



FRANCINE ZUBEIL

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hors de contenance

These photographs were taken in my mother's apartment.
I snatched them like a robber in broad daylight.
A memory that escapes me.
Nothing but emptiness to empty.
A painful absence that I do not want to accept,
wanting to stay dazed and not wanting to go to sleep.
Clothes that these bodies will never wear again.
Trailing images about with me.
Again and again, as if the absence of the body induces an
uninhabited presence.
Possibilities arise and present themselves to me.

installation in an exhibition space

A room at the corner of the building.
From the two glazed walls on the 3rd floor, you can see
the city south of Manhattan.
No sound goes out. No sound comes in.
The heat or cold do not even have any effect on the place,
and only the artificial circulation of conditioned air controls life.
Only the light passing through this glazed building gives
the illusion of time.
Timeless time, with no changing seasons.
Isolation.
Isolation in the very heart of the city.
The paradox of a certainty that anything can happen, and
that the imaginary reveals endless horizons.

the work is composed of 2 photographs and a text

These two photographs are juxtaposed, printed in negative on
polyester transparencies.
The photographs are faint – an imprint, a trace.
They are in the format of the 4 corner windows.
The images are repeated, as if unfolding.
windows on the left: clothes hangers + dress; windows on the right:
dress + clothes hangers + the text "hors de contenance".
This text cannot be translated directly into English.

The ambivalence is lost – “hors de contenance” means: “out of oneself” or beside oneself; “out of control”, “uncontained”, unrestrained or having lost one’s composure; and “out of content” or void of content.

The relationship is rather ambiguous.

the relationship with the space

An office building abandoned by its investors, investigators, office workers, etc. – a building deserted by its occupants.

A building whose functions must be redefined.

Toiling, intense industry; a progress that goes beyond the limits of the perceptible and the tangible.

Relocation of energies and skills.

So what is this movement and migration within the city?

By placing transparent pictures on the window pane, we see a superimposition of the city, buildings, facades and the sea.

The scale is reversed, light changes, and the image also: it becomes an animated still picture.

The buildings and the images take on the same function: that of absence, but strong presence in the subtle.

They are all void of warmth and void of bodies.

All spaces are potential spaces, spaces waiting to be occupied.

Private spaces, public spaces.

Interior spaces, anyway.

The relative scale is reversed.

The window pane becomes a vehicle separating the interior from the exterior.

It is the boundary, transparency, appearance.

Look at the surface of the window pane, or let one’s eye wander and pass through it.

FRANCINE ZUBEIL lives and works in Marseille. Since the 1980s she has created numerous installations in public spaces in Miramas, New York, Almere, Marseille... She was a co-founder of l’Observatoire (photographic research, creation, production, publication). In 2000, she created her own centre, La Fabrique sensible. This text and the accompanying images are taken from *Hors de contenance*, a book in English and French by Francine Zubeil which will be published by La fabrique sensible, Marseille, 2002.

