

Inspired by recollections of a motorway bridge from his own childhood, internationally acclaimed artist Mark Leckey takes over the x-room venue with a total installation produced especially for SMK.

British artist Mark Leckey grew up outside Liverpool in England. With the exhibition he invites you to join him in returning to a very distinctive place from his own childhood: the ramps underneath the M53 motorway bridge in Ellesmere Port.

For the x-room venue he has recreated the bridge and ramps where he and his friends hung out in the early 1970s.

“Many of my works have their wellspring in things and experiences from my childhood and youth that still haunt me. The motorway bridge is one of those things that have settled in my memory. That is why I have recreated it. It is as if memories of this kind take on too much importance, too much room. They become too overwhelming”, says Leckey.

According to Leckey, all his works are a kind of exorcism – the urge to create a work arises when something becomes too toxic and must be expelled and eradicated.

One of the distinctive traits of Mark Leckey’s artistic practice concerns his use of found objects and found footage, i.e. existing objects, images, sound and video footage. Speaking about the M53 Bridge, the British artist says:

“I’d like museumgoers to have a psychedelic experience when they step into the room. I’d like the light, the scale of the bridge and the music to transport them to a different state of mind,” Mark Leckey explains, speaking about a major transformation of the x-room.

The total installation involves not only a giant phantom bridge awash with sodium lights, but also peeling posters and a new audio piece embedding the entire installation in an immersive soundscape.

The sound piece is reminiscent of a cross between a lecture, a radio broadcast, an autobiographical narrative and a DJ set. It is made out of audio samples that span four decades, live recordings, historical facts and Leckey’s own reflections and thoughts.

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