



**PRESS KIT**

**NAIRY BAGHRAMIAN**

*Coude à Coude*

**Carré d'Art-Nîmes**

**April 3 - September 20, 2020**



## PRESS KIT

# NAIRY BAGHRAMIAN

## *Coude à Coude*

**Carré d'Art–Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes**

Exhibition from April 3 to September 20, 2020

Curator: Jean-Marc Prevost

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<http://carreartmusee.com/fr/espace-presse/>

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## THE EXHIBITION

Over the last two decades Baghramian has created sculptures, photographic works, and drawings that explore the relationships between Architecture, everyday objects, and the human body while challenging preconceived ideas of functionality, decoration, abstraction, domesticity, and feminism. Baghramian's sculptural work proudly displays protuberances and cavities, blobs and spills, limbs and prosthetics, to put under pressure traditional questions of volume, mass, form, and theatricality that have shaped the history of sculpture.

Her works are drawn from materials as diverse as steel, glass, silicon, resin, cork and leather, and often allude to familiar objects abstracted and reconfigured in precise and innovative new forms, conjuring through their reinvention fragments derivative of various fields of association – from the anthropomorphic and industrial, to fashion, theater or interior architecture, their history and the ideological undercurrents hold particular interest for the artist.

For her first museum exhibition in France titled *Coude à Coude*, Baghramian enters into a dialogue with the architecture of the Carré d'Art with a selection of works specifically formed for this exhibition. Spanning several exhibition rooms the walls, thresholds and passageways of the display parcours become living protagonists as well as the works themselves. If the sculpture usually presents itself autonomously from its surroundings and uses the exhibition space like a pedestal, Baghramian reaffirms the marginal, the liminal and the transitional sites of space, attaching her sculptures to the architectural structure of the institution and questioning conventional connotations of spatial perception and its hierarchies. The work *'Das Hübsche Eck'*, 2006, for example, directs its mirrored side of a screen-like structure to the partition wall of two exhibition rooms, while on the back an enigmatic staircase leads into this very wall that obscures the view. *Grosse Klappe*, 2008 similarly, is neither boundary nor threshold, occupying the virtual line between two spaces, whereas *French Curve*, 2014 *Off the Rack*, 2014, and *Dwindler, Low Tide*, 2017 utilize extremities to wind their way fluidly from one room to another. And in the earliest work, on view, *Trennwände mit Ohringen (Anna, Martha, Vartuhi) (Partitions with Earrings (Anna, Martha, Vartuhi), 2004)* reverses expectations with structures dressed of fabric, the metal becoming the accessory.

## ESSAY BY NAIRY BAGHRAMIAN

In architecture, 'inversion' describes a model of thought and strategy in which spaces are grafted into each other and different layers of spatial experience are superimposed to effect a synchronization of categories such as foreground and background and allow for established orders to be perceived on new levels. In historic urban construction, for instance, a city's wall frames it in a way that lets the traveler approaching it from the distance experience it as a single entity; inside it, the eye encounters multiple inversive spaces composed of individual nested and interwoven structures, each of which can simultaneously limit both an interior and an exterior. To pass through or enter into the interior of the urban space is at once to find oneself outside numerous organically defined and self-contained units; roaming among these stations, one encounters passages or interstices that raise the questions of inside and outside, of involvement or passivity.

This interstitial space is determined by the placement and control of fixed points of spatial volumes or in a continuous structure of the design of ever smaller interiors through the positioning of objects and their interrelations. In a figurative sense, such passages can become spaces of thinking that, in more than one way, unsettle constants on the axis of traditional historical classifications and established spatial determinants and allow new conjunctions to emerge.

The description of museum spaces and their organization for the purpose of the presentation of art reveals that this process offers numerous opportunities for inversive design, but also for manipulation. The category of the display, in particular, comes into view as a scene on which complex relations between beholder and object are enacted, allowing for perceptions such as opacity vs. transparency or historicizing vs. modernizing readings.

When we pursue this thought further, the framing of paintings becomes an object of analysis as well. Here, too, the arena of painting, as a space in which the creative arrangement of form is performed, is contained or encompassed by a framing that might be described as an additive space leaving more or less room for progressive or else normative readings of a work of art, but that may at the same time also be conceived as an organization of historical references.

One example of close interconnection in this relation between work and frame is the account offered by the art collector and patron Heinz Berggruen (1914–2007), who, in the audio guide to his collection of works of classic modernism in Berlin, notes how important it was to him to personally select frames suited to the art he had collected. Emphasizing the close correlation between the two, he keeps the work in the structures framing and containing them, even retaining or conserving them in the distinctive historical as well as political reality bound up with their genesis.

The Italian architect and exhibition organizer Carlo Scarpa (1906–1978), who was the Venice Biennale's managing architect for many years and directed the redesign of numerous museums and exhibition spaces in postwar Italy, may serve as an example of a different strategy to bring established patterns of perception into focus.

The gesture of removing historic paintings from their visually as well as relationally fraught frames, as in the Museo di Castelvecchio in Verona or the Accademia in Venice, and the alternative forms of presentation he devised for these works confront the beholder with how his experiences are grounded in tradition and give rise to certain expectations. Scarpa thus lays bare the mechanism of the display and the possibilities of the work's representation.

The simple metal supports and hooks on which he props or anchors the canvases, also effectively isolating them from the institutional surroundings, engender the inversive niches and passages that make a reconsideration from a fresh perspective and a transposition into a contemporary perception possible.

His interventions and accentuations dislocate hierarchies, even compelling a reassessment of authorship.

The pedestals and displays he designs for works of art evince an artistic-aesthetic elaboration and deliberate fragility that project ambiguity, raising the question wherein the difference between the work and its presentation lies. The beholder is prompted to ponder: What is it that ultimately makes art art?

Which attributions of aura are immanent to the work, and which are superadded to it by their articulation?

So the self-conscious display must be aware that the autonomy it has attained and its aspiration to effect a reassessment have triggered a fresh thinking and even revisionism—but also to the simultaneous leveling of historical fact and the possibility of a 'tabula rasa,' or in other words, the eventuality of amnesia.

In his personal copy of Jean Cocteau's *Le Coq et l'Arlequin* (1918), Scarpa highlights the following aphorism: 'Emotion resulting from a work of art is only of value when it is not obtained by sentimental blackmail.'

„Nairy Baghramian "Inversions", 2017, catalogue Kühnmalvezzi (not published yet)“

# BIOGRAPHY

Nairy Baghramian b. 1971 in Isafahan, Iran is a visual artist living and working in Berlin since 1984.

Her work has been the subject of monographic exhibitions in an array of institutions, including MUDAM, Luxembourg (2019); Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2018); SMK, Copenhagen (2017); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2016); S.M.A.K, Ghent (2016); Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2015); Museo Serralves, Porto (2014); the Art Institute of Chicago (2014). Baghramian also participated at Skulptur Projekte Muenster (2017 / 2007); documenta 14 in Kassel and Athens (2017); Lyon Biennale (2017); Berlin Biennale (2014 / 2008); 54th and 58th Venice Biennale (2011/2019).

## GRANTS/AWARDS/RESIDENCIES

2019	Malcolm-McLaren-Award with Maria Hassabi
2016	Zurich Art Prize
2014	Arnold-Bode-Award of the documenta-city Kassel
2013	Villa Aurora Los Angeles
2012	Hector Art Award
2009	Senatsstipendium Berlin
2007	Schering Foundation Promotion Award (Berlinische Galerie Museum of Modern Art, Photography and Architecture)

## WORKS IN PUBLIC SPACE

2019	Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean
2017	Walker Art Center, Wurtele Upper Garden

## PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

2019	MUDAM (Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean), Luxembourg
2018	Museum of Modern Art, New York
2017	Museo Tamayo, Mexico City Centre Pompidou, Paris
2016	Salomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Edinburgh House Estate Ltd. Tate Modern London The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University Art Institute of Chicago

The Brandhorst Collection, Munich

2014 Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach  
Stedelijk Museum voor Aktueele Kunst S.M.A.K. Ghent

2013 Muzeum Sztuki, "Neoplastik Raum." Łódź  
Sammlung Bundeskulturstiftung, Halle an der Saale

2012 Sammlung des Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen (IfA)

2013 Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago

2012 Kunsthalle Mannheim

2011 Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam  
Junger Ankauf Museum Ludwig Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst, Köln  
Walker Art Center

2010 Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

2012 The Permanent Collection at the Museum Ludwig Köln

2009 Collection Ludwig Forum Aachen

2007 Museum Szuki Lodz, PL (Permanent Loan of Collection Prokesz)  
Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

2012 Neues Museum Nürnberg

2004 Kunsthalle Basel

## LIST OF WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

### **All works: Courtesy the artist, Marian Goodman Gallery, kurimanzutto, Galerie Buchholz**

- *Anna Martha Varthui (Trennwände mit Ohringen / Partitions with Earrings)*, 2004, fabric, painted metal, 3 parts : 220 x 150 x 35 cm, 215 x 145 x 35 cm, 205 x 140 x 35 cm.
- *Das hübsche Eck / The Pretty Corner*, 2006, painted metal, mirror, painted wood, waxed wood, stairs: 160 x 115 x 25 cm; wall: 250 x 145 x 25 cm.
- *Es ist ausser Haus / It is out of House*, 2006, C-print, painted metal, glass, brass stick, ribbons, 70 x 110 x 25 cm.
- *Es ist ausser Haus / It is out of House*, 2006, C-print, painted metal, glass, brass stick, ribbons, 70 x 110 x 25 cm.
- *Es ist ausser Haus / It is out of House*, 2006, C-print, painted metal, glass, brass stick, ribbons, 70 x 110 x 25 cm.
- *Es ist ausser Haus / It is out of House*, 2006, C-print, painted metal, glass, brass stick, ribbons, 70 x 110 x 25 cm.
- *Es ist ausser Haus / It is out of House*, 2006, C-print, painted metal, glass, brass stick, ribbons, 70 x 110 x 25 cm.
- *Aufsicht / Invigilator*, 2008, polished aluminium, rubber, 52,5 x 69 x 42 cm.
- *Besucher / Visiteur*, 2008, polished aluminium, rubber, 68 x 66 x 71 cm.
- *Grosse Klappe 1 / Big Mouth 1*, 2008, polished aluminium, coloured cast rubber, 260 x 170 x 65 cm.
- *French Curve*, 2014, casted aluminium, epoxy resin, laquer, 60 x 1100 x 700 cm.
- *Von der Stange (Handlauf) / Off the Rack (Handrail)*, 2014, cast and painted aluminium, chromed brass pole, concrete, variable dimensions.
- *Mooring (hanging)*, 2016, cast aluminium, lacquered, 102 x 48 x 21 cm.
- *Mooring (hanging)*, 2016, cast aluminium, lacquered, 102,5 x 48,5 x 21 cm.
- *Mooring (hanging)*, 2016, cast aluminium, lacquered, 102 x 48 x 21 cm.
- *Mooring (hanging)*, 2016, cast aluminium, lacquered, 99 x 43 x 16 cm.
- *Mooring (hanging)*, 2016, cast aluminium, lacquered, 97 x 43 x 15,8 cm.
- *Treat (Marrowbone)*, 2016, wax, 2 parts : Left : 44 x 115 x 50 cm, Right : 42 x 110 x 61 cm.
- *Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In)*, 2016, Baryte b/w print (framed), 121,5 x 193 x 5,5 cm.
- *Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In)*, 2016, Baryte b/w print (framed), 192,7 x 121,9 x 5,4 cm.
- *Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In)*, 2016, Baryte b/w print (framed), 122,5 x 122,5 x 5,5 cm.
- *Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In)*, 2016, C-print (framed), 107,5 x 143 x 5,5 cm.
- *Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In)*, 2016, Baryte b/w print (framed), 102,7 x 102,7 x 5,5 cm.
- *As Long as it Lasts*, 2017, epoxy resin, polished aluminium, powder coated steel, rubber, front room: 381 x 580 x 730 cm ; back room: 381 x 365 x 430 cm.
- *Dwindler\_Updraft*, 2017, paint, glass, zinc coated metal, colored epoxy resin, Part 1 : 171 x 36 x 34 cm, Part 2 : 214 x 51 x 41 cm, Part 3 : 68 x 35 x 228 cm.
- *Smart Water (after Michel Asher, Untitled 1991, UCSD)*, 2017, C-print in artist frame, 162 x 108,5 x 8,7 cm (with frame).
- *Breath Holding Spell*, 2018, cast and powder coated aluminium, 102 x 70 x 85 cm.
- *Breath Holding Spell*, 2018, cast and powder coated aluminium, 102 x 70 x 85 cm.
- *Breath Holding Spell*, 2018, cast and powder coated aluminium, 102 x 70 x 85 cm.
- *Dwindler\_Gale*, 2018, glass, zinc coated metal, colored epoxy resin, 184 x 52 x 82 cm.



- *Dwindler\_Overflow*, 2018, glass, zinc coated metal, colored epoxy resin, 2 parts, 311 x 60 x 67 cm.
- *Dwindler\_Rear Tilt*, 2018, glass, zinc coated metal, colored epoxy resin, 3 parts, 710 x 53 x 82 cm.
- *Dwindler\_Segue*, 2018, glass, zinc coated metal, colored epoxy resin, 2 parts, 357 x 58 x 70 cm.
- *Grosse Klappe / Big Mouth*, 2020, polished aluminium, laquered steel, silicon, 120 x 200 x 120 cm.
- *Grosse Klappe / Big Mouth*, 2020, polished aluminium, laquered steel, silicon, 190 x 320 x 150 cm.



*Das hübsche Eck / The Pretty Corner, 2006*



*Es ist ausser Haus, 2006*



*Grosse Klappe 1 / Big Mouth 1, 2008*



*Von der Stange (Handlauf) / Off the Rack (Handrail), 2014*



*Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In), 2016*



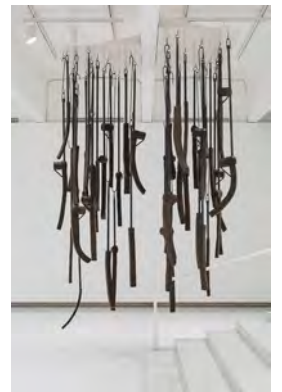
*Portrait (The concept-artist smoking head, Stand-In), 2016*



*Mooring (standing), 2016*



*Dwindler\_Low Tide, 2017*



*Jupon Suspendu, 2017*



*As Long as it Lasts, 2017*



*Maintainers (F), 2019*

## PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

Open from Tuesday to Sunday included from 10 AM to 6PM.

Carré d'Art–Musée d'art contemporain. Place de la Maison Carrée. 30000 Nîmes  
Tel.: + 33 (0)4 66 76 35 70 - Email: [info@carreartmusee.com](mailto:info@carreartmusee.com). Website: [www.carreartmusee.com](http://www.carreartmusee.com)

### Admission Fees

Entrance to temporary exhibition + permanent collection + Project Room: full fee: 8 €; reduced fee\*: 6 €  
Entrance to permanent collection + Project Room: full fee: 5 €; reduced fee\*: 3 €

#### 1st Sunday of the month

temporary exhibition only - full fee: 8 €; reduced fee\*: 6 € / Permanent collection + Project Room: free

\* reduced fee\*: those eligible include groups of more than 20 people, people seeking employment, students (upon presentation of written proof), members of the association Amis des Musées de la Région Occitanie (Friends of the Museum of the Region of Occitania).

FREE ADMISSION (upon presentation of written proof): see <http://carreartmusee.com/fr/infos-pratiques/>

Guided Tours: Leaving from the reception hall of the Museum, level + 2

(fee, added to admission fee): 3€

#### **Individuals**

- Every Saturday and Sunday at 4:30 PM
- During April school vacations, every day at 4:30 PM
- From July 6 to August 31, every day at 4:30 PM
- The first Sunday of each month, guided tours at 3PM and 4:30 PM (included in the entrance fee)

Groups not affiliated with schools: By appointment only. Contact Sophie Gauthier (04 66 76 35 74)

### Atelier d'Expérimentation Plastique (Experimental Art Workshop):

*For children from 6 to 12 years of age, by appointment. Contact: Sophie Gauthier (04.66.76.35.74)*

**Individuals** (fee: 5 €) from 2PM to 4PM some Wednesdays and during holiday periods.

**Groups** : From Tuesday to Friday, by appointment. For rates see <http://carreartmusee.com/fr/infos-pratiques/>

### Collective Family Workshop

Open to all, free for old and young from 2PM to 4PM on May 6, June 3, September 9, 19, 20, 2020.  
Participation possible without prior registration, on the first floor of the Carré d'Art museum.

### Adult Workshops

(fee: 5 €) From 10AM to 1PM on June 13, 20, 27, 2020

Registration required; classes meet at the atelier of the Carré d'Art museum. No minimum level of skill required.

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### Centre de documentation en art contemporain, Level -1

From Tuesday to Friday, from 1PM to 5PM; in the morning by appointment

Saturday from 10AM to 1PM and from 2PM to 5PM.

04 66 76 35 88 - [documentation@carreartmusee.com](mailto:documentation@carreartmusee.com)

Online catalogue: <http://carreartmusee.centredoc.fr/opac/>

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

### RENCONTRES D'ARLES

As part of the Rencontres de la Photographie, in the summer of 2020, Carré d'Art will host two exhibitions. The program is being created in tandem with the Director of the Rencontres. It will take up the Carré d'Art's Project Room space and the Chapelle des Jésuites in Nîmes.

#### ➔ JEFF WEBER - Project Room, Carré d'Art (June 30 – November 15)

(Text by Élia Pijolet and Jean-François Chevrier)

Jeff Weber works mainly in analog photography and film. For this show for the Carré d'Art, he presents a juxtaposition of several sets of works, including an ensemble of photographs taken during an initiatory journey he took in 2013 with artist Snejanka Mihaylova as part of her collaborative project *Kunsthalle Leipzig* (2012–2017). Its aim was to study the Gnostic elements of Coptic Christianity.

The concept of gnosis as a personal journey towards ultimate knowledge was in phase with Weber's long-term photographic project, *An Attempt at a Personal Epistemology*, which seeks to define the paradoxical space in which an artist operates, at the crossroads between objective knowledge and intimate experience. His method is an empirical one, according to which it is through working on the image itself, on its material data, creating it by employing photographic techniques, that one's ideas crystallize and articulate themselves. The image is, in essence, the materialization of the process of creation. The abstract photograms of the series *Neural Networks* are the result of speculations on neuronal activity and its transposition in a digital circuit that uses the most basic means to generate "image-prints" of a life of the mind. Weber attempts to play with the tensions between technique and learning, between the world of technical culture and that of gnostic knowledge.

Jeff Weber (born in 1980) lives and works in Berlin.

#### ➔ MARTINE SYMS, *Lesson LXXV* - Chapel of the Jesuits, Nîmes (Projection from June 30–August 30)

Martine Syms uses video, preferably short films, to explore representations of blackness in contemporary visual culture. *Lessons* is an ongoing project that consists of a series of short videos that make effective use of images from sitcoms and online sources. *Lesson LXXV* is a video that is horizontally fitted into a base painted in purple. It's a close-up image of the artist on a black background covered with milk. The scene calls to mind the Ferguson, Missouri protests against the killing of Michael Brown, a young unarmed black man. One sees several images of demonstrators pouring milk on their faces to protect themselves from the tear gas. The simplicity of the images and their composition results in an intimate evocation of the condition of black women and racial injustice. It is also an image that is reminiscent of the Christian iconography related to the mater dolorosa. The color purple is used in all the artist's work as an homage, not just to Pop culture but the renowned novel by Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (1982), a story of a young black woman, which has been the object of censure on several occasions. It was adapted into a movie by Steven Spielberg in 1985.

Syms was born in 1988 in Los Angeles and still lives there.

## TARIK KISWANSON

October 16, 2020 – February 28, 2021

Tarik Kiswanson has developed an oeuvre that unites sculpture, writing, film and performance. The artist creates forms that attest to his commitment to a "poetics of diversity." Using a variety of conceptual strategies of weaving, in both the metaphorical and literal sense, Kiswanson's aim is to lend visibility to the concept formulated by Edouard Glissant, referred to as the "poetics of relation." His works are activated by the presence of the viewer, even as they offer in return a reflection of their own unstable image, whether increased tenfold, erased or diffracted. Kiswanson is a sculptor, writer and performer who makes use of a variety of media. Writing is central to this oeuvre permeated with poetry, where rhythms and tones act as so many voices of different origin. His use of metal, present in many of his sculptures, is a legacy of his family background. Born in 1986 in Sweden, Kiswanson studied in London and currently lives in Paris, but his family are from Palestine and have lived in Jordan, and his background plays an integral part in his work. The presence of children in his performances and some of his works – such as his latest film *The Reading Room* or his New York performance for the Performa biennial *As Deep as I Could Remember, As Far as I Could See* – reveals his interest in reflecting upon the moment when identity is created. Over the course of several years, he conducted research at the Tiraz Foundation in Jordan, which holds one of the major collections of textiles and clothing of the Muslim world.

This exhibition will present some of his early works, as well as recent ones produced at the Atelier Calder in Saché, and installations designed for the spaces of the museum. This will be Kiswanson's first museum show in France.

Tarik Kiswanson studied at London's Central Saint Martins school, and the Beaux Arts in Paris. He has recently shown his work at the Mudam in Luxembourg (2017), the Ricard Foundation in Paris (2018), the Pompidou Center (2019), the Performa biennial in New York, and the MMAG Foundation, Amman (2020).