

25. Seeing is Believing



Seeing is believing, mounir fatmi, SF Publishing, 2020

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"Seeing is believing continues fatmi's exploration of the connectivity between large social structures such as architecture, religion, politics and art history and the minute relationships found in everyday existence.

This is perhaps most evident in a series of prints that line the wall with statements reading, Minimalism is Capitalist, or Futurism is Fascist."They are semi-comical, but at the same time imply alternative readings of classic art historical movements.

Russian Constructivist Malevich's iconic Black Square, for example, is referenced in a large square set high up on the wall built from black VHS cassettes, and also in a video piece in which the censored text of FBI interviews with Black Panthers flashes onto the screen, here reduced to essential forms of black (markings of censored text) and white background.

VHS tapes are a recurring medium for the artist. The installation Ghosting, most recently seen at the Lyon Biennial, consists of a huge wall covered in tapes, their film pulled out along the floor and covering several photocopy machines with which viewers were encouraged make copies of the extracted celluloid. The resulting images range from near-black abstractions to weird reflections and transparencies, spectral imagery from both the exhibition and the empty stretches of film.

A large, glossy photograph titled, Black on Black, depicting the bands of tape streaming outwards is on view at Hussenot Gallery. The image is close-up and tightly cropped, giving the impression of a stack of hanging seaweed. It conveys a feeling of claustrophobia - if we entered into it, we'd be lost in a maze of never-ending images."

Galerie Hussenot, January 2010

"In Between the lines, a steel circular saw blade becomes the inscription surface for Koran verses, which undergo a process of being emptied of semiotic content and rendered decorative elements.
The defining qualities of both the object and of language are suspended, and the image becomes the new bearer of knowledge."

Elena Stanciu, PETRIe Magazine, 2016