24. | Tracked Memory





2006, France, 6 min 06, SD, 4/3, B&W, stereo.
Courtesy of the artist and Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris.
Ed. of 5 + 2 A.P.

Tracked Memory est une vidéo tournée en noir et blanc qui met en scène les voies ferrées sur lesquelles les trains circulent, ainsi que des postes d'aiguillage avec leur personnel (dont on aperçoit furtivement les silhouettes à contre-jour) et leur équipement informatique, notamment composé d'écrans et de plans du réseau ferroviaire. La bande sonore se compose des différents bruits ferroviaires produits lors du déplacement des trains et de fragments de conversations entre aiguilleurs.

Tracked Memory interroge notre rapport à la technique et aux outils de communication et de circulation modernes. La vidéo s'intéresse en particulier au rail, à travers les époques et les usages. L'œuvre interroge l'imaginaire de la voie ferrée et explore le mythe du progrès technique, très présent dans nos sociétés depuis les premières révolutions industrielles jusqu'à nos jours.

Tracked Memory croise les matières issues de l'industrie, les données chiffrées et les écrans d'ordinateurs derrière lesquels disparaissent les silhouettes humaines. Le recours au noir et blanc tend à transformer des images actuelles en film d'archive et ces dernières se voient ainsi mises en relation à un passé et à un imaginaire collectif marqués par la guerre. La vidéo exprime la violence d'un moyen de communication moderne, parfois détourné de ses fonctions premières de mise en relation des hommes et des marchandises.

Les déportations de la seconde guerre mondiale ont ainsi vu les trains de fret transformés en wagons de transport de prisonniers destinés aux camps de concentration. La vidéo Tracked Memory traduit la fascination du 20e siècle pour la

Tracked Memory is a black & white video showing railway tracks with trains running on them, along with signal boxes and their personnel (whose silhouettes can be surreptitiously seen against the light) and their computer equipment comprising screens and railway network maps. The soundtrack consists in various sounds produced by the trains in motion and fragments of conversations between pointsmen.

Tracked Memory addresses our relation to technology and modern communications and transportation tools. The video particularly focuses on trains across eras and uses. The work questions the fantasized image of the railway and explores the myth of technological progress, so present in our societies ever since the first industrial revolutions.

Tracked Memory blends together materials from the industrial world, data in the form of numbers and computer screens behind which human silhouettes disappear. The use of black & white tends to turn these contemporary images into archive footage, thereby related to an era and a collective imagination on which the war has left its mark. The video expresses the violence of this modern means of communication, sometimes diverted from its primary function of connecting people and transporting merchandise.

The deportations of WWII transformed freight trains into prisoner transport convoys headed to concentration camps. The video Tracked Memory translates the fascination of the 20th century for modernity, industrialization, speed and productivity enabled by machines, a fascination that was sometimes exercised to the detriment of individuals and populations. The video shapes a contemporary fantasy

modernisation, l'industrialisation, la vitesse et le rendement atteint par la machine, fascination qui s'est parfois exercée au détriment des individus et des populations. La vidéo met en forme un imaginaire contemporain de la machine où la fascination et l'horreur se côtoient et met dans la balance d'un côté le poids de l'histoire et des atrocités commises au nom de l'idée de progrès (technique ou social) et de l'autre les éventuels bienfaits et améliorations que cette idée a suscités. Avec des accents baudelairiens, Tracked Memory invite à se méfier de notions telles que le progrès – centrale au 20e siècle, aussi positives que celles-ci puissent paraître.

Studio Fatmi, Juillet 2017.

vidéo distribuée par Heure exquise ! www.exquise.org

image of the machine, where fascination blends with horror, and balances the weight of history and atrocities committed in the name of progress (whether technological or social) with the potential benefits and improvements that very idea brought forth. With Baudelairian accents, Tracked Memory urges us to be wary of notions such as progress – so central throughout the 20th century – positive as they may seem.

Studio Fatmi, July 2017.

video distributed by Heure exquise ! www.exquise.org

" The video expresses the violence of this modern means of communication, sometimes diverted from its primary function of connecting people and transporting merchandise. "

Studio Fatmi, July 2017

exhibitions:

2018

This is My Body - Art Bärtschi & Cie - Solo show



This is my Body, Sf Publishing 2019

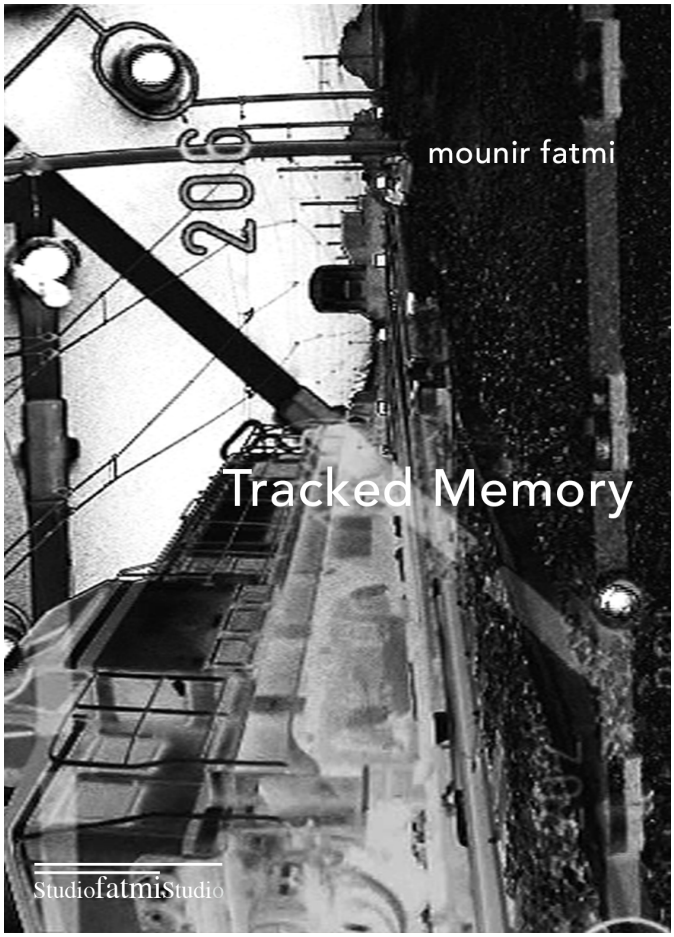
When hearing the name mounir fatmi, one can't help but think of his sculptures and installations addressing the issues of free expression and censorship. His works, both material and immaterial, all have in common striking concepts and powerful images. Video is his preferred medium. Contrary to a painting where the image remains motionless and unchanging, a screen always offers the possibility of being turned off, thus making the work disappear, of giving it life or not at any chosen moment.

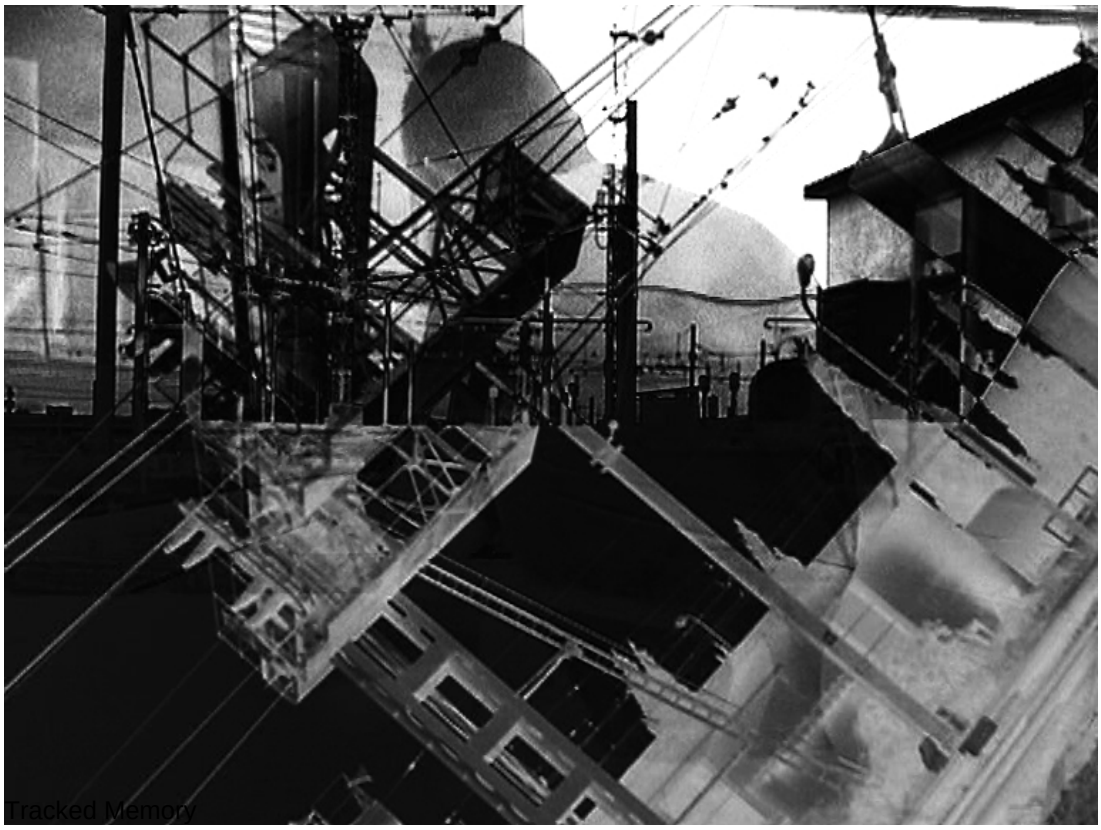
Barbara Polla, 2019



Tracked Memory addresses our relation to technology and modern communications and transportation tools. The video particularly

focuses on trains across eras and uses.





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The video expresses the violence of this modern means of communication, sometimes diverted from its primary function of connecting people and transporting merchandise.



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The video shapes a contemporary fantasy image of the machine, where fascination blends with horror, and balances the weight of history and atrocities committed in the name of progress (whether technological or social) with the potential benefits and improvements that very idea brought forth.