

**Mario Airò**  
(Pavia, 1961)

The image of an existentialist film, the title of a book by an American writer, the detail of a Renaissance painting, the verses of a German poet, the notes of a philosopher: the list could go on, for innumerable ideas can inspire Mario Airò and contribute to the genesis of his work. Intentionally non-systematic, the artist defines his approach as a sort of “wandering,” modulating the physical action in a mental one. Cinema, literature, art history, philosophy, music, or biographical details of poets and writers are only some of the many realms from which Airò’s art draws sustenance. Whether visual, verbal, or aural, every citation represents the artist’s intention to share emotions he has experienced, thus making each work a sort of affective poetic declaration, able to involve viewers in its own positive charge. The power of *Parlez moi d’amour (Speak to Me About Love)*, 2002, which consists of very few elements, resides in its capacity to condense within itself a microcosm of events. Resting on a base, a glass contains water that a magnetic agitator compresses in a whirling motion. Two rose petals float inside, chasing each other in an endless dance. Like two lovers destined to pursue one another, potentially united in a single place but imperceptibly separated by forces out of their control, the two petals follow a circular motion, which they can neither stop nor change. The torment that the two petals seem to condense in their fragility is also echoed in *Plaisir d’amour*, the melody that is part of the work and which spreads throughout the surrounding space. A well-known love song, composed around 1785 and the subject of a number of subsequent interpretations and arrangements, *Plaisir d’amour* focuses, precisely, on love’s inscrutable capacity to offer momentary happiness followed by heartache that can endure an entire lifetime. (MB)