59. | Peripheral Vision



2017, Pigment print on fine art in 27 x 40cm, 35 x 52 cm and 70 x 105 cm each.
Exhibition view from Peripheral Vision, Art Front Gallery, 2017, Tokyo.
Courtesy of the artist and Art Front Gallery, Tokyo.
Ed. of 5 + 2 A.P.

« Vision périphérique » est une série de quatre portraits photographiques en noir et blanc représentant l'artiste de face, de dos et de profil, droit et gauche. Son visage disparaît en partie derrière un grand rapporteur d'angle circulaire blanc qu'il tient dans la main, à hauteur des yeux - yeux qui demeurent visibles grâce à deux ouvertures pratiquées au centre de l'instrument de géométrie. L'esthétique futuriste de ce dispositif renvoie à une approche artistique avant-gardiste, conçue comme un renouvellement du regard porté sur ce qui nous entoure, une prise de conscience de ce qui nous relie au monde et l'appréhension des limites de ce dernier. Dans son ouvrage, Tractacus logico-philosophicus, le philosophe autrichien Wittgenstein aborde la question des limites d'un point de vue essentiellement linguistique : « Les limites de mon langage signifient les limites de mon univers » La série proposée par « Vision périphérique » met en scène les carences du langage esthétique et son inaptitude à traduire la pensée de celui qui le met en œuvre. Elle élabore ainsi un projet artistique voué à l'échec avant même d'avoir pu être formulé.

En biologie humaine, la vision périphérique s'ajoute à la vision centrale ou fovéale. Cette dernière, impliquant la focalisation de l'attention du sujet, s'appuie sur un point de fixation et elle est dite détaillée et analytique. La vision périphérique livre quant à elle des impressions globales. Elle permet la perception ultrarapide de mouvements jusqu'à l'extrême périphérie et renseigne sur l'état général d'une situation visuelle. L'œuvre aborde le thème de la vision en tant qu'ensemble des processus cognitifs et des opérations mentales qui entrent dans la perception de notre environnement. La terminologie scientifique est ici employée

« Peripheral Vision » is a series of four black & white photographic portraits of the artist taken from the front, the back and of his left and right profiles. His face partly disappears behind a large white geometry protractor he holds in his hand, at eye level – his eyes remain visible thanks to two holes in the center of the measuring instrument. The futuristic esthetic of this setup is reminiscent of an avant-gardist artistic approach conceived as a way of renewing the way we look at what surrounds us, a new awareness of what connects us to the world and of the comprehension of its limits. In his book Tractacus logico-philosophicus, the Austrian philosopher Wittgenstein addresses the question of limits from an essentially linguistic point of view: “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.” The series proposed in « Peripheral Vision » highlights the shortcomings of the esthetic language and its incapacity to translate the thoughts of the person employing it. In this way, it elaborates an artistic project that is doomed to fail before it can even be formulated.

In human biology, peripheral vision combines with central – or foveal – vision. The latter requires the subject to focus his or her attention on a fixation point and is said to be detailed and analytical. « Peripheral vision » on the other hand delivers general impressions. It allows the extremely rapid perception of movements, even in the far periphery, and provides information on the overall state of a visual situation. The work addresses the question of vision as a set of cognitive processes and metal operations that contribute to the perception of our environment. The scientific terminology is used here to designate mounir fatmi’s specific artistic vista, whose definition, expressed through the photographic

pour désigner la vista artistique particulière de mounir fatmi, dont la définition, exprimée à travers les autoportraits photographiques, est enrichie de conceptions psychologiques, philosophiques, géométriques, esthétiques et éthiques.

Mêlant figuratif et abstraction géométrique, les photographies constituent une illustration du programme esthétique de l'artiste. Cette série d'autoportraits en évoque d'ailleurs une autre : cellle de Frederick Soddy, mathématicien et prix Nobel de chimie, auteur du poème The Kiss precise qui fait le lien avec le théorème de Descartes et les cercles tangents. Référence essentielle dans l'œuvre de mounir fatmi, la figure du poète scientifique disparaît presque entièrement derrière de complexes constructions géométriques. Elle participe à fonder une figure des correspondances artistiques : celle du baiser, comme point d'équilibre et de rencontre de la sensibilité poétique et de la rigueur formelle. Un geste est commun aux deux œuvres, une stratégie artistique similaire élaborée à partir des techniques de dripping et all over de Jackson Pollock : le recouvrement et l'effacement.

Ce procédé met à distance l'autorité figurative du portrait. Le jeu de travestissement qui en constitue le principe souligne l'importance du regard et inverse pour un temps les positions respectives du spectateur et de l'artiste en faisant de ce dernier un observateur attentif du public qui défile devant l'œuvre. Celle-ci recompose un portrait mobile du sujet vivant, où se révèlent sa sensibilité et ses sources d'inspiration. Elle élabore également un masque, celui de l'artiste contemporain, doté d'un pouvoir particulier : la vision périphérique. Cette vue décentralisée, globale et synthétique relève des liens, des connexions. Perception élargie, sans œillère, elle appelle à regarder tout autour de soi et à ne pas se contenter de ce qu'on a devant soi. « Peripheral vision » fait écho à la pensée du philosophe allemand Schopenhauer exprimée en ces termes : « Chaque homme croit que les limites de son propre champ de vision sont les limites du monde ».

Studio Fatmi, Mai 2018.

self-portraits, is supplemented with psychological, philosophical, geometric, esthetic and ethical conceptions.

Combining figurativeness and geometrical abstraction, the photographs constitute an illustration of the artist's esthetic program. But as a matter of fact, this series of self-portraits evokes another such program: that of Frederick Soddy, a mathematician and Nobel Prize winner in chemistry who wrote a poem called The Kiss Precise that is connected to Descartes' theorem of tangent circles. A fundamental reference in mounir fatmi's work, the scientist poet's face disappears almost entirely behind complex geometric constructions. It contributes to creating a representation of artistic correspondences: that of the kiss as a point of balance and encounter between poetic sensitivity and formal precision. A gesture common to both works of art, a similar artistic strategy derived from Jackson Pollock's techniques of dripping and all-over: covering and erasing.

This process keeps the figurative authority of the portrait at a distance. The twisting and playing that constitutes its main principle underlines the importance of the viewer's gaze and temporarily reverses the respective positions of the viewer and the artist by making the latter an attentive observer of the public walking passed the piece. The work reconstructs a mobile portrait of the living subject, in which his sensitivity and his sources of inspiration are revealed. It also creates a mask, that of the contemporary artist, with his particular power: peripheral vision. This decentralized and global view perceives links and connections. With a wider perception, devoid of blinders, it encourages us to look all around instead of settling for what is right in front of us. « Peripheral Vision » echoes the thought of German philosopher Schopenhauer, expressed in these terms: "Every person takes the limits of their own field of vision for the limits of the world."

Studio Fatmi, May 2018.

" My Peripheral Vision series comes from an awareness of what connects us to the world and an apprehension of its limits. In his book Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, the Austrian philosopher

Ludwig Wittgenstein also addresses the question of the limits of an essentially linguistic point of view: “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.” "

mounir fatmi ITW by Megan Miller, September 2018

exhibitions:

2023

Breaking the Cycle - BARO galeria, Palma - Personal show

2022

In this world, I’m a stranger - HiFlow, Geneva - Group show

2021

The Observer Effect - ADN Galeria - Solo Show

Heavier than words - Conrads Gallery - Solos show

Intersect 21 - Al-Tiba9 - Art fair

2020

How to disappear - Goodman Gallery Johannesburg - Expo collective

ARCO madrid - Wilde Gallery - Art fair

2019

The Process - Wilde Gallery - Solo show

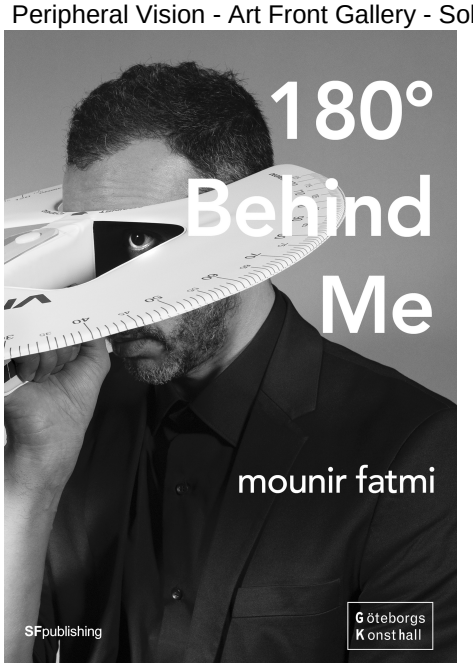
Al-Tiba9 - MAMA - Expo collective

2018

180° Behind Me - Göteborgs Konsthall – Solo show

2017

Peripheral Vision - Art Front Gallery - Solo show



180° Behind Me, SF Publishing, 2019

Going deeper into 180° Behind Me, the catalog of mounir fatmi's exhibition at Konsthall in Göteborg, means measuring all the coherence and aesthetic radicality of his career.

Olivier Rachet, Diptyk, April 2020



Peripheral Vision

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