

## **Mariotti's 'LICHT-KUNST-BÄNKE'**

There are many ways of approaching art, but when it gets to media art, as with any type of electronic mediated artifact, due to its malleability it tends to be more flexible yet diverse. One of the distinguishing aspects of electronic art is its ubiquity; we find paintings in enclosed spaces, but the space of media is always open and available to other physical instances of reality. Enabling many possibilities, far beyond the tangible ones, new media has been conceptually well articulated, especially regarding to its characteristic evanescence and a-temporality. Nevertheless, it has not been explored deeply in the realm of naturalism. The naturalistic observation defies a-temporality and introduces itself as an emergent and open stimulus, in similar ways as the evolution of any biological organism.

The work of Francesco Mariotti has dealt for decades with the ambiguity of evanescence and biological emergence towards a cybernetic depiction of naturalism. His works are not intended to be inside a cultural institution, but on its fragmentary outside: hybrid gardens that epitomize harmonic and ludicrous dialog between deterministic technologies and the former naturalistic evanescence. In some sense many of Mariotti's so-called 'techno-sculptures' are metaphors of organisms that exist in reality but that are reinterpreted in the cybernetic realm in search for permanence beyond the natural world.

These imbrications between the natural and the artificial are continuously seeing new light in the dialogical scene of public space installations. Not only are Mariotti's works participating along with the real but around the technologically supra real. In most works, his playful ideas could be seen as an escaping bridge of what is considered the control of industrial production, bringing us to a confrontation between the industrial reproductivity and the value of the unitary piece, the one that does not want to become part of the rationalistic sense of the *homo economicus*.

But, to reject that art has also a utilitarian function may be seen today as a somewhat purist statement. Mariotti's passionate spirit and somewhat techno-engineering aptitude have always crafted ways of integrating his work with day-to-day life.

The "LICHT-KUNST-BÄNKE" is therefore an awesome and exiting new idea. It combines many of the concepts that have been a characteristic of Mariotti's previous works: luminescence, techno-industrial development and public space.

The "LICHT-KUNST-BÄNKE" embeds a level of flexibility. The flexibility is not in the sturdy steel and glass enclosure of the bench itself, but on its internal constituency. As an illuminated nervous system flow the bench is replete of colorful LEDs. As in many of Mariotti's works, lights are a random guidance. The program also enables several speeds for color variances. Beyond the program of the bench and its determinist conundrum, the randomness, takes place in collective orchestrations: a series of several benches can randomize their colors and generate interesting visual hybrids complexes.

The benches are sturdy, even more than in the case of Mariotti's techno-sculptures, it defy time and become part of the monument of time itself, the place to wait for something to happen. What we can consider a sturdy piece that generates a notion of permanence generates, at the same time, evanescence, since its colors combinations may never be the same. As in many works of Mariotti, the piece has a controlled functionality, but giving this principle to a commercial application requires a much more clear and fixed idea of what the piece function in the world is all about.

The "LICHT-KUNST-BÄNKE" becomes no longer evanescence, its is considered media art and a product of the industrial age, yet done slowly, one by one numbered by Mariotti, to become the spiritual eternal work of art.