

## Nick Ervinck

Not all cultures represent 'space' in the same way for the simple reason that they do not see it in the same way. There is so much more to see than the visible and of the visible we only see a small fraction. Letting the world see on a different level than that on which we normally experience it: seeing and thinking; knowledge and perception. My sculptures are adaptations and assimilations of sculptures from my world of experience. Proceeding I ask myself the question what I see, hear or read *and* my interpretation of that. I search for what the meaning of fact, space and/or sculpture is to me. I search for a dialogue with sculptural shapes. I create building blocks that I constantly try to balance against each other. The creation of a personal system: my world and language.

My oeuvre is based on archives constructed around a structure in which building blocks are stored from which my *alphabet* is formed: objects made by humans, personal objects, fragments of memories from my life. It is an autobiographical archive, a never ending enumeration of fragments with which I try to do the impossible, an archive in which I try to join my life and my thinking. Details of our complex society came alive. They get adapted and transformed. In that way I try to understand what I see. I try to catch the meaning of shape, tension and energy. I look for another way through the objects, a way that can please me. Even though the sculptures give a figurative impression, they are sculpture in the first place.

Each work is a bearer of information and generates a stratification of meanings, an interaction between form and intellectual references, sometimes accompanied by a subtle wink. Drawing from a personal and art-historical memory, I unravel, re-write and re-define permanent the experience of the reality in which we live in a constant renewing picture-language. The sculptures force you to look and to analyse, they invite you to construct.

If knowledge is possible, it is because the human knows to create order with his mind in the abundance of appearances. Each part is necessary for the whole, which in its turn is necessary for each part to be able to function. It deals with how the free spirit plays with the representation of the subject. The reality that we know is no longer an isolated subject but the result of a structuring process in which representations get structured by the imagination and the mind. The overall impression is too chaotic. Order created by disorder.

The result is cross-fertilization between sculpture and architecture. The associations between the shapes refer in their turn to traces of human actions. The constructions and structures evoke memories and art-historical associations. I create a new universe in which I hope to control the chaos, while at the same time I keep putting things upside down. The human has to persist in the faith that the incomprehensible is understandable, otherwise he would not keep on doing research. By capturing the world in a personal system, it is possible to structure and organize it. Because it is not able to grasp the complex reality, I try to reveal the difference between a world that is named reality and a personal, authentic world. Meanwhile, that search for authenticity has almost become folklore. In fact, authenticity is in the actual digital-technological period almost no mark of attention anymore. The thing that fascinates us now is the non-authentic, the falseness in which we live and how it is build, put

together and integrated in the everyday life. That integration is so excessive that the reality for many almost falls together with the non-critical consumption of the spectacular pictures continuously delivered by mass media, movies, advertising, computer games and websites.

The traditional art originally searched for the representation of reality. With the actual possibilities of digital technology the work of art can become a representation of reality on its own. We are literally able to enter a digital world. Here the visitor is no longer a consumer in a tomb of objects but rather a traveller in an audiovisual world. In this temporary dimension, the actions of the artist or audience are able to adapt and restructure the work of art again and again.

My work is an expanding archive of images and sculptures in which I search an intense interaction between virtual constructions and hand-made sculptures. Digital images constantly infect the three-dimensional shapes and vice versa. For that, I use a range of expression means: digital prints, video, drawings and especially sculptural shapes made out of painted plaster and polyester. During the exhibition, the precise manner of presentation forces to look and anatomize. On the intersection between virtuality and reality; new, hybrid, sculptural and spatial possibilities develop. Plenty of them can be exploited in new, experimental spaces.

This specific context, the combined action between an independent virtually created world and the three-dimensional sculptural work, opens new possibilities of experience.

My sculptures conquer their final form with a lot of pain and violence. Their appearance is the result of a feverish search for, a hectic process in which I work with feelings of control and disdain, of conviction and doubt. They are subjected to a continually process of change: rebuild, correct and delete. It is the constantly redevelopment of my own energy. I bear the sculptures with me in time and the process-aspect of the character of the work becomes readable and even a primer part of the sculptures. They are the inheritors of a continual process of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction out of a particular vision.

The objects are counters in constantly changing arrangements. Shapes, which I weigh out towards each other and towards space. They complement each other, they strengthen each other, one cannot exist without the other. The spaces are attempts, sketches of a bigger entity, which is becoming more and more clear to me. The sculpture platforms are the living examples of those attempts to create order but they nonetheless still offer the appearance of a postcatastrophic landscape. The communication into which the shapes enter with each other refer to the autonomously acting individual in space as well as to the individual interfering with his surroundings. The entity may get the appearance of a city, a network or a grid in which the tension between the complexity of the multiplicity and the autonomously acting individual is shown. This tension is also present in the shapes themselves. Combination is the keyword: open/closed, mantling/covering, outside/inside, object/fit, sculpture/socle, subject/object.

My digital prints offer a window into a digital world, but just as well into a "another reality". These windows show possibilities from my research in which sculptural elements are being placed in new compositions and meanings.

The real looking rooms, shelves and podia consist of polymorphic, synthetic shapes which are being called into life as mutated molecules by means of an artistic computer simulation. Walls are no longer walls and gravity seems non-existing. I am playing with sculptural forms and monumental buildings are being lifted in a fraction of a second and injected with new life. Houses turn into sculpture and are being developed in space. It is a vigorous game with images, materials and space as well as an equilibration exercise between means and goal, between accurate calculation and inspired improvisation.

My aim is not only to reflect upon the sculpture but also to work towards a total space. I have to learn to control the sculpture before I can start building a complete space. The sculpture *Elbatargscu I* is a first step into that direction and flirts with the borders of sculpture, scale model and space. Here you will discover more figurative references than before in my oeuvre. New starting points and interpretation possibilities with reality emerge. I play with architectural values where a ship's wheelhouse suddenly turns into a building behind the ship, but the ship itself also loses its functionality and one starts wondering what its new meaning is. This contains a silver afforested mountain, suddenly a lightweight in the entity. Let us go down with our eyes to find an encapsulated greenish shape with references to the landscape. This shape also reminds us of a tomb, a relic or an archeological excavation. But it could just as well be interpreted as a future factory. They are elementary parts of the story, all carefully considered. Even the smallest shift makes one question everything again...

*Nick Ervinck April 2003 – April 2005*