

Natalia Stachon. In Broken Images. Thoughts on my artistic practice.

He is quick thinking in clear images. I am slow thinking in broken images (Robert Graves)

Every room is a challenge. And my answer to it is a change every time. I often ask myself the question: How would my work look if I had exhibited it in places other than the ones I did? And the answer is always broken down in the same way: differently. Places find me. And they change me. It is always a journey with an uncertain outcome. I'm tense when I view an exhibition venue for the first time under the presumption that I am supposed to develop an intervention for it. Sometimes I come with a vague idea. The first meeting is also the first turn of the screw. It becomes clear very quickly if my concept works (or not). If the created vision will fill the space. Can the idea stand up to the space? At least until the second justification begins. The model. It has to be as big as possible. Preferably 1:10. The construction of the empty space is an investigation for me. Where do its scenic qualities lie? What is special and unusual about this location and its architecture? Where is the break? Where can I enter in? At these points, where tensions emerge, where the first idea forms cracks and starts to dissolve in space, is where the end results slowly emerge. My conception merges together with the place, is controlled by the place, and assumes form. Little by little, sculptures, installations and drawings occupy the model. Precise and from the same material as the later original. Every mirroring, every twist, every glance designs as well. The location is the stage, the arrangement will be the choreography and the subsequent viewer will be the actor.

I'm skeptical towards everything that is finished, completed, absolute and total. I do not believe in the idea of a concluded, autarchic work of art. Because it is just not that way in my life. For that reason I work in series and variants. Every work originates from a previous one. They refer to each other and are connected among themselves. For that reason I prefer modular systems. Conditions, actions. Everything that you can staple, bundle up, hang, and pile up. They generate first an alleged order, but in fact their differences are still contained: their deconstruction, transformation, destruction. My works reside exactly in between. In transition between becoming and vanishing.

This ambivalence, this dynamic, alterable and multi-faceted spaces of sensation also happen to me in texts. They often talk about the impossibility of language to grasp what it's trying to describe. They don't comprise any assessments, stipulations or facts. For me, they possess the ability to open new rooms. I encounter this over and over especially in the work of Maurice Blanchot, Emily Dickinson, Robert Graves' lyric poetry and in the novels by William S. Burroughs. They work like mirrors. In this way quotes of these artists flow into my work. They work in correspondence with my objects, installations and sculptures. They are spiritual allies and volumes for associations. The same goes for my drawings.

I like to draw. And for hours. For days. In a conventional sense, that's actually what my sculptural task is. How the image, the form casts itself off of the paper. You look at odd architecture, in rooms, containers, waste land, vacancies in which new spaces unfold out of gray scale and places of memory flood the piece of paper. In the exhibitions my paper works can function like initial sparks. Out of the intimate observation the viewer rotates again in the room and proceeds on his path through the exhibition and to think about the event further. And is maybe at first disoriented? But in these moments of loss and disorientation, where the subconsciously assumed, the acquired, are interrupted without forewarning, he asks himself possible questions: How does this all go together? Where am I? When he looks for questions and finds them in the quiet, he is right in the middle of it. The space, the viewer and my art are in dialogue. In this way the space becomes a living body in the perception. An alterable variable.