

ABOUT “NO-PROGRAMMATION”:

(I am aware that the term “No-Programmation” is incorrect and does not exist in English, therefore I replaced it in the texts with “nonprogramming”)

Flamme éternelle (Eternal Flame)

Flamme éternelle is a situation that provokes a displacement: a displacement of time, of the times—the today—in which we live. It is also a displacement in the sense of presence—within this time. The sense of presence is displaced if I am at a place where I normally go to do something specific but where—for a single moment—I do something other than that specific thing. For example, during a vote at a school gym or at the occupation of a workplace during a strike. *Flamme éternelle* wants to pose the question of presence—the presence of the body, of my body, of our bodies—and the question of the time during which such presence of the body operates. This leads to the posing of four questions that offer themselves: Why do I do that which I do? Why do I think that which I think? Why do I use the tools that I use? Why do I give the form that I give?

Why do I do that which I do? I do that which I do because I want to create a new term of art. I want to establish—with *Flamme éternelle*—a “critical body,” and I want to work with a “nonexclusive public.” This is the aim of my work, and I always want to further reinforce it.

Why do I think that which I think? *Flamme éternelle* is thought of as a deployment of my “Field of Force and of Form,” which contains Love, Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Politics. I think that it is there in the Field where these four Notions interweave that the truth of *Flamme éternelle* is situated. That truth, which can also be named as “beauty” or “the absolute,” is art, a work of art. And because it concerns a work of art permanently in construction—in the state of becoming “work”—the truth at times crystallizes around the complicated notions of Love or Philosophy, at other times around the even more complex notions of Aesthetics or Politics. I think that which I think because it is the application of my “Field of Force and of Form,” which gives motion and stoppage, dynamic and coagulation, to *Flamme éternelle*.

Why do I use the tools that I use? I use the tools that I use because I like them. I love them definitively and decisively. I am—indeed—settled on these tools, these instruments, these materials. It’s a decision for which—evidently—I am willing to pay the price, and to be the first to do so. The tools or the weapons used in *Flamme éternelle* are double-edged: they can turn against me—against me first—but they are effective. Their use is a “headless” use, out of necessity, out of precipitation and urgency. Their use is neither gratifying nor satisfying. I use what I use because I want to work with what surrounds me, with what is available and accessible to me—and thus also accessible to the other.

Why do I give the form that I give? *Flamme éternelle* is a work based on the following “guidelines”: “Presence and Production,” Admission-Free, and Nonprogramming. These are the

guidelines that give the form in which *Flamme éternelle* is placed and that are necessary to allow the “sense” or “non-sense” that produces this work of coexisting and of having a place or a space. The decision to create the conditions of a space for floating is the decision of form—my gift of form. This is the form in which sense grafts itself to nonsense, and here this nonsense associated with sense floats in space. Sense and nonsense float together in the galaxy that is *Flamme éternelle*.

If *Flamme éternelle* at the Palais de Tokyo renders the problematization and the questioning of “the institution” as visible and present—without it being my ambition or my will—it’s because day after day, from the first day, I had to—as always—struggle to be able to do my work. I had to fight for the integrity of my work and I had to insist on the position of my work. This poses further and even more forcefully the four questions.

—Thomas Hirschhorn, May 2014