

Correspondences (2007)
an audiovision for mixed media

images & music: Joseph Butch Rován

Correspondences is a translation into sound and image of the timbre of Charles Baudelaire's "Correspondances." The work is not a reading, per se, but it follows the structure of Baudelaire's sonnet closely, pivoting around the white space of the dash in the first tercet. In this experimental video + computer music work the gesture of Baudelaire's poetry serves as a scaffolding for an exploration of mutable time and memory. *Correspondences* is an invocation to the memory of something read, half-remembered perhaps, connected through a dream logic.

Correspondances — *Charles Baudelaire*

La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
Laisent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.

Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.

Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,
— Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,

Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.

Correspondances

Nature is a temple in which living pillars
Sometimes emit confused words;
Man crosses it through forests of symbols
That observe him with familiar glances.

Like long echoes that mingle in the distance
In a profound tenebrous unity,
Vast as the night and vast as light,
Perfumes, colors, and sounds respond to one another.

Some perfumes are as fresh as the flesh of children,
Sweet as the sound of oboes, green as pastures,
— And others corrupt, rich, and triumphant,

Having the expanse of things infinite,
Such as amber, musk, benzoin, and incense,
That sing of the flight of spirit and the senses.