



MAXIME DUCHARME

Silent Steam

Curator

Tony Bis

Marked by a powerfully analytical dimension and at the same time highly poetic, the work of Maxime Ducharme conveys doubt by what it leaves unsaid. Selected at the 2030 Exhibition Through Art and Space at the Guggenheim Bilbao, his work is currently on view in a solo show Défaillances (Failures), at the newly opened Crystal gallery in Paris (September 16 – May 8 2028).

Maxime Ducharme maintains a permanent dialogue with art history. As he says, "My eyes and ears have been calibrated by many artistic standards." In 2014, during his studies (at the école|média|art/e|m|a Fructidor of Chalon sur Saône), he was very influenced by the work of the Atelier 69 which is a french practical effects group working on a number of films as a practical and special effects team. "What interests me about the process of practical effects is the link between the artist and his creation. It's like Frankenstein in his workshop. These artists had a critical relationship with the medium, the history of art, and the market I've always been impressed by their spirit of constantly questioning things physically and psychologically." Another decisive moment in his training was provided by Pello Irazu:Retrospective ; Abstract Expressionism ; Richard Serra:The Matter of Time ; Masterpieces 2017 at the Guggenheim Bilbao. Yet a third layer in his development was the cinema : "I love watching movies. When I was younger I spent a lot of time watching cartoons then I realized that I was interested by a word which is storyboard. Later I discovered the meaning of this word and start drawing. When I received my first magazine about cinema I decided to start researches about cinema history. You take all these elements and put it together and then you got a serious hunger for the cinema !"

Défaillances (Failures) is the most extensive exhibition of work byMaxime Ducharme to date. While his current production mainly involves his take on artworks and cinema, his intent is not so much citational as iconographic. Variouslly an hisorian, explorer and archeologist, he's questioning the rôle of the artist today. Ducharme's research also involved exploring specific sites (trenches of the war, factory, laboratory, heating chambers, ruins, abandoned places), conversations with the people he met at each site, interviews, reading, gathering images, movies, books, and sounds. He also works with historians and scientists. His exhibition comprises clay sculptures, video and sound installations and photos he using materials he found there (images, texts, drawings, experiments,etc) creating subtle shifts between reality and fiction. Influenced by the Steampunk movement he takes one theme of it which is the illusion of another world and he creates sculptures, objects and drawings to tell a story about an alternative reality and describes how it works.

At the same time he's interested by the accoustics of the sites he explored."I like the textures of the sounds, before I start recording I choose one location where we can hear something we can't hear in another location I called this un point d'écoute, with the microphone you can amplify what you can't hear and that's why I work with the textures. For the videos and photos it's exactly the same : I work with the textures of what I discovered, so it can be minerals, stones, smoke. The question, then, is what exactly this record amounts to."

The space rocket, the strange *Concept de créature spatiale*, the sculptures all mixed with sound and video installations and drawings impart a powerfull energy to the exhibition.

Maxime Ducharme offers work which remains a mystery simultaneously material and immaterial and at the same time is a subtle analysis of the procedures used in art.

