

THE BOX

April 1–30, 2010

Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson

Sound Design for Future Films, 2006, 2008, 2010



Image courtesy of Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson

In 2006, Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson created a two-and-a-half-minute sound piece using material found in existing sound effect and foley libraries. With no obvious sounds (dialogue, music) to ground it in a specific narrative, the piece relies on ambience and environmental sounds to make loose references to action and to drive basic tone and mood. They then asked a variety of artists from around the world to take the sound and, without manipulating it or adding to it in any way, to create the video component. The resulting videos are then arranged to play simultaneously in different combinations so as to draw out the obvious differences between the individual videos, and, in some cases, to point to larger narrative connections that emerge as a result of their grouping.

Dubbin & Davidson describe their approach:

Sound Design for Future Films inverts the hierarchy and workflow of typical film production, starting with a two-and-a-half minute sound design for a scene in a film that doesn't exist. We began with the narrative aural details necessary to construct a scene, sounds that describe activities within an environment, sounds that are not dialogue or music. These sounds are drawn from sound libraries and are composed to propose an oblique-narrative.

In keeping with Dubbin and Davidson's own multidisciplinary interests, the artists that they approached to participate represent a range of creative practices and influences. Artists were given complete freedom to create a visual element to accompany the sound. The only requirement was that the audio remain completely unchanged.

The first edition of Sound Design for Future Films was exhibited in 2006 at Gigantic ArtSpace, New York. In 2008, the first and second editions were installed together at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm. This month's screening at the Wexner Center includes the premiere of the third edition, with work by artists who have worked in the center's Art & Technology residency program.

Melissa Dubbin and Aaron S. Davidson are based in New York and have worked collaboratively since 1998. Their multidisciplinary practice includes video, sculpture, sound, performance, and works on paper. They have exhibited, screened, and performed at galleries and museum internationally including the Sculpture Center, New York; the New Museum, New York; 2004 Gwangju Biennale, South Korea; and recently at the 33rd Göteborg International Film Festival, Sweden.

Jennifer Lange
Associate Curator of Media Arts

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Edition 1 (2006)
Katja Aglert, Marc Ganzglass, David Gray, Pierre Huyghe, Christine Rebet, Christopher Seguine

Edition 2 (2008)
Oskar Aglert, Aideen Barry, Lisa K. Blatt, Kate Gilmore, Klara Hobza, Gabriel Lester, Melik Ohanian, Klaus Schafler

Edition 3 (2010)
Martí Anson, Marc Joseph Berg, Amy O'Neill, Lucy Raven, Deborah Stratman, Eve Sussman / The Rufus Corporation

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Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson
Sound Design for Future Films, 2006, 2008, 2010
an ongoing collaborative project with videos by Katja Aglert, Oskar Aglert, Martí Anson, Aideen Barry, Marc Joseph Berg, Lisa K. Blatt, Marc Ganzglass, Kate Gilmore, David Gray, Klara Hobza, Pierre Huyghe, Gabriel Lester, Melik Ohanian, Amy O'Neill, Lucy Raven, Christine Rebet, Klaus Schafler, Christopher Seguine, Deborah Stratman, Eve Sussman / The Rufus Corporation

Multichannel video, color, stereo sound

Wexner Center for the Arts
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