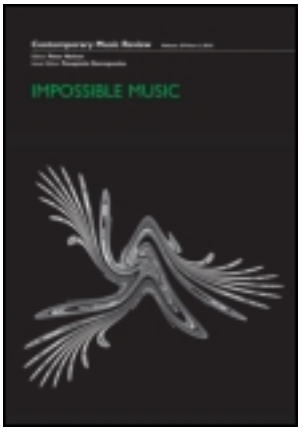

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The Silent Network—The Music of Wandelweiser

G. Douglas Barrett

This essay examines Wandelweiser as a unique social and artistic formation while considering the social import of the group's artistic works. Tracing Wandelweiser's history and analyzing a selection of its musical works, the group is considered in relation to historical avant-garde movements and contemporary network theory. Though lacking an official manifesto, Wandelweiser's aesthetic program can be located largely in its interpretations of John Cage's silent composition 4′33″. Expressed in the various interviews, writings, and musical works of Wandelweiser members, these readings of Cage's work—largely consonant with the consideration of 'silence as an autonomous musical phenomenon'—are contrasted with existing and original interpretations of 4′33″ which underline its potential as a conceptual, discursive, and socially engaged musical work.

Keywords: Artistic Autonomy; Avant-Garde; Conceptual Music; John Cage; Music Collective; Wandelweiser

Introduction

You return to your seat following intermission. The once illuminated gallery space has now darkened. It is dusk and small amounts of sunlight from the windows scatter across the bodies of three performers. As you sit down, the subtle scraping of a metallic chair leg is audible just above the rustling generated by the clothes of the performers as they settle into place. Distributed throughout the space, Manfred Werder, Normisa Pereira da Silva, and Stefan Thut sit on the concrete floor of the gallery, each holding a small, unique object and poised in a shared state of austere collectedness. Werder holds a Japanese toy harmonica, da Silva grasps a bow and in Thut's palm sits a small music box. The performance begins in silence. After two minutes, your attention wanders to the sounds of birds chirping just outside of the gallery; inside you notice da Silva draw her bow across a small Chinese cymbal; the brittle inharmonic sound is nearly drowned out by traffic sounds outside. Eventually,

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after slowly turning the handle on the music box held in his left palm, Thut softly ekes out a single clunky tone on his tiny device. Following several minutes of silence, Thut's music box sound transforms into a quiet series of muted arrhythmic clicks overlapping with the return of da Silva's scraped gong. A similar texture continues over the course of the next fifteen minutes: an occasional sound pokes out from the noises occurring inside and outside of the gallery, dotting the otherwise barren expanse of time. Shortly before the performance ends, you see Werder blowing into his toy harmonica and realize that the delicate tone he produces had been occurring all along. Finally, after looking around the space and then at one another, the performers glance toward the audience to acknowledge the end of the piece. You—and the rest of the audience—applaud.

To anyone familiar with Wandelweiser, the above description will ring an extremely soft yet distinct bell. For, as Christian Wolff has remarked, 'they play very quietly, with *huge* silences' (quoted in Chase & Gresser, 2004, p. 22). Referenced with slogan-like regularity, the group's music is purported to deal with 'the evaluation and integration of silence(s) rather than an ongoing carpet of never-ending sounds' (Malfatti, in Warburton, 2001). My description above refers to a performance of Swiss composer and pianist Werder's *2010*[1]—a text score consisting entirely of a fragment quoted from Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*—presented as part of the *Incidental Music Series* held at Galerie Mark Müller in Zürich, 8 July 2010. Werder and Thut are both current members of Edition Wandelweiser, the publishing company and record label organized and co-founded by Dutch-born composer and flautist Antoine Beuger. With its headquarters in Haan, Germany, Edition Wandelweiser currently publishes the work of sixteen composers coming from seven countries and with birthdates spanning over four decades.

Edition Wandelweiser was born in 1992—the year of John Cage's death. Indeed, Cage's work has remained profoundly influential throughout the international collective's nearly twenty years of development. Following the founding of Edition Wandelweiser by Beuger and German violinist and composer Burkhard Schlothauer, the company grew steadily during its first decade, adding roughly one new composer to its roster per year. During its first year of operation, Brazilian guitarist and composer Chico Mello, who remained a member of Edition Wandelweiser until 2005, joined Beuger and Schlothauer. In 1993, Swiss clarinetist and composer Jürg Frey joined, followed in 1994 by German composer Thomas Stiegler and South Korean composer Kunsu Shim, who remained until 1999. In 1995, Michael Pisaro (USA), Radu Malfatti (Austria), and Carlo Inderhees (Germany) joined, along with Japanese pianist and composer Makiko Nishikaze, who remained until 2005. 1997 saw the group incorporate Werder and Marcus Kaiser (Germany), followed in 1999 by American trombonist and composer Craig Shepard. In 2002, German composer and musicologist Eva-Maria Houben and French-born Greek composer Anastassis Philippakopoulos joined. Dutch clarinetist and composer Taylan Susam joined the group in 2010; American pianist and composer Sam Sfirri, and Swiss composer and cellist Thut are the most recent additions. Beuger explains that Wandelweiser now

extends beyond the core group of composers whose scores and recordings are published by the company, forming a 'lively network of cooperations and affinities, and friendships with all sorts of gradations, a kind of community that now has real definition' (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). Though Beuger runs the day-to-day operations of Edition Wandelweiser in Haan, Germany, the composer insists that the group is functionally decentralized. According to guitarist and composer Pisaro (2009a), 'the ''group'' as such doesn't ever come together as a whole, and includes others besides composers: musicians, artists, writers—friends.' While the group does not congregate in its totality, the Künstraum in Düsseldorf, Germany regularly holds concerts, readings, exhibitions, and festivals, and provides a strong center of activity for the collective. Beuger is quick to point out that Wandelweiser has never had a manifesto as such and he has remained opposed to the determination of the collective by reference to shared formal aesthetic goals or criteria. Rather than maintaining stated goals or statements of intent, the collective identity of Wandelweiser has been forged from its variegated collection of compositions, recordings, writings, regular performances, a clearly defined group of core members, and a number of satellite groups.

This essay examines Wandelweiser as a unique social and artistic formation while considering the social import of the group's artistic works. Tracing Wandelweiser's history and analyzing a selection of its musical works, the group is considered in relation to historical avant-garde movements and contemporary network theory. Though lacking an official manifesto, Wandelweiser's aesthetic program can be located largely in its interpretations of Cage's silent composition *4′33″* (1952). Expressed in the various interviews, writings, and musical works of Wandelweiser members, these readings of Cage's work—largely consonant with the consideration of 'silence as an autonomous musical phenomenon' (Beuger in Warburton, 2001)—are contrasted with existing and original interpretations of *4′33″* which underline its potential as a conceptual, discursive, and socially engaged musical work.

Two Beginnings: A Silent Music Contest, a 'Free Sex' Commune

Before founding Edition Wandelweiser, Beuger and Schlothauer met as members of the *Aktionsanalytische Organisation*, a radical commune started in 1970 and led by Vienna Actionist artist Otto Mühl. In Mühl's large-scale experimental art/life project, also referred to as the Friedrichshof Commune, communal sex replaced monogamy, group ownership replaced private property, and 'Aktionsanalyse' replaced psychoanalysis.[1] According to AAO member (and brother of Burkhard Schlothauer) Andreas Schlothauer, there were approximately 2000 residents between 1971 and 1991, although the commune never held more than 600 members at any one time (Schlothauer, 1992, p. 11). While Andreas Schlothauer's generally more critical account of the commune, *Die Diktatur der freien Sexualität* (1992) is written as a sociological study, Robert Fleck's *Die Mühl-Kommune* (2003) takes an art historical

perspective. Both accounts refer to the group as a totalitarian formation. For Andreas Schlothauer (1992):

> the move towards ''free sex'' was not only the realization of a year-long discussed idea or a ''dream'', but also the submission to the leadership of Mühl, the increasingly specific conditions under which the ''liberation'' from monogamy occurred. (p. 17)

Fleck (2003) refers to the 'totalitarian character' of AAO in claiming that it aimed to regulate every detail of 'life context' for its members; he compares AAO with the Communist regimes of the twentieth century, suggesting that AAO had replaced party-state control of the economy with the regulation of sexuality (p. 156). Noting the 1980 publication of *Mille Plateaux*, Fleck offers the work of French poststructuralist philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari as an appropriate context for analyzing the Mühl commune (pp. 156–157). However, while Deleuze and Guattari (1987) pose their concept of the 'rhizome'—a root structure that 'connects any point to any other point' (p. 21)—as a counter to the 'arborescence' of totalitarianism, Fleck insists that creative freedom and, to an extent, hierarchical mobility were in fact enjoyed by members of AAO (p. 156).

Beuger's membership of AAO began shortly after finishing his composition studies; with an interest in alternative communities, he simply could not pass on the opportunity (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). Beuger goes on to explain that, for him, AAO was a kind of 'psychological and sociological laboratory' in which there was a focus on expression and spontaneity, on making public that which is private; composition as a private activity had no place in it (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). Beuger was a member of AAO from 1977 until 1989; the commune was dissolved following Mühl's 1991 conviction and seven-year jail sentence for rape, sexual abuse of minors, abuse of authority, and a series of drug offences (Schlothauer, 1992, pp. 172–173; Fleck, 2003, p. 213). 'You learn a lot about power structures', Beuger expressed in retrospect (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). There were ongoing contradictions and antagonisms inherent to the commune's economic and political organization. In 1978, a member of the commune wrote a letter to a local Viennese magazine, explaining that the group (having begun as a 'hippie flophouse' [Schlothauer, 1992, p. 13]), got a 'haircut' and had become 'more realistic'; the group requested to advertise drawing, history, drama, and music courses (Fleck, 2003, p. 142), and turned to stockbroking to help with funding. As Beuger explains, 'in the daytime you're in a ''theater piece'', in the middle of capitalism playing a stockbroker. Then coming back home, you're in communism with no private property' (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). Counter-intuitively, it was apparently money earned from Burkhard Schlothauer's work in construction that would provide the initial funding for Edition Wandelweiser (Vriezen, 2007).[2] Beuger refers explicitly to his experience in AAO when speaking about his role in Wandelweiser's formation. In particular, it was Beuger's conception

of community that was at stake as a member of the Mühl commune: 'In it we knew too well what we were, and who was a part of it, and what the rules were and the ideals. Because of that it gets too rigid and then it explodes' (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). For Fleck (2003), 'the question remain[ed] as to how a liberation movement turned into a dictatorial *Gesamtkunstwerk*' (p. 255). According to Beuger, it was because of AAO that he began Wandelweiser with the idea that a community as such should not be rigidly defined. He describes his role in Wandelweiser as 'integrating' and that without his presence the group would not be as cohesive an entity; furthermore, the group would not be the same without the knowledge he gained during his time in the AAO commune.

Beuger first encountered Frey at the 1991 *Internationales Kompositions-Seminar* '*Stille Musik*', a 'silent music'-themed competition that ended in a hung jury.[3] Held from 10–14 September 1991 at the *Stiftung Künstlerhaus* in Boswil, Switzerland, the event culminated in a reception on 15 September in which a decision was announced that all eight compositions from the contest participants had 'proven to be so unique that the jury had decided to award the prize money equally among all composers' (Fondation Foyer Des Artistes Boswil, 1991, p. 4).[4] The jury was led by German composer Dieter Schnebel,[5] who was joined by Roland Moser, Alfred Schnittke, Marianne Schroeder, Jakob Ullmann, and Christian Wolff—the latter being a composer whose work has continued to exert a crucial influence upon Wandelweiser. A group of eight composers of various nationalities residing throughout Europe (Antoine Beuger, Jürg Frey, Dieter Jordi, Ricardas Kabelis, Hiroshi Kihara, Chico Mello, Urs Peter Schneider, Ernstalbrecht Stiebler) was selected based on the prior submission of compositions. Manfred Werder notes a general aura present in Europe at the time of *Stille Musik* in which the work of Feldman, Cage, and Wolff was particularly influential (personal communication, 21 November 2010). Wolff recalls that the jurists were 'all serious in their appreciation of John Cage'; he notes, however, that this was not to be assumed of all European new music circles at the time (personal communication, 26 June 2011). The idea was that each composition was performed during the seminar and, following a discussion and second performance of each work, the jury chose a winner. Perhaps unsurprisingly, much of the music performed during the four-day seminar was very quiet, or sparse; none of it, however, contained only silence. Beuger composed *lesen, hören, buch für stimme* (1991), a 'book' for solo voice and two tape parts. Calling for a 56-minute performance, the score consists of 147 pages of notated music combining graphic symbols and traditional notation; sparsely placed rhythmic figures are placed alongside a graph indicating manipulation of the volume level of one of the tapes. Jürg Frey's *unbetitelt IV* (1990) for viola and piano consists of a repeating exchange between a scalar passage scored for piano and an arpeggio in the viola, creating a hocket melody which is subtly elaborated toward the end of the work. Even at this early stage, Frey's piece resonates with his later formulation of music as an 'expanse', in which, 'memory is shaped less by the individual details than by a situation in which one has spent a certain period of time' (Frey, 2004). Referring to the overall

quality of the music presented at the seminar, '[i]t is ''quiet''', Wolff (1991 [2000]) recalled following the seminar, 'because of qualities of rhythm and sonority'. He writes, '[t]here is an overall rhythmic sense not of single-tracked momentum but of diffusion and suspension, moving out as though from various centers' (p. 232).

Following their participation in the Boswil seminar, Jürg Frey and Chico Mello were both invited to join Wandelweiser during its first year of operation. Werder, a native of Boswil, attended some of the concerts presented as part of the seminar and was impressed by Frey's work. The two would not meet, however, until 1995, during Werder's residence in Paris. Werder was invited to join Wandelweiser and became a member in 1997. Although no single winner was selected at *Stille Musik*, Beuger obtained the long-term friendship and artistic partnership of Frey; Wandelweiser gained two members as a direct result, while planting the seeds for the future involvement of others.

Though clearly a formative experience for Beuger, Frey, Werder and Mello, *Stille Musik* did not result in any founding doctrines or a manifesto for Wandelweiser. Yet, despite this lack of a formal aesthetic program, Wandelweiser has managed to sculpt a relatively refined collective identity, however heterogeneous its individual elements may be relative to the group. They are, in the words of Christian Wolff, 'really a collective' (Chase & Gresser, 2004, p. 22). What, then, can be said of this 'network' of affinities? The term network might be misleading if Wandelweiser is thought only in terms of the works published by Edition Wandelweiser; yet the label seems nonetheless appropriate in referring to the web of activity surrounding the group's writings, musical works and concert events. Unlike Mühl's AAO, Wandelweiser are not geographically bound; rather, they unite on specific aesthetic territory. While successfully avoiding statements of intent, Wandelweiser have been nothing short of prolific in interviews and their own publications. In his recent work on social formations, Bruno Latour (2005) argues, '[g]roups are not silent things, but rather the provisional product of a constant uproar made by the millions of contradictory voices about what is a group and who pertains to what' (p. 31). For Latour, groups are not inert, but always in a process of contestation. Group formations are 'performed' and in the process produce 'new and interesting data' (Latour, 2005, p. 31). Though reluctant to produce 'explicit' boundaries, there are nevertheless distinct voices at work in Wandelweiser: the contours of the group are effectively traced by the discourse and artworks of its members.

As intrinsic as the study of music is to the field of sociology—to many of the great social thinkers (Marx, Simmel, Weber, Adorno, Bourdieu) music was crucial—relatively little has been theorized about the form of the collective in a specifically musical context, e.g. the Florentine Camerata, Les Six or the Second Viennese School. As they can be seen as sharing certain problems and characteristics of the historical avant-garde, perhaps a richer context can be drawn around Wandelweiser as an artistic movement. An obvious comparison might be made between Wandelweiser and Fluxus. Several members of Wandelweiser have cited Fluxus artists as important influences,[6] and though Wandelweiser began more than three decades after Cage's

course at the New School for Social Research—attended by notable future Fluxus artists George Brecht, Dick Higgins, and Allan Kaprow—Wandelweiser and Fluxus at the very least share in the uniqueness of their respective interpretations of the work of Cage. Chronological lag notwithstanding, we might think of Wandelweiser and Fluxus as parallel yet entirely distinct branches stemming from the crisis initiated by Cage and his famous silent work, *4′33″* (1952).

The question as to whether Fluxus was (or is) itself an avant-garde group is answered in Hannah Higgins's (2002) study. Referring to the infamous 'purges' of George Maciunas, 'dogmatism, ideological self-assertion, intolerance of nuances, occasional purges, and a linear time line' mean for Higgins that Fluxus 'can properly be described as avant-garde, or neo-avant-garde' (p. 81). Though Wandelweiser have avoided some of those pitfalls (perhaps as a direct result of Beuger's cautious and self-conscious role as an organizer), there remain structural features linking Wandelweiser to the avant-garde that deserve consideration. For Renato Poggioli (1968), as a 'group manifestation', the avant-garde is 'not so much of an aesthetic fact as a sociological one' (p. 17). There is a tension within Poggioli's dialectic of avant-garde movements: while a movement is in its '*activistic* moment [...] constituted primarily to obtain a positive result, *for* a concrete end', it is also '*antagonistic*' or '*against* something or someone. The something may be the academy, tradition; the someone may be a master whose teaching and example, whose prestige and authority, are considered wrong or harmful' (p. 25). For Peter Bürger, the avant-garde revolves around the question of autonomy, art's independence from society.[7] Bürger (1984) attempts to articulate the complexity of the concept of autonomy: conceding to both art's separation from society (*l'art pour l'art*) as a given condition *and* the flat out denial of any separateness art may have from society based on the 'correct insight that autonomy is a historically conditioned phenomenon' at once misses the logical and historical 'contradictoriness inherent in the thing itself' (pp. 35–36). Poggioli's and Bürger's theories of the avant-garde can be seen as mirror images of one another: whereas Bürger's concern is art's relation to the social, for Poggioli the avant-garde is a social relation; while for Poggioli the avant-garde is activistic, Bürger, as Mann (1991) contends, 'validates only one form of activism—that directed against the institution (of) art' (p. 8). The relative aesthetic radicalness of Wandelweiser and the view it has held of remaining 'outside of the status quo' created by European new music organizations (Pisaro, 2009b), are by some token illustrative of the *antagonistic* moment to which Poggioli refers. Concerning the question of autonomy in Fluxus, Higgins (2002) maintains that the group has been 'deeply committed to the world' (p. 81).

Where, however, might one find a critical engagement with broader cultural or social concerns in Wandelweiser? A decade after the group's founding, Wandelweiser trombonist and composer Radu Malfatti scornfully lamented,

> Almost all the music which mercilessly surrounds us today has the same underlying structure: never-ending gabbiness. What's the difference between MTV music and most of the classical avant-garde? They use different material, but they're both

> intensively talkative. We're surrounded by noises and sensory overstimulation wherever we go. For me, the true avant-garde is the critical analysis or issue-taking with our cultural surroundings. What's needed is not faster, higher, stronger, louder—I want to know about the lull in the storm. (Cox & Warner, 2004, pp. 63–64)

While there is an 'off-the-cuff' quality to Malfatti's remark, one can't help but take seriously some of its ramifications. The initial charge of 'gabbiness', equating the 'low' form of MTV music with the classical avant-garde is interesting because there is a conspicuous, if total absence of an explicit critical engagement with popular culture in the work of Wandelweiser.[8] More relevantly, there is the silence, or quiet, represented by the 'lull in the storm', which implicitly answers Malfatti's call for cultural 'issue-taking'. With the complexity of Bürger's understanding of autonomy in mind, perhaps we should not prematurely draw conclusions regarding whether or not this kind of criticality is achieved in the collective project of Wandelweiser. However, there is a clear contradiction between Malfatti's confrontational quiet as 'critical analysis' and Beuger's consideration of Cage's *4′33″* as 'the beginning—not an end—of a serious involvement with silence as an *autonomous musical phenomenon*' (quoted in Warburton, 2001; emphasis added).

Reconnecting Cage

Cage's influence on Wandelweiser may be hard to overstate. Burkhard Schlothauer at one point succinctly confessed, 'the only composer I'm really interested in is Cage' (Warburton, 2001). For Beuger, Cage's influence began at age fifteen, following a festival performance by Cage and Merce Cunningham in Breda, the Netherlands, in 1970 (Vriezen, 2007). As a group, it is difficult to take into account the variety of views on Cage expressed in the numerous essays, interviews, blog entries, and program notes authored by members of Wandelweiser. It is possible that no other single work has shaped the overall understanding of music within the collective as significantly as *4′33″*. Perhaps because of the work's sparseness—it can be said to present the 'bare essentials' for a musical performance—*4′33″* has allowed for such a density of thought including but not limited to sound, silence, notation, and musical meaning in a broader sense. Specifically, the work is relevant to our concerns here due not only to the ostensible similarities it shares with many works by Wandelweiser composers; equally important are the historical and conceptual underpinnings Cage's work provides. Indeed there are, as Frey has remarked, 'many different silences' (Warburton, 2001), although there are, perhaps, also an equal number of discursive contexts that frame the phenomenon.

Having attained iconic status, *4′33″* has often been dismissed as a gag or scandal, an idea one need only encounter as anecdote in order to understand. James Pritchett (2009) has compared the popular reception of *4′33″* to that of Warhol's Campbell soup cans in writing that it has similarly served as a 'punch line for jokes and

cartoons; the springboard for a thousand analyses and arguments; evidence of the extremity of a ''destructive avant-garde'' that appeared in the 1950s and 1960s.' The thoroughly documented multiple origins of the piece may be listed here: Cage's pivotal attempt to open the field of musical sound to the eventual inclusion of any and all sound; his proposed work *Silent Prayer* (1948) conceived as a physical silencing of Muzak (see Kahn, 1997); the composer's encounter with the white paintings of Rauschenberg; his engagement with notions of emptiness and nothingness found in Zen Buddhism; his programmatic insistence upon non-intentionality and the removal of the ego from the process of artistic creation; his insistence, based on the music of Satie and Webern, that duration be thought of as the basic unit of both sound and silence (Cage, 1948, p. 81); lastly, Cage's visit to an anechoic chamber at Harvard in which he learned of the impossibility of experiencing true silence—instead Cage heard the sounds of his own nervous system and his blood in circulation (Kahn, 1997, p. 581). The actual score for *4′33″* has an obscure history. Two versions of the score were created—one using blank measures in metric time (1952), the other using space-equals-time notation (1953)—before the more commonly known score published in 1961 (Kotz, 2007, p. 18).[9] The latter version, also containing a dedication to Irwin Kremen, would serve as Cage's proto-text score and is notated entirely in language (Kotz, 2007, p. 18). Rather than using traditional music notation, *4′33″* defines three durations during which the silence of the concert hall becomes the content of the piece. The main body of this later version of the score reads, 'I/TACET/II/TACET/III/TACET', describing three sections during which the performer is simply to rest. The score follows with a note describing the first performance of the piece, by David Tudor in Woodstock, New York in 1952 and explains that the title of the piece, when programmed, should refer to the overall duration of the performance, which may be of any length.

4′33″ insists upon the importance of the language used to prompt a performance: the means by which Cage's score instantiates and underlies the resulting silence is of interest. Pisaro has explained that, following Cage, 'notation is not a form of communication, but an incitement to action (or at times, non-action). The character of that action comes in response to the score' (Warburton, 2001). As Pisaro's comment suggests, *4′33″* represents the break between the musical score and its sounding result. Similarly, Ian Pepper (1997) has argued that, 'by defining ''music'' as writing on the one hand, and as sound on the other, and by erecting an absolute barrier between the two spheres, Cage initiated a crisis in music that has barely been articulated, let alone worked through' (p. 34). Beuger expresses a similar attitude stating that 'asking someone to play an ''a'' of a certain duration, a certain volume and a certain tone colour is like asking him to write the number pi: he'll do something more or less approaching something else' (Saunders, 2004a, p. 231). Indeterminacy—the term Cage used to define the breakdown of the relationship between the score and the sounding result of a work—suggests a shift in focus from the composer of a determinate musical work to the listener who witnesses the unfolding of a process. In this sense, the score is less a blueprint mandating a

pre-constructed musical object; it is, moreover, embraced for the contingent consequences of its realization.

Consisting of instructions presented entirely in language, *4′33″* is linked in Liz Kotz's analysis to the broader turn to language in 1960s art, which also paved the way for conceptual art and the various neo-avant-garde movements of the decade. Writer and artist Seth Kim-Cohen argues for an interpretation of *4′33″* aligned with a conceptual art defined by Peter Osborne as 'art *about* the cultural act of definition paradigmatically, but by no means exclusively, the definition of "art"' (Kim-Cohen, 2009, p. 158). Kim-Cohen proposes a *4′33″* in which 'normally stable ideas about the roles of the performer, the composer, and the relationship of one to the other are unmoored from their anchorage, allowed to drift freely in the tides of conceptualization' (p. 167). While for Kim-Cohen, *4′33″* is conceived as a legible conceptual work, for Paul Mann (1991) it is the shuttling between the work's 'performance-immediacy' and the work's discursivity—its meaning as constituting and constituted through its historical and critical accounts—that is important. For Mann, 'representation is already inherent in its presentation; the work also performs in discourse' (p. 27). Mann (1991) cites a comment made by Christopher Butler lamenting that, since the work had already 'made its critical point'—i.e., it had already been performed and the silence was no longer startling for audiences—it no longer retained any value (p. 26). I contend that these last two modes (and others) are present simultaneously. The sensuous and impactful immediacy of presence, distanced from an ever-receding horizon of signification, is countersigned by the immediate presence of the symbolic; the work is inscribed in language—in terms of its score and its conceptuality. Both 'performance-immediacy' and representation are intimately bound together in a kind of dynamic harmony.

Still another interpretation of *4′33″* considers the piece as a presentation of the concert situation itself, drawing attention to the frame of the musical setting *as* the work. Re-interpreting a term originally elaborated by Kant, Derrida (1987) defines the *parergon* as that which 'separates the internal from the external', a kind of double border which 'joins together what it splits' (p. 331); as a frame or 'a supplement to the operation', it is 'neither work nor outside the work' (p. 121). South African musicologist Martina Viljoen (2004) invokes Derrida's *parergon* (an intrinsic part of Kim-Cohen's general interpretive framework as well), arguing that it is across this 'dynamic field of influence' that musical meaning is situated.

> Acting on (and across) the "border", the "limit" of the musical work, the performer, the listener, and the hermeneutic analyst creatively shape musical meaning. They respond to its musical autonomy by constantly enacting it anew within novel performative frames, and renegotiate boundaries which fit new situations. (p. 21)

Woodstock, New York, 1952: David Tudor's simple action of opening and closing the piano lid to indicate the beginning and end of each movement is to become indelibly inscribed into *4′33″*'s history, a part of the work's score, performance, and

subsequent discussion. The performance note in the 'Tacet' versions of the score performs a role falling between instruction and documentation; it links the world of the symbolic to the contingent worlds of its realization, ultimately tethering both to broader discursive and cultural universes. Contrasting with Pritchett's claim that, 'looking for the meaning behind the piece takes us away from direct experience and into the world of ideas and stories' (2009), there is a story built into the very framing of *4′33″*. The marking that delimits the spatial and temporal boundaries of the musical frame—'the line [*trait*] which purports to mark its edges' (Derrida, 1987, p. 7)—is divided; music is opened to its outside. The durational frame of four minutes and thirty-three seconds opens onto the expanse of history, while the concert hall expands to include the noise of the surrounding world. The story of Tudor's opening of the piano lid unbars the fluid passage between musical performance and (its) representation. The outside floods into music's proper interior.

Whereas, for Kim-Cohen, there is a cascading process of signification inherent in hearing/viewing in which the spectator's perspective is—to an extent—given primacy, Mann's (1991) pessimistic formulation further reduces meaning purely to 'circulation within the discursive economy' (p. 30). Viljoen (2004), meanwhile, emphasizes a 'dynamic field' in which performer, listener, and analyst interact and produce meaning. Porous in its temporal and spatial bounds, *4′33″* permeates this field by virtue of its material and discursive mutability. As Kim-Cohen argues, *4′33″* 'unmoors' the roles of performer, composer, and listener; but it also connects: presence and representation; history and immediacy; contingency and record. As a variation upon Viljoen's interpretive framework, we might strive to combine with it the structural logic of a group such as Wandelweiser: a 'network' of indeterminate agents, of 'cooperations and affinities', all of which work in tandem, conflict, and collaboration. A truly valuable engagement with *4′33″* might emerge out of the consideration of this sort of confluence of elements—of *4′33″* performances, discourse, and criticism, *4′33″* historical accounts, 'post'-*4′33″* music, *4′33″* offshoots, parodies, and *détournements*—each thought as one interconnective node in a synchronic field of meaning-space. Contingent as indeterminate silence, and with its 'network' of ever-shifting interpretive fluidity, *4′33″* may be considered the anti-autonomous artwork *par excellence*.[10]

While 'offshoots, parodies, and *détournements*' of *4′33″* are far removed from the work of Wandelweiser, if there is a single category appropriate for considering the work of the group, it might be something like 'post-*4′33″* music', a term designating a body of music which is considered as following, while making important departures from, Cage's piece.[11] As in the case of the *Stille Musik* seminar, none of the music explicitly contains only silence, although members of Wandelweiser often use silences of various durations, and within different musical contexts. There are some interesting exceptions, however. Werder's scores, for example, often work in the liminal space between the implicit acknowledgement that sounds must always occur (as Cage realized during his visit to the Harvard anechoic chamber) and an explicit call for sounds to be performed. For instance, Werder's *2006*[1] score reads, 'a place,

natural light, where the performers like to be / a time / (sounds)'. Addressing its relationship to *4′33″*, Werder (2006) states that *2006*[1] is 'not about exploring new sounds', but rather, it is about exploring 'a new relation' to the sounding world. From 1998, Werder's scores have displayed a striking similarity. Pisaro (2009a) notes that, in considering the trajectory of Werder's work over time, 'one considers the difference between the indications ''time''and ''a time''or between ''place'',''a place'' [. . .] and ''places''' (p. 63). The parenthetical enclosing of sounds creates an even greater ambiguity between the call for an active realization of sounds and a passive listening or observing. Either interpretation (to perform sounds or simply allow sounds to be present) may be justified; however, a performer must consider the language used to notate the score—a feature Werder's pieces share with Cage's *4′33″*.

Distinct from *4′33″*—in which silence constitutes the content of the work in its entirety—silence often appears in Beuger's work as an element in a composition, within a broader musical syntax. Crucial, however, are the hues or shades of silence that arise from different performance scenarios. His series *calme étendues* (1996/97) consists of seventeen individual pieces, each scored for a single instrument while containing the same basic structure: the performer plays a three-second sound, followed by a five-second silence, and continues to alternate between the two elements until s/he stops for a longer silence. Acoustically, the five-second pause and the longer silence are initially virtually equivalent, but the experiences of each are incommensurable. Even during the first five seconds of the longer silence, one senses that something has halted; a *hole* is cut into the musical fabric. The 'carpet of sounds' is jerked out from underneath the listener, who is left momentarily hovering above an imminent silent abyss.

Beuger explains that he had been interested in the silence preceding and following the performance of a piece of music for many years.[12] He had been interested in exploring this experience of silence as a 'disruption'. In Beuger's words, silence is 'a direct—not symbolic or imaginative—encounter with reality, which means with contingency, singularity, emptiness. Silence in my music always is [an] encounter with reality, enforced by the event of a situation being disrupted without any reason' (Warburton, 2001). For Beuger, the sense of silence as an *'interruption* of what is there' is comparable to loss or death; it is 'irreversible'. It is commemorative (personal communication, 15/17 June 2011). As a distinct break—or 'cut', to use Beuger's term adapted from Alain Badiou—this interruptive dimension of silence was his distinct departure from Cage. Beuger (1997) contends

> in the music understood as the *music after the event of 4′33″*, it is not the sound, but the cut itself which is the subject of compositional activity. The process is composed with which of the infinite variety of sounds, a new cut, a new opportunity for perception is obtained. (p. 120)[13]

Perhaps a more appropriate comparison to make with Beuger's *calme étendues* is Cage's *Waiting*, a little-discussed work for piano composed just eight months prior to

4′33″. Nearly one minute shorter than the originally determined length of *4′33″*, *Waiting* consists of sixteen measures of silence during which the pianist and audience anticipate the forthcoming piano music; the anticipation of audience and performer alike is then 'interrupted' by a pair of delicate ostinato phrases, which are followed by a much shorter silence. In *calme étendues*, however, the function of such silence is inverted: rather than musical sound interrupting a period of 'waiting', silence disrupts a state of musical flow. Beuger's *calme étendues* put Cage's *Waiting* '*vom Kopf auf die Füße*'; they stand waiting on its feet, turn silence into disruption.

A further aspect of the *calme étendues* is each work's indeterminate length, to be decided by the performer and to last between 45 minutes and nine hours. Volker Straebel (2008) discusses the potentially extreme duration of *calme étendues* in the context of conceptual art and what he refers to as conceptual music (or conceptual composition), proposing that, 'the aspect of the aesthetic imagination of real presence becomes especially vivid during long but time-limited events having the character of a performance (e.g. *calme étendue* by Wandelweiser composer Antoine Beuger, 1996/97, which lasts up to nine hours)' (p. 70). Straebel (2008) continues

> A piece of music of nine hours' duration necessarily eludes perception as a whole. The knowledge of its actual performance at the moment is available to an audience member who is absent from the room solely as an aesthetic image. Here the uncertain element of truth in such a projective image is in antithetical tension to the phenomenological structure of perception and imagination. When I leave the room, I can assume at any given time that the performance is going on, and something is happening in the performance space that follows the score (with which I'm familiar) and/or is related or similar to what I perceived at an earlier moment during the performance. This uncertainty nonetheless points to the uncertainty of any given *perception*, which can always deceive me. But my imagination cannot. Imagining, as a synthetic act, is always certainty, for rather than telling me something about the world, it is solely the project of my assumptions. (pp. 70–71).

Framed as a work of conceptual art/music, for Straebel (2008) *calme étendue* illustrates the ability of the work to overcome its 'objectification' in the 'movement between the perceiving and imagining consciousness' (p. 76). Straebel's privileging of the imaginary over direct perception (perception can always deceive me; '*but my imagination cannot*' [2008, p. 71; emphasis added]) is provocative in the context of Beuger's *calme étendue*, considering the composer's insistence on 'a direct—*not symbolic or imaginative*—encounter with reality' (Beuger, quoted in Warburton (2001); emphasis added). Furthermore, and relevant with respect to our discussion of artistic autonomy, the imaginary threatens to unravel the tightly wound threads of music as 'pure sounding'. It posits an inherent connection between music and its outside—that void which surrounds music, yet of which it is wholly comprised. (There is, however, perhaps an intuitive objection to Straebel's 'conceptual' consideration of Beuger's *calme étendue*. One need only consider a similarly 'ungraspable' activity such as watching the sun setting. We cannot see the *process* of

the sun setting in any given instant; but does the day therefore overcome objectification?) Straebel's conceptual composition, as the 'movement between perceiving and imagining', by implicating the imaginary, tugs at one of the loose threads of musical autonomy. Ultimately, however, it leaves the 'carpet of sounds' relatively intact.

Let us return to the problem of artistic autonomy framed as relating the poles of art and life. Mühl's AAO can be viewed as a radical solution to the problem of artistic autonomy, as the complete integration of an art practice into the 'praxis of life' and in which the two spheres became inseparable. AAO was exemplary as an avant-garde formation in that it was not necessarily the content of individual artworks, but the way art functioned in society that was at stake. In AAO, the relationship between art and life was totalizing. For Bürger (1984), the critique of this tendency of the avant-garde is clear: 'An art no longer distinct from the praxis of life but wholly absorbed in it will lose the capacity to criticize it, along with its distance' (p. 50). As a totally integrated art/life practice, AAO had lost the ability to adequately wage a critique of art or life from either perspective. While novel as a social formation, Wandelweiser, I argue, move to the opposite extreme from AAO in their disengagement from broader social or political relevance. Bürger (1984) concludes that following the failure of the 'total return of art to the praxis of life, the work of art entered into a new relationship to reality', which epitomized a 'new type of engaged art' (p. 91). What, then, might a truly engaged musical practice sound like? Considering its interconnective and mutable nature, perhaps there is a way in which Cage's *4′33″* may be employed as a socially engaged work. How might a contemporary connection be drawn between Cage and a broader political or social sphere? Where might one make a cut into music that allows for this kind of connection?

I wish to add to the existing conceptual and discursive engagements with *4′33″* an attempt to take into account the social dimension of the work.[14] While the roles of composer, performer, and listener may be called into question, one may still point to specific relations within the situations made possible by the work. In *4′33″*, the dynamic between performer and audience, for example, rather than being destroyed, is underlined as a component of the work. An audience member coughs. Looking around, she realizes that the cough, along with her physical and emotional responses, her body language, all become 'part of the work'. The performer then assumes the passive role of listening to the audience member; the two acknowledge the ostensible 'equality' of the consequences of their actions (they both make sounds), which overlays their ordinary hierarchical roles as performer and listener. An exchange occurs. The interplay multiplies across the rest of the audience as they take notice. The performance situation—the physical site as context—also behaves as an agent within this web of connections. Holding a guitar, a boy runs to the front of a public bus and announces that he will perform *4′33″* as passengers make their daily commute. It is not simply that passengers are suddenly audience members and the bus becomes an ambulant concert hall. *4′33″ intersects* with the situation: *4′33″* absorbs the context as 'content'. The performance cited above is available to view on

YouTube;[15] indeed mediation—whether an audio recording or video accessible via social media—functions as yet another framing of the work. Like David Tudor's original 1952 Woodstock version, performances of *4′33″* further open the work; its realizations 'add' to *4′33″*. This kind of 'contextual indeterminacy' may allow critical readings of *4′33″* in which context plays a crucial role.

If, as Beuger contends, following *4′33″*, the cut itself constitutes a new subject for composition, it may be argued that the incision must slice into the symbolic and tear across the fabric of the social. It may be useful to situate Wandelweiser's configurations of *4′33″* in relation to the social and political engagements with Cage's piece developed by the art/music and activist collective Ultra-red. Their project, *SILENT|LISTEN (The Record)* (2006) is part of an ongoing series of events in which invited statements on the AIDS epidemic—'where it has been, where it is now, and where it is going' (Ultra-red, 2006)—are recorded and interspersed with performances of Cage's *4′33″*. Ultra-red are a collective, which, unlike Wandelweiser, do have a statement of intent: they seek to reverse the existing model of activist art, in which the political content of appropriated aesthetic form 'does the work of both cultural analysis and cultural action' (Ultra-red, 2000). Their project is intimately folded around the axes of the aesthetic and the social.

> If we understand organizing as the formal practices that build relationships out of which people compose an analysis and strategic actions, how might art contribute to and challenge those very processes? How might those processes already constitute aesthetic forms? (Ultra-red, 2000).

Their uses of Cage and silence are clear: allowing the richness of metaphor back into music, silence is invoked as the disturbing, deathly silence that has surrounded the AIDS crisis. Writer and musician Terre Thaemlitz (2010) explains,

> the project uses Cage's *4′33″* as a metaphor for what they term the current "epidemic of silence" around AIDS within the US generally, as well as in relation to the increasingly inaudible noises of contemporary AIDS activism—activism that had once rallied around the slogan "Silence = Death". (p. 78)

In his discussion of *SILENT|LISTEN*, Roger Hallas (2009) explains that Ultra-red reframe the slogan to which Thaemlitz refers through Paulo Friere's 'discipline of silence', in which silence is prefigured as the site for listening and 'listening as the condition for action, since it enables genuine reflection and analysis' (p. 248). The emblem for Ultra-red's *SILENT|LISTEN* is a mesostic made in (pseudo-)Cagean fashion. It spells out LISTEN with each letter of SILENT, turning the self-referentiality of silence into an ouroborous-like text-image showing that 'listen' is a part of 'silent'. To arrive at listen, silent need only to be respelled. Thaemlitz (2010) describes the project as 'an archive of the absence of an archive. An archive of sound as memory' (p. 78). Thaemlitz (2010), who is also an activist and educator around

AIDS, class, and non-essentialist conceptions of Transgenderism, explains how an Ultra-red performance resulted in local government action.

> In the annotations to *4′33″* (*Arrest Record #1, County USC Hospital, May 22, 2004*), Ultra-red members return fourteen years later to the site of a cornerstone demonstration on May 20, 1990, which forced the Los Angeles government to open an AIDS clinic at the hospital. (p. 78)

As a 'reading' and performance of Cage's *4′33″* Ultra-red's *SILENT|LISTEN* doubtless participates as an agent of meaning production in the '*4′33″* network' alluded to earlier. *SILENT|LISTEN* employs the logic of *détournement*; it 'misuses' *4′33″*. Further, *4′33″* and the AIDS crisis *frame one another as social contexts*. Ultra-red's project rips through and subverts musical autonomy, binding music to (its) broader social concerns. Thaemlitz (2010) concludes that Ultra-red challenge audiences 'to confront their desires for witnessing and contributing to social transformation' (p. 84). Ultra-red's work shows the real potential for both 'critical analysis' and 'cultural issue-taking' as crucial elements of a musical practice. More than simply political in the content of individual works, Ultra-red engage the relationship between the aesthetic and the political; art challenges and shapes social action. Their work has been referred to as '"music performance"' (Thaemlitz, 2010, p. 84) and is elsewhere classified as sound art.[16] Why not, however, hear this work as music proper—more precisely, as *critical* music?

While Ultra-red render audible the silenced voices of those involved in political and social struggles, Manfred Werder's recent work can be read as a meditation on the context of enunciation, the musical framing of the discursive act. Many of Werder's scores, like the 'Tacet' versions of Cage's *4′33″*, are scored using only written language. As with Cage's *4′33″*, the performances of Werder's recent scores are open to the indeterminate sounds within and outside of the performance space. Werder (2012 [forthcoming]) invokes *4′33″* and George Brecht's *Water Yam* (1963) in explaining that, for him, indeterminacy occurs as a kind of 'intrinsic unavailability (*Unverfügbarkeit*)'; in the score, 'language oscillates between power and unavailability'. Furthermore, there is yet another level of indeterminacy in Werder's works, in which a performer must decide just what s/he is to do with the minimal text fragments contained in each score. Just how does one realize a score consisting only of the text, 'dost / rue / araucaria / ore / lewfü', as in *2009[1]*? Werder refers to this use of indeterminacy as a 'refusal to prescribe the form of performance or set it down in the score' (Müller, 2002).

It is as though these works have a kind of double life: that which unfolds in performance and the strands of text which both prompt the performance and yet somehow speak *behind* it. Beuger often includes a citation in the introduction page of his scores; for example, in his *badiou tunings for eighteen* (2005), a brief statement is followed by a quote from the eponymous philosopher. Others have included Stéphane Mallarmé, Deleuze, Ad Reinhardt, Sam Peckinpah, and John Ashbery.

In Werder's recent work, however, a single quotation often comprises the entire score. *2009*[4], for example, consists entirely of a fragment taken from the work of French essayist and poet Francis Ponge. Werder's *2010*[1] score (a performance of which was described as this essay's introduction) consists solely of a fragment of text taken from Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*: 'the rarity of the *énoncés* / that immediate transparency that constitutes the element of their possibility'. Foucault refers to the conditions that construct, contextualize, and allow for discourse (in any field: scientific, legal, aesthetic); this scaffolding, or 'field of objects' (p. 119), of which discourse is a part and makes possible is precisely because of its all-pervasiveness, 'neither hidden, nor visible' (p. 122). Foucault (2002) does not intend to describe the logical structures of propositions or phrases, but rather, aims at 'defining the conditions in which the function that gave a series of signs [...] an existence, and a specific existence, can operate' (p. 122). Writing of Foucault's project, Deleuze (2006) explains 'this virtual or latent content multiplies meaning and opens itself up to interpretation, creating a ''hidden discourse'' that *de jure* is a source of great richness' (p. 4). The full sentence of the Foucault text excerpted in the second line of Werder's score states: 'We shall try to render visible, and analyzable, that immediate transparency that constitutes the element of their possibility' (Foucault, 2002, p. 126). The irony is in what Werder leaves out. The fragment, '[w]e shall try to render visible, and analyzable', is itself made invisible, removed, in Werder's *2010*[1], from its source. Does Werder intend to hide the attempt to render visible the immediate transparency? Or by leaving out the first part of Foucault's statement, does Werder point to a supposed impossibility of musical meaning? The 'making visible, and analysable' is, itself, made invisible. With a provocative literalness, this invisibility might be understood as pointing to the hiddenness of the score in performance, its physical absence from the view of the audience—the status of the score as *parergonal*: 'neither [the] work nor outside the work' (Derrida, 1987, p. 121), it lies along the edges of the musical frame.[17] Beneath its sparse texture, behind its mute surface, there is perhaps something profound expressed in Werder's piece. While ostensibly invested in its physical presence, *2010*[1] contemplates its discursive potential as a musical work; it enunciates a kind of self-cancellation of its own ability to speak. *2010*[1] may be thought as a meta-statement concerning the production of meaning—how does one locate a discourse 'neither hidden, nor visible'?—in a musical context. While there seems to be a critical value to a work that proposes this kind of reflexivity, one wonders still if the piece remains caught up within its own circular process of self-questioning, hermetically closed to an outside. In this interpretation, does *2010*[1] ever move beyond the question of *what one can say in music* in order to actually say anything at all? Do *2010*[1] and other works by Werder operate, as the composer would contend, 'in relation to our complex situation of being the world, and at the same time observing the world' (Saunders, 2004b, p. 353)?

In Werder's recent scores, there is a witty crossing of the profound with the banal. *2008*[1], a work containing a fragment taken from Deleuze and Guattari's *Que'est-ce*

que la philolsophie?, appears in the same format—a 'score' written in plain font, printed on an A4 page—as his work *2008*[2] which consists of the text 'birches / a butterfly / swifts / bats / a fox'. It is interesting that Werder refers to both *2008*[2] and *2008*[1] both as containing 'found sentences' (personal communication, 28 June 2011). These works engage broader questions of appropriation and authorship. In another seminal essay by Foucault (1969 [2003]), the philosopher states that the first rule of the 'author function' is that 'discourses are objects of appropriation' (p. 382). There is a subversive edge to the notion that a composer simply stumbles across the text of an author, and from that a piece is formed in its entirety. There may even be something of a hint towards Foucault's vision of a future in which 'the author function will disappear', in which the author 'will have to be determined or, perhaps, experienced' (Foucault, 1969, p. 391; [2003]). Werder's appropriated texts suggest a critical position with respect to musical authorship; the act of composition as individual expression is replaced with the encountering of something *found*, 'out there' in the world. Referring to Duchamp's ready-mades, Bürger (1984) claims that the avant-garde had already begun a 'radical negation of the category of individual creation' linked explicitly to the collective and the problem of artistic autonomy (pp. 51–53). Werder's use of indeterminacy as a refusal to prescribe the parameters of a performance in his scores (Werder in Müller, 2002) is also pertinent in this respect. The role of the composer becomes 'unmoored' to the extent of being nearly inconsequential. Taken together, a withering away of the solitary figure of the composer is suggested by these approaches, allowing the emergence of a creativity that truly belongs to the collective.

What about the future of the collective? In a time when collective action organized through social networks is widely purported to have shown emancipatory potential, questions posed by a group as unique as Wandelweiser are of utmost relevance. Thought around social and artistic group formations has gained wider import, and Latour (2005) explains that while sociologists still disagree on questions about the types of groups that constitute social amalgamations, the methods by which such formations occur is clear: 'groups are made to talk; anti-groups are mapped; new resources are fetched so as to make their boundaries more durable; and professionals with their highly specialized paraphernalia are mobilized' (p. 41). According to Latour, the borders that demarcate the boundaries of a group are by nature discursive; they are *a priori* exclusionary. Can silence function in a refiguring of this binary inside/outside mode of social mapping by constructing—as a variation on Foucault's 'new relational modes'?—'new relation[s]' to the (sounding) world (Werder, 2006), and new modes/nodes of connectivity within that world? Is it possible for a group such as Wandelweiser, without official, 'durable' boundaries, to allow into its confines non-autonomous, socially engaged practices—whether employing conceptual, activist, or discursive strategies? Perhaps to concentrate too heavily on the conflict between autonomy and anti-autonomy intimated in the writings and musical works of its members is to have ignored some of the potential of Wandelweiser as a social work itself, an art/life *Gesamtkunstwerk* of considerable

stature. What would it mean though for Wandelweiser to shift its focus to the other of autonomous musical silence? Would the future of Wandelweiser require an 'official' manifesto or mission statement; or, ignoring the group's supposed 'requirement to talk', would Wandelweiser's implicit discursive boundaries shrink back into invisibility, revealing a network of silence extending out into infinity? If premised on lending an ear to that which falls outside its (un)silent borders, perhaps only then might the *silent network* be rightfully respelled as the *listen network*.

Notes

[1] See Schlothauer, 1992, pp. 19–20; Fleck, 2003, pp. 50–51. My translations of both texts are used throughout.

[2] My thanks to Taylan Susam for his translation from the Dutch original.

[3] Or was it a quiet music seminar? The multiple translations of *Stille* add a subtle ambiguity to the character of the event.

[4] My thanks to Nicholas Melia for providing information pertaining to the *Stille Musik* seminar.

[5] In Germany at least, Schnebel has been associated with Cage to the extent that *Stille Musik* jury member Marianne Schroeder was compelled to wonder if he could be called '*Ein deutscher Cage*?' (in Grünzweig, Schnebel, Schröder & Supper, 1990, pp. 65–67). It is not clear, however, to what extent Schnebel saw the work of Cage as related to the seminar theme.

[6] For example, George Brecht: Werder in Müller (2002) and Werder, M. (2012 [forthcoming]), and Jürg Frey (1999, p. 14); George Brecht, James Tenney, La Monte Young: Pisaro (2004a, p. 101). Closely associated with Wandelweiser, the work of Hungarian-born Swiss artist and composer István Zelenka contains many ostensible similarities with Fluxus. See, for example, his *Versuchen wir die Sachen so zu ordnen, dass das Resultat nie endgültig wird* (2005), a score containing a broad range of instructions for producing various actions, and instrumental and vocal sounds.

[7] Of course, one might also appropriately cite Adorno in this regard. In his *Sociology of Music* (1962), it is precisely music's claim to autonomy since the Enlightenment, which is seen as false consciousness in light of its commodity status (Adorno, 1976, p. 63; for further commentary, see Paddison, 2001, p. 184). However, there are perhaps enough aesthetic divergences between Wandelweiser and the music championed by Adorno, the 'classical avant-garde', that warrant a theoretical departure as well.

[8] While Malfatti's comment refers to what in his view are similarities shared by 'MTV music' and the 'classical avant-garde', Pisaro (2004b) describes his ongoing appreciation of rock 'n' roll and Motown (p. 56). It may be argued, however, that the music of Wandelweiser does not meaningfully problematize the construction of the category of Western art music either in relation to popular music or non-Western music.

[9] Containing a 1960 copyright, the score's 1961 publication date has been contested; see Kotz (2007, pp. 268–269, fn. 10).

[10] For an opposing view, see Douglas Kahn's (1997) analysis of *4′33″*. Noting the composer's self-purported shift during the 1960s 'from musical to social issues', Kahn argues that for Cage, 'there was no corresponding shift to reconceptualize the sociality of sounds' (p. 557). A full consideration of Kahn's attempt to question Cage's ideas 'from the vantage point of sound *instead* of music' (p. 556, my emphasis)—Kahn's casting of music as a conservative site over which sound is privileged—is beyond the scope of this essay. However, there are perhaps clear drawbacks to Kahn's self-conscious overinvestment in Cage's views on his own work. For a perspective which to its credit does not as strictly '[take] Cage at his word'

(Kahn, 1997, p. 557), see Katz (1999). Katz argues for an understanding of Cage's silence as a mode of 'historically specific queer resistance' during the Cold War and the homophobic oppression of the McCarthy era. See also Gentry (2008).

[11] Recently, in the US press, Wandelweiser were called 'a small coterie of mostly European post-John Cage composers' (Margasak, 2011).

[12] In this respect, silence literally frames the musical work.

[13] My translation.

[14] My thanks to Lindsey Lodhie for her suggestions pertaining to this interpretation.

[15] *John Cage / 4′33″ andrestorresREVOC*. Retrieved 3 July 2007, from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYQhXN1UFbU.

[16] Statements made by Ultra-red situate their work in relation to sound art (Ultra-red [2000]), and classify it explicitly as such (see 'PS/o6.b Encuentro, Los Angeles.' *Ultra-red*. Retrieved 3 July 2011. http://www.ultrared.org/pso6b.html; see also the biographical blurb found at 'Vera List Center for Art and Politics'' Organized Listening: Sound Art, Collectivity and Politics.' *Vera List Center for Art and Politics*. 18 November 2010. http://www.veralistcenter.org/currentprograms/?p=1972). Hallas (2009) refers to Ultra-red as a 'sound collective' (p. 242).

[17] In this case, however, the score was in fact displayed to the audience following Werder's *2010*[1] performance at the Incidental Music event in Zürich.

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