

English

23.02. 16.06.

JORGE MACCHI

CONTAINER

For his first institutional solo exhibition in Switzerland, Jorge Macchi (b. 1963) is creating in situ spatial installations. This allows the Argentinean artist to respond sensitively to the existing exhibition architecture. The artist treats the exhibition spaces almost like containers or portakabins, which are supposedly interchangeable but can be filled with very different objects. A varied production of light, sound, projections, installations and murals awaits the public in the exhibition. Jorge Macchi's poetic and melancholic work creates ambivalent atmospheres, at once attractive and unsettling. The artist is particularly interested in phenomena of perception, he enquires into time and transience, into stasis, balance and eternity.

Jorge Macchi was born in 1963 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he lives and works today. His oeuvre encompasses a large number of different media: sculpture, installation, drawing, video and photography. In 2003 he represented his homeland at the Venice Biennale. He is represented by the following galleries: Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich, Alexander and Bonin Gallery, New York, Galeria Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, Galleria Continua, San Gimignano/Beijing.

Limited edition

Jorge Macchi's watercolour drawings accompanying the ten installations of his exhibition at Kunstmuseum Luzern are available as a limited edition. Apart from the ten prints, the linen case contains a certificate by the artist and an essay by Fanni Fetzer in German and English. It will be published in an edition of 20 + 5 artists' proofs by Edizioni Periferia at a price of CHF 4000.-. During the exhibition there will be an opportunity to buy the edition at a special price of CHF 3000.- at Kunstmuseum Luzern.

The longest distance between two points

Visitors are puzzled by a course marked off by barrier tapes right at the start of the exhibition. A multitude of poles and tapes stresses the horizontal line and gives an almost landscape like feel to the exhibition space. The longest possible path through the exhibition hall leads the visitors to automatically follow a choreography in which they will walk behind one another like animals in a herd.

Refraction

The next room we can best convey if we describe it as the remains of a flooding after the water has left. The installation *Refraction* (2012) consists of steel girders that rest at an angle against the wall. The grey colour of the paint reaches up to the angle of the beams. Jorge Macchi often locates his works in this area of tension between the real world of objects and the fictional world of simulation. The girders appear broken, like a straw in a glass of water, by the optical effect of refraction. Macchi's humour comes into play as the only thing that is left is the only thing that couldn't be there without the water. But the optical effect persists ghost-like in the room. This and the grey wall colour indicate the possible past events.

Hotel

The mural *Hotel* (2007) shows the part of a printed piece of wallpaper that the light in its middle would illuminate if it were the only light source in an otherwise dark room. But the exhibition space is brightly lit and, even in spite of the homely elements its function is still clearly apparent. Both wallpaper and lamp look like a projection that has been made material, a forgotten part of a backdrop or like a ghost that manifested itself in the exhibition space. The theatrical and filmic influences in Macchi's work are unmistakable: the vocabulary with which he creates his atmospheres is clearly borrowed from this field.

Container

The title *Container* (2013) refers both to the exhibition as a whole and to the most monumental work in it. In one of the spaces a massive orange freight container seems to have fallen through the ceiling and wedged itself in the walls. This colossus, weighing several tons, creates an atmosphere of tension and paradox.

Second

The projection *Second* (2013) shows the section of one minute on the oversized face of a projected clock. Like a ray of light the triangle of a second is projected in the otherwise dark room. Every 60 seconds the viewer sees the second hand darting across the section and thus perceives a second, a unit of time, in a visual way. Macchi translated time into an image that pierces the room like a flash from a lower floor.

Beehive

In the next room stasis prevails: none of the fans in the installation *Beehive* (2013) rotates, they are all still, interlocked in such a position that they produce a honeycomb pattern. Macchi's works are supposed to be uncanny and alienating. If all the works have something in common it would be his intention is to provoke a feeling of strangeness. His use of everyday objects suddenly behaving in an unfamiliar way intensifies this effect. His fans block each other, a container is wedged in a container like space, his barrier tapes organize a line with no purpose.

XYZ

Time also stands still in the video projection *XYZ* (2012). The picture of an analogue station clock is projected in one corner of the room in such a way that the three hands lie both on the edges of the floor and the wall and on the axes of the system of coordinates. Space and time become one in a humorous way. Again certainties become out of balance and the visitor's perception shifts to a place where conceptual and sensual intentions balance each other out.

Suspension

Light is a major theme in Macchi's work. The visualisation and spatialisation of non-material phenomena is one of his key interests in that field.. In this room Macchi copies the shadow produced behind a sheet of wood with a scaffolding of slats. The perspective of the slats corresponds to the path that the light would take if it were not blocked by the wood. Macchi's works are hybrids between conceptual work and installation. His first step towards transforming ideas into material is always through drawings and watercolours. They are sketchy, fleeting and not works in their own right, but a step on the way to the work and the search for its medium.

Cathedral

The wall painting *Cathedral* (2011) shows rows of letters like the ones used for eye tests, except that this test is impossible to pass. Because the letters in the lower rows become not only smaller, but also lower in contrast, until they are no longer legible. Macchi likes to attribute logic to the illogical, and this seems to be the case again here. It is only logical that the letters should, while becoming smaller and smaller, finally disappear.

From Here to Eternity

In the two channel video projection Jorge Macchi takes the Hollywood classic *From Here to Eternity* literally and paradoxically, showing two loops made on the few seconds the title and the words "THE END" appear in the film. As these two clips have slightly different lengths they don't match up and their correspondent soundtracks coexist in the exhibition space superimposing each other always in a different way and creating a chaotic sound mixture. A computer software programmed by musician Edgardo Rudnitzky creates a third audio channel in real time: the software takes musical notes from both original soundtracks and develops a third soundtrack sang by women voices.

From here to eternity is the last piece in collaboration with Edgardo Rudnitzky, with whom Macchi has been working for the last ten years.

5 JORGE MACCHI. CONTAINER

