

With "Underground" ALI KAZMA, unearths the invisible and offers the palm game a brighter exhibition than it seems.

By Patrice Huchet (<http://mowwgli.com/en/author/patrice-huchet/>) On 23 October 2017

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(http://mowwgli.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/AliKazma_28-1024x682.jpg)



Safe, 2015, Resistance series, HD video, color, sound, 3 min 18 sec. Courtesy of the artist © Ali Kazma

Reading time: 3 minutes and 19 seconds

Entitled "Underground," Ali Kazma's solo exhibition focuses on showing the evolution of his work over the last ten years. It includes some twenty video works, two of which were made for the occasion.

With "Underground" Ali Kazma tries to put us face to the invisible. From taxidermy to the art of tattooing, from brain surgery to making robots or to human activity in underground spaces, Kazma documents the existence of extraordinary individual abilities, technical skills, and even impressive forms of resistance of the human body which, by their nature, remain invisible or little known. The relation to time, the sedimentation, the archive, the traces of certain activities are also recurring themes in his videos. "I have often explored in my work various formal and intellectual ways to

develop our reflection on the passage of time, on the marks and traces it leaves in our bodies, in our physical environment and in our psyche. I talked about taxidermy, cryogenization and watchmaking. I visited abandoned bases of NATO, old libraries and artists' archives, recording the different ways in which time passed through these spaces and objects. Ali Kazma confirms.

In each of his videos, Ali Kazma documents the techniques and tools that allow the gesture of precision and patiently films the intelligence of the hand. He undertakes an almost surgical examination of the space that fits between gesture and time. This autopsy of the gesture is the heart of many of his works. Each bringing complementary dimensions: The rhythm, the repetition and the administrative trace in Clerk. Precision and concentration in Taxidermist. Memory and tradition with Calligraphy.

Clock Master is close-up on the hands of a master watchmaker who repairs, disassembles, cleans and remembers a 19th century clock. In this work there is everything Kazma: dexterity, patience, time itself and memory.

Tattoo, in addition to its meticulous description of instruments and gestures, adds a new dimension; that of the body and the pain. This preoccupation of the body is found in Brain Surgen and Robot, but it is above all Anatomy that offers the most remarkable example of the central importance, literally and metaphorically, of the human body in Kazma's work.

Focusing particularly on the contemporary phenomenon of globalization Ali Kazma explores various interactions of space, memory and time. For him the concept of place is fundamental because it reactivates our individual and collective memory with our history and our involvement in the world.

The diptych North (2017, specially produced for the exhibition) shows an abandoned coal mine on the island of Spitsbergen, whose dilapidated industrial architecture and abandoned objects, evidence of the powerful Soviet ideology, contrast with the pristine whiteness and the serenity of the landscape. Colors and textures create an atmosphere that highlights the cleavage between the human and nature scales. In the same vein, Absence, a video filmed in a former NATO underground military base abandoned at the end of the Cold War, testifies to the re-appropriation of the building by nature, but nonetheless recall the clashes between the great powers.

Faced with these traces of human activity, past and rather violent, Safe, look at the world towards the future. The images describe the World Seed Reserve, with its walls, ducts and shelves on which many metal boxes are stacked. Here, in a permanently frozen environment, hundreds of thousands of seed species are protected from extinction. Safe invites the viewer to question the active role of humanity in the rapid evolution of "nature".

The exhibition continues with works closer to abstraction. Electric is an extremely graphic triptych that draws us into the constant flow of electricity and communication. And Tea Time, filmed in a glassware factory, is a striking video from the graphic beauty of its images, the

pace marking the pace of production and the intensity of the working atmosphere in a political narrative of a great aesthetic beauty.

In short, we loved it!

ALI KAZMA, born in 1971 in Istanbul, is a video artist with a master's degree from New School University in New York. In 2000, he returned to Istanbul, where he currently resides.

His videos pose fundamental questions about the meaning and importance of activity and work, the meaning of economics, production, and social organization. He has exhibited at the Istanbul Biennial (2001, 2007, 2011), Tokyo Opera City, (2001), Istanbul's Istanbul Platform (2004), Istanbul Modern (2004), 9th Havana Biennial (2006), San Francisco Art Institute (2006), Lyon Biennial (2007), Sao Paulo Biennale (2012) and Venice Biennale (2013).

Practical information

• Exhibition

ALI KAZMA "Underground"

From 17 October 2017 to 21 January 2018

Jeu de Paume

1 place of the Concorde

75008 Paris

<http://www.jeudepaume.org> (<http://www.jeudepaume.org>)

• Catalog of the exhibition

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Ali Kazma. Souterrain - Subterranean

Foreword by Marta Gili, Texts by Selen Ansen and Pia Viewing

Conversation of Ali Kazma with Paul Ardenne and Barbara Polla

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