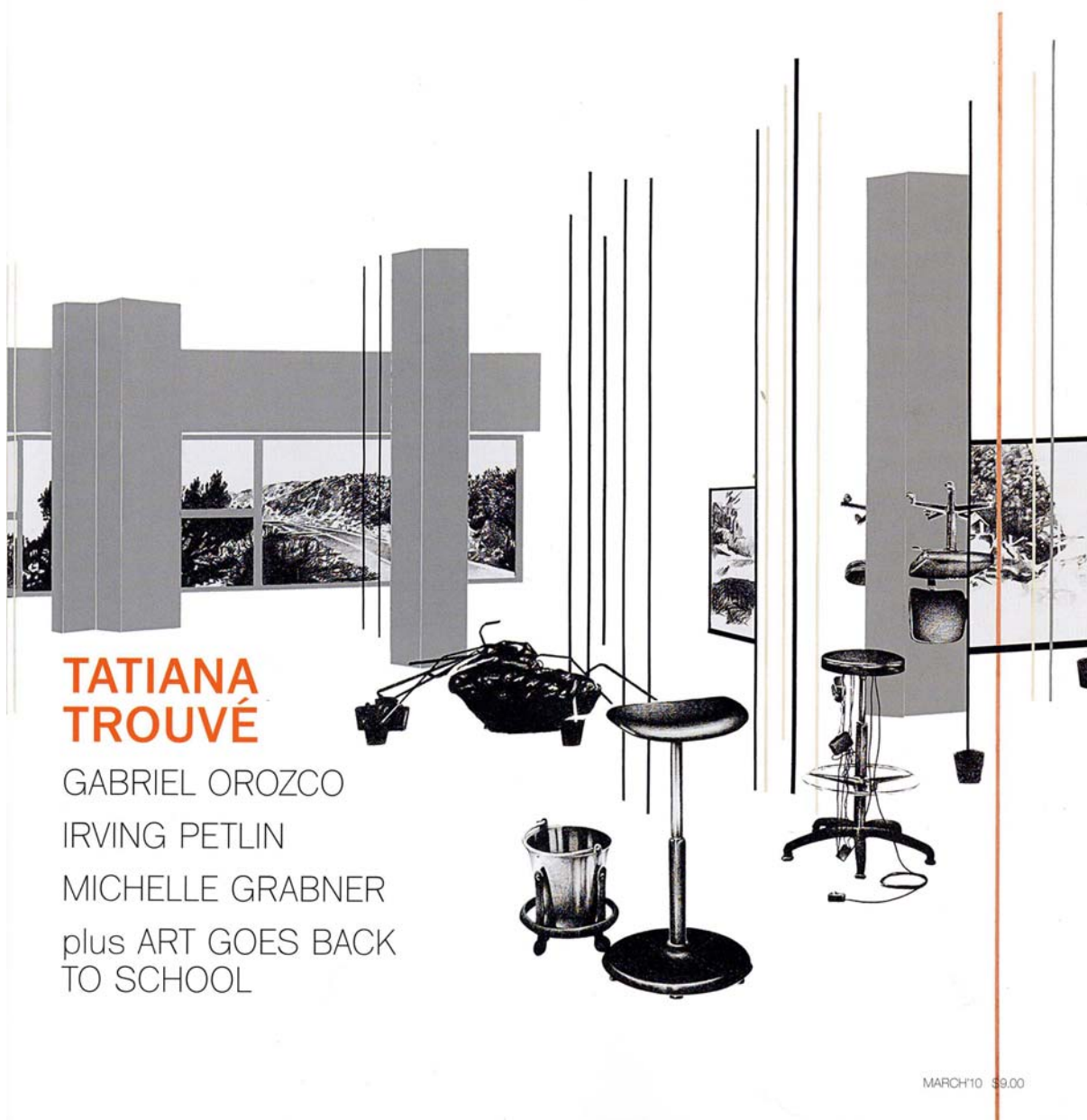


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**TATIANA
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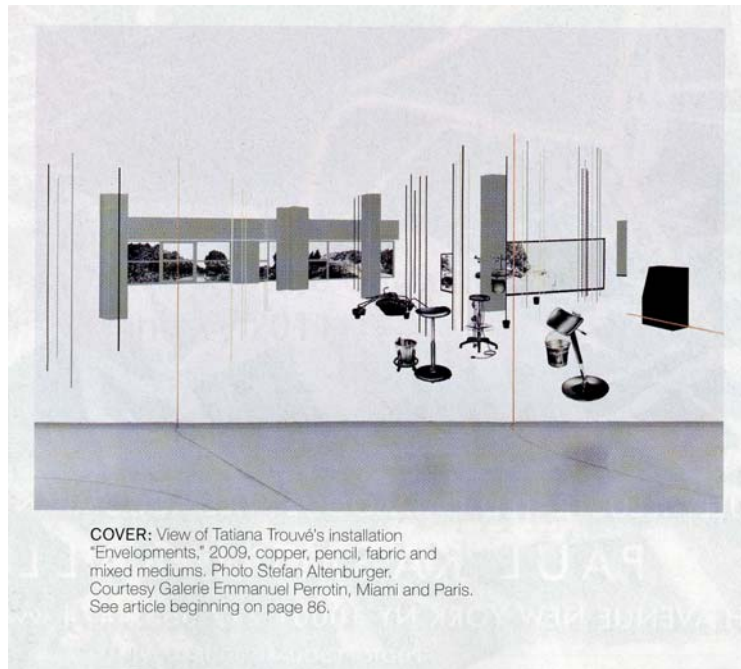
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FEATURES



COVER: View of Tatiana Trouvé's installation "Envelopments," 2009, copper, pencil, fabric and mixed mediums. Photo Stefan Altenburger. Courtesy Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Miami and Paris. See article beginning on page 86.

86 IN THE STUDIO

TATIANA TROUVÉ BY FRANCESCA PIETROPAOLO

Born in Italy, raised in Senegal, educated in France and briefly resident in the Netherlands, Trouvé, who now lives in Paris, reflects—in her work as in this conversation—on the relations among place, time and artistic process.



IN THE STUDIO TATIANA TROUVÉ

BY FRANCESCA PIETROPAOLO

In her installations, sculptures and drawings, the Paris-based artist Tatiana Trouvé tackles the uncertain boundaries of fiction and reality, the mental and the physical, and explores notions of time, space and memory. Her breakthrough work was *Bureau d'Activités Implicites* (*Bureau of Implicit Activities*), or B.A.I., an open-ended project begun in 1997 and developed over a decade, and which she now considers dormant. Drawing on the often frustrating experiences of establishing herself as a professional artist, she conceived the large-scale installation as a structure in which she might place her accumulated drawings and projects for works as yet unrealized, as well as give some form of visibility to her search for support as an artist. B.A.I. consists of 13 "modules" of various sizes and forms, shown sometimes as a whole and at other times in smaller clusters. Each is devoted to a different aspect of Trouvé's life. At the heart of B.A.I. is the *Reminiscence Module* (1999), a mirrored cylinder whose surface reflects the other modules, among them the *Administrative Module* (1997-2002), a construction akin to an office cubicle, which contains a perpetually expanding archive of administrative documents (grant applications, résumés, rejection and acceptance letters) and office supplies (staples, rubber bands, stamps). Trouvé's passports and identity cards are displayed along the module's exterior.

In 2000 Trouvé undertook a series of miniature installations developed from B.A.I. titled "*Polders*," the Dutch term for land reclaimed from water. These consist of familiar and yet somehow cryptic objects—desks and chairs, gym equipment, video surveillance cameras, mirrors, etc., made of metal, Plexiglas, rubber and other materials—realized at half their normal size. In 2007 Trouvé began to make isolated sculptures—generally linear abstractions—and to create enigmatic, carefully lit rooms, often displayed behind glass, again containing familiar-looking items made of various materials. The objects—bed frames and other furnishings, exercise machines, shoes, doors, etc.—have an unsettling psychological effect, and,

although they contain no figures, the rooms suggest the potential for a human presence.

Born in 1968 in Cosenza, Italy, to an Italian mother and a French father, Trouvé spent her early childhood in Orco Feglino, Italy, and lived from age eight to 15 in Dakar, Senegal. She graduated from the National School of Fine Art at the Villa Arson, Nice, in 1989, and relocated to the Netherlands in 1990 for a two-year residency at the artist-run *Ateliers 63* in Haarlem. She moved back to Italy in 1993 and settled in Paris two years later. In 2003 she showed at CAPC Bordeaux and participated in the Venice Biennale. Trouvé had a solo exhibition in 2007 at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, and the same year she made a site-specific installation for "*Think with the Senses—Feel with the Mind*," organized by Robert Storr at the Venice Biennale. (Trouvé and I worked together there, as I was assisting Storr on the show.) Also in 2007, she received the Marcel Duchamp Prize, which led to her solo show "*4 between 2 and 3*" (2008) at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

More recently, Trouvé has been producing a body of work that ties together her interests in sculpture, architecture and drawing. For her recent exhibition at the Migros Museum in Zurich [Nov. 21, 2009-Feb. 21, 2010], she produced site-specific sculptures, installations and her first wall drawings. Prior to that she had been making medium-size works on paper in graphite, often combined with collage, depicting spare modernist interiors. Called "*Envelopments*," her large-scale, pencil-and-collage wall drawings blend images of domestic settings with urban or natural landscapes. For the drawings in Zurich, she embedded copper filaments (which she also used in her earlier, smaller drawings) in the wall and extended them to the floor, where she placed large rocks.

I met Trouvé at her Paris studio on Oct. 20, 2009, as she was preparing for two major exhibitions, the one at the Migros Museum and another at Kunsthaus Graz, Austria (which opened Feb. 6). Later this month, she makes her solo New York debut at Gagosian Gallery. We spoke in Italian, which I have translated into English.

FRANCESCA PIETROPAOLO Perhaps we could start by talking about the *Bureau d'Activités Implicites* or B.A.I., which was conceived as an open work intended to evolve over time. What is time, for you?

TATIANA TROUVÉ Time is the theme underlying all my work. It's hard to know what time is, but I don't think I would work with it so much otherwise. The only thing we know for sure about time is how to calculate it. I like to think of it as a material, a formless space with which you can play, do different things.

Tatiana Trouvé in her Paris studio.
Photo Fabrice Gousset.

CURRENTLY ON VIEW

Tatiana Trouvé's "*Il Grande Ritratto*," at Kunsthaus Graz, through May 16;
"Tatiana Trouvé," Gagosian Gallery, New York, beginning Mar. 25.

"I BUILT MY MODULES IN ORDER TO FINALLY GIVE A SPACE TO THINGS THAT, IN OUR INNER SELVES, CAN HAVE HUGE SPACES, BUT HAVE NO FORM OUTSIDE."

FP *B.A.I.* captures the time of your life as an artist. Through your accumulation of materials, your creation of an archive, etc., is there an attempt to suggest a time regained? There seem to be multiple layers of time rather than a linear evolution from the past to the present and future.

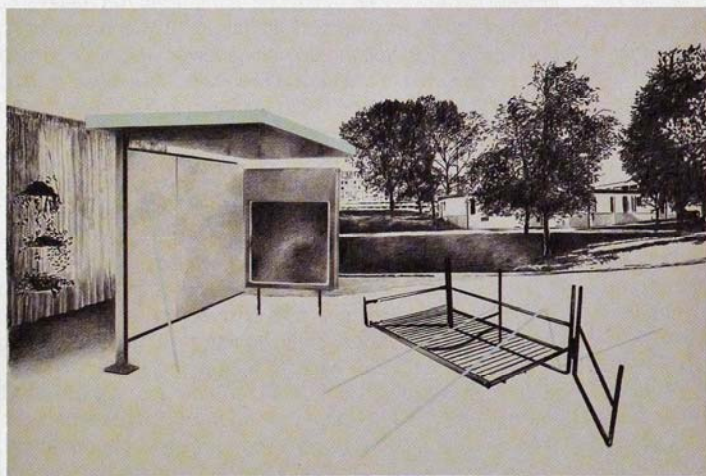
TT I was interested in working on the recovery of time, and of things that are never really considered constructive, or part of a productive activity. Like when you are waiting for your turn in line, or for a bus, an

has neither a studio nor works of art. From what moment is an artist an artist? Was the fact that I knew I was an artist enough? And what could I invent in this, a completely invisible space? So I began to play with forms of temporality. I tried to recover moments of my life to make something of them, including the time invested in finding a job and sending out résumés filled with all the things one should have done in a lifetime. I created *curricula vitae* with everything I could

Implicites, a blend of my artistic projects and the quotidian experiences in my life.

FP You call the structural elements of the *Bureau* modules. There is a close relationship between sculpture and architecture in your work. Do the modules express a desire to give a structure, in some way, to the disorder, the chaos of life?

TT I, too, asked myself this question. I explained these modules to myself as a kind of architecture of aridity, as if I were trying to create walls to keep the desert from advancing. And I tried to give a form to things that were formless, since my various projects, letters, even the titles of works had never seen the light of day. My modules finally allowed these materials to exist, be presented and stir the viewer's desire to actually consult them. I built them in order to finally give a space to things that, in our inner selves, can have huge spaces, but have no form outside.



Above, Untitled, from the series "Intranquility," 2008, pencil on paper, plastic, 32½ by 47 inches. Courtesy Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Miami and Paris.

appointment, a phone call. All this, which is an enormous amount of time in our lives, is regarded as non-time, as something wasted. This isn't so obvious. I believe these waiting moments are quite productive. In this waiting time there is a construction of the self, of the subject. And I also realized that the unconscious has no time, or an immeasurable time. So in my *Bureau* I started playing with all these different aspects of time. Back then, I had just arrived in France and I was looking for a job.

FP So you were *waiting* to find a job, and you turned this waiting time into something creative.

TT Not only was I waiting to find a job, but I lacked the economic means to work as an artist. I did not have enough money to rent a studio. My job search took all my time, and that took time away from my work as an artist. I asked myself if an artist could be an artist when he/she

have never done in my life: I was Chinese, I was a black man; I was 15 years old again, or 40, 60; I was a doctor, etc. I invented other jobs, other studies—in short, other identities. I started to have a thousand possible existences. It was really a form of projection into other lives, and into time. But, also, it was a means of taking a journey back through all my readings, all my projects, even all the rejections I had received. All these materials constituted the *Bureau d'Activités*



Right, model of the *Bureau of Implicit Activities*, 2007, wood, Formica, imitation leather, sand, metal, tape, mirror, Plexiglas, paper, approx. 3 by 24 by 12 feet. Courtesy Galerie Perrotin.

FP You were in art school at the Villa Arson, Nice, and then you continued to study art in the Netherlands. Did you also study architecture?

TT No, I didn't, but my dad was a professor at the School of Architecture in Dakar, Senegal, where he currently lives. He is what you would call an architect on paper, because he has never built anything in his life! My sister and I grew up in this architectural environment, and then we did some small jobs in the field, to have some pocket change. So the world of architecture—floor plans and the like—is familiar to me.

FP The *Bureau* contains various kinds of drawings, but they are not visible, as they are hidden inside the modules, in "archives" of various sorts. Some of them inspired your artist's book *Djinns* [2005]. How would you describe the relationship between your drawings and your sculptural installations? How do your drawings relate to an underlying theme in your work, the tension between visibility and invisibility?

TT This is a key issue for me. There's

a real difference between a project design and a drawing. In *B.A.I.* my project designs were hidden because they carry a potentiality, something that will happen in the future: hence they are not autonomous. My drawings are in and of themselves—autonomous. Drawing has a life of its own; it doesn't promise something else. It is not under our eyes to say, "I'm here, but only to make you an image of what will happen." The designs in *B.A.I.* existed as something to be potentially consulted; they could not be presented in the same way as my autonomous drawings. Afterwards, it was possible for me to show some of them, and to rework some of them as the artist's book, which was another space—yet another in-between space.

FP Your work establishes a very interesting relationship with the spectator, an oscillation between attraction and distancing. For instance, the "Polders" keep viewers at bay.

TT You cannot enter the world of the "Polders"; you view it from the outside. Their scale is so much smaller than

human scale that you cannot walk in anyway, and you cannot physically manipulate them. The furniture that is so often part of these small environments is recognizable, yet it is made in miniature. Sometimes the objects are placed behind mirrors or Plexiglas. What I wanted was to propose worlds that are above all mental. When there is a line that cannot be crossed physically, the work can continue to be completed. The same is true when we look at a picture, watch a film or read a book.

I take as an example Alighiero Boetti, whose work I first saw when I was a student. He has really influenced me—all of his works, but two in particular. One is *Lampada Annuale* [Annual Lamp, 1966], which the artist claimed switches on for a few seconds once a year—though you never know when. It consists simply of a vertical box with a glass top. Inside, there is a lamp. What's interesting is not the fact that this sculpture exists, that it can be seen as it is, but that it can become something, that it makes a promise. There's this huge distance



between all of its possibilities. Maybe the lightbulb switched on five minutes before my arrival, or will do so five minutes after my departure. Maybe it will never turn on, maybe it will turn on in 10 years. What will happen in 10 years, what will it be like then? Why at *that* very moment? Between the work of art and the spectator is a universe full of possibilities. The other work by Boetti consists of glass propped against a wall.

FP It's *Nothing To See, Nothing To Hide* [1969-86], a large sheet of glass gridded with iron.

TT Yes, "nothing to see, nothing to hide"—yet it exists between two worlds, the inside and the outside, and it suggests many other possible dimensions. I like to be able to create dimensions, too, although I render them in a completely different fashion—and perhaps not as radically as Boetti.

FP You once referred to thought as a plastic entity. Can you tell me more about this?

TT Thought is something very malleable to me. Sometimes I have an idea for a work, I start to make it, and an incident occurs, something unexpected. Other times a new reflection or way of seeing things compels me to change the project entirely. This is true of everything: it is the same for the scientist who experiments in the lab, for instance. And I believe that thinking requires a continuous modeling of itself. When you write a text, you reread it and rework it: it is a material that you work with to attract the reader, to take the reader in a certain direction. You enter a field at once plastic and mental. Similarly, making sculpture is not simply a matter of style and syntax, but a practice that attempts to seduce the spectator.

FP You speak about writing. You yourself created a work that consists of a series of titles or brief texts: the title *is* the work. Who are the writers that interest you the most?

TT Fernando Pessoa is one writer I read a lot, perhaps because he invented so many characters, which allowed him to invent many forms of literature. Then there are Borges and Calvino. But also Dino Buzzati, whose short novella *Il grande ritratto* [The



Great Portrait, 1960] has deeply influenced me. I reread it recently. It's really a masterpiece. That's the reason I titled my exhibition in Graz "*Il grande ritratto*."

FP So, a tribute to Buzzati.

TT Yes. They wanted to translate the title into English and German, but I found that it was really a pity, because there are titles that cannot be translated. For example, the French publisher's translation is *L'image de Pierre*, which evokes something different. *Il Grande Ritratto* is more metaphorical. What can the great portrait of a person be? How do you paint a person?

FP It also makes us reflect on the very idea of the masterpiece, the great work of art.

TT Yes, absolutely. Do you know the story?

FP I read it a while back. It is a kind of science fiction.

TT It is the wonderful story of a scientist who tries to re-create his late beloved wife in the form of a great, complex building. In it he somehow re-creates her brain and body, and all the qualities of her temperament, including her bursts of jealousy and rage: a woman brought back to life—regained by the man who loves her—but as something like a lost city. What is beautiful is the secrecy that pervades the story. It takes place in a highly guarded military zone; no one can access it, except for a group of scientists. There is a quote in the book which, to me, is a splendid definition of a work of art and how it can be approached. The soldiers say, "We know absolutely nothing, but of this

nothing at least we can speak." Ideally the spectator of my work is someone who has no information about the work and maybe even no understanding of it, yet *perceives* that nothing.

FP You have spoken to me about the pleasure of retelling stories as one remembers them, which you say is a way to always add new elements. Does this accent on the transformative power of memory and storytelling spring from your childhood in Senegal, where there is a rich oral tradition?

TT In Africa there is the tradition of the *griots*, who go from house to house in the village and tell you about where you come from and who you are. In the past they had a crucial role. Today, Dakar, where I grew up, is a metropolis, where people from the rest of Africa and from all over the world live. But the *griots* continue to offer their knowledge. When I was little, they would stop by our house, and I remember thinking, "It's incredible. They speak about my ancestors killing lions, and this and that, and I'm white!" So I began to imagine that maybe I was a ghost, another person belonging to a different reality. I invented for myself and my family a whole new dimension: we were invisible, transparent people, as if we were ghosts of some kind, living in another reality. That's why I titled my book of drawings *Djinns*. The *djinns* are ghosts or spirits often living in gardens. They are not physical entities. You cannot see them, but you can sense them.

Also, in Africa there is a unique way to capture time and toy with it. I remember

that once my mother invited a family friend to our house for dinner the following day, and two months passed before the person came by, taking my mother by surprise! This left a lasting impression on me. I realized that in Africa there is a different relationship with time, and among people. An invitation like that is a kind of a gift. When you invite someone to your house on a certain date it can also mean a week or months later. And the same with greetings: when two people meet on the street, they greet for maybe half an hour, because they greet the world of a person, the whole family, all your space.

FP Your works conjure an inner space, even if there is always a strong dialogue between inside and outside.

TT There is a really intimate and yet completely open dimension. What I call intimate is for me a mental space. This, for me, is intimacy.

Opposite, view of the exhibition "Today, Yesterday, or Long Ago . . .," 2003, at CAPC Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux.

Below, view of the exhibition "Polders," 2002, at Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Photos this spread courtesy Galerie Perrotin.

FP The body is also very important to you—even more so when it is kept out.

TT In my view the rational and irrational, the mind and senses, always mingle. What I like is to let them slip one into the other, and be complementary rather than opposite. Just like Boetti, who turned himself into Alighiero e Boetti. It is about being double, about taking one's double by the hand and doing things together. I am interested in structuring opposites together, to give life to multiple possibilities. I don't believe in categorical opposites. Rilke gave a beautiful definition for art: of artworks he said, "Seul l'amour peut les saisir," as it translates in French. There is a completely irrational movement that allows people to attract and be attracted, as in the case of love. *Saisi*—I really like this word in French, which means that we are caught by something. And in this being "caught," we are also "catching" something. It is a double movement.

FP You often use mirrors, which conjure the double. The small ones in the "Polder" [2001] that I just saw at the Centre Pompidou [in the group exhibition "Les Archipels Réinventés"] are like

the eye of the work looking from the inside out, from multiple angles.

TT The mirror is a passage to another space. In that particular "Polder" there are also small video monitors, where images flow. In that miniature architecture I tried to show that other spaces exist, and they are concrete. I also tried to point out the dimension of control pervading our daily life: think of security cameras and the like. For example, at the supermarket, the exit, with its magnetic security system, marks a frontier in and out of what is presented as an open, inviting space, yet is actually controlled. In that "Polder" the eyes of the cameras are directed at certain angles to make visible spaces we would not notice otherwise. Same for the little mirrors. In later, larger installations, I have always tried to use the mirror to the same effect: as another space that invites you to go beyond. Just like Jean Cocteau, whose characters go beyond the mirror into another dimension. In mirrors, ghosts and vampires can't see themselves, my dog does not recognize herself. This interests me and plays into my work: it is not about what the mirror reflects, but



"IN MY WORK, I EVOKE A MOMENT THAT IS NEITHER DAY NOR NIGHT: *ENTRE CHIEN ET LOUP*—A CERTAIN LIGHT WHEN THINGS ARE IN THE MIDDLE, WHEN SYMBOLICALLY, A DOG MAY BECOME A WOLF."

about its capacity to create other worlds. I use it to create holes in the architecture, so to speak—to open up other angles. That's what I tried to do in my installation for the Venice Biennale in 2007.

FP In many of its concerns—gravity, energy, infinity—your work shares a certain consonance with Arte Povera; you spoke about Boetti, and I'm also reminded of Giovanni Anselmo.

TT I was very sensitive to the vocabulary of Arte Povera when I was a student. It was a good answer to Minimalism—I say this even though I like Minimalism very much—in the sense that the Arte Povera artists were saying, "Okay, maybe we can reduce everything to the essentials of form and space, to this purity, but there is another aspect that is mental, maybe even 'poor,' in which there is an infinite field of possibilities." The important contribution of Arte Povera is its ability to draw on the world of the imagination, of fancy—which can never be erased—with a minimum of materials.

FP When you have a show, you usually get to know the venue in person well in advance. What is your working method?

TT I do that for all my exhibitions. I go to see the space, take pictures and recreate it in a model. Then, usually, I do more things than I should! My works are all delivered but I do not end up installing all of them. I don't work with 3-D simulation, but rather like the old-fashioned architects, with floor plans. It takes a lot of time.

FP So you're very patient.

TT I'm very patient! My dad teases me because he does everything with the computer, AutoCAD, etc. I seem to waste a lot of time, but I also gain time because I can really concentrate. Sometimes when you work in simulated space you can be seduced very quickly by a solution. You can arrive too easily at the correct scale, giving in to things that just "work" and look effective. But, after working on a model, when you're in

the actual space, you say "Gee, but it's tiny!" I like this perceptual shift, because then I have to respond to reality again. And I want to keep this kind of freedom. When I get there, that's when the work is finished, in that moment. This is what the legacy of Duchamp is all about: waiting for the unexpected, to make something with it. And for me this appointment is important! I work in the space late into the night; I like being able to intervene, discover unforeseen things. And then I like the surprise of seeing that things which worked in the model no longer work well, or not at all in the same way.

FP Do you begin from one object that inspires you to compose these carefully orchestrated spaces, or are you already thinking in terms of the ensemble?

TT I begin with certain items that trigger my imagination. Some objects resist a degree of abstraction that sets them free from their narrative—and by abstraction I mean what results from my formal manipulation, which allows me to pull



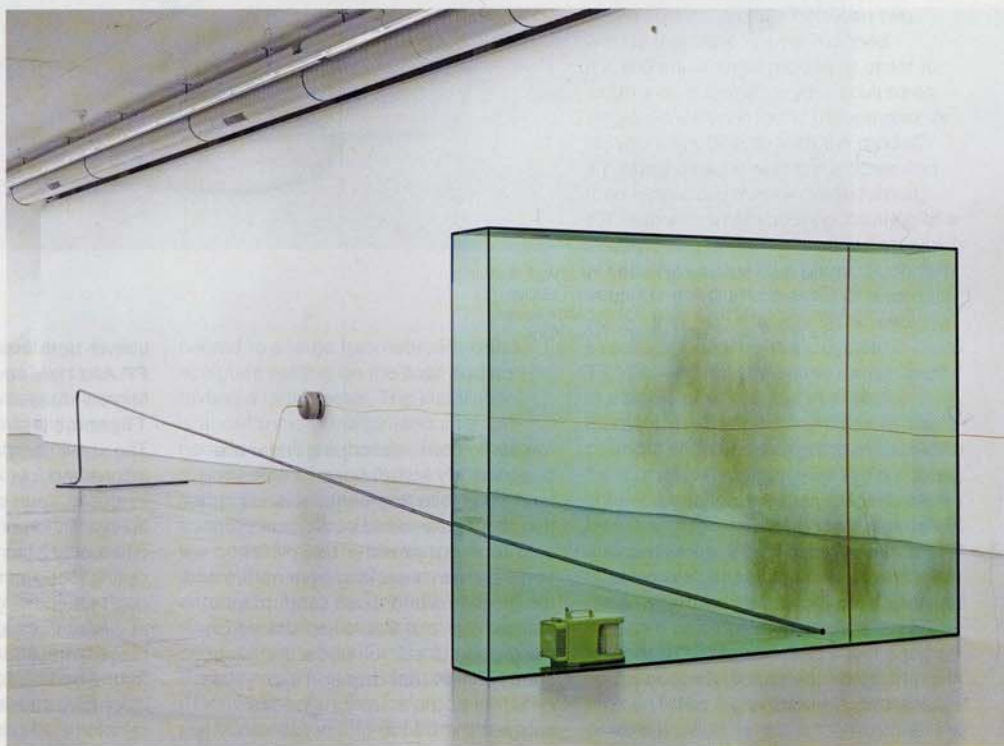


Above, view of 350 *Points towards Infinity*, 2009, plumb line, magnets; at the Migros Museum, Zurich. Photo Stefan Altenburger.

Right, *Promise of Line*, 2009, metal, Plexiglas, mixed mediums; at the Migros Museum. Photo Stefan Altenburger.

Opposite, view of Trouvé's untitled installation at the 52nd Venice Biennale, 2007. Photo Daniele Resini.

Photos this spread courtesy Galerie Perrotin.



them into a dimension of my own making. But other objects, I find, more easily lose a bit of their content to gain a new one, so that they refer to something else. Take a pair of shoes: if I use leather shoes, they are real shoes and I can't do much with them. But if I make a mold and cast them in bronze, they become represented. This representation establishes a relationship that I have with the world. Same thing with a mattress: if I place it as is in a room, it evokes sleep, softness, etc., but if I wrap it and then remake it in cement, it becomes sculpture. Now it may call to mind Pompeii, speaking of a fossilized story—a kind of petrified, congealed narrative.

FP Can you say something about the materials you most love to work with?

TT Well, I am unfaithful! I use copper a lot for its conductive properties. In architecture, it is used for electricity, water, gas—and, to me, it also almost suggests a nervous system. I also like to use copper because it is an important component of bronze and is thus associated with one of the oldest sculptural materials. Its vocabulary is much more open than, say, that of plastic, which is linked to a certain time, to a different type of processing. But it really depends



Detail from the studio model for a wall drawing in Trouvé's exhibition at Gagosian Gallery, New York, 2010. Photo Robert McKeever. Courtesy Gagosian Gallery, New York.

on what I'm doing. I use leather, stone, sand, a bit of everything.

FP Am I looking at a model of the Kunsthau Graz?

TT Yes, not an easy building. All the walls are curved. I have tried to create an installation in such a way that when you enter the museum you also exit it. Perhaps that's because of the relationship I had with the space: as soon as I walked in, I wanted to get out! There are all these columns, so I decided to toy with them: I made sculptures that

run along them, describing linear arabesques. My installations for this show tend to refer to fragments of landscapes, things that are found outside and that are recomposed within this exhibition—elements evoking both nature and the modern world. I use sand, plants, stones, etc., but also oil splattered on the ground to call to mind a car repair shop. Things that drip and slip—even on some of the existing windows—to suggest the traces of a cryptic activity. As I said, I like the idea of putting the

viewer both inside and outside.

FP And how about the show at the Migros Museum?

TT Let me show you the Migros model. The show comprises a series of installations and four wall drawings. For example, upon entering, you encounter an installation of 350 pendulums of all different shapes, suspended from the ceiling [*350 Points towards Infinity*]. They don't touch the ground, and they slant at different angles, depending on the placement of 350 magnets embedded, for the occasion, in the floor. The installation gives the impression of a huge rainstorm—a rain of pendulums. And it also suggests a crazy magnetic space,



with forces pulling in all directions. As you walk around it, you discover that I placed the pendulums so as to create on the floor the visual outline of a slightly irregular sphere, which alludes to infinity.

FP It seems to play with the idea of where we are in the world, suggesting we are always a bit off center.

TT And that every space *est gérée par une loi qui l'est propre*—is governed by a law of its own. This is evident also in another of the Migros installations, called *La promessa della linea* [Promise of Line]. It comprises a copper wire embedded in the wall which, after running through another wall element reminiscent of a gas cylinder, is con-

nected to a large geometric Plexiglas sculpture resting on the floor and containing a hydrometer. The installation is about transformation and interconnection—and this copper line is the key to the entire show. It crosses spaces and dimensions, and in so doing it transforms itself. Introduced right at the beginning of the show, the motif of the copper line resurfaces, taking yet another form, at the end of what I like to view as a journey of puzzling discoveries carefully crafted for the public. I devoted the last room to large wall drawings ["Envelopments"] that incorporate copper filaments running out from the wall onto the floor. These wires connect the

drawings with each other and with the space they inhabit.

FP In this new body of work the dialogue between the second, third and fourth dimensions is taken a step further.

TT Yes, it's true. With the wall drawings, the exhibition space—and more generally the actual space we move in and about—becomes the space of the drawing. The viewer enters right into it, becomes one of the elements of the drawing.

FP And as in your earlier and smaller drawings, you here use graphite and collage. How does collage figure in this new context? It seems to further complicate subtle dimensional shifts.

TT Absolutely. Also, I tend to work in drawing by subtracting and adding, like I do with sculpture. Some things in my installations are used almost as I find them, which is a form of collage, after all.

FP Lighting also seems very important in your creation of ambiguous, mysterious atmospheres.

TT Light is an integral part of the work and, to me, speaks of time in particular ways. In half-light, for instance, there is a very strong temporality. In my work, I attempt to evoke a moment that is neither day nor night: *entre chien et loup*, we say in French, referring to a certain light when things are in the middle—when, symbolically, a dog may become a wolf. Things are just between two worlds that have not yet touched.

FP You make small models in order to explore new forms for your sculptures. Do you draw your forms beforehand, or do you work directly with the model?

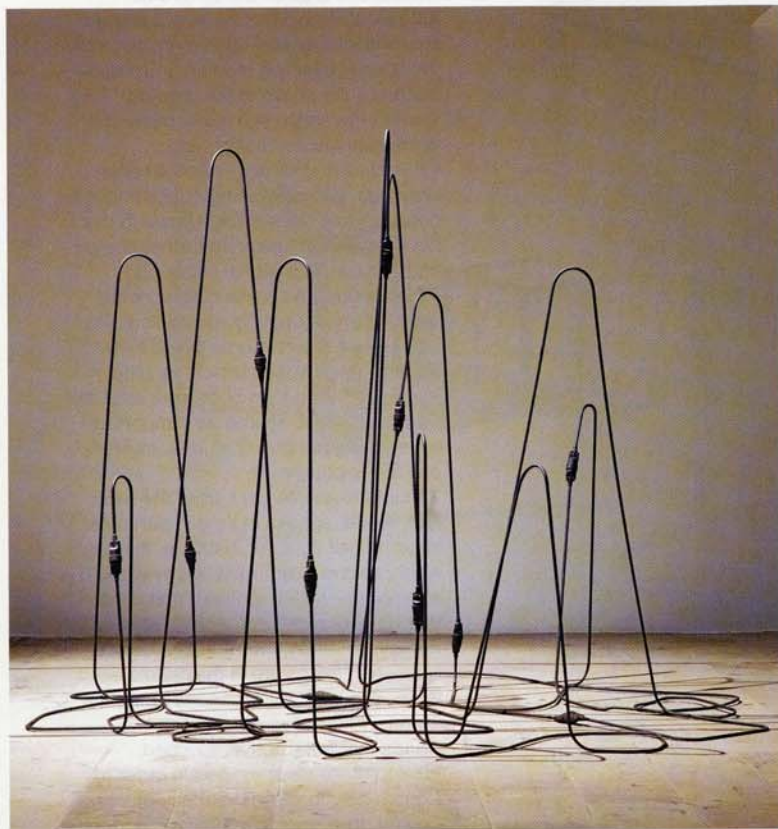
TT I start directly with the models and then reproduce them in large format.

FP Here is a small model consisting of a freestanding system of lines within which we see two connected plugs. Such self-feeding motifs, and the use of materials like copper, recur in your work, evoking circuits or continuous life cycles.

TT Yes. And the sculptures remain fixed in a single position, as if in a frozen moment, in a shape determined by the principle of self-generated energy. I like to think of these sculptures as having been shaped by the space that contains them, by the architecture itself—as if their often attenuated forms had been determined by a force of attraction pulling them from the floor toward the ceiling, defying gravity—as if there were magnetic forces at work. It's a little bit like Giacometti's sculptures, which look as though they are carved by a corrosive atmosphere, or energy, all around them. I love working with the idea of a form determined by

IN THE STUDIO

"I LIKE TO ALLUDE TO SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED JUST BEFORE WE LOOKED—AN IMPACT OR SOME KIND OF ACTIVITY THAT HAS CHANGED THE ORDER OF THINGS."



View of Trouvé's work at the 52nd Venice Biennale, 2007. Photo Daniele Resini. Courtesy Galerie Perrotin.

something imperceptible to us.

FP You have explored the double in two related series of drawings, which you called "Intranquility" and "Remanence." Their dialogue is like that between day and night, right?

TT Exactly. From my drawings in the *B.A.I.*, I got the idea of copying some earlier drawings. Revisiting also means making changes. So I decided to draw black on black, rethinking things that already happened. It's like when you wake up in the middle of the night in a space that you know, but that you experience in a different way.

FP Imagery from interior design and nature—plants, fragments of landscape—appear often in your drawings.

What are your source materials: photographs, magazines?

TT I use everything. I have archives of images catalogued by subject—both found images and photographs I take—but some things I draw directly because they are simple and I don't find them anywhere else. So there's a mixture.

FP You often employ fire as an image and as a medium.

For instance, you might burn the surface of a drawing. The Plexiglas object here in the studio has traces of some burning, too.

TT I like to allude to something that happened just before we looked—an impact or some kind

of activity that has changed the order of things. First I used dripping materials—like oil—and then I started to use fire. A wall drawing I am making for Zurich is of a burning car; in this and other drawings I used fire as a medium to turn some architectural elements drawn with copper into slightly rusty structures.

FP So it's about the beginning of a transformation.

TT Yes. The trace of an impact with no memory, no history.

FP Circling back to *B.A.I.*, with which we started this conversation: some read in it a critique of the pervasive control of bureaucracy, often associated with French culture. Did you intend this?

TT Yes—the administrative module. That is why I titled it as I did. But for the other modules, that's not the case. Perhaps many think about the administrative element because the work is called *Bureau*. Maybe I could have called it "laboratory," but to me that would have lent the work too experimental a dimension.

FP Too scientific.

TT Yes, and that was not my realm.

Today many people think of it as a critique of society, of bureaucracy, but in my mind it was something more open: it evoked both working time and personal time, since *bureau* in French also means a desk—something you work on at home. "C'est mon bureau" is my study in the sense of my worktable. So this title seemed semantically much more open.

FP What will you show in New York?

TT I would like to show large-format wall drawings enveloping the viewer, along the line of what I will have done in Zurich. I would like to propose that idea through new drawings conceived and made specifically for the gallery.

This exhibition will be after the shows in

Zurich and Graz, and so I will play somehow with what I did there, to do something specifically for New York. I was happy because the gallery told me that I could do what I wanted.

FP It will be your first show in New York?

TT Yes, so I am quite excited. ○

"Tatiana Trouvé: Il Grande Ritratto" is currently at Kunsthau Graz [Feb. 2–May 16], and the artist's solo exhibition at Gagosian Gallery's Madison Avenue space in New York opens later this month [Mar. 25–June 26]. "Tatiana Trouvé: A Stay Between Enclosure and Space" appeared at the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich [Nov. 21, 2009–Feb. 21, 2010].

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