

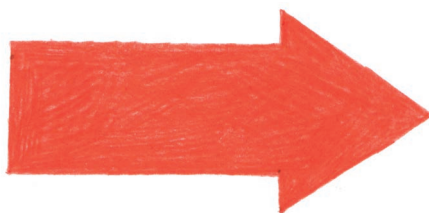
Kunsthalle Wien

Museumsquartier

NATHALIE DU PASQUIER



BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT



15/7 – 13/11 2016
Booklet #DuPasquier

www.kunsthallewien.at
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna, Austria



BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT is the telling title for Nathalie Du Pasquier's first solo-exhibition in Austria. Covering an artistic career spanning 35 years, the exhibition brings together her paintings and patterns, sculptures and designs, constructions, carpets, and ceramics to create a world of different cities, of architectures and forms that fall under one roof to build a new understanding of how her practice has evolved.

Larger than life, her work looks at the trope of the still life in an entirely fresh and individual way. The exhibition enters new terrain to see and understand how Du Pasquier considers and plays with complex arrangements of forms, the expressive and emotive relations between things, and the space between objects and their representation.

Self-taught, Nathalie Du Pasquier began her career in product design. At the age of 23, she was the youngest founding member of Memphis, the influential Milanese design and architecture collective launched under the direction of Ettore Sottsass in 1980.

Since 1987 however, her main focus and passion has been to paint. Although she primarily sees herself as a visual artist, her measured approach to formal attributions lies not only with regard to her own work, but also to hierarchies within artistic fields: "What bores me about the art world is the myth that art is so precious, and that it should be so expensive. Art is just what you do.

It is not less worthwhile to make a pattern or a carpet than a painting in the end."

BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT averts a chronological framework and instead opts for an intuitive choreography, a constructed environment similar to the way in which the artist creates her painterly or sculptural compositions, a methodical yet free and lyrical procedure. As conceived by Du Pasquier, pieces from decidedly different periods of artistic production are presented side by side, portraying the natural evolution and exchange between design and painting, as well as illustrating recurring elements and processes of making that ultimately underscore all of her oeuvre. Functioning as a type of alphabet, her work is constantly enriched by new objects and signs, following a peculiar yet powerful path to construct and compose forms, sculpt space, and render representation anew.

The division of different rooms, considered as houses or cities of intrigue, constitute the central exhibition space. In each of these rooms creative phases are presented in a wild jumble of chronologies, materials, and motifs.

The exhibition at Kunststhal Wien is the first extensive solo show dedicated to Nathalie Du Pasquier at an international institution and is thus a long overdue homage to her oeuvre in all its genre-spanning complexity.

Luca Lo Pinto



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani

For this exhibition I wanted to show work produced in the last 35 years.

I worked as a designer until 1987 when I decided to become a painter. After a short time, objects and the arrangement of forms became the main theme of my work.

I purposely avoided opting for a chronological presentation, trying instead to juxtapose works done in different periods, including the design period, highlighting the recurring elements that very soon appeared – developing a kind of alphabet enriched with new signs and objects. At the end, I wanted to create a “setup” with the elements collected during this long period, which could be considered as one single piece.

This large “exhibition as installation” looks a bit like a part of a city, made of different houses in which I decided to include a collection of works that were selected around some themes in my practice. The categories that my brain has identified for the production of work. But also the “streets” contain elements and links of course.

So as you enter, a long shelf extends as a kind of self-portrait made of small works from various periods, objects I made, stones, bricks, small drawings and paintings as well as some other elements recognizable as being represented in my paintings. The shelf looks similar to what you see when you enter my studio in Milan although on a slightly larger scale. It should give the impression of the multitude of inputs that feed my work.

Then you enter the “city”.

Initially you see the first “house” which is envisioned as the “scientist’s room” or “my room”. The outside of it is covered with a wallpaper so as not to forget that I began my working life drawing decorated surfaces. This room represents where the “big game” begins. The big game starts in my brain, in this secret room where I connect my different experiences in order to create new ones. Inside this room there are works from all different periods, from 1982 until now. There are pieces of furniture that were designed for Memphis, there are some patterns that were supposed to become textiles, and there is a sofa with some of them realised. Most of all there are paintings, all of them starting points for a series. All the pieces in this room are steps and when they are all together without chronology they continue to create new connections.

On the way to the second house you will see constructions I made, these pieces are sometimes models for paintings and sometimes they just exist like big antennas. You will also see some big paintings representing them.

House 2, the pink one, includes the compositions of objects. As mentioned above, the arrangement of things is the issue around which all of my work is based. The whole exhibition is about that, and nonetheless I wanted to create a special room for a number of these paintings, that were realized in a systematic way for about fifteen years every day. They were created from small sets installed in the study near the easel. From time to time,

the objects were arranged and portrayed in a very meticulous way – bigger than in reality – resulting in silent oil paintings. Gradually the objects in the studio were replaced by wooden constructed things as objects to be represented (of the same family as the ones you saw outside). In this room all the paintings represent things that were in front of me. On the outside of that room there is a big painting of an engine, a painting I like also for its size. A big engine.

In the other corner, there is the house of drawings: House 3. Before entering, you can see another group of big paintings. I wanted to hang them high so that the viewer could feel small in front of these small objects represented “big”. When things are painted big they seem more silent, more STILL life, it also takes longer to paint them and that adds time to them.

In the house of drawings there are works from two periods. The ones produced in the 1980s when I was a designer, and the ones I started doing again from 2009. (In fact for many years I gave up drawing and only painted!). As a designer it is normal to draw, all projects come from drawing and even though very few of my things were produced, I did many drawings, even of architecture. There was a period in the early 1980s when I would have liked to be an architect, of course that was impossible for someone like me who did not want to go to school, but I enjoyed designing houses and cities. In 2009, during a residency in Ireland, I started to draw again. During that time, I produced many still lifes which were what I was mainly interested in.

However these drawings are also suggestive of small architectures. Executed in the middle of sheets of paper, the drawings become almost like buildings, fortresses with courtyards, and paradoxically they make you think of larger spaces. They are composed of different elements but appear as single objects, they also introduced me to the idea of monochrome. They are no longer – as in the paintings – spaces in which you can penetrate. There are also abstract drawings in this room. Paper is a material with which one can experiment easily, less expensive than canvas, one feels more courageous to try out things. The hand is really the magic instrument transferring to the paper the oscillations of the brain. These drawings appeared in a moment where I had resumed to draw textiles and to review my work as a designer. I realised I did not always need to have a model in front of me, especially since my models were very abstract objects, I could build my things directly on the paper. I am still in this exciting moment.

Continuing through there is a space between the house of drawings and the other small house that we shall enter later. In this space I wanted to exhibit floating works, works “in-between”. I have always enjoyed entering the studio in the morning and being surprised by a work I had done the day before as if it was the first time I was seeing it. A strange feeling of “straniamento”. With this group of works that combine 3D pieces with a kind of trompe-l’oeil painted on paper and cut out, I have that same strange feeling every time, my eye cannot be sure what is the 3D piece and what is flat on the wall. Every time seems like the first time.



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani



Model for the exhibition. Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani

I understand now it is in front of me, that this work is talking about the conflict between the tangible and intangible, my theme “par excellence”. The ambiguity of this juxtaposition takes us totally away from the world of representation. I return to thinking about the status of the object as it was during the design period, but with the mind of a painter.

In the little house 4, after all these things and colours and representations, we enter a very restful space. It is monochrome and contains only 3D shapes. It is very silent here, maybe even deaf.

In the streets of the exhibition, (not in the houses) there are carpets. These carpets are a selection from the many carpets I have designed since the early 1980s – for Memphis in particular. In this exhibition the carpets function as landmarks, identifying the different areas of the exhibition. They are colourful, decorative elements covered with signs borrowed from various genres, from flowers to road signs. One could ask if they have a different status from the paintings on the walls, they do: they are carpets and you can walk on them.

In the last part towards the exit there are two spaces, not real houses because here one can see that the works are still in the making and cannot be closed within a definitive structure. The paintings presented here continue to maintain the structure of the still life, or perhaps even of an urban landscape, these forms do not represent anything but they are connected together in a similar way to the arrangement of objects. The type of relationship between the elements remains the thing that interests me.

On the way out, turning a corner, there is the “first painting”, a work done in 1985 when I was still working as a designer. The theme is quite obvious, there is only energy, no silence, two people pursued by a flaming beast run toward the exit. It is a large panel realized on the occasion of an exhibition in Denmark called *Homo Decorans*. The use of decoration is applied to the expression of feelings. And the feeling is: go on.

In the spaces between the rooms and the outer walls, you have seen other works from different periods, they did not really fit in any of the rooms but somehow fill the gaps between them, organically linking the elements and participating in the creation of this big installation. It was not so easy to decide what works to exhibit and what to exclude. Together with the curator Luca Lo Pinto, we decided from the beginning to work on this show as an installation but it was only at the end of the process that the installation became obvious.

A last word about the title “BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT”. In the show there is only one object which can be noisy: the “Pico”, a big object that was made following a tradition of Columbian origin when, for parades, people decorate and take around big sound systems playing very loud music. This Pico was made by Plus Design, who installed electronics and speakers in one of my constructions, and the noise coming from it comes from a day in the studio.

Nathalie Du Pasquier

Program

Sunday Tours

Join our art educators on a trip through Nathalie Du Pasquier’s oeuvre. The exhibition juxtaposes different phases in her artistic production and illustrates the evolution of her work and the connections between design and painting.

Sun 17/7, 14/8, 9/10, 30/10, 6/11, 4 pm

“Form Follows Fun” –
Nathalie Du Pasquier
and the Memphis Group
With Michael Simku

Sun 24/7, 21/8, 18/9, 23/10, 4 pm

Art and Design – No Space
for Hierarchies
With Wolfgang Brunner

Sun 31/7, 28/8, 4/9, 11/9, 4 pm

Sources of Inspiration – From Africa
to the Wiener Werkstätte
With Martin Pfitscher

Sun 7/8, 25/9, 2/10, 16/10, 13/11, 4 pm

Sketches from a World of
Thoughts – On Artworks
and Everyday Objects
With Daniela Fasching

Thu 15/9, 7 pm

Curator’s Tour

Tour with the curator Luca Lo Pinto.

Sun 2/10, 5 pm

HiStories / Geschichte(n)

In the series *HiStories / Geschichte(n)*
Nathalie Du Pasquier shares her
thoughts on the works of other artists.
Even though her own work will not

be discussed directly, the lecture instead reflects her influences, tastes and interests.

Part of Vienna Design Week

Duo Tours

A personal approach to the exhibition and the subjects at hand provided by two alternating employees of the Kunsthalle Wien.

Tue 23/8, 6 pm

Katharina Murschetz
(Head of Press/Communication)
Dalia Ahmed
(Marketing Assistant)

Tue 13/9, 6 pm

Isabella Drozda
(Head of Education)
Adina Hasler
(Marketing Assistant)

Tue 4/10, 6 pm

Andrea Hubin (Dramaturgy)
Martin Walkner (Education)

Tue 18/10, 6 pm

Lucas Gehrmann (Curator)
Michael Niemetz (Technology)

Serigraphy Workshop

In cooperation with Viadukt
Screen Prints. A Workshop
on two afternoons.

Sat 10/9, 2 – 3:30 pm

Part 1, Theory and Inspiration

Tour of the Exhibition and
Introduction to Serigraphy
Kunsthalle Wien Museumsquartier

After a tour of the exhibition,
Bernadette Meisel and Barbara
Heiner of Viadukt Screen Prints will

introduce you to the techniques of serigraphy. Inspired by Nathalie Du Pasquier's world of shapes and colours, you can then start sketching your initial thoughts on the design you will be realising in the practical part.

Sat 17/9, 2 – 6 pm

Part 2, Practice

Serigraphy Workshop at Viadukt
Screen Prints, www.viadukt.at
Gumpendorferstraße 132,
1060 Vienna

The practical part at the Viadukt Screen Prints Studio is very hands on. You will be given the opportunity to transfer your designs onto textiles or paper using different serigraphy techniques. Feel free to experiment with colours and patterns.

Registration at:
vermittlung@kunsthallewien.at
Costs for the workshop series including tour and material:
60 Euros per person

Program for Children

Mon 18/7 – Fri 22/7, 11 a.m. – 1:30 pm
SUPERLAUT – The Magazine
Kunsthalle Wien Museumsquartier

Join us on a tour of the exhibition BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT by the artist Nathalie Du Pasquier and let her ideas inspire you. Use your impressions to create a magazine. For this project we need clever and funny writers, keen photographers, smart puzzle makers, and cool illustrators who enjoy being creative together.

Sun 25/9, 12 – 3 pm

The Colourful Print Workshop viennacontemporary, Marx Halle

Nathalie Du Pasquier's artistic world is colourful and her painting is almost like an explosion of colours, shapes, and patterns. Besides her paintings, the exhibition includes furniture, materials, and carpets she created as a designer, or things she finds particularly interesting, such as vases, tools, or stones. Our workshop at the viennacontemporary was inspired by Nathalie Du Pasquier's art. At the colourful print workshop, you can experiment with colours and patterns and print your own tote bag. Please wear something you don't mind getting dirty!

viennacontemporary
Thu 22/9 – Sun 25/9
Marx Halle, Karl-Farkas-Gasse 19,
1030 Vienna
www.viennacontemporary.at

Colophon

Exhibition
Kunsthalle Wien GmbH

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&
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