

reminder, it was a realization. It was something I had only dimly imagined before. So though I disagree with much of the specific content of his philosophy, I think it's important that he introduced that change of emphasis.²³

One of the points of Cage's program was to make musical compositions "the continuity of which [are] free of individual taste and memory (psychology) and also of the literature and 'traditions' of the art."²⁴ As we shall see, Eno is emphatically not interested in making music that is "free of individual taste and memory (psychology)": looming large in his artistic intentions is a desire to make music that has a frankly seductive surface and arouses the emotion of wonder, and, at least in recent years, he has consciously tried to create a unique sense of physical space for each piece.

In 1985, Rob Tannenbaum scored a remarkable journalistic coup by bringing together John Cage and Brian Eno for the first time. In the 1980s, Eno has been somewhat reluctant to give interviews, apparently bored with repeating himself, and often wondering "why people just don't research the extant material."²⁵ Tannenbaum coaxed him out with the prospect of meeting Cage – who was in London for performances of the Cunningham Dance Company which featured his music – and doing a joint interview. Among other topics, the two amicably discussed their methods of composition, their knowledge of each other's work, their status as legends, their views on modern music, and the role of the composer. Tannenbaum reports that Eno was deferential, seeming "reluctant to quiz Cage on anything other than gardening,"²⁶ a shared interest. At one point, Tannenbaum posed the dilemma: "Both of you have defended the idea that you can be a good composer whether you're trained or untrained ... So what is it that separates untrained composers who aren't worth listening to from untrained composers who are?" Cage responded with a characteristic conceptual twist:

I think the term "worth listening to" depends on who's listening. I think it would be right to say that no matter what, if it is sounds, one could listen to it. I haven't yet heard sounds that I didn't enjoy, except when they became too musical. I have trouble, I think, when music attempts to control me. I have trouble, for instance, with the *Hallelujah Chorus*. But if the sound is unintentional, then I have no problem.²⁷

Eno picked up the train of thought and said:

That's right. Some sound comes so heavily laden with intention that you can't hear it for the intentions ... But the question you asked about trained and untrained musicians ... In fact, I must say that [to Cage] you're the reason, or you're the excuse for why I became a composer. The alibi, I should say. Because I never learned to lay an instrument, and still haven't. But I had always been very fascinated by music, and when I was in art college, I was shown your book *Silence*. And in fact, I saw several concerts of your music, came to London to hear you

²³ Aikin, "Eno," 60.

²⁴ Cage, *Silence*, 59.

²⁵ Stephen Grant, "Brian Eno Against Interpretation," *Trouser Press* 9 (Aug. 1982), 28.

²⁶ Tannenbaum, "Cage and Eno," 66.

²⁷ Tannenbaum, "Cage and Eno," 69-70.