

Jon interviewing Sandra Membre at La Roche Jagu

Jon: I'm with Sandra, again, who's a guide at La Roche Jagu, and I suspect the owner, but she's a guide. Now there have been plenty of whacky exhibitions at this castle, haven't there over the last ten years at least? But this is probably one of the most whacky of all, with its combination of insects and music. How do they kind of join up?

Sandra: Well, it's all to do with what Darwin said about, if a beetle was as big as a horse or a dog, then we would probably take more interest in the beetle and in insects in general. So, it stems from there. They've collected different instruments, collected through *SFR*, different instruments that are basically to be thrown away, or they're faulty, and with these instruments they've created a beetle as big as a horse ...

Jon: They're very scaled-up beetles, aren't they, to approximate the size of a horse, as you say ...

Sandra: Absolutely, yes, yes, yes.

Jon: ... to raise their profile, maybe, in the public consciousness?

Sandra: Indeed, absolutely. Here we're in the second room and as you can see there are drums, to resemble the Earth. And on each side of the drum there's a new insect that has been made, and that's supposed to say that basically the insects are the most important part of life on Earth, basically. In numbers, they er ...

Jon: And in function as well. They pollinate plants, for example.

Sandra: Exactly, exactly. So basically the insects are large when the scale of the world is small, that they are very important.

Jon: And now we're in the first room.

Sandra: Here you have a forest of trumpets. It's basically wind.

Jon: And the idea behind that is, er, is it trying to approximate the sound that the insects make?

Sandra: No. Well, the trumpets are there. Basically, they've been ... they're being shown off. They trumpets have been used to create insects. And some have been used just for our pleasure, to walk in and look at. I don't know how you found it when you walked up the stairs and you've got all these trumpets hanging down staring at you?

Jon: Visually, it's very striking, isn't it?

Sandra: Yes.



Jon: It's like I think last year's exhibition, or was it two years back, when somebody magnified their photographs of beetles using very specialist equipment, and they were gigantic.

Sandra: Yes.

Jon: So there's probably a slight correlation between this exhibition and that one? But this is concentrating more on sound, isn't it?

Sandra: Yes, yeah, yeah. Possibly, yes.

Jon: Right, let's move into the third room. Okay, what do we see in this room?

Sandra: Okay, this is actually a room that's dedicated to the artist, because they came three times to the castle, a week each time, and they actually worked here. So people could, visitors could walk in that room and speak to the artist and ask questions, and at the same time they'd be working and very happy to answer questions, explain what they were doing. During that time people would bring instruments that they don't use, and so they'd give new instruments to the artists, and they could ask all sorts of different questions while they're working.

Jon: So the artist that put this exhibition together ... is it he or she?

Sandra: It was Vincent Gadrassé and Mathieu Desailly – the two main artists.

Jon: So do they specialise in this kind of art? Musical art ... installations?

Sandra: No. It's David, the musician called Davide, he's the one who does music. Mathieu is a graphic designer, and they work full-time. They do have a proper job, and this is just an extra job that they do. And Mathieu is like ... he does all the manual work basically. And so they came ... they came for three weeks in all over the summer.

Jon: Before the visitors were allowed in?

Sandra: No. During. Yeah.

Jon: Are we actually ... did they incorporate any of the visitors' musical gifts for this exhibition?

Sandra: I can't be sure, because they did come in May and so they might have collected some instruments that they would use, would have used.

Jon: Anyway, thank you very much. Nice talking to you again. What can we expect next year? Do you know?

Sandra: We're not allowed to say.

Jon: Do you know?



Sandra: I do know.

Jon: Is it going to be good?

Sandra: It's going to be brilliant. As usual.

Jon: It's always good. Sandra, thank you very much.

Sandra: It's my pleasure. Bye, Jon.