

*1967 –
2017*

*aspen 5+6
Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)
& the Orthogonal Methods Group (OMG)*

In this room, the [Orthogonal Methods Group](#) (OMG) has created a series of works that responds to the legacies of two projects from 1967: [Aspen 5+6](#) and [Experiments in Art and Technology](#) (E.A.T.).

Aspen 5+6

Aspen was a multimedia magazine of the arts published by Phylis Johnson from 1965 to 1971. Each issue had a new designer and editor. "*Aspen*", Johnson said, "should be a time capsule of a certain period, point of view or person". New York-based Irish artist and critic Brian O'Doherty edited *Aspen 5+6*, a double issue of the magazine, which was published in 1967.

E.A.T.

Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) was established in 1967 – the same year in which *Aspen 5+6* was published – in response to the success of the previous year's *9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering*, a series of events at New York City's 69th Regiment Armory. The brainchild of Bell Labs engineer Billy Klüver and artist Robert Rauschenberg, *9 Evenings* paired artists, composers and choreographers, the likes of Rauschenberg, John Cage, David Tudor and Yvonne Rainer, with engineers from Bell Labs. They worked together across disciplinary boundaries for 10 months to create the technologies that enabled the legendary series of multimedia spectacles in October 1966.

(Documentation of *9 Evenings* is being screened on one of the monitors in this room)

E.A.T. was founded to further the philosophy informing *9 Evenings*. Klüver and Rauschenberg envisaged the organisation as a framework within which artists and engineers could be brought into dialogue with each other, with a view to developing technologies that would enable artists to enact their ideas. They saw E.A.T. as a "catalyst for the inevitable fusing of specialisations". As Michelle Kuo says in the opening paragraphs of her essay (presented in the wall-mounted vitrine), E.A.T. was founded on the desire to "change the structure of invention itself".

OVERLAPS

Aspen 5+6 and E.A.T. overlap in a number of dimensions. O'Doherty reviewed *9 Evenings* for the magazine *Art and Artists*, describing it as a "criss-cross of traditions, disciplines, time-streams, and audiences". Rauschenberg and Cage participated in both the *9 Evenings* programme and O'Doherty's *Aspen*. Following on from his review of the events at the Armory, O'Doherty was slated to edit a book of interviews with *9 Evenings* participants by Harriet DeLong. The book was to be published by MIT Press and although this never came to pass, some of this material still lies in the E.A.T. records at the Getty Archives in Los Angeles.

In an interview with the website *Brooklyn Rail* in 2007, O'Doherty said "the idea was to establish a network of provisional relationships that could be read in endless combinations, depending on the reader, listener, looker". O'Doherty's *Aspen* includes work by artists such as Sol LeWitt, Mel Bochner, Dan Graham and Tony Smith, who were associated with the Conceptual and Minimal art movements. Their strategies often drew on mathematical and technological ideas such as 'set theory', 'the series', 'systems theory' and the notion of the algorithm. The modernist motif of 'the grid', which often recurs in their work, is fundamental to the design of *Aspen 5+6*. Bochner went on to formulate his iconic *Measurement* pieces as part of an E.A.T. residency at the Singer Company in 1968.

HISTORY OF E.A.T. TALK

E.A.T. director Julie Martin will present a talk on the history of E.A.T. at IMMA on Saturday December 9th 2017. Please check www.imma.ie for details.

Legend

aspen 5+6

- 1 book essays The Death of the Author / Roland Barthes / trans. Richard Howard
- 2 book Style and The Representation of Historical Time / George Kubler
- 3 book The Aesthetics of Silence / Susan Sontag

- 4 record fiction Text for Nothing #8 / Samuel Beckett / read by Jack MacGowan / Duration 12' 45"
- 5 record Nova Express / excerpts / William Burroughs / read by the author / Duration 4' 20"
- 6 record "Now the shadow of the southwest column" from Jealousy / Alain Robbe-Grillet / read by the author / Duration 10' 7"

- 7 record music Fontana Mix-Feed / John Cage / realized by Max Neuhaus / Duration 9' 57"
- 8 record The King of Denmark / Morton Feldman / Max Neuhaus (percussion) / Duration 7' 23"

- 9a boards sculpture The Maze / Tony Smith

- 10 film films Rhythm 21 (1921) / Hans Richter / Duration 3' 27"
- 11 film Lightplay: Black-White-Grey (1932) / Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (excerpt) / Duration 1' 40"
- 12 film Site (1964) / Robert Morris / Stan VanDerBeek (excerpt) / Duration 4' 58"
- 13 film Linoleum (1967) / Robert Rauschenberg (excerpt) / Duration 4' 06"

- 14 record interview Merce Cunningham / Duration 9' 22"

- 15 record documents The Creative Act (1957) / Marcel Duchamp / read by the author / Duration 7' 17"
- 16 record Some texts from A L'infinitif (1919-20) / Marcel Duchamp / read by the author / Duration 3' 58"
- 17 record Four poems from Phantastische Gebete (1916) / Richard Huelsenbeck / read by the author / Duration 4' 10"

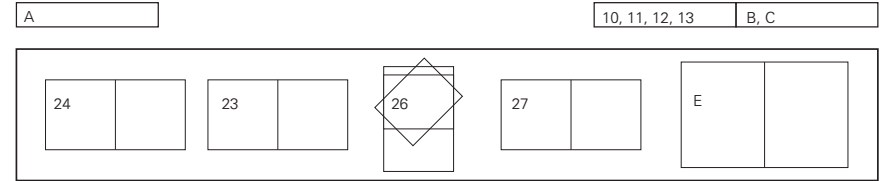
- 18 record The Realistic Manifesto (1920) / Naum Gabo / Noton Pevsner / read by Gabo / Duration 17' 24"
- 19 print The Russian Desert: A Note on Our State of Knowledge / Douglas MacAgy
- 20 record Space, Time and Dance / Merce Cunningham / read by the author / Duration 8' 11"

- 21 print poetry Conditionnement / Michel Butor / trans. Michael Benedikt
- 22 print Poem, March 1966 / Dan Graham

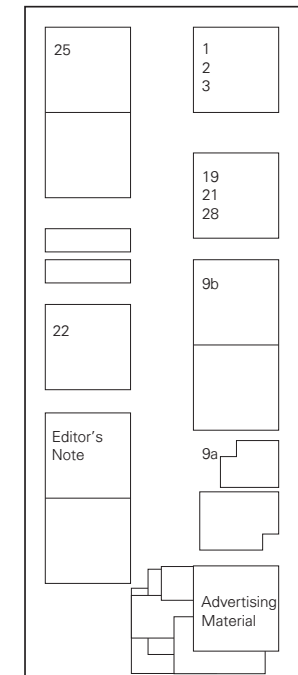
- 23 print data Serial Project #1 / Sol Lewitt
- 24 print Seven Translucent Tiers / Mel Bochner
- 25 print Structural Play #3 / Brian O'Doherty
- 9b print Drawings for The Maze / Tony Smith
- 26 print Score for Fontana Mix-Feed / John Cage / Max Neuhaus
- 27 print Score for The King of Denmark / Morton Feldman
- 28 print Translation of Jealousy (recorded excerpt) / Alain Robbe-Grillet / trans. Robert Howard

other works

- A drawing data Seven Transparent Tiers ([N + 2] Center Set A) MB67 / Mel Bochner / 1967 ¹
- B film films 9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering / Alfons Schilling / 1967 / Duration 20' 08" ²
- C film E.A.T. / Barbro Schuntz Lundestam / 1997 / Duration 32' 32" ²
- D film Aspen Unboxing / Julie Martin, Mellissa Rachleff & Orthogonal Methods Group / 2017
- E book catalog Robert Rauschenberg Exhibition Catalogue / Tate Publishing / 2016
- F object object Placement as Language / Orthogonal Methods Group / 2017



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OMG WORKS IN RESPONSE TO *Aspen 5+6* AND E.A.T.

Title: *Placement as Language* (2017)
Dimensions: 90mm x 113mm x 900mm
Materials: The text of *Aspen 5+6*'s three essays, two Twitter feeds (@aspen_ordered and @aspen_reordered), hand-sanded laser cut and CNCed acrylic, two Raspberry Pi 3 model B computers, two thermal printers, paper rolls, Python script (incorporating adafruit_thermal.py, twitter.py and markovify.py), 3G Wifi dongle, power supply, cabling, fixings and human labour.

Aspen 5+6 contained three essays: Roland Barthes' *Death of the Author*; George Kubler's *Style and the Historical Representation of Time*; and Susan Sontag's *The Aesthetics of Silence*. *Placement as Language* uses these texts as a material.

Taking the form of a long, black, wall-mounted object, this work replaces *Aspen*'s original communication platform (a magazine in a box) with a contemporary one (Twitter). Two feeds are printed onto streams of paper in the gallery and are available to read online via a browser or the Twitter app. The paper rolls will be replaced once a fortnight.

@aspen_ordered

Divides the three essays into Twitter-sized 140 character chunks, transmitting them one by one into the world.

@aspen_reordered

Employs an algorithm to create new variations on the original texts. These variations are generated by a statistical algorithm called a Markov Chain that generates sentences based on the probability of one word following another in the original text.

Title: *Unboxing Aspen* (2017)
Duration: To be determined
Materials: HD video with sound

Unboxing is "... the unpacking of new products, especially high tech consumer products, where the process is captured on video and uploaded to the Internet." Unboxing videos on YouTube often include a voiceover where the *unboxer* narrates the process of breaking the seal on the packaging and describes their subjective response as they encounter the contents.

OMG have invited E.A.T. director Julie Martin and curator and NYU professor Melissa Rachleff, to 'unbox' *Aspen 5+6* at IMMA in December 2017. From January 2018, a video documenting their experience will be displayed in this room.

Title: *Aspen 5+6* FOR TEACHERS
Duration: variable
Materials: variable

As a response to the themes of *Aspen 5+6* and the work of E.A.T., OMG are developing a series of talks and workshops for maths teachers in collaboration with IMMA's Engagement and Learning Department and Professor Elizabeth De Freitas (Manchester Metropolitan University). These will take place in 2018. Please check www.imma.ie for updates.

ABOUT OMG

The Orthogonal Methods Group is a collection of artists and non-engineering researchers operating in the context of CONNECT, the world leading Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Future Networks and Communications.

OMG currently includes Maeve Connolly, Linda Doyle, Jessica Foley, Fiona Hallinan, Cliona Harmey, Fiona McDermott, Dennis McNulty, Tom O'Dea, Rachel O'Dwyer, Stephen Roddy, Neil Smyth and Kate Strain.

The room layout was designed by OMG with the assistance of the IMMA Collections Department and the IMMA exhibitions team.

LINKS

For more information on this project please visit www.connectcentre.ie/omg/1967
There is more information about OMG at www.connectcentre.ie/omg

CREDITS

1. *Seven Transparent Tiers (IN + 2) Center Set A) MB67* is part of the Novak / O'Doherty Collection at IMMA, Gift, The American Ireland Fund, 2014
2. *9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering* and *E.A.T.* were kindly provided courtesy of Julie Martin and E.A.T.

Special thanks to Stephen Cushen, Mary-Ruth Walsh and Brenda Moore-McCann.