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Rachid Koraïchi

Artist Bio

Creating an Alphabet of Memory

Rachid Koraïchi was born in Algeria in 1947, and currently splits his time between Paris and Algiers. A cosmopolitan artist, Rachid Koraïchi speaks to a universal audience with an artistic vision rooted in his culture balanced by a global modernism.



Koraïchi's artistic training includes instruction from various institutions, with diplomas from the Higher Institute of Fine Art in Algeria, the Superior National School of Arts, the National School of Decorative Arts, and the School of Urban Studies in Paris. He has exhibited in many group exhibitions including *Textures-Word & Symbol in Contemporary Art* (2005) at the National Museum of African Art Washington, DC and *Authentic/Ex-centric: Africa in and Out of Africa*, part of the 49th Venice Biennale (2001).

Born into a Sufi family in Ain Beida, Algeria, Koraïchi's fascination with signs and symbols is a natural inclination. Since his early childhood, he was immersed in writing, illuminated pages, talismans, calligraphy reeds, traditional ink, parchment paper, and clayed wood. It is in

the company of these things, their scents and fragrances that leave an indelible mark on his mind. Koraïchi refers to these signs and symbols as the "alphabet of memory," a memory that transcends the boundaries of space and time, and in which the sacred and the profane converge into one. His aesthetic is deeply rooted in his multicultural Algerian heritage, and his work demonstrates a tremendous awareness of the international contemporary art scene. The political nature of Koraïchi's work, of which does not overshadow his aesthetic and artistic concern, stems from his active involvement in the struggle for democracy and human rights in his native country.

Homage to Love and Memory

A site specific banner project

Koraïchi has fashioned 21 large banners for a site specific installation in the city of Philadelphia. These banners were conceived as a dialogue with and homage to seven Philadelphia writers, poets and activists—three banners respectively—who have shaped, or continue to shape, the historic and/or current events of Philadelphia. The banners will be installed at, and around The George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate in North Philadelphia which boasts a long history as a hub of political activism such as involvement with the Civil Rights Movement which embraced African American and women's rights.

Homage to Love and Memory opens on October 13, 2007 at the Church of the Advocate, 1801 Diamond Street. Prints produced from the original banner drawings are on exhibit at Temple Gallery Sept. 7-Nov. 3, 2007.