29. | Circles 01





2011, coaxial antenna cable, staples on plywood, 69 cm.
Exhibition view from Abu Dhabi Art, Ceysson & Benetiere, 2017, Abu Dhabi.
Courtesy of the artist and Ceysson & Benetiere, Paris

Les Cercles, avec leur aspect blanc immaculé et épuré, leur jeu d'associations des formes, de tensions entre lignes droites et courbes, de révélation et d'occultation des figures, attirent le regard autant qu'ils soulèvent de questions. La série des Cercles est réalisée au moyen de câbles d'antennes blancs - matériau récurrent des œuvres de Mounir Fatmi depuis 1998, disposés en motifs géométriques, puis fixés à des panneaux blancs et circulaires à l'aide d'attaches à tête rondes. Les compositions obtenues sont parfois surmontées d'un second panneau circulaire blanc en plexiglas, découpé à certains endroits, et laissant apparaître les câbles coaxiaux.

Avec Cercles, il est essentiellement question d'études géométriques. "Casablanca Circles", série de photographies réalisée en 2012, avait pour ambition d'explorer la structure de l'existant et en particulier du baiser amoureux. Avec Cercles, aucune référence explicite à la réalité n'est mentionnée par l'artiste. "Le cercle concentre toutes les recherches que j'ai faites en dessin, en sculpture et en vidéo (…)" déclare Mounir Fatmi. Il semble a priori qu'avec Cercles, Mounir Fatmi prenne le parti d'une abstraction radicale, ou la question du réel est évacuée.

Les sculptures Cercles se présentent en fait à la fois comme des équations purement mathématiques, et comme des dispositifs symboliques expérimentaux. Le cercle est envisagée dans sa dimension purement abstraite et géométrique, et également dans sa dimension symbolique. Elément aux propriétés inépuisables, permettant la modélisation de nombreux phénomènes, le cercle est également à l'origine de tout un symbolisme spirituel et religieux, où il sert à évoquer les idées de perfection par exemple, ou à exprimer la perception d'un temps cyclique. Mounir Fatmi fait ainsi allusion dans plusieurs de ses œuvres

Circles, with their immaculately pure whiteness, their associations with various shapes, the tensions between lines and curves and the revelation and occultation of figures, attract the viewer’s gaze as much as they raise questions. The Circles series is made using white antenna cables – a frequent material in Mounir Fatmi’s work since 1998 – arranged in geometric motifs and attached to circular white boards with rounded tacks. The compositions obtained in this way are sometimes superimposed with another white round panel made of Plexiglas, cut out in certain places, letting the coaxial cables appear.

Circles is essentially about geometric studies. “Casablanca Circles”, a series of photographs created in 2012, aimed at exploring the structure of the existing, in particular of the lovers’ kiss. With Circles, no explicit reference to reality is mentioned by the artist. “The circle concentrates all the research I have conducted through drawing, sculpture and video”, says Mounir Fatmi. It seems that with Circles, Mounir Fatmi has chosen radical abstraction, in which the question of reality is cast aside.

In fact, the Circles sculptures are both pure mathematical equations and symbolic experimental installations. The circle is considered through its purely abstract and geometric dimension, as well as through its symbolic dimension. The circle is an element with endless properties enabling the modeling of countless phenomena, but it is also the origin of a vast field of spiritual and religious symbolism in which it is used to evoke the idea of perfection for example, or to express the perception of time as a cycle. Mounir Fatmi thus alludes in several of his works to the movement of Muslim pilgrims around another shape whose powerful symbolism he has also studied, the cube of Mecca. The Circles sculptures therefore constitute a reflection upon a fundamental figure in

au mouvement exécuté par les pèlerins musulmans autour d'une autre forme dont il a aussi étudié le symbolisme fort, le cube de la Mecque. Les sculptures Cercles constituent donc une réflexion sur une figure fondatrice à la fois du réel et du travail mené par l'artiste. Les propriétés retenues par Mounir Fatmi font du cercle un signe à la fois intérieur et extérieur, matériel et abstrait, vide et plein de sens. L'équation développée est enfin esthétique : la circularité répétée des œuvres, la multiplication des motifs géométriques et la monochromie y contribuent. L'œuvre propose une forme "forte et pleine de doutes " (Mounir Fatmi,) un espace de projections mentales et de mise en action des capacités cognitives, permettant dans le même temps une réflexion à leur sujet.

Studio Fatmi, Avril 2017.

reality as well as in the artist's work. The properties taken into consideration by Mounir Fatmi define the circle as both an interior and exterior sign, both material and abstract, empty and full of signification. Lastly, the equation developed here is esthetic: the repeated circularity of the works, the multiplication of geometric motifs and their monochromy all contribute to it. The work presents a shape that is "strong and full of doubt" (Mounir Fatmi), a space for mental projections and the activation of cognitive capacities, simultaneously enabling a reflection about them.

Studio Fatmi, April 2017.

" The power of his piece owes a great deal to this continuous/discontinuous energy, and convinces us
that it is something other than a simple borrowing from a foreign universe. Everything is tangency or tends towards tangency. "

Régis Durand, 2014

exhibitions:

2025

Art Week Riyadh - Lawrie Shabibi Gallery - Art fair

2024

If you don't know me by now - Ceysson & Bénétière, Lyon - Solo show

2020

Glitch - Margo Veillon Gallery - Tahrir Cultural Center, AUC - Expo collective

1:54 Marrakech - Goodman Gallery - art fair

Frieze New York Viewing Room - Goodman Gallery - art fair

2019

1:54 Marrakech - Goodman Gallery - Art fair

2017

Abu Dhabi Art - Ceysson & Bénétière - Art fair

Art Basel Hong Kong - Goodman Gallery - Art fair

2015

Art Brussels - Keitelman Gallery - Art fair

2013

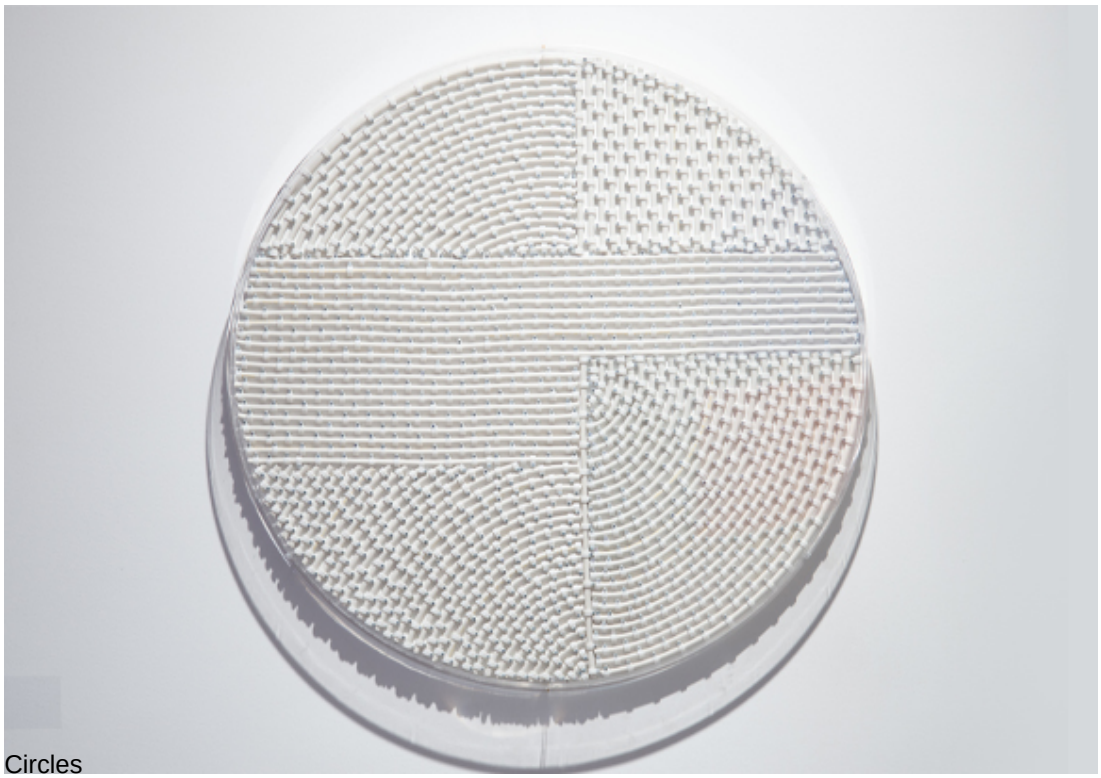
Intersections - Keitelman Gallery - Solo show

History is not mine - Paradise Row Gallery - Solo show

TEFAF - Keitelman Gallery - Art fair

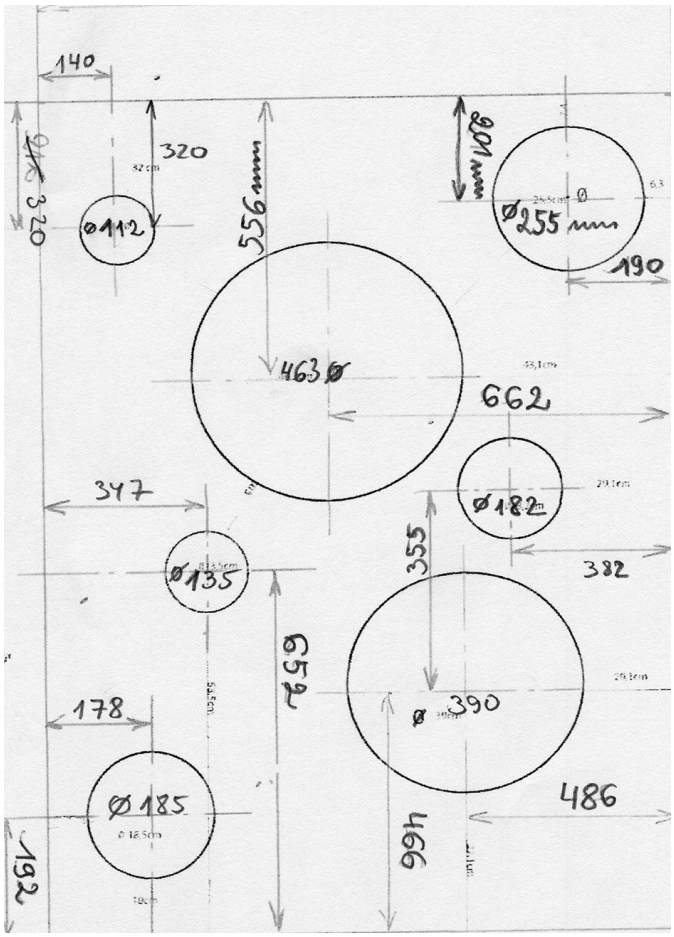


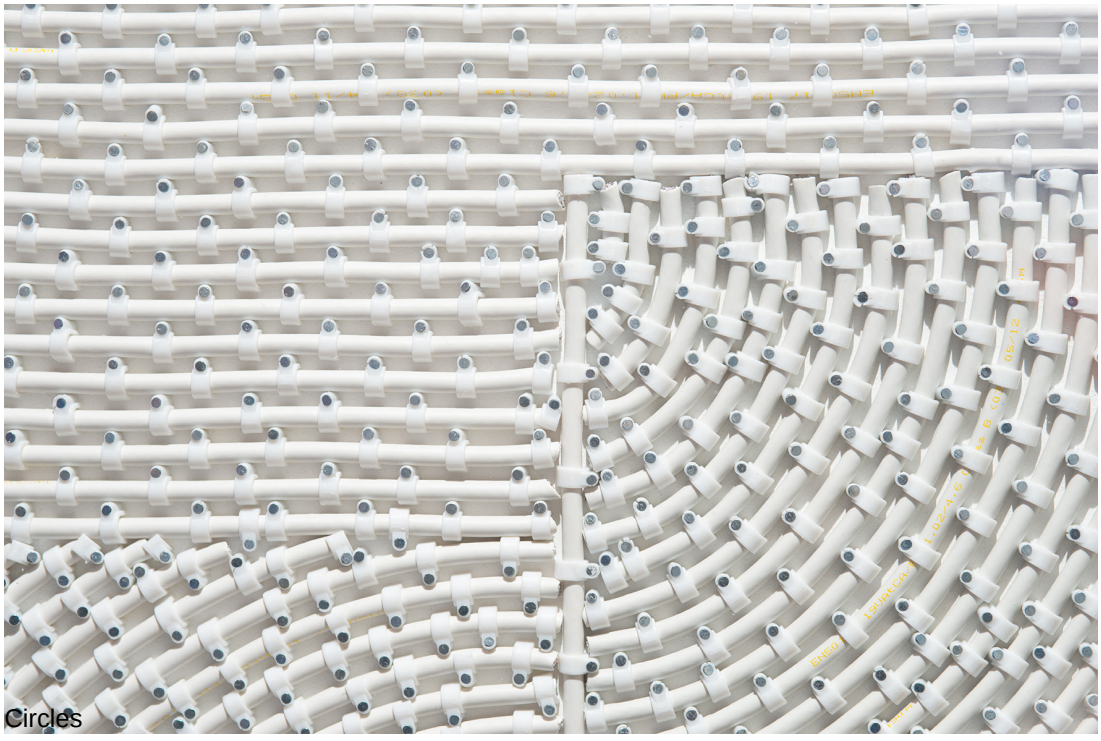
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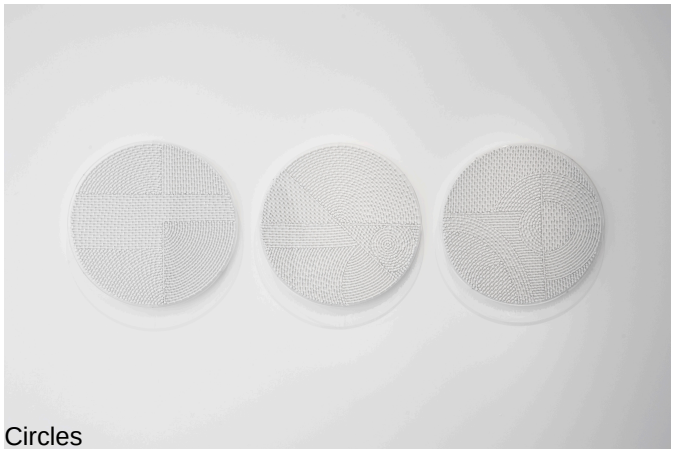
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The Circles sculptures therefore constitute a reflection upon a fundamental figure in reality as well as in the artist’s work. The properties taken into consideration by mounir fatmi define the circle as both an interior and exterior sign, both material and abstract, empty and full of signification.



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