



CONRAD SHAWCROSS

b. 1977, London

Counterpoint: piano: (Second 9:8) 2006 140 x 140 cm Mixed Media

Lose the machinery and concentrate on the after-image. The interval of a second, (9:8), shown in Shawcross' John Cage-like sketch in the catalogue to *The Steady States*, makes a case for harmony, *counterpoint* and fugue. When the turn 'locks' in *Counterpoint: piano* these chromatic imprints appear out of initial dissonance to harmonise with the sonic interval thrown up by the grinding and churning of the machine. According to the speed, this appears as a 'second' within the lightbulbs themselves, or a 'major third', as the turn becomes constant. If the viewer/listener is able to absorb both music and visual patterns simultaneously the 'round' will settle into a 'major sixth' cycle, known as the most *relaxed* interval in the scale.

Out of all the brackets and bracelets, slats and gears the artist/engineer combines science and art integrating the properties of vibration, rhythm, colour and light. Acoustic telescopes, harmonic towers, loop systems and 'space trumpets', Shawcross' constructions are shot through with harmonic influence. In this respect he demonstrates shared interests with the fractured radar patterns of Takis and the kinetic flutter and chromaticism of Carlos Cruz-Diez.

"Counterpoint: Piano (ie 'soft' or 'smaller') is conceived from looking at the intervals in music that sound beautiful to us. Taking the specific ratios of these temporal measurements, in this case 9:8 which is the 'Second' and transcribing it to a bevel gear at the heart of the machine. Further to this, and to the original single bulbed machines, the piece has four bulbs instead of just the one; each driven by the same gear but a quarter of a rotation after each other. In this the piece is a form of counterpoint with the same riff repeated over each other a quarter after each other per 'round'. It is 'piano' because the amplitude and diameter has been converted and reduced in order for the piece to occupy the upper gallery at Riflemaker" Conrad Shawcross

Literature: **The Steady States** The New Art Gallery, Wallsall, 2005 **English Vogue**, November, 2006 **Observer Colour Magazine**, 6 November 2006

Courtesy Victoria Miro, London

EVENT: Monday 4 December, 2006 6.30pm
Conrad Shawcross, Liliane Lijn, Juan Fontanive and Guy Brett will talk about *Indica: Kinetica and Concept* 1966 - 2006. For booking see Events list