

# Each vertebra is an extinct sun

The Video Fortnight  
carte blanche to Fabien Danesi  
10 - 20 March, 2021

With:

Ahaad Alamoudi, Abdullah Al Othman,  
Francis Alÿs, Bing & Ruth / Michael Speed,  
Ali Cherri, Paz Corona, Larissa Sansour,  
Ibrahim Shaddad, and Malena Szlam.

Francis Alÿs, *When Faith Moves Mountains*, 2002. Lima, Peru – April 11 2002. In collaboration with  
Cuauhtémoc Medina and Rafael Ortega. Courtesy of the artist.



When Etel Adnan started to write *The Arab Apocalypse*<sup>1</sup> in January 1975, Lebanon was on the brink of civil war.

The poet developed an angry and profane cosmology where the Sun is part of the long chain through which every thing is transformed. In it the Sun appears not as an omniscient observer of History but on the contrary as a prominent actor in human disasters. It participates in them as a voracious star that is capable of becoming anything. Operating an astounding turnaround, Etel Adnan thus writes that "each vertebra is an extinct sun."

I clearly remember that when I read that first sentence, the image of a desert appeared to me. From Arabia to Atacama and the American Great Basin, there are deserts on every continent. Too often limited to a mere exotic motif, the desert is in fact a powerful biotope where the existence of plants, animals and humans is hard won. The desert confronts us with the abstract time of tectonic formations. However, as with Etel Adnan's allegorical Sun, the desert is also connected to our political condition.

Thus, the films and videos presented here show that these arid regions can amplify our individual or collective struggles. By expressing genuine indifference to our experience, the desert appears as a metaphorical tool that translates in striking fashion the necessity we're all confronted with: holding on in the face of adversity.

— Fabien Danesi

Fabien Danesi holds a PhD in Art History and is a lecturer in visual arts at the University of Picardie Jules Verne.

A former resident of the Villa Medici - French Academy in Rome in 2007-2008, he was artistic director of the Pavilion - laboratoire de création of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris from 2014 to 2017. He has since developed a practice as an independent curator and is the director of the Casa Conti - Ange Leccia, based in Oletta, Corsica.

His latest exhibitions include *City Prince/sses* (2019) with Hugo Vitrani and *Our World is Burning* (2020) with Abdellah Karroum, both presented at the Palais de Tokyo, as well as *The Secrets of Alidades* (2021) as part of 21.39 Jeddah Arts.

1. First published in French in 1980, the first English edition, translated by the author, was published in 1989 by The Post-Apollo Press.

## Wednesday 10 – Thursday 11 – Friday 12, March / 10am - 6pm

*When Faith Moves Mountains*, 2002, 15 min. - Francis Alÿs, in collaboration with Cuauhtémoc Medina and Rafael Ortega

*The Digger*, 2015, 23 min. - Ali Cherri

*Al Habil / The Rope*, 1984, 32 min. - Ibrahim Shaddad

## Saturday 13 – Tuesday 16 – Wednesday 17, March / 10am - 6pm

*Sound Carving*, 2020, 8 min. - Abdullah Al Othman  
 in rotation with:

*When Faith Moves Mountains*, 2002, 15 min. - Francis Alÿs, in collaboration with Cuauhtémoc Medina and Rafael Ortega

*NIUN*, 2018, 7 min. - Ahaad Alamoudi, in collaboration with Michael Mogensen

*A Space exodus*, 2009, 5 min. - Larissa Sansour

## Thursday 18 – Friday 19 – Saturday 20, March / 10am - 6pm

*Atacama*, 2020, 10 min. - Paz Corona, in collaboration with Pablo Jomaro  
 in rotation with:

*When Faith Moves Mountains*, 2002, 15 min. - Francis Alÿs, in collaboration with Cuauhtémoc Medina and Rafael Ortega

*The Pressure of This Water*, 2020, 10 min. - Bing & Ruth / Michael Speed

*Altiplano*, 2018, 15 min. - Malena Szlam

# Press material



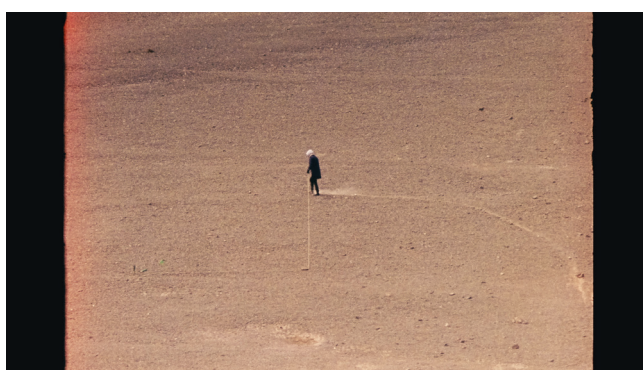
Ali Cherri, *The Digger*, video still  
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Ibrahim Shaddad, *Al Habil / The Rope*, video still  
© Sudanese Film Group, Ibrahim Shaddad



Malena Szlam, *Altiplano*, video still  
Courtesy of the artist



Paz Corona, *Atacama*, video still  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire



Larissa Sansour, *A Space exodus*, video still  
Courtesy of the artist and Lawrie Shabibi, Dubai



Ahaad Alamoudi, in collaboration with Michael Mogensen, *NIUN*, video still  
Courtesy of the artist and Athr Gallery, Jeddah