29. | Forget





2006-2009, France, 3 min 17, SD, 4/3, B&W, stereo.
Courtesy of the artist and Analix Forever, Genova.
Ed. of 5 + 2 A.P.

Alors que nombre des théories, systèmes économiques et idéologies sur lesquelles le monde actuel s'est construit sont en crise, la question doit se poser de ce qui doit être préservé et ce qui doit être oublié. Les bâtiments – en tant que manifestations physiques des valeurs et aspirations sociétales – incarnent cette question. Des plus hauts gratte-ciel au plus humbles habitations, ces structures existent en tant que témoignages d'actions passées et tombeaux pour celles qui ont été effacées. Dans un cycle d'arasement et de reconstruction qui semble perpétuel (souvent en tant que conséquence de la guerre), Fatmi postule que – en termes de coûts économique et humain – « si vous voulez oublier, c'est gratuit… Si vous voulez vous souvenir, cela peut se révéler cher… »

La vidéo Forget se situe quelque part entre ces deux extrêmes, montrant en boucle des images d'archives de tours jumelles Melchiorre démolies par détonations coordonnées. Elles s'effondrent sans tambour ni trompette, donnant une fin sans gloire à des structures construites à la hâte dans la France des années 60 pour loger des travailleurs immigrés alors que les fils de la nation étaient engagés dans la guerre. Ces immeubles étaient des ghettos habités par des travailleurs sans visage, mais malgré leur qualité médiocre et leur pauvreté architecturale, les Melchiorre étaient devenus le ciment d'une communauté en marge de l'opinion publique et à l'écart du rêve moderniste. Leur offrant un dernier répit, bien qu'ostensiblement perpétuel, Fatmi prolonge leur souvenir fugace en montant les images en avant et en arrière – montrant les Melchiorre s'élever et s'effondrer au son du bip d'un moniteur cardiaque.

When many of the theories, economic systems and ideologies from which the world was built are now in crisis, one must ask what should be preserved, and what should be forgotten? Buildings – as the physical manifestation of societal values and aspirations – embody this question. From the tallest high rises to the most humble dwellings, these structures live as the evidence of actions, and tombstones to those which have been erased. In a seemingly endless cycle of being razed and rebuilt (often as the consequence of war), Fatmi argues that – in human and economic cost – "If you want to forget, it is free…If you want to remember, that can prove expensive…"

The video Forget lingers somewhere between these poles, looping historical black & white footage of paired Melchiorre buildings being toppled by controlled detonation. They collapse with little fanfare, providing an inglorious end to structures built hurriedly in 1960s France to house immigrant workers as the country's first sons were engaged in war. These buildings were ghettos for faceless workers to inhabit; yet despite their middling status and architectural failings, the Melchiorre became the foundation of a community outside popular attention, and outside modernism's dream. As a last, but ostensibly perpetual respite, Fatmi prolongs their fleeting memory by forwarding and reversing the footage – having the Melchiorre rise and fall to the sound of a beeping heart rate monitor.

Beating faintly but steadily in an infinite state of life, "They seem," in the words of the artist, "to breathe, to resist the destruction, the loss, the memory. They are becoming monuments…" They are human, and in a pock-faced park adjacent to a hospital (with clear visual association to the

Battant faiblement mais continument dans un souffle de vie se maintenant perpétuellement, « ils semblent, selon les mots de l'artiste, respirer, résister à la destruction, à l'oubli, à la mémoire. Ils deviennent progressivement des monuments… » Ils sont humains, et dans un petit parc vérolé jouxtant un hôpital (et dans une association visuelle manifeste avec les tours du World Trade Center), Forget nous exhorte à nous rappeler du lien tenace entre être(s) et bâtiment(s).

Steven Matijcio

Vidéo distribuée par Heure exquise ! www.exquise.org

World Trade Center towers), Forget compels us to remember the enduring link between being/s and building/s.

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video distributed by Heure exquise ! www.exquise.org

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Steven Matijcio

exhibitions:

2018

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

2012

Narracje 4 - Gdanska Galeria Miejska - Expo collective



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


Forget

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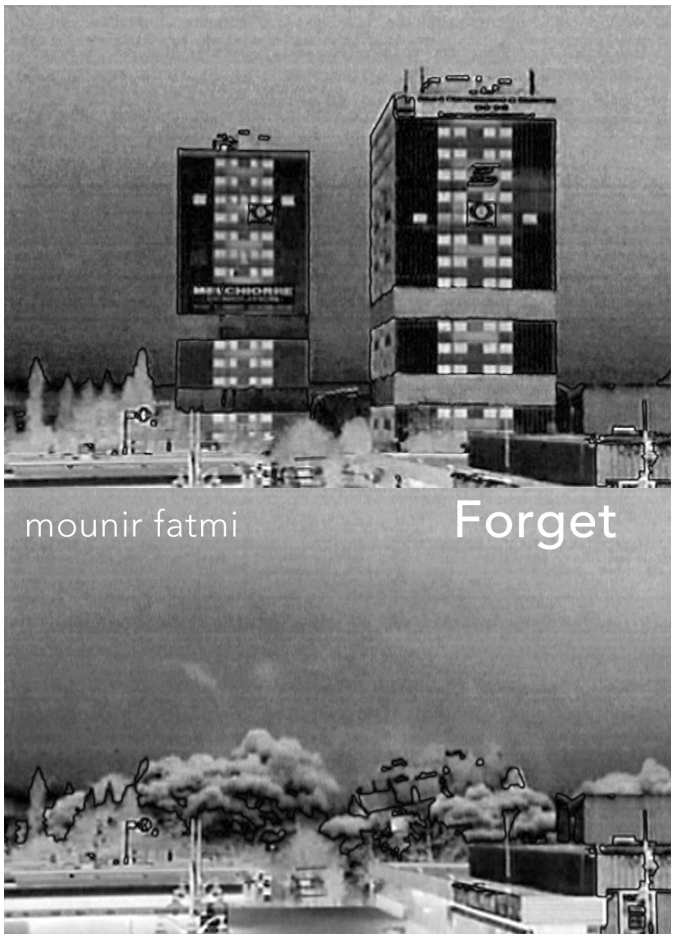

MOUNIR FATMI

Un minuto di sole in più

One more minute of sun

by Barbara Polla



Mounir Fatmi, *Forget*, 2008-2009, video(still (video, 3'17), courtesy of the artist and Analia Forever, Geneva

Per parecchi anni, la ricerca video di **Mounir Fatmi** è rimasta quasi confidenziale, a vantaggio delle sue grandi installazioni, di un lavoro costruito sulla realtà personale, politica e sociale. Niente di *soprannaturale* in queste proposte, ma, al contrario, un solido radicamento nella realtà della periferia, anzi, delle periferie; proposte monumentali, a volte pesanti. Ma ecco che *Les Ciseaux* entrano in scena…

For many years, **Mounir Fatmi**'s video research has remained almost confidential, to the benefit of his big art installations, a work built upon a personal, political and social reality. There is nothing *supernatural* about these proposals - on the contrary, they are strongly rooted in the reality of the suburb, or better, of the suburbs: monumental proposals, sometimes quite heavy. But now *Les Ciseaux* come on stage…

Mounir Fatmi, soprannaturale o, al contrario, iperreale e politico? Per cercare di rispondere a questa domanda, bisogna ascoltare i fantasmi di Fatmi. I fantasmi dell'infanzia, dei genitori, del Marocco; il fantasma dell'architetto, quello di Goethe; i fantasmi che infestano le città che ossessionano Fatmi… Bisogna inoltre guardare il lavoro più intimo di Fatmi: i suoi video.

Il video, mezzo di per sé soprannaturale, mondo di fantasmi che fa risorgere immagini già esistenti, immagini della memoria cariche di forme e temporalità multiple che vengono poi riassemblate, ricomposte, mixate in un insieme nuovo, a sua volta carico di senso, di memoria, di vita.

Montare un film partendo da quello che è stato censurato, "tagliato" (da cui il titolo, *Les Ciseaux*, letteralmente le forbici) –, in questo caso scene d'amore del film *Une minute de soleil en moins* di Nabil Ayouch –, è possibile? Ad ogni modo, il risultato è di una rara densità amorosa. Come un concentrato di mille storie d'amore, storie sempre ricominciate, fra donne – esseri perfidi, vanitosi, curiosi e depravati – e uomini – bugiardi incostanti ipocriti orgogliosi e sensuali – che, quando si amano, attraverso il miracolo di una chimica feromonica e di una folle condensazione, diventano all'improvviso la cosa più divina al mondo. Un minuto di sole in più. Incantati, siamo pronti a dimenticare tutto ciò che non è stato censurato.

Fatmi usa i film degli altri, la vita degli altri, ciò che viene tagliato, distrutto. Così si ritrovano le forbici in *Beautiful Language* (2010), ispirato dal film di Truffaut, *Il Ragazzo selvaggio*. Il ragazzo selvaggio è lui, lo stesso Fatmi, questo bambino soprannaturale capace di vivere da solo nelle giun-

Mounir Fatmi, supernatural or, on the contrary, hyper real and political? In order to try to give an answer to this question, we need to listen to Fatmi's ghosts. The ghosts of his childhood, of his parents, of Morocco; the architect's ghost and Goethe's one; ghosts that haunt the cities that obsess Fatmi… Moreover, we need to look at Fatmi's more intimate work: his videos.

The video, a supernatural medium in itself, a world of ghosts that make already existing images rise again, images of memory full of forms and multiple temporalities which are reassembled, recomposed, mixed in a new whole, but still full of meaning, of memory, of life.

Is it possible to edit a film beginning from what has been censored, 'cut' (from which derives the title, *Les Ciseaux*, literally the scissors) - in this case, love scenes taken by the film *Une minute de soleil en moins* by Nabil Ayouch? Anyway, the result has a rare loving density. As a concentrated of a thousand love stories, stories always started again from the beginning, between women - wicked, vain, curious and depraved creatures - and men - liars, moody, hypocrite, proud and sensual - who, when in love, through the miracle of a pheromonic alchemy, all of a sudden become the most divine thing in the world. One more minute

Forget

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