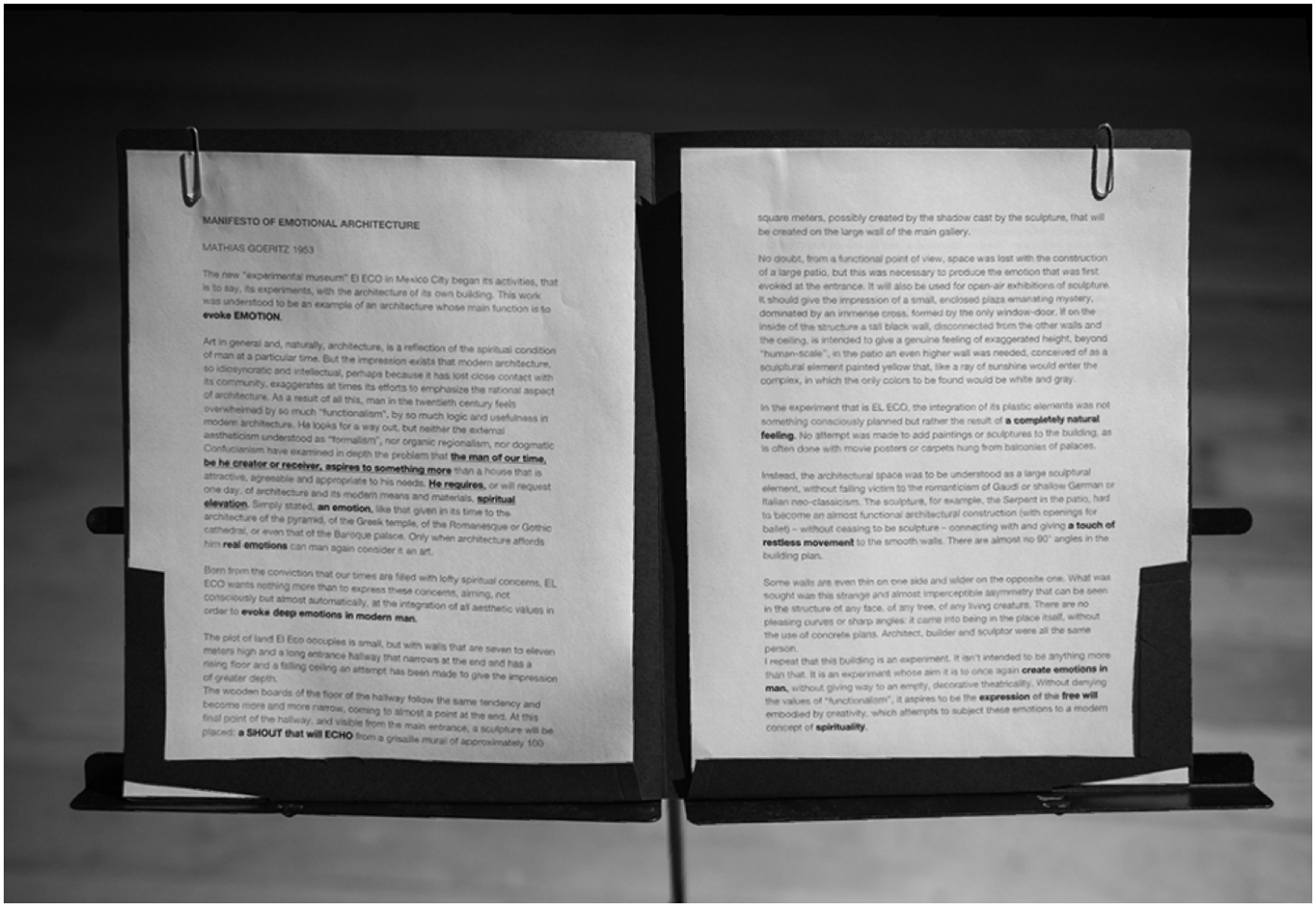
Manifiesto El Eco

Manifiesto is a collaboration with New York based singer Rachel Sharples. The work juxtaposes music and architecture, two forms of expression that employ rhythm, texture, harmony, proportion, and dynamics. Mathias Goeritz, in his 1952 *Manifiesto de la arquitectura emocional* and in his manifesto's built form, *El Eco*, added emotion to this list of architecture's essential characteristics. The artist commissioned composer Will Orzo to incorporate Goeritz' manifesto into a new musical composition that was performed live by Sharples, then played back in El Eco for the duration of the exhibition. *Manifiesto* proposes that cultural manifestos have an emotional and spiritual function similar to that of religious musical forms. The audio track was recorded in New York City and then pressed in an edition of 100 vinyl records for this exhibition.

Documentation:
Performance and exhibition at Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City. Curator: Paula Santoscoy

Manifiesto
Terence Gower and Rachel Sharples, 2015
Live performance (by Rachel Sharples)
Installation: empty museum with audio track on speakers
Vinyl LP, silkscreen on card, produced in Czech Republic

Link: El Eco



MANIFESTO OF EMOTIONAL ARCHITECTURE

MATHIAS GOERITZ 1953

The new "experimental museum" El ECO in Mexico City began its activities, that is to say, its experiments, with the architecture of its own building. This work was understood to be an example of an architecture whose main function is to **evoke EMOTION**.

Art in general and, naturally, architecture, is a reflection of the spiritual condition of man at a particular time. But the impression exists that modern architecture, so idiosyncratic and intellectual, perhaps because it has lost close contact with its community, exaggerates at times its efforts to emphasize the rational aspect of architecture. As a result of all this, man in the twentieth century feels overwhelmed by so much "functionalism", by so much logic and usefulness in modern architecture. He looks for a way out, but neither the external aestheticism understood as "formalism", nor organic regionalism, nor dogmatic Confucianism have examined in depth the problem that **the man of our time, be he creator or receiver, aspires to something more** than a house that is attractive, agreeable and appropriate to his needs. **He requires,** or will request one day, of architecture and its modern means and materials, **spiritual elevation**. Simply stated, **an emotion**, like that given in its time to the architecture of the pyramid, of the Greek temple, of the Romanesque or Gothic cathedral, or even that of the Baroque palace. Only when architecture affords him **real emotions** can man again consider it an art.

Born from the conviction that our times are filled with lofty spiritual concerns, EL ECO wants nothing more than to express these concerns, aiming, not consciously but almost automatically, at the integration of all aesthetic values in order to **evoke deep emotions in modern man**.

The plot of land El Eco occupies is small, but with walls that are seven to eleven meters high and a long entrance hallway that narrows at the end and has a rising floor and a falling ceiling an attempt has been made to give the impression of greater depth.
The wooden boards of the floor of the hallway follow the same tendency and become more and more narrow, coming to almost a point at the end. At this final point of the hallway, and visible from the main entrance, a sculpture will be placed: **a SHOUT that will ECHO** from a grisaille mural of approximately 100 square meters, possibly created by the shadow cast by the sculpture, that will be created on the large wall of the main gallery.

No doubt, from a functional point of view, space was lost with the construction of a large patio, but this was necessary to produce the emotion that was first evoked at the entrance. It will also be used for open-air exhibitions of sculpture. It should give the impression of a small, enclosed plaza emanating mystery, dominated by an immense cross, formed by the only window-door. If on the inside of the structure a tall black wall, disconnected from the other walls and the ceiling, is intended to give a genuine feeling of exaggerated height, beyond "human-scale", in the patio an even higher wall was needed, conceived of as a sculptural element painted yellow that, like a ray of sunshine would enter the complex, in which the only colors to be found would be white and gray.

In the experiment that is EL ECO, the integration of its plastic elements was not something consciously planned but rather the result of **a completely natural feeling.** No attempt was made to add paintings or sculptures to the building, as is often done with movie posters or carpets hung from balconies of palaces.

Instead, the architectural space was to be understood as a large sculptural element, without falling victim to the romanticism of Gaudí or shallow German or Italian neo-classicism. The sculpture, for example, the Serpent in the patio, had to become an almost functional architectural construction (with openings for ballet) – without ceasing to be sculpture – connecting with and giving **a touch of restless movement** to the smooth walls. There are almost no 90° angles in the building plan.

Some walls are even thin on one side and wider on the opposite one. What was sought was this strange and almost imperceptible asymmetry that can be seen in the structure of any face, of any tree, of any living creature. There are no pleasing curves or sharp angles: it came into being in the place itself, without the use of concrete plans. Architect, builder and sculptor were all the same person.
I repeat that this building is an experiment. It isn't intended to be anything more than that. It is an experiment whose aim it is to once again **create emotions in man,** without giving way to an empty, decorative theatricality. Without denying the values of "functionalism", it aspires to be the **expression** of the **free will** embodied by creativity, which attempts to subject these emotions to a modern concept of **spirituality**.