

URBAN SPACE  
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- What is the Module De Zeer?

The Module De Zeer is a global artistic project born from the meeting of Mehdi Cibille, a.k.a. Zeer, with the street. Zeer is an acronym for Zone Experimentale d'Expression Relative (Experimental Zone of Relative Expression); more than a visual tool or a graphic element, it is a drawn raw material which offers to explore a space that is urban, institutional, and mental. The Module is both proof and witness of the existence of a playful and poetic area in the city. This space is sometimes borrowed, sometimes reclaimed by the Module, which remains within, to both call out and question urban dwellers by offering new visual propositions in the aesthetical urban landscape.

- To whom belong the keys to the city?

The city space constitute more than a context to be shown in for the Module, it is the motor that operated its creation. Effectively, the urbanization of the world and the extension of the big cities brought about new visual cultures and originated a change on an unprecedented scale. Man disappears under the weight of urban advertisement images. Man goes from the role of a main character to that of an enslaved viewer before a show of consumption. However, the city industry was destined to incarnate the democratic space par excellence. How could the public space be given back to the public? How to interact with urban dwellers in space that is less and less shared? By creating a schism, here was the first answer given by the Module: break with the daily monotony by participating in the writing of the urban story. The Module started its urban exploration by taking actions; it'll leave evidences of its passage by creating a city sized canvas. Its approach is first and foremost motivated by its will to create a common experience of the world by creating space where the non-space ruled.

- Between space and non-space

The Module De Zeer appears and strives in the gaps between the public space and its non-space: traffic space, transitional space, consumption space and communication space and any space deprived of social markings. The Module De Zeer honed his skills in abandoned brownfield sites, waste places, streets but also old areas of culture and patrimoine such as the Maison du Peuple in Clichy, which it'll invest as part of an artistic residence. This place has been under rehabilitation since 1983.

On one of the last rampart of the Fort d'Issy, built in 1840, it'll worked on the idea of passage and threshold by creating a closed door, on which it'll carve « Behind this door anything is possible ». The experiences offered by the Module aim for a peculiar cognitive interaction with the urban world. By making an appearance in the public space, the Module opens areas to think and imagine.

Invited to the Bains Douches, former emblematic night club in Paris where the mundane and artistic worlds used to meet, the Module invests the now empty area. It transforms it by drawing a volume which redesigns the room and changes its dimensions. Then, it fills the empty volume with its Module by transposing the whole area. This staging allowed the Module to generate its own space to show and flourish, and thus cancels the existing space of the room and transforms the non-space in an area for creation.

- The Rectangular prose

To understand the transition between urban space and institutional artistic space, the Module De Zeer thinks of an equation that shows the difference between the two spatial contexts and that studies the different modalities and postures that allow its evolution.

Street / To do without being seen,  
seen without it being there to be seen  
Art Gallery / To do in order to be seen,  
seen because it's the purpose

If in the street the artists operates with discretion and in non-spaces, on the other hand, the institutional body implies a more demonstrative approach which has for final goal to expose the artworks to the public.

You can then wonder about the transposition of the Module of the street towards a new media and a new conception of time and space.

The project « Elevation » constitutes the first step of this thinking process in which the Module invests the white and smooth surface of the roof of a truck and creates an original artwork. The video recording of the project is an integral part of the

artwork, and thus it shows the piece of work from a point of view that's one of a kind and it delivers the final result by cancelling the three-dimensionality of the truck, by reducing the painted area of the truck to a rectangular area. The posture of the street artist is similar to that of an artist working in their workshop, standing up and filling an horizontally hanged canvas, but with a Posca in hand.

As the camera gets higher and higher, you begin to understand the spatial context of the artwork: a street, an elevated railway and the noises of the city. The project goes on inside the area of the gallery... in which the Module De Zeer produces a fresco that has the same dimensions as the roof of the truck the artwork was painted on.

This confrontation between the Module and the new production and exposition modalities fall within a thinking approach. Just like a literacy prose, between respect and transgression, the Module De Zeer makes its piece, with street art grammar (spray can and markers) and White cube (canvas and white wall). A rectangular prose which goes along with the Module its spatial recontextualization and, thus, its semantical recontextualization as well.

The Module De Zeer is also a method that conceptualizes its different approaches and it leads researches on the creative process.

Just like a free electron, the Module incarnates in itself an indeterminate territory of infinite experimentations. At the crossroad of Science, Art and Design, it ceaselessly questions the different methods to create and it hustles the borders between subjects and references.

*« It was the occasion to create a monumental immersion inside the Module De Zeer. On the highway, speed is law; that's why I decided to compress the Module accordingly to the deceleration and acceleration of the vehicles. In the street, the eye of the rubberneck is subjected to a lot but it has to, from time to time, be unhooked from visual standards and be confronted to something else. This 'something else' ought to make you want to understand its hidden meaning and it ought to inspire deep thoughts that will get the rubberneck out of their daily life. »*

What tells an artwork in public space? What tells an artwork in the space of an art gallery? And, most importantly, what tells this recontextualization? How to strike a balance in a movement of continual transition?