Antoine Leperlier

1953 Born Evreux, France

Critical comment

Antoine Leperlier recalls visiting his grandfather's studio as a small boy and seeing there a skull on an upper shelf. It always held a fascination for him, yet he was cautious about using this always highly charged image in his own work. Only recently does he feel he has reached the necessary maturity to use its unavoidable symbolism with confidence and without slipping into banality.

JHO, conversation with AL, May, 2003

Artist's statement

Le temps est une réalitié resserrée sur l'instant et suspendue entre deux néants

Time is a reality constricted in an instant and suspended between two nothings **(Gaston Bachelard)**

For me, art is a tentative means to catch life. But when you catch it, it dies. This questions the vanity of making art which in turn refers to the vanity of a life which we cannot arrest and make eternal. We are left with memories suggesting eternity, like a lost paradise.

The challenge in *Effets de la Mémoire* was to go further into this tentative state, catching the fleeting instant.

Chaos is the moment just before time is counted. I tried to capture this instant, like a bubble which is about to burst.

The question of this moment is crucial when you consider that we are always 'before' death. Life is as chaos and we find a balance only in the fleeting instant before its loss; this is for me the only acceptable definition of the present. You cannot be at the same time within the present and yet outside it as an artist representing it; but you can show that suspended instant which is between the two, that instant which is neither past nor future. Art tries to show this moment. And glass is the best material with which to do it.

I created a new process to show permanently suspended, this swelling moment between Present and Past, a distortion by an instant of the space between the two.

This process consists of making the hollow form of a skull in a glass cube, which is then held (fused) between sheets of glass. I then fire the work a second time heating it to a point when the air that is confined within the hollow skull begins to expand, like a breath, rising and wanting to escape. I stop the firing at this crucial moment.

With this process I am experimenting in real time with the moment just before the loss, and this is crucial to the work.

There is no other justification of technique in art than to experience the intuition (I do not say concept) or the sensation you wish to represent.

AL, (amended) statement

Effets de la Mémoire
XXI 1/1 Chaos
Pâte de verre
Conches, France, 2001
Height 24cm
Gift of Paul Bedford
V&A: C.46-2003
Exhibited, *Antoine Leperlier, 'L'Instant juste Avant'*, Galerie Capazza, Paris/Nançay, 200

Training

1968–71 Introduced to *pâte de verre* by his grandfather, François Décorchemont

1972–81 Sorbonne, Paris, Philosophy and Fine Arts; Maîtrise et DEA d'Arts Plastiques et de Sciences de l'Art

Professional/International

1981 Lauréat de la Fondation de France

1985 Royal Art Gallery, Osaka, Japan

1989, 1992 Heller Gallery, New York

1992 Habatat Gallery, Farmington Hills, Michigan

1993 Designated Maître d'Art

1996, 2001 Galerie Jean-Claude Chapelotte, Luxembourg

1997 Habatat Gallery, Miami

1996, 2002 Habatat Gallery, Pontiac, Michigan

1998 Miller Gallery, New York

2000 Riley Hawk Galleries, Cleveland, Ohio

2001 Etienne & Rob van den Doel Gallery, The Hague, The Netherlands

Teaching

1988 Canberra School of Art, Australia

1989, 2002 Sars-Poteries, Musée-Atelier du Verre

1997 Pilchuck Glass School, Washington State

2000 Centre des Métiers du Verre

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