

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: *agapē*
Organized by Alex Waterman

Dates: June 3 – July 28, 2007

Opening reception and performance: Sunday, June 3, 6:30 – 9 PM (performance at 7:30 PM)

[A] composition is not an end product, not in itself a useful commodity. The end-product of an artist's work, the 'useful commodity' in the production of which he plays a role, is ideological influence... The production of ideological influence is highly socialized involving (in the case of music), performers, critics, impresarios, agents, managers, etc., and above all (and this is the artist's real 'means of production') an audience...

— Cornelius Cardew

Opening on June 3rd, Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to present *Agapē*, an exhibition of experimental music scores and an accompanying concert series that will address aspects of the social acts of translation and collective interpretation in musical performance. The show will feature a sequence of scores marking the evolution of notation in music, spanning from Anna Magdalena Bach's unaccompanied cello suites to the long awaited *Trios WHITE ON WHITE* by Robert Ashley (1963). Printed by Will Holder in consultation with Alex Waterman, this work will be, for the first time, both formed and performed as originally intended by Ashley.

Throughout the two-month event, each score appearing on the gallery walls will be performed in a series of scheduled concerts. The performances will engage the task of reading in relation to the various acts of writing, composing, translating, and committing works to memory. The aural tradition and story-telling will also be explored in addition to issues pertaining to editing, copying, and the transmission / performance of scores and written words.

On July 28th, the exhibition will close with *The Bachelor Party*, an evening led by Will Holder celebrating the 120th birthday of Marcel Duchamp.

Among Alex Waterman's guests will be experimental cellist, Charles Curtis; Fluxus artist, Alison Knowles; language poet and political economist, Bruce Andrews; writers, designers and publishers, Will Holder and Stuart Bailey; poet and sound artist, Chris Mann as well as composers Christian Wolff, Anthony Coleman, Pauline Oliveros and Robert Ashley.

agape₁ | ə'gāp | |ə.gɛp | |ə.gɛp |

adjective [predic.]

(of the mouth) wide open, esp. with surprise or wonder : *Downes listened, mouth agape with incredulity.*

ORIGIN mid 17th cent.: from a-₂ [on] + **gape**.

agape₂ | ä'gä , pā; 'ägə- | |ɑ.gə'peɪ | |ɑgə'peɪ | |. , agəpi |

noun Christian Theology

Christian love, esp. as distinct from erotic love or emotional affection.

• a communal meal in token of Christian fellowship, as held by early Christians in commemoration of the Last Supper.

ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Greek *agapē* 'selfless love.'

When referring to language, poetry, music and social politics, this double meaning is striking to me. We are obviously not living in the age of (Christian) fellowship and selfless love, but we are vulnerable and under attack when we try to love or congregate. Our words are reduced to information and our actions are made redundant by their appropriation by publicity and media machines.

"The meaning is the use" has become the dissolution of meaning through the (mis)use.

— Alex Waterman

Calendar:

- Sunday, June 3*, 7 – 9:30 pm Opening: Anna Magdalena Bach cello suites performed by Alex Waterman (performance at 7:30 pm)
- Thursday, June 7, 7:30 pm Performance with Michael Schumacher and Bruce Andrews
- Monday, July 2, 7:30 pm Charles Curtis performs Eliane Radigue and Christian Wolff
- Thursday, July 12, 7:30 pm Ensemble concert: Dave Shively, Anthony Ptak and Alex Waterman perform works by Christian Wolf, Tim Parkinson, Alvin Lucier, Herbert Brun and Anthony Ptak
- Thursday, July 19, 7:30 pm Ensemble program: Anthony Coleman, Dave Shively, Anthony Burr and Jennifer Choi perform works by James Saunders, Laurence Crane, Christian Wolff, Pauline Oliveros, Alison Knowles and Robert Ashley
- Thursday, July 26, 7:30 pm Premiere of *Trios WHITE ON WHITE* by Robert Ashley; premiere of a new composition by Anthony Coleman and performance by Chris Mann with guests including David Watson
- Saturday, July 28, 7:30 pm *I am 120*, Marcel Duchamp birthday featuring Richard Hamilton/Stuart Bailey, Will Holder, Mauricio Kagel, Michael Portnoy and others ... more to follow

* Free. All other concerts \$7 admission

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery.

Hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11:30 – 6:30 pm or by appointment
Closed Sundays in July

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Agapē

Concert series, June 3- July 28, 2007

Each of the concerts will address an aspect of the *social act of reading* in relation to: writing, composing, translating, committing works to memory, aural tradition, editing, copying, and performance and/or transmission of the musical scores and written words.

In the first concert on June 3rd (the opening of the exhibition), Alex Waterman performs the Suites for Unaccompanied Cello by Johann Sebastian Bach. These works have no autograph manuscript and only exist in hand-written copies/redactions by several different sources. The copy that is historically closest to the original is in the hand of J.S. Bach's wife, Anna Magdalena Bach. The incredible phrasing and beauty of her manuscript suggests another voice, an internal voice, or a transcription of a "sung reading." In looking at Borges and his story *Pierre Menard, true author of the Don Quixote*, as well as looking at the source materials of the Suites and the pseudo-autobiography of Anna Magdalena Bach by Esther Meynell, a discussion about the copy and the legibility of the "readers voice" will emerge.

In the second concert, Bruce Andrews and Michael Schumacher approach the act of performing poetry and music from the standpoint of real-time composition, referencing the "cut-up" the constant shuffling of words and sounds causing a re-staging of fixed moments and mimetically captured sounds. The use of digital electronics to create another arena for text and sound to interact is questioned in Bruce Andrews writing,

"Going electronic. Radical or so-called innovative literary writing faces (& that means faces up to) the facts of life in the digital age. If you have been committed to foregrounding the processes by which language works, to the unsettling & detonation of an established medium — what then? How simpatico is this potential cyberworld as a staging area & as a reading environment?"

Bruce Andrews is a language poet who has published many volumes of poetry. He teaches Political Economy at Fordham University. Michael Schumacher is a composer and pianist and curator of Diapason Gallery in New York City.

The July series opens on July 2nd with a solo concert by Charles Curtis. Charles is one of the leading experts on experimental music practice. Composers such as La Monte Young, Alvin Lucier and Eliane Radigue have written works specifically for him. Charles will discuss the process of working on the epic 3-and-a-half hour-long cello piece by La Monte Young. The work was taught and learned aurally, and exists only in the memory of the composer and the interpreter. Charles will discuss the concept of the "instruction score" as well as aspects of the learning process and the music itself. He will then perform the astonishingly beautiful cello solo by Eliane Radigue. The night will close with an early work of Christian Wolff for two violins, performed by Charles Curtis and Alex Waterman on cellos.

July continues with 3 programs of small ensemble and solo works. On July 12th, the concert will feature works for percussion and electronics by Robert Ashley, Tim Parkinson, Gordon Mumma, Herbert Brun and Alvin Lucier. The percussionist Dave Shively will perform the works accompanied by members of the group, Either/Or.

On July 19th an ensemble made up of Dave Shively (percussion), Anthony Burr (clarinet and pedal-steel guitar), Anthony Coleman (double manual electric organ) and Alex Waterman (cello and auxiliary instruments), will perform works by the British composers Laurence Crane and James Saunders in addition to Allison Knowles's beautiful "blueprint scores", works by Pauline Oliveros, Christian Wolff, and an incredible installation piece of Robert Ashley for double manual organ, "The Entrance" performed by Anthony Coleman.

The final ensemble concert will be on the 26th of July and will feature the great Australian poet and sound artist, Chris Mann. His work has been the inspiration for numerous composers and improvisers including John Cage and Robert Ashley, as well as his own incredible work with the bands "Machine for Making Sense" and "the use". The program will include a performance of a work by Robert Ashley for solo voice (performed by Chris Mann) followed by Ashley's work from 1963, *Trios (WHITE ON WHITE)* and a new work by Anthony Coleman. The night will end with a solo set by Chris Mann with guest David Watson on bagpipes and guitar.

The closing event of *agape* will be a party for Marcel Duchamp's 120th birthday. The night will feature a performance of Richard Hamilton's "Urbane Image" by Stuart Bailey and music arranged by Alex Waterman, a performance of Mauricio Kagel's "A Breeze- for 111 bicyclists), a street performance by Allison Knowles, readings by Will Holder, films and other miscellany, and last but not least, Michael Portnoy will set up shop around the corner at Dexter Sinister (bookstore and print shop) installing his very own den of iniquity in order to pawn off his brilliant new concept- "Abstract Gambling"!!