



Mehdi Meddaci *nous nous sommes levés*

From February 2nd to April 6th 2014

Opening saturday 1st at 3 p.m

At the very heart of Mehdi Meddaci's work are the notions of exile, a no man's land, the concept of cultural identity, the cyclical nature of life, memory and the imaginary world that hides behind every location.

The Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France is proud to present the very first solo exhibition in a contemporary art centre in the Île-de-France region of this artist who graduated from Le Fresnoy audiovisual school in Tourcoing and the École Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie d'Arles.

This exhibition with its title that sounds like the fragment of a narrative : *nous nous sommes levés* (we got up) comprises an installation with video, film and photography that matches the scale of the exhibition space. It brings together *Les yeux tournent autour du soleil* (2013), the third and previously unseen part of Mehdi Meddaci's oeuvre, and the film *Tenir les murs* (2011).

The work of this young artist (he was born in 1980) has progressed layer-by-layer and each new layer is a completely autonomous module or component. By using cinematographic techniques in works that are like parts of an incomplete storyline, Mehdi Meddaci enhances the way they are perceived, arouses expectations and plunges the spectator into another dimension that encourages a meditative state of contemplation. He defines a space and invites the public to participate on a corporal level: a white wall, a child moves gracefully to avoid danger, a blue wall, a silent choir wanders, a body falls into the water, boats follow their chosen course...

At the beginning of the process a thought takes shape. It is the start of an imaginary journey, one which is always closely linked to a place that has sentimental connotations for the photographer: a childhood memory, a family anecdote or just a simple everyday gesture, Mehdi Meddaci's aim is to reconstruct the complete story of an obsessive journey in a no man's land, situated somewhere between the two sides of the Mediterranean. A strange feeling of absence worms its way into this vacuum, and his films unremittingly bear the traces of whole sections of history that have somehow been obscured.

Whether with still or moving images, Mehdi Meddaci questions the state of the world, our perception of reality and its representation. Constructing and deconstructing his dramaturgy with cinematographic techniques and bold references to the visual arts, he employs a diversity of timescales: slow-motion sequences, loops, repetitions, static shots and off-screen visual or audio elements, which are his recurrent and trademark processes in the service of a highly-controlled aesthetic sense. Lighting is another essential element: the image becomes a painting, bodies become sculptures.

His images are like windows to another world: they distance themselves from reality and convey a poetic force that is sustained by the feeling that time itself is wavering and uncertain and by the impression of upheaval and the cyclical nature of life they portray.

*Mehdi Meddaci was born in Montpellier in 1980. He lives and works in Paris. He graduated from Le Fresnoy - Studio National des Arts Contemporains de Tourcoing and the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie d'Arles.
He is represented by Galerie Odile Quizeman in Paris.*



Les yeux tournent autour du soleil, 2013
© Mehdi Meddaci. Courtesy galerie Odile Quizeman, Paris

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Free Entry
Open Wednesday to Friday 10 am-6 pm
Saturday and Sunday 2-6 pm



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