

## **THE IMPLUVIUM OF THE DAMNED: A BREATHING SPACE**

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This impluvium of the damned is an artist's space within an architect's space. The digital images that accompany the installation, created by manipulating photographs of the studio, provide an artist's view of the latter. And I hope that the combination will allow for reflection about the space that art can create for itself.

Whilst architecture can clearly be included in the category of "art", its practice necessarily requires a rationalist approach not essential to other art forms; it normally answers practical needs; it is, above all, eminently responsible. The artist's responsibility, in my view, lies, by contrast, to a large extent in his or her irresponsibility. The normal tendency of our minds (also of our society, and of our biological reproduction) would seem to be towards filtering out any element that appears anomalous, that makes no sense within the existing framework, or that is simply of no more or less immediately practical use. I believe that the appearance of the concept of "art" has meant the creation of a space- one of great restriction and relatively great freedom- for irresponsibility, a space within which to contemplate, manipulate, play with the incorrect, the incompatible or incomplete, the anomalous. A lock, through which may sometimes pass new things.

As soon as I saw the impluvium, I thought of Charles Fort and his *Book of the Damned*. I haven't read this book; I probably never shall and this will allow me to imagine it all the better. I do know that it is a compilation of inexplicable (especially at that time) and, above all, outlandish, preposterous phenomena such as rains of frogs in the middle of deserts. Later, as I got to know the studio better, I came particularly to love the various pipes and tubes which, under the gaze of the sympathetic visitor, emancipate themselves from their purely utilitarian fate.