

The Voices of Kunstenfestivaldesarts

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In this latest edition of Kunstenfestivaldesarts, several propositions have adopted the voice as a way of relating to the world. To hear the invisible, make the absent speak or play with one's own voice, decipher three pieces which have caused the vocal cords to vibrate.

Voicing Pieces, Begüm Erciyas

With the installation *Voicing Pieces*, Turkish artist Begüm Erciyas invites us to a rare meeting, to take the time for a tête à tête with our own voice. In the half-light of the chapel of Brigittines we can just make out three black cocoons in the space, which look like three giant cardboard clouds. They are suspended and open in their centre. We are welcomed and the pathway is explained to us: We have to enter each of the cocoons in a particular order, put on headphones, and read the text as we talk into the microphone in front of us. Head and body swallowed up by these imitation caves, we discover three stations to hear, test and feel our voice. We tame it first, by balancing it, to the rhythm of monosyllabic repetitions. We test the frequency, its modulations. Behind the scenes, three technicians work simultaneously to make a resounding echo, to increase the tonality in the low or high notes.

The reading continues with sentences from novels, films or café conversations. There is giddiness and surprise when we hear ourselves like that. We become the performer of our own show, we catch ourselves playing with intonations, taking on different roles, modulating and surfing directly on our own rhythmic writing to put together a story using several voices. We are spectator-listener of the sounds produced and actor at the same time, eager to discover a layer of our own identity. Our voice becomes a choreographic gesture with which we compose, alone on stage. At each step, the modifications proposed by the technology in the shadow have an impact on how we read and talk, ranging from lyricism to irony – as during this passage when the text mentions a drunken character and our diction reverberates between our ears, moves out of line, overturns and we lose our bearings to such an extent that we find it hard to carry on reading.

As we exit, a bit dazed, the coolness of the chapel and step back into the heat of late May, what remains is a profoundly intimate sense of having met with ourselves. We feel as though we have been carried by a perceptible resonance. *Voicing Pieces* is a place for fun, a treat, a digression of the head into its black clouds from which one emerges transformed.