

School of Casablanca

2022-25

Integrations (Boujaad)

Materials: Wool.

Dimensions: Variable.

Integrations (Sidi Mokhtar)

Materials: Wool.

Dimensions: Variable.

Integrations (Studies)

Materials: Colour inkjet print on blueback.

Dimensions: 584 x 430cm.

Turning Frozen Yesterdays into Fluid Now

by Fatima-Zahra Lakrissa

Materials: Ink on paper.

Dimensions: 332 x 66cm.

Histories of abstraction and symbolic representations have often begun in weaving undertaken by women in many regions of the world. However, the use of a warp and weft to generate textiles, baskets, and rugs has been sidelined in the visual arts and relegated to the space of craft. Occasionally acknowledged as sources of inspiration for modernist, often male abstract painters in Europe and North America, the topographic, spiritual and cultural underpinnings of the source materials are lesser known.

Condorelli spent several years exploring abstraction as women's work through the legacy of the anti-colonial Casablanca Art School (1962-1974), which became an important place to re-think the relationship between art and craft, and to rewrite art history from a non-European point of view, which had an impact on the entire region. Starting from the rich history of Amazigh (also known as Berber) material culture, and reconnecting it within an Afro-Arab context, students were enabled to explore without the limiting distinctions and hierarchies between various materials and techniques.

“A lot of attention was given to the signs and symbols, their aesthetic, iconography and history within the Afro-Mediterranean space. (...) A beautiful rural traditional carpet —the work of a woman artisan from the Houz region— was hung on the wall of the painting class to inspire students. The carpet was friendlily named ‘Klee’s carpet.’¹”

Honouring the legacy of the Casablanca Art School and reversing a common museum practice of showing pieces such as textiles and illustrations as the inspiration for better known artists in more widely coveted media like painting, Condorelli has been collaborating with groups of female weavers around Morocco, and exhibiting their work in art museums. Over time spent sharing techniques, colour palettes, formal arrangements, and imbedded meaning extraordinary new textiles have been created. Continuing Condorelli's interest in the relationship between art and labour, the pieces are available for purchase, and the proceeds are to be used to continue to create better working conditions in the weaving workshop that produced them in the first place, in Sidi Mokhtar.

¹ Toni Maraini



Integrations, installation view, La Coupole, Casablanca (2023).



Integrations, installation view, Ifa Gallery (2024). Photograph by Victoria Tomaschko.



Integrations, installation view, Remai Modern (2024). Photograph by Carey Shaw.



The Sun Shines Through a Hole in the Clouds, exhibition view, The National Gallery. Photograph by Ben Fisher.

Artist Statement

My artistic research is concerned with how our encounter with the material world takes place by relying on it, and that all human action takes place amidst countless structures of support mostly taken for granted, and therefore appearing invisible. My work attempts to make these supports and conditions legible—materially, spatially, and socially—by turning them into the core of an ongoing inquiry.

The works address this at a scale between furniture and infrastructure, combining approaches from various disciplines which merge exhibitions with architecture and design, public space ('making things public'), publishing, collective action, and education. Having studied art, architecture, as well as history and theory, I work through interdisciplinary methodologies and collaborations, integrating perspectives from design, theatre studies, philosophy, law, art history, and sociology, through a sustained commitment to thinking across disciplinary boundaries.

My work largely consists in altering what I call 'existing conditions', understood in the widest sense: the socio-political context of a site, the architecture of a building, the display and specific use of objects, and the wider conditions under which people live and work. Removing these conditions (and their relationships) from their supposed state of neutrality or allocated place, and turning them into the subject of enquiry is what my projects attempt to do, in different ways.

I make work that makes it possible to experience not this or that thing on display, nor this or that object being shown, but the action of showing itself, in its material, temporal nature. The act of showing implies boundaries and classifications, inclusions and exclusions, taboos and hierarchies; it becomes institutionalised and inscribed on social space, even when it begins from a simple exhibition support. The artworks that develop from this approach have as their explicit function to make things public — not least art and space. They are simultaneously sculptures and public spaces, artworks that can often be sat upon, rested on, used and inhabited, allowing an intimacy with form that's not normally allowed with cultural objects.

This operating principle is taken through three parallel strands: addressing forms of display (*Display Show*, *Puppet Show*, *Conversation Piece*, as well as *Thinking Through Skin*, *Pentimenti*, and *Zanzibar*); inventing structures and infrastructures (*Support Structure*, *Eastside Projects*, *Portals*); and exploring forms of commoning and being in common (*Tools for Imagination*, *Two Years Vacation*, *After Work*, *Proposals for a Qualitative Society*, *The Company She Keeps*). Publishing is integral: each body of work is pursued spatially, but also as a set of issues distributed through books, including *Support Structures*, *The Company She Keeps*, *Zanzibar*, *After Work*, and *Two Years Vacation*.

Bio

Céline Condorelli (IT, FR, UK) is a London-based artist and Professor of Exhibition and Scenography Research at HfG Karlsruhe. Her work combines a number of approaches from developing structures for 'supporting' (the work of others, forms of political imaginary, existing and fictional realities) to broader enquiries into forms of commonality and discursive sites.

A recent selection of exhibitions and projects include:

Musées hors frontières, Kunstmuseen Krefeld, DE IT (2025); *In the Light of What We Know*, Remai Modern, CA (2024); *Antennae* (with students from HfG Karlsruhe) ZKM Karlsruhe, DE (2024); *Radical Playgrounds*, Gropius Bau, Germany (2024); *Museum Hours*, Galeria Vera Cortês, Portugal (2024); *School of Casablanca*, Ifa Gallery in collaboration with KW Institute for Contemporary Art, DE (2024); *Pentimenti (The Corrections)*, National Gallery, UK (2023); *After Work*, Talbot Rice Gallery & South London Gallery, UK (2022); *Our Silver City 2094*, Nottingham Contemporary, UK (2022); *Dos años de vacaciones*, TEA, Tenerife, Spain (2021); *Deux ans de vacances*, FRAC Lorraine, Metz, France (2020); *Ground Control*, Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden (2020); *Every Step in the Right Direction*, Singapore Biennial (2019); Art Encounters Biennial, Timisoara, Romania (2019); *Céline Condorelli*, Kunsthau Pasquart, Biel, Switzerland (2019); *Host / Vært*, Kunsthal Aarhus, Denmark (2019); *Zanzibar* (commissioned sculpture), King's Cross Projects, London, UK (2019); *Ausstellungsliege*, Albertinum, Dresden, Germany (2019); *Geometries*, Locus Athens, Greece (2018); Anren Biennale, Chengdu, China (2017); *Céline Condorelli*, Epilogue, P!, New York, USA (2017); *Wall to Wall*, Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig, Germany (2017); *Proposals for a Qualitative Society (Spinning)*, Stroom Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands (2017); *Corps à Corps*, IMA Brisbane, Australia (2017); *Conversation Pieces*, MASP, São Paulo, Brazil (2016); Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2016); Liverpool Biennial, UK (2016); Sidney Biennial, Australia (2016).

Condorelli was one of the founding directors of Eastside Projects, Birmingham, UK; she is the author and editor of *Support Structures* published by Sternberg Press (2009) and was the 2023 National Gallery Artist in Residence. Monographs include *bau bau*. Pirelli HangarBicocca. Milan, (2017), *After Work*, Edinburgh University Press (2022), *Céline Condorelli*, National Gallery (2023), *Two Years Vacation*, Archive Books (2024).