

VOICEGALLERY

Mohamed Larbi Rahhali MICROCOSMS

Exhibition: 12 may - 15 september 2018

Vernissage: 11 may | h7:00 pm

VOICE gallery from Marrakech is pleased to invite you on may 11th at h7 :00pm, to the opening of the solo exhibition MICROCOSMS from the artist Mohamed Larbi Rahhali.

Mohamed Larbi Lahari is interested in mundane everyday things, things we don't pay attention to anymore; as a fisherman, a sailor, a boat at sea. The artist carries with him this idea of flux, following the flow, compiling artistic languages to bring about the idea of an identity. His practice comes within the scope of presenting art as a game, in mixing artistic languages, "creating a vital, undetermined fluidity, close to that of everyday life elements themselves."¹

Fluxus in latin, *flux*, *current* is a form of Total Art, which gathers numerous artistic languages and brings about the idea of a possible identity between art and life. Born at the beginning of the nineteen sixties from a will to bridge the gap between the two, the movement makes an attempt at infringing on pre-established categories, because "everything is art and art should be about mundane things, should be fun and accessible to all." ²

Through his sensitive and poetic vision, Mohamed larbi Rahhali invents, creates and recreates various universes, giving us the opportunity to see the world as he perceives it. He conveys his ideas through symbols and signs, once playing on collective memory, or on different value systems: the modern subject appears in multiple spaces that could be identified as anthropological, a small world in itself, a synopsis of Creation.

Mohamed Larbi draws inspiration from the real world around him. From the school painting begins a research, where the artist tries to understand, experiment, in order to extract explanatory elements, not of the works themselves, but of subjects and reasoning he is interested in. His findings become works, like treasures contained in small boxes that would though lose all value if the world was to collapse.

The notion of time is essential in the life and work of the artist and fisherman; once again, the line between life and art is blurred: time flows like a flux used by human beings to structure their existence. The sundial sets the tone. Time-measuring tool, its imprecisions can only compare to those of human beings in their wish to handle the measure of time.

Mohamed Larbi paints, draws, sticks and assembles ordinary objects in small boxes, manufactured or just gathered, to create his microcosms, his half-dream half-reality microcosms. He uses the

highly recognisable matchbox identifiable by its size and pattern as a Moroccan symbol of collective memory to surprise the viewer. If one pays attention, one will see a whole world coming to existence; coming closer and opening the boxes still closed to discover engraved mirrors with a planetary system or with a compass.

The artist tells us stories, of life, of the universe, of parallel existences. The simplicity of the medium: these small cardboard boxes, seem to put the artist's work in perspective and set the way one should be interested in them. To succeed on such a small scale in recreating a whole universe means to have been able to understand it and synthesise it to its essence. Then again the idea of flux reoccurs, of time flowing along a learning process, or experiences...

The *Fausses étagères* (false shelves) are mobiles that move and sing, allowing the viewer to cross a playful path whilst enabling him or her to come closer and linger on the details offering a possible other understanding of life and the elements surrounding us.

Mohamed Larbi seems to be working as a self-taught artist, in a sensitive and intuitive manner. The works, primarily designed as *trompe-l'oeil* initiate a dialogue with the viewer.

Mohamed Larbi uses practical everyday life objects such as clothes pegs, diverted to create a work of art. In two parts, it represents integration, as each piece completes the other very much like two human beings in harmony. As a whole, it is a piece composed of two independent parts, that when separated forms a new abstract work brings about a questioning.

Through these symbols, the artist gives a new definition of the role of images in the construction of a historical narrative, between nostalgia, melancholy and affection.

One can find in these stories the landmarks of the fisherman. A lighthouse always lit for the sailor-viewers lost in a sea of impressions, universes and their flux.

Text by Cassandre Gil

Translation by Sibylle Baltzer

¹ Loredana Parmesani, *L'art du XX^{ème} siècle*, Edition Skira, 2006.

² George Maciunas, *Manifeste Fluxus*, 1963 : « Savoir promouvoir la réalité ».