



Mónica Ruiz Loyola

A visual artist by the National School of Plastic Arts (ENAP) in the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), her concern on reviewing the electronic media in arts began with her thesis research, leading her into electronic and digital arts. And concluding with a Master in Digital Arts at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona (2006).

In 2008, her interest in these subjects gets her involved on arranging workshops and lectures in different cultural centers and museums, such as Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Centro Cultural de España en México, Centro de Cultura Digital, Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Centro Border and the University of San Francisco in Quito, Ecuador.

Her attention is primarily focused on the reflection between the analog and the digital. Hence she keeps merging these two subjects, trying to embody them in different projects that wander around the intimate and a more social edge, whether through interactive installations or performance displays. A few examples of her work include the self-portrait on “life and death of the image”, which she reveals as a performance that implies an audio and video manipulation by breathing; as well as “Ausencia” (Absence), in this piece, a sewing machine is the main object responsible of activating a projection on a great woven thread.

Her work has been exhibited in the United States, Barcelona, Ukraine, Ecuador, as well as in the International Festival of Lights (FILUX) editions in Belgium, Mexico City, Lux Helsinki, Finland and Estonia.



Portfolio

Mónica Ruiz Loyola



Project 1

Harbinger II: Subtle Collisions
Curatorial Project: Exhibition Art and Science
Botanical Garden, Ghent Belgium
2019

Where there are uncertainty and doubt, there is the desire to understand. To face uncertainties, we sometimes have to predict, anticipate, and rely on our intuition. We estimate changes and try to visualize unknown matters. The exhibition Harbinger II: Subtle Collisions asks the question: what are the common grounds between art and science? Could it be in the way both fields use prediction and intuition as an approach towards understanding the world? A harbinger predicts future events. Both artists and scientists could be considered as forerunners, who reveal imperceptible phenomena. They aim to reach sensible dimensions of the world, driven by a constant curiosity.

Harbinger II: Subtle Collisions combines works by the artistic researchers associated with KASK & Conservatorium, developed after a visit to the CERN facilities in Geneva, with work by artists selected by the postgraduate students of Curatorial Studies. It is part of Harbinger, a project by Curatorial Studies in collaboration with art@CMS and Ghent University.

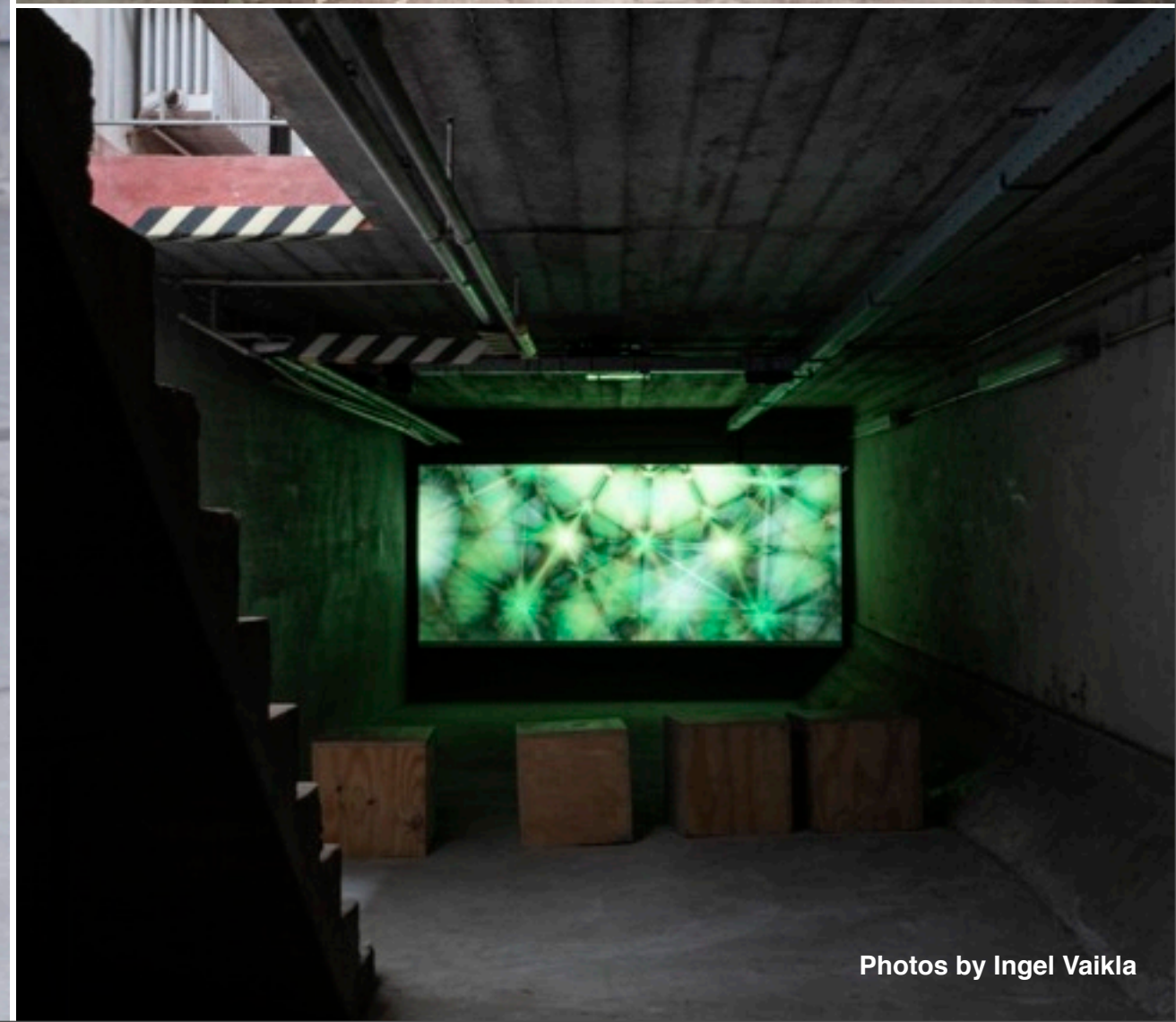
links:

<https://harbinger.schoolofarts.be/>

[https://harbinger.schoolofarts.be/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/](https://harbinger.schoolofarts.be/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PRESS_RELEASE_ENG.pdf)

[PRESS RELEASE ENG.pdf](#)

<http://www.curatorialstudies.be/>



Photos by Ingel Vaikla

Project 2

WEEKEND AT CHARLIE'S Curatorial Project: Exhibition Contemporary Art 2019



During the program Curatorial Studies, we worked with the extensive collection of modern and contemporary art from Jeanne and Charles Vandenhove. The collection contains some 300 works of art the Vandenhoves have been collecting over the past 50 years.

WEEKEND AT CHARLIE'S brought together seven ensembles of artworks from the collection of the Belgian architect Charles Vandenhove, as well as other private and public sources. The interconnecting ensembles allowed for multiple readings and unexpected juxtapositions, reflecting the unique and surprising composition of the Vandenhove collection.

With works by

Carlos Alfonso | Hilla & Bernd Becher | Christian Boltanski | Elsa Brès | Athos Bulcão | Pierre Caille | Eduardo Chillida | Amédée Cortier | Jo Delahaut | Frédéric Fourdinier | François Hers | Julian Hetzel | Ann Veronica Janssens | Thomas Kuijpers | Sol Lewitt | Guy Mees | Hans Op de Beeck | Lili M. Rampre | Sophie Ristelhueber | Joe Scanlan | Amélie Scotta | Adriaan Van Leuven | Jan Vercruysse | Py & Verde | Didier Vermeiren | Marthe Wéry | Léon Wuidar



Learning How to Do It Together

A three-day exhibition like *Weekend at Charlie's*, curated by 17 Curatorial Studies students who performed every role from design, budgeting and logistics to installation, mediation and dismantling, might seem a reckless act of curatorial bravado, or worse, an exercise in futility. For isn't the curatorial act essentially a singular one, best performed by the solitary curator? True, she or he is necessarily gregarious and collaborative, since the curator needs to liaise with artists, designers, technicians, mediators, financial managers and, not least, the public in order to call any exhibition her or his own. But if 20th-century tradition is to be believed, the curator is little different from the music conductor or theatre director – holding the blueprint of the final outcome and rallying the talents of the musicians or actors while at a safe remove from the toil and tensions of the orchestra pit or stage.

This vision serves to comfort a basic fear: that artists in their unpredictability pose a fundamental threat to order and require a firm supervising hand. It is of course no coincidence that this hand is the same that upholds a conventional division of labour under capitalism, between the site of production (always at risk of disorganisation) and cerebral management above.

Reinforced by such curatorial figures as Harald Szeemann and Hans Ulrich Obrist, this vision of the autonomous curator as manager-impresario has eroded considerably in the 21st century.¹ Key examples of early collective curatorial efforts include What, How and For Whom (WHW, founded in 1999) and Chto Delat (What is to be done?, founded in 2003), paving the way for a global blossoming of curatorial collectives today.² One could argue that this collectivization of curating has followed the rapid expansion of biennials, which increasingly rely on teams of curators. WHW was invited to curate the 2009 Istanbul Biennial; a year later, Manifesta 8 took the then landmark step of entrusting its organisation to three collectives (Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum, Chamber of Public Secrets and Tranzit.org). Collectivising curatorial agency has an added benefit in the wake of #Me Too and other collective actions, namely to bypass the single curator model and diversify organizational structures.

If collective curatorial agency has become common currency at least in so far as biennials are concerned, one has a right to wonder why it

¹ Hans Ulrich Obrist chapters *A Brief History of Curating* according to biographical entries – a list of the great curators of the twentieth century (9 male, 2 female) (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2008). For a useful guide to Harald Szeemann's working methods, see the aptly titled *Harald Szeemann: Individual Methodology*, a research project by the students of Curatorial Programme at Le Magasin, Grenoble (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2007).

² The history of collective curating starts much earlier, at least since the late 1960s, but mostly under the aegis of artists – see, among others, the actions of the Argentinian group Tucumán Arde in 1968, those of the New York-based

Antony Hudek, 4.02.2019

hasn't impacted longer-term, more sustainable institutions such as contemporary art centres and institutes, Kunstvereins and Kunsthallen, and museums.

Indeed, most contemporary art institutions avoid more horizontal models with shared responsibilities among equals, preferring instead the standard pyramidal business governance model, with a CEO on top and progressively larger pools of workers going down. Who could easily name art institutions run by more than one artistic director? To limit oneself to present-day Belgium: not a single major art museums or art centre can claim to be run by co-equal curators or artistic directors (not to speak of the fact that most of these singular directors are men), with the possible exception of the new Kunsthal Gent, which is currently testing a more collective governing structure in which two members of the coordination team take responsibility for the space's artistic programme. It is telling that in this last example the word 'curator' is banished, as if having two curators working collaboratively were a contradiction in terms.

On the teaching side, as long as most cultural institutions adopt the top-down management structure prevalent in business, there is little incentive for curatorial programmes to break the circular reasoning according to which exclusive and often expensive programmes produce a few chosen graduates who will become, in turn, the leading curators and directors of the future. By and large, academic curatorial programmes remain attached to curating as a set of theoretical skills needed to envision exhibitions or other public manifestations, on the understanding that the actual work – from conservation and installation to security and mediation – will be taken care of by someone else lower down the professional ladder. The shift from curating to 'the curatorial',³ which sees curatorial agency as more epistemological than object-based and representational, has only exacerbated the role of curatorial programmes as purveyors of uniquely and cognitively gifted individuals, each capable of developing a curatorial style all her or his own.

Guerrilla Art Action Group from 1969, and the decors of the Canadian artist-trio General Idea from the late 1960s into the 1990s. This history was admirably addressed by WHW in their 2005 exhibition *Collective Creativity* at Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel; see, in WHW's own words, 'Defining the Enemy and Post-Fordist Business as Usual', in Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen, eds., *Self-Organised* (London: Open Editions, 2013), 113–121.

Weekend at Charlie's



Traces of destruction

Lucie Ménard, Mobina Mohamadi Tabar, Nasrin Tork & Monica Ruiz Loyola

Among the diverse art collection of architect Charles Vandenhove, a few photographic works document remnants of human activities, enlightening the complex mutuality between human architecture and landscape destruction.

Winding Towers by Bernd and Hilla Becher (1968, a series of iconic photographs of industrial constructions in Germany) turns the previously functional building into monuments of a vanishing era, freezing time before they reach the state of ruin. This transformation through industry echoes others scars left on landscapes by conflict.

In two photographs from the series *Fait* (1992) by Sophie Ristelhueber, the scars in places devastated by war in Kuwait are captured through an aerial view and close-up abstract photographs blurring our perception of scale. Humanity and civilizations are marked by this polarity between construction and destruction. Those ruins and past events leave a

visible scar that will in time disappear, but will remain part of a collective memory. Around these works extracted from Vandenhove's collection, we selected a few artists whose interest revolves around the same questions of architecture, its spatial and temporal scale, and this dynamic of construction/destruction.

In Amelie Scotta's drawings (2017), the functionality of water towers (also a subject of the Becher's typology) becomes an utopian construction; an architecture unfolding from the wall onto the ground, hiding its foundations, suggesting infinity.

Frederic Fourdinier's *Terraformation* (2016-2017) is a series of cardboard models made reproducing industrial architectures presented in glass boxes. These industrial objects address the colonization of a new natural territory by man, while at the same time destroying nature.

The extensive typology of bunkers gathered by French thinker Paul Virilio in his

book *Bunker Archeology* (1997) is also a reminder of war. Left on beaches all over the coasts of Europe, these concrete structures are unlikely to disappear on a human time scale, their destruction instead coming as they are slowly absorbed by the earth as sand covers them.

In the video *Stella 50.4N1.5E* (2016), architect and artist Elsa Brès explores the city of Stella as a fallen utopia. She elaborates a multiple and experimental cartography of the city and its landscape; a populated tourist complex in winter.

In *Le village de Sarrasin* (2013) by artists Py & Verde, soba noodles standing like skyscrapers are slowly deconstructed by *stegobium paniceum* larvae (commonly known as the drugstore beetle). During the exhibition, the larvae slowly consume the work, destructing and consolidating it at the same time, revealing that mankind may not be the only architect species after all.

Weekend at Charlie's

Fait #43, Sophie Ristelhueber, 1992.
Courtesy: Vandenhove Collection, Ugent

Project 3

Absence

Interactive installation

Collaboration Eduardo Jiménez/MONODATA

2014- 2018

Mexico has been seriously affected by the problem of feminicides, as is the case of the women killed in Ciudad Juárez. "Absence" is a tribute to all women brutally murdered or those who are still missing. I made an interactive installation using a sewing machine because in Ciudad Juárez, a lot of women who are murdered, work in *maquiladoras* or textile factories. The sewing machine is the object that represents the absence.

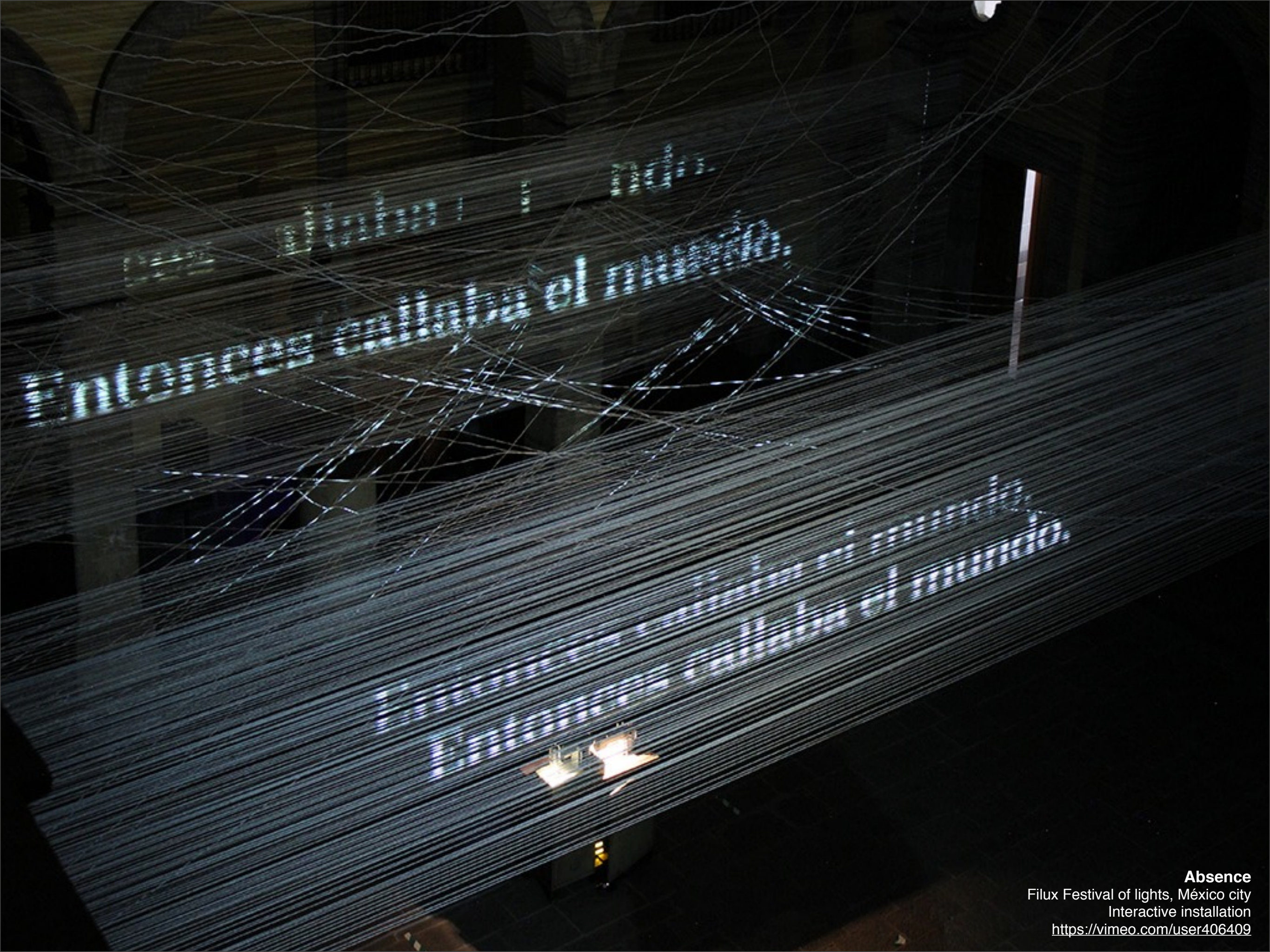
The strong part of this piece is a beautiful poem by Rocío Cerón, who wrote it specially for this installation. Absence was presented in Cultural Center Roca Umbert, Barcelona, Galerie *La libertad* in Querétaro, Mexico and in different light festivals: Light Festival in Ghent (2015), Filux (festival of lights in Mexico, 2015), Lux Helsinki (Finland, 2017) and Radical Light (Tartu, Estonia 2018).

<https://vimeo.com/174322609>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvsqZUL1Xlc>

<https://plan.fi/plan-ja-lux-helsinki-ovat-yhdessa-tyttojenpuolella>

<https://2018.tartuvalgus.ee/en/exhibitions/city-space-installations/radical-light/>



Absence

Filux Festival of lights, México city
Interactive installation

<https://vimeo.com/user406409>

Project 4

Death and life of the image

Performance

Part of the International Performance Festival

Ex-Teresa Arte Actual

Mexico City



“Death and life of the image” was a performance where my breathing is the most important part. I tried to figure out the existence of my image but also relate it with life and death. Through my breathing, I control the image and the audio. The performance has 5 stages: memories of the image, loss of consciousness of the image, delirium of the image, the agony of the image and death of the images. Each stage consists of 25 breaths, each breath lowers the audio bit at each stage, as well as controlling the effects in the video projected next to my bed.

<https://www.monikaloyola.com/project-03>

Project 5

Collective Conversation
Artist in Residence (Konnektor)
Langerbrugge, Belgium 2020

The last summer I was selected as artist in residence in Konnektor. Between city, port and hinterland, in the vicinity of the iconic Langerbrugge electricity plant, the layered art-project KONNEKTOR has its ground. <http://gouvernement.gent/konnektor/residenties-residencies/>

The name of my project is “Collective conversation” which consisted of asking residents for stories through meaningful object for them: family photos and objects that show their personal relationship with the neighborhood and the power plant. <https://www.monikaloyola.com/project-08>

Collective Conversation
Art installation
Artist in Residence (Konnektor)
Langerbrugge, Belgium 2020



The light in the art installation is connected to the audios. The intensity of the voice controls the intensity of the light.
<https://konnektor.be/project/collectieve-conversatie-monica-ruiz-loyola/>

Project 6

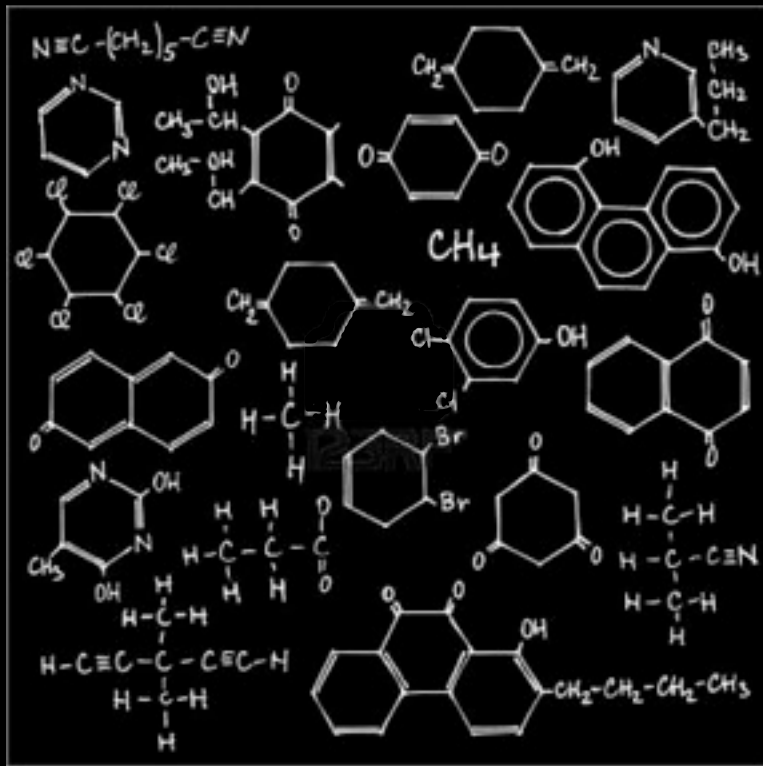
Peñoles Metals Museum.
Torreón, Coahuila
Interactive Design



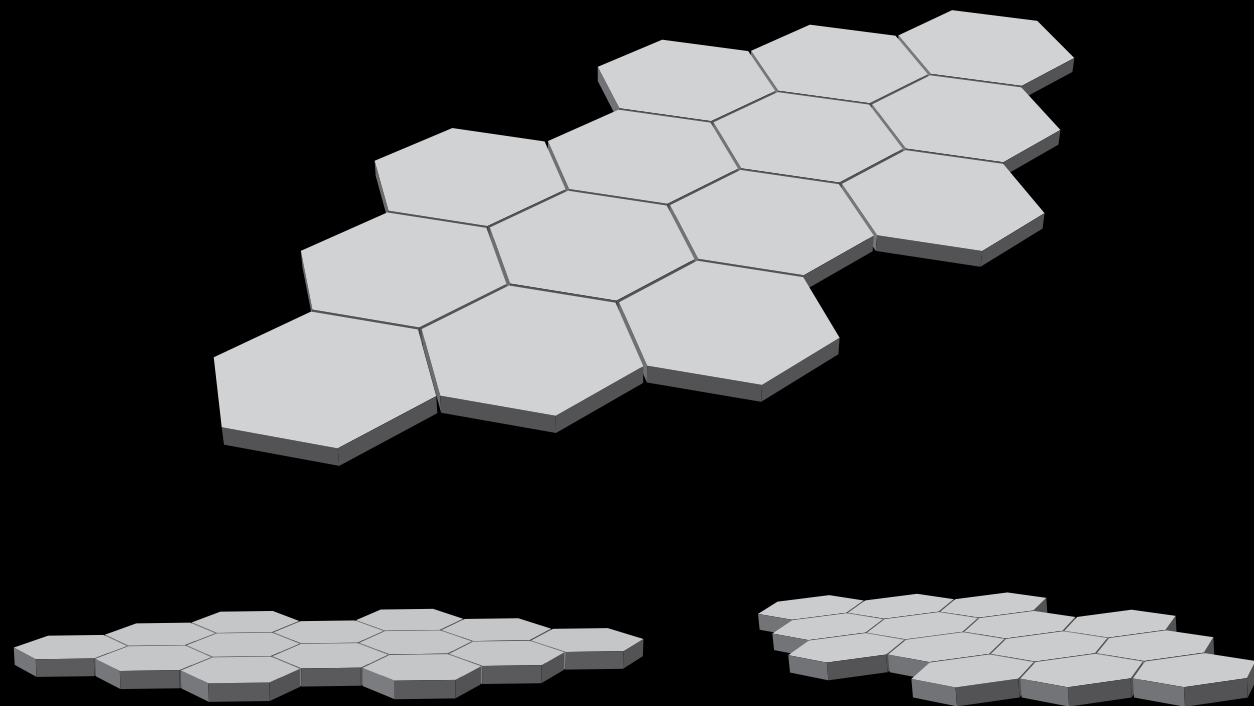
I was part of the Hotpixel team, an interactive design studio in Mexico. Currently the studio is part of Cocolab (<https://cocolab.mx/en/#inicio>). The functions that I was in charge, was conceptualization and interactive design. Peñoles Metals Museum contacted Hotpixel to renovate its museum and make it more attractive for young people. I lead the project to make the proposal, working hand by hand with the programmer and the graphic designer.



Peñoles Metal Museum Interactive Design



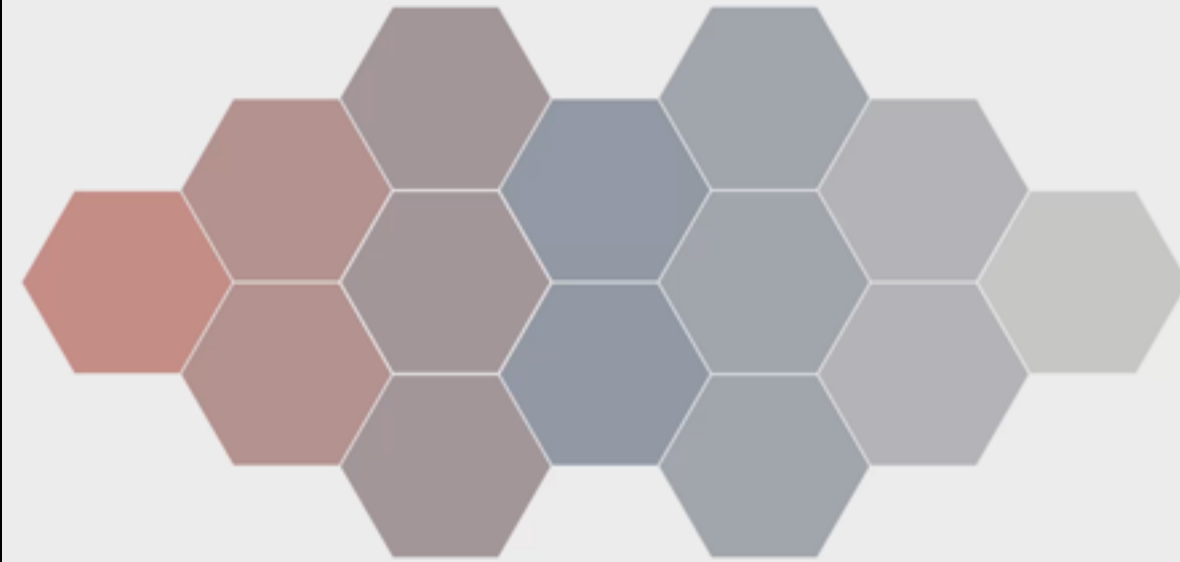
RENDER



My proposal was a modular table based on hexagons. The design refers to the aesthetics of the chemical formulas in accordance with the content showed in the museum.



Peñoles Metals Museum Interactive Design



I thought about designing interactivity in stages so that each hexagon explained the metal extraction process step by step. The videos provided by the Museum were used and information was added with motion graphics to make it easier to understand the extraction process of some metals. <https://vimeo.com/50776788>



Thanks

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