CONSERVING MULTIMEDIA ART FROM ARTISTIC, CURATORIAL, AND HISTORICIST PERSPECTIVES: CASE STUDY ON TEOMAN MADRA ARCHIVE

by
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CONSERVING MULTIMEDIA ART FROM ARTISTIC, CURATORIAL, AND HISTORICIST PERSPECTIVES: CASE STUDY ON TEOMAN MADRA ARCHIVE

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ABSTRACT

CONSERVING MULTIMEDIA ART FROM ARTISTIC, CURATORIAL, AND HISTORICIST PERSPECTIVES: CASE STUDY ON TEOMAN MADRA ARCHIVE

BEGÜM ÇELIK

VISUAL ARTS AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN M.A. THESIS, AUGUST 2024

Thesis Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Hüseyin Selçuk Artut

Keywords: Technological Arts Preservation, Teoman Madra, Media Archive, Multimedia Art, Fluxus

This thesis aims to concretize the historical significance of Teoman Madra in Turkish Media Art by analyzing his works produced between 1960 and 2000, while presenting a case study on the conservation of technological artworks. It addresses the challenges of preserving multimedia works that combine both analog and digital elements, reflecting a shift from traditional conservation methodologies to a more holistic, interdisciplinary approach. The study not only details the methods applied in archiving Madra's work but also evaluates the evolution of Media Arts in Turkey through his perspective, highlighting his significant influence and positioning within international art discourse. By bringing long-forgotten works to light, it seeks to answer the question, "*How did Media Arts evolve in Turkey between the 1960s and 2000s?*" This thesis also explores Madra's career, his self-identification as a Fluxus artist, as well as the archival and curatorial challenges of exhibiting multimedia art, thus uncovering the complexities of conserving and curating technological works. Ultimately, the study aims to revive and contextualize Madra's forgotten contributions within Turkish Media Art history, offering a comprehensive framework for future archival and exhibition studies.

ÖZET

MULTİMEDYA SANATININ KORUNMASINA SANATSAL, KÜRATÖRYEL VE TARİHSELCİ YAKLAŞIM: TEOMAN MADRA ARŞİV ÇALIŞMASI

BEGÜM ÇELİK

GÖRSEL SANATLAR VE GÖRSEL İLETİŞİM TASARIMI YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, AĞUSTOS 2024

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Teknolojik Sanatın Korunması, Teoman Madra, Medya Arşivi, Multimedya Sanatı, Fluxus

Bu tez, Teoman Madra'nın 1960-2000 yılları arasında ürettiği eserler üzerinden Türk Medya Sanatı'ndaki tarihsel önemini somutlaştırmayı ve teknolojik sanat eserlerinin korunmasına ilişkin bir vaka çalışması sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Multimedya eserlerinin hem analog hem de dijital unsurları birleştirmesi, geleneksel koruma yöntemlerinden daha bütüncül ve disiplinler arası bir yaklaşıma geçişi zorunlu kıldığından, bu eserlerin korunmasında karşılaşılan zorluklar ele alınmaktadır. Çalışma, Madra'nın eserlerinin arşivlenmesinde uygulanan yöntemleri ayrıntılı olarak incelemenin yanı sıra, sanatçının perspektifinden Türkiye'de Medya Sanatı'nın evrimini değerlendirmekte ve Madra'nın uluslararası sanat söylemindeki etkisini ve konumunu vurgulamaktadır. Uzun süredir unutulmuş eserleri gün yüzüne çıkararak "*1960'lar ile 2000'ler arasında Türkiye'de Medya Sanatı nasıl gelişti?*" sorusuna yanıt aramayı hedeflemektedir. Ayrıca, Madra'nın kariyeri, Fluxus sanatçısı olarak kendini tanımlaması ve multimedya sanatının arşivleme ve sergileme süreçlerinde karşılaşılan zorluklar da bu tezin inceleme alanına girmektedir. Sonuç olarak, çalışma, Madra'nın Türk Medya Sanatı tarihindeki unutulmuş katkılarını yeniden canlandırmayı ve bağlamına oturtmayı, aynı zamanda gelecekteki arşivleme ve sergileme çalışmalarına yönelik kapsamlı bir çerçeve sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

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I am immensely thankful to the Madra family for granting me access to Teoman Madra's extensive archive. Their support made this research possible.

My heartfelt thanks go to Ahu Antmen and Fırat Arapoğlu for their insightful feedback on the art history and criticism aspects of this thesis. Their expertise and constructive criticism have greatly enriched my work, especially in areas requiring further feedback.

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Lastly, I am deeply thankful to my mother, who made all of this possible, including me. Your unwavering support and encouragement have been my foundation.

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Salondaki büyük saati sattım
Saatin ölçebileceği
Herhangi bir zaman parçası yok
(Manastırlı Hilmi Beye Birinci Mektup, Edip Cansever)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATONS

CCO Cataloging Cultural Objects 74

CDWA Categories for the Description of Works of Art 74, 75, 77, 78, 81

ICOM-CC International Council of Museums - Committee of Conservation ... 65

NMK New Media Kitchen 33

1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this thesis is to concretize the historical significance of Teoman Madra in Turkish Media Art based on his works produced between 1960 and 2000, and to present a comprehensive case study on the conservation and archiving of technological artworks. This study addresses the challenges of preserving multimedia artworks that integrate both analog and digital elements, advocating for a holistic and interdisciplinary approach that reflects a shift from traditional conservation methodologies.

The first chapter, "Teoman Madra as an Artist", delves into Madra's career, examining documents from his archive to present his exhibitions and remembrances from interviews. This chapter establishes a foundational understanding of his artistic journey. Within this chapter, the subsection titled "Teoman Madra's Artistic Approach" explores his self-identification as a Fluxus artist. It includes an overview of the Fluxus movement in "Fluxus History" and analyzes the role of Fluxus in Madra's artworks, comparing his approach with the Fluxus community. This comparison scrutinizes his self-attribution while presenting parallels and discrepancies regarding his statement.

Transitioning from Madra's artistic identity, the second chapter, "Conservation of Multimedia Art" highlights the urgency of conservation, outlining what needs to be conserved. This chapter details the archival strategies developed for the Teoman Madra Archive case study, including collection exploration, technical examination, media conversion, digitization, and descriptive cataloging. Additionally, it offers an in-depth discussion on the findings from the archival process and suggests potential future work to further preserve and study Madra's archive.

Finally, the last chapter, "Exhibiting Teoman Madra's Artworks" discusses curating a retrospective exhibition for Madra. It provides an overview of retrospective exhibitions and proposes a retrospective for Madra, focusing on selection, reconstruction, and installation processes. This chapter ties together the historical, archival, and

technical aspects of Madra's work, demonstrating how these elements can be effectively presented to the public in a meaningful and contextualized exhibition.

By integrating an analysis of Madra's career and artistic approach with a detailed examination of conservation methodologies and a practical proposal for exhibiting his works, this thesis offers a comprehensive framework for understanding and preserving the legacy of Teoman Madra in Turkish Media Art.

2. TEOMAN MADRA AS AN ARTIST

2.1 Teoman Madra's Art Career

Born in Istanbul in 1931, multimedia artist Teoman Madra grew up in Ayvalık, where he was engaged in agriculture from an early age, a vocation rooted in his family. He graduated from Galatasaray High School in Istanbul before moving to the United States in 1950 to pursue his graduate studies. At the University of California, Davis, he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Pomology in 1954. It was during these years (1950-1954) that Madra's interest in contemporary art and avant-garde jazz music deepened, influenced by the dynamic cultural scenes he encountered in California and New York. Prior to his departure to the United States, he was already familiar with the likes of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Lennie Tristano. Upon his arrival in New York, one of his first cultural activities was to immerse himself in the music of those artists at the iconic Birdland on 41st Street.[1] This experience in one of jazz's legendary venues afforded Madra a deep appreciation for the art form and reinforced his passion for the avant-garde.

As Madra tells the anecdote, in the summer of 1952, while working at canneries in San Jose, he was introduced to a group of jazz musicians who were keenly exploring the frontiers of contemporary music.[2] This exposure to a broader spectrum of musical experimentation profoundly influenced his artistic development. Among these musicians, there was a student, referenced in the archive with the first name only, Bill, with whom Madra ventured to Los Angeles. Their shared goal was to seek insights from a documentary composer—a vanguard artist who was dedicated to exploring the evolving landscapes of music. Although Madra's memoir does not confirm whether they found the composer or not, this anecdote shows his effort to understand the progressive elements of art and music during his time in the USA.

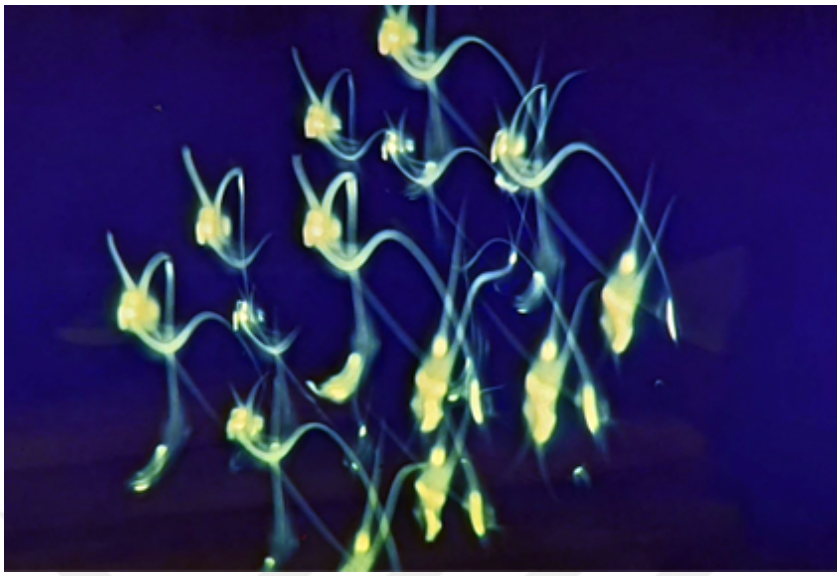
[1] Referenced from an interview he conducted, found in the archive, for the 'John Cage' exhibition at Kuad Gallery in 2012.
[2] Ibid.

These experiences in New York provided Madra with a rich opportunity for sensory experiences. It was in this milieu that Madra not only deepened his appreciation for avant-garde but also began to find the conceptual links between auditory rhythms and visual dynamics that would characterize his future work. During one of his travels from New York to California by train, Madra shared a compartment with an individual who would later be recognized as a prominent painter from San Francisco. The painter whose name he could not remember in the interview,[3] shared with Madra his practice of painting while listening to Stan Kenton. This interaction underscored the interconnectedness of the visual and auditory arts—a theme that would significantly influence Madra's later works. In the same interview, Madra noted his lack of knowledge about Jackson Pollock's work at the time and expressed his precedence for the jazz scene over the Visual Arts he encountered in Berkeley and San Francisco during the early 1950s.

Upon his return to Turkey, in 1955, during his military service in Turkey, he purchased his first photo camera, a Voigtlander Vito B, from his major. In his own words, he states *"I became a photography-based (Fluxus) artist in 1962"*[4] thanks to this camera that became an extension of his vision, enabling him to superimpose images and capture the interplay of light and shadow. Undoubtedly, his interest in Arts, specifically painting, played a major role in the visual language he created through experimenting with photography. As he mentioned, he was influenced by icons such as Picasso, Hans Hartung, Paul Klee, Victor Vasarely, and Jackson Pollock[5] as he delved more deeply into the field of Visual Arts. I would also include Wassily Kandinsky among the influential artists for Teoman Madra, particularly due to Kandinsky's geometric compositions and his unique approach to visual art as a form of synesthetic expression, being referred to as the "painter of chords and sound". These influences, combined with Madra's photographic experimentations, would lead to the creation of works that were more than mere images; they were visual interpretations of jazz rhythms and abstractions.

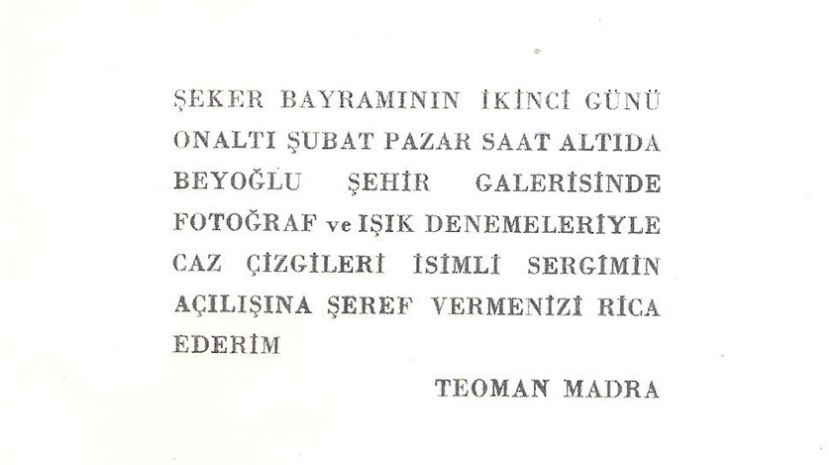
[3]Referenced from an interview he conducted, found in the archive, for the John Cage exhibition at Kuad Gallery in 2012.
[4]Quoted from a CV document titled 'Teo Timeline' found in the archive.
[5]Listed in a document titled 'Marcatre and More' found in the archive.

Figure 2.1 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.



In 1964, Madra opened his first exhibition "Light Playout with Contemporary Jazz"[6] on February 16th at the Beyoğlu City Gallery in Istanbul. This exhibition was the first official public showcase of what he has been experimenting with; abstract light compositions capturing contemporary jazz rhythms.

Figure 2.2 Invitation for the "Light Playout with Contemporary Jazz" Exhibition, 1964, ©Teoman Madra Collection.



ŞEKER BAYRAMININ İKİNCİ GÜNÜ
ONALTI ŞUBAT PAZAR SAAT ALTIDA
BEYOĞLU ŞEHİR GALERİSİNDE
FOTOĞRAF ve IŞIK DENEMELERİYLE
CAZ ÇİZGİLERİ İSİMLİ SERGİMİN
AÇILIŞINA ŞEREF VERMENİZİ RİCA
EDERİM

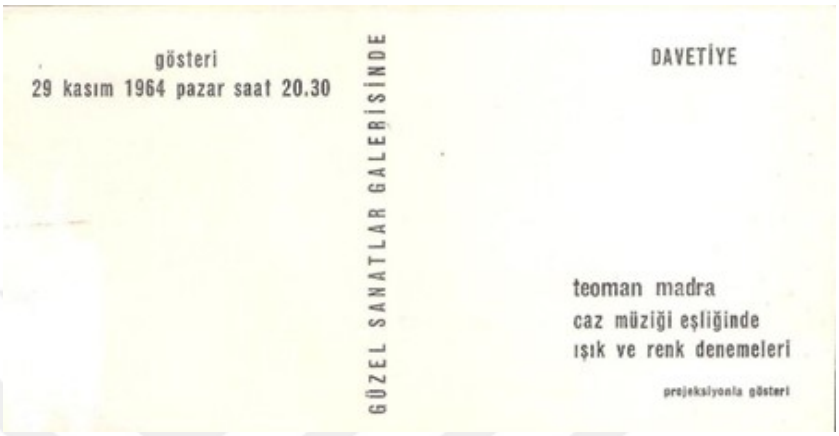
TEOMAN MADRA

On the second day of the Ramadan Holiday, Sunday, February 16, at 6 PM, I kindly invite you to the opening of my exhibition titled Experiments with Photography and Light: Jazz Lines, at the Beyoğlu City Gallery.

[6]His first exhibition is listed in his CV, which is included in the exhibition catalogue for a later show titled 'Inside Abstraction' at Gallery BM.

Shortly after beginning to exhibit his early abstract photography, Madra began organizing multimedia shows where he displayed his photos with projections, all set to the accompaniment of jazz music. The first recorded instance of such a show took place on November 29, 1964, as indicated by an invitation found in the archive.

Figure 2.3 Invitation for a Projected Show of Light and Color Experiments Accompanied by Jazz Music, 1964, ©Teoman Madra Collection.



Following this event, Madra hosted another one titled "*Light Games Accompanied by Jazz Music*" on May 7, 1965, at the Ankara French Cultural Center. This event is particularly noteworthy because it was one of the earliest to receive press coverage, as indicated by archival findings, with a piece written by Cemil Eren, a Turkish painter who is also known for his art critiques, regarding the show. Eren's article is particularly significant due to the scarcity of writings mentioning Madra's early career in the archival records and its detailed account of Madra's earlier practice. He describes how Madra, using light as a brush, performed a visual symphony aligned with the rhythms of jazz music. By being one of the earliest press findings from the Teoman Madra archive, Cemil Eren's article deserves to be quoted at length:

Figure 2.4 Newspaper Clipping titled 'Teoman Madra Photo-Light Games' by Cemil Eren, 1965, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Resim

Teoman Madra Foto - Işık oyunları

Cemil EREN

FRANSIZ Kültür Merkezinde caz müziği eşliğiyle projeksiyonla bir gösteri yaptı Teoman Madra. Bir el feneri, mum veya benzeri bir ışık kaynağını objektifi açık duran bir fotoğraf makinası önün de hareket ettirmek veya bunun tam aksine, makinayı tesbit edip, kendisi, dinlemekte olduğu caz müziğinin temposuna uyarak dans etmek suretiyle elde ettiği renkli diapozitiflerle yaptığı gösteri fotoğrafçının nasıl soyut bir sanatçı gibi çalışabileceğinin güzel örnekleriydi. Caz müziğinin, fotoğraf makinasını gözünde tutan sanatçının ritmik danslarına dans eden kişinin devimlerine bağlanmış olan makina vasıtasıyla çizgi şeklinde ritmik devimlere çevrilmesi, şeklinde anlatılabilecek olan bir sanat eylemi olarak deyimlenebilir. Teoman Madra'nın yaptığı iş. Müziğin resme aktarılması. Veya müzikteki ritmle resimdeki ritmin birleştikleri nokta. Zaman içinde gelişen müzik ritmi nin dört tane kenarı olan bir yüzeyde saptanması. İki sanatın ortak yanlarından biri olan ritm küçük fotoğraf filmlerinde gözle görülür hale getirildiğinde sonuç nefis resimlere dönüşüyor. Projeksiyondaki fotoğrafları resim diye seyrediyoruz, ancak bunun yanısıra dinlenen müzik arasında bağlar kurmaya yardım ediyor. Müziğin ritmine uyarak perdede ritmik bir düzen için de gelişen çizgileri izleyebiliyoruz.

Esas müziğin ritmiyle çalışmak olmak üzere çeşitli deneylere girişiyor Teoman Madra. Bazı resimler de ince çizgiler halinde olan devimler yer yer kalınlaşıp aynı zamanda detinlik, kalınlık kazanıyor. Bunlar, ince çizgiler arasından daha ışıklı, parlak olarak dikkati çektikleri gibi, bazı resimler de de akkor haline gelmiş demir çubuklardan yapılmış sağlam heykellerin görüntüsünü alıyor. Üst üste çekimle elde ettiği renkli fon ve bunun üzerinde çizgi veya lekeler halinde gelişen foto - ışık resimler başka hiç bir teknikle elde edilemiyecek teknik olanaklar meydana getiriyor. Kalın ışık çizgilerinin dönen, kıvrılan, uzayıp giden bir yaşantısı oluyor. Bunların yanında bazı basit değişikliklerle olmadık görünümler elde ediyor.

Daha çok geliştirdiği son denemelerinde çizgilerle birlikte, devingen geniş yüzeylerin ritmine varıyor. Bazı resimlerde çok dolu yüzey bazılarında da minumum hareket ve elemandan ibaret kalıyor...

Bir tek gösteriden ibaret kalan bu sanat olayı ne yazık ki sanat severlerin çok azı tarafından görülebildi. Ama bir fotoğraf makinası ve bir de el feneri gibi basit bir ışık kaynağıyla çalışan Madra bu işin peşini bırakacak gibi değil. Çalışmalarına devam ettikçe de çok güzel şeylerin çıkacağı su götürmez bir gerçek.

Şeref Bigalı

İzmirli ressam Güzel Sanatlar Galerisinde açtı sergisini. Davetiyedeki sözlerden öğrendiğimize göre ressam Paris'te tanınmış Göettzile birlikte çalışmış; ayrılırken Götz özilmiş ve Bigalının yapıtlarını daima görmekten memnun olacağını belirtmiş.

Götz'ün kanılarına önem vermekle birlikte, biz kendi görüş açımızdan sergiyi değerlendirmeye çalışacağız.

Sergiyi görenlerden çoğunun takıldıkları nokta resimlerin hepsinin küçük boyutlarda oluşu. Küçük boyutlarda resim yapmak elbette ki bir sakın ca değil, değil ama, doğrusu, insan bir kaç tane de büyük boyutlu resim görmeyi istiyor. Resimlere tek tek bakıldığın da güzel; ritmi, dengesi, armonisi yerinde tuallere görüyorsunuz. İçlerinden bir kaç tanesi de insanı çekiyor ve önünde tutuyor. Bunlar güzel resim dedirtiyor. Resimlere elbetteki tek tek bakılır ve güzel olması aranır, diyecekler olacak. Evet ama sergiye bir de toplu bir bakış vardır, bu bakıştan aranan da sanatçının kişiliğidir. Yapıtların ortak bir havası varsa, tümüyle insanı kavrıyorsa, başkalarından ayrılan bir karakter taşıyorsa, kısaca sanatçının başkalarından ayrılan kişiliğini veriyorsa o zaman işler başka türlü olur. Götz'in çağrı kartlarındaki sözlerinden sonra bunu bulmayı ummuştuk sergide...

Bazı resimlerde 1950 - 51 yıllarında Fahrünnisa Zeid'in yaptığı kaleidoskopik görüntülere benzer görünümleri bazı resimlerde Polinkof havası; bazılarında da Pariste yaşayan ünlü ressamımız Selim Turanın etkilerini bulmak umduğumuz havayı bulmamıza engel oldu. İsterdik ki, sanatçı artık başka sanatçıların etkilerinden kurtuluk, kendine has bir yol çizmiş olsun. Oyle bir sergiyle karşılaşmış olsaydık gerçekten çok sevinecektik. Çünkü, Şeref Bigalı şimdiye değin çok resim yapmış ve çok da sergi açmış bir sanatçıdır. Ama şunu da hemen ekliyelim ki Şeref Bigalı genç bir sanatçıdır, tek tek sevdiğimiz yapıtları ile risi için umut vericidir. Gelecek yıllarda, şimdi sergisinde gördüğümüz bütün etkilerden sıyrılmış olarak, kendi kişiliğini aksettiren yapıtlarla karşımıza çıkacaktır. Bu gün artık sanat çok kişisel bir gösteri ve davranış olmuştur, dünyanın her yanında, sanat kaygılarıyla birlikte sanatçıda kişilik aranmaktadır. Bir çok eleştiriciye göre belirgin bir kişilik her türlü kaygının üstüne çıkmaktadır.

İzmirin iki üç önemli ressamından biri olan Bigalının yapıtlarını merak etmekteydik, sergisini görmekten çok memnun olduğumuzu söylemek isterim.

Teoman Madra gave a projected show accompanied by jazz music at the French Cultural Center. They were good examples of how can the photographer act like an abstract artist by moving a flashlight, candle, or similar light source in front of a camera whose lens is open, or on the

> contrary, by detecting the camera and dancing to the tempo of the jazz music he is listening to, with the colorful diapositives he creates. Teoman Madra's work can be described as an artistic act that can be defined as the transformation of jazz music into line-shaped rhythmic movements by the machine connected to the rhythmic dances of the artist holding the camera in front of the dancer's movements. Transferring music into painting. Or the point where the rhythm in music and the rhythm in painting meet. Capturing the musical rhythm developing over time on a surface with four edges. When rhythm, one of the common aspects of the two arts, is made visible in small photographic films, the result turns into exquisite paintings. We watch the photos on the projection as paintings, but in addition, they help establish connections between the music we listen to. By following the rhythm of the music, we can follow the lines developing in a rhythmic order on the screen.[7]

The essence of Madra's photograms, namely *Light Games*, lies in their creative process, as Eren states. Employing the techniques of photogram and long exposure, Madra orchestrated light in a darkened space, capturing its dance on photosensitive surfaces. With a flashlight in hand or a mechanically rotating apparatus, Madra manipulated light sources, such as the glow of moonlight, to generate his visual compositions. These gestures were not random but synchronized with the rhythm and flow of contemporary jazz, translating musical narratives onto visual canvas while immersing himself in the rhythm. Madra's photograms were a mixture of movement, light, and time – a showcase of his ability to merge the auditory with the visual, especially when presented in accompaniment of jazz music creating a multisensory experience of his art. He describes this harmony in his own words as such, within the history of photography:

> Except for a neo-romantic tendency that consciously inclines to resemble 19th-century photographic art, the fact of photographic vision has left its process of estrangement to machines far behind. When combined with a contemporary interpreted sample of music and arranged as a multimedia show, photography bears "natural harmony.[8]

It was during this period that his acquaintance with Fluxus began. In his own words, there were people around him who had seen echoes of Fluxus in his photograms, which piqued his interest in the group. Consequently, he began following their activities. In the 1960s, with the help of an American student, Madra initiated correspondence with Robert Filliou, a French Fluxus artist based in New York at the time. This exchange marked his first direct encounter with the Fluxus community.

[7] Translated from a newspaper clipping about Teoman Madra's Light Games, written by Cemil Eren, found in the archive (1965).

[8] From a program note on the Synesthesia 83 performance at the Turkish American Society, 27th of May 1983.

Unfortunately, there is no trace of this communication in the archive, which could have illuminated his perception of the conceptual relationship between his early practice and Fluxus. Although it is certain that he was aware of Fluxus, there is no commentary explaining his understanding of the movement, resulting in gaps regarding the reasons behind his self-identification as a Fluxus artist. Additionally, it is uncertain whether his statement "*I became a photography-based (Fluxus) artist in 1962*" was made contemporaneously or retrospectively. Given that Fluxus began emerging in 1961, the fact that 1962 corresponds to its early formation years highly suggests that the statement is retrospective. Considering the fact that there was no commentary regarding his perception of Fluxus and the reasoning behind his self-identification, this proposition contains question marks, which will be scrutinized in depth in the upcoming section.

Madra's artistic practice shares the commonality of emphasizing experimentalism and offering multi-sensory experiences with the Fluxus group. However, he diverges from Fluxus, which often incorporates political tendencies and an ironic approach toward art-making. This distinction is crucial in understanding Madra's work not as a derivative of Fluxus but as a parallel exploration of the avant-garde through his artistic lens. Unlike the spontaneous, participatory, and mundane performances characteristic of Fluxus, Madra's photograms, or Light Games, employ a more structured and individual approach, focusing on the interplay of light and music in an improvised setting. These works are created by gently moving a flashlight in front of an open camera lens in a dark room, with hand movements synchronized to modern jazz music, producing various shapes and compositions within the spatial depth offered by photography, akin to a painter's manipulation of canvas. This process, reminiscent of Action Painting, or in other words Gestural Abstraction, emphasizes the physical act of the artist and the spontaneity in the creative process, resulting in an unconscious performance. At that point, Harold Rosenberg's commentary on Action Painting might shed light on the similarities can be found with the movement and Madra's practice:

> At a certain moment the canvas began to appear to one American painter after another as an arena in which to act — rather than as a space in which to reproduce, redesign, analyse or 'express' an object, actual or imagined. What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event.[9]

[9]Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," The London Magazine, Volume 1, no. 4, Painting 1961 (July 1961), accessed July 20, 2024, https://web.archive.org/web/20160305171729/http://poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record.asp?id=9798.

Figure 2.5 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Similarly, Madra's Light Games do not merely capture images but unfold as events, capturing the dynamic interplay of movement and light. Just as Action Painters used dynamic brush strokes in line with their action onto canvas, Madra's technique of "painting" with light and color in a improvised setting represents a performative act, where he transformed the essence of jazz into visual forms through photography. His method celebrates the very act of creation, akin to the gestural techniques of Jackson Pollock, being one of his primary influences, thereby aligning his practice with the ethos of Action Painting despite the different mediums involved. The idea of art being a performative act rather than a mere object, emphasizing the process over the finished product that has been executed by Action Painters, later influenced and exercised by many art movements including Happenings, Fluxus, Conceptual Art, Performance Art. Given this context, and considering Madra's earlier career in arts was a contemporary of the Fluxus group, additionally, the unique way he included newer technologies into this way of art-making made him recognized as an avant-garde and experimentalist artist, it is understandable that he identified himself with

this performative ground of Fluxus. However, despite these connections, I believe his earlier practice aligns more closely with Abstract Expressionism because of the parallelity between the artistic creative processes. The overt political tendencies and non-art stance prominent in Fluxus contrast with his focus on aesthetics and form. Since Fluxus productions are mainly shaped around Event performance and Fluxkits, it is not possible to define a certain Fluxus aesthetic, whereas Madra's work has a significant aesthetic consistency. Therefore, the reasons behind his association with Fluxus will be scrutinized in greater depth in the upcoming section while trying to present contrasting situations against his self-attribution.

In the early 1960s, Madra's attention was also captured by "Marcatrè" an influential Italian art quarterly. Marcatrè was a contemporary culture magazine focusing on the branches of contemporary art, literature, architecture, and music from 1963 to 1970, founded and directed by Eugenio Battisti.[10]. Either in 1965 or 1966, he mentioned two different dates in two different documents, Madra's role with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) took him to Italy. During a three-month trip, Madra immersed himself in an influential circle of artists and critics associated with Marcatrè. Under the guidance of the renowned art critic Professor Gillo Dorfles -who was a board member of the magazine back then-, Madra was introduced to a vibrant avant-garde scene in Milan. Here, he encountered figures such as Germano Celant, who were central to the Marcatrè discourse, along with many other artists. This trip was significant for Madra's artistic development, as evidenced by his frequent references to it in several interview texts and autobiographies found in the archive. It provided him with exposure contemporary discourses and deepened his insights into the practices of his contemporaries.

In 1966, Madra continued his multimedia shows, featuring his *Light Games* with accompanying jazz music in Turkey. In March, he brought his show to the İzmir Atatürk Provincial Public Library and in April to the GEN-AR Gallery. The music list accompanying such shows was proof of his appreciation of various musical genres, including avant-garde jazz, electronic music, and classical music. This wide-ranging musical spectrum was not chosen solely to be listened to in the multimedia shows; it was also at the core of his creative process, immersing him in rhythm through different genres and a variety of cultures. His setlist for Contemporary Show with Music and Photography at GEN-AR was as follows:

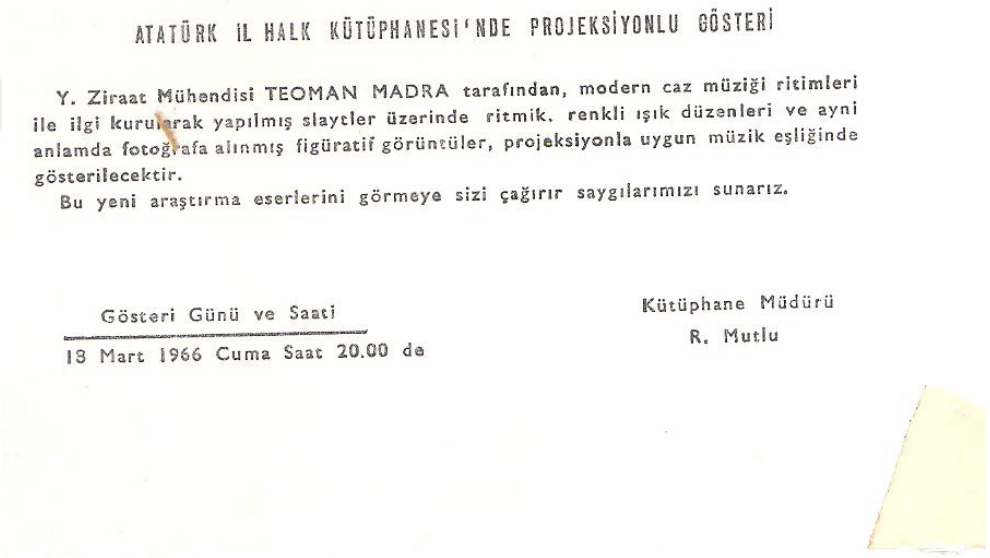
> *Ravel-Quator en Fa Majeur, Bülent Arel - Electronic Music, Harry Partch - Cloud Chamber Music, Bach - Toccata, Cecil Taylor - Blue Trane 1957, Halim El Dabh - Electronic Music, Hawkins and P. Bley,*

[10]"Marcatré." Wikipedia, October 22, 2023. https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/MarcatrC3A9

Brubeck - Countdown, Jim Hall-Gunther Schuller - Ornette Coleman 1962.[11]

This list reveals his interest and wide spectrum of knowledge in contemporary music. Additionally, the invitation to the library event deserves attention, as it characterizes Madra's productions as innovative *research* while introducing him to his professional title, Agricultural Engineer.

Figure 2.6 Invitation for Projected Show of Teoman Madra's Photography Accompanied by Modern Jazz Music, 1966, ©Teoman Madra Collection.



ATATÜRK İL HALK KÜTÜPHANESİ'NDE PROJEKSİYONLU GÖSTERİ

Y. Ziraat Mühendisi TEOMAN MADRA tarafından, modern caz müziği ritimleri ile ilgi kurularak yapılmış slaytler üzerinde ritmik, renkli ışık düzenleri ve ayni anlamda fotoğrafa alınmış figüratif görüntüler, projeksiyonla uygun müzik eşliğinde gösterilecektir.

Bu yeni araştırma eserlerini görmeye sizi çağırır saygılarımızı sunarız.

Gösteri Günü ve Saati

18 Mart 1966 Cuma Saat 20.00 de

Kütüphane Müdürü

R. Mutlu

> Agricultural Engineer TEOMAN MADRA has created slides that establish a connection with the rhythms of modern jazz music, upon which rhythmic, colored light patterns have been arranged, and figurative images captured in the same line are to be showcased through projection with accompanying music. We invite you to see these new research works and extend our regards.[12]

The same year, Teoman Madra married Beral Kefeli, known as Beral Madra, who is later known to be an acclaimed contemporary art critic and curator. In the upcoming decades, she became the General Coordinator of the first two Istanbul Biennales in 1987-1989 and curator of Turkish pavilions at the 43rd, 45th, 49th, 50th, and 51st Venice Biennales.[13] She opened her art gallery, Gallery BM, where she collaborated

[11] From the exhibition catalogue for 'Inside Abstraction' at Gallery BM.

[12] Translated from the event invitation found in the archive.

[13] Beral Madra,"CV," Beral Madra Official Website, accessed July 4, 2024, https://www.beralmadra.net/cv/.

with many artists from both national and international domains. Teoman and Beral Madra collaborated in many exhibitions in the latter years, especially in Gallery BM, and they also worked in partnership with Goethe Institute for workshops and exhibitions.

In 1967, Teoman Madra held his first exhibitions abroad with three events in Paris: at the Hotel de Ville Night Club, the Galerie Jacqueline Ranson, and as part of the 5th Paris Young Artists Biennial with the exhibition titled "Photograms in Jazz Rhythm" accompanied by the album *Ascension* by John Coltrane.[14] These exhibitions showcased a fusion of rhythmic photograms and new jazz, where Madra explored polyrhythmic constructivism through simultaneous projections of abstract photography and contemporary jazz. The events, sponsored by significant cultural ministries and associations,[15] demonstrated Madra's method of "painting" with light and color in real-time, a performative act where he translated the vibrant spirit of jazz onto a visual canvas by using photographic capture. The exhibition at Jacqueline Ranson Gallery echoed in the Turkish press with the headline, "A Turkish painter created a new genre!".

[14]Referenced from the exhibition catalogue for 'Inside Abstraction' at Gallery BM.
[15]Listed in events' invitations written in French, which were found in the archive.

Figure 2.7 Newspaper Clipping titled 'A Turkish painter created a new genre!', Photography capturing Teoman Madra with Iris Clert, a renowned curator and owner of Iris Clert Gallery in Paris mentioned as an avant-garde hotspot back in time, 1967, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Bir Türk ressamı yeni bir tür yarattı

OMAN MADRA caz ile
klı resimler yapıyor..

Two years after his successful first exposure to the global art scene, in 1969 he was invited to the 17th Artists' Congress held in Rimini, Italy. Teoman Madra, who was invited from Turkey by the organizing committee, attended the conference sessions and opened an exhibition in the building where the Congress was held.

Figure 2.8 Photograph of Teoman Madra at German Art Center, 1969, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

In 1970, the Vakko Factory was established by Vitali Hakko and designed by architect Haluk Baysal, becoming a notable feature in Turkey's industrial architecture. Vitali Hakko himself expressed admiration for the textile factory's aesthetic significance, remarking, "Our factory had become so beautiful that it resembled a museum of modern art rather than a mere factory"[16] highlighting the cultural importance he placed on the building. Within its walls, the factory housed artworks such as concrete, mosaic panels, and plastic reliefs by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, stained glass and sgraffito compositions by Metin Şahinoğlu and Nevzat Yüzbaşıoğlu, ceramic panels by Jale Yılmabaşar Ertuga, a composition of Atatürk by Haluk Tezonar and Tankut Öktem, metal sculptures by Şadi Çalık and murals by artists Eren Eyüboğlu, Hasan Kavruk, and Mustafa Plevneli further adorned the space.[17]

[16] İrem Nur Kaya, "20. Yüzyılın Önemli Endüstriyel Yapılarından Biri: Vakko Fabrikası," Arkitekt, August 21, 2022, https://www.gzt.com/arkitekt/20-yuzyilin-onemli-endustriyel-yapilarindan-biri-vakko-fabrikasi-3684885, accessed April 25, 2024.

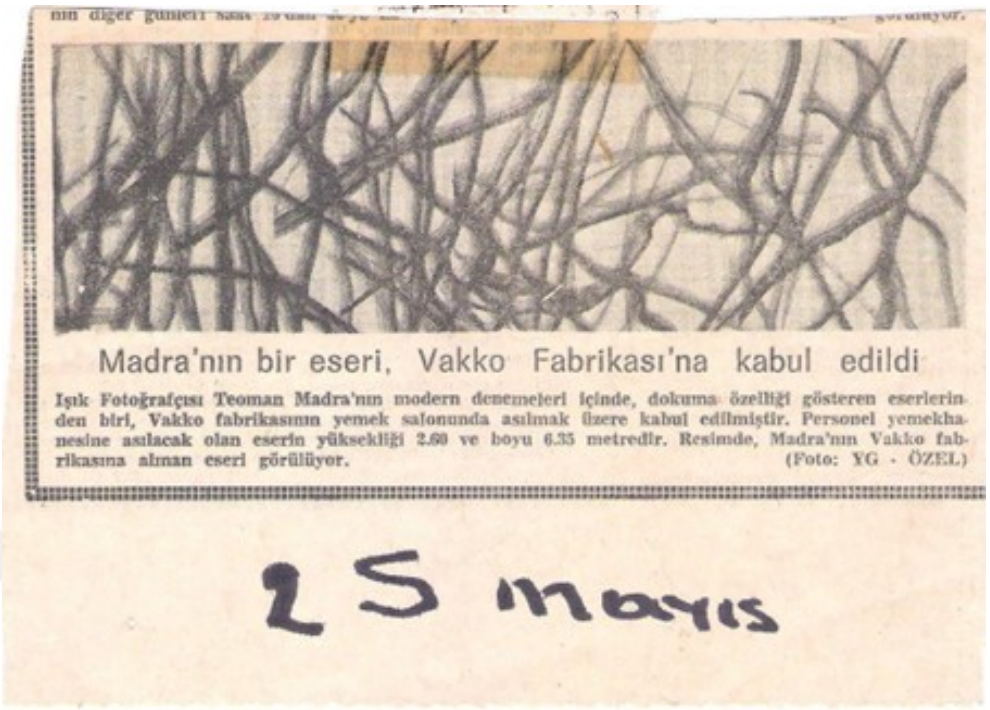
[17] "VAKKO Turistik Eşarp ve Konfeksiyon Fabrikası," *Arkitekt*, 1970, no. 340 (04), 159.

Figure 2.9 Photograph of Teoman Madra's Mural (6.35m x 2.60m) at Vakko Factory, 1970, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Teoman Madra also contributed to this artistic assembly with a 6.35 m x 2.60 m mural that was accepted into the factory's collection.[18] While textual references to Madra's mural within papers could be found online there was no visual clue about the mural itself. Fortunately, the photographic evidence of the mural display was found in Madra's archive, accompanied by a newspaper excerpt stating, "One of Madra's works has been accepted into the Vakko factory," thus shedding light on the inclusion of his art in this pioneering space. The choice to include Madra's mural signifies a recognition of his artistic contributions to the contemporary art scene of Turkey at the time aligning with Vitali Hakko's statement of turning the textile factory into a museum of modern art.

[18]Quoted from the newspaper clipping presented in the Figure 1.9.

Figure 2.10 Newspaper Clipping titled 'A work by Madra was accepted to Vakko Factory', 1970, ©Teoman Madra Collection.



Madra'nın bir eseri, Vakko Fabrikası'na kabul edildi

Işık Fotoğrafçısı Teoman Madra'nın modern denemeleri içinde, dokuma özelliği gösteren eserlerinden biri, Vakko fabrikasının yemek salonunda asılmak üzere kabul edilmiştir. Personel yemekhanesine asılacak olan eserin yüksekliği 2.60 ve boyu 6.35 metredir. Resimde, Madra'nın Vakko fabrikasına alınan eseri görülüyor. (Foto: YG - ÖZEL)

25 mayıs

During the 1970s, he continued arranging multimedia shows of jazz music with abstract photography and joining group exhibitions with his photograms, yet in 1972 he did something that echoed in the art scene much more than others. That year, Madra expanded his repertoire of jazz-accompanied abstract photography shows into more collaborative and multidimensional art practice. At the Italian Cultural Center in Istanbul, he co-hosted an art showcase that resonated profoundly within the artistic community. Alongside Tan Oral and Orhan Taylan, and with the participation of the Anatolian Pantomime Players led by Oktay Anılanmert and under the direction of Gürsel Boyla, they presented a joint artistic performance where they combine pantomime with Madra's multimedia displays. The newspaper clipping "The Festivity of Music, Color and Movement" quoted below reveals the context of this event and its echoes on the art scene:

Figure 2.11 Newspaper clipping titled 'The Festivity of Music, Color and Movement' written by Kerem Emre, 1972, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

MÜZİK RENK VE HAREKET CÜMBÜŞÜ

SAHNE SANATINA YENİ DENEMELERDEN BİR ÖRNEK

Dünyanın çeşitli ülkelerinde, tiyatro, gün geçtikçe belli bir çıkmaza giriyor. Sanatçılar da ne yapsınlar, yeni denemeler peşinde koşarak, sahne sanatını sürdürebilmek için, çeşitli çarelere baş vuruyorlar. Kimi çıplaklığa yönelirken, kimi "Sesiz Tiyatro", "Bale Tiyatrosu" gibi topluluklar kuruyor, "Heppening" denilen sahne olayları-na yöneliyorlar. İşte Türkiye'de de bu akımın öncülüğünü Teoman Madra isimli bir sanatçı yapıyor.

Teoman Madra, birkaç yıldan beri, modern caz ve elektronik müzik eşliğinde, çekmiş olduğu çeşitli renk ve ışıklı projeksiyonlarla gösteriler tertipleyen bir sanatçıydı. Ancak bundan böyle sanatına başka bir boyut ekleme kararı aldı. Anadolu Pandomim Oyuncularıyla birleşen sanatçı, müzik ve renk olaylarına bir de hareket olayını katıyor. "Aynı anda oluşan birkaç plastik macerayı, insanlar, ön yargıdan uzak bir şekilde, çok daha olumlu olarak izleyebiliyorlar. Bu nedenle, duy-görsel (Audo-visuel) gösterime üçüncü bir boyutu, hareket olayını kattım. "Yani anlatımı güçlendirmek için renk ve müziğe pandomimi ekledik" diyor.

Anadolu Pandomim Oyuncularının yönetmeni Gürsel Boyla ise, "Bugün tiyatro bir kriz içindedir. Dünyanın her yerinde, teknik elemanlardan faydalanılarak, yeni yollar aranıyor. Biz de kendi koşullarımıza uygun bir yol arıyoruz" demektedir.

Bu sanatçıların gösterilerine, ünlü karikatürist Tan Oral'ın çizgi filmleriyle, ressam Orhan Taylan'ın "Sürkli resim"leriyle katıldıkları da oluyor. Sonuç gerçekten ilginç bir ses, renk ve hareket cümbüşü. Bir yandan kulakları sağır edici elektronik müzik dinlerken, bir yandan da sahnede pandomimcileri ve üzerlerinde ve dört bir yanlarında hareket eden ışıkları izliyorsunuz. Ancak, bu gösterilerin tiyatro için yeni bir çıkar yol olup olmadığına zaman karar verecek. Şimdilik, bu sanatçılar, sadece bu "Deneme akımı"nın öncüleri.

KEREM EMRE

TEOMAN MADRA • YENİ DENEMELERİN ÖNCÜSÜ

As theater around the world increasingly finds itself at an impasse, artists are compelled to seek new experiments to sustain the art of performance. While some turn to nudity, others form groups like 'Silent Theatre' and 'Ballet Theatre,' or gravitate towards 'Happening' stage events. In Turkey, Teoman Madra has been a forerunner of this movement. For several years, Teoman Madra has been an artist organizing shows with various color and light projections alongside modern jazz and electronic music. However, he has now decided to add another dimension to his art. By collaborating with the Anatolian Pantomime Players, he incorporates the element of movement into his work with music and color. 'People can observe several simultaneous plastic mediums more positively and with-

> out prejudice. That's why I've added the third dimension, movement, to the audio-visual performance, essentially enhancing the expression by adding pantomime to the color and music,' he explains.
>
> These performances also feature contributions from famous cartoonist Tan Oral with his animations and painter Orhan Taylan with his paintings. The result is truly an intriguing mix of sound, color, and movement. On one hand, you are engulfed by deafening electronic music, and on the other, you watch pantomimes and the moving lights around them on stage. However, only time will tell if these performances will pave a new way for theater. For now, these artists are merely pioneers of this trial movement.[19]

This excerpt is particularly important since it points out the term "Happening" coined by Allan Kaprow in the late 1950s. As Kaprow describes *"Happenings are events that, put simply, happen [. . .] In contrast to the arts of the past, they have no structured beginning, middle, or end"*.[20] In the introduction Jeff Kelley wrote for Kaprow's famous work titled "Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life" he presents a more structured definition for that new experimental form of art experience by saying "*Happenings—a late-fifties art form in which all manner of materials, colors, sounds, odors, and common objects and events were orchestrated in ways that approximated the spectacle of modern everyday life.*".[21] For Kaprow, Happenings was mainly based on theater discipline yet transforming the theater practice into something unconventional by taking inspiration from American Action Painting.[22] They were spontaneous, often multi-disciplinary events where artists and audiences interacted in an environment of semi-controlled chaos. Unlike traditional theater, happenings involve improvisation and unpredictability, with the boundary between performers and the audience deliberately blurred. Kaprow explains this concept of active audience and the integration of art and life through *Happenings* as follows:

> The fine arts traditionally demand for their appreciation physically passive observers, working with their minds to get at what their senses register. But the Happenings are an active art, requiring that creation and realization, artwork and appreciator, artwork and life be inseparable. Like Action painting, from which they have derived inspiration, they will probably appeal to those who find the contemplative life by itself

[19] Translated from the newspaper clipping titled "The Festivity of Music, Color and Movement" written by Kerem Emre.

[20] Allan Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene (1961)," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, expanded ed., ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 16.

[21] Jeff Kelley, "Introduction," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, expanded ed., by Allan Kaprow (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), xii.

[22] Allan Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene (1961)," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, expanded ed., ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 17.

inadequate.[23]

According to Kaprow, there were several kinds of Happenings: the witty productions by theater groups; the minimalist, almost Zen-like rituals performed by writers and musicians; and the types he was deeply involved in—raw, expressive, and highly spontaneous.[24] Here recalling John Cage's 4'33" might be beneficial in the case of conceptualizing the Zen-like rituals and notion of blurring the boundary between audience and performer since he was also one of the primary influences of Kaprow. In this work, the silence is filled with the sound of either coughing, rustling, or something that just happened in other words audience becomes the agency that produces the sound while the performers perform the *silence* on the stage. Regarding the participatory notion of Happenings where the roles of audience and performers are intermingled, the Teoman Madra's collaboration with Pantomime players is not totally aligned with Happenings when its conventional staged production method is considered. However, considering the performative aspect of producing his Light Games and when combined with Pantomime Players' semi-improvised performances in accompaniment with electronic music, it partially parallels Kelley's definition by being multi-disciplinary and inviting various sensory plays into the art experience.

During the same years, in the 1970s, he included a new term in his artistic vocabulary in order to describe his multi-disciplinary showcases: Synesthesia. By saying so, he meant delving into a multisensory experience that engaged light, music, and movement simultaneously. He framed *synesthesia* as a fusion of contemporary art forms infused with aesthetic sensitivity, extending multimedia beyond its conventional scope by applying advanced technology to evoke a synesthetic experience. I find this intent to conceptualize his shows around the term Synesthesia as an unintentional attempt to describe the differentiation Dick Higgins concretized as *intermedia* vs. *multimedia*. Arapoğlu clarifies this distinction by exemplifying with opera based on Higgins's essay on *Intermedia*.[25] He uses the example of opera to demonstrate multimedia, where components like text, music, and stage design are structurally separable and synthesized sequentially.[26] In contrast, intermedia, as described by Dick Higgins, involves blending disparate artistic disciplines such as music, sculpture, and poetry or even non-art practices in a synchronous manner,

[23] Allan Kaprow, "The Happenings Are Dead: Long Live the Happenings! (1966)," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, expanded ed., ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 64.

[24] Allan Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene (1961)," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, expanded ed., ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 16.

[25] Fırat Arapoğlu, "2.1.3. İntermedya'nın Multimedya'dan Ayrımı," in *Disiplinlerarasılık, Coğrafi Kavramlar ve Sanatsal Bir Edim Olarak Yürümek* (PhD diss., Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Sanat ve Tasarım Ana Bilim Dalı, 2018), 7.

[26] Ibid.

creating a unified and simultaneous artistic expression within the same time and space. At that point, Arapoğlu also refers back to 4'33" in order to examine that intermedia does not only refer to the inclusion of various mediums but also concepts where the audience's experience of silence plays an integral part in the artwork, effectively making the audience a co-creator in the event.[27] This approach highlights the ongoing, limitless nature of intermedia, distinguishing it from the more defined, traditional bounds of multimedia. In my opinion, by saying synesthesia, Madra was pointing out the experiential nature and mixture of different mediums all together resulting in an intermedial approach.

In a much later interview in 2012 regarding the group exhibition at Kuad Gallery called John' Cage" in which Madra took part, he was confronted with the question along the same lines as the argument presented in the previous paragraph:

> I think it is possible to read the multimedia shows that you started making since the 1960s, which bring together abstract visuals, modern dance, and avant-garde music, as efforts to break down the interdisciplinary divisions that have already been worn down today, is it true? Yours is almost a contemporary effort with the concept of "intermedia" proposed by Fluxus (specifically by Dick Higgins)...

He initiated his answer by saying that the interdisciplinary path he has been following was not an intentional choice from the start. Then, continued by mentioning his affinity for McLuhan's texts and John Cage's writings, suggesting that his "multimedia" works drew inspiration from them. He interpreted the breakdown of disciplinary boundaries not as fragmentation but as a collective effort, citing collaborative projects like the special and forerunner "Multimedia Live Jazz Concerts" he curated and accompanied with Okay Temiz and South African bassist/saxophonist Johnny Dyani at Şan Cinema in 1976 as examples of such solidarity. That being the case, it can be argued that he was using the term multimedia interchangeably with intermedia proving that he was not fully aware of the distinction in between. Nevertheless, his emphasis on collaboration proves his motivation towards producing something holistic against fragmented which can be read as an attempt at what has been conceptualized as intermedia. Therefore, I am on the same page with the commentary provided in the question based on arguments provided in the previous paragraphs, yet his answer does not provide a solid ground nor a rationalé regarding his self-identification as a Fluxus artist.

In the latter two years after the show with Okay Temiz and Johnny Dyani he mentioned previously, 1977-1978, Madra continued performing together with Okay

[27] Ibid, 8.

Temiz Oriental Winds Jazz Orchestra, presenting a series of multimedia live jazz concerts across multiple cities including Izmir, Istanbul, and Ankara. In 1980, he made the “Polyaesthetics” multimedia jazz show at Catholic Studentenhaus Keller in Graz, Austria. During that same year, he collaborated with Okay Temiz for a performance at Loft Gallery in Munich. The detailed program of the Loft Gallery performance can be found in the accompanying poster below, showcasing Madra’s wide spectrum of knowledge in the avant-garde music scene.

Figure 2.12 Program Poster for Performance at Loft Gallery in collaboration with Okay Temiz, 1980, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

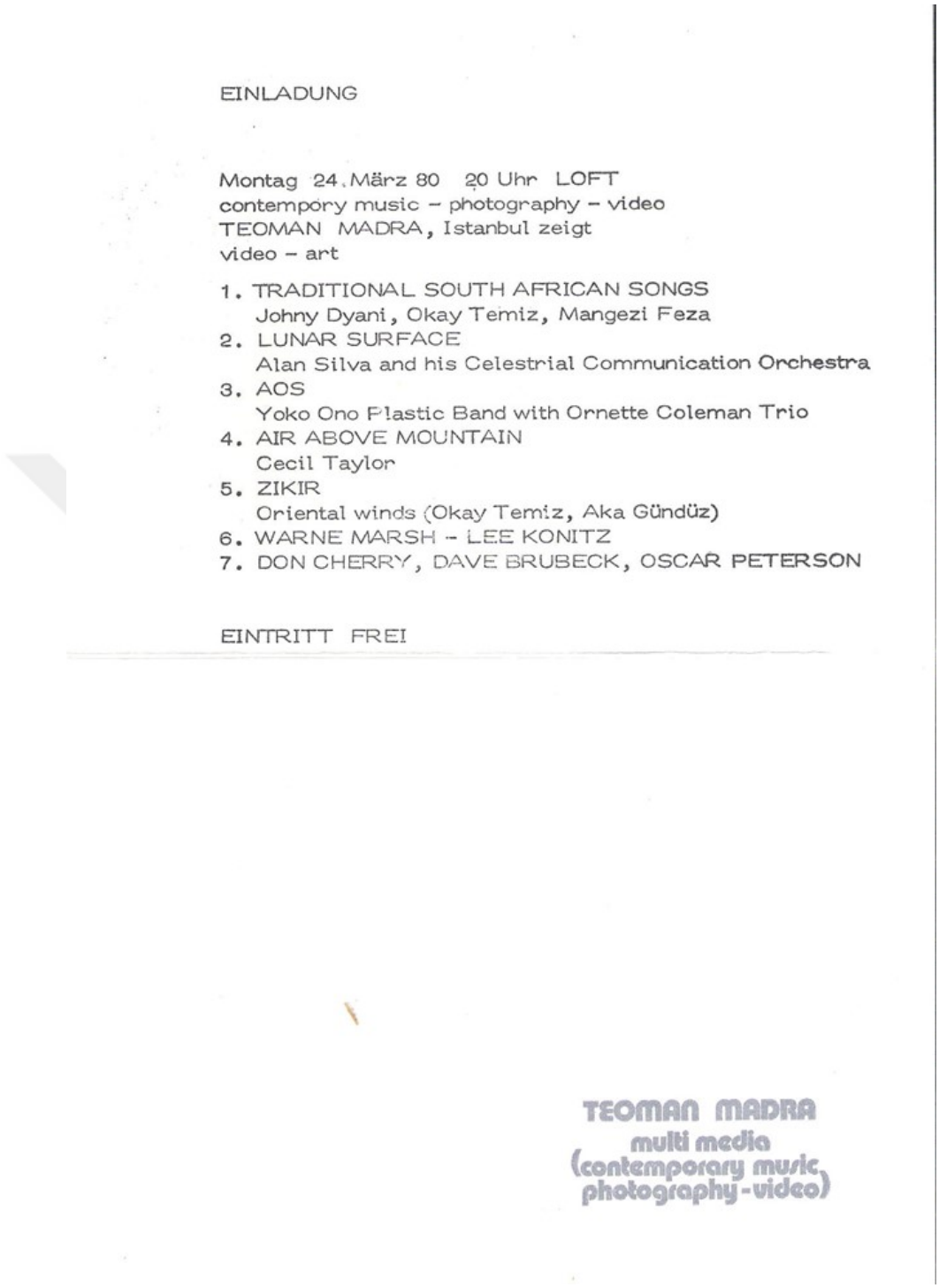
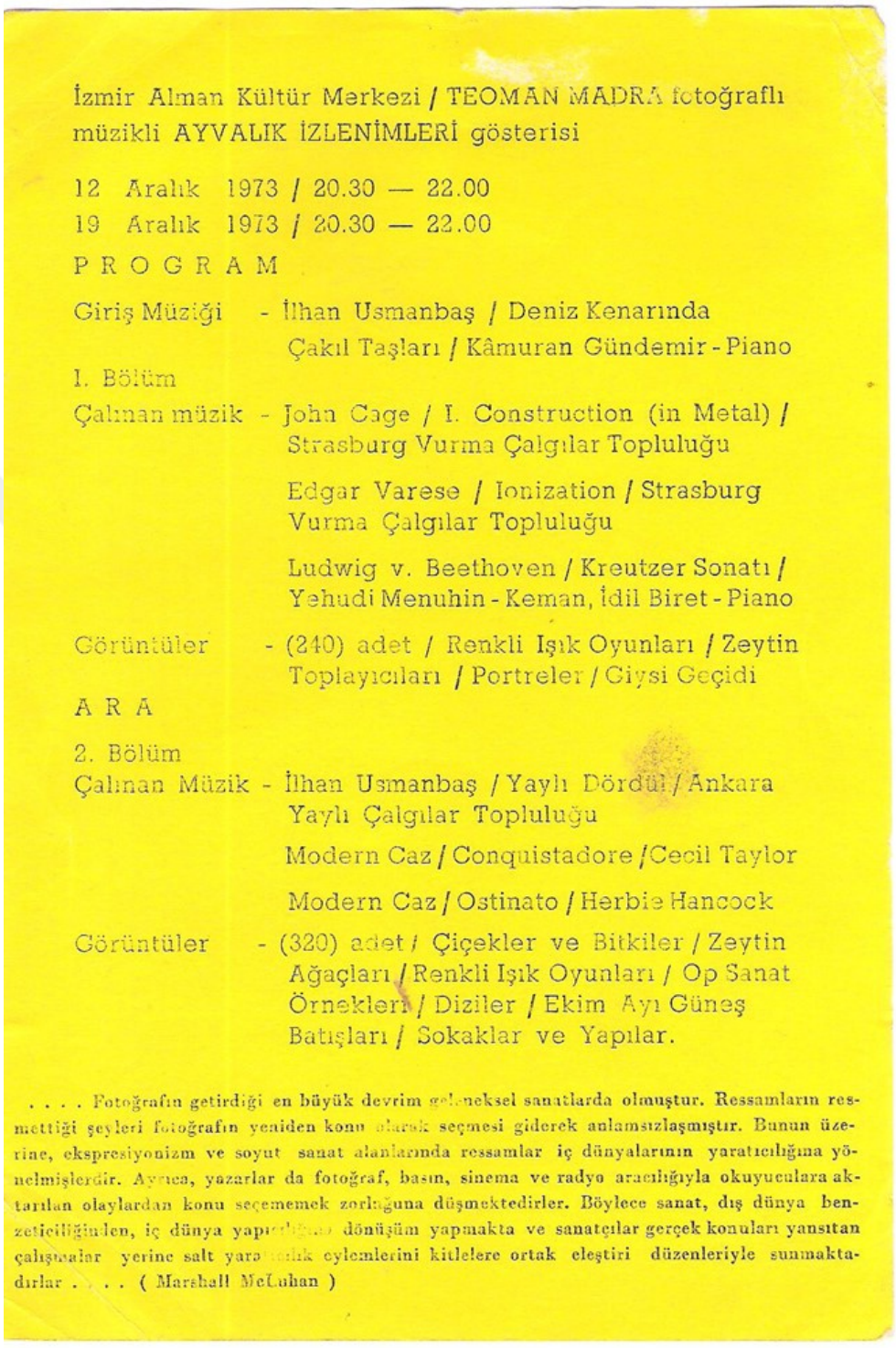


Figure 2.13 Program Poster for "Ayvalık Impressions Show with Photography and Music", 1973, ©Teoman Madra Collection.



İzmir Alman Kültür Merkezi / TEOMAN MADRA fotoğraflı müzikli AYVALIK İZLENİMLERİ gösterisi

12 Aralık 1973 / 20.30 — 22.00
19 Aralık 1973 / 20.30 — 22.00

P R O G R A M

Giriş Müziği - İlhan Usmanbaş / Deniz Kenarında Çakıl Taşları / Kâmuran Gündemir - Piano

I. Bölüm

Çalınan müzik - John Cage / I. Construction (in Metal) / Strasburg Vurma Çalgılar Topluluğu

Edgar Varese / Ionization / Strasburg Vurma Çalgılar Topluluğu

Ludwig v. Beethoven / Kreutzer Sonatı / Yehudi Menuhin - Keman, İdil Biret - Piano

Görüntüler - (240) adet / Renkli Işık Oyunları / Zeytin Toplayıcıları / Portreler / Giysi Geçidi

A R A

2. Bölüm

Çalınan Müzik - İlhan Usmanbaş / Yaylı Dördül / Ankara Yaylı Çalgılar Topluluğu

Modern Caz / Conquistadore / Cecil Taylor

Modern Caz / Ostinato / Herbie Hancock

Görüntüler - (320) adet / Çiçekler ve Bitkiler / Zeytin Ağaçları / Renkli Işık Oyunları / Op Sanat Örnekleri / Diziler / Ekim Ayı Güneş Batışları / Sokaklar ve Yapılar.

. . . . Fotoğrafın getirdiği en büyük devrim geleneksel sanatlarda olmuştur. Ressamların resmettiği şeyleri fotoğrafın yeniden konu olarak seçmesi giderek anlamsızlaşmıştır. Bunun üzerine, ekspresiyonizm ve soyut sanat alanlarında ressamlar iç dünyalarının yaratıcılığına yönelmişlerdir. Ayrıca, yazarlar da fotoğraf, basın, sinema ve radyo aracılığıyla okuyuculara aktarılan olaylardan konu seçememek zorluğuna düşmektedirler. Böylece sanat, dış dünya benzeticiliğinden, iç dünya yapıcılığına dönüşüm yapmakta ve sanatçılar gerçek konuları yansıtan çalışmalar yerine salt yaratıcılık eylemlerini kitlelere ortak eleştiri düzenleriyle sunmaktadırlar . . . . (Marshall McLuhan)

Moreover, Madra's ideas resonate with McLuhan's conception of the transformative impact of technology on artistic practice, as evidenced by McLuhan's quote put in the program poster for Madra's *Ayvalık Impressions Show with Photography and Music* happened in December 1973 (see Figure 2.13):

> The biggest revolution brought by photography was in traditional arts. It has become increasingly meaningless for painters to choose the things they depict as the subject of photography again. Thereupon, in the fields of expressionism and abstract art, painters turned to the creativity of their inner world. In addition, writers have difficulty choosing topics from the events conveyed to readers through photography, press, cinema, and radio. Thus, art transforms from simulating the external world to constructing the inner world, and artists present their pure acts of creativity to the masses with common criticism systems, instead of works that reflect real subjects.[28]

Madra's recurrent use of McLuhan's famous phrase "the medium is the message" in his later video works underscores the influence of McLuhan's ideas on his artistic practice. Madra's creative approach was directed towards exploring different forms of art making, focusing less on content, which aligns with Marshall McLuhan's theory, a concept frequently echoed in Madra's practice. His experimental approach to the medium was at the core of his artistic practice rather than the message it conveyed, which eventually emerged from his way of expressing himself. Believing in the transformative power of new forms of communication, he was driven to experiment with both existing mediums and non-traditional art forms, in the pursuit of the "new".

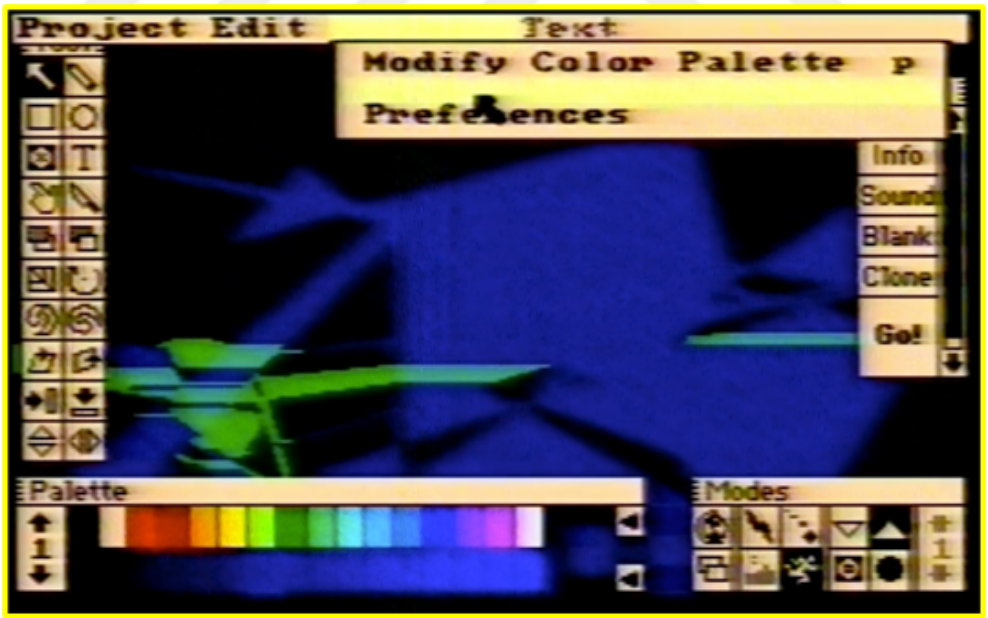
Figure 2.14 Photograph of Teoman Madra in front of his Photography Exhibition at Galeri VEB, 1975, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

[28] Quote from Marshall McLuhan, translated from the event poster above.

In the early 1980s, a Turkish company called Teleteknik started to operate as a distributor of Commodore computers in Turkey, which allows youth to encounter with personal computers back in the day. Although it is not certain, it might be the case that an Amiga computer was provided to Madra in 1985 by the company, paving the way for his artistic production through this new medium. Driven by a motive to push beyond the limitations of static images, Madra eagerly embraced the advancements in computer and video technologies.

Renowned for its cutting-edge graphics capabilities, the Amiga 1000 being the first personal computer manufactured by Commodore, could display a palette of 4096 colors, generate 8-bit stereo music, and run multiple applications simultaneously.[29] The Amiga 1000's graphics capabilities were revolutionary for its era. With a keen ambition to explore the computer's potential for artistic expression, Madra delved into exploring its functionalities, particularly through the use of Deluxe Paint, a bitmap graphics editor software. Released in 1985, Deluxe Paint swiftly became the preferred tool for graphics and animation editing for Amiga users.

Figure 2.15 Screenshot from a video recording by Teoman Madra, showcasing the UI of Deluxe Paint software while experimenting with the platform (circa 1990s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

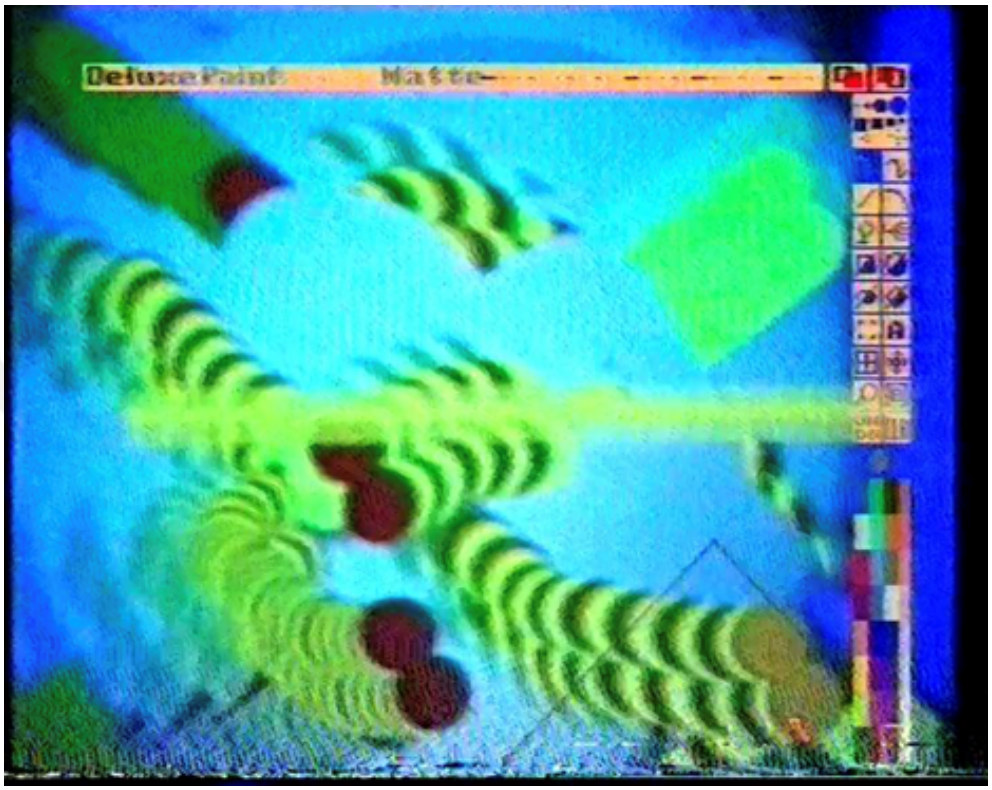


Through this software, Madra adeptly manipulated graphical elements on the screen, crafting generative visuals that synchronized with musical components, becoming a

[29] Selçuk Artut and Begüm Çelik, "Conservation of Multimedia Art: Case Study on Teoman Madra Archive," *ResearchGate*, 2023, accessed March 13, 2023, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368858755_Conservation_of_Multimedia_Art_Case_Study_on_Teoman_Madra_Archive.

pivotal moment in his artistic career. These generative visuals were produced by by copying, translating, and moving the graphical objects on the screen through the use of software.

Figure 2.16 Screenshot from computer-generated visuals superimposed on a camera feedback loop by Teoman Madra (circa 1990s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.



This technological breakthrough enabled him to fulfill a longstanding aspiration of creating geometric artworks, a theme recurrent in his earlier photographic works where he employed various lenses and prisms to manipulate geometric patterns captured by his camera. Now equipped with graphics software and video capturing devices like Genlock for the Amiga, Madra embarked on experiments with generative art, integrating them into video feedback loops to produce complex visual compositions.

Hence, obtainment of this very first computer, the Amiga 1000, marked the inclusion of this new medium in his multimedia showcases. While exploring new abstract video compositional techniques, he simultaneously immersed himself in avant-garde jazz and electronic music as he was doing with photograms previously. As he persisted in showcasing multimedia exhibitions whenever possible, he gradually integrated computer-generated imagery into his shows as he experimented with it. During the 1990s, this type of generative videos crafted through improvisation, employing computer and video technologies, were frequently encountered in the archive stored in

different storage units like VHS, Betamax, miniDV. As a pioneering artist in Turkey, he arranged multimedia exhibitions paired with contemporary music, embracing the newly emerged video technologies. As Arapoğlu argues, starting from the 1970s, Nil Yalter and Teoman Madra are recognized as early pioneers in incorporating video into experimental works.[30]

Similarly, his pioneering role in this field is described on the Kuad Gallery's website as follows:

> He is one of the first artists to build multimedia environments and installations using video and computer technologies with the accompaniment of music by Turkish and foreign composers.[31]

A great example of such showcase happened in April 1989, where Madra displayed a multi-channel video art installation at the esteemed Atatürk Cultural Center in Istanbul. This installation featured nineteen television screens playing in a continuous loop via two video players (see Figure 2.17).

[30] Fırat Arapoğlu, "Videonun Radikal Dili," *Fırat Arapoğlu Blog*, June 2010, https://firatarapoglu.blogspot.com/2010/06/videonun-radikal-dili.html, accessed July 4, 2024.

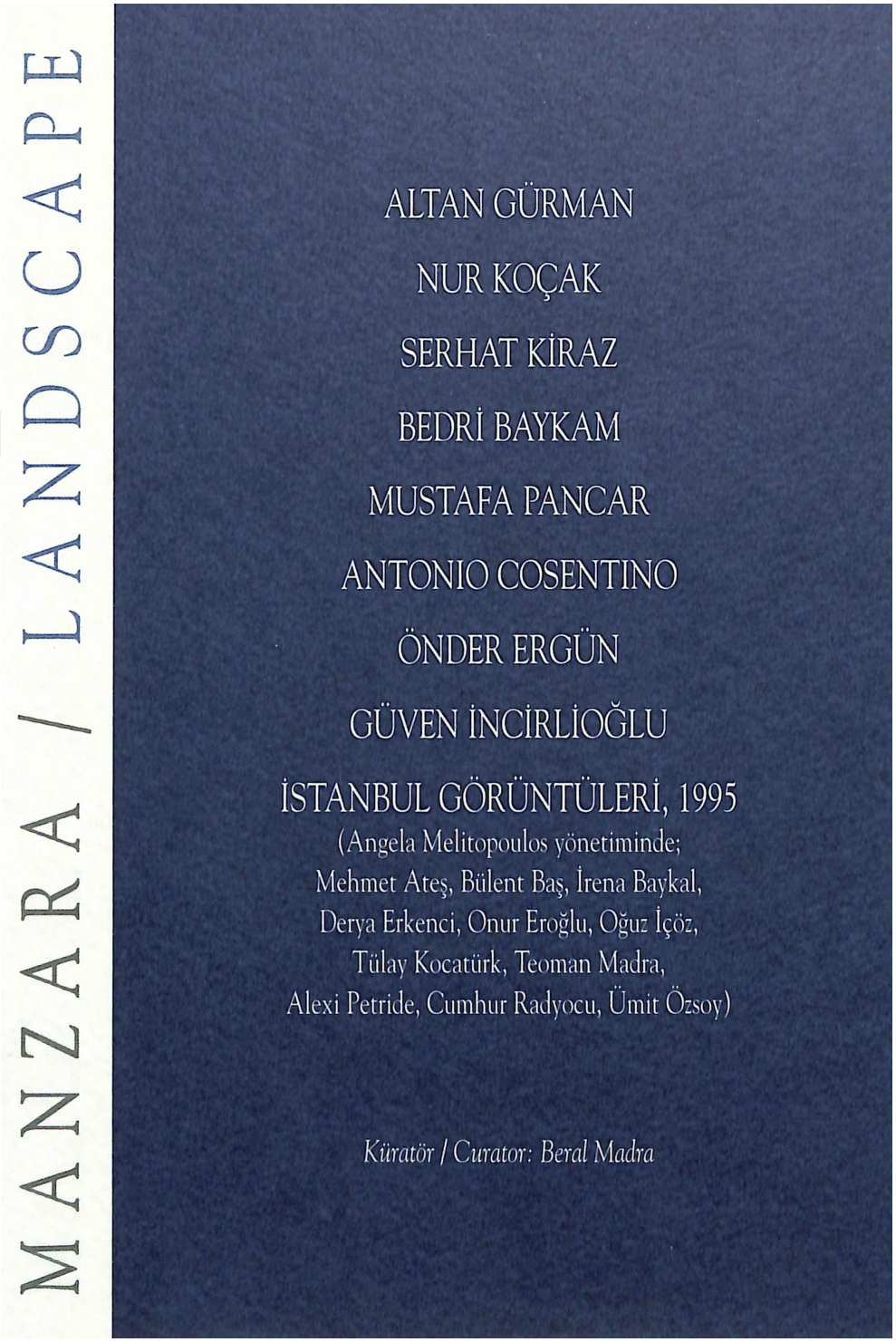
[31] This quote is originally from the Kuad Gallery website but is cited here from Merve Çaşkurlu's thesis, "New Media Art in Turkey: A Research on Current Situation and a Development Proposal," due to the original website no longer being available. Kuad Gallery website, quoted in Merve Çaşkurlu, "New Media Art in Turkey: A Research on Current Situation and a Development Proposal" (Master's Thesis, Yeditepe University, 2013), 40, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312592771_NEW_MEDIA_ART_IN_TURKEY_A_RESEARCH_ON_CURRENT_SITUATION_AND_A_DEVELOPMENT_PROPOSAL.

Figure 2.17 Photograph of Video Installation by Teoman Madra at AKM Istanbul. (Source: Teoman Madra, accessed from Flickr on April 1, 2024, https://www.flickr.com/photos/teomanmadra/2307065247/), 1989, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

On January 20th, 1991, he showcased a video artwork in commemoration of the electronic music composer Bülent Arel's first annual memorial event at CRR in Istanbul. This artwork was created using the above-mentioned techniques via graphics software where Madra was advancing his use of these new technologies. The same year he opened up a professional photo studio in Istanbul, SPQuantum, whose logo appears in many of his videos in the archive recurrently, which proves his way of utilizing his skillset for the commercial display of his studio.

In February 1995, a Multimedia Video-Art workshop organized in collaboration with the Goethe Institut, featured eleven artists and was hosted by the BM Contemporary Art Center in Istanbul under the direction of Munich-based video artist Angela Melitopoulos. Madra attended the workshop and participated in the video work produced collaboratively, combining videos he captured Istanbul scenery with geometric manipulation techniques he developed over the course of time. This video work was later presented in an exhibition "Landscape: Paintings, Photographies and Videos" curated by Beral Madra in Borusan Art Gallery in 1998 (see Figure 2.18).

Figure 2.18 Exhibition Invitation for Landscape: Paintings, Photographies and Videos at Borusan Art Gallery, Istanbul, 1998 (Source: SALT Research, accessed on July 6, 2024, https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/201748), ©SALT Research Collection.



Again in 1995, there was another significant event regarding the Turkish Media Art scene, namely XAMPLE 2. The "XAMPLE" exhibition, conceptualized by Edwin Herman, began in Frankfurt in 1993 and included participation from Turkish artist

Kadri Özayten.[32] Its second iteration, "XAMPLE 2" took place in Atatürk Cultural Center, Istanbul, with Beral Madra being the director. The event featured daily discussions, performances and collaborative project development, fostering interaction among artists from various backgrounds and techniques. It emphasized interactivity, a hallmark of new media art, making it a pioneering exhibition in Turkey.[33] Beral Madra defines Teoman Madra's contribution to the event as such:

> Since 1963, Teoman Madra has been organizing performances that combine abstract photographs with avant-garde music. In the 1980s, he continued these performances with computer graphics. In his show, he presented a video composed of documentary footage, texts related to the concept of the event, and computer graphics.[34]

In 1996, when he closed the SPQ photo studio, he relocated to his artist studio on Sofyalı Street in Tünel, Istanbul, a vibrant hub for the art scene. It was during this time that his collaborations with live music performances began to flourish even more. Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, he showcased his computer and video-generated artworks in multimedia presentations featuring collaborations in the live performances with musicians and musical ensembles such as Zen, İlhan Erşahin, Islak Köpek, Batur Sönmez, and Siya SiyaBend. Reflecting on his work in an interview, he explains his artistic approach with the following summary:

> I am creating my work on random fiction. I combine technology with art. I reshape the photograph using digital possibilities. I create images as I want at that moment without a certain scenario or rule. There is always contemporary music in the background. When we say contemporary music, it would be more correct to say jazz music. I can say that my works are more abstract and experimental.[35]

From 1996 to 1997, he hosted a modern music radio program titled "studiominus" on Açık Radyo, featuring postmodern listening experiences for a duration of five months. At the end of the 90s, he started working on launching his self-managed website, newmediakitchen.com, featuring insightful articles, discussions, quotes, and extensive link lists to various net-art sites, exploring the intersection of technology

[32] Beral Madra, "XAMPLE-Interdisciplinary Art," BM Contemporary Art Center archive, accessed July 7, 2024, https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/201748.

[33] Merve Çaşkurlu, "New Media Art in Turkey: A Research on Current Situation and a Development Proposal" (Master's Thesis, Yeditepe University, 2013), 42, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312592771_NEW_MEDIA_ART_IN_TURKEY_A_RESEARCH_ON_CURRENT_SITUATION_AND_A_DEVELOPMENT_PROPOSAL.

[34] Beral Madra, "XAMPLE-Interdisciplinary Art," BM Contemporary Art Center archive, accessed July 7, 2024, https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/201748.

[35] From an interview text found in the archive.

and art.[36] The website also allows him to experiment with different presentation options for GIF animations he has been creating as he stated in his own CV documents. Within the scope of this website, Madra presented his own productions, and his current exhibitions alongside many examples from his contemporaries from all around the world in order to publicize emerging practices making use of contemporary technologies in Turkey. This website proves his dedication to the field and as one of the pioneers in Turkey, his desire to make it heard, discussed, and archived in a net-based platform. Meanwhile, it became a new medium for him to explore net-based art. Unfortunately, the website is not accessible currently, yet another one created by him on the same basis can shed light on what might have been presented in newmediakitchen.com as well. This website is called studioplus[37] recalling the SPQ photo studio he had back in the day, and built on Blogspot, currently called Blogger, as a blog site where he posted his own works along with writings and notes of thought processes in the field of Media Arts. The name New Media Kitchen was not only covering his self-published website, but he also named his artist studio at Sofyalı Street in Tünel with the same name where he planned to arrange workshops and events focusing on his artistic practices, namely photography, video, and net-art. This argument is proved by the following text on his description of NMK found from the archive, since he does not solely include the scope of the website but also the events planned to be held within the NMK's offerings:

> *what is new media kitchen?*
>
> - *an online art forum and a hypermedia communication project,*
> - *a survey of recent contemporary art news,*
> - *a communication with art oriented people,*
> - *an interactive review, reevaluation, recovery under the cyberspace expectancies in Istanbul, in a paradoxical, heterogeneous city that grows like a digital network and where life means being prepared for the event that is not explicitly planned for (blasting, bomb attacks, and earthquakes).*
>
> *what do we want?*

[36] In his CV, he marks the launch date as 2003. However, a document published in 1999 for the Venice Biennale mentions that www.newmediakitchen.com and info@newmediakitchen.com were under construction. His LinkedIn profile lists the start date of New Media Kitchen (NMK) as 1998. Thus, it is likely that he started New Media Kitchen in the late 1990s. Norese, Giancarlo, and Tilo Schulz. "Oreste Alla Biennale. Oreste at the Venice Biennale." Oreste Alla Biennale. Oreste at the Venice Biennale, 2000, accessed July 7, 2024, https://www.academia.edu/3409335/Oreste_alla_Biennale_Oreste_at_the_Venice_Biennale.

[37] The blog can be found at the following web address http://spq2.blogspot.com/.

- *to regard, estimate and to discuss art, society and mediated communication,*
- *to say hello to technologies as artists with basic humanity, sociology and ecology concerns,*
- *to be oriented in a post-modern and post-utopia way,*
- *to experiment tediously the intracacies of hypermedia processes,*
- *to create genuine works and extended communication forms as well as to bind up all necessary contexts on the edge of virtual and physical by systematic print-outs and other possible media,*
- *to send regular e-mail to all interested private and public destinations*

what do we give?

- *media and hypermedia communication services, -photography, video & website productions-*
- *new jazz and new music to be listened and relistened,*
- *interactive on line surveys and coverings of major art events,*
- *workshops of creative photography, video art, standard and new - computer software programs in collaboration with other artists and art-oriented media-artists in a recently restored flat in an old apartment building at Tunel-Asmali mescit district.*[38]

In 1999, he achieved another significant success in his field. In June 1999, he participated in the 48th Venice Biennale as a guest with a performance at the Oreste Artist Group Events in the Italian Pavilion. The Oreste group, which emerged during the 1999 Venice Biennale, represents a significant movement in the art world, particularly in the realm of "relational art".[39] At the Biennale, they implemented innovative communication technologies such as email, listservs, and the early World Wide Web to create a broad, inclusive network.[40] This network not only connected over 100 artists who were physically present in Venice but also linked them virtually with more than 500 artists worldwide, illustrating the potential of digital platforms to transcend geographical and cultural barriers in the art community.[41] Unfortunately, there is no trace of how exactly Madra contributed to the show, yet there is this text provided by him for event's documentation:

[38]From the document titles as 'DocumentNMK1999' found from the archive.
[39]Caroline A. Jones, "Event Structures and Biennial Culture: Oreste at the Biennale," *OBOE Journa*l, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2020), https://www.oboejournal.com/index.php/oboe/article/view/6.
[40]Ibid.
[41]Ibid.

> Multimedia communication of contemporary art news as a net art production... creative artistic ventures with all new technology... less ready-made and more multimedia alternatives with hardware and software... retrogressive cyberspace in deconstruction (if this last word is more than one)... I believe our points of interest are already most widespread, popular, well-supported, and in expansion for the sake of the near future and for all artless instances... all the same, these subject matters will soon be covered at https://www.newmediakitchen.com where contemporary art, new music, and technological facilities will be merged in multimedia creativity and online interactivities...Some software and hardware are capable of more alternative processes, rendering a rich variety of counter situations.[42]

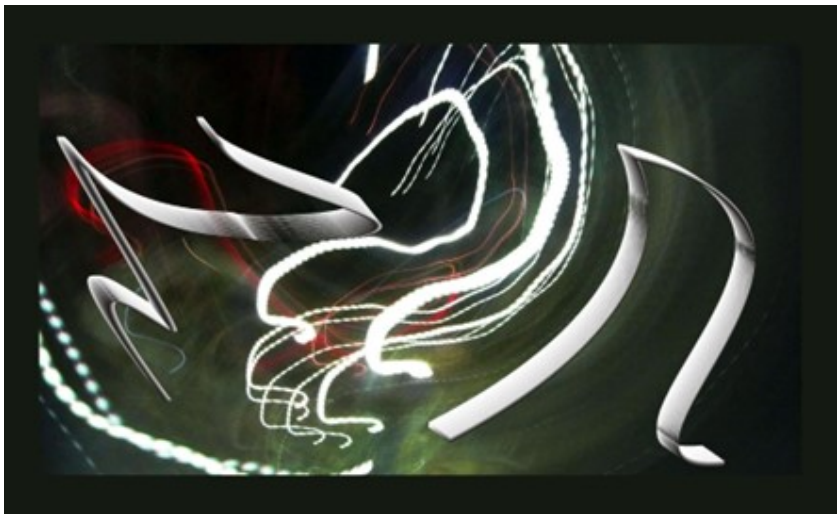
Throughout the 2000s, he continued producing multimedia shows, interactive art, photography, video, and music performances, including "solar2002intermedia" at Goethe Institut in 2002, and "Dada-Loop" together with Batur Sönmez at German Cultural Center. He also participated in several significant events: ARTALAN II at Kadıköy Art Alan where he showcased vinyl-inkjet large format prints of his recent works in 2005, the Mediterranean Countries Festival in 2006, and the AMBER Festival in 2008.

In the 2010s, Teoman Madra embraced new technology in his artistic practice with the advent of iPads. Much like the emergence of personal computers, this became another milestone in his career. Reflecting on his earlier Light Games practice, this new tablet technology enabled him to incorporate movement into his work more directly. This time, however, it was not his camera lens reacting to the sound he was listening to; instead, he used his hand directly on the digital canvas, in the manner of an Action Painter, while listening to jazz music. Utilizing this emerging technology, he created digital geometric drawings or added layers to his earlier Light Games, mimicking the performative techniques of those works. The result was a combination of his aesthetics from two different eras. Therefore, these artworks (see Figure 2.20.) present a juxtaposition of two different technological aesthetics, marking his final artistic productions built upon his initial practice.

[42]Norese, Giancarlo, and Tilo Schulz. "Oreste Alla Biennale. Oreste at the Venice Biennale." Oreste Alla Biennale. Oreste at the Venice Biennale, 2000, accessed July 7, 2024, https://www.academia.edu/3409335/Oreste_alla_Biennale_Oreste_at_the_Venice_Biennale.

Figure 2.19 Teoman Madra, Free Hand Drawings (circa the 2010s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Figure 2.20 Teoman Madra, Free Hand Drawings with Light Games (circa the 2010s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.



It can be stated that throughout the decades, Madra has been a frontier of the Turkish Media Art scene, creating a performative approach through abstract photography in the manner of a action painter, curating multimedia exhibitions/shows in accompaniment with avant garde jazz music, producing generative video works with early computer technologies, hosting radio programs, and delving into the realms of net-art and digital culture with his website, newmediakitchen.com. His commitment to forging new connections between technology, art, and music exemplifies his legacy as a vanguard artist whose work is both inspiring and provokes thought regarding the newly emerging media technologies.

To conclude this chapter, I would like to provide an artist statement written by Teoman Madra himself found from the archive, an insightful reflection on his artistic vision by himself:

> I am a photography, computer, internet, and video artist, creating visual documents and abstract icons that reflect my ideas on Modernism, convey sensitivities and perceptions on experimental art, and negotiate with new technologies. In my multimedia performances, I combine old and new abstract photography with live or CD jazz and contemporary music, creating an audio-visual synesthesia environment. The abstract photography or computer graphics, in tune or in contradictory position to the selected music, propose to the viewer a free zone of perception; free from "narrative" or "advertorial" photography or images. This environment proposes an alternative way of resisting the ongoing pollution in visual culture and art.
>
> I experiment with various camera technologies and computer graphics to create improvised abstract designs and icons, but I try not to yield to the instructions of the computerized camera and computer. Having worked on abstract photography since the 60s, I have observed the viewer's reaction and know that non-narrative images have a very positive psychological effect on the individual. The synesthesia environment, which is actually a total art form as it unites music, image, aesthetic knowledge, and memory, fulfills the hidden desire of the viewer to feel themselves as an integral part of the work.
>
> Internet and computer possibilities have opened a vast universe of individual creativity, democratizing participation in art making and distribution. However, it has also blurred the line between high art and popular art; kitsch has mingled with real art. Not every image created with ever-developing technology is art! The only way to recognize real artwork is to find the socio-political and cultural intentions in the idea and concept of the work and its aesthetic and conceptual links to Modernism and Post-modernism. The other aspect of making art with technology is to invest in the work with all five senses, i.e., with performative power or strong subjectivity; only this innate power can deal with the rigidity of

technology.[43]

2.2 Teoman Madra's Artistic Approach

Teoman Madra often identified himself as a Fluxus artist, a claim that merits closer examination. While this self-identification highlights certain aspects of his work, it may not entirely encapsulate the full scope of his artistic approach. To scrutinize this statement thoroughly, it is essential first to delve into the history and defining characteristics of the Fluxus movement. Therefore, the following subsection, 2.2.1. Fluxus History, will provide a detailed overview of Fluxus, laying the groundwork for a more nuanced understanding of Madra's alignment with this avant-garde art movement. Then, in the 2.2.2. The Role of Fluxus in Teoman Madra's Artworks, his engagement with the group will be scrutinized in depth while presenting an overview regarding the similarities and discrepancies between his artistic approach and Fluxus community.

2.2.1 Fluxus History

Fluxus was a laboratory[44] of ideas concentrating on experimentation with the ways of doing, neither an art movement with a solid manifesto nor an aesthetic style in art history. As Ken Friedman introduces " *[Fluxus] is an active philosophy of experience that only sometimes takes the form of art*"[45]. Since no consensus in style, medium, subject matter, or political stance has existed among Fluxus artists, the portrayal of the group requires further analysis where general definitive terms are not sufficient enough to describe the inner dynamics. Therefore, there is no point in an attempt to define *what* Fluxus was instead it would be more relevant to deliberate *why* and *how*. In this chapter, the essence of Fluxus practice will be discussed by asking

[43] From a CV document specifically created for ISEA 2011, this quote presents a personal reflection on Teoman Madra's artistic philosophy and career written by himself. The document, written in his own words, was prepared for the International Symposium on Electronic Art (ISEA), an event known for its focus on the intersection of art, science, and technology. As such, it provides a retrospective view of Madra's contributions to Media Art field from the start, highlighting his pioneering efforts and his evolving approach to integrating various media forms. This statement captures Madra's insights into the relationship between modernism, technology, and artistic expression, showcasing his commitment to creating art that challenges conventional narratives and engages viewers on a sensory and intellectual level.

[44] Ken Friedman, "Introduction: A Transformative Vision of Fluxus." in *The Fluxus Reader*, (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), viii.

[45] Ibid., ix.

these questions, the parallelity between their and Madra's works will be scrutinized as well as the reasons behind his self-identification as a Fluxus artist. Because of the fact that it is not possible to define a certain aesthetic style or subject matter for Fluxus group, the conceptual linkage tried to be built between Madra and their approach to art-making.

The term "Fluxus" was propounded as a title for a magazine planned by George Maciunas[46] in 1961. The *Fluxus* name was not intended to embrace a specific group of artists or the newly-emerging performance approach, yet it was a publishing endeavor for new and experimental works that have already been created by many. Even though this very first plan of the publication to expose everyone to the *interesting things being done* as Smith[47] expresses was not realized at that moment, it was foreshadowing for many others to *flow*. This point in the formation of the Fluxus group can be regarded as the first step of what Smith refers to as the "institutional phase" - which can be divided into three as such: "*(i) the period of Fluxus festivals and event performances in 1961-1964; (ii) the period of Fluxus publishing and multiples, 1964-1970; (iii) the period of late Fluxus performances, 1970-1978*".[48] The changeover from the initial idea of a magazine called Fluxus to the era of Fluxus festivals in the early 60s is related to Maciunas's departure from New York to Europe. Besides, La Monte Young and Mac Low, who were working in collaboration with Maciunas in New York for the publication in continuation to their previous experimental work publishing in Beatitude East magazine, were not able to afford the printing costs of the project.[49]

Maciunas's arrival in Europe in the last days of 1961, made him change the direction towards concerts titled "Very New Music" in order to publicize the wide-ranging performances thanks to his encounter with many artists who have been pursuing akin path. These artists, such as Nam June Paik and Emmett Williams, have been mainly gathering around German serialist composer Karlheinz Stockhausen[50] since the early 1950s through his composition class in Darmstadt. The Bauermeister's atelier, which belongs to Stockhausen's wife, was housing the vanguard music and performances corresponding to Cagean ecolé in Germany; hence, it is called a "Proto-

[46] Owen Smith, "Avant-gardism and the Fluxus Project." *Performance Research* 7, no. 3 (2002): 4, https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2002.10871868.
[47] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 19.
[48] Owen Smith, "Avant-gardism and the Fluxus Project." *Performance Research* 7, no. 3 (2002): 4, https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2002.10871868.
[49] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 12-13.
[50] Hannah Higgins, "Introduction" in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 11.

Fluxus in Cologne".[51] Through the agency of Maciunas's connection to Stockhausen and Bauermeister over Paik, he offered to hold the Fluxus festival in Bauermeister's studio as a fund-raiser[52] for Fluxus magazine, which also reveals his perception of festivals as a financial instrument. His concept of Very New Music concerts was eventually carried out in the festivals under the name of *Festum Fluxorum*[53] starting in September of 1962 at Wiesbaden, and continuing in Copenhagen, Paris, Dusseldorf, Amsterdam, The Hague, and Nice until the summer of 1963. The earlier precedents of these festivals had no restricted specificity in terms of conceptualization, rather a variety of works, by whom including the artists closely associated with Fluxus thereafter as well as many other experimental composers of the time like Stockhausen and Pierre Mecure, have been presented to a wide-ranging audience. As Smith conveys, the initial plans for the festival consisted of over twenty concerts encapsulating concrete music, piano compositions, and new electronic music, yet later decreased to fourteen in Wiesbaden, four in Copenhagen, and two in Dusseldorf[54] – proving that the basis of Fluxus was taking shape around the specific performative form; *Events*. Events were experimental performances that present mundane activities as creative practice. These events, which aim to cease the boundary between art and everyday life, are distinguished by their simplicity and directness. George Brecht's "Keyhole Event", which has been defined as "through either side one event"[55] serves as an example of such performances that can be performed by anyone. The fact about the Festivals; initially being too diverse in agenda and getting narrowed down especially after Wiesbaden can be observed in an anecdote by Dick Higgins:

> In line with his ideas of Fluxus being a united front, Maciunas had invited a bunch of International Stylists to perform: Von Biel, Rose, and a couple of others. But they did not like some of the pieces Maciunas was doing and quarreled with him, and they had a style of living that was too self-indulgent to be concrete with the lively aspects of Fluxus. So we kicked Von Biel's crowd out and Rose left.[56]

From this point on, Fluxus was no longer an all-inclusive umbrella but "*a form of experimentation most directly concerned with a post-Cagean interest in concretism*

[51] Ibid.
[52] Hannah Higgins, "Charting Fluxus: Picturing History," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 71.
[53] Owen Smith, "Avant-gardism and the Fluxus Project." *Performance Research* 7, no. 3 (2002): 4, https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2002.10871868.
[54] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing." in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 7.
[55] "Event." Fluxus Digital Collection. University of Iowa Libraries. Accessed December 20,2023. http://fluxus.lib.uiowa.edu/categories/event.html.
[56] Dick Higgins, *Jefferson's Birthday / Postface* (New York: Something Else Press, 1964), 68.

and action music"[57] , yet the repertoire has diversified over time within itself.

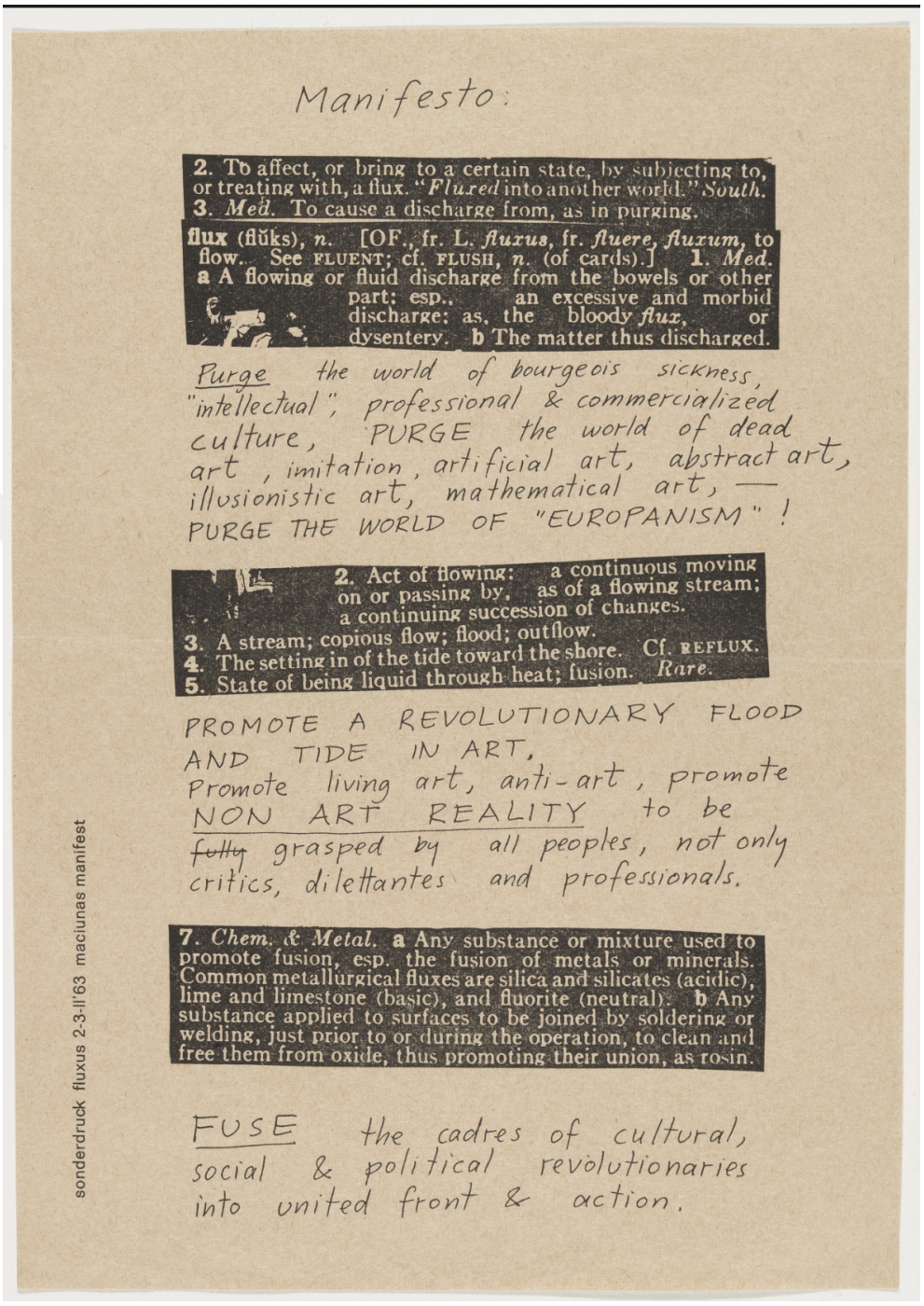
Undoubtedly, the most prominent one amongst the Fluxus festivals is the one held at Dusseldorf Art Academy in February 1963. The significance of the Dusseldorf festival relies on two key points: the Purge Manifesto, and the focused Fluxus attitude on Event performances. The Festival was inaugurated by art critic and gallery director Jean-Pierre Wilhelm, who pointed out the misconception of this new "movement" as neo-Dada also discussing the aleatoric nature of John Cage's Prepared Piano.[58] In his regard, Dada, Surrealists, and others were the heroes of the past, the emergency of now was identified as "*it's a matter of mattering!*"[59] and *how to matter* was relying on the creation of acts and gestures with absurdity in appearance but meaningfulness in reality. Subsequently, he introduced the artists, George Brecht, Dick Higgins, La Monte Young, Alison Knowles, George Maciunas, Ben Patterson, Terry Reilly, and Emmett Williams, whose productions were going to be performed that night. The opening performance was Ben Patterson's Paper Piece when the Purge Manifesto as it came to be called, was scattered toward the audience.

[57] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing." in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 8.

[58] Ibid., 3.

[59] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 3, quoting Jean-Pierre Wilhelm, [untitled manuscript], September 1962, Archive Sohn, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart. Smith notes that this text was not the exact text read by Wilhelm at the Düsseldorf Fluxus Festival, but rather an introduction for a proto-Fluxus performance in Amsterdam titled "Parallele Aufführungen Neuester Musik"; however, he argues that it is probably very similar to what Wilhelm did read in Düsseldorf.

Figure 2.21 George Maciunas, *Fluxus Manifesto*, 1963. Print. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



The world of bourgeois sickness, 'intellectual', professional & commercialized culture, PURGE the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematical art, PURGE THE WORLD OF 'EUROPEANISM!' [...] PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND TIDE IN ART, Promote living art, anti-art, promote NON-ART REALITY to be grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes and professionals [...] FUSE the cadres of cultural, social&

political revolutionaries into united front & action.[60]

This manifesto was written by Maciunas upon request of Beuys who was a faculty member of the Dusseldorf Art Academy, collaborating with Maciunas and others on behalf of the realization of the Festum Fluxorum Dusseldorf.[61] However, the manifesto has never been signed or agreed to by all of the Fluxus artists.[62]

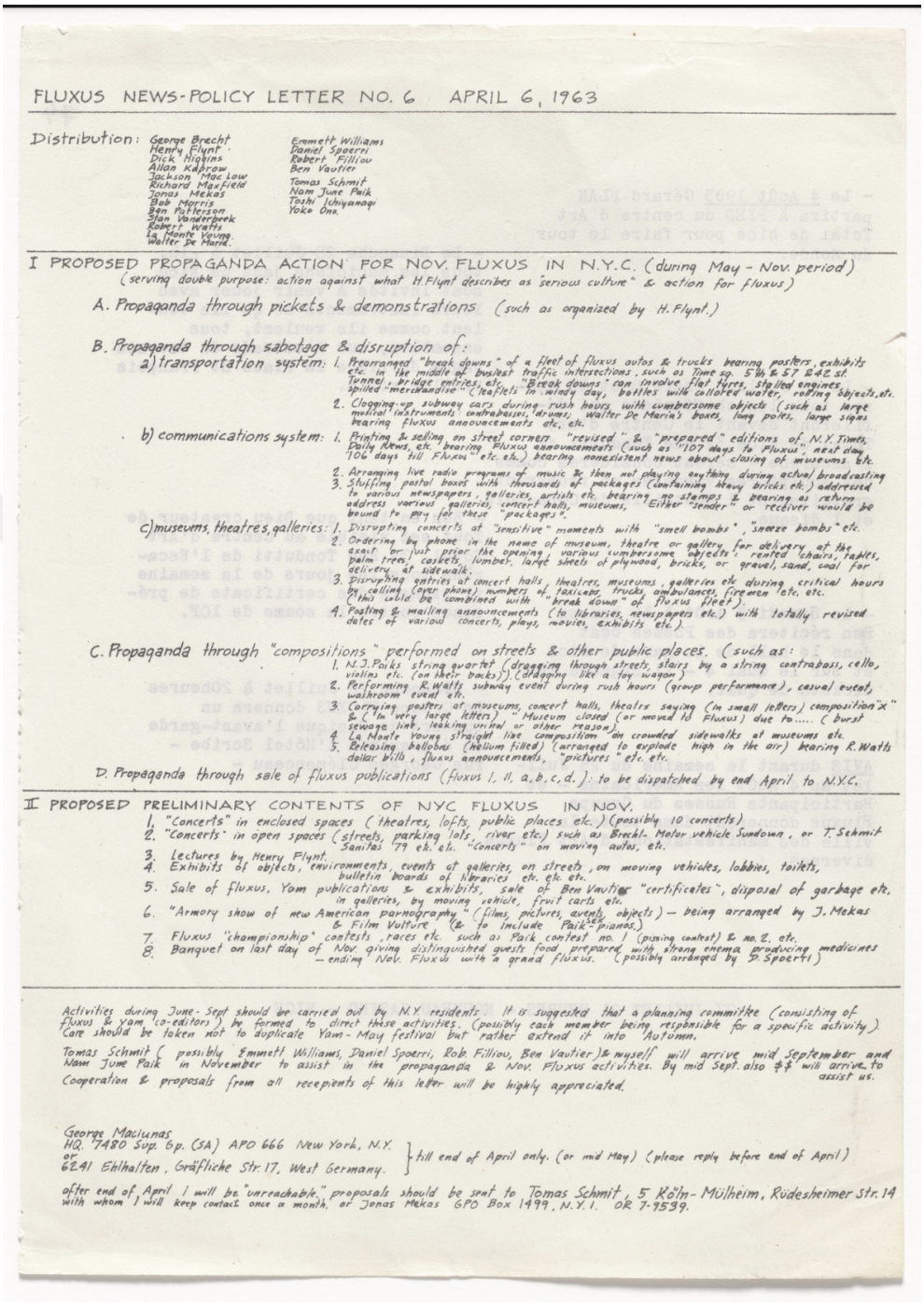
What is most distinguishable in the Purge Manifesto is the anti-institutional stance of Maciunas, which later produced a interpretation of Fluxus as a unified radical group in general perception. Hannah Higgins diagnoses this fallacy as a "Maciunas-based paradigm" since the group as a whole was not sharing the dominant political motivation Maciunas had Clavez construes this radical political standpoint of Maciunas, as Henry Flynt's influence over him. However, labeling the political stance of the Fluxus group as a "Maciunas-based paradigm" might neglect the others who was sharing a common political drive in their artistic practice as Maciunas had. It can be argued that this way of interpreting Fluxus is very much American-centric approach and might obstruct to read the political stance that was very much prominent in some artists from the group. Additionally, this fallacy based interpretation might have linked to Hannah Higgins's personal ties to the group through her parents Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles.

[60] George Maciunas, Fluxus Manifesto, 1963, print, Museum of Modern Art, New York, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/127947.

[61] Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 6.

[62] Hannah Higgins, "Charting Fluxus: Picturing History," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 75.

Figure 2.22 George Maciunas, *Fluxus News-Policy Letter*, no. 6, April 6, 1963, 1963. Stencil copy. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



FLUXUS NEWS-POLICY LETTER NO. 6 APRIL 6, 1963

Distribution: George Brecht, Henry Flynt, Dick Higgins, Allan Kaprow, Jackson Mac Low, Richard Maxfield, Jonas Mekas, Bob Morris, Ben Patterson, Stan Vanderbeek, Robert Watts, La Monte Young, Walter De Maria, Emmett Williams, Daniel Spoerri, Robert Filliou, Ben Vautier, Tomas Schmit, Nam June Paik, Tashi Ichiyanagi, Yoko Ono.

I PROPOSED PROPAGANDA ACTION FOR NOV. FLUXUS IN N.Y.C. (during May - Nov. period)
(serving double purpose: action against what H. Flynt describes as "serious culture" & action for fluxus)

A. Propaganda through pickets & demonstrations (such as organized by H. Flynt.)

B. Propaganda through sabotage & disruption of:
a) transportation system: 1. Prearranged "break downs" of a fleet of fluxus autos & trucks bearing posters, exhibits etc. in the middle of busiest traffic intersections, such as Time sq. 5th & 57 42 st. Tunnel, bridge entries, etc. "Break downs" can involve flat tyres, stalled engines, spilled "merchandise" (leaflets in windy day, bottles with colored water, rotting objects, etc.
2. Clogging up subway cars during rush hours, with cumbersome objects (such as large musical instruments contrabasses, drums, Walter De Maria's boxes, long poles, large signs bearing fluxus announcements etc. etc.
b) communications system: 1. Printing & selling on street corners "revised" & "prepared" editions of N.Y. Times, Daily News, etc. bearing Fluxus announcements (such as "107 days to Fluxus", next day, "106 days till Fluxus" etc. etc.) bearing nonexistent news about closing of museums etc.
2. Arranging live radio programs of music & then, not playing anything during actual broadcasting
3. Stuffing postal boxes with thousands of packages (containing heavy bricks etc.) addressed to various newspapers, galleries, artists etc. bearing no stamps & bearing as return address various galleries, concert halls, museums, "Either "sender" or receiver would be bound to pay for these "packages".
c) museums, theatres, galleries: 1. Disrupting concerts at "sensitive" moments with "smell bombs", "sneeze bombs" etc.
2. Ordering by phone in the name of museum, theatre or gallery for delivery at the exact or just prior the opening various cumbersome objects: rented chairs, tables, palm trees, caskets, lumber, large sheets of plywood, bricks, or gravel, sand, coal for delivery at sidewalk.
3. Disrupting entries at concert halls, theatres, museums, galleries etc during critical hours by calling (over phone) numbers of taxicab, trucks, ambulances, firemen etc. etc. (this calls be combined with "break down" of fluxus fleet).
4. Posting & mailing announcements (to libraries, newspapers etc.) with totally revised dates of various concerts, plays, movies, exhibits etc.).

C. Propaganda through "compositions" performed on streets & other public places. (such as:
1. N.J. Paiks string quartet (dragging through streets, stairs by a string contrabass, cello, violins etc. (on their backs)). (dragging like a toy wagon)
2. Performing R. Watts subway event during rush hours (group performance), casual event, bathroom event etc.
3. Carrying posters at museums, concert halls, theatre saying (in small letters) composition X" & ("in very large letters) "Museum closed (or moved to Fluxus) due to..... (burst sewage link, leaking urinal or other reason).
4. La Monte Youngs straight like Composition "in crowded sidewalks at museums etc.
5. Releasing balloons (helium filled) (arranged to explode high in the air) bearing R. Watts dollar bills, fluxus announcements, "pictures" etc. etc.

D. Propaganda through sale of fluxus publications (fluxus I, II, a, b, c, d.): to be dispatched by end April to N.Y.C.

II PROPOSED PRELIMINARY CONTENTS OF NYC FLUXUS IN NOV.
1. "Concerts" in enclosed spaces (theatres, lofts, public places etc.) (possibly 10 concerts)
2. "Concerts" in open spaces (streets, parking lots, river etc.) such as Brecht- Motor vehicle Sundown, or T. Schmit Sanitas '79 etc. etc. "concerts" on moving autos, etc.
3. Lectures by Henry Flynt.
4. Exhibits of objects, environments, events at galleries, on streets, on moving vehicles, lobbies, toilets, bulletin boards of libraries etc. etc. etc.
5. Sale of fluxus, Yam publications & exhibits, sale of Ben Vautier "certificates", disposal of garbage etc. in galleries, by moving vehicle, fruit carts etc.
6. "Armory show of new American pornography" (films, pictures, events, objects) — being arranged by J. Mekas & Film Vulture (& to include Paik's pianos.)
7. Fluxus "championship" contests, races etc. such as Paik contest no. 1 (pissing contest) & no. 2, etc.
8. Banquet on last day of Nov. giving distinguished guests food, prepared with strong enema producing medicines — ending Nov. Fluxus with a grand fluxus. (possibly arranged by D. Spoerri)

Activities during June - Sept should be carried out by N.Y. residents. It is suggested that a planning committee (consisting of fluxus & Yam (co-editors) be formed to direct these activities. (possibly each member being responsible for a specific activity). Care should be taken not to duplicate Yam - May festival but rather extend it into Autumn.

Tomas Schmit (possibly Emmett Williams, Daniel Spoerri, Rob. Filliou, Ben Vautier) & myself will arrive mid September and Nam June Paik in November to assist in the propaganda & Nov. Fluxus activities. By mid Sept. also ?? will arrive to assist us.
Cooperation & proposals from all recepients of this letter will be highly appreciated.

George Maciunas
HQ. 7480 Sup. Gp. (SA) APO 666 New York, N.Y. } till end of April only. (or mid May) (please reply before end of April)
or
6241 Ehlhalten, Gräfliche Str. 17, West Germany.

after end of April I will be "unreachable." proposals should be sent to Tomas Schmit, 5 Köln - Mülheim, Rüdesheimer Str. 14 with whom I will keep contact once a month, or Jonas Mekas GPO Box 1499, N.Y.1. OR 7-9539.

When Maciunas proposed propaganda actions in other words sabotage of cultural institutions in Fluxus News-Policy Letter no 6 published in 1963,[63] some of the Fluxus artists did not hesitate to express their opposition. Jackson Mac Low responded to this proposition through his critique as follows:

[63]From the text written in the figure 1.17 George Maciunas, *Fluxus News-Policy Letter, no. 6, April 6, 1963*, stencil copy, Museum of Modern Art, New York, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/127661.

> I'm not opposed to serious culture—quite the contrary. I'm all for it & I hope & consider that my own work is a genuine contribution to it... No blunderbuss attack against culture (serious or otherwise) as a whole ... will do anything to remedy what's wrong in the present situation. I am not at all against art or music or drama or literature, old or new. I'm against the overbalance of museum culture... as against present-minded and presently "useful" cultural activities and would certainly like to see the balance tipped the other way, but I would not want to eliminate museums (I like museums).[64]

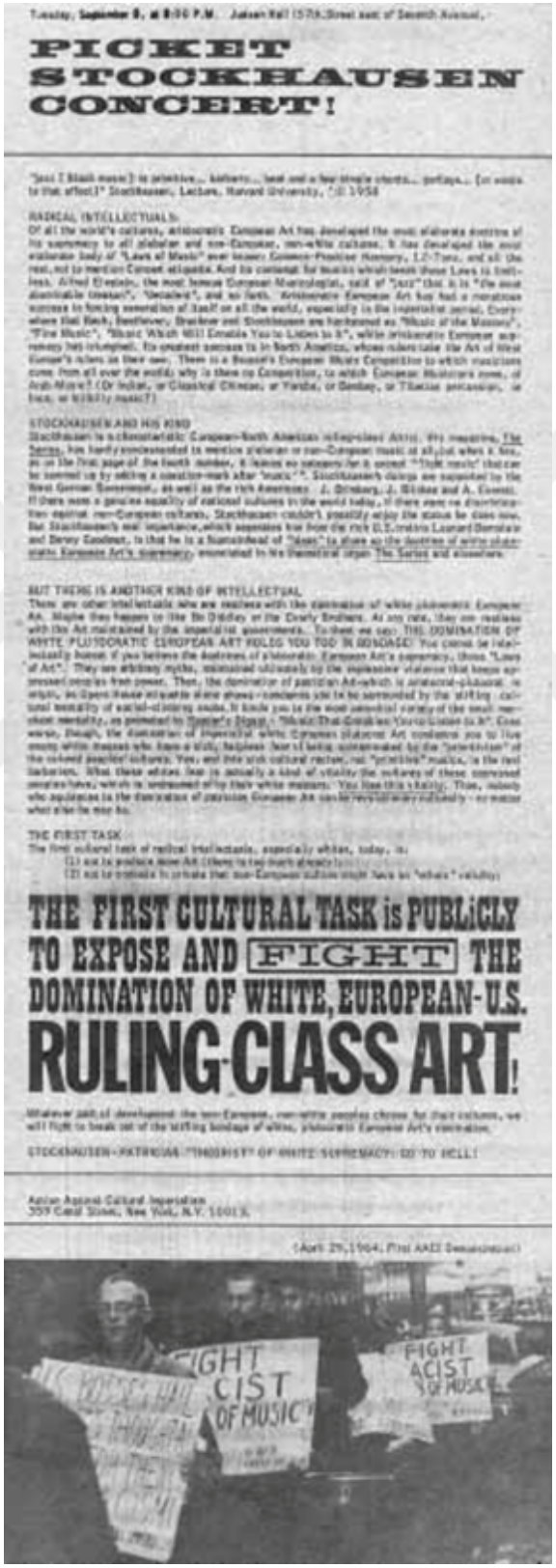
Other artists such as Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik, and German Fluxus artist Tomas Schmit agreed with what Mac Low was indicating;[65] the relationship between cultural institutions and the public does not always have to be oppressive and does not necessarily be destroyed radically by the avant-garde yet can be criticized persuasively. This divergence reached its climax in the performance of Stockhausen's multimedia opera *Originale* during Charlotte Moorman's 1964 Annual New York Festival of the Avant-Garde, a year after Maciunas's return to New York. Rewinding the clock back to the time when Maciunas's connection to Stockhausen was built, Nam June Paik was playing an intermediary role by virtue of the professional loyalty and admiration he had for his former instructor Stockhausen, although Maciunas was criticizing him for being an elitist.[66] Thus, the later conflict was no surprise considering this early disagreement about Stockhausen's inclusion. Furthermore, there was an ontological difference between Stockhausen's serialist compositions that carries the elements of what Cage defines as conventional European music and unconventional Event format that could be performed by anyone and could engage almost any of the senses.

[64]Hannah Higgins, "Charting Fluxus: Picturing History," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 77, quoting a letter from Mac Low to George Maciunas, April 25, 1962, Archiv Sohm.

[65]Hannah Higgins, "Charting Fluxus: Picturing History," in The Fluxus Experience (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 77.

[66]Ibid., 71.

Figure 2.23 Flyer for "Action against Cultural Imperialism, Picket Stockhausen Concert!" designed by George Maciunas and text by Henry Flynt, 1964. Courtesy of the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit. Photograph by the Walker Art Center.



The flyer, titled "Action against Cultural Imperialism, Picket Stockhausen Concert!" was designed by Maciunas, and distributed at the protest against Originale. The text of the flyer was written by Henry Flynt, advocating that "the first cultural task is publicly to expose and fight the domination of white European - US ruling-class art!".[67] There were three different fronts in this concert amongst Fluxus circle: first - performers including Nam June Paik, Jackson Mac Low, Joe Jones, and George Brecht, second - protestors not surprisingly George Maciunas and Henry Flynt, Ben Vautier, Takako Saito, third - Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles and Allan Kaprow who were both performing in and protesting against.[68] This situation showcased that Maciunas was not alone while protesting against Originale. Thus, the political aspect of the group can not be reduced to him only, instead the same political motivation shared by many. What George Brecht conveyed regarding this diverse range of attitudes of the Fluxus members in the protest is as follows:

> Whether you think that concert halls, theaters, and art galleries are the natural places to present music, performances, and objects, or find these places mummifying, preferring streets, homes, and railway stations, or do not find it useful to distinguish between these two aspects of the world theater, there is someone associated with Fluxus who agrees with you. Artist, anti-artists, non-artists, anartists, the politically committed and the apolitical, poets of non-poetry, non-dancers dancing, doers, undoers, and non-doers, Fluxus encompasses opposites. Consider opposing it, supporting it, ignoring it, changing your mind.[69]

Albeit the discrepancy about Fluxus's political stance and its potential exercises was at the core of the group back then, the press releases, both the mainstream and the alternative, about the situation were not reflecting the contradistinction. *Time* magazine's report on the protest suggested that "*The opening at Judson Hall could not have been more auspicious; it was picketed by a rival group calling itself 'Fluxus,' bearing signs: 'Fight the rich man's snob art.'*".[70] The discussion of The Nation had the same attitude toward Fluxus while expressing further "*They are also against 'the rich U.S. cretins Bernstein and Goodman.' Their aim is to promote jazz ('black music') and not to promote more art ('there is too much already')*".[71] This

[67] Henry Flynt and George Maciunas, flyer, "Action against Cultural Imperialism, 'Picket Stockhausen Concert!'" 1964, offset on paper, 178 x 6 in, photo by the Walker Art Center; courtesy of the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit.

[68] Hannah Higgins, "Fluxus Fortuna," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 33.

[69] George Brecht, "Something about Fluxus," *Fluxus Newspaper*, no. 4, June 1964, Silverman Collection, Detroit.

[70] Hannah Higgins, "Charting Fluxus: Picturing History," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 74.

[71] Ibid.

excerpt carries an evidential value for racist bias racist bias regarding this Avant-garde music genre, which was in line with Stockhausen's perspective. This argument can be supported by the his opera titled Freitag aus Licht, where he whereas Stockhausen had intended for the Black characters to appear more "primitive" as it is argued.[72] According to Owen Smith, this protest against the performance of Stockhausen's Originale was the consequence of tension developed by ideological discord throughout the time and made the first period of festivals and Events in Fluxus's institutional phase come to an end in 1964 with several artists distancing themselves from the group.[73] Fluxus group was framed and historically embraced as a unified anti-art group, centered around radical political motivation – which has not been a consensus amongst all yet there were many artists who was carrying this political, anti-institutional stance. Therefore, it would not be adequate to reduced it down to Maciunas's perspective, besides the political aspect of the group can not be neglected.

In the second period of the institutional phase, the initial plans of Fluxus being a publication venture came to the fore. Maciunas who had the idea of publishing new and experimental music, poetry, and performance scores under the name of Fluxus in the first place, was aware of the similar works being collected by La Monte Young for *An Anthology* publication.[74] In the early days of the 60s, Maciunas as a designer, Young both as an editor and co-publisher, and Mac Low as a co-publisher started working together for this very first collaborative publication project consisting of many other artists' works such as Higgins, Flynt, Paik, Williams, Brecht.[75] Mainly because of financial infeasibility, the project got to be delayed at the time, but this did not prevent Maciunas from carrying a wide collection of works to Europe in 1961 with the hope of publishing a series of collective Fluxus magazines. During his stay in Europe where many Fluxus festivals were happening, he developed the concept of "Fluxus Yearbooks" which consisted of collected essays and scores apart from what was reserved for An Anthology, as well as the objects produced by artists such as a glove by Knowles and molded plastic relief composition by Bauermeister.[76] These earlier ideas from magazines to yearbooks, later found their way to the "Fluxus yearbook-box", by indicating the transition from the traditional form of printed publication to the boxed collection of object multiples. The earliest example of the Fluxus yearbox format; *Fluxus* I originally published in 1964 and altered many

[72]Callum John Blackmore, "Freitag," Parterre Box, December 9, 2022, accessed July 13, 2024, https://parterre.com/2022/12/09/freitag/.

[73]Owen Smith, "Avant-gardism and the Fluxus Project," *Performance Research* 7, no. 3 (2002): 4, https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2002.10871868.

[74]Owen Smith, "Developing a Fluxable Forum: Early Performance and Publishing," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 13.

[75]Ibid.

[76]Ibid.

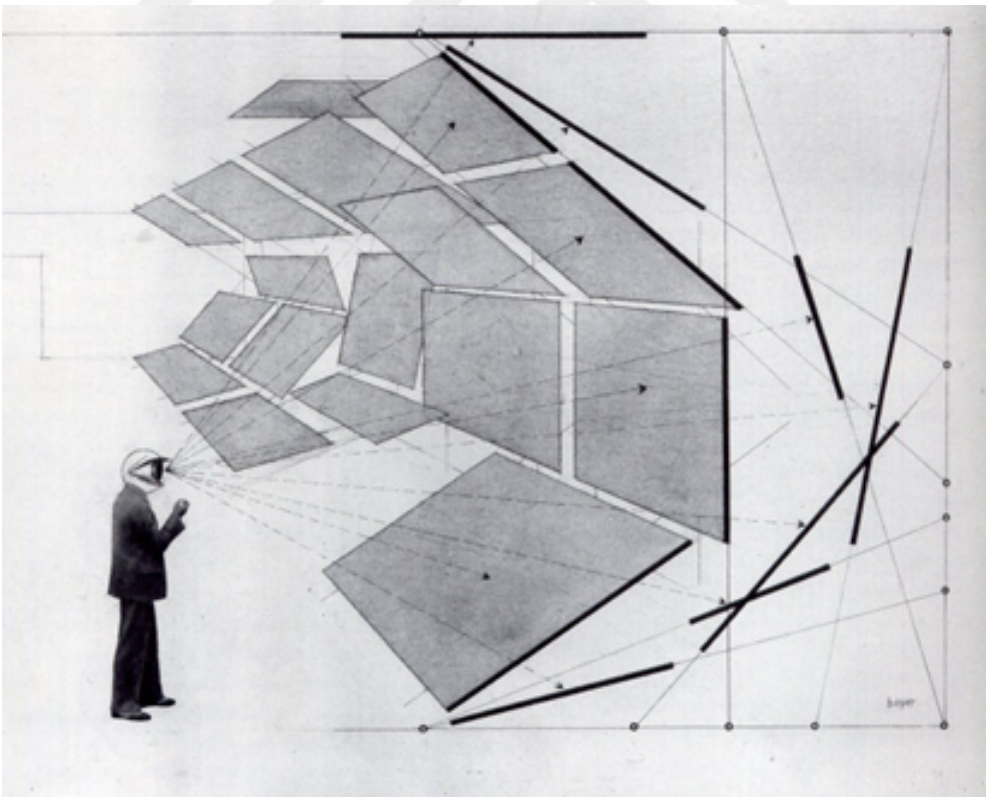
times thereafter, made up of brown envelopes and printed pages bolted together. The layout of Fluxus I goes beyond being solely a design choice by playing the role of a unifier for diverse types of forms and materials to be included. The works contained by Fluxus I can be exemplified with Maciunas's photograph of hair printed on transparent paper, Kosugi's footprint on paper called *Theatre Music*, Knowles' print of tooth x-ray, and many other artists' works, scores, and essays that have been accumulated for a collective publication which has been planned since 1961 and finally got to be materialized.[77] Some of these works were not specifically intended to be published, rather they were the remnants of Fluxus activities and performances prior to that. This publication can be regarded as the "*first full manifestation of the original impetus for establishing Fluxus*" as Smith states.[78] Similarly according to MET Museum's collection where the work is being preserved, "*Fluxus I exemplifies many of the founding principles of Fluxus —from collaboration, viewer participation, and de-skilling to inter-disciplinarity, everyday life, and unconventional systems of distribution.*"[79]

Following the first publication of Fluxus yearboxes, the more comprehensive identification of the format was served under the name of *Fluxkits*. Hannah Higgins introduces Fluxkits as one of the two major formats embraced by Fluxus artists: (i) Event performances, and (ii) Fluxkit multiples which encapsulate everyday objects and printed materials in a box meant to be explored by the interactants individually.[80] The structure of the Fluxkits being inclusive of a diverse body of materials essentially has its roots in the experiential nature of Fluxus. John Dewey explains the notion of experiencing art as " *[...] it signifies active and alert commerce with the world; at its height, it signifies complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events.*"[81] That's what Fluxus was all about; getting lost in the immersion of art through its multisensory instrumentality where the self and the objective body of the work are intermingled. Hannah Higgins construes the experiential basis of Fluxus works as ceasing the boundaries of Western epistemology in which the separation between subject and object disappears, resulting in "non-hierarchial density of experience".[82] This approach undermines the predominant visual model of traditional art history which regards the viewer as a "disembodied gaze" with its stan-

[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 12.
[79] George Maciunas, *Fluxus 1*, 1964, book with offset, metal bolts, and stamped ink, containing objects in various media, in wood box, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/789197.
[80] Hannah Higgins, "Introduction," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 12.
[81] John Dewey, "The Live Creature," in *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee Books, 1980), 19.
[82] Hannah Higgins, "Introduction," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 12.

dardized vision derived from the Renaissance perspective, namely the single-point perspective.[83] The conventional method of limiting the means of visual experience through controlling the gaze of the viewer by disembodying them has been still the case in the 20th-century art scene especially when one thinks of white cube gallery spaces of the time. O'doherty describes the gallery spaces as white cubes whose clean, smooth surfaces are not torn down by time, hence art is placed inside an eternity where time seems does not exist.[84] According to his account, one's own body inside the gallery space felt like an intrusion; "*while eyes and minds are welcome, space-occupying bodies are not*".[85] As opposed to what was served in white cubes - a timeless, idealized vacuum where the viewer feels alienated - Herbert Bayer who was an exhibition designer from Bauhaus was proposing a more lively setting by constructing the space beyond its physical limits. His attempts intended to create the dynamism of exhibition space by replacing the walls with panels hung in diagonal angles, while still putting the emphasis on the *primacy of optical apprehension in constructing the meaning of objects within consciousness* (The Way Beyond "Art": Dorner, Herbert Bayer, and the Production of the Exhibition Viewer).

Figure 2.24 Herbert Bayer, Diagram of the Field of Vision, 1930.



[83]Hannah Higgins, "Information and Experience," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 24.
[84]Brian O'Doherty, "Notes on the Gallery Space," in Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space (Santa Monica and San Francisco: The Lapis Press, 1986), 15.
[85]Ibid.

Directing the opticality and field of vision was at the forefront of Bayer's method of exhibition making, as seen in his diagram of the Field of Vision where he illustrates the viewer as a single eye in line with the common notion of disembodied gaze. However, Fluxus laboratory was in an attempt for something else; instead of "*I'll know it when I see it.*" they were in pursuit of "*I'll know it when I experience it.*"[86]

Hannah Higgins's commentary on John Cavanaugh's Fluxfilm Blink (or Flicker) might shed light on the discussion of experiential nature in art blurring the barrier between the perceiving self and the signifier. This film was produced thanks to Cavanaugh's encounter with Fluxus in the mid-1960s and was later introduced in the screenings of Fluxfilms held by Maciunas in 1966.[87] Flicker was made of a sequence of frames with colors alternating back and forth between pure black and bright white. These flashing lights of contrasting dark and bright induce optic fatigue which comes along with temporal semi-blindness. Being exposed to such flickers, makes the eye hallucinate colorless blobs over the semi-blocked vision. As Hannah Higgins explains "*There is neither a tangible object that corresponds to the colorless blob that hovers over the flicker nor an objective framework that determines the precise form the blob takes.*".[88] Going beyond the physiological limits of the eye, the artist made the non-existing perceivable by using the incapabilities of the human optical system. Therefore, the experienced work becomes more than what it signifies within the body of experiencing self. In this regard, what was emphasized by Bayer or all other carriers of the conventional method of visual experience becomes inadequate since it is no longer about controlling the visual means of the viewer through navigating the field of vision; neither the artist nor the artwork has full control over what is being perceived. The self becomes an apparatus for artwork to be realized, alternating against the concept of the disembodied gaze. Instead of "seeing", "experiencing" the film made the audience recognize the visual incompetencies they have over against the outside stimulus which does not directly correspond to what is visible to the eye but indeed does not entirely independent from it. Thus, the mutual relation between stimulus and sense data was revealed. Recalling John Dewey's account of art as experience, the interpenetration of self and world of objects was happening through experiencing Flicker when feeling unified within the continuous flow of the surround.

> Because it occurs in this interstitial location between objective and subjective, Flicker works against the belief that experience is mediated by

[86]Hannah Higgins, "Information and Experience," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 20.
[87]Ibid., 21.
[88]Ibid., 20.

> clearly delineated senders (objects) and receivers (subjects) of information, a duality that lies at the core of the Western philosophical tradition.[89]

Against the passive vision, the dynamicity in the embodied model drives the onlooker to contribute, by putting his or her existence into it for the work to reach completion. In accordance with what Marcel Duchamp indicates, the viewer becomes responsible for half of the work on behalf of its meaning to come into being.[90] Thus, the participation of the interactant makes the work acquires a performative aspect which is a common ground for Fluxus practice.

> Fluxus originated in the context of performance and the nature of its being—the ontology of Fluxus—is performative.[...] The body, in addition to its role as a subject, is itself presented as an object. Together, subject and object create a changing and interrelated perceptual field for the investigation between actions, language, objects, and sounds.[91]

Concluding this examination of Fluxus, it's evident that the essence of Fluxus lies in its pursuit of experience beyond mere observation. The group's diverse and collaborative ethos avoided conventional forms and structures, advocating interactivity and the fusion of multi-sensory stimulis. Fluxus was not an art movement; it was a philosophical inquiry into the nature of experience and the boundaries between life and art while questioning whether it can be ceased.

In this regard, Fluxus can be understood as a facilitator of immersion and performativity, emphasizing the importance of the multisensory experience, inviting others to consider art as something to be experienced, or be interfered. They encourage interactant to partake in art that does not simply exist in a vacuum but evolves dynamically. Fluxus, as practiced by Madra that will be discussed in depth in the upcoming subsection, thus becomes a prototype for a more engaging and immersive way of artistic expression, where the lines between creating and experiencing art are seamlessly intertwined.

[89] Ibid., 21.

[90] Ralph Rugoff, "You Talking to Me? On Curating Group Shows That Give You a Chance to Join the Group," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 46.

[91] Kristine Stiles, "Between Water and Stone, Fluxus Performance: A Metaphysics of Acts," in *In the Spirit of Fluxus*, ed. Elizabeth Armstrong and Joan Rothfuss (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1993), 65, quoted in Hannah Higgins, "Information and Experience," in *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 26.

2.2.2 The Role of Fluxus in Teoman Madra's Artworks

This section of the thesis aims to provide an overview of the similarities and differences between Madra's artistic approach and the Fluxus community. While presenting his relationship with the group hence their role in Madra's artworks, his perspective of John Cage who is regarded as the spiritual father of Fluxus[92] will be scrutinized in order to open the door for further analysis of his self-identification as Fluxus artist.

Teoman Madra explains his relationship with John Cage and the Fluxus group in an interview[93] accompanying the group exhibition titled John' Cage" organized at Kuad Gallery, Istanbul in 2012. The exhibition was held to commemorate Cage on the 100th anniversary of his birthday, in which an international group of artists including Lynn Criswell, Esther Ferrer, Sarkis, Michael Snow, Tom Johnson, and many others took part. Madra contributed to the exhibition with the early chiaroscuros[94] in other words *Light Games* he created in the 1960s. In the interview, when he was initially asked about his first encounter with Cage's works, he answered the question by rewinding the tape back to the early years of his artistic practice and described his engagement with Fluxus as follows. His experiments with light by a performative approach to photography led him to certain artistic forms which he calls *Light Games* he started in 1962. Subsequently, in the mid-60s he initiated the dia shows where he presented these works in company with contemporary music and occasionally dance performances. In one of those such performances held in GENAR in 1965, he included John Cage's compositions into his repertoire upon the recommendation of İlhan Usmanbaş. He attended an event held by İlhan Mimaroğlu, who is a contemporary electronic music composer, to introduce John Cage's compositions. Before calendars date back to 1980, he was already experimenting with the electronic music pieces by Klaus Ager who hosted Madra in his hometown Salzburg, in addition to Okay Temiz's collaborative compositions with his Swedish colleagues. Later, he made use of those pieces by Ager, in a collaborative performance event in 1985 at Bilsak with Aydın Teker who was a modern dance artist and former student

[92] Ellsworth Snyder, "John Cage Discusses Fluxus," *Visible Language* 26, no. 1/2 (1992), accessed July 29, 2024, https://monoskop.org/images/4/45/Snyder_Ellsworth_1992_John_Cage_Discusses_Fluxus.pdf

[93] Referring to an an interview text found in the archive, for the John' Cage" exhibition at Kuad Gallery in 2012.

[94] Beral Madra referring to Light Games by saying chiaroscuros in the text she wrote for the exhibition catalogue titled Inside Abstraction for Teoman Madra. Chiaroscuro is a technique being used to create a strong contrast between light and dark in paintings, drawings, and prints. This technique is leveraged to give the illusion of volume in modeling three-dimensional objects and figures. The term originates from the Italian words "chiaro," meaning clear or light, and "scuro," meaning obscure or dark. Historically, chiaroscuro was developed during the Renaissance period as a method to bring dramatic intensity to an image.

of Merce Cunningham.

At this juncture in time, it can be clearly suggested that he was well-informed about the Cagean école and even collaborated with many artists who were closely associated with this art circle, indeed his first face-to-face contact with John Cage took place during Merce Cunningham's performance in Istanbul in 1987. Since his mind was preoccupied with the idea of regarding Avantgarde music - either could be jazz or electronic- as contemporary art, he allusively posed the question of whether Cage was identifying himself as a contemporary artist or a modern musician, yet could not get the answer he would have expected. Cage responded by saying both, while drawing attention to his drawings and his large-scale paintings without any reference to what Madra had in mind. The same year, he paid a visit to Cage's home in New York, and was given a CD of Paul Zukofsky playing violin as a gift.

Figure 2.25 Photograph of John Cage taken by Teoman Madra during a home visit in New York on 11th Street near Broadway, 1987, (Source: Teoman Madra, accessed from Flickr on July 31, 2024, https://www.flickr.com/photos/teomanmadra/7629234526/in/photolist-3zJzCe-cCaPCj-9xcnKP-7GCaSD-7nRqJF-8ziAMv-5Dbq5v-47pjBs), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

During the previously mentioned interview for John' Cage" exhibition, found in the archive, Madra's conveyance of his conversation with Cage gave rise to the second question about the accordance of his interdisciplinary approach with the intermedial attitude of Fluxus on the basis of his perception of unifying avant-garde music and contemporary art. Madra's multimedia shows starting from the 60s melting abstract imagery, modern dance, performance and avant-garde music in a single pot might be regarded as a contemporaneous attempt to what Fluxus was conceptualizing as "intermedia" back then. In order to understand the question asked to him, the differentiation between the two core concepts, namely intermedia and multimedia, should be scrutinized first while trying to provide a clear definition for both.

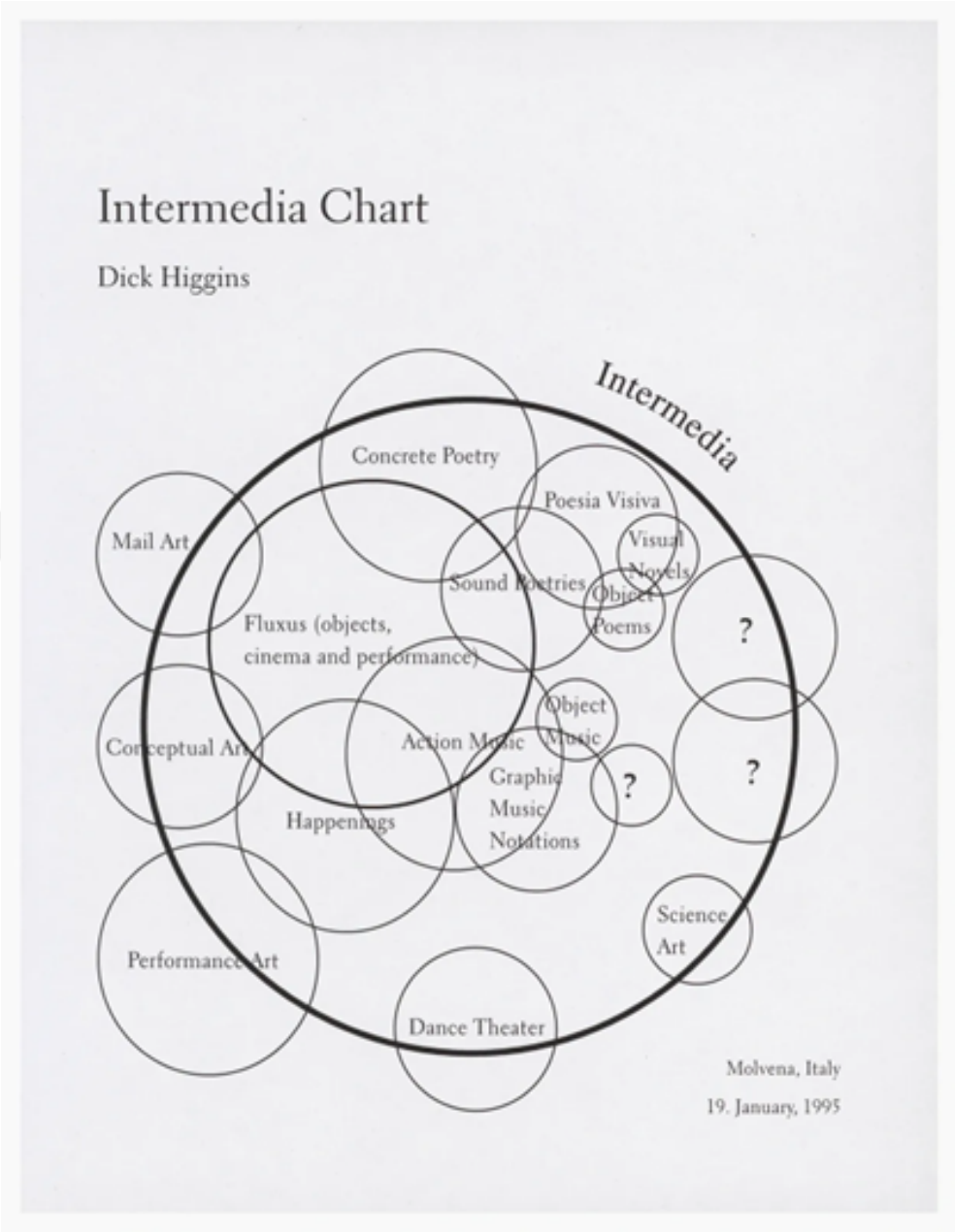
Dick Higgins initiates his well-known article on "Intermedia" where he conceptualize the term, by mentioning categorization and separation in a sociological context. The social conjuncture of class society - the feudal conception of the Great Chain of Being as he calls it - generated the compartmentalization of the media perception in like manner since Renaissance.[95] However, the classless societies of the day are no longer bound by rigid categories the people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds are now able to conduct an akin course of action, as proved by the examples of millionaires eating from food service automats.[96] Consequently, such a divisive approach to the ways of art-making is not adequate nor valid anymore within the given portrayal of the new social milieu. By reason of painting being an expensive ornament to flaunt the grandeur of the owner, it does not pave the way for a dialogue involving onlookers. This is not only typical for paintings, the art of the pure medium carrying the past functionalities of art can not free itself from being an institutionalized power helder regarding its positioning in the High Art world.

> Pop and op are both dead, however, because they confine themselves, through the media which they employ, to the older functions of art, of decorating and suggesting grandeur, whatever the detailed content of their artist's intentions.[97]

In contrast to art which has been destined to be dead from its birth, Fluxus was looking for liveliness in line with the aim of dissolving the boundaries between art and life in which intermedia proposed as a well-serving tool for this purpose. Dick Higgins drew the following schema in order to illustrate the mixture of different art-making methods at varying levels to better describe intermediality.

[95] Dick Higgins and Hannah Higgins, "Intermedia," *Leonardo* 34, no. 1 (2001): 49, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/19618.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.

Figure 2.26 Intermedia Chart, Dick Higgins, 1995. (© Estate of Dick Higgins, accessed from https://dickhiggins.org/intermedia)



As Arapoğlu conveys, the origins of intermedia productions can be traced back to John Cage, specifically with his "Untitled Event" performed in 1952 at Black Mountain College in North Carolina where simultaneous activities such as poetry reading, painting, playing recorded music, dance, and live music took place, while Cage himself delivered a lecture on Zen Buddhism.[98] From this point onwards, recalling Arapoğlu's distinction between intermedia and multimedia might contribute

[98]Fırat Arapoğlu, "2.1.3. İntermedya'nın Multimedya'dan Ayrımı," in *Disiplinlerarasılık, Coğrafi Kavramlar ve Sanatsal Bir Edim Olarak Yürümek* (PhD diss., Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Sanat ve Tasarım Ana Bilim Dalı, 2018), 7.

to understanding and answering the question asked to Madra during the interview from today's perspective. Arapoğlu elucidates this distinction using the example of opera, based on Higgins's essay on *Intermedia*. He illustrates that in multimedia, elements like text, music, and stage design are structurally separable and synthesized sequentially as in the case of opera.[99] In contrast, intermedia, as defined by Dick Higgins, involves the synchronous blending of various artistic disciplines such as music, sculpture, and poetry, or even non-art practices, creating a unified artistic expression within the same time and space.[100] That being the case, Madra's multimedia performances started in the late 60s and presented under the name of Synesthesia, where abstract photography, modern dance, and avant-garde music have been put together simultaneously, can be regarded as intermedia art productions to answer the initial question.

Upon the question in the interview regarding intermedia, Teoman Madra elaborated more on his interdisciplinary background whereas explaining his relationship with Fluxus. In fact, his interdisciplinary path was not intentionally drawn at the very beginning, rather it was shaped either by the virtue of the opportunities he encountered or the contexts he fitted in. The starting point of his journey can be marked by the time he spent in New York and California in the early days of the 50s when he went for his undergraduate studies, listening to contemporary jazz performances of whom he was already been a fan such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Lennie Tristano. He particularly mentions jazz and poetry concerts in New York, since they were the ones that attracted him the most among all the events he participated in. In the summer of 1952, he went to San Jose to work at a canning factory where he met with many scholars who were studying contemporary music going beyond jazz. With one of those students, they went to Los Angeles to pursue a documentarist composer whose research was based on apprehending all the variations in music, yet he did not remember if they found him or not. Another memory he conveys was about a painter whom he met in a train compartment traveling from New York to California, listening to Stan Kenton while painting. The cues of those remembrances can be traced from his artistic practice thereafter, as in *Light Games* by fusing rhythm simultaneously with visual endeavor. This remembrance also supports the argument provided in the chapter 2.1. where Madra's approach towards art-making is compared to Action Painting regarding how Action Painters employed dynamic brush strokes that mirrored their physical actions on canvas, Madra's method of "painting" with light and color in an improvised setting constitutes a performative act. Through this technique, he translated the essence of jazz into visual forms using photography in the same manner as the painter he

[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

recalls from the train compartment. For the time spent in the US, he was not quite fascinated by the Visual Arts he encountered, yet it can be claimed that he was an honest enthusiast of the contemporary music scene as he conveys in the answer provided in the interview document. However, he did not provide a direct answer to the question, and the fact that he was using the terms intermedia and multimedia interchangeably it can not be argued that he was well aware of the conceptual distinction between them, nor was it not an intentional choice from the start of his artist career. In contrast, it can be claimed that his intermedia performances were the natural output of his desire to experiment with various sensory operators which is in line with Fluxus's philosophical grounds.

In addition to his shows, it can be argued that the abstract photographs of Madra being demonstrated in his multimedia performances - as he refers to them- can not be restricted solely within a visual domain, yet the intermedial notion is anew the core of the creative process. The abstract photography works, Light Games, were based on his performative experimentation with long exposure techniques by using the technical capabilities of the camera he had on hand. Keeping the camera lens open for a lengthy period of time, he was able to capture the traces of the light radiated from the source that the performer held. In his own words, he describes the pursued method of production as follows:

> In fact, it was sometimes a flashlight moving there, and sometimes a machine rotating around its axis against a fixed light source (e.g. moonlight). When both of them moved, the lights flew, but since the camera also moved following the light or in the opposite direction of the light, the trace of the flying light remained on the screen without interruption.[101]

Within the improvised choreography involving Madra and the performer, the selection of favored music, either modern jazz, electronic music, or contemporary interpretations of Turkish and classical music has been a companion of both Madra and the dancer together with the light source. This mutually inclusive performance has been crystallized through photography, yet the solidified outcome which is the abstract imagery can be read only as a single facet of the process. Beral Madra's commentary on the performative basis of his abstract photography sheds light on the multiplicity of the facets embraced.

> The rhythm being acquired along the dancing moods becomes the primary factor of the harmonies or the contradictions created by the confrontation of the light source and the camera. The movement of the

[101] Teoman Madra's own words: From an Interview Text.

> human body in accompaniment of music becomes an art object with the technique of photography and light. But the image obtained on this art object (photograph) is abstract, just like the innate abstraction of music, human movement, and rhythm.[102]

The constituents of the process - the music, rhythm, human body, light, and camera as Beral Madra mentions, were transformed into actors on the stage where art objects were revealed. The interplay between these actors was open to coincidences and improvisation as an experimental theater play would be. Madra did not limit his field of operation within the conventions of photography, but rather he positioned himself on a performative ground through the interplay of various media. Thus, the traditional methods of formal identification can not be applied to his works, yet they fall into the intermedium between music, performance, and photography. At that juncture Beral Madra's commentary on Teoman Madra's photographs might contribute this argument:

> Teoman Madra introduced photography into Turkish contemporary art as a permanent source of art, contributed to the development of the concept of total art, activated the use of different media, and demonstrated new ways of communication to a broader cross-section of society.[103]

Here Beral Madra's reference to the concept of total art (Gesamtkunstwerk) is significant given the challenge of contextualizing photography as such. Interpreting Gesamtkunstwerk as melting different art forms into a single pot aligns with the idea of having multiple mediums combined together in Madra's practice. This approach resonates with the principles of Fluxus, which embraced the notion of art as an immersive, multisensory experience resulting in intermedia as described previously. Hence, the same question posed at the beginning of 2.2.1. Fluxus History chapter, needs to be re-addressed in order to scrutinize this parallelity: *What is Fluxus?*

It has never been an easy inquiry to address nor a consensus built around a prominent definition, indeed there are diverse answers propounding whether it is an art movement widely referred to as, a laboratory,[104] a community of shared interests, a tendency, or a conceptual country.[105] That being the case, it is more adequate

[102] From the exhibition text titled 'Abstract photographs created with light-music-movement and multi-media shows of Teoman Madra' written by Beral Madra for the exhibition catalogue of 'Inside Abstraction' at Gallery BM.

[103] From the exhibition text written by Beral Madra for the exhibition catalogue of 'Inside Abstraction' at Gallery BM.

[104] Ken Friedman, "Introduction: A Transformative Vision of Fluxus." in *The Fluxus Reader*, (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), viii.

[105] Refers to the exhibition called Fluxus: A Conceptual Country, an exhibition organized by Estera Milman at the University of Iowa.

to elaborate more on the motifs that typify the Fluxus experience as art historians/artists have been theorizing, rather than attempting to categorize the whole. According to many, there was no prescriptive program shaping Fluxus, yet commonalities among Fluxworks assemble them, instead of mere *Zeitgeist*. Dick Higgins listed these common notions within nine points - almost like a criterion - as such: "(i) internationalism, (ii) experimentalism and iconoclasm, (iii) intermedia, (iv) minimalism or concentration, (v) an attempted resolution of the art/life dichotomy, (vi) implicativeness, (vii) play or gags, (viii) ephemerality, and (ix) specificity."[106] As he expresses, one would decide whether a work can be regarded as Fluxwork by looking at its accordance with these criteria, the more it matches it gains more right to be one. Later, Ken Friedman expanded those to twelve ideas by adding chance, exemplativism, and musicality while replacing ephemerality with presence in time, and internationalism with globalism.[107]

The intermedial approach of Fluxartists was grounded in experimentalism, as Higgins indicates. The experimental artists of the time being in the Fluxus circle, have been concerned with doing something new with an "*[..] iconoclastic attitude towards the conventions of the art establishments of their various countries*".[108] Having such a demeanor led them to experiment more with the forms of art making with less attention to the content, which can be read as a simultaneous attempt to what Marshall McLuhan theorized as "the medium is the message" that also been referred by Madra repetitively in his video works. The focal point of their experimentalist notion was pointing out the nature of the artistic practice itself, instead of concentrating on the message it would carry which eventually arose from new means of communication. Believing the power of new forms of expression and communication would grant newer messages to be conveyed, led them to experiment either with already existing mediums or non-art forms in the pursuit of the unexpected, or unacquainted. Dick Higgins's commentary on experimentalism and intermedia aligns with this argument suggesting a new message emerges along with the new forms of communication:

> There was the assumption that new content requires new forms, that new forms enable works to have new content leading on to new experiences. In many cases this experimentalism led the artists into intermedia - to visual poetry, some varieties of Happenings, sound poetry and so on.[109]

[106] Dick Higgins, "Fluxus: Theory and Reception," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 224.
[107] Smith, Owen, "Teaching and Learning about Fluxus: thoughts, observations and suggestions from the front lines," Visible Language 39, no. 3 (2005): 241.
[108] Dick Higgins, "Fluxus: Theory and Reception," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 224.
[109] Ibid.

Thus, putting experimentation at the core of creation directed artists to intermedia which does not solely indicate the combination of media yet is against the conventional categorization of means. In the case of Madra's practice, his experimental approach in Light Games or in later generative video works accompanied with live music and performances, the tangible outcome was only one aspect of the artistic expression. Thus, it can not only be regarded as photography or video art since the experimental process here refers to the immersion and fusion of multiple sensory experiences. As Dick Higgins mentions,

Even though Madra's creative process emphasizes experimentation which aligns with (ii) experimentalism and iconoclasm and (iii) intermedia notions of Fluxus as discussed in depth previously, the other core concepts are questionable leading to the undermining of his self-identification as a Fluxus artist. To present discrepancies or contrasting situations, as well as parallelities regarding his self-identification, the rest of the twelve key ideas shaping the Fluxus perspective will be overviewed.

(i) Internationalism or Globalism: This concept is for adopting the perspective that we exist on a unified planet, where the limits of political territories do not match with the natural or cultural boundaries.[110] This is mainly related to embracing like-minded individuals regardless of nationality. No conceptual linkage can be built with Madra's artistic approach since there is no reference put by the artist regarding his perspective on the issue.

(iv) Minimalism or Simplicity: Simplicity, often referred to as parsimony, highlights the connection between truth and beauty, and this idea is also conceptualized as elegance.[111] Ken Friedman elaborates on this concept by arguing that "In mathematics or science, an elegant idea is that idea which expresses the fullest possible series of meanings in the most concentrated possible statement."[112] This notion aligns with the Fluxus movement's emphasis on simplicity and directness. However, this can be regarded as an antithesis to Teoman Madra's approach. Madra's combined use of statements from different contexts increases the complexity of the message conveyed, rather than presenting a fuller view with less. This complexity is reflected in Madra's aesthetic as well. The superimposition of visual elements in his work brings his aesthetic closer to pop collages, making it difficult to label his works as minimalist or elegant within the provided definition of simplicity. Thus, while Fluxus values simplicity, Madra's work stands in contrast with its intricate layering and contextual diversity. The same attitude can be proposed regarding (vi) implicativeness since it

[110]Ken Friedman, "Fluxus and Company," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, West Sussex: Academy Editions, 1998), 244.
[111]Ibid., 249.
[112]Ibid.

suggests that a perfect Fluxus piece hints at the existence of numerous other works, which is closely associated with the concepts of elegance and parsimony.[113]

(v) Unity of Art and Life: This aspect of Fluxus is elaborated in depth in the Fluxus History chapter, through the Flicker film which dissolved the boundary between the object and subject. Additionally, it has been scrutinized within the concept of Happening in Teoman Madra's Art Career section, once his performances were referred to as Happenings in reviews. As discussed previously, concerning his traditional theatrical method of staging, Madra's performances do not fully align with Happenings where audience and performers are intermingled in order to blur the boundary between art and life. However, does parallel certain aspects regarding creating immersive and multi-sensory experiences.

(vii) Playfulness: Fluxus has always embraced a sense of playfulness, which is often expressed through jokes, games, puzzles, and gags as Friedman conveys which comes with a counterpart of free experimentation, free association, and paradigm-shifting.[114] This can not be assigned to Madra's creative process, the irony and humor have never been emphasized either by him or by critiques regarding his works.

(viii) Ephemerality or Presence in time: The term Fluxus itself has roots in Greek philosophical concepts of time and Buddhist analyses of time and existence, which highlight the importance of temporal elements in human experience and the fleeting, transient nature of Fluxus works.[115] Madra's ephemerality is more depending on its performativity. His multimedia performances accompanied by live music or dance are ephemeral in that they are experienced in the moment and cannot be fully captured or replicated outside of the moment they have performed yet recorded in documentary form in the analog media units.

(ix) Specificity: As Ken Friedman introduces "*Specificity has to do with the tendency of a work to be specific, self-contained and to embody all its own parts.[...] When a work has specificity, it loads meaning quite consciously.*"[116] Again it does not align with Madra's approach towards art-making regarding the confusion present in his works, he does not pursue a certain direction towards meaning to be derived.

(x) Exemplativism: Exemplativism is the idea that a work of art should serve as a clear example or embodiment of the theory, process, or meaning behind its creation.[117] The work itself should illustrate or exemplify the ideas it is meant to

[113]Ibid., 250.
[114]Ibid., 249.
[115]Ibid., 250.
[116]Ibid.
[117]Ibid.

convey. In that case, it might be suggested that Madra demonstrates the concepts that directed him towards producing, eg. quoting Marshall McLuhan's ideas regarding the utilization of new mediums repetitively. Meanwhile, he exemplifies the emphasis he put towards this idea, by actually experimenting with these mediums in artworks' own structure.

(xi) Musicality: Musicality refers to instruction-based works being named as scores within the Fluxus group. Through these scores, one can execute the works by following these instructions. The musicality can be linked with generativity found in Sol LeWitt's approach regarding his instruction-based drawings, yet such methodology can not be found within Madra's artistic process.

(xii) Chance: A central element of Fluxus experimentation is the use of chance. Fluxus artists frequently employ methods that incorporate chance, resulting in unpredictable outcomes. There are various approaches to integrating chance into their work. The concept of chance, particularly in the sense of randomness or aleatoric processes, is rooted in a tradition that traces back to Duchamp, Dada, and Cage.[118] Madra, deeply influenced and inspired by Cage, places music at the core of his artistic practice, where the creation of unexpected outcomes becomes central to his process. His audiovisual compositions, developed in reaction to music, are driven by spontaneous responses at the moment, thus embracing randomness as a fundamental element. That being the case, this concept of Fluxus can be traced within Madra's approach as well.

In this chapter, the relationship between Teoman Madra's artistic approach and the Fluxus movement has been explored, highlighting both the similarities and differences. While Madra's work shares common ground with Fluxus in aspects such as experimentation, intermediality, and the embrace of chance, it diverges significantly in other areas. His approach is marked by a complexity and layering that contrasts with Fluxus's emphasis on simplicity and elegance. Moreover, while Fluxus often integrates political tendencies and irony into its art-making, Madra's work takes a different path, focusing more on the sensory and experiential dimensions rather than on political commentary or playful subversion. Despite these divergences, Madra's engagement with Fluxus ideas, particularly through his connection with John Cage and his use of avant-garde music, demonstrates a deep resonance with the movement's core principles, even as he maintains a unique and independent artistic identity as an avantgarde artist.

[118] Ibid., 248.

3. CONSERVATION OF MULTIMEDIA ART

3.1 Why is Conservation Urgent & What Needs to be Conserved?

Artworks that incorporate technological infrastructure to operate—whether through hardware or software systems—or are produced using diverse technological tools specific to domains such as Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), Sound Art, Interactive Installations, Generative Art, and Video Art, etc., fall under the umbrella term *Technological Arts*. In the field of Technological Arts, where technology intertwines with artistic practice, the urgency of conservation emerges as a critical issue yet often underemphasized by cultural institutions and also artists themselves. The urgency and significance are caused by the fact that unlike traditional art forms, which might withstand the passage of time before requiring restoration, technological artworks confront the inevitable pace of technological evolution. In the case of traditional mediums such as painting, or sculpture, artworks do require preservation methodologies that have been developed within the field of art conservation and restoration, yet the necessity comes into prominence after centuries of aging. However, the inevitable obsolescence of the devices, software, and even digital formats that are part of technology means that an artwork can become outdated in the short period following its creation, which may be as brief as a few months. Thus, the loss of functionality in the components the artwork makes use of or in the formats they have been stored in will eventually cause their evanescence. That being the case, the challenge of preserving these artworks amidst rapidly advancing technology presents a complex dilemma for cultural institutions responsible for cultural heritage, as well as individual and corporate collectors who acquire such pieces, and artists whose practice is making use of technological means. As key stakeholders in this complex issue, it is imperative that each examines the problem from their unique perspective to develop solutions that leverage multi-disciplinary workflows and collaborative research in the conservation of Technological Arts.

Artut criticizes the ICOM-CC's - one of the largest organizations within the field with currently 5000 members worldwide- definition of conservation in his essay titled Conservation of Technological Artworks, arguing that it falls short to adequately address the needs of artworks that extend beyond physical attributes.[1] The definition mentioned previously as follows:

> Conservation - all measures and actions aimed at safeguarding tangible cultural heritage while ensuring its accessibility to present and future generations. Conservation embraces preventive conservation, remedial conservation and restoration. All measures and actions should respect the significance and the physical properties of the cultural heritage item.[2]

However, artworks that utilize technological means often transcend tangible elements, incorporating intangible properties grounded in conceptual background and abstract environments that challenge conventional conservation approaches. Traditionally, conservation practices have focused on preserving the physical integrity of artworks, aiming to maintain them in their original state. This approach often overlooks the evolving nature of digital and interactive media, treating any change as potentially detrimental and threatening the stability and identity of the artwork. However, time-based digital artworks challenge this traditional paradigm because change and evolution are often inherent to their very nature.[3] Unlike static paintings or sculptures, time-based media such as video, digital installations, and interactive art are designed to evolve or react to their environments over time. Besides, because the technical infrastructure is inevitably resonated in the aesthetic of the work created, any interference other than keeping the original equipment -which can be regarded as impossible in the long run- will result in a change in appearance/physical properties of the work itself. In response to these challenges, Pip Laurenson, who leads Collection Care Research at the Tate Museum, advocates for a revised definition of conservation, and according to her proposal, conservation should serve to document, comprehend, and preserve the fundamental properties of an artwork, namely *artwork*'s identity.[4] In the same manner, a renowned Mexican-Canadian artist in the field, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's perception of what needs to be preserved as an essence within technological artworks over the course of time might shed light on the conservation methodologies of such works. In a podcast

[1] Selçuk Artut, "Conservation of Technological Artworks," in *Technological Arts Preservation*, ed. Selçuk Artut, Osman Serhat Karaman, and Cemal Yılmaz (Istanbul: Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 2021), 15.

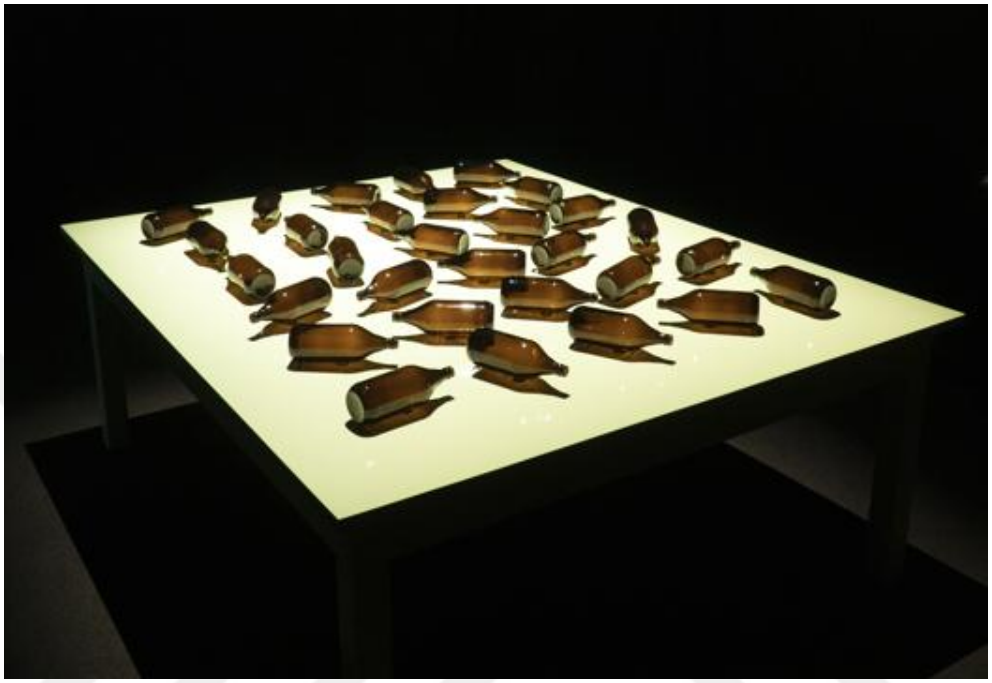
[2] International Council of Museums - Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC), "Terminology to Characterize the Conservation of Tangible Cultural Heritage," accessed April 10, 2024, https://www.icom-cc.org/en/downloads/icom-cc-resolution-terminology-english.

[3] Francis T. Marchese, "Conserving Digital Art for Deep Time," *Leonardo* 44, no. 4 (2011): 303.

[4] Ibid.

series called Art and Obsolescence, he explains his perspective of preservation based on a work he produced in 2004 called *Synaptic Caguamas*[5] which features a typical Mexican cantina table set with 30 Caguamas beer bottles—large, brown bottles similar to the 40-ounce bottles in the US.

Figure 3.1 Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, “Synaptic Caguamas, Subsculpture 4”, 2004.



> I incorporated a cellular automaton to rotate these bottles, mimicking basic neural connections similar to brain synapses. This installation, which humorously represented a simple brain using beer bottles, was also a personal nod to my father, who struggled with alcoholism. The bottles, their shape, color, and the way they catch light are crucial to the piece. They are specifically Indio brand 40-ounce bottles, and I insist on their authenticity in any future displays. Initially, the installation was powered by a small Mac laptop hidden under the table, but I plan to upgrade it to a Raspberry PI, a more efficient choice with no moving parts. While I’m flexible about changing the computer and the motors that operate the installation, the specific beer bottles must remain unchanged, as they are essential to the work’s symbolic and aesthetic integrity. I’ve made it clear that future curators or conservators should preserve these bottles exactly as they are.[6]

As can be understood from his comment on the issue, the technological components or software programs might be replaced or migrated or re-written with newer tech-

[5]Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, "Synaptic Caguamas," Lozano-Hemmer, accessed June 1, 2024, https://www.lozano-hemmer.com/synaptic_caguamas.php.

[6]Ben Fino-Radin, “Rafael Lozano-Hemmer,” *Art and Obsolescence* (podcast), December 7, accessed June 1, 2024, https://www.artandobsolescence.com/episodes/015-rafael-lozano-hemmer.

nologies to make the work resilient over time. However, the essence that the artist framed must be preserved within the conservation and restoration methodologies applied. That being the case, detailed documentation becomes a necessity to understand and maintain the core properties that define artwork's experience or, in other words, the work's identity. There won't be any one-fits-all solution for preserving technological artworks regarding the unique approach each artist takes with a variety of technological mediums of their choice. Thus, the generic algorithm of such preservation methodology must focus on drawing the framework to decide what to preserve. By documenting and conserving the operational and contextual elements that constitute the artwork's essence, conservators and restorers can ensure its engagement with the audience, even as its physical components might need updating or replacement. This approach presents a significant redefinition of conservation methodologies by embracing the fluidity and temporality inherent in technological arts.

In conclusion, the preservation of technological and multimedia art forms presents both conceptual and technical challenges, necessitating a reevaluation of conventional conservation techniques. The definition of what makes an artwork unique must evolve as technology advances and artistic practices are redefined. The perspectives provided by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Pip Laurenson, and Selçuk Artut highlight the urgent need for conservation techniques that are just as flexible and dynamic as the media they are meant to preserve. This entails preserving the operational, contextual, and conceptual integrity of artworks in addition to their physical aspects.

The urgent need for this paradigm shift arises from the rapid obsolescence of technology and the inherent changeability of media. To address these challenges effectively, conservation must extend beyond tangible properties to include comprehensive documentation and understanding of an artwork's essence and the artist's intention. This will provide future conservators and restorers with a better understanding of what needs to be preserved. By embracing such multi-disciplinary, collaborative approaches, we can ensure that future generations have access to the experiences of art as they were designed to offer. This shift will secure the legacy of technological arts within the broader narrative of cultural heritage, preserving their place in the artistic canon for years to come.

3.2 Archival Strategies for Teoman Madra Archive

Digital preservation methods come into prominence since digital information has been dominating knowledge production and dissemination in today's world. As Tom Evens and Laurence Hauttekeete describe, digital preservation is a management process of providing long-term access to scientific and cultural heritages.[7] The challenges of digital preservation practices are primarily driven by the rapid evolution of both organizational and technological environments. Consequently, these practices should be regarded as a continuing process that requires recurrent effort and strategic planning.

Preserving an artist's oeuvre demands a workflow similar to that which cultural institutions must carry out for their collection. However, it is not a responsibility that every artist neither should nor can undertake by themselves. That being the case, technological artworks that have not been acquired by cultural institutions face the threat of deterioration and technical obsolescence, consequently obliterated from history. This section focuses on the intensive archiving process of the multimedia artist Teoman Madra, whose practice is significant to shedding light on the origins and evolution of Turkish Media Art history. The planned and executed stages in the process of building and maintaining the artist's archive are provided in the table below with accompanying brief definitions. A more comprehensive description of each step and methodologies applied within the scope of this case study is discussed in detail in respective sections.

[7] Tom Evens and Laurence Hauttekeete, "Challenges of Digital Preservation for Cultural Heritage Institutions," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 43 (2011): 157.

Figure 3.2 Stages of Building and Maintaining Media Archive and Brief Definitions

Exploration of the Collection	Detecting the archival material and researching related archival material
Technical Examination	Inspection of the physical and digital material, draft categorization for conversion operation
Media Conversion	Converting existing media formats to updated formats, digitization, storage
Building the Data Structure	Configuring a proper data structure for cataloging items effectively
Determining Significance	Distinguishing the relevant materials, eliminating the redundancy
Descriptive Cataloging	Cataloging archival material, creating metadata for work records
Copyrights Management	Managing intellectual properties, negotiating licenses, describing usage rights
Preservation	Configuring maintenance measures, prevent physical deterioration, maintaining the digital archive
Accessibility	Allowing outside users to explore the contents and to participate the process

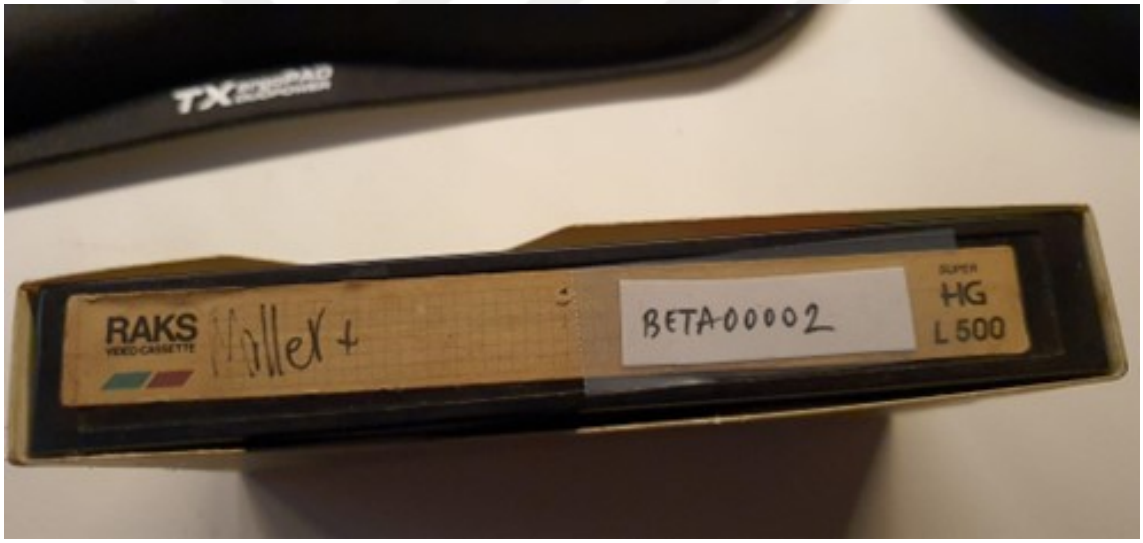
3.2.1 Exploration of Collection, Technical Examination & Draft Categorization

The conservation case study on the Teoman Madra archive was initiated by Selçuk Artut in January 2021. When Artut decided to collect all the records created by Madra, these materials were scattered in three different locations: (i) Madra's hometown Ayvalık, (ii) Madra's Istanbul home, and (iii) a depot in Istanbul. He began by gathering all the available materials and acquired a quantitatively rich collection. The collected materials included a variety of storage media, such as dia slides, negative films, VHS, Betamax, miniDV, hi8 videotapes, floppy disks, DVDs, CD-ROMS, hard drives, and thumb drives. These storage units contained not only works of art but also other archival documents carrying historical value and biographical information about the artist's career. These documents consist of artist statements, interviews, newspaper clippings, old exhibition invitations, and posters which were regarded as guidelines for descriptive cataloging in future steps. Since neither any prior conservation strategies were applied nor special physical storage conditions were provided, the materials were about to deteriorate. Considering the limited

lifespan of analogue media storage technologies due to the material-aging processes, if these media remained untouched, their obsolescence would be inevitable.

In addition to the poor physical storage environment, no classification and cataloging for the materials have been attempted before. Thus, the collection was just a bunch of unidentifiable records accumulated over time except a very few that has labels referring to their content. That being the case, Artut began the archiving process by organizing the materials into groups with respect to their media types e.g. VHS, Betamax, negatives, prints, etc. After this type-based draft categorization of the collection was completed, all the physical material was labeled using media type-based unique identifiers. The formula of the tags was such: the media type followed by 5-digit numbering, such as "BETA00002" - referring to Betamax. Therefore, the material became identifiable and available for future access.

Figure 3.3 Example labeling of Betamax record done by Selçuk Artut in 2021



3.2.2 Media Conversion & Digitization

According to Cleveland, there are three methods of building digital collections: (i) digitization, (ii) acquisition of original digital works, and (iii) access to external materials.[8] Teoman Madra archive project requires all the methods listed previously since there are (i) analog records, (ii) artworks stored digitally or published online, and (iii) other artworks or archival material published by third parties. At the current stage of the Madra archive, the project holders focus on digitization to

[8]Gary Cleveland, "Digital Libraries: Definitions, Issues and Challenges," accessed October 13, 2023, https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/DIGITAL-LIBRARIES-DEFINITIONS-ISSUES-AND-Cleveland/885e060e26ada43d51940c8182163db8261e4113, 4.

preserve analog media, the latter two will be discussed in the Future Work section in depth.

Digitization is the conversion operation by scanning, sampling, or even re-keying any fixed or analog medium, such as books, journal articles, images, artworks, or microforms, into electronic form.[9] Evens and Hauttekeete list the reasons that necessitate digitization as such "*deterioration of analog carriers of information, the lack of storage and playback infrastructure, and insufficient access to different archival collections*".[10] However, digitization is a costly and labor-intensive process. Therefore, cultural institutions have to deal with collection management dilemmas to decide on selection criteria for the content to be digitized. The situation was different in case of the Teoman Madra archive since what is stored in those storage units, namely the content of the analog media at hand was unknown. Thus, selection guidelines developed for collection management were not applicable to this case study at that stage. That being the case, Artut followed the strategy which is defined as "save now, preserve later" by Lavoie and Dempsey as follows:

> The "save now, preserve later" strategy is feasible only through the unique characteristics of digital information, where the steady decline in storage cost makes it conceivable to save everything. The chief criticism of this approach is summarized by the adage "saving is not preserving"; there is considerable uncertainty concerning the extent to which preservation techniques can be applied retrospectively to digital materials that have resided untouched in storage for long periods of time.[11]

As the term suggests, he decided to save everything possible and explore those mystery boxes afterward to avoid losing any valuable data. Therefore, all the material that previously gathered and categorized with respect to media type, has been digitized. Considering the fact that each medium necessitates specific techniques, various digitization processes have been implemented depending on the storage unit type. As has been already mentioned, digitization is intensive work, especially regarding the vastness of the materials at hand in this case study and Artut working as an individual researcher at that point. That being the case, digitized content was not meant to be high-quality archival copies. Rather, the digitization process was conceived as a recovery of the analog content while establishing a referential linkage between the original analog media and digitized copy. Thus, whom would like to

[9] Ibid., 5.

[10] Tom Evens and Laurence Hauttekeete, "Challenges of Digital Preservation for Cultural Heritage Institutions," Journal of Librarianship and Information Science 43 (2011): 158.

[11] Brian Lavoie and Lorcan Dempsey, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at...Digital Preservation," accessed October 1, 2023, https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Thirteen-Ways-of-Looking-at...Digital-Preservation-Lavoie-Dempsey/e3803eba60f001b8f9edc123a274ffb59b2095fe.

do research on Teoman Madra will have an insight into the content and be able to access to original record thanks to this referential system built by labeling. The accessibility of the original material also makes it possible to extract high-quality copies in the future using appropriate equipment as long as the analog media is preserved. The preservation of original media will be discussed in 2.4. Future Work section in depth, concerning the challenges of technological obsolescence.

The technical examination, draft categorization, and digitization processes were finalized by Artut at the end of 2021. Ultimately, 351 hours of linear media (VHS, Betamax, miniDV) and 14.494 slides/negatives have been digitized and backed up safely on local drives and cloud storage services.[12]

3.2.3 Building the Data Structure, Determining Significance & Descriptive Cataloging

The cataloging process was initiated by Begüm Çelik and Selçuk Artut, once all available analog media had been digitized. This process involves a detailed descriptive analysis, since there are no individual artist statements or titles associated with the works. To catalog a work involves describing what it is, who created it, where and how it was made, the materials used, and its thematic content, and the process begins with the initial question, "What am I cataloging?" as recommended by "Cataloging Cultural Objects" to establish a framework for subsequent decisions.[13] This question may lead to more foundational conceptualizations regarding the cataloging process. The example provided in the following reference clearly defines the potential inquiries about the nature and complexity of the items being cataloged:

> The institute owns a 35-mm slide copied from a lantern slide of a photograph by Erwin Panofsky, a distinguished 20th-century art historian. The photograph is of a 15th century Dutch manuscript page that depicts a 2nd-century Roman sarcophagus. What is the work? What is the subject? Who is the artist?...If the cataloger chooses to catalog the photograph by Panofsky, the work is the photograph, the creator is Panofsky, and the subject is the manuscript. If the cataloger chooses to catalog the manuscript, the work is the manuscript, the creator is

[12] Selçuk Artut and Begüm Çelik, "Conservation of Multimedia Art: Case Study on Teoman Madra Archive," *ResearchGate*, 2023, accessed March 13, 2023, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368858755_Conservation_of_Multimedia_Art_Case_Study_on_Teoman_Madra_Archive.

[13] Murtha Baca et al., "General Guidelines," in *Cataloging Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2006), 3.

unknown, and the subject is the Roman sarcophagus.[14]

This situation is caused by the dual nature of photograph having the potential to be work of art in itself and documentation for other artworks.

Teoman Madra was an artist who used photography and video not only as artistic mediums but also as tools for documentation. He can be described as a *Man with a Movie Camera* capturing everything from family gatherings and social events with friends to art happenings and his broader environment. Given that both videos and photographs have the potential to serve as both standalone art forms and as documentary records of other artworks as in *Panofsky's* example, it was crucial to distinguish whether a particular recording from his archive should be considered as an artwork or a documentary piece during the cataloging process. The fact that Madra was quite involved in the art scene of the time, given that he was collaborating with many dancers, musicians, and performers and also Beral Madra being a contemporary curator, his archive consists of documentation of artworks in the form of video recordings capturing exhibition openings, biennale visits, happenings, concerts, and performances. At this stage of the Teoman Madra archive project, project holders decided to keep both Madra's own artworks and documentary records in the archive taking their historical value into account. These documentations especially have been kept in the digital archive, as they not only offer insights into the art scene surrounding the artist, but also hold records that might be unavailable even to the creators of the artworks being documented. This decision to keep both drew a framework in the latter steps to decide on data standards for building an archive while answering the initial question of "What am I cataloging?".

[14] Ibid., 4.

Figure 3.4 Screenshot from Teoman Madra's video record found in the archive, capturing Ben Patterson's performance, where he orchestrates the act of eating apples, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

After being agreed on what to be cataloged, the selection of the data standards was the second stage of the cataloging process. As it is described in the CCO manual, data standards are " *[...] data structure, data values, and data content form the basis for a set of tools that can lead to good descriptive cataloging, consistent documentation, shared records, and increased end-user access.*"[15] The data structure can be explained as a metadata element set to define categories formatting the database of records. As explained by Baca, while there is no "one-size-fits-all" metadata system, the data dictionaries of many major museum management systems are predominantly based on the CDWA scheme.[16] The Categories for the Description of Works of Art (CDWA) establish best practices for cataloging and describing artwork, architecture, and material culture, including groups, collections, and associated imagery.[17] CDWA schema was selected for this archive not solely due to its extensive adoption in contemporary digital museum systems yet also this schema offers detailed categories for the characterization of artworks and supports the integration of data with other systems. Additionally, it provides flexibility and precision with

[15] Ibid., xi.

[16] Murtha Baca, "Practical Issues in Applying Metadata Schemas and Controlled Vocabularies to Cultural Heritage Information," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 36, nos. 3-4 (2003): 48, doi:10.1300/J104v36n0305.

[17] Getty Research Institute, CDWA List of Categories and Definitions, accessed October 5, 2022, http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/definitions.pdf, p.1.

its comprehensive categories for the characterization of artworks. That being the case, the entire range of CDWA categories and definitions was thoroughly reviewed to ensure that all useful fields are included in the metadata element set for Madra's archive. This comprehensive inclusion was needed for providing a high-quality description for the Teoman Madra archive records and increasing the efficiency of information retrieval. The final list of chosen metadata elements can be found in the below list with accompanying original definitions from CDWA List of Categories and Definitions by Getty Foundation:[18]

[18] Ibid.

Figure 3.5 Metadata Element Set of Teoman Madra Archive and Their CDWA Definitions

TITLE TEXT	Titles, identifying phrases, or names given to a work of art, architecture, or material culture.
DESCRIPTIVE NOTE TEXT	A narrative text or prose description and discussion of the work. Important information in this note should be indexed in other appropriate categories.
CREATOR IDENTITY	The identity of any one individual or corporate body that played a role in the creation of a work of art or architecture.
CREATOR ROLE	The role or activity performed by a creator or maker in the conception, design, or production of a work.
CREATION PLACE /ORIGINAL LOCATION	The location where the creation, design, or production of the work or its components took place, or the original location of the work.
EARLIEST DATE	The earliest possible date when the work of art or architecture was created. For works that were created over a span of time, this is the year when the work was designed or when execution was begun.
LATEST DATE	The latest possible date when the work of art or architecture was created. For works that were created over a span of time, this is the year when the work was completed or when the structure was dedicated.
COPYRIGHT/RESTRICTIONS	An identification of the individual or group that holds the rights to use, exhibit, or reproduce a work along with an indication of any licensing or existing restrictions on its reproduction, exhibition, or use.
OBJECT/WORK TYPE	The kind of object or work described (e.g., refectory table, altarpiece, portfolio, drawing, drinking vessel, basilica, dome).
FORMAT/SIZE	The configuration of a work, including technical formats, or the conventional designation for the dimensions or proportion of a work.
MATERIALS/TECHNIQUES DESCRIPTION	An indication of the substances or materials used in the creation of a work, as well as any implements, production or manufacturing techniques, processes, or methods incorporated in its fabrication, presented in a syntax suitable for display to the end user and including any necessary indications of uncertainty, ambiguity, and nuance.
PROVENANCE DESCRIPTION	The prose description of the provenance or history of the owners or others in possession of a work of art or architecture, or group of works
SUBJECT MATTER	The subject matter of a work of art (sometimes referred to as its content) is the narrative, iconographic, or non-objective meaning conveyed by an abstract or figurative composition. It is what is depicted in and by a work of art.
CONSERVATION/TREATMENT HISTORY	Procedures or actions that a work has undergone to repair, conserve, or stabilize it.
RELATED TEXTUAL REFERENCES	Citations to sources of textual information related to the work of art or architecture being described, including published bibliographic materials, web sites, archival documents, unpublished manuscripts, and references to verbal opinions expressed by scholars or subject experts.
CLASSIFICATION TERM	The term from a classification scheme that has been assigned to a work.
INSCRIPTIONS/ MARKS	A description of distinguishing or identifying physical markings, lettering, annotations, texts, or labels that are a part of a work or are affixed, applied, stamped, written, inscribed, or attached to the work, excluding any mark or text inherent in materials
CURRENT LOCATION	Identification of the repository that currently houses the work of art, and the geographic location of the work of art or architecture.
IMAGE TO WORK RELATIONSHIP TYPE	The relationship of the image to the work it depicts (e.g., conservation image, documentary image).

After the fielded database structure was established, the review of all digital materials was initialized. The initial entries consisted of digital scans of negative slides. Tulya Madra, Teoman Madra's daughter, facilitated the first step of this process by descriptively naming each image file, which allowed for accurate data entry based on her identifications of the people, events, and locations depicted in the photographs. As a direct witness to her father's artistic production, Tulya Madra's personal experiences informed her examination of the photograph contents. Artworks were cataloged as 'Untitled' followed by sequential index numbers, reflecting the absence of specific titles given by the artist. Following the definitions provided by the CDWA categories, an example entry for a dia negative slide in the database was cataloged as follows:

Figure 3.6 Untitled 224, Photography / Digitally scanned from a negative slide, Teoman Madra, ©Teoman Madra Collection.

- File Type: Image
- File Name: isikoyunu 20210209_091911.jpg
- Title: Untitled 224
- Description: Light Games
- Creator & Rights: Teoman Madra
- Creator Role: Artist
- Format: Dianegative
- Medium: Photography

- Subject: Artworks
- Conservation History: None
- Related Textual References: Unknown
- Current Location: NEGA00009
- Image to Work Relationship Type: Digitally scanned from a negative slide

Since in that stage there was no linkage built between the artworks and textual materials at hand all the Related Textual References values remained *unknown*. To accurately present information and facilitate scholarly research, it is crucial to appropriately indicate any uncertainty or ambiguity as necessary, as suggested by the CDWA manual.[19]

The process then moved to reviewing video recordings, including digitized versions of VHS, Betamax, MiniDV, etc. This phase required additional input from project holders compared to cataloging dianegatives. This was due to the aim of segmenting each video file into coherent sections that reflected the artist's creative intentions. Video partitioning was usually based on detecting empty segments in the tape or, alternatively, by scene content, visual style, or accompanying music. The edited segments were uploaded to a cloud service, maintaining organization within the same directory as the original recordings. Title field again filled with "*Untitled*" and consecutive numbering for uniqueness, with few exceptions where titles were applied if the artist had specifically named a piece in the video. For each segmented video file, its nature—whether artwork or documentary—was clarified in the data entries, along with the creator's role as either artist or documentarian. For the descriptive note text field, descriptions included references made by the artist in the videos, and keywords were selected from a pre-determined tag cloud such as generative art, geometric art, superimpose etc. However, despite these efforts, identifying characters, exact locations, or creation dates often remained inexplicable most of the time and were not distinctly documented. These incomplete data contents are anticipated to be addressed in future research efforts. When available in the video content, they were included in the data entries for each video file. The organization of the physical materials was found to be lacking; inscriptive marks made by the artist on the cassettes were irrelevant or mostly absent and did not follow any chronological order. Nevertheless when available inscriptions by the artist on the physical materials and also labels from the digitization process have been documented in the data entries to aid future research. It is believed that the revelation of this collection is expected to enrich the history of Turkish Media Arts, providing valuable insights for future

[19]Ibid., 4.

researchers interested in Teoman Madra's artworks and documentary pieces that capture the art scene of their time. The organization of digital database and example data entry of a video in a VHS cassette can be found in the below reference:

Figure 3.7 Database entry example for a digital archive of video artworks, illustrating the structured cataloging of various video works by Teoman Madra, detailing file specifications, titles, descriptions, creators, and roles.

filespec	title/en	Description/en	Creator/en	Creator Role
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_1.mp4	Untitled 10098	Teoman Madra Artworks, Geometric Art, Generative Art	Teoman Madra	Artist
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_2.mp4	Untitled 10099	Teoman Madra Artworks, Geometric Art, Generative Art, SPQ, Super Performance Quality	Teoman Madra	Artist
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_3.mp4	Untitled 10100	Teoman Madra Artworks, Geometric Art, Generative Art, Photographs, Video Art, Patterns	Teoman Madra	Artist
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_4.mp4	Untitled 10101	Teoman Madra Artworks, Geometric Art, Generative Art, Patterns, Teoman Madra Işık Oyunları, Epilogue to Dialogues Exhibition, Ernst Hesse, Video Art	Teoman Madra	Artist
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_5.mp4	Fabrica - The Geometric Room	Fabrica - The Geographic Room by Angela Melitopoulos, A videoinstallation with video projectors, tables and chairs..., Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf 5.4 - 5.5.96, The music of the horizons a videotape of 15 min...	Teoman Madra	Documenting
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_6.mp4	Untitled 10102	Instanbul by Angela Melitopoulos, İstanbul fluid, Video-workshop in İstanbul february 1995 BM Gallery, Beral Madra Goethe Institut İstanbul, Curated by Beral and Teoman Madra, A video-workshop with Angela Melitopoulos	Teoman Madra	Documenting
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_7.mp4	Black Pompei	Fabrica - Black Pompei conceived and directed by Angela Melitopoulos	Angela Melitopoulos	
Vidi 2021-02-28 09-43-08_8.mp4	Unknown	Fabrica, Video by Angela Melitopoulos, ex-Fabrica-1	Angela Melitopoulos	

- File Type: Video
- Title: Untitled 10102
- Description: Instanbul by Angela Melitopoulos, İstanbul fluid, Video-workshop in İstanbul February 1995 BM Gallery, Beral Madra Goethe Institut İstanbul, Curated by Beral and Teoman Madra, A video-workshop with Angela Melitopoulos
- Creator: Teoman Madra
- Creator Role: Documentarian
- Rights: Music Copyrights
- Date: February 1995
- Medium: Digital Video

- Subject: Documentary
- Conservation History: None
- Related Textual References: Unknown
- Inscriptions: Demo, Angela Melitopoulos Video Workshop Feb. 1995 2.9'
- Current Location: VHS000072
- Image to Work Relationship Type: Digitally captured from a VHS Tape

This process is repeated for each VHS, Betamax, and MiniDV record in the collection. At the end a rich accumulation of data entries were attained and all available information were stored in a digital database regarding the analog content.

3.3 Discussion on Teoman Madra Archive

As explained in detail in the previous section regarding the cataloging process, one might argue that the approach pursued is biased since it heavily relies on the judgment of project holders due to a lack of formal information especially in the case of video recordings partition and data entries. The reason is that the absence of specific artist statements or art critiques for individual pieces introduces ambiguity. Given the fact that the artist was unable to participate in the process due to health-related concerns, the archive cannot be considered purely objective; instead, it requires interpreters to rely on their perception of these historical records of past technological works. However, a collaborative approach planned for future steps of the study aims to reduce reliance on individual judgments. Details of this collective examination will be discussed in the 3.4. Future Work section, but fundamentally, planned committees will analyze the records to find robust connections based on interactions within the art scene of that era, aiming to provide an unbiased perspective on the artist's catalog.

A second issue related to the cataloging phase concerns the construction of a thesaurus for data values inserted as part of data standards. The role of vocabulary control and thesaurus construction is crucial in cataloging and classifying digital media. Rowley defines a thesaurus as "*a compilation of words and phrases showing synonyms, hierarchical and other relationships and dependencies, the function of which is to provide a standardized vocabulary for information storage and retrieval*

systems".[20] Baca argues that the database would be inadequate if the metadata components or data structure are not populated with the correct data values, or the appropriate terminology, retaining researchers from finding what they need, even if it exists within the resources.[21] The options for data standards in the application of thesaurus by cultural heritage institutions was reviewed, and the Art and Architecture Thesaurus by the Getty Research Institute was chosen for Teoman Madra archive thanks to its multilingual, semantically structured thesauri. It has been described by Baca and Gill as a powerful tool for enriching knowledge and providing valid interconnections for cultural heritage information resources.[22] Though planned to be used, it was not implemented during the initial examination and creation of data records because the nature of the media to be categorized and labeled was not yet understood beforehand. Initially, digitized media was stored in the cloud unlabelled and undescribed. Thus, how to categorize and label the media before thoroughly reviewing all the content was uncertain. Consequently, a tag cloud (e.g., generative art, geometric art) was agreed upon by the project holders, and descriptions were based on these tags as progress was made on cataloging. That being the case, the classification term element, a core field of the CDWA scheme defined as "*the term from a classification scheme that has been assigned to a work*", was added to the metadata element set but left unfilled until the works could be thoroughly examined by project owners.[23] As will be discussed in the Future Work, a subject tree will be created based on the data values standards by Art and Architecture Thesaurus of the Getty Research Institute, and the works will be categorized and the classification terms will be assigned accordingly for each database entry in the Teoman Madra archive.

3.4 Future Work

In the ongoing process, digitization and cataloging have demanded substantial archival efforts. However, further steps remain on this archive study. Firstly, the entire database will be organized according to the categories established, as previously

[20] Jennifer E. Rowley, *Organizing Knowledge: An Introduction to Information Retrieval*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot: Gower, 1992), 252.

[21] Murtha Baca, "Practical Issues in Applying Metadata Schemas and Controlled Vocabularies to Cultural Heritage Information," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 36, nos. 3-4 (2003): 52, doi:10.1300/J104v36n03$_0$5.

[22] Murtha Baca and Melissa Gill, "Encoding Multilingual Knowledge Systems in the Digital Age: The Getty Vocabularies," *NASKO* 5, no. 1 (2015).

[23] Getty Research Institute, *CDWA List of Categories and Definitions*, accessed October 5, 2022, http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/definitions.pdf, p.12.

discussed in the Discussions section. After a comprehensive review of all digital media by the project holders, a classification scheme or subject tree can be constructed based on the content fully observed in the Teoman Madra archive. This process will be guided by the Art Architecture Thesaurus from the Getty Research Institute. A subject tree, in other words a hierarchical structure of categories, can facilitate information browsing on specific subjects within a web directory. The construction begins with defining the subject area covered by the archive, listing all concepts within that area and their related terms, and analyzing the relationships between these terms to determine if they are associative or equivalent. Synonyms, or equivalent terms, are removed to maintain vocabulary control. The final step involves examining associative relationships to identify broader and narrower terms, establishing a hierarchy.[24] It has been decided that the polyhierarchical approach will be executed for this case study, allowing subcategories to be accessible under multiple categories, thus offering flexible navigation within the digital environment.[25]

Secondly, the cataloging's current biased approach is set to evolve towards a more neutral perspective, refining the understanding of Teoman Madra's artworks. Since the cataloging has been conducted only by project holders without the artist's involvement, it reflects their individual perceptions. Yet, artworks also serve as *knowledge carriers* of events and experiences once integrated into an archival system besides being individual collection items.[26] Therefore, individual judgments alone might not appropriately define such historical data. A collective examination becomes a necessity to provide an unbiased approach and fill gaps in descriptive identifiers. As Janina Hoth argues, "*the complex challenge of preserving digital art questions historicization in how this process pre-defines our perception and understanding of art*".[27] To this end, the database will be opened for discussions among stakeholders including collaborators of the artist, contemporary art critics, and others involved. This process of digital art preservation is inherently interdisciplinary, requiring the integration of theoretical and practice-based research across various professions.[28] Moreover, external resources related to Teoman Madra will be thoroughly explored and, where available, incorporated as related textual references to

[24]Sue Batley, "Classifying Electronic Resources," in *Classification in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2005), 162.
[25]Ibid.,152.
[26]Oliver Grau, Janina Hoth, and Eveline Wandl-Vogt, "Introduction," in *Digital Art through the Looking Glass: New Strategies for Archiving, Collecting and Preserving in Digital Humanities* (Krems an der Donau: Edition Donau-Universität, 2019), 17.
[27]Janina Hoth, "Historicization in the Archive: Digital Art and Originality," in *Digital Art through the Looking Glass: New Strategies for Archiving, Collecting and Preserving in Digital Humanities* (Krems an der Donau: Edition Donau-Universität, 2019), 147.
[28]Oliver Grau, Janina Hoth, and Eveline Wandl-Vogt, "Introduction," in *Digital Art through the Looking Glass: New Strategies for Archiving, Collecting and Preserving in Digital Humanities* (Krems an der Donau: Edition Donau-Universität, 2019), 14.

enrich the understanding for future researchers while filling the gaps in the core data fields regarding the date, and agents involved. Once the archival work is completed and the archive becomes accessible, it is likely that subsequent research and analysis of the archive will naturally ensue.

Furthermore, while the works produced mainly between the 1960s and the 2000s have been thoroughly investigated and documented—comprising dia negatives that capture abstract photography works named as Light Games, along with video works stored in VHS, Betamax, and MiniDVs— the artworks created in the 2000s using the iPad have not been included in the scope of this thesis research. The primary reason for this omission is that the storage formats from this period are not as straightforward as the linear analog media previously cataloged. The digital storage units, specifically hard drives, are currently in disarray, making it considerably more challenging to organize and catalog effectively. Thus, his later works from 2000s have not been cataloged and included in the digital database yet. However, the inclusion of this new medium has a significant impact on Madra's career paving the way for executing his aesthetics by using more direct and easily controllable medium. Hence, these more recent works will also be added to Madra's archive in the future, once the digital storage units have been properly organized and cataloged. Similarly, the works published online platforms such as Youtube or Flicker by the artist himself are needed to be addressed and included in the archive as well.

Finally, it should be noted that there are two types of materials need to be preserved and protected within the scope of conservation of multimedia art. The first group consists of analog materials that contain the original content. The second group is the digital data pool that emerges as a result of digitization processes which has been stored in cloud services at the moment. Identifying and obtaining suitable solutions to prevent the deterioration and disappearance over time of different physical media storage formats that house original copies is one of the important goals to be achieved within this project's future steps. If a digital migration to potentially new formats, which will be used as market standards in the future, becomes necessary, the information loss during the transfer from digital to new digital formats cannot be controlled nor measured, hence, the preservation of physical materials must be prioritized under all conditions. In such a potential scenario, the data migration should be conducted from physical to digital. Thus, solutions aimed at preventing the deterioration and degradation of physical materials due to environmental conditions should be applied. These efforts will require smart climate control studies to ensure that the analog media containing the works (such as VHS, BETAMAX, miniDV, Video8, dia, negatives, etc.) are stored under the correct atmospheric conditions. The equivalents of such methodology can be found within the field of Library and

Archival Sciences, yet a unique methods need to be developed specifically for technological artwork carriers. In addition to protecting the analog media, this study should also address the protection of technological components, which are the most definitive characteristic that distinguishes technological artworks from all other artworks. Features such as determining the procedures for periodic maintenance of media players, identifying the environments in which these units will be preserved, and establishing criteria for producing simulators when necessary, are unique aspects that differentiate the conservation of technological artworks from traditional conservation practice. That being the case, it is crucial to take those necessary steps in the future to present a comprehensive study of conservation of multimedia art.

4. EXHIBITING TEOMAN MADRAS ARTWORKS

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how a retrospective exhibition for the multimedia artist Teoman Madra, who created art extensively using technology between the 1960s and the early 2000s, would be curated and put together from a media archive. An important part of curating the exhibition is to ensure that Madra's work can be contextualized within the history of art and technology integration. Curating a retrospective requires telling the story of its protagonist and revealing the turning points of the artist's career in relation to the ever-changing nature of time over the course of a person's lifetime. Retrospectives can be either chronological, thematic or time-based, synoptic or comprehensive, posthumous, or devoted to a living artist, and the pursued methodology should be in line with the artist's oeuvre decided to be showcased. This chapter focuses on the selection, reconstruction, and installation processes for the proposed retrospective exhibition of the Turkish multimedia artist Teoman Madra and seeks to establish an exemplary workflow for curating an exhibition from a new media archive. Focusing on the technological and creative evolution identified in Madra's archive, the exhibition proposal aims to facilitate the expansion of meaning that the artwork in question can reveal.

4.1 How to Curate a Retrospective Exhibition?

The term "retrospective" has its roots in Latin; while retro means 'back, behind, or backward,' specere indicates 'to look at': The joint use of these two terms hence implies a 'perusal of the past'.[1] As the adjective form of the word signifies 'relating to, or contemplating the past', the term has come to describe 'a generally comprehensive exhibition, compilation, or performance of the work of an artist over a span of years'

[1] Merriam-Webster, s.v. "retrospective," accessed December 23, 2022, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/retrospective.

in its noun format.[2] In accordance with this dictionary definition, the selection from an individual artist's entire oeuvre is presented in retrospectives in order to portray a comprehensive image of that particular artist's output. Undoubtedly, such a presentation is arranged to showcase many facets of its subject; consequently, this multi-faceted narrative might contribute to the mythologization of the artist.

"A good exhibition" as Robert Storr describes "is never the last word on its subject".[3] Correspondingly, good retrospectives should not be definitive about their protagonist, rather the selection and installation of the works should open the door for new discussions on the artist's lifetime production. Certainly, the story of the particular artist will be weaved by the exhibition-makers, yet the narration should serve for the expansion of meaning that can be revealed out of the art in question instead of placing the artist on a throne for a blockbuster exhibition. By having such a conception of retrospectives, Madra's retrospective exhibition is envisioned in a manner that avoids the mythologization of the artist. Thus, working against mounting an apotheosis for the artist will be at the core of this study as Robert Storr recommends. Otherwise, if the artist's grand myth is being narrated, it "*[...] by implication suggests that the artist's work is complete and that the audience is merely in attendance at the public celebration of fulfilled promise*".[4] On the other hand, Madra's retrospective aims to raise new questions about how technological evolution simultaneously affects the artistic creative process while going over his oeuvre. It has never been the case to draw ultimate conclusions from his works, if one takes the very nature of his productions into account it would not be possible already. Rather, the proposed retrospective aims to be open-ended and be seen from various perspectives in accordance with his attitude toward making/experimenting. Since the proposed exhibition will be the first retrospective exhibition devoted to Teoman Madra, it will be the beginning of the acquaintance instead of claiming to know him completely.

For a better understanding of the role of one-man shows in art history, it is necessary to return back to Academy and the contemporaneous art scene. With the establishment of the Academy in the 17th century, the artists demarcate themselves from craftsmen and artisans, by undertaking an exclusive personage of the intellectual elite being "strange, different, exotic, imaginative, eccentric, creative, unconventional, alone".[5] Throughout the progress of time within all social, eco-

[2]Ibid.
[3]Robert Storr, "Show and Tell," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 14.
[4]Ibid., 26.
[5]R. Parker and G. Pollock, "'God's Little Artist'," in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 82.

nomic, political, and ideological transformations of the 17th and 18th centuries, the modern construct of the artist has been shaped to indicate this new persona. Being one of the first examples of artists curating their own solo shows, Courbet's show in his self-organized 1855 Pavillon has a great potential to reflect an endeavor of creating this modern myth of the "artistic genius" by the artist himself. Before Courbet, shows organized for individual artists were quite rare; and the only examples were to be found in the world of fine arts. These types of exhibitions were either held to commemorate recently deceased Academicians or by artists themselves in their private studio spaces, which contributed to the exclusiveness of the event and highlighted the dignity of the occasion.[6] What distinguished Courbet's show from its predecessors was that putting such an exhibition into practice itself reflected an attitude of protest; both more specifically in reaction to his rejection by the Salon jury, and more generally, as a populist statement against the pretentious status of the institutionalized fine art establishment. Courbet's gesture contributed to the nature of the modernist perception of the artist that relies on the notions of "Individualism, Self-confidence, Defiance, Genius" grounded on "*the heroization of the individual standing alone against an unjust state*".[7] This modern myth of a genius belongs to whom distinguish themselves from "ordinary mortals" and carry the role of both "the Bohemian and the pioneer", being an artist.[8] At this juncture, a retrospective serving as a "one-man show" consolidates the artistic prominence and peculiar myth of the individual in line with its narration.

On the other hand, we no longer believe in the power of the pre-fabricated image of the artistic persona. The modern discourse of artistic genius came to an end, especially in the late 20th century together with "the death of the author". In his famous essay titled as such, Roland Barthes argues that "*as soon as a fact is narrated [...], this disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins.*"[9] What has been criticized in his account is the conventions of literary criticism which "*[...] is tyrannically centered on the author, his person, his life, his tastes, his passions*".[10] According to him, there is no point in an attempt to shed light on the "ultimate meaning" that the author intended to give, indeed the interpretation of each individual reader replaces the authority of the author.

Barthes's dissertation on authorship in literature can be understood as echoes of

[6]Patricia Mainardi, "Courbet's Exhibitionism," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 118 (December 1991): 257.
[7]Ibid., 254.
[8]R. Parker and G. Pollock, "'God's Little Artist'," in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 82.
[9]Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142.
[10]Ibid., 143.

what has been scrutinized in the art scene of the time. Especially in the second half of the 20th century, performativity and the conceptualization of the artwork came to the forefront. With the emergence of conceptual art, the idea makes the work operates itself and is prioritized over the artist's prominence. As Sol LeWitt conveys "*the idea becomes a machine that makes the art*".[11] When one takes his instruction-based wall drawings into consideration, his argument of "*the idea itself, even if not made visual is as much a work of art as any finished product*" is solidified.[12] The instructions provided by the artist himself are open to interpretation of whom executes the work. Therefore, the existence of the artist disappears in the production stage of the artwork, yet the idea is still there. Correspondingly, *the voice loses its origin* [the creator], *and work begins* [by being executed and reinterpreted].[13]

That being the case, retrospective exhibitions or in other words one-man shows which are arranged to showcase a grand artistic persona or assign definitive meaning to one's lifetime productions are no longer relevant in today's art world. Because of the fact that neither the artist's stance is a priority, nor there is an ultimate meaning to be extrapolated. Thus, the retrospectives of today should not put emphasis on establishing a heroic artist myth, but rather on facilitating the expansion of meaning that the artwork in question can reveal. The rationale behind such an attitude toward exhibition-making is well formulated by Robert Storr as follows:

> If the art is truly important, it will necessarily have many facets and set off many trains of thought. The responses it may prompt and the lessons that can be drawn from it correspondingly multiply by the number of people who come to look, the number of times they do so, the number of objects offered to them, the number of facets if presents, and the number of angles from which they are encouraged to examine it, as will be the passage of time and changes in the world context. The mathematics are simple; the sum infinite.[14]

Recalling what Marcel Duchamp argues, now the onlooker is responsible for half of the work to derive its meaning.[15] In addition to his argument, it can be suggested that it is the responsibility of exhibition-makers to provide the appropriate setting for viewers to examine, question, and interpret the art in question from infinite

[11] Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 80.
[12] Ibid., 83.
[13] Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142.
[14] Robert Storr, "Show and Tell," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 31.
[15] Ralph Rugoff, "You Talking to Me? On Curating Group Shows That Give You a Chance to Join the Group," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 46.

perspectives. That's why the curation of retrospective exhibitions has a crucial role in introducing the artist to the public whether it is devoted to a living artist or done to commemorate a past one. The curator who has the role of being a storyteller in such an exhibition is concerned with opening the door for possible understandings of one's lifetime work in line with his/her in-depth knowledge and vision of art.

The juxtaposition of autobiography, and retrospectives organized by the artists themselves as in the case of Courbet's 1855 Pavillion, was presented by Constantine Stefanis in his Ph.D. thesis titled "*Artists in Retrospect: The Rise and Rise of the Retrospective Exhibition*".[16] Both concepts, the autobiography, and this type of retrospective exhibition are self-reflective practices requiring one to look at one's own past being both the narrator and the protagonist.[17] While elaborating further on these two self-narrative processes, the author introduces the Freudian term *Nachtraglichkeit (Afterwardsness)* which refers to the retroactive attributions or associations built by one after the event has passed by means of reinterpretation.[18] Similarly, the autobiographical narration and self-retrospectives allow the artists to reform their past memories at the present moment using later experiences. This process of picking out, and melting memory and narrative in a single pot eventually results in new interpretations.

In line with his account, such adjacency can be built between biography writing, and retrospectives curated by anyone other than the artist oneself with a core difference. Neither author is pledged to document each and every event the figure has encountered, nor the curator is responsible for collecting every piece of work created by the artist otherwise the process would culminate with a *catalogue raisonné*. Rather, what they are obliged to do is select a series of memory traces or artworks to tell the story of the protagonist's lifespan. Their method of story weaving determines the pivotal elements of the subject's past and requires them to reinterpret the deliberately selected materials at hand to come up with a persuasive narration. The one who is concerned with the narration has a chance to approach the case with a degree of objectivity different from what self-reflective occupations might don't have. Thus, this time the reinterpretation process might result in new narratives which diverge from what has been told by the protagonist themselves. A recent example of such situation can be found at Alte Nationalgalerie's exhibition archive. The exhibition titled "Paul Gauguin – Why Are You Angry?" aims to look at Gauguin's oeuvre and juxtapose the chosen works with the ones by various artists from the international contemporary art scene. What makes the exhibition diverge from its predecessors is

[16] C. Stefanis, *Artists in Retrospect: The Rise and Rise of the Retrospective Exhibition* (PhD diss., Birkbeck College, University of London, 2011).
[17] Ibid., 30.
[18] Ibid. 28.

not repeating the discourse conveyed by the artist himself, but rather establishing a metadiscourse that "*interrogates Gauguin's self-created myth of the savage artist*".[19]

Elaborating on the nature of the retrospectives gives rise to the following question; *how does an artist's oeuvre deserve to be showcased in such an exhibition?* There might be diverse answers well-suited to case-specific situations. The answer provided in this chapter will depend on the case study of this particular thesis project, the Teoman Madra archive. Since there is no answer to the question of *how did the media arts evolve in Turkey between the 1960s and 2000s*, due to a lack of related documentation, this study aims to put a missing milestone into its place in Turkish Media Art history. Departing from the belief that Madra's artistic practice was significant in this particular context, it is argued that the retrospective exhibition is a necessity to introduce him. It both aims to unveil what was happening in the Turkish art scene during the time period in question, and to position the artist in an international context while strengthening the origins of the media arts field in this particular country. Madra's retrospective would not solely be a celebration of his works or reinforcing the myth of the avant-garde artist, but to present a fuller picture of the status of Media Art in Turkey while questioning Madra's own contribution. Additionally, the retrospective has the function of bringing the established new media archive to light and contributing to future research that will potentially take place.

4.2 Exhibiting Teoman Madra

Curating an exhibition from a new media archive has its own dynamics in terms of exhibition-making workflow. Firstly, it should be remarked that having the whole collection of artist's works at hand makes it possible for exhibition-makers to state their preferences free from any physical or financial restriction. There is no concern about how to deliver or lease an artwork from any other institution, and having access to an artist's entire oeuvre eliminates many challenges that any other project might have to deal with. Consequently, the exhaustive amount of material at hand gives the means for exhibition makers to see a fuller picture of the particular artist's productions over the course of time, and select the ones which work as pieces of the puzzle to present this portrait. Undoubtedly, this advantage also comes with its counterpart of having an extensively large collection of works to examine which may lengthen the duration of the project.

[19] Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, "Paul Gauguin – Why Are You Angry?" last modified March 26, 2022, https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/paul-gauguin-why-are-you-angry/.

There are various types of exhibitions that are dedicated to the art of a single person: early or mid-career surveys, either synoptic or comprehensive retrospectives, late-career updates, posthumous retrospectives, or theme- or time-based arrangement of an artist oeuvre.[20] Undoubtedly, the preferred strategy should be in line with the artist's oeuvre decided to be showcased. A variety of approaches in the case of curating a retrospective exhibition does not suggest a predefined framework of exhibition-making, indeed each individual case would demand a unique methodology necessitating the curators to listen to the voices of the artworks in question. However, several generic methods can be propounded within the scope of curatorial studies. Without any doubt, the most conventional path to be followed is the chronological in other words time-based reexamination. Thus, the personal progress of the artist would be revealed with its all fluctuations, in addition to the transformations in his artistic practice. Such curation would require taking into account materials that refer to the political, economic, technological, or social events of the period in question, demarcating defining moments that made the artist change course and using these as the inflection points of the narrative. If artistic practice in question is not shaped by these outside forces, the dominant biographical stories should be told from exhibition-makers' perspective in order to expose the driving stimuli for the artist's practice. Another method might be organizing the exhibition space around common themes, in other words identifying the themes that emerge from the artist's repertoire. This method can also revolve around repeated motifs that appear at different points during the artist's lifetime or the use of a certain color palette in the case of Visual Arts. Following this manner would result in a different narrative than a continuous chronicle of an artistic journey by focusing more on the nature of individual works.

The proposed methodology of making the retrospective exhibition of Teoman Madra would be the chronological arrangement of the selected artworks. The preferred time-based strategy comes concomitant with the medium-based categorization of the works. Since he was creating art extensively using the technological capabilities of the time between the 1960s and the early 2000s, his chronicle has the potential to reflect contemporaneous technologies. The retrospective would be initiated with early abstract photography which he calls *Light Games*, followed by manipulated video productions using an Amiga computer and a video camera, and finally, his later works created using an iPad would be demonstrated. Of course, the video storage medium differs within itself whether recorded in VHS, Betamax, or miniDVs revealing the evolution of media technologies. That being the case, technological evolution is being echoed through the chronological narrative of his oeuvre. The technolog-

[20] Robert Storr, "Show and Tell," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 16.

ical evolution can be regarded as the first key element of the curation of Madra's retrospective whereas the second is artistic creative progress. The narration aims to reveal the interplay between these two by asking the question of how technological evolution echoes within artistic practice. According to Robert Storr, one-man shows can be either biographical or teleological in terms of narration.[21] Thanks to the previously mentioned focal point of Madra's retrospective proposal, it proposes to be both. While following a biographical storyline, the teleological narrative of progress is being told simultaneously. In addition to these, there is the third key point of the exhibition which corresponds to Madra's unique attitude towards making; confusion and repetition. The repetitive references to the motifs and texts that influenced him emerged in his productions and must be shown to capture the atmosphere of his cycle of continuous production and reproduction. That being the case, there should be an arrangement that goes against a fully chronological order. Instead, there should be spaces where artworks produced with different technologies from various periods of the artist's career are showcased together. This juxtaposition of his repetitive motifs and writings will present the evolution of the mediums he utilized, showcasing the core elements of his artistic process. Thus, the motive behind his production will be illustrated. At the end of the thesis, I believe this eagerness had roots in multiple notions: (i) playing with new toys like a child (the toys being emerging technologies in this case), (ii) a passion for experimenting and developing his practice, (iii) hoarding memories, and (iv) examining concepts that preoccupied his mind as part of an intellectual brainstorm. I believe that presenting these common themes and motifs together will reflect those motives while aligning with the essence of such a retrospective —showcasing technological and artistic evolution simultaneously.

While proposing a chronological arrangement for Madra's retrospective, it is important to start from the beginning of the artist's career. As it has been discussed in detail in the first chapter of this thesis study, Madra's career was initiated upon his return from the USA, and his obtainment of his very first camera Voigtlander Vito B thereafter. Thus, I imagine the exhibition space to be divided into different rooms, or at least segmented areas via room dividers, and the first encounter of the audience should be with the Light Games. For this purpose, the proposed Light Games pieces as examples from the archive are presented below.

[21] Robert Storr, "Show and Tell," in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. Paula Marincola (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 26.

Figure 4.1 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Figure 4.2 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

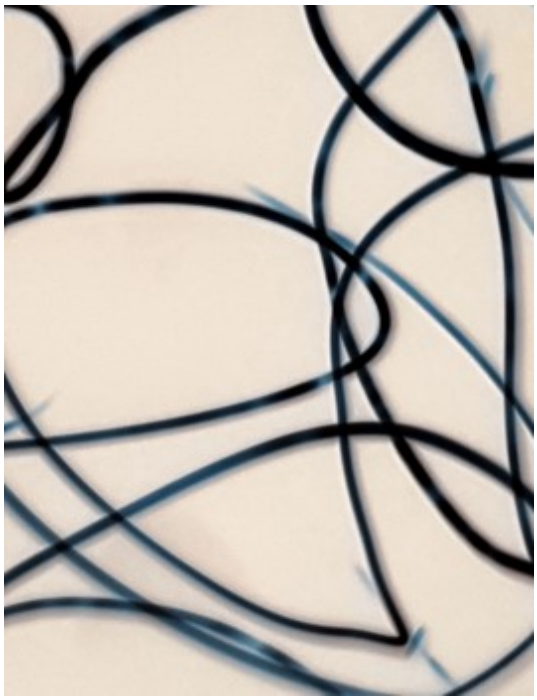


Figure 4.3 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

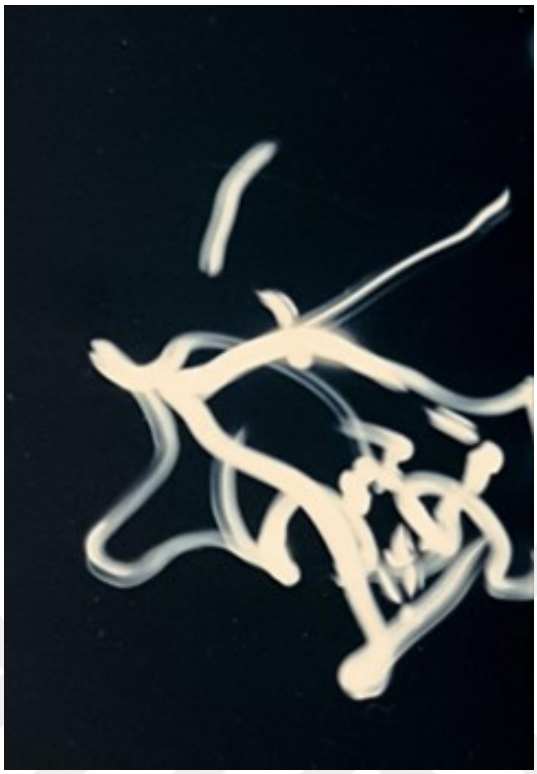


Figure 4.4 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Figure 4.5 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

Undoubtedly, each room should also contain documents reflecting the *zeitgeist*, such as newspaper clippings, artist photos, exhibition posters, and invitations. These documents are already presented in the first chapter (see Figures 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and following), and for each segment of the retrospective presented here, they should be considered as accompaniments that follow the era reflected in the room. To illustrate this vision with a solid example, for the Light Games room, there can be the art piece acquired by the Vakko factory (see Figure 4.6.), the photographic documentation of the mural (see Figure 2.9), and the newspaper clipping reflecting the acquisition of the piece (see Figure 2.10). Following such a methodology for Madra's archive will present the archiving work being done within the scope of the thesis project while also helping to portray the artist's entire career, thus overcoming his lack of recognition and accessible documentation within the Turkish Media Arts field.

Figure 4.6 Teoman Madra, Light Games (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

At this initial stage of the retrospective exhibition, where Light Games will be presented alongside documentation from that era, other types of photographic experiments capturing geometric interplays with prisms or ornamental tessellations should also be demonstrated (see Figure 4.7., and Figure 4.8.). Thus, when the audience encounters these types of images in the upcoming sections of the exhibition, where generative video works are displayed, his method of repetition and re-manipulation of the material at hand will be recognizable.

Figure 4.7 Teoman Madra, Geoprisms (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

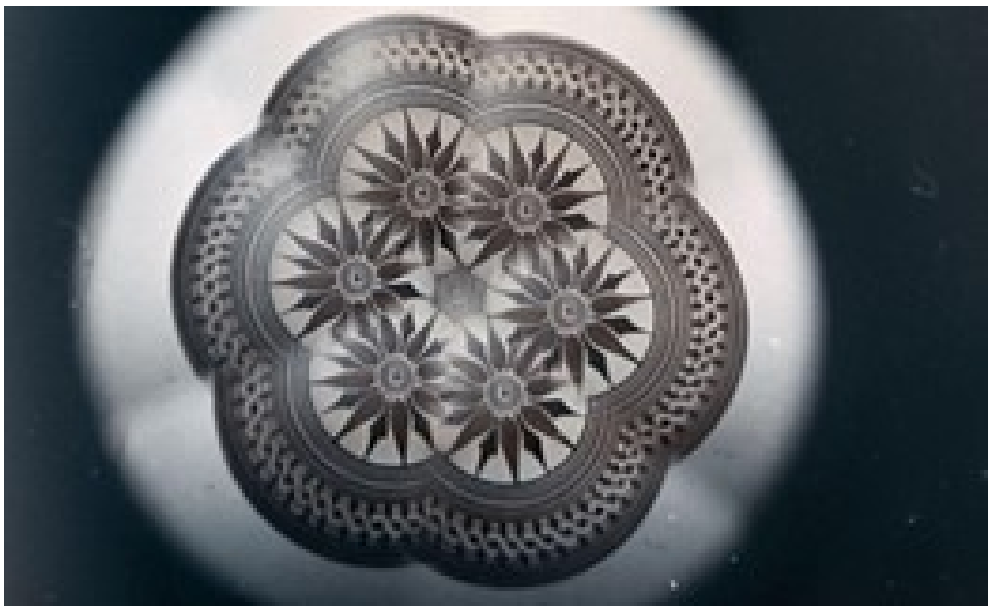
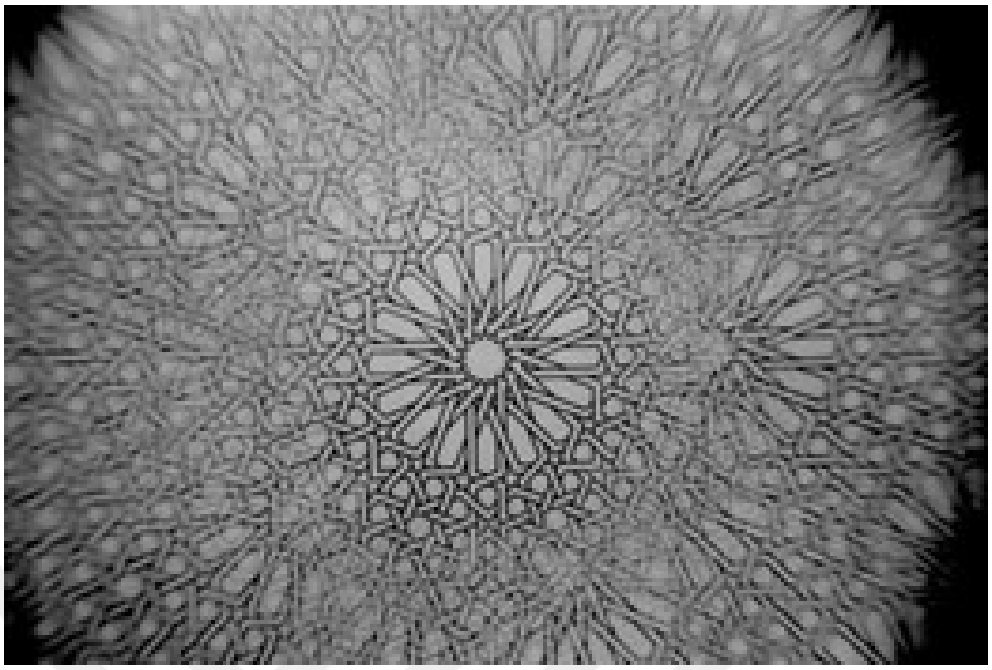


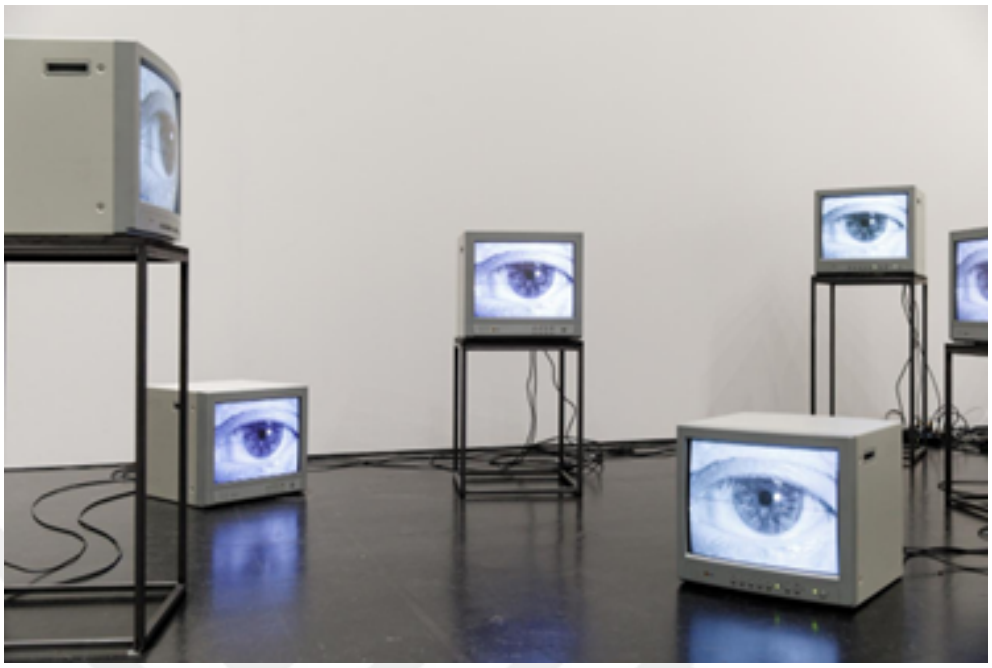
Figure 4.8 Teoman Madra, Geoprisms (circa the 1960s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.



Following the Light Games, the video works created using graphics software should be showcased as the second chapter in the artist's lifetime production. This section of the retrospective should be supported by technical documents explaining the history of Amiga computers, along with the specifications of the Deluxe Paint software that Madra widely used during this period. The installation of this section is envisioned to align with what Madra did in 1989 at Atatürk Cultural Center, where he presented a multi-channel video installation (see Figure 2.17). However, the arrangement of multi-screens can be more scattered across the space to reflect the confusion and disorder within his oeuvre. This arrangement can be illustrated via an exhibition view from another pioneering media artist's retrospective, Peter Weibel, who directed one of the major Media Arts museums, ZKM, where his retrospective also took place.[22]

[22]Peter Weibel, "Video Lumina," 1977, ZKM | Center for Art and Media, Photo: Felix Grünschloß, accessed July 1, 2024, https://zkm.de/en/exhibition/2019/09/respektive-peter-weibel.

Figure 4.9 Peter Weibel, »Video Lumina«, 1977/© ZKM| Center for Art and Media, Photo: Felix Grünschloß.



Showcasing various video works created by Madra in such a setting will evoke the atmosphere of a cluttered playroom, reflecting the experimental essence at the core of his productions. Much like toys scattered in a child's room, this type of video installation would reflect his creative passion, akin to a child exploring new toys while also presenting a sense of confusion through repeated sayings and motifs over the years. Additionally, this method of display will align with the initial clutter of his archive as encountered by Artut at the outset of this study, capturing Madra's tendency to hoard and accumulate images in a disorganized manner. It is crucial to emphasize the use of original contemporaneous technologies from the period in question while presenting the video works. This may require additional effort in reconstructing the video playback setup for each analog media type in which Madra's work has been stored, such as VHS, Betamax, and miniDV. However, this effort is vital in a retrospective, especially for today's audience to understand and appreciate the era's context. Furthermore, it will highlight technological evolution as one of the driving forces in artist's practice.

The last section of the exhibition should be dedicated to Madra's latest works, which were produced using iPad technology. Utilizing this new technology, he produced digital geometric drawings and incorporated layers into his earlier Light Games, emulating the performative methods of those pieces. This resulted in a fusion of his aesthetics from two distinct periods (see Figure 4.12). Consequently, these artworks display a contrast of two technological styles, representing his final artistic creations

that built upon his original practice. An interactive display could be designed and proposed for this section of the retrospective. Inspired by Selçuk Artut's interactive exhibition titled 'Motifs in ad Infinitum: Remediations in Time'[23] at Hope Alkazar in Istanbul, where the audience is invited to create their own patterns and their tessellated version is displayed on the walls (see Figure 4.10.), a similar setup can be proposed for Teoman Madra's retrospective. For this setup, a digital tablet can be set up where users can draw with unique brush types similar to the ones Madra utilized in Figure 4.11. and Figure 4.12. shown below. This interactive element will not only engage the audience but also provide a deeper understanding of Madra's creative process.

Figure 4.10 Interactive Pattern Creation at Selçuk Artut's "Motifs in ad Infinitum: Remediations in Time" Exhibition (2024), Hope Alkazar, Istanbul, ©Selçuk Artut.

[23]Selçuk Artut, "Motifs in ad Infinitum: Remediations in Time," Hope Alkazar, accessed July 25, 2024, https://www.hopealkazar.com/experiences/eternal-motifs.

Figure 4.11 Teoman Madra, Free Hand Drawings (circa the 2010s), ©Teoman Madra Collection

Figure 4.12 Teoman Madra, Free Hand Drawings with Light Games (circa the 2010s), ©Teoman Madra Collection.

In conclusion, the retrospective exhibition of Teoman Madra's work provides a comprehensive and insightful overview through his artistic evolution, highlighting the interplay between technological advancements and his creative process. By employing a chronological arrangement supported by thematic juxtapositions, the exhibition captures the essence of Madra's continuous experimentation and the recurring motifs in his oeuvre. The integration of original contemporaneous technologies and interactive elements further enriches the audience's understanding of his work, allowing for a deeper appreciation of his contributions to the field of Media Arts. This curation not only showcases the breadth and depth of Madra's artistic legacy but also addresses the challenges of archiving and exhibiting Media Art, ultimately aiming to showcase his place within the Turkish Media Arts field.

5. CONCLUSION

This thesis has demonstrated the historical significance of Teoman Madra in Turkish Media Art, by bringing his long-forgotten works into light. This research not only revitalizes Madra's legacy but also highlights his artistic approach and its evolution throughout his career in line with technological advancements.

Throughout his career, Madra was at the forefront of technological and artistic experimentation, merging diverse media forms such as photography, video, jazz/electronic music, and digital art into cohesive, multisensory experiences. His artistic practice evolved alongside the technological advancements of his time, from early Light Games to video art, computer-generated visuals, and net-art. This continuous adaptation highlights Madra's commitment to exploring new forms of artistic expression, positioning him as a true avant-garde artist. Additionally, Madra's self-identification with the Fluxus movement, while nuanced and partially retrospective, underscores the interdisciplinary and performative aspects of his work.

Moreover, the detailed documentation of the archival and conservation processes applied to Madra's works offers a framework for future projects in the field of Multimedia Art Conservation. By addressing the urgent need in the paradigm shift from traditional conservation practices to new conservation methodologies embracing the evolving nature of technological artworks, this thesis contributes to the broader discourse on preserving and archiving culturally and historically significant pieces that include contemporaneous technologies.

In addition to exploring Madra's artistic trajectory, this thesis also delves into the complex process of curating a retrospective exhibition from his media archive. The proposal for such an exhibition involves not only selecting and reconstructing his works but also contextualizing them within the broader history of art and technology. This process requires a deep understanding of both the technical and conceptual aspects of Madra's work, ensuring that his contributions are presented in a manner that reflects their historical and cultural significance.

In bringing Teoman Madra's work back into the spotlight, this thesis reaffirms his pivotal role in Turkish Media Art history and provides a framework for future archival studies within the field. It stresses the importance of an interdisciplinary approach that integrates technical expertise with an understanding of the conceptual and historical contexts of Madra's artworks. By doing so, it ensures that the legacy of pioneering artists like Madra is preserved and appreciated for future research.

In conclusion, this thesis has demonstrated the enduring relevance of Teoman Madra's work, both in terms of its artistic innovation and its contribution to the broader field of Media Arts. By bringing his work back into the spotlight, this study not only honors Madra's legacy but also provides a critical foundation for future research in the field, ensuring that the rich history of Turkish Media Art continues to be explored and appreciated for generations to come.

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