

CRISIS CABIN outside in inside out

By Sophie Boursat

Culture, is it a freedom or a prison?

And which contains the other? Only fantasy can say. A reality that turns inside out like a glove, cautioning us that underlying our most all-encompassing thoughts will always be the livable and the unlivable. My work alludes to this conflict, and aims to deconstruct these objects and their symbolism. To come to grips with history, in all its know-how, in order to reveal both harmony and dissociation. Using preexisting cultural elements to call to mind the still lingering evidence of an original purity, and therefore to designate a fertile and protective environment. The piece invokes the all-mighty question of living, as imagined in society's ink, and in the context of its original form of shelter. Books and feathers are the active ingredients, doubly serving to evoke both life and writing, as much in their physical as in their symbolic presence. Standing invitations to find refuge in a transformative experience, these two module cabins confront each other, identical in scale and symbols. And their equivocal relationship gives rise to a mirror effect.

Cabin 1 is a space crammed with selected books, whose exterior has been covered over with black feathers. On the interior, thousands of titles, like as many doors, comprise the thickness of the walls. On the exterior, the system of feathers protects us from the elements and pays an homage to shamanic wisdom. It is in the exploration of transfiguration that we enter into Cabin 2.

At the sight of a vital conflict, we suffocate now in the interior, as much from the proximity of the bestial as from the sense of confinement. Suddenly swallowed into this cavern upholstered with black feathers, we find ourselves cheek to cheek with a monster that we on some level wanted to let in. The library becomes mortar. A terrible deafness presses against our bodies with all of its weight. We feel the conspicuous absence of the birds' singing. The great forest of Cabin 2 now offers up only the fragility of its paper. We are alone now, clenching our openings as if against a blinding light that we are afraid to give in to. In this darkness we have only ourselves to hold onto, cut off even from our own memories. And from this suddenly projected image rushes an urge toward order and harmony.