

LILI DUJOURIE

Opening

Sunday 24th March 2019 from 11.00 to 16.00

Until 28th July 2019

The art of Lili Dujourie, whose first works date to the sixties, expresses an imagination and everything pertaining thereto which, in seeking precisely the beauty of art history, touches on the themes of vanity, the transitory, of presence and absence and of melancholy. Her oeuvre is pregnant with cultural references drawn from literature, music, film and painting.

On a thematic basis the artist has selected works for exhibition in two of the gallery's large rooms: in the first, the far wall of roughly 20 metres houses the series of four sculptures entitled *Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbra(m)*, 1988; the images/figures (the shadows) are allusions to monuments/tombstones, portraits of ancestors, shadows of people who cannot be identified. The sculptures consist of different materials: marble, the photographic reproduction of the figure within massive frames, the whole being a harking back to an ancient culture of representation and the commemorative monument. In the *light* of these shadows, a dialogue opens up with the other works:

Untitled (red nude), 1983, in which the vanity and narcissism endemic to the self-portrait is avoided by substituting one's own body with that of another woman. In the presented setting, the presumed transparency of the photographic medium highlights the dialectic between presence/absence, depth/surface and figure/frame.

The sculpture *Portret (marble)*, 1987, is presented as a marble box with two small mirrors applied inside; by inserting your head in the box you will see reflections, but from an unusual angle.

Jeux de Dames, 1987, a marble chessboard on the floor, bears a *paravent* (folding screen) on which a blue drape is laid. The spectator is led into a certain atmosphere, but any voyeurism there may be in his gaze will remain unsatisfied: behind the *paravent* there is no presence. The eye will not find the nestling body of a naked young woman, as in Tintoretto's celebrated *Susanna and the Elders*.

Stilleven (Keats), 1990, is part of a series of sculptures the artist created from 1989 onwards, positioned freestanding, close to the wall, as in this case, or in a corner: they are high, thin metal tables covered by a plaster drape with natural folds, in representation of a still life. Unlike the still lifes whose images have been handed down by painting, these are sculptures in black and white; there are no objects on the table, only the drape as fragment raised to the subject of the work, which in turn is here dedicated to the English poet John Keats.

The work *Aurora*, 1987, is installed in the second room on the wall opposite the entrance. The dawn announces the beginning of day or, metaphorically, of something, and by extension announces the night of the works *Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbra(m)*.

On the right hand side of the frontal wall on entering the room there is a series of collages titled *Stilleven (collages)* (still life), dated 1976, in which the theme of the fragment elevated to subject is reprised.

Continuing through the room, the work *Roman (collage)*, 1977-1978, is installed on the wall. A series of sheets torn from newspapers and magazines, depicting landscapes and figures that bear witness to a perceptible reality.

On the floor, the sculptures of the series *Meander*, 2009-2010, and *Maelstrom*, 2009, the latter inspired by the whirlpools caused by tides along the Atlantic coast of Norway. Both the *Meanders*, with their sinuous development, and the *Maelstroms*, both created in papier-mâché, are a metaphor of today's society.

Lili Dujourie (Roeselare, Belgium, 1941) exhibited at the Galleria Tucci Russo Studio per l'Arte Contemporanea in 2001.

Her solo shows include: *Folds in Time*, S.M.A.K Ghent and MuZEE, Ostend 2015 - Leopold-Hoesch-Museum, Düren 2014 - *Lili Dujourie - La naturaleza es sabia*, Abadía Benedictina de Santo Domingo de Silos, Burgos 2011 - *La Conservera*, Ceuti 2010 - *Le Creux de L'enfer*, Thiers 2008 - *Jeux de Dames*, Bozar, Brussels 2005 - *Videos 1972-1981*, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Seville; Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe; Argos Brussels, 2002-2004

Among her many collective shows, she participated at *Sanguine. Luc Tuymans on Baroque*, Fondazione Prada, Milano 2018, *21st Biennale of Sydney – Superposition: Equilibrium and Engagement*, Sydney 2018 - *Documenta XII*, Kassel 2007 - *Biennale of Sydney*, Sydney 1988 - *Aperto 86, Biennale di Venezia*, Venezia 1986.

In 2016 the exhibition *Folds in Time* was nominated *Best show of the year 2015* by the Belgian Association of Art Critics. In the same year Lili Dujourie was awarded the prestigious *Flemish Culture Prize for Visual Arts*.