

Volker Straebel

Sound Observation #1b (Chinatown)

live diffusion of four-channel digital audio (2011)

Program note:

Sound Observations is a series of electroacoustic works – live performances and sound installations – that observe the qualities of live or recorded soundscapes.

Sound Observation #1b (Chinatown) is based on the sound of an air conditioning unit installed above a shop door, recorded on the street in New York's Chinatown. A narrow frequency band is filtered out and projected from in front of the audience, while all other frequencies are projected from behind. During the course of the piece, the frequency band in front scans the entire spectrum, from the very low to the very high.

The duration of the piece is 15'. The dynamic relation between front and back speakers is mixed live.

Performance:

Playback through four speakers surrounding the audience, with the bandpass filter in front, the band-block filter in back. For the very low and very high frequencies – which occur at the very beginning and very end of the piece – the bandpass signal is quite soft. It should always appear dominant in comparison to the band-block signal, and its volume needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Documentation:

Recording: M. Kessler Hardware, 229 Grand Street, New York, between Bowery and Elizabeth, on June 16th, 2011.

First performed on September 15th, 2011, at Moltkerei Werkstatt, Cologne.

