

# The art of sound

Italian artist Maurizio Martinucci marries science and art in his aural experiments. **By Cheah Ui-Hoon**

**W**HILE sound artists have been around for a while, Italian artist Maurizio Martinucci's art practice isn't just about creating sound, but also showing what it looks and feels like. Just before he came here for an arts residency at the National University of Singapore, the artist – who goes by the moniker TeZ – created a “performative environment” where the public get to wear specially designed garments. The wearables were outfitted with various sensing devices that enabled them to interact with the performance space. For about 20 minutes, the visitors felt sound and vibration, thus giving them an other-bodily experience as their vision and feeling became increasingly blurred.

In another one of his projects, TeZ captured how soundwaves affected water and he used laser lights to illuminate that in a dome – giving visitors an immersive environment as they looked up to amorphous, colourful soundwaves.

TeZ isn't the typical artist or scientist, but believes that the two are the same thing. “To me, art is science, and science is art,” he shares. This marriage of art and science might not be new in the West, but could see greater acceptance in Singapore with residencies like this one supported by NUS and ArtScience Museum.

For a short three months here, TeZ gets to network with professors and students across several fields for his project. A graduate of computer music, TeZ is now looking at the possibility of using underwater robots or drones to collect scientific data underwater and then orchestrate their findings in sound and light. He's also trying to find a way to pump sound waves through bioluminescent plankton to create movement, similar to a laser beam.

“I do dive and having seen plankton, I think it's a fascinating sight. And I love the water and I hope to create something only for divers one day,” he says.

Meanwhile, his residency at NUS has also led him to experiment with “electro-culture” – where he's used low-level soundwaves to stimulate plants to see how much they'll grow.

NUS and the ArtScience Museum are partners in the Art/Science Residency programme which first began in 2013. The residency was just re-launched in February this



## GOOD VIBES

TeZ (right), an artist from the 2015 Art/Science Residency Programme, conducted by NUS in partnership with ArtScience Museum, is seen working with NUS students on an electroculture experiment – using low-level soundwaves to stimulate plants to see how much they'll grow. PHOTO: NUS

year, says Dr Margaret Tan, who administers the programme at Tembusu College at NUS. Honor Harger, ArtScience Museum's executive director with the residency programme says they are “promoting the creative processes and research that art and science require – and providing a stage for artists whose work embodies that spirit.” [uihoon@sph.com.sg](mailto:uihoon@sph.com.sg)

**TeZ will perform PV868 at the ArtScience Museum on May 7, at 8pm and 9pm, as part of the ArtScience Late programme. It's a performance based on the use of flickering video light. PV868 is an experimental performance aimed at producing a stimulus which would allow moving visual patterns to emerge directly in the brain of the viewer/listener. Admission is free to the Level 4 Expressions Gallery. Note: This performance is not suitable for people with photogenic or photosensitive epilepsy.**