

Murray Guy

453 West 17 Street New York NY 10011 T: +1 212 463 7372 F: +1 212 463 7319 info@murrayguy.com

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Sergei Tcherepnin: Ear Tone Box  
Murray Guy  
by Holland Cotter

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As might be expected of a composer-artist, Sergei Tcherepnin's captivating solo show at Murray Guy is as much about hearing as seeing. In recent performances, the Brooklyn-based Mr. Tcherepnin has infused electronic impulses through the bodies of audience members, effectively transforming their anatomy into musical instruments. He does something similar with various objects in the show, turning the gallery into an orchestral suite of sounds and vibrations.

To experience one of the two pieces that make up "Ear Tone Box," you sit in a chair with your head enclosed in a metal box that's affixed to the wall and listen to high piping and chirping sounds that could be coming from the box, from your head, from your cellphone or from the gallery beyond. A set of three large sheets of rusted metal generate different, amplified sounds as you walk around them. If you sit on a nearby bench — one of those big, indestructible wooden New York City subway benches transported to the gallery — a rumbling buzz goes right up through you.

It all felt like music to me, with the score accompanied by a short video of what could have been a dance performance. Titled "Pied Piper Playing Under the Aqueduct," it shows the artist, tall and lean, dressed in a floral mini and fishnet stockings walking among the monumental columns of an aqueduct in Rio de Janeiro. He looks a bit distracted, as if looking for something, or thinking, or waiting for someone to show up — us, maybe, his baffled but buzzed and enchanted band of followers.