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Anri Sala

Selected Press

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AUSTRALIA FRANCE

ANRI SALA'S LAST RESORT: 33RD KALDOR PUBLIC ART PROJECT

BY MICHAEL YOUNG

Installation view of **ANRI SALA**'s *The Last Resort*(2017) at the Observatory Hill Rotunda, Sydney, 2017. Photo by Peter Greig. Courtesy the artist and Kaldor Public Art Projects, Sydney.

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Philanthropist John Kaldor initiated his Australian public art program in 1969 with the audacious *Wrapped Coast* by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, for which the artists draped some-90,000 square meters of fabric over14.5 kilometers of Sydney's coastal cliffs. Since then, there have been 32 projects from artists as diverse as Gilbert and George (1973), Ugo Rondinone (2003) and Tino Sehgal (2014). But few of the projects have been as socially relevant, historically immersive and exquisitely realized as Anri Sala's understated installation *The Last Resort*, which premiered on October 11 in Sydney as the 33rd Kaldor Public Art Project.

At 43 years old, Sala is an internationally celebrated artist and filmmaker, attracting plaudits from around the globe. He has presented work at London's Serpentine Galleries and the Tate; New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; the 2013 Venice Biennale; as well as other festivals and museum exhibitions.

Installation view of **ANRI SALA**'s *The Last Resort*(2017) at the Observatory Hill Rotunda, Sydney, 2017. Photo by Peter Greig. Courtesy the artist and Kaldor Public Art Projects, Sydney.

The installation consists of 38 inverted snare drums that are suspended from the ceiling of Sydney's Observatory Hill Rotunda situated on the city's highest natural point, affording expansive harbor views. Each drum contains two hidden audio speakers—one to convey music, the other to emit low-frequency sound waves that vibrate the drum skins, triggering the attached drum sticks to move in arbitrary and unpredictable patterns. These suspended drums are the work's only visual components; the other major element of the work remains intangible. Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto in A Major* has been appropriated and tastefully reimagined by Sala with the aid of the Munich Chamber Orchestra. Standing beneath the drums, the music emanates in a ghostly fashion with no clear source; it is like being drenched in a dazzling, unpredictable, Aeolian moment. We have all heard Mozart's concerto before, but never like this—strange yet familiar, sparked from a simple idea, and yet complex in execution.

The concerto was Mozart's last instrumental work, which he wrote in 1791, just three years after the First Fleet from England landed at Botany Bay in what is now New South Wales. The British brought the rampage of colonization, and spread their influence across the Australasian continent with the rapidity of an uncontrollable bushfire. Writing in the catalog, Sala said that he wanted to imagine how a fictional journey through the winds, waves and currents of the high seas would affect Mozart's musical masterpiece. "My aim was to compose with corruption," Sala writes, and this he has achieved while remaining faithful to the original score.

"It is geography of sound by an orchestra of drums," Kaldor said at the unveiling of his work, but that is too simplistic a description to capture what is an intensely realized architecture of sound. Kaldor observed that the best way to enjoy *The Last Resort* is to lie flat on one's back beneath the drums. With that, he threw himself onto the deck of the rotunda. By doing so, the drums were no longer simply inverted musical instruments; they became components of what is a cohesive, synchronistic, complex but neatly packaged array of ideas. It is not what you see here that makes the work so poignant, but what you hear, what you experience.

The Last Resort is many things: an art installation, a musical arrangement, public entertainment, an allusive compendium of sound that one might stumble upon unexpectedly in a public space. This work is the sum of these parts, and carries an emotive power. The work becomes even more poignant when one realizes that Mozart passed away just months after completing this composition.

"The work has many different layers, and I like it to be challenging but not demanding. For those who have a curiosity and affinity with the work, and want to scratch beneath the surface, they will find why I made certain choices," Sala said of the shared encounter offered by *The Last Resort*. "But it is important that the listener remains under the experience of the work to appreciate it and judge it." The latest entry in Australia's Kaldor Public Art Projects is one that is pragmatic and democratic, one where a piece of music over three centuries old binds all those who wander within.

Installation view of **ANRI SALA**'s *The Last Resort* (2017) at the Observatory Hill Rotunda, Sydney, 2017. Photo by Peter Greig. Courtesy the artist and Kaldor Public Art Projects, Sydney.

Michael Young is a contributing editor of ArtAsiaPacific.

Anri Sala's The Last Resort *is on view at the Observatory Hill Rotunda, Sydney, until November 5, 2017.*

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McDonald, John. « Review: Anri Sala's The Last Resort 'an exemplary work of public art »,
Sydney Morning Herald, October 20, 2017.
http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/review-anri-salas-the-last-resort-20171016-gz28qw.html

ıe Sydney Morning Her.

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OCTOBER 20 2017 SAVE PRINT

Review: Anri Sala's The Last Resort 'an exemplary work of public art'

John McDonald

Historians can never agree about the so-called "Age of Enlightenment". The narrow definition has it beginning with the death of Louis XIV in 1715 and ending with the French Revolution in 1789. The long version begins somewhere in the late 1600s and fizzles out in 1815 with Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo.

As the dates are disputed so too are the achievements of this era in which science and philosophy made such advances. We used to think of the Enlightenment as a landmark in the history of civilisation, but increasingly it is viewed as a Eurocentric movement that inspired imperialist attitudes toward the rest of the world.

The combination of a spectacular location (the rotunda on Observatory Hill), and a brilliantly conceived installation, makes Anri Sala's The Last Resort one of the most memorable of all the Kaldor projects. Photo: Christopher Pearce

The dual nature of the Enlightenment is explored in the 33rd Kaldor Public Art Project: Anri Sala's *The Last Resort*. The combination of a spectacular location (the rotunda on Observatory Hill), and a brilliantly conceived installation, makes this one of the most memorable of all the Kaldor projects.

Sala was born in Albania in 1974 and would spend the first 11 years of his life under the declining dictatorship of Enver Hoxha, an experience that might be described as character-forming. In 1996 he left to study in Paris and within a few years had became a familiar presence on the contemporary art circuit.

Jamart, Christine. « Viva Arte Viva, Vaine Incantation », *L'art meme*, *73*, 3ème trimestre 2017, p.3-5.

L'ART MEME

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FOCUS
LE GRAND TOUR

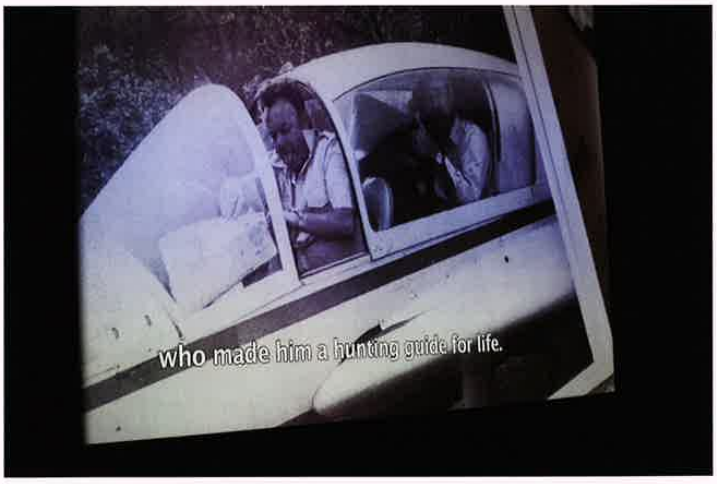
VIVA ARTE VIVA, VAINE INCANTATION

Biennale de Venise

Pauline Curnier Jardin
Grotta Profunda, Approfundita, 2011-2017
two channel HD video installation, color, sound and mixed media installation dimensions variable
57th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, *Viva Arte Viva*
Photo : Andrea Avezzù
Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia

Première commissaire française à se saisir de la Biennale de Venise depuis Jean Clair en 1995, Christine Macel, conservateur en chef au Centre Pompidou, connaît bien la doyenne des biennales pour avoir assuré le commissariat du Pavillon belge en 2007 (investi par Eric Duyckaerts) et du Pavillon français en 2013 (confié à Anri Sala accueilli exceptionnellement cette année-là en Pavillon allemand). Et pourtant, *Viva Arte Viva*, son exposition générale aux accents revendiqués de mantra, articulée en 9 "transpavillons" comme autant de "chapitres" d'un livre ouvert au sein desquels 120 artistes de toutes origines et générations s'expriment (dont 103 pour la première fois à Venise), apparaît, malgré de louables intentions et quelques belles (re)découvertes, en porte-à-faux avec son contexte de réception.

Marie Voignier
Les Immobiles, 2013
HD video, color, sound, 14'37"
57th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, *Viva Arte Viva*
Photo: Italo Rondinella
Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia



Jamart, Christine. « Viva Arte Viva, Vaine Incantation », *L'art meme*, *73*, 3ème trimestre 2017, p.3-5.

L'ART MEME

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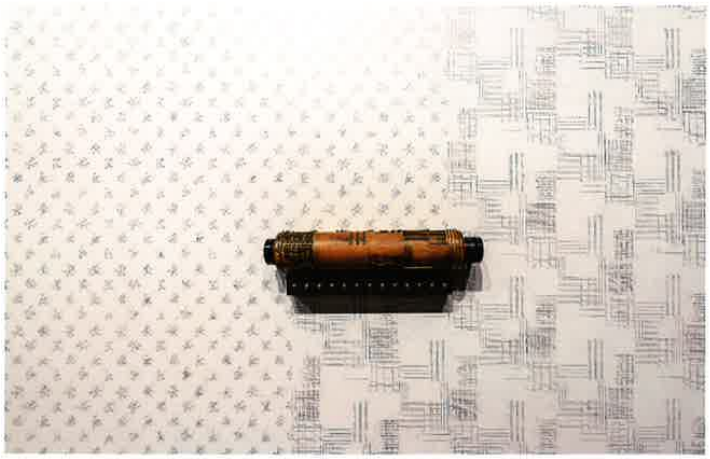

Anri Sala
All of a tremble (Encounter I), 2016
modified vintage wallpaperprinting roller, steel comb, pencil drawing on wallpaper, electric motor and customized motion control software
57th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, *Viva Arte Viva*
Photo: Andrea Avezzù
Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia

La guérison symbolique

Ce jugement critique qui implique la question, combien cruciale, d'où et à qui l'on parle est loin de ne s'appliquer qu'à cette seule édition de la biennale. Nous avions déjà souligné à quel point pouvait irriter en 2015 la lecture publique et quotidienne du *Kapital* de Marx par Isaac Julien dans *Tous les futurs du monde* d'Okwui Enwezor, au sein de ce cocon mondain qu'est la Biennale de Venise, cordon sanitaire qui en neutralise la charge, fût-elle la plus virulente, alors même que son exposé n'est rendu possible que grâce à l'appui du marché dont la logique ultra libérale participe largement au creusement des inégalités. Mais là où la Biennale d'Enwezor, du moins en plusieurs de ses séquençages, parvenait à formaliser un propos politique et, au-travers de ses meilleures de œuvres, une "politique des formes", une "capacité de la forme à parler, à des niveaux multiples et complexes, de ce que l'art produit ou est en mesure de produire"[1] celle de Macel, outre une ligne curatoriale qui souvent se perd, pèche, à de (belles) exceptions près, par un déficit formel et conceptuel qui s'exprime soit dans des pièces dont la forme peine à soutenir le propos, soit dans des installations souvent démonstratives et par trop bavardes. Sorte de "voyage initiatique" qui suit, à l'Arsenal principalement, une progression (peu palpable) "de l'introversion vers l'ouverture", selon les propres termes de la curatrice, *Viva Arte Viva* entend ainsi remettre l'artiste (et son œuvre) au centre de l'expérience esthétique dans un désir (louable) de partage avec le public des grands thèmes qui fondent notre humanité et des principales préoccupations (dont l'écologie) qui occupent notre communauté de terriens. Si le choix de ces entrées en matière entend reconfigurer quelque chose d'un monde commun, c'est le plus souvent à une image hors-champ des réalités et enjeux de notre contemporain, portée par "l'optimisme de la volonté" prôné par Christine Macel[2] qu'il nous renvoie. Sorte de prescription valant remède aux maux actuels de l'humanité, cette mise en œuvre d'énergies salvatrices ou encore cette conception d'une pratique de l'art comme "guérison symbolique"[3] irriguent fortement *Arte Viva Arte* qui se décline en net contre-point du *All the World's Futures* d'Okwui Enwezor hanté par les soubresauts d'un monde post et néo-colonial.

VIVA ARTE VIVA

SOUS COMMISSARIAT
DE CHRISTINE MACEL
PAVILLON CENTRAL DES GIARDINI/
ARSENAL/JARDIN DE LA VIERGE
www.labiennale.org/en/art/exhibition/macel/
JUSQU'AU 26.11.17

Le chamane et le migrant

Ici, pas d'artistes d'Afrique noire hormis le Malien Abdoulaye Konaté mais une prépondérance d'artistes d'Asie, Amérique latine et du Moyen-Orient, zones familières à la curatrice, et d'artistes (féministes pour la plupart) des années 60 et 70 dont les œuvres scandent un déroulé en 9 stations respectivement dénommées pavillon "des Artistes et des Livres", "des Joies et des Peurs", "du Commun", "de la Terre", "des Traditions", "des Chamanes", "Dionysiaque", "des Couleurs" et "du Temps et de l'Infini". Un humanisme qui n'est pas que de façade mais qui ne peut s'empêcher d'égrener quelques poncifs et bons sentiments en célébrant la communauté, le sens du partage et de la redistribution dans un contexte on ne peut plus éloigné de ces valeurs. Ainsi en est-il des formes franchement équivoques que revêtent les installations du Brésilien Ernesto Neto et du Danois Olafur Eliasson. *Le Green light – An artistic workshop* (2016-) de ce dernier convie au Pavillon central des Giardini des réfugiés vivant dans les environs de Mestre à assembler devant un public de privilégiés des lampes polyédriques faites de matériaux recyclés qui y sont mises en vente. Les recettes ont pour but de soutenir le projet co-financé par TBA21 (Thyssen -Bornemisza Art Contemporary) et son volet éducatif "Green Light - Shared Learning" prodiguant des cours de langue, organisant des séminaires, projections de films et autres activités au sein d'une plateforme d'écoute et d'échanges dédiée aux migrants. "Je ne veux pas que cela semble utopique, ni ne soit considéré comme la parole d'un Européen du Nord aux Européens du Sud quant à savoir comment faire quelque chose (...) *The Green Light* est une réponse pragmatique et une stratégie culturelle" avance Eliasson qui, dans un entretien donné à *The Art Newspaper*, conclut : "J'aimerais dire à Angela Merkel: ceci est un modèle". Venise est la troisième occurrence de ce projet au long cours après Vienne et Houston. Pour autant, face ce que nous percevons bien moins comme un atelier de "création collective" que comme une installation ciglée de la signature visuelle et omniprésente de l'artiste, un sentiment de malaise puis de franche exaspération nous envahit. Pourquoi mettre en scène le travail de ces réfugiés, l'exposition et la mise en vente du produit de leur labeur (rémunéré ?) suffisant largement à présenter le projet et ses enjeux ? Ici, comme ailleurs dans cette 57ème édition de la Biennale, en pavillons et expositions collatérales, les migrants, et non la question migratoire, sont pris de manière obscène et éhontée pour thème, pire pour *motif* d'œuvres qui n'en ont que le nom. Si le projet d'Eliasson se voit porté par un but altruiste d'envergure, son installation, faut-il le déplorer, flirte avec la notion de zoo ethnographique à l'instar de l'invitation -dont on ne doute pas de la sincérité- d'Ernesto Neto à entrer, sous une tente dressée dans le pavillon dit des Chamanes, en résonance spirituelle avec les Indiens de la forêt amazonienne Uni Kuin. A nouveau, nous sommes saisis par l'obscénité, au sens étymologique du terme, de la situation. Nous ne pouvons que nous tenir à l'écart d'une scène qui, dans ce contexte, nous apparaît créée de toutes pièces et se livre à nous tel un collage incongru. Littéralement transportés, implantés dans cet arsenal pris d'assaut lors des journées d'ouverture de la Biennale où l'économie de l'attention, sursollicitée, est au plus bas, les Uni Kuin, censés nous instruire de nouvelles formes de transformation sociale, font, eux aussi, office de figurants,

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de motifs. De rencontre, il n'y a (forcément) point. Comme en ces colonnes, la presse internationale n'a pas manqué de fustiger ces deux interventions à tel point que les artistes ont jugé bon de s'en défendre, ou de s'en expliquer du moins, par médias interposés. Conscient de ne pas avoir rencontré son public, Ernesto Neto concède mais persiste : "Les institutions artistiques sont les temples contemporains, et l'art est un pont. Dans de plus petits espaces, comme ceux de nos précédentes expositions mettant en présence les Huni Kuin, nous avons pu créer un meilleur contact et une meilleure compréhension que ce qui s'est produit dans une grande exposition de groupe comme la Biennale de Venise. Mais Venise est la grande rencontre, le grand salon contemporain où les chocs se produisent lorsque l'avant-garde apparaît, et c'est très bien! L'art est encore un chemin, et dans le pays occidental de l'objectivité, l'art est un fil subjectif qui peut nous aider à coudre un réseau social spirituel. Mais cette route n'est pas mentale. Nous pouvons lire à ce sujet et en parler, mais seule l'expérience peut ouvrir des portails. La spiritualité des Huni Kuin est un portail parmi beaucoup d'autres. Tout autour de nous." [4]

Le lieu d'énonciation

Si la validité de l'incorporation par les pratiques artistiques de rituels chamaniques aux fins de sauver notre Occident malade est, à notre sens, plus que discutable, outre la question du hors-champ déjà évoquée, celle de l'expérience est ici centrale. Car ni le contexte, ni le format de la Biennale ne peuvent la garantir. Et ce manque de prise en considération de ces paramètres essentiels à la bonne réception d'une œuvre, tant dans sa résonance au contexte qu'au format auquel elle aura à se confronter (et au déficit de temps qu'il lui impose) est dommageable. Il y va de la responsabilité de l'artiste et plus encore de celle du commissaire d'exposition.

"Feindre d'oublier depuis quelle position on s'exprime est plus qu'une faute de goût ; cela témoigne d'une grave incohérence, voire irresponsabilité, de la part des organisateurs. Car il y a une contradiction à vouloir simultanément représenter une institution majeure (et très fortement légitimatrice) dans le domaine de l'art contemporain, tout en prétendant être un lieu où l'institution peut être contestée", tel s'exprimait Jérôme Glicenstein dans la revue *marges* en 2005 à propos de l'exposition *Dionisiac* au Centre Pompidou signée Christine Macel.

Cette réflexion critique sur la nécessité d'être en cohérence avec son lieu d'énonciation portait alors sur la récupération institutionnelle d'œuvres censément transgressives. Mais, de façon plus générique, elle vaut pour toute autre question curatoriale et artistique et, plus que jamais, reste de mise en ces temps d'inflation des grands rendez-vous de l'art contemporain portés par un marché de l'art et un capitalisme outranciers et, corolaire, la subordination désormais avérée des institutions publiques et de leur pouvoir de légitimation au privé. Sans la prise en considération de ces paramètres contextuels que Venise condense à elle seule, tout propos curatorial prend le risque de s'annuler de facto. Ce n'est certes pas ici le reproche à formuler à l'égard de *Viva Arte Viva* qui a plutôt tendance à lisser toute charge politique et met en exergue des artistes encore peu portés par le marché, si ce n'est regretter son manque de prise en compte de son format et de son contexte d'émission qui met en faillite l'exercice du ralentissement et de l'expérience tant prôné par sa commissaire.

Varia

L'on ne va pas d'avantage faire le reproche à Christine Macel de la forte présence d'artistes femmes et féministes au moment de l'énonciation de leur œuvre dans les années 60 et 70. A priori, l'on ne peut que s'en réjouir. Impossible par contre de ne pas penser à un quelconque effet de réparation de la part de la commissaire sachant à quel point il lui fut reproché l'absence d'artistes femmes dans *Dionisiac*, certaines à Venise étant d'ailleurs présentées dans le pavillon qui en a repris l'intitulé. Notons ainsi la belle présence de la Sarde Maria Lai (1919-2013), de l'Américaine Anna Halprin (°1920), de la Libanaise Huguette Caland (°1931 ; vit et travaille à Los Angeles) et, dans une moindre mesure, de la Suissesse Heidi Bucher (1926-1993), l'Américaine Judith Scott (1943-2005) ou de la pionnière du Land Art, la New-Yorkaise Michelle Stuart (°1933) ainsi qu'un bel ensemble de Kiki Smith et la mise à l'honneur de l'Américaine Carolee Schneemann, détentrice du Lion d'Or pour sa carrière, dont nous publions un entretien.

Enfin, l'on constate depuis quelques années déjà un regain d'intérêt, porté par le marché et les institutions, du monde de l'art et en particulier des jeunes artistes pour ceux un temps oubliés par la modernité et son historiographie. Quels qu'en soient les registres et modes d'expression, les questions de genre et d'émancipation, de modes de vie alternatifs et communautaires ou d'écologie portées par toute une génération d'artistes dans les années 60 et 70, pour pertinentes qu'elles demeurent, peinent parfois dans leur formulation et malgré l'expérience qu'elles mettent en partage à nous parler de notre contemporain. Peut-être est-ce le livre, source de savoir ou simple fétiche, au cœur de nombreux ensembles tel celui de John Latham (1921-2006) et, au-delà, la question combien actuelle de la production et de la transmission de connaissances dans le champ de l'art qui retiennent davantage notre attention.

Reste que *Viva Arte Viva*, malgré une distribution d'artistes par chapitrage qui semble arbitraire et un accrochage séquencé qui ne permet guère les corrélations, nous offre *a minima* quelques belles (re)découvertes. Tous registres et niveaux de notoriété confondus, épinglons ainsi les vidéos de Marie Voignier (*Les Immobiles*, 2013), Rachel Rose (*Lake Valley*, 2016), Shimabuku (*Do snow monkeys remember snow mountains ?*, 2016), les installations de Pauline Curnier Jardin (*Grotta Approfundita*, vidéo, 2017), Sung Hwan Kim (*Love Before Bond*, 2016), Hajra Waheed (*A Short Film*, 2014), Anri Sala (*All of a tremble (Encounter I)*, pièce sonore, 2016), Edith Dekyndt (*One Thousand and One Nights*, 2016), Kader Attia (*Narrative Vibrations*, 2017), Thu Van Tran (*Sans titre*, 2017) et celle, site-specific, de Leonor Antunes à l'Arsenal ainsi que les dessins d'Huguette Caland et du Cambodgien Sopheap Pich ou encore l'envoûtante composition musicale en trois mouvements pour le Jardin de la Vierge d'Hassan Khan (*Composition for a Public Park*) récompensé du Lion d'Argent.

Christine Jamart

Leanor Antunes
...then we raised the terrain so that I could see out. 2017
mixed media installation, 900 x 300 x 2400 cm
57th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, *Viva Arte Viva*
Photo: Italo Rondinella
Courtesy: La Biennale di Venezia

1 Propos tenus par Enwezor en conférence de presse de la 56ème Biennale de Venise, mai 2015. Traduction de l'auteur

2 in "Christine Macel : Il est primordial de réhabiliter la paresse". Propos recueillis par Emmanuelle Lequeux, *Le Monde*, le 11.05.17, p 12

3 Idem

4 http://www.arterritory.com/en/texts/articles/6640-an_uncomfortable_green_light/ Traduction de l'auteur

Azimi, Roxana, Régnier Philippe. « Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise »,
Le Quotidien de l'Art, *Numéro1287*, Thursday, May 11, 2017, pp.5-9.

Le Quotidien de l'Art

VIVA ARTE VIVA – Arsenal, Giardini, Venise
Du 13 mai au 26 juin

Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise

Par Roxana Azimi et Philippe Régnier

Peu d'expositions savent donner le sourire et la foi en ces temps troublés. Sans sombrer dans le nihilisme de formes rêches et arides, la Biennale de Venise 2017 conçue par Christine Macel a su remettre le plaisir de l'art au centre. Viva !

Sheila Hicks, *Escalade Beyond Chromatic Lands*, 2016-2017. Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie frank elbaz, Paris ; Alison Jacques Gallery, Londres ; Demisch Danant, New York ; De 11 Lijnen, Oudenburg ; Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia ; Sikkema Jenkins & Co, New York. Photo : Philippe Régnier.

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Ci-dessous : Lee Mingwei, *The Mending Project*, 2009-2017. Avec le soutien de Richard M. Tsai, Fubon Financial Holding Co., Ltd, Maggie Tsai, Fubon Art Foundation, Ministry of Culture, ROC (Taïwan), Centre culturel de Taïwan à Paris, ministère de la Culture et de le Communication, Institut français. Collection Rudy Tseng. Photo : Roxana Azimi.

Le monde va mal, il est laid, noir, violent. Il s'égare, se fourvoie, s'abîme. Tel était le pitch nihiliste de la cuvée 2015 de la Biennale de Venise conçue par Okwui Enwezor. Cette année, changement de ton avec l'édition pleine de sève et d'espoir conçue par Christine Macel. L'air est moins vicié, porteur d'espoir, mais non de béatitude. La conservatrice du Centre Pompidou ne voit pas la vie en rose. Elle a toutefois su choisir des œuvres qui lui redonnent des couleurs, comme l'incroyable feu d'artifice chromatique de Sheila Hicks ou les concrétions mystérieuses de feu l'artiste trisomique Judith Scott, ravivant l'une des fonctions essentielles de l'art, magnifier la vie. La curatrice a su éviter de nombreux écueils : la paresse tout d'abord, en présentant quantité d'artistes inconnus aux bataillons – mais plus pour très longtemps – comme les tout jeunes Philippins Katherine Nuñez et Issay Rodriguez, le Français Marcos Avila Forero, ou le maître de l'art inuit Kananginak Pootoogook. Autre chausse-trape, que son prédécesseur n'avait pas su éviter, elle a fait preuve d'autodérision, en rebondissant sur la polémique qu'avait suscitée l'exposition « Dionysiac » au Centre Pompidou, qui présentait l'expression la plus virile de la fureur de vivre, en dédiant son pavillon dionysiaque aux artistes femmes… Et quelles femmes : la plus

/…

LA CONSERVATRICE DU CENTRE POMPIDOU NE VOIT PAS LA VIE EN ROSE. ELLE A TOUTEFOIS SU CHOISIR DES ŒUVRES QUI LUI REDONNENT DES COULEURS,

Azimi, Roxana, Régnier Philippe. « Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise »,
Le Quotidien de l'Art, *Numéro1287*, Thursday, May 11, 2017, pp.5-9.

LE QUOTIDIEN DE L'ART

CHRISTINE MACEL RÉENCHANTE LA BIENNALE DE VENISE

SUITE DE LA PAGE 05 âgée, Huguette Caland, a tout osé, surtout rompre avec son milieu bourgeois et la bienséance comme en attestent ses mannequins fortement sexués. La plus jeune, Pauline Curnier Jardin, tourne en dérision les canons féminins dans une drolatique danse érotique.
Last but not least, Christine Macel a su ménager un parcours souple et fluide, d'une folle énergie, jamais heurté mais toujours articulé autour de quelques thématiques fortes, à commencer par la définition même du créateur. Qui est-il ? Le paresseux qui ronronne sur son canapé, alias Mladen Stilinovic ?

David Medalla, *A Stitch In Time*, (1968-2017). Photo : Roxana Azimi.

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Le touche-à-tout au verbe vertigineux Raymond Hains, qui occupe une place centrale dans le pavillon international ? L'entrepreneur façon Olafur Eliasson qui, à des fins certes humanitaires, reproduit les procédés d'un travail à la chaîne pour fabriquer une lampe écologique ? Ou le shaman, l'intercesseur qui nous fait communiquer avec le monde des morts ? Un peu tout cela à la fois.

IL N'EST PAS ANODIN QUE LES ŒUVRES RITUALISANT LE LIEN DATENT DES ANNÉES 1970, COMME UN APPEL À NE PAS OUBLIER CERTAINES UTOPIES COLLECTIVES

Il est celui qui tire les fils, non comme un marionnettiste ou une Parque, mais comme un guide qui nous prendrait par la main. Dans l'Arsenal, la question du lien se dévide de bout en bout, sans jamais s'effilocher. Le fil est à la fois une langue et un lien, qui apparaît dans l'œuvre de l'Italienne Maria Lai, déjà mise en majesté à la Documenta 14 à Athènes, ou dans la réactivation d'une performance de David Medalla, qui permet à des quidams de joindre des bribes d'intimité dans une broderie modeste composée de cartes de visite ou d'embarquement. Il n'est pas anodin que les œuvres ritualisant le lien datent des années 1970, comme un appel à ne pas oublier certaines utopies collectives. Un appel que l'artiste taïwanais Lee Mingwei a entendu en 2001, lorsqu'il croit son compagnon tué dans l'attentat du World Trade Center à New York. « *Pendant huit heures, je me suis mis à raccommoder ses vêtements jusqu'à ce que j'apprenne qu'il était sain et sauf* », raconte-t-il. À la Biennale, il propose aux visiteurs d'apporter des vêtements à réparer, manière d'éviter la perte et l'oubli. « *Je préfère me concentrer sur les solutions que sur l'échec. Il faut avancer* », rajoute l'artiste réparateur.
Cette ritualisation de la vie est aussi un des enseignements tirés des mentors

Azimi, Roxana, Régnier Philippe. « Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise »,
Le Quotidien de l'Art, *Numéro1287*, Thursday, May 11, 2017, pp.5-9.

LE QUOTIDIEN DE L'ART

CHRISTINE MACEL RÉENCHANTE LA BIENNALE DE VENISE

SUITE DE LA PAGE 06 des années 1970, comme Antoni Miralda et Dorothée Selz et leur repas chromatique, Anna Halprin et sa danse planétaire, ou Nicolás Uriburu et ses mises en garde écologiques que l'homme doit prendre conscience de ses erreurs ou, mieux, les réparer. Le Japonais Shimabuku s'est lui rendu au Texas pour apporter de la glace à des singes des neiges déracinés dans le désert américain. À partir d'une même plante, l'hévéa, Thu Van Tran relie deux histoires d'exploitation, celle des ressources naturelles de l'Amazonie et celle coloniale du Vietnam par la firme Michelin. Marie Voignier pointe en revanche le cynisme d'un organisateur de safaris qui, page après page, déroule le récit de massacres d'animaux sauvages en Afrique sans manifester le moindre remord.

Le parcours ne passe pas sous silence le retour au vernaculaire et aux sources, comme les références à l'art préhispanique mexicain de Cinthia Gutierrez, les cultes de mort andins revus par Enrique Ramirez, ou la déclinaison sous toutes ses formes du *David* de Michel-Ange par le Chinois Guan Xiao.

CES ALLUSIONS AU PASSÉ SONT MOINS SIGNES DE REPLIS QU'AIGUILLONS POUR DESSINER L'AVENIR

Pour autant, ces allusions au passé ne sont pas teintées de nostalgie. Elles sont moins signes de replis qu'aiguillons pour dessiner l'avenir.

***BIENNALE DE VENISE, VIVA ARTE VIVA*, du 13 mai au 26 juin, Giardini, Arsenal, Venise, www.labiennale.org**

Galerie Chantal Crousel

Vue des œuvres de Thu Van Tran, Arsenal, Biennale de Venise 2017. Avec le soutien du ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, de la Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, de Meessen De Clerq (Bruxelles) et de l'Institut Français. Photo : Philippe Régnier.

Azimi, Roxana, Régnier Philippe. « Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise »,
Le Quotidien de l'Art, *Numéro1287*, Thursday, May 11, 2017, pp.5-9.

Le Quotidien de l'Art

BIENNALE DE VENISE

Notre sélection dans « Viva Arte Viva », Biennale de Venise 2017

Par Roxana Azimi et Philippe Régnier

Galerie Chantal Crousel

Marcos Avila Forero, *Atrato*, 2014.
Courtesy Galerie Dohyang Lee, Paris.
Photo : Roxana Azimi.

Vue d'œuvres de Raymond Hains.
Pavillon central, Giardini, Biennale de Venise.
Photo : Philippe Régnier.

Kananginak Pootoogook, *Sans titre*.
Photo : Roxana Azimi.

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Azimi, Roxana, Régnier Philippe. « Christine Macel réenchante la Biennale de Venise »,
Le Quotidien de l'Art, *Numéro1287*, Thursday, May 11, 2017, pp.5-9.

LE QUOTIDIEN DE L'ART

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Anri Sala, *All of a tremble (Encounter)*, 2017.
Courtesy the artist et Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.
Photo : Philippe Régnier.

Kader Attia, *Narrative Vibrations* (détail), 2017.
Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin, Cologne ; Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hongkong ; Galerie Krinzinger, Vienne ; Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, Les Moulins, Pékin, La Havane.

Edith Dekyndt, *One thousand and One Nights*, 2016.
Avec le soutien de Lafayette Anticipations - Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette, Paris ; Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles ; Wallonie-Bruxelles International ; Galerie Greta Meert, Bruxelles ; Konrad Fischer Galerie, Düsseldorf, Berlin ; Galerie Karin Guenther, Hambourg.
Photo : Philippe Régnier.

« Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala », *Frieze.com*, May 6, 2017.
https://frieze.com/article/anthems-and-apples-anri-sala

Galerie
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06 MAY 2017

Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala

Ahead of his participation in Frieze Talks on Saturday 6, and with a major project on view in the fair, Anri Sala discusses his recent projects

Anri Sala was born in 1974 in Tirana, Albania. His show 'Take Over' inaugurates the new Esther Schipper gallery building in Berlin, opening during Berlin Gallery Weekend. His installation *Bridges in the Doldrums* (2016) is subject of a solo presentation at Frieze New York 2017 by Marian Goodman Gallery. Ahead of his participation in the Frieze Talks panel 'The Activity of a Lifetime' on Saturday, May 6, the artist spoke to Frieze.com about his recent projects.

Besides being my first exhibition with Esther Schipper, this is the first time I am working with their new space, which just opened. I was able to visit the space very early on, while it was still in construction, which allowed me to anticipate what it would become and let it 'have a say' in the kind of work I would conceive for the exhibition.

With this show, I was interested in exploring ways how music and narrative, sound and architecture, fictional and physical space, affect and overlap with each-other. 'Take Over', the main work on display, is a sound and video installation comprising two complimentary films involving encounters among pairs. There is a musical encounter between two anthems — *La Marseillaise* and the *Internationale* — one national and one "international". There is a second encounter between a machine and human agency, in the form of a duet between a *Disklavier* ('player piano') and a human player; the piano is both played by the pianist but it also plays its own part. And then there is a third encounter between the projected space in the films and the space of the gallery. In each film, the space is a piano keyboard: it's a kind of architecture (quite an ingenious architecture, actually) and landscape. Not only does it resemble a landscape of peaks and troughs, but also represents the symbolic landscape of Western instrumental tradition – its soundscape, its scales and its proportions.

« Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala », *Frieze.com*, May 6, 2017.
https://frieze.com/article/anthems-and-apples-anri-sala

Anri Sala, *Take Over*, 2017, film still. Courtesy: the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

The interaction of the two anthems, *La Marseillaise* and the *Internationale*, offers a kind of complementarity and opposition, both musically and politically as, in fact, they are more similar in some ways then they are different. I guess the musical affinity is due to the fact that the lyrics of the *Internationale* were initially set to the tune of *La Marseillaise*, until its original music was composed some 17years later. Both are very well-known tunes, with their own rich historical trajectories that have oscillated and shifted through time. What has actually been in flux is not them in themselves - not their scores or lyrics - but our position in relation to them. In the beginning, the audiences - for lack of a better word - of both songs were much more homogenous and objective. They knew where they stood. Whereas nowadays our political belongings have turned into subjective leanings with multiple facets, highlighting the fragmented nature of our values, standings and beliefs.

Both *La Marseillaise* and the *Internationale* started as songs of the oppressed against oppression, whether class oppression within national borders, or the supranational dictate of vested interests. Over time, the political connotations of both anthems have been shaped by successive historical developments, such as revolution, restoration, resistance, patriotism, socialism, and additional associations with nationalism, colonisation and oppression (as national anthems of France and the Soviet Union, respectively). Consequently, nowadays each anthem triggers a very different reaction depending on the one's leanings, upbringing and whereabouts. Someone from Northern Africa could react to *La Marseillaise* very differently from a French left- or right-leaning person. Likewise with the *Internationale*, a person from Lithuania, progressive or conservative, might feel very differently towards it, from an activist far away from the Russian borders. Depending on who is listening, all of a sudden, an inspiring and ennobling tune could turn into the soundtrack of the coloniser or the occupier.

« Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala », *Frieze.com*, May 6, 2017.
https://frieze.com/article/anthems-and-apples-anri-sala

Anri Sala. Photograph: Jutta Benzenberg

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How the installation unfolds in the space produces some sort of fragmentation as well, which intuitively echoes with the subjective nature of the anthems. I wanted to convey a very sculptural aspect to 'Take Over', in order to prioritise the point of view of the visitor. The films are shown simultaneously on both sides of a projection wall situated in the point of intersection between four large glass walls. While the glass panels separate the exhibition room in four spaces, the visitors are able to freely position themselves relative to the work in the space. Consequently their trajectories through the space will produce distinct points of view, which in return will determine what they see and hear. The work, acting a bit like a carousel, encourages the visitors to go around. Their different pathways will interlock and intertwine, just like the two anthems and their connotations do in 'Take Over'.

The other body of work in the exhibition is 'Them Apples', a series of forty-four drawings of apples with bites taken out of them. They are arranged on the wall in the pattern of musical notes resembling the score of the German anthem. I spent several days last summer with people from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, including Kurdish families, who now live in Berlin. We spent time doing all sorts of small activities. While the highlight of the exchange probably was the making of apple jam (according to a German recipe), the aim was to invite each person to take a bite out of an apple and together we would take a photograph of it. The pictures of each apple were to serve later as the basis for each drawing. We are used to thinking of drawings as starting points — a drawing becomes a painting, a sketch becomes a building, a storyboard becomes a film — but I wanted to produce instead an experience, a process, a reality, where the drawing would be the endpoint. So, there's the trajectory of the process which has its end-point in a drawing; I suppose there's also the more metaphorical idea of the trajectory that these people have travelled, from their various countries, through war, to Berlin.

« Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala », *Frieze.com*, May 6, 2017.
https://frieze.com/article/anthems-and-apples-anri-sala

Anri Sala, from the series 'Them Apples', 2017. Photograph: Roman März. Courtesy: the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin

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The apple carries multiple associations or meanings — it can be a symbol of the Fall, of sin and eternal loss, or the uplifting token of curiosity, enlightenment and emancipation. These contradictory projections draw some similarity with how we relate to current crises, including the refugee crisis. How people relate to the refugees and whether one sees in them a danger or an opportunity, is also a question of positioning and projection.

That said, I don't want to be too fixed in the symbolical meaning of the drawings, but rather the trajectory from the process that preceded them to their inherent individualities (the bite is a like a fingerprint, it's unique to each individual).

« Of anthems and apples: Anri Sala », *Frieze.com*, May 6, 2017.
https://frieze.com/article/anthems-and-apples-anri-sala

Anri Sala, *Bridges in the Doldrums*, 2016, installation view at Marian Goodman Gallery stand, Frieze New York 2017. Photograph: Mark Blower. Courtesy: Mark Blower/Frieze

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At Frieze New York, I'll be showing *Bridges In The Doldrums* (2016), a sculptural installation based on a music performance I did in London, at the Frieze Sculpture Park in 2016, in collaboration with the musician Andre Vida. We picked about 74 bridges from songs - pop songs, jazz songs, traditional songs, excerpted and arranged them into a musical score for wind instruments (a saxophone, a trombone and a clarinet) and percussion. The bridges follow each other in a continuous construction: bridge leading to bridge, from the slowest to the fastest. In its installation form, four custom-made drums — three suspended in mid-air and one fallen on its side on the ground — play the bridges, their drumsticks responding to the vibration of their beats.

Within songwriting, the section of the bridge features attributes that usually tent to contradict and undermine the rest of the song, producing moments of suspense and alienation. They temporarily drift the listener away from the song's destination, which is usually embodied by the verse and chorus sections. Throughout *Bridges In The Doldrums* some of the chosen bridges were extracted from very well-known songs. We usually tent to remember the verses or choruses of well-known songs – not their bridges – however at different stages of the piece, some bridges from songs we are familiar with inevitably produce glimpses of recognition. Upon recognition, these bridges loose their underdog attributes, turning into 'points of arrival' and temporary destination for the listeners.

— as told to Frieze.com

Anri Sala joins the Frieze Talks panel 'The Activity of a Lifetime' with artists Tania Bruguera, Jeanne van Heeswijk and Shuddhabrata Sengupta at Frieze New York on Saturday, May 6 at 11.30am. Entry is included with all Frieze New York tickets.

Bridges in the Doldrums is on view at the stand of Marian Goodman Gallery (Stand C8) during Frieze New York 2017, May 5-7. Tickets are available now.

Anri Sala's 'Take Over' is on view at Esther Schipper, Berlin, until June 17.

Tifentale, Alise. « Massimiliano Gioni and Margot Norton, eds. Anri Sala: Answer Me », *caa.Reviews*, April 27, 2017.
http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2967#.WQMGm44Soik

caa.reviews

April 27, 2017

Massimiliano Gioni and Margot Norton, eds.

Anri Sala: Answer Me

Exh. cat. New York: New Museum in association with Phaidon, 2016. 192 pp.; 114 color ills. Cloth $59.95 (9780714871783)

Exhibition schedule: New Museum, New York, February 3–April 10, 2016

Alise Tifentale

Unravel (2013). Installation view. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery; Hauser and Wirth; and kurimanzutto, Mexico City. Photo: Maris Hutchinson/EPW Studio.

Anri Sala: Answer Me, organized by the New Museum's artistic director Massimiliano Gioni and associate curators Margot Norton and Natalie Bell, is the artist's first comprehensive survey exhibition in the United States. Sala (b. 1974) is an Albanian artist who lives and works in Berlin and uses primarily video to investigate the underlying structure of music and sound. Many of his works deal with emotional histories of architectural spaces as told by live and recorded musical performances.

Answer Me fills three floors of the museum and is organized thematically—a minimalistic and technologically sophisticated presentation on the fourth floor; a comprehensive overview of the artist's major video works on the third; and a selection of small-scale installations, works on paper, and recent sound and video works on the second. The centerpiece of the exhibition—two interrelated sound and video installations, *Ravel Ravel* (2013) and *Unravel* (2013)—takes up the entire fourth floor. These works introduce Sala's artistic strategies that often are aimed at multisensory confusion and a questioning of temporal and spatial coherence. In *Ravel Ravel*, for example, two large video projections each show a male pianist's left hand playing Maurice Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D-major* (1929–30) simultaneously. The detailed attention on the pianist's hand isolates and decontextualizes it as an object, making it unfamiliar and thus contributing to the overall effect of disorientation. By focusing solely on a hand playing a piano, Sala highlights the moment when sound/music is made and asks one to wonder whether understanding the mechanism of making sound helps one understand music.

The lengthy wall label and the catalogue essays provide context for the piece. The historical narrative begins with Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein (philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's brother), who lost his right hand in World War I and who commissioned Ravel, a French composer, to create a composition for the left hand. (The two would later engage in debates about the extent of a performer's rights to interpret a score.) The technical account explains the slight modification of the tempo of the concerto in each score, performed by pianists Louis Lortie and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet. A result of collaboration between Sala, the composer Ari Benjamin Meyers, and the sound engineer and sound designer Olivier Goinard, this subtle modification creates an unnerving effect, with both soundtracks in and out of sync.

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caa.reviews

The complementary work, *Unravel*, is less overwhelming in an auditory sense but more interesting visually. On a single screen, a female disc jockey is seen working two turntables with vinyl recordings of the two performances of the concerto. The DJ—composer and electronic music artist and producer Chloé Thévenin—struggles to synchronize both recordings with a varying degree of success. Orchestrating multiple temporalities on several levels is characteristic of Sala's practice. Spatial displacement is another artistic approach he utilizes in these two works. *Ravel Ravel* and *Unravel* were commissioned to represent France at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). Playing on the troubled history between France, Austria, and Germany, during this particular biennale France occupied the German Pavilion and vice versa. *Unravel* was filmed inside the German Pavilion, and the inscription "Francia" on the building across the pathway is visible through the open door.

The most prominent work on the third floor is *3–2–1* (2011/2016), a live performance in which experimental composer and musician André Vida plays a saxophone in response to the recorded sound of *Long Sorrow* (2005), a video featuring a saxophone improvisation performed by the jazz musician Jemeel Moondoc outside an apartment complex in Berlin. Temporally, this interaction between live and recorded music creates a dialogue between past and present. Like *Ravel Ravel*, *Long Sorrow* never reveals the entire body of the musician, instead focusing on his eyes, mouth, and head. This sense of spatial ambiguity is further emphasized by imagery suggesting that the musician is mysteriously positioned in mid-air outside the window of the top floor of the building. The location of the apartment complex is also unclear. Sala admits that people often think that the building looks as if it could be in the former East Berlin, but is actually in the former West Berlin (88).

In the video *Answer Me* (2008), also on view on the third floor, Sala stages an impossible dialogue between a man who is fiercely playing the drums and a soft-spoken woman in a historically charged location—an abandoned concrete dome in former West Berlin that was used by the U.S. National Security Agency as a surveillance center for spying on the German Democratic Republic. The dome was built on top of the remnants of architect Albert Speer's Nazi-era structure. Among other videos on view on the third floor, two complementary works stand out—*Le Clash* (2010) and *Tlatelolco Clash* (2011). Filmed in politically significant locations in France and Mexico, these works disrupt the traditional hierarchy and historical specificity of musical genres. The underlying common musical motive in both videos is "Should I Stay or Should I Go," a 1982 song by British punk rock band The Clash, which is played with a barrel organ and music box, instruments far predating the era of punk rock. Also on view on the third floor is *Dammi i colori* (2003), a video that features Edi Rama, the artist's friend, sometimes co-author, and then-mayor of Tirana (Sala was born in Tirana). The setting is the afterlife of the failed planned economy and state socialism in Albania, when the previously forced collectivism was replaced with total individualism, represented by the do-it-yourself constructions found on many balconies in Tirana. Rama speaks about his idea to paint the dilapidated facades of these Soviet-style apartment complexes in bright De Stijl colors. The result of this beautification makes it clear that color-field painting on an urban scale only masks the miserable state of the majority of the housing. This video was also included in *Ostalgia* (click here for review), a survey of art from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries, curated by Gioni at the New Museum in 2011, and is one of the works that solidified Sala's career. Unfortunately, it is projected in the narrow space at the back of the hall where attentive viewing is difficult due to the flow of visitors to and from the staircase.

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Tifentale, Alise. « Massimiliano Gioni and Margot Norton, eds. Anri Sala: Answer Me », *caa.Reviews*, April 27, 2017.
http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2967#.WQMGm44Soik

caa.reviews

Meanwhile, two other key early works—*Intervista (Finding the Words)* (1998) and *Nocturnes* (1999)—are relegated to the theater in the basement, with screenings offered only on Wednesdays. The narrative of *Intervista* begins with the artist finding 16mm film footage of his mother, Valdet Sala, speaking as secretary of Albania's Communist Youth Alliance in the late 1970s. However, the soundtrack was lost, leading Sala to embark on a quest to reconstruct his mother's words. When Sala presented the recovered transcript to his mother, she was shocked at how absurd her language at the time sounded. She commented, "We lived in a deaf and dumb system in which we only talked with one mouth and one voice" (53). As Gioni notes in an interview with Sala in the catalogue, "it was one of the first works to reintroduce an interest in the documentary, raising questions about the role of art and artists in the face of dramatic social changes," and this work created a "big shock" (81). It is unfortunate that *Intervista* is not included in the main display of the exhibition.

Two major video and sound installations, *The Present Moment (in B-flat)* (2014) and *The Present Moment (in D)* (2014), dominate the second floor. They are based on Arnold Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, a composition written in 1899 before he became a pioneer of the avant-garde, twelve-tone system for which he is best known. The videos, projected on two large screens, feature close-ups of the faces, eyes, and hands of musicians. In the multichannel audio only select notes of the score are performed (B-flat and D, as per titles of the works), and the sounds in the large and darkened exhibition hall mix and interact in a disorienting manner. The powerful, amplified sound and large-scale projected video images of *The Present Moment* diptych make the rest of the works on the second floor appear as if they were added as afterthoughts. The two slowly rotating blue rubber gloves (*Title Suspended [Sky Blue]*; 2008) on the wall in front of the elevator seem out of place. Pencil and crayon drawings (*Inversion—Creating Space Where There Appears to Be None*, 2010), co-authored by Sala and Rama, are displayed at different angles from the wall, but it is not clear whether their unusual presentation adds to their effect.

Sala's sound-based, non-narrative work challenges existing methods of displaying and theorizing art, and in doing so reveals their limitations. The layout of the exhibition occasionally struggles to establish a coherent relationship between works in different media, and the catalogue essays hesitate at times to look beyond the technical procedures and historical facts. Nevertheless, the New Museum succeeds in presenting some of Sala's most complex works in a captivating and engaging setting.

Alise Tifentale
PhD candidate, Department of Art History, Graduate Center, City University of New York

Please send comments about this review to editor.caareviews@collegeart.org.

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Harris, Gareth. « Anri Sala turns abandoned Japanese house into sonic space », *The Art Newspaper*, February 2, 2017.
http://theartnewspaper.com/news/anri-sala-turns-abandoned-japanese-house-into-sonic-space/

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Anri Sala turns abandoned Japanese house into sonic space

Albanian artist creates audio and visual installation on the island of Teshima

by GARETH HARRIS | 2 February 2017

Anri Sala's All of a Tremble (Seawall) (2016): the house resonates with the sound of drums, music boxes, saxophone and bamboo flute in video and audio works

The Albanian artist Anri Sala has converted an abandoned house on the island of Teshima, off the west coast of Japan, into a large-scale installation. The ambitious site-specific piece, entitled All of a Tremble, incorporates music boxes decorated in the same pattern as the wallpaper in the property and a video showing footage of a shakuhachi (Japanese flute).

Sala received the commission to work on Teshima after winning the tenth Benesse Prize at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. The Japanese conglomerate Benesse and its Fukutake Foundation sponsor a range of art-related activities on the islands of Teshima, Naoshima and Inujima. "The eloquent new work is housed in an old Japanese home that the foundation acquired and restored for Sala, right next to the coast on the Setouchi inland sea," says a spokeswoman for Marian Goodman Gallery, which represents the artist. The house will be open to the public for the next three years.

Akiko Miki, the curator of All of a Tremble, says in a statement: "The once abandoned house is brought to life, inviting viewers to reflect on the displacement and lives of human beings as well as to physically experience the meeting of two different worlds: outside and inside, eastern and western, ocean and sky, social and private."

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Marti, Silas. «Albanês Anri Sala vem ao Brasil verter som em obras de arte arquitetônicas», *serafina*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

serafina

Albanês Anri Sala vem ao Brasil verter som em obras de arte arquitetônicas

Divulgação

O artista albanês Anri Sala

POR **SILAS MARTÍ**

28/08/2016 02h00

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Marti, Silas. «Albanês Anri Sala vem ao Brasil verter som em obras de arte arquitetônicas», *serafina*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

serafina

Ninguém mora mais ali, mas Anri Sala não deixa de buscar ecos de uma atmosfera doméstica na casa modernista onde um dia viveu a família Moreira Salles, na Gávea. Transformado em centro cultural, o lugar perdeu os fluxos originais de movimento e a dinâmica distinta de suas alas íntimas e sociais. Também já não preserva a mesma relação entre dentro e fora, do pátio e da piscina com suas salas mais reservadas. É como se esse palacete moderno, uma das residências mais luxuosas já construídas no Rio, esbarrasse agora no anonimato estéril de um museu contemporâneo, de cubos brancos e superfícies alisadas.

Quando foi chamado para montar uma exposição ali, o artista albanês estudou cada milímetro da casa desenhada nos anos 1940 por Olavo Redig de Campos. Não por obsessão ou fixação, mas pela vontade de trazer à tona, ou de volta ao presente, a memória dos passos e respiros dessa construção.

Não é a primeira vez que Sala tenta parasitar a arquitetura, fazendo de seus intervalos, detalhes e singularidades menos um cenário e mais uma extensão viva de suas obras.

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Obras de Anri Sala

Anri Sala

1/6

No Barragán, No Cry

Marti, Silas. «Albanês Anri Sala vem ao Brasil verter som em obras de arte arquitetônicas», *serafina*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

No início do ano, ele ocupou todo o New Museum de Nova York com uma grande retrospectiva, desconstruindo ali toda a audácia arquitetônica do Sanaa, firma japonesa responsável pelo projeto de museu que lembra uma pilha de caixotes metálicos no sul de Manhattan.

Mergulhando as salas brancas da construção na penumbra e enchendo os ambientes de música, conseguiu criar uma dinâmica de movimentos insuspeitados. De certa forma, é isso que ele quer fazer no Instituto Moreira Salles, que abriga sua primeira grande mostra no Brasil a partir de 10/9.

"Não é só discutir a minha relação com a arquitetura, mas destacar detalhes físicos que passariam despercebidos, momentos fugidios, cantos invisíveis, sentimentos, ideias políticas", diz Sala, por telefone, de seu ateliê em Berlim.

"Gosto de produzir a realidade das minhas obras não no lugar de onde elas vêm, mas no lugar onde elas encontram o público. Nesse sentido, a arquitetura da mostra é essencial. Muitas vezes tem a ver com a maneira que escuto o lugar que me oferecem, tentando escolher e amplificar o que quero ressaltar e descartar o que é só ruído. No fundo, é recusar um espaço dado."

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Chantal Crousel

Sala não fala em som e ruído por acaso. Sua obra é atravessada pela música, mas não enquanto melodia, letra, timbre ou sonoridade. Embora todos esses elementos estejam presentes, como nos seus tambores robóticos que parecem tocados por fantasmas, o artista está mais interessado nos silêncios, nos ecos, nos buracos da malha sonora, que, na sua obra, ganham corpo e peso. "Trabalho com os valores rítmicos. É um olhar mais escultural, em que o intervalo entre as notas se torna muito importante."

São silêncios que também sublinham o deslocamento físico. Nascido na Albânia em 1974, radicado na França e hoje vivendo na Alemanha, Sala se apropriou do clássico "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" como um hino do nomadismo numa série de trabalhos que ajudam a entender sua relação com os espaços. A canção do Clash tocada em versão instrumental por um realejo na Cidade do México ou entreouvida nos escombros de um dos templos do punk em Bordeaux serve de trilha sonora de dois trabalhos do artista, que fez dos rastros da fuga e do abandono uma das peças-chave de sua obra.

A MÚSICA DA DR

Um trabalho de Sala, aliás, embala essa dimensão física do som na pele de uma estranha DR. No filme rodado num prédio do arquiteto Buckminster Fuller, que funcionou como base de espionagem dos Aliados na capital alemã durante a Segunda Guerra, uma mulher aparece fora de foco querendo saber por que um rapaz decidiu terminar o namoro. Suas palavras, da mesma forma que sua imagem, são afogadas por uma tempestade ruidosa. Em vez de responder, seu par romântico toca furioso uma bateria, transformando o discurso em violência, da mesma forma que o tráfego radiofônico que um dia atravessou aquele espaço carregava ordens bélicas.

Outro filme na mostra retrata um saxofonista tocando uma mesma canção triste dentro e fora de uma casa. "A música é uma negociação do personagem com o espaço ao seu redor", diz Sala. "Meu objetivo é criar uma história que torne físicas as qualidades acústicas de um lugar."

«Obras de Anri Sala», *Folha de S.Paulo*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

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No Barragán, No Cry

Title Suspended (Sky Blue), 2008. Resina, luvas de borracha, motor elétrico

«Obras de Anri Sala», *Folha de S.Paulo*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

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Tlatelolco Clash, 2011. Vídeo HD em canal único, som surround 5.0, cor11'49"

Long Sorrow, 2005. Super 16 mm transferido para vídeo hd em canal único, som estéreo, cor

«Obras de Anri Sala», *Folha de S.Paulo*, August 28, 2016.
http://fotografia.folha.uol.com.br/galerias/46143-obras-de-anri-sala

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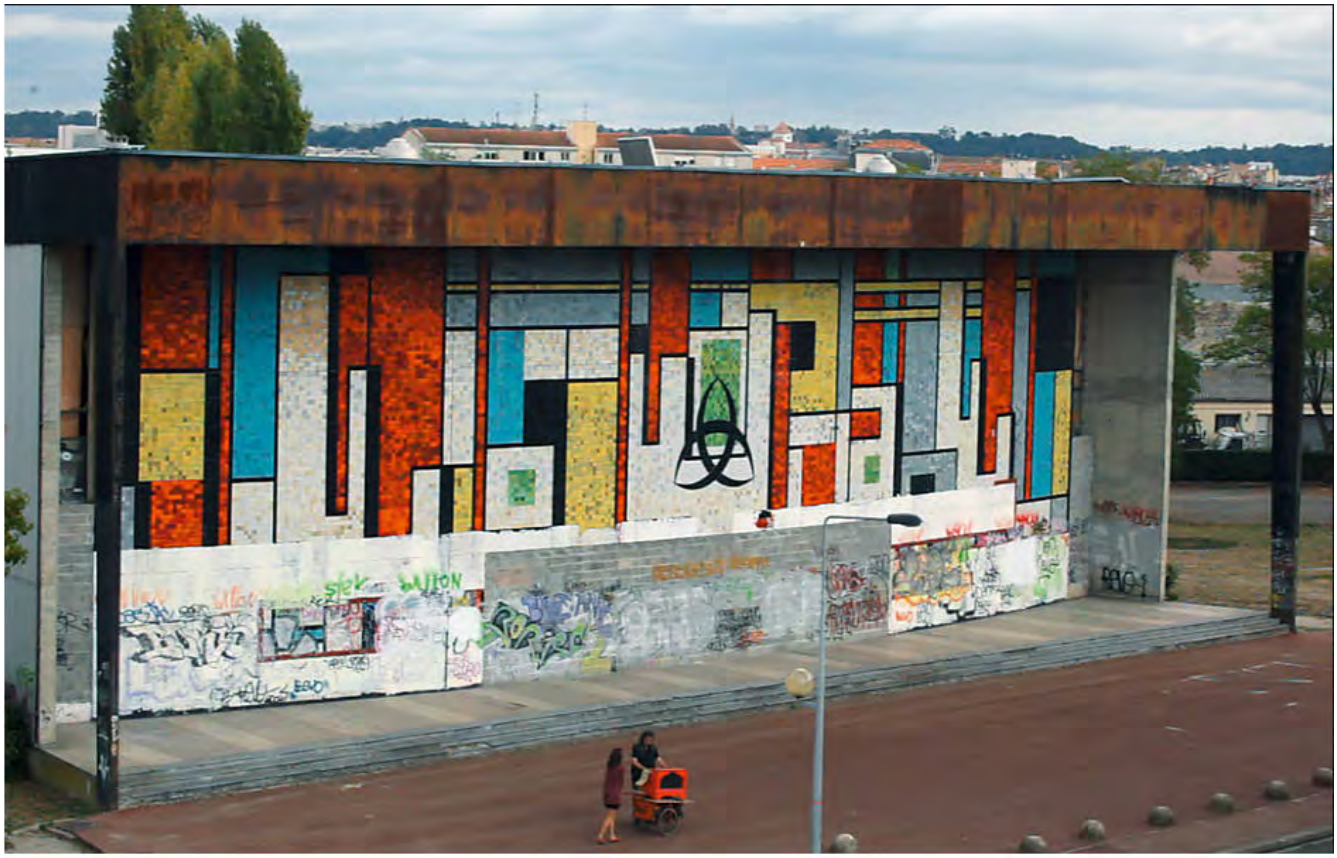

Le Clash, 2010. Vídeo HD em canal único, som surround 5.0, cor

ANSWER ME. Cena de vídeo que artista gravou em antigo prédio em Berlim, em que um baterista responde com batucadas às perguntas perplexas de sua namorada

«Brazil welcomes Anri Sala's First Exhibition», *Albanian Daily News*, September 9, 2016.
http://www.albaniannews.com/index.php?idm=8244&mod=2

Albanian Daily News
The most Authoritative Albanian Source in English

Brazil Welcomes Anri Sala's First Exhibition

September 9, 2016

Share 1

One of the best contemporaneous artists, the Albanian Anri Sala, will present his works for the first time in Brazil. 'Anri Sala: o momento presonte'exhibition will raise the curtains on September 10 in Moreira Salles Institute of Rio De Janeiro. Some of his most known works, always related to the music, will be exposed for the public.

This exhibition curator, Heloisa Espada has prepared a text showing Sala's works as 'The Interview" or "Give me the colors". This exhibition reflects Albania's political issues, using the music as an universal language that suit every political, social and technological development.

Works like Title Suspended", "No Window no Cry", "Lak-kat 3.0", "Long Sorrow", "Who is Afraid of Red, Yellow and Green" realized during many years are part of this exhibition.

Sala will personally meet with the public one night ahead of exhibition opening ceremony. The visitors will have the chance to see this exhibition until November 20.

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Licht, Alan. «Anri Sala. New Museum», *Art Forum*, Summer 2016, p.400.

ARTFORUM

Anri Sala

NEW MUSEUM

Occupying three floors of the New Museum, and fully energizing exhibition spaces that can ordinarily feel disproportionate, "Anri Sala: Answer Me" traced the reorientations within the Albanian-born video artist's practice. The survey, which was organized by Massimiliano Gioni, Margot Norton, and Natalie Bell, was dominated by work from the past decade, when Sala's ongoing ruminations on past versus present—initially expressed in a more-or-less straightforward documentary form—moved toward more elliptical studies of sited music renditions.

The large-scale installations reorganized early-twentieth-century classical-music compositions from a contemporary perspective. *Ravel Ravel*, 2013, a double-screen video, shows the tightly framed left hands of two pianists playing Maurice Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D Major (1929–30), a piece commissioned by pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who had lost his right arm fighting in World War I. Sala made variations in the score's tempo markings to generate occasional lags between the two performances, creating short delays and realignments reminiscent of Steve Reich's phase pieces; he also transformed the viewing room into a towering semi-anechoic chamber, buffering its high walls with dark foam wedges to eliminate natural echo. Down the hall, the accompanying *Unravel*, 2013, shot in the German pavilion of the 2013 Venice Biennale, found a DJ attempting to "correct" the imposed phase differences by manipulating two albums of the same performances on two turntables, her hand movements taking on an otherworldly quality through deft close-ups.

Sala's alterations of written music are even more drastic in *The Present Moment*, 2014. He isolated notes from Arnold Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* (Transfigured Night, 1899), reshuffled them according to the Austrian composer's twelve-tone system (which this late-Romantic-era

Anri Sala, *Ravel Ravel* (detail), 2013, two-channel HD video (color, sound, 20 minutes 45 seconds), sixteen-channel sound installation, dimensions variable.

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Licht, Alan. «Anri Sala. New Museum», *Art Forum*, Summer 2016, p.400.

ARTFORUM

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piece predates), and played the notes individually through separate speakers in the gallery space, arranged so that it sounds as if each tone is darting laterally overhead across the room. A pair of videos, *The Present Moment (in D)* and *The Present Moment (in B-flat)*, both 2014, present a string sextet doggedly bowing only the D and B-flat notes in the score—another Minimalist gesture. Like the DJ in *Unravel*, the musicians show a steely determination, deep in the concentration required to deal with a deceptively simple yet abnormal task. They are stationed in an airy building, which turns out to be the Haus der Kunst in Munich, a relic from Nazi Germany that would have been off-limits to Schönberg (whom the Nazis ranked among the "degenerate" artists). The deconstruction of the music and the pointed choice of setting are of a piece: Sala seeks to highlight a potential impermanence in both musical and physical architecture, whether due to artistic intervention or societal change.

Unfortunately consigned to weekly screenings in the museum's basement, outside the exhibition proper, Sala's debut, *Intervista (Finding the Words)*, 1998, is critical to understanding the evolution of his recent work. The events recounted in the twenty-six-minute-plus-long documentary are prompted by Sala's discovery of a 1970s television interview with his mother, then a leader of the Communist Youth Alliance. The sound track is missing, and his subsequent recovery efforts lead him to a school for deaf students, who read her lips. He transcribes their findings as subtitles, and his mother, watching herself on-screen all these years later, is shocked and alienated by the results: During the Albanian dictatorship such encounters were practically scripted, and her propagandistic words, which she deplores as "gibberish," were the Communist Party's, not her own. Here are the seeds of the resyncings and, presumably, of Sala's interest in modifying or circumventing musical scores. Also descended from *Intervista* are the inaudibility of a woman's moving lips in *Answer Me*, 2008, and the title of *Lâk-kat 2.0 (British/American)*, 2015, which means "gibberish" in Senegal's Wolof language. The music is diegetic, but not indigenous, in the later videos: These works' probing nature leaves open the question of whether Sala's shooting locations, like *Intervista*'s salvaged footage, lack a sound, or whether music itself needs to be situated in unexpected places.

—*Alan Licht*

«How to get a grip on Anri Sala», *Phaidon*, February, 2016.
http://fr.phaidon.com/agenda/art/articles/2016/february/04/how-to-get-a-grip-on-anri-sala/

PHAIDON

How to get a grip on Anri Sala

To mark the New Museum show here's some insight into the best ways to appreciate a cool and important artist

Still from Ravel Ravel Unravel (2013) - Anri Sala

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

On 23 August 1914 the Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein, elder brother of the philosopher Ludwig, lost his right arm in World War I. Following the armistice, Wittgenstein approached a number of composers to write piano pieces for just the left hand. The most famous work came from Maurice Ravel whose Piano Concerto for the Left Hand remains a well-known piece to this day, thanks both to its beauty and its back story.

Anri Sala's 2013 Venice Biennale show, Ravel Ravel Unravel, took the music as its starting point. Yet, rather than present the concerto as a kind of Modernist symbol of triumph of the human spirit over adversity, the artist offered visitors a somewhat more slippery proposition.

No Barragán No Cry (2002) - Anri Sala

«How to get a grip on Anri Sala», *Phaidon*, February, 2016.
http://fr.phaidon.com/agenda/art/articles/2016/february/04/how-to-get-a-grip-on-anri-sala/

In one room two video recordings of pianists playing the piece were screened simultaneously; while in a second area, a French DJ attempted to sync two vinyl copies of the performances. In each case, the pieces fall out of time with each other, which, for Sala, was key. In fact, the discrepancies "paradoxically create an 'other' space" somewhere in between the two performances," the artist explained.

All this was compounded by the fact that Ravel Ravel Unravel was the 2013 French national exhibition at the Beinnale, yet it was staged in the German pavilion, since the two had switched venues in 2013 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty. Sala was born in Albania, studied in France and works in Berlin, and so was perfectly suited to the show, the pavilion and the occasion.

Still from Long Sorrow (2005) - Anri Sala

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Indeed "Anri Sala has developed a widely acclaimed multimedia practice founded in the interplay of images, sound and architectural space," write the New Museum's Margot Norton and Massimiliano Gioni in our new Anri Sala monograph, published to coincide with the Museum's retrospective. "Probing notions of memory and time - both personal and historical - Sala's works engage the viewer's awareness of being present while calling attention to the political dynamics of space."

The accompanying show Anri Sala: Answer Me, which has just opened at the New Museum and runs until 10 April 2016, is the most comprehensive survey of his work in the United States to date.

Still from Answer Me (2008) - Anri Sala

PHAIDON

It includes Ravel Ravel Unravel, as well as other well-known works by the artist, such as Answer Me (2008), video wherein a couple argue inside one of Berlin's Cold-War era Teufelsberg listening stations, the man only answering the woman by playing the drums; No Barragán No Cry (2002), a photograph of a horse plonked onto a plinth on a Mexican skyscraper, mimicking a missing statue from modernist architect Luis Barragán's far lovelier roof terrace in Mexico City; and Long Sorrow (2005) which features the free-jazz saxophonist Jemeel Moondoc playing just outside the window of the uppermost apartment in a bleak modernist Berlin tower block.

Every piece is filled with unseen details. It helps, for example, to know that the Berlin estate where Sala filmed Moondoc is known locally as the Long Sorrow; or that No Barragán No Cry sounds a bit like the title of a Bob Marley song. It is worth bearing in mind that Sala was born in the Eastern Bloc, and experienced the rough end of socialist, pseudo-scientific social planning up close. A lot of his work deals with the kind of world that the Modernists bequeathed to us. Yet you can just enjoy the beauty of the sounds and the images.

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Anri Sala (left) on the set of Long Sorrow (2005), Berlin

For more on the New Museum show go here and for further detail and insight into this important artist buy a copy of our new book, which is written by the show's curators. Finally, if you want to get a great Anri Sala print at a very attractive price take a look at this work available right now over at Artspace.

Sala created this limited edition print on the occasion of his exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery, Anri. Untitled (Cactus 2), 2011, shows the Blue Agave, the plant from which the spirit tequila is made, shimmering as if photographed under conditions of extreme heat. The distortions visible in the image are the result of a sheet of antique glass the artist placed inbetween his camera and the native Mexican plant. Made using pre-modern techniques, the glass bears the hallmarks of hand-craftsmanship; the ripples and imperfections on its surface standing in contrast to the uniformity of standard, industrially produced glass. It's available right now over at Artspace.

«How to get a grip on Anri Sala», *Phaidon*, February, 2016.
http://fr.phaidon.com/agenda/art/articles/2016/february/04/how-to-get-a-grip-on-anri-sala/

PHAIDON

Untitled (Cactus 2), 2011 - Anri Sala

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ENTRÉE(S) EN MATIÈRE

ŒUVRES COMMENTÉES

PAR ▶SAMANTHA DEMAN ET VÉRONIQUE GODÉ

Anri Sala

Né en 1974 en Albanie, Anri Sala a grandi à Tirana, où il a étudié à l'Académie nationale des arts avant de rejoindre les bancs des Arts déco de Paris, en 1996, puis ceux du Fresnoy, à Tourcoing, entre 1998 et 2000. Très tôt marquée par un rapport intime et poétique à la musique, sa démarche s'articule autour d'une recherche mêlant image, son et espace. « *Au départ, mon intérêt pour la musique est survenu comme une réaction au langage et à l'opacité que je percevais du rapport entre contenu et syntaxe*, explique-t-il. *Puis, peu à peu, elle a pris une part active à mon travail, jusqu'à devenir à la fois action même et gardienne du temps dans les films. Grâce à son caractère implicite, la musique permet de transmettre une situation sans raconter une histoire, d'influencer sans informer.* » Représentant la France à la Biennale de Venise de 2013 — édition lors de laquelle Paris et Berlin, où l'artiste est installé, échangent leurs pavillons nationaux à l'occasion du cinquantième anniversaire du Traité de l'Elysée —, Anri Sala y dévoile l'envoûtant *Ravel Ravel Unravel*. Cet ensemble de trois installations vidéo et sonores — l'une, *Ravel Ravel*, a pour

Ravel Ravel, Anri Sala, 2013.

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ENTRÉE(S) EN MATIÈRE

ŒUVRES COMMENTÉES

PAR ▶SAMANTHA DEMAN ET VÉRONIQUE GODÉ

installations vidéo et sonores — l'une, *Ravel Ravel*, a pour cadre une chambre sans écho ; les deux autres partagent le même titre *Unravel* — a pour point de départ le *Concerto pour la main gauche*, pour piano et orchestre, de Maurice Ravel. L'artiste revient sur les motivations particulières qui ont guidé cette création. « Plusieurs raisons m'ont incité à m'intéresser aux compositions pour la main gauche et orchestre, en général, et au *Concerto pour la main gauche* de Maurice Ravel — chef-d'œuvre en la matière —, en particulier. Tout d'abord, le contexte historique : les compositions pour la main gauche se sont multipliées à la suite de la Grande Guerre, qui avait causé beaucoup de mutilations. Or, à l'époque, en contraste avec notre rapport actuel à la discipline, plus passif, écouter de la musique voulait dire la jouer soi-même, avec un instrument. Les répercussions sur la composition générées par la rencontre du corps humain mutilé avec celui de l'instrument — en l'occurrence le piano — et le chevauchement induit constituaient une autre source d'intérêt. Enfin, la structure interne de ce concerto convenait très bien aux ajustements rythmiques que je voulais apporter à travers *Ravel Ravel*, où les tempos

Vue de l'installation vidéo *Unravel*, Anri Sala, 2013.

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ENTRÉE(S) EN MATIÈRE

ŒUVRES COMMENTÉES

PAR ▶SAMANTHA DEMAN ET VÉRONIQUE GODÉ

voulais apporter à travers *Ravel Ravel*, où les tempos respectifs de deux performances singulières — diffusées simultanément — sont recomposés afin que leurs exécutions soient parfois disjointes, parfois à l'unisson, l'une progressant un peu plus lentement que l'autre, créant d'abord un léger écho, puis un dédoublement au moment où les notes sont entendues deux fois, avant qu'elles ne se rejoignent, puis se décalent à nouveau… Mon intention étant de pouvoir faire résonner l'espace de telle manière à signifier l'écart temporel entre ces deux exécutions, cette partie de l'installation était à écouter dans une chambre anéchoïque — un environnement où l'absorption des réflexions sonores annihile toute sensation d'espace — afin d'induire l'impression d'un écho dans un environnement pourtant entièrement sourd. Le geste est une autre notion importante de ce travail ; si la gestuelle des mains gauches des pianistes dans *Ravel Ravel* a été chorégraphiée par Ravel, dans le sens qu'elle correspond précisément à son intention musicale, j'ai pu amener pour ma part une forme de chorégraphie de décalage ainsi qu'un travail sur la gestuelle des mains droites. Pour *Unravel* — où DJ Chloé mixe sur ses platines les deux

Unravel (détail), Anri Sala, 2013.

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ENTRÉE(S) EN MATIÈRE

ŒUVRES COMMENTÉES

PAR ▶SAMANTHA DEMAN ET VÉRONIQUE GODÉ

Unravel — où DJ Chloé mixe sur ses platines les deux versions des pianistes essayant de les faire se rejoindre —, j'ai beaucoup discuté avec Chloé sur les mouvements de ses mains : comment, par exemple, ralentir ou accélérer la vitesse des platines avec ses doigts ? Comment et quand croiser les mains ? Nous avons répété cette chorégraphie plusieurs fois, ce qui l'a d'ailleurs beaucoup aidée à mémoriser les interventions nécessaires pour synchroniser les deux versions. Dans mon travail, et de manière générale, le son apporte à l'image des perspectives singulières qui ne sont pas de l'ordre du visuel : la construction et la mise en scène du son dans une installation produisent l'espace même accueillant l'image et introduisent des zones de subjectivité, que seule la dimension sonore est capable de générer. Ces perspectives singulières et le continuum dans l'espace ainsi produit, par le biais de l'ouïe, confèrent au son un potentiel sculptural. » ■

▼ CONTACT

Answer Me
Jusqu'au 4 octobre

Ravel Ravel, Anri Sala, 2013.

Galerie
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ENTRÉE(S) EN MATIÈRE

ŒUVRES COMMENTÉES

PAR ▶SAMANTHA DEMAN ET VÉRONIQUE GODÉ

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Vue de l'installation vidéo *Unravel*, Anri Sala, 2013.

Daniel Birnbaum. «Anri Sala: Answer Me», *Artforum*, n° 5, vol. 54, January, 2016, p. 129.

"ANRI SALA: ANSWER ME"

New Museum
February 3–April 10
Curated by Massimiliano Gioni

Anyone who has followed Anri Sala's career will have noticed the key role acoustics play in his films and installations: modernist music, free jazz, punk rock, even just the sound of a lone snare drum. Often distorted through delays and echoes, a tune might at first be indecipherable: In *Tlatelolco Clash*, 2011, for instance, a recognizable version of the Clash's hit "Should I Stay or Should I Go" emerges only toward the end. As in many of Sala's works, the fractured music seems to echo the historical and political ruptures of the site where it is performed—here, a town square in Mexico City. With a catalogue comprising essays by Gioni and assistant curator Natalie Bell, as well as Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, Tacita Dean, Mark Godfrey, Boris Groys, and Christine Macel, this major solo show—the artist's first such outing in New York—will explore the relationship between sound and site, music and architecture, in the artist's work.

—*Daniel Birnbaum*

Anri Sala, *Ravel Ravel*, 2013, two-channel HD video, sixteen-channel sound installation, color, 20 minutes 45 seconds.

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Fine Arts | Leisure

Weekend Arts II
The New York Times

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2016 C21

JAKE NAUGHTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Laura Poitras: Astro Noise *This exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art includes the installation "Bed Down Location," featuring time-lapse video projections of night skies in Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan.*

Surveillance, and Visions of the New Normal

HOLLAND COTTER
ART REVIEW

Political art has changed over the past 50 years. Unlike the protest art of an earlier era, much of the most interesting new work feels slippery and evasive, as if reluctant to speak its mind. In part, this is a reflection of different, though not necessarily evolved, thinking. We've abandoned old beliefs in utopias, in visions — some would say hallucinations — of a society built on absolute good for all, in which art plays a declaratively positive role. The 1960s counterculture, even at its most anarchic, was based on such beliefs and visions. And that counterculture is long gone.

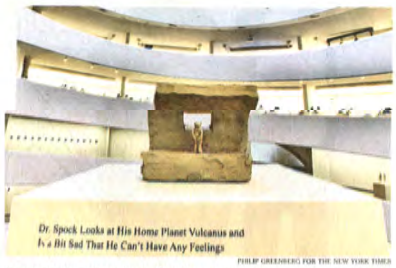
The current political work — and there's quite a bit out there — seems tailored to an altered terrain. On the one hand, it is flourishing under global capitalism and its new collecting culture. At the same time, its character is shaped by distinctly 21st-century doubts about the moral efficacy of art in a market-intensive, ideal-averse world. In the political thinking of an earlier time, you were either part of the problem or part of the solution, the inference being that there *was* a solution. The art of the present is not so sure.

Which brings us to "Laura Poitras: Astro Noise," at the Whitney Museum of American Art, an engrossing solo show by an artist best known for three remarkable films documenting the United States government's post-Sept. 11 "war on terror." (She has also written for The New York Times.) The first film focused on the American occupation of Iraq; the second, on the detainment and torture of prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The third, the Oscar-winning "Citizenfour," was a white-knuckle, you-are-there account of Edward J. Snowden's leak of thousands of pages of classified National Security Agency documents in 2013, revealing mass surveillance at home and extensive drone wars abroad.

The show, which fills the Whitney's eighth floor, deals with all of these subjects, too, though in images that are not always easy to interpret. It opens with six large photographs of what could be prettily patterned fabrics. They are, in fact, examples of encrypted data intercepted from satellites and drones by a top-secret surveillance center or "listening post," this one British, on the island of Cyprus. The original images were part of the leaked Snowden trove, and your feeling about them — as about much else in the show — will naturally be colored by your ethical take on his actions. Were they treasonous, or heroic, or both?

Inside the exhibition proper, the lighting is dim,

Continued on Page 28



Dr. Spock Looks at His Home Planet Vulcanus and Is a Bit Sad That He Can't Have Any Feelings

PHILIP GREENBERG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Peter Fischli David Weiss: How to Work Better *Above, one of more than 300 sculptures, photographs, slide projections and videos at the Guggenheim.*

Playfully Poking Pieties

KEN JOHNSON
ART REVIEW

In his classic tome "Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture," the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga declared that "genuine, pure play is one of the main bases of civilization." If that's true, then the art-making team of Fischli and Weiss — Peter Fischli (born in 1952) and David Weiss (1946-2012) — have been among the contemporary world's eminently civilizing influences. Few other artists have been more infectiously playful than this Swiss duo, as visitors to the Guggenheim Museum will be delighted to find in "Peter Fischli David Weiss: How to Work Better."

Organized by Nancy Spector, the museum's chief curator, and Nat Trotman, its curator of performance and media, in collaboration with Mr. Fischli, the show presents more than 300 sculptures, photographs, slide projections and videos. This marvelously entertaining exhibition

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Symphonic Experience, From Floor To Floor

ROBERTA SMITH
ART REVIEW

Certain artworks imprint themselves on the brain. "Dammi i Colori," a 2003 video by the Albanian artist Anri Sala, seems permanently lodged in mine. I first saw it at the Venice Biennale that year, mesmerized by this D.I.Y. documentary's effortless argument for the necessity of art and its potential as balm for a traumatized city.

Now it can be seen in "Anri Sala: Answer Me," the artist's austere yet impassioned survey at the New Museum. The video is an apt introduction to his roiling explorations, mostly in video, of sound, time, color, architecture and the politics of modern life.

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Continued on Page 27

NICOLE BENGIVENO/THE NEW YORK T

Anri Sala: Answer Me *Watching the video "Answer Me" (2008) at the New Museum.*

Roberta Smith «Symphonic Experience From Floor To Floor», *Weekend Arts II*, *The New York Times*, n° 1000, Friday, February, 5, 2016, p.21-27.

Galerie
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Symphonic Experience, From Floor To Floor

ROBERTA SMITH
ART REVIEW

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLE BENGIVENO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

In "Anri Sala: Answer Me," the saxophonist André Vida walks around the space, improvising alongside Jemeel Moondoc's performance in a video shot on the balcony of a building in Berlin.

A Symphonic Experience, From Floor to Floor

From Weekend Page 21

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In newer works, Mr. Sala has done with music what he does with color, which is to convey its nurturing power in the face of disruption, a theme undoubtedly influenced by growing up in Albania during its rough transition from communism to democracy.

He usually achieves this with disorienting combinations of spatial, visual and aural elements that are rarely devoid of politics. On screen, modern architecture figures prominently, as a symbol of government incompetence and control and as a measure of change, but also as a container that modulates sound. Other political points about history, progress, age, language and displacement are frequently woven into the fabric of his pieces, to be extrapolated by the viewer.

Top, a close-up of the pianists' hands in "Ravel Ravel." Above, in "Unravel," a disc jockey tries to sync up their performances.

In "Tlatelolco Clash," shot in Mexico City, several elderly street musicians take turns playing different fragments of "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" — a hit by the Clash — on a mechanical barrel organ while a beautiful young woman hovers about. Around them rise Mayan ruins and, just beyond, a modern skyscraper. At one point a worker starts cleaning the ancient stones.

In "Long Sorrow," the free-jazz musician Jemeel Moondoc improvises on the saxophone, from what seems to be the balcony of a stark apartment in an unloved mile-long Berlin building known as the Long Complaint, or Sorrow. Only gradually do we realize that there's no balcony: He's hanging in midair. As he floats away, and other massive buildings come into view, the piece conjures both Magic Realism and an artistic refusal of architecture's numbing anonymity. At approximately the top of every hour throughout the show, the saxophonist André Vida improvises alongside Mr. Moondoc's video performance (13 minutes), their sounds blending and separating as Mr. Vida moves around the space, an option for the viewer as well.

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Anri Sala's "Dammi i Colori," from 2003, a single channel video, documents a painting project dreamed up by the mayor of Tirana, Albania, to lift the spirits of the struggling city.

"Anri Sala: Answer Me" is on view through April 10 at the New Museum, 235 Bowery, at Prince Street, Lower East Side; 212-219-1222, newmuseum.org.

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The New York Times

'Anri Sala: Answer Me' Offers Symphonic Experience From Floor to Floor

ROBERTA SMITH
February 4, 2016

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"Answer Me" (2008), single channel HD video, by Anri Sala at the New Museum.
All photos: Nicole Bengiveno / The New York Times

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The New York Times

"Still Life in the Doldrums (d' apres Cezanne)"

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Jason Farago. «Anri Sala: Answer Me review- art cures 20th century' s broken dreams», *The Guardian*, February 4, 2016.
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theguardian

Anri Sala: Answer Me review – art cures 20th century's broken dreams

New Museum, New York

This is a cunning and occasionally glorious retrospective from one of the most important artists in Europe, exploring communism through video and music

Jason Farago
Thursday 4 February 2016

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Anri Sala, Le Clash, 2010 (still).
Photograph: © Anri Sala/Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery; Hauser & Wirth; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; and kurimanzutto, Mexico City

If America's enervating presidential election has sapped any remaining esteem you had for politicians, might I suggest booking the next flight to Tirana? For the last two and a half years, the west Balkan nation of Albania has been governed not by some philistine crusader promising divinely inspired corporate tax cuts, but by a bona fide artist: the painter-turned-prime-minister Edi Rama, elected in a landslide in 2013.

Rama came to prominence a decade ago, when as mayor of Tirana he ordered the dilapidated communist-era towers of the capital repainted in wild colors – chevrons of red and yellow, zigzagging blue and green stripes. The painted facades are hopelessly inadequate to repair the crumbling architectural legacy of the last century. But after a previous century of politicians brought a city to decay, surely an artist at least deserves a shot.

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Anri Sala, Answer Me, 2008 (still): 'Dreams in which politics and aesthetics informed one another and then collapsed into ruin.' Photograph: © Anri Sala/Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery; Hauser & Wirth; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich; and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

Galerie
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Rama spent much of the 1990s in Paris, where he lived with another Albanian: Anri Sala, a documentary film-maker turned video artist. "This is more an avant garde of democratization," he tells Sala in his 2003 film Dammi i Colori, a nighttime escapade through the Albanian capital and its parti-coloured apartment blocks. It's this seductive tour of Tirana, a midnight reverie of past and present, by which Sala eases us into the grand, busted dreams of the 20th century: modernist dreams, communist dreams, dreams in which politics and aesthetics informed one another and then collapsed into ruin. And Rama's proposition – that (abstract) art might be your best bet for courage after the failure of the communist dream – ripples throughout all the works that constitute Anri Sala: Answer Me, a cunning, musical, and occasionally glorious retrospective of one of the most important artists in Europe, east or west.

Sala was born in 1974, when an isolated Albania was under the thumb of the pitiless, paranoid dictator Enver Hoxha. He shot to prominence with his first film, the documentary Intervista (1998), made while he was still a student in France. (It's not properly included in this show, but the curators have at least decided to screen Intervista once a week in the New Museum's theater.) Sala comes across footage of his mother speaking at a conference of the Party of Labour of Albania in the late 1970s, but the audio is lost. His mother can't remember what she had said. So Sala takes the footage to a school for the deaf, where the students read her lips and help the artist subtitle the interview. It turns out she was just spouting party-line claptrap about young people's allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, which Sala's mother can hardly believe. Her voice, her language, was not her own.

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Anri Sala, Tlatelolco Clash, 2011 (still): a Mexican street performer plays the Clash's Should I Stay or Should I Go?
Photograph: © Anri Sala/Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; and Hauser & Wirth

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With Intervista and Dammi i Colori (the latter's Italian title, literally Give Me the Colors, is borrowed from an aria in Tosca), Sala established himself as one of the shrewdest artistic interrogators of the legacy of communism, on both personal and urban planes. But after his film with Rama, Sala stepped back from his engagement with Albania and began to make more poetic, plangent films and videos – looking obliquely at recent European history, and making heavy use of music.

Four of these later video works are presented here in a single gallery, on a half-hour loop, and you'll want to watch them all, although the sound is occasionally tinny in the New Museum's hostile building. The best is Long Sorrow (2005), shot at a massive housing estate in west Berlin, in which a free jazz saxophonist on the roof plays an improvised dirge to the drab buildings below: a eulogy for modernism, and for the hopes that artists and architects could transform our lives. Answer Me (2008), filmed in a cold war listening station, depicts a woman struggling to speak to a man, who responds only with cacophonous drumming.

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Anri Sala, 3-2-1, 2011/16. Live performance featuring André Vida on saxophone responding to Long Sorrow.
Photograph: © Anri Sala/Courtesy of the artist

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Almost all the last century's aesthetic dreams came to grief. Utopian tower blocks rotted into periurban ghettoes; modernist painting, delusionally imagined as an accelerator of revolution, has become an asset class for a global crew of financiers and rentiers. Rama's painting of the facades of Tirana appears almost a parody of modernist urban planning, a charming but woefully insufficient aesthetic bandage for one of Europe's poorest capitals. But music, that most abstract of all art forms, seems to hold for Sala some little bit of hope. As words are replaced by sound in Sala's later works, music ends up both reflecting the sorry history of 20th-century Europe – and also offering a possible means of redemption.

The newest pair of videos here, both entitled The Present Moment, feature a string sextet playing Arnold Schoenberg's Verklärte Nacht. Sala has modified the score: in one video the musicians only play the note B-flat, in the other only D. (He originally showed the work in Munich's Haus der Kunst, which was initially built as a Nazi show palace; Sala's work served as a stinging rebuke to the Nazis' designation of Schoenberg as a degenerate composer.) The two modified sextets are projected simultaneously, and Schoenberg's late Romantic score devolves into a dissonant muddle. And yet the profound concentration on the musicians' faces, their anxious attempts to play this deformed opus, bespeaks an abiding faith that art might yet live after the dreams of transformation we ascribed to it have died.

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Anri Sala, Unravel, 2013 (still): a DJ scratches together two performances of Ravel. Photograph: © Anri Sala/Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery; and Hauser & Wirth

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

I remain unconvinced by Sala's occasional sculptures – notably his motorized snare drums that play themselves, which to me seem like souvenirs of his major music-backed films rather than fully formed artworks. (There are also some unremarkable works on paper in the show; some were done in collaboration with Rama, who has a penchant for doodling on printouts of his prime ministerial Outlook calendar.) But on the whole this retrospective affirms Sala's unrivaled capacity to excavate the sullied dreams of modernism, and to imagine a future on the ruins of the recent past.

In his masterpiece Ravel Ravel Unravel, first seen at the Venice Biennale in 2013, two pianists play Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D Major, composed for the Jewish pianist Paul Wittgenstein (the brother of the philosopher Ludwig), who fled Austria just before the Anschluss. The two renditions are slightly, deliberately out of sync, and Ravel's concerto sounds curiously rowdy; on a third screen a DJ tries to mix the two together, with only some success. Tempo itself has lost its meaning; time has been disjointed, history is a collection of shards. But the DJ keeps spinning her records, and scratches a new concerto.

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Anri Sala: Answer Me is at the New Museum, New York, through 10 April. A conversation with the artist will be livestreamed here at 7pm ET, then available thereafter

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The New York Times

'Anri Sala: Answer Me' Offers Symphonic Experience From Floor to Floor

ROBERTA SMITH
February 4, 2016

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"Answer Me" (2008), single channel HD video, by Anri Sala at the New Museum.
All photos: Nicole Bengiveno / The New York Times

Certain artworks imprint themselves on the brain. "Dammi i Colori," a 2003 video by the Albanian artist Anri Sala, seems permanently lodged in mine. I first saw it at the Venice Biennale that year, mesmerized by this D.I.Y. documentary's effortless argument for the necessity of art and its potential as balm for a traumatized city.

Now it can be seen in "Anri Sala: Answer Me," the artist's austere yet impassioned survey at the New Museum. The video is an apt introduction to his roiling explorations, mostly in video, of sound, time, color, architecture and the politics of modern life.

This exhibition is brilliantly installed and is as much for music as for art folk. Organized by Massimiliano Gioni, the New Museum's artistic director; Margot Norton, its associate curator; and Natalie Bell, an assistant curator, it spreads a dozen videos and video installations through three floors, encompasses some 16 years of artistic growth and includes a smattering of fairly inconsequential sculpture and drawings. (Example: a snare drum stacked with four real human skulls and dedicated to Cézanne.)

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The New York Times

"Still Life in the Doldrums (d' apres Cezanne)"

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Black-box viewing rooms have all but been eliminated, and the sound quality is extraordinary. The music flows through the museum's spaces, defining them floor by floor. In a work collectively titled "The Present Moment" on the second floor, Arnold Schoenberg's tumultuous late Romantic "Verklärte Nacht," a string sextet from 1899, starts out whole and its notes are fragmented across the entire space and 20 separate ceiling speakers. It re-emerges, performed by musicians on two video screens, having been subjected to the modernist 12-tone technique that Schoenberg developed in the 1920s. It sounds a lot like the Minimalist Philip Glass.

Several videos play in wide open spaces, especially on the third floor, where a large screen hangs from the ceiling to accommodate projections on both sides, their sounds mixing and conversing. And the fourth floor presents Mr. Sala's masterpiece, "Ravel Ravel," a dual-screen, 16-speaker symphonic installation, accompanied by its aural doppelgänger, "Unravel." Both works were seen at the 2013 Venice Biennale and did not stick in my brain. They will now.

But for a minute, back to "Dammi i Colori," whose title — "Give Me the Colors" in Italian — is from "Tosca." It was made in Tirana, Albania's capital, where Mr. Sala was born in 1974 and lived until 1996, when he left for Paris, studied film and video for four years and subsequently settled in Berlin. At the time of the filming, 2002, Tirana resembled a war zone in recovery, rising precariously from decades of Communist neglect and corruption; basic services were intermittent, the roads were barely paved.

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The New York Times

With his camera giving us a passenger-seat view, Mr. Sala drives along these byways, past scaffoldings and piles of dirt. Shooting mostly at night with a spotlight, he focuses on rows of modest Eastern-bloc concrete buildings, which Tirana's mayor is having painted an array of bright, booming colors.

The jubilant blocks of color and eerie disarray remain, gripping for their unexpected combination of poetry and politics. It's like the rebirth of the more populist principles of Constructivism and the Bauhaus. It's Mondrian in action, proof positive of the transformative power of color. In the film, the mayor, Edi Rama, a friend of the artist (and he is now Albania's prime minister), talks fervently about the benefits of his somewhat monomaniacal undertaking. The city's most heated discussions, he says, concern "what are the colors doing to us." He adds that while most cities wear color like a dress, "in a way colors here replace the organs." Which is to say they are sustaining life.

In newer works, Mr. Sala has done with music what he does with color, which is to convey its nurturing power in the face of disruption, a theme undoubtedly influenced by growing up in Albania during its rough transition from communism to democracy.

He usually achieves this with disorienting combinations of spatial, visual and aural elements that are rarely devoid of politics. On screen, modern architecture figures prominently, as a symbol of government incompetence and control and as a measure of change, but also as a container that modulates sound. Other political points about history, progress, age, language and displacement are frequently woven into the fabric of his pieces, to be extrapolated by the viewer.

In "Tlatelolco Clash," shot in Mexico City, several elderly street musicians take turns playing different fragments of "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" — a hit by the Clash — on a mechanical barrel organ while a beautiful young woman hovers about. Around them rise Mayan ruins and, just beyond, a modern skyscraper. At one point a worker starts cleaning the ancient stones.

In "Anri Sala: Answer Me," the saxophonist André Vida, improvising alongside Jemeel Moondoc's performance in a video shot on the balcony of a building in Berlin.

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In "Long Sorrow," the free-jazz musician Jemeel Moondoc improvises on the saxophone, from what seems to be the balcony of a stark apartment in an unloved mile-long Berlin building known as the Long Complaint, or Sorrow. Only gradually do we realize that there's no balcony: He's hanging in midair. As he floats away, and other massive buildings come into view, the piece conjures both Magic Realism and an artistic refusal of architecture's numbing anonymity. At approximately the top of every hour throughout the show, the saxophonist André Vida improvises alongside Mr. Moondoc's video performance (13 minutes), their sounds blending and separating as Mr. Vida moves around the space, an option for the viewer as well.

Mr. Sala has arranged the show as something of a sound installation in itself. Sounds from different pieces bleed together. The light rhythmic voices of the video "Lak-kat," in which two young Senegalese boys practice Wolof — one of their country's indigenous languages — impinge on the pounding noise and abrupt silences in the video "Answer Me."

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Here a slightly crazed-looking young man drums wildly, the sound reverberating inside an abandoned geodesic dome built by Americans to eavesdrop on East Germany. He sometimes pauses but always ignores the woman anxiously lurking behind him, who is occasionally heard to say "Answer me." The children of "Lak-kat" seem to respond, although it turns out that they are actually learning the many words that distinguish skin tones.

Throughout this show music is taken apart and reassembled, but is never the same. This is most apparent and complex in "Ravel, Ravel" on the fourth floor. In a darkened space, everything is magnified: the sounds of orchestra and piano buffet you, while the two videos — one above the other — each presents a close-up of a giant left hand playing the piano. Even the walls and ceiling seem exaggerated: They're covered with two-foot high wedges of foam that mute echoes.

"Ravel, Ravel" includes two performances of a piano concerto.

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"Unravel," a single projection, shows the disc jockey Chloé Thévenin trying to sync records of two pianists.

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The music is Maurice Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D (1929-30), which was commissioned by Paul Wittgenstein, a pianist (and the philosopher's brother) who lost his right hand in World War I. The hands on the screens belong to the pianists Louis Lortie and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, who each performed the concerto with an orchestra, using scores with tempos altered by Mr. Sala slowing or accelerating different parts. Their hands play tag up and down the keys, moving in and out of sync, finishing each other's passages. The music is at once luxuriant and turbulent; if you know the back story, it can be traumatic. It swirls around, filling and then abandoning the crenelated space, whose protrusions add their own suggestion of violence.

The video "Unravel" is an attempt to straighten out the ravel, or tangle, created by "Ravel Ravel." Installed in a smaller, lighter room next door, "Unravel" shows the disc jockey Chloé Thévenin with a record of each performance on her turntables, trying to sync them up. In contrast to the pianists' sparring hands she gently taps or pushes the discs, stops them completely or sets them spinning, sometimes with slurring sounds that can evoke sappy movie music.

Synchronization is fleeting and impossible to sustain, but it is invigorating to follow her fierce concentration. The two versions of Ravel's music cannot be reunited, but as with this singular show, we experience Mr. Sala building art upon art, as well as life, in inspiring ways.

"Anri Sala: Answer Me" is on view through April 10 at the New Museum, 235 Bowery, at Prince Street, Lower East Side; 212-219-1222, newmuseum.org.

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Anri Sala. *Intervista*. 1998. Video, color, sound. 26 min. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.

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She's captivating: a young woman with long, flowing hair, filmed in black-and-white, speaks with confidence into a microphone. The way she dresses, in a boxy pantsuit with a floral collar, along with the visual quality of the 16mm film stock, suggest that the footage has been taken sometime in the late 1970s. While holding forth for the interviewer she beams with pride—and with good reason. As the viewer of Anri Sala's 27-minute experimental documentary *Intervista* (1998) has just seen, the woman has participated in one of her country's major political events, the Congress of the Labour Youth Union of Albania. She has even had the rare privilege of standing shoulder to shoulder with Enver Hoxha, the Supreme Comrade, with the congress hall breaking out into one of the prolonged bouts of metronomic applause that were a regular feature of life under Stalinist regimes.

The woman in the footage is Anri Sala's mother, Valdet. The soundtrack accompanying these images, however, is missing. Two decades after they were captured for Albanian state television, Sala transferred the 16mm reels to videotape. He screens them for his mother, who watches her 32-year-old self: a woman whose voice is muted, whose lips move but emit no sound. Transfixed by the images, anxiously laughing at what she sees, Valdet can only say in response, "Too bad the sound is lost."

From this point, *Intervista* takes the form of a detective story. Sala is determined to locate the missing sound tapes. In succession, he telephones the journalist who questioned his mother, meets with the elderly former Central Committee member Todi Lubonja—expelled from the Party and imprisoned for 16 years after a falling out with Hoxha—and even tracks down the sound engineer for the interview. The sound engineer is now a taxi driver, and he relates that, at the time, sound and image were recorded and stored separately. The sought-after soundtrack for the footage of Sala's mother has, most probably, been destroyed. All three figures attest to the paranoia and fear that impregnated Hoxha's Albania. The reporter gruffly contends that "my questions were set in advance, as were the answers," and even the lowly sound recorder was terrified of a technical incident occurring when party heavyweights were on camera.

Undeterred by the irrecoverable absence of the soundtrack, Sala hits upon a novel solution to his impasse: he visits a local school for the deaf, and he enlists lip-readers to "translate" the movements of his mother's mouth into spoken language, which are then rendered as subtitles on

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It is not the political content to which Sala's mother objects when she sees footage from her youth. It is the *syntax* of her discourse that truly disturbs her.

the footage. Predictably enough, her interview turns out to have consisted of textbook phrases of Stalinist political jargon, a long stream of what semiotic theory would call empty signifiers: "This meeting was held," the young Valdet explains, "to clearly express the political situation in the country in terms of the struggle against imperialism, revisionism, and the two superpowers, which is only possible with the Marxist-Leninist Party. And only if youth unites its efforts under the auspices of the Marxist-Leninist Party..."

The tape is paused. Having earlier been spellbound by the footage, the Valdet of 1998 is now in disbelief: "It's absurd! I just can't believe it! It's just spouting words. There's no sense to it. I know how to express myself." Crucially, it is not the political content to which Valdet objects. It is the *syntax* of her discourse that truly disturbs her, the senseless cobbling together of set phrases into a near-indecipherable gibberish that she struggles to accept came from her own mouth.

An exploration of Albania's political history, an interrogation of the roles of image, sound, and language in audiovisual media, and a touching sketch of the relationship between a mother and her son, Sala's *Intervista* gained considerable renown for the first-time filmmaker, then aged 24. The film's success—scooping up several festival awards and bringing Sala to the attention of critics across Europe—opened up the possibility for the artist to join the burgeoning field of documentary filmmaking. But while this foundational work established a reputation for what art historian Paolo Magagnoli calls Sala's "enigmatic realism," his subsequent output has proved to be of a particularly protean nature: initially concentrated in film and video art, Sala's repertoire has expanded to incorporate sculpture, photography, and musical performance.[1] Increasingly, too, the conditions of spectatorship have become integral to the Albanian artist's œuvre, with his most recent works conceived specifically for multi-screen installations in the gallery space. Christine Macel, the curator for Sala's 2012 show at the Centre Pompidou and 2013 presentation at the Venice Biennale, has referred to his "symphonic" juxtaposition of multiple video works in a single viewing environment, and this

(1) Paolo Magagnoli. *Documents of Utopia: The Politics of Experimental Documentary*. Columbia University Press. 2015. p. 57.

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quality will surely come to the fore again in "Answer Me," a retrospective at New York's New Museum, which for the first time offers North American audiences an overview of the artist's growing body of work.

Sala emerged in the European art scene of the late 1990s, at a time when a number of artists, from Pierre Huyghe and Stan Douglas to Doug Aitken and Douglas Gordon, were importing cinema into the white cube. Yet while his colleagues utilized cinema (often Hollywood cinema) as raw material for new works—a phenomenon the curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud baptized "postproduction"—Sala has shown no special interest in the cultural heritage of Hollywood, nor has he treated the media of celluloid and video as visual elements to be remixed or repurposed. Like peers such as Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Albert Serra, he is, strictly speaking, neither a filmmaker-cum-artist nor an artist-cum-filmmaker. Rather, Sala is *equally* at home in both spheres, to the point of liquidating any hard boundaries between the two. And while his more recent work has been shown exclusively in gallery settings—earning Sala the approbation of art historians and theorists such as Michael Fried, Jacques Rancière, and Boris Groys—a more specific concern for cinematic questions such as editing, mise-en-scène, and the sound-image nexus remains central to Sala's art.

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The intersection of cinema and visual art practices in Sala's work can be traced back to his educational background. Trained at Tirana's Academy of Fine Arts as a fresco painter soon after the end of Communist rule, Sala enrolled in the video department at France's Le Fresnoy art school—almost by accident, as the artist himself tells it—and immersed himself in the work of auteur filmmakers such as Andrei Tarkovsky, Jean-Luc Godard, and Ingmar Bergman. It was in Paris that he made the acquaintance of Edi Rama, a fellow artist and expatriate Albanian. The two lived together for a time, but soon after Sala completed *Intervista* his friend returned to Albania and turned to politics, becoming mayor of Tirana in 2000. Rama's signature policy was an urban regeneration program centered on painting the capital's buildings in a panoply of bold colors. The result is a polychromatic cityscape that unwinds the cliché of the drab Eastern bloc metropolis, and instead resembles the Boca district of Buenos Aires, or even the red-saturated apartment in Godard's *La Chinoise* (1967). In

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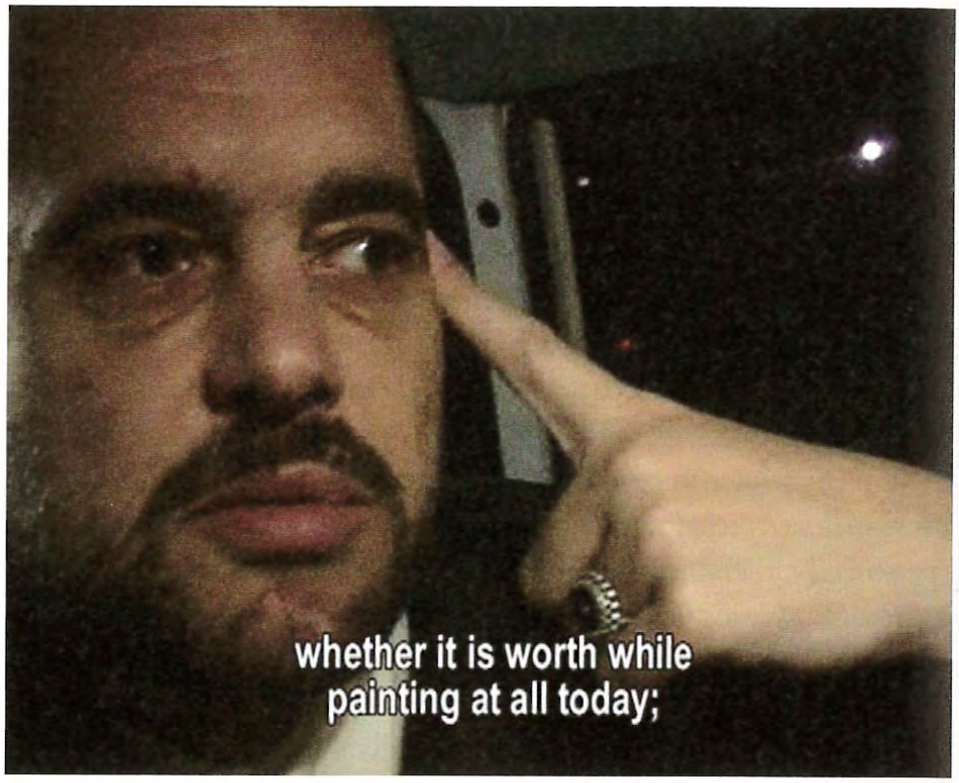

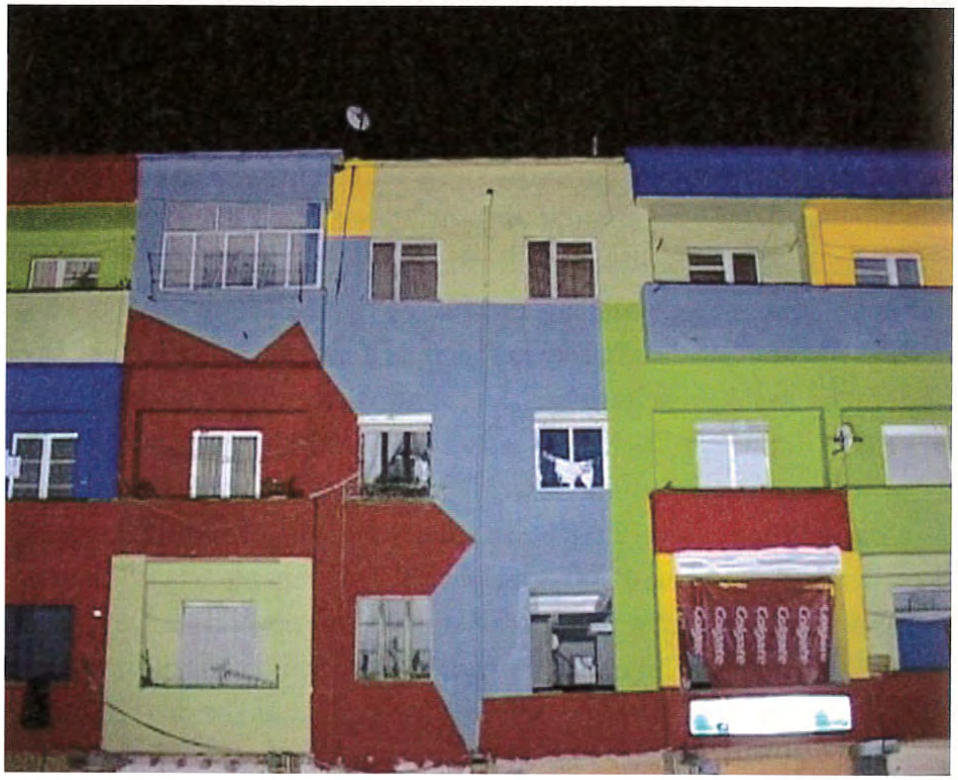

Anri Sala. *Dammi i colori*. 2003.
Video, color, sound. 15 min. Courtesy
Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.

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contrast to the stately charm of the Argentine capital or Haussmannian Paris, however, most of the edifices daubed under Rama's administration are crumbling Brutalist monoliths connected by pothole-studded dirt roads, attesting to Tirana's status as the capital of one of Europe's poorest countries.

In *Dammi i colori* (2003), Sala's camera prowls around these neighborhoods as they are transformed by municipal workers into the panels of a vast, abstract fresco. Long, nocturnal traveling shots taken from behind a car windshield show the brightly colored buildings illuminated by automobile headlights. In a dreamy voiceover accompanying the images, Rama muses, "Here, colors replace the organs, they are not part of the dress," and insists that the colors displayed even have an impact on the breathing rhythms of city residents. The mayor observes that, as a result of his beautification project, "I do not think there is any other country in Europe where people discuss so passionately and collectively about colors." Indeed, Rama's transformation of the capital was hotly debated both within and beyond Albania: seen in some quarters as a quick and inexpensive way for decaying urban spaces to aesthetically remake themselves, it has been criticized in equal measure as a frivolous diversion from the city's more pressing needs for social services and new infrastructure. Certainly, Sala does not flinch from contrasting the freshly painted walls of the apartment buildings with the squalor and decrepitude of modern-day Tirana. The residents that appear on camera, far from being enchanted by Rama's paint job, just go about their daily business, blithely indifferent to the visual spectacle unfurling around them.

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And yet the ebullient optimism of Rama's vision does not leave us unmoved. Faced with these kaleidoscopic images of an otherwise nondescript city, the viewer will likely share the dazed incredulity of fellow artist Liam Gillick, who, according to the title card that opens the film, implored Sala: "Anri, tell me the truth. Tell me that this city does not exist. Please tell me that you do not have an artist-mayor friend." Ostensibly, with the communist project's political millenarianism eviscerated, only a modernist faith in abstract painting is left to provide a happier, more beautiful future. Indeed, whether consciously or not, the mayor of Tirana adopts a distinctly Leninist language when discussing the popularity of his aesthetic measures. The focus on spending a substantial portion of the municipal budget on a cosmetic makeover of the city is, he admits, "not an outcome of democratization,

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(2)

but more an avant-garde of democratization." The choice and disposition of colors is a decision made from above, because, in Rama's view, if such decisions were left to local residents the resulting "golden mean" would be nothing but a homogeneous gray. Rama even compares the relationship between a mayor and his electorate to that between artist and viewer—a statement that assumes a certain degree of passivity on the part of both the political citizenry and the artistic public.

Even with the political responsibilities of his position, Rama's artistic sensibility is evidently irrepressible: late in the film he takes delight in the visual effect of the car's red brake light set off against the blackness of the night. In pursuing an idiosyncratic dialogue between art and politics, *Dammi i colori*—the Italian title, which translates as "Give me the colors" is drawn from a line in Puccini's *Tosca*, airs of which waft through the background of the film's soundtrack—also demolishes stereotypes about the supposed backwardness of Albanian society. After the turmoil of the 1990s, the Balkan nation has largely avoided the authoritarian drift of many of its post-Communist neighbors. Instead, its populace elects a forward-thinking painter as mayor. A decade on from its release, Sala's film has gained a fresh political context: Rama, the artist's old Paris flatmate, is now prime minister of Albania, having been elected in 2013 on a platform promising progressive taxation, universal healthcare, and legal equality for gays and lesbians. Meanwhile, Rama's artistic past has not been forgotten: the entrance to the prime ministerial office has a light-up awning by Philippe Parreno, and he gives press conferences in front of a Thomas Demand photograph.

Dammi i colori, however, was the last time that Sala would reflect specifically on the vicissitudes of his homeland in his films and videos. Having lived through

(2) Philippe Parreno. *Marquee Tirana*. 2015. Façade of the office of the prime minister, Tirana. Photo: Blerta Kambo.

(3) In 2015, the question of linguistic meaning returned to the fore in a reworked version of the video, *Làk-kat 2.0 (British/American)*, although here it is the inevitability of semantic uncertainty in any cross-cultural communication that is stressed. In this two-screen work, independently subtitled versions of the text in British and American English are presented side by side, thereby highlighting culturally charged lexical variances: *tubab*, for instance, is rendered in the British translation as "whitey" and in the American as "great white hope."

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With the communist project's political millenarianism eviscerated, only a modernist faith in abstraction is left to provide a happier, more beautiful future.

the political and economic isolation of pre-1991 Albania, a pariah-state even within the Communist world, Sala now seems to delight in crossing borders. A long-time resident of Berlin, his subsequent projects have taken him to different parts of Europe (France, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and further afield (Mexico, Arizona, Senegal). A pair of videos made after the Rama documentary aptly demonstrates this globalizing tendency in Sala's work, instantiating and reflecting on processes of cultural deracination. *Làk-kat* (2004) depicts the efforts of three Senegalese schoolboys to regurgitate the words of a radio announcer speaking in Wolof, as they are given a vocabulary lesson focusing on the words used to describe the range of colors from black to white. Learning this lexicon is a considerable task, even for a native speaker. As the artist explains, the traditional Wolof terms have been displaced in contemporary popular usage by their French equivalents, and so the very choice of terminology is a question laden with political and racial implications linked to Senegal's colonial past. The boys taking the lesson, however, are unaware of the historically charged nature of the words they utter. In Wolof, the word *làk-kat* means "gibberish"; coming from the mouths of bored schoolchildren, the film's spoken text is abstracted and denuded of its meaning. Instead, what comes through to the viewer most palpably is the strange staccato rhythms produced by the repetition of words which, divorced from any syntactic context, are transformed into pure sonic phenomena.[(3)]

Làk-kat's gesture towards abstraction is echoed in *time after time* (2003). Filmed in a prolonged, rigidly immobile shot, a silhouetted horse stands motionless on the side of a highway, with an imposing concrete apartment block visible in the darkened rear of the scene. An undulating camera lens brings the horse in and out of focus; at times the image is so blurred that small dots of light in the background come to dominate the frame. Dogs bark on the soundtrack, but otherwise the night is still. The sense of repose, however, is brusquely interrupted by a series of passing vehicles, briefly throwing light on the animal before whooshing past. These near-collisions may cause tension for the spectator—a couple of trucks passing at high-speed late in the piece are particularly terrifying,

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Anri Sala. *Ravel Ravel*, 2013. Two-channel HD video and 16-channel sound installation. 21 min. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; and Hauser & Wirth.

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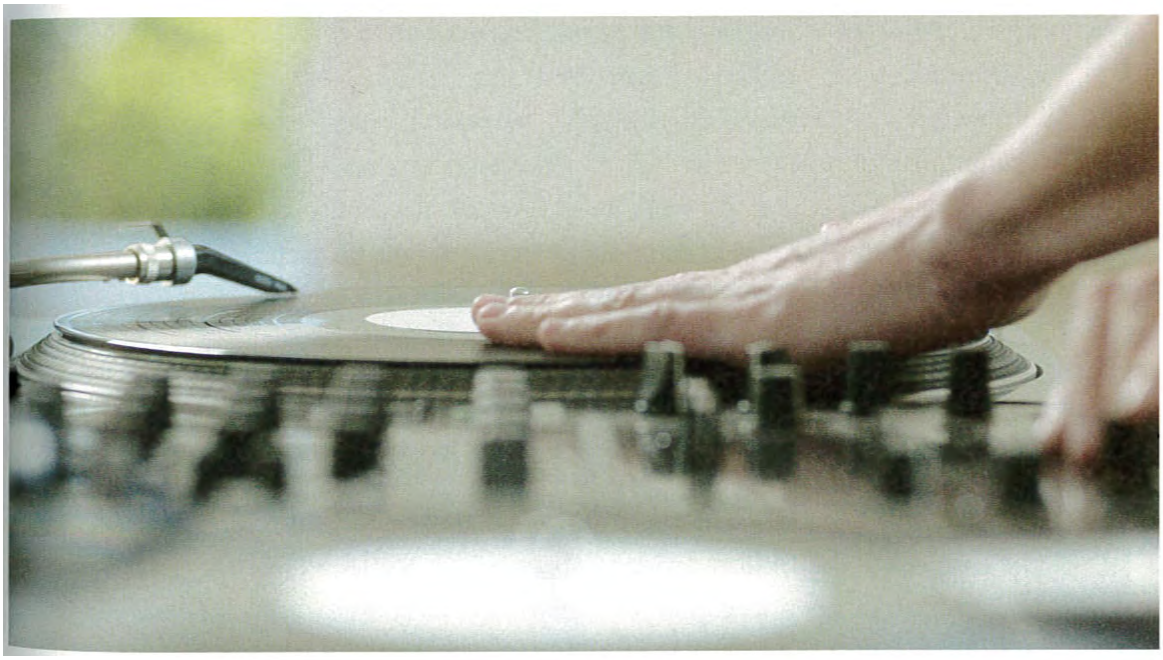

Anri Sala. *Unravel*. 2013. Two-channel HD video and sound installation in two separate spaces. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; Hauser & Wirth; and kurimanzutto, Mexico City.

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and induce the only moment of montage in the film, a subliminally brief close-up of the horse's eyeball. But the steed remains impassive, and its only response to the prospect of impact is a serene raise of its rear hoof. The architecture of the apartment block suggests an Eastern European filming location, but this information is left deliberately unspecified by the artist; highlighted instead is the coexistence of disparate technologies and tempos produced by rapid economic transformation.

time after time prefigures a more thoroughgoing shift in Sala's œuvre from the mid-2000s onwards. Issues of linguistic meaning and ambiguity were at the heart of *Intervista* and other early films, but after 2005, language is largely eliminated, not only as an effective means of communication, but also as an aesthetic material. Sala's output becomes progressively wordless, with the artist increasingly preoccupied with the "languages" of other media, such as architectural space and music. Key to this transition is the 2005 work *Long Sorrow*. Shot on Super 16mm, the film represents a rare use of celluloid by the artist, and is discussed in detail by the veteran art historian Michael Fried, who casts Sala as one of "four honest outlaws" now at work in contemporary art.(4) Taking its name from the Langer Jammer housing estate in West Berlin, designed by Bauhaus architect Otto Bartning in the early 1930s, *Long Sorrow* opens with a passage reprising the static camerawork of *time after time*. From within a stark, compact apartment, unfurnished save for a radiator, the camera looks out the window to the endless residential complex beyond, while the feverish energy of an insistent saxophone score provides a counterpoint to the cold functionalism of the décor. At first glance, a strange potted plant appears to be wedged under the window, holding it open in a tableau arrangement whose oneiric desolation recalls Magritte or de Chirico. But soon the camera begins to float around the room, drawing closer to the vegetal structure at the center of the frame, which is revealed, in fact, to be the dreadlocked head of the free jazz saxophonist Jemeel Moondoc, suspended just outside the window of the 18th-floor apartment. In the second half of the film, the camera switches position to join Moondoc outside the building, and an increasingly frenetic montage is crafted from elliptical fragments of the soloist's face and hands, before he appears to float over the rooftops of Berlin. The cuts, however, introduce an element of discord between sound and image: while the musical score continues in uninterrupted fashion, the combination of camera

(4) Michael Fried. *Four Honest Outlaws: Sala, Ray, Marioni, Gordon.* Yale University Press. 2011.

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Anri Sala. *Long Sorrow*. 2005. Super 16mm film transferred to video, sound, color. 13 min. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; Hauser & Wirth; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich; and Johnen Galerie, Berlin.

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Anri Sala. *Answer Me*. 2008. Video, color, sound. 5 min. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; Hauser & Wirth; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

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angles, frequently alternating between opposite sides of the filmic space ("crossing the line," in the parlance of classical film editing), precludes the possibility that the shots were filmed simultaneously. Instead, the sequence is a *post facto* assemblage, void of any potential synchronous relationship with the improvised saxophone arrangement on the soundtrack.

Filmed in a derelict Buckminster Fuller-style geodesic dome in Berlin, whose original function was as a Cold War-era surveillance center for American intelligence, *Answer Me* (2008) is similarly positioned at the confluence of history, architecture, and music. At the same time, however, Sala's work here comes closest to the generic conventions of narrative cinema. Its structure, the artist has revealed, derives from a passage in Michelangelo Antonioni's book *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber*, which sketches an idea for a film depicting the breakup of a couple: instead of speaking they say nothing, and let their silences do the work of heartbreak. A young man and woman meet inside the dome—whose mushroom-like architecture recalls the Mussolini-era EUR district in Rome, where Antonioni filmed *L'eclisse* (1962)—and engage in a frustrating *dialogue de sourds*. While the woman attempts to speak, the man, facing away from her, responds only with a frenzied pounding of his drum kit, the reverberating sounds of which drown out her voice. Only disconnected snatches of dialogue filter through the onslaught of drumming: "Isn't that so?", "Answer me!"

Whereas *Long Sorrow* and *Answer Me* are pervaded by continuous instrumental scores, Sala's more recent works tend toward a decomposition and serialization of music. This technique was foreshadowed by the impromptu short film *Air Cushioned Ride* (2006), in which a cortège of semi-trailers creates transmission interference on Sala's car radio, blending baroque orchestral music with country tunes in an improbable mashup. But it blossomed with the twin works *Le Clash/Tlatelolco Clash* (2010/2011), for which Sala was awarded the Vincent Award in 2014. Both films dismantle the eponymous English band's seminal 1982 track "Should I Stay or Should I Go." In the former piece, filmed in an abandoned outdoor amphitheater in Bordeaux, two lightly anachronistic versions of the punk anthem are generated by an organ grinder and a melancholic middle-aged man holding a tinkling music box, both of whom meander through the depopulated, weed-strewn surrounds. The latter film retains the street organ, but shifts location to the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City, the site of an Aztec monument that was repurposed first by the Catholic Church, and

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Sala lived through the catastrophic denouement of the 20th century's most concrete attempt at total social transformation. And yet the ideals it espoused, of equality, solidarity, and progress, remain stubbornly lodged in the collective psyche.

then by the secular modernism of post-revolutionary Mexico. The political resonance of the location, however, is more sharply pertinent: it was here that up to 300 student demonstrators were shot dead by police prior to the 1968 Olympics. In *Tlatelolco Clash*, the process of melodic breakdown is further accentuated: local townsfolk, possessing punch cards for the Clash song, individually feed them into the organ, producing detached snippets of music that only come together in halting, stuttering fashion.

In 2013 and 2014, Sala created two works that make use of canonic examples of 20th-century music, both intimately linked to the histories of the exhibition spaces in which they first appeared. Incorporating Maurice Ravel's "Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major" (specifically composed for the one-handed Jewish-Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein, elder brother of the philosopher Ludwig), *Ravel Ravel Unravel* was commissioned for the 2013 Venice Biennale, where Sala represented France. In an extraordinary move, Sala staged the work not in the French pavilion but in the German one, a Nazi-era neoclassical building constructed as a monument to pan-fascist solidarity. Two contemporary pianists, Louis Lortie and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, each tackle the composition, but subtle deviations between the recordings mean that, when Sala projects them simultaneously, they slide in and out of synchrony. Played in an anechoic chamber, the resulting stereo soundscape thus sporadically generates otherwise impossible echo effects. In an adjoining room, French DJ Chloé Thévenin can be seen at a pair of turntables, her efforts to bring the pieces into synch through beat-matching techniques frustrated by the continual re-emergence of sonic discordances.

The Present Moment, meanwhile, took Arnold Schoenberg's early, neo-romantic "Verklärte Nacht" and subjected it to the same processes of atonal serialism that the composer would develop in his later dodecaphonic works. In Sala's rendition, a string sextet performs only single notes from the work (existing variants include D and B flat). The absolute concentration on the musicians' faces and poised control of their instruments—we see the

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Top: Anri Sala. *Tlatelolco Clash*. 2011. HD video and surround sound installation. 12 min. Courtesy kurimanzutto, Mexico City; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; Hauser & Wirth; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; and Kaikai Kiki, Tokyo.

Bottom: Anri Sala. *Le Clash*. 2010. HD video and surround sound installation. 8½ min. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; Hauser & Wirth; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; and kurimanzutto, Mexico City.

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Anri Sala. *The Present Moment (in D)*. 2014. HD video and 19-channel sound installation. 28½ min. Courtesy Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York; and Hauser & Wirth.

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cellist's eyes widen, and a violinist's arm tremble like gooseflesh—belie the fact that they are playing the same note over and over. As with *Ravel Ravel Unravel*, however, it was the site of the installation that provided the most symbolic impact of *The Present Moment*. Sala's initiative enabled Schoenberg—considered by the Nazis as a nonpareil of degenerate art—to gain revenge by occupying the Haus der Kunst in Munich, an institution originally conceived to showcase the work of official artists of the Third Reich.

In his posthumous opus *Aesthetic Theory*, Theodor Adorno argued that the formal radicalism of figures such as Schoenberg could provide a far more potent alternative to alienated society than the output of politically engaged artists. At the same time, however, he cast doubt on the capacity for artistic modernism to have any practical effect on contemporary, industrialized nation-states. The intransigent experimentation of a Schoenberg, a Beckett, or a Kafka contains a utopian kernel, which is precious in presaging a "reconciled" world, even if its realization proves impossible.

In exploring sites where artistic utopianism meets with and confronts visions for political transformation, Sala traverses the same antinomies that were mapped out by the Frankfurt School theorist. There is a key moment in *Dammi i colori*: Rama speaks of making Tirana "a city of choice, not a city of destiny," admitting to the utopian nature of this social project in paint. Simultaneously, the image fades to an irrefragable black. Both Sala and Rama, of course, lived through the catastrophic denouement of the 20th century's most concrete attempt at totalizing social transformation, and yet the ideals it espoused—ideals of equality, solidarity, and social progress—remain stubbornly lodged in the collective psyche. A similar ambivalence is at work in *Intervista*, as Sala's mother is confronted with the phantoms of her past, returning to her in the guise of silent film footage. Initially disdainful towards the image of her younger self, the most moving moment of the film comes when she suddenly changes tack, confessing to her continued attachment to the Communist cause. Allowing that the notion of a world revolution to do away with oppression and exploitation "still has a nice ring to it," Valdet insists that "if I could go back, I wouldn't act differently. I believed in what I was doing, that much I can say." As she watches Albania plunge into civil unrest following the collapse of a

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government-backed pyramid scheme, Sala's mother becomes even more affirmative: "The commandments of Communism were to be honest, socially minded, idealistic, energetic, optimistic. I was all of those things. I still am that way. And I still work for that today."

Valdet's attitude towards her past as a Communist militant mirrors, in many ways, Sala's own engagement with the vexing legacy of artistic modernism. He is lucid to the pitfalls of excessive faith in art's capacity to sweepingly overhaul everyday life, but he has not ceded to disenchanted cynicism. Instead, he seeks to renew the subversive impulse of the modernist project. At the core of his work, in the saxophone solo from a Berlin apartment, the stop-start melody of a Mexican organ grinder, or the furtive blush on the young Valdet Sala's face after she delivers a disquisition on Marxist-Leninist politics, Sala retains a confidence in the transformative potential of art—albeit one that works in subtler, more personal ways than the grand programs of revolutionary change that characterized the 20th century. There is a lingering spark of utopianism at the heart of Sala's films and videos, and it is this that allows him to be, as Fried has it, an "honest outlaw."

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Mark Godfrey. «Anri Sala talk about the the present moment, 2014», *Artforum*, Vol. 53, n. 8, April, 2015, pp. 232-235.

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1000 WORDS

Anri Sala

TALKS ABOUT *THE PRESENT MOMENT*, 2014

FOR ANRI SALA, sound has always functioned as both an expressive medium and a register of memory, hauntingly subject to erasure. In the work for which Sala first garnered acclaim, the 1998 video *Intervista*, silence is the sensory analogue of historical amnesia, a condition the artist seeks to reverse, specifically by trying to find, and later re-creating, the lost sound track of a reel of 16-mm footage showing his mother speaking at an Albanian Communist rally, circa 1977. Since then, the artist has produced a series of videos in which sound becomes a means through which to investigate the relationships between past and present, place and displacement. In *Naturalmystic (Tomahawk #2)*, 2002, an actor from Belgrade sits in a Paris recording studio, vocally simulating the sound of missiles falling on Serbia's capital during NATO's 1999 bombardment, as if to articulate trauma's repetition compulsion as syncopated composition. In *Long Sorrow*, 2005, a saxophonist suspended on a narrow ledge near the top of a West Berlin skyscraper appears so absorbed in his playing that he is not perturbed by his precarious situation; at times, however, he emits notes that echo the sounds around him, showing his awareness of his environment. While at every moment of his playing one feels the saxophonist's intense immersion in the present, Sala has chosen to stage this performance in a housing project nicknamed *lange Jammer*, or "long sorrow"—a gesture that prompts reflection on all the historical

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Opposite page: **Anri Sala, *The Present Moment*, 2014,** HD digital video (color, sound, 21 minutes 30 seconds), nineteen-channel sound installation. Installation view, Haus der Kunst, Munich. Photo: Jens Webber. This page, clockwise from top left: **Anri Sala, *Long Sorrow*, 2005,** Super 16 transferred to HD digital video, color, sound, 12 minutes 57 seconds. **Anri Sala, *1395 Days Without Red*, 2011,** HD digital video, color, sound, 43 minutes 46 seconds. **Anri Sala, *Intervista*, 1998,** digital video, color, sound, 26 minutes.

sorrows crowding in on this fleeting instant, from the violence of Berlin's past to the failed promises of modernist design. And in *1395 Days Without Red*, 2011, set in Sarajevo during the mid-1990s siege, an actor playing a musician on her way to rehearsal hums a melody to help her negotiate the terror of her journey through streets relentlessly monitored by snipers.

Like Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe, artists he came to know during his post-art-school years in Paris, Sala conceives each exhibition not just as a gathering of works but as a distinct *place* where sound can help choreograph the viewer's experience. Sala's presentation *Ravel Ravel Unravel* at the 2013 Venice Biennale, an exemplar of this approach, was a masterpiece: Representing France but showing in the German pavilion, Sala blocked the building's grandiose main entrance, requiring visitors to detour through a side door, past a video projection of a woman shot in tight close-up, and into the vast main gallery. There, viewers found two projections of two pianists playing Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*; in an adjacent space, another film showed a DJ (the woman from the projection) trying to mix the disparate renditions back into a coherent whole. Though the focus was on the manual effort of the musicians, the strange space between their interpretations of the score, and the way the intensity of their performances was matched by the concentration of the DJ, the setting itself was also very much a subject of the work. Sala had filmed the DJ within the empty German pavilion, sometimes directing the camera up to the high windows so that the bright light of that particular day scorched the image: Watching this video in the exact same space, one became conscious of the overdetermined layerings of physical, representational, and historical strata that constitute any given place. Certainly it was difficult to conceive of a more historically overdetermined situation: This was a work by an Albanian-born, Berlin-based artist, representing France in the German pavilion, using a score composed by a Frenchman (Maurice Ravel) for an Austrian pianist (Paul Wittgenstein) who was injured fighting for the German side in World War I and who was later barred from performing in Austria on account of his Jewish ancestry.

While recent critical accounts, especially Michael Fried's excellent essays on the artist, have dwelled on Sala's absorbed protagonists and the ways in which his videos, as Fried puts it, "invariably convey the sense of taking place *in the present*, as opposed to the implied past-ness of traditional narrative film," I have wondered for some time how these qualities or concerns connect to the ways in which Sala has continued to deal with the impact of the past on our sense of the here and now. Rather than history threatening to shatter either the absorption of Sala's characters or our own experience of presentness as we encounter his works, perhaps it is this very intensity of presentness in his art that allows a unique perspective on the meaning of *now* and its correlate, *here*. To be fully in the present is to be paradoxically aware that the present is not a discrete moment—not the gap between past and future, but the experience of these things converging; immediacy is never truly immediate, because it is separate neither from the burdens of the past nor from the possibilities, both hopeful and dire, of moments not yet lived. Arguably, music—so singularly evocative and transporting, yet so conducive to a feeling of immanence, of fully inhabiting a particular moment and a particular body—has unique capacities to mirror and intensify this paradoxical condition, or what Sala calls the "overlays of past and future in the present." And so it was fascinating to hear that, for his current show at Munich's Haus der Kunst, Sala had chosen to fill the space that once hosted the Third Reich's "Great German Art" exhibitions with the music of "degenerate artist" Arnold Schönberg, and that Sala had named his project for something he has wanted to both complicate and intensify since the very beginning of his practice: the present moment.

—Mark Godfrey

BACK IN THE FALL OF 2013, I was invited by the Haus der Kunst to make a new work for their large central hall. Considering the physical characteristics as well as the history of the site, I decided to create a work that would confront the space through a series of contradictions: I wanted to contrast the monumental size of the hall with the intimacy of a chamber

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Anri Sala, *The Present Moment* (detail), 2014, HD digital video (color, sound, 21 minutes 30 seconds), nineteen-channel sound installation, dimensions variable.

I'm interested in how the idea of the present comes across in a time of boundless acceleration.

composition, and to oppose a space that was once dedicated to authoritarian speech with a rational conversation among six voices—a sextet of two violins, two violas, and two cellos, with no conductor to guide them; that role is nonexistent. Knowing that people are constantly crossing the space to get from one part of the museum to another, I sought to complement the visitors' random movements with a sort of choreographed walkabout through the site. I wanted to create something you can't quite hold all at once, from a single vantage point, but that you're compelled to try to grasp and comprehend, through a succession of distinct phases and locations.

Once I had decided to use a chamber composition, the choice of Arnold Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* [Transfigured Night, 1899] was mostly intuitive. I believe that what strikes me most about Schönberg's sextet, besides its outstanding beauty, is how it both speaks of a period that is coming to an end and announces the suspenseful anticipation of the times ahead. Although it is a late Romantic piece, in my opinion *Verklärte Nacht* already hints at the sounds of the new music that was to come.

Taking the score of *Verklärte Nacht* as a departure point, my collaborator and sound designer Olivier Goinard and I created three supplementary scores, using a method of subtraction and accumulation based on the principle of the twelve-tone system—the compositional method that Schönberg pioneered two decades after he wrote *Verklärte Nacht*. The first of these supplementary scores singles out each appearance of a new tone in the original score of *Verklärte Nacht*. Only solitary notes obeying Schönberg's dodecaphonic rule are played: In his system, and therefore in this score, a tone may be repeated only after all the other eleven tones with which it forms the chromatic total have been played. Each tone in *Verklärte Nacht* that disobeys Schönberg's rule, appearing before the eleven others in the series have been played, is filtered out of the first supplementary score and removed from the staves, so that only the first appearances of the respective tones remain.

In the second supplementary score, having passed through this dodecaphonic filter, each of the notes is played repetitively in the same rhythmic value until replaced by the next note—a new tone—from the aforementioned score. And in the last score, the sextet only plays a single tonality—the D notes—from *Verklärte Nacht*. Each D note is played repetitively until the next D note from *Verklärte Nacht* replaces it. The only distinction among the notes is their original rhythmic value, as well as the ensuing melodic differences when D changes octaves while remaining one and the same tone. At this point we are seeing the musicians perform the composition's ultimate reduction.

We recorded *Verklärte Nacht*, which was to become our reference point, first, before proceeding with the recordings of the other scores. Although the sextet performed each score together, each musician had to rigorously follow the tempo indications and the pace with which he or she had performed in the previous recording. The real challenge and particularity was in creating this peculiar reliance on a previous recording. As a result, each musician was more "in touch" with his or her previous self in *Verklärte Nacht* than with the fellow musicians playing simultaneously. This reliance between the different scores of *The Present Moment* is indispensable to the work; it stops them from acting like competing chapters in the piece and instead enables them to become complementary instances of the same presentness.

All through this process of transforming and supplementing the Schönberg score, I had been thinking about how the viewer would hear these concurrent renditions of *Verklärte Nacht* simultaneously (hearing all the scores together from one standpoint) and sequentially (moving through the hall). I imagined that one's encounter with the different scores would spark a string of present moments that would exist both beforehand and at once with one another. Turning

Mark Godfrey. «Anri Sala talk about the the present moment, 2014», *Artforum*, Vol. 53, n. 8, April, 2015, pp. 232-235.

Left: **Anri Sala, *The Present Moment* (detail), 2014,** HD digital video (color, sound, 21 minutes 30 seconds), nineteen-channel sound installation, dimensions variable.

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these scores into distinct locations within the space of the Haus der Kunst was vital to the experience of the work.

As you enter, you find yourself below an arc of six speakers, and you listen to the recording of the original score. You become aware of a second set of speakers, and of certain solitary tones drifting across the space as if expelled from the main body of the music, thus producing a sense of direction and trajectory. As these tones reach the far end of the hall, they accumulate and play repetitively—under another arc of six speakers—seemingly trapped in a dead end, a space where acoustic memory is condensed. Some notes, all belonging to a particular tone, extend their journey farther to conclude in a video in which they

Anri Sala, *Unravel*, 2013, two-channel HD digital video, color, sound, 6 minutes 25 seconds, 20 minutes 45 seconds.

are embodied by the sextet seated together in a semicircle against a wall. There they are instantly transformed into a series of recurring movements of shoulders, elbows, arms, and hands: the physical manifestation of musical gestures. The musical instruments remain nearly invisible, to stress the physical effort that precedes the sounding of the notes.

I called the work *The Present Moment* because I'm interested in how the idea of the present comes across in a time of boundless acceleration. In addition, it is believed that the longest present "moments"—those pieces of time in which memory is not yet activated and notions of past and future do not arise—occur while one is listening to music. The extents of these present moments often correspond to the lengths of what are known as musical phrases or gestures. Observation has shown that the present moment only lasts three to four seconds during most of the activities of everyday life. The exception is when one is listening to music, when it may lengthen to eight seconds.

Verklärte Nacht's own trajectory across the hall is, in a manner of speaking, a journey of a past event toward its own future, since the music was rearranged using the technique Schönberg developed twenty years later. Further, *The Present Moment* produces sounds and induces actions that echo historical events and procedures (such as serialism in music and the increasing specialization and division of industrial labor under Taylorism) that were to occur only later. And as one walks through a space and hears the sounds of *Verklärte Nacht* drifting across a place that was erected to expel those sounds, the past is also summoned. These overlays of past and future in the present assign to the current moment a special aura within the flow of time.

This interest in the experience of a "continuous presence" is increasingly reflected in my work, especially in how the characters in the films negotiate the next moment while being absorbed by the present one—for example, Jemeel Moondoc in *Long Sorrow*, suspended outside the top floor of a tall building and coping with the stress of his situation by improvising on a saxophone, or the woman who hums her way across the besieged city of Sarajevo in *1395 Days Without Red*, or even Chloé, the DJ who endeavors to manually sync two distinct executions of Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*.

I'm especially interested in how music gives weight to the present moment, how it spreads it open. And when I conceive an exhibition, I do not see it as a space where works are exhibited together, but rather as a place where the trajectories of the characters and their presentness in the respective films converge with the trajectory of the viewer in the here and now of the exhibition site. In that regard, I do not see a difference between constituting an exhibition from preexisting works or elements and composing a new work where different elements and sound tracks converse together. Instead, I see an exhibition as a possibility, an opportunity to explore what I would call the now-moment and its contending instances. □

"Anri Sala: The Present Moment" is currently on view (through Sept. 20) at Haus der Kunst, Munich.

Baynard Woods. «Waiting For Tchaikovsky: Anri Sala's '1395 Days Without Red», *Baltimore City Paper*, February, 17, 2015. http://www.citypaper.com/film/film/bcp-waiting-for-tchaikovsky-anri-salas-1395-days-without-red-screening-at-the-baltimore-museum-of-art-th-20150217,0,624282.story

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CITY PAPER

Waiting For Tchaikovsky: Anri Sala's '1395 Days Without Red'

Directed by Anri Sala, through Feb. 22 at the BMA

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«1395 Days without Red» follows Spanish actress Maribel Verdú as she walks across town, hanging close to buildings when possible and then standing in lines with others at intersections as they wait to dash across the vulnerable streets one by one in dark colors, so they're not an easy target. (February 17, 2015)

Though we invaded Iraq for the first time when I was a senior in high school, it was really the conflicts, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes in the early '90s after the breakdown of Yugoslavia at the end of the Cold War that woke me up to the larger world. It sounds ridiculous to say, but for my generation, it seemed, perhaps a just war. The beautiful European city of Sarajevo was under siege. When uber-intellectual Susan Sontag went there to direct "Waiting For Godot" in 1993, she said that people were really waiting for Clinton to come and intervene. Journalist Christiane Amanpour used CNN to bring the atrocities the Serbs committed in the Balkans into American living rooms.

I couldn't watch Anri Sala's film "1395 Days Without Red," at the Baltimore Museum of Art through Feb. 22, without thinking about all of this. The film is set in the mid-'90s—during which snipers shot pedestrians as they walked through the city, especially on the main drag, Ulica Zmaja od Bosne, which became known as "Sniper Alley"—and follows Spanish actress Maribel Verdú (who resembles both Sontag and Amanpour) as she walks across town, hanging close to buildings when possible and then standing in lines with others at intersections as they wait to dash across the vulnerable streets one by one in dark colors, so they're not an easy target.

Baynard Woods. «Waiting For Tchaikovsky: Anri Sala's '1395 Days Without Red», *Baltimore City Paper*, February, 17, 2015.
http://www.citypaper.com/film/film/bcp-waiting-for-tchaikovsky-anri-salas-1395-days-without-red-screening-at-the-baltimore-museum-of-art-th-20150217,0,624282.story

Sala's film acts as a painterly study of Verdú's face as she crosses Sarajevo. And she seems the perfect subject, creating tremendous depth of feeling with subtle facial shifts as her largely silent features express the fear, uncertainty, relief, and even a bit of exhilarated joy that come from possibly dying at any moment. The footage of Verdú's walk, which is simultaneously mundane and horrifying, is woven with that of the Sarajevan orchestra rehearsing Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony ("The Pathétique"). We see the Sarajevan symphony orchestra rehearse and hear their songs as a sort of counterpoint to Verdú's trajectory across the city, punctuated as it is by the same kind of stops and rhythmic pacing as Tchaikovsky's symphony.

In his essay "Vermeer in Bosnia," the writer Lawrence Weschler makes a connection between the conflicts in Sarajevo after the collapse of Yugoslavia with the paintings of Vermeer. The connection at first seems far-fetched. Vermeer is widely known as the master of calm scenes, whereas Sarajevo was shorthand for siege, ethnic cleansing, and warfare. "When Vermeer was painting those images, which for us have become the very emblem of peacefulness and serenity, all Europe was Bosnia . . . awash in incredibly vicious wars of religious persecution and proto-nationalist formation." Like that of Vermeer's 'The Girl With a Pearl Earring,' Verdú's face is a manifestation of what peace within war may look like. Through Sala's eyes we see in Verdú, all the intensity of living under bombardment, so that, as Weschler says of Vermeer, Sala "can be seen, amid the horrors of his age, to have been asserting or inventing the very idea of peace."

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The way this painterly aspect of the film collides with its more obvious musical element is mesmerizing. As Verdú walks, she occasionally hums the Tchaikovsky movement. Eventually—especially after a long and exhausting sprint across a long intersection—her steps and her breaths have become a part of the song. As her movements became rhythm I started to notice something. The film's title refers to the length of the siege and the wall text outside of the BMA's Black Box screening room explains the context—and that the music is Tchaikovsky—but nothing in the film itself explains the circumstances. If one watched the film outside of this context, it would feel more like Andrei Tarkovky's "Stalker," where the stalker has to follow a strange logic of starting, stopping, waiting, and running in an otherwise ordinary-looking landscape, suffused with an unknown source of danger. Outside of history, the rhythms of Verdú's walk follow a disjointed, unintelligible logic. Why do the people stand there and wait as long as they do? Why do they run when they run? Why does the one old man walk, a middle-aged woman sprint? Nothing in the city is driven by its own internal logic, but by some malicious virus that has infected it.

And that seems to be part of the point. War is absurd. It changes our rhythms and our patterns and our thoughts. But here is also where the film performs a sort of switch. Just as we see Sarajevo through our own cultural lenses, when we walk out of the BMA and back onto the street, the city that Sala has conjured has occupied our own city, superimposing itself over it in a temporo-spatial palimpsest, so that each of the intersections felt as if under the shadow of their horrendous and terrifying Sarajevan doubles. And the news, the next day, that the shooting of three Muslims in Chapel Hill might have occurred as much because of a parking dispute as because of ethnic or religious differences made me think again of "1395 Days Without Red" and how fragile what we call civilization really is.

Anri Sala will speak with art historian Michael Fried at the Baltimore Museum of Art on Saturday, Feb. 21, at 2 p.m.

Alexandre Costanzo. «Anri Sala, la part de flou», *Cahiers du Cinema*, n°707, January 2015, p. 58.

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INSTALLATION. La Haus der Kunst de Munich expose jusqu'au 20 septembre 2015 une œuvre de l'artiste.

Anri Sala, la part de flou

© ANRI SALA

The Present Moment (in D), extraits de la vidéo.

Il y a toujours un malentendu caractérisant les œuvres d'Anri Sala. Or ce malentendu, il nous faut l'appréhender au sens propre comme le concevait son premier film, *Intervista* (1998), où il nous racontait l'histoire d'une pellicule muette – découverte lors d'un déménagement sans sa bande-son – sur laquelle figurait sa mère interviewée en 1977 lors d'un congrès de la Jeunesse communiste albanaise. Il s'agira pour lui de retrouver le son manquant en sollicitant des sourds-muets pour déchiffrer, à même les lèvres, les paroles de sa mère. Cette enquête sur un vieux monde socialiste, sur la perte des sons et des mots, nous ramène à la matérialité du langage pour affirmer un paradoxe. Car penser, entendre ou comprendre quelque chose, cela procède ici d'un écart selon lequel il s'agit de regarder : *de voir ce qui se dit*. Voir, parler, écouter, marcher, il n'y a pas d'autre puissance à en croire Anri Sala, éprouvant à chaque fois les langages et les sens pour matérialiser un déplacement de notre attention.

Avec *The Present Moment (in D)*, il investit aujourd'hui le hall de la Haus der Kunst à Munich. À chaque heure nouvelle nous assistons à un étonnant concert où Sala reconstruit, pour la réinventer *La Nuit transfigurée* (1899) d'Arnold Schönberg, dont on entend des variantes diffusées simultanément, via des enceintes, en divers foyers de la salle. Il suggère ainsi une partition marchée dès lors qu'on déambule dans l'espace en écoutant tout à la fois une musique qui a lieu *ici* tandis qu'une autre est diffusée au même moment *ailleurs*, et ce voyage acoustique s'achève par un film troublant qui y est associé. Si cette œuvre est une sculpture sonore dans laquelle on circule, ce que l'on retient est que l'on ne sait pas trop où se situer : il se passe toujours en même temps quelque chose au loin, à l'autre bout de la pièce ou alors juste à côté – le son se réverbérant partout en écho. On se déplace donc en cherchant la position la plus adaptée pour entendre, raccordant des phrases et des temps musicaux déliés. Mais déjà la lumière s'éteint et un film commence où l'on découvre un enchaînement de plans serrés et partiels de coudes, d'épaules, de dos, de visages attentifs, de mains ou de bras, d'un sextuor à cordes interprétant la partition en ré. Alors que les musiciens démultiplient à coup de gestes cette même tonalité, tout se passe comme si la caméra cherchait à localiser l'origine des sons à même les corps. Il faut dire que parmi les plus beaux plans, il y a ces alignements de gestes de musiciens saisis de profil : tandis que la focale appréhende ici un avant-bras, dans le prolongement flou, on discerne les contours des mouvements d'un voisin. Or nous avons là un paradigme de notre attention puisque l'on regarde aussitôt la part de flou avant de revenir au bras qu'on avait laissé. Cette part, on la retrouve en réalité tout au long d'un film où le point de la caméra accroche systématiquement des parties de corps abandonnant le reste du plan au flou. La focale s'attache aux seuls gestes, anticipant sur le son, sans chercher à attraper les instruments, la musique, la situation. Le point mise exclusivement sur les gestes en reléguant matériellement au flou et au hors-champ « l'oreille » (l'appréhension de ce que serait la localisation du son au sein de l'image). La caméra affirme ainsi un décentrement en aggravant le strabisme de la perception : l'intervalle entre l'œil et l'oreille. Et ce strabisme, on le compense en déportant à notre tour le regard dans le flou tout comme on se déplaçait dans la salle pour aller écouter ce qui se passe *à côté*. Autrement dit, ce qui fait loi dans le film caractérise aussi bien l'ajustement de notre position comme de notre attention dans l'espace : nous sommes toujours convoqués par ce qui reste dans le flou de la perception. Car on entend en écoutant ici une partition et là-bas une autre qui entrave, sature, déporte notre attention.

Si Anri Sala conçoit une aire où il nous appartient de conjuguer en marchant des bandes sonores pour résorber des intervalles, un écart qui se donne entre un ici et un là, c'est peut-être qu'il cherche à localiser dans ce trajet les coordonnées d'un « moment présent » – ce que par ailleurs toute la tradition métaphysique et politique assimile à un *ici et maintenant*. En d'autres termes, tout se passe comme si en démultipliant les points de vue et les points d'écoute, ce territoire accueillerait quelque part un « ici et maintenant », quelque part dans le flou de notre attention. Car le problème qu'il soulève, et que l'on retrouve aussi bien dans l'œuvre de Kafka dont les personnages partent à la recherche du monde émancipé, est le suivant : entre ici et là-bas, entre les territoires de l'œil et de l'oreille, que compensent nos pas, où a bien pu passer le *maintenant* ? Un maintenant qui serait peut-être juste à côté. On le disait, on ne sait pas où se situer en arpentant cet espace et pourtant, à bien les regarder, chacun des spectateurs prête attention. Ne pas savoir où se situer exactement et du coup prêter attention à ce qui se passe ici et à côté, telle serait finalement la formule poétique et politique de l'œuvre d'Anri Sala, selon laquelle il nous appartient constamment d'inventer notre position.

Alexandre Costanzo

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Elected Affinities

HANS ULRICH OBRIST TALKS WITH EDI RAMA AND ANRI SALA

EVEN IN OUR AGE of endless multitasking, few artists have become world leaders and few world leaders artists (George W. Bush's watercolors notwithstanding). But Prime Minister Edi Rama of Albania is that extraordinary hybrid: A noted painter and professor at the state art academy in the 1990s, he became mayor of Tirana in 2000 and assumed his current office just this past year. *Artforum* invited curator Hans Ulrich Obrist to talk with Rama, along with his frequent artistic and political collaborator, Anri Sala, and unravel the complexities surrounding his ambitious aesthetic and social reforms.

HANS ULRICH OBRIST: Would you call yourself an artist-activist?

EDI RAMA: When I was young, yes. Politics has always interested me, but I never wanted to enter politics formally. I was making a life as a traveler—selling artworks, buying plane tickets, discovering the world. But at the same time, I was always writing opposition papers against this or that, being a kind of professional troublemaker. Finally, I was a painter who was caught between colors and conflicts: My works were like an abstract pattern, a code for a secret movement.

I'm nearly fifty years old. But from the beginning, I think it was the fact that I started making art on the edge of the Communist regime—when the Academy of Arts was still totally controlled and socialist realism was the only acceptable method, but when there were also ways to escape if you used your imagination—that made me an artist-activist. In a way, all nonacademic art or even discourse at the time, in this situation, could be seen as activist—a way to get to the other side of the wall, whether formal or literal.

OBRIST: And then you became extremely involved with the student movement; after the Communist government fell, you began teaching at the academy. It's a heady time, and you discuss some of the intersections between the utopias of politics and art, and their ensuing corruption, in your book *Refleksione* [1991].

RAMA: Yes. I wrote it with a friend of mine, Ardian Klosi, one of the leading figures of the anti-Communist protests, who tragically committed suicide last year. We had been thinking of reprinting it, adding a chapter about the years since, because it turned out to be quite prophetic. Klosi and I were very upset, from the very first moments of change, with the way the democratic movement was being manipulated. It was the first opposition party recognized by the regime, and it was turned into a kind of faux-populist movement. The city squares were full of people, and full of a strange energy—you could feel controversy and hate in the air, but no positive outlook, no view for a future. Crowds were being misused; they became a kind of decoration. Our "reflections" were very much posed as a diagnosis and an alternative—looking inside as opposed to the movement of screaming outside.

Around that time, Ardian and I staged an event in the old theater hall at the academy: no tribune, no stage, no panel, nothing but a dark space. People could not see each other, so it was all about voices. The microphone went around and people could hear voices that were not recognizable, voices spilling truths that people were otherwise afraid to speak in public. This was the first time the situation was articulated clearly, and it brought about a very rapid, radical positioning against the regime.

OBRIST: But then you went to Paris, where you lived with Anri [Sala]. How did you reenter Albanian politics?

RAMA: In 1998, my father died from a heart attack, and I planned to come back to Albania for three days for the funeral, but instead I never left. My father and I were very close. But we also continually fought: He was a Communist and I was an anti-Communist. He was a very famous official artist, and I was firmly opposed to official art. But he was also a man of tolerance, and I will be always grateful to him for allowing me to grow up without any limits in my way of thinking. When he died, it was terrible. After the funeral, at the reception at our house, I went to make coffee in the kitchen. The phone rang, and it was the prime minister, Fatos Nano, who was presiding over the reorganized government after the political upheavals and economic collapse of 1997. He asked me point-blank: "Mister Minister of Culture, do you want to stay or do you want to leave?" He was proposing that I take a position in his cabinet. And without hesitating, I said, "I'll stay." He said, "Really? You want some more time to think?" I replied, "If I think, I'll leave." He hung up.

> **"Culture *is* infrastructure. It's not mere surface. How can we start something through culture?" —Edi Rama**

Later, his office asked for my CV, and I just wrote: "Edi Rama, born on the fourth of July. That is enough." And then a day later, I became minister of culture, and my life changed forever.

OBRIST: There is a great tradition of artists and intellectuals as statesmen. And of course in Eastern Europe,

Edi Rama speaking to Socialist Party supporters, Tirana, Albania, April 2, 2006. Photo: Arben Celi/Reuters.

Left: Painted apartment building from the Tirana color facade project, 2001–11, Tirana, Albania, 2007. Photo: David Dufresne/Flickr.

Below: A 2003 preparatory drawing by Edi Rama for the Tirana color facade project, 2001–11.

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From left: **Demonstrators surround the Tirana pyramid (formerly the Enver Hoxha Museum) during an antigovernment protest, Tirana, Albania, January 21, 2011.** Photo: Gent Shkullaku/AFP/Getty. **Former residence of Enver Hoxha, Communist leader of Albania from 1944 to 1985, Tirana, Albania, September 7, 2012.** Photo: Groundhopping Merseburg/Flickr.

there was the playwright and poet Václav Havel, who became the first president of the Czech Republic. Were these the kinds of role models you looked to?

RAMA: You know, this cultural-political overlap was typical for the former Communist countries, because the political class simply evaporated along with the regimes, so writers, philosophers, artists, social activists, and the like filled the space that was left. But at the same time, the intelligentsia's political rise didn't bring a lot of actual change in terms of policies. Take Havel, who remained marginal until the end. He *was* much more representative of the people, but he had little influence in the government.

OBRIST: And yet you view your own term as minister of culture, I think, as actually shifting policy. What were the main things you changed?

RAMA: When I began as minister of culture in 1998, I was totally independent. I was not even a member of a party. And the first and most important thing that I learned about politics and image had to do with the way I was dressing, which was the way I dressed before I became minister: in a completely nonconformist way. With my red jackets, flamboyant shirts, or yellow pants, I was like an unidentified flying object in the middle of a sea of dark suits and ties! And I think this made many young people feel like I was representing them, just by my style.

I was very young, too, at the time: I was thirty-four. I began organizing a lot of events for youth, as well as international competitions for art, opera singers, young filmmakers, book and art prizes, and then a biennial. I reopened movie theaters, which were nonexistent here; avant-garde cinema had been banned. And I spoke out very harshly against tradition, against the establishment. So I became popular. That's why I won by a landslide in the election for mayor of Tirana two years later. It was the largest rate of youth participation in an election here.

OBRIST: The 1990s was, in fact, a time of a serious return to thinking about the youth vote in Western politics.

RAMA: Yes—I really liked and really followed Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. I think they changed politics forever. They also made it an affair of young people. They were the avant-garde of all that came after in terms of young generations getting involved, communication, image—I know that to say this now, it seems a bit retrograde—but it might also be proof that I'm getting older! I was very affected by Blair and impressed by the idea of the Third Way, because it was the first anti-ideological approach, an alternative to neoliberalism, but also to socialism. You don't privatize because you are liberal, but because it's needed, and you don't socialize because you're a socialist, but because it's needed. And in both cases, you do it because it works. If it doesn't work, you don't do it.

For me, as an Albanian, these two great men were instrumental in forever changing the history of the Balkans by liberating Kosovo and opening a path of peace and democracy for the region as a whole.

OBRIST: We first collaborated after you became mayor of Tirana, in 2000, and you started your painting project in the city—that's how we met, discussing this at "Utopia Station" at the Venice Biennale in 2003. I've always wanted to ask you: How did your epiphany about painting and color happen?

RAMA: When I took office, there were very high expectations. Tirana was stagnant. And political campaigns in Albania were likewise completely frozen in time: people sitting in auditoriums just as they had under the Communist regime, a table on the stage, no real images, thoughts, or communication. So I brought the campaign to the streets. There was also always an authentic aesthetic dimension, thanks to my background and to the collaboration with Anri.

OBRIST: Did Anri make the first campaign video clips?

RAMA: Yes. It was the precursor of what would become the urban painting project: We took an old picture of the center of Tirana. We put the photograph in water, then dripped colored paint into the water, and filmed the whole thing.

OBRIST: It was a teaser.

RAMA: Because it was just this sequence, no message.

ANRI SALA: It emerged like a colorful virus on TV.

RAMA: People would see this black-and-white picture at the center, and then red, yellow, blue, or green suffusing the picture, and that's it. Just a few seconds. It was before the actual campaign started in earnest. So it was announcing something—

SALA: But you didn't know what.

RAMA: Once I was mayor, we actually started to paint buildings. We simply painted bright, colorful facades on rows of grim socialist block housing—and it was transformative. The colors bound together all the volumes that had been wantonly added to the original surface, piecemeal, by residents who needed to expand their living space but who were not concerned with the forms produced by such alterations and the consequent disfiguring of facades. I thought it would be a cheap, effective way to change people's perception of the country and their common space. It worked. And the project generated the first good international press about Albania after the regime change.

OBRIST: It triggered an avalanche of things.

RAMA: After the initial color project, after the first Tirana Biennale, in 2001, after acclaimed artists came (thanks to you and Anri inviting them to participate in the facade project in 2003), everyone seemed to want to do something connected with the colored facades. I am very, very upset that this project stopped because of lack of funding.

OBRIST: But it could start again, no?

RAMA: Yes, it could.

OBRIST: Maybe on the scale of a country. It could happen in every city now. And not just in urban centers, but in the villages—as Rem Koolhaas says, the future is the countryside.

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RAMA: We will go forward with the demolition of illegal buildings, with developing an economic plan, but we need visual change too. So there are, for example, beautiful villages on the Ionian coast where we could try to build a synthesis between old houses and new ones. The idea wouldn't be to simply repaint them, as we did in Tirana, but perhaps to differentiate the new from the old, while still producing a coherence. And color is not necessarily the only answer. Maybe live events and performances would produce new traditions, artistic rituals that leave behind traces and forms that will eventually reconfigure those spaces. I'm actually going to visit the southern coast soon, with a few artist friends previously involved with the facade project in Tirana, so that we can debate whether and how existing ideas would apply on a countrywide scale and discuss new approaches.

OBRIST: It would be a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In fact, I can't help but think of your early projects as Beuysian social sculpture at an unprecedented scale: In 2000, for example, you initiated your "Clean and Green" project, in which illegally built structures were knocked down to create more park spaces. It reminded me of Beuys's slogan for his *7000 Oaks* [1982–87]: "City forestation instead of city administration."

Many architects are very interested in Albania because it is relatively unregulated, unlike the rest of Europe. Yet at the same time, there is obviously a downside: all these illegal buildings. You seem to face a quandary: to get rid of these illegal structures, yet at the same time not to fall into the trap of squelching innovation—because many parts of Europe are so overregulated that real architecture can no longer happen.

RAMA: Culture *is* infrastructure. It's not mere surface. What can we do in terms of culture here? How can we start something through culture? Of course, financing these ideas is always the problem—but we have had ideas that worked incredibly well despite the lack of funds. We organized the only biennial in the world that didn't really cost anything. And Harald Szeemann was so fascinated by what was happening in Tirana that it inspired him to curate an entire show ["Blood and Honey" at the Essl Museum—Kunst der Gegenwart, Klosterneuburg, Austria, in 2003]; he even participated as an artist in the second edition of our biennial [in 2003].

OBRIST: I remember it was one of the last shows he did.

RAMA: Yeah, and many young people came. So I want to return to these kinds of cultural benchmarks.

OBRIST: Biennials put different places on the map. But at the same time, the biennial is obviously not a sustainable presence: Every two years a city gets an injection and then nothing. You need that kind of injection every day, not every few years.

RAMA: Yes, and that's how I want to see Albania and Tirana and the Balkans as a whole: as a kind of repeatable and recombinant event.

OBRIST: Performance—ritual—is paradoxically enduring because it's infinitely iterable. And I don't think it's farfetched to connect this idea of the iterable event to your use of social media—a model of continuous interaction.

RAMA: I was pretty much the first person to use Twitter for public debate, or really at all, here. And this sort of debate in real time is fantastic. As prime minister, I decided to hold regular sessions on Twitter. I go online for two hours answering people's questions.

OBRIST: But how many Albanians actually have Internet access?

RAMA: We've made a lot of progress.

OBRIST: How can these digital platforms translate into physical public space?

RAMA: Well, one thing I want to do is to build an interfaith museum. Albania is a unique case because Muslims, Christians, Catholics, Orthodox, all coexist in peace here. We had a period of horrible persecution under Communist rule, churches blown up with dynamite and religious artworks burned in the streets. And yet we also, historically, have had an atmosphere of great tolerance.

A museum like this could examine the entire Balkan region, too, perhaps bringing together new generations of Albanians both from here and Kosovo, as well as Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Greeks, as part of a shared history of beliefs. The younger generations are completely ignorant about Communism and its crimes: They didn't live it, they don't get it, they don't care about it, they are indifferent to how we got to this point as a harmonious society in terms of faith, and to what the dangers of taking all of it for granted might be.

SALA: It's refreshing to think of the region as a community of shared references, rather than as solitary places or appendices on the edge of Europe.

RAMA: The museum would activate this cross-cultural history, not only with exhibitions but also with spaces for workshops, debates, conferences. It shouldn't be a frozen, official space where you go to passively look. We've already held a competition for the museum's design; one component that I especially love is the garden museum, which would display the plants mentioned in the Bible, Koran, and other sacred books.

SALA: At the same time, it's not only about building new museums. There are existing buildings such as the pyramid—the deserted, surreal mausoleum built for [former Albanian leader] Enver Hoxha—that could be reconceived and given a new role, a different use.

RAMA: And Hoxha's former residence, too. I really like the idea of using it as a neighborhood guesthouse. To keep the house as it is, to keep everything, even Hoxha's furniture—but to change the nature of the life inside. At the moment, it's a guesthouse for politicians, but it could be a guesthouse for many people, a place for everything and everyone that Hoxha would have hated to have around. He would hate a contemporary artist being there.

SALA: It would be like a blood transfusion. You could also open it to the public. Right now, it's closed off behind walls, like so many spaces were under Hoxha's regime. But if you turned part of its garden into a park—

RAMA: Yeah, I want to open up the garden surrounding the house. Before, the whole area—several blocks comprising all the residences of the politburo leaders—was completely forbidden, protected by armed soldiers. And when it was finally opened, in 1991, the streets were overflowing with crowds who had never been able to catch a glimpse of it, let alone what was inside. A bit later, when I first saw the house myself, I was shocked. I had this incredible feeling of awkwardness. You see a man who kept this country under his thumb for years, and then you see such banal taste and his utterly banal way of living. □

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found in newspaper reportage becomes a kind of self-parody, both because Tuerlinckx isolates the stock figures and photographs of gold bars from their normal justificatory context in the business pages, and because she seems to weigh them against abstract drawings that, in their incredible simplicity, look like reasoned antidotes.

Some works, such as a rectangle on the floor composed of a thin trail of confetti, have become legendary. This nearly invisible line of paper fragments, *Stukjes, stukjes en dingen, dinge, dingen en stukjes* (Pieces, Pieces and Things, Thing, Things and Pieces), was created for the group exhibition "WATT" at the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam in 1994. In a gallery filled with compositions involving line and demonstrations of scale, this work's own "line" is always a broken series of points; the merest footfall causes it to drift, and thus it breathes, as so much of Tuerlinckx's work does—as if in respiration with the subjects around it, literally sensitive to the social and political space of the institution and of hierarchies of display.

Many of these works were remade for installation in the retrospective, such as the confetti; other works were wall drawings and installations, which were specifically introduced to expand and respond to the conditions of each venue. In this way, the earliest works quite reasonably appear to exist in contiguity with the latest. Her intermittent or understated labeling of objects is therefore hardly a caprice—it may be one of the artist's most rigorous decisions. In a visit to a more typical retrospective, it is easy to view "early" work with nostalgia and "late" work more critically, but the present is always the time in which a work of art is being judged. Tuerlinckx's retrospective illustrates just how fully this temporal collapse, which continually makes past works contemporary, is also tied to the artist's lifetime. When she is no longer present to reactivate them, her works will assume a weight of responsibility that is hard to imagine: These traces, objects, drawings, books, sculptures, photographs, and films will have to stand in for the part of the artist's work that can no longer exist—her own agency. Until then, Tuerlinckx's arrangements frustrate attempts to parse a career or "retrospective" view; her objects create encounters and moments of discovery in real, rather than chronological, time, much as they did in the quotidian context from which she took them. □

"Joëlle Tuerlinckx: WOR(L)D(K) IN PROGRESS?" is on view at the Arnolfini in Bristol, UK, through March 16, 2014.

CATHLEEN CHAFFEE IS CURATOR AT THE ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY, BUFFALO.

Robert Barry. "Venice Preview: Anri Sala Unravels His Project for the French Pavilion", *Frieze Blog*
May 2013

http://blog.frieze.com/venice-preview-anri-sala-unravels-his-project-for-the-french-pavilion/

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Artist Anri Sala will represent France at this year's 55th Venice Biennale. Photo © Julien Mignot / Eté 89

At the age of four, Anri Sala was taken to the Palace of Pioneers in Tirana, then capital of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, in order to begin the violin lessons he had asked his parents for. 'So there was this man sitting in front of a piano,' the artist recalls, 'and he needed to check if I had an ear.' In a small, darkened room, the instructor clapped out a series of rhythms for the boy to repeat, each one longer and more complex than the last, 'and I got so worried that I would miss the next one,' Sala says. But he didn't falter. 'Good,' said the violin teacher finally, satisfied with the boy's ability to recognize and repeat a rhythm. 'You're done.'

Sala went on to study violin for seven years and, though he no longer reads music, he acknowledges that the experience helped him develop 'an idea about musical tempo, and how to speak with musicians' – both of which have proved useful in his numerous projects involving music of various stripes, be it Tchaikovsky or The Clash. But there is something about this story of his initial encounter in the Palace of Pioneers, with its play of difference and repetition, that resounds especially clearly in Sala's upcoming project for the French Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale this year.

Robert Barry. “Venice Preview: Anri Sala Unravels His Project for the French Pavilion”, *Frieze Blog*
May 2013

http://blog.frieze.com/venice-preview-anri-sala-unravels-his-project-for-the-french-pavilion/

‘The idea was that I wanted to make a work that is about repetition,’ Sala told me last month in a cafe across the square from the Centre Pompidou in Paris, ‘the same and its difference and how you produce difference in the same.’ The installation Ravel Ravel Unravel (2013) breaks down into two parts: the work Ravel Ravel (2013) sees two celebrated concert pianists, the Quebecois Louis Lortie and French-born Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, filmed separately performing Maurice Ravel’s celebrated Piano Concerto for the Left Hand (1929–30), with both films projected superimposed in the main hall of the pavilion. In the two side rooms, another pair of films, Unravel, depicts Chloë Thévenin (better known to techno fans as DJ Chloë) struggling to reconcile the two unsynchronized interpretations by Lortie and Bavouzet with a mixer and dual turntable set-up.

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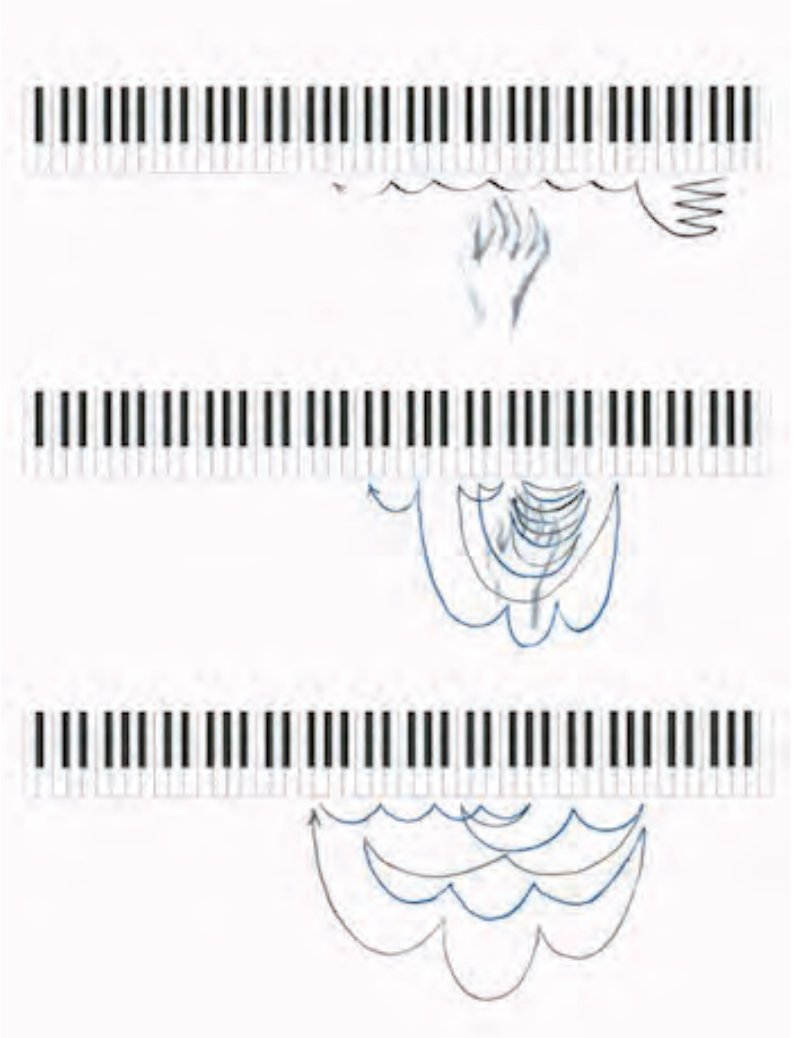

Anri Sala, Preparatory Drawing for ‘Ravel Ravel’ (2013). © Anri Sala

Robert Barry. "Venice Preview: Anri Sala Unravels His Project for the French Pavilion", *Frieze Blog*
May 2013

http://blog.frieze.com/venice-preview-anri-sala-unravels-his-project-for-the-french-pavilion/

Initially Sala was drawn to the existing repertoire for one-handed piano by its 'dynamics', the way such pieces pit 'a single hand playing against 120 other hands.' He soon found himself drawn into the story of one man who may have done more for this repertory than any other: the concert pianist Paul Wittgenstein. Big brother to the philosopher, Ludwig, and heir to one of the greatest fortunes in Europe, Wittgenstein lost his right arm fighting at the Russian front in World War I. Undaunted, he continued to practice one-handed on a keyboard painted on a wooden crate in a prison camp in Siberia. Upon his return home, he used his wealth to commission new works from some of the greatest composers of the time. Of these, the 'most beautiful', according to Sala, as well as 'one of the most successful challenges' was the Concerto by Ravel.

Ravel Ravel Unravel developed in the wake of last year's announcement that France and Germany would be swapping pavilions for this year's biennial, and Sala admits that, 'the project would probably resonate differently if it were in the French pavilion.' Nonetheless he is keen to stress that this, 'doesn't mean that Ravel Ravel can only be shown in that space. Of course it will continue its life and be shown in other spaces, but the idea of the project took shape and grew together with the knowledge that it would be there.'

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One of the first foreign pavilions in Venice, the building that had originally hosted just Bavarian art became a national German pavilion in 1912, within months of Wittgenstein's first professional concert. The pavilion closed completely during the war, while the pianist fought with the Austrian Army dragoons, re-opening in 1922 as – coincidentally – Wittgenstein commissioned his first one-handed works from Rudolf Braun and Erich Korngold. Finally extensively redesigned by the Nazis in 1938, the very year Wittgenstein fled the régime for America. But besides what Sala calls these 'historical repercussions', what interested the artist most about the building was its peculiar acoustics.

The making of Anri Sala's 'Unravel' (2013). Photo © Simone Falso

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May 2013

http://blog.frieze.com/venice-preview-anri-sala-unravels-his-project-for-the-french-pavilion/

'I went with Olivier Goinard, the sound designer [for films by Agnès Varda, Olivier Assayas and Mia Hansen-Løve, among others] to measure the acoustic imprint of the German pavilion,' he told me. 'Because of its height and its hard surface it has a very long echo – almost nine seconds long.' This long delay is used to full effect in Unravel, complicating further the DJs efforts to unite the two performances. But for Ravel Ravel, it became necessary to negate the effect of the room. 'Where you produce a difference between the two executions of the same concerto, you produce an echo,' Sala explains. 'And echo may produce a feeling, a hint of space. So where am I able to project that hinted space that is completely induced by the temporal interval between the two concertos?' he asks rhetorically. 'It has to be in an anechoic room.'

The first anechoic room was built at Harvard University during the Second World War by an acoustician named Leo Beranek while he was working on the problem of noise control in military aircraft and other armoured vehicles. With walls typically covered in jutting cones, the room is expressly designed to be totally acoustically dead, resistant to all sonic reflections. The use of such a space by Sala thus brings the project in line with his previous employment of such 'very controlled … very scientific spaces,' which would ultimately prove 'very necessary for the military', as in the geodesic dome which provides the setting for Answer Me (2009). Based on a design by Buckminster Fuller, the dome at Teufelsberg, near Berlin, was used by the American military as a telecommunications monitoring station, part of the Echelon project. Sala's film finds a man playing the drums inside the dome, blocking out the attempts of his lover to end their relationship. As the drummed beats echo about the dome, they animate another, lone drum, which plays, as it were, by itself.

'You had to compose by including – in the beat – the frequency response of the building,' Sala tells me. So, as with the present work, it is a question of what he calls, 'an architecture of sound' – whether the sound is created by the echoes in a space, or the space implied by the lengths of echoes in a sound. In both cases, it is a question, Sala claims, of 'syntax'. And this is what draws the piece into the very heart of the artist's abiding concerns of the past 15 years: 'how to develop a narrative not via content but via syntax' and 'the way political situations impact and scar syntax.'

This syntax could be the composition of a piece of music, the arrangement of space within a building, or the pauses that break up a dialogue. This was the subject of the note left by Michelangelo Antonioni, which inspired Answer Me – to film the breakdown of a couple by shooting 'not their conversation but their silences.' And this, too, was the subject of one of his earliest works that captured the public's attention: Intervista (1998), in which an old film of the artist's mother from her days as a communist party activist, is disturbing not so much by what is said, but 'how she articulated it.'

Multiple echoes, then – musical, architectural, historical, and theoretical – will resound in this year's French pavilion – in the German pavilion – at Venice. Having been working on the project since last summer, it's a piece, Sala says, that he has been 'completely taken by'. Over-determined and multiply entwined with a complex criss-cross of narratives, it's a project that invites every visitor to unravel for themselves the subtle resonances of the work.

Robert Barry is freelance writer and composer, based in Paris. His music can be heard at littleother.blogspot.com

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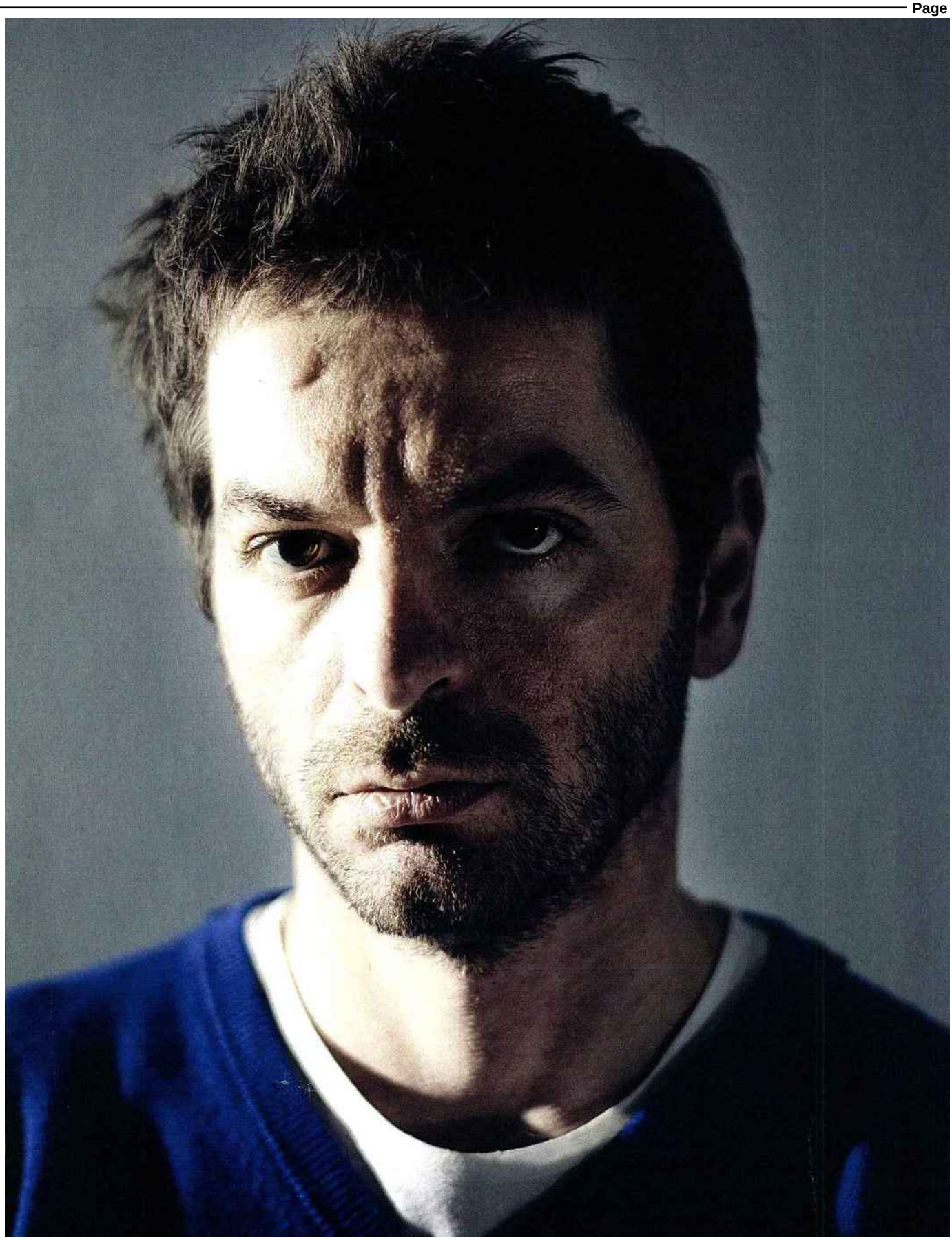
L'ŒIL

21 RUE LERICHE
75015 PARIS - 01 48 42 90 00

JUILLET/AOUT 13
Mensuel

Surface approx. (cm²) : 1296



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Anri Sala.
© Photo : Julien Mignot/Eté 1980.

Anri Sala

À VENISE, L'IMAGE (ET LE SON) DE LA FRANCE

Biographie

1974
Naissance à Tirana, en Albanie.

1992-1996
École des beaux-arts de Tirana.

1999-2000
Son court-métrage *Nocturnes* est sélectionné aux Rencontres cinématographiques de Tourcoing et au Festival du court-métrage à Clermont-Ferrand.

2005
Après la Tate Modern à Londres, son installation vidéo *Dammi i colori (Give me the colors)* est présentée à la Galerie DAAD à Berlin.

2013
Il représente la France à la Biennale de Venise.

Il est un film qu'il a réalisé en 2003 et qui a fait le tour du monde. C'est un interminable travelling sur les façades colorées de sa ville natale, Tirana, capitale de l'Albanie. La voix *off* qu'on entend est celle de l'un de ses anciens camarades de l'Académie des arts (Edi Rama) dont il a suivi l'enseignement de 1992 à 1996. Lui n'a pas poursuivi dans cette voie, il est devenu le maire de la ville et a fait le pari fou de la couleur comme réhabilitation du désir de vivre ensemble. Anri Sala, l'auteur de ce film, s'est installé quant à lui à Paris et y a développé une œuvre très personnelle, fondée sur les rapports de l'espace, de l'image et du son qui lui vaut aujourd'hui de représenter la France à la Biennale de Venise. Un véritable sacre après un parcours qui l'a mené d'institutions en institutions à travers le monde, notamment l'an passé au Centre Pompidou.

Anri Sala, Ravel Ravel Unravel, *2013*
Pavillon français, Biennale de Venise.
© Photo : Marc Domage.

Sujets universels

Né à Tirana en 1974, Anri Sala appartient à la dernière génération d'artistes ayant grandi sous le régime communiste en Albanie et à la première à entrer en contact avec le monde de l'art international. Après avoir fréquenté l'École nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs, à Paris, puis Le Fresnoy, à Tourcoing, et après avoir été naturalisé français, l'artiste n'en a pas moins fait le choix d'aller vivre à Berlin. Question de facilités économiques et d'espaces de travail. C'est dire s'il est de cette nature d'artistes nomades, toujours prompts à s'adapter aux situations qu'ils rencontrent. Si c'est possiblement là le secret d'une ascension qui le porte aujourd'hui à la première place du classement des artistes de la scène française [selon *Le Journal des Arts* du 10 mai 2013], cela tient d'abord et avant tout à la qualité d'une œuvre singulière en phase avec l'esprit du temps et à l'écho de problématiques qui demeurent universelles, sur le plan tant du contenu que de la forme.

Anri Sala, qui a pratiqué le violon jusqu'à l'âge de onze ans puis a quelque temps hésité entre devenir mathématicien et artiste, compose ses pièces comme un musicien, voire un chorégraphe, sur des bouts de papier qui prennent dès lors l'allure de diagrammes, sinon de figures quasi mathématiques. Il y imagine dans l'espace le placement des éléments sonores et celui de ses projections filmiques, envisageant avec maints détails la déambulation des spectateurs. Il en résulte des images cabalistiques animées de ponctuations, de triangles et de flèches qui ne sont pas sans familiarité avec le dessin hâtivement croqué par Duchamp de la première pensée de son *Grand Verre*.

Cette similitude d'esprit avec la pensée musicale, qui caractérise sa démarche, n'aurait certes pas déplu à un certain Vassily Kandinsky qui jalousait la musique et enviait l'aisance et la facilité avec lesquelles cet art, le plus immatériel qui soit, parvenait à exprimer l'univers intérieur de l'artiste. La façon qu'a Anri Sala de concevoir ses installations relève d'une subtile réflexion sur la spatialisation sonore dans cet objectif de soumettre le corps du spectateur à l'épreuve émotionnelle et invasive d'une expérience sensorielle. Aussi tous ses efforts visent-ils à orchestrer les relations secrètes que peuvent entretenir l'image et le son. ■ ***Philippe Piguet***

→ **Biennale de Venise, pavillon français,** installation d'Anri Sala, *Ravel Ravel Unravel* (2013), commissariat de Christine Macel, Giardini, Venise (Italie), jusqu'au 24 novembre 2013. www.institutfrancais.com

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Cyril Béghin. "A Matter of Synchronisation / Philippe Parreno & Anri Sala," *Mousse*, N°37, February-March 2013, p.158-167.

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For Philippe Parreno and Anri Sala the object is always a thing in transit: one phase of a detailed itinerary taken by an idea amidst multiple forms, and in parallel one phase of the itinerary the visitor takes in the context of exhibitions conceived as choreographed routes. Films, at this point, have taken on great importance for both artists, and the work on the acoustic environment of exhibitions is based, to a great extent, on their shared taste for the dialectic of image and sound in cinema. For the upcoming Venice Biennale, Anri Sala is preparing a work involving sounds, visuals and space. Cyril Béghin asked the two artists to discuss these themes.

A MATTER

A. Anri Sala, Long Sorrow, 2005. Courtesy: Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Hauser & Wirth Zürich, London; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

B. "Anri Sala", installation views, Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples, 2004. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples

C. Philippe Parreno, The Boy from Mars, 2003. Courtesy: the artist; Air de Paris, Paris; Esther Schipper, Berlin; Pilar Corrias, London

D. Philippe Parreno, June 8, 1968, 2009. Courtesy: the artist; Air de Paris, Paris; Pilar Corrias, London

E. Anri Sala, Now I see, 2004. Courtesy: Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Hauser & Wirth Zürich, London; Johnen Galerie, Berlin; Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

F. Philippe Parreno Marilyn, 2012. Courtesy: the artist and Pilar Corrias, London

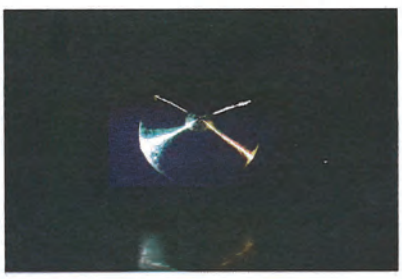
G. Philippe Parreno, Invisible Boy, 2010. Courtesy: the artist; Air de Paris, Paris; Pilar Corrias, London

H. Anri Sala, Le Clash, 2010. Courtesy: Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Johnen Galerie, Berlin

I. Anri Sala, "La mano di Dio", installation view, Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples, 2008. Courtesy: Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples

J. Philippe Parreno, The Boy From Mars, 2003. Courtesy: the artist; Air de Paris, Paris; Esther Schipper, Berlin

K. Anri Sala, Intervista, 1998. Courtesy: Ideal audience international, Paris; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Johnen Galerie, Berlin



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Cyril Béghin. "A Matter of Synchronisation / Philippe Parreno & Anri Sala," *Mousse*, N°37, February-March 2013, p.158-167.

OF SYNCHRONIZATION

C

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN PHILIPPE PARRENO AND ANRI SALA,
MODERATED BY CYRIL BÉGHIN

D

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Cyril Béghin. "A Matter of Synchronisation / Philippe Parreno & Anri Sala," *Mousse*, N°37, February-March 2013, p.158-167.

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ANRI SALA
Someone sent me a phrase from Lacan we might use to start our conversation: "The hysteric is a slave in search of a master over which to rule."

CYRIL BÉGHIN
This might be a good way of getting ready for the latest film by Paul Thomas Anderson, The Master.

PHILIPPE PARRENO
I saw it in September, it's great. But I don't know if it really corresponds to this quotation from Lacan... I really like Anderson's films, especially *Punch Drunk Love*, which is a kind of fable, with an amazing soundtrack. Anri, do you remember that scene in which a pianoforte is left on a sidewalk?

AS No. But I do remember a film with Tim Roth, which tells of a boy born and raised on a ship. There is a nice scene in which he plays the piano during a storm, with great energy, and they both slide into the saloon [*The Legend of the Pianist on the Ocean*, Giuseppe Tornatore, 1998]

PP You invented that, there's no such film.

AS If there's no such film then I'll shoot the scene myself, right away!

CB *There is a significant difference between your recollections: Anri evokes a scene in which we see someone playing the piano, while Philippe speaks of a scene in which there is just the instrument. Music has a large part to play in your working process, especially in your films. But with Anri we always end up seeing the musician/s, while with you, Philippe, we seem to never see them.*

AS It's true, apart from the opening credits of *Intervista* [1998], I have never used music that is not produced in the action of the film itself. The music is always the result of the screenplay. I am not talking about "film music" in the conventional sense of the term, though there are some ambiguities: when do we realize that what we are hearing comes from the scene itself? In *Long Sorrow* [2005] a saxophonist is hung up high, on a window sill, but it takes a while to realize that someone is playing hanging in the void. I am not interested in having the music insert an image in a context, I want the image to produce the music.

PP The first time I used music was for the film *Credits* [1999], a sort of re-composition of the view of a "priority urban development zone" where I grew up. I asked different people to remember those places, to make the re-composition starting precisely with their memories. And I had asked Angus Young, the guitarist of AC/DC, to play while imagining he was me, as a teenager, who imagined being him, looking at this landscape from a window. A sort of backwards air guitar. So the music was part of a "procedure", in the sense assigned to the term by Raymond Roussel.

AS You had already produced the image and you showed it to him?

PP Yes, it was an already established subject. I did the same thing with Devendra Banhart for *The Boy from Mars* [2003], which is a building that has generated a film, or a film that has generated a building: an animal with two heads, one in reality, the other in fiction. The idea was to continue the game: the film, in turn, generated the music. I showed it to Banhart, and I edited in his improvisation after the images, on black.

AS You never already have music, which you use to do the editing.

PP At least once, for *Invisible Boy*, the Godspeed piece already existed.

CB *But you also wanted to continue* Invisible Boy *by writing an opera, which would have permitted you to continue the making of the film.*

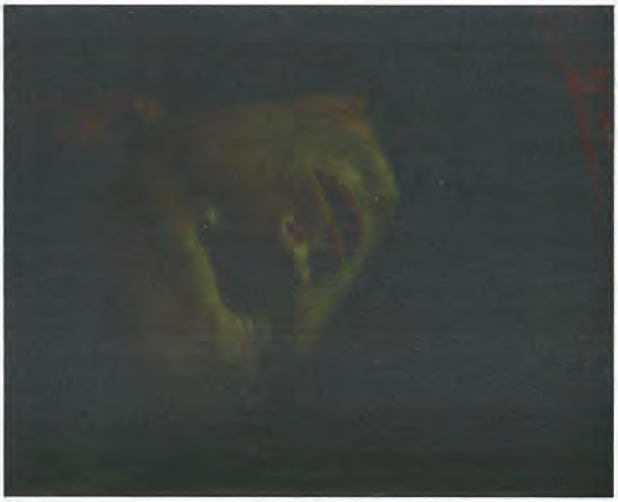
PP Yes. I wanted to make an orchestra "speak", to produce words with musical instruments.

AS There is always an ambiguity between sound and music. In *Le Clash* [2010] it is hard to believe that the small music box is spreading its sound into the abandoned building. For *Now I See* [2004] I asked a group from Iceland, Trabant, to give me a song that still didn't exist. At the time, Trabant was famous in Iceland, but they also had another group, The Funerals, that wasn't so well known. The members of the group used to switch roles, between Trabant and The Funerals: the bass player became the drummer, etc. I wanted to make a film where each of them would have yet a different role. In *Now I See*, we see them playing, and the vibrations make a balloon in the form of a dog attached to a speaker fly away. At this point the musical piece begins. Instead of staying on the musicians, the camera tracks the balloon, which stays in the air thanks to the low frequencies, and the musicians become secondary. It is a sort of voyage in which the music produced during the film is held hostage by its own low frequencies, which in turn are joined by another melody, transforming the whole into "film music" that accompanies the flight of the balloon.

CB *Anri is always looking for a moment of synchrony between soundtrack and image, while you, Philippe, seem to favor gaps and duplication.*

PP With music, yes, but with sound the relationship is different. For *Zidane* [2006] we began to edit the sound prior to the image. For *C.H.Z.* [2011] we put microphones in the ground in the garden before starting to shoot. But above all we should not forget that the films are designed for their display contexts, where they appear and disappear. The problem is always the same, between sound and image: what comes first? It is a question of automation: who is the master, who the slave? Often it is the sound that, technically, "guides" the image. Because it is simpler to position a time code on a soundtrack than to make a long image to which a sound or an event is attached.

AS Also because sound can be moved gradually in the exhibition space, unlike images, which leap from one space to another. Or we can easily create or re-create a sound in space, but not the image. Precisely as you did at the Beyeler Foundation with the underwater speakers, that played the sounds of the films, or like I did with the drum kits that played on their own at Centre Pompidou. Sound remains a material that can be shaped



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in space, something that doesn't happen for the image, if not in the form of collage or multiple projections, which do not interest me, a priori.

PP Making a film, as we do it, means somehow signing a contract with ourselves, saying that every time the object appears, it is necessary to renegotiate its appearance, or even its status as an object. In fact, it takes on different forms, generating as many different interpretations, while in the time capsule of the movie theater nothing changes, except the mood of the spectators. My first film showed a bouquet of flowers, an image of very little meaning, which I had given to several television stations *Fleurs*, 1988. At one, it had become an advertisement for Interflora: the fact that it was broadcast produced the meaning. This is something fundamental: most of the objects we produce are never really concluded. And sound takes part in this elasticity, this uncompleted aspect that can be taken on by film. I am reminded of the sculptures of Mali, the so-called *boli*. These are ritual, vaguely zoomorphic objects. Between one ritual and the next the *boli* are covered with earth, blood or excrement, so well that each time they appear they are never the same. They are

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said to be alive. And it is precisely the ritual of display that transforms the object.

AS It often happens, when I am working on a film project, that I already know where it will be shown. It is a piece of information I already have, and it influences the production. The device is included in the production thinking. It is something that is part of the trip: the film is not finished in the moment of mastering, but when it reaches a screening surface.

PP Now that the technical tools allow it, there are films I remaster to change a hue or a sound. *The Boy From Mars* for example, where I completely altered the soundtrack. Just like the *boli*: so why not propose to museums that have purchased these works, some time ago, to give them new objects? We should do this for everything: you could also go back to a

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drawing, so it would be in constant movement.

AS At times this means putting further layers onto an object, which come from outside, through reflections and transparencies, as you did at Centre Pompidou with the curtains that opened and closed.

PP There are some things that belong to this category, but it took some time for the thing to become evident. Not so long ago, with Anri, we complained about the fact that every time a work is re-presented or reproduced, for us it was like a form of constriction. To re-present or re-do the same thing is not very interesting. We are not craftsmen, we don't reproduce forms: we re-create them.

AS And let's not forget that the art world is essentially visual. Negotiating sound technique is very hard. The culture of hearing requires a sensibility that is rarely that of the world in which we operate.

PP But in the moment in which we manage to get our hands on the "master", it all gets easier, and more amusing as well.

CB *This is how you have learned to think about objects, and films in particular, with this elasticity, the possibility of their changing in the area of the display context.*

AS The film has a perimeter, which can be enlarged depending on the different spaces in which we project it. It is a temporal sculpture. We began by saying that in my films the music comes from the action itself; while in the case of Philippe it comes after, through in any case it was composed for the action. It is a different way of relating to synchrony. But let's not forget that we are working on a double separation of sound and image: those of the film, and those of the exhibition. In Philippe's exhibition at the Serpentine or in my show at Centre Pompidou, you have *one* sound and *many* images. While you travel with the sound, you encounter images. In this dynamic, I am increasingly interested in "destabilizing" the films, to create other relationships between them. To produce a reality in the abyss between two screens, when the sound is present and the image is out of the frame. An image has just finished, and another begins, farther away: the viewer is held in an intermediate space, where it is the image that is off-screen, rather than the sound, as usually happens.

CB *I'd like to insist on the idea of synchrony, though: while in Anri there are these effects of an image out of its role, perhaps it is to better underline the moments in which the image and the sound are joined, moments that ensure a sort of reality effect. While for Philippe the reality effect never happens in this point.*

PP I'll go back to Roussel's procedure. The form is not important: it is the procedure that takes us back to the form. For me, the construction of the image is simply one element of the automaton. So the question of synchrony can arise in different moments: during shooting, editing or screening. You talk about synchronization in the classic way, thinking of cinema. But we have to pay attention to the word "film". For me, the film is but one moment of the form. The camera is used to capture, in that given moment, a form in a space, but it is just one of many moments. In *C.H.Z.*, I begin to place the microphones in the ground, then I construct a garden; the thing starts to come alive, and it is already an element of the display. Then I film it. The terrain continues to grow. And then the film is done, a sound has been given back. It is a chain of elements in which you can never say what comes first: the synchrony isn't there, where you think it is. For me, nothing could have been more synchronous than Angus Young playing in front of the re-composed images of *Credits*. It was a moment of display, but not the one I then chose to exhibit.

AS It's like the autofocus of the camera. The camera makes things clear adjusting the focus where the light encounters an object, not necessarily where there is a meaning. The same thing happens in the exhibiting: will the meaning of synchrony take place in the film or elsewhere? You choose the best moment in the space, which will become the master. And to play this game, in every phase there have to be potential synchronies.

CB *Is this why you, Anri, film musicians, immediately triggering a very strong possibility of synchrony in the film itself?*

PP For me, the sound does not make image in the recording of the image. And the shooting is not the moment in which the film is made. As Anri said, the cursor of synchrony can be continuously moved.

AS Where is the difference between making the sound come first to help you to produce an image—in my case—and making it come first to "prepare" the moment in which it will encounter the image? As far as I'm concerned, it is always sound that leads me to the starting image. For *Long Sorrow*, I got the idea of the saxophonist, Jemeel Moondoc, hanging in the void. So I needed a window, i.e. a view. But the starting point was neither the window nor the view. My problem was: how can I have someone who produces sound through breathing, suspended in the air, capable of negotiating with this void only by virtue of being a human instrument?

PP And then, you find the window.

AS Yeah, and the problems increase. Because if I have a window, then I also have a view, a possible metaphor, a symbolic environment. What I have to cross is the process: the sound demands a given image, but how can I keep that from becoming a trap? I have to constantly reduce the image that springs of the sonic reality. While you think about sound and image in a more simultaneous way.

PP Perhaps... for *Marilyn* [2012], I had to invent two robots: the vocal robot that produces the voice, and the mechanical robot that writes. The image was literally subordinate to the sound, given the fact that the voice describes the things that are filmed. This is rarely the case, because I usually prefer one thing to be triggered by another, like a series of links in a chain. The film *C.H.Z.* leaves a terrain behind it that gets covered with vegetation, and with trash. The two things go together, the "abject" and the "object". The nature of the object becomes an "other" nature: it has produced something that is alive. To get back to the idea of elasticity, it is as if the object rested attached to something it has produced and, at the same time, has not completely emerged from its shell. It is projected into the future, but it is still a little bit in the past. This is the thing that interests me most: to produce diffractions of the object that will develop, to become its pollution, its project, its screenplay, without ever ceasing

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to change. And this has to be constantly negotiated, all the way to the presentation or re-presentation of the object.

CB *What do you mean by "negotiation"?*

PP First of all, negotiating with a figure. This is why I was talking about the procedures of Roussel. What Anri tells us in his thinking about *Long Sorrow* seems at first to be a mad hypothesis: "hanging a saxophonist in the air". This hypothesis takes form in the paroxysm of the display. The question of the chain of meanings is often raised, and probably the thing has no solution. At times one has to wait for the publication of the catalogue for the conclusion. You must never stop, it is the revolution of the pleasure of play, as they said in the Seventies. The permanent revolution: if you stop, you die.

AS In this chain you are describing, made of objects, exhibitions and books, there are often slippages. Sometimes you have to make decisions about the space before the film is finished. I find it interesting: of course it can create problems, but also interesting hypotheses. These are procedures that do not exist in cinema.

CB *It is like a non-stop discussion with many people involved. For example, I was struck by the way Philippe speaks openly of his projects, always using discussion as an open moment of reflection.*

PP In cinema there is more of a culture of secrecy. Also in art, but it is something new. What we have done, just as many others have done before us, is to open the practice of the atelier. The production emerges and flows everywhere. It is precisely the painter's nightmare: you construct an atelier that is different each time, modified, exchanged, taken into the exhibition space. Forms are created in these negotiations. But nobody does it,

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because there is the risk of things getting diluted. For the exhibition at Centre Pompidou I spent months making the film *1968* [2009]; at the end of each screening, the curtains of the room opened automatically, something that was organized in 5 minutes. Often, though, people remembered the curtains opening more than the film. But it is a bit like dining: you need a bit of bad taste to appreciate the good flavors. The exhibition has to have ups and downs, it is still thought of too much like a treasure chest. These are questions that date back to the avant-gardes. The influence of sound on the production of an image is already there in the synesthetic paintings of Malevich. When Duchamp does a painting under a chandelier, his palette is influenced by the color of the light. These are games. Someone should start to write a history like this. There are more books that talk about the history of objects than about procedures, that sort of slippage of the terrain. The protocols of apparition of forms in space that we define as display are rooted in a particular moment, contemporary to the birth of cinema. In his *Dictionary of Received Ideas* Flaubert defined exhibition as the "cause of delirious excitement of the 19th century". With our way of proceeding, Anri, me, and others, we undoubtedly lose immanence, solidity, but we gain something like joy.

AS To get back to our earlier terminology, it is like losing certain achievements of synchronization to rediscover other synchronies with the viewer.

CB *This is exactly what was created by the opening of the curtains at Centre Pompidou: you simultaneously transmitted, inside the room, a sound taken from outside, in a literal form of synchrony.*

PP Precisely. But that was a last-minute gesture, found during the installation of the exhibition. And this is the dangerous moment. The sentence is not complete, it is painful. You are still writing your theater piece one hour before the audience enters.

AS The economy of live performance makes this type of operation possible, but we don't make theater. In general, we do not work with a technique that has been produced for our purposes.

PP They are found objects!

AS Or, more than anything, found techniques.

PP There is something terrible about not having your own technique. You have to always base what you're doing on those of others. Generally the thing works, but you have to spend a lot of time convincing people.

AS And the equipment has not been designed for the uses we make of it. Often I use only one part of its potential, and I may use more than one device, combining them. The machine or the show control that can combine all the different qualities still doesn't exist. It is like renting a castle and using only the vestibule. And it is a serious economic problem.

PP Now, for Palais de Tokyo, I'm thinking about turning things upside-down: to display only the procedures of installation of the objects, eliminating the presence of the objects themselves.

AS In other words, you remove the destination to produce the itinerary.

CB *Recently you worked at the Philadelphia Museum for an exhibition on Marcel Duchamp.*

PP It took them a while to find a definition for my work: "set design" or "choreography", then in the end they borrowed the term from French, *mise-en-scène*. For the first time, I did a show without my work: there were all kinds of devices, but without my objects. It is a sort of mental, non-authoritarian choreography, with a direction of interpretation, but not clear, apparently without text. The eye is attracted by a light, a sound, by forms that move. There are many sounds, sometimes excerpts from sonatas for prepared piano by Cage, or maybe a chorus that sings a score by Duchamp. I made a piece with some interpreters of Cunningham: with microphones attached to the floor, in the theater I recorded the steps of the dancers. In the museum space, on the other hand, we installed a platform with speakers in place of the microphones. When the dancers are not there, we can still hear them moving. At times they are really there, and dance the same steps, shifted or out of synch, in an very unpredictable way.

I think it would have been awful to see poor videos in black and white of Cunningham's choreographies. We needed to invent forms to understand how, at a certain point, he asked his dancers to move from one position to another in a random way, without any relationship to the music. This fact becomes the object of an experience: we hear dance steps, a musical excerpt, and the thing works. You understand without having read any text. It is the exhibition that produces knowledge.

CB *Another case of desynchronization?*

PP Yes, but Anri could have done it too, a bit like there were exchanges between Cage and Cunningham. At a certain point there is this simultaneous presence of strong personalities that have something in common. The time has come to realize this. If a sense of community is no longer possible in art, the world is truly in a bad way. Getting involved in the practice of exhibition also means making a commitment to others, to the fact that the other may have similar ideas. No form of copyright exists to protect practice, but this is always renegotiated in its terms and its authority.

CB *The difficulty might be that by crossing so many different practices, each of you embodies, in himself, a form in common?*

PP The true danger is that the common can get transformed into academia. Anri does his exhibition for the Venice Biennale, I will be at Palais de Tokyo, Douglas Gordon will soon be at the Museum of Modern Art. The procedure has been accepted, now it is up to us to play, to question ourselves. Because we are only at the beginning, there is still so much to invent.

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A Matter of Synchronization

Una conversazione fra Philippe Parreno e Anri Sala, moderata da Cyril Béghin

Per Philippe Parreno e per Anri Sala, l'oggetto è sempre qualcosa di transitorio: una fase dell'articolato itinerario che un'idea compie tra molteplici forme, e in parallelo una fase dell'itinerario che il visitatore compie nell'ambito di esposizioni concepite come percorsi coreografici. Per i due artisti i film hanno ormai acquisito un'importanza capitale, e il lavoro sull'ambiente sonoro delle esposizioni deriva in gran parte dal loro gusto comune per le dialettiche dell'immagine e del suono nel cinema. Per la prossima Biennale di Venezia, Anri Sala sta preparando un'opera insieme sonora, visiva e spaziale. Cyril Béghin ha invitato entrambi gli artisti a intessere un dialogo su queste tematiche.

Anri Sala: Mi hanno inviato una frase di Lacan che potrebbe aprire la nostra conversazione: "L'isterico è uno schiavo in cerca di un padrone sul quale regnare".

> **Cyril Béghin:** Può essere una buona chiave per prepararsi all'ultimo film di Paul Thomas Anderson, *The Master*.

Philippe Parreno: L'ho visto lo scorso settembre, è molto bello. Ma non so se corrisponda davvero a questa citazione di Lacan... Amo molto i film di Anderson, soprattutto *Punch Drunk Love*, che è una specie di fiaba, con una colonna sonora strepitosa. Ti ricordi, Anri, di quella scena in cui un pianoforte viene lasciato su un marciapiede?
AS: No. Ma mi ricordo di un film con Tim Roth, che parla di un bambino nato e cresciuto su una nave. C'è una bella scena in cui lui suona il piano, durante una violenta tempesta, e ambedue scivolano nel salone [*La leggenda del pianista sull'oceano*, Giuseppe Tornatore, 1998]
PP: Te lo sei inventato, questo film non esiste.
AS: Se non esiste, allora questa scena la giro subito io!

> **CB:** C'è una differenza significativa nei vostri ricordi: Anri rievoca una scena in cui si vede qualcuno che suona il pianoforte, Philippe una scena in cui c'è solo lo strumento. La musica occupa un grande spazio nel vostro processo lavorativo, in particolare nei vostri film. Ma con Anri si finisce sempre per vedere il musicista/i musicisti, mentre con te, Philippe, sembra che non si vedano mai.

AS: È vero, a parte i titoli di testa di *Intervista* [1998], non ho mai utilizzato una musica che non sia prodotta dall'azione stessa del film. La musica è sempre il risultato di una scrittura scenica. Non sto parlando di "musica da film" nel senso convenzionale del termine, anche se ci sono delle ambiguità: quand'è che si capisce che quello che si sente scaturisce dalla scena stessa? In *Long Sorrow* [2005] un sassofonista se ne sta appeso in alto, sul davanzale di una finestra, ma ci vuole un po' prima di capire che qualcuno suona sospeso nel vuoto. Non mi interessa che la musica inserisca un'immagine in un contesto, ma piuttosto che l'immagine produca la musica.
PP: La prima volta che ho usato la musica è stato per il film *Credits* [1999], una sorta di ricomposizione della veduta di una "zona a prioritario sviluppo urbano" in cui sono cresciuto. Avevo chiesto a diverse persone di ricordarsi quei luoghi, per realizzarne la ricomposizione partendo proprio dalle loro testimonianze. E avevo chiesto ad Angus Young, il chitarrista degli AC/DC, di suonare immaginando di essere me, adolescente, che immaginavo di essere lui guardando questo paesaggio da una finestra. Era una specie di *air guitar* al contrario. Quindi la musica faceva parte di un "procedimento", nel senso in cui lo intendeva Raymond Roussel.
AS: Avevi già prodotto l'immagine, e gliel'hai mostrata?
PP: Sì, era un soggetto già stabilito. Ho fatto la stessa cosa con Devendra Banhart per *The Boy from Mars* [2003], che è un edificio che ha generato un film o un film che ha generato un edificio: un animale a due teste, una nella realtà e una nella finzione. Si trattava di continuare il gioco: il film a sua volta ha generato la musica. L'ho mostrato a Banhart, e ho montato la sua improvvisazione dopo le immagini, sul nero.
AS: Tu non hai mai una musica già pronta a partire dalla quale fai il montaggio.
PP: Almeno una volta, per *Invisible Boy*, il pezzo di Godspeed esisteva già.

> **CB:** Ma volevi anche proseguire *Invisible Boy* scrivendo un'opera, che ti avrebbe permesso di continuare la realizzazione del film.

PP: Sì. Si trattava di far "parlare" un'orchestra, di produrre parole con gli strumenti musicali.
AS: C'è sempre un'ambiguità tra suono e musica. In *Le Clash* [2010], è difficile credere che sia la piccola scatola musicale a diffondere la sonorità nell'edificio abbandonato. Per *Now I see* [2004], avevo chiesto a un gruppo islandese, i Trabant, di darmi una canzone che ancora non esistesse. All'epoca i Trabant erano famosi in Islanda, ma avevano anche un altro gruppo, The Funerals, meno conosciuto. Il membri del gruppo avevano l'abitudine di scambiarsi i ruoli tra i Trabant e The Funerals: il bassista diventava il batterista, etc. Volevo fare un film dove ciascuno avrebbe avuto un ruolo ancora diverso. In *Now I see*, li vediamo suonare, e per effetto delle vibrazioni sonore, un palloncino a forma di cane, attaccato a un altoparlante, vola via. È a questo punto che inizia il pezzo musicale. Invece di restare sui musicisti, la camera segue il palloncino, che rimane in aria grazie alle frequenze basse, e i musicisti diventano secondari. È una specie di viaggio in cui la musica prodotta durante il film è ostaggio delle sue stesse frequenze basse, che a loro volta, sono raggiunte da un'altra melodia, trasformando l'insieme in una "musica da film" che accompagna il volo del palloncino.

> **CB:** Anri è sempre alla ricerca di un momento di sincronia tra colonna sonora e immagine, mentre tu, Philippe, sembri privilegiare lo scarto e il doppiaggio sonoro.

PP: Con la musica sì, ma con il suono il rapporto è diverso. Per *Zidane* [2006] abbiamo cominciato a montare il suono prima dell'immagine. Per *C.H.Z.* [2011] abbiamo messo dei microfoni nel terreno del giardino prima di girare. Ma soprattutto non bisogna dimenticare che i film sono progettati per dei contesti espositivi, dove appaiono e scompaiono. Tra suono e immagine, il problema è sempre lo stesso: cosa viene prima? È una questione di automazione: chi è il padrone, e chi è lo schiavo? Spesso è il suono che, tecnicamente, "guida" l'immagine. Perché è più semplice posizionare un *time code* su una colonna sonora piuttosto che fare una lunga immagine cui viene applicato un suono o un evento
AS: Anche perché il suono si può spostare progressivamente nello spazio di un'esposizione, contrariamente all'immagine, che salta da uno spazio all'altro. Oppure possiamo facilmente creare o ri-creare un suono nello spazio, ma non l'immagine. Proprio come hai fatto tu alla fondazione Beyeler con gli altoparlanti piazzati sott'acqua, che diffondevano i suoni dei film, o io con le batterie che suonavano da sole, al Centro Pompidou. Il suono resta una materia plasmabile nello spazio, cosa che non esiste per l'immagine se non sotto forma di collage o di proiezioni multiple che non m'interessano a priori.
PP: Fare un film, così come lo facciamo noi, vuol dire in qualche modo firmare un contratto con se stessi dicendo che ogni volta che appare l'oggetto, bisogna rinegoziare la sua apparizione, o addirittura il suo stesso essere oggetto. Esso, infatti, assume forme diverse generando altrettante letture diverse, mentre nella *time capsule* della sala cinematografica, non cambia nulla, salvo l'umore degli spettatori. Nel mio primo film veniva mostrato un mazzo di fiori, un'immagine di scarsissimo significato, che io avevo dato ad alcuni canali televisivi [*Fleurs*, 1988]. In uno, era diventato una pubblicità per Interflora: era la trasmissione televisiva a produrre senso. È una cosa fondamentale: la maggior parte degli oggetti che produciamo non sono mai veramente conclusi. E il suono partecipa di questa elasticità, di questo aspetto incompiuto che il film può assumere. Mi vengono in mente le sculture del Mali, i cosiddetti *boli*. Si tratta di oggetti rituali con forme vagamente animali. Fra un rito e l'altro, il *boli* viene ricoperto di terra, sangue o escrementi, così bene che ogni volta che appare non è mai lo stesso. Si dice che viva. Ed è proprio il rituale dell'esibizione a trasformare l'oggetto.
AS: Mi capita spesso, quando lavoro al progetto di un film, di sapere in anticipo dove lo presenterò. È un dato che è già in mio possesso e che andrà a influenzare la mia realizzazione. Il dispositivo è incluso nel pensiero della produzione. È una cosa che fa parte del viaggio: il film non finisce nel momento della masterizzazione ma quando approda su una superficie di proiezione.
PP: Ora che gli strumenti tecnici lo permettono, ci sono dei film che rimasterizzo per modificare una tonalità o un suono. *The Boy From Mars* per esempio, ha cambiato completamente colonna sonora. Esattamente come il *boli*: perché allora non proporre ai musei che hanno acquistato questi lavori tempo fa, di dar loro dei nuovi oggetti? Si dovrebbe fare così per tutto: anche poter riprendere un disegno, affinché sia in costante movimento.
AS: A volte, questo vuol dire riportare sull'oggetto ulteriori strati provenienti dall'esterno, per riflessioni e trasparenze, come hai fatto tu al Centro Pompidou con le tende che si aprivano e si chiudevano.
PP: Qualcuno c'è che rientra in questa categoria, ma c'è voluto un po' perché diventasse una cosa evidente. Non molto tempo fa, con Anri, ci lamentavamo del fatto che ogni volta che un'opera veniva ri-presentata o ri-prodotta, era per noi come una forma di costrizione. Ripresentare o rifare la stessa cosa non è molto interessante. Noi non siamo artigiani, non riproduciamo forme: le ricreiamo.
AS: Non dimentichiamoci poi che il mondo dell'arte è essenzialmente visivo. Negoziare la tecnica sonora è molto difficile. La cultura dell'udito esige una sensibilità che raramente è quella del mondo nel quale operiamo.
PP: Ma nel momento in cui riusciamo a mettere le mani sul "padrone", diventa tutto più facile, e anche più divertente.

> **CB:** È così che avete imparato a pensare gli oggetti, e in particolare i film, con questa elasticità, la possibilità di un loro cambiamento nell'ambito del contesto espositivo.

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AS: Il film ha un perimetro, che si può ampliare in funzione dei diversi spazi in cui proiettiamo. È una scultura temporale. Abbiamo cominciato dicendo che nei miei film la musica nasce dall'azione stessa; mentre nel caso di Philippe arriva dopo, sebbene sia stata comunque composta per l'azione. È un modo diverso di relazionarsi con la sincronia. Non dimentichiamoci però che lavoriamo a una doppia separazione del suono e dell'immagine: quelli del film, e quelli dell'esposizione. Nell'esposizione di Philippe alla Serpentine o nella mia al Centro Pompidou, ci sono *un* suono e *molte* immagini. Mentre si viaggia con il suono, si incontrano immagini. In questa dinamica, mi interessa sempre di più "destabilizzare" i film, per creare fra loro altre relazioni. Produrre una realtà nell'abisso tra due schermi, quando il suono è presente e l'immagine è fuoricampo. Un'immagine si è appena conclusa, ed ecco che un'altra comincia più lontano: lo spettatore è stretto in uno spazio intermedio, dove è l'immagine a essere fuoricampo mentre invece di solito è il suono.

CB: Vorrei però insistere sulla sincronia: se in Anri ci sono questi effetti di immagine fuori ruolo, forse è per sottolineare maggiormente i momenti in cui l'immagine e il suono si uniscono, momenti che garantiscono una sorta di effetto del reale. Mentre per Philippe l'effetto del reale non è mai in questo punto.

PP: Torno sul procedimento di Roussel. Non è importante la forma: è il procedimento a condurci alla forma. Per me la costruzione dell'immagine non è che un elemento dell'automa. La questione della sincronia può quindi porsi in momenti diversi: durante le riprese, durante il montaggio, o alla presentazione. Tu parli di sincronizzazione in modo classico, pensando al cinema. Ma occorre fare attenzione alla parola "film". Per me il film non è che un momento della forma. La camera viene utilizzata per cogliere in quel dato momento una forma in uno spazio, ma è soltanto uno dei tanti momenti. In *C.H.Z.*, comincio a sistemare dei microfoni nel terreno, quindi costruisco un giardino; la cosa comincia a prendere vita, ed è già un elemento dell'esposizione. Poi filmo. Il terreno continua a svilupparsi. Ed ecco che il film è fatto, un suono è stato restituito. Si tratta di una catena di elementi in cui non puoi mai dire ciò che viene prima: la sincronia non è lì dove pensi che sia. Per me, non c'era nulla di più sincrono di Angus Young che suonava davanti alle immagini ricomposte di *Credits*. Era un momento dell'esposizione, ma non è quello che ho scelto di mostrare.
AS: È come l'autofocus della camera. La camera aggiusta il fuoco là dove la luce incontra un oggetto, e non necessariamente là dove c'è un senso. Lo stesso accade nell'esposizione: il senso di sincronia avrà luogo nel film, o altrove? Si sceglie quale sia il momento migliore nello spazio, e che diverrà il padrone. E per giocare a questo gioco, occorre che a ogni fase ci siano potenziali sincronie.

CB: Per questo, Anri, tu filmi dei musicisti, ponendo da subito una possibilità molto forte di sincronia nel film stesso?

PP: Per me il suono non fa l'immagine nella registrazione dell'immagine. E le riprese non sono il momento in cui si fa il film. Come diceva Anri, il cursore della sincronia può essere spostato di continuo.
AS: Dov'è la differenza fra anticipare il suono per aiutarti a produrre un'immagine – è il mio caso –, e anticipare il suono per "preparare" il momento in cui questo incontrerà l'immagine? Per quanto mi riguarda è sempre il suono che mi conduce all'immagine di partenza. Per *Long Sorrow*, mi è venuta l'idea del sassofonista, Jemeel Moondoc, sospeso nel vuoto. Mi serviva quindi una finestra, vale a dire una veduta. Ma il punto di partenza non era né la finestra, né la veduta. Il mio problema era: come poter avere qualcuno che produca suono attraverso la respirazione, sospeso nel vuoto, in grado di negoziare con questo vuoto unicamente per il fatto di essere uno strumento umano?
PP: E poi, trovi la finestra.
AS: Già, e i problemi aumentano. Perché se ho una finestra, allora ho anche una veduta, cioè una possibile metafora, un ambiente simbolico. È il processo ciò che devo attraversare: il suono necessita di una determinata immagine, ma come fare perché non diventi una trappola? Devo costantemente ridurre l'immagine che nasce dalla realtà sonora. Mentre tu, pensi il suono e l'immagine in modo più simultaneo.
PP: Può darsi... per *Marilyn* [2012], ho dovuto ideare due robot: il robot vocale che produce la voce, e il robot meccanico che scrive. L'immagine era letteralmente subordinata al suono, dato che la voce descrive le cose che vengono filmate. È raro che sia così, perché di solito preferisco che da una cosa ne scaturisca un'altra, come una serie di anelli concatenati. Il film *C.H.Z.* lascia dietro di sé un terreno che si ricopre di vegetazione, come dei rifiuti. Le due cose vanno insieme, l'"abietto" e l'"oggetto". La natura dell'oggetto diventa una natura "altra": ha prodotto qualcosa di vivo. Per tornare all'idea di elasticità, è come se l'oggetto restasse attaccato a qualcosa che ha prodotto, e allo stesso tempo non è completamente uscito dal proprio guscio. È proiettato nel futuro, ma è ancora un po' nel passato. Questa è la cosa che mi interessa maggiormente: produrre le diffrazioni dell'oggetto che si svilupperà, diventare la sua contaminazione, il suo progetto, la sua sceneggiatura, senza smettere mai di cambiare. E questo deve essere negoziato costantemente, fino alla presentazione o alla rappresentazione dell'oggetto.

CB: Cosa intendi per "negoziazione"?

PP: Prima di tutto negoziare con una figura. Per questo parlavo dei procedimenti di Roussel. Ciò che ci racconta Anri nella sua riflessione su *Long Sorrow*, all'inizio sembra un'ipotesi folle: "sospendere un sassofonista nel vuoto". Queste ipotesi prendono forma nel parossismo dell'esposizione. Spesso si pone la questione della catena dei significati, e probabilmente la cosa non ha soluzione. A volte si dovrebbe attendere la pubblicazione del catalogo per concludere. Non bisogna mai fermarsi, è la rivoluzione nel piacere di giocare, come si diceva negli anni settanta. La rivoluzione permanente: se ci si ferma, è la morte.
AS: In questa catena di cui parli, fatta di oggetti, di esposizioni, di libri, ci sono spesso degli slittamenti. A volte occorre prendere delle decisioni sullo spazio prima che il film sia terminato. Trovo la cosa interessante: certo può creare dei problemi, ma anche delle ipotesi interessanti. Sono procedimenti, questi, che a cinema non esistono.

CB: È come una discussione non stop con tanti interlocutori. Ad esempio sono colpito dal modo in cui Philippe parla apertamente dei suoi progetti, usando sempre la discussione come momento aperto di riflessione.

PP: Nel cinema vige più una cultura del segreto. Anche nell'arte, ma è una novità. Ciò che abbiamo fatto noi, come tanti altri prima di noi, è aprire la pratica dell'atelier. La produzione esce e scorre ovunque. È esattamente l'incubo di un pittore: si costruisce un atelier ogni volta diverso, modificato, scambiato, riportato nello spazio espositivo. È in queste negoziazioni che si creano le forme. Ma nessuno lo fa, perché c'è il rischio della diluizione. Per l'esposizione al Centro Pompidou, ho impiegato mesi per realizzare il film *1968* [2009]; alla fine di ogni proiezione, le tende della sala si aprivano automaticamente, cosa che è stata realizzata in 5 minuti. Spesso, però, la gente si ricordava più dell'apertura delle tende che del film. Ma è un po' come a tavola: ci vuole un po' di sapore cattivo per apprezzare quello buono. L'esposizione deve avere alti e bassi, è considerata ancora troppo come uno scrigno.
Sono questioni che risalgono alle avanguardie. L'influenza del suono sulla produzione di un'immagine si trovava già nelle pitture sinestesiche di Malevich. Quando Duchamp dipinge un quadro sotto il lampadario, la sua tavolozza è influenzata dal colore della luce. Si tratta di giochi. Bisognerebbe cominciare a scrivere una storia così. Ci sono più libri che parlano della storia degli oggetti piuttosto che dei procedimenti, di quella specie di slittamento del terreno. I protocolli di apparizione delle forme nello spazio che definiamo come esposizione, hanno origine in un particolare momento, contemporaneo alla nascita del cinema. Nel suo *Dizionario dei luoghi comuni*, Flaubert definiva l'esposizione come il "l'argomento delirante del XIX secolo". Con il nostro modo di procedere, Anri, io e altri, perdiamo senz'altro di immanenza, solidità, ma guadagniamo qualcosa come la gioia.
AS: Per tornare alla terminologia di poco fa, è come perdere alcune acquisizioni della sincronizzazione per ritrovare altre sincronie con lo spettatore.

CB: È esattamente ciò che creava l'apertura delle tende al Centro Pompidou: tu trasmettevi simultaneamente all'interno della sala un suono captato all'esterno, in una forma letterale di sincronia.

PP: Proprio così. Ma si è trattato di un gesto dell'ultimo minuto, trovato durante il montaggio dell'esposizione. Ed è questo il momento pericoloso. La frase non è conclusa, è una sofferenza. Stai ancora scrivendo il tuo pezzo di teatro un'ora prima dell'ingresso del pubblico.
AS: L'economia dello spettacolo dal vivo permette questo genere di operazioni, ma noi non facciamo teatro. In generale, non lavoriamo con una tecnica prodotta a nostro uso e consumo.
PP: Sono oggetti trovati!
AS: Più che altro tecniche trovate.
PP: C'è qualcosa di terribile nel fatto di non avere una tecnica propria. Ci si basa sempre sulle altre. In genere la cosa funziona, ma si passa molto tempo a fare opera di convincimento.
AS: E le apparecchiature non sono progettate per gli usi che ne facciamo noi. Spesso io sfrutto soltanto una parte delle loro potenzialità, e magari ne adopero più d'una combinandole insieme. La macchina o lo *show control* che possa riunire tutte le diverse qualità non esiste ancora. È come affittare un castello per usare solo l'ingresso. È un serio problema economico.
PP: Adesso, per il Palais de Tokyo, penso di rovesciare completamente le cose: esporre soltanto le procedure di installazione degli oggetti, eliminando la presenza degli oggetti stessi.
AS: Cioè, togli la destinazione per produrre l'itinerario.

CB: Recentemente hai lavorato al museo di Filadelfia per un'esposizione su Marcel Duchamp.

PP: Ci hanno messo un po' a trovare una definizione per il mio lavoro: "scenografia" o "coreografia", poi alla fine hanno mutuato dal francese il termine "messa in scena". Per la prima volta ho fatto un'esposizione senza il mio lavoro: c'era ogni sorta di apparecchi, ma senza i miei oggetti. È una specie di coreografia mentale, non autoritaria, con un senso di lettura, ma non chiaro, apparentemente senza testo. L'occhio è attirato da una luce, un suono, da forme che si muovono. Ci sono tanti suoni, a volte estratti di sonate per pianoforte preparato di Cage, o magari un coro che canta una partitura di Duchamp. Ho fatto un pezzo con alcuni interpreti di Cunningham: con dei microfoni attaccati al pavimento, ho registrato in teatro i rumori dei passi dei danzatori. Nello spazio museale, abbiamo invece installato una piattaforma con altoparlanti al posto dei microfoni. Quando i danzatori non ci sono, li sentiamo muoversi. A volte sono realmente presenti, e danzano sui loro stessi passi, sfalsati o desincronizzati, in maniera del tutto imprevedibile. Vedere video scadenti in bianco e nero di coreografie di Cunningham, per me sarebbe stato tremendo. Si trattava di inventare delle forme per capire come, a un certo punto, lui ha chiesto ai suoi interpreti di passare da una posizione a un'altra in modo casuale, senza alcun rapporto con la musica. Questo fatto diventa l'oggetto di un'esperienza: si sentono passi di danza, un estratto musicale, e la cosa funziona. Si capisce senza aver letto nessun testo, è l'esposizione a produrre conoscenza.

CB: Un altro tuo caso di desincronizzazione?

PP: Sì, ma avrebbe potuto farlo anche Anri, un po' come ci fossero degli scambi tra Cage e Cunningham. A un certo punto, c'è stata questa compresenza di personalità forti che avevano qualcosa in comune. È venuto il momento di prenderne atto. Se non è più possibile un senso di comunità nell'arte, il mondo è ridotto davvero male. Impegnarsi nella pratica dell'esposizione, significa impegnarsi anche verso l'altro, verso il fatto che l'altro può avere idee simili. Non esiste copyright che sancisca la pratica, ma questa è sempre rinegoziata nei suoi termini e nella sua autorità.

CB: La difficoltà potrebbe essere che, attraversando tante pratiche diverse, ciascuno di voi incarni per se stesso una forma di comune?

PP: Il vero pericolo, è che il comune si trasformi in accademia. Anri prepara la mostra per la biennale di Venezia, io sarò al Palais de Tokyo, Douglas Gordon, presto, al Museo d'arte moderna. La procedura è stata accettata, ora sta a noi continuare a giocare, a interrogarci. Perché siamo soltanto all'inizio, c'è ancora tanto da inventare.

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

ANRI SALA
architecte du son et de l'image

interview par Kathryn Rattee

artpress.com

1395 Days without Red est un film qui raconte un jour parmi les 1 395 que dura le siège de Sarajevo, et dans lequel s'entrelacent la répétition de l'Orchestre Symphonique, qui répète la *Pathétique* de Tchaïkovski, et la progression d'une jeune musicienne qui traverse la ville assiégée pour rejoindre l'orchestre. C'est autour de ce film que prend forme l'exposition d'Anri Sala au Centre Pompidou, à Paris (2 mai - 6 août 2012), conçue comme une chorégraphie dans laquelle les multiples espaces, temps et sons se télescopent en une cartographie spatiale et sonore. Anri Sala représentera la France à la Biennale de Venise en 2013.

« 3-2-1 ». 2011. Performance interprétée par Andre Vida (saxophone). Durée variable. (Court. de l'artiste ; Ph. S. Deleu). *Live performance featuring Andre Vida on saxophone responding to the film "Long Sorrow." Duration variable*

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

Depuis le début des années 1990, l'œuvre d'Anri Sala est axée sur l'image animée. Vidéo ou cinéma, ses premières œuvres traitaient de son expérience personnelle dans le contexte des bouleversements sociaux et politiques qui agitaient alors son Albanie natale. Depuis peu, il accorde de plus en plus d'importance au son, élaborant des pièces complexes dans lesquelles il renouvelle son rapport à l'image. Il a également beaucoup travaillé sur le dispositif de l'exposition, utilisant l'architecture, la chorégraphie, le son et la performance dans des installations innovantes qui ont bousculé les modes traditionnels de présentation du cinéma en galerie.

■ ***Vos expositions constituent des œuvres autonomes, pas seulement des présentations de films ou d'objets. Ma première question concerne donc votre façon de les préparer – par quoi commencez-vous ?***
Je commence par penser aux genres de correspondances que je veux établir entre les œuvres que j'ai choisi de présenter, et qui sont susceptibles d'éveiller l'intérêt du public. Mais, en même temps, je dois adapter cette idée à un lieu concret, physique. Les caractéristiques de l'espace et les conditions d'exposition peuvent suggérer à leur tour d'autres choix, qui vont enrichir ou élargir mon idée de départ. Je ne veux pas dire par là que je ressens l'espace physique comme un bloc de contraintes, mais qu'il arrive que ce type d'obstacles soit productif. Et bien sûr, le fait que je tiens à ne pas me répéter joue aussi.

JEUX DE MOUVEMENTS

La notion de performance est centrale dans votre travail. La plupart de vos films récents sont nés d'une performance, ou peuvent en amener une. Dans votre dernière exposition à la Serpentine Gallery, vous avez intégré ces deux courants de votre travail – cinéma et performance. Et l'idée de performance s'applique aussi bien à vos sculptures, par exemple la boîte à musique de* No Window No Cry, *ou les Doldrums, ces tambours qui ont l'air de jouer tout seuls.
À la Serpentine, c'est la performance qui primait. L'idée était d'élargir un des films avec un élément vivant, pour en faire un événement récurrent à l'intérieur de l'exposition : une performance en *live* qui briserait le rythme toutes les demi-heures, neuf fois par jour, de manière imprévisible et improvisée. J'avais invité le saxophoniste André Vida à répondre in situ au *Long Sorrow* de Jemeel Moondoc ; dans cette performance, Moondoc est suspendu dans le vide au 18e étage d'un immeuble berlinois et il improvise au saxophone sur les bruits de la rue qui montent vers lui. La performance-réaction d'André Vida s'intitulait *3-2 -1*, et se déroulait dans les trois principaux espaces de la Serpentine ; dans le premier, il jouait sur un enregistrement de Jemeel Moondoc improvisant sur le film de sa propre performance lors de la projection de *Long Sorrow* à la galerie Chantal Crousel, ce qui donnait un trio ; puis André passait dans le deuxième espace et ne jouait plus que devant les images du film ; il y avait donc un duo entre le musicien présent et le musicien filmé. La performance se concluait par un solo dans la troisième pièce. On était donc dans la répétition, mais avec une dose d'imprévu, ce qui permettait une sorte de dilatation. À la Serpentine, je voulais insister sur la nature performative du cinéma, alors qu'au Centre Pompidou je veux mettre en avant les divers jeux de mouvements en présence : ceux des personnages des films, ceux des spectateurs dans le Centre, et enfin ceux des passants, puisque leur image est projetée dans la salle, les rendant ainsi partie prenante de l'exposition. Par ces jeux de mouvements, on se « promène » (*le Clash* ou *Tlatelolco Clash*), ou qu'on « reste planté » (*Answer Me* ou *1395 Days without Red*), pour ce qui est de mes films ; qu'on suit le parcours balisé, s'agissant du public dans l'espace du musée ; qu'on participe du flot incessant de la circulation piétonne à l'extérieur. La signification de chaque type de mouvements se définit par sa juxtaposition avec les autres, ceux qui sont hors champ, qu'il s'agisse du cadre des films ou de celui de l'exposition.
Un autre aspect de l'exposition au Centre Pompidou concerne le son. Il tient littéralement le rôle de balisage en orientant les mouvements du public dans l'espace. Le son prime sur l'image, contrairement à ce qui se passe le plus généralement, d'une manière ou d'une autre. Christine Macel, la commissaire de l'exposition, parle d'instruments de musique à propos de mes derniers films. Au-delà de chaque histoire particulière, ils ont cela en commun. On pourrait dire qu'il y a le film orgue de barbarie (*Tlatelolco Clash*, 2011), le film boîte à musique (*le Clash*, 2010), le film tambour (*Answer Me*, 2008), le film saxophone (*Long Sorrow*, 2005), même s'il n'est pas dans l'exposition, et le film basson (*1395 Days without Red*), dans lequel cet instrument à vent est associé au souffle et au fredonnement du personnage principal qui trace son chemin dans la ville assiégée. Dans cette exposition, j'imagine les films comme autant de voyelles différentes, qui se mélangent avec l'espace pour le faire sonner.
Pour l'exposition au Centre Pompidou, *1395 Days without Red*, le plus long des films, est fractionné en plusieurs parties, qui sont intercalées dans les trois autres films. Il y aura cinq écrans, mais aucun ne sera « dédié » à un seul film. *1395 Days without Red* sautera d'un écran à l'autre, progressant ainsi simultanément dans sa narration et dans l'espace. Il sera de temps à autre interrompu, sur le même écran, par un autre film qui nous ramènera aux images de départ, celles de *1395 Days without Red*. Les films sont entremêlés de telle sorte que *1395 Days without Red* agisse comme un conducteur guidant le spectateur d'écran en écran. La progression physique dans l'espace se calque ainsi sur le déroulement du film et de sa bande-son.
Trois grandes baies vitrées courent sur trois côtés de la galerie ; deux rangées seront masquées et une seule laissée telle. Ce mur de verre – avec vue sur l'extérieur – sera comme un écran de cinéma projetant les scènes de la rue et de la fontaine devant le Centre.

EXPLORER LES ESPACES INTERSTITIELS

1395 Days without Red ***est donc le moteur, la colonne vertébrale de l'exposition.***
C'est la colonne vertébrale, c'est-à-dire l'os le plus souple. De nombreuses petites vertèbres lui donnent son élasticité.

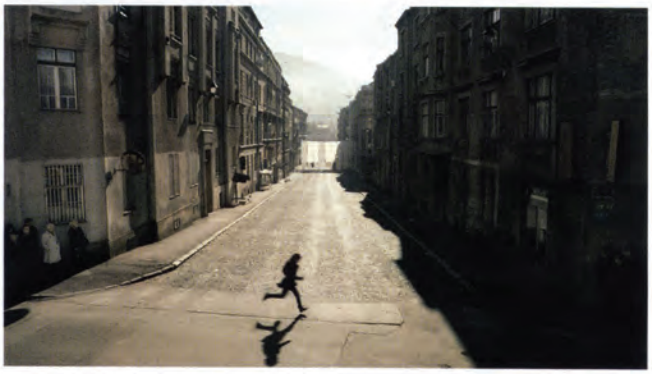
Établissez-vous une connexion entre l'espace de l'exposition et l'espace du film ?
Quand j'installe une exposition, j'essaie de délocaliser les bandes-son du film dans l'espace, de dégager le son de l'image et des films auxquels il appartient. Dans mes expositions récentes, le son est détaché de son point d'origine. Il ne s'agit pas seulement d'une dissociation du son et de l'image, ce qui n'est pas inhabituel au cinéma ; il s'agit d'un son qui n'est plus associé à l'image, mais à l'espace, qui n'est plus dans l'image, mais dans l'espace.

Je suis fascinée par l'idée que l'on puisse percevoir les notes de la gamme non plus seulement avec les oreilles, mais avec les yeux. Cela fait penser à cet état que l'on appelle la synesthésie. Dans une de ses formes, on entend des sons en réponse aux mouvements qu'on perçoit visuellement. Le stimulus visuel se traduit par une réponse auditive. Ce type de translation me semble proche de ce que vous décrivez.
Absolument. C'est d'autant plus fascinant qu'il y a là quelque chose qu'on peut tester empiriquement : dès qu'il s'agit de son et d'image, on a souvent tendance à penser au potentiel poétique de cette combinaison, au fait qu'un son fait penser à une image et vice versa. Ce qui est intéressant, ce sont plus les modifications de la perception susceptibles d'être observées objectivement que l'appréciation consciente ou inconsciente que l'on en a. Il ne s'agit pas d'évoquer quoi que ce soit, mais d'articuler les failles entre les différents médiums de manière à pouvoir faire passer l'esprit par un trou de souris, de lui faire explorer les espaces interstitiels entre les sens.

Nous avons évoqué l'espace et ses rapports avec l'exposition. Qu'en est-il de la relation de l'architecture avec vos films. Elle donne sa forme à la narration.

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.



De haut en bas/*from top:* « Answer Me ». 2008. Vidéo HD. 4' 51". (Court. galeries M. Goodman, New York ; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich/Londres ; Johnen/Schttle, Berlin, Cologne, Munich ; Chantal Crousel, Paris). *HD video, Dolby surround sound* « 1395 Days without Red ». (Collaboration L. Bégéja) À partir de/*from a project by* S. Kameric et A. Sala, collab. A. Benjamin Meyers. (Court. M. Goodman, NY Hauser Wirth, Londres © Artangel, Scca/pro.ba)

Elle donne forme en effet. La question est alors de trouver comment l'architecture peut devenir l'acteur principal, mais indirectement. Elle doit influencer, donner sa forme à la narration et nouer l'intrigue. Pour *Long Sorrow, Answer Me* et *le Clash*, j'ai d'abord choisi les lieux de tournage, et ensuite seulement ce que j'y tournerais. Le lieu n'est pas seulement l'arrière-plan de l'histoire, posé là pour l'esthétique. Il faut trouver des espaces qui articulent les films grâce à la bande sonore. Les relations sont bien plus fortes entre le son et l'espace qu'entre le son et l'image. Il y a des exemples dans la nature où cette interdépendance son-espace est essentielle.

Pour les chauves-souris !

Oui, ou pour le roitelet de Caroline. Il a développé un chant structuré de manière à lui permettre d'évaluer la distance qui le sépare d'un congénère en train de chanter, en « lisant » les déformations imprimées au chant par la topographie, et pas simplement en se fondant sur l'atténuation du son, critère peu fiable puisque des changements atmosphériques peuvent affecter l'absorption des sons dans des proportions impossibles à calculer à l'avance. Ce que l'oiseau estime plutôt, c'est la dégradation des différents composants du chant, et il en déduit la distance par comparaison. Dans le futur, peut-être le roitelet de Caroline pourra-t-il anticiper l'effet de la topographie sur la détérioration sonore et parviendra-t-il à la compenser de manière préventive. De telle manière qu'en reconfigurant les dynamiques entre les fréquences hautes et basses des ondes sonores, il donnera l'impression de chanter en plusieurs endroits à la fois, mais sans changer de place en réalité. Si je pense à cela, c'est parce que l'anticipation est de plus en plus l'importante dans mon travail. Je l'ai déjà évoquée à propos des effets de la gravité dans *Title Suspended*. Quand on a filmé *Answer Me* dans le dôme de Buckminster Fuller, sur la colline du Teuffelsberg, à Berlin, on voulait jouer avec l'écho particulier de ce dôme, en tirer le maximum d'effets. Le batteur a expérimenté diverses fréquences, en adaptant son jeu aux propriétés acoustiques du lieu, jusqu'à ce qu'il trouve le *beat* parfaitement en accord avec la réverbération. Cela revenait à composer une musique anticipant les effets de l'espace sur le son.

À l'Ircam, on a conçu une pièce qui ne renvoie aucun écho. Dans cette pièce, il est difficile de s'y situer, car, quand on parle, on ne sait pas d'où vient sa propre voix. Le corps est déstabilisé, pris d'une sorte de vertige. La connexion son-espace est vraiment fondamentale pour notre coordination sensorielle.

Je voudrais revenir à* 1395 Days without Red. *L'architecture de la ville détermine la progression du personnage. Pour ce film, vous avez créé une structure liant architecture et musique.

1395 Days without Red imbrique deux histoires : les répétitions quotidiennes de l'orchestre philharmonique de Sarajevo, et le trajet d'une musicienne se rendant à cette répétition à travers la ville assiégée. Les deux histoires suivent la « partition » de la même symphonie, avec les tempos prescrits par le compositeur. L'orchestre joue la musique, la femme la fredonne. Une série d'arrêts et de reprises perturbent l'interprétation, tandis que la progression de la femme à travers la ville est ponctuée par les franchissements hasardeux de carrefours transformés en pièges mortels. Elle essaie de garder le tempo, alors qu'elle doit accélérer le pas à chaque croisement pour « sauver sa peau » et que ces courses éperdues la laissent pantelante. Le souffle court, elle ne fredonne plus de la même manière, or c'est ce fredonnement qui la relie à l'orchestre. Lorsqu'elle peut faire une pause, c'est le tempo de la symphonie qui l'aide à reprendre son souffle, qui lui permet de recommencer à fredonner. C'est la marque du temps opposée à la marque de l'espace. En un sens, la partition orchestrale et la « grille » architecturale sont désynchronisées – comme si, pendant un siège, la trame urbaine plaquait les accords de la musique aux mauvais endroits. C'est la topographie de la ville qui dicte la mesure.

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

« Tlatelolco Clash ». 2011. Vidéo. 11' 49 "
(Court. kurimanzutto, Mexico City, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York ; Hauser & Wirth, Zurich, Londres ; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris ; Kaikai Kiki, Tokyo).
Video, Dolby surround sound

CHORÉGRAPHIER UNE GESTUELLE

Vous revenez sur l'idée de la ville dans beaucoup de vos films. Vous allez cadrer un morceau très connu de Paris à partir de votre exposition du Centre Pompidou.

Je suis toujours intéressé par l'histoire du lieu, même si je préfère ne pas en tirer le sujet de mes films. Il n'est pas nécessaire que le spectateur connaisse cette histoire, mais s'il le fait, cela ajoute une couche de sens supplémentaire. J'ai choisi de tourner *Tlatelolco Clash* dans le quartier éponyme à Mexico. Un site important, puisque c'est là que les Aztèques ont livré et perdu leur dernière bataille face aux Espagnols, et où, des siècles plus tard, en 1968, eut lieu le massacre des étudiants. Architecturalement, c'est un mille-feuille de périodes et de styles. Il y a les ruines des pyramides aztèques ; à côté, on trouve une église, bâtie avec des moellons récupérés sur les pyramides, et tout autour s'élèvent les grands immeubles modernes dessinés par Mario Pani, certains d'entre eux ont d'ailleurs été complètement détruits par le tremblement de terre. M'intéressait le fait que cette continuité apparente ait été brisée à plusieurs occasions, ruptures évoquées comme en écho par la bande-son du film, la mélodie tronquée de *Should I Stay or Should I Go* [des Clash], jouée à l'orgue de barbarie. Exploiter visuellement cette juxtaposition de ruines aztèques, d'église catholique et d'immeubles modernes est un peu compliqué, mais le lien, c'est l'histoire du lieu. Parallèlement, il est difficile de reconnaître le titre punk dans les fragments constamment interrompus du morceau, d'autant qu'ils se chevauchent de façon aléatoire.

Dans* 1395 Days without Red, *cet arrière-plan historique semble plus prégnant. C'est bien l'histoire de la ville qui joue un rôle de premier plan.

Elle est peut-être moins en retrait. Pourtant, le but n'était pas de raconter l'histoire de la ville assiégée, mais de chorégraphier la gestuelle imposée par l'état de siège. L'action est sous-tendue par tous ces gestes qui sont la mémoire de ce que la ville a eu à endurer. J'accorde aux postures un rôle significatif dans tous mes films. Mouliner pour l'orgue de barbarie ou remonter délicatement la boîte à musique, ce sont avant tout des gestes.

Quelle importance accordez-vous au temps dans votre travail.

Je pense que ce qui compte le plus, c'est la relation entre le temps et le tempo, entre la permanence et l'impermanence. C'est l'oscillation entre le temps régulier et le temps des à-coups qui m'intéresse.

La manière dont vous avez conçu votre exposition, telle une boucle fixe, s'inscrit elle aussi dans le temps.

Une exposition se déroule aussi bien dans le temps que dans l'espace, comme une chorégraphie qui aboutirait à une cartographie spatiale, où le temps enregistré des films rejoint le temps de la déambulation du public dans l'espace de la galerie. En face d'ailleurs, mais comme en arrière-plan de l'exposition, les gens vont et viennent dans la rue Saint-Merri, chacun suit son tempo personnel sans se douter qu'il participe au décor d'un espace intérieur qu'il ne fait que longer. ■

Traduit par Michel Pencréac'h

Kathryn Rattee est commissaire à la Serpentine Gallery, à Londres.

Installation à la Serpentine Gallery, Londres 2011
À gauche/*left:* « No Window no Cry ». 2011.
Au centre : « Le Clash ». 2010.
À droite/*right:* « Score ». 2011. (Ph. S. Deleu)

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

Anri Sala Architect of Sounds and Images

***1395 Days without Red* is a film which recounts one of the 1,395 days of the siege of Sarajevo, in which the Symphony Orchestra's rehearsals of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* are interspersed with shots of a young musician walking through the besieged city to reach the orchestra. This film is the centerpiece of Sala's show at the Pompidou Center (May 2–August 6), which has been conceived as a choreography in which multiple space-times come together to form a spatial and aural map. Sala will represent France at Venice next year.**

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Since the late 1990s, Anri Sala has worked mainly with the moving image. His early videos and films mined his personal experience to reflect on the social and political change taking place in his native Albania. More recently, Sala has attached a growing importance to sound, creating complex works in which he recasts its relationship with the image. Sala has also increasingly been interested in exploring the possibilities of the exhibition format itself, using architecture, choreography, sound and performance to develop innovative installations that challenge traditional modes of presenting film in the gallery space.

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

THE PLAY OF MOVEMENTS

Your exhibitions operate like works in themselves, rather than as collections of discrete films or objects. I'd like to begin by asking you about your process of making a show—where do you start?

I start by thinking in an abstract sense about what kind of correspondence I want to establish between the works that I'm choosing to present in the show and what kind of relationship aspects of their correspondence will inherently trigger with the audience. But at the same time, I am also thinking about matching this idea with a real, physical space. The space's specific characteristics and conditions can suggest further choices, which can expand or enrich what I am already thinking about. I wouldn't say that the physical space enters into the process as a set of limitations, but sometimes restrictions like this can be productive. Of course, another consideration is that I do not want to repeat what I have already done.

The idea of performance has become very important in your work. More specifically, most of your recent films are born of a performance or could lead to one. In your recent show at the Serpentine Gallery, you were able to integrate these two strands of your work—film and performance. And the performative idea can also be applied to your sculptures, for example the music box of No Window No Cry *or the* Doldrums, *which are drums that appear to play themselves.*

Performance was very important at the Serpentine. The idea was to expand one of the films through a live element and transform it into a recurrent offshoot in the show: a live performance that would interrupt the show's time-coded program every half an hour, nine times a day, in unpredictable and improvised ways. I invited the saxophonist André Vida to respond live to Jemeel Moondoc's performance in *Long Sorrow*, in which Moondoc is suspended in mid-air outside the 18th floor of an apartment building in Berlin and improvises on his saxophone in response to the urban void under his feet. The performance with André is called 3-2-1 and it took place through the three main spaces of the Serpentine. In the first space André played to a recording of Jemeel Moondoc improvising at Galerie Chantal Crousel along with his own earlier performance in *Long Sorrow*; resulting in a trio. Then André would move into the second room and respond to the film; a duet between the musician in the exhibition and the musician in the film. Ultimately the performance would end in a solo coda when André finishes playing on his own in the third room.

So there was repetition but also unpredictability within this repetition, which allowed for a kind of expansion. While the Serpentine show foregrounded the performative nature of the films, for the show at the Centre Pompidou I want to highlight the distinction between the movements of the characters in the films, of the audience in the show and the passersby outside the exhibition, whose visibility from inside the show makes them part of the experience of the exhibition. The distinctness of these movements extends from "wandering" (in my films *Le Clash* or *Tlatelolco Clash*) to "being stuck" (in *Answer Me* or *1395 Days without Red*) in the films, to the scripted flux of the audience inside the exhibition space, to the undisrupted fluidity of the passersby outdoors. The significance of each type of movement will be defined through their juxtaposition with the other movements outside the frame, whether this is the frame of the films or the frame of the exhibition.

Another aspect of the show at the Centre Pompidou is the role of sound, which will literally direct the movement of the audience within the space. Sound will lead the image rather than the more usual situation in which sound follows the image in some way. Christine Macel, who is the curator of the show, spoke of my recent films as musical instruments. Beyond their individual narratives, the films share this common feature. In a manner of speaking, there is the barrel organ film (*Tlatelolco Clash*, 2011), the music box film (*Le Clash*, 2010), the drum film (*Answer Me*, 2008), the saxophone film (*Long Sorrow*, 2005), although this will not be in the show, and the bassoon film (*1395 Days without Red*), where the wind instrument is associated with the breathing and the humming of the main character trying to make her way across the besieged city. In the show I imagine the films like distinct vowels that merge with the space to sound with it.

So for the show at the Pompidou, *1395 Days without Red*, which is the longest film, is cut into parts, which are interspersed with the other three films. There will be five screens and the films do not "own" their own screens. *1395 Days without Red* will proceed from one screen to another simultaneously advancing in both its narrative and in the space. On its route around the exhibition space it will sometimes be interrupted in the same screen by another film, which will eventually lead us back to *1395 Days without Red*. In the exhibition, the films are interwoven so that it is always the conductor in *1395 Days without Red* that leads the viewer to the next screen. In both the film and the show, physical progress through the space is conducted by him and conveyed by the sound of the orchestra. The gallery has three long walls of windows, two of which will be covered while the third wall of windows is left open. This windowed wall—its view unobstructed—will be a bit like a cinema screen looking out onto the street and the public fountains outside the gallery.

And 1395 Days without Red *is like the engine or the backbone of the show.*

It is the backbone but at the same time it's the most broken bone. The backbone is broken into so many pieces, and this is what gives it its elasticity.

Are you making a link between the space of the exhibition and the space of the film?

When making a show I try to relocate the soundtracks of the films into the space, to disengage sound from the image and the films to which it belongs. In my recent exhibitions, sound is detached from its point of origin. I'm not just speaking of the disassociation of sound and image, which is not uncommon in cinema, I'm speaking of

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

« Friday 10.07.2009 (Why the Lion Roars) ». 2011. Photographie couleur. 41 x 52 cm. (Court. Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris). *Color photograph*

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

sound no longer being associated to the image but to the space, of making sound one not with the image but with the space.

I'm fascinated by this idea that the note of a score becomes something that you experience with a different sense, not with your ears anymore but with your eyes. It makes me think of this condition that exists called synaesthesia. In one particular type, people hear sounds in response to movement that they perceive visually. Information is perceived visually but is experienced aurally. This kind of translation seems very close to what you are describing.

Absolutely. This is fascinating because it is also something that can be tested empirically. The moment you talk about sound and image, people are often drawn to thinking of the poetic potential of their combination, of how a sound makes you think of an image or vice-versa. What is more interesting to me is that these shifts in perception can be objectively surveyed, however conscious or unconscious their appreciation may be. It's not about evoking something, it's about articulating the gaps between different media in order to bring the mind through the rabbit hole and into the interstitial spaces between the senses.

We have spoken about space in connection with your exhibitions, but what about space, and more specifically architecture, in relation to your individual films? It often has a role in shaping the narrative in your films.

Shaping is the best way to put it. The questions is how can architecture become the main character but indirectly. So it is about using architecture to influence and shape the narrative and enhance the drama. With *Long Sorrow*, *Answer Me* and *Le Clash*, I first found the location and then considered what could happen in it. The location is not just the background of the story, there to enhance the aesthetic. For me, the important thing is to find spaces that can articulate the film via the sound. There is a much stronger relationship between sound and space than between sound and image. There are examples in nature where this interdependence of sound and space is essential.

Bats?

Yes or this bird called the Carolina Wren, which is a type of small bird that can estimate the distance that separates it from a conspecific singer thanks to its understanding of the impact of geography on its song. The Carolina Wren has developed the ideal song structure to enable it to estimate distance based not simply on the overall attenuation of the sound, which would be an unreliable clue because weather changes can affect the atmospheric absorption of sound in unforeseeable ways. Instead, the bird can estimate distance by comparing the degradation of different components of the song. I like to think that in the future, in an evolutionary leap forward, the Carolina Wren could do more than calculate the distance of the conspecific singer. I hope that one day it can anticipate the effect of geography on its song's deterioration and compensate for it in advance. So that by recomposing the dynamics between high and low sound waves, the Wren could sing as if it were in different locations without ever actually changing place.

Perhaps I think of it because of the growing importance of anticipation in my work. I spoke earlier of anticipating the effect of gravity in *Title Suspended.* When we filmed *Answer Me* inside the Buckminster Fuller dome in Teuffelsberg in Berlin, we wanted to compose with the dome's echo in mind, triggering it as much as possible. The drummer experimented with different frequency arrangements, adjusting his

Interview by Kathryn Rattee. "Anri Sala, architecte du son et de l'image," *art press*, May 2012, N° 389, p.41-47.

drumming to take into account the acoustics of the dome, until he found the perfect drum beat for the frequency response of the space. It was like composing music in anticipation of the effect of the space on the sound.
At IRCAM (Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics and Music, Paris) there is a room designed to have absolutely no echo and what is amazing is that being in the space, you lose your balance. It becomes difficult to situate yourself in the room, because it's as if when speaking you can no longer sense where your voice comes from. The body feels unbalanced and it produces a feeling of vertigo. The connection between sound and space is fundamental to our sense of coordination.

CHOREOGRAPHING GESTURES

I want to return to 1395 Days without Red *because it is the music that drives the main character's movement through the film, but it is also the architecture of the city that, in the end, determines her progress. You have brought both music and architecture together in this film to create the structure..*

1395 Days Without Red intertwines a daily rehearsal of the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra with a musician crossing the besieged city on her way to the rehearsal. They are both following the "score" of the same symphony at the prescribed tempo, which is set out in the score. The orchestra plays it, while the woman hums it. A series of difficulties with the tempo interrupt the orchestra's run-through, as the woman's progress through the city is halted by a succession of street-crossings that the siege has turned into probable dead-ends. The woman tries to keep the same tempo but at the same time, because at each crossing she has to run for her life, her breathing is affected. This in turn has an impact on her humming, which is what ties her back to the orchestra. When she has a moment to rest, the tempo of the symphony helps her catch her breath and start humming again. It's time signature versus space signature. In a sense the musical score of the orchestra and the architectural 'score' of the city are off register, out of sync—it's as if, under siege, the urban grid puts the bars in the wrong places in the music. The topography of the city becomes like a set of measures itself.

What about the role of the city in your work? It is obviously central in 1395 Days without Red *but also* Tlatelolco Clash *and earlier works such as* Dammi i Colori. *You've returned to the idea of the city in many of your films and, as you've described, you will also frame a view on to a well-known part of Paris in your exhibition at the Pompidou.*

I'm always interested in the historical background of a location, although I prefer it not to become a subject in my films. The viewer doesn't have to know about the history of the site, but, if they do, it certainly adds another layer. I chose to film *Tlatelolco Clash* in the Tlatelolco site of Mexico City. It is an important site because that is where the Aztecs were finally beaten by the Spanish and where centuries later the student massacre of 1968 took place. Architecturally, it is a mix of different layers and periods. There are the ruins of the Aztec pyramids, and next to the ruins is a church that was built with stones plundered from the pyramids and surrounding these structures are modernist buildings designed by Mario Pani, some of which no longer exist as they were destroyed by the earthquake. What interested me was that the continuity of this area had been severely broken more than once, a rupture that echoed somehow the soundtrack of the film, the broken melody of *Should I Stay or Should I Go* played on a barrel organ. Visually speaking it is hard to explain the juxtaposition of the Aztec ruins with a catholic church and to the modernist buildings, but they are all connected in one location following one history. Similarly, it is hard to guess the punk song from the randomly played different sections of the song constantly interrupting each other in the film.

In 1395 Days Without Red *this historical content seems to be less in the background, however. The history of the city plays a more prominent role in the film.*

Yes, perhaps it's less in the background. Nevertheless, the aim was not to tell the story of the besieged city, but to choreograph the gestures that the siege prompted. The action is driven by gestures that carry the memory of what the city went through. Gestures are significant in all my films. Playing the barrel organ or carefully cranking the music box are gestures too.

One last thing I wanted to ask about, Anri, is the importance of time in your work.

I think what is relevant is the relation between time and tempo, even and uneven. I'm interested in this oscillation between even and uneven time.

And of course, with the way you have conceived the exhibition, as a fixed loop, it also becomes something that is described in time.

For me an exhibition unfolds in time as much as it unfolds in space, like a choreography of time that creates a cartography of space, joining the recorded time of the films with the time the audience spends navigating the exhibition space. Just outside the gallery space, in the background of the exhibition people pass by Rue Saint-Merri at their own pace unaware that they have become the background of an adjacent interior space. ■

Kathryn Rattee is exhibition curator at the Serpentine Gallery, London.

Anri Sala
Né en / *born* 1974 à / *in* Tirana (Albanie)
Vit à / *lives in* Berlin
Expositions récentes / *Recent shows:*
2009 Marian Goodman Gallery, New York
2011 Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal
Kaikaikiki, Tokyo ; National Museum of Art, Osaka
Serpentine Gallery, Londres
Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
Kurimanzutto, Mexico
2012 Centre Pompidou, Paris
2013 Biennale de Venise, pavillon français

« Le Clash ». 2010. Vidéo HD 8'31". (Court. Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris)
HD Video, Dolby surround sound

Galerie
Chantal Crousel

Propos recueillis par Roxana Azimi. “Anri Sala au Centre Pompidou : “C’est le son qui fait l’histoire” ,”
Le Quotidien de l’Art, May 7, 2012, p.1-2.

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Anri Sala au Centre Pompidou : « C’est le son qui fait l’histoire »

ANRI SALA, ARTISTE

Galerie Chantal Crousel

Vue de l’exposition d’Anri Sala au Centre Pompidou. © Hervé Véronèse, Centre Pompidou.

Exposé jusqu’au 6 août au Centre Pompidou, l’artiste albanais Anri Sala livre une partition où le son donne corps à l’espace, guidant le cheminement du visiteur invité à suivre, d’écran en écran - cinq au total -, le film *1395 days without red* (2011). Celui-ci montre le parcours d’une musicienne dans la ville de Sarajevo, avec pour toile de fond le siège qui avait amené les habitants de la ville à éviter de porter du rouge pour ne pas devenir la cible des snipers. Cette œuvre est intercalée entre trois autres films introduisant leurs propres *SUITE DU TEXTE P. 2*

* **p.6** ESSAI TRANSFORMÉ POUR FRIEZE À NEW YORK
* **p.7** MORCEAUX DE CHOIX DANS LES VENTES D’ART CONTEMPORAIN
* **p.8** LA FONDATION CRÉDIT AGRICOLE, UN MÉCÉNAT DE PROXIMITÉ

Propos recueillis par Roxana Azimi. “Anri Sala au Centre Pompidou : “C’est le son qui fait l’histoire” ,”
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Entretien avec Anri Sala

PAGE 02

SUITE DU TEXTE DE UNE **géographies et musicalités : *Answer Me*, *Le Clash*, et *Tlatelolco Clash*. À cela s’ajoutent des batteries qui déclenchent par intermittence leur propre petite musique fantôme. L’artiste nous explique ce travail de spatialisation sonore.**

R. A. Le visiteur de votre exposition se transforme en passant, qui suit les déambulations de la musicienne du film 1395 days without red en se promenant lui-même dans l’exposition au gré du son et de l’image. Comment est né ce dispositif ?

A. S. Je voulais une représentation spatiale du film, et non une projection de cinéma. Le spectateur progresse dans le film et dans l’espace d’exposition. Il ne se situe pas au centre du dispositif sonore. Dans l’exposition, on est tout le temps décentré. Selon le lieu où l’on se trouve, on est capté par un autre son. Ce qui m’intéresse, c’est de « reconcrétiser » le son dans l’espace. Je ne veux pas faire d’expositions où les gens sont projetés dans les films, mais où ils ont conscience de l’espace dans lequel ils se trouvent.

R. A. Les quatre films présentés jouent sur la dualité intérieur ou extérieur, sur la résonance entre les deux espaces, tout comme la Galerie Sud, qui fait presque entrer la rue dans l’espace d’exposition. Comment avez-vous joué sur la présence très visible de la ville ?

A. S. Il y a dans 1395 days without red l’idée de parcourir la ville et de longer le bâtiment. C’est ce que les gens font à l’extérieur du Centre Pompidou, lorsqu’ils vont par exemple à la Bibliothèque. C’est intéressant de voir ce qui est lié au processus du quotidien dans une ville et les chorégraphies qui sont imposées dans d’autres villes. On ne marchait pas de la même façon à Sarajevo, où il fallait parfois presser le pas, traverser un carrefour en courant, qu’ailleurs. L’exposition intègre l’environnement du Centre Pompidou comme la cinquième ville. L’extérieur vient empêcher l’effet Tati dans Playtime. L’image est là en toute transparence, mais le son n’est pas là.

Le Quotidien de l’Art
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R. A. Comment avez-vous mis en corrélation 1395 days without red avec les autres films qui l’entrecoupent ?

A. S. Je voulais que l’on passe à côté et à travers plusieurs villes, comme l’on passe à côté d’un écran. Je voulais aller contre l’individualité et la fiction de chaque film. On est dans une continuité, dans les syntaxes des instruments utilisés. On se rend compte que quelque chose a changé, et c’est le son qui fait l’histoire.

R. A. La musique domine beaucoup de vos films. Comment est-elle arrivée à prendre cette place cardinale ?

A. S. Au tout début, j’avais fait Intervista, sur le langage qui devient son, quand il n’est plus compréhensible. J’ai travaillé sur le doute du langage, rendre opaque la structure du langage qui transmet le son. Dans 1395 days without red, il n’y a pas de musique de film. La musique est toujours le résultat d’une action. Je suis intéressé quand l’air et le souffle deviennent musique, pas quand la musique est un produit à partager. Dans le film Long Sorrow [qui ne figure pas dans l’exposition], la peur du vide conditionne certains sons du saxophoniste. Dans 1395 days without red, la musicienne répète dans sa tête et fredonne la partition du basson. L’inquiétude professionnelle l’aide à dépasser le danger quotidien. J’ai travaillé sur l’idée du temps, historique, politique, la conscience du temps, le tempo, le rythme, la dynamique, l’inégalité des tons et des expériences de ces tons. Cela passe de façon plus tangible par la musique. Le langage nous emmène dans le contenu. La musique, c’est le rythme et la mélodie.

R. A. En 2009, lors de votre exposition « Purchase not by moonlight » au MOCA de Miami, le spectateur devait attendre la fin d’un film avant de pouvoir passer à un autre écran. Au Centre Pompidou, nous sommes tout autant obligés de suivre votre parcours. Aimez-vous imposer au spectateur votre sens du temps et de l’espace ?

A. S. Je ne dirais pas imposer, c’est plutôt comme une invitation. Je propose un chemin, une proposition principale, les gens sont libres de choisir. Ils peuvent décider d’aller contre ce parcours, d’aller vers la périphérie. Je propose très clairement la chorégraphie du temps de l’exposition, mais les gens la débutent selon leur arrivée. À Beaubourg, je fais la même chose et le contraire de « Purchase not by moonlight ». Ici, les films ne sont pas propriétaires de l’écran. Ils se partagent l’espace. On regarde un bout de film, puis un autre, on passe de Sarajevo à Bordeaux, puis au Mexique, et enfin à Sarajevo, qui est comme une ellipse. Dans la boucle qui dure une heure, les gens font deux fois le tour de l’espace. Le mixage joue un rôle énorme. C’est le son qui pilote l’exposition, c’est lui qui nous suggère ou nous invite. Le son anticipe, prépare l’envie des visiteurs d’aller ailleurs. ▮

PROPOS RECUEILLIS PAR ROXANA AZIMI

***ANRI SALA**, jusqu’au 6 août, Centre Pompidou, Galerie Sud, niveau 1, 75004 Paris, tél. 01 44 78 12 33, www.centrepompidou.fr*

Galerie Chantal Crousel