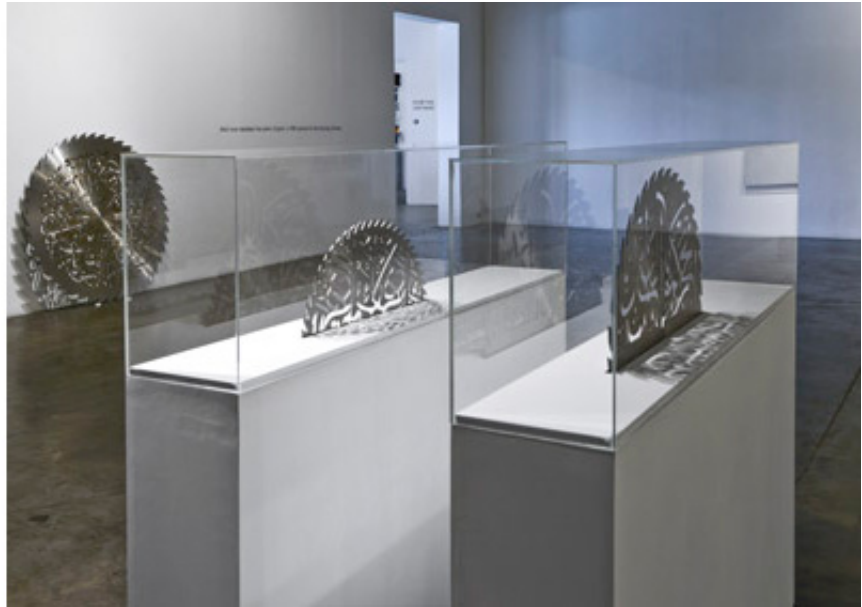


21. | Cuts



2009, saw blades of 30 cm, 50 cm, 60 cm, 75 cm and 90 cm, pedestals, 147,5 x 170 x 30 cm.
Exhibition view from Kissing Circles, Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica.
Courtesy of the artist and Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica.
Ed. of 5 + 1 A.P.

Les Coupes forment une série de sculptures réalisées à l'aide de lames de scie circulaires, dont les surfaces métalliques non traitées sont percées de motifs calligraphiques arabes découpés au laser. Les lames sont juchées sur des piédestaux blancs, dans lesquels elles paraissent s'enfoncer sous l'action de leurs dents tranchantes. Elles sont également surmontées d'une structure transparente en plexiglas dont l'utilité semble être d'avantage de protéger le public de blessures éventuelles que de mettre en sûreté l'œuvre au sein d'un dispositif muséal.

Désignés par le terme "coupes", les éléments exposés pourraient être envisagés comme autant de sections minces d'un objet plus vaste et destiné à l'observation ou à un examen scientifique, à savoir le langage ou le discours religieux. L'étude des rapports entre langue et culture est une préoccupation constante de Mounir Fatmi, qui peut s'observer à travers diverses installations et sculptures, recourant notamment aux lames de scies circulaires, telles que l'installation *Le Paradoxe* ou la sculpture *Entre les Lignes*. Les Coupes, quant à elles, proposent d'extraire des éléments du langage religieux de leur cadre doctrinal afin de les placer dans les conditions d'une observation scientifique. Elles invitent à un examen attentif permettant d'en relever les caractéristiques fondamentales et de décrire leur comportement.

Les Coupes permettent ainsi d'ordonner un certain nombre d'observations. Elles donnent d'abord à voir un objet aux propriétés ambivalentes : si les motifs calligraphiques exercent en effet un attrait esthétique indéniable, les dents acérées n'en demeurent pas moins dangereuses. Les subtilités graphiques contrastent avec l'impression de

"Cuts" is a series of sculptures created with circular saw blades whose untreated metallic surfaces are pierced with laser-cut motifs of Arab calligraphy. The blades are placed on white pedestals, and they seem to sink into them through the action of their sharp teeth. A transparent Plexiglas structure surmounts the installation, its utility seeming to be to protect the public from possible injuries rather than to protect the work within its museum setting.

Designated by the term "cuts", the exhibited elements can be perceived as a series of slim sections of a larger object destined for observation or scientific examination, namely the religious discourse. The study of the relations between language and culture is a constant preoccupation for Mounir Fatmi, which can be perceived in various of his installations and sculptures, some of which also employing circular saw blades, such as the installation *The Paradox* or the sculpture *Between the Lines*. As for *Cuts*, it proposes to extract elements of religious discourse from their doctrinal context in order to place them under the conditions of scientific observation. The work calls upon an attentive examination that could distinguish their fundamental characteristics and describe their behavior.

In this way, *Cuts* enables a certain number of observations. First, it exhibits an object with ambivalent properties: the calligraphic motifs have an undeniable aesthetic appeal, yet the sharp teeth are dangerous. The graphic subtleties contrast with the impression of power, even of violence, that the object conveys. They also put forward the fact that these slices of cultural elements, these sections of religious discourse, are difficult to control outside of the context in which they usually appear: indeed, the observed objects, far from being inert, have started to turn against the support

puissance, voire de violence que procure l'objet. Elles mettent également en évidence que ces tranches d'éléments de culture, ces sections de discours religieux, sont difficilement maîtrisables hors du contexte où elles apparaissent habituellement : pour preuve, les objets observés, loin d'être inertes, ont commencé à s'attaquer aux supports sur lesquels ils se trouvent. Et cependant, ces éléments, aussi solides et immuables qu'ils puissent paraître, sont constitués d'une matière vivante qui subit les dommages du temps et de l'oxydation. A une autre échelle, eux aussi sont fragiles et ils sont également voués à disparaître.

Les Coupes, reprenant le mécanisme du « piège esthétique » cher à Mounir Fatmi, mettent ainsi en garde contre les dangereuses séductions du discours religieux d'une part, et d'autre part disent la difficulté, voire le danger de l'étude critique, scientifique ou artistique, d'un tel objet, qui a tendance à s'en prendre à la fois au cadre expérimental et aux observateurs. L'œuvre met en évidence les propriétés d'éléments linguistiques caractéristiques et révèle les difficiles rapports de l'art et la pensée critique à la religion. Elles affirment enfin une volonté d'observer et de comprendre malgré les risques et expriment le désir d'extraire la langue de son cadre doctrinal et de la rendre à son pouvoir critique.

Studio Fatmi, Avril 2017.

materials on which they find themselves. Yet these elements, solid and immutable as they may seem, are made of a living material that also suffers the ravages of time and oxidation. Though on a different scale, they too are fragile and destined to eventually disappear.

Cuts, resorting to the mechanism of the "esthetic trap" Mounir Fatmi enjoys using, send out a warning against the dangerous attractiveness of religious discourse on one hand, and on the other hand testify to the difficulty, even the danger, of critical, scientific or artistic examination of such an object, which tends to go after any experimental context as well as its observers. The work highlights the properties of specific linguistic elements and reveals the difficulty of the relation between art, critical thought and religion. Finally, it affirms a desire to observe and understand despite the risks, and expresses the will to pull language out of its doctrinal context and give it back its critical power.

Studio Fatmi, April 2017.

" These elements, solid and immutable as they may seem, are made of a living material that also suffers the ravages of time and oxidation. "

Studio Fatmi, April 2017

exhibitions:

2015

Art Brussels - Keitelman Gallery - Art fair

Artgenève - Keitelman Gallery - Art fair

2013

Intersections - Keitelman Gallery - Solo show

2012

Kissing Circles - Shoshana Wayne Gallery - Solo show

2010

Seeing is believing - Galerie Hussenot - Solo show

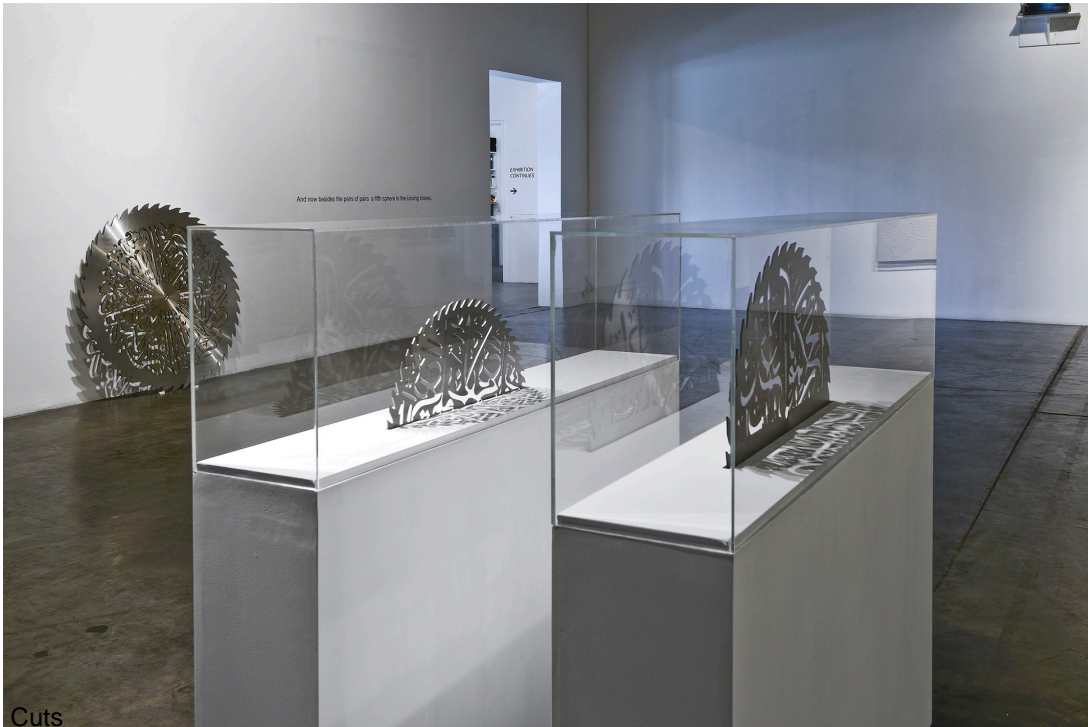
Art Dubai - Solo show - Paradise Row Gallery - Art fair

The Armory Show - Galerie Hussenot - Art fair



Cuts

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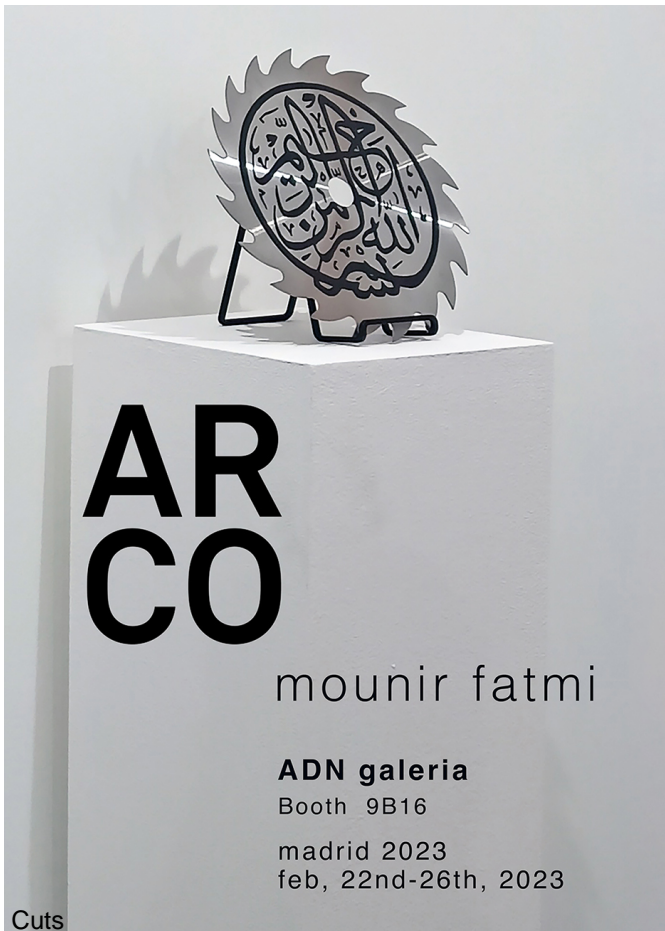


Cuts

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