

'SERGEI TCHEREPNIN: EAR TONE BOX'

MURRAY GUY

It is rare that one is truly baffled by the operation of an artwork. For his debut show at Murray Guy, Sergei Tcherepnin presents a number of wonderfully baffling things, among them a beat-up subway bench that is periodically hit by deep, rumbling vibrations. It turns out that transducers beneath the seats are responsible for these; if you happen to be sitting on the bench when they start, they may scare the hell out of you.

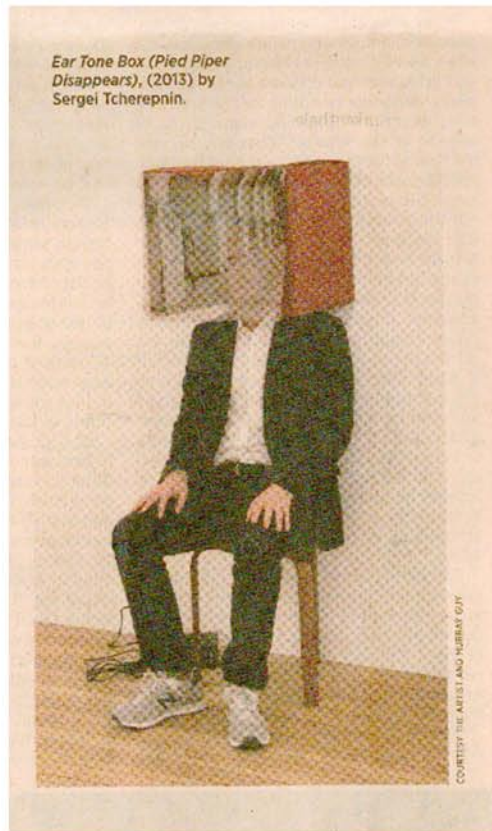
Elsewhere, visitors are invited to pop their heads into metal boxes in order to hear a series of chirps, reminiscent of a cordless phone's crisp ring, made into a beguiling melody. Mr. Tcherepnin has made those boxes into what are essentially homemade speakers that bring about a third tone in the inner ear of the listener. Shift your head a bit, and new sounds and patterns emerge. In these pieces, sound takes on the weight and logic of architecture—it attains something akin to a sculptural form.

The whole gallery becomes an instrument in Mr. Tcherepnin's hands. He has also converted three metal rain shields into speakers with transducers, which periodically rumble as the chirping tones shift from box to box and, in turn, over to a larger burlap-covered box with a hinged top that opens to reveal a trippy set of Op Arty images. Occasionally, speakers from behind small, curved surveillance mirrors let out shrieks and squeals.

There's also a short video that shows a young man in a blue dress and orange cap, shoeless, wandering among aqueducts. He's the pied piper, according to the work's title, and he seems content to drift about, perhaps using his ears as his instrument.

(Through April 20, 2013)—A.R.

Ear Tone Box (Pied Piper Disappears), (2013) by Sergei Tcherepnin.



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