

DELPHINE COINET : BOOKSHOP

September 5 – Octobre 17, 2015

Vernissage Friday, Septembre 4th, 5 – 9 PM

Freely applying linguist Roman Jakobson's model of the 'functions of language,' the exhibit "Bookshop" can be regarded as a continuation of Delphine Coindet's extensive experiments with the poetic functions of language. Be it in the sculptures representing letters, in the cardboard scrolls, the paper calendars and fragments of discourse written or stated, it is the materiality of language's signs and codes that is on display without offering any obviously decipherable meaning.

Mention has often been made of the iconic nature of Delphine Coindet's works, and particularly of the way in which, even when materialized, the pieces still appear to be virtual images.

And though the work is as ever indebted to the computer age – its tools and its aesthetic – it nevertheless distances itself perceptibly from the virtual in its rediscovery of the material – unpredictable, imperfect, familiar.

Some of the pieces presented in the exhibit "Bookshop" draw on former works. Tunnel (1994), with its architectural dimensions, is as though duplicated here, reduced in scale, textured, and decorated for show. In this twisted version, it gives form to three large coloured books in a style more akin to Philip Guston's figurative painting than to the sculpture of Tony Smith.

The letters also come from the field of digital imaging. Each consists of a hand-drawn grid, whose squares are painted in watercolour. As with computer-generated dot-matrix images, the picture is composed of juxtaposed colour points. But once again, Delphine Coindet takes an unexpected direction. This hand-painted font of characters, riddled with lacunae, ambiguousness, is unlikely ever to be used as a means of communication.

Actual books are present as well, inserted into sculptures and thus no longer functional, along with the other linguistic objects/signs that inhabit this enigmatic "Bookshop."

Translated from the original French text written by Elisabeth Wetterwald