

THEY USED TO SING – LUCILE BERTRAND
IRÈNE LAUB GALLERY – 30.10.20 > 19.12.20

"The space of our life is neither continuous, infinite, homogeneous nor isotropic. But do we know precisely where it breaks, where it bends, where it disconnects and where it gathers? We confusedly feel cracks, hiatuses, points of friction, we sometimes have the vague impression that it gets stuck somewhere, or that it bursts, or that it bumps. We rarely try to find out more and most often we move from one place to another, from one space to another, without thinking of measuring, taking into account these lapses of space. The problem is not to invent space, still less to re-invent it (too many well-meaning people are there today to think about our environment...) but to question it, or, more simply, to read it; because what we call everydayness is not obvious, but opacity: a form of blindness, a way of anaesthesia.

It is from these elementary observations that this book, the diary of a space user, has developed".

Introduction by Georges Perec to his essay *Espèces d'espaces*, published by Galilée in 1974.

Through testimonies, current events and literary accounts, Lucile Bertrand weaves with objectivity and benevolence the story of our humanity, with all its richness, hope, pain and paradox. For her first solo exhibition at Irène Laub Gallery, the artist has developed a participatory sensory wandering, which invites us to penetrate to the heart of her preoccupations in order to better grasp the societal issues that concern us all. Nourishing her practice with lived experiences, writings, dispatches and in-depth articles as diverse as they are cross-disciplinary in order to get as close as possible to the universality of her subjects, as each new production is produced, the artist strives to offer a detailed synthesis of a specific situation so that everyone can fully grasp it and make it one's own.

Like small punctuations, which would have the ambition to slow down temporarily the never-ending march of the world, Lucile Bertrand's interventions require patience, tolerance and perseverance to materialise, but also to reveal themselves. From the gallery window and on, the public is immersed in a physical and mental cartography composed of micro-journeys which, according to the times and individualities, meet and echo each other, like so many exiles' fates, sometimes anonymous, sometimes famous, who had to learn to reinvent themselves elsewhere. Following a similar approach, the installation *They used to sing* makes the sad observation of the gradual disappearance of the diversity of sounds emitted by the living beings that populate our planet. In a final attempt to save it, the artist has gathered here a vast sample of musical resources that she makes doubly available to the public, through both a soundscape that temporarily inhabits the space and scores that can be freely interpreted.

Although visually appealing, Lucile Bertrand's production is generally serious in its content. Texts, landscapes, photographs and scores all participate, each at their own level, in sketching the contours of a territory with borders that are both porous and sinuous, sealing every passing day the fate of thousands of species and individuals around the world.

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