Luigi Archetti: NULL

Free Events

Bates Mill Photographic Studio

Luigi Archetti (Switzerland, 1955)
NULL (2010-15)

Parts 1-4: 2pm - 6pm
Parts 5-7: 9pm - midnight

The music of NULL describes our experience waiting, pausing, anticipating. To us, the act of not doing something, and merely expecting it, is as good as nothing.

In this five-year project, sound designer Luigi Archetti made a series of sound recordings that serve as a metaphor for this sensation. Think of elevators, or train platforms, or empty offices—places where a murky near-silence permeates everything. With its greyscale drones and static sound, NULL invites us to notice the waiting room worlds we spend our days in.

With NULL, Archetti attempted to capture and foreground the sounds we disassociate from. Over seven distinct records, he created heavily-processed guitar works that have the tone of these un-listened noises. They have none of the qualities we would usually give to music; they have 'no melody, rhythm, structure', and they ultimately relate to nothing, offering no distinguish a soundtrack to their surroundings.

Without a purpose to come, a sound to follow, NULL becomes its own event, its complete stillness impossible to ignore. As Archetti points out, NULL is a senseless and displacing experience. In his view, there's no place that it belongs to; 'the sounds do not provide any reference whatsoever to a possible location'.

Archetti's sparse approach to making music — no extra instrumentation or recording makes up the textures of this record, all made with guitars — makes NULL wholly unique, a journey unto itself. At hcmf// 2019, we invite you to sink into one of this century's most monumental feats of sound design.

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