

MUNTREF CENTRO DE ARTE
CONTEMPORÁNEO

JEU DE PAUME

ALI KAZMA

Subterranean



**JUNE 29
TO OCTOBER 14
2018**

Tuesday to Sunday. Free admission
May to September: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. October to April: Noon to 8 p.m.
SEDE HOTEL DE INMIGRANTES: Antártida Argentina Ave.
(between Dirección Nacional de Migraciones and Buquebus), Puerto Madero



AMBASSADE DE FRANCE EN ARGENTINE

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UNTREF

UNTREF AND MUNTREF strive to promote Argentine culture abroad, and endeavour to reposition our country as one of the world's culture capitals so that it can recover the role it should have never lost.

In this regard, the show by Turkish artist Ali Kazma results not only from the interest aroused by his work and background, but also from our effort to host artists of the most diverse origins.

Likewise, this project is included in our plan to place MUNTREF among the few Argentine institutions that develop continuing programs on an equal footing with remarkable museums and centres of the international scene. In this case, Ali Kazma's exhibition is produced with the Jeu de Paume, with which we worked in collaboration on Georges Didi-Huberman's curatorial project *Uprisings*.

Our university has been conducting the MUNTREF project for sixteen years. This art museum has expanded and currently has five different venues that operate as centres for the Visual Arts, Art and Science,

Art and Nature, Contemporary Art and the Immigration Museum. Additionally, it has established a collection in permanent growth and, first and foremost, it appears as a crossroads both for undergraduate and graduate courses, and the research conducted in different areas, as well as with relation to society as a whole.

In MUNTREF we seek to create a wide entryway into university, a bridge that contributes to the incorporation of other patterns of cultural consumption and to the expansion of the social outreach of the research and projects in the academic field.

MUNTREF sets itself apart from the rest of the museums and art centres; nonetheless, this does not impede collaboration with them. Such is the case of the projects we have conducted with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía of Madrid, the Akademie der Künste of Berlin, the Fundación Picasso of Málaga, the MALI of Lima, the Hirshhorn Museum of Washington and the Jeu de Paume.

For MUNTREF, the challenge of working with such prestigious institutions is rewarded not only by the quality of the exhibitions that we present here, but also by the synergy with our research guidelines, archives and the projects that we carry out.

In this connection, we wish to express our gratitude to Marta Gili, the Director of the Jeu de Paume, for her commitment to this kind of activities between institutions with different formats and for the quality of the selected program. We would also like to thank Ali Kazma for his excellent work and his curator Pia Viewing, who have established a rich exchange with our team to deliver this show, which is the result of a rich glance at spaces, perspectives and activities invisibilized in the contemporary world. It is our hope that these installations will adopt a singular character enhanced by the memory of the place that hosts our Centro de Arte Contemporáneo: the former Immigrants' Hotel.

Anibal Y. Jozami
Diana Wechsler





North, 2017
 Diptych, HD video,
 synchronized, color, sound
 5' 7"
 Production: Jeu de Paume,
 Paris, with the support of
 SAHA Association, Istanbul.
 Courtesy of the artist

Opposite page:
Taxidermist, 2010
Obstructions series
 HD video, color, sound
 10' 28"
 Courtesy of the artist and
 Fondation d'entreprise
 Hermès, Paris

ALI KAZMA (born in Istanbul in 1971) uses lens-based media, mainly video, to investigate situations, places and structures relating to man's ability to transform the world, gradually constituting an archive on the human condition.

Subterranean brings together several works from 2006 to the present. The title of the exhibition relates to an homonymous video work made in a pipeline factory. Even though the work refers directly to the global, underground activity of pipelines and their function of transmitting energy and fluids, the title also evokes the relationship between the visible and the invisible aspects of reality.

The subject of *Clock Master* (2006) is the work of Recep Gürgen, a Turkish artisan in Istanbul, who "revives" a 19th-century clock, dismantling, cleaning and reassembling the whole mechanism by heart. The knowledge and the artistry shown in the clock master's gestures can also be seen in *Calligraphy* (2013), where the skillful application of the reed pen brings tradition to the fore. These works highlight the indispensable value of manual production processes that are overlooked in everyday consumer society.

Electric (2016), a video triptych, is composed of close-up shots of high-voltage cables being reeled in slow circular motions. This meditative work is, in fact, an abstract composition in which the reflection of the light on the texture of the different types of cable emphasises the movement and

the patterns that the material creates. In addition to referencing the pictorial surface of abstract modern art, it can also be interpreted as a reflection on the speed of global communications, or even as a comment on the immense wealth and power of industry today.

Kazma's films are the result of an incisive yet distanced observation: the artist never interacts with the subjects he films. Authentic and powerful, his works also bring the spectator close to their subjects by using ambient sound and particular details.

Studio Ceramist (2007) and *Taxidermist* (2010) show the gestures and specific tools used by artisans. It is the physical, aesthetic and temporal relevance of these techniques that Ali Kazma highlights here.

Other works explore the idea of space: surface, depth and specific places. *Safe* (2015) was shot in the Svalbard Islands, close to the North Pole. Moving from the windy, snow-covered environment to the inner spaces of the building, the frozen walls, shelves and metallic labelled boxes are all elements that give insight into the building's purpose: the preservation of hundreds of thousands of species of seeds. *North* (2017) shows an abandoned coalmine not far from Svalbard. It represents the region's relatively recent complex history, marked by Soviet culture for over fifty years (1936–1991). The industrial architecture and the historical artefacts left there are testimonies to the strong ideological presence of this former working environment.



Mine, 2017
Resistance series
 HD video, color, sound
 3' 34"
 Production: Jeu de Paume,
 Paris, with the support of
 SAHA Association, Istanbul
 Courtesy of the artist

Cover:
Subterranean, 2016
 Diptych, HD video,
 synchronized, color, sound
 5' 17"
 Courtesy of the artist and
 Borusan Contemporary,
 Istanbul

Several videos show situations where traces of historic and political activity are evident. For example, *Mine* (2017), shot in the Atacama Desert, Chile, presents the ruins of a nitrate mine that ceased to function in the late 1930s and, in the 1970s, became a concentration camp for workers, lawyers, artists and writers under the Pinochet regime.

Past (2012) shows the archeological site of Bibracte (Burgundy, France). The artist reveals the activities linked to this place of historical importance: excavations, conservation, research and preparation of models of the artefacts for the museum. This video diptych evokes the element of time: past and present as history is revealed and knowledge is acquired and shared.

In contrast, the visual narrative in *House of Letters* (2015) reveals the intimacy of the author Alberto Manguel's previous home in southern France.

This exhibition shows how the wide variety of subjects that Ali Kazma's work covers reflect his immense curiosity and his desire to link documentation to aesthetic visual narrative. He claims that the political stance of his work lies in the assertion that complexity and singularity are essential aspects of the richness of our contemporary world.

Pia Viewing

Curator

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