

AICHA FILALI

تونس
بوقربة
وأشياء أخرى

Mémoire en raccourcis

(Memory in short)

14 May - 30 June 2022

Elmarsa Gallery, Tunis



Aicha Filali, *Bata*, Collage heightened with acrylic, 73 x 70.5 cm

Elmarsa Gallery is pleased to present *Mémoire en raccourcis (Memory in short)*, the gallery's first solo exhibition with Tunisian artist Aicha Filali, featuring a new body of work.

The personal and family history of the artist is an integral part of this new body of work. She is familiar with the great History, and the autobiographical gems that pepper this work, and attest as much to an assumed sincerity as to an undeniable identity quest.

Aicha Filali's work is inscribed in the hollow of an aesthetic and plastic quest: she ruled out the reading of the past, transcribed by history books and official stories, to offer us a novel insight, a new scale of values. Plunging back into the first two decades of the Bourguiba era.

The artist revisits them through two types of supports: altarpieces decorated with color image, and fabrics onto which printed photos show a crowd, all dressed in grey, with masked features with embroidered thread. Grey and white flood, where stands out the naked face of the leader Habib Bourguiba, coiffed with a blood-red "chéchia".

In the cabinet of buried memories, this imagination redistributes the cards, proceeds to unpublished collections, disturbs the historicity of memories, to the benefit of a "re-creation" essentially subjective.

This body of work resets childhood snippets in the present time, still alive for those who have lived them.

By Azza Filali

These are "synchronics" where the images of the same time, drawn from various archives of a particular decade of national history, play at finding each other and, unusually, at coming together ... just like their setting, these synchronics are also sacred chronicles. Chronicles of the glorious hours of a nation and its father.

That is how Aïcha Filali applied herself to collect, religiously, the images of a Tunisian era, that of the 1960s, as one collects relics.

If the summoned imaginary is taking part in the same geographical and temporal area, the meeting of its elements remains however unlikely ... from the political image to the advertisement, by way of the folk, tourist, educative, media, industrialist, or sporting images. The reality of a country is obviously made up of all the strata, closely and intricately intertwined with each other.

The photomontage had fun constructing the summary that is worth a thousand sacred words.

The artist has constituted his palette of images by leafing through various magazines, newspapers and other media of a Tunisia dating from the glorious decade of the 1960s; at a time when the Leader had his mausoleum erected and inscribed on his door, as he intends to be inscribed in the national memory and crystallized for posterity, as the "Supreme Combatant", the "Builder of modern Tunisia" and the "Liberator of woman"; at the time of being a star and on all the front pages covers.

It was also at the time of childhood, that of the artist... We do not know if these holy chronicles were then imagined by a child growing up in the midst of this idolatrous imagery, or if the artist, today that hindsight allows to embrace these large sets of collective and personal memory, enjoys pushing the mechanisms of this factory of living god to comic absurdity.

Also participating in these holy chronicles, the artist childhood and family life and, little by little, those of a society, a nation or a people.”

By Mohamed-Ali Berhouma

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