



Julien Salaud - String Sculptures at Bon Repos

Rob I'm here in the er Abbaye de Bon Repos avec Julien Salaud who is an installation artist. Hello Julien. We are in a very small room here, very dark. What's happening here, can you explain?

Julien Yes, er we are installing a big artwork which doesn't have a name for the moment, but I can describe it to you. It's made of er, well I think we can say thousands of nails er that are directly on the walls and between those nails er we are putting some white cotton string that is under tension, and we are using it er to draw things on the walls like the virgin, the skull of a deer, a deer whose antlers are becoming branches, what do we have so the moon a plant that is name is Mandragore in French; fishes, fairies, flowers etc.

Rob It's a very active place, you've got people working with you here.

Julien Yes we are er working with 2 groups of people, some are, how to do you say *bénévoles* in English?

Rob Volunteers.

Julien Ah yeah volunteers, who are working with the Abbaye, and here we have 9 students coming from Lorient, they are studying Fine Arts.

Rob And they're working hard for you?

Julien Yes, they're very noisy!

Rob And I should explain, this is a very tall, narrow room with a huge piece of scaffolding, with several people up on the scaffolding nailing.....

Julien Nailing the walls, yes. I forgot to explain one thing at the end all room will be lightened with er black light.

Rob So it shines, so the white....

Julien Yes, if you want maybe I can er show you, give me 3 seconds.

Rob Wow!

Julien Something like that.

Rob It's er very effective, it glows

Julien Yes, actually the er the cotton string, the only thing reacting with the black light, so it's like shining – in the dark.

Rob Oh

Julien Ya, it's changing the space

Rob Can you tell me something about where this idea comes from? Have you done this kind of thing before?

Julien Yes, I'm working on this kind of installation since 2012. And it's a story about the stars. It's like every nail is a star in the sky and if you connect them together it gives something like a constellation

Rob It reminds me of the kind of constructions you make as a child with, with thread and nails

Julien Exactly, I've been learning this technique with my Grandma when I was a child, actually. But it was not so big.

Rob Well here it's very big. Eventually, when you've finished, will it take up all of this room?

Julien Yes, the artwork will be destroyed at the end of the exhibition in December

Rob So it's going to be on view all summer long?

Julien Yes

Rob I can see that you're interested in, well the stars, for one thing, but nature as well?

Julien It's my main theme. I guess, and at the moment I'm developing a new serie of artworks about ecology. My idea is that you take care of what you love. So my goal is to restore the sentimental links that people have with nature, like animals plants, that although er landscapes, resources and of course, other people.

Rob People are part of nature?

Julien Yes, we are definitely, we shouldn't forget this.

Rob Well, it's great. Thank you very much for giving us time, Mr Salaud, I hope you continue to have a happy team working for you

Julien Yes, I hope so. Vous et content? Dit que vous et content! Yes, my slaves are trying to communicate.

Rob Julien. Thank you very much indeed for your time

Julien You're welcome.

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