

Astrit Schmidt-Burkhardt
Net-Working with Maciunas

Right from the very beginning of Fluxus in the early 1960s, George Maciunas built up an international, but selective network of contacts. Later, in the 1980s, when the ascendancy of the computer launched the concept of the network it turned out that the social network was one of the chief characteristics of Fluxus. And even today, old boy and old girl networks seem to work perfectly when the task in hand is to keep Fluxus alive. If, however, the Italian communications theorist Tatiana Bazzichelli is right, then the history of "networking" in art essentially began with Maciunas' net-based diagrams of history, art history, the avant-garde and the Fluxus movement. That Maciunas, whose sophisticated diagrams link together the most heterogeneous knowledge cultures, artistic currents and artists, is one of postmodernism's greatest networkers is certainly not in doubt. His fascination with tables and diagrams was profoundly optimistic, and evidence of the widespread assumption that the main thrust and patterns of history can indeed be captured in graphic form. Between 1953 and 1978, he produced some three dozen charts, diagrams, and atlases, which together form a vivid account of the various ways in which politics, business, cultural history, poetry, music, and art are intertwined.



●●●

http://www.fas.at/languageofnetworks/downloads/Language_of_Networks_Program.pdf