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Lucy Glendinning, sculpture, narration, installation, Galerie Da-End | Publié par Thierry Grizard le 8 mai 2018 pour artefields.net

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English

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### *VISUAL APHORISM AND POETRY*

Lucy Glendinning (born in 1964, she works and lives in England), in many interviews does not position herself exactly as a sculptor or even a visual artist, nor quite like a visual artist. She explains, on the spot, that her point of departure is not an idiosyncratic impulse but a reflection, a thought fuelled by her interest in new technologies, particularly in the field of medicine and genetics. She does not start from an artistic compulsion, fantasy or pure imagination, she develops a reflection - often expressed primarily through a poem - in visual form, in search of an experience to solicit the viewer / spectator / visitor / art lover. His reflection is therefore aphoristic or poetic, there is no discursiveness. She uses statuary, that is to say the representation of the human body as a material, because it allows her to represent her thought in strange beings exposed to the eyes and put in situation, which are like the culmination prospective of what "poetic" meditation has initiated.

### **Engenderment's and singularity**

While Duane Hanson, then Ron Mueck sought disruption causing break-ins of the real by "deterritorializing" their favourite subjects, the American social reality, the Australian film moments of life at the Carver, Glendinning formally utilizes hyperrealism only incidentally, but still retains from hyperrealist sculpture one of its essential foundations, namely the emergence of singularities. Indeed, the mimicry of sculptures in hyperrealism is primarily intended to introduce otherness. Duane Hanson projects the social raw in places that are foreign to him, it causes a questioning leading to shake the intellectual comfort of the elites. Ron Mueck exposes beings prey to the weight of existence and places the viewer in the situation of involuntary voyeur, he reverses the relationship, the indifference of his characters - without mentioning scale - imposes the visitor the role of intruder.

In the wake of these two masters of hyperrealist statuary, many other artists have exploited the same path by incorporating variations sometimes drastic. Sam Jinks develops the path of hybridizations, alterations. Patricia Piccinini, for decades, give reality to awakened dreams exposing the strangeness of everyday life or the aberration of technophilic "utopias". Choi Xooang, among others, uses the hyperrealism of textures, of anatomy, in a word of detail, to give substance to the worst nightmares of dereliction.

One of the common features of his disparate approaches lies in the generation of singularities. Hyperrealist sculpture does not work with forms or movement, it stages, gives birth to another reality that produces spatio-temporal singularities, breaks in the fabric of reality. Moreover, this process of "narrative" rupture owes a lot, since its pictorial origin, to photography and cinema. Lucy Glendinning is one of the heirs of this approach, she uses the figure, the anthropomorphic body as a medium that finds

its culmination in a place, as much as a moment in space, from which it tries to bring out singularities, irreducible nodes that open up new perspectives.

### **The body as a medium**

The expression "poetic", (which moves by the charm, the mysterious), through the manipulation of the human body is obvious when Lucy Glendinning shows it, very explicitly, in her series on the epidermal envelopes (Skins) and the bodies being liquefied (Distortion). While Sam Jinks or Choi Xooang abuse the human body to achieve a certain pathos, the English artist continues his metaphorical reflections in the form of more or less dystopian "sculptures". This is how it spins the image of the body envelope to give the appearance of a collapsed inflatable doll, or individuals who disintegrate by liquefaction. The body will no longer, she tells us, in a time may be not so distant, a vehicle for, if not the soul, at least the consciousness understood as "digitizable" data and recordable in a memory itself dematerialized on the network. These series, more explicit than the Feather Child, underline the process which consists in starting from an idea, more or less documented, to reach its expression in the form of a visual aphorism, which is not for all that an illustration or an allegory.

### **Anxiety and empathy**

Concerning Lucy Glendinning's beings, we have often mentioned the Unheimlich (the disturbing strangeness) conceptualized by Freud. Indeed, the small - Glendinning figures are mostly small, and juvenile in appearance - trans-species and transgender beings of the artist can arouse by the spectacle of their otherness the anguish of what is more fully identifiable. Now this rupture of the congruity of the real brings, according to Freudian psychoanalysis, a return of the same but without its original representation, which is capable of opening, in the gap thus produced, the diffuse and incomprehensible intrusion of the repressed.

However, for Lucy Glendinning, unlike Berlinde De Bruyckere for example (which is one of her sources of inspiration), the staging of the strange is rather on the side of softness, a form of fantastic close to some cinematographic productions, especially the Night of the Hunter or the Beauty and the Beast. There is, like Cocteau's, a poetic-fantastic experience of otherness that oscillates between the fascination, empathy, curiosity and anxiety of the unknown. However, as in Hunter's Night (Charles Laughton, 1955), darkness envelops everything and never ceases to be threatening. Whereas "the disturbing strangeness" comes from the gaping of what is opening up in itself, at Glendinning the relationship leans more towards the relation to the other in the disturbing difference that it imposes on us. Another which is, of course, a projection - anticipatory in the case of Glendinning - anthropomorphic and therefore intimate, likely to awaken the insidious return of the repressed.

The peculiar singularities of the English artist are mostly children, they are often immersed in sleep, coiled in fetal position. They seem unaware of their environment, exposed to the eyes, as to the dangers, it is for the visual artist a very effective means of generating in the visitor of the anxiety - consequently of the empathy - for the physical security of the small being presented without the slightest regard.

At the Salon Art Paris 2016, Lucy Glendinning had pushed this effect to the extreme by putting one of his characters on the ground, in constant danger and yet completely ignorant of the dangers that awaited him. Moreover, these little beings are graceful, delicate, refined and peaceful they arouse immediate sympathy, then comes the moment to define them, that is to say to identify them, since the perplexity makes its way, it is precisely the purpose of Glendinning. She strives with these visual "poems", in the form of staging, to provoke a double movement between the feeling of otherness, even discomfort and empathy, a path that is also one of reflection and knowledge. .