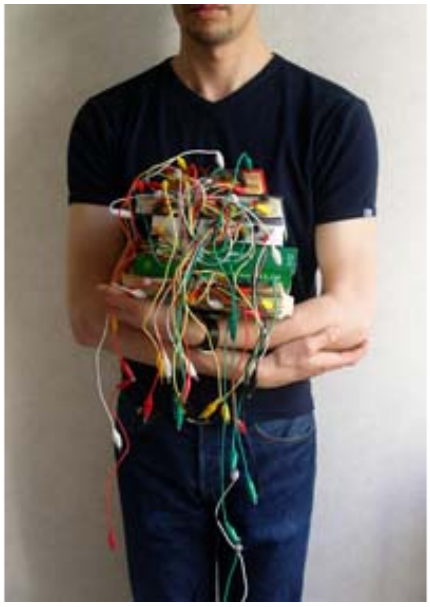
7. | My Litterature


2003, triptych, digital prints, 160 x 120 cm each or 65cm x 50cm each.
Exhibition view from Connexion 02, Galerie Delacroix, 2008, Tanger.
Courtesy of the artist and Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris.
Ed. of 5 + 2 A.P.

Ma Littérature est un triptyque photographique. La photographie centrale est occupée par un personnage masculin dont ne voit pas le haut du visage en raison du cadrage, seule sa bouche demeurant visible. Celui-ci tient dans ses bras une pile de livres, reliés entre eux par des câbles électriques de différentes couleurs. Les photographies latérales, quant à elles, donnent à voir des rangées d'une bibliothèque garnies d'ouvrages également reliés entre eux, et au milieu desquels apparaît un exemplaire du Coran.

Les photographies constituent la genèse d'un ensemble de projets élaborés autour de la thématique des connexions. L'artiste a relié entre eux les livres de sa propre bibliothèque afin d'étudier les choix qu'il opère en matière de littérature et la façon dont se constituent ses influences littéraires. Ainsi Ma Littérature peut être vue comme un portrait robot de l'artiste, traitant également des rapports de l'individu aux textes sacrés et aux écrits en général. Le livre est un matériau récurrent des œuvres de Mounir Fatmi, où ses pouvoirs de diffusion et de transmission des connaissances, ou au contraire d'empêchement et de censure sont étudiés. Ma littérature identifie le corpus littéraire au corps de l'individu. Les connaissances livresques et les connexions opérées participent aux processus d'autoformation et de transformation des individus qui engagent la pensée et le corps.

Ma Littérature multiplie les éléments entrant dans sa composition (livres, fils électriques, couleurs et connexions) et procure une impression de profusion et de diversité. L'œuvre relie les ouvrages les plus divers au texte sacré, établissant des liens inattendus et quoiqu'il en soit très personnels. Le Coran se voit assimilé aux autres livres avec

My Literature is a photographic triptych. The central image depicts a male figure whose head has been cropped by the frame, leaving only his mouth visible. In his arms, the man holds a pile of books connected by a profusion of multi-colored electrical cables. This central photograph is flanked by pictures of a bookshelf: an edition of the Koran is surrounded by other books, also connected by electrical cables.

My Literature is the genesis of an ensemble of projects that examine the theme of connection and connectedness. The artist has connected books from his personal library in order to study the choices he makes, and the way in which he is influenced by literature. In this sense, My Literature can be seen as a kind of literary sketch of the artist – a portrait composed of his relationship to books, both sacred and profane. The book recurs frequently in Mounir Fatmi's work, where its power to propagate and transmit knowledge, and consequent propensity for censorship, are examined. My Literature posits a link between an individual's body and a literary body of work: the knowledge contained in books, and the connections that books permit their readers to draw, contribute to the self-empowerment, and transformation, of the minds and bodies of those who read them.

My Literature seeks to multiply the connections one can draw from a book: the profusion of books, electrical wires and colors create a rich and diverse array of possible links. The piece quite literally connects a variety of works to the The Koran, creating an unexpected, and deeply personal, web of relationships. In this way, the Holy Book becomes assimilated into the larger collection of books to which it is attached — it is thus considered by the artist, who has no

lequel il est relié, et fait finalement partie de ce que l'artiste considère très largement, et hors de toute idéologie intellectuelle ou religieuse, comme de la littérature. La mise en relation provoque ici un effet de désacralisation du texte religieux dont l'enjeu est un rétablissement de la pensée critique. L'œuvre affirme sa conception de la lecture et de l'activité intellectuelle en général. Toute lecture est mise en rapport : un texte n'existe jamais seul et renvoie toujours à un autre, en s'y ajoutant ou au contraire en s'y opposant. L'intertextualité est cette capacité à découvrir ou à créer des relations entre les éléments les plus divers en apparence, et la lecture est une activité éminemment libre qui combat la pensée dogmatique, dans la mesure où elle réalise les connexions qu'elle désire.

Par analogie avec un réseau électrique, la lecture est une activité intime, intense, énergique et non dénuée de risques. Le porteur de livres mis en scène par Ma Littérature présente d'ailleurs quelques ressemblances avec un personnage médiatique dont l'image est devenue (trop) familière, à savoir le terroriste muni d'une ceinture d'explosifs. Le dispositif de Mounir Fatmi remplace cependant les explosifs par les livres. Au terrorisme religieux ou politique s'appuyant sur la lecture unique, l'ignorance et la violence physique, il oppose une forme de terrorisme artistique, dont les armes sont la connaissance et les liens établis.

Studio Fatmi, avril 2017.

allegiance to any particular intellectual or religious ideology, to be a literary text. The photographs depict the Koran in relation to other works of literature. This has the effect of "de-sacralizing" its religious nature, thereby opening a space for critical thought. The piece asserts a certain vision of reading, and of intellectual activity in general. At its essence, reading is about drawing connections: a book does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in relationship to other books – the texts adding to, or perhaps contradicting, each other. At the very core of the idea of intertextuality is the discovery (or creation) of links between elements that, on the surface, seem to have nothing in common. Reading is the ultimate expression of personal liberty, and the greatest threat to dogmatic ideologies. When we read, we are free to make the connections that we desire.

To use the analogy of an electrical network, reading is an activity that is private, intense, energetic, and not without risk. The man holding the books in My Literature shares certain characteristics with a figure that has become (too) familiar in the media these days: the terrorist and his belt of explosives. Here, Mounir Fatmi replaces the bombs with books. In so doing he is opposing religious or political terrorism – based on fundamentalism, ignorance and physical violence – with artistic terrorism, whose arms are knowledge and connections.

Studio Fatmi, April 2017.

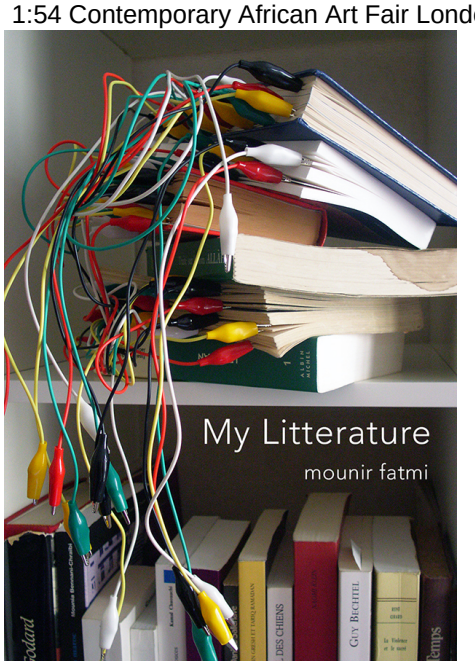
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exhibitions:

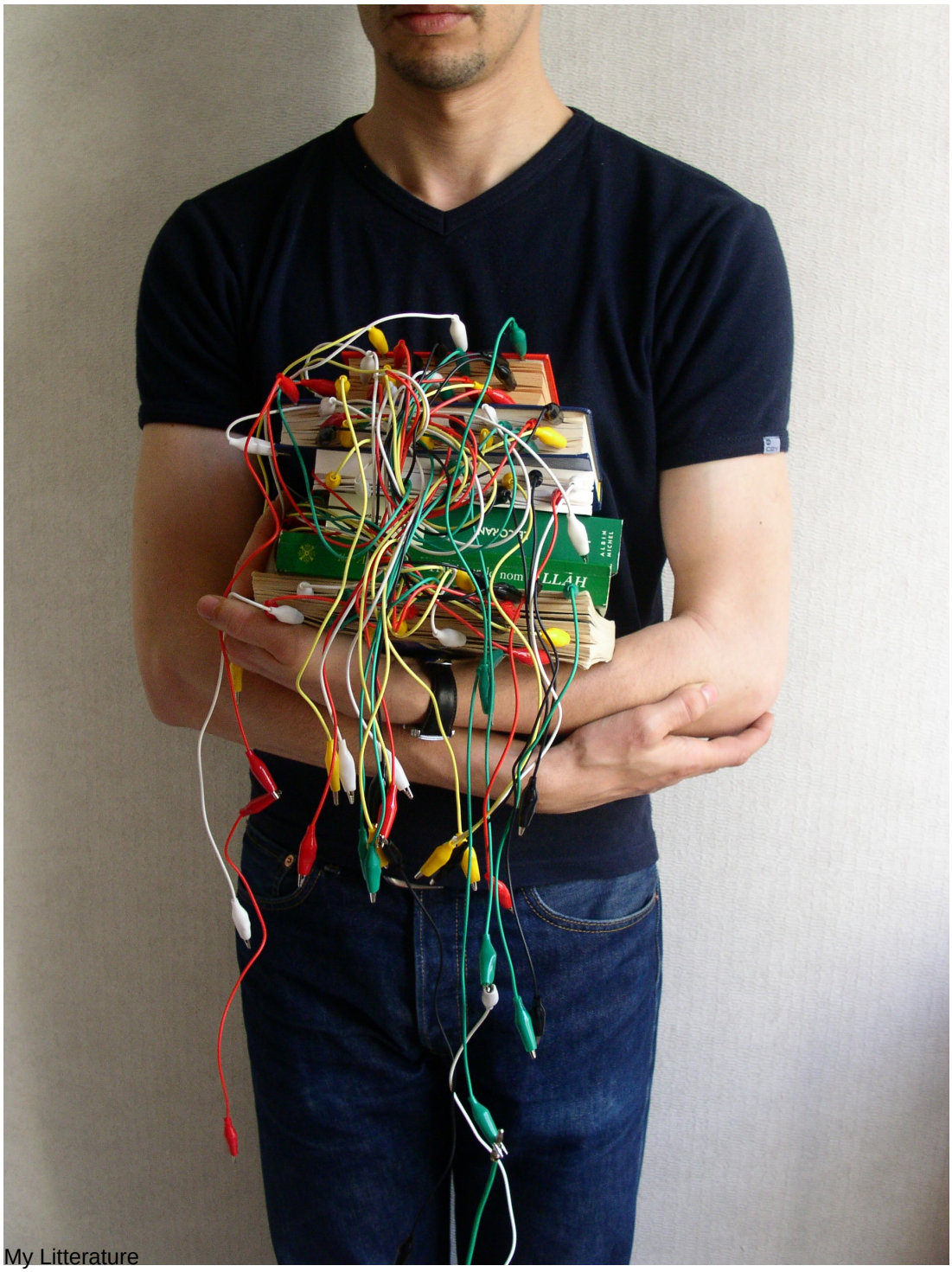
2018

1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair London - Officine dell'Immagine - Art fair



My Litterature

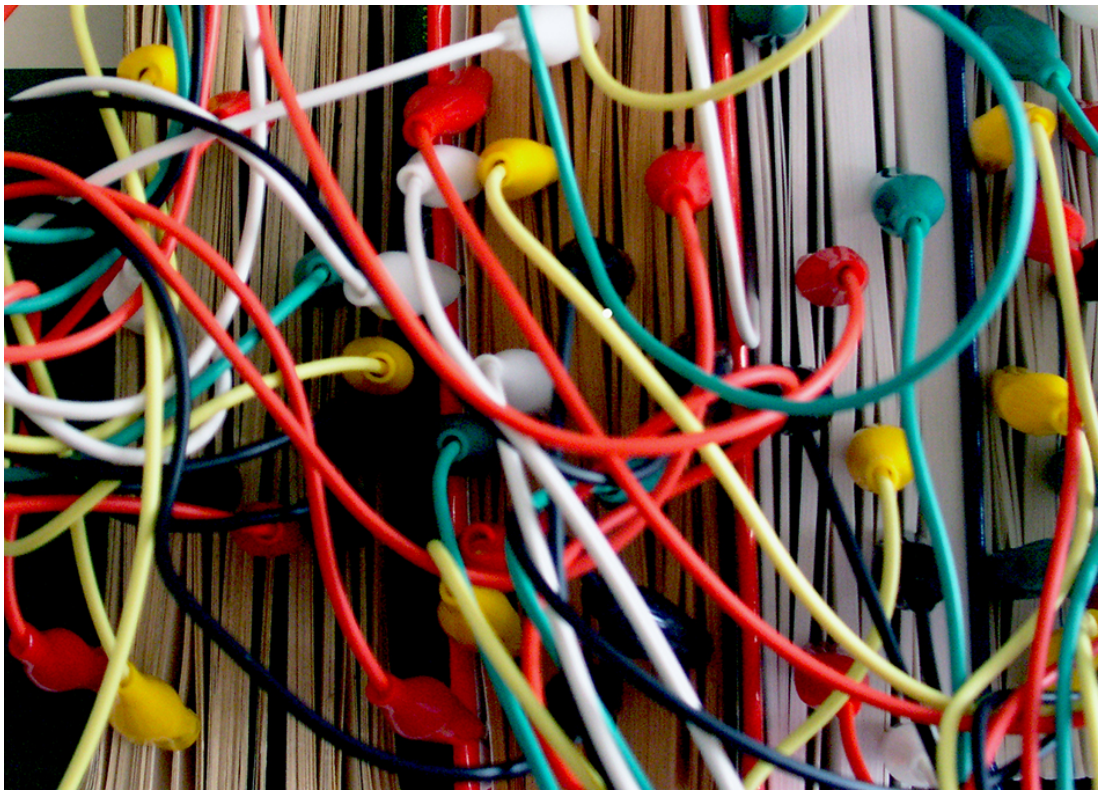
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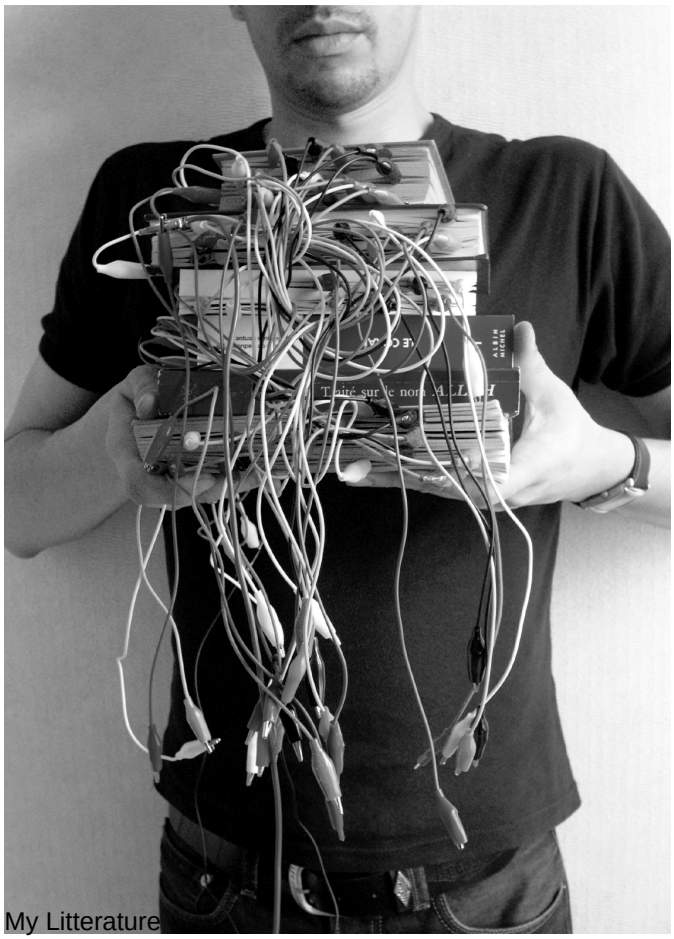
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