

Latifa Echakhch

Verso

opening february 16, 7.00 pm

kaufmann repetto is glad to present *Verso*, Latifa Echakhch new solo show at the gallery.

Through simple actions and minimal interventions, Latifa Echakhch repositions and de-contextualizes objects loaded of socio-cultural meaning, inviting the viewer to undertake an active and plurivocal reading, by virtue of an ontological relativism that suspends any judgment, favoring the coexistence of multiple perspectives. *Verso*, the title of the show, mirrors this same polysemic openness: in fact, the word *Verso* can refer to the poetry structural unit as well as to a direction, but it also indicates something that lies behind, something hidden.

A work that gathers all these different meanings is *MorgenLied*, where a hanging system for paintings becomes a giant music score, and the denied presence of the canvases enables the object to free its otherwise unexpressed evocative power. The simple subtraction of an element leads to the deconstruction of usual associations therefore functioning as sound box, that amplifies and brings out what usually slips the viewer eye.

The vertical fall tension characterizing this work is counteracted by *Fantasia*, an installation positioned in the gallery's courtyard and composed of pennons without flags that, through an intricate overlapping, create a geometry of lines projected towards the sky. This work, which was recently exhibited at 54th Venice Biennale, evokes a relation of both encounter and conflict, as to comment the ambivalence implicit to the confrontation of different entities, which becomes even more evident when concerning different national identities.

As to connect the inner gallery space with the outer one, Latifa Echakhch intervenes on the gallery windows by dropping black indian ink, therefore partially obscuring the exhibition rooms, almost through an act of vandalism recalling scenarios of violence, as well as the revolutionary potential of the written word. The title of the work, *Enluminure*, refers at the same time to miniature writing and lighting: what occults also reveals.

In this sense, the works in the show seem to be located in a pre-linguistical dimension: black carbon paper, dried ink, empty hangers for paintings. All these elements share a sense of openness, that evokes both the beginning and the end, the possibility of sharing a message and the negation of the message itself.

Absence and denial are the core themes pervading the whole exhibition, which could either be seen as a succession of ghostly presences or, better yet, a series of amplified absences. A concept that especially applies to *Skin*, an installation composed of a group of second-hand sneakers, accumulated against the wall in an apparently random manner. The title of the work refers to the trend of the 'Skin Parties', particularly wide-spread among teen-agers, where all the guests leave their clothes and shoes outside the door, as a rebellious act against conventions. While on one hand this piece is meant to represent the portray of a generation, on the other hand it seems to evoke circumstances of collective gatherings, ranging from the entrance into places of worship to the dramatic scenarios of massacres.

Fantome is the work 'inhabiting' the other room of the gallery: a sort of negative portray, where those that might look as the remains of a presence, compose a still life embodying a story we cannot learn anything about besides what we can infer. Once again, the viewer becomes the key of a creative mechanism, where emptiness asks to be filled, and silence seems to speak through multiple voices.