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Can you explain the concept behind the Counter Culture Room? How will it relate to Project Cybersyn? Why did you call it 'Counter Culture'?

flscl

When we talk about counterculture we understand a sort of restart of our culture, but not destroying the past but recognizing it as layer where we have the chance to look into another path. In other words, counterculture means a restart point, thus, Cybersyn project was an extraordinary experience that attempted consciously or unconsciously a new socio-economics system, showing us a window to something utopic but real. Allende's vision wanted to transform the way to give governance to people, meaning that they wanted a counterculture revolution at the end. Plus, if you consider that Chile was a real utopia these days and our historical context is full of precariousness, the real issue was that they were creating a world avant-garde project but from an extremely insular scenario, which is a huge lesson at the end.

Thus, the main idea of this staging is to provide the understanding of this mythological project from the experience of the historical context and the operation room in itself, and how the context's information was transformed into digital data, or in current words: from bits to atoms. Mainly, the narrative line will explain how this project is one of the most relevant concrete worldwide experiences that change the understanding of our world, changing our vision from the mechanical world (Newton) to the digital world (Einstein).

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In practical terms, what will visitors see and do in the Counter Culture Room?

flscl

Basically, we want to communicate three conceptual levels: explain the history behind the project, to show the social contrast where the project was developed and express its contribution to transform the way that we understand the world these days as we said before.

At the same time, our idea is to provide an experience, the room is quite small, so we are trying to use different channels to create a deeper ambient, actually we create a soundtrack, a documentary and we are using an inherited photography catalogue to express all this contextual variables. It's not only about the famous operations room; it's about the meaning and the experience.

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How is Allende's Chile viewed today? Is it romanticized as a lost utopia, or a failed one?

flscl

Allende is still a controversial figure for Chile's society. Practicable the same socio-political polarization is currently present, thus, for some people were a great dream and for others represent a sort of nightmare. According to us, the most relevant characteristic of his personality was the way that introduce a concrete political vision, you can agree or not, but that is something that nowadays is practicable impossible to see in any politics. This element is crucial because when you create a vision, you need design as a strategically tool to reach it, to understand it and to live it at the end. In other words, when you have a vision you need to be really creative to get it, otherwise you can not be even close to innovate within the social complexity, and that is why currently is really hard to find a minimum level within politics, they are only building a route for their race for power, not for their represented people.

Allende was the last political icon in Chile for sure.

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The original project, which is described as a network that would 'unite workers with the authorities' could be read as Orwellian in terms of the potential of the program to monitor people. How far will you explore this idea in terms of modern day technology?

flscl

A few months ago, we read in an UK newspaper a note about Cybersyn that literally defined this project as "sinister". We understand that western culture is really influenced by television, Hollywood and particularly by the whole North American culture. It's really hard to understand within this culture that somebody else that were cohabiting with power were actually thinking in others, so as a consequence we create explanations filled with fear, doubts and conspiracy.

These people were working really hard to find an answer to real problems only. They tried to use technology and science knowledge to understand how to hell survive to an extremely isolated country, poor, economical locked by the States and the ex URSS, a huge Chilean brain drain and of course and intense socio-political environment immersed into a strong vision: give power to the people. Thus, instead to think that they were trying to control people, they were actually trying to integrate people, which is the opposite. Certainly if Cybersyn had worked, you have a new tool to do something good or bad, it's always depends of who is behind the knowledge. Nowadays you can see easily who is behind this type of knowledge, but back of these days they were just trying to answer a hard question only. Digital age is giving us a wide range of chances to promote autonomy as Cybersyn wanted to give, but this freedom scenario is fighting against the corporation monetization all the time, and this is really exiting because in theory or even better, potentially we have a huge opportunity today to balance the concentration and inequality using design, creativity and technology, because potentially we have more chances to be connected.