Emilie Morin

'Look Again': Indeterminacy and Contemporary British Drama

The integration into conceptual art of techniques inspired by Fluxus (the international aggregate of artists who saw indeterminacy as imaginatively and linguistically enabling) has, in turn, given rise to a specific line in British playwriting since the mid-1990s, as evidenced in plays by Martin Crimp, Sarah Kane, and Tim Crouch which gesture towards conceptual art, performance art, and the event score. In this article Emilie Morin brings to light the affinities between this artistic moment in contemporary British theatre and the international avant-garde. She discusses the shared interest of Crimp, Kane, and Crouch in indeterminacy and the fusion between artistic media, paying particular attention to Crouch's redefinition of the status of the modern artwork in his play for galleries *England* (2007). Critical recognition of the experimental mode in which these playwrights operate has remained subsumed under a non-specific appreciation of their relationship to conceptual art, leaving important questions of form and legacy unaddressed. Here, the proximity between this marginal trend in British playwriting and developments in experimental music and performance art exploring ideas of indeterminacy is highlighted, and the contemporary problematization of performance as event and concept is reconfigured in relation to the legacies of Marcel Duchamp, John Cage, and Fluxus. Emilie Morin is Lecturer in the Department of English and Related Literature at the University of York and the author of *Samuel Beckett and the Problem of Irishness* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Her research interests lie in European modernism and the avant-garde.

TIM CROUCH's *England* (2007), a play conceived for art galleries, pivots upon an intransitive exigency: 'Look.' The imperative remains unfulfilled, however, and it is the ear, rather than the eye, that is called upon to appreciate the gallery visit led by two guides, both acknowledged as actors in the script.[1] Their narrative fuses the surrounding gallery exhibition with other, unvisualized spaces, among which emerge a duplex in a converted jam factory in London's Southwark, Southwark Cathedral, a hospital corridor, and a stately home in Berkshire. These spaces are traversed by a disembodied, unnamed, and genderless consciousness awaiting a heart transplant, whose life story recaptures the 'cool Britannia' of the early Blair years and involves a wealthy, unnamed, Dutch-American art dealer 'boyfriend', collector of artworks in unspecified media by Marcus Taylor, Gary Hume, Gregory Crewdson, Tacita Dean, and Marc Quinn.

Such carefully tailored name-dropping draws attention to the marketing ploys into which media attention to British conceptual art has been channelled in the wake of Charles Saatchi's 1997 'Sensation' exhibition in London; indeed, most of the artists mentioned in the play featured in 'Sensation', and the published script relates to an Alex Hartley exhibition (another 'Sensation' artist) at the Edinburgh Fruit Gallery, the space for which the play was commissioned.[2] More immediately, the Saatchi connection feeds into Crouch's interrogation of art's problematic status within a free market economy – an economy upon which the very existence of this 'play for galleries' depends: indeed, *England* is conceived to appeal to a global Anglophile audience (a quality consecrated in a 2009 adaptation for the 'World Drama' series of the BBC World Service),[3] and a production involving the author and Hannah Ringham as the two guides has toured in art galleries across the world since the 2007 Edinburgh premiere.

Here, the artwork loses significance precisely by means of its double existence as

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aesthetic object and commercial transaction, and, by virtue of this doubling, becomes a mere cogwheel in the global trade of organs, bodies, and expertise that shapes the architecture of Crouch's England, from the art scene to the National Health Service. A painting by Willem de Kooning, which in Act One is granted a place of honour in the duplex, is offered in retribution for the transplanted heart in Act Two, and unidentified artworks and prints by Bridget Riley, Sam Taylor-Wood, David Hockney, and Damien Hirst – described as 'amazing' and 'so beautiful' – adorn the invoked hospital, surgery, and stately home. The heart transplant also functions as a powerful metaphor for the shortcomings of a global economy whose potential for scientific and artistic innovations emerges from the unresolved legacy of empire in western Europe: the GP is Indian, the surgeon is Ghanaian, the cardiologist Lebanese, and the new heart was purchased in an unidentified developing country.[4]

The Theatre and Conceptual Art

The play explores realms contiguous to Mark Ravenhill's *pool* (*no water*) of 2006, which dramatizes the politics of a collective of conceptual artists and relies upon an indeterminate text, and Martin Crimp's *Attempts on her Life* (1997), which takes its cue from Jean Baudrillard's interrogation of the commodification of the event and neo-liberalism.[5] *England* goes a step further, presenting the artwork as the central referent in an economy which ascribes financial value to agreeable artistic practice: 'Good art is art that sells,' the boyfriend reportedly states, conveying a vacuity in contemporary thinking about artistic experiment.[6]

A quotation from Brian O'Doherty's seminal study *Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of the Gallery Space* features as an epigraph to the text, a timely reminder of the web of conventions that shape the gaze of the spectator upon the art gallery, and inviting a consideration of the immediate material context of the art object.[7] As in *Attempts on her Life*, the consumerist logic that rules both the distribution and appreciation of the artwork haunts *England* – the literal death of the artist is presented, tongue firmly in cheek, as the sole reliable sign of quality: 'When they're dead, we know for sure they won't be able to paint any more!'[8]

Despite what its title may suggest, *England* aspires to be far more than a play about the state of the nation; its reflection upon neocolonialism remains subordinated to a subtle interrogation of the relation between theatre and conceptual art, outside which its politics cannot be understood. In this respect, *England* is in keeping with Crouch's long-term goals as a playwright: he has previously stressed that the visual arts have gained a critical degree of advancement upon dramatic writing in the twentieth century, and that the theatre should seek to emulate modern art's ability to handle progressive forms.[9]

England goes a step further in this process of exchange and reveals that playwriting can, in turn, do something for conceptual art practice, by uncovering the hegemony of an egalitarian rhetoric illustrated in populist slogans such as 'Art is for all!'[10] The play nevertheless operates in a realm that is far removed from such slogans, and constantly evades the possibility of teleological fulfilment that might be elicited from an alignment between character, narrative, and enactment: the unnamed focal character does not materialize in a stable form, lines are not assigned (meaning that gender is determined by delivery, since the stage directions call for one male and one female 'guide'), and the text requires adjustments with each new venue, depending on the history of the building and the exhibition in which it is performed.[11]

Earlier plays, also involving Crouch as main actor and the interdisciplinary company 'news from nowhere', are similarly rooted in the language and history of conceptual art. *My Arm* (2003) tells of the transformation of a boy into an icon of the London art world; his decision to keep his arm lifted above his head in a gesture of defiance leads him to feature on the cover of *Arts Monthly* at the age of fourteen and, later, to inspire a series of art installations. Oper-

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ating in a similar register, *An Oak Tree* (2005) is titled after Michael Craig-Martin's 1973 installation (a celebration of the indeterminacy of perception), avowedly abides by Marshall McLuhan's adage 'Art is anything you can get away with', and replicates a 1974 performance score by Bruce Nauman, 'Instructions for a Mental Exercise', which also identifies visual perception as the kernel of indeterminacy.[12] Centre stage is a piano stool without its accompanying piano; the absence of instrument hints at the re-imagining of musical performance exemplified in John Cage's 'silent' pieces and La Monte Young's application of chance operations to the piano as physical object in *Compositions 1960*.[13]

Transgression as Cultural Narrative

Because of their embedded specificity, Crouch's plays raise serious questions about the status of artistic experimentation in an economy aimed at the production of intangibles.[14] In the age of immaterial labour, theatre must also reinvent itself, and *England* suggests that conceptual art, like theatre, is inscribed in a wider transformation which abides by the demands of the market: the actor is recycled as both a gallery guide, charged with directing visitors to the gift shop, and a translator. Ceaselessly transfigured, the actor in Crouch's body of writing conveys the difficulties inherent in meeting the demands of the culture economy: performers are replaced with everyday objects sourced from the pockets of audience members in *My Arm*, and a selected member of the audience, rather than improvising, repeats the prompts relayed via headphones or reads from a given script without prior knowledge in *An Oak Tree*.[15] In this context, *England*'s call to 'look' reads as more than a simple imperative, becoming an interrogation of the commodification of art after 'cool Britannia'.

Such sloganeering provided more than a catchphrase for New Labour: indeed, it corresponds to a turn in the history of European neo-avant-gardes, as experimental practices developing from 1960s conceptual art were branded as signifiers of a culture to be 'experienced', and 'Young British Artists' such as Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin became instrumental in a discourse of national rebirth. Ironically, the traumatized and dismembered body – a recurring plastic and dramatic concern – chimed with a visual landscape dominated by representations of rot and decay, reflecting a moment when provocation and transgression became culturally normative for a post-Thatcher generation.

This moment is dramatized in Ravenhill's *pool* (*no water*) of 2006, which tells of the rise and fall of a YBA, and informs the challenges to representation posed by Crimp's *Attempts on her Life* (1997), Sarah Kane's *Crave* (1998), and Crouch's *England* (2007).[16] This logic of transformative experience through transgression also suffused modes of thinking about playwriting, as shown in Aleks Sierz's seminal book, *In-Yer-Face Theatre*; for Sierz, the 1990s marked a golden age in British drama reminiscent of the creative surge that followed John Osborne's 1956 *Look Back in Anger*.[17] Subsequent studies have also approached this period of British theatre as a postponed reaction to the realist aesthetic into which dominant energies in British playwriting had previously been channelled.[18]

In this process, the formal questions raised in a minority of plays which employ a sensory vernacular inherited from conceptual art and experimental music have remained unaddressed. *England* (currently the last instalment in this marginal trend of playwriting) takes to the art gallery some of the conceptual problems that *Attempts on her Life* and *Crave* touch upon; its problematization of performance as event exceeds the boundaries of current critical debate due to its freedom from mimetic representation.

Samuel Beckett's late drama comes to mind when attempting to find precedents for such refusals to succumb to plot-based writing: indeed, Kane's *Crave* follows a structural principle reminiscent of Beckett's *Play*, which presents three heads speaking from beyond the grave, their lines triggered by a revolving spotlight, and Crimp's devising of absent subjects in *Attempts on her Life* and the trilogy *Fewer Emergencies* (2005) recalls the

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narratives of non-visualization in Beckett's *Not I*, *That Time*, *. . . but the clouds . . .* , and *Eh Joe*.[19] Crouch has also expressed admiration for Beckett's exploration of the limits of representation.[20]

However, the crucial point is that these Beckettian undertones are subordinated to an exploration of the potential of indeterminate performance that has very little to do with the realm of playwriting in which Beckett operated. The semblance of kinship with a Beckettian mode of non-representation is merely utilized to signify an estrangement from the diktats of narrative-based realism and a striving towards a type of intermediality which is less inspired by the historical avant-garde than by turbulent offshoots in experimental music and conceptual art – that which *Attempts on her Life* calls the 'so-called radicalism of the sixties stroke seventies': namely, experimentalism grown out of the dialogue between European and American artistic counter-cultures.[21]

These complexities have so far remained unacknowledged; critical discussions have drawn upon Hans-Thies Lehmann's definition of 'postdramatic', which qualifies a rejection of history as teleology and a questioning of mimetic representation.[22] But this term suggests a relatively uncomplicated relationship to European literary modernism, and the mono-disciplinary framework from which it emerges is conceptually and aesthetically limiting when it comes to understanding the functioning of forms of theatre which rely upon indeterminacy as practice, rather than the primacy of plot and character.

A Moment in Late Capitalism

In an attempt to address this aspect of the critical debate, this article contends that the distinctive line in British playwriting which joins *Attempts on her Life*, *Crave*, and *England* interrogates an artistic moment that, in the 1990s, gestured towards John Cage and Fluxus but found itself subsumed into mainstream culture before it found full articulation. There are shared concerns here concerning art's relationship to late capitalism: Fluxist Ken Friedman, for instance, was certainly haunted by demons similar to those of Crouch and Crimp when conceiving his 'Exhibition' (1991), an event score for an exhibition of artworks concealed by a curtain; the viewing fee may vary according to size, fame, market, or insurance value, and the artwork becomes its own referent, existing only as tautology.[23]

The possibility of conceiving new forms of expression by fusing extant modes of representation is handled with extreme caution in *Crave* and *Attempts on her Life*; both plays maintain a residual adherence to the principles of plot construction whose limitations they seek to highlight.[24] As conveyed in M's call, *Crave* explores zones of absence in a manner resonant with *Attempts on her Life* (which was an acknowledged influence): 'No performance needed.'[25] Fleeting interactions between four voices, A, B, C, and M, occur in a space which does not purport to be anything other than the space of the theatre. Physical movement remains unscripted, confining the performance to a location that it cannot transcend (the space of the performance) and to narration rather than enactment; interactions between actors depend upon directorial choices.[26] Gender is partially indeterminate: the play was initially written for two male and two female actors, but Kane later expressed unease about such categorizations.[27]

Speaking of love and death, the voices regurgitate quotations and misquotations from *The Waste Land*, loose references to Beckett's fiction and drama, and popular sayings in Spanish and Serbo-Croatian.[28] As it wallows in the rubble of modernism, the play presents the rehearsal for a subjective mode which can only find materialization in a series of geographically, linguistically, and culturally unmoored anecdotes. Notation and presentation reflect Kane's interrogation of the limits of verbal expression: some lines are exempt from the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spatialization. The text of *4.48 Psychosis* (2000), out of which voices should be extracted for the purpose of performance, goes a step further in its embrace of indeterminacy.

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By contrast, the dissolution of the focal subject in Crimp's *Attempts on her Life* is closely entwined with the voicing of socio-economic concerns. The play is an ensemble of fragmentary 'scenarios' that replicate rhetorical devices commonplace in marketing and advertising, and revolve around an absent 'she', alternately named Anne, Ann, Annie, Anya, and Annushka – all of whom relate to different age groups, nationalities, religions, professions, and political beliefs. 'She' is also the subject of a publicity stunt about 'the *Anny*', a car marketed as a pure experience of speed and comfort. The utilization of fragments relating to a partially undisclosed narrative also dictates content in *Fewer Emergencies*, which is set in a temporal and spatial '*blank*' – namely, the space of the performance.[29] In this instance, however, the number of parts remains finite, unlike in *Attempts on her Life*, which relies upon chance procedures and contextual indeterminacy: its cast should vary in composition from one production to another; numbers are indeterminate; and gender and ethnicity should reflect 'the world beyond the theatre'.[30]

Living Packaged as Investment

Delivery is also indeterminate: lines are not attributed but separated visually by means of hyphens or columns. The boundaries of the text are not finite: the first scenario, entitled 'All Messages Deleted', which restores the memory content of an answering machine and alludes to all the disguises taken by 'she', may be cut. Perhaps tellingly, this is the only scenario which refers to the necessity of looking and listening; however, the words 'look' and 'listen' are no more than conversational injunctions to attend to the content of the message, and sensory experiences remain associated with semantic poverty elsewhere in the text.

From these kaleidoscopic fragments emerges a troubling critique of the ways in which contemporary living is manufactured and packaged as a sensory experience worthy of financial investment. The play owes much to Baudrillard's view of the global consumer society: cultural and social affiliations are articulated through ownership of material goods, and political ideologies and events are reduced to catchphrases channelled by the mass media. In keeping with the passage from Baudrillard's *The Transparency of Evil* cited as epigraph (a passage which, in the original, follows from a damning allusion to Margaret Thatcher's policy in relation to the coal industry), the scenario entitled 'The Threat of International Terrorism' draws a correlation between corporate values and the conversion of common fears into mediatized spectacle. But it does so with a twist: the political void in which Western 'terrorist' Annie evolves is presented as the logical sequel to her childhood faith in God and ownership of a Barbie.

Annie and Crimp's other debased muses do not sustain a momentum of their own as authored creations: any hint at a unifying narrative thread that might suggest sustained political and aesthetic concerns is interrupted as soon as it threatens to surface. This lack of momentum is evidenced in Scenario 11, 'Untitled (100 Words)', a parody of contemporary discourses about conceptual art involving a critical commentary upon an installation of found objects and a multimedia installation which, together, portray the artist's suicide attempts. Critical sterility, rather than artistic innovation, characterizes the exhibit; the absence of a perspective able to qualify the represented disappearance of the artist is emphasized as inherently problematic

> in the context of a *post*-radical, of a post-*human* world where the gestures of radicalism take on new meaning in a society where the radical gesture is simply one more form of entertainment i.e. one more product – in this case an artwork – to / be consumed.[31]

Such territories were previously the preserve of visual artists such as Cindy Sherman: her photographic self-portraits, which derive from Hollywood representations of femininity, present a perpetual identity crisis, in which the artist is ceaselessly caught in different scenarios and costumes, her face remaining strikingly expressionless. Emulating Sherman's work, *Attempts on her Life*

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probes new zones relating to the direction and nature of the gaze: the very refusal of the subject to yield to the eye and the ear of the spectator becomes the guiding principle of the performance.

Following from *Attempts on her Life* and *Crave*, whose narrative impulse originates from evoking the termination of life, *England* is predicated on imagining an agonizing body. Audience mobility is endowed with meaning: the interval, during which audience members are invited to walk to another room within the gallery, marks a progression from ill-health to full health, after a successful heart transplant, and from 'England' to a hotel room in an unidentified developing country.

At the term of the journey, the disembodied, anonymous consciousness of Act One materializes in Act Two as a character called 'English'. This character, alternately played by the male and female actors, attempts to converse with the non-English-speaking wife of the deceased organ donor, figured by the audience, through the intermediary of a translator, also played in turn by both actors. Crouch's representation of simultaneous translation is certainly indebted to *Attempts on her Life*, which also includes translation scenes dealing with forms of embodiment and disembodiment, embracing realms as varied as pornography and the car industry.

However, there is a light-heartedness to Crouch's portrayal of simultaneous translation which is absent from Crimp's play, for within the gallery space casual comments about looking and space become tinged with irony, as evidenced in English's reply to the Mancunian translator who states that s/he lives 'here': 'Here! Bloody hell! Good on you!'[32] Likewise, the double meaning of the collective 'they', relating to the exotic and possibly veiled wife, and to the silent audience, is played upon: 'Hard to see how they're feeling with just the eyes. . . . How am I meant to have a proper conversation when I can't even – '.[33]

Constructing and Demolishing the Scenario

The painting by de Kooning, the pride and joy of the Dutch-American boyfriend, provides narrative continuity: English offers the painting to the wife in retribution for the heart of her husband, Hassam, the organ donor, who died in an explosion outside a Marriott hotel. It is suggested that Hassam's life might have been saved if his healthy heart had not been an available commodity and if adequate care had been at hand, but the hypothesis is no sooner sketched out than defused. The Iraq war looms large, yet any definition the text affords operates in the negative, by means of lack and absence: the unidentified country in which the encounter takes place is characterized by a lack of healthcare provision; a population scattered between Germany, France, and Afghanistan; the presence of American officials upon its soil; explosions which target officials and civilians alike; and the ready availability of Coca-Cola and Marriott hotels.

The undesired and unsolicited exchange of the heart against an artwork whose financial cost is beyond measure thus becomes a means of establishing a correlation between neo-colonialism and the prosperity of 'cool Britannia'. But attempting to ascribe clear political intentions to the play is self-defeating and leads only to outlining an agenda of exorbitant scope which the play does not fulfil, since its concern with the workings of late capitalism is subsumed under a relentless interrogation of the possible alternatives to performance as teleological progression.

If the attempt to eradicate narrative causality remains the motor force of dramatic experimentation in *England*, as in *Crave* and *Attempts on her Life*, this is precisely because this aim cannot be fully achieved. Indeed, the subversion of teleological narrative is enabled by a residual reliance on plotlines relating to love, death, exploitation, miscommunication, and incomprehension, which, in their repudiation, make way for a complex representation of the processes of cognition and perception involved in the construction and demolition of a dramatic 'scenario'.

Such an enterprise involves a radical questioning of the modalities of the dramatic script: speakers or voices are marked as single capitals in *Crave* and numbers in *Fewer*

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Emergencies, and remain unmarked within the text apart from the occasional hyphen and space in *Attempts on her Life* and *England*, as in *4.48 Psychosis*. Contextual indeterminacy is built into content, turning these plays into 'occurrences' dependent upon exterior situations and decisions facilitated by indeterminacy in the script: the impersonal player merely executes a self-governing piece and, as such, nothing is more specific than the event of performance.

Fluxus and the Intermedial

In order to understand the influences shaping the problematization of performance to be found in Crimp, Kane, and Crouch, one needs to turn to the utilization of indeterminate procedures in specific strands of conceptual art and experimental music. The radical re-imagining of the architecture of performance that took place with Fluxus is relevant to this mode of playwriting, particularly the exploration of that which Dick Higgins, drawing on Samuel Taylor Coleridge, defines as 'intermedia'.[34] This notion, for Higgins, has distinctive ideological aims: writing in 1965, he argues that the looming failure of American industrial capitalism called for a new kind of social dialogue and, more specifically, for an urgent reconsideration of the compartmentalization of media and disciplines.

Citing Duchamp's ready-mades as the inspiration for intermedial work within Fluxus, Higgins emphasizes that the artistic revolution evidenced in contemporaneous American artistic practice has fostered a novel relationship between the observer and the work, as illustrated in the de-collages of Allan Kaprow and Robert Rauschenberg, which alter, substitute, and remove parts of a given work, integrating the spectator into the artistic process. Intermedial work necessarily involves a performative element, yet its progression within the dramatic arts has been thwarted by institutional reflexes, among which Higgins singles out the proscenium theatre, an 'outgrowth of seventeenth-century ideals of social order' responsible for a mechanistic divide among 'performers, production people, a separate audience and an explicit script', and, more importantly, undue adherence to narrative causality.[35]

To foster new dramatic forms, what is required is indeterminacy divested from improvisation, a strategy that Higgins adopts in *Stacked Deck* (1958), a sequential piece in which any event can take place at any time, as long as a cue appears in the form of a coloured light. Defining indeterminacy as concept rather than practice raised intractable problems of methodology for Higgins and his contemporaries, problems which could only be addressed within a practice able to account for the parasitic and accidental variables involved in performance. The possibility of defining indeterminacy in musical performance was a particular concern for John Cage, and his controversial lecture 'Indeterminacy' (1958) illustrates the problems inherent in defining such a versatile concept.

Here, indeterminacy is defined incrementally, with considerable care and precision and by means of example. Cage moves from Johann Sebastian Bach's *The Art of the Fugue* (1740s) to the modern period, evoking his own *Music of Changes* (1951), Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Klavierstück XI* (1956), and Christian Wolff's *Duo II for Pianists* (1958). Differences of form, method, and content are hailed as demonstrating the necessity of embracing an industrial age, and industrial capitalism provides a frame of reference for thinking about the role of the performer and the possibilities of sound: the performer is compared to a contractor following an architect's blueprint; a driver through a series of traffic lights; a photographer; a traveller in a train station.

At the same time, chance and indeterminacy are acknowledged as controlled processes fashioned by cultural and institutional reflexes, and conventions of European music such as the twelve-tone octave and rhythm consistency are presented as hindering the creation of unforeseen situations which might arise from chance operations or indeterminate notation – the term 'chance operations' here referring to the use of random

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procedures in composition or performance, while 'indeterminacy' relates to the ability of a written piece to be performed in different ways, each unique, and to the diversity of opportunities that are given to the performer in order to realize the piece.[36]

Rethinking the Morphology of Performance

For Cage, then, awareness of the limitations of European musical conventions enables the composer and performer(s) to rethink the morphology of performance and to conceive actions without motive and whose outcome is unforeseen.[37] The relation between indeterminacy, chance, and empowerment is handled with similar care and precision: any musical performance which makes space for the unexpected, unwritten, or unplanned re-empowers the piece, enabling a discovery of its 'true centre': indeed, for Cage, the passage from composer to score, score to performer, and performer to listener imposes power relations which ought to be disarticulated in order to leave performer(s) and audience to work away from traditional understandings of expression.[38] Cage's *0'00" (or 4'33" No. 2)* of 1962 illustrates how such empowerment might arise: the score blurs the boundaries between musical and non-musical sound, and its central imperative – 'perform a disciplined action' – brings to light the uneasy relation between the demand that throws the performance into existence and the factors upon which enactment is predicated.[39]

The event scores written by artists of the Fluxus group, initially inspired by Cage's forays into textual notation, also relied upon short didascalia, chance operations, and the blurring of the boundaries between the musical and the non-musical.[40] The many anthologies of event scores evidence a shared attempt among a wide diversity of international artists to re-contextualize as performance simple actions and situations: the core subjects are seeing and hearing (perception as event); space (performance space as event); chance (chance procedures as performance); the potential occurrence of the event (the event does not have to occur).

Textual notation does not circumscribe the realization of the event within given parameters and the possibility of performance is not taken for granted; for instance, Eric Andersen's 'Opus 13' (1961) states: 'Do and/or don't do something universally.'[41] Explicit political concerns are confined to messages of peace; Jackson Mac Low's 'Social Project 2' (1963), for example, calls for an end to the Vietnam War: 'Find a way to end war. Make it work.'[42]

Playing with the Performance

The disruption of museums, theatres, and art galleries ranked as a priority in 1960s Fluxus projects, providing a template for a series of pranks involving a generic audience to be played *with* as opposed to played *to* – an endeavour which certainly resonates powerfully with Crouch's own experiments with the collective audience.[43] Ay-O's undated 'Exit' series, for instance, is intended to supplement another performance in a parasitic manner, testing the reactions of audience members before an announced performance by making them walk over ropes, soap suds, or through a room in which the ceiling has been substantially lowered.[44] Stagecraft provides the basis for the undoing of a dramatic work in Ken Friedman's 'Theater Exercise' (1989): the actors carry all scenery with them, put the stage set together, and then take it apart while the play is in progress.[45]

By contrast, Ben Vautier's theatre events involve catastrophic situations which are designed to prevent the theatrical performance from taking place and mock the social conventions that shape theatregoing: his propositions range from the theft of audience members' possessions ('Hold-Up', 1964) to the public auction of the theatre building ('Sale', 1962).[46] The prank might also target the Fluxus artist: on no occasion was the figure of the performer more reviled than during Robin Page's 'Merry Christmas '66', an event which involved assistants 'dumping' gifts from benefactors over the author, who would, when possible, greet deliveries with gratitude.[47]

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In other instances, the obligatory deference of the artist to the public *becomes* the performance: Peter Frank's undated 'Thank You Piece', in which the voice that gives instructions, prompts the performance, and thanks the audience for its completion becomes the performance, acknowledging the lowly status of the artist-entertainer:

> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Thank you
> Politeness is no crime[48]

Other Fluxus text scores demand the disappearance of the performer; Bicci Forbes's 'Become Invisible' (1966), for instance, is a list of possible means through which invisibility might be achieved: hiding, sinking into the floor, becoming someone else, or 'ceasing to exist', for example.[49] Jed Curtis's undated 'Music for Wise Men', which simply states, 'Commit suicide,' reads as a foreboding of Crimp's and Kane's questioning of the very possibility of staging death and absence in any mode other than presence.[50]

A Challenge to the Act of Watching

For Crimp, Kane, and Crouch, as for the Fluxus artists, the gaze is an object of curiosity to be experimented with, confronted, and translated into a variety of modes beyond the visual. The idea that performance should operate as a challenge to the act of watching has been explored in productions of *Attempts on her Life* relying upon the use of projection screens, while performances of Kane's *4.48 Psychosis* have utilized a slanted mirror hung so as to offer the audience a double image – of the stage as well as themselves.[51]

Similarly, performances of *England* have played upon the power of glass or mirrored surfaces within the gallery space to reflect the image of audience members back towards themselves, and Crouch has been particularly forceful in his call for the necessity of giving the audience 'a greater sense of its own authority in relation to what it is seeing'.[52] His attempt to transform the dynamics of performance is also a repudiation of what he deems 'an artificial state', emerging from conventions ruling the representation of presence in the West, which pay no heed to the indeterminacy of the human component, to what he calls 'the tensions, the blocks, the trapped voice, the wonky features'.[53] In *England*, an incidental interaction with a necessarily imperfect audience is written into the script; the audience is momentarily invited to respond to the visit: 'Any questions?'[54] The illusion that the observer might evolve from the passive into the active is entertained throughout; the audience is eventually 'translated' into the performance and becomes a protagonist *without* active participation, recalling Cage's surrender to indeterminacy and chance.

Crouch's malleable audience, whose passivity is presented as a quality of activity, also owes much to Fluxus; indeed, translating the spectator into a performative occurrence was a staple of 1960s Fluxus events: Yoko Ono's 'Audience Piece' (1962) asks that performers stare at individual audience members until the latter avert their eyes; Robert Bozzi's 'Choice 18' (1966) demands that performers use mirrors to reflect the audience to itself; Ken Friedman's 'Card-music for Audience' (1966) replaces performers with audience members in random order, the performers having to ensure their own replacement.[55] Ben Vautier's audience pieces (1964–65) take the process of undoing further; 'Concerto for Audience by Audience' (1965) invites the audience to 'come to the stage, take instruments that are provided to them, sit on the orchestra seats and play for three minutes', concluding that 'if the audience does not respond to the invitation, instruments should be distributed to them'.[56] Audience members, having spurred the per-

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formance into being, are thus faced with the possibility of enacting another performance themselves.

Such a blurring of the lines between performer and audience had profound implications for experimental music. In Britain, it provided an impulse for collectives such as the Scratch Orchestra and, later, the Portsmouth Sinfonia, which mixed the formally trained and the untrained, and recruited members from cross-sections of the population, performing in community centres and social clubs across Britain.[57] The radical innovations of the composers associated with these collectives are illustrated in the 1972 *Verbal Anthology* published by the Experimental Music Catalogue (EMC), which gathers unperformed pieces and pieces performed by individual composers, groups, or the Scratch Orchestra.[58]

Here, performance is predicated upon the failure of musical sound and/or upon an interrogation of the relation between unarticulated noise, incidental sound, and spatiality of instruments. It is suggested that performance can free itself from the medium enabling its very existence: Gavin Bryars's 'Singer's Page' is a score for a singer that does not involve singing but a reflection upon the sonic properties of a text written as stream-of-consciousness, while his 'Dancer's Page' is a score for a dancer that does not involve dancing, but relinquishing choreographed bodily movement. Another piece by Bryars entitled 'The Heat of the Beat' confines performance to a unique occurrence: instruments should be submitted to a wide range of temperature treatments, and the piece terminates once consonance occurs consistently during the performance (or 'following illness, severe discomfort, or excessive perspiration odour from any performer').[59]

By contrast, the instructions for performance in Robert Ashley's 'The Entrance' question the very possibility of its realization: the score ends with a series of questions concerning the nature of the score and whether it should, indeed, *be* performed. Ashley invites the performer to reflect upon 'the relationship between the work of producing the sounds and the sound world created by the composition'.[60] Directions are provided: the performer should 'retain the notion of the composition as work performed, but eliminate the notion of a performance, and eliminate the act of performing'.[61] The text thus develops from the negation of its possible existence as performance and from the acknowledgement of the plurality of its being *as score*.

Performance as Self-Critique

This ability to conceive of performance as a process engaged in self-critique is relevant to the category of experimental plays discussed here, and it is important to acknowledge that these playwrights' attempts to expose the processes and conventions which sustain the event of performance participate in a complex artistic history which engenders particular types of fusion between form and content. However, if the artistic projects of Cage, Fluxus artists and EMC composers originate in the possibility of finding performers and audiences willing to engage with visual and sonic nuances that do not have a narrative basis, such possibility has a quasi-utopian status for Kane, Crimp, and Crouch. Their plays were not born of a conviction that non-narrative based playwriting might be sustainable, but of weariness with the conventional modes of dramatic representation.

Thus, Crimp has stressed that, when he began work on *Attempts on her Life*, he had become increasingly 'bored' with psychological drama and 'so-called cutting-edge theatre' as well as with 'the normal way of writing'; namely, '"he said" and "she said" dialogues'.[62] *Crave* was also born out of frustration with dramatic realism: parts of the play were originally written in 'musical notation, only the rhythm without the actual words'.[63] Kane stated that she knew the rhythm, but not the word content, and that the content developed from the rhythm – a method that recalls the indeterminate notation developed by Fluxist Jackson Mac Low in his 'asymmetries'.[64]

In *Crave*, this striving towards sound divested from narrative is momentarily

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brought to the fore with the occurrence of a series of 'short syllable screams'.[65] At this moment, the play drifts from the established parameters of the performance into unarticulated sound and emulates a cameo performance piece, the indeterminate instructions for which constitute the very text. A similar moment is summoned into being in Dick Higgins's 'Danger Music Number Seventeen' (1962): 'Scream! Scream! Scream! Scream! Scream! Scream!'[66]

The disconnect between the exigency which pushes the performance into being and the indeterminate components that the realization of such a performance necessitates surfaces at another point in *Crave*. The missing target for the eye and the ear (for there is indeed no defined entity to look at and listen to) is brought to life through its very absence:

B Look.
C Listen.[67]

An entropic sensory space comes into being with these imperatives for which an object cannot be found, since these demands nevertheless necessitate an external point of convergence between the senses, an agent able to act.

Rethinking the Architecture of Performance

England goes a step further in its reliance upon an intransitive mode by repeatedly asking the audience to 'look': the demand encompasses that which can be narrated but not visualized and, in so doing, hints at the need for creating a category of visual performance divested from dramatic language. Just as Crouch urges his spectator to look, in 1960 Dennis Johnson urged his audience to '*LISTEN*' in a one-word musical score whose execution was entirely independent from the composer, thus eliminating, as Branden Joseph points out, the very last residues of a language specific to music.[68]

Crouch's elaboration of a site-specific performance within the art gallery is solidly rooted in a long history of experimentation which gathers composers and conceptual artists beyond the Fluxus movement. There are indeed several precedents for Crouch's exploration in *England* of the malleability of the gallery space and attempt to foster a new mode of looking. Bruce Nauman, for instance, conceived a 'Dance Piece' project in 1970 which involved hiring a dancer who would perform daily exercises in a gallery space after the public had been evacuated.[69] The score ends with a remark upon the malleability of the gaze which emphasizes the precedence of mode of perception over thing perceived.

Going further still, Edward Kienholz's polemical series 'The Art Show' (1963–77) denounces the commercialization of the artwork. The piece began as a concept tableau which gave instructions for a gallery event, including the cost of the artwork and the artist's wages; this tableau was then realized as an installation based on an exhibition of paintings and mixed-media collages by Kienholz, 'attended' by nineteen life casts of critics, collectors, and personalities of the art world in the 1970s, many cradling punch and cigarettes. Their mouths have been replaced by air-conditioning vents taken from cars, turning them into mere toys at the mercy of the gallery visitor; the touch of a button activates the vents, which blow hot air into the room, as well as tape recorders, which emit pompous remarks about the exhibition.[70]

By contrast, the presence of the visitor within the gallery space is utilized to *create* sound and image in Christopher Hobbs's 1968 musical score 'To All Who Live in Simple Unpretentious Houses'.[71] Hobbs's piece is conceived to be performed in an art gallery or in 'a situation where the general public is present for a purpose other than that of hearing music'.[72] The performance should take place unannounced in two rooms between which the public moves freely and should consist of the public's incidental contact with microphones and television cameras. Loudspeakers and TV screens in each room broadcast sounds and images received from the other room.

The apparently disparate efforts to rethink the architecture of performance in

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conceptual art, experimental music, and playwriting documented in this article gain new currency when considered in relation to the legacy of Marcel Duchamp – an acknowledged precursor to the radical experiments of Cage and Fluxus, and a formative influence upon Crimp, Kane, and Crouch.[73] The biographical note to the 1998 edition of *Crave* gestures towards Duchamp, stating that Marie Kelvedon (the pseudonym under which Kane initially presented the play) had been 'sent down from St Hilda's College, Oxford, after her first term, for an act of unspeakable Dadaism in the college dining hall', and that her 1996 Edinburgh Fringe Festival debut was 'a spontaneous happening through a serving hatch to an audience of one'.[74]

Even more illuminating is Crouch's assertion that he found inspiration in Duchamp's 'The Creative Act', an essay which defines an 'art coefficient' characteristic of and contained within each work.[75] The concept designates the space separating the 'unexpressed but intended and the unintentionally expressed'; namely, the relation between the work's realization and the absence of an adequate mode of expression able fully to convey the intention preceding the work. The notion thus provides the grounding for an aesthetic of failed intention as a fundamental principle of artistic creation, embedded within the creative process in ways unfathomable to the artist.

The Post-Duchampian Moment

The non-realization of the creator's intention enriches the role of the spectator, whose gaze validates the content of the work; indeed, the external process of deciphering and interpreting contributes to the creative act itself and 'transmutes', to borrow Duchamp's words, 'inert matter' into a work of art.[76] Taking Duchamp's configuration of the artistic process a step further, Crimp, Kane, and Crouch problematize performance as a failed act specifically in relation to perception and, most significantly, linguistic translation: a shared lexicon of failure develops within verbal expression and perception in *Crave*, *Attempts on her Life*, and *England*, and points to these plays as emerging from a post-Duchampian moment which acknowledges the experience in and of art as rhetorical discourse, and articulates itself around the dematerialization of the artwork's finitude.

A degree of weariness intervenes in the formalization of this principle, as evidenced in the utilization of linguistic translation to enable a parodic take on the possibility of enabling multivocity within the text. Echoing Eliot's *The Waste Land*, *Crave* is peppered with lines in languages other than English, including phrases in German and a popular saying in Serbo-Croatian. Textual endnotes recreate the English equivalents to these lines; translation is not conducive to an experiment with meaning, or indeed to the playing out of a political message, but signifies an existential anguish independent of historical and cultural particulars.

The space of translation is also represented as a space already conquered, rather than a space of negotiation, in both *Attempts on her Life* and *England*. *Attempts on her Life* features two representations of simultaneous translation, scenarios entitled 'The New Anny' and 'Pornó', dealing with the car and the pornography industries respectively. These scenarios are partially indeterminate; the source and the target language, alternately, should be chosen among a vast diversity of Eastern European, African, and South American languages. This degree of contextual indeterminacy remains inconsequential: the English counterparts to these lines are scripted. Here, translation merely operates as a simple system of equivalents enabling an exchange of goods; the language, demands, and mode of operation of the transaction are universal.

England goes further in presenting translation as mimicry, albeit within a different kind of economics. The entity being 'translated' in the second act, the audience (representing the wife of the organ donor), necessarily remains silent. All lines are in English, including the translated lines, suggesting that translation can only exist as tautology in a global economy in which

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'Everyone speaks English!' and in which the translator is as replaceable as the actor and the gallery guide.[77]

The boundaries of translatability and intelligibility thus exposed convey profound anxieties about the impact of a free market economy upon artistic practice, and the attempt to formalize these anxieties contributes to the very process of ensnarement into the representational tenets that these plays strive to counter: indeed, the representation of translation calls for at least the residual presence of a linear narrative logic, introducing tensions into what otherwise develops as a non-teleological narrative. More importantly, the predetermined outcome of the translation process provides a ready stock of symbols for imagining a performance that can be sustained without, and in spite of, external validation, while giving the semblance of searching for approval.

Considered against the problematization of performance to be found in Duchamp, Cage and Fluxus, *Crave*, *Attempts on her Life*, and *England* read as tentative gestures towards a history of conceptual art and experimental music which attempts to resist appropriation. It is evident from the critical terminology used to qualify these plays that their endeavours have been misunderstood: the terms 'non-play', 'anti-play', and 'conceptual play' commonly employed in relation to these texts fail to acknowledge the complex legacies which they address. More importantly, the rhetoric of the experiential which underscores such evocations of the 'conceptual' corresponds to an erasure of cultural, artistic, and historical referent, and, as it grows from this absence of referent, critical discourse becomes subsumed into a generic theory of emotions and takes presumed authorial intentionality as its main mode of validation – and in this respect, Crouch's insistence upon presenting his work as 'conceptual' has probably heightened the problem.

For these reasons, it is necessary to acknowledge the centrality of translation, in its many literalized guises, to the particular kind of intermediality explored by Crimp, Kane, and Crouch, since doing so goes some way towards addressing their unshakeable faith in the plasticity of performance as well as the mixture of cynicism, disillusionment, frustration, and boredom that underlies their attempts to problematize it. Ultimately, the crucial point is not to pinpoint the exact nature of the malaise that their experiments with dramatic form might symptomatize, but to acknowledge that their reluctance to succumb to a representational impulse has opened up novel territories for thinking about playwriting.

Notes and References

1. Tim Crouch, *England* (London: Oberon, 2007), p. 13. In performance, Dan Jones's electro-acoustic accompaniment reinforced the play's synaesthetic aspirations.

2. See Brooks Adams *et al*., *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997). Crouch stated that the pun (heart/Hartley) was not deliberate: Tim Crouch, 'No Audience, No Echo', workshop, University of York, 7 November 2008.

3. *England*, by Tim Crouch, directed by Marion Nancarrow, performed by Tim Crouch, Hannah Ringham, Nikki Amuka-Bird, and Janis Acquah, BBC World Service, 13–14 June 2009. In this version, Act Two was altered to accommodate the new medium.

4. It is also useful to note that the motif of the heart transplant has an intertextual dimension: *My Arm* ends with the evocation of a diseased heart.

5. The epigraph is from Jean Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil*, trans. James Benedict (London: Verso, 1993), p. 90–1.

6. Crouch, *England*, p. 29.

7. The epigraph is from Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of the Gallery Space*, revised ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 15.

8. Crouch, *England*, p. 19.

9. Crouch, *My Arm, I Caliban, Shopping for Shoes* (London: Faber, 2003), p. 9–10.

10. Crouch, *England*, p. 18.

11. The script suggests that delivery is indeterminate; however, the touring production is a collaboration between Crouch and Hannah Ringham, and delivery is, to a degree, determined by the parameters of their collaboration. The play's striving towards non-representation has occasionally led to attempts to recreate a measure of realism; in an Italian production, for instance, the actors enacted some of the lines in Act One (Napoli Teatro Festival Italia 2008, directed by Carlo Cerciello, performed by Paolo Coletta and Mercedes Martini).

12. Crouch, *My Arm*, p. 26; Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage: an Inventory of Effects*, 1967 (Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2001), p. 132–6; Crouch, *An Oak Tree* (London: Oberon, 2005), p. 54; Bruce Nauman, 'Instructions for a Mental Exercise', in Janet Kraynack, ed., *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman's Words* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), p. 76.

13. La Monte Young's 'Piano Piece for Terry Riley No. 1', for instance, involves pushing a piano into the

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wall; see La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low, ed., *Anthology of Chance Operations* (New York: La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low, 1963), n.p.

14. In his analysis of the progression from industrial to cognitive capitalism, Yann Moulier Boutang identifies language as the central site of economic production within cognitive capitalism, a correlation relevant to Crouch's play; see Moulier Boutang, *Le Capitalisme cognitif: la nouvelle grande transformation* (Paris: Editions Amsterdam, 2007), p. 33, 48–52, 86–7, 158.

15. Ironically, many renowned actors have played the part of the audience member; see the promotional description featuring at <www.newsfromnowhere.net/shows/an–oak–tree.html>, accessed 30 September 2009.

16. *pool* (*no water*) presents a number of similarities with the texts examined here; however, the play lacks the conceptual complexity which this article attempts to bring to light in relation to Kane, Crimp, and Crouch. It will be kept at the periphery of the argument due to its use of indeterminacy in the script as a way of re-thinking narrative drama. That said, Ravenhill's text also speaks of techniques which recall Fluxus; the injunction 'Throw camera – disgusting thing – through window and eight floors to the street below', for instance, recalls event scores based on throwing away objects of value to the performer. Mieko Shiomi's 'Event for the Late Afternoon' (1963) comes to mind: 'Suspend a violin with a long rope from the roof of a building till it nearly reaches the ground.' See Mark Ravenhill, *Plays: 2* (London: Methuen, 2008), p. 306; Ken Friedman, Owen Smith, and Lauren Sawchyn, ed., *The Fluxus Performance Workbook* (*Performance Research* e-Publication, 2002), p. 95.

17. Aleks Sierz, *In–Yer–Face Theatre: British Drama Today* (London: Faber, 2001), p. 15–35.

18. See Graham Saunders, 'Introduction', in Graham Saunders and Rebecca D'Monté, ed., *Cool Britannia? British Political Drama in the 1990s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), p. 1–2.

19. A particularly striking example is the 'voice in his head' evoked in *Whole Blue Sky* (p. 17), which recalls Beckett's *Eh Joe*.

20. Crouch, 'No Audience, No Echo'. Crouch was also involved in a 1999 performance of *Endgame* at HMP Brixton.

21. Martin Crimp, *Attempts on her Life* (London: Faber, 2007), p. 57. I am here referring to Theodore Roszack's and Lucy R. Lippard's definitions of counter-culture; see Theodore Roszack, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. xii; Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: the Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. vii–xxii.

22. See, for instance, Aleks Sierz, '"Form Follows Function": Meaning and Politics in Martin Crimp's *Fewer Emergencies*', *Modern Drama*, L, No. 3 (2007), p. 380; Stephen Bottoms, 'Authorizing the Audience: the Conceptual Drama of Tim Crouch', *Performance Research*, XIV, No. 1 (2009), p. 68–71.

23. Friedman *et al*., *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 44.

24. Both Crimp and Kane, when attempting to qualify their aims, evoked a generic leaning towards the musical; see Graham Saunders, *Love Me or Kill Me: Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002), p. 17, 81; Aleks Sierz, 'The Question Is the Ultimate in Discomfort', *New Theatre Quarterly*, XXII, No. 4 (2006), p. 352.

25. Graham Saunders, *About Kane* (London: Faber, 2007), p. 49; Sarah Kane, *Complete Plays* (London: Methuen, 2001), p. 173. Intertextual echoes surface; 'larvae of flies' are mentioned in *Attempts on her Life* (p. 8) and 'white larvae' are evoked in *Crave* (p. 175).

26. For example, in Vicky Featherstone's 1998 productions at the Traverse Theatre and the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, all four characters were seated side by side, facing the audience, while Matt Peover's 2004 production at the Battersea Arts Centre presented the quartet drinking at a table. See *Theatre Record*, XXVIII, No. 18 (1998), p. 1152; *Theatre Record*, XXIV, No. 3 (2004), p. 143.

27. Saunders, *About Kane*, p. 79.

28. The repeated line, 'I feel nothing', and the lines 'This has to stop' and 'No one survives life' recall *A Piece of Monologue*, *Play*, *Texts for Nothing*, and *The Unnamable* (p. 156, 158, 170, 187).

29. Martin Crimp, *Whole Blue Sky*, *Face to the Wall*, *Fewer Emergencies* (London: Faber, 2005), p. 5, 23, 39.

30. Crimp, *Attempts on her Life*, p. v.

31. Ibid., p. 58.

32. Crouch, *England*, p. 50.

33. Ibid., p. 50, 60.

34. These developments were actively theorized within Fluxus. Henry Flynt coined the term 'concept art' in 1963, defining it as 'a kind of art of which the material is language', and George Maciunas's Fluxus manifesto of the same year called for the necessity to promote a 'living art' and an 'anti-art' to be 'fully grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes, and professionals'. See Henry Flynt, 'Essay: Concept Art (Provisional Version)', *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, n.p.; George Maciunas, 'Manifesto', in Jon Hendricks, ed., *Fluxus Codex* (Detroit: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, 1988), p. 24.

35. Dick Higgins, 'Intermedia', *Leonardo*, XXXIV, No. 1 (2001), p. 50.

36. Cage has emphasized the fundamental difference between chance and indeterminacy at other points; see Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 78–9.

37. Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan UP, 1961), p. 39.

38. See Branden W. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), p. 81. Theatre, for Cage, encompassed the whole range of human emotions and daily experiences. He perfected forms of musical performance which were in symbiosis with theatrical performance, of which the 'silent' *4′33″* stands as an immediate example.

39. See William Fetterman, *John Cage's Theatre Pieces: Notations and Performances* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1996), p. 84–93.

40. George Brecht's text scores, which provided the initial impulse for Fluxus scores, developed from Cage's classes in experimental composition at the New School for Social Research in New York in 1958. For reproductions of event scores and surveys of the history of Fluxus, see Friedman *et al*., *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*; Jon Hendricks, Marianne Bech, and Media Farzin, ed., *Fluxus Scores and Instructions: the Transformative Years* (Detroit: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, 2008); Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate*.

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41. Friedman *et al.*, *Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 14.
42. Ibid., p. 77.
43. Hendricks *et al.*, *Fluxus Scores and Instructions*, p. 157.
44. Friedman *et al.*, *Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 16.
45. Ibid., p. 44.
46. Ibid., p. 103.
47. Hendricks *et al.*, *Fluxus Scores and Instructions*, p. 116.
48. Friedman *et al.*, *Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 37.
49. Ibid., p. 36.
50. Ibid., p. 32.
51. Some directors have opted for a 'high–tech' mise en scène; others have preferred a bare stage with white lights. The 1997 production at the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs, directed by Tim Albery, relied upon video screens, stage screens, and photographic montage, for instance, whereas the 2004 production directed by Anne Tipton at the Battersea Arts Centre unfolded against an empty backdrop. See *Theatre Record*, XXVII, No. 6 (1997), p. 311; *Theatre Record*, XXIV, No. 3 (2004), p. 960. On the premiere of *4.48 Psychosis* at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, see *Theatre Record*, XX, No. 13 (2000), p. 826.
52. *England*, by Tim Crouch, directed by Karl James and A. Smith, Leeds Met Gallery and Studio Theatre, UK, 6 November 2008; Crouch, *My Arm*, p. 10.
53. Crouch, quoted in Caridad Svich, 'Tim Crouch's Theatrical Transformations: a Conversation', *Hunter Online Theater Review* <www.hotreview.org>, accessed 25 December 2009.
54. Crouch, *England*, p. 31.
55. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate*, p. 100; Friedman *et al.*, *Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 19, 40.
56. Friedman *et al.*, *Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 107.
57. Cardew, 'A Scratch Orchestra: Draft Constitution', in Edwin Prévost, ed., *Cornelius Cardew: a Reader* (Harlow, Essex: Copula, 2006), p. 90–4; Michael Parsons, 'The Scratch Orchestra and Visual Arts', *Leonardo Music Journal*, XI (2001), p. 5–11; Virginia Anderson, *British Experimental Music: Cornelius Cardew and his Contemporaries*, facsimile of MA thesis, August 1983 (London: Experimental Music Catalogue, 2000), p. 53–8, 61, 82–9.
58. Christopher Hobbs, email message to author, 23 October 2009.
59. Robert Ashley, Gavin Bryars, Phil Gebbett, Christopher Hobbs, and Hugh Shrapnel, *Verbal Anthology*, 1972 (London: Experimental Music Catalogue, 2000), p. 11.
60. Ibid., p. 3.
61. Ibid., p. 4.
62. Crimp, quoted in Aleks Sierz, *The Theatre of Martin Crimp* (London: Methuen Drama, 2006), p. 101.
63. Kane, quoted in Saunders, *About Kane*, p. 94.
64. Jackson Mac Low, 'Method for Realizing Indeterminate Asymmetries', *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, n. p.
65. Kane, *Complete Plays*, p. 186–7.
66. Friedman *et al.*, *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*, p. 50.
67. Kane, *Complete Plays*, p. 162.
68. Joseph, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate*, p. 102.
69. Nauman, in Kraynack, p. 59.
70. Edward Kienholz, Nancy Reddin Kienholz, and Walter Hopps, *Kienholz: a Retrospective* (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1996), p. 168–73.
71. The title echoes Emily Post's instructions for party hosts; see Emily Post, *Etiquette: the Blue Book of Social Usage*, 9th ed. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1955), p. 389.
72. Ashley *et al.*, *Verbal Anthology*, p. 31.
73. See Marjorie Perloff, '"A duchamp unto my self": "Writing through" Marcel', in Marjorie Perloff and Charles Junkerman, ed., *John Cage: Composed in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 100–24; Sierz, *The Theatre of Martin Crimp*, p. 160.
74. Sarah Kane, *Crave* (London: Methuen, 1998), p. v.
75. Crouch, 'No Audience, No Echo'.
76. Marcel Duchamp, 'The Creative Act', in Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson, ed., *Essential Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), p. 140.
77. Crouch, *England*, p. 15.

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