

ILYA MONOSOV



PERFORMANCE THINGS SCORES

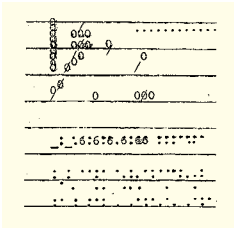
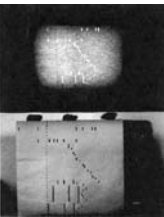
ILYA MONOSOV

PERFORMANCE THINGS SCORES

Music
for
everyone

At first look, Ilya Monosov’s means of artistic expression is music. But if you dig deeper, you’ll see that his work is much more diverse—his pieces are neither a repetition of the same idea, nor are they drowning in a sea of scattered, indiscriminate expressions of all aesthetic styles. Rather, it shows his many artistic connections in musical circles. Pleasantly, he never hides these connections, but flaunts them enthusiastically and aggressively. The end results are not simple imitations of such forebears as John Cage, drone, noise or ambient, that are so often found in the noise music scene (and which bore me terribly). When I listen to his work, I get the impression that it is in a dialogue with, rather than a response to or imitation of, those influences. This dialogue is most of all apparent in Monosov’s unique method of musical experimentation—instead of imitation, new and unique pieces of musical art emerge. These artistic arrangements continue to surprise me in their simplicity and their humor as sound sculptures, as visual scores or as would-be conventionally consumable music that I can listen to. The pieces play with cultural memories and associations that are dismantled and reassembled in a scientifically experimental manner. Their quality lies in the fact that they are not clinical, cold and static, but they speak directly to me, asking me to sit and interact.

This approach is an implicit strategy that is found in all of his works shown here—sort of like the recordings the record stores would classify as “free jazz” or “singer/songwriter,” or as visual-acoustic work. His feel for the materiality of simple objects he works with inspires me, a fine example of which is “TV Piece” (pages 21/22), for which two photos are shown. I thought it was fantastic, that with only three elements—the TV set, the paper tapes and, three small lava stones holding the paper tapes in place—he composed an enviably precise and beautiful piece of music for the eyes. I asked Ilya to sell the piece to me. The idea of owning a television set (at this point I did not even own a television) that made music delighted me. Ilya insisted upon sending me everything (including the TV) at his expense. I thought it was completely absurd to have a TV sent to me from the United States because the shipping alone would have been more than the actual appliance was worth. Finally, months later, a big package arrived in the mail. Unfortunately, the TV was damaged during transport, so I bought a used TV. I got the set home, only to find that it changed the original piece so much that I returned it. I decided that “TV Piece” was meant to be experienced mentally. Since then, it stares darkly at me through the holes in the paper tapes and I imagine the music that goes with it. And I am happy to still not own a working TV.



Another object is “Sounding Record” (pages 35/36). At first glance it reminds me so much of the vinyl pieces of other artists like Milan Knizak or Christian Marclay since it plays with the same material. But to come up with the idea to mount a complete playback mechanism on a record that plays its own music, is more than original. Not only does it play with a quick (Fluxus) wit (that could also quickly fall flat), with a denial of functionality (a boring statement against art) or of an artisanal adaptation of record albums (records as floor covering, fruit bowls or columns, etc). It leads the user up the primrose path. The vinyl becomes the carrier of a delicate composition. The basic trick is that if the dictaphone is turned on incorrectly, it erases Monosov’s composition, and records in situ (in its place). I already deleted parts of the composition by my faulty operation, so that they were lost and were replaced with the noises I made during the failed attempts at playback. To consolidate presence and absence on so small an area astonished me.

Upon cursory examination, the composition *Music for Touch* seems to follow a long tradition of so-called 20th century avant-garde music and poetry, such as the typographically arranged phonetic poems of Dadaist Raoul Hausmann or the “visual music” of Gerhard Ruhm. However, Monosov’s composition demonstrates the potential of music, when it is not understood as a cultural genre, but as an event with a liminal character. The directly tactile effect [of the braille] provokes a change in the way music is experienced, which is new and remarkable. Above all, the composition has a rather interactive value, since it must be read with the fingers and imagined, or, if you will, deliberately constructed. With time, I saw that the raw surface of the white sheets got dirty from repetitive use. First I found this annoying, because I destroyed the pure and formally minimalistic aura of the sheets. The pages now appear worn and spotted. What had originally been clean, embossed printing gradually became a grayish color under my fingers. With every new touch, the originally invisible and imaginary piece transforms itself into a tangible piece that can be visually experienced. The composition gets a firm structure and loses its liminal blurriness.

Marc Schulz
2009

PERFORMANCE 7



Chances of choice #1

2002

I created this environment for the second Lowercase Music Festival in Los Angeles, California. The auditory component was a composition of three sine waves, burned vinyl records, and a modified music box. The visual component consisted of paper ships which I made from sheet music of children's songs. The ships floated on water in various cups and pans. A candle with a light bulb (candle bulb) attached to the top was positioned in front of the piece.



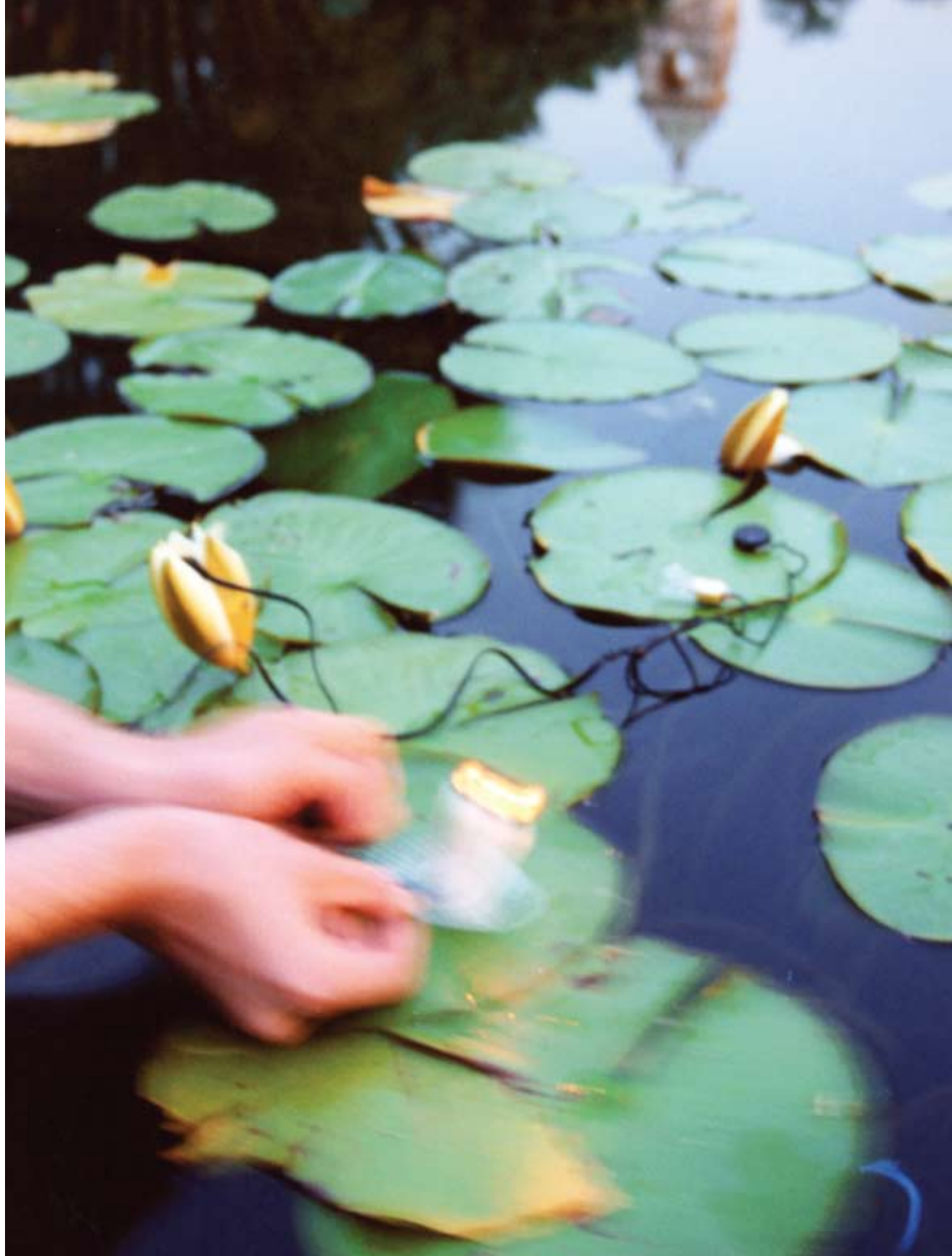
With candlebulbs

1999–2001

In the performance of Action #1 (shown on left and right), I used candle bulbs, small speakers, and light bulbs. The sound source was a composition of sine waves and two vinyl records of test tones. These records were used in the 1970's to test home stereo systems and provided an interesting sound source. I used the sound to power the light bulbs (the audio outputs were split up—and some of the signals were amplified and attached directly to the light source). As the sun set, the pond vibrated with light and sound.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTION #1 FOR CANDLE BULBS AND SOUND:
place candle bulbs on the lily pads in a pond or a small river; after a nightly observation leave candles to sink.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UNTITLED ACTION FOR ONE CANDLE BULB (SHOWN ON BOTTOM): wash hands; wash a small tree; place a green light behind the tree; pour honey on the tree; place candlebulbs around it; observe all night; wash tree in morning; return at night; pour honey over the tree; pour white rice over the tree; repeat cycle again until satisfied, and never return.



Ck.l.m.performance

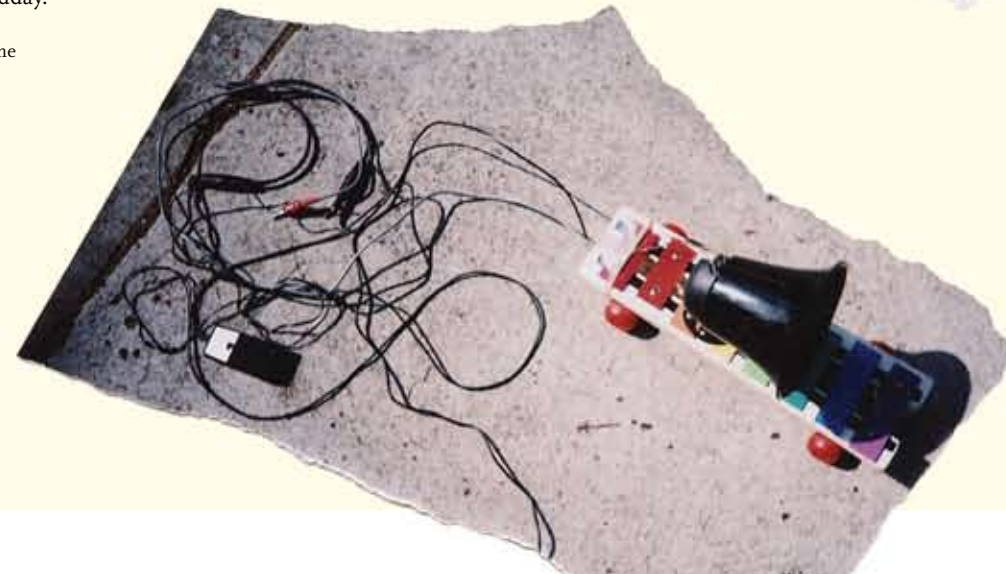
2002

A COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE WITH CIVYIU KKLIU

Our idea was to record the city first, and then to play the recording back into the city-space as performance. I took my train-xylophone and attached a string to the front of it, so that I could pull it along the course of the performance. A large black megaphone, nailed to the top, was used to reintroduce the sound into the environment from which we took it.

1. The geography of both the recording and the performance remained the same.
2. The train xylophone added itself to the performance and can be heard in this document.
3. Besides pulling the device, I also had a tape recorder in my other hand to which I attached a small microphone (m#1) and allowed it to drag on the rough pavement next to the toy train. Much like a record player needle, the microphone transformed the physical characteristics of city-environment into sound.
4. Civyiu Kkliu followed with a large boom stand and another microphone (m#2), closely recording the xylophone, the megaphone*, the dragging mic, and the city at midday.

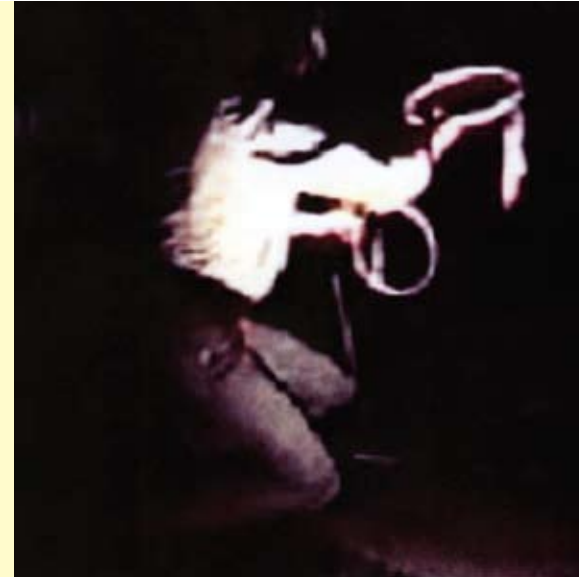
* The initial recording made by CK was an important part of the work. It was not simply a phonographic pursuit, but rather "recording as action", during which the microphone was an instrument connecting the body to the environment.



Silent music

2001—2003

Silent Music is a piece specifically written for a set of objects I created from large dry fruit that grew on a tree in front of my studio in San Diego, California. I saw them dangling from the tree's long limbs casting strange shadows onto the grass and sidewalk. I hung them in wooden rings (you can see me playing the instruments in these photos). I recorded a version of Silent Music with Daniel Hicks and Josh Russell. They played two short-wave radios. In the beginning I played a koto and Thai-whistles, slowly transitioning from these "real" musical instruments to silent music instruments. The objects used in this performance are now owned by Osamu Ibe who runs Gallery 360 in Japan.

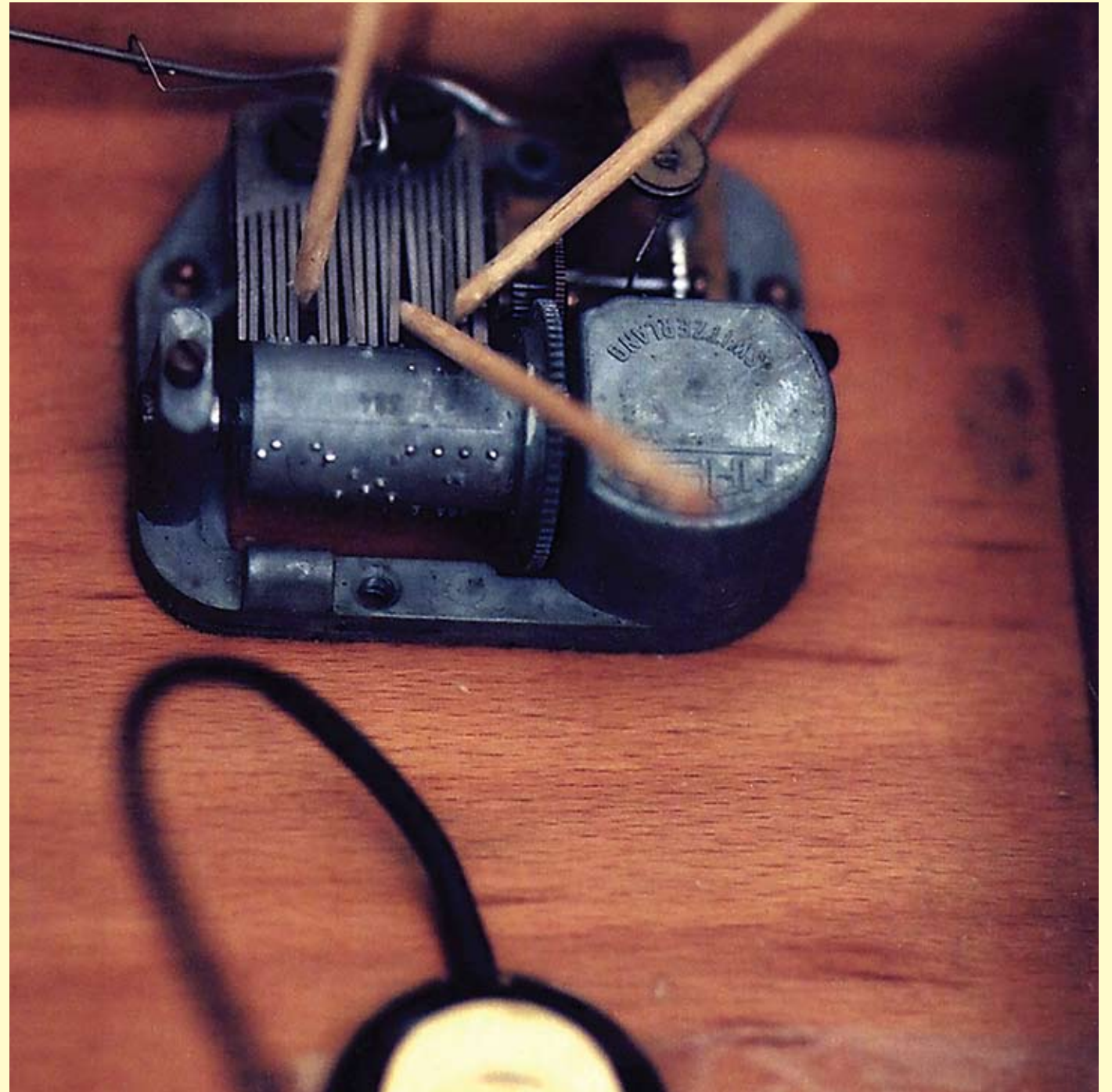


How to make silent music

Each instrument is used to see the music. Look for it, find it, shadow music is a music of shadows... you can find such music if you look closely. You can play such music with these instruments. Sometimes they are a compass, a telescope or a microscope, sometimes you should point them at the sun, other times you should close your eyes just to touch. There is no wrong way to find silent music.



THINGS 7

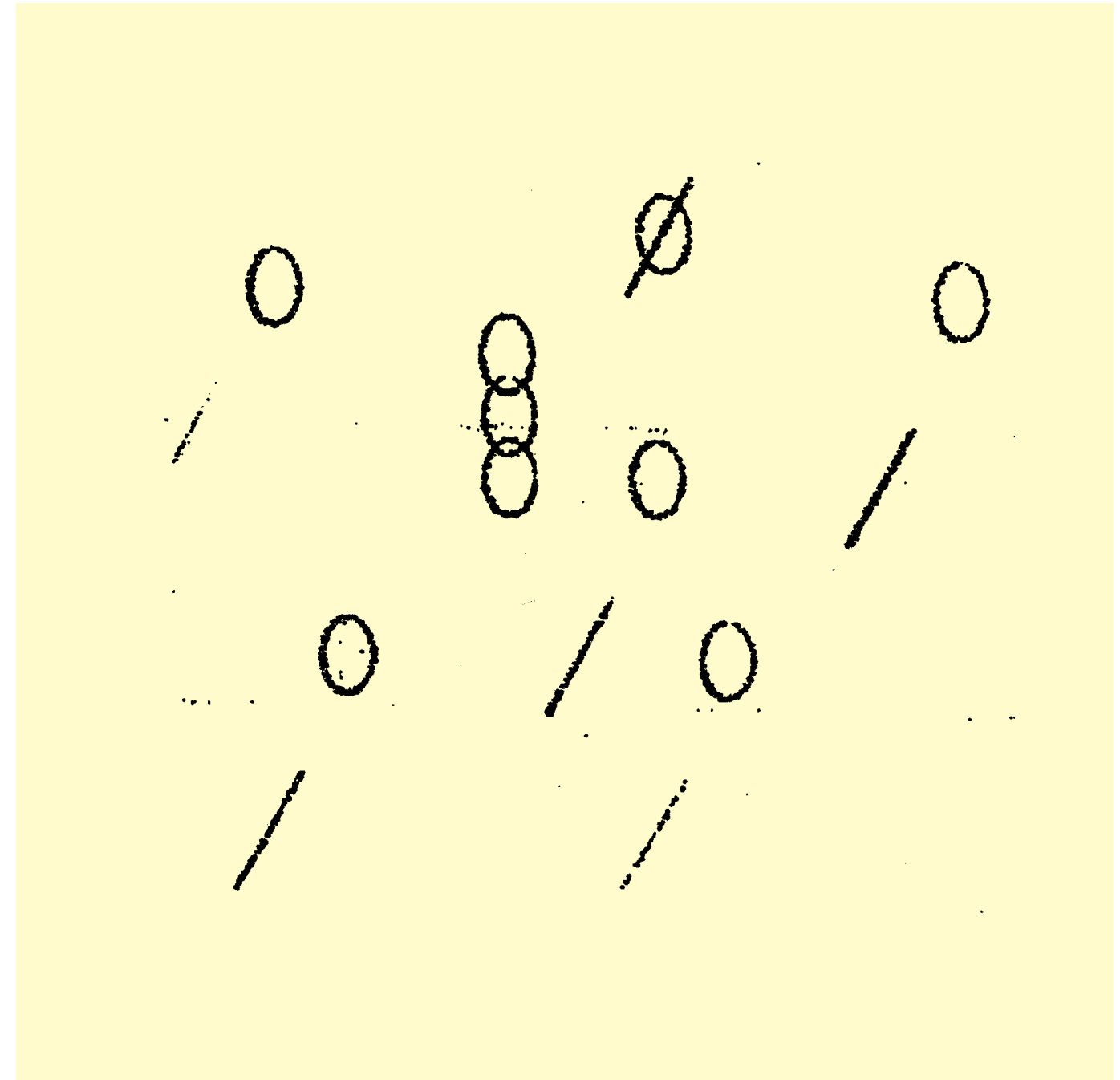
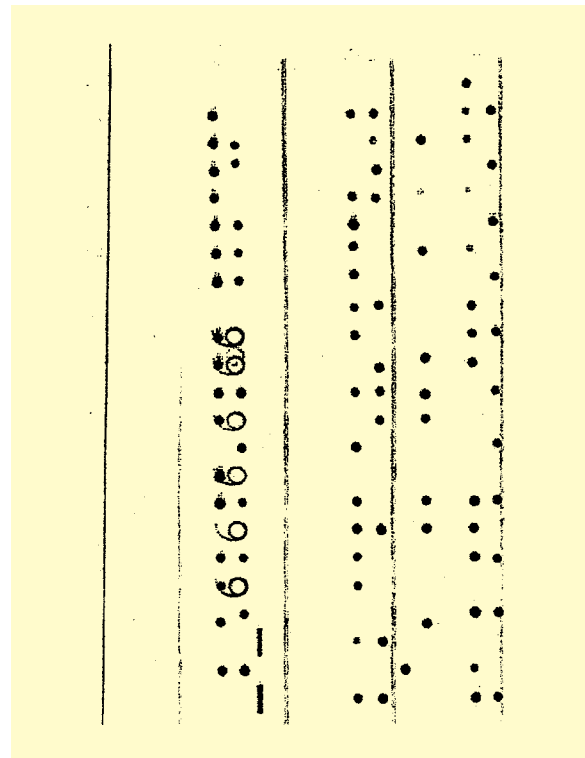
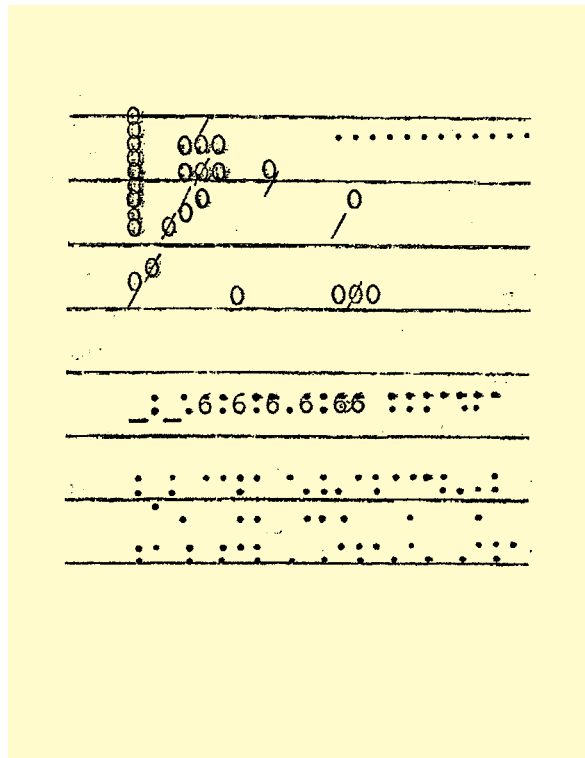


Music for touch

2003—PRINTED IN EDITION OF 50

In 2003, after a long struggle, I finally convinced the braille printing house to print a book of my touch-music. The book did not contain a single drop of ink; rather, each page was an embossed pattern for the player to touch with her/his hands. Some of these patterns are shown here.

The sense of touch is reminded of the hidden haptic music (and music is reminded of the touch). I will print more once I pay the braille printing house the money I still owe them for the initial print run.



Fluxus music in front of my home in San Diego, California.

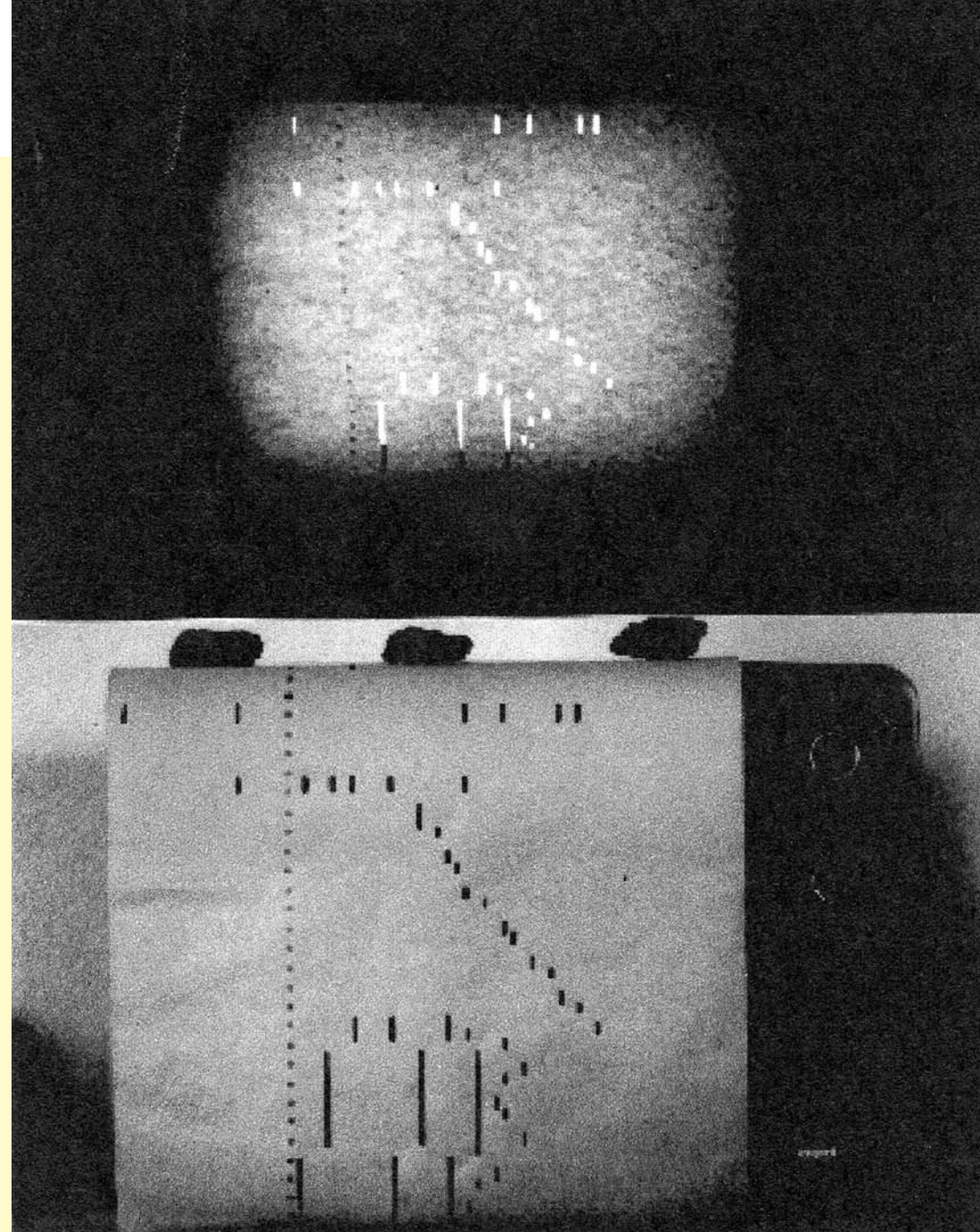
2001



TV piece

2001

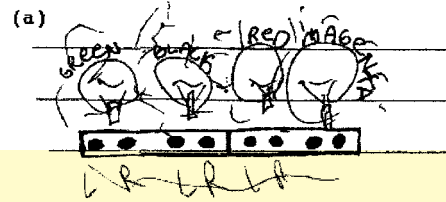
This work is a part of a series of experiments which present sound works as multi-sensory experiences (e.g. seeing and hearing, hearing and seeing, tasting and hearing). The piece pictured here now lives in Germany at Marc Schulz's house. Marc, do you ever turn it on?



Sounding plants

1999–2002

In 1999, I began making sound-light environments which could be explored, that would change with time, and eventually cease. In these works, a sound composition was used as a power source for a light bulb and a speaker (both of which were placed inside a glass vase that housed a plant). I also experimented with (1) sound compositions in which the music was split up by various sound properties into four tracks, and each one of the tracks powered a speaker and a light bulb of a different color (green, black, red, and magenta light bulbs were used), and (2) sound-to-motion environments using iron filings and electrical magnets (powered by the signal of my sound compositions). The filings were placed on thin mirrors, and the magnets were positioned below (on the other side of the mirror). The sound signal modulated the magnet, which caused the filings to dance.



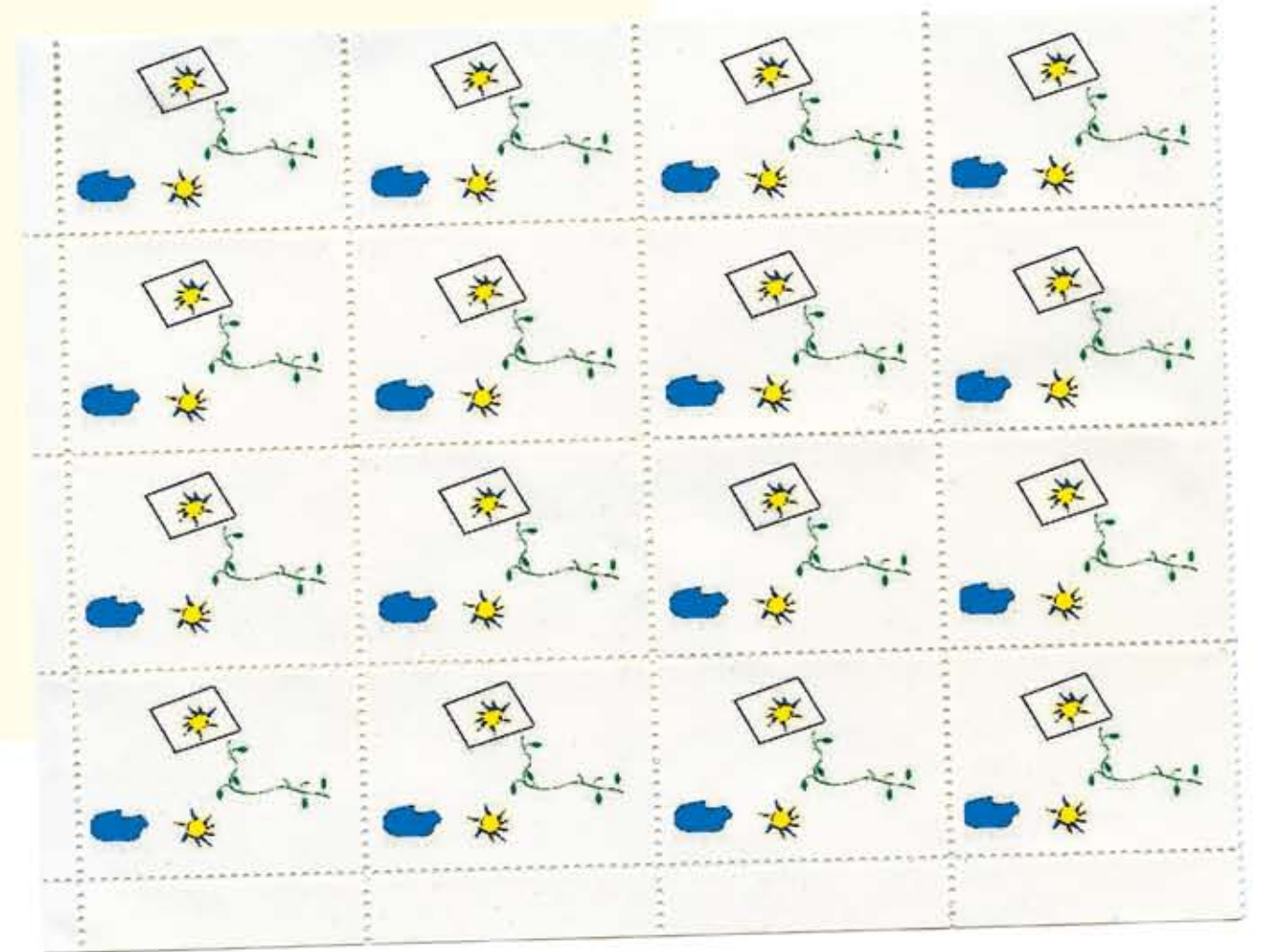
Stamps

1999–2005

Marc Schulz likes to make trouble. We collaborated on this stamp. The front was a black and white picture of a wall, and the back said “What you see is what you get.” A hole was made in the bottom right corner of each stamp.



My hope is that the reader relates to this book as s(he) would relate to a game that is both serious and silly rather than to an essay or to a typical artist catalog. When we consider a thing “art,” we enter a contract with our perception of that thing and influence the percept to make it so. I ask for far less than that. 2009



Music boxes

1996–

I created works by selectively pulling out the studs from the cylinders of music boxes, combining large number of modified/broken music boxes, and adding electronic circuits, like the one shown in this picture.

The circuit attached to the music box simulates the sound of a cricket. Modifying and breaking music boxes is an attractive way of sampling and reworking older music. I've always loved hearing music boxes slow down and stop, especially at the very end of the song when the tiny gears struggle to make a few more squeaky movements before they cease.

Music box and cricket (below)

I used this combination (modified music box and electronic cricket) in recording sessions for *Music for Everyone*, which is an artist book I self published in 2001.



Gamelan music for three dancers (left)

This piece was created by accident. As I was pulling the studs from the music box's cylinder, I noticed that the sound began to resemble Balinese gamelan music. It made me think of a dance called Rejang. This dance is performed by women and usually takes the form of a slow procession. Inspired by this, I wanted to think of a way to create motion that would be beautiful to watch while listening to the music box, hence the three toothpicks. Someday, I want to make many such boxes and fill an entire room with them. For this purpose, I plan on using electricity to power the music boxes so that the audience members' experiences could be more voyeuristic (as if they were at a dance performance).

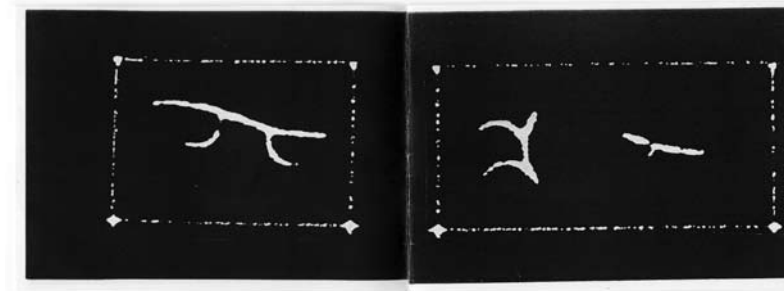
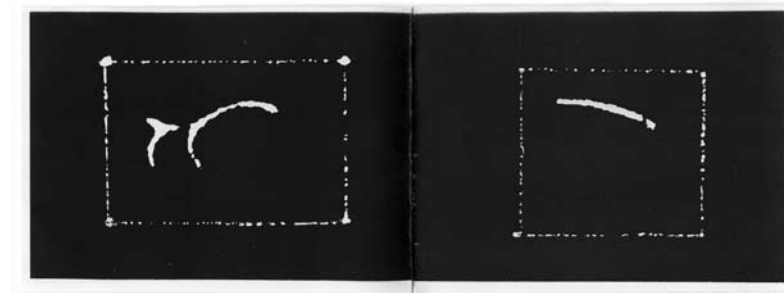
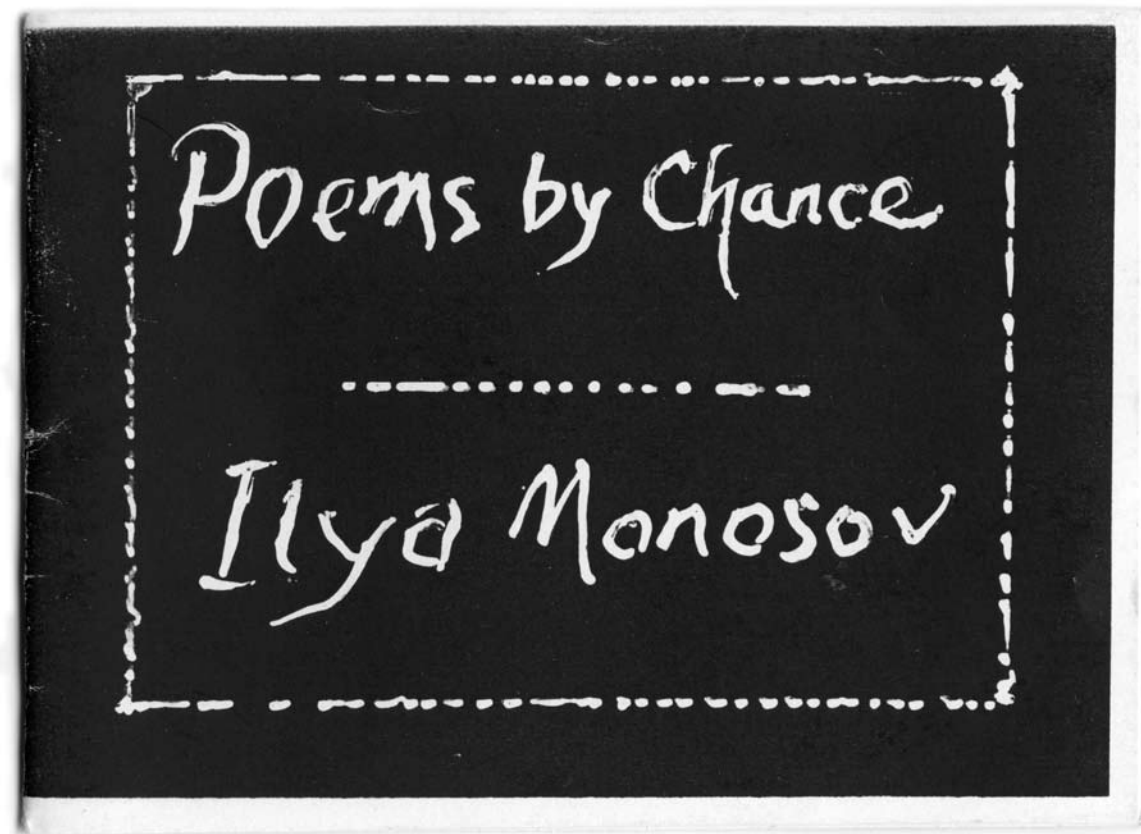
Sounding record

2000

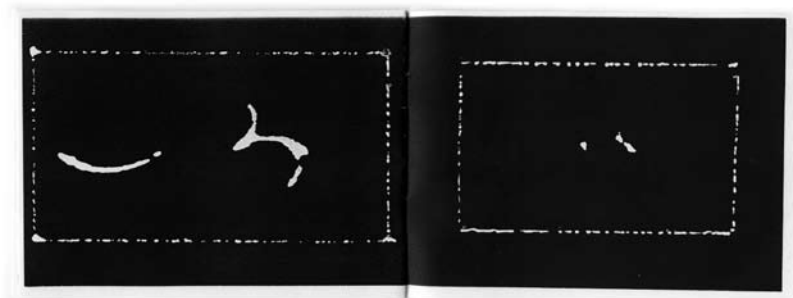
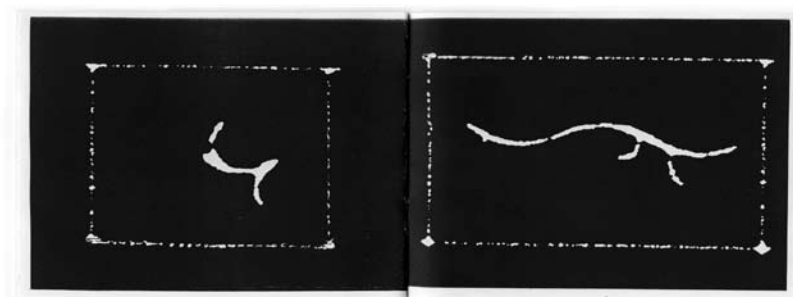
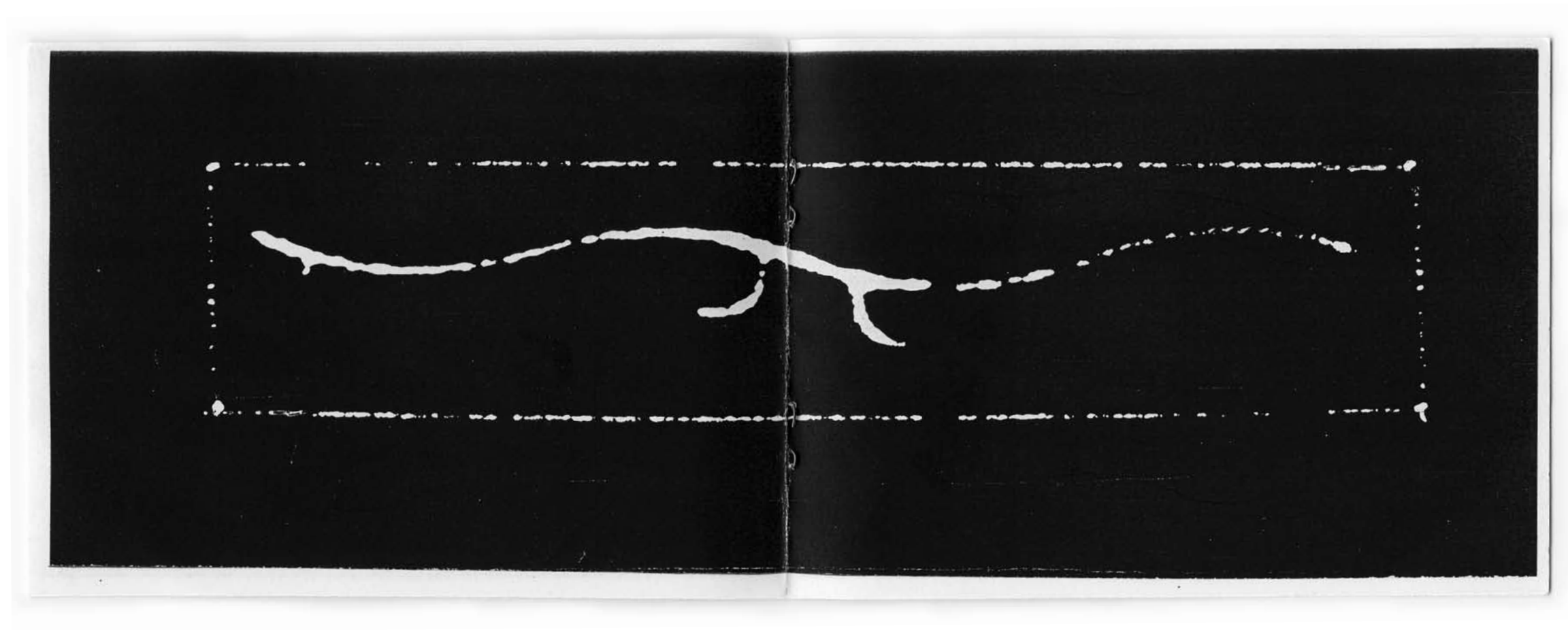
My first piece of autonomous music used the rotational motion of record players. It was made from hanging chimes, a vinyl record, and a chime-ball. I dedicated it to Joe Jones and his music. A video of this object is included with this book. I made another sounding-record for Marc Schulz. This record was created from little speakers and selected sounds (high-pitched sine waves and pulses).

The perceptual experience of the sound is affected as the listener and the sculpture change location (e.g. listener moves, the record spins). Incidentally, Marc and I were asked by Andrew Deutsch to rework a sound piece he made with Tony Conrad. Marc said that his remix dealt with finding the inner music inside the recorded performance. I found this concept very inspiring, especially as it relates to my sounding record sculptures.





I really love the works of Bob Cobbing. In the early 2000's, I found out that Bob was composing visual poetry using his photocopier machine and "found" images. I wrote him and proposed a collaborative project. My idea was that he would create images he felt were appropriate for me to place behind wall clocks. I added metal brushes to the hands of the clocks. The idea was that with time his images would be erased by the hands of the clocks. I built several prototypes, but we had a hard time finding a gallery to house this project. So, we released a box in edition of ten that contained his images and a description of our idea, so that others can build these objects and have their own private "time-reactive poetry." Bob also published a small collection of my visual poetry called *Poems by Chance*, which is partially shown on these pages.





35 | 36

Chances of choice #2

2002

I grew up playing chess. Like many boys and girls in Russia, I attended a chess club after school. I think chess is beautiful. It taught me many things. One can learn much about life and human behavior by playing chess.

This is a sculpture created from an old chess set. Some of its components were not attached to the chess board and were lost, and some were used for my flashlight when I camped in Western Maryland during the warm, early fall weeks of 2008.



Flux star

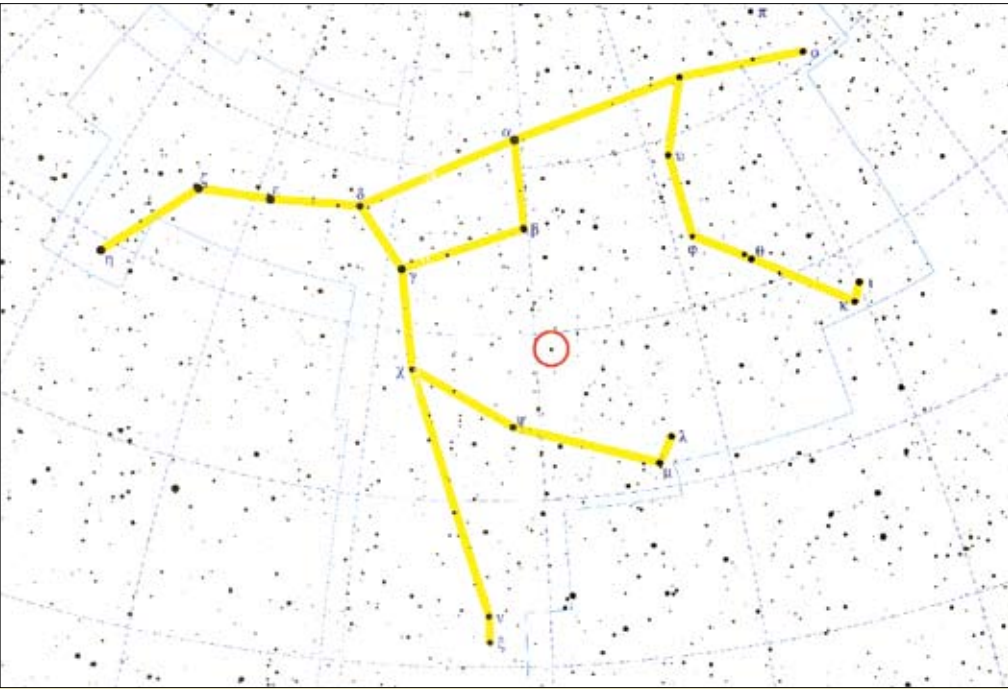
2002

Shortly before Valentine’s Day (February 14, 2002), I was listening to A.M. radio and heard a commercial which suggested to the listeners that they pay fifty dollars to name a star after their Valentine’s date. A week later, International Star Registry sent me a certificate confirming payment. They even sent me a map of the heavens, which could supposedly be used to find the star I titled *Fluxus*.

I made a few copies of the book pictured on these pages. It contained some instructions, a star map, and a certificate authenticating the star. Marc Schulz added some content to the back cover.



flux-star will occupy a certain space for
a certain time ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ in a certain way.
astronomical coordinates, right ascension (RA) &
declination (D) are provided and should be used
for allx intents and purposes. t he coordinate
system uses the earth's poles and equator, simply
extending them skyward so that, because the ~~poles~~
earth's poles move independently of the star, the
coordinates changex & ~~xxx~~ over time.



Music everyday

For the 40th anniversary of Fluxus exhibit, Marc Schulz was working with Ben Patterson on an installation piece, to which he asked me to make a contribution. I created a photographic sheet music score *Music Everyday*, which comprising of different elements, recorded by me, created a sounding picture/ sheet music that was to be used for *Solo Cello #1 For Charles Curtis*.

When I asked Charles Curtis to perform this piece, he asked me to compose a text explaining my relationship to the pictures, which I have included here:

Photographs allow my ideas to lay flat. The beauty with which things happen around us is missed by those attempting to search for it with ridiculous vigor; to look up at a thin wire resembling 'notation' is an experience if one relaxes enough to understand the irrational precision with which nature creates unpredictable and random events - the beauty of endings, beginnings, love and violence, of irrational thinking, and of birds sitting on an electrical wire - the feeding source for our various pursuits, a balance for the bird's view of the ground, the motion of decay.

The blue color of the sky and the shape and texture of the sky. Blue is the color of the sea and the color of the sky—largeness, irrationality, borderless-ness, and perceived repetition that is cut into shape by the shadow lines of the electrical wires which smoothly transmit the cloud shapes towards the end of each photograph. After looking at various patterns for a prolonged time, the mind forms meanings and shapes while searching for context. Music, like photographs of the sky, practices the mind and feeds our primordial passion, which to some degree is the passion for order and decay.

We decided to cut the score into 5 separate sheets, which were then interpreted by Charles and resulted in the recorded work released by Eclipse Records in 2007.





41 | 42

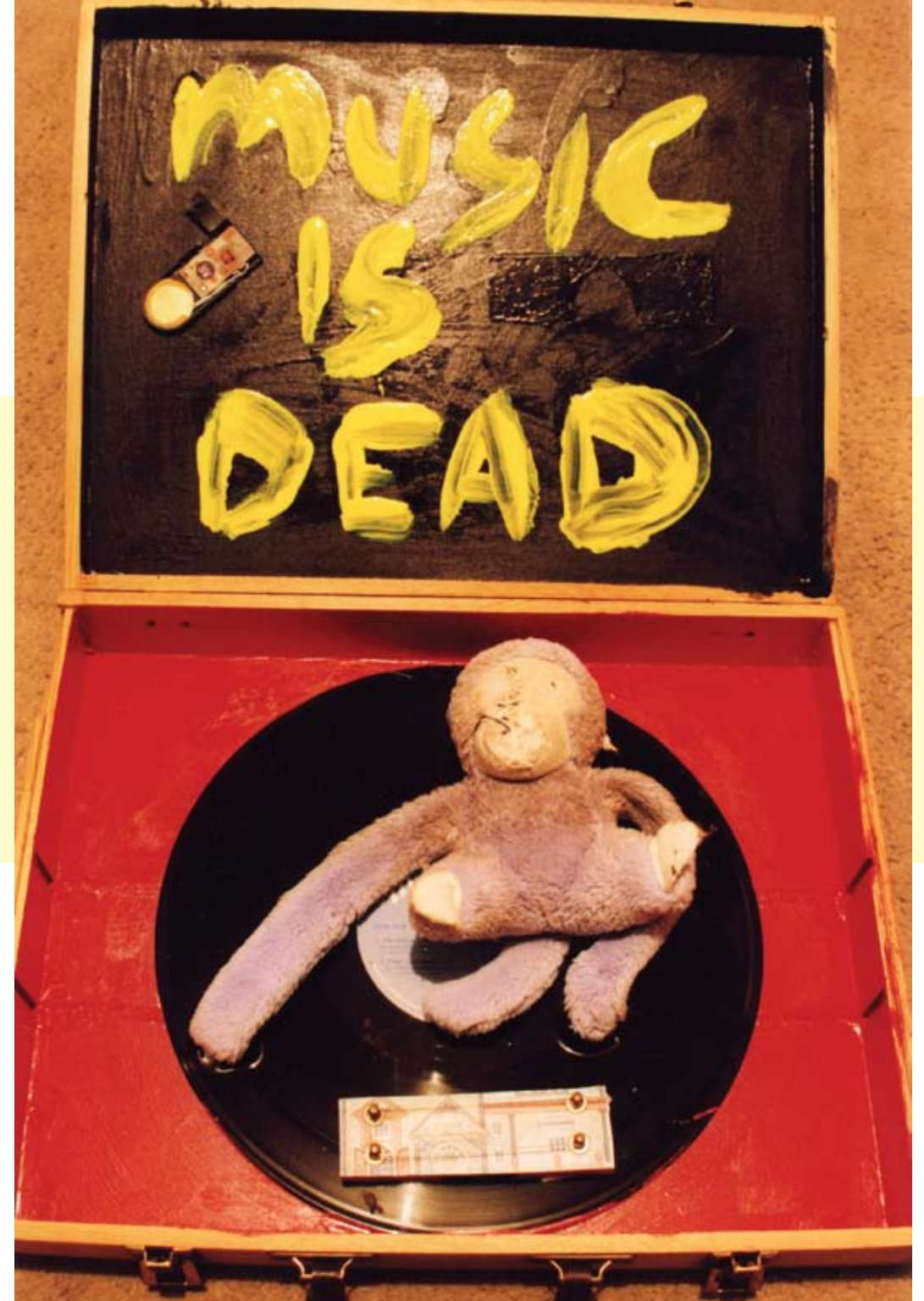
Paper planes made from the essay
Art and the Intellect.

2000

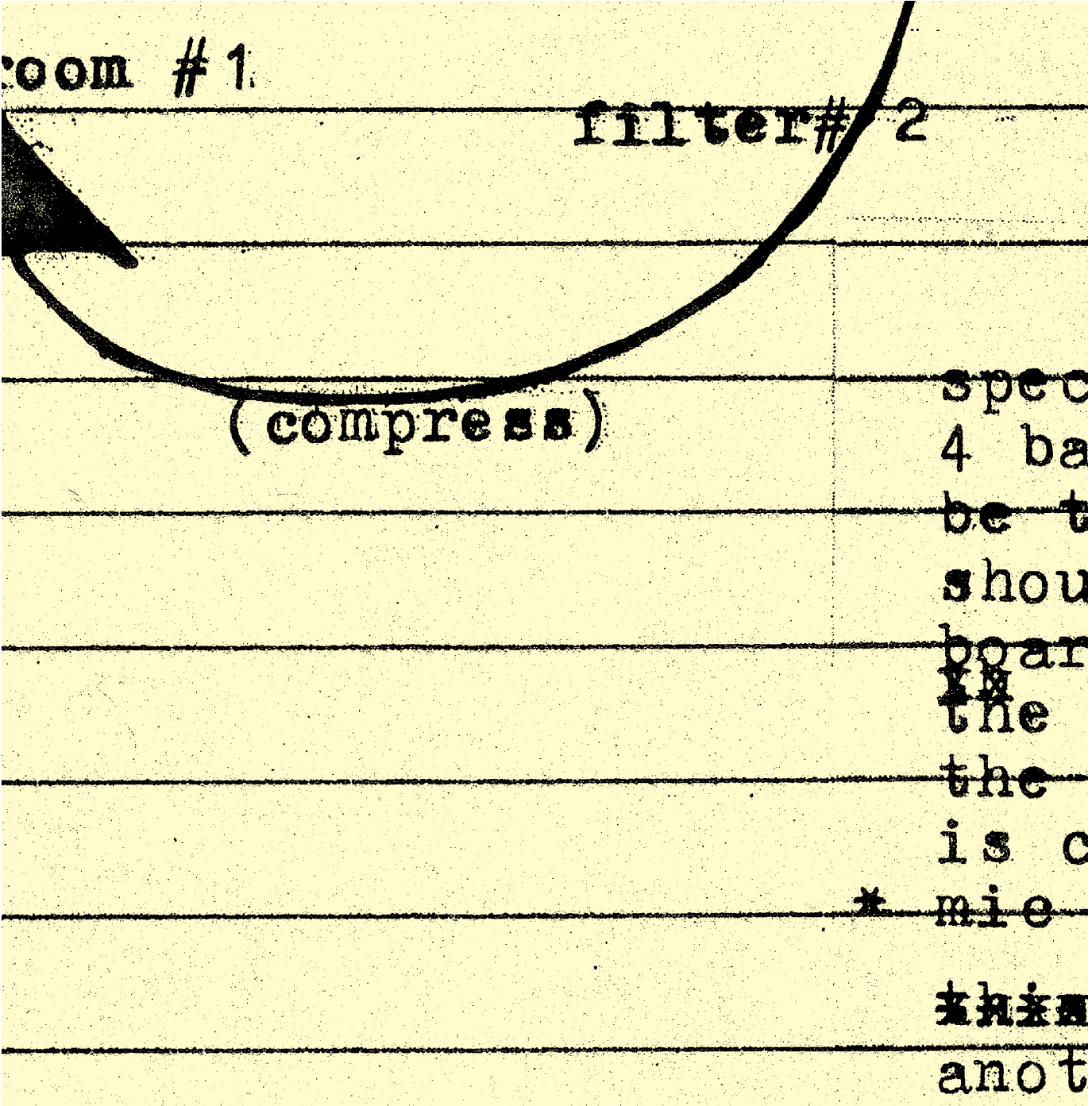
Music is dead

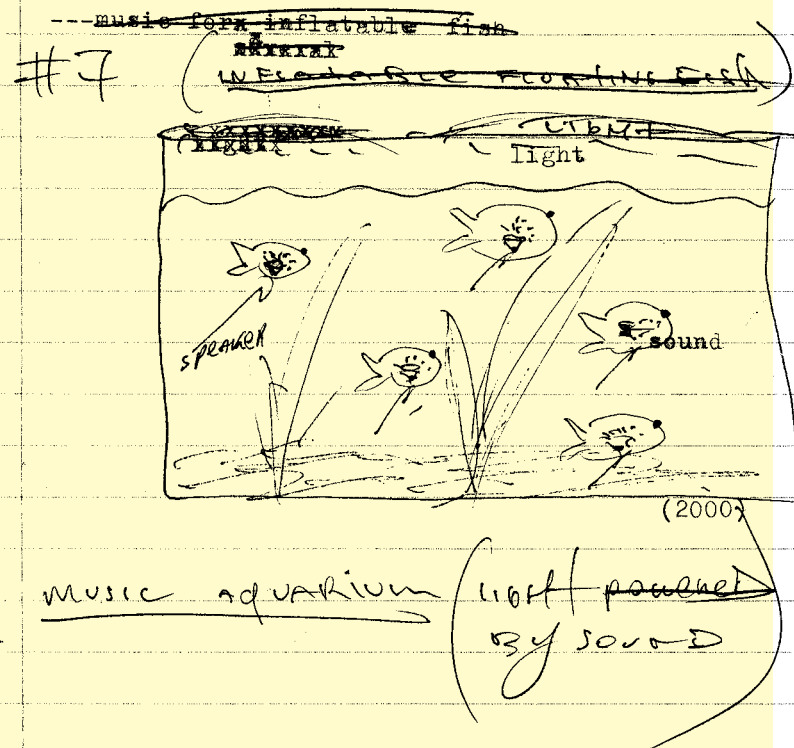
2003

A box object I made for Andrew Deutsch from an electronic cricket, a toy string instrument, a vinyl record, and a monkey.

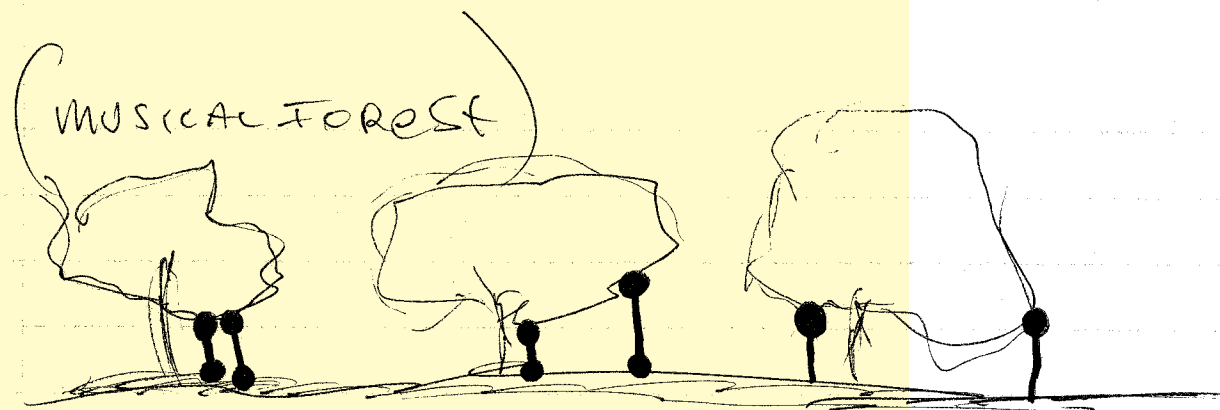


SCORES └





music in water / yellow blue fish / white light



~~tree is planted / with strings~~
~~attached / wind-powered~~
~~beaters / play the strings~~
~~the tree grows / the music~~
~~changes / the strings~~
~~stretch / music ends~~
~~when strings are broken~~

strings are attached to the thick area of several trees. some strings are played by wind-powered ~~xx~~ beaters & some are ~~xxx~~ for public use. music changes as the the strings stretch and the branches move ~~xx~~ so the piece ends when the strings break. ~~xxxxxx~~

(1999)

SOUND ENVIRONMENT #1

.....

1999. (portland, oregon, usa)
introduction.

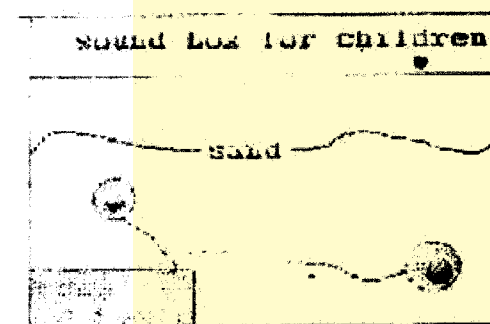
sound is a strong linking force for objects, organisms, and ideas. i would like to give rise to a sound world that is free of human motivations and goals, to a sound that changes historically as a language but does not hold on to meaning.

score.

During encryption a computer virus will create a new ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and continuous ~~xx~~ tone which can be randomly generated or based on an occurring event, external change, or on any inconsistency in environment. the tone frequency will be the value needed for the virus to decrypt. polymorphic virii need to decrypt in order to replicate ~~xx~~ (infect new files) and perform any other function. This is the basis for the sound evolution that will take place. The perpetually evolving sound nature in its entirety encompasses all individual tones produced by the virii and represents a guarantee of a living sound. Such conditions can develop into a network based on polymorphic sound packets (i don't mean autonomously) as a means of communication between remote computers and other systems. The latter idea can be setup via world wide web (internet).

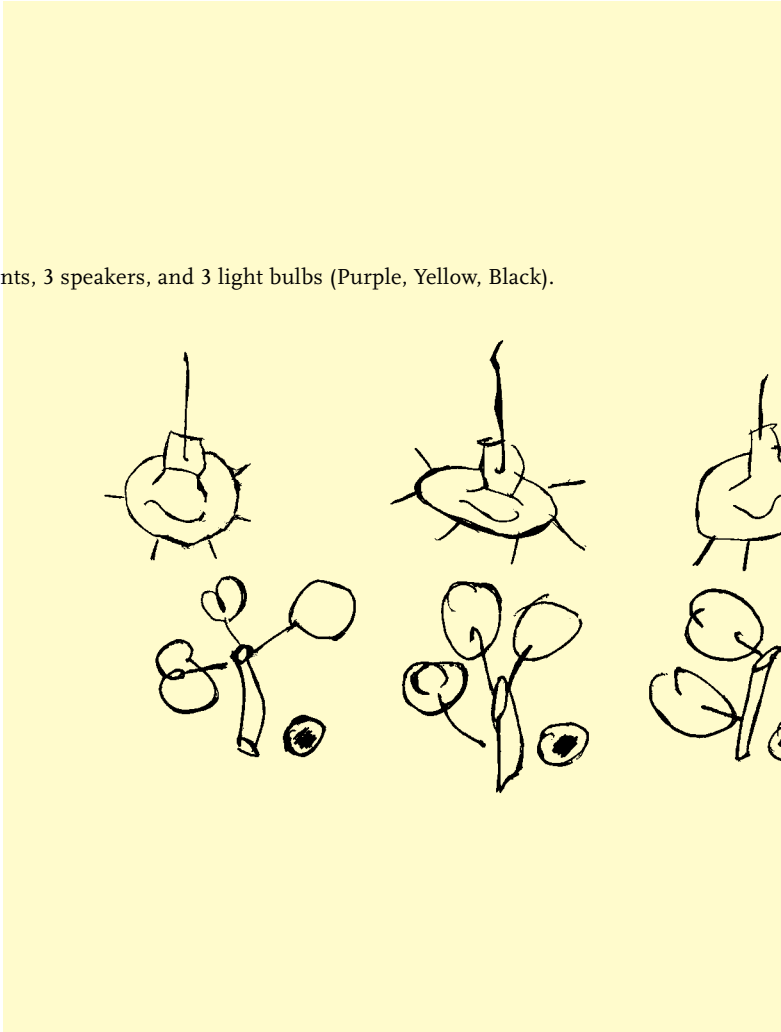
a row of glass bottles, each contains a little speaker which is glued to the inner wall. some dirt is added to each bottle + a little green plants. a light bulb hangs somewhere amongst the leaves of each plant. both lightbulb and speaker share the same audio input. (in my early experiments i used the audio produced by my music box - which i modified by ripping out some of the notes and adding a mini-electronic buzzer. the circuit begins producing cricket sounds which the box is opened)

1. a large number of nails is thrown on the floor. several electric-powered magnets and some light-bulbs are placed around the same area. speakers are in all the corners of the room. the objects are evenly scattered. the concentration of metals/nails/metal-powder is initially larger in the center of the room. lightbulbs/speakers/and magnets are all connected to the same audio signal -- which can be pre-recorded or a continuous sound, such as random radio transmissions or even audience / surrounding. 2. use canvas with magnets underneath and tiny metal objects visible to the audience (a small speaker is on the floor by the hanging canvas. same audio can be used for magnet and speaker) I.M2001



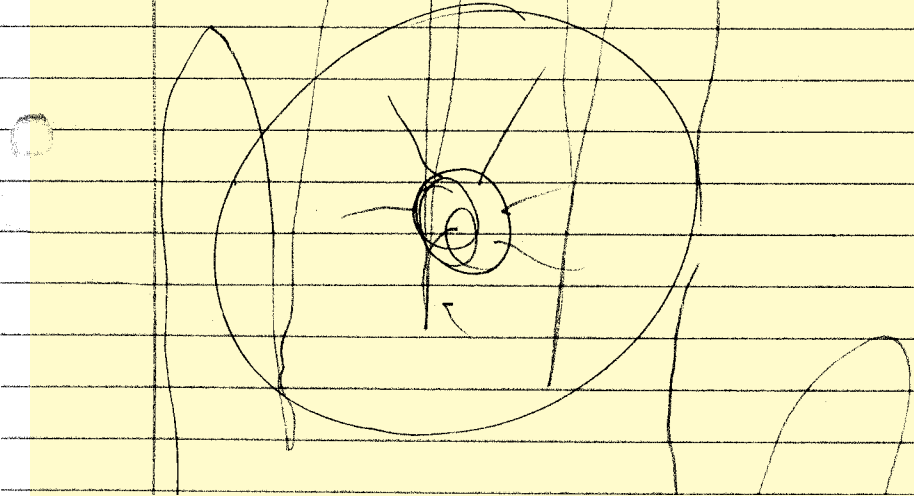
deep wooden box full of sand. a tape player attached to the bottom. little speakers are underneath the sand. box comes with a tiny sand scooper and a note encouraging the user to play with the sound.

Composition for 3 plants, 3 speakers, and 3 light bulbs (Purple, Yellow, Black).

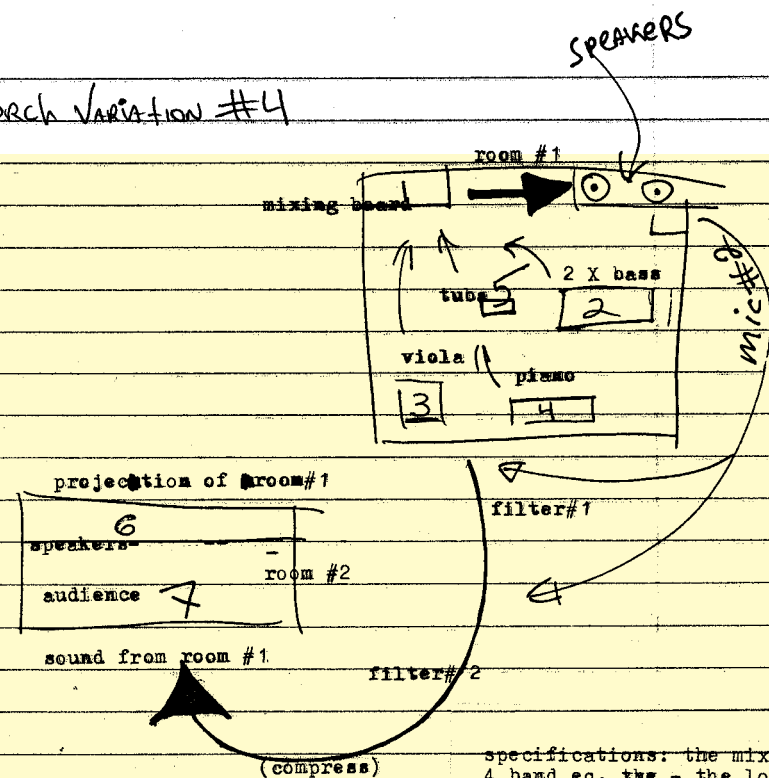


Romeo & Juliet
#1 (2002)
(description of performance)

the room is ~~is~~ very dark. i use a flash-light
to shine ~~in~~ certain shapes on to the ceiling
the shapes are created with the slow movements
of my fingers. i keep the flash light pressed
tightly to my palm through out the performance
after 5 minutes a short high sound is heard ~~in~~
the light is turned on. end#



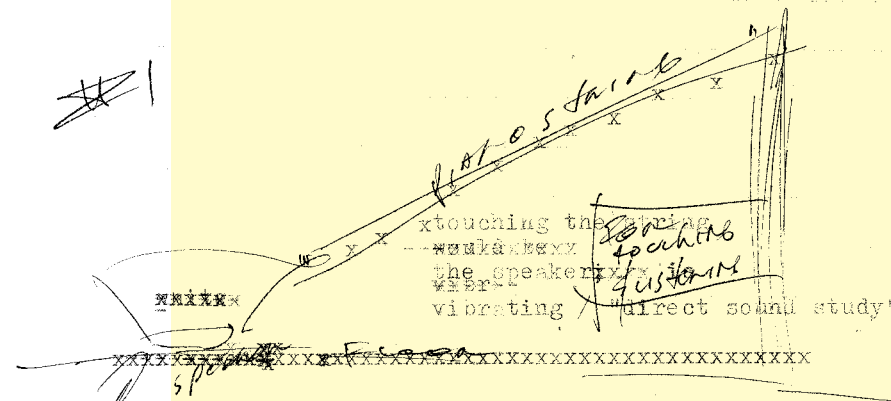
ORCH Variation #4



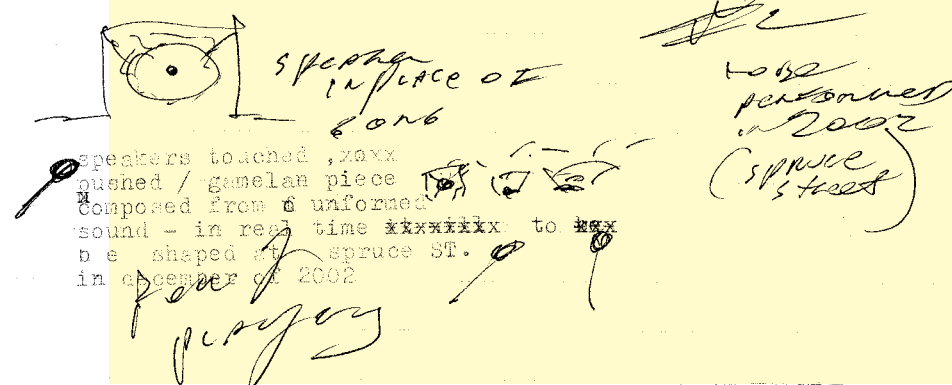
specifications: the mixing board must be at least 4 band eq. ~~the~~ the low and midrange ~~xxxxxx~~ must be turned down while the upper range ~~xxxxxx~~ should be at maximum. using mics, pa, and the mixing board in the ~~xxxxxx~~ performance room allows for the creation of real-time interactive feedback. the mixing board level (only high and volume) is controlled by one of the performers. ~~another~~ mic is placed near ~~the speakers~~ each speaker.

~~xxxxxx~~ *these microphones are put through another mixer (same settings as mixer #1) & compression. the output is heard in real-time in audience room which also has a live video feed of the performance, (this work can be adapted to 'my saddest chord for hurdy gurdy & orchestra').

sound study



white sounds
(Curtis, Proulx)



Music For Square Wave & ~~XXXX~~ Smoker's Voice

~~*****~~ ⁵¹⁰⁶⁵

(player ~~XXXX~~ favorite lullaby in
within the suggested parameters)

A A A A aH *

A A h - A A h - A A h - A A h
A A A h

A A A h - A A A h

X-----X

(X---X or -- denotes as 'square wave present')

Music For "2 Guitars (puppet ver.7)

2 guitars are placed belly-up.

hundreds of ~~str~~ strings are

put through ~~the~~ the

6 strings of ~~the~~ the guitars.

this ~~was~~ creates large bushes

which should be handled much like

puppets to

guitar puppet
*equipment: volume pedals,
tube amps, guitars*

definition is to define it long

to assemble, fine it long to

be happy with the composition &

time ~~to~~ needed to disassemble.

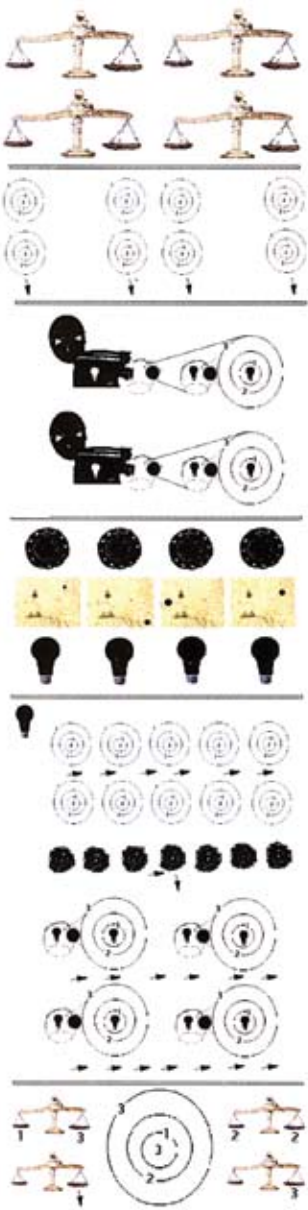
Two disorganized thoughts on language

(1) ARCHITECTURES ON AIR
Besides its overt communicative functions, language must create meaning and an existence (a place for things) that otherwise would be null (e.g. *what* is ‘freedom’). The architecture of language transcribes itself into us—becoming our process of being. Linguistic structure, if viewed as an evolutionary timeline to which it pertains, can show social growth and advancement to be the integration of individuals into a common sense of value (i.e. the assignment of value). By analyzing the architecture of language the secret history of economy (things and experience as value), morality (creation of value), and social class (necessity for the emergence of) can be traced. The logic contained within linguistic structure, which from an early time in our development (as individuals and in the broad, socially and historically) transfers its internal parameters into our way of processing the world (experience).

Autonomous creation of meaning (for things that can not be understood), definitions (for objects and things that do not exist), and reference to non-experience is the second function of language. Language is one of the elements of force pushing the animal in to the “city” and that keeps law and tradition (social, sexual) on the forefront of concern. The frustration is born here and it is broad; it is born out of predicament. The creation of “blank” words and non-experience is both autonomous and necessary. We engage the illusion because we have no other choice. This is an important component of “constant orientation,” which in my opinion is the main function of the individual. It is what we are designed to do; if it were to be abandoned one would cease or, rather, life could not be imagined.

Take any one philosophy or ideology to be a specific vocabulary set; its growth catalyzes the formation of a social condition which happens to be based on then parameters defined during its formation. The growth, not only of itself but of the member group, ends the period of intervention, and the system evolves according to the trajectory defined.
2000

(2) ON MUSIC AS THERAPY
Cerebral vascular accidents or strokes often cause varied perceptual and psychological/cognitive deficits because they can result in permanent brain lesions which vary in size and location. The level of recovery from strokes depends on many factors, though it is generally understood that some neural rewiring is required. Some patients only recover if they actively try to relearn or reacquire the affected functions. I propose that for patients with post-stroke language deficits, music therapy could be made more beneficial by employing free improvisation with instruments that directly engage the sound production machinery such as the mouth, throat, and lungs (e.g. harmonica). Learning to “play” the instrument would be unnecessary. This approach could be beneficial because it removes the psychological weight produced by the relationship of sound to language, and of language to its representative, historic, and social functions. The use of free improvisation in music therapy for patients suffering from post-stroke language deficits could positively affect the progress in recovery.
1999–2005



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