25. | Without history



2007, jumping poles, exerpts from the Art of War, 4 meters wide, size may vary.
Exhibition view of Light and Fire, ADN Galeria, 2014, Barcelona.
Courtesy of the artist and ADN Gallery, Barcelona.
Ed. of 1 + 1 A.P.

Collection of Musée BPS22, Charleroi

This work was part of 5th Thessaloniki Biennale -Between the Pessimism..., Thessaloniki, 2015.

This work was part of Biennale de Bruxelles - Fuck architects: chapter III, Brussels, 2008.

Les barres de saut d'obstacles, appartenant initialement au monde hippique, sont des signes récurrents, matériel détourné en matériau plastique, du vocabulaire formel de mounir fatmi.
Plusieurs versions des Obstacles ont ainsi été présentées, dans des configurations contextuelles variées, comme une sorte de sculpture polymorphe. Bien droites entre leurs échelles , au sol, en équilibre précaire, brisées, les barres de saut d'obstacles permettent un jeu de construction-déconstruction ouvrant à un entrelacs de points de vue, offrant une richesse d'angles d'approche, esthétique, perceptif et physique, conceptuel, existenciel, socio-politique.

Si les Obstacles peuvent évoquer tout à la fois le ready-made, le pop ou le constructivisme, c'est qu'ils portent en eux l'affirmation d'une esthétique de la densité et de l'enchevêtrement , dans laquelle les représentations esthétiques de l'histoire de l'art s'inscrivent comme autant de partitions alphabétiques avec lesquelles joue l'artiste. Présence à la fois massive et fragile, le contournement d'un

Jumping poles, from horse jumping obstacles, are recurring signs in mounir fatmi's formal vocabulary, appropriated and integrated as plastic material. Several versions of Obstacles have been shown, in a variety of contextual configurations, like a sort of polymorphous sculpture. Whether straight in their stands, on the ground, precariously balanced or broken, the jumping poles play on the tension between construction and deconstruction, opening up interlacing points of view. They can be approached from an abundance of angles: aesthetic, perceptive and physical, conceptual, existential and socio-political.

If Obstacles can evoke both the readymade, Pop and Constructivism, it's because it has the affirmation of an aesthetic that is both dense and muddled, on which the visual representations of art history can be inscribed, as with so many of the scores played with by the artist. Circumnavigating this massive and fragile presence, the sculpture reveals a mobile-immobile reality, like a kinetic object. It is a universe of embodied, significant and unfinished

tel obstacle révèle, comme en un objet cinétique, une réalité mobile-immobile de l'objet, un univers de formes incarnées, signifiantes et inachevées, dans lequel la matière et l'espace, l'équilibre et l'effondrement, le chaos et la faille, le triomphe et l'échec se manifestent comme les différentes faces du même objet.
Installés de telle sorte qu'ils entravent la progression physique du visiteur, les Obstacles fonctionnent alors comme un « piège ». Littéralement « obstacles », ils opposent au corps la résistance et la complexité du monde, réinvestissent la conscience du « corps propre », pour reprendre l'expression de Merleau-Ponty, matérialise le système de l'être-au-monde, entre lutte, dialogue et engagement.
Les récentes installations d'obstacles, placée à l'entrée du lieu d'exposition se veulent, explique mounir fatmi, « catalyseurs de conversation, propositions pour engager le dialogue ».

Dans cette mise à distance toujours critique, les Obstacles confirme la vision d'une humanité nécessairement inachevée, pour laquelle seul un état permanent de précarité permet de déconstruire les certitudes, une existence humaine dans laquelle la constitution de son identité, la coïncidence avec soi-même, la saisie de l'altérité, la liberté exige de s'affranchir de bien des déterminismes.
A cette question des déterminismes qu'il s'agit de dépasser, parmi lesquels ceux du contexte socio-culturel -celui de l'artiste, celui de l'étranger- se juxtapose la question, plus cruciale encore, des frontières et des nations et, pour reprendre le mot de Merleau-Ponty, tous les « déraillements de l'Histoire ».

Marie Deparis, Paris 2007.

forms, in which material and space, balance and collapse, chaos and faults, triumph and failure appear like different facets of the same object.
Installed in a way that hinders the visitor's physical progression, Obstacles functions like a trap. Literally "obstacles", it pits the resistance and complexity of the world against the body, reinvesting the conscience with the "corps propre" [one's own body] - to borrow Merleau-Ponty's expression - and materialising the system of being-in-the-world, between struggle, dialogue and commitment.
Recent installations of Obstacles, placed at the entrance of the exhibition space, can be thought of, explains mounir fatmi, as "conversation catalysts, propositions to encourage dialogue."

From a critical distance, Obstacles confirms the vision of a necessarily unfinished humanity, where only a permanently precarious state allows certainties to be deconstructed. It is a vision of human existence in which the constitution of identity, the concurrence of the self, the embrace of otherness and liberty demand that we free ourselves from passive determinism.
Juxtaposed against this issue of determinisms to be overcome, including those of socio-cultural contexts – that of the artist, that of the foreigner – is the still more crucial question of borders and nations and, to borrow the words of Merleau-Ponty, all the "derailments of history".

Marie Deparis, Paris 2007.

Translation: Caroline Rossiter.

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Marie Deparis, 2007

exhibitions:

2023

Stayin’ Alive, Discover the Collections - BPS22, Charleroi - Expo collective

2018

Basically It's Very Practical - IKOB, International Art Centre East Belgium - Expo collective

2015

Elogio de la fatiga - Fabra i Coats - Expo collective

2014

Light & Fire - ADN Galeria - Solo show

Walking on the light - CCC - Solo show

2013

History is not mine - Paradise Row Gallery - Solo show

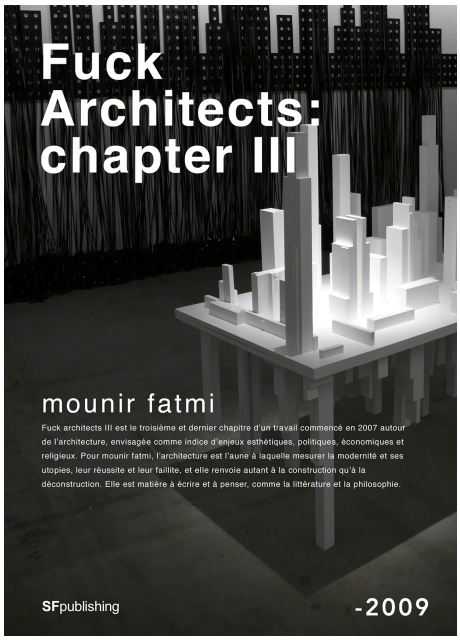
La Ligne Droite - Galerie Fatma Jellal - Solo show

2008

Fuck architects : Chapter II - Le Creux de l'Enfer - Solo show

2007

Sans histoire - Musée Picasso - Solo show



Fuck Architects: chapter III, SFpublishing 2025

For mounir fatmi, architecture serves as a measure of modernity and its utopias, their triumphs and their failures, and it speaks as much to construction as it does to deconstruction.

Olivier Grasser, February 2009



Without history

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