

## Fondu Ré-enchaîné

Group exhibition with works by Tamara Al-Samerraei, Caline Aoun, Omar Fakhoury, Rania Stephan and Raed Yassin

08-09-2022 | 23-10-2022

L'Atlas, galerie des mondes

Tamara Al Samerraei  
*Chondite*  
*Shore*  
2022

Tamara Al Samerraei's work is often triggered by photographs from her personal archive and from the public domain such as film stills, google images, stolen and borrowed photographs. Since the start of her journey as an artist, she has been curious about the interface between the two mediums.

She depicts interior and outdoor spaces, objects, and figures that are stripped of everything except their bare essence. Her details are vague, colors appear as either faded or saturated.

The objects in her paintings appear silent and inanimate but alive.

Her narratives are sometimes disrupted by an outside interference from the bare margin of the canvas into the frame. Like a spectral vision, we register a palpable presence even when we can't physically see it.

Caline Aoun  
*Ever New Becomings of Space*  
2022

In *Ever New Becomings of Space*, Aoun looks into the fluid permeability between the invited space Marfa' and the hosting space L'Atlas. By experimenting with overlapping the floor-plans of both spaces, Aoun notices a huge similarity in both their sizes and layouts.

The artist is interested in opening up or breaking the finitude, boundedness of the exhibition space.

For this exhibition, she reproduces sections of Marfa's floor, by pouring on its surface silicone rubber, from which she creates paper casts. These transcriptions are then displayed in the space of L'Atlas in the exact locations where the silicone molds were originally poured in Marfa'. In this way, the viewer encounters the sections of the floor from Marfa' gallery in the same spatiotemporal configuration as the viewer would have if they were walking in the latter.

The surface of the work becomes a material register of the history of the gallery's exhibition making, as well as of the unfortunate explosion that happened in the port of Beirut in August 2020, which greatly impacted the physical space of the gallery. The seemingly solid and permanent spaces of our lives are not static, but are made of various events that are kept hidden, that constantly transform the spaces into new ones.

For this work, Aoun used blue carbon paper, a material which she often uses in her sculptural transcriptions. As a result, the paper casts on the floor are reminiscent of the sea, and of its maritime boundaries. At the same time the work is seen as a group of bounded islands framing outward within the space the flow and traffic of visitors around them.

Omar Fakhoury  
*Chairs*  
2019

Among the different media that Omar Fakhoury uses, from installation to sculpture or video, the series of painting "*Chairs*" simultaneously reveals and dissolves the figures he studies. It is in the daily life of his native city, Beirut, that the artist encounters them.

Wandering its streets, Fakhoury finds abandoned chairs that he photographs before painting them on linen. Empty and worn out, like most public spaces in the Lebanese capital, these wrecks are the remnants of a succession of specific situations. Painted in series of imagined landscapes, they finally become a community, and substitute for the inhabitants of Beirut who have once sat in them outside a shop, a building site of a family home.

Rania Stephan  
*Double Cross*  
2018  
Video

*Double Cross* is part of a trilogy investigating the artist Rania Stephan's personal archive, using fictional films and images from different sources to tell the story of a traumatic memory from her past. The main character in the Otto Preminger's film *Laura* (1942), detective Marc McPhearson, became the investigator in Stephan's film, delving into the filmmaker's personal archive and memory.

Here we find him walking into Laura's apartment in a classical "Fondu enchaîné" or Cross-Fade transition between two shots: him walking from the street into the building, then entering Laura's flat.

The Cross-Fade is a classical cinematic code for transiting smoothly from one space to another using the ellipse to condense "useless" narrative time. Images from one shot overlap with images from the next, resulting in unique and surprising compositions. In *Double-Cross* the detective remains stuck in transition, stretched out with an overlapping composition. This video uses the same tool which condenses time, to expand the notion itself. Condensed time becomes doubly chained in an eternal loop.

Raed Yassin  
*The Company of Silver Specters*  
2021

With the advent of photography and its spread into the nuclear family unit, imbibing the documentary records of one's familial history became fundamental to one's notion of identity; as if without these printed pieces of paper, one does not have a memory or a sense of self at all. This is the unfortunate fate that befell Raed Yassin: many of his family photographs were lost during the civil war in Lebanon. In order to overcome this initial trauma, he began collecting the family photographs of others in bulk.

The personal nature and preciousness of those captured moments make up for the artist's own loss, helping him to reconstruct a mental picture of his domestic upbringing. But with time, these treasured items transform into a burden, as the number of persons inhabiting them grows into an intimidating, sometimes even haunting mass.

So the artist starts erase these images by spraying the photographs with paint, leaving only a faint trace of their bodily outlines within the frame. The result is an abstracted spectre of characters, all impossible to see with the naked eye, but still affirming to us that they once existed through their invisibility.