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Always In-Formation: The Presence of Sound in the Work of Dan Graham

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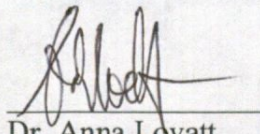
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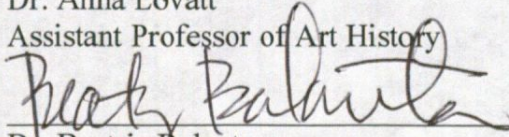
ALWAYS IN-FORMATION: THE PRESENCE OF SOUND

IN THE WORK OF DAN GRAHAM

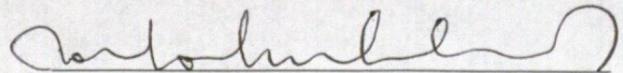
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ALWAYS IN-FORMATION: THE PRESENCE OF SOUND
IN THE WORK OF DAN GRAHAM

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty of

Meadows School of the Arts

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in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

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by

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Always In-Formation: The Presence of Sound
In the Work of Dan Graham

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This thesis argues for a reconsideration of the role sound plays in the work of the American artist Dan Graham. Graham regularly used his work as a means of drawing viewer's attention to the seemingly infinite multiplicity of the subjective experience which shapes their encounter with the visual art object. I argue Graham's engagement with music and his involvement in the multidisciplinary art scene of Downtown New York City in the 1970s and 80s shaped and encouraged his interest in this greater sensorial environment in which a work of art is encountered. Through performance, video, and architecture, Graham has attempted to foreground the environmental context of an artwork, and through a study of his work in disparate media, I argue it is his use of sound which most forcefully demonstrates his interest in destabilizing the definition of art. Through a variety of interpretations related in one way or another to sound I examine the relationship between the visual and audible in the work of Graham and his contemporaries, the relationship between sight and sound in enabling and structuring perception, sound as excess designed to point the viewer towards something not immediately apparent in an image, and the role sound plays in uniting the other senses.

Questions with which I grapple include: Since everything is encountered within, and surrounded by, something else, where does the work of art end? Can there be any aspect of the

space in which an artwork is encountered that is irrelevant to that encounter? Through a focus on Graham's engagement with music as well as several key artworks, this thesis works to emphasize the influence of encounters with sound and music on contemporary art practices and the intellectual concerns of practicing artists, while expanding our understanding of what shapes our experience and evaluation of a work of so-called visual art.

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This is dedicated to my family.

INTRODUCTION

From 2008-2010 *Sonic Youth Etc.: Sensational Fix*, an exhibition dedicated to the multidisciplinary output of the alternative rock band Sonic Youth made stops at six museums and cultural venues in Europe.¹ Although no strangers to the world of art, Sonic Youth are, of course, a band, legendary in the history of rock music and key figures in the development of the underground rock scene of the 1980s. From their unsteady and diverse beginnings, to the various scenes' union and institutionalization under the generic moniker of alternative rock, Sonic Youth have become a symbol of sorts, for the mainstreaming of underground music. If a museum exhibition seems an unusual way to recognize a rock band, a quick examination of the credits for Sonic Youth album covers and music videos quickly dispels confusion: Tony Oursler, Mike Kelley, Raymond Pettibon, Dan Graham, and Gerhard Richter are just a few of the visual artists Sonic Youth have borrowed from for album art or collaborated with on music videos. A band whose associated visual material seemed vital to their self-definition, Sonic Youth blatantly displayed their affiliation with, and affection for, the work of visual artists. *Sensational Fix*, curated by Roland Groenenboom with extensive input from band leaders Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore, aimed to highlight that aspect of the band's work: instead of focusing on solely the band's music and art Groenenboom explicitly foregrounded their scene, their influences, and their relationship with collaborators, in order to present what he described as "an alternative

¹ Although *Sonic Youth Etc.: Sensational Fix* is the exhibition's full title, I'll be referring to it from here on it simply as *Sensational Fix*.

history of contemporary culture...in which underground meets official culture.”² As a result, the exhibition on the rock band overflowed with visual material: album artwork and liner notes, flyers, zines, posters, and photos of the band filled plexiglass cases and lined the walls of rooms packed with tour equipment, beat-up electric and bass guitars, and monitors displaying footage of the band rehearsing, performing, or just being. In addition to the work directly produced or sanctioned by the members of Sonic Youth was the work of the band’s collaborators and friends: there was Christian Marclay’s room-size *Untitled*, a 1987 piece consisting of 5000 vinyl records spread haphazardly along the floor; Vito Acconci’s *Conversions*, super 8mm films of the artist altering his body to suggest sexual transformations; drawings by Raymond Pettibon; text work by Jenny Holzer; a drawing by Christopher Wool, Cindy Sherman’s 1975 animated video *Doll Clothes*, drawings by Mike Kelley, videostills of Tacita Dean’s work, a few films by Tony Oursler, and several of Isa Genzken’s drawings, just to name a few, were interspersed amongst the liner notes, t-shirts, and guitars. This was not *just* a show about a band.

If the show visually and conceptually staged a relationship between Sonic Youth’s music and the artistic scene of their moment, the architectural pavilion designed for the show by Dan Graham more explicitly connected the two worlds. Graham, like many of the visual artists whose work was on view during the exhibition, was a friend of the band, the reason, as Kim Gordon told an interviewer, she started playing music.³ Designed for visitors to listen to the music of Sonic Youth on provided headsets, Graham’s pavilion united the sonic and visual, and, in a way, the two worlds of the exhibition; the avant-garde and popular culture, in one work. Not that the terms elite and mass would have meant much as categories to any of the artists or

² Press Release for the exhibition *Sonic Youth, etc. : Sensational Fix*, 2008, Accessed Jan. 29, 2019: <http://ca2m.org/en/archive/item/1350-sonic-youth-etc-sensational-fix>

³ Markus Muller, “Dan Graham: Collaborations, In Other Words Not Alone,” *Dan Graham: Works 1965-2000*, Ed. Marianne Brouwer (Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 2001), 20.

musicians whose work was included in the show. Sonic Youth came of age artistically in the New York City of the early 1980s, and although Graham began producing art a decade and a half before Moore and Gordon arrived, the New York City of both was the Downtown of the 70s and 80s, the cheap, still somewhat crime-ridden Downtown, the now tirelessly over-romanticized Downtown of cheap lofts, alternative art spaces, limited commercial interest in art, and rampant experimentation.⁴ This Downtown was, as has been noted many times, synonymous with artistic experimentation, dilettantism even; the period's weak art market sparked an explosion of interdisciplinary practice; artists were forming bands and musicians were trying their hand at art, with little hope of financial success in the period, artists had nothing to lose.⁵ Downtown's association with art and experimentation by no means began in the 1970s; the move to Downtown began many decades before when co-op galleries began forming and setting up shop in SoHo and the East Village, and artists such as George Maciunas and John Cage were living and working well below 14th Street.⁶ But the 1970s were different; if the music and art worlds were beginning to come together in the 1950s and 60s through John Cage's influence on the musical work of the Fluxus artists and in groups such as La Monte Young's "Theater of Eternal Music," in the 1970s visual artists were no longer identifying with the avant-garde world of art music but instead those of punk and new wave, musical styles which were forming distinct

⁴ Although Graham began producing work in the 1960s amongst contemporaries such as Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, and Robert Morris, as I'll take up in my chapter focusing on Graham, he more or less rejected the artistic specificity of many of his contemporaries, instead placing his work from the very beginning, in conversation with discourses occurring far outside the traditional discursive spheres of the art world.

⁵ Marvin J. Taylor, "Playing the Field: The Downtown Scene and Cultural Production, An Introduction." In *The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene, 1974-1984*, ed. Marvin Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 17.

⁶ *Inventing Downtown: Artist-Run Galleries in New York city* takes up the history of these spaces and the artists who participated.

populist identities in opposition to the avant-garde.⁷ New brands of shared space were also being inaugurated. The Kitchen, which had already begun hosting experimental music performances at this point, moved slowly towards programming rock; Sonic Youth played their first show at White Columns, an alternative gallery in Greenwich Village when the space hosted a nine-night series of shows called Noise Festival; and the Mudd Club opened in 1978 to firmly root the union of the two in one establishment, one in which a media work by Nam June Paik would sit to the side of a Talking Heads performance, and a film screening would happen in a room adjacent to a performance by Gray, Jean-Michel Basquiat's band, an artist whose musical career would soon be sidetracked by his visual practice.

“Dan was always around the scene...going to shows with probably the first stereo Sony tape player which was THAT big at the time,” as Gordon remembers it.⁸ Graham was a fan of the new music, a part of the scene, going to punk shows, hanging at the Mudd Club, but he was also a rock critic, penning dozens of reviews and critical essays for publications in the 1970s deconstructing the political subtext of punk music and its culture. Graham advocated for a more constructive understanding of mass culture, the operation of which he analogized to the pop and conceptual art movements of the 1960s and 70s. On rare occasions, Graham's interest in music even made it into his own work. Throughout the 1970s Graham was making a name for himself staging performances, crafting media-driven installation works, and making videos, including a few which explicitly announced his participation in the music scene. His 1983 video documentary of a performance by the legendary hardcore band Minor Threat at New York City's

⁷ Bernard Gendron has charted the other avenues in which artists were coming into contact with other types of music, the loft jazz scene, and the minimalism in an essay for *The Downtown Book*, “The Downtown Music Scene.” But he notes the dominant tendency for these artists to identify with the punk/new wave movement as opposed to the other still more traditionally defined as avant-garde, musical practices, 56.

⁸ Markus Muller, “Collaborations,” 17.

CBGB gestures at what Graham would go on to explicitly thematize as the ecstatic, ritual nature of rock music in his film *Rock My Religion*, but where *Rock My Religion* was laboriously scripted and edited, *Minor Threat* amounts to little more than a piece of raw footage Graham recorded at the show. For a 21st century viewer *Minor Threat* announces Graham as fan, dedicated enough to hold up a camera for nearly 45 minutes in a chaotic venue and in this sense close kin to the thousands of videos posted daily on YouTube and throughout music-driven online communities of rough footage taken by audience members at concerts. On most occasions though, if Graham's interest in music and the relationships between mass and elite culture are present in his artwork over this period and that which would follow, it is on a subtle, conceptual level, in work such as *Yesterday/Today* (1975), a two-channel video installation which separates the visual and audible channels, or in the architectural pavilions he was just beginning to construct, works which challenge the taken-for-grantedness of everyday experience. These works embody his career-long interest in concerns he shared with many of his contemporaries: how space and environment shape an individual's encounter with the world.

The pavilion at *Sensational Fix*, aesthetically, differed little from many of the pavilions Graham has erected throughout the world since he began constructing the structures in the late 1970s. It maintained the material with which his pavilions have become indelibly associated, two-way mirrored glass and stainless steel, this time assembled to form a series of interconnected, but open rectangles. Inside, several listening stations with headphones were available for visitors to sample as much or as little as they liked of Sonic Youth's prodigious recording history. Graham's pavilions have always been full of sound given their placement in the open air, in parks or plazas, spaces where the sounds of the street and the city fill the open structures unpredictably. Although Graham did not write extensively on how sound and its incorporation,

either intentionally or accidentally, into the experience of his work might alter, or shape its experience, it is undeniably part of the spectator's experience of his work. In any case, what one hears is absolutely unavoidable in a discussion of the pavilion at *Sensational Fix*. But one's experience of Graham's pavilion at *Sensational Fix* would not just have consisted of music; the pavilion was, of course, surrounded by art, art which would have entered the listener's field of vision, even if distractedly, as they stood inside the pavilion's transparent walls, listening (or not) to the music.

In the chapters that follow I will examine the importance of an artwork's surroundings, those things which "brush, rub, or press" against it, to shaping our experience of art, by arguing for a reconsideration of the presence of sound in the work of Dan Graham.⁹ By exploring his identification as a music fan and his involvement in the multidisciplinary art scene of Downtown New York City in the 1970s and 80s, I will argue Graham's experience and involvement in musical practices and spaces shaped his own interest in the greater sensorial environment in which a work of art is encountered. I will also examine Graham's own artistic practice, one consumed with these environmental factors which press against the artwork in the viewer's experience, before concluding by exploring the art and writing in which Graham directly explores music and sound. By exploring several theoretical models of sound and how it operates to effect our phenomenological and ontological understanding of experience, I will argue for a privileging of the role of sound in shaping our experience of both space and the art within it.

Although there is a long history of interdisciplinary dialogue between the visual arts and popular music, the 1970s marked a unique moment in that history. I will demonstrate that during the period a variety of factors influenced the emergence of a new relationship between the visual

⁹ Jacques Derrida, "The Parergon," *October*, Trans. Craig Owens (Vol. 9, Summer 1979), 21.

and musical worlds which was unprecedented in the history of either institution, altering our understanding of popular, or “non-art” music, and its relevance to high culture. Through this crossover, our experience of where the visual ends and the aural begins was becoming conjoined and confused. In the first chapter I will examine the historical and cultural factors which influenced and initiated this cross-over between the avant-garde and popular art worlds, casting the scene in terms of a newfound emphasis on listening as encouraged by the art world’s engagement with music. Key to my own understanding of the artists and musicians who were coming of age in the 1980s, was the new experience of the popular and avant-garde as equivalent, the attribution of criticality to artists from both worlds equally appropriate. Through the work of Bernard Gendron on what he describes as the Borderline Aesthetic, I will cast this evolution as bringing about a new understanding of the relationship between the visual and the aural in the arts as well as in experience more broadly. By focusing on the popular in this chapter, I intend to introduce a level of instability and unknowability that its study often entails, something I hope will assist in destabilizing traditional art historical understandings of the visual work this paper takes as its ostensible subject.

Graham’s work represents the synthesis of a number of concerns which dominated artistic thinking in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s: a preoccupation with space, perception, and institutional critique. His work in media ranging from magazines, to video, to performance and sculpture, while allowing for a wide array of interpretation, has been dominated by a concern with the sublimation of the subject under the dominance of ideology, in other words, our indoctrination into society’s determined and un-questioned system of how to experience the world, especially as it is wrought at the basic level of perception. As Marc Perelman writes, Graham is engaged in a “constant interrogation of the material shaping of existence mediated by

a structure which cannot be sidestepped.”¹⁰ Focusing on the radical multiplicity of phenomenological experience Graham sought to reveal through his work, the second chapter of my thesis foregrounds the role of Graham’s art as inclusive of its environment. Graham’s work eliminates, or at least attempts to eliminate the frame, the point of demarcation between the art object and the world at large, but rather than eliminate the concept entirely in my writing on his work, I would like to cast Graham’s practice as instead offering an expanded definition of the “frame.” Mieke Bal writes that “the frame is the link between work and world.”¹¹ But rather than serving as delineating boundary, Bal’s understanding of framing allows for an ever evolving relationship between object and world through her assertion that the frame or framing of an object or experience is necessarily fluid. Even more relevant to my argument is Jacques Derrida’s essay on Immanuel Kant’s *parerga*. In “The Parergon,” Derrida deconstructs Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, arguing that Kant’s rejection of the *parerga*, the supplementary features of a work, as relevant for aesthetic judgment is not as self-evident as Kant would have his readers understand. By drawing on Kant’s own *parerga*, or notes, appended to the *Critique* as well as a number of other texts, Derrida argues Kant himself places a frame around his work that cannot be distinguished from that which it surrounds. The *parergon*, in Derrida’s description, is therefore both exterior to the work and yet intrinsically related to what is inside; the *parergon* “touches, plays with, brushes, rubs, or presses against the limit” [of the work].¹² He continues by equating the frame of a painting to the frame of Kant’s argument, the analytic structure through which his theory is activated, arguing for the intrinsic importance of the ostensibly

¹⁰ Marc Perelman, “The Glass Stage of Modern Architecture as transformative of the Ego,” in *Dan Graham*, ed. Jacinto Lageira, (Paris: Éditions Dis Voir, 1995), 87.

¹¹ Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 140.

¹² Derrida, “The Parergon,” 21.

“supplemental,” as well as the frame’s essential unknowability, both in terms of its impingement into the work and how we understand it, as well as in its relation to the exterior, troubling what constitutes the work’s exterior at all. I understand Derrida’s argument to entirely destabilize our traditional understanding of a work’s frame, casting it as essentially indefinable and infinite. Graham defamiliarizes experience by opening his work to unpredictable influences, making our understanding forever uncertain. In the same way, he destabilizes our understanding of where the work ends and the world begins by declaring their boundaries to be fluid. Instead of eliminating the concept of the frame as a means of discussing the work of Graham, I argue Graham’s “frame” includes both the intentional and the unintentional environment in which his work is presented and by which it is effected. In so doing I hope to maintain the ability to discuss the art object as such, while expanding the environment of study in the so-called visual arts. In what follows I will argue that the artwork is inextricable from its “frame” or, more accurately, its environment. Although the understanding of space and how it effects the art object within it is open to endless variation, dependent on the subjective encounter of each viewer, no aspect of the space in which a work is encountered should be irrelevant to its interpretation.

Graham experimented with many means of disrupting the distinction between inside and outside, between individual and object, of crafting situations in which information could be understood as “in-formation.” He credited punk music as capable of doing the same, of introducing a level of instability into language or style which serves to open what is often understood to be their closed circuits, but when music has been introduced into his own work it has typically been kept separate from the perception-oriented videos, performances, and pavilions for which he is known. In the final chapter I will foreground the moments in which

Graham does introduce music into his work, either as primary or ancillary subject, and argue the pavilion at *Sensational Fix*, instrumentalized as it was as a means of listening, is an apotheosis of sorts, for Graham's concerns as a whole. I will argue that sound and in particular music, is an invisible presence informing Graham's conceptual interests, a presence which has been elided in the history of not only Graham's work, but of visual art as a whole. Graham's practice, intent as it was on illustrating the ways in which a work's environment impacts its perception, may have only rarely offered an explicit consideration of music's role in initiating that understanding, but I argue its impact on his work persists nonetheless. By marshalling a number of theoretical readings regarding the relationship between sound and visual experience, I will argue the sonification of Graham's pavilion in the context of a visual art exhibition filled with the signs and culture of music, alters our understanding and experience of its structure and, by extension, shifts how we consider all of Graham's pavilions as a now quite large body of work. Graham's pavilions have been understood both by the artist and others to be interventions designed to reveal something hidden in the un-considered world; a channel into historical memory, our relation to others and to space, or the ways in which the ideologies of the urban city and its creators are embedded in the structures and materials of which it is composed. Could their infusion with intentional sound be understood as a means of emphasizing the role sound plays in shaping the entirety of our experience of visual art? Could it be a means of drawing attention not only to sound itself, but the myriad array of sensory variables which effect an encounter with art?

Despite the volume of Graham's writings on music and even references to his interest and engagement with music scenes, there has been surprisingly little attempt on the part of art historians to adequately account for what Graham's involvement and acknowledgment of music's centrality to his life and practice might do to our understanding of his art. There are two

notable exceptions. In a catalog essay for the recent retrospective of Graham's work produced by the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Bennett Simpson takes up the possibility of rock music as being a "way in" to Graham's work: In the essay he describes the experiential nature of rock music and especially the music scene's heavy incorporation of drugs and the notion of "drug-space" as offering "the possibility of a new expanded subjectivity – one buffeted and informed by overwhelming material and phenomenological presence," relating this to Graham's own experiments with the phenomenology of social experience.¹³ Although he acknowledges moments when Graham's performance works were "explicitly wedded to musical performance," Simpson stops short of considering music's larger impact on Graham and his practice or how it might shift or otherwise color Graham's emphasis on subjective and phenomenological experience. John Miller also took up the issue of music for Graham, setting Graham's interest in music against his interest in suburbia in works like *Homes for America* (1966-67), arguing, then, for music as emblematic of freedom and vitality in contrast to suburbia's suffocating sameness. This thesis owes a great debt to Miller's recognition that the works of Graham's which most directly recall his engagement with music are not in fact the ones in which music is foregrounded but others, such as for Miller, *Alteration to a Suburban House* (1978) and *Homes for America*. Of particular interest for this work is, as well, Miller's assertion that a reading of Graham's works as calling attention to our interactions with space and with others might be slightly misleading. Instead

¹³ Bennett Simpson, "A Minor Threat: Dan Graham and Music," In *Dan: Graham Beyond* Ed. Bennett Simpson and Chrissie Iles, (Los Angeles: MOCA and MIT Press, 2009), 41.

Miller posits, “*interaffectivity* is more accurate. *Interaffectivity* galvanizes the audience’s self-consciousness as a collective body. It constitutes the work’s affinity to the rock festival.”¹⁴

Dan Graham however, has written extensively on music in his own practice. As a writer and critic Graham contributed reviews and critical essays on music and music culture to numerous publications throughout the 1970s. Most of his writing focuses on the culture of music, the means through which punk musicians were able to resist the commodification of the artist by corporations through deconstruction and critique, the ways in which punk undermines “liberal society’s assumptions,” or the cathartic and communal nature of live performance. Music also comes up regularly in interviews Graham has given, interviews in which he has commented on the influence of the seriality of the music of Pierre Boulez and Karl Stockhausen on even early magazine projects such as *Homes for America*, and noted the influence of architecture and space on our experience of music and sound.¹⁵ I will draw heavily from Graham’s responses to interviewer’s queries in the pages that follow.

When it comes to the Downtown scene with which both Graham and Sonic Youth were associated, art history is just beginning to seriously take into account the multidisciplinary and experimental nature of its participants. Although references to individual artists and their engagement or involvement with music scenes in the 1970s and 80s pepper scholarly works on Jean-Michel Basquiat, Richard Prince, Dan Graham, Richard Longo, Jenny Holzer and many other seminal New York artists who were part of the scenes which this work discusses, the fluid boundaries between these two scenes, that of the musical and the artistic, are more ancillary than

¹⁴ John Miller, “Even the Pigs’re Groovin,” Reprinted in *Dan Graham*, Ed. Alex Kitnick, (Boston: MIT Press, 2011,) 38.

¹⁵ See Pietro Valle’s “Half Square/Half Crazy,” an interview with Dan Graham in *Dan Graham: Half Square Half Crazy*. Charta: 2004.

central in the history of art as a whole. This has been partially corrected in recent years. In 2002 Bernard Gendron's *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club* brought together the worlds of art and music through a history of the collision and interpenetrations of the avant-garde and popular culture during several key moments in art and music history. And in 2006, New York University's Grey Art Gallery and the Fales Library produced an exhibition on the downtown scene which traveled to two cities in addition to New York and published *The Downtown Book*, edited by Marvin J. Taylor with contributions from Gendron as well as Lynn Gumpert, Brian Wallis, RoseLee Goldberg, among others, on various artistic scenes and their convergence in the Downtown New York City of the period.

The last several decades have seen a turning away from the ocularcentrism which has plagued much of the history of western art in favor of a broader consideration of the entirety of the sensory world in which we encounter works of art.¹⁶ Sound has played perhaps the largest role in the re-centering of the other senses, with even the rare art historical text incorporating the auditory into scholarly studies of works which might otherwise seem to rely purely on the visual. Of particular interest for my work is Simon Shaw-Miller's *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage*, which takes Jerrold Levinson's discussion of hybrid art forms as a departure point from which to analyze the musical work of Wagner, as well as the visual artwork of Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee and Frantisek Kupka, and John Cage and the Fluxus artists. In chapter three Shaw-Miller's understanding of the hybrid relations between the visual and auditory arts and the concept of intermedia offered by the artists of Fluxus and articulated in the

¹⁶ In Art History see Caroline Jones, *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses*, Holly Jones *Sounding the Gallery*, Douglas Kahn's *Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts*, Niall Atkinson's *The Noisy Renaissance*, as examples. For broader cultural studies of sound see Steven Connor's essays on the auditory and W.J.T. Mitchell's *What Do Pictures Want*, as examples.

writings of Dick Higgins, will assist me in bringing sound and vision together in the work of Graham. More common with regards to sound are the work by film and media scholars on sound and vision, a large body of writing to which this work also owes a great debt, Michel Chion will be of particular importance. I will also draw heavily on the work of theorists more typically associated with literature including Roland Barthes and Steven Connor, both of whom have written extensively on sound and its relation to art as well as its role in shaping the entirety of our sensory experience.

Graham has always made a work's surroundings and how we perceive it in that space the true subject of his art, using his work to reveal the fluid relationship between art and its environment. Through the pioneering work of R. Murray Schafer in defining the soundscape, and taking a cue from Emily Thompson's linking of Schaeffer to Alain Corbin's more explicit invocation of the soundscape as a landscape made heavy by its affective and emotional associations, I use the concept of the soundscape, with its collapse of the divide between sound and vision in our understanding and experience of space, as a means of understanding Graham's work. The inhabitants of Downtown New York's soundscape were experiencing sound and art in entirely new ways, as a soundscape in which the boundaries between the visual and the aural were fluid, an evolution which impacted Graham's own understanding of the relevance of framing to our experience not only of art, but of experience in its entirety. The recreation of the soundscape of the period inside and through Graham's pavilion at *Sonic, Youth Etc., Sensational Fix*, offers an opportunity to reconsider Graham in his own soundscape, and, by extension, the relation between exterior and interior when it comes to both art and experience. "The fact that I did not write about it does not mean that it was not informative. The first work I was doing for the magazine pages were totally influenced by listening to the Kinks and the Rolling Stones.

‘Mothers Little Helper’ was the main influence on ‘Side Effect/Common Drug’ (1966). So let’s say that the music was always an influence.’¹⁷

¹⁷ Interview with Eric De Bruyn, “Sound is Material: An Interview with Dan Graham,” *Grey Room*, 17, 110.

Chapter 1

ROCK MY RELIGION

A shirtless Henry Rollins is the first image we see in Dan Graham's film *Rock My Religion*. The camera frames Rollins, the visceral lead singer of hardcore band Black Flag, tightly, as he violently throws his body back and forth on stage accompanied by the screeching of guitars and ambient crowd noise, before slowly panning back to briefly reveal the rest of the band on stage and cut to black. Mere seconds later, a scrolling text matter of factly declares "the dominant religion of America" to be Puritanism, before offering a brief summary of the Puritans' religious beliefs and cutting again, this time to still images of early Americans accompanied by Sonic Youth's "Shaking Hell," an abrasive, violent song in which Kim Gordon snarls the words "shake off your flesh" over, and over, and over again. The film's beginning offers a reliable indicator of what follows in the nearly hour long film; images of Shakers descending into communal trances accompanied by hardcore music alternate with still images and video taken by Graham (and others) at rock concerts of performers and fans entering into a trancelike state of their own as their heads and bodies slam through crowded clubs. Clips of advertisements and suburbia too, are interspersed with video of live performances by Jimi Hendrix, Elvis Presley, and Patti Smith, images of Jim Morrison's grave, James Dean's acting, police, protestors, and much more fill in the spaces between. Graham's voice occasionally accompanies the images, narrating selective pieces of history ranging from details regarding the Plains Indians or the Shakers, to the history of rock 'n roll and the lives of musicians such Morrison, Smith or Jerry

Lee Lewis. The film provides a general feeling of excess, or over-stimulation through its unrelenting montage of cultural references and images. Occasionally Graham's disembodied voice intones deconstructionist critiques of religion or rock music such as "Desublimating repression of the body, rock sexualizes the Shaker dance and the revivalist meeting."¹⁸ The film rejects succinct summary but could be characterized as a philosophical argument equating the fanaticism of rock fans with the religious and spiritual communities the film references; "The rock club and rock concert performance are like a church, a sanctuary against the adult world."¹⁹ In writing and interviews Graham argued the film was a restoration of "historical memory," a reconstruction of an "actual, although hidden past," but a 21st century viewer might find the film's affective organization and speculative narrative more far-fetched than Graham's now canonical interpretation might express.²⁰ As Kodo Eshwun writes in his essay on the work, *Rock My Religion* is better understood "as an object lesson that demonstrates how artists can rewrite the history of the present according to their own enthusiasms."²¹ A manifesto disguised as documentary, then.

Patti Smith is a recurring figure in Graham's film. The elder stateswoman of avant-garde rock, Smith, Graham proposes, was responsible for moving rock 'n roll into a cultural position in which it came to encompass and thereby unite art forms as disparate as poetry, music, and sculpture. According to Graham's narrative, it is thanks to Smith that "for a time during the seventies, rock culture became the religion of the avant-garde art world."²² As countless cultural

¹⁸ Dan Graham, "Rock My Religion," in *Rock My Religion: Dan Graham* Ed. Brian Wallis (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1993) 86.

¹⁹ Ibid, 90

²⁰ Quoted in Brian Wallis, "Dan Graham's History Lessons," *Rock My Religion: Dan Graham* Ed. Brian Wallis (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1993) viii.

²¹ Kodwo Eshun, *Rock My Religion*, (London: Afterall Books, 2012), 6.

²² Graham, "Rock My Religion," 94.

critics and historians have pointed out, the 1970s and 1980s did indeed see a shift in aesthetic tastes and practices, most attributing the change to the media generation, the emergence into adulthood of the kids who “had grown up on rock and roll, B movies, 24 hour television, and fast food.”²³ As I will discuss, Bernard Gendron extensively chronicles how this new generation were also raised in the aftermath of rock’s accreditation as a serious form of high art, a massive shift in cultural discourse which he argues contributed to the explosion, both intentional and accidental, of traditional art forms in the Downtown New York scene.²⁴ In what follows I will argue the reevaluation of rock music and its merging with the strategies of visual art in the creation of what Gendron describes as the Borderline Aesthetic in this period, inaugurates a period of cultural history in which there was a renewed consideration of the role of sound and in particular music, in our experience of visual art and space. Graham and the members of Sonic Youth will appear throughout the chapter as players and participants in this re-conceptualized scene. I will conclude the chapter with a brief examination of what was at the time a newly emerging field of studies based on R Murray Schaffer’s concept of the soundscape to show this reconsideration of sound was occurring contemporaneously across cultural and academic lines. 1974 was the year Television, Richard Hell and Tom Verlaine’s legendary band, often credited as the instigators/founders of punk, played their first show at CBGB. By 1984, at least in Marvin Taylor’s recounting in the *Downtown Art Book*, the “larger art world” had begun its slow takeover of the Downtown scene in which artists and musicians were developing a specific brand of symbolic capital, a brand of restricted capital (in the terms of Pierre Bourdieu) which didn’t

²³ Roselee Goldberg, “Art After Hours: Downtown Performance,” in *The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene, 1974-1984*, ed. Marvin Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 102.

²⁴ Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

require the validation of the culture at large.²⁵ Theirs was a capital which thrived on the blurring of disciplinary boundaries and their outsider status.²⁶ By 1984 Basquiat's paintings were selling for tens of thousands of dollars and "the battle for accreditation in 'large-scale' production was on."²⁷ But between those years, and of course, a number of years on both sides of the arbitrary division, Downtown New York City and the artists who called it home, would forever redefine the relationship between art forms.

A new emphasis on rock music seemed central to the new generation of artists populating the Downtown scene. There was an energy in the period's rock scene the visual art world lacked, and visual artists wanted to capture it. "Without an understanding of what the role of rock was in artistic thinking," Eshun writes in *Rock My Religion*, "One could not understand what had made art avant-garde in the 1970s and 80s."²⁸ A primary piece of evidence in an argument asserting rock's influence on artistic circles was the increased participation of visual and performance artists in rock bands. For a period in New York City, mostly centered around the late 1970s and early 1980s, it seemed everyone was or would be, at least for a time, in a band. Poets such as Lydia Lunch, filmmakers such as James Nares, dramatists such as Glenn Branca (an artist who would go on to collaborate with Dan Graham a number of times over his career), visual artists such as Robert Longo and Jean-Michel Basquiat, were all challenging any attempt to define their primary artistic affiliation. It was, according to music critic Simon

²⁵ Pierre Bourdieu. "The Forms of Capital." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Ed. J. G. Richardson. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241-258.

²⁶ Marvin J. Taylor, "Playing the Field: The Downtown Scene and Cultural Production, an Introduction," in *The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene, 1974-1984*, ed. Marvin Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 35. Marvin Taylor describes the consolidation of artists in Downtown as operating within what Pierre Bourdieu terms a "restricted field," the value of their works not recognized by the establishment cultures, these artists created new forms of symbolic capital, and experimentation with genre and aesthetic definitions seemed to have been crucial to its cultivation.

²⁷ Ibid, 36.

²⁸ Eshun, *Rock My Religion*, 95.

Reynolds, “the single greatest phase of art school students forming bands.”²⁹ Sonic Youth and its members provide a case study for the power of rock’s siren call in the early 1980s.

Both Kim Gordon, the band’s bassist and lead vocalist, and drummer Lee Ranaldo began their careers as visual artists before turning to music. For Gordon it was Dan Graham, who she met while studying at the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, who first turned her head towards the art form. When she moved to New York City Graham invited her to perform in a piece he was creating for “Eventworks,” a festival curated by Christian Marclay at the Massachusetts College of Art in April of 1980. Interested in the role of female bonding in the largely male world of rock music, Graham cast Christine Hahn, Stanton Miranda, and Gordon to play in *All-Girl Band*, a performance piece in which the women were meant to perform an improvised script of sorts. Graham had planned for the performers to reveal their thoughts and observations to the audience members in an attempt to subvert what he understood to be the typical process of identification audience members feel towards performers. Perhaps as a result of nerves, perhaps the lack of rehearsal time, the performers forgot what Graham had instructed them to do and instead proceeded to “play” their instruments in an impromptu rock concert.³⁰ Despite her total lack of musical training, the piece changed Gordon’s career trajectory. She would later tell an interviewer that at that point, music was just more exciting than art.³¹ When Gordon was introduced to Thurston Moore, a poetry-writing, zine-collecting musician she met while Moore was employed at Vito Acconci’s studio, Moore invited Gordon to join his still un-named band.

²⁹ Simon Reynolds, “Ono Eno Arto: Nonmusicians and the Emergence of Concept Rock,” in *Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967*, ed. Dominc Molon, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 81.

³⁰ Bennett Simpson, “A Minor Threat: Dan Graham and Music,” in *Dan Graham: Beyond* ed. Bennett Simpson and Chrissie Iles (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009), 43.

³¹ Markus Muller, “Dan Graham: Collaborations, in other words, not alone,” Ed. Marianne Brouwer, *Dan Graham: Works 1965-2000*, (Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 2001), 17, 19.

Moore had already cycled through several band names and bandmates when he joined forces with Gordon to play their first shows in late 1980 and early 1981, one of which had them opening for Branca's band.³² Graham was a fixture in the New York world in which Gordon and Moore were moving and performing. He watched the two meet and join forces, eventually telling an interviewer that Moore saw Gordon as a sort of Patti Smith, perhaps another allusion to Graham's argument regarding Smith's ability to smash the divisions between forms.³³ Shifting between minimalism and noise, the band was under-rehearsed and under-skilled (no-one in the band could actually play a chord when they began writing songs) and their early association with Branca and other noise bands such as Swans, alongside Moore's involvement in the newly emerging hardcore scene, drove the group to a brand of rock music which was aggressively noisy and un-polished, aesthetic qualities the band self-consciously revealed in.^{34,35}

Apart from the blurring of disciplinary lines at the level of the individual, the band made visual art and poetry central to their music as well as their broader identity as musicians. From the beginning Gordon's penchant for appropriation, a tactic she began cultivating in advertising-based collage work in art school, was evident in the band's lyrics, the writing of which stemmed from a similar cut-up technique.³⁶ Over the course of their career they would also collaborate with nearly a dozen visual artists on the production of the visual artwork which accompanied their music via the album art. "Whenever they release a record," Alan Licht wrote of the band, "It's not just a collection of songs, but it's a collection of accumulated influences shown in the

³² David Browne, *Goodbye 20th Century: A Biography of Sonic Youth*, (New York City: Da Capo Press, 2008).

³³ *Ibid*, 43

³⁴ *Ibid*, 79, 84.

³⁵ In the same way Gordon would borrow other techniques such as appropriation from her visual art training, the band's unskilled playing, mirrored Conceptual art's privileging of the deskilled artist. See (Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 238-240.)

³⁶ *Ibid*, 33.

packaging.”³⁷ In other words, whenever Sonic Youth releases a record of new music, they attempt to impart their framing along with it, the visual or text-based work that is exterior to the music but which at the same time “brushes, rubs, or presses” against it.³⁸ Apart from their album artwork, the band collaborated with visual artists in a variety of media throughout their career, whether it was supplying music for Graham’s film, producing a music video directed by Tony Oursler, or performing with Mike Kelley in the 1986 performance “Plato’s Cave, Rothko’s Chapel, Lincoln’s Profile” at Metro Pictures in New York. They also trod the fine line between pop and avant-garde music styles through work like their album *Goodbye 20th Century* which featured the band interpreting the works of contemporary avant-garde composers such as John Cage, Steve Reich, Yoko Ono, and more.

The era of Sonic Youth followed rock’s cultural accreditation, the story of which Bernard Gendron charts in *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde*. They were poster-children for the generation Goldberg describes in which rock music and avant-garde art came to be discussed with equal degrees of criticality and earnestness. The story of how the cultural field was levelled offers a means of grasping just how this cultural shift contributed to a conflation between sonic and visual means of production in the history of art’s creation. Gendron’s story begins with the Beatles, as he chronicles the transition from the first disdainful comments passed down by music critics during the band’s first US tour in 1964 to their second trip in 1967. Gendron cites the influence of Richard Lester’s film *A Hard Day’s Night* on highbrow critics newfound willingness to cast their critical lens on the rock ‘n roll music of the Fab Four; Lester’s incorporation of the techniques of the “art film” in his comedic musical may have been partially responsible for the shift in attitude, but Gendron notes as well

³⁷ Alan Licht, *Sensational Fix*, etc. 55

³⁸ Derrida, “The Parergon,” 21.

the vocal fandom of “musicologists” such as Leonard Bernstein, as well as the Beatles continued financial success and apparent staying power for their roles in rock’s process of accreditation.³⁹ Either way by the early 1970s the rock critic, birthed just a few years earlier, began consolidating cultural capital and influence. It would be punk, inaugurated at least by some accounts in 1974, that would encourage the development of a cultural discourse which would begin to blur the lines between a discussion of the aural and the visual in musical performance.

Lester Bangs was the voice of punk, the most outspoken and influential critic and proponent of these bands, and the one who would define punk as “anti-art” while delineating the stylistic qualities which would characterize its aesthetic. Three attributes defined punk for Bangs: shock, most often in terms of aurally assaultive musical performance, either in terms of volume or attitude; a stripped down musical style; and aggressive amateurism. The inability to play instruments and a drastically reduced variation in terms of musical composition married with a performative contempt of the audience, marked a band, at least in Bangs’ characterization, as punk.⁴⁰ As Gendron is quick to point out, however, despite Bangs’ attempt to assert punk as anti-art and anti avant-garde, the musicians who codified its practices were borrowing strategies from the artistic avant-garde who had been utilizing techniques such as de-skilling and minimalism to undermine the establishment since at least Dadaism if not long before.⁴¹ There was clearly a debt to the art world, or at least *an* art world more interested in visual experience than the world of music had as of yet acknowledged. Bangs’ inclusion of the aggressive, antagonistic attitude punk performers exhibited towards their audiences in his criticism and codification of punk as a musical form, marks even the virulently anti-art critic as at least

³⁹ Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 175.

⁴⁰ Lester Bangs, Reprinted in *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, (New York City, Anchor, 1988), 55, 56.

⁴¹ Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 237.

incidentally acknowledging the role of the visual in music. It was in New York that the tension between art and pop (a word I will use to refer broadly to populist art forms including the anti-art movement Bangs describes as punk) and by extension sound and vision, would come to a head, resulting in what Gendron has defined as the Borderline Aesthetic.

The Borderline Aesthetic is rooted in the alliance between art and pop, high culture and low culture. It is a term Gendron utilizes to refer to those artists, musical or visual, whose fluid traffic between the avant-garde art worlds and the more popular institutions of mainstream music or film locate them at the borderline between traditionally defined aesthetic categories as well as more recent conceptions of genre or form. He charts a history of the Downtown scene in which an increasing number of painters, filmmakers, and performance artists fraternized with musicians at rock clubs, while the rock musicians in turn participated in their new acquaintances' film or performance work.⁴² This commingling of practices led to an inevitable borrowing of conventions and ideas from the respective scenes and their incorporation into others.⁴³ While the "anti-art" musicians Bangs describes were ostensibly opposed to the avant-garde, elite worlds of classical music or art, they were participating in, and adopting the aesthetic strategies of those worlds. Borrowing from artistic movements such as Dada and Surrealism, punk musicians were utilizing strategies to produce art which, in its opposition to established notions of taste and talent, was proving to be as difficult to engage with as the avant-garde art at which these musicians and critics sneered. Art took on a new meaning, surpassing its connotation with visual art to be understood more generally as "a set of conventions that operate in opposition to the

⁴² Ibid, 228.

⁴³ Gendron does also note the role of the "arty" criticism authored by early rock critics as also influential on the dialectical tension between art and pop, 238.

popular.”⁴⁴ Marvin Taylor echoes Gendron’s argument when he states the Downtown scene was defined by an “attitude;” rather than interest in a particular form or medium, the Downtown scene’s participants engaged more broadly in an effort to “push the limits of traditional categories of art.”⁴⁵ Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground served, in Gendron’s telling, as a sort of lynch-pin for the reevaluation of punk music as avant-garde in their self-conscious presentation (another visual art convention related to the Borderline Aesthetic): the aesthetics of their performance and identity, both visually and conceptually, seemed as central to the band’s development as the music. The Borderline Aesthetic then, incorporates those aspects of an artist’s work which were traditionally considered ancillary to the work’s primary medium. To put it another way the Borderline Aesthetic is inclusive of the work’s frame or environment, the attitudes, tactics of display, the perceived or understood influences, all of the things which “brush, rub, and press” against a work of art, whether musical, visual, or more likely, some combination of the two, as we experience it.

New Wave was the term music writers initially adopted in the United States in the early 1970s to refer to new bands whose adoption of certain artistic conventions, a heightened self-consciousness and commitment to theatricality, as examples, essentially inaugurated a new style of art in which the influences of the other arts were acknowledged to be present in the finished product, even if they were not always immediately discernible. The theatrics and costuming of the New York Dolls marked an easily detectable connection to the worlds of visual art and performance, while audiences might need to rely on critics to pick up on Television front-man Tom Verlaine’s self-consciously displayed affection for French Romantic poetry. Additional examples of the Borderline Aesthetic include the ironic detachment of the Talking Heads, who

⁴⁴ Ibid, 242.

⁴⁵ Taylor, “Playing the Field,” 20.

epitomized the move of young people from art school to the music world as well as the Ramones, whose aggressive anti-virtuosity mimics the de-skilling of Conceptual art. But it was No Wave, a second wave of alternative musicians styling themselves in opposition to what preceded them, that, in Gendron's terms, fused the worlds of art and pop most fully.⁴⁶ The term No Wave came into use to refer to these new bands in 1978 at a festival produced and performed at a SoHo art Gallery called Artists Space. It is only appropriate that this should be the case, a musical form epitomizing the union of avant-garde and popular, art and music, emerging from a concert hosted in an art gallery. What has not yet been discussed but was of course the case, was the need for a new type of artistic space to serve as host to the artists and musicians forging work within this new aesthetic.

Although the consolidation of artists and avant-garde music in the area below 14th Street began a number of years earlier, a change in housing policy designed to regulate illegal occupancy and protect occupants from crooked landlords opened the doors for an expanding wave of artists to move into the now cheap and empty lofts of Downtown in the 1970s. Attracted by low rents and a burgeoning sense of community, artists began populating buildings only recently abandoned by manufacturing and industries in the Downtown exodus. In *The Artist in the City* Charles Simpson notes that at least as far as New York city was concerned, the advent of the live-work space was unique; the practice was only legalized in 1975 after the many artists and musicians who were already living in spaces leased to them for purely commercial use as studio space were successful in lobbying for a change in policy.⁴⁷ In the "restricted field" of the Downtown New York scene, ignored as it was in its nascent period by the established gallery scene, a new type of alternative art space was inaugurated. Artists Space, the Kitchen, and White

⁴⁶ Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 278.

⁴⁷ Charles R. Simpson, *Soho: The Artist in the City*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1981).

Columns were just a few Downtown art spaces which were formed, most often as cooperatives, by the same artists who would go on to perform or show work within their walls. These were the spaces that would play host to the artists who “worked in the gap between disciplines,” as Goldberg describes them, and it was cheap rent that allowed so many of these adventures to thrive, as she writes, “the infinite possibilities of space were themselves inspirational.”⁴⁸ Sonic Youth too, played their first show at an art gallery. For nine nights in 1981, White Columns served as host for Noise Festival, a group of bands making music no traditional music venue would host. White Columns founder Josh Baer and Glenn Branca would even produce the first Sonic Youth album through their own, White Columns-sponsored record label. If he is careful to note his Borderline Aesthetic does not lie in any one thing, Gendron does acknowledge it was the Mudd Club which served to institutionalize Borderline Aesthetics in its encouragement to both artists and musicians to participate in the club’s programming in equal numbers.⁴⁹ These artists were not just visiting these clubs, they were living in close proximity to them, in a neighborhood in which the sound of Mudd poured through the streets, as Richard Boch, the club’s legendary bouncer, wrote in his oral history of the Club’s scene.⁵⁰ They were of course making art in the streets as well. Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring were putting graffiti on subway platforms and sidewalks, and Jenny Holzer was posting one-liners from her “Trusim Series” on colored paper throughout the streets.⁵¹ Lynn Gumpert also notes the emphasis in the art of the period on participation, although not entirely new, artists in the period seem to place an increased emphasis on promoting the idea “that engaged audiences should participate in a work’s

⁴⁸ Goldberg, “Art After Hours,” 100.

⁴⁹ Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 301.

⁵⁰ Richard Boch, *The Mudd Club*, (Port Townsend, WA: Feral Books, 2017), 170.

⁵¹ Lynn Gumpert, “Foreword,” in *The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene, 1974-1984*, ed. Marvin Taylor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 11.

completion.”⁵² These aspects of art production denote a significant shift in the conception of what or where an artwork ends or even what counts as the artwork at all. It also initiates an era in which what accompanies an art experience is offered a consideration that rivals, and occasionally exceeds, the art itself.

While all of these developments were occurring in the worlds of art and culture, R. Murray Schafer was forging a new means of studying the landscape through sound or “acoustic environments.” “We can isolate an acoustic environment as a field of study just as we can study the characteristics of a given landscape,” he writes in his 1977 text *The Soundscape*.⁵³ The soundscape as a means of studying a space challenges the ocularcentrism which has historically dominated our understanding of architecture and landscape. Schafer’s was a necessary first step in reevaluating the role of sound in our understanding of space and society, but other scholars would go even further in privileging the role of sound in structuring experience.⁵⁴

Contemporaneously with Schafer and the Downtown scene, Jacques Attali noted in his own more political study of sound that “Nothing essential happens in the absence of noise.”⁵⁵ Sound in Attali’s understanding, is what creates and consolidates community; at one and the same time music, for example, is capable of reflecting the society from which it emerges while revealing its contradictions. The duality of reflection and critique is one we will see attributed to both art and music in Graham’s own work and writing. According to soundscape scholars, it is sound that

⁵² Ibid, 11.

⁵³ R Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and The Tuning of the World*, (Vermont: Destiny Books, 1977), 7.

⁵⁴ I use sound throughout this chapter and throughout the remainder of this essay as a means of including both music as well as other more ambient as well as intentional sound that occurs in a space. Schafer cites 1913 as the year after which it was no longer necessary/reasonable to divide the soundscape and its study into musical and nonmusical kingdoms. Schafer, *Soundscape*, 111.

⁵⁵ Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 3.

serves to locate groups in places and times. In Alain Corbin's study of the village bells of 19th century France, Corbin describes the soundscape provided by a village's bells as responsible for shaping the entirety of a community's culture of the senses.⁵⁶ Scholars have gone so far as to proclaim that the auditory environment is the "primary sensorial field through which identities" are "reconstructed and maintained."⁵⁷ Sound, they declare, is how we find our way through a space as well as the means through which we understand its emotional experience. It aids in the construction of our identity as individuals as well as our understanding of the society of which we are a part while shaping the entirety of our sensorial experience of a space.

As scholars were beginning to reimagine the social and political meaning of sound, privileging it as a means of structuring experience, the artists of the Downtown New York scene too, were looking to a more aural medium to structure their art. Whether it was as a means of experimentation or, as in the case of Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon and Lee Ranaldo, the adoption of a sound-based art as primary medium, sound was central to artistic practice in the New York City of the 1970s and 80s. If music has always served as a source of inspiration for artists working in a variety of media, the accreditation of this more popular form of rock as well as the electric revolution's dissemination of music into increasingly wider, often pervasive sound environments, ensured individual artistic practices were almost always taking place within a landscape, or should we say soundscape, heavily mediated by music. Whether they were aware of it or not, sound was framing the experience of the spaces in which artists were making and viewing art, never more-so than in the period in question when the performing of music and the viewing of art were regularly occurring in the same venues. As we will see in the next chapter, although Graham only rarely incorporated sound and music into his artwork, he consistently

⁵⁶ Corbin, 97, 158

⁵⁷ Atkinson, 24.

attempted to incorporate an acknowledgment of the work's surrounding environment into the work itself, to draw attention to what is brushing and pressing against the artwork as it is experienced.

Chapter 2

RUBBING, PRESSING, BRUSHING

In the late 1970s Dan Graham produced a series of three performances similar in scope and scale: *Performer/Audience Sequence*, *Identification Projection*, and *Performer/Audience/Mirror*.⁵⁸ Explorations of subjectivity, self-consciousness, and space, each of the performances revolved around an inquiry into where the self ends and the other begins. In *Performer/Audience/Mirror*, a piece that exemplifies the mode of inquiry Graham pursues in each of the three pieces, a performer, Graham, stands in front of a mirror facing the audience. The performance begins with the performer describing himself; in a rapid-fire, stream of consciousness-like delivery he carries throughout the performances, Graham describes his appearance, his movements, and how he feels. He describes how the position of his hands feel regularized, his body feels stiff, his position seems odd. He continues by describing what the audience can see; his pants, his green shirt, his body as it moves side to side. Next he describes what he understands to be the audience's experience of both himself as performer as well as their response to their own reflection as individuals and as a group. "There seems to be a lot of amusement," he notes, there is a lot of blinking, people seem passive, others serious, he continues. He notes the ways in which people seem to be loosening up, smiling, people are

⁵⁸ *Performer/Audience/Mirror* was originally performed at the De Appel Arts Center in Amsterdam in 1975 but the work was reprised twice over Graham's career which I will describe in a later chapter. It was also recorded and the video recording is now a part of MOMA's permanent collection.

looking away, touching themselves, changing their position, he observes. When this was complete, Graham turned to face the mirror, performing the same routine only in reverse. Ostensibly an exploration of feedback, the piece illustrates the psychological exchange which occurs between a performer and their audience as well as the relationship and differences between how an individual perceives themselves (an action which of course takes place only within the minds of the viewers) and how they are perceived by another. Graham wrote regarding the evolving audience dynamic over the course of an earlier performance of *Performer/Audience Sequence*:⁵⁹

“It seems that the people who were rigidly holding themselves apart in some way have now joined the others, it seems like the audience is more like a body of people collectively; they don’t have to reference each other, but they are not so conscious of themselves...maybe that’s because of the relaxation or unconsciousness of their individual body activities while their minds are very focused.”⁶⁰

Graham’s choice of words is key; the description is peppered with “it seems like” or “maybe.” Despite the declarative nature of Graham’s instructions for his performance and installation work, in his own performative narration and recounting of these works as they are experienced, he acknowledges nothing ever *is*, but rather only *may be*. And indeed, as others have pointed out, the group defining intentions of the performer are always futile; the addition of the mirror to *Performer/Audience Sequence* simply serves to heighten the impossibility of consensus or unified experience. The seeming discrepancy in power is negated as the performer inevitably

⁵⁹ *Performer/Audience Sequence* and *Performer/Audience/Mirror* are nearly identical in terms of directions, the only difference being the addition of the mirror in the latter performance.

⁶⁰ Unpublished transcript of second performance of *Performer/Audience Sequence* at Artists Space, New York, January 1976 printed in Chrissie Iles, “You Are the Information: Dan Graham and Performance,” In *Dan Graham: Beyond*, (Cambridge: MIT Press,) 69.

realizes the group is not the same, that there are too many private selves experiencing the work in too many separate minds, there is no “we” or “them,” only a multiplicity.⁶¹

In a 2004 interview with Pietro Valle, Graham describes what he understood to be the futile attempts at objectivity which characterized the Minimalist art he encountered in his early work at the Jon Daniels Gallery in New York City. “The general opinion about that form of art was that it was based on objective relations,” he states, in other words, the work was constituted by the relationship of the spectator to an object. “To contrast that idea,” he continued, “I decided that my productions would highlight the spectator’s subjective point of view.”⁶² If Minimal and Conceptual Art before him had made it their business to challenge or bring awareness to our experience of art, space, or the structures which undergird our ability to experience an object as art at all, if they had begun to include an object’s environmental framing, that which was neither inside nor outside of the object itself, as part of a work’s analysis, Graham’s post-minimalist practice went one step further, switching “from the material entities” which are the subjects of sense perception “to the communicative procedures which are used to perceive these kinds of material.”⁶³ Graham’s work, then, would not just be about the subject in relation to objects, but about the highly subjective internal operations of the human brain as it experiences the world around it; by challenging the taken-for-grantedness of perceptual experience, Graham’s work would seek to inject an additional level of uncertainty into the experience of art by positioning

⁶¹ Thierry De Duve, “Dan Graham and the Critique of Artistic Autonomy,” In *Dan Graham*, ed. Alex Kitnick (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 79.

⁶² Pietro Valle, “Half/Square/Half Crazy,’ Interview with Dan Graham,” in *Dan Graham Half Square Half Crazy* (Como: Charta, 2004,) 45.

⁶³ Ludger Gerdes, “Dan Graham interviewed by Ludger Gerdes,” *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art*. Ed. Alexander Alberro, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 64.

the subject as they are by nature; “always in-between.”⁶⁴ Graham’s entire body of work thematizes, through a wide variety of means, the complexity of experience: how we are shaped ideologically “through diverse forces at work in everyday life, popular culture, and urban spaces, to reveal what remains hidden if we fail to question immediate experience.”⁶⁵ In the next few pages I will emphasize some of the ways in which Graham’s work itself served as a means of opening, or essentially dissolving, the artwork’s frame; of including within art objects the multiplicity of influences which act upon viewer’s phenomenological experience. Emphasizing the plasticity of the relationship between our internal and external selves and the space which surrounds us, Graham’s work acknowledges the centrality of the subject’s interiority to the perception and even construction, of the art object. I will conclude the chapter with a few of Graham’s works which more directly acknowledge the role various media, and sensory stimuli specifically, play in shaping and altering our understanding of experience and the art object. I will also begin to describe the presence of sound in Graham’s work before the final chapter’s emphasis on sound and music as a primary component of both Graham’s, as well as his audience’s, impossibly multiple experience of art in space. In his own words, “The context [of my work] is very important. I wanted my pieces to be about place as in-formation which is present.”⁶⁶

In her landmark essay “Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” Rosalind Krauss described then contemporary post-minimalist practice such as Graham’s as interested in an expanded field in

⁶⁴ Dan Graham to Eric De Bruyn, “Dan Graham interviewed by Eric De Bruyn,” *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art*. Edited by Alexander Alberro, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999,) 114.

⁶⁵ Brian Wallis, “Dan Graham’s History Lessons,” Introduction to *Rock My Religion*, Ed. Brian Wallis (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), viii.

⁶⁶ Dan Graham quoted in Brian Hatton, “Dan Graham in Relation to Architecture,” In *Dan Graham*, Ed. Marianne Brouwder, (Richter Verlag), 317.

which the conditions under which objects are seen becomes the primary point of interest for artists. The exploration of how an object alters our experience of space, or how it creates that space, was becoming the dominant terrain of contemporary sculpture. In Graham's early writing on the Minimalist practice of Carl Andre, he states that, "Things take place in a visual field... The field is perceptual as it is specific (the literal area)."⁶⁷ As he would write some years later:

"Minimal and conceptual art of the 1960s seemed to claim autonomy from the surrounding social environment. It represented only itself, as a factual, structurally self-referring language. It deliberately suppressed both interior (illusionistic) and exterior (representational) relationships to achieve a zero degree of signification."⁶⁸

In opposition to the ways in which Andre as well as his critics described his work at the time, Graham sought to challenge the notion that the viewing subject would become object-like themselves in relation to work such as Andre's. Instead of "reading" the viewer/artist out by ascribing their relation to the object as neutral, permanent, or static, Graham argued that "both the artist, the transported material (itself still part of an ongoing environmental process), and the viewing subject are in-formation (in the process of change)."⁶⁹ Within a field or space, and in spite of any or all attempts at prescription on the part of the artist, Graham sought to re-insert a renewed awareness of the environmental, or ever-shifting relationship between even the most static art object and its environment and audience. In much the same way he writes about the relation between audience and object in space, Graham writes about the relation between audience and performer. In the same essay in which he describes Andre's work, Graham describes his experience of a performance of Bruce Nauman and Meredith Monk's "Extended

⁶⁷ Dan Graham, "Subject Matter," Reprinted in *Rock My Religion*: (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 39.

⁶⁸ Dan Graham. "Art in Relation to Architecture/Architecture in Relation to Art," Reprinted in *Dan Graham: Rock My Religion* Ed. Brian Wallis, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 231.

⁶⁹ Dan Graham, "Subject Matter," 40

Time Pieces,” at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Through description that anticipates the performative nature of Graham’s own work, he describes the way in which the audience experiences the sounds and movements of Monk and Nauman as working together alongside the audience to create a new space, one in which “no fixed boundaries and no central position of focus are available to the observer...space does not contain the performance; rather is it the performance that constitutes the space.”⁷⁰

Communal and individual experience understood as “in-formation” and enfolded in space, emerged as the underlying premise of his intervention-based work into phenomenological experience.⁷¹ In early video work, Graham created contained environments in which the bodies of performers were at once predictable and not. In *Body Press* (1972) two performers holding cameras are enclosed inside a completely mirrored cylinder. In synchronized movements they and their cameras rotate around the space in reverse directions. After a certain point the two switch cameras and turn the lens onto themselves. Confined in a small space and yet instructed to move, the performers experienced the deterministic nature of space and its effects on their bodies while understanding as well, the unpredictable yet unavoidable influence of the accompanying body. When experienced as an art object, the two rolls of film are projected simultaneously onto different walls of a room, forcing the audience themselves to navigate the space with their bodies and eyes. As Graham hoped, an audience’s identification with the cameras and performers inevitably changes as the movements and relationships between camera and performer shift throughout the course of the work. The hope was that the work’s installation would convey to

⁷⁰ Eric De Bruyn, “Topological Pathways of Post-Minimalism,” *Grey Room* 25, (Fall 2006,) 34.

⁷¹ “Graham’s aim was to remain involved with the wider world as a subject and occasion for art, but to structure that involvement in the rigorously self-reflexive terms made mandatory by the intellectual achievements of conceptual art.” Jeff Wall in “Introduction: Partially Reflective Mirror” Introduction to *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings*, Ed. Alexander Alberro, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), xv.

the audience the ways in which their own movements are, in a way, both scripted *and* improvised, given the multiplicity of potential scenarios within the gallery walls.⁷² It was one of many experiments in which, for Graham, “an invisible or repressed factor,” would become, “the subject of a new investigation in method.”⁷³ To put it another way, Graham’s true object (or subject) was almost always invisible, the important thing was that his viewers experience a multiplicity, and that they would somehow understand their own subjective experience of a work was crucial to its meaning.

From his earlier, more explicit attempts to foreground how space(s) and others affect the experience of our own body, Graham moved to more tacit, albeit grander means of forcing his audience to confront their subjectivity and the “diverse forces” which act upon spatial and perceptual experience. Graham’s first architectural model, or pavilion, was erected in 1976 at the Venice Biennale. *Public Space/Two Audiences* consisted of two rooms with separate entrances. Although both part of the same structure, the rooms were split in half by a transparent pane of glass which stretched the entire length and height of the space’s interior. Visitors had a choice when determining which side of the space to enter but the experience was much the same; if the work served as a discrete art object when seen from outside, upon its entrance, visitors encountered either themselves, in a wall-length mirror placed on the far side of the opposing room, or both themselves as well as another group of individuals returning their gaze from the other side of the transparent glass. In a nod to Walter Benjamin’s journey through the Paris arcades, Graham hoped visitors would realize through their experience with the work, their dual status as commodity and commoditizer, both subject of the others’ objectifying gaze, as well as

⁷² The sense of identification I am referring to in the previous sentences is that discussed by Christian Metz with regards to the film viewer who, since they cannot see themselves on screen, project themselves on to, or identify with, the camera and the characters it captures in its lens. (*The Imaginary Signifier*)

⁷³ Brian Hatton, “Dan Graham in Relation to Architecture,” 319.

the source of that gaze for another. By confronting his audience with their mirror image, Graham illustrates Benjamin's own encounter with his reflection alongside the objects encased in the glass windows of the arcade shops. Indeed, Graham states in general of his work with mirror and glass that he aimed to establish a situation in which "public space would function like a showcase window, except that the spectators would see themselves in place of the commodity... the pieces are always involved with the psychological aspect of seeing your own gaze and other people gazing at you."⁷⁴ We tend to lose ourselves in public spaces and situations, forgetting what we look like, that we are looking at all, ignorant of how objects and others are shaping how we *are* in these spaces, but as Graham worked to reveal over and over again, this is never the case: We are constantly being examined, constructed, and altered by the gaze and presence of others.⁷⁵ In a proposed work like *Alteration to a Suburban House*, in which the window of a home is turned into a two-way mirror, presenting the viewer with their mirror image while also allowing a view into the space inside, Graham would heighten the stakes of that tenuous divide between public and private, inside and outside, self and other. This was an undeniably political project for Graham. Graham understood the individual as "shaped ideologically through diverse forces at work in everyday life, popular culture, and urban space."⁷⁶ Although his work can suggest much more, at its heart, Graham's conceptual project was always engaged with challenging our apathy towards the "phantasmagoric" nature of life in a Capitalist society.

⁷⁴ Dan Graham to Brian Hatton in *Two-Way Mirror Power*, 145.

⁷⁵ In addition to Graham's assertion that these works described the relations between people as reflected in this glass, Graham also discussed the architecture of the corporate skyscraper with its own mirrored glass as a means of commoditizing the individual, describing his eventual use of two-way mirrored glass as a means of reversing the one-way power dynamic in which the corporate space remained private and hidden while forcing the space of the public to be one of constant display. For Graham's most extensive discussion of the use and history of glass in modernist architecture see "Art in Relation to Architecture/Architecture in Relation to Art," reprinted in *Dan Graham: Rock My Religion*.

⁷⁶ Brian Wallis, *Dan Graham's History Lessons*, viii.

Graham would play with the formal elements which composed *Public Space/Two Audiences* for the rest of his career; two-way mirrors and glass would be the medium for a still ongoing series of pavilions proposed or erected everywhere from the rooftop park at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York City (*Two Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube*, 1989) to an Austrian Castle, (“*Star of David*” *Glass Pavilion for Schloss Buchburg*, 1988-1989) to an outdoor skate park in Stuttgart, Germany (*Skateboard Pavilion*, 1989). Graham understood architecture to function as a sign-system; simply through his installation of the framework of an architectural structure, we, his audience, would have the capacity to read it. The pavilions then, following the aesthetic strategies developed by “politically conscious American artists” to deal with the co-optation of their work by the dominant culture or media, would be two things at once; they would present themselves to us through their semiotic relationship with architecture as sign (they would package themselves), while also reflexively critiquing the self-evidential nature of architecture through the language of contemporary art, a language which allowed “the work to read alternatively” both as architecture and its critique.⁷⁷ Inasmuch as these works were aimed at drawing spectator’s attention to their imbrication within a group, Graham was equally as invested in the power structures he aimed to deconstruct through their involvement in the sign-system of architecture. Whether it was the Renaissance stage or the Cinema, the primitive hut of Marc-Antoine Laugier or the ostensibly neutral surfaces of mid 20th century corporate architecture, nearly all space, Graham wrote, “provides a background having the function of inversely defining what it places in the foreground.”⁷⁸ The pavilions were interventions into the psyche as well as space, functioning as sign as well as critique, while at the same time, Graham

⁷⁷ Dan Graham, “Art in Relation to Architecture/Architecture in Relation to Art,” 229.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 225.

hoped, serving to “dissolve the city’s alienation effects” by serving as a place for restful play or retreat.⁷⁹

The power of media to structure and alter experience too, maintain a presence in Graham’s oeuvre dating from his earliest work in magazines, which often explicitly demonstrated how the interactions between various forms of media alter and construct the meaning of the other. His work native to media and his work inserting media into architecture both serve to more explicitly direct his audience towards his goal of recapturing the multiplicity of subjective experience. In a more recent interview with Eric De Bruyn regarding his interest in music, Graham describes his first attempt at dealing with music in his work as having occurred during the creation of *Homes for America*. An examination of the standardized shell housing of suburbia, *Homes for America* consisted of a series of photographs Graham took of residential homes in suburban New Jersey. Arranged as a photo-essay the work mimicked a magazine spread; 35mm photographs were arranged alongside a mirrored column of text written in a language which parodied that of think pieces and advertisements in its description of the “new American home.”⁸⁰ Asked about his discussion of serial music in his 1969 essay “Subject Matter,” Graham responds to De Bruyn by stating his first use of music was actually in the article version of *Homes for America* in which he described the rows of houses and their arrangements in terms of musical seriality, and gave the taxonomically ordered house types musical names such as sonata, imparting an idea of the aural and musical to even the driest of information-heavy art.⁸¹ Apart from the idea that the creation of a heavily visual piece of

⁷⁹ Dan Graham, “Two-Way Mirror Power,” In *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art*, Ed. Alexander Alberro (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1999), 175.

⁸⁰ Alexander Alberro, “Reductivism in Reverse,” In *Dan Graham* Ed. Alex Kitnick (MIT Press, 2011), 22.

⁸¹ Dan Graham in conversation with Eric de Bruyn, “Sound is Material,” *Grey Room* 17, Fall 2014, 109.

conceptual art was informed by an interest in music, the piece is interesting for the mutual alterations performed within the formal elements of the work itself, how “the photographs illustrate the text” as “the text imbues the photographs with meaning.”⁸² Much writing on *Homes for America* focuses on the expanded field in which visual art was playing a role, suburbia for example, or circulating forms of media such as the magazine. Alexander Alberro echoes another common argument regarding *Homes for America* and *Schema* (1966), another of Graham’s early magazine works, when he describes the works as exhaustively self-reflexive, as fusing “content and context.” *Schema*, which Graham made in the same year as *Homes for America*, consists of an arbitrary scheme in which the attributes of a certain number of writing and text-based elements on a magazine’s page, such as the weight of the paper, the number of lines, or adverbs on a page, would be tabulated and published alongside the text for which it provides a schematic. Of the piece, Alberro writes, “all composition, narrative, and interiority is negated, as is all reference to external reality.”⁸³ But as even Alberro goes on to note, the work does, in the end, serve a purpose beyond that of its attempt to close its own frame; by referencing, and thereby drawing attention to the function of the magazine itself as frame, *Schema* gestures towards the ways in which any piece of information is defined and altered by what surrounds it, while at the same time alluding to what in reality is the ever-expanding definition of the “frame” itself; since everything is encountered within, and surrounded by, something else, where does the frame of an artwork end? Isn’t the concept of the “expanded field” itself, an acknowledgment of the frame’s fluidity? Perhaps its irrelevance? In other words, can there be any aspect of the space in which an artwork is encountered which is irrelevant to

⁸² Alberro, “Reductivism in Reverse,” 22.

⁸³ Ibid, 25.

that encounter? The frame of an artwork's experience is both fluid and ever-expanding, an attempt at closure even, perhaps, beyond the artist's control.

Graham would go on to produce similar experiments in other media, performance, and sculpture. In 1975 Graham created *Yesterday/Today*, an installation and performance in which he manipulated the experience of sound and image. For the piece a video monitor was installed in a public space reflecting a present-time view of what was happening simultaneously in a neighboring room. The video was accompanied by an audio recording of the events which took place in the room the previous day. Activity in the room was relatively circumscribed, with the same activities occurring at the same time each day, so while the visual record and audible description might somewhat match, viewers would witness a temporal disconnect between the information relayed by the various media. By way of explanation, Graham described how broadcast television "subordinates the visual image to the narration imposed upon the image."⁸⁴ Unlike film's assembly of discontinuous tracks of sound and image, Graham assumed the general public understood video as consisting of visual and aural information originating in the same physical place. By disassociating one from the other and separating the two in time, *Yesterday/Today* was an attempt at revealing our assumptions about video as a documentary medium; when the two sensory channels were isolated, the intermediary role played by the imposed narrative would rise to the surface. "Historical reality depends upon the medium through which it is documented and represented," he wrote. Although in the work Graham was primarily concerned with deconstructing the operation of broadcast news, Graham's encouragement to viewers and listeners to compare their own experience of a space with what a narrative (audio) is telling them could be applied to a variety of televisual media. As Graham

⁸⁴ Dan Graham, *Notes on Yesterday/Today*, Re-printed in *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art* Ed. Alexander Alberro (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 43.

described the work, he also hoped it would challenge the typical stress on visually and silently comprehending an ostensibly visual artwork by grounding the visual work in real (and multiple) space and time.⁸⁵ What the work also served to do, however, was imply that by separating the visual from the aural record of an event, our experience of a place or situation is changed; by separating the visual from the aural Graham drew attention to the presence of the acoustic at all, acknowledging in so doing that the acoustic has the ability to change our temporal experience of the visual.

With these works Graham seems to be responding to media in a manner similar to that described by Walter Benjamin several decades earlier in his writings on the photograph and photographic caption. When Krauss expanded upon Benjamin's observation on the importance of the photographic caption in "Notes on the Index," she described its renewed centrality as a disruptor of the "autonomy of the sign" in recent art; apparently, alongside both the coming of modernity and of post-modernity, comes the need for a caption, a tacit explanation, to accompany an artwork, a text which, while necessary, also *alters* the image or readymade sculpture it accompanies.⁸⁶ Although Benjamin and Krauss were concerned primarily with visual media, others have written in a similar manner of sound which too is, if not necessary to a work, ubiquitous nonetheless, and which too, alters the visual elements it accompanies. "One perception influences the other and transforms it. We never see the same thing when we also hear; we don't hear the same thing when we see as well," Michel Chion wrote in his 1990 book *Audiovision: Sound on Screen*.⁸⁷ In a work like *Yesterday/Today*, Graham is revealing the reality of what Chion describes in film to be "synchresis," "the spontaneous and irresistible weld

⁸⁵ Ibid, 44.

⁸⁶ Rosalind Krauss. "Notes on the Index, Part I." *October*, Vol. 3 (Spring, 1977), 68-81.

⁸⁷ Michel Chion, *Audiovision: Sound on Screen*. Trans. By Claudia Gorbman, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), XXVI

produced between a particular auditory phenomenon and visual phenomenon when they occur at the same time.”⁸⁸ The impulse to connect the sounds we hear with what we see as we hear them is a naturally occurring mental phenomenon, an artist like Graham simply draws attention to its operation. Steven Connor argues it is sound that brokers this “synchresis” between visual and auditory; the auditory is what creates the environment, the space, in which the two coalesce into one experience or object. In opposition to the intentionality of looking, listening is passive, sound just happens to us, and it is this passivity which allows the visual to merge with the auditory, and, by extension, all of the senses to merge into what we typically understand as one, unified experience.⁸⁹ Sound then alters whatever it accompanies by creating the grounds for a new space in which it will combine in experience, although Connor is quick to note sound in reality maintains its independence, with the other sensory stimuli it accompanies. Since, as historians of the soundscape have demonstrated, nothing happens in the absence of sound, it follows that sound is constantly creating and recreating the spaces within which visual experience occurs. If in *Yesterday/Today* Graham set out to unsettle our normal, unquestioned experience of broadcast television, he stumbled upon what may have been the ideal way of unsettling the illusion of unified experience in total: desynchronizing the audio and visual.

Later in his career Graham would begin erecting pavilions which themselves incorporated electronic media. Starting in 1986 with *Three Linked Cubes/Interior Design Space for Showing Videotapes*, a series of small, rectangular pavilions with one side open and composed of his trademark mirrored or transparent glass, housed video monitors and speakers which allowed for different programs to be screened by different audiences in the structure’s

⁸⁸ Ibid, 62.

⁸⁹ Steven Connor, “The Modern Auditory I,” In *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the present*, Ed. Roy Porter, (London: Routledge, 1996), 211.

various bays. In keeping with his other work, Graham described the reflection of other audience members which was visible in the glass panels, allowing the viewer to view the work, while also seeing “ghosts” of audience members in other bays.⁹⁰ But what Graham did not say but was of course true was that the visual experience in this pavilion as opposed to the earlier examples referred to in this chapter, was made more confused and uncertain by the addition of the videos which competed with the pavilion and its occupants for visitor’s attention; in this pavilion visitors were not just confronted with the pavilion walls, their own image as well as that of others, but with videos from outside the gallery walls, videos which infused the space with additional aspects of visual, sonic, and cultural experience, combining them together into an experience we encounter as a unified art object.

At various points over the years the pavilions designed for viewing videos have been specifically installed with music in mind, most recently in *Design for Showing Rock Videos*, a pavilion installed at the Cleveland Museum of Art for their show entitled *Dan Graham/Rocks*, an exhibition which presented the pavilion alongside the film *Rock My Religion* in an attempt to reconstruct Graham’s involvement in music culture. Similar to the structure Graham produced for *Sensational Fix, etc.*, the pavilion in Cleveland was composed of Graham’s reflective glass and steel frames. Visitors to the space were invited to sit on the floor and use sets of wireless headphones to listen to and watch a variety of music videos, both homemade and professional. Although Graham’s comments regarding the pavilions designed for showing videos seek to align these structures with his other pavilions as a means of re-engaging with the reality of our

⁹⁰ Dan Graham, *Three Linked Cubes/Interior Design for Space for Showing Videos*, Reprinted in *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art*, Ed. (Alexander Alberro), (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 178.

intersubjectivity in space, they also do something more.⁹¹ These pavilions bring their physical environments (as well as the interior environments of their viewers) into their structure: Instead of relying on visitors to search for the ways in which the work's surroundings were effecting their experience of it, Graham explicitly illustrated the permeability of the pavilions through the incorporation of additional visual subjects and, more importantly, sound. Just as Graham described Monk and Nauman's performance at the Whitney as creating a new space, the addition of sound in Graham's pavilions too creates a new space, one in which the visual stimuli experienced in its presence are altered by an encounter with sound. If sound is always present in an experience of Graham's pavilions, by differentiating the aural and visual "tracks" of experience (sometimes multiplying them in various ways), Graham emphasizes, makes central, its presence in his work, as well as the ways in which it is altering and effecting the visual space in which it is heard. Graham's work was always designed to draw viewer's attention to the seemingly infinite multiplicity of the subjective experience which shapes and accompanies an encounter with visual art, but it is at these moments, moments in which he introduces sensory differentiation into the work itself, that the effects of the exploded frame Graham creates through his work, become most evident. The experience of artwork is always multiple, impossible to define, perpetually uncertain, there are too many variables which enter in to disrupt a sense of unified experience, as I have just begun to reveal, sound serves as a powerful tool to detail what was already true of the variability of visual experience. In the final chapter I will turn more directly to music and sound as Graham and others have understood them, to argue for their role in shaping Graham's interest in expanding the field of his work's operation.

⁹¹ The pavilions for showing videos seem to resemble most closely Graham's early idea for *Cinema*, in which he intended to erect a seemingly ordinary movie theater, only instead of a one-way screen, he would install a two-way mirror in which an audience would be confronted with their mirror reflection instead of a film broadcast.

Chapter 3

DAN GRAHAM AND SOUND

In 1983 the Bern Kunsthalle produced an exhibition of the work of Dan Graham. During the course of the exhibition Graham reprised a performance he had completed several years earlier involving video and a two-way mirror. *Musical Performance and Stage-Set Utilizing Two-Way Mirror and Time-Delay* consisted, as its name implies, of a set involving a video monitor, a musical performance, and a two-way mirror. In the 1983 iteration of the performance the audience sat on one side of a room while a trio of musicians performed on the other, each group facing the same, wall-length mirror. Behind the two-way mirror a video monitor displaying a view of the space delayed from real time by a matter of seconds was also visible. In order to see the musicians the audience was forced to utilize the mirror, where-in they would also be confronted with their own image, both that of the present as well as the very recent past. The musicians too, were required to use the mirror's image to gauge physical cues from their fellow performers, a situation which forced a simultaneous confrontation with their own image as well as the gaze of the audience across multiple temporalities. It is rather clumsy to describe but simple to experience, a way for Graham, as he had attempted in earlier works such as *Performer/Audience/Mirror*, to force a confrontation with the ways in which behavior is culturally and socially circumscribed by creating a sense of confusion regarding the inter-subjective and even temporal relationship between audience and performer: Who is watching who? And when? With whom are we meant to identify? At the Bern Kunsthalle, the musicians

were led by Glenn Branca, an avant-garde composer and guitarist who had begun his artistic career in the avant-garde theatre before turning to music in the heart of the Downtown New York scene. When Branca turned to music, forming a band called Static, his first performance followed Graham as he reprised *Performer/Audience/Mirror Piece* at Franklin Furnace in 1977. Their first real *collaboration* was that performance at the Bern Kunsthalle where, according to Branca, Graham was hoping to create a performance that would deal with the acoustics of a space. “In his mind it [the performance] somehow created an aural space,” Branca noted, “That was similar to the visual space that he was setting up.”⁹² As Bennett Simpson rightly pointed out in his own essay on Graham, in the performance “the architecture of self-conscious perception that frames so many of Graham’s works of the 1970s and early 80s was now explicitly wedded to musical performance.”⁹³ Although music ostensibly played a minor role in Graham’s work when taken as a whole, as I demonstrated in the first chapter it consumed his time as a fan. The formative decades of his artistic career coincided with the birth and institutionalization of Gendron’s Borderline Aesthetic and its union of the sonic and the visual. In chapter two I demonstrated the many ways in which Graham’s own practice was informed by the desire to include what is usually excluded from our consideration of the art object, and concluded with some of Graham’s work which more directly infuses his spaces with the multiplicity of subjects which compose and shape the world around us. In this final chapter, I will illustrate the ways in which the conceptual concerns which informed Graham’s work were mirrored in his extensive writing on the operation of punk music and I will offer two theoretical understandings of sound which might offer a means of grasping how Graham’s relationship with music might have

⁹² Glenn Branca in Conversation with Markus Muller, “Collaborations in other words not alone,” *Dan Graham*, Ed. Marianne Brouwer (Richter Verlag), 31.

⁹³ Bennett Simpson, “A Minor Threat: Dan Graham and Music,” In *Dan: Graham Beyond* Ed. Bennett Simpson and Chrissie Iles, (Los Angeles: MOCA and MIT Press), 44.

informed, and remained present in his work, before concluding with a brief return to the pavilion at *Sensational Fix, etc.*,

Graham's work with Branca occasioned several of the rare instances in which music entered his work explicitly, but from the very beginning of his time as music fan and critic, Graham was articulating with regards to music the same critical concepts he would go on to explore in his art practice, even acknowledging later in his career the influence of the structures and techniques of music, both avant-garde and popular, on his art.⁹⁴ In early writing Graham regularly applied his understanding of the aesthetic function of contemporary art to describe how music, in most cases the punk music of the bands he was frequenting in the Downtown New York scene, was operating for its listeners. "Punk responded to commercialized rock music in a manner similar to Pop art's rejection of the Abstract Expressionist cult of the heroic," he wrote in "The End of Liberalism."⁹⁵ Like Lichtenstein and Warhol, punk musicians such as Devo, who passed themselves off as a corporation themselves instead of waiting for the corporations to commoditize them, defined their work as both the art and the frame in which it is presented to the public.⁹⁶ In a deconstructionist move, "they aim[ed] to 'remake and remodel' their sources in order to create a new, synthetic, or reconstituted form, analogous to DNA or biological hybrids."⁹⁷ These bands that Graham discusses were engaged in a critique of the corporate

⁹⁴ Dan Graham to Eric De Bruyn, "Sound is Material," 113.

⁹⁵ Dan Graham, "The End of Liberalism," Reprinted in *Rock My Religion*, Ed. Brian Wallis, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 77.

⁹⁶ Graham's writing on Dean Martin and Eric De Bruyn's writing on Graham's writing, describe Martin's comedy as a Minor Literature, following Deleuze and Guattari's description of Kafka in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, to describe the same "in-betweenness," as both inhabiting and departing from a "major language" in order to achieve its dual reading. I should clarify as well the meaning of the word frame in this sentence is referring specifically to the framing of music's packaging in terms of marketing; Devo were themselves responsible for their "framing," as opposed to the marketing art of corporation.

⁹⁷ Dan Graham, "Punk as Propaganda," Reprinted in *Rock My Religion*, Ed. Brian Wallis, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 96.

system. They were composed of highly self-conscious musicians, aware of the ways in which their art would necessarily be utilized by, and interact with, societal power structures. Instead of operating as a closed circuit, as most art forms do in a capitalist democracy, Graham wrote, art created in a propagandistic vein allows the work to function in relation to the forces outside of the work as well as within it. Through music like the punk music of the Ramones or Devo, the spectator or listener is put “in contact with, and in relation to, social practices existing outside the actual art work.”⁹⁸ This is work that functions in its urgency and ephemerality. It is not neutral. Bands such as the Sex Pistols “used the media... in order to destroy the media...their ultimate goal was to expose it for what it was by forcing the media’s contradictions into the open.”⁹⁹ Just as his pavilions subvert the “one-way power dynamic” between building and viewer and function as both legible sign system *and* artwork, punk music challenges corporate control over music by taking ownership of its packaging, even its message; in this way punk musicians such as the members of Devo, attempt to create art that will function as both art object and frame.¹⁰⁰ Graham was able to utilize the philosophy of contemporary art to describe the work of these musicians because, as Gendron describes, the strategies of visual art as well as their associated visual culture, were central to these musicians’ artistic identity. In the same way that Graham’s work was operating with regards to the larger, more expansive environment in which it was encountered, punk musicians too were crafting music that was self-consciously engaged with the wider circuits in which it would circulate in an attempt to reveal those movements as well as shape their outcome.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 102.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰⁰ Dan Graham, “End of Liberalism,” 78.

In “Semio-Sex: New Wave Rock and the Feminine,” an essay which Graham initially conceived as a lecture before publishing the text in the early 1980s, Graham applies his concerns with space and intersubjectivity to the space of the rock concert. A few years prior he had created the “All-Girl Band: Identification Projection” for Christian Marclay’s Eventworks Festival, an event which included Kim Gordon in her first musical performance. In the essay he attempts to describe the difference between the on-stage bonding and communication practices of male performers and those of female musicians. In a style that mirrors his description of the audience for Nauman and Monk’s performances at the Whitney, as well as his attempts at describing the audience of his own work, Graham begins the essay by adopting a behaviorist model of description; “Women in the audience *tend*” to identify with female performers or reject identification entirely, constitutes one observation, and during a performance “female group members *may* appear to refer only to themselves,” by refusing to acknowledge the audience’s gaze, for example, another.¹⁰¹ He then switches registers to a more direct analysis of the performance styles of individual female artists such as Blondie’s Debbie Harry, Siouxsie Sioux’s Siouxsie, and Lydia Lunch of Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, describing the various ways in which the women challenge the traditional (his word) understanding of rock performance as signifier of male sexual difference by adapting the language of musical performance to fit their own needs.¹⁰² Like much of Graham’s writing, the essay is dense and “fold-like,” but his interest in the relation between band members as well as between performers and their audience is central. In a much later interview Graham emphasized the communal nature of music spaces in which a spectator cannot even pretend to be alone with oneself. In a rock venue, he stated, one is always

¹⁰¹ Dan Graham, “New Wave Rock and the Feminine,” Reprinted in *Rock My Religion*, Ed. Brian Wallis, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 116

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 121.

“aware of your relationship to other spectators and other people in a group situation.”¹⁰³ Rock concerts naturally provided the large, often self-conscious public audience “aware of other’s, as well as their own, gazes” that Graham sought to reveal in all of his work.¹⁰⁴ Rock was less interactive than *interaffective*, John Miller pointed out in his writing on Graham; its ability to “galvanize the audience’s self-consciousness as a collective body” in the space of the music venue or festival, was what Graham was seeking to achieve in one way or another, throughout much of his practice.¹⁰⁵ The music Graham often described was its own kind of intervention into the stasis of the human psyche, a way, just as Graham would do in work such as *Alterations to a Suburban Home*, to “deepen the schism between viewers’ discontinuous subjectivities and their more predictable roles.”¹⁰⁶ A way, then, of reinserting a sense of the dialectic missing from most of human experience.

The space of the rock concert was a space in which Graham spent a great deal of time.¹⁰⁷ Given his preoccupation with space, what might the sound-filled spaces of these music venues have to offer to our understanding of Graham’s work? In a description of a musical performance by La Monte Young, Graham describes sound’s effect on the experience of space:

“the music appears to come not only from inside of your own head, from your own perceptual process, but also....the sound is bouncing off the side of the walls and the

¹⁰³ Dan Graham in conversation with Brian Hatton, *Two-Way Mirror*, 148.

¹⁰⁴ Dan Graham, Notes for “Two-Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube and Video Salon: Rooftop Park for Dia Center for the Arts.” Reprinted in *Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on his Art*, Ed. Alexander Alberro, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 165.

¹⁰⁵ John Miller, “Even the Pigs are Groovin,’” Reprinted in *Dan Graham*, Ed. Alex Kitnick (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 138.

¹⁰⁶ John Miller, “Even the Pigs are Groovin’,” 138, 154.

¹⁰⁷ Glenn Branca and Kim Gordon have both acknowledged Graham’s technical ineptness but staunch commitment to recording the Punk and No Wave bands making music in the 1970s and 1980s. See Muller, “Collaborations in other words not alone,” 29.

architecture as you move around....You are actually inside the production of sound by the architecture as well as by your own perception.”¹⁰⁸

In the interview he describes sound as material, as merging with the materiality of the visual experience by which it was accompanied, architecture, art, or otherwise. The thing is, as Graham would have been well aware, “Nothing happens in the absence of noise.”¹⁰⁹ Just as Richard Boch wrote of the music of the Mudd Club pouring into the streets of the city, the urban is always and already experienced as auditory, something Steven Connor notes was brought into high relief with the advent of portable audio technologies such as the Walkman; by auditizing the urban, more contemporary forms of solo listening technology reveal how for the hearing individual, the experience of space is, and always has been, auditory.¹¹⁰ Sound is inherently leaky. In space and in places, sound “diffuses in all directions.”¹¹¹ It dissolves space, transforming and traversing it, refusing to be pinned down at the same time as it is constantly merging, in perceptual experience, with the visual nature of that by which it is surrounded. What I am driving at is that visual art is never purely visual, sound always accompanies our experience of a visual object and given Graham’s emphasis on the work’s perceptual experience and how that experience is informed by environment, a consideration of his work is incomplete without acknowledging its acoustics. Just as in Connor’s description of the Walkman, Graham’s introduction of sound into his own work at sites such as the *Sensational Fix, etc.* exhibition, serves to reveal the ways in which these pavilion spaces were always already sounded. The use

¹⁰⁸ Dan Graham Interview with Eric De Bruyn, “Sound is Material,” 112.

¹⁰⁹ Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985,) 3.

¹¹⁰ Connor, “The Modern Auditory I,” 211.

¹¹¹ Steven Connor, “Ears Have Walls: On Hearing Art,” Reprinted in *Sound* Ed. Caleb Kelly, (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2011), 129.

of headphones in pavilions such as that at *Sensational Fix, etc.*, although confining the music of Sonic Youth to a smaller space than a less individual form of audio technology, matters little to the argument I am making with regards to the impact of their inclusion: the media itself, the stereo or the video, through sheer presence alone already serve to alter the pavilions, bringing into sharper relief what was already present, the multiplicity of sensory experience in front of, or within any work of art, but has been unacknowledged given Graham's canonization as a *visual* artist.

In Roland Barthes essay 'The Third Meaning,' Barthes describes the image of a working class woman in Sergei Eisenstein's silent film *Ivan the Terrible*. He describes the obvious meaning of the woman in the film as illustrative of the film's themes of grief, revolution, and the working class, but notes there is something in his encounter with her figure that is in excess of what he sees, a feeling he grasps from the image but cannot describe, something the image is communicating that is outside of language. This obtuse meaning, as Barthes refers to it, is a signifier without a signified. Although it subverts the obvious meaning of a text, instead of subverting the story as a whole it simply structures it differently by creating a "third meaning, one which in the film cannot be described, a representation which cannot be represented."¹¹² He references at length Eisenstein's own writing on the coming of sound to the voiceless visuals of the silent film. Audio-visual montage is described as releasing the film from a meaning found only in the relation between images, and allowing for a more vertical reading of the film; for Eisenstein, the advent of audio-visual montage inaugurated an era of film-viewing in which the meaning of the film came to reside *within* the shots themselves, rather than the relation between them. In other words, the introduction of the audible allows for a more complex analysis of the

¹¹² Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning," *Image, Music, Text*, 64.

individual filmic image, an analysis which proffers an understanding of the filmic frame as neither exclusively symbolic nor informational, but also as obtuse (what Barthes' describes as the image's third meaning). In a footnote to the text, Barthes delightedly notes that in the classical understanding of the senses, the third sense is hearing. This, he notes, "is a happy coincidence, since what is here in question is indeed listening: firstly because the remarks by Eisenstein to which reference will be made are taken from a consideration of the coming of sound in film; second because listening bears within it that metaphor best suited to the 'textual.'"¹¹³ It is sound that creates an excess of meaning in the otherwise visual art of film, allowing for a reading that transcends the image's informative or symbolic aim, and seeks instead its indescribable affect; sound transforms a visual art form into something much more. Sound, the third meaning, "remains suspended between the image and its description."¹¹⁴ It is, to use Graham's own term, always *in-forma-tion*, unstable and perpetually shifting alongside its viewers and their environments.

"Isn't it wonderful if someone listens to something one is ordinarily supposed to look at?" La Monte Young supposedly once queried Tony Conrad.¹¹⁵ Young and Conrad were both members of the field of musicians credited with revealing, or rather, re-revealing the sense of musical performance as a "field" of activity. Rather than understanding music as a purely sonorous medium, these musicians followed the lead of John Cage in conceiving of music as multiple, as visual and textual, as inclusive of all of "the scaffolding that is necessary for sound."¹¹⁶ In other words, as inclusive of its environment, its expanded frame. Rather than emphasizing what different media share in common or what separates them, Dick Higgins'

¹¹³ Ibid, 53.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 61.

¹¹⁵ Simon Shaw-Miller *Visible Deeds of Music*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 226.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 209.

concept of Intermedia was intended to encompass work like that of Cage's by privileging the space between, what it is that places media in a dialectical relationship with each other such that they are understood as single and also multiple. Music for artists such as Cage and Young, was not an object but rather an "occasion for experience."¹¹⁷ In a way, Graham's work was doing the same. If Cage aimed deliberately to re-involve the visual and the textual in music, Graham pursues the same through less direct means, focusing not on the invocation of the media themselves but rather the entire field in which experience occurs; the aural and textual should and do re-emerge in Graham's work, just rarely in any direct manner. Just as the objects of Minimalism alone do not communicate their authorial intention, Graham relied on his audience themselves to do the work necessary to arrive at the meaning of their experience at his performances or within his pavilions.

In conclusion, I return to the exhibition *Sensational Fix, Etc.* Visitors to Graham's pavilion would have encountered a space similar to innumerable spaces Graham had designed over his career. They would be forced to share space within its walls, altering their own position with regards to the walls themselves as well as the other visitors inside with them. Should they place a set of headphones over their ears, their auditory experience of the space would suddenly become radically amplified, Sonic Youth's thrashing guitars or Kim Gordon's dour voice loud accompaniments to their intersubjective experience of the pavilion's interior. Perhaps, as Graham hoped, they would see their reflection in the glass walls, perhaps the album cover of the album they were listening to would enter their field of vision as their restless eyes continued to scan the visual clutter of the exhibition space. When they removed their headphones though, they would not be greeted with silence but rather the voices of others, the sounds of movement,

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 221.

perhaps the voices or music coming from other television or digital monitors positioned throughout the space, perhaps simply the ringing in the ears that often remains after loud music is listened to over headphones. All of these are sounds which accompanied the entirety of their experience within the exhibition space. It just might be only after their experience inside the pavilion walls, that this becomes apparent.

Sound is always present. It does what it does without us. It happens to us. In its pervasiveness it creates a field which allows the obvious and symbolic meaning of the visual signs around us, to be read as also in excess of what we see, an excess formulated and communicated through the sound which attaches, and yet doesn't quite, to the visual objects which accompany it. Chion's synchresis functions, after all, only in our perception; our brain may collapse the distinction between sound and vision, but sound also remains apart, reverberating and resonating off objects and throughout spaces. Sound art utilizes sound as a primary medium so Graham's work is not sound art, instead, sound for Graham is one of the many conceptual means through which his work is able to transcend its immediacy in order to be multiple. Whether his pavilions are intentionally filled with sound or not, sound is present, shifting and altering their experience.

It has become rote to describe postmodernism as the dissolution of the boundary between high and low, elite and popular, of genre and disciplinary distinctions in total. Perhaps a more profound means of acknowledging a shift in contemporary culture might be to acknowledge the dissolution of the boundaries between the visual and audible in art. To stop referring to art as *visual* at all. Graham's work has always been about revealing what is obscured in everyday experience, about revealing the fluidity of the divide between ostensible binaries such as in and out, me and you. "The point is that everything previously thought of as fixed is in fact fluid,"

Alexander Alberro wrote regarding the conceptual aim of Graham's *Homes for America*.¹¹⁸ If it is not immediately evident in any one art object, as Graham has said himself, "music is always an influence." Peppered throughout his writing on the pavilions is the word "reflective." He once described the glass as ever-changing, as "cinematic;" the two-way mirrored glass a means of "describing" the surface of the city."¹¹⁹ When filled with intentional sound then, the pavilions are reflecting perhaps more accurately the multi-sensorial nature of the city's surface; they are revealing what is often invisible, but never excluded, from the experience of the artist and the art object. In the same way that Sonic Youth attempted to frame their context through the careful construction of their visual identity, the assemblage of visual and audible media in the reflective surfaces of Graham's pavilion reflects his own environment, his "soundscape," while at the same time acknowledging the sounded nature of all visual experience, and the visual nature of all that is sounded.

¹¹⁸ Alexander Alberro, "Reductionism in Reverse," 34.

¹¹⁹ Dan Graham to Eric De Bruyn, *Two-Way Mirror Power*, 107.

FIGURES



Fig. 1 — Dan Graham, *Pavilion for Sonic Youth Etc. : Sensational Fix*, 2008, Two-way mirrored glass, steel. *Pavilion for Sonic Youth Etc. : Sensational Fix*.

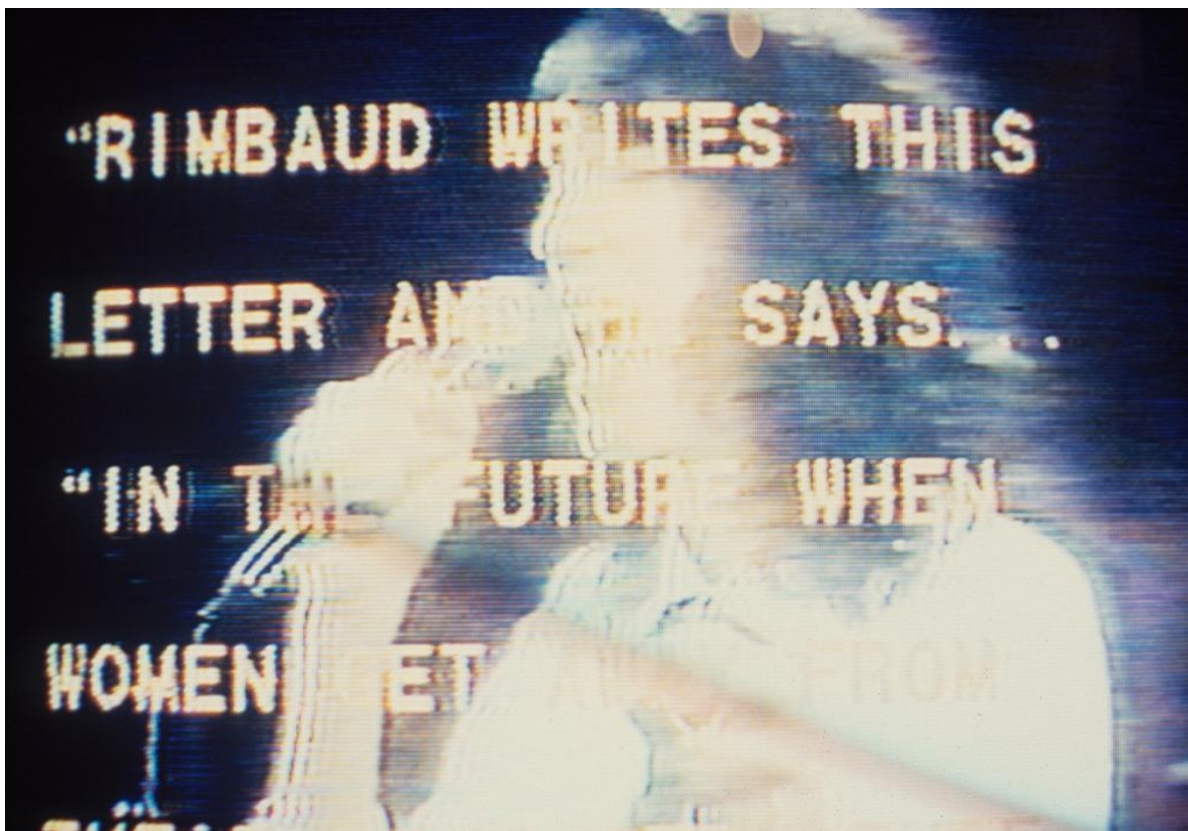


Fig. 2 — Dan Graham, American, b. 1942. Exhibition: 11/23/1985-1/19/1986, Work: 1984. Exhibition: The Art of Memory / The Loss of History: Re-viewing History: Video-Documents, *Rock My Religion*. Video. Available from Artstor www.artstor.org (accessed April 2019)



Fig. 3 — Dan Graham *Performer/Audience/Mirror*, Performance, 1981. At Stadtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich, Germany, *Exhibition: Selected Works*, partial view. Available from ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (Accessed April 2019)



Fig. 4 — Dan Graham and Glenn Branca, *Musical Performance and Stage Set Utilizing Two-Way Mirror and Time Delay*, 1983 video camera with time delay and mirrored wall, music composed by Branca and performed by Axel Gross, Margaret De Wys, and Branca; at Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, 1983.

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