

Disenchanted Salmu

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Josely Carvalho's work features the exploration of current political and cultural themes and issues, which stem from the social and economic processes from globalization: migrations and exile, the loss of birthplaces and identities, the erasing of the past and of memory. Trained as a printmaker, her work uses various media, such as drawing, photography, video, and the internet, and appropriates itself of documents, testimonials, and second-generation images. She proposes to build up a mobilization project around various issues, the bases of which comprise stories, images, and texts lodged in spaces marked by losses, absences, destructions, and which search for a shelter, a place to be, in the contemporary collective memory.

Disenchanted Salmu is an installation which takes upon itself cuneiform writing tablets, produced in ancient Mesopotamia, the birth of Western civilization, currently Iraq, to speak about the conditions of the people and of the culture of this nation at war, and subject to every type of annihilation, pillaging and looting. It is offered as a type of shelter for a moment of insight and reflection. A set of lithographs is articulated from images of cuneiform tablets found in archeological sites such as Uruk (one of the world's oldest cities) and which are currently in the Iraqi Museum, in Baghdad, having been identified and archived by archeologist Robert Englund from the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). These are the images which can be seen upon the museum floor, as if they were fragments of history, on which walks the public, and within a space in which the past and the present coexist. The central fountain and permanent flow of water comprise a statement of life in movement and of constant renovation. The work proposes a sensitive and intellectual experience on the destruction of the subject and culture, the disappearance of identities and traditions, and intolerance and freedom of choice.

Disenchanted Salmu is also part of the *Book of roofs*, a work in progress which, since 1997, explores the notion of shelter, as from the references and usage of clay rooftiles in popular culture in several parts of the world, taken by the artist as a metaphor and materialization of the search for a place for shelter and privacy for all possibilities of existence. The idea of the turtle's shell, which brings on itself the marks of its history and of its struggles, is associated with the passage of time. The rooftile, a cover, acts as strategy for the artist to keep herself linked to issues as the like of those deprived of a home, of migrants, and of those bereft by nature, by the economy,

wars and expatriation. Her successive works come together like the pages of a book, a file of stories, individual and collective memories, with different levels of narrative and reading. The themes – the Xetá Indians, the massacre of the Armenians, the invasion of Iraq, the street children –are painstakingly dealt with so as to create and testify to the immense humanity revealed by her work.