

5.1.8.

CONSTANCE DE JONG

<THE PLACE>

'The Place' is a sound equipped chair sited for the lobby/foyer of a public building in Zuoz. The chair is of a comfortable style, designed for relaxing. I will work with a commercially made design. The chair is equipped with a custom designed sound system and pressure sensor in the seat. Sound recordings begin to play when a person sits down. 'The Place' remains silent when no one is seated; the sound begins and ends upon one taking or leaving a seat; programmed to always start playing at the beginning of spoken text. The recordings consist of approximately 30 minutes of material, edited into a sequence of segments programmed to play in a random order with each seating.

Content: 'The Place' evokes a series of beloved and/or favorite locations. Individuals from the Engadine and from 'around the world' (available in New York City) will be interviewed to capture spoken evocations of specific environments or moments in a specific environment that have distinct and powerful meaning to the interviewee. To someone sitting in 'The Place', the chair becomes a kind of time-traveler or dream-device: journeys to local and distant places, reveries of being in a place. The reference to tourism is self-evident and inhabitants of the locale are also represented.

I will edit and compose spoken texts from the interviews I conduct, as well as write original texts to be spoken by me (sometimes in duet or trio with a recorded speaker, see 'Ripple' on CD 'Speaking of the River').

Constance DeJong: Speaking of the River. The Thames and Hudson Rivers Project. Audio-CD. Public Art Development Trust. London 2000.

Audio recordings are composed of spoken language, musical & sound material.

Musical material:

sampled from regional music associated with the sites and remixed with original material.

Sound material:

natural and ambient sounds recorded on-site.

Voices:

(1) Studio recordings: I will be the principal speaker of the texts I write and will hire female and male speakers to deliver some or parts of the texts.

(2) Men & women recorded in interviews conducted by me.

Spoken texts will be comprised of written language and material from interviews, combining 'natural' and composed language in seamless compositions.

Audio editing and mixing have become part of my writing process. I use ProTools (a professional editing software) to form vocal arrangements of speakers in duets, trios or chorus. As a compositional tool, ProTools allows me to develop a style of audio composition particular to the benches: layers of sound, reiterated phrases, syntactical rhythms & incremental motion are among the characteristics that can produce a vivid listening experience and a kind of text comprehensible in an ambient setting.

April 2002

An example of the sound equipped chair, 'Channel', 2001. The chair is a commercial design, equipped with a pressure sensor in the seat, electronics (runs off D-batteries) fit under the seat in a custom-made metal box, speakers left and right near back rest... an upright seat in which a listener receives communications from the dead, known and unknown figures who got on the channel



<TIMETABLE>

In English the term 'timetable' means: "any schedule or plan, designating the times at or within which certain things occur or are scheduled to occur; for example, a timetable of coming musical events; a timetable of space research." (From the 'Random House Dictionary of the English Language')

'TimeTable', the proposed indoor work, metaphors the meaning of 'timetable' and extends the metaphor into the actual form of a table.

Form: a round glass table, 36 inches in diameter, with an 18 inch high perforated metal base and seating. (see sketch) A DVD flat screen is centered under and flush with the glass table top. The base houses the electronics: DVD player, speakers, circuit board and sensor. Connects by one cable to an ordinary electrical outlet. A social setting, lower than typical table heights for dining or working.

'TimeTable' is comprised of approximately 30 minutes of audio & video material, composed in segments and programmed to play in random order. The recorded material is initiated by a proximity sensor that recognizes the presence of a viewer/listener. In the absence of a viewer/listener, the work remains silent and paused on a video blue screen.

Content: Both the audio & video compositions are sourced from regional phenomena—geological events and the weather; traces of human and animal activities; views inward and outward. The "times within which certain things occur" (from the above definition) belong to the valley's past and present; the occurrences are derived from the valley's environment, architecture and people. The compositions, audio & video, incorporate a scope of material: the world of ideas and of ordinary experience. (see also Audio & Video sections of this proposal)

Siting of work: 'TimeTable' asks to be situated in a building where people gather or which they frequent for no particular purpose; a waiting area—for example in the lobby/foyer of a public building or community center in Zuoz; at the rail station in Madulain (or Chamues-ch?, or S-chanf? Bahnhof).

'TimeTable' inserts a contemplative, reflective moment into the fabric of public experience. As a form, 'TimeTable' animates a common structure—a table—and extends the forum where language and images can perform and have meaning.

Audio

The audio is composed of spoken texts and other sound material. The compositions use layers of sound, reiterated phrases, syntactical rhythms and incremental motion to project real aspects of geographical location in a landscape of thought and imagination.

A broad time frame will be represented in the spoken texts; past and present; as well as different scales, as if writing from close up, from a far view and microscopically.

Spoken texts:

-- will combine English with local languages. I will be the primary speaking voice with additional voices of Deutsch and Romanisch speakers.

-- will occasionally be visible as an image or as an element of video images, informed by the wall writing on Engadine Houses and other local buildings; also informed by my continuing interest in integrating written language and images in a single visual field.

(see images on CD 'Fantastic Prayers')

Constance DeJong, Tony Oursler, Stephen Vitiello: *Fantastic Prayers*. CD-ROM. Dia Center for the Arts and Prop Foundation. New York 2000.

-- will be heard in a 'soundscape' composed of manipulated natural sounds, such as wind, and musical material, such as bells and remixed regional music.

Note: audio will be timed-out at intervals (should someone sit for extended time with the work) providing times of silence with only the video and video language playing.

Image from 'Fantastic Prayers', 2000

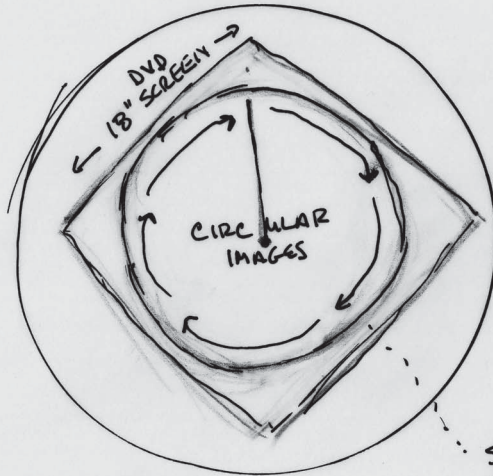


INDOOR:
Le Plaisir
Project

"TIME TABLE"

Sensor activated table with audio + video compositions. For foyer of public building - ambient social setting.

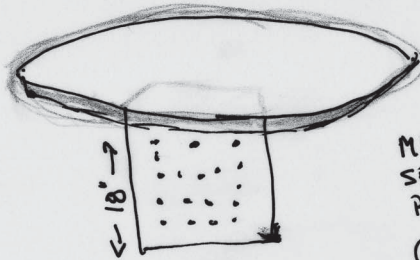
Top View:



36" DIAMETER
1" PLATE GLASS TABLE TOP

SWEEP HAND CLOCKWISE
REVEALS IMAGE AS IT
TRAVELS.

Side View:



METAL BASE: CONTAINS
SPEAKERS, SENSORS + DVD
PLAYER

(Perforated for sound
emission + air circulation)

Include

BUDGET for SEATS: 4 Low stools
+



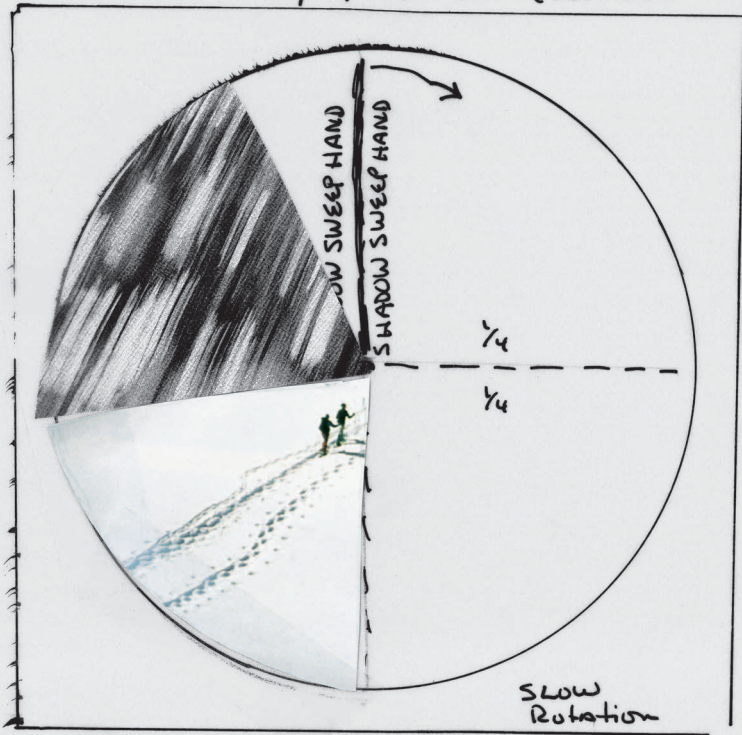
or 4 Small benches



Circular Video Image Field VARIATIONS

For: "TIME TABLE"
Le Plaisir Project

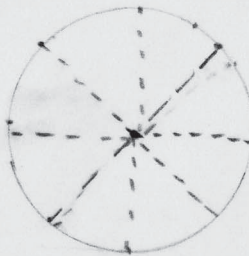
By QUARTERS (sort of)



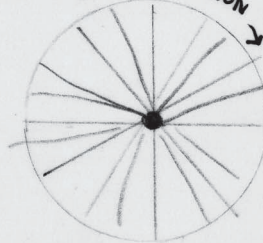
IRREGULAR DIVISIONS



Regular DIVISIONS



FAST Rotation



CONCENTRIC LAYERS



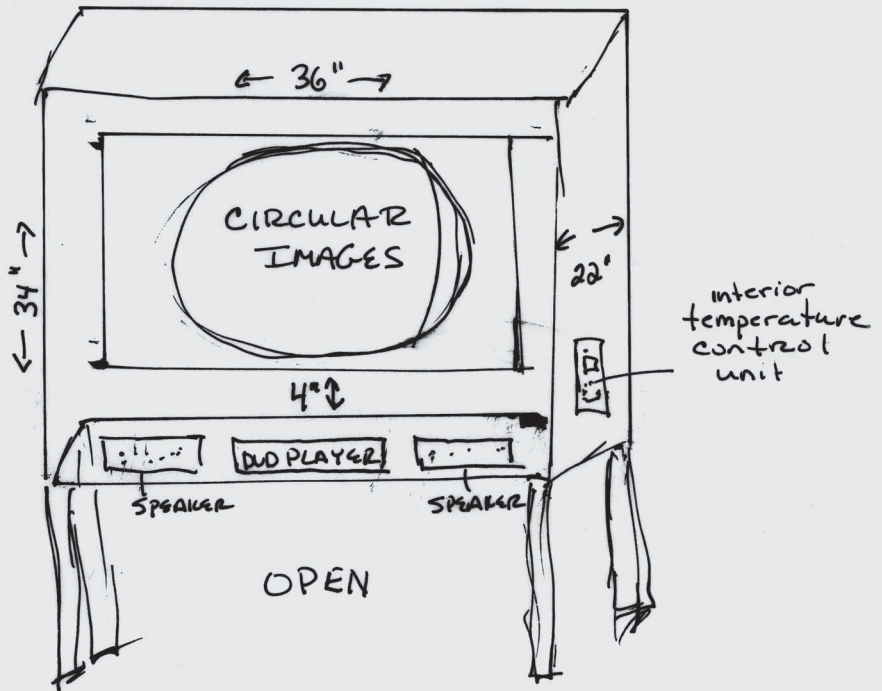
2002 Constance & Jongs

ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR PROJECT

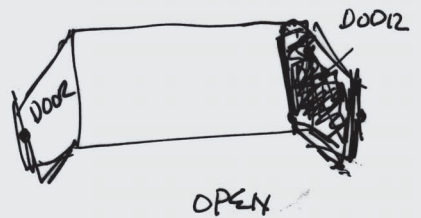
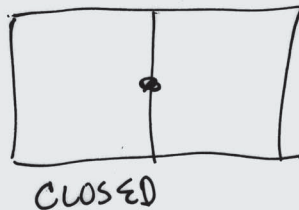
STRUCTURE: WEATHER TREATED WOOD

ELECTRICITY: From nearby outdoor light fixture

"TIME TABLE"
(Sign board)



" = INCH



2002 Cultural Survey

Video

Images will be drawn from geological formations of rock; sun and moonlight on surfaces of water and reflected in clouds & fog; wind made visible in snow swirls/whirl winds; patterns sourced from actual phenomena, such as animal tracks, ski & snowshoe/foot tracks; manipulated views.

All video will be composed as circular images appearing out of the default monitor blue screen. The images belong to three categories:

1. Referencing local sun dials (Sonnenuhr): a shadow line will sweep the screen clockwise at varying rates of speed to reveal images in segments. (see sketch of circular video field) The size/shape of the segments will vary. For example, sometimes the completed image will appear in four quarters, sometimes in eight or twelve, etc. segments. The images incorporate systems of time and distance in variables that are actual/real but only visible through optical instruments. I will use a close up camera lens and micro lens, and a satellite camera to produce very close and very far images of the immediate environment and by extension, very fast and very slow rates of time, all evident in the proposed work. The circular image produces a whole, though individual sections of the whole can be of diverse material—a moment made of many things.
2. Referencing circular windows of local architecture: my camera will, by analogy, 'pierce the flat wall', giving views into private worlds and outward to public spaces. Also providing a sense of depth to these images, as if peering in, peering out of an oriel. Note: these circular images will appear in concentric layers.
3. Referencing circular decorative patterns of sgraffito on Engadine houses: the image flow will periodically be punctuated with white abstract medallions based on the number six. Water in the shape of snowflakes always adheres to the symmetry of six; an accumulation of water molecules attaching onto a 'seed' particle, probably a speck of dust. Probably my medallions will grow from a speck and quickly vanish.

The audio and visual texts are meant to be viewed/heard in an ambient, public setting—a consideration I have undertaken in previous public works. I have developed and continue to explore a compositional form in which short increments of material are complete compositions but also participate in a longer sequence where the content builds by memory, association and accretion. In other words, 'TimeTable' can sustain momentary or prolonged attention.

For Alternative Project (outdoor):

Sketch of 'TimeTable' as an outdoor sign board, to be sited on pedestrian foot path in Madulain or at bus stop in Zuoz. Same video and audio elements as indoor table project, with space for local postings. Note: my concern is that the winter weather will present problems to the equipment, though I would develop a temperature control device for the interior of the structure housing electronics. I have added doors that can close the work, making it seasonal.

5.3.8. **CONSTANCE DE JONG**

Constance DeJong begann ihre Arbeit als Schriftstellerin in New York. Ihren Schritt zur Kunst vollzog sie, indem sie die 1978 publizierte Erzählung ›Modern Love‹ an sechs Personen in ihrem Freundeskreis verschickte und aufgrund der verschiedenen Kommentare je anders erweiterte. Die in dialogischer Weise entstandenen Texte stellte sie anlässlich einer Lesung im Ausstellungsraum ›The Kitchen‹ als ›mail art‹ vor. Aufnahmen der Lesung wurden vom Komponisten Philip Glass vertont und im Radio gesendet. Auf diese Weise mischte der Text intime mit öffentlichen Begegnungen und verwandelte private Zwiegespräche in veröffentlichte, musikalische Interpretation. Die Zusammenarbeit mit Glass fand ihre Fortsetzung in der 1980 fertig gestellten Oper ›Satyagraha‹. DeJong verarbeitete im Libretto Mahatma Gandis Zeit in Südafrika, die Zeit seiner Entdeckung des gewaltlosen politischen Widerstands. Für DeJongs spätere musikalische Umsetzung von Texten war diese Zusammenarbeit entscheidend. Der meditative Minimalismus der Glass'schen Musik prägt ihre Arbeiten auch heute noch.

Neben der kontinuierlichen Veröffentlichung weiterer Bücher und Anthologien (›Five‹, 1986; ›I.T.I.L.O.E.‹, 1993; ›Blasted Allegories‹, 1987; ›Wild History‹, 1985; ›Top Ten Stories‹, 1991) arbeitete DeJong an Videos mit Tony Oursler: 1988 entstand ›Joyride TM‹, ein Jahr später mit ›Relatives‹ eine erste Mischform zwischen szenischer Lesung und Videoprojektion, der zahlreiche weitere folgen sollten.

Die Befreiung des Textes vom Buch führte DeJong in mehrjähriger Arbeit am CD-ROM/Internet-Projekt ›Fantastic Prayers‹ (1995 bis 2000) fort. Zusammen mit Bildern und Videosequenzen von Tony Oursler und Tonspuren von Stephen Vitello entstand ein vielschichtiges, interaktives Netz, dessen Bezüge von feinstofflichen, körperlichen Erfahrungen bis zu globalem, kolonialem Handel (einer Erläuterung der Geschichte des Indigo-Farbstoffs beispielsweise) reichen. Mit verschiedenen ›sprechenden Bänken‹ und ›sprechenden Objekten‹ fand DeJong schliesslich zu einer objekt- und ortsbezogenen Umsetzungsform ihrer Texte. Im Rahmen des ›Themse and Hudson River Projects‹ realisierte sie ›Speaking of the River‹ (2000). Sobald sich jemand auf die Bank am Ufer der Themse setzt, erklingt eine vielstimmige Erzählung. In der rhythmisch-meditativen Struktur durchdringen sich die Geschichte vom Niedergang der benachbarten Docks, Beobachtungen von Spaziergängern am Fluss und poetische Träume davon, welche Lebewesen im Schlamm der Themse wohl vor tausenden von Jahren gelebt haben könnten.

DeJong führt diese Arbeit mit ihrem Projektvorschlag ›The Place‹ fort: Die Künstlerin fragt Ortsansässige und Reisende nach ihren liebsten Orten. Zu den Antworten mischt die Künstlerin eigene Texte sowie Aufnahmen traditioneller Engadiner Musik und lokaler Geräusche. Das Hörstück ist in einen Stuhl eingebaut und wird durch Drucksensoren aktiviert. Der Stuhl steht in einem öffentlich zugänglichen Gebäude und animiert Gedanken zur jeweils eigenen Beziehung zum Aufenthaltsort.

Mit ›Timetable‹, dem zweiten Projektvorschlag, bezieht sich DeJong auf Sonnenuhren. In einem Tisch scheint ein Videofilm auf, in dem ein Zeiger wie ein Schatten über Aufnahmen

traditioneller Engadiner Sgraffiti, Rundfenster und Zeit-Spuren menschlicher und geologischer Aktivität hinwegwischt. Die flüchtige Zeit geht in DeJongs Bildern analog einher mit der Langsamkeit überindividueller Veränderungen in Landschaft, Politik und Kultur. tz

Constance DeJong, 1948 in Cleveland, Ohio (USA), geboren, studierte an der Ohio State University und am Hunter College, New York City. Sie lebt in Nyack, New York, und arbeitet als Schriftstellerin, Performerin und Künstlerin.

Aufführungen / Werke im öffentlichen Raum / Publikationen

- 2001 ‹Scry Agency›, Thread Waxing Space, New York
- 2000 ‹Speaking of the River›, London und New York
- 1994 ‹Duets for Animals and People›, Woodland Park Zoological Gardens, Seattle
- 1993 ‹I.T.I.L.O.E.›, veröffentlicht bei City Lights, San Francisco
- 1979 ‹Modern Love›, The Kitchen, New York

Gemeinschaftsarbeiten

- 1997–2000 ‹Fantastic Prayers›, CD-ROM mit Tony Oursler & Stephen Vitiello, Dia Center for the Arts, New York
- 1999 ‹Pink›, mit Stephen Vitiello, Performance Garage, New York, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin
- 1988 ‹Relatives›, mit Tony Oursler, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston
- 1980 ‹Satyagraha›, Libretto zu einer Oper von Philip Glass, Weltpremiere in der Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam

Auszeichnungen

- 2000 Danial Langlois Foundation, Production Award
- 1985/90 New York State Council on the Arts, Media Production
- 1979 National Endowment for the Arts, Literature Fellowship