

Delphine Coindet

— Modes & Usages de l'art

From 10 April to
28 June 2015

What excited us when Delphine Coindet's work began to appear in the mid-1990s was the irruption on the art scene of an oeuvre that is simultaneously image and object, and intent on not blending in with reality. Basing her art on simulacrum, artifice and theatricality, Coindet focused on the notion of setting, style and, as she puts it, "the ability we have of reducing our surroundings to schematic forms while leaving behind a trace of what we are."^{*}

^{*}Unless otherwise stated, all quotations below are by Delphine Coindet.

Coindet is one of the first to integrate and highlight the computer in her sculptural work as a tool and especially as a way of thinking. Thanks to CGI, Coindet's art clearly showed at the time her desire and ability to assert its difference from reality. She has made over our environment into digitized 3D imagery: buildings, stones, diamonds, water, gears, fountains, flowers, harp, mountain, teepees, boulders, plants, feathers... These generic images took on volume.

Although part of a minimalist tradition, her works bear fine titles that in fact alter the minimalist element running through them by forcing an image to emerge. Coindet introduces a certain complicity between minimalism and digital representation. Michel Gauthier defines the artist's sculpture as "...an image that has fallen into the three dimensions of reality under an appearance that could easily have been different" (*L'Irréel du présent*," Delphine Coindet, Lyon: Les Presses du Réel, coll. La salle de bains, 2006). In a word, the relationship and interdependence of form, text, image and imagination have always been funda-

mental and will remain so.

"...Images today are no longer made to last and demonstrate nothing other than their belonging to a flood of data that has become uncontrollable; my work consists less in producing than in extracting certain images from that flood, that mathematical magma, and offering them as proof of the existence of an artificial world in a perpetual state of becoming, like 'beautiful hypotheses'."

In 2004 Coindet mounted *La Belle Hypothèse* (Beautiful Hypotheses) at Crédac. For the occasion we inaugurated a special program for which our featured artists were to design posters for a backlight display sign located outside in public, just opposite the art center's entrance. Coindet filled that space with a preparatory digitized 3D image from *La Belle Hypothèse*, a counterpart of a 3D object installed inside in the exhibition galleries. A plywood E rested its branches on an inflatable pool-shaped blue structure. A painted metal lotus set on the E was swept by a light beam in the colors of the spectrum, introducing the notion of time in this artificial setting.

"Color remains central, construction with color, with the sensation of color."

Today, with the didactic-sounding *Modes & Usages de l'art* (Modes and Uses of Art), Coindet continues to examine the questions of art's function and its modes of representation and production. As plastic and symbolic objects at one and the same time, the works featured in the show play on the unresolved ambivalence between art and design. Her initial sculptures, the result of 3D computer modeling, give way to assemblages that are more unstable looking. Mirrors, sand, fabrics, ropes, and torn and pasted pieces of paper are recurrent materials, which are joined here by a new element, glass.

"Multiplication and the concept of the series are components of my approach to art because I believe that the effectiveness of any artifice lies not only in the pertinence of the representational modes it explores, but also in its capacity to reproduce itself

in an infinite number of examples of itself."

The first gallery's "**Architecture & Utopie**" (Architecture and Utopia) features pyramidal structures made up of a hundred or so different polyhedrons that were produced at Marseille's Centre International de Recherche sur le Verre et les Arts Plastiques (International Center for Research in Glass and the Plastic Arts). No computer-generated imagery whatsoever went into making this collection of individual elements—the artist reused preparatory drawings from her sketchbooks and a prismatic mold she found in the workshop. Taking off from her *Diamants* (1994), a series of five veneered "stones" whose opacity served to emphasize the cutting that is involved (cutting being the oldest sculptural technique), the artist extends this earlier work today in her experiments with glass, which introduces the concept of breath. The walls, meanwhile, display a series of excerpts from poems, stencils, newspaper articles and various other materials, all brought together around the theme of the fan. Like portraits, these collages bear the names of mythological figures such as *Cassandra, Diana, Mnemosyne, Eurydice, Pandora, Psyche, Iris, Echo*.

In the second gallery, entitled "**Narcisse et les autres**" (Narcissus and the Others), a bull's eye mirror equipped with odd colored arrow shapes is the first of a series done with Vladimir Boson, the producer of multiples and design items. The artist has personified this piece of sculpture by naming it *Anna*. Meanwhile, in front of this reflecting eye, three biomorphic sculptures made of turned wood and two hanging glass bowler hats fill out a scene worthy of a painting by René Magritte or a film by Hans Richter.

The final space, "**Physique et Spiritualité**" (Physics and Spirituality), offers a scene in which painted ropes hang down from the ceiling and a "monument" stands in homage to the forms of the eighteenth-century rational architecture of Ledoux and Boulée, as well as workouts and wellbeing. And

Coindet has adorned the walls with illustrations from her anarchist calendar inspired by the alphabet primer designed by Narcisse Prag. For the Labor Day parade of 1 May 1970 in Geneva, participants were carrying banners and signs on which their demands appeared in the form of the anarchist alphabet primer.

Throughout the show then, visitors encounter objects and their lightness, suspension and silence, their rebellion and magic, as well as division and artifice. Sometimes surrealist, sometimes anarchist and revolutionary, even gymnastic on occasion, these new narratives raise questions about the connections we have with the objects around us, be they transitional, narcissistic, ritual or addictive. But one thing is certain, the inventiveness of Delphine Coindet's artistic vocabulary is exhilarating, constantly in dialogue with architecture, design, play, performance, and public space. It is today articulated around a broad palette of experiments that she intends to expand infinitely.

— Claire Le Restif
Curator of the exhibition

Interview, Delphine Coindet and Isabelle Reiher, director of CIRVA February 2015, Marseille (excerpts)

Isabelle Reiher: During a conversation we had, you told me once that you were increasingly interested in the questions raised by design and that you were integrating a form of the art/design or art/object dialectic in your work. Could you expand on that question, which seems even more important in the work you did at CIRVA?

Delphine Coindet : Although the modernist project of liberating the individual through art seems to have failed in the hands of IKEA, on the one hand, and the art fairs on the other, I continue to believe in the transitional power of objects and

their emotional, transgressive and symbolic impact. I also believe that the matching of the production process with its most complete, advanced form lies by far in the pertinence and singularity of an object. In this, art is distinct from design, which generally—except for new alternatives—is supposed to adhere to the constraints of industrial production and moderate manufacturing costs.

If I am interested in design, it's not so much for its capacity for large-scale production and distribution than for that symbolic function of the objects it studies and the place it occupies in domestic space. Much more than the exhibition space it is the home space that molds our lives because that (so called) private space, in any time since the invention of printing, is more than ever porous to the world around us. Just as Richard Hamilton's 1956 collages foresaw (*Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*), aren't our interiors completely a reflection, not to say the products, of our global world? Personally, ever since Pop Art and radical architecture, movements I have often referred to, that has been the logical result. In other words, design and architecture are part and parcel of my work ever since I first began to focus closely on art.

Moreover, to think in terms of design is to frankly confront the issues having to do with the market, the questions of distribution and marketing, like confronting both proof and a test of inescapable reality. Maybe I should make clear that my intrusion in the world of design with Vladimir Boson and *Le Pecker Molton Set* for example, remains quite confidential and above all quite artisanal, in other words produced with very demanding standards in terms of the quality of the materials and mastery of the expertise involved.

This new project with CIRVA made me want to work on a collection of objects that evince a decisive ambivalence between the objet d'art and the utilitarian object. Mirrors, vases, hats, and coat racks all serve as supports for representations... I wanted to name the resulting show at Crédac *Modes & Usages de l'art* as a way of getting back to the question of

the function of art, perhaps through design, knowing that through that title I hope to suggest as well what we might call the "modes of art" of the craftsman, without whom an artist or designer like me is nothing!

I.R.: **As part of your work at CIRVA and for Crédac, you wanted to simplify form as much as possible. Could you tell us why and to what end you made that choice?**

D.C. : As I've said just before, I was thinking less about form itself than about the material conditions of production. Given I had never experienced it beforehand, for me the absolute in working glass was grounded in breath, color, and transparency. I only needed to find a pretext like that mold to explore the articulation. The idea of the bowler hats came later, as a counterpoint to the objects that are modular, cast, colored, and supernumerary. There had to be a few copies of those objects, masterfully molded by the glassblowers—black, figurative, and unquestionably emptied out of their utilitarian function but oh so emblematic.

I.R. : **To turn to the installation made up of numbers of identical glass polyhedrons, could there be an autonomy of the unique object, are there as many possible variations as elements, or are you thinking of a highly formal and precise protocol which goes along with the display?**

D.C. : If one considers—as I find it amusing to do—these modules as a population, since they are all different yet come from the same mold, then there would naturally be groups, associations, couples, families. And solitary individuals. The moment we mount the show at Crédac will be decisive for rendering these groups of varying scales visible. I've thought about having trays in a variety of formats produced that would serve to arrange, superimpose and distribute them in space in order to give us the chance, ideally, to slip from the home format to the architectural one.

Exhibited works

Gallery 1, *Architecture & Utopia*

① **Eventails, 2011**
(With Chloé Delaume)
From left to right : *Cassandra, Diana, Mnemosyne, Eurydice, Pandora, Psyche, Iris, Echo*
Mixed media, plexiglass
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris and Anne Mosseri-Marlio, Basel

② **Prismes, 2015**
Glass, MDF
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris and Anne Mosseri-Marlio, Basel

Gallery 2, *Narcissus & the others*

③ **Portemanteaux (Hall trees), 2014**
Oak wood, stainless steel
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

④ **Chapeaux (Hats), 2015**
Glass
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

⑤ **Miroir (Anna), 2015**
Mirror, fabric, wood
Edition 1/9, atelier vladimir boson, Lausanne

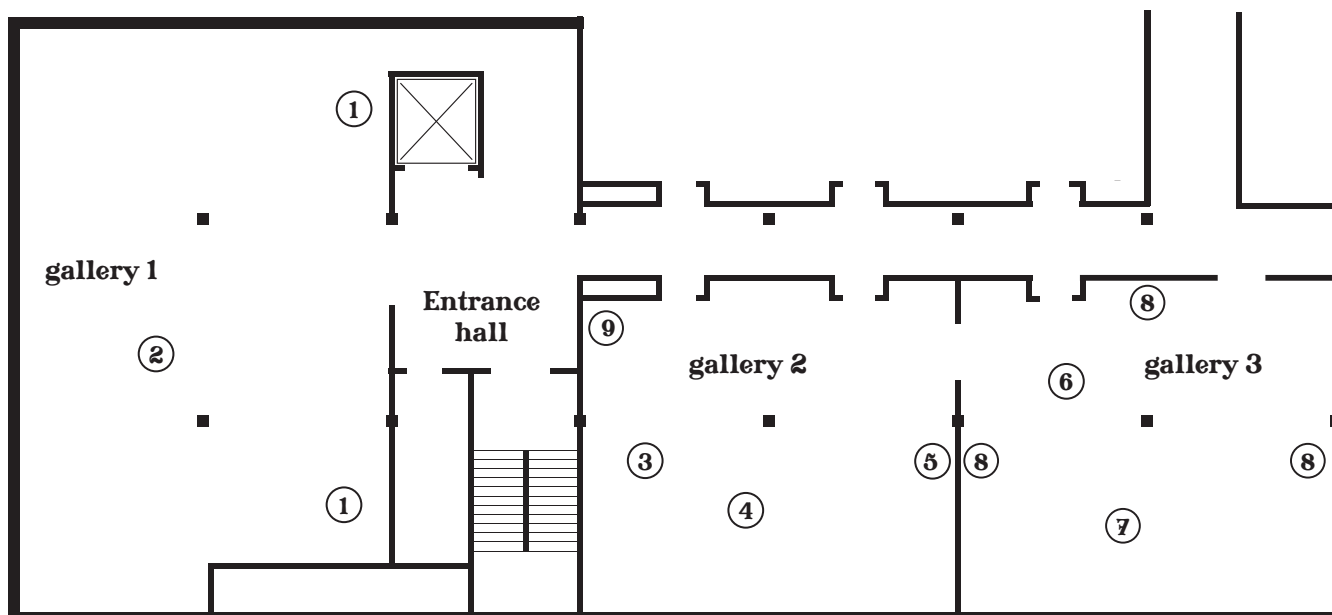
⑨ **L'Uomo traslocato, 2015**
All-over lycra suit, cardboard boxes
Courtesy of the artist

Gallery 3, *Physics & spirituality*

⑥ **Cordes (Ropes), 2015**
Hemp ropes, brass, paint
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris and Anne Mosseri-Marlio, Basel

⑦ **Monument IN, 2015**
Exercice ball, plexiglass, salt
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

⑧ **Calendrier Anarchiste, 2014**
Silkscreen, édition Ateliers Tchikebe, Marseille



Biography

Over the past twenty years, Delphine Coindet (born in 1969 in Albertville) has been developing a sculptural vocabulary that has recently grown to include exhibition curating, set design, performance, publicly commissioned work and the production of radical furniture.

Among the solo shows that have featured her work, we should mention *New Barocco*, Synagogue de Delme, 2003; *Encore une fois*, Domaine de Chamarande, 2008; and *Périmètre étendu* (an exhibition,

cycle of events and publication produced with the assistance of MAE Master's students) in Rennes, Rome and Geneva, 2012. The artist also recently took part in the group shows *Une Exposition parlée*, Jeu de Paume, 2013 (cur. Mathieu Copeland); and *Carte blanche à John Armleder*, Palais de Tokyo, 2011.

Coindet has worked several times with Crédac since her solo show *La Belle Hypothèse* in 2004, participating in the group shows *La Partie continue 2* in 2004; *Midnight Walkers* (Crédac and Kunsthhaus Baselland in Mutteng, Switzerland)

in 2006; and *Le Carillon de Big Ben* in 2009.

Her work figures notably in the collections of a number of prestigious institutions, including the Centre National des Arts Plastiques, the Fonds Régionaux d'Art Contemporain, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and MAC/VAL Musée d'art contemporain of Val-de-Marne.

She was a resident at the Villa Medici, Rome, in 2011/2012, and at CIRVA, the International Center for Research in Glass and the Plastic Arts, Marseille, in 2014/2015.

Rendez-vous !

Sunday 10 May and 14 June 2015
at 4 p.m.

Les Eclairs

One Sunday per month, an exhibition
tour with Julia Leclerc sheds light on
featured works.

Free admission.

Thursday 28 May 2015
from noon to 2 p.m.

Crédacollation

Guided tour with Delphine Coindet and
Claire Le Restif. A convivial moment for
sharing thoughts and reactions with
others, the visit will be followed by
lunch at the art center.

Participation : 6 € / Members : 3 € *

Saturday 30 May 2015 at 4 p.m.

Two together

Delphine Coindet
— **Angela Maria Piga**
Space and genius loci

Delphine Coindet will discuss her work
with the Italian journalist, writer and
art critic Angela Maria Piga. Together
they will talk about the artist's career,
specifically her time in Italy where the
two met, and the many influences that
have fed into her practice over the last
three years, i.e., her stay in Rome and
residence at CIRVA and its workshops
in Marseille.

Free admission *

Samedi 6 juin 2015

Pink Line

From one suburb to another, from Crédac
in Ivry-sur-Seine to the Aubervilliers
Laboratories by way of the Jeu de
Paume Museum in central Paris, the path
of the Pink Line follows the Paris metro's
7 line, helping participants discover
exhibitions, events and performances.
With the participation of the staff of
Code 2.0 magazine (Laëtitia Chauvin
and Clément Diré) and the artist Barbara
Manzetti.

Information and booking

Tram : www.tram-idf.fr

01 53 34 64 43 / h15@tram-idf.fr

Sunday 21 June at 3:30 p.m.

Studio-Snack

During these "workshop-afternoon
treats," children from 6 to 12 years of
age lead their families on a tour through
the show. Families are then invited to
enjoy an afternoon snack and a practical
workshop that extends the exhibition
visit in a sensitive and playful way.

Free admission *

Sunday 28 June 2015

from 3 to 7 p.m.

Closing of the exhibition

Delphine Coindet & guests

With the participation of the harps
ensemble of Ivry's music academy and
the quartet of experimental music GOL.

More informations, soon on www.credac.fr

* Booking required !

+33 (0) 1 49 60 25 06 / contact@credac.fr

MARD!

Conferences cycle by Isabelle Alfonsi

For this season, eighth in the series,
Crédac and Médiathèque have invited
the gallery owner, art researcher and
feminist Isabelle Alfonsi to take part.
Ms. Alfonsi has developed a completely
fresh program following a research
residency in San Francisco as part of
the "extramural" program of the Institut
français.

Nothing theoretical about gender... A few attempts to talk about art looking through gender's glasses. Season 2014-2015

This cycle of conferences will attempt
to come up with a few partial answers
to some of the questions raised during
recent societal debates about gender
in art, based on examples drawn from
the visual cultural of the 20th and 21st
centuries. Visual works of art have
indeed accompanied the emergence
of a visual culture founded on sexual
difference. Reference to a certain
number of authors and their works
will help us understand how gender
identities are represented in modern
and contemporary art practices, and
by extension, how they circulate
throughout the society we live in.

Tuesday 14 April 2015 at 7 p.m

Intersectionnalité et désidentification : années sida et activisme transpédégouine (hommage à José E. Muñoz).^{4/5}

Attempt at a genealogy of a queer art.

Tuesday 9 June 2015 at 7 p.m.

Qu'est ce qu'un art queer aujourd'hui ? Perspectives politiques.^{3/5}

On the importance of hitting the target in
representation.

→ The *Mard!* talks are held at the Multimedia
Center of Ivry – The Antonin Artaud Auditorium,
152, avenue Danielle Casanova – Ivry-sur-Seine
Metro: the 7 line, Mairie d'Ivry (50 m from the
station).

Talks run 90 min. Free admission.

**For the *Mard!* evening events,
exhibition at Crédac remain open
until 6:45 PM.**

Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry - le Crédac

La Manufacture des Œillets

25-29 rue Raspail

F-94200 Ivry-sur-Seine

infos / booking :

+ 33 (0) 1 49 60 25 06

contact@credac.fr

www.credac.fr

Open every day (except Mondays and bank
holidays) from 2 to 6 PM, weekends from 2 to
7 PM — free admission

Metro: line 7, Mairie d'Ivry /

RER C: Ivry-sur-Seine.

Member of Tram and DCA networks, Crédac
enjoys the generous support of the City of Ivry-
sur-Seine, the Regional Direction of Cultural
Affairs of Île-de-France (the Ministry of Culture
and Communications), the General Council of
Val-de-Marne and the Regional Council of Île-de-
France.



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