



MA [questions] is a series of interviews with sound artists, architects, visual artists and thinkers, contemplating the relationship between sound and architecture, and the use of silence and empty space in contemporary art practices. Curated by Fabio Perletta, Luigi Turra and Gaia Martino.

FEDERICA JEANNE DE LUCA

Visual Artist

Fear of empty space (horror vacui) shows us how in artistic expressions, as well as in our daily life, there is this tension in not leaving even the smallest of spaces between events. How do you react, with your artistic language, to this visual/communicative stimulation of abundance?

Federica Jeanne de Luca: The horror vacui culture, that is as if you couldn't give up to anything and everything was absolutely indispensable, has led to an obsessive state of denial for whichever interval and spatiotemporal vacuum in both daily life and many of the common artistic languages. We live swamped with continuous sensory stresses, dizziness (auditory and visual stimuli). We are used to compressed times and experiences almost without ever taking a break. We are injured by an excess of speed and information that disorients us. All of this has a strong impact on our perception of space and time and especially on our way of living through this full-empty relation. Considering my nature, having a slow and introspective temperament, I often need to stop and take breaks. Speed, sudden changes and tight rhythms contrast with my world. An empty space, which is a form that generates harmony and beauty, expresses a certain spiritual character that, to me, has always been a source of deep inspiration from which I draw creative energy and a good concentration.

Just as in meditation, where space and time do not exist and breath seems to expand, an immersive balance and peace state — around which everything is silent — makes sure that even the spatial perception

of a place expands, allowing the natural energy to flow more freely. Just as in my life visual and auditory worlds are closely connected to each other by an intimate and constant dialogue, I like to describe my artistic language as a kind of visual feeling. This language of mine is made up of white spaces and long breaths, where balance lies in removing and spacing out, rather than adding or compressing. In my landscapes, suspended nearly isolated places — where space is almost never entirely painted — are often represented and seem to float in the nothingness. Images emerge as unfinished and evocative visions free to float in long silences and white voids. Inner places, like nature, need breath, empty spaces and silences. Like silence, void becomes a physical space to explore and listen to.

Federica Jeanne de Luca is an Italian visual artist born in Milan in 1974 where she currently lives and works. Sounds and images constantly live in a symbiotic relationship of deep dialogue both in her daily work and in her private life. Some of her recent works show a new series of investigations on the meaning of emptiness in close relationship with the perception of space and silence. She collaborates with some international independent record labels and musicians of electronic, minimal and ambient music genres.

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