

## **Agathe de Bailliencourt Statement**

My art finds its most essential denominator in problems and possibilities of identity and the relation between individual and society. In this sense, my work addresses imperfection and failure, as well as disentanglement and liberation, progress and exultation. I see my work as an inquiry into what Francis Bacon called "the human form". How can the reality of something that consists of various ambivalent and inconsistent aspects be described and precisely translated into one single picture? The integral elements of my art are therefore figures of contradiction and repetition.

I'm a painter, working in situ as well as on canvas and paper. My paintings in particular are generally being positioned within the wider tradition of abstract expressionism, though its most basic characteristic is a more or less aggressive pressure to be as tangible as possible. It is linked to my own experience, directly and spontaneously.

On canvas and paper, the material I use is foremost my own personal life and identity (comparable to the work of Sophie Calle), my emotions and conflicts, my freedom and my liberty in relation to the echo of history, the history and context of art, society and the world in general. I try to express my belief that humankind does not attain perfection. I attempt to show a total sincerity of the self, which for me includes incidence, fate and error in the passing of life.

The process is regarded as being much more important than the result. My work reflects disorder and spontaneity, expressed in patterns of continuous, countless, irrepressible approaches. The simple and abstract power of words is grounded in concrete intimacy and meets an anti-romantic, if not punk position. The word 'punk' means for me a position of questioning established ways of thinking, to be against the conditioning of certain systems.

My drawings and paintings are built upon the process of leaving marks. Here, the palette of media I'm using ranges from hand-writing (with pastels, pencils or markers, or direct engraving in the paint), drawn patterns, fractured calligraphy or large bursts of primary color, mainly acrylic paint, which is mostly applied directly with my fingers. I like to have no intermediaries between my hands and the paint. If I choose to use something, I like tools that are not tools in the common sense, like wood sticks, pieces of cardboard or cork bottle stoppers.

The installations give me the possibility of escaping the initial frame of the medium and of painting in the real world itself in a very direct sense. I engage in the idea of being 'out of the frame'. Each and every installation is specific to a geographical site and a given social context at a contemporary time. The installations do not follow a precast plan but emerge in the actual occupation of the space when I start working. Again, this includes spontaneity and direct interaction in the process. I start with a real situation to construct my painting. This reality is not being modified, as I'm interested in its entire complexity. The resulting installations often give the impression of 'growing' as a continuum with no end.

Trying to describe what is first and foremost form, I'm looking for a resonance, if not a feedback of space. I'm not concerned with an analytical translation of awareness into a form of art, though I certainly find motivation in art being a trigger for individual awareness and reflection within reception and experience.

For the installations, I use acrylic or enamel paint, depending on whether the work takes place indoors or outdoors. The paint is applied on every medium: walls, columns, pavements, streets, buildings, bridge, cars, bikes, trees, grass, people. Compared to the range of media of my drawings and paintings, my installations are made of simple paint, which gives them a rather minimalist character far from street art or graffiti. Applied with a simple brush, the type and quality of paint is always chosen with great care.

The painted installations are mostly non-permanent pieces. This carries no consequence for me, neither in the process, nor in the quality of the piece. Once the installation is over, I do not want to interfere with its further life-cycle.

For the past two years, I have been increasingly creating installations with light. Here, drawings are being projected with light on buildings (for example, "Oh mon Dieu!" on the Berliner Dom). Again, each drawing is made specifically for the building or site.

As with the installations, where it seems that removing physical limits is helping me to achieve sovereignty with regard to the control of other boundaries, systems and schools of thinking, the work on canvas and paper is an inquiry into what is possible. This requires great demands in "un-learning" and "re-learning," calling not only for forthrightness, but also for the acceptance of noise. I'm trying to be as sincere and open as I can. The image of liberation that I'm looking for derives from this effort of baring myself as well as I can.