

Elaine R. Barkin - *blanc* notes

Confrontation: blank page v. me. Meditation. Preservation. Resolution. At the time, simple, all-white and spare was what I needed, what I heard somewhere up in there. After 9 days of fussing at the piano with pitch, tempo, intervals, register, and pedaling, *blanc* materialized, the first in a set of 6 pieces (2008), followed by *holding on* which starts with all 5 black notes. Then: *spirals*, *sarabande*, *blanc et noir*, and *postlude*. Electronic realization of *blanc* is by Ben Boretz.

Russell and I met in 2006 or 2007 in Woodstock during one of my visits to New York. But it wasn't until May 2012 that I asked, after having viewed a batch of his vimeos, if he'd consider a project with a work of mine. All collaborative work is tricky, even with the best of friends, but bi-coastal collaboration – of this sort – with a relative stranger, even one whose work you admire, can be dicey. But it wasn't; lots of emailing, Skype talks, short lists, listening, all went smoothly and by February 2013, the dies were cast. The upshot could not have been otherwise. Russell's grey-white Percheron twosome in the snow – oblivious to their serendipitous participation in *blanc* – , embody suavity, their graceful motion, their light blue wink-gaze, their manes virtually tangible, totally incompatible yet impeccably congruent with *blanc*, which Russell has, in every sense, corporealized.