



## **PRESS RELEASE**

*BIELEFELDER KUNSTVEREIN*

**LATIFA ECHAKHCH**

**PARTITAS**

**FLO MAAK**

**NICHTS TUN WIE EIN BIEST**

SEPTEMBER 5 – OCTOBER 25, 2009

**PRESS PREVIEW: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2009, 11 AM**

Press talk and guided tour through the exhibition with Thomas Thiel (director), in attendance of the artists

**OPENING: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2009, 7 PM**

**LATIFA ECHAKHCH**

**PARTITAS**

SEPTEMBER 5 – OCTOBER 25, 2009



The works by French-Moroccan artist Latifa Echakhch (born 1974 in El Khnansa, Morocco) are forever revolving around questions of cultural identity and how it is depicted. In this, she particularly engages with the ways culturally specific signs, such as national symbols in today's globalised society, work and how we deal with them.

In her installations, videos, sculptural objects, interventions, and happenings, which refer to particular locations, the artist often engages with stereotypes and linguistic codes as well as social mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Latifa Echakhch integrates everyday objects and materials, works on them, shifting them into a different context and transferring them from one culture into another. These objects, Moroccan tea glasses, sugar, worthless carbon paper, for instance, but also legal or political documents, are highly important in the way Echakhch's practices her art. They frequently open up a dimension of social politics by making the observer aware of our treatment of (art) history, focusing on the West, with globalisation, political events, with our handling of national symbols as well as the different aesthetic concepts between the cultures.

The solo exhibition at the Bielefelder Kunstverein entitled »Partitas« - a reference to the suite as a form of musical composition - focuses on an approach within Latifa Echakhch's oeuvre, where she engages with the development of the ornament and of abstraction in different contexts. Here, the artist for the first time goes more deeply into an interest which has already been a motif in numerous of her works. Four groups of works were created for this

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exhibition and concentrate less on topics of social politics but rather more on an engagement with lines and geometric forms. In this, it is not only the art-historic or creative dimensions that are relevant, but also the ideological and narrative potential inherent in ornament and abstraction. Her spatial installations, objects and paintings appear minimal and, making use of various media and materials, they seek to emphasise cultural common ground as well as cultural differences.

Since 2005, Latifa Echakhch has participated in several significant group exhibitions and Biennials. Most recently, her works were shown in the context of »Manifesta 7«, Trento and South Tyrol (2008), »Shifting Identities«, Kunsthaus Zürich (2008), »Global Feminisms«, Brooklyn Museum, New York (2007) and at the »3. Tirana Biennale« (2005). The most recent solo exhibitions were mounted in Paris (»Pendant que les champs brûlent«, Galerie Kamel Mennour), London (»Speakers' Corner«, Tate Modern, Level 2 Gallery, 2008) and Grenoble (»Il m'a fallu tant de chemins pour parvenir jusqu'à toi«, Le Magasin, 2007).

Almost concurrently with the exhibition in the Bielefelder Kunstverein, Latifa Echakhch will realise a project for the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel. Her first monograph will appear in 2010 as a cooperative project with further art institutions.

## **FLO MAAK**

### **NICHTS TUN WIE EIN BIEST**

SEPTEMBER 5 – OCTOBER 25, 2009



The Bielefelder Kunstverein is the first institution to mount a solo exhibition by the Frankfurt based artist, Flo Maak (born in Fulda in 1980). In his photographs, photo-collages, objects, and his video and sound works, he investigates the conditions of situation, image and exhibition. To this end, the artist resorts to found image motifs as well as to those he stages himself.

This artist's works are predominantly photographic and result from engaging intensively with the relationship of private and public spaces. This becomes obvious through earlier groups of works, which focus on image motifs like public conveniences, pedestrian underpasses, interiors, utilitarian objects and plants. In the process, this photographer with his keen eye for situations plays a decisive role, as does, however, the principle of chance. And for a good while now, Flo Maak has been equally working with collage as a creative vehicle: he combines and arranges his own and found image motifs, plays with the size-relations, and constructs his own scenarios. These in turn serve as the pictorial background for collages or translate collages into spatial structures. In the sense of extended photography, alongside and in conjunction with photographs independent objects and vehicles for images arise, which the artist often brings

together into narrative spatial constructs. The atmosphere surrounding his work is permeated by its particular underlying melancholic mood, which can be read both pictorially and formally.

In this sense, the exhibition, »Nichts tun wie ein Biest« [Doing Nothing, like a Beast] does not frame itself so much as a collection of individual exhibits, but rather more as a dialogue of photographs, photo-collages, objects and one sound piece. What puts a bracket around its content is the complex relationship between humans and animals. In shaping this, the artist has quite consciously picked out individual aspects like the question about the division between humans and animals, like spectators' pleasure as staged in concrete locations, or the analysis of structured environments, such as, for instance, nests, caves, refuges, houses, apartments etc.

In his current images, photographic portraits of wild animals dominate and conform to the usual depictions of animals only partially. His pictorial translating of animals in zoos or wildlife parks ranges from documentary snapshots to the digitally-manipulated group of works entitled »shelter« (2009), where animal photos are combined with interior environments. Spatially, the exhibition's structure derives from three coloured objects featuring steps and stages. Visitor's use them and so become part of the staging. The exhibition is a game with a staged voyeurism, which governs media and event culture and, with that, our everyday life.

He studied art history, philosophy and sociology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main, as well as fine arts with Prof. Wolfgang Tillmans (until 2006) and with Prof. Willem de Rooij at the State Academy of Fine Arts, Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main and at Cooper Union, New York (USA). His artwork already received backing from a number of scholarships and prizes. In Germany, Maak has exhibited most recently with JET Berlin (2006), among other venues, and in the context of group exhibitions like the »Frankfurter Positionen« (Frankfurt Positions) in the Museum für Moderne Kunst (Museum of Modern Art), Frankfurt am Main (2007), and with the group, »Free Class Frankfurt/M.« at the Frankfurter Kunstverein (2008).

The Bielefelder Kunstverein was honoured by Arts Foundation of North-Rhine-Westphalia with the award of Jump – Grants to Art Associations for its artistic programme 2009.

## KUNSTSTIFTUNG NRW

The exhibition by Latifa Echakhch is kindly supported by the Institut Français and CULTURESFRANCE.



### FOLDER

On the occasion of the exhibition a folder (German/English) will be published.

## **EVENTS FROM SEPTEMBER TILL END OF OCTOBER 2009**

FRI, SEPTEMBER 4, 2009, 7 PM

Opening of the solo exhibition of Latifa Echakhch and Flo Maak

SAT, SEPTEMBER 5, 2009, 4 PM

Artists talk with Latifa Echakhch und Flo Maak inside the exhibition

THUR, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009, 7 PM

Jour fixe for members – Guided tour with Thomas Thiel (director)

THUR, SEPTEMBER 24, 2009, 7 PM

Touching on Lecturing – Lecture by Dr. Sibylle Peters (cultural scientist, Universität Gießen),

»Online/offline – Spekulationen über die Zukunft des Vortrags als Performance«

THUR, OCTOBER 1, 2009, 7 PM

Jour fixe for members – Studio visit at Elisabeth Masé (artist, Bielefeld)

*Meeting point: Johannistal 14, 33617 Bielefeld*

THUR, OCTOBER 15, 2009, 7 PM

Touching on Lecturing – Performance lecture by Armin Chodzinski (artist, Hamburg/Luzern),

»Wie Sie im Geschäftsleben Erfolg haben ... Halten Sie Vorträge!«

*An event in cooperation with the Theaterlabor Bielefeld.*

*Place: Theaterlabor Bielefeld im Tor 6, Herrmann-Kleinewächter-Str. 4, 33602 Bielefeld*

WED, OCTOBER, 28 – SUN, NOVEMBER 1, 2009

Presentation of the project »Umbauraum«

FRI, NOVEMBER 13, 2009, 7 PM

Opening of the international group exhibition »Mehr als ein T-Shirt«

SAT, NOVEMBER 14, 2009, 11 AM – 6 PM

Conference in the course of the exhibition »Mehr als ein T-Shirt«.

*An event in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Bielefeld.*

You will find further information (texts and images) related to the exhibition in the press section of our website [www.bielefelder-kunstverein.de](http://www.bielefelder-kunstverein.de).

## **CONTACT**

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