

# Degrés Est

# Ouassila Arras

25.02.22 —  
12.06.22

↳ Curated by :  
Agnès Violeau  
assisted by Antoine Champenois

↳ Press visit  
Wednesday 23.02.22, 10h30  
49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine

In the presence of the artist

Ouassila Arras (\*1993, Juvisy-sur-Orge) will be the eighth artist to occupy Degrés Est, a space dedicated to artists from the Grand Est region which features rotating proposals from three FRACs. Invited by Marie Griffay — the director of the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne — the work of the Franco-Algerian artist, a graduate of the Beaux-Arts de Reims, usually takes the form of monumental installations. These often revolve around the notion of displacement, with a focus on family migrations linked to economic contexts.

Building on her investigation of invisible communities, Ouassila Arras's work at Degrés Est interrogates what it means to enter and inhabit a space. Having inherited a family story surrounded by historical silence — a muteness shared by both Algeria and France — the artist invites us to discover a specific social context. The genesis of the project was a meeting with former fighters in the Algerian War who eventually emigrated to work in France. Members of the Chibani community, they came to France in the context of large-scale national construction projects; having now reached retirement, they are currently housed in a hostel. Unable to feel at home in either the country of their childhood or in France, they live in ongoing material and emotional precarity.

The exhibition transcribes and translates their situation into new surroundings. The walls of the exhibition space are covered in clay that crumbles and disappears, like an untold story. Algerian henna covering the floor intersects with the clay's slow erosion. The dried pigment crumbles under the visitors' feet and spreads throughout the space of the FRAC. Should one enter, walk on the work, and mark up the shared space of the museum, or remain at the entrance, as a spectator? Ouassila Arras's work addresses pressing issues of cultural distancing, contamination, and displacement.



Ouassila Arras generally works on a large scale, in the form of monumental installations. This will be her “smallest work”—the Degrés Est room itself: one geography responding to another. The exhibition, accompanied by a limited edition of an autobiographical text by the artist, highlights what is hidden from our eyes. It invites us to reconsider the threshold at which we accept what has taken place.



Ouassila arras, *Care*, 2021, argile rouge pour la peau, Kuensthlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin - Courtesy de l'artiste

## → Available pictures on request



1 Ouassila Arras



3 Ouassila Arras



2 Ouassila Arras



4 Ouassila Arras

# Coming up at Frac Lorraine

→ Betye Saar *Serious Moonlight*

01.07 - 02.10.22

In cooperation with the Institute of Contemporary Art,  
Miami and Kunstmuseum of Lucerne

→ Exhibition with immaterial works from the  
Collection

21.10.22 – 12.02.23

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Horaires  
Gratuit

Ma. – Ve. : 14h – 18h  
Sa. – Di. : 11h – 19h

Le Frac est soutenu par la Ré-  
gion Grand Est et la Direction  
Régionale des Affaires Cultur-  
elles Grand Est

Press contact

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