

How to make a work of art invisible

Ahead of two shows, the artist Edgar Sarin explains why he does not want you to see his work

INTERVIEW



Edgar Sarin: the art of concealment

Berlin/Paris. This month, the French artist Edgar Sarin opens two shows in Europe that deal with invisibility and performance. In Berlin, Sarin will unearth 13 coffers buried months earlier in the Grunewald forest and carry them to the Konrad Fischer Galerie, where he will present them during the opening. At the Collège des Bernardins in Paris, he will install a group of sculptures, some also recently unearthed, that inspire weekly closed-door sessions with a group of participants for the duration of the show. We spoke to Sarin, who won the 2016 Révélations Emerige prize, about why he hides his work.

The Art Newspaper: What will the Konrad Fischer show look like?

Edgar Sarin: The exhibition is organised around a central work, *The Thirteen Jewels Hierarchically Ordered*. This work consists of 13 wooden coffers, inside each of which I have made something. Last October, I went to Berlin to bury them in a forest about 20 kilometres from the gallery. The morning of the opening, I'll go to this forest, dig them out and spend the day carrying them to the gallery, where I will hang them on the wall, still closed, during the opening.

"It is hard for me to find spiritual relief in just showing something"

When the show ends, the work will disappear again, and the buyer will get only a wooden sculpture. The sculpture will have to be traded back for the 13 coffers in precisely 100 years. My work is about creating things and then shielding them from one's eyes for a certain amount of time, so there is a latent possibility between having the work and seeing it. It is hard for me to find spiritual relief in just showing something, which is why I use exhibitions as a medium.

How will this compare to your show at the Collège des Bernardins in Paris?

The show is titled *A Midnight That the Gaze Never Disturbs*. First, I will arrange a group of sculptures in the gallery, which will be open to the public. Then we will have a group of the people come each week at the same hour for 16 weeks straight. We will enclose ourselves for 45

minutes to exercise situations I call the "midnights". These will be closed to the public and kept as secret for the duration of the show.

But the audience will recognise your presence after the show reopens?

Yes. It's the energy that remains. My work is that the audience will notice traces of co-operation. This idea came to me when I realised that earth, from

a human perspective, was an enclosed system with only finite resources. We should think about this more often, considering the major crises our generation is going through.

Pac Pobric

• *Thirteen Jewels Hierarchically Ordered*, Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin, 3 March-13 April

• *A Midnight That the Gaze Never Disturbs*, Collège des Bernardins, Paris, 31 March-20 July



Edgar Sarin's *Unearthed Bird 33* (2017), which will be in his Collège des Bernardins exhibition, was buried by the artist and will be unearthed in time for the show