

MAPS

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COMME des GARÇONS
HOMME PLUS



MAPS GALLERY | Interviewed by
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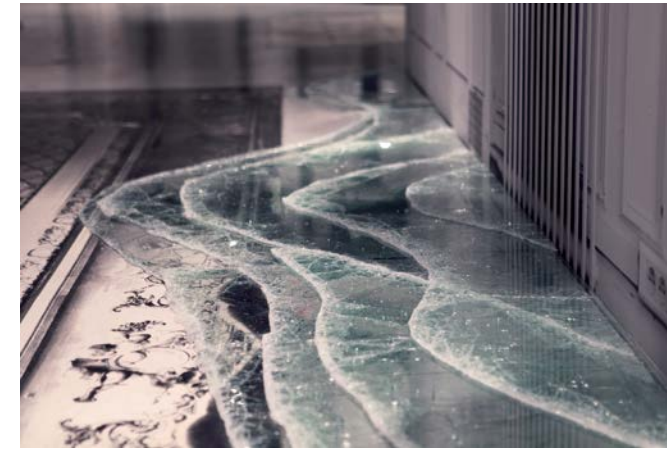
Volte-Face, windshield installation at the Art Center Duplex100er in Sarajevo, 2010



(Top)_ACCELERATION FIELD, white laminated glass, wood structure, vis, nails, painting, silicones, technical assistant 3D, Léa Marchal, with the support of Saint-Gobain Industry, Weilmade, 1.1x7x1.8m / 250kg glass / 4 tons, 2015
(Bottom)_AERIAL, laminated glass, wood, nails, white painting, site-specific installation at the Abbey Brauweiler in Germany 3x12x4,5m / 2 tons of glass, 2012

Your work gave me the impression that you are much older, as I could feel a lot of tension and experience in the way you treat the surfaces. How can you comment on this?

It is in my nature to invest a lot of myself, driven by the result I am aiming to reach. I basically work all the time, so I imagine that the experience accumulated. I like to experiment, reinvent things, find new challenges to overcome...research takes a lot of time, together with testing or experimenting...it all makes you discover things that you were not expecting to discover. I enjoy exploring what inspires me and I never count the time I invest in it. I had a wide experience with glass, mainly because of the complexity of its structure, its ability to exist in different forms, its interaction with light, its transparency. I'm still working to expand the potential of this material. I am inspired by Total art, like Merzbaum by Kurt Schwitters, or Yayoi Kusama with her psychedelic installations. Architecture is also another channel from where I get inspiration; the Kolumba Museum of Cologne in Germany conceived by Peter Zumthor or the chapel of the Ibaraki Kasugaoka Church by Tadao Ando in Japan are just two examples. What makes sense for me as an artist is the moment when you can really feel something very special from the art, something true; and in that moment, all of your senses are engaged, so you are immersed in a total art dimension.



How did glass become the leitmotiv of your creation?

I was analyzing security glass in our everyday life, and how it behaved when an accident occurred. In the same time, I observed people's reactions towards the government – the destruction of urban objects, of furniture or glass. The duality of the glass has been fascinating me; it is beautiful and dangerous at the same time.

The 'acts of protest' made me think about ways of translation what I was seeing. It led me discover laminated glass, which is a very interesting material, because it preserves the impact, the 'gesture' of destruction. The glass becomes a witness of an action, of an impact. It keeps the memory of the action through its materiality, becoming a mirror of us, humans.

Through my research, I approached the history of glass and became aware how specific this material is for our times. Laminated glass was invented by Édouard Bénédictus at the beginning of the 20th century (Triplex), then later it became the norm in architecture. After the terrorist act in Oklahoma City in 1995, the US Government decided to extend this type of glass to all public architecture, because the glass killed a lot more people than the actual destruction of the building. I think glass is a good representation of our contemporary existence.

In some of your works, I can perceive the space between the glass and the surface used as a base, as if caught in an interplay between imagination and reality, as if a tsunami was forming there. Do you invest the hidden space in your installations with any idea?

I usually start from a real event, a context, thinking about the people that inhabit a specific territory, understanding the history of a place. I define my way of working by saying that I am a contextual artist. I like to interact with everyday life, architecture, design, history. I look for the connections between the space and the people, exploring the way that people use space, feeling the life they breath into it. After being aware of these observations, I try to articulate and organise all the elements, determining what I can see and what I perceive from this reality. Within this mental framework, the idea, the dream, the imagination become the main subject of the art project. I try to model these emotions into reality through my installations, basically trying to make the 'dream become true'. Time and space are very important in my installations, hence I truly respect the identity of the space where I work – I don't like to impose something, it is rather a dialogue with the space. That is why in the majority of the cases, except the public commissions, my installations are ephemeral and disappear at the end of the show. I like the idea of ephemeral art, because you can ask many questions and provoke reactions, but also respect the independence of the space. I am fascinated with the idea of change, how art appears and disappears in a space, and the space is again free for some new project. Jean Blaise is a French curator who developed this idea with the festival 'Voyage à Nantes' (Nantes, Take the journey!) and it is so amazing to have art in the city during many months, many sculptures and installations that totally change the life of the people in Nantes every year. It is precisely in this context that I created 'Stellar'. I think we need to stimulate and develop our capacity to imagine. It is a fundamental human need, but also a departing point; I believe in the power of the idea, and the 'empty' space within the work is crucial for it.



Stalker, Contextual pour Maison Martin Margiela USA - Art Basel Miami - in collaboration with Atelier Swarovski 4 transparent laminated glass sculptures, wood structure, Glue, Gantry clothes, portique 173x1,54x51cm 2 tables 74x74x240cm, floor installation, 630x150x3cm, 2013



Turbo, Patricia Dorfmann Gallery Paris, Galerie HO Marseilles, Galerija 10m2 Sarajevo, 2007-2013



AERIAL, laminated glass, wood, nails, white painting, site-specific installation at the Abbey Brauweiler in Germany, 3x12x4,5m / 2 tons of glass, 2012

In your artistic discourse, you often mention violence and the paradoxical impact between the outside and the inside as two main concepts that you address. How do you situate your oeuvre in the context of the various forms of violence that we experience now?

The reality is violent, not the art. If we look at the refugees, the migrant crisis in the EU, the actual injustice between women and men, racism, poverty...the list is long, unfortunately. My work strongly expresses the troubles and desires of our everyday life. My wish is to share experience and use my work to rise people's awareness.

You work with your own hands in order to realize complex glass installations, although many contemporary artists prefer to externalize the artistic production. How would you comment on the syntagms "artist as producer" and "artist as creator"?

I think it's important to work within the context of our time, and sometimes I am with many assistants, 7 or 8. I always make sure to work with the best people (usually artists, too) and care about every single detail. It is just a different organisation – you need to be attentive all the time and self-critic to be able to progress constantly. The real problem from my point of view is the difficult relation between artists and the art market, which leads many artists in the wrong direction. They started to be totally corrupted by the commercial system and end up making unvaluable works, and that represents the instance when they stop making art. On the other hand, we are living in a system, and you have to deal with it in order to survive. However, time always filters quality from the junk, but if you want to stay free, you don't have to care too much, and just do your own thing.

You also worked with fashion brands such as Maison Martin Margiela and Nouvelle Affaire. How did you approach these particular projects?

Well, these were truly exciting collaborations – two different spirits, but same passion. Pascal Humbert from Nouvelle Affaire and Maison Martin Margiela approached me with distinct projects. For Margiela I was invited to propose an installation for the shop in Miami within the frame of Art Basel Miami, and I decided to 'crash' the shop, as if some kind of accident happened there, but scrupulously connected to the details of the fashion objects and the clothes. I love the early work of Martin Margiela, I admire his way of being so minimal and radical.

With Pascal Humbert it was more a scenography, including the design of the lights for Hyeres Festival in the Villa Noailles in 2014.

It was very exciting and it opened my mind. We were spending our days in the wonderful Villa Noailles to prepare the Nouvelle Affaire show. I keep very good memories of it. What I learned from that experience is not to compromise, and to defy the world of consumerism.

At the moment, I am working on a scenography for a music performance with the curator Stéphane Ghislain Roussel that will take place in Mudam Luxembourg in 2019. I like new challenges, they are indispensable to keep you aware of who you are.





Nowadays there is a lot of concern regarding the easiness of creation, it's almost like we are being flooded with creativity. What do you think about this critical aspect of art production?

Yes, but when do we really create?

It's a very good point that nowadays people develop their potential for creativity. I'm also an art teacher in the Architecture school (ENSAPLV) and I encourage and stimulate my students to develop their potential.

We need creative people; of course, not everything is art, but, as I mentioned before, if more people have the opportunity to express themselves, we might cure a lot of problems surfacing in our world. I prefer happy people than frustrated people...we should not forget what Robert Fliou said: art is what make life more interesting than art...