



Portrait of Woman with Theodolite I, 2019 © Heba Y. Amin

HEBA Y. AMIN Fruit from Saturn

Center for Persecuted Arts, Solingen
November 15, 2019 – February 2, 2020

OPENING | 15. November, 6.30 PM
in the presence of the artist

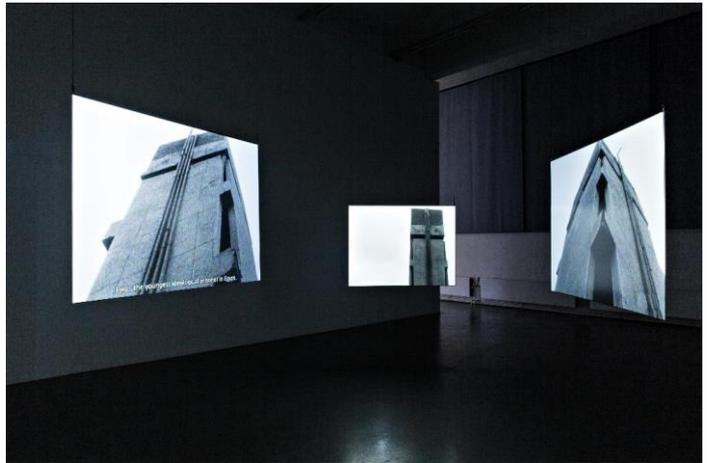
The Center for Persecuted Arts in Solingen presents *Fruit from Saturn*, a solo exhibition by Berlin-based artist Heba Y. Amin (*1980 Cairo, Egypt).

Fruit from Saturn borrows its title from German-French poet Yvan Goll's 1946 book of poems by the same name. Its opening poem, "Atom Elegy" was inspired by the invention of the atomic bomb when the promise of the "atomic age" brought with it utopian ideas of progress and modernity. The poem later changed when the detonation of the first nuclear weapon revealed its destructive power.

Techno-utopian ideas, as manifest in characteristic machines of colonial soft power, are at the heart of Heba Y. Amin's practice. Working across media, the artist uses Goll's writing to reflect on the concepts of domination and authoritarianism exercised through technology. *Fruit from Saturn* highlights the failures of the nation-state paradigm and the technological violence nurtured by nationalisms. Through trajectories marked by colonial warfare and failed political movements in North Africa, the artist examines the use of technologies for hegemonic power and the technofossils they leave behind.

Central to the exhibition *Fruit from Saturn* is the idea that landscape is an expression of dominant political power. Amin's new works explore narratives related to the German Afrika Korps and their lingering presence in northern Egypt. In her most recent work, she looks at the story of a Nazi pyramid – located in Alamein – commemorating a German WWII fighter pilot dubbed "The Star of Africa". In contrast, the artist presents a series of new photographs which portray a scenario of a land surveyor from Africa – the artist herself – assessing and mapping German landscapes through optical devices by night. The works tell the story of modern technological progress as one of empire and colonial exploitation.

Fruit from Saturn also includes Amin's ongoing multi-channel video installation, *Project Speak2Tweet*, which features voice messages recorded by phone during the 2011 Egyptian uprising in response to the government's countrywide Internet shutdown. Juxtaposed with the abandoned urban structures that represent the long-lasting effects of a corrupt dictatorship, *Project Speak2Tweet* highlights the paradoxical nature of communication technologies disguised in their utopian promises of democratic expression.



Project Speak2Tweet, 2011-ongoing © Fred Dott

While Yvan Goll evaluates the process of nuclear fission as an alchemy for acquiring knowledge, Heba Y. Amin rather emphasizes the oppressive outcomes of technological intervention in North Africa in the last century. The Center for Persecuted Art's collection of Yvan Goll's work includes the original unpublished manuscript of "Atom Elegy" and will be on display for the first time as part of the exhibition.

Heba Y. Amin participated in numerous international exhibitions including 10. Berlin Biennale, 15. Istanbul Biennale, Kunsthalle Bremen (Kunstpries der Böttcherstrasse 2018), MAXXI Rom, FACT Liverpool, Kunsthalle Wien, Museum of Modern Art in Warschau, MOCAC Krakau, Kunstverein Hamburg, 9. Forum Expanded Exhibition der Berlin Berlinale, IV Moscow International Biennale for Young Art. Her work is part of several collections, among others the British museum. Amin grew up in Cairo and received her MFA from the University of Minnesota. She currently teaches at Bard College Berlin, is a doctorate fellow in art history at Freie Universität, and a 2019 Field of Vision fellow in NYC. She is also the co-founder of the Black Athena Collective, the curator of visual art for the MIZNA journal (US), and co-curator for the biennial residency program DEFAULT with Ramdom Association (IT).

The exhibition will be accompanied with a catalog. | The exhibition is supported by Zilberman Gallery.

CENTER FOR PERSECUTED ARTS

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