

SOUND ART AT BEALL

TITLE: WALL OF SOUND

TYPE: SOUND ART EXHIBITION

WHERE: BEALL CENTER

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While movies, television shows and music are all fine and dandy, sometimes you need a healthy dose of visual art to satisfy your artistic cravings. The Claire Trevor School of the Arts always provides exactly that. Playing host to Swiss artist Zimoun, the Beall Center for Art and Technology opened its doors Thursday evening, inviting students, faculty and the general public to immerse themselves in a visual and auditory experience.

Known for both his sound sculptures and architecture, Zimoun is an established artist from Switzerland whose claim to fame can be seen in his solo shows, which have premiered at artistic venues such as Galerie Denise René in France and the Contemporary Art Museum MNAC in Romania. UC Irvine is one of the few locations in the U.S. lucky enough to display Zimoun's talent.

"I personally picked him to feature," David Familian, the Beall Center's artistic director, said, "and, with the help of student volunteers, assembled the exhibit, which took about one week."

As you walk in, you are greeted by a compilation of Zimoun's work, in the form of clips from his exhibitions around Europe. Utilizing mundane objects that range from fans to plastic wrap to wood, Zimoun's simple art is fascinating and aesthetically pleasing. After finally wrenching your eyes away from this presentation and making your way into the remainder of the exhibition, you get the full experience of his work.

At first glance, one is overcome with sensory overload. With boxes piled to the ceiling and a buzzing sound permeating throughout the entire center, it is a daunting yet exciting sight to behold. It is impressive that the exhibition took only one week to assemble, a fact that fourth-year studio art major Allie Ihm was able to shed



COURTESY OF ZIMOUN

Zimoun's unique artistic abilities are highlighted in this cardboard box maze, which had its motors attached by a large group of UCI students.

some light on.

"A bunch of us students, from Claire Trevor as well as outside the school, volunteered to help with the process," Ihm explained. "We worked around four to eight hour days, attaching motors to the boxes in an effort to prepare for our grand opening." The Beall Center was packed with about 375 cardboard boxes arranged into a maze.

These were no ordinary boxes, however. Adopting a low-tech device to create this unique art, Zimoun combines cork balls attached to DC motors and boxes. The cork balls, pounding against the boxes at varying speeds, intervals and angles, with the help of the motor, produce a deep, pounding sound that resonates throughout the exhibition space. As you walk through the labyrinth of boxes, the constant humming and vibrating builds, and can be felt both behind and inside you.

"The purpose of this art is to cause the individual to develop an appreciation for sound," Familian said. "You don't just experience it

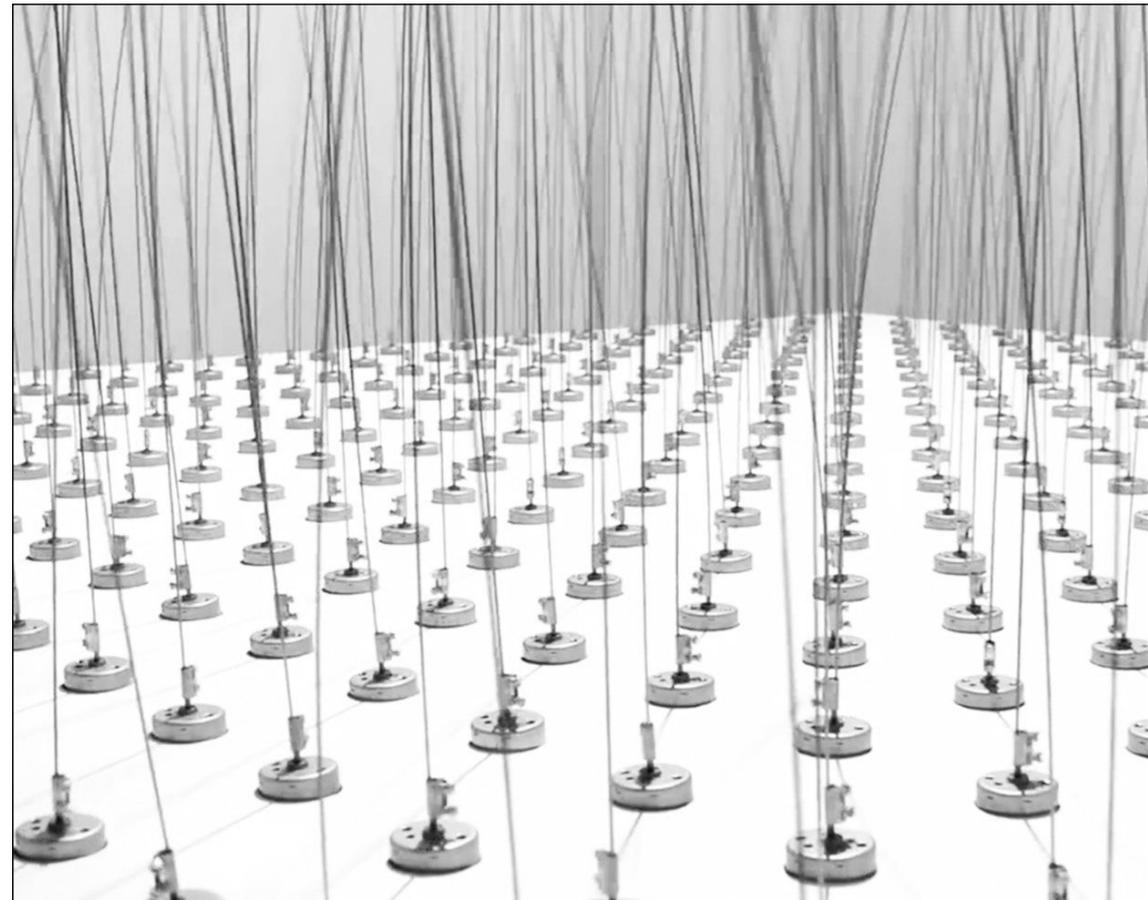
with your eyes, but also with your ears and your body."

The purpose of keeping the visual aspect of the art basic and subtle is to allow the person to take in all the auditory effects and be free from distractions. The rigid and structured format of the art itself creates this desired effect and is Zimoun's signature.

What is even more fascinating about the concept of Zimoun's art is the fact that, if more boxes are added, the sound does not get louder but merely richer in tone.

"The name of the exhibition is derived from Phil Spector, a sound engineer, who used this music production technique for background singers in the 60s and 70s", he said. "As you walk through the exhibit, you should experience the sound following behind you."

A unique collection of engaging and captivating artwork, Zimoun's "Wall of Sound" is an exciting exhibition displaying out-of-the-box thinking and ingenuity, an experience all should see and hear.



COURTESY OF ZIMOUN

Zimoun's "Wall of Sound" exhibit will be on display until May 3rd this year, with a Family Day on April 12th.