GALERIE⏐JEROME POGGI

LOOP Barcelona
May 25th - 26th, 2017

Yona Friedman
Films d'animation / solo show

Anticipating his major solo show « Mobile Architecture » at MAXXI - Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo in Rome (IT), the Gallery Jérôme Poggi is pleased to present Yona Friedman (born in Hungary in 1923, lives and works in Paris), one of the most influential architects and theoreticians of the 20th and 21st centuries.

For its 4th participation to LOOP Barcelona, the Gallery Jérôme Poggi is pleased to present a selection of Yona Friedman's Films d'animation, a series of ten movies produced in collaboration with his wife Denise Charvein between 1960 and 1963. The movies are conceived with illustrated wooden blocks assembled into scenes. With an original soundpiece by Yona Friedman made from recordings of African music collected by UNESCO, each video depicts a short story inspired from ancestral African tales. Broadcasted many times in Africa by ethnologist and movie-maker Jean Roch, they encountered great success and were unanimously praised. Lost until 2007, these movies were restored with the help of Cneai (Centre National Edition Art Image).

Yona Friedman first studied architecture at the University of Technology and Economics in Budapest, then at the Technion of Haïfa, Israël, where he worked as an architect from 1949 to 1957. Since his early projects on housing, he tried to step away from the responsibility for designing the projects by delegating it to their future inhabitants, a procedure he calls « self-planning ». In 1953, in response to postwar demographic problems and the challenges of the reconstruction period, he started to conceive spatial structures on stilts based on « mobile architecture »'s principles (1958): 1) to touch the ground in a minimum area; 2) to be demountable and movable; 3) to be transformable at will by inhabitants. These structures with indeterminate characteristics enable him to develop the principles of the « spatial city », a highly innovative urban organization based on a nomadic way of life.

Yona Friedman's projects have included the College Bergson in Angers (FR); the Museum for Simple Technology in Madras (IN), for which he received the Scroll of Honour for Habitat from the UN; and other projects for which he received the Architecture Award of the Berlin Academy, the Grand Prize for design of the Prime Minister of Japan, etc. Since very early, he was also invited to teach at different universities such as Harvard, Columbia, MIT, Princeton and Berkeley.

He is also the author of numerous books (including comics and didactic books for Unesco), among them Realisable Utopias, a book in which he exposes his main lines of thinking and architectural production. His publications and teaching have had a notable influence on many architects from the seventies to the present day, especially those who have worked on projects of an experimental nature, such as Archigram, transforming together buildings and lifestyles related thereto.

Highly considered since many years in the field of contemporary art, Yona Friedman is known today not only for an incredibly rich corpus of drawings, films, all kind of representations in plan, in section or in elevation, but also for his models marked by special artistic touches (forms of intent, circulation, projection ratios, sculptural and volumetric qualities, etc.) and an aesthetic of remarkable mobility. Along his entire life, his ideas led him beyond architecture, adhering to principles based on the requirement of individual freedom and responsible use of the environment.

His work has been exhibited on significant worldwide art events such as the Venice Biennale (2003, 2005, 2009) and the Shanghai Biennale in 2004, among others. Important international museums have consecrated major exhibitions to his work, the latest of which took place in 2015 at the Power Station Museum of Art in Shanghai. The MAXXI - Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo in Rome (IT) will be dedicating a new solo show to Yona Friedman as from June 23ww under the title « Mobile Architecture ».