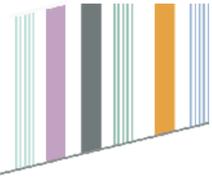


Swing for Poe
Solo Show by Edgardo Rudnitzky
Text by Manuel Wischnewski
June 3rd – July 26th 2014
Opening on Saturday May 31st 2014 at 7pm



Galerie Mario Mazzoli is delighted to present the exhibition *Swing for Poe* with new works and selected older works by the Argentine artist Edgardo Rudnitzky.

The idea of the physicality of sound and music – its natural material presence in space – is one of the central aspects in the works of Rudnitzky, who is active as a sound artist as well as composer and percussionist. Like a point of gravitation, materiality is the center that the individual works seem to strive toward. In so doing, sound is articulated not as an ostensibly immaterial substance, but with a strong and explicit reference to the material form in which it is bound. Certainly, its genesis is already tied to the material; ultimately, it only reveals itself as sensorially perceivable in the materiality of the sounding body. And yet, Rudnitzky finds an approach to the sound object which appears to go beyond this apparent relationship of necessity and to locate the connection of both elements at a much more essential point. As it were, the material configuration of the objects never only arises from the associative domain. It focuses on something more than the sound just enveloping the object, contrasting or doubling it. The auditive does not give the impression of being a self-contained entity whose physicality would merely be an add-on. The sound enters the space as a necessary physical, not embodied sound.



Rudnitzky's works articulate the idea of acoustic physicality, first and foremost, both as a seamless merging into and a feeding off of one other. Here, sound and object are not just elements of the same work that are coordinated with one other, rather, they are mutually dependent to such a degree, that it is not until the coalescing of the two elements that something meaningful is achieved. Sound manifests itself in Rudnitzky's works as a musical composition and in this form, is afforded special notice: unlike with an instrument, the composition is not applied to the sound object, but is inscribed into it as a material aspect. The two works *Border Music* (2014) and *Vanishing Music* (2014) accomplish this deep synthesis in an unmistakable way: here, reels of barbwire reels and – in the latter work – perforated paper, are inextricably incorporated into the work as actual components of the score. In a similar way, with *Swing for Poe* (2014), we can understand the magnet mechanism that keeps the work in motion as a kind of mechanical composition.

This visual-material way of thinking of music starting from the physical is translated into gestures which can perhaps best be observed in their entirety as staged language. And indeed, again and again, the music in the works of Rudnitzky seems as if it is being put onstage, where its “becoming” is visible. This staged, often even playful perspective clearly reaches beyond modes of pure exhibition. The music in the works shown here is always fatefully tied to the materiality of the body and can, after all, only exist in this connection. The previously mentioned work *Vanishing Music* refers to this moment of deep interconnection of music and material most impressively. At the very moment of sounding, the perforated paper, as the material carrier of the composition, is destroyed and emerges again, cut up in pieces on the floor. The music cannot exist here outside of the physical space of the work itself: its becoming and being is coupled to this object. Thus, the cutting up of the perforated paper almost even seems like a final, paradoxical reference to the materiality, for the possibility of destruction is, in the first place, contingent upon the existence of the material. The pile of remnant strips on the floor thus becomes a reminder of the physical fixedness of the sound that should not be overlooked.

Not merely visualizing music, but rather, forming it in the texture of the sound object, is an idea that emerges perhaps most strikingly in a work which appears to retreat strongest from the domain of physicality: *Fim de Film* (2007), a collaboration with the artist Jorge Macchi. The wall projection, on the one hand, and the video reproduction on a monitor, on the other, appear here as flat elements of a reduced physicality. The performance of the *Porto Alegre Symphony Orchestra* that is running on the monitor seems at first like a straight reproduction of music – a straightforward replay of the sound itself in two respects: by the orchestra on the one hand, and the monitor on the other. Yet, already at the level of the original orchestral performance, a subtle moment unfolds with regard to the aspect of physicality: to begin with, here, in the form of the projection of closing screen credits, the score is elevated to a visible material part of the performance. Instead of remaining unseen on the music stands of the musicians and the conductor, it materializes in this form as a kind of tangible code. The blurriness of the closing credits intensifies this effect, by lending individual words and series of words an aspect of abstract plasticity: instead of words, schematic objects now string together in always new forms and constructs. What's



more, the orchestra itself does not simply figure as musical canvas: the division of musicians into a right and left half – analogous to the form of the closing credits – shifts attention, as a direct intervention into the body/bodies of the orchestra, to that very aspect and inscribes the work with an unmistakable reminder of the graspable materiality of this moment. The supposed dissolution of the material level leads, in the end, to its underlining and, in so doing, turns into the exact opposite.

On the level of the actual exhibition, the work ultimately repeats the original process and inserts the score – in the form of the projection of closing credits – into the space again. Just as it was inscribed into the actual orchestral performance as a visible element, here, too, it appears anew in the exhibition space. In this doubling, *Fim de Film* affirms something of the strongly visual thinking of the artist, which he continues to explore in his sound objects.

Such playful treatment of the relationship between object and music breaks fresh ground at yet another place: in *Octopus*, a work from 2008, presented now for the first time in Berlin, the impression of a pure reproduction of previously composed, performed and recorded music vanishes at the moment in which the central materiality of the object is revealed through the movements of the needles. For, only in the meticulously coordinated dance of the four needles on the vinyl record does the compositional idea emerge as music. Each of the individual needles captures its own track and in this formulated, almost animated materiality, the object proves itself here to be an essential element of the music itself – as its actual body.

It is by no means a coincidence that the exhibited works might, at first, cursory sight, appear as a rather heterogeneous collection of very different, almost contrasting objects. Initially, the playful work, *Vanishing Music*, assembled from found objects, has little connection, with its wooden surfaces, with the cool, almost forbidding aesthetic of a work such as *Border Music*.

Whereas the nature of the one work calls for a direct interaction, the handmade barbwire used in the work *Border Music* sooner rejects this form of closeness. Nevertheless, these individual differences in the single works are what repeatedly draw renewed attention to the aspect of materiality and in so doing, move it to the center of the exhibition – as an element that is not to be ignored, inseparable from the music, united with it.

Manuel Wischnewski

English translation: Laurie Schwartz



CV

Edgardo Rudnitzky (b. 1956, in Buenos Aires) is a sound artist, composer and percussionist.

Rudnitzky studied composition and instrument construction with Carmelo Saitta, Gerardo Gandini and Enrique Belloq. His works have been shown internationally at venues such as the Natural History Museum in Potsdam (2013), *Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica*, Bologna (2012) and the House of World Cultures, Berlin (2009), and presented at important international exhibitions including the Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama (2008), Venice Biennale (with Jorge Macchi), Venice (2005), and the Istanbul Biennale, Istanbul (2003).

Group exhibitions include the Kunstmuseum Luzern, Luzern (2013) and the Hunter College Times Square Gallery, New York (2012). He has been awarded many prizes including the Award for Interactive Project of the Year 2004 of the Argentine Art Critics Association (2005), the Music Award of the Cremona Film Festival (Italy), and the World Theater Award of the 4th Conference on Comparative Theater of the University of Buenos Aires (1998). His compositions for film and theater have been presented at many festivals including Palais des Papes Festival d'Avignon, Theater der Welt Berlin, Theater der Welt Cologne, Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Sundance Festival, Festival de Cannes, and the Berlinale. He lives and works in Berlin.