

## CORINE BORGNET – Portfolio



WARRIORS WOMEN KIT, 2022 - Poultry bones on salting table  
View from the exhibition « warrior women, women in battle » at the *Topographie de l'art* Space in Paris  
Curator: Isabelle de Maison Rouge



Corine Borgnet is an artist and sculptor. Graduated from the *Beaux-Arts* of Poitiers, she moved to New York where she lived for over ten years. Back in France in 2002, Corine Borgnet settled in Paris where she now lives and works.

She borrows her favorite quotation from Alphonse Allais: *“Let’s not take ourselves too seriously, none of us will survive!”*.



ART PIECE, 14 seconds video recording, 2018, tablet, Amazon box. <https://vimeo.com/226759022>

# INTRODUCTION

## **Lending prestige to the human “tragicomedy”**

Seriousness, solemnity is of course part of how we may deal with our issues. But as Corine Borgnet would say, should we also consider them as an opportunity to wind down and take a step back from the existential doldrums.

Borgnet, who started as a visual artist and sculptor in the 90's, combines humor, jest, comedy and even sometimes irony through her art. How should one face the « unfortunate consciousness » in his / her everyday life? By mixing perspicuity and humor, tears bordering on laughter.

Clear-sightedness on reality and its infinite complexity, dark humor and bitter laughter jumble together in a trilogy. Borgnet combines and showcases them in many creative forms, from designs to paintings, but also sculptures, videos, installations and performances.

Reinterpretation is key: rather than quoting directly, Borgnet favors off-beat humor, allegories and parables that constitute her esthetic language. To say what? In a nutshell; vanity, how hard it is to be one's self in the fold of our times, where our identities get lost in the backwater of multiple crises (self, gender, sex, economical, ecological, cultural...).

On the frontpage of her website, Corine Borgnet promotes the merits of joking and taking things quite nonchalantly, indulging in Alphonse Allais's posthumous support, a 19<sup>th</sup> century writer famous for his taste for joyful derision, a masterful manager of consciousness if there were ever one, called in for the occasion through one of his definite shock phrases : “Let's not take ourselves too seriously, none of us will survive!”

Her work, endowed with corrosive imagination, takes various forms: combined figures, mutant shapes, staged parties that are running out of breath, faded frescos, critical and caustic “mise en abyme” of consensual customs, mind games using references from both high and mainstream cultures... either staged in a “classic” manner (hanging or screening), or with performances (collective display, participative art). Her creations joyfully leading an assault on esthetic values of decency, Borgnet unsurprisingly favors cheap materials: “ignoble” rather than noble; jesmonite, bones, consumed-candled wax, sticky notes, collected pictures.

Combination of adversity and a crooked smile? Corine Borgnet's poetic signature, her “style”, could indeed be synthesized as such.

The artist feels comfortable being in line with the so called “deconsecrating” artists, the disciples of diversion. While she believes in the benefits of art (creating brings joy and happiness), she's nevertheless quite clear-sighted on her power. It would be surprising that art could change the order of things from top to bottom. She also chooses to always pay attention to high culture esthetics, not to express her fascination but with a view to acid confrontation and collision.

Her aim is to expose the illusions, the cosmetic values of the established art, and to replace it with a nihilism that is paradoxically positive, because it allows thinking and happiness.

**Paul Ardenne**, writer, art historian and art curator

# THE LAST SUPPER

Open series started in 2019



BBQ, THE LAST SUPPER, 2019, Jesmonite water-repellent, variable dimension (picture by Atelier Find Art)



THE LAST SUPPER, 2019, photograph printed on Dibond, 30 x 78,7 in (picture by Atelier Find Art)



THE LAST SUPPER, view from the exhibition - Valérie Delaunay Gallery picture by Atelier Find Art)

May the party begin again? « ...The Last Supper » combines high and low, hope and death, hunger and the inability to get and eat satisfying food, while an invasion of cockroaches or else proliferates. There is desire, although this once, reality doesn't overcome.

To give and take back, to bring sublime and loss together are the key of this ceremony and splendor. Would The last supper be alluding to an overconsumption doomed and out of breath? Terrestrial, celestial foods are not tangible anymore.

**Paul Ardenne**, art historian (textual excerpt of the exhibition "The last supper", 2019).



THE LAST SUPPER (detail), 2019, poultry bones and Jesmonite (picture by Atelier Find Art)



THE LAST SUPPER, 2023. In situ La maison des arts, Schaerbeek, Belgium.

### The last supper

Proposing a “last supper” while the traditional Christmas feasts are coming may seem strange. “The last supper”: the title of Borgnet’s latest work - a table dressed in the heart of the *Valérie Delaunay* Gallery - obviously refers to Jesus Christ and his apostles at Easter. Confusion in the calendar? More of a reinterpretation and repurposing remarkably done by Corine Borgnet, who stands out for her perpetual throw-ins and esthetic sideslips.

This time, The last supper foresees Christmas and the Maker’s birth. Is this an opportunity to celebrate? Whoever can see the artist’s work in detail will doubt it, all his / her hopes being shattered. On the table, some crockery invites for celebration; dishes, cutlery, glasses, or a generous promise to fill in the appetite but as it turns out, the objects ruin it. The material used by the artist, jesmonite, a porous beige resin, gives a bone aspect to the whole which seems taken out of the endless time of History, imbued with a deadly atmosphere, as if death had already stroke, forcing the potential guests to leave. May the party begin again? On the table, insects taking shape from the rubbish are having dinner.

A splendid and intriguing world of sophisticated beauty is created by the artist, although, at the same time, it is reduced to an ambiguous state.

**Paul Ardenne**, art historian (textual excerpt of the exhibition “The last supper”, 2019).



ENDLESS SUPPER.2023. In situ: The grass is ever green Gallery, Liepzig,



MURDERED PLATE #4. 2023. 48" diameter . Watercolor on Jesmonite

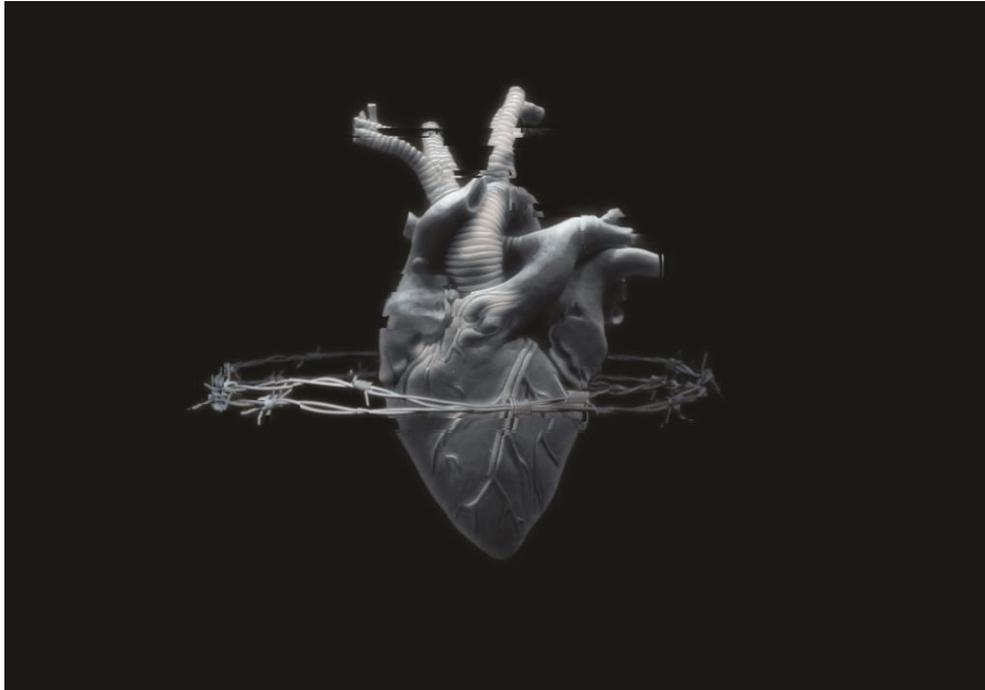


MURDERED PLATE and BOURGEOISIE. Art Paris booth. .2022

An old Maya tradition: a dish is pierced, placed on the head of the deceased by some priests so that the soul, relieved of terrestrial things, can escape through the hole. Using a deliberately “old fashioned”, slow method (a sketch, a clay sculpture, a mold, a print, a model), Corine Borgnet tries to pull away from technologies which typically represent our contemporary, consumerist world, to come back to a slow, timeless art. The material, jesmonite, a chalky, non-toxic resin, can make you think of travertine and allows you to play with history, like archeological remains.

NO MAN'S LAND  
201

To the eternal silence of Pascal's infinite spaces responds, like an echo, the infinite solitude of the heart. No man's land is a 3D animated video, based upon the "endless love" drawing, vibrating according to the sound of the Kepler telescope mixed with a synthesizer drowning out the profound vibrations of the space probe.



NO MAN'S LAND, video, 2019, 7mm  
Sound: Kepler Star KIC7671081B Light Curve Waves to Sound by the NASA and Serge & Buchla (excerpt recorded at EMS Stockholm),  
Conception and design: Corine Borgnet – modeling and visual and special effects: Suzon Héron  
<https://vimeo.com/316273285>



NO MAN'S LAND. Drawing installation .2019 .Art Center Georges V, Begin, China



Video installation - "14 SECONDS OF NOTHING, 14 SECONDS OF ETERNITY" - video recording, 2018

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/212100736>

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/244182387>

**BONE STORY**

2018 - 2023



WAITING. 2023. Bones.

### **Bone story**

Since the dawn of time, via worship or ceremonial rites often linked to Shamanism, men and women make artefacts using human skulls or a shinbone. Tantric Buddhism also resorts to it with the ancient Bönpo Tradition. With Christianity, the relics cult developed itself, with martyrs' bones, from the Roman catacombs to dedicated altars in many churches where they are inserted in medallions or precious cases.

Skeletons or blood drops are surrounded by an intense veneration, or even a superstition and people used to believe these objects were endowed with occult powers: they could allegedly emit luminous radiations and a sweet, sugary smell. Corine Borgnet doesn't use human bones but bones from animals, more especially from birds: keel, pubis and ischium of a duck or a guinea fowl, caudal vertebra and pygostyle of a chicken, sternal ribs of a capon or a quail scatter like a rosary. Sometimes, these fowl carcasses go along with skulls, feet, claws or teeth taken from other species such as the mole or the cat. Meticulously cleaned, sanded, these very small elements, prompt to break or to disintegrate into dust, are cautiously taken care of by the artist. Borgnet gives a new state and a whole new purpose to these strange materials.

Staged together, they become the media of Borgnet's expression. These animal fragments somehow get sacralized by being turned into a work of art; they transform from a common material to a noble subject through some sort of chemistry.

These sophisticated objects suggest a fairy tale fantasy: a Cinderella shoe, royal crowns, a princess tiara, a knight glove, the deadly flower in "Beauty and the beast", a courtesan basque, a bridal garter...

**Isabelle de Maison Rouge**, art critic and curator (textual excerpt of the exhibition Endless Love).



THE BASQUE, 2018. Poultry bones, 15.8 x 49.7 in (picture by Atelier Find Art)

### The insolent vanities

“All these ceremonial signs, made of worthless poultry, mole or cat bones!” With “Bone story”, the artist showcases in fact vanities, objects of power and of seduction: a crown, a tiara, a basque... Trying to refine, make it simple, effective, Borgnet offers an appealing art that can catch you like a carnivorous plant, or seduce you with its humor. The artist gives us a moment of oversight, of mental and visual contemplation, a glimpse of eternity!”.

**Véronique Godé**, journalist and art critic (article extract, “Corine Borgnet’s insolent vanities”, *Artshebdomedias*)



VANITY SHOES / T-strap shoe, 2018. Poultry bones, size 6 (picture by Atelier Find Art)



ROYAL BOUQUET. 2022. Poultry bones, 13.8 x 31.5 in (picture by Atelier Find Art)



ETERNAL LOVE. 2023.  
Poultry none and 3D printing bones colored with spices.  
In situ; Art Center La Banque Bethune; France



THIS IS NOT A HEN ANYMORE, 2019, bones and graphite, 2019

### The writings

The bone, chosen as a symbol of life and memory, is used by Borgnet as a mean of expression. It also becomes the regular subject of her work as well as the foundation of her esthetic language.

These writings in poultry bones convey sarcastic but also relevant messages that can be read as aphorisms. All these birds savored by art lovers for their enjoyment, reveal how much they hold an important place in our lives and sometimes tell us quite strange stories. Shall we avoid a bone of contention by giving too much thought to our own interpretations, or maybe the artist throws us a bone and unleashes our imaginations? These bone stories, as noticed, seem to naturally come into a dialogue with a classic erotic book with a very similar name: "Story of O" (in French, "Bone story" is "Histoire d'Os").

As we head back home after having delighted ourselves with a fowl, we pull apart one of the wishbone's legs, distinctive by its shape and also called "furcula", "lucky bone" or "whishing-bone" and take our chance.

This common but unique method allows the artist to see life in the light of irony and even of comedy. Her choices may show casualness at first, but they actually express her wild desire for freedom of style and of (her) expression<

**Isabelle de Maison Rouge**, writer, curator and art critic.

# WITHOUT A GOD OR A PARTICLE

2015 - 2019

Cultural heritage and bourgeoisie deception



BOURGEOISIE, 2016, watercolor on Jesmonite, 19.7 x 23.6 x 31.5 in (picture by *Atelier Find Art*)

### **Unfolding eternity**

If the Toile de Jouy relates to bourgeois homes, it's also a camouflage for decrepit walls, as much as Kundera wrote that "kitsch" is a cloak of reserve thrown on the world's shit. Referring to elegance as well as vulgarity, houndstooth constitutes the starting point of real fictions. The motif digs itself off the ground and becomes a fake armor, a coat of mail that elevates itself to face an actual tarsus molded in resin, that became a material and soon will turn into a shoe embracing a missing foot...

**Marion Zilio**, writer, curator and art critic.



ARISTOCRACY, « OMAR M'A TUER » 2016, BOURGEOISIE, .2021  
View of the biennial art show Hybride 4 « OUVRIER » 2021-Douai.



FASHION VICTIM, THE MADONA, 2018, gouache on museum archive (painting by *Raphael*),  
1/3 edition, 15.7 x 13.8 in

### Houndstooth Madonna

“Your dress will be my shivering desire”, wrote Charles Baudelaire to a Madonna.

Borgnet focused her last researches on motives. After having used a narrative motif such as the Toile de Jouy, she started working with a more graphic one in black and white: the houndstooth and playing with it in a kinetic way. If many guesses are ventured about the motif's origins, the assumption that it symbolized neutrality among the 19th century Scottish shepherds, as tribes fought each other, is the one chosen by the artist. She took interest in its evolution throughout history, as the motif ended up being printed on noble and preppy fabrics, from Edward the 8th to Christian Dior, becoming the house's emblem. Thus, this peasant then bourgeois cloth is used by the artist in an unexpected and even iconoclastic way: it decorates butterfly wings, a Madonna's dress, creating an anachronism that echoes to the pastoral dimension of icons. Nevertheless, by covering a beautiful ancient reproduction of an artwork by Raphael that she found on a sidewalk in New-York City, with some houndstooth painted in gouache on the maternal dress usually colored with Marial blue or virgin white, Borgnet elegantly deconsecrates the icon which she once stopped believing in.

**Marie Deparis-Yafil**, curator and art critic.



NOBLIUS EPHEMERIUS, 2017, gouache on an Antenor Madagascar butterfly, 9.4 x 8.3 in (picture by *Atelier Find Art*)



« OMAR M'A TUER » (« Omar killed me ») Referring to an emblematic murder case that happened in a bourgeois home in Mougins, France, 2017, graphite on jesmonite and clippers, 27.6 x 23.6 x 19.7

## OFFICE ART 2002 – 2012

### **The working world, New York period**

In the glorification of 'work', in the unwearied talk of the 'blessing of work', I see the same covert idea as in the praise of useful impersonal actions: that of fear of everything individual. Fundamentally, one now feels at the sight of work - one always means by work that hard industriousness from early till late - that such work is the best policeman, that it keeps everyone in bounds and can mightily hinder the development of reason, covetousness, desire for independence. For it uses up an extraordinary amount of nervous energy, which is thus denied to reflection, brooding, dreaming, worrying, loving, hating; it sets a small goal always in sight and guarantees easy and regular satisfactions. Thus a society in which there is continual hard work will have more security: and security is now worshipped as the supreme divinity.

**F. Nietzsche - *Daybreak* (1881)**



URGENT, giant sticky-note, 2012, knitting, 39.4 x 39.4 in



INTERIM SECRETARY, 2012, photograph printed on aluminum, 39.4 x 39.4 in (caption by Pierre Leblanc)

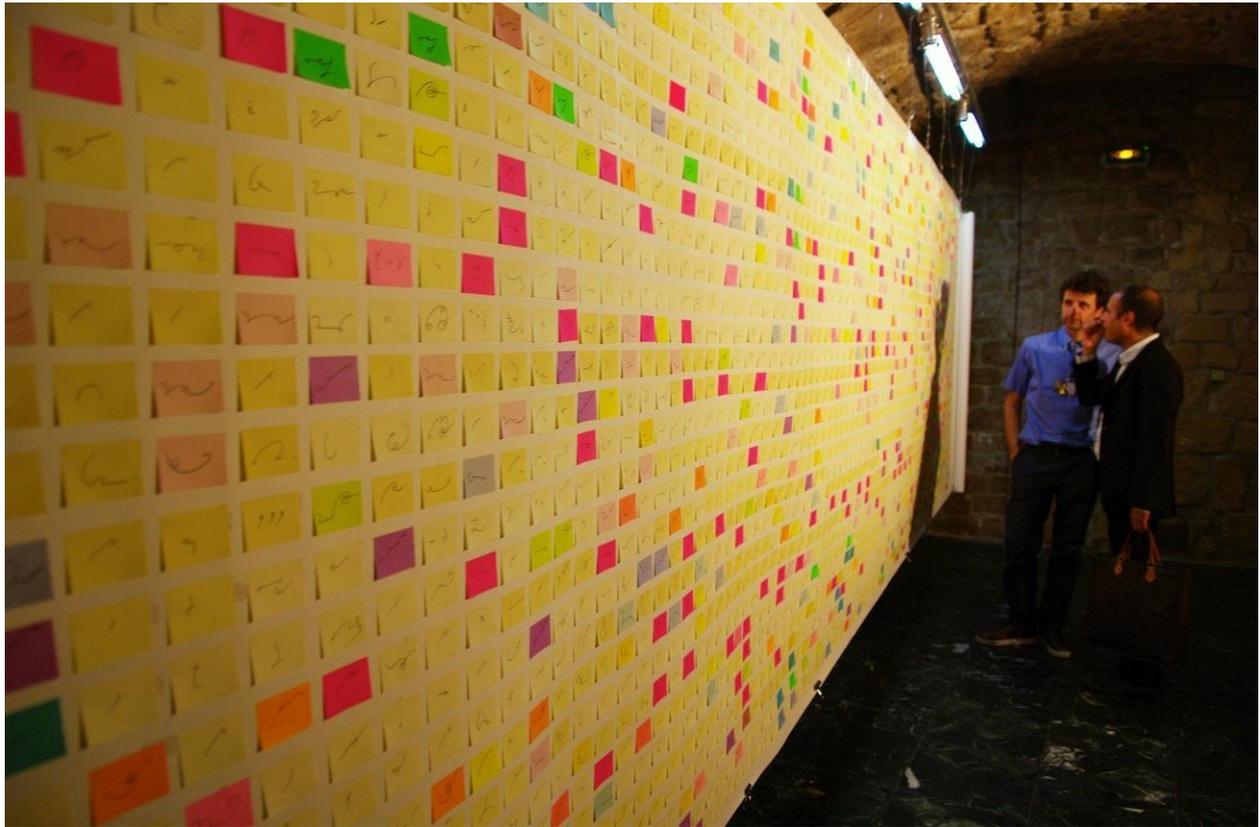
### **The dual: the yellow night**

The sticky-note is the cornerstone of the apparatus. As it symbolizes the daily work life, hammering home to one's priority duties, it is however meant to be thrown away. This coloured trivial piece of paper, inherently temporary, is used and re-used at one's leisure. Borgnet gives it various shapes: an "urgent" note laboriously knitted, a metallic board "hand-scribbled", and even ends up making incredible human notes! They appear as the ultimate medium, the suddenly embodied sticky-note used to denounce the merciless productivity, totalitarisms and the disposable. The caustic image is brought to a fever pitch with the vision of naked bodies entirely covered in yellow and scribbled up and down their spines with trivial additions or urgent orders. Clothing becomes irrelevant, the worker being objectified and depreciated.

**Marie Deparis-Yafil**, curator and art critic



TOWER OF BABEL. 2002. Used notes mainly collected on Columbia's campus and at the UN.  
Set up in New-York in response to 9/11 events. Ht: 157,5 in  
View from the exhibition "Multitude", Artists Space, organized by Laurie Firstenberg & Irene Small in New York



THE CURE, 2013, view of the exhibition at the Talmart Gallery, curated by Marie Deparis-Yafil  
The Cure : <https://vimeo.com/79035230>

### The art of contradiction

Turning a sticky-note into a piece of art... What a surprising gambling proposed by the artist! It was a winning bet, as the result, unexpectedly beautiful, is displayed at the peak of its transformation. When the magic happens, it's extraordinary how, like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, a common piece of paper with scribbles and crossing-outs can give birth to a piece of art endowed with graceful curves, looking alike the singular model it arose from, with mysterious drawing embroidered in silk marbling its wings. The piece generates an emotion that comes from a paradox between haste and diligence, vulgar and precious, basing itself on a contradiction that transcends the ordinary. Ten years ago, her work was front-page in the New York newspaper. The Tower of Babel, a building in paper, made out of hundreds of thousands of sticky-notes, evokes the entanglement where messages cross each other, get lost, and pile-up in a gigantic and piddling monument (from Latin *monumentum*, derived of *monere*: "to remind"). Therefore, the memory set up as a tower, alludes to an overflowing and precarious diversity of Freudian slips. As a daily life reminder, these sticky-notes, usually yellow but also bright green or pink, have a safe future. Although we could believe that electronic mail would make us save paper for the forests' greater benefit, it turns out computers are even more "paper-consuming" than typewriters. Recycling all those outsiders by shaping them into an arborescent bonsai which takes roots in the memory folds of network connection, constitutes for Borgnet a way to provoke as much as an esthetic commitment.

The irony is obvious. Introduced by Borgnet more than ten years ago in North America, the artistic use of sticky-notes has a lot of imitators as last summer, newspapers reported a "sticky-notes war" led by "windows", the battle spreading from La Défense in Paris to Lyon, Lille and even beyond French borders, in Brussels (...).

**Frank Morzuch**, artist



THE DUAL, 2012. Happening at Talmart Gallery. Paris.

## Ego Factory

« Ego Factory » is a closed warehouse that turns into an intense artistic tight ship, very personal, during Borgnet's exhibition. With this work and its title "Ego Factory", we may think that Borgnet offers to herself an "ego trip". Without any curation or gallery, except some help from an unknown Mr. Edmond Lessieur in London, she organizes "her" exhibition in "her" space, like a gift to herself. As we walk in the empty warehouse with this raw, industrial design that the artist will soon turn into a lively working place, we shall immediately get an overview of her mindset. On another hand, we shouldn't ignore the delicate games through which Borgnet knows how to maintain a distance, fully aware that to any artist, the process of thinking, making, working put in motion to create "his" / "her" work, requires a solid "ego", a developed form of narcissism. Borgnet precisely likes to play with it, while she's not fooled by artists' desire of fame, admiration for his / her work, a secret yet crucial driving force to any making and especially to artistic creativity, which is the artist's own extension. According to Paul Ardenne's words, "Narcissism is fundamental to art (...). The artist always searches for recognition, and love". She also feels that the artist must trust his / her subjectivism, and dare to impose his / her way to inform people, looking for "a meeting point of two narcissisms, the artist's and the spectator's, where two self-lovers can mix up and touch each other". And carry out all the artist can in order to do so: desire, energy, passion as well as pride and belief... Thus, Borgnet doesn't just playfully tackle her own ego, but also egos of the artists all over the world..."

**Marie Deparis-Yafil**, curator and art critic

## PROLOGUE

The meaning of life and human frailty are repeatedly questioned in Borgnet's art, whose approach consists in various creative processes and a wide range of materials, with the boldness to try almost everything; bones, videos, sticky notes, virtual reality, always starting with a drawing.

Therefore, through her art, her series combine pieces which appear unrelated at first, but finally interlock and overlap. A series can bring to another, some are finished as the artist went through with them, some subsist, waiting for a sign in her atelier, others are only getting started.

Usually, a series or a questioning finds an answer when, during an exhibition, it can display a gathering of pieces facing each other that find an echo to themselves through space. Like a writer, Corine Borgnet could finish at last her essay to start a new one. In her mind, exhibitions are this edited book through which the artworks are all at one: the artwork is the exhibition ; the exhibition makes for the artwor



