

This magic moment. Lotte Van den Audenaeren

Lotte Van den Audenaeren's works are light as a feather. They touch on the surface of the world, they flirt with the fleeting moment. Too immaterial to be grasped, too subtle to be seized. They will never impose themselves too much on the viewer, even if their size would allow them to. Rather, they follow the ephemerality of the everyday; its impermanent, transient nature. It's a matter of giving voice to the everyday without breaking its silence too abruptly. Her pieces often come close to nothing, where the work tends to evaporate in its workings, in its performativity. And it's precisely this phenomenological finesse that constitutes the fascinating thread running through her oeuvre.

The present is a gift. The present is an articulation of how the world discloses itself to us, of the way it manifests itself in a spectrum of manifold appearances. The veil of the everyday, with its routines, patterns and habits, tends to conceal this crystalline richness. It gradually transforms our lives into a homogeneous mass, an undifferentiated continuum. After all, we can't keep our eyes wide open all the time. But magic moments do happen, even though they are hidden, tucked away in the folds of our everyday lives. These moments make the world light up and sparkle, even if very briefly.

Lotte Van den Audenaeren tries to capture this little magic. The city seems to be the artist's playground, both as a workplace and as an environment to draw inspiration from. Her pieces succeed at slowing down the pace of urban life, they make us want to linger in the moment. The instant is suddenly put out of joint, the veil of the ordinary is lifted for just a little while. Mostly using words as tropes, the artist introduces a certain temporality in the public space, fostering an interaction between seeing and reading. There's this delicate dance between the image and its flipside, light and shadow, the present and its representation. Her body of work can be labeled site-specific in that it intervenes or 'comes in between' the location where it finds itself. It turns space into a place, makes us consider certain places anew.

Light is Van den Audenaeren's most used medium, be it artificial neon light, fluorescent fabric, theatre spots or incident sunlight. "Photograffiti" would therefore be the most appropriate neologism to describe her work; a portmanteau of photography and graffiti. Van den Audenaeren writes with light, creating graffiti without any permanent traces, at least not physically. This kind of art plays on a different level, making its marks in the back of our heads.

*And then it happened
It took me by surprise
I knew that you felt it too
I could see it by the look in your eyes*

Pieter Vermeulen, curator, March 2014