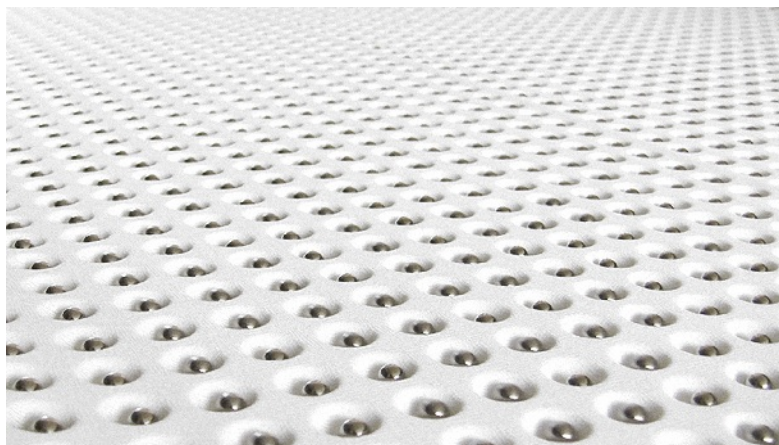


## Decay

Group Show with Andy Graydon, Brandon LaBelle,  
Pe Lang and Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri  
Opening January 20, 2011



The exhibition “Decay” at Galerie Mario Mazzoli presents works by four artists from the USA, Switzerland and Greece, all newly based in Berlin, who deal in different ways with concepts of temporality and transience. The word “decay” refers to the context of biological decomposition in the sense of “decaying”, “spoiling”, “rotting” or “wilting”. It is also a term that is used in an audio context to describe the attenuation, decay or fading away of a sound (as, for example, in the attack-decay-sustain-release envelope of a synthesizer). For the works in the exhibition, “decay” refers to the continuum of coming into being and passing away, to the process of continual transformation in acoustic and kinetic art. Most of all, however, it has to do with the aesthetic valuation and contemplation of something that is unfinished, in which things appear as incomplete and mutable.

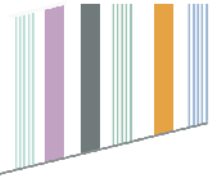
**Andy Graydon** was born in 1971 on Maui, Hawaii and graduated from film school. His predominantly site specific installations are based on the interaction and fusion of physical space with virtual image material, often combined with sound. He describes his projects as “science fiction ecologies” in view of the mutability of reality and the fictional reshaping of our environment through the world of media. Graydon took part in the inaugural exhibition of the New Museum in New York in 2008 and was recognized with a solo exhibition at the Portland Art Center in Oregon.

Andy Graydon’s video installation *Untitled (band pass)* is comprised of a white band of light that slowly glides back and forth over a pile of building rubble and “scans” its volume. The raw, unconfigured materiality of the materials heaped onto the floor of the exhibition space is a stark contrast to the ephemeral character of the light which is projected from the ceiling with geometric precision. The moving band of light harkens associations with the process of digital image production as is familiar from copying or scanning. At the same time, it is a metaphor for temporality or presence. The texture of the material is accented along the band of light, in sharp relief against the darkness of the space. The clear visibility and also pictographic quality of the heap of rubble is perceived as a visual reduction and is limited to the particular segment and the momentary nature of the moving band of light.

Author, artist and cultural theorist **Brandon LaBelle** was born in 1969 in Memphis, Tennessee and has been represented at festivals and exhibitions throughout the world with his sound installations, spatial compositions that reference architecture, and live performances. LaBelle has also established a scholarly reputation with his writings on experimental music and sound art. He is presently teaching as professor at the National Art Academy in Bergen, Norway.

LaBelle’s work *Meditation on a Future Horizon* is based on a selection of revolutionary slogans from different eras and regions that are transformed into the sound of an absurd melody by a hand-operated music box. LaBelle transferred the text onto a strip of score paper and punched the letters

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onto previously determined points, thus translating the written language into the naïve series of tones of the music box. The ironic process of translation refers to the transformational potential of revolutionary ideas that were drafted with the intention of changing entire societies. The playback of the melodies can be seen on lap tops in the middle of an installation comprised of tables in which the corresponding books and texts are displayed and offered to observers as reading material.

The Swiss artist **Pe Lang**, born in 1974, has in recent years become known for innovative sound sculptures and kinetic objects, for which he has received various international awards. His handcrafted mechanical sculptures, in which different physical forces are deployed and ingeniously combined with one another, are aimed to both surprise and enchant. The effects that are generated, including the underlying idea, are baffling; at the same time, however, the works are to be perceived as an aesthetic event, described with concepts such as poetry or elegance. Pe Lang is a self-taught artist who came to kinetic art through experimental music via sound art.

At the center of the exhibition are two machines whose movements run through a cycle that flows into itself. With *moving objects* | n° 485 from 2010, a large panel upon which 1,836 small steel balls are lying, each in its own individual recessed hole, is set into vibration by a rotary unbalanced motor in such a way that after a certain time, the overwhelming majority of the balls move in sync, only to relapse again into the original disorder. This interference phenomenon occurs when the mass of balls vibrating in common mode corresponds to that of the unbalanced motor and impede each other's movements. The second work, *positioning systems – falling objects* from 2009 is an electronically controlled pipette that adds drops of water onto a special textured surface until each forms into an almost perfect sphere through the surface tension of the water. The pipette wanders through a square grid of 21 x 21 drops and, after approximately 300 minutes, returns to the beginning at exactly the moment when the water there has evaporated.

The composer **Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri** was born in Greece in 1974 and, for many years, alongside her experimental sound works, has occupied herself with creating new types of instruments located at a highly individual interface between music, performing art and installation and often produced in collaboration with Pe Lang. *Untitled II* from 2010 is a sound sculpture powered by three motors that can also be played manually as an instrument during a performance. It is comprised of different sized plexiglass cylinders closed at one end by a membrane with a nylon thread leading from each to a winch coated with resin. The turns of the winch create arbitrary changes in the tension of the thread, resulting as sounds in the body of the cylinder. The acoustic experience is immediately connected with the visual presence of the object as sculpture. For this instrument, Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri composed a score and created a special notation that permits precise playing of the instrument. This notation is included in the installation as a sculptural element in the form of a template, likewise out of transparent acrylic glass, thus highlighting the fusion of performative and visual arts in Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri's work.

Marc Wellmann, January 2011