

john  
cage  
year  
Lublin  
2012

# CAGE100

Symposium in Celebration of John Cage's Centenary  
Lublin, May 16–19, 2012

"Crossroads" Centre for Intercultural Creative Initiatives  
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

## PROGRAM

### May 16, Wednesday

- 9:30 Opening and welcoming addresses  
9:45 **Gordon Mumma**: mini-recital  
10:15 **Kyle Gann**: “*Silence* in the Rear-View Mirror”  
11:15 **David Revill**: “Performing Cage, Cage as Performance”  
12:15–13:00 Lunch break  
13:15 **Gordon Mumma**: “John Cage’s Work  
with Electronic Technologies from the 1930s to the 1960s”  
14:15 **Krzysztof Sz wajgier**: “Cage, Poland and the Question of Freedom”  
15:00 Opening of “Encounter,” an installation  
by **Hee Sook Kim** and **Chris Shultis**  
and “Dear.John: A Canon on the Name of Cage,”  
an installation by **Pauline Oliveros**

### May 17, Thursday

- 9:30 **Chris Shultis**: mini-recital  
10:00 **Peter Jaeger**: “John Cage and the Imitation of Nature”  
11:00 **Anne de Fornel**: “Encounter with Chance in the Exhibitions  
of John Cage”  
12:00–13:00 Lunch break  
13:00 **Jerzy Luty**: “John Cage’s (A)Political Thinking”  
14:00 **Margaret Leng Tan**: “4’33’’: A Zen Perspective”  
15:15 **Margaret Leng Tan**: outdoor performance  
of John Cage’s 4’33’’ and 0’00’’

### May 18, Friday

- 9:30 **David Revill**: mini-recital  
10:00 **Volker Straebel**: “Text and Context: The Premiere of Cage’s  
*Variations III*”  
11:00 **Katarzyna Bazarnik**: “Liberature and Cage: Prepared Lecture”  
12:00–13:00 Lunch break  
13:00 **Zenon Fajfer**: “Nothing on Lecture”  
14:00 **Chris Shultis**: “*Faux Amis*: Communication and Its Discontents”

### May 19, Saturday

- 9:30 “50’ for Speakers: Does It Have to Happen?” – An aleatoric panel  
discussion with audience participation presented by **students  
of the Cracow Academy of Music**  
10:45 **Fred Turner**: “John Cage as Cold War Democratic Theorist”  
11:45–12:45 Lunch break  
12:45 **David Nicholls**: “‘Each... is at the Center’:  
Thoughts on a Cagean View of (Music) History”  
13:45 Open discussion / closing

# CAGE100

Symposium in Celebration of John Cage's Centenary  
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under the honorary patronage of  
United States Ambassador to Poland  
President of Lublin and  
and Rector of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

organized by  
"Crossroads" Centre for Intercultural Creative Initiatives  
and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

at Czartoryski Palace  
Lublin Scientific Society  
Litewski Square 2, Lublin



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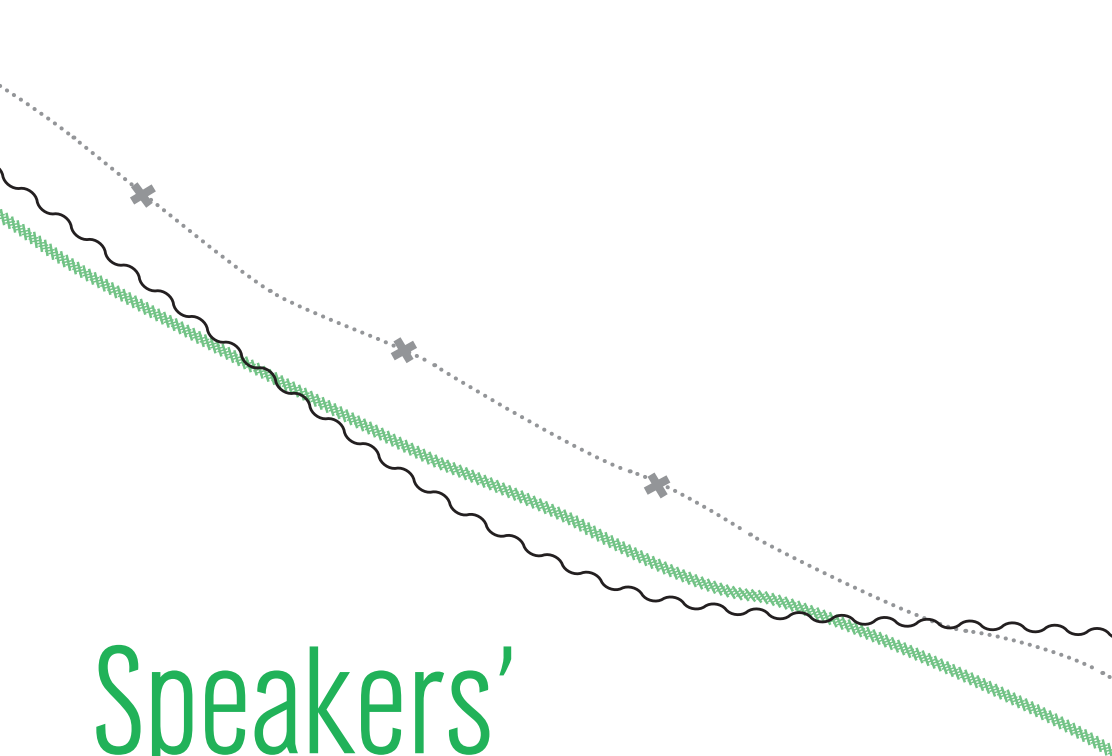
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# Speakers' Abstracts and Biographical Notes

## “Liberature and Cage: Prepared Lecture”

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Liberature is a kind of literature in which not only the verbal but also the material aspects carry meaning; i.e. the layout, the number and arrangement of pages, the structure of the book, being often unconventional and different than the codex, are constituents of the literary work. Unlike John Cage, authors of liberatic books seem to leave nothing to chance. In liberature the work appears as a deliberately crafted whole. But at the same time liberatic works often “play” with chance, using it as a structural principle or an important element of their meaning. The play with chance and openness of composition are but two of several analogies between liberature and Cage’s creative work. The American artist and liberatic writers also share an interest in everyday life, in banality, in small, ready-made, accidental details of the world, such as the surrounding sounds, the format and texture of a piece of paper used for writing down a lecture, words picked up from other people’s works. Other parallels between him and liberatic writers include blurring boundaries between visual and sound arts, sensitivity to the spatial features of textual and musical notations, and using “silence” and “emptiness.” The paper will be accompanied by actions performed by Zenon Fajfer.

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Katarzyna Bazarnik is a theoretician of literature, Joyce scholar, and translator. She teaches English literature at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow. She edited several volumes of essays, including “James Joyce and After. Writer and Time” (2010), and wrote “Joyce and Liberature” (2011). Together with Zenon Fajfer she co-authored the triple-codex book “Oka-leczenie” (prototype 2000, 2009) and “(O)patrzenie” (2003), which triggered off the liberature movement in Poland. They also launched the Liberature Reading Room in Cracow and run “Liberatura,” an imprint of the Ha!art Publishing House. In 2011 Bazarnik and Fajfer carried out a poetic action called “Liberty Poem” in several cities of the US (New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Oakland) as well as in Taipei and Tokyo, and published “Sonnet of Sonnets,” a book made together with Mills College students (2012). Bazarnik’s theoretical work on liberature as a new literary genre integrating the verbal content with the material shape of the book introduced the concept to the academic world.

Zenon Fajfer

## “Nothing on Lecture”



Zenon Fajfer is a poet and playwright, creator and theoretician of liberature, a new literary genre integrating text and the material shape of a book (Latin *liber*) into a meaningful whole. He is the author of the bottle-book “But Eyeing Like Ozone Whole” („Spoglądając przez ozonową dziurę”, 2004), the multimedia poetry volume “dwadzieścia jeden liter/ten letters” (2010) and “Liberature or Total Literature. Collected Essays 1999–2009” (2010). Together with Katarzyna Bazarnik he published the triple-codex book “Oka-leczenie” (prototype 2000, 2009) and “(O)patrzenie” (2003), which triggered off the liberature movement in Poland. In 2011 Fajfer and Bazarnik ran a poetic action called “Liberty Poem” in several cities of the US (New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Oakland) as well as in Taipei and Tokyo. Besides, in the US they published “Sonnet of Sonnets”, a book made together with Mills College students (2012). Fajfer’s work is characterized by formal inventiveness; he created a new poetic form called the “emanational poem.”

## “Encounter with Chance in the Exhibitions of John Cage”

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Starting in 1951, John Cage relentlessly searched for new creative strategies that would allow him to compose in a different manner. This commitment was rooted in his determination to prevent any and all subjectivity from controlling his artistic world, either as an expression of personal taste or as aspects of memory. On this basis, he pursued the invention of multiple impersonal procedures in which chance is the source of the conception of the work and intervenes at different stages of its elaboration. The result is an artistic exploration wherein the creator is confronted with the unpredictable. From 1969 on, the search for non-intentional means of creation reached beyond the musical domain to include the plastic arts. If chance intervened in the elaboration phase for a large number of his musical and visual production, the works produced remained fixed in their final aspect. However, particularly in the sixties, most of his musical works took on an indeterminate form as chance also became an integral part of the performance; hence the unpredictability of the result. This paper will explore how near the end of his life Cage combined this dialectic between *fixed* chance and *mobile* indetermination in the conception and organization of the installation “Changing Installation” (1991) and the exhibition “Rolywholyover A Circus” (1992).

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Anne de Fornel is currently finishing her doctoral thesis at the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV) entitled “Chance Encounter in the Musical and Visual Works of John Cage” that will be published in 2012 in French and English. Next year she will receive her master’s degree in piano at the National Superior Conservatory of Lyon (CNSMD), where she is studying with Florent Boffard. She is also the artistic director and pianist of The Ensemble Mesostics. She has set up an entire musical program dedicated to John Cage that will be presented in Paris in June 2012. It will include works of Cage and pieces written in homage to him by composers Jean-Yves Bosseur, David Revill, and Christian Wolff that will be premiered by The Ensemble Mesostics.

## Michelle Fillion

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Canadian musicologist Michelle Fillion received university degrees at McGill and a PhD from Cornell. She was for 20 years a Professor at Mills College in Oakland, California. She is now a Professor of Music at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. Her research and publications range from C. P.E. Bach and Haydn into the present time. Her major published book is on the author E. M. Forster and the musical life of his novels. Dr. Fillion is currently reviewing the Lublin John Cage Year centennial conference for publication in the journal "Circuit – Musiques Contemporaines" from Montreal.

## “Silence’ in the Rear-View Mirror”

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The publication of “Silence” in 1961 changed John Cage’s life and made him a celebrity even outside of new-music circles. It also gave him an opportunity to update his image for a new generation. Through his selection of texts, the composer of quiet, protominimalist prepared piano pieces that Cage was in the 1940s nearly disappeared from view; connections, sometimes contentious ones, with younger Europeans like Stockhausen and Boulez were emphasized; Varèse (still alive) was taken down a few notches; young colleagues Feldman, Wolff, and Brown were promoted as almost uniquely relevant. This paper will examine the historical positioning that Cage aimed at between the lines of “Silence,” finding the shadows among the famous sunniness of Cage’s elegantly quotable philosophical pronouncements.

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Kyle Gann is a composer and was new-music critic for the “Village Voice” from 1986 to 2005. Since 1997 he has taught music theory, history, and composition at Bard College. He is the author of “The Music of Conlon Nancarrow” (1995), “American Music in the 20th Century” (1997), “Music Downtown: Writings from the Village Voice” (2006), “No Such Thing as Silence: John Cage’s 4’33’’” (2010), and “Robert Ashley” (2012). He also wrote the introduction to the 50th-anniversary edition of Cage’s “Silence”. He studied composition with Ben Johnston, Morton Feldman, and Peter Gena. His rhythmic language was developed from his study of Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo Indian musics. His major works include “Sunken City”, a piano concerto; “Transcendental Sonnets”, a 35-minute work for choir and orchestra; “Custer and Sitting Bull”, a microtonal, one-man music theater; and “The Hudson River Trilogy”, a trio of microtonal chamber operas written with librettist Jeffrey Sichel. In addition to Bard, he has taught at Columbia University, Brooklyn College, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Bucknell University. His writings include more than 2500 articles for more than 45 publications. He writes the “American Composer” column for “Chamber Music” magazine. In 2003, the American Music Center awarded him its Letter of Distinction, along with Steve Reich, Wayne Shorter, and George Crumb.

Peter Jaeger

## “John Cage and the Imitation of Nature”

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On a number of occasions, John Cage cited in his writings South Asian philosopher Ananda Coomaraswamy's definition of art as “an imitation of Nature in her manner of operation.” This paper will investigate Cage's “nature” writings, with a focus on what the American eco-critic Jonathan Skinner has labelled as *entropological* poetics. Skinner borrows and recontextualizes this term from land artist and writer Robert Smithson in order to describe a formal practice engaged at the level of materials and processes, where entropy, transformation and decay are part of the creative work. For Smithson entropology occurs when the reproduction of information is so overwhelming in terms of its physicality that it tends to obliterate itself. However, where Smithson finds exhaustion in the entropic transformation of the universe, Cage finds a highly affirmative sense of playfulness and humor, a big “Yes to our presence together in chaos.” This paper will consider Cage's affirmative version of entropological poetics with reference to his 1961 essay “On Robert Rauschenberg, Artist and His Work,” as well as to his texts “Mureau” (1970) and “Empty Words” (1975).

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Peter Jaeger is a Reader in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Roehampton University in London. Previously he taught at Dartington College of Arts, The University of Toronto, and Royal Holloway, University of London. He writes literary criticism and poetry and is the author of six books, including “ABC of Reading TRG: Steve McCaffery, bpNichol and the Toronto Research Group” (2000), “Prop” (2007), and “The Persons” (2011). His next book, a critical monograph on the interface of Buddhist philosophy and ecological concerns in the work of John Cage, is set to be published by Continuum Press next year.

## “Encounter”

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“Encounter” is a multimedia installation that has 12 mixed media paintings interspersed with 12 texts, 12 jars of Chinese herbs, video projection, and four-channel audio with tracks alternating between sound and silence. The authors worked together in the same way Cage and Cunningham did: they had a time line to match the length of video and audio and they worked independently, after which the sounds and sights were simply combined. The installation also addresses the ephemerality of nature, another important Cageian theme. The audio and video recordings were made during walks in mountains and woods the authors took together.

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Hee Sook Kim is a painter and printmaker from Seoul, Korea, who is currently an associate professor teaching printmaking at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. She holds degrees from Seoul National University and New York University and has received several grants and awards, including those from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Leeway Foundation, and the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts. She has been artist-in-residence at, among others, the Ascona Centro Incontri Umani (Ascona, Switzerland), the Collaborative Press (Los Angeles), the Brandywine Workshop (Philadelphia), Millay Colony (New York), and the Vermont Studio Center (Johnson, Vermont). Her prints and paintings have been shown at museums and galleries in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Spain, and Germany. She has also exhibited at the Bronx Museum and the Queens Museum in New York, Lincoln Center in Colorado, and the Museum of Natural Sciences at North Carolina. She is currently represented by Causey Contemporary Art Gallery in New York.

Jerzy Luty

## “John Cage’s (A)Political Thinking”

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According to Richard Kostelanetz, John Cage’s art is characterized by fuzzy, non-hierarchical and non-linear structures, and his works are mostly built of elements with no beginning or end, none of which, additionally, dominate over the others. In the opinion of this author, the political originality of the author of “Anarchy” arises from the fact that his radical ideas are not enclosed in the content but in the forms of his works. For example, characteristic of all his works for orchestra is that they do not allow for the presence of the conductor. Thus, these works imply that, both in music and outside it, it is possible to create social mechanisms which will also function without the participation of “conductors,” without leaders or “bosses.” In this sense, the form offers a model of ideal social order. Seeing Cage as a supporter of political anarchism for social change seems justified especially with regard to his views from the 1980s or the last few years of his life, when he wrote “Overpopulation and Art.” An interesting contribution to the debate over the significance of Cage’s “anarchist” ideas, which are often misinterpreted and simplified, is Polish philosopher Stefan Morwaski’s observation from the 1970s that the artist’s anarchism combined with his renunciation of the idea of “art” was a sign of the maturity of his approach. In “Overpopulation and Art” he definitively dropped “art” in favor of “forms of life.”

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Jerzy Luty studied philosophy at Wrocław University, where he received his doctoral degree in 2006. His dissertation was published as “John Cage. Filozofia muzycznego przypadku” (John Cage: The philosophy of chance in music) in 2011. He is the author of 20 articles on esthetics and philosophy and the first translation into Polish of the writings of Denis Dutton, the father of evolutionary esthetics.

## “John Cage’s Work with Electronic Technologies from the 1930s to the 1960s”

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This presentation with film and video examples traces Cage’s disciplined collaborative work in the electronic media of radio broadcasting, disc recording, sound-film, tape-recording, and the innovative ensembles of modern dance across almost four decades. It begins with his work with his inventive engineering father in the 1920s and 1930s. Through the late 1920s and into the 1950s, Cage often worked in the milieu of radio broadcasting and recording technologies. He considered radio a major performance activity, and several of his compositions from the Seattle Cornish School era were specifically made for live-radio broadcasting. All of those activities required collaboration with others in the technological realm, particularly with the rapid development of new technologies. By 1952 Cage had changed from disc recording to the new magnetic-tape technology, and by 1960 he expanded his ensemble to include live-electronics (in “Cartridge Music”). By 1965 his collaboration with a vast array of electronic and film technicians led to the large ensemble extravaganza “Variations V,” in collaboration with Merce Cunningham’s complex choreography and decor. This presentation will outline Cage’s ever growing creative imagination and skill in his collaboration with others in the electronic media.

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Gordon Mumma’s diverse instrumental performances include piano, horn, musical saw, cornet, harpsichord, percussion, bandoneon, and live-electronics. From the mid 1950s onward he performed with Robert Ashley, David Behrman, Anthony Braxton, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Alvin Lucier, Pauline Oliveros, David Tudor, Christian Wolff, and others. Besides compositions for acoustical instruments, his creative work has also involved designing electronic equipment for his live-electronic and studio compositions. From 1975 to 1994 he was Professor of Music at the University of California, and received the 2000 Biennial Award of the New York Foundation for Contemporary Arts. His many writings on the arts and technology are now being assembled for book publication in 2015.

David Nicholls

## “Each... is at the Center’: Thoughts on a Cagean View of (Music) History”

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Traditional historiographic practices deal almost exclusively with prospective chains of influence, prioritizing the canonic over the non-canonic and the influence flowing from an individual over the influences flowing towards her or him. Similarly, historical pre-eminence is valued more than historical accuracy. Although John Cage’s view of history initially chimed with these traditional practices, from the 1940s onward he increasingly came to dismiss teleological historiography in favor of an alternative view that might be characterized as “centrality.” Thus, whereas in the 1930s he was – in his own words – “like a tiger in defense of Schoenberg, and... less and less interested in Stravinsky’s music,” by 1959 he had modified his stance, in apparent realization of his agreement with the supposition that “[Cowell] was not attached (as Varèse also was not attached) to what seemed to so many to be the important question: Whether to follow Schoenberg or Stravinsky.” This paper examines in detail Cage’s journey from traditional to alternative historiographic practices. While focusing in particular on a passage in “Communication,” the third of his 1958 Darmstadt lectures, it also reflects on the multiple challenges created by a historiography based in centrality. Along the way, it touches variously on music history as presented in such standard textbooks as Grout and Palisca; the writings of Lewis Carroll; Cage’s “discovery” of the prepared piano; recent biographies of Shakespeare and Beethoven; mesostics; Zen Buddhism; value judgments; and the influence on Cage of the artist Mark Tobey.

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David Nicholls is Professor of Music at the University of Southampton. He has written widely on American music of the twentieth century; his principal publications include “American Experimental Music, 1890–1940” (1990), “John Cage” (2007), and (as contributing editor) “The Cambridge History of American Music” (1998) and “The Cambridge Companion to John Cage” (2002). Before moving to Southampton in August

2000, he was Professor of Music and Research Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at Keele University. Born and raised in Birmingham, he studied for a BA at St. John's College, Cambridge, primarily with the distinguished British composer Hugh Wood. After graduating, he subsequently undertook doctoral and postdoctoral research: in 1986 he was awarded a PhD for his thesis on the experimental compositional techniques of Ives, Cowell, Cage and others, and from 1984 until 1987 he was Keasbey Fellow in American Studies at Selwyn College, Cambridge. Until the mid-1990s, he was also active as a composer. His "Cantata: Jerusalem" was commissioned by the BBC and was premiered in London in November 1996 and broadcast shortly afterwards on BBC Radio 3.

Pauline Oliveros

## “Dear.John: A Canon on the Name of Cage”

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“Dear.John” is a sound installation in which 16 voices play the pitches C-A-G-E, divided into cycles of a fixed duration. For each cycle, each voice picks a duration, an octave, whether it is on or off, and a starting and ending loudness, each randomly. The installation gives anyone the option of activating it from the computer to hear a 5 minute version of the piece. Ideally, one person at a time should visit the room and hear the piece. It can also have more than one person for listening. Each time the piece is activated the version is unique and will never be heard the same way again.

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Pauline Oliveros is Distinguished Research Professor of Music at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, and Darius Milhaud Artist-in-Residence at Mills College. Her career spans fifty years of boundary dissolving music making. In the 1950s she was part of a circle of iconoclastic composers, artists, and poets gathered together in San Francisco. She has been as interested in finding new sounds as in finding new uses for old ones – her primary instrument is the accordion. Since the 1960s she has influenced American music profoundly through her work with improvisation, meditation, electronic music, myth and ritual. Oliveros is the founder of “Deep Listening,” which she describes as “a way of listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear no matter what you are doing.” This “life practice” is promoted by the Deep Listening Institute, formerly known as the Pauline Oliveros Foundation. She was recently awarded the John Cage award for 2012 from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

## “Performing Cage, Cage as Performance”

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This presentation examines the particular problems of performing the music of John Cage – the chance works in particular. One option frequently adopted by performers during their preparation is to learn something about the composer – the motivation being that awareness of the background (a spatial metaphor which is, of course, open to debate) will inform one’s playing. The advantages of this option are all the more obvious with an approach, such as Cage’s, that is in one way or another unusual. By exploring some of the challenges of performing Cage, the paper will simultaneously explore some of the general issues of self-discovery, -development and -transformation they bring up – issues of focus, discipline, devotion, and what action, what spontaneity actually are. Cage’s chance pieces are not always technically difficult, in the narrow sense. Here, however, the challenge is that they are written in an unprecedented way. Cage had re-written esthetics, for himself at least, and to give a good performance of his chance music it is necessary to understand that re-writing. Discipline is needed to let the sounds simply happen – to resist the temptation to make connections between them by phrasing. The key difference is between expression (which is our default mode in the west in esthetics and performance) and exemplification (which is critical in Cage’s post-1952 work). Cage’s chance music offers an opportunity to discover, through performing, the player’s own discipline, which is the truest, most productive discipline. His pieces also bring up the general issue of how to responsibly interpret works whose details are to be realized spontaneously. Spontaneity is not to be confused with automatism, reverting to cliché. This leads us to the second of the two main themes of the presentation: the way in working on new art music can teach us what spontaneity, centering, even action itself is. Through that, we can return to the common theme: self-transformation. In the pun beloved of Cage, “get out of whatever cage you find yourself in.” We become more fully ourselves by becoming other than ourselves.

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David Revill wrote "The Roaring Silence" (1992), the authorized biography of Cage, described by "Library Journal" as "definitive." His involvement with Cage's work, besides "The Roaring Silence," encompasses college courses, radio and television programmes, publications, CD's, and performances (including the world premiere of "Muoyce 2" and the U. K. premiere of "One<sup>4</sup>" for solo drummer). In the PASIC New Music Study Day, 1999, he devised and presented, in collaboration with Benjamin Toth of the Hartt School, a music circus and lecture which presented Cage's complete percussion music, performed by Revill, Toth and members of the Hartt School Percussion Ensemble. As a composer, Revill has worked in countries such as Austria, Poland, Romania, Croatia, Canada, and particularly, in recent years, France, Germany, and the United States. His compositional residencies include the "Begegnungen" Festival in Innsbruck (1999, 2003) and McKnight Visiting Composer (American Composers' Forum, 1997), portrait concerts at the Zagreb Biennale, the "Dialogues" Festival in Edinburgh (2002), and the "Sound" Festival in Aberdeen (2007). His electronic work includes numerous visits to Heinrich-Strobel-Stiftung in Freiburg, Germany, and residencies at C.C.MI.X. in Paris.

## “Faux Amis’: Communication and Its Discontents”

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In the late 1940s, John Cage and Pierre Boulez engaged in a correspondence as they were both working on removing the self from their work. Central to their exchange, revolving around chance versus total serialism, was a “misunderstanding” – a case of similar goals produced by different means creating similar ends with different meanings. Students of languages know this phenomenon – not all cognates carry over from one language to another. Thus the term “*faux amis*” – words that look or sound similar but differ in meaning. This paper will examine these mistakes and misunderstandings in the light of reappraisal and re-evaluation. It will look at how Cage and Boulez’s views of each other are wrong but right about something of importance in a way that requires looking at their work of that period as oppositionally separate in combination. An analogy will be invoked: how Adorno was wrong about Schoenberg and Stravinsky but right about something that in fact makes it possible to explain what I mean about Cage and Boulez. The result is what I call a “dialectical experimentalism” that reflects the ending of Ezra Pound’s Canto 116: “to confess wrong without losing rightness” – and can also shed a “little light” on the currency in our own time of this important moment in music history.

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Christopher Shultis, Distinguished Professor and Regents’ Professor of Music (retired), began his musical career as an orchestral percussionist and timpanist, performing with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra and the Santa Fe Opera. In 1980 he became the youngest full time faculty member ever hired at the University of New Mexico. Soon after he was selected as Principal Percussionist for the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra and Principal Timpanist for the Orchestra of Santa Fe. Under his direction, the UNM Percussion Ensemble became internationally recognized for its performances of the most important contemporary repertoire, working closely with many composers including Lou Harrison, Konrad Boehmer, John Cage, Michael Colgrass, James Tenney,

and Christian Wolff – the latter two writing music dedicated to the ensemble. In 1988 Shultis started work as a composer and musicologist and began teaching composition at UNM in the late 1990s. His research on twentieth-century music (especially the music of John Cage) is widely cited by scholars in the field and he received an ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for a Cage-related article in 1997. He has been awarded two Fulbrights to Germany (RWTH Aachen, 1993; Universität Heidelberg, 1999) and in 2010 was selected to deliver the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Lecture, “the highest honor UNM bestows on its faculty.” Now primarily a composer, a CD of Shultis’s recent music – “Devisadero: Music from the New Mexico Wilderness” – is available through Parma Recordings.

## “Text and Context: The Premiere of Cage’s ‘Variations III’”

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In summer 1962, John Cage was invited by musicologist Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt to contribute to the concert and lecture series “Musik im Technischen Zeitalter” (Music in the Technical Age) in Berlin, Germany. As a young man, Stuckenschmidt had been an avid promoter of “mechanical music,” i.e., music written specifically for player piano or mechanical organ. In turn, in the course of Cage’s autodidactic studies in the 1930s, he had likely come across Stuckenschmidt’s contribution to the American magazine “Modern Music” entitled “Machines: A Vision on the Future” (March 1927). By the time Stuckenschmidt experienced performances of Cage’s “Sonatas and Interludes” in 1949 in New York and “12’55.6078” for Two Prepared Pianos” in 1954 in Donaueschingen, his penchant for the extreme avant-garde had noticeably cooled. Nevertheless, Stuckenschmidt acknowledged the relevance of Cage’s work and aesthetics even after the scandal of Cage’s 1958 appearance in Darmstadt and invited him to lecture on his work or to have an “exchange of views [with] an outstanding performer of [his] work.” The presentation that took place on January 21, 1963 at the West Berlin Kongresshalle was a simultaneous performance of “Fontana Mix” (1958), realized by David Tudor for piano and electronics, and “Variations III” (1963), premiered by Cage as a performed lecture. The filmed recording of the live television broadcast also shows Stuckenschmidt’s rather futile attempts to engage Cage in a serious interview. The paper seeks to relate Cage’s performance at the Kongresshalle event to the score of “Variations III” – a score consisting of graphical elements on transparencies and instructions for “reading” their undetermined superimposition. Special emphasis is given to the margins of the music performance – that is, to the differentiation between the piece and other events happening at the same time (e.g. Tudor’s piano playing,

Stuckenschmidt's questions, or audience reactions). That these edges become blurred brings "Variations III" into the context of Cage's then recent works addressing the theatrical aspect of music performance within the works themselves – "0'00'" ("4'33" No. 2") on the one hand and "Rozart Mix" on the other. In addition, the paper will address the problem of documenting performances such as the Kongresshalle event. The live television broadcast, directed by Reinhard Elsner, reveals the difficulties of capturing a multiperspectival, only partially planned happening, where simultaneity occurs only in limited sequences, and the connection between the audible and its source is often lost. Research in performance practice needs to take these limitations of available data into consideration.

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Volker Straebel is a musicologist focusing on electro-acoustic music, the American and European avant-garde, intermedia, performance and sound art. He is co-director of the Electronic Music Studio at Technische Universität Berlin and teaches Sound Studies at the University of Arts (UdK). He is curatorial adviser to the contemporary music festival MaerzMusik and has realized and performed indeterminate works by John Cage and himself.

## “Cage, Poland and the Question of Freedom”

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In 1912, the year John Cage was born, Poland had been absent from the map of Europe for over a century. Cagean manifestations of artistic freedom culminated at a time when Poles experienced oppression and imprisonment in the Communist bloc. No wonder, then, that the three centuries of unfreedom affected our peculiar understanding of the role of the artist and his responsibilities with respect to his country. This understanding became deeply ingrained in our mentality during the Romantic period, when it became associated with emotional expression. Twentieth-century American innovators like Ives, Varèse and Cage represent approaches that are as distant as can be from the Central and East European traditionalist-patriotic notions of liberty. Using “freedom” as a category for describing the reception and impact of Cage’s ideas in Poland is quite obviously a sensitive issue. After the wave of anti-Communist protests in 1956 Polish composers and music institutions enjoyed more freedom, which resulted in the appearance of new movements, such as sonorism (after 1960 promoted chiefly by Krzysztof Penderecki) and the so-called Polish school of composition. The 1960s avant-garde composers distanced themselves both from the Romantic model and from contemporary modernism. Sonorism was a protest against the almost universal domination of the serialist and aleatoric dogma. The material of sonorist compositions are either autonomous tone clusters or groups of aleatoric elements. Both approaches to composition are very distant from Cage’s total sound space idea and indeterminacy. Understanding the difference between freedom and arbitrariness was crucial for Cage’s reception in Poland. Having discovered their own ways of manifesting independence Polish composers were able to escape the danger of becoming slaves of their own inventions, even if the methods they developed guaranteed total liberation. Cage, however, continued to inspire and motivate many of them to try new ideas without the need to test their limits.

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Krzysztof Szwejgier teaches music theory and composition at the Academy of Music in Cracow. He has also taught at the Jagiellonian University and the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts. He has published articles about avant-garde music, jazz, minimalism, theatre, esthetics, and axiology and has worked with several theatre companies as music director and co-author of productions. He is a member of the Polish Association of Esthetics and the program committee of the „Warsaw Autumn” International Festival of Contemporary Music.

## “4’33’”: A Zen Perspective”

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By 1952 John Cage had thoroughly integrated the tenets of Zen into his cauldron of Asian philosophical influences. “4’33’”, the quintessential apogee of Cage’s Zen odyssey, embodies many of Zen’s precepts and paradoxes. These will be explored in “4’33’”: A Zen Perspective.” Two other seminal Cage works share traits in common with “4’33’” and these will round out the discussion. They are “Water Music,” created in the same year as “4’33’,” and “0’00’” (1960), which Cage designated “4’33’” (No. 2).” Following the symposium, there will be outdoor performances of “4’33’” and “0’00’” (weather permitting).

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Margaret Leng Tan’s eleven-year collaboration with John Cage, from 1981 until his death, established her as one of his preeminent interpreters. She was the featured performer in a tribute to Cage’s memory at the 45th Venice Biennale. Her Cage recordings are critically regarded as definitive performances and she performs Cage’s music in the Public Broadcasting System’s “American Masters” films on John Cage and Jasper Johns. She is the editor for Volume 4 of Cage’s piano music published by C. F. Peters. In 2006 she gave the premiere of his newly discovered “Chess Pieces,” which she also prepared for publication. Tan’s DVD of Cage’s “Sonatas and Interludes” (mode 158) was selected as a “Desert Island Choice” by “Gramophone.” During this Cage centenary season Tan will honor her mentor in celebrations in the US, Eastern and Western Europe, and Central America.

## “John Cage as Cold War Democratic Theorist”

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To date, most scholars have analyzed John Cage’s career from the mid-1950s on, celebrating his chance composition methods, his allegiance to Buddhism, and his extraordinary influence on American art and music in the latter half of the century. This paper focuses instead on his career from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. Drawing on archival materials from Northwestern University and the Institute of Design in Chicago, it relocates Cage’s turn toward what he called “disinterested” composition within a larger cultural movement toward the integration of self and the rejection of authoritarian modes of communication. The paper opens in the summer of 1940, when Cage traveled to Mills College in California and met Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and other members of the New Bauhaus. Building on research by Branden Joseph and on new archival sources, the paper points out that Cage quickly absorbed the refugee Bauhaus artists’ vision of art as a form of perceptual therapy. The paper then links his turn toward the therapeutic to the larger project of democratic self-making articulated by American social scientists at the same time. To date, most scholars have ascribed Cage’s turn toward chance methods as a response to his reading of Eastern philosophy. By returning to his writings of the 1940s, the paper reveals his deep preoccupation with the relationships between culture and character and between individual agency and collective power that exercised leading American intellectuals and national policy makers at the same moment. The paper then argues that Cage’s aleatory esthetic and his denial of his own authority to compose musical messages in the late 1940s represented a powerful strategy for transforming the individual musical performance from an effort to supply the audience with a single, dominating, even authoritarian tone-stream, into an attempt to supply it with an array of sounds from which to choose. In that sense, Cage’s music in this period presented an esthetic solution to the problem of democratic communication. If the individual psyche and

the world as a whole were riven by the tensions of World War II and the early cold war, Cage's musical strategy of turning away from authority toward open, egalitarian soundscapes offered a route to individual and collective peace. For that reason, the paper concludes, we need to see Cage not only as a composer and theorist of music, but of democratic social relations.

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Fred Turner is Associate Professor of Communication and Director of the Program in Science, Technology and Society at Stanford University. He is the author of two books, "From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism" and "Echoes of Combat: The Vietnam War in American Memory." His essays have tackled topics ranging from the rise of reality television to the culture of engineering at Google. He is currently drafting a history of immersive media environments in the decades after World War II.

## “50’ for Speakers: Does It Have to Happen?”

A panel discussion presented by students of the Cracow Academy of Music

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John Cage’s work has been marginalized in music school curricula for years. Therefore, it seems all the more interesting to consider what today’s young composers, music theorists and instrumentalists have to say about his music now that the 20th century is over and the so-called second avant-garde is a thing of the past. Can Cage’s music still inspire discoveries and innovations and continue to delight with its inventiveness and unpredictability? Or is it just an obsolete philosophical utopia invented on the spur of the moment – now exhausted, dull and hackneyed? In our 50-minute panel discussion, in which – we hope – the audience will also take part, we will reflect upon the chosen aspects of Cage’s music: continuity in formal structures, instrumental theatre, deconstruction of the opera, and the role of silence in music, to name a few. The form of the presentation is guaranteed to keep all participants on their toes – it will disturb their sense of comfort, annoy and leave them unsettled. Will relinquishing control over the course of events to chance operations confuse the audience as well? Will the speakers themselves be thrown off balance in the end? Does this really have to happen? We invite you to help us put the ideas behind this panel to the test.

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Barbara Bogunia graduated in English from the Jagiellonian University in Cracow and is now about to graduate in music theory under the supervision of professor Mieczysław Tomaszewski. She specializes in contemporary American music, especially the work of George Crumb and John Cage.

Emilka Grzegorzczak is a graduate student of music theory in the class of dr. Małgorzata Janicka-Stysz and an undergraduate student of church music. She specializes in contemporary Russian music and the work of Alfred Schnittke and Galina Ustvolska. Piotr Kielbiński holds a graduate degree in conducting (the class of professor Tadeusz Strugała) as well as a postgraduate degree in music theory. He completed his diploma with distinction under the supervision of professor Teresa Malecka. He specializes in

German and Austrian composers (A. Bruckner, R. Wagner, R. Strauss) and the evolution of musical genres such as symphony, opera and musical drama. Apart from music, his interests include literature, philosophy, and Germanic and Norse mythology.

Dominika Micał is an undergraduate student of music theory as well as of Polish studies at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow.

Piotr Peszat is an undergraduate student of composition in the class of professor Krzysztof Meyer.

Mateusz Rusowicz is enrolled in the graduate trumpet class of dr. Wacław Mulak and the undergraduate conducting class of professor Jerzy Katlewicz. He is interested in astronomy.

Kacper Sokołowski is an undergraduate student in the oboe class of professor Arkadiusz Krupa. He is interested in instrumental improvisation, electroacoustic composition and apiculture.

Academic supervision is provided by dr. Krzysztof Sz wajgier and dr. Agnieszka Draus.



john  
cage  
Year  
Lublin  
2012

# Idea

Reflecting on the achievements of John Cage, it is really astonishing how much one man, always smiling and always bewildered, could do. Without calling to man the barricades or destroying established institutions, answering only when he was attacked, he proposed a new vision of the world, of society, of man and of art. A vision that, bearing the mark of utopia, completely reshaped 20th-century aesthetics. As history shows, subsequent generations always draw the most from past utopias.

We have decided to celebrate the 100th anniversary of John Cage's birth by organizing a **John Cage Year in Lublin** because we believe that at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century we still live in the **Cagean** era and that new generations of musicians continue to draw extensively on his legacy, often without realizing how many doors in art were first opened by him. Subverting the traditional notion of art, he sparked off the creative impulse behind such new forms and genres as minimal music, performance, sound art or sound poetry. In music, he redefined not only the very idea of what music is or can be, but also the notion of the listener, who, according to Cage, is equally important for the creative process as is the composer and the performer.

The range and depth of Cage's interests and his creative experiments make us think of him as a 20th century alchemist. He used his life experiences and combined diverse phenomena to try to get through art at the true meaning of life. It is both paradoxical and symptomatic that his experiments, while perceived as examples of avant-garde thinking, are also often referred to as very close to the organic character of archaic art. The best example of that are his experiments with sound and the desire to restore the sound's subjectivity. In archaic cultures, the sound – including the sounds of nature, murmurs, rustles and a vast array of other sonic phenomena – was a self-contained sign and a carrier of meanings and traditions, a sacred element among the world's phenomena. It is because of this affinity with the most primal understanding of sound that Cage continues to inspire us today in our exploration of the common ground between contemporary and ancient music.

Why Lublin? Because, opposing the division into the centre and the periphery, Cage saw potential in even the most remote places on earth. He claimed that any context, whether historical, intercultural or interpersonal, has its own "other dimensions" that may not be noticeable if one looks at things from one's own narrow perspective. Saying that we can all be composers – that is, artists – he encouraged us to keep rediscovering the world we live in and to see ourselves as its centre.

By inviting to Lublin the artists for whom John Cage was a master and a guiding spirit, we want our city to become a place open to experimenting artists from around the globe. We will be equally delighted to welcome renowned musicians who knew Cage and had the opportunity to work with him and young artists who have chosen the risky but challenging path of experimentation. We want Lublin to become a meeting place for artists of different generations who boldly break new ground and are open to new ideas. We want them to bring original and remarkable art to this town and are convinced that Cage's friendly smile will accompany us throughout this year. He believed that the value of artistic and social undertakings should be measured by their scale, saying that the bigger their scale, the more useful they are.

Jan Bernad,  
Artistic Director of the "Crossroads" Centre  
Jerzy Kutnik  
Professor of American Studies, Maria Skłodowska-Curie University