual Explorations* in 1967.

22 Higgins, "Intermedia," n.p.

23 Dick Higgins, "Whatever Happened to the Something Else Press?" unpublished manuscript, January 21, 1975, box 31, folder 23, Dick Higgins Papers, Northwestern University (emphasis mine).

24 "I cannot, for example, name work which has consciously been placed in the intermedium between painting

and shoes. The closest thing would seem to be the sculpture of Claes Oldenburg, which falls between sculpture and hamburgers or Eskimo Pies, yet it is not the sources of these images which his sculpture resembles so much as the images themselves." Higgins, "Intermedia," n.p.

25 Two recent exceptions are these deeply illuminating unpublished studies: Gregory Laynor, "Ray Johnson, Something Else Press, and *The Paper Snake*," in "The Making of Intermedia: John Cage to Yoko Ono, 1952 to 1972" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2016), 62–91; Rachel High, "Something Else Press as Publisher" (master's thesis, The City University of New York, 2019).

26 For an exploration of contemporary artists' publishing as artistic practice, including chapters on Hardworking Goodlooking, Martine Syms's *Dominica* Publishing, and Bidoun, see Kayla Romberger, Gee Wesley, Nerissa Cooney, Lauren Downing, and Ricky Yanas, eds., *Publishing as Practice* (Los Angeles / Philadelphia: Inventory Press / Ulises Press, 2019).

27 "About Us," Cassandra Press, accessed February 22, 2023, <https://cassandrapress.org/About-us>.

28 Judith F. Rodenbeck, *Radical Prototypes: Allan Kaprow and the Invention of Happenings* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014).

Christian Xatrec Interviews Dick Higgins

“Christian Xatrec Interviews Dick Higgins” is an excerpt from a conversation that took place over the phone and via fax between Xatrec and Higgins during fall 1993. An edited and condensed version of the interview appeared as an article entitled “Dick Higgins: Avant-Garde Publishing Venture” in art press, no. 188 (February 1994): 16–19.

Christian Xatrec: It seems that all the texts on the history of the subject tend to consider Cage’s class at the New School for Social Research between 1957 and 1960 as the place-in-time most instrumental in bringing about some of the most radical currents of the period: firstly, certain word pieces which prefigured concept art (although the term had not been coined yet by Henry Flynt, George Brecht did one of the earliest word pieces considered by Flynt to be concept art prefigurations); secondly, happenings (Allan Kaprow attended

Cage’s class in 1957); thirdly, Fluxus (it has now been well documented that it was Jackson Mac Low and yourself who introduced Maciunas to the New York avant-garde at that time, an introduction without which Fluxus would never have seen the light of day); and finally, the concept of “intermedia,” which you formulated in 1966 and which is inseparable from the very idea and being of Something Else Press [hereafter SEP].

Dick Higgins: Actually, at the time I attended Cage’s class I was also studying with the composer Henry Cowell, Cage’s own teacher. And Henry constantly used the term *event* to describe the discrete elements of any composition.

As for Flynt, though he coined the term *concept art*, what he thinks about Brecht related only to his own work. Surely Brecht did the most with “event” as a principle. Events in Brecht’s parlance could be

microcosms which happened, sure, but also included microcosms which existed. The implications of this were enormous.

Kaprow's evolution from painter and collagist through assembling and environment artist to "happener," that could well have happened even if he had never met Cage. Probably attending those classes gave him the courage to follow his work on to its natural conclusion, more than providing him with a theoretical basis for it.

Mac Low and myself, but also Richard Maxfield, took Maciunas around New York and introduced him to the people whom we thought were doing the most interesting things—La Monte Young, Ray Johnson, and a dozen or so others. Maciunas was more knowledgeable about Renaissance and early Turkic art than about modern art.

The term *intermedia* comes from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who worked with it in 1814.¹ I developed it myself in looking for the common ground among visual (concrete) poetry, happenings, events, sound poetry, and the other things of that sort which were important to us then. I was the first who used the term in print in modern times, and that was in 1966. The idea was "in the air" by then, and if I hadn't used it, someone else would have. However, in 1958–1960 it was still in the future.

Christian Xatrec: There seems to be a controversy about the name you initially chose for the publishing

house you were about to start, before you told Alison Knowles about it, and she suggested calling it "something else." The more common version is that your initial name for it was "Shirtsleeves Press." Another version is that you wanted to call it "Fluxus Annex."

Dick Higgins: Both seem to be true. I have no recollection of wanting to call it "Fluxus Annex," but some correspondence of mine has been found in which I proposed the name. I guess I must have considered that possibility, probably between the time Alison suggested "Something Else Press," and, say, a week or so later, when I began to tell people what I had decided to do. I must have rejected "Fluxus Annex" along with "Bell Press" and perhaps others.

Christian Xatrec: This point brings to light first of all the very reason which led you to engage in the "SEP adventure," because Maciunas did not, as he said he would, publish your *Jefferson's Birthday/Postface* book, and secondly, the open split which occurred between you and Fluxus, because of that decision. Could you expand on that point?

Dick Higgins: I had been complaining for some time that Maciunas's publications were inexpensive to produce only as long as we had time to do the work ourselves, and that problems would develop as soon as we began

to produce larger quantities. In Maciunas's formats the works would not be able to circulate widely. So I decided to take over what was not his priority, namely the publication of other kinds of books, books which could, in fact, be sold beside the vegetable counter in food cooperatives. If I considered the name "Fluxus Annex," it was surely to expand Fluxus into the second area, not to dispute the "leadership" of Fluxus with Maciunas.

For me to attempt what Maciunas did, organizing a group, would have led to a total disaster. My difficulties with Maciunas came later, over the Stockhausen *Originale* production in 1975,² when Flynt, on the grounds of "cultural imperialism," persuaded Maciunas and some Fluxpeople to picket that production in which others of our colleagues appeared. I felt this was a mistake, and furthermore that Flynt's ultraleftist positions were too utopian. Maciunas took umbrage at my unwillingness to go along with himself and Flynt. It was only then that he accused me of "founding a rival organization," namely my press, forgetting that he was our group chairperson but not our leader. Fluxus almost collapsed over that one. I think Maciunas was thinking metaphorically of the various groups and political parties in the Soviet Union of the 1920s. My focus was more concrete, there were too many books that needed to be brought out. Of course, I loved Maciunas's newspapers and the *Fluxkits* and

the first *Flux Year Box*. Those were perfect as they were. I saw myself as doing the books and Maciunas the boxes.

Christian Xatrec: In 1966 you published your "Intermedia" essay. Did the publication of this text modify in any way your vision of the SEP? Or was it, on the contrary, the Press itself which, in some empirical way, influenced it?

Dick Higgins: It's very clever of you to see the second of those possibilities. Many of my friends assumed that the idea of intermedia came to me and then I sat around looking for intermedial work to publish. No, the SEP got its name in late 1963 or early 1964. But when I decided to start it, I was having a rough time verbalizing just what kind of work I wanted to make available first and what it had in common. Just to call it all *experimental* or *avant-garde* would have raised more questions than it solved. But, once I used my term, *intermedia*, to tie my goals into a whole, it also led to my ability to decide what *not* to publish. For example, I was friends with many pop artists. It could have been politically helpful and commercially successful to bring out works in those areas. But those are not intermedial fields. Others could do those books as well as I.

Christian Xatrec: In your "Intermedia" essay you take a more general stand than Fluxus. I'm referring here to Fluxus as defined

by Maciunas in his manifesto as some sort of “Duchampian/Cagean vaudeville gag.” In essence the intermedia concept encompassed at a theoretical level the whole Fluxus activity. Yet you stayed involved in Fluxus after you wrote the essay. How did you manage to reconcile the two?

Dick Higgins: I would never have become an artist if I did not think that what I did could be offered to a very large number of people rather than simply being for a clique. I enjoyed Maciunas’s handmade publications, as I have said, but I could see that if he did things only his way, they would wind up for a just few favored people rather than part of our commonality of experience.

Second, that so-called “Fluxus Manifesto” was signed only by George himself along with a handful of the Fluxpeople.³ For the rest of us it represented a commitment to historical distortion and to cliquishness; in fact, Maciunas seemed to agree, and I would challenge *anyone* to find some place in his correspondence or elsewhere where the more mature Maciunas of, say, 1966, accepts that manifesto as a statement of Fluxus. That’s why he never typed it up into a “fair copy” or printed it. He made up that manifesto because, by analogy with the artistic groups of the 1920s and the Soviet ones of the same time, he felt any cultural group needed one.

Thirdly, I think the manifesto reflects George’s very shallow body

of information on historical materials of the twentieth century; he knew earlier materials better. He was not familiar with Western European and US materials from the 1910-to-1955 period. He should have defined his ludic version of Fluxus as “Cagean/Keatonean/hyper-Dada games.” But I think he didn’t know Keaton’s films, and Maciunas’s knowledge of actual Dada materials was not broad. His self-image for Fluxus was simplistic and drew excessively on the early Soviet models. With the overall idea of intermedia, on the other hand, I could see rather clearly how what we were doing as well as other intermedial works of the past fit into the overall view—in microcosm (Fluxus and the intermedial art worlds of the time) and in macrocosm (worldview and social and historical views). This is why that text seemed relevant to its readers, why it is still in print today.

You ask how I managed to reconcile the two. I did so by arguing that *intermedia* applies to some but not all of the larger world and is therefore a valid part of it, that Fluxus is its logical encapsulation.

Of course, I could have taken a philosophical tack in my essay, could have argued for the logical validity of intermedia as a form of dialectical interaction among previously known categories, but while this might have satisfied the professionals and served a heuristic function in academia, I instead hoped to appeal to the lay reader, the “free receiver” in hermeneutic terminology.

Christian Xatrec: How do you see the contrast between the radicality of the SEP content and the apparent conformity of its forms? Was this a deliberate, strategic decision to allow the avant-garde to infiltrate the establishment? Or was it an aesthetic decision on your part?

Dick Higgins: If you want to reach a large public in order to escape from the avant-garde, you must speak the language of that public and must let books resemble the objects with which store people and salesmen are already familiar.

As for the question of “infiltrating the establishment,” that is, I think, a misunderstanding of what constitutes any establishment (and there is *always* an establishment in any cultural field). In capitalist societies an establishment is not a self-constituted closed circle devoted to keeping outsiders out. Rather it is a circle of professionals chosen by market forces and only in a lesser way by the prestige of selection by peers, and it constitutes the set of writers, organizers, and opinion leaders whose work and thoughts can be drawn on dependably in order to achieve fashion or prosperity. The mass publication or media draws on this establishment because it is dependable—“good copy”—while the public receives its productions in order to be “in the know.” But this establishment *cannot perpetuate itself*—it always shifts because of the shift of inputs to it and the changing relation of marketing forces.

Thus, you cannot “infiltrate the establishment” for any length of time but can only act as *if*, as if you were part of the establishment yourself, and then you will be tested by some who see what you have done and you may be found to be as valid as the agreed-upon establishment. That is why my “Intermedia” article was presented in the form of a newsletter mailed out to some three thousand people. It empowered them by giving them a tool for understanding a body of work of which they knew little, and thus they saw me, for however brief a time, as a potential part of the establishment.

Christian Xatrec: The SEP went bankrupt in 1974. Yet its importance never ceased to increase. Its influence on “artist’s books” (artworks designed for publication in traditional book formats) has been discussed at length. A few important exhibitions of the SEP have been mounted. How do you explain this recent turnaround? Was the SEP simply too far ahead of its time? Does its theoretical and aesthetic discourse still remain alive in today’s global context?

Dick Higgins: I left the SEP in 1973 because I was exhausted by constantly having to raise funds to publish. Also, I was torn between my wish to do my own art and my role as publisher. I felt a responsibility to our authors and the workers at the SEP itself. I could barely support myself. All this led to medical

problems. I certainly didn't want the SEP to collapse. I chose a team of, I thought, capable people to carry it on. But they confused the pleasure of enjoying one's fellow workers socially with the need to survive. So they split up. The business manager left and the editor, who was then left in charge of business, refused to raise money to do books and to carry on.

Thus, the reason it collapsed was not because of a lack of receptivity on the part of the establishment of the time. In fact, we had been tentatively added to a modest corner of the establishment and it was potentially a larger one. But the attention given to the SEP was not sudden. The first book about the Press, Hugh Fox's *An Analytical Checklist of the Something Else Press*, appeared at the end of 1974.⁴ The second, Peter Frank's *Something Else Press*, came out in 1983. The first museum show was in 1980 or 1981, and there have been perhaps twenty by now in museums and galleries. In other words, the Press

collapsed not because of a lack of public receptivity but *in spite of it*.

However, the ending of the SEP in 1974 was not entirely a bad thing. It left the Press as a manageable conceptual model for other presses. Had it carried on and done not ninety-seven books but two hundred, it would have been a sort of fluke among publishers rather than a model small press.

Its message would also have been diluted over the passage of time. In fact, by the late 1960s, we had begun to publish innovative works which were not intermedial in any way and we even brought out a couple of nature books which weren't even art (one on gardening and one on wild mushrooms). Had we continued in this direction, it would have been hard to see the SEP as a model of anything except "a small press that made good." Thus, paradoxically, I think, the relevance of the SEP today is greater than it would have been if we had carried on up to the present.

¹ Coleridge first used the term *intermedium* in 1818, rather than 1814; see "Lecture III: The Troubadours, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Pulci, Chaucer, Spenser," delivered on February 3, 1818, in Henry Nelson Coleridge, ed., *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London: William Pickering, 1836), 79–97.

² The production that Higgins references here took place in April 1964, not in 1975. See "Karlheinz Stockhausen," in Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus Codex* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1988), 490.

³ The Fluxus documents Maciunas dubbed manifestos were not signed by anyone, not even Maciunas.

⁴ Fox published a long article on Something Else Press entitled "An Analytical Checklist of Books from Something Else Press." It appeared in the magazine *Small Press Review* in March 1974.

Something I

New

ART. PLANNED

Else Press,

York Nice Co

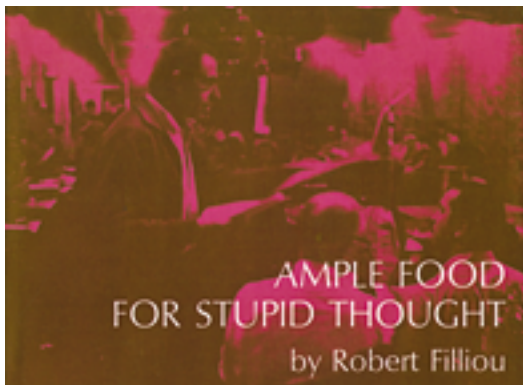
FOR APRIL PROD

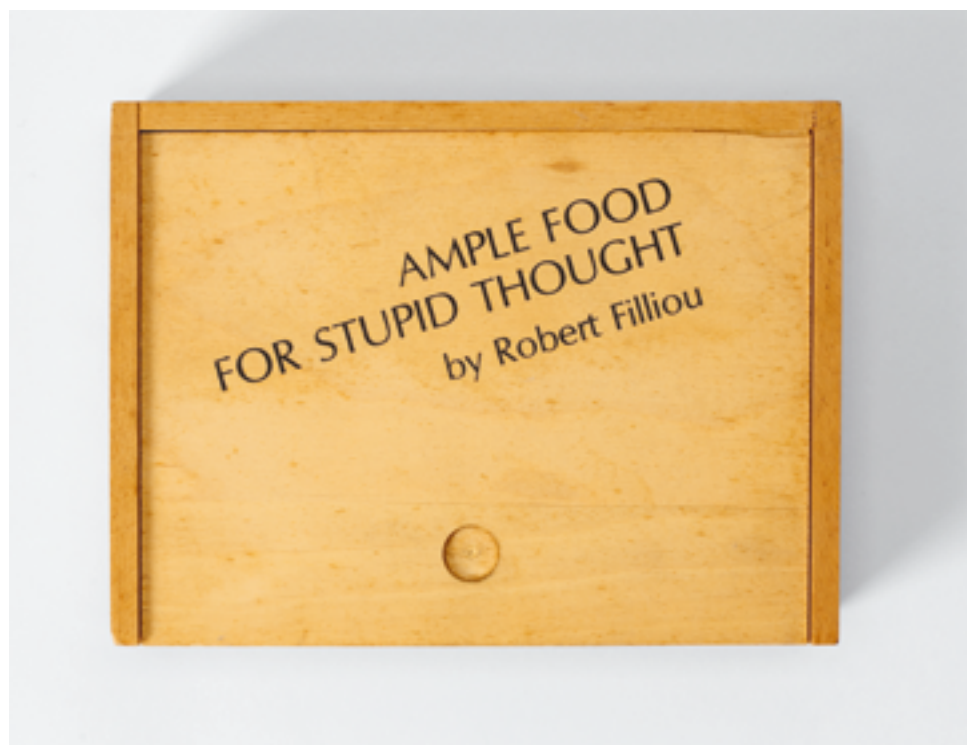
Ample Food for Stupid Thought

Written by Filliou, the well-known artist and poet, and one of France's only experimenters, the book consists of apparently pointless questions which lead in fact to highly poetic speculations. It was originally conceived as a set of postcards to be sent to friends, and is available in this format as well as in nondepletable normal book form.

The Arts of the New Mentality Catalogue
1967-1968, New York, Something Else
Press, 1969

Robert Filliou
*Ample Food for Stupid
Thought*, 1965







it's better with one
of them off, isn't it?

Dear George, tell Marion,
it is great having the
Fillins with us at 288;
We wish you two were in
the basement, and Daniel
on the roof.
George, please change the
enclaved print because the
I'd like you to be present in
the Great Gallery Section of the
Big Book.

Love pl 10/67

from AMPLE FOOD FOR STUPID THOUGHT
by Robert Fillian

INVITATION EVENT

I live in Villefranche-sur-Mer.
If you would like to visit, to see
pages from the Book of the Tumbler
on Fire, games, puzzles, scores and
other things, talk about what's going on,
have a pastis, look at the bag
whatever, you are invited to stop by
by getting in touch with
Francis Marino

who helps me keep track of things.

George Brecht

— NEOA MEN ON 'SEPER EISE PEER INC. NEW —

Realized just over a year ago
by Robert Fillian
by Marianne and Robert Fillian
and with
Donna and George Brecht

LA CEDILLE QUI SOURIT

12 rue de May
Villefranche-sur-Mer (Alpes-Maritimes)
France

Keeps collections of new work like MAT,
MAT/MOT, PLUS publications, something Else
Press, whatever is lively, and initiates
inventions, drawings, puzzles, games,
manual jewelry and other objects like
Marianne's "Sacs d'artiste...
STOP BY, or get in touch.

Place
54
Stamp
Here

There's a dog in my backyard
 every afternoon it goes
 arf, arf, is everybody in arf, arf,
 arf, arf, the same boat? arf, arf,
 I hear Allison, Eric and Albert M. are going to Topanga to do a
 waffle. There will be many people walking around and sitting
 under trees. People will make loud and weird and wonderful
 noises on instruments such as a piano with everything removed
 except the strings.
 Many of the people there will have small children.
 There will be no food. There will be a great deal of
 beauty. But not too much.
 Many objects will be around, dolls in windows, children,
 paintings, and everywhere the view. There will be no waffle.
 At least not while you're there.
 Your number is dignity. Walk with
 your head erect.
 No palm trees.
 And then Eric will be shipped back to Africa.
 Where do I put my idealist?
 Well not at the Cafe Go Go I can tell you
 arf, arf, arf, arf, arf, arf

From AMPLE FOOD FOR STUPID THOUGHT
 by Robert Fillow

7/18
 Dear Ray,

Wolf
 In your article on model Jean
 Shrimpton (The Impending Propor-
 tions of Jean Shrimpton, April)
 mention was made of an animal
 model—a Yorkshire terrier named
 Chowie—who appeared on Broad-
 way in Gypsy. To have this beauti-
 ful little four-pound dog referred to
 as a "goddamned hound" shocks and
 distresses us.
 We worked with Chowie for al-
 most three years and found her to be
 a meticulously groomed, intelligent,
 well-behaved little dog. Since she
 cannot back for herself we are doing
 it for her.
 MARIA KARNCHOVA
 Fiddler On The Roof
 JULIENNE MARIE
 Do I Hear A Waltz?
 ALICE PLATTEN
 Hello, Dolly!
 New York, N. Y.

SOMETHING ELSE, INC. NEW YORK

To—
 DICK
 HIGGINS
 238 West
 22 St.
 NYC, NY

I will
 cry, I
 call
 you
 should
 ignore any possible relationship
 yours, Rick

Place
 5¢
 Stamp
 Here

Ray Johnson
 Postcard to Dick Higgins, c. 1965

Robert Filliou and I as children used to make
magenta on the Boulevard Malesherbes.

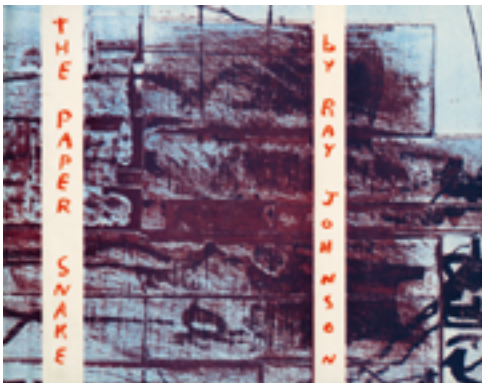
Ray Johnson

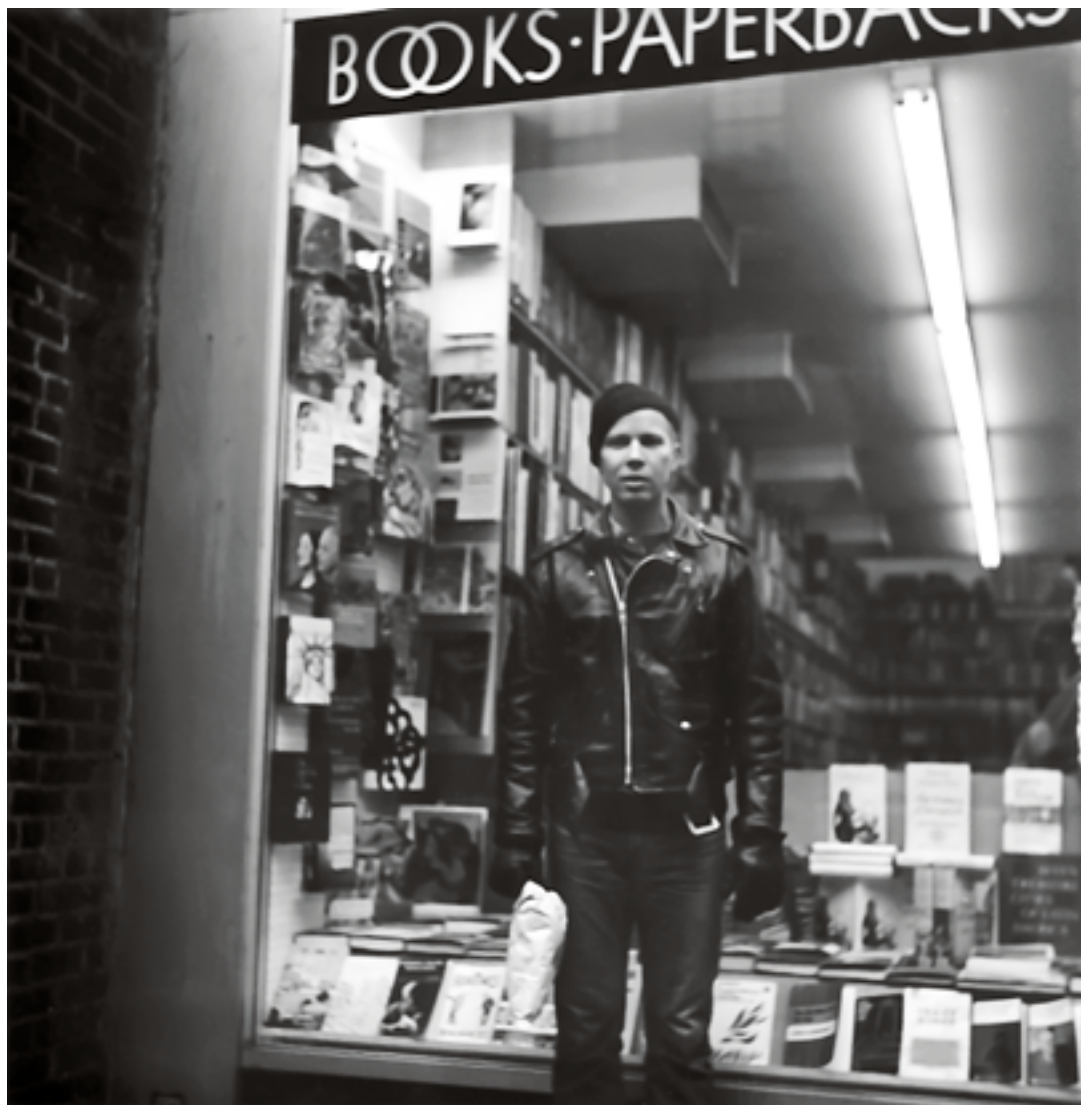
Ray Johnson
Untitled (Robert Filliou and I...), c. 1965

The Paper Snake

If everybody were as deft as light as Ray Johnson, the world might be a happier place. This book is a rare paean to whimsy. Reading it or looking at it or merely handling it will make even an old grump giggle, guffaw and start galvanating about. It does that to us. Johnson, founder of The New York Correspondence School of Art, gives you his poems, playets, drawings, letters, and imaginings. This sampling of his style and art makes for one of our most beautiful books.

Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974, New York, Something Else Press, 1973





Marie Tavroges Stilkind
Ray in New York, c. 1970
Bookshop window featuring
Higgins's *Jefferson's Birthday*/
Postface and Johnson's own
The Paper Snake



Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1964



Ray Johnson
LUCKY STRIKE, c. 1965



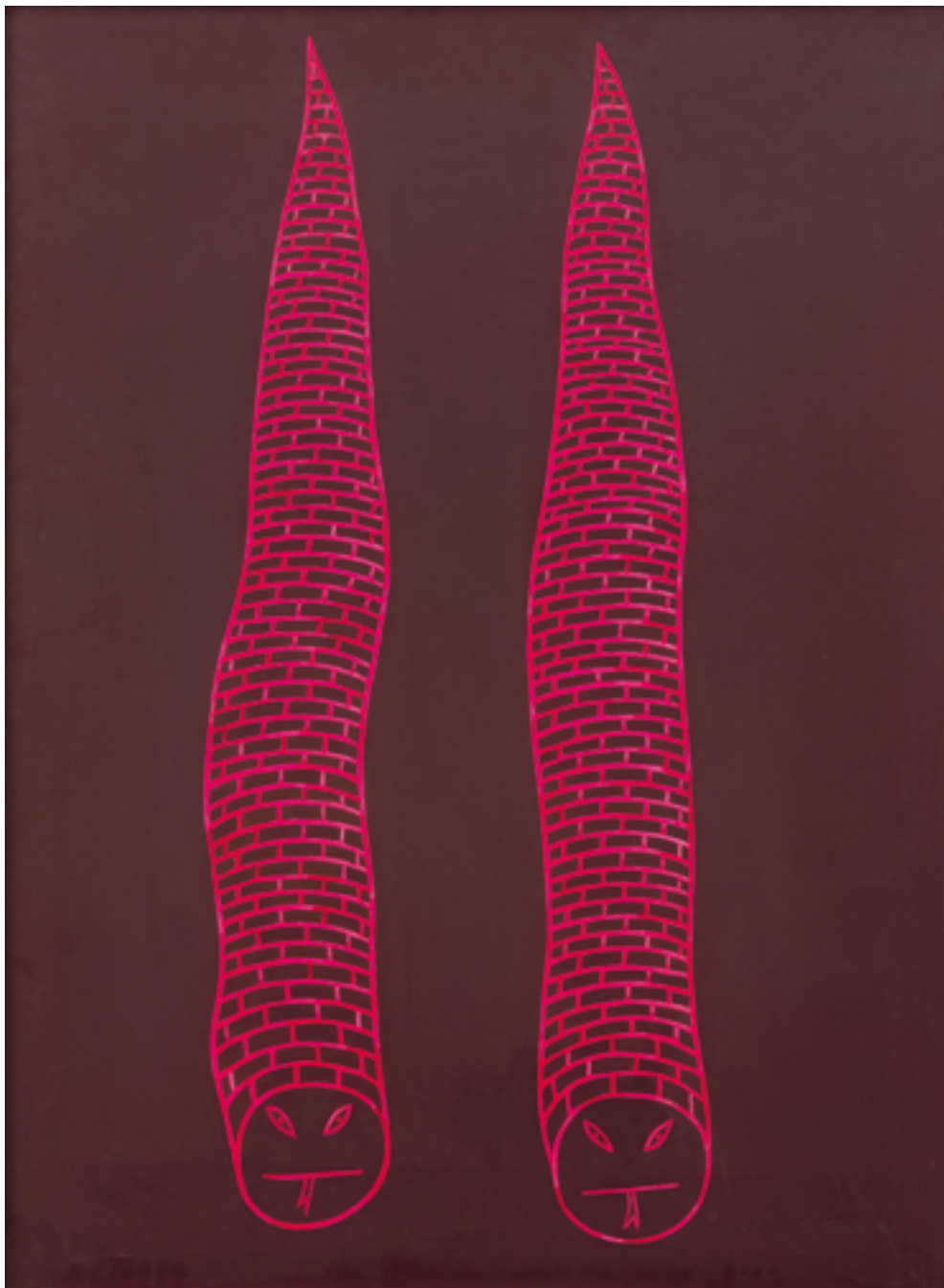
Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1954



Ray Johnson
Max Ernst (Carl Ruggles), c. 1960



Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1964



The Four Suits

The Four Suits is a collection of very different directions, intended to show the variety of work being done in the general field of happenings and happening-related work. Corner is represented by a collection of his musical events; Knowles has written a dictionary of the letter “T” which is mostly unperformable; Patterson’s performance pieces are psychological experiments along the lines of Zen koans; Schmit has contributed utterly classical, private pieces which are done for the benefit of the performer and best without any audience at all.

What to Look for in a Book—Physically & Catalogue
1965–66, New York, Something Else Press, 1966



The most extraordinary collection of
art experiments available—

THE FOUR SUITS

♥ **BENJAMIN PATTERSON**
♠ **PHILIP CORNER**
♣ **ALISON KNOWLES**
♦ **TOMAS SCHMIT**

We've had art as experience and art as
communication: now comes art as stimulus!

\$5.00

Available in New York from the 8th Street Bookshop,
17 West 8th Street, from the Gotham Book Mart, 41
West 47th Street, from Geo. Wittenborn & Co., 1018
Madison Avenue, and from your regular book dealer.

Prospectus of *The Four Suits*, 1965



Benjamin Patterson

Born in the nineteen-thirties in Pittsburgh...graduated from Northwestern University...became a composer and went to Germany with the U.S. Army as a bass viol player...settled in Cologne where his "Lemons" was first done...in Paris he began to incorporate psychology, science, music and theatre into his art...became known there for his "Lecture Demonstrations"...back in New York, performed in Yarn and Fluxus festivals...early in 1966 speaking at Douglass College...work fascinating to watch and endless to contemplate.



Philip Corner

Also lives and works in New York...in fall 1965 gave a concert series in Wales...his works well known in experimental circles all over the world...plays Charles Ives as nobody else does except Jim Tenney...composes music with graphic forms interpreted in many modes of activity...moving from very clear concept basis into theatre and dance...work rooted to a statement of intent at once utterly clear to performer and spectator alike, there it is, what is happening and why.



Alison Knowles

A New Yorker by birth...painter in the nineteen-fifties showing at the old Nonagon and Judson galleries...early in 1966 at the Fischbach...writes performance pieces...performed her own work with the Fluxus group in concerts abroad...author of the Bean Book...here she uses graphics to perform a work that someone else could do another way, perhaps as a happening using toys, bottles and old men...one is invited to try.



Tomas Schmit

We first met him several years ago emerging from an Amsterdam canal during a Nam June Paik performance...a German...a composer...a stevedore...an understudy at a Düsseldorf theatre...now writing work glorifying deliberately pointless activity...highly experimental artist...full of irony and questions, always to the point.

The Tart


Some happenings are improvisatory impressions in vaudeville-derived language, *The Tart*, however, belongs to the original node of happening, in which ideas and events were structured by collage procedures, but in which the forming of the work was based on the statement. As opposed to vaudeville-cum-gallery style, this type of performance requires extensive preparation to develop its impact, which in turn interacts with the nature and environment of the spectators and performances. This kind of work thrives in unorthodox, un-boxed settings.

Box 35, folder 8, Dick Higgins Archive, Northwestern University

Peter Moore

The Tart (photograph of performance venue), April 1965, NY





in a boxing ring—

The Tart

a happening
by Dick Higgins

starring Ay-o, Lette Eisenhauer and Florence Tarlow!
with a cast of dozens!

directed by the unique Gloria Graves!

also on the programme: *Solo for Florence and Orchestra and Celestials!*

at Sunnyside Garden Ballroom and Arena
44-36 Queens Boulevard (at 45th Street)

Saturday, April 17th, at 8:35 P.M.

Sunday, April 18th, at 4:00 P.M.

Tickets: \$2.00 and \$4.00

Reservations: WA 9-2699

Advance sales: Something Else Press, 360 5th Avenue, New York 10010

Dick Higgins
The Tart or Miss America,
announcement with portrait of
Lette Eisenhauer, 1965



The Something Else Press, Inc.

New York Nice Cologne

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DICK HIGGINS' HAPPENING, THE TART, PLANNED FOR APRIL PRODUCTION

Happenings, due to their anti-theatre nature, often appear in unlikely places. The latest is Sunnyside Gardens, Queens' mammoth boxing arena, where The Tart by Dick Higgins will play two performances on Easter/Passover weekend, April 17 and 18.

Anti-theatre is not to be equated with anti-theatrical. The Tart promises some exciting and unconventional effects within its controversial "chance" framework. The cast includes many avant-garde artists, among them the Japanese Ay-O and veteran happenings performer and pop artist Lettie Eisenhower. Direction is in the hands of another well known pop artist, Gloria Graves. This is indeed a veritable spectacular among happenings, with a large cast performing in space that seats over 1200 people!

The production is being sponsored by The Something Else Press, publisher of Dick Higgins' book, Postface, a history of happenings and related events. Two other happenings by Mr. Higgins will appear on the same program; their titles will be announced later.

Further details and reservations are available by calling 929-2699.



160 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

Dick Higgins
The Tart or Miss America
press release, 1965

PROGRAM
Three Happenings
by Dick Higgins
Sunnyside Garden Ballroom and Wrestling Arena
April 17th and 18th, 1965

THE TART (6/62)
from Jefferson's Birthday

The Chemist- Robert Riales
The Drinking Man- James Harrison
Mr. Miller- Mary-Ann Raphael
The Prophet- Meredith Monk, Lennox Raphael, and Florence Tarlow
The Special Performer- Ay-o, assisted by Joe Jones, Kawagami, and
Alison Knowles
The Steelworkers- Al Hansen
The Tart- Lotte Eisenhauer
The Yogi- Philip Corner
The Yoking Man- Richard Antispaugh

Directed by Gloria Graves
Properties and Situations by Ay-o
American Dice by Alison Knowles

INTERMISSION

SOLO FOR FLORENCE AND ORCHESTRA (3/61)
from One Hundred Plays

Florence Tarlow with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Broadway
Opera Company

CELESTIALS for Export of Klintberg (11/62-4/63)
from Jefferson's Birthday

Lotte Eisenhauer, Al Hansen, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, Meredith
Monk, Phoebe Neville, Lennox Raphael, and Mary-Ann
Raphael; directed by Gloria Graves

Peter Moore
Photographs of
The Tart, 1965



Alison Knowles
Die, 1965
(view from three
different angles)

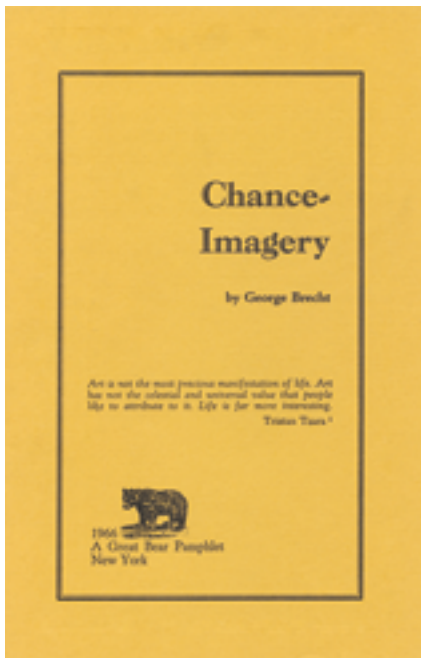


Chance Imagery

In 1957, when this article was written, I had only recently met John Cage and had not yet seen clearly that the most important implications of chance lay in his work rather than in Pollock's. Not could I have foreseen the resolution of the distinction between choice and chance which was to occur in my own work.

We are eight years farther on the spiral, and I prefer work to re-work. "Chance-Imagery" is presented in the form in which it was originally written.

George Brecht, "November 1965, Afternote," in *Chance Imagery*, New York: Something Else Press, 1966







Suzanne Duchamp
*Readymade malheureux de Marcel
Duchamp* (Marcel Duchamp's "Unhappy
Readymade"), c. 1919–1920



Jackson Pollock
Free Form, 1946

UPPER TRIGRAM ▶	Ch'ien	Chên	K'an	Kên	K'un	Sun	Li	Tui
LOWER TRIGRAM ▼	☰	☷	☵	☶	☴	☲	☱	☳
Ch'ien ☰	1	34	5	26	11	9	14	43
Chên ☷	25	51	3	27	24	42	21	17
K'an ☵	6	40	29	4	7	59	64	47
Kên ☶	33	62	39	52	15	53	56	31
K'un ☴	12	16	8	23	2	20	35	45
Sun ☲	44	32	48	18	46	57	50	28
Li ☱	13	55	63	22	36	37	30	49
Tui ☳	10	54	60	41	19	61	38	58

Key for Identifying the Hexagrams

64 hexagrams from Richard Wilhelm
and Cary F. Baynes *I-Ching, or The
Book of Changes*, 1950

5000	.496-	1.863	.354	2.206	.922-	.117	1.400-	.884	.872-	2.201
5001	1.127	1.865-	.967	.171	.160	1.761-	.446-	.487	1.066	1.220
5002	.068-	.162	1.884	.512-	.364-	.307-	.521	.734-	.063-	.991-
5003	.415-	.584-	1.239	.876-	1.546-	.441-	.492	3.976-	1.361-	.544
5004	.617-	1.957	1.734	.643-	.391	.795	.669-	.126-	2.108-	1.233-
5005	.100	.788-	1.168	.518-	.546	.642-	.856	.117-	.793	1.035-
5006	2.016	1.119	1.806-	.173-	2.527-	.250	.801-	.619	1.195-	1.161-
5007	1.066	1.624-	.823	.458	.670	.772	1.150	.644-	.196	.232
5008	1.422-	.348	.196	.620-	.741-	.621-	.948-	1.194	.311-	1.302-
5009	1.081-	.770	.644	.632-	1.331	.267	1.070	.640-	1.229	.238-
5010	1.261	.026	1.605	.909	.372	1.264-	.874	1.044	1.658-	.250-
5011	.829-	1.388-	1.362-	1.186-	1.222-	.331	.853-	.602-	1.006	.276
5012	1.103-	2.338	.655	.642-	.448-	.519	1.166	1.074	.552-	.570-
5013	.479	1.066	.017-	.502-	.515-	1.283-	.325	2.928	.120-	.482-
5014	.292	.173-	1.294-	.440-	1.355-	.895-	1.531	1.126-	.155-	.509
5015	.579	1.149-	.099	.338	1.303-	.498	.331	1.183-	.371	.357
5016	2.451	.158-	1.104	.195	1.118	1.321	.280-	.345	1.388	1.205
5017	1.338-	.136-	.972	.354	1.137-	.006-	.468-	.159-	.256	1.145-
5018	.983	.024-	1.264	.741-	.099	.088	.215-	.787	.993-	1.101-
5019	.154	.028	.085-	.459-	1.161	1.825	1.405	2.785	.295-	1.827-
5020	1.089-	.241	.038	.644	.129	1.717	.739-	.767	.937	.082-
5021	1.064	1.552	.746-	.760-	.901	.275-	1.230-	.065-	.056	2.438
5022	1.502	.346	.564-	.516	.277-	1.521	2.360-	.513	.520	.904-
5023	1.645-	1.799	.559	1.383	1.019-	1.074	3.022	.272	.203	1.218
5024	.535	.665-	.181	1.127-	.107-	.990	.501-	.306	.540	.721-
5025	2.090	1.937-	.028	.144-	.911-	.194	.235-	.398-	.098-	1.072-
5026	.583-	1.230	1.731	.789-	1.557	.124	.177	.994-	.679	2.173
5027	1.591-	.257	.071-	.562	1.322-	1.347	1.216-	.063-	1.990	.882-
5028	.869	.242-	.421	.656	.821	1.852	2.874-	.482-	.482	.089
5029	.260-	.691-	.716-	.359	.463	.852	.993	1.855-	1.313-	.436
5030	.269-	.754-	.595	.365	1.180	2.365	1.415-	.523-	.461	1.090
5031	.148	.867	.534	.258	.207	1.237	.376-	.287-	1.372	2.044
5032	.406-	1.063-	.605	1.180	.991	.368-	.251-	.503	.870	.295-
5033	1.360	.059	.139-	.576-	1.286-	.173	.217-	.256-	1.835	.612
5034	.025	.759	1.404-	.145	.098	.163	.319-	.206	.247-	1.621
5035	.028-	.681-	.209	1.084-	.886-	.367	1.374	1.101-	1.651-	.743
5036	.678-	.054-	1.491	1.066-	.754	.822	.095	.229	.028-	1.713
5037	.015-	1.798	.178-	.208-	.578-	.271	1.294-	.246-	1.030-	.149-
5038	.159	.642-	1.335	2.266-	.911-	.851	.345-	.021-	2.145-	1.518-
5039	.042-	.296-	1.321-	.386-	1.105-	.494	1.033	1.055-	.118	2.159-
5040	.027	.124-	2.501-	.825-	1.594-	1.424-	.661-	.698-	1.029-	.042-
5041	.170-	.587-	.571	.570	1.062	.705	.249	.251-	2.173-	.256
5042	2.678-	1.300	.938-	.385-	.692	.403-	.835	.781	.693-	.203
5043	.144	.075	.114-	1.669	1.151-	.198-	.382	1.477	.162-	.538-
5044	.265-	.718	.304-	1.739-	1.257-	.142-	.898-	.257	.871	.516
5045	1.983-	.143-	1.211-	.218-	2.575	.340	.442-	.522-	1.197	1.365
5046	1.460	.674-	.320	.203	.639-	1.420	.975	.657-	1.281-	.294
5047	2.212	1.221	1.739	.171	.651	.320	.121-	1.248-	.937-	.096
5048	1.705	1.173	1.074	.057-	.027	.103-	.639-	.882	2.328-	1.080
5049	.464	.496	.720-	.887-	.226-	1.028-	.341	1.191	.596	.386

The Big Book

Alison Knowles's *The Big Book* is going to Europe to the Frankfurt International Book Fair in the autumn of 1967. It is four feet by eight feet, is fully automated, furnished and electrified, and must be finished once it is begun. Actually, it's only a study for the *Big Big Book*, an architectural phenomenon forty feet wide and eighty feet high.

Something Else Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 6, August 1966

Peter Moore
The *Big Book* by
Alison Knowles at
the Something Else
Gallery, 238 West 22nd
Street, New York, 1966



Dick's 100 Amusements

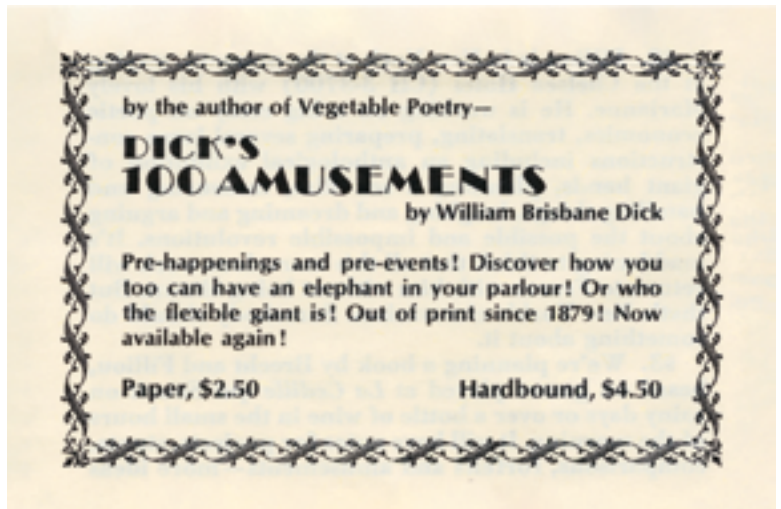
We've tackled a new kind of book for us, which is antecedents of happenings and events in 19th Century Americana, by reissuing William Brisbane Dick's masterpiece, *Dick's 100 Amusements*, reproduced in all its battered type glory, with its many crazy steel engravings and whimsical fancies, from the (very rare) edition of 1879. It is not so much a book to read as to share, and for this is absolutely unique.

Something Else Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 5, February 1967



September. We'll keep you posted how it shapes up.
§15. We've tackled a new kind of book for us, which is antecedents of happenings and events in 19th Century Americana, by reissuing William Brisbane Dick's masterpiece, **Dick's 100 Amusements**, reproduced in all its battered type glory, with its many crazy steel engravings and whimsical fancies, from the (very rare) edition of 1879. It is not so much a book to read as to share, and for this it is absolutely unique. See the ad on the facing page for the details.

§16. We note that the girl who appeared nude in



by the author of Vegetable Poetry—

**DICK'S
100 AMUSEMENTS**

by William Brisbane Dick

Pre-happenings and pre-events! Discover how you too can have an elephant in your parlour! Or who the flexible giant is! Out of print since 1879! Now available again!

Paper, \$2.50 Hardbound, \$4.50

The advertisement is enclosed in a decorative border of repeating floral motifs. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and regular fonts to highlight the title and author.

Dick's 100 Amusements blurb, 1967

Dick's 100 Amusements ad, 1967

The oration over, a clever trick may be performed for the amusement of the merry-makers, entitled

What's O'clock ?

Request any person to think of some hour of the day ; tell him to deduct it from twenty, and remember the remainder. You take out your watch, and inform him that you are going to count around on the dial, and that when you have counted the number corresponding with the remainder that he was to remember, he must stop you.

EXAMPLE :

Suppose he thought of five o'clock ; five taken from twenty leave fifteen remainder. You now count promiscuously (mentally, not aloud), pointing at each count with a pencil to one of the hours on the dial, but taking care at the eighth count to



FIG. 51.

point to the "Twelve," and thence in regular rotation backward to the left. When you come to the figure "Five" you will be stopped, as this will be the fifteenth count, corresponding to the

remainder *fifteen* which he was to remember. You will thus know that five o'clock was the hour thought of.

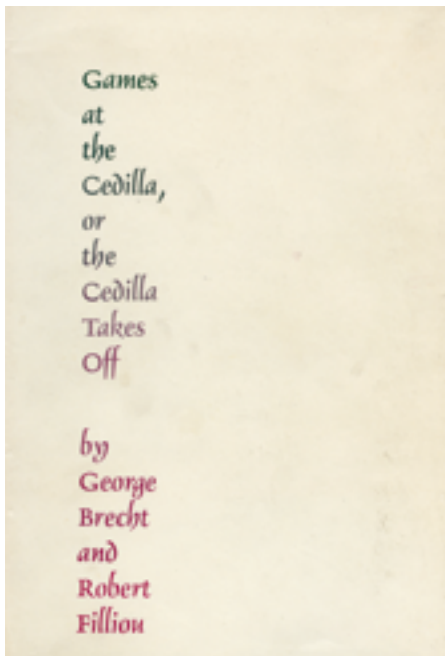
If this trick be repeated more than two or three times, it is well to vary the number from which the deduction is to be made. Thus, instead of deducting, as in the foregoing example, five from twenty, the person addressed may be told to deduct the hour thought of from eighteen; but as eighteen is only six more than twelve, you must make your *sixth* (not the eighth) promiscuous count be at figure "Twelve" on the dial. In the first example, with twenty, the eighth count was made at figure "Twelve" because twenty is *eight* more than twelve. If twenty-two be the number adopted, the *tenth* count must be made on figure "Twelve," twenty-two being *ten* more than twelve; and so on for any other number.

Games at the Cedilla

This is a slice of life such as Chekhov never imagines. Brecht and Filliou ran a shop in Villefranche-sur-Mer called “La Cedille qui Sourit” where they certainly did smile a lot, amusing themselves, their friends, and customers with puzzles, objects, games, poems, books, and what-have-you. “La Cedille qui Sourit permanently creates anything which has or has not been created,” they said, going so far as to try to get insured by Lloyd’s of London against their becoming prematurely senile. This is an hilarious journal of their aesthetic experiments.

Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974, New York, Something Else Press, 1973

Jacques Strauch
*Filliou and Brecht in front
of La Cédille (detail)*, 1966





(THE MYSTERY GAME) I
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
ART OF PAINTING

Take _____
(a colored material)

add to it (a material which dries)

and place it on _____
(a flat surface)

by _____
(an action)

THE MYSTERY GAME II
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
ART OF SCULPTURE

Take some _____
(a material)

~~and~~ and shape it by _____
(an action)

Take some _____
(a material)

and some _____
(a material)

and shape them by _____
(an action)

and _____
(an action)

Take some _____
(a material)

and some _____
(a material)

and some _____
(a material)

and shape them by
(an action)

ing, (an action)

and (an action)

ing.

THE MYSTERY GAME III
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
ART OF MUSIC

Since music has to do with
(anything) then if
you take a(n) (anything) and
an anything and put them together
you will get
music.

repeat four more times

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The way to get a laugh
out of

— ~~any~~ Brigitte Bardot

— Not getting a hard-on
when you thought you
might

— Robert Fillion

— Lyndon Johnson
Wrote Topper, Library of
Congress, D de Huggins
— George Brecht

Ce Jeu du Corps
(He or she) has something about the
body
and so ^{he can} _{she can} _____

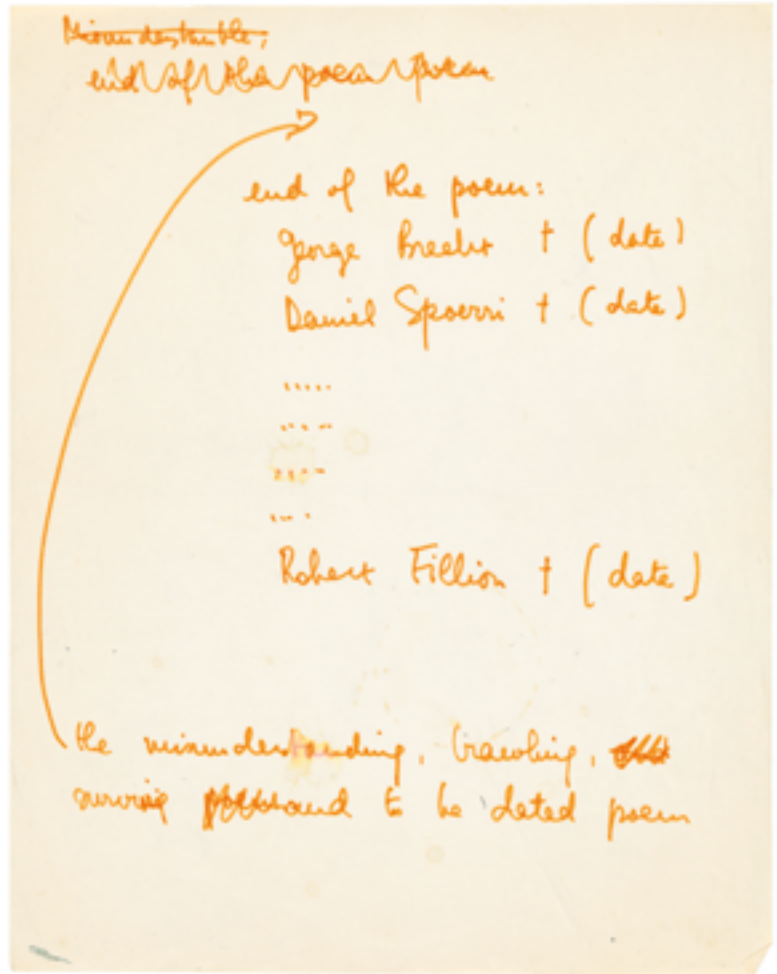
LE JEU DU RIRE

~~The~~

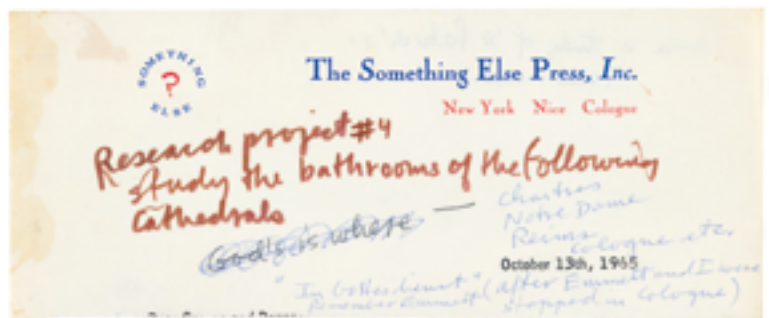
is to:

- move ~~it~~ ^{her} an inch forward
- look at it (repeat it) until it blurs
- laugh about ~~it~~ him
- have him illustrated by Tapon
- think of ~~it~~ ^{him} as a special kind of happyfort

George Brecht and
Robert Filliou
Handwritten
notes for "The
misunderstanding,
brawling, survival,
and to-be-dated
poem," c. 1966



George Brecht and
Robert Filliou
Handwritten notes
for "Research
project #4: study
the bathrooms
of the following
cathedrals," c. 1966





Robert Filliou (codirectors:
Georges Brecht, Bob Guiny)
*Movie Re-Invented. Hommage à
Méliès (prochainement sur cet
écran)*, 1968





Jacques Strauch
*La Cédille qui
sourit* (interior
view with AX wall
piece), 1966



Jacques Strauch
*La Cédille qui
sourit* (interior
view), 1966

Il y a toujours quelqu'un qui fait fortune
quelqu'un qui fait...

BANQUEROUTE

(nous en particulier)

La Cédille qui Sourit tourne encore la
page, et puisque...

La Fête est Permanente

annonce la réalisation prochaine de

THE ETERNAL NETWORK

manifestations, meanderings,
méditations, microcosms, macrocosms,
mixtures, meanings...

La Cédille qui Sourit, 12, Rue de May, Villefranche-s-Mer (a-m)

DIFFUSION ROBERT - 1968

George Brecht + R. Filliou, 5/68

George Brecht and Robert Filliou
Banqueroute/The Eternal Network, 1968

Coeurs volants

In the words of Alison Knowles:

Through Daniel Spoerri, the Something Else Press arranged to meet Marcel Duchamp. This screen print was preceded by a four by five color swatch showing two circles, one red, one blue. He selected this color swatch one day while we were having tea at his Tenth Street apartment in New York. There were eleven color swatches, each showing blue and red circles but in different intensities. He selected one and left it out on the table saying "Oh, that's it," I put the others in my briefcase and we kept talking. Teeny Duchamp walked by the table, saw the color swatch and said "Marcel, when did you do this?" He asked for a pencil, smiled and signed the color swatch.

Chris Thompson, *Felt: Fluxus, Joseph Beuys, and the Dalai Lama*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2011



Bill Wilson
*Alison Knowles with
Marcel Duchamp*, New
York City, 1967

Marcel Duchamp (silkscreen by Alison Knowles)
Coeurs volants (Fluttering Hearts), 1967



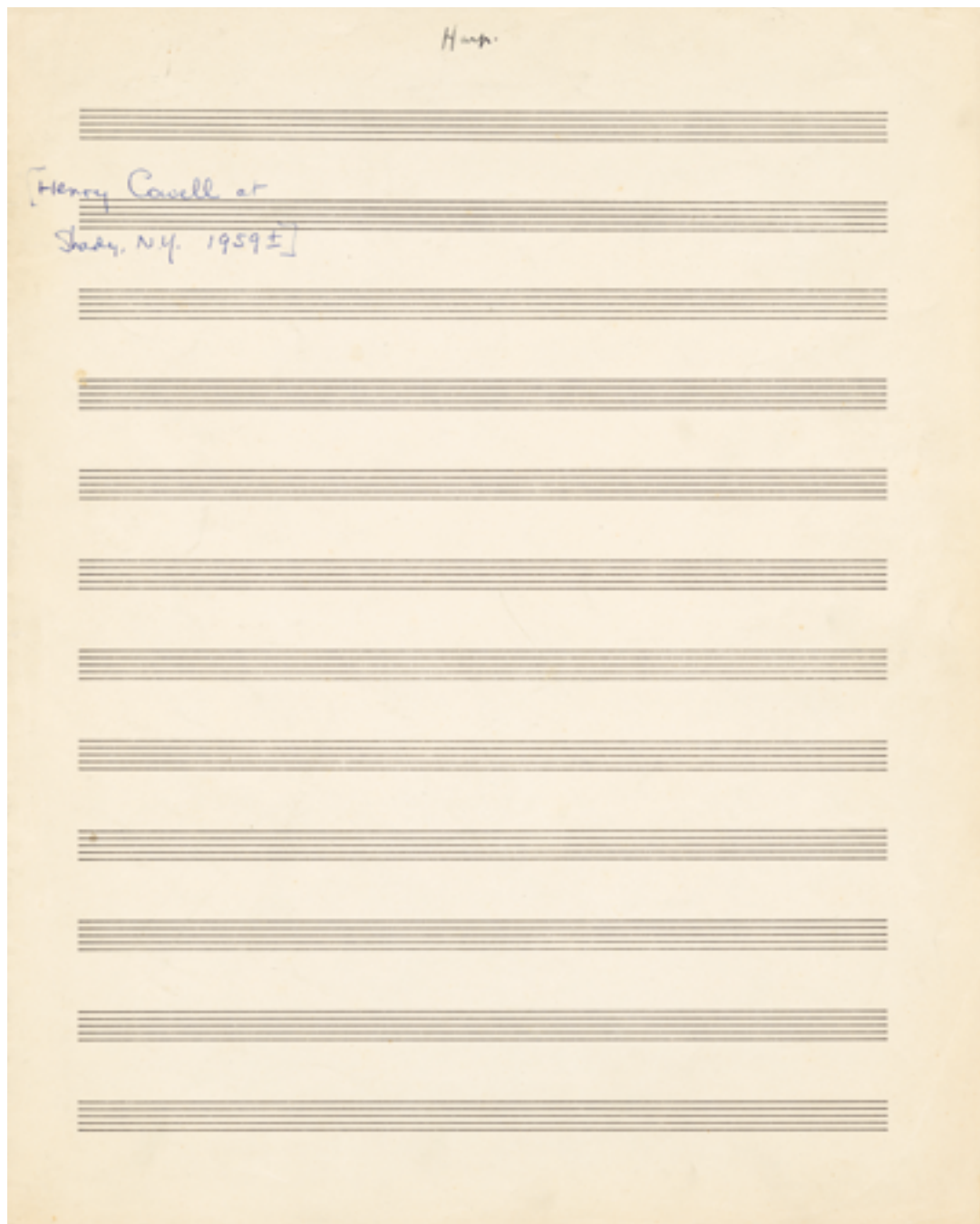
Notations

This is a compendium of sample of manuscripts by the more or less controversial composers of our time, edited by the most controversial of them all. A contemporary who's who of work instead of personalities, this is a must reference book.

The Arts of the New Mentality: Catalogue 1967-1968, New York, Something Else Press, 1968



Henry Cowell
Blank sheet with marginal
notations, n.d.



WHITE FOR GOVERNOR WALLACE

3 PERFORMERS
3 BOOKS
3 CANDLES

PERFORMERS SIT DOWN AND READ
SILENTLY, IN CANDLELIGHT. WHEN
A PERFORMER DISCOVERS THE WORD
WHITE HE BLOWS OUT HIS CANDLE
AND EXITS. PERFORMANCE ENDS
WHEN THE STAGE IS IN DARKNESS.

Emmett Williams
PARIS 1963

Emmett Williams
White for Governor Wallace, 1963



Albert A. M. Fine
Scale Piece for John Cage, c. 1966

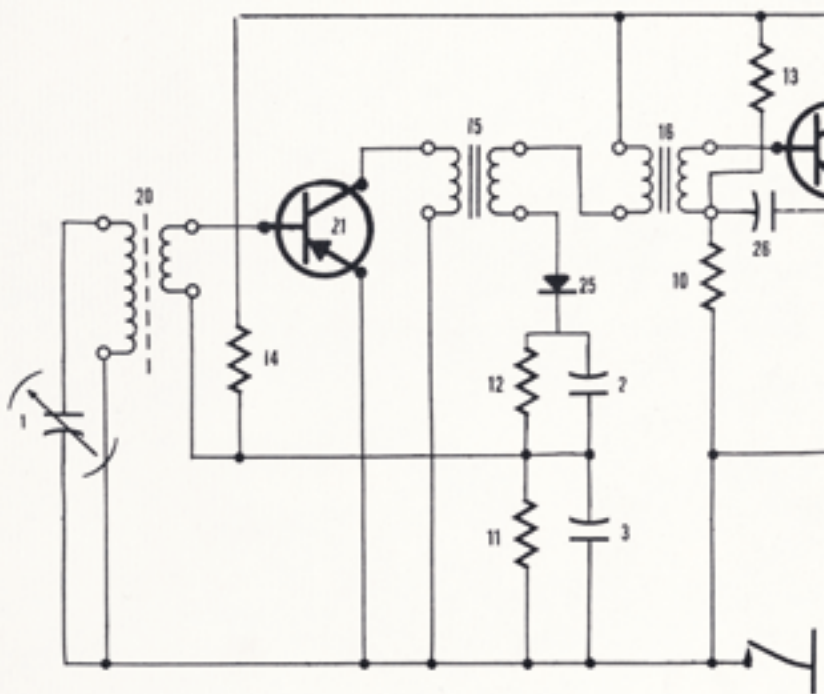
Ay-O'S Tactile List (Rev. 6.66)

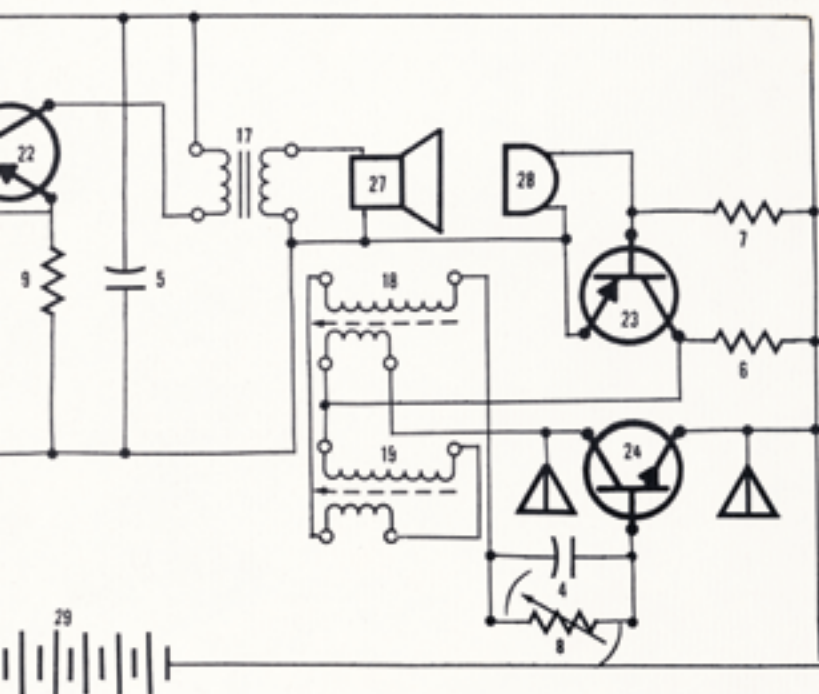
A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5
0000	0001	0002	0003	0004
A 6	A 7	A 8	A 9	A 10
0005	0006	0007	0008	0009
A 11	A 12	A 13	A 14	A 15
0010	0011	0012	0013	0014
A 16	A 17	A 18	A 19	A 20
0015	0016	0017	0018	0019
A 21	A 22	A 23	A 24	A 25
0020	0021	0022	0023	0024
A 26	A 27	A 28	A 29	A 30
0025	0026	0027	0028	0029
A 31	A 32	A 33	A 34	A 35
0030	0031	0032	0033	0034
A 36	A 37	A 38	A 39	A 40
0035	0036	0037	0038	0039
A 41	A 42	A 43	A 44	A 45
0040	0041	0042	0043	0044
A 46	A 47	A 48	A 49	A 50
0045	0046	0047	0048	0049
A 51	A 52	A 53	A 54	A 55
0050	0051	0052	0053	0054
A 56	A 57	A 58	A 59	A 60
0055	0056	0057	0058	0059
A 61	A 62	A 63	A 64	A 65
0060	0061	0062	0063	0064
A 66	A 67	A 68	A 69	A 70
0065	0066	0067	0068	0069
A 71	A 72	A 73	A 74	A 75
0070	0071	0072	0073	0074
A 76	A 77	A 78	A 79	A 80
0075	0076	0077	0078	0079
A 81	A 82	A 83	A 84	A 85
0080	0081	0082	0083	0084
A 86	A 87	A 88	A 89	A 90
0085	0086	0087	0088	0089
A 91	A 92	A 93	A 94	A 95
0090	0091	0092	0093	0094
A 96	A 97	A 98	A 99	A 100
0095	0096	0097	0098	0099
A 101	A 102	A 103	A 104	A 105
0100	0101	0102	0103	0104
A 106	A 107	A 108	A 109	A 110
0105	0106	0107	0108	0109
A 111	A 112	A 113	A 114	A 115
0110	0111	0112	0113	0114
A 116	A 117	A 118	A 119	A 120
0115	0116	0117	0118	0119
A 121	A 122	A 123	A 124	A 125
0120	0121	0122	0123	0124
A 126	A 127	A 128	A 129	A 130
0125	0126	0127	0128	0129
A 131	A 132	A 133	A 134	A 135
0130	0131	0132	0133	0134
A 136	A 137	A 138	A 139	A 140
0135	0136	0137	0138	0139
A 141	A 142	A 143	A 144	A 145
0140	0141	0142	0143	0144
A 146	A 147	A 148	A 149	A 150
0145	0146	0147	0148	0149
A 151	A 152	A 153	A 154	A 155
0150	0151	0152	0153	0154
A 156	A 157	A 158	A 159	A 160
0155	0156	0157	0158	0159
A 161	A 162	A 163	A 164	A 165
0160	0161	0162	0163	0164
A 166	A 167	A 168	A 169	A 170
0165	0166	0167	0168	0169
A 171	A 172	A 173	A 174	A 175
0170	0171	0172	0173	0174
A 176	A 177	A 178	A 179	A 180
0175	0176	0177	0178	0179
A 181	A 182	A 183	A 184	A 185
0180	0181	0182	0183	0184
A 186	A 187	A 188	A 189	A 190
0185	0186	0187	0188	0189
A 191	A 192	A 193	A 194	A 195
0190	0191	0192	0193	0194
A 196	A 197	A 198	A 199	A 200
0195	0196	0197	0198	0199



Ay-O
Tactile List, 1966

MAX-FEED





MAX NEUHAUS

modified Ballouper V97

Fantastic Architecture

Architects smile smugly, and talk about how marvelously the world could be designed. They sponsor dance groups and modern museums—okay, but then they say they're artists too. Not so, say Vostell and Higgins. As artists they're primitives, this is what artists do, and they proceed to make an anthology of artists of all kinds' ideas on space—musical, visual, environmental, dramatic, etc. The artists' work was orchestrated by Vostell visually, with textual substance provided by Higgins. And the results is the first book of the new architecture. Try it. You might like it. And you may very well live to see it.

Kurt Schwitters
Merzbau, 1933

Fantastic Architecture prospectus







Arthur Köpcke
Glass House from Outside, 1972

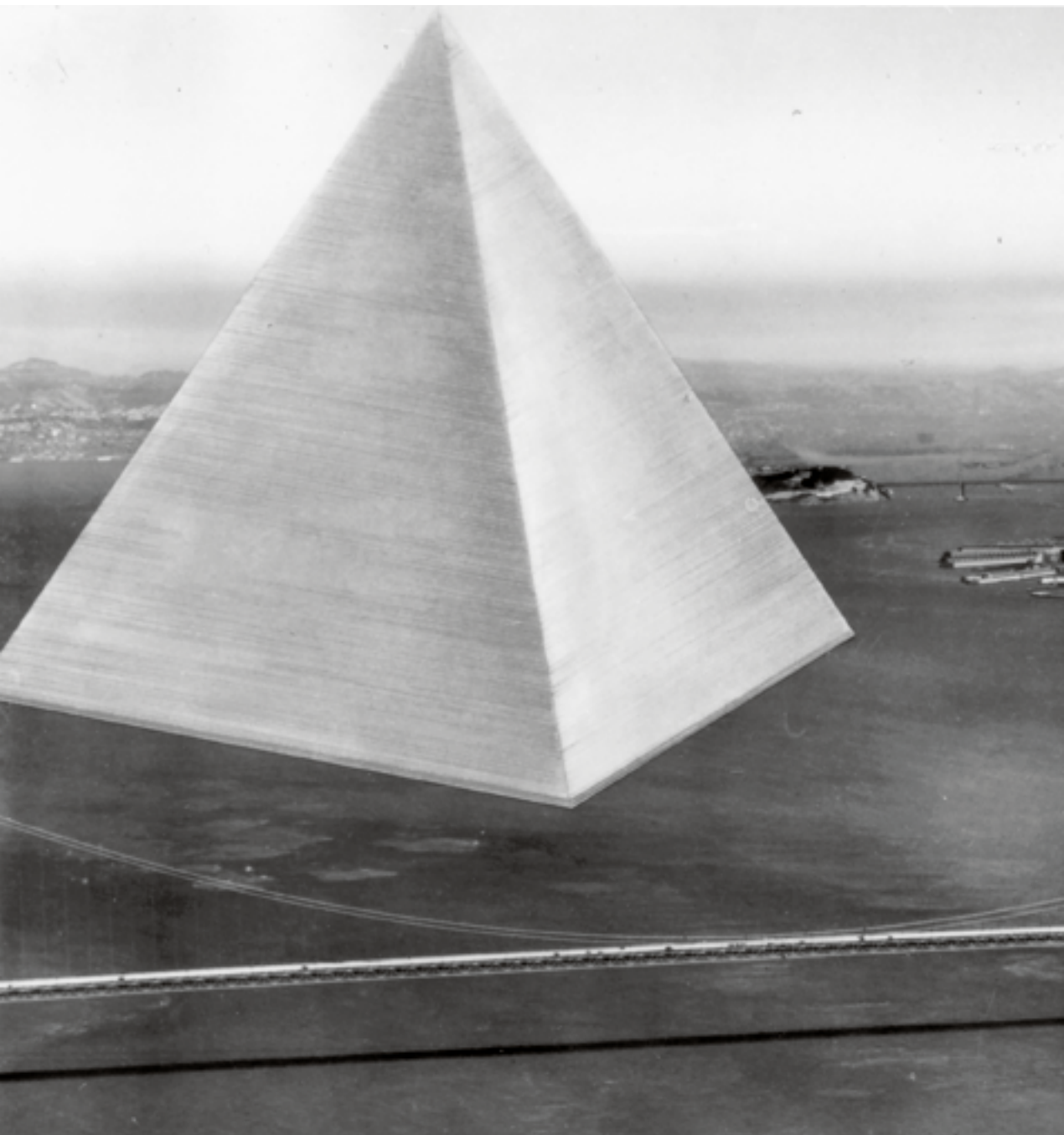




Claes Oldenburg
*Study for a Large Outdoor
Sculpture in the Form of a
Clothespin, 1972–1973*

Dear Dick,
Re: your project of fantastic ["unreal... made
without reference to reality, truth etc, - Webster's]
architecture - I am afraid there is no
such animal. It's a contradiction of terms.
Maybe you mean fantastic large sculpture.
Architecture is a process of solving very ?
real problems, not fooling around with
large abstract forms into which one can
walk into. Since I am an architect &
do not do sculpture I must decline this
kind offer of yours, Try Yoko Ono.
Best regards,
George.

George Maciunas's response to Dick
Higgins's invitation to submit a piece for
Fantastic Architecture, 1967

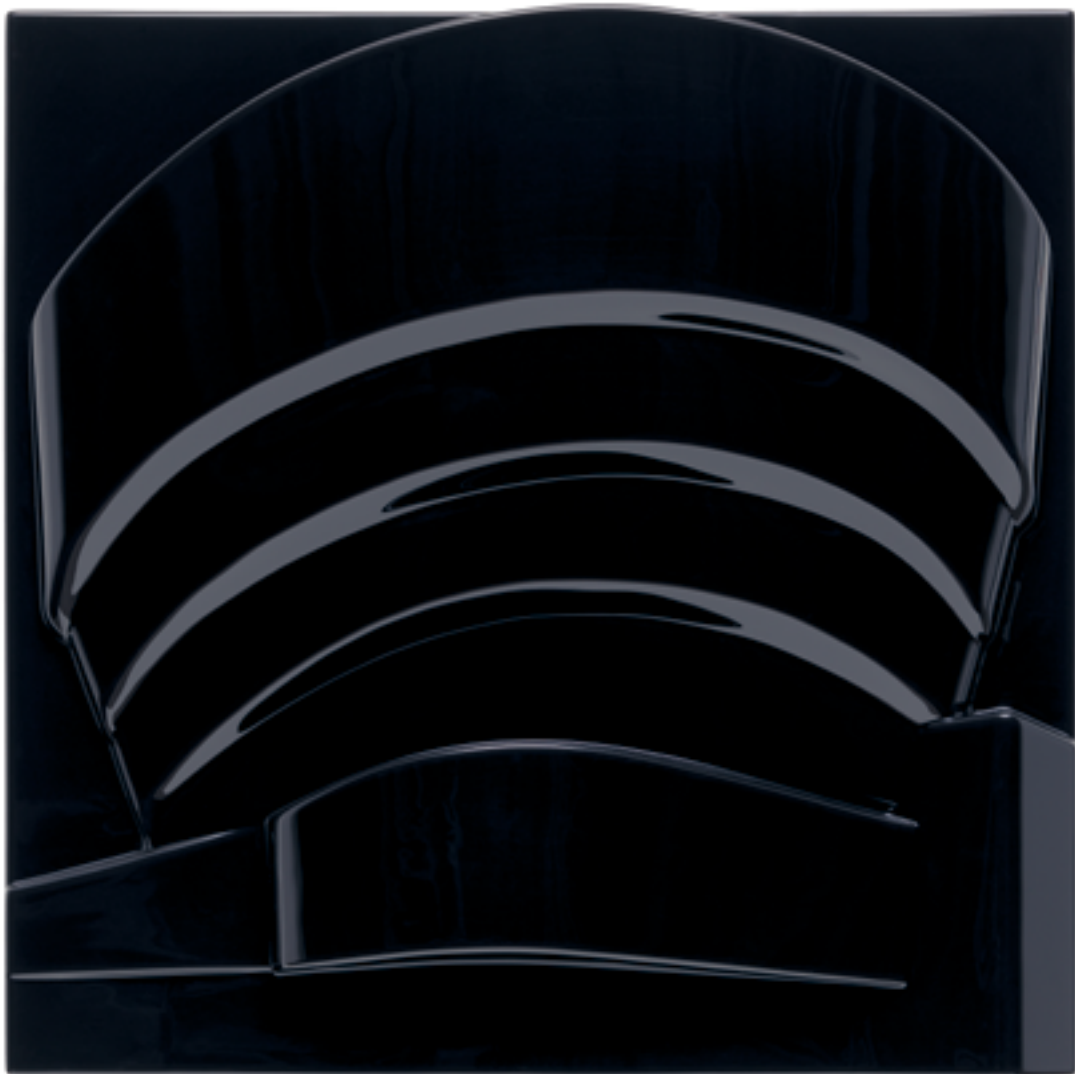


Buckminster Fuller
*Floating Tetrahedral City Planned
for San Francisco Bay Area, 1965*





Claes Oldenburg
*Proposed Monument for the
Intersection of Canal Street and
Broadway, N.Y.C. – Block of
Concrete, Inscribed with the Names
of War Heroes, 1965*



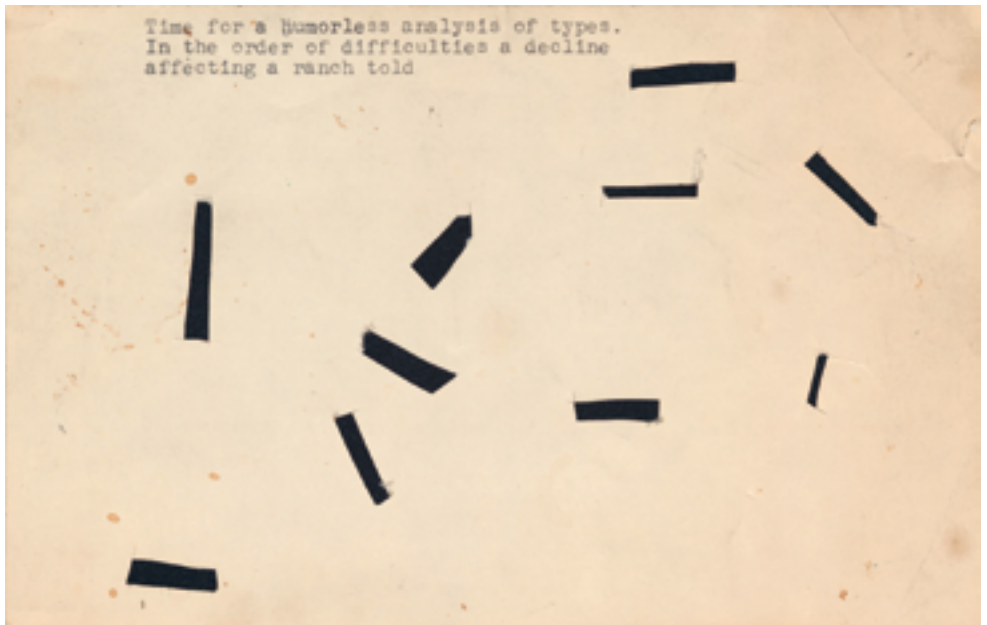
Richard Hamilton
Guggenheim (Black), 1970

Stanzas for Iris Lezak

In literature the direct presentation of linguistic material is an unusual phenomenon. But it is this concept that gives the remarkable tone to the book. Portions of it have been performed now and again over the years until the work has become an underground—or at least unavailable—classic. The author used chance operations for the selection and arrangement of materials but the structural techniques in Mac Low's stanzaic-acrostic poems are both random and systematic. He has created a sort of cinema of words, far more interesting than you could guess at.

Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974, New York, Something Else Press, 1973





Jackson Mac Low
Composition cards for
Stanzas for Iris Lezak, 1960



Iris Lezak
Untitled, 1966



Iris Lezak
Untitled, c. 1970

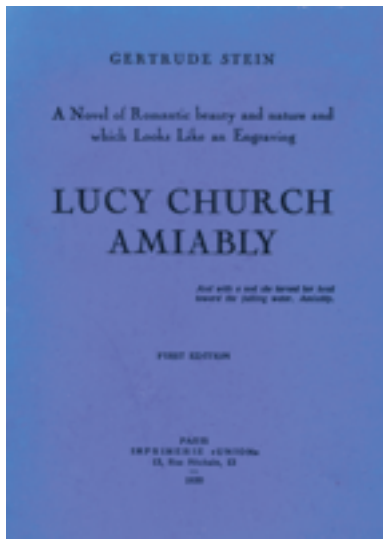


Iris Lezak
Sun, c. 1970

Gertrude Stein

A lot of the work is simply not available. This is partly due to the Stein estate, which wants unrealistic amounts to make this or that edition "official" even when they don't control the rights. And some of it is due to the preciousness of the Stein coterie which would rather collect than read her (contrary to one of her best-known remarks). [. . .] I would like to sell all Stein works available so we can take the next steps: maybe by publishing the works that the Stein estate doesn't control, we can provoke others into doing more, and maybe somebody into doing a Stein Collected Works . . . But much of what we publish is in the Stein spirit, and it seems also Steinian to use the best work of the past to support the present . . .

Something Else Newsletter, vol. 2, no. 4, September 1972

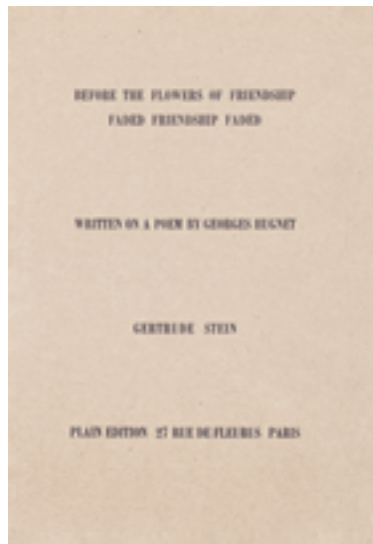


Gertrude Stein
Lucy Church, Amiably, Paris:
Imprimerie "Union," 1930

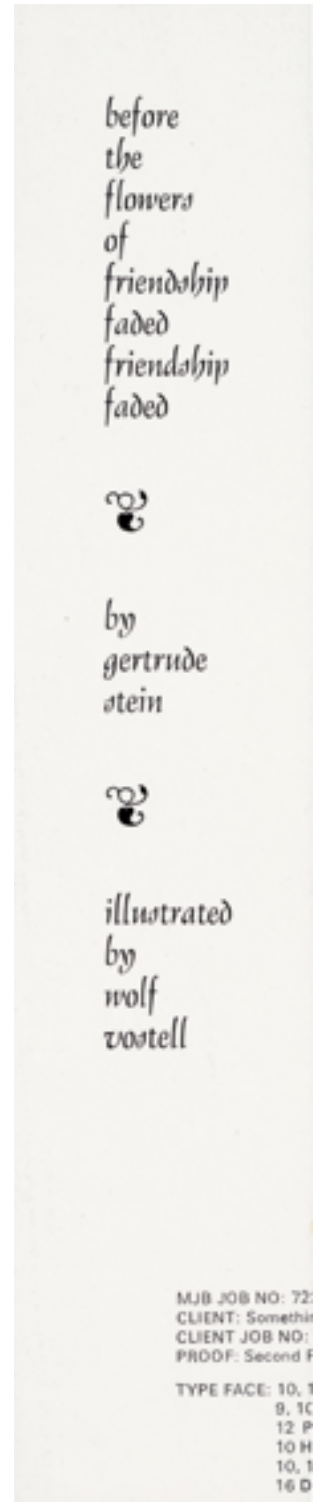


Gertrude Stein
How to Write, Paris: Plain
Edition, 1931

Dust jacket test print of *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded*
Friendship Faded by Gertrude
 Stein, Something Else Press, 1972



Gertrude Stein
*Before the Flowers of Friendship
 Faded Friendship Faded, Written
 on a Poem by Georges Hugnet,*
 Paris: Plain Edition, 1931



About This Book

by Dick Higgins

The tale of what happened to *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded Friendship Faded*, which was to be a Something Else Press book some five years ago, is part of its almost bizarre story since its beginning.

Georges Hugnet was a young French enthusiast for Gertrude Stein; he selected sections of her huge 1907–1909 novel, *The Making of Americans*, translated them into French and published them. His selection was quite fine, and it formed the basis for the abridged edition which became known in the United States as if it were *the only* text—which, for all practical purposes it was, until a certain other Stein enthusiast, namely myself, reissued the complete version in 1967¹—the Something Else Press text. Anyway, Gertrude Stein offered to translate some of Hugnet’s texts into English, and set out to do so. But being a mature artist with, to say the least, a distinctive style of her own, she translated Hugnet’s *Enfances* less into Standard American English than into Gertrude Stein-ish. And, finding the amalgam of Stein and Hugnet an exciting synthesis, she saw fit to extend it until soon Hugnet’s originals were all dispensed with. Hugnet was surprisingly tolerant of her freedoms, but was evidently unwilling to go along with her request for top billing in the proposed published book of the resulting collaboration. This led to a severe falling out between Stein and Hugnet—rather a complex one, whose details are best told in James R. Mellow’s *Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein & Company* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974). Stein withdrew from the proposed book, cut

herself off from Hugnet’s circle (even, for a time, from Virgil Thomson and Bravig Imbs, who were suspected of taking Hugnet’s side of the quarrel). And finally she and Alice B. Toklas published the “translations” (for the most part shorn of any direct relation to Hugnet’s originals) as *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded Friendship Faded* in a very handsome-looking edition of 120 copies. An American edition was never done, and the work passed into the public domain but also into undeserved obscurity. It is, it is true, a very strange work if approached as a translation. Stein could be sexually extraordinarily reticent, for instance, and translated Hugnet’s “J’aime t’avoir” (meaning “I love to *have* you”) as “He likes to be with her.” Again, these deviations are detailed in Richard Bridgman’s *Gertrude Stein in Pieces* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), and I don’t mean to go deeply into the scholarship of all this here. But what tends to be forgotten is that the result, however free (to give it credit) it may be as translation, is superb as poetry. She did what was necessary to turn Hugnet into Stein, to metamorphose Hugnet’s *Weltanschauung* into conformity with her own.

Something Else Press had published many of the Stein works which were in the public domain—*Lucy Church Amiably*, *Geography and Plays*, *G. M. P.*, *How to Write*, and so on. But we had not published any of her poetry. And yet for me and for many of the literary people I admire most, Stein is not simply the prose stylist and source of influence, whom the

usual academics point to—but is, above all, a magnificent poet. Much as I love her novels, I find they sometimes suffer from a poor sense of architecture and that the large lines of planning cause a distortion of time. Yet her poems are, in the deepest and most inclusive sense, fully “adequate” (to use Matthew Arnold’s highest term of praise). They sound *and* they mean. *Stanzas in Meditation* is, for me, one of the finest poetic statements in our century. And *Before the Flowers* is nearly as magnificent. Yet it was unknown, thanks to its having been done in that small edition. It had been reprinted in an almost illegibly miniscule type in an English collection; but it had not been taken as seriously in its own right as it deserved.

Enter Wolf Vostell, one of Germany’s best-known artists and an old friend of mine from happenings and Fluxus days. I loved his drawings, and he loved Gertrude Stein. It took little persuading for him to decide to illustrate the cycle: and he caught the erotic subcurrent of the work immediately. So he produced a cycle of drawings which not so much illustrate as harmonize with the text. The halftones were made from the drawings, and then—

I left Something Else Press and, a year later, it went into bankruptcy. The drawings by Vostell were dispersed and sold off. And from 1974 until the summer of 1978, the files of Something Else Press were first sealed, then moved and, finally, presumed lost. But in July 1978, a strange thing happened. I had been afraid that

the good reputation would be capitalized on by somebody, with trashy books done. So I bought back the “residual” rights and materials—the right to use the name of Something Else Press, and so on. This was part of the settlement of the bankruptcy. At this point it transpired that the files were still intact; they were moldering away in the cellar of the Vermont Tomato Company’s warehouse in Barre, which belonged to the brother of the bankruptcy trustee. It was a curious place to be—a huge, strange building which had been (I am told) the first Socialist Hall in the USA, where Eugene V. Debs had spoken often and where Rosa Luxemburg had appeared when she made her tour of the United States. But there the reproduction proofs were—typeset, excellent proofs of Vostell’s drawings, all in an amazingly usable condition in spite of their nearly four years of a cold steam bath in the cellar. And these files and these reproduction proofs had come back to me.

At that point Gerard Dombrowski, an old friend and the publisher of Abyss Publications, came by—and we got to talking about possible publications. So it occurred to me, why not do a sort of posthumous Something Else Press through Abyss?

The result is the book that you are now reading.² Now it is up to the poems to speak for themselves, and for Stein the poet to emerge from Stein the legend.

West Glover, Vermont
August 7, 1978

¹ According to the book’s title page, *The Making of Americans* was published in 1966.

² The Abyss Publications edition of *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded Friendship Faded* was never published.

One Thousand American Fungi

The book, as long as it was available, was the mushroom collector's bible and, in fact, even today there is no exact replacement. We have reproduced the 1902 edition in facsimile (but larger than other editions and easier to read) except that we have chosen to do the plates in black and white since the old colors in the original did not match modern mycological standards in any way and have virtually no taxonomic value. While the nomenclature has changed a great deal since McIlvaine's time, the accuracy of his macroscopic descriptions has not been surpassed.

Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974, New York,
Something Else Press, 1973

Unknown photographer
Photograph taken during the
mycological expedition at Gate
Hill (detail), c. 1973







Unknown photographer
Photographs taken during the mycological
expedition at Gate Hill, c. 1973

AITKEN Hugh 516 AM L-5746
 #5 Charleston Tr., Amityville, LI, NY
 ALBERTSON Core A. WA 6-8136
 617 W 152nd St., NY NY 10031
 BARNES Art 911 CE 2-1268
 44 Hallsdale Ave., Katonah, NY
 BRITTON Christine 911 NE 1-5772
 394 So. Mtn Rd., New City, NY
 BRITTON Hugh 911 NE 1-5772
 394 So. Mtn Rd., New City, NY
 CIGIE John 911 WA 9-8161
 Stony Point, New York
 CONGDON Jean E. WA 2-5857
 70 E. 91st St., NY NY 10028
 DANSON Helene LE 5-5929
 136 E 69th St., NY, NY
 DINES Sari 911 WA 9-9213
 Stony Point, New York
 FERLINA Ralph CE 7-8907
 311 E 17th St., NY NY 10003

GRAY Cleve 203-JUN 8-2653
 Graystones, Cornwall Bridge, Conn.
 GRAY Francine 203-JUN 8-2653
 Graystones, Cornwall Bridge, Conn.
 HODGINS Richard 212-2903
 238 W 22nd St., NY, NY 10011
 JONE Joe 911-359-1682
 Old Library, Palisades, NY
 JARVIS Margaret M. CE 6-7311
 70 E 91st St., NY, NY
 KEMMIS Alison 212-2903
 238 W 22nd St., NY, NY 10011
 LESSER Gilda UL 6-8534
 915 Washington Ave., Bklyn, NY
 LESSER Irene UL 6-8534
 915 Washington Ave., Bklyn, NY
 LUTHERY Mrs. Madya RE 1-0535
 335 E 81st St., NY, NY 10028

LIPSCHITZ Sylvia 672-1521
 74-10 35th Ave., Jackson Hts, NY
 LOEWEN Edward NE 1-7208
 515 Beach 132nd St., Belle Harbor NY
 LOUW Lois 911-355-2385
 Pocono Rd., Suffern, NY
 Mac IVER Mr. Robt. M. 911-359-0861
 Mayhew Woods Rd., Palisades, NY
 McVILLIE Robt. S. RE 1-2762
 444 E 75th St., New York NY 10021
 MENDEL John R. 911-359-3500
 14 Onden Rd., Scarsdale, NY
 MILLER-Walton 516 JU 7-5055
 41 Church Lane, W. Islip, LI, NY
 MCEL FRANCIS Louise CE 3-7436
 352 E 19th St., NY NY 10003
 MERRING Guy 212-291-7315
 PO Box 102, Ramsey, NJ

MYERS Margaret
 #3 Pike St., NY NY 10002
 PANTILA Parker (Woodie) RE 3-8294
 23 Warren St., NY NY 10007
 ROSENCK Robert O. CH 2-6304
 116 Bank St., NY NY 10014
 ROSENBERG Herbert JA 6-5093
 8647 Midland Pkwy, Jamaica 32 NY
 ROUSE Michael YU 9-7518
 411 W 22nd St., NY NY 10011
 SCULLY Elizabeth A. 475-7176
 136 E 19th St., NY NY 10003
 SERPERO Laurette CH 2-0067
 #10 Downing St., NY NY 10014
 SHIFFIN Nathaniel R. IN 3-5159
 13-07 124th St., College Pt. 56, NY
 SPEDALI Edith AL 1-0383
 313 E 18th St., NY NY 10003
 SPEDALI John AL 1-0383
 313 E 18th St., NY NY 10003

STEIN Mrs. Sylvia NI 7-3160
 2728 Wallace Ave., Bronx 67, NY
 STEINER Leonard O. ST 6-1643
 41-41 43rd St., LIC, NY
 SWITZLER Warren 516-JUN 6-6381
 76 Cornell Tr., Smithtown, LI, NY
 TULLOY Florence HU 6-5028
 216 E 54th St., NY NY 10016
 TRACY Marion AL 5-2819
 10 W 15th St., NY NY 10011
 WHELAN Vera FT 1-3790
 119-29 212nd St., Jamaica, NY

THE
 NEW YORK MYCOLOGICAL
 SOCIETY
 MEMBERSHIP LIST
 1965

Cancer in My Left Ball

A major collection of new poetry. He dissects the American consciousness, cutting through the layers that collectively make up America, and his poems expose the vileness and beauty. His metaphors are the hells of heroin, the hungry ghosts of trashy pornography, the animals of hamburger cattle, the titans of B-52 bombers, the Gods of the cheap thrills of consummate bliss, and the human voice trying to figure its own suffering . . .

Catalogue Fall/Winter 1973–1974, New York, Something Else Press, 1973



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
 444 EAST 68th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021
 TR 9 - 3000, Ext. 2044

PATIENT: GIORNO JOHN

 BILL TO: MR JOHN GIORNO
 222 BOWERY
 NEW YORK, NY

284755
 CASE NO.

 PLEASE REFER TO
 THIS NUMBER IN
 1-800-10-1000 COMMUNICATION

THIS BILL IS SUBJECT TO THIRD PARTY
 APPROVAL. IF SUCH APPROVAL IS NOT
 OBTAINED YOU WILL RECEIVE AN ADJUSTED
 BILL FOR THE UNAPPROVED PORTION.

SUMMARY BILL

ADMISSION DATE		CLINIC NO.	WEEK NO.	ROOM NO.	DISCHARGE DATE	NO. CODE	BLUE CROSS CLAIMABLE	DATE OF BILL
11/27/72		32	04	35	5/2	11/27/72	01 013625699 14021291	11/30/72
SERVICE NO.	DATE	SERVICES RENDERED	HOSPITAL SERVICES	PHYSICIAN SERVICES	TOTAL CHARGES OR CREDITS	COVERED BY BLUE CROSS OR MEDICARE	PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY	
		PATIENTS BALANCE			.00	.00	.00	
40		RADIOGRAPH			285.50	255.50	.00	
41		PATHOLOGY			98.00	98.00	.00	
42		HEMATOLOGY			72.50	72.50	.00	
43		SACITRIL			11.00	11.00	.00	
44		URINALYSIS			10.50	10.50	.00	
45		BIOCHEMISTRY			311.00	311.00	.00	
47		E.A.G.			12.00	12.00	.00	
54		BLOOD			75.00	.00	75.00	
56		CEPHALOGY			174.00	174.00	.00	
57		BLOOD REPLACEMENT			125.00	.00	125.00	
58		A.H.P.			300.00	.00	300.00	
59		INFUSIONS			72.00	72.00	.00	
60		OXYGEN			143.00	143.00	.00	
61		PHARMACY			14.00	14.00	.00	
63		GR			944.78	944.78	.00	
64		ANESTHESIA			710.50	710.50	.00	
65		RECOVERY ROOM			280.00	280.00	.00	
67		ROOM AND BOARD			1,712.00	1,712.00	.00	
					5,071.58	4,821.58	250.00	

Something Else Press
 cordially invites you to attend
 a party in honor of
 JOHN GIORNO
 on the occasion
 of the publication
 of his new book of poems
CANCER IN MY LEFT BALL
 Tuesday, October 2, 1973
 from 6 to 8 p.m.
 Open Mind Books & Records
 66 Greene Street
 New York City.

BILLS ARE PAYABLE UPON PRESENTATION. NO ROOM AND BOARD CHARGE TO MAKE FOR LAST DAY OF STAY IF
 ROOM IS VACATED BEFORE 11:00 A.M. BILLS PRESENTED AT DISCHARGE ARE NOT FINAL SINCE THEY MAY
 NOT CONTAIN CHARGES FOR ALL SERVICES RENDERED. A FINAL BILL WILL BE MAILED TO YOU WITHIN A WEEK
 FOLLOWING DISCHARGE. DETAILED BILL AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
 444 E. 68th Street
 N.Y., N.Y. 10021

PLEASE PAY
 LAST AMOUNT
 IN THIS COLUMN

Invitation to book launch of John Giorno's
 Cancer in My Left Ball, 1973

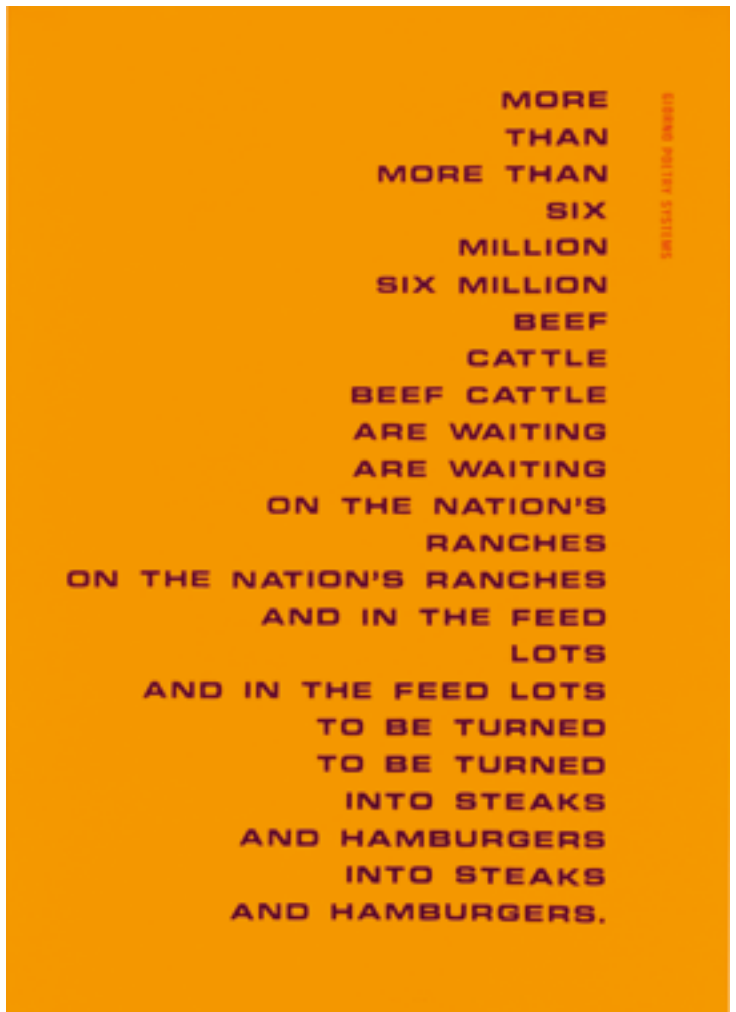
Put
your arms
around me,
honey
Put your arms
around me, honey,
hold
me
tight
hold me tight,
cuddle
up
and cuddle up
cuddle up and cuddle up
with all
your might
with all your might.

printed by Toothpaste Press

One
cockroach
One cockroach
in today's
Soup
in today's soup
is more
nourishing
is more nourishing
than all
of next
year's
honey
than all of next year's honey.

JOHN GIORNO

John Giorno
Toothpaste Scroll, 1972



John Giorno
Beef Cattle, 1969

Intermedial C

ches the following

Object #1

by Dick Higgins

description:-

LECTURE SERIES, by Dick Higgins

LECTURE No. 1 - 4/2/64, Thursday, 8:14 PM. Mainentrance, Carnegie Hall. No adm.

LECTURE No. 2 - 4/13/64, Sunday, 2:15 PM. Top of the Cascade of Stic. off Pine Meadow
Trail, Staatsburg, N.Y. Via Short Line Bus from N.Y. Port Authority Terminal.
Contributions accepted.

LECTURE No. 3 - 4/15/64, Monday, 1:15 PM. NE corner 28th St & 4th Ave. No admission fee.

LECTURE No. 4 - 4/15/64, Monday, 6:15 PM. By new stand on island, Herald Square, N.Y.C.

LECTURE No. 5 - 4/17/64, Friday, after 8:30 PM. Phone CO 7-9198 for information.

LECTURE No. 6 - "On the Dance" - 4/22/64, Wednesday, 7:40 PM. 3rd Floor Loft,

Canal Street, N.Y.C. Very limited capacity, reservations advisable. Contribution 12¢.

LECTURE No. 7 - "On Employment" - 4/22/64, Wednesday, after 8:30 PM. 3rd Floor Loft,

359 Canal St, N.Y.C. Very limited capacity, reservations advisable. Contribution 12¢.

LECTURE No. 8 - 5/1/64, Friday, 6:20 AM. Starts at 359 Canal St, NYC. No admission fee.

DURING MAY, VARIOUS SMALL CONCERTS, LECTURES, AND FILMS WILL HAPPEN TO US. THERE
WILL BE NO MASS MAILING FOR MOST OF THESE. KINDLY JUST SEND A COUPLE
OF SELF-ADDRESSED POSTCARDS TO DICK HIGGINS, 923 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 13

In mid-July Dick Higgins's JEFFERSON'S BIRTHDAY and POSTFACE, the first a collection
of all pieces written between 4/13/62 and 4/13/63, the second a critical-very
critical- essays, will be published by the SOMETHING ELSE PRESS. Prepublication
price is \$9.95 for the two, postpublication price is \$5.95. Checks should be made
payable to and sent to ALISON KNOWLES, 923 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 13, N.Y.

by Dick Higgins

The lecturer distributes to the audience sheets of directions for children's games, sample rental leases, tax forms, etc. He requests the audience to read them back to him, each person loud enough to drown out all the others to himself.

Around May 1957

[illegible]

The lives of great men are described by the lecturer in terms of their personification as great or common monuments or objects in the sight of the lecturer.
January 1960

The lecturer meticulously prepares a text,
the words of which are then carefully
formed before his hearers without being at
all audible.
On hearing Henry Flynt's lecture.
Winter 1961

The lecturer announces: “For this lecture, will the audience please turn around exactly 180 degrees in their seats.” When they have

This lecture is a collection of calisthenics with old-time music, available on request from the lecturer.
April 20, 1963

What do you have to say? Tell me about yourself.
May 23, 1963

As early in the morning as possible, on as inconvenient a day as possible, at as uncomfortable a season as possible, and having notified as many people as possible of the forthcoming lecture, the lecturer sets out before sunrise, equipped with a flashlight and accompanied by the attenders of the lecture, to whom, however, he says not a single word throughout. They are led through his favorite and unfavorable places, as he points with the flashlight at his favorite and unfavorable places—or where they were or might be. It is observed that the sun rises.

December 1964

Errata have been corrected and the text has been amended for style.

Dick Higgins
Intermedial
Object #1, 1966



John Armleder and
 Patrick Lucchini
Intermedial Object
No. 1, 1977



Intermedia—a new magazine

There exists today a large body of opinion which seems out of place within the context of existing art publications. There has been a simultaneous expansion and fusion of the traditional media of expression. The distinctions between painting and sculpture, poetry and graphics, mass and classical forms, theater and politics, even between the arts and the environment itself have become artificial and indistinct.

Writings about these crossovers, whether as leakage or convergence, have had to appear in publications still bound by the confines of the separate arts. Appearance in such a context has frequently given these writings the illusion of being negative in character, in the sense of attacking forms which it was never the actual intent of the writer to attack. All of these investigations have created the conditions for this magazine, **Intermedia**. It is now time to move on to a further stage of extensive discussion and appropriate presentation of materials, to focus upon the mixtures, connections and implications of the various media.

The Something Else Press and the editorial staff of **Intermedia** (S. Edwards, Allan Kaprow, Lawrence Alloway, Emmett Williams, Quentin Fiore and Dick Higgins) have already established the organization and access to most of this material, both in the United States and around the world. This unique combination of resources suggests that **Intermedia**, which is to be issued monthly, will become a major voice in cultural and intellectual affairs.

Allan Kaprow, Lawrence Alloway, Emmett Williams,
Quentin Fiore, and Dick Higgins (editors)
Intermedia—a new magazine, c. 1967

Statement on Intermedia

Art is one of the ways that people communicate. It is difficult for me to imagine a serious person attacking any means of communication per se. Our real enemies are the ones who send us to die in pointless wars or to live lives which are reduced to drudgery, not the people who use other means of communication from those which we find most appropriate to the present situation. When these are attacked, a diversion has been established which only serves the interests of our real enemies.

However, due to the spread of mass literacy, to television and the transistor radio, our sensitivities have changed. The very complexity of this impact gives us a taste for simplicity, for an art which is based on the underlying images that an artist has always used to make his point. As with the cubists, we are asking for a new way of looking at things, but more totally, since we are more impatient and more anxious to go to the basic images. This explains the impact of Happenings, event pieces, mixed media films. We do not ask any more to speak magnificently of taking arms against a sea of troubles, we want to see it done. The art which most directly does this is the one which allows this immediacy, with a minimum of distractions.

Goodness only knows how the spread of psychedelic means, tastes, and insights will speed up this process. My own conjecture is that it will not change anything, only intensify a trend which is already there.

For the last ten years or so, artists have changed their media to suit this situation, to the point where the media have broken down in their traditional forms, and have become merely puristic points of reference. The idea has arisen, as if by spontaneous combustion throughout the entire world, that these points are arbitrary and only useful as critical tools, in saying that such-and-such a work is basically musical, but also poetry. This is the intermedial approach, to emphasize the dialectic between the media. A composer is a dead man unless he composes for all the media and for his world.

Does it not stand to reason, therefore, that having discovered the intermedia (which was, perhaps, only possible through approaching them by formal, even abstract means), the central problem is now not only the new formal one of learning to use them, but the new and more social one of what to use them for? Having discovered tools with an immediate impact, for what are we going to use them? If we assume, unlike McLuhan and others who have shed some light on the problem up until now, that there are dangerous forces at work in our world, isn't it appropriate to ally ourselves against these, and to use what we really care about and love or hate as the new subject matter in our work? Could it be that the central problem of the next ten years or so, for all artists in all possible forms, is going to be less the still further discovery of new media and intermedia, but of the new discovery of ways to use what we care about both appropriately and explicitly? The old adage was never so true as now, that saying a thing is so don't make it so. Simply talking about Viet Nam or the crisis in our Labor movements is no guarantee against sterility. We must find the ways to say what has to be said in the light of our new means of communicating. For this we will need new rostrums, organizations, criteria, sources of information. There is a great deal for us to do, perhaps more than ever. But we must now take the first steps.

Dick Higgins
New York
August 3, 1966

Published in: Wolf Vostell
(ed.): *Dé-coll/age*
(*décollage*), no. 6, Typos
Verlag, Frankfurt, July 1967

eyeye

Notice how fresh the visual impact of the work is, and how the visuality serves to heighten the verbal content, as a relationship between the words "eye" and such an expression as "Aye-aye, skipper." It suggests games—such as writing the word "eye" twice, placing the nose between the words, and running them together with the eye. In other words, the impact ceases to be, as in traditional poetry, purely dependent on the literary word and literary image, but lies, instead, in its very essence, in the mid-ground between poetry (as a relatively pure medium of expression) and the visual arts (as another such pure medium): that is, in the "intermedium" between these extremes. Of course, not all concrete poems are this simple. Here is another, by Emmett Williams himself, from the same collection:

like attracts like
like attracts like
like attracts like
like attracts like
like attracts like
like attracts like
likeattractslike
liketractlike
liketracklike
liketracklike
liketracklike
likeattracts

*A poet-publisher explains
concrete poetry, which
occupies a mid-ground
between poetry and
the visual arts*

INTERMEDIA

by DICK HIGGINS

For example, take a piece of paper and a pencil. Draw an equilateral triangle. Label one point "visual arts," a second, traditional verbal performance, i.e., "drama"; and the third, "music." Place a point anywhere inside the triangle. Where is this point—in relation to the traditional media involved? It is in another intermediate: the Happening—the art form, not the pop one. The latter has come to denote almost any spectacular, spontaneous, and deliberate occurrence, which was not true in the late 1950's when Allan Kaprow adapted the word to describe his very serious, somber performance works in this very intermedium.

Kaprow's own work was originally derived from his experiences as a painter, and would therefore fall rather close to the visual point of the trian-

I'd like to mention also the distinction between *intermedia* and "mixed media." The opera is a mixed medium, for instance. It is possible to differentiate clearly between its three elements: visual, musical, and dramatic, at each stage and at each moment, and in the very concept of almost all operas. In other words, the same diagram would have no point inside, since that is never where the essence of the opera would lie. The Happening fuses the three poles and is an intermedium, with whatever emphasis a particular work happens to have. The opera remains a traditional mix, essentially, of disparate and separate elements.

One final critical point: the function of intermedial concepts and systems is that of classifying and formally conceptualizing bodies of work which, very simply, exist already in today's cultural world. No work is good or bad, simply because it is intermedial. But noticing to what intermedium a work of art belongs can make it easier to overcome whatever

12
else
25
on the 7

10113
On Clark
1122
22 St.
21C Aven

Object Poems

Robert McElroy
Opening of *Object
Poems*, 1966

Object Poems,
poster, 1966







Robert Watts
Chrome Hamburger, 1963



Robert Watts
*Untitled (Dispenser of the
23rd Psalm)*, c. 1960



Takako Saito
Ball Game, c. 1966



Nye Ffarrabas
[Bici Hendricks]
Egg/Time Event, 1966





← Robert McElroy
Opening of Object Poems, 1966

Carolee Schneemann
Music Box Music, 1964–1965



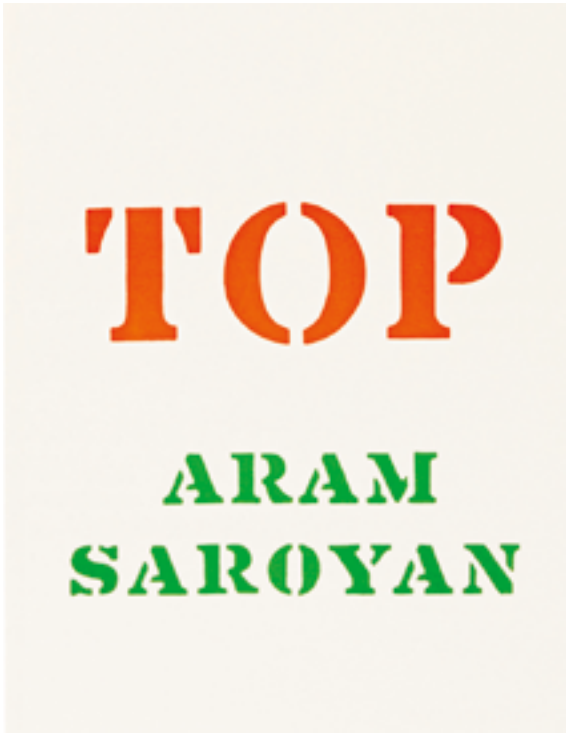




Dick Higgins
"Do You Believe Me?," 1966



Aram Saroyan
Top, 1965





Al Hansen
Hi-Yo Silver, the Lone Ranger, 1965



Dick Higgins
Black Mirror, 1959

Terry Schutte
Installation photos of
Object Poems, 1966



Intermedia

*Intermedia/The
Arts in Fusion,
poster, 1966*

Intermedia

The idea of intermedia is the idea of work that falls between established norms. Some of those intermedia use themselves, establish new norms, for example, the happening (between music, theater and painting or sculpture or the direct poem).

Allen Evans, best known for his self-written performance of the late 1950s and early 1960s and for his *Book of the Dead*, in his *Performance Piece 40* has explored the intermedia between performance, graphic art and photography, using materials from his "T" Dictionary. This installation, incidentally, is printed in *The Four Walls*.

George Brecht, author of the definitive many *Chance Encounters*, has moved from painting through collage and art games into an investigation of the limits of art, the intermedium, which might be called "StarArt," is that between the arts and philosophy.

Jar Jones, trained both as a composer and as an electronic engineer, has applied the techniques of his trade to his art more thoroughly than anyone else, making it an aesthetic problem that is far more than merely automated music. Lulu is one of his earliest compositions. For Fun is one of his most recent. In both the nature of his intermedium is clear, that it lies between music, sculpture and technology.

Intermedia

Allen Evans
The "T" Dictionary
a realization of Performance Piece 40

George Brecht
subjects from the archivist

Jar Jones
Lulu
For Fun

**The
Something Else Gallery**
238 West 23rd Street, New York City
Behind the Chelsea Hotel
Phone: 242-2859 and WA 8-2859
Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 10:30 to 5:30

Something Else Press, Inc.
867 FDR Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10009

Return Requested

April 20th to May 15th, 1966, Opening: April 26th, 4:00 to 10:00 PM

Something Else Gallery

238 West 22nd Street, New York City

(behind the Chelsea Hotel)

Phones: 242-2903 and WA 9-2699

Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 10:30 to 5:30

INTERMEDIA

April 29 - May 11, 1966

GEORGE BRECHT

Exhibit, oil on canvas (1964)
Chair Event, blue chair (1965)
Table Event, yellow table (1965)
Winner's Flag, auto racing signal flag on white stick (1961)
Parallel Canes, striped, plain and metal canes, the last also a drain pipe (1961)
Water Yam (Fluxus publication), 1958-1964
Ham Box, doll's ham in plastic box with picture, 1964
Toaster Box, doll's toaster in plastic box with picture, 1964
Keyhole, manuscript, 1961
Two Dustings, manuscript, 1961
#5 from Book of the Tumbler on Fire, emplacement in specimen box, 1965
#28 from Book of the Tumbler on Fire, emplacement in specimen box, 1965
V TRE, periodical, 1963
V TRE, original paste-up, 1963
11 Lists, manuscript, 1964?
List of Cream Soaps, manuscript, 1964?

JOE JONES

Silver Bird Cage, bird cage with self-playing violin
Fats Piano, self-playing toy piano
Lulu, self-playing violin
Wind Instruments, toy instrument on music stand

ALISON KNOWLES

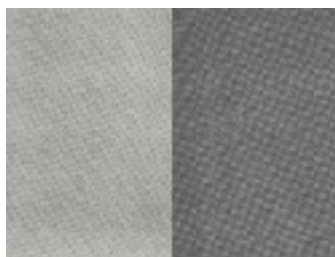
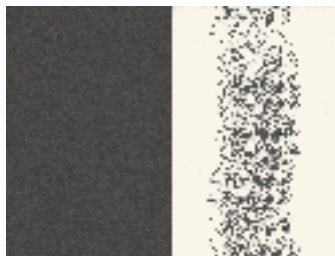
Railroad Shirt, striped work shirt with serigraph
Remember Cynthia, orange sport shirt with serigraph
The Japanese Duck ~~Shirt~~ Shirt, purple shirt with serigraph
The Alphabet Shirt, man's white shirt with serigraphs
Car Crash Shirt for Wolf Vostell, man's tea shirt with serigraphs
Dictionary Ski Parka, blue parka with serigraphs
Orange Scroll, with serigraph
Japanese Duck Trap Scroll, with serigraph
from The Four Suits, 19 different silverprints

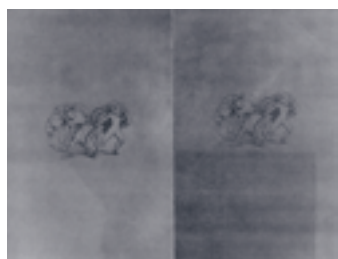
Joe Jones
Cage Music, c. 1965



George Brecht
Keyhole, 1962







The Arts in Fusion



*Intermedia/The
Arts in Fusion,*
poster, 1966

NOON

TWIN HOUSE
10 YEARS OLD
NO. 1643-5
UNGER VAUGHN

PETUNIAS

GRASS

TWIN HOUSE
10 YEARS OLD
NO. 1647-9
WHEELER XAVIER

ROSES

GRASS

TWIN HOUSE
10 YEARS OLD
NO. 1651-3
VERKES ZAKS

ROSES

GRASS

YOU STREET WHITE LINE HERE

GRASS
ROSES
COHN DUNN
NO. 1644-6
10 YEARS OLD
TWIN HOUSE

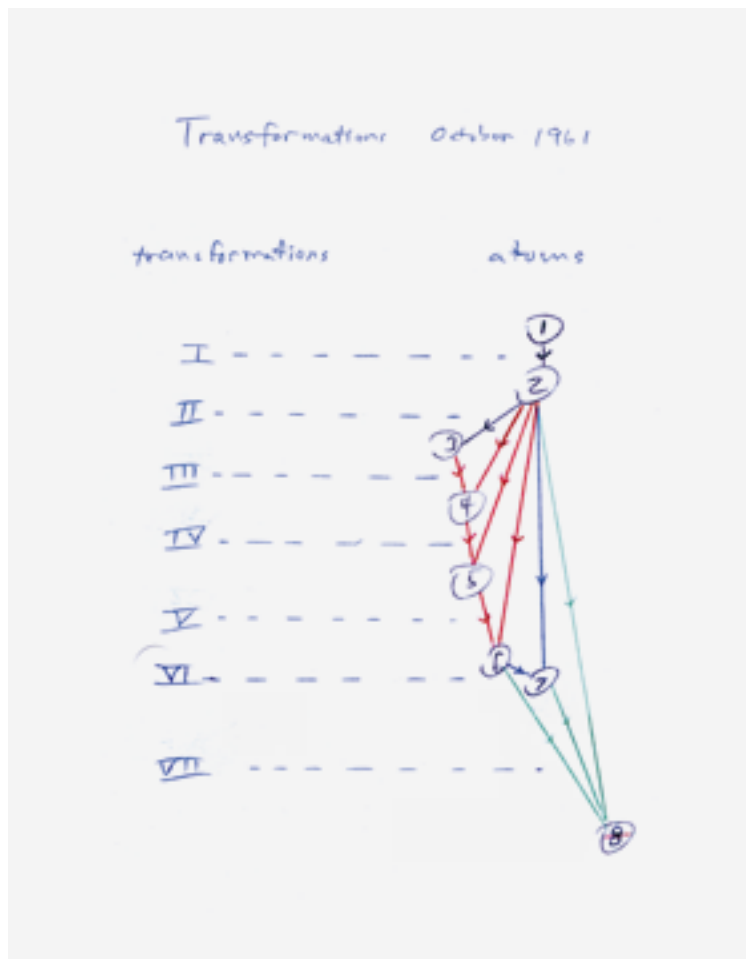
GRASS
PETUNIAS
ELLIS FANELLI
NO. 1648-50
10 YEARS OLD
TWIN HOUSE

GRASS
ROSES
GREEN HAHN
NO. 1652-4
10 YEARS OLD
TWIN HOUSE

SUMMER
ZIP CODE 19138



Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim
*Three-Dimensional Boolean Image/
Conceptual Typewriter*, 1970



Henry Flynt
Transformations – concept art version
 of colored sheet music no. 1, 1961

Top: derivation diagram, 2022
 Left: facsimile of the piece in *An
 Anthology*, as typeset by George
 Maciunas, 1963

HENRY FLYNT, transformations, (u.s.a.)

Transformations - Concept Art Version of Colored Sheet Music No.1 3/14/61 (10/11/61)

The initial object: a sheet of cheap, thin white typewriter paper
Transformation of the initial obj. (obj.1) into obj. 2: soak the initial obj. in inflammable liquid which does not leave solid residue when burned; then burn it on horizontal rectangular white fireproof surface - obj. 2 is ashes (on surface)

Transformation of object 2 into obj. 3: make black and white photograph of obj. 2 in white light (image of ashes' "rectangle" with respect to white surface (that is, of the region of surface, with the ashes on it) with bounding edges parallel to the edges of the surface and intersecting the four points in the ashes nearest the four edges of the surface) must exactly cover the film; develop film - obj. 3 is the negative

Transformation of obj. 2 and obj. 3 into obj.4: melt obj. 3 and cool in mold to form plastic doubly convex lens with small curvature; take color photograph of ashes' rectangle in yellow light using this lens; develop film - obj.4 is color negative

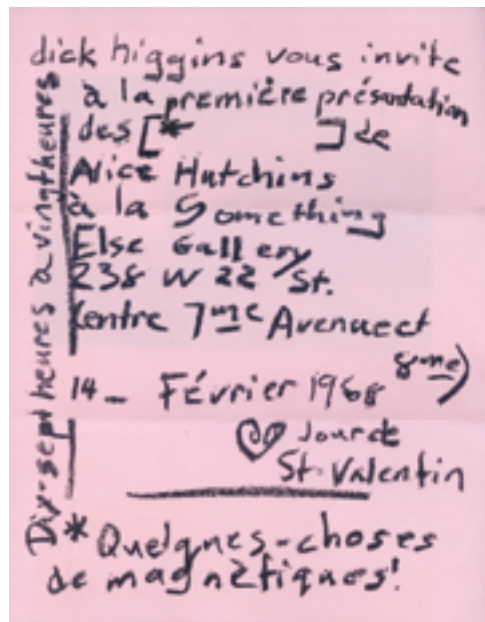
Transformation of obj.2 and obj.4 into obj.5: repeat last transformation with obj. 4 (instead of 3), using red light - obj. 5 is second color negative

Transformation of obj. 2 and obj. 5 into obj.6: repeat last transformation with obj. 5, using blue light - obj. 6 is third color negative

Transformation of obj.2 and obj.6 into obj.7: make lens from obj. 6 mixed with the ashes which have been being photographed; make black and white photograph, in white light, of that part of the white surface where the ashes' rectangle was; develop film - obj.7 is second black and white negative

Transformation of obj. 2, obj. 6, and obj. 7 into the final obj. (obj. 8): melt, mold, and cool lens used in last transformation to form negative, and make lens from obj.7; using negative and lens in an enlarger, make two prints, an enlargement and a reduction - enlargement and reduction together constitute the final object

Alice Hutchins



Alice Hutchins, *Quelques-choses de magnétiques!*, Something Else Gallery, invitation, February 1968 (recto and verso)

Unknown
photographer
Opening of Alice
Hutchins's show,
Something Else
Gallery, 1968



Peter Moore
Geoffrey Hendricks and
his daughter playing
with *Switchboard NY*,
opening of Alice Hutchins
exhibition, Something Else
Gallery, 1968





Alice Hutchins
Homage to J.-A. Ingres
(*L'Odalisque*), 1966





Alice Hutchins
Untitled, 1968



Alice Hutchins
Untitled, 1968



Magnetic Assemblage

In each of these assemblages there is a permanent industrial magnet which I have used to create a field of desired size and strength to magnetize the selected components. Solely the force of attraction holds them together in an arrangement that is temporary and easily altered. *I invite you to move a component to create something new.*

- Start with an exploratory touch. Gently displace and move a *willing* component to another place where it is *attracted*.
- Release slowly and see what happens.
- Expect surprises due to the dominating magnetic field with its forces of attraction and repulsion. Moving a component results in unexpected sounds, movements and serendipitous rearrangements. Accept.
- Go on from there, and collaborate until something comes up that you like, possibly better than what you had in mind.
- Go with the flow.
- Be careful not to remove the metal parts touching the magnet as they are the defining parts of the magnetic field.

T.O.T.

(Technological Oak Tree)

Any more gossip? Just sort of some. Like Wolf Vostell came to the USA in March. He's going to build a technological maple tree beside Dick Higgins's farmhouse in Vermont.

Something Else Newsletter, vol. 2, no. 3, April 1972





With the compliments of the editors —

Something Else Press, Inc.
160 Fifth Avenue New York, N. Y. 10010
WAdjms 9-1699

ing Else Pres

64-1974

Annexes

Chronology

A History of Dick Higgins and Something Else Press, Inc.

This chronology brings together a network of artists, publishing activities, and events connected with the life of Dick Higgins and Something Else Press, Inc. While the Press was founded in late 1963, we have chosen spring 1958 as the point of departure for this history, the moment when twenty-year-old Higgins arrived in New York City to complete his undergraduate degree. Mapping Higgins's discovery of and involvement in various artistic communities in New York in the late 1950s and early 1960s provides context for the development of the Something Else Press. In fact, some of the artists Higgins met during these formative years became close collaborators and, in many instances, became the authors the Press would go on to publish. This chronology also highlights the professional experience in printing and publishing that Higgins gained in the years leading up to the founding of Something Else Press, Inc., which undoubtedly allowed him to finesse his exceptional editorial intuition, strengthen his printing skills, and build a useful roster of contacts in the industry.

Although the constellation of events reported below traces the activities of a publishing house, the aim is not to create a bibliography; therefore, it does not single out the publication of any of the Press's books, except for its first title and the first Great Bear Pamphlet.¹ Nor does this chronology include any historical references to parallel artistic interventions in the printed field (e.g., artist's books and magazines) or to artists' uses of the two-dimensional space of the page as a medium (e.g., conceptual art). Instead, by using the figure of Higgins and the diverse artistic tendencies he witnessed firsthand as a framing device, we hope to shed light on some knowledge gaps in the more commonly told history of Something Else Press, Inc., such as the Press's responsibilities as a business, its cross-country moves during its short existence, the diversity of its workforce, the extent of its distribution efforts in the US and abroad, and the projects of the Something Else Gallery.

1958

Spring: Higgins transfers from Yale University to Columbia University, where he enrolls in the School of General Studies to major in English and minor in music.

Higgins finds a job at Ruder & Finn, a New York–based communications and creative agency, where he learns about advertising, product placement, and publicity releases.

On May 15, Higgins attends *The 25-Year Retrospective Concert of the Music of John Cage* at Town Hall.

Summer: Higgins enrolls in John Cage’s class, Experimental Composition, after learning that Ruder & Finn has a policy of paying for any course its employees wish to take at the New School for Social Research. Fellow attendees include George Brecht, Allan Kaprow, Al Hansen, Jackson Mac Low, and Florence Tarlow, among others. He attends the class for two semesters followed by occasional visits throughout 1959.

1959

April: Higgins meets Ray Johnson at a concert at the Village Gate, mistaking him for Jasper Johns. Following their encounter, Johnson sends Higgins a small wooden construction with the caption “Are you angry? Jasper Johns.” This object marks the beginning of a mail art exchange between the two artists that results in the publication of *The Paper Snake* (Something Else Press, 1965), a sampler of Johnson’s collages, letters, sketches, drawings, and poems sent to Higgins between 1959 and the mid-1960s.

On April 7, the New York Audio Visual Group—a makeshift organization founded by Higgins and Al Hansen upon completing Cage’s Experimental Composition summer course—debuts at the 92nd Street YM-YWHA. The group performs Hansen’s *Alice Denham in 48 Seconds* and Higgins’s *Six Episodes from the Aquarian Theater*.

Higgins is invited to perform one episode from his *Aquarian Theater* (*The Escape of the Goose from the Wild Bottle*) with the Audio Visual Group on the *Henry Morgan* television show.

The Audio Visual Group performs a “research film project” that involves forty-two projectors and simultaneous viewing on the four walls and ceiling of a dining room at the Hotel Albert in Greenwich Village. The movie-performance is reviewed in the *Villager* on May 14.

October: On October 4–10, Higgins performs in Allan Kaprow’s *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* at the Reuben Gallery.

Late 1959: Higgins meets Alison Knowles at a party that he has organized at his apartment, located at 84 Christopher Street, in honor of Dorothy Podber’s release from the Women’s House of Detention, where she had been jailed for arranging abortions for women.

1960

Early 1960: After starting a relationship with Knowles, Higgins moves into her apartment at 423 Broadway (at Canal Street).

Higgins makes his first appearance in print (excluding his middle and high school publications) in *The Beat Scene*, a poetry anthology edited by Elias Wilentz and published by Corinth Books.

February: On February 29–March 2, Higgins contributes his *Edifices, Cabaret, and Contributions* to Claes Oldenburg’s *Ray Gun Spex* at the Judson Gallery.

March: On March 21, Higgins’s play *Saint Joan at Beaurevoir* is presented by Julian Beck and Judith Malina’s Living Theatre at the Players Theatre.

April: On April 30, Higgins premieres the first electronic opera *Stacked Deck*, with music by Richard Maxfield at the Kaufmann Concert Hall at the 92nd Street YM-YWHA.

May: Higgins graduates from Columbia University.

On May 31, Higgins and Knowles marry.

June: Higgins buys a vintage 1898 mimeograph machine that he uses to publish editions of his smaller works, like *Six Concretions* and *One Hundred Plays* (both 1961). He also rents a studio at 359 Canal Street. In summer 1963, George Maciunas will rent a studio downstairs from Higgins.

Summer: On August 1, the Audio Visual Group presents “An Evening of New Music” at the Living Theatre. The program features several of Higgins’s pieces (including *Mechanical Music no. 5* and *To Everything Its Season*), compositions by Al Hansen, Ray Johnson’s *Funeral Music* and *Lecture*, and Jackson Mac Low’s *Stanzas for Iris Lezak* among others.

Higgins enrolls in the Manhattan School of Printing where he gains skills in black-and-white and color stripping, black-and-white camerawork, color separation, and more.

Fall: Higgins’s first book, *What Are Legends?*, is published by Bern Porter. The book is hand-lettered by Porter with camera- and presswork by Higgins.

1961

Spring: Higgins graduates from the Manhattan School of Printing and finds a job at Harding & Harding, a bank-stationery and checks designer.

June: On June 18, Higgins opens his first solo show at George Maciunas and Almus Salcius’s AG Gallery.

December: In December, Higgins buys a bright blue-and-yellow candy from Claes Oldenburg’s *The Store*, Ray Gun Manufacturing, Co., NYC (December 1–30). A selection of texts, graphic materials, and photos of Oldenburg’s work will be published by the Something Else Press in 1967 in the book *Store Days*.

1962

January: On January 8, Higgins takes part in the first of two benefit concerts for *An Anthology* (La Monte Young, editor; George Maciunas, designer; Young and Jackson Mac Low, publishers) at the Living Theatre and presents his *Symphony no. 4*.

September: Higgins and Knowles participate in the Fluxus Internationale Festspiele Neuester Musik, the first Fluxus festival at the Städtisches Museum in Wiesbaden. They will also take part in other Fluxus festivals and concerts that will be organized in Europe over the next year, in London (Festival of Misfits, October 21, 1962), Copenhagen (November 23–28, 1962), Paris (December 3–8, 1962), Düsseldorf (February 2–3, 1963), and other cities.

1963

April: Higgins discusses with George Maciunas publishing his book *Jefferson's Birthday 1962–1963* for the Fluxus imprint. By the summer, he will deliver the manuscript, which includes *Jefferson's Birthday* as well as a theoretical essay entitled “What the Theater Can Be” (later retitled “Postface”).

May: On May 11–12, *An Anthology* is published to coincide with YAM Day, a two-day event at the Hardware Poet's Playhouse that crowns a year's worth of activities as part of George Brecht and Robert Watts's YAM festival.

Summer: Higgins works in the production and design department at the printer Zaccar Offset, Co. Zaccar will later become the printer for Fluxus Editions and George Maciunas's own work.

Fall: Higgins works in the design department of the publishing company Random House.

On September 4, Higgins organizes a screening of his film *The Flaming City* (1961–1962) at his studio on Canal Street.

October: An argument between George Maciunas and Higgins prompts Higgins to found the Something Else Press. He runs the Press from his apartment at 423 Broadway, where it will remain until 1965.

1964

April: Between April 2 and May 1, Higgins presents a lecture series in and around New York City. “Lecture Number 1” (written in May 1957) is delivered on April 2 at the main entrance of Carnegie Hall; “Lecture Number 2” (fall 1959) takes place on April 12 at the top of the Cascade of Slid off of Pine Meadow Trail in Sloatsburg, New York; “Lecture Number 3: ‘The Lives of Great Men’” (January 1960) is performed on April 13 on the northeast corner of 28th Street and Fourth Avenue; “Lecture Number 4” (winter 1961) is delivered on April 13 by the newsstand in Herald Square; “Lecture Number 5” (written on the same day as “Lecture Number 4”) is given on April 17 (location unknown); “Lecture Number 6: ‘On the Dance’” (April 20, 1963) is performed on April 22 in the third-floor loft at 359 Canal Street; “Lecture Number 7: ‘On Employment’” (May 23, 1963) takes place on the same day and at the same location as “Lecture Number 6”; and “Lecture Number 8: ‘On Muscatel’” (undated) is given on May 1. The lectures are announced in a handwritten flyer distributed by Higgins, and they are advertised in the March 1964 issue of *Fluxus cc V TRE*.

Summer: After the death of his father, Higgins receives an inheritance with which he will fund the Press.

October: The first Something Else Press book, Higgins’s own *Jefferson’s Birthday/Postface*, comes out. The book is typed by Lette Eisenhauer on an IBM executive typewriter with a New Gothic typeface.

December: On December 11, Higgins organizes a reading of *Jefferson’s Birthday/Postface* at the Washington Square Galleries, 528 West Broadway.

1965

Early 1965: Higgins works as a production manager for the book publisher Russell & Russell, Inc.

February: On February 1, Something Else Press, Inc., is incorporated under section 402 of the Business Corporation Law by the law firm Webster, Sheffield, Fleischmann, Hitchcock & Chrystie.

On February 5, the first meeting of the board of directors takes place in room 604 at 160 Fifth Avenue, the new headquarters of the Something Else Press. The Press's storage room is located three floors above in room 918. On this day, Higgins is named president and treasurer of the board, Knowles becomes the secretary, and Barbara Moore is chosen as vice president. Moore is also the Press's editor. A Something Else Press checking account is opened at Hanover Trust Co. Additionally, Higgins buys all of the two hundred available shares of Something Else Press, Inc., stock.

On February 8, Mac Low reads the loose cards from Robert Filliou's *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*, published by the Something Else Press in the same year, at Cafe Au Go Go.

March: Higgins and Knowles become members of the New York Mycological Society. Together with John Cage, Sari Dienes, Gilda Lesser, Lois Long, and others, they regularly go on foraging excursions in the woods of Stony Point, New York.

April: On April 17–18, the Something Else Press sponsors and stages Higgins's happening *The Tart* (1962) in the boxing ring of the Sunnyside Garden Arena in Queens. The happening features Ay-O, Lette Eisenhauer, and Florence Tarlow accompanied by a cast of a dozen performers, including James Cahill, Philip Corner, Jess Furnell, Al Hansen, Ruth Hurwitz, Alison Knowles, Jackson Mac Low, Bill Meyer, Meredith Monk, Phoebe Neville, and Karl Schenzer. As part of the same program, Higgins also presents two additional pieces: *Solo for Florence and Orchestra* and *Celestials (for Bengt af Klintberg)*.

June: Higgins and Knowles, along with their twin children Jessica and Hannah, move to a townhouse located in Chelsea at 238 West 22nd Street.

July: The Something Else Press rents a Great Bear Water Company dispenser for the office on Fifth Avenue because of a summer water shortage in New York City. The Great Bear Pamphlet series, whose name is inspired by the water-dispenser brand, begins with Knowles's *By Alison Knowles*.

September: Higgins leaves his job at Russell & Russell, Inc., to fully devote himself to the Something Else Press.

The first *Something Else Newscards* are distributed to a list of subscribers. The *Newscards* advertise events related to Press authors and chronicle the life of a mysterious figure, Camille Gordon, the Press's "bookkeeper." Occasionally, they are written by Gordon herself, one of the many aliases used by Higgins in his editorial and artistic work.

George Brecht and Robert Filliou, with Marianne Staffeldt and Donna Jo Brewer, open the store La Cédille qui sourit, in Villefranche-sur-Mer, France. It will remain active until October 1968.

Marshall McLuhan contacts Higgins to sing the praises of Filliou's book *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*, commenting on its relevance to his own theories on communications, media, and semantics.

December: Higgins informally offers Emmett Williams—who is currently editing Daniel Spoerri's *Anecdoted Topography of Chance* (Something Else Press, 1966)—an editorial and design job at the Press for the period October 1966–January 1967, which corresponds to an extended sojourn in Europe that Higgins and Knowles are planning.

Higgins and Williams discuss the publication of John Cage's *Notations* (Something Else Press, 1969) for the first time. At this stage, *Notations* is a six-hundred-page catalogue of an unparalleled collection of musical scores Cage has assembled and that he intends to present in an exhibition.

1966

January: From January 23 to February 17, *Arts in Fusion*, an exhibition of concrete poetry curated by Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim opens at the Tyler School of Art, Temple University, in Philadelphia. Fernbach-Flarsheim dubs the artists included in the show “fusionists.” An artwork by Higgins is included in the show.

February: Emmett Williams arrives in New York and becomes an editor at the Something Else Press working alongside Barbara Moore.

The *Something Else Newscards* are replaced by the *Something Else Newsletter*. The first newsletter, a three-part serial essay titled “Intermedia,” is sent to a list of about one thousand subscribers. It is followed by “Games of Art” (March) and “Intending” (April).

The opening of the Something Else Gallery is announced with a program of five shows, each one lasting a week and a half.

March: Emmett Williams contacts Yvonne Rainer and her then partner, Robert Morris, to ask whether they are interested in submitting a manifesto for the forthcoming Great Bear Pamphlet on manifestos (*Manifestos*, 1966). She turns down his invitation but suggests Morris’s “Notes on Sculpture” (February 1966) for its pertinence to the pamphlet’s theme. Morris’s work will not be included in the final publication.

On March 14, Higgins participates in a panel titled “The New Fusion Arts” at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. The event is organized as part of *Kaprow & Guests: A Series of Panel Discussions, Demonstrations, Performances*. Panelists include Allan Kaprow, Jackson Mac Low, and Stan VanDerBeek.

April: Robert Filliou visits New York.

The *Something Else Newsletter* “Serious Gabcard” (vol. 1, no. 4) announces the death of Camille Gordon in a car crash.

The Something Else Press announces Frankfurt-based publisher Typos Verlag as its new German distributor, and, in turn, it begins distributing Typos editions in the United States.

John Cage continues the editorial work on *Notations* and invites Knowles to be coeditor.

On April 15, the Something Else Gallery opens at 238 West 22nd Street in Knowles and Higgins's family townhouse. The gallery's first show, *Object Poems*, features the works of Ay-O, George Brecht, Filliou, Albert M. Fine, Dieter Rot, Johannes Cladders, Carolee Schneemann, Gertrude Stein, Betty Thompson, and Jean Toche, among others.

On April 30, the exhibition *Intermedia* opens at the Something Else Gallery. It is a three-person show featuring serigraphs by Knowles, objects from Brecht's archives, and Joe Jones's musical instruments.

May: Higgins announces a list of stores in the US and abroad that sell Something Else Press books: in New York, the Eighth Street Bookshop, Gotham Book Mart, Something Else Gallery, and Wittenborn & Company; in Ann Arbor, the Centicore Bookshop; in Berkeley, Cody's Books, Inc.; in Boston, the Institute of Contemporary Art; in Princeton, Mercer Street Gallery; in London, Indica Books & Gallery and the Institute of Contemporary Art; in Los Angeles, Los Angeles Free Press; in Nottingham, England, Trent Book Shop; and in Paris, Librairie Anglaise.

On May 14, Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim's group show *Arts in Fusion* opens at the Something Else Gallery. The New York version of the exhibition features fifty artists and showcases works from the international concrete poetry movement, musique concrète, and Henry Flynt's concept art.

On May 21, Wolf Vostell stages his dé-coll/age-happening *Dogs and Chinese Not Allowed* at a secret location in New York City, and, on May 27, he opens his solo show *Exhibition of Notations and Erasures of the Happening* at the Something Else Gallery.

June: Higgins reprints "Intending," his third essay from the "Intermedia" newsletter trilogy, in Jerome Agel's *Books*, a twelve-page publishing-industry newspaper.

On June 15, the Tone Roads Chamber Ensemble—cofounded by Philip Corner, Malcolm Goldstein, and James Tenney in 1963 (lasted until 1970)—plays a concert of works by Charles Ives and Henry Cowell at the Something Else Gallery. Players include Corner, Max Neuhaus, and Tenney.

On June 18–19, the Tone Roads Chamber Ensemble presents *Piano Music of Erik Satie* and *Vexations* at the Something Else Gallery. Players include John Bierhorst, Ferdinando Buonanno, Corner, George Flynn, Joseph Gurt, Goldstein, Higgins, Miriam Kappell, John MacDowell, Meredith Monk, Judy Speiser, Tenney, and Joan Wiesan. The first marathon performance of *Vexation*, a score to be played 840 times in succession, was organized by John Cage at the Pocket Theatre on September 9–10, 1963.

On June 23, Emmett Williams is appointed vice president and editorial director of the Something Else Press.

July: Higgins writes the score for *Intermedial Object #1*. A 1:10 scale model will be constructed by John Armleder and Patrick Lucchini, two members of the Geneva-based Ecart group, in 1977 on occasion of the exhibition *Recent Graphic Works, Retrospective of the Books, and Editions Something Else Press* in Geneva. In 1992, for the *Fluxus Virus* exhibition in Cologne, Higgins will build a full-scale *Intermedial Object* using painted folding chairs and small cakes.

August: Haroldo de Campos and the São Paulo-based Noigandres concrete poetry group visit the Something Else Press.

The shop La Cédille qui sourit is announced as a new distributor for the Something Else Press in France.

Higgins offers Maciunas the opportunity to organize a Fluxus show at the Something Else Gallery, but his invitation is turned down, so the gallery adjourns its activities for some time.

September: Barbara Moore leaves the Something Else Press, and Marilyn Harris takes over the business management.

The Something Else Press is represented at the Frankfurter Buchmesse for the first time.

On September 25, the program of events entitled *Juxtapositionen 1* opens at Galerie Aachen in Germany. In the program, the term *intermedia* is used to describe the practice of Higgins and Knowles, who take part in the event. *Juxtapositionen 1* marks the beginning of their 1966 trip in Europe.

October: Knowles's *The Big Book*—a live-in book in an edition of one that includes a library, a small kitchen, and a toilet (not connected to a sewer pipe)—is on view at the Something Else Gallery. Despite its size, it is still only a study for the *Big Big Book*, an architectural phenomenon forty feet wide and eighty feet high.

Multiples, Inc.—the publishers of artist's editions founded in New York in 1965 by Marian Goodman—visits the Something Else Press offices to discuss a deluxe edition of Ray Johnson's "Snakes" (possibly *Brick Snakes*, 1955).

On October 3, Higgins and Knowles perform in a Fluxus concert at Galerie Block in Berlin.

On October 13, Higgins participates in an event at Galerie Platýz in Prague. Other performed pieces include works by George Brecht, Ben Vautier, Joe Jones, György Ligeti, George Maciunas, Mieko Shiomi (also known as Mieko Chieko Shiomi), Robert Watts, Emmett Williams, Philip Corner, and Knowles.

November: On November 4–5, *Something Else: A Concert of Events and Music* takes place at the ICA, London. Participants include Robert Erebo, Robert Filliou, Peter Green, Higgins, Joe Jones, Knowles, Gustav Metzger, Ben Vautier, and Emmett Williams. Filliou performs several cards from his book *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*.

On November 7, John Cage receives a letter from the New York Public Library, rejecting his proposal to curate an exhibition of his collection of scores in the Music Division's Vincent Astor Gallery.

On November 12, Knowles and Higgins perform with the Madrid-based group Zaj in the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, in Madrid.

December: Something Else Press undertakes the distribution of Hansjörg Mayer's Futura editions in the United States and Canada.

Higgins starts working on the anthology *Fantastic Architecture* (coedited with Wolf Vostell). He sends out a call for submissions and draws up a list of works that he plans to include in the book, such as Marcel Duchamp's *La Boîte-en-valise* and Henry Flynt's *Communists Must Give Revolutionary Leadership in Culture*. Higgins solicits John Cage's and George Maciunas's participation in the anthology. In response, he obtains a list of possible contributors including Robert Rauschenberg, Sari Dienes, Merce Cunningham, and Richard Lippold. Higgins also invites Ray Johnson to submit a work, but he declines, stating that he does not "dream about cities." In response to the call for submissions, Carl Fernbach-Flarsheim submits a "poem garden" and *Action Architecture*; Haroldo de Campos sends in a piece on "poetic architecture." None of the works or artists mentioned above will be included in the published anthology.

On December 21, Higgins donates ten shares of Something Else Press, Inc., stock to Williams.

1967

January: A New Year's Day party is organized at the Something Else Gallery. The invitation instructs: "no neckties, but okay to bring babies."

Higgins subscribes to *A Wake Newsletter*, a periodical dedicated to the study of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*.

The new magazine *Intermedia* is announced. It is planned as a bimonthly publication that, according to the prospectus, "will become a major voice in cultural and intellectual affairs." The editorial staff includes S. Edwards, Kaprow, Lawrence Alloway, Emmett Williams, Quentin Fiore, and Higgins. The publication never materializes.

February: The *Something Else Newsletter* “Serious Gabcard #2” (vol. 1, no. 5) boasts that Mississippi and New Mexico are the only two US states not to carry Something Else Press books. In Europe, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Albania, and Portugal are supposedly the only countries not to distribute the Press’s titles.

Schröder & Dupont’s Boekhandel in Amsterdam is announced as the new Something Else Press distributor in Holland.

Robert Filliou and Marianne Staffeldt visit New York.

Higgins informs George Maciunas that he has decided to sell all their original correspondence because the Press is hard up for cash.

Spring: The *Something Else Newsletter* “Against Movements” (vol. 1, no. 6) is included in the magazine *Aspen* (no. 4) in an issue dedicated to Marshall McLuhan and designed by Quentin Fiore.

John Cage organizes a weekly series of group discussions on Buckminster Fuller at the Something Else Gallery. James Tenney, one of the attendees, is inspired to start his own workshop at the Gallery on computer programming. Participants in Tenney’s workshop include Philip Corner, Higgins, Knowles, Max Neuhaus, Nam June Paik, and Steve Reich, among others. Knowles’s *House of Dust* (1967) and Higgins’s *Computer for the Arts* (1970) are two of the works developed in the context of Tenney’s workshop.

May: Something Else Press secures the Canadian distributor Inform in Toronto.

Frances Starr joins the Something Else Press as second editor.

June: Emmett Williams takes a leave of absence from the daily operations of the Press and the board. He will return to New York full-time in early 1969.

July: Higgins’s “Statement on Intermedia” (August 3, 1966) is published in Wolf Vostell’s magazine *Dé-Coll/Agé Happenings*. The same issue includes a statement by Knowles and photos of her *The Big Book* as well as a list of published and upcoming Something Else Press titles.

Higgins finishes the galley proof for *Act: A Game of 52 Soaphorse Operas*, the first issue of a new Something Else Press publication series called Threadneedle editions. This new series is supposed to reprint facsimiles of manuscripts as well as graphic and calligraphic constructions. Threadneedle editions are 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ -by-4-inch booklets, stapled into manila folders, trimmed on three sides, and labeled with rubber stamps. The manufacturing costs for 150 copies is estimated at around thirty-six dollars; the production cost for eight copies of a Threadneedle corresponds to that of one Great Bear Pamphlet. Higgins intends to publish fifteen Threadneedle editions with works by Eric Andersen, José Luis Castillejo, Philip Corner, Ken Friedman, Milan Knižák, Arthur Köpcke, Nam June Paik, Tomas Schmit, James Tenney, and others. The series will never come out.

August: *The Big Book* is exhibited at the Pollock Gallery in Toronto (August 31–September 30).

Fall: “A checklist of the Great Bear Pamphlets” is included in *Aspen* (nos. 5+6), edited and designed by Brian O’Doherty.

The Big Book is shown at Frankfurt Buchmesse.

September: Higgins purchases a farm in Barton, Vermont. The property is located a short ride away from the Canadian border.

October: *The Big Book* is on view in the exhibition *Pictures to Be Read/Poetry to Be Seen* curated by Jan van der Mark at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (October 24–December 3).

1968

January: The *Something Else Newsletter* “Chatter Letter” (vol. 1, no. 7) reports that Camille Gordon’s death was a prank and that she actually lives with her fiancé in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan. The Press begins the series of newsletters called *Camille’s Reports*, which are signed by Gordon herself. She also pens publicity blurbs and introductions for the Something Else catalogues, including the unpublished catalogue “The Literature of Happenings and Fluxus.” On January 12, a fire in the Fifth Avenue building forces the

Something Else Press to find a new office. The Press's headquarters officially move to 238 West 22nd Street.

On January 22, a meeting of the board of directors and a meeting of the shareholders are held at Lido's Restaurant. Emmett Williams, still on leave, is replaced by Larry Freifeld as vice president.

February: Marilyn Harris leaves the Something Else Press.

On February 14, Alice Hutchins's solo exhibition *Quelques-choses de magnétiques!* opens at the Something Else Gallery.

March: On March 1, the board of directors meets for the second time in 1968. Larry Freifeld becomes the new general manager, Emmett Williams is appointed editor in chief, Higgins is elected president and production manager, and Frances Starr becomes trade editor.

The Something Else Press decides to publish their own paperback editions rather than selling the paperback rights of their titles to other publishers. Paperback editions of Daniel Spoerri's *An Anecdoted Topography of Chance*, Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*, and Emmett Williams's *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, among other works, will appear shortly thereafter.

Inform, the Canadian distributor of the Something Else Press, collapses, almost putting the Press out of business.

The foreign rights to *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* are sold to German publisher Hansjörg Mayer.

On March 5, the National Committee, in conjunction with the National Book Awards Week, organizes a panel on "Poetry Now." Higgins speaks about intermedia. Other participants include John Ashbery, Robert Creeley, Allen Ginsberg, Walter Lowenfels, and Ronald Gross (as moderator).

April: Something Else Press undertakes the distribution of ED.912 posters from Milan and Tam Thek multiples from Cologne.

June: Higgins publishes a new essay titled “Intermedia” in *Library Journal* (vol. 93, no. 11), which he says was initially presented at a conference for booksellers at Yale in 1964.

On June 23, a party and exhibition on occasion of the publication of *The Gutman Letter* is organized at the Gotham Book Mart Gallery.

October: The distribution of Something Else Press books in the United States is taken over by the Small Publishers’ Company (later renamed The Book Organization). The Small Publishers’ Company is an association that distributes *Aperture* magazine and the publications of Croton Press, Inc., Frontier Press, and Jargon Society, in addition to the Something Else Press. It is administered by Michael Hoffman, and its headquarters and storage space are located at 276 Park Avenue South (in the same office as *Aperture*, of which Hoffman is the director).

McBride Bros. & Bradley, Ltd., distributes Something Else Press books in the sterling area, a group of countries with currencies tied to the British pound sterling.

On October 7, Higgins attempts to set up a meeting between George Maciunas and Hoffman to arrange for the distribution of Fluxus editions by the Small Publishers’ Company. Fluxus Editions will not join the organization.

1969

Higgins gets involved with COSMEP (Committee of Small Magazine Editors and Publishers), a grassroots organization founded in 1968 focused on networking between small-scale magazines and presses.

February: Frances Starr leaves the Something Else Press.

Philip Corner begins sharing a studio with Knowles in her Chelsea townhouse. Together, they kick off *The Identical Lunch* performance series. Two books result from their collaboration, *Journal of the Identical Lunch* by Knowles (1971) and *The Identical Lunch* by Corner (1973), both published by Jan Herman’s Nova Broadcast Press.

On February 14, a party is organized at the Something Else Gallery on occasion of the publication of John Cage's *Notations*.

March: Judy Padow joins the Something Else Press and begins to respond to letters on behalf of the Press.

Higgins discusses with Herbert Blau, founding provost and dean of the School of Theater and Dance at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), the possibility of moving the Press to the West Coast, as a CalArts-sponsored publishing organ. Higgins discusses a similar arrangement with Purchase College in Harrison, New York, in the hope of turning the Press into a university-subsidized publishing house. Both plans will fall through.

On March 13, Higgins participates in the "Expanded Poetry" program at New York University's School of Continuing Education (today's School of Professional Studies) and speaks about intermedia with John Giorno. Other speakers and themes in the program include Ronald Gross on "Expanded Poetry," Clarence Major and Raymond Patterson on "The New Black Poets," Bici Hendricks (now known as Nye Ffarrabas) and Hannah Weiner on "Word Environments," John Robert Colombo on "The International Found Poetry and Concrete Poetry Movements," Peter Neumann and Emmett Williams on "The Computer and Programmed Literature," Jackson Mac Low on "Electronic Poetry, Simultaneities and Free Improvisation," and Michael Benedikt and John Perreault on "Poem Events."

On March 20, the first 1969 meetings of the Something Else Press board of directors and of stockholders are held at El Quixote Restaurant, after Emmett Williams's return to the United States. Michael Hoffman is proposed as new secretary of the board, and Williams is reinstated on the board. Williams is put in charge of constituting the New Means Foundation, a nonprofit organization that would enable Something Else Press to receive grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Though the Foundation is meant to be operative by January or February of the following year, it will never materialize.

April: The exhibition *Superlimited: Books, Boxes and Things*, curated by Susan Tumarkin Goodman, opens at the Jewish Museum. Knowles's *The Big Book* and Vostell's book-box *Dé-Coll/Agé Happenings* (Something Else Press, 1966) are included in the show.

May: On May 2, *Retrospective Showing of Artworks by Ruth Waldinger* opens at the Something Else Gallery.

June: The first New York City nonstop public reading of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* takes place at the Something Else Gallery.

July: The Small Publishers' Company hires twelve commission sales representatives to take over sales and distribution of books.

October: Higgins writes to Stewart Brand's *Whole Earth Catalog* asking to list some Something Else Press publications in the magazine, in particular John Cage's *Diary: How to Improve the World, Part 3* (Great Bear Pamphlet, 1967) and Marshall McLuhan's *Verbi-Voco-Visual Explorations* (1967). His request is turned down because, as explained by a representative, at *Whole Earth Catalog*, they "love arts a lot, but [they are] very cautious around it."

November: On November 8, the Something Else Gallery hosts a benefit gala for Larry Freifeld's Land Press, the publishing house of the Something Else Press's very own general manager. The gala honors poets and filmmakers, including Jud Yalkut, Larry Freifeld, John Harriman, Harry Smith, Jackson Mac Low, Mel Shultz, Washburn films (with Alison Knowles), and Michael Snow.

December: Hans Sohm—a Stuttgart-based dentist and collector of art ephemera, including Fluxus and Something Else Press editions—visits the Something Else Press.

1970

February: A party for the launch of Daniel Spoerri's *The Mythological Travels of a Modern Sir John Mandeville . . .* takes place at the Something Else Gallery.

Summer: Higgins moves to Newhall, California, and brings Something Else Press along. His new mailing address is P.O. Box 688, Newhall, CA 91321.

September: Higgins, Knowles, and Emmett Williams start teaching at CalArts. Higgins is hired by the School of Critical Studies and is appointed professor of publishing, intermedia, and mycology. During the 1970–1971 academic year, he teaches two courses: Events, Happenings, and Other Performance Structures, and Wild Foods and Botany Ecology. He also coordinates several publishing workshops.

1971

July: Higgins relocates from California to Barton, Vermont, to be closer to the Canadian border. The Something Else Press headquarters also move to the Northeast Kingdom. The new mailing address, for both Higgins and the Press, is P.O. Box 26, West Glover, VT 05875.

August: The Small Publishers' Company changes its name to The Book Organization and moves its headquarters to Elm Street in Millerton, New York. New presses join the organization including Corinth Books, the Eakins Press, Glide Publications, Pasadena Art Museum, Portola Institute, and Big Rock Candy Mountain.

November: Geoffrey Hendricks performs *Ring Piece* on occasion of the 8th Annual Avant Garde Festival organized by Charlotte Moorman at the 69th Regiment Armory. The following year, the Something Else Press will publish a book of the same title documenting Hendricks's performance.

1972

April: Nelleke Rosenthal arrives in Vermont to be Higgins's secretary.

May: John A. Kimm arrives in Vermont as general manager of the Something Else Press.

June: Higgins funds Unpublished Editions to publish his own work and puts out his book *Amigo: A Sexual Odyssey*. The structure of

the new press resembles, in Higgins's words, an "unincorporated syndicate": artist-members fund and produce their own projects, which are then sold using the Something Else Press network. Members of the newly formed press include John Cage, Philip Corner, Geoffrey Hendricks, Knowles, Jackson Mac Low, Pauline Oliveros, and Jerome Rothenberg. Unpublished Editions will be renamed Published Editions in 1978.

July: Emmett Williams leaves the Something Else Press, and Jan Herman is appointed as the new editor in chief.

On July 31, a meeting of the board of directors takes place in Barton. John A. Kimm is appointed president to replace Williams.

August: On August 20–21, the Something Else Gallery opens for a one-off event in West Glover to host Wolf Vostell's project *T.O.T.* (*Technological Oak Tree*). Despite the work's title calling for an oak tree, *T.O.T.* uses a maple tree as prop.

Fall: Higgins draws up a list of possible outlets for advertising Something Else Press books, including the *New York Review of Sex*, *New York Feed Company*, the *Guardian*, *Tulane Drama Review*, the *Village Voice*, *Art and Artists*, SF State College, Wittenborn and Company: Books of the Fine Arts, the *International Times*, the *Electronic Music Review*, *East Side Review*, the *Nation*, *The World in Books: A Magazine of Life and Letters*, *Evergreen Review*, and *Arts Magazine*.

Berlin-based gallerist and collector René Block visits the Something Else Press in Vermont.

September: On September 12, Something Else Press, Inc., is officially incorporated in Vermont.

October: Due to its dire financial situation, the Something Else Press withdraws from The Book Organization. In the following months, it becomes the independent distributor of its own books. Sales are to be handled by Russell Chaskin (in charge of New York City, southern Westchester County, Long Island, and northern New Jersey), Ronald Neuwirth and Aaron Litway (covering the Northeast as far south as Washington, DC), and McBride Bros. & Broadley, Ltd. (offering representation in the British Commonwealth area).

The Something Else Press announces an editorial shift toward “botany and new lifestyles.” Books such as the reissue of Charles McIlvaine and Robert K. MacAdam’s *One Thousand American Fungi* and Cary Scher’s *The Ten Week Garden* will be published shortly thereafter.

December: The Something Else Press participates in the Modern Language Association (MLA) meeting in New York. For this occasion, they make fortune cookies.

1973

January: The Something Else Press sets up warehousing facilities in Barton to aid its independent distribution. Its office moves from Higgins’s farmhouse to the second floor of the warehouse building.

February: The Something Else Press plans to revive the Great Bear Pamphlet series and begins to distribute Jan Herman’s Nova Broadcast Press publications.

March: John Giorno visits Higgins and Jan Herman in Vermont. There, he works with Knowles in her print studio on two of his deluxe editions: *[From the Kama Sutra of John Giorno]* *[Black Cock]* *[Barton, VT, 1973]* and *[From the Book of Death of John Giorno]* *[Rainbow Buddha & Bodhisattvas]* *[Barton, VT, 1973]*.

April: The *Newsletter* is temporality suspended to reduce costs.

June: On June 10–13, the Something Else Press exhibits at the Convention Trade Exhibit of the American Booksellers Association in Los Angeles.

July: On July 11, Higgins resigns from the Something Else Press. John A. Kimm is appointed president and treasurer, Jan Herman becomes chairman of the board and senior editor, and Ann Brazeau is named vice president, secretary, and production director.

The new logo reading “Something Else Farms” is designed for the postage-meter label and for new letterhead.

Fall: Higgins commits himself voluntarily to Silver Hill, a psychiatric institution in New Canaan, Connecticut.

The Something Else Press begins distribution of John Giorno's records and posters as well as of the West Coast music magazine *Source* and of Unpublished Editions. The Press also has its own stand at the Frankfurter Buchmesse.

October: John A. Kimm is fired and Jan Herman takes over financial responsibilities. George Mattingly is hired as the new production head and assistant designer.

On October 2, a party is organized on occasion of the publication of Giorno's *Cancer in My Left Ball* at Open Mind Books & Records.

On October 10, Higgins's exhibition *Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed and Something Blue* opens at Galerie René Block, in Berlin. A selection of books and materials from Something Else Press is on view in the gallery's bookshop. This is the first known exhibition devoted to the Press.

December: Jan Herman and Higgins explore the possibility of declaring bankruptcy for the Something Else Press with attorney Julien Goodrich, from a law firm in Montpelier, Vermont, but they decide to postpone the decision.

1974

February: George Mattingly leaves the Something Else Press.

March: Hugh Fox's "An Analytical Checklist of Books from Something Else Press" is published in issue 21 of the magazine *Small Press Review*.

June: Oslo-based publisher Schibsted translates and publishes Cary Scher's *The Ten Week Garden* in Norway.

Fall: Higgins offers to sell the Something Else Press to Jan Herman, who turns him down and, shortly afterward, resigns as president of the board.

Higgins returns to Silver Hill.

December: Higgins discovers that in early 1965, when Something Else Press was incorporated, the Press's then accountant Harry Rabbiner had failed to convert the Press into a subchapter S corporation. "Subchapter S" is an IRS designation for corporations that avoids double taxation on corporate income by passing income, losses, deductions, and credits on to the shareholders. Rabbiner's oversight results in the IRS questioning the legality and legitimacy of the Press's business operations, and it compromises, fatally, both the Press's and Higgins's finances.

On December 24, the Something Else Press petitions for bankruptcy.

1975

February: The first meeting of the creditors takes place on February 3 at the United States District Courtroom in Montpelier, Vermont.

Higgins sends out a card announcing the end of the Something Else Press.

¹ Other written accounts already cover in detail the release dates and edition numbers of the Something Else Press publications, such as Peter Frank's annotated bibliography and the more recent and comprehensive checklist compiled by Steve Clay. See Peter Frank, *Something Else Press: An Annotated Bibliography* (Kingston, NY: Documentext, 1983), and Steve Clay, "A Something Else Press Checklist," in Steve Clay and Ken Friedman, eds., *Intermedia, Fluxus, and Something Else Press: Selected Writings by Dick Higgins* (Catskill, NY: Siglio, 2018), 176–235.

List of images

*America's Quality
Avant-Garde Publisher*,
1965
Business card
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart,
Archiv Sohm
pp. 12–13

John Armleder and
Patrick Lucchini
Intermedial Object No. 1,
1977
Model, painted wood,
glass, plastic, sand,
electric light
43 × 23 × 12 cm
Coll. MAMCO, gift of
Jean-Pierre Favre
Inv.: 1994-1158
p. 172 (bottom)

Mary Ashley
Truck (A Dance), 1964
Typed paper
108 cm × 18 cm
Box 18, folder B-195,
item 6. John Cage
Notations Project
Collection, Cage
Notations. Charles
Deering McCormick
Library of Special
Collections & University
Archives, Northwestern
University Libraries
p. 139

Ay-O
Tactile List, 1966
Typed and handwritten
paper
21.6 × 61 cm
Box 21, folder C-184.
John Cage Notations
Project Collection, Cage
Notations. Charles
Deering McCormick
Library of Special
Collections & University
Archives, Northwestern
University Libraries
p. 138

George Brecht
Chance Painting, 1957
Sheet with ink stains
220 × 180 cm
Private collection, Milan
p. 111

George Brecht
Keyhole, 1962
Ink on paper in artist's
frame and two metal
escutcheons on wood
Score: 14.2 × 2.1 cm;
wood with metal
escutcheons:
12 × 9.2 × 2 cm
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
2066.2008.2b
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 196

George Brecht
Chance-Imagery, 1966
Book
21.6 × 14 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 110

George Brecht
Handwritten
instructions for *The
Laughing Game*, "*The
way to get a laugh out
of . . .*," c. 1966
Ink on paper
21 × 8.6 cm (irreg.)
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Archives,
I.304. The Museum of
Modern Art Archives,
New York
Object no.:
ARCH.9896.2.
p. 125 (right)

George Brecht
Handwritten
instructions for *The
Laughing Game* "*Le Jeu
du Rire*," c. 1966
Ink on paper
21 × 8.6 cm (irreg.)
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Archives,
I.304. The Museum of
Modern Art Archives,
New York
Object no.:
ARCH.9896.7.1.
p. 126

George Brecht and
Robert Filliou
Handwritten
instructions for "*The
Mystery Game I*,"
c. 1966
Ink on paper
21 × 8.6 cm (irreg.)
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Archives,
I.304. The Museum of
Modern Art Archives,
New York
Object no.:
ARCH.9896.2.
pp. 124, 125 (left)

George Brecht and
Robert Filliou
Handwritten notes for
"*The misunderstanding,
brawling, survival, and
to-be-dated poem*,"
c. 1966
Ink on paper
27.6 × 20.3 cm
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Archives,
I.304
The Museum of Modern
Art Archives, New York
Object no.: ARCH.9892.
p. 127 (top)

- George Brecht and Robert Filliou
Handwritten notes for
"Research project #4:
study the bathrooms
of the following
cathedrals," c. 1966
Ink on paper
8.9 × 21.6 cm (irreg.)
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Archives,
I.304
The Museum of Modern
Art Archives, New York
Object no.: ARCH.9893.
p. 127 (bottom)
- George Brecht and Robert Filliou
*Games at the Cedilla or
the Cedilla Takes Off*,
1967
Book
20.5 × 14 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 122
- George Brecht and Robert Filliou
*Banqueroute/The
Eternal Network*, 1968
Letterpress
49.8 × 32.4 cm
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
3857.2008.
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 131
- William Brisbane Dick
*Dick's 100
Amusements*, 1967
Book
20.2 × 13.7 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
pp. 118, 120–21
- John Cage
Notations, 1969
Book
22 × 22.8 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 134 (top)
- Henry Cowell
Blank sheet with
marginal notations, n.d.
Ink on sheet music
paper
27.4 × 34 cm
Box 21, folder C-37.1.
John Cage Notations
Project Collection, Cage
Notations. Charles
Deering McCormick
Library of Special
Collections & University
Archives, Northwestern
University Libraries
p. 135
- Marcel Duchamp
(silkscreen by Alison
Knowles)
Coeurs volants
(Fluttering Hearts),
1967
Silkscreen on card
61 × 45.5 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 133
- Suzanne Duchamp
*Readymade malheureux
de Marcel Duchamp*
(Marcel Duchamp's
"Unhappy
Readymade"),
c. 1919–1920
Gelatin silver print
11 × 7 cm
Philadelphia Museum of
Art: Gift of Virginia and
William Camfield, 1983,
1983-87-1
p. 112
- Envelope with
corporate sticker,
c. 1966
Envelope with
sticker, stamped and
postmarked
7.7 × 25.4 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 21
- Carl Fernbach-
Flarsheim
*"Canvas for Voice".
Song Poem #1*, 1965
Letterpress on linen
60 × 80 cm approx.
Collection of Tara
Goings
p. 202
- Carl Fernbach-
Flarsheim
*Three-Dimensional
Boolean Image/
Conceptual Typewriter*,
1970
Polymethylmethacrylate
73.5 × 78 × 65 cm
Collection Stedelijk
Museum Amsterdam
p. 203
- Carl Fernbach-
Flarsheim
Untitled, c. 1970
Letterpress on linen
165 × 137.2 cm
Collection of Tara
Goings
p. 201
- Robert Filliou
*Ample Food for Stupid
Thought*, 1965
Book
13.2 × 18.4 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 86

Robert Filliou
Ample Food for Stupid Thought, 1965
 Wood box containing ninety-six offset postcards
 Box: 15 × 20 × 5.1 cm; sheet (each): 12.7 × 17.8 cm
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 p. 87

Robert Filliou
8 Measurement Poems, 1966
 Wood sticks with objects
 Variable dimensions
 Collection Irmeline Lebeer, Brussels
 p. 189

Robert Filliou
 (codirectors: Georges Brecht, Bob Guiny)
Movie Re-Invented. Hommage à Méliès (prochainement sur cet écran), 1968
 16 mm, black and white, silent, 7 mins., 10 secs.
 Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art Moderne, Paris
 pp. 128–29

Albert A. M. Fine
Scale Piece for John Cage, c. 1966
 Box with scale and weight
 17 × 14 × 2.5 cm
 Folder H-191. John Cage Notations Project Collection, Cage Notations. Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections & University Archives, Northwestern University Libraries
 p. 137

Henry Flynt
Transformations – concept art version of colored sheet music no. 1, 1961
 Photocopied text and graphic on foam board
 100 × 66 cm; 36 × 28 cm
 Courtesy of the artist
 pp. 204, 205

Buckminster Fuller
Floating Tetrahedral City Planned for San Francisco Bay Area, 1965
 Courtesy of the Estate of R. Buckminster Fuller
 pp. 148–49

George Maciunas's response to Dick Higgins's invitation to submit a piece for *Fantastic Architecture*, 1967
 Ballpoint pen on paper
 Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Archiv Sohm
 p. 147

John Giorno
Beef Cattle, 1969
 Silkscreen on paper
 99.06 × 71.12 cm
 The John Giorno Foundation, New York
 p. 167

John Giorno
Toothpaste Scroll, 1972
 Zinc blocks of author's handwriting in red on Chiri paper
 24.1 × 33 cm
 The John Giorno Foundation, New York
 p. 166

John Giorno
Cancer in My Left Ball, 1973
 Book
 23.3 × 48.7 cm
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 p. 164

Richard Hamilton
Guggenheim (Black), 1970
 Vacuum-formed acrylic and cellulose
 58.9 × 58.9 × 9.5 cm
 Acquired through the generosity of Catie and Donald Marron. Acc. no.: 178.2018.
 Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York
 p. 151

Al Hansen
Hi-Yo Silver, the Lone Ranger, 1965
 Lithograph on tin
 68.6 × 40.6 cm
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 p. 191

Dick Higgins
Black Mirror, 1959
 Black painted corrugated cardboard
 197 × 45.4 cm
 Maria und Walter Schnepel Foundation, Budapest
 p. 192

Dick Higgins
 Stills from *The Flaming City*, 1961–1963
 The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. 2008
 p. 17

Dick Higgins
Graphis 118, 1962
 Ballpoint pen on two
 sheets of paper and cut-
 and-pasted photostat
 and pressure-sensitive
 tape on board
 24 × 20.4 cm
 The Gilbert and Lila
 Silverman Fluxus
 Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
 2249.2008.2.
 Museum of Modern Art
 (MoMA), New York
 p. 56

Dick Higgins
 Letter to Emmett
 Williams, 1963
 Getty Research
 Institute, Los Angeles
 (890164)
 p. 66

Dick Higgins
 "A Something Else
 Manifesto," 1964
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation New York
 p. 69

Dick Higgins
Lecture Series, c. 1964
 Pen on paper
 21 × 28 cm
 Henry Flynt Collection
 p. 170

Dick Higgins
*The Tart or Miss
 America* announcement
 with portrait of Lette
 Eisenhower, 1965
 Offset print
 27.7 × 21.4 cm
 Box 35, folder 10. Dick
 Higgins Archive,
 MS132. Charles Deering
 McCormick Library of
 Special Collections &
 University Archives,
 Northwestern University
 Libraries
 p. 105

Dick Higgins
*The Tart or Miss
 America* press release,
 1965
 Typed text on paper
 11 × 8.5 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 pp. 84–85, 106

Dick Higgins
*The Tart or Miss
 America* program, 1965
 Typed text on paper
 11 × 8.5 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 107

Dick Higgins
 "Do You Believe Me?,"
 1966
 Engraved Tiffany & Co.
 sterling silver box
 3.7 × 9.4 × 2 cm
 The Gilbert and Lila
 Silverman Fluxus
 Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
 4277.2008.
 Museum of Modern Art
 (MoMA), New York
 p. 188

Dick Higgins
Intermedial Object #1,
 1966
 Typed paper
 27.9 × 21.6 cm
 The Gilbert and Lila
 Silverman Fluxus
 Collection Archives,
 I.1145. The Museum of
 Modern Art Archives,
 New York.
 Object no.: ARCH.9886.
 Museum of Modern Art
 (MoMA), New York
 pp. 169–70, 172 (top)

Dick Higgins
 "Intermedia," in *Library
 Journal* 93, no. 11, June
 1, 1968
 Box 19, folder 24. Dick
 Higgins Archive,
 MS132. Charles Deering
 McCormick Library of
 Special Collections &
 University Archives,
 Northwestern University
 Libraries
 pp. 176–77

Dick Higgins
 "Something Else Press
 1964–1974," 1975
 Card
 8.3 × 14 cm
 The Gilbert and Lila
 Silverman Fluxus
 Collection Archives,
 I.1144. The Museum of
 Modern Art Archives,
 New York. Object
 no.: ARCH.9888.
 Museum of Modern Art
 (MoMA), New York
 pp. 217, 260

Dick's 100 Amusements
 ad, 1967
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 119 (bottom)

Dick's 100 Amusements
 blurb, 1967
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 119 (top)

Alice Hutchins
*Homage to J.-A. Ingres
 (L'Odalisque)*, 1966
 Letraset on paper
 15.24 × 20.32 cm
 University of Iowa
 p. 208

Alice Hutchins
Hoop, 1968
 Painted metal, eighteen
 steel rings, alnico
 magnets
 Diameter: 76.2 x 1.9 cm
 Santa Barbara Museum
 of Art, gift of the artist
 and museum purchase
 with funds provided by
 the SBMA Visionaries
 and the 20th Century
 Art Acquisition Fund
 p. 212

Alice Hutchins
*Quelques-choses de
 magnétiques!*, 1968
 Invitation
 27.9 x 21.6 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 pp. 178–79, 206

Alice Hutchins
Magnetic Assemblage
 instructions, 1968
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 213

Alice Hutchins
Untitled (La Tour), 1968
 Five plastic boxes with
 rivets, bells, metal strip,
 and magnet
 24 x 7.6 x 7.6 cm
 Thomas Hutchins
 Collection
 p. 209

Alice Hutchins
Untitled, 1968
 Colored plastic-coated
 magnets, chain swivel,
 and weight
 7.6 x 3.8 x 5 cm
 Lent by Merrily Peebles,
 California
 p. 210

Alice Hutchins
Untitled, 1968
 Alnico magnet, steel
 cylinder, and seven steel
 tubes
 13 x 5 cm
 Claudia Hutchins-
 Puéchavy
 p. 211

Intermedia checklist,
 1966
 Typed text on paper
 28 x 21.50 cm
 Staatsgalerie Stuttgart,
 Archiv Sohm
 p. 195

*Intermedia / The Arts in
 Fusion*, 1966
 Poster, offset print
 5.5 x 75 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 pp. 194, 200

Invitation to book launch
 of John Giorno's *Cancer
 in My Left Ball*, 1973
 Ink on paper
 22.5 x 25.5 cm
 The John Giorno
 Foundation, New York
 p. 165

Invitation to the event
*Piano Music of Erik
 Satie*, Something Else
 Gallery, 1966
 Offset print
 22 x 28 cm (each)
 Henry Flynt Archive
 p. 40

Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1954
 Pencil on paper
 26 x 20.3 cm
 Maria und Walter
 Schnepel Foundation,
 Budapest
 p. 96

Ray Johnson
Max Ernst (Carl Ruggles),
 c. 1960
 Drawing and collage on
 paper
 21.1 x 13.1 cm
 Maria und Walter
 Schnepel Foundation,
 Budapest
 p. 97

Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1964
 15.2 x 13.2 cm
 Collage on cardboard
 Maria und Walter
 Schnepel Foundation,
 Budapest
 p. 94

Ray Johnson
Untitled, c. 1964
 Collage, photographs,
 and offset print on
 paper
 9.6 x 11.1 cm
 Maria und Walter
 Schnepel Foundation,
 Budapest
 p. 98

Ray Johnson
 Postcard to Dick
 Higgins, c. 1965
 Collage and
 handwriting on
 postcard
 12.8 x 17.8 cm
 Maria und Walter
 Schnepel Foundation,
 Budapest
 p. 90

Ray Johnson
The Paper Snake, 1965
 Book
 21.8 x 27.3 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 92

- Ray Johnson
Two Brick Snakes, 1965
Paint on board
72.4 cm × 56.8 cm
© The Ray Johnson
Estate, 2023
p. 99
- Ray Johnson
LUCKY STRIKE, c. 1965
Mixed media on
cardboard
Diameter: 15.1 cm
Maria und Walter
Schnepel Foundation,
Budapest
p. 95
- Ray Johnson
*Untitled (Robert Filliou
and I . . .)*, c. 1965
Typewritten text on
cardboard, in the
introduction of the
hardcopy print of
*Ample Food for Stupid
Thought*
8.8 × 15.8 cm
Maria und Walter
Schnepel Foundation,
Budapest
p. 91
- Joe Jones
Cage Music, c. 1965
Metal birdcage
containing painted
plastic violin and
battery-powered motor
with striker
40 × 33 × 33 cm
Publisher: Fluxus
Editions, announced
1965. The Gilbert and
Lila Silverman Fluxus
Collection
Gift. Acc. no.: FC1899
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 197
- Allan Kaprow, Lawrence
Alloway, Emmett
Williams, Quentin
Fiore, and Dick Higgins
(editors)
*Intermedia—a new
magazine*, c. 1967
Print
29.20 × 22.80 cm
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart,
Archiv Sohm
p. 173
- Dorine van der Klei
Performance of *Zyklus
for Water-Pails (or
bottles)* by Tomas
Schmit. Amsterdam,
1963
Black-and-white
photograph
Courtesy of the artist
p. 55
- Alison Knowles
Die, 1965
Silkscreen on wood
43.18 × 43.18 × 43.18 cm
Collection of William S.
Wilson
p. 109
- Alison Knowles
The “T” Dictionary,
1965/2020
Ten plates
260 × 135 cm
(30.5 × 23.4 cm each)
Courtesy of the artist
pp. 198–99
- Alison Knowles and
George Brecht
Postcard, c. 1967
Collection Marcel
Alocco, Nice
p. 89
- Alison Knowles and
Dick Higgins
Postcard sent to George
Maciunas, 1966
Getty Research
Institute, Los Angeles
(890164)
p. 88
- Alison Knowles, Tomas
Schmit, Ben Patterson,
and Philip Corner
The Four Suits, 1965
Book
24.2 × 16 × 2.7 cm
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 100
- Arthur Köpcke
Glass House from Inside
from *Weekend*, 1972
Screen print from a
portfolio of nine screen
prints
62 × 48 cm
Seiden and de Cuevas
Foundation Fund. Acc.
no.: 1-1973.12.
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 145
- Arthur Köpcke
*Glass House from
Outside from Weekend*,
1972
Screen print from a
portfolio of nine screen
prints
62 × 48 cm
Seiden and de Cuevas
Foundation Fund. Acc.
no.: 1-1973.13.
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 144
- Iris Lezak
Untitled, 1966
Watercolor on paper
12.1 × 10.2 cm
Family of the artist
p. 154 (top)

- Iris Lezak
Sun, c. 1970
 Watercolor on card
 Diameter: 31.75 cm
 Family of the artist
 p. 155
- Iris Lezak
 Untitled, c. 1970
 Watercolor on paper
 12.1 x 10.2 cm
 Family of the artist
 p. 154 (bottom)
- Jackson Mac Low
Stanzas for Iris Lezak,
 1971
 Book
 23.7 x 15.7 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 152
- Jackson Mac Low
 Cards used to compose
 the *Stanzas for Iris
 Lezak*, 1960
 Pen on manila folder
 Jackson Mac Low
 Papers. MSS 180.
 Special Collections &
 Archives, UC San Diego
 Library
 p. 152
- Robert McElroy
 Opening of *Object
 Poems*, 1966
 Black-and-white
 photographs from
 contact sheets
 Getty Research
 Institute, Los Angeles
 (2014. M.7)
 pp. 181, 184–85
- Charles McIlvaine and
 Robert K. MacAdam
*One Thousand
 American Fungi*, 1973
 Book
 27.8 x 21 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 160
- Peter Moore
*Piano music of Erik
 Satie*. Performance at
 the Something Else
 Gallery, 1966
 Contact sheet
 Box 102, folder 22.
 Dick Higgins Archive,
 MS132. Charles Deering
 McCormick Library of
 Special Collections &
 University Archives,
 Northwestern University
 Libraries
 pp. 42–43
- Peter Moore
The Tart (photograph
 of performance venue),
 1965
 Box 35, folder 8. Dick
 Higgins Archive,
 MS132. Charles Deering
 McCormick Library of
 Special Collections &
 University Archives,
 Northwestern University
 Libraries
 p. 104
- Peter Moore
The Tart, 1965
 Black-and-white
 photographs
 Box 35, folder 8. Dick
 Higgins Archive,
 MS132. Charles Deering
 McCormick Library of
 Special Collections &
 University Archives,
 Northwestern University
 Libraries
 p. 108
- Peter Moore
*The Big Book by
 Alison Knowles* at the
 Something Else Gallery,
 238 West 22nd Street,
 New York, 1966
 Digital print
 250 cm height
 p. 117
- Peter Moore
 Party at the Something
 Else Press office, 160
 Fifth Avenue, New York,
 1966
 Black-and-white
 photographs from
 contact sheets
 Staatsgalerie
 Stuttgart, Archiv Sohm
 pp. 72–73
- Peter Moore
 Geoffrey Hendricks and
 his daughter playing
 with *Switchboard
 NY*, opening of Alice
 Hutchins exhibition,
 Something Else Gallery,
 1968
 Gelatin silver print
 17.78 x 25.4 cm
 University of Iowa
 p. 207 (bottom)
- Max Neuhaus
Max-Feed, 1965
 Symbols transferred to
 acetate
 45.5 x 30.2 cm
 Box 24, folder E-75.
 John Cage Notations
 Project Collection, Cage
 Notations. Charles
 Deering McCormick
 Library of Special
 Collections & University
 Archives, Northwestern
 University Libraries
 pp. 140–41

Nye Ffarrabas [Bici Hendricks]
Egg/Time Event, 1966
 Ink stamped on plaster
 9.5 × 8.9 × 9.2 cm
 John Hendricks
 Collection
 p. 183 (bottom)

Object Poems, 1966
 Poster, offset print
 55.5 × 75.5 cm
 The Emily Harvey
 Foundation, New York
 p. 180

Claes Oldenburg
Study for a Large Outdoor Sculpture in the Form of a Clothespin, 1972–1973
 Painted cardboard
 123.2 × 17.1 × 41.9 cm
 Des Moines Art Center
 Permanent Collections;
 Gift of Mrs. E. T. Meredith, Jr., 1980.31
 p. 146

Claes Oldenburg
Proposed Monument for the Intersection of Canal Street and Broadway, N.Y.C. – Block of Concrete, Inscribed with the Names of War Heroes, 1965
 Crayon and watercolor on paper
 40.6 × 30.5 cm
 p. 150

Benjamin Patterson
Puzzle Poems, 1962
 Collage on cardboard; cylindrical tin box of liquorice candies
 Puzzle: 12.1 × 16.5 cm; box diameter: 9.8 cm
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 p. 187

Jackson Pollock
Free Form, 1946
 Oil on canvas
 48.9 × 35.5 cm
 The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection. Acc. no.: 645.1967
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York
 p. 113

Prospectus of *The Four Suits*, 1965
 Offset print
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 pp. 101–103

Takako Saito
Ball Game, c. 1966
 Wood box with glass sides, containing ball bearings
 9.6 × 9.6 × 7.6 cm
 The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift. Acc. no.: 3753.2008
 Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York
 p. 183 (top)

Aram Saroyan
Top, 1965
 Print
 28 × 22 cm
 Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA
 p. 190

Carolee Schneemann
Music Box Music, 1964–1965
 Wood, glass, oil paint, music boxes
 Two parts:
 30.5 × 16.5 × 22.9 cm;
 28 × 39.4 × 25.4 cm
 Emily Harvey Gallery Archive, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles
 p. 186

Terry Schutte
 Installation photos of *Object Poems*, 1966
 Black-and-white photographs from contact sheets
 Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Archiv Sohm
 p. 193

Kurt Schwitters
Merzbau, 1933
 Installation
 Variable dimensions
 Photo: Wilhelm Redemann
 WV-Nr. 1199 (Abb. 19)
 Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany
 p. 143

Hans Sohm
Dick Higgins at the Something Else Press Office, 238 West 22nd Street, New York, 1969
 Box 102, folder 20. Dick Higgins Archive, MS132. Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections & University Archives, Northwestern University Libraries
 pp. 2–3

“Something Else Gallery,” announcement published in the *Chelsea-Clinton News*, New York, NY, April 14, 1966
 The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
 p. 33

Gertrude Stein
*Before the Flowers
of Friendship Faded
Friendship Faded,
Written on a Poem by
Georges Hugnet, 1931*
(1st ed.)
Book
30 cm
Paris: Plain Edition
Yale Collection of
American Literature,
Beinecke Rare Book
and Manuscript Library
p. 157 (left)

Gertrude Stein
How to Write, 1931
(1st ed.)
Book
17 cm
Paris: Plain Edition
Yale Collection of
American Literature,
Beinecke Rare Book
and Manuscript Library
p. 156 (right)

Gertrude Stein
Lucy Church, Amiably,
1930 (1st ed.)
Book
19 cm
Paris: Imprimerie
"Union"
Yale Collection of
American Literature,
Beinecke Rare Book
and Manuscript Library
p. 156 (left)

Gertrude Stein
*Before the Flowers
of Friendship Faded
Friendship Faded,*
Something Else Press,
1972
Dust jacket test print
Box 61, folder 8. Dick
Higgins Archive,
MS132. Charles Deering
McCormick Library of
Special Collections &
University Archives,
Northwestern University
Libraries
p. 157 (right)

Jacques Strauch
*Filliou and Brecht in
front of La Cédille, 1966*
Black-and-white
photograph
Arch. dép. des Alpes-
Maritimes, 30 Fi 3510
(fonds Jacques et
Michou Strauch)
p. 123

Jacques Strauch
La Cédille qui sourit
(interior view with AX
wall piece), 1966
Gelatin silver print
20.1 × 25.2 cm
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
2998.2008.1
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 130 (top)

Jacques Strauch
La Cédille qui sourit
(interior view), 1966
Gelatin silver print
20.1 × 25.2 cm
The Gilbert and Lila
Silverman Fluxus
Collection Gift. Acc. no.:
2998.2008.2
Museum of Modern Art
(MoMA), New York
p. 130 (bottom)

Marie Tavroges Stilkind
Ray in New York, c. 1970
Collection of Black
Mountain College
Museum + Arts Center
Gift of Marie Tavroges
Stilkind
p. 93

Stock certificate
of Something Else
Press, Inc., 1965
The Emily Harvey
Foundation, New York
p. 18

The New York
Mycological Society
member list, 1965
Getty Research
Institute, Los Angeles
(870613)
p. 163

The RAND Corporation
*A Million Random Digits
and 100,000 Normal
Deviates, 1955*
Book
27 cm
Biblioteca de la
Facultad de Estudios
Estadísticos,
Universidad
Complutense de Madrid
p. 115

Unknown photographer
Philip Corner's *Piano
Activities*, performed
by Philip Corner,
George Maciunas,
Emmett Williams,
Benjamin Patterson,
Dick Higgins, and
Alison Knowles during
Fluxus Internationale
Festpiele Neuerster
Musik, Hörsaal des
Städtischen Museums,
Wiesbaden, Germany,
September 1, 1962
Gelatin silver print
17.6 × 23.9 cm

The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift. Acc. no.: 2694.2008. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York p. 53

Unknown photographer
Opening of Alice Hutchins's show, Something Else Gallery, 1968
Gelatin silver print
19.68 × 26.67 cm
20.32 × 25.4 cm
University of Iowa
p. 207 (top, middle)

Unknown photographer
Something Else Press, Inc., warehouse in Barton, VT, c. 1973
35 mm color slide
Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (870613)
p. 22

Unknown photographer
Photographs taken during the mycological expedition at Gate Hill, c. 1973
Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (870613)
pp. 161, 162

Wolf Vostell
T.O.T.: Technological Oak Tree, 1972
Collage and ink on paper
130 × 60 cm approx.
Hannah B Higgins & Joseph B Reinstein Collection
pp. 214–15

Wolf Vostell and Dick Higgins (eds.)
Fantastic Architecture, 1970
Book
20.5 × 15 cm
The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
p. 142

Robert Watts
Chrome Hamburger, 1963
Silver chrome on plastic
8.5 × 10.3 × 6.5 cm
Museum Ostwall at the Dortmunder U, Dortmund
Collection Braun/Lieff, Dortmund
p. 182 (top)

Robert Watts
Untitled (Dispenser of the 23rd Psalm), c. 1960
Cast-iron string dispenser, containing metal tape measure with typewriting on paper,
29 × 16.1 × 16.1 cm
The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift. Acc. no.: 2786.2008. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York
p. 182 (bottom)

Richard Willhelm and Cary F. Baynes
I-Ching, or The Book of Changes, 1950
New York: Pantheon Books
p. 114

Emmett Williams
Fish Tank, published in *Books*, Jerome B. Agel, ed., April 1966
The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
p. 34

Emmett Williams
White for Governor Wallace, 1963
Ink on paper
21.5 × 34 cm
Box 17, folder B-73.
John Cage Notations Project Collection, Cage Notations. Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections & University Archives, Northwestern University Libraries
p. 136

Bill Wilson
Alison Knowles with Marcel Duchamp, New York City, 1967
Collection of Alison Knowles
p. 132

With the compliments of the editors, n.d.
Business card included in the books published by the Something Else Press
The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York
p. 216

**CHAIRMAN
OF MUSEO NACIONAL
CENTRO DE ARTE
REINA SOFÍA**

Acting Minister of Culture and
Sport
Miquel Iceta i Llorens

**DIRECTOR
OF THE MUSEUM**

Manuel Segade

**ROYAL BOARD
OF TRUSTEES**

Honorary Presidency
Their Majesties the King and
Queen of Spain

President

Ángeles González-Sinde Reig

Vice President

Beatriz Corredor Sierra

Ex Officio Trustees

Isaac Sastre de Diego
(Acting Secretary General of
Culture)

María Pérez Sánchez-Laulhé
(Undersecretary for Culture
and Sport)

María José Gualda Romero
(State Secretary for Budgets
and Expenditure)

Isaac Sastre de Diego
(Director General of Fine Arts)

Manuel Segade
(Museum Director)

Julián González Cid
(Museum Deputy Director of
Management)

Felipe Faci Lázaro
(Regional Minister of
Education, Culture and Sport
of Aragon)

Ana Vanesa Muñoz Muñoz
(Regional Deputy Minister of
Culture and Sport of
Castilla-La Mancha)

Horacio Umpierrez Sánchez
(Regional Deputy Minister of
Culture and Cultural Heritage
of the Government of the
Canary Islands)

Pilar Lladó Arburúa
(President of Fundación
Amigos del Museo Nacional
Centro de Arte Reina Sofía)

Elective Trustees

Pedro Argüelles Salaverría
Ana Patricia Botín Sanz de
Sautuola O'Shea (Banco
Santander)
Ignacio Garralda Ruiz de
Velasco
(Fundación Mutua Madrileña)
Juan-Miguel Hernández León
Antonio Huertas Mejías
(FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE)
Carlos Lamela de Vargas
Isabelle Le Galo Flores
Rafael Mateu de Ros
Ute Meta Bauer
Marta Ortega Pérez (Inditex)
María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
Ana María Pilar Vallés Blasco

Honorary Trustees

Pilar Citoler Carilla
Guillermo de la Dehesa
Óscar Fanjul Martín
Ricardo Martí Fluxá
Claude Ruiz Picasso †
Carlos Solchaga Catalán

Secretary

Guadalupe Herranz Escudero

Advisory Committee

María de Corral
João Fernandes
Amanda de la Garza
Inés Katzenstein
Chus Martínez
Gloria Moure
Vicente Todolí

**Architecture Advisory
Committee**

Juan Herreros
Andrés Jaque
Marina Otero Verzier

**MUSEO NACIONAL
CENTRO DE ARTE
REINA SOFÍA**

Director
Manuel Segade

Deputy Managing Director
Julián González Cid

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Head of Protocol
Diego Escámez

EXHIBITIONS

Head of Exhibitions
Teresa Velázquez

**General Coordinator
of Exhibitions**
Beatriz Velázquez

COLLECTIONS

Head of Collections
Rosario Peiró

**Head of the Office of the
Registrar**
María Aranzazu Borraz de
Pedro

RESTORATION

Head of Restoration
Jorge García

EDITORIAL ACTIVITIES

Head of Editorial Activities
Alicia Pinteño Granado

Head of Digital Projects
Olga Sevillano

PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

**Head of Cultural Activities and
Audiovisual Program**
Chema González

**Head of the Library and
Documentation Centre**
Isabel Bordes

Head of Education
María Acaso

**DEPUTY DIRECTORATE
MANAGEMENT**

**Acting Deputy Director
of Management**
Sara Horganero

Technical Adviser
Ángel J. Moreno Prieto

**Head of Area of Support to the
Managing Office**
Guadalupe Herranz Escudero

**Head of the Economic
Department**
Beatriz Guijarro

**Head of Strategic
Development, Business and
Audiences**
Paloma Flórez Plaza

**Head of Architecture,
Sustainable Development and
General Services**
Francisco Holguín Aguilera

Head of Security
Juan Manuel Mouriz Llanes

This publication is edited on the occasion of the investigation *Call it something else. Something Else Press, Inc. (1963-1974)*, presented in the homonymous exhibition organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía from September 27, 2023, to January 22, 2024.

EXHIBITION

Curators

Alice Centamore
Christian Xatrec

Project Director

Teresa Velázquez

Coordination

Fernando López
María del Castillo

Coordination Support

Íñigo Gómez
Fernanda Dávila

Exhibition Design

Tatiana Tarragó

Management

Natalia Guaza

Administrative Support

Nieves Fernández

Registrar

Antón López
Camino Prieto

Conservation

Conservator in charge:

Eugenia Gimeno

Conservators:

Juan Antonio Sáez Dégano

Virginia Porres

Paula Ercilla

María García

Begoña Juárez

Translations

Jaime Blasco

Installation Coordinators

Beatriz Velázquez

Nieves Sánchez

Shipping

Técnica de transportes
Internacionales TTI s.a.u.

Installation

Intervento 2 S.L.

Insurance

Hiscox S.A.

PUBLICATION

Publication edited by the
Editorial Activities Department
of Museo Reina Sofía

Editorial Director

Alicia Pinteño Granado

Editorial Coordination

Mercedes Pineda

Translations

From Spanish to English:
Jethro Soutar

Copyediting

Tess Rankin

Graphic Design

Manolo García nz

Production Management

Julio López

Administrative Support

Victoria Wizner

Plates

Museoteca

Printing and Binding

Willing Press

© Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2023

The essays
LOGO CREATIVE COMMONS



© All images, their authors

© George Brecht, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023
© Association Marcel Duchamp / VEGAP, 2023
© R. Hamilton. All Rights Reserved, VEGAP, 2023
© Addi, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023
© 2023 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, VEGAP, Madrid
© Takako Saito, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023
© Carolee Schneemann, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023
© Merz, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023
© Wolf Vostell, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023

Estate of Ben Patterson
Estate of Robert Filliou
© John Giorno Foundation
© Ray Johnson Estate, New York
© Marianne Filliou
© J. Paul Getty Trust
© Barbara Moore
© Jacques Strauch
Photograph by Peter Moore; © Northwestern University
© The Estate of Alice Hutchins
© The Estate of Max Neuhaus
© The Estate of Dick Higgins and the Something Else Press
© The Estate of Emmett Williams
© Robert Watts Estate
© Bill Wilson
The Estate of R. Buckminster Fuller
Ulrik, New York and the Estate of Bettina Grossman
Used by permission of Anne Tardos, Executor of the Estate of Jackson Mac Low

We are committed to respecting the intellectual property rights of others. While all reasonable efforts have

been made to state copyright holders of material used in this work, any oversight will be corrected in future editions, provided the Publishers have been duly informed.

ISBN: 978-84-8026-648-2
NIPO: 828-23-008-5
D.L.: M-26905-2023

Catalogue of official publications
<https://cpage.mpr.gob.es>

This book has been printed in:

Inside:
Classic Rough 100 gr
Woodstock rosa 80 gr
Flyleaves:
Classic Rough 120 gr
Cover:
Classic Rough 120 gr
168 x 230 mm
pp. 260

Photographic credits

© 2023 Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, pp. 53, 56, 87, 113, 124–127, 130, 131, 134 (bottom), 144, 145, 151, 172 (top), 182 (bottom), 183 (top), 188, 196, 197, 217, 260
© 2023 Photo Scala, Florence/bpk, Bildagentur fuer Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin, p. 143
© Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais - © image Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, pp. 128–129
Alice Hutchins Papers, Special Collections & Archives, The University of Iowa Libraries, pp. 207, 208
Archivo Lafuente, pp. 174–175
Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections & University Archives, Northwestern University Libraries, pp. 2–3, 42–43, 104, 105, 108, 135–141, 157 (right), 176–177
Robert Chase Heischman, pp. 214–215

Collection Marcel Alococq, Nice, p. 89 (top)
Collection of Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, p. 93
Collection of Tara Goings, pp. 201, 202
Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, p. 203
Courtesy, The Estate of R. Buckminster Fuller, pp. 148–149
Philadelphia Museum of Art, p. 112
Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, pp. 22, 66, 84–85, 88, 161–163,
Jackson Mac Low Papers.
MSS 180. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego Library, p. 152
Ilmari Kalkkinen © MAMCO, Geneva, p. 172
Lauren Karazija, p. 212
Dorine van der Klei, p. 55
Tamara Lalanne Photography, p. 209
Fabio Mantegna, p. 111
Maria und Walter Schnepel Foundation, Budapest, pp. 90, 91, 94–98, 192
Merrily Peebles, California, p. 210
Courtesy of Primary Information, p. 190
Rich Sanders, Des Moines, p. 146
Jürgen Spiler, Dortmund, p. 182 (top)
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Archiv Sohm, pp. 12–13, 42–43, 93, 147, 173, 195
Jacques et Michou Strauch, p. 123
The Emily Harvey Foundation, New York pp. 18, 22, 34, 86, 92, 100–103, 106, 107, 110, 118–122, 134 (top), 142, 160, 164, 178–180, 186, 187, 191, 194, 200 206, 216, front and cover pages
The Ray Johnson Estate, p. 99
Philippe Vermes, p. 211
Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, pp. 156, 157 (left)
Marcelo Yáñez-Arroyo, pp. 109, 153–155

The Museo Reina Sofía would like to thank first of all the Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, which lent to this exhibition the largest known collection of the Something Else Press output, part of the Emily Harvey Foundation Collection.

Thanks are also due to Jessica Higgins and Hannah B. Higgins, coexecutors of the Estate of Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles and her Studio, and Joshua Selman.

To the following people and institutions who have helped this project to materialize:

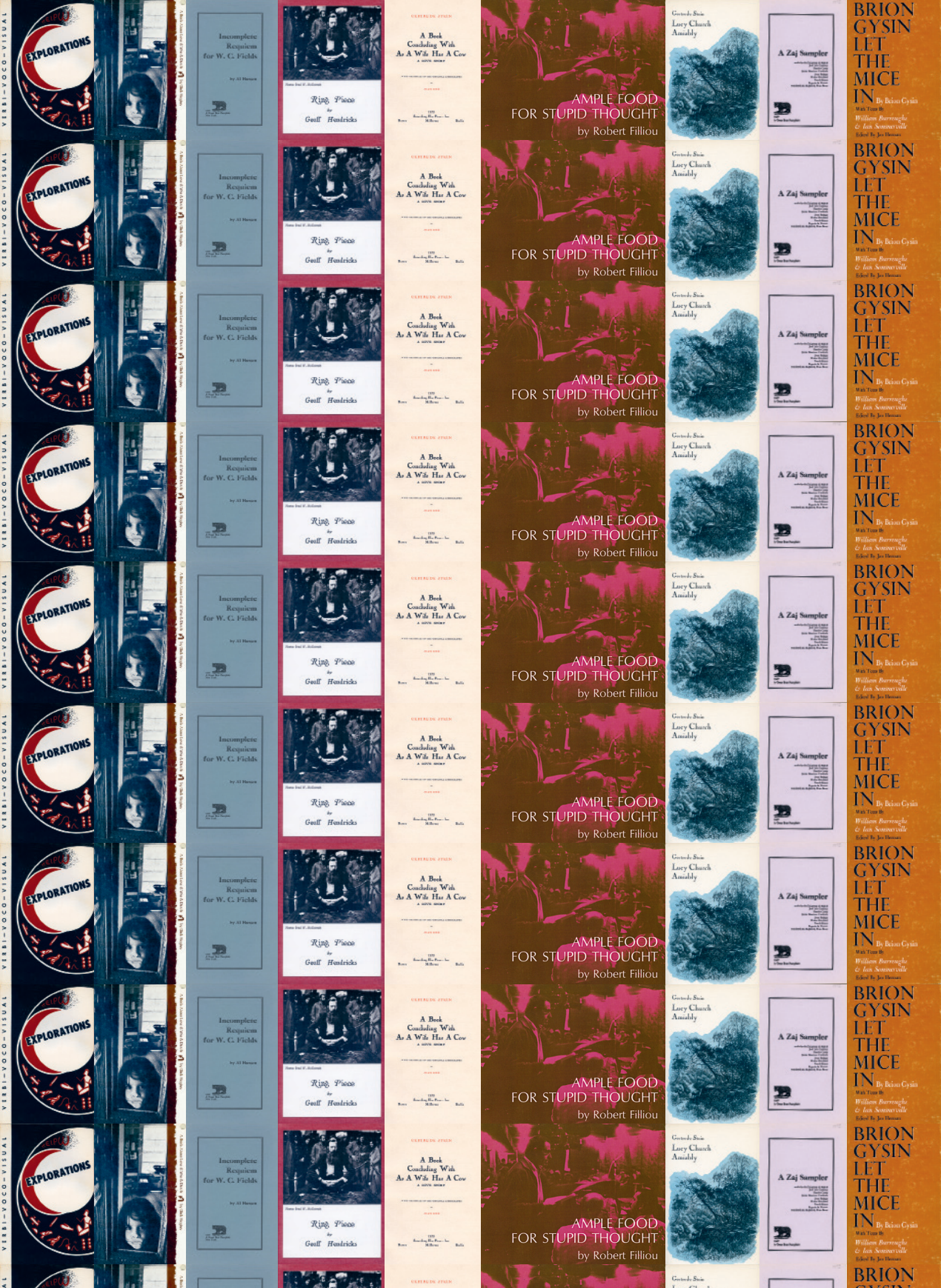
Archives départementales des Alpes Maritimes
Bibbe Hansen & Sean Carrillo
Biblioteca Nacional de España
Biblioteca Facultad Estadística U.C.M.
Biblioteca/Centro de apoyo a la investigación de la Fundación Juan March
PPOW Gallery
Clarinda Mac Low
Mordecai-Mark Mac Low
Claudia Hutchins-Puéchavy
Ben Vautier
Eva Vautier
Dorine van der Klei
Estate of Geoffrey Hendricks
Fundación José Ortega y Gasset-Gregorio Marañón
Getty Research Institute
Fondazione Mudima
Granary Books
Henry Flynt
HR MEDIA
Irmeline Lebeer, Hilma Czekelius
Joseph B Reinstein
Jon & Joanne Hendricks
John Giorno Foundation
Katherine, Ara and Andrew Wilson
MAMCO (Mussée d'art moderne et contemporain) Ginebra
Maria und Walter Schepel Kulturstiftung
Merrily Peebles Fine Art
Musée national d'art moderne-Centre Pompidou
Bibliothèque Kandinsky
Museum Ostwall Im Dortmunder U
Northwestern University Libraries
Other Minds
Primary Information
Ray Johnson Estate
Mme. Mariane Filliou-Staffeldt
Russell Sage College Libraries
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Shigeko Kubota Video Art Foundation
Sid Sachs
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart / Archive Sohm
Stedelijk Museum
The Estate of Jackson Mac Low
The Museum of Modern Art
The New York Public Library
Thomas Hutchins
Tomas Schmit Archiv
Ucla, Library of Special Collections
University of California San Diego
University of Iowa Special Collections

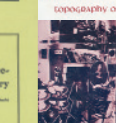
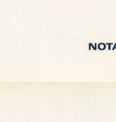
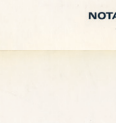
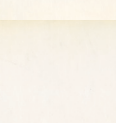
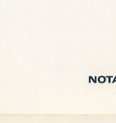
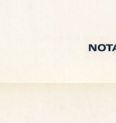
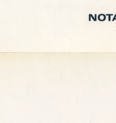
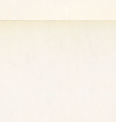
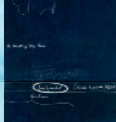
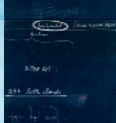
The curators would also like to thank:

Alan Akers, Darsie Alexander, Marcel Alocco, Charles Amirkhanyan, Alain Arias-Misson, John Armleder, Peter Balestrieri, Ana Baliza, Norman Ballard, Reid Ballard, Frances Beatty, Michael Berger, Tobias Berger, Jennifer Bertani, Julien Bismuth, René Block, Ina Blom, Yve-Alain Bois, Lisa Brainard, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, Enrico Camporesi, Luciano Chessa, Rachel Churner, Lynda Claassen, Anastasia Clarke, Steve Clay, Thorbjørn Christiansen, Philip Corner, Charles Curtis, Katherine Danalakis, Eric de Backer, Elizabeth Dee, Meghan A. DellaCrosse, Jacques Donguy, Jennifer Donovan, Martie Edelheit, Lucia Fabio, Patricia Falguières, Gerard Forde, Peter Franck, Rébecca François, Ken Friedman, Lauren Fulton, Paul-Armand Gette, Mica Gherghescu, Malcolm Goldstein, Ted Gordon, Cecilia Grönberg and Jonas Magnusson, Hélène Guénin, Jan Herman, Jonathan Hiam, James Hoff, Anthony Huberman, Billie Hutchins Maciunas, Maria Ilario, Maud Jacquin, Nicole Kaack, John Klacsmann, Scott Krafft, Élisabeth Lebovici, Patrice Lerochereuil, Iris Lezak, Nina Mamikunian, Gracie Mansion, Gilles Marquenie, Henry Martin, Guy Mathieu & Geraldine Schwemlin, Solal Mazeran, Larry Miller, Barbara Moore, Charles Morrow, Karen Moss, Annja Müller-Alsbach, Lucy Mulrone, Maartje Oldenburg, Nathaniel Otting, Barbro Patterson, Pierre Paulin, Lisa Pearson, Jeffrey Perkins, Singrid P. Perry, Andreas Petrossiant, Amy Plumb Oppenheim, Sébastien Pluot, Jonathan Poutier, Marcia Reed, Joan Retallack, Anne-Laure Riboulet, Shelley Rice, Julia Robinson, Lia Robinson, Amandine Rousguisto, Emily Schecter, Berit Schuck, Sara Seagull, Olivia Shao, João Simões, P. Adams Sitney, Lauren Smith, Jeremy Strauch, Sur Rodney Sur, Christine Tilleke, Michael von Uchtrup, Zach Vanes, Regina Vertone, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Kenneth White, Barbara Wien, Martha Wilson, Nicole Woods, Marcelo Gabriel Yáñez, Matvei Yankelevich, Anne Zeitz.

And to those who wish to remain anonymous
Finally, we thank the authors of the texts in this catalog
for their contribution to the project.

Something Else Press
1964-1974





NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

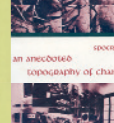
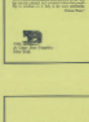
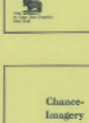
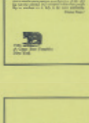
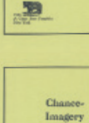
NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage

NOTATIONS
John Cage



an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

an anecdotal
topography of chance

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The Making of Americans

The image displays a dense grid of 100 small book covers, organized into 10 rows and 10 columns. Each row contains a variety of book covers, including:

- Row 1:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 2:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 3:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 4:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 5:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 6:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 7:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 8:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 9:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).
- Row 10:** 'The Mythological Travels...' (black and white portrait), 'Bio-Music' (green waveform), 'Manford L. Eaton' (black and white portrait), 'Dick's 100 Amusements' (black and white illustration of a person), 'The Art of the Book' (black and white illustration of a person), 'A Filio's Sampler' (pink cover with a small illustration), and 'Store Days' (colorful illustration of people).

Something Else Press, Inc. 1963–1974



Financiado por
la Unión Europea
NextGenerationEU



Plan de Recuperación,
Transformación y Resiliencia



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA



MINISTERIO
DE CULTURA
Y DEPORTE

MUSEO NACIONAL
CENTRO DE ARTE
REINA SOFÍA