WEEK 4: AUDIENCE & INTERACTION
The Most Relevant Art Today Is Taking Place Outside the Art World

— Isaac Kaplan
“If we take an analogy from the wireless technology—the artist is the transmitter, the work of art the medium and the spectator the receiver . . . for the message to come through, the receiver must be more or less in tune with the transmitter . . .”

- Roger Fry, 1939
“[Artist] became the genius: solitary, like a holy man; inspired, like a prophet; in touch with the unseen, his consciousness bulging into the future.”

_The Death of the Artist_ by William Deresiewicz
‘The Death of the Author’
ROLAND BARTHES
"As soon as a fact is narrated [...] this disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins."

"Once the Author is removed, the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile. To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing. [...] a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not the author."

- Roland Barthes, The Death of the Author (1968)
‘The Poetics of the Open Work’

UMBERTO ECO

OPERA APERTA

UMBERTO ECO
“Open works, insofar as they are in movement, are characterized by the invitation to make the work together with the author and that, on a wider level there exist works which, though organically completed, are "open" to a continuous generation of internal relations which the addressee must uncover and select in his act of perceiving the totality of incoming stimuli. Every work of art, even though it is produced by following an explicit or implicit poetics of necessity, is effectively open to a virtually unlimited range of possible readings, each of which causes the work to acquire new vitality in terms of one particular taste, or perspective, or personal performance.”
“In this model art is nothing but an active dialogue between the artist and audience. Therefore, the process of reception is affected by the fact that reader’s interpretation always differs from what the artist intended. This situation is called Aberrant Decoding.”
“Suggestion is an act of imposing an idea on the brain of another.”

- Emil Coue
Auto-Suggestion

Staged Reading of Tim Crouch's "My Arm"
The Situationist International (SI)

A European group of avant-garde artists and thinkers who were making political works designed to shake the viewer’s passive acceptance and change them into an active participant.

Guy Debord, the French theorist and the leader of SI argued that capitalist society had moved from a focus on production to a focus on consumption, and its main goal is to transform people into mindless and passive consumers.
Détournement and Drifting

“Turning expressions of the capitalist system and its media culture against itself through interaction”
Reception theory is based on the idea that the meaning of a text is located somewhere between the reader and the text and that each person will decode the text slightly differently depending on their background, cultural life experiences and the access they have to the frameworks of power that enable them to make informed judgements.
Roland Kirk
Sound Theory
Improvisational performances and events in which the involvement of audience is the main component.

Allan Kaprow, American painter and performance artist, coined this term in 1957 to design a set of performances wherein he was supplying the place, objects, props and some guidelines for action, and the rest was up to audience.
Fluxus was an international network of artists, composers and designers noted for blending different artistic media and disciplines in the 1960s.

Fluxus emphasized ephemeral actions and playful intervention of the audience in the pieces.

“Fluxus remains the most complex – and therefore widely underestimated – artistic movement (or “non-movement,” as it called itself) of the early to mid-sixties... Fluxus saw no distinction between art and life, and believed that routine, banal, and everyday actions could be regarded as artistic events, declaring that ‘everything is art and everyone can do it.’”

- Hal Foster, Art Since 1900
From the collection of Yoko Ono’s instruction pieces. These scripts could be performed or imagined in the mind of the viewer.

PAINTING TO BE STEPPED ON
Leave a piece pf canvas or finished painting on the floor or in the street.
1960 winter

PAINTING TO SEE THE SKIES
Drill two holes into a canvas. Hang it where you can see the sky.
(Change the place of hanging. Try both the front and rear windows, to see if the skies are different.)
1961 summer

LAUGH PIECE
Keep laughing a week.
1961 winter
Yoko Ono
Cut Piece, 1964
Yoko Ono
Add Color Painting, 1966
“So it was positive. I felt relieved. It’s a great relief when you get up the ladder and you look through the spyglass and it doesn’t say NO or FUCK YOU or something.”

John Lennon, describing his reaction to Ceiling Painting when first viewed in 1966
Erwin Wurm
One Minute Sculpture, 2000
Erwin Wurm
One Minute Sculpture, 2000
Erwin Wurm

One Minute Sculpture, 2000
Erwin Wurm
One Minute Sculpture, 2000
Red Hot Chili Peppers
Can't Stop