

Childhood, love and death are pretty much the sum total of our obsessions. We've all lived these moments and we've all photographed them. Days come and go, and leave us with images. Anything can make a photograph: a town, a desert, a cat, a crime scene... But nothing stays with us without a razor sharp eye. The photo was a glimpse into the future – thirteen, in front of the mirror, camera against the temple, the end of a baguette held uncouthly between teeth, the lamp wedged in the door and eyes fixed on the image being captured. It's no laughing matter, exploring Man. Its a form of torture, you need to dismantle Him to the point of distraction, stripping Him of all illusion, artificiality and and vanity. Parents busy in their mutual exploration of nose and mouth. The improbable father dancing by night, frustrated by his reality. The feminine ideal shattered, the daughter waving a hula hoop in the face of her weird mother in a night gown, the pose exactly equidistant between obscene and playful... Goya... As if 'Mother and Daughter' wasn't enough, it follows in a long line of hackneyed macho visions. Theatre of female misery beyond the normal realms of seduction... world-weary cleaning ladies, love on the run. It's not enough to expose the horror, it also has to be funny because the cruelty of life is not what makes us unbearable, it's our vanity... The inconsequentiality of Man has been proven. A suitcase filled with objects, places and people gives us clues. 'Things and Words', sumptuous like the portrait of the pink-cheeked girl, barren like the seats on a train, depressing like the Stasi decor, terrifying like concentration camp hausbloks and their lamentable walls of separation, sterile like the middle-class suburbs, calming like flowers in a shady cemetery. A black cat with crazy eyes puts everything in perspective. The 'Passengers' touch a raw nerve because they don't allow us to extract the marble from the flesh. Are we constructing or deconstructing? Germinating or decomposing? Who knows? A simple mise en scène, a frontal, square composition makes for a silent photo, sterile like a laboratory... A Renaissance is not far. Once more, we have become enigma, after a century of destructive and terrifying 'progress', we are scared of ourselves. There's no need to travel the world to explore Man, an uncomplicated square or rectangle is enough. If we are bold, we are happy with a neutral backdrop, the aperture wide open to wash over excess signs, the image seared in our head - like a sculptor, never looking back. We work objects and people to fit our vision. We place the light and dark, and their relationship creates that magic equation. We make vibrations travel across images. Tracing the weft of this seeing machine that cuts through mirrors upon a fragile reality.... Beyond that, what is left of the journey? The cruel and endless possibility of no longer living between the hammer and the anvil...

Milou, 2008, texts for the DVD's soundtrack of « Things and Words »
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