

MAIDENS OF THE COSMIC BODY RUNNING MAJJA GAZA

APRIL 23 - JULY 17, 2011

Humanity has long dreamed of creating utopias—idealized community structures. The collaborative group, *Maidens of the Cosmic Body Running*, merges video work with exhibition design and traditional handicrafts to explore notions of utopia tied to feminism, nature and spirituality. In the Maiden's concept of a female community they employ rural endeavors and integration of craft to conjure up references to some 'communes' from modern art—the Soviet Constructivists and the Bauhaus in particular—and reflect on the legacies of these historical projects in their desire to ignite social revolution through art. Even their use of color, symbolism and items of clothing evoke the myriad of utopian communities that emerged through the last century.

Nature is often integrated into concepts of utopia. The Maidens' installation and video work references forest settings which have been seen as stand-ins for the unconscious in fairy tales and

simultaneously represents transformative states, dislocation and broken time. Through working in well-managed parks and planted forests, the Maidens exploit the artifice of those spaces to underscore that nature in the 21st century now exists as a romantic notion—an unspoiled counterpart of culture, technology and civilization. The Maiden's explore these romantic memories of nature in their mesmerizing repetition of forms and in connection to the mind-altering spiritual practices of the occult.

Maidens of the Cosmic Body Running: Majr Gazr is a collaboration between Denise Burge, Lisa Siders and Jenny Ustick.

Curated by Raphaela Platow and organized by the Contemporary Arts Center.

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