

CRITICAL Mass

HAPPENINGS, FLUXUS, PERFORMANCE, INTERMEDIA
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Edited by GEOFFREY HENDRICKS

Anomaly, Sky, Sex, and Psi in Fluxus

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Anomaly and sex pervade fluxus objects and actions.¹ Yet, however plentiful and manifest these two features of Fluxus practice may be, art historians have neglected them. These absorbing and entertaining motifs are avoided as well by Fluxus artist-theorists like Dick Higgins and Ken Friedman in their fine inventories of Fluxus themes, which otherwise provide thorough itemizations of Fluxus tendencies.² In 1982, Higgins listed nine aesthetic procedures common to Fluxus practices, and in 1998 Friedman revised this list.³ I have reshuffled Friedman's chronology for easy comparison to Higgins's roster so that their differences and similarities are readily transparent.

HIGGINS	FRIEDMAN
1. internationalism	1. globalism
2. experimentalism and iconoclasm	4. experimentalism
3. intermedia	3. intermedia
4. minimalism or concentration	7./9. Simplicity; exemplativism
5. attempted resolution of the art/life dichotomy	2. unity of art and life
6. implicativeness	8. implicativeness
7. play or gags	6. playfulness
8. ephemerality	11. presence in time
9. specificity	10. specificity
	5. chance
	12. musicality

Friedman retained Higgins's terms "experimentalism," "intermedia," "implicativeness," and "specificity." He substituted "simplicity" for "minimalism" to distinguish Fluxus from the art-historical movement of that name and replaced "concentration" with "exemplativism" (a word Higgins coined in 1976 to describe art that exhibits "the theory and meaning of [its own] construction").⁴ With hindsight, Friedman further honed Higgins's list, proposing three subtle but important changes: "playfulness" for "play and gags," "presence in time" for "ephemerality," and "globalism" for "internationalism." The word "playfulness" emphasizes the ludic quality of much Fluxus art over the more superficial social implications of the term "gag." "Presence in time" underscores the central role of

the human body in Fluxus and its attention to the transitory and fleeting conditions of reality. "Globalism" reflects the radically altered world situation in the 1990s. Friedman also suggested the addition of new terms—"chance" and "musicality," key foci of Fluxus that display the central influences of John Cage, Eastern philosophy, and the methods and practices of Dada and Surrealism. Finally, Friedman abandoned the term "iconoclasm," distancing Fluxus from the rebellion, dissent, and other destructive associations of the term. He did not however, suggest a replacement term.

I propose that the word "anomaly" be substituted for "iconoclasm" in Higgins's list, in order to explore a different way to think about Fluxus art practice. Next I suggest that the term "sex" be added to Friedman's new classifications (like "chance" and "musicality") as a regular category of Fluxus subject matter.⁵ Both topics—*anomaly* and *sex*—deserve much more scholarly attention than I can give them here, and *sex* could become the subject of an exhibition in its own right. But I hope that this essay will initiate a conversation on both. In addition, I shall consider two case studies in which both *sex* and *anomaly* figure prominently: Geoffrey Hendricks's work on sky and Larry Miller's work on psi (psychic phenomena). I shall approach these subjects from an oblique angle at the edge of the current exhibition. Rather than a history of the period under consideration, I shall attend to its general conceptual milieu in the belief that the boundary better informs the center.

Anomaly

Why did Higgins select the word "iconoclasm" as a descriptive term for Fluxus, since the plethora of Fluxus productions exempts it from the meaning of iconoclasm, or "image-breaking"? However imprecise, the term has been employed historically as a metaphor, or synonym, for the practices of the modernist avant-garde, especially Dada and Surrealism. The first Fluxus Festivals, which took place in Germany in 1962, occasioned this context largely because of the popular exhibition *Dada: Documents of a*

Movement. It opened at the Kunstverein für Rhineland und Westfalen in Düsseldorf in 1958 and traveled to Frankfurt and Amsterdam, making the work of Dada and Surrealist artists of great topical interest. Higgins remembered long discussions in Wiesbaden related to how Fluxus artists might frame the theoretical structure of their art. "George Maciunas, myself, Alison Knowles, and, occasionally, others," he wrote, "would talk into the small hours of the morning, trying to determine what would be the theoretical nature of this tendency [Fluxus] to which we were giving birth."⁶ Robert Lebel's 1959 biography of Marcel Duchamp was read widely by the same artists who had likewise pored over Robert Motherwell's *The Dada Painters and Poets* when it came out in 1951. Cage belonged to Dada and Surrealist circles and directed his students to study their practices, students like future Fluxus artists George Brecht, Al Hansen, Jackson Mac Low, and Higgins (who, according to Alison Knowles, showed her these books in the 1960s).⁷ Such books functioned as manuals for the post-1945 avant-garde, and similarly, they were the key interpretive references for Fluxus audiences in the early 1960s, even if very little that might be counted as iconoclastic took place in Fluxus. There are, of course, exceptions: Nam June Paik's early performances, Wolf Vostell's *dé/coll-age* process and Happenings, the intentional misinterpretation of Philip Corner's *Piano Activities*, which resulted in the collective destruction of a piano in Wiesbaden in 1962, and other works of art that involved destruction.⁸ But Fluxus almost never displays the unbridled spectacle of iconoclasm (except perhaps in its earliest European festivals); and the creation of "public uproar," as Ina Blom rightly observed, "was more in the vein of Dada."⁹ In Maciunas's words, "It's [Fluxus is] more like Zen than Dada."¹⁰ Even the career of Ben Vautier, a key exception in terms of his self-conscious product of spectacle, merged art and lifestyle in a simultaneous presentation and parody of spectacle in Vautier's obsessive production of objects and texts.

If the context in which Fluxus emerged encouraged a comparison with Dada and Surrealist iconoclasm, how did Higgins actually use the term? "Fluxus . . . was a coming together of *experimental* artists," he wrote, "[who] mostly took an iconoclastic attitude towards the conventions of the art establishments of their various countries, and many have since paid the price of doing so, which is obscurity and poverty."¹¹ This sentence suggests that Higgins wished to emphasize the suffering of experimental artists at the hands of art establishments around the world, and not that "*experimental* artists" per se—

Higgins's emphasis—were themselves iconoclastic in their practices. Only their attitude vis-à-vis authority was "iconoclastic." Friedman, therefore, correctly surmised that the term was not accurate to describe Fluxus procedures. But, again, its removal without replacement left a void. I propose to fill that space with the concept of "anomaly." Anomaly pertains to *how* Fluxus artists insisted upon maintaining a *relation* to the normative while pushing toward the atypical. For Fluxus, process and objects differ remarkably from iconoclasm, however rooted in Surrealist techniques for activating the extraordinary in the ordinary and in Dada's attention to the quotidian to disrupt and mock authority. Fluxus never seeks to create the hyper-real or surreal, or, again with few and marked exceptions, to confront authority. Fluxus remains intently focused on the unremarkable. Fluxus attends to the commonplace, expanding its normative properties by making ordinary objects and actions anomalous, thereby provoking, arousing, and vexing the mind and simultaneously energizing the body to animate novel ways and means to view and experience the world. So, then, what is anomaly?

In Greek, *anomalos* means "abnormal," "bumpy," "irregular," "uneven." Pursuing its multiple and nuanced denotations yields the following. "Abnormal" becomes *asynithis*, or "odd," "unusual" (and "abnormal"). "Bumpy" remains *anomalos*. "Irregular" is *paratypos*, or "atypical" (and "irregular"). "Uneven" renders up *anisos* and *perittos*. *Anisos* means "unparalleled" and "incomparable," while *perittos* becomes "needless," "odd," "otiose," "uneven," "unnecessary," "unwanted." Finally "unparalleled" is *aparamillos*, or "incomparable," "nonpareil," "nonesuch," "unequaled," "unexampled," "unmatched," "unrivaled," "unsurpassed," and "unparalleled." Taken together, these terms present a scale of meaning ranging from the odd and abnormal (and therefore commonly thought to be unnecessary and unwanted) to the incomparable, unrivaled, and unsurpassed. In between these extremes, the normative and conventional hold sway over the suffocating institutions that govern and control most of life. As the following examples show, Fluxus artists habitually located their subjects at the extreme ends of convention, without ever directly rejecting it, precisely to avoid and, simultaneously, to alter, the center.

Boundary Music (1963), an event score by Mieko Shiomi, orchestrates an expression of "the faintest possible sound" and encapsulates some of what I mean by the anomalous affect Fluxus discharges in the world:

Make the faintest possible sound
to a boundary condition whether the
sound is given birth to as a sound or

not. At the performance, instruments, human bodies, electronic apparatus or anything else may be used.

Faint sounds are heard by chance and by expectation. But because they arrive by surprise and/or anticipation, they have the effect of focusing the act of listening in such a way as to change the way in which all other sounds may be heard. This process might be described as an anomalous affect that reorders the conditions of the known. David T. Doris has pointed out how Buddhism enables a method he describes as "mutual causation": "In attempting to create a 'new object' from an 'object' and an 'other,' it becomes clear that the 'object' constitutes the 'other,' and vice versa." Quoting Chuang-Tzu, Doris suggests that the pursuit of such a course is an act of "throwing things open to the light."¹² He identifies Shiomí as an artist who practiced "mutual causation," showing how to unify and nullify the apparent opposition of terms through direct action.¹³ In philosophical and spiritual terms, such concepts are challenging. But when they are realized in actions and objects, they appear anomalous, oddities without a trace of iconoclasm. It might seem that the boundary between presence and absence, and the effect and affect of consciousness at that boundary, is aniconic, but a shadow is still a representation however diaphanous.

Much of Shiomí's work is concentrated on boundaries, shadows, and mirrors, all phenomena that, like fog, dissolve material conditions, making "the real" incorporeal, reflected, and discontinuous, yet visually present. Shiomí intensifies the spell-like quality of mirroring by joining it with water in *Mirror Piece No. 3* (1966):

Performers seat themselves around a large mirror on the floor of a dark stage.
A vessel filled with water stands in the middle of the mirror. Performers stand and sit at random intervals with flashlight pointing to the mirror.
The water may be drunk.

Here light bounces off water like shadowy sighs to make one drunk with refraction. Then Shiomí invites us to drink again of this intoxication. Approaching the edges of order, she plunges the psyche into uneven and unpredictable phenomenological spaces of perception. In "Mirror," 1963, Shiomí calls for the performer literally to merge with reflection:

Stand on a sandy beach with your back to the sea. Hold a mirror in front of your face and look into it. Step back to the sea and enter into the water.

Such pieces require performers to balance disjunction with unity, to place themselves in the anomalous condition of the interstice. In an evocative and admirable essay on Fluxus, Ina Blom has commented on this precarious balance as a theme of Fluxus. "Only Fluxus," she writes, "with all its very literal self-effacing discretion, went all the way towards an art dissolving into a greater and more all-absorbing kind of unity, allowing for a real fusing of the horizons of reality."¹⁴ This fusion takes place in Shiomí's *Shadow Piece II* (1964), in which performers are asked to become the boundary itself:

1. Project a shadow over the other side of this page.
2. Observe the boundary between the shadow and the lighted part.
3. Become the boundary line.

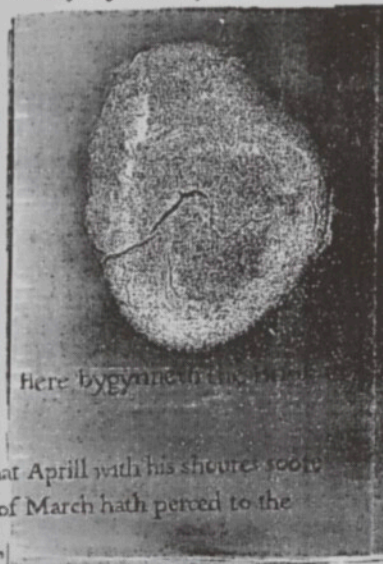
Blom continues, "Fluxus tries to make a shortcut to . . . [a] kind of impenetrable wholeness that manages to present itself as a moral imperative and thus escapes criticism, argument, and judgment."¹⁵ To this end, Shiomí's illusive method presents unfathomable unity when one is asked to "become the boundary line" between shadow and light. In this way she prepares the mind to enter into anomalous experience.

Fluxus objects and actions stretch the imagination and reorder traditional associations and conventions around viewing the ordinary in highly irregular, anomalous ways. Alison Knowles's exquisite series of seventeen palladium prints entitled *Bread and Water* (1995) is a good example. The process began when Knowles noticed the "lovely bottoms of the *roggenbrot* (rye) bread" baked by her roommate. Knowles photocopied one and then did a whole series of Xeroxes each time her friend baked. But Knowles had no idea what the outcome of these photocopies might be. Then "traveling one day up the Hudson on the train," she was suddenly "struck" by an idea:

The lines in the bottom of each loaf were rivers of the world. Opening the atlas, I located each river by studying the bread lines. Then I made the seventeen palladium prints with my assistant, Catherine Harris. There are four large meter-square or so cloth cyanotype prints as well in different colors. . . . After the palladiums were made I projected other images from maps of the atlas, newspapers, etc., did some silk screening, and drew over the finished prints.¹⁶

Fragment I (Group A) A

River Stour from Pegwell to Canterbury



Here bygyne the first of the Tales of Canterbury

When that Aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the
roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licout
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;

5

10

Bread and Water

Alison Knowles 1993

15

Alison Knowles, *River Stour from Pegwell to Canterbury* (*Bread & Water*), 1993, palladium print, 22 x 15 inches. Collection Bracken Hendricks, Bethesda, MD

The ghostly facsimiles of the bottoms of bread appear as pale abstractions rousing dense webs of associations that Knowles augmented with pale swabs of color, numbers, dates, words (hand-written and type-set), literary fragments, and geographical and ecological information. Even the ordinary names of the rivers and the places where they intersect with other bodies of water and land become exotic titles because of the anomalous relationship between the bread and the rivers: *The Amazon at Belém*, *The Dnieper at the Black Sea*, *The Hudson at Jersey City*, *Mud Flats Where the Nile Meets the Nibia*, *The Great Lakes at Great Bear*, *River Stour From Pegwell to Canterbury*, *The Volga at the Caspian Sea*, and *Yangtze From Lake*

Dongting to the Yellow Sea, etc. The list of Knowles's sources reveals how her eclecticism contributes to anomalous experience, resulting in the visual poetics of these stunning prints.¹⁷ In *Bread and Water*, Knowles joins bread, the fundamental sustenance of life, with water, the predominant substance of life. Life appears anew and anomalously, issuing from the most uncommon and oblique angle through the most ordinary and basic things otherwise taken for granted or forgotten. "We grow acutely aware," Henry Martin writes of *Bread and Water*, "that the rivers of human experience have sources and estuaries."¹⁸ Knowles seems to point out that exploration of the estuaries of life results in anomalous experiences

that enhance the rivers of our course through time. Her attentiveness to minutia in *Bread and Water* is an object lesson in the mental and artistic processes of how to reach the unpredictable and anomalous. As this work shows, Fluxus grants permission to and instruction in how to think and behave in odd and atypical ways that open the world to the unexpected and incomparable.

In summoning examples of Shiomi's and Knowles's work from the 1960s and 1990s, I have purposefully bracketed thirty years of Fluxus production, offering a glimpse across time that shows how, without ever tripping into the magical or iconoclastic, Fluxus artists employ the mundane to verify invisible relations of matter and energy. Fluxus repeatedly exhibits the unity of multidimensional, interconnected disconnection that is also displayed in string theory, in which the quotidian appears anomalous but is quite regular.¹⁹ Fluxus remains in the here and now of matter and mind. Fluxus works "serve as stimuli," Higgins wrote, for making one's life, work, and experience "more meaningful and flexible."²⁰ Being flexible is being Fluxus. This elasticity presents in a pattern of benign non-conformity, an eccentricity that stems from the ways in which these artists imagine and practice alternatives to the monotony of convention, an elasticity that goes a long way toward explaining the lasting power of Fluxus. Indeed, its very longevity provides a vehicle through which to distinguish the anomalous practices of Fluxus from iconoclasm (which is always chained to the historical period whose social conventions it challenges). Forty years is an unheard of span in the life for the avant-garde, except perhaps Surrealism. The ability of Fluxus to attract and incorporate successive generations of artists, each with his or her own generational preoccupations and milieu, is powerful evidence of its transhistorical potential, and its enduring appeal and fascination to its changing audiences.

Nothing could be further from iconoclasm than Geoffrey Hendricks's comment on the evolution of Fluxus. "You don't have to reject a situation that you simply don't find interesting," he observed. "You push forward and do what is interesting to you, which is something else."²¹ In this observation, Hendricks points out how Fluxus artists become preoccupied with the world *as if it were something else*, rather than reject it *in itself* in the iconoclastic mode.²² Fluxus artists push forward by retiring from convention, even as they employ the quotidian. They are comfortable with boredom and "blank structures," as Higgins described it.²³ Their harmless disobedience quietly cedes custom without riotous sedition, resistance, trans-

gression, or iconoclasm, enabling viewers to "accept the world," but anomalously. How, when, and why Fluxus artists "push forward," as Hendricks puts it, is of great interest and instructive for how to imagine *and then lead* a different life. Hendricks begins with the sky.

Sky

While numerous Fluxus artists have incorporated the sky and clouds into their work, Hendricks's constant dedication to sky as a leitmotiv of his paintings and performances singles out this subject from their concerns, even as it sheds light on why sky has been a constant presence in Fluxus art.²⁴ Sky summons thoughts of the limitless dimensionality and dynamism that Immanuel Kant attributed to the sublime and the transcendental. But the sky in all its incomprehensible vastness also forms an umbrella under which social relations take place. Grace, hexagram No. 22 of *I Ching*, identifies the intersection between the sky and the social world as the domain of aesthetics:

In nature we see in the sky the strong light of the sun; the life of the world depends on it. But this strong, essential thing is changed and given pleasing variety by the moon and the stars. In human affairs, aesthetic form comes into being when traditions exist that, strong and abiding like mountains, are made pleasing by a lucid beauty. By contemplating the forms existing in the heavens we come to understand time and its changing demands. Through contemplation of the forms existing in human society it becomes possible to shape the world.²⁵

Pairing of sky and ministering to the world runs throughout Hendricks's work. Under the transcendental umbrella of sky, Hendricks attended to the prosaic institutions, deeds, and needs of earth. He performed the societal rites of passage by ministering at George and Billie Hutching Maciunas's *Flux Wedding* (February 25, 1978) and at George Maciunas's *Flux Funeral* (May 13, 1978). He also organized Maciunas's *Flux-Mass* that took place in Voorhees Chapel at Rutgers University on February 17, 1970, and, with Robert Watts, George Brecht, and others, he organized and was the master of ceremonies for a *Festschrift Banquet* in honor of Maciunas on May 2, 1975.²⁶ These are just some of the ways Hendricks attended to the social under the sky, to say nothing of his creation of "sky" foods like the blue cake layered with blue cream that he presented in 1967 and again at the *Flux-Feast (Food Event)* on New Years Eve 1968.



George Maciunas and Billie Hutching, *Flux Wedding*, February 25, 1978, Grommet Art Theater, 537 Broadway, NYC. Larry Miller as bridesmaid, Alison Knowles as best man and Geoffrey Hendricks as Flux Minister. Photos: Babette Mangolte



Hendricks began making sky paintings in 1965, by painting a chair with the picture of grass on the bottom and sky and clouds on the back. That same year, he also over-painted a pair of old work boots he found in a barn on the property he had bought in Nova Scotia. Hendricks's *Sky Boots* recall Vincent van Gogh's *Old Shoes With Laces* (1886), as well as the famous art-historical discussion among Martin Heidegger, Meyer Schapiro, and Jacques Derrida, who used van Gogh's painting as a pretext to debate the nature of the origins of a work of art. For Heidegger, studying the shoes lead to a *contemplation of truth* by letting "us know *what shoes are in truth* [my emphasis]."²⁷ Shapiro argued that Heidegger, in not identifying *which* of the eight paintings of shoes van Gogh painted in his lifetime, took one painting of shoes to present *the same truth for all* the artist's eight paintings of shoes. Whereas for van Gogh, Shapiro pointed out, the shoes in the 1886 *Old Shoes With Laces* must represent a unique and personal experience for the artist; in essence, "the shoes were a piece of his own life."²⁸ Derrida defended Heidegger against Schapiro's monistic view, insisting that Heidegger did not hold the painting *in itself* to be truth, but as an index of something else. In this way, Derrida concluded, the nature of art takes place elsewhere, "which the work of art could [only] illustrate by referring to it."²⁹

This conversation about van Gogh's painting is relevant in thinking about how Hendricks's *Sky Boots* may be an index of something else. The question of how a work of art refers beyond itself to something else is precisely what Hendricks attempted to communicate when he

Painted the boots and when he situated them in a cosmological context that included sexuality and identity:

The boots are of the earth, and when you put sky on them, you bring together the heaven and earth, the primal couple in any culture. In Greek mythology sky is male and earth is female. In Egypt they have a sky-goddess and an earth-god; it's not one or the other, they are interchangeable, but they are the pair that come together in the basic creation myths. With the *I Ching*, earth and heaven are the two primary trigrams. So sky and earth are concepts, or things, that have been isolated for millennia, and the *Sky Boots* are these two joining and fusing. The boots are also the embodiment of the person, [like the] van Gogh painting of work boots.³⁰

In this statement, Hendricks suggests how sky painted on boots might represent "a density . . . a certain kind of unified poetic way," that also might include himself "as a person."³¹ Painting and wearing the shoes, Hendricks brought sky into the prosaic and material workaday world of his activities, performing sky on earth. In his inclusion of mythopoetic cultural traditions (associating the heavens to earthly concerns, especially the vision of male and female) and artistic biography (including sexuality), Hendricks arrived at *how* certain representations of truth might be produced.

These assertions are firmly grounded in the very operations and means of art. Hendricks approached "elsewhere" (namely, the field of the larger world beyond art and aesthetics—or what Derrida identified as referential, not illustrative) by engaging his painting practice in aesthetic questions of figure/ground relations in which sky and clouds appear prominently in discussions of perspective.³² At the same time, Hendricks positioned his work squarely within this traditional aesthetic discourse, as he maintained the anomalous situation of Fluxus. Moreover, it should be noted that he came to these representational questions through his fascination with Baroque illusionist painting. (He wrote his master's degree at Columbia University with a thesis on Roman Baroque church ceiling painting.) Indeed, throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, many artists concentrated on questions of framing and the relation of figure to ground. A few prominent examples will suffice. In his *Black Paintings* series (1959–60), Frank Stella dissolved what he called the "relational painting" of traditional European figure/ground representations by unifying image and shape. Jim Dine literally jumped through the frame in his Happening *The Smiling Workman* (1960), exhibiting the space in front of and behind the picture plane as



Geoffrey Hendricks, *Sky Boots #2*, 1980, acrylic on size 10 work boots. Collection of the artist.

a figure/ground relationship that included the artist. Lucio Fontana had gestured toward what Dine explicitly visualized in his punctured and slashed paintings dating from 1949 through the 1960s. Carolee Schneemann used her body to literally extend Cézanne's fragmented passages in her series of photographic tableaux, *Eye Body* (1963), by inserting her corporeal self into an assembled room environment. In this way, she linked the eye that sees bodies to the body that makes the bodies seen and, like Dine, drew the figure through ground.

In the cases of these artists, painting became a literal object of the world to which psychosocial dimensions then accrued. The same is true of many of Hendricks's paintings in which he tied several canvases of "sky" together and painted sky around the edges of the canvases and onto other adjacent objects. Paintings became continuous with *things in the world* in a similar manner to the ways in which Stella, Fontana, Dine, Schneemann, and other artists during this period moved out from painting into the world. The social relations that these works then suggested implied political realities. For when painting entered the region of politics, it coincided with the anticommercial and antiwar impulse representative of the years of the civil rights, youth, sexual liberation, and antiwar movements. Fluxus artists

were among those who anticipated these directions in art by attending to imperceptible *meanings* that underpin the ordinary experience of ordinary objects and in connection to the real and *meaningful* conditions of life. Fluxus artists also were among the first to suggest the body as figure and ground, as Hendricks's *Sky Boots* so astutely asserts, paradoxically in a material and metaphysical way. The figure/ground question that animated Hendricks's work must be understood, thus, in the larger social situation where painting sky on boots synthesized the art historical problem as much as it led to rethinking the conditions of painting in relation to the political issues of the period. In short, *Sky Boots* enabled Hendricks—as a figure—to walk upon the real ground of his political interactions, to bring the sky of metaphysics and art into the social world as an index of something else.

Hendricks expanded upon this theme in *Sky Bus* (1968), when he painted his Volkswagen bus as sky for Charlotte Moorman's 1968 Avant Garde Festival, which took place down Central Park West. Later, in *Sky Car* (1979), he painted a VW bug sky-blue and adorned it with cumulus clouds. Merging with the car, Hendricks also painted his body and clothing sky-blue with clouds, becoming a picture of the sky driving the car across the

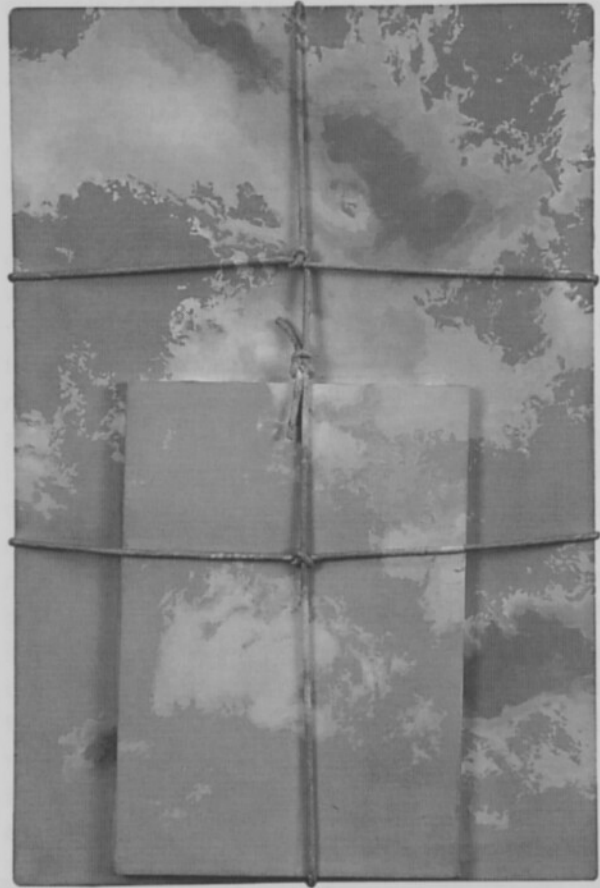


Geoffrey Hendricks in his *Sky Car*, 1979, painted Volkswagen. Collection Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, Germany

ground. René Magritte's many paintings of sky come to mind in thinking about Hendricks's sky works. But the principle difference between Magritte's visual riddles and Hendricks's object/actions (like *Sky Car*) is that *Hendricks painted the background as foreground in which one acts in the world*. Hannah Higgins has explained this function of Hendricks's paintings in a different and significant way:

Hendricks's . . . sky paintings and the objects that surround them testify to the recuperation of a variety of practices within an avant-garde thematic. The uniform rejection of culture traditionally associated with the historic avant-garde has been given over to a nuanced and complex system of affirmation (the paintings) and rejection (the readymades that display them). . . In what amounts to a conflation of the readymade and painterly traditions of the twentieth century, Hendricks's paintings seem to imply that all modes can be appropriated to a traditional art-object status [and] that all objects are representational insofar as they represent a reality outside of the art context.³³

Before leaving Hendricks's sky paintings, let us revisit Schneemann's painterly and corporeal comment on the figure/ground question in *Eye Body* in order to place it, and by extension Hendricks's works, in sexual and gendered terms. Schneemann insisted that the artist's sexuality (in her case, female heterosexuality) is an integral part of art, and she asserted a woman's right to represent herself naked and erotic. While representations of sex pervade and have always been a part of art, Schneemann's explicit assertion of the artist's own sexuality opened the way for the politics of gender and sexuality that would sweep the following three decades into the present.³⁴ Hendricks, too, introduced sexuality into the discourse on sky. In *Sky on Sky* (1965), *Triple Sky* (1965), and other *Sky Bundle* works (from 1965 and 1966), and in *2 (W)holes* (1974), he brought his own sexuality into the work of art by joining sky paintings together in a diptych and noting that they conjured "gay overtones." It was like "putting two like things together rather than two different things," he commented.³⁵ The canvases became anthropomorphic reflections of their creator's imagination—personal projections on inanimate objects—that recall comments in the *I Ching* hexagram of Grace. "In human affairs, aesthetic form comes into being, when traditions exist that, strong and abiding like mountains, are made pleasing by a lucid beauty." I would suggest that Hendricks used the permissive anomalous context of Fluxus to translate heterosexuality (held to be tradition) into homosexuality, creating a new convention



Geoffrey Hendricks, *Sky on Sky*, 1965, acrylic on canvas and rope, 36 x 24 inches. Collection the artist

for the contemplation of "a lucid beauty" that entails broader sexual freedom.

A decade before gay, lesbian, and transgender sexuality became commonplace subject matter in culture, Hendricks made the decision to exhibit the real conditions of his actual experience. He made his life as a gay painter of sky, and as a gay man who ministered to the social world, the subject of art. His emphasis on the homosexual conditions of his artistic production, and the gay mind that produced these images—pairing like with like as an opposition to figure and ground—was exceptional even in the milieu of "camp" associated with Andy Warhol, David Hockney, and others in the late 1960s and early 1970s. While the moving forces at Rutgers were Allan Kaprow and Robert Watts, the impact of Hendricks's frank exploration of his sexuality in that community cannot be underestimated. (Nor can Higgins's change in the late 1960s from heterosexuality to homosexuality be overlooked, as it enabled him to express his art and life more clearly.) Hendricks required viewers to grapple with the sky in their mind's eye, with an innate knowledge that, in

the words of *I Ching*, "[t]hrough contemplation of the forms existing in human society, it becomes possible to shape the world."

Sex

It stands to reason that sex would permeate Fluxus. Fluxus emerged in and contributed to both the sexual revolution and the feminist movement. Fluxus artists had been tutored in Wilhelm Reich's and Norman O. Brown's work in the 1950s, and *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid to Ask*, by David R. Reuben, and *Sexual Politics*, by Fluxus artist Kate Millett, were both published in 1969, just seven years after the first Fluxus Festival in Wiesbaden. Men, particularly George Maciunas, dominated the discussion of sex in Fluxus in the early 1960s, even if Fluxus women more boldly presented sex in their work (with, perhaps, the exception of Nam June Paik). Moreover, sex in Fluxus was publicly presented as heterosexual—even if its practitioners were not. Homosexuality, long accepted in Fluxus, beginning with the group's mentor John Cage, was not openly presented until Geoffrey Hendricks came out in the late 1960s when Fluxus ritually marked his homosexuality in his and Bici Hendricks's (also known as Bici Forbes, now as Nye Ffarrabas) *Flux Divorce*, June 24, 1971. Indeed, Hendricks's ceremonial exhibition of his sexuality and overt inclusion of gay thematics in his work had a powerful impact on the subsequent development of Fluxus works. In terms of Maciunas's sexual proclivities, their manifestations in his art and Fluxus life may only be described as "polymorphous perverse," a term Freud used with "no moral judgment . . . implied" to describe the indiscriminate sexuality of children.³⁶ This range of sexual interests informs the artworks, rituals, performances, and celebrations of Fluxus.

In the early years, Fluxus exercised a sexist double standard for men's and for women's art. Nam June Paik's *Serenade for Alison* (1962), for example, called for Alison Knowles to remove successive pairs of panties. A classic photograph of her performance shows Knowles standing on a table with her dress discretely pulled up, surrounded by grinning males, as she performs the striptease that, in true Fluxus anomalous fashion, enables her to be titillating while remaining dressed except for her panties. However seductive this action may have been, as Knowles insists, one must take into account how "specific performers in specific situations" would change a score. So, for example, though Paik's score was very precise, instructing Knowles to take off a series of different-colored panties and do specific things with them—"put them on the

wall," "look at the audience through them," "pull them over the head of a snob"—she altered the score. This was especially true of the instructions that read "Take off a pair of blood-stained panties and stuff them in the mouth of the worst music critic," and the finale, in which she was encouraged to "show them that you have no more panties on." "What I did," Knowles wrote, "was change the piece so I could do it":

Paik presented me with a Korean striped satin bathrobe to wear. My hair was down mostly (not in a bun on the top of my head as it often was). What I added was a transistor radio around my neck. [I] changed stations with each removal of panties, threw each pair to the audience from the table until the ritual no longer amused me, then stepped down and led the audience out of the Galerie Monet in Amsterdam over the dikes of the town with the radio blasting the news. The audience followed. I remember feeling what a glorious evening it had been! I think it was Tomas Schmit who spent that night in jail. The director spent the whole time behind boxes in the basement!³⁷

Though Knowles controlled the sexual content, structure, and therefore reception of her performance, women who introduced direct sexual content into their work were criticized by Fluxus men. Shigeko Kubota remembered that her colleagues hated her performance *Vagina Painting* (1965). This ingenious work challenged social proscription of female behavior, presented a ribald commentary on the machismo of male action painting, and asserted the power of female sexuality in menses in a way that materialized the procreative/creative continuum of real women over and above the patriarchal imagination of women as the female muse.³⁸ Carolee Schneemann made Kubota's discourse even more explicit and directly political in *Interior Scroll* (1975). But Schneemann's erotic display of sexuality in *Eye Body* (1963) and *Meat Joy* (1964) had already earned her excommunication from Fluxus by 1965 or 1966.³⁹ Maciunas, who, in his self-appointed authority over Fluxus membership, excluded her because he opined that her "neobaroque . . . happenings . . . are [the] exact opposite of flux-haiku-style events."⁴⁰ Yoko Ono, too, described being rejected because her work was "too animalist."⁴¹ Ono's instructions for events are full of sex. *Cut Piece* (1964), for example, reads as a discourse on aggression toward women, victimization, abuse, sadomasochism, and self-denigration. Ono internalized and externalized misogynistic patriarchy, putting herself at risk in this piece. Most of her films are erot-



Alison Knowles performing Nam June Paik's *Serenade for Alison*, October 5, 1962, Galerie Monet, Amsterdam. Photos: Hans De Boer, courtesy Gilbert & Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit, MI

ically charged if not explicitly sexual: *Bottoms* (1966), *Rape* (1969), *Fly* (1970), and *Freedom* (1970). In their several 1969 *Bed-In* performances, Ono and John Lennon inverted the privacy of honeymoon nuptial intercourse into a public discourse on "peace and love," and displayed the anomalous (at the time) conjugal union of an aristocratic Asian woman in bed with a working-class European man.

But when women's work did not flaunt female heterosexuality, Maciunas, in particular, embraced it. It is ironic, therefore, that he supported Kate Millett's disposable "throwaway" dinnerware, which cast gender out of household labor, a work she created while writing her powerful feminist manifesto, *Sexual Politics*.⁴² Maciunas also would have liked Millett's *He and She* (1964–65) and *Loveseat* (1965) because his interest in cross-dressing, to which we shall return, was piqued by bending gender roles. Similarly, Takako Saito's *Smell Chess* (1965), which brings the olfactory senses of the body into play, and *Chess Board Door* (1973), which situates a person on either side of a revolving toilet stall, would have interested Maciunas for their scatological implications.⁴³ The same is true of Knowles's early-1960s *Glove to Be Worn While Examining*, which suggests the erotic attraction of a vaginal or anal probe. Maciunas was particularly invested in the erotic qualities of scatology, and for *Excreta Fluxorum* (1972–77), he collected the excrement from a host of animals—"caterpillar, bird, turtle, hamster, horse, cat, sheep, cockroach, lion, antelope"—droppings that became "Flux objects."

Though women's works were scrutinized, Fluxus men enjoyed a wide range of uncensored proposals and actions. Paik's work is steeped in sex. In *Young Penis Symphony* (1962), Paik aimed to humorously flip a phallic bird to the Orwellian world by staging the premiere of this action in 1984. The piece calls for ten young men to stand behind "a huge piece of white paper stretched across the stage mouth . . . and [for each to] stick his penis out through the paper to the audience." Paik's metaphorical fellatio also commingles oral and visual eroticism. It underscores the sexual dimension of the voyeuristic/exhibitionistic visual exchange in looking at and performing works of art. *His Chronicle of a Beautiful Paintress* (1962) anticipated Kubota's *Vagina Painting* by three years and was probably the inspiration for her work. Dedicated to Alison Knowles, *Chronicle of a Beautiful Paintress* calls for a woman to stain the flags of selected world nations "with your own monthly blood" and afterward to "expose them and yourself in a beautiful gallery." Paik's 1962 manifesto, "Towards a New Ontology of Music," invests music

with the existential value of bodies.⁴⁴ His legendary collaborations with cellist Charlotte Moorman realized these aims, especially in the many performances in which Moorman held Paik's body as though it were a cello while playing a string stretched over his nude back. In the notorious *Opera Sextronique* (1966), performed at the New York Film-Makers' Cinematheque on February 9, 1967, Moorman progressively stripped and was arrested for exposing her breasts. Tried and found guilty of "indecent exposure" (her sentence was suspended), Moorman's fate reflected the fundamental sexism of the U.S. legal system. Paik was found not guilty when the judge reasoned that it was impossible to create "pornographic music." As in Paik's work, heterosexual sex is also a staple in the Fluxus art of Milan Křížák, Wolf Vostell, and Ben Vautier, whose current Web site even contains a link to "Ben Sex Maniac."⁴⁵ From this link, a second one connects to the "spirale infernale," which contains a series of pornographic images. Such sexual titillation as Ay-O's many versions of *Finger Box* are also typical of Fluxus artworks. Willem de Ridder made a career of sex, publishing erotic magazines like *Suck* and *God* and establishing such entities as the Wet Dream Film Festival and the Academy for the New Sexuality. Ben Patterson's rollicking *Lick (Whipped Cream Piece)* (1964) invited volunteers to lick whipped cream off a person's body. This was a favorite score for both Fluxus and its audiences. (Letty Eisenhauer was the first volunteer.) Moreover, the suggested violence of Robert Watts's *Branded Woman Thigh* (described in a 1962 letter to Maciunas) takes the branding of a woman (like a cow) beyond sexism into misogyny.⁴⁶

Misogyny is also fundamental to the art and politics of Henry Flynt. Indeed, the literature about Fluxus completely overlooks the fact that Flynt's analysis and rejection of European-derived "serious culture" (a term Maciunas often borrowed) came out of his considerations of the personality of the sexual outsider.⁴⁷ Flynt, in his own words, had been humiliated at summer music camp when a girl who dubbed him a "creep" rejected his adolescent advances. Flynt soon explored a rationale for his position as a sexual outsider, as well as identified with the civil rights movement, which provided a positive example for the affirmation of otherwise despised identities. He also plunged into a study of the "positive creep values" that individuals develop when consigned to sexual isolation as social misfits. Flynt rapidly conflated his anger at women with his sense of inferiority as a Southerner (who liked and performed bluegrass, jazz, rhythm and blues, and other vernacular forms of music), and he

began to attack "serious culture." Maciunas often adapted Flynt's term "serious culture," and it became one of the central precepts upon which the political reputation of Fluxus was built. But that political edge may be tracked directly to Flynt's thinking in its many social, political, and sexual guises.⁴⁸ The link between sex, culture, and politics is particularly vivid in a small gesture Flynt made when he used a print of the Mona Lisa as a doormat before a lecture ("From Culture to Veramusement") he gave at Walter De Maria's loft on February 27, 1963. This lecture took place after his picket demonstration against "serious culture" outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which was then showing the Mona Lisa to millions of viewers. In essence, Flynt used the quintessential image of European culture (and a picture of a woman) as an object to be denigrated, an object on which to wipe one's feet.

George Maciunas's sexuality shaped the art-historical picture of Fluxus in many ways as he sculpted its historical context in Fluxus publications, multiples, boxes, and other publications, as well as in rituals, celebrations, and games. *Flux Stationary* (1972) is a good example of how Maciunas sexualized his work. He illustrated this stationary with such pairings as a fur coat and

a naked woman, a glove and an ungloved male hand, and a shoe and a bare male foot. Ironically, however, I believe that it is easier and more direct to approach Maciunas's sexuality through Robert Watts's work, in particular his *Flux Med* (1987), created nine years after Maciunas's death. Quite simply, *Flux Med* overtly, and in an uncomplicated manner, depicts aspects of Maciunas's sexuality that remained more or less covert, however intensely (and discretely) it remained a foundation for his approach to Fluxus art.⁴⁹ The images Watts created in *Flux Med* are composed of fractured and fragmented human forms. They confuse corporeal imagery to create strange sexual hybrid bodies that challenge conventional notions of the body and sexual propriety. A number of the images depict bodies distorted, tortured, and engaged in unorthodox and sadomasochistic behavior. The title of one print, for example, states the sexual situation bluntly: *Flux S & M*. A print entitled *Wouldn't it be great if* displays a naked female figure lying with her knees drawn open and back on a wooden plank that appears to be some sort of torturous cranking device. Watts used a similar position in another work entitled *Hospital Events*. Sex and violence in *Flux Med* belongs to the histories of bourgeois sexuality that have become standard global commerce.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the images are far removed from the raw, sexual abjection celebrated in the 1980s when the prints were made, in large measure because Watts culled the images from an 18th-century medical book of prints provided by Francesco Conz, the Italian collector and publisher of the suite. In this regard, *Flux Med* is stylistically indebted to Dada collage like Max Ernst's *FATAGAGAS* (c. 1920), which employed 19th- and early-20th-century prints in a way that Maciunas and other Fluxus artists also often adapted. What *Flux Med* does recall is Watts's fascination with the displacement of pictures of body parts onto commercial objects like *Female Undershirt* (1965), which exhibits a pair of bare breasts. *Male Undershirt* (1965) depicts a hairy chest. *Female Underpants* (1966) displays pubic hair with a flower in place of the clitoris. *Male Underpants* (1966) sports pubic hair and a penis. These items of clothing may be appropriated and worn by either gender. Watts also produced photographic studies for *Nude Waitress With Tray Apron* (1967), *Nude Front Apron* (1968), and *Pornography* (1964). In addition, Watts created a deck of altered playing cards that included an instructional drawing of a female figure whose body parts are sectioned off and numbered. The word "joker" is written over her abdomen. In *Safe Post/K.U.K. Feldpost/*

FLUX MED



Doctor Bob

Robert Watts, Dr. Bob (*Flux Med*), 1987 graphic. Published by Francesco Conz Archive, Verona, Italy



Robert Watts, *G.M. as a student of Dr. Hyde* (*Flux Med*), 1987 graphic. Published by Francesco Conz Archive, Verona, Italy

G.M. as a student of Dr. Hyde

Jockpost (1962), Watts made a series of postage stamps that juxtaposed women's breasts with pictures of various kinds of hardware, like pliers, and in one stamp a woman on her back holds something indistinguishable over her pubis. In the end, such works are ambiguous in their sexual politics. *Flux Med* appears to be an ironical visual game and a contribution to the many Fluxus "medical" works by "Dr. Bob", as he identified himself in the suite. It summons memories of Maciunas's polymorphous perverse sexuality and his penchant for cross-dressing.⁵¹ Hendricks recalled, for example, that in the autumn of 1977, Maciunas invited him to a *Flux Fest* at New Marlborough, and that he instructed people to "come with a different identity." "George became a blond woman in spike heels," Hendricks remembered.⁵²

Flux Med also seems to be a continuation of the kind of sexual discourse Watts engaged in with Maciunas in the early 1960s. *Hospital Events* (1963) is a perfect example of the kinds of allusions to sadomasochism and misogyny typical of their exchange. The event score reads as follows:

HOSPITAL EVENTS

Dedicated to gm
 Also to passerbyes [sic]
 Instructions:
 Place on firm surface
 Strike sharp blow with hammer and nail
 On black dots
 In sequence indicated by numbers⁵³

A set of seven large cards with a variety of images (such as the Parthenon, city maps, a musical diagram culled from old lithographs) provides visual instruction for where to hammer. At least two of the cards display pictures of semi-nude women. In one image, a topless woman wearing what appears to be sheer pantyhose is shown lying on her back on the floor with her legs bent under her and her feet tucked under her buttocks (as in the example cited above in the *Flux Med* suite). Exploding caps (in the form of dots) appear on her body at intervals where the player should "strike a sharp blow with hammer and nail." A dot appears on her forehead almost between her eyes. There are also dots on her breast, upper arm, thumb, side ribs,

lower thigh just above the knee, and foot at the ankle, etc. In essence, the performer is instructed to hammer the nails into the caps, exploding parts of her body and nailing her to the floor. (When the image is not a woman, the player explodes the Parthenon, various places on maps, etc.) Such works not only entertained Watts and Maciunas but Fluxus audiences as well, if we are to believe Maciunas, who apparently exhibited *Hospital Events* in Europe in 1963.⁵⁴ Maciunas wrote to Watts, "The hospital event pictures we exhibited in Wuppertal's Gallery Parnass (Paik's exhibit) & visitors hammered so hard the pictures are damaged."⁵⁵ Maciunas, too, produced objects with sado-masochistic qualities, such as a twelve-inch-long bicycle pump fitted with sixty-four needle heads to be injected, called *Fluxsyringe* (1972–73).

Ironically, before the late 1970s, Maciunas was often described as asexual. But his relationship with Billie Hutching, the artist-poet whom he married in 1978, altered perceptions of him during the final year of his life. Billie reminisced how much Maciunas loved to cross-dress with her and travel from Massachusetts (where they lived at the time) down to New York, and "walk around Canal Street where people knew him, but seemed not to bat an eye. He didn't disguise his voice; he wore those glasses."⁵⁶ She also told art historian Susan Jarosi that "one of George's fantasies was that we travel in Europe

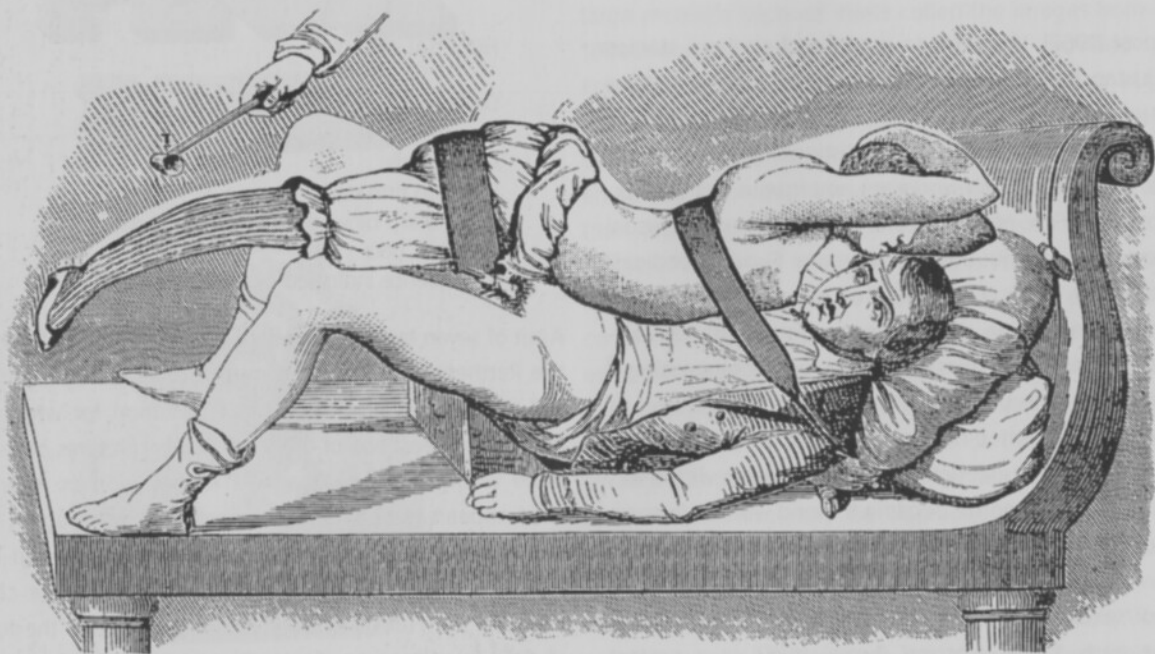
as elegant sisters, as he put it. So he always saw us as two women—as a couple. I think he just wanted to wear a dress too."⁵⁷

At their *Flux Wedding*, the couple both wore bridal gowns, but their marriage was never consummated in intercourse, which she believed was due to "the pain and the drugs he was taking." She revealed much about Maciunas in her diaries, and in an interview she states the following:

I accepted that his pain and the drugs he was taking prevented love-making. Anyway, I knew . . . that his sexuality was at least as complicated as mine. Still, G. was tender and delightfully imaginative in inventing games that would have enlightened even the Marquis de Sade had he been present. I regarded the relationship as wholly suitable to both our temperaments, though as time passed neither of us could help being frustrated by the limitations. I had to laugh at the idea of some of G's friends that he was asexual, just because he didn't display the usual readily understandable mating ritual.⁵⁸

In some of her diary entries, she is more explicit about their sexual games:

Friday evening George brought me an evil looking horsewhip and begged me to beat him. He thinks that this will have a cathartic effect on me. I gave him five or six. . . . I admired George



Flux S & M

Robert Watts, *Flux S & M (Flux Med)*, 1987 graphic. Published by Francesco Conz Archive, Verona, Italy

especially when he looked like a woman dressed as a man.⁵⁹

And in her discussion with Jarosi, she explained more about Maciunas's sexuality:

He said he was masochistic. He asked me if I would sometimes slap him in public. If he found it erotic I was willing to do it. It was a fun and interesting kind of role for me to play. . . . But I did start to have weird images more connected with my own childhood or something, of scary people in the attic and fears of being pushed down the stairs and things like that. . . . I sensed that the exploration of his feminine side, including the cross-dressing and the masochism . . . had something to do with his childhood. I know one time he had appendicitis and had to be operated on without anesthetic, and he was just put on a table in the home and cut open. He remembered it as extremely painful and frightening and traumatic, and he talked about it several times in relationship to enjoying pain. He also said that he was in so much pain [with his cancer at the end of his life] that the beating distracted him from the pain, the internal pain. Both things were going on.⁶⁰

Billie Hutching Maciunas's account of Maciunas's sexuality offers valuable and intimate insight into his art and his behavior toward female Fluxus artists, and toward the creation of such works as *Flux Med*.

I have offered these cursory remarks about sex in Fluxus in order to provide a glimpse of how sex inflects Fluxus art, actions, politics, and worldview. Sex—as the above examples vividly portray—is part of the very structure of Fluxus subject matter, from medicine to food to culture to politics. Biography is central to this discussion for the role it plays in shaping the kinds of work produced under the umbrella of Fluxus. Moreover an understanding of biography is a central factor in grasping why and how Larry Miller's work on the paranormal and parapsychological, namely on anomaly, is so powerful as a strategy for art.

Psi

Larry Miller's 1973 video installation and performance *Mom-Me* stands at the apex of sex and anomaly in Fluxus.⁶¹ Miller was born in 1944 while his father was away serving in World War II. His parents divorced soon after his father's return, and his father moved to Oregon only to return to Missouri to kidnap his two-year-old son, who was

George Maciunas and Billie Hutching performing *Black & White*, February 25, 1978, *Flux Cabaret*, 537 Broadway, NYC. Photos: Babette Mangolte



rapidly returned to his mother. Years later, Miller's natural father became a born-again Christian with whose fundamentalist beliefs Miller disagreed.

Miller's mother married a man who Miller described as intellectually backward, a "hillbilly" who regularly beat his mother and sometimes assaulted Miller until he ran away from home at the age of thirteen. "The psychological trauma was unspeakable," he remembers. "I really thought he would kill us." Miller's stepfather also took him on many occasions to the basement of their home to show him pornographic photographs of naked women in various positions, as well as pictures of piles of dead bodies from the Holocaust that he had somehow obtained during the war.⁶² Miller's emotional conflict about his troubled childhood included anger at his mother for not protecting him, an overwhelming sense of powerlessness as a child, and guilt about his inability to defend his family against his stepfather. Miller overcompensated for his home life by excelling in school, which he believes was his "salvation."

Miller's dysfunctional family and the events of his childhood critically shaped his work. Estrangement from his mother as a two-year-old combined with the physical violence of his stepfather contributed to his early traumatic memories.⁶³ The artist recalled:

He did variously kick me, hit, and throw me around when out of her [Miller's mother's] view, especially in the basement, as I said. But I cannot say I was punched full force in the face with a closed fist repeatedly like my mother. She was the regular victim of pitiful, severe beatings to the face and body. It was sickening and she took it like a martyr . . . It might ultimately have caused her breast cancer. As for me, at age four I somehow "knew" he was perverted and dangerous. It was like an animal sense; I was repulsed, scared, and protected myself by trying to be scarce, and rightly so. So I saw my mother as the Victim—and my younger sister and brother (his children) [also as victims]—[but] not myself.

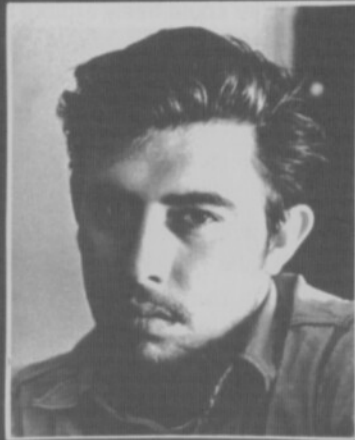
Although Miller did not at the time understand his various psychological strategies for survival, his four-year-old instincts are in keeping with the ability of even small infants to be cognizant of moral issues. Ronald Batson, a psychiatrist at Duke University specializing in incest and trauma, has observed that even "babies as young as ten months old know right from wrong."⁶⁴ Moreover, the pictures of naked women and dead bodies that Miller was coerced to see constituted a form of sexual aggression and contributed to what is described in the pathology of incest survivors as an "incestuous environment." Miller became

hypervigilant in order to ward off and avoid his stepfather's violence, and he dissociated himself psychologically from the memories of his past; both behaviors are similar to patterns of individuals who have experienced actual sexual abuse.⁶⁵ Miller continues to suffer nightmares to this day.⁶⁶

Miller's work *Mom-Me* consists of photographs, texts, and a ninety-minute video documenting the artist's attempt to inhabit his mother's psyche while under hypnosis. In *Mom-Me*, Miller aimed to grasp aspects of his mother's concept of him and his relationship with her. Yet *Mom-Me* contains no references to Miller's traumatic childhood. In viewing the work, I recognized the signs of Miller's traumatic subjectivity, and I questioned him about his childhood.⁶⁷ I must stress that Miller is extremely reticent about discussing his past and is cautious not to overstate his childhood situation, fearing especially that his biography might interfere with people's ability to view his work in and for itself. Moreover, Miller has long psychologically suppressed the traumatic content in *Mom-Me*. Nevertheless, it was vivid to me by its absence, quite simply because of its symptomatic references. I solicited his biographical recollections, and what follows is my reading of the various substrates of *Mom-Me*.

My initial clue, in fact, was Miller's work on anomaly, which has everything to do with his traumatic background.⁶⁸ Trauma contributed to his interest in exploring anomalous experiences in his art. Indeed, high incidences of adults with posttraumatic stress disorder recount paranormal experiences.⁶⁹ Researchers on the paranormal are familiar with the capacity of traumatized subjects—and artists, and artists who have been traumatized—to test high in psychic abilities, and the term "anomalous" is typically used in the field of parapsychology.⁷⁰ Miller reports having had paranormal experiences since childhood, especially precognitions, dreams, and psychokinesis in the late 1950s and early '60s. In the mid-1960s, he began more serious study of psychic phenomena and tried consciously to produce them.⁷¹ He eventually looked for artists historically who had dealt with psychic phenomena, trance, and hypnosis:

I saw myself in relationship to Dada, Surrealism, and Pollock. I saw hypnotism in relationship to automatism. I was trying to innovate. But at the same time, I was trying to do something that was not imitative. I didn't know anyone who had done anything with psychics; the Surrealists must have done something with hypnosis. I wanted to bypass the conscious mind. Certainly my acquaintance with people from Fluxus was a kind of underwriting of "Go for it." . . . Today I am an interested skeptic.⁷²



"I THINK I ALWAYS FELT A LITTLE...IN...JUST KIND OF RESTLESS OR SOMETHING...A LITTLE BIT...HE MIGHT HAVE A LITTLE OF THAT OF COURSE THAT COULD BE HIS DAD TOO... I WAS GOING TO SAY SOMETHING...I FORGOT..."

MOM-ME

I WANTED TO KNOW WHAT IT WOULD FEEL LIKE TO BE MY MOTHER, TO LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS OF MY OWN IDENTITY AND BELIEVE FOR A WHILE THAT I WAS "MOM". IN 6 WEEKLY SESSIONS WITH A HYPNOTIST, I ENTERED SUCCESSIVELY DEEPER HYPNOTIC STATES. DURING THE LAST SESSION, I BECAME "MOM". "SHE" COMMENTED ON PHOTOGRAPHS, DREW PORTRAITS AND CONSIDERED THE TWO OF US.

SESSIONS 1-5: VIDEO DOCUMENT, SESSION 6: VIDEO DOCUMENT HYPNOTIST: GUY DARMAN

L.V. Miller 1973-81



"I ASK YOU TO OPEN YOUR EYES AND SAY 'I WANT YOU TO WATCH THE WATCH AND WATCH MY EYES' AT THE SAME TIME."



"YOU'LL BE THE MOTHER OF YOURS... YOU'LL BE CONSCIOUSLY NOTHING AND YOUR MOTHER WILL BE SEEING AS SHE DOES... FEEL AS SHE DOES AND THINK AS SHE DOES."



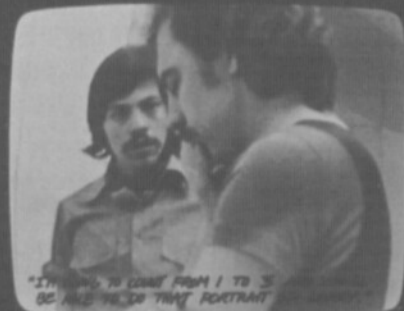
"HE WAS THIS OLD DISAPPOINTED AND SAD MOTHER... HE HAD A LOT OF THING DOING THOSE."



"YOU'VE GOT TO BE HONEST... YOU'VE GOT TO BE HONEST... ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FEEL YOUR MOTHER... THAT'S WHY MOTHERS... MOTHERS... YOU HAD TO GET OUT OF YOU DON'T WANT TO"



"WHEN HE'S BRINGING ME... TELL ME WHAT"



"IT'S HARD TO COME FROM I TO 'S BE... HE TO THAT PORTRAIT"

Larry Miller, *Mom Me*, 1973, document panel 2 (detail), photograph and text on board, Collection of the artist.

Fluxus embraced anomaly and contributed to an environment in which Miller could freely explore the paranormal. But while Miller was associated with Fluxus, he also pursued interests in body art, performance, and video of the period and considered "psychic medium as a pun for artistic medium" in the Duchampian sense.

In 1967, he began to systematically include the paranormal, telepathy, and psychokinesis in some of his art. The first work he made using psychic material was *Stone* (1967–73). It commenced when he consciously began carrying a stone he had found by a river in Missouri. Three years later, in 1970, his fascination by a display of moon rocks exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C., inspired *Stone*. He was also influenced by George Brecht's *Chair Event*, the "chair with a history" that Brecht began to explore in the early 1960s and whose history continues to grow. In addition, Miller was interested in the negative space that English sculptor Henry Moore created in his work, as well as Lao-Tzu's thought on the importance of nothing.⁷³ After carrying the stone in his pocket for six years, Miller submitted it to readings by nine psychic mediums and asked them each to relate information about the energy of the stone. The transcripts of these psychometric readings cohere around the themes of historical antiquity, religion, power, and blood, subjects that the psychics felt reflected the history of the rock, Miller's relationship to it, and Miller himself.⁷⁴

A second project, *Lines to Grow* (1973–85), occupied Miller for several years and evolved from a spontaneous psychic reading of the lines in his palms made by one of the psychics with whom he was working on *Stone*.⁷⁵ The psychic noted that the lines of his left and right hands represented two divergent psychological states of development, and she told him that he "must" work on developing the lines in order to become a "less self-destructive" individual. Miller responded by concentrating psychically upon growing the lines in his hands, and he has since made casts "every ten years to allow for significant changes in morphology."⁷⁶ Thus far, he has made three sets of hands, with the fourth set due in January 2005. The lines in his hands "are growing well," according to the original psychic, with whom Miller consulted again in the mid-1990s.

Also during this period, Miller made a video entitled *Jim the Wonder Dog* (1978). This video documentary is about an extraordinary telepathic dog, Jim (1925–37), a Llewellyn English setter that lived in Marshall, Missouri, where Miller was born and grew up. Owned by Sam Van

Arsdale (who ironically also owned the Hotel Ruff in Marshall and whose name sounds like the terrier breed Airedale), Jim performed feats of psychical knowledge by answering questions posed to him by Van Arsdale.⁷⁷ For example, Jim picked Kentucky Derby winners correctly for seven years in a row, and he was able to respond to questions put to him in five languages, as well as in Morse code and shorthand.⁷⁸ Jim became so famous that he was tested for his telepathic abilities at the University of Missouri, where he correctly responded to every question asked of him. (A request from the University of Missouri for Jim's brain was denied after Jim's death.) For his documentary on the dog, Miller undertook research on "thinking animals," interviewing Laura Dale of the American society for Psychical Research in New York City. Miller's video *Jim the Wonder Dog* is an unprecedented documentary on the subject of animal psychic powers.⁷⁹

All of the works Miller realized on anomalous forms of knowledge are fascinating. But *Mom-Me* is especially arresting for Miller's use of hypnosis as the medium for retrieval of psychological material and as a vehicle for connecting psychically with his mother's concepts about him. In order to realize this work, it first took a year for Miller to find a willing and capable hypnotist. He first approached a psychiatrist well known for his therapeutic use of hypnosis. But this doctor refused to participate in the artwork, advis-



Larry Miller, *Stone*, 1967-73, stone, apothecary bottle, readings by psychics on audio tape. Collection of the artist.

ing Miller that such a process might be dangerous to him and that he might suffer serious psychological damage by dislodging psychic material with which he was not able, or ready, to cope. Miller persisted and found a hypnotherapist who would work with him. They had six sessions together, five of which were audiotaped and the sixth and last of which was videotaped. Miller believes that in the last session he assumed his mother's identity.

As the videotape begins, Miller explains in a voice-over why he is being hypnotized:

I wanted to know what it would feel like to become my mother, to lose consciousness of my own identity through hypnosis and to believe for a while that I was Mom. In six weekly sessions with a professional hypnotherapist, I was able to enter into progressively deeper hypnotic states until I became Mom in mind and body. During this 90-minute session, Mom was casually interviewed to evoke her persona, her concept of self, of me, and of our relationship.

Once Miller is hypnotized, the therapist establishes that he is speaking to "Mom" and begins to interview Miller-as-Mom, asking her about her children and focusing on her son Larry. Upon seeing a family photograph of his mother holding him as a child, Miller—now speaking as his mother (Miller-as-Mom)—describes her child as a "chunky baby who cried a lot." But he was "a good kid." The therapist then asks Miller-as-Mom to draw a life-size picture of herself. Miller-as-Mom makes a very realistic drawing of herself but leaves off her hands, an action that is accompanied by the statement, "Maybe I'll just leave the hands off."

In the second phase of the interview, the questions and photographs are directed more precisely to "Mom's" view of her relationship with her son. In a voice-over, Miller says that "talking about herself had seemed manageable," but in discussing "the mother-son relationship, she becomes disturbed and frequently escapes into a sleep state." In other words, Miller-as-Mom is unable to maintain consciousness when asked to discuss her relationship to her son Larry. Recognizing that their relationship is painful for Miller, the therapist tells Miller-as-Mom that if she is "bothered" by any of the questions, she should merely flick her wrist and the therapist will not continue that line of questioning. The therapist then shows Miller-as-Mom a number of photographs that Miller had earlier selected and brought to the session. Regarding a photograph of his mother at about the age of eighteen, Miller-as-Mom remarks, "This reminds me of



Larry Miller, *Mom Me*, 1973, document panel 2 (detail), photograph and text on board, Collection of the artist

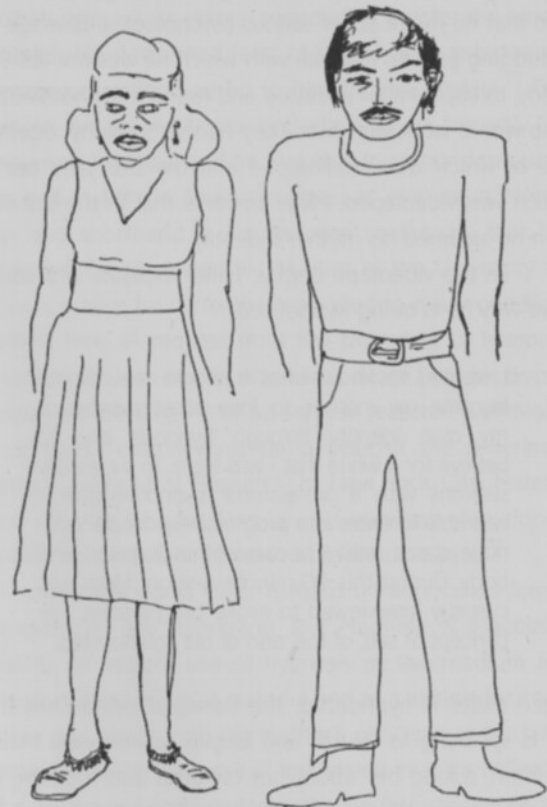
Betty Grable." About a provocative image of Miller's mother in a bra-top and grass skirt (the latter sent to her by Miller's father during the war), Miller-as-Mom comments, "Clyde sent us these skirts from Hawaii . . . I'm fond of that picture." The therapist also shows Miller-as-Mom a conventional portrait snapshot of herself and one of Miller in the late 1950s. Miller's strikingly handsome image strongly resembles the famous sultry portrait of James Dean. Miller had taken the picture of himself in 1966, at the age of 22, when he was "interested in projecting thought "into" the photograph.⁸⁰ Next, the therapist asks Miller-as-Mom if she feels there are any "similarities" between "you and him?" Miller-as-Mom responds that she wanted to say something but is unable to remember what it was and begins to flex her wrist dramatically, signaling extreme discomfort. The therapist asks, "Was it important?" Miller-as-Mom flicks her wrist again. The therapist asks again, "Do you want to talk about it? Do you want to find out what it is?" Miller-as-Mom does not answer. The therapist then asks what Miller-as-Mom thinks Larry might have been thinking about in the picture. Miller-as-Mom answers, "Well, it's

hard to say, it's kinda serious." Finally, the therapist asks Miller-as-Mom to draw a life-size picture of her son Larry to accompany the realistic picture she has already drawn of herself. Miller-as-Mom complies but says, "Oh, this is silly. I don't like it too much," as she draws. Though this picture is realistically drawn, it also has no hands.

After several more exchanges, the therapist wakes Miller up and immediately asks him to draw pictures of himself and his mother. Unlike the realistic figurative pictures that Miller-as-Mom drew during hypnosis, Miller's drawings after hypnosis are abstract. He draws himself first, using disconnected dots. The figure resembles a cocoon-like mummy shape with a head topped with hair that stands out like radiant, energy-filled tentacles. Next Miller draws his mother. He depicts her as a round, fat figure with tubular legs and a round head. This is a particularly strange image of his mother, since in all the pictures he has used during the session she is quite slender. What is most striking about Miller's drawings, however, and the element that unites them with the drawings made under hypnosis, is that they, too, do not have hands. When I pointed out this obvious detail to Miller, he was surprised and stated that in all the years since making *Mom-Me*, neither he nor anyone else had ever noticed this correlation before.

Let us recall that Miller-as-Mom consciously, even under hypnotism, decided, "Maybe I'll just leave the hands off." "Hands off" is a powerful subtext of *Mom-Me* that suggests a sublimated relationship to his and his mother's hands. Indeed, hands prevail throughout Miller's entire oeuvre, beginning with *Revivified Self-Portrait No. 2* (1967–96) and *Lines to Grow* (1973–85) and continuing into the present with *Finger Exercise* (1983), *Astro-Genetic Landscape* (1989), and *Geonomic License Series No. 6* (1995). *Finger Exercise (Transplant)* (1990–95) (in which Miller attaches a fingernail clipping, removed from his hand, onto the finger of an audience volunteer) is a continuation of Miller's activity of collecting both his own and his mother's nails. (Miller also collected hair and other bodily samples from his mother, who enjoyed "the special attention.")⁸¹ Of particular interest is the dialogue between Miller and his mother in *Mom's Feet: My Hands* (1972–74):

Larry Miller: What do you think about feet?
Mom: Feet don't do anything for me. . . . Now, hands fascinate me. . . . Hands can tell you a lot.
Larry: Like what?
Mom: Oh, I can tell one thing about your hands. You have a weak spot—but you don't like to show it.
Larry: A weak spot?
Mom: Just the way your fingers are structured. You're holding in [*sic*] to something tight—things



Larry Miller, *Mom Me*, 1973, ink on paper. Life-size portraits made by the artist under hypnosis. Collection of the artist

that should be letting out. You got emotion that you hide. It's a security form, a way of holding onto something or holding in something. Turn it loose, I say.

Larry: You're saying that from the hands, or from having raised me?

Mom: No, the hands. Now, that's what I'd say.

Larry: What do you suppose I'm holding in?

Mom: I wouldn't know.

Larry: Well, you reared me, so . . .

Mom: Well I was busy rearing you. I didn't have time to study you too.⁸²

This conversation between mother and son brings closer to the surface the discussion of the meaning of hands that is pending between them. It haunts the artist's work like a fetish or force of conscience as with Shakespeare's *Lady Macbeth*, who obsessively washes her blood-stained hands. In his essay "Some Character-Types Met With in Psycho-analytical Work" (1916) and in his book *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1946), Sigmund Freud identified a sense of guilt (as associated with hands) as the most important problem in the development of civilization. *Mom-Me* has many suppressed Oedipal and familial layers implied in Miller's use of hands, and the avoidance and sublimation of

hands suggests traumatic experience played out in an interest in the anomalous and the paranormal. "I wanted to know what it would feel like to be my mother, to lose consciousness of my own identity," Miller has written, comparing that experience to how a part of the whole might "become the whole" and observe all the subset parts."⁸³ Miller's desire to "become the whole" further evinces the fragmentation associated with traumatic subjectivity.

As already noted, Miller used photographs (some taken when he was a baby and some shot by him of his mother and of himself) as "preexisting readymades" in *Mom-Me*. He also used drawings to make portraits that he described as seen through "another's eyes" (namely the persona he assumed when he became "Mom" in the hypnotic trance). In both the photographs and the drawings, Miller dealt with portrait images, ostensibly from both his conscious mind (the images he brought with him to the session) and from his unconscious psyche (the images he drew while hypnotized). These photographic and graphic references point to the shifting positions of subject-object and creator-viewer, suggesting how identity is both self- and socially constructed in the maturation process. *Mom-Me* can be compared to the artistic tradition of self-portraiture, Miller has pointed out, with the addition that these portraits attempt to formally materialize some aspect of the artist's dissociated mind and therefore do not purport to represent only physical appearance.⁸⁴ *Mom-Me* also tries to visualize some aspect of the mind of someone other than the artist: Miller believes that he did enter the mind of his mother and that she drew herself. Whether Miller realized his aim—whether these drawings actually *are* pictures created by his mother and communicated by his hands—is not the point. Even if actuality were to concern us, it could not be proved. What must oblige consideration is the truth of Miller's desire to make such an image, and his belief that he accomplished his aim. Miller shifts our attention from his intentions to the history of self-portraiture (in the autobiographical tradition from Rembrandt to Duchamp) and astutely points out that it hinges on an identification of a factual observation of a psychic creation. I would add that these psychic creations to some degree reflect Oedipal relationships, especially with the mother. Indeed, Miller's intelligent title—*Mom-Me*—signifies the interconnection between "me" and "mom" that adheres for most in the appellation "mommy." While *Mom-Me* is resoundingly personal to Miller, many universal aspects of it visualize the ways in which the Oedipal construction of personality operates in self-identity.

Miller further argues that "the degree to which the application of autobiography pertains to an understanding of *Mom-Me* seems to balance on a scale with 'factual events' and narrative located at one pole and 'internal projection' and pictures at the other." In this regard, Miller's work summons considerations of Henri Bergson's concept of *durée*, which posits a continuous field of experience wherein no perception exists that is not full of memories.⁸⁵ Miller writes:

Mom Me is autobiographical at both ends. . . . We have a person sketching autobiographical pictures, but from a removed vantage point in the unconscious through hypnosis. This means that the only factual biography present was in the family photographs and the only factual autobiography present was the self-portrait photographs. The form and the content were reflected by surrogates.

To claim that a "surrogate" enacted his performance implies that Miller actually made psychic contact with, and became, his mother, which again is impossible to prove or disprove. In the absence of such evidence, I theorize that *Mom-Me* actualized something akin to a visual depiction of the resolution of the false binaries that Bergson found in the operations of memory. The philosopher's concept of the integral relationship between memory and consciousness suggests how mental binaries (inside/outside, part/whole, subject/object, and viewer/maker) might disappear at points in the time-space continuum where the extendedness of images and the lack of extension of ideas merge. Freud echoed this theory in his essay "Screen Memories" three years later.⁸⁶ In both Bergson and Freud, consciousness and the psyche appear to operate at cross-purposes, apparently in order to maintain



Larry Miller, still from video *Mom Me*, 1973.

equilibrium between the mind/body, space/time duality and to preserve psychological balance between the ego functions of consciousness and the pathologies of unconsciousness.⁸⁷ In both models, consciousness balances opposing states, operating similarly to dissociation (which permits both blocking of some memories and access to others). Reconstruction and reintegration of memory is the aim of trauma therapy. *Mom-Me* functioned in this sense as a healing agent for Miller, who claims that his relationship with his mother and his memories of his family life improved after completing the work. That he was unable to draw hands and continues to be concerned about hands in his works of art suggests another area of psychological research for the artist.

Mom-Me might also be seen as a working model of the site where a picture is exchanged over the shifting image/screen of the gaze and the subject of representation discussed by Jacques Lacan.⁸⁸ *Mom-Me* draws viewers (and Miller himself) into the moment in which images pass into memories and vice versa, in the same way that identities merge on the plane of psychical construction. Miller compares *Mom-Me* to "elective surgery," in which he voluntarily opens his psyche and removes his mother, who, in turn, then takes a look at him and at herself. Miller wanted to make "an object" within the psyche both accessible and external. He intended to make *the psyche an object* for contemplation of the construction of self, and thus he used hypnosis to make psychic contact with his internalized notions about his mother's views of herself and of him. In his attempt to inhabit his mother's psyche, Miller visualized his projection of an internalized image of his mother, his longing for an understanding of her and a grasp of what she thought of him, and for closure of his dissociated relationship with her.

Dissociation is key here. Often described as "the compartmentalization of experience, identity, memory, perception, and motor function," traumatic dissociation truncates aspects of consciousness from normative experience and memory, producing unconscious or sublimated memories that reappear or are enacted in altered forms.⁸⁹ Dissociation is frequently the primary instrument for survival from trauma, providing a form of cognitive homeostasis (however fragile) that enables severely traumatized individuals to live with experiences otherwise too painful for consciousness to acknowledge. Among many cognitive behaviors, dissociation includes derealization, depersonalization, amnesia, confusion, and alterations in identity in which various parts of the subsystems of mind "disconnect in terms of information exchange or mutual

control."⁹⁰ This is especially true of dissociative identity disorder (DID)—formerly called multiple-personality disorder (MPD)—a psychological behavior that is primarily attributed to childhood sexual abuse. Dissociation is a survival mechanism that protects the psyche from exposure to distressing memories and experiences. Moreover, traumatic subjectivity and dissociation are interconnected to problems of memory.

Dissociation is associated with pathology, or survival mechanisms, *and* with creativity, *and* it is part of the artistic process itself.⁹¹ In this regard, dissociation is a cognitive behavior that is coded in the unconscious positively (when it is associated with art and creativity) and negatively (when it is associated with traumatic subjectivity and survival). In this regard, artists are often described as "losing" themselves in their work, which comes to "speak" for them. This is especially true for artists with a traumatic history.⁹² Many artists testify to this dissociative process (whether or not traumatized). Arthur Rimbaud, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Rainer Maria Rilke all accounted for their artistic abilities *as if* they had been "spoken by another." Rimbaud observed, "*Je est un autre*"; Nietzsche's "*es denkt*" names something "*thinking in*" him; and Rilke wrote, "Where there is a poem, it is not mine but that of Orpheus who comes to sing it."⁹³ Colin A. Ross, founder in 1995 of the Colin A. Ross Institute for Psychological Trauma, notes that "complex relationships among hypnosis, dissociation, absorption, fantasy-proneness, somatization, and paranormal experiences" exist in both artists and traumatized people.⁹⁴ In fact, researchers at Stanford Research Institute found that "artistic talent, visual-spatial intelligence, and creativity all tended to be associated with high remote-viewing [psi and telepathy] scores."⁹⁵ My research for twenty years on destruction, violence, and trauma in art corroborates connections among creativity, trauma, and multidimensional aspects of consciousness (the anomalous or paranormal), and I have theorized that traumatic subjectivity resides at the phenomenological center of performance art, of which Fluxus is a genre.⁹⁶

For thirty years Miller's work on psychic phenomena has been doubly coded; it is both an expression of traumatic subjectivity and a powerful form of creativity harnessed as a survival technique. *Mom-Me* is the most extensive work of art on anomalous knowledge in the body of Fluxus works, although several Fluxus artists—Ono, Watts, Schneemann, Hendricks, Nye Ffarrabas, Robert Filliou, and others—have used psychic phenomena in their work.⁹⁷ When Miller created *Mom-Me*, however, he knew nothing about Fluxus artists' use of psychic

phenomena in their work. He sought hypnosis first as a means to produce a unique work of art and second as a means to quiet his own mind. Finally, he also felt that "something 'therapeutic' seems to transfer to certain people from this piece."⁹⁸ Sculptor Louise Bourgeois may have been one of those people.

Miller first exhibited *Mom-Me* in 1973 at 112 Greene Street in New York, where numerous artists saw it, including Al Hansen, who Miller met there for the first time and who told him, "Everybody is talking about your show!" But significantly, it was Louise Bourgeois who showed the most interest in *Mom-Me*. Miller remembered: "She was one of the few people that sat through the hour-and-a-half video." She also encouraged him to continue his work with hypnosis and even discussed "the possibility of a collaboration" on several occasions.⁹⁹ The following year, Bourgeois made *Destruction of the Father* (1974), a sculpture that marked a turning point in her work, and she began systematically to depict the ambiguous and conflicting relationship she had to her father and the network of childhood relationships that motivated her art. What may only be described as a higher level of self-consciousness about the relationship between her art and her past, Bourgeois noted in her diary April 1, 1974:

The search (pushing on) for truth is what has kept me going. The secret of my anxiety. What is it since childhood? It has to do with hostility—what is wrong with me?¹⁰⁰

In December 1974, she exhibited her new work at 112 Greene, the same gallery where a year earlier she had seen Miller's *Mom-Me*. In 1975, Lucy Lippard began to write about the sources in childhood of Bourgeois's imagery. Lippard's views exemplified the critical reception of Bourgeois's new sculptural turn, especially in feminist quarters, where the exploration of physical and sexual violence against women had been a key trope since the end of the 1960s.¹⁰¹ Eight years later, in 1982, at the age of seventy-one, Bourgeois created *Child Abuse (Portfolio)*. This photographic and textual spread in *Artforum* was one of the earliest personal presentations of incest in art.¹⁰² Although Bourgeois does not mention the impact of *Mom-Me* in the development of her work, it seems to have stunned her with its invisible dissociated violence hovering below the surface. *Mom-Me* is an extremely sensitive and courageous work, and it may have played a pivotal role in helping Bourgeois recognize her own dissociated consciousness, thereby giving her permission to address it more directly in her art. *Mom-Me*, then, may

be understood to have built upon and expanded feminist discourses about psychological and sexual abuse.¹⁰³

While he acknowledges that the process gave him some "personal benefit," as I noted above, Miller does not feel that an examination of his biography is "really necessary to the 'art' construct presented to the viewer."¹⁰⁴ Moreover, though he views his own "hands . . . as a work of art in progress," Miller has "tried to minimize personal biography in these kinds of works," and he views art as indebted to "a collective intelligence—therefore one's personal history and expression are secondary to more universal interests of art."¹⁰⁵ Clearly, I disagree. The eccentricity of *Mom-Me* demands contextualization within the psychodynamics of the artist's life in order for its strange focus and material (psi and hypnosis) to make sense in terms of his trauma. In addition, an artwork such as *Mom-Me* provides important aesthetic research on the interrelation between art and healing, and therefore, it is vital that its sources are clear. Miller's poignant, intrepid, and unprecedented effort to unify his emotional/mental construct of "Mom" (with his sublimated and dissociated familial experiences and Oedipal relationship to her) is singular in the history of art in its form and content and in its voracious will to reconstruct memory. Moreover, I know of no other portrait in the history of art that purports to be an actual psychic representation (or self-portrait) of another person's mind that is simultaneously made by that person who is inhabited by an artist. In both these respects, *Mom-Me* deserves a great deal more attention in the history of art.

"There are 'tones' of mental life," Henri Bergson observed. "Our psychic life may be lived at different heights—now nearer to action, now further removed to the degree of our *attention to life* [my emphasis]."¹⁰⁶ Miller's attention to anomaly not only represents an extraordinary attention to life but a will to live in and through art.¹⁰⁷

Afterword

Consciousness cannot be adequately explored until more expanded conditions of knowing become commonplace territories of research. In this regard, Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne, scientists associated with the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Laboratory, opened in 1979, have called for a "science of the subjective":

The particular form of human observation, reasoning, and technical deployment [that] we properly term 'science' has relied at least as much on subjective experience and inspiration

as it has on objective experiments and theories. Only over the past few centuries has subjectivity been progressively excluded from the practice of science, leaving an essentially secular analytical paradigm. Quite recently, however, a compounding constellation of newly inexplicable physical evidence, coupled with a growing scholarly interest in the nature and capability of human consciousness, are beginning to suggest that this sterilization of science may have been excessive and could ultimately limit its epistemological reach and cultural relevance. . . . Huge anomalies . . . cannot, in principle, be accommodated by conventional, orthodox models [of science]. They require a break with current [scientific] thinking."¹⁰⁸

In a humorous but also pointed observation, Terence McKenna once noted how the scientific model has failed to account for the normativeness of anomaly in everyday life:

No less a founder of modern scientific rationalism than René Descartes was set on the path toward the ideals of modern science by an angel who appeared to him in a dream and told him that the conquest of nature was to be achieved through measure and number. This enunciation, which is really the battle cry of modern science, first passed through the lips of an angel! . . . This aspect of science, the fact that much of its premises have been transferred to mankind from the hidden realm of higher intelligence, is completely suppressed in its own official story. The official history tells the story of rational thought, of conquering the dark world of superstition.¹⁰⁹

Fluxus provided remarkable models for a "science of the subjective" in visualizing anomaly in works of art and artistic processes, even if in its early years Fluxus men often avoided acknowledging the very anomalous underpinnings of their own work. This failure to endorse its own operations has many causes, not the least of which is the connection between gender and expression associated with women, a subject that I touched on above when citing Henry Flynt's use of a reproduction of the Mona Lisa as a doormat. Yoko Ono confirms the interconnection between anomaly and gender:

In those days, in Fluxus, it was not "cool" to use anything that had to do with human psyche. I think I am the first one who used things like "Kehai" (music of pure vibration created by human psyche) in her work. It's [the reason for excluding such material in Fluxus] to do with John Cage, who was more interested in mushrooms, nonsensical events, and chance. Consequently, he broke down dramatic sequencing of sounds and created chance music, which basically had nothing to do with human emotion, which relies on emotion created in result of sequential events. I was criticized for being too emotional, dramatic, and uncool, so I might as well give you this side of the story too.¹¹⁰

In other words, both anomaly and emotion were *too female*. Some male Fluxus artists could not become involved in the paranormal or admit (as Hendricks and Miller did) their own personal expression of sexuality, which they could only visualize *through* related or distant nonpersonal sexist subject matter. I theorize that the radical shift that younger artists brought to Fluxus in the late 1960s and early 1970s was to make anomaly and sexuality the very materiality and content of their work. It took a gay man and a traumatized man to do so! Namely, Hendricks and Miller were men willing to abandon the patriarchal codes of control and machismo and dare to go where Fluxus women had often been. Miller and Hendricks have both created works with a heroic directness and a naïve openness. They risk what earlier Fluxus artists guarded, even when, as in the case of Higgins and Pauline Oliveros, they were openly gay, or, as in the case of Schneemann, the art was full of the paranormal but carefully controlled and presented so as not to appear "too crazy."¹¹¹

Miller and Hendricks are two Fluxus artists who have altered the *official* qualities of the Fluxus canon by exploring the private existential conditions and complex psychosexual and social dynamics that Fluxus women had long entertained. In doing so, they also reflected the historical and art historical tenor of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The fact that such aesthetic concerns were sanctioned in their work, and not in women's art, suggests the underlying sexism in Fluxus, even though it is by far one of the most socially, sexually, and racially tolerant of all avant-garde movements.

1. I would like to thank Jane McFadden and Edward A. Shanken for their thoughtful readings of this text, and Geoffrey Hendricks, Larry Miller, Hannah Higgins, Alison Knowles, and Carolee Schneemann for generously responding to my many questions.
2. In a "hand-written manuscript/manifesto entitled 'Design Principles of FLUXUS MYTHOLOGICA,'" March 25, 1987, Friedman mentions sex as an area of interest for Fluxus. "The third key principle of Fluxus is that ideas such as mass-manufactured art, thematic variation, the inclusion of life themes such as humor, myth, sex or religion in art are liable to develop the most interesting objects," he wrote. See Estera Milman, "Ken Friedman: Art[net]worker Extra-Ordinaire," http://sdr.lib.uiowa.edu/atca/subjugated/five_12.htm.
3. Dick Higgins, "Theory and Reception," in Ken Friedman, ed., *The Fluxus Reader* (Chichester, England: Academy Editions, 1998): 224. Higgins wrote the essay in Berlin in March 1982, revised it in April 1985, published it in the *Fluxus Research* issue of Lund Art Press in 1991, and revised it again for his book *Modernism Since Postmodernism*. San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 1997. See also Ken Friedman, "Fluxus and Company," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 244.
4. Friedman: 250. See Dick Higgins, "Exemplative Works of Art," and "An Exemplativist Manifesto," in Higgins, *A Dialectic of Centuries: Notes Towards a Theory of the New Arts* (New York: Printed Editions, 1978): 23-27; 156-166.
5. My attention to sex here expands upon my earlier discussion of sex, gender, and race in "Between Water and Stone: Fluxus Performance, A Metaphysics of Acts," in Elizabeth Armstrong and Joan Rothfuss, eds., *In the Spirit of Fluxus* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1993): 62-99. Kathy O'Dell has also taken up the question of sexuality in Fluxus women. See O'Dell's "Fluxus Feminus," *TDR (The Drama Review)* 41 (Spring 1997): 43-60.
6. Higgins, "Theory and Reception": 219.
7. Alison Knowles, e-mail to the author, July 24, 2002.
8. Maciunas knew very well that Fluxus artists were performing Corner's piece incorrectly and wrote to La Monte Young in 1963: "Then on the end we did Corners piano activities not according to his instructions since we systematically destroyed a piano which I bought for \$5 and had to have it all cut up to throw away, otherwise we would have to pay movers, a very practical composition, but german [sic] sentiments about this 'instrument' of chopin [sic] were hurt and they made a row about it." For a reprint of Maciunas's letter see Clive Phillpot and Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1988): 35. For Corner's response to the destruction of the piano see Philip Corner, "Shiva Turns Back into Bramah," in Hanns Sohm, ed., *Happenings & Fluxus* (Cologne: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1970): n.p. See also Philip Corner's *Piano Activities* in *The Four Suits: Benjamin Patterson, Philip Corner, Alison Knowles, Tomas Schmit* (New York: Something Else Press, 1965): 166-168.
9. Ina Blom, "Hiding in the Woods," in *The Fluxus Performance Workbook* (Trondheim, Norway: EL DJARIDA, 1990): 61.
10. "Transcript of the videotaped interview with George Maciunas by Larry Miller, March 24, 1978," quoted in Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus etc. / Addenda I: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection* (New York: Ink., 1983): 26.
11. Higgins, "Theory and Reception": 224.
12. David T. Doris, "Zen Vaudeville," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 104-105.
13. Ibid: 104.
14. Blom: 60.
15. Ibid.
16. Alison Knowles, e-mail to the author, July 21, 2002.
17. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (12th edition); *The Journals of Henry David Thoreau*; *Walt Whitman: Poetry and Prose* (Justin Kaplan, ed.); *Writing Through Finnegans Wake*, by John Cage; the prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, by Geoffrey Chaucer; *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy and Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, by Mircea Eliade; *The Cloud Forest*, by Peter Matthiessen; *Earth's Grandest Rivers*, by Ferdinand C. Lane; *Seventeenth Century North America*, by Carl Sauer; *The Writings of Chuang Tzu*; *The Sculpture of Africa*, by Eliot Elisofon; *The Mushroom Hunter's Field Guide*, by Alexander H. Smith; a version of a Danish myth provided by Eric Andersen; various travelogues; personal letters; and newspaper articles. See Alison Knowles, *Bread and Water* (Kingston, New York: Left Hand Books, 1995): 70.
18. Henry Martin, "Introduction," in *Bread and Water*: xii.
19. Friedman would describe this characteristic as "implicativeness," showing the "relationship of Fluxus to experimentalism and to the scientific method." See Friedman: 250.
20. Dick Higgins, "Boredom and Danger," in *Foewöombwñwn: A Grammar of the Mind and a Phenomenology of Love and a Science of the Arts as Seen by a Stalker of the Wild Mushroom* (New York: Something Else Press, 1966): 105.
21. Geoffrey Hendricks interview with Lars Movin in *Geoffrey Hendricks: Day into Night* (Odense Denmark: Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, 1993): 49.
22. Higgins documented the unorthodoxy of Fluxus artists when he opened Something Else Press in 1964, one of the most significant artist's publications in the 20th century and a treasure trove of key mid-century aesthetic ideas. As Peter Frank has pointed out, it was "the first publishing house in the United States to devote itself to what are now called 'artists' books'—integral artworks designed for publication and distribution in traditional book formats—and the scope and importance of its activities have not been equaled since." See Frank's annotated bibliography of the press in *Something Else Press* (Brattleboro, New York: McPherson & Company, 1983): 1.
23. In blank structure, Higgins would "simply establish a rule matrix for the performance, and give neither explicit clues to his intentions nor any working materials, apart from the matrix, to the performers. What they or the audience contributed became both subject matter and perceptible form." Higgins continues: "At a Fluxus performance in Copenhagen in 1962 the extremes of this kind of work were tested—with the excitement inseparable . . . from the boredom. During my second *Contribution*, each performer chooses something in the environment of the performance to cue him to perform an action, which he has also determined. The poet Emmett Williams and the composer Eric Andersen each chose to do his action when he became the last person on stage. The resulting hours of waiting to see which would break became very exciting. Each stood motionless. The audience became bored, impatient and upset. But the word began to circulate, through those who knew the piece, as to what had happened. And then the audience quieted down and became fascinated. Very few left. The end of the performance came by accident—one of the performers, offered a drink by someone, misunderstood and thought he was being ordered off stage. It was a very fortunate misunderstanding, since both Williams and Andersen are sufficiently tough-minded to be there still today . . . if necessary." Higgins in "Boredom and Danger": 107-109.
24. For example, Yoko Ono wrote several instructions that involved the sky from *Painting to See the Skies* (1961) to *Sky Event*

for John Lennon (1968); and Lennon used a Hendricks painting of sky for the cover of his album *Imagine* (1971). Robert Watts created sculptural *Desk Clouds* (1967). Higgins published Diter Rot's book *246 Clouds* (1968) in Something Else Press. Shiomi's "Flux-members Biography" states: "Almost every night since the Second war had a colorful [sic] dream, especially about tremendous or subtle happenings in the sky, and about impressive episodes at a cove or river—with no fear or joy, just observation." (See, *Fluxus etc. / Addenda I*: 198.) Schneemann has used clouds in many works, among them *Water Light/Water Needle* (1966), *Fuses* (1965–68), and most recently, *Vesper's Pool* (1999).

25. *I Ching or Book of Changes*, translated by Richard Wilhelm, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes. Foreword by C.G. Jung and Preface to the Third Edition by Hellmut Wilhelm (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967): 91.

26. Hendricks states that Maciunas was "recovering at the time from being "beaten up by mafia in connection with renovation of a new Fluxloft." The story of the Fluxlofts is complicated. See Hendricks's "Fluxriten," in René Block, ed., *1962 Wiesbaden FLUXUS 1982* (Wiesbaden/Berlin: Harlekin Art/Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD, 1983): 156. By the time the Festschrift happened, Maciunas had been released from St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City.

27. Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," 1971, reprinted in Donald Preziosi, ed., *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998): 424.

28. Meyer Schapiro, "The Still Life as a Personal object—A Note on Heidegger and van Gogh," 1953, reprinted in Preziosi, *The Art of Art History*: 431.

29. Jacques Derrida, "Restitutions of the Truth in Pointing ['Pointure']," 1978, in Preziosi, *The Art of Art History*: 434.

30. Geoffrey Hendricks interview with Lars Movin in *Geoffrey Hendricks*: 56.

31. *Ibid.*: 58.

32. See especially Hubert Damisch's discussion of clouds in *A Theory of Cloud: Toward a History of Painting*, translated by Janet Lloyd. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2002, originally published as *Théorie du nuage: pour une histoire de la peinture*. Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1972.

33. Hannah Higgins, "Fluxus Fortuna," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 52.

34. For an exhaustive examination of the subject of sex in art see Victoria Combalá and Jean-Jacques Lebel, *Jardín de eros* (Barcelona: Institut de Cultera de Barcelona and S.E. Electa, 1999).

35. *Geoffrey Hendricks*: 57.

36. Sigmund Freud, "An Autobiographical Study," in Peter Gay, ed., *The Freud Reader* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985): 24. Freud first discussed polymorphous perverse sexuality in "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," 1905, revised in 1924. Considerable controversy over the meaning of perversion has, rightly, been waged since Freud's use of the term. Foucault showed how this kind of concept has linked the law and the state, and queer theory offers a socially determined critique of such psychoanalytic terms. I use it here to identify the complex range of Maciunas's erotic interests.

37. Alison Knowles, e-mail to the author, September 1, 2002.

38. Shigeko Kubota, telephone conversation with the author, June 12, 1991. See Kristine Stiles, "Between Water and Stone: Fluxus Performance, A Metaphysics of Acts" in *In the Spirit of Fluxus*: 62–99.

39. Carolee Schneemann, letter to the author June 11, 1992: "Maciunas sent an excommunication directive in regard to my work '65? '66?."

40. David Mayor, ed., *Fluxshoe*, Cullompton, 1972, as quoted by Simon Anderson, "Fluxus, Fluxion, Fluxshoe: The 1970s," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 27.

41. Yoko Ono, in Melody Sumner, Kathleen Burch, and Michael Sumner, eds., *The Guests Go in to Supper: John Cage, Robert Ashley, Yoko Ono, Laurie Anderson, Charles Amirkhonian, Michael Peppe, K. Archley* (Oakland and San Francisco: Burning Books, 1986): 174.

42. See, Kathy O'Dell, ed., *Kate Millett, Sculptor: The First 38 Years* (Baltimore: Fine Arts Gallery, University of Maryland Baltimore County, 1997).

43. Takako Saito, "Chess Board Door," in Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus Codex* (Detroit and New York: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection and Harry N. Abrams, 1988): 455.

44. Nam June Paik, "Towards a New Ontology of Music," in Hanns Sohm, ed., *Happenings & Fluxus*: n.p.

45. Ben Vautier: http://www.ben-vautier.com/sexmaniac_display.php3.

46. Valie Export tattooed a garter, sign of woman's bondage, on her thigh in an action entitled *Body-Sign Action* (1970).

47. Henry Flynt, unpublished interview with the author, September 22, 1989. See also Kristine Stiles, "Creep and Brend: Henry Flynt's Utopian 'Blueprint for a Higher Civilization,'" paper delivered at the College Art Association Annual Meeting, February 15, 1990; and Kristine Stiles, "David Tudor—Alive, Free, and Without Need of Culture," symposium on *The Art of David Tudor: Indeterminacy and Performance in Postwar Culture*, Getty Art Center. This essay will soon be available on the Web site of the Getty Center.

48. Maciunas issued *Fluxus Newsletter Policy Newsletter* No. 6 (April 6, 1963), proposing "propaganda actions." These would be disruptive performances in New York City from May through November that would clog transportation systems with "breakdowns" on bridge and tunnel entries, confuse communication systems, disrupt public concerts, interfere with museums, theaters, galleries, and in general cause social and institutional mayhem. George Brecht, Jackson Mac Low, and eventually Higgins all felt that such propositions by Flynt, followed by Maciunas and Tomas Schmit, were socially irresponsible.

49. Sara Seagull has pointed out that "Watts's younger brother had suffered leukemia and Watts had a lifelong aversion to hospitals, injections, and medical procedures. Plus, it had been horrible for all who watched G.M. [George Maciunas] fight his illness. So *Flux Med* may have been cathartic to Watts both in the loss of his little brother and in G.M.'s severe illness." Seagull, fax to the author, September 3, 2002.

50. Indeed, Australian businessmen have recently incorporated the Daily Planet, Melbourne's largest brothel, and offered stock options on the Australian Stock Exchange. See <http://www.dailyplanet.com.au/content/nav.html>.

51. Two examples of Fluxus medical objects would be Shigeko Kubota's 1966 boxed versions of empty capsules, vials, wrappers, or "fluxmedicine," that Maciunas advertised in various editions of the *Fluxnewsletter* from 1967 to 1969; and Larry Miller's "Orifice Flux Plugs" (plugs for the body, ranging from condoms to cotton balls), advertised in the *Fluxnewsletter* of May 3, 1975.

52. Geoffrey Hendricks, "Fluxriten" in René Block, ed., *1962 Wiesbaden FLUXUS 1982* (Wiesbaden/Berlin: Harlekin Art/Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD, 1983): 153.

53. Robert Watts, "Hospital Events (1963)," in Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus Codex*: 551.
54. Sara Seagull suggests that *Hospital Events* was originally a "private entertainment for G.M. [George Maciunas] when in hospital. It was like kids' play with caps." Seagull, fax to the author, September 3, 2002.
55. Ibid. George Maciunas letter to Tomas Schmit, early June 1963.
56. Susan Jarosi, "Selections from an Interview with Billie Maciunas," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 207.
57. Ibid: 205.
58. Billie Hutching Maciunas made available to me entries from her diary that pertained to this aspect of her life with George Maciunas.
59. Ibid.
60. Susan Jarosi, "Selections from an Interview with Billie Maciunas," in *The Fluxus Reader*: 207-208.
61. I presented several versions of this section of this essay at the following venues and under the following titles: "To See Knowing: Dissociative Consciousness, Parapsychology, and Art," College Art Association Annual Meeting, New York, 2000; "Dissociation, Multidimensional Consciousness, and the Mediation of Art and Technology: Larry Miller, a Case Study," The Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, 2000; and "Mimesis and Media," Wro International Media Biennale, Wro Center for Media Art, Wroclaw, Poland, 2000.
62. Discussion with Larry Miller, October 16, 2000, New York City. Most of the biographical information in this essay comes from this discussion unless otherwise noted.
63. Larry Miller, e-mail to the author, May 10, 2001. Unless otherwise noted, most of the information about the inspiration for *Stone* comes from this e-mail.
64. Ronald Batson, conversation with the author, summer 1992. See Susan Roth and Ronald Batson, *Naming the Shadows: A New Approach to Individual and Group Psychotherapy for Adult Survivors of Childhood Incest* (New York: Free Press, 1997).
65. For an extensive bibliography and key professional texts on the subject of trauma, see John P. Wilson and Beverley Raphael, eds., *International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes* (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1993).
66. Nightmares are a classic symptom of incest, and an extensive literature exists on the relation between them. Indeed, continued nightmares are often one of the first symptoms of incest. For a general discussion of this phenomenon, see Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence—from domestic abuse to political terror* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).
67. I also think that more scholarship should be undertaken on the relationship between trauma in Maciunas's past and its impact on his Fluxus works of art and performances. See Jarosi: 207-208.
68. While this is not the place to explore the relationship between the prominent role of anomaly in Fluxus and the traumatic underpinnings of many of these artists' lives, it is worth mentioning that among Fluxus artists trauma is rampant. The most immediate examples include Ono, Flynt, Maciunas, Vostell, Paik, and Tudor.
69. For an extensive list of diagnostic questions related to traumatic disorders, including questions pertaining to the paranormal, see the Colin A. Ross Institute for Psychological Trauma Web site: <http://www.rossinst.com/dddquest.htm>.
70. Kenneth Ring, *Heading Toward Omega: In Search of the Meaning of the Near-Death Experience* (New York: W. Morrow, 1984).
71. Larry Miller, e-mail to the author, July 21, 2002. These experiences led Miller to study C.G. Jung's *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963).
72. Larry Miller, telephone conversation with the author, August 13, 2002.
73. Miller discovered Lao-Tzu in high school and was struck by one of the most beautiful Lao-Tzu texts: "Thirty spokes unite in one hub; It is precisely where there is nothing, that we find the usefulness of the wheel. We fire clay and make vessels; It is precisely where there's no substance, that we find the usefulness of clay pots. We chisel out doors and windows; It is precisely in these empty spaces, that we find the usefulness of the room. Therefore, we regard having something as beneficial; But having nothing as useful." Lao-Tzu, *Te-Tao Ching*. Translated, with an Introduction and Commentary by Robert G. Henricks (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989): 63.
74. Larry Miller, unpublished transcripts of psychometric readings of *Stone* and *Lines to Grow*. One of the psychics asked if Miller's rock came from the moon, perhaps telepathically reading Miller's inspiration for the project while looking at rocks from the moon in the Smithsonian.
75. Larry Miller, e-mail to the author, July 21, 2002.
76. Ibid.
77. As Miller points out in the video, an Airedale held the record for "thinking animals" (animals that can count, spell, and do other cognitive acts involving memory and knowledge) until Jim's feats.
78. There are many public records of the feats of Jim, and the Jim the Wonder Dog Memorial Park was unveiled on May 1, 1999, located on the spot where his home, the Hotel Ruff, once stood on the downtown square of Marshall, Missouri. Among other writings, see Larry Mueller, "Jim, the Wonder Dog," in *Outdoor Life* 53, (August 1985): 99-102; Henry N. Ferguson, "Jim the Wonder Dog," www.john-bauer.com/jim.htm; <http://www.roadsideamerica.com/pet/jim.html>.
79. For more detailed research on psychic animals, see Robert L. Morris, "Psi and Animal Behavior: A survey," *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 64:3 (July 1970): 242-260; Rupert Sheldrake, *Seven Experiments That Could Change the World: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Revolutionary Science* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1995); Rupert Sheldrake, *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home and other Unexplained Powers of Animals* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1999); and J. Moussaieff Masson and Susan McCarthy, *When Elephants Weep: The Emotional Lives Of Animals* (London: Cape, 1994).
80. Larry Miller, unpublished "Notation on Two Photo-Document Panels of *Mom-Me*," 1973.
81. Larry Miller, e-mail to the author, July 21, 2002.
82. Larry Miller, "Mom's Feet: My Hands," in *As If the Universe Were an Object, Larry Miller: Selected Works: 1969-1985* (Richmond, Virginia: Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University): 20.
83. Larry Miller, letter to Susan Ryan, 1995.
84. Ibid.
85. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (1896), Translation by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988).
86. See Sigmund Freud, "Screen Memories," (1899) in James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Freud*, Vol. 3 (London: Hogarth Press, 1966-1974): 303-322.
87. Such paradoxical behaviors of mind also parallel the operations of matter, a point I discussed in a paper entitled "To See Knowing: Dissociative Consciousness, Parapsychology, and Art," at the College Art Association Annual Meeting in New York,

2000. For example, David Albert, a professor of theoretical physics at Columbia University, and Bryan Loewer, a philosopher from Rutgers University, have discussed conditions of nonlocality in "the micro-world of subatomic particles." Describing the behavior of electrons in "super-position," they stated that an "electron is located somewhere, but it is not located in any particular place," a behavior that is "paradoxical and strange." If the properties of an electron in super-position are thought of metaphorically as a question of color, they note, then to say that those properties are either blue or green would be false. For in super-position electrons require an entirely different mode of thinking, a model that would identify them as "nor both nor neither." Albert and Loewer add, "What is going on here is that we are being forced to confront odd (and metaphysically odd) claims about the structure of the world by the mathematical structure of our best scientific theory of how the world operates." See Albert, D. and Loewer, B., "Physics and Philosophy with Wayne Pond," on *Soundings*, National Public Radio, 1989. Similarly the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Laboratory program calls for a "generously expanded model of reality . . . one that regards many of the concepts of observational quantum mechanics, most importantly the principles of complementarity and wave mechanical resonance, as fundamental characteristics of consciousness, rather than as intrinsic features of an objective physical environment." See the statement by PEAR "Scientific Study of Consciousness-Related Physical Phenomena." At <http://www.princeton.edu/~pear>.
88. Jacques Lacan, "Of the Gaze as Object Petit à," in Jacques-Alain Miller, ed., *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*. Translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988): 67-122.
89. D. Spiegel, "Introduction," in D. Spiegel, ed., *Dissociation: Culture, Mind, and Body* (Washington, D.C. and London: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1994): ix.
90. M.H. Erdelyi, "Dissociation, Defense, and the Unconscious," in D. Spiegel, ed., *Dissociation*: 3. See B.G. Braun, "Multiple Personality Disorder and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Similarities and Differences," in J.P. Wilson and B. Raphael, eds. *The International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes* (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1993): 35-36, 583.
91. D.J. Bem and C. Honorton, "Does Psi Exist? Replicable Evidence for an Anomalous Process of Information Transfer," *Psychological Bulletin* 115:1:4 (19-): 14-8.
92. See Kristine Stiles, "Corpora Vilia: Valie Export's Body," in *Valie Export's Visual Syntagmatics* (Philadelphia: Goldie Paley Gallery, Moore College of Art and Design): 16-33. See also Kristine Stiles, "Shaved Heads and Marked Bodies: Representations from Cultures of Trauma" (1993) in Jean O'Barr, Nancy Hewitt, Nancy Rosebaugh, eds., *Talking Gender: Public Images, Personal Journeys, and Political Critiques* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996): 36-64, and http://www.duke.edu/~awe/shaved_heads.html.
93. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*. Tom Conley, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988): 257.
94. C.A. Ross, "Dissociation and Physical Illness," in D. Spiegel, ed., *Dissociation: Culture, Mind, and Body* (Washington, D.C. and London: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1994): 173.
95. Jim Schnabel, *Remote Viewers: The Secret History of America's Psychic Spies* (New York: Dell, 1997): 15.
96. Many performance artists are interested in, or state that they possess, various forms of nonlocal consciousness traditionally associated with psychic phenomena. A short list includes Marina Abramovic, Joseph Beuys, John Duncan, Michel Journiac, Paul McCarthy, Linda Montano, Raphael Montañez Ortiz, and Ulricke Rosenbach. On these subjects, see Kristine Stiles, "Uncorrupted Joy: International Art Actions," in *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object, 1949-1979* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998): 226-328.
97. Jean Sellem has researched the relationship between Fluxus and the Kabbalistic numerical system. See Jean Sellem, ed., "Fluxus Research," special issue of *Lund Art Press* 2:2 (1991): 53-63.
98. Ibid.
99. Larry Miller, telephone conversation with the author, August 13, 2002.
100. Louise Bourgeois, "Select Diary Notes 1960-1979," in *Louise Bourgeois: Destruction of the Father, Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews 1923-1997*, edited and with texts by Marie-Laure Bernadac and Hans-Ulrich Obrist (Cambridge: MITY Press, 1998): 72.
101. See Lucy Lippard, "Louise Bourgeois: From the Inside Out," *Artforum* 13 (March 1975): 26-33.
102. Louise Bourgeois, "Child Abuse (Portfolio)," *Artforum* 21 (December 1982): 40-47.
103. This is not an exaggeration of the importance of Miller's *Mom-Me*, as Bourgeois clearly maintained a keen interest in Fluxus in general and even attended Maciunas's *Flux Wedding*, as well as his memorial service at the crematorium, all in 1978.
104. Larry Miller, e-mail to the author, May 10, 2001.
105. Ibid.
106. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*: 14.
107. For writings by artists on this subject, see the special issue "Art and Healing," which I edited for *WhiteWalls: A Magazine of Writings by Artists* 25 (Spring 1990).
108. Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne, "Science of the Subjective," *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 11:2 (1997): 201-224, reprinted at <http://www.princeton.edu/~pear/sos.pdf>.
109. Rupert Sheldrake, Terence McKenna, and Ralph Abraham, *Chaos, Creativity, and Cosmic Consciousness*. (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 1992, 2001).
110. Yoko Ono, e-mail to the author, July 3, 2002.
111. I have had numerous conversations with Schneemann about the parapsychological foundations of her art in which the artist expressed the fear of being considered "nuts" for exposing that aspect of her inspiration and knowledge.