

Christophe Doucet

By Christian Malaurie

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Christophe Doucet sculpts space as much as materials. His vision ranges wide, from the material elements that configure a territory, to the symbolic elements that make it possible for people to live in it. He carries out implementations, shapings that trouble the common representation of the places where he performs. Thus, the identification modes that serve as landmarks and limits, which define the essence of a territorial belonging, are shaken, disturbed by the artist's work. Christophe Doucet's production doesn't aim so much at making artistic objects that the world of art will classify under the category *sculpture*, but rather at making anthropological objects with a strong aesthetic value that may be reappropriated by the people living in the territory where his intervention literally *takes place*. Whether in Europe or in Asia, within his own culture or in another, he proceeds in the same way, with the same will to produce a gift by leading the looks of those he addresses to question the shape that is given to see and its effects on life. Through these collective reappropriations linked to a specific place, the living game of the imagination that animates ordinary lives is here at stake in the form of rituals, often lost ones—at least in the Western world. What some would present as a banal gesture becomes, through the power of intervention of the artist, a remarkable chance to reconnect to an existing site, to reinvent some practices, to reactivate stories linked to the place. A word is given in an artistic form; a word that belongs not only to the artist but also to those he addresses with efficiency as much as modesty. The monumentality of the sculptures exhibited in full visibility leaves place to the aesthetic power of an invisible that matches, creates a link with the inhabited space and makes the spectator "face time". The act of artistic production, signed by Doucet, assumes full meaning in this particular manner in which the time that inhabits a place spreads—through the device and the artistic shape made by the artist—to its full thickness. The place then finds unsuspected memory strength. Doucet puts materials together, reuses ordinary objects to make his "sculptures". He thus creates meaning effects where the uncanny, the enigmatic find their place. But in the end, beyond this play on visual aspects through which his work is presented to the permanent or ephemeral inhabitants of a territory, a rare symbolisation dynamics comes to life and allows a community of beings to be as one in a place revealed by an extraordinary powerful artistic act.

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Documents d'artistes Aquitaine & Christophe Doucet