

LATIFA ECHAKHCH

PRIX MARCEL DUCHAMP 2013

L'AIR DU TEMPS

8 OCTOBER 2014 – 26 JANUARY 2015

Protean, minimal and poetic, Latifa Echakhch's work mingles numerous references that are simultaneously intimate and political, literary and artistic, biographical and historical. Her installations are always conceived in relation to the space where they are exhibiting.

For the Centre Pompidou, the artist has produced a specific installation that continues the line of her exhibitions over the past three years, exploring an idea where circuses and shows become deserted places, ghostly events.

With Espace 315, the artist once more places ideas about the stage, sets and traces at the heart of her approach.

The exhibition, consisting of several sculptural elements, has a strongly

unified feel. The artist transforms the place into a dense, dreamlike place in order to build a scene within it and break up a drama into its component parts.

As they move around, visitors discover different fragments of history, objects that are almost derisory, recollections of childhood drawn from the very depths of memory, then immersed in black ink.

Making play with the other side of the set, the scene as a whole proposes a world open to all kinds of meanings and interpretations.

**Centre
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L'AIR DU TEMPS

What the artist presents here is a landscape that we see straightaway and embrace in a single glance. Then, as we go through it, we discover what it consists of: groups of clouds; objects immersed in Indian ink; hanging wires that might evoke rain; a floor in which the elements are reflected. The clouds are placed on the ground, almost at the same level as the objects. Nothing rises. The play on the reflections of the shining parquet floor increases the sensation of confusion between high and low, earth and sky.

The landscape is seen from two different angles. When we arrive, the clouds are black; when we leave, they are blue. For the artist, the change of viewpoint leads to a change in temporality. Our arrival and our wanderings among the black clouds and objects can be seen as a confrontation with the past, while the return journey among the blue clouds leads us towards futures we can invent and project.

The groups of clouds and wires make up a scene – a set, which never seeks to deceive or create an illusion, but on the contrary, constantly states that it is an artifice.

Meanwhile, the objects belong to the register of history and the endless number of narratives that each visitor can read into this scene. Sought out in second-hand shops or brought back from travels, these objects are linked with the artist's memories and her childhood as a small girl spent by Lake Bourget after leaving Morocco in 1978 when she was three. They include a suitcase (evoking uneasy emigration), the boxes of records left by her father in Morocco, now distorted by the heat, and the bottle of perfume – "L'Air du Temps" by Nina Ricci – filled with black ink, which gives the exhibition its subtitle.

SPACE

"I approached Espace 315 by focusing mainly on its form. It is an extended rectangle; a kind of box which reminded me a little of a "camera obscura", where the image is reversed. In the exhibition, clouds float slightly above the ground, and the shiny floor duplicates this impression of inversion. In a way I sought to draw out/condense a landscape in the venue, in order to play with different planes or strata of interpretation, and different scales. "

"An exhibition is not constructed in the same way as a work. In the end, you can hang a work on its own, and it acquires another set of problems, but when I began to think in terms of an exhibition, I asked myself what kind of landscape. I wanted to show."

THE MINIMUM

"I work according to a certain process of economy: reducing and intensifying each project as much as possible. I sometimes take a lot of roundabout paths before finding a simple, necessary form."

CLOUDS

"These clouds do not have a definitive, precise meaning. They enable a form of condensation. It's about providing one single view of a whole, like the landscape on the shores of the lake where you can see the sky, the water and the shores all reflected onto and within each other. Here there is play between high and low, front and back. A game of inversion, permitting a form of synthesis, which helps to create a dreamlike sensation while drawing visitors' attention to the sculptures."

BLACK

"I use it as a filter. Black evokes both the idea of a period of action that is past and finished, and a whole, filled with the power of future gestures. It creates a sense of grief, of suspension."

OBJECTS

What the ordinary, unrelated objects presented here have in common is that they are obsolete; vehicles of both personal memories and a collective memory.

The perfume bottle illustrates this relationship between the intimate and collective in the object. For the artist, it is a childhood memory – that of a little girl attracted by the promise it contains: to wear this perfume means becoming a woman, an adult. But this fragrance, created in the Fifties, is also a symbol for her parents' generation: that of a period after the war, when people were trying to recover dignity, elegance and stylishness. As the artist says, "it's the perfume you wear after mourning."

Often placed upside down close to groups of clouds, the objects are found as they might be after a dramatic and sudden event that has upset the order of things. When you look closely, you see that the ink partly covering them is not laid on evenly; they bear the visible traces of a gesture.

The artist is equally interested in the object in itself, the emptiness around it, and its relationship with the space and the groups of clouds. Points of light focused on emptiness partly distract our gaze from these objects, encouraging us to see situations.

The black covering these objects unifies them at the same time as accentuating the assertion of their obsolescence. "The objects and materials I use are chosen for their ordinary, recognisable character," says the artist. "They enable me to present easily understandable artistic actions, and to show critical flaws in what lies around us."

POETRY

"I like words and the space of words. But I feel more at ease when I use objects and materials. With words, the intrusion is more direct, more intimate. But if I had not found the means to be an artist, I would have written poetry. (...) I am particularly attached to the political side of artistic action, because the poetry that interests me is the type that deconstructs the palpable. Its approach enables constant, critical new beginnings."

RESISTANCE

"I would like to be able to say that I don't know what I am, or where I come from. Quite honestly, I cannot define myself, but I see far too many people make statements in my place, or statements on my place – that's where I resist. My immigration when I was very young and had no choice, the lack of education in my native country, the language I have forgotten, the vague snatches of memory, the rare images and this very strong foreignness all make things far more complex than a simple mixed culture. I have the impression of having grown up in a great mess – which can sometimes be inspirational – and of having decided not to identify myself. Perhaps to preserve a fundamental area of freedom within me."

THE PRIX MARCEL DUCHAMP

One of several powerful initiatives undertaken to contribute to the international influence of the French scene, the Prix Marcel Duchamp was created in 2000 by the ADIAF (Association for the International Dissemination of French art), which brings together 350 collectors and lovers of contemporary art.

From the outset, this collectors' prize has enjoyed a high-profile partnership with the Centre Pompidou and the Musée National d'Art Moderne. Since its creation, it has acclaimed around 60 artists – winners and contenders – considered the most innovative of their generation.

The international jury consists of experts from within and outside France whose opinions carry weight in the contemporary art world: curators, critics and collectors.

www.adiaf.com

2013 INTERNATIONAL JURY

Bernhard Mendes Bürgi (Switzerland),
Director of the Basel Kunstmuseum

Gilles Fuchs (France),
President of the ADIAF; collector

Jacqueline Matisse-Monnier
(France, United States), artist

Alfred Pacquement (France),
Director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou;
President of the jury

Giovanni Springmeier (Germany),
collector

Poul Erik Tøjner (Denmark),
Director of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen

Sylvie Winckler (France), collector

EXHIBITION

CURATOR

Jean-Pierre Bordaz

PRODUCTION MANAGER

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PRODUCTION



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Latifa Echakhch is represented by various galleries: kamel mennour in Paris, kaufmann repetto in Milan, the Dvir Gallery in Tel Aviv, and the Eva Presenhuber Gallery in Zurich.

PUBLICATION

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INFORMATIONS

01 44 78 12 33

www.centrepompidou.fr

EXHIBITION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

from 8 October 2014 to 26 January 2015

Espace 315, level 1

Every day except Tuesdays from

11.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.

Ticket offices close at 8.00 p.m.

PRICES

**Admission with the
"Museum and Exhibitions" ticket**

€13; reduced price €10

Valid the same day for the Museum, all the exhibitions and the Panorama, with a single admission to each area

Free with the annual Pass and for those under 18

Online purchase and printing

(full price tickets only)

www.centrepompidou.fr/billetterie

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TWITTER

You can find information and content on the exhibition via twitter with the hashtag #Echakhch or by going to <http://www.twitter.com/centrepompidou>

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