

A FEW QUESTIONS FOR HA CHA YOUN

Bruno Mathon

1. Why are you interested in the current form of urban misery and homelessness; is it out of compassion, by social concern or for other motivations?

The reason is personal: having lived in Germany and several cities in France, now in Paris, one of my major concerns is to be somewhere, to locate myself. It's hard to ignore all these people sleeping, seeking help in highly touristic places. I've asked tourists about them; some said they were one of the most striking images of the 'landscape' of Paris: the contrast between these people and the environment, so elegant, even precious, is very strong. It's not just the aspect of urban misery that concerns me here: in "Sweet home 2," I photographed in a specific place, along the Canal Saint-Martin, real installations created by the homeless from April 2005 to August 2006. These were remarkable 'open-air installations.' In these places, solitary people live without attachment to the location, in the ephemeral.

2. What is the nature of the movement that triggers the creative process in you?

I want to be caught up in every moment and exist in it as completely as possible. That's what creates movement in my work; it transforms, changes identity according to the moment and situation.

3. Are signs of accumulation one of your working instruments: dictionary words, plastic bags, matrimonial announcements, etc.?

Initially, they serve to erase my 'persistent concerns'; they reflect the agitation that gives me time. Then they serve to seek and find a form suited to the language of art. By repeating the same gesture, I give myself time to reflect; it's the result of hesitation—I start once and then repeat the act, thus obtaining certain answers. But I need a lot to arrive at a solid idea, to extract what I want and achieve a finished work as I wish.

4. Everyday life objects, industrial materials of daily life, often appear in your works; do you see them as themes of the banality of contemporary life carrying poetry? Or are they primarily carriers of meaning and form?

Reflection on daily life through the banal object of this daily life is not a sufficiently strong theme for an artist; it won't capture the attention of today's audience. The artist needs coherence in their work; it's a simpler thing I'm seeking: plastic bags have attracted artists since their appearance, they offer immense possibilities for work—from their use to the consequences of their

environmental impact. I approach things now in the present moment, and I am aware of this. The question is: is there another possibility of feeling alive with others in this world, another way of being in the world?

5. How do you conceive the idea of installation; does the relationship with the exhibition space play a central role?

It's indeed a crucial moment in creation; it's when I finalize the work. The Icare space serves a dual function as both reception and gallery space; I made the choice to exhibit this work on the homeless precisely so that guests would have the idea that they could inhabit this beautiful building that has just been constructed during my exhibition.

6. Photography and video now complement your installation work. Is this a necessity due to a new need to clarify the content of your works, or is it more poetic; an introduction of temporality into the work, or is it the desire to create a contrast between the moving, flat, and luminous image itself, and the immobile and voluminous object?

Yes, indeed, it's the first time that video is so present in one of my installations. My choice was based on a cohabitation between the reception area and the gallery space, as I mentioned earlier. Since I've been in Paris, I no longer have a studio, so I no longer have a workspace. Therefore, I started a different kind of work from what I used to present: I go out into the street, collect images that I store on my computer, without specific ideas about their destination. It's through the event of the exhibition that these 'drafts of work' took shape. For me, the video is also an installation, obviously on the wall, but an installation just like the objects that will be presented in the exhibition.

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