



CELEBRATING THE SOUND MAKER, JAEGER-LECOULTRE UNVEILS A NEWLY COMMISSIONED WORK BY RENOWNED SWISS ARTIST, ZIMOUN

As a highlight of The Sound Maker, Jaeger-LeCoultre's year-long celebration of the art of sound in watchmaking, the Maison will present a new 'sound sculpture' installation commissioned by Jaeger-LeCoultre from the Swiss contemporary artist, Zimoun. The new work of art will be exhibited around the world, following its debut in China this fall.

In choosing to expand its creative and cultural universe through this art commission, Jaeger-LeCoultre enlarges the dialogue that exists between horology and art. In keeping with The Sound Maker theme, the Maison has chosen to collaborate with an artist whose main body of work examines and celebrates the nature of sound.

In his work, Zimoun employs simple raw materials and repurposed industrial components to create complex and evocative tapestries of sound and movement that redefine traditional ideas of sculpture, space and time. Discussing his approach, the artist explains: "I'm interested in sound as an architectonic element to create space, but also in sound which somehow inhabits a room and interacts with it. I work with three-dimensional sound structures, with spatial experiences and the exploration of sound, material and space – and perception."

Zimoun deliberately chooses materials that are not necessarily intended just to look attractive, basing his choices on their dynamics, behaviour and resonance properties. In this sense, there are clear parallels with the way the watchmakers of Jaeger-LeCoultre work with metal, and this adds a deeper dimension to the collaboration with Zimoun. "We are delighted to work with Zimoun," says Catherine Rénier, Chief Executive Officer of Jaeger-LeCoultre. "Like our Manufacture, he transforms raw materials with precision. His expertise and creativity with metal was a perfect fit with our artisans, who are always looking for the ideal balance between technicality and beauty."

Like the artisans who construct chiming watch movements, Zimoun creates graceful and poetic works that combine simplicity with complexity and playfulness with elegance. In both cases, fascination lies in the immediacy of understanding the sound-making process through visible and concrete elements, while at the same time the complexity of the total system defies attempts to dissect it.



'The Sound Maker' Installation

1944 prepared dc-motors, mdf panels 72 x 72 cm, metal discs Ø 8cm, 2020

To encourage freedom of interpretation, Zimoun gives his works very technical titles that just describe the materials used – the elements that the viewer sees anyway. The work is based on small dc-motors, fine wires, MDF panels and almost 2,000 very thin metal discs. These discs are, in fact, watchmaking components obtained from the Manufacture Jaeger-LeCoultre to serve as sound sources. Connected to the motors by wires, the discs rotate against the MDF panels in a similar way to a coin falling to the ground. This friction produces a highly complex sound structure and the movement creates a flickering surface.

The artist explains: "Since all the wires holding the metal discs are bent by hand, each is slightly different, causing the metal discs to rotate at different angles or speeds. This creates a complex individuality that affects both the visual and acoustic properties of the work. The sound becomes very complex and is in constant change in its microstructures. Similar to the sound of a river, which never sounds exactly the same again. Visually, a similar complexity arises...resulting in a kind of flickering, similar to the effect we know from water surfaces."

In the viewer's mind, this complex and evocative tapestry of sound and movement can be connected with natural phenomena – the sounds of nature and the reflection of sunlight on water – immersing visitors in the natural soundscape of the valley and evoking the deep connections between the watchmakers of Jaeger-LeCoultre and their surroundings.

ABOUT ZIMOUN

Zimoun (born 1977) is a Swiss self-taught artist best known for his 'sound sculptures', sound architectures and installation art. Exploring mechanical rhythm and flow in programmed systems, his emotionally engaging installations incorporate commonplace raw materials and industrial objects, articulating a tension between the orderly patterns of Modernism and the chaotic forces of life. In addition to being recognised by numerous residencies and grants, Zimoun's work has been presented in exhibitions at prestigious international museums such as the Museum of Contemporary Art MAC Santiago de Chile; Nam June Paik Art Museum Seoul; Kuandu Museum Taipei; Art Museum Reina Sofia Madrid; Ringling Museum of Art Florida; Mumbai City Museum; National Art Museum Beijing; LAC Museum Lugano; Seoul Museum of Art; Museum MIS São Paulo; Muxin Art Museum Wuzhen; Kunsthalle Bern; Taipei Fine Arts Museum; Le Centquatre Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art Busan; Museum of Fine Arts MBAL; Kunstmuseum Bern; Museum Collection Lambert Avignon; among others. The artist lives and works in Bern, Switzerland.



ABOUT THE SOUND MAKER

In 2020, Jaeger-LeCoultre celebrates THE SOUND MAKER, paying homage to the sounds of nature that form a backdrop to daily life in the Vallée de Joux, and to its great legacy of chiming timepieces, expressing a century and a half of accumulated expertise in fresh new ways. During the 150 years since the Manufacture developed its first minute repeater in 1870, chiming watches have been a particular forte, with 200 calibres demonstrating its mastery of all forms, from relatively simple alarms to highly complex sonneries and repeaters. In parallel, the Manufacture's engineers and designers have patented numerous innovations that redefine the benchmark for acoustic quality and beauty.

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