

**Painting Sound; the collaborative work of musician  
Bartosz Dziadosz and painter Colin Lawson**

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**Abstract:** This presentation will screen and discuss two digital animations made collaboratively by British painter Colin Lawson and Polish musician Bartosz Dziadosz. These artists work together to make animations which unite abstract painting with experimental music. The presentation will discuss how the animations are constructed, what they hope to achieve and how the digital medium allows two artists from different countries to collaborate and disseminate work without ever meeting in person.

My painting is primarily influenced by my fascination with ambient music. From the early experiments of John Cage through to Brian Eno and contemporary experimental music, I have been searching to find what might be considered a visual equivalent of this remarkable music. It is not my intention to illustrate this music however. My painted compositions are informed by responses to repeated notes and subtle variations in texture: the gradual introduction of stronger rhythms and the smaller, hidden sounds which surface periodically.

In 2009 I began experimenting with the digital medium as a means of directly linking my paintings to the pieces of music that informed them. The following is an animation made with music by Bartosz Dziadosz:

**Screening One:** *The Butterfly*

2010, single channel digital animation with sound, 4 minutes 40 seconds, music by Bartosz Dziadosz, paintings & animations by Colin Lawson.

Screened through a digital projector linked to DVD player or a laptop.

**Preview Viewing:** to preview this work please go to the following URL:

<http://vimeo.com/17186504>

I met Bartosz Dziadosz through MySpace. The work you just viewed, *The Butterfly*, is our second collaboration. The creation process was initiated when Bartosz sent me a

sound file of the music. Painting in response to this music, I made three works (oil on paper measuring 30 x 21 cm). The music informed the composition and colour of the paintings and it also informed the varied surface textures unique to each painting. These surfaces were constructed through a process of layering and scraping paint. They are what were primarily manipulated in the animation process.

The animation process is essentially very simple. When the paintings are complete they are photographed and imported into Adobe Photoshop. Working with the filters and tools present in this programme, I manipulate the various painted surfaces to emphasize or obscure specific parts of each painting. The resulting images are then animated with Photoshop to evolve and move in response to changes present in the music. This visual evolution is slow; changes in texture and colour are not immediately identifiable. Each change is made with the music to highlight aural changes that might otherwise go unnoticed; the rough grain in a line of scumbled paint will reflect the shifting rhythm of a percussive beat. The aim is to emphasize processes of viewing and listening in an attempt to entrance the spectator.

The completed animation is rendered as a QuickTime file which is sent easily through the internet. This means Bartosz and I can screen the work ourselves in gallery spaces or music venues where we live and upload it for viewing through internet forums such as Vimeo and YouTube. It also means that when *The Butterfly* was selected to screen at the SIMULTAN arts festival in Timisoara, Romania in October 2010, it could be saved as a high resolution file on DVD and posted to the festival organizers.

Bartosz and I continue to collaborate and I would like to finish the presentation with a screening of our most recent animation *Swell Bliss* which we completed in December 2010. This animation is constructed four paintings (oil on paper measuring 30 x 21 cm) I made in response to music by Bartosz.

**Screening Two: *Swell Bliss***

2010, single channel digital animation with sound, 4 minutes 55 seconds, music by Bartosz Dziadosz, paintings & animations by Colin Lawson.

Screened through a digital projector linked to DVD player or a laptop.

**Preview Viewing:** to preview this work please go to the following URL:

<http://vimeo.com/17468783>