



Héloïse Audy

Alphabets

multimedia installation

January 24th to February 28th 2009
opening Saturday January 24th at 2 pm

Within a tactile interactive space, nineteen women of different origins recite the alphabet in their maternal tongue. Through each of these feminine presences, an unutterable part of their identities is revealed by an intonation, a hesitation or a rhythm. The pattern of the alphabet is a pretext through which another form of communication is engaged as it happens through the body and the texture of the voice, in a language originating upstream from words.

In this installation, the language is apprehended through time, by multiple and successive layers. Only when the viewer steps upon the huge carpet crossing the gallery do the lips of the women reciting the alphabet appear, in a series of random encounters thus initiated.

The voices that superimpose to form this resounding patchwork are those of women who are staying here for a short period of time or, in most cases, who have decided to settle down here and recreate their home. Language, in this context, takes a whole different dimension. It becomes the locus of roots and the locus of memory. Sometimes, as the years go by, this locus of the origins becomes a hazy space, at the very edge of oblivion. The different paths each of these women has followed influence in a subtle manner the way they pronounce their alphabet. This installation thus bears witness to those complex realities, closely linked to the preservation and the transmission of language, but also, in some cases, to its deterioration, leading to the eventual loss of the language and culture of origin.

Héloïse Audy is presently completing a Masters degree in fibers at Concordia University, in Montreal. Her multidisciplinary practice is rooted in a passion for textile, a material that she uses in a recurrent way, through installations that bear poetical and social resonances. Women's reality occupies a predominant place in her work. In the past few years, she has also been particularly interested in the thematic of language, focussing her attention on the translation of phonetic structures from different languages into textile structures.

She has received grants from CIAM, as well as from FQRSC.

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