

## HADLEY+MAXWELL / (The Rest is Missing)

A student of John Cage once said, “When an artist learns his craft too well, he makes goals instead of footballs.” For *(The Rest is Missing)* we wanted to make something to play with: an explicit imperative for players and audience alike to take time.

In collaboration with composer Stefan Smulovitz we were working self-consciously with the rarified experience of live musical performance, and what this means for video as one of the instruments in an ensemble. From the very beginning we wanted to address the conventions of this form of performance. The first step was to set the players in a line facing the audience, changing the conventional dynamics, aural and physical, of a chamber music setting. This line became our theme, and we thought of it as the thing that connects point (a) to point (b) in time-based media, a musical line, but also on another axis as a boundary, a cut, or a decision. The line through the work uses a musical logic of perpetual transformation wherein the composer designs a series of tasks for the players to carry out, eventually escorting the audience to the end of the composition. We carry out a similar logic in the video to ridiculous ends, beginning with a “composer” who has to carry a series of instruments. The movement of the composer—from left to right on the projection screen—is translated onto the static plane of painting. This is used as a pattern to make a series of cuts in the instrument cases, which in turn are sutured together into mutated forms that provide the material with which to start the process over again. The hours of footage recording tasks performed for the camera become the material on which we perform similar tasks common to video: projecting, collecting, editing, dissolving to white, cutting and combining.

Our favourite scene in *Cremaster 3* features Matthew Barney, as the Apprentice, filling the elevator of the Chrysler building with cement. We watched this mundane, but eccentric, activity play out with a perverse joy; the means are freed from the ends when the ends are of uncertain or contested value. We go to see live music because we love to watch the strange efforts of the players and their timeliness together. They exhibit

mediality, particularly if they are unable to keep their faces from twitching or their cheeks from puffing out. We're beginning to think that the popular phenomenon of reality television is not driven by a search for an authentic drama, but instead by a desire to witness the labour of humans, the labour of mediation itself in *an uncertain relation to use*. Labour has become a phantom part of our experience of objects in the age of technological reproduction—a horrific part in the case of mass production—that we prefer to repress. Yet it returns as an element of relation that continues without rest. We search out the means to exercise a restless, obscene, labour, as a sensible expression of human experience.

How does form govern the way we work together? How does the football design the game? A line, as both time and material process, is the measure against which each singular agent—from the video projection to the musicians and from instrument cases to audience members—each part of the ensemble is tested. (*The Rest is Missing*) draws out a line that marks the sovereign decision between complicity and dissent in the collective labour of the performance. What appears as sensible operates in relation to this line, and the rest is missing.

HADLEY + MAXWELL, *December 2007*

Stills from (*The Rest is Missing*)

STEFAN SMULOVITZ, composer

HADLEY + MAXWELL, visual artists

23:09 (plus variable intermission loops)

Single channel video, projector, 2 computers, 8 speakers,  
4 woodwinds, 7 brass, 4 percussionists, 1 keyboard

(*The Rest is Missing*) was commissioned by CABINET: Interdisciplinary Collaborations and premiered as a part of the program *Projections*, January, 2007, at the Roundhouse Theatre in Vancouver, under the musical direction of Owen Underhill with Turning Point Ensemble.



















