

Testing the waters: Troika's new exhibition of illusion arrives at Bogota's NC-arte

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The site specific exhibition questions what we think trustworthy by having the illusion of 11 streams of water, dripping from the ceiling in unexpected flows

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Much contemporary art (though perhaps all art, always) has trust issues. It asks us to question what we think trustworthy. Take Troika's 'Limits of a Known Territory', a site-specific installation currently on display at NC-arte in Bogotá.

INFORMATION

'Limits of a Known Territory' is at NC-arte, Bogotá until 5 September

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The piece is essentially a flooded 200 square metre gallery, scattered with stepping stones. It also echoes with the sound of 11 streams of water, dripping from the ceiling. Except these streams do not behave as you would expect. Some are stalled in space, frozen in time, some run faster than the gravitation-set norm, some more slowly. Some streams even head north.

The illusion, the three-piece art collective explain, is achieved using a series of lights set in the ceiling that flicker at speeds unnoticed by the human eye, similar to the shuttering of the cinema projector. And just as a film can appear to stall or run in reverse if its frame rate and the projector's shutter speed are not properly synched, so the water will do the same here. The piece is, as Troika's Eva Rucki says, in the 'tradition of expanded cinema'. And the effect is of a glitch in the known universe.

'Limits of a Known Territory' is, Rucki explains, an intriguing mix of 'art, metaphysics and science'; all useful tools for asking big questions. 'We are interested in systems and models that we, as humans, set up to create order, sense, purpose and stability.'

'These systems can be religious, scientific or whatever, but people often mistake these models for reality. We're fascinated by how these models become the status quo; the ultimate truth, even though they are just models that we set up to eliminate uncertainty. The water droplets invite us to reconsider the assumptions we make about the continuous nature of our universe.'

She adds, 'it's about creating disruption that leads to re-evaluation. What we think we see is influenced by what we believe we know. So if we step back and question the certainty of this knowledge, we might be able to see more, and differently.'

Unfortunately, time is not standing still for Troika; they are currently busy working on two exhibitions opening at the ZKM and Lehmbruck Museums in Germany this autumn, as well as a new public art installation in Cambridge.