

VAL or the TAO of contemporary sculpture

In Laozi's "Tao TeChing", chapter 25, it is said that:

"Human beings follow the Earth, the Earth follows the sky and the sky follows the TAO (the path) and the path follows Nature".

In Laozi's work, Nature illustrates the nature of things, the related breathing of the sky, the earth and human beings. All life long, sporadically, we feel this magic combination of forces, which we endeavour to identify with and follow.

« Nature » in the widest sense is the TAO and the TAO is the nature of things.

With its combining forces of sky, earth and men, « Nature » gives us the magic of motion. VAL succeeded in capturing this motion for us. When I look at her sculptures, it always feels like her characters are moving and that this life will go on even when I look away.

No one can remember a sculptor who gives us such a reflection of his time and his environment. Most modern and contemporary sculptors interiorize a freeze frame in the heart or the head region.

VAL is going to describe our daily universe the way she feels it.

From Miss Trendy's and Cool Dude's portraits, attitudes of the finishing years of the 20th century in the West, to the creation of Urban Life and Fantastic City, which make up the universe of our life today, VAL shows us every human attitudes she feels.

Waiting for Someone, Waiting for Life, and, more recently, Parade, Tango, New Born Child, all of this is part of our universe.

VAL tells us a story of our West in the last years of the 20th century up to the early years of the 21st century, when our planet becomes "global".

VAL tells us about the time which passes by in a movement which stops as long as we observe, without distorting its manifestation.

I think we stand on the fringe of a cybernetic civilisation in which all states of mind will occur with the eyes fixed on the screen and the hands on the keyboard. VAL is one of the last troubadours of pre-cybernetic human reality. She tells us about a man who is still one with the earth, the sky, nature and the forms surrounding him.

Her narrative describes each of us, she locates us in a universe with which each of her characters is related, a kind of precarious equilibrium between the human form and its universe. We gain access to the understanding of her work through the representation of these precise and simplified forms. VAL relies on the tangible relation between human figures and the environment to make herself heard better from us.

Her art is still understandable and the French, American and Chinese public is not mistaken when they decide to buy one of these works. VAL tells them about themselves, about what she likes, about what they like, about what she is, about what they are, about what we are.

VAL leaves the self-centered self or event self or the reflection on the contemporary phenomena many renowned artists are used to. Far from the medias' *mise-en-scene*, this distorting spectre which oversimplifies the images which surround us according to its own needs, VAL tells us quietly about what she is seeing and what she is feeling as the days go by.

Since the Chinese 12th century, imitation of reality has slowly faded away to make way for spiritual likeness and in Europe, since the end of the 19th century, the invention of photography has given birth to the great artistic upheavals which tend to stray as far as possible from the exact description of reality. VAL gives us a spiritual likeness on the first level, capturing Nature's breath, which is very unlike photographic likeness. She tells us about reality with her poetry and we identify immediately with her spiritual likeness of "Nature".

VAL, like a great storyteller, gives us the opportunity to live scenes, movements of life again, which remind us of a past moment or a past meeting.

In the Tao, "Nature" refers to the existential force, which penetrates each individual and creates in some people the artists' gift, the full good harmony, concordance of the creating hand, head's and heart's extension in the imaginative world of the East.

In her description of man and the universe, VAL tells us about ourselves, about the life awaiting us, about this sum of embellishments made at our level, which partakes in a great whole and questions us eventually with the great issues of the environment.

Urban Life, Travel, Fantastic City are a respiration which confront us with the universe we live in today, these sculptures are calling for the best in ourselves to act on this environment to embellish it, to tune it better to this great TAO generated by our planet and its present inhabitants.

VAL's work as a whole is a call for harmony in which man, earth, sky and nature interact in a great breath. We are made aware by our age that this harmony is needed in order to leave our children with a planet still fit to live on.

In this sense, VAL is a true Tao artist and it is no coincidence that, although a French national, she chose to live in Asia in order to practise her art and interact with this great lung of the 100 coming years in which Asia is turning to.

She is the link between these two great histories, which have been intertwined with each other for more than 2,000 years between East and West. From that point of view, she meets all the requirements to become one of the great artists of the global 21st century.

With her work on big pieces, some of which are monumental, which magnifies naturally her message, she becomes a storyteller to be reckoned with, who conveys the messages that each of our communities wants to convey in this century, in which everyone would like to have his own image represented.

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