

My Island_Solo Show of Moufida Fedhila

By Richard Guilbert

The "My Island" exhibition reports on research by artist Moufida Fedhila around the notion of borders. A political and territorial expression, the wall represents the heaviest and most binding form of demarcation.

From its location to its function, the artist reflects on the constraints and effects of the implementation of these architectural structures that are reshaping the world, while redefining at the same time its circulation patterns.

In an artistic and documentary approach, Moufida Fedhila compiled for years data specific to borders (press articles, scientific and sociological writings, video archives, cartographic images). The play "My Island" (Island World), which gave its name to the exhibition, is a huge world map where territories isolated by border walls, derive like abandoned islands.

In 2007, "draw me the world" offers to various people residing in France to redraw from memory and in a few minutes, a world map with its borders playing on imagination, movement and interpretation.

The same year, at the invitation of Padua Nocolo gallery, the artist built a cinderblock wall across the showroom, offering visitors the physical experience of stress and separation. At the same time, she made a documentary video about the Via Anelli district of Padua, a ghetto dedicated to immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa, living surrounded by a high steel fence three meters high and eighty-four meters long.

"Not In My Back Yard" is an in-situ intervention representing inscriptions painted on the ground and questioning the Nimby movement. This way of thinking from the United States refers pejoratively to the battle of neighborhood associations set up to protect their local environment. The piece reveals the paradox of limits on private property interests and overall development.

More recently, after meeting a potential immigrant, the artist made a film from a video he took with a mobile phone, showing extreme conditions of illegals landing on the beaches of the small Italian island of Lampedusa; first door to the European continent.

At a time of globalization and free movement, Moufida Fedhila reflects on the paradox of modern societies and on their migration and territorial policies. Between identity and cultural questions as well as strategic and political issues, it is a bitter fact about the future and the changes of the very notion of identity.

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