

L'Art Rue الشارع فن

"fawâssel-فواصل"

Presented by the winners of the creation grants conferred by l'Art Rue , the artistic projects unfold in a way that is less demonstrative than reflexive. Combining video-performances, visual arts, theatrical choreography and music, they portray experimental approaches per se, where the critical attitude outweighs the aesthetic imperative.

Emanating from these creations, themes that have a particular resonance nowadays: territory, environment, heritage, society and identity. Through their innovative tools, these 17 artists tackle a rendering of their perception of the world surrounding, thus establishing the conditions for a new life. There is no doubt that the territorial awareness that stains the spirit of most of these works echoes a worrisome socio-political and environmental context.

Territory: a vast notion that everyone defines according to his or her whereabouts, their identity, group, position within society and relationship with the other. In each of the projects, there is a question of physical or imaginary territory, inner and intimate space, or of the resonance between the two, but also of the way in which the artist is positioned before this environment. Each project questions, in its own way and via different mediums, the perception that the artist has of what is surrounding, starting with an impersonal introspection, going beyond the intimate framework of the self.

The projects address the question of territory, nature and the environment in an extremely diverse manner. Thus, thanks to the work of **Ghassen Chraifa**, we are prompted to question everything our citizenship takes as paradoxes: As for a maritime community of Kerkennah the sea, which has become property, can it constitute both a source of life and a constant threat? Alternatively, to what extent, at the price of long urban habits, are public alleys making themselves privately owned?

As per her part, **Bochra Taboubi** stimulates our environmental consciousness through the lost memory of a former Metlaoui natural history museum, prompting it to invent a new vocabulary of flora and fauna. Again, this fictional archaeology merely questions our origins, inviting us to remember the umbilical connection that binds us to the earth.

Reconnecting to one's environment means first and foremost, being the conscious actor of an established aesthetic experience with it. **Oumaima Bahri** takes the artistic practice out of its traditional framework to move it to unconventional territories for the practice of dance allowing us to see differently what surrounds us. Being on the fringe of ambient political environmentalism, some artists will opt for a more subtle awareness strategy: according to them, it is only by yielding to the ethical virtues of slowness that a sense of territorial belonging is possible. The iconographic and sound archiving as elaborated by the artist **Férielle Zouari**, is but an unprecedented emblem: it is a matter of making perceptible - through these hybrid objects blending industrial materials with regional plants - the effect of time over the four seasons, as well as the effect of human actions on this same nature.

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In a more abstract manner, musician **Mohamed Kamel Cherif** musically involves us in ecological issues and establishes a dialogue between nature and humanity to aesthetically attempt redefining a pact of cohabitation. This standpoint of the impact of human activities on the environment is addressed by **Oussema Menchaoui**. Listening to what surrounds us, distinguishing the sounds of nature as opposed to those produced by human activity, analyzing the impact of noise pollution on our environment, and processing this collected data in an artwork where the senses are awakened to perceive what man does and what nature offers. Once again, on the sensory side, the artist strives to raise our awareness about the environmental emergency.

Hence, these works refer to a reality whose magnitude is perceptible today at a time when hyper-industrialization is part and parcel of manual labor regression, the reign of speed replaces the quality where bringing a project to fruition is the main criterion. This is how the entire technical vocabulary of an artisan (repetition, manufacture, search for functionality, aesthetic requirement) interferes in the creative processes of most projects. Not that it is a question of technical know-how dedicated to the mercantile use: by artisanal process, we mean the flow of a qualitative time rather than that of a market time (factory, mass production, etc.). Not only is slowness shouldered by our artists here, it is even sought after. It is the exact slowness that **Mohamed Amine Hamouda** uses, so to speak, to carefully extract his fibers and silk threads.

Similarly, in the artwork of **Abir Gasmi** and **Kamal Zakour**, the relationship with time is inseparable from a territory. In their work, they superimpose multiple spatialities and temporalities where reality and fiction mingle. The desert is the source of this creation, a space where time breaks down, where the Tuaregs cohabit with evil spirits, where the forces of living or extinct souls interact within a nature that seems empty at first glance, but which conceals a thousand lives to protect. Thus, the preservation of a space also connotes respecting coexistence with the other regardless of their differences. From another territory, from another era, **Chokri Daay** resonates music from several temporalities, going from one instrument to another, the notes draw a questioned heritage from which emerges a new sound environment.

On these territories, societies are being built and destroyed. Spaces are being shaped politically, and communities are undergoing changes that are reflected in the environment. Pandemics are the finest examples to illustrate this. **Ali Mejri** relies on the latter to evoke this confinement imposed by politics, the imprisonment affecting the prison that, itself, reflects the deprivation of liberty and fundamental rights allowing individuals to live within groups.

This cohabitation, this ability to live together and to respect the other, intrinsic or was man born a fighter? **Kais Harbaoui**, through colliding bodies, thossing them against each other, questions our ability to build a collective well-being in respect of what surrounds us. This observation of our ability to love one another, to tear each other apart, to despise or adore each other, is an opportunity for **Anis Mehouchi** to make portraits of the people observed on the daily, of noticing small details, plenty of notes that make up our societies and their musicality.

L'Art Rue الشارع فن

To tame a territory, to move elsewhere, to transpose its history, we detect these themes with **Aïcha Ayoub** and **Lobna Noomen**. The artists confront two spatialities, stories that intertwine where the individual, while exiled elsewhere, questions their roots and their identity. In search of history, **Wael Marghni** uses his body as an accumulation of archives and invites us to read alongside. Through his experience, he retraces stages of life where the intimate and the collective mingle. The beginning where everything can be written, the construction where questions create opposition to the Other, authority, social rules, and finally the struggle to anchor in a territory that wants to be its own by fighting environmental, human and political devastation. **Youssef Meksi** represents this body-to-body intimacy through both images and music. He transcribes this nightmare, this waking dream that haunts our nights and days, this paralyzing introspection that can lead to the obsession to understand the reasons behind our existence in a world that is self-destructive. On the theme of identity, body in motion and space, **Marwen Ben Cheikh** questions the relationship to the body in a film and sound performance where the boundaries of the territories of reality and the imagination are porous: what identity, what body?

In what space?

The viewer dives then emerges from this choreography where the bodies are weightless.

Although they emanate from the subjective journey of each artist, these projects share the fact of releasing a permeability, so as to make it possible to take ownership - even symbolic and temporary - of them, by us the visitors. Indeed, the artist-citizen they embody only sketches the horizons of a common well-being, perceived as the ultimate alternative to the challenges of the present.

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Elsa Despiney and Hedi Khelil