**L&B Gallery**

**Anna Ill: Objective Chance**

When walking down the streets we constantly run into objects that have no apparent value. These are the engine of Anna Ill’s work (Vilanova i la Geltrú, 1990): abandoned materials such as pieces of wood, stone and discarded fabrics. Structures which have lost their practical and utilitarian functions, and that can be only brought back to significance if approached from a wider vantage point able to unveil the expressive potential hidden behind their inert bodies.

Such expressive potential brings to a paradox: although developing out of an object, it cannot exist without the engagement and will of the person who looks at it rather than seeing it, impregnating and appropriating it. This is what Anna Ill does, approaching instinctively the space wherein she moves and hoping for the materials themselves to interact with her, as it happens during her long night strolls in London, a city where she lives when she is not in Barcelona.

Thinking of all of this as a question:

do objects really mean something to us, or is it us to make them talk?

By virtue of this question, the work of the artist cannot be understood without addressing two concepts, coincidentally by two French surrealistes theorists: the psychiatrist Jacques Lacan and the artist André Breton. From Lacan, Ill plastically draws the idea of ​​extimacy (the presence of exteriority in the intimacy), as the repositioning of elements of private lives into public view such as the desire to reveal some aspects of the inner self to receive a feedback. From Breton, the artist takes the idea of ​​objective chance which explains the appearance of surprising coincidences that reveal something through the relationship between natural and human necessity.

This is what Anna Ill revelas to us in the current exhibition Objective Chance at L&B Gallery. The artist presents found materials that exerted a strong attraction on her to discover through her interventions the pulsing expressions of her own identity. Breton's concept guides her working process: the found objects work as coincidences that keep pushing her creative desire like it was predestined to be. These materials then acquire new meaning suggesting ideas of time, automatism, dreams and love.

“The works escape themselves”, says Ill, that after bringing an object to her studio does not immediately start to work on it, but rather store it with other pieces until she finds a sense and a new form for it to exist - arosen out of a nowhere somehow situated deep inside her. The point is to offer the chance of being beautiful to all structures. This can happen when a confrontation between different values creating tensions, mystery and attraction is produced. For this reason, Anna Ill converges and merges insides and outsides, functions and aesthetic attributes, hard and soft materials, intuitions and forms.

Objective Chance starts with silhouettes of sandbags typically present in London’s urban landscape, and ends with the silhouettes of the artist’s back beside objects ranging from a blanket from the artist’s trip to South America, a typical catalan roof structure from Collbató and a brick from London.

On the way between the two series of siluettes, we encounter other important pieces like the sculpture *Nomada*, which could be called a self-portrait if only it was a photograph. Works of art made of all that our senses, our mind, our body and our world carry on their shoulders and that, many times and without even being aware of us, allow us to make up the meaning of life.

**Press**

“When walking down the streets we constantly run into objects that have no apparent value. These are the engine of Anna Ill’s work (Vilanova i la Geltrú, 1990): abandoned materials such as pieces of wood, stone and discarded fabrics. Structures which have lost their practical and utilitarian functions, and that can be only brought back to significance if approached from a wider vantage point able to unveil the expressive potential hidden behind their inert bodies. This is what Ill does: transforming abandoned objects into pieces of subtle beauty that spreads from the outside to the inside, and questioning if it is just a coincidence that our eyes cannot turn away from materials that speak to us and draw our attention.“

Text: Clàudia Rius

Translation: Nicoleta Guastamacchieta