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# Marina Abramović and Ulay

## *Breathing In / Breathing Out, 1977*

In the performance *Breathing In / Breathing Out*, recorded in April 1977 at the Studenski Kulturni Centar in Belgrade, it seems at first as if we are witnesses to an intimate kiss. Marina Abramović and Ulay, at the time lovers and an artist couple, kneel in front of each other on the floor, their mouths pressed together, their noses plugged with cigarette filters, mutually dependent on each other's breath, in the greatest sensorimotor resonance with one another. Under increasing physical exertion, Abramović and Ulay breathe loudly in and out. They share their breath until the oxygen content of the air is depleted. After nineteen minutes, on the verge of physical collapse, they let go of each other, and the performance ends. The attempt to connect with the life of the respective other in the most basic life function—breathing—turns into all-consuming, life-threatening self-sabotage. Just like any form of symbiotic interrelatedness, there is the potential threat of self-extinction. In *Breathing In / Breathing Out*, the artist couple negotiates the utopia of the hermaphroditic union of the sexes—to the point of latent mutual annihilation.

Between 1975 and 1988, Marina Abramović and Ulay collaborated in numerous performances, which explored physical and psychological liminal scenarios through the relentless use of their bodies, thus transforming them into vessels for questions about (gender) identity, sexuality, and human existence. *Breathing In / Breathing Out* was performed twice. On the first occasion, Ulay began by inhaling oxygen; the second time, at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in November 1977, he commenced the performance by exhaling carbon dioxide.

Heike Eipeldauer and Franz Thalmair

# Anna and Bernhard Blume

## *Flugversuch*, 1977–78

“We” is a flexible concept. It can refer to everything from political movements all the way to the epicenter of petit-bourgeois life, in West Germany and elsewhere: marriage. This social institution—as successful as it is restrictive—was the site from which, beginning in the nineteen-sixties, one of the most anarchistic oeuvres of post-war German art emerged: that of the Cologne-based artist couple Anna and Bernhard Blume, who had studied together at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. As so often, their five-part tableau *Flugversuch* (Attempt at Flight; 1977–78) makes use of the early incarnations of the lower-middle-class style that came to be known as “Gelsenkirchener Barock”:<sup>1</sup> tapestries, rugs, vases, and, most importantly, huge plush sofas. The latter serves—depending on the medium in which one situates this work, which hovers between photography and performance—as a ramp or plinth for humankind’s dream of flying (which in psychology bears sexual connotations), as executed in the living room. Five photographic moments of lived entropy, ecstatic instants of shared liberation in the middle of a historical era characterized, following Rainer Werner Fassbinder, as “leaden.” A series of works rendered in black and white that also possess a certain serial character. At the same time, this series seems to make fun of the kinds of systems of rules that were cultivated by Bernd and Hilla Becher, another artist couple from the Rhine region, whose work could be viewed as a kind of counter-model to that of the Blumes.

Martin Germann

1 Literally: Gelsenkirchen Baroque. The term references the working-class city of Gelsenkirchen and is an ironic designation for affordable twentieth-century knock-offs of antique furniture.

# VALIE EXPORT

## *Facing a Family*, 1971

The Austrian television audience members watching the youth show *Kontakt* on Sunday, February 28, 1971, were confronted with a disquieting feature toward the end of the program: sitting opposite them was a family, who in turn were staring at a television screen. The television set itself was not visible and the program this other family was watching (some commercials and *Sportschau*) was only audibly present. This approximately five-minute video was aired under the title *Isolation*. It was a work commissioned by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation. According to VALIE EXPORT's (unfortunately unrealizable) concept, it was to be broadcast without comment during the evening news: "You're sitting in front of the TV, and the news anchor is reading his report, when all of a sudden you see a family representing you while you're looking back at the family."<sup>1</sup> EXPORT describes the work as an "Expanded Movie, TV action, imaginary screen"<sup>2</sup> and included it in her list of works under the title *Facing a Family*. In her intervention, the collaborative element manifests itself simultaneously in two ways: first, by thematizing the loss of communication (due to television) in the small social unit of the family, and second, through the participation of a much larger collective, the mass audience of that mass medium, television.

Gabriele Jutz

1 Brigitta Burger-Utzer and Sylvia Szely, "In der Erweiterung liegt die Möglichkeit zur Veränderung: Gespräch mit VALIE EXPORT" (December 2008), in *Export Lexikon*:

*Chronologie der bewegten Bilder*, ed. Sylvia Szely (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 2007), pp. 201–28, here: p. 222.

2 Szely, p. 123.

# Rimma Gerlovina and Valerij Gerlovin

## *Costumes, 1977*

Art is contemporary when its images and concepts speak across historical differences into the present day. This work by Rimma Gerlovina and Valerij Gerlovin is emphatically contemporary. The artist couple were part of the Moscow Conceptualists, and their performance *Costumes*, from 1977, deepened their ongoing work with linguistic semiotic systems and their own bodies. The work's photographic documentation, a series of small-format black-and-white photographs, shows the artists in an apparently private scene in natural surroundings, clothed in burlap bags with naked bodies painted on them; they appear as Adam and Eve in the midst of a group of picnicking adults and children. Apart from the iconography's religious dimension, it is the construction of a "we" articulated from within the intimacy of the couple relationship that makes the work insistent and precarious. Considering the context in which Gerlovina and Gerlovin made their work—that of political restrictions on public life, of unfreedom, and censorship—their collaborative togetherness must also be read as a space of possibility for political community and resistance. Only a short time later, both artists left the Soviet Union; in retrospect the performance seemed to them prophetic of their departure and exile. Their collective action, meanwhile, points to a provisional and contingent space of intersubjectivity, one that incorporates our own reference points across the historical distance.

Sebastian Mühl

# Gilbert & George

## *Dead Boards No. 6 Sculpture, 1976*

The picture consists of sixteen fields arranged in a pattern that follows the logic of a sudoku. In each row, there are four black-and-white photographs separated by a thin black bar, two of which feature men in interiors with large windows and wooden wall paneling. The other two are close-ups of worn floorboards. These surfaces are set in gray: almost monochrome images that appear like tombstones or blanks in a slider puzzle. Their chiaroscuro treatment is reminiscent of Hitchcock and film noir, while the figures' appearance evokes fashion and melancholy. Two men can be distinguished: one wearing glasses with his arm at an angle; the other has black hair. Despite changing positions, they always look pensive, forming a pair in the mirroring of the views. The two bring to mind artists pondering their fate in an empty attic, or perhaps businessmen or politicians preparing themselves privately, turning to the pale light. The back views and interiors conjure images of Romanticism, with cold fireplaces, barren rooms, and bright windows. Well-fitting suits testify to fashion awareness and British style; the emptiness and sparseness admonish transience and death. Gilbert & George have been working together on their photomontages since the early nineteen-seventies: "We are two people but one artist."

Thomas D. Trummer

## Natalia LL

### *Intimate Recording (Kosmo)*, 1969 (2013)

One of the particularities of postwar Polish was its perpetual subjugation to the vagaries of shifting cultural politics ranging from official support to prohibition. Natalia LL (Lach-Lachowicz), along with her husband, Andrzej Lachowicz, and Zbigniew Dłubak, came of artistic age in the relatively tolerant late nineteen-sixties, where Conceptualism was a “tolerated” variant of the neo-avant-garde. Based in Wrocław from 1971, she founded the gallery PERMAFO, which lasted until 1987. At the time, and for many years subsequently, Natalia LL defined her work in the compass of Conceptualism, semiotics, and the criticism of consumerism but later came to identify her work as feminist, organizing the first Polish all-women artists exhibition in 1978. The series of early photographic and video works entitled *Consumer Art* (1971–73), for which she is best known, include photos and videos in which young, attractive women voluptuously consume pizza, pop-sicles, hotdogs, and, most notoriously, a banana. But in even earlier works (and even more scandalously in the Polish context) NLL produced a series of photographic multiples made with a self-timer depicting a couple having intercourse, their heads cropped out, purportedly NLL and her husband. More clinical than erotic, soberly documentary in its seriality and multiplicity, *Intimate Recording (Kosmo)* retains its link with Conceptualism, but its subject—corporeality and sexuality—suggests NLL’s later projects in which the feminine and desire would come to play an increasing role. Subsequently, her practice, in performance and other media, expanded to explore the realms of unconscious, dream states, aging, and mortality.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau

## Art & Language

*Index II: (Now They Are), 1991–92*

*Now They Are Elegant Again, 2002*

Collectivity was central to the conceptual British-North American collective Art & Language, whose work sat at the intersection of discussion, art theory, and text. Since their inception in the nineteen-sixties, their practice examined “the physical-object-naturalistic notion” and the idea of media or genre, so intertwined with the “institutional and economic framework conditions of the art world.” At times this involved a process of referentiality and the revisiting of canonical images, like the work of Courbet, which form the basics of the *Index: Now They Are* series. These are later works by the group, created between 1992 and 1993. These canvases took Gustav Courbet’s *The Origin of the World* (1866), once secretly owned by psychoanalyst and author Jacques Lacan, as a starting point. Here semen-like white paint is splattered over the female figure’s pubic hair so the final image resembles a tree or beard from other Courbet paintings. The subject’s hair, a signifier of desire, is equally defaced, concealed, and revealed. Seen through the gaze of contemporary feminism, the knowing jokes and Duchampian visual games feel a bit puerile in their approach. “Now they are” in Latin is *nunc sunt*, which sounds like *nun’s cunt*, for example, in English. Yet, like all their work, this seemingly playful work is deeply rooted in questioning the hierarchy of theory and all artistic endeavor.

Francesca Gavin

## Bruce Conner

### *HOMMAGE TO JAY DE FEO, 1958*

*HOMMAGE TO JAY DE FEO* is one of the first assemblages made by Bruce Conner. All the elements are intentionally combined, wrapped, and knotted in such a way that the garbage-like material exudes a fetishistic charge. The nude photograph of a woman, a paper cutting with dancing instructions for women, the nylon stocking, and the pearl bead refer to female erotic attraction. The work is dedicated to Jay DeFeo, an important painter in San Francisco who became famous for her monumental *The Rose*, which she worked on in Conner's neighborhood between 1958 and 1966. But Conner was not only impressed by how DeFeo transformed her surroundings and everyday life into a total work of art. He was also inspired by the urban environment of his district around Fillmore Street, which was declared a redevelopment area in the nineteen-fifties and sixties. The artist found his materials in its Victorian derelict buildings, but also in junk shops or the trash. *HOMMAGE TO JAY DE FEO* pays tribute to an artist befriended and cherished by Connor. The work also represents the strong bond of the small art scene on the West Coast and in San Francisco across the boundaries of literature, art, film, dance, and jazz. It translated family structures to friendships and networks. The protagonists lived and worked together in near proximity with open houses, in close artistic exchange, and in conscious rejection of the prospering art market on the East Coast. Both Conner and DeFeo shared this ideal of the Beat Generation. The fragile object made of old materials from *HOMMAGE TO JAY DE FEO* conveys this in an impressive way.

Barbara Engelbach

## Richard Hamilton and Dieter Roth

### *INTERFACES*, 1977

So many things can take shape during the holidays. In the summer of 1977, working in the art-historically charged town of Cadaqués (think Dalí, Duchamp, and many more), Dieter Roth and Richard Hamilton—who already had a significant history of collaborations, homages, gift giving, and of reworking and expanding upon each other’s work—produced two sets of thirty depictions of heads, made from all manner of materials and arranged into pairs. These sets reflected the way that the highly distinct facial features of the two artists had unintentionally crept into the works. Once exhibited, this body of work was complemented by the addition of photographic portraits, which reinforced the similarities. A third step occurred after a second exhibition, with another series of photographs being produced and painted over—by whose hand was irrelevant. The result was a series of intermediate, mediated faces. The 180 elements of the series were then framed and arranged into triptychs that do not so much demand devotion as testify to a friendship, although one not without the odd tussle.

The crucial element is the way that Hamilton and Roth come together: the central portraits seem to be lying in a festive double bed and are accompanied by counterparts. But the outside images bring the dissimilar counterpart closer. The balance of the two sides of the double portrait (him on the left, her on the right) are off kilter. When closed, they form a chiasmic head-to-head, but opening just one of the wings facilitates a momentary theater of identity. An interlocutor, multiplied and intertwined, structured as a triptych, *INTERFACES* has a dialogical structure that can repeatedly unfold and develop. The whole way through—because even the “first” works establish a broader context—it’s not only Roth and Hamilton who rear their heads but also Pablo Picasso (ca. 1907) and Jean Fautrier (1943–44), and Cuban heroes in the left wing. And as a whole, the work is reminiscent of Hans Memling, Piero della Francesca, or even Lucas Cranach, like an homage to the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. After all, there are never just two of us.

Edith Futscher

## Alison Knowles

### *Do You Remember (for Emmett Williams), 1968*

The phrase “Do you remember,” posed as a question, is more than just the title of a work by Emmett Williams, poet and publisher of Something Else Press. In 1966, Williams wrote a text using the technique of linguistic permutation which he dedicated to visual artist Alison Knowles. Equally, *Do You Remember* is more than just the title of a work by Alison Knowles, created two years later as a graphic interpretation of the poem and dedicated to its author. Knowles uses the rhythmic repetition and variation of visual design elements to incorporate the artistic methods of her counterpart into her own practice.

Going beyond the expression of mutual appreciation and respect for one another’s work, in employing the question “Do you remember?” the two Fluxus co-founders allow the readers and viewers of the respective works to participate in an intimate moment between two people who share a piece of common history. Knowles and Williams were both key members of the same creative scene, repeatedly performing together and warmly supporting each another. In their works, neither Williams nor Knowles reveal which specific memory they are referring to. This is ultimately irrelevant, however, for what is being expressed and what takes priority here are the moments of shared knowledge, mutual appreciation, collaboration, and complicity.

Heike Eipeldauer and Franz Thalmair

## Louise Lawler

### *(Jenny Holzer and Other Artists) Kelly Green, 1982*

In the framework of her first solo exhibition, *Arrangement of Pictures* at Metro Pictures New York in autumn 1982, Louise Lawler presented a group of photographs that featured different constellations of works by other artists, among them *(Jenny Holzer and Other Artists) Kelly Green*. On the monochrome surface, whose color tone is cited in the title, she groups together works by Jenny Holzer, Sherrie Levine, and Roy Lichtenstein, thus works by artist friends as well as artists associated with the gallery. Lawler herself becomes the curator who determines context, credits, and display while revealing the impact and meaning of artworks as variable values. On the level of the image as well as the title, she creates a complex web of questions about originality and authorship, selection and representation, embedding and appropriation. But above all, Lawler joins the chorus of her convened allies against the fiction of an autonomous artwork and formulates a plea for conceiving artistic practice as a relational process of collaborative action, productive affiliation, and complicit entanglements.

Verena Gamper

Stephen Prina

*Exquisite Corpse: The Complete Paintings of Manet*

148 of 556

*Départ du Vapeur de Folkestone*

(*The Departure of the Folkestone Boat*)

1869

O. Reinhart Collection, Winterthur, April 9, 1991

Starting in 1988, Stephen Prina's series *Exquisite Corpse: The Complete Paintings of Manet* refers to the oeuvre of painter Édouard Manet (1832–1883). Conceived in each case as a juxtaposition of two components, the left side shows a true-to-scale rendition of the format of the painting mentioned in the title; the picture is monochrome in a delicate sepia tone, the brush application clearly recognizable. On the right side, we see a kind of index of Manet's 556 paintings on a tiny scale, though these are also not reference illustrations—tellingly, it is the lithographic reproduction process that marks the difference to the painterly ductus. "A lot of people have tried to see in my drawings the image of a Manet painting. That's not a concern of mine. It's not image to image that I'm interested in, but labour to labour."<sup>1</sup> For Prina, processes of appropriation, recontextualization, and translation is thus a matter of relativizing the division of labor and authorship. The title also echoes the collaborative practice of the *cadavre exquis*, popular in the Surrealist context.

Naoko Kaltschmidt

1 Cited by Pedro de Llano, "Displacement and Translation in the Work of Stephen Prina," *Afterall*, September 2009, accessed April 27, 2020, <https://www.afterall.org/article/displacement.and.translation.in.the.work.of.stephen.prina>

## Robert Watts

### *Rembrandt Signature Chair, 1965/1990*

Robert Watts (1923–1988) is considered one of the most important protagonists of the Fluxus movement, but he also drew attention in the Pop Art context when he presented his neon objects at Galerie Ricke in Kassel in 1966. In contrast to Dan Flavin, who used industrially manufactured neon tubes, Watts was probably the first artist to design works using individually produced luminous glass tubes and to thus “draw with light,” so to speak. In his series of signatures of famous artists, such as Picasso or Duchamp, he made a critical statement toward the art market while combining the individuality of the lettering with modern technology, varying both the colors and the “handwriting.” Watts pursued a strategy of subversive poetry and simultaneously demonstrated the intentional anonymity of the artistic creator in the spirit of Fluxus. The (director’s) chair should turn Rembrandt into the director, as the artist wrote. Three series of neon sculptures were made in 1965, 1975, and 1982. The *Rembrandt Signature Chair* was not realized until 1990, based on preliminary drawings from 1965 and in collaboration with the artist’s estate.

Ingrid Pfeiffer

# Heimo Zobernig

## *Heimo Zobernig erklärt seinem Double, wie man eine Performance macht, 2008*

The video *Heimo Zobernig erklärt seinem Double, wie man eine Performance macht* (Heimo Zobernig Explains to His Double How to Do a Performance) documents a performance that took place at mumok on April 18, 2008, as part of the exhibition series *Nichts ISTAUFREGEND. Nichts IST SEXY. Nichts IST PEINLICH* (Nothing IS EXCITING. Nothing IS SEXY. Nothing IS EMBARRASSING).<sup>1</sup> Heimo Zobernig invited the artists Jakob Lena Knebl and Lone Haugaard Madsen to appear as his alter egos and, following a script that he had written, to reflect on the “possibilities and potential as well as currency and meaningfulness of performing as a visual artist.” (HZ) Zobernig, the artist and author, was not present.

From the outset, the almost one-hour performance has something improvised and unpredictable about it: Lone Haugaard Madsen (in one of Heimo Zobernig’s custom-made suits) and Jakob Lena Knebl (in gray thermal underwear) set up the scarce stage props: a table, two chairs, a step-ladder, and a 60-meter-long piece of curtain fabric (Redscreen Trevira CS, a material Zobernig often uses), which places the coming theater (and its concomitant illusionism) literally before our very eyes. Both performers move constantly, converse, or look bored, drink, smoke, and leaf through the script. They keep changing roles, sometimes they appear to be themselves (artists in their own right), then executors of the performance (and so doubles of Heimo Zobernig), reading out—not without irony—extracts from the concept text. Yet it remains unclear who is actually speaking here; the expectations aroused by the title are not fulfilled. We find ourselves once more in an “uncontrollable situation,”<sup>2</sup> in which the “authorship and originality of the explanations remain as unresolved as the question of whether it is possible, in this constellation, to successfully put aspects and fault lines of contemporary debates about performance art up for debate.”<sup>3</sup> This is how Heimo Zobernig wanted it in his concept.<sup>4</sup>

Maria Huber

1 *Nichts ISTAUFREGEND. Nichts IST SEXY. Nichts IST PEINLICH* took place from April 12 to 20, 2008, co-produced by mumok and Tanzquartier Wien. Concept by Tanja Widmann, curated by Achim Hochdörfer, Tanja Widmann (mumok), Sigrid Gareis, Martina Hochmuth, and Krassimira Kruschkova (Tanzquartier Wien).

2 Script by Heimo Zobernig, 2008.

3 Ibid.

4 A thorough analysis of the performance as well as the presentation of the video as a discrete work can be found in Yann Chateigné Tytelman, “Double Meaning: Bemerkungen zu *Heimo Zobernig erklärt seinem Double, wie man eine Performance macht*,” in *Heimo Zobernig*, exh. cat. (Klosterneuburg: Essl Museum, 2011), pp. 42–47.

# Secession, 1960s Viennese artist avant-garde, DIE DAMEN, VBKÖ

Many artists' groups and collectives use manifestos and programmatically staged photographs to define themselves and present themselves publicly. One famous example is the group picture of the Vienna Secession, taken at their 1902 Beethoven Exhibition. The exclusively male group presented themselves as progressive and unconventional—Klimt wearing a gown in the style of the dress reform movement, the other eleven artists in suits, all gathered around a rolled-up carpet or draped across it with a pointed languor. The image has been the subject of artistic reflection up to the present day.

Even years after the Secession's foundation in 1897, in one respect they had made no advances over more conservative groups—they continued to exclude women artists. They remained a men's club until after World War II.<sup>1</sup> In reaction to the widespread policy of exclusion that was practiced around the turn of the last century, Viennese women artists established the Association of Austrian Women Artists (VBKÖ). Between the group photo of the Secession and that of the Association's 2021 board lie 119 years—and enormous societal transformation, leading from an image of exclusively white men to one of four women artists—all people of color—who gaze self-confidently into the camera lens.

Such progress was hard won, something that is shown in the artistic action *Aus gegebenem Anlaß* (For Good Reason; 1988) by the artist group DIE DAMEN (THE LADIES). Their postcard formally and critically referenced a group photo from twenty years earlier, *WIR NICHT* (NOT US; 1968), which depicted the aspiring artists Steiger, Kalb, Pichler, Attersee, Graf, Wiener—and “Ingrid.” Irrespective of this politically enlightened group's artistic achievements—the photograph's title expresses their protest against Freddy Quinn's sarcastic and conservative pop song “Wir” (We)—their heedless disrespect toward the only woman artist present, Ingrid Schuppan-Wiener, remains. DIE DAMEN reacted to this in a self-consciously feminine way, witty, tender, yet razor sharp.

These examples of programmatic self-representation tell a story of tremendous artistic and societal development across the turbulent twentieth century and into our present. And the current appraisal also seeks to ask in which direction the “group photo”—our society—is headed. Will the protagonists of the near future include members of LGBTQ+ communities, artificial intelligences, or non-human organisms, of equal worth, photographed side by side?

Jeanette Pacher and Bettina Spörr

1 The tendency among twentieth-century avant-gardes to limit women's roles is impressively demonstrated by Anna Artaker in her work *Unbekannte Avantgarde* (Unknown Avant-garde; 2008), with which she re-establishes women artists' place in history.

## Secession (ed.)

### *Ver Sacrum*, 1898

The periodical *Ver Sacrum – Organ der Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs* (Organ of the Association of Fine Artists of Austria; published 1898–1903) served as another forum (in addition to exhibitions) in which the members of the Vienna Secession could distance themselves from the prevailing, traditional conception of art, especially the conservatism of the Vienna Künstlerhaus, by exploring alternative, new forms of presentation. The name *Ver Sacrum* (Latin for “sacred spring”) stands for renewal and new beginnings. With the periodical as a mouthpiece and a medium of distribution, the intention was to make art accessible to the broader public, in keeping with the slogan found in the foreword to the first edition: “art is a common good.” Members included Gustav Klimt, Koloman Moser, Alfred Roller, Josef Hoffmann, and Joseph Maria Olbrich, who, coming from various disciplines, contributed to the visual and intellectual tenor of the magazine with literary essays, woodcuts, lithographs, and drawings. *Ver Sacrum* was collaboratively produced—there were no fixed creative directors but a rotating group of various members who shared editorial duties differently for each edition. As such, *Ver Sacrum* can be understood as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, with the collective method of production also allowing for more emphasis to be afforded to social aspects.

The first edition of the magazine appeared in January 1898, the year the Vienna Secession was founded, before its first art exhibition opened that November. The numerous contributions by artists from other countries—which were published in the six years up to the final edition in 1903—are indicative of the Secessionists’ strong international connections.

Barbara Schneider

# Wiener Gruppe

## 2. *literarisches cabaret*, 1959

The Wiener Gruppe—consisting of H. C. Artmann, Friedrich Achleitner, Gerhard Rühm, Konrad Bayer, and Oswald Wiener—was an artistic group formed in the reactionary climate of postwar Austria in the nineteen-fifties, which, in keeping with historical avant-gardes, linked collective production with an aspiration for social transformation—in their case, through a fundamental critique of language. Inspired by political anarchism, Concrete poetry, Surrealism and Dada anti-art, Ludwig Wittgenstein's theories of language, the Lettristes, and the Oulipiens (members of Oulipo, an acronym for *Ouvroir de littérature potentielle* [Workshop for Potential Literature]), they adhered to a self-imposed imperative of form that declared everything to be literature: Oswald Wiener wrote formulaic poems, Konrad Bayer did math with syllables, and Gerhard Rühm transferred the principles of serial music to language and—in an anticipation of later Conceptual Art—signed blotting paper, family notices, and flyers. The two editions of the legendary *literarische cabaret* (Literary Cabaret) of 1958 and 1959 formed a climax in the creative work of the Wiener Gruppe. Achleitner, Bayer, Rühm, and Wiener conceived review-like collages that deconstructed traditional ways of looking at art with anarchist aplomb. The programmatic collective working method united voices from different artistic fields into a transmedial and process-oriented performative approach to counter a perceived threatening, unartistic outside world.

Brigitte Huck

Otto Muehl

Walter Pichler (poster)

*Plakat: Zock Fest, Gasthaus Grünes Tor, 1967*

*Zock* was the title of a radically anarchistic program proclaimed in early 1967 by Otto Muehl and Oswald Wiener. Art as sociopolitical agitation was to be intensified much further than had hitherto been the case with the Actionists. The short life of this incendiary initiative manifested in two public actions in April 1967 and in three editions of the manifesto *Zock—Aspekte einer Totalrevolution* (*Zock—Aspects of a Total Revolution*) in 1968, 1970, and 1971.

The emphatically proclaimed project of a “total revolution” had its first public manifestation in the action *Zock Exercises* on April 17, 1967, at Galerie nächst St. Stephan in Vienna. Billed as “Omo Super Materialaktion Bodylyrik,” it featured Muehl, Peter Weibel, and Wiener, the latter declaiming the manifesto *Zock an alle* (*Zock to All*). Three days later, the *Zock Fest* took place in the club room called Grünes Tor on Vienna’s Lerchenfelderstraße. Otto Muehl and Hermann Nitsch, who participated on behalf of the Actionists, were joined by other representatives of the Vienna art scene, in particular writers such as Gerhard Rühm and Oswald Wiener. The festival was advertised with posters by the artist Walter Pichler. In a heated atmosphere, the participants performed a series of revue-like numbers. Gerhard Rühm alias “Gustav Werwolf” opened the evening with the speech-act performance *Gusch* (Shut Up). Later, Oswald Wiener alias “Garth mit extra Fleischkraft” (Garth with extra meat power) heralded the *Zock* manifesto while throwing dumplings into the audience. He was followed by painter Christian Ludwig Attersee, who began to inflate a giant rubber cushion and decorate it with sparklers. Then “Omo Super & His Big Band” (Muehl and the Direct Art Group) threw themselves into a convulsive body performance before smashing kitchen furnishings to pieces in the framework of a “demolition concert.” Writer Reinhard Priessnitz (“Mr. Message”) whiningly recited the enervating *Hymne an den Zock* (Hymn to Zock). When Nitsch alias “Johannes 007” began prematurely to bludgeon a lamb cadaver, the event snowballed out of control. After several buckets of red paint gushed into the space and a brawl escalated in the hall, the police were called in and put a stop to the evening. The *Zock Fest* not only ended in general chaos but also led to a fall-out between Muehl and Wiener.

Christian Höller

# Günter Brus

## *Kunst und Revolution*, 1968

On Friday, June 7, 1968, just after 8 p.m., in the main auditorium of the New Institute Building at the University of Vienna, the event *Kunst und Revolution* (Art and Revolution) commenced before an audience of some 500 people. Brief introductory speeches were followed by Otto Muehl bad-mouthing Robert Kennedy (who had just been assassinated) and his family, and by Peter Weibel's speech about Austrian finance minister Stephan Koren. Simultaneously, Günter Brus carried out a body-analysis action, making incisions in his chest and thighs with a razor and urinating into his hand, which he then drank and threw up. While singing the Austrian national anthem, he began to defecate, then smeared his body with excrement and vomited again before lying down on a table and masturbating. Oswald Wiener gave an analysis of the "input-output relation" between language and thought, writing cybernetic formulae on the blackboard while Otto Muehl whipped another man. Alongside this, psychoanalyst Fritz Kaltenbeck gave a talk on "information and language," and Peter Weibel gave an "incendiary speech," his right arm stretched out and on fire.

For the proponents of Viennese Actionism, the Vienna Group, and Expanded Cinema who participated in this event, which was organized by the Austrian Socialist Students' Alliance (SÖS), it was their most high-profile appearance and sparked intense responses from the public. Muehl was sentenced to four weeks detention and Brus was given a six-month prison sentence. The scandal around the event *Kunst und Revolution* forced the end of the collaboration between Viennese Actionism—represented by the practices of Brus and Muehl—and the circle around Wiener and Weibel.

Kazuo Kandutsch

# DIE DAMEN

*Postmodern*, 1989

*Böse ist besser*, 1994–95

Four bespectacled women in white blouses are sitting at tables, illuminated only by pendant lights. Then a big light goes on and there's a flurry of action: gallerists, curators, artists, and a great many other people form lines at the tables. First, the guests pay 100 Austrian schillings; then, they receive a special stamp, which is postmarked before finally being placed in a folder or an envelope.

With their performance *Postmodern* at the Vienna Secession on April 18, 1989, the artist group DIE DAMEN (THE LADIES) performed in public for the first time under the name that would accompany them until their final appearance in 1996.<sup>1</sup> Initially a quartet (Ona B., Evelyne Egerer, Birgit Jürgenssen, and Ingeborg Strobl), they were later joined by US conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner.

In contrast to other artist groups like IntAkt or the Guerilla Girls, DIE DAMEN did not go on the offensive against the discrimination faced by women in the art world, for instance by using numerical data. But their work was decidedly feminist: in the history of Austrian art, it is hard to find any other artists caricaturing female role models in such a funny and cheerful manner. In keeping with this, *Postmodern* plays with the image of the eighties businesswoman. In later works, the quartet took on the roles of housewives or biblical Eves wearing skin suits. In 1993 (as a quartet composed of Ona B., Evelyne Egerer, Birgit Jürgenssen, and Lawrence Weiner), they performed in Venice wearing sailor's uniforms. On St. Mark's Square, they wrote their names in large letters using bird feed, after which a poster reading *Böse ist besser* (evil is better) appeared, with an accompanying logo formed out of pantyhose, letters, and enamel signs. In the words of Andreas Spiegl, DIE DAMEN established a "label of protest."<sup>2</sup> Their corporate design certainly functioned as an ironic comment on brand development processes within companies.

For performances such as the one at St. Mark's Square, DIE DAMEN's audiences formed in public by chance, while other works such as their multiples (stamps, postcards, calendars, and beer coasters) spread far beyond the confines of the gallery. This strategy of seeking to make an impact in society outside of the hermeticism of the "white cube" is one that they share with other collectives.

Nina Schedlmayer

1 In connection with their exhibition at the Zeit Kunst Niederösterreich Landesgalerie für zeitgenössische Kunst in St. Pölten, there was a DIE DAMEN reunion in 2013 (albeit without Jürgenssen, who died in 2003), although this remained a one-off appearance.

2 Andreas Spiegl, "Die Damen hat es nie gegeben, aber es gibt sie," in *Die Damen*, exh. cat. Zeit Kunst Niederösterreich Landesgalerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, St. Pölten – Krems (Nuremberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst, 2013), pp. 23–27, here: p. 24.

# Jörg Schlick

## *Keiner hilft Keinem*, 1991

“No one helps anyone” was the motto of Lord Jim Lodge, an association of artists founded by Jörg Schlick, Bernd Fischerauer, Wolfgang Bauer, Mathias Grilj, and Claus Schöner in 1985. Their logo (featuring the sun, breasts, and a hammer) was designed by Bauer alongside fellow members Martin Kippenberger and Albert Oehlen in the same year in connection with their exhibition *Kritische Orangen für Verdauungsdorf* at Galerie Bleich-Rossi in Graz, which Schlick also participated in.<sup>1</sup>

The motto’s double negative is an absurdist rendering of the motto of mutual assistance (“Jeder für Jeden,” i.e. “all for one and one for all”).<sup>2</sup> Everyone is ultimately left to their own devices. The lodge’s founding idea affirmed catholic-patriarchal (male) secret societies while its motto simultaneously critiqued them. The motto corresponded to Schlick’s skepticism of the efficacy of artist collectives and their potential to change society. The lodge affirmed the secret society as a form of “cronyism,” as a kind of “happy place,” thereby expressing the internal contradictions of community, which “never exists as a harmonious whole; rather its structure is fundamentally conflictual and antagonistic.”<sup>3</sup>

The slogan “No-one helps anyone” and the collectively designed logo become visible as artistic material. The logo served as Kippenberger’s signature on some of his works, while Schlick used both the motto and the logo until 1997, the year of Kippenberger’s death.<sup>4</sup> Schlick’s goal was to make both the lodge and its logo more famous than Coca-Cola. In 2005 he transferred ownership of the lodge to the artist group monochrom.

Harald Krejci

1 Sandro Droschl and Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, eds., *Jörg Schlick: Monografie und Werkverzeichnis* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2018), p. 296.

2 See Diedrich Diederichsen, “Alles in einer Hand,” in *ibid.*, pp. 101–15, here: pp. 107–8.

3 Helmut Draxler, “The We-Ideal: Toward a Critique of Collectivity,” *Texte zur Kunst* 124 (December 2021), pp. 42–63, here: p. 42.

4 Droschl, pp. 300–1.

# Hubert Schmalix

## *Die Freunde – Zentrifugal*, 1980

The title *Die Freunde – Zentrifugal* (The Friends—Centrifugal) contains, albeit encoded, a narrative program: it is about the short period in which the artist was part of the “boy group” Nouveaux Fauves, whose expressive “Neue Malerei” (New Painting) in Peter Pakesch’s gallery shaped the style of the nineteen-eighties and led to commercial success. The Neue Wilde with Herbert Brandl, Gunter Damisch, et al. was not a group in the stricter sense of the word, rather joint protagonists of a milieu that also included post-punk music, glaring neon bars, and a life on the edge celebrated with a passion for surmounting artistic and personal frontiers. The adjective “centrifugal” in the title of the artwork, however, already indicates a certain skepticism toward the friendship status at this early stage: the rough outlines of seven heads with long necks are grouped around a red disk. It could be a bird’s-eye, aperspectival view of a company of people around a dinner table, a wheel in which the people represent the spokes, or even a red planet plummeting into the infinity of space, its spinning momentum hurtling the circle of friends out of its core. It is about art in so much motion—“everything’s so splendidly colorful here”—that it risks losing itself in the process, and lets friends drift apart who once wanted to move on together into the new era. In a song lyric, Peter Weibel summed up the schizoid mood at the time that accompanied the success: “Ich sehe durch zwei Augen mit Entsetzen die Entzweiung” (I see through two eyes with horror the divisiveness).

Thomas Mießgang

# Daniel Spoerri

The Nouveaux Réalistes are one of the last programmatic artist groups of the postwar avant-garde. Their goal: to bring the visible world and the reality of life back into art and to relate it to the society of the postwar period, which is informed by economic upswing and unprecedented (media) consumption. They conserve the transitory nature of this culture in their works with found and collected materials: in stores, on the street, or in the garbage dump. Daniel Spoerri turns eating into a happening and, as Eat Art, into a communal experience. In his “snare pictures,” Spoerri enables recipients to participate in the production of art, as in *Hahns Abendmahl* (Hahn’s Supper; 1964). The tabletop is the “image plane” on which the work takes place: fixed and tilted ninety degrees, the objects “fall into the artist’s snare.” As if the plates, full ashtrays, or leftover food had defied gravity, attention is drawn to the things themselves and an experience of community that is frozen, conserved, and exhibited. The artist is the “magician” who directs this process of transformation and determines the rules. In this case, it happens in the house of the Cologne art collector Wolfgang Hahn, at a table designed by Spoerri, where Hahn’s friends from the Rhineland art and culture scene are invited to *Hahns Abendmahl*. In 1970, ten years after signing the founding treaty, the Nouveaux Réalistes group dissolved.

For *L’Ultima Cena: Banchetto Funebre del Nouveau Réalisme di Daniel Spoerri* (The Last Supper: The Funeral Feast of Nouveau Réalisme by Daniel Spoerri), the artist is once again the dramaturge. Each member of the group is assigned a table for his/her guests at the Biffi restaurant in Milan with a dish that refers to the respective artistic activity. Spoerri recalls the cheerful funeral feast: “Arman had several piles of eels, for example, or shrimp, in transparent aspic. ... For César, I thought of a compression of about 50 kilos of liqueur candies in colored silver foil. ... Christo’s guests were served a whole menu ‘in cartoccio,’ that is, vegetables, meat, and jacket potatoes, wrapped in aluminum foil. ... François Dufrêne, who was above all a Letterist, spooned alphabet soup with his guests. ... In the cake [of Niki de Saint Phalle] were many candies filled to the brim with multicolored liqueurs. Arrows were thrown at the cake structure, and when one hit, the colored alcohol poured out.”<sup>1</sup>

Jörg Wolfert

1 Daniel Spoerri, “L’Ultima Cena, 1970,” in *Daniel Spoerri presents Eat-art*, ed. Elisabeth Hartung (Nuremberg: Verlag für moderne Kunst, 2001), pp. 138–40.

## Franz West

### *Untitled (Rosa Labstück)*, 1983

Franz West encourages my animist instincts. His objects are alive. Though I sit securely enough in his chairs, their spindly appearance evokes the transience and instability of my own life. Museums place classic works of industrial design within vitrines. But West's metal looks as if it must be vibrating internally and would shatter a museum's glass. His materials are museum-resistant.

West's makeshift, off-colored sculptures, even when bright and fresh, already look worn, like hand-me-down clothing. West made hand-me-down art. His objects hold a social past within them, as if many people had already been handling the surfaces. Their impurity denies the hands-off respect that art traditionally demands. These unruly objects, often with appendages that tempt a viewer to touch, suit undisciplined people. They would be counter-cultural within any culture.

While making the works he titled *Labstücke*, West consumed the alcohol contained within the bottles central to these assemblages. Here, consumption corresponds to production. *Untitled (Rosa Labstück)* (1983) introduces ambiguities to this process, for the degree of fullness or emptiness of the bottle isn't evident. Such an object needs testing. I imagine grabbing its knob-like appendage to shake it, seeking indications of liquid within. The top of the bottle appears sealed by a gob of whiteness, which inhibits a more direct inspection by fingertip or mouth. I think that the bottle may have ejaculated. If West indulged himself by drinking, the bottle would have indulged itself in whatever way it could. An animist knows this.

Richard Shiff

Oswald Wiener

Ludwig Hoffenreich (photographs)

*1. und einzige Aktion mit O. Wiener, Ingrid Schuppan, Kurt Kalb, Dominik Steiger, Robert Klemmer und Frau, Michel Würthle, Traudl Bayer, 1967 (2000)*

The starting point and background for the pleasant *1. und einzige Aktion ...* (First and Only Action ...) with Oswald Wiener and friends was in fact a sad occurrence, namely a memorial for the late writer Konrad Bayer. After he took his own life in October 1964, his companions had the idea of getting Robert Klemmer to paint a memorial picture, to be titled *Robert Klemmer and the Friends of Konrad Bayer*.<sup>1</sup> In November 1967, the friends met in Klemmer's apartment at Erdbergstraße 126 to have their picture taken by friend and photographer Ludwig Hoffenreich in what were typical poses for the group. Over the course of the afternoon and evening, the combination of friendly intimacy, alcohol consumption, and an appetite for hijinks led not only to a great deal of dancing and fooling around but also to the famous communal bath scene. The resulting photographs document a tight-knit community's attitude to life and sense of humor. The painting in memory of Konrad Bayer would never materialize, however, due to Klemmer's death in 1971 at the age of thirty-three.

Roman Grabner

1 "Homage to Kurt Kalb: Gerald Matt in conversation with Kurt Kalb," March 2016, accessed March 2022, <https://themavorarlberg.at/kultur/hommage-kurt-kalb>

## 24 Stunden

Joseph Beuys, Bazon Brock, Rolf Jahrling, Ute Klophaus,  
Charlotte Moorman, Nam June Paik, Eckart Rahn,  
Tomas Schmit, Wolf Vostell

The publication *24 Stunden* (24 Hours) documents the legendary happening that Rolf Jährling organized at Villa Parnass in Wuppertal as the culmination of his seventeen years as a gallery owner. The so-called *24 Stunden Happening* took place around the clock on June 5, 1965, with Joseph Beuys, Bazon Brock, Charlotte Moorman, Nam June Paik, Eckart Rahn, Tomas Schmit, and Wolf Vostell.

While Ute Klophaus captured the flow of the happening with her camera and Bazon Brock took hourly notes about the vibes of the events, the artists, each assigned to a different room in the villa, performed individual and independent actions in front of their audience. Only Tomas Schmit, who poured water into twenty-four buckets standing in a circle, interrupted his action when a visitor entered the room. The range of happenings spanned from performances as show pieces (Joseph Beuys,<sup>1</sup> Wolf Vostell<sup>2</sup>), audio pieces (Eckart Rahn,<sup>3</sup> Nam June Paik, Charlotte Moorman<sup>4</sup>), and a text reading (Bazon Brock<sup>5</sup>) to the call for interaction in the publication that appeared in the same year; Wolf Vostell invited readers to engage with flour for 24 hours as a way of joining the happening after the fact. To this end, he sealed a plastic pouch of flour in a square compartment cut in the body of the book.

The event concluded on the morning of June 6 with Paik's *Robot Opera*, a street action featuring the performer Robot K-456, which Paik remote controlled as the first non-human action artist.

Regarding its genesis and intention, the book is a collective product, which resulted from a collaborative process. Furthermore, it refers to the mechanism of the gallery as a network and as a site for hosting avant-garde (Fluxus) events. In terms of its format, the book is a hybrid between documentary work, object catalogue, artist's book, and object.

Simone Moser

1 Action titled *und in uns ... unter uns ... landunter* (and in us ... under us ... flooded).

2 Happening titled *Die Folgen der Notstandsgesetze* (Consequences of Emergency Laws).

3 Eckart Rahn's *Konzert* (Concert) featured a type of noise music.

4 The piano-cello concert included works by John Cage, Morton Feldman, La Monte Young, and Ludwig van Beethoven.

5 The text reads, "Nach experimentellen Ergebnissen tötet ein Gramm Kobragift 83 Hunde, 715 Ratten, 330 Kaninchen oder 134 Menschen" (According to experimental results, one gram of cobra venom can kill 83 dogs, 715 rats, 330 rabbits, or 134 humans).

George Brecht (ed.)

*The Universal Machine, 1962–63*

George Brecht's *Universal Machine* is a collection of around 500 loose objects contained within an American shoeshine box. Letters, fragments of text, photographs, sheet music, newspaper clippings, city maps, and small objects such as knitted fabric and mint packets come together to form a seemingly inexhaustible collection of ephemera. The basis for Brecht's *Universal Machine* is the mathematical model of the same name, also known as a "Turing machine," which British computer scientist Alan Turing designed in the nineteen-thirties for the purpose of modeling and computing algorithms and which is now considered foundational to modern computer technology. But Brecht's Fluxus-inspired knowledge generator calls Turing's logic-based system into question; similar to a shake box, it "dispenses" the loose objects through two openings in an infinite number of configurations, with play and chance being the determining factors in the generation of meaning. The loose elements in Brecht's "machine" can be used to not only create further artworks such as novels, poems, or pieces of music but also—in accordance with the idea of a universal library and an encyclopedic apparatus—generate any form whatsoever from them. Most of the material comes from Brecht himself, with the rest coming from other users of the machine. Artists also contributed objects, with Ray Johnson providing a valentine and Edward Kienholz a business card and two scraps of paper with the addresses of J. D. Salinger and Orson Welles.

With *Universal Machine*, Brecht anticipated the algorithmic logic that shapes every aspect of our contemporary era back in the early nineteen-sixties. The work plays with the collecting, generating, linking, and distributing of information in a way that we recognize as occurring today on the Internet. It invites us to interact with the boundless abundance of ever-changing knowledge and to actively take part in collaborative processes. By creating an open, non-hierarchical, and potentially manipulable situation in this way, the universal machine anticipates the systematic connectivity of the transnational networks that emerge as a result of users' interaction with it.

In 1965, a second version of the *Universal Machine* was produced as an artist's multiple for Daniel Spoerri's *MATMOT* series.

Heike Eipeldauer and Franz Thalmair

# George Brecht, George Maciunas (ed.)

## *Water Yam*, 1963

In 1962–63, when Fluxus events were being held in Europe, George Brecht and Robert Watts organized the YAM Festival in the USA, which comprised a series of interdisciplinary performative artistic activities, events, and a Mail Art series. The name YAM is MAY spelled backward, with the festival so named because most of the events took place in May 1963. At the heart of YAM was the issue of how the nature of an event can be understood and implemented.

Like Watts, Brecht was an important instigator for Fluxus. As early as his first solo exhibition, *Towards Events: An Arrangement* at Reuben Gallery in New York in 1959, he was already preparing objects for gallery visitors to interact with, which also allowed his own authorship to recede into the background. In so doing, he was following the example set by John Cage, who had used the same principle with respect to music.

George Maciunas created Fluxus as a dynamic and international network. He strove to present it as a collective and coherent movement, in order to make it recognizable, reproducible, and marketable—like a brand. This goal also lay behind the unification of the YAM and Fluxus concepts: “Those yam lectures—things—I am very interested. But I think we should have a COMMON FRONT—CENTRALISATION of all such activities. Yam there, Fluxus here, not so good, why not combine all into one effort.”<sup>1</sup> With artists and musicians, including from Eastern Europe and Japan, Maciunas planned more than just concerts, with a strong focus on publications from the very beginning. The first such publication appeared in 1963, entitled *Water Yam*, and was a collection of all George Brecht’s event scores. Constructed by Maciunas, it consisted of a wooden box containing ninety-five cards on which the scores (either events or individual instructions) were printed; their implementation or interpretation is up to the performer or observer, with simply reading the card in and of itself constituting a form of participation.

Sophie Haaser

1 Letter to Robert Watts from George Maciunas from before March 1963, quoted in Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus Codex: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection* (Detroit and New York: Abrams, 1988), p. 579.

Günter Brus (ed.)

*Die Schastrommel*, 1969–74

The medium of the magazine and its collaborative potential already preoccupied Günter Brus during his artistic work in the nineteen-sixties. In 1965, he published a special issue of *Le Marais*, edited by Erich Felix Mautner, in the framework of the action *Malerei Selbstbemalung Selbstverstümmelung* (Painting Self-Painting Self-Mutilation). As opposed to using it as a singular presentation of his work, he invited Hermann Nitsch, Otto Muehl, and Rudolf Schwarzkogler as well as Reinhard Priessnitz and Hermann Schürer to make artistic contributions. The term “Wiener Aktionsgruppe” (Viennese Action Group) has its roots in this publication.

Following the scandalous action *Kunst und Revolution* (Art and Revolution) in 1968 and his subsequent criminal prosecution, Brus fled in 1969 to Berlin, where in the same year he founded the so-called österreichische Exilregierung (Austrian Government in Exile) together with Otmar Bauer, Hermann Nitsch, Oswald Wiener, and Gerhard Rühm and thereupon published the journal *Die Schastrommel* (The Scandalmonger) as its “organ.” At any rate, naming Bolzano as the place of publication can be read as a reference to the escalation of the South Tyrol conflict in the nineteen-sixties. Until 1974, a total of twelve issues were released, which Brus was responsible for both as editor and artistic designer. The same applies to Brus’s follow-up publication, published under the title *Die Drossel* in five issues until 1976. The magazine serves as a presentation and archiving platform for Brus’s own political and artistic ideas, works, and texts as well as those of his artist friends. The first issue documents the constitution of the exile government and gathers statements by the participating artists who express clear criticism of Austrian politics and society. Other issues of the magazine are dedicated to Hermann Nitsch’s Conceptual work *Harmating ein Fest*, for example, or the Günter Brus’s actionist work of the nineteen-sixties.

Marie-Therese Hochwartner

Johannes Cladders (ed.)

*Kassettenkatalog*, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg,  
Mönchengladbach, 1967–78

With *Kassettenkatalog* (Box Catalogue), Johannes Cladders developed an original publication format that not only accompanies and documents exhibitions but also can stand on its own and take on the status of artwork in its own right. Over the years, the series evolved into the group portrait of a generation of artists while simultaneously showcasing the manifold ways in which the same format can be handled. Although Cladders understood himself to be a co-producer,<sup>1</sup> he designed some of the box catalogues alone while others were conceptualized by the artists themselves as autonomous works of their own. In the case of Giulio Paolini's box catalogue, Cladders was only permitted to design the outer frame – front and back covers – regarding which he commented: “For an—every—interpretation wraps itself around an artwork. It is not identical to it. ... Visualizing this is Paolini's job. Accepting it is a component of the interpretation.” In contrast, he felt that Daniel Buren's final line, “Continuation possible,” challenged him “to work in parallel,” although he conceded that it “certainly [isn't] meant to be understood as an invitation to others.” Marcel Broodthaers's box, on the other hand, shows that intensive interaction can also give rise to collaborative artworks in which the individuality and autonomy of its creators are preserved, even though their contributions mutually depend on and produce each other, to the extent that Broodthaers can assert that the underside of his box allocated to Cladders “signifies my co-operation on [Cladders's] text before I have read it,” while Cladders concedes, “on the one hand, it is a text entirely independent of his [Broodthaers's] co-operation and conception ... on the other it is connected to Broodthaers's box by being imprinted on it.”

Annette Gilbert

1 See Susanne Titz and Susanne Rennert, eds., *The Box Catalogues of the Städtisches Museum Mönchengladbach 1967–1978* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, 2020).

Peter Faecke, Wolf Vostell (ed.)

*Postversand Roman*, ca. 1970

The nineteen-sixties are just coming to an end. Art is political, processual, participatory, unconventional in its variants, and Fluxus is widely known. In this context emerges an art project in novel form. Writer Peter Faecke and artist Wolf Vostell send a blank loose-leaf book in eleven shipments to their subscribers. The readers are asked to actively participate in the process of creating the novel and to fulfill the various requests of the two “directors.” The concept is to collaborate on the text modules of the novel, put ideas into circulation, and to successively fill in and expand the loose-leaf binder coated with silver foil and held together by two screws. The title page already speaks of the interactive idea. The folded, removable game instructions on brown cardboard read: “What’s in store for you, what’s in store for us? Do us a favor: play along, kick your neighbor’s ass, (finally) start writing yourself, write with us, write together with us this book (which is not a book), which (however) consists of the following deliveries ...”

The concept of the content is just as multifaceted as the book format with its multimedia inner life. For example, the third delivery consists of a vinyl single of Peter Faecke’s *Elf Romane in 6 Minuten und 5 Sekunden* (11 Novels in 6 Minutes and 5 Seconds), followed by twenty-four pages of *30 Tage Telefon-Kunst* (30 Days of Telephone Art) by Wolf Vostell; among various other contributions, there is also a chapter of letters to the editor. “The spectrum ranges from suggestions for new action games to rather trivial attempts to imitate the tone of Vostell/Faecke.”<sup>1</sup> The connecting idea between authors and recipients is the involvement in a common game—a “Spiel ohne Grenzen” (game without borders),<sup>2</sup> which demands activity from all participants. As an open network for artists and non-artists, the *Postversand Roman* was intended to break open the traditional understanding of the book and its history of reception.

Simone Moser

1 Monika Schmitz-Emans, “Der Postversandroman von Vostell und Faecke im Kontext von ‘1968,’” in *Schreibweisen der Kritik: Eine Topographie von 1968*, ed. Peter Brandes and Armin Schäfer (Paderborn: Brill, Fink, 2020), p. 98.

2 Title of the instructions.

Robert Filliou

*Galerie Légitime*, 1968

*Galerie Légitime* is both a work of art and a collaborative exhibition space in miniature format as well as a tool for communication among artists. Originally a trained economist, Robert Filliou, whose work pursued the self-defined principle of the equality of all elements and persons involved in the creative process, thus expanded his role in the art world to that of curator and gallery owner. On a side table, we find a transparent cylinder made of Plexiglas containing various objects, which wait to be pulled out of the hat as if by magic. These art objects include small, framed drawings, paintings, or a rolled-up poster on which the key terms of Filliou's oeuvre such as "The Eternal Network," a loose association of internationally active artists, can be read. Besides Filliou himself, figures such as George Brecht, Mark Brusse, Scott Hyde, Alison Knowles, Serge Oldenbourg, and Dieter Roth contributed to *Galerie Légitime*. The white velvet tablecloth the cylinder rests upon bears not only the gallery's stamp and the signature of its creator but also the names of all the artists involved in the collaborative process of exhibiting. Hence, *Galerie Légitime* manifests one of the many nodes in Filliou's idea of an eternal decentralized network based on cross-border collaboration.

Heike Eipeldauer and Franz Thalmair

# Kerstin von Gabain and Nino Sakandelidze

## *DOLLHOUSE OF A POEM, 2017*

### Participating artists:

Ismini Adami, Daphne Ahlers, Minda Andrén, Rani Bageria, Nouria Behloul, Adrian Buschmann, Simone Carneiro, Schirin Charlot, Clegg & Guttmann, Dark Disko (Rade Petrasevic/Philipp Ruthner), Alessio Delli Castelli, Marco Dessi, Daniel Ecker, Philipp Friedrich, Bernhard Frue, Kerstin von Gabain, Marcus Geiger, Franz Graf, Martin Grandits, Begi Guggenheim, Hannah Hansel, Anne Hardy, Max Henry, Richard Hoeck, Natia Kalandadze, Benedikt Ledebur, Michael Lukas, Constantin Luser, Albert Mayr, Emma McMillan, Thea Moeller, Johann Neumeister, Daniel Peterson, Roshi Porkar, Noushin Redjaian, George Rei, Rosa Rendl, Daniel Richter, Alex Ruthner, Nino Sakandelidze, Hanno Schnegg, Bjørn Segsneider, Ania Shestakova, Tamuna Sirbiladze, Nino Stelzl, Lilli Thiessen, Sophie Thun, Cathrin Ulikowski, Franz West, Anita Witek, Sasha Zalivako, Edin Zenun, Heimo Zobernig, Christina Zurfluh

On the initiative of Kerstin von Gabain and co-curator Nino Sakandelidze, more than fifty artists from the Viennese scene and their networks filled the rooms of an old dollhouse with specially created works in miniature format, breathing new life into a relic from bygone days. *DOLLHOUSE OF A POEM* was conceived as a collective curatorial project. The developmental process reflects the practice of collaborative work and shared authorship; each contributed work functions on its own and at the same time fits into a new collective work—a miniature museum. Especially outside the safety of an institutional edifice, within the precarious structures of art production, or under the permanent pressure of self-initiative and self-discipline, a network of different actors can be useful in subsisting or remaining visible as an artist in the complex fabric of the art world. Kerstin von Gabain provides an example of how collegial networking can consolidate very different forms of artistic expression, stimulate productive exchange, and help create a shared presence.

Sandra Adam

Dan Graham (ed.), George Maciunas (design)

*Aspen No. 8 –The Fluxus Issue, 1970–71*

The multimedia, collaborative, and experimental aspects of Fluxus combined with the inclusion of theoretical texts and musical contributions paved the way for the first “three-dimensional” magazine: *ASPEN: The Multimedia Magazine in a Box*. Initiated by Phyllis Johnson, it was published in ten issues between 1965 and 1971. No. 8, the Fluxus Issue, was designed by George Maciunas and edited by Dan Graham in 1971. The fold-out cardboard sleeve contains fourteen loose contributions called “sections.” One of these sections, No. 5, consists of a flexi-disc featuring the pieces *Young Turtle Asymmetries* by Jackson MacLow (A side) and *Drift Study 31 1 69* by La Monte Young (B side). More contributions came from Jo Baer, Ed Ruscha, and Robert Smithson, among others.

Sophie Haaser

George Maciunas, Willem de Ridder (eds.)

*Fluxus 1 (Yearbox)*, 1964

George Maciunas (ed.)

*Fluxus 1 (Yearbox)*, 1964–65

Ay-O, Eric Andersen, Henning Christiansen, Philip Corner, Jean Dupuy, Ken Friedman, Al Hansen, Geoffrey Hendricks, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Bengt af Klintberg, Milan Knížák, Alison Knowles, Jackson Mac Low, Larry Miller, Ben Patterson, Takako Saito, Serge III, Mieko Shiomi, Anne Tardos, Ben Vautier, Yoshimasa Wada

*Fluxus Virus 1962–1992*, 1962–92

Cardboard boxes and suitcases appeared as a contemporary means for the presentation and distribution of Fluxus as a critical, idea-based approach to art that simultaneously adopted an anti-art position. In their form and function these vessels allowed for large production runs at low prices and were easy to distribute by post and sell in Fluxshops, meaning they could be disseminated independently of galleries and institutions. Since they could be filled in a range of ways and with a range of materials (pieces of text and other objects), they were able to overcome hierarchical forms of production and distribution. In this way, these “editions” embody Fluxus’s aspiration to shake things up and disrupt rigid traditions.

The first *Fluxus 1 (Yearbox)* appeared in 1964 in the form of a cardboard box featuring contributions from the US, Europe, and Japan. Assembled by Willem de Ridder in Amsterdam, they could be sent from his European Flux Mail Order Shop. A later edition consisted of a wooden box with eighteen filled envelopes and other printed matter.

*Fluxus Virus 1962–1992* is the title of a box containing multiples from twenty-two Fluxus artists produced in 1992 in connection with the exhibition of the same name at Galerie Schüppenhauer in Cologne. Labelled a “mini museum” by its publisher, this edition updates Marcel Duchamp’s idea of the portable museum, a connection underscored by the quote from the artist that is printed in reflective silver foil on the underside of the carton: “The viewer completes the artwork. Marcel Duchamp.”

Sophie Haaser

# George Maciunas (ed.) and Beau Geste Press (Felipe Ehrenberg, Martha Hellion, David Mayor)

It is probably no coincidence that George Maciunas initially coined the term “Fluxus” as the title of a magazine, given that collaborative publishing would go on to play such a key role in the movement. Stemming from the desire to circumvent the elitist system of galleries and museums, from 1964 onward Fluxus utilized a number of diverse publication methods to provide alternative possibilities for publication and distribution.<sup>1</sup> The newspaper *VITRE*—later issues play with variations of this title—served as the central organ by which to promote the movement.<sup>2</sup> Each issue combined diverse content from a range of contributors, including (usually) full-page posters for upcoming Fluxus events or, as in the case of issue No. 6, photos documenting previous performances. Issue No. 5 advertised the Fluxshop and the Flux Mail Order Shop, both of which allowed for a wide range of Fluxus items to be obtained quickly and cheaply. Although the underlying ideas mostly came from individual artists, the physical Fluxus objects were often produced by others—usually Maciunas himself—and distributed via an international collaborative network.

At the beginning of the nineteen-seventies, Fluxus’s performative element re-emerged with the *Fluxshoe*, the movement’s first major exhibition in the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition’s flyer addresses numerous artists by name, asking them what they are currently doing. It announces a diverse program ranging from documentation of past activity through to publications and live performances and explicitly calls on readers to write to David Mayor, one of the project coordinators. The *Fluxshoe* was originally intended to be a small project with photocopies and publications, but the Fluxus spark was ignited within the organizers and became the catalyst for collaborative production. This resulted not only in an exhibition that toured the country for nine months featuring a colorful mixture of artistic genres but also Beau Geste Press, an art publisher led by one of the communes involved in the project, a community of duplicators, printers, and artisans.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, over 100 artists responded to the invitation to participate, either actively taking part in the exhibition or contributing to the catalogue.<sup>5</sup>

Astrid Robin

1 See Owen F. Smith, “Fluxus: A Brief History and Other Fictions,” in Walker Art Center, ed., *In the Spirit of Fluxus* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1993), pp. 24–37, here: p. 33.

2 See Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus Codex* (Detroit: Abrams, 1988), p. 92.

3 See Simon Anderson, “Fluxus, Fluxion, Fluxshoe: The 1970s,” in Ken Friedman, ed., *The Fluxus Reader* (Chichester: Academy Editions, 1998), pp. 22–30, here: p. 25.

4 See Alice Motard, “Introduction: Exhibiting Books, Reading the Exhibition,” in Alice Motard, ed., *Beau Geste Press* (Berlin: Bom Dia, 2020), pp. 17–31. The exhibition was conceived by Mike Weaver and Ken Friedman (Fluxus West) and realized by David Mayor. Beau Geste Press was formed in 1971 by Felipe Ehrenberg, Martha Hellion, and David Mayor. Between October 1972 and August 1973, the exhibition visited seven UK cities (Falmouth, Exeter, Croydon, Oxford, Nottingham, Blackburn, and Hastings).

5 *Fluxshoe* (Cullompton: Beau Geste Press, 1972).

# Seth Siegelau (ed.)

## *One Month, March 1969, 1969*

*One Month* is Seth Siegelau's third publication, which brings together editorial and curatorial practice and declares the book space an exhibition space. The group exhibition, organized as a page-a-day calendar, presents one artist per sheet and thereby creates the image of a generation of artists that, in their constellation by Siegelau, is distinguished as a community of like-minded people and an independent strand of contemporary art. It is no coincidence that the involved artists are primarily associated with Conceptual, Land, or Minimal Art, which is particularly well suited to distribution by means of printed matter: "The use of catalogues and books to communicate (and disseminate) art is the most neutral means to present the new art."<sup>1</sup> In keeping with Ekaterina Degot's characterization of Moscow Conceptualism, one could speak of "'horizontal' paper-based art,"<sup>2</sup> which is not presented vertically on the wall but rather handed around from person to person as reproduced yet "primary information." This horizontal circulation, in the spirit of a democratization of the art (world), allows for greater dissemination and new forms of engagement and exchange, as well as participation and ownership.

Annette Gilbert

1 Charles Harrison, "On Exhibitions and the World at Large: Seth Siegelau in Conversation with Charles Harrison," *Studio International* 178, no. 917 (December 1969), pp. 202–3, here: p. 202.

2 Ekaterina Degot, "The Paper Media of Moscow Conceptualism," in *Moscow Conceptualism: Collection Haralampi G. Oroschakoff & Collection, Publishing and Archive Vadim Zakharov*, ed. Hein-Th. Schulze Altcapenberg, exh. cat., Kupferstichkabinett Berlin (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2004), pp. 17–23, here: p. 22.

# Daniel Spoerri

## *Der Koffer*, 1961

With works by Arman (*Poubelle et Accumulation*, 1961), Gérard Deschamps (*Tableau Chiffons*, 1961), François Dufrêne (*Dessous d'affiche*, 1960), Raymond Hains (*Palissade*, 1959), Martial Raysse (*Hygiène de la vision*, 1959), Niki de Saint Phalle (*Untitled*, 1961), Daniel Spoerri (*Tableau-piège*, on suitcase lid, 1961), Jean Tinguely (*Balouba*, n.d.), Jacques de la Villeglé (*Affiches Lacérées le 2 février 1959 Boulevard Saint-Germain à Paris*, 1959), and a padlock by Robert Rauschenberg

The temporary community that underpins *Der Koffer* (The Suitcase) is based on a concept by Daniel Spoerri: as a mobile and temporary exhibition, *Der Koffer* brings together positions of Nouveau Réalisme—assemblages, poster tear-offs, kinetic objects, and a *tableau-piège* (snare picture)—which share the radical integration of everyday materials and waste products of the consumerist postwar society into the respective artistic practice. Spoerri assumes various roles simultaneously: as the artist conceiving *Der Koffer*, as the curator assembling the contributions, and the director and performer of the two presentations of *Der Koffer*—first on June 10, 1961, in a private exhibition at the house of architect Peter Neufert, and the following day at Galerie Haro Lauhus (both in Cologne). His professional socialization in ballet and theater, the magazine *material* (1958) he founded, as well as *Edition MAT* (1959) and the *Simultaneous Lectures* collaboratively conceived and performed as part of *Autotheater* (1959) make *Der Koffer* a culmination of artistic collaboration under Spoerri's "direction," a genealogy in which Spoerri's intense reception of Marcel Duchamp's work, especially *La Boîte-en-Valise* (1938–41), is essential.

Veronika Rudorfer

Manfred Grübl  
*Personal Installations,*  
*Saatchi Gallery, 1999–2001*

The shortcomings of the exhibition space are a recurring topic in Manfred Grübl's reflections on institutional critique. For example, he transformed the threshold that must be overcome to enter a "white cube" into a physical experience: in the Lukas Feichtner Gallery, a wrestler welcomed the exhibition visitors, who then had to pass him; on another occasion, one was led through a lock system of sorts into the gallery space, where there was no turning back prior to the end of the event.

With his "personal installations," Manfred Grübl wangled the institutional framework up a notch: he engaged eight performers who positioned themselves in the space during openings (at the Saatchi Gallery or New York's Lincoln Center, among others) to form a conspiratorial circle with their gazes.

Grübl's self-organized action undermined ingrained access rules and inevitably raised questions about the future of art spaces: How could access become more permeable for all? Could the invitation policy of art spaces be discussed more transparently? What are the institutional evaluation criteria? And could the eventization that the performative action critically mirrors be circumvented by strengthening the importance of museums as sites of public collectivity?

Christa Benzer

# Thomas Struth

## *Audience 1 (Galleria dell'Accademia),*

*Florenz, 2004*

Thomas Struth's series *Audience* was made for an exhibition celebrating the 500-year anniversary of Michelangelo's *David* at the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence. In contrast to his earlier museum photographs, this time Struth focuses exclusively on the beholders who, at the latest since the emergence of installation art in the nineteen-seventies, have become an indispensable part of the aesthetic experience through their gaze, participation, or interaction. The larger-than-life sculpture of David is not visible in the picture, but its aura is reflected in the onlookers' sculptural bodily poses and the observers' upward glances. Framed by two towering columns, it is precisely this which exemplifies the numerous aesthetic and social aspects and conditions of viewing art: the relationship between institutional space, art, and observers, for example, which oscillates between a touristic lack of interest and the expression of religious devotion; the visitors' physical presence and their connection to the works and to each other; or the constitution of a "global art audience" whose rules of garb and patterns of movement become visible beyond national borders. Struth's photographs are neither staged nor digitally manipulated. For almost two weeks, he took pictures each day for several hours and then selected a small series of photographs from the countless pictures.

Achim Hochdörfer

# Leidy Churchman

## *Reena Spaulings*, 2017

Literary figure, artist, gallerist—persona, mask, nom de plume. Created by 150 authors, if its preface is to be believed, the novel *Reena Spaulings* was published in 2004 by the Bernadette Corporation, an art and fashion collective. The protagonist of the same name is conceived of as a collectively hallucinated embodiment of a woman in her twenties who works as a museum guard and is scouted as a model for an international advertising campaign, leading to fame and fortune. “It’s a story about a nobody who could be anybody becoming a somebody for everybody.”<sup>1</sup> As a collectively authored artistic figure, Reena Spaulings is so polyphonic as to resist easy description. Spaulings is a template that functions as a post-digital network in an analogue fashion while being thoroughly “informed” by the digital: here, authorship and its attendant functions and roles are no longer up for debate.

As a gallerist from Reena Spaulings Fine Art, an initiative founded in 2005 by artists associated with the Bernadette Corporation, the figure not only serves as a network node in the New York art scene but also exists as a visual artist: *The Complete Dealers* (2013) is the title of one work attributed to Spaulings, which comprises postcards featuring painted portraits of gallerists either busy at the peripheries of the anonymous collective or who have been co-opted by it. One of these subjects is Mary Boone, the influential gallerist who was imprisoned for tax fraud and is the subject of Leidy Churchman’s portrait. By using the title *Reena Spaulings*, the painter not only consciously leads us astray but also perpetuates the identity game that the Bernadette Corporation has continually sought to reignite ever since the novel’s publication. This feeling is enhanced by the fact that the eponymous gallery uses the painting on Instagram as its profile picture<sup>2</sup> and supposed proof of identity. Reena Spaulings is simultaneously everyone and no one.

Zsófia Fenyvesi

1 “Reena Spaulings,” Bernadette Corporation, accessed April 27, 2020, <http://www.bernadettecorporation.com/novel.htm>

2 “Reena Spaulings,” Instagram, accessed April 27, 2020, [https://www.instagram.com/reena\\_spaulings/](https://www.instagram.com/reena_spaulings/)

# Ray Johnson

## *Ray – Berty – Ray Correspondence Pieces, 1963–90*

Ray Johnson's oeuvre can be considered the most radical to emerge from the Mail Art movement of the nineteen-sixties. It consists of intense postal communication in the form of collages, some of which are sent to strangers, forwarded to third parties, or even worked on further by others. The network of collaborators thereby potentially extends to infinity. Johnson's collages in standard format are cutouts from comics, newspapers, or ads, combined with drawings and texts. Personal experiences and conversations form associatively assembled messages, making use of wordplay and creating poetic connections between elements. Johnson's letters to Henry Martin, the art critic, are even expanded upon by Martin's wife, the artist Berty Skuber, with drawings and marginalia. The medium is open for such transformations: Johnson called his collages "moticos," an anagram of "osmotic," intending them to be porous and constantly changing, "like the news in the paper or the images on a movie screen."<sup>1</sup> The artwork, thus stretching itself out in time and space, becomes part of an ungraspable network of information, actions, and persons, thereby systematically eluding the rules of the art market and economic valorization. Mail is the medium of a democratic idea according to which everyone can be both sender and receiver; Mail Art realizes that dream of the community that early modernism could only proffer in symbolic form.<sup>2</sup> Ray Johnson studied with Josef Albers at Black Mountain College in the forties. There, the ideas of composer John Cage brought him to aesthetic principles based on spontaneity, chance, and indeterminacy. His "New York Correspondence School" thereby becomes a complex, publicity-shy construct: "It is secret, private, and without any rule."<sup>3</sup>

Jörg Wolfert

1 Ray Johnson, cited in Sofia Kofodimos, "Collages in Motion: The Transformations and Dispersal of Ray Johnson's Moticos," accessed April 27, 2020, <https://sofiakofodimos.wordpress.com/>

2 Ina Blom, ed., *The Name of the Game: Ray Johnson's Postal Performance*, exh. cat. (Oslo: National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2003), p. 103.

3 Ray Johnson, cited in Lawrence Alloway, "Ray Johnson: Send Letters, Postcards, Drawings, and Objects ...," *Art Journal* 36, no. 3 (Spring 1977), pp. 235–36, here: p. 236.

On Kawara  
*I Am Still Alive*, 1970

Jean Dupuy  
*Stamps*, 1990

From 1969, On Kawara sent out over 900 telegrams to friends and acquaintances around the world, bearing the sober message “I am still alive.” Pertinent at the moment of sending, the message is also always pertinent in the moment it is read. Yet the text is not “I am alive” but rather “I am still alive.” Time advances; On Kawara’s announcement is his own (and our) reassurance about existing in the here and now, which the word “still” overshadows with the inevitability of death. Telegrams are traditionally expensive and only used by private individuals to convey the most urgent of news. One recipient writes about the moment she held the telegram in her hands: “I was scared, sure the someone I loved had died. Instead, there was On’s message: I am still alive ... Nothing horrible had happened. But someone reminded me, out of the blue, that it could.”<sup>1</sup> The artist delegates the distribution of this message to the postal system, thereby surrendering it to objectifying factors that he cannot determine: the telegram’s design, the distribution routes, the time of delivery, and so on turn the message into a universally reproducible experience in which the work completes itself.

Recipients like the Milan art critic Tommaso Trini collected the messages and compiled them as pictures. This makes an exhibitable object out of what is actually a performative operation: the decision about an addressee, the trip to the post office, the delivery to the recipient, and hence a network of voluntary and involuntary collaborators.

In 1990, a tellingly short time before the personal computer loomed up on the information technology horizon and challenged traditional distribution channels, Jean Dupuy put out an edition of stamps with portraits of various artists. Handy and easy to transport, Dupuy used the stamps to put miniature “group shows” together, like *Laughing Group Show #1*, or *Group Show (8 Spectacled Fluxists)*—both in 1991—which took place on a sheet of paper instead of in a gallery: an associative togetherness whose rules are established by the artist.

Jörg Wolfert

1 Teresa O’Connor, “Notes: On Kawara’s *I Am Still Alive*,” in Karel Schampers, ed., *On Kawara: Date Paintings in 89 Cities*, exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, 1991), p. 251.

# Lucy Lippard

557,087/955,000, 1970

The art of the nineteen-sixties puts artistic authorship and the principle of the presentation and distribution of artworks up for debate. Motivated by this spirit, art critic Lucy Lippard established a new exhibition format. Her concept was to transfer the presentation space of galleries and museums to a publication, or to replace the venue with the medium of print: the book, the catalogue itself, becomes the exhibition, and the *Numbers Shows* organized by Lippard in four cities between 1969 and 1974, along with Seth Siegelaub's famous action around the *Xerox Book* (1968), count among the most important group exhibitions in book form. Thus, Lippard's strategy is not to show physical exhibits in physical places. In their place is a mobile series of printed index cards with contributions by invited artists. Lippard chose four sites and derived the exhibition title from the population of each city: 555,087 (Seattle, 1969), 955,000 (Vancouver, 1970), 2,972,453 (Buenos Aires, 1970), and approx. 7,500 (Valencia, California, 1973).

The order of the index cards is determined by chance. The unbound collection may be used in any order. There are no hierarchies. All cards and contributions are to be considered equal in terms of their form and content and, in this sense, all artists, too—whether famous or (still) unknown. The reading rooms of the mentioned museums as well as public locations were used as presentation spaces. Lippard complemented the submitted "artists' cards" with cards noting the key data of the participants and exhibitions. Moreover, she listed artists who could not be included in the exhibition.

Lippard's "catalogue as exhibition" can be seen as a loose compilation of artists' contributions, and, given its easy reproducibility and the use of a mass product, it fulfills the anti-commercial claim of Conceptual Art. With the intention to make the exhibition accessible to a broad public in multiple ways, the demand for the democratization of art postulated at the time was accounted for as well. Lippard's redefinition of the exhibition format set new standards and continues to have an impact on contemporary art historiography.

Martha Horvath and Simone Moser

George Maciunas

*Diagram of Historical Development of Fluxus  
and Other 4-Dimensional, Aural, Optic, Olfactory,  
Epithelial and Tactile Art Forms, 1973/1998*

Fluxus was the first global anti-art movement. In the nineteen-sixties and seventies, and with a sort of anarchic joy, a group of artists from the United States, Asia, and Europe set about playfully doing away with the last remnants of high culture—making Fluxus one of the twentieth century’s last avant-garde movements. Influenced by Zen Buddhism from the East and Dada from the West, Fluxus mingled elements from the visual arts with the performing arts. Across a series of Fluxus festivals held in Wiesbaden, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Amsterdam, London, and New York, a loose but committed community of kindred spirits arose.

George Maciunas, acting as the group’s guiding spirit, consciously relied on charts and diagrams in order to lend the movement historicity and to distinguish it from other neo-avant-gardes (as a trained graphic designer, the principle of using charts as aesthetic instruments suggested itself immediately). On the model of the chronologies and synopses he encountered during his subsequent art history studies, Maciunas was already developing graphical representations that allowed large amounts of data to be compressed and visualized. Further sources of inspiration were Oswald Ungers’s serial furniture and Charlotte Perriand’s system of vertical drawers. The first deliberations on a Fluxus diagram date back to the early sixties. In *Time-Space Diagram*, from 1962, Maciunas emphasized various mediating transitional forms between the poles of spatial and temporal art and was already conceiving Fluxus as a tendency that encompassed all artistic disciplines. Around 1965, he consolidated the historical origins of Fluxus and with its network in *Fluxus (Its Historical Development and Relationship to Avant-garde Movements)*. Around a year later, at the end of 1966, the more conceptually precise *Expanded Arts Diagram* appeared. The 1973 *Diagram of Historical Development of Fluxus and Other 4-Dimensional, Aural, Optic, Olfactory, Epithelial and Tactile Art Forms* is the last of Maciunas’s Fluxus diagrams and responds to criticisms made of the earlier diagrams by including the work of fellow associates he had previously chosen to exclude.<sup>1</sup>

Nina Zimmer

1 See the chapter “Fluxus im Fluss der Zeit,” in Astrit Schmidt-Burkhardt, *Stammbäume der Kunst: Zur Genealogie der Avantgarde* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 357–90, in particular: pp. 380 ff.

# Ree Morton

## *Something in the Wind*, 1975

*Something in the Wind* (1975) consists of brightly colored flags that, when arranged into a kind of tapestry, can be displayed on the wall. The first public presentation, however, took place on New York's East River, where Morton installed the flags on a nineteenth-century fishing schooner. The artist explains: "I MADE A FLAG FOR EACH PERSON IN MY LIFE THAT I HAVE GOOD FEELINGS FOR, OR WHO I FEEL CONNECTED TO IN SOME WAY. IT WAS A CELEBRATION FOR THEM, AND A MEANS OF IDENTIFYING AND LOCATING MYSELF IN THE WORLD BY NAMING THE PERSONS WHO SURROUND ME."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the flags sewn and painted by hand feature the first names of a number of people from Morton's circle: family members but also artists (Barbara Kruger, Gordon Matta-Clark, Laurie Anderson, and Cynthia Carlson, among others), each combined with motifs inspired by heraldry, often referring to "airy" things (birds, kites, clouds, butterflies, fans ...). Accordingly, her sketches speak of a "Relation-Ship." With her work, however, Morton not only makes the autobiographical public and exhibits it—as her sketchbooks demonstrate—following the idea of a family crest; she also lends it a festive character. It is not the lone artistic genius that is celebrated here, rather the social and creative fabric in which artistic practice is always embedded.

Manuela Ammer

<sup>1</sup> Ree Morton, *Attitudes towards Space Environmental Art*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Mount St. Mary's Art Gallery, 1977), unpaginated, cited in *Ree Morton Retrospective 1971–1977*, exh. cat. (New York: The New Museum, 1980).

## Nam June Paik

### *Fluxus Island in Décollage Ocean, 1963*

When Nam June Paik drew his *Fluxus Island* (1963), art began to become processual and performative. The picture reflects—consciously or not—the central paradox of this Neo-Dadaist movement: the insular representation from the artist’s perspective is permeated by network-like references to personal, professional, historical, and social contexts, as if the work itself was threatened by its surroundings, the decollaging ocean, and had to be demarcated by a thick line. Hence, ‘drawing a line’ turns into the enigma of an art movement not exactly lacking in contradictions. The demarcation between the inside and the outside resists the individual dissolution in the network collective, which is envisaged in Fluxus but ultimately not carried out. Despite all interdisciplinary and intermedial collaboration, the artist remains the real pawn, beautifully illustrated in the artist’s dedication to the collector, whose imagined museum is also drawn in red. In contrast, a ‘network’ would actually be in ‘flux,’ as every starting point is at the same time an end point, so the *work* itself must constantly be woven further.

Clemens Apprich

# Timm Ulrichs

## *Teile und herrsche*, 1969–72 (2014)

Whether in warfare, information technology, or everyday life, the principle of *divide et impera* dissects a greater fixed entity into its individual parts in order to make it tangible and comprehensible, as in the case of information technology, or to dominate it, as the Latin phrase prescribes for political purposes. Timm Ulrichs's eponymous sculpture *Teile und herrsche* (Divide and Conquer) features a telecommunication cable fanned out into its component parts. Countless colorful cables spill out of one end of the black solid plastic jacket and spread out in all directions. The tangled red, green, white, and yellow strands in turn divide again into thinner elements twisted into a larger whole. These twist up again at their ends, continuing what began in the beginning.

Timm Ulrichs reveals, almost literally, the concatenation of places and people communicating with each other, which the telecom cable makes possible in the first place—as anachronistic as this may seem today, in times of ubiquitous wireless information networks. However, by associating the readymade with the principle of *divide et impera*, this bundling of the act of communication also alludes to moments of control, regulation, and regimentation, as well as domination. In the age of wireless communication, the artwork seems like a memorial from bygone times, for it anticipated several decades ahead what is literally and proverbially in the air today: the intransparency of global digital communication systems and the associated dangers of manipulating entire groups of people, along with a dimension of networking that can no longer be controlled.

Heike Eipeldauer and Franz Thalmair

# Martin Beck

## *Headlines, 2010*

*Headlines* grew out of Martin Beck's engagement with utopian forms of communal life and the history of US dropout communes in the nineteen-sixties and early seventies. This double-sided silkscreen print gathers together the headlines of all the articles published in the legendary commune newsletter *The Modern Utopian*. Reproduced in their original typography, the individual elements form fragments of visual and linguistic communication, which had a lasting impact on the conception of these new communities. The headings are spread evenly around the frames and are arranged so that the recto and verso of the work can be lined up perfectly. Arranged in a modular fashion, these rhetorical remnants slot together in endless variations and vacillate between tessellation and repetition. As a collection of historical slogans, Martin Beck's *Headlines* evokes deliberately fragmentary historical images and expresses the contradictory interplay between communicative surfaces and the ideals of a utopian society.

Matthias Michalka

## Chto Delat

### *Untitled (Tatlin Tower), 2013*

Born as an architectural project for the never realized headquarters of the Comintern, which was to be built in Petrograd after the revolution of 1917, the model of the Monument to the Third International by Vladimir Tatlin has symbolized for decades the ideals of modernity and equality. The quotation created by Chto Delat, a Russian collective of artists, critics, and philosophers, founded in 2003, plays on the reversal of meaning, representing the end of utopia. The small dimensions, together with the ephemeral materials and the precariousness of the artifact, describe the decline of the socialist dream and the instability of contemporary Russian society, deconstructed of its values and subjected to the speculation of capital. In many of Chto Delat's works the awareness of failure is the generative principle of a new value system. Through the use of different media—from the most traditional languages of the visual to more hybrid and immaterial artistic forms—the collective has carried out a tight critique of the economic, social, and cultural policies of its country, even resorting to real protest actions, as when, in 2014, its members refused to participate in the tenth edition of Manifesta, in St. Petersburg, to denounce the arms race and the Russian military intervention in Crimea.

Lorenzo Giusti

Clegg & Guttman

*The Open Music Library – Project Unité,*

*Firminy, Recontextualized –*

*A Community Portrait, 1993/2005*

Clegg & Guttman's contribution to Yves Aupetitallot's exhibition *Project Unité* was conceived as a "group portrait" involving inhabitants of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'habitation* in Firminy, France. The curator realized the project at a time when the last remaining residents of the now dilapidated "housing machine" were tenaciously resisting the official demolition plan. They were asked to provide their own favorite pieces of music for an "open music library." The music cassettes that the music was copied onto were placed in wooden shelving, which represented an abstract model of Le Corbusier's housing block, and the slot corresponded to the position of the respective participant's apartment. The tapes could be played on a provided cassette recorder. After the end of the exhibition in Firminy, a selection of the music was published in a box set of six CDs (one for each story of the apartment block). Each participant was also asked to pose for a photo portrait, which became a poster as part of the installation. *The Open Music Library* thus represents a kind of musical sociogram of the *Unité*, a collective portrait of the residential community that sought to update the social utopia of Le Corbusier's architecture once again in a self-determined way. At the same time, it tested alternative forms of communication and exchange within this rather heterogeneous community.

Ines Gebetsroither

Phil Collins

*marxism today (prologue)*, 2010

One perspective on Marxism is that it has been refuted by history (and actually existing socialism). A counterargument to this position is that for any “method of thinking” being faced with new challenges also amounts to being presented with new opportunities. In *marxism today (prologue)*, Phil Collins plays with the potential of an ideology that was a standard school subject in the GDR. In his work, three teachers of Marxism-Leninism appear as witnesses: they do not speak in theoretical terms but rather against the backdrop of their own multilayered life experiences. Archive material from the GDR is also on display; as a professor drones on, Collins switches off the sound partway and allows music to play instead. Marxism has always based its foundations on “objective facts.” In contrast, Collins makes use of a different, more open mode of thinking, one guided less by concepts and more by lived experience. He also breaks with the mass ornamentation of a precisely choreographed society by means of a filmic collage, one which uses heterogenous material to convert a failed orthodoxy into a productive ambiguity.

Bert Rebhandl

# Andreas Gursky

## *Nha Trang*, 2004

What viewers might initially perceive as a tangled web of materials turns out to be an orderly factory situation, ornamental in its organization, with conspicuously archaic working conditions. The title *Nha Trang* indicates that the scene must be set in a popular tourist destination in Vietnam. The composition has unmistakable ties with Gursky's pioneering photographs of crowds in the midst of their work environment, which began with a press photo of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in 1990. Since then, Gursky has demonstrated like no other just how close-knit our globalized economy is. Interdependent yet not equitable—these asymmetries are made laconically clear in Gursky's images, and it is precisely this lack of involvement that summons us to take a stand ourselves. What is fascinating about these photographs is that they allow us to examine both the ornamental whole and the individual in detail. In this concrete situation, however, one realization is particularly irritating: certain work conditions only exist in this form and were not delegated to machines in order to claim the label “handmade,” which is highly appealing to tourists in their search for the authentic. “This state of non-identity and being in-between [interests me] in particular as it puts the status quo in a state of limbo and reveals free spaces for utopian models of society.”<sup>1</sup>

Cathérine Hug

1 Andreas Gursky in conversation with Bernhard Bürgi, in *Andreas Gursky*, ed. Bernhard Bürgi, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich (Cologne: Walther König, 1992), p. 28.

Sharon Lockhart

*Gary Gilpatrick, Insulator*

from the series *Lunch Boxes*, 2008

How fine is the line between critique and affirmation of neoliberal structures when the forging of relationships threatens to become an efficiency- and profit-enhancing measure? Sharon Lockhart thematizes these issues through the people working at Maine's Bath Iron Works, through a metaphor (lunch boxes) and through purely visual means (a strict indexical presentation of personal objects). The resulting photographs do not—in contrast to the conventional image of capitalism—testify to productivity and hard labor but focus on standstill, pause, and rest.

What are these people doing in the name of progress? The project simultaneously embodies and negates the ideology of freedom in an American culture that offers putative prosperity and freedom but also represents a curtailing of a collective public culture, the social atomization that goes hand in hand with capitalist individualism. *Lunch Boxes* and the corresponding film, *Lunch Break (Assembly Hall, Bath Iron Works, November 5, 2007, Bath Maine)*, were made in the very heart of the economic crisis of 2008, when the world was made to suffer under corporate power and unbridled capitalism in deeper and more glaring ways. Thus, this tiny community encapsulated much larger narratives, such as Fordism, productivity vs. leisure, industrialization vs. post-industrialization, social interaction vs. individualization, and the American way of life, or what is left of it. Sharon Lockhart spent one year with the workers, sharing some of their lives, observing and learning to understand. It resulted in a sharing of the sensible by way of its engagement with the lives of its subjects. It's much more of a challenge to come up with a portrait of a community that has been abused and rendered invisible in so many ways such that viewers can sense some of the texture of its daily existence which renders its shared humanity palpable. The lunch boxes contain at the same time self-expression and standardization while providing a reflection on a moment of respite from productive labor. They tell about the people who own them—their rites, choices, and interests.

Bettina Steinbrügge

Otto Neurath

*Die bunte Welt: Mengenbilder  
für die Jugend, 1929*

From the mid-nineteen-twenties, Otto Neurath, economist, social politician, teacher, and an eloquent and pugnacious founding member of the Vienna Circle, developed the method of pictorial statistics in close cooperation with his colleagues—above all, the illustrator Marie Reidemeister (later Neurath) and the graphic designer Gerd Arntz—at the Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftsmuseum (Museum of Society and Economy), which he founded in Vienna. “Modern democracy requires the broad mass of the population to be informed factually about production, emigration, infant mortality, trade in goods, and unemployment,” wrote Neurath in 1926.<sup>1</sup> The social and pedagogical objectives were clear: a free combination of highly stylized pictorial symbols was used to visualize complex data, relations, and orders of magnitude on display boards and make them tangible for broad segments of the population—across language and educational borders. Together with Arntz and Reidemeister, he refined and expanded the system, which was also called “Isotype” (International System of Typographic Picture Education), following the emigration of the politically committed scientist—pro “Red Vienna” and against the Dollfuß regime—and his colleagues to Denmark in 1934. Pictorial statistics were employed not only in exhibitions but also publications; in 1929, the Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftsmuseum published the children’s book *Die bunte Welt: Mengenbilder für die Jugend* (The Colorful World: Pictographs for the Young) for usage in schools. In it pictograms impressively illustrate, for example, the ratio of men and women working in the textile industry between 1905 and 1925, the sharp disparity in real wages between different countries of the world, or the relationship between the rich and poor in Prussia and England—and also, represented by symbols of crowns, Phrygian caps, and hammer and sickle, the current “forms of government in Europe” at the time.

Ines Gebetsroither

1 Cited in Otto Neurath, “Bildstatistik und Volksaufklärung,” in *Neurath: Zeichen*, ed. Jeff Bernard and Gloria Withalm (Vienna: Austrian Association for Semiotics, 1996), pp. 133–59, here: p. 134.

# Petr Štembera

## *Joining (with Tom Marioni), 1975 (2004)*

The performative work of the Czechoslovak-born artist Petr Štembera is formally anchored in the international context of body art. The notion of “international” is of particular significance here: in the Cold War era and in light of the situation in the ČSSR, these artistic expressions and tendencies were outside of the state-supported art of Socialist Realism. The collaboration with US artist Tom Marioni makes this position even more evident and required a certain ingenuity at the time. For the work *Joining (with Tom Marioni)*, the two men connected their bodies together with two circles painted on their torsos, the first made of condensed milk and the second out of condensed hot chocolate. In the center of the two circles, they emptied a jar of hungry ants. Some ants moved toward the circles, where they sensed food but got stuck there. Other ants stayed in the center of the circle and began to bite the two bodies.

Štembera understood his work as a reflection on the events surrounding the Prague Spring of 1968, which left deep wounds and trauma in the population. In the context of art production, however, another step taken by the artist is of political importance and relevant for the artistic community: the cessation of his artistic activities at the end of the seventies on the grounds that the physical pain he voluntarily inflicted on himself in the context of his art was not comparable to the mental and physical terror exercised by the state on political dissidents. Štembera subsequently turned to other activities, such as yoga and martial arts.

When confronted with the performance images today, it is difficult to escape a queer connotation, even though such an artistic intention is not documented as such. The subject of the under-representation of women in the circles of political dissent was already countered in the nineties with a laconic answer: we were at war. There was no time for feminism, let alone queerness.

Ivan Jurica

Yoko Ono

## *White Chess Set, 1966*

Apart from all of the pieces being white, the game board in Yoko Ono's *White Chess Set* could easily be mistaken for a so-called "king-and-pawn end-game"—a topic on which Marcel Duchamp once authored a treatise.<sup>1</sup> Originally, however, the *White Chess Set* had been complete. Regardless, Ono had been trying to facilitate an experience of peaceful conciliation—contrary to the core principles of chess, according to which the superior player invariably strives to avoid a stalemate and instead to systematically annihilate the opponent's configuration. The conditions for a peaceful resolution would be first, attempted conformity with the rules of the game, and second, limited memory capacity (obviously, uniformly white pieces could never confuse *professional* players). Thus, the dramaturgy of a *White Chess Set* game might run from an initially orderly offensive to comical chaos to hopeless confusion. Finally, exasperation would cathartically result in a reinterpretation of the game's core principles in favor of amicable peace. An exhausting but therefore all the more strongly formative, positive experience of a potentially transformative Beuysian social plasticity.

As Yoko Ono and John Lennon claimed on billboards in 1969, as well as in song in 1971, martial confrontation could be a thing of the past if only all involved parties wanted it. In September 1995, with war raging in Yugoslavia, museum in progress took up both the subject and the unusual modes of art distribution, purchasing a full-page ad in the daily newspaper *Der Standard* that read "WAR IS OVER! (If You Want It)"—a conviction that the world would be glad to hear and be able to believe again in 2022.

Patrick Puls

1 Marcel Duchamp and Vitali Halberstadt, *Opposition et Cases Conjuguées sont réconciliées par Duchamp & Halberstadt / Opposition und Schwesterfelder sind durch Duchamp & Halberstadt versöhnt / Opposition and Sister Squares are reconciled by Duchamp & Halberstadt* (Paris/Brussels: L'Échiquier, 1932).

# John Cage and Merce Cunningham

## Playing Chess, early 1960s

### James Klosty (photo)

John Cage and Merce Cunningham met in Seattle in 1938. Their first collaborations were characterized by dance and music, choreography and composition growing more and more independent of each other, to the point where only their simultaneity would link them.<sup>1</sup> During the subsequent fifty years that Cage and Cunningham spent living and working together, many more collaborations would follow, including *Untitled Event*<sup>2</sup>—the first happening—in 1952, when Cunningham and Cage were teaching at Black Mountain College.

At first glance, John Cage's passion for chess seems contrary to his preoccupation with random processes in musical composition, since chess ranks among the so-called games of perfect information, defined by the virtue that there are *no* random elements that would exert influence on the course of the game. The opponent's options are perfectly known at any given moment. Among the numerous aleatory methods Cage employed, his preoccupation with the more than 2,000 years old *I Ching* is of particular importance. The deliberate chess game and the oracular methodology of the *I Ching*, based on the primordial principles of yin and yang, which Cage utilized for numerous random compositions, are, despite all their polar differences, both combinatorial systems. And in fact, Cage never busied himself with involuntary chaos<sup>3</sup> but rather strove for *autonomy* for both the sound events and the performers: his indeterminate scores require quasi-compositional interpretation in order to be performed—much like Merce Cunningham's choreographic notations, no matter how detailed.

Patrick Puls

1 See Kerstin Evert, *DanceLab: Zeitgenössischer Tanz und Neue Technologien* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003).

2 In collaboration with Robert Rauschenberg and Franz Kline.

3 Daniel Charles, *John Cage oder Die Musik ist los* (Berlin: Merve Verlag, 1979), p. 40: "The random procedures John Cage uses are not even, as one would assume, cultivated specifically for this purpose. Why should indeterminacy be a purpose in itself? In their subtlety, the ... simultaneously executed scores ... aim less at confusion or chaos than at the autonomy of each event."

John Lennon and Yoko Ono

*WAR IS OVER! IF YOU WANT IT*, 1969/1995

*Vital Use – Der Standard*, 1994–95

museum in progress in cooperation

with *Der Standard* newspaper

museum in progress seeks to transport art beyond the ordered space of the museum and to develop exhibition projects largely outside of traditional establishments. Working with media companies and other institutions that manage public advertising space, newspaper and magazine classifieds, and television and Internet spots—or, in the case of the Vienna State Opera, its safety curtain—museum in progress reaches with its art a much broader general public than it otherwise would. Founded in Vienna in 1990 by Kathrin Messner and Josef Ortner as a private art association, museum in progress situates art in the social spaces that exist outside of established galleries. Media spaces are transformed into exhibition spaces, and users of everyday media become viewers of art and exhibitions, without having to enter unfamiliar and/or pre-coded spaces.

Presenting the artistic collaboration between John Lennon and Yoko Ono via the medium of the magazine is a particularly apt choice: Lennon and Ono combine the Pop-culture prestige of their public personas with an artistic practice closely aligned with Fluxus. The peace-activist slogan “War Is Over!” is coupled with the addendum “If You Want It,” in a process paving the way for an individually enacted form of action through language.

Manuel Millautz

# Multiple Authorship

## Christine and Irene Hohenbüchler in collaboration with Kunstwerkstatt Lienz *Kommunikationsmöbel, 1991–97*

Christine and Irene Hohenbüchler repeatedly provoke questions in their works and projects about the potential roles and functions of art in social contexts. In the process, they transcend the field of art in its traditional conception. The *Communication Furniture* shown here was part of the installation *Multiple Authorship: A Communication Space*, which was presented at documenta in Kassel in 1997. It consisted of several items of “communication furniture,” a publication, and a video. The diverse pieces of furniture are now divided among several collections. The white-painted wooden object in mumok is a combination of bench, pedestal, and shelf with horizontal and vertical stripes in shades of blue. The style recalls early twentieth-century design reforms. Different techniques and materials were used for the objects. In addition to ceramic works, we see paper objects, photographs, and textile works.

All of the furniture and objects were created in artistic and communicative processes initiated by the siblings at the invitation of Kurt Baluch at the Kunstwerkstatt Lienz between 1991 and 1997. Twenty-four artists of different ages and with different disabilities collaborated on the works over several years: Klaus Altstätter, Kurt Baluch, Thomas Baumgartner, Andi Brunner, Clemens Erlacher, Mario Gander, Dietmar Geppert, Andreas Hoffmann, Christine Hohenbüchler, Irene Hohenbüchler, Rudi Ingruber, Maria Kofler, Leopoldine Kretschmann, Sylvia Manfreda, Andrea Mariacher, Georg Oberkirchner, Maria Patterer, Veronika Pichler, Hildegard Pranter, Elfriede Skramovsky, Günther Steiner, Helmut Trojer, Ferdinand Wieser, and Christian Wurnitsch.

However, in the reception and canonization of the works, the multiple authorship is often obscured by an authorship only assigned to the siblings.

Mikki Muhr

# Franz Erhard Walther

## *Annäherung ... , Für Zwei ... , Gegenüber, 1967–98*

The material origins of Franz Erhard Walther's fifty-eight-part sculpture *I. Werksatz* (First Workset; 1963–69) are the stuff of collaboration. Beginning in 1963, Walther collaborated with his then partner, Johanna Frieß, who sewed the artist's concepts into the fibers of garment-like instruments for bodily action. This initial expansion of the artist's project from sole producer to networked activity presages Walther's openness to process and participation as constitutive forces throughout his oeuvre.

The sculptures comprising *I. Werksatz* move fluidly between score, prop, and prosthesis as they prompt, support, and extend the bodily activity of individuals and groups. Even when inactive or intricately folded or packed in storage form, these works operate as interfaces for potential collaborations, presenting a virtual set of possibilities for negotiating individual and collective agency. Their physical and social enactment requires people to grasp, unfold, carry, cover, insert, or otherwise activate the work through coordinated effort. Accordingly, the conditions of collaboration are continuously renegotiated in relation to three interrelated agents: one's own body, the object, and the bodies of others. Walther sought to relinquish control and open the work's terms of engagement to a rotating cast of characters; however, throughout the life of the work, the artist has staged what he refers to as "demonstrations"—public pedagogical exercises during which he performs how each work is to be used. In doing so, he leaves us with a contradictory set of tutorials and open scores, cultivating a productive tension between indeterminate and closed systems.<sup>1</sup> The artist hemmed both choreographed and improvisational action into hybrid canvas constructions that unfold in the interstitial space between collaboration and control.

Jordan Carter

1 As Walther noted in 1972, "I determine my own work-process (in so doing my actions are restricted by the conditions of the work-process)—I cannot determine the work-process alone since others are also engaged in it (if I try to push it beyond a certain point, I can destroy the work-process). There is a reciprocal influence on the participants." Franz Erhard Walther, "Franz Erhard Walther: First Workset," *Avalanche* 4 (Spring 1972), pp. 34–41.

## Ant Farm

### *Inflatables Illustrated*, 1971

Ant Farm's *Inflatables Illustrated* opens with a shot of the collective's ICE-9 inflatable and customized Media Van, two components of a larger information sharing system put to work in their Truckstop Network tour, a cross-country road trip mediated by the Portapak and its playback equipment, launched in April 1971. The video cuts to Curtis Schreier in his Baby Moon Hub Cap 2-frequency geodesic dome hat, demonstrating to his collaborators and the Portapak how to make your own inflatable in the kitchen of Ant Farm's communal work and living space in a Sausalito warehouse, with its signature media fridge. Interspersed between shots of Schreier's lessons in inflatable fabrication are trippy, almost ecstatic scenes shot in 16 mm film by Kelly Gloger during the deployment of environmental-scale inflatables for ecology teach-ins and large gatherings. Their billowing forms attract or solicit collaborative experimentation with their fluid plastic world—pushing, pulling, rolling, climbing, interacting, playing, videotaping, always laughing—widening the sphere of actors in an environmental, informatic, and social machine. “See how uninhibited you get in an inflatable?” we hear. The audio track is evidence that the silent, color film is being watched collectively, transferred to black-and-white video during a live playback event. Losing color but gaining sound and laughter. “It is like floating as well as being on something, as well as being swallowed up by something.” “Inflatables allow a fourth dimension to take place where there are no rules,” another adds. *Inflatables Illustrated* is not just a video-format reprise of Ant Farm's do-it-yourself print manual *Inflatocookbook*, also of 1971. Part of an extended media-technical apparatus involving print media, film, events, performance, cameras, vans, even the surface of refrigerators, the tape reminds us that DIY situates the “yourself” within a collective activity or networking process leading to new configurations of elements and to new forms of life.

Felicity D. Scott

Haus-Rucker-Co.  
(Laurids and Manfred Ortner,  
Günter Zamp Kelp, Klaus Pinter)  
Larry Miller

The Space Age culminated in the 1969 moon landing, which was not only an illustrious event in human history but also a stage victory for the USA in the power-political race with the USSR. Torn between hippie culture and the Cold War, between euphoric belief in progress and bleak fears about the future, it was above all a time of social upheaval and transformation. Outside of space travel, Space Age euphoria was also evident in the use of innovative, aerodynamically soft, lightweight, and transparent forms and materials in both art and everyday aesthetics.

Interdisciplinary art forms with revolutionary social aspirations were in vogue and reflected exemplarily in the works of the artist group Haus-Rucker-Co. (Günter Zamp Kelp, Laurids and Manfred Ortner, Klaus Pinter). The group's name already was a proclamation: it referred not only to the artists' region of origin—the Hausruckviertel in Upper Austria—but also to the “shifting” (German: *Verrücken*) of conventional parameters in art and architecture. Starting in 1967, the group accomplished this with a “mind-expanding program,” an art of expanded and intensified consciousness in which communication and human contact were played off against the coldness of a society petrified in consumerism and with ruinous tendencies toward nature. *Gelbes Herz* (Yellow Heart), for example, is based on the form of a light bulb, within which couples should feel liberated from everyday worries in a meditative, relaxed atmosphere. Physical closeness was also conveyed by *Battleship*, which stimulates couples' feelings at the click of a button and with an illuminated display—a warship mutated into a peace ark in the service of “make love not war.” Larry Miller enriched the Fluxus movement not only with his art but also with his curatorial and scientific competence. With *OUTER SPACE*, he created a sober signpost, a “performing object,” pointing to a mysterious beyond of space and time.

Rainer Fuchs

Cross, square, circle—the basic forms of Suprematism as a group action on a roof in New York, on Red Square in Moscow, in a meadow near Ljubljana: *Transcentrala, New York, Moscow, Ljubljana* is exemplary of IRWIN’s “retro principle,” a method of recontextualizing motifs in political art from the first half of the twentieth century. Since its founding in 1983, the collective has dealt with avant-garde movements of Eastern Europe and the dialectic of avant-garde and totalitarianism. The citations, appropriations, and montages of historical visual formulas are less a form of critique than “subversive affirmation” (Boris Groys) or “over-identification” (Slavoj Žižek) with a cultural system that does not live up to its own, originally utopian claims.

In the collective work of IRWIN, their interest was initially focused on the creation of local networks. From the nineteen-nineties onwards, interaction and the exchange of experiences with international colleagues gained in importance. These two phases can be identified in the art collective Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) founded in 1984 by IRWIN, the band Laibach, and the theater group Gledališče sester Scipion Nasice (The Scipion Nasice Sisters Theater). While NSK initially presented itself as a hermetic, almost totalitarian organization, in 1992 the collective became a state without territory. “The NSK State in time is an abstract organism, a suprematist body, installed in a real social and political space as a sculpture comprising the concrete body warmth, spirit and work of its members.”<sup>1</sup>

Among its most important projects was the *NSK Embassy Moscow* (1992) in a private Moscow apartment, where NSK passports were issued for the first time. The follow-up project, *Transnacionala*, led IRWIN and artist friends across the USA in the summer of 1996. Subsequently, IRWIN transformed the experiences of this project into several installations of the same name, which took the form of NSK passport offices.

Gudrun Ratzinger

1 Eda Čufer and IRWIN, “NSK State in Time,” accessed April 19, 2022, <https://www.irwin-nsk.org/texts/nsk-state-in-time/>; reprinted in Laura Hoptman and Tomas Pospiszył, eds., *Primary Documents: A Sourcebook for Eastern and Central European Art since the 1950s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), p. 301.

# Friedrich Kiesler

## *Studie zum Space House, 1933*

In 1933, Friedrich Kiesler presented a 1:1 model of his *Space House* at the Showroom of the Modernage Furniture Company in New York. Dismantled after just a few weeks and never built in reality, the house met the needs for small, functional, and affordable housing in the wake of the Great Depression but at the same time set new standards in design. The building, with its organically rounded, transparent forms of glass and plastic, was designed to interact with the psyche and physique of the human body. Fluid forms responding to human patterns of movement shaped the architecture as a dynamic spatial phenomenon. Accordingly, curtains and sliding walls were used as flexible elements as opposed to stereometric room dividers. Since the nineteen-thirties, Kiesler also developed his theory of “correalism,” which conceived both the individual and the social environment as well as the diverse genres of art as correlating parts of a holistic assemblage. The visionary nature of the *Space House*, also conveyed in the graphic study of it, continued to evolve in the fifties in the *Endless House*, Kiesler’s most concise biomorphic architectural design.

Rainer Fuchs