

Tesla Machines

Günter Held



The coil developed by Nikola Tesla — also called Tesla transformer — is based on the principle of resonant circuits of high frequency electromagnetic oscillations and produces visually perceptible energy which can be sent out freely into space in the form of series discharges from the secondary coil.

Günter Held and Mathias Betz succeeded in reproducing the series of experiments made by Nikola Tesla and will be presenting the results they have achieved from several years' work.

Concept NEUROSERV in the contemporary art sphere

The fact that art has become a self-referential system is now only a self-admiring pursuit, it is not a new theme but nevertheless in our Western civilization it is still regarded as being totally up-to-the-minute, and for a number of decades now, has been the hobby of many art agents, critics and artists. We regard ourselves as being confronted with the questions:

— as to whether art can still only be identified in a "negative presence", in the form of debates, talks, texts and performances which have this for a subject.

— as to whether art today still only exists as its anticipated criticism / reception, resulting in "works of art" only in the form of substitutes (fakes).

— as to whether the current works of art are now only the presentation of art or its absence and as to whether this means that there is really no "art" any more, or, is this a new meta-art.

— as to whether art criticism has come to an end or has reached an impasse, driven into this by itself with its linear thinking?

The sphere of art has, in many areas, been degraded to a mass spectacle staged by publicity-mad art agents for piles of glossy magazines; by the blinded pleasure-mad that populate the openings.

Exhibitions, large museum shows and their performances are discussed by critics in a way as if they, too, were works of art of the highest order. Even the exhibition makers tend to argue in this direction, or they imagine themselves to be archeologists of the present which means that they approach the present like a dead culture. Artists become agents to this. Their work illustrates stipulated conceptions. They become material for the manufacture of "super works" in the form of uncensored shows which, however, very often have hardly even the standard of a mass tourism spectacle.

Performances of this type signify an informal step back in the direction of superficial entertainment values within the anticipatory and consumer role of the audience as produced by the media in the form of an uncritical agreement shared with many (the more the better). It will be difficult for this or that artist to still see any sense — with reference to possible artistic activity — in this, particularly since all attitudes or opinions which differ, are almost exclusively reckoned by situations determined by calculation and as a rule no notice is taken of them.

What is quite certain is that anyone who is "dead-set" on becoming an artist today, must ask himself under what prerequisites such stubbornness is still justifiable now. Since "Duchamp it has now become noticeable that it is difficult to be an artist, in a certain way, and the question must be asked as to the stakes: what are we doing at all?" (Lyotard in an interview). It is clear that the discussion about art and the statements about the values themselves is moving on a meta-level.

This cannot be avoided and cannot be undone. And yet art is still something sensual, something which can be perceived first of all by the eye and the sense of touch. Only afterwards does it become a matter of the complex of acquired ideas which present themselves as theories, aesthetics, poetics, strategies, etc.. However, to an ever-increasing degree they block the access to the sensuality of art and degrade it to become a subordinated partial aspect. Reception is continuously proving to be a directive moment rather than a restrictive role resulting from the necessity of a worn-out cultural circle to assert itself.

Today, the reception of art is, in the first instance, an intellectually headed activity. And yet the vocabulary, which attempts to put linguistic equivalents aside which can be described with the aid of their artistic processes, does suggest a participation of the body.

Terms such as perception, understanding, condition, stimulation, contemplation, etc., prove this.

Even Baudelaire for example wrote about a contemporary, that he painted "flows of energy" which "triggered off a nervous shock which could be felt in the cerebellum", what — as he meant — was the characteristic of all "superior thoughts".

In art criticism and in artistic conceptions there is hardly anything that would directly concern itself with physical states during the process of art reception. Releasing hormones, electric currents, neural processes, etc..

Can one, in order to be able to correspond with Baudelaire, artificially produce the feeling of "superiority" with the aid of certain electrical currents, and directed frequencies aimed at certain areas of the brain or the rest of the body? Can one set the brain reeling to simulate the highest form of art pleasure and can one do this without the diversion through the sensual and intellectual reception of traditional art, and without the diversion through aesthetics, theories and their getting tangled up in sociological contexts?

We came to this question in the course of our considerations, and we believed that we had reached a point where we could possibly interrupt concrete work.

Erich Maas

Federal Office for Post and Telecommunications

Permission to operate high frequency equipment for the purpose of development, manufacturing and testing:

In this case: experiment with HF transmitter

Dear Sir / Madam,

We would like to thank you for your application dated 28th of June 1991.

Subject to the acknowledgement of the following supplement, terms and stipulations, we hereby grant you the temporary permission, in accordance with Par. 2 of the legislation concerning the operation of high frequency equipment dated 9th of August 1949.

On the land belonging to the German Federal Post Telecom's Radio Broadcasting Centre at 7686 Königs Wusterhausen you are hereby permitted to operate a TESLA transformer with a 75 kW LW transmitter, as a high frequency energy source to produce high frequency high voltage and farreaching disruptive charges in the air, for the purpose of several demonstrations and experiments with a duration of approx. 10 minutes per experiment.

This permit is free of charge.

We would ask you to keep this permit in a safe place.

The following supplements, terms and stipulations are valid. ...



Functional description

The impulse capacitors are charged to a high direct current voltage with transformer and rectifier. The series resistance serves to limit the charging currents which occur.

Once the voltage at the impulse capacitors has reached the full striking voltage of the rotating sparking distance, they discharge onto the primary coil and cause the characteristic TESLA high frequency discharge, the resonance frequency of which is synchronized to that of the high voltage coil.

The blocking throttle is absolutely necessary to avoid network reactions. The rotating sparking distance periodically interrupts the discharge process and the impulse capacitors are then charged again, etc. The discharge current induces impulse-type discharge sparks in the high voltage coil, approx. 20-50 per second.

