

Work note

The corner piece entitled

Vittorio Santoro

Good-bye Darkness IV –

Elephants Don't Play Chess

(a loose conversation on some aspects of BWV 1001–1006 with Kerwin Rolland)

Installation

2010



detail

has derived from some conversations I had with Kerwin Rolland (Ing. du son) in May, June and July 2010 in Paris on some aspect of J.S. Bach's "6 Sonatas & Partitas for Violin solo" completed around 1720. Trying, with my modest musical knowledge, to distillate a system of the 6 pieces and of some Bach's work at large, I chose to dedicate myself to analyze the variations, counterpoints and other strategies that were deployed in Bach's polyphony.

My intuition has led me to introduce different elements that are part of the sculptural installation: two oak plates each bearing a mirror (one is suspended, the other one is lying on the floor) and two light bulbs with a programmed light cycle, and a Venetian blind hanging from the ceiling.

Furthermore I wrote two texts. These were recorded by two actors in a studio. The time line of the recorded texts serves as raw material for the transcription in numeric codes that in turn has been transcribed in electronic impulses for the light bulbs. As mentioned, for every light bulb I wrote a different text. The text for light bulb A is a progression of the following sentence including variations in its structure:

"It is unfair to claim that an elephant has no intelligence worth of studying just because it does not play chess."

"It is unfair to claim that an elephant has no intelligence worth of studying just because it does not play chess with one of its own kind." etc.

As for the text on bulb B, I chose a selection of world news of the three days of my conversation with Kerwin Rolland in the above mentioned period.

My aim is not merely a transformation of the spoken sentence into a changing light intensity of the bulbs. Rather, I would like to propose a visible structure that reflects the progression and variation of the sentences. Thus I would like to find a parallel to the underlying structure that I perceive of some of Bach's works.

I like to think that the connection of an industrial produced object like a venetian blind, itself associate with a domestic and private realm, connecting the two facing mirrors, each of which reflecting one another and creating de facto an infinite reflection, and two pulsating light bulbs might engage the viewer on the "sensuality" of logic, dependent participation and the every day questioning about the self-effacing traces of our doing.

In an exhibition part of the title changes daily. This will be visible trough the daily addition of a caption apposed on the wall in the vicinancy of the installation.

V.S._Sept. 2010