

## 19 FLUXUS.GRAM

*Johannes M. Hedinger and Marcus Gossolt*

Can the historical network of Fluxus, its participants and their artistic-subversive strategies of making be revived within a contemporary context, and, if so, how? How can we make this heritage—much of which has receded into the obscurity of archival vaults and dusty museum vitrines—available and accessible to a wider audience? How can we reframe preservation as a dynamic force capable of activating and bringing to light artistic practices, attitudes and worldviews that seem to have faded into the past? And how can this activation also take place outside the field of art in other life contexts?

These are questions that have accompanied us—the Swiss art collective Com&Com—since the beginning of our collaboration with the research project *Activating Fluxus* in 2022, which has focused on examining diverse methods of bringing historical Fluxus to life. Within the research team, we have introduced new perspectives into art-historical debates through artistic experiments and workshops (Figure 19.1). These have included experimental score writing, the creation of an art multiple, a visit to a Swiss folklore museum (Museum Appenzell) and a study day in a private collector’s *Wunderkammer* that explored the intimate ways in which the collector’s life interweaves with the intricate objects he has amassed, capitalizing on their inseparability. Other formats involved interventions and performances in a Berlin warehouse housing a Fluxus collection (Archivio Conz) and the exploration of social media channels—always with the aim of expanding perspectives on existing theories and methods at the intersection of art and life.

For the final part of the four-year research project *Activating Fluxus*, we developed *FLUXUS.GRAM*, a curatorial networking and activation program that integrates artistic practice, digital publication and participation, art education and mediation with artistic research. This initiative seeks to merge art and life, offering a contemporary interpretation of Fluxus while exploring the historical significance of certain intrinsic Fluxus forms (Figure 19.2).

### **A brief contextual excursus**

The project draws inspiration from the experimental, participatory ethos of Fluxus, centering on three key concepts: the Fluxkit, the instruction/score and the



*Figure 19.1* Fluxus workshop by Com&Com, May 11, 2023, HKB Bern Academy of the Arts. Photo: Aga Wielocha.

networked system of distribution. Historically, Fluxkits functioned as portable anthologies that circulated art through international networks, while instructions and scores provided open-ended frameworks for audience engagement. Both formats prioritized collaboration and active participation—principles that remain central to our project’s design.

Fluxus has been recognized as an international network of artists, performers, musicians, composers and designers, led in the 1960s and 1970s by George Maciunas. While some regard Fluxus as having ended with Maciunas’s death, others argue that it remains alive—perhaps even more so—continuing its legacy of interdisciplinary experimentation aimed at dissolving the boundaries between art and life through accessible, do-it-yourself aesthetics.

Fluxus’s participatory principles were shaped by various influences, including Dadaism and the experimental music concepts of John Cage. Though each artist pursued their own individual agenda, they contributed to a dynamic network that embraced a remarkably diverse range of mediums, from performance, film and poetry to electronic media, scores and objects. This approach fostered one of the most innovative and influential artistic phenomena of the twentieth century.

With interaction and collaboration at its core, and postal services as a means of communication, Fluxus became one of the first truly global and diverse artistic networks—influential across Europe, North America and Japan while including artists of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, social classes, gender identities and orientations.



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Figure 19.2 FLUXUS.GRAM, Instagram screengrab, November 2, 2025.

### Scores, kits and mailings

Fluxus works often took the form of an event emerging from or accompanied by a brief prompt or a series of instructions known as an “event score.” These verbal or written scores blend the methodologies of music composition and visual art. Scores can be understood as a set of guidelines, however abstract or narrative, for the audience or recipient to perform actions. Similarly, Fluxkits—the historical Fluxus boxes—were designed to prompt the viewer to perform an action and thus make Fluxus art widely accessible. With their origins in George Brecht’s *The Case* (1959), Fluxkits were conceived as a continuation of his *Yearbox* concept—an encyclopedic, anthological Fluxus *Sammelsurium*—to be distributed through Fluxus’s international networks. Encased in repurposed attaché cases, these kits featured an array of artistic materials, including games, riddles, films, functional objects such as hand-crank film viewers, tactile surprises and event scores. Maciunas envisioned Fluxkits as pedagogical tools that demonstrated the *needlessness of art*.

At times interpreted as three-dimensional scores, in Fluxkits, the affordances of the objects dictate the mode of their activation. Whereas scores or instructions were meant to be realized, Fluxkits were meant to be handled. But their intricate materiality and experiential, interactive nature stand in opposition to contemporary ethics of preservation and musealization, which attempt to keep historical work away from touch and use. By shifting the Fluxkit to the digital realm, our project, *FLUXUS.GRAM*, offers an alternative to these tendencies by generating a work that can be digitally handled, activated and “used.” It reimagines the Fluxkit as a digital box and the Fluxus score as a digital object (and a representation of a historical score) in the context of contemporary art and popular social media, with further inspirations drawn from artists such as Miranda July and curator Hans Ulrich Obrist.

The core principles of Fluxus—privileging process over product, blurring the boundaries between art and life and embracing ephemeral and affordable materials—are evident in Fluxus instructions and scores for actions, which often use very simple materials and the postal distribution network. This characteristic is shared with other historical Fluxus works conceived for circulation, capitalizing on the Fluxus network’s focus on communication and exchange. Correspondence between artists, the stamps and markings they applied, and even the postal system itself became integral components of Fluxus artistic production. Over time, this *art of correspondence* evolved into a movement of its own—*mail art*. It enabled the dissemination of unconventional ideas across vast distances, often bypassing institutional and ideological constraints. Whether through letters, postcards, photocopies or small-press magazines, mail art functioned as a form of artistic exchange that deliberately circumvented commercial markets and institutional gatekeeping. Operating largely outside conventional systems of distribution and regulation, it fostered an open, often subversive network that challenged dominant art world structures.

In light of the growing obsolescence of traditional postal communication, it is particularly striking that more and more artists have turned to social media to reimagine how their work circulates. These platforms offer new possibilities for

visibility and connection, while also raising questions about surveillance, data ownership and algorithmic control. For instance, H.R. Fricker (Hans Ruedi Fricker, 1947–2023), a renowned mail artist, used Facebook in a diaristic manner to map his daily activities, adapting the ethos of mail art to the logics of digital sharing. Unlike earlier forms such as mail art, social media leverages simultaneity and immediacy in publishing and communication. It also offers integrated forms of commentary and interaction—for example, through likes, comments under posts, reposts (featuring others), or by tagging people—thereby expanding the network and creating new connections. It functions as a digital (social) network.

### **Audience participation and activation**

As sketched earlier, audience participation was one of the hallmarks of historical Fluxus, and both Fluxkits and instructions/scores were inherently participatory, with their realization depending on the involvement of others. Fluxus events were chance performances that turned the audience from passive observers to active participants. In other words, Fluxus works were incomplete without the audience's actions, whatever form they might have taken.

The concept of activation was central to Fluxus multiples, starting with George Brecht's *The Case* (1959) and including the iconic Fluxkits assembled by Maciunas. Designed to be owned and engaged with by anyone, these objects invited recipients to respond to open-ended prompts and instructions. Their deliberately ambiguous nature ensured that each interaction yielded unpredictable outcomes. This approach extended to other Fluxus-related works, such as Yoko Ono's *Grapefruit* (1964), an artist's book composed of instructional pieces that range from acts of self-reflection to imperatives for silence, creation and destruction. Readers were prompted to perform simple yet evocative actions—watching snow-fall, making a sandwich or even burning the book itself upon completion.

By prioritizing indeterminacy and chance, Fluxus multiples and instructions functioned as catalysts for ongoing live art actions. Each activation reinforced the movement's core philosophy: dissolving boundaries between art and life through direct engagement and participation.

### **Fluxus today and tomorrow**

Fluxus has never been homogeneous, bringing together many hands and minds in the aesthetic exploration of various media. Just as historical Fluxus resisted a uniform style, its influence has extended into diverse forms, including new and social media, digital art and net art—sometimes without explicit reference to Fluxus itself. Contemporary artists continue to embrace humor, absurdity, ephemeral materials, instructions, networks and audience participation, embodying a Fluxus-like attitude.

For instance, the late German artist Christoph Schlingensiefel created several Fluxus-inspired works, including the Fluxus-oratorio *Eine Kirche der Angst vor dem Fremden in mir* (2008). Influenced by Fluxus, Schlingensiefel's Happenings

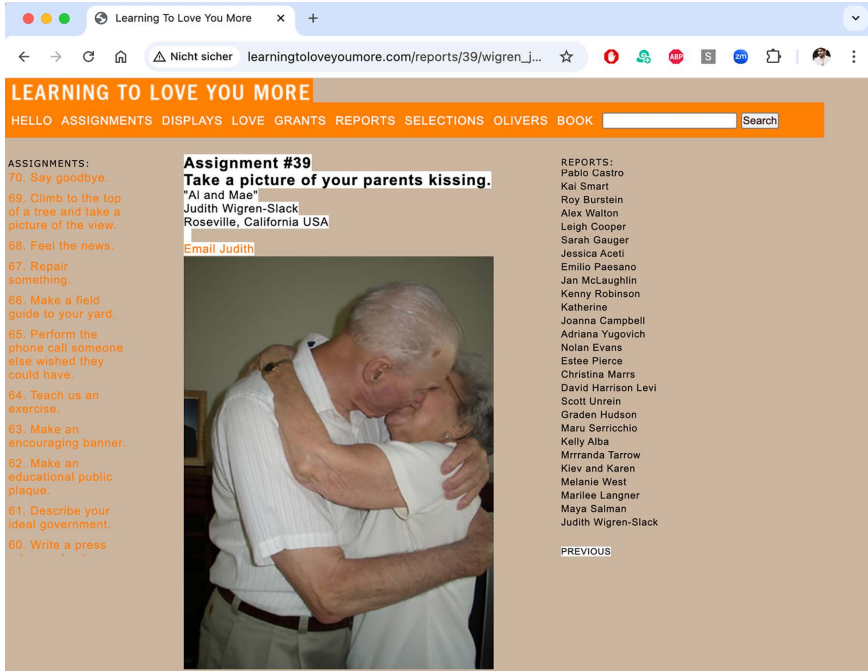


Figure 19.3 Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher, *Learning to Love You More*, 2002. <http://learningtoloveyoumore.com/>. Reactions to Assignment #39: “Take a picture of your parents kissing.” Al & Mae, by Judith Wigren-Slack. Screenshot, July 9, 2025.

sought to heighten audience awareness and offer a new experience of reality. In this oratorio, he transforms his cancer diagnosis into both the subject and catalyst for his theatrical action. The requiem also serves as a homage to Fluxus artists, who viewed life and death as integral to their artistic practice.

Transdisciplinary artists such as Miranda July have developed several participatory and instruction-based works, including *Eleven Heavy Things* (2009) and *Learning to Love You More* (2002). In *Learning to Love You More*, July and her fellow artist Harrell Fletcher created a website inviting strangers to submit their responses to a series of creative, simple prompts, such as “Take a picture of your parents kissing” (Figure 19.3). Like many other Fluxus artists, July is interested in testing the limits of authorship, creating a space for anyone—not just artists and cultural workers—to engage in radical intimacy and self-expression. Meanwhile, curator Hans Ulrich Obrist has organized *Do It*—a series of instruction-based exhibitions—since 1993, with over sixty iterations worldwide, featuring more than 300 artists, numerous publications and an online version hosted by e-flux (Figure 19.4).

The screenshot shows the 'DO IT at e-flux' website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to 'ARCHIVE history / venues (museum version)' and 'NOTES essays / interviews / fragments'. Below this is a large 'MANUAL' header with icons for instructions, video, font size, realizations, printable form, and e-mail content. The main content area is titled 'MANUAL artists / instructions / realizations' and features a search bar and a list of artists and their works, organized into columns: A - G, H - O, and P - W. The list includes names like Abramovic, Marina; Azul, Pablo; Are You Meaning Company; Baldessari, John; Bock, John; Boltanski, Christian; Birnbaum, Dara; Brossa, Joan; Barney, Matthew; Bonillas, Itaki; Bourgeois, Louise; Brigata Tognazzi; Cohen, Amy E.; Cuevas, Minerva; Chung, Jay; Carrion, Ulises; Chicks on Speed; Durham, Jimmie; Diller & Scofidio; Dean, Tacita; Diaz, Wilson; Donnelly, Trisha; Dono, Heri; Eichhorn, Maria; Elmgreen & Dragset; Ellasson, Olafur; Etchells, Tim; Erkmen, Ayse; Feldmann, Hans-Peter; Friedman, Yona; Gilbert & George; Gitlick, Liam; Hatoum, Mona; Hybert, Fabrice; Höller, Carsten; Hite, Shere; Hoeck, Richard; Hoffmann, Roald; Jonas, Joan; Kelley, Mike; Kinmont, Ben; Knowles, Alison; Kusolwong, Surasi; Kabakov, Ilya; Karamustafa, Gülsün; Kaltenbach, Steve; Kuri, Gabriel; Koo, Jeong-a; Khan, Hassan; Kim, Soo Ja; Koller, Julius; Lavier, Bertrand; Lozano, Lee; Lotringer, Sylvère; Lieshout, Erik van; McCarthy, Paul; Marclay, Christian; Messenger, Annette; Myles, Eileen; Mekas, Jonas; Macchi, Jorge; Mengbo, Feng; Mrežnik, Valérie; MacPherson, Robert; Pippin, Steven; Potrc, Marjetica; Pietrousti, Cesare; Pistoletto, Michelangelo; Paik, Nam June; Pape, Lygia; Rhoades, Jason; Rist, Pipilotti; Rosler, Martha; Roy, Xavier Le; Rehberger, Tobias; Slominski, Andreas; Smith, Michael; Spero, Nancy; Sala, Anri; Sehgal, Tino; Scanlan, Joe; Tiravanija, Rirkrit; Trockel, Rosemarie; Tzalg, Uri; Tayou, Pascale Marthine; Varela, Francisco J.; Weiner, Lawrence; Wurm, Erwin; West, Franz.

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with logos for 'e-flux' and 'fluxkit', and a small text block: 'DO IT is a project curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist. / DO IT at E-flux is produced and presented by electronic flux corp. that holds all the publishing rights, copyrights are held by the respective authors. / Architecture, Design and Development by FDTdesign, NY.'

Figure 19.4 *Do It*, founded by Hans Ulrich Obrist, 1993, online archive at e-flux since 2002, [http://projects.e-flux.com/do\\_it/homepage/do\\_it\\_home.html](http://projects.e-flux.com/do_it/homepage/do_it_home.html). Screenshot, July 9, 2025.

## Revisiting the Fluxkit

Offering an artistic response to some of the research questions raised by the project *Activating Fluxus*, *FLUXUS.GRAM* has been conceived as a contemporary digital Fluxkit—an online collection of contemporary and historical Fluxus scores, mainly brief instructions (for performances, objects and/or installations), accumulated and curated by Com&Com. It is housed on Instagram, a social media channel widely used by individuals, artists, brands and organizations to visually share their work, ideas and lives.

*FLUXUS.GRAM* utilizes Instagram's capacity as a digital exhibition space and an archive, allowing broad public engagement through visual and interactive content. As a growing collection, the Instagram channel *FLUXUS.GRAM* contained approximately three dozen artistic scores—half of them historical,

**Embrace an important friend in a full-length hug for 31 minutes**

**Contact should be frontal, body to body, full length, with legs, chests, pelvises and heads touching.**

**Speak a maximum of twenty words each to each other. Do not proceed to other activities or to „sex.“ The room should be silent, without music.**

**Alternately, videotape your embrace. There should not be a third party present videotaping; the camera should be set on a tripod with no operator.**

**After, write your sensations on a large paper or blackboard. Read them out loud.**

**Name the activity you have just engaged in, using just one word. Mail this word to me.**

*Figure 19.5* Shere Hite, *Untitled*, 1996, from *Do It (TV Version)*, produced by Museum in Progress. Designed by Com&Com.

**Look for a photo of a person who seems likeable or attractive. It's important that you can assume this person is dead. You don't need proof, your assumption is enough.**

**The photograph might be found in a variety of places: magazines, flea-markets, a family photo album. In any case, you must take great care in the search, which will continue until your intuition tells you that you've found the right photo. However, it is important that the person you choose is a complete stranger.**

**You take this photo and choose a frame according to your taste, as with any home decoration. This can be a wall frame or a standing frame, or possibly a case that you carry around.**

**Having brought this photo into your daily life, and now looking at it frequently, you should, as often as you like, think about who this person might have been, about what his or her life may have been like, about the cause of his or her death. You should find out how close you can get to this person, and at what point you would give him or her a name.**

*Figure 19.6* Hans-Peter Feldmann, *Homework*, 1996, from *Do It*. Designed by Com&Com.

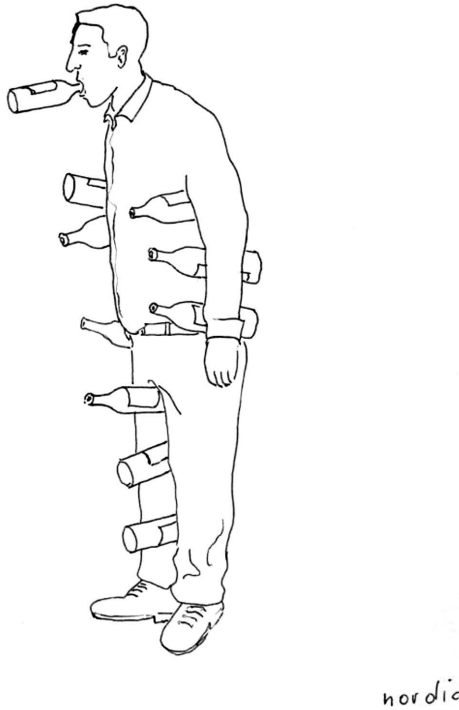


Figure 19.7 Erwin Wurm, *One Minute Sculpture (Nordic)*, 2002. Courtesy Erwin Wurm.

half contemporary—at its launch (see, for example, Figures 19.5–19.10). As this chapter goes to print, it is predicted that *FLUXUS.GRAM* will expand through an open call, commissions, individual invitations and spontaneous responses from the public.

Most of these primarily text-based scores featured on *FLUXUS.GRAM* are meant to be performed—activated—by the viewer. Those willing to engage with the scores might be invited to record the activation and/or its outcomes through photos, text, audio or video and share them via the *FLUXUS.GRAM* channel. A forum/comment section (Instagram Stories) facilitates creative dialogue and is designed to remain active beyond the runtime of the research project. It is planned—again, as this chapter goes to print—that all scores and activations generated throughout the project are to be presented in an exhibition and animated through a curated program of artistic interventions at Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich on 28 February 2026.

1 WE ARE LIVING IN A POST-IRONIC AGE. IRONIC DOUBT IS JUST DISSATISFACTION ELEVATED INTO A LIFESTYLE. 2 WE HAVE BEGUN TO HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROCESS OF DOUBTING. 3 TRUTH IS NO LONGER UNCONDITIONAL, BUT RATHER CHANGES TO FIT THE DEMANDS OF THE MOMENT. 4 THE WORLD IS MORE THAN WHAT IT IS. 5 EVERYDAY LIFE PROVIDES A PROVING GROUND FOR THE HUMAN SPIRIT. 6 EVERYTHING IS FILLED WITH MAGIC & BEAUTY. 7 BEAUTY CAN INSPIRE US TO BECOME BETTER PEOPLE. 8 BEAUTY CAN GROW INTO LOVE. 9 OUT OF LOVE, TRUTH CAN EMERGE. 10 WE ARE STANDING AT THE VERGE OF SOMETHING WONDROUS: THE REBIRTH OF OUR SELF-CREATION. POST-IRONY MEANS TOTAL IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE FREEDOM.

*«first post-ironic manifesto»  
by Com&Com (Marcus Gossolt / Johannes M. Hedinger) 2008*

[www.postirony.com](http://www.postirony.com)

Figure 19.8 Com&Com, *First Postironic Manifesto*, 2008. Courtesy Com&Com.

**BOPAPE, Dineo Seshee**  
(2020)



This exorcism should be practiced in the morning ☀️  
What you will need: a bowl or a cup that you like

If you are able to be outside go outside  
If not stand by a window where you can feel the warmth of the sun on your skin

Turn in a circle so that the sun can warm all sides of your body directly  
Hold the bowl or cup with all the hands you have  
Turn your body towards the sun  
Allow the sun's rays to pour into your bowl  
Once filled to the brim, bring the bowl to your lips  
And allow the rainbow to flow into your body,  
Continue to pour and drink until yes.  
Once at yes, allow the bowl to be filled again to overflowing w the sun's rays...  
Then lift the bowl to the top of your head and tilt the bowl... allowing the rainbow to  
flow on your body  
Take a slow deep breath in and then out and smile  
Lower the bowl to the ground in front of you,  
Bow and thank the bowl....  
And bow and once up again  
Close your eyes  
Feel the warmth of the sun on your lips  
Pour them ...and kiss the sun deeply  
Take a deep breath in through pursed lips  
Then sigh out the exhale  
Thank the sun ☀️

*Figure 19.9* Dineo Seshee Bopape, *Morning Exorcism*, 2020, from *Do It*. Screenshot, July 9, 2025.

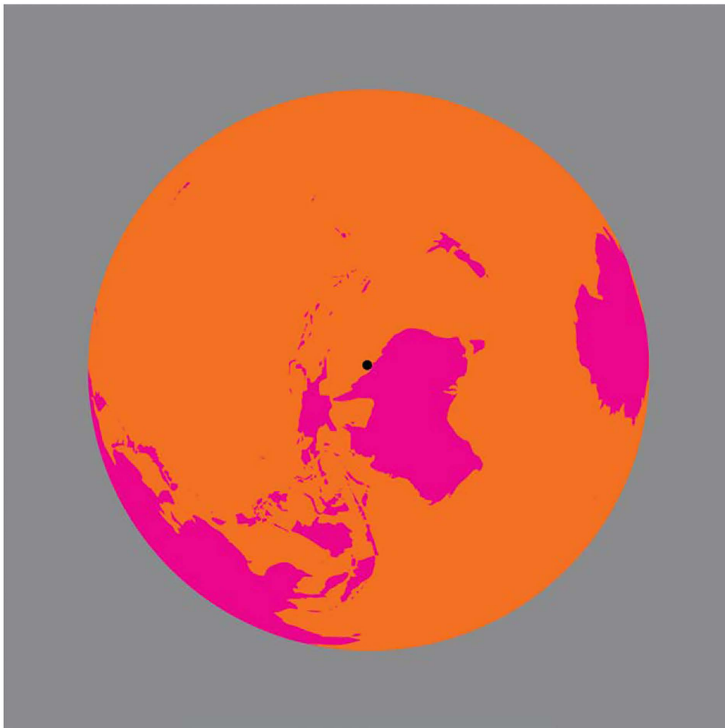
### **Objectives and impact**

At the heart of this project lies a commitment to communication and engagement, structured around several key objectives. First, *FLUXUS.GRAM* seeks to bring Fluxus to life by inviting contemporary artists and creators to contribute new scores and, by doing so, connect with each other as a network. Second, *FLUXUS.GRAM* invites broad public participation, ensuring that both historical and contemporary Fluxus works remain active and relevant. *FLUXUS.GRAM* approaches Fluxus scores as more than mere instructions—they become pedagogical tools that invite interaction and dialogue. Finally, and perhaps most relevant for the broader pursuit of the research project *Activating Fluxus*, *FLUXUS*.

**ELIASSON, Olafur**  
(2020)

To create a new world view...

- 1) Stare at the dot on the Earth about ten seconds.
- 2) Then train your focus onto a black surface.
- 3) An afterimage appears in the complementary colours of Eliasson's visual.
- 4) You have projected a new world view.



*Figure 19.10* Olafur Eliasson, *Earth Perspectives*, 2020, from *Do It*. Screenshot, July 9, 2025.

*GRAM* tests the capacity of the artistic and curatorial interpretation of historical Fluxus as a potential form of conservation, one that not only preserves but also reinvents Fluxus through lived artistic experiences across different audiences. Rather than treating Fluxus as a static historical phenomenon, this initiative—and the research project more generally—aims to sustain its legacy as a living, participatory form that continues to generate new meaning through activation and exchange, ensuring Fluxus remains relevant across generations and various social groups. In this way, the project functions as an ongoing rewriting of Fluxus itself, ensuring its continued resonance in contemporary artistic practice.

### **Join us**

Available since November 2025, *FLUXUS.GRAM* has been distributed widely through participating artists, as well as selected activators and the project-associated members within and beyond the art world, engaging diverse audiences and social groups.

We invite you to engage with *FLUXUS.GRAM* by exploring the various scores and interacting with the platform. Whether by contributing to the growing collection of scores or by activating one of the scores already present on the channel (accessible via [instagram.com/FLUXUS.GRAM](https://www.instagram.com/FLUXUS.GRAM)), you can become part of a growing network of participants and co-creators.