

HEIDI WOOD

In 1997, when I met Heidi Wood, she was undermining the forms of the male, conquering modernism that invades the visual sphere. Her polyptychs foreshadowed the recent developments in her work. I liked this manhandling of dominant ideologies tied to the foundations of painting and language. The equivalence she established between irregular verbs in English (system, rule, exception) and the invention of abstract forms evoking the bastardized versions of modernism filtered through the omnipresence of design and graphics already participated in the third level that Stephen Wright refers to; a sort of third path.

A major turning point occurred in 2001 for the exhibition *Quotidien aidé (LES LOCATAIRES)*, with the appearance of "Serving Suggestions." Since then, she has worked on and questioned the complex, fragile, contradictory, futile, necessary, intimate, forced (etc.) relationships between the painting and its surroundings. This undertaking, which is very well analyzed by Philippe Coubetergues, goes through different stages. The painting is no longer alone. It is accompanied, presented, enhanced. A décor for a painting, a painting for a place, an ephemeral *mise en scène* for a photograph or an exhibition... Bringing together marketing strategies and presentation, she mixes economic and decorative registers, levels of readings, building up layer upon layer upon layer.

An essential question was already raised: where exactly is the artwork? From this moment on, Heidi's work is constructed on disorder. It is confused. By that I mean it occupies a disordered territory and it plays on confusion. Of genres and attitudes. Deliberately clouding the issue, she gives equal importance to the painting, its *mise en scène*, its décor, the elements that accompany it, the photographic trace, etc. Her exhibitions play on these accumulations of different types of strata, undertaking a very disturbing (for the purist) de-hierarchizing of values. From here on, she devotes herself to an art of projects, an art of attitude.

Gradually emerging from the comfortable domestic environment where she began her experimentation, she has confronted public spaces (the 10th arrondissement in Paris, Los Angeles, Budapest, etc.). A few excursions in storefront windows had already kicked off the process. Yet perhaps renewing with avant-garde concerns (for whom, as we know, social structures and forms were fundamentally linked by ideology) she decided to infiltrate reality using spam.

Today, her interest focuses more specifically on the forms of the common vernacular of globalized visual culture. Playing on the powers of the image, she works between fiction and reality, precisely at the imperceptible border between the two. She operates at the heart of the symbolic. And the fundamental issue at stake is authenticity.

Frank Lamy, 2007

Heidi Wood, œuvres de 2001 à 2007 catalogue

Translated from French