The Engraver of Mathematics, Patrice Jeener

The Engraver of Mathematics –Patrice Jeener– a documentary released in June 2016. Mathematics – abstract and sometimes imaginary – are being drawn and engraved before our eyes under the expert fingers of artist Patrice Jeener.

About the film

La Motte-Chalancon, Drôme provençale, Winter 2016. A black-cloaked figure paces the narrow, crooked streets of the medieval village, as if straight out of a gothic film: muttering mathematical formulae, Patrice Jeener is taking us to his house, where he introduces us to his work – hundreds of engravings representing mathematical objects, concepts and graphs.

Do you know what a double-sheeted hyperboloid looks like? Or a seven-dimensional hypercube? Patrice Jeener, one of the last artist-engravers, draws and engraves such objects in metal, and his art is informed by these mathematical objects. For him, as for mathematicians, human imagination is not bounded by our earthly dimensions, and for 50 years he has been combining the purity of equations with the elegance of copper and chisel.

Through this neglected art of engraving, he gives tangibility to the obscure imaginary world of mathematicians. He gives shape to the most complex equations and, under his chisel, mathematical symbols become the aesthetic expression of an impalpable dimension. These arabesque-like shapes are each a science-fiction dream, a dream of a universe come true, and transport us to the very heart of the mysterious realms of mathematics and artistic creation – two worlds that are ultimately not all that different.

General information

Director: Quentin Lazzarotto
Producer: Institut Henri Poincaré
Scientific advisor: Roger Mansuy
With: Patrice Jeener, artist engraver – Jean-Luc Jeener, playwright – Marie-Georges Lamarque, close friend of Patrice Jeener
Image: David Goudier
Sound: Victor Loeillet
Post-production : Jean Goudier
Original score: Arthur Dairaine Andrianaivo
Running time: 26 minutes

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Scientifics

Nicolas Bergeron, University Pierre-et-Marie-Curie
Olivia Caramello, IHES
Isabelle Gallagher, University Denis-Diderot Paris
Robin Jamet, Palais de la découverte
Alba Malaga, University Paris-Sud
Roger Mansuy, Institut Henri Poincaré
Patrick Massot, Ecole Polytechnique

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TIMETABLE
The institute:
• Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 6pm,
• closed on public holidays.

The museum - Maison Poincaré :
• Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
from 9:30am to 5:30pm,
• Saturday from 10am to 6pm,
• closed on Wednesday and Sunday.

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