

«INTERVIEW»

ZIMOUN to COINCIDENCIA

1. Your exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) in Santiago, Chile, is your most extensive show ever to happen in South America. Could you describe the concept behind the exhibition? Did you have a particular wish or intention with this assemblage of works?

ZIMOUN: The exhibition in Santiago is the largest exhibition I have ever done in South America up to date, but it is also one of my largest shows in general, especially regarding the number of site-specific installations presented. At MAC Santiago, I could work with the entire museum and develop twelve site-specific installations for twelve individual spaces. Six of these installations are new creations, and the other six works are site-specific too, but, conceptually, they already existed - they had been presented in other exhibitions and other dimensions before. As my works are often large-scale and based on hundreds of mechanical elements, they are usually very time-consuming and complex to produce and to set up. Therefore, it is rare to be able to present that many installations within one exhibition - and this also opens other possibilities on how to perceive the works, as you can walk from one space into the next. While you will find identical elements and materials in all the works, you will also discover their individualities and differences on various levels and perspectives.

2. Your immersive sound landscapes trigger sensorially charged experiences. How do you understand the body consciousness in your work? How do you see the impact on the public when in contact with the atmospheres your work creates?

ZIMOUN: In my installation work, what you hear is what you see, and what you see is what you hear. It is not a combination of visual and acoustic elements, as both have the same source. They are one thing: the physical material you see, and the physical material you hear and smell. Therefore, the sound isn't more important than the visual elements, nor the other way around, as both are the same. I'm interested in sound as an architectonic element to create space, but, also, in the sound which somehow inhabits a room and interacts with it. I work with three-dimensional sound structures, with spatial experiences and the exploration of sound, material and space. And perception.

For me, the work triggers thoughts, connections, reflections and associations in various directions. I'm thinking, for instance, about nature, architecture, society, science, philosophies, engineering, technology, organic behaviors, systems and organisms... Just to mention a few. Or contrasts, such as simplicity and complexity, order and chaos, mass and individuality, organic and artificial, or precision and inaccuracy. However, as a first reaction, people often connect the sound of my work with rain or water in general. Even if two works sound very different from each other - let's say one has a deep and low-frequency sound and the other is based on high-frequencies - this is often the first connection people do. We can see that what is triggering such connections is not the sound frequencies themselves, but the microstructures of the sounds and the microrhythms evolving out of

the installations. Thus, we still make the same association for very different sounds (for instance, the sound of rain), even if they obviously do not sound the same at all. This also shows, partly, how our brain works, how our brain picks one element out of many to put it into a context we are familiar with. I believe this way our mind creates some feeling of stability. This stability can make sense in some contexts, but it also creates limitations. Since such microrhythms are similar to the microrhythms of rain, this connection is made immediately. Usually, this is the only first reaction and, afterwards, if we stay longer in front of a piece, our mind continues to trigger into other directions on individual levels too.

3. The titles of your installations usually describe their components, listing all the materials used. At the same time, you point out the daily nature of those materials and, also, reinforce their presence and strength. It is information but, also, provocation. Do you seek to tension the limits of perception also with the works' titles? Is there a criticism to institutional art codes in these choices?

ZIMOUN: I keep my works very reduced and raw. That way, they function more like a code behind things, rather than just creating one connection to one thing or topic. The works can ideally activate the visitors somehow and allow them to make their own connections, associations and discoveries on different, individual levels. In this case, the works might open observation fields and allow the visitor to reflect and wonder, to think and question about the present experience, our surroundings and ourselves. For that reason, to – ideally - give this freedom to the viewers, I also keep the titles very technical, only describing the materials used. In that sense, the titles simply tell you what you already see anyway. Charlotte Posenenske once said regarding her own work: 'the objects are not intended to represent anything other than what they are'. As I already mentioned, I create my works based on many different interests coming together, and I see and understand them in many different ways and layers myself. Subjectivity is the base of how we see, understand and don't understand the world and the universe. But perception and consciousness are flexible and formable. It is very interesting to explore and observe those in all possible ways. I think other types of titles would limit the works on various levels. To me, language seems to be much more limited than the experiences themselves.