

Textile Languages

The exhibition Textile Languages brings the rich visual vocabulary of textile textures and the poetic of material into a private space. Brought together in a modernist architectural setting, the artworks seem to embody the thoughts of Bauhaus teacher and textile art pioneer, Anni Albers "If the nature of architecture is the grounded, the fixed, the permanent, then textiles are its very antithesis".

The exhibition showcases a selection of videos, photographs, installations and textiles works from around eighteen artists. With a special emphasis on the Indian art scene, the exhibition brings together practitioners from different cultural contexts and generations. It investigates the interwoven personal, historic and collective experiences that inform the works as well as repetitious processes and political concerns. Moving away from material fetishisation, the show highlights the inherent potential of textiles as a material language that goes beyond the purely aesthetic.

The exhibition also hints at the current trends in 'neo-craft', that challenge the traditionally marginalised role of the craft realm and instead place contemporary craft firmly at the center of contemporary creativity. The textile and garment works exhibited throughout the house unveil the extraordinary variety of modes of production as well as their rich historical legacies.

On occasion, the exhibition refers to works and methodologies of such eminent artists as Anni Albers, William Morris, Alighiero Boetti and Sheila Hicks to shine a light on their enduring influence. That diversity of approach and intention is illustrated by the enthusiasm of Sheila Hicks for Pre-Colombian textiles and the influence of her teacher Josef Albers. Her textile work Pinto (2004) is showcased in the exhibition. In the entrance, The World in Workwear (2011) of Jonathan Monk confronts the visitors with a work that takes its direct inspiration from the Mappa by the Italian artist Alighiero Boetti whose original works are shown in the show. The three bright colored Arazzi embroidered alphabet reference collective experiences and structural protocols conducive to the variation of their form, thus resolutely retain its connection to the colour sensibility of the Afghan women who made them.

By inviting Moroccan artisans to deconstruct and to re-weave a Jouy fabric, the work Fabric (2013) by Philippe Terrier-Hermann echoes some of the principles found in Boetti's process. Contemporary works by artists Fay Nicolson A P E L (II) (2013) and André Guedes Les Nouveaux Rouges (II) (2013) are speculations on the forms and writings of their antecedents and not mere transcriptions of past works.

Works by Marie-Ange Guilleminot, Baptist Coelho and Joël Andrianomearisoa are imbued with troubling memories. In Kimono memories of Hiroshima (2005), Marie-Ange Guilleminot transposes onto traditional kimonos the patterns and shapes of the garments of the Hiroshima victims. The Hiroshima garments emerge as a delicate shadow against the backdrop of history and the literal backdrop of fabric. Baptist Coelho was similarly moved by the conditions of Indian soldiers in the white planes of Siachen Glacier, one of the most remote battlegrounds in the world. In "Beneath it all... I am human..." (2009), Coelho uses discarded uniforms to restore humanity to the soldiers. Coelho's installation likewise bears the traces of a missing body, of abandoned garments and echoes other works installed in the show. The reference to garments in Charlotte Beaudry's painting and Jimmy Robert's performance confronts us with an absence, a solitary dance, the traces of an existence : such are the exhibited works connected by a thread that passes through and across cultures and time.

Cotton threads, fabrics and velvet are the primary materials in the sculptural works of Hemali Bhuta, Prajakta Potnis, Anita Dube and Caroline Achaintre. Textile is all about touching and interlacing threads with dancing fingers. The making process involves a direct contact with material by which to inscribe various references in its layers. Whereas Caroline Achaintre's tapestries Roofos (2013) tread the line between the primitive and the carnivalesque, Hairarchy (2007) by Hemali Bhuta uses material that are wielded during rituals in India. The immersive installation by Prajakta Potnis turns the staircase into a surface on which delicate black threads run, giving the impression of a disintegrating system and a corrosive contamination from within. Also addressing the architectural space is the work of Erwan Maheo. Installed in the pool area, Maheo's nomadic museum functions as a stage curtain that explores the internal and external boundaries of the house.

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Artists selection : Nathalie Guiot

Research assistant and project coordinator : Julia Marchand

Thalie Art Project was created in Brussels, Belgium in 2013 by Nathalie Guiot, collector, art producer and author. Independent and ephemeral exhibitions platform, the association promotes emerging international artistic scene.

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