

# latifa echakhch

## *the after*

kaufmann repetto is pleased to announce *The After*, Latifa Echakhch's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Dominated by black perimeter walls and a black carpet covering the floor, the entire exhibition space is transformed into a concert stage. Lighting trusses—usually perceived as merely technical elements of stage design—assume a central function in this installation. Assembled into doors, bridges and totemic objects, they invite the visitor to walk into a forest of beams and apparatus. The severe geometry of the metallic sculptures is subverted by signs that indicate a process of deconstruction: some beams are abandoned on the floor, clothing and other objects appear to be thrown haphazardly on the trusses. These elements convey the idea that we are observing the remnants of an event that happened in our absence: a concert has taken place, the dismantling of the stage has already started, or maybe some musicians and fans stayed throughout the night enjoying the rite of a collective celebration.

An additional clue to complete the artist's complex narrative is provided by the diptychs of the painting series, *Sun Set Down*. Glowing brightly from the black walls, the canvases depict a landscape steeped in the warm hues of a sunrise, confirming that we are not witnessing a nocturnal scene, but that a new day is near. While the reference for her previous *Underneath* paintings was the classic representation of the sky in Italian Renaissance fresco, the new series is closer to the viewing habits of the 20th century, influenced by the supersaturated aesthetics of technicolor film and the bright and brilliant color palette of mainstream landscape photography. A radiant sunrise of a mountain landscape is captured in vivid hues, ranging from dark blue to red, orange and gold, while the lower part of the scene is dominated by the dark silhouette of the surrounding peaks. However only fragments of the painted image remain intact, while large portions of the scene appear to be missing, scratched with vigorous gestures, unveiling a rough layer of concrete previously applied on the canvas. The process of deconstruction collides sharply with the apparently romantic subject matter, entailing a displacement of the viewer's gaze.

The exhibition's title, *The After*, reveals ambivalent temporal layers: "l'after" is the French slang term that indicates the after-party usually following an event, a concert, or a rave, which often lasts until the following morning. At the same time, the after on a literal level implies a temporal rupture or sharp division that separates two eras.

Individual or collective memories, stirred up by the installation, remind us of the fulfilling experience of attending concerts and festive events, which in the present times seems like a distant mirage. Nonetheless, it is the occurrence of a destructive moment which allows to conceive a reconstruction, and an ending that can correspond to a new beginning.

Latifa Echakhch (born in 1974 in Morocco), lives and works in Switzerland.

She will represent Switzerland in the upcoming Venice Biennale 2022; her work has been exhibited internationally in several solo exhibitions in venues such as BPS22, Charleroi (2020); Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz; Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2019); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; The Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco (2018); The Power Plant, Toronto (2016); Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2015); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2014); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Kunsthalle Basel, Basel; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus (2012); GAMeC, Bergamo; MACBA, Barcelona (2010); Swiss Institute, New York; Fridericianum, Kassel (2009); Tate Modern, London (2008) and many others.