

*At the far end of the source, there is the echo.*

*The echo is the image of your image.*

*The voice of your voice.*

*The echo is heavy water that darkens with time.\**

Entitled Eco (Spanish for Echo), José Maria Sicilia's exhibition at Galerie Chantal Crousel, the sixth since 1983, marks a decisive turning point in the artist's oeuvre. He explores here new techniques and media leading to a deep introspection on one's self and the world. In the main exhibition space, six bronze "doors" resound with four marble "doors."

Two paintings delineate the space: Suspendido de su canto ("Suspended from his song"), paintings in graphite on plaster.

In the glass-roof room, works on paper decline sheep skins, flower petals — as many textures and carpets as those that echo the Paradise.

#### ECO — Mirrors

*The dimensions of the bronze are the dimensions of a door. The text has been acid-bitten like in an etching. It was then lightly worked, slightly erased as when one writes on a sandy beach and the waves washing upon the shore efface the traces little by little. I wanted the viewer to read through this text. The sentences are everyday questions. The mirror absorbs us. It becomes the Vanity of our own image.*

#### CECILIA—Constellations

Cecilia — the name that José Maria Sicilia gives to the doors in white marble — speaks of the universe, the reflection of a reflection. Each slab, hand-sculpted, contains an image of the sky corresponding to a month of the year.

*The land of the sky in the land of the water. The stars are — also — islands.*

*All living water is dying water.*

*This universe is an echo. It speaks of the mother.*

## SUSPENDIDO DE SU CANTO — Bird songs

A geometry of octagons which lie in octagons. Different songs inhabit this octagony. They are represented by sonograms, genuine imprints of sounds given out by birds, allowing them to be visualized.

The octagon is a representation of the bird, a symbol of the soul, of rebirth, in both the Occidental and Oriental worlds (see Ruqbihân Baku, Ibn Sinâ, carpets of the 16th-17th century Western Anatolia, Holbein carpets, certain prayer mats).

*It is a manner of making the space go backwards in front of me.*

*The bird's song is an instant, only an instant — not the past, not the future. This instant is plenitude. One knows that one exists. It feeds us and at the same time it eats us. It is the consciousness of our solitude. The bird's song that has just disappeared is more dead than death. The duration of a bird's song is made of instants with no duration. This duration is life.*

*The bird song makes time stand still. It expresses ecstasy. It gives us back the lost unity.*

*This time does not flow — it gushes forth.*

\*The sentences in italics are José Maria Sicilia's.

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