



Empty Sea ?

“Empty Sea?”

an interactive art installation, speaks the universal language of aesthetic emotion to deliver a strong message: we must stop overfishing. It is the survival of oceans, and men, which is at stake. In parallel, by exposing the ocean’s frailty, “Empty Sea?” makes us feel our own transience.



EmptySea?

A DREAM-LIKE POETIC AMBIANCE

“Empty Sea?” is composed of graphically designed fishes, with unreal colors. While having the appearance of fishes, they are floating in air.

This is not a realistic scene but a phantasmagoria inspired by the Japanese windsocks representing carps. As is such, this type of fish is more familiar with fresh water than with the oceans!



Ravenna, Italy Crypt with fish

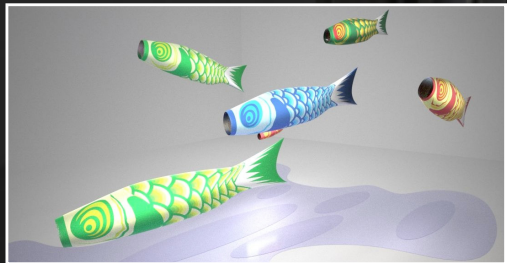
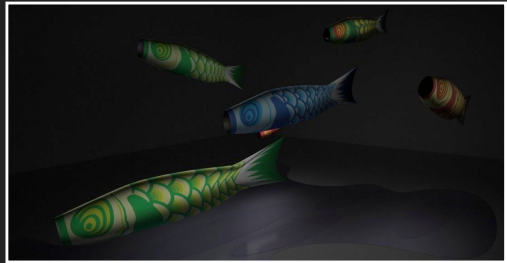
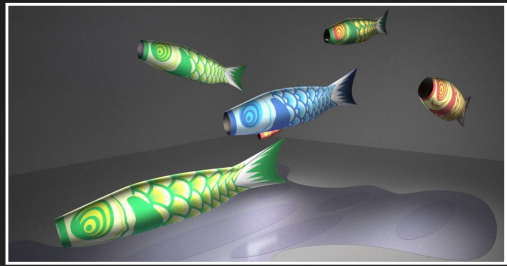
EmptySea.~

AN ASIAN INSPIRATION...

In Japan a major feast called "Koi Nobori" takes place at the beginning of May. Windssocks representing carps are exhibited. They symbolize courage and perseverance. This typical Japanese feast finds its own source in a Chinese legend. According to this legend a particularly resilient carp swam upstream as if on a mission. Moved by such obstinacy, the gods

...INTO A UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

turned her into a beautiful water dragon that flew majestically over the tumultuous waters. Beyond this Asian inspiration, the symbol of fish as a source of life and fecundity is shared all over the world as witnessed by the numerous sacred springs and basins populated with fish.



INTERACTIVE...

Empty Sea?

...SYMBOLIC STRENGTH

When entering, visitors perceive the brightly illuminated “Kois”. But as soon as they approach them, the “Kois” lose their brightness and become ghost like.

This reflects the ever growing human pressure against fish and oceans. However the “Kois” regain color and life when visitors throw some coins on the basin’s floor, representing the ocean.

Thanks to its interactivity, “Empty Sea?” plays on two opposing symbols:

- a negative one, directly experienced by visitors when they see the “Kois” losing their luminous vitality.
- a positive one, when visitors re-enact a universal and age-old tradition by throwing a coin in a basin.

This gesture of thanks towards the nourishing benefits of water and fish also symbolizes the actions that visitors should undertake to protect the oceans against the numerous threats they are facing.

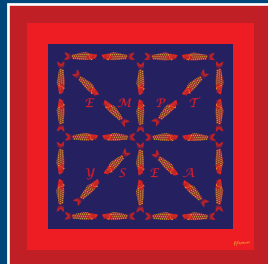
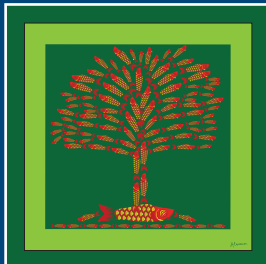
More fundamentally, this unstable balance between these positive and negative dynamics evokes the efforts we have to do to augment or restore our own vitality against its inevitable waning.

"I want to be helpful"

Hans Ulrich Obrist

EmptySea?

ART & ACTION



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Empty Sea? aims at contributing to safeguarding oceans. This is a world emergency task, as stressed by the **"Ocean Compact"** initiated by UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon. **"Empty Sea?"**'s artistic, interactive, and playful character makes its message able to be well received by audiences from all ages and origins. **"Empty Sea?"** has thus a very large potential to be spread. SensoArt is also preparing a **"FishAction"**, a festive

and social party centered around **"Empty Sea?"** with:

- A competition to keep "Kois" alive. That is, illuminated as long as possible
- A "tweet contest" with a poll to distinguish the best tweets related to **"Empty Sea?"**
- Awards given to winners and contributors: silk scarves decorated with "Kois"



ALEXANOR

Who are you Alexanor?

I am a Parisian living and working in Hong Kong and frequently travelling in Asia. I have also stayed some years in London. I like large international cities and

I love Hong Kong for its dynamism and its multicultural atmosphere. Alexanor is my artist name. I have picked up this name because it's the name of a beautiful butterfly from southern France and because I have been moved by Zhuangzi's "Butterfly Dream". Zhuangzi sleeps and dreams he is a butterfly. Upon waking up he asks himself if he is Zhuangzi who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or if he was a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuangzi! I am also fascinated by technological innovation because it allows exploring entirely new modes of expression. Very early, I have been involved in the setting up

of interactive installations such as "Fiat Lux!" an immersive space where one could generate colors and sounds just by moving and touching. Then I designed other installations like "Expansion" that has been selected and exhibited in the digital art festival "Futur en Seine" in Paris in 2011.

What are your present concerns?

I am still looking for deepening and extending my command of design and of new technologies through multiple experiments. Today, I have the desire to go beyond the field of Digital Art and to move closer to the grounds of Contemporary Art. In other words, I am now focusing more on the strength of the message, on its content, and on the way it is expressed, than on technological innovation per se. As new technologies become cheaper and easier to use, I don't hesitate to use common interactive devices to create artworks that should be striking by their sheer communicative power. Otherwise, within the framework of my non-artistic activities, I keep watch on today's major changes that will shape the world of tomorrow and I post blogs in this regard.

Observing trends and practicing foresight are feeding my artistic sensitivity. Conversely this sensitivity allows me to detect weak signals that classical analysis would leave aside (the early warning capacity of artists!)

What does your position as a global citizen bring to you?

A lot of personal fulfillment. It is fascinating to face different ambiances, colors, sounds, and sensations in everyday life. It is also exciting to have to adapt to behaviors, and to ways of thinking differing from the one you have been accustomed to. It is enthralling to put yourself in the shoes of another culture to better solve the problems you are confronted with. I am also fascinated by the differences between the major cultural tectonic plates Asia / West for example. I am also struck by the important variations I can perceive within each of these large plates, between England and France, and between China and Japan for example. Regardless, Asian cultures have become a major source of inspiration for me.

What are the themes of your current artworks?

What I am aiming at is to express the rooting of an artwork in a culture, and meanwhile to avoid locking it up in this specific culture. I want to create things and installations having a universal resonance that can be felt and appreciated all over the world. So, the themes I play with are those that involve the future of the whole humankind: in particular the survival of our planet and of our oceans; the way we are changing the society by now being able to communicate and exchange with people at the other end of the world and well beyond our usual common identities, and so on... The curator Hans-Ulrich Obrist has stressed the major role artists may play in society. He declared himself: "I want to be helpful". This is also my wish! ■

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