

# JOHN CAGE

## Lecture on Nothing Variations II

### 45' for a Speaker

du 7-30 juillet 2017 à 21h30  
au Théâtre des Vents Avignon

63 rue Guillaume Puy  
Reservations: 06 20 17 24 12

**LU/ME/VE Lecture on Nothing  
MA/SA Variations II  
JE/DI 45' for a Speaker**

Ne ratez pas 'A la découverte de la  
musique contemporaine' (concert com-  
menté), tous les vendredis du 7-30 juillet à  
23h au Théâtre des Vents, entrée libre!

### UMS 'N JIP

#### Swiss Contemporary Music Duo

Ulrike Mayer-Spohn, recorder & electronics  
Javier Hagen, voice & electronics

<http://avignon.umsnjip.ch>  
<http://theatredesvents.com>

## 45' FOR A SPEAKER

### PROGRAMME

#### JIP (\*1971)

55 minutes, 2016

for voice, recorder, video & electronics  
based on 45' for a Speaker (1954/61) by John Cage  
French version: M. Fong

#### MOTOHARU KAWASHIMA (\*1970)

Das Lachenmann IV, 2017

duration: 60min

*"To get yourself in such a state of confusion  
that you think that a sound is not something  
to hear but rather something to look at."*

John Cage, "45' for a Speaker," Subvocal

In the years 1954 to 1956 John Cage wrote a series  
of 5 pieces which are all named after their exact  
lengths, among them a composed lecture called "45'  
for a speaker".

They are all written "in space", in that there is a  
timeline (of seconds) indicating which musical action  
is to be performed when. In his notes to all these  
pieces, Cage encourages performers to not only play  
the pieces on their own, but also simultaneously in  
any combination. When performing them  
simultaneously players are asked not to engage, by  
listening to and interacting with each other, in  
musical interplay - rather, only the sounds should  
interact, by means of chance encounters.

Cage's instructions for "45' for a Speaker" tells the  
speaker exactly when and how particular sentences  
and/or phrases should be read so that the lecture  
finishes in exactly 45 minutes. "Indeterminacy" is a  
collection of anecdotes from Cage's life and readings,  
which, as Cage explains in his instructions, are to be  
read one per minute. To achieve this goal, the  
speaker must either speed up or slow down,  
depending on the length of each anecdote.

The greatest challenge of musical discourse lies in  
the relationship to written text and aural experience.  
We use words to describe a temporal aural

experience, but there is really no direct relationship  
between the two. Metaphor serves to bridge the link  
between experiences, and oftentimes we resort to  
discussions of structure and form when describing a  
piece, leaving the "interpretation" up to the listener.  
Historical background, likewise, is an easy realm for  
musical discussion; these are facts about the piece,  
but not necessarily about the music "itself."

"45'" does contain a fair amount of "facts" in the  
sense that it describes compositional techniques Cage  
was interested in at various points, as well as a  
considerable amount of metaphor via Zen or East  
Asian heuristics and anecdotes. Equally, "45'" is  
densely structured; every element of succession and  
duration was devised according to a complex  
precompositional rhythmic structure coupled with a  
strict gamut technique for content.

Thus "reading through" this work presents another  
level of circularity central to the Cagean aesthetic.  
This is in essence a mosaic of ideas and aphorisms  
related to Cage's compositional style and various  
philosophical statements, and the thinking mind  
inevitably goes about making analytical connections  
between statements, history, individual pieces,  
literary theory, art history, musicology, etc.  
Phenomenology is more concerned with "essences,"  
or the fleeting sense of something rather than the  
concrete, since it is impossible to perceive just what  
that is in time; it's sort of like glancing over your  
shoulder, or the cold feeling of déjà vu. (...)

"A statement concerning the arts is no statement  
concerning the arts." It consists of single parts. Any  
of them may be played together or eliminated and at  
any time. "To me teaching is an expedient, but I do  
not teach external signs." Like a long book if a long  
book is like a mobile. "The ignorant because of their  
attachment to existence seize on signified or  
signifying." No beginning no ending. Harmony, so  
called, is a forced abstract vertical relation which blots  
out the spontaneous transmitting nature of each of  
the sounds forced into it. Form, then, is not  
something off in the distance in solitary confinement:  
It is right here right now. Since it is something we say  
about past actions, it is wise to drop it.

<http://www.ayearfrommonday.com/2012/01/45-for-speaker-1954.html>

**JOHN CAGE (1912-1992)**, compositeur, poète et  
plasticien américain. Élève de Schönberg, Cage s'est  
illustré comme compositeur de musique contempo-  
raire expérimentale et comme philosophe. Il est  
également reconnu comme l'inspirateur du mou-  
vement Fluxus et des expérimentations musicales  
radicales qui accompagnaient les chorégraphies de la  
Merce Cunningham Dance Company. En 1935, faute  
de place pour pouvoir utiliser des instruments de  
percussions pour les besoins d'une œuvre destinée à  
accompagner une chorégraphie de Syvilla Fort, Cage  
crée sa première pièce pour piano préparé. Cherchant  
à épurer sa musique, il eut la particularité d'écrire ses  
œuvres sans ponctuation musicale, laissant au  
pianiste comme seules indications des descriptions  
d'atmosphère au lieu des traditionnelles nuances.  
L'une des œuvres les plus célèbres de Cage est  
probablement "4'33", un morceau où un(e) interprète  
joue en silence pendant quatre minutes et trente-trois

secondes. Son objectif est l'écoute des bruits  
environnants dans une situation de concert. "4'33" dé-  
coule aussi de l'expérience que Cage réalise dans une  
chambre anéchoïque dans laquelle il s'aperçut que "le  
silence n'existait pas car deux sons persistent" : les  
battements de son cœur et le son aigu de son système  
nerveux. Comme le dit Yōko Ono, Cage « considérait que  
le silence devenait une véritable musique ». À partir de  
cette période, toutes les compositions de Cage seront  
conçues comme des musiques destinées à accueillir  
n'importe quel son qui arrive de manière imprévue dans  
la composition. Cage prétendait que l'une des  
composantes les plus intéressantes en art était en fait ce  
facteur d'imprévisibilité où des éléments extérieurs  
s'intégraient à l'œuvre de manière accidentelle. Le mot  
« aléatoire » doit s'entendre chez John Cage, en anglais,  
comme chance et non pas random.

**UMS 'n JIP** est à l'actuel l'une des formations de  
musique contemporaine suisses les plus innovatrices au  
niveau international: pluridisciplinaires et d'une  
virtuosité exceptionnelle, Ulrike Mayer-Spohn (UMS,  
flûtes à bec, électronique et composition) et Javier  
Hagen (JIP, ténor/contreténor, électronique et  
composition) ont créé plus de 200 œuvres dans les plus  
prestigieux festivals de musique contemporaine  
mondiaux (Donauessingen, Strasbourg, Berlin, Zürich,  
Genève, Basel, Shanghai, Beijing, Hongkong, New York,  
Moscou, Paris, Adelaide, Riga, Ulan Bator, St.  
Petersburg, Prague) en collaborant avec des  
compositeurs tels que Goebbels, Rihm, Oña, Mitterer,  
Sciarrino, Walshe, Guo Wenjing, Huang Ruo, Kagel,  
Reimann. UMS 'n JIP représentent à côté d'Ensemble  
Modern, Kronos et Intercontemporain, l'un des  
ensembles les plus actifs du monde. En plus de leur  
activité d'interprètes ils ont composé des œuvres qui ont  
gagné >20 prix internationaux et ont été jouées en toute  
l'Europe, en Chine, Corée, Egypte, Iran, Israël, Australie,  
au Japon, aux Philippines et aux EE.UU par des chefs tels  
que Beat Furrer, Jürg Henneberger, Tsung Ye, Mark  
Foster et les ensembles Phoenix, Neue Vocalsolisten,  
DissonArt, Arsenal, Vertigo, Inverspace, UmeDuo,  
Proton, Amar. Ils sont co-chefs par Irvine Arditti (Arditti  
Quartet London). Leur opéra de chambre 'EINER' a été  
mis en scène au légendaire Teatro Colon de Buenos  
Aires (11/2015), ils organisent le Helikopter-  
streichquartett de Stockhausen dans le cadre du festival  
Forum Wallis en Suisse (5/2015) et 'Integrations'  
en collaboration avec les ensembles dissonArt  
(Thessaloniki), Taller Sonoro (Sevilla) et Moscow  
Contemporary Music Ensemble MCME. (2016/7).

**DAS LACHENMANN (Motoharu KAWASHIMA)**.  
"Lachenmann" is the name of composer, but  
accompanied by "Das" turns to the meaning of "the  
laughing man". The voice part of this work consistently  
laughs and the recorder imitates it. In my works  
exploring the relationship between utter-ance and music,  
it is the work dealing with only the aspect of "parole"  
which excluded "langue (written language)" the most.  
Since publishing the first version for soprano, tuba and  
piano in 2006, I have rewritten several different  
arrangement versions, but unlike those versions, in this  
version for UMS 'n JIP, "laughing" eventually turns into a  
"singing". They specialize in extreme singing and playing  
techniques, but on the other hand, the beauty of the  
harmonious blending by their sound is so wonderful that  
I wanted to make effective use of it.