

## FIELDWORKS

In 2002 while travelling and filming in Patagonia for a film, I stumble upon an abandon swimming pool, in a derelict old resort in Chilean Patagonia, not so far from Punta Arenas. I got hypnotized by its presence, its mood and its sublime echo, an echo of a glorious past, of a lost civilization, it was like travelling to a future place where past memories invoke sadness, a feeling of abandoness, but ultimately what I was searching in Patagonia, a sense of the end of the world, a traces or clues of a possible future. Only today 20 years after I understand the dimension and reason of this necessity, I feel, like most of my generation born in the 70`s, have had to cope with a morbid fascination for our own ruins, the remains and failures of present and past civilizations, I believe like the romantics before, our gaze to nature is always filled with our sense of guilt, the same feeling I always have while filming in any location around the world, or any distant culture, always my effort to document is parallel to the demise of what I am filming. I am by defect part of the machinery that is endangering it.

While in Patagonia, I started recording with the camera and using a little radio I had as a microphone, connected I was able to hear radio communication transmissions of the scattered population, it was like tuning the ether in search of voices, or like Marconi`s dream, remains of the voices from the past. In search of some life, while recording inside the pool, I felt like the radio frequencies where an extended dimension of what I was feeling, I sensed that its sonic presence was being captured by those shortwave frequencies , I was in awe, trying to cope myself with this discovery, a personal and intimate discovery that was to drive most of the fieldworks I have done ever since.

When I started filming those fieldworks, I felt that those pieces, should follow a different path than the films, a much more free reign, a sort of liberated film free from narration or storylines, they were meant to be sort of clear and concise as encyclopedia definitions, without the need to confront with a story; the place, its presence, was to become the story. I thought of them as my way of understanding the world, my environment; in some ways it was like creating my own audiovisual encyclopedia. Long ago a critic called this pieces **ambient videoworks**, in a way I like this nomination as it recalls in a way the epiphany of Brian Eno ambient music, escaping the inscrutable necessities of music attention and narratives allowing for creating a sort of music furniture as Satie defined his music in 1917, in a way images have had a slavery to storylines to plot or narratives, for me this pieces want to escape from that they want to recreate a sort of atmospheric feeling more like a sublime painting or romantic painting did in last century before the advancement of photography. For some reasons when I started to make this pieces, it came to mind to call them **concrete video**, as an homage to concrete music, it was an intuitive way to put it, but today I see that both ambient and concrete could be the perfect limits of the semantics that surround the works.

With a touch of structural sensitivities, fieldworks are my way of grasping coding my experience of the world.

At that time I was asking myself and I still do today how can you capture a place its essence with film, how can you film an experience of being in a precise moment in time in a precise location, which technology which data you need to gather, to fully comprehend a place. Fieldworks were always that for me a way to document place with all its possible dimensions, it was an architectural question, a pure space perception debate, but also in my way I was trying to capture myself in that space feeling and seeing as well as listening. Ultimately Fieldworks are this, perceptual moments captured through image and sound, what is like to be inside a lighthouse, or how it is to be in a barn in Patagonia, or what is an aurora borealis, or even what is a white night or a midnight sun. In a way a sort of personal encyclopedia of those moments that are essential to me, that have questioned my understanding of the world, that have created my own archive of the world, I still remember with wonder the day that I visited the Albert Kahn *Archives de la planete*, it was exactly that feeling, to watch those films and understand the value through time. A feeling of a world cataloguing itself, a document archive of a world continuously disappearing, a deep respect and passion for diversity for the amazement of being in the world, embedded in the riches of its cultures and its everyday pulse.

Film and even more digital video is a very fragile medium, how all this fieldworks will survive is still to be discovered, generation through generation, I hope these instruments and documents will become a sort of testimony of these places or even better the ghosts that were inhabiting them.

Most of those fieldworks are devoid of human presence, Only the echo or the ghosts seem to live in those landscapes, populated by RF and other sonic phenomena captured in location and sometimes reworked as it would be an alchemical composition of the place, these landscapes were coming back to live in its surrogate version in its artistically/artificial version, hopefully with the ability of retelling its tale, of bringing back those memories of the place, those sensations, maybe an encapsulated version but also a reality in the works.

in 2002 I wrote:

*"Fieldworks are a series of films, a part of an ongoing experiment with ambiental video and radio frequencies, a sort of landscape video notes I have been developing since 2000, with these works I try to capture the atmospheric qualities of a landscape through visual and audio field recordings captured on location. Using image and sound as a sort of spatial instrument, I am interested in short waves signals and VLF, their atmospheric qualities and sound, capturing the radio waves in each of the landscape I portray, allows me to grasp another dimension of it. A sort of enhanced perception. I am interested also in the asynchronous randomness of the relation between soundtrack and film. I see this work as a sort of post structural film, where documentary and experimental film manners meet."*