

Robert Morris.
Two Columns, 1973 refab-
rication of a 1961 original.



The Tower and the Line: Toward a Genealogy of Minimalism

BRANDEN W. JOSEPH

No article has so characterized the reception of minimalism as Michael Fried's "Art and Objecthood." As Fried himself has noted, though their valences may be reversed, the terms of his argument have remained virtually untouched for nearly four decades.¹ The most important of these terms is undoubtedly *theatricality*, by which Fried characterized minimalism's move beyond the individual arts or media into an undetermined area where, in the words of Clement Greenberg, which he quotes, "everything material that was not art also was."² Theater, as a term, served to connect Robert Morris's phenomenological engagement with the body with "some kind of final, implosive, highly desirable synthesis" of the arts, from which would arise our understanding of postmodernism.³ In "Art and Objecthood," Fried provided this inter-media realm with a veritable topography by referencing Tony Smith's infamous ride on the unfinished New Jersey Turnpike. Theatricality was a mundane spatial expanse, with no discernable bounds, which continued for an "endless or indefinite *duration*."⁴

Historically, "Art and Objecthood" succeeded in linking Morris's theatricality to Donald Judd's derivation from modernist painting—a move that effectively severed Morris's work from its actual genealogy in John Cage's challenge to modernism.⁵ It is not entirely true, however, as James Meyer has maintained, that Cage and his influence were absent from Fried's discourse.⁶ Indeed, it was in large part to Cage that "Art and Objecthood" attributed the implosion and theatrical "degeneration" of the arts.⁷ Fried, as we will shall see, proved somewhat more accurate in "Three American Painters" of the previous year, where he less polemically characterized Cage's legacy as "calling into question . . . the already somewhat dubious concept of a 'work of art.'"⁸ In that article, Fried posited Cage's neodadaism as "antithetical" to modernist painting, placing it in much the same antagonistic role in which he would soon cast minimalist theatricality. It is my supposition that the parallel troubles posed to Fried by Cage and minimalism are not unrelated. For as is entirely *unnoted* in the literature on minimalism, Cage had a well-defined notion of theater, one both influential and readily available by 1961. This is far from an historical footnote. Though

Fried's use of the term "theater" likely derived from his reading of Stanley Cavell (who also engaged with Cage), it was from Cagean theater that Morris's actual "theatrical" practice emerged.⁹



Running from the chance techniques of *Music of Changes* (1951) to the indeterminacy of *Variations II* (1961), Cage's challenge to the modernist project had already fully developed by the advent of minimalism.¹⁰ Nevertheless, and despite its importance within the realms of art, music, dance, and film, Cage's impact is more often diminished than explored. Frequently, the idea of chance, apart from any understanding of Cage's use of it, is hypostatized as his sole concern and equated with relativism. Caricaturing him as a holy fool, dismissing him as an imitator of dada, or disparaging him as a religious reactionary, critics overlook the logical, self-critical, and utterly consistent development of the first two decades of Cage's career. Quotations and compositions are routinely cited out of context, while the specifics of his scores and performances are usually ignored. Such off-hand treatment by critics and historians, however, differs markedly from that of those artists who interacted with Cage on a daily basis in New York or Black Mountain College, encountered his work at Darmstadt, took his courses at the New School for Social Research, or studied his scores with Robert Dunn or the Judson Dance Theater. Although tracing the full development of Cage's project is impossible here, it is important to list five of its most significant implications.¹¹

First is the production of an aesthetic of immanence. For over two decades, Cage sought to disarticulate any and all abstract or transcendent connections between sounds or between sound components like frequency, amplitude, timbre, or duration. Beginning with investigations of chance, Cage worked to detach sound from preestablished meaning and composition from continuity or structure, whether harmonic, atonal, or the supposedly neutral time structures Cage himself lauded in the forties.

Going beyond a priori connections between sounds, Cage sought to disarticulate determinate a posteriori connections as well. Quickly realizing that, once fixed, a chance score like *Music of Changes* (which was indeterminate with regard to *composition*) was still determinate upon *performance*,¹² Cage made indeterminate the relation between composer and performer, as well as that between performer and listener—for instance, by arranging musicians around the audience so that no two listeners would hear the same "mix" of sounds. The goal was to eliminate from the acoustical experience—as much as possible—creation of any form that could be received as existing on a level above

what Deleuze and Guattari, discussing Cage among others, would term “a plane of immanence.”¹³

The second component of the Cagean aesthetic concerns the relation between the listener and the indeterminate musical production.

Instead of confronting the composition as a unit or whole, listeners were to encounter sonic events as a “field” or “constellation” (Cage’s terms) that not only potentially surrounded them, but opened onto and interpenetrated with random acoustical occurrences “outside” and therefore beyond any single intentionality. (Hence Cage’s quip that “A cough or a baby crying will not ruin a good piece of modern music.”)¹⁴ Like a glass house (one of Cage’s favorite metaphors) or an auditorium with open windows, Cage’s compositions acoustically emulated a “transparency” to external events that sought to undermine their autonomy. With neither formal nor “spatial” delineations, compositions were to be grasped not as discrete acoustical “time-objects” but as temporally changing yet a-teleological processes.¹⁵ Instead of following a pregiven structure or attempting to comprehend a message, the listener was to assume an attitude of attentiveness within a differentiated but nonhierarchical field of sonic occurrences: “to approach them as objects,” wrote Cage, “is to utterly miss the point.”¹⁶ For Cage, this reconfiguration of the subject-object/listener-work relation into that of a listener within a multidimensional, transformational field was an explicit challenge not only to abstraction but to dialectics: relationships such as those between frequency and amplitude, Cage noted,

make an object; and this object, in contrast to a process which is purposeless, must be viewed dualistically. Indeterminacy when present in the making of an object, and when therefore viewed dualistically, is a sign not of identification with no matter what eventuality but simply of carelessness with regard to the outcome.¹⁷

According to Cage, seeing composition as an a-teleological process or a focusless but differentiated field produced a transformation in listening, which is the **third relevant point of his aesthetic: interpretation gives way to “experimentation.”** In place of the attempt to comprehend a composition or any of its sounds as signs with determinable (i.e., bi-univocal) meanings—whether pregiven or a posteriori and even if multiple or ambiguous—the listener was to experience process as without ulterior signification, structure, or goal. Cage sometimes groped for terms to describe this: “awareness,” “curiosity,” “use,” even “an entertainment in which to celebrate unfixity.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, “experimentation,” as defined by Cage, was a process of interpretation, of reading and receiving signs, in the absence of pregiven signifieds.¹⁹ Such was not conceived by Cage as negation (no received meaning whatsoever), nor as irrationality or mystical oneness, but at its most

radical as a death of the composer that was a birth of the listener.²⁰ In this reconfigured situation, neither the unavoidably *perceived* connections between sounds nor the listener's thoughts or feeling about them were denied. "Hearing sounds which are just sounds," Cage stated, "immediately sets the theorizing mind to theorizing."²¹ However, the locus of the acoustical experience's meaning is transferred to the listeners, who are thereby allowed to "become their own centers" rather than submit to the will of either composer or performer. "Of course, there are objects," Cage declared about the related aesthetic of Robert Rauschenberg. "Who said there weren't? The thing is, we get the point more quickly when we realize it is we looking rather than we may not be seeing it."²²

Four: the disarticulation of transcendent structure was understood as a subversion of power. For Cage, the determinate passages from composer to score, score to performer, and performer to listener were understood as power relations. Thus, to disarticulate them as necessary, bi-univocal relations meant that neither performer nor audience member had to be subservient to the will of another; they could instead work from their own centers, not by doing whatever they want, but nonetheless without being "pushed," as Cage put it, in any one direction.²³ As he explained about one such relation, "Giving up control so that sounds can be sounds (they are not men: they are sounds) means for instance: the conductor of an orchestra is no longer a policeman."²⁴ This (ultimately utopian) attempt to dissolve or eradicate all forms or effects of power was essentially an anarchist position, and Cage would explicitly label it as such in *Art News* in 1960: "Emptiness of purpose," he wrote, "does not imply contempt for society, rather assumes that each person whether he knows it or not is noble, is able to experience gifts with generosity, that society is best anarchic."²⁵

The final relevant component of Cage's legacy concerns its **challenge to the disciplinary status of the separate arts**. Beginning with a quest to undermine the separation between music and noise, Cage moved to undo the distinction between sound and silence. Following his 1951 experience in an anechoic chamber, Cage famously proclaimed that there was no such thing as silence, only two kinds of sounds: "those intended and those others (so-called silence) not intended."²⁶ By 1954, Cage would extend the disarticulation of "abstract" categories such as sound and silence to the distinction between the auditory and the visual. The inevitable combination of the two in all performed actions—which begged the question of the separation between the visual arts and music—Cage described as "theatre."²⁷

Music is an oversimplification of the situation we actually are in.
An ear alone is not a being; music is one part of theatre. "Focus"

is what aspect one's noticing. Theatre is all the various things going on at the same time. I have noticed that music is liveliest for me when listening for instance doesn't distract me from seeing.²⁸



Whether explicitly referencing Cage or not, Fried was right to note the manner in which such “theater” questions the distinction between media or artistic disciplines.²⁹ Quite different from the boundless dissolution implied by Fried's analysis, however, Cagean theater (especially as taken up around Fluxus) opened onto a situation in which *certainty* about the disciplinary status of the aesthetic object (even that it was necessarily “aesthetic”) was effectively dissolved. This did not imply that there was, magically, no longer any such thing as a painting or a sculpture, or that the institutions of concert hall, gallery, and museum were no longer relevant or recognizable. What it did imply (as Fried, in fact, also observed) was that the disciplinary and medium-based distinctions traditionally handed down could no longer be received as ontological facts, or even mutually accepted conventions, but had to be reiterated in each instance.³⁰ For a generation situated in Cage's wake, however, as opposed to those artists championed by Fried, the issue was not how to restore the validity of medium or disciplinary distinctions through what Fried called “conviction.” Rather, for a certain group of artists, not only could such distinctions not be taken for granted but the very idea of producing an “advanced” work implied that the question of a work's status—the disciplinary, institutional place of the work as art or music—almost necessarily had to come into play. That is, for a certain group of artists (which would include Tony Conrad, La Monte Young, Morris, Walter De Maria, Simone Forti, and Yvonne Rainer, but not Frank Stella or Donald Judd), the very notion of being “advanced” meant not only that the status of the work (which might be an object or a process or both) was already *in* question but that the work had to take up that question and keep it in question. Not eradicating but continually problematizing medium or disciplinary specificity was, in other words, a primary condition of being “advanced” after Cage. This is different from Judd's positioning of a “specific object” in the formal space between (but no longer part of) painting and sculpture. For a more radical group of minimalists, whether coming from music or visual art, a work could not be advanced, could not be “new,” unless it took up the question posed by Cagean “theater.”

More important, the breakdown or problematizing of formal and disciplinary distinctions was—particularly after Cage linked his aesthetic to anarchism—an unavoidably *political* question. Indeed, it was

a directly political question. According to Cage, the relations between composition, score, performance, and audition involved the imposition of something like semantic force. Hence the conductor enforcing (his or her idea of) the composer's dictates was understood to function as a "policeman." For Cage, form and politics seemed connected by the simple fact and to the degree that form *was* politics. An abstract or transcendent connection or relation was, for Cage, an imposition of power. More specifically, we could say that, by 1960 at the latest, Cage conceived form as a particular *technique* of power, a moment within a micropolitics. To disarticulate, unstitch, or undermine form, to produce an aesthetic of immanence, was therefore to disarticulate that technique. Rather than obscuring or avoiding a political project (a charge, for instance, routinely advanced about Cage's relation to dada), what Cage put on the table was the connection or articulation of politics and form. The situation from which the arts were approachable after Cage was no longer evidently and unquestionably that of "objects" (even if musical performances) within a discipline or institution but of specific techniques within a field or realm of power effects.³¹

Top: Henry Flynt. Flier for "A Concert of Avant-Garde Music," Harvard University, March 31, 1961.

Bottom: Robert Morris. *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making*, 1961.

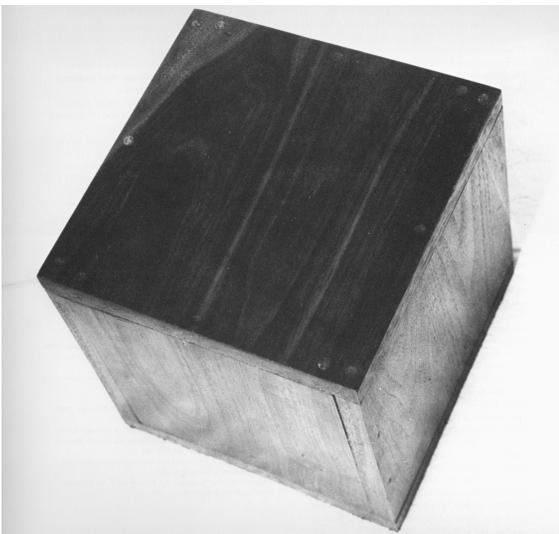
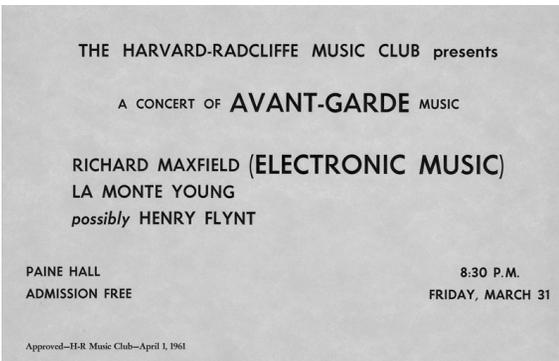
Opposite, top: Robert Morris. *Performer Switch*, 1961.

Opposite, bottom: Robert Morris. *Litanies*, 1961.



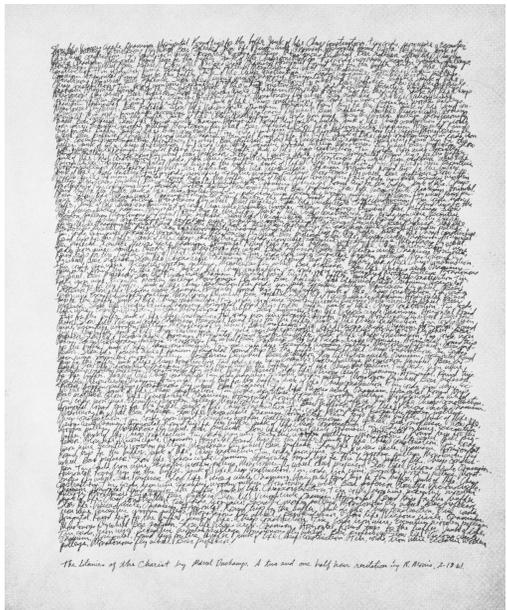
From 1957 to 1964 when he severed ties with Fluxus, Robert Morris was saturated with Cagean aesthetics, both directly and through his

interactions with Young, Forti, Ann Halprin, Henry Flynt, and others. Much has been made of the "theatrical" debut of Morris's *Column* (1961), which fell at a benefit performance for Young's *An Anthology*. "Its literal fall from illusionism," writes Maurice Berger, rejected "formalist sculpture's defiance of gravity."³² *Column* was not, however, Morris's only performing object. In a little-known concert of avant-garde music organized by Flynt at Harvard in 1961, Morris, although not listed on the flier, appeared alongside Young and Richard Maxfield. Originally slated to present *Water Sculpture* (possibly an early version of *Fountain* [1963] or a relative of the unrealized *Wind Ensemble* [ca. 1959–60]), Morris ultimately debuted *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* (1961).³³ That Morris's *Box* would appear as a "performance" was not without precedent, for that had been how Cage received the work at



around the same time. Invited to come see that piece and others at Morris's New York apartment, Cage reacted to the *Box* as a private concert. As Morris told Jack Burnham, "When he came I turned it on. I said this is something I made. I turned it on, and he wouldn't listen to me. He sat and listened for three hours. And that was really impressive to me. He just sat there."³⁴

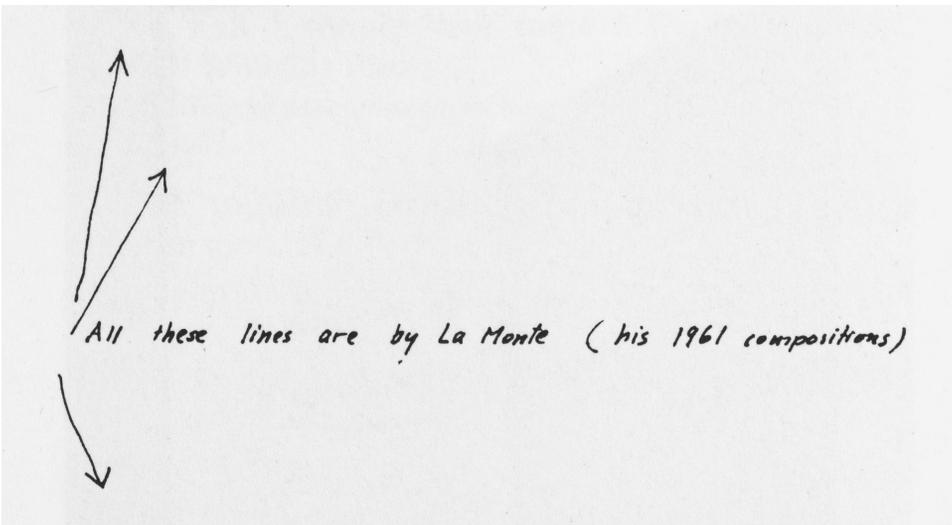
Burnham would brush off Cage's response as "sort of a perverse graciousness," and it has always seemed the idiosyncrasy of a composer avowedly devoted to nonmusical sounds. Yet Cage's interest likely also stemmed from the work's theatricality, which it distilled into a discrete thing, one that problematized process and object, temporality and form, art and music, and, not least, performance and score. For although the *result* of a process, Morris's walnut box, in its simple and evident construction, also acts as instruction as to how to produce a subsequent "performance" (an inversion Cage later adopted in his own work).³⁵ Morris's *Performer Switch* and *Game Switch* of the same year are similarly problematic objects—interactive, three-dimensional realizations of the type of word scores Morris submitted to and then withdrew from *An Anthology*, scores such as *Make an object to be lost* (1961); *Tomorrow 8 am to 12 pm* (1961), and *To be looked at in a state of shock: nearly anything in a state of shock* (1961).³⁶ Indeed, all the works Morris described in a letter to Cage that February were decidedly hybrid without relinquishing genre or medium interrelations for a realm in which "anything goes." Works such as *Litanies* (1961) were described as "Drawings, writings" and also "a two and one half hour graphic recitation."³⁷ Morris's lesser-known *Frugal Poem* (also known as *Words* [1961]) consisted of the repetition of the word "words" filling an entire page. "When read aloud," Morris explained to Cage, "one substitutes the word 'talk' for 'words.' A tape was made of the scratching of the pencil as it was written—it is intended to be several superimposed images, i.e., drawing and/or poem and/or musical score and performance."³⁸ Young performed *Words* in 1962 at the ONCE Festival in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on a program with compositions by himself, Maxfield, Flynt, De Maria, Terry Riley, Terry Jennings, Toshi Ichiyangi, and Christian Wolff.³⁹



At the time, Young and Morris were particularly close, a connection inscribed in Young's most infamous and influential word score, *Composition 1960 #10 to Bob Morris (October 1960)*, which reads in its entirety, "Draw a straight line and follow it."⁴⁰ Young's word scores were touchstones for the development of Fluxus, and *Composition 1960 #10* was "answered" with particular frequency. Milan Knizak's *Line* (1965) made it into a competition: "A line is drawn on the sidewalk with chalk. The longest line wins."⁴¹ Knizak had already been trumped, in a sense, by George Maciunas's *Homage to La Monte Young* (1962), which instructed, "Erase, scrape or wash away as well as possible the previously drawn line or lines of La Monte Young or any other lines encountered, like street dividing lines, ruled paper or score lines, lines on sports fields, lines on gaming tables, lines drawn by children on sidewalks etc."⁴² Yoko Ono included three variant *Line Pieces* in her book *Grapefruit*, including an injunction to draw a line with yourself "until you disappear."⁴³ In 1961 Nam June Paik performed Young's piece by dipping his head in a bowl of paint and marking a broad line down a long sheet of paper in what became known as *Zen for Head*.

Young himself returned to *Composition 1960 #10* in the series *Compositions 1961*. Calculating that he completed twenty-nine works a year, Young decided to finish off a year's worth at once, carefully assigning each a "date" between January 1 and December 31, 1961. Having further decided that originality was no criteria for a legitimately "new" work, Young simply repeated "draw a straight line and follow it" for each one. Thereafter, Young often performed *Composition 1960 #10* on the same bill with all twenty-nine of his *Compositions 1961*. At the Harvard concert in March (technically before many of the works were "composed"), Young premiered the entire suite with assistance from Morris (who, appropriately, drew the first line himself). For the remainder, Young and Morris used plumb lines and yardsticks to draw a chalk line across the stage—being careful to stay behind it, thereby following it at the same time—repeating the action once for

George Maciunas. "All these lines are by La Monte. . . ." letter from George Maciunas to Robert Watts, early April, 1963.



each of the compositions, all the time trying to repeat the drawing as precisely as possible.⁴⁴ At the time, Young declared that he “does not call such proceedings music, but rather ‘art’ in general.”⁴⁵ “Music,” Flynt later commented, “had become an arena for a transformation which did not need to be about music.”⁴⁶

Cage was in the audience when Young reprised the Harvard performance, this time assisted by Robert Dunn, at Yoko Ono’s loft concert series that May. “We had a beautiful program by La Monte Young,” Cage wrote to David Tudor:

He and Bob Dunn drew 30 straight lines using a string with a weight in the manner somewhat of surveying. By the time La Monte finished, not only had all the audience left, but Bob Dunn too had left exhausted. The next evening the project was shortened by shortening the line. Even then it took 3 hours.⁴⁷

In his own letter to Tudor, Young emphasized the performance’s intentionally workman-like character, a relationship to labor echoed later in Morris’s *Site* of 1964.⁴⁸ The primary interest of the performance, however, lay in the inadvertent, and thus indeterminate, differences in the paths traced by the chalk lines. Young noted how hard they had worked at making the lines straight, despite the fact that each one always included slight but noticeable deviations.⁴⁹ What was being performed was a dialectic, executed in time, between the ideal of a straight line and the inevitable alterations that arise in real world production.

Composition 1960 #10 was not the first time Young had broached such a dialectic. It had been preceded by the exploration of loud, sustained noises in *2 Sounds*, developed in 1960 at Halprin’s dance workshop (attended at the time by Morris, Forti, Rainer, Riley, and others), and continued with his work in the Theatre of Eternal Music. Instead of surrounding the audience with a multiplicity of sounds, as in Cage’s work, Young so amplified a limited number of sounds as to render them environmental, a sort of sonic architecture. Young described the situation in “Lecture 1960”:

Sometimes when I was making a long sound, I began to notice that I was looking at the dancers and the room from the sound instead of hearing the sound from some position in the room. I began to feel the parts and motions of the sound more, and I began to see how each sound was its own world and that this world was only similar to our world in that we experienced it through our own bodies, that is, in our own terms.⁵⁰

Young here introduces two ideas. First is the manner in which sound is experienced through the body: not a discrete apprehension through

the ears but a more phenomenologically complex interaction in which listeners not only feel air movement on account of amplification but also hear different parts (or partials) of the sound depending on their place and movement in the acoustitized space.⁵¹ Hence Young's discussion of experiencing the sound "through our own bodies . . . in our own terms."

The second and more pronounced idea concerns the way in which this sound space constitutes "its own world." Cage initially regarded Young's work as blowing up the sound, fragmenting it like an acoustical unconscious (akin to Walter Benjamin's "optical unconscious") wherein perception (as through a microscope) opened a realm of continually transforming processes.⁵² For Young, however, the fullness and singularity of the now-environmental sound returned precisely the totality and objecthood that Cage had wanted to dissolve into a "field." Young, in other words, sought to restore the transcendence Cage sought to dismantle. "I could see," Young continued in "Lecture 1960," "that if we could to some degree give ourselves up to [the sounds] . . . we enjoyed the possibility of learning something new. By giving ourselves up to them, I mean getting inside of them to some extent so that we can experience another world."⁵³ Cage labeled this aspect of Young's work "fixation," juxtaposing it to his idea of "transparency" and pointing out

Billy Name. The Theatre of Eternal Music (John Cale, Tony Conrad, La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela) at Henry Geldzahler's loft, March 7, 1965.



their opposition: “I would like that you consider . . . that ‘I am where I must be,’” Cage explained, “but Young finds that where you must be is ‘elsewhere.’”⁵⁴ That Cage considered Young’s aesthetic not merely different but (literally) regressive would seem to be implied by a story told in *A Year from Monday*: “In the lobby after La Monte Young’s music stopped, [Henry] Geldzahler said: It’s like being in a womb; now that I’m out, I want to get back in. I felt differently and so did Jasper Johns: we were relieved to be released.”⁵⁵

If Cage criticized Young’s “fixated” acoustical environment (as he would also the physical environments of Allan Kaprow), he did so not only for its separation from the plane of immanence but for its reintroduction of a power dynamic Cage wanted to avoid.⁵⁶ Whereas Cage sought to place the listener into a nonhierarchical field with which he or she could interact as a disinterested equal, Young reinscribed a dialectic between subject (listener) and object (the environmental, nearly overwhelming, sound). Indeed, via amplification, Young exacerbated the interaction to such an extent as to make the power relationship palpable. From *2 Sounds* onward, Young’s listener and sound were engaged in a type of struggle, the phenomenological particularities of hearing in “one’s own terms” struggling for autonomy against the nearly overwhelming pressure of the sound.



Morris’s minimal sculptures, which began as minimal environments (such as *Passageway* [1961]), took up the interaction of ideal and contingency found in *Composition 1960 #10* and *2 Sounds*. It is as though Young’s two-dimensional line became Morris’s three-dimensional cube, which viewers experienced through their own bodies and in their own terms.⁵⁷ As Morris explained in “Notes on Sculpture, Part 2”:

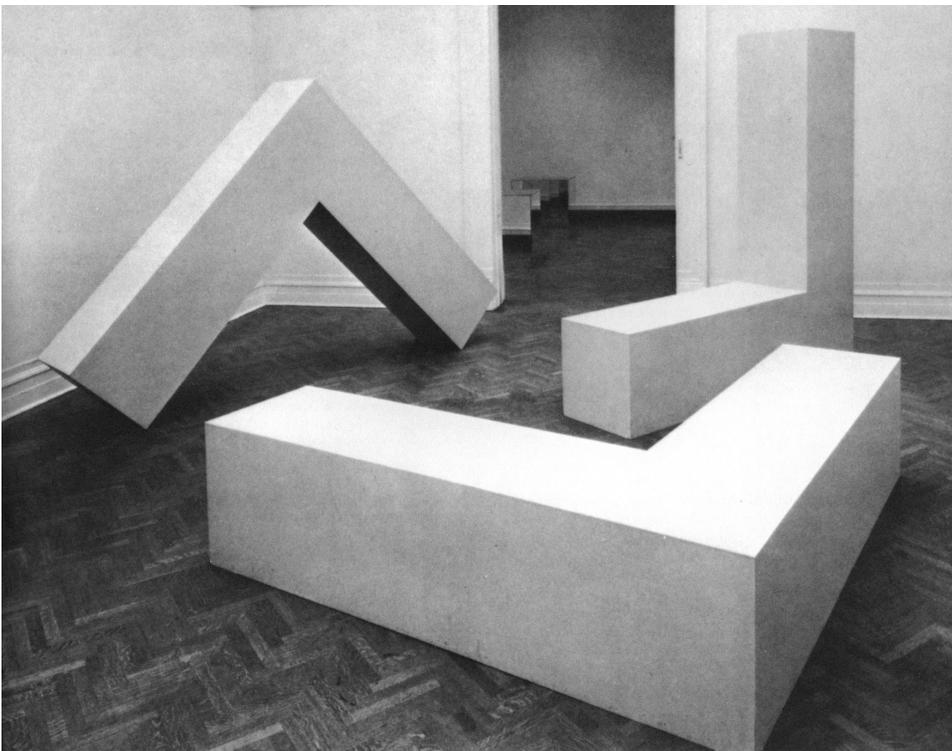
Even its [the new sculpture’s] most patently unalterable property, shape, does not remain constant. For it is the viewer who changes the shape constantly by his change in position relative to the work. Oddly, it is the strength of the constant, known shape, the gestalt, that allows this awareness to become so much more emphatic in these works than in previous sculpture. . . . The constant shape of the cube held in the mind, but which the viewer never literally experiences, is an actuality against which the literal changing perspective views are related. There are two distinct terms: the known constant and the experienced variable.⁵⁸

Whereas Young advocated “giving oneself up to the sound,” Morris maintained a dialectic between experience and transcendent form, emphasizing *resistance* over identification or capitulation. Since the

publication of Annette Michelson's masterful "Robert Morris: An Aesthetics of Transgression" (1969), all analyses have stressed Morris's subversion, the manner in which his phenomenological involvement of the viewer's body serves to undermine the atemporal "presentness" of late modern painting and sculpture.⁵⁹ And this subversion has been linked both to the political climate of the 1960s (most notably by Berger) and to the revolutionary aspirations of the historical avant-garde. In the indispensable analysis offered by Hal Foster, minimalism's "crux" both culminates modernism and recovers the transgressive legacy of the avant-garde. What "the transgressive avant-garde sought to *transform*," he writes, is "the institutional autonomy of art."⁶⁰ "We arrive, then, at this equation: *minimalism breaks with late modernism through a partial reprise of the historical avant-garde*."⁶¹

Foster's analysis is crucial, particularly regarding the influence of Marcel Duchamp as recovered by Morris (although filtered in important ways by Cage and Young), but it might be inflected, I would propose, with regard to Morris's recovery of the historical avant-garde practices of constructivism. For what Morris emphasized in his only invocation of the historical avant-garde in "Notes on Sculpture, Part 1" (and practically his only reference to constructivism) are the qualities of form and transcendence much more than their subversion:

Tatlin was perhaps the first to free sculpture from representation and establish it as an autonomous form, both by the kind of image, or rather non-image, he employed and by his literal use of materials. He, Rodchenko, and other Constructivists refuted Apollinaire's observation that "a structure becomes architecture, and not sculpture, when its elements no longer have their justi-



fiction in nature.” At least the earlier works of Tatlin and other Constructivists made references to neither the figure nor architecture. In subsequent years Gabo, and to a lesser extent Pevsner and Vantongerloo, perpetuated the constructivist ideal of a non-imagistic sculpture that was independent of architecture.⁶²

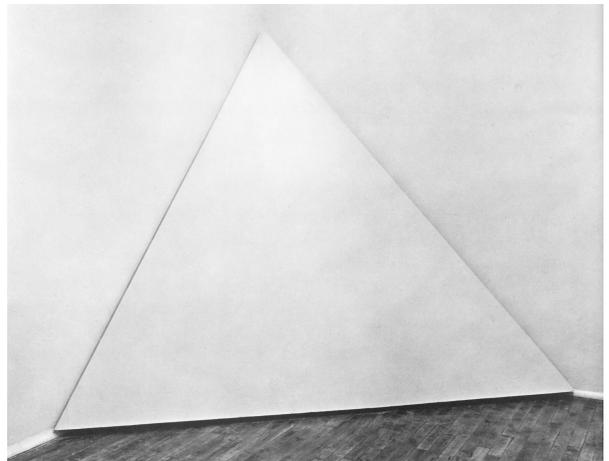
While Morris soon enough emphasized the transgressive nature of his project, the main thrust of “Notes on Sculpture, Part 1” was to establish the abstract gestalt form as a legitimate morphology for autonomous sculpture. One need only examine Morris’s *Corner Piece* (1964), which stands clear of the wall and floor, asserting an autonomy even as it moves into the room, to realize that it is not about actual space, mass, weight, and materiality so much as it is about “actual” *volume*.⁶³ Primary for Morris—as opposed, for example, to Carl Andre (who was a consistent critic of this aspect of constructivism)—were shape and opticality rather than tactility or mass, as Morris’s use of textureless fiberglass, wire mesh, and mirrored cubes reveals.⁶⁴ Indeed, in “Notes on Sculpture, Part 1” Morris equates Tatlin and Rodchenko with Gabo, Pevsner, and Vantongerloo, “constructivists” whose work is hardly tactile, generally not in real space, and largely mathematically based. As Morris later reflected, “What was relevant to the 1960s was the necessity of reconstituting the object as art . . . It is not especially surprising that art driving toward greater concreteness and away from the illusory would fasten on the essentially idealistic imagery of the geometric.”⁶⁵

This places Morris, vis-à-vis the Cagean legacy, in a position analogous to that of Young. Against Cage’s alliance with the plane of immanence, the initial project of minimalism was to *reconstruct* or *recover* transcendent structure—or, more specifically, to articulate an investigation of immanence with, or vector it against, late modern abstraction.⁶⁶ When approached from a perspective leading out of Cage, then, rather than Greenberg, Morris’s link to constructivism provides an opposite, but equally true, counterpart to Foster’s minimalist equation: *minimalism, we can say, reconnects with transcendent form through a partial reprise of the historical avant-garde.*

In the amalgam of aesthetics and politics put forth in the Cagean program, Morris’s move to restore transcendence had effects on both sides. For one reason to engage with transcendent form was doubtless the desire to model certain relations of power—power that, for Cage, was understood as potentially absent or eradicable once transcendent, hierarchical structures had been dismantled. Morris’s reengagement with such structures thus amounts to a *refusal* of Cage’s utopianism, Cage’s

Opposite: Robert Morris. *Untitled (Three L-Beams)*, 1969 refabrication of a 1965 original.

Below: Robert Morris. *Corner Piece*, 1964.



(typically anarchist) hope that power could simply be dissolved. That Morris's position was not merely personal is well characterized by Fredric Jameson, who describes the general political consciousness of the sixties as conditioned by "the discovery, within a hitherto antagonistic and 'transparent' political praxis, of the opacity of the Institution itself as the radically transindividual, with its own inner dynamic and laws, which are not those of individual human action or intention."⁶⁷

At this stage in his career, Morris understood power as a transcendent, autonomous form that operated in an exclusively "sovereign" manner: repression exerted by a hierarchical authority that, even if impersonal, acted from on high, a superior law that governed the distribution and combination of bodies and desires. Repression was a top-down affair, a vertical imposition, a "tower," akin to what Cage, nearly thirty years earlier, had termed "the cumbersome, top-heavy structure of musical prohibitions."⁶⁸ Following Herbert Marcuse, as Berger has shown, Morris extrapolated the relationship between an indissoluble form and its liberating subversion to a variety of situations.⁶⁹ Transcendent ideal and contingent perception became the pattern for sexual repression and desublimation, institutional constraints and their subversion, and so on. "As calls for the 'desublimation' of Western society and the liberation of human sexuality resounded in the 1960s," writes Berger, "Morris sought to liberate the art object from the repressive control of galleries, museums, and the media—the imprisoning iron triangle of the art world."⁷⁰ For Morris, the topography of power was one of isomorphic towers. The gallery, the museum, the bedroom, the factory, the university, the government, the media: each is the

purview of a despotic, repressive law; each resembles the others, is homologous with the others, but is discontinuous from them—autonomous, abstract, reified structures. Berger goes so far as to characterize Morris's political project as "a continual dialectic between the repressive, overpowering verticality of urban spaces and the more expansive, liberating realm of the Peruvian plain."⁷¹

Morris, however, was inextricably connected to the towers that he would subvert. Circling around a gestalt or near-gestalt sculpture, the viewer is, as Morris wrote, "both free of the shape and bound to it."⁷² Morris thus recovers and reenacts the "infinite paranoiac spiral" that Deleuze and Guattari saw in

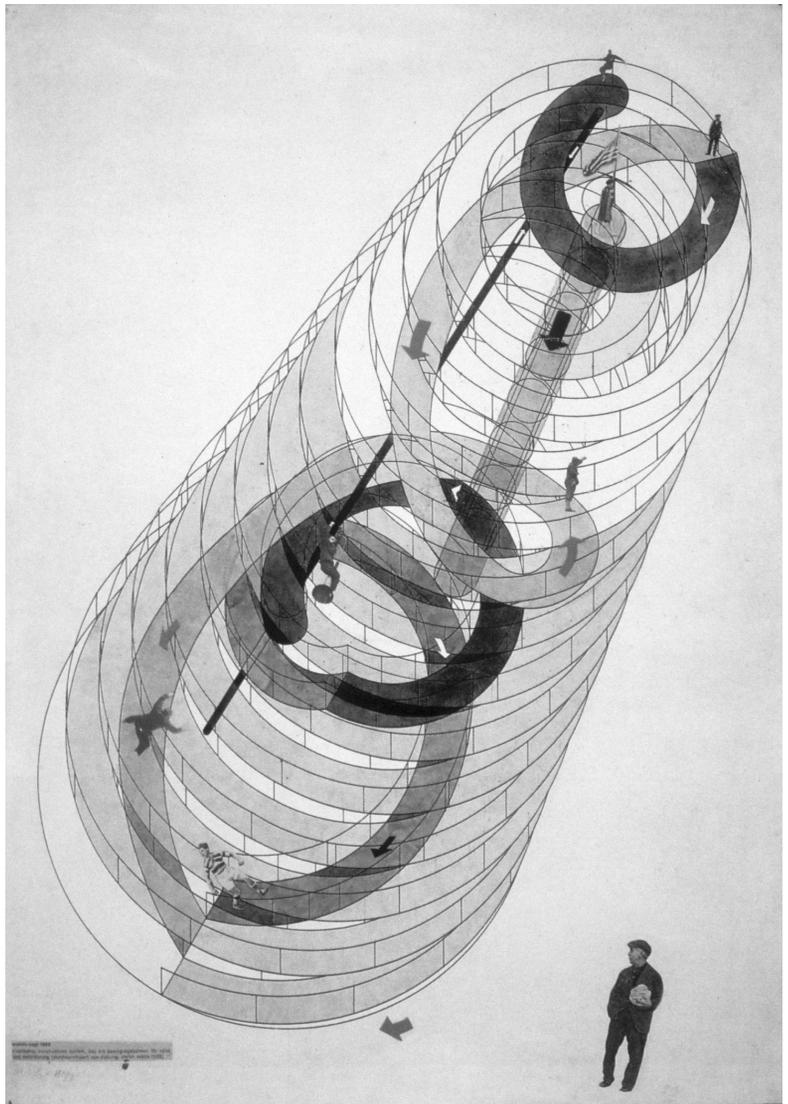
Below: Vladimir Tatlin.
Monument to the Third International, 1920.

Opposite: László Moholy-Nagy. *Kinetic-Constructive System*, 1922–28.



the rotating chambers of Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International* (1920) and, even more, in László Moholy-Nagy's unrealized 1922 tower wherein bodies would circulate endlessly on spiral ramps and athletes' paths.⁷³ Morris's viewer, like that of Moholy-Nagy, is always "a part of the function of the tower."⁷⁴ Indeed, Morris never sought to escape or destroy the towers that he on all levels confronted, but rather to occupy them.⁷⁵ Whereas Cage argued for a strategy of exodus ("Let them build whatever walls," he wrote; "someone will always be getting out"), Morris sought "empowerment through a subversive relation to . . . institutional connections."⁷⁶ The difference is between a "major" and a "minor" politics, the former operating within a restricted, Oedipal economy predicated on there being one immutable mode of power's operation.⁷⁷

Morris was not wrong, of course, to oppose the repressive spires of sovereign power. The late twentieth (and early twenty-first) century is filled with oppressive, hierarchical structures. Indeed, recent years have seen the emergence of an overarching neo-sovereignty.⁷⁸ Yet



power is not, nor was it in the sixties, univocally or exclusively sovereign but multiple—always existing within the mutual penetration of regimes: “*archaisms with a contemporary function*” on the one hand and “*neoformations*” on the other.⁷⁹ Correspondingly, an analysis of cultural production must also proceed on a differential basis, examining the imbrication and mutual implication within multiple regimes.⁸⁰

Seeing Morris’s viewer’s corporeal engagement as inherently “subversive” functions only to the extent that power is understood exclusively as transcendent. As Morris himself would later understand, however, the body was not a site of desublimated freedom (even, indeed especially, when dealing with sexuality) but itself a site of power effects. The physical participation and kinesthetic demands on the body that Morris understood as subversively engaging or transgressing ideal form may in fact be better understood as limitations on or inherent structurings of actions and behaviors. What comes into play, then, (and into consciousness) in the kinesthetic interactions that Morris’s minimalist sculpture commands—the incorporation into the act of aesthetic perception of the body, its gestures, its placement, its movements, its forces, its time—is none other than that level or layer of subjectivity in which discipline infiltrates, operates, and inheres.⁸¹ Discipline, as Foucault has explained, is precisely that which accommodates itself to the exact contours of the “somatic singularity” that is the body, that which makes the body both into a “subject” and subject to power: a “subjected body.”⁸² What was being modeled, then, even in Morris’s earliest grey plywood sculptures was not so much a dialectic of subversion as an oscillation between two distinct but coterminous loci of power: the despotic form and the disciplined body. It is, I want to suggest, a type of mapping of the interactions between sovereignty (already in the sixties a neo-sovereignty) and discipline that forms the very subject of Morris’s work.⁸³

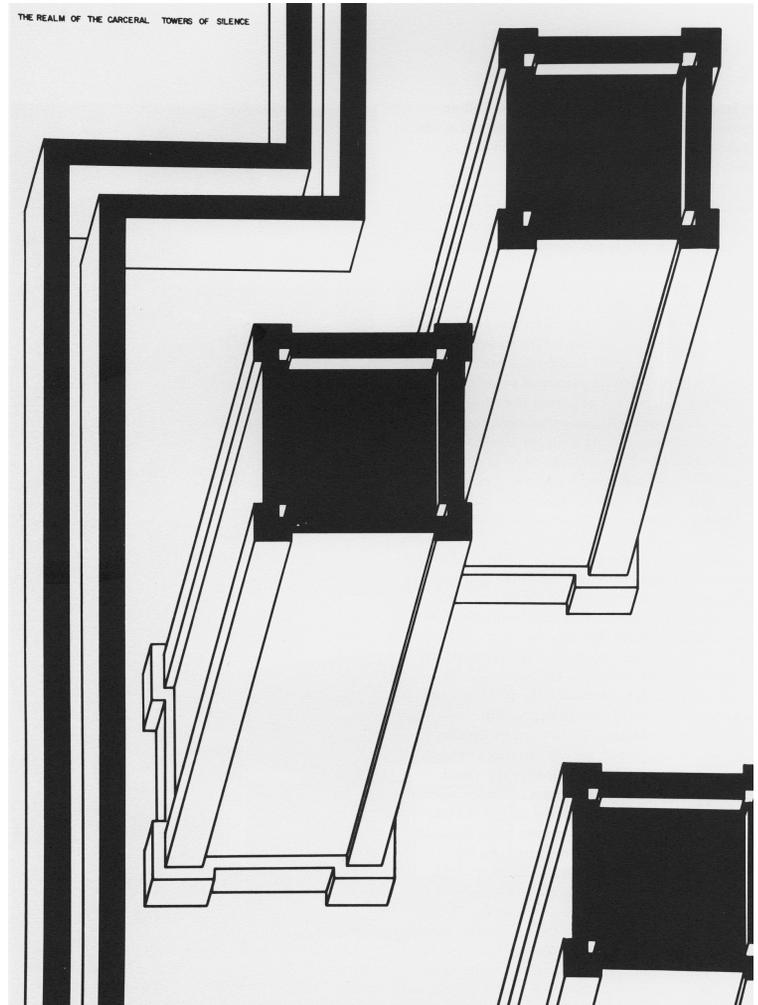
Something like this was, in fact, intuited by Fried in “Art and Objecthood”:

It is the explicitness, that is to say, the sheer persistence with which the experience presents itself as directed at [the beholder] from outside . . . *that simultaneously makes him a subject—makes him subject*—and establishes the experience as something like that of an object, or rather, of objecthood.⁸⁴

Yet if theatricality is neither the liberating nor the neutral or mundane ground of phenomenological experience, neither is it the vast, undifferentiated, chaotic space of a certain postmodernism that Fried describes. The topography of theatricality, which has from the outset always been associated with Cage, is a space saturated with techniques of power that come together in particular and differential configurations.

It is thus not surprising to find it argued that the trajectory Morris began with *Column* culminates with *Voice* (1974), a largely objectless, chance-derived acoustical field.⁸⁵ Such an immersion in process and temporality was not simply, however, a return to Cage. Far from it. Once Morris had (once again) undermined the stability and self-evidence of the artwork as object, what he realized (in a way that Cage never would entirely) was that the dissolution of transcendent form did not effect or guarantee the dissolution of power but only (and at best) the dissolution of a certain type of sovereign power. Within other regimes or modes, however, power operates on an immanent level, coursing through and even producing subjects out of bodies. This is the lesson, in part, of the series of works with which Morris's minimalist project may be said to have ended. *In the Realm of the Carceral* (1978) was Morris's response to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, which Morris read in 1977, the year of its English translation. In a series of graphic meditations, Morris transformed his minimalist sculptural forms into mechanisms of disciplinary power, abstract, Piranesiesque, prison complexes. His grey columns—which had their roots in Young's line—ultimately came to take on the guise of “Towers of Silence.”

Robert Morris. *Towers of Silence*, 1978. From the series, *In the Realm of the Carceral*.



Notes

1. Michael Fried, "An Introduction to My Art Criticism," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 43.
2. Clement Greenberg, "Recentness of Sculpture" (1967), in *The Collected Essays and Criticism, vol. 4*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 252, quoted in Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), *Art and Objecthood*, 152.
3. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," 164. The relationship of theatricality and postmodernism is made by, among others, Douglas Crimp, "Pictures," *October* 8 (Spring 1979): 75–88; Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 35–69; and James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 242.
4. Fried, "Art and Objecthood," 166.
5. See, for example, Robert Morris, "Letters to John Cage," *October* 81 (Summer 1997): 70–79. For a larger study of Cage's impact within the 1960s and the ways in which a generation of artists grappled with it, see my *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage* (New York: Zone Books, forthcoming).
6. James Meyer, "The Writing of 'Art and Objecthood,'" in *Refracting Vision: Essays on the Writings of Michael Fried*, ed. Joll Beaulieu, Mary Roberts, and Toni Ross (Sydney, Australia: Power Publications, 2000), 71.
7. Fried, "Art and Objecthood," 164. Fried noted, "Art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theater."
8. Fried, "Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella," in *Art and Objecthood*, 259.
9. James Meyer has expertly traced Fried's debt to Cavell, in *Minimalism* 234–239.
10. This was actually the second major phase of Cage's development. The first revolved around percussion. Cage's work would transform again in the 1960s, beginning with *0'00" (4'33" No. 2)* (1962). Henry Flynt suggests that the latter transformation was, in part, brought forth by the developments in the circle around Young. Henry Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York, 1960–62," in *Sound and Light: La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela*, ed. William Duckworth and Richard Fleming (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1996), 77.
11. The best critical study of Cage's work remains James Pritchett, *The Music of John Cage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). I have attempted to chronicle certain aspects of Cage's development in detail elsewhere. See Branden W. Joseph, "John Cage and the Architecture of Silence," *October* 81 (Summer 1997): 80–104; Branden W. Joseph, "'A Therapeutic Value for City Dwellers': The Development of John Cage's Early Avant-Garde Aesthetic Position," in *John Cage: Music, Philosophy, and Intention, 1933–1950*, ed. David W. Patterson (New York: Routledge, 2002), 135–175; and Branden W. Joseph, "White on White," in *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 25–71.
12. John Cage, "Composition as Process II: Indeterminacy" (1958), in *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 36. In all quotes, I have chosen not to reproduce Cage's chance-derived typography.
13. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 266–267.
14. John Cage, "45' for a Speaker" (1954), *Silence*, 161.
15. Cage, "Composition as Process II," 38.
16. John Cage, "Composition as Process I: Changes" (1958), in *Silence*, 31.

17. Cage, "Composition as Process II," 38. Cage comments further on dualism and dialectics in "Program Notes" (1959), in *John Cage: Writer*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Limelight Editions, 1993), 81–82.

18. John Cage, "Where Are We Going? And What Are We Doing?" (1961), in *Silence*, 237; and John Cage, "On Robert Rauschenberg, Artist, and His Work" (1961), in *Silence*, 98.

19. Daniel Charles, *Gloses sur John Cage* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1978), 91–109; and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Mark Seem, Robert Hurley, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 370–371.

20. As Liz Kotz has observed, the more celebrated notion of the "death of the author" put forward by Roland Barthes in 1968 was likely a reimportation of the idea into literature and art from the context of contemporary music. Liz Kotz, "Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the 'Event' Score," *October* 95 (Winter 2001): 59, n. 10.

21. John Cage, "Experimental Music" (1957), in *Silence*, 10.

22. Cage, "On Robert Rauschenberg," 108.

23. Cage, "Where Are We Going?" 224–226.

24. John Cage, "History of Experimental Music in the United States" (1959), in *Silence*, 72.

25. John Cage, "Form Is a Language" (1960), in *John Cage: An Anthology*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Da Capo, 1970), 135. The essay originally appeared in the April 1960 issue of *Art News*. The history of Cage's relation to anarchism remains to be written. For a hint at the environment in which it operated, see Judith Malina, "Remembering Jackson Mac Low," *Performing Arts Journal* 80 (2005): 76–78.

26. John Cage, "Experimental Music: Doctrine" (1955), *Silence*, 14.

27. Cage, "Experimental Music," 12.

28. Cage, "45' for a Speaker," 149.

29. Fried does specifically mention music, particularly Cage, in "Art and Objecthood," 164.

30. See Fried, "Art and Objecthood," 168–169, n. 6.

31. Cage's decomposition of form, his production of an aesthetics of immanence, thus also opens onto a historiographic project. See Michel Foucault's critique of "institutionalocentrisme," in *Sécurité, Territoire, Population: Cours au Collège de France, 1977–1978* (Paris: Gallimard/Le Seuil, 2004): "A method such as this one consists in passing behind the institution to attempt to find, behind it and more globally than it, what one could call a technology of power. By that even, this analysis permits one to substitute for the genetic analysis by filiation a genealogical analysis . . . that reconstitutes an entire network of alliances, communications, and pressure points [*points d'appui*]. Thus, the first methodological principle: to go beyond the institution to substitute for it the overall point of view of a technology of power" (121).

32. Maurice Berger, *Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 47.

33. Flynt, 60–61. Flynt further recalled that the *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* was played during the intermission and perhaps before the concert and that Morris was upset that it was mistakenly left off the flyer (Henry Flynt, e-mail to author, November 21, 2006). Morris corresponded with Cage about the happening-like *Wind Ensemble* in letters dated August 8, 1960 and February 27, 1961; see Morris, "Letters to John Cage," 70–73.

34. Robert Morris, interview by Jack Burnham, 21 November 1975, Robert Morris

Archive. The interview is partly quoted in Berger, 31.

35. Such a reversal, in which the score comes afterward and as a result of the performance would be taken up by Cage in such works as *Variations V* (1965).

36. On Robert Morris's contributions to *An Anthology*, see Barbara Haskell, *Blam! The Explosion of Pop, Minimalism, and Performance, 1958–1964* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1984), 91–103.

37. Morris, "Letters to John Cage," 75.

38. Morris, "Letters to John Cage," 74.

39. Program reproduced in Flynt, 74.

40. La Monte Young, ed., *An Anthology* (New York: 1963), n.p.

41. Ken Friedman, ed., *The Fluxus Performance Workbook, special issue of [El Djarida (Trondheim, Norway), (1990): 29.*

42. Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus Codex* (New York: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection in association with Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 358.

43. Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions and Drawings* (1964; reprint, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), n.p.

44. See discussion and reproduction of the evening's program in Flynt, 59–63.

45. Reported by William Weber in the Harvard *Crimson*, 11 April 1961, as cited in Flynt, 63. For a different discussion of the passage to "art in general" that focuses on mainstream minimal and conceptual art, see Thierry de Duve, *Kant after Duchamp* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), esp. ch. 4.

46. Flynt, 63.

47. John Cage to David Tudor, n.d. (c. May 1961), Folder 2, Box 13, David Tudor Papers (940073), Getty Research Institute.

48. La Monte Young to David Tudor, c. May 1961, Folder 11, Box 13, David Tudor Papers (940073), Getty Research Institute. On Robert Morris's *Site*, see Berger, 81–82.

49. Young to Tudor, c. May 1961.

50. La Monte Young, "Lecture 1960," *Tulane Drama Review* 10, no. 2 (1965): 81.

51. This phenomenon is best explained in La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, "Dream House," *Selected Writings* (Munich: Heiner Friedrich, 1969), n.p.

52. Jacqueline Caux and Daniel Caux, "John Cage: 'Une expérience qui a changé ma façon d'entendre,'" *Chroniques de l'art vivant* 30 (Mai 1972): 26. See also Cage's comments in Jean Vanden Heuvel, "The 'Fantastic Sounds' of La Monte Young," *Vogue* 147 (May 1966): 198; and John Cage, *Conversing with Cage*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Limelight Editions, 1994), 203–204. For Benjamin's discussion of the "optical unconscious," see Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography" (1931), trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter, in *Selected Writings, Vol. 2: 1927–1934*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 512; and Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Third Version," trans. Harry Zohn and Edmund Jephcott, in *Selected Writings, vol. 4: 1938–1940*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 265. Benjamin specifically extends this unconscious to the "auditory" realm as well in the wake of the development of sound film (265).

53. Young, "Lecture 1960," 81. The experience of getting inside a sound, as experienced in the work of Young and the Theatre of Eternal Music more generally, could, and perhaps should, be understood more radically by stressing the aspect of negation—the distinction and distancing from the habitual (auditory) environment—though that aspect is only hinted at, not emphasized, by Young.

54. Caux and Caux, “John Cage: ‘Une experience qui a changé ma façon d’entendre,’” 26; ellipses in original. Cage refers to “fixation” in Richard Kostelanetz, “Conversation with John Cage,” in *John Cage*, ed. Kostelanetz (New York: Da Capo, 1970), 26.

55. John Cage, *A Year from Monday* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1967), 16. See Marian Zazeela’s comments on this passage in Ljerka Vidic, “Meet the Composer: La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela,” *EAR: New Music News* 12, no. 3 (May 1987): 26. Cage’s judgment of Young’s work as a regression in contrast to his own is also revealed by his reference to it as potentially “European” (to which Cage juxtaposed his “American” qualities). This judgment, however, did not stop Cage, toward the end of his life, from developing upon Young’s aesthetic in his late “number” compositions.

56. On Kaprow, see Michael Kirby and Richard Schechner, “An Interview with John Cage,” *Tulane Drama Review* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1965). The interview is reprinted in Mariellen R. Sandford, *Happenings and Other Acts* (London: Routledge, 1995); quote appears on page 69.

57. Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 3: Notes and Non Sequiturs,” *Continuous Project Altered Daily* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 28.

58. Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 2,” *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, 16–17.

59. Annette Michelson, “Robert Morris: An Aesthetics of Transgression,” in *Robert Morris*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1969), 7–79. See also the important discussion of Morris in Rosalind E. Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977). The term *presentness* derives from Fried, “Art and Objecthood,” 167–168. Michelson has best articulated the relation between Morris’s work and that of Cage, how the former articulated the “theatrical” tradition within which he developed to the medium or discipline of sculpture.

60. Foster, 56.

61. Foster, 54.

62. Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 1,” in *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, 3. Foster’s discussion of the neo-avant-garde emphasizes Soviet productivism rather than the constructivism that Morris recovers. The dialectical aspect of Morris’s use of constructivism is most evident in Michelson.

63. Meyer describes it as such, in *Minimalism*, 158.

64. For Andre’s critique of constructivism, see, for instance, Carl Andre and Hollis Frampton, *12 Dialogues 1962–1963* (Halifax, NS, and New York: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and New York University Press, 1980), 43.

65. Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 4,” in *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, 64. As noted by Hal Foster, for Morris the ideal form is primary; it comes first (Foster, 47).

66. Michelson makes the latter point, 23.

67. Fredric Jameson, “Periodizing the 60s,” in *The Sixties without Apology*, ed. Sohnya Sayres et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 190.

68. John Cage, “Goal: New Music, New Dance” (1939), *Silence*, 87.

69. As Morris wrote in an unpublished text of 1970, “the repressive structures within the art world parallel those outside it.” Berger, 109. See also Berger, 118.

70. Berger, 123.

71. Berger, 146.

72. Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 1,” 8. Thus, as Berger observes about Morris’s late-sixties landscape works, “The expansive landscape of Holland [*sic*] or Nazca offered no ideological resistance for Morris to work against; he would have to return

to the world of repressive institutions in order to critique them more convincingly” (Berger, 148). The risk of this sort of institution critique, which remains within and potentially strengthens the institution as much as it critiques it, has been noted by Foster, 196. Such a dynamic, in which critique can only ever remain inside, was long ago discussed by Susan Buck-Morss, “The Dialectic of T.W. Adorno,” *Telos* 14 (Winter 1972): 137–144.

73. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 76.

74. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 75.

75. Morris’s political actions, as Berger makes clear, aimed toward greater artist involvement in institutional affairs, forging “Emergency Cultural Government[s]” and the like (Berger, 111–113). That Morris’s actions “mostly took place in the very institutions he deplored: the museum and the gallery” (93) is thus more than simple irony.

76. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, ed., *The Boulez-Cage Correspondence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 143; and Berger, 120.

77. On the notions of major and minor, see Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 16–27; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 100–110, 291–298, 362–374. Deleuze’s most concise statement appears as Gilles Deleuze, “Philosophie et minorité,” *Critique*, February 1978, 154–155 (parts of which appear in *A Thousand Plateaus*).

78. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); and Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), esp. 50–100.

79. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 75.

80. The most important theorist of power in this manner is Foucault. As he has noted, “Thus, you do not have at all a series in which the elements are going to succeed each other, those which appear making the previous ones disappear. There is not the legal age, the disciplinary age, the age of security. You do not have the mechanisms of security which take the place of the disciplinary mechanisms, which had taken the place of juridico-legal mechanisms. In fact, you have a series of complex edifices in which what is going to change, of course, are the techniques which are going to perfect themselves, or in any case render themselves more complex. But, above all, what is going to change is the dominant or more exactly the system of correlations between the juridico-legal mechanisms, the disciplinary mechanisms, and the mechanisms of security. In other words, you are going to have a history which is going to be a history of techniques properly speaking.” Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population*, 10. See also Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 72–76. On the related issue of the heterogeneous nature of contemporary economic regimes, see Paolo Virno, “The Ambivalence of Disenchantment,” in *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*, ed. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 18–19.

81. Discipline is most fully discussed in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977). According to Berger, Morris read this book as soon as it was translated into English (Berger, 163, n. 9). Traces of Morris’s reception of Foucault’s concern with power, specifically power-knowledge, are perceptible in his writings much earlier in the 1970s. See, for example, “Some Splashes in the Ebb Tide” (1973), *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, 121. Morris’s move toward emphasizing disciplinary power and its internalization within the subject (as opposed to repression of the subject in a sovereign manner) brings with it a certain questioning of institutional boundaries, “beyond studios and

even factories.” Robert Morris, “Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated” (1970), *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, 92. On sexuality as a site not of liberation but power effects, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

82. Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1973–1974*, ed. Jacques Lagrange, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 55.

83. Berger, who discusses Morris’s relation to Foucault, largely presents the idea of discipline as conforming to the Marcusean ideas of repression and desublimation with which it is distinctly at odds (though Morris may have initially understood it this way himself). Discipline, however, as Foucault continually emphasized, is primarily productive—which makes it “one of bourgeois society’s great inventions”—and as such must be located not on the “oppressive” side of ideal form but on the “liberated” side of the viewing subject (though it is precisely the idea of “liberation” that the analysis most profoundly puts into question). Michel Foucault, “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 36. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault would go so far as to posit that the very idea of a free or liberated subject is itself an effect of disciplinary power, not its opposition. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have argued for the interrelation of sovereignty (what I would call neo-sovereignty) and discipline in *Empire*, 83–88, 330–331.

84. Fried, “Art and Objecthood,” 159; emphasis added.

85. This is argued in Berger, 153–159, who discusses it in relation to Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*.