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Latifa Echakhch, Rising Star Focused on Immigration and Alienation, Will Represent Switzerland at 2021 Venice Biennale

BY ALEX GREENBERGER  January 28, 2020 7:56am

Latifa Echakhch.
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Though the Venice Biennale is still over a year away, the 2021 edition of the hallowed Italian biennial is beginning to take form—France, Canada, and others have begun announcing their **picks to represent them** at the exhibition, and Cecilia Alemani was recently selected to **serve as artistic director**. Switzerland is now the latest country to reveal its pick for the **2021 Venice Biennale**, with **Latifa Echakhch** lined up to take over its national pavilion.

Echakhch, who was born in El Khnansa, Morocco, and who is now based in Fully, Switzerland, has been closely watched in Europe for the past decade and a half. In 2013, she won the Prix Marcel Duchamp, France's highest art award, and appearances in string of esteemed biennials—including the Sharjah Biennial, the Biennale de Lyon, and the Biennale of Sydney—have positioned her as a major talent.

Much of Echakhch's work focuses on political strife, alienation, and immigration, often through minimalist means. Her works pun objects for their meanings across disparate cultures and ponder how people relate to places. For one of her most famous works, *Frames* (2001), she deconstructed a group of Islamic prayer rugs so that all that was left of them was their outer fringes, which come to appear like picture frames.

For her Biennale project, Echakhch will work with composer Alexandre Babel and curator Francesco Stocchi to create a project involving rhythm and sound.

Alongside the announcement of the pavilion came news that Echakhch has new gallery representation. Metro Pictures, a beloved New York gallery that has long specialized in photo-based art, will be working with the artist, and will have work by her on offer at its booth at the Frieze Los Angeles art fair next month.

Echakhch was chosen by a jury that includes Swiss artist Laurence Bonvin, critic and curator Riccardo Lisi, art historian Federica Martini, *Contemporary* & editor Yvette Mutumba, and Rein Wolfs, the director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.