

What Car?

The first works Sunyoung Park showed me were photographs of things seen or placed on the street. What she seemed to be looking for -and to find -was an empty space that had become occupied. One of the intriguing things was that it was impossible to tell which were the things she had just come across and which were the things she had placed or manipulated, the photographs contrived to be both documents and works at the same time, both fiction and fact. At more or less the same time she was also working on a range of sculptures based around the manipulation of found or purchased objects. Thinking back, all of these –using rubber boots, doors, windows, radios, telephones, clocks etc., -incorporate objects where both distance and communication or passage and a kind of absent partner are somehow implicated. Sunyoung then took herself off to Paris, where she spent hours -and days -circling the streets of every arrondissement, looking and taking photographs. At first these take their cue from the previous work, but progressively the parked cars which interrupted her pictures or were always present became a subject. Lumpy, obtrusive, blocking the view and somehow also disregarded, she started by making curious hybrids of the front and back ends appearing in the images, then began work on a car itself -the sculpture presented here. Taking the dimensions from a ubiquitously familiar early 90s model, she has built one out of found material. Part cargo-cult totem, part masterful reconfiguring of one thing as something else (I particularly like the way the skis are used, the walking stick wiper and the metre rule) it takes up space in the same kind of brute way that cars do –not much use unless you can move them -an empty space that has somehow become occupied, throwing back at us our own occupation of space. And even, given that we are mobile and it is not, bringing us up against our own mortality.

Richard Deacon (Statement, Exhibition at Carte Blanch No.5, Bad Ems, Germany, 2012)