2. | I like America, tribute to Jacques Derrida

2007, painted jumping poles, ladders in metal, size may vary.
Exhibition view from Tuileries, FIAC hors Les murs, 2010, Paris.
Courtesy of the artist.

L'intervention publique J'aime l'Amérique, hommage à Jacques Derrida fait surgir un enchevêtrement de barres de saut d'obstacle hippique peintes aux couleurs du drapeau américain, au beau milieu du Jardin des Tuileries fréquenté par les promeneurs.

Employant un matériau récurrent de ses œuvres, à savoir les barres de saut, Mounir Fatmi questionne avec cette installation les rapports des individus à la réalité sous les formes de la nation, de la frontière et de l'identité. Il tente également de définir les relations entre l'art contemporain et le contexte culturel et politique actuel. J'aime l'Amérique est un dispositif aux inspirations multiples, allant des notions philosophiques développées par Jacques Derrida, aux séries peintes des drapeaux américains de Jasper Johns, en passant par les "sculptures sociales" de Joseph de Beuys. En 1974, Joseph de Beuys intitulait en effet sa première performance J'aime l'Amérique et l'Amérique m'aime, durant laquelle il passa trois jours enfermé dans une galerie d'art américaine en compagnie d'un coyote, animal emblématique des indiens d'Amérique.

Hommage à Jacques Derrida, l'installation se veut œuvre de déconstruction : en opérant la transformation du drapeau américain et sa fragmentation, elle s'attache à démonter les concepts de nation et d'identité et observe dans le détail leur mécanisme et leurs effets concrets. Traduisant la problématique en terme d'espaces, elle vient interroger les fondements du réel en expérimentant ses pouvoirs de

The public intervention I Like America, tribute to Jacques Derrida, consists in the sudden appearance of a jumble of horse jumping bars painted in the colors of the American flag in the middle of Paris' Tuileries gardens and its many visitors.

Mounir Fatmi uses here a frequent material in his work, horse jumping bars, and questions with this installation the relation of individuals to reality in the form of the nation, borders and identity. He also tries to define the relations between contemporary art and the current cultural and political context. I Like America is an installation with multiple inspirations ranging from the philosophical notions developed by Jacques Derrida to Jasper Johns' series of paintings of the American flag and Joseph de Beuys' "social sculptures". In 1974, Joseph de Beuys entitled his first performance I Like America and America Likes Me, during which he spent three days locked in an American art gallery with a coyote, an emblematic animal for Native Americans.

A tribute to Jacques Derrida, the installation is a work of deconstruction: by operating the transformation and fragmentation of the American flag, it aims to break down the concepts of nation and identity and observes in detail their mechanisms and concrete effects. Translating these issues spatially, it questions the very foundations of reality by experimenting its power of resistance and mobilizes the viewers' cognitive, intellectual and physical capacities. This piece establishes itself as an obstacle, which in turn is

résistance et mobilise les capacités cognitives, intellectuelles et physiques des spectateurs. L'œuvre d'art se constitue en tant qu'obstacle, lequel se définit à son tour comme une stratégie esthétique élaborée par Mounir Fatmi et s'illustrant à travers plusieurs installations employant divers matériaux.

L'obstacle oblige le spectateur à un arrêt, une pause méditative, et l'invite à imaginer et à élaborer ses propres stratégies de franchissement, de contournement ou dépassement. J'aime l'Amérique appelle ainsi à prendre conscience du pouvoir exercé sur les individus par les idées de nation, de frontière ou de territoire, et à dépasser ces mêmes notions qui ont tendance à se constituer comme des entraves à la différence ou au désir de se déplacer. Le décor familier du Jardin des Tuileries se perçoit à travers une intrication de barres : l'installation, ancrée dans un décor familier du public, vient bouleverser ses habitudes et modifie sa perception du monde et sa manière de le penser et d'y agir en lui proposant une grille de lecture active.

Studio Fatmi, décembre 2010.

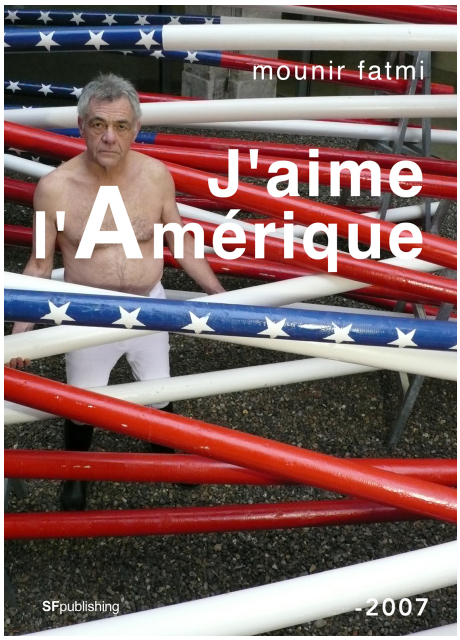
defined as an esthetic strategy elaborated by Mounir Fatmi and developed through several installations using various materials.

The obstacle forces the viewers to stop and take a meditative break, inviting them to imagine and elaborate their own strategies for getting through, around or beyond it. In this way, I Like America is an invitation to become aware of the power exercised on individuals by the ideas of nation, borders or territory and to overcome these very notions that tend to hinder the possibility of difference and the desire to move about freely. The familiar setting of the Tuileries gardens can be seen across an entanglement of bars: the installation, placed in a context the public is familiar with, upsets people’s habits and modifies their perception of the world, the way they conceive it and act in it by proposing an active interpretative framework.

Studio Fatmi, December 2010.

" I Like America is an installation with multiple inspirations ranging from the philosophical notions developed by Jacques Derrida to Jasper Johns’ series of paintings of the American flag and Joseph Beuys’ “social sculptures”. "

Studio Fatmi, December 2010



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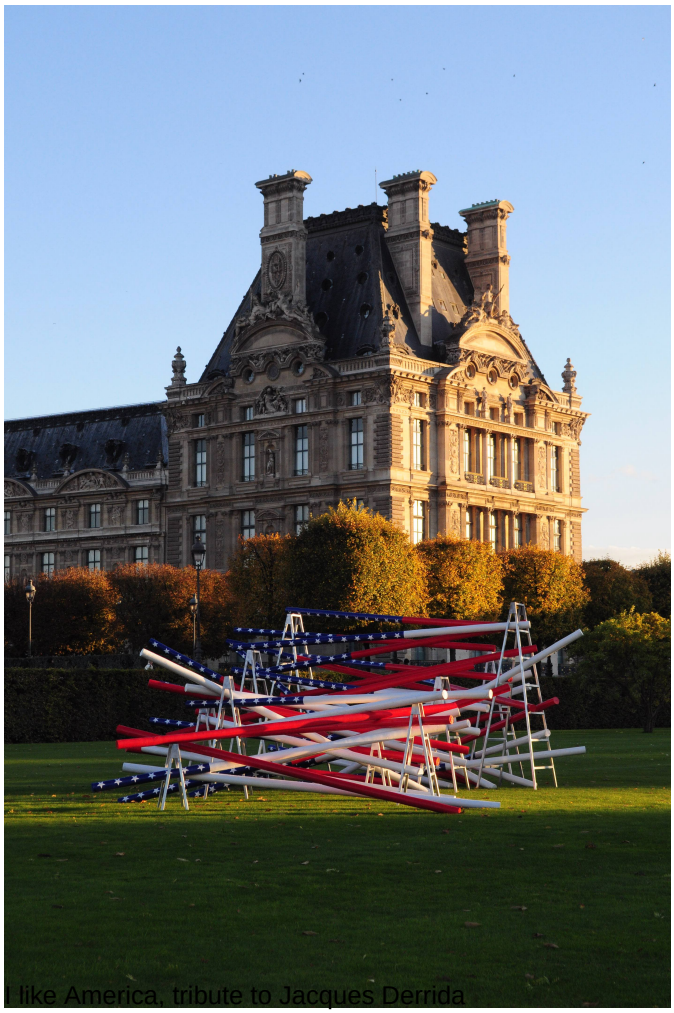

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