

**PIPELINE** *Pipeline n°50, Septembre / Octobre / Novembre 2015*  
"Attunement to the Ground. Slimane Rais" pp. 63-71

# Attunement to the grounds 協調的理由

原文 Slimane Rais



*S'orienter* by Slimane Rais, 2011.  
Site-specific installation. Arabic calligraphy in white granite  
slabs. 1,500 x 700 cm. L'Art dans les Chapelles. Moric, France.

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*Le Jardin des Délices* by Slimane Rais, 2006.  
Site-specific installation. Brass, neon and sound.  
Multiple sizes. Rurart Contemporary Art Space, France.

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*A quoi rêve la méduse* by Slimane Rais, 2003.  
 Installation. Cinderblock, toile, satellite dishes, light bulbs, video.  
 Dimensions variable.  
 Palace of Culture, Constantine, Algeria. Photo: Blaise Adilon.

My work has nothing to do with the cycles and repetitions you were asking about, but depends on the surrounding circumstances. I have never developed a traditional studio practice. My work environment is itinerant, and changes according to the place where I am. And so it is really rarely repetitive. But in the notion of rotation there is something both surprising and comforting. A return.

Often three territories meet in my work. First, there is always the notion of autobiography, which speaks of one domain: the intimate. Then it includes my involvement with the city in which my work takes place, to be understood as a social, urban or political fact. It is the territory of the other. Then comes my unceasing dialogue, deafening at times, with the history of arts, men and ideas. That is the territory of memory. My practice is at the crossroads of these three territories: the intimate, the other and memory. The base, the medium and the spatial layout virtually unfold by themselves then. I never think of the medium before my encounter with a story. The latter determines the work.

I believe a lot in intuition. My work is based on encounters: an encounter with others, the most intimate as well as the most common things they carry within themselves. A meeting with a place, its history and architecture. An encounter with the events, with all their most aleatory turns. So, indeed, chance

is very much present, while I have also learned to provoke it as it has become an important parameter in my work. My work is based on process, in the sense that the process is as important as the form produced. In fact, the process is more important at times.

To me, a successful art work is one that erases all distance between itself and the viewer. Therefore it is a work without artifice or illusions. When I have the opportunity to make site-specific works, I always integrate them totally with the environment. In *S'orienter* (2011), made for the 20th anniversary of Art in Chapels, I chose to work on the notion of the slip. Almost all the churches in France are built toward the Orient, which means where the sun rises, and so the east. I wanted to work on the double meaning of self-orientation (*s'orienter*), which means both to find one's direction and to adopt an eastern culture. I slipped that orientation by 45 degrees, directing the building towards Mecca.

There are various ways to be influenced by a place, but often influence comes from its history, or rather the histories inhabiting that place, be they true or false. They all interest me, from history with a capital H to the legends, the rumours and the local news-in-brief stories.

I don't spend my time thinking about art history. I sometimes allude to historical art works such as Hieronymus Bosch's *The*

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*L'histoire sans fin* by Slimane Rais, 2006.  
Site-specific installation. Wax, metal, neon, sound, video.  
Dimensions variable.  
Timișoara Art Museum, Romania.

*Garden of Earthly Delights* or those of Marc Chagall, as in my work *En attendant le songe* (2008), but they remain exceptions in my practice. It is difficult these days to escape from art-historical affiliation.

I come from an oral culture. In Algeria, where I was born, people discuss a lot and everything is exchanged verbally. Unlike the written form, the spoken word carries the emotions of the person who's pronouncing it. Something in the voice's vibration makes the same word pronounced and understood differently according the people, locations and circumstances. I am very attentive to what is said and how it is said.

About my relationship with writing: I learned to write in France at the same time as I learned French, so at age 25. It was a very difficult exercise at first; I had to learn everything. But I had not much choice my artistic work was dependent on it.

My favourite places are public spaces, locations that are favourable to meetings.

I love strong art works that produce physical sensations, but also works that question, disturb and produce mental earthquakes.

With my neons, I am interested in the particular atmosphere they bring. It is the universe of the night. I have always preferred day to night. Work with neon or lights is a way for me to tame this unknown universe. I work at night sometimes, but mainly early in the morning. Virtually all my works have been thought through in the morning.

I am currently working on a project to be shown in Constantine in Algeria, within the international Capital of Arab Culture 2015 exhibition season that will take place in November. The last book I read was *Voyage au pays des Travellers* by Guillaume Thouroude.