

Schumacher's brief experience as an architect gave him an interest in diagrams, notes and drawings, as well as models, material samples and more or less sophisticated printing and graphic techniques. But what has also actively enriched his art is the abstract side of architecture, particularly "speculative execution" based on methods of production assisted, if not entirely generated, by computers, and, more specifically, artificial intelligence software that creates its own computing architecture and programmatic structures, evolving in an autonomous manner with regard to the amounts and types of data involved.

Rebirth of the Bath House is to be taken at face value, given that it comprises, among other things, a response to a call for tenders to renovate a bath house in New York. Schumacher was assisted by young architect Andrea Macias-Yanez, to whom he delegated part of the design, the formal aspects and the technical execution of this sculptures and images, e.g. the 3D simulations, models and flexograph printing.

This is a new chapter in Schumacher's career, following on from his collaborations with the New York Design studio Diller Scofidio + Renfro, in 2012, and the Miami architect John Keenan, in 2013. A billiard table—this being a recurring element in Schumacher's repertoire – is physically present. It is at once a found object, a sculpture and a showcase for plans and elevations. It also acts as an anchor for the second part of the exhibitions, which is taking place simultaneously at the Académie de Billard de Lyon. And it relates to what the artist has been progressively revealing in a non-material way, over a period of several months, at: <http://worse.tumblr.com/>.

The billiard table is a visual motif that structures some of the 3D simulations, in which it provides a planted roof for the bath house. It also denotes the ubiquity of games and betting. It encapsulates the levity, uncertainty and doubt that are the inevitable scenaristic counterparts of the capitalist economy and its architectural projections. For better or worse, architecture nowadays has to be "speculative" and "executive". And this is underpinned by the chaotic, if not apocalyptic, cold, disembodied aesthetic of the installation.

When talking about his work, Schumacher places himself at a certain critical distance from a type of jargon that is shared by computer programming, communications infrastructure and contemporary architecture, with the cloud, the hub, skip logic and lazy evaluation, in other words a vocabulary that embraces our environment, both real and virtual. He applies the concept of speculative execution, as understood by architects and computer people, to the appropriation of a programmatic universe in which one of the major issues is data management. The computerized memorization, storage and extractions of data do not just dominate architecture, but also the financial industry and,

indeed, everything from the world of mass production to that of high-end handicrafts. Schumacher's models, 3D simulations and flexographic printing also demonstrate that speculative execution, paradoxically, links up with the wilder side of utopian architecture from the 1960s and '70s, which, albeit for ideologically opposite reasons brought together imagination, anticipation, hybridization and modulation ad infinitum as a response to permanent information flows.

One of the big economic concerns of the 21st century is unquestionably the treatment of computerized data, whether as part of architectural or town-planning projects, or in communications infrastructure. And it is not without humor that Schumacher approaches this large-scale dematerialization, establishing a parallel between his bath house and the new, experimental method of cooling computers by immersing them in a bath of mineral oil, which is currently being tested in data centers on the outskirts of cities, but has also been adopted by certain geeks who dunk their PCs in oil-filled aquariums. Like bodies in a sauna or a spa, the huge buildings that house data management centers can get overheated. And the duplication, or indeed substitution, of individuals by digital versions of themselves is echoed in the inverse phenomenon, namely the fetishization of the body, the care that is lavished on it, and its commercialization. With Rebirth of the Bath House, bodies have ceded space to cable trays in a "hyperrealist" 1:1 representation that supplies a canopy for this whimsical, futuristic place of relaxation, this "data center bath house".

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