

Press release

VOID

[vwab]

19 June – 26 September, 2021

Arnaud Eeckhout (BE, 1987) and Mauro Vitturini (IT, 1985) created the duo VOID in 2013 as a way to research and explore sound. Their work consists of giving body to sound by inscribing it onto different media resulting in plastic works with a range of contours: installations, sculptures, drawings, books, objects... This first solo exhibition in France at the Galerie Papillon is an invitation to discover the different sides of their research.

Sound has no packaging of its own, it is by essence intangible. VOID tries to materialize the immaterial by developing different writing processes to represent sound, to translate it into visual language. If this representation of sound is not always blatantly obvious, a poetry does emerge that is often paradoxically nourished by scientific inspirations. To appreciate with the eyes something we cannot hear, we must dive into this abstract universe that, despite a sometime systematic approach, invites the viewer to contemplate.

With *SARA 1* (Souvenir Archival Recording Apparatus, 2021), VOID revisits the process invented in 1860 by Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville who made the first sound recording in history. A needle, connected to a loudspeaker, scrapes a cylinder coated with carbon. This needle draws lines on the white of the paper following a sampling in real time of anonymous' voices who tell their memories. The drawing shows the traces of the oscillation of these voices which appear ghost-like on the paper.

Materializing sound by drawing is a process found in a number of their works such as the *Mappe Sonore* series (2020). For these sono-visual mappings of space, it is no longer a question of inscribing the voice by recording, but the landscape. The artists capture the sound data of a place by trying to draw only the sound that is produced there and not the space, a kind of meta recording. Unlike Georges Perec to whom they refer to in this attempt to consume a place, they do not wish at any time to document it by the exhaustive referencing of the space in question. It is a landscape which is built and which is drawn...

This desire to capture a space is translated differently with the *Compositions* series (2019). By their materiality, these paintings on foam blocks absorb the sound and become a kind of an "acoustic tomb" of space.

Another facet of VOID's work is the invasion of the voice onto the landscape. *Au clair de la lune* (2021) was born out of an attempt to etch the sound of their voices into the sand on a beach. A tin print is made in-situ allowing the negative of a sound recording to be extracted from the landscape, even though it remains inaudible.

For *Synonym's synonyms* (2021), the artists use an online dictionary of synonyms and build a list of 300 words starting with the word "ruin". The words engraved on bricks form sections of a wall whose surfaces are punctuated by the appearance and disappearance of words. We get caught up in an internal reading of a kind of semantic scroll generated by this variation of one word into another. The initial meaning of the first word chosen therefore disappears completely. Little by little the sound takes precedence over the meaning. The inert language of its codification in the dictionary thus becomes changing, poignant.

All the work of VOID revolves around this attempt to capture something which is impalpable, to exhaust sound in all its possibilities, to bring this paradox into focus. Even if it means sometimes failing in this exploratory undertaking, a variable they completely assume, even more so since we are often fascinated by the history that each of the pieces reveals, the history of a sound that we can finally look at.

Anne-Laure Chamboissier (April 2021)
Art curator - Champrojects

VOID is a Brussels-based duo composed of **Arnaud Eeckhout** (BE, 1987), who graduated with a Master's degree in public art from the École supérieure des arts ARTS² in Mons, and **Mauro Vitturini** (IT, 1985), who graduated with a Bachelor's degree in painting from the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome. They founded VOID in 2013 and received the Mediatine award in 2014. In 2018, they were awarded the Salomon Foundation Residency Award and did a residency at ISCP - New York. Their work is regularly presented in Belgium and Italy. Following a commission from the University of Saint-Louis (BE) in 2019, they created several permanent in situ installations. Their works are present in several private collections in Europe, Turkey and the United States. In 2022, they will present a major solo exhibition at the Musée du Jardin Botanique in Brussels (BE). *[vwaB]* is their first solo exhibition at the Galerie Papillon, which represents them in France.