

Sara Sadik
Xenon Palace:
Crystal Zastruga
February 22 —
April 28, 2023
Opening
February 22

Basement Roma, presents the first solo exhibition in Italy of the French artist Sara Sadik, *Xenon Palace: Crystal Zastruga*, a multi-media installation resembling a futuristic hookah lounge.

Xenon Palace is a place far from the real world, a smoky environment, inhabited by fantastic creatures, the Xenons, which appear from the fumes of hookahs. Here the artist explores the magical dimension of childhood that takes shape in adulthood, through an immersive surrounding, crossed by a big inflatable sitting, that takes us into the suspended universe of Zetrei, the main character, played by Émile-Samory Fofana. Zetrei is a lonely man who has lost his family and friends, forced to live in a foreign world, and that only by spending his days at Xenon Palace finds his haven of peace, capable of soothing the loneliness and sadness of his own existence.

Halfway between fiction and documentary, everyday experiences, biography, video games, science fiction and French rap, Sara Sadik's work creates initiatory stories in which young characters move eagerly within an identity process of physical and mental transformation. Here, amid the hallucinogenic visions of smoke, Zetrei plunges into the dimension of Crystal Zastruga, a snowy landscape dotted with icy crystals, in which his journey is fulfilled.

Focused on the themes of integration, identity and marginalization in a still deeply discriminating society, Sara Sadik's work features some of the central themes of social policies centered on institutionalized racism and its process of de-symbolization.

"When speaking of Sara Sadik's work there is often talk of *beurcore*: in a sense, a reinvention of Afrofuturism based on the experiences and cultural references associated with the Maghreb diasporas. The cultural and religious repression of the Islamophobic society not only aims to exclude, but also to foreclose any feeling of community conveyed by symbolism. This is the objective when the right wing evokes so virulently and obscenely a Judeo-Christian culture: while the dominant benefit from a symbolic set of references, the oppressed are condemned to being stereotypes." (Félix Boggio Éwanjé-Épée and Stella Magliani-Belkacem in Sara Sadik, *CURA. 38*, The Generational Issue, Spring Summer 2022.)

Born by a wide collaboration between public and private institutions, Sara Sadik's exhibition will then move to the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, with a three-day performance (April 2023) before moving—with a second chapter of the show—to the Kunsthalle Lissabon at the end of June 2023.

Basement Roma

New Exhibition Space
Viale Mazzini 128
00195 Rome

Mon–Fri 2–7 pm

Basement Roma Studio
Via Nicola Ricciotti 4
00195 Rome

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Sara Sadik
Xenon Palace: Crystal Zastruga
curated by CURA.
In joint curatorship with Kunsthalle Lissabon

Basement Roma
February 22 – April 28, 2023

French Academy in Rome -- Villa Medici
April 26–28, 2023

Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon
June 28 – September 2, 2023

In collaboration with
French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici
Kunsthalle Lissabon
Crèvecoeur Paris
Soho House Rome

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