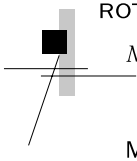
# EXPERIMENTALISM OTHERWISE

*The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits*

Benjamin Piekut



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Experimentalism Otherwise

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# Experimentalism Otherwise

*The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits*

Benjamin Piekut

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# Introduction

*What Was Experimentalism?*

This book tells the stories of four disastrous confrontations within the world of New York experimentalism in 1964, plus one more about the extension of experimentalist techniques out of the city's avant-garde community and into the foreign realm of popular music a few years later. In February, the New York Philharmonic gave their notorious performance of John Cage's *Atlas Eclipticalis,* during which the musicians reportedly played scales, chatted among themselves, and even destroyed the composer's contact microphones. In April and September, the composer and activist Henry Flynt led raucous public demonstrations against Karlheinz Stockhausen and the American artists who performed his works in concert. Also in September, the cellist and impresaria Charlotte Moorman premiered her full version of Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player,* in an interpretation that the composer would liken to "murder." In October, the trumpeter Bill Dixon formed the Jazz Composers Guild, an organization that forcefully, albeit briefly, proclaimed its independence from the exploitative jazz marketplace. Finally, that autumn the composer Robert Ashley premiered his sonically assaultive vocal piece *The Wolfman* at a Moorman-produced festival. He would take this work back with him to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where it became the inspiration for a young Iggy Pop to experiment with avant-garde techniques in his band, the Stooges.

I was guided to and through these stories by an appreciation of what the literary scholar Fred Moten refers to as "the very intense relationship between experimentalism and the everyday."[1] Anyone familiar with the

work of John Cage will recognize the importance accorded to the quotidian within American experimentalism. However, like any avant-garde, experimentalism performs not simply a return to daily life but an intensification of it—a peculiar mix of the commonplace and the singular. Experimentalism is both ordinary and extraordinary. It is the everyday world around us, as well as the possibility that this world might be otherwise.

This study is situated in New York City during 1964. That means that other important formations of experimentalism—most important, those in San Francisco and Ann Arbor—come up only tangentially here (though Ann Arbor figures prominently in the epilogue). There is no deep reason for this; my book is about New York, not those other places. In fact, I maintain that there is nothing special about the New York stories that I discuss in this project—they are simply a way in, a collection of opportunities to explore experimentalism in the most ordinary fashion.

But New York was also extraordinary in the 1960s. And 1964 was certainly a special year, with three important festivals, each reflecting a different notion of commonality. Under the direction of Leonard Bernstein, the New York Philharmonic's Avant-Garde concert series, presented in January and February, linked Cage, Morton Feldman, and Earle Brown with Edgard Varèse, Iannis Xenakis, Stefan Wolpe, György Ligeti, Aaron Copland, and Larry Austin. At the end of the summer, Moorman organized her Second Annual Avant Garde Festival, with almost two full weeks of concerts involving dozens of composers and performers. (She would produce these famous yearly festivals until 1981.) Finally, Dixon's concert series, the October Revolution in Jazz, marked the formal emergence of that avant-garde's second wave and paved the way for the founding of the Jazz Composers Guild later that month.

The year 1964 was also special for many of the individuals featured in this study. Although the writer and critic Amiri Baraka (then known as LeRoi Jones) would not found the Black Arts Repertory Theatre and School until the spring of 1965, the black nationalist sensibility was already taking shape in 1964, and that was also the year in which Baraka's popularity was reaching new heights. Flynt's demonstrations against Stockhausen represented a culmination of sorts and were the most explicit and public articulations of his anti-imperialist and antiracist critique of the European-American avant-garde. Moorman premiered her famous interpretation of Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* in this year, and also began her fruitful collaboration with Nam June Paik in 1964. The New York Philharmonic's performance of Cage's *Atlas Eclipticalis* bestowed a measure of prestige on the composer and his "tradition" that had never before existed.

During the same weekend as that of the *Atlas* concerts (February 7–9), the Beatles arrived in New York to appear on the *Ed Sullivan Show,* a broadcast that set off a year of Beatlemania and radically altered the public tenor of youth culture and popular music. It was an important year in the civil rights movement as well, with the signing of the Civil Rights Act in July, Mississippi Freedom Summer, the founding of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the murder of three activists in August, and riots in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant in protest of police brutality.

However singular, however extraordinary New York might have been in 1964, that time and place is more an evocative trope symbolizing the unity of my case studies than it is the uniting principle itself. Quite to the contrary, my reason for bringing together these five cases is perfectly ordinary, nothing more than the network forged through the everyday connections made by the actors in these stories. Indeed, the conflicts, meetings, and attachments that arose hardly seem special in a time and place when ordinary overlap was the rule. The major and minor characters of my marginal universe moved regularly through a variety of cultural, institutional, bohemian, and political milieux in this period. This point cannot be overstated, especially in a study like this one, which devotes substantial attention to the free jazz movement existing underground alongside the European American scene downtown. The key task for a fresh appraisal of 1960s experimentalism is to register the ambivalence of the connections between these two avant-gardes, the ways in which these communities were both connected to, and separated from, each other in powerful ways.

The overlaps are innumerable, so let one figure serve as a representative example. In the 1960s, the saxophonist, composer, and journalist Don Heckman was best known as a critic for *Down Beat,* where he wrote analyses of Ornette Coleman's music and other treatments of the new adventurous jazz. He had long been interested in both the European American avant-garde and African American jazz experimentalism. Along with his teacher, the Greenwich Village polymath and sage John Benson Brooks, Heckman took Cage's class in experimental music composition at the New School for Social Research in 1960. The presence of Heckman and Brooks goes unreported in accounts that center on the course's other notable attendees: Jackson Mac Low, Al Hanson, George Brecht, Dick Higgins, and Allan Kaprow.[2] Given the pair's jazz orientation, this omission is not surprising. Heckman remembers, "I learned very quickly in asking questions in the class that the fact that I was a jazz musician didn't get me any special cachet at all. [Cage] generally didn't want to discuss it."[3] Heckman recalls later participating in a few of Al Hansen's happen-

ings, and he wrote a thoughtful survey of Cage's aesthetics and music in *Down Beat* in 1964.[4]

Heckman also took part in a famous 1964 production of Stockhausen's *Originale,* directed by Kaprow and produced by Moorman for her Second Annual Avant Garde Festival (and picketed by Flynt). In Peter Moore's documentary film of the performance, Heckman tosses off bebop licks in a duet with Moorman, who concentrates on scattered, dissonant pizzicato chords.[5] The role he was playing, "Jazz Saxophonist," was not in Stockhausen's original 1961 performance in Cologne, nor was it part of the score published in 1964.[6] Heckman believes that the part was probably added for the New York performance by Stockhausen himself, whom Heckman met during the composer's sojourn in the city in the spring of 1964. "I took them [Stockhausen and his then mistress, the painter Mary Bauermeister] out. We went out to hear jazz one night, and it was interesting that I took him to one of the Jazz Composers Guild performances, and he had no interest in it at all," Heckman later recalled. (The Guild did not exist until a few months later, so Heckman misremembered this specific point. His more general meaning, however, is understood: the music they heard was representative of the post-Coleman generation of black avant-gardists in the city and likely involved personnel that would later be associated with the Guild.) Heckman continued:

> I was so caught up, as most of the players around town were, with what was happening with these cutting edge things, that I thought, "Oh my God, here's Stockhausen, and he's going to fall in love with this stuff." . . . I thought that he was going to have a very favorable reaction to it, and then we were there for not very long, and he said, "Is there anything else we can hear?" And that was it. We were out of there. . . . We went uptown then, and went to a Roy Eldridge gig, which is what he really wanted to hear. That was his perception of what jazz was, and you know, jazz should be. As it is for many Europeans. But he had no interest in the, sort of, so-called avant-garde music stuff that was happening, jazz things that were happening.

Though Cage and Stockhausen symbolized for many the oppositional poles of "American experimentalism" and "European avant-gardism"—argued most strenuously by Michael Nyman in his *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*—this anecdote indicates that they shared a mutual ignorance and lack of attention to the most adventurous jazz of their contemporaries.[7] As a noted voice in the swing movement of the 1930s and a major influence on Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, Eldridge was safely situated in the musical past for Stockhausen, and, unlike the jazz avant-gardists, he was not making a claim, either explicit or implicit, to vanguard status.

For her part, Moorman had fewer reservations about integrating "jazz" into her activities. On her First Avant Garde Festival in 1963, she premiered Coleman's *City Minds and Country Hearts,* which he had written sometime in the previous year or so.[8] Moorman also performed a string quartet by the saxophonist and composer Giuseppi Logan in 1965, and she appeared in concert with the trombonist Roswell Rudd and the saxophonist John Tchicai shortly thereafter.[9] Despite her numerous attachments to the jazz avant-garde, Moorman tapped Heckman to curate the "jazz night" on her Avant Garde Festivals for the rest of the decade, which turned out to feature Jazz Composers Guild–affiliated artists such as Rudd, Burton Greene, Cecil Taylor, Sun Ra, Bill Dixon, and Michael Mantler, as well as such other notable players as Charles Lloyd, Robin Kenyatta, and Heckman.

Such casual connections and confrontations among different musical worlds are not unique to Heckman. They permeate the biographies of downtown artists in this period. Pick a point in this network—composer, venue, critic, publication, performer, event—and follow where it leads. Explain the strange topology that results. At the most basic level, this has been my approach with the five case studies that constitute *Experimentalism Otherwise*. But no matter the degree to which the New York avant-gardes were effectively jumbled in 1964, the view from 2009 offers a well-sorted and stable collection of repertoires (or are they "genres," "traditions," "styles," or "histories"?). This business keeps two sets of books: one with all the messy overlaps and conflicts, and a second in which these attachments have been snipped away to preserve the cohesion and consistency of a bounded tradition. Such a transformation from (near) chaos to (near) order prompts the question of what it is, exactly, we are talking about when we talk about experimental music. As I hope to make clear, this is a question best approached historically. What *was* experimentalism?

. . .

In Michael Nyman's influential formulation, a set of "purely musical considerations" sets off experimentalism from its close cousin, the avant-garde.[10] Experimentalism, he writes, offers fluid processes instead of static objects; antiteleological procedures instead of goal-driven works; new roles for composers, performers, and listeners instead of the hierarchies of traditional art music; notation as a set of actions rather than as a representation of sounds; a momentary evanescence instead of temporal fixity; an ontology that foregrounds performance over writing; and a welcoming of daily life instead of its transcendence.[11]

To this familiar list we might add commonly cited ideological imperatives such as the desire to replace an inherited European tradition with a fresh American music; an expansion of the concept of music; an attenuation of intention; an openness to non-Western musics and philosophies; a mission to liberate sounds, stress timbre and rhythm over melody, and explore different tuning systems; an avoidance of stylistic continuity; and a contempt for large orchestral forms and concert halls.[12] Other hallmarks of this consensus view of experimentalism include notions of rugged individualism, a "maverick" spirit, academic nonaffiliation, and general noninstitutionality.[13] All of these qualities are often thought to add up to a kind of radicalism or subversiveness inherent in the experimental impulse.

Although this list of characteristics offers a useful description of the thing that we take to be experimentalism, it is not an explanation or definition of the category. Authors who use this list may think they are explaining what experimental music is, but they assume a grouping from the outset, as if to say, "Let me explain to you what the experimentalists have in common, what they share, what their music does."[14] But the inquiry needs to be pushed back one step: How have these composers been collected together in the first place, that they can now be the subject of a description? This second question is the proper starting place for an investigation into what experimental music was in the last century. Experimentalism is a grouping, not a group, and any account of it must be able, in the words of Michel Foucault, "to recognize the events of history, its jolts, its surprises, its unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats."[15] In this study, experimentalism is the *result* of these jolts, surprises, victories, and defeats. It marks an achievement, not an explanation, and my interest is in tracing a few moments of this achievement.

Amy Beal is virtually alone in investigating the formation of the category "experimental" since World War II.[16] Not content simply to reproduce the standard tropes of this formation, Beal is instead concerned to show when and how these tropes were disseminated and proliferated in the postwar decades. As she makes clear in her study of the correspondences among Cage, the West Coast critic Peter Yates, and John Edmunds (curator of the New York Public Library Music Division's Americana Collection from 1957 to 1961), the years around 1960 were a crucial moment in the emergence of the idea of American experimentalism. She further shows that conversations and contacts in West Germany were perhaps more important to the development of American experimentalism than similar connections were in the United States.

To cite just one of Beal's many examples, the composer Gordon Mumma

sets in motion familiar experimentalist themes for an audience of composers and critics in Darmstadt in 1974: "The United States has a long history of individualist creative artists. . . . Some, like the composer Charles Ives, are widely known. Though the universities still tend to nourish conformity, the individualists survive. The individualists, even the crackpots, are a source of pride to almost everyone. They are the source of our most fertile innovation."[17] American experimentalism is not what Mumma describes in his lecture. Rather, it is what is *enacted*—Mumma *performs* a grouping and articulates this grouping to a well-connected audience. Such performatives constitute experimentalism as an act (specifically, an act of grouping), and, as I will explain, these acts are always situated as iterations in a series. Mumma's grouping continues to perform beyond this single moment in 1974. Through its publication in the conference proceedings, his grouping travels and persists temporally, thus becoming another crucial node in a network that gradually stabilizes as it accrues other connections over time. Beyond being an observation or description of the world, Mumma's act of grouping now acts upon other groupings.[18] The scenario I am describing is an experimentalism that is the product of labor, an achievement that must be maintained over time.

The fundamental ontological shift that marks experimentalism as an achievement is that from representationalism to performativity. From the latter perspective, an explanation of experimentalism that already assumes the category it purports to explain is flawed from the outset.[19] I take my cue from philosophers and science and technology scholars by thinking of experimentalism as something that is "put together" in processes that are historical, social, linguistic, and technological.[20] To explain what experimentalism has been, one must attend to its fabrication through a network of discourses, practices, and institutions. This formation is the result of the combined labor of scholars, composers, critics, journalists, patrons, performers, venues, and the durative effects of discourses of race, gender, nation, and class. The continuing performance of this network—and not an experimental "ethos" or "spirit"—explains the extension of experimentalism through time.

In the following chapters I examine individuals, events, and organizations located at the edges of recognized experimentalism; by marking a limit or boundary, these individuals, events, and organizations have tested the experimental network and helped to define it historically. By considering such edge, or marginal, moments I hope to show the enacted realities of an experimental network in a specific time and place. The "very intense relationship" described by Moten is one of testing. Testing the quotid-

ian, the ordinary, the accepted, the given—not for any directed purpose but as an open-ended project—can reveal the unknown, the unnoticed, the extraordinary, or the otherwise. In a historical inquiry, edge moments perform an analogous kind of testing by probing at the given to uncover the ways that historical formations take shape, how limits are drawn and redrawn, and how the details of specific life stories and concrete events—what I call "actually existing experimentalism"—might place pressure on accepted narratives.

. . .

My approach to these matters is inspired above all by the work of Bruno Latour, a philosopher of science associated with actor-network theory (ANT). I proceed from Latour's formulation of the term *network:* it does not describe the shape of the social formations under study but rather the method used to understand them and the movements of translation they effect. When studying a network, it is important to identify everything that has an effect in a given situation. These effects reveal a web of connections among people, technologies, texts, and institutions. It is a heterogeneous network—these are things of different kinds, and thus their connection necessarily requires translation. Latour writes, "[In the mid-1980s], the word network, like Deleuze's and Guattari's term *rhizome,* clearly meant a series of *transformations*—translations, transductions—which could not be captured by any of the traditional terms of social theory. With the new popularization of the word network, it now means transport *without* deformation, and instantaneous, unmediated access to every piece of information. That is exactly the opposite of what we meant."[21] A network, then, describes a formation not simply of connected things (as we might assume in the post–World Wide Web era), but of differences that are mediated by connections that translate these differences into equivalences.[22] One example of translation is the grouping of the New York School of composers, whose commonalities were often delineated even as Earle Brown and Morton Feldman increasingly pointed out the differences of perspective they held.[23]

Another Latour tenet that guides this book is a directive: follow the actors. In this study, "following the actors" has meant pursuing an individual or argument even when it seems to be leading outside of experimental music studies proper. (This directive differs greatly from the robotic injunction to "add context" to the object of historical study, for ANT rejects the separation of text from context *ab initio*.) Abandoning such disciplinary limits is a minimum expectation in a milieu that encourages the kind of

expansive thinking characteristic of someone like La Monte Young, who has written, "I trace the roots of minimalism in music from modal music, blues, and the sounds of step-down transformers on telephone polls and in power plants."[24] Or, as Cecil Taylor told an interviewer in 1965, "I don't know if the powers that be would want (musicians to work regularly) *[sic]* because then you would be able to operate at maximum capacity on all levels. . . . You could think more clearly with regard to political action, for instance. You would be able to think in terms of what you would contribute to your community on all levels—not just the level of a musician."[25]

To follow the actors, one must abandon the limit of limit, which is different from "pushing boundaries" or "taking it to the limit." Whereas the frontier mentality of pushing at limits can naturalize those boundaries by channeling theoretical expansion to only occur in one direction ("over the edge," as it were), throwing out the idea of limit places us in an entirely different critical topology. Abandoning the limit of limit means disregarding any artificial and normative separations among fields and actors and embracing the messy assemblages that result.[26] As Georgina Born has argued, these assemblages must be revealed by means of a robust empiricism that, unlike traditional positivist empiricism, uses the analysis of the state of things as the basis for conceptual invention: "The methodological point is that the outcome of such processes cannot be known in advance, but must remain open to empirical investigation."[27] At the outset, the empiricist treats all actors symmetrically by assuming no differences between them, thus allowing a network of relations to emerge and further guide the inquiry. Latour writes, "We also know that these networks are not built with homogeneous material but, on the contrary, necessitate the weaving together of a multitude of different elements which renders the question of whether they are 'scientific' or 'technical' or 'economic' or 'political' or 'managerial' meaningless."[28]

American experimentalism, like the multitudinous weave that Latour describes, is the result of attachments of different kinds, and it is in and through these attachments that the network is performed. In other words, Henry Cowell shouldn't be thought to "follow" Charles Ives in a tradition because of some shared maverick spirit but because of the scores he published in *New Music Edition,* the works he arranged to be conducted in Europe in the 1920s, the articles and book he wrote about his elder colleague, and so on.[29] These attachments take different forms—personal connections, shared enterprises (the exposure of Ives's work in Europe), printed texts—and each has a different degree of temporal persistence. Face-to-face connection (and thus cultural capital) is clearly important

in this kind of network, but printed and recorded texts can travel much farther and last much longer as part of a social grouping. This is why it is crucial to understand a network as heterogeneous, as something far more complex than a simple *social* network of composers and critics who get each other gigs. Dispersal and durability measure relative strength, so the portable persistence of articles, scores, books, and recordings assumes paramount importance, especially when they end up in authoritative sites of knowledge production such as archives and university libraries. Shared musical concerns—a predilection for tone clusters or a certain sonic eclecticism—play a role in the act of grouping, but this dimension is not deterministic and is in fact conditioned by the vast apparatus of connections surrounding and supporting it.

Among the components of this apparatus are such forces as race, gender, class, and nation. For example, it is critically important to register the racial patterns that would take two trumpeters born in 1926, Miles Davis and Earle Brown, both of whom studied in reputable traditions (Davis at Juilliard, Brown in the theory of Joseph Schillinger), into two quite exclusive networks. This is a certain arrangement of power that incites, induces, and makes it easier and more probable for Brown to be associated with the white configuration of American experimentalism than with the African American configuration of bebop and modern jazz. This is not to say that phenotype equals destiny; as Foucault puts it, only in its extreme form does power constrain or forbid absolutely, but "it is always a way of acting upon one or more acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action. A set of actions upon other actions."[30]

Because I agree with Foucault's description of power relations as both "intentional and nonsubjective," I spend little time in this study on personal racial politics, for face-to-face interactions occur on a social terrain that has already been shaped and segmented by racial patterning.[31] The limited ethnic cast of a grouping such as experimentalism isn't to be reduced to a conspiracy scene. Nonetheless, face-to-face connections do concretize, modify, and enact racial discourse, and, crucially, ramify this discourse in a range of other more material and durable forms, such as performance spaces, economic arrangements of distribution, the production of legitimating texts, the design of curricula, and the formation of scholarly disciplines and subdisciplines. The difference in audience complexion between performances at the Judson Memorial Church and the Five Spot, for instance, clearly demonstrates that race plays a role here (even though Cecil Taylor *did* appear on that first program of the Judson Dance Theater in 1962, alongside the work of Cage),[32] but the specific ways

in which such discourses become instantiated in the concrete and durable reality of performance spaces are harder to trace. Far more than just one node in a network, race is dispersed throughout the social, economic, and cultural modes of daily life—to borrow a phrase from Kathleen Stewart, "It's more like a strand in the netting that holds things together."[33]

Connecting this kind of dispersed racial patterning to its atomistic manifestations—raced bodies or racialized performance spaces, for example—has proven difficult for even the most incisive writers on experimentalism. Sally Banes's *Greenwich Village 1963,* for example, mounts a spirited attempt to include the efforts of African American artists in its account of the New York sixties avant-garde. Unfortunately, the analysis elides those institutional and systemic channels of power that might lead one to conclude that "very few African Americans or other people of color systematically played a part in [this avant-garde milieu]."[34] Her speculation that "many black artists may not have had a taste for the kind of iconoclastic activity—the product of some measure of educational privilege—in which the white artists reveled" leads Moten to an uncharacteristically laconic demurral: "I guess, in the end, it's not even that crucial to open an argument against her position by saying that she must not have been looking 'round the Five Spot."[35]

Conflict appears as a predominant theme in this study—between John Cage and the New York Philharmonic, Henry Flynt and the European American avant-garde, Charlotte Moorman and Cage (not to mention Charlotte Moorman and the New York penal code), and among members of the Jazz Composers Guild, Black Arts Movement, and the New York jazz underground. I am drawn to controversies because of the clarity they bring. As Latour notes, "[N]o one lives in a 'culture,' shares a 'paradigm,' or belongs to a 'society' before he or she clashes with others. The emergence of these words is one consequence of building longer networks and of crossing other people's path."[36] Similarly, it is my premise here that "experimentalism" comes into being *through* conflict and disagreement; the emergence of the category is not the *cause* but the *result* of clashes over how and where to extend networks or make new connections.

If experimentalism is a grouping, then conflicts are the traces of its formation. As in any case of group formation, this one involves spokespersons who make the group talk, actors who mobilize resources to make boundaries more durable, professionals who authorize the group, and those who map antigroups.[37] Experimentalism's spokespeople define "who they are, what they should be, what they have been. These are constantly at work, justifying the group's existence, invoking rules and precedents

and . . . measuring up one definition against all the others."[38] They have included Henry Cowell, whose introduction to *American Composers on American Music* (1933) was already grouping a category reminiscent of experimentalism;[39] Wolfgang Edward Rebner, whose 1954 Darmstadt lecture was an important early articulation of the "tradition";[40] John Cage, whose writings and lectures in the 1950s include both canon-building exercises and more doctrinal statements on experimentalism;[41] Peter Yates, whose lectures, articles, and book publications in the 1950s and 1960s had identified him with the category to the extant that Lejaren Hiller would write in 1965 of Yates's "thesis of the American experimental tradition";[42] and Nyman, whose 1974 publication of *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* solidified many of the key tropes of experimentalism.

Comparing Moorman's Second Annual Avant Garde Festival and Dixon's October Revolution in Jazz reveals the different kinds of resources that could be mobilized on behalf of each festival. Moorman, an assistant to the concert producer Norman Seaman, could draw upon her experience and considerable contacts in concert promotion to attract reporters and critics from several newspapers, national glossy magazines, news film, and radio. Seaman's financial support, publicity networks, and extensive mailing list further eased her job of booking Judson Hall and attracting an audience (though Seaman never did break even). In the years to come, Seaman's contacts with city officials and other New York power brokers doubtlessly smoothed the way for Moorman to stage her festivals at sites across the city.

But when Moorman went uptown in October 1964 to hear concerts at the October Revolution, she arrived at a crowded, tiny basement café. Dixon produced the event with little more than his telephone and a list of hungry and eager musicians, and he later recalled incurring debts to both his phone company and his local grocers in the weeks preceding the festival. (Indeed, the fact that the power company cut the café's electricity on the day of the first concert indicates the precariousness of the situation.) When Dixon and the Jazz Composers Guild produced the Four Days in December series at Judson Hall two months later, the success of the event had little to do with the size of their Rolodex. "We didn't have any money," Dixon later explained. "I got a bunch of newspapers and showed everyone how to make signs with magic marker, and from 91st Street down to 57th Street, we put them up in every damn subway station there was." Unlike the Judson Dance Theater, another artists' collective in New York at this time, the Guild also had to pay rent on its rehearsal and concert space.

Different kinds of professionals authorize the grouping of experimentalism, from respected members of an established and powerful group ("To

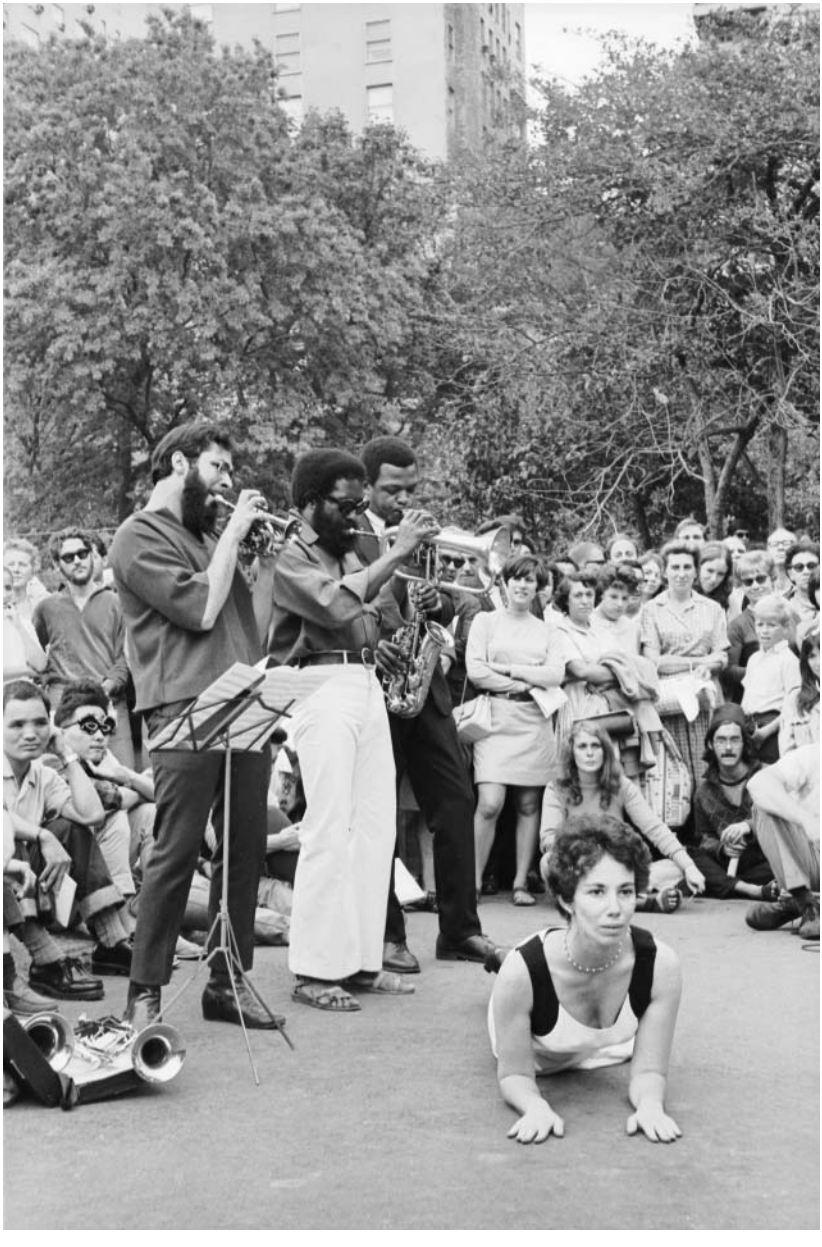


FIGURE 1. Bill Dixon (in sunglasses) and Judith Dunn present their work "Ground Speed" at Charlotte Moorman's Fourth Annual Avant Garde Festival, September 9, 1966, at the conservatory pond in New York's Central Park. Dixon's ensemble also included Marc Levin (pocket trumpet, left), Robin Kenyatta (alto saxophone), and Bob Pozar (percussion, unpictured). Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images.

catch on to us, what the public needs is to get it from Leonard Bernstein," Feldman reportedly told Cage)[43] and publishers who produce and distribute a composer's work (C.F. Peters and Universal Edition, for example) to critics (such as Yates, Tom Johnson, and Kyle Gann) who publicize the activities of the group.[44] By taking account of these various elements that go into defining the formation, we can understand experimentalism itself as a kind of composition, a putting together of people, institutions, sounds, and discourses. The elements available at hand affect profoundly the resulting composition.

Supporters of American experimentalism have expended the most energy mapping two antigroups: the European avant-garde and U.S. jazz. In the latter case, we have seen less a mapping than an inscription: "terra incognita." Don't go there![45] Jazz and African American improvisation was a major presence during the 1960s, however, especially in New York City, and I examine its overlaps and intersections with European American experimentalism in several sections of this project. Rather than reinscribing the usual distinction made between American *experimentalism* and European *avant-gardism*, I use the two terms interchangeably here because doing otherwise would naturalize a difference that has been discursively produced.[46] Given the amount of ink devoted to establishing and maintaining this division, the best option is to sidestep it altogether.

These antigroups are essential for the formation of experimentalism. I have accordingly tried to understand this network not only through its "internal" fractures but also through the other series of breaks that have cordoned off experimentalism from other significant networks of the time such as rock, jazz, and traditional concert music. In doing so, I take as a general axiom that meaning does not inhere in the object itself but is produced through difference in a system of signification. The empirical philosopher Annemarie Mol has eloquently elaborated the profound ontological ramifications of this simple principle of structuralism: "Somewhere along the way the meaning of the word 'is' has changed. Dramatically. This is what the change implies: the new 'is' is one that is situated. . . . It doesn't say what it is in and of itself, for nothing ever 'is' alone. *To be is to be related*. The new talk about what is does not bracket the practicalities involved in enacting reality. It keeps them present."[47]

. . .

Experimentalism has been proliferated through a series of citations. Time and again, the act of grouping has seemingly already taken place, and a new account of the network is less a singular event than an iteration or

citation of an authority existing elsewhere, a new instance of the same list of names and titles, without reference to why or how that list came into shape. To quote Judith Butler, the normative grouping of experimentalism "takes hold to the extent that it is 'cited' as such a norm, but it also derives its power through the citations that it compels."[48] Such is the two-way street of performativity. Accounts of experimentalism register as meaningful to the extent that they instantiate an already durative network, but the network itself depends upon these iterations to gain stability and influence. With this performative (as opposed to representational) understanding of the scholarly enterprise, the origin moment of experimentalism ceases to be a matter of concern and is in fact relocated into the present with each successive iteration. As Latour puts it, "For ANT, if you stop making and remaking groups, you stop having groups."[49]

Scholarship is a key site of this grouping and one of the central ways that experimentalism has been stabilized over the long term and on a larger scale. The point is obvious—there is no imaginary space where sounds and an "experimental spirit" meet up and sort themselves into a tradition. They require human organizers to group them together, and because sounds cannot articulate arguments for themselves, the scholar must engage in acts of translation, the rendering of differences into equivalences. This is not to say that we are free to group things however we please, or that experimentalism is nothing but a discourse. A network model is useful because it stresses heterogeneity—networks are never *simply* language, never *simply* sound, never *simply* personal contacts, never *simply* practices and institutions, but rather a messy mix of all types of things. Because translation constitutes its object, rather than simply discovering it, a genealogy of experimentalism leads ineluctably to the circumstances of its scholarly performatives.

The first wave of Cage studies that appeared in the late 1980s and early 1990s was concerned with legitimating the composer's music in an environment that had been all too quick to dismiss him as nothing more than a philosopher and writer. In his introduction to *The Music of John Cage,* James Pritchett responds to this situation by framing Cage as a traditional composer "with a unique and very beautiful sense of musical style."[50] This approach creates and stresses continuities between Cage and the Western European tradition by concentrating on scores and sketches—which extend the network in time and give it further stability once they are housed in an archive—while simultaneously attenuating the ruptural possibilities of his work. Pritchett cites approvingly Cage's description of the ideal critic as someone "who could take music and, by writing about it,

turn it 'into something you can deal with.'"[51] Pritchett offers a strikingly apposite description of translation itself: turning things into something we can deal with. At the time of his remarks, this practice entailed the methodology of archival recovery and explication, a set of concerns that has been highly influential in articulating a sense of experimentalism based on musical style considerations.

One way to think about translation is to consider briefly a less familiar view of 1960s experimentalism. Cage's well-known movement away from objects and toward process and theater was, for much of the decade, enacted in small group performances, most commonly in an electrified duo formation with David Tudor. As Cage described in a letter to Edward Downes in 1965, the pair's performance of *Variations IV* "has become an improvisation using a large library of taped material, together with short wave radios, electronic circuits, [phonograph] cartridges, and alarm devices (horns, etc.)."[52] The dancer Carolyn Brown describes Volkswagen bus tours across the United States by Cage, Tudor, and the Cunningham Dance Company that would have done Henry Rollins proud.[53] Following Cage's example (or perhaps setting the example for him), the younger generation of experimentalists customarily performed in loose, improvisational group formations more reminiscent of rock or jazz bands than of the traditional, cultivated split between composer and performer. Think here of the ONCE Group, AMM, the Moorman/Paik duo, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Sonic Arts Union, Musica Elettronica Viva, and the Theatre of Eternal Music, which, in the words of Tony Conrad, "denied *composition* its authoritarian function as a modern activity."[54] Given the manner in which such groups presented and performed music, it makes as much sense to connect them to the Cecil Taylor Unit or the Stooges as to Charles Ives or Arnold Schoenberg.

Such arrangements of distributed authorship and shared responsibility for musical production—what Georgina Born has called "latent and processual" assemblages—are only ruptures in the familiar institutions of classical music.[55] For most other musics in the world, of course, this arrangement isn't disruptive at all, and therefore we have to position these experimental bands—Cage's included—in a landscape in the 1960s where new social movements were creating sociopolitical constituencies tied to folk, jazz, rock, and soul—not Western art music

But not every writer on Cage would agree. David P. Miller, for example, dismisses those wilder associations of Cage's performances of the 1960s in favor of an approach that translates them into the more common terms of art-music production. He asks,

> Don't these pieces [i.e., the *Variations* works from the 1960s], above all, incarnate Cage's famed openness to whatever may happen to happen? This question, while understandable, may be more of an artifact of the mid-twentieth-century avant-garde than it is relevant to the *Variations* in particular. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, more interesting questions include: What are these works as *compositions?* What distinguishes them not only from each other but also from generically imagined "happenings" or multimedia events?[56]

The difference between Miller's artifactual question and the other questions he finds more interesting reveals precisely the ways in which the experimentalist network is stabilized into a conventional model of canonic definition, score parsing, and author-centered explication. Miller's works-based indeterminacy tells a story of experimentalism that is familiar but narrow, willfully uninterested in the tangle of attachments around Cage in the 1960s.

For the young Henry Flynt, however, Cage's music was dangerous. Many years later, reflecting on the bracing atmosphere of innovation in the downtown of the 1960s, he remarked, "There were not supposed to be any brakes on the car. If it meant going over the cliff, then it meant going over the cliff! There were no brakes on this car, where you would say, 'Enough is enough—I want my *job* at Wesleyan,' you know? It was not supposed to be about that. Of course, it *was* about that." In this regard, Miller merely follows the lead of Cage, who was a virtuoso at translating or mediating the ruptural potential of his most indeterminate works by rearticulating them into the terms of a high-art-identified experimentalism, thus pulling these band formations out of the wider 1960s landscape and back into another powerful network. All of those collaborative, noisy performances were derived from scores that were so general and abstract that almost any sonic theatrical situation could be generated. The perfect example is Cage's score for *Variations V,* which was created *after* its first performance in 1965. The score itself specifies: "Performance without score or parts."[57] A few years after he wrote this work, Cage asked Richard Kostelanetz, "Do you see the implications of this? . . . [It] changes our idea of what a score is."[58] But it hasn't done so at all. Cage still expected someone else to perform his work: "These are remarks that would enable one to perform *Variations V,*" he told Kostelanetz. His scores were still analyzed by musicologists who placed them into a style history. And even *Variations V* would be performed many years later by Miller's Mobius Artists' Group, in a version that was, in Miller's words, "free of the historical circumstances of the original performances."[59] Indeed, Cage folded his output very easily into the conventional concert-music tradition, where it was later taken up by willing performers.

Cage's choice to score even an unscored event like *Variations V* sets off a chain reaction of paper: music with a title is listed on a program, and that program ends up in several different archives. Then there is the score, its autograph, sketches, facsimiles, and final printed copy housed at hundreds of libraries across the world. Through this example we see that translation is performed not only by scholars such as Miller or Pritchett; Cage often prepared the way with translations of his own. (And, as I detail in the epilogue, Iggy Pop attempted his own translation of experimental techniques into the networks of popular music.) Considering Cage as band member allows us to recognize similarities in practice with other bands in the 1960s, but, more important, it also allows us to recognize how those messy overlaps have been cut or attenuated in favor of other network configurations.

This study of experimentalism as both the ordinary and the otherwise is not a project of historical retrieval but rather one that aims to detail both a history of actually existing experimentalism and the other stories that have been excluded in its telling. In terms of race, for example, the point is not to give a less racially divided history of experimentalism but to offer a clear account of the nature of these racial divisions. Experimentalism *was* racially divided, and an accurate account of that reality must look beyond the limits of the consensus view to register those exclusions (not just of race, but also of gender, politics, and belief) that made the consensus view possible.

In this regard, the studies of marginal or edge moments in American experimentalism that I offer here resemble those of George E. Lewis in his recent history of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. Concerned with charting a multicultural, multiethnic, and global musical experimentalism, Lewis views his book as an interventionist project, "an activity aimed at encouraging the production of new histories of experimentalism in music."[60] Because I am more interested in Foucauldian genealogy than in history, however, I am hesitant to detach a concept like "experimentalism" from the limited and situated conditions of its emergence. To do so risks reifying "experiment" as the unchanging quiddity of "experimentalism," and thereby losing sight of the practicalities that were involved in enacting the reality of experimental music.

The idea of counterhistories or lost narratives in a tradition such as experimentalism derives from the belief that experimental music studies has been mistaken in its research object. The counterhistorian might say, "You have said that experimentalism was this, but it was actually that." I think, to the contrary, that experimentalism is *exactly* what scholars

have said it was during the twentieth century, but not for the reasons they gave. That is, the "tradition" wasn't something that magically coalesced around shared qualities of indeterminacy and rugged individualism. It was a network, arranged and fabricated through the hard work of composers, critics, scholars, performers, audiences, students, and a host of other elements including texts, scores, articles, curricula, patronage systems, and discourses of race, gender, class, and nation. Experimental music studies has gone far beyond describing this construction of the experimental to instead constitute one of its vital keystones. And saying that experimentalism has been fabricated does not mean that it is unreal. In fact, the opposite is the case—by showing *how experimentalism is made,* a performative ontology renders its object far more real than any stylistic or formalist description could.

Despite our slight divergences in method and premises, I share with Lewis the goal of a fuller, more variegated portrayal of what American experimentalism might be. This is the aspiration of any genealogy—to refuse to accept that a given arrangement of knowledge and power has been "hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history," to show that it is indeed historically contingent and thus open to revision and being otherwise.[61] Lewis's project is an opening, a movement toward an otherwise—not an expansion or revision of American experimentalism, but the assembly of an altogether new configuration of social, technical, textual, sonic, and material elements.

More important, Lewis's book, like the examples I discuss here, hints at the possibility of an experimentalism otherwise. It seems to me that this restless desire to be elsewhere, this searching for an otherwise, might be the closest thing to an "essence" of experimentalism that we will ever get. So, although I am most interested in what experimentalism *was*—a mutable social location, a contingent arrangement of discourses, practices, and institutions—I am also intrigued by the idea of experimentalism as an arena of risk, testing, and even (productive) failure. At the level of subjectivity itself, as I discuss at the conclusion of this book, it can usefully be understood as an ethical practice, a means through which "to control, to manage, to cope with the self in its 'riskiness.'"[62] Experimentalism is where the everyday and the otherwise converge in an arena of grounded possibility. Rather than explore explanations that would foreground indeterminacy, open form, and rugged independence, I have been interested in mobility, that certain kind of restlessness that can push us to consider what else experimentalism might have been, and whether it still might be otherwise.

CHAPTER 1

# When Orchestras Attack!

## *John Cage Meets the New York Philharmonic*

They turn things away from music, and from any professional attitude toward music, to some kind of a social situation that is not very beautiful.

—John Cage, interview in Cole Gagne and Tracy Caras, *Soundpieces: Interviews with American Composers,* 75

The date was Sunday, February 9, 1964, and the New York Philharmonic had just performed Vivaldi's "Fall" from *The Four Seasons,* followed by Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6. The audience returned from intermission to hear the conductor, Leonard Bernstein, deliver one of his famous concert talks from the podium. The lengthy address—it lasted over eleven minutes—perhaps indicated his anxiety concerning what was about to unfold.[1] He began, "This week we are presenting the last group of avant-garde works in this series," and was answered by a grateful round of applause from the audience. "This may be good news to some of you, and not so good to others." He was referring to the four programs that had been presented in the previous month in a series titled "The Avant-Garde," which had included works by Ligeti, Xenakis, Varèse, and others. Each program had been performed four times, and this was to be the final performance of the fifth and last program. Bernstein cautioned the audience that this was probably "the most avant-garde" presentation of the entire series, for the works to come—John Cage's *Atlas Eclipticalis,* Morton Feldman's . . . *Out of "Last Pieces,"* and Earle Brown's *Available Forms II, for Orchestra Four Hands*—all employed aleatoric techniques in their composition or performance. "Uh, this is very serious, and this so-called aleatoric aspect of today's new music has come in for more comment, excitement, controversy, and speculation than any other aspect. . . . It ranges from the most

serious possible intention and execution to the most tricky, antimusical kind of Dadaism. We have tried . . . to choose only works that can be identified as serious in intention, and genuinely adventurous in seeking new paths of music-making."

Bernstein wryly noted the "psychological adjustment" the members of the orchestra had undergone during the previous week in learning how to perform these indeterminate works, and also explained to his audience the difference between chance operations, which use randomness in the course of composition but arrive at a score that is fixed, and indeterminacy, which integrates elements of chance into the moment of performance itself.[2] As an example of the former, Bernstein conducted a few measures of a composition that had been generated by "a computing machine from London." Called "Pegasus" and developed by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the computer had written a work "based on arbitrary and random selections" from a twelve-tone row that had been provided it. When the woodwinds finished performing the excerpt (which had been arranged for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon), Bernstein quipped, "It's not bad!" To illustrate the concept of indeterminacy—for Bernstein, this meant music with no predetermined material at all, and only the "slightest, most spontaneous control of its evolvement"—the orchestra improvised. "Now here's the New York Philharmonic's Improvisation No. 1, which has never been played, and will never again be played," he announced, receiving a roar of laughter in response. At the conclusion of the improvisation, which lasted a little more than ninety seconds, Bernstein commented, "I thought that was very nice." And perhaps sensing that the audience was not taking this seriously at all, he added, "And also, very serious."

Bernstein was struggling. Although he appeared to be doing his best to give these works a fighting chance in the context of Philharmonic Hall and its subscription audience accustomed to Beethoven and Brahms, Bernstein had little artistic or philosophical sympathy for Cage and his associates. In trying to elucidate the principles of chance and indeterminacy, he had settled upon the culturally predominant musical form of spontaneity in the postwar United States—improvisation. "Its true significance lies in the identification of the performers with the creative act, the participation by the orchestra in the actual composing of the music," he stated. While this choice speaks volumes about the high cultural profile of jazz during these years, it was not the best choice for explaining Cage's music, which in the case of *Atlas* allowed relatively little participation in the compositional act by the performers.[3] Indeed, as Bernstein had to admit in introducing the piece, "[T]his is not *only* chance music—by any means, since every note

the orchestra plays has been written down by the composer. Therefore, it's the very opposite of the improvisation we just made."

The ensuing disastrous performance of *Atlas Eclipticalis* has become a minor legend for those interested in Cage's life and work.[4] In an interview twenty years later, Cage did not mince words when it came to describing the Philharmonic: "They are a group of gangsters. . . . They do everything wrong on purpose, not to make fun of something, but to ruin it. They get in mind criminal ideas, artistically criminal ideas. They are vandals. The moment they can ruin a piece, they are delighted. . . . They also have tenure; you can't throw them out. Their job is secure. Therefore, they can act any way they like. They're not like children; the L.A. Orchestra is like children. The New York orchestra is like grownups who intend to be bad. They are criminals."[5]

This meeting interests me because of its importance in establishing Cage's bona fides as a radical avant-garde artist. By 1964, he had certainly dealt with his share of unsympathetic performers and antagonistic audiences, but this was the most prestigious engagement of his career, and the poor treatment he reportedly received would feature in his interviews and conversations for years to come. This story of a well-intentioned experimentalist encountering a curmudgeonly old institution has also proven irresistible for musicians sympathetic to Cage, as well as to his critical commentators. Though powerful, such an easy narrative of abuse and ignominy has served to obscure many of the fascinating aspects of this encounter—the reputations of Cage and the Philharmonic at the time, the formidable musical challenge of *Atlas Eclipticalis* itself, the different understandings of choice, chance, and sound held by the composer and his performers, and the political valences of indeterminacy and its apparent enemy, the symphony orchestra. Most of all, I revisit this conflict because it has thus far been a univocal retelling, based entirely on the words of Cage. Every published mention of the encounter derives from Cage's statements on the matter in a few interviews over the years, or from Calvin Tomkins's very long *New Yorker* profile of the composer, based on interviews with Cage, which appeared in November 1964 and was reprinted with light editing in *The Bride and the Bachelors* in 1965.[6] Nearly all subsequent accounts that appear in print repeat what is found in Tomkins's essay.

But Cage was just one witness among the over one hundred who were present and implicated in this story. Given that the rhetoric of experimentalism has placed emphasis on the creative role of the performer in presenting this music, it is strange that the voices of these musicians have been entirely absent as conarrators of the encounter. One can attribute this

absence to the path that Cage scholarship has taken to achieve legitimacy and respect in the academy, namely through emphasizing the composer's more traditional and conservative qualities as a composer at the expense of the truly ruptural possibilities inherent in his work. Through listening to these alternate voices, one can develop a description of Cage and *Atlas Eclipticalis* that is productively remote from the themes of these studies, an alien viewpoint that significantly decenters the composer as the sole narrator and owner of the last word.

Cage often expressed his preference for dealing with crowds as a multiplicity of individuals rather than as a unitary mass. For Cage, group formation was the evidence of a hierarchical power that he explicitly sought to evacuate from his work by creating nonfocused, nonlinear compositions that could be performed without leaders. The political associations of this work are most commonly labeled "anarchist." I've tried to honor Cage's preference for atomistic individuals here (and hold him to it) by speaking with the living musicians and Philharmonic administrators from the 1964 season as a set of individuals with their own tastes, opinions, and philosophies of sound and music.[7]

Although Cage's attempt to take his model of musical anarchism into the traditional concert hall can be regarded as a failure, the break it established (or highlighted) between American experimentalism and the cultural institutions of the Old World would serve him well as he became increasingly interested in social and political concerns. When he later wrote, "The masterpieces of Western music exemplify monarchies and dictatorships. Composer and conductor: king and prime minister," Cage was clearly implying that his music stood opposed to these hierarchical systems; he did not compose "masterpieces of Western music," and if you needed proof, he seemed to be saying, look no further than his disastrous engagement with the New York Philharmonic. It has thus become a truism in Cage studies that the composer's music offers a liberatory politics.

In the alternative reading presented in this chapter, I argue that this contentious performance of *Atlas*—and the way it has been retold by Cage and his supporters—reveals a surprising political dynamic. Although he has been ceaselessly portrayed as a radical artist who challenged the prevailing social order, Cage appears as a far more conventional figure in the following analysis, which I base on the concrete reality of actually existing experimentalism rather than the idealism of aesthetic explications. In fact, what most clearly emerge in this story are the themes of liberalism, that hegemonic political formation of Western modernity: autonomy, choice, the will to reason, justice as fairness, and small government.

With the term *liberalism,* I refer most of all to the political philosophy—ranging from John Locke to John Rawls—that prizes individual liberty and advocates state power only to the extent that it is necessary to guarantee the freedom of individuals on an egalitarian basis. (The term has also acquired a separate but related meaning in economic thought, in which competition and free trade are supported by minimal state intervention. The hallmarks of economic liberalist subjectivity—competitiveness, entrepreneurialism, accumulation, and so on—are largely absent from Cage's worldview.) A liberal *political* order, Wendy Brown clarifies, may harbor either liberal or socialist *economic* policies. Furthermore, "[I]t may lean more in the direction of maximizing liberty (its politically 'conservative' tilt) or maximizing equality (its politically 'liberal' tilt) but in contemporary political parlance, it is no more or less a liberal democracy because of one leaning or the other."[8] In other words, though one might quibble over whether Cage in his musical politics favored liberty or equality (I think there was considerable slippage between the two), the broad outlines of his work hew closely to the mainstream of political thinking in the United States and Europe.

I will avoid the term *neoliberalism,* which can be described as the dissemination of free-market values to all global institutions and social action, a regime emerging in the decades following the breakdown of the Bretton Woods Agreements in 1971.[9] Neoliberalism is generally thought to combine both political and economic meanings of liberalism. According to this theory, the spread of free-market capitalism brings with it democratic political institutions and erodes religious, ethnic, and nationalist solidarities. Because I don't believe that Cage's work demonstrates the rational calculus of profitability characteristic of economic liberalism, I am not convinced that neoliberalism is the best frame for understanding his musical politics. Nonetheless, two elements of neoliberal ideology seem apropos. First, political and economic governance in neoliberalist thought is framed as a matter of technocratic management, removing it from the contested sphere of ideological conflict (the much-maligned "end of history" thesis). Such was Cage's understanding of the social philosophy of Buckminster Fuller, whom Cage praised as an "apolitical" problem-solver of the highest order.[10] Second, the composer's statements on the coexistence of different traditions, musics, or individuals exhibit a rhetoric of "tolerance" that, Wendy Brown explains, has emerged as a key term in neoliberal discourse.[11] I will return to both of these points in greater detail.

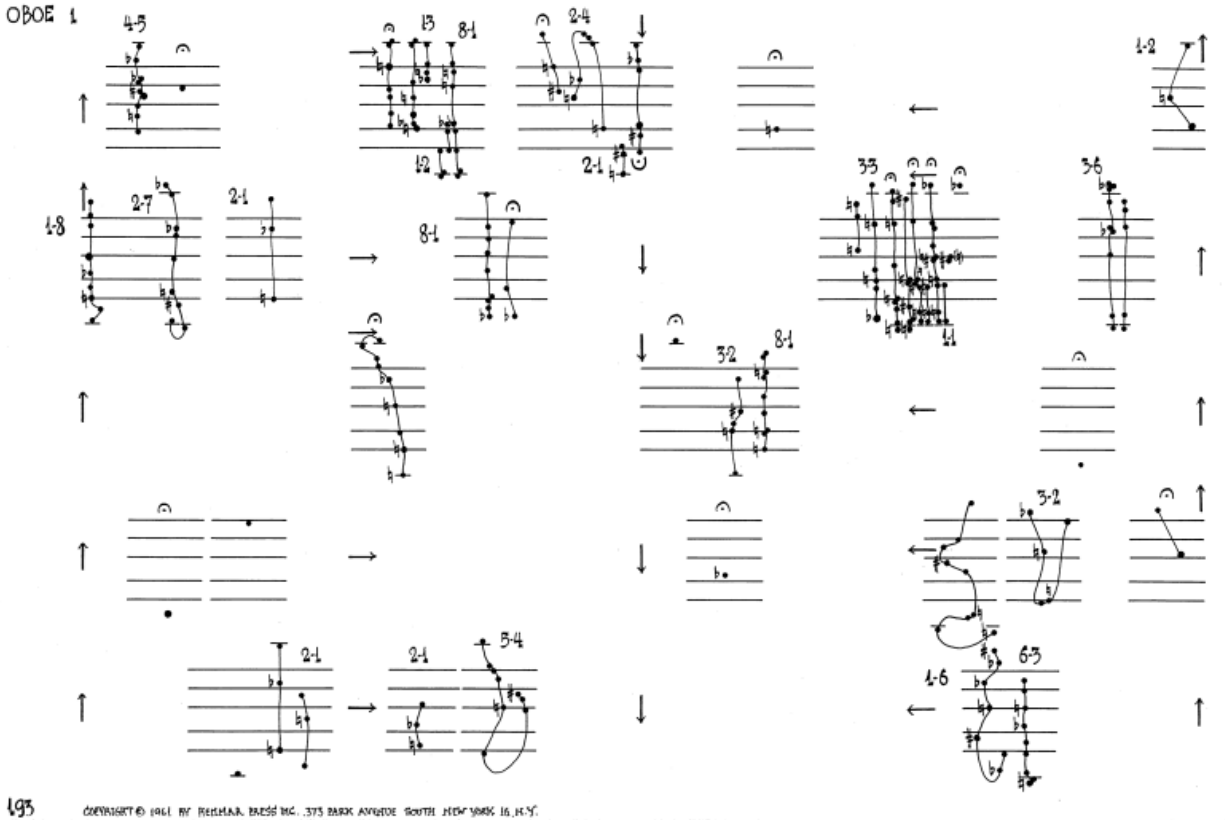
For the most part, my interest in the political models of indeterminacy owes to the enthusiasm for this topic shared by Cage and his supporters. I

want to show that if one is interested in Cage's musical politics, then one should examine what actually happened in the performance of his works. And, if one actually examines the performance of *Atlas Eclipticalis* in 1964, then one will find a musical model of liberalism, perhaps unexpectedly. At the same time, though, my argument is particularly inspired by the work of philosophers and critics who contend that the "freedom of choice" ideology of liberalism in fact masks a meta-operation of power that defines the terms through which those choices can be made.[12] The successful performance of Cagean indeterminacy in the 1960s, I argue, likewise depended upon a performer who had already internalized the expectations of the composer, significantly undermining Cage's well-known goal of accepting the unforeseen. From this perspective, Cage's work evidences a peculiar status as both model and mirror—a mock-up of utopian anarchism and register of hegemonic liberalism.

. . .

A closer look at the score of *Atlas Eclipticalis* reveals the many challenges it posed for performers.[13] Each of its eighty-six parts is unique, but all consist of four large pages divided horizontally into five systems (see music example 1). Time is measured spatially across the page, and each system is marked with four arrows that point first up, then right, then down, and then left. These directions correspond to the motions of the conductor, who mimics the operation of a clock. Cage describes it in his directions: "A system equals at least 2 minutes,—preferably more. (Extend the time to the point where the presence of silence is felt.) The conductor, however, performs a single clock cycle for each system. At 0", 30", and 60" he makes changes of arm, at 15" and 45" changes of palm. From the last 30" to the end at 60" he uses both arms, fingers touching at the conclusion."[14] Each musician judges when to play a particular note or group according to where it is positioned spatially in relation to these four cardinal points.

Because Cage determined pitch content by tracing a star map he discovered while in residence at Wesleyan University in 1961, he needed to alter the conventional staff to allow a separate vertical position for each possible pitch (rather than a shared vertical position for B♮ and B♭, for example). Thus, Cage's modified bass clef has extra space between the top two lines (where F♯ sits just above the second staff line, G♮ is dead-center in the space, and G♯ hangs just below the top line of the staff) and the bottom two. The pitches specified in the score exceeded the twelve pitch classes, however. In his performance instructions for the Philharmonic performances, Cage writes: "Conventional pitches are marked sharp, flat,



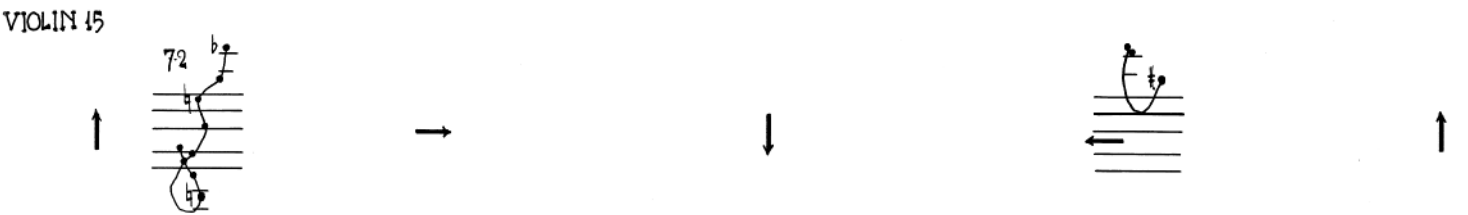

MUSIC EXAMPLE 1. John Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis,* oboe 1 (page 193). Copyright © 1962, renewed 1990 by Henmar Press, Inc. Used by permission of C. F. Peters Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

or natural. The absence of such signs means that the tones to be played are not at conventional points. They are as they appear to be in the space, more or less sharp, more or less flat. Microtonality."[15]

The sound events themselves consist of either single notes (which are quite rare in the score) or groups, which Cage referred to as "aggregates" or "constellations." These aggregates consist of up to ten pitches joined by a squiggly line; they do not necessarily appear in a straight vertical arrangement, and Cage notes that "within [each] aggregate[,] space need not refer to time. Individual tones of an aggregate may appear in any succession."[16] Duration is noted for each constellation in one of three ways. First, a pair of numbers might appear above a constellation; the first indicates how many notes out of the whole group should be played with as short a duration as possible ("as though it were a splinter of sound"), while the second represents the number of notes that can be played with a longer duration. Second, a fermata indicates that all of the notes in the group are to be played with a longer duration, but no longer than one bow length or one breath. Third, the absence of numbers or a fermata means that all of the notes are to be sounded as short as possible. The player is free to combine tones from a group into chords or multiphonics whenever possible.

Cage's desires about the general sound of the piece may be divined through various indications in the performance notes. He did not want individual musicians to project anything resembling a melody, stating outright that "melodic lines are not produced by the players individually."[17] He tried to ensure against this by specifying that a silence should occur between tones, even those in the same aggregate. He also wanted the work to be generally quiet. Loudness of each tone is indicated by its relative size, and Cage goes out of his way in the instructions for individual parts to point out that most of the notes in the piece are small, and thus should be played softly.[18] He also ruled out special techniques like ponticello or flutter-tonguing, and explicitly forbade any "extraordinary" tone production. Although he allowed the repetition of individual notes within an aggregate, Cage asked that the duration of the repeated note vary from short to long or vice versa. Each of these specifications indicate that, although he used chance operations to determine pitches and temporal placement, Cage nonetheless took steps to ensure a quiet, sparse, nonmelodic, and varied texture.

It bears pointing out that for the 1964 New York Philharmonic performances, each musician only played a single system out of the twenty contained in his part; moreover, every player executed the same system (the first on page 1 of each part).[19] This possibility is explicitly set out in




MUSIC EXAMPLE 2. John Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis*, violin 15 (page 57). Copyright © 1962, renewed 1990 by Henmar Press, Inc. Used by permission of C.F. Peters Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

Cage's directions for the conductor: "The conductor determines the length of a performance, and how much and which part of the composition—the same for all players—is to be performed."[20] This decision meant that many of the performers had little to do. The violin 15 part, for example, contains a total of twelve notes for the entire eight-minute performance; the instrument sounds a nine-note aggregate (seven short, two long) about forty-five seconds into the piece, then remains tacet until minute 6, where the part calls for a quick group of three notes before indicating silence for the remaining two minutes (see music example 2). The violoncello 1 part calls for four constellations in quick succession beginning around two minutes into the work, but this constitutes the totality of the player's contribution to the performance.

. . .

*Atlas Eclipticalis* was commissioned by the Montreal Festivals Society and premiered at the International Week of Today's Music in Montreal on August 3, 1961. The ensemble comprised seventeen instrumentalists, all of whom were amplified with contact microphones, and David Tudor, who simultaneously played the electronic version of *Winter Music*.[21] Cage served as conductor, and the composer Toshi Ichiyanagi operated the mixing console, at times producing bursts of "unbearable noise," in the words of one critic in attendance.[22] As a *Montreal Star* reviewer noted, the signals from the contact microphones "would be turned up in a variety of ways which surprised even the musicians."[23] Two days later, Cage presented the piece in a scaled-down version for three musicians to accompany Merce Cunningham's new work *Aeon*.[24] This pairing would be repeated twelve days later at the American Dance Festival at Connecticut College, where Cage led a larger ensemble of twenty. It was here, the Cunningham dancer Carolyn Brown recalls, that Richard Maxfield, who was in charge of mixing the twenty channels of audio, badly misgauged the acoustics of the auditorium. "The distortion created by the contact microphones was nearly unbearable," she writes.[25]

Enlisting the help of Ichiyanagi, Cage continued working on the eighty-six instrumental parts throughout the fall.[26] An ensemble of seven (including violinist Tony Conrad) played the piece at Harvard in February 1962, and in March the composition was performed on Peter Yates's Monday Evening Concerts series in Los Angeles, with Tudor playing *Winter Music* in front of an ensemble of twelve.[27] The *Los Angeles Times* reviewer Albert Goldberg likened that evening, which also included three pieces by Christian Wolff, to "a cesspool dredging operation."[28] In a letter to Yates

six months before this performance, Cage specified that he would like four rehearsals of two hours each—one with the percussionists, one with the harpist, a third with the other musicians, and a fourth with the entire ensemble, complete with electronics.[29] This was a significant increase in rehearsal time over what he had been given in Montreal, where there was only one three-hour block and the dress rehearsal. The Los Angeles performance foreshadowed Cage's increasingly insistent stance on the amount of rehearsal necessary for his large-scale pieces. He had realized that there would be obstacles from the start, confiding in Carolyn Brown that "the harp part stinks" and that "there'll be lots of rehearsal problems."[30] Cage's time with the musicians of the New York Philharmonic, by contrast, was minuscule. As ever for the orchestra, there were five sessions scheduled for the week of his concerts, each lasting two and a half hours.[31] A memo dated November 6, 1963, states that the organization planned one rehearsal each for the works by Cage, Feldman, and Brown, as well as one session for Vivaldi and Tchaikovsky together; the fifth session would be devoted, as was customary, to a run-through of the entire program.[32] In light of the extensive electronic setup for *Atlas,* one wonders how much they could have accomplished in such a short period of time.

. . .

The circumstances that led to the programming of *Atlas* by the New York Philharmonic remain something of a mystery, but Feldman was concerned at the time with spreading the music and message of the New York School: "To catch on to us, what the public needs is to get it from Leonard Bernstein."[33] In her memoir, Carolyn Brown recalls Cage's energy and optimism in the fall of 1961. Not only were the orchestral parts for his largest piece to date steadily being finished but his first book publication was about to be issued by Wesleyan University Press. Brown writes, "He was convinced that *Silence* would be a best-seller. . . . John continued to work diligently on *Atlas Eclipticalis,* and just as diligently on convincing Leonard Bernstein to conduct it."[34] Success in this latter endeavor seems to have brought mixed emotions, according to his close friend, the poet and potter M. C. Richards. "Last time I saw [Cage] he was in the delirium over the possibility of the NY Philharmonic doing the *Atlas Eclipticalis,* full orchestra," she wrote David Tudor on September 30, 1961. "And hating himself for his excitement."[35] The Philharmonic performance was still only a possibility at the beginning of November, when Cage wrote to Tudor, "I have been trying to get Lenny Bernstein (!) interested in doing Atlas C. but no answer as yet."[36]

In a letter nearly two years later, Cage thanked Bernstein for taking a chance on his work: "We all admire your courage in doing this at the present time, for actual hostility toward our work is still felt by many people."[37] Cage disagreed, however, with Bernstein's original plan to end the concert with an improvisation by the orchestra. "Improvisation is not related to what the three of us are doing in our works," he wrote. "It gives free play to the exercise of taste and memory, and it is exactly this that we, in differing ways, are not doing in our music. Since, as far as I know, you are not dedicated in your own work to improvisation, I can only imagine that your plan is a comment on our work. Our music is still little understood and your audiences, for the most part, will be hearing it for the first time. It would seem best if they could do so without being prejudiced."

In his reply, Bernstein was not swayed. "Your letter astounds me," he responded.

> What, for example, makes you think that our orchestral improvisation should in any way constitute a "comment" on your work, and that of your colleagues? What, again, gives you the idea that everything in this part of the program must be confined to the realm in which you work? The overall idea is *music of chance;* and there are chance elements in your work, as well as those of Brown and Feldman, *as well* as in total improvisation. We are trying to have as comprehensive a look at the aleatory world as is possible in half a subscription program; and it seems also to me that improvisation is an essential fact of such a look.[38]

In the end, Bernstein offered to perform the orchestral improvisation before the works by Cage, Feldman, and Brown, in hopes of avoiding the appearance of a "final" comment on the preceding repertoire.

For the Avant-Garde series, the Philharmonic had originally planned six programs: "New Sounds in the Orchestra" (Xenakis and Ligeti), "The Jazz Trend" (Copland and Austin), an untitled program featuring Wolpe's Symphony No. 1, another featuring Boulez, "The Electronicists" (Davidovsky and Varèse), and "Music of Chance."[39] Illness caused Boulez to cancel his premiere, and Davidovsky's piece was struck, apparently because of disagreements over who would conduct, so the fifth concert was cancelled and the Varèse work moved up to take the place of Boulez's.[40]

Albert Webster, who had been with the organization since 1962 as assistant to the general manager Carlos Moseley, recalled in our interview that the impetus for the series had come from Bernstein, and that Moseley himself was very supportive of the idea.[41] According to the violinist Newton Mansfield and the hornist A. Robert Johnson, Bernstein and Moseley were under constant pressure from critics and composers to program and

support new music. They were probably referring to the columns of the *New York Times* critic Harold Schonberg, who in May 1963 criticized the Philharmonic's list of commissions—works by Ginastera, Chávez, Bernstein, Copland, Schuman, Poulenc, Hindemith, Henze, Milhaud, and Barber—to celebrate the orchestra's new home at Lincoln Center: "Nearly all of these were safe commissions. Apart from the Henze score, they represented work from established composers whose style has long been formed. Thus there were no surprises in store. . . . [T]hese commissions did indicate a lack of adventure on the part of the New York Philharmonic."[42] The administrators of the Philharmonic paid close attention to complaints like this one; one long memorandum from the late spring of 1964 consists entirely of excerpts from reviews of the Avant-Garde series.[43]

In Mansfield's opinion, the twenty concerts performed in the Avant-Garde series "were a gimmick . . . to satisfy the critics, to satisfy the people who wanted to see some kind of special interest being . . . programmed."[44] This view of the series as a kind of conciliatory yet marketable gesture is held by another member of the orchestra (who wished to remain anonymous), who in conversation with me characterized Moseley as "a press man. His question was always, 'Is it newsworthy?'" Though the organization's administrators may have felt pressure to support the cutting edge of contemporary composition, they were also responding to the avant-garde's considerable notoriety in the early 1960s. As the clarinetist Stanley Drucker, who had joined the orchestra in 1948 under Bruno Walter, remembers, "As an idea, it was very New York. New York has an audience for everything. Maybe some things get a smaller audience, but they're all patronized." Indeed, "showbiz" was the term that sprang to the bassist Walter Botti's mind in my interview with him.

The fact that the series may have been an attempt to answer the demands of New York critics and composers did not stop Alan Rich of the *New York Herald Tribune* and Schonberg from launching "fierce attacks" on Bernstein once the series began for what, according to Humphrey Burton, "they took to be a poorly planned Philharmonic series examining the latest in avant-garde experiments."[45] Schonberg was critical of the decision to package these pieces in between warhorse works of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Saint-Saëns. As Burton notes, "Each week brought a new press scandal. Pierre Boulez was sick in Paris and had to cancel a premiere. Stefan Wolpe's symphony proved so difficult that there was time to rehearse and perform only two of its three movements. . . . To make things worse, [Bernstein] left his assistants in charge for a week and went up to Boston to supervise the premiere of *Kaddish*."[46]

Both Schonberg and Rich derided the conductor for his overly solicitous—and lengthy—introductions to the new works, and the typescripts of Bernstein's remarks confirm that he regarded the latest trends with suspicion: "other new music has reverted to a semi-idiotic simplicity, where two notes, spaced a minute apart, can constitute a sonata—or for that matter to the neo-Dada notion of no notes at all, or of dropping a herring down into a tube *[sic?]*, and calling it a 'musical happening,' or a 'moment,' or, conceivably, a sonata for tuba and herring."[47] As Bernstein warned the audience, "hoaxes are easily perpetrated," but he also assured them that the Philharmonic had programmed only the best and most representative of the current trends for the series. Indeed, he continually emphasized how "serious" they were in presenting these pieces, and at one point in his typewritten text he appears to have anticipated a negative reaction from the audience. Following Xenakis's *Pithoprakta,* he apologized, "I'm sincerely sorry that not all of you listened to it with all the seriousness that I had hoped. I hope I didn't mislead you in any way because we are—I cannot emphasize strongly enough—presenting these works in the deepest seriousness." So serious was this affair that one might mistake the personnel of the orchestra for soldiers heading into battle after hearing Bernstein's tribute: "[E]ven to do this much, the gentlemen of the orchestra are extending themselves far beyond the call of normal duty and they deserve our abiding gratitude."

In his scathing appraisal of "the smouldering ruins of good intentions" that remained after the series' conclusion, Rich pronounced this inaugural speech "full . . . of glib, uncomprehending condescension."[48] He also strongly criticized Bernstein for programming difficult works when he didn't care enough to conduct them well, and for publicly announcing that he would conduct certain works that he had in fact not yet seen (Rich was referring to Wolpe's symphony, the third movement of which had to be cut). "Mr. Bernstein certainly appears well-informed about who the important names are in avant-garde circles," Rich wrote. "But the impression is unshakable that the actual problems this kind of music presents went largely unexplored until long after the chips were down."[49] In a lengthy rebuttal mailed to Rich and Rich's editor at the *Herald Tribune,* Moseley defended his music director.[50] Bernstein had in fact first reviewed the Wolpe score three years before, Moseley noted, and it was at Bernstein's insistence and at considerable expense that the score had been rebarred to render it playable by the orchestra. Furthermore, he explained, the unfortunate deletion of the final movement was through no fault of Bernstein's, but rather owed to the poor quality of the parts, which had to be recopied

at the last minute. In response to Rich's quip that "music did not stop with the death of Mahler," Moseley countered that Bernstein had included at least one, if not more, substantial work written after Mahler's death on each program of the 1963–64 season. In conclusion, Moseley pointed out that the Avant-Garde series was an attempt to bring this music to a wider segment of the public. "This has been done in spite of a number of complicating factors and additional costs, and in the face of obvious displeasure to a number of our regular supporters." Indeed, the displeasure of the Philharmonic's regular supporters was undeniable; Moseley received—and answered—dozens of complaint letters that spring.

A. Robert Johnson, a member of the orchestra from 1962 until 1970, does not recall favorably how the organization handled events such as the Avant-Garde series; he remembers that the environment was not one of serious or even respectful preparation. Bernstein may have desired acceptance from the new music community, but, Johnson maintains, his behavior did not demonstrate this. "He didn't understand this music, he didn't care for it. . . . It was a not at all hospitable environment, and Bernstein was responsible for that." Johnson also stressed in our interview that the way to introduce such works to an orchestra is to begin working on them months in advance, rather than to wait until the week of the performance. The remarks of Stefan Bauer-Mengelberg, however, suggest that orchestra management—not the conductor—prevented the most difficult scores from being rehearsed well in advance. Bauer-Mengelberg had been tapped by Bernstein to conduct one of the series' most challenging scores, the Symphony No. 1 of Stefan Wolpe, and he related the following story to Joan Peyser:

> There is nothing that matches Bernstein's behavior during that difficult week. I had anticipated trouble at the beginning of the season so I asked management if we could set aside a half hour each week during rehearsals throughout the fall and early winter so that the musicians could be familiar with the piece by January. That was turned down. The players saw this incredibly complex work on the Tuesday before the Thursday night performance for the very first time. The other pieces on the program were the Beethoven Symphony Number One and the Beethoven Piano Concerto Number Three with Rudolf Serkin. Both were scheduled to be recorded the following Monday. A recording is for eternity. Still Bernstein gave me both the Tuesday rehearsals, all of them.[51]

Nonetheless, faced with the difficult tasks of hosting nervous composers, placating his personnel, and selling the public on this music, Bernstein appears to have overcompensated by fostering a lighthearted and even mocking atmosphere among the orchestra and his listeners. Several musi-

cians recall the contests he sponsored to see who could come up with the cleverest limerick about a visiting composer (most of these rhymes were mocking), a fact that counters Cage biographer David Revill's statement that Bernstein "encouraged a responsible and serious approach" in rehearsal.[52] Indeed, according to the trumpeter John Ware, "Lenny Bernstein . . . would come out and tell you, 'Now, be serious about this piece,' because he knew we'd start losing interest and discipline would suffer. But then, he *himself* would start fooling around and cutting up and making jokes, maybe fifteen minutes after we started."[53]

According to Carolyn Brown, this type of benign (but undermining) cleverness also characterized Bernstein's performance of Earle Brown's *Available Forms II,* an open form work for two conductors who each led one half of the complete ensemble. She remembers that "Bernstein tackled Earle's two-conductor work . . . as a *competition*—his orchestra jousting with Earle's in an 'anything you can do I can do better' (flashier, louder, faster, whatever) contest—instead of approaching the work as a collaborative effort in adventurous music-making."[54] When I read to him Revill's account of a meeting after the third performance, in which Bernstein reportedly chastised his orchestra and demanded that they play the Cage piece seriously for the final concert, Mansfield replied, "The fact is, that [story of] Lenny reprimanding us is a joke, because whatever we did, he was part of it!" But if the conductor indeed took part in these shenanigans, Cage didn't dare cross him, because Bernstein was such a powerful gatekeeper to the prestigious circles of musical high culture during this period. Even Cage's most influential interviewer, Tompkins, and his first biographer, Revill, seemed to go out of their way to minimize the friction between Cage and the orchestra, and to absolve Bernstein of any part in it.

Nonetheless, friction there was. Although Tomkins and Revill report that the orchestra was well behaved in rehearsal, the musicians themselves remember the event differently. The oboist Albert Goltzer, for example, described the episode as "sheer bedlam. Because after the first or second rehearsal, nobody could concentrate anymore. And everybody spoke, if they felt like talking to neighbors and what not. And, it was sheer bedlam." In my interview with him, Drucker insisted that any unruly behavior by the group—such as inappropriate conversation, jokes, out-of-place sounds—was confined to rehearsals. "[A]ll of these things probably happened in every one of those four rehearsals leading up to the first concert of the four. And I'm sure every silly thing, and every stupid thing occurred in those rehearsals. . . . I mean, silly things are supposed to happen in rehearsal. Mistakes are to be made, and hopefully you won't have them in the perfor-

mance." Drucker's point is not that the orchestra was forgiving, empathic, or committed to producing a good realization of *Atlas* but rather that Cage's memory of events conflated behavior in rehearsals with that in the concerts. Indisputably, however, rehearsal time was short, and, like most composers writing for full orchestra, Cage felt that his work needed more preparation than it was given. In response to William Duckworth, who had asked Cage if he thought the poor performance of the Philharmonic had to do with the novelty of the notation, Cage replied, "So what relation does the notation have to that? The rehearsal was seven minutes long."[55]

The electronics that Cage used for the event added another layer of confusion. With few exceptions, each instrument was outfitted with a Radio Shack contact microphone, whose signals fed into a custom-designed fifty-channel mixer.[56] This piece of equipment had been provided by Bell Labs, who also paid for the time of its two engineers, Max Mathews and Phil Giordano, to design and install the technology.[57] The mixing console was installed on the risers in the middle of the orchestra, facing the audience. Mathews remembers that, although contact miking was something of a novelty in the early 1960s, the musicians in the orchestra applied them without much fuss, despite Bernstein's comment in rehearsal, "If you guys don't want to put these contact microphones on your expensive instruments, *you don't have to!*"[58] The hornist Rainer De Intinis recalls that considerable time was spent discussing appropriate dynamic levels, for the cheap microphones were easily overwhelmed: "If you went too far with the volume, you got nothing. You just got a scratch."

The mixer could handle only fifty inputs, and because there were eighty-six instrumental parts in *Atlas,* the signals from each desk in the string sections were combined—if the level of one instrument was raised, that of his stand partner also increased.[59] These fifty channels were then sent out to the hall, where six amplifiers and loudspeakers had been temporarily installed. Mathews recalls that the speakers "were so powerful around the auditorium that it was very easy to get a very loud feedback—horrible and, it turned out, dangerous screech oscillating. In the actual performance, these feedback squawks at dangerously loud levels occurred quite frequently."[60] The problem was that these moments of feedback could have originated with any one of the contact microphones, and with fifty separate volume controls it was nearly impossible to find quickly the specific channel that was feeding back.

The final technological intervention came at the level of ensemble leadership, for *Atlas* was conducted by a mechanical clock that had been designed and built by Cage's patron, the architect Paul Williams. The

FIGURE 2. John Cage conducts a rehearsal of *Atlas Eclipticalis* with the New York Philharmonic in early February 1964. In the background stand Leonard Bernstein and the mechanical clock that conducted the actual performances on February 6–9. To the right are violinists John Corigliano and Frank Gullino. Photograph by Bert Bial, courtesy of the New York Philharmonic Archives.

device featured a single long arm, which indicated the timing of the work. For the Philharmonic performances, the arm made one complete revolution lasting eight minutes. A green light on the mechanical conductor signaled the start of the performance by turning on for ten to fifteen seconds, then going out. A white light on the end of the arm illuminated shortly before the three, six, and nine o'clock positions to indicate minutes 2, 4, and 6 precisely by going out. A red light did the same to signal the end of the piece.[61]

The difficulties of the performances themselves are amply documented, not only by Cage but also by several New York critics who attended the opening night. A number of them reported that people began exiting during the Philharmonic's improvisation, and they continued to exit throughout *Atlas*.[62] Schonberg noted that a large portion of the audience left without much fuss: "There were a few lusty boos, a few countercheers. But on the whole the music fell flat."[63] The unusually lengthy first half, he noted, might also have been responsible for some of the departures. At the beginning of *Atlas,* according to a writer for *Time* magazine, "Suddenly all hell broke loose," and the piece ended eight minutes later "with a blast of

horns and a salvo of boos and hisses from the audience. Several violinists nodded in agreement."[64] The *New Yorker*'s Winthrop Sargeant described the audience response as "the loudest chorus of boos I have ever heard, even in Italy, where the natives are masters of negative applause," and the critic Miles Kastendieck concurred: "It was a marvelous boo, nothing like it has been heard in the concert halls for years and years."[65] Needless to say, at the conclusion of the piece Cage "was bowing to rows of empty seats."[66]

On the matter of the orchestra's behavior during their performance of *Atlas Eclipticalis,* there exists considerable disagreement. In various interviews and accounts over the years, Cage reported that the musicians laughed and conversed among themselves, played scales and melodies, whistled into the contact mics, and even destroyed property: "What happened at the first performance was that many in the orchestra were furious at the music and tore the microphones off their instruments and stamped on them and smashed them."[67] In his anti-Cage polemic in *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism,* Cornelius Cardew noted that the ordinarily mild-mannered Wolff "felt compelled to rush in amongst them and protest against the extensive 'damage to property.'"[68] (In 2007, Wolff remembered that he had attended the opening night performance, but he considered Cardew's description of his "rushing in" to be something of a dramatization. He had, however, been angry. "We were so looking forward to finally hearing some orchestra music . . . that was, to us at least, enormously interesting and exciting, and then finding this remarkable hostility, and for me unbelievable unprofessionalism of the orchestra players.")[69] In a 2002 interview, Wolff recalled, "Half the musicians just sat there. They wouldn't even play their parts. . . . It was stunning."[70] It bears repeating here that many of Cage's parts for the piece do, in fact, direct players to sit silently for up to six minutes at a time (violin 14, 15, and 20, viola 8, and violoncello 8, for example). Tomkins reports that after the second and third concerts, "Cage realized with a shock that the members of the Philharmonic orchestra were hissing" him during his bows. In a 1980 interview, Cage recalled, "When I came off the stage after one of those performances, one of them who had played badly shook my hand, smiled, and said, 'Come back in ten years, we'll treat you better.'"[71]

Most of the musicians and administrators whom I interviewed flatly denied this kind of behavior, even those who remain otherwise critical of the Philharmonic. For example, on the subject of destroying microphones, the violinist Enrico DiCecco remarked, "I almost *wish* that that would happen. I would almost *wish* that I could say, 'Yeah, I remember some guys smashing the microphones,' because maybe that would show their disdain

[for the piece]." DiCecco was criticizing the production of the appearance of consent, a production that he believes is too rarely answered by gestures of refusal by the orchestra, "not voting, or you know, 'don't use me as a rubber stamp,' 'don't take advantage of me,' 'don't think I'm a fool.'" However, he could not recall any such gestures in response to *Atlas*. "I can't say that. I cannot say that. I don't think that my colleagues—even then—would have . . . the intestinal fortitude to throw the microphone on the floor and step on it. Maybe they took [the microphones] *off* their instruments, I don't know."

Other orchestra members I interviewed maintained an interesting double stance. Even while recalling somewhat unflattering conduct on the part of some orchestra members, nearly every musician made it a point to mention that they were, of course, professionals, and would certainly *never* do anything to sabotage a performance. As Goltzer, who like many of his colleagues is not a supporter of Cage's work, remarked, "I don't think any musician—unless there were something wrong with him or her—would do something to ruin a piece." Another anonymous member of the orchestra clarified, "That would not have been characteristic treatment, even from the bully types [in the orchestra]. They did consider themselves professionals, and that's such an unprofessional thing to do." But despite these ritual incantations about professionalism, many of the same musicians also confirmed that the orchestra behaved badly in the 1964 concerts. In the words of Mansfield, "It was a whole series where there was a lot of fooling around." One musician recalled hearing scales and melodies in all the aleatoric works they played, while Goltzer confirmed Cage's memory of having been hissed by the orchestra during his bows. Walter Botti remembered wristwatch alarms "accidentally" going off during some performances. In 1985, Ware related the following story (later corroborated in my interviews with Johnson, Botti, and Goltzer) to LeFrak: "In the middle of the piece a horrible shrieking sound came over very loud and repeated over and over. It was similar to a wild turkey call or other wild animal at a high pitch. No one knew where it originated and Cage frantically turned his 106 dials to stop it without success. Needless to say, many in the orchestra could not control their laughter. Cage was very upset. The next day our manager assembled us and read the riot act. Sometime later we learned that it was a bass fiddler with an impatient sense of humor."[72]

Tomkins and Cage related that the meeting with Moseley referenced by Ware occurred after the third concert. According to Revill, Cage spoke with Moseley and the union representatives of the orchestra after the Saturday performance, and then Bernstein scolded the group.[73] De Intinis, however,

strongly recalls that it was Moseley who delivered the harsh reprimand, and that it happened much earlier than Cage alleges. Conceding that the opening night's performance did contain horseplay by the orchestra, De Intinis remarked, "Carlos Moseley severely reprimanded us before the Friday afternoon concert about that, and he said, 'These pieces are to be played, and to be played to the best of your ability. Cut out all this whatever it is.'"[74] Moseley was the person responsible for making sure that the Philharmonic sold tickets, and obviously unprofessional behavior would damage the orchestra's reputation. Both he and Cage were probably concerned about the final concert because it was to be broadcast by WOR.[75] The recording of this performance, released publicly for the first time in 2000, seems not to include any funny business on the part of the orchestra (and certainly nothing as plainly out of place as the ridiculous "Augurs of Spring" quote cynically inserted into the 1958 performance of Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*). The recording does, however, reveal a robust chorus of boos at the work's conclusion.[76]

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This meeting between the leading figure in U.S. experimentalism and the country's most prestigious orchestra was probably doomed to fail.[77] Cage's biographers and supporters have understood this encounter as a meeting between a beatific Buddhist seeking nobility in his performers and an old-guard cultural institution digging in its heels. This formulation is half correct. No one disputes that the New York Philharmonic had a reputation for being difficult for most of the twentieth century; nearly all the surviving members whom I interviewed confirmed this fact, and it is accepted among composers and critics. In an interview with LeFrak in 1984, Virgil Thomson complained, "The Philharmonic is a bunch of tough boys. They don't like anybody. Their conductors are standoffish too."[78] Botti, a member of the group since 1952, recalled, "I think a lot of that reputation, which the Philharmonic had, goes way back before my time—in the days when Toscanini was the music director. With Toscanini, the orchestra was like a school. He was the ruler, and he could explode. When the other guest conductors came, the guys would relax, and then . . . "

Despite its tough reputation, the Philharmonic did not treat every visiting composer the same way. In my interview with him, Webster brought up Stockhausen's visit in 1971 to conduct *Hymnen*. The orchestra was skeptical, but when the composer, "complete with pigtail and very hippy-looking, gets up there—we introduce him—and . . . starts working with them, inside of fifteen minutes, he had them in the palm of his hand."

The secret, Webster continued, was that Stockhausen was "a consummate musician"—he had anticipated all of the possible difficulties that the musicians might have and "answered their questions even before they formulated them." As recollected by some of the musicians who played in the 1964 concerts, Cage did not possess this important quality of traditional musicianship. Mansfield, for example, told me about the occasion when the flutist Paige Brook approached Cage with a question about his part: "And he says, 'These notes are not in my register. What do I do there?' And John Cage says, 'These are not a group of notes. They're clusters.' [Brook] says, 'What do you mean, "clusters"? I can't play it!' . . . He never got the answer as to how he was going to play that damn cluster!" Earle Brown later remembered that this matter of professionalism was "what we [he and Cage] used to argue about. Psychologically speaking, are you making rules and regulations that are compatible with the nature of a performer? You can't be angry with them if you do not deal responsibly with their professionalism. There's a big difference between John and Morty and me in that they both play the piano, which is not an orchestral instrument. I've sat in all kinds of orchestras playing the trumpet, and when I write my scores I do it from my knowledge and background as a performing musician, not as an idealist or a philosophical revolutionary."[79]

Brown was among the close associates of Cage who shared the program on these concerts and seem to have received better treatment from the orchestra. The clarinetist Michael Burgio later reflected on the orchestra's visitors: "Feldman was a very quiet man, very nice guy. . . . Brown was cool. I didn't see anything . . . happen with these guys. . . . Varèse came once . . . —very respectable. I didn't see any of these men react in such a negative way as they did with Cage. Never. Stockhausen—he was respected."

What was it about Cage that resulted in what Burgio called "an antagonism, a negativism"?[80] The commonly held view of Cage as a serene Buddhist appears incongruous when considered along with the performance history and reputation of *Atlas* at the time of the Philharmonic performances. Branden Joseph argues that Cage articulated a "neo-avant-garde" position that moved beyond traditional definitions of the avant-garde that centered on negation, shock, and the foregrounding of an artwork's construction as a way of leading the observer to a critical appraisal of the conventions and institutions of power.[81] This earlier theory of the avant-garde, articulated most influentially by Peter Bürger,[82] depends on a notion of a negative space of critique untainted by the operations of capitalism, but, as Joseph argues, Cage instead pursued an affirmative politics of difference "as an immanent force within the totalized sphere [of late capitalism] itself."[83]

Joseph further notes that "Cage's estimation of the postwar situation differs from Bürger's in large part because he [Cage] did not similarly value the notion of negation or shock."[84] Joseph's theory of the neo-avant-garde offers an exciting and persuasive interpretation of the relationships among postmodernity, power, and resistance in Cage's work. Nonetheless, events like the *Atlas* concerts indicate that some characteristics of the traditional avant-garde—such as shock and agonism—were still operative, at least in the presentation and reception (if not the formal aesthetics) of this music.[85]

Despite Cage's claim that "I have never gratuitously done anything for shock," he appeared to court and even enjoy his frequent confrontations with the audience, particularly beginning in the late 1950s. Benjamin Boretz's review of the 1964 Philharmonic performance captures this tendency toward confrontation: "Without imputing motives, it seems, like all of Cage's jokes, principally designed to see just how far patrons can be made to spend money, musicians can be made to perform absurd and humiliating tasks, and audiences and critics be made to endure the necessity of choosing between the embarrassment of remaining to 'listen' and of making a public exit in the middle of a performance—an alternative preferred by surprisingly many at Philharmonic Hall."[86] Cage himself noted in 1973, "[Criticism of a concert] taught me that if people like what I am doing, I should look out. It's important that I live as I did before society became involved in what I am doing."[87] A few weeks after the New York performance of *Atlas,* in an interview with a newspaper columnist in Hawai'i, Cage described the premiere of *4′33″* in 1952, relishing the aggressive audience response: "In the third movement they whistled, hooted and one of them stamped out noisily. It was marvelous."[88]

In addition, Cage had added an element of painful volume with *Atlas*. As the featured dancer in the Merce Cunningham Company since 1952, Carolyn Brown had probably heard more performances of Cage's music than anyone save Cage, Cunningham, and Tudor. She addressed the issue of volume in her description of the performance of the work in New London, Connecticut, on August 17, 1961: "Until this performance, loudness per se had never been one of the complaints about the music that coexisted with Merce's dances."[89] Certainly reviews from the early 1960s consistently complained about the ear-splitting volume of *Atlas*'s amplified sounds, and a 1963 performance at Lincoln Center resulted in "storms of angry letters from people who claimed Cage had hurt their ears."[90] In a 1980 interview, Charlotte Moorman recalled that after Cage's evening on the first of her annual Avant Garde Festivals in the fall of 1963, she was sued by a woman in the audience who claimed that the concert had damaged

her hearing.[91] Brown captures the newly combative tone of such works as *Atlas* when she writes that they "did not coexist with the choreography, they competed with it, even attempted to annihilate it, like an insanely jealous lover."[92] Tomkins noted that Cage had in fact begun working with contact microphones—and thus, with amplification—in early 1960.[93] So strong was the reaction to his loud amplified sounds that Cage was led, as he confessed to Tomkins, to consult the *I Ching* in 1964. "I got perfectly marvelous hexagrams," he told the journalist. "They told me to continue with what I was doing and to spread joy and revolution."[94] High levels of volume continued to interest him; in 1966, he told Michael Zwerin that it was because of the loudness of rock music that its regular beat was less oppressive than that of jazz.[95]

Cage often explained that he was merely doing "what needs to be done," but, as Brown points out, there is nothing in the score of *Atlas* that directs the engineer to set the volume at earsplitting levels. This convention was arrived at by choice, not chance. As Cage told Tomkins,

> One does what there is to do, that's all. I remember during the rehearsals for the Philharmonic concert the microphones seemed to be causing all kinds of trouble, and Morty Feldman tried to persuade me not to use them. "Think how shimmeringly beautiful it would sound," he said, "just the instruments playing that star music, with no electronics." "Yes," I said, "but think how magnificently ugly it will sound with the microphones on!" That's how I feel now. I am going toward violence rather than tenderness, hell rather than heaven, ugly rather than beautiful, impure rather than pure—because by doing these things they become transformed, and we become transformed.[96]

Cage's position on the necessity of ugliness and violence was not a newly invented spin on the events of February 1964. He had, in fact, expressed nearly identical sentiments in a letter to Yates in August 1961, only one week after the world premiere of the piece. "What *Atlas Eclipticalis* does (to an audience) is to let them hear all the things they thought they didn't want in the way of amplification and electronics: feed-back, distortion, etc. rattling loud-speakers, low fidelity, etc." He continued, "Some of my best friends hate it. M. C. Richards said she never heard so many objections. I am certain, however, that this piece will eventually evoke gratitude since it embraces 20th century horror transforming it."[97] *Atlas,* then, was not simply an assaultive piece but also a pedagogical—even didactic—tool. With this piece Cage wanted to help train our ears to the sounds of daily life in the jet age, "because if [our] ears don't get stretched by me they'll be stretched by something else later on, and it just might be more painful," he told a journalist in Paris.[98]

The agonistic and didactic tone that apparently characterized the composer's interactions with performers and the public during these years was clearly a significant factor framing his interactions with the New York Philharmonic.[99] A common complaint of the musicians I interviewed concerned visitors who arrived looking to tutor the group on various musical subjects. Burgio, for example, summarized the orchestra's ability to "size up" guests (this, no doubt, also contributed to their reputation as tough guys):

> It could be . . . that Cage's personality did not jive with the Philharmonic. . . . [T]he Philharmonic had instinctive intuition. They could tell a conductor if he was anything or something, as soon as he walked onstage. . . . I mean, they studied with Mengelberg, Toscanini, all of them. They had the greatest [leaders] in the world, and they could tell somebody who was arrogant, or gonna try to "teach them something," or "I'm gonna teach you how to play Beethoven's Fifth," you know? They could tell, and maybe, when Cage was there, he just rubbed them the wrong way.

As a highly trained and world-renowned orchestra, the Philharmonic did not enjoy being lectured about the repertoire in which they specialized. Can we also assume that they did not appreciate being told what music ought to be, or that *Atlas* would "eventually evoke gratitude since it embraces 20th century horror transforming it"?

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Although Cage undoubtedly had legitimate grounds for complaint after his experience with the Philharmonic, the musicians, too, had legitimate reactions and opinions about the event—responses that have been obscured by a univocal account that inevitably portrays them as ignoble and childish. One dissenting view was articulated by Cardew in 1974: "I find it impossible to deplore the action of those orchestral musicians. Not that they took a 'principled stand' (I hope such stands may be taken in the future), but they gave spontaneous expression to the sharply antagonistic relationship between the avant-garde composer with all his electronic gadgetry and the working musician. There are many aspects to this contradiction, but beneath it all is class struggle."[100] Marxist analyses like these, which were somewhat common in the 1970s, reflected a concern for social divisions of class that arise from the "head-and-hand" division of labor.[101] These relations of power and of force are more subtle and ambivalent than Cardew's position appears to allow, but he does raise the possibility of understanding the conflict between Cage and the Philharmonic from another perspective.

A few of my interviewees mentioned the "showbiz" atmosphere as a factor in their taking the work less seriously. One anonymous member

told me, "When the method of writing becomes more significant than the content, it also gives the impression that the emphasis is in the wrong place, to a musician. . . . What is it doing here? We're an orchestra. What has this to do with what we do?" The percussionist Arnie Lang described the piece as "mechanical" and "so much baloney,"[102] and Enrico DiCecco also criticized the robotic nature of the mechanical conductor; the device may have given the impression of granting players freedom, but this was never more than "freedom within the barline," because there was no chance that the rate of the armature's rotation would ever change.

Burgio and DiCecco both remember the irritation many musicians felt at not having control over the volume of their amplified sound. Burgio averred that this might have been what led to Cage's memory of broken contact microphones: "I saw some guys take the microphones off, because they would not allow anything to be controlled on their instruments. They would not be controlled. In other words, if I'm playing and you're putting me down to zero, and I am not heard or something, . . . it's not correct." According to DiCecco, "You had to have the feeling that you were the only one playing, you're being heard all the time. But somebody was turning the knobs, saying, 'Okay, now you, now you.' And you never knew it—no light went on, it's not like a camera or something. You didn't know when you were being heard." Whereas the prevailing narrative of these events interprets the relationships between musicians and microphones according to tropes of juvenile misbehavior, these musicians' recollections indicate a more complex struggle over agency and control of one's own sound production.

Another aspect of the confrontation between the Philharmonic and Cage turns on the function of sound in articulating the musical philosophy of nonintention so central to the composer's work. *Atlas,* like all of Cage's pieces written after 1950, was composed with a view to limiting its performers' (and, indeed, composer's) reliance on conventional approaches to "musical" sound such as form, melody, phrasing, articulation, and so on. Cage wanted each instrumental part to be rendered with no regard for what other instruments are doing. Resistance to musical convention is thus built into the parts themselves; if all the parts of the piece are performed accurately, the sonic texture will embody the kind of nonintention that the composer sought. Each musician's activity is directed toward executing individual, chance-derived processes rather than toward contributing to the total aural surface—such tinkering at the level of sonic surface would be a manifestation of the kind of intentional, taste-based logic that chance operations and indeterminacy were intended to resist and disrupt.

If Mansfield's comments are any indication, many members of the Philharmonic did not understand this fundamental point about Cage's work: "There were times during some of these works . . . when you've started playing and it really didn't make a bit of difference what you are doing on the instrument. I mean, you could have been playing the Brahms violin concerto the whole time, and nobody would have known." If the goal of the performance was to create a specific sonic feel, then, Mansfield contended, there would have been more than one way to achieve that goal: "The noise was there, it was completely wild, it was unstructured, and what you did, didn't seem to make much difference. At least, to my ears, certainly it didn't." It appears that for Cage, the composer who is most readily identified with sound itself, this position was ironically *too* centered on sound, for it neglected to pay attention to the score and to how the score generated the sonic surface of the work.

The musicians of the New York Philharmonic cultivated a serious approach to sound for its own sake, but their approach was not compatible with Cage's. One might even say that the members of the New York Philharmonic were more devoted to sound than Cage was, for they engaged with *Atlas* solely on the level of sonic surface, uninterested in the specific compositional method used to generate this surface. The problem seems to have come with the assumption of the players that they understood how to represent sonically the kind of nonintention so important to Cage. Of course, in one sense a Cage work is never a "representation" of nonintention, because such a formulation implies that there is a level of artifice or technique, a kind of guidance applied to the final product to make it just right. Furthermore, as Joseph explains in his treatment of Cage and Rauschenberg, works such as the *White Paintings* and *4′33″* offer a *critique* of representation by allowing every act of perception to be individualized—no single hearing of *4′33″* is privileged because the work refuses to form its audience into a generalized whole and "does not presuppose any common denominator of subjectivity."[103]

Cage's music was opposed to a representational logic that eliminates or masks differences in order to create identity.[104] Joseph connects this Cagean aesthetics to Deleuze's antirepresentational philosophy of immanence, which describes a world that is continually transformed by the flux of time—a state of infinite change and absolute difference where "difference [is] conceived as an ontological first principle, the positive and productive motor force driving a dynamic conception of 'nature.'" When the musicians of the Philharmonic attempted to realize *Atlas* according not to its score but to sound alone, they proceeded from a generalized conception

of how indeterminacy should sound, and it was this jump to the abstract level of representation that Cage so strenuously opposed. This refusal to think categorically led to Cage's many compositional techniques for fixing attention to the radical specificity or materiality of sound—or, as he would say, "nature"—in flux.

At the same time, however, we know that Cage made small changes to the results of his chance operations all the time. As several scholars have made clear, Cage fiddled with the parameters he set, adjusting the questions he asked to assure a sonic surface that was suitably complex, noisy, sparse, whatever.[105] To align the antinomy between Cage and the Philharmonic along the axis of structure/sound would thus be misleading, for the composer had his own tastes for certain sounds and often tinkered with his chance-determined structures to achieve them.

Another complicating factor in this discussion was related by James Tenney in an interview with Leta Miller. Tenney had been Cage's assistant conductor in the 1964 New York Philharmonic concert, a position that entailed helping Cage control the fifty channels of amplified sound. Cage specified in the score of *Atlas* that the assistant conductor's part—that is, determining which channels to manipulate, when to make adjustments, and the nature of these adjustments themselves—was to be generated using Cage's earlier work *Cartridge Music*. Written in 1960, Cage used this work throughout the 1960s as a kind of instant concert generator, and programs from the years around 1960 reveal that Cage and Tudor frequently performed the piece. Pritchett referred to it as a "musical tool," a work that "[does] not describe events in either a determinate or an indeterminate way, but which instead present[s] a procedure by which to *create* any number of such descriptions or scores."[106] Tenney recalls that Cage had brought the materials for *Cartridge Music* to one of the final rehearsals. "Maybe we could put together our parts with these," he remarked. After a pause, he asked, "Do you really think we need these?" When Tenney replied "no," they decided to proceed in an improvised manner.[107]

Malcolm Goldstein assisted Cage in the 1965 electronic extravaganza *Variations V* (also performed at Lincoln Center) and recalls that on that occasion the electronics were again manipulated via improvisation. As Tenney told Miller, "By the time of *Variations V,* Cage had come to terms with free improvisation (though he didn't like that word) as long as it was done by people sympathetic to his aesthetic aims."[108] An obvious question arises: Why did Cage feel comfortable controlling the mixer without a chance-derived part that would ensure a nonintentionality of purpose, while castigating those musicians in the orchestra who might have deviated

from their part, or viewed it as an opportunity for "improvisation"? He might have reasoned that the difficulty of keeping track of fifty separate channels would automatically rule out the appearance of taste or judgment in the execution of the piece; the sonic surface of *Atlas* would hardly register the absence of a chance-generated part for the mixer operators. There were other pressing concerns: at any moment, an unbearably loud screech of feedback might roar out of one or more of the loudspeakers, or even worse, one of the orchestra musicians might decide to spice up the mix with a passage from the Brahms violin concerto. In the first case, we can assume that Cage would not have avoided an assaultive sonic blast; during this period he often spoke of the therapeutic function that extreme auditory textures could have for modern listeners. The second case provides a more likely explanation for Cage's decision to improvise at the controls—if one of the musicians got cute, the composer needed the freedom to find the correct channel quickly and remove the offending sound from the live mix.

Pragmatic reasons aside, I would contend that Cage improvised at the mixing board because he (and Tenney) had lived with and in the soundworld of indeterminacy for many years. He knew how it usually sounded; he understood its peculiar rhythms, surprising interruptions, and stochastic texture. Indeed, he had created indeterminacy—controlled it and served as its primary discursive gatekeeper. According to Fredric Lieberman's account of the visit Cage made to the Festival of Music and Art of This Century at the University of Hawai'i only two months after the New York Philharmonic performances, Cage conducted nine students playing *Atlas* with amplified cafeteria trays "onto which they dropped various objects at the times appointed by the astronomical data."[109] Though such a realization is conceivable using the nine percussion parts, one wonders whether Cage would have assented to the Philharmonic percussionists' preparing a similarly imaginative approach. In Hawai'i, however, Cage was clearly in charge. The group was much smaller, and rather than the battle-hardened professionals of the Philharmonic, he conducted students who were no doubt eager to please their famous guest. Like these "friendly experiencers," as Anthony Braxton would call them, Cage's various assistants in the early 1960s—Ichiyanagi, Maxfield, Tenney, Goldstein—worked closely with him and possessed the kind of deep knowledge deriving from experience in a particular sociomusical network that orchestral musicians could never be expected to pick up in a few rehearsals. In other words, unlike the members of the Philharmonic, Cage's ideal performers did not represent the sound of indeterminacy according to how they heard or understood it. Rather, they embodied and performed indeterminacy itself, manifesting

its characteristic soundworld from the inside out in a manner agreeable to the composer.

The difference between Cage's preferred musicians and those who could not be trusted to handle the freedoms of indeterminacy opens up a consideration of subjectivity and the structures of liberalism that underlie the common narrative of this episode. Having already been trained in more conventional art-music traditions, Cage's friendly experiencers had *chosen* this position within indeterminacy. They may have embodied it, but they had also demonstrated the capacity to embody another tradition. This sort of optional relationship to culture, writes Wendy Brown, "sustains . . . the conceit that the rationality of the subject is independent of these things, which are named as contextual rather than constitutive elements" of subjectivity.[110] If a hallmark of liberal subjectivity is the will to separate or abstract itself from its context, then this formulation of the subject also presupposes a nonindividuated other who *fails* to manifest such a will. For the Philharmonic musicians, culture was authoritative, not something to be "entered into" or chosen. The danger of this understanding is that the event then becomes less a conflict over control than an expression of the Philharmonic's essential nature: the musicians refused to tolerate Cage's instructions because of *who they are*, not because of *what they think*. The matter of substantial cultural belonging—framed within liberal discourse as a kind of supplement to personal autonomy—thus heralds the latent liberalism in Cage's position, a position to which I will shortly return.

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One way to understand the conflict is through the idea of victimization, an approach explored by David Savran in his analysis of the changes in white masculinity in U.S. culture since World War II.[111] Savran argues that through its model of a divided subjectivity that gains pleasure and power from controlling a feminized part of itself, masochism constitutes the prevailing model of postwar white masculinity. This notion of the white-man-as-victim has taken many forms since the 1950s, when—as the story goes—corporate bureaucracy rendered the "organization man" little more than a functionary cog in the capitalist machine. Contributing to his sense of loss and anger in the decades to come were the incomplete but significant gains of the civil rights struggle, the ascendance of the women's movement and feminism, the collapse of the New Left and rise of "identity politics," the failures of the Vietnam War, and the effects of deindustrialization and a major economic downturn in the 1970s. According to Savran, representations of the white-male-as-victim became a powerful part of a broadly

masochist white masculinity that proves its manhood through displaying the ability to withstand pain.

In early 1964, the civil rights movement was swiftly gaining intensity on its way to the Voting Rights Act later that year; in early 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique,* the breakthrough text that launched the white women's movement; and throughout the 1960s, following the Sino-Soviet split, anticolonial struggles around the world received support and inspiration from China. These movements, along with others in the early 1960s, were conspicuously responsible for the displacement of white men as the undisputed subjects of history. In the worlds of art and culture, the embattled position of white European culture (and organizations like the Philharmonic who performed it) in 1964 owed less to John Cage than to other revolutionary artists making their New York debut on that second weekend in February: the Beatles. As Bernard Gendron has shown, rock was by the mid-1960s increasingly identified with—and referenced by—high-art practitioners such as painters, sculptors, poets, filmmakers, and novelists. And among an older crowd of middle-brow consumers, jazz had already established itself as a high-status pursuit. In this swiftly changing cultural landscape, traditional institutions such as symphony orchestras were increasingly faced with questions of relevance. Bernstein's roles as media personality and pop icon speak to his understanding of this fundamental shift in U.S. culture during the 1960s.

Within the restricted network of high culture itself, this shift played out in the relationships between old-guard cultural institutions such as the Philharmonic and a younger generation of adventurous artists such as the Beats, Cage, and Andy Warhol. It was this latter group of "barbarians at the gate" that the literary critic Leslie Fiedler attacked in his important 1965 essay "The New Mutants."[112] Ostensibly a critique of Beat writers such as Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, and Allen Ginsberg, Fiedler's essay issued a primal scream against the emerging "post-humanist, post-male, post-white, post-heroic world." (Representative of the peculiar power of whiteness is the fact that even Fiedler's symbols of a "post-white" future are white or Jewish.)

Although the Beat literary scene that was the target of Fiedler's critique shared little beyond Zen with Cagean experimentalism, Fiedler's essay is representative of a broader generational split. Indeed, he described the younger generation for a wider constituency who couldn't have cared less about differences among various branches of the postwar avant-garde. This sort of categorical imprecision can readily be found in the judge Milton Shalleck's opinion in *People v. Charlotte Moorman* (1967), the decision in

which Moorman was convicted of indecent exposure following her topless performance of Nam June Paik's *Opera Sextronique* (see chapter 4). Although the opinion was written three years after the *Atlas* concerts and two years after Fiedler's essay, it evinces an almost identical jumble of aesthetic, moral, and political disapproval. (Shalleck is a particularly appropriate character to introduce in this chapter, because, as he recounts in his rambling decision, he had in fact been present at the Philharmonic performances discussed here—present, at least, until he and his wife walked out.) In a mocking, contemptuous style, Shalleck dismissed events, happenings, indeterminacy, "draft-card burning 'long hairs,'" and "bearded, bathless 'Beats'" in one fell swoop, demonstrating that for him these quite specific categories all seemed to run together.[113]

Fiedler wrote that this young generation regarded its whiteness as "a stigma and symbol of shame," turning instead to Asian religions or to "the non-Christian submythology that has grown up among Negro jazz musicians and in the civil rights movement." Another element of his critique was the charge of antihumanism and irrationality: "[T]he tradition from which [the Beats] strive to disengage is the tradition of . . . Humanism itself, . . . and more especially, the cult of reason."[114] From Fiedler's perspective (and, insofar as this perspective was shared widely among older gatekeepers in U.S. arts and letters, from that of the Philharmonic musicians as well), Cage's Zen-inspired turn to chance and indeterminacy was an irrationalist, anti-Christian attack on the European humanist tradition.

Fiedler's most striking comments concern gender, more specifically the feminization of the arts and of U.S. culture generally. "To become new men," he avowed, "these children of the future seem to feel, they must not only become more Black than White but more female than male."[115] Perhaps not surprisingly, Fiedler tied up this feminization process with themes of homosexualization: "[Camp], though the invention of homosexuals, is now the possession of basically heterosexual males as well, a strategy in their campaign to establish a new relationship not only with women but with their own masculinity."[116] Although the canon of U.S. literature was, in the words of Savran, "peopled by a multitude of eccentrics, homosexuals, and misfits," there seemed to be something about the younger generation's display of sexuality that, combined with the other structural shifts during these years, constituted it as dangerous. Indeed, this was a charged moment in the history of homosexuality in the United States, and in New York in particular.[117] The years 1963 and 1964 saw an explosion of stories in the popular press about the increasing visibility of male homosexuality in U.S. culture, including a story in the *New York*

*Times* titled "Growth of Overt Homosexuality in City Provokes Wide Concern" (at the time the city was in the middle of a large-scale "clean-up" ahead of the World's Fair, held in Queens in 1964).[118]

Given such a setting, could it be that the peculiar, lilting speech of the East Village experimentalist was simply too much for the tough boys of the Philharmonic to bear? Although Cage never "came out" about his sexuality (in the terms of the dominant trope of the closet—a trope, it bears pointing out, that was only just becoming dominant in the early 1960s), his affected tone, high voice, and dandyish style were probably received as nonnormative by an orchestra more accustomed to the equally urbane but more subdued homosexuality of Bernstein in the 1960s.

In a variety of ways, therefore—his effeminate, possibly gay self-presentation, his identification with Zen, his "irrational" method of composition, his seeming disregard for the humanist tradition—Cage may have been received as a threat by a Philharmonic already feeling victimized by a culture that seemed to be passing them by. There was also the issue of labor. For the manly men of an earlier era, hard work came naturally as an extension and performance of masculinity itself. But for the artists and writers of the new sensibility, in the words of Fiedler, "work is as obsolete as reason, a vestige (already dispensable for large numbers) of an economically marginal, pre-automated world." To a community of white and Jewish men such as those who made up the Philharmonic, a community that prided itself on professionalism and the hard work necessary to achieve its exalted position, Cage's score seemed to flout the very skills that had required so much hard work to acquire. Virtuosity—or at least the kind of virtuosity possessed by the Philharmonic musicians—was completely unnecessary to perform *Atlas*. Therefore, Cage seemed to be communicating that the skills upon which the identity of the Philharmonic depended were useless, meaningless, or unnecessary.

Savran's analysis of victimization is based on the premise that a general dynamic of masochism underlay all positions of white masculinity in the postwar decades. In other words, old-guard cultural institutions inhabited solely by white and Jewish men were not the only sites of victimization; rather, in a field saturated by masochism, this discourse also characterized the upstart positions occupied by such artists as Cage. From this perspective, the struggle for control in the confrontation between Cage and the Philharmonic was also a struggle over *modalities* of victimization, and was thus a struggle *particular* to white masculinity. Whereas the traditionalists in the Philharmonic may have felt under attack from a culture that seemed to be leaving them behind, Cage's practice of masochism was directed

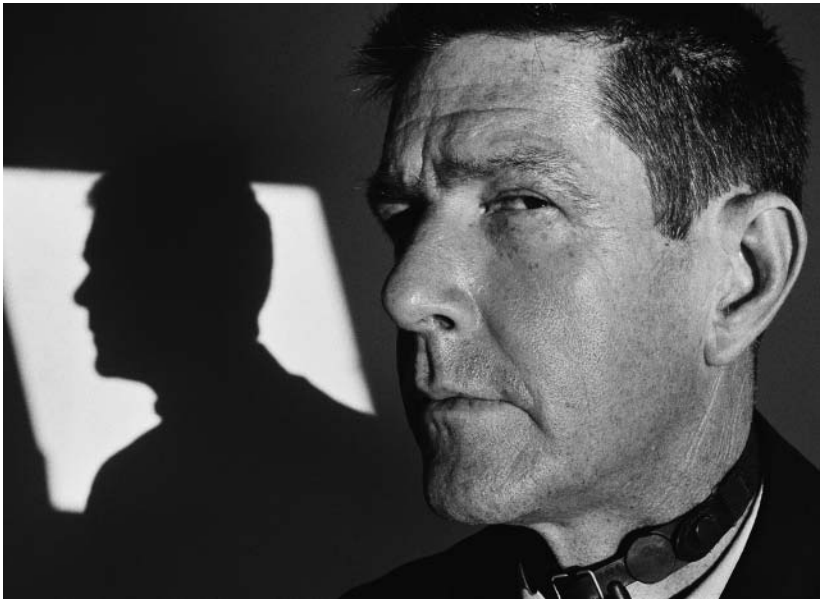

FIGURE 3. John Cage in Stony Point, New York, October 1963. Photograph by HIRO.

inward and aimed toward dividing, and then controlling, the self. (To state what should be obvious, to comment on the structure of masochism in Cage's work is not the same thing as to imply that Cage gained sexual pleasure from the experience of pain. Cage's sexuality has nothing to do with it. If any member of the New York School has suggested such an analysis, it would be David Tudor, who seemed to delight in the difficulties presented to him by Cage, Wolff, Feldman, or Brown. As Carolyn Brown remembers, "David licked his lips with pleasure after bowing to booing.")[119]

Although the Philharmonic may have dismissed Cage as a lazy dilettante, the composer's entire philosophy and creative methodology were based on notions of discipline. The whole point of chance operations and indeterminacy, Cage repeatedly pointed out, was to free the composer from his or her taste, history, or psychology, but such freedom could only be achieved through self-abnegation. Cage described chance as a "leap" of liberation[120] but also as a kind of bondage: "By flipping coins to determine facets of my music, I chain my ego so that it cannot possibly affect it."[121] Stories about his grueling compositional processes—six months of coin-tossing for *Music of Changes,* twelve-hour days of cutting tape for *Williams Mix*—are certainly relevant here. Relevant, too, is the composition and notation of *Atlas,* a project that kept Cage "immovable yet

slaving ceaselessly at his task" for months.[122] As Morton Feldman told Robert Ashley in an unpublished interview in 1963, "In the midst of all this increasing interest in theater, [Cage] wrote *Atlas Eclipticalis,* and he devoted more time to it than to any other composition he ever wrote."[123]

With the work's eighty-six separate parts, at five pages apiece, the inking process alone was a punishing task. In light of his masochistic working practices, Cage's interest in high amplitude noise during the 1960s makes more sense: by becoming *willing victims,* by subjecting ourselves to the pain—or is it pleasure?—of sonic violence, we allow our ears to be stretched by Cage. "[T]he louder the sound, the greater the chance it gave us to discipline ourselves," Cage told Daniel Charles.[124] Through this kind of discipline, we gain the pleasure and power that comes from withstanding an assault. "What I'm doing with these loud sounds is stretching people's ears. I'm more or less confidant they'll be grateful in the long run."[125] It was this process of pushing/punishing the self but "taking it like a man" that contributed to the masculinist slant of postwar experimentalism, helping to set it off from what Nadine Hubbs has identified as a feminized tonal modernism that took on softer hues.[126]

. . .

Could this confrontation between Cage and the Philharmonic be dubbed an experimentalist "rumspringa"? Practiced by Amish communities throughout the world, rumspringa is the custom of sending young adults at the age of seventeen out into the non-Amish world to experiment with sex, drugs, smoking, make-up, television, video games, and other aspects of the uninhibited life. After a few months or years, however, they are expected to choose between remaining in the "devil's playground," as the title of Lucy Walker's fascinating documentary on the subject would have it, or returning to their families and the rule-bound Amish life they had known since birth.[127] If they choose the former, they will be ostracized from the community and their families for the rest of their lives. Based on the admirable belief that only informed adults can choose to be baptized and initiated into the church, rumspringa advances dubious evidence for the validating role of choice in accepting Jesus Christ as the savior, for the Amish adolescents are shunted into a situation for which they are completely unprepared. It is not surprising that the overwhelming majority choose to be reunited with their communities and the only social lives they have ever known? For the practice truly to be one of free choice, young Amish would have to be knowledgeable about the outside world, able to experience its pleasures without the thrill of transgression and limitlessness. This is an

impossible expectation, since it would involve earlier education in the secular sphere of non-Amish society, and thus a deformation of the very rules and conditions by which rumspringa assumes its meaning. "The lesson of all this is that a choice is always a meta-choice, a choice of the modality of the choice itself," writes Slavoj Žižek.[128] Here we arrive at the Žižekian paradox: if the choice of rumspringa is to be a true choice, it cannot be made by a true Amish.

I find this paradox useful in considering what might be termed the experimental rumspringa. Who in 1964 was doing the choosing—the performers or the composer? The musicians of the New York Philharmonic were, for the first time, asked to play an aleatoric work, but this work wasn't just a conventional score with some open passages worked in. Rather, the whole piece was composed using chance, and therefore the production of every sound involved a certain amount of decision making. The aesthetic philosophy of a Cage work was so distant from the training these musicians had received, it should come as no surprise that they rejected this alternative future in favor of returning to the music of Vivaldi and Tchaikovsky.[129] It is this latter repertoire that had guided their education and provided the conceptual grounds upon which they would receive *Atlas Eclipticalis,* and under such conditions the work was doomed to fail. Brought into the devil's concert hall, the Philharmonic musicians regarded what they found with horror (or somewhat ignorant amusement), but their rejection of the decision-making function that *Atlas* had granted them is not the "true" choice to give up on Cage and go back to Vivaldi. The deck is stacked. These musicians could only have made a real decision if they had been educated in the experimental tradition, had learned its philosophical underpinnings and become thoroughly entrained into the soundworld and social mores of the Cagean community. But it is precisely an engagement with this world—and all others—that is ruled out by the commitment to a focused repertoire of European classics, a repertoire that is responsible not only for the prestige of the orchestra but also for the respect and publicity that Cage sought by engaging them. If the choice to reject Cage is to be a true choice, it cannot be made by the New York Philharmonic.

But what about David Tudor, who performed *Winter Music* while the orchestra played *Atlas*? As John Holzaepfel points out, Tudor gave the first performances of all of Cage's piano music, among his most important works, between 1952 and 1967.[130] Cage later commented that during this period "David Tudor was present in everything I was doing."[131] The manner in which Tudor interpreted the indeterminate scores of Cage is therefore germane to this discussion. The work he played on the 1964

Philharmonic concerts is a representative example. *Winter Music* is one of Cage's best-known examples of indeterminacy, consisting of twenty pages of music that can be played by one or more—up to twenty—pianists. Each page contains anywhere from one to sixty-one chords or clusters, each generated by Cage's marking of paper imperfections on the manuscript sheets. Two clef signs are given for each chord, and in the event that these are not the same, a pair of numbers indicates the proportion of notes to be read in each of the different clefs (the assignment of clefs to notes, however, is left to the performer).[132] In his performance of this piece, as with all the other pieces by Cage he premiered, Tudor did not improvise from the score. Instead, he generated a performance score from measurements of the original score, precise calculation, and conversion tables. These preparations seriously undermine Cage's celebrated claim that "a performance of a composition which is indeterminate of its performance is necessarily unique. It cannot be repeated. When performed for a second time, the outcome is other than it was. Nothing therefore is accomplished by such a performance, since that performance cannot be grasped as an object in time."[133] Tudor's performances of *Winter Music* were not unpredictable—at least no less predictable than the repetition of any other piece.

As Holzaepfel writes, "[I]n spite of the [New York School] composers' numerous pronouncements about spontaneity, unpredictability, and freedom, here was the music's first and most important performer working it out in advance with a rigor that is little short of astonishing. . . . Do the aesthetics of indeterminacy stand at odds with Tudor's systematic means of ensuring it in performance?"[134] Holzaepfel rightly points out that Cage always separated the acts of composition and performance; in one essay he famously wrote, "Composing's one thing, performing's another, listening's a third. What can they have to do with one another?"[135] But could Cage really believe that a work's indeterminacy was determined only at the composition stage and that it didn't matter if every performance of the work was the same?

In the well-known essay "Indeterminacy," Cage likened indeterminate compositions to the construction of a camera that could be used to take any number of photographs.[136] But Tudor's performances took the same photograph every time. Surprisingly, Tudor's very predictability gained him the loyalty of Cage, Wolff, Brown, and Feldman. Tudor's role in the experimental scene was generative, rather than just interpretive, because the characteristic sound of his realizations was reliably amenable to his composers' tastes. As Brown replied when Holzaepfel asked whether he discussed performances with Tudor ahead of time, "No. I think the answer . . .

has to do with how much we trusted David to always be doing things properly and correctly and right."[137] Cage, too, did not instruct the pianist on how to perform his works: "There was never any conversation. . . . Nor did I consult with him about what he could do, or what he couldn't do—none of that."[138] Wolff indicated that in the case of works that pass some degree of decision making to the performer, the issue of trust emerges as a key consideration. "And of course, with David there was no question. There was not only no question, but you'd be looking forward to see what he had thought to do with the 'material' you had given him. . . . When a piece was turned over to David, there was simply no anxiety. You didn't worry, you knew that something would happen."[139]

But it wasn't simply that "something" would happen; it was that the "right" thing happened, without exception. Tudor never seems to have given a performance of a piece by one of these composers that the creator considered unsatisfactory. As Holzaepfel makes clear in his detailed and persuasive study, Tudor's flawless record of interpretation owes to the fact that he was instrumental in the development of indeterminacy, and not simply its most gifted performer. Taking this observation seriously means considering the New York School as one example of what could be called "distributed authorship," wherein the conception, meaning, and soundworld of a given composition is shared across multiple subjectivities. When authorship is distributed to include the performer who realizes the work, Cage's Buddhist goal of identifying with "no matter what eventuality" is rarely tested in a significant way; generating an "eventuality" with which it might be difficult to identify becomes as hard as tickling yourself—not impossible, but quite unlikely.[140]

"Each spring brings no matter what eventuality," Cage wrote. "The performer then will act in any way. Whether he does so in an organized way or in any one of the not consciously organized ways cannot be answered until his action is a reality."[141] We should regard these statements with skepticism. Tudor was a formidable musician and a crucial voice in the development of indeterminacy, but he was not unpredictable. The choice to use Tudor is always a metachoice.

Here we approach the experimental rumspringa from the opposite direction. With Tudor at the keyboard, Cage accepts whatever will come, regardless of the consequences, but this is not a real acceptance—he already knows that he will approve of what is to come. In the *Atlas Eclipticalis* episode, Cage's fidelity to the principles of indeterminacy was tested not only by the Philharmonic but also by Tudor. This latter encounter, however, was not a test at all, but rather the affirmation of a familiar soundworld,

the "correct" and "proper" interpretation of *Winter Music*. Were Tudor's performance truly to have provided the composer with an opportunity to accept whatever outcome, the realization would have had to have been uncharacteristic of Tudor, as if he and the composer had not worked closely together for more than ten years, and as if Tudor had not had a generative role in the very tradition whose expectations he would at that moment be working to confound. Again, Žižek's paradox: if Tudor is to create a situation of indeterminacy, he cannot be Tudor.

Although Cagean aesthetics would seem to advance a model of subjectivity that is open to its environment and in a perpetual state of flux, the practicalities involved in enacting this experimentalist reality instead left us with a less radical example. As the free chooser who always chooses correctly, possesses the self-control to execute his tasks without regarding the tasks of others, and seems to have released his attachments to idiom and tradition (even though the modernist pitch language of Tudor's Cage realizations betrays his prior studies with Stefan Wolpe), Tudor exemplifies key traits of the modern liberal subject of the United States and Europe: culturally flexible, individualistic, and tolerant (or unmindful) of others. Yet as Žižek reminds us, liberalism is never simply an arena of individual choice but also a framing of the terms within which choice takes shape. "This is why, in our secular societies of choice, people who maintain a substantial religious belonging are in a subordinate position: even if they are allowed to practice their belief, this belief is 'tolerated' as their idiosyncratic personal choice/opinion; the moment they present it publicly as what it is for them (a matter of substantial belonging), they are accused of 'fundamentalism.'"[142] At the larger level of what Wendy Brown calls "civilizational discourse," tolerance poses as a universal value and impartial practice, and "designates certain beliefs and practices as civilized and others as barbaric, both at home and abroad; it operates from a conceit of neutrality that is actually thick with bourgeois Protestant norms."[143]

Cage faced and enacted this dynamic directly when he returned to the Philharmonic in 1976 for the New York premiere of his *Apartment House 1776,* a work celebrating the U.S. bicentennial. *Apartment House* is a large and complex piece featuring four solo singers who improvise in front of the orchestra. According to Cage, these vocalists "represent the peoples living here two hundred years ago: Helen Schneyer, the Protestants; Nico Castel, the Sephardim; Swift Eagle, the American Indians; and Jeanne Lee, the Negro Slaves. The songs they sing are their own. . . . And they are authentic, whether learned through notation, oral tradition, or racial feeling."[144] When the piece was subsequently played by other orchestras across the

country in the late 1970s, it provoked strong reactions. "That's because of the superimposition of so-called spiritual musics, which offended some of the Jewish people in the audience," Cage told David Cope in 1980.

> I knew something might happen because people who sing such music don't have the habit of singing while another person is singing something else. And I had to explain to each singer carefully what was going to happen to get them to accept that before they did it. It was particularly hard with Helen Schneyer, who said that she didn't think that she'd be able to sing while other people were singing, that her work meant too much to her. . . . I said, "Life is full of things that we don't necessarily like." But now she loves it. They all love it because it is a kind of ecumenical feeling to have everything, all the churches, so to speak, together.[145]

In the discourse of experimentalism, the musician who maintains a firm commitment to traditional concepts of beauty or religious devotion is—like Žižek's "fundamentalist"—a throwback to an earlier, more parochial era, or even residual grit in the highly polished gears of a new machine. As Cage put it, "[W]e have this overlap situation of the Old dying and the New coming into being. When the New coming into being is used by someone who is in the Old point of view and dying, then that's when that foolishness occurs."[146] The cost of entering Cage's arena of indeterminacy—which, as we have seen, is a narrowly drawn musical discourse—is the forfeiture of those commitments and substantial beliefs that might otherwise be described as the stuff of true alterity.

Beginning with *Cheap Imitation,* his 1969 "recomposition" of Satie's *Socrate,* Cage himself would return explicitly to the musical traditions of Western Europe. This interest in foraging through a musical past for new materials and new possibilities continued in such works as *Apartment House,* the *Europeras,* and *Hymns and Variations*. Music history again became available, but the modality of the choice was such that tradition could function only as nostalgia, material stripped of its original social or musical function. In *Europeras,* for example, the orchestral parts are drawn from a number of scores, but individual notes have no harmonic function, as they would in their original context.[147] Choosing this music is possible, Cage demonstrates, but only from the position of total catholicity associated with "tolerant" liberalism. A violinist from the Philharmonic cannot choose this tradition in the same way unless he forfeits his position of substantial belonging in the music and re-approaches the choice from the other side. Does not the Cage-Philharmonic confrontation trace the most important lines of conflict that emerged in the late twentieth century, struggles between secular liberal societies and those that have not so

easily forfeited their relationships to "premodern" affiliations, duties, and commitments?

Cage and his associates based their implicit understanding of this encounter on two opposed precepts. According to the one, the orchestra is framed as a residual cultural formation for whom history is meaningful and legitimizing, a grouping that not only obdurately believes in the continuing existence of beauty and tradition but stubbornly figures these qualities as sites of substantial belonging and personal investment. According to the other, the composer uses chance operations and indeterminacy to break the bonds of history as a determining force, requiring a forfeiture of these very kinds of belonging to create a (dis)unity that is "open to whatever eventuality." Cage's explanation of the conductor as timekeeper renders the political dimension here explicit: "The conductor of an orchestra is no longer a policeman. Simply an indicator of time—not in beats—like a chronometer."[148] Elsewhere, he put the matter in even stronger terms. "You see, the old idea was that the composer was the genius, the conductor ordered everyone around, and the performers were slaves," he told Arlynn Nellhaus in 1968. "In our music, no one is boss. We all work together."[149]

As a shared framework, the chronometer provided the neutral ground upon which a group of individuals could work in concert and thus foreshadowed what Joseph has called Cage's "techno-optimism" of the late 1960s.[150] In this heady period of Buckminster Fuller and Marshall McLuhan, Cage viewed technology as part of a system of "utilities" that could make available to everyone such necessities as food, shelter, air, energy, and communications. He took pains to distinguish (apolitical) utilities from (political) government: "[G]overnments discriminate between those who *should* have and those who *shouldn't* have. Therefore, we do not need government; what we need is utilities."[151] Cage often railed against the evils of "big government," and his conviction that government ought to be eliminated in favor of utilities can be regarded as a technocratic variation on classical liberal—or even libertarian—theory.[152] In that tradition of political thought, government need exist only to the extent that it guarantees the grounds upon which citizens can pursue whatever they define as the good life (what John Rawls refined in his theory of "justice as fairness").[153] As Cage told Charles in 1968, "We need a society in which every man may live in a manner freely determined by him himself. I am not the first person to say so—I am only repeating Buckminster Fuller."[154] Though Fuller may have been the immediate inspiration for Cage's views, the provenance of his thoughts on government interference in determining the right is better traced to the origins of liberal political philosophy in the seventeenth century.

Cage's rather orthodox liberalism leads naturally to a familiar posing of the "orchestra question" as a matter of dictatorship versus liberal democracy. This position is shared by some members of the Philharmonic. In Walter Botti's terse formulation: "It's like the army. You do what you're told." DiCecco added, "It is not, in essence, the artistic organization that I as a young kid thought it was. It is a note factory, with a guy who says, 'Jump,' and I'm supposed to say, 'How high?'" Richard Taruskin has argued that by demanding that the Philharmonic musicians undertake labors that appeared pointless and arbitrary, Cage's work highlighted and intensified the hierarchical arrangement of power in the organization, rather than offering an alternative.[155] It might be too obvious to point out that most of the musicians in the Philharmonic did not see themselves as participating in a totalitarian police state, even in the case of *Atlas*—who would choose "dictatorship" in this opposition? The anonymous member I interviewed commented, for example, "I remember reading explanations of what it's like to be in an orchestra, where you're subservient to the conductor—that type of thing. I never felt that."

But regardless of whether one thinks *Atlas* dissipated or intensified the dictatorship of the orchestra, Cagean indeterminacy was not the sole alternative to this power arrangement in the sociocultural field of "high-art" musics. Doesn't contemporary improvised music, emerging at this precise moment in the experimental networks of the United States and Europe, offer a different way out of the ideological struggle between "tolerant" Cagean liberalism and "fundamentalist" traditionalism? The examples are several: Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, founded in the summer of 1965; the Theatre of Eternal Music, founded in the summer of 1962 by La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, and Angus MacLise, and later including Tony Conrad and John Cale on strings; Henry Flynt's improvised treatment of the melodic vocabulary of popular and roots musics; the Charlotte Moorman/Nam June Paik duo; the improvisational rock scene represented in one recent archival release by Cale;[156] and finally, the coffee-shop and loft-jazz circles that were formalized in the October Revolution in Jazz. In each of these contemporaneous developments, Cagean openness to whatever might arise operated in tandem with an equally strong commitment to personal histories and an embodied, disciplined approach to musical tradition, whether that of bebop for free jazz's "second wave" in the Jazz Composers Guild, Hindustani traditions of vocal improvisation for Young and the Theatre of Eternal Music, or fiddling styles of the rural South for Flynt.

All of these experimental musicians escaped the explicit governing struc-

ture that pits indeterminate liberalism against traditional fundamentalism, and they did so by embodying the social and musical histories of particular idioms and using them as avenues toward the unforeseen, the relatively unpredictable, and, within limits, Cage's "whatever eventuality." For these genre-troubling young musicians of the 1960s, the commitment to a specific cultural tradition in the form of substantial musical belonging is not an obstacle to cooperation and freedom but rather the grounds upon which musical cooperation may occur. Furthermore, these improvised musics advanced a notion of group organization that, though obvious when viewed from the perspective of countless other musical traditions, disappears in the discursive antinomy offered in the prevailing account of the Cage/Philharmonic encounter. There, the choice is between a group of slaves being ordered around by a policeman on behalf of the genius (so Cage tells us) and a disinterested collection of eighty-six individuals who pay no attention to the people around them and concentrate solely on the execution of their own narrowly defined tasks.

This opposition between enslavement and atomism fails to account for the alternative modes of organization found in improvising groups and rock bands, where distributed authorship and shared responsibility place each musician in a position of being both creator and collaborator. Ironically, this third way also describes the concrete enactment of indeterminacy. Cage, Tudor, and Cunningham functioned as an inseparable unit in the 1950s and 1960s, traveling and performing together as a kind of troupe. During these crucial years they resembled a band far more than the traditional arrangement of composer and performer, yet this practical means of enacting their reality has been consistently elided by an undue emphasis on more abstract conversations about aesthetics and philosophy.

In his repeated telling of the 1964 encounter with the Philharmonic, Cage draws two borders. One is established explicitly, and the second is created more subtly. Explicitly, of course, Cage offers the choice between his model of anarchic utopia—what I think of more as liberalism shading into libertarianism—and the Philharmonic's model of traditional attachments, which Cage's narrative allies with fundamentalism. This border is very public, and it is key. It marks Cage off from "tradition," from Europe, and metonymically from dictatorship. But the very process of establishing this border between dictatorship and egalitarianism conceals a third possibility, improvised musics, and thus subtly draws another border separating the overt antinomy of Cage and the Philharmonic from the more covert antinomy between both of these terms and alternative possibility of

improvised musics and those sociomusical formations offering distributed authorship and responsibility.

In a 1993 review essay given the unfortunate cover title "The Musical Tyrant" (it appeared a few months after Cage's death), Taruskin draws attention to the threat of force that supported Cage's demands, a sort of state of exception that Žižek describes as a "ruthless power whose message to us, its subjects is: 'I can do whatever I want to you!'"[157] We might detect this ruthless power in Cage's admission that "for the orchestra I give up the conductor. I keep him, unfortunately, for the rehearsals."[158] But he was never less than forthcoming about the role of discipline and structure in his works, telling a journalist in 1975, "Many people still think that everything I do is somehow thrown together in hit or miss fashion and that I've not cared for it at all. That's the wrong idea. Everything that I've done has been in the spirit of discipline, and it's very little understood."[159]

At issue is the difference between purportedly advancing a *model* of utopian social systems that we do not yet have and providing a *mirror* of social systems as they actually exist. Cage tells us that his music demonstrates that if we get rid of the conductor/king, everything will continue fine without him: "Those rules of order must have been put there in order, as we say, to hold things together. Now, when they are taken away—if we take them away and don't have them—we discover that things get along perfectly well."[160] A society without laws is one that as yet does not exist. Thus, Cage's utopia of participatory disorganization must be based on the threat of discipline—and not only on the discipline of chance operations or of eliminating one's ego in order to allow sounds to be just sounds. No, this is real discipline: Bernstein and Moseley castigating the orchestra, the position of Cage and his supporters that, no matter what they actually think about the piece, these musicians must obey Cage's demands (in fact, union rules and the labor contract with the Philharmonic make plain this metalevel of discipline).

This totality—of anarchic (dis)unity and the threat that guarantees it—represents less some distant utopia than the logic of presently existing liberal capitalist democracy that is being exported throughout the world in the twenty-first century. The threat of violence is again being used to guarantee an enactment of tolerance, the rule of law, and self-determination—but not if its subjects, like the Philharmonic, choose incorrectly. As Cage frequently observed about those musicians who behaved disrespectfully toward his music, "I've given them freedom and I would hope they would use that freedom to change themselves rather than to continue being fool-

ish."[161] (One is also reminded of the guitarist Bern Nix's story of the first time he played with Ornette Coleman's Primetime. Having received no music or instructions from Coleman, Nix asked what he should play. "Just play what you feel," Coleman responded. When the group began their first tune and Nix entered, Coleman cut them off. "No, that's not what you feel!") Here, the 1964 performance of *Atlas* offers up another of its paradoxical lessons: it is both a model of anarchism and a mirror of liberalism. To imagine the former, Cagean indeterminacy enacts the latter.

Although Cage criticized the civil rights movement and other social justice movements in the Vietnam and post-Vietnam periods, he also frequently aligned his project and politics with progressive anarchism and against all notions of "power." In his open letter to the musicians of the Zurich Opera after they had mistreated his score for *Europeras 1 & 2*, Cage wrote:

> My work has been misrepresented, largely, I am sorry to say, by you musicians.
>
> My work is characterized by nonintention and to bring this about I Ching chance operations are employed in its composition in a very detailed way. On the other hand what many of you are playing is characterized by your intentions. We are on opposite sides of the future both musically and socially.
>
> The future is either with the governments, their wars and their laws, or it is with the world as global village, spaceship earth as one society including the rich and the poor, without nations, everyone having what he needs for living.[162]

Cage is correct that he and the Philharmonic musicians were "on opposite sides of the future" but not in the way that he intended. A close look at his conflict with the Philharmonic shows that the situation reproduced and in fact closely modeled the lineaments of hegemonic liberalism in the twentieth century. The strength of *Atlas Eclipticalis* lies not in how presciently it modeled an alternative politics but in how clearly it demonstrated the ideological struggles of its historical moment and the decades to come.

CHAPTER 2

# Demolish Serious Culture!

*Henry Flynt Meets the New York Avant-Garde*

On the evening of April 29, 1964, a group calling itself Action Against Cultural Imperialism (AACI) mounted a picket line in front of Town Hall on West 43rd Street in New York.[1] Inside the hall took place a "gala concert" sponsored by the West German government, with music by Karlheinz Stockhausen, Hans Werner Henze, Paul Hindemith, and a few others. The performers included Stockhausen, the pianist David Tudor, and the percussionist Max Neuhaus. On the sidewalk in front of the hall marched the demonstrators: the philosopher and composer Henry Flynt, artists Ben Vautier and Takako Saito, Ikuko Iijima (wife of the artist Ay-O), and George Maciunas, the impresario of Fluxus, a loosely organized art and performance movement of the 1960s and 1970s.[2] Although he had been invited to participate, Amiri Baraka chose to observe the event from across the street. AACI bore signs reading "Fight Racist Laws of Music!" and "Fight the Rich Man's Snob Art," and, according to *Die Welt,* made quite a racket chanting "Death to all fascist musical ideas!"[3] The group also distributed a leaflet in which Flynt attacked Stockhausen as a lackey for the West German bosses and claimed that Stockhausen's "repeated decrees about the lowness of plebian music and the racial inferiority of non-European music, are an integral, essential part of his art and its 'appreciation.'"[4]

On September 8, AACI staged another demonstration outside of Judson Hall on West 57th Street.[5] Replacing Vautier was the poet, journalist, and activist Marc Schleifer, later known as Abdallah Schleifer, who was associated with Progressive Labor. Iijima was also absent, but the actor and poet

Alan Marlowe (then married to Diane Di Prima) had taken up a placard and joined the action. Also joining in was the filmmaker and violinist Tony Conrad, a close friend of Flynt and member of the improvising group Theatre of Eternal Music. This time the occasion was a performance of Stockhausen's *Originale,* a wild theater piece that was the centerpiece of Charlotte Moorman's Second Annual Avant Garde Festival. That performance was directed by Allan Kaprow and featured such avant-garde and Fluxus luminaries as Moorman, Allen Ginsberg, Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik, James Tenney, Alvin Lucier, Max Neuhaus, and Jackson Mac Low. The circuslike atmosphere inside the hall carried over to the demonstration outside, with one performer, Ginsberg, extorting his way into the line. The poet wanted to join the protest on his way into the hall, but Flynt refused. Schleifer, who was good friends with Ginsberg (indeed, he had published an early interview with Ginsberg in the *Village Voice* in 1958), threatened to leave if Ginsberg were not allowed to join. Flynt, lacking organizational strength or leverage of any kind, had to acquiesce, a move he later deeply regretted.[6] (In a 1980 interview with Fred Stern, Moorman claimed that she joined Ginsberg in his turn on the line, but both Flynt and Schleifer dispute this claim.[7] A letter draft in Moorman's papers indicates that there had been plans for disruption. She wrote, "Fluxus will picket us because they are against Stockhausen, [and] Paik + [Norman] Seaman said we'll anti-picket the pickets!")[8]

This mixing of personnel might have been partly to blame for the confusion of the journalists covering the event, but it appears that many of the *Originale* performers were just as flummoxed. Shortly after the incident, the *Village Voice* journalist Susan Goodman wrote of "the complete bafflement of the people connected with the performance."[9] Even though the language on the group's leaflet seems quite clear—"Stockhausen—Patrician 'Theorist' of White Supremacy: Go to Hell!"—many commentators actually thought the demonstration was a staged part of the performance, perhaps owing to the Fluxus associations shared by many *Originale* performers as well as Maciunas and Saito.[10] A review in *Time* magazine incorrectly referred to Flynt as a "Fluxus leader,"[11] and Harold Schonberg of the *New York Times* reported, "Some said they were part of the show. Others said no, including the picketers, but nobody believed them. . . . [T]hey looked like the participants in 'Originale,' they acted like the participants in 'Originale,' and they were dressed like the participants in 'Originale.'"[12] Jill Johnston, the dance critic for the *Village Voice* and also a participant in some of the performances, wrote, "I don't know why the Fluxus people were picketing the concert . . . , but it might have


FIGURE 4. Action Against Cultural Imperialism demonstrates outside of the Second Annual Avant Garde Festival at Judson Hall, September 8, 1964. From left: Marc [Abdallah] Schleifer, Alan Marlowe, Tony Conrad, Henry Flynt, Takako Saito, and George Maciunas. Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images.

been interesting if the director had invited the picket line to participate as 'guests.'"[13]

In 2004, Flynt recalled, "[T]he issue became . . . very confused. . . . I mean, people did not understand even the point that I was making. I would have to say [the demonstrations] were disasters, actually. They were disasters."[14] Most historians have fared little better than their journalist predecessors, largely because they stubbornly continue to narrate the AACI actions from the perspective of Fluxus, even though that word does not appear in any form on the literature distributed at either AACI demonstration. In the accepted version of the story, then, Flynt is cast as Maciunas's sidekick, the outside influence who pulled him to the left and set off the internal feuds of Fluxus.[15] Fluxus historian Owen Smith, while acknowledging that Flynt was involved, wrongly states that Maciunas authored the September leaflet and organized the protest.[16] In light of this tendency to assign authorship to Maciunas, Cuauhtémoc Medina makes the strange assertion that, although "the action generally has been attributed to Henry Flynt's initiative, it is more likely that it was devised by Maciunas in the context of his struggle with the proponents of Happenings [a rival split-off from Fluxus]."[17]

The art historians Michel Oren and Hannah Higgins also frame these protests within the limits of Fluxus history. Oren embraces Flynt and Maciunas's demonstrations against the avant-garde, claiming that their political program was a major factor holding the Fluxus movement together.[18] Higgins regards the incident as a confrontation between two competing views of Fluxus—as a politically motivated anti-art critique, and as a socially elastic aesthetic based on individual experience—and maintains that "a new framework, one that can accommodate the avant-garde *and* the experiential nature of Fluxus, needs to be proposed for exploring the movement more holistically."[19] Her holistic approach to the 1964 demonstrations would be significantly enriched were it not coterminous with the boundaries of Fluxus history. Indeed, Higgins's interpretation exemplifies the kind of misunderstanding that marked the reception of Flynt's demonstrations from the beginning. Instead of understanding the protests as part of a larger intervention into the public discourse of avant-gardism, European imperialism, and the structures of power and knowledge supporting these systems, the views of Higgins and others are fixed on the level of intertribal feuding.

A more critical observer might look past the apparent confusion and ignorance of the *Originale* participants, their journalist transcribers, and their scholarly supporters to assess what could otherwise be seen as a

campaign to neutralize Flynt's anti-imperialist cultural politics. One such neutralization strategy might be to join the picket line solely for the sake of mockery (as Ginsberg did and Moorman claimed to have done), or to falsely report that other *Originale* participants took part in the demonstration (as Hannah Higgins claims her parents did).[20] Each of these strategies dilutes the coherence of Flynt's critique by subsuming it into an interartistic spat. Allan Kaprow does the same in his 1996 remembrance: "I told [Maciunas], to no avail, to reconsider [the demonstration] for the simple reason that next to the collage of art and life of our version of [*Originale*], a picket would appear to the public and press as a part of it, not an attack. And that's indeed what happened. To make sure, I briefly joined the small group of marching protesters during an intermission of the piece."[21] Kaprow accomplishes a triple feat in this remarkable admission. After first *misattributing* AACI's action to Maciunas, Kaprow then *fabricates* a turn on the picket line *to make sure* that Flynt's intervention would be mistakenly folded into Stockhausen's extravaganza. (Meanwhile, Flynt, Conrad, Schleifer, Moorman, Higgins, and every known account of the incident fail to place Kaprow at the demonstration—to say nothing of the fact that there were no intermissions in *Originale*.)

Another neutralization strategy—to criminalize the organization—appeared in the following week's *Village Voice,* which published a vitriolic letter to the editor from Billy Klüver, an engineer with Bell Labs who would cofound Experiments in Art and Technology and served as a technology advisor for numerous artists and composers in the 1960s and 1970s.[22] Klüver was a friend and supporter of Moorman, and his wife, Olga, was a performer in *Originale*. In his *Village Voice* letter, Klüver accused AACI of committing a series of criminal acts: stealing recording equipment, making threatening telephone calls, handcuffing Paik to a scaffolding during the performance, and breaking into the home of one of the sponsors and stealing scores and recordings. These claims were repeated by the historian Thomas Kellein in his 2007 biography of George Maciunas.[23]

Regardless of whether these artists, critics, journalists, and scholars were (and still today are) simply confused about the demonstrations or ideologically opposed to them (or both), I hope to show that the AACI interventions represented far more than mere squabbles within the European and European American avant-garde, and that any critical account of Flynt's work must widen the scope of its inquiry beyond the experimental art world. I propose that the handling of Flynt's critique of Stockhausen not only tests the avant-garde's ability to reflect critically on its own position in social and cultural hierarchies but also exposes the inability of subsequent

writers and historians to move beyond the limited scope of disciplinary history so as to place these events into a wider network of discourses.

To correct some of the misunderstandings, it will be useful to introduce a set of references that rarely figure in conversations about American experimentalism and performance in the 1960s. This requires a trip into histories of the Left, the civil rights movement, and popular music styles. I shall construct a reading of the 1964 demonstrations along the axes of three different narrative threads in the life of Flynt. These should be understood not in isolation but as interrelated moments in a more general movement away from European and European American high culture. Two of these threads were the competing musical imperatives that pulled at Flynt between 1961 and 1965. The first was the search for artistic or musical activities so new and strange as to be not only outside of or beyond any existing idiom but also at risk of no longer qualifying as "music" at all. This search, informed and influenced by the downtown experimentalism of John Cage and La Monte Young, also involved revised definitions of performance, as the boundaries separating music from other media were significantly blurred in this milieu. The second thread led from Flynt's initial exposure to jazz in the late 1950s to his involvement in vernacular and commercial U.S. musics, particularly such African American styles as the blues, R&B, and early rock 'n' roll, as well as classical and folk music from the rest of the world. I will show how both of these threads involved a critique of European-U.S. high culture, and how Flynt eventually abandoned the downtown avant-garde quest for the new in favor of a roots-music–based populism. Finally, representing the third thread, Flynt was led to the 1964 demonstrations by his involvement with the sectarian Left that had begun in the second half of 1962 and lasted through 1967.

These three life axes help explain what led Flynt to his anti-Stockhausen protests, but this is not to imply that the 1964 events were a culmination in Flynt's development. (Only in the case of the avant-garde impulse was 1964 a conclusive year.) After tracing this three-part genealogy, I will consider the years following the demonstrations to explore the manner in which Flynt combined his interest in African American popular music with Marxism-Leninism, a synthesis that eventually led to his 1966 political rock recordings. Flynt produced these recordings to demonstrate how a communist cultural policy ought to sound, and he did not regard them as "avant-garde." Nonetheless, his theoretical treatments of African American vernacular music reveal a continuing interest in such avant-garde predilections as formal innovation, newness, engagement with new sound technologies, and sonic complexity. In connecting these qualities to the

black liberation movement and the wider fight against imperialism, Flynt sought to rearticulate avant-garde concerns within the context of group identity and collective struggles for self-determination.

. . .

Born in 1940 to middle-class parents in Greensboro, North Carolina, Flynt majored in mathematics at Harvard in the late 1950s.[24] He was also a classically trained violinist and, along with his close friend and classmate Tony Conrad (later a well known violinist and filmmaker), became interested in the European and American avant-garde. After withdrawing from the university in the spring of 1960, he devoted himself to philosophical and musical pursuits. He visited New York frequently before relocating there permanently in 1963. He soon fell into the circle of artists, musicians, poets, and writers that had formed around La Monte Young, who had arrived in New York from California in October 1960 and galvanized the post-Cage generation of avant-gardists. One interested observer—the composer John Edmunds, who curated the Americana Collection in the Music Division of the New York Public Library from 1957 to 1961—described Young in a letter only a few months after his arrival on the East Coast: "You'll be hearing about La Monte Young soon—the farthest out of all the new people. A stimulating combination of daring, originality & downright offensiveness. . . . He has the start of an idea that is basically electrifying."[25]

The artists in Young's circle shared a debt to the aesthetics and philosophical approach of Cage. The older composer's influence was very strong by the early 1960s, after the publication of his scores, the distribution of his *Indeterminacy* LP recording, the well-attended twenty-five-year retrospective concert at Town Hall in 1958, and, finally, the publication of *Silence* in 1961.[26] Furthermore, Cage had taught several composers of the younger generation in his experimental music composition classes at the New School between 1957 and 1960.[27] Like Cage, Young took music and performance seriously; though provocative and mercurial, he avoided showpersonship and any appearance of playing to the crowd.

The elevated and refined tone Young often cultivated was summarized in a statement that appeared on programs and flyers for a concert series he curated with Yoko Ono and held in her Chambers Street loft: "THE PURPOSE OF THIS SERIES IS NOT ENTERTAINMENT."[28] The series began in December 1960 and continued through the spring of 1961, presenting Ichiyanagi, Mac Low, Young, Richard Maxfield, Simone Forti, Robert Morris, Joseph Byrd, and Dennis Lindberg. Flynt traveled from Boston for the first two concerts, which featured the composer and saxophonist Terry

Jennings. It was Flynt's first face-to-face meeting with Young, though the two had corresponded for about a year. They discussed music and philosophy, and Young read him some of his new "word pieces," works consisting of simple directions or koanlike imagery and written on index cards.[29] Among the best-known of these pieces are *Composition 1960 #7,* which offers a single dyad of B and F♯, with the direction "to be held for a long time"; *Composition 1960 #5,* which instructs the performer to let loose a butterfly into the performance space; and *Composition 1960 #15,* which consists solely of the text "This piece is little whirlpools out in the ocean."[30]

Flynt was attracted to these pieces because they seemed to suggest a link between avant-garde aesthetic practice and Flynt's own interest in logical contradiction and the impossibility of language.[31] Excited by the possibilities he identified in Young's work, Flynt soon began to write word pieces of his own, some of which he circulated later in 1961 in the form of a four-page "anthology." These works display little of Young's poetic style and read more like detailed instructions for an avant-garde high school science class. Some bear the distinct influence of John Cage: "To experience this composition, one must be alone in a quiet, darkened room. Relax, and accustom oneself to breathing slowly so that one's breathing will be as quiet as possible. Then put one's fingers in one's ears and close one's eyes. Listen to the very low sound (subsonic vibration) and the medium high—high noise (the sound of one's nervous system in operation), and 'look' at the changing pattern of light and dark."[32]

Flynt and Young also bonded over their interest in contemporary jazz. Flynt had been a self-described "classical music snob" at Harvard, but he was introduced to jazz by one of his classmates in the late 1950s. Though his opinion was neutral on most of what he heard, Flynt loved John Coltrane; it had been Young who pointed Flynt to the saxophonist's playing on Cecil Taylor's "Double Clutching."[33] At the same time, however, Flynt was interested to learn about other U.S. vernacular musics; he read Samuel Charters's 1959 text *The Country Blues* and sent away for the accompanying recorded anthology. This music, unlike jazz, had enormous impact on Flynt. As was the case for many young whites during these years, Flynt's encounter with black music was a "conversion" experience: "I heard that, and it *completely* turned me *all* the way around. Totally. From that moment on . . . I've been . . . a conscious, dedicated enemy of . . . 'the European vision,'" he recalled with a smile.

Flynt also admired Ornette Coleman and was intrigued by the saxophonist's abandonment of the changes. Young thought Coleman had gone too far, but then Young had been involved with jazz much longer than

Flynt had.[34] According to Keith Potter, "Jazz was Young's first love, and though not a direct influence on most of the first compositions he would now regard as his own, it dominated his musical activities as a teenager."[35] Young continued playing the alto saxophone in college, and he was also active in small combos, forming his own group with guitarist Dennis Budimir, bassist Hal Hollingshead, and drummer Billy Higgins. He even sat in with the likes of Don Cherry and Coleman during these years.[36] (Coleman has no specific memory of this meeting but allows that, as he played with countless musicians during his time in Los Angeles, it certainly could have taken place.)[37]

In addition to playing the alto sax, Young also began in the mid- to late 1950s to develop a personal blues style on the piano, which Potter describes as "a continuous alternation of the chords in the left and right hands."[38] This piano music—often referred to as "La Monte's Blues"—performed a repetition of the classic blues harmonic pattern, I–IV–I–V–IV–I, without a set duration for each chord; Young would sit on a single chord for an indeterminate amount of time before moving to the next.

Flynt, too, had been practicing the piano, and he had worked out a "translation" of Coleman's saxophone playing for the instrument. By the time he met Young, in fact, Flynt had already devoted himself fully to improvising in the adventurous style of free jazz—or, at least, in his own very idiosyncratic version of the post-bop language. Since he had no real training in jazz musicianship and deliberately avoided the bebop lyricism of his musical role models, Flynt's "out" playing during this period sounds more like disarticulated noise.

When Flynt appeared on Young's concert series on February 25 and 26, 1961, he had planned to play his Coleman fakes for the entirety of the first evening, which was advertised as an informal "experimental concert." (He later described the night as "unstructured, improvised time-filling.")[39] According to Flynt, the Coleman piano piece was unsuccessful because the audience was so "square."[40] He spent some time pacing the floor, considering what to do next, and then began improvising, first on a clarinet he borrowed from the composer Richard Maxfield and then on homemade instruments, one consisting of two toothpicks and the other of a rubber band.[41] According to the dancer Yvonne Rainer, "The outstanding event of the evening was Henry Flynt holding a taut rubber band up to his own ear and plucking it."[42]

Flynt recounts arguing with Cage after the concert, when he told the older composer that he was giving up "composition" to pursue jazz and R&B. After Cage was informed that Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry were

R&B singers (according to Flynt, Cage was unaware of this), Cage asked, "Well if that's what you're interested in, then what are you doing here?"[43] Cage had a point. Despite their importance to the postwar generation of poets and painters, African American jazz and vernacular musics were anathema to an experimental music scene seeking to mark the properties of spontaneity and improvisation as its own (Young's jazz playing notwithstanding).[44] For his second concert at Ono's loft, Flynt performed more traditional, notated scores—a piano piece in modified tablature format and a violin work consisting solely of notes stopped between the end of the fingerboard and the bridge; both works were destroyed about a year later.

On March 31, Flynt produced a concert at Harvard's Paine Hall of works by Young, Morris, and Maxfield. Flynt considered significant the pieces by Young, who had planned his compositional output for the whole year to consist of twenty-nine pieces based on his famous *Composition 1960 #10* ("Draw a straight line and follow it"). The majority of these pieces were "written" on a date that had not yet arrived. Flynt was drawn to the idea that "in logical terms, [Young] was going to follow a rule which he had planned, but which did not yet exist."[45] Flynt further expressed his attraction to such apparent violations of the rules of logic by listing his own contribution to the event as *possibly Henry Flynt*. Inspiration for Flynt's nonevent can be traced the December 1960 Jennings loft concerts a few months earlier, for which Young had written a piece titled *An Invisible Poem Sent to Terry Jennings for Him to Perform*. Many years later Flynt wrote, "It was a composition whose only tangible record was its mention on the program. . . . As the culture, the ordainments, dematerialize, they will not be registered unless one accepts the premise of sincerity."[46] Flynt's piece *possibly Henry Flynt* is reminiscent of a George Brecht piece, *Time Table Music* (1959), in which performers use a train schedule to determine moments in time when events may or may not occur; the work could be performed in an actual train station, in which case the audience might either be completely unaware of the performance or so focused on its possibilities that any action is interpreted as part of the work. Just as a piece of this kind threatens totally to destroy its own boundaries, so, too, did Flynt's listing merely the possibility of his appearance on the March 31 concert. Flynt refined the idea some months later with *Work Such That No One Knows What's Going On* (1961), which states, "One just has to guess whether this work exists and if it does what it is like."[47]

Young concluded the Harvard concert with improvised piano playing. Since he was the first musician Flynt had ever met with real jazz or blues chops, Young's playing had enormous impact on the younger musician.

Following the concert, Flynt spoke with Young about adding melodic lines to his rhythmic piano style. The two agreed to try out some ideas in a rehearsal on April 2, at which Flynt played the violin and song flute, a toylike children's instrument that he had been practicing extensively.[48] Inspired by Coltrane, Flynt had developed a battery of extended techniques on the instrument that allow for the production of multiphonics, squeaks, and squeals. Young continued improvising on the piano in the summer of 1961 with Terry Jennings on alto sax, but he did not play again with Flynt until January 1962.

Flynt continued to experiment with his Coleman-style violin playing. Though Flynt destroyed almost all of his earliest recordings during his intense anti-art period between 1962 and 1963, a recently discovered tape from August 1961, "Tape 14," provides a fascinating glimpse into his musical development.[49] Both tracks last about eight minutes, and consist of Flynt's solo violin improvisations to the accompaniment of his tapping foot, the tempo of which fluctuates considerably. Though it is impossible to be certain, his instrument sounds as though it had been set up in the open tuning B♭–F–B♭–F.[50] The middle perfect fourth almost functions like a drone, but it is not heard often enough to function in this capacity. Lacking anything resembling a melody, Flynt's playing consists mainly of double-stops and shrieking glissandi up and down the fingerboard. The style is quite varied throughout both takes, but legato textures are far more prominent than "chop-chop" fiddling strokes. We hear many overtones and scratchy noises, played with manic, messy abandon. About six minutes into the second take, Flynt hints at a repeating two-beat riff for about twenty seconds, but this is the closest he comes to referencing Young's rhythm piano style; repetitive, periodic riffs would not become a central feature of Flynt's musical vocabulary until later in the 1960s.

In early June 1961, Flynt delivered a lecture on the subject of newness to a small audience in Young's apartment. The ideology of novelty was prevalent during this period; Tony Conrad later recalled, "In short, there was a dare in the air, and the most fundamental matters were repeatedly being brought to task by the most successful exponents of the tides of change."[51] In Young's "Lecture 1960," which he delivered in California in 1960, and which bears more than a passing resemblance to the stories of Cage's *Indeterminacy,* he declared, "I am not interested in good; I am interested in new—even if this includes the possibility of its being evil."[52] The competitive edge of this quest for originality held even when it came to the godfather of experimentalism. Just as Cage had set himself apart from European modernists as the most advanced composer on the stage of

history, so too did Young elbow his way to the front of the line, noting in the "Lecture" that "it is often necessary that one be able to ask, 'Who is John Cage?'"[53] The poet Diane Wakoski, with whom Young had traveled to New York from Berkeley, later described this dynamic in evolutionary terms: "We go against the alpha male, because we want to be the alphas. And so, we'll form our own pack, where we can be the alphas. And then, hopefully those other alphas will come and either fight with us, or join us, or acknowledge our equality."

In his June 5 lecture, Flynt contended that newness cannot be the sole criterion for judging the value of a work of art because it is a quality applied approvingly to a thing that already "*has some major value* quite irrespective of 'newness.'"[54] That is, these artworks were already valued as art. For this reason, Flynt concluded, newness is a secondary characteristic of a work, one determined by context. Valuing newness by itself mistakes the context that makes novelty meaningful for a substantive matter. These realizations were important for Flynt because they set the stage for considering newness—which he still thought was an important quality—outside the context of traditional or avant-garde art making. Lifting the qualities of strangeness, originality, novelty, and innovation away from aesthetic practice, Flynt was moving toward concept art and, later, his theory of private aesthetics, called "brend."[55]

Flynt's "Essay: Concept Art," from the summer of 1961, was the next important step in his development.[56] In an interview about the essay with Christer Hennix many years later, Flynt reflected specifically on the kind of paradoxical play of Young's word pieces, as well as the structural gaming of Cagean chance operations and indeterminacy:

> [T]he point of the work of art had become some kind of structural or conceptual play. . . . The audience receives an experience which simply sounds like chaos but in fact what they are hearing is not chaos but a hidden structure which is so hidden that it cannot be reconstructed from the performed sound. . . . So I felt that the confusion between whether they were doing music or whether they were doing something else had reached a point where I found that disturbing or unacceptable.[57]

Flynt attempted to resolve this situation by developing the idea of concept art. "'Concept art' is first of all an art of which the material is 'concepts,' as the material of for ex[ample] music is sound," he wrote. "Since 'concepts' are closely bound up with language, concept art is a kind of art of which the material is language."[58] The idea for concept art, the author explained, comes from two antecedents: "structure art" and mathematics. For Flynt, structure art was a vestige of the medieval period and before, when music

was believed to be a branch of scientific knowledge, along with geometry and astronomy. Flynt names fugue and serialism as modern musical examples of structure art. In his denunciation of these forms, Flynt leaves little doubt about his point of view: "[B]y trying to be music or whatever (which has nothing to do with knowledge), and knowledge represented by structure, structure art both fails, is completely boring, as music, and doesn't begin to explore the aesthetic possibilities structure can have when freed from trying to be music."[59] If we stop referring to structure music as music, Flynt reasoned, we will see "how limited, impoverished, the structure is." Flynt located concept art's second antecedent in mathematics. In his earlier philosophical manuscripts he had concluded that logical truth does not exist, and this premise freed him up to approach the work of mathematics differently. "[S]ince the value of pure mathematics is now regarded as aesthetic rather than cognitive, why not try to make up aesthetic theorems, without considering whether they are true."[60] Flynt concluded the essay with the suggestion that the word *art* should apply only to art for the emotions, whereas *concept art* could be a new, independent activity—"throw away the crutch of the label 'Art,' and . . . crystallize unprecedented, richly elaborated activities around unprecedented purposes."[61] Concept art, then, was about lifting the layer of structure from art making and developing structure's own possibilities.

In June 1961, Young moved his concerts from Ono's loft to the AG Gallery, located on Madison Avenue and owned by Maciunas. When Flynt appeared there on July 15, he offered a concept art work, *Innperseqs,* and told the audience about his new piece, *Exercise Awareness-States.*[62] *Innperseqs* was an experiment in individual perception that involved the tracing of haloes that appear around small lights when looked at through fogged-up glasses; Flynt wrote the score in the language of formal logic, complete with definitions and conditional statements. *Exercise Awareness-States,* which Flynt retitled *Mock Risk Games* for publication in 1966, is a series of amusing games and activities for a single person or couple to perform alone; the work was not intended to be performed in front of an audience—Flynt merely read the manuscript at the July 15 event. Game A1 gave the directive "Walk across the lighted room from one corner to the diagonally opposite one, breathing normally, with your eyes open. You are suddenly upside down, resting on the top of your head on the floor. You must get down without breaking your neck"; game A5 instructed "Walk across the lighted room. . . . The room is suddenly filled with water. You have to control your lungs and swim to the top. Wear clothes suitable for swimming"; and game AA1, scored for a couple, directed: "Face each other

at a distance and walk toward each other. The other's head flies off and hurtles at you like a cannonball. It can swerve up or down, so that you will be hit unless you jump aside. The time you have to jump is about the same no matter what your distance from the other is, because the head accelerates rapidly."[63]

*Exercise Awareness-States* was infused with a droll sense of humor. All the while, Flynt was searching for "new modalities," activities that are not "true" but nonetheless meaningful and new in a nonaesthetic sense. Addressing the preparations required in a game where gravity is supposed to reverse itself and the participant fall to the ceiling, Flynt wrote, "I am interested in dealing with gravity reversal in an everyday environment, where everything tells you it can't possibly happen. Your 'preparation' for the fall is thus superficial, because you still have the involuntary conviction that it can't possibly happen. Mock risk games constitute a new area of human behavior, because they aren't something people have done before, [and] you don't know what they will be like until you try them."[64] Flynt was careful to locate *Exercise Awareness-States* outside the context of public performance of any kind. This was perhaps the most important aspect of the work; these exercises could be unprecedented only if they no longer relied on the "crutch of the label 'Art.'"

Most of Flynt's activities in 1961—the concerts at Ono's loft and Harvard, the lecture on newness, and the development of concept art and *Exercise Awareness-States*—were governed by concerns and dispositions of the avant-garde circle around Young, which Flynt summarizes as (1) a nonsensational, noncareerist "quest for refined sensibility," (2) an obsession with "newness" and its eventual crisis, (3) the discovery that an artwork could be clever rather than sentimental, and (4) an experimental practice that would disrupt and collapse the traditional distinctions among media, performance, and disciplines.[65] Flynt's work during this year responded to each of these concerns and grew out of the work and statements of Cage and Young. "Whatever one thinks of this agenda, it was decisive for me at the time," he later wrote. "One has to get one's mind around these positions established by Young: otherwise, what came concurrently—such as concept art and its exchanges—cannot possibly be understood."[66] Always a reactive thinker, Flynt's aesthetic projects were responses to the concerns of the community. Flynt put it even more strongly when he avowed, "I thought I was explaining to them what their own professed goals meant. That was my purpose. If you want to talk about [being] 'infinitely and unsurpassably modern and radical' . . . then let me tell you what you have to do. It does not involve *ballet!* It does not involve composing an *opera!*"

That his works and ideas were met with indifference and (at times) ridicule led Flynt to suspect that other experimentalists were not truly committed to discovering a new, unsentimental aesthetic practice for which there was no mold. His loss of confidence in the avant-garde continued into 1962, when he turned more explicitly toward an anti-art position.

Flynt's musical activities prior to 1962 were governed as well by his interest in jazz and love of black popular music, and this trajectory, too, continued into 1962. On January 8, at a benefit concert for *AN ANTHOLOGY,* the collection of scores, poems, and writings that Young was compiling, Flynt sat in playing the song flute at the Living Theatre with Young, Jennings, and Billy Higgins.[67] The following day, Young and Flynt recorded three duets, with Young on piano and Flynt on violin, alto sax, and song flute. The recording of this event reveals that Flynt's contributions consisted almost solely of nonpitched scrapes, screeches, and squawks. The session could be considered a fourth attempt at producing his own version of Ornette Coleman's innovations, following the February 1961 piano transcription at Ono's loft, the duet of April 1961, and the August violin recordings. Young stuck relatively close to a repeating twelve-bar blues pattern, but Flynt had directed him to alter his usual swinging triplet subdivision to a faster duple subdivision characteristic of such early rock 'n' roll players as Little Richard.[68] This direction represented a change from Young's predilection for jazz to Flynt's interest in more popular commercial styles, a transition in musical vocabulary that itself symbolized emerging social and cultural differences between the two friends.

Although Flynt had only once attended a live jazz performance and had never experienced live R&B or rock 'n' roll, he was eager to take his and Young's act into the clubs. Young was not a populist, however, and refused. A California beat, Young was in some ways a true free spirit—into drugs, jazz, and world music. Notwithstanding, he was also a scion of the elite musical establishment who had studied with Stockhausen in Darmstadt in 1959 and come to New York on a travel grant from the University of California, Berkeley. Though jazz may have held transgressive allure for Flynt because of the escape it offered from traditional European elite culture, Beats like Young valued jazz for almost the opposite reason, as an alternative elite culture separating them from the middle-brow masses. As Wakoski, Young's partner at the time, put it many years later, jazz was "really wonderful, innovative, better than popular . . . entertainment music. And I liked it because it was played in dark nightclubs, by people who seemed to have intellectual ideas about why they were playing music, as opposed to the pop music culture of the time." After 1962, Young began

his work with the Theatre of Eternal Music, perhaps the closest he ever came to the sociomusical arrangement of a rock band, but the group only performed at private concerts and in art galleries.

Clearly, Flynt and Young were headed in opposite directions: Flynt toward the commercial practices of popular musics and the populist ideology of folk music, and Young toward the rarefied settings of institutional patronage and traditional cultural establishments. In a 1968 interview, Young stated, "The reason I discontinued my work in jazz was to progress into more serious composition."[69] Such a statement would have been unthinkable from Flynt. The ideological gulf between the two men never closed, and with the exception of one encounter in 1969 or 1970, the 1962 recording session was their final collaboration.[70] In my interview with him about forty-five years later, Young recalled, "I remember when Henry came to my apartment at Bank Street . . . it would be in 1963, I think. Could have been earlier. But he was saying that his type of people were just going to come and machine gun people like me down, because I was just a dirty capitalist [laughs]! . . . When Henry was demonstrating against Stockhausen, I wasn't convinced that it was the accurate move."

The difference between the two was no doubt exacerbated by Flynt's explicit anti-art position, which he began to make public in the late spring of 1962.[71] A May 15 lecture at Harvard considered "the acognitive"—that is, art and anti-art. It marked the debut of his theory of "acognitive culture," which he would later term "Veramusement," before finally, in spring 1963, settling on "brend." Christian Wolff and Conrad attended the May 15 event, as did Young, who had driven up from New York with two friends from the Warhol circle.[72] In a letter to Jackson Mac Low shortly afterward, Flynt wrote, "A major difficulty in getting this group to understand the essay was that they were just a group of serial + indeterminate composers: they just weren't interested in thinking about anything outside serial + indeterminate music (when I stopped talking, the conversation immediately reverted to Earl *[sic]* Brown, Bussotti, and the like)."[73] This lecture seems to have been unsuccessful; a second lecture on June 5 in Flynt's temporary apartment in the East Village, was advertised in a flyer as an event that "hopefully will clear up the widespread misunderstanding of the earlier version."[74] Mac Low, Cage, and Virgil Thomson were in attendance, and a spirited argument followed Flynt's presentation, with Mac Low leading the charge. Flynt later recalled that the three composers looked at a copy of Flynt's four-page anthology of text pieces. "And they were saying, 'Well, if what you're talking about is these little pieces, then that's alright.' That was acceptable. There was confusion about whether

brend was these little instructions, or whether it was no art at all. Of course, it was no art at all."[75]

The theory of acognitive culture, a theory of recreation distinct from the twin areas of art and entertainment, proceeded from Flynt's belief that mathematics and "serious culture" are "discredited activities." Flynt believed that he had proved mathematics, logic, and language to be self-contradictory systems, and his training in logical positivism led him to regard high cultural and avant-garde art making—both examples of "acognitive" culture, because they do not carry knowledge—as governed by pretensions to scientific knowledge and art's status as a marker of prestige and refinement. The institutionalized activities of serious culture, such as composing a fugue or some other accepted form, are not recreation, according to Flynt, because they fulfill social expectations.

His idea of acognitive culture, on the other hand, is purely inward directed and no longer governed by a sense of social obligation; the activities that could be called acognitive culture are the ones that are done only because they are liked by the individual. Flynt does not give examples of such activities, but I suspect that he must be thinking of small, nontheatrical, or prosaic events, not unlike the Fluxus word pieces of Brecht ("Turn on a radio. At the first sound, turn it off") or Knowles ("Make a salad"). The crucial difference between Flynt and those two artists, however, is that Flynt formulated his concept as an extension of the avant-garde project and as a dialectical sublation of what came before. He wrote, "My proposal can now be seen to be plausible, that one give up the discredited activities, all established real right activities which would otherwise be retained as quasi-recreation; and have in their place 'nothing,' except one's acognitive culture, or rather recognition of it."[76] He understood his theory not only to open up new spaces for aesthetic or recreational experience but also to replace prior trappings of art making and entertainment such as scores, recordings, performances, and so on. In the race to create art that was new, inventive, and strange, acognitive culture would always place ahead of the "discredited activities" of serious culture, because acognitive culture took as axiomatic that an individual's personal likings could not take any preexisting form. Whatever the merits of Brecht's or Knowles's activities, the nature of those activities as performances kept them from being examples of acognitive culture.

Acognitive culture was also a response to the crisis of the new that followed Young's celebration of the concept of the new in his "Lecture 1960." Young observed that if we define "good" as what we like, which is the only definition he uses, and if we are only interested in "good" art, then we will

experience that which we like again and again. For this reason, he stated, he was more interested in the new than in the good. But Flynt countered that if we truly explore what we like, we must throw out the possibility of using art or music by other people, because one individual's just-likings can never be borrowed from those of another. In fact, he argued, concentrating on the private world of one's just-likings was the *only* way to ensure that the product would be new. In his account of this period, Flynt later wrote, "To prevent serious misconceptions, I must say that my anti-art theory was a philosophical argument that if taste is subjective, then nobody is more able than me to create an experience to my taste. . . . I was serious enough about this to have destroyed my early artworks in 1962; and thereafter I did not produce art."[77] The subjective nature of aesthetic taste, Flynt argued in his 1968 pamphlet "Art or Brend?" creates a situation where an individual values the art object because he or she "likes" it. "It supposedly has a value which is entirely subjective and entirely within you, is a part of you."[78] A contradiction arises because the object is also outside of the individual and therefore "is not you or your valuing, and has no inherent connection with you or your valuing. The product is not personal to you." Flynt eventually settled on the term "brend" to describe the experiences that escape this contradiction of interiority/exteriority. "Consider all of your doings, what you already do," he instructs. "Exclude the gratifying of physiological needs, physically harmful activities, and competitive activities. Concentrate on spontaneous self-amusement or play. That is, concentrate on everything you do just because you like it, because you just like it as you do it. . . . These just-likings are your 'brend.'"[79]

By the end of 1962 and into 1963, Flynt was concentrating on brend, coupling it with an increasingly fierce anti-art attack. Flynt perceived the persistence of the traditional components of art or performance, such as an audience, conventional media or forms, and the ritual of a public concert, to be a harmful residual expression of social obligations, intellectual snobbery, and plain corniness. Flynt believed that the possibility of art's being liquidated in favor of more avant-garde or useful activities was very real. "I felt challenged by a can-you-top-this competitiveness which focused on ideas," he wrote. "The ante was raised further when 'anti-art' was spoken of."[80]

Anti-art sentiment was also encouraged by Maciunas, who was an ardent admirer of the Soviet Union and in 1962 began to promote himself as the leader of a new movement called Fluxus.[81] Though initially planned as a magazine, Fluxus soon developed into a loose aggregate of artists and musicians whose work was situated between conventional media. The friendship between Flynt and Maciunas was important because, as Flynt

wrote many years later, "Only one person echoed my ideas approvingly in 1963: George Maciunas."[82] Oren explains the sympathy shared by Flynt and Maciunas during these years: "Perhaps because both partly issued from the same milieu, brend shared with Maciunas's notions of this period an anti-authoritarian impulse, a prizing of authenticity of experience, and a certain purist scorn both of art as an institution and for the Bohemian pretensions of artists' lives."[83] Whereas Flynt had arrived at his anti-art position after a considerable amount of thinking and writing, Maciunas was a showman, who gleefully attacked high art through neo-dada spectacles. As Goodman perceptively noted in her *Village Voice* profile of Flynt and Maciunas, the two men "find common ground [only] in their hatred of Western serious art."[84] Moreover, Dick Higgins's description of Flynt in a letter from the spring of 1963—"[H]e's ostensibly a Maoist but really an ultra, he counts the West as including the Urals and wants the whole thing swamped"—points to Flynt's remarkably early identification with (Maoist) Third-World anti-imperialism, a marked contrast to Maciunas's lingering dedication to mid-century Soviet centralization.[85]

In the fall of 1962, Flynt worked on a manuscript summarizing his attack on art and substitution of "veramusement" for traditional aesthetic experience.[86] Flynt presented the ideas in the manuscript, titled *From Culture to Veramusement,* in a pair of events on February 27 and 28, 1963. The first was a series of three anti-art demonstrations at the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Philharmonic Hall at Lincoln Center (these demonstrations preceded his anti-Stockhausen pickets by more than a year). Flynt enlisted his friend Tony Conrad and Conrad's roommate, the filmmaker Jack Smith, to picket outside each institution with signs bearing the slogans "Demolish Serious Culture!" "Destroy Art!" "Demolish Art Museums!" "No More Art!" "Demolish Concert Halls!" and "Demolish Lincoln Center!" The Fluxus artist and composer Benjamin Patterson was on hand to offer support and encouragement, and the demonstrators handed out announcements of the second event, a lecture to be delivered by Flynt the next evening.[87]

Visitors to the lecture—including Zazeela, Young, Wolff, Mac Low, Wakoski, Robert Morris, and the composer Serge Tcherepnin—entered De Maria's loft by stepping on the face of Leonardo's Mona Lisa, printed as a doormat for the occasion. Photographs and placards from the previous day's demonstration were on display, but the main event was Flynt: his performance lasted over three hours. According to the printed announcement, he began at about 8:00 P.M. by laying out preliminary concepts and discussing the phenomenon and price of "serious culture." After a short

intermission, he then delivered his critiques of newness, mathematics (and structure art), "literary culture," and the continuing existence of discrete artistic media. Finally, after a second intermission, Flynt read what he considered to be the pièce de résistance: "Veramusement," which included considerations of conventional amusement, free time, boredom, and "liked" work. Flynt provided a definition for the term on the flyer advertising the lecture: "'VERAMUSEMENT' is every doing of an individual which is not naturally physiologically necessary (or harmful), is not for the satisfaction of a social demand, is not a means, does not involve competition; is done entirely because he just likes it as he does it, without any consciousness that anything is not-originated-by-himself; and is not special exertion. (And is done and 'then' turns out to be in the category of 'veramusement.')"

In the spring of 1963, Maciunas circulated the infamous *Fluxus News-Policy Letter No. 6,* which contained suggestions for a range of aggressive propaganda actions, including mailing dozens of bricks—C.O.D.—to art museums, abandoning stalled trucks at major intersections, and blocking the entrances to museums and galleries with deliveries of rented chairs, tables, lumber, and other large goods.[88] The follow-up issue, *Fluxus News Letter No. 7,* was issued in a rush to quell the uproar: "Newsletter 6, seems to have caused considerable misunderstanding among several recepients *[sic]*. This newsletter 6 was *not* intended as a decision, settled plan or dictate, but rather—as a synthetic proposal or rather a signal, stimulus to start a discussion among, and an invitation for proposals from—the recepients (which it did—partly)."[89] The follow-up newsletter included proposals from Tomas Schmit, Nam June Paik, Flynt, and Mac Low for a Fluxus festival that was then being planned. Schmit and Paik offered a variety of pranks and confrontational public performances, and Mac Low explicitly responded to the suggestions of the previous newsletter, pleading that the group should forge "association[s] with positive social action & activities, *never* with antisocial, terroristic activities such as sabotage activities proposed in newsletter 6." The poet specified that Fluxus should support strikers, locked-out workers, and peace demonstrations. Further, he advocated agitation against the war in Vietnam, U.S. aggression toward Cuba, nuclear testing, racial discrimination, and capital punishment. Mac Low did not offer details about how an art movement could participate in such socially conscious goals, but Flynt's suggestion directly addressed the place of art in culture: "Last culminating festival event, in largest hall, largest audience—a lecture by Henry Flynt: dennouncing *[sic]* all Fluxus festival activities as decadent serious culture aspects & expounding his BREND doctrine and campaign."[90]

Flynt's musical production had all but ceased during this intense period of anti-art, and he had destroyed his notated compositions, as well as all his early recorded roots music experiments except the previously discussed "Tape 14".[91] But by the end of the summer 1963 he was once again practicing the violin. He was heartened by the publication of Amiri Baraka's *Blues People,* which, like Charters's *The Country Blues,* significantly influenced his thinking. In Baraka's groundbreaking social history of black music in the United States, Flynt found an unlikely source of support for his brend theory of private aesthetics. Baraka observed, "Blues was a music that arose from the needs of a group, although it was assumed that each man had his *own* blues and that he would sing them. As such, the music was private and personal. . . . [I]t was assumed that *anybody* could sing the blues."[92] Baraka described the professional blues musicians of the 1920s as perfectly balanced between the private, personal aesthetics of folk or "primitive" blues and the smoother emotional appeal of professional entertainment.[93] His explanation seemed to open up the possibility of recuperating the practice of public performance that brend had explicitly repudiated over the previous year and a half.[94] As Flynt noted many years later, "African-American music was wry, astringent, spiritually profound. . . . It was exemplary in another way: being an ethnic music, its most vital exponents, I believed, were sometimes amateurs. So perhaps there could be a deep culture which did not depend on professionals and stars."[95] Moreover, the profundity and complexity that he cherished in black music gave the egalitarianism of the amateur an animating urgency that Flynt found lacking in what struck him as the trivial gestures of Fluxus performance.

In addition to perceiving the book to be an independent reinforcement of brend, Flynt also found in *Blues People* support for his attacks on European art and music. In one passage concerning the noisy theatricality of R&B saxophone players, Baraka made a passing reference to the kind of riff-based minimalism that Flynt would soon pursue himself: "The riff itself was the basis for this kind of playing, the saxophonist repeating the riff much past any useful musical context, continuing it until he and the crowd were thoroughly exhausted physically and emotionally. The point, it seemed, was to spend oneself with as much attention as possible, and also to make the instruments sound as unmusical, or as *non-Western,* as possible."[96] After reading *Blues People,* Flynt began to employ the category "non-Western" (or "non-European") more frequently in his attacks on high culture, which became not simply arguments about how to achieve newness but also critiques of European cultural imperialism and ethnocentrism. Following Baraka's example, Flynt now understood his two favorite

genres, R&B and hillbilly music, to be "non-European"; indeed, on the leaflet for his April 1964 demonstration, he lists these two genres alongside the music of Japan, India, and Africa as examples of the cultural traditions ignored or insulted by Stockhausen.

On Christmas Day 1963, Flynt recorded a solo violin performance called "Acoustic Hillbilly Jive," the first documentation of a new, idiomatic style that he had been practicing. The piece begins with a rather inexpertly plucked riff accompanied by a background foot stomp; it soon transitions into a sort of duet between his left hand, using a hammer-on technique adapted from the guitar to articulate a repeating pattern on the fingerboard, and his right, which uses the bow to scrape out wild counterpoints that occasionally settle into polyrhythm patterns. In this section, Flynt seems to be recreating the duets he played with Young, but now arranged for a single player. The third section consists of country fiddling, several minutes of static repetition that served as a homage to Young. Flynt ends the piece with an "out" exploration of noisy glissandi on all the strings, producing a chorus of shrieking overtones. The work is transitional in Flynt's oeuvre, containing abstract noise explorations, Young-influenced riff repetitions, and the avant-rural sound that would eventually capture Flynt's lasting interest. Fittingly, it was the final step before the April 1964 demonstration.

The trajectory of Flynt's development in the post-Cage downtown avant-garde represents one important path to the 1964 demonstrations. His theories of concept art and brend both developed out of the aesthetics of Young's circle of artists and musicians—indeed, Flynt believed that they were the necessary extensions of this community's concerns for newness and its anti-art sympathies. For a few years between 1961 and 1964, it seemed that traditional art practices might well dissolve permanently, and Flynt was theorizing a world beyond this breakdown. Concept art and brend were attempts to think about aesthetics without the ordainments of high culture or conventional performance expectations, and when composers and artists continued to rely upon these conventions—even composers in the avant-garde such as Stockhausen—Flynt regarded them as philosophically dishonest and politically reactionary.

. . .

Concurrent with Flynt's familiarization with jazz and black popular music and his involvement in downtown experimentalism was his growing commitment to the political Left. The music led him there. In an interview, Flynt recalled that although his initial attraction to rural vernacular music was emotional and aesthetic, he realized even then that there was some-

thing "appropriately leftish" about the repertoire. Of course, folk music and the blues had long been linked with progressivism, with performers such as Lead Belly, Woodie Guthrie, and Pete Seeger becoming icons of the socialist movements in the 1930s and 1940s.[97] In 1974 Flynt explained, "There is a social validity for real ethnic music which for me is like socialism; in that both of them are concerned with the welfare of the collective."[98] By the end of the 1950s, Flynt had also made the association between free jazz and liberation movements, writing many years later, "As for me, I was wildly enthusiastic about Coleman. Indeed, free-form jazz appeared concurrently with a sudden upsurge of the civil rights movement."[99]

Mac Low had given Flynt's name to the Marxist-Leninist Workers World Party (WWP) sometime in early 1962, and soon after Flynt began receiving and reading their newspaper, *Workers World*. A highly secretive and hierarchical organization, WWP split off from the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party (SWP) some years after the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956; WWP supported the invasion, whereas the SWP viewed the incident as an unsuccessful workers' rebellion against Soviet control. Although WWP agreed with the Trotskyite commitment to a post-Stalin reconstitution of the global class struggle, the organization also supported the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, arguing that a strong Soviet state could provide crucial support to fledgling Marxist revolutions around the world. As a statement in the first issue of the party's newspaper put it, "The Russian, Chinese, and East European proletariat . . . have established states of their own, no matter how deformed. And it is our bounded duty to defend them with all our might."[100] The party favored action over critical discourse and theory. Having organized one of the earliest demonstrations against the Vietnam War, WWP displayed the kind of commitment to anti-imperialism and Third World Marxism that is usually associated with the second half of the 1960s.[101] The Worker's World Party should not, however, be considered a part of the New Left movement. Though it was constituted only a few years before the Port Huron Statement of 1962 and the founding of Students for a Democratic Society, WWP was much more dogmatic than the students, antiwar protesters, Free Speech advocates, and militant civil rights activists in the New Left. The party's leadership, particularly its founders Sam Marcy and Vincent Copeland, had emerged from the industrial labor base in Buffalo, even though the party's membership was no longer drawn from this sector of the working class.

In the pages of *Workers World,* Flynt read articles about anticolonial struggles in Africa, Southeast Asia, South America, Cuba, and the Caribbean. He also would have learned about one Marxist interpretation of

the civil rights struggle, based on the premise that African Americans in the South were an oppressed nation with full rights to self-determination. Robin D. G. Kelley has noted, "If there is one thing all the factions of the twentieth-century American Left share, it is the political idea that black people reside in the eye of the hurricane of class struggle."[102] Kelley shows that this notion was the hard-won result of a black radical tradition that included individuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois, C. L. R. James, and Richard Wright, as well as organizations such as the African Blood Brotherhood and Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association.[103] This tradition also included (but was not limited to) the participation of black intellectuals in the Communist Party. In his influential study *Black Marxism,* Cedric Robinson explains that despite Lenin's call to recruit U.S. black intellectuals into the workers' movement throughout the 1920s, the American Communist Party (CPUSA) could only see the racial consciousness of black radical groups as ideological backwardness and an obstacle to true revolutionary class consciousness. They would, however, be overruled by the Comintern, which had been convinced by an international Negro Commission in 1922 that the world movement against colonialism and imperialism had to include the racial struggle of diasporic Africans in general and African Americans in particular.[104] In 1928, when the Comintern officially recognized the "black belt" counties in the American South as an oppressed nation, they cast the civil rights movement as one of nationalist liberation.

Though the Communist leadership withdrew the "nation-within-a-nation" thesis in 1958, that thesis remained a crucial principle for black radicalism outside the CPUSA in the 1960s, when it received new support and theoretical force from Mao Tse-tung.[105] It was also of critical importance to the majority-white membership of Workers World Party, who framed the global class struggle along the axes of imperialism and capitalist European-U.S. colonial expansion. A 1965 *Workers World* headline declared, "In Selma, Bronxville, and Vietnam: The Enemy Is the Same!"[106]

WWP's commitment to black nationalism as an important component of the international struggle against racist imperialism continued throughout the 1960s and beyond. In a 1972 ideological résumé, leader Deirdre Griswold put it like this: "We support the right of the Black nation to choose whatever form of relationship to the United States will best advance their struggle for liberation from oppression: that is, the right to integrate, separate, federate, or any other political path."[107] Before the slogan "Black Power" emerged in the summer of 1966, sectarian groups such as Workers World Party consistently supported militant black radicalism, most con-

spicuously in their advocacy for Robert F. Williams, president in the late 1950s of the Monroe, North Carolina, branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).[108] An effective leader and organizer, Williams built the branch into a disciplined organization with a reputation for militancy (owing to the large number of veteran members, who, in Williams's words, "didn't scare easy").[109] In response to escalating threats from the Ku Klux Klan, the Monroe chapter took up arms and, in one dramatic incident, repelled the Klan in an extended firefight. In 1959, after a Monroe jury acquitted a white man of assault and attempted rape of an African American woman, Williams famously responded, "This demonstration today shows that the Negro in the South cannot expect justice in the courts. He must convict his attackers on the spot. He must meet violence with violence, lynching with lynching."[110] The statement was repeated in newspapers across the nation, and Williams was soon suspended by the national office of the NAACP, who insisted that the organization did not advocate violence. After leading a series of desegregation protests and nonviolent demonstrations, Williams was forced to leave North Carolina in 1961 to escape a trumped-up kidnapping charge. He was offered political asylum in Cuba, where he and his family lived until 1965, when they moved to China. The SWP had by 1958 set up a front organization to raise funds and provide legal assistance to Williams (who spearheaded legal aid for Monroe's African American population for years prior to the 1959 incident).[111] Although the details of internal disagreements in the party may never be known, it appears that a faction that would later become WWP was the most vocal on this imperative. As WWP leaders wrote in 1959, "It is our tendency that has taken the initiative to build a revolutionary group *in the South*. And we are the first tendency to have *done it*."[112]

*Workers World* was filled with reports on Williams's activities from 1959 until the late 1960s, in some cases printing his articles and speeches. In the summer of 1962, WBAI Pacifica radio in New York aired several times a four-and-a-half-hour interview with Williams that had been recorded by Marc Schleifer a few months earlier. Like many left-leaning intellectuals in New York at the time, Flynt heard the interview and was deeply affected. Schleifer was a beat poet and journalist who had become radicalized in the early 1960s. (He was also the first husband of Marian Zazeela, who by 1963 had married La Monte Young.) In spring 1960, Schleifer founded the literary journal *Kulchur,* editing it until his political commitments—among them writing for the *Monthly Review* and *Studies on the Left*—drew him away to other projects.[113] It was during a one-year visit to Cuba in 1961

and 1962 that he recorded the interview with Williams. The leftist publisher Carl Marzoni heard the WBAI broadcast and subsequently published an edited version, titled *Negroes with Guns,* which became one of the enduring documents of the civil rights movement.[114] Flynt probably came to know Schleifer personally as the latter was something of a hero in the New Left movements. As the chief organizer of the May 2nd Movement—Progressive Labor's front organization to recruit beats, hippies, and other underground youth cultures into the party—Schleifer was known for his Third World sympathies, as well as for assembling the May 2nd Movement militia, the first left militia in the United States. Despite his political sympathies, however, Schleifer, when asked to join Flynt's September 1964 demonstration against Stockhausen, recalls not having been able to understand why the German composer should be targeted.[115] Nonetheless, Schleifer's presence as one of only six picketers should have been a clue to Fluxus supporters that the issues in play extended beyond mere intertribal feuding.

In the spring of 1963, a few months after the publication of *Negroes with Guns* (which he recalls avidly reading), Flynt visited his parents in Greensboro and witnessed a civil rights demonstration, which profoundly affected him. He sent a letter about the experience to *Workers World,* which was subsequently printed as an article.[116] In the piece he declared, "It was one of the great experiences of my life." He mentions asking some protesters for their opinion of Williams's advocacy of self-defense: "They didn't seem to think it was necessary. . . . But as one youth said cagily—'Not yet, anyway.'"[117]

His commitment to WWP brought Flynt to New York permanently in May 1963; he soon took a properly proletarian job—as messenger—and began taking part in such party activities as demonstrations, marches, and meetings. The leaflet for the April 29 demonstration described at the opening of this chapter reveals that by 1964 Flynt had assimilated the language and concepts of orthodox Marxism. "Stockhausen is a lackey of the West German bosses and their government, just as Haydn was of the Esterhazys," he wrote in that leaflet. "Like all court music, Stockhausen's Music is of course a decoration for the West German bosses."[118] Although Flynt's rhetoric is clearly informed by the terms of class struggle, he also makes a subtle point about the modality of Stockhausen's musical-theoretical domination. The leaflet begins by referring to a lecture that Stockhausen had given at Harvard in 1958 that Flynt and Conrad attended. At this time Flynt was only beginning to be interested in jazz, but by 1964 he had retroactively become enraged by the composer's patronizing remarks on jazz: "Stockhausen contemptuously dismissed 'jazz' as 'primi-

tive . . . barbaric . . . beat and a few single chords' . . . and in effect said it was garbage."[119] In Flynt's eyes, Stockhausen did not consider jazz to be music, or at least not music of any significance. Through his lectures and journal *Die Reihe,* Flynt argued, Stockhausen articulated a vision of music that only included his own in dialogue with that of other avant-garde European composers. The music of the rest of the world did not exist—or, in the words of *Die Reihe* contributor Wolf-Eberhard von Lewinski, it "can be summed up by adding a question-mark after 'music.'"[120] By calling attention to the gaps and silences in Stockhausen's musical discourse, Flynt was attempting to reinsert subaltern musical traditions into the discussion and thus to place Stockhausen and his colleagues in the context of a global hierarchy of cultures created by European imperialism.

This motivation became more pronounced in the extraordinary September leaflet "Picket Stockhausen Concert!"—one of the most audacious documents on politics and the avant-garde to come out of the 1960s.[121] Here Flynt emphasizes imperialism, and specifically the way that art music has supported European claims to global supremacy by "develop[ing] the most elaborate body of 'Laws of Music' ever known: Common-Practice Harmony, 12-Tone, and all the rest, not to mention Concert etiquette." Flynt points to Alfred Einstein's denigrating statements on jazz as an example of a powerful apparatus that produces the standards by which musical value is assessed.[122] Stockhausen is singled out as a target of Flynt's critique because, unlike the "rich U.S. cretins Leonard Bernstein and Benny Goodman," the German composer is "a fountainhead of *'ideas' to shore up the doctrine of white plutocratic European Art's supremacy*." In 1962 or 1963, Flynt might have attacked this music because it made false claims to originality, or because it was pretentious. Now, in 1964, he believed that the social pretensions of high culture played a crucial role in European global domination.[123]

The final two sections of the September leaflet bundle together Flynt's experiences in the avant-garde and the radical Left with his passion for black popular music. Even intellectuals who are resistant to high culture, he warns, are held in bondage by the arbitrary myths supporting the supremacy of European art, "surrounded by the stifling cultural mentality of the social-climbing snobs." Flynt's directions on how to break these bonds of snob culture make direct reference to his previous anti-art crusades: "The first cultural task of radical intellectuals, especially whites, today, is: (1) not to produce more Art (there is too much already)." Finally, naming his enemy along the intersection of race, nation, and class that was common in the rhetoric of WWP, he proclaimed, "The first cultural task is publicly

to expose and fight the domination of white, European–U.S. ruling-class art!" In a later essay titled "The Politics of 'Native' or Ethnic Music," Flynt explained this position yet more clearly: "[The dismissal of ethnic music as primitive] has to be interpreted as a political act, as an integral part of the 'white man's burden' doctrine invented to justify European colonialism in Asia and Africa."[124]

Although the significance of the 1964 demonstrations has been clouded by the partial and incomplete understanding of critics and historians, the events make complete sense in light of the three primary aspects of Flynt's work in the early 1960s. His avant-garde aesthetics—brend and concept art—contributed to his anti-art projects of 1962 and certainly to the 1964 protests. Along with his dialectical relationship to the avant-garde, Flynt's musical allegiances were shifting to black popular traditions, which he had begun to see as an alternative to the solipsistic aesthetics of brend. The fact that Stockhausen ignored non-European musics in his writings was significant to Flynt in light of the antiracist, anti-imperialist ideology of Workers World Party. These impulses interconnected and combined to motivate Flynt's public intervention against European music. I therefore regard as untenable Medina's assertion that "the significance of [Flynt's] politics has been overestimated in relation to his anti-artistic project."[125] This statement attempts to limit the meaning of Flynt's critique in the 1960s but in fact reveals its own limits of interpretation, particularly in regard to the dynamics of race and anti-imperialism that were so important for Flynt's position.[126]

As Flynt told a radio interviewer in 2004, "Here I'm deciding that the best musicians in the U.S., possibly doing some of the all-time best records are on the bottom rung of the status ladder. What conclusion do you draw from that? . . . One had to become socially involved, I thought. You had the civil rights movement, you had the Cuban revolution, you had the Vietnam war, you had . . . an African political awakening, the so-called 'year of freedom,' 1960, in which many colonies gained their formal independence. At that time, all of this was the same thing to me."[127] Indeed, in the same manner that WWP was making global connections in its class analysis ("In Selma, Bronxville, and Vietnam: The Enemy Is the Same!"), Flynt was combining insights and conclusions from various separate discourses, using brend to inflect his understanding of the blues, the race/class analysis of the Left to critique the avant-garde, and eventually black popular music to attack the Left's cultural Eurocentrism. His growing appreciation for the revolutionary nature of black vernacular musics would become crucial to this last attack.

. . .

Flynt spent the next few years as a party worker, attending meetings and demonstrations and occasionally speaking for the WWP in forums on the race and colonial question.[128] From 1964 to 1966, he also wrote for *Workers World,* and even edited the newspaper for a few weeks in 1965. His numerous articles, written under the pseudonym Henry Stone, fall into three categories: reports on civil rights demonstrations and crimes throughout the United States, accounts of decolonization and nationalization in Africa (Zanzibar, the Congo, South West Africa), and longer background pieces on imperialist aggression in Laos, Vietnam, and Indonesia. In July 1966, he interviewed three black leaders for the paper on the subject of Black Power and what it meant to them: Ivanhoe Donaldson, the leader of the New York City chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC; the civil rights activist Jim Haughton; and Mae Mallory, who was associated with Williams in Monroe and, like Williams, fled from and eventually beat a false kidnapping charge.[129] In one of his last stories for the paper, he reviewed a SNCC benefit concert at the Village Gate, where Stokely Carmichael shared the stage with groups led by Marion Brown, Jackie McLean, and Archie Shepp. "The juxtaposition of Carmichael's high political awareness with a score of the black community's musicians was a logical, timely, and refreshing development," he wrote.[130] The review brought the first mention in *Workers World* of music—or any of the arts.

The support that Workers World Party gave to the civil rights movement and black radicalism was part of a long history of white involvement with African American freedom struggles. The relationship between whites and blacks in the movement was often tense, and by the 1960s many black radicals felt that their cause was being coopted and superseded by the imperatives of white Marxism. Harold Cruse, for example, questioned the collaboration between the Trotskyists and the civil rights movement when he wrote, "This 'alliance' is meant to build the Marxist party, *not* the Negro movement, in order to rescue the Marxists from their own crisis."[131]

Flynt, too, was interested in enrolling black intellectuals in his anti-imperialist cultural campaign, meeting with A.B. Spellman and Baraka to discuss his ideas about music and, in the latter case, to convince Baraka to join the April 1964 demonstration. "I probably thought that I had a message," Flynt later recalled, "and I expected this message to galvanize them. And it didn't." But unlike many white radicals who endeavored to direct African American freedom struggles from afar, Flynt focused most of his attention on launching a postcolonial critique of his own immediate

circle, the composers and artists of the white avant-garde. As he explained in his *Village Voice* interview, black jazz musicians and writers should be encouraged to go their own way, while their white counterparts "should devote themselves solely to the propagation of Afro-American art forms in white intellectual circles."[132] Although a certain devotion to African American culture was certainly not uncommon among white subcultures of this period, Flynt's explicit, anti-imperialist, leftist politics distinguished him from the white hipster figure analyzed by Ingrid Monson and others.[133]

It was becoming apparent to Flynt, however, that his enemy was not only European serious culture but also the cultural Eurocentrism of the Left. In WWP, cultural matters were not a priority; there was no coverage in *Workers World,* and the official organ of Soviet propaganda in the United States, *Soviet Life,* reported only on festivals of heroic folk art and the occasional performance of a great Russian symphony. Flynt insisted that the Left's love of Woodie Guthrie–style folk music had to be brought up to date:

> I just found it absolutely shocking, because Workers World had deliberately latched on to the black issue . . . , and yet the fact that there was an entire form of music which was created in the United States by these people that they were advocating for just completely bypassed them. . . . I said, "You cannot go on like this, with like Beethoven and Pete Seeger. . . . [T]he cultural revolution is right under your nose, right here at Atlantic Records. That's the culture of revolution."

In 2004, Flynt recalled the difficulty he had in trying to present this critique to the party leadership: "They would try to switch you off to the world crisis or something like that as a way of not having to think about whether Shostakovich symphonies are really getting it done."

In fact, following the somewhat confusing 1964 demonstrations, Flynt was advised by the head of WWP not to introduce a new theory in the flimsy form of a leaflet. His project lacked political clarity, he was told, and if he wanted to make a complex theoretical statement, he should do so in a more substantial document. This admonition led to Flynt's writing the pamphlet "Communists Must Give Revolutionary Leadership in Culture."[134] Designed by Maciunas, the publication made a striking impression: the bold text treatment sprawled out over four wide columns of body copy, and the whole thing was folded four times and banded to a one-inch-thick slab of styrofoam, which was included to illustrate Maciunas's ambitious idea for mass-produced housing. It was published by World View, the imprint of Workers World, whom Flynt had persuaded to lend their logo to the project; Workers World offered no other support for the publication.

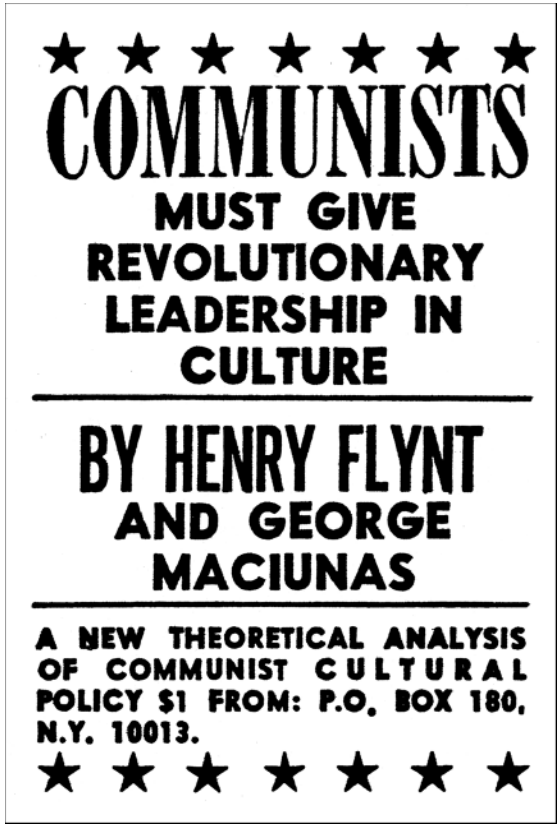


FIGURE 5. An advertisement that ran in the *Village Voice*, March 3, 1966.

"Communists Must Give" was Flynt's most developed statement on culture and politics during the 1960s; it shows evidence of his wholesale estrangement from the Left on the cultural question, even though his suggestions for cultural policy were steeped in Communist rhetoric and Maciunas's cult of efficiency. Flynt set out three conditions that he thought revolutionary culture must meet: first, increase the productivity of labor; second, promote the equality of all workers and reduce the stratification of labor by nationality or other categories of false consciousness; and third, bring workers to grips with reality and eliminate "escapism in culture." Flynt investigated these three conditions in a range of cultural practices, including the "applied arts" (industrial design), music (together with dancing and poetry), film, theater, visual arts, and fiction.

The section on music, by far the longest in the pamphlet, presented Flynt's case for the radical nature of popular musics. Although he listed styles from Jamaica, Africa, Brazil, India, and Cuba, his focus was on African American popular music, which he referred to in the language of the times as "street-Negro music." For Flynt this was not a narrow category, however; rather, by his definition it "includes every authentic popular music in the world today, except the European or Anglo-American, which is simply washed up." It was important to Flynt that this music could not be reconciled with European bourgeois art. In a swipe at folk heritage festivals and the like, he writes, *"Further, it must be absolutely clear that street-Negro music is not 'folk art.'"* Flynt agreed with the widespread judgment of "folk art" as antiquated, humble, and pathetic, and he argued that because the music of Buddy Guy, Bo Diddley, John D. Laudermilk, and the Trashmen did not fit that definition, it was therefore not "folk." Crucial to Flynt's argument about the modernity of black popular music was the technological basis for its many innovations. The music not only uses "advanced instruments," among them many types of electric guitars and electric organs, but also engages with such cutting-edge electronic recording techniques as reverberation and overdubbing, and relies on radio stations for distribution. For Flynt, these technological investments positioned "street-Negro music" in the vanguard of musical evolution. In short, he wrote, "Street-Negro music rocks; European bourgeois Modern Art (and 'folk art') doesn't."

Following this section, Flynt turned his attention to the internal dynamics of Communist cultural policy. In his preparatory study for the pamphlet, where he presumably had more room for clarification, he responded to the prevailing Communist attitude that the jazz avant-garde was too antipopular, and R&B too decadent and hedonistic, to support: "But the truth is that authentic culture of an oppressed nation, whether of a national bourgeoisie or of the toilers, even if not overtly political, is more revolutionary as a cultural symbol than a 'politically correct' expression in an Art Form of the imperialists."[135] The problem, he maintained, was that Communists retained significant sympathies for European court musics. To address this unacceptable situation, Flynt offered several suggestions: Communists should begin listening to R&B and rock 'n' roll radio programs; they should replace their classical music recording collections; and they should only play street-Negro music at parties, which ideally would take the form of dances. Only after the Communists have integrated street-Negro music into their lives will it be possible to address their

complaint that this music is decadent and manipulated by the bourgeoisie. "Somebody will have to encourage an open call to rebellion in the lyrics."

That "somebody," it turned out, would be Flynt himself. By late 1965, he was not only theorizing and writing about the relationship between Marxist anti-imperialism and black popular music, he was also beginning to put his ideas into practice. After learning the rudiments of guitar playing from Lou Reed, Flynt began writing explicitly political rock 'n' roll songs, cobbling together a pickup band, the Insurrections, that consisted of the sculptor Walter De Maria on drums, Art Murphy (who would later appear on Steve Reich's classic *Four Organs* album) on keyboards, and the jazz bassist Paul Breslin.[136] Flynt played guitar and sang. The band recorded about ten songs in three sessions during the first half of 1966, a collection of material that Flynt hoped would show Workers World Party exactly how the movement's music should sound. This necessitated Flynt's reinventing himself as a Gramscian organic intellectual (he did not use this term). In his 1980 essay "The Meaning of My Avant-Garde Hillbilly and Blues Music," he wrote, "For me, innovation does not consist in composing European and academic music with inserted 'folk' references. It consists in appropriating academic or technical devices and subordinating them to my purposes as a 'folk creature.' An outstanding prototype of this approach was Bo Diddley's use of the electric devices of pop music to project the Afro-American sound."[137] Noting that "these repertoires are the voice of the unsubjugated autochthon," Flynt admired the iconoclasm and inherent rebelliousness of U.S. popular musics. His avant-gardist allegiance to progressivism persisted, however, and he aimed to extend these traditions as Coleman and Coltrane had extended the language of jazz. "Of course the musical languages of the autochthonous communities need to be renewed—to absorb new techniques and to respond to changing social conditions—and they also need to be refracted through an iconoclastic sensibility, an ennobling taste."[138] In his own music, Flynt's "new techniques" included opening blues and country to extended melodic improvisation, eliminating chord progressions, incorporating extreme glissando and ornamentation, and dividing the beat non-arithmetically, as is characteristic of African American music—all of which, for Flynt, made this music more complex than "serious composition."

Flynt was no Chuck Berry, and the songs were not exactly radio friendly. Nonetheless, the combination of Flynt's splintered guitar style and De Maria's rollicking approach to the beat created an unusual sound, which is perhaps more at home in histories of garage, punk, or no-wave than in

those of R&B and electric blues. Young's influence can be heard in the extended static harmonies on many of the tracks; Flynt's lyrics make up in clarity what they lack in poetry. In "Uncle Sam Do," he sings,

> Nobody talk peace like Uncle Sam do
> Nobody talk peace like Uncle Sam do
> Uncle Sam talk peace, and drop napalm on you.
>
> Nobody hate Africa like Uncle Sam do
> Nobody hate Africa like Uncle Sam do
> He send d' C.I.A. to make uh rightist coup.
>
> Uncle Sam stores his H-bomb in your town
> Uncle Sam stores his H-bomb in your town
> If it chance to go off, you'll never be found.
>
> Set uh fire under Uncle Sam's feet
> Set uh fire under Uncle Sam's feet
> Burn baby burn till he feel uh heat.

In other tunes, Flynt celebrates the riots in Watts, criticizes the draft board's targeting of the poor, and fantasizes about the capture and cooking of a European missionary in Africa. Flynt was initially inspired by Bob Dylan's "Subterranean Homesick Blues," which was released in the spring of 1965 and contained elliptical references to the counterculture and police surveillance, but Flynt's lyrics are more explicit and to the point.

Flynt was not alone when he called for R&B and other black popular styles to be used in spreading revolutionary messages to the workers, but no one offered as developed a justification as he did. Roland Snellings (later Mohammed Askia Toure) wrote in October 1965 about "Rhythm & Blues as a Weapon," but his presentation lacked the doctrinal rigor of Flynt's formulation. Snellings's was a strongly worded but ultimately impressionistic celebration of the music as a political force: "The Fire is spreading, the Fire made from the merging of dynamic Black Music (Rhythm and Blues, Jazz), with politics (GUERRILLA WARFARE) is spreading like black oil flaming in Atlantic shipwrecks spreading like Black Fire."[139] Although it was common for soul musicians in the late 1960s to play benefits, donate to civil rights organizations, and speak out for the cause, in the music of the early and middle 1960s, historian Brian Ward notes that there was little more than "sympathy and synchronicity" with the movement. Baraka observed that such songs from the first half of the decade as "Keep on Pushin'" and "Dancing in the Street" "provided a core legitimate social feeling, though mainly metaphorical and allegorical for Black people."[140] As Ward concludes in his magisterial study of race consciousness in black

popular music, "[T]he claims that Rhythm and Blues provided some sort of explicitly running commentary on the Movement, with the men and women of soul emerging as notable participants, even leaders, tacticians and philosophers of the black struggle, have usually depended more on partisan assertion than hard evidence."[141] (The single notable exception is Nina Simone, who wrote the seething "Mississippi Goddamn" in 1963. Her refined cabaret style, however, was a far cry from the electric sound that had so captivated Flynt.)[142] Although Flynt cannot be considered a real part of 1960s black popular music (*I Don't Wanna,* an album of the Insurrections material, was not released until 2004), it wasn't for lack of trying; he sent demo recordings of his duets with Young to Atlantic Records in 1962 and pitched the Insurrections material to Folkways and ESP-Disk in 1966.[143]

In 1967, Flynt left Workers World Party. He had grown dissatisfied with the party's unwavering support for the Soviet Union, and his friend Ben Morea, the leader of the anarchist group Black Mask, influenced him to question the organization's rigid hierarchy and its stifling of open debate.[144] His misgivings were reinforced by a lecture Herbert Marcuse delivered in 1967, in which the Frankfurt school philosopher offered an immanent critique of Soviet policy. In the end, Flynt no longer wanted to be a foot soldier in WWP, and he gradually dissociated himself from the party. Although he told me in 2004 that his sojourn in the dogmatic Left was in some sense a compromise to avoid being swept into obscurity, the ideology of Workers World Party was important in the development of his anti-art critique, particularly his attacks on Stockhausen. As the Insurrections material shows, he continued to be influenced by Young's pedal-point harmony and Coleman's adventurous approach to improvisation, and these influences informed Flynt's music for years to come.

. . .

"Freedom" was a ubiquitous word in the 1960s. Musicians experimented with open form, improvisation, alternative performance sites, and chance operations as ways to achieve or enact models of freedom. As Sally Banes describes in *Greenwich Village 1963,* the artists, dancers, musicians, filmmakers, and poets of the downtown avant-garde pursued a politics of personal liberation.[145] Charlotte Moorman, who produced the 1964 performance of *Originale* that was the target of Flynt's protest, expressed a succinct version of this political outlook when she told Goodman, "We're more concerned with our own artistic production than with answering their manifestos."[146] This abstention from politics and ideology, Andreas

Huyssen has reminded us, was itself deeply ideological and perhaps explains why Fluxus artists had such a hard time understanding or accepting Flynt's and Maciunas's demonstrations. "It is significant to a historical understanding of Fluxus," Huyssen writes, "that end-of-ideology politics held sway in the two front-line countries of the cold war—the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States—much more strongly than it did in France or England, where the political and intellectual Left was still a palpable presence. This would explain why Fluxus had its major forcefields in the United States and Germany."[147]

Downtown experimentalism's limited notion of freedom was also at odds with the prevailing tendency of the 1960s toward collective action and group formation, beginning with the black liberation struggle, the women's movement, and the other new social movements of the mid- and late 1960s. As Morton Feldman wrote in 1969, "Before determining just how much art should or should not infringe on social life, let us remember that social life never infringes on art. In fact, social life doesn't give a damn about art."[148] In this context, Flynt's sustained engagement with the relationship between art making and the social sphere registered as quixotic at best.

My objective is not to reduce the productive mess found at the intersection of politics and music to a rigid distinction of who is, or is not, "political." I am, however, concerned with explaining why Flynt's work was misunderstood and even ignored, and in this regard it makes sense to point out how limited the white experimental view of politics could be. Flynt's interlocutors—whether contemporary, historical, or current—did not have the vocabulary, training, or inclination to follow his arguments outside the limited sphere of experimentalism itself. As even the astute political thinker Jackson Mac Low put it in a 1963 letter to Maciunas, "I'm interested, by the way, in Henry as an *artist*—as the inventor of concept art & as a brilliant instrumental improviser—not as an anti-cultural propagandist or as a political thinker."[149] It was in these latter roles as propagandist and political thinker that Flynt so severely clashed with his avant-garde interlocutors. "As he led in his own thinking toward a position in which systematic cultural production was viewed as corrupt and unforgivable, he inevitably and rapidly came into conflict with fundamental personal commitments that other people had made as a foundation for the kind of lives they wanted to lead," Conrad recalled in 2007. "For a number of people, this is so alienating as a territory on which to found any discussion, that they throw up barricades right away, as soon as the terms are put down, they say, 'Well, it's Henry. He's crazy, or deranged, or whatever.'"

As he became disenchanted with the European American avant-garde, Flynt changed his focus from an antiaesthetic utopia beyond "art" itself to the more pragmatic possibility of an economic system beyond capitalism. But as this pragmatic goal seemed to fade, he reapproached cultural production with a different perspective. He later explained, "The utopia in human relationships to which my philosophy is directed is unattainable in the foreseeable future. Activities are worthy, then, whose contribution is to keep the dream alive. To ennoble the cultural media of a non-privileged, autochthonous community is a way of ennobling the community itself."[150] Flynt's avant-gardism consisted in embracing the sound language of what he took to be his home community—roots music of the rural South—and extending it through technological innovation and compositional invention. This is a rather different view of the artistic vanguard than many of us retain; we don't usually think of Cage or Stockhausen as linked to the traditions of a local community. Flynt looked to black performers such as Bo Diddley, Jackie Wilson, and Memphis Slim for inspiration, modeling his own extensions of U.S. vernacular musics on these earlier artists who successfully updated their tradition with new sounds, new technologies, and new kinds of virtuosity. In this regard, Flynt was more in line with theorists of the Black Arts Movement than he was with those of the white experimental scene. For example, Baraka's important essay, "The Changing Same (R&B and New Black Music)," attempted to chart a mutable African American essence as it appeared in both R&B and avant-garde jazz.[151] His goal was to illuminate the role that free jazz played in the black liberation struggle and connect this avant-garde form with more popular (and, perhaps, more "populist") genres. Like Baraka and other Black Arts writers, Flynt was concerned with repositioning the ideas of innovation, advancement, and technical "progress" into the context of group identity. As one of the very few 1960s experimentalists to tackle questions of race, imperialism, collective struggle, and the role of expressive culture in these discussions, Flynt's campaign to demolish serious culture was bewildering to many observers. Enlarging the frame through which we view this campaign not only alleviates this bewilderment but also pushes conversations about experimentalism into productive circulation with other trends in 1960s culture.

CHAPTER 3

# October or Thermidor?

## *The Jazz Composers Guild Meets New York*

In the late afternoon of October 1, 1964, Bill Dixon sat in the home of two friends on West 91st Street after a long week of hard work.[1] The composer and trumpeter had been busy organizing a four-night festival of adventurous music to be called the October Revolution in Jazz and soon to take place across the street at the Cellar Café. Earlier that year, between May and September, Dixon had programmed nearly twenty Sunday afternoon concerts at the café, including performances by the pianists Sun Ra and Paul Bley, saxophonists Pharoah Sanders and Albert Ayler, drummers Rashied Ali, Sunny Murray, and Paul Motian, clarinetist Jimmy Giuffre, bassists Barre Phillips and Lewis Worrell, and the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble (flutist Jon Winter, saxophonist Gary William Friedman, pianist Burton Greene, bassist Alan Silva, and drummer Clarence Walker).[2] "I had one rule," Dixon recalled over forty years later. "Anyone could play at the Cellar, as long as they weren't playing any other place. So right away, we got a reputation for a certain kind of music."[3] The trombonist Roswell Rudd, too, remembers the Cellar's reputation during this period, remarking of the audiences that frequented these shows, "You know, they could pay their money and take their chances at the commercial . . . clubs. But at least here, they were guaranteed a taste of the unexpected, the unforeseen."

Although he had been living in New York for many years by 1964, Dixon rarely played the established clubs, which presented nationally established popular acts such as Woody Herman, Dizzy Gillespie, Gerry Mulligan, Nina Simone, Muddy Waters, or the comedian Dick Gregory. Off-night

and afternoon dates at such establishments were hard to get, so up-and-coming players honed their craft in the more open network of cafés and coffeehouses that had sprung up in Greenwich Village—among them the Four Steps, the White Whale, Café Avital, Le Metro, Harout's, and Café Roué and Take 2, where Dixon had established the music policies.[4]

In the weeks leading up to the October Revolution concerts, Dixon selected and contacted the musicians, worked out the schedule, and placed advertisements in the *Village Voice,* the *Villager,* and the *Columbia Daily Spectator.*[5] By the time the day finally arrived, he deserved a break. Then the phone rang. It was Peter Sabino, the owner of the Cellar Café and Dixon's partner in the enterprise.

> [H]e says, "Bill, can you get over here right away?" I said, "Why?" He says, "Just get over here right away." So I went over, and I got downstairs, and there was this huge crowd in the street, between Broadway and West End. So I said, "Gee, I wonder what happened." I got to the Cellar, I walked in, and Peter said, "They're all trying to get in!" That's the way it was, for the entire thing.

The October Revolution was indeed a great success. Dixon credits the low price of admission ($1), the convivial atmosphere they had created at the Cellar in the earlier concerts, and the enthusiastic word-of-mouth endorsements those concerts had garnered. The number of people who attended the Revolution concerts was generally agreed to have been about seven hundred. The festival presented about forty ensembles and solo acts. Building on the earlier innovations of Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor, these seventy-five-odd composers were working to extend bebop's experimental ethos by discarding periodic harmonic patterns and the formulaic split between soloist and accompaniment, expanding the basic instrumentations of bop, and composing new pieces instead of reworking old tunes. Along with European American composers such as John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Morton Feldman, and La Monte Young, these musicians of what came to be called the "New Thing" were developing an aesthetics based upon spontaneity and sound over more abstract and computational approaches to form.

With the exceptions of Sun Ra, Paul Bley, and Jimmy Giuffre, everyone taking part in the festival was relatively unknown; a number of names familiar today were then young performers who had yet to record or play any of the big clubs.[6] Dixon wanted to insure that the musicians on the series wouldn't be accused of riding on the coattails of such more established players as Ayler, Taylor, and Coleman. But in spite of the obscurity of most of the performers, and a location far removed from the lively net-

work of cafés in Greenwich Village, the October Revolution drew substantial crowds and several notable figures in the New York scene, including Taylor, Coleman, Archie Shepp, Gil Evans, Andrew Hill, Charlotte Moorman, Tony Williams, the Village Gate owner Art D'Lugoff, and the poet and critic Amiri Baraka (then known as LeRoi Jones). As the writer A.B. Spellman observed at the time, "Almost everybody who's doing anything at all in the way of *avant-garde* jazz in New York passed through the Cellar during these programs, if not to play, then to participate in the panels or to listen."[7] Martin Williams and Dan Morgenstern were present to review the event for *Down Beat*.

In his recollection of the event, Rudd described a mood that combined celebration and intensity in equal measure: "I just remember it . . . [being] very professional. The players were seriously digging in. . . . Serious business. . . . And I don't mean to make it sound like a funeral. It was anything but. What I mean by the word 'focused' is a lot of humor, good feeling, certain amount of good competitiveness. My recollection is very positive." The feelings of mutual support and goodwill seem to have collided with the equally strong tendency toward disagreement during the panel discussion that closed each concert.[8] The panel themes were "Jim Crow and Crow Jim," "The Economics of Jazz," "The Rise of Folk Music and the Decline of Jazz," and "Jazz Composition."[9] Dixon moderated the panels, which featured prominent members of the New York jazz community.[10] Dixon recalled that the discussion centered on issues of work and work privileges: the New York Musicians' Union Local 802's disregard for jazz musicians, the difficulty of landing a recording contract or playing date at one of the major clubs, the exclusion of African American musicians from the lucrative market of television music and commercial jingles, and the white monopoly on well-paying club dates in the Catskills and Broadway and off-Broadway shows.[11] Jazz musicians of all colors were constantly having to negotiate unfavorable working conditions, but the panel conversations discussed the fact that black players were at an even larger disadvantage. "'[J]azz musician white,' if he could read well enough and knew someone like that, he could work with the New York Philharmonic tomorrow, and then play a jazz club. . . . The black one was always black, no matter how you cut the thing."[12] The subject of race was not restricted to the "Jim Crow and Crow Jim" panel; Dixon remembered that "race later raised its head in all of them." This was perhaps inevitable in the fall of 1964, after the Harlem and Bed-Stuy riots, Freedom Summer, and the murder of three civil rights workers earlier that year, but race was undoubtedly also a topic because the new music was increasingly identified with black nationalism.

Many years later, Dixon told Ben Young, "I did the October Revolution completely by myself . . . for a simple reason. All these writers . . . were telling me that this music I saw wasn't worth anything . . . [, but] I knew people could be interested in anything if it was presented to them in the proper way."[13] As we shall see, the New Thing never gained much traction in the jazz marketplace, but the October Revolution did launch the careers of several musicians and "formalize[d] . . . a coffee-shop, loft-space, underground, storefront phenomenon," in the words of Rudd.

The most conspicuous event of this formalization process was the formation, later in October 1964, of the Jazz Composers Guild. In this chapter, I describe and assess the attempt of this organization to reorient the aesthetic, social, and economic networks within which their work was situated. Although the new black music was born and nurtured in downtown cafés and bars in the East Village and the Lower East Side, in 1964 and 1965 the geography of this music had expanded significantly—to midtown, where concerts were held at the Galaxy Arts Center on West 58th Street, Town Hall on West 43rd Street, and Judson Hall on West 57th Street; to the Upper West Side and the Cellar Café; to Harlem, where the Black Arts Repertory Theater and School on 130th Street and Lenox Avenue hosted performances and outdoor events; and to the more upscale West Village, where the Guild produced concerts at the Contemporary Center at West 11th Street and Seventh Avenue. These geographical routes out of the mainstream jazz clubs in the Village mirrored the expansion and transformation of the socio-aesthetic terrain upon which experimental black musicians operated.

In a landscape increasingly defined by the juggernaut of youth culture, even mainstream jazz was struggling to survive financially. New Thing composers did not have the success that Cage and his associates had had at defining alternative sites of musical production (Judson Church, for example) or gaining institutional support for their projects; this was largely due to a set of associations that linked black music with commodification and entertainment, the discursive opposites of "serious" high culture. Morgenstern described the music as "a form of 20th-century 'art music' rather than that unique blend of popular and 'true' art that has been . . . jazz as we know it," but that was not how it was generally regarded, and New Thing composers struggled to compete in the jazz marketplace with Brubeck and Adderley, and in the art marketplace with Cage and Moorman.[14] (It would be several years before composers working in the African American tradition began to garner foundation support.)

The journalist Dan Carlinsky wrote of the October Revolution, "The

Cellar is not really a café, but a small concert hall with sandwiches and coffee. It is not really smoke-filled, and the clink of paper coffee-cups cannot be heard too distinctly."[15] This characterization of the site as a small concert hall goes straight to the issue that Dixon and the other musicians were attempting to address: how to create space outside of the entertainment economy of the jazz club for musicians and composers who had been denied these opportunities by a racial taxonomy of musical traditions. Indeed, Dixon made clear his desire to escape the automatic labeling of this music as "jazz": an advance notice in the *Village Voice* referred to the October Revolution as "a Festival of Contemporary Music, both jazz and non-jazz, to focus attention on a segment of the 'creative underground.'"[16]

Although racial formation was a key factor in delineating the jazz underground, caught as it was in the space between the entertainment economy of mainstream jazz and the racially policed borders of established and experimental institutions of high culture, different ideologies of race also mediated relationships within the jazz avant-garde. The move toward self-determination always started with self-definition, and attempts at group formation based on particular models of racial or interracial understanding inevitably came into conflict.

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Following the success of the October Revolution, Taylor urged Dixon to consider founding the musicians' collective they had long discussed. It was certainly an auspicious moment: for the Revolution, Dixon had gathered some of the brightest young players in the jazz underground and presented them as a large, polystylistic movement; critics and established musicians were taking notice; the music had shown itself capable of drawing sizeable audiences; panel discussions had provided the kind of serious and formalized intellectual engagement that musicians in the black avant-garde could not find elsewhere; and the Cellar Café could now serve as a base of operations, removed from the foot traffic of Greenwich Village but within walking distance for the students and intellectuals of Columbia University.[17]

Under the headline "The October Revolution Continues," an October 15 advertisement in the *Village Voice* proclaimed: "Cecil Taylor, Archie Shepp, Sun-Ra *[sic]*, Mike Mantler, Burton Green *[sic]*, Roswell Rudd, John Tchicai, and Bill Dixon have united as the JAZZ COMPOSERS GUILD with the idea in mind that the music as represented by the above-named and others must and will no longer remain a part of the 'underground' scene."[18] Early Guild members included bassist Alan Silva and flutist Jon Winter (both members of the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble), as well as Paul

and Carla Bley.[19] To qualify for membership, a musician had to lead his or her own group; for this reason, Rudd and Tchicai were both members, but their New York Art Quartet drummer, Milford Graves, because he was a sideman, was not. The pianist Lowell Davidson was an original member, but since he lived in Boston (he was then a graduate student in biochemistry at Harvard), he was unable to commute to meetings. He deputized his trumpet player, Michael Mantler, who had relocated from Boston to New York in 1964, to take his place. Carla Bley did not lead her own group, but because she wrote the music for her husband, Paul Bley, who had already been invited to join, she too was offered membership. In my interview with her, Carla Bley recalled that Giuseppi Logan was asked to join but declined. When Dixon and Taylor visited Coleman in late 1964, while the latter was on hiatus from playing in public, and asked him to endorse the philosophy and activities of the collective, he refused; in a 1965 interview, he indicated concern that organized advocacy might eclipse individual principle.[20] Dixon, Taylor, and Shepp also met with John Coltrane at one point during the Guild's existence to ask if he would consider joining an effort to withhold jazz music from New York City clubs for one weekend, but Coltrane, though sympathetic, did not do so.[21]

Choosing a name for the new group was a struggle. Each of the three words in the final name represented the culmination of considerable debate. Silva recalled in 2002, for example, "I had a major problem with the name though: I didn't like the word 'jazz'—I always felt it was a bad word, like 'ghetto'—and I didn't like the word 'composers' either. . . . I joined the Guild because I thought these musicians were some of the most important *improvisers*—not composers."[22] Greene's allusion to divergences of opinion was relayed by the *New York Times* reporter John Wilson, who wrote, "The Guild's members have divergent views on as basic a subject as 'What is jazz?' ('We went through that for two meetings,' Greene admitted)."[23] The word *guild* was the most contested component, perhaps because, as Dixon recalled, few of the other musicians knew what a guild was.[24] Dixon had researched medieval mercantile organizations and was struck by how they integrated the commercial and the aesthetic into a powerful social structure that regulated labor and distribution for an entire industry. "They were structured in such a way that it brought the art and the artisan closer together in dealing with business contracts with people," he reasoned. "For me, it [also] had a much more aesthetically pleasing sound. 'Union' is too flat, cold." Despite his advocacy for the term, Dixon met considerable resistance from the other musicians, who objected to the European provenance of the organizations and their implied commercialism.[25]

Dixon talked of the need for an organization like the Guild in a feature interview with Robert Levin in *Down Beat* in May 1965.[26] Although the piece ran at the moment when the Guild was dissolving, it remains the most complete public statement of the organization's philosophy and objectives. Jazz musicians, Dixon explained, are treated condescendingly, ignored, or exploited outright, resulting in an environment of such collective anxiety and distrust that the pursuit of group empowerment had lost ground to individual competition. "Many musicians have been made so unstable that if they see their names in print a couple of times, they begin to believe, and try to convince you, that the Establishment isn't really that bad," Dixon told Levin.[27] Dixon also voiced a complaint that was increasingly common among jazz musicians, that working conditions in the clubs were unfair and cruel. Owners rarely gave avant-garde musicians anything beyond a Sunday afternoon or Monday night date, when few people could be expected to attend and payment to the musicians was negligible.[28]

Record companies, Dixon continued, forced musicians to accept minimum scale and often asked the band to cover recording costs. He could also have mentioned that record executives frequently controlled which compositions were to be included on a release. For example, Shepp's first recording date for Impulse!—a financial and artistic decision that would play a prominent role in the dissolution of the Jazz Composers Guild—was contingent upon Shepp's agreeing to include only one of his own compositions. The album that resulted, *Four for Trane,* consists of four works by Coltrane and one by Shepp, "Rufus."

These working conditions had led to the "absence of representation of the most vital elements in the main stream of America's contemporary musical culture," as Dixon said in his interview with Levin, and the time had come for musicians to do it themselves. Dixon went on to outline the Guild's objectives: "[T]o establish the music to its rightful place in the society; to awaken the musical conscience of the masses of people to that music which is essential to their lives; to protect the musicians and composers from the existing forces of exploitation; to provide an opportunity for the audience to hear the music; to provide facilities for the proper creation, rehearsal, performance, and dissemination of the music."[29]

The goals of the Guild could be summarized as exposure, protection, and support, but the method that Guild members followed was one of disengagement. As Greene told Wilson at the time, "Our idea is to corner the market, to take this music off the market for as long as is necessary to establish the kind of relations with the business people that are needed to give the music its proper outlets. Meanwhile, we'll generate our own

activities."[30] Before attempting to negotiate with club owners or major record labels, the organization planned first to build a core audience of committed listeners through weekly concerts. "I think I was alone in wanting to withdraw the music from the market," Dixon later recalled, "I was adamant about that. I wasn't interested in going out and asking people to let us in the door."[31] Mantler, however, was quick to point out that the act of pulling their musical labor off the market was less audacious than it might sound today. He remarked, "There was nothing to withdraw from, anyway. There was no market that this music was a part of. . . . There wasn't anyone giving us gigs. That was the whole point. I think 'withdrawing it from the market' is a little grandiose."

The Guild's rules of disengagement directed the members to refrain from recording, or from releasing any preexisting recordings, unless the group voted that the project was beneficial to all members. The long-term goal was a major deal with a large label that would benefit all members.[32] In November 1964, as the Guild was slowly coming into shape, the New York Art Quartet (Rudd, Tchicai, Worrell, and Graves) recorded an album for Bernard Stollman, the young lawyer who had begun signing up-and-coming players to one- or two-record deals on his label, ESP-Disk. In accordance with Guild rules, Rudd remembered, the recording was held back from production until late spring 1965, by which time the Guild was dissolving.[33]

The other primary rule in the organization restricted members from accepting a performing gig until approved by vote. Opportunities that were well publicized, overly commercial, or part of the New York jazz "establishment" were rejected. Carla Bley recalled that when she and Mantler were close to securing the opportunity to write music for the Dave Garroway television talk show, they were initially ecstatic. Garroway, the first host of NBC's *Today* show, had continued, after leaving NBC in 1961, to host various talk programs. When Bley and Mantler brought the offer before a Guild meeting it was rejected, and Bley recalls being shamed by the other members for even considering such an "establishment" gig (in the end the opportunity never materialized).[34] One-time gigs, on the other hand, had a better chance of approval, especially if they were not within New York City limits, where the Guild hoped to be a strong presence. Rudd remembered presenting his case for a one-night playing date as a sideperson somewhere in the South: "I brought it up. I said, 'I need the money. Please think about that when you vote.'" Rudd's performance opportunity would not promote the Guild as a whole, but it was approved because it was seen not to undermine the group's integrity. Moreover, as the Guild's rules had been

formulated primarily to regulate members' work as performance leaders, the rules were relaxed for sideperson gigs.

In the weeks after the October Revolution, the Guild produced concerts by Sun Ra, the New York Art Quartet (then still billed as the Roswell Rudd-John Tchicai Quartet), the Paul Bley quintet, the Alan Silva quartet, the Archie Shepp septet, and the Cecil Taylor Unit.[35] Nearly all of these concerts occurred at the Cellar Café ("rapidly becoming the New York center of avant-garde jazz activity," as *Down Beat* reported), where each leader rehearsed his ensemble during the week before the performance.[36] The group also met regularly, about once a week, with the location rotating among members' apartments. On October 30–31, the Guild held a nearly twenty-four-hour marathon concert to raise general funds and money for a new four-day festival at Judson Hall.[37] This series of concerts, dubbed Four Days in December, occurred December 28–31 and featured groups led by every member of the Guild.[38] The musicians appearing as sidemen, a veritable who's who of young avant-garde jazz players in New York, included the saxophonists Jimmy Lyons, Robin Kenyatta, Marshall Allen, Steve Lacy, Marion Brown, Pharoah Sanders, and Pat Patrick; the bassists Buell Neidlinger, Eddie Gomez, Ronnie Boykins, and Reggie Johnson; and the drummers Andrew Cyrille, Rashied Ali, and Graves. The festival also introduced the Jazz Composers Guild Orchestra, an eleven-piece big band performing the compositions of Carla Bley and Mantler. This group would outlive the Guild by many years as the Jazz Composers Orchestra, led by Bley and Mantler sporadically into the 1970s.

Wilson reported that the first night's concert of ensembles led by Taylor and Dixon attracted a standing-room-only crowd of over three hundred, and that the remaining three concerts drew about half as many.[39] Spellman described "capacity or near-capacity audiences which were vocally sympathetic to the great bulk of the music played."[40] The December 31 issue of *Down Beat,* which presumably reached newsstands the week before the concerts, announced: "According to a Guild spokesman, the festival will be recorded for the organization's own label, and an initial two-LP release will include a track by each of the groups performing at the concerts, with the subsequent releases devoted to the individual group; the records will be available through subscription and at selected stores specializing in jazz."[41]

Like the October Revolution, Four Days in December was a major success and represented one of the signal achievements of the Guild. Judson was a sizeable, well-known venue, and members of the Guild cooperated to produce these four concerts without help from managers, agents, or publicists. Although the double-LP of Guild performances never material-

ized, the plan to record and self-release excerpts of the festival was, in the first weeks of 1965, a virtually unprecedented and exciting possibility. Capitalizing on advance stories on the event in *Down Beat* and the *New York Times,* the Guild was able to attract audience members from across the country.[42] Word of the festival also drew critics from *Down Beat,* the *New York Times,* and the *Nation,* where Spellman presented the first published account of the Guild's history and values and painted a favorable portrait of the four nights' music. This attention led not only to further reviews in those publications but also to longer feature articles in *Down Beat* and the *New York Times* and a review of a Guild performance some weeks later in the *New Yorker.*[43]

Following the successful October Revolution, the owner of the building that housed the Cellar Café, perhaps sensing that he had a hit on his hands, more than doubled the rent on the basement space. Faced with this staggering increase, the Guild sought a new home. After the Four Days in December concerts, they settled on the studio of the choreographer Edith Stephen, a triangular space at Seventh Avenue and 11th Street called the Contemporary Center.[44] As it happened, the site was two floors above the Village Vanguard, a center of major-name jazz in Greenwich Village that, during the Guild's existence, hosted groups led by Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln, Thelonious Monk, Ornette Coleman, and Charles Mingus. It is unclear how and why this location was chosen, but Dixon recalls having been against it from the start. "My feeling was that this put the Guild and its presentations in a form of 'competition' for audiences that wouldn't be to our advantage."[45] Nonetheless, the Guild remained at the Contemporary Center for the rest of its brief life and produced thirty-three member concerts there—every Friday and Saturday, and by the end of January, every Sunday as well.[46]

During these months, the group also researched other projects. According to Robert Levin, Rudd, who was voted treasurer at a meeting he was unable to attend, corresponded with other performance groups in Detroit, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. Levin also told of a "campaign to get colleges and universities interested in scheduling concerts by the members."[47] In an interview in 2002, Alan Silva said that he was in charge of "records and music education" in the Guild, and Val Wilmer reported that he "headed a committee researching the record business for the Jazz Composers Guild," but nothing seems to have come of these activities.[48] At one point, Dixon recalled, he and Taylor looked at a five-story building on East 65th Street that was on the market for $65,000. Dixon wanted to turn the building into a combined recording studio, rehearsal

FIGURE 6. The Archie Shepp Sextet performs on a Jazz Composers Guild concert at the Contemporary Center, January 1965. From left: Marion Brown (alto saxophone), Reggie Johnson (double bass), Shepp (tenor saxophone), and Clifford Jarvis (drums). Photograph © Steve Schapiro.

space, and lodgings for visiting musicians. To secure money for the down payment, he arranged a meeting with representatives from a few of the major record labels, offering them the opportunity to record all the members of the Guild for a package price (somewhere around $100,000); the recording companies refused the deal.

During the time of its existence, members of the Jazz Composers Guild developed a charter document outlining the rules they had agreed upon, but Rudd recalls that the document was not finished and distributed until the spring of 1965, when the Guild was on the verge of folding. The charter was the direct result of the chaotic and often heated meetings that the group held: "The constitution was born out of certain needs. It was not a thing that was imposed so much, as it kind of arose out of the need for order, or direction, consensus," said Rudd. Other participants chafed at the idea of having to "conform" to a formal constitution. Rudd recalls that by mid-April, only he, Dixon, and two or three other people were showing up at meetings. Soon after, the organization ceased to exist.

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The Jazz Composers Guild began with disagreement, continued with dissension, and ended in dispute, anger, and disappointment. Rudd has described the meetings as "verbal jam sessions," with different members soloing on long digressions and personal histories, augmented with frequent altercations. "We all got dissed. We were all dissing each other, in one way or another. It was unavoidable." Indeed, Graves described the meeting he attended with a single word, "chaos." These internal disputes were obliquely referenced in contemporary press coverage; in an interview with Nat Hentoff, Taylor remarked, "It's hard to get a group of people to trust each other, work together and communicate at the deepest level," and Dixon told Levin, "To say that the personalities of any group sometimes come into severe conflict with each other even when the participants are in pursuit of the same idealistic goal is a vast understatement."[49] Frustrating and draining as the arguments were, many of the members of the Guild recall that they were also productive and cathartic, perhaps inevitable in the case of such a collection of extraordinary individuals. Aside from the obvious, and unsurprising, gender imbalance in the group, the heterogeneity of backgrounds could hardly have been greater. The group included African Americans from the South (Shepp and Ra), New England (Dixon was born in Nantucket), New York City (Taylor), Bermuda (Silva), and Saturn (Ra). John Tchicai was African Danish. Michael Mantler was Austrian. The European Americans hailed from Canada (Paul Bley), the West coast (Carla Bley, Jon Winter), the Ivy League (Rudd attended Yale), and Chicago (Greene, whose Russian Jewish grandparents had been labor organizers in New York's garment district). Most of the members were heterosexual, but there were some who manifested nonnormative sexual identities (Ra and Taylor).[50] With the possible exception of Carla Bley, who told me she was still young and impressionable at the time, the Guild was an exceedingly brief articulation of fully formed mature individuals. "We were not teenagers, you know?" Rudd pointed out. "We were in our twenties, thirties. . . . Sun Ra was probably in his forties. Quite a range of age and experience, but all very hard-earned."

Trust was key to the Guild's survival, but a number of factors combined to undercut trust before the collective was even properly constituted. The relationship between Dixon and Shepp had soured, and by October 1964 the two men were no longer on speaking terms. Though they had co-led the Archie Shepp–Bill Dixon quartet from late 1961 to the end of 1963, Shepp thereafter began working with Don Cherry on trumpet in the New York Contemporary Five (initially because Dixon had developed problems with his embouchure).[51] Tensions between the two arose when

two Baraka-penned interview features on Shepp, which ran in *Down Beat* and *Jazz* during the height of the Guild's activities, included no mention of the organization or its other members.[52] Dixon also interpreted Shepp's involvement with black nationalism as careerist, and in a public forum he commented that "certain people wouldn't be quite that willing to identify themselves with certain things if it wasn't timely."[53]

Sun Ra also clashed with several of his colleagues, criticizing the political stance of Taylor and Shepp, who "were not talking about Space or Intergalactic things. . . . They were talking about Avant Garde and the New Thing."[54] Tchicai, too, recalled disagreements, adding that Taylor and Sun Ra argued over who had influenced whom.[55] John Szwed has reported that Sun Ra lost interest in the Guild because he felt that his group was doing all the promotion and that some members were not sincere in their aims. "He also disagreed with the organizing principle of the group," Szwed writes. "For them to be successful, he thought, someone should be serving as the leader."[56]

Trust was further undermined whenever Guild members violated the rule about not taking gigs on the side.[57] Apart from off-night gigs at the bigger clubs, significant opportunities to play were provided by the major spokesmen of the young jazz underground, who were all in some ways building or defending their influence on the same rapidly expanding field of musical production. There were three poles of organization and support—the Guild, Baraka, and Stollman—and each attempted to frame the emergent discourse of black experimentalism along different lines. The Guild was concerned with presenting music outside of the entertainment economy and without the expectation of traditional jazz signifiers. Baraka and the budding Black Arts Movement attempted to forge a black populist understanding of free jazz, increasingly linked first to Black Power and then to a pan-African cultural nationalism. Given his concert productions and record label, Stollman most resembled the traditional impresario, albeit one devoted to underground and largely unknown artists.

Baraka was the music's most prominent voice in the mainstream jazz press, and his celebrity skyrocketed after the publication of *Blues People* (1963) and the 1964 premiere of *Dutchman* (1963). His work with the New York Art Quartet in November 1964 produced a recording of his poem "Black Dada Nihilismus" over Rudd's composition *Sweet*. A few weeks later, *Down Beat* reported that Baraka was holding "informal sessions" in his East Village apartment, and that Shepp's group had performed there on December 5 and 6.[58] (Shepp lived in the same building at the time.) As Baraka's first wife, the poet and writer Hettie Jones, wrote in her memoir,

"[I]ncreasingly the racial balance in our house shifted, as a black avant-garde—writers, musicians, painters, dancers—became part of the new East Village."[59] The circle around Baraka at this time included his fellow writer Spellman, the saxophonists Shepp, Marzette Watts, and Marion Brown, the drummer Sunny Murray, and the painters William White and Bob Thompson.[60]

Watts, whose 1969 Savoy album *Marzette Watts Ensemble* was produced by Dixon, told an interviewer in 1998 that Baraka's short-lived, protonationalist political action group, the Organization of Young Men (OYM), had made a conscious decision to promote Ayler as the next "big name" in the music. "Baraka got involved in a move to basically take all of the music off the market, and we would just push one guy; and everybody agreed it should be Albert," Watts recalled. "[W]hen things began to move, Albert jumped up and went to Denmark. . . . Archie just moved right in that spot."[61] Described by Baraka as "one fledgling effort at building some political consciousness downtown," OYM included Spellman, Shepp, writer Steve Cannon, photographer Leroy McLucas, musician Walter Bowe, critic Harold Cruse, writer and activist Calvin Hicks, poet Bobb Hamilton, and others.[62]

After Baraka's move uptown to found the Black Arts Repertory Theater and School in March 1965, his musical associates also included Sun Ra, Ayler, Graves, and Hugh Glover.[63] During that month of March, Baraka held a few benefits for his new cultural organization. On March 1, groups led by Giuseppi Logan, Pharoah Sanders, and Dionne Warwick performed at the Polish National Hall.[64] On March 28, a benefit concert at the Village Gate featured Ayler, Shepp, Sun Ra, Coltrane, the trombonist Grachan Moncur, the vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, and the trumpeter Charles Tolliver.[65] A few months earlier, Baraka had been involved in an art opening at Galaxy Art Center that featured the paintings of Thompson, White, and Michael and Joyce Snow; the poetry of Baraka and others; and the music of the New York Art Quartet. Advertised under the name of the Jazz Composers Guild, the event ran opposite the Guild's regular Friday night performance at the Contemporary Center, and as Young observes, offered "some of the earliest evidence of a splintering of the Guild's constituents as the organization lost cohesion."[66]

Competition over leadership of the jazz avant-garde was exacerbated by the personal animosity between Dixon and Baraka. Baraka's feelings about Dixon and his music were expressed in his jazz criticism. In a review of Dixon's and Shepp's second Savoy album, for example, which featured one composer per side, Baraka wrote, "The Shepp side contains the serious

business."[67] In a 1962 essay on trumpeter Bobby Bradford, Baraka omitted Dixon from his long list of prominent young trumpeters.[68] For his part, already nearly a year earlier, Dixon had written a letter to *Down Beat* criticizing Baraka's inaccuracies in reporting, specifically the critic's failure to identify Dixon as the principal composer and arranger for the New York Contemporary Five, which Baraka had described as having a "pretty wild book" of compositions by Shepp, Tchicai, and Cherry. Dixon also attacked Baraka for his "turgid self-conscious 'in-group' superiority generally and rightly associated with pseudo-intellectuals."[69] Another member of the Baraka circle who had little respect for Dixon's work was Spellman. In his review of the Four Days in December, he commented bluntly, "Dixon is a far better organizer than musician."[70] One year earlier, he had written, "[A]s a space age trumpet player [Dixon is] in trouble. . . . You can hear everybody who's hip in his playing. His tone is fuzzy and indefinite, varies from track to track. He does not arrive at his style by choice. He rather adapts a melodic line to his own technical limitations."[71]

After graduating from Columbia University Law School, Stollman was involved in artists' rights, music publishing, and copyright law, at one point serving as attorney and manager for Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor.[72] Initially called upon to counsel the Guild on obtaining foundation money and perhaps incorporating as a nonprofit organization, his tenure as a legal advisor to the Guild was brief, and the accounts of Stollman and Dixon vary considerably as to how this relationship ended. In our interviews, Dixon recalled that the young lawyer advanced the group money to pay rent on the East Village loft of the vibraphonist Ollie Shearer, where the Guild produced the marathon fund-raising concert of October 30.[73] When Stollman demanded that he be permitted to stand at the door and collect the money as it came in, Guild members—primarily Dixon—refused, and instead returned the loan. Dixon later claimed that, after scrambling to borrow money from another source and preparing for the concert, the organization voted to expel Stollman; he was gone by the end of November. Stollman, on the other hand, told me that he had been angrily confronted at a meeting in the first weeks of the Guild's existence that he had been invited to attend. "They were telling me off. 'We're not going to allow this.' It was like a union meeting—the union steward talking to the employer. 'We're going to have this, we're going to have that, you're not going to be able to do this and do that.' It was that kind of exchange." This memory is consistent with the description Stollman offered in 1966: "[Dixon] regarded me as a spokesman for the so-called 'jazz business structure' for he spoke to me with great hostility."[74] Members of the Guild—particularly Dixon

and Carla Bley—viewed Stollman's record company as a danger to the group's cohesion. Though Stollman had not yet released any recordings of the new music, he had begun to establish a reputation as someone to contend with, appearing as he did at the October Revolution and offering to record most of the artists on the festival. Indeed, he had already recorded the Paul Bley Quintet on October 20, 1964, and the New York Art Quartet soon after.[75] Stollmann later recalled that this led some Guild members to accuse him of meddling in their business: "I left their meeting, and it was pretty clear to me—Carla couldn't have made it more plain—that I was the enemy." For his part, Stollman was not sympathetic to the aims of the Guild. "I wasn't about to be dictated to," he remarked. "It was a decision between an individual artist and me. . . . And everyone has to be free to make their own decisions, I think. I wasn't going to deal with a union, or Guild, or anything of that sort."

The antipathy between Stollman and the Guild may have contributed to Stollman's decision to begin booking an after-hours concert series, Jazz in Repertory, at Café Au-Go-Go; the series began on December 8 and featured the Guild members Taylor, Sun Ra, and the New York Art Quartet, in addition to Logan and Bud Powell, who had recently returned from France.[76] In 1966, Stollman told Ralph Berton, "The Jazz Composers Guild had ostracized Giuseppi Logan, Byron Allen . . . for refusing to join the Guild and for being willing to record for ESP. When the Guild started its concerts I was concerned, and so were Logan and Allen, lest the critics and public hear only Guild members—so I produced a few midnight concerts with them at the Go Go. . . . Sun Ra had agreed to play, too."[77] Young, on the other hand, reported, "Though technically not 'bar' performances [the Café did not serve alcohol], the entire booking constituted second-rate treatment (at the hands of a third-party promoter) and was therefore frowned upon as a breach of the Guild's principles."[78]

Stollman continued to organize events. A notice in the February 25, 1965, issue of *Down Beat* announced that he had "formed the American Society for Serious Improvised Music," an organization that made its debut at Judson Hall on February 1. The concert featured Logan and Graves as leaders (the latter leading a percussion ensemble).[79] Stollman's coterie of Ayler, Logan, Byron Allen, and Powell appeared again on May 1 at Town Hall in a concert presented by "producer Norman Seaman and ESP records."[80] By November of that year, ESP-Disk had released records by Ayler, Logan, Allen, the New York Art Quartet, and Paul Bley.[81] Despite claims that he "didn't have the money and wasn't affluent," Stollman had resources to launch the recording venture after he requested the funds

from his mother: "She gave me $105,000 which in those days was a fortune—now, you multiply that by ten. So in eighteen months, I produced 45 records. I wasn't what you'd describe as an aficionado of the music; it was something I could do that was meaningful."[82]

In an early 1966 column in *Down Beat,* Baraka wrote somewhat sardonically of his rival, "All the ESPs I've heard are worth having. I hope the musicians are benefiting as much from the recordings as the producer and the consumers. (A likely story.)"[83] The critic and journalist Robert Levin, who was certainly in the Guild camp, likewise excoriated Stollman as "a very typical current demonstration of the exploitation of the Negro jazz musicians by the white business man."[84]

The allegiances of Jazz Composers Guild members were frequently tested in this multipolar scene, and the distrust among certain members never entirely dissipated. This situation was further influenced by the fact that while the organization was scraping together the funds to launch a record label and buy a building, most of the incoming money was spent on rent, first at the Cellar Café and then at Edith Stephen's dance studio. In this regard, their attempt to reorient the musical field had its limits—itinerant and financially strapped jazz musicians did not usually have wealthy patrons or rent-free performance spaces such as the Judson Church, which was home to so many white experimental artists during these years. Immediately after Stollman offered to record everyone who had taken part in the October Revolution, several Guild musicians had recorded for him. Greene and Sun Ra followed in 1965, after the collective broke up.[85] On the other side, Baraka was the closest the New Thing had to a Jill Johnston or a Virgil Thomson, critics who championed the work of the Judson Dance Theater artists and Cage and his associates, respectively. Baraka's long-standing friendship with and promotion of Shepp, and the personal animosity between him and Dixon, surely fostered the young saxophonist's ambivalent relationship to the Guild. Rudd and Tchicai, too, pursued opportunities with Baraka during their tenure in the Guild, and once Baraka relocated to Harlem, his strident black nationalism was a better fit for the Afrocentric cosmology of Sun Ra than the interracial coalition of the Guild had been.[86]

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The Jazz Composers Guild was an interracial organization, but it was hardly a model of racial harmony. To comprehend fully how various discourses of race were colliding in and around the organization, it is necessary briefly to consider the wider terrain of race in the United States

at this time, particularly in the sphere of jazz discourse, the avant-garde jazz underground of New York City, and finally the Guild itself. The two decades following World War II were a period of transition between two paradigms of understanding race in the United States.[87] The first paradigm, color blindness, was part of an antiracist response to the discourse of biological essentialism, the dominant theory of race until the 1920s. By evading questions of color and power, this strategy asserts that we are all the same under the skin, that we all have the same chances to succeed materially, and that any explicit marking of race in public discourse is both impolite and evidence of racial "prejudice." Whereas color blindness willfully turns away from the structural inequalities of race by emphasizing the attitudes of individuals, the competing paradigm, which Ruth Frankenberg terms "race cognizance," draws attention to racial difference and its cultural, social, and economic constitution as "a fundamentally structuring feature of U.S. society."[88] In more historically specific terms, this constituted a transition from melting-pot assimilationism to the nationalist movements of the 1960s, but both discourses continue to frame thinking about race, and despite the increasing presence of race cognizance in the public arena, the dominant racial thinking continues to evade questions of color and power.

The heated debates over race and culture in the jazz world of the early and mid-1960s were in essence a struggle between the discourse of color blindness held by most white musicians, critics, record producers, and club owners, and the paradigm of race cognizance increasingly deployed by African American musicians, artists, and writer/critics.[89] The frank commentaries on race and power offered by such musicians as Mingus, Roach, Lincoln, Shepp, and Sonny Rollins were met with hostile accusations of "Crow Jim" (or "reverse racism," in contemporary parlance) from the critical establishment, who had been schooled in evasion of color and power as the proper and appropriate response to discussions about race, a worldview that perceived a black nationalist organization such as the Nation of Islam to be just as racist as the white supremacist group Ku Klux Klan.[90] At the same time, there were different types of race cognizance in circulation during these years. The racial consciousness of the Black Arts writers, critics, and musicians around Baraka (Lawrence Neal, Spellman, Shepp, Graves, and others) was characterized by a polarization of positions, perhaps best summarized by the title of a panel discussion sponsored by *Liberator* magazine in 1965: "Is Pro-Black Necessarily Anti-White?"[91] Though these separatist and militant impulses are often identified with Stokely Carmichael's assertion of "Black Power!" in the summer of 1966, this strain of black

nationalism was clearly coming into form several years earlier. Dixon, on the other hand, subscribed to a race-cognizant position that differed in important ways from both the separatism of Baraka and the color blindness of white jazz musicians and critics. As the organizer and leader of the Guild, Dixon's complex perspective on race created points of both agreement and contention with the race-conscious black players and their rather apolitical white comrades.

Dixon was not sympathetic to the aims and rhetoric of Neal, Spellman, and Baraka, doubting above all the genuineness of their commitment: "My problem with the black nationalists as a group . . . was that it was a bunch of rhetoric. It was never going anywhere. . . . Two words of Swahili does not make you a knowing African." Because he believed in basic tenets of the avant-garde—the possibility of musical progress and the need for innovative individuals—Dixon objected to the cultural nationalist search for African origins. "They're going backwards," he later remarked. "They want to beat drums, they want to think that the Africans are doing this."

Dixon also questioned the radical bona fides of Baraka and his comrades in the Black Arts Repertory Theatre and School (BARTS). Referring to the fact that BARTS activities were funded with more than $200,000 in grants from HARYOU (Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited), a city-level administrator program for federal antipoverty funds, Dixon commented, "Now here's the way I looked at it . . . : they are forming their all-black organizations, and applying to the government for funds to be rebellious. And they don't see the ambiguity there." Jerry G. Watts also points out that BARTS loses its sting as a revolutionary undertaking when one considers that the Johnson administration viewed HARYOU as a means of temporarily pacifying a population that was on the edge of exploding into open rebellion.[92]

In 1965, Neal, a central figure in the Black Arts Movement (which he referred to as the "spiritual sister" of Black Power), articulated his view of who was—and who was not—the proper audience for black cultural production: "Recognition from dominant white society should not be the *primary* aim of the Black artist. He must decide that his art belongs primarily to his own people."[93] It is not difficult to interpret these words in the context of concerts given by the Jazz Composers Guild to preponderately white audiences. Neal and his colleagues were interested in framing the new black experimental music as a continuation of the African American jazz tradition, which they considered a powerful symbol of blackness. There was no room in this perspective of black music for a white audience on the Upper West Side or in the West Village. The preferable alternative

FIGURE 7. A rehearsal of the Jazz Composers Guild Ensemble, likely dating from July 1965. From left: Michael Mantler (trumpet), Roswell Rudd (trombone), Makanda Ken McIntyre (alto saxophone), Milford Graves (drums), John Tchicai (alto saxophone), and Charles Davis (baritone saxophone). Obscured by Mantler is Carla Bley (piano). Photograph by John Hoppy Hopkins, www.hoppy.be.

for advocates of black nationalism was to be found at sites such as BARTS, where "the community and the artist could meet each other in a harmonious and natural setting."[94]

White audiences were off limits for Baraka and his circle, and white musicians, too, were the targets of their critical attacks. In his review of the Four Days in December festival, Spellman reserved his strongest criticism for the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble—the festival's only majority-white group.[95] By observing that the band played "on the conservatory level," Spellman cast them as the kind of effete dabblers who don't belong in an authentic jazz setting, a trope that turns on the long-standing equation of black culture with noninstitutional pedagogy and corporate-sponsored mass media (as opposed to noncommercial or academic discourses).[96] The most interesting part of Spellman's response to the FFIE is the passage where, echoing Morgenstern's comments on the October Revolution; he points out that "much of their music has little to do with jazz."[97] He continues, "Why were they here? Dixon says he didn't want the Guild to be thought an all-black organization, which seems to me

an unnecessary hang-up, especially since more than ten white musicians appeared in the series, and since two other groups were led by white musicians."[98] In his review, Spellman seemed to be doing two things at once: first, he implied that the Guild should be an all-black organization, and, second, he stated that if it is to be interracial, then it would suffice to have Rudd, Mantler, Carla Bley, and Paul Bley (whose performance Spellman mentioned but did not review) as white representatives.

In this context, Dixon's invitation to the white musicians of the FFIE to join the Guild, and his interest in creating and presenting "both jazz and non-jazz," marked him as an enemy of the black nationalist imperative to close down interaction with European history and culture. That imperative was articulated by Graves, one of the musicians who followed Baraka into cultural nationalism, when he told Neal in 1965, "The Black musician must withdraw from the Western concept and economic thing."[99] Picking up the thread from Spellman, Graves also criticized the Guild for including white members. "Graves believes that this organization should have been all *Black,*" Neal summarized, "because our musicians face greater problems than white musicians."[100] As John Gennari points out, Baraka became a "master of incendiary anti-white rhetoric" after the spring of 1965, and his "blacker-than-thou posture not only put a torch to the Martin Luther King–led civil rights movement vision of an interracial beloved community, but also cordoned off black culture as a blacks-only space, a culture whites did not have the biological and mental equipment to feel and perceive."[101]

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Black nationalism was also a discourse of gender that turned on tropes of masculinity and patriarchy; in the words of Winifred Breines, "The black male stood center stage, strong, proud, and furious, a crucial building block in the imagery of black nationalism. His rage anchored the movement."[102] In the jazz milieu, gender patterning prescribed desirable aesthetic qualities based on gendered codes of musical meaning—the qualities most admired were volume, "raw" and extreme emotion, dominating tone, and virtuosic displays of hand and breath control. Baraka vividly expressed these values in his evocative description of Albert Ayler: "He had a sound, alone, unlike anyone else's. It tore through you, broad, jagged like something out of nature. . . . Like the thunder or the lightening or the ocean storming and mounting, crushing whatever was in its path."[103] This discourse of masculinity provided the vocabulary in which Dixon and the Black Arts writers enacted their mutual hostility; when Baraka and Spellman criticized Dixon's playing, it may well have been in particular because the trumpeter

avoided the tropes of dominant free jazz masculinity in his musical style. (Spellman's observation that Dixon's "lips are too soft because of lack of practice" is one representative swipe.)[104]

Whiteness—and thus interracialism—also assumed gendered and sexualized meanings in Baraka's rhetoric of this period. As Fred Moten argues, the stabilized heteronormativity of Baraka's black nationalism was conditioned by the downtown bohemian scene that preceded his 1965 turn toward Black Arts. Ingrid Monson describes the scene: "This hip subculture, comprising black Americans interested in Western artistic nonconformity and white Americans captivated by urban African American styles of music, dress, and speech, fashioned itself as a vanguard cultural force against the 'shoddy cornucopia of popular American culture.'"[105] Downtown bohemianism was nothing if not transgressive, and Moten centers the discussion on homoeroticism. He writes,

> [T]he limits of black arts are set by the rejection of a certain revolutionary embrace that is embedded in bohemianism. . . . There are questions here concerning decadence or deviance. The black arts are, in part, the cultural vehicle of return to a certain moral fundamentalism, one based on (the desire for) African tradition rather than white/bourgeois normativity. This is to say that they would enact a return to the former after having enacted the bohemian rejection of the latter. The embrace of the homoerotic is, here, an opening and not an aim.[106]

Baraka and his circle of black artists and intellectuals joined white comrades in resisting bourgeois, white normativity; this resistance was linked with nonnormative sexual practices, including same-race and interracial homosexuality and interracial heterosexuality.[107] Baraka recast these transgressive sexualities—particularly homosexuality—as deviant when he moved uptown in 1965. (Interracial heterosexuality, on the other hand—for example, Baraka's marriage to the Jewish Hettie Cohen—produced far more ambivalence: on one hand, it expanded the black man's agency by enlarging his sexual domain; on the other hand, it betrayed a weakness for the forbidden fruit and the potential dilution of strong black bloodlines. Interracial heterosexuality for black women, then as now, was often the object of severe disapproval.)[108] It was *through* his break with Village bohemia that Baraka refigured the Village as a white bohemia, the site of sexually deviant transgressions of weak, effeminate white men. These discursive poles of a strong black male heterosexuality and a soft white male homosexuality animated Baraka's writing in this period. His famous 1965 essay "American Sexual Reference: Black Male" begins with the bracing but representative declaration: "Most American white men are trained to be fags."[109]

A few years later, Baraka published the short play *Rockgroup,* which featured "4 boys in whiteface" wearing "Beetle suits" in a band called The Crackers.[110] The action of the play is relatively straightforward: a band is introduced, takes the stage, sets up, and performs a song ("White shit white shit white shit/hocuspocus in the clouds allright"). After their brief concert, The Crackers bow to the effusive applause of the crowd, "dainty and faggish and removed from reality swaggering like toygirls."[111] As dollars rain down from above, the band collects the money and packs up their instruments; it is revealed that their "geetahs" were plugged into the rear end of a black man who had been slumped underneath a black cloth at the back of the stage during the performance. The man wears tawdry remnants of a showbiz career: "falling down konk and raggidy *[sic]* sequined stage evening clothes." The Crackers place this secret source of their power into a traveling case, placating him with a little money, some "white powder," and "then one of the white boys put on a lady outfit, and kiss him on lips, then nigger, he swoon dead away in box, and white boys carry him off with them."

With this final flourish, Baraka not only criticizes his own past interracialism by lumping it in with economic exploitation and drug abuse but also casts white men as "dainty toygirls" who seduce and deceive black men. It is worth pointing out that many, if not most, of the downtown bohemian "whites" whom Baraka rejected were in fact Jewish. Jeffrey Melnick has advanced a persuasive hidden history of black-Jewish male homoeroticism that is pertinent here, yet Baraka continually elided the difference between Jewishness and whiteness, indicating that for him the move uptown effected a certain simplification of racial difference.[112] Given the traditional feminization of the male Jewish body, Baraka's rhetorical strategy effectively minimized the difference between "whiteness" and "effeminacy" by lumping Jewishness and whiteness together.[113] The collapsing distinction between interracial romance and male homoerotic seduction in *Rockgroup* suggests that by 1969, at the height of his cultural nationalist years, Baraka viewed his earlier bohemian period as a blur of cross-racial hetero- and homoerotic sexual energy that required a forceful rejection in his reorientation toward black nationalism.

According to Moten, Cecil Taylor complicated Baraka's break with downtown, for Taylor avoided a clear presentation of straight, queer, gay, or bisexual identity. His ambivalent sexual presentation, queering him in the eyes of others, was problematic in what Patricia Hill Collins has described as "a hegemonic discourse of *Black sexuality* that has at its core ideas about an assumed promiscuity among heterosexual African Ameri-

can men and women and the impossibility of homosexuality among Black gays and lesbians."[114] Nonetheless, Taylor had by the mid-1960s earned unassailable credentials as a leader of the black avant-garde, even as his problematic sexual ambivalence seemed to cut across and destabilize the moral fundamentalism of Black Arts heterosexuality.

This figuration of Taylor's ambivalence showed up in Baraka's 1965 review of a performance by Pharoah Sanders, Marion Brown, and the former Guild member Burton Greene: "Greene's 'style' is pointed, I would presume, in the direction of Cecil Taylor and, I would also suppose, with Taylor, the Euro-American, Tudor-Cage, Stockhausen-Wolf [sic]-Cowell-Feldman interpretations."[115] Within that "certain moral fundamentalism" that grounds Baraka's analysis in this passage, two liminal figures emerge to mediate musical difference along parallel axes of race and sexuality. Greene's Jewish identity mediates the racial binarism of strong black jazz and weak white avant-gardism (though Baraka clearly places him closer to the latter), whereas Taylor's elusive sexuality floats between heteronormative blackness and male homosexual Jewish/whiteness. (As hip to the "Euro-American" scene as anyone, Baraka was undoubtedly aware of the nonnormative sexualities of Cage, Tudor, and Cowell.) Through the doubled inscription of Greene's style "toward the direction of Cecil Taylor," Baraka dismisses both whiteness and homosexuality under the cover of musical style.

In a context of material deprivation, marked by nonexistent or limited employment opportunities and unequal wage structures, the discourse of "fundamentalist" black heterosexual masculinity provided a realignment of power toward those to whom it had historically been denied. (Indeed, the status of women as significant wage earners in the African American community contributed to this articulation of black male power.) Jazz was one arena where labor could be reframed as a (black) male activity. Although Dixon was suspicious of the linkages between black nationalism and avant-garde jazz, he shared Spellman's view of the music as men's work. In our interview, Dixon explained, "[T]here were very few people who were like Mary Lou Williams and those people, because first of all, the life was so rough, and the men—if you want to look at it, here's a guy works in the garment center all day, taking all that crap, going through that stuff, but he's got his horn, comes home, and goes out and plays—it was the *only* thing these guys had!" Dixon went on to clarify, "I can tell you this: it was a male-dominated music, because that's what the men wanted to do. They wanted to play, and they had no problems playing for hours, rehearsing for hours, doing all this kind of stuff."

FIGURE 8. Roswell Rudd, Michael Mantler, and Carla Bley rehearse ahead of a July 1965 performance by the Jazz Composers Guild Ensemble. Photograph by John Hoppy Hopkins, www.hoppy.be.

This aggressively masculine social environment characterized jazz in general and the Guild in particular, yet Roswell Rudd's positive memory of a "certain amount of good competitiveness" at the October Revolution in Jazz takes on a different meaning when considered from the perspective of a female instrumentalist or composer who might feel less willing to participate in a such a contest. In fact, Carla Bley's invitation to join the Guild was extended only after debate among the members. Dixon later recalled, "I had to really be very, very severe with the Guild. They didn't want Carla in the group, because of Sun Ra. Sun Ra was against it. My feeling was, first of all, Carla at the time wrote all of the music for Paul Bley, so she was one half of Paul, so she deserved it. He wrote no music at the time, he just played, so that was Carla's thing." Bley's presence apparently did little to alter the belligerent and famously antagonistic mood of Guild meetings, which in her memory were full of shouting and challenges to "put it on the table!" Well known as a misogynist who discouraged women from entering the Arkestra's communal living and rehearsal spaces, Sun Ra was particularly hostile to Carla Bley.[116] When things began to sour in the Guild, he is said to have recounted the old seamen's legend according to which taking a woman on a voyage will sink the ship.[117] Though painfully shy at the time,

Bley did not take this abuse quietly, and remembers the shouting match that ensued and her angry departure from the meeting.[118]

Apparently Bley could go toe-to-toe with other Guild members when pressed, but anecdotal evidence suggests the ways in which she was viewed differently from her male colleagues. One musician who was not a member of the collective but played in a group with Guild musicians recalled that he enjoyed frequenting Guild events because he thought Bley was attractive. Another exceedingly polite and helpful (male) member discussed all the sidetracks the group pursued during the course of an ordinary meeting. When asked about the subject of these digressions, he replied, "Oh, anything! It could have been about . . . pussy! Well, if Carla wasn't there." This flippant but revealing comment indicates that Bley's gender was present at meetings even in her absence, and that there was certain "business" that could only be conducted among male members of the Guild.

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The notion of purity was a key element in the discursive repertoire of this milieu, and the theorists of the Black Arts Movement and members of the Guild deployed a rigid rhetoric of purity. Baraka and his associates constructed black nationalism on a foundation of cultural purity; any association with or involvement in what was thought to be "European," "Western," or white was condemned. They viewed these types of interactions not as positive instances of hybridity, dialogue, interactivity, or code switching but rather as simple examples of corruption. The Black Arts Movement derived strength and passion from this formulation of a pure African American essence, based as it was on the historical retention of African cultural elements. In his important essay on black music, "The Changing Same (R&B and New Black Music)," Baraka attempted to chart this mutable essence as it appeared in both rhythm and blues and avant-garde jazz, or "New Black Music," and he paid particular attention to how the "blues impulse" in both of these musics interacted with the "whitening" influences of commercialism and formal training.

Like the Black Arts theorists, Dixon felt that his radical solution to an oppressive social and economic environment necessitated a theoretically pure position from which he could attempt his transformation of mainstream jazz institutions. He sought to move beyond the exploitation of the jazz industry by cutting off all interaction and withdrawing to a space uncontaminated by compromise. Dixon remembers that his was the most extreme position in the Guild—he was, for example, the only one who wanted to withdraw the music from the market completely. The

commitment to purity also informed his criticism of BARTS for accepting government funds to finance their undertaking; in his view, if one does not separate completely from hegemonic networks, one is colluding with them. Such rigorously pure positions reached their breaking point in the 1960s, when the clarity of past eras dissolved into the complexity of late modernity. One might question the long-term efficacy of any strategy that surrenders or ignores the potentially positive, enabling, and productive aspects of ambivalence, partial participation, multiple allegiances, and polyvalent tactics. Indeed, the "purity-fixation" of Dixon and the Black Arts writers indicates some measure of naiveté about viable tactics for transforming a complex and contradictory social sphere.

Although Dixon used purity to criticize Baraka for accepting federal assistance, he had to explain his own decision to resist the exclusion of white musicians and refuse withdrawing his music from white audiences. As he pointed out to Robert Levin in 1965, white musicians are treated better than black ones, "significantly better, but not much better—that's why they're in the guild."[119] The purity of principle with which Dixon sought to transform the jazz establishment did not mean that he would ignore white listeners. "How are you going to function in a predominantly white society and ignore the white musicians who are virtually in the same situation that you're in . . . ? We never performed before any black audience, for god's sake. I was desperately trying to get young blacks to come, as much as I could without kowtowing to them," he recalled in 2006.[120]

Harold Cruse's description of the early 1960s as a moment of transition between two generations of black political activism suggests another way to interpret the conflict between Dixon's interracialism and the Black Arts' separatism. According to Cruse, since the 1920s white communists and liberal organizers had instilled in black leaders the urgent need for interracialism as the only viable political strategy to combat racism, poverty, and imperialism. Cruse was referring specifically to the Popular Front ideology of the national Communist Party in the 1930s and the liberal paternalism of the 1940s and 1950s, which severed any historical continuity between the young black activists of the 1960s and the pan-Africanism of Marcus Garvey in the 1920s. "Every other ethnic group in America, a 'nation of nations,' has accepted the fact of its separateness and used it to its own social advantage," Cruse wrote. "But the Negro's conditioning has steered him into that perpetual state of suspended tension wherein ninety-five per cent of his time and energy is expended on fighting prejudice in whites."[121] Younger intellectuals such as Baraka and Neal had swung far to the other side in their rejection of interracialism. Cruse observed, "Negroes had

become so deeply mired in an institutionalized form of political interracialism that they could not break with it unless sufficient hatred were mustered to avoid the necessity of apologizing to whites for excluding them." Cruse was critical of both moments; though he argued for the assertion of ethnic separateness, he also condemned the Black Arts Movement for claiming a leadership position without first developing a social, economic, political, or cultural analysis of the plight of African Americans.[122]

Dixon was nearly forty years old at the time of the October Revolution, whereas most of the musicians and intellectuals associated with the Black Arts Movement were in their twenties, among them Shepp (twenty-seven), Graves (twenty-three), Spellman (twenty-nine), Neal (twenty-seven), and Baraka, who turned thirty years old the week of the festival. Generational tension seems to have been in play. Already in his earlier Greenwich Village bohemian period, Baraka had exhibited mild contempt for his elders. In his essay "Cuba Libre," in which he detailed his trip to Cuba in 1960 as part of a delegation of black writers and intellectuals, Baraka described his disappointment with the "1920's New Negro type" and "1930's type" writers in the group, none of whom he considered "important."[123] According to Cruse, this disdain carried over into the writer's nationalist phase: "[Baraka] once threatened to picket the NAACP, for no other reason than that it represented the old guard, of which [Baraka] was contemptuous."[124] It seems that Dixon, however, remained committed to educating whites about the evils of racism, as exemplified by the panel discussions that Dixon moderated at the October Revolution, in which he guided his "almost exclusively white" audience through heated considerations of the structures of inequality that plagued African American musicians in New York. In recalling these panels he articulated his pedagogical aim explicitly: "In hindsight, the panels would not have been a success if . . . everyone wasn't at least being made aware of something, thinking about it, and wanted to be a part of it. Whether anything was done after they left that room or not—that's another point. The thing was, I am convinced that certain things were said and done . . . [that] people were stuck with as knowledge for the rest of their lives." In the eyes of Dixon's younger colleagues, this concern with educating whites in the evils of racism appeared old-fashioned, futile, and even spineless, especially in a context already conditioned by the association of integration with obeisance and vulnerability.

After forming the Guild, Dixon continued to raise awareness among his white colleagues about the realities of racism. He told Robert Levin in 1965 that the civil rights struggle and the racist structures of the jazz establishment "represent vast problems of which very few people have any

real awareness or even the desire to be aware."[125] This position on interracialism and integration—though frowned upon by Cruse as an unhealthy fixation on white society—grew out of what Dixon saw as the social reality of the New Thing. In his review of Spellman's *Four Lives in the Bebop Business* (1967), Dixon pointedly observed that whites are "in effect the only audience that this music has. None of the new music is played in Negro neighborhoods, Negro colleges or universities and neither do black people purchase in any numbers of consequence any of the recordings. So when it is constantly noted that this music has a following, one has to be aware of who the following is."[126]

Who *did* constitute "the following"? Though he felt that the New Thing spoke for the black community, Baraka left his bohemian life in the Village to cultivate a following for the new jazz (and African American theatre and letters) among the black poor in Harlem. The contradiction that resulted—recycling the Black Arts to the masses who were supposed to have been represented by them in the first place—did not escape Baraka, who later commented, "Really most of the black intellectuals there, even though all of us lived in Harlem, were still not part of the whole organic, dynamics of the community. We were sort of, I think, superficial to the community even with the Black Arts."[127] Graves, too, has recalled that neighborhood audiences in Harlem were often quite hostile to the New Thing, on one occasion bombarding his band with boos and even eggs. Asked about the audiences for events in the BARTS building, he replied, "Average folks? No way. People from the neighborhood hardly ever came in there." The split between Baraka and the community he claimed to speak for cast the writer as a bourgeois nationalist, lecturing the black masses on how to be black and displaying an authoritarian streak that Dixon himself found repellent. "I didn't want to be controlled and work under people who had to get their finances from a group of people that they claimed were holding them down. All I want is the freedom to be able to do whatever I think I'm able to do. I don't want some half-ass over here editing me."

The will to self-actualization that is evident in this comment raises an important point about what type of organization the Guild actually was. Though the aim was to elevate the status of the New Thing as a whole, the Guild was a collection of individuals, banding together because of the strength that accrues in a group. And though Dixon devoted his life to advancing the position of new black music, he undertook this project primarily with the aim of clearing space for himself as an artist to pursue his work without obstacles or editorial oversight. His was a fundamentally different philosophy of commitment and communalism from the one

employed by Baraka and his nationalist circle. For all its somewhat overblown claims to leadership of the black masses, Baraka's movement was for community, strength, and unity through the naturalization of racial difference—a strategic essentialism. Baraka's "The Changing Same" is above all an attempt to find the linkages, despite their many apparent differences, between R&B and new black music. The Guild was undoubtedly a political organization, too, but its politics were derived from the will to self-actualization, not group-actualization. The strength of the group was necessary only as the foundation and stepping-stone toward aesthetic self-making. This is the key difference between the Guild and groups associated with the Black Arts. In pursuing the freedom to develop and present his own aesthetics, Dixon's position was not far removed from that of the white bohemians in the Village from whom Baraka was escaping in the spring of 1965.[128] For these white experimentalists, "freedom" meant only the freedom to create and publicize their own work.

Dixon's project would always differ from that of European American artists, however. Though he wished to have his work received on the same terms as those applied to other serious avant-garde composers, that reception was denied to him by the racial connotations of the jazz tradition that he was associated with. This fundamental fact insured that he could never push social and political matters to the background; merely by attempting to write music and have it performed under conditions that white composers would have taken for granted brought him into confrontation with a powerful racial discourse of musical creativity. The first obstacle that Dixon had to negotiate as a composer was the automatic relegation of his work to the discursive field of jazz; there in turn it was rejected because it did not "swing" or properly extend "the tradition." Dixon's second obstacle was the "difficulty" that avant-garde music posed to all audiences. This aspect of innovative music—and, consequently, the struggle to create and maintain an audience for avant-garde work—were likewise obstacles for the white players in the New Thing, especially those in the Guild. They, too, identified with his desire to create a "non-jazz" arena for the production and distribution of their work, but they remained racially unmarked and thus free from Dixon's first obstacle. Indeed, because most of the white members in the Guild employed a racial discourse of color blindness, they overlooked the possibility of a society structured in dominance and assumed that the *only* problems facing avant-garde jazz musicians were an unsympathetic critical community, uninterested club owners, and record companies that were too timid to take a chance on the new music.

Mantler, for example, joined the organization because their work—

whether "jazz" or not—wasn't being performed. "The music was very difficult, and was indeed 'new,' and at times, rather unpleasant and noncommercial. So it was obviously limited to a small audience like any avant-garde music normally is." Mantler recalled that the Guild was initially more concerned with the practical matters of promoting itself and putting on concerts, but gradually some of the African American members began to center on issues of race and politics in their meetings. "I was interested in music. I had no interest in this being a political organization—black/white and stuff. To me, it was political in a social sense that that music could not be performed. People who were in that music could not make a living doing it. So that was the issue. And that's what I think it started out being, then later, because certain people were more colorful . . . than others, it just got bogged down by endless discussions and screaming matches."

Although Mantler's opinion that the political "is never good for music" was perhaps the most extreme position, several of his white colleagues were also confused by or resistant to a focus on race. Comments of Paul Bley, Greene, Gary William Friedman, and Carla Bley on the racial turn of the Guild range from hostile to naive. Paul Bley wrote in his 1999 autobiography, in his typically acerbic tone: "What a bunch of wounded souls there were at these meetings. Talk about group therapy. It was nothing for someone to stand up at a meeting and talk for two or three hours about the pain that they felt, the struggle—inter-group, inter-race, inter-class, inter-family, inter-musical, inter-*everything*. The next night, the working nucleus of the Guild would get together and do all the work."[129] Though Greene was the victim of a pointed critique from Baraka in *Down Beat*, where the critic implied that Greene was unable to assimilate the "black spirit-energy sound" of his African American band mates Pharoah Sanders and Marion Brown, the pianist maintained that race was unimportant to the major figures in the music:[130] "[I] still feel that was a great period," he later remarked, "and I must say that the innovators of this music—and we all know who they are—don't have time for this petty, penny-ante shit. They're color-blind. They're busy with some much bigger issues." The comments of Friedman—who was a member of FFIE but not of the Guild—are also representative: "It never occurred to me who was black and who was white, and who was gay and who was straight, and who was a Jew. . . . It didn't matter to me, the only thing that mattered was the music that I played."

White musicians, interested as they were in "the music itself," considered the frequent forays into social and political issues during Guild meetings to distract from the main issue. Rudd commented to Taylor once after

a meeting that he knew that paranoia can be a good thing at times, but that perhaps it was dominating the tone of the discussion and keeping them from dealing with business at hand. Taylor responded that they still had far to go. In Rudd's recollection, "We were in the process of something, and that stuff would have to be worked out. But he [Taylor] agreed with me, that time was getting wasted some of the time." Rudd's recollection indicates that there was a fundamental disagreement about the value of examining racial issues. Though Taylor could recognize that the meetings were not models of efficiency, he continued to believe that matters of race were essential to their conversations about self-determination and the promotion of their work.

Carla Bley has recalled that the white members simply did not understand the anger of some of the black musicians, a failure of empathy and identification that undermined their interest in building an interracial coalition.[131] The white members of the organization thought that all jazz musicians were in the same situation—black and white, they were eking out a living by playing the music they loved. Greene recalled that, for him, black nationalism meant that people who used to be his friends no longer spoke to him. "One black guy at the time said to me, 'Hey man, . . . why are you playing this game, man? Why don't you take it easy, go work in your father's bank?' I said, 'What father's bank? My father struggled for years on the road selling eyeglasses—he was never a banker.'" Greene's point is well taken but also shows an inability to recognize the power of whiteness and his own position in a social hierarchy, that broader level of ethnic privilege implied by the reference to his "father's bank." Whether or not all the members of the Guild were equally poverty-stricken and bereft of work, the notion that they had identical experiences of deprivation disappointed and angered black musicians who felt that some in the group did not recognize their racial oppression. White players may have believed that through jazz they were forging interracial bonds of empathy and cooperation (and, in many ways, they were), but Dixon reminds us of the signal difference that the whites *chose* to play the music, whereas blacks had no other option.[132]

Though Dixon resisted the polarizing stance of black nationalist writers, he was not therefore incognizant of race. Indeed, he clearly registered the impact of race on the internal dynamics of the Guild: "[E]ven in the Guild, which is comprised of some very intelligent people, there has been a subtle, but apparent, indignation on the part of the white members (and this is something I think nearly all white men have in them) that a black man . . . myself, Cecil . . . could conceive and execute an idea that would be

intelligent and beneficial to all."[133] With such acute racial divisions in the Guild, it was not surprising that—according to Dixon—votes in the organization proceeded along racial lines. Mantler and Rudd have no memory of this, but Graves recalled a palpable racial tension in the meeting he visited in 1964. Referring to something he had heard in private, he commented, "I used to say to myself, 'I wonder if the white guys are talking about the black cats like the black cats are talking about the white guys when we're not with each other.' . . . People didn't understand that there was suspicion of white people at the time."

According to Mantler, there were varying degrees of race cognizance in the Guild. Shepp and Sun Ra (the latter in his own intergalactic way) were particularly outspoken, whereas Tchicai adopted a more color-blind position. In a 1966 profile by Morgenstern (with the somewhat patronizing title "John Tchicai: A Calm Member of the Avant-Garde"), Tchicai revealed a position similar to Mantler's: "Whether you are a black or a white artist, if you are playing the new music that people haven't been exposed to, it's obvious that you will meet a lot of resistance, and you can't fall back and blame it on the black and white thing."[134] Silva, too, was critical of nationalism, insisting that, "If I had a band I wanted it *integrated*—I support this great tradition. Free jazz was later thrown in with Black Power and I don't agree with that."[135]

Carla Bley interpreted the prolonged discussion of race as a personal rejection, one that would eventually lead to her own growing race consciousness. She told a critic that upon returning from Europe in 1967 "I began to get an overview of myself as a white woman. . . . I realized I had European roots, so why was I trying to find African roots? I'd been like a bastard—if you're a bastard, you don't inherit. I decided if they don't want me, I don't want them."[136] Greene has written that the criticism he received as a white musician contributed to his decision to leave New York for Paris in 1969. "This stuff was symbolic of what a lot of creative, sensitive people who just happened to be White had to put up with in the '60s from, often Black, writers who put down anything with White origins that happened in America," he writes.[137] Though Greene understood why the circle around Baraka wanted to make sure that the white critical establishment recognized the cultural origins of the music, he thought that their attacks on white musicians hurt the music's prospects by identifying it too readily with political and racial controversies. Echoing Dixon's comments on the reception of the New Thing, Greene writes that these controversies meant that "the predominantly White, middle class audiences would not support any of us, White or Black."[138]

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Other incidents undermined trust within the group. In January 1965, Paul Bley's quintet was scheduled to play a concert at the Contemporary Center during Ornette Coleman's stint at the Village Vanguard, two floors below. The nightly performances by Coleman's trio were the first public appearances by Coleman in nearly two years, making them the talk of the town. Apparently unwilling to compete for listeners and attention, Paul Bley did not show up for his engagement and instead absconded to Florida with money from the Guild treasury. Bley repaid the money when he returned, but the Guild held a vote to expel him; the vote was evenly split (and thus unsuccessful).[139] On another occasion, several members visited a foundation or government agency (accounts vary) in hopes of obtaining a large grant or a donated building; the delegation had suppressed differences of opinion for most of the meeting and were close to securing a deal, when Sun Ra chose an inopportune moment to express doubts about accepting a gift from the institution in question. His speech spooked the institutional representative, and nothing came of the meeting.[140] Such incidents reminded Guild members that the trust necessary to build consensus would never be achieved in this atmosphere of competing interests.

The most serious and painful breach of Guild principles involved the record contract that Shepp signed with Impulse! records in the late summer of 1964. Almost every existing published account of the Guild has erroneously reported that Shepp signed with Impulse! during the brief existence of the collective, and that this act of self-interested careerism outraged his colleagues and compromised the integrity of the organization. In fact, as the record sleeve makes clear, Shepp's *Four for Trane* was recorded in August 1964 by Bob Thiele, who as producer for Impulse! would not have engineered the session without first signing Shepp to a deal; in other words, Shepp had received his contract before the founding of the Guild.[141] This fact is corroborated by Stollman, who recalls standing outside the Cellar Café during the October Revolution with Shepp, who cordially turned down Stollman's offer to record for ESP-Disk with the comment "I am an Impulse! artist." The bitter arguments over Shepp's contract were thus not about his surreptitious acquisition of a solo recording gig but rather with his continuing refusal to renegotiate the deal in accordance with Guild principles. In Dixon's opinion, the Impulse! contract garnered an inordinate amount of commentary, when in fact all members of the Guild had their own fruitful contacts and individual opportunities that carried over into the collective (including, for example, the negotiations of Rudd and

Paul Bley with Stollman in the first few weeks of the Guild's existence). But Shepp's reticence over his recording contract was part of a larger pattern of omitting to mention the Guild in his public statements; this became all the more conspicuous when Shepp was the subject or author of six articles in the mainstream jazz press in the year or so following the establishment of the Guild—two in *Jazz* (January and August 1965), two in *Jazz Magazine* (June and December 1965), and two in *Down Beat* (January and December 1965).[142]

Many members of the Guild were outraged, however, about the contract. Greene, who described the contract as "hand to mouth tokenism," has written, "Of course a lot of us were really hungry, but we're always being tested to see if we're really serious and dedicated, if we can tighten our belts, or hold out for our basic principles."[143] In 1966, Taylor told *Jazz Magazine*, "If certain members had shown themselves to be stronger and more faithful to their promises, if there had been agreement between their actions and their values, the Guild would still exist."[144] Silva, too, was unforgiving: "Archie was bound by the bylaws of the company, and he broke the law. . . . It led to the downfall of the structure we had imposed upon ourselves."[145]

Sun Ra, however, lumped Shepp's indiscretion in with those of all the other members of the Guild: "[E]verybody was vowing they weren't going to get put under the big companies—when everybody did but me. . . . But then, it's possible they were only trying to survive and that's the only way they saw to play the game."[146] Survival seems to have been the motivating factor for Shepp, who said in 1994, "I wasn't into music simply to continue to be poor. I had a family. . . . I was moved by a different set of references."[147] Carla Bley bluntly contradicted the protestations of other members of the Guild by noting, "We all would have taken that contract if it had been offered to us." Tchicai also deflected blame from Shepp, saying, "I think there was envy among some in the group as well as a dissatisfaction with those who got recording contracts and then started pulling away from the Guild's original founding ideals."[148]

The divergent responses to Shepp's Impulse! deal indicate a basic misunderstanding about the goals of the Jazz Composers Guild that seems to have been in place from the group's inception. Dixon pointed out that he was attempting fundamentally to transform an economic structure that had grown up with the jazz tradition but restrictively channeled the creativity of black artists into a set of exploitative relationships. His long-term goals—prestige, respect, and the freedom to pursue musical projects without the oppressive label "jazz"—could only be reached by first seizing

control of the means of production and distribution. Dixon was not simply withdrawing his music from the market but also cultivating his own audience outside the preexisting channels afforded by a racial discourse that continued to frame jazz musicians as socially deviant, irresponsible, or purveyors of mere entertainment. The French cultural theorist Jacques Attali has referred to this process as the creation of a "parallel industry to produce and promote new music," but Dixon was also concerned with reorienting the flawed but powerful network of jazz production toward new, more equitable arrangements.[149] He believed that creating a counterpublic was one way to effect this reorientation.

However, most of the other musicians in the Guild thought of the organization as an effective marketing tool or collective promotional agreement. In this view, withdrawing the music from the market would simply increase demand and drive up the price, and that would in turn lead to better opportunities for all the affiliated artists. As Dixon has pointed out, "Their thinking was, apparently, get as much mileage out of this Guild, get better gigs, and such and such. . . . So you had—from the very beginning—a cleavage there." In our interview, Greene characterized the group as a "clearinghouse for gigs," and Paul Bley wrote, "As it turned out, the best thing about the Guild was that it promoted all its members."[150] Indeed, many of the associated musicians recorded albums for a variety of labels in the years that followed. About a year after the group's demise, Taylor signed a contract with Blue Note and prepared to take the Unit to Europe to promote his album *¡Conquistador!* Dixon performed on the record, but he refused to join the tour because Taylor was breaking in the group at Slug's Saloon, an East Village bar that had recently become a center of the new music. "I reminded him, 'We decided that we weren't going to be working in these clubs, man!'"

Not everyone was as discriminating in their choice of opportunities: Paul and Carla Bley, Mantler, Shepp, and Taylor all agreed to perform in early July at the 1965 Newport Jazz Festival, which was perhaps the biggest "establishment" gig in the business.[151] Details of how this engagement came about remain unknown, but the producer of the Newport festival, George Wein, probably contacted the musicians in April or May, when the Guild was already close to dissolving. In his comments at a *Jazz* panel discussion on "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," Wein referred to a "somebody" (or "this fellow") who had approached him about presenting the Guild at his festival, but he specified that the only musician he called personally was Cecil Taylor.[152] Dixon was furious that the concert was billed as the Jazz Composers Guild, and he told Wein that he could not

use the name. Wein replied that he had no idea that the organization had dissolved, which led Dixon to conclude that whoever initially spoke to the promoter had misrepresented their situation.[153] Following on the dissension over Shepp's contract with Impulse! the Newport engagement signaled the end of the Guild—in Mantler's words, "That, in the end, killed it."[154] By the time of the final concert at the Contemporary Center on April 18, the group was already disintegrating.

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In his groundbreaking study of the interactions between popular music and the avant-garde, Bernard Gendron argues for making a key distinction between the nature of high/low engagements in modernism prior to the 1940s and the postmodernism of later decades. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, high/low interactions were defined not only through aesthetic and critical discourse but also along institutional lines (as exemplified by the artistic cabaret and *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*) "and in the slumming and secondary aesthetic practices of artist-bohemians."[155] In the postmodern period that emerged with the bebop movement, the central tool through which jazz appropriated the techniques and rhetoric of modernism was the critical discourse of magazines, books, and radio shows. Gendron notes, "Discourse's crucial role in the postmodern turn is further amplified by the fact that none of the other traditional options of contact between high and low were easily available to popular musics in their initial excursions across the divide."[156] Discourse was indeed the only avenue available to jazz in its transformation from entertainment to "art," for it did not enjoy an extended web of patronage, institutional support, formalized educational system, or access to venues that were coded as noncommercial and serious. Furthermore, as a practice of aesthetic boundary crossing, slumming only works in one direction; as Gendron points out, "[W]hat could it have meant for bebop musicians to generate secondary aesthetic practices by 'slumming' in high-cultural haunts?"[157]

But it was precisely because of their subordinate social position that jazz musicians were forced to limit their incursions into high culture to the level of discourse, and this is where I hope to add to Gendron's many insights. Although jazz struggled to make discursive connections to prestigious cultural networks, the musicians of the bebop revolution (and those who followed them) lived and acted in a world where discourse was bound to material realities. My examination of the Jazz Composers Guild is a case study of what happened when the post-Ornette generation of New Thing composers, armed as they were with a modernist aesthetic discourse, came

face to face with the economic reality of exploitative jazz clubs and record companies.

This example demonstrates that networks mobilize connections of different kinds and different strengths. At the level of aesthetics and personal relationships, the jazz underground overlapped significantly with Cagean experimentalism, yet durative and institutionalized patterns of race, commerce, and education severely restricted the ability of musicians to solidify and build on these overlaps in a lasting way. The Guild did achieve material gains—in the creation of alternative performance settings at the Cellar Café and the Contemporary Center, in the occasional concerts at larger halls in midtown, in the small amount of press attention that Guild members began to attract, and in the single-artist recordings that would eventually be issued—but these partial gains were only a fraction of what Dixon had originally envisioned. Perhaps the most important repercussion of the Guild was the entrance some years later of several New Thing musicians into institutions of higher learning; Dixon, Shepp, Graves, Roach, Taylor, Brown, and others all entered academia as professors or graduate students in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The Jazz Composers Guild's brief history was marked by breaks and conflicts of all kinds. This chapter has lingered on those having to do with cultural politics, gender, and sexuality, but the salience of race in each of these discourses is noteworthy. Compared to the ignorance displayed by Henry Flynt's interlocutors in matters of race and power during this period (and after), the example of the Guild provides a stark contrast. Color was not an avoidable issue for the black avant-garde, and the color line marked a sharp edge for experimentalism. Although aesthetic and personal sympathies created connections across this edge, observing the network of the jazz avant-garde shows a social topography quite distinct from that of the European American avant-garde, and investigating the area beyond this edge reveals an experimentalism otherwise. The questions that arise—those of politics, commerce, institutions, audiences, and community—indicate that thinking about experimentalism otherwise requires not only new critical approaches but an awareness of the areas beyond the limits of accepted experimental music history.

CHAPTER 4

# Murder by Cello

*Charlotte Moorman Meets John Cage*

Although Henry Flynt and Action Against Cultural Imperialism made quite a racket outside of Judson Hall on September 8, 1964, the commotion was scarcely louder than what was occurring inside the hall that night. *Originale* was a large-scale happening that Stockhausen had written in 1961 for his circle of friends and colleagues in Cologne. During the composer's visit to New York City in the spring of 1964, the cellist Charlotte Moorman (1933–91) persuaded him to allow her to reprise the work as the centerpiece of her Second Annual Avant Garde Festival. (The Festival also included a week of other performances that year.) Moorman had been living in New York since 1957, and by 1964 she had emerged as a catalytic force in New York experimentalism, owing to her considerable prowess in organizing and promoting large events (and to her close working relationship with Norman Seaman, a well-connected New York concert producer who employed her in the 1960s). Over the next fifteen years, she produced thirteen more Avant Garde Festivals at a number of unorthodox locations throughout the city—among them Central Park, the Staten Island Ferry, and Shea Stadium.

According to Moorman, a key to her negotiations with Stockhausen was the star power of her collaborators:

> [I] said, "I want to do the *Originale,* the theater piece." And he said, "Well, I did that for certain people. I did that for Hans Helm." I said, "Well, we've got Allen Ginsberg here, the poet." He said, "Well, you need Caspari, the director." I said "We have Allan Kaprow, who invented the happening more or less. What

better director do you have than that?" He said, "Well you have to have Paik." And I said, "What's a Paik?"[1]

Stockhausen explained that he had written one part in *Originale* specifically for the Korean-born, German-trained composer and artist Nam June Paik and that no one else could possibly substitute. As luck would have it, Paik had recently arrived in New York, and he soon contacted Moorman about the performance.

The resulting performances (on September 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13) were a cacophonous adventure in collaborative theater.[2] Kaprow, an influential practitioner of environmental art and happenings (the most famous of which was his *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* of 1959), had reconfigured Judson Hall for the five-night run of *Originale* by removing a swath of seats in the auditorium and setting up additional seating onstage. The space was dominated by a towering scaffolding covered with tinfoil, from which Kaprow hung, shouting out directions. During the course of the ninety-four-minute piece, some musicians improvised together and performed works by Stockhausen, while others recited poetry or acted out a variety of small activities. Birds, dogs, fish, and a chimpanzee were also involved. To one side of the stage stood a screen onto which films were projected, and three large mirrors hung from the ceiling. A number of critics thought that Paik's performance stood out: he threw dried beans at the audience and then sprayed shaving cream and ketchup over his head, followed by rice. After a brief recitation and weeping spell, he leapt fully clothed into a large tub of water, drank water from his shoe, and sat down at the piano, banging out a cluster with his head. "For all these pains, Mr. Paik is applauded resoundingly," Faubion Bowers wrote in his review in the *Nation*. "Why? Because they are indeed pains, and he performs with an amazing sincerity—as if it mattered that it, his will, be done."[3]

*Originale* featured several key figures of the downtown avant-garde of the mid-1960s: Kaprow, Paik, Allan Ginsberg, Max Neuhaus, James Tenney, Jackson Mac Low, Alvin Lucier, David Behrman, Robert Breer, and Michael Kirby, to name a few. Although their artistic community was not particularly politically minded, the increasingly volatile civil rights struggle was evident in the performance in various ways. For example, the poet and composer Mac Low donned a Congress of Racial Equality T-shirt ("Freedom Now," it read across the back) when it was his turn to read poetry through a megaphone. Mac Low's contribution to an earlier Festival concert on September 3 was the piece *A Long Hot Summer,* which used chance operations to structure and juxtapose text recitations with

sounds improvised by instrumentalists.[4] In a letter to the poet and critic Denise Levertov, Mac Low described the piece in some detail: "What is read consists of descriptions of events in the Civil Rights movement, the riots, Miss. &c., during this last summer or background economic facts (mostly from Tom Kahn's extremely good League for Industrial Democracy pamphlet, *The Economics of Equality*)."[5] Joining the composer in performance were Paik, Moorman, the bassist Benjamin Patterson, the percussionist Max Neuhaus, and the poet Lorenzo Thomas, who was a young writer from the Umbra Workshop, an African American writers' collective based on the Lower East Side.[6] Acting on Paik's suggestion, Mac Low concluded the performance by passing out Congress of Racial Equality pins to the audience.[7]

We may recall how the movement for black liberation informed Flynt's protest at the Festival, and a few scattered notes in Moorman's collected papers suggest that she had advance warning of Flynt's picket. One scrap, though cryptic, is suggestive: "FLUXUS: Maciunas Resigned[.] Jazz Musicians—lost some picketers[.] 3 picketers—Flint *[sic]* Maciunas."[8] It's that bit about "Jazz Musicians" that catches my eye, and I wonder whether Flynt's demonstration against Stockhausen, and his angry denunciation of the composer's alleged comments about jazz, may have led Moorman to commission the jazz critic and composer Don Heckman to program a "jazz night" during the 1965 festival (and in later years as well). This interpretation would indicate that Moorman seriously misconstrued Flynt's message, but it does suggest one way that his protest registered with the "establishment" of the New York avant-garde.

Moorman was a controversial figure, and this conflict with Flynt was hardly the only one in her career. On August 30, the first evening of the 1964 festival, Moorman premiered her full solo version of John Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* ([1955] 1960), the massive work with which she was most identified and that she would feature prominently in her recitals for years. The performance did not go well, and Cage disapproved of her interpretation of the piece as it developed over the years. This disagreement between Moorman and Cage reveals much about the ways in which individual performers related to the materials of experimentalism. I have so far explored conflicts that defined the edges of an experimentalist network on a large scale, but with Moorman my focus narrows to questions of subjectivity and the care of the self. What might experimentalism reveal about the way an artist becomes a subject, how she relates to the materials of everyday life, and how she manages these relations with the world? In investigating these questions, I hope to address what Georgina Born refers

to as "the insistent, existential reality of the historical orientation of producers by reference to the aesthetic and ethical trajectories or coordinates of the genres in which they work, an orientation that *enables or affords agency*."[9]

I will approach these questions through Michel Foucault's later writings on ethics, which present a way to connect the actions of a single individual to larger patterns of what Foucault called "subjectivation" *(assujettissement),* the process through which one becomes a subject by adapting norms external to the self. Furthermore, Foucault's work suggests a way to rethink agency beyond one-dimensional reductions to resistance or "transgression" and to conceive of experimentalism as a technique of inventing both a self and a culture. As James Faubion puts it, "For the later Foucault at least, resistance is one thing; the ethical field and the cultural invention it allows is another, not to be reduced to mere contrariness."[10] Moorman was not simply a feminist martyr, as Edgard Varèse's nickname for her—"the Jeanne d'Arc of New Music"[11]—might suggest, nor was she a negligent interpreter, as Cage no doubt considered her. The "contrariness" of Moorman's performance will become clear below, but I hope to show further that the concept of agency emerging from this conflict between cellist and composer is a far more variegated process than narratives of liberatory transgression or careless irresponsibility will allow.

My analysis is based on the premise that the care of the self is always entangled in relations of power and conditioned by the norms through which one achieves subjectivity. Here I distinguish subjectivity from the idea of agency, which I define as the management of these modes of subjectivation. The anthropologist Saba Mahmood has insisted that "norms are not only consolidated and/or subverted . . . but performed, inhabited, and experienced in a variety of ways."[12] The following history and analysis of Moorman's *26′ 1.1499″* shows that the cellist treated Cage's score accordingly as a set of rules to be performed, inhabited, and experienced in a variety of ways, rather than being merely obeyed or subverted. I hope to draw out a portrait of the cellist within a tangle of relationships that includes composer, instrument, collaborator (Paik), and fleeting artifacts of everyday life. In the words of the anthropologist Kathleen Stewart, this model of agency is "strange, twisted, caught up in things."[13]

. . .

Moorman's first public performance of a work by Cage occurred on April 15, 1963, at the loft of Philip Corner.[14] She was introduced to the downtown avant-garde scene by her Juilliard classmate, the violinist Kenji Kobayashi,

who occasionally performed pieces by the Japanese experimentalist Toshi Ichiyanagi. Moorman saw Kobayashi perform in January 1961 at the Chambers Street loft of Yoko Ono, who was married to Ichiyanagi at that time.[15] Her introduction to the experimental scene in New York came at a moment when Moorman was searching for new repertory; as she told Fred Stern in 1980, she had been playing the Kabalevsky Cello Concerto innumerable times with regional orchestras around New York. "While I was playing that solo," she recalled, "I was wondering in my mind, had I turned the gas off in my apartment in New York? And I realized, my God, if my mind can wander like this while I'm playing a solo . . . , can you imagine what the audience [is thinking]? So I started looking for contemporary music."[16]

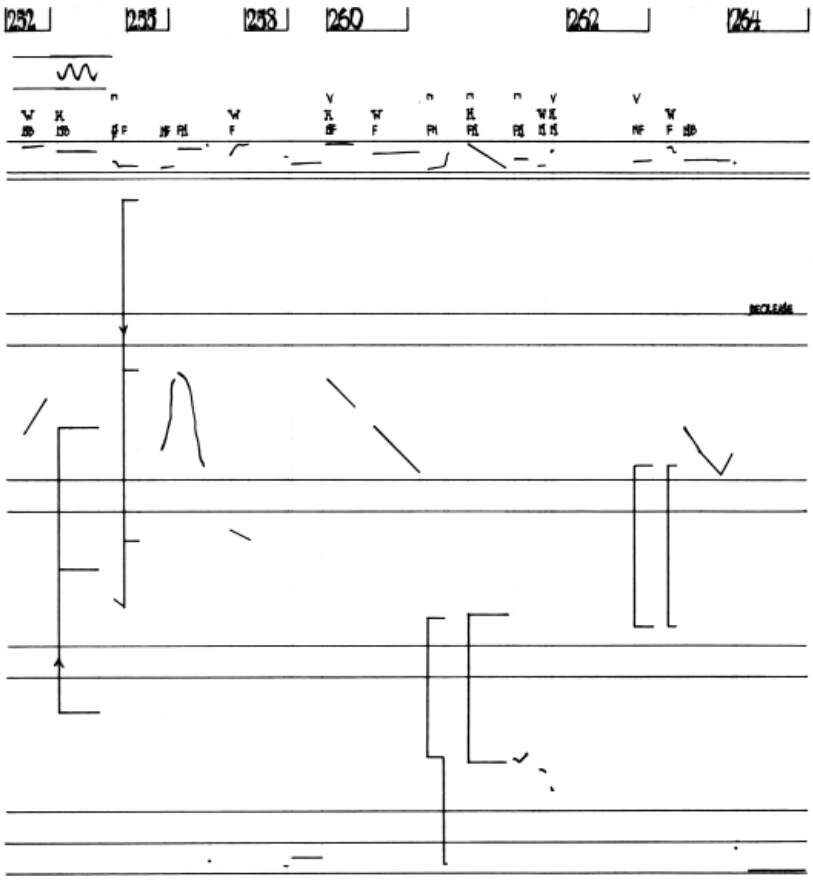
The program for the 1963 concert portrayed it as a collaboration between Moorman and David Tudor, whom she revered as a master of the earlier generation. "And how patient he must have been," she later wondered in her Southern drawl. "'Cause that had to be the worst performance he's ever been involved with, 'cause it was my first solo performance. . . . [H]e had been . . . performing at that point with John Cage for years, and they were really the pros and developed this whole new medium, this new way of playing. So my performance must have been godawful."[17] Nonetheless, she was eager to earn his respect and praise. In a letter to Tudor dated June 3, 1963, she expressed her gratitude for his assistance with the concert: "You are such an artist. It is a real priviledge *[sic]* to work with you. . . . Working with you has opened up a whole new world for me for which I am very grateful."[18]

In fact, the pianist had joined her for only one piece on the April 15 concert, Earle Brown's *Music for Cello and Piano*. For the rest of the program, accompanying duties fell to Corner (for his own work and those by Webern and Byrd) and to violist Jacob Glick, percussionist Max Neuhaus, and pianist Joseph Byrd, who assisted Moorman in her performance of Barney Childs's *Interbalances III*. On the second half of the program Moorman debuted her version of Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player*. For this performance, Moorman performed only 162.06 seconds of the piece (in his performance notes for the work, Cage allows the performance of shorter excerpts, provided the title is changed to indicate the new duration).[19] Although she had originally planned to present the entire composition (and had a program typeset and printed that reflected this intention), a letter she wrote to Tudor just four days before the concert indicates that she may have had only two weeks to learn the difficult work.[20] It is not surprising, then, that she "decided against doing the entire piece in this concert." She also told Tudor that she was ambivalent about where exactly to cut off her

performance but finally decided to play through to page 34: "Since I find that pgs 1–34 are more exciting (they're certainly more difficult!) than pgs 34–58, I've decided to perform the first section."[21] This too proved to be an overly ambitious goal, for the final figure of 162.06 seconds printed in the program represents only the first nine pages of the score.

And yet Moorman's shortened performance on April 15, 1963, wasn't a sign of her failure. The complete piece is extremely difficult and exhausting, running to eighty-five pages of nearly constant activity. The unique notation system alone requires considerable effort to understand, let alone master (see music example 3). Time is indicated spatially, with the amount of space equaling one second given along the top of the page. To make matters even more difficult, this ratio of space to time is constantly changing throughout the work. The top system gives a series of letter symbols, which directs the type of articulation each note should have, whether played with the hair or the wood of the bow, *sul ponticello* or *sul tasto,* pizzicato with the nail or the flesh, and so on. Directly below this system appears a graphic indication of bow pressure, a physical mapping of the property of dynamics. The large center area of each page is devoted to four wide rows, each representing one of four strings, with individual markings indicating where to stop the string (spatially, along the fingerboard) for a specific note and vertical lines representing double-, triple-, or quadruple-stops (arrows sometimes provide direction to these chords). Throughout the piece, Cage also indicates moments when the tension on a string is to be increased or decreased indeterminately. Perhaps the most important element of the score is an area running along the bottom of the page that is "devoted to noises on the box, sounds other than those produced on the strings. These may issue from entirely other sources, e.g. percussion instruments, whistles, radios, etc. Only high and low are indicated," Cage specified in his performance notes.[22]

With some assistance from Tudor, Cage wrote *26′ 1.1499″* in a two-year period from 1953 to 1955, as part of a larger project informally referred to as "The Ten Thousand Things," a reference both to the planned rhythmic structure of the works—10,000 beats each—and the special status of the number 10,000 in Taoist and Buddhist philosophies, where it refers to the infinite.[23] Along with three other works—*34′ 46.776″ for a Pianist, 31′ 57.9864″ for a Pianist* (both 1954), and *27′ 10.554″ for a Percussionist* (1956)—the piece for a string player was written at the end of what James Pritchett has called Cage's "classic" period of chance composition.[24] It was composed using a more complex version of the composer's point-drawing technique, in which Cage used imperfections in a sheet of paper to deter-




MUSIC EXAMPLE 3. John Cage, *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* (page 15). Copyright © 1960, renewed 1988 by Henmar Press, Inc. Used by permission of C. F. Peters Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

mine relative pitch and attack times. Thus, there is clear reason to associate *26′ 1.1499″* with such iconic works of chance-based composition as *Music of Changes* (1951) and *Music for Carillon* (1952).

Looking ahead in Cage's output, Pritchett identifies two ways in which the composer's practice evolved from the techniques used in these pieces to those of indeterminacy: first, through the notational experiments of *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1958), and, second, through works such as *Fontana Mix* (1958), which were more open-ended tools for creating other pieces and performances. In light of Cage and Tudor's performance practice of the 1960s, when the pair presented loose improvisations with

pianos, tape machines, radios, and a variety of amplified noisemakers, it seems that the noisemaking possibilities inherent in the bottom row of the score for *26′ 1.1499″* also presented a path toward Cage's next compositional stage. Similarly, the two works for prepared piano that Cage composed for "The Ten Thousand Things" did not fully specify the preparations required for the piece, allowing for considerable fluctuation between and during individual performances.[25] *27′ 10.554″ for a Percussionist* also specified one area of the score devoted to "electronic devices, mechanical arrangements, radios, whistles, etc."[26] The surviving pieces from "The Ten Thousand Things," then, serve as a pivot between chance operations, in which random procedures are used to arrive at a relatively fixed and conventional score, and indeterminacy, in which the score requires significant interpretation from its performer (in the moment or in advance of the performance).[27]

Once he had moved on to composing works that were largely indeterminate, Cage expressed some ambivalence about his earlier chance-based works:

> The *Music of Changes* is an object more inhuman than human, since chance operations brought it into being. The fact that these things that constitute it, though only sounds, have come together to control a human being, the performer, gives the work the alarming aspect of a Frankenstein monster. This situation is of course characteristic of Western music, the masterpieces of which are its most frightening examples, which when concerned with humane communication only move over from Frankenstein monster to Dictator.[28]

Cage, our latter-day Frankenstein, seems to have thought that chance-derived scores such as *Music of Changes* and *26′ 1.1499″* had worked their way free of his control, only to turn the tables on their human creator. But the failed performances of *Atlas Eclipticalis* (with its unconventional notation requiring some performer choice) and *26′ 1.1499″* (with its allowance for sounds "from entirely other sources") suggest that indeterminacy likewise offered no safe haven from unexpected challenges to Cage's control.

. . .

The score of *26′ 1.1499″* is representative of the modernist impulse to divide musical sound into its component parts: pitch, duration, timbre, and amplitude. In traditional musical composition, each of these sonic elements might imply specific relationships to others, but Cage isolates and treats each separately. In other words, he confounds the expectation

that, for instance, certain timbres might follow "naturally" from shifts in amplitude. Instead of matching a crescendo with a movement of the bow slightly down toward the bridge to add a "bite" to the sound, Cage might ask for extreme pressure with the wood of the bow over the fingerboard, followed quickly by lighter pressure with the hair, close to the bridge. Little in a cellist's training would have prepared her for such physically awkward musical gestures. Indeed, it is precisely a cellist's training that renders such movements awkward.

Since the eighteenth century, cello technique has built up a musician's body and kinesthetics through precise directions for positioning the body, repetition of small movements, and graduated complexity of exercises. These methods create what Foucault called a "political technology of the body," a microphysics of power that leaves its trace directly on the body, its behaviors, and its habits.[29] The discipline of cello pedagogy offers a position in a field, the recognition of personhood in a particular context—here that of "musician." Foucauldian discipline differs from the more conventional sense of the word as "training" because the latter is something that a person does to improve a skill, whereas the former is a set of actions upon other actions that allows one to become a subject in the first place.

This difference between training and discipline is critical in exploring subjectivity, which is marked here with a fundamental ambivalence. The cellist attains subjectivity by taking on norms that are external to the self, demonstrating the difficult truth that subjectivity is never self-contained. As Sebastian Harrer explains, "When the subject internalizes a helpful precept . . . the precept itself becomes so deeply anchored in the subject, that in a real-life situation it is no longer the subject who acts, but the *precepts* themselves."[30]

Harrer's insight suggests that the successful rendering of a difficult passage in a concerto or sonata owes not only to the cellist who overcomes the challenges of the music but also to her training. It is as if, at the moment when the individual appears to be most engaged in an exhibition of abilities and talents, she actually recedes from the stage in deference to a disciplinary technology. At moments like this one, in the body techniques of the professional cellist, the objectivizing logic of discipline intersects with the subjectivizing tendency of the care of the self, for in the process of internalizing norms, the cellist can employ a range of inhabitations, adaptations, and resignifications.[31] This set of strategies constitutes the ethical field, a space of action where agency emerges as the management of subjectivation.

If Moorman's training at Centenary College (BM, 1955), at the University of Texas (MM, 1957), and at Juilliard (lessons with Leonard Rose,

1957–58) offered her one means of attaining the status of subjectivity, then *26′ 1.1499″* offered another. Cage's piece was a tool for breaking tradition and history. Ideally (and as intended by the composer), the work would liberate Moorman from the habits of musical training and allow sounds to be themselves without interference from culture or individual personality. This process resembles "problematization," which Foucault described as "the motion by which one detaches oneself from [action], establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem."[32] The ethical field is transformed through problematization; through this process, one might clarify the forces that have contributed to one's subjectivity, inhabit that subjectivity differently, redirect those forces toward different ends, resist overtly the power regimes that have been revealed, or find new goals and possibilities for elaborating the self.[33]

This is how Moorman used *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player*—it provided the opportunity to separate from the mode of subjectivation of her traditional cello training and to reapproach her corporeal relationship to the instrument without the histories sedimented in the actions of her body.[34] If Cage's composition aimed to alter our relationship with the ordinary by returning us to an intensified and invigorated daily life, then Moorman problematized this problematization itself by using Cage's technology to articulate a *different* notion of the everyday from that of the composer, thus redirecting his piece to a new end. The result was an "interpretation" of Cage's work that stretched traditional expectations of that term, revealing the extent to which creative authorship was distributed in practice, even if it was still nominally retained by the "composer" in the discourse of creativity that operated in this world.

. . .

According to a well-traveled rumor in experimental music circles, Cage was never fond of Moorman's version of *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player*. The archival evidence is spare but devastatingly direct. The double bassist Bertram Turetzky wrote Cage in 1967 to ask if his *59½″ for a String Player* had yet been recorded. (This short work was one of six pieces Cage had composed in 1953 before folding most of them into the larger *26′ 1.1499″* in 1955.) Cage replied, "It hasn't been recorded. Would you consider doing the large work for st. player? The one Charlotte Moorman has been murdering all along? 59½ is part of it, I believe. At any rate the title is so many minutes and seconds for st. player. I'd travel a long way to hear a proper performance!"[35] Cage's close friend Jasper Johns agreed with his assessment. In a 1964 letter to the composer, Johns wrote of the Second Annual

Avant Garde Festival, "C. Moorman should be kept off the stage. But I guess I'll go again tonight."[36] In an interview with Gisela Gronemeyer in 1991, Cage commented, "The striking thing was to take this piece of mine and play it in a way that didn't have to do with the piece itself. I didn't like it at all. And my publisher said, the best thing that could happen for you, would be that Charlotte Moorman would die."[37]

What was wrong with Moorman's interpretation of the work? She certainly seems to have approached the composition with care and dedication. In 1963, she wrote to Tudor, "I'm beginning to wonder if I'm not overly concerned with accuracy. I don't feel that I have a right to add seconds to Cage's Music any more than I do to add beats to the Boccherini Cello Concerto. As it is, the notes and rhythms turn out differently within the indicated seconds every time I play the piece."[38] This last detail is telling. As we have seen, pitch was left open, so Cage would not have objected to notes "turning out differently" with each performance (though, as John Holzaepfel has pointed out, most of Tudor's exemplary performances of the 1950s and 1960s were in fact the same at every iteration).[39] To vary the rhythms, however, was a different kind of sin; both Cage and Tudor always performed Cage works with an exacting eye on the stopwatch. The violinist Malcolm Goldstein, who observed Moorman perform many times and also collaborated with Cage in the 1960s, later suggested that Moorman did not have a rigorous approach to realizing difficult scores: "She was a wonderful, very effusive, extravagant person. But she was not someone for details. . . . And I think that's what bothered John. She really wasn't playing the details of his piece."[40]

Letters from Moorman to Tudor in 1963 reveal that she actively sought out the advice and instruction of Tudor and Cage for how to perform the piece. (She also sought out Earle Brown's help when she performed his *Pieces for Cello and Piano* with Tudor.) "I did play for Mr. Cage as you suggested. He helped me so much," she wrote in June. "I was nervous playing for the creator of the music, but also very grateful to have the opportunity. I want to try making part (+ possibly all) of the other instruments on tape and control its playing with my foot. Mr. Cage mentioned that the piece could be played with you. I'm more eager than ever to play it with you."[41] Moorman was referring to Cage's instruction that *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* could be played simultaneously with his *34′ 46.776″ for a Pianist,* which in fact is how Moorman and Tudor performed the work for the Avant Garde Festival on September 3, 1963. Unfortunately, Moorman viewed the performance as an utter failure. A few days after the concert, she apologized to Tudor:

> You played so beautifully Tuesday evening. I am sorry that I played so badly. John Cage's piece is one of my favorite compositions in the entire literature—it really hurts that I ruined it. I never thought I would recover from my bad performance, but fortunately I've gotten some rest and I am playing it like I wanted to that night. My mind [is] functioning and is connected to my body once again. I am between 3–4 minutes overtime and once I was only 1 minute over—using the indicated parts of my bow + following the dynamics. I only hope I will have another chance some day to play this beautiful piece with you.[42]

The key problem seems to have been Moorman's timing ("between 3–4 minutes overtime"), rather than the pitched or noncello sounds she selected for the work. Her timing continued to be an issue when she presented the complete work as a solo at the 1964 festival. Bowers in his review for the *Nation* mentioned "an exasperated critic [who] exclaimed in the back row against John Cage's *26′ 1.1499″* for lasting 41' 2.0001" and being tediously impeded by the cellist's chores of putting down the bow to reach for a razzer, or blank pistol, or balloon pricker."[43] Moorman's sonic additions didn't seem to cause consternation to anyone else, or at least none that can be detected in photos of the concert, which show Cage sitting onstage with the cellist and assisting with page turns and noisemaking devices. One photo shows Cage holding a plastic penny whistle to Moorman's mouth as she prepares to sound the next sonority on her instrument. Scattered at her feet are a garbage can lid, some tin pie pans, a metal wastebasket (for breaking glass), and a metal tray, positioned at her left foot, onto which sand has been scattered. Another photo shows Moorman glancing at a large crash cymbal she has just tossed over her music stands like a Frisbee. Cage looks on impassively.[44]

In the course of honing her interpretation of *26′ 1.1499″* over the years, the attention Moorman gave to noncello sounds gradually replaced her concerns over timing, and increasingly the choices she made about these noncello sounds were not consistent with Cage's expectations. Another possible explanation for Cage's dissatisfaction was Moorman's decision to include passages of spoken text in her performance—or, rather, the texts that she chose to recite. Her 1964 performance did not include text recitations, but her surviving score of the piece includes several text clippings that she had later taped into the pages. Among these texts are several that sit uncomfortably with Cage's preference for what Henry Flynt once called "the perfectly sterile human being"[45]: a set of instructions for Tampax tampons, printed in Italian, upon which Moorman had circled steps 4–6 out of 8, having to do with insertion of the product (p. 10); the headline from an advertisement for "comfortable panties" (partially obscured by a hand-

FIGURE 9. Charlotte Moorman receives assistance from John Cage during a rehearsal of the composer's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* at Judson Hall in August 1963. Photograph by William Lovelace/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

copied Icelandic lullaby, "Bí, bí og blaka," that Moorman had written out phonetically; p. 11); a classified advertisement from Planned Parenthood for birth control (p. 16); the title typography from an ad for the 1965 film *How to Murder Your Wife,* starring Jack Lemmon (p. 23); and a short, undated newspaper story about an attempted rape that had been reported by a University of Illinois student (the incident probably dated from the spring of 1973, when Moorman performed at the Phoenix 73 Festival at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; p. 75). There is only one reference to a recognizably Cagean motif, a handwritten note card that reads, "There is no such thing as silence. Something is always happening that makes a sound" (p. 19).

In addition to menstruation, underwear, abortion, contraception, murder, and rape, Moorman's textual additions also referenced consumer culture (text for a Cadillac advertisement, p. 28); morality and obedience (a list of proper behavior for children, including the directives "I will always obey Mother and Dad," "I will be truthful," and "I will go to bed on time," to the last of which Moorman had added an asterisk,

p. 16); political corruption (newspaper articles on Watergate, p. 23, and G. Gordon Liddy's sentencing, p. 57); Nixon's domestic policies (articles on cutbacks in Medicare benefits for the elderly and on the failings of the antidrug campaign, p. 56); free speech (a short clipping on John Lennon's deportation case, likely dating from the spring of 1973, p. 50); and the black liberation struggle (probably a description of the copper-topped Malcolm X: "He often said he became a racist from the womb, because his grandmother was raped by a white man. That is how he got his red hair and" *[sic],* p. 81).

These themes of women's health, misogyny, violence, current events, and U.S. politics were not characteristic of Cage's taste. The composer generally preferred sounds that were "natural" or articulated "nature" as a sonic entity that could be uncovered, rather than created, by human activity. Even Cage's city sounds, such as automobile traffic, indicated rather his interest in chaotic auditory phenomena than in human history or society. Moorman's selection of recited passages presented a far more heterogeneous sonic text that explicitly situated her performance of *26′ 1.1499″* within her own history and that of U.S. culture in the 1960s and 1970s. And her performance grew and changed with time; the Icelandic and Italian texts were likely added during Moorman's 1965 European tour, which took her and Paik through Reykjavík and Florence, whereas a second round of textual additions (on the attempted rape, Nixon, Watergate, and Lennon) date from the spring of 1973.[46]

In addition to her textual supplements to Cage's composition, Moorman also devoted considerable attention to the bottom line of the score, which called for noises and other sounds. She later recalled, "This suggestion [of] non-music sounds [—] that is what I wanted[.] I could scream, shoot a gun, hit the wall, anything, but I had to make that sound at this precise second and this had never appeared in cello music to my knowledge and I had never come across it[. After] finding this piece[,] I started my mixed media performances."[47] It was here that Moorman concentrated on creating her own individual realization of the work. In a letter to Tudor, she enthused, "I've gotten some new ideas for the other instrument—I'll paste sandpaper on the bottom of my shoe and rub it against a wood block also covered with sandpaper; I'll stretch a long rubber band from the tail piece of my cello to the shoulder of my cello, + I may pop inflated balloons during the piece—2) I haven't forgotten about the possibility of using a chain, but I'm having trouble finding a chain. . . . Do you know where I might be able to borrow an antique cymbal?"[48]

Moorman's acquisition of a tape recorder in 1964 opened up possibili-

ties for using a wide range of sounds. A list taped into the back of her score indicates an active sonic imagination:

| | |
|---|---|
| Life sounds | garbage truck in operation |
| | subway screeching (IRT West side) |
| | ice cream truck |
| | Long Island train before departure |
| City sounds | recording buzzer |
| | Joseph's buzzer |
| | telephone busy signal |
| | Porsche horn—Earle's |
| | Queen Mary leaving (a big boat) |
| | tug boat? |
| | cab horn |
| | debris falling or being thrown on my landing |
| | car screeching to a stop |
| Animal sounds | wasps |
| | cat in heat (female Siamese) |
| | cats copulating |
| | birds—George's |
| | zoo: lions, monkeys. |
| [Untitled] | sculpture *[sic]* cutting stone—working with metal |
| | church chimes Charles |
| | wood burning |
| | beer can opening/champagne opening |
| | bat hitting baseball |
| | telephone ringing (in very dense place) |
| People sounds | voice (mine, etc), spoken, singing, etc., Zoo, Central Park, Beach |
| | fighting (brawl) |
| | cantor chanting |
| | orgasms |
| | loud/soft voices in anger and/or happiness |
| | laughs |
| | crying—new born baby's first cry |

| | |
|---|---|
| | hiccups? |
| | foreign languages, accents |
| | singal *[sic]* words |
| | singing tones |
| | flatulent lady |
| Water sounds | ocean |
| | shower |
| | toilet |
| | faucet |
| | natural spring |
| | rain, on car top, on umbrella top. |
| Untitled | needle scraping on a turntable |
| | rubber popping |
| | percussion instruments:? |
| | glass bottles |
| | electronic sounds: radio sounds, static, dentist drill |

It is doubtful that Moorman recorded and used all of these sounds; none of her documented performances of *26′ 1.1499″* contain such a wide array of noises. It seems more likely that this list represented a brainstorming session, and that the collection of taped sounds she actually used was much smaller. A dog-eared card taped onto the back cover of Moorman's score contains a shorter list of eight sounds that she used in her 1964 solo performance of the complete work, along with the specific pages where each would be used and the volume of sound to aim for. These include rain (2", soft), cat in heat (1", very loud), one grandfather chime (1" ff, "as low as possible"), Queen Mary (6", ff), tug boat (2" mf), Big Ben (about 6 chimes, 2", mf), ocean (6" p, soft but audible), and a bomb (1" fff, terribly loud).[49] Of course, these taped sounds constituted only one component of a performance that was infused with electronic sound technologies. Moorman's portable phonograph, tape recorder, contact microphones, mixer, amplifier, and small, homemade sampler indicate that Moorman was just as invested in the melding of art and technology in the 1960s as Paik and Cage were.[50]

Moorman's battery of noisemaking objects extended well beyond taped sounds. On the promotional poster for a performance in Philadelphia in March, 1966, she advertised what she would be offering in the course of the performance:

> You will hear and see a human cello, a film of Cage and Miss Moorman, records of rock and roll and jazz, an electric cooking skillet, a throat mike amplifying coca cola and hot dogs, a cymbal, garbage can top, contact mikes, sand, chains, shoes with sand paper glued to the soles, aluminum sheets, pie pans, hammer, drum sticks, snare drum brush, rubber band, glass chimes, wood chimes, door buzzers, pistol, light bulbs, waste basket filled with bricks, whistles: police whistles, gym whistle, toy whistle, halloween whistle and siren whistle; animal calls: duck call, crow call, squirrel call, and predator call; tape recorders, mixers, amplifiers, speakers, taped sounds (Queen Mary departure blast, Big Ben chimes, ocean waves, cat in heat, tug boat, wasps, and a bomb exploding); fire engine siren and a plate of glass (which is broken during performance) ETC—plus many new cello sounds all of which Miss Moorman plays in tandem.[51]

Several elements in this description indicate the extent to which Moorman's version of the piece changed in the year and a half following her 1964 concert on the Second Annual Avant Garde Festival. Many of these innovations were surely developed in conjunction with Nam June Paik, whose flair for showpersonship matched Moorman's. The "human cello," for example, refers to one of the most iconic moments in Paik's and Moorman's version of the piece: a topless and kneeling Paik stretching a loose string across his back and temporarily providing an alternative cello for Moorman to "play," which she does while holding Paik between her knees. A contact microphone in his left hand helped translate this compelling bit of theater into sound. Moorman's score is clearly marked to indicate the moment when the pair was to switch to the human cello configuration; it is difficult to imagine how they could have interpreted Cage's markings to include this action.

Other new elements in this March 1966 performance in Philadelphia include the presentation of a Movietone newsreel of the 1964 concert (with Cage assisting) and an onstage electric frying pan in which Moorman cooked up either eggs or mushrooms (her score annotations indicate both; she had chosen eggs for her January 1966 appearance on the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson). She almost certainly borrowed the idea for her "throat mike" from Cage, who by 1966 had long been terrorizing audiences with thunderously amplified swallows of water. (Moorman's taste always aimed a bit lower; instead of Cage's tall glass of water, she imbibed a bottle of Coca-Cola and ate a hot dog.) A few other sound effects, which seem to have been added during 1965, were the shattered plate of glass, a fire engine siren, and various animal calls. A drawing taped in the score diagrams her method of controlling her sound-making battery. The record player was placed on her right (her bow hand), whereas the tape recorder lay to her

FIGURE 10. Charlotte Moorman and Nam June Paik perform John Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* as part of Cage's *Theatre Piece,* on September 8, 1965, at Judson Hall. Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images.

left. Also to her left, near a rack of gongs and metal noisemakers, was the pane of glass. Small whistles and wind chimes were attached to her two large music stands. The drawing also shows a contact microphone at the base of her music stand, presumably ready to be applied to any sound-making object.

Another note tucked into the back of her score indicates that the "records of rock and roll and jazz" that Moorman played were *The Unique Thelonious Monk* of 1956 (Riverside 12–209) and *The Rolling Stones No. 2* of 1965 (Decca BLK 16325).[52] Also noted on that scrap of paper are the Beatles, Roy Acuff, the 1966 R&B hit "Cool Jerk" (performed by the Capitols), and "Italiano" (perhaps the Frankie Avalon album of the same title, issued in 1962). She seems to have chosen these recordings as generic representatives of their type: her cues refer to "rock + roll Beatle" (p. 5), "classical record" (pp. 15 and 45), "negro record" (p. 31), and "jazz record" (p. 31).[53]

Moorman's score for *26′ 1.1499″* was clearly a work in constant revision.

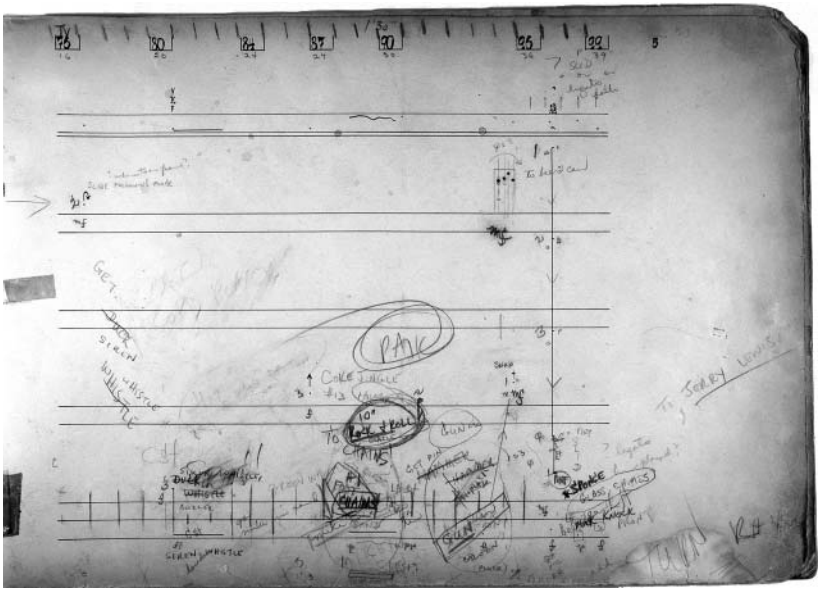


FIGURE 11. Page 5 of Charlotte Moorman's copy of John Cage's *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player*. Photograph by Scott Krafft, courtesy of the McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

One passage on page 5, for example, ninety seconds into the piece, bears traces of Moorman's changing approach. A single line on the score indicates about two seconds of noncello sound at a relatively low amplitude. A note at the end of the score indicates that at one point she played a tape recording of birds here, and indeed, on page 5 we can make out a faint, partially erased marking in red pencil, "TO TAPE BIRDS." This marking, however, exists in a towering collection of many other notes in green, red, and black pencil that accumulated over the years, including directions to render the line with a green whistle, a "mike in sand" (presumably the tray of sand she kept at her left foot), chains, and two different tape parts: "coke jingle" and "10" rock + roll Beatle." This final annotation shows that Moorman was indeed lax in her interpretation of Cage's score: though the sound at that point should last no more than two seconds, she planned on ten seconds of the Beatles sample. (See figure 11 for a reproduction of this page of Moorman's score.) At any rate, in these moments when a noncello sound is indicated for more than one or two seconds, or the noise is not surrounded by a flurry of other activity on the cello, Moorman seems to have relished the chance to try different sounds and sound-producing means.

. . .

Every musical performance is a performance of relationship. "To be is to be related," writes Annemarie Mol.[54] The musical relationship is one between body and instrument, but also one between composer and performer, performer and audience, and sound and idea. Performing musicians are always deflecting away from themselves and toward some other; as subjects they are no more relational than any others, but they do make this kind of relational subjectivity clear and readable. Moorman's artistic identity surely developed in relation with Cage's score, but that relationship was also caught up in and twisted by her collaborative partnership with Paik.

By the time he had moved to New York in June 1964, Paik was already known as a composer and performer in the European proto-Fluxus community.[55] Paik had studied music and art history and philosophy at the University of Tokyo in the mid-1950s before relocating to Germany in 1956 to continue his studies. After stints in Munich, Freiburg, and Darmstadt, he settled in Cologne in 1961. His early performance pieces, which he described as "expressionistic" and "suffering" art, were often violent and abject displays. Cage recalled witnessing a performance in 1960:

> I found myself in Cologne attending a performance by [Paik] of his *Etude for Pianoforte*. Behind Paik as he performed was an open window, floor to ceiling. His actions were such we wouldn't have been surprised had he thrown himself five floors down to the street. When at the end he left the room through the packed audience, everybody, all of us, sat paralyzed with fear, utterly silent, for what seemed an eternity. No one budged. We were stunned. Finally, the telephone rang. "It was Paik," Mary Bauermeister said, "calling to say the performance is over."[56]

When Paik arrived in New York, he and Moorman quickly struck up a friendship, and the two collaborated on Moorman's August 30 solo recital in the Second Annual Avant Garde Festival (though not on Moorman's performance of *26′ 1.1499″*). As in all of the pre-*Originale* performances that year, Paik's *Robot Opera* kicked off the evening, featuring the radio-controlled K-456, "who shambled on stage with the gait of Frankenstein's creation," as the critic Raymond Ericson observed. "It was very definitely a female robot, whose ability to jiggle certain 'muscles' was reminiscent of the late [burlesque star] Carrie Finnell."[57] (Ericson was referring to the machine's left breast, which Paik could cause to twirl in a circle.) Constructed by Paik with the help of Shuya Abe in Tokyo, the robot was to retake the stage in the second half of the program to join Moorman in Paik's realization of Stockhausen's *Plus-Minus,* which was to feature "cello

glissandos of every variety and velocity played by Miss Moorman and pizzicatos played by Paik's robot."[58] Unfortunately, a malfunction seems to have interfered; the *Voice*'s Leighton Kerner wrote, "[K-456] apparently developed some kind of nervous short-circuit and skulked in a corner backstage, ignoring well-wishers and friends."[59] As it happened, Paik "substituted for his protégé and whacked happily at a piano while Miss Moorman doodled mournfully on her cello."[60]

The 1964 Avant Garde Festival marked the beginning of a long, productive relationship between Moorman and Paik. In the summers of 1965 and 1966, the pair toured Europe with a program showcasing their own work and that of their favorite composers. A few pieces by Toshi Ichiyanagi, Earle Brown, and Giuseppe Chiari showed up on many of these programs, augmented by works of such composers as Young, Dick Higgins, Yoko Ono, Philip Corner, and Malcolm Goldstein. Cage's *26′ 1.1499″* continued to be featured prominently.

Moorman regularly performed works by Paik, both alone and in collaboration with the composer. The work she presented most frequently was *Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saens,* in which Moorman played the first half of Saint-Saens's *The Swan* (with Paik accompanying on the piano) before stopping abruptly, putting down her instrument, climbing a ladder, and jumping into a barrel of water. After fully submerging, the cellist returned to her seat to finish the piece.[61] (She performed this work either wearing a formal gown or wrapped in a large piece of clear plastic.) A photo taken at the 1964 Festival during the performance of this work shows Moorman seated on the back of a kneeling gentleman, with the endpin of her instrument resting in the mouth of another man, who is lying prone beneath her.[62] In addition, the duo's concerts often included a solo turn by Paik in his study in shaving cream and rice titled *Simple*.[63]

On their joint 1965 tour, Moorman also performed Paik's musical striptease *Sonata for Adults Only.*[64] According to Michael Nyman, Paik had been interested in sexual and erotic themes for a number of years; his *Sonata quasi una fantasia* (1962) consisted of a performance of Beethoven's piano sonata op. 27/2, in which the pianist is directed alternately to play and strip.[65] In another Paik piece, *Serenade for Alison* (1962, dedicated to the Fluxus artist Alison Knowles), the performer is directed successively to remove several sets of panties and perform various actions with them ("pull them over the head of a snob," or "make an omelette-surprise with them").[66] Describing a performance of this work, Knowles recalled that "[Paik] was just delighted because his whole emphasis in those years was scandal . . . and for him, as a young man, scandal involved women."[67]

In an undated letter to Gordon Mumma (likely dating from 1966), Paik described *Sonata for Adults Only* in terms more suited to a dramatic scene than to music as traditionally understood; the score consists of only a set of text instructions, rather than of musical notation.[68] As Paik impishly noted in the letter, "The piece cannot be played by another player [than Moorman], because I cannot teach it [in Ann Arbor]. There is no notation. I must teach it with my mouth tact by tact, as oriental master did." (Paik probably meant "takt by takt," using the German word for bar or measure.) The piece begins when a "very beautiful female cellist" plays the prelude to Bach's third cello suite in C Major, pausing every three measures or so to remove a piece of clothing. Paik's score, which consists of a marked-up copy of the Bach prelude, indicates the progression of discarded items: watch, bracelet, ring, belt, shoe, shoe, stocking, stocking, bra, garter belt, pants, four sets of panties (one at a time), blouse, and skirt. In his broken English, Paik summarized the rest of the composition as follows: "[A]nd she lie down on the floor and put cello on her stomach and play till the end."[69] Moorman had discovered this horizontal approach to the instrument during the 1964 *Originale* performances; when it was time for her to make an entrance, there had been no available chairs in the packed house, so she had lain down in front of the stage and plucked her cello from a recumbent position.[70] In her 1980 interview with Stern, Moorman recalled that she and Paik frequently "spliced" their performance of *Sonata for Adults Only* with films by Robert Breer and Stan VanDerBeek, indicating that this piece was often part of a multimedia presentation.[71]

Paik explained to Mumma that he had been looking for an adequate performer for years. "Pretty girl, who is ready to strip, cannot play cello. [A]nd young and pretty cellist will never strip," he wrote. "I am very happy that Charlotte agreed to play this piece." Paik was trying to convince Mumma to program the piece on the 1967 ONCE Festival in Ann Arbor and assured him that their previous performances at the College of Art in Philadelphia (March 13, 1966) and the New School for Social Research (January 8, 1965) had been successful events. "You need not fear about this erotism. I[t] was pl[a]yed without difficulty in both highly respected schools," he wrote, strangely denying the eroticism of the very striptease that seemed to be the central motivation behind the work.

The *Sonata for Adults Only* sounded the themes that are now so readily linked with Moorman and Paik: sex, nudity, humor, and a touch of absurdity. The spark of the piece owed to its appropriation of Bach, a rather unlikely candidate for a striptease. Paik's penchant for modifying the work of an old master rubbed off on Moorman as she made Cage's *26′*

*1.1499″* increasingly her own. The cellist's agency—evident in the decisions she made about how to inhabit works such as *26′ 1.1499″*—materializes in a delicate braid with the actions and intentions of her collaborator. In other words, *26′ 1.1499″* became "more Moorman" to the extent that it also became "more Paik."

Such cases show how agency extends beyond what Nikolas Rose has called "the envelope of the skin," distributed across the discourses and practices—the relationships—that enable and give meaning to specific notions of agency.[72] Because these relationships are never permanent, Mahmood notes, "The meaning and sense of agency cannot be fixed in advance, but must emerge through an analysis of the particular concepts that enable specific modes of being, responsibility, and effectivity."[73] In her position as a performer of works by Paik, Moorman gained new motivations and pleasures, not to mention a facility with modalities of shock. Techniques she learned from Paik—of bricolage, of use and misuse, of spectacle, and of self-display—interact with a centuries-old discipline of cello technique, only to be reshuffled and problematized in the encounter with Cage.

. . .

Moorman and Paik's talent for theatricality is undeniable, and their performance of *26′ 1.1499″* was a spectacle. A contact sheet of images taped into the end matter of Moorman's score documents a performance at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London in 1968. These images show Moorman drinking Coca-Cola out of a glass bottle while holding a contact mic to her throat, playing Paik's human cello, striking a garbage can lid with a hammer, bowing her instrument with a bunch of artificial flowers, shooting a pistol into the air (while Paik comically holds his hands over his ears), and pounding what looks like a painting of Lyndon Baines Johnson with her hammer. Nearby sits a huge World War II–era mine. The mine was often replaced by a four-foot-long bomb that Paik had enhanced with a contact mic; markings in Moorman's score (pp. 20, 24, and 29) signal that she played the bomb instead of her cello for several minutes beginning at 5′47″ (p. 20).[74] The duo's theatricality also included Moorman's striking or kicking Paik (pp. 14, 36, 38, 40, 62, 65), making telephone calls to John Cage and President Nixon (pp. 25 and 75–77), using a blender to chop up dollar bills (p. 57), and ending the performance by eating a red rose (p. 85).

Another component of the duo's performance that became increasingly important after 1965 was the banter that Moorman and Paik exchanged throughout the piece. One recording of a 1966 performance in Aachen,

Germany, contains a section where Paik's distinctive voice chatters away in the background while Moorman performs her many duties; at one point, we hear the cellist shouting an instruction to her collaborator: "Record!" (i.e., "[play a] record!").[75] In a "video realization" of their performance of this work, recorded by Jud Yalkut in 1973, Moorman turns away from her electric skillet (filled with mushrooms) and exclaims, "I never was a cook, but now it's ridiculous!" Later, dangling a dollar bill over a whirring blender, Moorman challenges Paik: "I dare you."[76] Moorman and Paik mixed this kind of comical, semi-improvised dialogue—probably stemming from the 1964 performance of *Originale,* which had the feeling of an open dress rehearsal, with instructions and objections being freely exchanged over the course of the performance—with Moorman's text recitations to give the performance a rambling theatricality. (Paik's developing aesthetic and presentation style included numerous examples of such improvised tinkering. As John Hanhardt notes in his catalogue of Paik's work, "His work embodied a sense of hand fabrication, of things that would break down and require repair in the process of the concert/performance."[77] In this way, Hanhardt and others have argued, even Paik's art "objects" become more like processes, reflecting the influence of Cage but differing considerably from the older composer's tight-lipped stage persona.)[78]

Cage's reservations about Moorman and her interpretation of *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* were due to her lax following of the time structure of the work and her text recitations, but what about this oversized theatricality? By the 1960s, Cage had actualized his 1957 pledge to move "towards theatre," and the recently distributed video of his performance of *Water Walk* on the television program *I've Got a Secret* in 1960 confirms that the composer was no stranger to spectacle; in the course of that three-minute performance, Cage fired off a party streamer, poured (and subsequently drank) a Campari and soda on the rocks, ran a blender until it smoked, and pushed five radios off their perches, smashing them to pieces on the floor.[79] At another concert, captured in a photograph printed in *Newsday* in 1963, Cage, Tudor, and Toshiro Mayuzumi poked away at the insides of a grand piano while Yoko Ono, who lay on her back directly across the top of the instrument, belted out a vocal accompaniment with her head hanging over the rim.[80] For Cage, however, spectacle was supposedly meant to serve the higher project of sound production (though that sip of Campari does seem gratuitous): "I am sure that [Paik's] performance with Charlotte Moorman of my *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* is not faithful to the notation, that the liberties taken are in favor of actions rather than sound events in time. I am

thinking of the point where Paik, stripped to the waist, imitates a cello, his back being bowed by Charlotte Moorman."[81]

Cage articulated his disapprobation of Moorman and Paik in terms of "liberties taken . . . in favor of actions rather than sound events in time," but his chosen example—Paik's semi-nude body—also points to what Roger Copeland has called "this touch of Puritanism in Cage that has lent a chastened rigor to the Cunningham/Cage aesthetic."[82] Copeland's account of the composer's offhand remarks about dance places this Puritanism into more concrete terms:

> In 1986, I interviewed Cage about his score for "Roaratorio." Just as I was about to leave his apartment, he volunteered a quite extraordinary confession: "You know," he remarked, "I've never really liked dance."
>
> "What do you mean?" I asked in utter bewilderment: "Why not?" Adopting an expression of mock disgust, he shook [his] head and said simply, "All those faces, all those (and he paused again for special emphasis) . . . *bodies!*"[83]

This surprising exchange suggests that Cage objected to the particular *kind* of theatricality on display in Moorman's and Paik's performances, even though he might not have objected to theatricality itself. We can safely assume that the Puritan in him would not have approved of Moorman's inclusion of condoms and the sounds of her own orgasms in her realization of his piece.[84] In a related context, Carolee Schneemann maintains that she was "excommunicated" from George Maciunas's branch of Fluxus because her work "had to do with too much sensuality, too much self expression, basically overt physicality and the explicit body."[85]

Paik's topless Asian body was another kind of highly charged symbol in the United States during the 1960s. In this context, the inclination to associate him with the Vietnam War—or, for those who could identify Paik's nation of origin from his name, the Korean War—was solidified by the duo's use of war symbols (such as the sample of a bomb exploding and other sonic events labeled in Moorman's score as "war sounds" [p. 47]), their repurposing of Paik's "practice bomb" as an amplified musical instrument, and their occasional use of a World War II–era mine in performance. Moreover, their act included violence against Paik's body. Shortly before her death in 1991, Moorman recalled that when she asked why Paik thought she should strike him at various points in the piece, he responded, "Imperialist Americans should hit yellow man!" (Paik, who was present for Moorman's telling of this story, somewhat disingenuously protested, "I never said that!")[86]

Because Moorman's and Paik's theatricality was not only an explicitly

corporeal but also an explicitly referential display, their split from Cage deepened. This performance of *26′ 1.1499″* was very much a product of its time, and in closing the gap between art and life it highlighted a notion of what counted as "life" that was at odds with Cage's view. Whereas the older composer held various aspects of the social and cultural movements of the 1960s at arms' length, Moorman and Paik seem to have channeled the spirit of the times into their theatrical and sonic imagery. In a 1969 issue of *Source* magazine, Moorman explained her approach to the Cage piece in political and social terms: "In the piece that I do by John Cage, I play the cello, then I discard the cello and play Nam June Paik's back as a human cello, then I discard him, then I play a bomb as a cello, everything is highly amplified. I feel this has somewhat of a political message and definitely a social message. In the same piece I cook, I scream, I play films, records, and drink Coca-Cola. So, just about every piece that I do, especially the pieces of Nam June Paik, have political or social overtones."[87] The social message of drinking Coca-Cola onstage might not be entirely clear, but the important point here is that for Moorman this piece should overlap with an "everyday life" that is meaningful in a social and cultural sense, albeit not one that Cage would have endorsed.

In a stream-of-consciousness poem-cum-program note that Moorman wrote during her first tour of Europe in the summer of 1965, she compared the war sounds of Chiari's *Per Arco* to U.S. imperial aggression and racial injustice:

> I have played Chiari's Per Arco in many countries but this time I have quite a strange feeling because I [am] in the german country that is bombing italy in the tape. Do you recognize your sound?
> Vietnam dominican republic mississippi!!!
> I can not keep from crying.[88]

Turning to the work with which she was most associated, Moorman stressed the relevance of her interpretation: "My interpretation of Cage's '26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player' is very american—a kind of pop music. Thank you Nam Jun *[sic]* Paik. . . . I love you John Cage!"[89] Her use of the term "pop" was a pointed rejection of "avant-garde": "[W]hat we're doing is not 'avant-garde.' Our work is of *this* time. It's not ahead of the time. Therefore we're not 'avant-garde.'"[90] And indeed, as her performance evolved over the years, it provided a textual, sonic, and visual register of the most enduring symbols of the 1960s and early 1970s: flower power, the women's movement, black nationalism, the Vietnam War, consumer culture, U.S. imperialism, the sexual revolution, rock 'n' roll, jazz, free speech, and Watergate.

As we have already observed, composers and musicians in the experimental and avant-garde scenes practiced a politics of personal liberation at the expense of more traditional forms of group action and social consciousness. Andreas Huyssen, for example, has perceptively referred to Fluxus's "overall closeness to the non-political, allegedly non-ideological 1950s."[91] The responses to *Source* magazine's 1969 poll on the question "Have you, or has anyone ever used your music for political or social ends?" indicate that the great majority of composers surveyed did not view their music in political or social terms.[92] The differences between the responses of the only two performers included in the survey—Moorman and Tudor—could not have been greater. Whereas Moorman responded with a nearly 1,000-word statement detailing what she viewed as the progressive politics of her concert appearances, Tudor responded briefly: "Political or social ends? No, not at all. Of course, you realize I have an advantage, because I don't often call myself a composer. No, I just don't think of it in those terms."[93] Moorman seems to have designed her performances to *épater les bourgeois,* which was certainly a long-standing—though, from today's perspective, somewhat stale—characteristic of avant-garde performance.

At no time was this tendency toward shock more apparent than in February 1967, when Moorman was arrested for (and later convicted of) indecent exposure for appearing topless in a performance of Paik's *Opera Sextronique*.[94] However stale the idea of avant-garde shock might seem today, Moorman's nude body was multiply transgressive in the 1960s. In its flouting of "good taste" or "proper comportment," the performance exemplified what Anthony Julius has called "taboo-breaking art."[95] By challenging the laws governing public bodily display, the performance also set out to transgress the laws of the state.[96] Perhaps most important, in her search for novel elements of musical performance—here, the nude body—Moorman broke rules of artistic convention.

And yet the political valences of this multiple transgression are subtle and ambivalent. As Julius points out, transgressive artists often violate commonly held beliefs in order to violate their audiences: "These artists do not wish to banish, but rather to preserve, these beliefs in the medium of their disrespect for them." [97] Although Moorman's exaggerated self-display in the 1960s was not solely directed toward breaking taboos, there was in many of these performances an element of shock for the sake of shock. The transformative potential of such performances is negligible, for they retain their transgressive meaning only as long as taboos remain in place. Furthermore, though the cellist's legal transgression concerned the criminality of female nudity, it also made a claim for the exceptional status of the

FIGURE 12. Charlotte Moorman performs Nam June Paik's *Opera Sextronique* on February 9, 1967, at the Filmmakers' Cinémathèque. Photograph by Hy Rothman/ New York Daily News.

artist to probe matters of controversy without having to be held accountable for her actions. Finally, Moorman based her justification for the formal transgression of nudity on an appeal to the traditional place of the female form in Western art. "Nudity has always been extremely important to art," she wrote in her account of the trial. "It represents the most familiar and honest thing that we all have in common. The nude is one of art's oldest images and symbols."[98] In making this appeal to long-standing traditions of female objectification to the male gaze, Moorman severely undermined the claim that her transgression had politically resistant meaning.

Moorman's foray into the use of transgression raises interesting parallels with the Cagean use of shock (see chapter 1). Like Moorman, Cage sought to expand the realm of musical performance; he believed that even loud, potentially damaging sounds should be permitted in the artistic arena. But, also like Moorman, Cage seemed to shoot his arrows in two

directions at once. In the 1960s, Cage's loud music and Moorman's spectacular performances weren't directed simply at breaking the rules of art. They also expressed a certain scorn for the audience. "You must accept these new materials into the musical situation, for we know better than you," they seemed to be saying.

The critical difference between Cage's and Moorman's transgressions, however, turned on the different gender positions they occupied at this moment in history. Not only Moorman's nudity but also her performance references to tampons, orgasms, condoms, and Planned Parenthood give the lie to the common assumption that the avant-garde's capacity to shock was depleted by the 1960s.[99] As Rebecca Schneider writes, "I nevertheless find it telling (as have many before me) that the avant-garde and the option of 'shock' that it championed should die just as women, artists of color, and gay and lesbian artists began to make critically incisive political art under their own gender-, race-, and preference-marked banners."[100] The issue, Schneider argues, was not so much a disappearance of transgressive shock as it was a relocation of the practice in a way that questioned the "historical licensing of transgression" to heroic male artists alone (a point about subject position that escapes Julius). The force of such interventions should not be underestimated in a context where the New York Philharmonic, for example, would not countenance any female member until 1966, when it hired the contrabassist Orin O'Brien.[101]

Nonetheless, shock is not a political program. It is a momentary state, as likely to reinforce existing attitudes as it is to dislodge them.[102] The "political or social overtones" of Moorman's interpretations sounded the limits of transgression as a sustainable political strategy, even though they also offered an emancipatory counterweight to Cagean Puritanism. Compared with the Marxist analysis of race and culture developed in these years by Henry Flynt, or with the concurrent Left-Labor tonalities of the Jazz Composers Guild, Moorman's cultural politics appear surprisingly conventional. Although she brought the spirit of the times—in all of its controversy—into her performances, and despite the fact that she pursued concert opportunities outside of conventional halls, Moorman hewed closely to traditional models of art-music performance—presenting works with clearly defined composers, in recital style, and to audiences who observed quietly.

Moorman always identified as a performer—she cautioned readers of a 1965 program note that "I am an interpreter and not a composer and I can not write interesting sentences"[103]—and it was through the language of traditional, romantic interpretation that she understood her role as a musician. She likely embraced this identity with some measure of ironic

distance, her glamorous hair and formal gowns providing a screen from behind which she could present "interpretations" that were elaborate enough to constitute entirely new, original works. In regard to one part of her repertoire, she would later proclaim, "All of these pieces are half-mine. . . . In performance, these are not Nam June Paik pieces, but Nam June Paik/Charlotte Moorman pieces. They are all collaborations."[104]

But that's not what she said at the time of her 1967 arrest. On hand for the event, as he was for so many of Moorman's performances in the 1960s, Norman Seaman recalled decades later that as Moorman was led out by the police, she asked, "What'd I do wrong, Mr. Seaman? I just did what Mr. Paik said!" Moorman's embrace of the firm division between composer and performer continued throughout the trial, when she took pains to show the judge, Milton Shalleck, that her performance—including its music, actions, and costumes—was dictated by Paik's score. As Shalleck summarized her argument in his written opinion, "The dress and props were all provided for in the script. She was bound by it. She obeyed it."[105] And in her own account of the trial, Moorman wrote of *Opera Sextronique,* "Of course, each [element of the work, such as the cello, masks, actions, costumes, and partial nudity] is an integral part of the composition; a part of the total structure, *indicated in the score by its creator,* Nam June Paik. . . . These works should not be performed in clothing other than specified by Paik, since they would then be different compositions from those created by the composer—*such a censorship would constitute a compromise with artistic requirements*."[106]

The trial illuminated a curious kind of reversal. Although Moorman deflected responsibility for the event by claiming fidelity to the score, the judge was as skeptical toward the composer's scriptural authority in this case as Moorman had demonstrated herself to be in relation to Cage's *26′ 1.1499″*. If the script had directed her to jump from a dangerous height, he wondered, would she likewise consider herself bound to obey? Shalleck was prepared to accept a model of distributed authorship in this performance. Though he recognized shared creative responsibility, he also insisted on shared accountability. If this piece was indeed "half-Moorman's," then she should accept half the responsibility for the legal ramifications. But Shalleck's opinion was flawed. He extended legal responsibility for public nudity to the performer, but the same responsibility was lifted from the composer—charges against Paik were dropped one day after the aborted performance. In addition to demonstrating clearly one intersection of gender and power, this juridical discrepancy points to the ways that networks are uneven in their distribution of power and responsibility. Given this

FIGURE 13. Charlotte Moorman at her arrest outside of the Filmmakers' Cinémathèque on February 9, 1967, following her interrupted performance of Nam June Paik's *Opera Sextronique*. Photograph by Hy Rothman/New York Daily News.

hostile legal environment, Moorman's recourse to scriptural authority would appear to have been a situated, tactical decision to try to deflect agency—and thus blame—away from herself and toward Paik.

Though we may speculate that Moorman found the role of traditional performer/interpreter more hospitable for a woman musician in a male-dominated environment, it is also helpful to consider the ambivalent, twisted nature of subjectivity itself. In other words, by narrating Moorman's self-presentation as a traditional performer in terms of a strategic navigation of the law, or indeed of downtown experimentalism itself, we assume a fully formed—and resistant—subjectivity that precedes her enrollment in this historical, social, economic, artistic, and technological network. In the alternative analysis I am pursuing here, subjectivity emerges as an effect of that network, and there its specific shape and valences—which Karen Barad would call its "agential cut"—cannot be taken for granted.

In this environment, specific roles and agencies come into being in a process that Barad has called "intra-action," a kind of mutual definition through acting in concert.[107] Instrumentalization is multivalent, Barad argues, and it does not precede the enacted relationships in an ensemble: "Intra-actions include the larger material arrangement . . . that effects an *agential cut* between 'subject' and 'object' (in contrast to the more familiar Cartesian cut which takes this distinction for granted). That is, the agential cut enacts a resolution *within* the phenomenon of the inherent ontological (and semantic) indeterminacy."[108]

Cagean indeterminacy describes an environment where relationships among sounds are not fixed—indeed, performance itself is supposedly unfixed and always changing. As we have seen throughout this study, the gap between rhetoric and practice was often wide when it came to the performance of Cage's work, indicating that a fresh approach to notions of indeterminacy might be useful. Barad's ontological indeterminacy both refines and expands the model, in that the customary division between subject and object (a division that grounds conventional understandings of agency) is never taken for granted. This split and the mapping of agency generally thought to derive from it is in fact always contingent and open to multiple relationships of use and instrumentalization.[109] Barad's cosmological description transposed down to a historically situated circumstance of cello playing in the 1960s helps explain how Moorman might at one moment assume a controlling position in relationship to her considerable technological battery of equipment, while at another moment take on an instrumentalized role vis-à-vis the discipline of cello pedagogy operating at the capillary level upon her performing body. One could also say that Cage used the score as an instrument to extend his creative agency over the considerable interpretive freedoms of Moorman, even as the cellist asserted a fugitive coauthorship of the work by way of her thoroughgoing reinvention of his score. Paik is enrolled as a facilitator but he, too, extends his compositional voice through the work of Cage. Subjects, objects, instruments, and technologies turn and fold in on one another in constantly shifting configurations. In such an environment, agency emerges not simply in those moments when Moorman assumes a subject position through some practice of instrumentalization but also in configurations in which she is rendered an object through processes juridical, musical, or spectatorial.[110]

Rather than fixating on how Moorman's performance betrayed Cage's wishes, I find it more productive to examine the ways in which Moorman used the composer's work to fashion her relationship to her training and

the world around her. Approaching the relationship between composer and performer from the perspective of the latter still seems unexpected, an odd realization when we remember that experimental music is supposed to "give" more creativity to the performer. Among other things, the wealth of new issues and problems uncovered by an approach attuned to the inventions and appropriations of performers suggests that the scriptural economy of experimental music is not significantly different from other economies of music that are dominated by producers who attempt to restrain the multiple voices of popular orality.[111]

Tropes of obedience and disobedience pale in comparison with the question of utility. How did Moorman *use* Cage's piece?[112] (A not unrelated question is: How did Cage use Moorman's realization? In this regard, the well-publicized cellist offered a Faustian bargain—sure, the interpretation might not be the most faithful, but she was taking it all over Europe and to the *Tonight Show,* public television, and Shea Stadium.) "Poaching" is the term used by Michel de Certeau (and later adopted by Henry Jenkins) to describe the ways in which readers create their own versions of texts.[113] It is a term of appropriation, rather than simply implying misreading, and one shouldn't assume that a reader is necessarily molded by the products she consumes.[114] "This misunderstanding assumes that 'assimilating' necessarily means 'becoming similar to' what one absorbs," de Certeau has written, "and not 'making something similar' to what one is, making it one's own, appropriating or reappropriating it."[115]

In making *26′ 1.1499″* her own, Moorman went beyond using Cage's score as a problematization of traditional cello technique and problematized the problematization itself. This act of appropriation not only rendered strange her training on the cello but also became the means through which she redirected the piece toward ends other than the ones Cage had in mind. "Resistance" is not the word to describe this relation; though Moorman was risking and exploring a different kind of experimental subjectivity than the score offered, she did not reject Cage's expectations outright.

Because Cage's piece so denaturalized the "normal" ways of playing a cello, it pulled off the layer of disciplinary efficiency that customarily managed and administered the relationship between body and instrument, returning that interaction to a clumsier encounter among flesh, metal, and wood. Perhaps Moorman picked up on this unusual corporealization and extended it in her alternative inhabitation of *26′ 1.1499″*—once given the opportunity to focus on her body in a new way, she chose to stage it not simply as a sound-producing mechanism but as part of a larger cultural

and social formation that included all those themes so readily associated with the 1960s.

. . .

By concentrating on these overlapping and contradictory aspects of Moorman's work in the 1960s, I have tried to show how subjectivity can be traced through the stylizations, modifications, and inhabitations that she brought to various modes of subjectivation, a process more intricate than easy assumptions about resistance and agency will allow. At the same time, the care of the self concerns much more than subjectivity on an atomistic level, for an engagement with the self is always also an engagement with culture. The anthropologist James Faubion's statement that "the ethical field is the primary site of cultural invention" is particularly relevant for the scholar of experimental music, for the avant-garde has always been about innovation and curiosity. The routines and simple inventions of daily life are where the ethical and the experimental overlap and diffract one another. We can surmise that Foucault was unfamiliar with experimental music when he commented in 1983, "What strikes me is the fact that, in our society, art has become something that is related only to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something which is specialized or done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?"[116]

Whereas Kantian critique seeks to trace the limits of knowledge, and thus to outline a space of rational action that is common to all humanity, Foucault's ethical project was to reverse this approach: "In what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory," Foucault asked, "what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints? The point, in brief, is to transform the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible crossing-over."[117] What links Foucauldian ethics to experimentalism is an engagement with the everyday, where testing the limits and capacities of what is given, what is there, becomes the condition for "a possible crossing-over," an elsewhere.[118] Such a test highlights the ethical as a field of the self at risk, offered up in what Stewart calls "a series of dilemmas: that action is always a reaction; that the potential to act always includes the potential to be acted on, or to submit; that the move to gather a self to act is also a move to lose the self."[119]

Foucault did not understand these processes of self-stylization to be a retreat into the aesthetic and away from questions of society, politics, or history; rather, in putting itself to "the test of reality," in its constant

engagement in the present, the work of self-fashioning can reveal where change is possible and desirable.[120] Glossing Foucault's description of thought itself, we might say that experimental music practices take the form of a certain curiosity, "not the curiosity that seeks to assimilate what is proper for one to know, but that which enables one to get free of oneself."[121] Releasing oneself from oneself, straying afield of the self, bringing critical thought to bear on itself: these practices condition the possibility of thinking differently, of crossing over. This, as Paul Rabinow has explained, is an ethics that has as its telos the disassembling of the self in service of an unknown future—experimental processes.[122]

And yet, all experiments harbor the possibility of failure. The debacle of *Atlas Eclipticalis* at the New York Philharmonic; Henry Flynt's outlandish search for an anti-imperialist avant-gardism; the challenging vision and quick flameout of the Jazz Composers Guild; Charlotte Moorman's murderous appropriation of *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player*. In different ways, these failures outline the limits both of experimentalism in the 1960s and of experimental music studies in the decades since.

Although Bernstein's Avant-Garde concert series represented a major opportunity for Cage to present his work and ideas to a wide audience, a rebellion by musicians skeptical of Cage's professionalism and hostile to his aesthetics turned the occasion into a nightmare of bad press. The incident suggested the limits of Cagean indeterminacy to adapt to the unforeseen, to open itself up to "whatever eventuality." In failing to win over the downtown avant-garde to his mission, Flynt pushed beyond the capacity of that community to situate their practice in a larger frame of race and power. His experience also revealed the limited understanding of popular music held by the sectarian Left during these years. The Jazz Composers Guild failed to restructure the economics of jazz and black experimentalism and to build a desired audience. The attempt exposed the limited chances of constructing a parallel industry when both mainstream and alternative sites of musical production were largely unavailable to composers working in an aesthetic space related, but not limited, to jazz repertories. Finally, in her spectacular performance of Cage's score, Moorman exceeded the limits of Cagean theatricality and highlighted a notion of daily life that was at odds with the composer's. Although she was a powerful artist and performer, the political models one can draw from her work, especially those based in the logic of feminist transgression, were likewise limited.

"Failure" is too strong a word to describe how scholarship has treated these cases, but each case, once thoroughly investigated, sheds light on some of the limits of methodology and ideology in experimental music

studies. The available literature has excelled at documenting and elaborating upon Cage's articulation of experimentalism, but the examples of the Philharmonic and Moorman performances indicate that "actually existing experimentalism"—that is, the disagreements, compromises, antagonisms, concessions, refusals, and modifications that occurred in the performance of this music—could become something quite unlike what the composer and his supporters subsequently described it to be. Methodologically, this insight can be reached by beginning with performance and resources (such as interviews and oral history) that fill in detail where archival sources fall silent. This method is strongly sympathetic to what Georgina Born has called "post-positivist empiricism," in which research (in her case, ethnographic fieldwork) "throws up material and findings which cannot be incorporated into existing frameworks, and which demand that they be extended. It is characterized by a movement between prior substantive knowledge and theoretical approach, and the new insights given by fieldwork; each amends the other in a process of refinement of working analyses."[123] Most problematic has been the enclosure of experimental music as a self-contained tradition, repertory, or tendency; this enclosure has limited the capacity of scholarship to make adequate sense of complicated assemblages that persist from the past. Flynt's journalistic and scholarly chroniclers, for example, have failed to follow him outside of their own narrowly drawn network of experimental arts, failed to take him at his word (or action) that Fluxus was not the proper frame to understand his work of the 1960s.

But there are many kinds of failures, and some failures can be deemed "successful failures" in that they reveal new opportunities for elaboration. For example, the *Atlas* episode defined a clear break that Cage and his chroniclers seized upon as evidence of his ideological freedom and liberation from the dictatorial, Old World cultural politics of the symphony orchestra. The episode was useful for the Philharmonic, too, for the debacle allowed them to take a dramatic stand as the barbarians (i.e., the beats, antihumanists, and others) closed in. Although widely misunderstood, Flynt's protests of 1963 and 1964, like so many political interventions of that decade, took place in a world where symbolic action could be public and effective. The photographs, press releases, and journalism that accompanied his events ensured that a certain discord was written into the historical record (though that discord was seldom explained properly). Despite its brief existence, the Jazz Composers Guild's status as inspiration and example can be detected in a number of cases: George E. Lewis notes that the Guild was a topic of discussion at one of the first organizational

meetings of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians in Chicago during the summer of 1965;[124] Carla Bley and Michael Mantler used the knowledge gained from the Guild project to found the Jazz Composers Orchestra Association, one of the most important musician-run publishing and promoting organizations of the late 1960s and 1970s; and Roswell Rudd recalls lending his copy of the Guild's constitution to the bassist Reggie Workman when the latter was organizing the Collective Black Artists in 1970.[125] Finally, Moorman and Cage's uneasy collaboration on *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* gained both artists impressive exposure in the 1960s and 1970s.

Failures and the conflicts they follow are crucial for highlighting the edges of experimentalism in the 1960s. To gloss Foucault, failure takes us to the time of the singular and contingent, providing an opportunity to grasp the points where change was possible. As markers of limits, failures indicated the areas that lie beyond the New York avant-garde, as well as the varied means through which the resulting experimentalist formation gained strength and stability. Failures thus surface the concrete, enacted realities of an experimentalist network, but they also reveal the possibility of an experimentalism otherwise.

# Epilogue

*Experimentalism Meets (Iggy) Pop*

September 1964. "I was certain that I had drunk the dregs of limited conception and poverty of ideas," wrote the critic Carl P. Sigmond in *Musical America*.[1] Howard Klein complained of the "self-conscious artiness" of this "exercise in tediousness" in the *New York Times*.[2] And John Gruen, critic for the *New York Herald Tribune*, wondered about the "very special kind of desperation that compels [someone] to stand in front of a microphone [and] scream his lungs out."[3] In the absence of evidence to the contrary, one might mistake these statements to be descriptions of the late-1960s, early-1970s band the Stooges, whom the writer Scott Isler once labeled "the reductio ad absurdum of rock 'n' roll."[4] Some years later, the Stooges' front man and leader, Iggy Pop (né James Osterberg, 1947) echoed the comments of these New York critics when he described his band's early music: "Torture, it basically started out as torture. And then went from there."[5]

But Sigmond, Klein, and Gruen were not reacting to a performance by the Stooges. The object of their scorn was the Ann Arbor–based composer Robert Ashley, who presented a concert with his collaborator Gordon Mumma as part of Charlotte Moorman's Second Annual Avant Garde Festival on September 1, 1964. By far the most offensive element of the evening for the critics was Ashley's solo turn in his own work, *The Wolfman*, which appeared as a last-minute substitution for the Ashley piece that was listed on the program.[6] According to Moorman's account of the performance, the stage was darkened, a loud "eerie" sound began throbbing

through the loudspeakers, and the curtains parted to reveal a banner that had been prepared by Mary Ashley: "The Wolfman Will Replace Maneuvers for Small Hands."[7] Moorman continues, "Ashley enters, stands in front of the poster, adjusts a floor-microphone, puts on a pair of dark glasses, folds his hands behind his back, and roars."[8]

The onslaught lasted for eighteen minutes. Ashley "stood solidly motionless" for the duration, Faubion Bowers reported, "whistling, shouting, screaming, humming, blowing and blasting away at a microphone which, naturally, veered off into its own realm of harmonics, squeaks and piercing rasps. This virtuoso solo was accompanied, appropriately, by an overamplified tape recording of a boiler factory at peak work pitch (or was it an iron foundry?)."[9] In their descriptions of the audience during *The Wolfman,* critics noted people stopping their ears, rushing out of the hall, conversing among themselves, or sitting "paralyzed by sheer terror."[10] At the work's conclusion, Bowers related, a listener at the front of the hall shouted, *"Assassino!"* According to Bowers and other witnesses, others in attendance responded with cries of "Encore!" and "Bravo!"

In the liner notes to the 2002 release of *The Wolfman,* Ashley addressed Bowers's description of his having screamed into the microphone: "This couldn't be farther from the truth. The vocal sounds in the performance have to be probably the softest vocal sounds ever performed in public."[11] Ashley explained that he vocalized at low amplitude because the voice was meant to blend with the sounds of feedback and the precomposed tape part. If the vocalist were to shout or sing too loudly, feedback would be blocked until the vocalist stopped to breathe. The tape part that Ashley used for the 1964 premiere was his 1960 work *The Fourth of July,* which he chose because its full frequency range and quickly changing texture created a noisy "drone"-like background with which he could maintain the illusion of sounds moving around the performance space.[12] *The Wolfman* calls for the performer to improvise a part based on detailed instructions from the composer: every sound should last one breath, beginning with a few seconds of sustained tone, then transforming itself over the next seven to ten seconds, then returning to a sustained tone for the end of the breath.[13] The sound could be altered in pitch, loudness, vowel type (achieved by moving the position of the tongue in the mouth), or jaw shape (open or closed, lips pursed or drawn back), but only one of these parameters was to be changed at any one time. The result was a sinister performance of the human voice pushed to the edge of sonic transformation—hence Ashley's title.[14]

Following their concert at Moorman's festival, Ashley and Mumma traveled to Italy, where they joined several other artists from Ann Arbor


FIGURE 14. Robert Ashley performs his work *The Wolfman* on September 1, 1964, at Judson Hall. Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images.

to present a multimedia piece called *Space Theater* as the American entry in the Venice Biennale.[15] Soon after their return to Ann Arbor, on February 12, 1965, Ashley reprised *The Wolfman* at the 1965 ONCE Festival, an annual concert series that had been running since 1961.[16] ONCE was at the center of a lively arts and performance scene that included a wide slice of Ann Arbor residents, among them the young Jim Osterberg. There are, in fact, several links between this community and the earliest music of the Stooges. As the music journalist Paul Trynka has noted in his definitive biography of Osterberg, "the Stooges' out-there experimentation and improvised instrumentation fit perfectly into this arty, intellectual niche [of Ann Arbor and ONCE]. To most observers, Jim Osterberg was an intellectual first, a rock 'n' roller second."[17]

The performance history of *The Wolfman* after its 1964 New York premiere illuminates some of the ways in which the network of experimentalism extended and linked into the world of popular music as the 1960s wore on. Ultimately, Iggy's translations of experimentalist tropes and techniques were discursively aligned with rock, not experimentalism. But the contrast of his work to Cage's translations of rock into the terms of high art–identified experimentalism helps to illustrate how networks operate, and how connections can be weak or strong, fleeting or enduring. Of these kinds of translated attachments, Kathleen Stewart writes, "Some work better than others. Some are smoother, more consistent. Some can be prolonged. Others operate clumsily, break down, and have to be constantly rethought. . . . The difference often depends on what material a person has to work with."[18]

I shall not attempt to present a historical overview of the links between pop music and experimentalism, nor to distinguish and define something called "pop experimentalism." But the music of La Monte Young, Philip Glass, "Blue" Gene Tyranny, Glenn Branca, Arthur Russell, Rhys Chatham, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Henry Cow, Laurie Anderson, Boredoms, and Sonic Youth, among many others, surely suggests that such a study would be invaluable. I will use this epilogue, therefore, to speculate about the grounds upon which such a study might proceed.[19]

. . .

The ONCE Festivals were organized by several creative individuals and held every year in Ann Arbor between 1961 and 1965. (Concerts and related events would continue to the end of the decade.)[20] One of the most important institutions of American experimentalism in the 1960s, the ONCE Festivals lasted only a few days every year, but each festival spun off a

number of other groups, as well as year-round concerts, creating a vibrant, independent music and performance scene.

Growing out of a collaborative, multidisciplinary environment that included Ashley and Mumma, the artist Milton Cohen, architects Harold Borkin and Joseph Wehrer, and filmmaker George Manupelli, the early ONCE Festivals were relatively conventional presentations of new music. In addition to Ashley and Mumma, the composers George Cacioppo, Roger Reynolds, Bruce Wise, and Donald Scavarda helped to organize and produce these events. Initially galvanized by visits to Ann Arbor by Karlheinz Stockhausen, John Cage, David Tudor, Luciano Berio, and Roberto Gerhard (all between 1958 and 1960), this local community of composers had attachments to, but were nonetheless separate from, the University of Michigan music department. A local community arts funding organization, the Dramatic Arts Center (DAC), was almost entirely responsible for funding ONCE endeavors until 1965.

During these years, ONCE welcomed (or welcomed back) such guests as Berio, Cage, Tudor, Morton Feldman, La Monte Young, the Judson Dance Theater, Pauline Oliveros, Max Neuhaus, Alvin Lucier, and Lukas Foss. New projects and series sprang up across the city: the Ann Arbor Film Festival began in 1963, ONCE Friends presented year-round concerts, the ONCE Recording concerts were offered in 1966, and the Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival began in 1969. After 1964, ONCE transitioned to more theatrical multimedia performances. When the DAC ceased its funding in 1965 and Gordon Mumma joined Cage and Merce Cunningham on tour in 1966, the Festivals wound down, but the artists, musicians, performers, architects, and filmmakers associated with ONCE continued to collaborate on large-scale multimedia performances under the name "the ONCE Group" until the end of the 1960s. (The usual contributors were Manupelli, Cynthia Liddell, Robert and Mary Ashley, Joseph and Anne Wehrer, Milton and Caroline Cohen, and Harold and Ann Borkin.)

Many of ONCE's performances involved audience participation, sometimes even outright confrontation. For example, the highly amplified sounds in Robert Ashley's *Public Opinion Descends upon the Demonstrators* (1961) were determined by the behavior of the audience. As Ralf Dietrich describes it, "Every audience member became a potential demonstrator faced with the sonic consequences of the opinion that he or she may have fancied to express or manifest. No matter how they decided to react to this unusual situation, they could not 'out-behave' (disturb or break up) the performance."[21] Combined with the group's anti-institutional stance, this sort of performer/audience dynamic gave these events an edge of renegade danger, which took

physical form with *The Wolfman* in 1964. The street theater performances of Mary Ashley, in particular, which began in 1963, often involved a younger set of ONCE personalities and occasionally resulted in police action, further sharpened this edge. The aggression of ONCE would be turned back on them in 1965 by a rival group of younger University composers, the Grate Society, who on one occasion "projected a picture of the ONCE composers onto a screen and bombarded it with season apple mash they had collected in cider mills outside Ann Arbor."[22]

Despite harboring the possibility of divisiveness, ONCE was an important part of a mutually supportive arts community in Ann Arbor. Ashley recalled in 2003, "For some reason, for about twelve years that small town was the site of a more or less on-going party, of which the Festival was certainly one of the highlights, but not the only one."[23] There were also connections with the rock- and free jazz–identified counterculture—Mumma, Ashley, and Manupelli helped John Sinclair's Detroit Artists' Workshop receive a DAC grant in 1965, and once Sinclair moved to Ann Arbor and founded the collective Trans-Love Energies (centered on the politically minded rock band the MC5), ONCE artists helped the collective secure permission from the city to present free rock concerts in a public park.[24]

Iggy Pop had drifted into this world by 1965. "Gradually, I sort of smelled out that there was a bunch of leftists around campus who knew about all sorts of stuff I didn't know about. That was a whole lot more interesting than trying to write garage songs," he recalled many years later.[25] In his biography, Trynka describes Iggy as having been charming and ambitious from the start, with an uncanny ability to identify and capitalize on opportunities to advance his status. Iggy's attachments to the ONCE network began with social links to two individuals, Robert Sheff and Anne Wehrer, and he translated these links into a stronger—that is to say, more durable—heterogeneous collection of elements in the years to follow. This collection took the form of electronic instruments, concert attire and behavior, lasting social connections, and the audible traces of these attachments concretized in recordings by his band, the Stooges.

Sheff (b. 1945) arrived in Ann Arbor from San Antonio (by way of the Juilliard School in New York) in September 1962. A preternaturally gifted young pianist and versatile musician, Sheff had performed works by Cage, Feldman, Young, and Ashley by the time he was seventeen years old, often on programs he had coorganized with the composer Philip Krumm (who had relocated to Ann Arbor about a year before Sheff). Sheff was equally at home in the musical idioms of art music, the blues, rock and roll, soul, and R&B.

According to Sheff in 2007, he began performing in ONCE-related events only a few months after his arrival in Ann Arbor. He was practically a ONCE veteran by the time he joined the Prime Movers, a local blues band founded by the brothers Michael and Dan Erlewine in the summer of 1965.[26] In November of that year, Iggy also joined the band on drums, having traded his position in his teeny-bopper band, the Iguanas, for the high-brow intellectualism of the white man's blues. Aside from adult sophistication, Iggy also gained his nickname from the new group, initially as a result of ribbing from his new band mates, who thought little of Iggy's former band. Iggy recalls one incident during his time with the Prime Movers that was particularly influential to his later development. Dan Erlewine (or possibly Sheff) showed up at a rehearsal one day with a Gordon Mumma–designed electronic effects unit. "It was a little silver box about 10 by 8 by 6," Iggy remembers.

> People were just starting to invent the wah-wah, feedback, distortion boxes. But this box had some kind of synthesizer in it, so you plugged in your guitar, and when you played something, something totally different was going to come out of the box, and it would never come out the same way twice. [laughs] It was frightening. I listened to Danny Erlewine plugged into the thing, and I remember just sitting in the room really quietly, staring at it, and my mind was racing, and I was trying to figure out a way in which this thing could be useful.

Discount Records was an important site of connection for those in the Ann Arbor popular music scenes, and Iggy and Sheff both worked there as clerks. The store's manager, Jeep Holland, was a local power broker who also managed the careers of a few regional bands (including the Rationals and the Scott Richardson Case). Several other local scenesters passed through the establishment, including the saxophonist and future Stooge Steve Mackay, who, with Discount Records' assistant manager and bass player Vivian Shevitz and Sheff (on keys), later formed the Charging Rhinoceros of Soul. "Charging Rhino was mostly R&B covers," Mackay told an interviewer in 2005, but the band gigged fairly regularly in the late 1960s and opened for the MC5 at Detroit's Grande Ballroom on several occasions.[27]

Musical and social links to Sheff were not the only paths by which Iggy moved into the social world of ONCE. Iggy was also friendly with the Wehrer family, attending high school with Martha and growing particularly close with her mother, Anne, whom the ONCE historian Richard James has described as "an energetic organizer, one of [ONCE's] most potent creative minds, and a consummate theatrical performer."[28] Born in Virginia in 1929, Wehrer led a multifaceted life. By the mid-1960s, she had

FIGURE 15. Iggy Pop at the MC5 house in Ann Arbor, c. 1967. Photograph by Leni Sinclair.

been an actress, school teacher, journalist, model, mother of five children, and arts organizer. (Her husband, Joseph, was an architecture professor at the University of Michigan and had worked previously for Buckminster Fuller, for whom Anne at one time performed secretarial work.) Anne Wehrer developed her talents in arts administration while serving on the board of the Dramatic Arts Center from 1961 to 1965. She and her husband collaborated extensively in ONCE during the mid-1960s and also took part in the group's various tours. Connections with the Fluxus and Factory scenes were established through exchange programs with New York artists; at least one of these connections led to Anne's being cast in Andy Warhol's film *Bikeboy* (1967). From 1964 until 1967, she assisted Robert Rauschenberg, Billy Klüver, and Theodore Kiel in planning Experiments in Art and Technology, and she also organized the Midwest contributions to the Museum of Modern Art's Machine Show (1969) and Expo '70 in Osaka.

A major force in the artistic, intellectual, and civic community of Ann Arbor, Anne Wehrer also hosted many of ONCE's famous parties, and the Wehrer house was a welcoming environment for the teenaged Iggy. "There was kind of a junior beatnik/senior avant-garde nexus around that

house. . . . I loved being at their house. It was a little bit of a salon, without being as drippy as that word implies. Cause you felt like you could toss your butt down and put your feet up and say something, you know?" In her afterword to Iggy's 1982 autobiography (which she coauthored), Wehrer remembered, "When Iggy was down, he'd crash on the couch. When he was up, we'd design band costumes and fantasies."[29] At one of the Wehrers' parties in March 1966, Iggy met Andy Warhol and the Velvet Underground, who had been invited by the Wehrers to stage their multimedia event "The Exploding Plastic Inevitable" at the Ann Arbor Film Festival that year.[30] (Iggy was also present at the performance.)

Through Sheff and Wehrer, Iggy was exposed to the equipment, people, compositions, and ideas of ONCE. In our 2009 interview, Iggy recalled hearing the ONCE crowd discuss their events on several occasions, but he cannot recall ever having attended a concert. He was quick to point out that there is plenty he cannot recall, and it is likely that his decades of hard drug use, not to mention the fact that rock journalists have totally ignored such connections, simply erased the memory of specific ONCE concerts. All the circumstantial evidence would suggest that Iggy attended at least some ONCE events, especially given that his clearest connections are to works presented during the first two nights of the 1965 ONCE Festival (11–12 February), when the eighteen-year-old drummer would have witnessed performances of *The Wolfman*, Mary Ashley's *The Jelloman* (which featured Sheff as a performer, and about which more below), and a percussion performance by Max Neuhaus.[31] Many years later, Sheff commented, "Max Neuhaus did an incredible concert, and I would really be amazed if Iggy wasn't at that one." In any case, the precise nature of Iggy's familiarity with ONCE concerts is less important than the clear evidence of the information he gleaned from his interactions with that network, and the ways in which he translated this information into his work with the Stooges.

Sheff also later insisted that Iggy must have been familiar with *The Wolfman:* "I *know* that Iggy knew that piece," he avowed. Certainly Iggy developed a deep respect for Ashley: "I always had a soft spot for guys like what I thought Robert Ashley was—a sort of footloose, freewheeling hero academic. . . . You got the idea this guy was not stuffy. He still had the kid in him." Ashley in turn seems to have enjoyed Iggy's company. Years later, he told Anne Wehrer, "When I saw that chubby kid in white shorts and T-shirt swinging around on top of a parking meter in front of Discount Records, smiling and waving at the world and singing, 'Hi, hi, hi—high!' I knew we'd know each other again."[32]

The lessons of *The Wolfman*—the unpredictability of feedback, the force of high volumes, the intensity of a complex drone texture, the clarity of aggression and sonic assault—stayed with Iggy when he began working on his own musical ideas with the Stooges. The social connections that Iggy forged with Sheff and Wehrer may have been casual and fleeting, but they were part of a heterogeneous network of attachments that included more material (and lasting) connections based on sound, public presentation, and professional/musical relationships. It is to these lasting connections that I shall turn in conclusion.

. . .

After leaving the Prime Movers in the fall of 1966, Iggy spent a few months playing the drums in blues bands in Chicago, frequently crashing with Robert Koester, owner of the famous Jazz Record Mart and Delmark Records. When Iggy returned to Ann Arbor in early 1967, he recruited two neighborhood toughs, Ron and Scott Asheton, to join him in a new band they soon named The Psychedelic Stooges. Iggy told the journalist Edwin Pouncey that he had envisioned an "avant garde instrumental trio" that would combine the musical styles of Harry Partch, Cab Calloway, John Cage, and Screaming Jay Hawkins, mixed with the energy of horror films and the Three Stooges (a favorite of Ron's).[33]

In fact, both Iggy and Ron Asheton have said that their earliest intentions in founding the Stooges were to create what they called "rock operas." Asheton told an interviewer in 2000, "So I'm going, 'Yes, we have to write some kind of rock opera.' And we actually started [one]. Iggy then was playing Farfisa keyboards and he'd come up with little vignettes."[34] Equal parts ONCE theater and the Who, these rock operas were quickly dropped for more formless experiments in droning noise and invented instruments. Iggy switched to playing a small, lap steel guitar with all the strings tuned to the same pitch (usually E).[35] Ron played electric bass through a number of effects pedals, while Scott banged away on an Iggy-made percussion battery of oil drums, auto parts, timbales, and cymbals, some of which had been amplified with contact microphones.[36] (Like John Cage a few years earlier, Iggy had become aware of the availability of cheap Japanese electronics: "You could get a two-buck mic down at the electronics store.")

As Iggy and Anne Wehrer wrote in 1982, the band "was entirely instrumental at this time, like jazz gone wild. It was very North African, a very tribal sound, very electronic."[37] Like better-known experimentalist figures such as Cage, Young, and Flynt, Iggy took part in the longstanding practice of dipping into non-Western sources for inspiration and validation.

This theme is familiar to any student of the European/U.S. avant-garde. The Stooges employed tribal beats, and Ron Asheton has identified Ravi Shankar as one inspiration for the drone in "I Wanna Be Your Dog." But the theme of primitivism became most evident in Iggy's later stage presentation, which was always topless (and, at times, bottomless). Reflecting on his one semester as an anthropology major at the University of Michigan, Iggy told Pouncey, "One thing that impressed me was that there was a recurrent theme of nudity in shamanistic rituals. In Stone Age or more primitive societies when people get out there and get musical they also get naked."[38]

Given this affinity for one of the defining characteristics of the avant-garde, it is no surprise that the band fell for the music of the experimentalist Harry Partch during the summer of 1967, when Iggy discovered some of his recordings at Discount Records.[39] Partch was interested in ancient religion and mysticism, as well as instrument building. One of his instruments, the Cloud Chamber Bowls, made a strong impression on Iggy. (The covers of the second and third editions [1957 and 1962] of *Plectra & Percussion Dances* prominently featured a photograph of the Cloud Chamber Bowls.)[40] Iggy initially attempted to create his own version of the large, glass-bowl array with spring water bottles, but he was unable to handle the bottles' ungainly bulk and excessive weight. "What I did instead, which still sounds great, was I took a Waring blender, and just put about two inches of water in the bottom, and turned it on low, and if you put a mic about an inch into the top of it, it sounds like Niagara." Though he may have caught the bug of fabricating instruments from seeing the homemade live electronics used by ONCE and from the liner notes on Partch LPs, Iggy might have also been encouraged by the Stooges' first manager, Ron Richardson, who was known to the band as "the Mad Professor," owing to his enthusiasm for tinkering.[41] In any event, the band added more homegrown instruments to their arsenal; they also acquired the future Stooges bassist Dave Alexander, who initially assisted Iggy in operating his battery of electronic noisemakers.

At the Stooges' first public appearance, which occurred in Richardson's living room on Halloween night, 1967, Scott and Ron Asheton concentrated on creating a tribal groove, Iggy roared away on his lap steel, and Alexander twirled knobs and banged Asheton's Kustom amplifier head on the floor to create waves of noise from its overloaded spring reverb unit.[42] Though the performance lasted only fifteen or twenty minutes (as indeed is true of all of the Stooges' concerts for at least the next six months), Iggy had time to transition from the lap steel to the other instruments he

had brought along: a vacuum cleaner, his water-filled blender, and a theremin.[43] Other accounts of the band's performances in this period include mention of an instrument called the "Jim-a-phone," a metal cone into which a microphone was suspended, creating almost tuneable feedback.[44] This instrument betrayed the influence of ONCE, particularly of Ashley. As Sheff commented in 2007, "That's Robert Ashley, there—tuneable feedback is used in a lot of his pieces. . . . A lot of early ONCE things were feedback pieces of various kinds."[45]

In the weeks following the Stooges' debut performance, Iggy began to front the band on vocals and swiftly became the centerpiece of the act. He was aided in this transition by Alexander's ill-fated and acid-influenced decision to paint Iggy's lap steel guitar with psychedelic designs. The paint ruined the guitar's electronics. The Stooges continued to avoid clearly defined songs, instead relying on a set of riffs and drones over which Iggy improvised lyrics and choreography. At times he returned to his blender or vacuum cleaner, which was eventually replaced by an air compressor that offered a louder drone.[46] One more new instrument emerged when Iggy donned golf spikes to scrape and tap dance his way across a contact-miked piece of either sheet metal or washboard (accounts vary). The band's plethora of percussion instruments using contact microphones calls to mind Pauline Oliveros's composition *Applebox Double,* which she performed with the pianist David Tudor in March 1966 at a ONCE Recording Concert in Ann Arbor. In that piece a pair of contact-miked and amplified wooden boxes form the basis for an improvisation "using bows, mallets, friction or any other method that worked to set the object into vibration," Oliveros later explained.[47]

At some point in the spring of 1968, Alexander moved to bass and Ron Asheton switched to guitar. Scott Asheton continued to play a cobbled-together drum set/junk percussion battery at least through April, but he eventually settled on a more conventional kit.[48] One local Ann Arbor journalist described the act in January 1968 as having involved "electronic music which utilized controlled feedback, wah-wah, slide guitar, and droned bass as well as scat-like singing and neo-primitive howling."[49]

Throughout the band's first year in existence, Iggy consistently performed in whiteface, wearing a white dress and a wig made of tinfoil.[50] Although Nausika Richardson, the wife of the group's first manager, remembers assisting in the creation of this costume prior to the Stooges' Halloween 1967 performance, the source of the outfit can reasonably be traced to a ONCE performance of February 1965.[51] The main character in Mary Ashley's theater piece *The Jelloman* also wore a long white dress,

white face paint, and a white wig. (Sheff had performed in that piece, including a surprise nude scene when the towel he was wearing accidentally dropped to the floor.)[52] Anne Wehrer recalled having discussed "band costumes and fantasies" with the young Iggy over late nights in her living room, so the most likely explanation of Iggy's sartorial presentation is that he developed it in collaboration with Wehrer.

The combination of Iggy's otherworldly stage presentation, the band's unusual invented instruments, and their free-form improvisations that cared little for conventional song form created a lasting impression on those who attended the Stooges' early concerts. The poet and critic John Sinclair described a gig from early 1968: "It wasn't like a band, it wasn't like the MC5, it wasn't like Jeff Beck, it wasn't like anything. It wasn't rock & roll."[53] Dennis Thompson, a local musician who played drums in the MC5, told one interviewer, "They were really like the first true performance art band."[54]

The Stooges' free-form drone was not motivated by disinterested sonic exploration. Rather, the group used noise to provoke a reaction from the audience. Such theatrical provocation extended to Iggy's onstage behavior, which included moments of nudity, direct engagement with members of the audience, occasional violence, and, eventually, self-harm with drumsticks and broken glass. Although Stooges legend usually traces this tendency to a particularly confrontational performance by Jim Morrison that Iggy had attended in the fall of 1967, it seems that the Ann Arbor scene too provided the young singer with numerous examples of confrontation to emulate. Iggy recalls hearing the older ONCE crowd telling tales of avant-garde performance at the Wehrer home:

> One that sticks in my mind, I remember—which is one of the clichés of the 1960s avant-garde—was the old concert with people beating a piano with hammers, which I think was a Fluxus thing. And then I heard them talking about John Cage, and I read a piece of literature that described a concert in which a naked woman played cello. . . . That made a big impression on me. I'm not sure why, but it did.

Stories of provocation and the prevailing atmosphere of confrontation in the ONCE circle conditioned Iggy's stance toward his audience. There was also the Velvet Underground, another art-identified rock band with a tendency toward shock. That band came to town in March 1966 with their manager Andy Warhol, who, not surprisingly, considered Ann Arbor to be the perfect setting for his multimedia assault on the senses. "At last the Velvets were a smash," he later wrote in *POPism*.[55] Indeed, the shock

"policy" of the Velvet Underground seems to have made as much of an impression on Iggy as Morrison had done. As Warhol told a local journalist in Ann Arbor that spring, "If they can take it for 10 minutes, then we play it for 15. . . . That's our policy—always leave them wanting less."[56]

The Stooges' connections to the Warhol circle grew in September 1968, when Warhol's associate Danny Fields, who was working as an A&R representative for Elektra, signed the band for $5,000.[57] Iggy described the encounter: "I was playing a free gig, one of my few. It got to the end of our show, I was just letting the amps play and shooed the band off. So I was just wandering around. I had this maternity dress and a white face and I was doing unattractive things, spitting on people, things like that."[58] Backstage after the show, Fields approached Iggy to offer him a contract, but he had to convince the singer that Elektra's offer was no joke.

By the time the Stooges entered the recording studio in April 1969, the act had tightened up considerably. Gone were the twenty-minute free-form freak-outs, save for one remnant at the end of the ballad "Ann," which took the form of a five-minute jam that had previously been known as "Dance of Romance" (the track was edited for the original release and later restored on a 2005 CD reissue).[59] The self-titled debut album was produced by Velvet Underground violist and bassist John Cale, whom Iggy had met in Ann Arbor three years before.

Cale presented his own interesting set of attachments to experimental music. As a music student at Goldsmiths in London in the early 1960s, he befriended the composer Cornelius Cardew, who in turn introduced him to the work of Cage and Young.[60] On his last day at Goldsmiths in July 1963, Cale performed Young's *Arabic Numeral (any integer) to Henry Flynt* (1960), a pioneering work of radical reductionism that consisted of a single loud sound repeated a certain number of times (Cale played a dense cluster with his elbows on the piano).[61] After arriving in the United States to study at Tanglewood that summer, Cale soon moved to New York, where in September 1963 he took a turn in Cage's famous performance of Satie's *Vexations*.[62] At about this time, he also began playing with Young, Marian Zazeela, Tony Conrad, and Angus MacLise in the Theatre of Eternal Music (TEM), an improvisational ensemble that is important in this context because this group, too, experimented with loud volume and harsh textures built on drones. Cale's participation in the group continued until December 1965, when he formed the Velvet Underground with Lou Reed, Sterling Morrison, and MacLise.[63] The new band's style was loud, abrasive, and confrontational. In the Ann Arbor performance of March 1966, for example, they performed "Nothing Song," which, according to Ingrid

Superstar, consisted principally of "noise and feedback and screeches and groans from the amplifiers."[64]

Cale carried over the drone impulse from his time with Young into several Velvet Underground songs, and he also continued to have an interest in harmonic stasis and harsh timbres.[65] His viola drone is present in "Heroin" and "Venus in Furs," and "I'm Waiting for the Man" concludes with a repeated, noisy piano cluster that strikes me as a reference to Young's *Arabic Numeral (any integer) to Henry Flynt*. These sonic predilections are indicated in some of his production choices on *The Stooges*. The song "I Wanna Be Your Dog," in particular, bears Cale's imprint, which is best detected when comparing Elektra's 1969 release with the 2005 reissue that includes Cale's original mixes (which were rejected by the label). Cale's sound is tinnier; he has drastically attenuated the low- to mid-range, and he has also rolled off some of the bass frequencies. Not stopping there, however, he pushes up the treble across all the instruments, particularly in the guitar, which now sounds even more ragged and wiry than it did in the original Elektra releases. (His version is also a half-step lower, lending a more ominous tone to the recording.) Moreover, Cale foregrounds the static component of sleigh bells and dogged, one-note piano line in his mix, which results in a constant wash of high frequencies. Although the song as originally released by Elektra speaks strongly of its producer, Cale's rejected mix presents that idiosyncratic trace in an even stronger form; his "Dog" is altogether harsher.

Many Stooges fans have pointed to the presence of Cale's viola track on the album's stoner-chant conclusion, "We Will Fall," as another clear indication of his influence on the group, but it may be more revealing to consider the actual pitches Cale chose to play. The dominant-tonic (C-F) dyad that he sounds throughout the ten-minute track does not stand out particularly, but when the overdubbed "solo" line begins at about 8:25, Cale's emphasis on scale degrees 4, 5, m7, and 2 indicates a clear continuing attachment to the pitch vocabulary of the Theatre of Eternal Music. (Generally speaking, TEM's harmony was based on just-tuned seconds, fourths, fifths, and sevenths. Young's *Four Dreams of China,* for example, uses three pitches in the ratio 6/8/9—in other words, a perfect fourth and a perfect fifth—in addition to a variable fourth pitch dividing the 8/9 dyad.)

As Young often explained, the goal of the Theatre of Eternal Music was to get inside the sound, and this corporeal relationship to raw sound explains the later affinity between Iggy and Cale. Cale wrote in his autobiography, "The story that affected my view of him [Iggy] most at the time was the nights he told me he spent alone in the farmhouse . . . tuning each

string of his lap-steel guitar to the same note, turning it up and immersing himself in the noise. That was vision to me."[66]

After recording their debut, the Stooges toured relentlessly in 1969 and 1970, and returned to the studio to record *Fun House* in May 1970, adding the saxophonist (and former Charging Rhino band mate of Bob Sheff) Steve Mackay for that recording. Though Stoogiography tends to cast the album as a kind of Sun Ra/Coltrane homage, it sounds to me like straight-ahead rock with some touches of funky sax.[67] Nonetheless, the record ends with a free improvisation meant to capture the energy of the band's live show, with Mackay and Iggy wailing away in equal measure. Drug use began to wear on the group in 1970, and they fell apart in the summer of 1971.[68] That fall, however, Iggy hooked up with David Bowie in New York, and Bowie helped arrange new management for him. Iggy (with a new guitarist, James Williamson, who had joined the band at the end of 1970) traveled to London in the spring of 1972, and he soon reformed the Stooges, bringing the Asheton brothers to England and recording the Stooges' third album, *Raw Power,* in September and October 1972.[69]

The band relocated to Hollywood at the end of 1972. In February 1973, Iggy contacted his old friend Robert Sheff, who had also relocated to (Northern) California a few years earlier and was now teaching composition and electronic music at that bastion of American experimentalism, the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College. (By 1973, the list of former Mills students and professors included Henry Cowell, John Cage, Lou Harrison, Darius Milhaud, Luciano Berio, Leon Kirchner, Pauline Oliveros, Morton Subotnick, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Robert Ashley, Laurie Anderson, and Peter Gordon.) Iggy was hoping to thicken the Stooges' sound with rootsy piano playing, and he invited Sheff to join the group for its Detroit homecoming on March 31.[70] Rehearsal tapes made at Scott Richardson's Morgan Sound Studios in Ypsilanti, Michigan, reveal that Sheff had filled out the old songs considerably; his playing is strong and gleeful.[71] Unfortunately, the association of the Stooges and Sheff only lasted for the concert in Detroit and a few at the Whisky-a-Go-Go in Los Angeles. At the Los Angeles venue Sheff performed in his recently created identity, "Blue" Gene Tyranny (a character he had inhabited before getting involved with the Stooges), in which identity he took the stage in ripped clothing and a crown of LED lights. But Sheff hadn't been paid, and he found himself loaning all of his cash to his band mates, all of them hard-core junkies. Realizing that he possessed only enough money for airfare back to Oakland, he took the chance to escape.[72]

The Stooges sputtered on until February 9, 1974, the date of their final

show. By that occasion, Iggy's customary baiting of the audience had reached new levels. At a concert outside of Detroit a few days earlier, the singer had physically challenged one particularly loud heckler in a group of bikers, and when his challenge was met with a punch in the face that sent him hurtling backward, the evening's entertainment ended abruptly.[73] "The invincibility of the band was shattered," said Williamson.[74] Rumors of the incident spread quickly ahead of the February 9 concert at the Michigan Palace in Detroit, which thereupon took on the atmosphere of a heavyweight title fight: band against audience. A well-known bootleg recording confirms that the event was a poetically abject flameout, a misanthropic, white suburban version of the Theatre of Cruelty. Facing a maelstrom of objects from the crowd—eggs, ice cubes, cups, drugs, coins, bottles—Iggy remained aggressive yet strangely charming in his engagement with the audience. But as he violently and insistently breached the gap between art (stage) and life (audience), life came hurtling back across that divide in the form of an empty Stroh's bottle, which, shattering on Iggy's face, drew the concert—and the band's career—to an ugly conclusion.[75]

. . .

I am drawn to the hidden story of loudness that runs through this network in the 1960s. Everywhere one turns, high amplitude emerges as character and muse. Of the Stooges' first gig in 1967, as described by Trynka: "[T]he volume at which they played was, everyone agrees, simply staggering."[76] Of a 1968 performance of *The Wolfman,* in the words of Pauline Oliveros*:* "My ears changed and adapted themselves to the sound pressure level. All the wax in my ears melted."[77] Of the Velvet Underground, as reviewed by Larry McCombs: "The amplified violin *[sic]* goes higher and higher, becomes a shriek, a feedback noise, a regular dit-dah-dit of unbearable Morse codes screaming above the other noise. . . . You wish it would stop."[78] Of the Theatre of Eternal Music, as John Cage reported to Peter Yates: "[Jasper] Johns and I [came] out relieved to be released."[79] And of a 1970 Cage performance, as a listener told the composer: "The decibels destroy that tranquility to which you profess allegiance, and which is necessary for an appreciation of what you set in motion."[80]

In this study, we have observed a few examples of Cage's fascination with the "change of scale" brought about by high amplitude, and this fascination mediated his relationship to popular music networks. Cage's disdain for jazz is well known, but his comments on rock have received less attention. In a conversation with Daniel Charles, he commented, "If we're talking about rock, everything changes! Electronics has transformed every-

thing in it. Jazz was hung up on its traditions; but in rock, the traditions are drowned in sound. Everything becomes confused—it's wonderful! . . . Jazz is a linear form; not rock."[81] When Charles responded that the regular beat, which Cage found so oppressive in jazz, was in fact even stronger in rock, Cage objected: "But that regularity disappears if the amplification is sufficient. . . . You are inside the object, and you realize that this object is a river. With rock, there is a change of scale: you are thrown into the current. Rock takes everything with it."[82]

In choosing to emphasize the loud volume of rock while denying its danceable (i.e., body-centered) beat, Cage translated the music into terms that were acceptable and significant for experimentalism as he had articulated it. This translation was also carried out on a social field patterned by race, for it was the white-coded genre of rock that captured Cage's attention, rather than the equally loud, equally noisy, and equally disruptive sound of R&B, the electric blues, or yet another rock translation, *Bitches Brew,* which had been released to considerable fanfare and controversy less than one year before Cage's 1970 conversation with Charles. Given Cage's directed extension of the network toward rock rather than toward more racially marked musics, one can't help but agree with Fred Moten's suspicion that "a black avant-garde exists, as it were, oxymoronically—as if black, on the one hand, and avant-garde, on the other hand, each depends for its coherence upon the exclusion of the other."[83]

Anyone can make translations, of course, and this is exactly what Iggy was doing with his electronic instruments, junk percussion, concert presentation, and sound (mediated as it was through Cale's own translations of the Theatre of Eternal Music). In his description of the Stooges' first public performance in 1967, John Sinclair states this fact plainly: "I loved it, because it was out there, but in a rock 'n' roll context. Taking this sterile European avant-garde stuff and translating it into things kids can listen to."[84] The mere *act* of translation is not enough, however, for one to gain a position in a particular network, for translation forges both weak and strong connections.

In Latour's definition, translation is "the means by which we articulate different sorts of matter."[85] Each of these different sorts of matter has something to offer the network into which it is enrolled. A piece of electronic equipment creates a sound that the composer could not achieve alone. The composer can use language to clarify the meaning or use of this sound to an audience. The composer's score or a recording, through processes of duplication and distribution, can act at a distance in ways that

the composer himself could not do. And, finally, an archive offers a kind of historical stability lacking in any single performance.

The durability and strength of a given network of translations, to quote Stewart again, "depends on what material a person has to work with." To return briefly to an example from my introduction, Don Heckman's mobility through the worlds of European composition, downtown experimentalism, and avant-garde jazz surely effected a movement of translation, but this translation wasn't strong or durable enough to convince the visiting Stockhausen to follow the same routes and explore the world of underground jazz in New York. In a field patterned by powerfully fortified boundaries between networks, there are limits to how far some translations will extend. Face-to-face conversations and occasional articles in *Down Beat* were not enough to overturn more established networks of translation.

Iggy's experimental translations have survived in vague memory. Programs and scores do not exist for these performances, and the attachments he formed with such institutions as Elektra Records, the Grande Ballroom in Detroit, or even the New York club culture of Andy Warhol, carried no force in the experimentalist network. In comparison, Cage translated rock loudness into a network that had already been fortified by attachments to strong institutions, including the New York Philharmonic and modern art galleries, and his preserved manuscripts and letters, published scores, and numerous publications enact a durability and clarity that Iggy's performances lacked.

The difference between strong and weak translations is crucial for understanding what I call "actually existing experimentalism." Those critics in thrall to idealist, or imaginary, experimentalism (marked by an interest in the abstract, formalist qualities associated with the grouping) would be drawn to several familiar themes in the Stooges' work: shock, open form, the incorporation of noise, the attempted erasure of the boundary between performer and listener, the construction of new instruments, and an interest in non-Western musics.[86] But this kind of formalist process of gathering musical texts under the rubric of "the experimental" through the identification of shared aesthetic traits mistakes the effects of a network for its causes. An approach attuned to actually existing experimentalism does not bracket the practicalities involved in enacting its reality, but instead shows how that network was put together—how successful translations were effected, and how other translations failed to have illocutionary force.

The complicated drone textures of *The Wolfman,* the music of Theatre of Eternal Music, and the songs "I'm Waiting for the Man" and "I Wanna

Be Your Dog" are clearly related to each other. A formalist approach might point to these sonic similarities to group the works in a tradition: they are connected because they sound alike. Alternatively, the network model shows that these two examples were already linked together in a variety of ways, and that the shared formal properties are their sonic trace: they sound alike because they are connected. The difference is important. If definitions of experimentalism, to quote Nyman, "ultimately depend on purely musical considerations," there can be no adequate explanation of the experimental music network that we have ended up with.[87] Why aren't the Stooges included? Clearly another layer of selection is operating. I am not making a normative argument for expanding the boundaries of the canon of experimentalism ("the Stooges *should* be included"). Such a project would erase history and obscure the powerful social, institutional, and economic currents that have defined this formation in the first place. The network model instead offers a way of understanding the complexities of attachment—how the Stooges can be both *associated* with a particular formation and *absent* from its canonical history.[88] Future histories of experimental music may well include the Stooges, but that would require that these histories explain how and why certain musicians, performances, or venues were previously thought to be outside the boundaries of experimental music. In short: those future histories must include exclusion.

In 1971, a journalist for the *Winona Daily News* in Minnesota wrote, "If you could somehow think of an extreme opposite of silence it would probably be something like the Stooges."[89] Such an assumption of difference between Cagean silence and Stoogean noise is anathema to a Latourian study of actually existing experimentalism, which assumes symmetry in the way it treats the Cage-Tudor duo, the Velvet Underground, the Cecil Taylor Unit, the Stooges, or the Moorman-Paik duo. Assuming symmetry is not the same as creating a new grouping or arguing that all of these bands belong together. But it does allow for the recognition of the historical overlaps, connections, and attachments among nodes in a network—and, more important, how those messy overlaps have been cut and translated into different networks. The similarities between Iggy's contact-mic tinkering, for example, and Oliveros's *Applebox,* can well be the basis for examining the two very different networks into which these pieces and their creators are enrolled.

*Experimentalism Otherwise* appears at a time when the permanence of "canonical experimentalism" is loosening; it is now common to speak of "avant-garde" or "experimental" strains in a variety of musical genres and styles, including rock, folk, electronic dance music, hip hop, and even

pop. We are moving in the direction of "all the fish swimming together in one big tank," to borrow one of Cage's favorite sayings. The ground for this shift was prepared in the discourse surrounding the John Zorn–associated downtown scene of the late 1970s and 1980s, and contemporary periodicals such as the *Wire* and books such as Bill Martin's *Avant Rock: Experimental Music from the Beatles to Björk* are latter-day extensions of this perspective.[90]

The implicit consensus holds that these new developments in different genres or styles exhibit a certain adventurous mobility of practice that justifies a more heterogeneous experimental supercategory. As the composer Rhys Chatham wrote in 1990, "Composers who began working in the fifties tend to feel comfortable with the label 'avant-garde': 'I'm an avant-garde composer,' they'll say. But so is Ornette Coleman. Or Miles Davis, Gil Evans, Carla Bley and Max Roach. So is Captain Beefheart and Screamin' Jay Hawkins. Is this a problem? Of course not!"[91] To take another example, Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman write in their admirable textbook on American popular music, "It could be argued that only old cultural habits and snobbery have kept James Brown out of discussions of minimalism in scholarly forums and journals."[92] Although this approach to tracing an experimental supercategory is appealing, it fundamentally misunderstands what experimentalism has been: not only a collection of style characteristics or an attitude toward innovation but, rather, the network of discourses, practices, alliances, and material arrangements of knowledge production that produce musical style and condition an attitude toward innovation. (Latour would refer to this prolongation of the experimental network as the "envelope" of its various performances through space and time.)[93] This network will not simply disappear with the wave of a hand or an expansion of the sacralized borders of high culture. Identifying formal similarities can only be a first step; that must be followed by a study of how these interconnections have been managed and translated into different networks. Although snobbery and old habits may have contributed to James Brown's absence in scholarly treatments of minimalism, there are also concrete matters of training, distribution, audiences, commerce, personal relationships, and production networks (which all no doubt enact snobbery and habit in lasting material forms that have contributed tangibly to Brown's absence).

American experimentalism is a contingent arrangement—social, technical, sonic, textual, and material—but this arrangement has played a significant role in the structuring of markets, disciplines, and formal and informal pedagogical systems. Disassembling such a network—were one

to do so—would take a long time (and would take far more than diverse record collections). In *Experimentalism Otherwise* I have been concerned with returning to one geographically situated moment in history so as better to understand the series of translations that has produced the American experimentalism that we actually have. Although it is in the nature of any experimentalist project to try to get free of itself, this network, like any other, has its limits.

# Notes

## ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
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| CFP | C.F. Peters Archives, Glendale, New York |
| CMA | Charlotte Moorman Archive, McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois |
| DTP | David Tudor Papers, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California (980039) |
| JCC | John Cage Collection, Northwestern University Music Library, Evanston, Illinois |
| JCMC | John Cage Manuscript Collection, New York Public Library, New York City, New York |
| JMLP | Jackson Mac Low Papers, MSS 0180, Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego |
| NYPA | New York Philharmonic Archives, New York City, New York |
| OA | ONCE Archive, Northwestern University Music Library, Evanston, Illinois |
| PYP | Peter Yates Papers, MSS 0014, Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego |

## INTRODUCTION

1. Charles Henry Rowell, "'Words Don't Go There': An Interview with Fred Moten," *Callaloo* 27, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 965.

2. See Bruce Altshuler, "The Cage Class," in *Fluxattitudes,* ed. Cornelia Lauf

and Susan Hapgood (Ghent, Belgium: Imschoot, 1991), 17–24; and Joseph Jacobs, "Crashing New York à la John Cage," in *Off Limits: Rutgers University and the Avant-Garde, 1957–1963,* ed. Joan Marter (Newark, NJ: Newark Museum and Rutgers University Press, 1999), 65–99.

3. All quotations not referenced in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.

4. Don Heckman, "The Sounds and Silences of John Cage," *Down Beat,* May 7, 1964, 20–22. The article also contains a brief remembrance of Cage's class at the New School for Social Research.

5. Peter Moore, *Stockhausen's* Originale: *Doubletakes* (New York: Electronic Arts Intermix, [1964] 2004).

6. Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Originale* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1964).

7. On the avant-garde/experimental split, see Joaquim Benitez, "Avant-Garde or Experimental? Classifying Contemporary Music," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 9, no. 1 (1978): 53–77; Catherine M. Cameron, *Dialectics in the Arts: The Rise of Experimentalism in American Music* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996); Frank X. Mauceri, "From Experimental Music to Musical Experiment," *Perspectives of New Music* 35, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 187–204; and Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

8. Ornette Coleman, interview with the author, New York City, July 26, 2008. Although Coleman admired Moorman's artistry and spirit, the two were not particularly close friends. For a transcription of *City Minds and Country Hearts* and a discussion of the piece, see Benjamin Piekut, "Testing, Testing . . . : New York Experimentalism 1964" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008).

9. The Logan quartet also included Lamar Alsop and Arthur Grossman (violins), and Jacob Glick (viola). The flyer for this concert is in the CMA; see also an advertisement in the *Village Voice,* February 4, 1965. Alsop was a steadily employed freelancer in these years; he had also performed La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #7* and *Trio for Strings* at Judson Hall in October 1962. Glick was also a regular, appearing on several of the early Avant Garde Festivals. On Rudd and Tchicai, see Roswell Rudd, interview with the author, New York City, October 5, 2006. I have been unable to find any additional information on, or even a listing of, this performance.

10. Nyman, *Experimental Music,* 1.

11. Nyman, "Towards (a Definition of) Experimental Music," in *Experimental Music,* 1–30. Most of Nyman's observations derive from Cage's writing on the topic and have been taken up by subsequent writers who attempt to explain the unique characteristics of experimentalism. See John Cage, *Silence* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1961); Cage, *A Year From Monday* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1969); Benitez, "Avant-Garde or Experimental?"; Thomas DeLio, *Circumscribing the Open Universe* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984); John Rockwell, "Experimental Music," in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music,* ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1986), 2:91–95; Cameron, *Dialectics in the Arts;* and Cecilia Jian-Xuan Sun, "Experiments in Musical Performance: Historiography, Politics, and the Post-Cagian Avant-Garde" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Ange-

les, 2005), which provides a rare historiography of recordings in the experimental tradition. For more on the subject of recordings in 1960s avant-gardes, see David Grubbs, "Records Ruin the Landscape: John Cage, the Sixties, and Sound Recording" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2005). Steve Reich's "Music as a Gradual Process" played an interesting variation on the theme of process and became one of the key linkages between Cagean experimentalism and minimalism as its late-1960s extension (in *Writings on Music, 1965–2000,* ed. Paul Hillier [New York: Oxford University Press, 2002]). Mauceri ("From Experimental Music to Musical Experiment") provides a survey of the meanings attributed to the term *experimental* throughout the twentieth century.

12. Cameron, *Dialectics in the Arts,* 83.

13. Michael Broyles, *Mavericks and Other Traditions in American Music* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

14. For example, although we might turn with interest to a section of Cameron's *Dialectics in the Arts* titled "Experimentalism Defined," the definition she offers is little more than a tautology: experimentalism is what the experimentalists did and how they thought about it (4–9). John Rockwell doesn't bother with a definition but assumes a similar grouping; see "The American Experimental Tradition and Its Godfather," in *All-American Music: Composition in the Late Twentieth Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 47–59.

15. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* trans. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 144.

16. Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Beal, "'Experimentalists and Independents Are Favored': John Edmunds in Conversation with Peter Yates and John Cage, 1959–61," *Notes* 64, no. 4 (June 2008): 659–87. In his introduction to *American Experimental Music, 1890–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), David Nicholls stresses the personal, pedagogical, and professional links among experimentalists in the first half of the twentieth century, explaining that the justification for "discussing . . . certain composers at the expense of others" includes more than mere musical/formal similarities. His definition is that of an experimental tradition built out of shared educational networks, more casual score exchanges, and formal and informal associations.

17. Beal, *New Music, New Allies,* 195. Beal wryly notes that despite Mumma's criticism of higher education in the United States, he had, at the time of his remarks in 1974, just accepted a faculty position at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

18. Gordon Mumma, "Witchcraft, Cybersonics, Folkloric Virtuosity," in *Ferienkurse '74,* vol. 14, ed. Ernst Thomas (Mainz: Schott, 1975), 72, quoted in Beal, *New Music, New Allies,* 195.

19. A common misunderstanding of the philosophy of performativity has it that there is a "subject" who "performs" a particular identity. By this logic, one might incorrectly conclude that I, too, assume the category that I purport to explain: experimentalism—that is, a preexisting collection of composers and scores—"performs" itself through various actions. This is not at all my argument. Addressing this misunderstanding, Judith Butler (*Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Lim-*

*its of "Sex"* [New York: Routledge, 1993]) writes, "I would suggest that it takes a certain suspicion toward grammar to reconceive the matter in a different light. For if gender is constructed, it is not necessarily constructed by an 'I' or a 'we' who stands before that construction in any spatial or temporal sense of 'before'" (7). She continues, "[I]t would be no more right to claim that the term 'construction' belongs at the grammatical site of subject, for construction is neither a subject nor its act, but a process of reiteration by which both 'subjects' and 'acts' come to appear at all" (9).

20. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Don Ihde and Evan Selinger, eds., *Chasing Technoscience: Matrix for Materiality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern,* trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Latour, *Aramis, Or the Love of Technology,* trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); John Law, *Organizing Modernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); and Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

21. Bruno Latour, "On Recalling ANT," in *Actor-Network Theory and After,* ed. John Law and John Hassard (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), 15.

22. For more on movements of translation, see Bruno Latour, "Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest," in *Pandora's Hope,* 24–79.

23. See Beal, *New Music, New Allies,* 129. For Brown's clarifications, see his comments in Peter Dickinson, *CageTalk: Dialogues with and about John Cage* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006). On the New York School, see Steven Johnson, ed., *The New York Schools of Music and Visual Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

24. La Monte Young, "Remembering Karlheinz Stockhausen," privately circulated document, 2008. An edited version of this text (without the passage quoted above) appears in Young, "How Time Passes: Remembering Stockhausen," *Artforum* 46, no. 7 (March 2008): 312–14, 316–17.

25. Quoted in Robert Levin, "Some Observations on the State of the Scene," *Sounds & Fury,* July–August 1965, 6.

26. On the subject of assemblages, see George E. Marcus and Erkan Saka, "Assemblage," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, nos. 2–3 (2006): 101–9; Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); Manuel DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (New York: Continuum, 2006); Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier, eds., *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems* (London: Blackwell, 2004); and Paul Rabinow, *Anthropos Today* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003). For a DeLanda-influenced application of assemblage theory to downtown music communities, see Tim Lawrence, "Connecting with the Cosmic: Arthur Russell, Rhizomatic Musicianship, and the Downtown Music Scene, 1973–92," *Lim-*

*inalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 3, no. 3 (2007): 1–84. Like Deleuze's and Guattari's assemblage, Foucault's *dispositif,* or "apparatus," expands beyond discourse to include behaviors, habits, institutions, architectures, and so on; see Michael Foucault, "Confessions of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 194–98.

27. Georgina Born, "On Musical Mediation: Ontology, Technology and Creativity," *twentieth-century music* 2, no. 1 (March 2005): 30; see also Born, "The Social and the Aesthetic: For a Post-Bourdieuian Theory of Cultural Production," *Cultural Sociology* 4, no. 2 (July 2010): 27–28.

28. Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 232. For more on this point, see Graham Harman, *Prince of Networks: Bruno Latour and Metaphysics* (Melbourne: re.press, 2009), 73–85.

29. See Rita H. Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music, 1925–1936: The Society, the Music Editions, and the Recordings* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1981); Frank R. Rossiter, *Charles Ives and His America* (New York: Liveright, 1975), 212–87; Michael Hicks, *Henry Cowell, Bohemian* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002); Henry Cowell and Sidney Cowell, *Charles Ives and His Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, [1955] 1983); and Gayle Sherwood Magee, *Charles Ives Reconsidered* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

30. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* vol. 3, *Power,* ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 2000), 341.

31. "[T]he logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them." Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* vol. 1, *An Introduction* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 95. In this regard, the insights of race and ethnic studies are essential for addressing a blind spot in Actor Network Theory. Latour's position on the self-awareness of his subjects—"actors know what they do and we have to learn from them not only what they do, but how and why they do it" ("On Recalling ANT," 19)—fails to account for larger network positionings and flows that might escape even the most cognizant actors.

32. Sally Banes, *Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theater, 1962–1964* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 35–57.

33. Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 87.

34. Sally Banes, *Greenwich Village 1963: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 110–11.

35. Ibid., 154; and Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 169. For trenchant critiques of Banes, see Jon Panish, *The Color of Jazz: Race and Representation in Postwar American Culture* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), 23–41; and especially George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 29–36. Other important sources on the Village during the 1960s include Imamu Amiri Baraka, *The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984); Hettie Jones, *How I Became Hettie Jones* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1990); and Ronald Sukenick, *Down and In: Life in the Underground* (New York: Collier Books, 1987).

36. Latour, *Science in Action,* 201.

37. See Latour, *Reassembling the Social,* 30–34. Clearly, there are affinities between ANT and Howard Becker's *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); on their similarities and differences, see Hans van Maanen, *How to Study Art Worlds: On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).

38. Latour, *Reassembling the Social,* 31.

39. Henry Cowell, *American Composers on American Music* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1933), 3–13.

40. Amy C. Beal, "Negotiating Cultural Allies: American Music in Darmstadt, 1946–1956," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 105–39.

41. See, for example, the following articles, all in *Silence:* "Experimental Music: Doctrine"; "History of Experimental Music in the United States"; "Forerunners of Modern Music"; and "Composition as Process."

42. Lejaren Hiller to Peter Yates, September 22, 1965, PYP.

43. David Revill, *The Roaring Silence* (London: Bloomsbury, 1992), 205. The original source for this quote is [Jack Kroll], "Is It Music?" *Newsweek,* September 2, 1963, 53.

44. Gann, *Music Downtown: Writings from the* Village Voice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Tom Johnson, *The Voice of New Music* (Eindhoven: Apollohuis, 1989). Cage's music began to be published by Peters in 1961 (James Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993], 142), and, as Beal relates, by early 1962 he had parlayed his good fortune into publication deals for Morton Feldman and Christian Wolff as well ("'Experimentalists and Independents Are Favored,'" 687). A short time later, he had also persuaded Peters president Walter Hinrichsen to take on the works of Toshi Ichiyanagi (Hinrichsen to Cage, October 23, 1962, CFP).

45. For more on jazz as the counterhistory of postwar spontaneity, see George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music After 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (1996): 91–123; Lewis, "Experimental Music in Black and White: The AACM in New York, 1970–1985," in *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies,* ed. Robert G. O'Meally et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 50–101; and Rebecca Young-Hie Kim, "In No Uncertain Musical Terms: The Cultural Politics of John Cage's Indeterminacy" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008).

46. On the many overlaps and interpenetrations between the two, see Beal, *New Music, New Allies;* and Beal, "David Tudor in Darmstadt," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 1 (February 2007): 77–88. Georgina Born's account makes a compelling case for understanding this split in terms of an opposition between modernism and postmodernism; see "Prehistory: Modernism, Postmodernism, and Music," in Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 40–65.

47. Mol, *The Body Multiple,* 54.

48. Butler, *Bodies That Matter,* 13.

49. Latour, *Reassembling the Social,* 35.

50. Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage,* 5.

51. Ibid. Pritchett goes on to point out: "This has been the model I have tried to follow in this book."

52. John Cage to Edward Downes, March 31, 1965, JCC. Downes wrote program notes for the New York Philharmonic for many years.

53. Carolyn Brown, *Chance and Circumstance: Twenty Years with Cage and Cunningham* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

54. Tony Conrad, "an EARful: *Four Violins* and *Early Minimalism,*" in liner notes to *Early Minimalism,* vol. 1, Table of the Elements 74–9216 (4 CDs), 2002, 4.

55. Born, "On Musical Mediation," 27.

56. David P. Miller, "Indeterminacy and Performance Practice in Cage's *Variations,*" *American Music* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 61.

57. John Cage, *Variations V: Thirty-Seven Remarks Re an Audio-Visual Performance* (New York: Henmar Press, 1965). Another good example is *Signals,* the "work" that Cage, Gordon Mumma, and David Tudor took on tour with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1970. There was no overall plan to the work at all; the three performers acted independently, and the piece was retitled from week to week and assigned to a different composer. See John Cage and Daniel Charles, *For the Birds* (Boston: Marion Boyars, 1995), 127.

58. John Cage, in Richard Kostelanetz, *The Theatre of Mixed Means* (New York: Dial Press, 1968), 62.

59. Miller, "Indeterminacy and Performance Practice in Cage's *Variations,*" 66.

60. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself,* xiii.

61. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 144.

62. James Faubion, "Toward an Anthropology of Ethics: Foucault and the Pedagogies of Autopoiesis," *Representations* 74 (Spring 2001): 100.

## 1. WHEN ORCHESTRAS ATTACK!

1. The speech is included on disc 9 of *Bernstein LIVE!* New York Philharmonic Special Editions NYP 2003, 2000.

2. Bernstein did not use the terms *chance operations* and *indeterminacy* in the concert talk.

3. It also speaks volumes about Bernstein's opinion of jazz, and of the continuing hegemonic function of the work concept: "Needless to say, what we have just played has no importance at all as a piece," he commented after performing the improvisation. "It doesn't even exist any longer."

4. The event is mentioned in Leta E. Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators: The Odyssey of *Variations V,*" *Musical Quarterly* 85, no. 3 (2001): 545–67; Miller, "Cage's Collaborations," in *The Cambridge Companion to John Cage,* ed. David Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 151–68; Cornelius Cardew, *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism* (London: Latimer, 1974); David Revill, *The Roaring Silence* (London: Bloomsbury, 1992); and Christian Wolff, interview with Frank Oteri, *New Music Box,* March 2002, www.newmusicbox.org/article.nmbx?id=1649 (accessed January 10, 2010), to name a few instances.

5. John Cage, interview with Karen LeFrak, New York City, August 2, 1984,

in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985" (MA thesis, Hunter College, City University of New York, 1986), 170.

6. Calvin Tomkins, "Figure in an Imaginary Landscape," *New Yorker,* November 28, 1964, 64–128; Tomkins, "John Cage," in *The Bride and the Bachelors: Five Masters of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Penguin, [1965] 1968), 69–144.

7. One member of the orchestra, whom I interviewed in New York City on August 3, 2007, wished to remain anonymous. In 1964, there were no female members of the Philharmonic; accordingly, my use of male pronouns to refer to this anonymous musician is not intended as a generic construction.

8. Wendy Brown, "Neo-Liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," *Theory & Event* 7, no. 1 (2003): 6. Given his criticism of equality movements in the 1960s, Cage leaned toward the conservative side of this divide.

9. See David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Marc Edelman and Angelique Haugerud, "The Anthropology of Development and Globalization," in *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism,* ed. Marc Edelman and Angelique Haugerud, 1–74 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005); and Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

10. See, for example, John Cage and Daniel Charles, *For the Birds* (Boston: Marion Boyars, 1995), 108n1.

11. Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

12. Brown, *Regulating Aversion;* Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003); Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception;* Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006); and Žižek, "Tolerance as an Ideological Category," *Critical Inquiry* 34, no. 4 (Summer 2008): 660–82.

13. John Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis* (New York: Edition Peters, 1961).

14. John Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis,* conductor score (New York: Edition Peters, 1961).

15. John Cage, performance notes for contrabasses, *Atlas Eclipticalis,* JCMC, JPB 95–3, folder 321.

16. Cage, performance notes, *Atlas Eclipticalis.*

17. Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis,* conductor score.

18. The Cage Collection at the New York Public Library contains several surviving performance notes for individual parts; these parts repeat the instructions found in the conductor's score, with minor variations to suit specific instruments.

19. In the performance notes for the New York Philharmonic concerts that survive, Cage specifies, "Only the first system of each part is being used in this performance."

20. Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis,* conductor score.

21. See concert program, Cage clipping file, JCC. According to Dusty Vineberg, "Composer Here for Concert," *Montreal Star,* August 3, 1961, Cage had been promised a full orchestra but was then only offered seventeen musicians. However, in a letter to Cage dated July 19, 1961, the festival organizer Pierre Mercure con-

firmed the size and makeup of the ensemble, so the surprise to which Vineberg referred did not come at the last minute (JCC).

22. Claude Gingras, "La semaine internationale de Musique actuelle s'ouvre sur des horizons illimités," *La Presse* (Montreal), August 4, 1961 (my translation).

23. Eric McLean, "Opening Program of Modern Music," *Montreal Star,* August 4, 1961.

24. See Mercure to Cage, July 19, 1961, JCC.

25. Carolyn Brown, *Chance and Circumstance: Twenty Years with Cage and Cunningham* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 330. On September 22, 1961, Cage wrote to Peter Yates that he had performed *Atlas* with "17, 20 and 3 so far" (PYP). I am grateful to Dean Jeffrey, archivist for the American Dance Festival, for sharing a copy of this program with me.

26. In a letter to Yates dated September 8, 1961, Cage mentioned that he was working on *Atlas Eclipticalis* and anticipated finishing by Christmas (PYP).

27. Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators," 548. Program in clipping file, 1962, JCC. Other performances occurred in Bochum, Germany (November 11, 1962), Dixon Hall Auditorium [Tulane?] (April 8, 1963), Vienna (May 2, 1963), Munich (May 20, 1963), and Stockholm (May 22, 1963); see programs and Henmar Press performance reports in clipping files, JCC. Max Neuhaus, James Tenney, and Philip Corner performed the work in New York on January 2, 1964.

28. Albert Goldberg, "Music Hits New Low at Monday Concert," *Los Angeles Times,* March 7, 1962.

29. Cage to Yates, September 29, 1961, PYP.

30. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 323. The New York Philharmonic administrator Clara Simons agreed, writing to Bernstein in a memo of December 23, 1963, "The technicalities revolving around the Cage and Brown pieces will be formidable, and some general rehearsal plan perhaps should be worked out very soon"; see NYPA, 010–01 folder 13.

31. Rehearsal Bulletin, NYPA, 010–01 folder 13. Furthermore, Earle Brown was also insisting on his own share of rehearsal time (at least two and a half hours); Brown to Joan Bonime, November 21, 1963, NYPA, 010–01 folder 13.

32. [Helen Coates?] to Joan Bonime, November 6, 1963, NYPA, 010–01 folder 13.

33. [Jack Kroll], "Is It Music?" *Newsweek,* September 2, 1963, 53.

34. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 337.

35. M. C. Richards to David Tudor, September 30, 1961, DTP, box 52, folder 3. The fall of 1961 would have been very early for a programming decision to be made about the 1963–64 season, so I assume that these were casual conversations between Cage and Bernstein.

36. Cage to Tudor, undated letter [November 5, 1961], DTP, box 52, folder 3. Cage's use of "Atlas C." (instead of the more understandable "Atlas E.") was probably a mistaken reference to another star chart, *Atlas Coeli,* which he used to compose *Music for Carillon No. 4;* see Revill, *The Roaring Silence,* 201.

37. Cage to Bernstein, October 17, 1963, Leonard Bernstein Collection, Library of Congress, Music Division. I am grateful to Mark Horowitz for locating this letter and sharing it with me.

38. Bernstein to Cage, October 22, 1963, JCC.

39. Planning memo, July 11, 1963, NYPA, 010–01 folder 18. Other planning

memos from the spring of 1963 indicate that works by Gunther Schuller, Luciano Berio, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Cornelius Cardew were under consideration.

40. A letter from Roger Englander of CBS Television to Cage, dated January 16, 1964, indicates that there were also plans to devote the entire Young People's Concert of February 8 to chance works, *Atlas* included, but that the Philharmonic scrapped the idea. "This eliminates what I hoped would have been a great experiment as well as great fun," wrote Englander. Apparently, the plans had progressed considerably, for Englander thanked Cage for attending a rehearsal and outlining a camera plan for the broadcast, which in the end included Gunther Schuller's *Journey into Jazz* (featuring Don Ellis, trumpet; Eric Dolphy, tenor saxophone; Richard Davis, bass; and Joe Cocuzzo, percussion), Copland performing his own *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra,* and Larry Austin's *Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists* (featuring Ellis, Davis, and Cocuzzo). This letter was part of a box of letters recently discovered at Stony Point; I am grateful to Ken Silverman for sharing it with me.

41. Nick Webster, interview with the author, New York City, May 27, 2006.

42. Harold C. Schonberg, "An Old Orchestra, a New Hall," *New York Times,* May 26, 1963. Schonberg had been critical of Bernstein for several years; see, for example, "Spreading Thin: Bernstein's Many Activities Leave Minimum Time for Regular Season," *New York Times,* April 16, 1961.

43. Joan Peyser, *Bernstein: A Biography* (New York: Beech Tree Books, 1987), 339. See also NYPA, 010–01 folder 31.

44. All quotations not referenced in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.

45. Humphrey Burton, *Leonard Bernstein* (New York: Anchor Books, 1985), 342.

46. Ibid.

47. "Mr. Bernstein's Remarks at the Concert on January 2, 1964," typescript document, NYPA, 010–01 folder 06. These typescripts were texts prepared in advance of Bernstein's remarks, not transcriptions of them.

48. Alan Rich, "Bernstein Meets the 20th Century," *New York Herald Tribune,* February 23, 1964.

49. Ibid.

50. Carlos Moseley to Alan Rich, February 25, 1964, NYPA, 010–01 folder 6.

51. Peyser, *Bernstein,* 341.

52. I spoke about this matter with the anonymous player and Johnson in person, and with the oboist Albert Goltzer in a telephone interview. Revill, *Roaring Silence,* 205–6. Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors,* also describes Bernstein's approach as respectful. In my interview with him, the clarinetist Michael Burgio praised Bernstein, noting that he thought "Bernstein held it together very well."

53. John Ware, quoted in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985," 329.

54. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 370.

55. William Duckworth, *Talking Music: Conversations with John Cage, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, and Five Generations of American Experimental Composers* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995), 18.

56. Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators," 549.

57. Max Mathews, interview with Leta Miller, Palo Alto, California, July 24, 2000 (emphasis in the original); see Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators," 549. I am grateful to Professor Miller and Mr. Mathews for sharing the transcript of their interview with me.

58. Mathews, interview with Miller. Though Mathews recalled in 2000 that Cage was initially unsatisfied by the amplified but sparse texture, and that he ameliorated this issue by having Tudor perform *Winter Music* simultaneously, Philharmonic records indicate that Tudor had been contracted over two months prior to perform as a soloist in the piece; see Joan Bonime to David Tudor, December 3, 1963, DTP, box 15, folder 23. See Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators," 550.

59. There may, in fact, have been fewer than eighty-six instrumental parts. A Philharmonic memorandum specifies the instrumentation for *Atlas* as follows: strings (12, 12, 9, 9, 3), woodwinds ("in three's" [12]), brass (3, 3, 3, 5), 2 harps, 2 timpani, 3 percussion, and prepared piano, totaling seventy-nine parts; memorandum from Nick Webster to Joe DeAngelis and Joan Bonime, January 13, 1964, NYPA, 010–01 folder 18.

60. Mathews, interview with Miller.

61. Cage, *Atlas Eclipticalis* performance notes. The unnamed author of "Sound of Cybernetics," *Newsweek,* February 17, 1964, had an imaginative interpretation of these lights: "As the arm sweeps downward, a green light signals 'allegro' to the players, a red flash cautions 'andante,' and the position of the arm tells how much remains of the eight minutes allowed for each player to produce, at whim, his notes and noises" (88).

62. Art Seidenbaum, "Living Worse, Electrically," *Los Angeles Times,* February 26, 1964; "Music Notes," *Chicago Tribune,* February 8, 1964; Boretz, "New Works and New Performances II," *Nation,* April 13, 1964, 380; and Winthrop Sargeant, "First Causes," *New Yorker,* February 15, 1964, 124–26.

63. Harold C. Schonberg, "Music: Last of a Series," *New York Times,* February 7, 1964.

64. "Music," *Time,* February 14, 1964, 80.

65. Sargeant, "First Causes," 125; Miles Kastendieck, "Electric Music Wired for Boos," *New York Journal-American,* February 7, 1964.

66. "Music Notes," *Chicago Tribune,* February 8, 1964. (Although the anonymous author writes that "the conductor" bowed to rows of empty seats, I assume s/he was referring to the composer.)

67. Cage, quoted in *Conversing with Cage,* ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Routledge, [1988] 2003), 120. As a matter of fact, whistling into a contact mic will not result in amplified sound. See also Cage's account in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985," 163–83; Revill, *Roaring Silence,* 205–8; James Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 142; Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors,* 139–44; Geneviere Marcus, "John Cage: Dean of the Musical Avant-Garde," 1970; repr. in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 73; Cage, interview with Gagne and Caras, *Soundpieces,* 75; Cage, interview with Peter Dickinson, in Peter Dickinson, ed., *CageTalk: Dialogues with and about John Cage* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 44.

68. Cardew, *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism,* 39.

69. Christian Wolff, e-mail communication with the author, October 14, 2007.

70. Wolff, interview with Oteri.

71. Cage, interview with Gagne and Caras, *Soundpieces,* 75.

72. Ware, quoted in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985," 334.

73. Revill, *Roaring Silence,* 206.

74. He added that the group's behavior was much less rambunctious for the remaining three concerts.

75. "Radio Concerts," *New York Times,* February 9, 1964.

76. Hear *Bernstein LIVE!,* disc 9.

77. In his comments on a draft of this chapter, Robert Adlington pointed out the oddly conventional way in which Cage seemed to approach the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Whereas other avant-garde uses of the orchestra in this period might have included new stage layouts, an integration of theater, extended techniques, and fresh approaches to instrumentation, Cage, by comparison, treated the organization almost as a found object with which to experiment.

78. Virgil Thomson, quoted in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985," 100.

79. Brown, quoted in Dickinson, *CageTalk,* 143–44.

80. Burgio, interview with the author.

81. Branden W. Joseph, *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), esp. chaps. 1 and 2.

82. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

83. Joseph, *Random Order,* 20.

84. Ibid.

85. For more on the concept of agonism in the avant-garde, see Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Belknap Press, 1968), 60–77. We might think of this overlap of the traditional and neo-avant-gardes as a variation of Bloch's *Ungleichzeitigkeit des Gleichzeitigen* (Ernst Bloch, "Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics," *New German Critique* 11 [1977]: 22–38).

86. Boretz, "Music: New Works and Performances II," 383. It should be noted that *Perspectives of New Music,* Boretz's publication, was not sympathetic to Cagean experimentation.

87. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 23.

88. Cobey Black, "Who's News," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin,* [late April? 1964], clipping file, JCC. Cage expressed similar sentiments about audience confrontation in interviews with Peter Dickinson (*CageTalk,* 44) and Geoff Smith and Nicola Walker Smith (*American Originals: Interviews with 25 Contemporary Composers* [London: Faber and Faber, 1994], 73).

89. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 331.

90. John Ashbery, "Cunningham Ballet in Paris," *International Herald Tribune,* June 13–14, 1964. See also Allen Hughes, "'Modern' Problem," *New York Times,* August 25, 1963, who states there that *Atlas* is one of Cage's "most irritating and deafening scores."

91. Fred Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde," unpublished video (interview transcript in author's possession), 1980. The Philharmonic bassoonist Bert Bial also recalled that a friend in the audience complained vociferously after the concert of hearing damage.

92. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 172.

93. Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors,* 135–36.

94. Ibid., 137.

95. See Michael Zwerin, "A Lethal Measurement," *Village Voice,* January 6, 1966; repr. in *John Cage: An Anthology,* ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Da Capo, 1991), 161–67. Coincidentally, the Beatles made their debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on the same day as the final performance of *Atlas,* on February 9, 1964. These two performances occurred only ten blocks and four hours apart.

96. Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors,* 144.

97. Cage to Yates, September 11, 1961, PYP. Brown refers to the "barrage of objection" that Cage faced in regard to this work in the early 1960s (*Chance and Circumstance,* 331).

98. Ashbery, "Cunningham Ballet in Paris."

99. "I think there is a didactic element in my work. I think that music has to do with self-alteration; it begins with the alteration of the composer, and conceivably extends to the alteration of the listeners." Cage, quoted in Gagne and Caras, *Soundpieces,* 78.

100. Cardew, *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism,* 39.

101. See, for example, George Kautzenbach, "Composer, Performer, and Marx," *Perspectives of New Music* 16, no. 1 (Autumn–Winter 1977): 197–204. For a more complete consideration of these debates, see Robert Adlington, "Organizing Labor: Composers, Performers, and 'the Renewal of Musical Practice' in the Netherlands, 1969–72," *Musical Quarterly* 90, nos. 3–4 (Fall–Winter 2007): 539–77; and Adlington, "Tuning in and Dropping Out: The Disturbance of the Dutch Premiere of Stockhausen's 'Stimmung,'" *Music and Letters* 90, no. 1 (February 2009): 94–112.

102. Lang, quoted in LeFrak, "Forty Years of Commissioning by the New York Philharmonic, 1945–1985."

103. Joseph, *Random Order,* 66.

104. Ibid., 60. Joseph explains this critique of representation with a discussion of Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*—see *Random Order,* 68–71.

105. See, for example, David W. Bernstein, "'In Order to Thicken the Plot': Toward a Critical Reception of Cage's Music," in *Writings through John Cage's Music, Poetry, and Art,* ed. David W. Bernstein and Christopher Hatch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 36–40; William Brooks, "Music II: From the Late 1960s," in *The Cambridge Companion to John Cage,* ed. David Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 137; and Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage,* 74–104.

106. Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage,* 126.

107. Miller, "Cage, Cunningham, and Collaborators," 549–50.

108. Tenney, quoted in ibid., 553.

109. Ibid., 548.

110. Brown, *Regulating Aversion,* 152.

111. David Savran, *Taking It Like a Man: White Masculinity, Masochism, and Contemporary American Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

112. Leslie Fiedler, "The New Mutants," *Partisan Review* (Summer 1965): 505–25. Following Savran and other scholars, I disagree with the widespread view that Fiedler's essay was a celebration of the emerging postmodernist landscape. Fiedler himself wrote that "The New Mutants" was "immensely ambivalent and much misunderstood"; see Leslie Fiedler, "On Being Busted at Fifty," *New York Review of Books*, July 13, 1967, 8.

113. Milton Shalleck, "People v. Charlotte Moorman," *New York Law Journal,* May 11, 1967, 18.

114. Fiedler, "The New Mutants," 509.

115. Ibid., 516.

116. Ibid., 520.

117. Savran, *Taking It Like a Man,* 64.

118. Gavin Butt, *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948–1963* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 14.

119. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 168.

120. Cage, *Silence,* 162.

121. Revill, *Roaring Silence,* 152.

122. Brown, *Chance and Circumstance,* 323.

123. Morton Feldman, unpublished interview with Robert Ashley, 1963. Typescript located in the library of the Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel, Switzerland; I'm grateful to Ryan Dohoney for sharing his copy with me. The complete recording of their conversation is located in the archive of the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, Oakland, California.

124. Cage and Charles, *For the Birds,* 95.

125. Ashbery, "Cunningham Ballet in Paris."

126. Nadine Hubbs, *The Queer Composition of America's Sound: Gay Modernists, American Music, and National Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 170.

127. Lucy Walker, *Devil's Playground,* Wellspring DVD FLV5349, 2001.

128. Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 331.

129. As Boretz wrote in his review of the concerts, "Even more striking was the effect that a similar gap in the experience of the players themselves had on their capacity to perform such new works; the conceptual and mechanical leaps required simply to apprehend the nature and their functions and actions in the new contexts were obviously unattainable" ("New Works and New Performances II," 380).

130. John Holzaepfel, "David Tudor and the Performance of American Experimental Music, 1950–1959" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1994), 197–200.

131. Ibid., 137.

132. See Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage,* 110–12.

133. Cage, *Silence,* 39.

134. Holzaepfel, "David Tudor and the Performance of American Experimental Music, 1950–1959," 314.

135. Cage, *Silence,* 15.

136. Ibid., 36.

137. Holzaepfel, "David Tudor and the Performance of American Experimental Music, 1950–1959," 58.

138. Ibid., 57.

139. Ibid., 58.

140. For another consideration of distributed creativity, see Georgina Born, "On Musical Mediation: Ontology, Technology and Creativity," *twentieth-century music* 2, no. 1 (March 2005): 7–36. In an entirely different critical context, Alan Klima has summarized this dynamic as the difference between an "other-self" and a "self-self": "I would argue that the progressive Buddhists hold out a difference that legitimates Euro-American values as quasi-universal, in that those values appear to originate from an 'other' setting. This 'other-self' might even promise a better mode of thinking or practice than that of the self-self" (Alan Klima, *The Funeral Casino: Meditation, Massacre, and Exchange with the Dead in Thailand* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002], 19). A more apposite example can be found in Robert H. Sharf, "Zen and the Art of Japanese Nationalism," in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism,* ed. Donald S. Lopez (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 107–60, in which the author argues that D. T. Suzuki was so successful in the United States because his discourse offered Westerners a repackaging of their own philosophies that made these philosophies appear irreproachably true because they had arisen from ancient Zen teachings.

141. Cage, *Silence,* 37.

142. Žižek, *The Parallax View,* 231–33.

143. Brown, *Regulating Aversion,* 7.

144. John Cage, program notes to *Renga with Apartment House 1776,* in *John Cage, Writer,* ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 103.

145. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 90–91.

146. Ibid., 73.

147. Laura D. Kuhn, "John Cage's *Europeras 1 & 2:* The Musical Means of Revolution" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1992).

148. Cage, *Silence,* 72.

149. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 112.

150. Branden Joseph, "*HPSCHD*—Ghost or Monster?," in *Mainframe Experimentalism,* ed. Hannah Higgins and Douglas Kahn (Berkeley: University of California Press), forthcoming.

151. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 293.

152. One example of Cage's antigovernment invective can be found in *For the Birds:* "I have often asserted that if there is indeed one useless thing it is government!" (109). His complaints continue through p. 111.

153. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

154. Cage and Charles, *For the Birds,* 99.

155. Richard Taruskin, "No Ear for Music: The Scary Purity of John Cage," *New Republic,* March 15, 1993, 26–35.

156. John Cale, *New York in the 1960s,* Table of the Elements TOE-CD-87 (3 CDs), 2006.

157. Žižek, *The Parallax View,* 334; Taruskin, "No Ear for Music." The cover

title of Taruskin's article ("The Musical Tyrant") was written by the editors of the *New Republic*.

158. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 275.

159. Cage, quoted in Thomas Willis, "No Rest for a 'Prophet' Who Just Wants to Be Understood," *Chicago Tribune,* February 2, 1975.

160. Cage, quoted in Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* 278.

161. Ibid., 73.

162. Cage, letter to the musicians of the Zurich Opera, JCMC, JPB 95–3 folder 1084.

## 2. DEMOLISH SERIOUS CULTURE!

1. This account is drawn from the author's interviews with Henry Flynt. See also R.B., "'Stockhausen, Go Home!' Zeitgenössische deutsche Musik in New York," *Die Welt,* May 12, 1964; and Raymond Ericson, "Showcase Offers Music of Germany," *New York Times,* April 30, 1964.

2. In my own "'Demolish Serious Culture!': Henry Flynt and Workers World Party," in *Sound Commitments: Avant-garde Music and the Sixties,* ed. Robert Adlington (New York: Oxford, 2009), 37–55, I mistook Ikuko Iijima for her husband, Ay-O. I'm grateful to Barbara Moore for pointing out this error.

3. R.B., "'Stockhausen, Go Home!'"

4. Henry Flynt, "Fight Musical Decoration of Fascism!" AACI leaflet, 1964 (available at www.artnotart.com/fluxus/hflynt-fightmusicaldecor.html).

5. See Susan Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," *Village Voice,* September 10, 1964, 3, 8; "Stuffed Bird at 48 Sharp," *Time,* September 18, 1964; Harold C. Schonberg, "Music: Stockhausen's 'Originale' Given at Judson," *New York Times,* September 9, 1964; Faubion Bowers, "A Feast of Astonishments," *Nation,* September 28, 1964, 174; Jill Johnston, "Inside 'Originale,'" *Village Voice,* October 1, 1964, 6, 16; and Frank Prial, "'Originale' a Wacky Show with Frenzied Story Line," *New York World-Telegram and Sun,* September 9, 1964.

6. Flynt, interview with the author, New York City, September 17, 2007; Abdallah Schleifer, telephone interview with the author, September 17, 2007.

7. Fred Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde," unpublished video (interview transcript in author's possession), 1980.

8. Charlotte Moorman to Earle Brown, draft, July 25, 1964, CMA.

9. Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," 3.

10. The formulation "Stockhausen . . . Go to Hell!" was a reference to signs displayed by members of the Japanese radical student organization Zengakuren on the occasion of the U.S. press secretary James Hagerty's visit to Japan in 1960, a few days in advance of a scheduled trip by President Dwight Eisenhower. Hagerty was greeted at the airport in Tokyo by a crowd of 20,000, the majority of whom were Zengakuren students holding placards bearing the English-language slogans "Hagerty Go to the *[sic]* Hell," and "We Dislike Ike." The demonstration succeeded in preventing Eisenhower's visit to Japan. See "Ordeal by Mob," *Time,* June 20, 1960, www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,826424,00.html; and Toyomasa Fuse, "Student Radicalism in Japan: A 'Cultural Revolution?'" *Comparative Education Review* 13, no. 3 (October 1969): 325–42.

11. "Stuffed Bird at 48 Sharp."

12. Schonberg, "Music: Stockhausen's 'Originale' Given at Judson."

13. Johnston, "Inside 'Originale,'" 6, 16.

14. All quotations not referenced in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.

15. Michel Oren, "Anti-Art as the End of Cultural History," *Performing Arts Journal* 44 (1993): 1–30. Oren refers to Flynt as "Maciunas's sidekick." The Stockhausen biographer Michael Kurtz attributes the *Originale* protest to Maciunas alone and makes no mention of Flynt; see Michael Kurtz, *Stockhausen: A Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 132. In *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents,* 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Schirmer, 2008), 463–65, Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin include the text of Flynt's leaflet for this demonstration but misattribute it to Maciunas and the Fluxus movement.

16. Owen Smith, *Fluxus: The History of an Attitude* (San Diego, CA: San Diego State University Press, 1998). Smith's account is flawed in other important respects: he claims that Maciunas organized the September picket line to disrupt Moorman's Second Annual Avant Garde Festival, which Smith states "was indebted to Fluxus for the idea of holding a festival presentation of experimental works in music, art, and performance." In fact, the genesis of Moorman's festival depended on completely different circumstances (I discuss these different circumstances in "Testing, Testing . . . : New York Experimentalism 1964" [PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008]). Maciunas clearly did not like Moorman and felt she was competing with him, but to conclude that the September demonstration was motivated by such a competition is misleading.

17. Cuauhtémoc Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I: Fluxus, the Abolition of Art, the Soviet Union, and 'Pure Amusement,'" *Res* 48 (Autumn 2005): 185. Among Fluxus scholars, Kristine Stiles is alone in acknowledging Flynt's formative role in the demonstrations and the politics that underlay them; Kristine Stiles, "Between Water and Stone: Fluxus Performance: A Metaphysics of Acts," in *In the Spirit of Fluxus,* ed. Janet Jenkins (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1993), 63–99.

18. Oren, "Anti-Art as the End of Cultural History."

19. Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 82.

20. Ibid., 72.

21. Allan Kaprow, "Maestro Maciunas," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life,* ed. Jeff Kelley, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, [1993] 2003), 245.

22. Billy Klüver, "More Incidents (letter to the editor)," *Village Voice,* September 24, 1964.

23. Thomas Kellein, *The Dream of Fluxus: George Maciunas, an Artist's Biography* (London: Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 2007), 98. According to Flynt's recollection, the composer (and Fluxus associate) Philip Corner was responsible for attempting another act of neutralization: arriving at the *Voice* offices for his interview with Goodman, Flynt found Corner trying to persuade the journalist not to publish her feature on the demonstrations. Flynt also recalls a meeting with Maciunas and Corner at which Corner tried to convince Flynt and Maciunas to end their campaign because he and Malcolm Goldstein were trying to work with Archie Shepp, which

Corner thought might heal the breach between "serious" avant-garde music and jazz.

24. This biographical sketch draws on my interviews with Flynt; Alan Licht, "The Raga 'n' Roll Years," *Wire,* October 2004, 26–29; and Ian Nagoski, "That High, Dronesome Sound," *Signal to Noise,* Winter 2002, 50–53.

25. John Edmunds to Peter Yates, January 18, 1961, PYP. For more on Young's early New York period and the artists around him, see Edward Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); Sally Banes, *Greenwich Village 1963: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993); Henry Flynt, "Mutations of the Vanguard: Pre-Fluxus, During Fluxus, Late Fluxus," in *Ubi Fluxus Ibi Motus: 1990–1962,* ed. A. Bonio Oliva (Venice: Ex Granai della Repubblica alle Zitelle, 1990), 99–128; Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York, 1960–62," in *Sound and Light: La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela,* ed. William Duckworth and Richard Fleming (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1996), 44–97; Higgins, *Fluxus Experience;* Keith Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists: La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Branden W. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage* (New York: Zone Books, 2008).

26. James Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 138–42.

27. Bruce Altshuler, "The Cage Class," in *Fluxattitudes,* ed. Cornelia Lauf and Susan Hapgood (Gent, Belgium: Imschoot, 1991), 17–24; and Joseph Jacobs, "Crashing New York à la John Cage," in *Off Limits: Rutgers University and the Avant-Garde, 1957–1963,* ed. Joan Marter (Newark, NJ: Newark Museum and Rutgers University Press, 1999), 65–99.

28. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 75. In *Into Performance: Japanese Women Artists in New York* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005), Midori Yoshimoto states that Ono's role in the programming of these concerts has been consistently overlooked (85–86).

29. Flynt, interview with the author, November 2, 2004; Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York."

30. For a discussion of these and other works from this period, see Jeremy Grimshaw, "Music of a 'More Exalted Sphere': Compositional Practice, Biography, and Cosmology in the Music of La Monte Young" (PhD diss., Eastman School of Music, 2005); Liz Kotz, *Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007); and Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate.*

31. In the previous year, he had written his first monograph, *Philosophy Proper,* in which he argued that all beliefs are false. Flynt would later focus his argument on language itself, suggesting that language could only be said to exist by using more language, and thus could never be substantively affirmed outside of its own terms. He extended this idea to conclude that language—and, thus, truth itself—rested on an assumption or belief in its existence that could never be proven. Young's word pieces seemed to engage these same ideas because they challenged the conventional assumptions of what a concert is, or what music could be. Was it sound? Was it performance? Was it merely attention?

32. Flynt, "Audart Composition (May 1961)," in "Anthology of Non-Philosophical Cultural Works," n.p., www.henryflynt.org/overviews/artworksphotos_new.html.

33. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 50.

34. La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, interview with the author, New York City, March 16, 2008.

35. Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists,* 24.

36. Ibid., 25–26.

37. Ornette Coleman, interview with the author, New York City, July 26, 2008.

38. Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists,* 26.

39. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 52.

40. Flynt describes this performance in *Henry Flynt in New York,* dir. Benjamin Piekut (Youtube videos, www.youtube.com/benjaminpiekut, 2008).

41. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 58; Flynt, interview with the author, April 1, 2005; and Flynt, interview with Kenneth Goldsmith, WFMU, East Orange, New Jersey, February 26, 2004.

42. Sally Banes, *Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theater, 1962–1964* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983), 101.

43. Flynt, interview with Goldsmith.

44. See Daniel Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); George E. Lewis, "Experimental Music in Black and White: The AACM in New York, 1970–1985," in *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies,* ed. Robert G. O'Meally et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 50–101; and Rebecca Young-Hie Kim, "Beyond Imaginative Landscapes: Strategies of Negation and the Indeterminacy-Improvisation Polemic," in "In No Uncertain Musical Terms: The Cultural Politics of John Cage's Indeterminacy" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008), 208–317.

45. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 61.

46. Ibid., 56.

47. The work was "performed" by Young at the ONCE Festival on February 9, 1962.

48. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 64.

49. Henry Flynt, "Tape 14," August 23, 1961. I am grateful to La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela for allowing me to locate this source in their archive. Flynt had labeled the tape "Afro-Amer. Music."

50. This is an admittedly odd pair of pitches, but the open dyad of F–B♭ is unmistakable. It is, however, possible that the tape speed was altered during recording and that we are now hearing the music one semitone higher than originally played. This would indicate a less surprising tuning of A–E–A–E.

51. Tony Conrad, "Contestation and Political Forms of Expression among Artists," privately circulated document, November 2007–January 2008.

52. La Monte Young, "Lecture 1960," *Tulane Drama Review* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1965): 75.

53. Young, "Lecture 1960," 79. See also Grimshaw, "Music of a 'More Exalted Sphere,'" 91–167. This kind of youthful challenge to Cage was also evident in the early work of Nam June Paik (whose "Homage to Cage" featured Paik's snipping

Cage's necktie with a pair of scissors and dumping a bottle of shampoo on the elder composer's head) and the later presentations of Charlotte Moorman.

54. Emphasis in original. The original text of this lecture is lost, but Flynt reconstructed his argument in "Chapter 9: Newness as Sole Value," in *Against Participation,* [1963] 1994, www.henryflynt.org/aesthetics/newnessas.html.

55. Branden Joseph's explication of this movement is particularly illuminating; see Joseph, "Concept Art," in *Beyond the Dream Syndicate,* 152–212.

56. Flynt, "Essay: Concept Art," in *AN ANTHOLOGY of chance operations . . . ,* ed. La Monte Young (Bronx, NY: L. Young and J. Mac Low, 1963), n.p. For another discussion of concept art and Flynt's later aesthetic theory, called brend, see Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I," 187–92.

57. Henry Flynt and Christer Hennix, "Philosophy of Concept Art," in *Being = Space x Action: Searches for Freedom of Mind through Mathematics, Art, and Mysticism,* ed. Charles Stein (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1988), 156–57.

58. Flynt, "Essay: Concept Art."

59. Ibid.

60. Flynt's early "avant-garde" take on mathematics and logic can be found in his "1966 Mathematical Studies," in *Blueprint for a Higher Civilization* (Milan: Multhipla Edizioni, 1975), 85–110.

61. Flynt, "Mutations of the Vanguard," 109.

62. "Innperseqs" was published in *AN ANTHOLOGY* with the concept art essay; "Exercise Awareness-States" was later revised and published as "Mock Risk Games," first in *Film Culture* (1966) and then in *Ikon* 1, no. 3 (July 1967): 11–13.

63. Flynt, "Mock Risk Games," 11–12.

64. Ibid., 11.

65. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 79.

66. Ibid. Flynt had a second evening on July 16, when he read the manuscript for his *Philosophy Proper.*

67. In a letter to Maciunas dated January 10, 1962, Mac Low wrote, "The concert ended with a jam session with La Monte on Piano, Terry Jennings on sax, Billy Higgins (a professional jazz drummer who has appeared with Ornette Coleman) on drums, and occasionally Henry Flynt on the tonette, Henry-Flynting away on the thing. Others joined the session before it was over and all and all it was real downhome." JMLP, box 24, folder 12.

68. These recordings have not been published.

69. Richard Kostelanetz, *The Theatre of Mixed Means* (New York: Dial Press, Inc., 1968), 187.

70. Flynt sat in with Young's Theatre of Eternal Music in 1969 or 1970 for two sessions. He was not satisfied with playing a single note for an hour, while Young thought that Flynt wasn't playing well enough in tune in the second session.

71. A hand-scrawled flyer dated April 17, 1962, indicates that Flynt continued to present his ideas wherever he found an opportunity. His lecture "The Cognitive (A Newly Defined Field): Its Present Situation" concerned his argument on the impossibility of language and was subtitled, "Why most people have beliefs. Whether academicians have more general intellectual curiosity than anyone else. And so forth." The talk was given in the composer Christian Wolff's Harvard dormitory room. (Flynt had withdrawn from Harvard, but he was then still living in Cambridge.)

72. Flynt, telephone conversation with the author, March 12, 2007.

73. Henry Flynt to Jackson Mac Low, undated, JMLP, box 15, folder 23.

74. "My New Concept of General Acognitive Culture," flyer in author's possession. A third lecture on these subjects—"A Lecture on Henry Flynt's New Theory of Pure Recreation"—was delivered in August 1962 at Harvard; a photocopy of the flyer dated August 7, 1962, is in the author's possession. A fourth talk, the third on acognitive culture or anti-art, occurred on August 7, again at Harvard.

75. In a July 26, 1962, letter to Maciunas, Mac Low stated that "Cage seemed delighted by my refutation of Henry" (JMLP). Among Mac Low's collected papers at University of California, San Diego, is a thirty-page handwritten response to Flynt's idea of acognitive culture. Although they were in frequent disagreement, Flynt and Mac Low continued to be in contact. An entry in Mac Low's notebook dated February 27, 1963 (the same day as Flynt's "From Culture to Veramusement" lecture, discussed below), includes a text piece, "Light Rhythms for Henry Flynt," which directed its reader to stand at the rear of a subway train and concentrate on the visual field for at least forty minutes. When the piece was published later that summer, the dedication to Flynt was removed (Mac Low, "Light Rhythms," *Genesis West* 1 [Summer 1963]: 300).

76. Flynt, "My New Concept of General Acognitive Culture," section 8.

77. Flynt, "Mutations of the Vanguard," 121. Young and Zazeela opposed this turn in Flynt's thinking at the time. In our interview, Zazeela recalled, "[W]e were very against his becoming anti-art, because that was really turning against us and what our whole lives were dedicated to. In fact, La Monte changed the way he would list '[Arabic numeral] (any integer) [to Henry Flynt],' and instead of having it 'to Henry Flynt,' he made it 'to HF,' so that it minimized [Flynt's presence]. He decided to stop publicizing his name. That was one thing. We took a little stand." Young and Zazeela also recalled having refused Flynt's requests for tapes or scores of his music that they might be holding, because they knew that he would destroy the materials.

78. Flynt, "Art or Brend?" in *Blueprint for a Higher Civilization,* 64.

79. Ibid., 65.

80. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 77.

81. For more on Maciunas and his relationship to the Left and Flynt, see three articles by Cuauhtémoc Medina: "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I"; "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' II: Fluxus, Khrushchev, and the 'Concretist Society,'" *Res* 49/50 (Spring/Autumn 2006): 231–43; and "Architecture and Efficiency: George Maciunas and the Economy of Art," *Res* 45 (Spring 2004): 273–84.

82. Flynt, "Mutations of the Vanguard," 111.

83. Oren, "Anti-Art as the End of Cultural History," 9–10.

84. Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," 3.

85. Higgins to Maciunas, ca. April 1963, quoted in Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I," 183.

86. This text has been destroyed, but Flynt attempted a reconstruction of its contents in the 1990s in *Against Participation: A Total Critique of Culture,* available at www.henryflynt.org.

87. These events are described in a March–April 1963 press release that was

reprinted in Flynt, *Blueprint,* 69–70. See also a press release dated February 27, 1963 (photocopy in the author's possession).

88. The document is described in Oren, "Anti-Art as the End of Cultural History," 6–7, and Higgins, *Fluxus Experience,* 75.

89. George Maciunas, *Fluxus News Letter No. 7,* May 1, 1963; reprinted in Kellein, *Fluxus* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 114. For a discussion of the rift that was opening up in Fluxus, see Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I."

90. Meanwhile, in early 1963, Maciunas had distributed his Fluxus "Manifesto," which called on its readers to "Purge the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematical art,—PURGE THE WORLD OF 'EUROPANISM' *[sic]!* PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND TIDE IN ART. Promote living art, anti-art, promote NON ART REALITY to be ~~fully~~ *[sic]* grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes and professionals. FUSE the cadres of cultural, social & political revolutionaries into united front & action"; reprinted in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings,* ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Howard Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 727; see also Kellein, *The Dream of Fluxus,* 72. Several of the references in the document—"abstract art," "mathematical art," and "non art reality"—seem to have come from Flynt's writings, suggesting that he was having an effect on Maciunas.

91. Among Flynt's papers is a reference to a tape of solo takes on violin and song flute, recorded on June 18, 1962, but this recording may have been destroyed. Young and Zazeela may have secreted "Tape 14" away during Flynt's intense anti-art period.

92. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music that Developed from It* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963), 82.

93. Ibid., 86–87.

94. Ibid., 82, 86–87.

95. Oren, "Anti-Art as the End of Cultural History," 29–30n36.

96. Baraka, *Blues People,* 172.

97. See Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 1996); and Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

98. Paul Colin, "Interview with Henry Flynt: The Overthrow of Everyday Life," *Soho Weekly News,* November 28, 1974.

99. Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," 71.

100. "Only the Socialist Revolution Can End War and Depression," *Workers World,* March 1959.

101. On this subject, see Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (London and New York: Verso, 2002).

102. Robin D.G. Kelley, "Reds, Whites, and Blues People," in *Everything but the Burden: What White People Are Taking from Black Culture,* ed. Greg Tate (New York: Harlem Moon Broadway Books), 45.

103. See Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

104. Ibid., 218–28.

105. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 60–109.

106. "In Selma, Bronxville, and Vietnam: The Enemy Is the Same!" *Workers World,* March 11, 1965.

107. Deirdre Griswold, "A Brief Resume of the Ideology of Workers World Party," reprinted in U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Internal Security, *The Workers World Party and Its Front Organizations* (93rd Congress, 1st session, April 1974), 27.

108. This is not to say that the WWP didn't also support Black Power. In an editorial that ran shortly after Stokely Carmichael's speech in 1966, *Workers World* proclaimed, "'Black power,' the strength to fight back and establish the power of the poor, no matter how horrifying to the billionaires and their reactionary—and liberal—stooges, should be supported by all progressives of all races"; see "Black Power," *Workers World,* July 1, 1966. On Williams, see Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, [1962] 1998); Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: New York Review Books, [1967] 2005); and Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power,* rev. ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

109. Williams, *Negroes with Guns,* 14–15.

110. Ibid., 26.

111. See Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 111–15. On the SWP and their uneasy relationship with the black radical tradition, see Robinson, *Black Marxism,* 278–85. For an excellent assessment of the SWP's overtures to black radicals written in the early 1960s, see Harold Cruse, "Marxism and the Negro," *Liberator,* May 1964, 8–11 (pt. 1); and June 1964, 17–19 (pt. 2).

112. "Proletarian Left Wing of SWP Splits, and Calls for Return to Road of Lenin and Trotsky," *Workers World,* March 1959.

113. Schleifer, telephone interview with the author. This is not to say that *Kulchur* was apolitical; Schleifer published Jones's account of his eye-opening trip to Cuba, "Cuba Libre," in the second issue of *Kulchur* (Summer 1960), and his "Tokenism: 300 Years for 5 Cents" in Spring 1962. In its five-year run, *Kulchur* also included contributions from Julian Beck and the Living Theatre; a colloquy on "Rights" (which included an essay by Robert Williams); and the work of the photographer Leroy McLucas, who was an important member of the radical black arts scene in the mid-1960s, later affiliating himself with the Umbra group of poets and contributing work to *Liberator.*

114. See Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 289.

115. Schleifer, telephone interview with the author.

116. Henry Flynt [Charles Henry, pseud.], "I Saw the Birth of Freedom in Greensboro, N.C.," *Workers World,* May 25, 1963. Coincidentally, the pop balladeer Bunny Sigler had joined Greensboro students on this same march, providing an early example of the connection between figures in black popular music and civil rights messages; see Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 297.

117. Flynt, "I Saw the Birth of Freedom in Greensboro, N.C."

118. Flynt, "Fight Musical Decoration of Fascism!" As early as February 1963, Maciunas and Flynt were corresponding about the reactionary nature of Stockhausen's music; see Cuauthémoc Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I" and "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' II."

119. Flynt, "Fight Musical Decoration of Fascism!" Ellipses in original.

120. Wolf-Eberhard von Lewinski, "Young Composers," *Die Reihe* 4 ([1958] 1960): 1.

121. Flynt has since expressed regret for the ranting tone of the document, although it was not uncharacteristic in that milieu.

122. Einstein had written, "Foxtrot, shimmy, and rag-time are adopted as elements of artistic music, and finally jazz, an orgiastic dance-music in quick-march rhythm—the most abominable treason against all the music of Western civilization—becomes symbolic of the spirit of the times. Yet even in jazz there lurks a European and decadent desire—that desire for the natural, primitive, and barbaric, a desire that often lifts its head in 'contemporary' music"; Alfred Einstein, *Short History of Music* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), 251. In a preparatory study for the 1965 pamphlet "Communists Must Give Revolutionary Leadership in Culture," Flynt expands on this line of argument, pointing out that imperialism had left a legacy of conservatories, international competitions, and music appreciation courses in European art music throughout the non-European world, cementing the normative assumption that this elite music was the universal standard to which all nations should aspire. Despite the significant opposition to European and U.S. imperialism, he continues, "the superiority of European Serious Culture has never been deeply challenged by non-Europeans"; see Flynt, "European-U.S. Cultural Imperialism," photocopy in author's possession, 1965.

123. In his 1964 interview with Goodman, Flynt mentioned that he was next turning his attention to sites of the social reproduction of Eurocentrism by planning demonstrations at Juilliard and The High School of Music and Art to protest the fact that they only taught European music. Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," 8.

124. Henry Flynt, "The Politics of 'Native' or Ethnic Music," *Zweitschrift* 2 (1976): 27–28.

125. Medina, "The 'Kulturbolschewiken' I," 187.

126. Medina's explanation of concept art and brend is clear, but his total omission of Flynt's musical production and taste—which are central to an assessment of Flynt's contributions—is problematic.

127. Flynt, interview with Goldsmith.

128. "WLIB: Opinions; Fwanyanga Mulkita, Zambia's U.N. representative, and Henry Flynt, author of 'Behind the Crisis over Zimbabwe,' discuss the racial crisis in South Africa." "Radio: Today's Leading Events," *New York Times,* July 3, 1966.

129. Henry Stone [Henry Flynt, pseud.], "Black Leaders on 'Black Power,'" *Workers World,* July 22, 1966.

130. [Henry Flynt], "Black Music at SNCC Benefit Linked to Liberation Struggle," *Workers World,* January 20, 1967.

131. See Cruse, "Marxism and the Negro," 9. See also C.E. Wilson, "Black People and the New Left," *Liberator,* June 1965, 8–10.

132. Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," 8.

133. Ingrid Monson, "The Problem with White Hipness: Race, Gender, and Cultural Conceptions in Jazz Historical Discourse," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 396–422. This is not to say that Flynt's position cannot be viewed through the lens of whiteness in this period. Indeed, his strategic separation from an imperialist race position in favor of a subaltern, rural whiteness reflected the broader emergence of the white ethnic movement. See Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post–Civil Rights Americ*a (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

134. Flynt, "Communists Must Give Revolutionary Leadership in Culture" (New York: World View, 1965).

135. Flynt, "European-U.S. Cultural Imperialism," 7.

136. For more on De Maria's musical career, see Smithsonian Archives of American Art, "Walter De Maria Oral History Interview," October 4, 1972, www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistories/transcripts/demari72.htm (accessed July 1, 2009); and Jane McFadden, "Toward Site," *Grey Room* 27 (Spring 2007): 36–57. On Murphy, hear Steve Reich, *Four Organs; Phase Patterns,* Shandar SR 83 511, 1971.

137. Henry Flynt, "The Meaning of My Avant-garde Hillbilly and Blues Music," 1980 (rev. 2002), n.p., www.henryflynt.org/aesthetics/meaning_of_my_music.htm (accessed July 1, 2009).

138. Ibid.

139. Roland Snellings, "Keep on Pushin': Rhythm & Blues as a Weapon," *Liberator,* October 1965, 9.

140. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "The Changing Same (R&B and New Black Music)," in *Black Music* (New York: William Morrow and Co., [1966] 1967), 208, quoted in Ward, *Just My Soul Responding,* 204.

141. Ward, *Just My Soul Responding,* 290.

142. For more on Simone, see Tammy L. Kernodle, "'I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free': Nina Simone and the Redefining of the Freedom Song of the 1960s," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2, no. 3 (August 2008): 295–318.

143. Flynt, interview with the author, April 1, 2005; Bernard Stollman, interview with the author, New York City, December 5, 2006. The founder of ESP-Disk, Bernard Stollman later recalled that he sent a sample contract and offer to Flynt, but Flynt did not find the terms acceptable.

144. For more on Morea, see Ron Hahne et al., *Black Mask and Up Against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group* (London: Unpopular Books, 1993).

145. Banes, *Greenwich Village 1963.*

146. Goodman, "Anti-Art Pickets Pick on Stockhausen," 3.

147. Andreas Huyssen, "Back to the Future: Fluxus in Context," in *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 194.

148. Morton Feldman, response to "Is New Music Being Used for Political or Social Ends?" *Source: Music of the Avant Garde* 3, no. 2, issue 6 (July 1969): 7–8.

149. Mac Low to Maciunas, April 25, 1963, JMLP, box 24, folder 12.
150. Flynt, "The Meaning of My Avant-garde Hillbilly and Blues Music."
151. Baraka, "The Changing Same (R&B and New Black Music)."

## 3. OCTOBER OR THERMIDOR?

1. Bill Dixon, interview with the author, Bennington, Vermont, August 15, 2006.
2. Benjamin Young, *Dixonia: A Bio-Discography of Bill Dixon* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 341–43.
3. All quotations not referenced in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.
4. Musicians often played for free, or sat in with a house-supplied rhythm section. Taylor, Shepp, Marion Brown, and Albert Ayler all performed in coffeehouses in the early 1960s. See Young, *Dixonia,* 1–66; and Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "New York Loft and Coffee Shop Jazz," in *Black Music* (New York: William Morrow and Co., [1963] 1967), 92–98.
5. The first advertisement placed in the *Village Voice* referred to the "1st Annual Contemporary Music Festival devoted exclusively to talented musicians and composers"; see *Village Voice,* September 17, 1964, 14; October 1, 1964, 18; and September 24, 1964, 24. The advertisement in the *Columbia Daily Spectator* of October 1, 1964, announced an "International Jazz Festival" (4). The series was also included in the concert listings of the *New York Times,* and there was a brief mention of the event in the October 8 issue of *Down Beat*.
6. The *New York Times* critic John Wilson wrote, "Only one widely known jazzman took part—Jimmy Giuffre, the clarinetist." See Wilson, "Dig That Free-Form Jazz," *New York Times,* January 24, 1965.
7. A. B. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," *Nation,* February 8, 1965, 149 (emphasis in the original).
8. To avoid noise complaints, the music had to stop each night at 11:00 P.M. or 12:00 P.M. (accounts varied).
9. Martin Williams and Dan Morgenstern, "The October Revolution: Two Views of the Avant-Garde in Action," *Down Beat,* November 19, 1964, 15; Dixon, interview with the author, August 15, 2006; Rudd, interview with the author, August 9, 2006. In the early 1960s, the panel discussion—and specifically one concerned with race and the avant-garde—could be likened to a noninstitutionalized seminar room. These forums, though denigrated by Williams in his review of the October Revolution, were important public settings for the exchange of ideas and opinions.
10. It remains unknown which individuals appeared on which evening, but the complete list included Taylor, Shepp, Hill, Sun Ra, saxophonists Steve Lacy and Hugh Glover, composer and band leader Rod Levitt, composer and producer Teo Macero, composer and critic Don Heckman, filmmaker and writer Herb Dexter, writer Rob Reisner, and critics Nat Hentoff and Williams. This list comes from Morgenstern, "The October Revolution," 15, and is corroborated by Young, *Dixonia,* 344. Dixon also remembered Ira Gitler in attendance on one of the panels, and the advertisement in the *Village Voice* additionally lists Ken McIntyre, R. D. Harlan, Linda Solomon, Carla Bley, and Hall Overton. Gary William Friedman, who

attended (and played on) the final night of the event, recalls listening to Carla Bley discussing the philosophical aspects of her compositional practice. Hentoff wrote that he was on a panel with Cecil Taylor; see "Reformer Ed and Cecil Taylor," *Village Voice,* October 8, 1964, 5.

11. Dixon, interview with the author, August 15, 2006. For one example of a commercial jingle, see "Jax Beer Commercial," Patty Waters, *You Thrill Me,* Water CD water137, 2005. Graves also mentioned the preferential treatment that Local 802 gave to white musicians for playing dates in the Catskills.

12. Bassist David Izenzon, for example, often played with orchestras in the New York area. Buell Neidlinger was the principal bassist for the Boston Symphony. Friedman, who played alto saxophone for the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble, had been a composition student at Columbia University, where he worked with Vladimir Ussachevsky in the Columbia-Princeton electronic music studios and also studied privately with Hall Overton.

13. Young, *Dixonia,* 344.

14. Morgenstern, "The October Revolution," 32, 33.

15. Dan Carlinsky, "Jazz in a Cellar," *Columbia Daily Spectator,* October 7, 1964.

16. "Music at Café," *Village Voice,* September 24, 1964, 13.

17. Scholarly sources that mention Dixon and the Jazz Composers Guild, often relating the same information, include Val Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life: John Coltrane and Beyond* (London: Serpent's Tail, [1977] 1992), 213–15; Philippe Carles and Jean-Louis Comolli, *Free Jazz/Black Power* (Paris: Éditions Champ Libre, 1971), 50–51; Ekkehard Jost, *Sozialgeschichte des Jazz in den USA* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982), 212–14; Iain Anderson, *This Is Our Music: Free Jazz, the Sixties, and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 138–41; and Jason Robinson, "Improvising California: Community and Creative Music in Los Angeles and San Francisco" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2005), 74–78. More in-depth discussion can be found in an extended chapter, based largely on one interview with Dixon and documents from the mainstream press, in Christopher Bakriges, "African American Musical Avant-Gardism" (PhD diss., York University, 2001), 167–93. Michael C. Heller, "So We Did It Ourselves: A Social and Musical History of Musician-Organized Jazz Festivals from 1960 to 1973" (MA thesis, Rutgers University, 2005), likewise includes a chapter-length discussion of the topic, and Will Menter's dissertation, "The Making of Jazz and Improvised Music: Four Musicians' Collectives in England and the USA" (University of Bristol, 1981), provides an interesting sociological and racial account of the Guild, based on one interview each with Bill Dixon and Paul Bley. Jeff Schwartz, "New Black Music: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Jazz, 1959–1965" (PhD diss., Bowling Green State University, 2004), is an excellent source of historical data. The master's thesis of Andrew Raffo Dewar ("'This Is an American Music': Aesthetics, Music and Visual Art of Bill Dixon," Wesleyan University, 2004) is unique in its depth of inquiry into Dixon's aesthetics. However, the most complete and useful source on Dixon and his role as an organizer in the New York underground remains Young, *Dixonia*.

18. Advertisement, *Village Voice,* October 15, 1964, 16.

19. Jost writes that Albert Ayler joined the Guild "for a short time" upon his

return from Europe, but this is not corroborated elsewhere in the literature or by Dixon himself; see Jost, *Free Jazz* (New York: Da Capo Press, [1975] 1994), 121. After the first three months of the Guild's existence, Winter left New York for the West Coast.

20. See Young, *Dixonia,* 78; and Dan Morgenstern, "Ornette Coleman from the Heart," *Down Beat,* April 8, 1965, 16–18. In his biography of Coleman, John Litweiler states that the saxophonist declined an invitation to join the Guild, but this does not agree with Dixon's recollection; John Litweiler, *Ornette Coleman: The Harmolodic Life* (London: Quartet Books, 1992), 97. Val Wilmer reported, "Some, like Ornette Coleman, were invited to join but refused"; see *As Serious as Your Life,* 214. In my interview with Mantler, he remarked, "We were trying to get Ornette to join, always. He didn't want to do it. That's the one specifically that I remember. Which was, in a way, too bad, because it was definitely not a united front. But he just wasn't . . . didn't want to be involved."

21. Bill Dixon, interview with the author, Bennington, Vermont, August 16, 2006. See also Young, *Dixonia,* 78. Coltrane told the critic Frank Kofsky, "Yes, I *do* think that was a good idea . . . , and I don't think it's dead. It was just something that couldn't be born at that time, but I still think it's a good idea." See Kofsky, *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music* (New York: Pathfinder, 1970), 229.

22. Dan Warburton, "Interviews with Alan Silva, November 8–22, 2002," *Paris Transatlantic,* www.paristransatlantic.com/magazine/interviews/silva.html (accessed August 2, 2006). Silva's connection of "jazz" with "ghetto" recalls one of Dixon's sayings: "The word 'jazz,' like the word 'negro,' is an antiquated term. They went out of style at about the same time."

23. Wilson, "Dig That Free-Form Jazz." Dixon and Mantler also remember a few meetings devoted to the subject of the name alone.

24. Though none of my interviewees mentioned the Jazz Artists Guild, formed in 1960 by Charles Mingus and Max Roach, they were probably aware of the organization. See Scott Saul, *Freedom Is, Freedom Ain't: Jazz and the Making of the Sixties* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

25. Presumably the musicians were unaware that guilds, or organizations that functioned like them, had long existed outside of Europe.

26. Robert Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild: An Assertion of Dignity," *Down Beat,* May 6, 1965, 17–18. See also "Quelques Hommes en Colere," *Jazz Magazine,* July 1965, 16.

27. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 18.

28. See Kofsky, *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music,* 145–53. At the end of his ballot for the *Down Beat* critics poll in 1964, Baraka wrote, "The stinking New York City club situation is causing very fine groups to break up. New York Contemporary Five, which was Shepp, Tchicai, Don Cherry, Don Moore, J. C. Moses, for instance"; see *Down Beat,* August 13, 1964, 34. As Art D'Lugoff, the owner of the Village Gate nightclub, explained in an essay in *Down Beat,* club owners simply could not afford to book unknown acts when even the larger names in jazz were no longer drawing the audiences they once had; for that reason proprietors had begun turning to comedians and folk and rock acts to fill their houses (Art D'Lugoff, "Experimentation in Public: The Clubowner's Viewpoint," *Down*

*Beat,* April 8, 1965, 14–15). In this article D'Lugoff was responding to Baraka's "New York Loft and Coffee Shop Jazz."

29. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 18. This statement is taken verbatim from the organization's charter and constitution. I am grateful to John Tchicai for sharing a photocopy of the charter with me.

30. Wilson, "Dig That Free-Form Jazz."

31. In "Jazz of a Minority," a roundtable discussion aired on WBAI on April 21, 1964, Cecil Taylor expressed similar sentiments, suggesting that club owners would eventually program the New Thing only if the musicians first demonstrated that the music could be successful in other venues. Taylor mentioned Judson Church as a possible performance space; the roundtable panel also included Amiri Baraka, George Russell, Ornette Coleman, and Gunther Schuller. I'm grateful to John Brackett for sharing a recording of the discussion with me.

32. There is some discrepancy among members' memories. Rudd recalls a one-year moratorium on recording, but Dixon maintains that if the Guild approved a member's project, it was permitted to go forward. In 1965, Archie Shepp explained, "Les musicians qui en faisaient partie ne devaient accepter de jouer dans un club que si la Guild acceptait les conditions qui étaient proposées; il en était de meme pour un enregistrement" ("The musicians who belonged were supposed to agree to play in a club only if the Guild accepted the conditions that were proposed; it was the same for a recording" [my translation]); Guy Kopelowicz, "Autumn in New York," *Jazz Hot,* November 1965, 31, quoted in Carles and Comolli, *Free Jazz/Black Power* (Paris: Éditions Champ Libre, 1971), 51.

33. John Tchicai, in an interview with the author, New York City, February 8, 2007, recalled that the ESP record was never discussed in a Guild meeting, which suggests that in November 1964 the organization did not yet exert much control over its members.

34. Carla Bley, telephone interview with the author, September 29, 2006.

35. Young, *Dixonia,* 350–52. See also an advertisement in the *Columbia Daily Spectator,* October 23, 1964.

36. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* December 17, 1964, 42. Advertisement, *Village Voice,* November 5, 1964, 12. One concert took place at composer Philip Corner's loft at 2 Pitt Street on the Lower East Side; see the advertisement in the *Village Voice,* November 19, 1964, 19.

37. See advertisement, *Village Voice,* October 29, 1964, 16: "To Raise Funds to Provide a Permanent Home for the Guild."

38. Greene remembers that Shepp came up with the title, which was presumably a reference to the film about the Kennedy assassination, *Four Days in November,* which had been released a few months earlier. See also "Jazz Composers Schedule '4 Days in December' Fete," *New York Times,* December 26, 1964; "Music Notes," *New York Times,* December 29, 1964; "Avant Garde Organizes, to Present Concert Series," *Down Beat,* December 31, 1964, 10; John S. Wilson, "Avant-Garde Jazz Series Offers Cecil Taylor and Dixon Quintet," *New York Times,* December 29, 1964; Don Heckman, "Caught in the Act: The Jazz Composers Guild," *Down Beat,* February 11, 1965, 37–38; advertisement, *Village Voice,* November 12, 1964, 16; advertisement, *Village Voice,* November 19, 1964, 19; "Jazz Concerts,"

*Village Voice,* December 24, 1964, 14 and 15; advertisement, *Village Voice,* December 17, 1964, 22; and Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson."

39. Wilson, "Dig That Free-Form Jazz."

40. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 150.

41. "Avant Garde Organizes, to Present Concert Series."

42. See "Avant Garde Organizes, to Present Concert Series"; and "Jazz Composers Schedule '4 Days in December' Fete."

43. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild"; and Wilson, "Dig That Free-Form Jazz." The *New Yorker* review ran in February, and praised a performance by the New York Art Quartet—see Whitney Balliett, "Comes the Revolution," *New Yorker,* February 27, 1965, 121–24.

44. See advertisement in the *Village Voice,* December 31, 1964, 6: "The Jazz Revolution Continues: The New Headquarters of the Jazz Composers Guild Is the Triangle above the Village Vanguard."

45. Dixon, e-mail communication with the author, October 13, 2006. Stephen recalls, however, that it was Dixon who had originally contacted her about leasing the space on weekends; Edith Stephen, telephone conversation with the author, December 28, 2006.

46. See Young, *Dixonia,* 356–67. The concerts were all advertised in the *Village Voice* and appeared in the concert listings of the *New York Times*. The Guild membership changed slightly when Jon Winter returned to California sometime after the Free Form Improvisation Ensemble's final performance on February 5, 1965, and Gary William Friedman, a rather conventional composer who was attracted to the notion of unlimited freedom that completely improvised, collective music making represented, lost interest in the group when they began working with precomposed material, including his own.

47. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 18.

48. Warburton, "Interviews with Alan Silva, November 8–22, 2002"; and Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life,* 239.

49. Taylor is quoted in Nat Hentoff, "The Persistent Challenge of Cecil Taylor," *Down Beat,* February 25, 1965, 40; Dixon is quoted in Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 17.

50. See John Gill, "Miles in the Sky," in *Queer Noises: Male and Female Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 58–67.

51. Young, *Dixonia,* 29–66.

52. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Voice from the Avant-Garde: Archie Shepp," *Down Beat,* January 14, 1965, 18–19, 36; and Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Archie Shepp Live," *Jazz,* January 1965, 8–9. There is also no mention of the Guild in Philippe Carles, "Archie Shepp: Archie Méconnu," *Jazz Magazine,* June 1965, 50–55, though this article does include a discussion of the earlier Archie Shepp–Bill Dixon Quartet.

53. "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," *Jazz,* May 1967, 38.

54. Tam Fiofori, "Sun Ra's Space Odyssey," *Down Beat,* May 14, 1970, 16. This quote is discussed by Jost in *Free Jazz,* 181, and by Ajay Heble in *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz Dissonance and Critical Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 133.

55. Tchicai, interview with the author. See also Mike Trouchon, "John Tchicai," interview on Tchicai's Web site, www.dcn.davis.ca.us/~jomnamo/rub_tchicai/page_inter.html (accessed August 3, 2006).

56. John F. Szwed, *Space Is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra* (New York: Da Capo, 1998), 206–7. Sun Ra told *Jazz Magazine* in 1965, "I joined because they played a different music, because they sought new paths. . . . But I found that they were not very sincere in certain things that they said. So I left them" ("J'y suis entré parce qu'ils jouaient une musique différente, parce qu'ils cherchaient des voies nouvelles. . . . Mais j'ai trouvé qu'ils n'étaient pas très sincères dans certaines choses qu'ils disaient. Alors je les ai quittés" [my translation]); see "Visite au Dieu Soleil," *Jazz Magazine,* December 1965, 74. In fact, Sun Ra did not split from the Guild as early as he claims; the Arkestra's final concert at the Contemporary Center occurred only one month prior to the dissolution of the organization.

57. I have been unable to document specific instances of scabbing, but Dixon, Greene, and Rudd all remember its happening. Taylor "also points to a lot of scabbing on the part of its musicians, both white and black, as another main cause for its disintegration"; see Spellman, *Black Music: Four Lives* (New York: Schocken Paperbacks, [1966] 1970), 27.

58. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* January 14, 1965, 11. The advertisement that ran in the *Village Voice* specified December 4 and 5; see *Village Voice,* December 3, 1964, 20.

59. Hettie Jones, *How I Became Hettie Jones* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1990), 172.

60. Amiri Baraka, *The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984), 258; for information on Baraka's salon, see 256–60.

61. Larry Nai, "Marzette Watts Interview," *Cadence* 24, no. 8 (1998): 14; see also Young, *Dixonia,* 37. The chronology here is complicated. The OYM existed between 1961 and 1962, when it dissolved and most of its politically involved members—including Baraka and Shepp—joined On Guard, Calvin Hicks's black intellectual organization. On the latter, see Tom Dent, "Umbra Days," *Black American Literature Forum* 14, no. 3 (1980): 105–8. In light of the nearly four-year interval between meetings of OYM and Baraka's first feature articles on Shepp, I presume that Watts is referring to a decision to promote Shepp that actually came about some years after the dissolution of OYM but nonetheless involved many of the same individuals.

62. Baraka, *Autobiography of LeRoi Jones,* 248.

63. Ibid., 298–99. Graves went on to write articles in Baraka's cultural nationalist magazine *Cricket* (see Graves, untitled article, *Cricket* 1 [1968]: 14–17), and he also conducted a "Black Aesthetic and Black Artist" workshop at the Third International Conference on Black Power in Philadelphia, August 29–September 1, 1968.

64. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* April 8, 1965, 39.

65. See Jason Robinson, "The Challenge of the Changing Same: The Jazz Avant-garde of the 1960s, the Black Aesthetic, and the Black Arts Movement," *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 1, no. 2, 20.

66. Young, *Dixonia,* 358. Carla Bley recalls that Dixon was angry at Rudd and Tchicai for taking this gig (Bley, telephone interview with the author). In a

brief announcement of this event, *Down Beat* erroneously reported that "The Jazz Composers Guild is booking the music at a new spot, the Galaxy Art Center." See "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* March 11, 1965, 12.

67. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Apple Cores," *Down Beat,* December 17, 1964, 40.

68. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Introducing Bobby Bradford," in *Black Music* (New York: William Morrow and Co., [1962] 1967), 99.

69. Dixon, "Dixon Digs at Jones," *Down Beat,* January 2, 1964, 8–9. Dixon's disagreement with Baraka showed up two years later in the question and answer period of a panel discussion on "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism" sponsored by *Jazz*. "[T]here were certain points that were sort of touched upon which I think affect all of the players much more so than some of the other aspects of being nationalists and that type of thing," he said; see "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," *Jazz,* May 1967, 38.

70. See Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson."

71. Spellman, review of *Archie Shepp–Bill Dixon Quartet,* by Archie Shepp and Bill Dixon, *Kulchur* 3, no. 11 (Autumn 1963): 95.

72. Unless otherwise noted, the following section is based on Clifford Allen, "Bernard Stollman: The ESP-Disk Story," *All About Jazz,* November 21, 2005, www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=19661 (accessed October 17, 2006); and Bernard Stollman, interview with the author, New York City, December 5, 2006.

73. Young, *Dixonia,* 352.

74. Ralph Berton, "Conversations with Bernard Stollman," *Sounds & Fury* (April 1966): 38.

75. See Paul Bley Quintet, *Barrage* ESPCD 1008, [1965] 2001. Stollman later remembered, "It was this whole community of improvisational musicians and composers. I invited them all to record—I'd already started something with Albert, and I invited all these guys to record for my new label. Everybody accepted"; see Allen, "Bernard Stollman: The ESP-Disk Story."

76. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* January 14, 1965, 11.

77. Berton, "Conversations with Bernard Stollman," 38.

78. Young, *Dixonia,* 353. Interestingly enough, at the same time that Stollman began programming at the Café Au-Go-Go, the Fluxus artists Robert Watts, James Waring, and George Brecht presented their series "Monday Night Letter" (their performances were considered "proper" enough to begin at 9:00 P.M.). See advertisements in the *Village Voice,* December 10, 1964, 7; and November 19, 1964, 6. A future member of Henry Flynt's Insurrections (see chapter 2), the sculptor Walter De Maria, played drums on November 23.

79. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* February 25, 1965, 14. The announcement erroneously reported that the alto saxophonist Byron Allen performed. In my interview with Stollman, he recalled little about the "American Society for Serious Improvised Music," but noted that it was probably a one-off promotional stunt that he thought up for the concert. The name of the fictitious group reflects a common antipathy to the word "jazz," which many African American musicians, going back to Duke Ellington, had avoided; Stollman shared this antipathy, and almost none of the dozens of ESP-Disk releases mentions the word. The February 1, 1965, program included a Logan work performed by a string quartet (with Charlotte

Moorman) and the pianist Don Pullen, bassist Eddie Gomez, and drummer Marvin Petillo as sidemen.

80. "Strictly Ad Lib," *Down Beat,* May 20, 1965, 11. The concert was reviewed by Dan Morgenstern in *Down Beat,* July 15, 1965, 12.

81. John S. Wilson, "Who's Carrying the Jazz Banner Now?" *New York Times,* November 28, 1965. See also Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life,* 231–33.

82. Allen, "Bernard Stollman: The ESP-Disk Story."

83. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Strong Voices in Today's Black Music," *Down Beat,* February 10, 1966, 15.

84. Robert Levin, "Some Observations on the State of the Scene," *Sounds & Fury* (July–August 1965): 5.

85. Sun Ra began recording *The Heliocentric Worlds of Sun Ra, Volume 1,* on April 20 (Szwed, *Space Is the Place,* 215–16), but Greene didn't enter the studio until December, when he recorded with his own quartet (featuring saxophonist Marion Brown and bassist Henry Grimes) and Patty Waters ("Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair"); see Greene, *Cluster Quartet,* ESPCD 1024, [1966] 2003, and Waters, *Patty Waters Sings,* ESPCD 1025, [1966] 2003.

86. "For some, Sun Ra became our resident philosopher," wrote Baraka in his *Autobiography,* 298.

87. See Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), especially chapters 1, "Introduction: Points of Departure, Points of Return," and 6, "Thinking through Race"; and Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1986).

88. Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters,* 14.

89. For more on the subject of race consciousness in 1960s jazz, see Ronald M. Radano, *New Musical Figurations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 63–72; and Ingrid Monson, *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call Out to Jazz and Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

90. Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters,* 32–33.

91. "Is Pro-Black Necessarily Anti-White?" *Liberator,* August 1965, 8. As Jason Robinson and Eric Porter point out, Shepp's position on black nationalism and revolutionary politics differed from Baraka's, despite the similarity of their rhetoric. In the course of an important panel discussion in December 1965 (transcribed and printed serially in *Jazz* in 1966), Shepp articulated a more traditional class-based analysis of racial oppression, resisting the radical polarization of black and white that was central to the Black Arts writers and thinkers; see Robinson, "The Challenge of the Changing Same," 27; and Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz? African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 200–207. In a 1965 interview, Shepp remarked, "I think that the whole question of nationalism has really confused the issue" (Lawrence Neal, "A Conversation with Archie Shepp," *Liberator,* November 1965, 24). In the years that followed, the split would become more pronounced. In an issue of *Cricket,* the cultural nationalist journal that Amiri Baraka published in 1968–69, a review by Mwanafunzi Katibu of Shepp's *Three for a Quarter, One for a Dime* castigated the saxophonist, who, Katibu charges, "hasn't, lost his, soul. *Yet. [sic]*" The critic thought Shepp had been spending too much time with his (white) trom-

bonist Roswell Rudd. "He [Shepp] need *[sic]* to come back to us. Before it's too late, let Rudds senseibility *[sic]* crawl in a corner and die"; Mwanafunzi Katibu, "Archie Shepp, Impulse! AS-916, Three for a Quarter, One for a Dime," *Cricket* 4 (1969): 26.

92. Jerry G. Watts, *Amiri Baraka: The Politics and Art of a Black Intellectual* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 157–58.

93. Laurence *[sic]* P. Neal, "The Genius and the Prize," *Liberator,* October 1965, 11.

94. L.P. Neal, "Black Revolution in Music," *Liberator,* September 1965, 15. The words are Neal's, but he is summarizing the thoughts of Milford Graves.

95. Dixon believed that none of the Black Arts writers around Baraka knew that Silva was black until he started playing in Sun Ra's band (Sun Ra never hired white players). Photos of Silva taken in the 1960s show him with shoulder-length wavy hair and light skin.

96. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 151. Spellman did not globally condemn all white players on the festival; in fact, he reviewed Carla Bley, Mantler, and Rudd somewhat favorably. My point here is simply to note that the FFIE was the only majority-white ensemble participating in the series. For more on the cultural politics of black "academic" music, see George E. Lewis, "Experimental Music in Black and White: The AACM in New York, 1970–1985," in *Uptown Conversation,* ed. Robert G. O'Meally, Brent Hayes Edwards, and Farah Jasmine Griffin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 75–79; and Lewis, *A Power Stronger than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

97. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 151. In an interview on October 5, 2006, Friedman told me that he, for one, never thought that the music of FFIE was "jazz."

98. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 151.

99. Neal, "Black Revolution in Music," 15. (In a short article published in *Liberator* in 1967, Graves was more specific: "Western thought in this sense has only limited and deprived the Afro-American of his own inner knowledge"; see Milford Graves and Don Pullen, "Black Music," *Liberator,* January 1967, 20.) Perhaps referring to the title of the first article, Dixon told an audience at the December 1965 *Jazz* panel discussion, "I never even heard of a revolution in jazz until I produced the October Revolution, never heard the word used, you see"; see "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," *Jazz,* May 1967, 38.

100. Neal, "Black Revolution in Music," 15.

101. John Gennari, *Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 283.

102. Winifred Breines, *The Trouble Between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 56.

103. Baraka, *Autobiography of LeRoi Jones,* 286.

104. Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 150. For a fuller treatment of gender and sexuality in 1960s jazz, see Benjamin Piekut, "New Thing? Gender and Sexuality in the Jazz Composers Guild," *American Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (March 2010): 25–48. On the topic of gender, specifically masculinity, in jazz, see Sherrie Tucker, "Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies," *Current Musicology* 71–73 (Spring

2001–Spring 2002): 377–408; David Ake, "Regendering Jazz: Ornette Coleman and the New York Scene in the Late 1950s," in *Jazz Cultures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 62–82; Ingrid Monson, "The Problem with White Hipness: Race, Gender, and Cultural Conceptions in Jazz Historical Discourse," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 396–422; Nichole T. Rustin, "Mingus Fingers: Charles Mingus, Black Masculinity, and Postwar Jazz Culture" (PhD diss., New York University, 1999); Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?*; Monique Guillory, "Black Bodies Swingin': Race, Gender, and Jazz," in *Soul: Black Power, Politics, and Pleasure*, ed. Monique Guillory and Richard C. Green (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 191–215; and Krin Gabbard, "Signifyin(g) the Phallus: Mo' Better Blues and Representations of the Jazz Trumpet," in *Representing Jazz*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995), 104–30.

105. Monson, "The Problem with White Hipness," 397.

106. Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 281n102.

107. Yet the Village was not a haven for interracial couples or open homosexuality. Cecil Taylor was attacked late one night in spring 1964 on the Lower East Side; his left wrist was broken in the scuffle. The short description of the incident in *Down Beat* noted that the police never caught the assailants. It is not known, therefore, whether this was a hate crime—and, if so, whether it concerned race or sexuality; see "Cecil Taylor Attacked on Street; Wrist Broken," *Down Beat*, August 27, 1964. For more on the dangers of Greenwich Village for African American bohemians, see Jon Panish, *The Color of Jazz: Race and Representation in Postwar American Culture* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), 23–41.

108. See Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

109. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "American Sexual Reference: Black Male," in *Home: Social Essays* (New York: William Morrow and Co., [1965] 1966), 216. For an extended theoretical analysis of this dynamic, see Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 87–116.

110. Amiri Baraka, "Rockgroup," *Cricket* 4 (1969): 41–43.

111. Ibid., 42.

112. Jeffrey Melnick, "Some Notes on the Erotics of 'Black-Jewish Relations,'" *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 23, no. 4 (2005): 9–25. Baraka's *Autobiography* provides innumerable examples on this point: Hettie Cohen was his "white wife," whereas the murdered civil rights workers Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were "white boys . . . seeking to assuage their own leaking consciences" (285).

113. Several authors discuss the gendering of Jewishness as a racial category; see, for example, Sander Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1993); and Ann Pellegrini, "Whiteface Performances: 'Race,' Gender, and Jewish Bodies," in *Jews and Other Differences: The New Jewish Cultural Studies*, ed. Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 108–49. The emerging antagonism between black nationalism and Jewish leftism during the 1960s is discussed in Melnick, "Some Notes," 23; and Andrea

Levine, "The (Jewish) White Negro: Norman Mailer's Racial Bodies," *Melus* 28, no. 2 (2003): 76.

114. Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics,* 97–98 (emphasis in the original).

115. Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "The Burton Greene Affair," *Down Beat,* August 25, 1965, 13.

116. Ra did eventually invite the vocalist and dancer June Tyson into the band, but he still banished her from the recording studio if a session wasn't going well. See Szwed, *Space Is the Place,* 250.

117. Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life,* 215.

118. For more on Carla Bley's experience in the Guild, see Piekut, "New Thing?"

119. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 17.

120. Dixon, interview with the author, August 16, 2006. That the majority of the audience was white was not disputed by Spellman, who had observed that the audience was two-thirds white "in most downtown and midtown *avant-garde* jazz concerts, and a great many of those Negroes present [are] jazz musicians." Spellman, "Jazz at the Judson," 150 (emphasis in the original). Over the years, Graves has changed his position on white audiences, observing in our interview, "If it wasn't for white folks, this music would be *dead!*"

121. Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Black Leadership,* repr. (New York: New York Review Books, [1967] 2005), 364.

122. "If Negroes were actually thinking and functioning on a mature political level, then the exclusion of whites—organizationally and politically—should be based not on hatred but on strategy"; Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual,* 365.

123. Baraka [LeRoi Jones], "Cuba Libre," in *Home: Social Essays,* 13.

124. Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual,* 363.

125. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 17.

126. William R. Dixon, "Jazz through Four Innovators," review of *Four Lives in the Be-Bop Business* by A.B. Spellman, *Freedomways* 7, no. 3 (Summer 1967): 257.

127. "Interview: Imamu Amiri Baraka," first published in *Black Collegian* and quoted in Watts, *Amiri Baraka,* 170. Shepp, too, doubted whether avant-garde jazz had a place in Harlem. "I think it would be very difficult for Cecil or Ornette or myself to just go up to Harlem and expect to be accepted right away—as good as our intentions may be," he told Neal in an interview (Neal, "A Conversation with Archie Shepp," 24). For two excellent summaries and analyses of Baraka's changing formulations of black nationalism and its relationship to black music, see Eric Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz?,* 193–207; and Gennari, *Blowin' Hot and Cool,* 264–89.

128. A later change in context for Dixon led to his taking a different position on group actualization: in the early 1970s, as a professor at Bennington College, Dixon founded the Black Music Division, a program he led until his retirement in 1996; see Dewar, "'This Is an American Music.'"

129. Paul Bley and David Lee, *Stopping Time: Paul Bley and the Transformation of Jazz* (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 1999), 92.

130. Baraka, "The Burton Greene Affair," 13.

131. Carla Bley, telephone interview with the author, September 29, 2006. I

draw also on Wini Breines's work on the misunderstanding, distrust, and anger that characterized interactions between black and white socialist feminists in the 1960s and 1970s; see Wini Breines, "What's Love Got to Do with It? White Women, Black Women, and Feminism in the Movement Years," *Signs* 27, no. 4 (Summer, 2002): 1095–1133. See also Breines, *The Trouble Between Us.*

132. Relevant to this discussion is George E. Lewis's explanation of the differences between Eurological and Afrological approaches to history and music making. He argues that the Afrological—historically emergent rather than biologically ordained—is based upon recognition of social difference and the importance of personal and collective history, whereas the Eurological seeks to transcend difference and escape personal and collective history; see George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (1996): 91–123.

133. Levin, "The Jazz Composers Guild," 17. In a 1965 letter to Taylor Castell, the editor of *Sounds & Fury,* Dixon addressed the "collective White American you" and again stressed the inability of white America "to accept *any* kind of leadership from black Americans"; see "Bill Dixon," *Sounds & Fury,* July–August 1965, 39.

134. Dan Morgenstern, "John Tchicai: A Calm Member of the Avant-Garde," *Down Beat,* February 10, 1966, 49.

135. Warburton, "Interviews with Alan Silva."

136. Wilson, "Don't Call Carla's Jazz Jazz," 131.

137. Narada Burton Greene, *Memoirs of a Musical "Pesty Mystic" Or, From the Ashcan to the Ashram and Back Again* (Redwood, NY: Cadence Jazz Books, 2001) 53–54.

138. Ibid., 55.

139. This sequence of events is corroborated by Young, *Dixonia,* 358, and author interviews with Dixon, Rudd, Greene, and Carla Bley. The incident is absent from Paul Bley's history of the Guild (Bley and Lee, "The Jazz Composers Guild: Dixon—Rudd—Shepp—Ra," in *Stopping Time,* 91–97).

140. Described in Bley and Lee, *Stopping Time,* 95–96, and in Greene, telephone interview with the author, July 12, 2006.

141. Archie Shepp, *Four for Trane,* Impulse! IMPD-218, [1964] 1997. As Shepp explained in a 1985 interview with Ben Sidran, the date was arranged by John Coltrane, whose assistance Shepp had requested in the weeks before; see Ben Sidran, *Talking Jazz: An Oral History,* expanded ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, [1992] 1995), 251–52.

142. The articles were Baraka, "Archie Shepp Live"; Archie Shepp, "On Jazz," *Jazz,* August 1965, 24; Carles, "Archie Shepp: Archie Méconnu"; Noames, "Archie Shepp: Shepp le Rebelle"; Baraka, "Voice from the Avant-garde"; and Shepp, "An Artist Speaks Bluntly." In the Noames interview, Shepp briefly discussed the Guild only after being prompted by the interviewer. I am grateful to Bill Dixon for clarifying this issue with me in a telephone conversation on January 3, 2007, when he observed that, given the amount of money that is rumored to have been involved, Shepp "would have been a fool not to accept" the deal. At the same time, Dixon maintains that one should not confuse a single artist's success—or even his later shepherding of Marion Brown, who recorded *Three for Shepp* for Impulse! under

the latter's auspices in 1966—with the greater mission of the Guild that *all* its members would be offered a joint contract.

143. Greene, *Memoirs of a Musical "Pesty-Mystic,"* 39.

144. "Si certains members s'étaient montrés plus forts, plus fidèles à leurs promesses, s'il y avait eu des rapports entre leur action et leurs idées, la Guilde existerait toujours" [my translation]. Jean-Louis Noames, "Cecil Taylor: Le système Taylor," *Jazz Magazine,* December 1965, 35.

145. Warburton, "Interviews with Alan Silva."

146. Fiofori, "Sun Ra's Space Odyssey," 16.

147. Bakriges, "African American Musical Avant-Gardism," 187. In an interview soon after the Guild folded, Shepp was more elliptical when asked by *Jazz Magazine* why Dixon had to dissolve the organization. He replied, "A la fois pour des raisons financières et des raisons raciales." See Jean-Louis Noames, "Archie Shepp: Shepp le Rebelle," *Jazz Magazine,* December 1965, 80.

148. Trouchon, "John Tchicai."

149. Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 138.

150. Bley and Lee, *Stopping Time,* 95.

151. "Newport Jazz Draws Small Crowd Again," *New York Times,* July 3, 1965.

152. "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," *Jazz,* June 1967, 30.

153. Dixon, interview with the author, August 16, 2006; and "Jazz and Revolutionary Black Nationalism," *Jazz,* May 1967, 38. Wein made a public apology to Dixon and offered to program him on the 1966 Newport Festival, an offer that Dixon accepted.

154. See also Young, *Dixonia,* 367.

155. Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 122.

156. Ibid.

157. Ibid.

## 4. MURDER BY CELLO

1. Fred Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde," unpublished video (interview transcript in author's possession), 1980.

2. For an account of this performance of *Originale,* see Benjamin Piekut, "Testing, Testing . . . : New York Experimentalism 1964" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008), 409–11.

3. Faubion Bowers, "A Feast of Astonishments," *Nation,* September 28, 1964, 174.

4. *The Long Hot Summer* was also the title of a 1958 film starring Paul Newman, which spawned a television miniseries in 1965–66 and no doubt led many people later to refer to the summer of 1967 as "the long hot summer."

5. Jackson Mac Low to Denise Levertov, October 21, 1964, JMLP, box 23.

6. Mac Low seems to have gone out of his way to work with African American members of the downtown arts community. In a letter to the composer Barney Childs in December 1963, he mentioned that he was considering giving a copy of one of his event scores to Ornette Coleman "or one of the other jazz 'far-outers'

here [in New York]"; Mac Low to Childs, December 1963, JMLP, box 2. Eric Porter has also detailed a 1966 collaboration between Mac Low and Jeanne Lee; see Porter, "Jeanne Lee's Voice," *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 2, no. 1 (2006), www.criticalimprov.com (accessed September 15, 2009).

7. Mac Low to Levertov, October 21, 1964.

8. These notes are located in the CMA. Another messy sheet of notes that likely dates from July 1964 (when Moorman was busy planning programs for that year's festival) suggests that other artists were rumored to be planning to take part in the demonstration. The jotting reads, "PICKETS! ORIGINALE! Dieter Schnebel, George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, Jackson Mac Low, Wolff *[sic]* Vostell, ANYONE ELSE? Cardew?"

9. Georgina Born, "The Social and the Aesthetic: For a Post-Bourdieuian Theory of Cultural Production," *Cultural Sociology* 4, no. 2 (July 2010): 22 (emphasis in the original).

10. James Faubion, "Toward an Anthropology of Ethics: Foucault and the Pedagogies of Autopoiesis," *Representations* 74 (Spring 2001): 99.

11. Moorman cites this nickname in many of the biographies and press releases located in the CMA.

12. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 22.

13. Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 86.

14. Concert flyer in the CMA. Moorman told Fred Stern in 1980 that she played the piece for a juried recital at Juilliard in 1958 but that her committee wouldn't allow the concert to take place in public (Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde"). Moorman's testimony in *People v. Moorman* corroborates the year of the recital (trial transcript, April 19, 1967, 6).

15. The program for this concert can be found in the CMA.

16. Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde." She may also have been introduced to figures in the avant-garde through her work organizing and promoting concerts by Yoko Ono (Carnegie Recital Hall, November 24, 1961), Joseph Byrd (Carnegie Recital Hall, March 9, 1962), and La Monte Young (Judson Hall, October 12, 1962); see programs in the CMA. As she told Calvin Tomkins, her own participation in the Ono concert of November 1961, which called for her to sit on a toilet with her back to the audience and play noises on her cello, further pushed her to investigate new paths; see Calvin Tomkins, "Video Visionary," *New Yorker,* May 5, 1975, 56.

17. Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde."

18. Charlotte Moorman to David Tudor, June 3, 1963, DTP, box 57, folder 2.

19. Two different versions of the program for this concert survive. One, professionally (if somewhat chaotically) typeset and printed in black, lists the full *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player,* with Tudor accompanying on piano. The second, a light purple, mimeographed copy, indicates that Moorman performed *162.06″ for a String Player,* an excerpt of *26′ 1.1499″,* without accompaniment. I believe that the black program was printed more than a week in advance, and that the second, mimeographed program represents the final concert.

20. Moorman to Tudor, April 11, 1963, DTP: "After living with the Cage 'Piece for a String Player' for the past two weeks, I am convinced that Cage is a genius."

21. Ibid.

22. John Cage, performance notes to *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* (New York: Henmar Press, 1960).

23. On "The Ten Thousand Things" compositions, see James W. Pritchett, "The Development of Chance Techniques in the Music of John Cage, 1950–56" (PhD diss., New York University, 1988), 237–310; and Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 95–104.

24. Pritchett, "The Development of Chance Techniques," 305.

25. Ibid., 275.

26. See John Cage, performance notes to *27′ 10.554″ for a Percussionist* (New York: Henmar Press, 1960).

27. These works, nonetheless, are not fully indeterminate. As Pritchett writes, "The indeterminacies of these pieces are still not central to their conception"; see Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage,* 109.

28. John Cage, "Composition as Process" (1958), in *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 36.

29. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage, 1977); see also Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980).

30. Sebastian Harrer, "The Theme of Subjectivity in Foucault's Lecture Series *L'herméneutique du sujet,*" *Foucault Studies* 2 (2005): 91.

31. Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth,* vol. 1 of *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 300.

32. Faubion, "Toward an Anthropology of Ethics," 89–90.

33. For more on this point, see ibid., 98.

34. Ibid., 89–90. As a tool for rendering traditional cello training strange, *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* shares certain qualities with the compositions of Luigi Boccherini, whose writing for cello Elisabeth Le Guin has described as "a delicate backing-off, a distancing, a making-strange of the player's habitual physical contact with his instrument" (*Boccherini's Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006], 146).

35. Bertram Turetzky to John Cage, October 21, 1963; and John Cage to Bertram Turetzky, October 29, 1967, JCC.

36. Jasper Johns to John Cage, September 1, 1964, JCC.

37. Gisela Gronemeyer, "Seriousness and Dedication: The American Avant-garde Cellist Charlotte Moorman," in liner notes to *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology,* Alga Marghen plana-M 27NMN.064 (6 CDs), 2006, n.p.

38. Charlotte Moorman to David Tudor, April 11, 1963, DTP, box 57, folder 2.

39. John Holzaepfel, "David Tudor and the Performance of American Experimental Music, 1950–1959" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1994).

40. All quotations not reference in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.

41. Charlotte Moorman to David Tudor, June 3, 1963, DTP, box 57, folder 2.

42. Charlotte Moorman to David Tudor, September 7, 1963, DTP, box 57, folder 2.

43. Bowers, "A Feast of Astonishments," 173.

44. This contact sheet of Peter Moore photos is located in the CMA.

45. Henry Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York, 1960–62," in *Sound and Light: La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela,* ed. William Fleming and Richard Duckworth (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1996), 46. That these numerous text insertions were intended to be read aloud is confirmed by a moment in Jud Yalkut's 1973 film of Moorman's and Paik's performance, in which Moorman can be heard declaiming, "Band-Aid Brand plastic strip, Johnson and Johnson"; see Jud Yalkut, *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player* (New York: Electronic Arts Intermix, [1973] 2004). She read this statement from a Band-Aid wrapper that is still pasted into page 30 of her score.

46. It may have been the manner in which Moorman collected and organized her recitations that put her most at odds with Cage, for the latter would have insisted on a chance-derived method of assembling and ordering them. It is possible to imagine an alternate version of Moorman's performance, in which she would have created a pool of possible texts (of her own choosing) and then subjected that pool to chance operations to arrive at a timing and duration for each event. Cage would employ a method of that kind in his own poetic works of the 1970s and 1980s, most notably in *I–VI.* In those lectures, the composer "surrendered" somewhat to chance but firmly expressed an overriding, organized politics and cosmology through his selection of source texts from Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Buckminster Fuller, Marshall McCluhan, and reportage on current events from several newspapers. Had Moorman followed a similar principle in her performance of *26′ 1.1499″,* Cage might have objected to the source materials but not to the manner in which she employed them. On *I–VI,* see Daniel Herwitz, "John Cage's Approach to the Global," in *John Cage: Composed in America,* ed. Charles Junkerman and Marjorie Perloff (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1994), 188–205. My thanks to Bill Brooks for putting this interesting question to me.

47. Charlotte Moorman, in *People vs. Moorman,* April 19, 1967, 7. Trial transcript located in the CMA.

48. Moorman to Tudor, April 11, 1963, DTP, box 57, folder 2.

49. The note also listed "birds," but this sound doesn't appear on the 1964 recording and is left off another list taped into the score.

50. Moorman's sampler can be seen in a video used in the 1975 broadcast of Paik's *Wrap Around the World,* which includes archival footage of Moorman and Paik in Paik's studio in 1965. The apple-sized controller is clipped to Moorman's music stand and has about five buttons. During the short scene, the cellist leans forward and presses a button on the sampler, which triggers a sample of what sounds like an electronic chime. I've been unable to locate any further information on this device, nor have I been able to locate the source of the 1965 footage in which it appears. I thank Trevor Shimizu at Electronic Arts Intermix for allowing me to see this unpublished Paik footage (Paik, "Wrap Around the World," thirty-minute version, dubbed August 9, 1990, ref: 1422–4–1258).

51. Poster advertising a concert with Moorman and Paik at the Philadelphia College of Art, CMA. This seems to have been a general boilerplate document, for Moorman inserted a typed copy of the paragraph in the end of her score for *26′ 1.1499″.* Moorman's equipment list for her January 20, 1966, appearance on *The Tonight Show*—handwritten on a card that was then taped into the end mat-

ter of *26′ 1.1499″*—gives a good indication of the standard setup she eventually settled on. The list includes: a "throat microphone" (presumably a contact mic); a 28"x31" pane of glass; "blank cartridges" (possibly phonograph cartridges?); two small metal wastebaskets, into which she could throw three light bulbs; a bottle and glass of water; a microphone hung over her head; a stuffed chicken or bird; and a platform on which she could assemble her setup.

52. In her note, Moorman specified the catalog numbers of both records.

53. A recording of a 1966 performance in Aachen, Germany, indicates that Moorman played the Beatles' version of Chuck Berry's "Rock and Roll Music." Hear *"26′ 1.1499″* for a String Player," *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology.* In the Paik video referenced in note 50, visible in a suitcase of noisemakers and other equipment is the cover for *The Beatles for Sale,* the album that contains that band's version of Berry's tune.

54. Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 54.

55. For more on Paik's biography, see Tomkins, "Video Visionary," 44–77; and Eva Keller, "Biographical Notes," in *Nam June Paik: Video Time–Video Space,* ed. Toni Stooss and Thomas Kellein (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), 133–37.

56. John Cage, "On the Work of Nam June Paik," in Stooss and Kellein, *Nam June Paik: Video Time–Video Space,* 22.

57. Raymond Ericson, "Avant-Garde Music Festival Opens," *New York Times,* August 31, 1964.

58. From Nam June Paik's program note draft, which is included in Moorman's copy of "Plus-Minus," CMA.

59. Leighton Kerner, "Buzz, Buzz," *Village Voice,* September 3, 1964, 15.

60. Ibid. A recording of this performance is included in *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology.*

61. This work remained in Moorman's repertory until the end of her life. *Charlotte Resounding,* dir. Larry Miller (New York: Electronic Arts Intermix, 1997), shows Moorman performing the work well into the 1980s.

62. The photo is reproduced in *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology,* n.p. A filmed performance of the piece also appears in Charlotte Moorman and Nam June Paik, *Rare Performance Documents 1961–1994,* vol. 1, *Paik-Moorman Collaborations* (New York: Electronic Arts Intermix DVD, 2000).

63. According to Paik's minimal instructions, he concluded this piece by playing the piano with a baby pacifier in his mouth—"komm zurück und spiele etwas Klavier mit Babyschnuller im Mund"; see Wulf Herzogenrath, ed., *Nam June Paik: Werke 1946–1975: Musik—Fluxus—Video* (Cologne: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1976), 45.

64. According to Tompkins, she first performed this work on the January 9, 1965, concert at the New School (Tomkins, "Video Visionary," 58).

65. Michael Nyman, "Nam June Paik, Composer," in *Nam June Paik,* ed. John G. Hanhardt (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1982), 83; see also Herzogenrath, ed., *Nam June Paik,* 47.

66. Nyman, "Nam June Paik, Composer," 86.

67. "An Evening with Fluxus Women: A Roundtable Discussion," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 19, no. 3 (November 2009): 379.

68. Nam June Paik to Gordon Mumma, undated letter [1966?], OA.

69. This sequence is confirmed by Paul Turok's review of a performance of the work ("More Torso Than Playing," *New York Herald Tribune,* January 9, 1965).

70. The story appeared in an autobiographical press release included in Barbara Moore, ed., *The World of Charlotte Moorman: Archive Catalogue* (New York: Bound & Unbound, 2000).

71. Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde."

72. Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self,* 2nd ed. (London: Free Association Books, 1989), xx. Donna Haraway's comments on a different kind of experimentalism are also relevant here: "It is important that the 'shared conditions of work' in an experimental lab make us understand that entities with fully secured boundaries called possessive individuals (imagined as human or animal) are the wrong units for considering what is going on"; Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 70.

73. Mahmood, *The Politics of Piety,* 14–15.

74. *New York Times,* September 5, 1965, includes a picture of several artists associated with the Avant Garde Festivals; Paik holds his bomb in the photo.

75. *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology,* disc 2.

76. Yalkut, *26′ 1.1499″ for a String Player.*

77. John G. Hanhardt, *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000), 68, quoted in Nick Kaye, *Multi-media: Video-Installation-Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 42.

78. For more on Paik's performances and music, see Hanhardt, *The Worlds of Nam June Paik;* Kaye, *Multi-media;* Chrissie Iles, "Nam June Paik and the American Dream," in *Nam June Paik: Fluxus und Videoskulptur: 9.6–25.8.02: Lehmbruck Museum, Duisberg,* ed. Christoph Brockhaus (Duisberg: Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, 2002), 50–59; Leigh Landy and Antje von Graevenitz, "'I Make Technology Ridiculous'—The Unusual Dialectics of Nam June Paik," *Avant-Garde* 7 (1992): 79–108; Yongwoo Lee, "Hybridity and Anonymity," in Brockhaus, *Nam June Paik: Fluxus und Videoskulptur,* 40–49; Michael Nyman, "Nam June Paik, Composer"; and Stooss and Kellein, eds., *Nam June Paik: Video Time–Video Space.*

79. As Cage wrote, "Where do we go from here? Towards theatre. That art more than music resembles nature. We have eyes as well as ears, and it is our business while we are alive to use them"; see Cage, *Silence,* 12. The video of "Water Walk" is available at Youtube.com.

80. Robert Mayer, "John Cage: Composer of Silences," *Newsday,* March 19, 1963.

81. Cage, "On the Work of Nam June Paik," 21–24.

82. Roger Copeland, *Merce Cunningham: The Modernizing of Modern Dance* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 213.

83. Ibid.

84. Moorman refers to the sexually charged aspects of her performance in "Cello," in Joseph Beuys et al., *24 Stunden* (Itzehoe-Vosskate: Hansen and Hansen, 1965), n.p. One is also reminded of Cage's reaction to a performance of his *Songbooks* by Julius Eastman, an event that Kyle Gann recounts in his liner notes to *Unjust Malaise:*

> During a performance of Cage's theater piece *Songbooks* that was chaotic in the best sense of the word, Eastman performed the segment of *Songbooks* that was merely the instruction, "Give a lecture." Never shy about his gayness, Eastman lectured on sex, with a young man and woman as volunteers. He undressed the young man onstage, and attempted to undress the woman, who resisted. The next day, the ever-mild-mannered Cage gave an angry lecture about the misuse of performances of his music, and, before our incredulous eyes, pounded his fist on the piano to punctuate his words: "The freedom in my music does not mean the freedom to be irresponsible!"

See Kyle Gann, "'Damned Outrageous': The Music of Julius Eastman," liner notes to Julius Eastman, *Unjust Malaise*, New World Records 80638, 2005, www.newworldrecords.org/uploads/fileEp3v.pdf.

85. "An Evening with Fluxus Women," 373.

86. The anecdote is recounted by Moorman in *Charlotte Resounding*, dir. Miller.

87. "Is New Music Being Used for Political or Social Ends?" *Source: Music of the Avant Garde* 3, no. 2 (6) (July 1969): 90.

88. Moorman, "Cello," n.p. Moorman sent an undated typescript of this text to Cage in 1965. It was probably written in May or June of that year, when Moorman and Paik performed four concerts in Germany (JCC).

89. Ibid.

90. Stern, "Charlotte Moorman and the New York Avant Garde."

91. Andreas Huyssen, "Back to the Future: Fluxus in Context," in *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 194.

92. "Is New Music Being Used for Political or Social Ends?": 7–9, 90–91. In the words of Steve Reich quoted in this article, "[T]he politics are more successful when the music comes first" (90).

93. Ibid., 8.

94. On this event and the subsequent trial, see "Miss Moorman's Music," *Village Voice,* February 16, 1967, 16, and the stand-alone photos on pp. 1 and 28; "Police Seize Topless Cello Player in N.Y.," *Chicago Tribune,* February 10, 1967; Ralph Blumenfeld, "The Cellist Dropped Her Top," *New York Post,* February 10, 1967; John McGee and Robert Carroll, "Halt Show, Barely in Time," *New York Daily News,* February 10, 1967; Moorman's response to "Is New Music Being Used for Political or Social Ends?" 90; Paik's notes and markings on the score; Moorman's trial testimony in *People v. Moorman,* April 19, 1967 (CMA); and Moorman, "An Artist in the Courtroom (People vs. Moorman)," which can be found in the CMA and in the Jean Brown Collection at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, and has been published in *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology.*

95. Anthony Julius, *Transgressions: The Offences of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

96. During her trial, Moorman defended herself by stressing that her performance was in a genre—mixed media—that was so new it necessitated a revision of the New York penal code: "We are living in a nation where more than one-half of the population is under thirty years of age. . . . Our century is space ships, computers, nuclear energy, Telestar, laser beams, mixed media, etc. The laws and the

interpretations of the laws should progress with our growth!" See "An Artist in the Courtroom," 18.

97. Julius, *Transgressions,* 129–31.

98. Moorman, "An Artist in the Courtroom," 5. Later in the document (14), she writes, "*Surely* the authorities would NEVER cover all the nudes in the Metropolitan and all other museums with clothes!"

99. For one example of this common observation, see Huyssen, "Back to the Future."

100. Rebecca Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 4.

101. See Allen Hughes, "One Is Avant-Garde, the Other No Gentleman," *New York Times,* September 4, 1966.

102. For more on this point, see Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 80–81.

103. Moorman, "Cello," n.p.

104. Quoted in *Charlotte Moorman: Cello Anthology,* n.p.

105. "People v. Charlotte Moorman," *New York Law Journal,* May 11, 1967, 18.

106. Moorman, "An Artist in the Courtroom," 3 (emphasis in the original).

107. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

108. Ibid., 139–40.

109. See Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 113–44.

110. For another discussion of shifting configurations of subjects and objects, see Georgina Born, "On Musical Mediation: Ontology, Technology and Creativity," *twentieth-century music* 2, no. 1 (March 2005): 7–36.

111. Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 24.

112. For more on how subjects use music, see Tia DeNora, "Music as a Technology of Self," in *Music and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 46–74.

113. Michel de Certeau, "Reading as Poaching," in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165–76.

114. Jenkins, *Textual Poachers,* 33.

115. de Certeau, "Reading as Poaching," 166.

116. Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* vol. 1, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth,* ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 261.

117. Michel Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?" in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* 1:315.

118. "[T]his historico-critical attitude must also be an experimental one," Foucault writes. "I mean that this work done at the limits of ourselves must, on the one hand, open up a realm of historical inquiry and, on the other, put itself to the test of reality, of contemporary reality, both to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable, and to determine the precise form this change should take" (ibid., 316).

119. Stewart, *Ordinary Affects,* 86. On the self in its riskiness, see Faubion, "Toward an Anthropology of Ethics," 100.

120. See Judith Butler, "What Is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue," in *The Political,* ed. David Ingram (London: Blackwell, 2002), 212–26.

121. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure* (New York: Vintage, 1985), 8.

122. Paul Rabinow, introduction to *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth,* vol. 1 of *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* xxxviii–xl.

123. Born, "The Social and the Aesthetic," 28.

124. George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 113–14.

125. Rudd, interview with the author, New York City, October 5, 2006; on the Collective Black Artists, see Eric Porter, *What Is This Thing Called Jazz? African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 215–39.

## EPILOGUE

1. Carl P. Sigmond, "Festival of the Avant-Garde," *Musical America,* October 1964, 51.

2. Howard Klein, "Music: The Avant-Garde," *New York Times,* September 2, 1964.

3. John Gruen, "Avant-Garde Screams, Vocal and Recorded," *New York Herald Tribune,* September 2, 1964.

4. Scott Isler, "The Iggy Pop Autodiscography," *Trouser Press* 9 (January 1983): 25.

5. Weasel, interview with Iggy Pop, WHFS Bethesda, Maryland, 1980, www.iggypop.org/iggyinterviews.html (accessed November 1, 2009).

6. In a letter to Moorman dated July 14, 1964 (CMA), Gordon Mumma proposed that the program include *Maneuvers for Small Hands.*

7. Moorman's account is given in a typescript ("Ashley-Mumma concert") located in the CMA, likely a script for her appearance on New York's WBAI some weeks later, when she played live recordings of the festival and discussed the pieces that had been included. The CMA also contains photographic documentation of Ashley's performance that confirm the presence of the banner. Ashley wrote *Maneuvers for Small Hands* in 1962 for solo piano. According to Robert Sheff and Mark Slobin, the piece consisted of a series of 110 index cards, combining musical notation, graphics, and text; Robert Sheff and Mark Slobin, "A History of ONCE: Music at the Boundaries," 1965–66, repr. *Lightworks* 14/15 (1981): 36–37.

8. Moorman, "Ashley-Mumma concert."

9. Faubion Bowers, "A Feast of Astonishments," *Nation,* September 28, 1964, 173.

10. Gruen, "Avant-Garde Screams, Vocal and Recorded."

11. Robert Ashley, liner notes to *The Wolfman,* Alga Marghen plana-A 20NMN .048, 2003.

12. An alternate six-minute tape piece called *The Wolfman* exists, which was created as the background for shorter performances. It also functioned as a stand-

alone work; in August 1965, Mumma sent a copy of it to Moorman, who programmed it on the electronic music night of her Third Annual Avant Garde Festival. Mumma specified, "Ashley says that if the beginning of this piece is very loud, everything else will be fine"; Gordon Mumma to Charlotte Moorman, August 23, 1965, CMA.

13. The score was published in *Source* 4 (July 1968): 5–6. It is reprinted in Ashley, liner notes to *The Wolfman*.

14. As Ralf Dietrich has reported, Ashley later combined *The Wolfman* with two other pieces into a larger suite of four "songs" called *The Wolfman Motor-City Revue* (1967–68). "The idea was to get the audience to think of loudness as equals 'dirty,'" Ashley wrote to Dietrich. Ralf Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties," in *Sound Commitments: Avant-garde Music and the Sixties,* ed. Robert Adlington (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 181. For more on Ashley's early works, see Ralf Dietrich, "Unzensierte Simultaneität der Stimmen: Das Frühwerk von Ashley," *MusikTexte* 88 (February 2001): 63–81.

15. For a description of this trip and performance, see Leta E. Miller, "ONCE and Again: The Evolution of a Legendary Festival," liner notes to *Music from the ONCE Festival 1961–1966,* New World Records 80567–2, 2003.

16. Ibid.

17. Paul Trynka, *Iggy Pop: Open Up and Bleed* (New York: Broadway, 2007), 65.

18. Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 77.

19. The research of Michael Dessen, Tim Lawrence, and Bernard Gendron has paved the way for an inclusive history of experimentalism and pop. See Michael Dessen, "Decolonizing Art Music: Scenes from the Late Twentieth-Century United States" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2003); Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Tim Lawrence, *Hold On to Your Dreams: Arthur Russell and the Downtown Music Scene, 1973–1992* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). See also Simon Frith and Howard Horne, *Art into Pop* (London: Routledge, 1987).

20. Unless otherwise indicated, the following description is based on Richard James, "ONCE: Microcosm of the 1960s Musical and Multimedia Avant-Garde," *American Music* 5, no. 4 (1987): 359–90; Miller, "ONCE and Again"; Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties"; Sheff and Slobin, "A History of ONCE"; and Robert Sheff, interview with the author, New York City, April 17, 2007.

21. Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties," 173.

22. Ibid., 178.

23. Robert Ashley, "Composers' Notes," in liner notes to *Music from the ONCE Festival 1961–1966.*

24. Dietrich, "ONCE and the Sixties," 182, 186n50. Although Motown is the area's defining contribution to popular music, the Detroit–Ann Arbor nexus also produced an important rock scene that included the Amboy Dukes (featuring Ted Nugent), the Up, SRC, and Alice Cooper. Ann Arbor's ties to highbrow rock are particularly strong. In addition to the well-known MC5, who experimented with free jazz–influenced improvisation, this lineage also included Destroy All Monsters, a performance art/rock band founded by the artist Mike Kelley in 1973.

Ron Asheton, formerly a member of the Stooges, would join a later incarnation of Destroy All Monsters, along with the saxophonist Ben Miller and guitarist Larry Miller. (The Millers had started out in a band called the Sproton Layer with their older brother, Roger, who later founded the art-punk band Mission of Burma in Boston in the late 1970s.)

25. All quotations not referenced in the text are drawn from my list of interviews provided in the bibliography.

26. Michael Erlewine created the Web site allmusic.com; see "Turning the Clock Back to (Iggy) Pop's Beginnings: Prime Mover Michael Erlewine," interview at *I-94* webzine, 2003, www.i94bar.com/ints/primemovers.html (accessed November 7, 2009).

27. Anthony Sanders, "Steve MacKay: Saxman of Interstellar Rock Pathways," *Ptolemaic Terrascope* 35 (2005): 27. On the MC5 shows, see the exhaustive Web site MC5 Concert Dates, http://makemyday.free.fr/mc5calendar.htm (accessed November 28, 2009).

28. James, "ONCE," 380; Iggy Pop, telephone interview with the author. Iggy did not recall ever having met Joseph Wehrer. The following biographical sketch of Wehrer is based on a curriculum vitae located in OA.

29. Iggy Pop, with Anne Wehrer, *I Need More: The Stooges and Other Stories* (New York: Karz-Cohl Publishing, 1982), 120. Wehrer's afterword was deleted from the 1997 reprint by Henry Rollins's 2.13.61 Publications.

30. Andy Warhol described this meeting in his foreword to Pop, with Wehrer, *I Need More,* 7.

31. The programs for these concerts came in the shape and size of baseball cards. They can be found in a number of archives, including the JCC.

32. Quoted in Wehrer, afterword to *I Need More,* 121–22. And they did know each other again. In the 1980s, when Ashley sought a male voice for his opera *Atalanta (Acts of God)*, Anne Wehrer suggested Iggy (with whom she had recently collaborated on his autobiography). After a meeting to discuss the project, it quickly became obvious that their competing schedules would make the collaboration impossible. Robert Ashley, e-mail communication with the author, September 12, 2009; Sheff, interview with the author.

33. Edwin Pouncey, "Coming through Slaughter," *Wire*, November 1999, 29.

34. Jason Gross, "Ron Asheton—Stooges Interview," *Perfect Sound Forever* (February 2000), www.furious.com/perfect/ronasheton.html (accessed November 28, 2009).

35. Pop, with Wehrer, *I Need More,* 21.

36. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 70.

37. Pop, with Wehrer, *I Need More,* 24.

38. Pouncey, "Coming through Slaughter," 31.

39. He also first heard Morton Subotnick's *Silver Apples of the Moon* there, but was less enthused by that record; Pop, telephone interview with the author.

40. Harry Partch, *Plectra and Percussion Dances,* Gate 5 Records, 2nd and 3rd editions, 1957 and 1962.

41. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 66.

42. For the best account of this performance, see Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 63–65. As quoted in Ambrose, *Gimme Danger,* 31, Iggy recalled that "Dave had

come along that first gig just to operate the weird machines that I made up from parts from the junkyard."

43. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 65.

44. Pouncey, "Coming through Slaughter," 29.

45. It is worth noting that, though *The Wolfman* explored the positive potential of feedback at a surprisingly early date, rhythm and blues guitarist Johnny Watson had already experimented with the sound by the mid-1950s, and by the time of Iggy's experiments (but after Ashley's), feedback had been used by the Who, the Beatles, the Velvet Underground, and other bands.

46. Pop, telephone interview with the author.

47. Pauline Oliveros, e-mail communication with the author, February 4, 2008.

48. See Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 71.

49. Quoted in ibid., 70.

50. Russ Gibb, the manager of the Grande Ballroom, had a different memory of Iggy's stage costume: "Another time he wore a tin-foil suit on stage. His mom made it for his act and during the course of the show he would slowly rip pieces of tin foil off of himself until it was in shreds" (Ambrose, *Gimme Danger,* 41). I've found no other reference to this tinfoil suit.

51. For Richardson's account, see Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 63.

52. See Miller, "ONCE and Again."

53. John Sinclair, quoted in Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain, eds. *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 41.

54. Ken Shimamoto, "Dennis Thompson: Phantom Patriot," *I-94 Bar* (1998), www.i94bar.com/ints/thompson.html (accessed November 28, 2009).

55. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *POPism: The Warhol Sixties* (New York: Harvest Books, [1980] 1990), 154.

56. Ibid.

57. See "Elektra Buys [MC]5," *The Fifth Estate* (Ann Arbor), October 3–16, 1968, 13.

58. Pam Brown, "An Afternoon with Iggy Pop," *Punk* 1, no. 4 (July 1976), 27.

59. See Robert Matheu, *The Stooges: The Authorized and Illustrated Story* (New York: Abrams, 2009), 23. Other early song titles included "I'm Sick," "Asthma Attack," and "Goodbye Bozos." Iggy confirms that there are no documents of these early Stooges performances; such possibly existing recordings remain the holy grail of Stooges fandom. There may be a trace, however, in the jam that ends the full-length version of "Ann." At 5:18 of the song, a new band of white noise enters the mix that is distinct in sound and stereo location from the two distorted guitar tracks in the left and right channels. Iggy has clarified: "The noise on the end bit of 'Ann' is I believe the motor of the air compressor I used in the studio. For some reason I think I remember that the studio system could not accept the direct volume of air from the nozzle, so when I tried to record at an angle, the mic instead picked up the clacking sound of the compressor motor" (Iggy Pop, e-mail communication to the author, 14 January 2010).

60. See Victor Bockris and John Cale, *What's Welsh for Zen: The Autobiography of John Cale* (New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2000), 39–48. Like the ONCE composers in 1960, Cale was struck by the reputation and charisma of Roberto Gerhard, whom he invited to Goldsmiths while studying there (43).

61. Bockris and Cale, *What's Welsh for Zen,* 46–47. Young performed the work himself at the ONCE Festival in February 1962; see Miller, "ONCE and Again"; and Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 142–44. These connections would multiply in September 1966, when Flynt filled in for Cale for a few Velvet Underground performances at the Balloon Farm in New York. Flynt's rural fiddling style was an odd match for the band's air of sleazy sophistication. See Richie Unterberger, *White Light/White Heat: The Velvet Underground Day-by-Day* (London: Jawbone, 2009), 111–12; and Victor Bockris, *Transformer: The Lou Reed Story* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 127.

62. On *Vexations,* see Gavin Bryars, "Vexations and Its Performers," *Contact* 26 (Spring 1983): 12–20; repr. 2004, *Journal of Experimental Music Studies,* www.users.waitrose.com/~chobbs/Bryars.html (accessed 20 November 2009); John Gruen, "18 Hours, Over and Over, Same Music 840 Times," *New York Herald Tribune,* September 10, 1963; Sue Solet, "7 Outlast Music Marathon, Get Back $3," *New York Herald Tribune,* September 11, 1963; and Howard Klein et al., "Music: A Long, Long, Long Night (and Day) at the Piano," *New York Times,* September 11, 1963.

63. La Monte Young, "Notes on the Theatre of Eternal Music and *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys,*" 2000, www.melafoundation.org/theatre.pdf (accessed November 21, 2009); and Unterberger, *White Light/White Heat.*

64. Ingrid Superstar, quoted in Unterberger, *White Light/White Heat,* 80.

65. See also Barry Shank, "Heroin, or the Droning of the Commodity," in *Silence, Noise, Beauty: The Political Agency of Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to Professor Shank for sharing a draft of this chapter with me.

66. Bockris and Cale, *What's Welsh for Zen,* 127. In his 1982 autobiography, Iggy recounted his attraction to the sounds of his environment such as the whir of the space heater or his father's electric shaver. "I'm sure the constant exposure to amplifiers and electric guitars, and hearing my own voice amplified, has altered my body chemistry." (*I Need More,* 64). The statement is reminiscent of La Monte Young's memory of the four kinds of sounds from his childhood that influenced his musical development: that of insects, steam kettles and train whistles, environmental resonance, and telephone poles and motors (Richard Kostelanetz, "La Monte Young" [interview], in *The Theatre of Mixed Means* [New York: Dial Press, 1968], 195–96).

67. This is not to say that there aren't significant attachments to 1960s jazz in the Stooges. Pharoah Sanders's *Tauhid* (1966), particularly his "Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt," captivated and inspired the band (and even led them to steal a bass line for their song "Little Doll").

68. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 122.

69. Ibid., 125–40.

70. Ibid., 146.

71. See the Stooges, *Heavy Liquid,* Easy Action (6 CDs), 2005. Sheff appeared on one semi-official Stooges release, the EP *Jesus Loves the Stooges,* released under the names Iggy Pop and James Williamson in 1977.

72. Sheff, interview with the author.

73. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 171–73.

74. Ibid., 173.

75. Iggy and the Stooges, *Metallic 2x K.O.,* Munster Records, n.d. The broken glass, audience confrontation, and physical disruption of a performance brings to mind an incident involving the ONCE Group on March 29, 1968. Engaged to make an educational/artistic presentation at the Midwestern Conference of Theoretical Physicists at the Washtenaw Country Club in Ypsilanti, the ONCE Group (consisting on this occasion of Robert and Mary Ashley, Joseph and Anne Wehrer, Harold Borkin, George Manupelli, and Cynthia Liddell) was attacked during their performance by several audience members. According to an affidavit (dated July 19, 1968) describing the event, one individual shattered a wine glass on Robert Ashley's head, and another broke Manupelli's eyeglasses in a scuffle. Later, a platform holding the ONCE Group's sizeable collection of film projectors and other electronic equipment was upended by an assailant, badly damaging the equipment, injuring members of the Group with shattered glass and other wreckage, and ruining Ashley's and Manupelli's film. A copy of this affidavit is housed in the OA.

76. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 64.

77. Pauline Oliveros, *Software for People: Collected Writings 1963–80* (Baltimore: Smith Publications, 1984), 18.

78. Larry McCombs, "Chicago Happenings," *Boston Broadside,* July 1966, repr. in *All Yesterdays' Parties: The Velvet Underground in Print, 1966–1971,* ed. Clinton Heylin (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 27.

79. John Cage to Peter Yates, December 7, 1965, PYP.

80. Quoted in John Cage and Daniel Charles, *For the Birds* (Boston: Marion Boyars, 1995), 57.

81. Ibid., 173.

82. Ibid.

83. Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 32.

84. Trynka, *Open Up and Bleed,* 64.

85. Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 194.

86. In those moments when a global perspective shades toward body-centered performances of primitivism, Iggy's nudity and self-harm recall the contemporaneous macho masochism of body artists such as Vito Acconci and Chris Burden, whom Iggy later cited in a 1978 profile; see "Creem's Profiles: Iggy Pop," *CREEM* 9, no. 8 (January 1978), www.creemmagazine.com/_site/ProfilesPages/Iggy_Pop_1978_01.html (accessed November 25, 2009).

87. Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

88. This theoretical approach might offer a more rigorous way to understand different kinds of connection than the vocabulary of "influence" will allow.

89. Denny Burt, "Back Pages," *Winona Daily News* (Winona, Minnesota), May 16, 1971.

90. For examples of downtown's stylistic diversity, see George Atlas, dir., *Put More Blood into the Music* (1987); John Rockwell, *All American Music: Composition in the Late Twentieth Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); and John

Schaefer, *New Sounds: A Listener's Guide to New Music* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987). George E. Lewis has persuasively argued that the despite its rhetoric of all-embracing eclecticism, downtown offered restricted opportunities to musicians of color; see George E. Lewis, "Experimental Music in Black and White: The AACM in New York," in *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies,* ed. Robert G. O'Meally et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 50–101. Bill Martin, *Avant Rock: Experimental Music from the Beatles to Björk* (Chicago: Open Court, 2002).

91. Rhys Chatham, "Composer's Notebook 1990: Toward a Musical Agenda for the 1990s," 1990, www.kalvos.org/chatess1.html (accessed November 28, 2009); see also the composer Nico Muhly's paean to this "healthy state of affairs," "Walls Come Tumbling Down," *Guardian,* October 5, 2007.

92. Larry Starr and Chris Waterman, *American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to MP3,* 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 279.

93. Latour, *Pandora's Hope,* 306.

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