



Lapse an audio-visual exhibition by Arnold Dreyblatt

Lux 03 1—30 September 2018 Museolaboratorio, Città Sant'Angelo, Italy





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Coordinated by Enzo De Leonibus

Texts by Arnold Dreyblatt, Marco Marzuoli

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Persistence

—Marco Marzuoli

The current state of contemporary art and music, now, in the second decade of the new century, raises a question of an almost mathematical nature, which reflects on the relationship between the passing of the time and the speed of the diffusion and finding of the information. This relationship, objectively, produces the continuous birth and disappearance of medium/ short-lived artistic phenomena, creating pointillistic and vaporizable intellectual textures of knoweledge. A vertical juxtaposition of fragmented infinitesimal segments, that appears, in its entirety, more and more impenetrable and "sauvage". Orient yourself in this jumble of volatile details (without losing the consciousness of the route) it's a very tiring operation, that requires method, obsession and awareness of oneself, aiming to re-discover and re-facing the primordial question of time.

Looking for a correct path is therefore an operation similar to that of filtering with a net a large quantity of sand, to find out if, in the multitude, are hidden bigger and solid stones. Applying this figurative action to the passing of time, it could happen, in its gestural reiteration, to run into the consideration of a rather clear and unshakeable concept, to whom, by convection, we could give the name of "persistence".

15

Persistence, in fact, is one of the key words that can help us to decode the work of Arnold Dreyblatt, considering its atavistic sense and placement in the history of experimental music and media art.

The American artist, in his transmedial research, focuses, a discreet part of his attention, on the results of the repetition of a phenomenon (physical or cognitive) in a more or less prolonged lapse of time, coming across technical and conceptual matters inherent in the physical and human phenomenology of a determinate (or shared) history.

This Dreyblatt's theoretical guideline permeate all of his fields of expression and investigation, creating a "fil rouge" that relate the studies on memory with his experimentation in music and videoart. The idea of persistence is present both in the early and contemporary production: if on the one hand we find an in-depth study of personal and collective memories, concept of archive and relationship between history and stories (all analyzed in a time segment decided a priori), on the other hand we find his experiments on the vibration of the strings, where the combination between harmony and acoustic physics determines the production of original scores, aimed at realizing minimalist and transcendent structures - where

progressive minimal alterations create an ecstatic and ancestral collision with the perception of time. Likewise, the videoartistic research of the composer, from the early work in the seventies, investigated the mutation of optical patterns (of a magnetic nature), where the repetition of textures and images is aimed at producing hallucinatory video loops. The individual perception of the audience discovers, through these artworks, the changeability of its own unconscious, which, in the presence of infinitesimal and "organic" changes, experiences perceptive spatiotemporal alterations.

With Lapse the artist creates a path that intersects, in an immersive journey, all the artistic languages used by himself during his career. Interconnecting the different disciplines in a perceptive combination of temporal units (where the time, in its infinity, is divided into autonomous modules), the exhibition recites an unique and "orchestrated" subject, result of the assembly and cyclical reiteration of each elements.

The display of documents from the Dreyblatt Archive (1973 - 2003), together with the presentation of his early video works (a batch of six analogue videos in european premiere dated 1973—1976), the recent video installation *Screen Memory* (2017), the multi-channel sound work

Turntable History (2009) and Monochordo (a multiroom installation composed of seven tuned monochord instruments), allow us to extend the artist's work in a period of more than four decades. In this time interval, Dreyblatt, with persistent punctuality and discretion, accompanies to us the entire history of minimalist music and new media art.

The Dreyblatt's exhibition for Museolaboratorio deliveres a clear and linear cross-section of almost fifty years of sonic and audiovisual experimentation, observed and/or interpreted, in first person, by the artist himself through his artistic and human presence.

experience within which sound sources and images

The exhibition, installed in eight spaces within the

overlapped and fused.

Navigations and Interferences

—Arnold Dreyblatt

My concept was inspired by the interest on the part of Marco Marzuoli and Enzo de Leonibus in both my visual and acoustic work. The discovery of original analog videotapes (thought lost) in a closet in New York City some years ago also proved auspicious. These works, created from 1974—1976 on Sony half-inch videotape reels, has been recently digitized by the Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe (ZKM), finally allowing display within an installation context.

The exhibition indicates a number of biographical and thematic correspondances through a presentation of archival materials and in the presentation of historical and newly created audio and visual installation works. The European premiere of my early video works (last shown at Anthology Film Archives in New York in 1977 and curated by Shigeko Kubota) forms a centerpiece of the exhibition

and are shown on a series of Cathode Ray Tube monitors which are placed throughout the spaces.

I have also created a new video work *Screen Memory* (2017) expressly for this exhibition which was filmed in the house of Enzo de Leonibus. The slowly morphing Moiré patterns of a window screen echo the non-optical stroboscopic color patterns of such video works as *Burst* and *Lapse* which follow in successive spaces.

Accompanying the six video monitors is found the "premier" of the multi-room sound installation *Monochordo*, (2018) in which seven tuned monochord instruments are each fitted with a timed magnetic feedback and driver system, setting the strings into vibration and resulting in a rising and falling chorus of harmonic resonance. Each instrument contained an individual amplifying system. Additionally, the electronic audio tracks of the video works *Lapse* and *Baby Essentials* mixed in space with the *Monochordo* installation.

Turntable History (2009) a 5.1 Surround Installation produced in Berlin in 2009 was installed in a circular domed space near to the archive. The source audio were originally recorded on a "Siemens Magnetom Maestro Class Magnetic Resonance Imaging System" (MRI) at a Radiology practice in Berlin.

Five glass vitrines were constructed especially for the exhibition. Here, archival documents were displayed from my personal archive referring to my origins in film and video art, my studies with The Vasulkas, La Monte Young, Pauline Oliveros and Alvin Lucier, and research into the acoustics of strings and tuning along with related ephemera from the time periods (1973 – 2003). *The magic square tuning system and how I got there*, a unique Box Edition created in 2007 for Jörg Hiller was included in the archival presentation.

A String When Sounded Makes Many Sounds at Once, an 8mm film by Edye Weissler from 1982, was screened at the last space before exiting. This film is the only moving image documentation existing of my first american music ensemble (filmed in preparation for a concert in Hartford Connecticut and in my studio at Wesleyan University in 1982).

Selections from from my writings

—Arnold Dreyblatt

From 1974—75, I was a graduate student in experimental film and video at the Center for Media Study at the State University at Buffalo, N.Y. where I studied with video artists Woody and Steina Vasulka, who were experimenting with direct translations between sound and image: electronic audio signals controlled and triggered images and visa versa. In my early video from that period I created a number of stroboscopic video works dealing with periodic optical structures. In two of these early works, Lapse and Burst, two color, two color "burst" reference signals (addressing the CRT color frequency), beat against each other, pushing the primary colors through superimposed moiré interference patterns at an high speed. This resulted in the perception of a generalized sense of color whereby any specific color becomes largely unidentifiable. In 1976 I turned a video projector in the direction of the audience, composing for a fast rotation of the blue, green and red guns in a perpetual attack. These tapes were created under the influence of Paul Sharits and Tony Conrad, with whom I had contact during this period. Sharits was teaching in the same department, and Conrad visited a number of times while I was studying in Buffalo, where he later was to become professor. Our biographies would cross paths many times. (1985)

While a student in Buffalo, Morton Feldman, an acquaintance of my family in New York, allowed me to sit in on his classes and invited me to participate in workshops with Pauline Oliveros, Joel Chadabe (1974) and John Cage (1975). Here I was gradually introduced to the prevailing tendencies in contemporary music. I was also heavily influenced by a 1975 Buffalo performance of Alvin Lucier of Still and Moving Lines of Silence in Families of Hyperbolas in a version for snare drum and sine waves. Shortly afterwards, I came upon a rare copy of Selected Writings by La Monte Young in which he explains the development of a music based on acoustic principles, establishing what was for me an essential connection between the empirical experience of the physics of sound, and the performance of acoustic music. Upon arriving back in New York from Buffalo in 1975. I apprenticed myself to La Monte and worked for him as archivist of his massive recordings collection until 1977

Having neither traditional music training or childhood indoctrination in this or that cultural scale or system I found it convenient to apply my background in experimenting with electronic sound and image to composition with

(in a project supported by the Dia Art Foundation). (1991)

acoustic instruments. I looked to a physical description of sound – a definition in acoustic terms... a description according to the laws of physics as opposed to a definition in cultural terms. (1979)

It is no accident that monochord and related members of the zither family have had an important mathematicalmystical role in the two great ancient cultural spheres, Greece and China. In both China and Greece the monochord was considered an instrument of acoustic measure - a tuning reference. In China the monochord gave birth to an entire family of instruments which then traveled to Korea, Japan and Vietnam. The heritage of Greek musical thinking was kept alive by Arabic musical theorists and was rediscovered by European monks in the middle ages. I was beginning to see that in performing on this "Ur" instrument, the monochord, one perceives a "geometry that one can hear" or perhaps an "acoustics that one can see". I then began building a number of experimental string instruments to test this hypothesis. It was in the spring of 1977 in my studio on Fulton St. in Manhattan, that I first built a one-string instrument according to instructions in a "Intervals, Scales and Temperaments", by A.M. Rowe and Hugh Boyle, New York, 1963 (1980).

Selections from the Dreyblatt Archive

Exhibited Documents and Artifacts, 1973—2003

Video / Film Works

Screen Memory, 2017 Full HD Video, Silent, 28'36"

28

Early Video Works: Burst, Uranus, Fluctuations, Carbon, Lapse, Baby Essentials, 1974—1976
Analog Video, Mono, Loop
Produced at State University at Buffalo, Center for Media Study, 1974—76
Digitized by ZKM (Zentrum für Kunst und Media), Karlsruhe, 2017.

A String When Sounded Makes Many Sounds at Once, 1982 8mm, Stereo, 9'24". Film by Edye Weissler Digitized 2009

Sound Installations

Turntable History, 2009
5.1 Sound Installation
Produced by Nepenthes Mastering Berlin
Sound Source: Siemens Magnetom Maestro Class
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Dr. Anne
Sparenberg, Radiology Practice, Berlin.
Recordings: Jörg Hiller

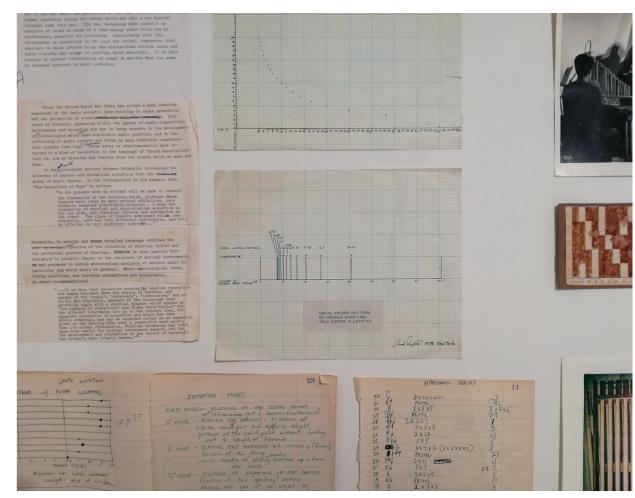
Monochordo, 2018
7 single-string instruments mounted with magnetic feedback system
Single Channel
Engineer: Filippo Del Trappeto.
Construction: Enzo De Leonibus

- A Tossup with the Steadfast Aggregate, 8 mm Film and Electronic Audio Tape, 1973
- Perception of Television Displays, Julian Hochberg and V. Brooks, WNET Lab and Columbia University, 1973
- Woody and Steina Vasulka, Department of Media Studies, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1974, (Studies 1974-1976)
- Project Proposal, New York, 1975
- Program Notes: Composition Seminar and Concert with Pauline Oliveros, Creative Associates, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1974
- Postcard from Pauline Oliveros, (in answer to question, "What should I learn?"), 1978
- Programs, Video Presentation, Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1976
- Edition X, LP, signed, La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, New York, 1975
- Composition Notebook, charts by La Monte Young, New York, 1974
- Project Proposal, Tony Conrad, New York, 1970
- Score, Music for Snare Drum, Pure Wave Oscillator and one or more Reflective Surfaces, 1973
- The magic square tuning system and how I got there, Single Box Edition, 26 pages, 2007 for Jörg Hiller / Konrad Sprenger
- Assorted Notebooks, Writings, Charts, 1976-79, New York
- Photo, *Nodal Excitation*, The Orchestra of Excited Strings, Concert, Experimental Intermedia Foundation, New York, 1982
- Dreyblatt performing on Gu-Ch'in, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1981
- Book, Intervals, Scales and Temperaments, A.M. Rowe, Hugh Boyle, 1963
- Plan for Portative Organ Keyboard in Dreyblatt Tuning, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1981
- Photo, Amplified Zither with Nodal Locators, Monochords, Fulton Street Studio, New York, 1979
- Program, first solo performance, Warren Street Performance Festival, New York, 1979
- Photo, Dreyblatt Loft during studies with Alvin Lucier, Wesleyan University, Middletown Connecticut, 1981

- Poster, first concert of The Orchestra of Excited Strings, 1980 (Silkscreen by Claire Fergusson)
- Transcript, Interview / Discussion with Phill NIblock, 1978
- Score, Orchestra of Excited Strings, 1982
- "30, 40 50" Concert Poster, Dreyblatt / Wada / Niblock, India Navigation Records / Experimental Intermedia Foundation, New York, 1983
- Concert Flyer, WBAI Music Store, The Orchestra of Excited Strings, 1983, New York City
- Concert Flyer, Mudd Club, The Orchestra of Excited Strings, 1983, New York City
- Print by artist Peter Forgasc printed in "Elet es irodalom", concert announcement, Theater Skene, Budapest, 1984
- Concert Photo, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 1985
- Research Travel with Ethnomusicologist Robert Labaree, Turkey, 1985
- Field recording in Power Station, 1987, Berlin
- Dynamic Processing System Chart for Performance Project Tour, Liege, Belgium, 1988
- Duo Geloso, Duet Performances with Paul Panhuysen, 1987—1989 (Rotterdam, Moscow)
- Performance with Ellen Fullman on Long String Instrument, Apollohuis, Eindhoven, 1986
- Program, Urbane Aboriginale Festival, Berlin, 1986
- Tuning Chart, Prepared Guitar Fingerboard, 1992, Berlin
- Concert Flyer, Conrad / Dreyblatt / O'Rourke, Tonic, New York, 1999
- Photo, Jim O'Rourke, Chicago, 1995
- Poster, Concert organized by Jim O'Rourke, Lounge Ax, Chicago, 1995
- Flyer, Concert, Bang On A Can Festival, New York, 1991
- Score, Music for 32 Strings, Octet, 2002
- Score, *Dreyblatt for Piano with Six Hands*, Wilhelm Friedrich Ernst Bach (1759—1845)



Happy Bitthday Dear Arnold; I sdentify every tone you until you don't need the Amold Dreyblatt
46 Falton St. and identify every tempor until you don't need the metronome (or stop watch) Practice tuning (vocally)
Practice tempo (clasping)
Thats the lasies. 10038

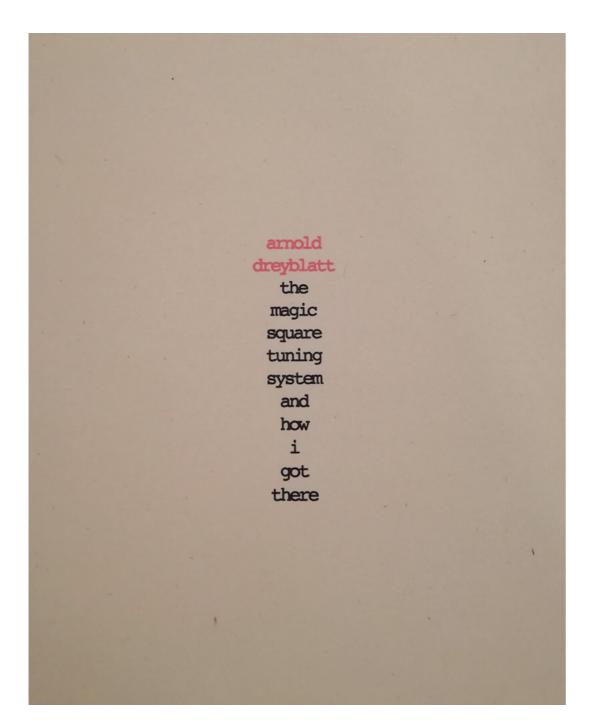


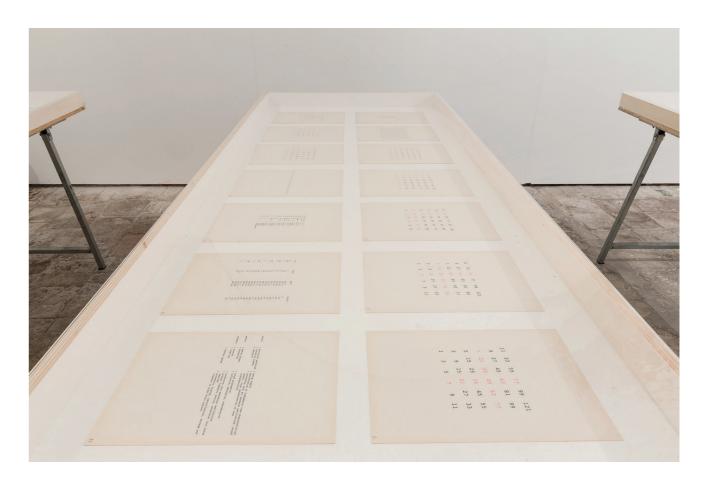
Conrad

Dreyblatt

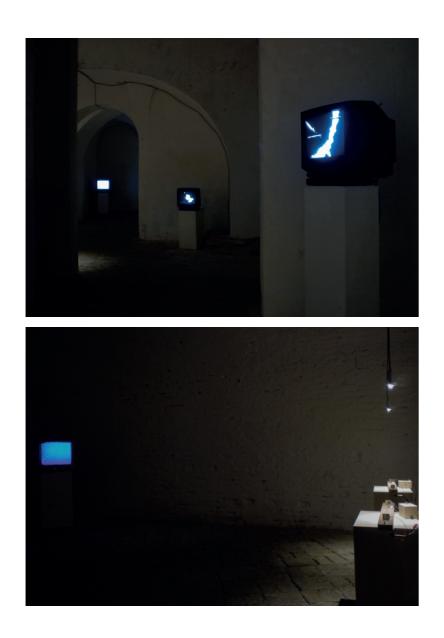
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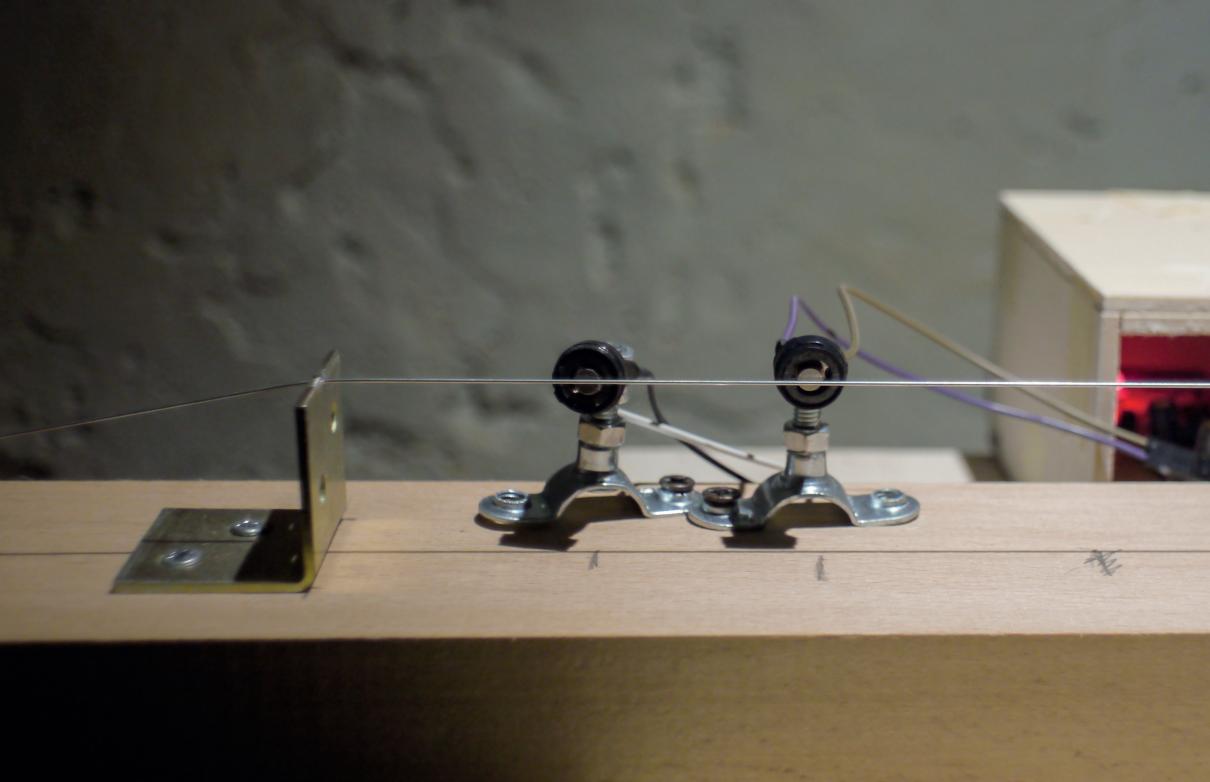


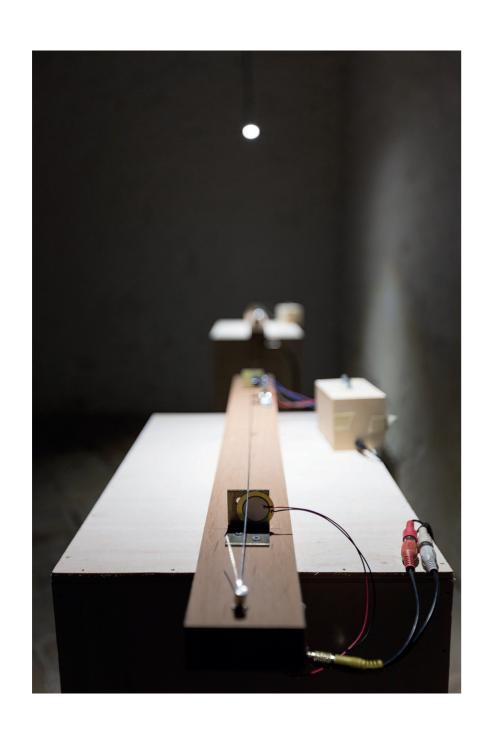






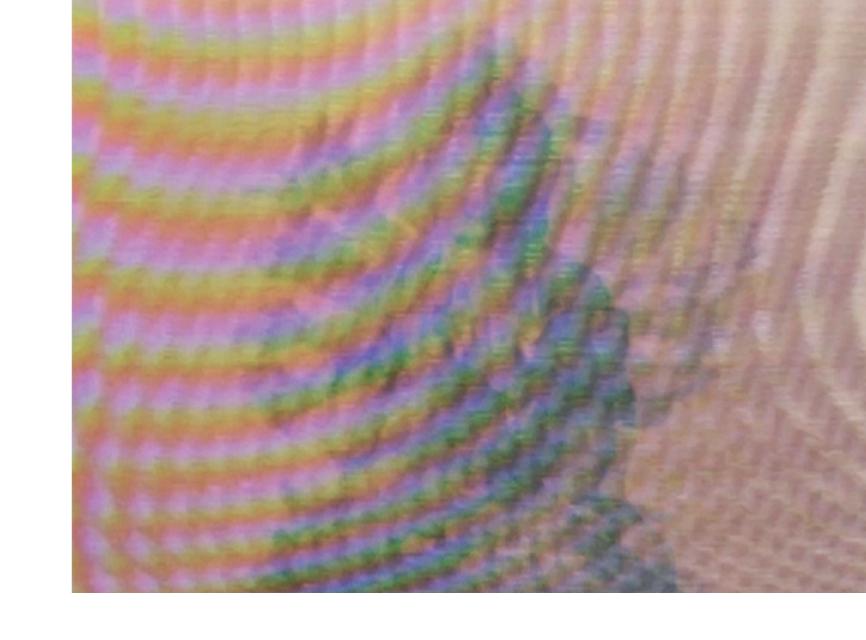








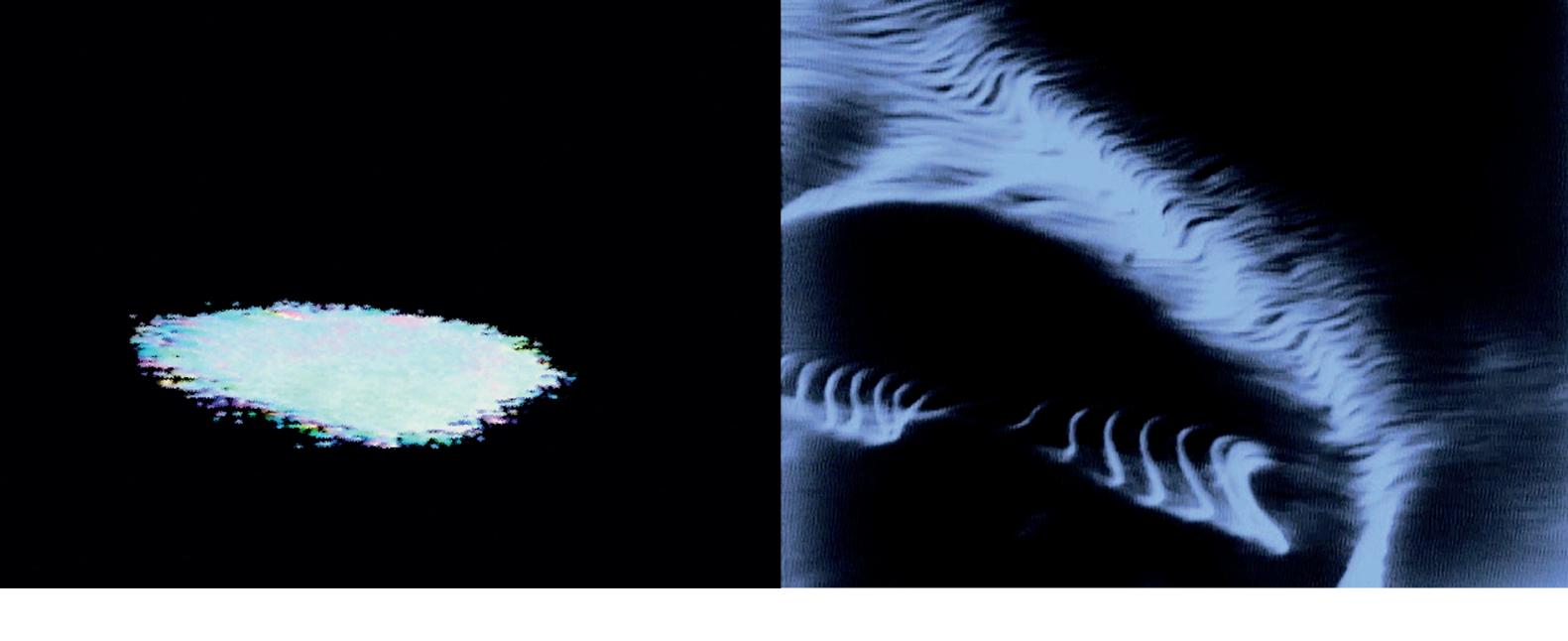




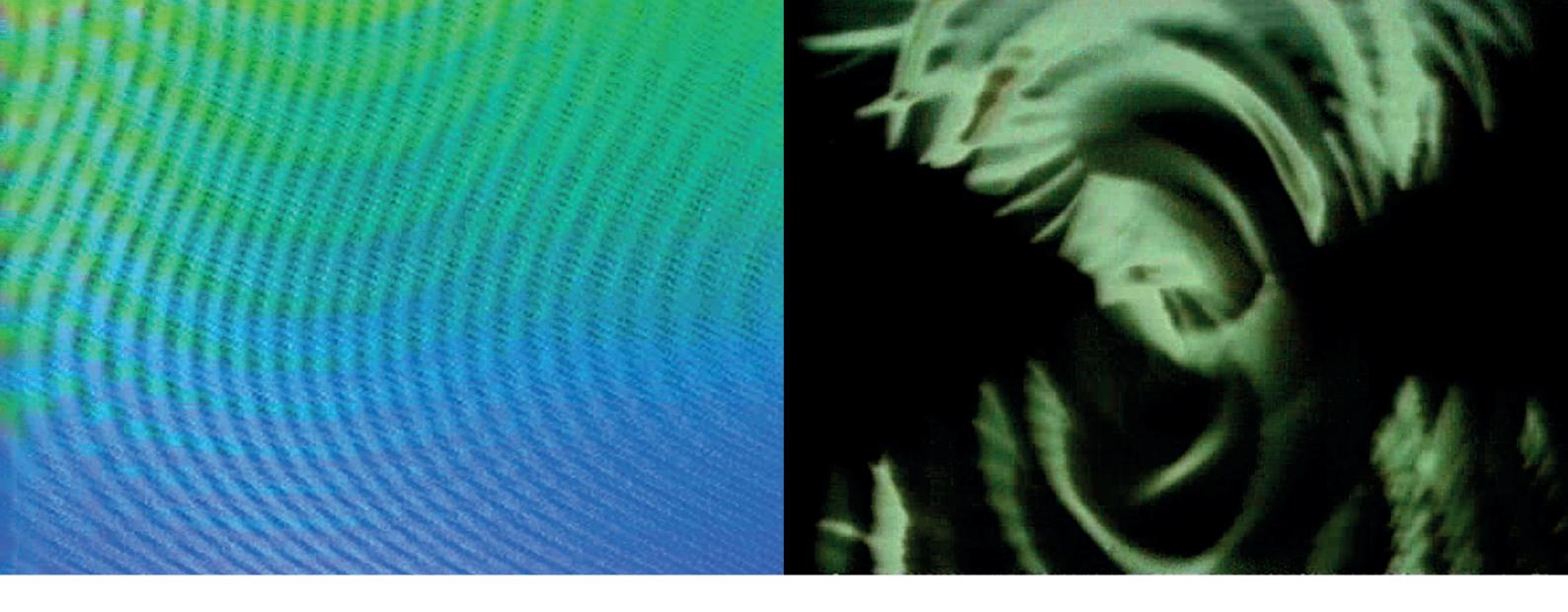
Early Video Works



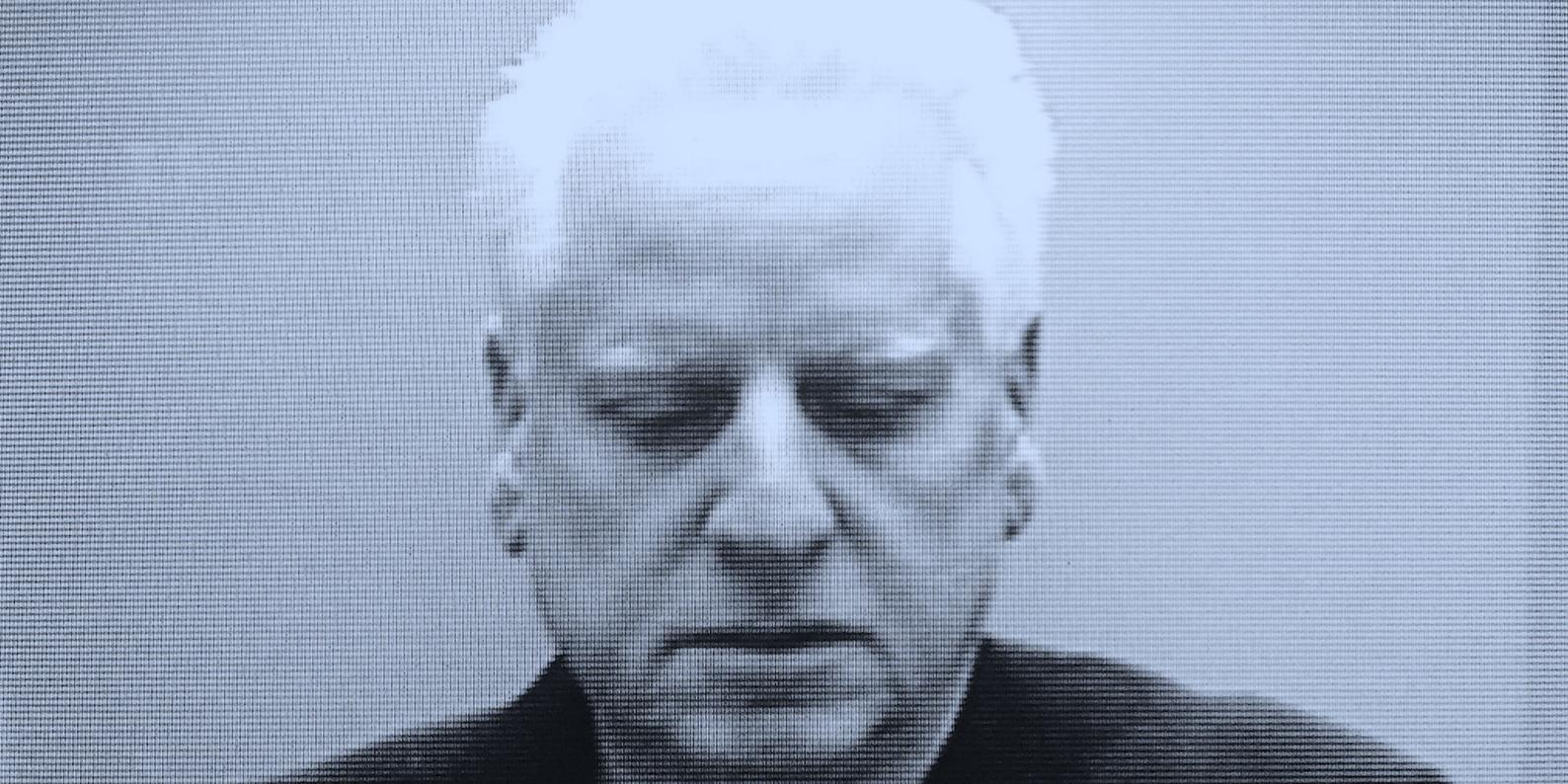
Fluctuations



Uranus



Lapse Baby Essentials



Arnold Dreyblatt (b. New York City, 1953) is an American media artist and composer. He has been based in Berlin, Germany since 1984. In 2007, Dreyblatt was elected to lifetime membership in the visual arts section at the German Academy of Art (Akademie der Künste, Berlin). He is currently Professor of Media Art at the Muthesius Academy of Art and Design (Muthesius Kunsthochschule) in Kiel, Germany. Dreyblatt studied music with Pauline Oliveros, La Monte Young, and Alvin Lucier and media art with Woody and Steina Vasulka.

As a composer, Arnold Dreyblatt has charted his own unique course in composition and music performance. He has invented a set of new and original instruments, performance techniques, and a system of tuning. Often characterized as one of the more rock-oriented of American minimalists, Dreyblatt has cultivated a strong underground base of fans for his transcendental and ecstatic music with his Orchestra of Excited Strings. His music has been performed by the Bang On A Can All-Stars in New York, Jim O'Rourke, Oren Ambarchi, Jörg Hiller, The Great Learning Orchestra in Stockholm, Pellegrini String Quartet and the Crash Ensemble Dublin. He has recorded for such labels as Tzadik. Hat Hut, Table of the Elements, Cantaloupe, Choose and Black Truffle and has performed alone and with his ensemble throughout Europe and North America.

Arnold Dreyblatt's visual artworks create complex textual and spatial visualizations for memory. These projects, which reflect on such themes as recollection and the archive, include permanent installations, digital room projections, dynamic textual objects, multilayered lenticular text panels and public art works. His artistic practice has ranged from large staged multiday performances (*The Memory Projects*, 1995-2001), involved installations (such as *From the Archives*, 1999; *The Wunderblock*, 2000; *Turntable History*, 2009) and lenticular wall works (such as *Ephemeris Epigraphica*, 2006 and *Writing Cage*, 2012) as well as interactive artistic research projects such as Performing the Black Mountain Archive (2015) at the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum for Contemporary Art.

He has exhibited and performed in international galleries, museums and public spaces and has recieved numerous commissions and awards including the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts in New York and from the Center for Arts, Science and Technology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston.

Photos Credits:

Arnold Dreyblatt

Book cover: Burst, video still

p. 51—57: Burst, Fluctuations, Uranus, Carbon, Lapse, Baby Essential, video stills

p. 60—61: Arnold Dreyblatt

Marco Marzuoli

p. 40: Carbon, Fluctuations, Burst and Burst and Monochordo, installation views

p. 41: Carbon, installation view

p. 44-45: Monochordo, particular

Fabio Perletta

p. 34: Postcard from Pauline Oliveros, 1978. vitrine closeup

p. 35: vitrine closeup. Concert Flyer: Conrad / Dreyblatt / O'Rourke, Tonic, New

York, 1999. Photo of Jim O'Rourke, Chicago, 1995

p. 36: The Magic Square Tuning System and How I Got There, Unique Box

Edition, 2007, particular

Graziano Romanelli

p. 32-33: Selections from the Dreyblatt Archive, installation view

p. 37: vitrine closeup, The Magic Square Tuning System and How I Got There,

Unique Box Edition, 2007

p. 38-39: Screen Memory, 2017, installation view

p. 42-43, 47: Monochordo, installation view

p. 46: Monochordo, particular

p. 49: A String When Sounded Makes Many Sounds At Once", 8mm, digitized,

1982, installation view

