

George Brecht "notebooks"

facsimile edition of George Brechts notebooks, with annotations and an interview

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"George Brecht - Notebooks I, June - September 1958"

"George Brecht - Notebooks II, October 1958 - April 1959"

"George Brecht - Notebooks III, April 1959 - August 1959"

edited by Dieter Daniels

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in collaboration with Hermann Braun

Verlag Walter König, Köln 1991

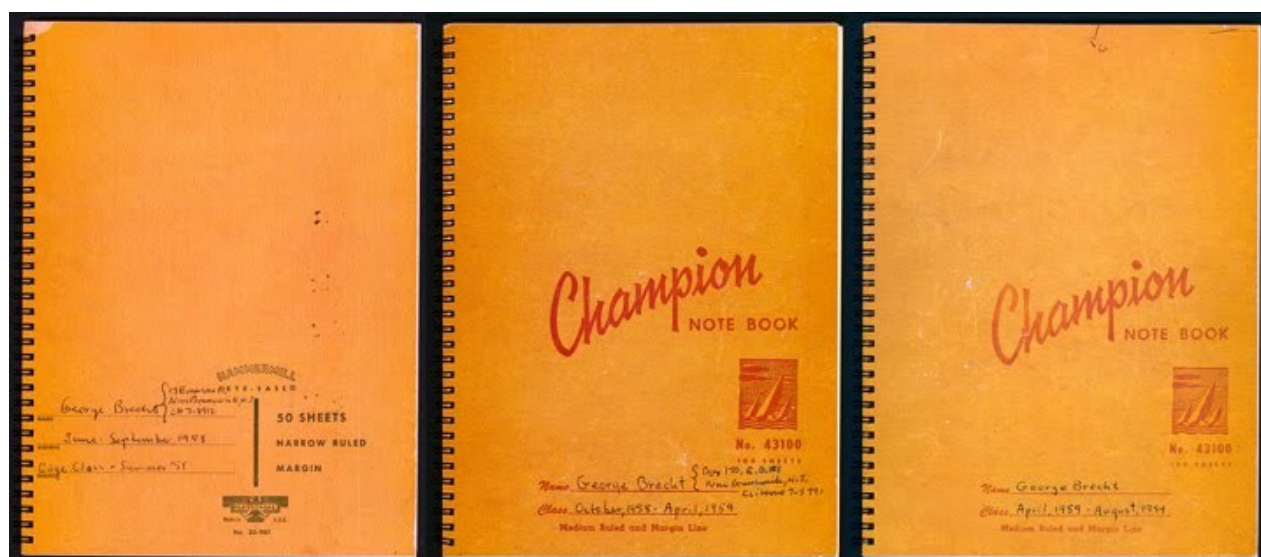
"George Brecht - Notebook IV, September 1959 - March 1960"

"George Brecht - Notebook V, March 1960 - November 1960"

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Who is George Brecht?

George Brecht is less known than his importance for the art of the last 30 years would suppose. His attitude has been formative for the philosophy of Fluxus and he was a central figure of this movement. In his works Brecht anticipates many developments of the 1960s and 1970s. But with full consciousness he has kept away from the mainstream of art, and since the 1970s withdraw almost completely from the actual art scene.

What are these notebooks about?

George Brecht has kept notebooks since the beginning of his artistic career. As a whole, the notebooks are an impressive intellectual autobiography. They allow to follow the development of his thinking in detail - but they give also a scope of the broad philosophical and theoretical background, that has been concentrated in his works.

For Brecht it has always been true, that he considers his works only as one possible realization of an idea. In the notebooks, there are many more pieces, than Brecht has ever realized. That means, Brechts works are only a small excerpt from his artistic »universe of possibilities« documented in the notebooks.

Who could be interested to read them?

Many different aspects are touched in these notes - they are a document of the seminal years of the so called intermedia art, including many rare invitations and program-folders for early events, happenings and concerts in New York. They are naturally a »must« for everybody interested in George Brecht or the research on the pre-history of Fluxus - but they might as well interest a Cage-scholar who wants to know more about Cage as a teacher, or someone concerned with the New Dance and New Music scene of these years.

How many notebooks are there?

The first three notebooks, which form the present edition, range from June 1958 until august 1959. They start with the first day of John Cage's class at the New School for Social Research, where Allan Kaprow, Jackson Mac Low, Dick Higgins and Al Hansen are among the co-students of Brecht - and they continue until the preparations for George Brecht's first important one-man-show »Toward Events« at the Reuben Gallery in 1959, which he considers as the beginning of his career as an professional artist. The next four notebooks, which will be published in autumn 1992, begin with documents and detailed plans related to this show and continue until the first nucleus of Fluxus in New York 1962. A continuation of the series is planned. (p.s. : it followed in 1997)

How have they been edited?

The notebooks are printed completely in facsimile. Comprehensive footnotes

facilitate the readers access to the broad background and give reference to source material and the realized works of Brecht. The edition has been achieved in close collaboration with George Brecht, and the footnotes include many statements by him.

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Dieter Daniels

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(this text is not part of the edition of the notebooks but was written as a separate promotion text for the publication of the first three volumes)