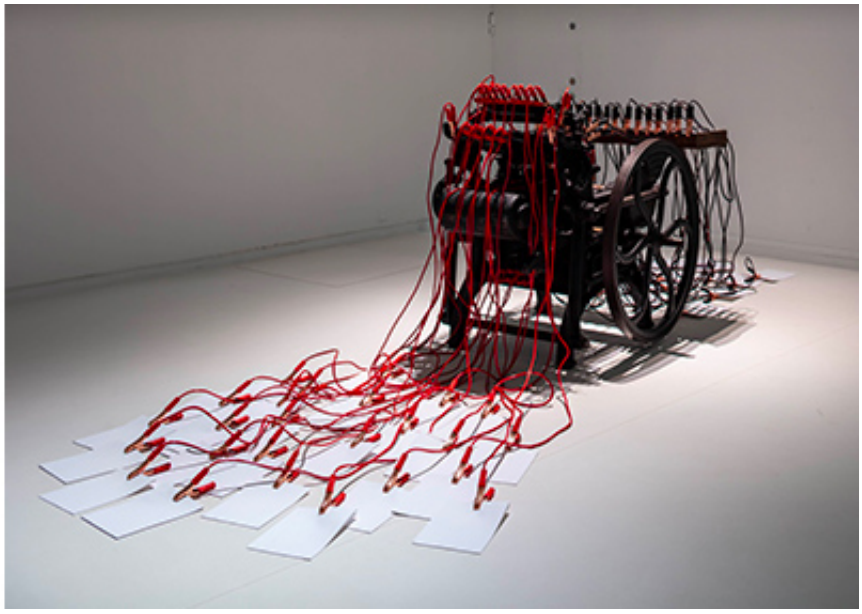
56. | The index and the machine 02





2018, Linotype, starter cables, papers.
Exhibition View from 180° Behind me, Göteborg Konsthall, Göteborg, 2018.
Courtesy of the artist.
Ed. of 1 + 1 A.P.

L'Index et la Machine est une association de mots que l'Histoire occidentale a toujours connu. Du moins, depuis la Renaissance qui a vu naître l'imprimerie et la publication du premier Index, liste des livres proscris par l'Eglise.

L'imprimerie a révolutionné l'écriture, la littérature et même plus largement la culture. Autrefois, outils de diffusion rares et précieux permettant essentiellement une circulation contrôlée des idées religieuses, les livres ont connus une diffusion massive à l'arrivée de l'imprimerie. Fidèle outil de la démocratie, elle a permis dès ses premières heures, la diffusion d'idées multiples. Cependant, c'est également grâce à l'avènement de cette machine que la censure a connu son apogée. Pour preuve, le premier texte à avoir été publié fût la Bible et il servis immédiatement de modèle à suivre en imposant aux autres publications le respect des théories qui y sont avancées. C'est d'ailleurs dans ce même sens que l'Eglise commença à publier l'Index lors du Concile de Trente et qui sera augmentée jusqu'en 1966. Durant ces quatre siècles, une majorité des grands philosophes et auteurs comme Voltaire, Sartre, Spinoza, Locke, Proudhon, Saint-Simon, Flaubert ou encore Descartes se sont ainsi retrouvés « mis à l'Index », l'Eglise ayant considéré leurs écrits comme « pernicieux ».

C'est toutes les problématiques attachées à cette dualité paradoxale portée par la mécanisation d'une technique ancestrale comme l'écriture que mounir fatmi a décidé de mettre en lumière dans cette installation. Le thème central est celui de la censure que l'on retrouve traité à travers différents aspects. Plus largement l'artiste tente de questionner le visiteur sur le concept de culture et d'histoire.

The Index and the Machine is a word association used in Western history since the Renaissance, during which time the printing machine originated. Soon thereafter the first Index (the list of prohibited books by the Church) was published.

The printing machine changed writing, literature and especially culture, in all its aspects. Until its creation, some instruments and tools had allowed a controlled circulation of religious ideas. Nevertheless, it wasn't until its creation that books experienced a massive diffusion. As an instrument devoted to democracy, it quickly became a vehicle for the expansion of multiple ideas. However, the accession of the printing machine also brought censorship and ideological control to its peak. A proof of this was the first published text, the Bible, which served as a model, but also imposed a form of restriction that impeded the diffusion and evolution of other more advanced theories. Since then, the Church published normative texts such as the List of Prohibited Books (Index librorum prohibitorum), which wasn't formally abolished until 1966. Throughout these four centuries, many of the leading philosophers and writers such as Voltaire, Sartre, Spinoza, Locke Proudhon, Saint-Simon, Flaubert, and Descartes, were "mis à l'index"[1], and their works were accused of being 'pernicious' by the Catholic Church.

In this installation, fatmi traces this problematic and brings to light the paradoxical duality faced by the mechanization of writing, a once ancestral technique. The central theme is that of censorship, which is dealt with through various aspects. More broadly the artist poses questions to the visitor about the concept of culture and history. Taking the opposite view

Prenant le contre-pied de l'idée proférée par l'Index, vu ici comme le reflet de la culture « universaliste » qui a prévalu durant quatre siècles dans tout l'occident catholique.

Finalement, l'installation l'Index et la Machine, propose une nouvelle lecture des problématiques auxquelles mounir fatmi tente inlassablement de répondre et qui traversent l'ensemble de son travail.

Studio Fatmi, novembre 2016.

of the idea expressed by the Index, seen here as a reflection of the "universalist" culture that prevailed over four centuries throughout the Catholic West.

Finally, the installation, The Index and The Machine, proposes a deep examination of certain topics to which fatmi tries to respond -such as the effects of hegemonic discourses, history, interpretation, memory and identity. Those topics are also present over the whole of his artistic production.

Studio Fatmi, November, 2016.

[1]"Mettre à l'ïndex" is a French expression that indicates rejection and finds its origin precisely in the indexation ecclesiastic practice. The Catholic church repudiated certain works that were considered impure, infidel, obscene or dangerous to the precepts of Catholic religion. Those texts were introduced in the Index, a list of publications accused of heresy. The equivalent expression in English would be "to be blacklisted".

In this installation, fatmi traces this problematic and brings to light the paradoxical duality faced by the mechanization of writing, a once ancestral technique.
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Studio Fatmi, November 2016

exhibitions:

2018

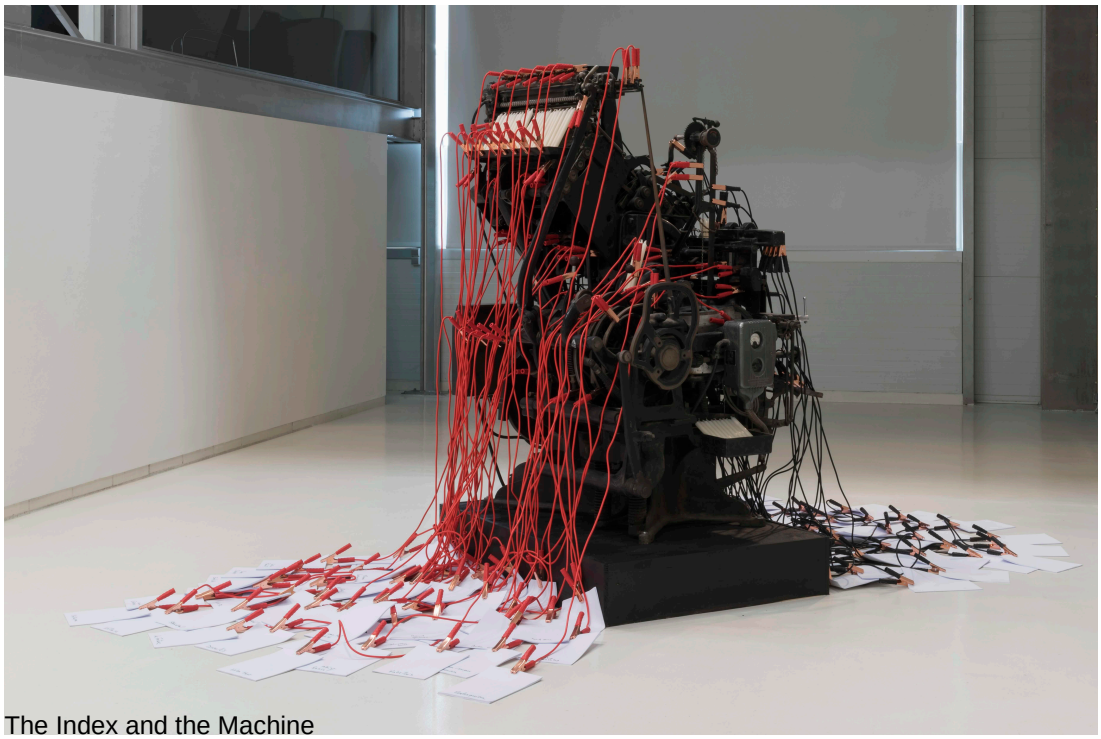
180° Behind Me - Göteborgs Konsthall – Solo show



The Day of the Awakening, SF Publishing, 2019

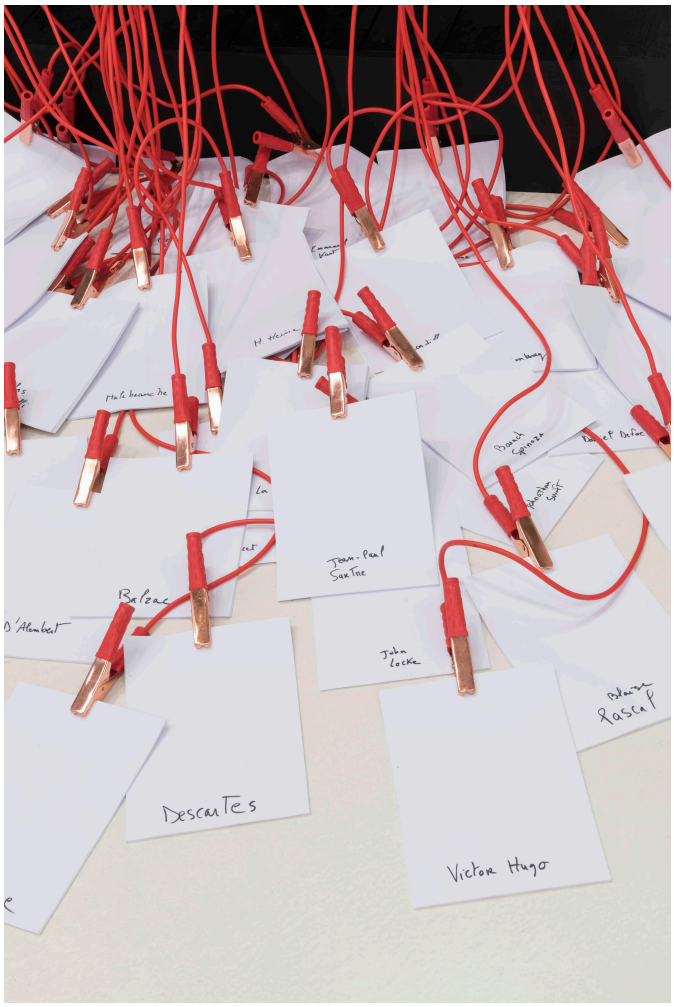
The Day of the Awakening is inspired by the title of an installation by mounir fatmi. Its epigraph, simple and enigmatic, acts as a metaphor for an artistic work that constructs visual spaces and linguistic games. In this way, his work offers a view of the world from a different perspective, avoiding the blindness provided by conventions.

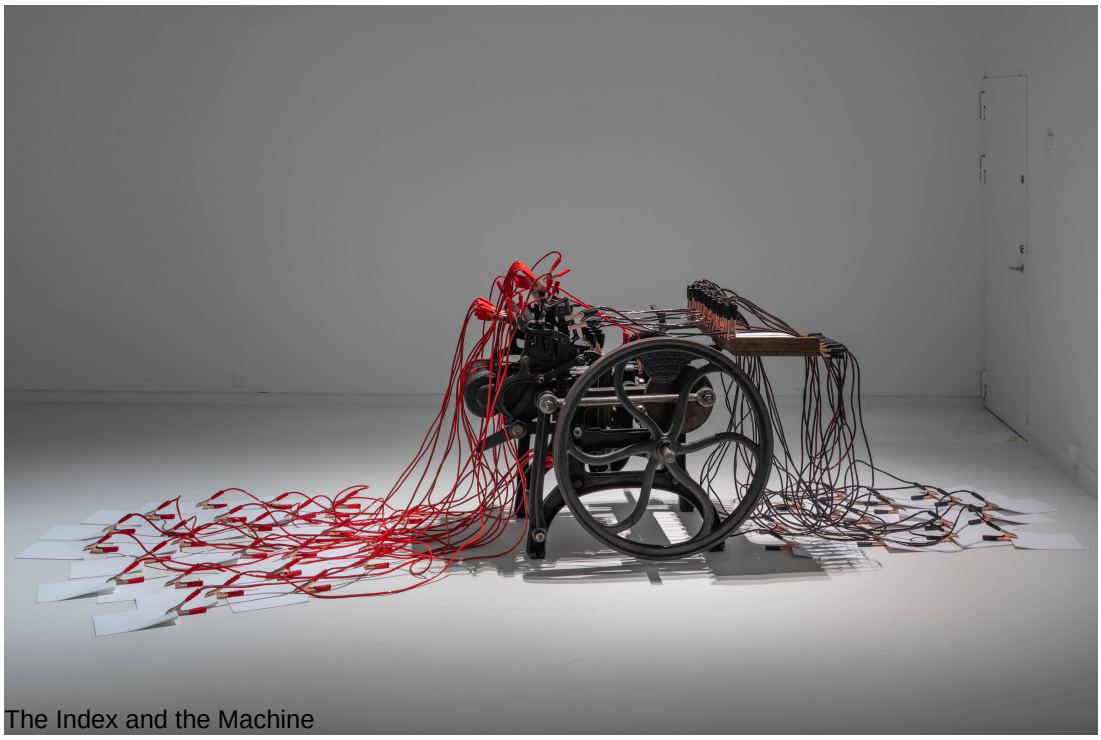
Juan Guardiola, December 2019



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