

Selected Quotes
from Ernesto Pujol performance class conversations

Silence is not the absence of sound; silence is the absence of distractions.

Everyone and everything assigns us a body. Silence gives you a body. (Time gives you a body.) Can we be the body of silence? And can we gift the body of silence to others.

There is a right silence and a wrong silence. One is about punishment and the other one is about clarity.

We are not entertainers; we are walkers.

Collectivity, our collectivity, should not result in a loss of individuality. Remarkable individuals are the fabric of the collective.

Oneness with time; oneness with place; oneness with architecture, oneness with people.

Everything we do is counterclockwise, retracing time, undoing time; dismantling time, undoing collective and personal history; undoing memories.

We are not afraid of placing people in a zone of healthy discomfort, of not-knowing. That is the ground for building, for beginning to know.

We are nothing but the city on the hill. We are not dancing. We are not acting. There is a visual language, but there are unhurried choices. We are simply taking the stuff of our daily lives and calling it art, turning it into art: the way we wait, the way we walk, the way we stop, a breadth, a subtle imperceptible gesture. It is a terrifying thing to do; it is a very simple thing to do. We are generating an experience that is not rehearsed, nor to be repeated.

Ascent and descent; descent and ascent. A gigantic Jacob's ladder.

Do not give in to apologizing for the fact that "nothing happens." It would be like apologizing for the seasons, for the arch of the night. Of course, at an unseen level everything happens, if you surrender and experience the purity of time, the details of place, the culture of waiting; your deeper self.

The night is both a mantle and a well.

If you are not trained in emptying your mind, in achieving no-mind, consider the mind; plan the mind. What do you do with your mind for 12 hours of silence?

Listen to your body; from now on, please listen to your body. There is no failure other than in not listening to your body.

Silence and solitude are a human right; reflection is a human right.

Manifesting the original purity of the passage of time in nature.

Trust is the foundation and the building block of public art.

During the performance, our positions of formal stillness evidence our oneness with the architecture, our integration into place. They form the bones, the skeleton of the body of the performance. Our great flow, on the other hand, evidences the metabolism of the city, our social contract, the blood flow of the body of the performance.

Feel free to touch the architecture (a wall, a column), like when you place your hand on a chest trying to listen for a heartbeat. But consider the gesture. It is not a game. It is about listening through the hand.

The entire performance consists of a common set of very simple clear rules, an austere visual language, but it is left to the individual to make choices. It is the difference between a prison and a monastery: the first is a place of punishment, the second is a place of freedom; both within walls. They can be the walls of a fortress or the walls of a deep well.

Do not be worried if this system takes a while to work. The performance is 12 hours long. Let it settle into itself, let it find its form, giving things time to work out, like peeling an onion.

The performer is not the destiny of our attention, but a sign pointing to landscape, or some issue.

A durational performance based on walking and stillness does not have a narrative arch with a dramatic climactic peak and post-climactic drop. "Nothing happens" in this performance. It is about a body walking nowhere. But as the body walks up and down, around and around, the place gets deeper. The field becomes a well. The horizontality becomes a verticality, an altitude, a height, and an abyss. If you surrender to this repetition in place, the place opens up, outside of you, inside of you. You open up.