

NIL YALTER



February 5 – June 5, 2016



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Opening: Thursday, Feb 4 at 7 PM

FREE ADMISSION
Tuesday through Wednesday,
from 2PM to 7PM
Saturday and Sunday,
from 11AM to 7PM

Open during school and public holidays

→ Exhibition organized in collaboration
with La Fondation d'entreprise Hermès

The 49 Nord 6 Est is supported by the
Région Alsace - Champagne-Ardenne -
Lorraine and by the Ministère de la Culture
et de la Communication-DRAC

PARISart www.paris-art.com

On the occasion of the first French retrospective of the work by Nil Yalter, 49 Nord 6 Est invites you to discover over a dozen pieces by this firmly engaged artist of Turkish origin, most of which have never been shown on the national artistic scene!

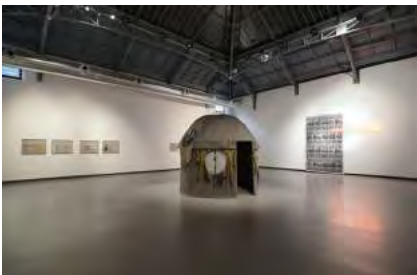
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A voluntary exile, Nil Yalter (1938, Cairo, Egypt), settled in Paris in 1965. She is a pioneering, spirited, and original artist motivated by social and political convictions. She creates hybrid works that combine video, painting, drawing, photography, collage, as well as performance and installation. Rooted in conceptual art, her work does not reject either form or materiality and, in its singular approach, eludes the contemporary artistic canons.

The artist's early work, pictorial and abstract in nature, took a "documentary turn" in the 1970s: Yalter started to incorporate social, anthropological, and ethnographic considerations, linked to her country of origin (such as crafts, shamanism, magic), and associate them with ideological issues of the post-1968 period. For the present exhibition, the artist has chosen a set of works that address the question of nomadism, exile, women's spaces, such as the emblematic "Topak Ev" of 1973 (a major historical piece whose form is inspired by ancestral traditions of Anatolia nomads), and the neon production of 2015: "Exile is a Hard Job."

A feminist manifesto, the words of migrant workers, travelogues from journeys across Central Europe, and transformative spiritual experiences are clear evidence that the artist is as engaged with ideas as she is with form. As early as the 1970s, Nil Yalter started recycling materials and images in her creative work, and today she uses new technologies to reactivate some of those pieces. The artist is continuously updating her discourse and her media, as well as fighting to foreground the struggles of minorities, which unfortunately remain a hot-button issue.

1- Nil Yalter, *Topak EV*, 1973
Courtesy of the artist & Santralistanbul Collection



Biography

Nil Yalter, born in 1938, has lived and worked in Paris since 1965. She has worked in video, painting, drawing, and multimedia installations since 1973.

She is represented by: Galerist, Istanbul (Turkey); Mot International, London (GB); Hubert Winter Gallery, Vienna (AU); and Espaivisor, Valencia (ES)

→ www.nilyalter.com

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

2016 / « Nil Yalter », Arter - Space of Art, Istanbul

RECENT SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2015 / La Verrière : « Nil Yalter 1973/2015 », Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Bruxelles.
 MOT International Gallery (Londres) : « Nil Yalter ».
 2014 / Art Brussels : « Solo », Galerist, Istanbul.
 Galerie Hubert Winter (Vienne) : « Orient-Express », « Paris Ville Lumière », « Neunkirchen ».
 2013 / Frieze Masters (Londres) : « Spotlight », Espaivisor Galeria.
 2012 / Espaivisor (Valence) : « 1970/1980 (Works) ».
 Centre Pompidou (Paris) : conférence, vidéo et après, « C'est un dur métier que l'exil ».

EDITION /

A publication, featuring new essays by Fabienne Dumont et Philippe Artières, and designed by Centraleuropeantime.net, will be published by 49 Nord 6 Est - FRAC Lorraine, Metz. To order this book, please contact us: info@fraclorraine.org

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

2015 / Espaivisor Galeria (Valence) : « Passing on the Value of Microhistories ».
 Tranzitdisplay (Prague, République tchèque) : « Ma'Aminim, the believers ».
 2014 / MAM (Rio de Janeiro) : « Topak Ev ». Curated by Adriano Pedrosa et Rodrigo Moura.
 Biennale de Gwangju : « Le Chevalier d'Éon ». Curated by Jessica Morgan.
 Musée d'Art et d'Histoire (Saint-Denis) : « Ma'Aminim, les rêveurs ». Curated by Guillaume Désanges.
 2013 / 13e Biennale d'Istanbul : « Paris Ville Lumière ».
 Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) : « Modernités Plurielles 1905-1970 ».
 2012 / Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam) : « Istanbul Museum of Modern Art ».
 2009 / Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) : « elles@centrepompidou ». Curated by Camille Morineau.
 2007-08 / The Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles)/National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, D.C.)/Contemporary Art Center (Vancouver)/PS1 MoMA (New York) : « WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution ». Curated by Cornelia Butler.

Portrait of Nil Yalter & Exhibition view, La Verrière, Fondation Hermès, Bruxelles, 2015.
 Photo: Isabelle Arthuis



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WORKS



Circular Rituals, Trans-voices, 1992

Video, 1 min., text on the wall

In her manifesto artwork, *Circular Rituals*, Nil Yalter invokes all sorts of identities associated with her family history: Jew from Salonica, Muslim from Bosnia, Circassian from Russia, Abaza, a Janissary woman, an immigrant, a nomad, a Mongolian woman... She juxtaposes images of women: migrants, workers, and protesters in the streets of Algiers. The numerous repetitions function as incantations intended to dispel any nationalist or identity-related tensions. Nil Yalter has turned her identity as a woman and artist into a vehicle for exploring the status and living conditions of marginalized communities.

JE SUIS UNE ARTISTE
I AM AN ARTIST

I AM A MUSLIM FROM BOSNIA HERZEGOVINE
I AM / A JEW FROM SALONIKA

JE SUIS / UNE JUIVE DE SALONIQUE
/ UNE MUSULMANE DE BOSNIE

I AM A CIRCASSIAN FROM RUSSIA
JE SUIS
UNE CIRCASSIENNE DE RUSSIE

I AM AN ABAZA
UNE ABAZA

I AM A FEMALE JANIZARY
JE SUIS UNE FEMME JANIS / SAIRE

A GREEK ORTHODOX
UNE GRECQUE ORTHODOXE

I COME FROM TURKEY, I AM FROM FRANCE
JE VIENS DE TURQUIE, JE SUIS DE FRANCE

I COME
JE VIENS DE BYZANCE

FROM BYZANTIUM

ET DE L'ASIE MINEURE /
I AM FROM ASIA MINOR / I AM

I AM A MONGOL, A NOMADE, AN IMMIGRANT WORKER

JE SUIS UNE IMMIGRÉE

UNE NOMADE, UNE MONGOLE

EXILED
EXILÉE

I AM THE MESSAGE
JE SUIS LE MESSAGE

I AM

1- *Circular Rituals,*
Trans-voices, 1992.
© the artist



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Stoning, 2009

Video, 4 min.

The performance video *Stoning* is a response to another video found on the Internet which shows a young Iraqi Kurdish Shiite woman, aged 17, being stoned to death in 2007 for having dated a Sunni. The scene was filmed by men with their mobile phones. Nil Yalter did not want to hide the extreme violence of the images. She reuses these scenes, inserting her own body. With staged violence, the artist in turn brings stones close to her naked back and pulls them away. She recreates a symbolic experience of suffering. Replacing the body of the woman in the original video with her own, the artist forges a bond of solidarity between the two realities. It is an inevitably futile attempt at averting the horror

Kurdish women from Diyarbakir

Forcefully divided in the 1920s among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, the Kurdish people has been a victim of ruthless repression by the Turkish state. In response to the denial of their rights, including the right to speak their own language, the Kurds have organized a resistance movement, forty percent of which is composed of women fighters, the very same who are engaged in combat on the ground against the Islamic State. Nil Yalter has always been interested in the Kurdish struggle for cultural recognition.

Diyarbakir / Mardin / Istanbul, 2005

Video, 19 min. 52, drawings

Diyarbakir, which partly lends its name to the title of the video, is a city in southeastern Turkey considered by some to be the capital of Turkish Kurdistan. Nil Yalter talked to Diyarbakir women who attended literacy courses offered by the foundation AÇEV. Their stories are at the center of the video which was first intended to be an interactive DVD. Nil Yalter's sound and digital modifications evoke the multiplicity of cultures represented by this region's inhabitants: Hittites, Assyrians, Seljuqs... The drawings which accompany the video were created as an exercise allowing the women to learn to identify, isolate, and reproduce the basic forms of letters of the alphabet.



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Social struggle and the feminist perspective

Committed from the beginning, Nil Yalter actively promotes women's and workers' rights in France and in Turkey alike. Her feminist considerations are closely entwined with her immigration- and working class-related projects. She works in public spaces, alone or as part of a collective, in order to empower minorities and those considered invisible.

La Roquette, Prison de Femmes, 1974-1975

Nil Yalter / Judy Blum / Nicole Croiset
Video nGb, photographs et drawings
FNAC, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain Collection

Starting with the narrative of Mimi, a former inmate, Nil Yalter, Judy Blum, and Nicole Croiset reconstruct, fragment by fragment, the daily life of female inmates at the Roquette prison, formerly located before its destruction in the heart of Paris. Photos, drawings, texts, and video footage tell the story of day-to-day power relations, of hardships and privations. Imprisonment is a major theme in the work of Nil Yalter, who shows that women suffer from physical, architectural constraints (the domestic space, the nomad yurt, the harem) as much as from social structures.



2-

Women at Work, Women at Home, 1981

Nil Yalter / Nicole Croiset
A public space project, La Rochelle Festival

In Mireuil, a new district in the outskirts of La Rochelle, Nil Yalter and Nicole Croiset created posters telling the story of the daily lives of ten female inhabitants. The artists put up the posters along a bus route, inside buses, as well as at bus stops where they replaced regular billboards. The posters show women who, whether at the factory or at home, have been assigned specific roles that impede their deepest aspirations.



3-

General Strike, 1976

Nil Yalter / Canan Beykøl / Yusuf Taktak / Orhan Taylan
Crayon, Chinese ink, black charcoal, photograph on transparent paper.

The Festival of the French Communist Party, 1977

Photographs

In 1976, 400,000 metal workers went on strike in Turkey. Nil Yalter and three other Turkish artists—Canan Coker, Yusuf Taktak, and Orhan Taylan—created six posters to report on, and support, their struggle. They distributed cameras to workers occupying the factory, collected the threatening telegrams sent by the bosses, and composed collective panels documenting the situation. The posters were secretly transported to France and exhibited at the Fête de l'Humanité in 1977.

1- *La Roquette, Prison de Femmes, 1974-1975* Nil Yalter / Judy Blum / Nicole Croiset. FNAC, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain Collection.
2- *Women at Work, Women at Home, 1981.* Nil Yalter / Nicole Croiset. A public space project, La Rochelle Festival. © the artist
3- Presentation of *General Strike* at the Festival of the French Communist Party, 1977



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Untitled, 1975-2016

Six videos

Nil Yalter was among the first artists to use Sony's famous portable movie camera Portapak, which went on to revolutionize artistic and activist practices.

This circular installation brings together videos made between 1975 and 2005: the testimonies of Portuguese workers in Ris Orangis; people employed illegally in sewing workshops in the Faubourg Saint-Denis district in Paris; and Turkish workers in Lyon and Ghent. These testimonies expose the difficult living conditions of the immigrants. Nil Yalter gives these women and men the time to tell their stories; her camera helps to humanize them. These politically engaged documentaries, considered today to be valuable testimonies, were poorly received by the artistic milieu at the time.

Exile is a hard job, 1977 / 2015

Screen print on cotton fabric, and neon

In the late 1960s many European countries launched programs allowing "guest workers" from abroad to alleviate labor shortages. The oil crisis of 1973 marked the end of the policy to recruit foreign laborers, while the 1980s brought a surge in violent, racist reactions in countries that had formerly welcomed foreign workers. During this period, Nil Yalter created numerous portraits of such exiles who were stigmatized by false representations. The title, "Exile is a hard job" is taken from the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet (1902-1963), who spent long years in exile and was later stripped of his nationality because of his membership in the Turkish Communist Party.

Orient Express (Paris-Istanbul), 1976

Photos, drawings, 16mm film, Polaroids.

Courtesy The SAMMLUNG VERBUND, Vienna

In 1976, Nil Yalter took the Direct-Orient-Express, a popular train which connected Lausanne, Milan, Venice, Belgrade, Sophia, and Istanbul, crossing several Communist countries. During the fifty-seven-hour journey, the artist sketched, filmed in Super 8, and photographed the passengers, as well as the landscapes and cities spied through the window, which were a far cry from the dreams and phantasms of a luxurious Orient. It is a journey where time stretches, expands, and the reigning conviviality does not account for the usual barriers of class or nationality.

1- Immigrants turcs à Paris, 1976 (extract of « Untitled » 1975-2016) © the artist
2- *Exile is a hard job*, 1975-2015.
Exhibition view « Nil Yalter, 1973-2015 »,
La Verrière, Fondation d'entreprise
Hermès, Bruxelles. Photo: Isabelle Arthuis



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1- *Topak Ev*, 1973. Exhibition view
« Nil Yalter, 1973-2015 », La Verrière,
Fondation d'entreprise Hermès,
Bruxelles. Photo: Isabelle Arthuis
2- *Shaman*, 1979 © the artist
3- *Lord Byron meets the shaman woman*,
2009 © the artist

Art under the influence of ethnography

In the context of hippie culture of the 1970s, Nil Yalter drew inspiration from the Turkmen nomads of Anatolia and, more broadly, from ethnographic research on Oriental shamanism. Between denunciation of and fascination with an inherently feminine space and knowledge, namely healing and care, the artist's message remains highly relevant.

Topak Ev, 1973

Metal structure, felt, sheepskin, texts, and mixed media.
Courtesy santralistanbul Collection

The form of *Topak Ev* (Round house) is based on ancestral traditions of the nomadic Bektashi. It represents a tent constructed and decorated by women. The artist has renewed the form in technical terms: the metal structure replaces wood, industrial felt replaces artisanal felt. The artist covered the surface of the tent with extracts from the Russian poet Velimir Khlebnikov, who defends "the right to move whenever you want...", and from the Turkish novelist Yachar Kemal who denounces forced sedentarization of the last Anatolian nomads. The yurt is completed with drawings explaining the know-how and the techniques which allow the Bektashi to live as nomads.

Shaman, 1979

Video b&w, 7 min. 06

The performance video *Shaman* was shot in the underground level of the Musée de l'Homme using a nineteenth-century mask fashioned by a Turkish tribe of Central Asia and to which Nil Yalter gained access thanks to her friend, the ethnologist Bernard Dupaigne. The video evokes a shamanic trance, always accompanied by a musical element. The mirror effect increases the trance feeling and the demultiplication of oneself. This effect is often used by Nil Yalter, influenced by visual codes of byzantine and ottoman art, its geometrical lines and symmetrical patterns.

Lord Byron meets the shaman woman, 2009

Video, 11 min. 16

The video *Lord Byron meets the shaman woman* was shot in 2009, when Nil Yalter had been unable to view her 1970s' videos for years due to lack of compatible equipment. She had thus forgotten about her video entitled *Shaman* (1979), and produced a sort of unconscious remake. Inspired by a photograph of an actual shaman woman, which appears in the video, the artist, clothed in a fur coat, develops a hypnotic ritual to the rattle of stones brought from Diyarbakir. The digital effects, superimposed on the photograph, expand the trance-like experience through the multiplication of the image.

PARALLELS GLANCES

J. Fleurentin © DR

ENCOUNTER > WED, FEB 24 / 7PM

Free Admission / 49 Nord 6 Est, Metz

Plants that heal

with Jacques Fleurentin, founder of the Société Française d'Ethnopharmacologie in Metz

Plants have been used to heal from the dawn of time! But phytotherapy is not limited to herbal teas and capsules with plant extracts; it is also used in many medications to treat serious pathologies, such as cancer. It is a science to rediscover!



Mustang (extrait) © DR

SCREENING > SUN, MARCH 06 / 3.30PM

Ticketed / Cinéma Caméo Ariel, Metz

Mustang

by Deniz Gamze Ergüven (2015), 97 min.

Five sisters living in a Turkish village cause a scandal with unexpected consequences because they played with boys. Their family home transforms into a prison, training in housekeeping replaces school, and marriages are being arranged.. Follow the resistance of these adolescent girls against the constraints of a patriarchal society.

On the occasion of International Women's Day on March 8.

ENCOUNTER > THU, MARCH 10 / 7PM

Free Admission / Jardin botanique, Montigny-lès-Metz

Le Laboratoire du Dehors

Liliana Motta, artist-botanist

This expert in "weeds" will present her Laboratoire du Dehors, or the Outdoor Lab. Her approach aims at breaking down boundaries between methodologies and at balancing different theories on living organisms. With the purpose of bringing together public space and urban professionals (philosophers, architects, landscape artists, urban planners, engineers) and life scientists (ecologists, geneticists, agronomists, biologists), this Laboratory is a forum for critically viewing our outdoors and the living organisms that inhabit it.

**MUST SEE**

Round the corner, in the Sainte-Croix district..

The Jardin des Récollets contains an experimental medicinal garden! It is none other than a natural medicine cabinet. Filled with therapeutic and/or poisonous plants (depending on the administered dose), it features numerous herbs from around the world. Beware of budding sorcerers!

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For the insatiable: Saturday, May 14 at 1:30PM / Free admission

Guided tour of the Colline gardens by Anne-Hélène Despois, naturalist at the Société Française d'Ethno-pharmacologie in Metz.

Weekly tours starting in June.



Le Cromlech (Psychodrame 4)
Oscar Gómez Mata / Cie L'Alakran
co-realized with Esperanza López
© DR

NOT QUITE A ROUND TABLE > SAT, APR 16 / 2.30PM

Free Admission / 49 Nord 6 Est, Metz

Creation vs healing?

Association Borromée & the artists O. Gómez Mata & F. R. Giles
Healing is not just “restoring to health or soundness,” but also inventing a new state of being. Every cure is an act of creation! That’s why there are many paths to healing... Another question arises: who does the healing, the “patient” or the “therapist”?

FACE TO FACE > SAT, APR 23/ 1-6PM

Free Admission / 49 Nord 6 Est, Metz

Le Cromlech (psychodrame 4)

Oscar Gómez Mata, Compagnie l'Alakran

Have you given any thought to what is missing in your life? Face to face with a performer, you will have 30 minutes to ponder the issue – so quintessentially contemporary – of emptiness, and find a solution together. A collective, spiritual piece.

By appointment every 30 minutes. Registration required, subject to availability:
info@fracloorraine.org



Fire of emotion - Genesis.
Pamina de Coulon © DR

PERFORMANCE > SAT, MAY 14 / 4PM

Paid upon reservation / 49 Nord 6 Est, Metz

Fire of emotion - Genesis (extraits)

Pamina de Coulon, author-performer

In a continuous flow of words, Pamina de Coulon invites us on a journey through time. She makes us follow a flexible path of thought, spanning from Pythagoras to Einstein, from science fiction to sorcery. Mental gymnastics aiming to regain awareness of our own power...

As part of the Festival *Perspectives*.

Pamina de Coulon performs at our partner institution:
SUN, MAY 15 / 4PM / CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ
If I learn to fish, I will feed myself for life



Planetary Dance
Anna Halprin © DR

PLANETARY RITUAL > SUN, JUN 05 / 11AM

Free Admission / Parc de la Seille, Metz

Planetary Dance

Anna Halprin, choreographer

Anna Halprin uses movement to explore different ways to address the needs of the individual and the collective. Planetary Dance is a contemporary ritual which, for the past thirty years, has taken place on the same day throughout the world. More than a show, it is an invitation to dance together, for oneself, for others, and for the Earth.

More information and registration at: info@fracloorraine.org



RESIDENCIES

→ YSÉ TRAN

Through words and images, the artist takes us back to the singular, and little known, history of forced Indochinese workers in Lorraine. Shared memories, words, life fragments, have been the points of departure for this fascinating research project conducted by a young filmmaker of Vietnamese origin, Ysé Tran, in collaboration with the Lorraine author Pierre Daum who was the first to bring to light this forgotten page in French colonial history.

Ysé Tran is a director of short films, as well as an actor, and she is going on tour with a Théâtre National de Nice production. She is also a contributor to the magazine *Traffic*, *Lettre du cinéma*, and the online journal *Médiapart*

Pierre Daum, native of Thionville, is a journalist. Former correspondent in Austria for the daily *Libération*, he has collaborated with numerous European newspapers: *Le Monde*, *L'Express*, *La Libre Belgique*... and regularly contributes cover stories to *Le Monde diplomatique*. His research on France's colonial past has been published by *Actes Sud*.

A documentary film and a book based on the research conducted during this residency are forthcoming, with the support of the Lorraine Region.



→ FLORENCIA RODRIGUEZ GILES

The work of this Argentinian artist born in 1978 cannot be boiled down to anything familiar. A performer, visual artist, choreographer, winner of the Prix Braque in 2015..., she is at home in the plurality of contemporary artistic and therapeutic practices. She uses both Facebook and her own personality in an attempt to create a collective dream at the bedside of children at the end of life. Her commitment is versatile and cross-sectional, at the antipodes of academic approaches.

In collaboration with the association P. Clément Lorraine (Service soins palliatifs, CHR Metz-Thionville)

→ SELMA & SOFIANE OUISSI

Since the languages spoken around the world are no longer working... Since incomprehension uncannily, even dangerously, toes the line, why not invent a new way of communicating that would really be universal? Wishing to return to the utopia of a life before the Tower of Babel, this duet of multidisciplinary artists (choreographers, dancers, performers, video artists, and public space creators at the "Dream City" biennale in Tunis) are going to try to invent, through collective experiments in different communities living in Metz, a new alphabet using bodies, gestures, and drawings. Attention to all who enjoy the adventure of living together!

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JAN - MARCH 16 / WORKSHOPS

APRIL 16 / MEETING

MAI-JUIN 16 / RESTITUTION OF RESIDENCY

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Selma & Sofiane OUISSI are choreographers, dancers, performers, video artists. Their creations have been featured at prestigious festivals: Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels, the La Bâtie Festival in Geneva, Triennale at the Palais de Tokyo, Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, and D'Days in Paris, and at shown around the world: Liban, Germany, Egypt, Spain, Italy, the United States, the Netherlands, Great Britain... In 2007, they founded the association L'Art Rue dedicated to the production and dissemination of contemporary art in public spaces in Tunisia. They created "Dream City," a multidisciplinary biennale in Medina's city center. They are today considered to be major figures in contemporary dance in the Arab world.

Dans le cadre du projet *Manufactories of Caring Space-Time*, in collaboration with Museum voor Schone Kunsten - MSK de Gand (BE) & Fundacio Antoni Tapies - FAT de Barcelone (ES)

To follow the projects:
<http://manufactories.eu>



With the support of Creative Europe
Programme of the European Union

