

By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape  
Alhambra  
Le Commun  
Cinéma Spoutnik  
Théâtre Le Galpon  
Cinema Dynamo  
cavel2  
Geneva  
December 13, 2019 - January 19, 2020

How do you turn a listening experience into the subject of an exhibition?

How do you turn a listening experience into the subject of an exhibition? How do you visually reproduce the idea that some music can be considered like painting with sounds, some films like compositions with light, and some paintings like scores whose music unfolds within us? How do you evoke forms and images that relate to the feeling of immersion within the space and time of an art gallery? By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape is a quote by North American composer Terry Riley. It is the starting point of a project in the form of a constellation that reflects the emergence in the early 1960s in San Francisco and the Bay Area, of a music expanding into horizons and climates, fostered by the re-evaluation of the fundamental virtues of the sound phenomenon - psychophysical, spiritual and political - namely taking distance with the European academic heritage. Gathering close to fifty artists, the exhibition at Le Commun connects the works, films and archives of a group of historical personalities with works specifically produced for the occasion by upcoming artists. It also includes a selection of films at the Dynamo and Spoutnik cinemas, as well as concerts at the cavel2, Alhambra and Théâtre du Galpon.

By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape will be held in Geneva from 13 December 2019 to 19 January 2020.

Repetition

In the early 1960s, a series of innovative experiments took shape at the crossroads of music and visual arts, dance, cinema and poetry, which were based on an unusual connection between the body and technology, nature and the media. Mainly collaborative and relating to the search for a community-based experience, their objective was to place the subject within a new situation, caught in a twofold movement, both centripetal and centrifugal. On the one hand, in connection with forms of subversion of norms and through a radical use of electronic tools, the aim was to open up the limits of the pieces -, artworks unfolding into their surroundings, films expanding in time and space, music compositions transmuting into waves and cycles. On the other hand, artists turned perception inward, the exploration of intimate landscapes, criticizing the modern reason, in particular by reducing formal language, opting for the uses of durational strategies, repetitive patterns, and specific vibrational frequencies, enabling a sense of attention and an act of listening that was transformative, individual as well as collective, and envisioned as a communal assemblage of experiences.

By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape focuses on the way in which, at the time in California, this research was singularly embodied around a place, the San Francisco Tape Music Center, established in 1962 by composers and artists Morton Subotnick and Ramon Sender. A cultural and working space open to new musical forms through contact with other art-

forms and new technology, it welcomed personalities such as Pauline Oliveros, Steve Reich and Terry Riley. Furthermore, commissioned by the SFTMC, Don Buchla designed his first modular synthesizer in 1963. Throughout the exhibition, a series of documents reveals the works produced in the proximity of this experimental network that, through various associations, touched upon the meditative, Eastern-inspired approach of Marian Zazeela and La Monte Young, as well as the new choreographic aesthetics of Anna Halprin and the psychedelic experiments of Bruce Conner.

#### Landscape

The structure of the project is based on highlighting, within this constellation, the career of one of its actors, composer Terry Riley, born in Northern California in 1935, by tracking his activities since the late 1950s. From his repetition-based compositions such as In C created at the San Francisco Tape Music Center in 1964, to the nocturnal improvisations on the electric organ of the All Night Flight via his connections with Fluxus and his intense studying of classical Indian music, Terry Riley has continuously renewed his approach to creation. By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape begins with his famous immersive installation Time Lag Accumulator, created in 1968 and reactivated in 2003, and presented here in a brand-new version, updated by the composer himself. Still a unique and greatly influential figure today, Terry Riley enjoys many friendships with artists, choreographers and filmmakers whose works are spread out throughout the exhibition.

The exhibition itself is thought as a landscape on several levels. Imagined as a story that one can browse through, the environment includes (as if in concentric circles drawn around the main story) the works of artists who, at the same time and in other places, have emerged as though echoing Terry Riley's music and the Bay Area's cross-disciplinary experiments. Much like Channa Horwitz's modular drawings/notations, John McCracken's mandalas in Los Angeles or Peter Young's vibratile grids, weaves and lines in New York, they open the project to a polyphonic rather than monographic exploration, ...

enabling connections between repetition, landscape and community. Finally, going back in time and evoking a discrete perspective of the links between Europe and the US, a series of archaeological clues (from Monte Verità to the Californian Nature Boys) point to other landmarks for a critical genealogy of counter-culture, and a criticism of the "minimalist" model that is still too often associated with this scene (from Adolf Wölfl to Emma Kunz).

#### Community

By repetition, you start noticing details in the landscape is a collective project. Special commissions entrusted to artists, especially Swiss and from Geneva, mix in with the exhibition's historical material and structure its landscape, contributing to the development of a living space in which to stroll and meditate. Francis Baudevin, Emilie Ding, Vidya Gastaldon,

Charlotte Herzig and Olga Kokcharova among others, have thus been invited to work within the space itself to provide a collective and intimate, vast and lively experience of the materials on display. History then blends with life, investigation with imagination, thought with dreams and, as when listening to the music that the exhibition features, for the time being, they all come together as one.

A number of projects have been set up in association with various Geneva organizations, partners of the exhibition, including the recreation of an oratorio by North American poet Robert Lax with students from HEAD - Genève, Geneva School of Art and Design, conducted by Vincent Barras; a program of rare artist films, some of which hitherto unseen in Switzerland, accompanied by two audiovisual performances at the Cinema Spoutnik; a cycle of film essays about music presented at the Cinema Dynamo, in association with the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, and a double concert at Cavel2 as well as a collective and multi-generational creation in tribute to Pauline Oliveros at the Théâtre du Galpon. Finally, following the exhibition, a monography, the first publication dedicated to Terry Riley, will be jointly published with Shelter Press. Edited by Vincent de Roguin, it will include the original contributions of a panel of historians, theoreticians and artists and is due in September 2020.