Adopting a chronological reception order criterion, some contributions were left out of the 100 na mes here hosted. It is possible to read them, together with those who initially surpassed the requested length limit, at these addresses: www.johncage.it and www.diaforia.org. dia·foria aperiodic magazine of arts and literature, n°8 - First print: 500 copies (English version), on 120 gr. silent paper and 400gr. cardboard. Crew: Fernando Anateti, Walter Catalano, Stefano Pocci, Daniele Poletti Michele Porzio, Renato Marengo, Erik Alfred Tisocco (exe tive producer), Marybeth Tamborra and Jane Barbara Erkkila (language revision), Louise Read, Carlo Battisti and all the one hundred and more contributors for their works and their aid in seeking new participants. After more than half a lifetime of listening, reading and once interviewing John Cage (KPFK Radio, Los Angeles, 1981), what most remains with me are two things. First, the legacy he consciously bore of the historical avantgardes, particularly Italian Futurism, in his insistence on simultaneity, that most noteworthy compositional virtue of these early 20th century innovators. For Cage, the inside and outside of consciousness are both one and endlessly dynamic; whether in restful quietude, or in the hurly burly of the most disquieting and violent of actions. Second, and perhaps most telling for me as a poet, is Cage's unerring desire for economy, i.e. keeping it simple in the tradition of his beloved Thoreau. The urge for clarity was never far from Cage's thinking on any subject, whether music, the visual arts, writing, or the gathering of mushrooms. As one of his New York contemporaries, pianist-com-Letizia Renzini (artist, performer) poser Thelonious Monk reminded us, "Simple ain't easy. Sylvano Bussotti (composer) Sounds intersect, they slowly interpenetrate. A landscape welds The various forms of John Cage's artwith another and the transforwork left me with infinite presences. mation takes place wherein the fulcrum is in the middle point of They do not console for his physical the fusion where both of them manifest toward the possibility absence, but in the daily practice, of of novelty. A horizon of sounds the piano keyboard for instance, in and images apt to explore the uncertain dimensions of our permy head, in my fingers and also in ception of the world. Perception of possible novelty, we are in exstasis, precisely adhering to that. Only the introduction to thought the pedals, I perceive his constant presence. I am not living any sort of detaches me from this affilialack and what always inspires thoution... thought catalogues, perght and fingers seems inexhaustible. ception adheres. Debora Petrina (musician, performer) I do not miss anything from John At the end of some concerts, people come to me intri-Cage... and I am left with a lot! His gued by the objects I lie on or I insert into the middle magic smile and his 'instructions of the piano chords, and by the odd sounds they make: for any event' follow me with unbolts, pieces of glass, rings, necklaces, lids, boxes, chichanged constancy in time. One sels, etc. They ask me how those ideas for my songs day of many years ago, Cage wancome to my mind; they are stupefied and fascinated, ted to attend the rehearsal of one and they do not know that all this was invented before of my performances. As he looked they were born, or before their parents were... Astoniat me fighting against an unexpecshment. This is what I hope I will be left with the most ted predicament which was prejufrom John Cage's sonorous experiences. It is not a precise dicing my debut, he told me: "Acciaesthetic, or a technique, but an attitude. Just like modents often are not an obstacle but an indication that changes the diving easily from a classical instrument to a toy, breaking the boundaries apart between genres and destabilizing rection." Fantastic! Once applied, it the sonorous habits, the compositional praxes. And it gave great advantages to my work and opened the way to a thousand is also what I miss the most, from Cage, which I would like to see extended to today's entire musical creation. other reveries. Merci. Claudio Lugo (composer) What I am left (and that I miss the most) from John "One day I dreamed I had composed a musi-Cage is his soundless laucal piece in which every note had to be cooked and then eaten. While we were about to play ghter. Cage is no longer here it in the hall I interrupted the rehearsals and – and he won't be forever – I cooked the notes. Then a bunch of cats and dogs ran in and they ate them all!" (J.C.) but the most amazing thing is that I will keep on hearing Here, this I miss: the chance to ask him if he remembered, in the dream, which smells or the sound of his soundless perfumes were emanated while cooking the laughter. And I'm sure that notes and if the cats and dogs had a particular predilection for diesis, flats, naturals. (Were the essence of the Unithey perhaps preferring the noise-sounds?...) This remains: an endless catalog of possible verse dwells in the sound musical wishes yet to be evaded. It seems imof his soundless laughter. possible, doesn't it?... In 1996 I made a visual poem homaging Cage: I cut out from a score sheet five pentagrams which I vertically inserted among the horizontal pentagrams of another music sheet, in order to obtain the image of a cage (a pun with his name), and behind the 'bars' so designed I inserted a feather: for 'lightness', 'grace' and silence. All with irony and a smile for having sensed that his last name might have helped him to become one of the most brilliantly free men of our epoch. You (or would gettir hold gett

That day in Paris, on the boulevard, the concert in its per-

When a person – a phenomenon, a work, anything – is

more difficult to define, this is the unequivocal sign that

this person is more alive. That he is too big to fit into

schemes, roles, static identities, specialisms. That he is

not afraid of being crossed by multiple currents. Here, it

is for this that John Cage is not only one of the greatest in-

ventors of language, but he is also and foremost a real an-

thropological prototype. Whichever label we would want

to stitch upon him will never be sufficient. Music, avant-

garde and other similar things were for him solely simple

manifestations of a global biological relationship with the

world, where everything is flowing and becoming, where

if there is something awkward it is exactly a mind that

demands to separate and catalogue. Before the connec

ted and global universe revealed it to us unequivocally,

John Cage narrated to us that the world and existence are

modeled not upon logic but upon paradoxes. We would

Franco Bolelli (philosopher, writer)

Teho Teardo (composer)

from Cage is the

capability of confron-

ting events without

taking oneself's

too seriously.

Marco Angius (conductor) transl. by Marco Angius

John Cage's artistic trajectory presents itself as a cha-

os/case engrafted onto an order/device which explo-

des the conceptual connection within the significance

inside. As long as we are imprisoned in an encoded

anguage, only choices of combination/manipulation of

notes, but not of sounds, exist. Cage startles the liste-

ner with the most unbridled creativity, transmitting a

heritage to composers and interpreters of today that

doesn't lie in the obsession of discovering something

new, but in the attempt to turn the surrounding rea-

lity, he shows us its wonders and latent ambiguities.

To make Cage current we must react to the martyrium of

the anti-music imposed by a mass-culture that worships

only media consumption dealers (even if Cage's appea-

rance on Lascia o Raddoppia quiz show demystified this

endency too) and switch to a mass Cageanism, recon-

ducting music outside history (that is, outside itself)

in order to bring it back to a really renewed listening.

Music learned to be wooed by silence, the wooing

of silence was such a luck for us listeners, with our

incessant bustle of arteries and cells in operation.

The occasion, after years scanned by mechanical ti-

cking and electronic buzz, deserves to be bookmar-

ked, makes the heart skip a beat: where is Cage? We

miss his calligraphy, his inventions. After innumera-

ble drinks we are persuaded that absolute silence

does not exist. We miss Cage as he stares at us smi-

ling, while feeding our poor minds. 1952: 4'33" does

it sound something to you? Or better: does it *not*

sound anything to you? The complexity of his scores

was born out of here: works that wouldn't interrupt

that first piece, as he used to say, If pataphysics we-

ren't sacked, we would also recall the mushroom

maven that won 5 million lire at Lascia o Raddop-

pia. It was 1959 and the musical genius of the time

was performing in front of M. Bongiorno and the tv

Elio Grasso (poet)

Aldo Nove (writer)

The wit of Cage has always been for me a source of pre-

cious vitamins for the spirit. Thanks to him, at the age of

ear to make it not an instrument of aesthetic satisfaction,

but a real gnoseologic device. I think I had comprehended

his absolute greatness ten years ago. I was listening to

Incredible, unbearable the distances from note to note.

At a certain point I heard the most beautiful cascade of

notes of my life. An unexpected, crystal-clear harmonic

sequence of sounds which I did not know. I then put the

record backwards to hear it again but it was not there.

Anymore. I was bewildered. What did I hear? Some days

later, I saw the neighbor pulling down the shutters. That

was the sound of Cage's record. The majestic symphony

of the shutters. I then realized that Cage had won forever,

"The majestic symphony of the shutters"

Mario Gamba (music critic)

It is not that the possibilities of a substantial change of

our living, in the direction of an expanded liberty now

ungraspable, are exhausted. On the contrary, the signs

of onsets and renewed desires are strong everywhere.

But as long as we felt among us, operating with envia-

ble nonchalance, a guy like John Cage, we sensed that

the actuality of revolution was a daily living subject.

If we were looking for a 'universal' road comrade, he

was at our disposal. He thought that there was no pla-

ce to go and many situations in which to act for ple-

asure and for thought unfixed to permanent centers

of gravity. How did Gilles Delezue say? We cannot be

revolutionary. Cage went much further: we practice

the more dionysiac/reflexive/playful relationships be-

cause revolutions are possible in every instant. There

is no stronghold to conquer, we must overturn with

implacable sweetness the present forms of life by spe-

I cried before his greatness.

aking startling languages.

an improbable (to me, in that moment) piece for piano.

fifteen I found out how to listen to silence, refining the

udience. Incredible, but we also miss all of this

missing

never be able to thank him enough.

What's

fect realization saved the appearances and the attraction

exerted a capture. Whoever stopped was blocked, remo-

ved from himself, projected into dispersion, without liste-

ning. Every sound was an inventory of sounds among us,

like a barricade closing the road but opening up the way.

John, what are you left with from music? Nothing, he said,

except the butterflies' colors. Instruments and voices

became superfluous, the way to Perdition, that opened

there amidst traffic, was enough. By putting at stake sen-

ses and imagination, the concert offered an accurate se-

lection of sonorous sources and physical elements, while

the composer without opera forgot why he was on stage.

Someone was blowing a horn, someone was reading from

a Webern score. John, what are you missing from mu-

sic? Everything, he answered. Including a vacation from

history. What about the Viennese 4tets? The Langsamer

Satz? Nothing, he said. The agreement with time is over.

Carlo Alberto Sitta (poet)

indeter Minacy and

while Silence

and Turning

witHout

attenTion

yEt

nEver

still li**S**tening

To

sound

with oPtimistic

nonunder**S**tanding

John Cage as tangible absence. Cage was able to harmonize con-

ceptual rigor, formal innovation

and sense of humor at once. Qua-

lities so rare that they were percei-

ved like unrepeatable a posteriori.

John Cage as persistent presence.

The aesthetic horizons unfolded by

Cage's formulated theories are so

far-reaching that even today they still

illuminate the whole contemporary

scene with unexplored possibilities.

Gianluca Becuzzi (experimental musician)

heaRd

pAying

uNdefined

Variable

circUmstances

Changing

Petra Magoni (singer)

Cage, nomen omen, by opening himself to the world ne opened the cages: constructions/constraints made of conventions, institutions, genres which separate the arts, minds, people and that, although protecting from doubts by reinforcing beliefs, castrate too many chances of encounter. Cage has left me his mind openness, his determination and his merry subversiveness, the urging need to satisfy curiosity; the extravagance not as a meaningless aesthetic research but as a coherent self-expression; the capacity to grasp presence within absence and music in everyday life, to know how to listen what is happening around by setting his own point of view at the same level of the possible others. His posing questions instead of making choices and by posing these questions, really making free choices. Of Cage I just miss Cage and all the cages that he could have opened through his very personal work mainly made of silence and of all the worlds of which silence itself is imbued

Paolo Fresu (musician)

I peer at it through the interstices of the 20th

century, between weighty silences and deep

sounds, and I reflect upon the fact that I don't

know much about it. This is why I imagine it,

What Cage left us as an artist is a line of sound

that moves across time cutting space in two,

four, multiple parts to reconstruct in galaxies

and in black holes, which are as dark as the

Cage was a meteorite. A Big Bang that has

totally twisted the yet-to-be-reconstructed

t has been a complex experience, to accept later that I

did not get anywhere. I emptied myself and this is also

positive. A great upheaval, because through exactly this

kind of effort I understood how I had buried part of my

90's (a phase of mine strongly influenced by Cage), maybe

nvoluntarily, in a brusque and inopportune way. My ide-

as remain strong and clear, but Cage's figure reminds and

compels me to make an even deeper reflection. However

I am not able to tell, to focus, to precisely clench what is

really inside the sound, clear. This is my (non)contribution

this is what is left of the 25th attempt. "John Cage was a

mirror", pianist Daniele Lombardi was right. A mirror with

a great urgency of shattering before the audience, of mel-

ding WITH the audience. The shattering and the melding

of a formidable utopian mind is what I miss the most from

Antonio Agostini (composer)

Maurizio Comandini (musicologist)

John Cage has left us sound while he has taken away

silence. We miss the sound, but we also miss the si-

lence that we know doesn't exist. But even if it doe-

sn't exist, or because of that, we miss it anyway. We

are aware that silence doesn't exist after he, John

Cage, an American, son of an inventor who has been

fiddling with submarines, which weren't yellow, told

us so. John Cage, son of a century who has elimina-

ted silence from his own life and filled it with sound.

The sound of silence. But exist, it doesn't really know

it if even doesn't exist. while silence. has left us Cage

taken has he away sound after American, that silence

doesn't aware Cage, John he, an exist so. a weren't

yellow, told which son Cage, The of us it silence. of

that, we because are We anyway. John miss has or of

an inventor son with fiddling been submarines, who

from We who has eliminated century life own his and

silence miss we the sound, but miss even too, silence

if we sound of it with sound. filled John

I try to see the music of John Cage.

looking at it rather than hearing it.

night and as bright as a comet.

contemporary.

John Cage.

Paolo Albani (poet) Numeric visualisation of John Cage's 4'33" listening time Homage to G.P. Torricelli, 2011

Antonio Caronia (professor)

Sometimes I feel my blood roaring in my ears (after a flight, or when I bend down while I'm tired). My vestibular system is frail, but it's not a disease. In these cases I get in touch with a sound of my body that's usually inaccessible, and for some minutes my proprioception is expanded. This roar, this dull and secret noise which is only mine, I call John Cage's voice. This is what John Cage left me. There is nothing I miss from him. He could "set off what is significant amid what's unavoidably or invincibly ugly", because he never confined any sound, gesture, movement or word, even the ordinary ones, to the unavoidable and invincible ugliness. When someone is able to do that, no one, never, can miss him.

Giampiero Cane (illuminist)

What could be done to increase the wit of listening and the sensitivity to sound, Cage has done and brought to an end. But a listener in music is not an interlocutor, although distant replies are real everywhere and can be ascertained. Musical dialogues are rare, they are in improvised music – of which there's not too much actually – grasping at the good will of jazz. Reality was and is different: common places, just like any chance of improvisation is englobed into a genre (off-the-cuff poets, fluxus musicians). The inescapable quality of Sun Ra's orchestra consisted in the musicians' rambling through the audience, causing 'localized' listening even if the electric keyboards, the bass and the little theatrical play in action took place on stage. Sun Ra was suggested to disperse the band among the audience by John when they participated in a festival together. There's the recording: the most silent in the history of jazz. The most neglected by the audience of jazz.

It's not only his music, though most of the times it had been excellent, that John Cage has left me, but more so the 'emptiness' he theorized and created; I'm not thinking of 'silence', which is often associated with his name, but of that emptiness stemming from a progressive redefinition of the border between music and non-music and even more between language and the creative gesture. A transcendental emptiness that can't be heard but can be 'sensed' and that inevitably repositions and redefines the 'composer''s role and lays bare the creation and performance process as the unique protagonist and bearer of values (and sounds). I also miss his ability to participate in the quiz show *Lascia o Raddoppia* as an expert mycologist when he proved to be "not just an odd character performing strange music on the stage, but a prepared scholar in deed that undoubtedly knew a lot about mushrooms! (Mike Bongiorno 1959)

I am left with a good deal of pictures of and about John Cage, which have found different ways to manifest and transform themselves throughout the years. The idea of creating and selecting images for a portrait that matched both Cage's and my memory was conceived with and upon him, an idea which I later developed with other composers. The multi-faceted, long and deep experience with John produces a continuous tidal wave, a never ceasing undertow that brings back that material in an always diverse and surprising fashion. In Cage's explicit relation between art and life, it might sound natural that even the pictures portraying him are endowed with the same vital elan and alternatively with that originality, liveliness, affability and humor which still mark his personality. Not just in the remembrance but also in its scorching actuality. What do I miss? Staying with him, the thrilling contact with such a charisma-

The first time we performed ARIA was in Rome. The program was all Cage and Luciano was at the piano. At the end all hell broke loose and after the concert there was a extremely spirited debate. I was interpreting for John who could not speak Italian well enough. So a lady got up and asked "Mr. Cage how could you allow that woman to make so many obscene noises." That woman. She was referring to me! And I had to translate that to John. I froze for a second, then I translated the question to him. He remained silent for a good while. Then he said: "There was a village, and in this village there was a beautiful girl, 16 or 17 years old. So beautiful that there was no man who did not desire her. One day, this girl went to the small lake by the village. She undressed and entered the lake completely naked, and the fishes were scared." A long silence followed. Then there was a burst of applause; everyone was expecting a more obvious ending and this story for-

Cathy Berberian (singer, Cristina Berio's archives)

what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence - what are you left and what do you miss from john cage? silence -

Federico Sanguineti (professor)

John Cage is a full artist who never posed himself too many guestions, who never asked himself what he would have had to do in order to accomplish his own targets, but he simply conceived the arts as an extension and a completion of his own existence. Anti-conventionality, negation of the ego, reference to interdisciplinarity and to multisensorial and interactive approach: these were the premises characterizing his wish to realize open containers, to create artistic structures to be joined and shared. A rationally instinctive, cleverly unpredictable creativity that guided him away from his own emotions to exalt the silent eloguence of his body and the nature in which he was moving. A dadaistic body, a Zen soul and a coherently surrealistic heart, Cage has left a special gift to our existence: the awareness of immeasurable perceptual possibilities which

Maurizio Vanni (museum director)

adieus, first an oboe and a horn, then the bassoon and the other oboe, then the other horn and the double bass, each one performing before ending – its brief solo: letting the movement fade on the violins' last bar."

Franco Buffoni (poet)

"And as in a symphony of

John Cage was for me a pair of glasses with which to see the world of music in a new way. And also to hear the sounds. He put together both the wonder of the child who is amazed for the first time by the sounds of the world, and startling intuitions upon the sense of music. In him lived the virgin candor of an unreachable naif and the depth that traspasses conventions, striking you in the heart with his being and not being within music. From his speech at the Inter-Collegiate Art in New York (1948), was musically a bluff: he some marvelous insights: "... fame, self-expression and success make music today what it is: absolutely divided, with an almost total separation among each composer fooled everybody with and a severe fracture among them and society. I don't think that a particular finished work is important... what is really valuable instead, is the ancient process of making and using music and our becoming more honest as persons by this making and this using of music."

Donella Del Monaco (singer)

In 1984 while describing

anarchy John Cage wrote

me: "There are many re-

asons why I am devoted

to the avantgarde and

this political one is one of

them. Another is its close

relation to the invention."

I am left with a future of

Gabriele Bonomo (musicologist)

My friend John Cage

his eternal smile.

Gino Di Maggio (art critic)

To answer in personal terms the question about what remains and what is now missing from John Cage's oeuvre, when confronted with a poetics that imposed factual limits to subjective intention, might be inappropriate. Would it therefore prejudice the very comprehension of his work, if we were not able to perceive it within its pertinent 'experiential' horizon? The apocryphal title of an Italian book by Cage – a vestige of one of his not infrequent travels within our borders - suggests not only a metaphorical answer: After me, silence (?). Within the potentiality of an aesthetic device able to eradicate all the conventions of musical communication, silence for Cage was not only the paradigm to formulate a degré zero de l'écriture, but it represented a mandatory semantic inversion in order to force music to interrogate itself about its gneoseologic horizon. The persistence of this question constitutes the inexhaustible heritage of the work of John Cage.

John Cage taught me: That waitings can be magical, when lived without anxiety That what is in the background, out-of-focus, can hide an unsuspected beauty, sometimes superior to what is in the foreground That to live the Landscape (that is, art, life, love) we must plunge into it (In a Landscape), not stare at it from the outside That to understand the others we must abandon our point of view and want and know and find and obtain the others' point of view That to love the piano it is also useful to transform it into something else, to perceive its structure by diverted, filtered sonorities to discover the richness of the natural harmonic sounds of the piano That to play in the correct time, you must create it, not follow it That to play a fortissimo first of all you must know how to play silence That to play fast and clear first of all you must sense the space between sounds before

That to discover and listen to and communicate music

Roberto Prosseda (pianist)

you must know how to listen to yourself first.

Piera Mattei (poetess)

Cage brings me back in time to a concert of his, in which among the other sounds there was the song of a bird in a cage, Cage and the bird in the cage. Those were distant times, in every sense.

But maybe it's just a dream.

I met Cage in 1964, at La Fenice Theater in Venice, during a Merce Cunningham performance. In those days, inside a private apartment, a concert of Rubin de Cervin was taking place and I was among the performers of the work together with Mario Bortolotto and others. It was a reunion for few guests: Cage, guest of honor, arrived late. The performance was repaid in the end by the compliments that the American master addressed to each of us, also to me who I had gladly played the wrong keys. But just this, I thought, was the most Cagean trait. What startled me was his old spinster face, so astonishing for a sulfurous character like him. What calmed me though was the fact that in the middle of summer, he was wearing a pair of suede boots without socks. Then I remembered that Joyce never forgot that he was born Irish and Catholic, while Freud cultivated good Viennese manners for life, and Pirandello, Sicilian from Girgenti, never touched the beloved Marta Abba. Old avant-garde timers.

Mauro Cardi (composer)

Emilio Isgrò (artist)

It might be obvious saying it, but what we miss above all about John Cage is the irony and that kind of boldness, almost childish unconsciousness, of who, by experimenting with everything and in all genres – speaking of music only - managed to do it always with utmost lightness and infinite grace, even when his oeuvre appeared provocative or iconoclastic. What is left of Cage is that part of his catalog which is based more specifically on the musical doings, first of all the works dedicated to percussions or piano, while those more abstract experimentation efforts, for which an historical interest survives due to the cultural stirring they contained, inevitably fade by the passing of time, at least from a concert point of view.

Roberto Fabbriciani (musician)

I am left with John Cage's thought, art and music and

what I miss is that subtle kindness accompanied by a

unique smile that was more expressive than words.

I recall with vivid emotion the first execution of Two that

took place at Carnagie Hall in New York, in April 1987 and

again at Den Haag's festival, where they even curated a

nushroom exhibition to homage him. I would also like to

remember a cozy episode on the occasion of one of my

birthdays: I received from him a letter containing a Me-

sostic of my name. We're left with a lot of well and lesser

known music, his provocations, his ideas that mined ou

formal culture and that accompanied us over a path of

great innovation. Last time I saw him was in Florence, in

1992, during a concert. The Cherubini Conservatory hall

was filled with an heterogeneous audience who was wit-

nessing the popularity and fame of this great personality,

a landmark for thought and music of the 20th century.

John Cage. The unbearable sensoriality of being

perience in the world. It seems a lot to me.

an avantgarde idea, and I miss his inventions. What I'm missing: nothing. What he left me: the questioning of the western (imperialist) culture's presumption of exhausting the totality (by means of the 'work of art') of the human ex-

Roberto Masotti (photographer, artist)

tic figure and, by reflex, the relentless thrush to delve.

ced them to think. It was amazing.

Renato Marengo (journalist, producer)

Whether it is chance or the author

ves the need of each one of them and the need of their relationship. Just as for an actor, words for a vocalist are like writing a drama in which life, memory and visions enter. Between sounds and between

words will take place that dance of ideas, images and thought to enliven with silence where the ganglions of the novel unravel. This is what John taught me: that by freeing the music from ego, its most intimate humanity can be found.

at 9 pm, I will suspend any activity I would be then performing and, in silence, I will listen to the sound of

whichever space I will be in for the duration of 4'33."

listen to the street.'

who writes the sounds that have to be sung, we must find in oursel-

rimentator, summarized his thought.

The one thousand number of characters in which I am asked to enclose my reflections upon John Cage, coinci-Homage to John Cage des with the event that enabled me to meet the eclectic American musician in May 1984, Turin, for an interview: an unusual concert for a thousand childish voices set up "On August 29th 2012 in the outskirts of the city. The dialogue took place in a hotel, sipping macrobiotic tea prepared by him. I am left with the memory of a nice and simple man, and of extraordinary humanity. A man able to explain his idea of music without technicality or conceptual puzzles. The 'collector of noises' moved and talked with the transparency of normality and the serenity of awareness: a genial Master who refused such a definition of himself. The news of his death left me with a feeling of dismay and emptiness, soothed

Maurizio Spatola (artist)

by the flash of his answer to my question about his source

of inspiration: "In New York, I live on the corner of 28th

and 5th avenue: I do not need anything else. I just have to

I had the pleasure to meet John Cage in Milan (1977) with Demetrio Stratos & Area. I immediately familiarized with him asking questions on what his idea of music was. He replied talking about mushrooms. We were there for his Empty Words concert at Teatro Lirico. Gianni Sassi, who loved contaminations, wanted to bring Cage into the young rock generation. I recall the chat with Franco Battiato before the show: "It's wrong, they won't understand anything. These guys belong to the rock generation, they're not ready for Cage's choices!" John on stage, sitting in front of a desk, reading Thoreau's journal. In the back, the words he wrote were projected on a luminous board. The audience bore it for 15 minutes, passing from uneasiness to insults, screams and whistles up to rage, ending in a stage invasion and an aggression attempt. recall Demetrio with his bold figure blocking the most

Ivan Fedele (composer)

Francesca Della Monica (singer)

aggressive guys and a firm speech of Mario Marenco. Cage calmly: "There was a feeling with the audience.

"New music, new instruments." This is how John Cage, often considered just an eccentric though brilliant expe-

"New music" for Cage meant emancipating from the romantic drift of directional composing, that is deciding to not decide. This means, also, not imposing listening but setting oneself to listen to what would manifest as music. Surely a difficult attitude to conceive if educated into logic grids that leave nothing to chance. "New instruments" signify instead the anodic usage of traditional instruments, the invention of new ones and also the musical usage of objects usually used for other purposes. But they were above all conceptual instruments: like the I-Ching, like the observation and the listening of silence,

Giulia Niccolai (poetess)

(translation by Gillian Ania)

or the reversal of the relation between music and listethe opposite, as it typically happens. Personally, today, I feel very close to these instances.

Versions they Were of bodies and signs Brilliant game of Heraklitos the obscure Allusions And never gratuitous For kabbalahs Troubling and cliques of all sorts Whether studied Recycled unhinged up and down His name a trap a framEwork a friendly smile Deeply contemplated paths yet trickster's delight Erring discourse Anxious groping Deviously poetrarchItecting pseudocreations Wanting to have fuN but ever saying otherwise Recasting phemes and themes and memes The truth an aside it was clear and echo Of a refrain of drumS and pipes often sad Unflinchingly desceNds into the self the gods A threat to sophists geOmeters Manichean antiheroes Unfathomably mulTifarious and prolific In/famous Text of his poetics To minds a cHallenge and to knowledge He Orpheus HermEs and Prometheus He ever the orAcle the sphinx The emptiness that Bends feeble certainties As we will Surely gather up in his trail Diasporic agnostics mEsostics prognoses Matrixes couNterfactuals

Even the Cartographies

Of John CagE the chameleon

Peter Carravetta (professor) transl. by Peter Carravetta

I was lucky enough to spend a weekend side by side with John Cage. I had just graduated with a thesis on aesthetics of his oeuvre and I was asked by Quaderni Perugini di Musica Contemporanea to be in charge of the press releases for a festival in his honor to which he assisted. What I miss and what I am left with from Cage is meaningfully tied to that emotional situation, celebrated two months before his death. I miss his laughter: uncontrollable, joyous, contagious

and sincere. A concrete metaphor of a Zen attitude and a kind spirit. I am left with the poetic lesson of tolerance towards everything, even the most annoying, uncomfortable and less acceptable one. The unexhausted will to usher in revolutions that were intentionally ordinary. quiet, tranquil. A man of an unconditioned opening, giving his total attention towards things, beings and sounds, his muffled fibrillations morphed, despite himself, into violent earthquakes.

Valerio Corzani (journalist, musician)

Maria Grazia Calandrone (poetess, journalist)

The listening of Cage's opus recalls The phantom of liberty by Buñuel when the elegant guests together perform the private function of freeing their intestinal content. Cage also made fun of the soul's passivity: he shoved the wedge of laughter into the habits' round timber. But this is the epidermis. The feeling that pertains to vital organs is that Cage sneaks stardust in the tilled domesticity. Bodies leaven with paradoxical sweetness: all spins around in the planetary darkness by the tuning of impossible instruments, sinking a sidereal thunder in the kitchen. The art of morphing daylife into art says that Cage was haunted by sounds of which he recognized the relations. Among pans and stars. Between the form of the human heart and the newspaper's rustle. But all the rituals are not yet mined, we're still waiting for freedom operators. We miss Cage's mockery, paradoxical mystic of liberty, that is: the autonomy from the need to be liked by the world, a maximum and human no man's land.

1968, a year with a frown and deprived of eros in which even mystification seemed necessary, did not stimulate to construct aeolian harps. It was at this time that I star ted to work on Cage's Cartridge Music: one of the less studied but most valid works of the composer, the firs piece to free music from secular prejudices. By finding e Levante por el Poniente for the sake of Cage, I stumble upon the Abruzzese guitar, a loom whose metal wires cut a pasta also loved by the fans of the New – nostalgi and gentle - forgetful of the ancient rags, of the ancient discipline. In the hunt for sounds not audible otherwi se (Cage), I subjected the object to electronic vexation unknown to the Abruzzesi housewives and unable t offer me an 'Auditorium-like' sonority. One day - for Os sian? For Goethe? - for sure homaging Cage, I exposed the object to the wind, on the balcony. An extraordinary emotion: thanks to an exaggerated amplification, I real ly obtained the first aeolian sounds of the New Music.

Mario Bertoncini (composer)

Are there any artists who, besides their behavior, also in their oeuvre possess the stigmata of the total anarchist? Yes, there is. His name is John Cage, multimedia artist and performer, carrier of a philosophical and musical thought. Instigator of new forms, moving from visual art to dance. First, for him there is no gap between art and life, sound and noise, projects and randomness, deputed instruments and daily objects. He developed a type of 'total artist' poetry in which the creative method is synchronic to that of an existence which does not recognize any cultural, political, media and social authority. Creation is for Cage a sort of gentle and quiet tsunami. The smile of the Jocund constitutes the subte theatrical aspect with which Cage imposed

a Socratic pedagogy upon art, in which fru-

ition implies the movement of interactivity. \vec{a}

As I believe that music, besides taking us to seventh heaven (whenever it is good), also possesses both uncouth features, as Kant rightly pointed out regarding its ambient invasiveness, and constrictive features, at least on public concerts' occasions, I perceive Cage like a brother not only because I love certain works of his (right now I'm feeling particularly close to non-avantgardish pieces as "Experiences II" for voice, the "Sonatas and Interludes", "The Seasons", etc.), but also because he, according to Richard Kostelanetz's testimony, didn't bear the idea of concert halls devoid of easy exits for those who wanted to go away. For Cage, "an imprisoned audience, compelled to pay attention, it is an intolerable thing, either in the arts or in everyday life." I would say that what I miss from Cage instead, having met him many times, is his persona, his smile and his pleasant and always prompt attitude to humor.

Giancarlo Cardini (pianist

Antonio Spagnuolo (poet)

How do we rediscover the emotion of a music that can remove the pathos amidst immortal melodic notes and the worship of philosophy concealed between the staves, when the flow of unpredictable and fascinating harmonies, within the emptiness of a structure, is missing? The wish of kindling an intimate sensitivity in the creative inkling, in the natural imitation's indeterminacy, between listening and the freeing of refusal. I recall his exaltation in the literate tradition, poetry that smashes and enlivens during the assiduous repeating of the rhythm, pure music which draws the problem of the pictorial figures, where the work itself finds the values of sound, duration, beat, volume, and of the impossible polyphonies generated by diverse instruments. The sounds of body, heart, muscles, blood, inside the divine influences of the mind, which produce music within the evocative effects of the wait. Every suspension is the sign, it was the sign of a concert that knew how to give up vanity.

Alessandra Celletti (pianist)

Playing the piano and fyling on a glider I found out that silence can have a thousand nuances. Moving in the wind, just like a pause between two sounds, is never absolute silence, but the outcome of thousands of vibrations. This is the thought that makes me feel closest to John Cage. His revolutionary score 4'33" (which Cage himself defined as his best work) is a demonstration not only of his sophisticated humor, but also of the depth and the boldness of his poetry. A pianist enters the stage with his concert suit, he sits at the piano and for 4 minutes and 33 seconds stays still, listening to the background noises in the hall. Silence, here on this earth, does not exist and the execution of the 'non-sound' fills up with con tents and poetry and also with the bravery of the 'unsaid'. It might seem a paradox, but John Cage's silence is exactly what is missing. That mysterious and fantastic silence which cradles the sound that follows and the one that preceeds it...

New York, 1987. I was 25 and 25 years have passed since hen. I remember the play of lights and shadows, which were cutting across the large living room where he welcomed us, and were going through various planes and illuminating the dark wood kitchen. The sound of the avenue and then f the city crawled through the window. John Cage moved a little bit, not to close it but to open it. I recall him putg his glasses on and off, in the focal equilibrium between e sheets and the faces to be observed. A world that was rn out of an open window. I'm left with a drawing on ugh paper, created by a pencil tracing four stones laid on e sheet, the dedication "to Roberto and Isabella." Peru-1992. John Cage was presenting "Simplicity and Chaos." ne was about to be born. The line "Everything will be od", the caress on my belly shortly after: I recall them. A eeting that was an indication for the world and a window me. What it was, is. Everything is left, nothing is missing.

sabella Bordoni (artist, performer)

We were children: on TV, in the afternoon, there was a pianist with a mustache (Bruno Canino), and some bolts among the strings, who was playing Amores. Later, still in Milan, at Teatro Lirico, a pamphlet was distributed outside: "John Cage is not merchandise", there was agitation. Inside a pandemonium took place. Empty Words, a cataclysm, I never saw anything like that. Later, towards the end, I met him. It was 1990: he was still inventing ("anarchic harmony", variable intonation). We spoke, as if we had always known each other, of future projects, of various and new enthusiasms. The curiosity, the talking, ended up invariably about the past but – here, Cage had the gift of making his most known and repeated ideas (about sound, chance, silence...), seem fresh, adding new aspects and implications that were questions in the end. He said that was his duty

one who, replacing him, is SO good at asking engaging questions.

Cagesagram (42) SOOD DECEMBER 191000000000 determined

anyway: to pose engaging questions.

This is what we miss and need: some-

Yes, Cage is a classic. His art is certainly provoking, bewildering, deriding. But it is also an art, after decades of hectic pan-tonal chromatism, abstract structuralism, neoclassic reactions and more or less informal sonorous orgies, that draws the attention on the unsaid, the unhearable, posing urgent and eternal questions again about the function of art, about the dynamics regulating the artistic fruition. In this regard, Cage is really Duchamp's twin. Or, furthermore, a Socrates of modern times and the new continent. His music, his questions and his witty mildness will be with us for yet a

long time.

"Borders" transl. by Piero Dossena

Cage's poetics is unique, revolutionary, and (inadvertently) perennially actual. Cage's musical sensibility was constantly directed towards the boundaries of what common sense defines as music. His curiosity was entirely focused on whatever could enlarge the perimeter of sound objects, thus making the listeners aware of all the events that constantly fill the aural space around us. The performer has to face his human before than technical limits. He must not challenge arduous difficulties to show his instrumental skills; Cage forces to recognize and accept his physical and mental borders. The player is compelled to go beyond any pretentiously exact (which exactness?) reprod of the score. Instead, he has to attempt approaching a real understanding of the object concealed behind the symbolism of the notation. Like in a Zen parable, describing what is *found* over this frontier is not easy - nor is it good. A truer understanding can only be achieved through a direct listening experience.

What do I most remember about John Cage? His smile. Marzio Venuti Mazzi (guitarist) transl. by Marzio Venuti Mazzi I was just a little girl, hanging out at the Darmstadt Festival with my parents. Since I was the only child there I hung out with my parent's friends - Boulez, Stockhausen, Pousseur, Earl Brown. John Cage and a few others, but they were al-ways busy discussing music, so I was bored. I'll never forget the day when in the middle of one of those heated discus- $00110011 \overset{1}{0}11110111001000100000011110010110111101110$ 10110110<mark>00110110000100</mark>000011<mark>10100011010000</mark>11011110 10011001100110010001000100000011011110110011000100 0000111001101101001011011000110010101101110011000101000011<mark>0100101101110</mark>0110011<mark>1001000000111</mark>010001101

What I miss from John Cage is the strong, aggregating and reassuring presence of a character of such grandeur, in an epoch – while many masters are passing away one by one – that seems to be more and more devoid of solid centers of gravity and remarkable reference points. What he left me is a copy – which time has randomly speckled with yellow and ochre spots of Silenzio (Feltrinelli, 1971), that I bought when I was not more than a boy, and particularly a phrase that struck me so much that I made a 3D work or of it (a 'box' containing a map of Earth covered wit colored pins to geographically mark my main contacts within the mail art circle); a prophetic and re presentative concept of a fundamental guideline for the arts of the third millennium, following my opinio that: "Art is not the outcome of a single person, but it's a process put in motion by a group of people.

Vittore Baroni (musicologist, artist)

I was immediately overcome by John Cage's sense of humor and inventiveness – incorregible enfant terrible de l'art, he soon surpassed the dodecaphonic serial technique to emancipate himself from every past experience. I'd like to recall two works of his. With First construction in metal (1939) he used teacups, rims, tin cans and many other unconventional objects as percussion instruments. The adoption of chance and random techniques would also lead him to take interest in the I-Ching and Zen. Music of Changes (1951) is inspired by the I-Ching – the "Book of Changes". The following year he 'composed' 4'33": four minutes and 33 seconds, 273 seconds that is, absolute zero. Minus 273°. The work is paradoxical: it has a theatrical character rather than a musical one since it consists in *not* playing any instrument. Is it maybe a homage to the Zen proverb to do is not to do? Or is it because he knows that silence is an intrinsic element of the musical polarity of silence/sound?

Arturo Schwarz (poet, art critic)

Davide Sparti (philosopher) transl. by Davide Sparti The rejection of the attachment to the written score, the ability to free the concept of musical writing from conventional notation; the sound experiments that defy the tonal scale; the fusion of sound and gesture, hence the uniqueness of perfomance; the collaborations with Merce Cunningham, the chess games with Marcel Duchamp, the poetry lectures with Sun Ra. In a nutshell, Cage's belief that the whole realm of sound is potentially musical. Music doesn't coincide with the controlled production of a bounded work of art, it recalls instead a way of exposing oneself to those sounds we are always already surrounded by. During an interview, Cage offered some (whole wheat) bread and tea to his guests. After serving tea, he left the kettle on the stove. As the interview went on, the photographer pointed out that the kettle was still whistling. "Oh, I

know" Cage replied. For the whole duration of the

interview, he let this slight blow waft through the air.

What I miss and what at the same time I am left with from this extraordinary man and great musician, is the curiosity and opening toward an always new and in a continuous creative movement musical thought An 'high' thought tree (in rigor) trom the schemes that this society now imposes on every artistic level.

Gian Paolo Tofani (musician)

Of John Cage I am left with an exquisite taste of an encounter with a great artist and an extraordinary man. What I miss from him is his wish and his ability to constantly move within unusual creative dimensions loaded with incredible emotions, capable to sweep away mediocrity and bana-lity that still pervades men and aspects of contemporary art.

Geneva, 1990 Four hundred silent people in the hall. While Cage was quietly reading aloud, I was wondering how he could bear the pauses he was imposing from word to word. Spoken words, carved out of the unspoken ones. It was my turn then to begin to read in the wake of that silence. The hard thing was to enter the applause, I couldn't go back and I didn't want to. Cage's lecture opened up space for more lectures: that's why it was possible. I understand it now, fourteen years later: it was because of him, not due to my boldness. After, at the bar, I felt a tap on my shoulder it was him repeating to me, almost whispering, though still audible in the bustle, "Thanks" and he smiled. "Thanks." Later, alone, he was looking for the hotel. Midnight. He was hesitating, left, right. Dressed in jeans (the same kind I had seen Mac Low wearing), tall, skinny, old and agile. He slowly walked on and his stride on the cobblestones of Geneva was very light, alone, all within his form, it didn't sound.

Biagio Cepollaro (poet)

Lorena Giuranna (museum curator)

Cage was able to reset to begin again. Some of his fanous works; 4'33", in 1952: the orchestra assembled and the metronome is playing, but the sonata does not commence. It is impossibility. *Etude,* in 1977: multiple musical notations on a score on the verge of impracticality. It is the idea of exhaustion as a creative process. Europera I-IX, in the 90's: each piece is an ensemble of sounds coming from different musical instruments, snippets of classical operas and noises from contemporaneity. It is the crossing of time and styles. In 1952, Cage enters the anechoic chamber: alone and isolated from s in touch with his 'inner ear' that forces him to listen to the sound of his own organic flows.

It is purposelessness. From this moment on the passage

to the aesthetic of chance becomes brief and obligatory.

opposing directions, until they lost their encoded iden-

tity as notes. Since then, the liberation had happened.

sion. John stood up, walked up to me smiling and asked: "Would you like to go for a walk in the forest? I can teach you everything about mushrooms." I couldn't believe my ears! He held my hand gently as we ventured deep into the woods where he lectured me about every mushroom we encountered. I was ecstatic, but kept wondering why he had left his colleagues to go mushroom hunting with me. Years later I understood: that's who John was, always in the noment. Smiling. Quietly noticing everything. I miss John, and to me he will always be like a kind, unusual, Zen uncle with a beautiful smile. Cristina Berio (percussionist, dubbing supervisor) Gigliola Nocera (professor of American-English language and literature) "What did John Cage leave you?" A vision of the artistic

experience as a revolutionary experience lived out of any possible kind of canon and at the same time, never disconnected from real life. For example: noise, which becomes one of the many possible sounds, or randomness, hence the everyday, which rightly enters the artist's creation. "What do you miss from him?" His (as well as his partner Merce Cunningham's) capability to look beyond the boundaries of the single artistic expression. For instance: the intuition of splitting, like never before, dance, therefore choreography, from music considered as the soundtrack Or the ability to create a score, that is a sonorous alphabet which is able to translate from other natural or artistic alphabets. For example: the drawings extracted from Henry David Thoreau's journal, as well as the stellar maps of the astral sky which become notes. It is what is nowadays called transcodification.

ham described his *Conversing with* Cage in the book "Lettera ad uno sconosciuto" that our Edizioni Socrates published: "Conversing with John Cage was talking with and listening to a person whose agile mind continually sprouted fresh possibilities. One day he looked up from his work

on a new musical composition and, smi-

ling, said "It's hard to have a new idea. But

What I am left from John Cage is the

statement with which Merce Cunning-

I think I've found one"." Louise Read (publisher)

met Cage in various occasions, first in Milan at Pirelli's cultural centre, invited by Gino Negri in the 50's. Then later in Rome, at the Eliseo Theater: then some years later in Milan again, at the Lirico Theater, during an animated, nisunderstood and impolitely disturbed performance of his. In all these situations I admired the coherence, the imagination, the liberty and the loyalty to the aleatoric principles of the great John Cage. During the period of maximum agitation in DARMSTAD – protagonists BOULEZ, STOCKHAUSEN, MADERNA, BERIO, NONO – who letely left the movement, and many other musicians. We were in a post WEBERNIAN extreme rationalism, an extreme and hyper-cerebral radicalism applied to all the parameters of sound. Cage arrived and disrupted everyone and everything, putting back on the table chance, randomness and a diverse role of the composer towards music. Now it is history and John Cage is one of its great innovators. He introduced doubt before certainty.

Giorgio Gaslini (composer, pianist)

Tania Lorandi (artist) Insecte en cage

I'm asked of John Cage. I think he has been a revolutionary who contributed to put Contemporary Music back on a historically acceptable path, once and for all closing the absurd and sometimes amateurish attempts of a historical phase marked by meaningless experimentation.

For someone like me, who

Ennio Morricone (composer)

seeks lost words, the music of Cage is a superior essence, the sound of another space. As the 'ancient home of language' is lost, there was no other way that finding a place elsewhere. Cage captured the breath of time with an eye of light. Thinking of something else, thinking otherwise, this is what he left me, this is what I must 'never' forget.

Paraphrasing Benedetto Croce (Why we cannot not call ourselves Christians), it could be said that composers who were born around or after WWII cannot not call themselves Cagean – even if they are not openly so and/ or aware. This holds true for me as well, and I am surenot Cagean. I met Cage twice, the first time in Palermo in 1968, though I discussed about him already in 1964/65 in Karl Schiske's compositional class in Vienna. One of my Bagatelles sans et avec tonalité is entitled C.A.G.E. and it features an improvisation upon the four notes contained in his name (C-A-G-E). Two minor thirds, an interval which is dear and familiar to me, also because it is inside my name (luCA) and because it is the interval with which the song Buongiorno Ro', composed by my father after the verses of Salvatore Di Giacomo, begins. That tune was the way we used to call each other in the house. A coincidence? Sure. Aren't we talking about Cage?

Luca Lombardi (composer)

The presence of John Cage resonates in the Roman house of Giacinto Scelsi. Via di San Teodoro 8: the sense of what is left of his passage moves from here and through the Campidoglio and the Circo Massimo, in perfect autonomy of sounds and their infinite possible encounters. Sounds stay within music to realize the silence separating them. Does Scelsi exist? Does Cage exist? I imagine what more abstract may exist in an already intangible, immaterial

undscape deprived of contradictions. Within sound, in its centrality, relations, sentiments, catastrophes move. The twentieth century freed sound from note, so Scelsi, Cage – for those who understand – exist, to sober and quiet the mind, thus making it susceptible to divine influences...

Nicola Sani (composer)

From the meeting I had with John Cage in Milan, 1980, I remember the sound of his laughter, similar to the treading on leaves in the woods, during the fall. Actually, I don't miss it, because I can always find in autumn, a wood, though small it may be, where the leaves have been falling for a couple of weeks, hiding some mushrooms beneath. Even the letters he sent me might do the job thanks to the flimsy paper that if crumpled could sound that way: it may be an idea for when it's not autumn. Some years after that encounter I wrote a piece for piano dedicated to him (Finnegans Wake thunderclaps, for 2 pianos and one performer), by means of ping-pong balls dropped over the piano. Thinking about it now, it might have been better using some leaves, gathered from a wood, in the fall.

All that remains of John Cage coincides exactly with what is lacking (and what I miss) in this epoch. I could say that I miss his Utopian vision, the enlightening multiplicity of his interests, his way of being out of any system and the belief that only through experimentation (a forbidden word in times of 'efficiency', 'professionalism', 'product', 'image') some sort of poetic and worthy result can be obtained. Above all, I miss his ethics example. Because I think that this is the to-be-retrieved value within the arts if we still want to believe in the Utopia effort. Cage's ethic messages might be a breath of fresh air both for running away from the castrating swamp of aesthetics, style and 'careerism' and for regaining the purity of artistic gesture as a need to relate with our own time and place.

Gianni Lenoci (pianist)

Marco Lenzi (composer, musicologist)

I believe that the deepest meaning of John Cage's oeuvre lies in the very famous words that Schönberg said about him: "He's not a composer, but an inventor of genius." Many years later, Cage replied to Daniel Charles' question upon what he thought he had invented, this way: "Music (not composition)." What Cage did was exactly this: showing how it is possible to write music without being a composer, without possessing any feeling for harmony, without being able – according to his own words – to keep in mind or reproduce the simplest melody Only a blind faith and an immense love could have brought a man not to desist, to insist "on hitting his head on the w<mark>al</mark>l of harmony for the rest of his life." Cage did what no one would have ever been able to do: to go through the needle's eye. And by doing this – like any other inventor of genius – he would discover new and extraordinary aural worlds: not to be composed, but to be heard.

Bruno Dorella (musician) The most effective way to say what I am left with fron

John Cage would be an empty space, which is also the est way to say what I miss from John Cage. What I am left with from JC is: What I miss from JC is: But it is not so easy. It is not meaningful and, frankly, ba-

Let's try to do better. The hefty role of randomness and performance, of mathematics, of eastern philosophies up to the I-Ching, the prepared piano, the indeterminism, the aleatoric factor? What I am left by JC is: eg zjkebcjdiempe jrbfhi3cdk2e xjk

What I miss from JC is: x euibcu b4 i0o4n89nc nroncnc3o Even less meaningful, even more banal. Is it possible that only theory remains? I listen again to

the JC material I own. There is some astonishing music. This is something we almost never remember.

Riccardo Vaglini (composer)

Yes, from Cage I am left with a memory of a summer in Darmstadt, outside the Orangerie, and then I think in the sultry and muggy cafeteria. I have a better memory of the Orangerie because after the concert it seemed like two wings formed: he was in one of them, slanting a bit like Pisa's leaning tower, with his jeans attire and a strange smile; in the other, like in capture-the-flag game, we, junge Komponisten, would momentarily leave to get a handshake from him, perhaps being careful not to shake (it) too much because he gave the impression to be, as it were, friable. Nevertheless, I wonder why, I did not go. Maybe I put myself in his 'still fetish' shoes, waiting to be touched to bestow grace. For sure, the others might have really received from his hands some sort of electricity or wisdom and maybe some crumbs would have been left for me as well. I could be a little bit different today, surely better, even a renown composer, like those who find a free ticket when they go to concerts.

first met the master through his works during my piano studies in 1972, then personally on the occasion of my Milan forays inside the Cramps Records offices. A forge of creative artists who proposed the most revolutionary and innovative ideas upon musical language and art ir general. Each one of us, in our own way, were pupils of Cage who mesmerized us with his thought and his philosophy. If I go back to those years with my mind, I realize that many of us fed on his art and emulated his spirit. Needless to say that I still live in his archetype, where life seems not to cease but move in a continuous flow between good and evil, presence and absence, because our existence resolves in the variables of cause-effect rapport. Therefore even silence is music and pause is sound rather than random noise. In the most banal synthesis

Alfredo Tisocco (musician)

of his thought, I found the gist of musical composition

Massimiliano Viel (composer, sound designer)

Among the many things that Cage taught me perhaps the most important one is that music is not made out of pen and paper, or numbers, visions and stories. Not only, at least. Music is rather a matter of ears and it is created by those who write and play it, but also and above all by those who listen to it. To listen is then an activity that far from being a passive reception of intuitions and interpretations which fall from the lofty music professionals, it is a creative activity and as Cage showed us with his work, always open, curious, joyful, anarchic and, I would also say, responsible. The development of the individual as a musical being therefore passes through the imperative of listening as a continuous and adventurous discovery of the universe of which we are part that it is formed from silence, and it unravel as tweaked tools, compositional techniques and scores like

«visualize time / time / and slide / slide / in random silences / with great consideration of eastern mystics / musicians / headlights of generations / ions of conditioning matter and perfumes of souls / of philosophers in glory / of intellecual priests operatively in tight rapport / celebrity out of controlthey would have played on the composer / as the dancing rabbit plays upon a mushroom hat / scrambled at length by dance steps / and eventually grated like a truffle in the imaginary landscape / that is worth an escape / a taste / they say / cruel and occasional / transversal.....

ting at last / the finale of the game»

What I am left with from Cage is not

really important; reconducting his unmanning poetry to an individualistic outlook is a contradiction. The things that he left us – even to tho-

coming of sounds to bulge out. Sound

goes to the musician who evoked it, as

Renzo Cresti (musicologist)

se who do not realize it – are many. I wrote 10 aspects on 10 sheets and I randomly picked two of them: The sounds of Cage protrude, they are called by the musician in a quivering wait. To await is to be in a state of grace, the only way that allows for the wel-

Arrigo Lora-Totino (verbo-visual poet)

the leaves follow the wind, in a rediscovered enchantment. The artistic thought of Cage philosophizes beyond, it is a further knowledge, because art is an extraordinary sign which leads to a plurality of dimensions, creating a particular art/world lationship. It is a sort of (f)act that

greatly resembles the ritual of religio. Cage listens to the sound *happening*, to its being this way.

Giancarlo Schiaffini (musician)

I know three faces of John Cage. The first belongs to the 'romantic' period of the 30's/40's when he intentionally pursued expressive aims, obtaining them perfectly, by the way. The second is the uncertain one, of 4'33", of Zen, while the third is the abstract one, when he reconstructed by means o sounds the deep meaning of silence. I was lucky to work with Cage2 and Cage3 in the 70's for a sort of happening in Rome and in 1990 when I was in Erlangen for the first execution of Seven². The formal outcome was very different, but the Dada-Zen idea of the Cage, who has always explored the pos sibility of expression, was very strong in both cases. Cage says that "if any event happens, it makes sense anyway, due to the fact that it took place" and that it tends to the natural sound indeterminacy against the rigid belief of music as a totally organihe were not so deeply rooted in us.

Armando Adolgiso (writer, director)

Cage was born in 1912 (2456 in the buddist calendar) he was musician, mycologist and Orientalist. His father invented a ty projection device, a cough medicine and, precisely in 1912, a gas submarine that, due to the bubbles rising to the surface, couldn't be used during WWI "Before that," Cage said "he theorized how the univer se worked, which he termed electrostatic field theory." Schönberg said about John Cage: "He's not a compo-

ser but an inventor, of genius." He brilliantly discovered in fact that in the noisy 20th century, making art essentially is living knowing how to listen. You see, his silent finesse, so rarely practiced today, is the thing I miss the most. Cage left me with a striking statement: "What a musician really needs is not a computer to work less, but rather one that increases what must be done."

I value John Cage as a fundamental point of reference, for the radicalism and depth of thought, for the rigor and, why not, for his sense of humor, so lacking among the composers of the twentieth century. If the domination upon matter has always been the aim of whom writes music, he, on the contrary, worked to free sounds from the will of the authors themselves, obtaining groundbreaking results. In an epoch during which everyone tried the right way to compose, Cage jeopardized the sense itself of the musical/ sonorous manipulation. After him, western music was not the same any longer: it had to deal with his dice and his blenders. Cage was for music what Duchamp symbolized for visual art, resetting, as a matter of fact, the cultural and

sider it part of my DNA. Patrizio Fariselli (pianist)

> that can go together/without knowing what the result will be/anything causes any other thing/I have no idea of how all this happens/living the whole world not just separate fragments of it/the world doesn't become it moves it changes/each one of us is the center of the world without being an I/I try not to refuse anything it is a way to open up to the absence of will/the possibility of seeing anything happen/the nothing is in all things so inside me as well/what counts is what happens/the meaning is the use/since everything speaks for itself already why communicate/to communicate is always to impose something/whereas during conversation nothing is imposed/things must enter us/leaving things the freedom to be what they are in order to let everything happen/not suppressing possibilities but multiplying them/

© creative (s) (s) (=) What has Cage left me? The famous evening of December 2 1977. I was 20 when I attended the concert-performance that John tried to realize at the Teatro Lirico in Milan. He tried because he would be interrupted every ten minutes by continuous provocations, like 'urban guerrilla', made by members of the Movimento who were expecting a pop concert instead of an experiment. Cage wasn't fazed by all that and transformed every disturbance into a musical event. Few of us grasped it but from that situation I understood his grandeur. The day after I was lucky enough to join a meeting between Cage and Demetrio Stratos during which they settled down

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[dia•foria + Cramps Records

Gian Ruggero Manzoni (artist, writer)

What has John Cage left me? Silence, noi-

se, buzz. The wait for something lurking or

that maybe had already happened, unno-

ticed. The tinkling of a piano on its way to

be dismantled in Les Halles. It was 1970,

cert I went to a party at Rue D'Assas. There

was him, Teeny Duchamp and other unk-

nown guests. I was just a beginner. I didn't

know anything about Futurism, or Russolo.

I knew The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The

Animals, The Kinks, The Yardbirds. But Cage

inspired me. He seemed a cool guy. Someo-

ne who mixed things up. The circus, the re-

volution, the improvisation. Anyone could

jump in. Anyone could be a musician. I know

Guido Zaccagnini (professor, musicologist)

miss Cage's face, his expressions, his movements. They

vere, unequivocally, never compliant and, least of all,

never winking. Light was his gesture, affable, apparently

nnocuous: until after verifying the incalculable conse-

quences. He could show himself serious, focused, untou-

arge mouth, but in a very silent way. Few times in my life,

erhaps never, have I found in one person such a blend of

sweetness and intellectual ferocity. Cage was – or knew

to be - wholesomely cruel. I am left with his lesson, de-

time. Cage taught me that everything can be, or become,

music: besides forms, genres, styles, epochs, instruments,

environments, codes. I owe him, since I stumbled upon

his thought (and I owe this to Mario Carresi, Boris Po-

rena, Aldo Clementi and Mario Bortolotto), the fact that

I have done everything possible not to let my ears age.

One day John Cage went to the United Nations with

a tape recorder and stepped into an elevator where

cisive among the many I was imparted in the course of

able: or he could begin laughing all of a sudden, with a

Paris. I was 19. Nevertheless after the con-

their future collaborations. I was with Adriano Spatola.

poet and performer, friend of Stratos. Spatola was one

of the first ones to believe in my writing and in my art

so we traveled together for some time in Italy and abro-

ad. What do I miss from Cage? Those years and that

stirring: "The fact we were pursuing research daily."

When in 1958 the John Cage tornado exploded at Darmstadt, the columns of the utopian structuralism began to tremble. Heinz Klaus Metzger, the avantgarde Lucifer-like legislator, ratified that appearance with an epochal essay: Cage or liberated music. The German scholar, who acutely caught the uneasiness of the New Music, interpreted Cage however through Adorno's "determinate negation". It was a misunderstanding in my opinion, though it stimulated the last contribution upon the radical thought of the Frankfurt philosopher, Vers une musique informelle. Cage had nothing to do with the "negative thought". He

as transition. John Cage, discoverer of the vicissitudes of

Mario Messinis (musicologist)

John Cage makes me travel through time and transports me in a context of mystery, where maths and poetry connect and create, through irony and cheerfulness, a sort of composition on the infinite possibilities of humanity. I met him via Gustavo Rol, the great 'thinker' from Turin who hosted Cage in 1959 and with whom he talked about the relationships tying sound-light-heat and the secret doors opened by certain sounds inside our conscience. It was however through Lascia o Raddoppia, the famous Italian quiz show hosted by my father Mike, in which Cage participated as an expert on mycology, that I refined my knowledge of him. I set on a quest through the TV archives to find the original footage or a recording of one of the 5 episodes of the quiz in which Cage was featured. In 1959 Lascia o Raddoppia had a 20 million audience! It was the world premiere of "Water Walk", an amazing blend of popular culture and refined musical research. My father has always been a passionate explorer of music.

1) What do I miss about John Cage? His wittiness as a man and as a free artist.

Cage? His catalog of compositions: diverse and rich in beautiful scores which, at least in Italy, are not as well-known (we speak a lot about John Cage in this country but unpeople of all races, dressed in all manners and speaking every language went up and down, either chatting or looking at their fingernails. Cage turned on his tape recorder and began asking casual questions: "Where are we going?", "When are we going to stop?", "Is this the right direction?", "Aren't we moving too fast?" All those people were after their own affairs and couldn't understand whether that tall, white-haired man was asking for directions up to some office or wanted to know where the world was heading to, so they answered: "Up", "Down", "No idea", "I hope soon", "Right here", "Further on", "We are close", "It will take a while", in every accent of the world. Later on, Cage mixed up the answers he had received, coming up with a piece for electronic tape. No, it never happened, but if Cage had done it we would now have his *Elevator Music*, and it is too bad that we don't. Alessandro Carrera (professor, writer)

Giancarlo Simonacci (pianist)

"The stimulus to be

curious, renovating

our own imagination

without a qualm. We

will always miss his

extraordinary trust

for everyday life.'

refused subjectivity and expressed an ataractic spiritual condition, profoundly ethical and not iconoclast by all means. Chance should then be more correctly read as the experience of the possible, for a musical idea conceived

it's not like this but that's how it seemed sound, is an immense, enigmatic and ungraspable figure. to me. He attracted me. He infected me.

Nicolò Bongiorno (director)

2) What am I left with from John

ces suggest silence again / dots suggest single ink notes / fastness and direction of reading speak of isolation and the possibility of leading the eye beyond space / of jumping from this event to another / killing time and preven-

conceptual gap between the two arts. Despite the fact that my work lead me to explore formal dimensions distant from Cage's poetry, his figure stands so grandly that I con-

we have to get out of here/there are many many things

each one is free to feel his own emotions/the sameness of sentiments toward all things/I have nothing to say

transl. by Nicolò Bongiorno Carlo Boccadoro (musician)

fortunately we perform him much