

States of War

Whereas when Laura Martin takes up a subject such as war, wars, it is once again with intimacy. The wars that the contemporary society keeps up by breaking social links, wars between individuals, which are in fact a miniature of the wars between States, wars which are born out of nothing, and generate a lot of suffering, she prefers to just hint at them rather than really showing them. Among her corpus, she composes a triptych of diptychs : photographs, but also sounds, a resonance and a rhythm, because Laura Martin had been a musician for a very long time, an exponent of harpsichord. Sound is present in her works, it is a musical score comprising silences and violent noises which traverses the six images. At the time of the States exposure of War (Philippe Lacoue Labarthe: police chief of exposure) Laura Martin proposed 3 dyptiques :

The first diptych : « Disorders », an allegory of war within a couple. A man, a child who are sleeping amid a complete chaos of objects and clothes. They have been taken in their greatest abandon, totally powerless in their lack of consciousness in front of the camera lens, like all those families disturbed within their own homes in countries at war. But violence is elsewhere. It is latent. The couple is in the process of collapsing, falling to bits and the world that surrounds the man and the child is this reality which seeks an escape from it all, nothing is structured any more : the bodies are falling into a frame devoid of any spatial references. How can they afford to sleep ? They have escaped into their sleep, shutting off the door of their eyelids to a world which is overwhelming them. The next photograph, the war is over, the couple's place par excellence, their bed, is empty. Nothing remains except references to reality which concretises the suffering.



“Disorders“ - Laura Martin 2002 - Photographic diptych “ 1,20 m x 1, 80 m

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« Tired Schiller », the second diptych, this is yet another war, the one figuring in social divisions. A man is withdrawn into himself at a bus stop : the « Schiller » bus stop, at the edge of a road which is ripping up a forest in his heart. The context could not be more romantic than this, but a racing car surges zooming by from the background of the picture, whereas the incarnation of the poet who inspired the ode to joy of Beethoven meditates/cries/sleeps. The allegory is present, it is the immense arrogance of modern technicity in the face of human finitude. This ripped up forest, society, this solitary man, the outsider at the edge of the road, this racing car, technique and money. Two speeds, or rather one immobility and a formidable acceleration. And Laura Martin presents the two photographs in a retrochronological fashion. Technology is not a progress if it is not shared. The ode to joy is pretty much tired by today's life.



“Schiller fatigué“ – “Tired Schiller“
Laura Martin 2002

Photographic diptych “ 1,20 m x 1, 80 m

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The third diptych : « Just a little is enough »

In order to trigger off war, in order to provoke human wrath, sometimes hardly much is required. It is lack of understanding that transforms the world. And the tyranny of human relationships. A little bit of empathy will do no harm, an attempt at least, and once again, with very little, everything can calm down and tenderness and love will be reinstated, like in the second picture. The evocation of the after-war is composed with the triangularity of the religious paintings from the Renaissance period : a kind of modern day Pieta, secular, an alleviation which contains mute suffering. No question of forgetting, but just the calmness required to continue to live. And the torturer is not always the one that we believe him to be, today's friend is at times yesterday's enemy and vice-versa. Relationships between people thus established with a little bit of dialogue will avoid a lot of wars, but its absence will contribute to as many wars. Arnaud Weber, November 2002.



“Il suffit de peu de chose « Laura Martin 2002

Photographic diptych “ 1,20 m x 1, 80 m