

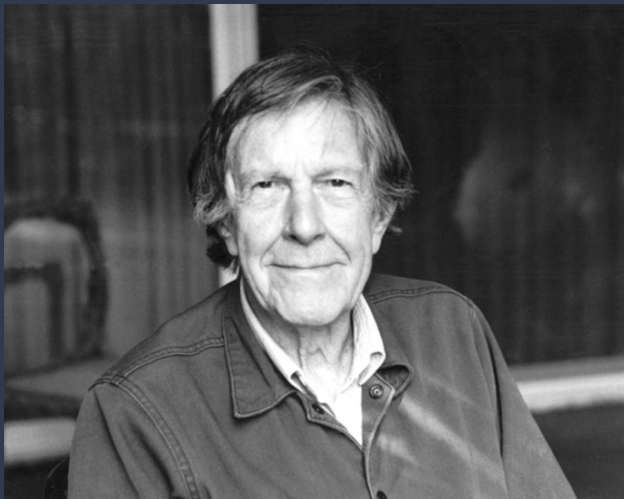
TV Köln - John Cage

McKenzie Squires

A large, dark blue, diagonal shape that starts from the bottom left corner and extends towards the top right corner, covering the lower half of the slide.

Biography

1912–1992



Grove

- Greater impact on music in the 20th C than any other American composer
- Postwar avant garde
- Studied with Richard Buhling, Henry Cowell, Adolph Weiss, Arnold Schoenberg
- Built his career off of continuous questioning of all music, social, and philosophical assumptions.
- Known for his work with prepared pianos, live electronics, and indeterminacy
- Inspired by zen buddhism

1 I am here , and there is nothing to say .
2 If among you are
3 those who wish to get somewhere , let them leave at
4 any moment . What we re-quire is
5 silence ; but what silence requires
6 is that I go on talking .
7 Give any one thought
8 a push : it falls down easily
9 ; but the pusher and the pushed pro-duce that enter-
10 tainment called a dis-cussion .
11 Shall we have one later?

Lecture on Nothing

1 This is a talk about something and naturally also a talk about
2 nothing. About how something and nothing are not opposed to each other
3 but need each other to keep on going . It is difficult to
4 talk when you have something to say precisely because of the words which
5 keep making us say in the way which the words need to
6 stick to and not in the Way which we need for living. For instance:
7 someone said, "Art should come from within; then it is profound."
8 But it seems to me Art goes within, and I don't see the need for "should" or
9 "then" or "it" or "pro-found." When Art comes from within , which is
10 what it was for so long doing, it be-came a thing which seemed to elevate the
11 man who made it a-bove those who ob-served it or heard it and the artist was
12 considered a genius or given a rating: First, Second, No Good , until
13 finally riding in a bus or subway: so proudly he signs his
14 work like a manufacturer .
15 But since everything's changing, art's now going

Lecture on Something

- 1937 - a dance accompanist
 - Met Merce Cunningham (life partner)
 - Introduction to percussion
 - Idea of making music from the "unmusical"
- Working with dancers led to prepared piano
- "The heir to Cowell" in his experimentalism (Grove)
- Lecture on Nothing and Lecture on Something
- Indeterminacy period
- "He aimed to free sound from from its use as communication, to free the composer from his 'self', music from all notions of theory and history, and the mind from all intellectual limitations" (New Voices, pg 71)

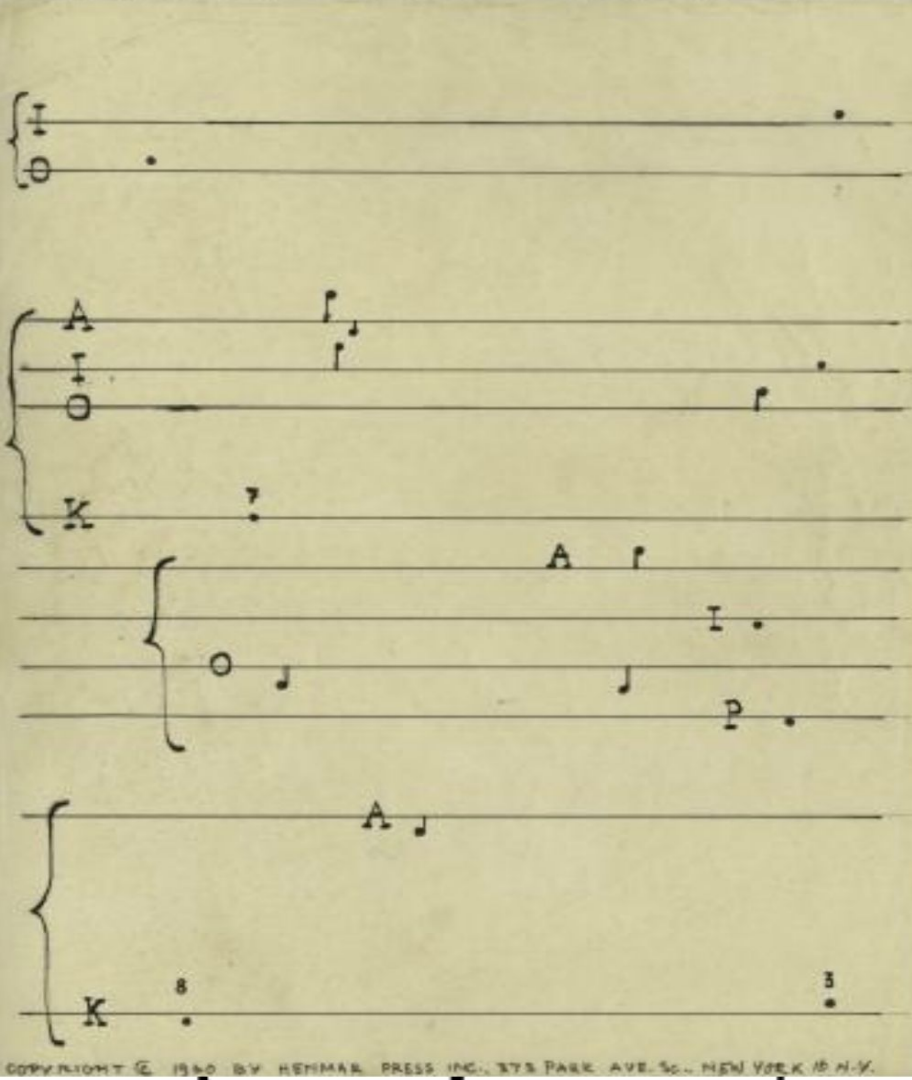
Indeterminacy

- Lecture: “Indeterminacy: New Aspect of Form in Instrumental and Electronic Music”
- Indeterminacy
 - Idea of opening up a composition, to be intentionally ambiguous
 - No more fixed ideas
 - Focus on the character of the processes
 - Performer is supposed to animate the process that Cage had created
 - Every performance would be different and unique

TV Koln



- Alternate title TV Cologne or TV Koeln
- Composed in 1958 and was premiered in Cologne, October 6th (or 7th) in 1958
- For piano
- 1:15 minute
- influenced by Cage's work with Artraud and his book *The Theatre and its Double*
- Written specifically to engage and interact with television
 - The idea that television would finally allow life processes to finally be transformed into art (Blom)
- All pitches are chosen by the performer



The score for this work contains four systems of two, three, or four lines each.

(I) interior piano construction

(O) exterior piano construction

(A) auxiliary noise,

(K) bottom line for the keyboard.

W/ Dots and quarter-notes, equal time lengths, position of a note to the line indicates its relative pitch, duration, and/or amplitude.

Reception

- No documentation of the reception to this piece specifically
- There is a history of receptions that we can assume apply here as well

- Cage has stated that all his music has been opposed since the beginning so he has built up a tolerance to it (New Voices)
- “If there isn’t opposition, I have the feeling that I’m not going in a radical enough direction” (NV 73)

Performer's Perspective

Brubaker

- Chose to accompany TV Koln with the sight and white-noise sound of video static

Timothy

- “indeterminate music will thus sound more like a loose connection of cultural influences, as opposed to a set of organised random variables.”

What would you do?

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