So Multiples

Notice biographique

Chrysanne STATHACOS

>>> *Cf.* intervalle dans *So Multiples* ***n°* 03** juin 2009

Chrysanne STATHACOS

Of Greek heritage, Toronto/ New York based multimedia artist and educator Chrysanne Stathacos explores the obvious and at times subliminal connections between ritual actions, technology and environmental issues resulting in cross-cultural hybrid installations that invite public participation. A graduate of York University, Toronto, Stathacos has received awards from Art Matters, the Canada Council, The Japan Foundation, the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, and the Puffin Foundation. Her work has been exhibited extensively in museums, galleries, sculpture gardens, train stations, and public spaces internationally for twenty-five years. Stathacos' major works include "The Wish Machine", "The Roses", "1-900 Mirror Mirror", and "Refuge, a Wish Garden" along with noteworthy collaborations such as, "One Night, One Garden One Wish" with sound artist Andrew Zealley, "The Banquet" with Hunter Reynolds aka Patina du Prey, and "Green Machine" with composer Ben Neill.

Stathacos' public art project, The Wish Machine was commissioned in 1997 by Creative Time for Grand Central Station. Timed to coincide with "Day With/out Art," a Wish Machine website enabled Stathacos to collect hundreds of anonymous oral and written wishes from around the world, including several from refugee children who called for peace and compassion. The collected wishes have been compiled into the publication 1000+ Wishes (1999), designed by Barr Gilmore for The Wish Machine's three-month's presence at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto.

Since its inception in 1997, over 50,000 people have interacted with The Wish Machine on four continents at train stations, museums, and public spaces, including the Frankfurt Train Station, Germany; "Natural Reality," The Ludwig Forum Museum, Aachen, Germany; "AIDS World," The Centre D'art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland; "Vital Signs," Concordia University, Montreal, Canada; "What's The Use," Jean Paul Slusser Gallery, University of Michigan; and the "Odor Limits," Esther M. Klein Gallery Science Center, Philadelphia.

This past December The Wish Machine was presented at 48• C Public Art Ecology, the first public art festival in New Delhi, which marked a return full circle to the city where The Wish Machine was inspired by a wishing tree thirteen years earlier, Stathacos used the occasion to add three new wishes with essential oils: sandalwood = hope, jasmine = peace, and cardamom = fame, all of which are native to India. Installed at Pallika Bazaar and Kashmere Gate, where it became a focal point; the underground space at Pallika Bazaar next to shops selling DVDs and CDs to teenagers; and next to the subway stop at Kashmere Gate—such bustling touristic and commercial venues provided the perfect foil for The Wish Machine's alternative answer to consumerism. All in all, 15,000 wishes were dispersed to the public in a 10-day period, and swarms of people crowded the machine. Many who were interviewed by the attendants gave wishes for a better environment along with hope for the future. For the artist, this was the defining culmination of the project, which will allow her to complete her book, The Wish Machine Travels which will be published in 2009.