



**Title, Lucidity**

**Author, Philippe Piguet**

**Refuge Wear, Jean Michel Place éditions, Paris 1996**

How may an artistic and social reflection be justified if it is without consequence in society?

This question is raised by Lucy Orta. It is a question she is asking both herself and others. Her work does not provide us with a solution but provokes response. This is not meant to be understood as limiting; quite the opposite. Firm in her resolve, she is investigating and initiating the dynamics of an idea. With her mind set she has chosen this obligation she has consciously decided to examine the artist's role in society.

An approach where works of art come from the careful consideration of such an attitude is rare today. If there were a time when contemporary art crusaded under the banner of aesthetics with the pretext that attitudes become form, it was not so much engaged on an altruistic level as on an individual basis. Faithful to this, the tradition of artistic creation is drawn towards conceptual ideas. It is not only a matter of coming down from one's ivory tower and claiming to act from the outside in order to assert the presence of the other. It must still be inscribed in the piece of work so as to justify the one against the other. This is how we see Lucy Orta's attitude towards her work. It is a procedure which is neither courageous nor exemplary, but powerful, and which informs art circles of a new awareness. The art world is a microcosm willingly folded in on itself, but from time to time it opens up to unexpected cases when certain artists train it and charge it with the weight of history. This does not happen without suffering. It falls back on the latter to open its eyes, literally, and, paradoxically speaking, to separate its eyelids too easily closed and often allowing refuge to be taken behind blindness. Lucy Orta's work operates like a scalpel in the collective conscience because it opens up the gap in this social fracture so scandalously manipulated by politics. It is not the finger that contents itself with pointing, but the entire hand, body and soul. It is salutary, not that it proposes - I repeat - miracle solutions - they do not exist in this domain as in so many others - but because it subverts each individual conscience to its depths. Her confrontation does not leave us unharmed. She shocks, she shouts out, she draws attention to the issue. What more could we expect from an artist and her work? Lucy Orta's art rehabilitates one of the primary functions of art: it sheds light on who we are. It is up to us to find the solution.