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What is mine, is yours forever :: *MOATAZ NASR*



In one of the first publications of Daniel E. Berlyne, one of the principal researchers of scientific Aesthetics of the XX century, he writes, citing his master Barlett: “struggle for meaning... the need to perceive something in terms of a wider background of past experiences and present situation, to confront with the

others, more familiar entities”. Here is the research of the Egyptian artist **Moataz Nasr**. To make the personal place a collective one, to merge the I in a new We, to read the own historical time as a sum of times extended up to us, to read the artist’s experience as a large glass of psychological, cultural and syntactical collective conditions. “The future and the present are one”, Tarkovsky does say to the Writer in his film *The Stalker*. This is the position embraced and therefore translated into work by Nasr in his art projects designed for Villa Pacchiani in Santa Croce sull’Arno and the Exhibition Centre San Michele degli Scalzi in Pisa, curated by Ilaria Mariotti. The symbols of Islamic culture and local traditions merge each other, favoured by maritime nature of the city of Pisa and the dialogue weaves in nine months between the artist and the inhabitants of the territory. In the project *The Journey of a griffin*, the leather, material representative of the identity of Santa Croce, is worked to realize a zoomorphic mythological sculpture, with precious carved arabesques, the legacy of the Kufic script character inscribed on the monumental bronze griffin, located in the origin on top of Duomo of Pisa. In the project planned for Pisa, *Vacanze Romane*, Nasr takes up the famous Vespa Piaggio, symbol of the journey and the Italian industrialization of the second half of 1900, that was celebrated in the film directed by William Wyler in 1953, honoured in the title. Eight scooters are displaced to create an octagon, evoking both the ancient symbolism of the number 8, and the architectural geometry, typical of many floor plans of the Tuscan city, as well as many works of the artist. And then *The Maze*, a labyrinth made with strips of green grass, hides a message in the ancient Arabic calligraphy consisting in the words ‘bread’, ‘freedom’ and ‘social justice’, so intense in a so uncertain Egypt, which Moataz often raised to subject of his works, indirectly too. Along a constant oscillation between our and other territorial integrity and national identity, the distinctive feature of an artist who conceives his research as a trip into an historical and collective energy, circular and non-stop, is unfolded. A reconnaissance on the experience and the prospective of art that can contribute to the evolution of man and the transfiguration of what we call reality. The work of art, again, as an act of resistance.

Elena Abbiatici
03.02.2014

MOATAZ NASR

Un ponte tra Pisa e Santa Croce sull’Arno

A project curated by Ilaria Mariotti

In collaboration with GALLERIA CONTINUA, San Gimignano / Beijing / Le Moulin and Associazione Arte Continua

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The Journey of a Griffin

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