



Stephen Vitiello

Duets

July 19 – August 30, 2008

Opening Reception: Saturday July 19, 6 – 8pm

PRESS RELEASE

MC is pleased to present ***Duets***, Stephen Vitiello's second solo exhibition in Los Angeles. Throughout his career Vitiello has aimed to stretch the boundaries of listening by emphasizing the physical presence and materiality of sound. Consisting of three recent works, ***Duets*** highlights a tendency towards collaboration as being an important social and formal aspect of the sound artist's oeuvre.

Four Color Sound, 2008, which was originally commissioned by DiverseWorks in Houston, TX and features lighting design by Jeremy Choate, is an immersive environment of sound and color. The twenty four minute cycle is accompanied by choreographed lighting effects that charge the foggy room with a single color, blue, red, yellow, green, that is associated with each of the four sections. As is common with Vitiello's soundtracks, the audio combines sounds produced by electronic synthesizers with excerpts from the artist's documentary field and instrumental recordings. With each 6-minute section there is a monochromatic color that modulates as the sound pulsates, changes intensity, and pans around the space. Just as certain sounds overlap, the hues fade between sections to create a visual cord of two colors colliding. The sensory confusion of sound and light merging together induces a form of simulated synesthesia, a neurological phenomenon in which the stimulation of one sensory experience involuntarily triggers the perception of another.

In ***Untitled #2***, 2007, Julie Mehretu's wall drawing acts in response to Stephen Vitiello's audio tracks, which are evoked by the artists' interest in a skewed landscape. The sculptural arrangement of hanging speakers emitting inaudible low-frequencies was designed by both artists. A common motif in Vitiello's work, these hanging speakers are a key element to exploring a physical orientation towards sound, and are only seen by the beating and vibrating of the speaker head.

With speakers humorously customized by Tony Oursler, ***Crazy Wall Thing***, 2005, consists of 25 3-inch speakers installed directly on the wall. Oursler used fingerprint smudges to create smiley faces with the speakers' pre-existing wiring. Influenced by Stockhausen's *Gesang Der Jünglinge*, sounds from an analog synthesizer are mixed with choral samples to create a chaotic soundtrack that draws the viewer in for closer inspection.

Stephen Vitiello's upcoming projects include a performance at Bard College with Pauline Oliveros and Andrew Deutsch in August and a solo exhibition at The Project, New York in October 2008. Vitiello has performed at Tate Modern, London; the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival and The Kitchen, New York. In 2006 Vitiello was nominated for the Nam June Paik Award and exhibited at the Sydney Biennale and the Kunstlerhaus, Vienna. Recent solo exhibitions include Museum 52, London, DiverseWorks, Houston, TX, The Contemporary Art Centre of Virginia, and Galerie Almine Rech, Paris. Recent group exhibitions include Organizing Chaos, P.S. 1, NY, the 2002 Whitney Biennial; Ce qui arrive at the Cartier Foundation, Paris.

Upcoming Exhibitions:

Tracey Rose, September 13 – November 8, 2008