Oded Assaf on J Cage

So, what about the truck next to the music school?

John Cage's Heritage: An Educational Proposal

Is music just sounds? / Then what does it communicate? / Is a truck passing by music? / (...) Which is more musical, a truck passing by a factory or a truck passing by a music school? / Are the people inside the school musical and the ones outside unmusical? / (...) If my head is full of harmony, melody, and rhythm, what happens to me when the telephone rings (...)? / Are we getting anywhere asking questions?"

(John Cage, Silence, pg. 41-42)

...but the following words might as well start my article:

"'Everyone is welcome! If you want to be an artist join our company!' ... [and K. could hear] at once the noise of many trumpets ... a confused blaring; the trumpets were not in harmony but were blowing regardless of each other. [still, that did not worry K.].

These are not the words of Cage, but of Kafka (from his novel *Amerika*). Brian Dennis found these words pertinent to his experience participating in the Scratch Orchestra , and quoted them in his memoirs 1. Indeed, they are well suited to Cage's pedagogical vision, and Dennis must be remembered as one of the major implementers of this vision. In the Scratch Orchestra, as he remembered it, he had the "feeling that 'anything' could happen, 'everyone' was equal" and therefore -

" (...) much of this was - and still is - relevant to groups of children of mixed ability, where conventional notions of music can temporarily be banished and all participants treated equally "2

2018 is marked as the twentieth year of Brian Dennis's untimely death. I do not know where and how it was mentioned. Maybe it was not publicized prominently enough. Virginia Anderson made a significant contribution to the public dialogue, when she attached a link, in a post on the Experimental Music Catalog, to a rare and fascinating film documenting one of Dennis's Experimental Music workshops in schools. 3

Well, fifty years since Cornelius Cardew's first initiative to run an experimental music class at Morley College, an initiative from which grew, as is well known, the Scratch Orchestra (in which Dennis took part a bit later). And fifty years since Jeffrey Steel was appointed as head of fine art at Portsmouth College of Art and paved the way to innovative, interdisciplinary methods of teaching, learning, and making music, following Cage and Cardew, aided by Gavin Bryars and later on by Michael Parsons. "*They explored",* in Mick Cooper's words -

"the collaborative art/music practices in America's Black Mountain College [notably John Cage] as well as the European avant-gardes... There were a series of visiting lectures from Morton Feldman, Cornelius Cardew and others and Cardew's Scratch Orchestra... There was a series of Thursday lunchtime performances of Terry Riley's 'minimal' composition 'In C '...

The Portsmouth Sinfonia emerged from this project ... Players had to be either non-musicians or play an instrument that was entirely new to them" [4]

it seems to me that ages have passed since the flourishing of these musical adventures and other innovative ideas in the field of musical education. In 1969, (nearly 50 years ago, here we go again!) the American musician, John Dinwiddie wrote in an extensive and illuminating article in the journal, *Source: Music of the Avant-Garde* about a special educational project to which he invited John Cage [5]. I will discuss this project later in my article, yet I keep wondering: what is left, in today's schools, academies, and universities, of the heritage of John Cage and the Experimental Music following him, Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra, Brian Dennis and some others who were doing their best to bring adventurous music-making into classrooms and workshops? Not what one would, or should expect. And now, in the age of distressing neo-conservatism (in the arts, the mainstream music, the mass-media, the political discourse), how can the pedagogical challenges posed by the avant-garde and experimental music from forty, fifty, sixty or seventy years ago get a new impetus?

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In 1992, a unique documentary film called *Ecoute / Listen* [6] was produced in Paris under the auspices of the Pompidou Centre. It was not a standard documentary, rather a collage including extracts of interviews, musical events and moments of collecting sound materials from various sources. The film is designed to challenge the viewer: what is music nowadays? Who makes it, and for whom, and where? How should one listen to what will be redefined as "music"? What is the musical education that will be capable of dealing with these questions? In the movie we see an enthusiastic collector of the sounds of nature and an exemplary teacher of music, leading a class of young students out of town and encouraging them to listen intently to the wind, birds, the sounds of insects in the grass, to a plane in the sky, giving each sound, the respect it deserves. The film also features interviews with musicologists, contemporary cultural commentators and well-known composers, such as György Kurtág, Philippe Manouri, Michaël Lévinas, Iannis Xenakis, and also John Cage, each expressing their individual approach.

Cage:

"*I have the feeling that a sound is acting. And I love that activity of sounds. What it does is that it gets lower [louder?] and quieter, and it gets higher and lower, and it gets longer and shorter. It does all those things which I'm completely satisfied with. I don't need sound to be talk to me (...) You mean IT'S JUST SOUND? (...) I love sounds, just as they are. And I have no need for them to be anything more than what they are. I don't want the sound to pretend that it's a bucket, or that it's a president, or that it's in love with another sound.* [laughing] ... ". [7]

Cage's words fit well into the film, even if his patently, "non-European" approach is clearly different from that of most other participants. He seems to offer basic assumptions for a new music education, even though he does not declare it. As a

matter of fact, he never formulated a systematic educational doctrine, but in his lectures and articles, in many of his works, in the experiences he shared in classes and workshops, and in several interviews, we can deduce *educational proposals*. As we all know Cage did not teach regularly. In 1948, and later in 1952/3, he was active at Black Mountain College. But the "Experimental Music Composition" courses - small classes that Cage led in the New School of Social Research in New York between 1956 and 1961 - deserve special attention.

A full professional background in music was not required of students. Many of them were involved in the plastic arts, in writing, and with intermediate fields on the fringes of the theatre. Among the students were prominent figures in the innovative arts of the Sixties: Allan Kaprow, the most significant initiator and author of the concept of the "happening"; members of *Fluxus* like George Brecht, Al Hansen, Jackson Mac Low and Dick Higgins, and also Toshi Ichiyanagi, a composer at the beginning of his career. Cage's stated purpose was neither the methodical teaching of musical knowledge (or musicology) for its own sake, nor the practice of accepted composition techniques, but rather to experience the kinds of thinking and creativity that interested him as a composer, and perhaps, he hoped the students might want to adopt some of them, each in their own way. When Cage occasionally introduced more theoretical papers in the classroom - some of the participants recalled later – they were displeased. They saw this as a departure from Cage's basic assumptions and from their expectations, and rightly so. Many of them adopted Cage's approaches only partially, diverted them to other, independent streams, expanded upon them, made them flexible, or gave them a personal interpretation of their own. Anyway, they considered Cage’s approach to creativity an indispensable frame of reference.

Some specific things Cage wrote may explain this:

'I began each series of classes by meeting the students, attempting to find out what they had done in the field of music, and letting them know what I myself was doing at the time. The catalogue had promised a survey of contemporary music, but this was given only incidentally and in reference to the work of the students themselves or to my own work. For, after the first two classes, generally, the sessions were given over to the performance and discussion of student works (...) I was helped by the absence of academic rigor there. 8

(Aren't we reminded of Cardew’s class in Morley College, not too many years later?)

Following Cage’s reminiscences, it is fascinating to read those of some of the students. Dick Higgins, for example, tells of the studies in 1958:

''In the first class, [Cage] spoke about notation - 'So much space equals so much time'. He wrote both words on the black board (...) He showed the class about the various properties of sound and how they could be altered. And stuck a pink pearl eraser in the piano strings. It made a dull, bell-like sound. 'Nice', he said (...) Problems

were given to the class - what to do with guitars and paper clips (...), how to make an array of numbers controlling durations, etc. Everybody in the class came up with a different solution (...)'' . 9

Certainly, teaching music in ordinary classes or in small groups of elementary or high school students requires a slightly different mindset, even when they rest on similar premises. But with a broader view, beyond the immediate environment in which teaching and learning take place under conditions familiar to us, with all the considerations, constraints and *realpolitik* that are difficult to avoid, the realization of Cage's proposals and those of some of his followers should encompass all forms of organization involved in education and enlightenment. Perhaps the task will be - to paraphrase the words of Christian Wolff - *changing **all** the systems.*

Recalling the classes that he taught during those years, Cage did not forget to relate to a book published by his friend, the architect Buckminster Fuller with the unusual title, *Education Automation:*

“You should know Buckminster Fuller’s book, 'Education Automation', in which he suggests a space that is without partitions, in which a variety of activities is going on and the attention of the student could be at one place or another—rather than being forced to focus on a single thing that often isn’t even of his choice. I think this is a good principle which can be stated in many ways. One is: where you see a boundary, remove it. (...) And if you must have them, then have them movable; and where you have—as Fuller says—a choice between fixity and flexibility, choose flexibility"

And therefore:

“In Fuller’s never-ending university he suggests that we take down the walls between the various rooms so that when you go, say to study music, you might hear a little bit from the next class over (because there wouldn’t be any wall between you) which might be on some other subject such as electrical engineering; I’m sure the mind is such that connections would be made and they might be very refreshing. Once when I was at Wesleyan University I didn’t have to teach but I did now and then give a class. When I was asked to teach musical composition, I introduced the students to the work of Marcel Duchamp; and since that wasn’t about music but was about things that you could see rather than hear, what they read had different effects—it was received in an original way by each of the students—so that when the students brought compositions resulting from that information they were all different, whereas if the teaching had been more musical they would all have done more similar things" 10

When Cage was asked: How does one tell students from teachers without a program? He answered:

“I think one would have a file, available night and day—twenty-four-hour access—of ideas given both by the faculty and by the student body in the university situation " 11

Cage's collaboration with Dinwiddie in 1969, at the University of California/ Davis [12] is an event of special importance. A course and a short seminar on topics like "Music in Dialogue" and "Music in its Surroundings" were planned in advance. The number of applicants exceeded expectations: one hundred and twenty students (!). Cage cancelled his original plan and proposed an alternative idea, adapted to a very large group. He also decided to give up the formal role of "teacher", and to act as another participant in the group. In a joint discussion, the project was agreed upon: the class was divided into groups of different sizes. Some of them undertook to wander through the university library and to randomly select books (without any influence of interest or personal taste), to read them, to summarize them to the other groups, to develop a discussion about them (or perhaps not to develop any discussion). Dinwiddie recalled the "curiosities" chosen from the library - Agrarian Policy in Pakistan, a recipe for chili powder - but also some real works of art inspired by one book or another: a poetic text composed by members of one of the groups; a movie produced by one of the groups; a composition for piano. An accompanying project, which was carefully planned by Cage himself, was a long marathon (twenty-four hours) in the closed and open spaces of the campus. It included concerts (new and less new music. The main piece was *Vexations* by Erik Satie), lectures prepared by Cage (listeners sat around him or lay on the floor), movies, and a special work in which Cage arranged twelve stereo systems in various corners of the hall, playing three hundred records. The audience was asked to move freely from place to place, to choose from the pool of three hundred records, to play the records and to change them as they wished. A flexible "sound environment", based on “ready-mades”, was created, and within it a constant movement; sometimes slow, "transparent" or more distinct, perhaps more "musical" (in the conventional sense), and sometimes without any prior planning, dense, frenetic, indistinct, identifiable as "noise."

2

We may deduce from Cage's approach to the teaching of music, from his own testimonies and those of others about how he instructed students, what he would suggest if he were teaching music to children in schools or conservatories. He did not elaborate on this matter, but I found at least two relevant references in his words. The first is very emphatic, perhaps somewhat provocative:

“Conventional music education is something that can only infuriate anyone who is at all interested in living. No matter what aspect of it you think of, you get angry almost immediately. The idea that a small child should be put in front of a piano and be made to read notation which is the equivalent of Greek or Latin is ridiculous. Unless the child loves music inordinately, he will soon learn to hate it positively. The first thing that happens is that his eyes are engaged and his ears are shut. So that playing music in terms of music education has absolutely nothing to do with ears or the enjoyment of sound. It has only to do with reading, and reading something equivalent to Greek or Latin because the notation is no longer useful for the music of the twentieth century. It’s only useful for previous centuries. So, for our young children to have the good fortune to be brought into the twentieth century, and to be immediately educated as though they were in a previous century, is some form of social insanity ". [13]

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Another reference to Cage in this regard is his answer to the question: "Would you offer some of your scores as the basis of sound communication for children?". Cage hesitates, and then mentions a certain experience of his in the distant past and an experiment that was done in later years:

"I don't know. That is the problem of my music. In Germany, Gertrud Meyerdenkam has intelligently broached this aspect of my music by letting children create their own music. The children vary so greatly, and among them once was Mozart. If I worked with children, which I don't, I would certainly find an answer to this question, along with some ideas. At the beginning of the 1940's, the WPA invited me to work in the "recreation department." At that time, I met children of every race and nationality living in San Francisco. I did not try to get them to play my music but to help them create their own". 14

And here are some of Cage's memories from his childhood, and some insights:

" I remember when I was in grammar school the people used to put the needle down on the record for just a few seconds and then pick it up and we all had to tell who had written it, and then when [the composer] died and so forth—things were getting confused because you couldn't tell whether the sounds were men, or the men were sounds (we spoke in fact of those sounds—if we got a star for it, we said Beethoven or Mozart or Haydn instead of saying what the sounds…instead of listening to the sounds really). Then, after studying music, if you're lucky you can come back to the direct hearing of sounds—hopefully" . 15

The frustrating way of learning that Cage recalls is familiar to us, alas, to this day. We need some kind of healing process, we have to re-think them, to revive other innovative pedagogical approaches, not necessarily in the field of music, which had their momentum in the 1960's and 1970's. I think primarily of Ivan Illich's proposals and activities, and especially about his book *Deschooling Society* 16. It is hard not to find a similarity between Cage's approach and some of Illich's assertions, for instance:

"At their worst, schools gather classmates into the same room and subject them to the same sequence of treatment (...) At their best, they permit each student to choose one of a limited number of courses. In any case, groups of peers form around the goals of teachers. A desirable educational system would let each person specify the activity for which he sought to peer. " 17

"student discipline, public relations, hiring, supervising, and firing teachers would have neither place nor counterpart in the networks I have been describing. Neither would curriculum-making, textbook-purchasing (...)". 18

I also recommend an article by Otto Müller entitled *That Entertainment Called a Discussion: The Critical Arts Pedagogy of John Cage* [19] . I cannot elaborate on this article and detail all the interesting distinctions in it, and only point to the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire's pedagogical approach that it focuses upon, linking them to Cage's approaches. Müller does not forget to mention briefly some predecessors like John Dewey and Maria Montessori as well as Illich's new ideas, and to point out the relevance of concepts raised by the great wave of student protest (in relation to which he comments: "*Some of Cage's educational experience precedes this historical moment*" [20]). But certain words in which Müller describes Cage's pedagogical approach and the possible connection between it and Freire's approach have attracted my attention particularly. They may interest readers:

"Despite the very different contexts in which these two men worked, Cage's methodology provides a model of co-intentional, problem-posing and holistic education as laid out by Freiere's theory". [21]

Tony Harris's book, *The Legacy of Cornelius Cardew*, [22] which appeared in 2013, reviews, perhaps for the first time in breadth and depth, the attempts to incorporate innovative trends of experimental music in musical education in UK schools - following Cage and (later) Cardew. Harris mentions John Paynter as a key figure in this area, first and foremost thanks to a book he published jointly with Peter Aston, *Sound and Silence.* [23] Both of them had a huge influence on what Harris does not hesitate to call revolution. Their music lessons were not necessarily directed to a canonical repertoire, to passive listening, to memorization or to professional skill in the accepted sense. They were designed with the intention that each pupil would develop sensitivity to the unique quality of sound (any sound) and silence while listening and acting . The process would be complemented by encountering modern works composed by professional composers, similar in their basic materials and in their way of notation to those created in the classroom. Paynter, Harris reminds his readers, was one of the first to explicitly relate to Cardew's music in this context, and he was not the only one. It should be added that Paynter's influence at that time (so long ago, so different from our present reality!) also received institutionalized academic recognition.

Perhaps the name George Self is less celebrated today than the name Paynter, and it's fascinating to read in Harris's book how he tried "*to provide opportunities for all children to experience ensemble music-making without having to wait until they had acquired either musical literacy or elaborate performing techniques* ". [24]No less significant is the fact that Self brought his students scores of Cage, Feldman, or Haubenstock-Ramati, along with graphic scores of Cardew. [25]

In the same context, Harris mentions the teaching methods developed by R. Murray Schafer, the special term he used, “soundscape”, his ardent activity in recording natural and environmental sounds in his compositions , and his work with young students. Brian Dennis receives special attention in this book, and he certainly deserves it, as a link between the legacy of Cage, the legacy of Cardew, and new, adventurous educational methods [26] . In a thesis published by David J. Beckstead [27] the author emphasizes the development of such methods as part of a general trend - to which Cage, of course, made a weighty contribution - that tries to abolish the traditional hierarchy of composers who write scores vs. performers. Quite a challenge for young musicians and music lovers these days!

3

Are these innovative ways of teaching music supposed to replace the more conventional ones? Are the sounds of the truck passing by the school of music, or sounds similar to them, both intentional and unintentional, "noises"- are they supposed to exclusively take the place of sounds on which beautiful, enriching musical traditions are based? And if the preservation of these traditions, or rather revitalizing them, is a task still dear to us, can the experimental education alone guarantee this? Cage himself did not focus only on the sounds of the street, the cactuses, the kitchen utensils, the random sounds from the radio. In his early compositions for prepared piano or a singer accompanied by such a piano, his first string quartet and *Six Melodies*, a later work such as *Cheap Imitation*, certainly *Apartment House* , even some of the late *number pieces* (in a rather tricky way), in all of these compositions the past is mingling with the present. These works are necessarily based on musical knowledge and on the musical habits of the composer and his performers as well as of their listeners (at least their ideal listeners). Without this precondition, how could *a cult of the beautiful*, as Michael Nyman called it [28] , become a trend among young English Experimental composers around 1969-1970? Clearly, this was neither a regression to Neo-Classicism nor to Neo (post) Romanticism, but rather a new, liberated attitude towards the old, strict conventions of these styles as well as to the conventions of good old light music. Christopher Hobbs, citing Keith Rowe (quoting the words of a Japanese monk) pointed out: "*We return to the old sounds; only, hopefully, with our feet a little off the ground*" [29]. Quite a few of John White's *machines* are very good examples. So are many of the works written by Hobbs or Hugh Shrapnel. Gavin Bryars shows another fascinating use of "drifting" - unpredictable, not unsystematic - new tonality. But, of course, Howard Skempton. Or Michael Parsons’ recent compositions for the vocal ensemble, *Fiori*. As for Brian Dennis, was his activity in experimental music education a sharp contrast to his *lieder* for voice and piano?

And I am thinking of two American composers, far from each other and far from the British Experimentalism, but not at all from the dynasty of experimental music. Each in his own way, and in certain works, touches upon the heritage of Western art music *with his feet a little off the ground*. This slight hovering releases them and their listeners from familiar patterns of the past, but does not erase these patterns from memory. The familiar melodic-harmonic *gestalts* just lose their original syntax,

become deconstructed. It's an adventure, sheer pleasure. That's how I feel when I listen to Philip Glass's *Another Look at Harmony*, and to *Broken Light (Corelli, Locatelli*) or *Still Lives* by Nicolas Collins.

So, may I dream of a wide-ranging curriculum of music lessons, in which walking in the paths laid by Cage and his successors is essential, but at the same time young pupils and students are offered a vast array of courses - ear training , all sorts of harmony (tonal-functional as well as early and new concepts, considering - why not? - some of john Cage's attitudes toward harmony 30) , seminars focusing on the histories of musics, reading conventional as well as graphic and verbal scores in the classroom , improvisation, playing music individually and in groups with all kinds of instruments, and various sessions dedicated to arts, literature, and theatre? Needless to say, the fruits of such a curriculum should be equally enjoyed by every child, every student, including the truck driver who happened to pass by the music school or near the college, and also the young people who attend classes at the same time. Such an experience may encourage the young generation to be involved, if they wish, in conventional music *with their feet a little off the ground*; to change the deadly mainstream musical scene (an expression I borrowed from Peter Brook's *The Deadly Theatre*) . But a syllabus of this kind, broad, flexible and modular, is especially important for the continued development of new experimental musics. How can such a vision be realized? Will this be possible only after all the systems in our present society have radically and completely changed, or can one begin, as was done in the experiments of the late 1950's, the 1960's and the 1970's, and is still done by some musicians today, in small "pockets", within the existing institutions? I cannot come to an unequivocal conclusion, but I do like of the popular slogan of 1968 (recently adopted by the American activist, Bill Ayers, as a title for his book): *Demand the impossible.*

4

Clearly, all this has to do with politics, as it should be. In any case, any accepted educational process is also enculturation, and all enculturation touches, in one way or another, on micro-politics and macro-politics, and any framework of music education (or teaching other forms of art), and any choice of curriculum has an ideological-political background and political implications. The innovative approaches of Illich or Freire were political, though not linked to specific political parties. So too were Cage's pedagogical approaches.

One should distinguish between the conventional meaning of the term "*political music"* and Cage's political-ness. We tend to consider works of art accompanied by critical or satirical text, whose message is a clear and a direct call for *agitprop*, as political works. But completely different ways can be found in contemporary music. I, for one, consider quite a few pieces such as *Laborintus 2* by Luciano Berio, Luigi Nono's *Prometheus* (but also his late non-vocal works) , Iannis Xenakis' *Kssandra* ,

Henry Pousseur's *Couleurs Croisees*, or Louis Andriessen's *De Staat*, as politically subversive now as they were decades ago, in spite - or just because - of their indirectness. Cage suggested a separate way; not a straightforward one , perhaps elusive at times, but more radical, *holistic* (to use Müller's words).

I will quote Cage in an interview in 1969:

"*When I say, for instance, that I'm not interested in telling people what to do, I mean that as a social statement and I think we need more and more a society without government. And that we can give examples of its practicality in Art, and those can be imitated in society. We can make our concerts, as we more and more do, instances of the practicality of anarchy"* 31.

The political dimension of Cage's legacy has received, and still receives, contradictory interpretations. Yes, It has some elusive elements. One could quite easily condemn it as essentially a-political (or neutral, or even "elitist"). Is it, really? The realization of works such as Wolff's *Burdocks* (and it's worth mentioning the title he chose for a new piece, just lately: *Resistance*), or Cardew's *Treatise* and *The Great Learning* , may well serve as micro-cosmos of alternative, egalitarian human relations, culture, and politics . Did Cardew's later works, which carry a direct political message based on familiar patterns of high-art canonical music, or on folk traditions and Kampfmuzik, have a stronger revolutionary effect? Has the experience of innovative music education become out of date, redundant? I cannot answer the first question with complete certainty. To the second question I reply without hesitation: No. Certainly John Cage's political and pedagogical legacy has strong utopian elements in it ; utopian - meaning not mere fantasy but praxis: cultivating a potential which still can be found in our midst. However, in an article written a decade after Cage's death, Martin J.C. Dickson claimed (in a tone of regret which I share) :

"For Cage in the 60s, there was still a discursive and praxial space which was able to accommodate a language of utopianism. We should not shy away from this, any more than we can be sure of what this utopianism and the works associated with it really amount to today (...) Ours is an age of diminished expectations, and the contemporary avant-garde, while still complaining of a boundary between art and life, has no political subtext and makes a straw man of the traditions it opposes. The modern art gallery and concert hall is not a place where we expect to be shocked by truth or epiphany. We do not even expect to undergo something as reactionary and outmoded as an aesthetic experience; rather we are merely presented with easy to decipher, mildly provocative objects about which we can, if we please, have a quick chat and talk of the radical in this context is facile." 32

So, the End of Utopia? Considering formal education, budgets given today for unusual projects, especially in the arts and in music, are shrinking. Education at all levels tends to be, or is forced to be, business oriented and risk averse. Generally speaking, we live under the ever-increasing control of what Ivo Mosley calls

Dumbocracy [33]. He, along with some of the co-authors of his book, point to the phenomenon of dumbing-down of culture, politics, science, and mass media. This goes for many parts of higher and lower education systems. As regards music, more and more young people are adopting a culture of all-encompassing consumerism, passive listening, X-factor-ism, high speed, very high volume, and quite a few types of 'nonchalant' attention deficit. Is it possible to imagine the survival and success of projects like those of Illich or Freire today? And projects of music education following Paynter or Dennis? In what school or conservatory could Cardew's *Schooltime Compositions* be given the place they deserve? Is it possible to speculate what Cage would say and do if he was alive today? And, under the conditions of our time, could Dinwiddie's project with Cage , or an initiative like the AntiUniversity of London, an alternative institution that opened in 1968 (well, fifty years ago!) with a faculty including the eminent participation, at least in the beginning, of Cardew, Anna Lockwood, Carolee Schneemann, Allen Ginsberg , and Richard Hamilton , attract interest and goodwill?

I was nevertheless encouraged in 2012, the centenary of John Cage's birth, by Alvin Lucier's lively and provocative book, Music 109 [34] . I felt that the spirit of experimental music and the ways of learning this music were here to stay. But, in what, and in how many places in the world, and what is the demand? Perhaps a comprehensive survey should be initiated.

And I cannot help but tell you about my enjoyment when I read a certain blog in 2015 (please forgive me, this really is not an academic reference). Young Americans wrote about their excitement, during their college days, when they discovered the film documenting Brian Dennis at Shoreditch School. [35] .

Recently I was encouraged by Virginia Anderson's discussion of the legacy of the Scratch Orchestra. She was asked about the degree of interest in the scores of experimental music that collectors have gathered since 1969, and answered:

"(...) it does seem like there's been a bit of a Renaissance. There wasn't that much interest in the early stuff in the early 1980s—the kind of things where, you like your grandfather but you don't like your father—it seems to skip a generation" . [36]

But what about the future? What is to be expected? I like the tentative answers of Nono, a utopian in his own way. His answers contain hidden question marks but not loss of hope. One of them is *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura*. I looked for a reliable translation of this complex title, and found it:

The composer Salvatore Sciarrino, to whom La lontananza is dedicated, suggests the following convoluted interpretation: "the past reflected in the present (nostalgica) brings about a creative utopia (utopica), the desire for what is known becomes a vehicle for what will be possible (futura) through the medium of distance (lontananza)". [37]

Another answer from Nono can be found in the quote he used as a title for some of his late pieces - an inscription (or to be more accurate, the words of a poem) on the wall of an ancient monastery in Toledo: *No hay caminos, hay que caminar* (the English translation does not do justice to the 'music' in the original Spanish words: "*There are no roads, you have to walk"*) . And this phrase is not very far from that of the eighty-year-old Cage, in a conversation with Laurie Anderson [38] :

Laurie Anderson: *To go on? To be able to go on?*

John Cage: *Not to be able to go on, but to go on.*

There is more than one way to interpret Cage's answer.

Or am I wrong?

NOTES

1 London Musicians' Collective , *25 Years from Scratch*, ICA ,London , November 1994, pg. 36

2 ibid.

3 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsigOnPJTtA&ab_channel=dorlec01
also -
https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3276yf [

4 Mick Cooper, *The Portsmouth Music Scene 1968*
http://michaelcooper.org.uk/C/1968.htm

See also -
Jeffrey Steel's illuminating (and, in parts, rather critical) article,
Collaborative Work at Portsmouth, Studio International, Vol. 192 No. 984, November/December 1976, pp. 297 - 300

5 John Dinwiddie, *Mewantemooseicday : John Cage in Davis*, Source: music of the avant garde, Vol 4, No.1, January 1970, pp. 2- 22

See also -
John Dinwiddie interviewd by Fabricio Carvalho, December 2014

http://astronautapinguim.blogspot.com/2014/12/john-dinwiddie.html

6 *Ecoute / Listen* was directed by Miroslav Sebestic .

7 This short conversation with Cage can be watched through -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcHnL7aS64Y&t=128s&ab_channel=jdavidm

8 Richard Kostelanetz (ed.), *John Cage*, Allen Lane, 1974, pg. 122

And it's interesting to read about Cage's classes in Rebecca Y. Kim, *The Formalization of Indeterminacy in 1958: John Cage and Experimental Composition at the New School*, October Files 12, The MIT Press, 2011 , pp. 141 - 170

9 ibid. pg. 119

10 Richard Kostelanetz (ed.), *Conversing with Cage*, Routledge 2003

also in -

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