

Santa Fe Symposium Fluxus (SFSF)

Ancient to the Future: Fluxus in Relation

October 15–17, 2026

New Mexico Museum of Art, Vadem Contemporary

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Conference website: <https://stage2001.com/SFSF/>

Program subject to change.

1. Thursday, October 15

Free Day

Museum visits; possible field trip TBA.

Memorial Dinner — 6:00 PM

Dinner honoring James McManus (1942–2025) and Alison Knowles (1933–2025).

2. Friday, October 16

Session 1: Origins, Introductions, and Early Fluxus — 9:00-10:30 AM

Dennis Summers

Independent Artist

Symposium welcome and introduction

Presentation type: Introduction — 5 min

Roger Rothman

Bucknell University

Overview of Fluxus

Presentation type: Introduction — 5 min

Meredith Tromble

Feminist Research Institute, University of California, Davis

Are any of these any good?

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: In an undated letter to Dick Higgins, recorded in Owen Smith's essay *Speaking Personally*, George Maciunas gives a list of 65 artists, which he attributes to James Goldsworthy. He asks Higgins, "Are any of these any good? (for Fluxus)." A frank and wonderfully gossipy conversation ensues, elliptically negotiating what is "in" and "out" of Fluxus. Bouncing off this correspondence as a prompt, this Fluxakucha presentation speculates on an aesthetics of group boundaries, and their role in producing a social sense of creative energy, drawing examples particularly from the West Coast artists on the list (including Wallace Berman, Bruce Conner, Jay DeFeo, Wally Hedrick, Manuel Neri, and Peter Voulkos) and folding in material from Teresa M. Amabile (business administration), Albert Laszlo Barabasi (network science) and Keith Sawyer (psychology). There may be odd diagrams.

Simon Anderson

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Fluxus is ludicrous!

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: This fluxakucha will play upon Fluxgames, puzzles, contradictions and complementarities, to juggle aspects of gladness and glee, of levity and noise. The ancients tell us that pleasure is our goal, but also that it is the opposition that is good for us. Thus a medieval poet can sing that all is game, joy, and jest—and yet we get that Utopia is nowhere and, and that dystopia is big box-office. In my dictionary of choice, the singular word play has a score of uses, and as a verb it has more than twice as many applications, ending with a pun and double meaning. It's the same with game; running from merriment and frolic to ridicule and humbug, via crooked, scheme, and pursuit—one can even die game but later exude a gamey odor. Gathered and produced through Maciunas' intense, singular, and maybe deluded, drive; Fluxus games, puzzles, sports, kits, masks, joke objects, and event scores offered cheap and deep insight into the power of paradox, posed as provocative play. Associated artists ran this gamut with humorous vigor; from Koepcke's Cheerups to Vostell's de/collage; from sight gags and one-liners to infinite variations, from auto-destruction to permanent creation, allowing us the pleasure to playfully speculate on the relations within homo ludens.

James Housefield

University of California, Davis

33 1/3 @ UC Davis: Cage/Duchamp/ O'Doherty & the Art of Chance in NorCal, 1969 & 2017

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: This paper interprets John Cage's "33 1/3" as an homage to Marcel Duchamp that emerged amidst a fascination with Fluxus and conceptual art at the University of California, Davis (UCD), where it was featured in 1969 and 2017. It emerged in a dialogue with Duchamp's heritage that included Aspen magazine 5 & 6, produced by Brian O'Doherty. When Cage came to the UCD campus as Visiting Artist 1969-70, its thriving artistic community was characterized by an embrace of avant garde musical experimentation and Duchamp-inspired conceptual art. Cage premiered "33 1/3" on November 21, 1969, during "Mewantemooseicday." He prepared a space with 250 vinyl LP records, 12 turntables, and loudspeakers. No seating was offered. No instruction was given. The audience spontaneously selected and played records. The audience completed the work. O'Doherty published Aspen 5 & 6 as a single white 8x8" box, filled with multimedia elements contributed by Cage, Duchamp, Barthes, Beckett, Cunningham, Sontag, and others. Boxed without binding, its contents inserted without prescribed order, Aspen 5 & 6 realized Mallarmé's dream of the ideal book. "33 1/3" engaged Mallarmé similarly. Although Cage's association with silence (from 4'33") pervaded the Aspen box, a new contemporary cacophony filled Freeborn Hall at UCD on that November day. This paper was inspired by the day Jim McManus showed up at my home with his newly acquired vintage copy of Aspen 5 & 6. I submit it in honor of Jim's life and generous scholarship, and in memory of our long friendship.

Allen Riley

University of California, Santa Cruz

Agential Cuts in Yoko Ono's Cut Piece

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: I examine the relation of physical action and meaning in Yoko Ono's performance work Cut Piece through Karen River Barad's agential realist philosophy of physics. Cut Piece is orchestrated through a Fluxus event score that simply states "Cut", though some performances include instructions for the audience to cut and keep a piece of the performer's clothing. Cut Piece articulates the concept of complementarity in quantum physics, in which certain properties of a phenomena cannot be measured simultaneously when the measurements require mutually exclusive physical arrangements, such as the position and momentum of an electron. Barad argues that the difference between mutually exclusive concepts is not merely a matter of what can be known, but what is materially determinate and indeterminate in a specific material arrangement. In Cut Piece, a participant cannot both observe and perform the cut, or cannot experience the distanced perspective of the audience while also performing a close-up cut. The meaning of the word "cut" transforms, or becomes more definitive, as it is enacted through this physical process. The meaning of the word becomes articulated through its enactment. Participants become more definitive too, as their physical presence on stage draws lines around their intentions, their race, and their gender in relation to the performer and to each other. The performance proceeds by resolving the indeterminacy presented to the audience at its outset, and works through the difference between what is indeterminate at the outset of the performance and what becomes determinate through participatory cuts.

Break — 10:30-11:00 AM

Session 2: Modernist Antecedents and American Contexts — 11:00 AM -12:30 PM

Linda Henderson

University of Texas at Austin

Vibratory, Fluctuant Modernism: Early 20th Century Art and the Ether

Presentation type: Paper — 20 min

Abstract: Flux and continuity were watchwords in the early 20th century. Usually attributed to the impact of Henri Bergson's philosophy, there was a much more pervasive source for this view--the widespread belief in the ether, thought to fill all space and serve as the medium for wave transmissions as well as a variety of other functions. This paper draws on my book project "Ether and the Energies of Modernism" Art, Science, and Occultism in the Early 20th Century." The ether was central to the early 20th-century paradigm of the fluid interpenetration of matter and space, as first exhibited in Pablo Picasso's and Georges Braque's Analytical Cubist paintings of 1909-10. Not only was the ether thought to be the source of matter (as in the "electric theory of matter"), but also its destination as matter dematerialized into the ether on the model of radioactivity (as propounded in the highly popular books of Gustave Le Bon). Artists to be discussed in this talk range from Edvard Munch through Cubists and Futurists to Wassily Kandinsky.

Anne Collins Goodyear

Independent Scholar

Fluxus and its Antecedents: The Case of Mina Loy and Alice Hutchins

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: Juxtaposing the careers of Mina Loy (1882-1966) and Alice Hutchins (1916-2009), this paper aims to identify and to account for the fascinating parallels between two artists who, although unknown to one another, can each, reciprocally, open up fascinating insights into the pioneering work of the other. Born the same year that Loy came to New York from Europe, entering the Dada circle of Walter and Louise Arensberg, Hutchins was just entering the world of avant-garde practice as Loy concluded her long and productive—yet far too frequently overlooked—career. In placing their practices side-by-side, I interrogate how and why, without intention, critical aspects of Hutchins engagement with happenings and Fluxus mirror features of Loy's own work: a strong engagement with the cosmos, a desire to work across the boundaries of art, science, and technology, a desire to break-down the boundaries of art in pursuing patents for their creative inventions. In so doing, I also grapple with the historiographic and conceptual relationships between these artists and Marcel Duchamp. I acknowledge that if his impact on the work of art of the past century has been liberating, and frequently cited as a bridge between the avant-garde practices of the early twentieth century and Fluxus, it has also acted to cement narratives that must be reassessed. This paper, then, uses the careers of Loy and Hutchins to open up a matriarchal history of Fluxus as we reconsider the invisible, yet magnetic forces that have shaped its emergence and reception.

Emilio Taiveaho Peláez

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Making of Americans and Something Else: Gertrude Stein and the Future of Fluxus

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: A poem is a web of relations and a poem is something else, a cairn pointing out a path. In the mandorla between Dick Higgins and Susan Howe is Gertrude Stein. The surface scission between these writers who seldom share the same sentence belies their common sybaritic substratum. It was Something Else Press who first fully published *The Making of Americans* and it was Gertrude Stein who first wrote Fluxus poetry and in between Susan Howe is sounding. Higgins saw Stein “as the only important writer between Alexander Pope and Bertolt Brecht.” Splitting the difference, Howe suggests that Stein “reached in words for new vision formed from the process of naming, as if a first woman were sounding, not describing, ‘space of time filled with moving.’” Something not dissimilar to the syllable babble of freshly poured gravel or a lecture by Bergson, the gravity of a first name and the weight of wording, the difference is spreading, in the commitment to the original clarity of the word skeleton. In the poetry that emerges along this path, “thinking becomes exciting as this process expands the reader’s feelings about these cumulative details, as he or she duplicate the experience in his or her mind,” this says Dick Higgins. Sounded undescribed details duplicate experience and actualize what will be. Fold into the flow. Fluxify your poesy. In the antiquity of American letters the future is waiting to be discovered and may erupt at any moment, may we make it.

Lunch — 12:30-1:30 PM

Session 3: Networks, Mail Art, and Ephemeral Exchange — 1:30-3:00 PM

Molly Kelleher

Southern Illinois University

John Dewey, Fluxus and Mail Art

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: John Dewey, in his 1934 work *Art as Experience*, sets out to critique modern theories of art which do not ground aesthetic experience in everyday life. Art has moved to a place where it is alienated from the everyday life. The museumification of art has aided in this alienation, stoked by capitalism defining pieces of art as rare and expensive. Art is now placed on a pedestal out of reach from the average person. The tradition of Fluxus falls on the side of Dewey’s view that art should be accessible to everyone. In this brief talk I will connect John Dewey’s aesthetic theory to Fluxus and its closely related cousin, mail art. Both Fluxus and mail art reject the view that art is something that belongs in a museum, away from everyday life. Fluxus and mail art invite the audience to participate, in most cases blurring the line completely between artist/performer and audience. By exploring these traditions, I will show how they align with Dewey’s view that aesthetic experience is found in everyday life, whether that be making a salad or mailing a letter. It is no coincidence that a strong connection to Dewey can be traced with these movements as many of their founding members started out at Black Mountain College. A school founded on the educational philosophy of John Dewey.

Margot Bouman

The New School

Transient, Marginal, Ephemeral: The Centrality of Labor in Feminist Fluxus Performances

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: Before the feminist artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles centered “maintenance art” in her writings, performances and residencies from the 1970s onward, Nye Ffarrabas, a Fluxus artist made otherwise-invisible labor a central conceit of performances that remain a footnote of the postwar avant-garde and absent from histories of second-wave feminism. At their summer home on Cape Breton Island, in Laundry Rainbow Ffarrabas formed a rainbow spectrum using her family’s laundry and then filmed the billowing clothes. A later performance/installation, Pavilion of Litter was staged at the 1969 Avant Garde Festival organized by Charlotte Moorman. Pavilion’s scope and scale—its very existence—arose from excess stuff dispersed by the festival participants. Both performances respond to a primary need that Ffarrabas identified for any social situation whatsoever, or “(1) sanitation.” In these separate acts of care, Ffarrabas injected a transient yet coherent aesthetic moment in a chore for her family and gave shape to the abject materiality of her avant-garde community. Instead of telling a story where a historical figure is uplifted (indeed, the slippery nature of Ffarrabas’ performances refuses any such attempt), my presentation will consider how both Laundry Rainbow and Pavilion of Litter center invisible labor between the everyday and political theory; the mundane and the aesthetics; between care and necessity. It will, finally, consider how each work bridges second wave feminism to the avant-garde.

Laurel Fredrickson

Southern Illinois University

“Greetings from Robert Filliou”: Interlocutions across Time and Space”

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: This talk explores a genre of interlocutory art works by the French Fluxus-affiliated poet, artist and economist Robert Filliou (1926-1987) in which he addresses others from his location (what cultural theorist Stuart Hall calls the “unrepeatable now”) to each viewer/observer located in their own “unrepeatable now.” In his art of poetic exchange Filliou names people he knew—other artists, family members, and friends. He also calls to people he did not know, including “great, great, great grandchildren” or the infinitely diverse “toi” (you), a variable subject whom he summons to look and respond and then, perhaps, to turn and address someone else. These interlocutory works often combine text and image with a message accompanied by an informal photograph of Filliou looking out interrogatively as if soliciting responses. I argue that Filliou’s word/image messages were envisaged to be received in multiple present moments, to reach horizons of reception far beyond those with which he was familiar or could imagine in an ever-changing world. This practice of ethical exchange, which continues to establish and nourish relations of love, friendship, and even of obligation, positions Filliou as a node or vector in a rhizome that crosses generations, cultures, and disciplines. As viewers of such works, we (toi/you; eux/them) are identified as in, or made aware of ourselves as already sited in, an eternal network of permanent creation that is in perpetual flux. We become collaborators in a network of social relationships that is always at play.

Michael Filas

Westfield State University

N.E.W.S. From SFSF

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: In 1999 Owen F. Smith created a mail art event, “Naming Names and Making Meaning,” Edition 2, with 150 Exemplars, involving disposable cameras and a Fluxus score, or directions, for participants to photograph their view facing due north, east, west, and south. Once done, they were to return the cameras to Owen for processing and would receive back their project, printed and produced by Owen, and also be added to a collective “N.E.W.S. From” website. The “NEWS” was entirely visual, simply the four directional perspectives. Owen’s project wasn’t realized online, but the idea, and the score/script endure. I will engage the audience in a re-creation of the photo shoot, Edition 3 (Owen produced two editions in 1999, and 2000), updated to be a Fluxus inspired selfie sequence, with directed facial expressions. The results may be collected live via text and (eventually) posted as “N.E.W.S. From Santa Fe Symposium Fluxus.”

Break — 3:00-3:30 PM

Session 4: Sound, Noise, and Performance — 3:30-5:00 PM

Bruno Clarke

Texas Tech University

Weekend Rocker

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: For this minor art practice of sorts the primal gods at my creation were Elvis Presley, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and the Beatles, Eddie Cochran, The Kinks, and Jimi Hendrix. Most of my own bands over the decades have been cover bands: it is we journeymen and -women who keep rock’s core repertoire in live circulation. That’s an honorable calling, for which one will peel off afternoons, evenings, and weekends to jam, rehearse, commute, perform, break down, and regroup. Negotiating musical relationships, musical egos, the pleasures of musical camaraderie. Hitting the road, however long or short, hanging out, hitting the stage. Most days, however, hitting the books, preparing classes, grading papers and writing my own, a working academic stiff rocking on the weekends. Here are twenty pictures from my bands over the years and the songs we played.

Dennis Summers

Independent Artist

Peter Brötzmann: Unlawful Noise, Fluxus, and Freedom

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: Peter Brötzmann (1941-2023), the German free-improv jazz saxophonist, was briefly affiliated with fluxus in the early 1960s largely through his friendship with Nam June Paik. Although he never considered himself to be a fluxus artist, what he learned from this early association influenced his approach to music for the rest of his life. And, in addition, he also created less widely-known visual (but not really fluxus) artwork throughout his life. Yet, like fluxus, free-improv back then (and still) consisted of a relatively small group of networked international artists with very different aesthetic approaches. I will briefly address some of the forms that free-improv can take, drawing comparisons to

the compositions of fluxus godfather John Cage, as well as the scores of some of the fluxus artists. All these communities challenged their (small) audiences with work considered to be lacking the rigor assumed to be essential to art, and often seen as just random visual or acoustic noise. The challenge of noise is to find the organization underneath. I will develop some shared ideas into comments about anarchy, freedom, and community, and how the implications of improv in general remain particularly relevant to our challenging political and cultural moment.

Andrea Buckvold and Chris Wildrick

Independent Artist; Syracuse University

Press Play

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: Andrea and Chris are creating a small press, Better Than Work Press. Our first publication is called Press Play. We will create a 20-page hand-bound book in an edition of 50. This book will be made of random leftover papers that we have collected over the years. Each page will have a different creative prompt—things to write, draw, perform, or otherwise enact. These prompts will be created at the reception of a show this summer, where we will ask people to engage in some randomized creative processes, which will lead to a set of new results. Essentially, one set of prompts that we create will lead to the audience-led creation of the second set of prompts that will go in the books. Then, at SFSF, we will lead the audience (which is capped at 50) in the fulfilling of the book's prompts. Each of our 20 slides will match up with a page in the book. People will quickly, in the 20 seconds allotted to that page, fulfill its prompt. After a slide's time is up, everyone hands their book to the right. We move to Slide 2 and Page 2, and so on until everyone has done all 20 pages in 20 different books. Whoever does the last page of a book keeps it. This project connects to relations in that it is about collaboration between Chris and Andrea, in that it connects the two art events, and that it connects the audience together in a group-made project.

3. Saturday, October 17

Session 5: Interpretation, Irregularity, and Identity — 9:00-10:15 AM

Roger Rothman

Bucknell University

Interpretations (of Interpretations)

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: The Pechakucha format--a rigid and compressed sequence of timed images--offers a way to think about Fluxus as a site in which interpretation does not follow the event but enters into it as part of what happens. This presentation argues that Fluxus performances did not simply invite interpretation; they produced situations in which attempts to make sense of what was happening and why became part of the event itself. In both individual performances and multi-artist festivals, audiences and performers were compelled to determine what kind of situation was in force: a concert, a prank, a protest, a provocation, or something else. Those determinations--because they were manifest as outbursts of laughter, derision, correction, amplification--became part of the performance as it unfolded. Under these conditions, individual interpretations did not remain private. They circulated in real time, entered the performance, altered its course, and generated further interpretations that reentered and altered it again.

Nicole L. Woods

Loyola Marymount University

"Love, All-is-On": Intimacy and Experimentation in the Collaborations of Alison Knowles, Liz Phillips, and Pauline Oliveros

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: This paper reflects on ongoing research into the life and career of Fluxus and intermedia artist, Alison Knowles (1933-2025) and the network of poets, painters, and musicians she worked with for over sixty years. Given Knowles' itinerancy (she was active in New York, Los Angeles, San Diego, Italy, Germany, Japan, and France), any serious contribution to reassessing her experimental art necessitates a nimble tracking of not only the locales wherein she created work, but also within the labyrinthine context of those many other practitioners she was closest to. One need only glance at the titles of key scores and performances, a litany of dedications, to get a sense of these intimate formations in her practice. Focusing on this aspect of her career—what has gone understudied in the literature of Fluxus—I preview new scholarship on the relations of Knowles's oeuvre with feminist artists and composers to whom Knowles not only claimed an intimate bond, but for whom she continued to make new work throughout the 1970s. These include sound pieces with pioneering video artist Liz Phillips, as well as unrealized projects with experimental composer Pauline Oliveros. Here Knowles openly expressed a longing for a messy, open, and even pluralist praxis. Driven by intimacy as a historical analytic, this paper thus asks: can the contours of their feminist relations (via routes of correspondence and material experimentations) be understood as a uniquely constitutive force for artistic and critical response?

Susan Peterson

Independent Artist

Irregularities : A Tragicomedy in Twenty Acts

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: My painted artwork engages with text, systems and gridded abstraction. Each piece begins with a text written, edited and organized to fit into a specific gridded composition. I develop abstract imagery (using color, geometric shape and scale) into sets of 26 different motifs that operate as a replacement alphabet by which this armature text is translated into a gridded abstract painting. Rhyme, repetition, and sequence are encoded into the paintings leaving an algebraic coded echo of the syntax, grammar and formal structures of the originating armature texts. The text is inscribed on the back of each painting.

Ayala Leyser

Independent Scholar

Id-Entity and Shadow,

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: My performance is about the dialectic evolution/regression of Person from a helpless suckling into an autonomous 'I', within their relationship with Party. The 'I' feels empowered but seeks 'You' for approval or love. As 'I' expands their boundaries, it also becomes more retentive and excluding. Life gets more complex with family and the burden of responsibility, so Person looks for belonging and sharing the burden of decision making by surrendering to the 'Party'. Authoritarianism lures, and fascism lurks in their darkest moments. That's when Person surrenders their 'I', replacing it with Party's power and dogma. Person is empowered by Party, but their 'I' must get repressed. The price of repression is a paranoid projection on Shadow (The repressed I, appearing as hostile 'Other'). Person fights but eventually succumbs to their Shadow, then, curls into the same fetal position from which they started, looking for a mother's tit that's not there anymore.

Break — 10:15-10:45 AM

Session 6: Participation, Place, and Theatricality — 10:45 AM – 12:30 PM

Christine Filippone

Millersville University of Pennsylvania

The 'Living' Water: Origins of Participatory Action in the Work of Betsy Damon

Presentation type: Paper — 20 min

Abstract: Community-based activism has informed Betsy Damon's commitment to water since the 1980s, including her project Living Waters of Larimer: A Fresh Infrastructure, Pittsburgh (2012), which yielded a new plan for this majority Black neighborhood subject to frequent flooding and casualties. Damon's notion of 'living' water, water that is kinetic, biomorphic, alive has a long cultural and intellectual history rooted in the collision between the industrial and the natural. To be alive is to be alert, awake, conscious, motile. Here I am drawing a line of influence, tracing the intellectual history of the concept of "living" in art from the 19th Century Transcendentalist movement and its antecedents to its descendants in the 20th Century. Transcendentalists' emphasis on a spiritually "lived" experience of nature that is kinetic and physiological is central to Damon's notion of living water. Damon's connection to Transcendentalism is patrilineal; her father was a scion of an established nineteenth

century manufacturing family in Concord, Massachusetts. I argue that the spiritual and moral awakening fostered by immersion in an animist nature revered by the Transcendentalists and revived in vibratory modernism continued into the 1960s, gaining full realization in kinetic and performance art, both formative for Damon's early practice.

Dawna Schuld

Texas A&M University

Flaneurs of Santa Monica: Maria Nordman, Itinerancy, and the Art of Happenstance

Presentation type: Paper — 20 min

Abstract: This paper addresses Maria Nordman's invocation of happenstance in a series of perceptual art experiments she devised in unmarked storefronts located throughout greater Los Angeles between 1967 and 1979. Leaving the work unmarked and unlocked, Nordman relinquished the autonomous privilege of the studio while also foregoing the mercantile structures and strictures of a gallery, instead placing the work in semi-public limbo. In such circumstances, happenstance becomes an aesthetic device at both conscious and literal thresholds between public and private spaces. Happenstance, unlike happenings for example, is by definition un-appointed; it not only accommodates coincidence, but invites it, framing itinerancy as a creatively productive state. The works' indeterminacy thus correlates with what philosopher Hans Gumbrecht calls the oscillatory nature of presence, ceding meaning-making to occasional passersby who could be misinformed, uninformed or, most likely, unaware of the situation's potential condition as art.

Melissa Warak

University of Texas at El Paso

Theatricality, Humor, and Chance in the Performances of Ragnar Kjartansson

Presentation type: Paper — 20 min

Abstract: Icelandic contemporary artist Ragnar Kjartansson has described himself as a son of Fluxus whose earliest ambitions centered around the "cliché" of the Bohemian artist. His over-the-top theatrical performance works, many of which have significant musical components, relate to the Cagean indeterminacy, repetition, and aesthetics of open-ended event scoring that connected so many Fluxus musical events of the 1960s. Kjartansson's use of humor and absurdity, sometimes very dark in nature, further aligns his work with some of the postwar anxieties expressed in Fluxus. Additionally, his work connects profoundly to both the natural environment and an expanded understanding of what constitutes the artistic studio space. "The long 1960s" are so often vaunted as a discrete, unique, and profound moment in global cultural production tied with worldwide social movements. How then, does a contemporary artist create a dialogue with this seemingly untouchable past? In examining Kjartansson's works including *Me and My Mother* (2000-present), *Blossoming Trees Performance* (2008), *The End* (2009), and *Death is Elsewhere* (2019), this paper considers how an inheritor of Fluxus connects studio practices, performance, and the environment to make an art of everyday life.

Lunch — 12:30-1:30 PM

Session 7: Fluxus Futures: Pedagogy, Technology, and AI — 1:30-3:00 PM

Judith Rodenbeck

University of California, Riverside

Possibly learning by possibly doing

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: Part of what's on the mind in 2026 is the end of (American) academia as it has been for the last 100 years or so, along with the general and very real crisis in American education. We are all world-weary, and watching the daily news of academia's implosion along with hard and well-researched reports of American functional illiteracy is quite sobering. The urgency of addressing what we know about pedagogy and learning-by-doing is both epistemological and generational. Robert Filliou archly wrote already in *Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts* in 1970, "enjoy your precarity." Whither teaching in the spirit of happenings, Fluxus, deep listening? What might (or does) a Fluxus Undercommons be or do? Possible jumping off points include Kaprow's pedagogical projects, Alison Knowles's *Big Book*, and obviously Filliou. But those are just period touch-stones. For Fluxakucha: a series of images including Froebel blocks, language diagrams, mathematical models, pictures of our planet, with riffs on models and imperatives including Filliou et al.

Doug Stark

University of Texas at Arlington

The Art of Solicitation: Fluxus, Patronage, and the Artist-Founder

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: This performance-lecture poses a simple question: is asking for money a form of art? Starting with the recent emergence of the "artist-founder," a figure operating at the intersection of artistic practice, startup culture, and venture capital, the talk offers a short history of the present. It argues that this figure becomes legible through a longer genealogy of patronage, in which art has always been entangled with support, solicitation, obligation, and exchange. Fluxus provides a crucial hinge in that history. As Mari Dumett has shown (2017), Fluxus was not only a field of works, scores, and performances but also an organizational and distributive experiment in editions, publishing, paperwork, and collective infrastructure. Under George Maciunas's self-described "communist corporation," artistic production was inseparable from the apparatus that circulated and sustained it. Taking *Restless Egg*, an artist-founder incubator, as a contemporary case, the presentation asks what it means when the building of companies, products, and funding structures becomes an explicit part of the work of art. Read through Anna Watkins Fisher (2020), the artist-founder appears less as an anomaly than as a historically specific intensification of a longstanding artistic tactic: exploiting the "play in the system," which now extends into the speculative economy of finance capital and the hype around AI and emerging technology.

Michael Cunningham

University of Illinois Chicago

Holding(IT)Together

Presentation type: Royale — 10 min

Abstract: Through an exploration of bodily and spatial resonance, Holding(IT)Together employs the instrumentalization of site and subjectivity to examine breakdown and reconstitution in acts of communication. It treats sound as a shared field shaped through collective attention. How can bodies/buildings/gatherings become thresholds? The threshold points to the sites surrounding it, gesturing towards their inherent potential. How can mourning and the other practices of grief be used as a site of renewal? This body of work interrogates loss as a generative condition and source for renewed forms of ritual. What is the residue leftover after the loss of ritual? What remains after rupture becomes material for collective attunement? Chance operations guide the emergence of the sonic environment, while the boundary between performer and audience is deliberately destabilized. The artist's hand recedes into a set of conditions that foreground collective authorship. As resonant frequencies accumulate and circulate, the site is reconfigured through embodied listening. By exploiting the resonance of thresholds, the site is transformed into a protest, instantiated through the experience of being moved by waves and others.

Kevin LaGrandeur

Global AI Ethics Institute

Emerging Technology, Art, and the Posthuman

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: For visual artists, the incipient elements of the posthuman I will identify in this presentation signal change in how art is produced and under whose agency, what human art means, and even what being human means—given the blurring of how we define the concept of “human” in a rapidly changing posthuman technological environment.

Craig Saper

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

The Prompt: From Fluxus to FluxAIs

Presentation type: Regular — 6 min 40 sec

Abstract: Similar to my research for Networked Art, this new project traces a media archaeology of the AI chatbot's need for a human's prompt back through Fluxus instructions and open constraints for event-based works. Instead of considering Fluxus as an art movement, a facile categorization which some of the people involved explicitly pushed against, this project looks at those works as a lineage and as archeological evidence of the conceptualization and function of the AI chatbot's necessity for a prompt. Put another way, Fluxus was (in works that would speak to an audience 50+ years later) a way to train human-people's sensorium to communicate with the non-human AI chatbot. In that sense, Fluxus was an advanced guard or an example of an avant-garde social technical and poetic experiment. My PechaKucha or Royale presentation (chapter and eventual book) will look at examples of Fluxus prompts/instructions as if it presented a direct lineage to what is now ever-present and perhaps a defining aspect of our new sensorium. Instead of focusing on how to train, or what was involved in training, AI systems and Large Language Models (LLM), Fluxus was training humans in the language of

prompted events. What becomes evident in the digging through the earlier instruction-based works is that the AI-chatbot also has limitations that we can test with, for one example, Yoko Ono's "touch someone" instruction — one wonders what the AI-chatbot's performance will look like given its lack of a physical ability as of now in 2026 to touch someone next to them. That might change. I will run a series of experiments in and for the Santa Fé gathering and Happening. I will be collaborating with a Pro Version of ChatGPT 5x and with members of the audience.

Break — 3:00-3:30 PM

Session 8: Searching for Mr. T: Closing Performance — 3:30-5:00 PM

Simon Anderson, Hannah Higgins, Christopher Reeves, and Lauren Sudbrink

School of the Art Institute of Chicago; University of Illinois Chicago; Independent Artist

Searching for Mr. T

Presentation type: Dance / participatory performance — 90 min

Abstract: Games, puzzles, and riddles are a fixture for a new consideration of how Fluxus works, acts, moves, smells, or tastes. A lively program will be put on for your viewing and participation pleasure.