

Noha Mokhtar

Lila
2021
2-channel HD Video

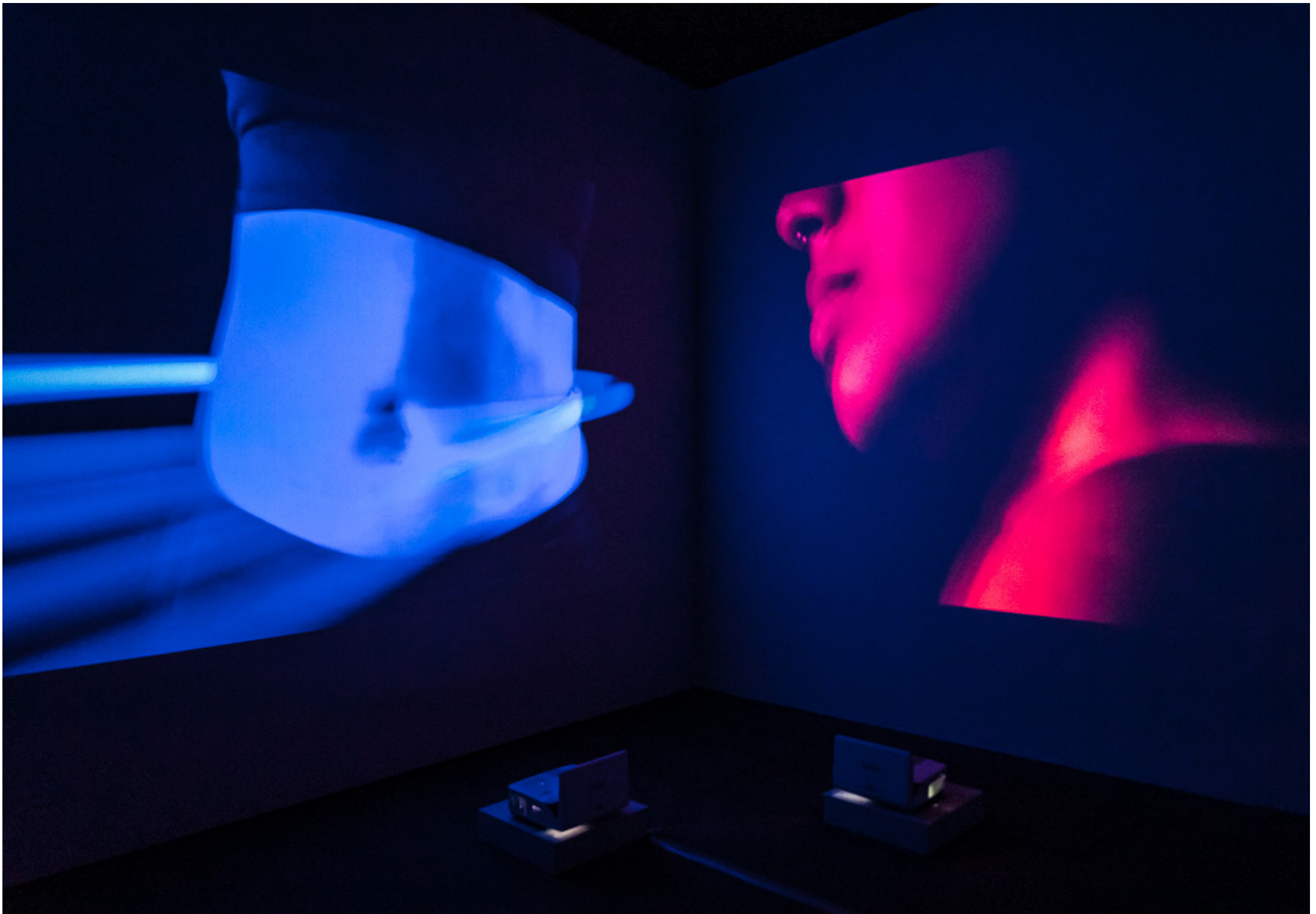
Lila is the ritual ceremony performed by the Gnawa, a black sub-Saharan population that came to Morocco as slaves in the 15th and 16th centuries. A form of music therapy, the ceremony helps cure its participants of various physical and psychic ills and lead them, through a color-coded possession ritual, into a mystical trance. For the anthropologist Viviana Pâques, the Gnawa ceremony is essentially a journey of initiation through the seven colors of the universe, where one learns to live, to die, and to live again. In this video work, two female bodies dance to Gnawa rhythms composed and played by Swiss-Algerian musician Khalil Bensid. The hypnotic movements of their hula-hooping are reminiscent of the out-of-body experience triggered by the traditional ceremony. They also mirror today's longing for both extreme physicality and disembodiment as promised by exercises of mindfulness and meditation. The physical and the superphysical worlds meet at the moment of trance.

2-channel HD Video, 15 minutes (loop), color, sound

Exhibition view: Werkschau, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, CH

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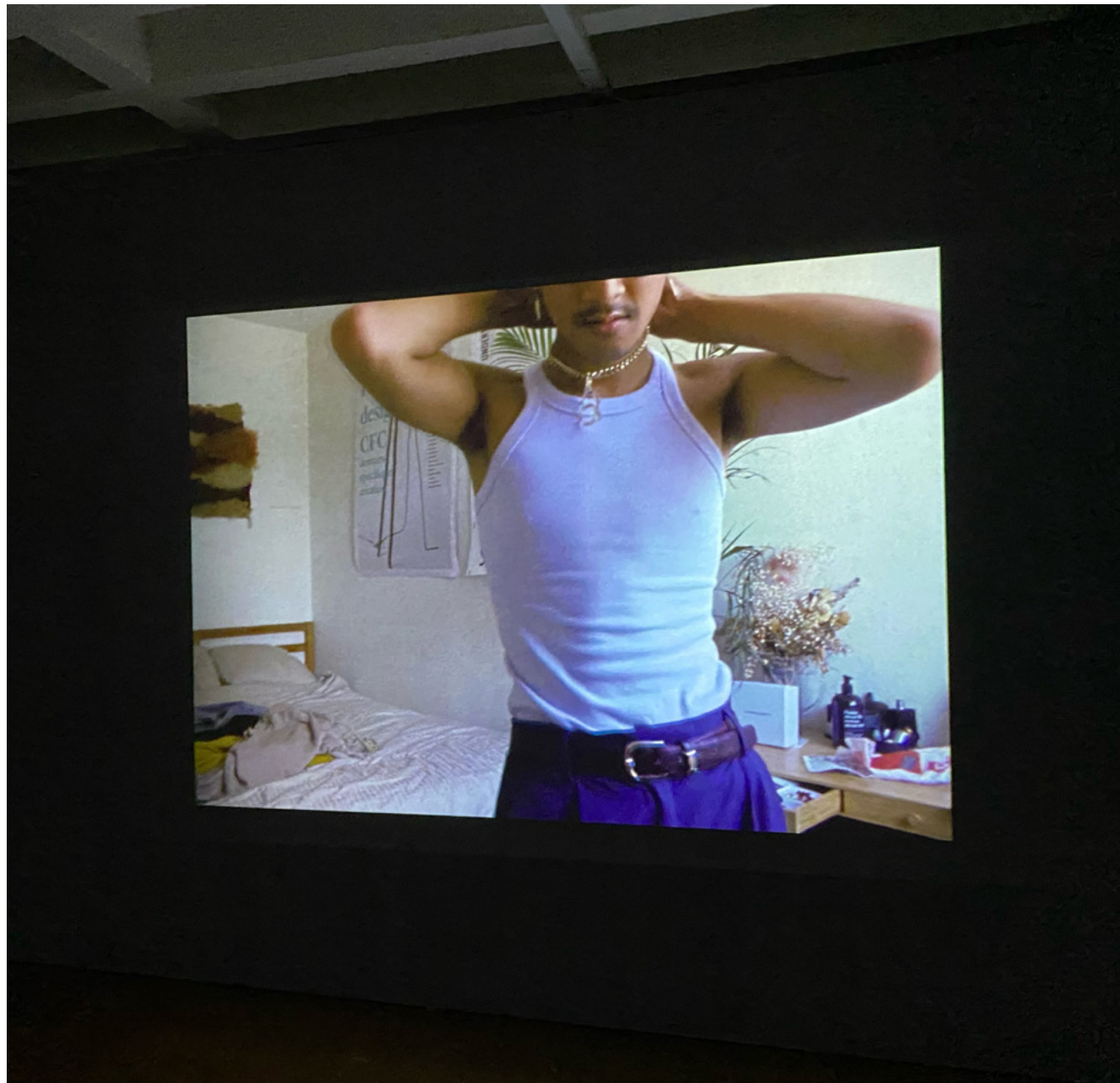
My Life my Life my Life in the Sunshine
2021
16mm film

An exploration on how people portray themselves and the world they live in through Instagram Stories. The film invites ten young women and men from Geneva, and second generation immigrants to re-enact their own Stories in front of a 16mm camera. The work focuses on the ways in which they shape their environment –from the products they consume to the pop cultural references they cite– to create a space of dreaming where their social identities, cultural backgrounds and diasporic biographies emerge. While using the montage techniques offered by the app, such as the alternation between photos and moving images, short and abrupt cuts, or the sporadic use of music, the change of medium challenges the modes of self-expression: if the mirror function of the phone's display allows taking the “best“ selfie and ultimately having absolute control over one's image, the lens of the analog camera offers no such possibilities. Collaboration with Mounira Mokhtar

16mm film (digital transfer), 5'25 minutes (loop), color, sound

Exhibition view: Kunstraum Baden, CH

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My Life My Life My Life 2021 Publication

cynkhatt: was denkt ihr, wenn ihr Nohas Profil seht?

mounira: Ich denke „Künstlerin“.

aabd19: Ja, genau. Es ist abstrakt, es ist nicht etwas, das ich verstehe, aber ich kann mir vorstellen, dass es manchen Leuten gefällt.

hangkellyy: Du hast deine Welt, du postest, worauf du Lust hast. Ich sage mir: Für dich hat es einen Sinn. Aber wenn du umgekehrt meinen Account ansiehst, dann frage ich mich, ob du mich beurteilst.

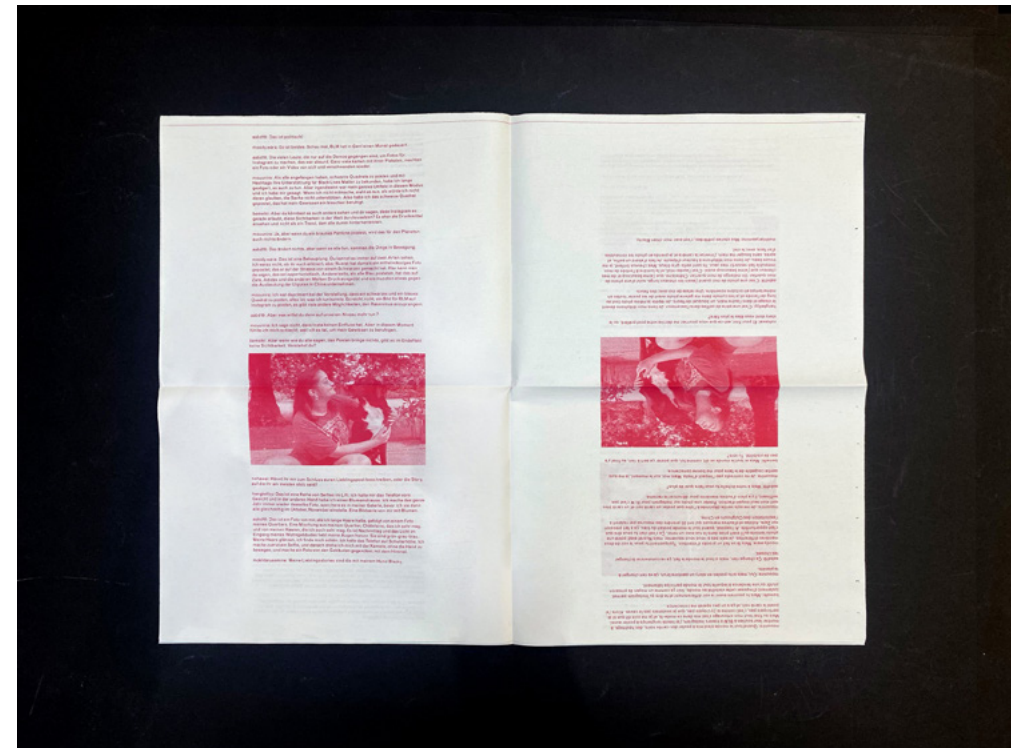
mokhtaryasmine: Aber würdest du dich getrauen, ein Selfie zu posten, auf dem du einfach nur schön bist, ohne diese ironische Seite, von der du sprichst?

nohawai: Hm... Ich glaube nicht.



Noha is in conversation with Ayman, Bilel, Hang, Yasmine, Moody and Mounira about why we post, who we follow and why boomerangs are no longer cool. The six young people from Geneva and main characters of Noha Mokhtar's film *My Life My Life in the Sunshine* talk together about the aesthetics and politics of Instagram. In French and German.

[Read!](#)



Lila
2022
Vinyl record

"Soudain, les lumières s'éteignent et la femme, qui est grande comme la montagne, se lève et se met à parler d'une voix d'homme. Ce sont des paroles indistinctes, graves. Elle est attirée au centre du salon dans lequel nous sommes tous assis en cercle. Ses mouvements ne lui appartiennent plus, son corps est entraîné par la musique comme si elle l'avait prêté à un danseur invisible. Tout s'accélère, les lumières se rallument, et d'autres invités la rejoignent, se balançant derrière elle. Adossée contre le mur et calée entre deux corps qui me donnent chaud à droite et à gauche, je regarde les images qui défilent devant moi avec la félicité ressentie lorsque l'on assiste à un spectacle dont le sens nous échappe, et devant lequel, pourtant, on se sent bien. Cette impénétrabilité n'est pas absolue, et par moment, je ne suis plus sûre si c'est la transe ou le sommeil insoutenable qui me fait tanguer dans un état d'extase. Les fourmis que j'ai dans les pieds remontent lentement jusqu'au ventre. Une anthropologue photographie le rituel, en prenant soin de nous garder hors-cadre. La présence de deux étrangères remettrait-elle en question l'authenticité de son terrain? Alors, une autre femme se met à danser plus intensément, ses épaules et sa tête font des mouvements saccadés, et ses bras, comme des cloches que l'on fait sonner, frappent sa poitrine. Brutalement, elle tombe au milieu des autres possédés, et des enfants, qui la regardent sans étonnement. Elle a réussi à se débarrasser de son jinn. La muqaddima est soulagée. Les musiciens continuent à jouer, satisfaits, et sur leurs fronts en sueur, on vient coller les dirhams. On amène plus de plats, et d'autres tissus de couleur."

Composition and music by Khalil Bensid
Photography and text by Noha Mokhtar

Red or blue version with green poster
Pressed at 250 copies
Published by Edition Hors-Sujet, Zurich

[Listen!](#)



Qualsevol Lloc / Anyplace

2022

Video installation

The project is an investigation of the processes of standardisation of domestic and urban construction in Barcelona. As in other cities in the global north, the reorganisation of spaces and the management of the massive flow of people by digital platforms, points to the existence of a digital infrastructure that at the same time projects its own image onto the city. The work is presented in the form of a video installation that pays attention to the work processes that sustain the mechanisms of reproduction of places and objects resulting from the encounter between mass tourism and digital economies at local and global scales. Collaboration with Júlia Nueno, Xavier Nueno and Gema Darbo.

Mix Fruit, HD video, 23 minutes, color, sound

Management Surfaces I, HD video, 12 minutes, color, sound

Management Surfaces II, HD video, 12 minutes, color, sound

Anyplace, Slideshow on iPad, 17 minutes, color

Exhibition views: Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona, Spain

[Watch!](#)

[Watch Mix Fruit!](#)





Europe Made Easy
2022
Video and neon

The video assembles footage from Instagram reels categorized under #discovereu and #interrail. DiscoverEU is a program of the European Union which promotes the exploration of Europe by train by offering 18-year-old residents of EU countries an interrail pass valid on the whole continent. A program that intends to build the image of an Europe which is culturally diverse, yet politically united. But in fact, there seems to be little differences between Prague, Paris or Porto, where the cappuccinos all look the same, and where historic monuments become the background for selfies. Paradoxically, in a time when refugee movements are intensifying, and borders once again closing, the idea of a united and freely traversable Europe only highlights larger economic and political disparities.

Video, 14 minutes (loop), color
Neon, 40 x 30 cm

Exhibition views: Le lieu secret, Biel/Bienne, CH

[Watch!](#)



Biel / Bienne

← 176 →



EUROPE
MADE
EASY

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Chaque Mercredi Caracas
2020
Book

The book presents a sequence of images taken from the travel sections of the newspapers Le Monde and The New York Times, from the 1960s onwards. Focusing on representations of “the Other” in reportages and ads, the images explore the relation between colonialism and the evolution of mass tourism in the second half of the 20th century: A world that is within reach and ready for consumption. As an insert to the book, Our Letters Crossed responds to the images from today’s perspective. In a collection of letters by friends in different parts of the world, each one addresses its sender’s experience of an unprecedented year, during which we stopped traveling, at least physically. 2020 is an island that didn’t exist. Collaboration with Gregor Huber and Xavier Nueno.

Black and white, 420 pages, print run of 250
Published by Edition Hors-Sujet, Zurich



Le bilan du monde
2017
Installation

This work thematizes the complex relationships between East and West via a series of works. Two large copperplate prints showing an iPhone and a tissue box cover, an aerial land photograph, some printed texts –the first a quote from Ancient Greek historian Thucydides (460-395 BC), the second a quote from One Belt, One Road (a development strategy to bolster China's position on the world stage through a China-Europe rail link)–, a box for business cards and a color drawing. The elements respond to each other either formally or by creating associations, constituting an installation which questions our relationship to land, forming a political, historic and economic map of the world.

- Agent I, Silkscreen print, 180 x 120 cm
- Agent II, Silkscreen print, 180 x 120 cm
- Méditerranée, inkjet print, framed, 40 x 30 cm
- The New Silk Road, inkjet print, framed, 40 x 30 cm
- One Belt One Road, business card box and 2 cards

Exhibition views: Swiss Art Awards, Basel, CH



Balacona
2018
Installation

The wall installation recreates the backdrop of a façade that becomes a projection screen for possible social interactions. The metal sculptures are replicas of the balcony railings that adorn the balconies of my aunts in a middle-class neighborhood in Cairo. The work explores the spatial structure and social significance of the balcony: visually exposed to the street but spatially protected by its elevation, the balcony is a space that simultaneously demarcates the interior from the exterior and provides a transition between private and public spheres. In Egypt, the balcony is a strongly gendered space where domesticity can be lived out in public. In a visual ellipse, the fragments of balustrades on the exhibition wall materially evoke the liminal state of the façade and the social surveillance at play in a neighborhood. The publication is a collection of fictional dialogues that take place on or around balconies. These dialogues are based on interviews as well as Egyptian television series.

Saadia, metal, 60 x 185 cm

Awatef, metal, 30 x 150 x 50 cm

Magda, metal and rope, 45 x 180 cm

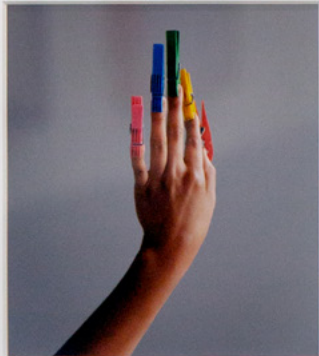
Noura, metal, 30 x 180 x 30 cm

Droite Gauche, c-print, framed photograph 59.4 x 42 cm

Scenes for Balconies, publication, 64 pages

Exhibition view: Werkschau, Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich, CH





Dreambox
2018
Installation

Dreambox is an ensemble of objects and images taken from a surreal domestic space. They function simultaneously as templates to be filled in, as projection surfaces, and as remnants of past scenes. Table tops lose their legs, television channels become cushions bearing their names (life, culture, drama, cinema, comedy, family), a photograph depicting a series of nesting tables becomes a family portrait.

Saga, c-print on Baryt paper, 120 x 120 cm

Les entrées, wood and plexiglas, 120 x 70 x 4 cm

120 x 30 x 4 cm and 50 x 50 x 4 cm

Les cousins, six satin pillows, 56 x 56 cm each

El beit beita (My house is your house), c-print, 115 x 115 cm

A discretion, c-prints, six photographs, 30 x 30 cm each

Exhibition views: On the Road, 10 Jahre Caravan, Aargauer
Kunsthau, Aarau, CH





Education

Current. PhD Candidate in Social Anthropology and Critical Media Practice, Harvard University, USA
2021 MA in Social Anthropology, Harvard University, USA
2016 BA in Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Bern, CH
2011 BA in Visual Communication, ECAL, CH

Exhibitions (selection)

2022 Qualsevol Lloc, Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain
Europe Made Easy, Le lieu secret, Bienne, CH
Off Stage, Kunstraum Baden, CH
2021 Werkschau 2021, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, CH
Kunststipendien der Stadt Zürich, Helmhaus, Zurich, CH
Aeschlimann Corti-Stipendium, Pasquart, Bienne, CH
2020 Biennale Bregaglia 2020, Val Bregaglia, CH
Raumfahrt IV, Langmatt Museum, Baden, CH
2019 Vordemberge-Gildewart, Alte Fabrik, Rapperswil, CH
There, When the Air Becomes Electric, Centre de la Photographie, Geneva, CH
Audio Guide, St Peter Kirche, Zurich, CH
Product Placement, Coalmine Winterthur, CH
2018 Werkschau 2018, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, CH
La pensée sauvage, O.T. Raum für aktuelle Kunst, Lucerne, CH
On the Road 10 Jahre CARAVAN, Aargauer Kunsthhaus, CH
2017 Under 30: Kiefer Hablitzel, Ex-Macello, Lugano, CH
Kiefer Hablitzel, Basel, CH
2016 Meaning Can Only Grow out of Intimacy, Espace Arlaud, Lausanne, CH
2015 Bourses de la Ville de Genève, CAC, Geneva, CH
When Will You Make Us Happy?, Townhouse Gallery, Cairo, Egypt
2014 Calderas, Alte Papierfabrik, Landquart, CH
Diversi Muri Un omaggio a N.O.F.4, Istituto Svizzero, Rome, Italy
Do you speak tourist?, Musée d'art de Pully, CH
2013 Cantonale Bern-Jura, Kunstmuseum Thun, CH
Cantonale Bern-Jura, Centre Pasquart, Bienne, CH
Kiefer Hablitzel, Basel, CH
SAS Escale à la Jonction, Usine Kugler, Geneva, CH
2012 Swiss Design Awards, Bellerive Museum, Zürich, CH
Kiefer Hablitzel, Basel, CH
Festival Photographie Voies-Off, Arles, France
Bourses de la Ville de Genève, CAC, Geneva, CH

Awards / Grants / Residencies

2022 Arbeitsstipendium Covid-19 der Stadt Zürich
2021 UBS Work Grant
Werkbeitrag der Kantons Zürich
Reisestipendium Landis & Gyr Stiftung

Arbeitsstipendium Covid-19 der Stadt Zürich
2020 The most beautiful Swiss Books
Projektbeitrag Bildende Kunst, Kanton Zurich
Contribution à la création d'oeuvres, Pro Helvetia
CMP-Mellon Fellowship, Harvard University, USA
Projektbeitrag, Stiftung Erna und Curt Burgauer, Zurich
Projektbeitrag, Volkart Foundation, Winterthur
Bourse pour projet d'édition, Canton de Genève
Soutien à projet, Ville de Lausanne
Soutien à projet, Etat de Vaud
2019 CMP-Mellon Fellowship, Harvard University, USA
2018 Werkbeitrag des Kantons Zurich
Kulturfonds Fellowship, Swiss Federal Office of Culture
Study Grant, Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, Geneva
2017 Prix Kiefer Hablitzel
Study Grant, Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, Geneva
2016 Fulbright Foreign Student Grant, Fulbright Program, USA
2015 Production Grant, FMAC, Geneva
Pro Helvetia Research Grant, Beirut, Lebanon
Artist residency Marr.tein, Beirut, Lebanon
Artist residency in Cairo, Egypt, Pro Helvetia
2014 Production Grant, Fonds cantonal art contemporain, Geneva
2013 Artist residency in New York, USA, BAK
2012 Swiss Design Award, Category Photography, BAK

Publications

2022 Lila, Edition Hors-Sujet, Zurich (vinyl record and poster)
La valise égyptienne, Edition Hors-Sujet, Zurich
2021 Cahier d'Artiste 2021, Edition Periferia & Pro Helvetia
My Life My Life My Life, Fabrikzeitung n°373, Zurich
2020 Chaque mercredi Caracas, Edition HS, Zurich
Biennale Bregaglia 2020. Ed: Progetti d'arte in Val Bregaglia; Luciano Fasciati
2019 Housemate, self-published artist book
2018 Scenes for balconies, Edition Hors-Sujet, Zurich
2017 Junge Schweizer Kunst. Kiefer Hablitzel Preis, XIII Edition. Catalog hrsg. von Elio Schenini. Vienna: Verlag für moderne Kunst
2015 When Will You Make Us Happy?, FAZ n°309, Zurich
Fonds Berthoud, Lissignol-Chevalier et Galland pour la jeune création contemporaine: 11.12.15 -10.01.16, Genève: Centre d'art contemporain
2014 Do you speak tourist?. Musée d'art de Pully, 2014.
Textes: Delphine Rivier, Pauline Martin et Milo Keller.
Gollion: Infolio, 2014

Press (selection)

2022 Kunstbulletin 5/2022. G. Bernardi. Noha Mokhtar – Auf den bunten Bühnen des Alltags.
Badener Tagblatt. A. Raymann. Dazwischen ist es am schönsten.

2020 Kunstbulletin 11/2020. F. Schindler. Langmatt – Kunst im tiefen Keller.
Engadiner Post. Die erste von drei Biennalen. 07.07.2020.
2018 Luzerner Zeitung, D. Keller. Ausstellung von Judith Leupi und Noha Mokhtar: Das Eigene im Fremden. 26.06.2018.
2015 Ahram Online. S. Elsirgany. Egyptian-Swiss artist explores identity through family, social, and political structures.
2014 Südostschweiz Zeitung. M. Balzer. Das passiert, wenn die Kunst dem Sandkasten entwächst.

Teaching /Talks /Lectures

2022 Guest Critic, Yale School of Art Graphic Design
2021 Panelist at From Pixel to Print: Visual Protest on the Web, Fotomuseum Winterthur, CH
Teaching fellow for Advanced Critical Media Practice, with Lucien Castaing-Taylor, Harvard University, USA
Teaching fellow for Critical Media Practice Projects: Production and Publication, Harvard University, USA
2020 Teaching fellow for Exploring Culture Through Film, with Veronika Kusumariaty, Harvard University
2019 Artist talk at the conference Art as Research: Harvard and Paris Sciences et Lettres, Paris, France
Teaching fellow for Graduate Studio Workshop, with Lucien Castaing-Taylor Harvard University, USA
2018 Public program workshop for the exhibition Theater Gates. Black Madonna. Kunstmuseum Basel, CH
2015 Lecturer in graphic design with Gregor Huber at Ecole supérieure d'Art et Design Valence, France
2015 Artist talk Still and moving images in the Egyptian Museum with Sahar Suliman, Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, Cairo, Egypt
2012 Artist talk at the Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, CH

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