

ALESSANDRO SCIARAFFA

Totem



Opening on November 16, 2019, 7 pm

November 17 – December 21, 2019

Galerie Mazzoli is pleased to invite you to *TOTEM*, the first solo exhibition of Alessandro Sciaraffa in Düsseldorf.

As the title itself suggests, the Italian artist connects his work to the realm of spirituality, and proposes himself as a modern day shaman, intending to explore the invisible immanent energy of inanimate objects through scientific means. Far from displaying a series of stacked pagan deities, Sciaraffa's totems involve suspended cymbals (i.e., gongs) placed in front large sub-woofers, all supported by minimal, tubular structures. As the sub-woofer produces low-frequency drones, the gongs are set in motion by way of acoustic resonance, therefore becoming spontaneous, sympathetic instruments coloring the sound with their harmonic-rich textures.

These sonic sculptures are evidently charged with mystical features, from the title, to the moon-looking cymbals, to the low-frequency drones—musical gestures traditionally associated with meditational practices. The artist reinforces this paradigm in multiple ways: the high volume of the sound connects the sculptures to the visitor, whose body itself resonates as a result of the pervasive frequencies. Furthermore,

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he creates a possible direct interaction between the public and the sculptures: first by allowing people to play with the cymbal, thus changing its frequency response, and secondly by adding a digital process to the system, which causes the woofer's basic frequencies—and thus the whole produced sound—to react and change as a function of the visitor's movement in front of the pieces. This kind of experiential conception of the artwork transcends its traditional view as object, as immutable monolith, and enters the dimension of “liquid” event through sound and interaction. Such an approach, set into action with the intent of stimulating an alteration of both physical and perceptual awareness, is paramount to Italian artist's practice in general.

The work of Sciaraffa stems from a tradition of artists who, starting from Nam June Paik on, have attempted to create connections between seemingly opposing forces such as art and science, physics and spirituality, new media and traditional iconography, the aleatory and pre-designed. With TOTEM, Alessandro Sciaraffa achieves an original balance between these forces, and accompanies us through a multisensory journey which will leave us pondering over our antonymic consciousness and ultimately let us reconcile with our innermost contradictions.

Alessandro Sciaraffa (Turin, Italy, 1976) graduated in Architecture from Politecnico di Torino, he also studied at the Fondazione Spinola Banna and received a degree in Electronic Music and Sound Design from MAXXI B.A.S.E, Rome. He is among the founders of the experimental music collective WHYOFF. Among others, Alessandro Sciaraffa's work has been exhibited at the Musée océanographique de Monaco (MC), the Biruchiy Contemporary art Project (UKR), the Stockhausen Foundation for Music Kurten (DE), the Auditorium of Swiss Radio Switzerland (Studio Uno Lugano, CH), the Chopin University Museum (MEX), the Auditorium Parco della Musica RSS, Rome (IT), the CIAC Castello Colonna in Genazzano (IT), Galleria Giorgio Persano in Turin (IT) Galerie Mazzoli in Berlin (DE), Galerie Italiënne in Paris (FR), the Museo della Permanente in Milan (IT), the Teatro Margherita in Bari (IT), the Biennale in Venice (IT), the Merz Foundation, the GAM Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea and the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation in Turin (IT), the Ermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (RU) and Ground Moscow in Moscow (RU).