

project.reflect.refract

for film projector, reflecting and refracting objects, sustaining instruments, and perhaps percussion instruments with minimal decay. dedicated to dicky bahto and madison brookshire

michael winter (la, 2012)

use a film projector that emits enough light out of the top vents such that when installed with the lens facing the ground, the light coming from the vents casts a clear shadow of the reels horizontally onto a white surface. the shadows of the reels should be at least 3 feet apart, while the light projected from the lens should be no more than a foot in width on the ground. use any format film projector, and thread a reel of clear or translucent, non-textured leader with a length that will project for at least 20 minutes.

the instrumentation should be a combination of instruments with naturally limited sustain (such as wind instruments) and indefinite sustain (such as bowed strings and sine tones). each person should also collect several small, refracting and reflecting objects such as shards of glass and broken mirrors.

initially, the ground/projection field should be covered with minimally reflecting and refracting material such as sand and rocks as to provide an uneven foundation onto which reflecting and refracting objects will later be placed.

the performance starts and ends with the running projector. in between, for any duration at least $3/4$ s the length of the reel, the performers play, sustaining the same pitch class (shared by the ensemble) with a deviation of up to $1/6$ th of a semitone. performers playing instruments with limited sustain should play a tone as long as is comfortably possible (such as a breath-length), then pause for an equal duration, and repeat this process. the instruments of indefinite sustain should pick a number between 3 and 5 as well as one of the performers playing an instrument of limited sustain to follow. they play (sustaining) through that number of tones of the performer they are following, pause one tone, and repeat. the entrance and exits of each tone should align as closely as possible with the entrance and exits of the respective tones of the player they are following. in place of a sustained tone, a person playing an instrument of indefinite sustain may also make a quickly repeated percussive sound.

during any pause, a performer may choose to place one of their reflecting or refracting objects on the foundation mentioned earlier such that the light from the projector reflects/refracts onto the wall that the throw through the vents is casting on. they may also place their objects on top of ones that others have already placed. this action (and corresponding pause, which may be lengthened in order to rest or observe the piece) should be made with minimal hesitation allowing the object to basically lie where initially placed without much alteration.

after placing an object, a player may slightly alter the pitch they are playing and/or choose a different number of tones to sustain through and/or follow a different performer.

several realizations of the piece may run simultaneously. for extended durations, the performance may be repeated. after a performance the projector light may be left on and the residual artifact left in its final state indefinitely.