

PRESS RELEASE // CAROLINE PAGÈS GALLERY

Yazid Oulab

Survivances

&

AnaMary Bilbao

Fallacious memory

Opening Saturday, October 11 from 5 to 8 pm

October 11 – December 6, 2014

Caroline Pagès Gallery

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Open from 3 - 8 pm Monday through Saturday, and by appointment.



Yazid Oulab, Exhibition view @ FRAC PACA, Marseille, 2013

Yazid Oulab

Survivances

Rooms 1, 2, 3

Born in Constantine (Algeria) in 1958, Yazid Oulab lives and works in Marseille, France. He opened the new FRAC PACA with a solo show curated by Pascal Neveux during Marseille-European Capital of Culture in 2013, and recently participated in the 2014 Busan Biennale (South Korea) curated by Olivier

Kaeppelin. *Survivances* is his first solo show at the Caroline Pagès Gallery and in Portugal. The exhibition will display graphite drawings and sculptures made with barbwire, nails, rock crystal, bamboo, and graphite.

"From the West, I have inherited form, from the East, the word." Yazid Oulab

The works of Yazid Oulab are, for the most part, autobiographical and rich in a multiplicity of meanings: they bear witness to contemporary artistic practice and a spiritual path nourished by the heritage and symbolism of Sufi philosophy. However, Sufism is only one aspect of Oulab's formal vocabulary. His work brings up the subtlety of paradox: born to a labourer father and an intellectual mother, Oulab defines himself as the result of them both, referencing and complementing manual labour and intellectual reflection while borrowing from religious imagery.

Clou and *Alif* represent the cornerstone of Yazid Oulab's work. In 2006, he began developing the theme of the nail, which has many meanings, depending on the time and place of its use: it was once a form of currency, it is an important architectural tool, and it is also a reference to writing, since it was used in Mesopotamia for the cuneiform script. Far from being a spiritual equivalent of the stylite tower, this nail refers to building labours Maghreb immigrants undertook in France; something the artist has done himself when he arrived in Europe.

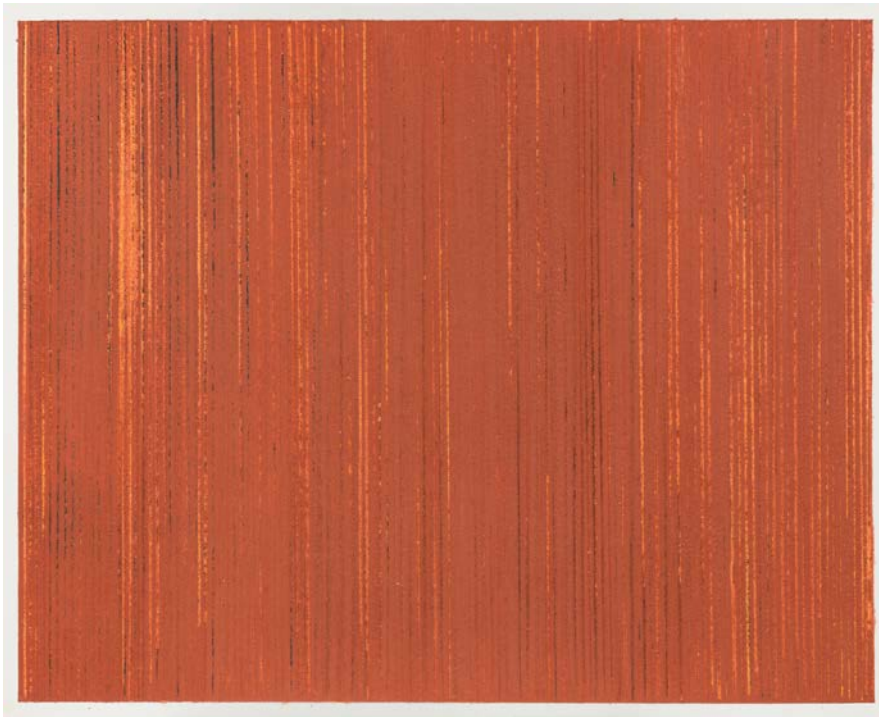
The *Stylites urbains* drawings are dedicated to the ascetics, who were exiled to the top of pillars in order to gaze at the work of God. The verticality of this structure reminds us of the written forms of the first word that the Divine revealed to the Prophet, the letter "Alif", the first syllable in Arabic of the word "read, learn". As three-dimensional Alifs, the rock crystal or graphite nails presented here embody this divine force descending from heaven to dictate God's word and educate mankind. The word being that which elevates, the artist's figures of speech take the form of chains, ladders and scaffoldings.

Yazid Oulab (DZ/FR) graduated from the School of Fine Arts in Algiers in 1985, and afterwards studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Marseille. In 2009 he was invited for an artist residency at the Atelier Calder in Saché, Touraine.

He has exhibited on both sides of the Mediterranean and worldwide. He has taken part in numerous group exhibitions at institutions such as the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), The Grand Palais (Paris), the Musée des Abattoirs (Toulouse), the FRAC Lorraine and Picardie, the Château de Servières in Marseille, Haus der Kunst in Munich, the MUDAM (Luxembourg), the Circulo de Bellas Artes in Madrid and the MNAC (Bucharest) among many others.

Some of his solo exhibitions include *Noyau cosmique* (2013), Eric Dupont Gallery, Paris; *Yazid Oulab* (2013), curated by Pascal Neveux, FRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, *L'ère du graphite* (2012) and *L'âge du graphite* (2011), Eric Dupont Gallery, Paris; *Tailler la montagne*, ESAC, Pau, France; Atelier Calder, Saché, France, Maison Max Ernst, Huismes, and *Le lien*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Saint-Restitut, France in 2009.

His work is represented in many public collections including the Musée National d'Art Moderne (MNAM)- Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris ; the FRAC Picardie, Amiens, France; the city of Marseille, France and Les Abattoirs Museum, Toulouse, France as well as the Fondation Musée d'Art Moderne Grand Duc Jean in Luxembourg.



Untitled (Fallacious memory #6), 2014, colour pencil, pigments and acrylic gesso on cotton paper, 20,3 x 25,5 cm.

AnaMary Bilbao

Fallacious memory

Room 4

Memory and Imagination

With the aid of Paul Ricoeur¹ and his revision of Plato's theory on memory as a phenomenon that allows the present creation of an absent thing, we could start by stating that all work from memory seems to imply work from representation. In that work from representation, inherent to the process of remembrance, we foresee, naturally, a process of creating images. Images that we think we have viewed before, images that we think reappear in us, images that we perceive as aids in memory's live experience. From this process, highly visual, occurs a natural distrust. The images that allow us to reach the recollection of a certain episode, concern only and exclusively that episode? Or are they affected by the giant ocean of other images that we hold within ourselves? Beyond that, can we trust their exclusive relationship with the past and trust that mnemonic quality, or can they occur of processes of original creation, resulting in a kind of future projections of a specific present experience?

In the series of paintings on paper "Untitled (Fallacious Memory)", now presented in the shape of a solo show in one of the rooms of the Caroline Pagès Gallery in Lisbon, AnaMary Bilbao seeks, precisely, to summon a set of questions that relate to the theme of the experience of memory. From the start, by its formal configuration. The use of the series, the adoption almost exclusively of the line and the grid, the economy of the chromatic palette, the rigor and the containment of the proceedings, fed by a repetitive and rhythmic logic in the making, seems to invite us to a universe that reviews minimalistic practices, here only contradicted by a presence, even if tenuous, of the hand, implied in the drawing of each of the lines.

But the investigation about the mnemonic processes is still highly reinforced by the process itself of constructing these paintings. While observing them carefully, we recognize immediately its construction in layers (the use of the term here is not innocent, since in this process, as in processes of remembering, we assume the archaeological aspect of experience). We realize then that in the process of construction itself, a process of deconstructing is implied (the drawing of a layer of lines over plaster unveils the layer of lines beneath it, making it visible, giving it presence, building its existence). Curiously, we realize as well that, when traced, the superficial layer of lines mimics, with maximum precision, the lower layer of lines. The double image that results from the top grid of lines seems, this way, to be created so it meets – amongst the natural opacity of plaster (metaphor for forgetfulness and time) – its original image.

To conclude we would assert that, through this process of production of images that give way to other images (with a simultaneous past and present existence), AnaMary Bilbao activates, in a first instance in herself and, in a second moment, in the spectator, precisely that which we could identify as a common territory between the universe of imagination and the universe of memory.

Ana Anacleto, Oct. 2014
Translated by Susana Pomba

¹ RICOEUR, Paul – *Memory, History, Forgetting*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2006.

AnaMary Bilbao PT/SP (Sintra, Portugal, 1986). She works in Lisbon and holds a BA in History of Art from FCSH-UNL, a MPhil in Contemporary Art from FCH-UCP and studied Painting and Cinema at Ar.Co – Art Centre & Visual Communication. AnaMary Bilbao began exhibiting her work in 2013, year of her first solo show, *Past present*, at Boavista Gallery (Lisbon, Portugal). Meanwhile she also took part in group exhibitions such as *On Drawing II*, at Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art (Lisbon, Portugal), *Coisa mental. Obras da Coleção António Cachola (Campo Maior, Portugal)* and *Correspondências Lisboa-Barcelona*, organized by Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa Contemporary Art Centre at Espai Mallorca Cultural Centre (Barcelona, Spain). Her work is represented in the António Cachola (Portugal) and Konrad Fischer (Düsseldorf, Germany) collections, among others.

For more information and visuals please contact the gallery at [+315] 21 387 33 76 or [+351] 91 679 56 97 or email us at gallery@carolinepages.com.