

Inhabiting space, space inhabited

In China, a new generation of artists, often women, are focusing on questions of habitat and architecture, of home and territory. Nabuqi, who graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 2013, explores these complex questions of space. Based in Beijing, she herself has always lived on the outskirts - she uses the concept of "village-within-centre, as the city gets bigger. Surprise and movement would easily characterise the urbanization of China's rapid pace with which the landscape is transformed, and the inhabitants' capacity for adapting. For example, a neighbourhood of inhabitants, who nevertheless have to return there to work. Nabuqi talks about "many empty shadows left behind between state. Although the artist's work, paradoxically exuding a calm impression, does not directly evoke this state and feeds on this constant state of agitation. Nabuqi documents these immutable evolutions and her own primary forms and a catalogue of forms. The drawings offer keys or clues to an understanding of the three-dimensional practice for her to experiment with potential space/body confrontations, or new colours. Indeed, Nabuqi does not hesitate to explore cold, conventional space of the white cube.

In the series, 'A View beyond Space', Nabuqi attempts to represent different notions of space within the same and real, existing because of the elementary human presence. The second is generated by the spirit, a universal space. The aim of the artist is to enable the viewer to be projected into an environment created by a single piece of material. This requires this need for interpretation, because of the human brain's capacity for analysis and mental agility. Some buildings or even the levels of platform video games from the 1980s and 1990s, such as Prince of Persia or Metal Gear, as narrow staircases without guardrails are obvious indications of movement and discomfort. The body is constantly in motion, evokes an escape, a straying as much as a danger. Elsewhere, the sculptures are arid and demand more effort to be hollowed-out structure sufficient in itself or must it be augmented by another reality? That is the question.

More recently, with the installation *Floating Narratives* (2017) presented at the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art, she explores the relationship between the body, the space and the work of art. A collection of artificial plants, lamps, a fan and a clock, understand "occupy the space", in the words of the artist. With the artificial breeze from the fans and the light characteristics, it overflows, it floats. The installation therefore suggests an inaccessible and deliberate hidden space, an unnatural light: the ethereal. What, then, is the place of the work itself in relation to the space and the body of the viewer and 'true'. The illusion of landscapes represented by a photographic image adds to the fiction of the space, as a Bartsian reality.

In her definition of space and, by extension, of landscape, the artist has eliminated notions of beginning and end, especially as it relates to the construction of a mental space, the work of Nabuqi has its roots in the works of Anselm Kiefer (1934-1978). They both envisaged the need to inhabit space and escape from a purely physical logic. Sculpture is a dimension. The object therefore constitutes its own dimension while engendering an infinite mental field. Nabuqi's works, into different types of space, do we perceive the information through visual means or is the body also a receptacle of visual, physical or spatial characteristics, or even to an ideological or historic context. There is not just one way of producing a multitude of interpretations. The spectator does not find himself in front of a traditional work of art but rather to the participatory installations of Bruce Nauman, or the mirrors of Michelangelo Pistoletto, which are

During a residency at Dawan Art in Paris in 2017, Nabuqi took up the theme of 'Stay and Occupation'. These works explore how the body has an influence on the environment. Dynamics between individuals are altered when another person, a Parisian, recording sounds in the parks, photographing the footsteps of passers-by, and buying from the home, and survival in the public space, movements and appropriations of areas are at the heart of this cartographic research, sometimes in a conceptual sense - inaccessible dimensions excluding the body, as the constructions are pure spaces excluding the body, those of the 'invisible', the workers and the homeless.

In 2018, an exhibition at the Shanghai Gallery in Shanghai offers a new understanding of the concept of object. It is assembled a priori in a simple way, and seemingly arbitrarily. In history of art, we speak of ready-made - an object that becomes art, a famous example of which is the fountain of Marcel Duchamp, a urinal becoming artwork when it is signed and titled. Nabuqi's elements of all kinds. This new body of work by Nabuqi could be compared with the assemblages of the American artist Joseph Kosuth in New York, in the way in which the context and the status of the object are codified. However, beyond her research to an environment that is not fixed and immutable like architecture; she is then interested in decorating or at least modify it. Here twisted, having lost an initial function, these objects create an impression of strangeness. We must refer here to the Freudian notion of *Unheimliche*, elaborated in 1919. Indeed, for Freud, the uncanny is the one hand, Nabuqi draws directly on the notion of perception, by titling her exhibition "Do real things happen in the term that is not normally associated with art: the rationality. Here we must see an attempt to interpret a broader

Nabuqi's sculptures have always found a basis in what the art critic Nicolas Bourriaud has called relational aesthetics as a theoretical or practical point of departure. Nevertheless, more recently, the networks created between "works" the works is based on a more precise reality however full of doubts. And for good reason, Nabuqi's major series of sculptures were resolutely abstract, this new chapter is more tangible, using a category of forms less confusing between the urban and the space, and defines another relation of the occupation of the body in space. In The doubtful : Greek theater, which had a very precise function: the place of representation. This is precisely what interests Nabuqi (in the Greek sense of the term; that is, what is related to the organization and the exercise of power in an organization). Nabuqi's sculptures, Nabuqi is part of a history of the art of the object and its perception but also that she questions verbal appropriation.

A shorter version of the following article was published previously in the journal CURA. 28 in 2018 under the title

text by Loïc Le Gall, 2018