

## **An Intuitive Approach**

There is in Genevieve Maquinay a world of her own that is revealed to us through her imaginative and highly individual concept of the universal in art, and that makes itself uniquely present in her work. The most diverse objects abound. Occupying a space and creating a world. They produce the most varied connections and articulations. If these humble, familiar objects are important to her work, it is because they are valuable to her, as their presence materializes and occupies the space in which she lives and moves. They arrive at a marvelous material, spiritual and conceptual balancing act, expanding the possibilities of working with a diverse array of materials and found objects. Their scale, the strangeness of their forms and their lived surfaces, contribute to giving her works a unique character and a direct psychological presence. And yet, they are also fragile, playful and unpredictable in their making. She dares to work with no preconceived ideas, free of all prejudice. She touches inanimate objects, ordinary materials that through her hand, come to life. Their power comes from their challenging and exploratory nature, as well as through their links to ancient cultures, such as Native American and Universal art.

Maquinay, through her work, rediscovers for herself and for the viewer various aspects of a universal art tradition. She proposes a return to the fundamental elements of artistic endeavor. An imaginative vision of things, a vision that is immersed in the primal nature of the world. Ancient art creates meaning and powerful objects through animistic impulses, ancient beliefs and using the natural materials that surround them. Wood being one of their main prime materials along with various metals and organic substances. 'The Ship Goes', is a great example of her links to this timeless ancient tradition, she combines a hammer head,

stone, wood and bamboo string. Her group of sculptures, 'Sacred Tales', have a magical quality to them, they are ritualistic and of a protective nature. 'Attente (Waiting)', is a protection piece, a 'bird' taking care of its baby, represented by a Chinese stone. Her pieces stand out because of their animistic qualities and form part of the universal vision of human history, divested of personal implications. She is fully engaged with extending the possibilities of creation, art and sculpture, by subjecting its defining features to new ways of seeing as well as creating her own rules and limits. 'Terre Brûlée (Slash and Burn)', is a good example of this attempt to create a personal set of rules. This cosmic tradition is also evident in her large scale works, now 'in situ' in Brazil.

Maquinay is aware that so much of contemporary art is failing in its understanding of the mystical aspects of life and art. Viewing her sculptures, our perceptions are thrown into a realm of uncertainty because of her exploration of unexpected ways of creating balanced relationships between vastly different organic and non organic forms. They also propose a contemplative manner of engagement, drawing us closer to understand the various elements that go into their making, their unexpected materials and the complexities in the readings of their various possible meanings. Her art is held up by memory, as much as it is about the here and now. The main subject matter of art should be the artists own experience, her relationship with the world, through her own feelings and ideas. One can also detect elements of the irrational in her work, a surrealism that is likely influenced by her training in Belgium and Colombia. We must not leave out that she is a Colombian born artist, daughter of a Belgian father and Colombian mother, and that the influence of these two cultures are present in her work. Her sculptures are as complex as they are fragile, as vulnerable as the wings of a feather, capable of allowing for the most beautiful flights of

the imagination, reminding us of Icarus daring to fly so close to the sun. So we can see the whole range of contradictions, oppositions, wonderings and a certain struggle for survival, a desire to fly to the highest heights of human endeavor and creation. It is also possible that her work contains, I suppose, a sense of loneliness and of deep connection simultaneously. Her work doesn't escape from these contradictions or avoid these problems, it deals with them, as only an artist of her caliber, sensitivity and consciousness can. She does what she does without playing to the gallery, and gives the impression that it is all perfectly natural, without self consciousness, and somehow she is able to arrive at the most wondrous results. An artists dialogue with the art of other cultures reveals and creates new meanings and interpretations. More than playing homage she is directly engaging in a dialogue, she is questioning, confronting and illuminating her own originality. She goes beyond trying to impress anyone and tests herself instead, until she arrives at her own definition of harmony, beauty and meaning.

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