

For some time already, I have been making spatial installations that could be felt at a haptic level and where the visitor would become part of it. I soon realized that the way people move through a room with an installation always seemed the same. Even if an area were not closed off, people would never set foot on some parts of the space. They would look in the same direction on same spots, just the way people entering the Roman Pantheon always look upwards. It seems that the way people experience space doesn't depend on their education, culture or even on whether they are interested in art at all.

A part of De Saussure's theory of language is something that has influenced me perhaps the most. He defined language as a system of signs. To be able to understand each other, two people should possess corresponding, identical systems. But if we think about it consequently, that is something that can never be achieved. If just one element, one word is different in two individual systems, the systems by definition do not correspond and understanding is not possible. Art can in many ways be looked upon as a language. It is a system we use for communication of a kind and the question how much is actually understood is asked far too often. Even the relatively limited circle of people belonging to any given art scene possess more than certainly very different information, knowledge and make different connections among the information they have. However much an artist tries, he will inevitably be misunderstood at least in some aspects.

In my work, over the past couple of years, I have been limiting my expression to the minimum. I wanted to keep it simple enough to be able to assume that people will react in the same way. I was inviting the visitors to walk along preset paths, sit on offered chairs. I was using their ordinary curiosity that will make them look round a corner and I made them move along a wall, the way they would walk, when they walk down a street. I think, once understanding is achieved at such a level, it could turn out to be a good starting point for possible further communication but, in any case, it is already something we have in common, something we can count upon.

Also, thinking about art as language and de Saussure's theory, I became more and more interested in languages as systems. About 50% of today's existing languages will die during our generation. These languages are being eaten up by bigger ones and, although it will be easier to communicate, we know that our understanding will be wider but more superficial. English is a good example. More and more people speak it even as their first language but if two speakers don't come from the same surroundings their understanding will, nevertheless, be limited. In the work I want to do, I will use recordings of dying languages. We don't understand them and one can assume that people who could encounter them in the streets, or in a gallery, won't either, but these languages are not "exotic". In our Europocentrism we tend to consider languages strange just because they are spoken somewhere far away from us. This is a different situation. These languages will simply cease to exist and will not be understood maybe some ten years from now. The only thing we will always be able to understand in the audio recordings of such a language, are the emotions communicated through intonation of the voice. If one listens to a mother speaking to her child in a language one doesn't understand, it is still possible to understand whether she is speaking lovingly or angrily. This naked expression of our tone is something involuntarily controlled by the hypothalamus. It is not culturally defined and can be understood by everyone, whether they belong to an art scene or not.

In an existing city situation, in places with lots of pedestrians, I want to make minimal interventions that would set new paths (painted, drawn, built...) and set sensors that will react to the movement. If one follows the path, tender voices will appear. Once one leaves the "yellow brick road" an angry voice will protest. A camera will record the movement and the expressions on the faces because the mimics, again, are a culturally uncontrolled means of communication.

Finally, large format photographs will show the results of the experiments in the urban situation. They will carry the, probably illegible, writing in dying languages. An installation in the gallery space can repeat the situation from the city. And a book could record all that happened, using again the same texts. They remain without translations and can therefore not be understood but they are accompanied by photographs of movement and expressions that remain the only way of communication we can rely upon.