

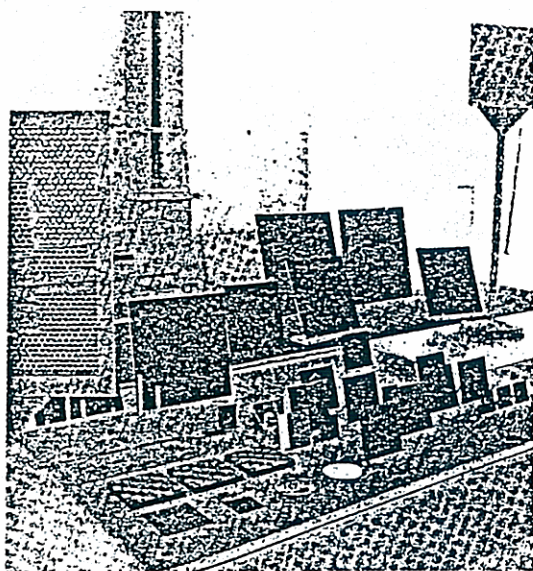
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R E V I E W S

DELME (FRANCE)

DAN WALSH

LA SYNAGOGUE



DAN WALSH, Installation view, 2003.
Photo: R. Villaggi.

Essentially known as a painter, Dan Walsh is also an artist who creates strange installations which, like his work at Delme, are aimed at questioning the conditions of perception. Using a variety of everyday materials (wooden sticks, fabric, carpet, planks of plywood) Walsh highlights the structure and main characteristics of the given space. But humor takes over from the analytical dissection of the place, thanks to the addition of perfectly architectural dysfunctional and senseless elements. The marking-out of the floor and of the building's structure conversely manages to highlight its function as an informative frame for perception. The black tape markings on the ground call to mind the marking-out of security zones, and evoke the gaffer tape used to mark the stage for the positioning of actors in a play. The actors in this case are the spectators, who seem to be directed towards privileged vantage points from which to view the pieces, the best distances at which to stand, and the most appropriate ways to behave in the exhibition setting. Likewise, an alternative system midway between the screen and the lectern seems literally to give several reading templates through which to interpret the exhibition. The Synagogue space, an actual ancient temple, becomes a pretext for an introspective (albeit retrospective) vision. Positioned head-on, taking the place of the altar, are a number of objects amassed in a homemade translation of art of the past ten years, which one might find in a flea market or a car boot sale. A spread of small, colored, translucent cubes evoke a mini jelly Carl Andre, and round mirrors, Lichtenstein tondi. But if the merchants seem to have stormed the temple, their wares, like this ensemble of small red and blue monochromes, propose a hypothesis of a world where meditating on the nature of abstraction could become a popular Sunday pastime, a world in which no one is afraid anymore of red and blue.

Vincent Pécoil

(Translated from French by Rosemary McKisack)