

# Breath, the Body, Silence & the History of Sound Art

IDS2931 12601 Jax Arts

Spring 2012, Department of English, University of North Florida

Tues. 12:15-2:55; Location: 2-Founders Hall 2219

Professor: Clark Lunberry, Ph.D.  
Office: Bldg. 8, Rm. 2645  
Office Hours: Tues. 10:30-12 & 4:30-5:30; Thurs. 1:30-3; 4:30-5

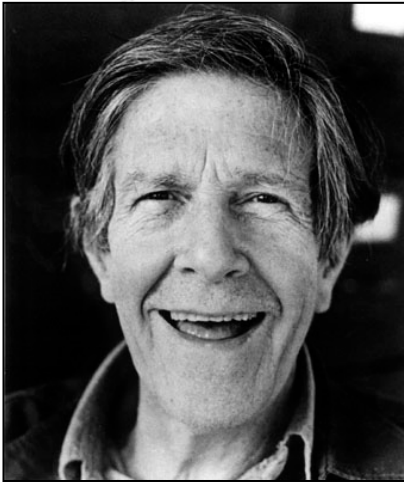
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## Course Description

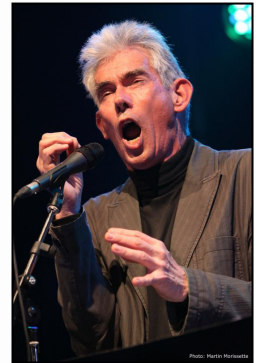
"Just sounds, sounds free of judgments about whether they are 'musical' or not, sounds free of memory and taste... sounds free of fixed relations."  
-John Cage

"We were composers who were getting rid of glue. That is: where people had felt the necessity to stick sounds together to make a continuity, we felt the opposite necessity to get rid of the glue so that sounds would be themselves."  
-John Cage

"Go on listening, for eavesdropping is the only way to write."  
-John Ashbery



A scream, a whisper, a murmur of words....[silence]...breath from an opened mouth, as sounds arise from stillness into the substance of sensation, language on its way to shaping itself into form, before dispersing again into....a scream, a whisper, a murmur of wounds....[silence]... breath from an opened mouth. With such varied sounds in mind, in this Venture Studies course, we will be looking at/listening to the rich and noisy history of sound art, an area of long-neglected study that stretches from the beginnings of the 20th century to the present. Our focus will be upon the varieties of ways in which artists and musicians have used and abused sound in order to expand the dimensions of poetry, theater and music. A major component of the course will be a sustained examination of the work of the American artist John Cage, culminating in a "John Cage Festival" which will run from March 26-31. This festival will celebrate and commemorate the enormous significance of the interdisciplinary body of work that Cage created during his life (1912-1992). As a composer, writer and visual artist, Cage brilliantly and controversially blurred all creative boundaries with his work, while influencing several generations of artists that were to follow him. The great Dutch sound artist, Jaap Blonk will be a major part of this festival and he will perform on Tuesday evening, March 27, with a "sound art workshop" for students the afternoon of Blonk's performance <<http://www.jaapblonk.com/>>.



**Required Text (Available at the UNF bookstore)** In order for us to all be "on the same page" in our discussions, please buy the *exact* editions of the books listed below, with the same ISBN listed below.

1. *Sound Art: Beyond Music, Between Categories* (Book & CD); ISBN: 0847829693
2. *Silence: Lectures and Writings*; ISBN-10: 9780819571762
3. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*; by Roselee Goldberg; ISBN-10: 0500204047

## Grade Distribution:

1. Midterm Project = 30%
3. Final Project = 40%
4. In-Class Presentations, In-Class Participation in Discussion, Quizzes, Workbook, Recitation = 30%