

Kader Attia

Mirrors of Emotion

September 10—October 26, 2019

501 West 24th Street, New York

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Opening Reception: Tuesday, September 10, 6-8 PM



New York, August 8, 2019—Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce *Mirrors of Emotion*, an exhibition of new and recent work by Kader Attia. Conceived as a continuation of Attia's recent, critically lauded *The Museum of Emotion* exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London, this exhibition presents a sequence of rooms dedicated to examining the complexities of emotional experience through the lens of collective, individual, and psychoanalytic perspectives. The exhibition will feature two video works, including Attia's 2016 Marcel Duchamp Prize winning film, *Reflecting Memory* (2016; 46 minutes) alongside new sculpture, drawings, and an installation of large-scale glass works. There will be an opening reception for the artist on Tuesday, September 10, from 6 to 8 PM at 501 West 24th Street.

Attia grew up in both Paris and Algeria in the decade following the dissolution of French Algeria in 1962, and has devoted his work to examining the wide-ranging effects of colonialism and the repercussions of Western hegemony on non-Western cultures. The exhibition's title *Mirrors of Emotion* is inspired by the French philosopher Etienne de la Boétie's theory that describes how a

tyrant will create visual omnipresence within society—by appearing constantly in public space and therefore becoming internalized by the people—not only as a reminder of their power, but also to allow the populace to see themselves reflected in the tyrant. French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Jacques Lacan coined the term *hainamoration* to capture the fusion of hatred and enamoration that results. In this way, a tyrant becomes a mirror of emotions for the population and individual. Attia contends that we live in an era where emotional reaction to demographic change and economic inequality propels a new populism, appropriated as a form of catharsis. This emotional response characterized by collective and individual victimization is represented in Attia’s works through research that link individual histories with collective ones.

Upon entering the exhibition, one of the first works visitors will encounter is Attia’s film, *The Body’s Legacies, part 2: The Postcolonial Body* (2018), which addresses the case of Théo Luhaka, a young French-Congolese man who was brutally assaulted by police in the early spring of 2017. Through interviews conducted with people who either knew Luhaka or share a similar background, Attia explores the treatment endemic to the descendants of France’s formerly colonized countries. Although mutual citizens, the populace’s shared history is still treated as two separate accounts between which there was no reconciliation. Indeed, the irony of the formerly colonized being forced to find safety and opportunity amidst their oppressors only internalizes the dehumanizing legacy of colonization within a society that espouses freedom, equality, and liberty as its bedrock. In response, the state exacts its “tools,” namely police and the courts, as an apparatus of violent oppression and unequally applied justice—a dynamic understood in consort with the United States’ own legacy of slavery and current day descendants of the enslaved.

An installation of megaphones, recognizable for their role in amplifying the voices of victims and protestors from Black Lives Matter in the United States to the French riots, lie on the floor of the gallery as a reminder of the importance emotional expression and empathy have had in transforming the global political landscape. Cast in concrete, the megaphones have become inert, silent, heavy objects—contradicting their intended function to amplify the voice of protestors in the struggle for social justice. A revised installation of Attia’s *The Field of Emotion* (2018), comprised of sourced imagery of political and cultural figures, serves as a reminder of how depictions or restrictions of emotion can serve as potent forces within society.

Attia often makes work that engages with the modern compulsion to provide an invisible repair, in the artist’s words, “While in the past we would repair a broken object by making the wound visible with staples or thread for instance, in modern societies, the principle is to repair by erasing completely the wound and to give an appearance of the object as per its original state. In the second, the repaired object is seemingly completely free of any wound, it has disappeared even though the wound remains, which represents an illusion of a control over time that is manifested by a denial of its history, the incident that caused the break, and of the object.”

Attia’s second film in the exhibition, *Reflecting Memory*, presents interviews with surgeons, neurologists, and psychoanalysts discussing the phenomenon of phantom limb syndrome, in which the sensation that an amputated limb still remains connected to the body causes severe pain and hallucinations. Referencing both intimate and collective injuries, as well as material and immaterial symptoms, the film expands beyond physical and individual amputation, harking back to the ghosts of contemporary history, including slavery, colonialism, and genocide—and their demands for repair.

Preceding the opening of *Mirrors of Emotions* at Lehmann Maupin, Columbia University will host *Repairing the Invisible: Kader Attia in conversation with Souleymane Bachir Diagne* on Thursday, September 5, from 6 to 8:30 PM in at Maison Française, Buell Hall (Campus entrance is on Broadway and 116th Street). Attia is also included in *Clapping with Stones: Art and Acts of Resistance*, organized by Sara Raza at The Rubin Museum of Art, through January 6, 2020.

About the artist

Kader Attia (b. 1970, Dugny, France; lives and works in Berlin and Paris) has received degrees from Ecole Supérieure des Arts Appliqués Duperré, Paris, France in 1993, La Escola Massana Arte i Disseny, Barcelona, Spain in 1994, and Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France in 1998. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at The Hayward Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2019); Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne, Vitry-sur-Seine, France (2018); Fundació Joan Miró, Centre d'Estudis d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona, Spain (2018); Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2018); Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH (2018); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2018); The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia (2017); Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL (2017); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France (2017); Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2016); Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland (2015); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (2013); Whitechapel Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2013); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France (2012); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA (2007); and Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon, France (2006). Select group exhibitions featuring his work include *The Warmth of Other Suns: Stories of Global Displacements*, Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. (2019); *The Flow Of Forms*, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany (2017); *Foreign Gods: Fascination Africa and Oceania*, Leopold Museum, Vienna, Austria (2016); *But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise: Contemporary Art of the Middle East and North Africa*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2016); *Picasso in Contemporary Art*, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany (2015); *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell Revisited*, The Smithsonian Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C.; *Here and Elsewhere*, New Museum, New York (2014); *Performing Histories*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); and *Contested Terrains*, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom (2011). Attia has participated in multiple biennial exhibitions, including the 12th Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea (2018); 12th Shanghai Biennale, China (2018); Marrakech Biennial 4 and 6 (2014 and 2016); 8th and 13th Lyon Biennale (2005 and 2015); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany (2012); and 50th and 54th Venice Biennale (2003 and 2011). His work is in numerous international public and private collections, including Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; The Colección Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and Tate Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

Attia has recently received several prestigious awards including the 2017 Joan Miró Prize, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain; the 2017 Yanghyun Prize, Seoul, South Korea; and the 2016 Prix Marcel Duchamp, Paris, France.

About Lehmann Maupin

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Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. The gallery represents a diverse range of contemporary artists and estates from around the world. Since inception, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies. This mission has resulted in historic first exhibitions in New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul. For more information on the gallery and its artists, visit www.lehmannmaupin.com.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

cart, horse, cart, Through August 16, 536 West 22nd Street & 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

Mandy El-Sayegh, *Dispersal*, Through August 23, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Kader Attia, Nicholas Hlobo, Angel Otero, Through August 24, 74-18, Yulgok-ro3-gil, SEOUL

Alex Prager, *Play the Wind*, September 5—October 26, 536 West 22nd Street

Hernan Bas, November 7—January 4, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

Lee Bul, November 7—January 18, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Kader Attia or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923 or kathryn@lehmannmaupin.com.

IMAGE: *Réfléchir la Mémoire / Reflecting Memory* (film still), 2016, single-channel HD video projection, color, dimensions variable, duration: 45 minutes, 56 seconds. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.