

frac franche-comté / lawrence abu hamdan, aux frontières de l'audible / exhibition novem- ber 19, 2023 - april 14, 2024



Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *Walled-unwalled*, 2018. Courtesy of the artist studio and mor charpentier © Lawrence Abu Hamdan.

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Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *45th Parallel*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist studio and mor charpentier. Installation view: Mercer Union, Toronto, 2022
© Lawrence Abu Hamdan. Photo : Toni Hafkensc

Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *Aux frontières de l'audible* 19 November, 2023 > 14 April, 2024

> Press visit : Friday 17 November, 12.30

> Opening : Saturday 18 Novembre, 18.30

Curator of the exhibition : Sylvie Zavatta, Director of the Frac

Aux frontières de l'audible is Lawrence Abu Hamdan's first solo exhibition in France.

Two works by this Jordanian artist of Lebanese origin are in the Frac Franche-Comté collection which since 2006 has been set round the question of Time and its corollaries (duration, movement, space, entropy, memory...) and has logically opened to include sound works.

The exhibition currently devoted to Lawrence Abu Hamdan is related to programming highlighting the dialogue between visual arts and the sound dimension. It follows on in particular after the exhibitions *Sound-Houses #1*

(2013) consisting of works by Alvin Lucier and Tom Johnson, *Laisser les sons aller où ils vont* (2014) and also *Max Feed* (2016), devoted to the work and posterity of Max Neuhaus.

Born in 1985, Lawrence Abu Hamdan was first devoted to music before developing plastic work which uses various forms (audio-visual installations, videos, sculptures, photographs, performances and audio and narrative documentaries) to explore the political, legal and social dimensions of sounds and listening.

The investigations performed by the artist—who defines himself as an 'audio detective'—show

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questioning about both what lies in the sound 'background' of our world as well as the memory that we have of it. For this, his research in art led him to working in legal investigations and participating in pleas for organisations such as Amnesty International. In 2013, his audio documentary *The Freedom of Speech Itself* was used as evidence for British court asylum hearings for which he was an expert witness. The two installations *Rubber Coated Steel* (2016) and *Saydnaya (The Missing 19db)* (2017) shown in the exhibition *Aux frontières de l'audible* were also made, the first related to the artist's participation in the No More Forgotten Lives for the NGO Defence for Children International, and the second to his research within an Amnesty International campaign run in collaboration with Forensic Architecture.

In parallel, as is shown by the exhibition, the artist is continuing his inventory of aural memories of traumas, catastrophes and violent acts (*Earwitness Inventory*, 2018), condemning the sound war suffered by the Lebanese as a result of the continuous violation of their air space by Israeli military aircraft and drones (*Air Pressure*, 2022). In *Walled Unwalled* (2018) and *45th Parallel* (2022) he questions the porosity of frontiers—at a time of generalised state supervision—to shed light on the dramas that they cause for humans.

Thus, in continuing his research at the intersection between sound and politics and carefully listening to persons subjected to violence by companies, states or their environment, Lawrence Abu Hamdan concentrates on making art involved in the search for another truth, a more human truth that lies side by side with law courts and scientific laboratories.

Sylvie Zavatta



Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *Earwitness inventory*, 2018. Collection Frac Franche-Comté. Installation view: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 2019 © Lawrence Abu Hamdan. Photo : Dusty Kessler



Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *Earwitness inventory*, 2018. Collection Frac Franche-Comté. Installation view: galerie mor charpentier, Paris, 2020 © Lawrence Abu Hamdan. Photo : François Doury

lawrence abu hamdan biography /



Lawrence Abu Hamdan. Photo : Diana Pfammatter.

The works by Lawrence Abu Hamdan have been shown in solo exhibitions at the MoMA, New York (2023); Spike Island, Bristol (2023); Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2022); Sharjah Art Foundation (2022); Kunstverein Nürnberg (2021); Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2021); Secession, Vienna (2020); Towner Eastbourne, United Kingdom (2020); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2019); Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2019); Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis (2019); Witte de With, Rotterdam (2019); Chisenhale Gallery, London (2018); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018); Tate Modern Tanks, London (2018); Portikus, Frankfurt (2016); Kunsthalle St Gallen (2015); Van AbbeMuseum, Eindhoven (2013); The Showroom, London (2012); and Casco, Utrecht (2012), among others.

He has also participated in many group exhibitions and international events such as the Second Toronto Biennial of Art (2022); the 12th Berlin Biennial (2022); Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022); the 34th Sao Paulo Biennial (2021); Kunsthalle Basel (2021); the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020);

Mudam, Luxembourg (2020); the 58th Venice Biennale (2019); the Sharjah Architecture Triennial (2019); Turner Contemporary, Margate (2019); Tate Modern, London (2013, 2018); Sharjah Biennial 13 & 14 (2017, 2019); Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (2018); the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2017); Contour Biennale 8, Malines (2017); MACBA, Barcelona (2017); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2017); the 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016); the 9th Liverpool Biennial (2016); the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2016); Beirut Art Center (2015); and the 10th Shanghai Biennale (2014) among many others.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan's videos have been shown at international festivals: IFFR, Rotterdam (2015, 2017, 2019, 2023); International Kurzfilmtage Winterthur (2022); New York Film Festival (2017, 2022); Punta de Vista, Pamplona (2021); Torino Film Festival (2018); Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival (2018), to mention just a few.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan was joint winner of the 2019 Turner Prize 2019. He also won a Prix Jean Vigo 2020 award, an EMAF Award in 2020, the Edvard Munch Art Award 2019, the Baloise Art Prize 2018 and the Abraaj Group Art Prize in 2018.

In 2017, he was awarded the Short Film Award at the Rotterdam International Film Festival, and in 2016 the Nam June Paik Award for new media. More recently, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo awarded him the 2022 Future Fields Commission in Time-Based Media.

His works are in the collections of the Reina Sofia, the MoMA, the Guggenheim, the Hamburger Bahnhof, the Van AbbeMuseum, the Pompidou Centre, the Tate Modern and the Frac Franche-Comté.

frac franche-comté presentation /



Frac Franche-Comté, Cité des arts, Besançon © Kengo Kuma & Associates / Archidev, crédit photo : Nicolas Waltefaugle

The Frac holds temporary exhibitions that succeed each other throughout the year and show the great diversity of art today. The exhibitions are accompanied by a rich programme of events: concerts, shows, performances, meetings with artists, etc. On the bank of a river in natural surroundings that favour escape and leisure, the Frac building displays exceptional contemporary and heritage architecture. Designed by Kengo Kuma, with Archidev Agency (Hervé Limousin and Séverine Fagnoni) and the landscaper Jean-Marc L'Anton, this building at a human scale and with gentle, bright aesthetics was designed to facilitate the discovery of works by visitors.

The question on Time

The collection held in the Frac's vast reserves totals more than 700 works by artists from France and elsewhere. The whole illustrates the richness of creation today and the diversity of forms of contemporary art: paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, videos, installations, performances, etc. and echoes the clock making past of Franche Comté by questioning the notion of time. It is enriched every year by new purchases chosen by a panel of experts.

practical information / contacts

Lawrence Abu Hamdan,
Aux frontières de l'audible

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of the Frac

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Opening times for the public
2–6 pm from Wednesday to Friday
2–7 pm on Saturday and Sunday

Prices
entry, full rate: €5
reduced rate: €3
free for school children, persons under 18 and
every Sunday.



Lawrence Abu Hamdan, *The diary of a sky*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist studio and mor charpentier © Lawrence Abu Hamdan