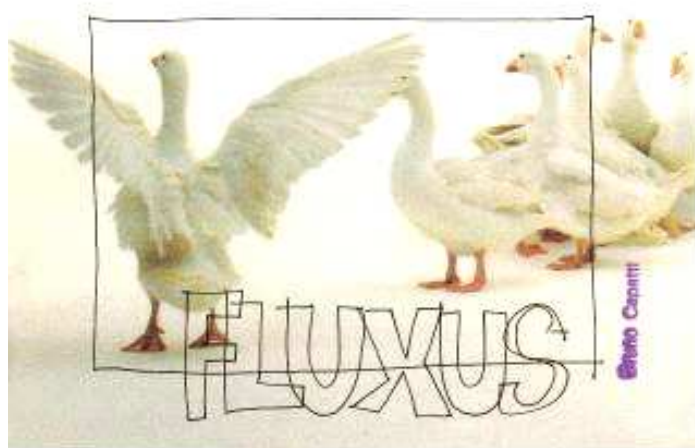


Fluxus to the People

Educación, conciertos, muestra documental en el Reina Sofía



Fondos TDS / Bruno Capatti



Póster diseñado por George Maciunas para el Perpetual Fluxus Festival. Washington Square Gallery, Nueva York, 1964/65. Cortesía de la George Maciunas Foundation inc y Harry Stendhal

Tipo de actividad: educación, conciertos, muestra documental

Fecha: 21, 22 y 23 de septiembre de 2012

Hora: consultar actividades específicas

Lugar: Edificio Nouvel. Patio, Auditorio 400, Espacio D, Edificio Sabatini. Vestíbulo
Entrada: gratuita hasta completar aforo. Entradas para el concierto disponibles en la taquilla del Edificio Nouvel desde el día 19 de septiembre (máximo 4 entradas por persona)

Programación: Iñaki Estella y Chema González
Con la supervisión y guía de Eric Andersen

Fluxus to the People es un programa de conciertos, actividades, itinerarios, conferencias y un espacio documental que explora la imaginación de lo colectivo, la idea del arte como una herramienta comunitaria y el proceso de des-especialización de la figura del artista que está en el origen del movimiento Fluxus. Este programa adopta la forma de festival de manera consciente. De un lado, reivindica la naturaleza lúdica, participativa e incluso burlesca que caracterizaba muchas de las manifestaciones de la vanguardia a partir de 1960. De otro, ensaya formas de aproximación al arte contemporáneo desde la actividad pública.

Cuando se cumplen 50 años del primer festival Fluxus de Wiesbaden en 1962, acontecimiento considerado como hito fundacional del movimiento, este programa se aproxima a Fluxus a partir de sus derivas y reinterpretaciones. Debido su carácter complejo, performativo y decididamente antidisciplinar, Fluxus es uno de los movimientos (también denominado grupo e incluso anti-movimiento) artísticos más decisivos desde 1945. Sin embargo, por su tensión rizomática y cosmopolita al mismo tiempo, Fluxus ha ocupado un lugar secundario en las narraciones del arte contemporáneo, situado de manera fragmentaria y superficial en el espacio

entre crítica institucional, arte conceptual y performance. El hecho de que se produjera al mismo tiempo que el pop, el conceptual o el minimalismo, no ha hecho más que acrecentar dicho carácter periférico. Fluxus se plantea sin embargo como un ámbito desde el que confrontar estos modelos dominantes: un pop ajeno a la celebridad, pero participante en el análisis de la cultura de masas; un conceptual, ajeno al hermetismo, pero basado en la capacidad performativa del lenguaje.

Fluxus to the People no propone un análisis de las obras sino su ejercicio, su práctica colaborativa. No es pluralista, ya que no se pretende como la fácil convivencia de diferentes posicionamientos, sino que promueve una colaboración temporal en un proyecto determinado sin evaporar dichas diferencias. Se trata, en conclusión, de pensar qué es lo que conforma un “nosotros”, aunque sea temporalmente.

El programa se compone de tres frentes: un espacio documental, una serie de acciones participativas de carácter muy diverso y un concierto.

Un mapa fluxus: documentos sobre internacionalismo, publica/acciones y eventos.

Esta muestra documental busca situar a Fluxus en la dialéctica de lo colectivo, el juego y el ensayo de nuevas narrativas para la historia del arte, basadas en el diagrama como un mapa no jerárquico. Por otro lado, también

pretende reactivar y dar a conocer gran parte del archivo fluxus del Centro de Documentación del Museo. Las obras expuestas son ejemplos de cómo prácticamente toda la producción documental en Fluxus contenía siempre una vertiente performativa que fusionaba textualidad y acción. Esta idea es atendida desde una amplia perspectiva en la que se pretenden establecer relaciones insospechadas con otros momentos, ejemplos y movimientos de la historia cultural del siglo XX, desde el productivismo del grupo soviético LEF de finales de los años 20 al músico humorista Spike Jones de la Norteamérica de los años 50. Este espacio documental funciona también como un *hub* informativo y espacio de reunión de ciertas actividades, como los itinerarios urbanos, inspirados en los fluxtours.
[+ info](#)

Fecha: Del 21 de septiembre 2012 al 28 de enero de 2013
Hora: lunes a viernes de 10 a 21:00h. Cerrado los festivos
Abierto excepcionalmente los días 22 y 23 de septiembre:
de 10:00h a 21:00h
Lugar: Edificio Nouvel. Biblioteca y Centro de Documentación, Espacio D

Acciones

Hacia finales de la década de los 60 la práctica fluxus fue transformándose y pasó de estar centrada en la sala de conciertos o en el teatro a tener un carácter urbano y lúdico que en ocasiones rozaba lo irreverente. Durante este fin de semana, se podrá burlar el deporte basado en la competitividad en las flux-olimpiadas del Patio Nouvel; alterar la relación diaria con los espacios de tránsito con la

adaptación de los *eventos de calle* del [Equipo](#); o participar en itinerarios que ofrecen distintas miradas en la transformación urbana, inspiradas en los fluxtours. Estos eventos proponen una relectura de Fluxus como una práctica performativa que aborda las ideas de agencia y colaboración que fundamentan gran parte del arte contemporáneo, pero también como el origen de algunas de las manifestaciones críticas y lúdicas que han caracterizado las nuevas formas de protesta y reivindicación social.

[+ info:](#) **Fluxolimpiadas y eventos de calle**

[+ info:](#) **Itinerarios**

[+ info:](#) **Conferencia**

Fecha: 22 y 23 de septiembre

Hora: 22 de septiembre, de 17:00h a 21:00h / 23 de septiembre de 12:00h a 14:00h

Lugar: Patio Nouvel, Edificio Sabatini. Vestíbulo.
Edificio Nouvel, Biblioteca

Dirigido a: niños, jóvenes y adultos

Participación gratuita, no es necesaria inscripción previa

Concierto

Este concierto parte de la idea que las composiciones descritas en las partituras fluxus desarrollan un virtuosismo ya existente en cualquiera y, al mismo tiempo, pretende hacer comunes las ideas y obras que tuvieron cobijo en Fluxus. Por esta razón los intérpretes son elegidos mediante una convocatoria pública, en la que no se requiere experiencia previa alguna; desdibujando las claras distinciones entre el público y la obra. No se trata de

repetir los eventos que sucedieron en los distintos conciertos y festivales Fluxus, si no de ver cómo se pueden interpretar y transformar a día de hoy.

[+ info:](#) **Concierto Fluxus**

Fecha: 21 de septiembre

Hora: 19:30h

Lugar: Edificio Nouvel. Auditorio 400

Entrada: gratuita hasta completar aforo. Tickets para el concierto disponibles en la taquilla del Edificio Nouvel desde el día 19 de septiembre (máximo 4 tickets por persona)

<http://www.museoreinasofia.es>

DOCUMENTACION:

Fluxus—a name taken from a [Latin](#) word meaning “to flow”—is an international network of artists, composers and designers noted for blending different artistic media and disciplines in the 1960s. They have been active in [Neo-Dada](#) [noise music](#) and [visual art](#) as well as [literature](#), [urban planning](#), [architecture](#), and [design](#). Fluxus is sometimes described as [intermedia](#).

"The Fluxus movement... developed its ‘anti-art’, anti-commercial aesthetics under the leadership of George Maciunas. Fluxus staged a series of festivals in Paris, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, London and New York, with avant-garde performances often spilling out into the street. Most of the experimental artists of the period, including Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono and Nam June Paik, took part in Fluxus events. The movement, which still continues, played an important role in the opening up of definitions of what art can be." Tate Online, *Fluxus, Performance, Participation* [\[1\]](#)

[History to 1965](#)



Flux Year Box 2, c.1967, a Flux box edited and produced by George Maciunas, containing works by many early Fluxus artists.

The origins of Fluxus lie in many of the concepts explored by composer [John Cage](#) in his [experimental music](#) of the 1950s. Cage taught a series of Experimental Composition classes, run between 1957 and 1959 at the [New School for Social Research](#) in [New York City](#) which explored notions of [indeterminacy](#) in art. These classes – later taught by [Richard Maxfield](#) – were attended by many artists and musicians who would become involved in Fluxus, including [Jackson Mac Low](#), [La Monte Young](#),^[2] [George Brecht](#), [Dick Higgins](#) and [George Maciunas](#).^{[3][4]}

The other main influence, [Marcel Duchamp](#),^[5] was a French artist who had originally been active within [Dada](#), and was by now resident in New York. He had created a series of artworks that used found objects, thereby negating any need for traditional artistic skill. Known as [readymades](#), of which the most famous is [Fountain](#), these artworks were to become a major influence on Fluxus and [conceptual art](#) in general.^[5]

A number of other contemporary [happenings](#) are credited as either anticipating Fluxus, or as proto-fluxus events.^[6] The most commonly cited include the series of Chamber's Street loft concerts, New York, curated by [Yoko Ono](#) and [La Monte Young](#) in 1961 featuring pieces by Jackson Mac Low and [Henry Flynt](#),^[7] the month-long *Yam* festival held in upstate New York by George Brecht and [Robert Watts](#) in May, 1963 with [Ray Johnson](#) and [Allan Kaprow](#) that was the culmination of a year's worth of Mail Art pieces,^[8] and a series of concerts held in [Mary Bauermeister](#)'s studio, Cologne, 1960-61 featuring [Nam June Paik](#) and John Cage amongst many others.^[9]

"Fluxus started with the work, and then came together, applying the name Fluxus to work which already existed. It was as if it started in the middle of the situation, rather than at the beginning" Dick Higgins, interviewed 1986 ^{[10][11]}

The American musician and artist La Monte Young had been asked to guest-edit an issue of a literary journal, *Beatitude East*, and asked George Maciunas, a trained graphic designer, for help with the layout; Maciunas supplied the paper, design, and some money for publishing of the anthology, which contained a more or less arbitrary association of New York [avant-garde](#) artists at that time. By the end of 1961 before *An Anthology of Chance Operations* ^[12] was completed (it was finally published in 1963 by

Mac Low and Young), Maciunas had moved to Germany to escape his creditors. From there, he continued his contact with the New York artists and sent out announcements about a series of “yearbooks” of artists' works under the title of *Fluxus*.

Early Fluxus & Neo-Dada

Fluxus was conceived by [Lithuanian](#)-born George Maciunas as an attempt to 'fuse... cultural social & political revolutionaries into [a] united front and action'.^[13] After having fled Lithuania at the end of [World War II](#), his family had moved to New York, where Maciunas first came into contact with a group of avant-garde artists and musicians centered around John Cage and La Monte Young. Initially opening an art gallery on [Madison Avenue](#) which showed work by Higgins, Ono, [Jonas Mekas](#), [Ray Johnson](#), Flynt and Young, he moved to [Wiesbaden](#), West Germany having taken a job as a graphic designer with the [US Air Force](#) in late 1961^[14] after the gallery had gone bust. Maciunas first publically coined the term *Fluxus* (meaning 'to flow') in a 'brochure prospectus' that he distributed to the audience at a festival he had organized, called *Après Cage; Kleinen Sommerfest* (After Cage; a Small Summer Festival), in [Wuppertal](#), West Germany, June 9, 1962.^[15]

Maciunas was an avid art historian, and initially referred to fluxus as 'neo-dadaism' or 'renewed dadaism'.^[16] He wrote a number of letters to [Raoul Hausmann](#), an original [dadaist](#), outlining his ideas. Hausmann discouraged the use of the term;

I note with much pleasure what you said about German neodadaists—but I think even the Americans should not use the term "neodadaism" because neo means nothing and -ism is old-fashioned. Why not simply "Fluxus"? It seems to me much better, because it's new, and dada is historic.^[17]

As part of the festival, Maciunas wrote a lecture, entitled 'Neo-Dada in the United States'.^[18] After an attempt to define 'Concretist Neo-Dada' art, he explained that Fluxus was opposed to the exclusion of the everyday from art. Using 'anti-art and artistic banalities', Fluxus would fight the 'traditional artificialities of art'.^[19] The lecture ended with the declaration;

Anti-art is life, is nature, is true reality—it is one and all.^[19]

European festivals & the Fluxkits



Piano Activities, by Philip Corner, as performed in Wiesbaden, 1962, by (l-r) Emmett Williams, Wolf Vostell, Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Benjamin Patterson and George Maciunas

With the help of a group of artists including [Joseph Beuys](#) and [Wolf Vostell](#), Maciunas then organised a series of *Fluxfests* across Western Europe. Starting with 14 concerts between 1 and 23 September 1962, at [Wiesbaden](#), these *Fluxfests* presented work by musicians such as John Cage, [Ligeti](#), [Penderecki](#), [Terry Riley](#) and [Brion Gysin](#) alongside [performance](#) pieces written by Dick Higgins, George Brecht and [Nam June Paik](#) amongst many others. One performance in particular became notorious; *Piano Activities* by [Philip Corner](#).

The score – which asks for any number of performers to, among other things, “play”, “pluck or tap”, “scratch or rub”, “drop objects” on, “act on strings with”, “strike soundboard, pins, lid or drag various kinds of objects across them” and “act in any way on underside of piano” ^[20] – resulted in the total destruction of a piano when performed by Maciunas, Higgins and others at Wiesbaden. The performance was considered scandalous enough to be shown on German television four times, with the introduction “The lunatics have escaped!” ^[21]

"At the end we did Corner's *Piano Activities* not according to his instructions since we systematically destroyed a piano which I bought for \$5 and had to have it all cut up to throw it away, otherwise we would have had to pay movers, a very practical composition, but German sentiments about this "instrument of Chopin" were hurt and they made a row about it..." George Maciunas ^[22]

At the same time, Maciunas used his connections at work to start printing cheap mass produced books and multiples by some of the artists that were involved in the performances. The first three to be printed were *Composition 1961* by La Monte Young [see](#), *An Anthology of Chance Operations* edited by Young and Mac Low and [Water Yam](#), by George Brecht. *Water Yam*, a series of event scores printed on small sheets of card and collected together in a cardboard box, was the first in a series of artworks that Maciunas printed that became known as *Fluxkits*. Cheap, mass produced and easily distributed, *Fluxkits* were originally intended to form an ever-expanding library of modern [performance art](#). *Water Yam* was published in an edition of 1000 and originally cost \$4. ^[23] By April, 1964, almost a year later, Maciunas still had 996 copies unsold. ^[24]

Maciunas' original plan had been to design, edit and pay for each edition himself, in exchange for the copyright to be held by the collective. ^{[25][26]} Profits were to be split 80/20 at first, in favor of the artist. ^[27] Since most of the composers already had publishing deals, Fluxus quickly moved away from music toward performance and visual art. John Cage, for instance, never published work under the Fluxus moniker due to his contract with the music publishers [Edition Peters](#). ^[28]

"Maciunas seemed to have a fantastic ability to get things done.... if you had things to be printed he could get them printed. It's pretty hard in East Brunswick to get good offset printing. It's not impossible, but it's not so easy, and since I'm very lazy it was a relief to find somebody who could take the burden off my hands. So there was this guy Maciunas, a Lithuanian or Bulgarian, or somehow a refugee or whatever—beautifully dressed—"astonishing looking" would be a better adjective. He was somehow able to

carry the whole thing off, without my having to go 57 miles to find a printer." George Brecht ^[29]

Since Maciunas was [colorblind](#), Fluxus multiples were almost always [black and white](#). ^[30]

New York & the FluxShops



Willem de Ridder's Mail Order FluxShop, Amsterdam, with Dorothea Meijer, winter 1964-65.
Photo by Willem de Ridder

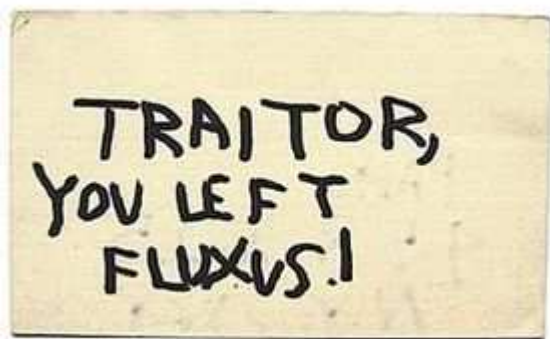
After his contract with the US Air Force was terminated due to ill health, Maciunas was forced to return to the US on September 3, 1963. ^[31] Once back in New York, he set about organising a series of street concerts and opened a new shop, the 'Fluxhall', on [Canal Street](#). 12 concerts, 'away from the beaten track of the New York art scene' ^[32], took place on Canal Street, 11 April to 23 May 1964. With photographs taken by Maciunas himself, pieces by [Ben Vautier](#), [Alison Knowles](#) and Takehisha Kosugi were performed in the street for free, although in practice there was 'no audience to speak of' ^[32] anyway.

'The people in Fluxus had understood, as Brecht explained, that "concert halls, theaters, and art galleries" were "mummifying." Instead, these artists found themselves "preferring streets, homes, and railway stations...." Maciunas recognized a radical political potential in all this forthrightly anti-institutional production, which was an important source for his own deep commitment to it. Deploying his expertise as a

professional graphic designer, Maciunas played an important role in projecting upon Fluxus whatever coherence it would later seem to have had.' Julia Robinson ^[33]

Along with the New York shop, Maciunas built up a distribution network for the new art across Europe and later outlets in California and Japan. Gallery and mail order outlets were established in Amsterdam, Villefranche-Sur-Mer, Milan and London, amongst others. ^[34] By 1965, the first anthology *Fluxus 1* was available, consisting of manila envelopes bolted together containing work by numerous artists who would later become famous including LaMonte Young, [Christo](#) and [Yoko Ono](#). Other pieces available included packs of altered playing cards by George Brecht, sensory boxes by [Ay-O](#), a regular newsletter with contributions by artists and musicians such as [Ray Johnson](#) and John Cale, and tin cans filled with poems, songs and recipes about beans by [Alison Knowles](#) ([see](#)).

Stockhausen's Originale



Traitor, you left Fluxus!, a postcard sent by George Maciunas to Nam June Paik, c late 1964, after the latter's involvement with Stockhausen's *Originale*

After returning to New York, Maciunas became reacquainted with Henry Flynt, ^[35] who encouraged members of Fluxus to take a more overtly political stance. One of the results of these discussions was to set up a picket line at the American premier of *Originale*, a new work by the German composer [Karlheinz Stockhausen](#), 8 September 1964. Stockhausen was deemed a 'Cultural Imperialist' by Maciunas and Flynt, while other members vehemently disagreed. The result was members of Fluxus, such as Nam June Paik and Jackson Mac Low, crossing a picket line made up of other members, including Ben Vautier and [Takako Saito](#) ^[36] who handed out leaflets denouncing Stockhausen as "a characteristic European-North American ruling-class Artist". ^{[37][38]} Dick Higgins participated in the picket, and then coolly joined the other performers inside. ^[39]

"Maciunas and his friend Henry Flynt tried to get the Fluxus people to march around outside the circus with white cards that said Originale was bad. And they tried to say that the Fluxus people who were in the circus weren't Fluxus any more. That was silly, because it made a split. I thought it was funny, and so first I walked around with Maciunas and with Henry with a card, then I went inside and joined the circus; so both groups got angry with me. Oh well. Some people say that Fluxus died that day – I once

thought so myself – but it turned out I was wrong." Dick Higgins, *A Child's History of Fluxus*, 1979 ^[40]

The event, arranged by [Charlotte Moorman](#) as part of her *2nd Annual New York Avant Garde Festival*, would cement animosities between Maciunas and her, ^[41] with Maciunas frequently demanding that artists associated with Fluxus have nothing to do with the annual festival, and would often expel artists who ignored his demands. This hostility continued throughout Maciunas' life – much to Moorman's bemusement – despite her continued championing of Fluxus art and artists. ^[42]

History, 1965-78

Yoko Ono and the Asiatic influence



Cut Piece, a performance piece by Yoko Ono in which the audience is invited to cut off her clothing. This version was staged at Carnegie Recital Hall, New York, 21 March 1965. Still taken from a film by [Albert and David Maysles](#)

The picketing of *Originale* marked the high point of Maciunas' [agit prop](#) approach, ^[43] an approach that estranged many of Fluxus' early proponents; Jackson Mac Low had resigned immediately after hearing 'antisocial' plans laid in April 1963, such as breaking down trucks under the Hudson River ^[44] Brecht threatened to quit on the same issue, and then left New York in the spring of 1965. Dick Higgins fell out with Maciunas around the same time, ostensibly over his setting up the [Something Else Press](#) which printed many key Fluxus texts. Instead of folding, however, Fluxus practise became increasingly influenced by Japanese members of the group ^[45]. Since returning to Japan in 1961, Yoko Ono had been recommending colleagues look Maciunas up if they moved to New York; by the time she had returned, in early 1965, [Hi Red Center](#), [Shigeeko Kubota](#), Takako Saito, [Mieko Shiomi](#) and [Ay-O](#) had all started to make work for Fluxus, often of a contemplative nature. ^[46]

Blurring boundaries

As fluxus gradually became more famous, Maciunas' ambitions for the sale of cheap multiples grew. The second flux anthology, the *Fluxkit* (late 1964 [see](#)), collected together early 3D work made by the collective in a businessman's case, an idea borrowed directly from Duchamp's *Boite en Valise* ^[47]([see](#)). Within a year, plans for a

new anthology, *Fluxus 2*, were in full swing to contain Flux films by [John Cale](#) and Yoko Ono (with hand held projectors provided), disrupted matchboxes and postcards by Ben Vautier, plastic food by [Claes Oldenberg](#), FluxMedicine by [Shigeo Kubota](#),^[48] and artworks made of rocks, ink stamps, outdated travel tickets, undoable puzzles and a machine to facilitate humming.^[49]

Maciunas' belief in the collective extended to authorship; a number of pieces from this period were anonymous, mis-attributed, or have had their authorship since questioned.^[50] As a further complication, Maciunas was in the habit of dramatically changing ideas submitted by various artists before he put the works into production. *Solid Plastic in Plastic Box*, credited to [Per Kirkeby](#) 1967, for instance, had originally been realised by Kirkeby as a metal box, inscribed 'This Box Contains Wood'. When opened, the box would be found to contain sawdust. By the time the multiple had been manufactured by Maciunas, it was a block of solid plastic contained in a plastic box of the same colour.^[51] Conversely, Maciunas assigned *Degree Face Clock*- in which a clock face is measured out in 360°- to Kirkeby despite being an idea by [Robert Watts](#).^[52]

"Some years ago, when I spoke with Robert Watts about *Degree Face Clock* and *Compass Face Clock*, he had recalled thinking up the idea himself and was surprised that George Maciunas advertised them as Per Kirkeby's. Watts shrugged and said that was the way George worked. There would be ideas in the air and Maciunas would assign the piece to one artist or another." Jon Hendricks^[53]

Other tactics from this time included Maciunas buying large amounts of plastic boxes wholesale, and handing them out to artists with the simple request to turn them into Fluxkits, and the use of the rapidly growing international network of artists to contribute items needed to complete works. Robert Watts' *Fluxatlas*, 1973, for instance, contains small rocks sent by members of the group from around the world.^[54]

Utopian communities

A number of artists in the group were interested in setting up Flux communes, intending to 'bridge the gap between the artist community and the surrounding society'^[55] The first of these, *The Cedilla That Smiles*,^[56] was set up in [Villefranche-sur-Mer](#), France, by Robert Filliou and George Brecht, 1965-1968.^[57] Intended as an 'International Centre of Permanent Creation', the shop sold Fluxkits and other small wares as well as housing a 'non-school', boasting the motto "A carefree exchange of information and experience. No students, no teachers. Perfect licence, at times to listen at times to talk."^{[57][58]} In 1966, Maciunas, Watts and others took advantage of new legislation drafted to regenerate the area of Manhattan known as 'Hell's Hundred Acres', soon to become rebranded as [SoHo](#), allowing artists to buy live/work spaces in an area that had been blighted due to a proposed 18-lane expressway along [Broome Street](#).^[59] Led by Maciunas, plans were laid to start a series of real-estate developments in the area, designed to create an artists' community within a few streets of the FluxShop on Canal Street.

'Maciunas wanted to establish collective workshops, food-buying cooperatives and theaters to link the strengths of various media together and bridge the gap between the artist community and the surrounding society'^[59]

The first warehouse, intended to house Maciunas, Watts, Christo & Jeanne-Calude, Jonas Mekas, LaMonte Young & others, was located on Greene Street. Likening these communities to the soviet [Kolkhozs](#), Maciunas didn't hesitate to adopt the title 'Chairman of Bldg. Co-Op' ^[60] without first registering an office or becoming a member of the New York State Association of Realtors. ^[61] FluxHousing Co-Operatives continued to redevelop the area over the next decade, and were widened to include plans to set up a *FluxIsland*- a suitable island was located near Antigua, but the money to buy and develop it remained unforthcoming- and finally a performance arts centre called the *FluxFarm* established in [New Marlborough](#), Massachusetts. The plans were continually dogged by financial problems, constant run-ins with the New York authorities, and eventually resulted, on 8 November 1975, in Maciunas being severely beaten by thugs sent by an unpaid electrical contractor. ^[62]

Since 1978

After the death of George Maciunas in 1978 a rift opened in the movement between a few collectors and curators who placed Fluxus in a specific time frame (1962 to 1978), and the artists themselves, many of whom continued to see Fluxus as a living entity held together by its core values and world view. Different theorists and historians adopted each of these views. Fluxus is therefore referred to variously in the past or the present tense. The question is now significantly more complex due to the fact that many of the original artists who were still living when the controversy arose are now dead. ^{[63][64]}

Some have argued that the unique control that curator Jon Hendricks holds over a major historical Fluxus collection (the Gilbert and Lila Silverman collection) has enabled him to influence, through the numerous books and catalogues subsidized by the collection, the view that Fluxus died with Maciunas. Hendricks argues ^[where?] that Fluxus was a historical movement that occurred at a particular time, asserting that such central Fluxus artists as Dick Higgins and Nam June Paik could no longer label themselves as active Fluxus artists after 1978, and that contemporary artists influenced by Fluxus cannot lay claim to be Fluxus artists. ^[65] The [Museum of Modern Art](#) makes the same claim dating the movement to the 1960s and 1970s. ^{[66][67]} However, the influence of Fluxus continues today in [multi-media digital art](#) performances.

Others, including [Hannah Higgins](#), daughter of fluxus artists [Alison Knowles](#) and [Dick Higgins](#), assert that although Maciunas was a key participant, there were many more, including Fluxus co-founder Higgins, who continued to work within Fluxus after the death of Maciunas. ^[68] There are a number of post-1978 artists who remain associated with Fluxus. Some were contemporaries of Maciunas who became active in Fluxus after 1978. While there is not a large Fluxus artist community in any single urban center, the rise of the [Internet](#) in the 1990s has enabled a vibrant Fluxus community to thrive online. Some of the original artists from the 1960s and 1970s remain active in online communities such as the Fluxlist, and other [artists](#), [writers](#), [musicians](#), and [performers](#) have joined them in [cyberspace](#). Fluxus-oriented artists continue to meet in cities around the world to collaborate and communicate in "real-time" and physical spaces.

Fluxus art

Fluxus encouraged a “[do-it-yourself](#)” aesthetic, and valued simplicity over complexity. Like [Dada](#) before it, Fluxus included a strong current of anti-commercialism and an

[anti-art](#) sensibility, disparaging the conventional market-driven art world in favor of an artist-centered creative practice. As Fluxus artist [Robert Filliou](#) wrote, however, Fluxus differed from Dada in its richer set of aspirations, and the positive social and communitarian aspirations of Fluxus far outweighed the anti-art tendency that also marked the group.^[69]

In terms of an artistic approach, Fluxus artists preferred to work with whatever materials were at hand, and either created their own work or collaborated in the creation process with their colleagues. [Outsourcing](#) part of the creative process to commercial fabricators was not usually part of Fluxus practice. Maciunas personally hand-assembled many of the Fluxus multiples and editions.^[70] While Maciunas assembled many objects by hand, he designed and intended them for mass production.^{[66][71]} Where many multiple publishers produced signed, numbered objects in limited editions intended for sale at high prices, Maciunas produced open editions at low prices.^{[66][71]} Several other Fluxus publishers produced different kinds of Fluxus editions. The best known of these was the [Something Else Press](#), established by Dick Higgins, probably the largest and most extensive Fluxus publisher, producing books in editions that ran from 1,500 copies to as many as 5,000 copies, all available at standard bookstore prices.^{[72][73]} Higgins created the term "[intermedia](#)" in a 1966 essay.

The art forms most closely associated with Fluxus are event scores and Fluxus boxes. Fluxus boxes (sometimes called Fluxkits or Fluxboxes) originated with George Maciunas who would gather collections of printed cards, games, and ideas, organizing them in small plastic or wooden boxes.^[74] The idea of the event began in [Henry Cowell](#)'s philosophy of music. Cowell, a teacher to John Cage and later to Dick Higgins, coined the term that Higgins and others later applied to short, terse descriptions of performable work. The term "score" is used in exactly the sense that one uses the term to describe a music score: a series of notes that allow anyone to perform the work, an idea linked both to what [Nam June Paik](#) labeled the "do it yourself" approach and to what [Ken Friedman](#) termed "musicality." While much is made of the do it yourself approach to art, it is vital to recognize that this idea emerges in music, and such important Fluxus artists as Paik, Higgins, or Corner began as composers, bringing to art the idea that each person can create the work by "doing it." This is what Friedman meant by musicality, extending the idea more radically to conclude that anyone can create work of any kind from a score, acknowledging the composer as the originator of the work while realizing the work freely and even interpreting it in far different ways from those the original composer might have done.

Event scores, such as [George Brecht](#)'s "Drip Music", are essentially [performance art](#) scripts that are usually only a few lines long and consist of descriptions of actions to be performed rather than dialogue. Fluxus artists differentiate event scores from "[happenings](#)". Whereas happenings were sometimes complicated, lengthy performances meant to blur the lines between performer and audience, performance and reality, Fluxus performances were usually brief and simple. The Event performances sought to elevate the banal, to be mindful of the mundane, and to frustrate the [high culture](#) of academic and market-driven music and art. Other creative forms that have been adopted by Fluxus practitioners include [collage](#), [sound art](#), [music](#), [video](#), and [poetry](#)—especially [visual poetry](#) and [concrete poetry](#).

Among its early associates were [Joseph Beuys](#), Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik, [Wolf Vostell](#), La Monte Young, [Joseph Byrd](#), and [Yoko Ono](#) who explored media ranging from performance art to poetry to experimental music to film. They took the stance of opposition to the ideas of tradition and professionalism in the arts of their time, the Fluxus group shifted the emphasis from what an artist makes to the artist's personality, actions, and opinions. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s (their most active period) they staged "action" events, engaged in politics and public speaking, and produced sculptural works featuring unconventional materials. Their radically untraditional works included, for example, the [video art](#) of Nam June Paik and [Charlotte Moorman](#) and the performance art of Joseph Beuys and Wolf Vostell. The often playful style of Fluxus artists led to their being considered by some little more than a group of [pranksters](#) in their early years. Fluxus has also been compared to [Dada](#) and aspects of [Pop Art](#) and is seen as the starting point of [mail art](#) and [no wave](#) artists. Artists from succeeding generations such as [Mark Bloch](#) do not try to characterize themselves as Fluxus but create spinoffs such as Fluxpan or Jung Fluxus as a way of continuing some of the Fluxus ideas in a 21st century, post-[mail art](#) context.

Artistic philosophies

Fluxus is similar in spirit to the earlier art movement of [Dada](#), emphasizing the concept of [anti-art](#) and taking jabs at the seriousness of modern art.^[75] Fluxus artists used their minimal performances to highlight their perceived connections between everyday objects and art, similarly to Duchamp in pieces such as [Fountain](#).^[75] Fluxus art was often presented in "events", which Fluxus member [George Brecht](#) defined as "the smallest unit of a situation".^{[75][76]} The events consisted of a minimal instruction, opening the events to accidents and other unintended effects.^[77] Also contributing to the randomness of events was the integration of audience members into the performances, realizing Duchamp's notion of the viewer completing the art work.^[77]

The Fluxus artistic philosophy has been defined as a synthesis of four key factors that define the majority of Fluxus work:

1. Fluxus is an attitude. It is not a movement or a style.^[78]
2. Fluxus is intermedia.^[79] Fluxus creators like to see what happens when different media intersect. They use found and everyday objects, sounds, images, and texts to create new combinations of objects, sounds, images, and texts.
3. Fluxus works are simple. The art is small, the texts are short, and the performances are brief.
4. Fluxus is fun. Humor has always been an important element in Fluxus.

Fluxus artists

Fluxus artists shared several characteristics including wit and "childlikeness", though they lacked a consistent identity as an artistic community.^[80] This vague self-identification allowed the group to include a variety of artists, including a large number of women. The possibility that Fluxus had more female members than any Western art group up to that point in history is particularly significant because Fluxus came on the heels of the white male-dominated [abstract expressionism](#) movement.^[80] However, despite the designed open-endedness of Fluxus, Maciunas insisted on maintaining unity

in the collective. Because of this, Maciunas was accused of expelling certain members for deviating from what he perceived as the goals of Fluxus.^[81]

<http://en.wikipedia.org>