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Liquid architecture and deconstructivist philosophy: a conversation with Diagraf, Ewrz and Wiklow

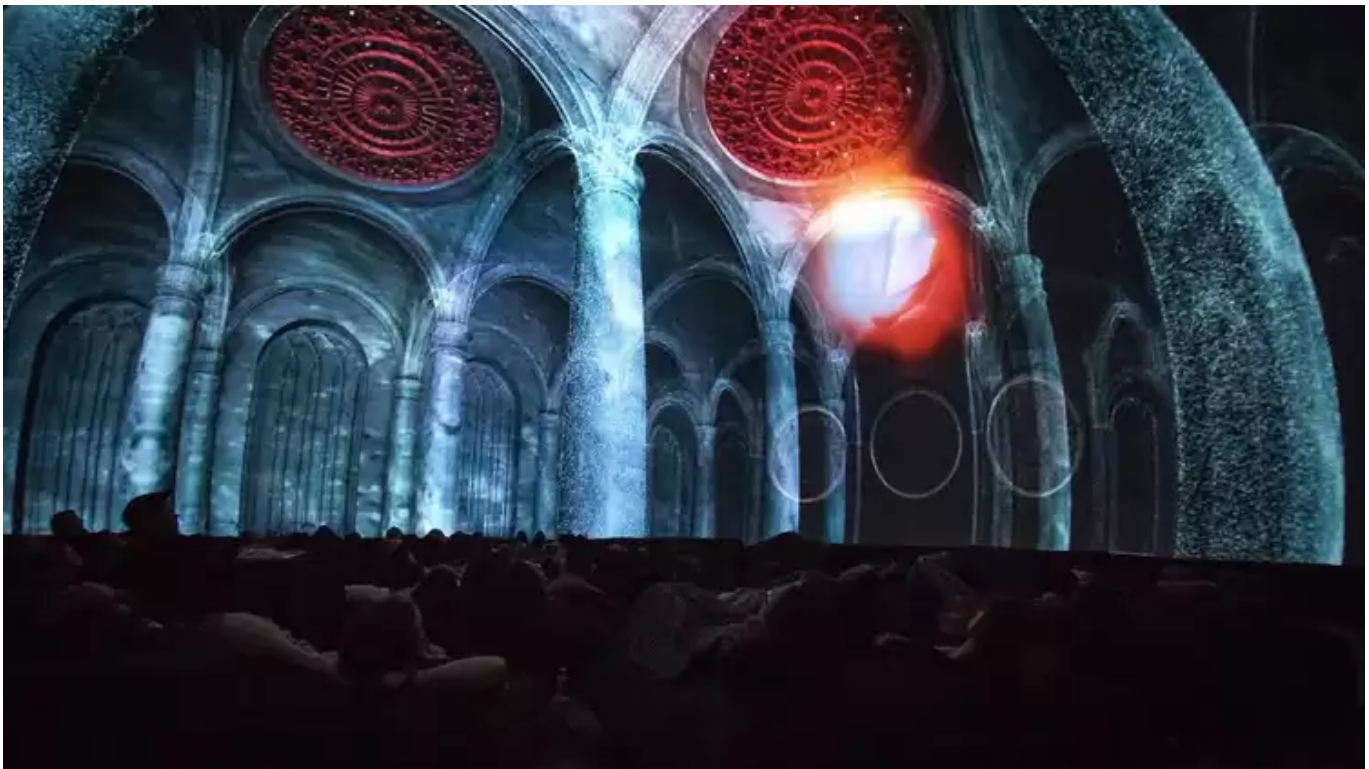**We talk with the wizards of audiovisual construction about their latest project for MUTEK 2017.**

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**Avs Knudsen**
nov. 21 2017, 3:00 pm

Diagraf, Ewrx & Wiklow will present their new Liquid Architecture project at MUTEK.MX 2017. Without a doubt, we can not wait for these audiovisual

In a conversation that goes from philosophical concepts to organic-technological interaction processes, Patrick Tudeau (Diagraf) and Mike Dean (Wiklow) share a bit of the background of Liquid Architecture.

How did you design Liquid Architecture?

Patrick Trudeau: Liquid Architecture was the product of a series of discussions between Mike Dean and me. We have presented together in the past, including a successful collaboration at Mutek Montreal in 2015. We wanted to continue our collaboration by carrying out projects of a more exploratory and conceptual nature, as well as to create content for immersive environments. The conceptual framework and the title of this project originated in the writings of the theoretician Marcos Novak, who wrote 'Liquid Architecture in Cyberspace'. We were also inspired by the concept of the 'Theory of Assemblies' originated in the writings of Deleuze & Guattari and extended by Manuel DeLanda. This led us to create tools and systems where the elements are always in changing arrangements, fluid and transient,
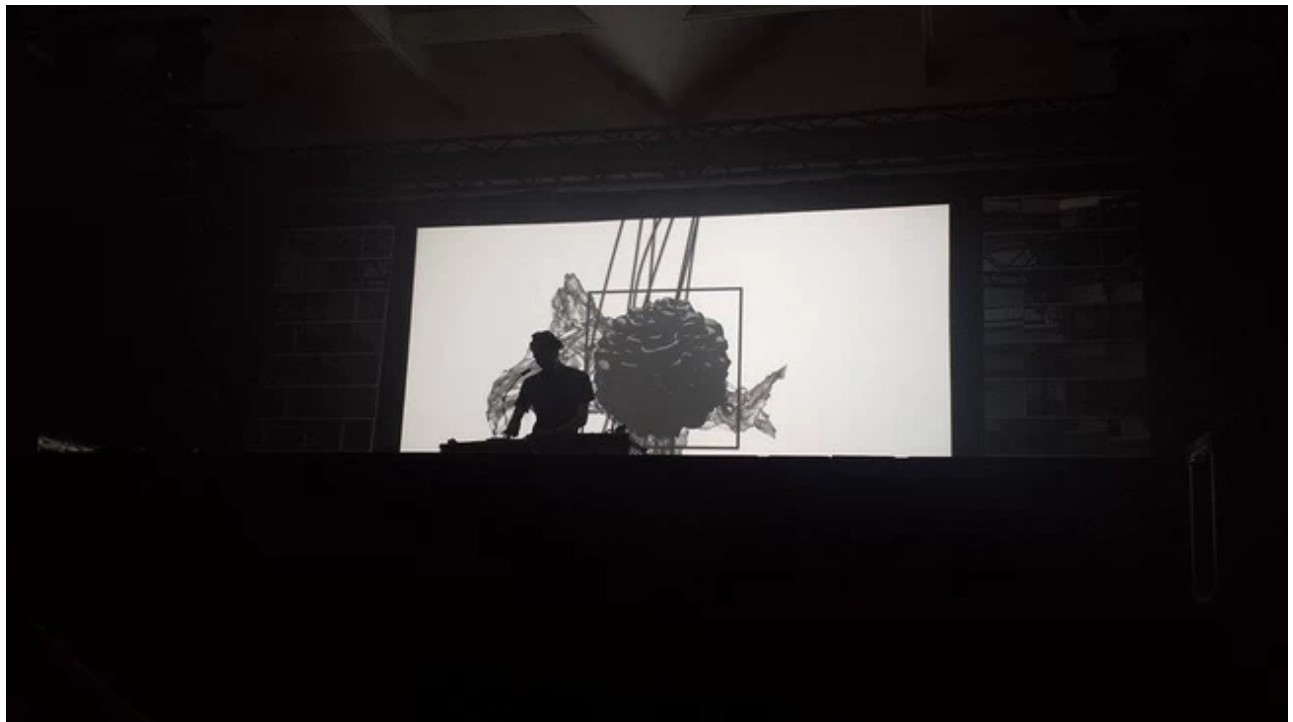
Mike Dean: I love the idea that each ear is like a fingerprint. It allows each individual to have a unique experience of sound and its presence in space. In the same way, working in any environment allows you to add a distant color, such as a signature of the specific place. Then, moving through a space changes this perception of sound again, depending on where we discover the interactions of reflections. Then, due to space, we have to be able to rediscover what is in a sound, what is in an experience.

It is interesting to put this in the context of architecture, which is intrinsically spatial. We can experience the structure very differently depending on the viewing position or a particular perspective. And, in addition, an experience is always affected by aspects of phenomenology. What does an individual contribute to the space that colors his experience?

Working with the subtleties of perception is an important aspect of our work. During the creative process, we like to work within the space whenever possible. This allows happy accidents, interesting moments of discovery. In terms of sound, the positions where phase cancellations occur are particularly interesting. I am fascinated by the appearance of phantom frequencies and difference tones. I work to highlight these whenever possible.

For me, the experience of sound is always spatial, and this allows the repeated discovery of unexpected moments.

What is the relationship between the organic and the technological?

Patrick Trudeau: It's a relationship that I find deeply interesting. Organic processes that use technology can often lead to surprising and unexpected results, such as unforeseen errors of replication or glitch, which constantly push the limits and horizons of art forms based on technology.

In many of my projects, aesthetics is based on the juxtaposition of the organic and the synthetic. I have a personal fascination with the technological

In addition, our science and technology often provide insights and revelations in systems that exhibit an organic, almost realistic dynamic, such as chaos theory, dynamic systems, and machine learning. In the coming years, these will play an increasingly important role in the creative process. Already, the distinctions between the organic and the technological vanish when confronted with the apparently organic forms and landscapes found in computer generated fractal images. These are often a great reminiscence of the natural world. A lot of my work is an attempt to explore this gray area.

How does the collaboration work during presentations?

Patrick Trudeau: Reflecting the previous question, very organically. Our preparation process usually involves individual work, followed by intense sessions of connection, experimentation and exchanges. We are often inspired by what the other does, and this informs and drives our process into new and

During the performances, I control the video and Mike controls the audio. I should also mention that many of the tools used for visual manipulation and deconstruction are designed and coded by our third partner, Ehsan Rezaie (Ewerx). The links are created between our two systems, designed primarily for the audio to generate, activate and manipulate certain visual elements. During immersive performances, these links also serve to shape the spatialization of sound and images in 3D space.

Much is left to human control, allowing us to act in a very improvised way, and allowing us to alter the direction of the performance depending on the context. This has allowed us to act in more environmental / contemplative ways, or under different circumstances, to create more dynamic, rhythmic and percussion-driven representations. In short, it is an audiovisual language that we are developing together, which is in a constant state of flux and evolution.

You can check the event on Facebook, **here** .

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Expériences audiovisuelles sous le dôme avec «Liquid Architecture» et «Hyperform» à la SAT
Deux créations visuelles inédites vous attendent dans la Satosphère

Publié le **6 novembre 2017** par **Léa Coffineau**

Crédit photo : Ariane Kis – Avec EWERX, Diagraf et Wiklow

Alors que la pluie et le froid se sont définitivement installés sur Montréal, la Société des Arts Technologiques (SAT) vous invite à la projection de deux créations numériques dans le confort et la convivialité de son dôme jusqu'au 25 novembre prochain. Présentés à MUTEK en août dernier, Liquid Architecture et Hyperform reviennent dans leur version finale pour une expérience audiovisuelle inédite.

Passer une soirée à la SAT, c'est déjà une expérience en soi. L'institution est continuellement habitée d'esprits créatifs et prolixes, et semble vibrer vingt-quatre heures sur vingt-quatre au rythme des nombreux évènements, animations et ateliers proposés à un public curieux de découvrir ce que nous réservent les nouvelles technologies, du plus néophyte au plus geek. Au troisième niveau de l'établissement, la Satosphère accueille les visiteurs pour un voyage ultra-sensoriel et hors du temps.

En première partie de soirée, le spectateur est invité à s'installer confortablement sur l'un des coussins géants de la Satosphère, de préférence en position allongée, pour mieux profiter du spectacle. Liquid Architecture propose une virée architecturale à travers les dimensions, augmentant et déconstruisant les perceptions et les perspectives.

Là où l'on pourrait être effrayé par l'aspect technique de la proposition, l'expérience nous surprend avec une poésie de lumières sensible et douce. Dans un ciel étoilé scintillant, les lignes se tendent vers l'infini, devenant des branches, des arbres ou un dédale de veines palpitantes. Wiklow, Diagraf et Ewerx déconstruisent notre monde tel que nous le connaissons pour ouvrir notre imaginaire vers de nouveaux cieux.

On se surprend à laisser aller notre esprit dans cet espace sans fin qui s'offre à nous. Il n'est pas question ici de suivre la logique d'un conte ou de se projeter dans une histoire. Au fur et à mesure que l'on s'enfonce dans l'expérience, il devient évident que la technique des scans 3D de monuments historiques utilisée pour produire ce film n'est en aucun cas une fin en soi. Elle est un outil inattendu employé pour créer une nouvelle dramaturgie qui téléporte le spectateur à l'intérieur de lui-même.

On entre en méditation, doucement, sans s'en apercevoir, jusqu'à la réapparition du concret. Les formes connues à l'aspect 3D brut nous font soudain redescendre sur terre et le voyage perd malheureusement de son intérêt.

from **Society for Arts and Technology**

▶ 00:44 ▌▌▌ ⚙ ⠿ *vimeo*
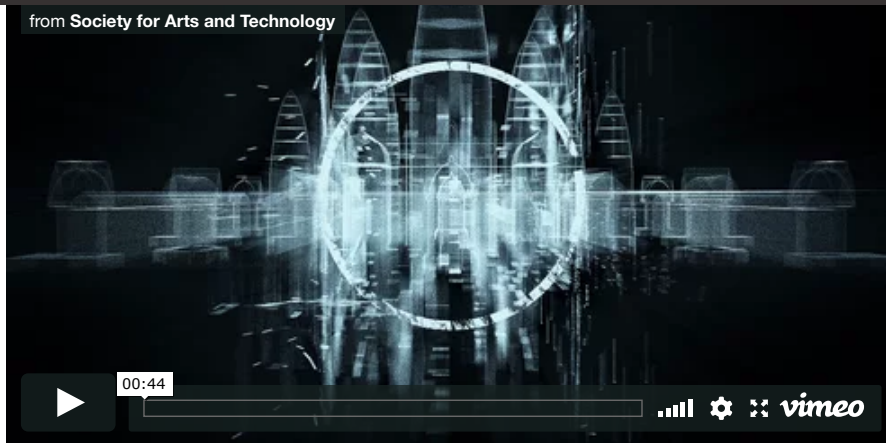
Une seconde projection est également présentée par la SAT, à voir séparément ou couplée à la première. Hyperform est une œuvre déroutante, à la fois rebutante et absolument séduisante. Son démarrage rassemble tous les clichés du grand public sur les films numériques. Une vague bleue et rouge ondule violemment sur fond de basses assourdissantes, rappelant furieusement l'écran d'ambiance de Windows Media Player sous XP.

À la limite du supportable, les premières minutes du film feraient presque fuir. Quand, soudain, la vague se transforme en fumée, les basses se taisent et le voyage peut enfin commencer. L'onde lumineuse tourbillonne délicatement autour d'un trou noir, accompagnée d'une mélodie numérique particulièrement émouvante composée par Max Cooper. À la frontière du film et de la peinture, l'expérience devient métaphysique et même thérapeutique.

Pour peu que l'on soit capable d'un minimum de lâcher-prise, ces deux projections vous inviteront à vous perdre pour mieux vous retrouver.
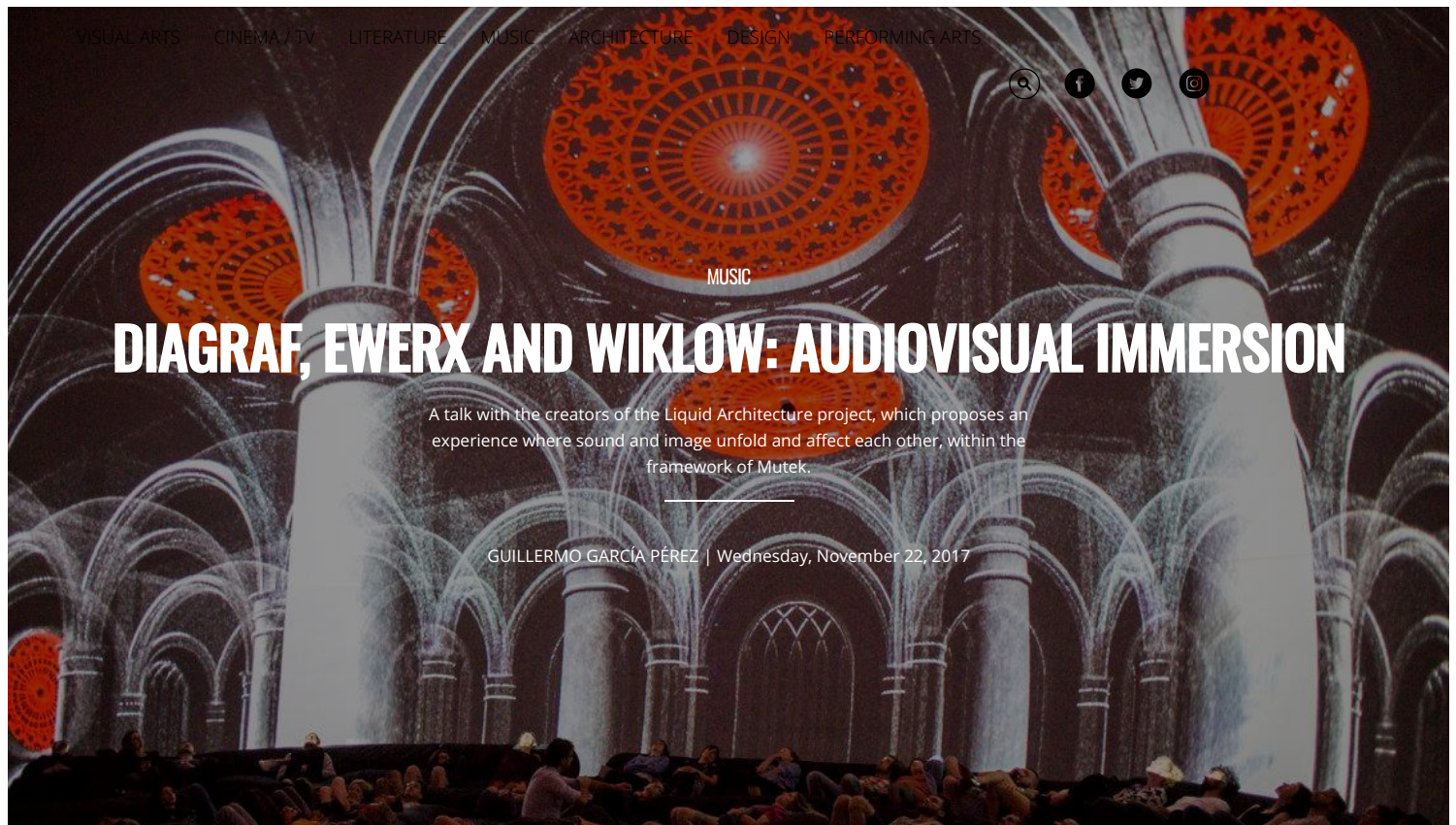

Léa Coffineau
Féroce enflammée

Léa est une passionnée de la scène. Franco-canadienne, elle découvre la danse et le théâtre à Montréal avant de monter sur les planches à Paris et de fonder le blogue culturel La Jaseuse.

L'événement en photos
Par **Ariane Kis** – Avec **EWERX, Diagraf et Wiklow**

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LA TEMPESTAD

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MUSIC

DIAGRAF, EWERX AND WIKLOW: AUDIOVISUAL IMMERSION

A talk with the creators of the Liquid Architecture project, which proposes an experience where sound and image unfold and affect each other, within the framework of Mutek.

GUILLERMO GARCÍA PÉREZ | Wednesday, November 22, 2017

S i the Mutek stands out among the panorama of festivals in the country is because it gives the same level of importance to music (this year's edition includes a prominent poster with people like Squarepusher, Alva Noto, The Orb or Nina Kraviz) that the visual aspect of the presentations. The A / Visions sessions, with presentations in the Digital Dome of the Papalote Museo del Niño and the Blackberry Auditorium, prove it. In the first session, highlights the participation of Diagraf, Ewerx and Wiklow (the artistic names of Patrick Trudeau, Ehsan Rezaie and Michael Dean, respectively) presenting the Liquid Architecture project; with experience in various artistic fields (from film and music to design and programming), his set, more than a simple concert, promises to be an immersive experience, where sound and image unfold and affect each other. Behind his work there is a deep reflection on aesthetic practices, which can be glimpsed in the following conversation, exclusively for *Tempest* .

I have the impression that, in its historical development, electronics has gone from being a rational experience to a corporeal one. If you agree, why do you think it happened? How important is the body to you when constructing aesthetic narratives?

Diagraf: I think a lot of it is due to the possibilities granted by technology. Previously, electronics were more cerebral, cooler, if you want, but now we get to the point where the tools allow us to have an experience that is still cerebral but tends towards the sensitive, even the visceral.

Wiklow: I agree completely. Personally, both visually and audibly I have always been fascinated by perceptual effects. I think that, definitely, there is a deep connection with our physiology and for that reason I try to synchronize it with the frequencies that we use in our work.

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Dome we will develop an immersive type of work, in a way that physically transport you to another space, to the point where you can have vertigo sensations and feel, effectively, that you move in space.

It is true, on the other hand, that we are surrounded, as never before, with image technologies. What role do you assume in this scenario? That of a sum, that of a recombination, that of a subtraction?

D: Yes, it is true that we are saturated, but I think that this scenario provides us with more ideas, more material. More things to find new limits, and to be able to transcend them also. The images can be oppressive, but it is a situation that I relate to the field of advertising, for example. I believe that we operate in the opposite direction, trying to take those images and subvert them.

Ewerx: And at the same time create an imagery that you would not normally see. New visual experiences that generate a novelty.

Ewerx, Wiklow and Diagraf © Mutek

His work, both visually and sonorously, is mostly abstract. But is it possible to develop narrative structures from it? Are you looking to do it?

D: Yes, totally. There is a certain amount of referential elements in our work. It is never so clear what kind of narrative it is, that is, it is not an obvious story, but it is definitely present, even if it comes from something abstract.

W: The method of telling a story is not necessarily traditional. In a movie, for example, you can see the development of the characters. The references used in our pieces make history built by the person who experiences it, so there can be as many stories as there are people involved.

D: I think that in this case, the concept of travel is useful: where are you at the beginning of the piece and where are you when you finish. With luck, you are in another place, you have been transformed. Even if the story does not make sense, even if the narrative elements are not clear.

Patrick, once, to describe your work as VJ, you wrote, and I quote: "We are filmmakers

D: I think that description is still useful. When you make a movie you start, with basic elements, a construction process. With the images you draw up plans, with the plans you create scenes and those scenes become the film. The work of the VJ, with the manipulation of live images, takes those elements and separates them again, deconstructing them to their smallest aspects, to reconstruct them and reshape them in new configurations.

W: Another issue we are talking about frequently is the use of *leitmotivs* that, in the context of a live presentation, sometimes you do not even know that they will work as such. Sometimes figures are used, for example, a red circle that contrasts strongly with the rest of the visual development, and although it does not appear all the time, it ends up rounding the experience. All subsequent forms, in relation to that first form, begin to make sense.

E: I find that deconstructive element mentioned by Patrick in the generative tools [*generative tools*]. That is, you are not only reacting to music and trying to create a narrative for it, but also reacting to generative systems that are not completely determined, but are having a particular behavior.

Beyond the cliché, which was given above all in the culture of the rave, the concert as a ritual and the DJ as a kind of preacher. Are there ritual aspects that interest them to develop through their work?

W: For me it is related to feeling an experience *out* of time. Leave your normal attention to the world. In these sets, sometimes I feel that I am no longer inside my head, and I am only at the moment, focused on what is happening. So yes, for me it becomes a ritual that takes you to a place that is meditative, at a certain point. That: being out of time.

D: The idea of the ritual is to put you in an alternative mental state, in a way that allows you, in some way, to transcend your present conditions. It's something we try to do, I do not know how successful we are, but we try to: generate another reality.

W: Something that has always fascinated me is the use of repetition of rhythms, to break the perception of time. I like to think that in *techno* music there is a moment in which time stops, that does not advance or recede.

I think that, perhaps, electronic culture has exaggerated in presenting itself as the bearer of the technology of the future because, first, it uses technology that is very widespread in the present and also a lot that technological progress already qualifies as antiquated. How do they relate to these notions of time?

D: It's a very complex issue. If we think about the history of cinema, for example, there is a point where all the elements that were once very innovative stopped being the central theme and became secondary. I think we are at a point where electronic tools are moving towards that secondary space, towards the bottom, and we are transcending them in pursuit of creation.

E: Technology is always progressing; the way to use it too, but in an alternative way. Someone, today, can find an innovative way to use cassettes, for example. There are two different paths: the time line of available technology and the one constructed by users under its own rules.

future. Although it is rooted in the present, look to the future, and I feel that it makes it optimistic. Because if I'm interested in building a future world, that presupposes that we have a future, that we're not going to destroy ourselves. That is to say, the traditions do not lose their value, they reincorporate and change pointing to the future.

[Liquid Architecture Teaser](#) from [Diagraf](#) on [Vimeo](#) .

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By the time the festival began in earnest I was already in awe. The first location was a planetarium at the Papalote children's museum, a large space that houses a huge IMAX screen; it sits on the outskirts of Bosque de Chapultepec, Mexico City's equivalent of New York's Central Park and one of the largest urban parks in the Western Hemisphere. Inside the dome, A/Visions 1 had already begun: Max Cooper and Maotik's "Hyperform" was first, offering aesthetically pretty visual trickery tacked to a suite of music that could best be described as a journey through the greatest hits of IDM covered by a rudimentary AI. As the set moved on, the scale remained impressive even as the glitchy, Autechre-influenced beats began to blur into tech-house. Diagraf, Ewerx & Wiklow's "Liquid Architecture" was more engrossing, with glitchy soundscapes – somewhere between Pole's distorted dub and Burial's storm-drenched shuffle – providing the backbone for epic, morphing cityscapes that amazed the audience.

Alva Noto

Before embarking on next evening's activities, I was impressed by the care the MUTEK.MX staff took to ensure festival-goers had the best possible experience in Mexico City. One of the biggest draws for tourists is the array of impressive cuisine – each day street vendors fill the city's sidewalks, while some of the world's finest restaurants are dotted nearby. To offer each visitor a proper taste of the city, a "Gastronomic Route" was provided by MUTEK that highlighted not only the best taco spots, food trucks and sit-down eateries, but also provided essential local knowledge: where you might need reservations and what's the tipping etiquette, for example. These little