

# Re:Flux

Fluxconcert

Curated by a.a.s.  
& Ensemble Interakt

Friday 27th June 2008

5pm - 9pm

St. Paul's Church, St. Paul's Square  
Birmingham





## **Participating Artists**

Ana Benlloch  
Cormac Faulkner  
Jonathan Green  
Phillip Henderson  
Calum F. Kerr  
Sian McFarlane  
Niki Russell  
Stuart Tait  
Keir Williams  
Dan Williamson



## **Including works by Fluxus artists**

Ay-o  
Emmett Williams  
Larry Miller  
Dick Higgins  
Bob Lens  
Ed Orton  
Ken Friedman  
Jed Curtis  
Lee Heflin  
Takehisa Kosugi  
George Brecht  
Tomas Schmit  
Tristan Tzara  
Robert Watts  
Bici Forbes  
Eric Andersen  
Mieko Shiomi  
Ben Vautier



# Re:Flux

## Interpretation and Event in Fluxus Performance Scores

In the Fluxconcert Re:Flux, artists have been invited to reinterpret original Fluxus performance scores, and write their own for others to realise. This fluidity of authorship, this sharing of responsibility is at odds with the idea of the artist as brand, but completely in keeping with the history of Fluxus - itself shifting and open to interpretation.

Several pundits suggest that Fluxfestivals initially started as a means to publicise the first edition of Fluxus - an anthology of works by various artists - and consequently the art group came about more or less by accident. Fluxus certainly were prolific and experimental in their publishing ventures, mostly driven by George Maciunas, who the gallery system focuses on as a charismatic leader and producer of commodities, in what Cynthia McCabe refers to as a 'great person theory' of history (McCabe, 1984 p. 64). However, his sole leadership is contested in histories written by surviving Fluxus artists. Dick Higgins says in his essay Fluxus: Theory and Reception that

"Fluxus was not a movement; it has no stated, consistent programme or manifesto which the work must match, and it did not propose to move art or our awareness of art from point A to point B. The very name, Fluxus, suggests change, being in a state of flux."

(Higgins, 1998 p. 221)

Indeed, Owen Smith's description of Fluxus 1 is reminiscent of the performance prompts that jazz musician and composer John Zorn uses with his compositions; The way an image, object, or

colour can be used as an intensive 'associative tool' from which the performer can move through a new, molecular, becoming. (Smith, 1998 p.14)

This becoming does not aim at finality, at closure, it is an ongoing state, which may be explored in performances, but can expand beyond them into a changed way of experiencing the world. David Doris, in his essay on Fluxus, Zen Vaudeville, discusses the intimate relationship between a specifically Zen form of Buddhism and many of the operations of Fluxus. The proposition is that Fluxus performances were, in many cases, written to encourage a conscious casting aside of preconceptions "in order that the things of this world be allowed to manifest themselves as such, as they present themselves in their fullness of being", and "Further, the operations of the individual are themselves revealed through this unfolding; one becomes an actively perceiving, infinitely mutable organ of response, not differentiated from nature" (Doris, 1998 p.93). The idea therefore is for the work to bring the audience into a direct perception of the duration and context of the event rather than a circumscribed, reproduction of an experience.

Many of the early Fluxus festivals experimented with composition, producing new ways of thinking about music, however George Brecht became "increasingly dissatisfied with an emphasis on the purely aural qualities of a situation', and so began to call his work, 'Events'. This word, he claims, 'seemed closer to describing the total, multi-sensory experience I was interested in than any other...'" (Doris, 1998 p.97). For Brecht, the aim was to create works that opened up a sense of a duration within which every sound, every breath, every movement became a part of the event of the work, and so subjectivity becomes the context of the art event and the event becomes a means for exploring or producing subjectivities.

This points towards a type of performance where the audience create the artwork themselves as they experience it: they become participants. Even attempts to resist this, to passively consume, show choices that mean they have engaged with the work. This involvement is a responsibility as much as a gift, many people have a fear of 'audience participation' being coerced into doing something they are not comfortable with, and it is up to the initiator of such involvement to present options, possibilities and openings rather than just a more subtle form of control. One way this Fluxconcert addresses this issue, is by each participating artist handing their own scores over to others and taking instructions from others in turn. In *For a Fluxus Concert*, Ben Vautier reminds us that 'Fluxus is supposed to be amusing' and warns against 'primadonas (sic) hanging on to the stage as long as possible' (Vautier, 1997). Performances at Re:Flux overlap, no-one is centre stage, chance and play are as important as the given text.

In his discussion of the Fluxus event form, Craig Saper speaks of the way Fluxus moved away from "the notion of passing some unadulterated information from the mind of an author, an artist, or a teacher directly to the eyes and ears of a spectator. Instead, participants interact with ideas, playing through possibilities rather than deciding on the meaning of a work once and for all" (Saper, 1998 p.137), placing them in a direct contact with the specificity of this event in this space at this time.

**Stuart Tait and Ana Benlloch**



# Programme

## **Exit No. 8**

The audience must pass through a vestibule where the floor has been covered with inflated balloons prepared to burst on contact.

Ay-0. Date Unknown

## **Programme**

Programmes are Stamped with Re:Flux stamp

Stuart Tait & Jonathan Green. 2008

## **Cancellation**

One score in the program must be marked with a stamp to indicate that it has been cancelled

Dan Williamson. 2008

## **Counting songs**

Audience is counted by various means – f.ex., performer gives a small gift [coin, cough drop, cookie, toothpick, match stick, etc.] to every member of the audience, counting each as he does so, or keeps track by pointing finger, etc.

Emmett Williams. 1962

## **Bag Exchange**

On a given day, everyone is asked to bring a brown bag with an object of their choice in it. An area is designated to contain the bags. At the end of the day, the bags are distributed at random.

Larry Miller. 1969

## **Constellation Number 4**

A sound is made. The sound is to have a clearly-defined percussive attack and decay (such as produced by plucking strings, hitting gongs, bells, helmets or tubes). Each performer produces his sound efficiently and almost simultaneously with other performers' sounds. Each sound is produced only once.

**Dick Higgins. Date Unknown**

## **#257**

Eat juicy apple (s) during concert.

**Bob Lens. Date Unknown**

## **Drag-Sleep**

Drag a table through the space whilst holding a duvet and pillow. Find a suitable position. Prepare your bed on a table and take a nap on it

**Dan Williamson. 2008**

## **Rainbow No. 1 for Orchestra**

Soap Bubbles are blown out of various wind instruments. The Conductor cuts the bubbles with a samurai sword.

**Ay-0. Date Unknown**

## **Cut Rhythm for the audience**

At any point during the evening, performer stands up

Performer looks for the mannequin

Performer takes an implement from the tray

Performer uses the implement on the mannequin

**Ana Benlloch. 2008**

# **Henry Flynt is NOT a FLUXUS ARTIST he IS a HILLBILLY FIDDLER**

1. The first person speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays a note on the violin.
2. Pass it to second person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
3. Pass it to third person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
4. Pass it to fourth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
5. Pass it to fifth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
6. Pass it to sixth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
7. Pass it to seventh person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
8. Pass it to eighth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
9. Pass it to ninth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
10. Pass it to tenth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
11. Pass it to eleventh person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
12. Pass it to twelfth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays another note.
13. Pass it to thirteenth person who speaks/sings a line from Henry Flynt's 'I Was a Creep' and plays the final note.

This score requires, 1 Violin (fiddle), 13 people.

Lines are written down beforehand and picked out at random by each person, the duration of the 'notes' is up to each person.

**Calum F Kerr. 2008**

### **Moving timber, with Ed Orton**

Carry a length of 2x1 planed timber into the space.

Q. Is Ed Orton is in the audience.

A. Yes, then pass timber up to Ed, then walk up and take the timber from him.

A. No, then place the timber on the floor

**Niki Russell. 2008**

### **Piece for Microphone**

Using a directional microphone on the end of a long boom pole, amplify an interesting sound.

**Jonathan Green. 2008**

### **Emotional Duet**

Performer A inflicts pain upon himself

Performer B inflicts pain upon herself

Performer A inflicts pain upon performer B

Performer B inflicts pain upon performer A

**Emmett Williams. 1962**

### **Bat Piece**

Dress as a man dressed as a bat. Then fall

**Keir Williams. 2008**

## **Opus 11**

An occurrence or part of an occurrence is recorded and played back.

Eric Andersen. 1961

## **Egg rolling**

Rolling eggs at various speeds against a wall

Sian Macfarlane. 2008

## **Music for My Son**

Do not prepare for the performance and even try to forget that in a short time you will be performing. When the time of the performance comes, simply do something appropriate.

Jed Curtis. Date Unknown

## **Water Music**

1. Give the water still form
2. Let the water loose its still form

Mieko Shiomi. 1964

## **Ice Trick**

Pass a one pound piece of ice among members of the audience while playing a recording of fire sounds or while having a real fire on stage. The piece ends when the block of ice has melted

Lee Heflin. Date Unknown

## **Document Piece**

Instruct audience on how to capture the event

Jonathan Green & Stuart Tait. 2008

## **Symphony No.2**

[turning]

George Brecht. 1962

## **Micro 1**

Wrap a live microphone with a very large sheet of paper. Make it a tight bundle. Keep the microphone live for another five minutes.

Takehisa Kosugi. Date Unknown

## **For a drummer, Fluxversion 5**

Performer dribbles a ping-pong ball between a hand-held racket and drum skin.

George Brecht. 1966

## **Light the audience, on / off**

Halogen lights face the audience. Choose a trigger performed by an audience member. On each subsequent trigger: alternate between lights on / off.

Niki Russell. 2008

## **Sanitas No.151**

250 nails are hammered.

Tomas Schmit. Date Unknown

## **Vaseline Symphonique**

Microphone, hands, vaseline

Tristan Tzara. 1921 (Fluxversion)

## **Drip Music**

For single or multiple performance. A source of dripping water and an empty vessel are arranged so that the water falls into the vessel.

George Brecht. 1959

## **Zen Vaudeville**

The sound of one shoe tapping

Ken Friedman. 1966

## **Composition #1 for guitar, 2007, for Dan Williamson.**

1. An electric guitar is plugged into an amp or PA system, via an effects pedal of some sort.
2. Saw pieces of the guitar off
3. Manipulate the sound during slices
4. The guitar should still be playable to some extent on completion

**Stuart Tait. 2007**

## **Event: 10**

10 performers are supplied with 1 match each. 10 other performers are supplied with 1 bell each. They take positions in a completely dark performance area. The first performer strikes a match. The 2nd performer immediately strikes a bell. The match is permitted to burn out, followed by a pause. The 3rd performer strikes a match, followed immediately by the 4th performer striking a bell. This continues until all 20 performers have completed their action.

**Robert Watts. 1962**

## **Moving timber**

Lengths of 2x1 planed timber are situated at a higher level

A passes length of 2x1 planed timber to lower level

B accepts length of 2x1 planed timber and places on floor

C carries length of 2x1 planed timber back to higher level

Vary respective speeds to alter the distribution of 2x1 planed timber

**Niki Russell. 2008**

## **Staged fall from stool**

Sit on a stool where your legs do not touch the floor. Cut through a leg using a saw. Repeat until you fall.

**Niki Russell. 2008**

## **Tumbleweed Event**

Roll out white paper down the centre of a room. Weight it down with stones. Set an electric fan at each end and play tumbleweed balls back and forth.

**Bici Forbes. 1964**

## **Drone 2**

The performer uses heavy objects to hold down the keys of an organ. The performance comes to an end as soon as the audience has left the performance venue.

**Phillip Henderson. 2008**

## **Audience Piece No.7**

The audience is requested to come on stage one by one to sign a large book placed on a table. After signing, each is led away, one by one, to the street. This is continued until all have signed and left the theater. Those led outside are not permitted to return.

**Ben Vautier. 1965**



**VIVID**



ensemble  
**INTERAKT**  
[www.ensembleinterakt.co.uk](http://www.ensembleinterakt.co.uk)





