Just Try It

Thoughts on Art and Science Experiments

Judy Radul

> "If the audience co-operates, they become either actors or materials. To impede interruptions during the action, the handling will be similar to that of a gym lesson."
> —Otto Muehl, 1965[1]

As artists and critics in the contemporary zone have struggled to characterize the shocking diversity of activities understood as art, a host of metaphors emerge to describe artistic practice. Leo Steinberg addressed this tendency in his wittily argued 1968 critique of formalism, in which he speculates that the language of Greenbergian rhetoric is as influenced by the "streamlined efficiency image"[2] of the Detroit auto industry as by an ideal of Kantian self-critique. For Steinberg, this tendency toward annexing other models and using other criteria to judge art is a phenomenon with a long history. America, in Steinberg's estimation, deeply distrusts art and tends to see it as effete and European. He states, "The process of courting non-art is continuous. Not art but happenings; not art but social action; not art but transaction—or situation, experiment, behaviour stimulus.... American artists seek to immerse the things they make or do in the redeeming otherness of non-art. Hence the instability of the modern experience."[3]

One can also view this continuous reframing of art activity as art's refusal of essentialism and a way in which metaphors counter to dominant ideologies arise. In contrast to all the action-oriented scenarios outlined by Steinberg, Duchamp's evocation of chess and leisure can be recalled. In addition, conceptual artists conceived of art as (post) philosophy and the semiotic tendencies of the seventies and eighties promoted writing and reading as analogues to art-making and viewing. Models continue to be added to the list and compete for currency.

The metaphor that informs this conference is the idea of art as experiment. This paper takes up that metaphor without directly hypothesizing about what experimentalism is; rather, I try to weave together ideas of experiment that are already in play to provoke some questions about the relation of art and science experiment.

It could very rightly be said that there is little crossover between the "experiment," which artists refer to as part of their practice, and what is carried out under that name in science. In fact, during the course of the Blowing the Trumpets conference, the term "experimental" was used as a

synonym—albeit often with discomfort—for a variety of other terms, including, primarily, "avant-garde," but without any explicit reference to science practice. In the film/video lexicon the term is a catch-all that refers to a variety of techniques, strategies, and instances of production and discourse with a history of "experimental film" written over the last fifty-odd years. Primarily these "experiments" are experimental in relation to the hegemonic presence of Hollywood and its attendant ideologies. Here the term experimental is really used to valorize "different" or "anti-hegemonic" practices. This use of the term allows for relational comparisons between experimental and non-experimental practice but isn't so specific about what "experiment" is. Even in a text such as Marga Bijvoet's *Art as Inquiry: Toward New Collaborations Between Art, Science and Technology*, which takes the relation between art and science as its topic, the term is occasionally used quite loosely. For instance: "When Woody and Steina arrived in New York City, inter-media art was at its height. Diving into an active New York art scene, they found themselves attracted to the experimental side, to artists working in the margins."[4]

I'm wary of science-flavoured metaphors, as they are likely the outcome of the widespread cultural illegitimacy of art work vs. science work. Artists in academic positions experience this friction as they are called upon to describe their artwork as "research" and conform to a social science paradigm in order to gain funding. Art and science as fields of complementary human endeavour are intertwined throughout history. However, the risk of facile comparison looms large (i.e., artists talk about carrying out "experiments" or working in a "media lab," but one gets the sense that even the artists themselves aren't wholly convinced by these metaphors).

See If It Works

In the visual arts the term experimental, though familiar, doesn't locate a coherent body of work or discourse (as it does in avant-garde film and video circles). The term is associated with the break-up of modernism in the '60s and the increased valuation of process, idea, action, structure, situation, and performance over the discrete, "autonomous" art object that was characteristic of the period. This focus on process over object is consistent with American philosopher Robert P. Crease's idea of the experiment[5] (scientific or artistic) as exhibiting a "detached attitude" toward results. This detachment is an aspect which runs through twentieth-century art. It is manifest as art's refusal of instrumentality but also as a result of critiques on the basis of social and linguistic construction of the subject and of representation which dismanteled assumptions about the role of intentionality in art making. Combined with the increasing

inclination to understand the context as part of the work, this tendency makes possible a comparison between scientific and artistic "experiment." What is striking about the work of Crease is that, rather than an interest in describing art as a kind of science experiment, he employs an art metaphor to question the nature of scientific experiment. He devotes his entire 1993 book *The Play of Nature* to extending this analogy. Specifically, he pursues the analogy of experiment as theatrical performance. Robert Crease describes "experiment" in an open manner that would surely be adequate for much artistic practice:

> Scientific experiments are unique events in the world undertaken for the purpose of allowing something to be seen. What comes to be seen is not something unique and peculiar to that event, but something that can also be seen in similar performances in other contexts.... Scientific performances are addressed to specific communities and are responses to issues raised within those communities. But properly preparing and viewing the performances requires a detached attitude, one interested in seeing what is happening for its own sake rather than for some practical end. The outcomes of the detached seeing of such performances, however, can be a deepened and enriched understanding of the world and our engagement with it.[6]

This description echoes the peculiar conditions of contemporary art-making. The artist is committed yet uncertain of the outcome—ultimately the artist commits to the uncertainty of the practice that is art. One wonders if experiment can be *avoided* in art. Even if the artist proceeds with a clear intentionality, reckoning with the work on the part of the audience cannot be fully predicted. Even Jeff Wall, an artist well known for attempting cohesion and control of meaning, accepts that "viewers of works [of art] cannot be marshaled into seeing the work in any specified way."[7] But this unpredictability alone is but one aspect of the experimental. Below I'll follow up a few other points of contiguity between art and scientific experimentation that arise from Crease's description—the ideas of detachment from results and need for an informed audience. Later I pick up on ideas about "appearance" and the conception of the experiment as a response to "issues raised."

Semi-Detached

Reality television makes a grotesque out of the curiosity and openness with which artists create(d) experimental situations, such as Les Levine's real-time video exploration of his loft (*Space Walk*, 1969) or Marina Abramovic's early piece in which she remained passive for six hours while

the audience chose from a table of dangerous instruments they could "use" on her (*Rhythm O*, 1974). This negative aspect of the experimental is evoked by Baudrillard who states, "Our reality has become experimental. Without destiny, modern man is left with an endless experimentation of himself."[8] Even if we take issue with Baudrillard's ideas about destiny we might still recognize something compelling in his example of the reality TV show *The Loft* as the kind of experiment that he further characterizes as introducing "principles of scientific evidence and verification... [e]verywhere the experimental takes over the real and the imaginary."[9] These remarks remind us that, in particular, the detachment that is necessary to experiment can also promote a banal and ultimately sadistic attitude toward the object. In Baudrillard's account of experiment there is an inability to empathize with the subject of the experiment who is "itself" no longer real. He describes the intrusive—yet endless—specularity of reality television as a desire to see everything while, at the same time, not caring about anything.

No Audience

The need for a specific and prepared audience for experiment is something that Crease emphasizes (above) and Joseph Kosuth echoes in his 1970 statement that "the audience of conceptual art is composed primarily of artists—which is to say that an audience separate from the participants doesn't exist. In a sense then art becomes as 'serious' as science or philosophy, which don't have 'audiences' either."[10] Jeff Wall identifies genre as that which determines that artwork is "addressed to specific communities" who are "properly prepared."[11]

Experiment as Tradition?

For Wall, genre is an important aspect of tradition that assists the work's readability. He claims,

> The process of experience of a work, while it must be open to the associations brought to it by different people, is still structured and regulated and contains determinations. I think it is controlled, above all, by genre, by the generic character of the picture-types and the types of subject. Bakhtin said that genre was the collective, accumulated meaning of things that has come through time and the mutations of social orders. It is the foundation of the guarantee of objectivity, the basis of the "truth content" of representations....[12]

This inclusion of tradition, genre, or "something that can also be seen in similar performances in other contexts" as a guarantor of an experiment's

readability indicates that if an experiment is entirely saturated with novelty it risks non-recognition.

Counting on Analysis

While not pretending to be an historical survey of the idea of the experimental, my mentioning of Kosuth allows me to introduce a complex of ideas surrounding modernism's aspirations to science. In Kosuth's energetic and self-consciously paradigm-shifting *Art after Philosophy* (1968) he outlines an analytical program for art in which each work is a proposition that is primarily concerned with developing the definition of art: "In other words, the propositions of art are not factual, but linguistic in *character*...they express definitions of art, or the formal consequences of definitions of art."[13] He asserts the cleanly tautological state of art as follows:

> Art's unique character is the capacity to remain aloof from philosophical judgements. It is in this context that art shares similarities with logic, mathematics and, as well, science. But whereas the other endeavors are useful, art is not. Art indeed exists for its own sake.[14]

Early conceptual work sought to assimilate an idea of science as rigorous meaning-making through the application of non-subjective analysis and controlled systematic approaches to art-making. Later, in the 1975 essay "The Artist as Anthropologist," Kosuth reassesses *Art After Philosophy* as having "externalized features of the art activity which had always been internalized—making them explicit and capable of being examined."[15] But he concedes that his earlier essay perpetuated the scientism of modernism.[16]

The experimental, such as Carolee Schneemann's drawing performance *Up To And Including Her Limits* (1976), with its emphasis on process and context, is in contradistinction to Kosuth's early notion of science as an elegantly hermetic field. Experimentation by artists articulates the fine line between detachment (as liberation) and claims of objectivity (as alienation). Art experimentalism resists the necessity of a unified "idea" as a validating principle. Coherence is provided by the examination of a network or context such as in the work of Mark Dion, who replicates the fieldwork model of natural science by bringing specimens into the gallery and using art to frame the entirety of his activities, including collection, display, and the ecological ramifications of natural science.

Art's use of "scientific experiment" opened the model to interpretation and produced not only essentialisms but also jokes and parodies. For instance, in the conceptual works of Douglas Huebler, a work may begin with a formal experiment as a catalyst, but once set in motion the strictures

of method are purposely undermined. In a work such as *Variable Piece #70 (In Process), Global*, this statement of purpose accompanies the photographs: "Throughout the artist's lifetime he will photographically document, to the extent of his capacity, the existence of everyone alive in order to produce the most authentic and inclusive representation of the human species that may be assembled in that manner."[17] Here Huebler expresses both sympathy and skepticism toward grandiose data-gathering.

Experiment as Trying Doing

If we think of the experimental in art as valorizing the act of "trying" rather than testing we may recognize a relationship with the concept of action. Historicized by thinkers such as Hannah Arendt, "action" has a particular relation to manifesting one's self as an individual and historical subject.[18] The same belief is reflected even in Baudrillard's statements that in the modern world this ability to act is vastly diminished, replaced by a society of passive-aggressive watchers who do surveillance on each other's "behaviour." As a response to a world of seemingly incomprehensible complexity, the assertion that "it can't hurt to try" (i.e., to "blow the trumpet to the tulips") is both abject and alienated *and* open and optimistic. Artists try actions that are too stupid (in the best and most complex sense of the word) for science to contemplate. Experiment, the rebuilding of the world to see what the world is like, is laborious. Inclined to be skeptical about statements of truth, the experimental re-musters the elements. The artist, perhaps here exemplified by those making installations, leaps into the hermeneutic circle[19] from a particular place. Through elaborate preparations of space and materials,[20] the artist tries to produce the atmosphere that is conducive to a change, and hopes his or her interventions will be generative. Yet Arendt is clear, even if one doesn't know what one is trying, trying *is* a kind of doing,[21] trying *is* beginning and beginning sets things in motion. And for better or worse, "action has no end."[22] Perhaps it is the different consequences of trying that distinguish art and science. When science behaves for its own sake, simply trying things out, with a devotion to the process and little regard for the consequences, terrible things can happen. Arendt writes:

> Through the introduction of the experiment, in which we prescribed man-thought conditions to natural processes and forced them to fall into man-made patterns, we eventually learned how to "repeat the process that goes on in the sun," that is, how to win from natural processes on the earth those energies which without us develop only in the universe.
>
> The very fact that natural sciences have become exclusively sciences of process and, in their last stage, sciences of potentially irreversible, irremediable

> "processes of no return" is a clear indication that, whatever the brain power necessary to start them, the actual underlying human capacity which alone could bring about this development is no "theoretical" capacity, neither contemplation nor reason, but the human ability to act—to start new unprecedented processes whose outcome remains uncertain and unpredictable whether they are let loose in the human or the natural realm.[23]

It is only perversion to think that art is less important than science because its consequences are less dire. Perhaps art is the milieu for trying.

Thinking and Tinkering

It is important to note, however, that the experimental and the scientific attitude should not be unproblematically equated. It is Crease's thesis that the experimental has been vastly undervalued in comparison to theory-making when conceptualizing the project of science. Crease argues that the idea of experiment can be called upon to counter "mythic" approaches to science. Mythic approaches all preserve a "division of labor present in modern science between experimenters and theorists"[24] and perpetuate the idea that

> ...science is essentially theory making. Theories in this view are representations of the nature and behavior of a set of fundamental things that are "out there" in the world: true theories are accurate representations....in all three versions [of the mythic account] the basic content of science is removed from sense perception; the Democritean by the assumption that the fundamental entities are too small to be perceptible; the Platonic by the assumption that the fundamental entities are akin to ideal forms, numbers, or mathematical objects; and the Kantian by the assumption that the fundamental entities are unknowable things-in-themselves that are revealed in human experience only via the mediation of a synthetic activity that simultaneously puts them behind an impassable barrier. In representing the nature and behavior of fundamental things or their effects, theories explain observations—what we perceive—of the world. The truths aimed at by theoretical representations are held to be eternal, above human time and history. Experimental methods and practices, which are historically and culturally bound, play no constitutive role in them.[25]

It would seem then that the artist-experimenters of the twentieth-century avant-garde have similarly tried to use the idea of experimentation (perhaps in advance of science in this) to dismantle some of the same mythic, metaphysical presumptions, and to situate art as an activity that is historically and culturally bound rather than a timeless manifestation of genius

or beauty. In fact, artists have seized on a central aspect of modern life—the idea of the "self" as an experimental unit for "testing" theories instead of receiving traditional knowledge without question. Artists often place themselves in the double role of the detached experimenter and the object of the inquiry, thereby explicitly contravening notions of scientific objectivity. To take but one example, consider the falling pieces of Bas Jan Ader "remake" Galileo. The "resistance" that the artist is subject to/of—as he falls from a roof, into a canal, from a tree, or simply (and with most difficulty) from standing—is not only gravity and surface resistance, but also consciousness itself. Artist-experimenters who use their own body as a site of information seem to both affirm and trouble the place of experience in modern life. To shoot myself in the arm as a mode of inquiry (Chris Burden) or to hang suspended from my flesh above the city (Stelarc) is to provoke the authoritative limits of both art and experience. What can be "gained" from these acts? What can be said, even after such limit-testing experiences? The questionable knowledge/authority achieved even through these extreme gestures anticipates experience's atrophied jurisdiction in the digital age.

Come Over to My House

One extreme example of artistic social experiment is the communal living pursued by Vienesse Actionist artist Otto Muehl as documented in Theo Alternberg's "Das Paradies Experiment." The banal sadism that Baudrillard locates in reality television is preceded by slowly devolving utopian experiments such as Muehl's.[26] Existing in various forms over a twenty-year period, Muehl's group was a living experiment in the critique of societal norms (monogamy, work, cleanliness, private property, hierarchy). The evening performances or "self presentations" were a constant feature of communal life and were used to perpetuate the raw edge of existence as well as to act as a forum for re/inscribing identity and social hierarchy. Crease has a more theatrical model in mind, but what he accentuates is a link between performance and experiment. To succeed they both need to be contextually responsive:

> ...performance cannot be thought of in terms of its product alone; performances must be prepared by an advance set of behaviors and decisions.... A spectrum of decisions and activities have to take place before that opening night in order to "shape" that opening night performance.... If these decisions and activities were made differently, the outcome would differ as well.[27]

It's hard to imagine points of comparison between Muehl's amorphous-

eroticized-infantilized art-life-demagogy experiment and the work of Jeff Wall. But the elasticity of the term experimental is illustrated by the fact that Wall also describes his work as "experimental": "I...don't think that my pictures have any point of contact with the neo-conservative return to tradition, which counterposes figuration and representation against Modernism and experimentalism. My work comes out of the process of experimental critique, but is itself an experimental critique of aspects of that process."[28] Here modernism and experimentalism are aligned against conservative reaction. Influenced early on by artists such as Vancouver's N.E. Thing Co. and American "land art" pioneer Robert Smithson, who questioned the institutional frameworks of art as well as the nature of the art object, Wall defends his development "away" from these experiments as a double turn, an "experimental critique" of experiment. Wall understands modernism as experimental in that it has inherited the notion of self-regulating criticality from the Enlightenment. I wonder about the difference then between self-experiment and self-critique. Is there a possibility of non-dialectic experiment, one which is not searching for contradictions within an idea but is somehow experimentally thinking through difference?

Experiment and Experience

How to function well without destiny, God, and grand theory is now a familiar question. One difficulty is our (in)ability to create meaning from our experiences without naively reasserting a unified subject—that is, without re-erecting a false cohesion of the "I" how does one say "I saw this."[29] This status of experience is something that Walter Benjamin addresses in "The Storyteller" (1936), Giorgio Agamben takes up in "Infancy and History" (1977), and which feminist writers have questioned in terms of the exclusion of women's experience from history and symbolic meaning.

I mention the questionable status of experience because in the experimental there is often a desire for, or assumption of, real experiences. What is available is understood as categorically not a representation but an appearance of phenomenon in the "here and now" shared by performer/director/audience. Anxiety about appearance as "representation" is recognized by Crease, but he counters Plato's ancient prejudice against the theatre as merely mimetic by stating, "for theatre (like experimentation) is in my terms...presentative rather than representative and confirmatory, revelatory and disclosive rather than imitative."[30] This resonates with Artaud's ambitions for theatre and, in fact, in his discussion of Artaud's "theatre of cruelty" Derrida similarly presents an idea of theatre as non-imitative (as life itself): "The theatre of cruelty is not a *representation*. It is life itself, in the extent to which life is unrepresentable. Life is

the nonrepresentable origin of representation."[31] And later, "...non-representation is thus original representation if representation signifies also the unfolding of a volume, a multidimensional milieu, an experience which produces its own space... A closed space that is to say a space produced from within itself and no longer organized from the vantage of another absent site...."[32] Artaudian staging is the fantastic convergence of as many life elements as possible. It is experiment because the complete remounting of history is no longer organized from outside but participated in, experienced.

Crease's project—to provoke science with the unfixity of performance—produces an interesting category of experimental activity that he calls "artistic." He contrasts "artistic" to "failed," "mechanical," and "standardized" works. His conception of the artistic as something that "has not previously appeared" seems to shade it a little closer to Derrida's idea of "non representable origin of representation." As Crease writes,

> Artistic performance...coaxes into being something which has not previously appeared. It is beyond the standardized program; it is action at the limit of the already controlled and understood; it is risk. The artistry of experimentation involves bringing a phenomenon into material presence in a way which requires more than passive forms of preparation, yet in a way so that one nevertheless has confidence that one recognizes the phenomenon for what it is. Artistic objects "impose" themselves—they announce their presence as being completely or incompletely realized—but this imposition is not independent of the judgments and actions of the artist.[33]

However, Derrida's insistence via Artaud that "it is chance that is infinite, not God" and that "[t]his play of life is artistic" goes much further than Crease to completely dismantle the experiment as well as the "usually" excluded preparations (the individuals, the space, the tools) that are used as a frame. While Crease emphasizes appearance over boundless experience, Derrida describes an exalted but elusive "experience which produces its own space" and considers life rather than experimentation to be artistic.

Crease remarks briefly on the relation between his ideas of the experiment as an experience and Artaud's theatre of cruelty as anti-mimetic when he mentions "the prejudice in favor of representation over presentation"[34] in both science and theatre. Crease claims that "by using the schema of hermeneutical phenomenology one is not forced into the position of having to choose between presentation or representation; both are accommodated within one framework."[35] By hermeneutical phenomenology he means an interpretive investigation into phenomena and experi-

ence in the context of daily life, one that recognizes no objective vantage point but a circle of affecting involvement continuously altering the object of inquiry.

Trying Not To Try

Can one experiment without or against structure, without "goals," for and against experiment? Crease is clear that experiment is the most open of processes; this is what differentiates it from "rehearsing, calibrating or demonstrating":

> One does not know precisely what will occur if one is truly performing rather than rehearsing, calibrating, or demonstrating; there is an aura of expectancy and suspense when a good performer takes the stage, even at the end of a run. We may also express this by saying that the act is executed in response to an inquiry, taken in its broadest sense as that "vague fever" that Merleau-Ponty asserts is prior to the act of artistic expression, a fever that cannot be assuaged with the aid of books, theories, and the like, but only from what transpires in the interplay of the performance elements: "[O]nly the work itself, completed and understood, is proof that there was *something* rather than *nothing* to be said. Only the experiment itself, completed and understood, is proof that there was something rather than nothing to be discovered."[36]

How do we experiment with our earnest desire to get results that justify the experiment? Even in the description above there is a causality, however poetic, which emphasizes production initiated by a problematic situation—a vague fever. Thinking about the problem produces theories or "texts" that need realization.[37] Science's *need* for a phenomenon[38] to appear as a motivating force of the "performance" is almost the reverse of my own experience of causality in making art. Problems are not so easily approached in art; if they are, one may quite quickly find that one is no longer making art. To hold on to "art" while addressing gender, urban experience, or cultural specificity (to name a few recent topics) one needs to consider the possibility that arises from an interplay of elements inside the space of art. What seems to matter are not experiments on the stuff of the world but rehearsing *a way of making decisions* in relation to material, context, history (not that they can be separated). Art cannot "test" anything. That is, it is not the material but the process with the material that is tested. What is ultimately of greatest interest to me as an artist is the decision-making process, its variability, its texture. This could also be described as the orientation and organization of differences. The attitude of the decision-making (which is reflected in the work) is what I under-

stand as an aesthetic. Bruce Nauman says, "Art is a means of acquiring an investigative attitude."[39] I understand this to mean not that art *is* an investigative attitude (a platitude) but rather that art is *a way toward* such an attitude. This inquiring interpretive attitude, then, is "produced" by the experiment and is as significant as the artwork that is the more obvious result.

The experiment, if it continues to be a meaningful description (and it is being used quite frequently, perhaps as the word "postmodern" pales), needs to be conceived of not just as process-oriented midwifery, but also as a zone of reception. That is, how does the experimental account for its appearance? My speech occurs at the invitation of your silence; the experiment is a condition that invites phenomena to appear. Is there a reciprocal situation where the phenomena also invite the experimental to appear? How can this circular causality be reckoned? Can it go beyond the circle, to the layered, multitracked mix of contemporary complexity? What conditions allow the experiment? By whom? When? Is the experiment only successful when Jesus, the phallus, or the like appear? Or, at least in art, can there be energizing flops and disappearances? Could something as rigidly symbolic as Mathew Barney's *Cremaster 3* be considered an experiment? As a film it is by nature "closed" to its immediate context; it cannot respond, but as an action it enters the interrelated conditions that form the world of contemporary art, and by its very scale and ambition may cause other "phenomena" to appear.

Making a Rabbit

> In postcoloniality we are incessantly offered counter-models through which the displaced—those placed on the margins of the enjoyment of full global participation—fashion new worlds by producing experimental culture. By experimental cultures I wish to define a set of practices whereby cultures evolving out of imperialism and colonialism, slavery and indenture, compose a collage of reality from the fragments of collapsing space.[40]

I observe that privilege—understood as not just economic or social advantage, but as "making sense in one's place and time"—produces not just better conditions for thinking—that is, more time, better equipment, access to better education, etc.—but a mind that is organized in a way that makes sense *of* and *to* the dominant culture. This making sense in relation to gender, family, community, history, becomes the very believability of that person or "subject position." And one's credibility, believability to oneself as well as others, is a ground from which further sense-making activities rather naturally arise. If an experimental subject then can be imagined it would seem that experiments on the order of *disappearance* of self-phenomena (that which makes us believably the one we are, showing up under different profiles but remaining essentially

recognizable) might be conducted. What about experiments in non-manifestation, disappearance rather than appearance, their relation to magic and the destabilizing effect on the "witnesses" who are no longer sure of what they (didn't) see? The pleasurable experience of non-mastery is an essential element. Somehow, like Crease's anti-mythic science, I want to avoid the metaphors of discovery - the assumption that one is going "deeper" into an already available reality—that seem to permeate not only the analytic, but also the experimental. Although the links between an idea of experiment in science and in art may be tenuous or unexplored, the imagining of a continuum is worthwhile if only to conceptualize art experiments as a provocation, antidote, or tease to the formalism, authority, arrogance of science, and, one would hope, vice versa. To offer a challenge each to the other from the side of life, cruelty, and materiality, and to practise to produce different forms of truth from the same experiment.

Notes

1 Theo Altenberg, *The Paradise Experiment: The Utopia of Free Sexuality Friedrichshof Commune 1973-1978* (Vienna: Triton, 2001).

2 Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art and Design* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 79.

3 Steinberg, 63.

4 Marga Bijvoet, *Art as Inquiry: Toward New Collaborations Between Art, Science and Technology* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 218.

5 Performance theorist Bert O. States' "Performance as Metaphor," which interrogates the metaphor of "performance" as it is used in contemporary art, was my introduction to Crease's thought. I am heavily indebted to States' reading of the book and, in some cases, my quote selections follow upon his. In fact, at the time of the Blowing the Trumpets conference I had only read States' article and hadn't yet been able to find Crease's book.

6 Robert Crease, *The Play of Nature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 96. Thanks to Bert States who recognized the succinct nature of this passage and quoted it in his article "Performance as Metaphor."

7 Thierry de Duve, et. al., *Jeff Wall* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 119.

8 Jean Baudrillard, "Dust Breeding," *CTheory*, eds. Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, 8 October, 2001, trans. François Debrix, <http://www.ctheory.net/text_file.asp?pick=293>.

9 ibid.

10 Joseph Kosuth, *Art After Philosophy and After: Collected Writings, 1966–1990*, ed. Gabriele Guercio (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), 39.

11 DeDuve, 119.

12 ibid.

13 Kosuth, 23.

14 Kosuth, 24

15 Kosuth, 119.

16 By this he means Greenbergian/Friedian modernism's emphasis on art's attempts to come up with objective formal standards, almost parallel to those of an increasingly untenable objective science approach. In his 1975 essay, he makes the following critical assessment of this approach: "the artist perpetuates his culture by maintaining certain features of it, by 'using them....art is manifested in praxis'; it 'depicts' *while* it alters society.... Our 'non-naiveness' means we are aware of our activity as constituting a basis for self-enlightenment, self-reflexivity—rather than a scientistic attempt at presenting objectivity, which is what a

pictorial way of working implies. Pictorial art is an attempt to depict objectivity. It implies objectivity by its 'other world' quality. The implication of an 'anthropologized art', on the other hand, is that art must internalize and use its social awareness. The fallacy of Modernism is that it has come to stand for the culture of Scientism. It is art outside of man, art with a life of its own. It stands and fails as an attempt to be objective." Kosuth, 117-118.

17 Alison Green, "Duration, Duration, Duration," *Art Monthly*, no. 255, The Arts Council of England (April 2002): 8.

18 Hanah Arendt, "Chapter V," *The Human Condition* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959).

19 The problem in interpretation that arises from needing to know the whole to interpret the part and vice versa. The hermeneutic circle depicts a circular and mutually altering relation between interpreter and object with no vantage outside the "circle" from which to propose an objective opinion.

20 Are the preparations, subtly religious, always linked to a second coming?

21 Arendt, 207.

22 Arendt, 209.

23 Arendt, 231-232.

24 Crease, 16.

25 Crease, 17.

26 And by extension the relation of experiment and dissatisfaction with hegemonic norms may also devolve.

27 Crease, 101.

28 de Duve, 123.

29 "I saw this" is the aspect of realism that Jeff Wall admires in the work of Goya who would sometimes inscribe these words under an image sketched from life (from de Duve).

30 Crease, 96

31 The quotation continues, "'I have therefore said "cruelty" as I might have said "life"' (Artaud). This life carries man along with it, but is not primarily the life of man. The latter is only a representation of life, and as such is the limit—the humanist limit—of the metaphysics of classical theatre." Jacques Derrida, "The Theatre of Cruelty (and the Closure of Representation)," *Mimesis, Masochism, and Mime*, ed. Timothy Murray (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 42, 40-63.

32 Derrida 45.

33 Bert O. States, "Performance as Metaphor," *Afterall*, eds. Charles Esche and Mark Lewis (London: Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, 1999), 65-87.

34 Crease, 182.

35 Crease, 182.

36 Crease, 111-112.

37 Crease explains: "In theatre, the need for a production arises from the fact that, by itself, a script or score is but an abstract testimonial to the possibility of a performance. To realize a performance a number of decisions have to be made and acts accomplished in advance to specify and create the circumstance.... Similarly, theories are but abstract testimonials to the possibility of the presence of phenomena.... The process of experimental production forces a researcher to make a number of decisions and to accomplish a number of actions in advance of an actual experiment in order to create the environment or special context in which the phenomenon may appear...." Crease, 161.

38 Crease follows Husserl's use of the term phenomena as "something that has been experienced to be an invariant, which reveals itself as the same through different circumstance." Crease, 91.

39 As quoted in the handout which accompanied his exhibition at the Dia Center for the Arts. Mapping the Studio 1 (Fat Chance John Cage), January 10-July 27, 2002.

40 Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box," *Documenta XI* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002), 45.