

Ali Cherri

Portfolio

Imane Farès

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Works: Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris

Ali Cherri

Lives and works in Paris



Photo: Dmitry Kostyukov

Ali Cherri's work is inspired by artefacts and the natural world. His sculptures, drawings and installations explore the temporal shifts between ancient worlds and contemporary societies. Using archaeological artefacts as a starting point, he investigates the boundaries of ideologies that underpin the foundations of nations and the myth of national progression. His work explores the links between archaeology, historical narrative and heritage, considering the processes of excavation and relocation of cultural objects into museums.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Les Veilleurs* ([mac] Musée d'art contemporain de Marseille, 2025) ; *Twenty-Four Ghosts per Second* (Bourse de Commerce), *How I Am Monument* (Baltic Art Center, 2025 ; Vienna Secession, 2024) ; *ENVISAGEMENT* (Giacometti Institute, 2024), *Dreamless Night* (Frac Bretagne, 2024 ; GAMEC, 2023), *Humble and quiet and soothing as mud* (Swiss Institute, 2023), *Ceux qui nous regardent* (CAC La Traverse, 2023), *If you prick us, do we not bleed?* (National Gallery, 2022), *Return of the Beast* (Imane Farès, 2021), *Tales from the Riverbed* (Clark House, 2018), *From Fragment to Whole* (Jönköping County Museum, 2018), *Satellite 10: Somniculus Programme* (CAPC Centre d'art contemporain de Bordeaux and Jeu de Paume, 2017), *A Taxonomy of Fallacies: The Life of Dead Objects* (Surssock Museum, 2016).

His work has recently been exhibited at the Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (Valencia), Jameel Arts Center (Dubai), Para Site (Hong Kong), MAXXI (Rome), Centre Pompidou (Paris), the 22nd VideoBrasil (2024) the 13th and 15th Sharjah Biennial (2017, 2023), the 5th Kochi-Muziris Biennale (India, 2022), the Venice Biennial (2022), Manifesta 13 (Marseille, 2020), the 5th Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art (Ekaterinburg, 2019), and the 8th Melle International Biennial of Contemporary Art (Melle, 2018).

A monographic exhibition is scheduled at Oakville Galleries in June, at Palais de Tokyo in September 2026, and at WIELS in autumn 2026. The artist is currently participating in an exhibition at the Musée départemental Arles antique, which is organized in partnership with the Louvre, and will also present her work this summer as part of *Le Voyage à Nantes*.

He received the Robert E. Fulton Fellowship from Harvard University (2016), the Rockefeller Foundation Prize (2017), and was nominated for the Abraaj Group Art Prize (2018). In 2022, he received the Silver Lion for his participation in the Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition, *The Milk of Dreams*.

His works are part of many major collections, including Museo Egizio (Turin), MoMA: Museum of Modern Art (New York); Collection Pinault (Paris); British Museum (London); Art Jameel (Dubai), Centre Pompidou (Paris); MACBA (Barcelona); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York; Mathaf (Doha); SeMA: Seoul Museum of Art (Seoul); [mac] Musée d'art contemporain de Marseille (Marseille), Musée Bonnefanten (Maastricht)...



The Sentinel (short film, 29 min, 2026)
Semaine de la Critique, Festival de Cannes



The Watchman (short film, 26 min, 2024)
- IFF Rotterdam, Cinemed (Grand Prix)
Neuchâtel IFF (Silver Méliès)



The Dam (feature film, 84 min, 2022)
- Director's Fortnight, Festival de Cannes



The Digger (short film 25 min, 2015)
- CPH:DOX (New Vision Prize)



The Disquiet (short film, 20 min, 2013)
- Toronto IFF, Dubai IFF (Best director Prize)

The Sentinel

Digital video, 16:9

29 minutes

French, Arabic

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

CAST

Nahuel Pérez Biscayart

Eric Cantona

Georges Torbey (Sbete)

“July 14, on Bastille Day. Strained by the military cadence of the barracks, Sergeant Lafleur struggles with the silent burden of duty. A doctor grants him one night of freedom, under the condition that he shall return before dawn. Nocturnal wanderings begin in the heart of a world which gradually drifts away from reality. A night suspended between destiny and desertion.”

Premiere:

Special Screening

65th Semaine de la Critique, Cannes Film Festival
(May 13–21, 2026)



Produced by LAST DREAMS PRODUCTION, Rémi Bonhomme & Imane Farès
Co-produced by Le Fresnoy - Studio National des Arts Contemporains
Executive Production: MANEKI FILMS, Didar Domehri, with the support of Almine Rech,
Mercedes Vilardell, Robert Matta (Fondation RAM), Fondation des Artistes, and Palais de Tokyo
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Imane Farès, Paris



Twenty-Four Ghosts per Second

Bourse de Commerce, Paris
February 5 — August 25, 2025

The twenty-four display cases in the Passage of the Bourse de Commerce present works by filmmaker and sculptor Ali Cherri. Personally marked by Lebanon's civil war and today by the region's persistent conflicts, the artist breathes life into artifacts (objects and fragments from various cultures and regions) and invents characters who are unwitting witnesses to these confrontations.

In occupying the display cases, a classic museum device, and taking advantage of the Bourse de Commerce's circularity, his work alludes to film and its twenty-four images per second, constituting ghostly flashes between reality and fiction, past and present.

In combining archaeological finds with his own creations, the artist gives birth to half-asleep chimeras that compel us to reflect on the manipulations of artifacts (i.e., their plundering, trafficking, and appropriation) and consequences of such actions, such as the loss of meaning. "The grafts I make in my series of sculptures constitute a form of solidarity between bodies that have been shattered, fragmented, and violated, and which create a community by being fused together," Cherri explains. Ali Cherri was also inspired by Jean Cocteau's 1930 Surrealist film *The Blood of a Poet*. In applying handwritten phrases from the screenplay to the backgrounds of the display cases, they come to symbolise a passage from one world to another.

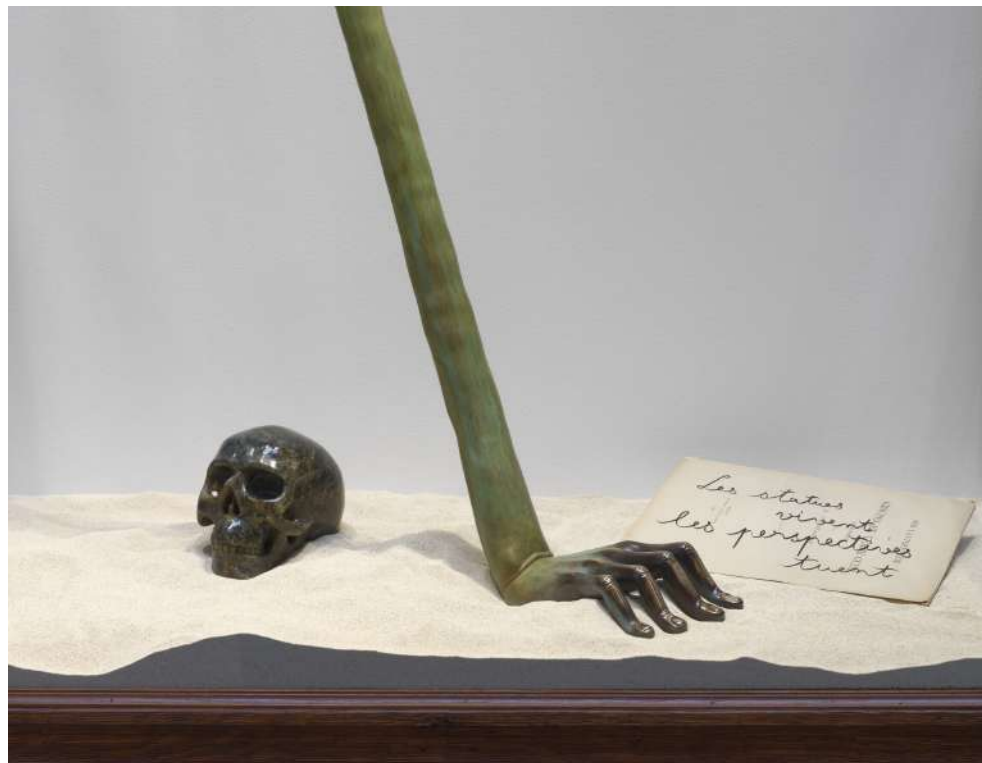


Ali Cherri, *Twenty-four ghosts per second*, 2025. installation view.
Photo: Aurélien Mole / Pinault.

Statues Also Live

2025

Memento mori in sculpted labradorite,
patinated bronze, calligraphy on paper
Unique



The Wound of the Poet

2025

Marble head of a Byzantine-era figure, lower
face missing, Jesmonite, concrete, steel, wood

Unique

Collection Pinault



A Mouth, A Wound

2024

Patinated bronze

Variable dimensions

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



Champ/Contrechamp

2025

Installation of 30 eyes (glass ocular
prosthetics, epoxy, coating), Neon
(CounterShot)

Variable dimensions

Unique



Eyes to the Sea

2025

Pair of sarcophagus eyes in bronze and alabaster, from a sarcophagus mask (Egypt, Saite Period (663-525 BC) or Late Period), brass serving tray, brass
Unique



Lessons of Theft

2025

epoxy paste, coating, naturalized throat red,
concrete, glass

Unique

Collection CNAP



The Lyrical Beast

2025

Pair of buffalo horns (Bubalus bubalis, non-regulated), wood, instrument strings, steel, concrete

Unique

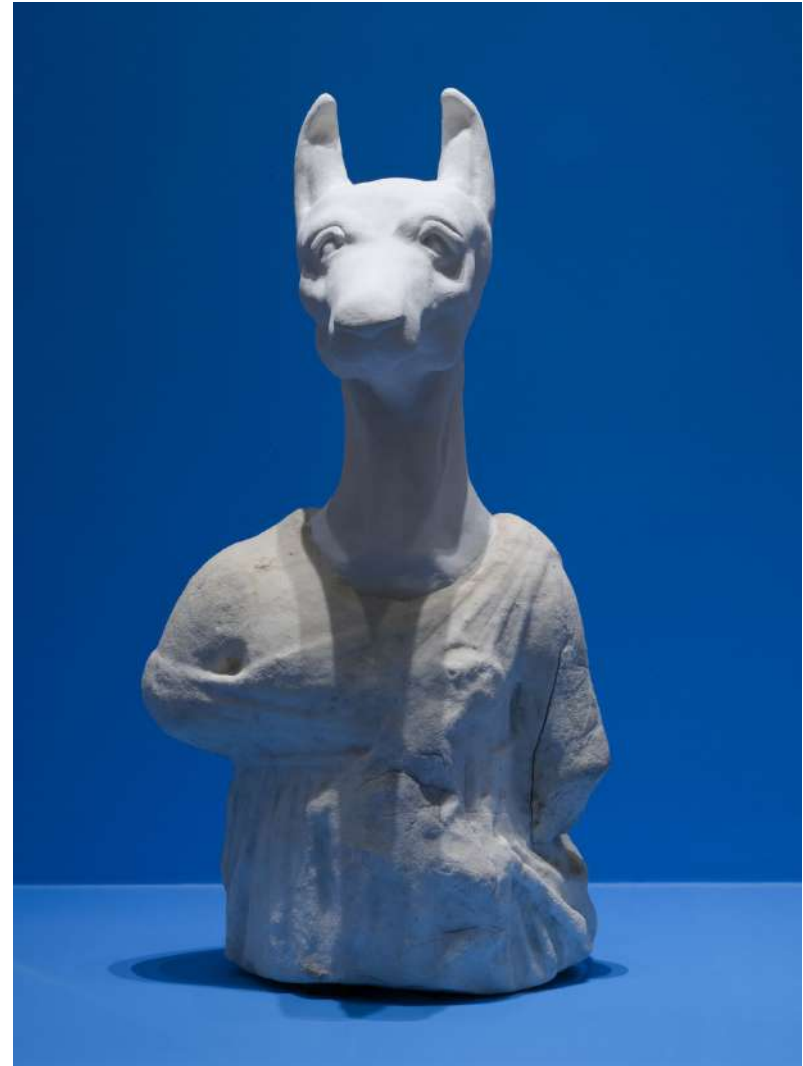


Anubis, Guardian of the Dead

2025

Headless bust in Roman marble, epoxy paste,
steel, coating

Unique



Do walls have ears?

2025

Installation of ears in Jesmonite mounted on a wooden background

Variable dimensions

Unique



The Eternal Sleep

2025

Forged iron rain divination tool in the shape of a serpent (Nigeria, Mumuye people), sarcophagus mask (Egypt, 1st millennium BC), pair of eyes from a limestone sarcophagus (Egypt, Late Period or earlier), concrete
Unique



How I Am Monument

Baltic Art Center, Gateshead
April 12, October 12, 2025

Vienna Secession, Vienna
December 6, 2024 —February 23,
2025

Mythology and ancient history as well as the afterlife of cultural artefacts play a key role in Cherri's practice, who sources archaeological relics in auction houses or antiquities markets. "Many of these objects," the artist explains, "are literally broken or damaged, and I see in this a poetic way to establish solidarity with other broken bodies.

Today, we all carry our own fractures and thus seek connection with other beings and communities who share similar experiences, from whom we can learn and with whom we can empathize." By integrating these fragments into hybrid, creature-like sculptures that radiate a surreal energy, Cherri introduces the forgotten, excluded or suppressed into Western collections. Questioning what is visible, and what remains obscured, his works get to the foundations of Western museums' practices and their power to shape the official canon and discourse through colonial politics of collecting and contextualizing.



Ali Cherri, *How I Am Monument*, Vienna Secession 2024, installation view. Photo: Sophie Pölzl

Sphinx

2024

Clay, sand, wood, steel, pigments, waxed bronze

80 x 212 x 220 cm

Unique

Collection Sharjah Art Foundation



Toppled Monuments 1 — 6
Kharkiv, Aleppo, Baghdad,
Bristol, Vienna, Richmond VA

2024

6 plinths: dyed and oiled larch, 2 vitrines:
dyed and oiled maritime pine plywood;
spots, glass panes

Richmond: H 122 L 144 D 107 cm

Baghdad: H 106 L 162 D 162 cm

Aleppo: H 62 L 70 D 35 cm

Kharkiv: H 147 L 111 D 89 cm

Vienna: H 90 L 78 D 78 cm

Bristol: H 89 L 53 D 53 cm

Unique



Returning the Gaze

Museo Egizio, Torino

On the occasion of its bicentennial, the Museo Egizio hosted an artist-in-residence for the first time: Ali Cherri.

The Lebanese artist drew inspiration from the museum's collection, exploring the contrast between the public's perception of artifacts and the «gaze» of the objects themselves.

He selected seven artifacts, entirely or partially missing their eyes, and reimagined them by reconstructing and casting them in bronze, restoring their ability to "see."

Collection Museo Egizio



Ali Cherri, *Returning the Gaze*, installation view, 2024. Photo Nicola Dell'Aquila.

*Returning the Gaze (Statue of
Wepwawetemhat)*

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

7 x 12 x 9 cm

24 x 35 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP



Returning the Gaze (Anthropoid Coffin of Puia)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

55 x 16,8 x 6,5 cm

30 x 52 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP



Returning the Gaze (Fragment of an anonymous statue)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

18 x 11 x 7 cm

25 x 30 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP



Returning the Gaze (Statue of Iteti)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

10 x 15 x 9 cm

25 x 23 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP

Collection Pinault



Returning the Gaze (Fragment of an anonymous coffin)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

35 x 25 x 16 cm

25 x 28 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP

Collection Pinault



Returning the Gaze (Anthropoid Coffin of Mentuirdis)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

26 x 13 x 9 cm

26 x 28 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP



Returning the Gaze (Fragment of an anonymous statue)

2024

Bronze, Pigment print on Dibond

18 x 22 x 30 cm

27 x 34 cm

Edition of 3 + 1AP



A Monument to Subtle Rot,
Galerie Imane Farès, Paris
September 7 —December 20, 2024

For his exhibition *A Monument to Subtle Rot*, Ali Cherri invites us to contemplate the intricate relationship between matter and history.

In a new series of sculptures, the artist reverses the notion of monumentality: his hybrid creatures, made from clay and bronze, embody a tension between vulnerability and resistance. Their enduring and immutable limbs are reminiscent of sculptures erected to celebrate and immortalize conquerors, yet their bodies seem to be on the brink of collapse. Bronze, the material of the powerful, is tainted by clay, the material of the oppressed. Suspended between monuments and ruins, these sculptures dismantle canonical representations of power and question our relationship to time.

The notion of transformation can also be found in a series of drawings depicting apples at various stages of rotting, a motif that references Alberto Giacometti's work and recurs in still lifes throughout the history of art. Here, the apples are eaten from within. Mold becomes a metaphor for resistance and reclamation, a force that deconstructs dominant representations of history and offers a form of redemption through decay.

Ali Cherri's practice challenges the construction of historical narratives and opens a dialogue between past and present, strength and fragility, destruction and creation. Through his films, installations, and performances the artist sculpts time.



Ali Cherri, *A Monument to Subtle Rot*, Galerie Imane Farès, installation view. Photo: Tadzio.

All That is Solid Melts into Air

2024

Patinated bronze, steel, clay, sand, wood,
plaster, pigments

267 x 181 x 81 cm

Unique



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Hollow

2024

Wood, steel, concrete, plaster, clay, sand, epoxy
paste, pigments

76 x 82 x 60 cm

Unique



*Cold Face from the series Egyptian
Bronze*

2024

Waxed bronze, wood, steel, clay, sand, pigments

168 x 29 x 29 cm

Unique



A Monument to Subtle Rot

2024

Steel base, KODAK 35 mm Film and Slide

Viewer

6 minutes loop

114 x 33 x 33 cm

Unique



Monument to Rust

2024

Patinated bronze, steel, clay, sand, wood, epoxy

paste, pigments

234 x 77 x 115 cm

Unique



Bitter Fruits series

2024

7 Watercolor and graphite on paper, framed

45,2 x 35,8 x 4 cm (each)

Unique



ENVISAGEMENT,

Giacometti Institute, Paris
23 January – 24 March 2024

The exhibition at the Institut Giacometti brings together the works of Ali Cherri and those of Alberto Giacometti, one of the great masters of modern art. Sharing with Giacometti a particular interest in the representation of the human head, the artist explores the notion of “envisagement”, a term referring both to the action of envisioning something, and to the evocation of the face.

This double meaning finds a particularly striking echo in Giacometti’s sculptures and paintings, where the human face is the motif of a ceaseless search as much as a realization in the making.

This exhibition will unveil new creations by Ali Cherri, most of them specially designed for the show. These new works will resonate with the rich selection of paintings, sculptures and drawings by Alberto Giacometti from the Fondation’s collections.



Ali Cherri, *ENVISAGEMENT*, 2024, Installation view: Institut Giacometti
© Succession Alberto Giacometti / ADAGP, Paris 2024.

Arbre de vie / Tree of life

2023

Brass, steel

240 x 83 x 74 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



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Boîte des regards / Boxes of gazes

2023

Ocular prostheses in glass, burr walnut veneer,
gold leaf, brass and resin

25 x 20 x 20 cm

Unique



L'Homme aux larmes / The Man with Tears

2023

Stone head 14th - 15th century carved stone with flat, smooth eyes to evoke the ancient tradition of placing a coin on the eyes of the dead, patinated silver, plaster, steel

49 x 41 x 31 cm

Unique

Collection Pinault



Boîte mélancolique / Melancholic Box

2023

Ocular implants made of glass, Wood, Steel, Epoxy

Paste, Coating

24 x 30 x 18 cm

Unique



Divination

2023

Marble head with female face (17th century); draped marble fragment from the Roman period; pair of clappers in the form of hands in the style of the New Empire or the 3rd Intermediate Period; steel, wood

77 x 25 x 22 cm

Unique



Tête en terre / Mudhead

2023

Wood, steel, sand, clay, pigments

42 x 21 x 19 cm

Unique



La Tête qui marche / The Walking Head

2023

Glazed stoneware, concrete, plaster

27 x 11 x 11 cm

Unique



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Petite tête en terre / Small Mudhead

2023

Wood, steel, epoxy paste, coating

33 x 12 x 12 cm

Unique



Fleuri / Blooming

2023

Wood, plaster, brass, glue

23 x 15 x 15 cm

Unique

Collection Pinault



Vanité / Vanity

2023

Plaster skull, wood, plaster, brass, glue

28 x 18 x 40 cm

Unique



L'Homme qui débarque / The Disembarking Man

2023

Egyptian head from an ancient sarcophagus probably from the Lower Empire, steel, wood, plaster, sand, pigments, glue

152 x 24 x 50 cm

Unique



Déesse / Goddess

2023

Idol with pinched nose (Indus Valley);

gold leaf, steel, wood, plaster

10x8x8 cm

Unique



L'Ange de l'histoire / The Angel of History

2023

Marble divinity head from the Roman period, steel, plaster

53 x 21 x 11 cm

Unique



Tête en terre endormie / Sleeping Mudhead

2023

Steel, sand, clay, pigments

18 x 41 x 21 cm

Unique



Lucie

2023

Ocular prostheses in glass, wood, brass, epoxy paste, coating

21 x 13 x 8,5 cm

Unique



Buffle d'eau / Water Buffalo

2023

Terracotta water buffalo from the Han period; wood, steel,
brass, plaster, glazed stoneware

42 x 29 x 12 cm

Unique

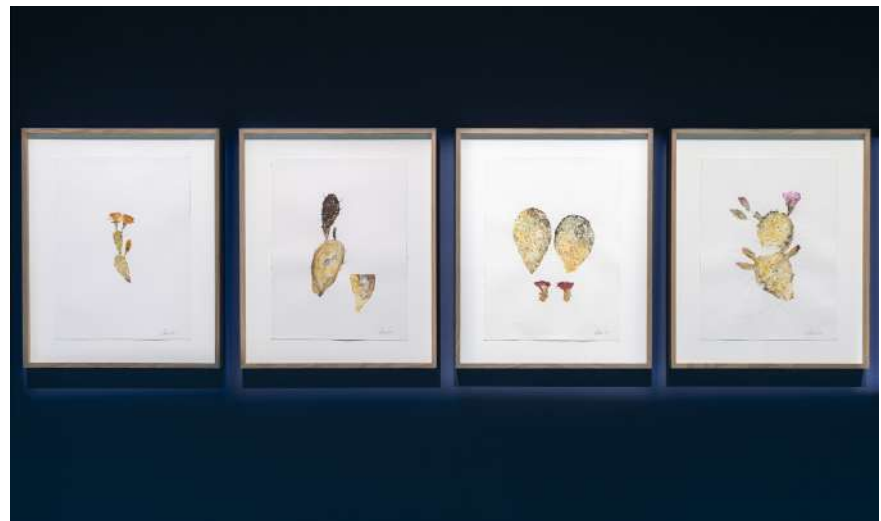
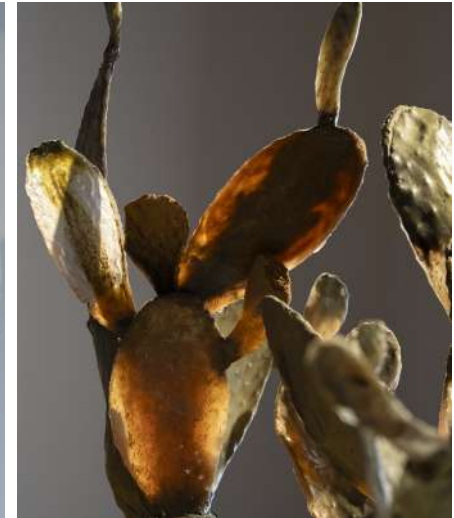


Dreamless Night

Frac Bretagne, Rennes
February 10 — May 19, 2024

GAMEC, Bergamo
October 8, 2023 — January 14,
2024

Dreamless Night represents the largest retrospective to date of Ali Cherri's multidisciplinary practice, encompassing film, video installation, drawing and sculpture. In an extension of the film, landscapes, bodies and ancient artifacts are presented simultaneously as witnesses to forms of destruction and as tools for imagining their past and present differently. The exhibition presents the video work *The Watchman* (2023), as well as a series of original sculptures and drawings, specially produced for the project, which relate to the symbolic elements and characters of the film, as well as to the geographical and cultural landscape of Cyprus.



Installation view d'Ali Cherri, *Le songe d'une nuit sans rêve*, 2024, Frac Bretagne, Rennes.
© Ali Cherri, Courtesy of the artist, Fondazione In Between art Film and Galerie Imane Farès, Paris.
Photo : Aurélien Mole.

The Watchman

2023

HD video, colour, sound

25 min 58 sec

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Edition 1/5: Fondazione In Between Art Film

Edition 2/5: Collection The Vega Foundation

Edition 4/5: Collection CNAP

Set in Cyprus, the East Mediterranean Island at the core of decades-long tensions between local Greek and Turkish communities, the film *The Watchman* (2023) sets out from the political history of this troubled territory and the personal stories of its inhabitants. The work proposes a wider reflection on the politics of the recognition of borders and their painful consequences with regard of sovereignty, identity, and ultimately peace.

The *Watchman* is centered around the figure of a soldier whose job is to guard the border of the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This soldier, like many others along the dividing line, spends his prolonged and dull night shifts perched on a watchtower looking out for “the enemy,” who may or may not arrive down the hills of the recognized Republic of Cyprus under Greek-Cypriot rule.

When he is off duty, the soldier wanders half-asleep the landscape waiting for the next shift to begin again.

His nights of motionless waiting for “the enemy” to arrive disjoint time and space, and trap the soldier in a physical and metaphorical threshold where the borders between alertness and sleepiness, reality and imagination, are constantly trespassed until, unarmed, he meets with his fantasies and reveries, unleashing unexpected events.



The Seven Soldiers

2023

Seven sculptures, resin, fiberglass, clay, sand, pigments, steel

Maximum height of the installation: 248 cm

91 x 77 x 83 cm; 112 x 82 x 97 cm; 97 x 80 x 88 cm;

97 x 75 x 86 cm; 89 x 76 x 85 cm; 98 x 78 x 86 cm;

90 x 78 x 85 cm

Unique

This installation stages seven oversized heads of soldiers suspended on thin metal spikes. With their eyes closed, and a neutral yet nightmarish expression, they seem caught in a perpetual state of sleep, like the ghostly figures that haunt the soldier at the end of the film *The Watchman*. Their surface reminds of plastic toy soldiers and their arrangement signals the culture of head displays, from the ancient practice of putting heads on spikes to the modern choices of ethnography and archaeology museums.

The intersection between sleep and museum displays was already explored by Cherri in his video *Somniculus* (2017), where the artist is seen dozing in a series of empty museums in Paris alongside their collections of wooden, clay, or plaster heads and masks. For the artist, the intermediate state that separates sleep from wakefulness is a space of transformation and opportunity. By connecting reality with dreams as well as life with death, this state gives the possibility of questioning acquired certainties, shedding new light on cultural projects that are based on colonial and nationalistic premises.





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Wake up Soldiers, Open Your Eyes
2023

Two sculptures, clay, sand, wood, pigments,
steel

220 x 120 x 84 cm ;

230 x 136 x 68 cm

Unique

With these sculptures, Cherri challenges the representation of power by intervening in the traditional iconography of war heroism. These impressively oversized soldiers are made of fragile materials which make them look unstable. Their posture is standing but it is also slouched, which stays at odds with the usual characteristics that soldiers are praised for: alertness, loyalty, and courage. Instead, they appear as if falling for Cherri modeled them after a horizontal sleeping figure. If their military boots and pants resemble the real ones, their torsos, guns, and faces get increasingly lost towards abstraction, with their mouths being reduced to menacing holes, a recurring image in Cherri's practice.



The Prickle Pear Garden

2023

Six sculptures, Resin, pigments, steel, clay
220 x 86 x 86 cm; 180 x 86 x 86 cm; 160 x 86
x 86 cm; 180 x 86 x 86 cm; 150 x 86 x 86 cm;
190 x 86 x 86 cm

Unique

Ali Cherri molded prickly pear cacti (*Opuntia*) leaves into resin. Light passing through the sometimes transparent, sometimes opaque leaves enhances the variety of colors. Like amber fossils, they tap into Cherri's interest towards the material history bore by objects, in this case, ubiquitous plants brought to the Mediterranean from overseas colonial enterprises which have been witnessing violence across continents and times.





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No Man's Land (Theater Backdrop)
2023

Paint on fabric, aluminium scaffolding

Fabric dimensions: 400 x 650 cm

Scaffolding dimensions: 400 x 600 x 100 cm

Unique

The work is inspired from the location where *The Watchman* was shot: rocky mountains, a few houses and ruined buildings, and a fence made from a row of prickly pear cacti. This idyllic landscape is interrupted with the signs of heavy militarization, from the watchtower itself to military vehicle and abandoned tank, to the warning sign that forbids crossing into this liminal territory. With its realist painterly style, *No Man's Land (Theater Backdrop)* points towards the fine line between reality and fiction: is it a backdrop used in the film or a deceitful propaganda banner? In both cases, it stages the friction between an idealized landscape and a failed space of militarization.





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Dreamless Night, 2023

We Grow Thorns so Flowers would Bloom

2023

Thirteen drawings, watercolor and graphite on paper

41,5 x 50 cm (each of 12);

68 x 87 cm (1)

Unique

This series of watercolors is a study of different types of cacti, which are often used as fence devices in arid and dry climates. Cherri studied the shape and color of their pads through various stages of decomposition and delicately combined the threatening aspect of their thorns with the beauty of their blooming flowers.

The series includes a drawing of a fallen robin, adding up to the portraits of roadkills or taxidermized animals that recur in Cherri's watercolors. The dead robin resonates with the bird that crushes into the watchtower in the film *The Watchman*.

The work weaves together not only a metaphorical take on the political flaws of borders, which are doomed to crumble, but also a critique of their effects on people and on the environment while suggesting a way in which beauty, poetry, and meaning can still be created out of their reality.





We Grow Thorns so Flowers would Bloom

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The Dismembered Bird

2023

Carved stone, clay, sand, wood, pigments, iron

Maximum height of the installation including the metallic structures: 169 cm

The Body part: 60 x 200 x 60 cm

The feet part: 65 x 25 x 45 cm

The head part: 55 x 65 x 35 cm

The wings part: 280 x 130 x 15 cm (each)

Unique

Collection Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art

Oversized and dismembered, this bird sculpted out of mud seems to carry with itself the fragility of ancient times and materials, for it has cracks, scars, and traces of feathers that can be spotted along its petrified wings. The 16th century Prussian eagle-shaped head, with its piercing gaze, is made of carved stone which the artist bought in an antique shop. Cherri re-imagined a big and brittle body for this heavy head as a reversal of the traditional iconography whereby eagles are symbols of power, authority, and victory. This choice continues his exploration into the politics of archaeology, heritage preservation, and display, questioning who may speak for the fragments of distant lives, who may write their story, and how they may be re-inserted within History.





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Humble and quiet and soothing as mud

Swiss Institute, New York
September 2023 – January 2024

The Dreamer;
Leaning Figure;
Gilgamesh (The Death of Enkidu);
Standing Figure (Pow!)
2023

From ancient Sumerian mythology to Jewish folklore, Maori and Chinese creation myths to Hindu and Yoruba cosmogony, humankind has time and again been narrativized as originating from mud. Houses, pots, and other vessels made from clay were instrumental to the beginnings of societies, as they were used for cooking, heating and gathering food. It is from the aqueous solution covering the Earth, where water and soil met, that the first single-celled organisms emerged, birthing every living creature on Earth today. The exhibition is structured around a dialogue between sculptures produced for the occasion and the three-channel video *Of Men and Gods and Mud* (2022), which won the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale.



Ali Cherri, *Humble and quiet and soothing as mud*, 2023- 2024, installation view. Courtesy Swiss Institute. Photos: Daniel Pérez.

The Dreamer

2023

Iron-cast mask, wood, clay, sand, pigments

160 x 45 x 60 cm

Unique



Leaning Figure

2023

Zoomorphic stone head; steel, clay, sand,
pigments

80 x 60 x 125 cm

Unique

Collection Bonnefanten



Gilgamesh (The Death of Enkidu)

2023

Old wooden mask; steel, clay, sand,
pigments / Bull horns, steel, clay, sand,
pigments

Gilgamesh: 230 x 75 x 85 cm

Enkidu: 50 x 80 x 80 cm

Unique

Collection Bonnefanten



Standing Figure (Pow!)

2023

Animal mask, steel, clay, sand, pigments

88 x 25 x 40 cm

Unique



In Our Veins Flow Ink and Fire
curated by Shubigi Rao
5th Kochi-Muziris Biennale
December 2022 – April 2023

Seated Figure;
Lion;
Standing Figure;
2022

Ali Cherri's participation in the 5th International Art Exhibition of Kochi-Muziris Biennale.

In continuity with the project presented at the Venice Biennale, Ali Cherri uses mud both as a material and as a metaphor to create three new sculptures presented for the first time at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale.

Mud is a symbolic element in nearly all creation myths. As the artist says: "Whether it is Gilgamesh, Golems or Adam, they are all moulded from mud. So, this material is as old as humanity itself and has a history that's cyclical."



Ali Cherri, *In Our Veins Flow Ink and Fire*, 2022- 2023, installation view.
Courtesy of the artist.

Seated Figure

2022

Heaume mask Mapico (Tanzania), clay,
sand, wood, pigments

130 x 85 x 67 cm

Unique



Lion

2022

Pink Sandstone of a roaring lion head
sculpture (England, 16th century), clay,
sand, wood, pigments

52 x 105 x 45 cm

Unique



Standing Figure

2022

Terracotta Nok head (Nigeria, c. 500 B.C.),
clay, sand, wood, pigments

88 x 25 x 40 cm

Unique



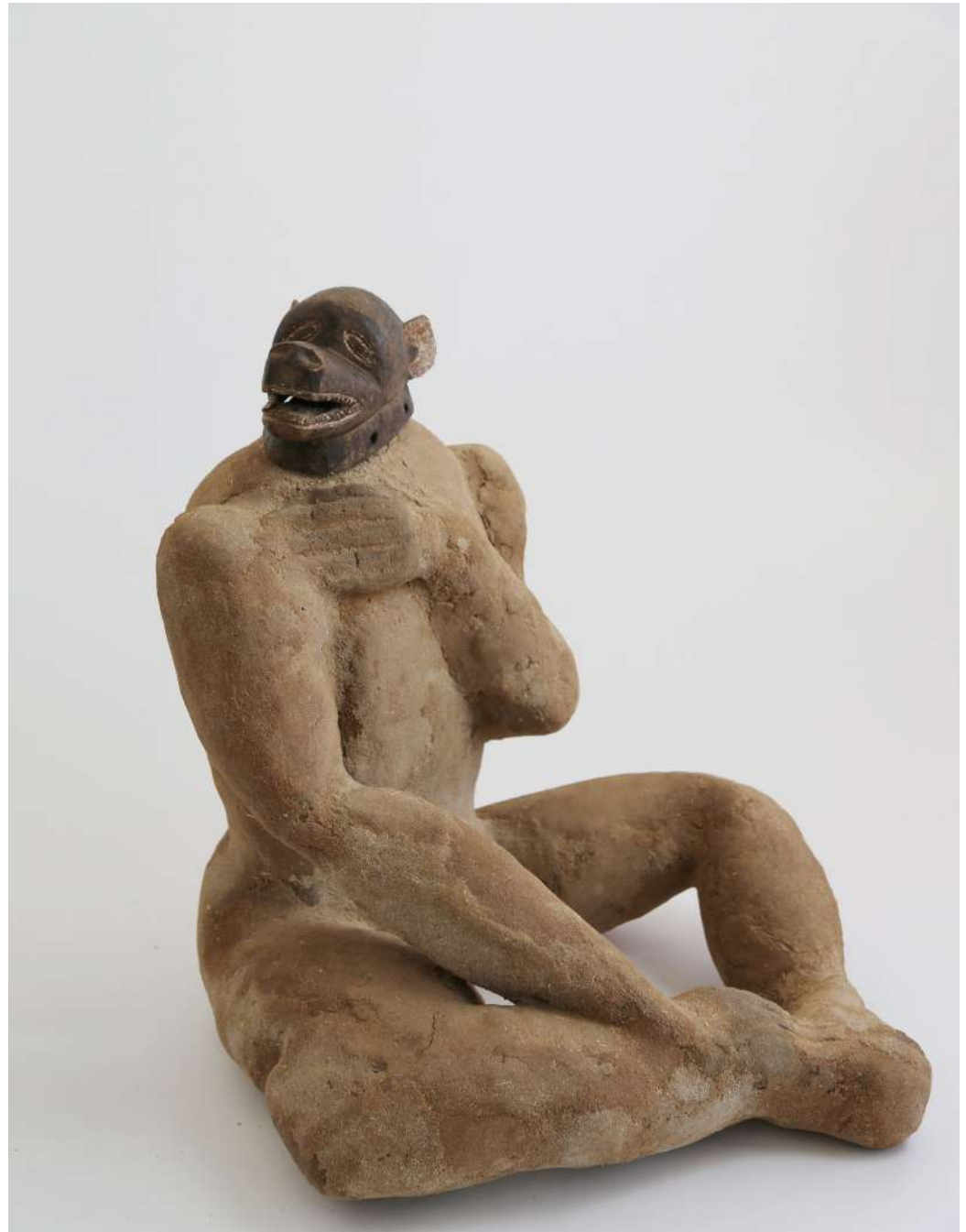
Seated Simia

2023

Gurunsi Monkey Mask, first half of the
20th century, (Burkina Faso), clay sand,
pigments

78 x 78 x 78 cm

Unique



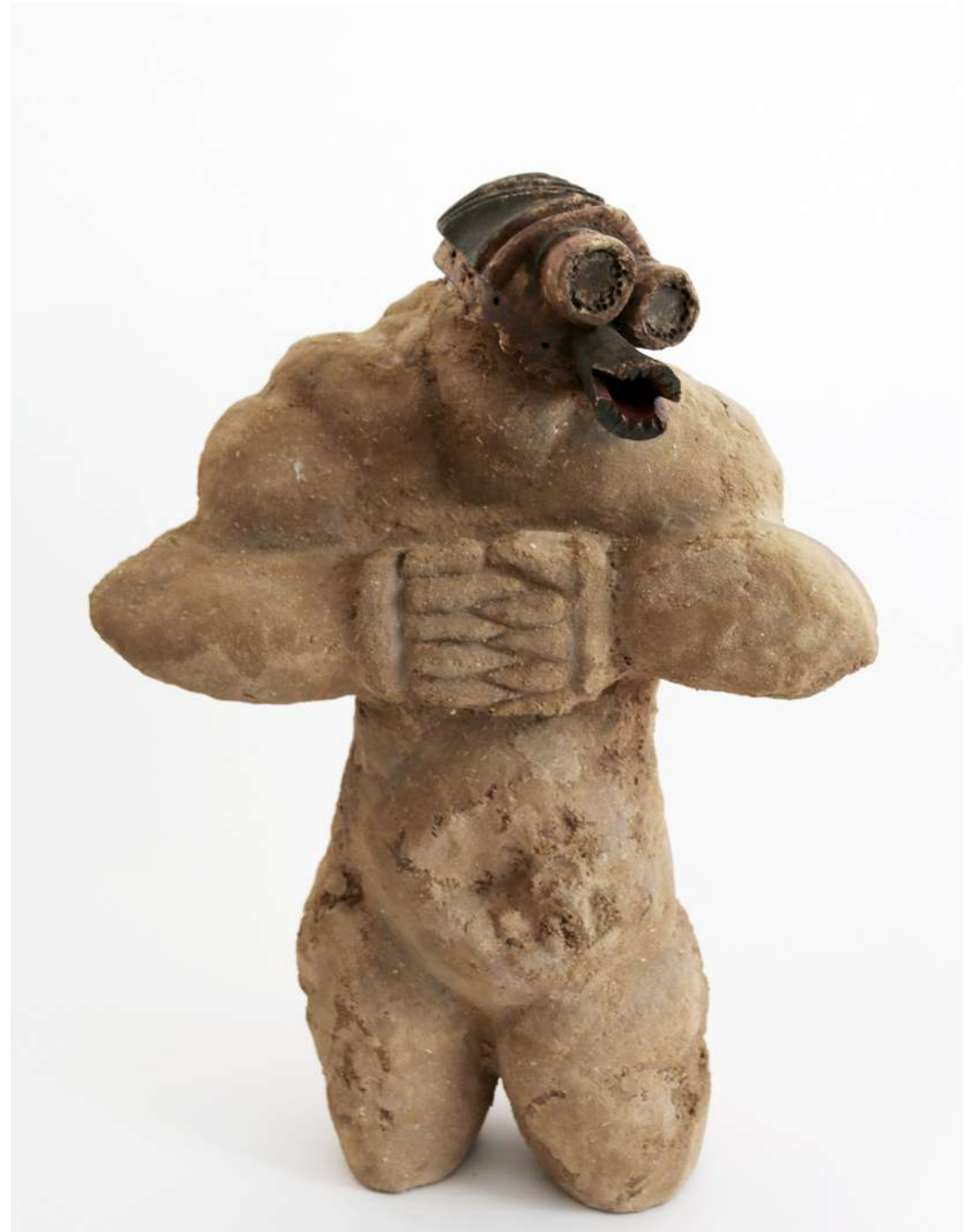
Vermilingua Bust

2023

Vakono Monkey Mask, first half of the 20th century, (Nigeria), clay sand, pigments

106 x 78 x 48 cm

Unique



La Grande Dame

2023

Male head with ball headdress (Egypt,
Late Period, ca. 664-32 B.C.), clay, sand,

pigments, steel

50 x 12 x 8 cm

Unique



The Milk of Dreams
curated by Cecilia Alemani
59th International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia
April - Nov. 2022

Titan 1, 2 & 3
2022

Ali Cherri's participation in the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

These three new sculptures are titled *Titans* and made of earth, water and their mixture: mud. Mud functions as the raw material for construction, but also as a metaphor. Deeply embedded in narratives of creation, from Gilgamesh to the Golems and Adam's formation, mud grounds life in a cycle that always finds its way back into the earth. Bearing resemblance to mud creatures or Lamassu, the three sculptures are evocative of mythological creatures.

Ali Cherri was awarded the Silver Lion for a Promising Young Participant at *The Milk of Dreams*, the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.



Ali Cherri, *The Milk of Dreams*, 2022, installation view.
Courtesy of the artist.

Titan 1

2022

Terracotta Nok head (Nigeria, c. 2100 B.C.),

clay, sand, loam, gesso, pencil, pigments

180 x 75 x 50 cm

Unique

Collection Guggenheim Abu Dhabi



Titan 2

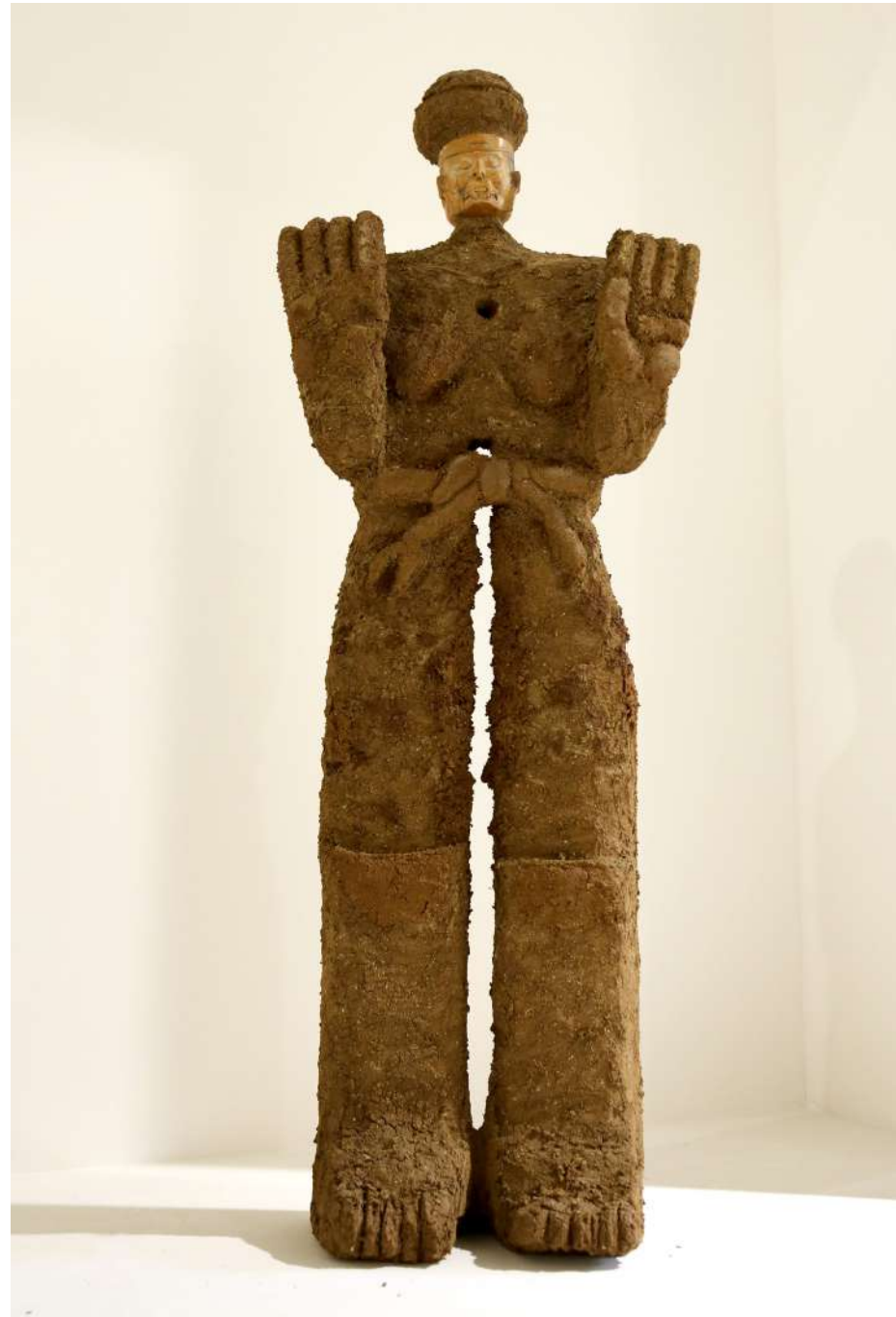
2022

Front part of a Mayan cult vase modeled after a priest wearing a mouth mask evoking the Monkey God Hun Batz or Hun Chouen, terracotta with smoothed orange engobe (Classical period, 600-900 AD), clay, sand, loam, gesso, pencil, pigments

198 x 70 x 50 cm

Unique

Coll. Famille Servais



Titan 3

2022

Mayan head of a dignitary in orange-beige terracotta (Mexico or Guatemala, Classical period, 600-900 AD), clay, sand, loam, gesso, pencil, and pigments

160 x 40 x 140 cm

Unique

Collection Guggenheim Abu Dhabi



Of Men and Gods and Mud

2022

Three-channel video installation,

18 min 48 sec (in loop)

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Edition 1/5: Sharjah Art Foundation

Edition 2/5: Guggenheim Abu Dhabi,

Edition 3/5: Bonnefanten museum in
Maastricht

Filmed in Northern Sudan, near the
Merowe Dam on the Nile River.

With the brickmakers of Kassinger, Maher
Al Kheir, Mudathir Musa (Sini), Santimaria
Aguero (Santino), Khamis IDris, Saber
Mussa, Jacob Quan, Ayman Shareef.



Ali Cherri: If you prick us, dp we not bleed?

National Gallery, London

March - July 2022

Starting with research in the National Gallery's archive, Cherri uncovered accounts of five paintings that were vandalised while on display. He was struck by the public's highly emotional response to these attacks, finding that newspaper articles would describe the damages as if they were wounds inflicted on a living being – even referring to the Gallery's conservators as surgeons. He also noticed an overwhelming urge to 'heal', make good and hide the damage. This personification of artworks, and the suggestion that they can experience distress, is reflected in the exhibition's title, taken from Shakespeare's play 'The Merchant of Venice'.

In response, Cherri presents a series of mixed media, sculptural installations that recall aspects of each painting and that imagine its life following the vandalism. They bring into question what Cherri calls the 'politics of visibility'; the decisions we make about how, and to what extent, we accept trauma within museums. By translating each damaged work into a series of strange objects, Cherri reminds us that we are never truly the same after experiencing violence. Assembled in five old-fashioned vitrines reminiscent of early museum displays and cabinets of curiosity, lined up in the Sainsbury Wing and surrounded by Renaissance paintings that often show wounds and suffering, Cherri's installations resonate with sympathy.



Ali Cherri, *Ali Cherri: if you prick us do we not bleed*, 2022, installation view. Courtesy National Gallery London. Photos: Daniel Pérez.

The Adoration of the Golden Calf
after Poussin

2022

Installation comprised of a display case containing a bas-relief pedestal in jesmonite, wood and gold leaf, and an eight-legged two-headed taxidermly lamb
188 x 137,5 x 63,5 cm (display case) | 100 x 45 x 50 cm (bas-relief pedestal) | 43 x 44 x 32 cm (taxidermy lamb)

Unique





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The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne and the Infant Saint John the Baptist ('The Burlington House Cartoon') after Leonardo
2022

Installation comprised of a display case containing a cardboard rendition of a bullet damage, newspapers, a copy of John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, a sculpture comprised of glass eyes and a metal stand. 220 x 170 x 70 cm (display case) | 70 x 7 cm (cardboard)

Unique

Collection Centre Pompidou, Paris





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The Toilet of Venus ('The Rokeby Venus') after Vélazquez

2022

Installation comprised of a display case containing a 19th-century head carving in marble, a wooden reclining Venus sculpture, a mirror and red velvet fabric
200 x 220 x 80 cm (display case) | 40 x 30 x 30 cm (marble head) | 170 x 80 x 80 cm (wooden Venus)

Unique





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*Self Portrait at the Age of 63 after
Rembrandt*

2022

Installation comprised of a display case
containing the sculpture of Rembrandt's
head in wax and a steel frame

166,4 x 127 x 53,3 cm (display case)

Unique



*The Madonna of the Cat ('La
Madonna del Gatto') after Barocci*
2022

Installation comprised of a display case
containing a taxidermy goldfinch and a
porcelain hand

147,5 x 81,2 x 40,5 cm (display case) | 12
x 10 x 7 cm (goldfinch) | 12 x 37 x 37 cm
(porcelain hand)

Unique

Collection Contemporary Art Society



Return of the Beast
Galerie Imane Farès, Paris
April - July, 2021

Standing at the center of Cherri's fourth solo exhibition at Imane Farès, a one-legged creature carved in marble greets you. Its limbs have not been fully amputated: a fragmented human foot lingers on the right, while the left leg, adorned with scale-like patterns, seems to have sunk into the short plinth. Attached to these mutilated remains is a pale humanoid face. Rimmed with green-blue lines, its eyes are wide-open, as if staggered by you, in a surprising inversion of roles.

Titled *Return of the Beast*, Ali Cherri's exhibition compels us to rethink what we've historically considered as the figure of the monster, by inviting us to reevaluate the gaze that defines this conception.

How do we look at monsters?

How do they look back?

What brings about the monstrous?

The exhibition engages with the trope of the monstrous in a continuation of Cherri's research on hybridity, which has been central to his practice for the better part of the last decade. (...)



Ali Cherri, *Return of the Beast*, 2021, installation view. Photo: Tadzio.



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The Gatekeepers
Manifesta 13 Marseille
Aug. - Sept. 2020

The Gatekeepers
2020

Four wooden poles or totems referring to the four elements (Fire, Earth, Wind and Water), metal, taxidermy, woodcarving, various objects

320 x 100 x 50 cm (each)

Commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille, supported by [N.A!] Project, Ammodo and Drosos Foundation

The Gatekeepers draws on the tradition of erecting totem poles at the gates of certain communities. These vertical pillars can welcome, warn or simply tell the story of the people who once lived there. Using figures inspired by the animal kingdom, the aquatic world or crossbreed beasts, *The Gatekeepers* welcome visitors to the Musee des Beaux-Arts de Marseille and offer a tribute to the souls of all the animals lodged in the Museum d'Histoire naturelle, only a few steps away, in the opposite wing of Palais Longchamp.

Despite the proximity of both these institutions, they reassert the divide between nature and culture – a key feature of knowledge production in western modernity. These vertical pillars offer a substitute to the "pillars of knowledge" that these museums represent, while also echoing the colonnade balcony that connects them both.



Ali Cherri, *The Gatekeepers*, 2020, installation view. Photo : © Jean Christophe Lett / Manifesta



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Head Nest

2020

Osteological *Ceratogymna atrata*,
Salampasu head mask from Central
Africa, wooden base

100 x 40 x 40 cm

Commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille,
supported by [N.A!] Project, Ammodo and
Drosos Foundation

Installation view: entrance of the Musée
des Beaux-Arts de Marseille, Palais
Longchamp, as part of Manifesta 13
Marseille.



Tree House

2020

19th century wooden pole leg, taxidermy
Falco Subbuteo, Chinese dragon head in
porcelain, steel rod and wood

60 x 40 x 40 cm

Commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille,
supported by [N.A!] Project, Ammodo and
Drosos Foundation

Installation view: entrance of the Musée
des Beaux-Arts de Marseille, Palais
Longchamp, as part of Manifesta 13
Marseille.



Fish Totem

2020

Taxidermy porcupine fish, 20th century, pole from Salampasu village, anthropomorphic wooden head, steel rod, wood and neoprene tube

160 x 60 x 50 cm

Commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille, supported by [N.A!] Project, Ammodo and Drosos Foundation

Installation view: entrance of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Marseille, Palais Longchamp, as part of Manifesta 13 Marseille.



Feline And a Bird

2020

19th century patented bronze Sphinx,
taxidermy bird, red colorant

100 x 40 x 40 cm

Commissioned by Manifesta 13 Marseille,
supported by [N.A!] Project, Ammodo and
Drosos Foundation



The Book of Mud

2018-2020

Published by Dongola Limited Editions

Vision and Direction – Abed Alkadiri

Edition of 65

[more info](#)

The Book

Limited Edition of 65

Story by Ali Cherri

English Text | Lina Mounzer

Arabic Text | Mariam Janjelo

Design | Reza Abedini

Assistant Designer | Lama Barakat

Photography | Kassem Dabaji

Printing and Binding | Riad Youssef

Cover | Black fabric, Foil debossing

Inside pages | Offset printing on Freelifte Vellum (140 gsm)

Binding | Double bound hardback

Printed in Beirut, Lebanon

The Mudbrick

Unique piece, 2019 | Artifact from the artist's collection nested in handmade, sun-dried mudbrick

Made in Deux-Sèvres, France | Frantz Lavenu

The Print

Brickyard, 2020

Silkscreen printed in two colors on Oikos extra white (100 gsm) signed and numbered by the artist

Edition of 65 Printed in Beirut by Salim Samara

The Box

Carved beech massif, plywood, and MDF painted white host the book and brick with a pullout drawer and a plexiglass lid

Box Production | Tanya Elhadj



Storage

2019

Lightbox, Duratrans print

200 x 125 x 5 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



Phantom Limb

Jameel Arts Center, Dubai

Oct 2019 - Feb. 2020

In agricultural botany, a graft is a sprout inserted into a slit on a trunk or stem of a living plant, from which it receives sap. In medicine, it's a piece of living tissue that is transplanted surgically to replace diseased or injured tissue. Grafting is often used to create new varieties or species, and it can sometimes be made between different species, that is, human and animal. By performing the assemblage of fragile things, a new appearance, a new life is granted. These hybrids give us a glimpse into the power of matter. By looking at the life cycles of objects and the complexity of preservation and representation of matter, the relationships and tensions between the organic and synthetic, figurative and the abstract, the found and made object are revealed.



Ali Cherri, *Phantom Limb*, 2019-2020, installation view: Jameel Arts Center, Dubai. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Jameel Arts Center, Dubai.

Grafting (I)

2019

Apollon Woman's Head; Carved Stone
Statue Representing a Bishop, Normandy;

Polyurethane Foam; Steel Nails

110 x 50 x 30 cm

Unique



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Grafting (H)

2018

Nok Civilization Terracotta Head; Wood;

Undated Jar; Reparation tape

29 x 13 x 14 cm

Unique

Collection Art Jameel LLC



Grafting (G)

2018

Head of Eros, marble; Lobi Protection

Figure from Burkina Faso, wood; Dried Jay

Wing

50 x 15 x 15 cm

Unique

Collection Art Jameel LLC



Grafting (F)

2018

Terracotta statue representing a sphinx,
Nok Civilization (500 BCE approx.), head of
a roe deer in taxidermy (1950)

36 x 13 cm

Unique



Grafting (C)

2018

Head in marble, 18th century - Wood -

String - Steel Tripod

26 x 20 x 18 cm (without pedestal)

Unique



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Grafting (B)

2018

Headless statue in limestone, 14-15th
century; terracotta head, Ghana; wood
Unique



Grafting (Errance)

2023

Headless sandstone bust of St. John
the Baptist, (France, late 11th century);
alabaster head, (France, 18th century);
terracotta votive feet; brass

47 x 32 x 22 cm

Unique



Hybrids (I)

2018

Base Granite – Volcanic Stone head –

Dogon Mali wooden Mask

61 x 22 x 20 cm

Unique



Hybrids (F)

2018

Vase with Geometric decoration painted with red slip on orange clay. Polychrome terracotta. Archaeological Site of Ban Chiang, Thailand, around 1000BC. Wood – Taxidermy bird specimen

38 x 34 x 34 cm

Unique

Collection Lazaar Foundation, Tunis



Hybrids (A)

2018

Wooden woman bust from Mali – Pottery and porcelain fragments of different provenances and dates - Plinth solid oak
Unique



La Classification du vivant

2018

Drawing, pencil, collage and pressed
leaves on canvas

Unique



The Weight of History

2018

Three Roman bricks in terracotta from the site of Ostia Antiqua Skin - bird from a cabinet de curiosités, c. 1890, unidentified

Tropical specie

Unique



The three humors

2017

Two pre-Columbian poporo; Alto Magdalena, Colombia, Pre-Columbian anthropomorphic vase - Chancay, Peru; animal bones, X-XIIIth century

Unique

Collection FRAC Nouvelle Aquitaine-MÉCA, Bordeaux

The three humors installation is emblematic of the archaeological research that Ali Cherri has been conducting since 2013. Composed of three pre-Columbian objects and animal bones dating from the X-XIIIth century, this work revolves around grafting, a process used in botany and medicine. This gesture thus allows the artist to create hybrid entities, mixing different cultures, eras and geographies and associating the natural with the artificial, the inanimate with the (once) living. Ali Cherri thus revisits the historical dichotomy between nature and culture, revealing its obsolescence. By reactivating pre-Columbian poporos and vases, the artist also tends to highlight the circulation of these «retrograde objects» (Jane Bennett), whose value was cultural, historical and finally economic.



Endless Falls

2017

Pre-Columbian pot with ornaments;
Manteno culture 850 -1530 AD,
restored with a piece of porcelain from
the excavations of the royal palace of
Ayutthaya - China c. 1700 AD, brass
attachments

Unique

Collection Kadist, Paris



Where do birds go to hide

2017-2023

Installation composed of two tree trunks, animal bones, grafting mastic, five hand-drawn canvas, wooden frames, metal bars, a specimen of Russian sparrow from a museum cabinet dating from 1879

Trunk 1 (195 cm long)

Trunk 2 (220 cm high)

Frame (300 cm high)

The installation *Where do birds go to hide* turns the encounter with objects freed from normative standards into a spectacle. A dead tree; animal bones; the skin of a taxidermy bird: each of these things on its own is mere debris. But when they are brought together, when they are grafted onto one another in such a way that creates relationships between them, they rise to a new status: that of an active encounter. They are given emotional value: these long-dead things become bodies with the capacity to affect and be affected.



Ali Cherri, *Ceux qui nous regardent*, installation view, CAC La Traverse, 2023. Courtesy of the artist.



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Where do birds go to hide

2017-2023

Installation comprised of a tree trunk and
a Russian specimen of a sparrow from a
museum cabinet dated from 1879, metallic
bars and hand-drawn canvas

Variable dimensions

Unique



*The Crow, the Owl and Other
Birds*

2018

Five etchings

30 x 23 cm (each)

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Edition 3/5: British Museum, London

The etchings *The Crow, the Owl and Other Birds* are signs of Ali Cherri's fascination with nocturnal birds, leitmotifs that populate his work. Each lithograph reveals in a poetic and delicate way the symbolic power of these creatures, present in many myths and religious texts. The raven's piercing eyes recall its mention in the Koran, while the owl's fixe gaze expresses the strength of this animal, associated with the wisdom of the goddess Athena.



The Melancholy of Birds (C)

2017

Series of 2 lithographs

105 x 74,5 x 3,5 cm (each)

Edition of 5

Ali Cherri's recent projects reflect on the tension between nature and its cultural reproductions. By exploiting the relationships that are forged between memory and fiction, communities and civilizations, the living and the dead, the artist recognizes that history is a fragile space, made up of events and stories rooted in the individual and collective political experience.

In his three series of lithographs *The Melancholy of Birds A, B and C*, Ali Cherri addresses the question of our relationship to nature: nature as an experience or nature as an object of study. He reproduced isolated drawings found on the plates of botanical and ornithological books, and superimposed them in order to «replace» them in their original environment, thus recreating the emotional dimension of our experience in front of nature. Birds are leitmotifs that populate his work. This series reveals in a poetic and delicate way the symbolic power of these creatures, present in many myths and sacred texts.



The Melancholy of Birds (B)

2017

Series of 3 lithographs

105 x 74,5 x 3,5 cm (each)

Edition of 5



The Melancholy of Birds (A)

2017

Series of 4 lithographs

105 x 74,5 x 3,5 cm (each)

Edition of 5



The Egyptian Scale (Triptych)

2016

Historical photograph (1900-1920) - ink
and charcoal

52 x 38 cm (each)

Unique



The Egyptian Scale (Quadriptych)

2016

Historical photograph (1900-1920) - ink
and charcoal

52 x 38 cm (each)

Unique



The Flying Machine

2017

Installation comprised of crow wings, bamboo, wood and ropes

Variable dimensions

Unique

A tribute to dreamers, the installation *The Flying Machine* looks back at the first dreams of flight, from Abbas Ibn Firnas, through Leonardo da Vinci and the Wright brothers. Man has always dreamed of breaking the mould of the formality of his own body, in order to remain suspended in the air, defying the law of gravity.

One of the first flying machines was designed in 875 by Abbas Ibn Firnas, an Andalusian Muslim physician, chemist and engineer (half a century before da Vinci). Ibn Firnas had wings made of wood and bamboo covered with a silk garment that he had trimmed with raptor feathers. Like a bird, he launched himself from a tower overlooking a valley, and, even though the landing was bad (he injured his back), he remained in the air in gliding flight for about ten minutes.

Flying machines went through different phases. The first tests to fly were carried out using ropes and pulleys of various sizes in order to increase the power of the machine. But soon man learned that the gliding flight of the birds, rather than the movement of the wing itself, was the way to achieve sustained flight over a long period of time. So the next step was not to imitate nature, but to design and build winged gliders.



Ali Cherri, installation view, FIAC Hors-les-murs, Jardin des Tuileries, Paris, 2017.



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Plot for a Possible Resurrection

2018

Installation comprised of mud bricks, a stone Jesus Christ Resurrection statue, 15th century, a wooden statue of Jesus Christ (damaged face), 15th century
Variable dimensions

Unique

The placement of the archaeological object is central in the work of Ali Cherri. It raises questions about the choice of objects shown in museums because it is not trivial and indicates the vision that each culture wishes to give to its history, what trace we preserve from the past. With *Plot for a Possible Resurrection*, Ali Cherri creates a space of archaeological excavations where objects are revealed showing traces of erosion. Mud serves to cultivate crops for its richness, but also engulfs everything during cataclysms. It is this mud that occupies the exhibition space and exposes some objects that it has imprisoned within. Nature always takes over and therefore, the objects transformed by man erode. The cut stone becomes stone again, the soil becomes mud again.

Although the silver mines of Melle had been forgotten for several centuries, then were rediscovered, Ali Cherri was interested in the formation of layers of limestone and stalactites that the penetration of water formed on the stone rubble left by the miners. These natural marks of the passage of time and of the victory of nature over human interventions were sources of inspiration for the work *Plot for a Possible Resurrection* that becomes part of this biennial as a mirror of the mines.



Exhibition view: biennale internationale d'art contemporain de Melle, Le Grand Monnayage. Photo © Origins Studio.

Plot for a Possible Resurrection

2018

Installation comprised of mud bricks, a stone Jesus Christ Resurrection statue, 15th century, a wooden statue of Jesus Christ (damaged face), 15th century

Variable dimensions

Unique

Exhibition view: biennale internationale d'art contemporain de Melle, Le Grand Monnayage.

Photo: Origins Studio.



Qubba
2019
Photograph
75 x 114,5 x 3 cm (framed)
Edition of 5



Four Masks

2018

Four inkjet prints on baryta paper, one
frame

44 x 160 cm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Lazaar Foundation, Tunis



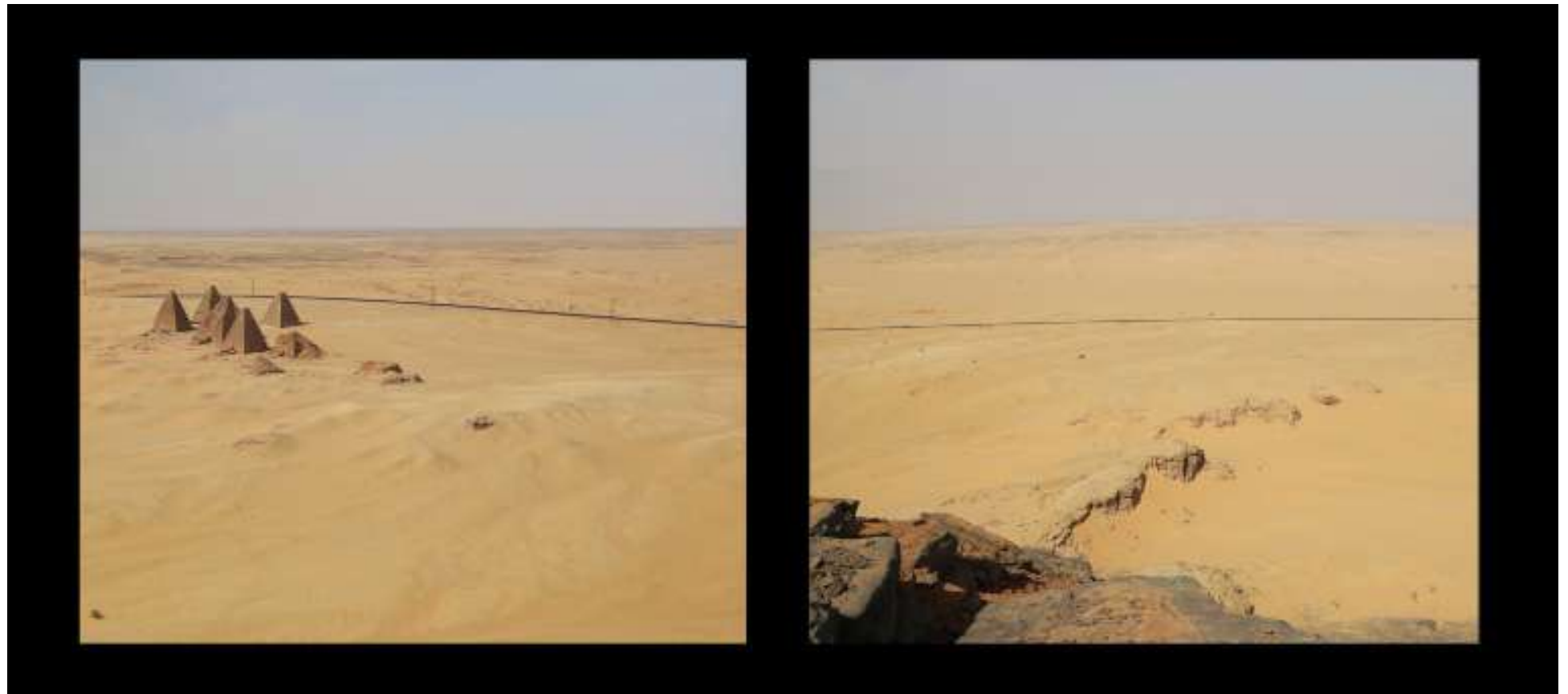
Deserts (1)

2018

Two inkjet prints on baryta paper, one
frame

54 x 118 cm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



Deserts (2)

2018

Two inkjet prints on baryta paper, one
frame

54 x 118 cm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



Somniculus

2017

HD video, colour, sound

14 min 40 sec

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Musée national d'art moderne/
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France

Ed. 2/5: Lazaar Foundation, Tunis

"Filmed inside a series of empty museum galleries across Paris, Cherrri's new work *Somniculus* (the Latin word for "light sleep") articulates the tension between the lives of dead objects and the living world that surrounds them. Artefacts from museums of ethnography, archaeology and natural sciences are all presented in their existing cultural context as the surviving objects of human interest. (...) We see how these objects might relate to us in a pre-modern sense, as objects endowed with their own autonomy and agency.

Although the modern era has given rise to a divide between the living and the non-living, human and nonhuman, culture and nature, the project of existing museum practice seeks to bring objects of the past to life by reactivating historical narratives. (...)

These fragments of loss, destruction and violence stand in as representations of civilizations' past. In accordance with the cultures they serve to represent, these objects are neither caught inside the deep dark past nor immediately visible in the light of our present day, but forever waiting to be awakened."

— Osei Bonsu



Still Life

2017

Lightbox, Duratrans print

152,5 x 96,5 x 7 cm

Edition of 3 + 2 AP



Petrified/Fragments (I)

2016

Installation includes:

- *Fragments (II)*, fragmentary archaeological artefacts, ethnographic objects, skull casting, taxidermy bird, light table

Variable dimensions

- *Petrified*, single-channel video, color and sound

Duration: 12 min

Collection MAC VAL, with the support of Fram Île-de-France

Ali Cherri's work, *Petrified/Fragments*, consists of a video shot in a wildlife park and an archaeological museum in the United Arab Emirates, and an installation of objects gathered on a light table. It offers a critical point of view on the process of patrimonialization of archaeological objects, from the excavation sites to the museum display. The objects filmed in the video, emerging alternately from the darkness, are the same ones facing us, in procession on the light table. They come from various eras and civilizations, heterogeneous in their materials, but all of them feature faces or bodies. Ali Cherri acquired them at auction. Far from the civilization that saw them appear and gives them meaning, they feed the art market - whether their authenticity is proven or not. Here, these relics are devoid of name, title or date, label or cartel: they appear to us as floating, disconnected from any language. This mutism results from their status as exhumed fragments, and reveals the nature of the excavation work, which, according to the artist, consists concretely and symbolically of a real uprooting.





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Petrified/Fragments (II)

2016

The installation includes:

- *Fragments (II)*, a set of archaeological artefacts, taxidermy bird

Variable dimensions

- *Petrified*, single-channel video, color and sound

Duration: 12 min

Installation: Unique

Video: Edition of 5

Exhibition view: Sursock Museum, 2017.





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Petrified

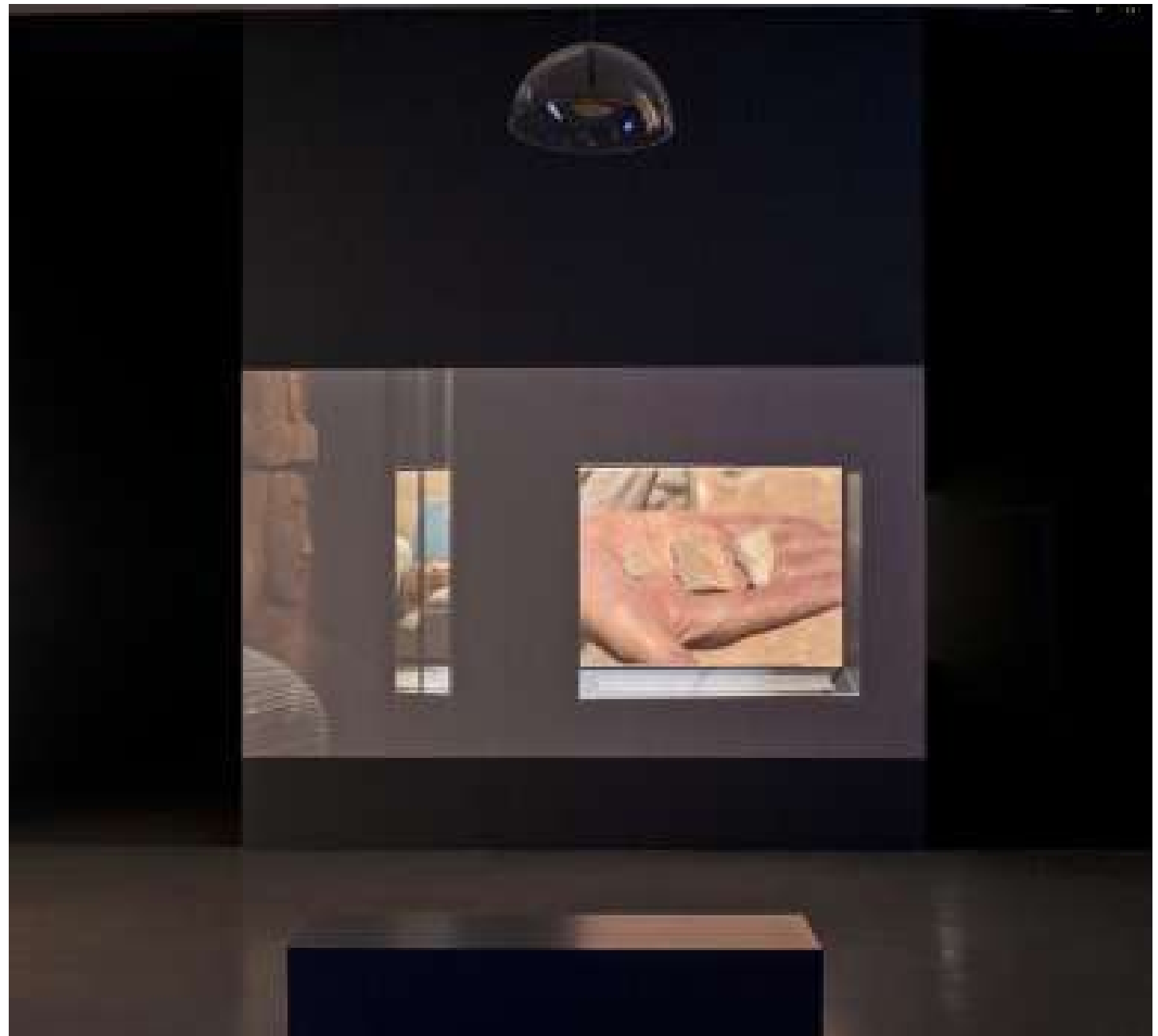
2016

Single-channel video, color and sound

Duration: 12 min

Edition of 5

Exhibition view: Sharjah Art Foundation,
2017



The Digger

2015

HD Video, colour, sound

24 min

Arabic and Pashto with English subtitles

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE

Ed. 2/5: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York, USA

Ed. 3/5: FRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte-
Provence, Marseille, France

Ed. 4/5: Museo Delle Civiltà, Rome, Italy

"My approach to archeology is not motivated by love of ruins, but by a desire to excavate that which has survived. While one end of archeology culminates in the encasing of History within exquisitely-lit, precisely-labeled glass boxes, on the other end there is the raw material, the archeological site itself, with all its potential sculptural qualities. The discovery of an excavation site goes hand-in-hand with its destruction: the more we unearth, the more we destroy.

In the past years, the United Arab Emirates has witnessed a number of archeological discoveries. The U.A.E. is a place said to be always running away from its urban ruins: as soon as a structure starts to decay, the machines of demolition and reconstruction roar forth to erase its traces. The film follows the guard of the archeological ruins, Sultan, on his daily tour around the 5000-year-old necropolis. The film blurs the boundary of documentary and video art, but it essentially blurs the position of the artist as a historian or as a chronicler."

— Ali Cherri



*Le Dernier Homme (1), (2), (3), (4),
(5), (6), (7)*

2015

Archival Inkjets on paper

35 x 50 cm (each)

Edition of 3 + 2 AP



Wildlife

2015

Lightbox, Duratrans print

200 x 125 cm

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

1 AP: Collection Les Abattoirs, Musée Frac
Occitanie, Toulouse



The Disquiet

2013

HD video, colour, sound

20 min

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Private collection

Ed. 2/5: Private collection

Ed. 3/5: Surssock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon

Earth-shattering events are relatively par for the course in Lebanon, with war, political upheaval and a number of social revolts. While the Lebanese focus on surface level events that could rock the nation, few realize that below the ground we walk on, an actual shattering of the earth is mounting. Lebanon stands on several major fault lines, which are cracks in the earth's crust. *The Disquiet* investigates the geological situation in Lebanon, seeking out the traces of the imminent disaster.

Sequences of long walks in nature alternate with seismographic mechanisms inscribing a disaster-in-becoming and then with history of recent earthquakes in Lebanon through archival images and old drawings. An inevitability of natural and political synchronicities in a given region, that reigns in the voiceover narration, is transformed in the last part of the film. A space for hope is introduced, where it is suggested that one has to leave the document(ary) mode of narrating and enter into a speculation, in solitude and lucidity of one's own mind and beliefs.



Dust and Other Anxieties

2013

Archival inkjet print mounted on Dibond

90 x 160 cm

Edition of 3 + 2 AP



Heroes: The Rise and Fall

2013

Sculpture, chrome-plated copper and granite

56 x 26 x 13 cm

Edition of 8 + 2 AP

Ed. 2/8: Contemporary Art Platform, Koweït

Ed. 3/8: Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE



Trembling Landscapes (Beirut)

2016

Lithographic Prints and Archival Ink

Stamps

70 x 100 cm (each)

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Trembling Landscapes (Beirut) belongs to a series of aerial maps representing Algiers, Beirut, Damascus, Erbil, Makkah, and Tehran. The cities that Cherrri has selected are situated on active fault lines, the coordinates of which are marked with red stamps. The precarity of these landscapes is paralleled by the social and political unrest that has come to characterize their locations. Cherrri's restrained cartographic diagrams offer an alternative to the media's explicit representations of disaster by investigating the region's geologic fissures.



Trembling Landscapes (Mekkah)

2016

Lithographic Print and Archival Ink Stamp

70 x 100 cm

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Ed. 6/7 : Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE



Trembling Landscapes (Erbil)

2014

Lithographic Print and Archival Ink Stamp

40 x 60 cm

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/7: Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE

Ed. 2/7: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York, USA



Trembling Landscapes (Algiers)

2014

Lithographic Print and Archival Ink Stamp

40 x 60 cm

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/7: Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE

Ed. 2/7: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York, USA



Trembling Landscapes (Tehran)

2014

Lithographic Print and Archival Ink Stamp

40 x 60 cm

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/7: Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE

Ed. 2/7: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,

New York, USA



Trembling Landscapes (Damas)

2014

Lithographic Print and Archival Ink Stamp

40 x 60 cm

Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/7: Barjeel Art Foundation, UAE

Ed. 2/7: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,

New York, USA



Archéologie (Égypte)

2014

Map (1876), ink and charcoal

45,5 x 60,5 x 3 cm

Unique

Other works in the series *Archéologie*:

Archéologie (Îles Britanniques)

Archéologie (Mappemonde)

Archéologie (Suisse)

Archéologie (France)

Archéologie (Océan Glacial)

Archéologie (Égypte)

Archéologie (Algérie)

Archéologie (Europe)

Archéologie (Amérique)

Archéologie (Asie)

Archéologie (Amérique du Sud)

Archéologie (Espagne et Portugal)

Archéologie (Océanie)

When the use-value of an object expires, its historical importance and auratic presence gains our attention. In that way, for his work *Atlas 1876 – 2014*, Cheri placed an old atlas from 1876 inside a resin frame and thus stopped the ageing process of this book of obsolete knowledge. Similarly, although created in unawareness of Mangelos' conceptual artworks, Ali Cheri's *Archéologie* are reminders of the amazing series *Paysages de la mort* or *Paysage de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale* (1950s-1970s) of that late Croatian/Serbian conceptual artist. The maps of the old atlas are blackened, wiped away from their primary function as orientations and recognizable territories, and morphed into a thick black mass on paper.



Pipe Dreams

2011

Two-channel video installation

5 min (looped)

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 3/5: MACBA, Barcelona



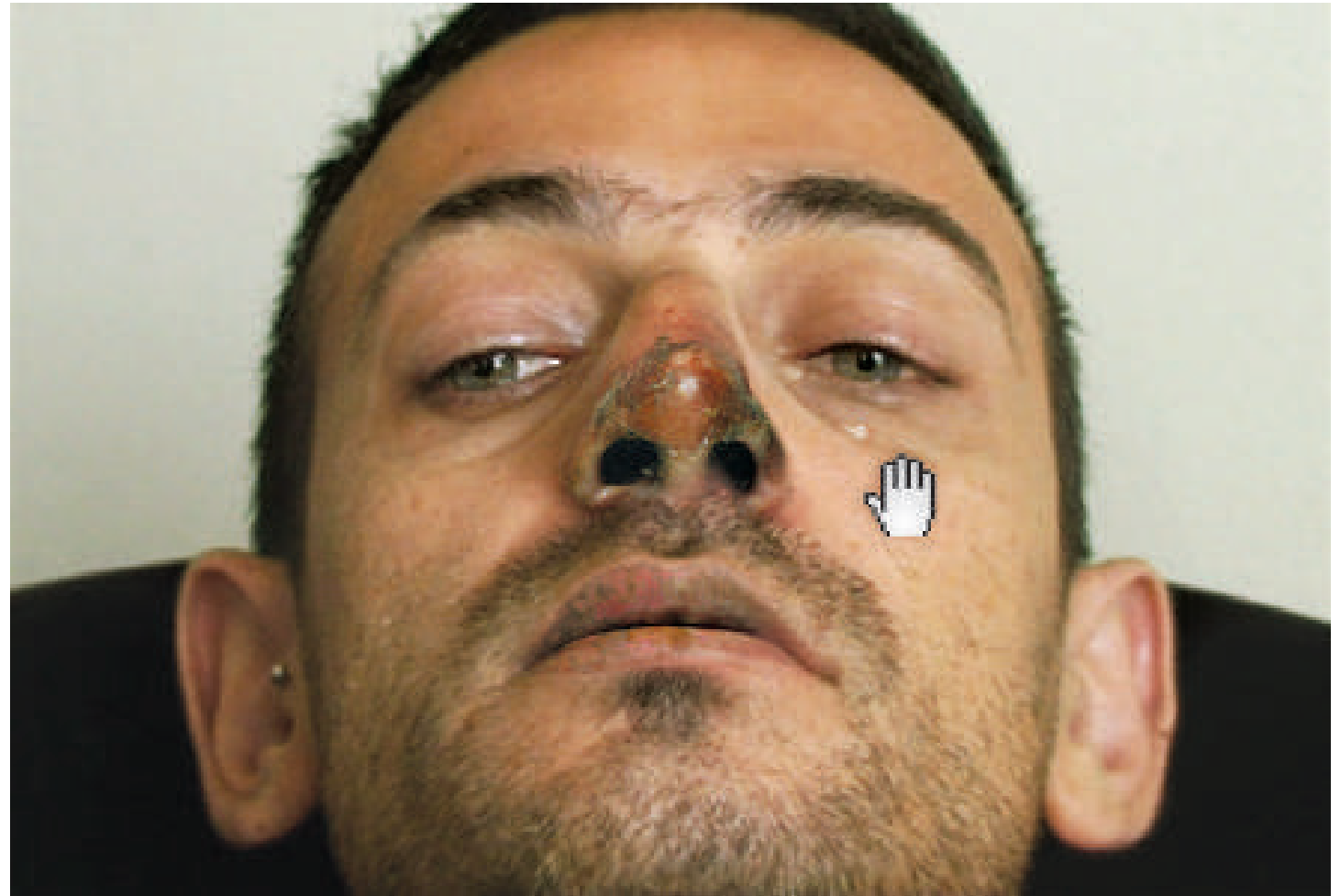
My pain is real

2010

Video, 5 min 30 sec

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Saradar Collection, Lebanon



Un cercle autour du soleil

2005

Video, 15 min.

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Ed. 1/5: Saradar Collection, Lebanon

