

## YOU LEFT ME MY LIPS, AND THEY SHAPE WORDS, EVEN IN SILENCE

Hamza Halloubi's new solo exposition *You left me my lips, and they shape words, even in silence* (2021) originates from the idea of silence as an empty space of discourse. Halloubi translates this concept to the medium of video while he makes an archaeological journey into the Western gaze, directed towards the Maghreb region. The exhibition opens on May 29 at ARGOS.

Hamza Halloubi was born in Morocco in 1982 but has lived and worked in Brussels for many years. In his new body of works, three larger projections are interspersed with a series of video portraits filmed in the streets of Brussels. The short videos feature raw gestures that turn and divert the camera, exposing the relationship between looking and being looked at in public spaces.

The videos are presented alongside a number of abstracted paintings that feature words and video stills. In assembling these works, Hamza Halloubi creates a constellation of portraits: a firmament of stories and identities, and the silences that exist in the spaces between them.



*Writing Back* (2019–2021) attempts to paint a portrait of Cherifa, a Moroccan woman from the 1960s who was exoticized in the writings of Jane and Paul Bowles and William S. Burroughs. The video addresses shadow and silence as strategies for deflecting the orientalist gaze.

*Messing Encounters* (2020–2021) establishes a dialogue between an African immigrant in Belgium and a Congolese statue expatriated to a Belgian museum. The short video is a reflection on the loss of meaning of the sculpture when displaced from its place of origin.

*Bégaiements* (2020–2021) intercuts images of Jackson Pollocks' dripping, investment in contemporary art, and the Arab Spring. Drawing parallels between creative investments and revolt against oppression, the video questions value and worth in our contemporary attention economy.

This exhibition is a coproduction of ARGOS and Kunstenfestivaldesarts.

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