

Krystyna Ziach's Spaces of Sculptural Imagination text by Christian Gattinoni, 2015

Christian Gattinoni is an art critic based in France.

Having received her education as a sculptress in the city of Cracow in her native Poland, Krystyna Ziach developed her body of work around the tensions between the plane of photography and its possibilities for 3D creation. Today she lives and works in Amsterdam. The seemingly retrospective exhibition which was devoted to her work by museum Beelden aan Zee in The Hague, is accompanied by a reference work, *Space of Imagination*. The exhibition was organized by Hans Rooseboom, curator for photography at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

The book opens with various works concerned with the relationship between body and sculpture, that allow us to revisit art history: the illusory play with geometric space of the painted nudes of the series *Geometry* of 1985. The following year the same techniques advance from studies that are still in black and white, to the corporal framing systems created by Francis Bacon. The transition to color then combines the body with metallic structures for the triptych *The Splendid Decadence of Kabuki* and in 1989 a painted body follows the spatial illusion of the mixed works of the series *The Black Cross of Malevich*. The imaginary museum becomes complete with a homage to Dürer which elaborates on the *Chamber of Mirrors* and with her *Spaces of Imagination* which we were allowed to admire at the Netherlands Photography Museum in 1994.

The second period of 'photography as sculpture' which begins in 1988 and continues to the present day, shows mixed works incorporated in monumental installations. We again find references to other cultures, such as in the triptych *The Anatomy of the Big Buddha*, or works that are more in line with the atmospheric in relation to the face and the skin, such as *In the Mirror of Your Eyes* (1992) or *Sweat* (1995). The sensuality of such pieces manifests itself in a very powerful work such as *The Fountain of Time* (2001).

During the same period the artist produces video sculpture such as *Blue Core*, which offers an immersive space to the viewer. In her relation with Japan she continues her experiments with more traditionally presented photo works in *Imperial Gardens* (2003). She creates serial ensembles with the use of industrially manufactured miniature Buddha's and gravestones, that allow her to approach the concept of *Infinity* (2003), or bales of paper prior to recycling which she constitutes into an *Ephemeral Library* (2013).

In her relations with art history and with other, in particular eastern, civilisations, Krystyna Ziach develops, with an immense exactingness, a spiritual body of work with a great richness of plasticity.

Translation : Hanny Keulers