

Checklist

Venue: Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen

Exhibition Title: Hicham Berrada - Aléas

Website Link: <https://galerie-sindelfingen.de/hicham-berrada/>

Dates: 29.09.24-16.02.25

Participating Artist: Hicham Berrada

Curator and author of the text: Hannah Eckstein

Curatorial assistant: Marisa Zeising

Photographers: Kilian Blee

© 2024: Hicham Berrada and Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

Instagram names: @galeriestadtsindelfingen (Venue), @hannieckstein (Curator),

@marisa_zsng (Curatorial assistant), @kilian.blees.photography (Photographer)

Hashtags: #hichamberrada #galeriestadtsindelfingen , #hannaheckstein

Exhibition text

From 29/09/2024 to 16/02/2025 the Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen shows with *Aléas* the first institutional solo exhibition by Hicham Berrada (*1986, in Casablanca, Morocco, lives in Roubaix, FR) in Germany. The exhibition provides an overview of the artist's oeuvre based on newly created works and ones from previous years.

Hicham Berrada's artistic practice resembles that of a painter whose materials are not colour and canvas, but the natural laws to which reality and all matter observes. His installations, sculptures, videos and performances are based on scientific methods, which he uses to activate the forces of ecological processes and the elements. He does not paint landscapes or poetic universes, but creates them with the help of chemical substances and physical reactions in process-related works that develop dynamically in time and space. *Aléas* means coincidences and the works in the exhibition visualise the random fluctuations of nature by triggering their aesthetic potential.

In the centre of the first room, an intense light emanates from a dark glass terrarium. The newly created installation *Chambre climatique* (2024) contains a misty garden with plants and minerals. At its centre is an indefinable creature that combines animal and plant attributes. It is surrounded by other creatures which, on closer inspection, turn out to be sculptures made of PLA (polylactic acid). They are part of a cycle initiated by the artist, which triggers the decomposition of the PLA. The man-made substances decompose into organic matter, which then further breaks down and transforms into mineral nutrients, ultimately fulfilling their original purpose of re-entering the mineral kingdom.

The two video works *Les oiseaux* (2014) and *Celeste* (2014) were created in the Villa Medici in Rome and show painterly interventions in nature. The setting of *Les oiseaux* is the Piazzale. The camera is focussed on a 20KW beam of light that illuminates the sky brightly. The night sky becomes a canvas on which seagulls move in circles around the artificial light source. The birds are attracted by it and become artistic actors in Berrada's painting, who succeeds in giving the location and, above all, nature its own artistic expression.

Celeste is a life-size painting that does not manifest itself on a canvas, but as an ephemeral, immaterial image. The static camera shows the view from a window into the garden of the Villa Medici. Wisps of blue mist rise, spreading like a cloud in the sky. The artist has developed a smoking device that allows him to choose the desired colour, density and spread of the smoke.

Ultimately, however, weather conditions that cannot be influenced, such as wind strength and currents, also play a significant role and leave the final result to the forces of chance.

For the *Cartes mères* (2021 – ongoing) series, Hicham Berrada immerses the motherboards of computers in electrolytic baths. The metals they are made of react with each other at high speed and form surreal-looking mineral landscapes in small aquariums. The artist activates and modulates just a few parameters in order to exploit the intrinsic properties of the metals and their ability to organise themselves. In this way, Berrada visualises the physical and chemical properties of matter and makes them comprehensible to the viewers.

In the *Permutations* (2023) video works, on the other hand, electronic circuit boards are immersed in electrolytic solutions. Once again, a metamorphosis is initiated that leads to the decay of the circuit boards and gradually dissolves them in foggy vapours. The decompositions visualise a continuous flow of energy, depicting the cycles of nature as well as the unpredictability and potential for change in the world.

In the museum's octagonal extension, a work from Berrada's *Présage* series (2007 – ongoing) is shown in an immersive 360° video installation. These processual works are as well created through controlled interventions by the artist, who adds minerals to an aqueous solution and chemically activates them. The resulting reactions form complex, colourful, constantly changing underwater worlds. By orchestrating the various components, the artist once again makes those processes visible to the human eye that it normally can't perceive: the movement of the minerals over the course of time.

The newly created sculptures of the series *Les Hygres* (2023-2024) are hybrids between the organic and the inorganic, the digital and the physical. Their enigmatic appearance is rooted in the real world that surrounds us. While the shapes of some sculptures are based on an ancient method of divination, in which molten wax is poured into cold water to divine the future with the help of the resulting forms, others are based on digitally processed components of

plants and stones. Hicham Berrada creates 3D scans of the selected shapes and then uses an algorithm to subject them to bilateral symmetry – the biological principle of form that is responsible for the appearance of humans and almost all animals and plants. Through the randomness of a simulated evolution, they face the viewer as almost life-size 3D printed wall sculptures looking like futuristic or extra-terrestrial life forms. Their symmetrical, proliferating forms offer a canvas for new perspectives that reflect the individual perception of the viewer and reveal order in chaos.

Hicham Berrada was born in 1986 in Casablanca, Morocco, and lives and works in Roubaix, France. His works have been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions at the Louvre, Lens, Punta della Dogana, Museum of the Pinault Collection, Venice, Gropius Bau, Berlin, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, Abbey Notre-Dame-La-Royale de Maubuisson, Palace of Versailles (garden), Paris, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Frankfurter Kunstverein, MoMA PS1, New York and Moderna Museet, Stockholm, at the Taipei Biennale, Taiwan (2020) and the Lyon Biennale (2017) among others. Works by the artist are in the public and private collections of: Futurium, Berlin, Mercedes Benz Art Collection, Stuttgart, Pinault Collection, Paris / Venice, Philara Collection, Düsseldorf.

List of Images

Photo: Kilian Blees

aléas_001 & 002:

Chambre climatique, 2024

Glass, PLA, mycelium, plants, soil, water, light, heat

240 × 200 × 200 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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aléas_003 – 005:

Chambre climatique (detail), 2024

Glass, PLA, mycelium, plants, soil, water, light, heat

240 × 200 × 200 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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aléas_006

Les Oiseaux, 2014

Full-HD-Farbvideo

3:55 Min.

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

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aléas_007

Celeste, 2014

Colour video (Full HD)

Grey sky, sky-blue smoke

5:55 min

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

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aléas_008 - 011:

Cartes mères, 2022

Copper, tin, aluminum, silver, lead, acrylic glass

37 x 28 x 5 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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aléas_012:

Permutations, 2014

4K colour video, computer hardware components, water, direct current, controlled electrical conductivity

34:56 min

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

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aléas_013:

Permutations (GPU), 2014

4K colour video, computer hardware components, water, direct current, controlled electrical conductivity

34:56 min

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

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aléas_014 – 016:

Présage 07/07/2024 14h18, 2024

8-channel colour video, chemical reactions filmed in an aquarium

08:47 min

Courtesy: the artist, Wentrup, Berlin & Kamel Mennour, Paris

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aléas_017:

Les Hygres, 2024

PLA (polylactic acid), car paint

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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aléas_018:

Hygre VI, 2024

PLA (polylactic acid), car paint

110 × 100 × 25 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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aléas_019:

Hygre VII, 2024

PLA (polylactic acid), car paint

160 × 60 × 25 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Wentrup, Berlin

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