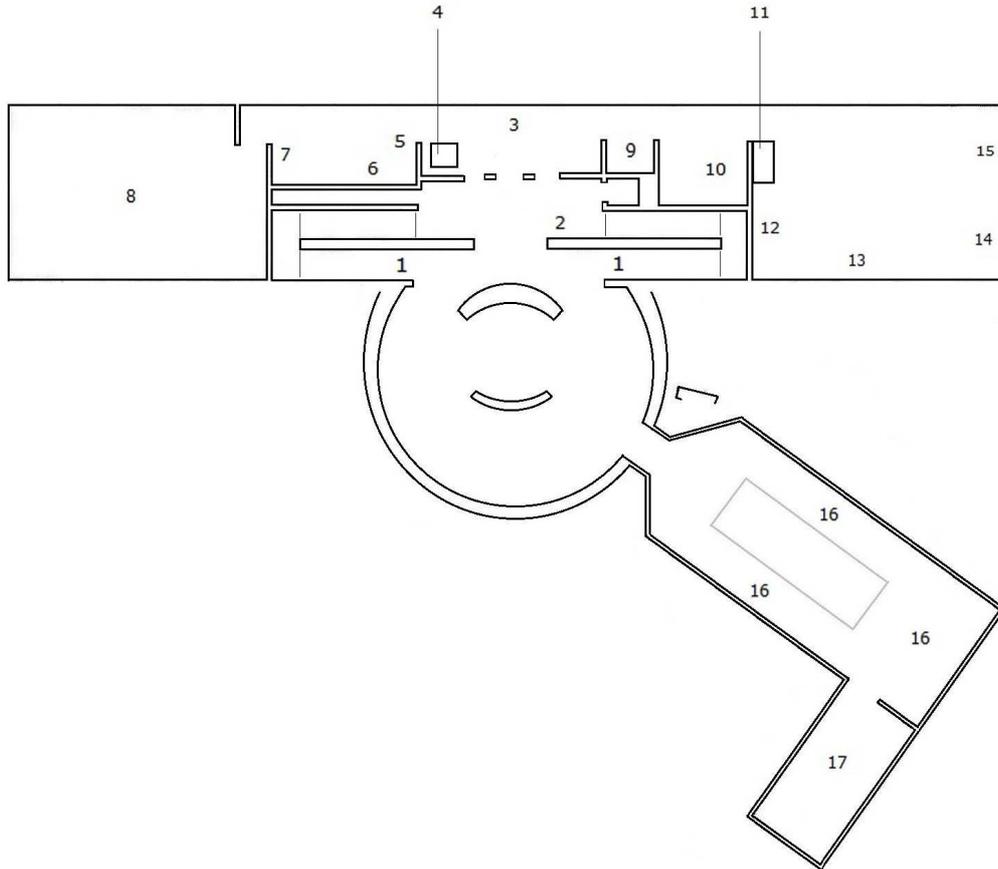


FORMAS BREVES, OUTRAS, 25



8 Charles Sandison. *Living Rooms*

FORMAS BREVES, OUTRAS, 25

Charles Sandison

Haltwhistle, United Kingdom, 1969); lives and works in Tampere, Finland

Living Rooms, 2001

6 channel-video projection

Loan from the artist and Collection Billarant

'Tout est moléculaire dans la pensée. Petites masses. Apparitions, disparitions de petites masses. Masses en perpétuelles associations, dissociations, néo-associations, plus que rapides, quasi instantanées'¹.

In writing about the work of Charles Sandison, the above quote of Henri Michaux's writing comes to mind. It is a fragmented form of writing — a *forme brève*. Sandison's poetic 'writing with light' is achieved through technological means, i. e. computer programmed codes. Word fragments are in movement within a specific space (each of Sandison's work is adapted in situ, here to MARCO's architecture). *Living Rooms* (2001) employs a reduced language, limited to only a few words. Its existentialist vocabulary reads: 'male', 'female', 'food', 'father', 'child', 'old', 'dead'. In a darkened space — an environment in which the viewer is literally immersed in — the projected words move on both walls and ceiling. They form clusters, overlap and pursue one another or drift away in opposing directions: the words act and react to one another. Its result is a complex visual narrative. The space between the words as well as its movement, thus contribute to the story being written. In a play between signifier and signified, the words — understood as building blocks in a chain of associations — take on their own 'artificial life'.

While computer programs simulate nature, here Sandison draws his inspiration for his pieces from varied sources, including literary, philosophical, scientific and political texts. These range from the integral 1911 edition of *Encyclopædia Britannica* to Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*. Despite their textual frames, Sandison's work undermines any fixed meaning:

'Sometimes I try to visualize the journey of a word as it leaves the lips of a speaker and moves towards a listener, or imagine, when standing in a public library, that all the books are quietly talking. The vision that occurs in my mind is that of a vast flock of birds, which seem to move chaotically yet somehow, manage not to collide. Physical space and the void between the words stand in for pronouns and verbs. I use this articulation between meaning, words, and in between spaces as a way to escape the authoritarian power of language'.

Charles Sandison

¹ Henri Michaux, *Les Grandes épreuves de l'esprit et les innombrables petites*, Paris, Gallimard, 1966, p.21-22, cited in Alain Montandon, *Les formes brèves*, Paris, Hachette, 1992, p. 155.