

## ARTFORUM

## Dominique Blais

GALERIE XIPPAS

108, rue Vieille du Temple

May 14–June 20

Dominique Blais's exhibition, his first solo show at this gallery, hinges on oppositions and dualities. Eleven works play on the contrasts between sight and sound, resemblance and difference, intangibility and materiality, and question the process and limits of perception. The pieces near the entrance of the gallery are auditory or visual conundrums. In particular, duality and divergence underpin the tautologous sculpture *X-Ray* (3 x 90 – 50 x 100), 2005–2009, a light box that does not display an artwork but rather a photograph of the three neon tubes inside it.

The most outstanding pieces here, however, are those that explore the interplay between the senses, generating interstitial sensory states and an almost palpable sense of the unreal. In the tenuous and insubstantial *Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out*, 2009, a video of a performance by a percussionist is projected onto a wall in broad daylight, while two speakers muffle the sounds instead of amplifying them. Viewers must reconstruct the performance by associating the barely perceptible sounds with the ghostlike flickers on the wall. The complementarity of sight and sound is also addressed in the charcoal drawing *Bernhard Günter "Un peu de neige salie (Untitled 1/92)" 9'00 (1993)*, 2009, which is Blais's visual equivalent to the nine-minute-long musical composition of the same name. Here, charcoal dust deposited by Blais on the loudspeakers was projected onto paper throughout the duration of the piece by the sound vibrations. The faint, blurred traces on the drawing materialize the passage of time. The tenuous materiality of sound is even more apparent in *Distorsions Spectrales*, 2008, in which a Plexiglas disc coated with ferrofluid turns silently on a turntable outfitted with magnets. Peaks and undulations form on the disc's surface when it passes over the magnets, creating a tangible and ever-changing visual image of sound.

— Rahma Khazam



Dominique Blais, *Bernhard Günter "Un peu de neige salie (Untitled 1/92) 9'00 (1993)"*, 2009, powdered charcoal on paper, 31 x 42 1/2".

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