

## On Translation/Transparency

The video installation *On Translation: Transparency/Architecture Acoustique* was originally designed for the 10th International Istanbul Biennial (2007).

At the core of the work is the concept of transparency. The artist highlights the meaning, implications and historic change of the term from different perspectives. Main element of the installation is a film in three parts, each of them 10 minutes long, in which Komarov opposes shots of the glass facade of the Van Nelle factory in Rotterdam with shots of the glass cupola of Berlin's Reichstag building. The two places represent different architectural concepts and ways of dealing with transparency. The Van Nelle factory (1926–30) is a typical modernist building in glass and steel. The Berlin Reichstag cupola stands for a more symbolic use of transparency in its attempt of making the democratic process of political participation visible. Through the glass of the dome in fact the visitors can see the Parliament at its meetings. At the same time Komarov's film shows what effort it costs to maintain the illusion of transparency. In one sequence one can see a team of window cleaners at work, continuously attempting to clear the glass, to keep it clean, and hence to dematerialize the glass wall between the State power and the citizens. On the visual level the artist juxtaposes photographic shots of reflections, which direct the gaze away from the buildings on to their environment. Thus, the glass surfaces appear less transparent but more as a projection surface that reflects the environment as well as the visitors and their ideas. The artist asked different composers to set these images to music. The sound compositions structure the film in three parts. Each part shows almost the same images accompanied by a different soundtrack, causing a shift in the perception. The first part shows the images with the original sound, for the second part Gleb Shutov re-translated the original sound in notes, and the third part is combined with a free-associative composition of Elvira Plenar.