

Translation as a Structuring Principle: If A Then B

Gentili Apri, 27 August – 15 September 2010

Opening: 26 August, 19:30.

A change of phase...means a change of equilibrium.
— Henry Adams, “The Rule of Phase Applied to History”(1909)

Aphasia stands at the locus of our perceptions. The moment we strive to make visible this empty center is the moment most fraught with its negative violence; this is the translator’s duty, to frame a language at the precipice of failure.

The work of art is often its own best translator. A work translates an original; or, the original masquerades as its copy. We have no way of distinguishing the two.

If A Then B works with writers and artists, at the limit of this structure, who use translation as a tool for production. On the occasion of the launch of our journal issue 1, If A Then B presents an exhibition of works which play off these themes in further variations.

The parallel logics of substitution, virtuality, and replacement have dispelled the singularity of the unique art object. Commentary overshadows production; works derive their own self-critique.

This structure is apparent in the works we have chosen which, generated in an economy of iteration, are continuously self-alienating. Misinterpretations, errors, failures of understanding—these are more fruitful for any ‘final’ result than the adherence to fidelity, either to a mimetic love, or to the possibility of a representational sphere outside that of the duplicate.

**We have felt the need to shift forms of production based on the inherent, generative duplicity of the works we translate; the journal is only one moment in the continuous orbit of these rotating mediums. The exhibition provides its extension, a translation of a translation.
Or it might go the other way.**

If A Then B, 2010