Holiday Powers

307 words

**Koraïchi, Rachid (1947--)**

Rachid Koraïchi was born in Ain Beida, Algeria to a Sufi family from Algeria, and his art is often framed within a tradition of Sufi spirituality in which aesthetics and metaphysics are intertwined. Writing and signs, for Koraïchi, hold sacred importance, and calligraphy is often a significant backbone of his work. Drawing from Arabic calligraphy, Koraïchi has created something of his own script or graphic language that includes Amazigh and Tuareg letters and mystical symbols. This calligraphy is sometimes legible but often is abstracted with thick repetitions, becoming signs or figures. While Koraïchi is deeply tied to mystic and visual traditions and draws from the spiritual and artisinal heritage of the Maghreb, in his artwork these ideas and systems of communication are reworked to become something new. His work ranges from mystical, abstract works to direct political commentary in dialogue with revolutionary and liberation movements. Koraïchi’s diverse oeuvre encompasses everything from intimate prints to large-scale banners and installations. He works in varied media, including printmaking, paint, ceramics, and textiles. Beyond Koraïchi’s personal work, collaborations with writers and poets have been an important part of his oeuvre, as with Mohammed Dib, Jamel Eddine Bencheikh, René Char, Michel Butor, and Mahmoud Darwish. A number of Koraïchi’s works have also been executed in collaboration with North African artisans trained in traditional techniques, as in dying, weaving, or pottery.

**References and further reading:**

Hassan, S., and Dadi, I. eds. (2001) *Unpacking Europe*, Rotterdam: NAi Publisher. (This was the catalog for an exhibition featuring Koraïchi.)

De Pontcharra, N., and Restany, P. (1991) *Cris écrits, Rachid Koraïchi*, Brussels: Editions de Lassa. (This is an early source that includes images.)

Lostia, M. (2003) ‘Rachid Koraïchi: A Celestial Architecture.’ *Nafas Art Magazine*. <http://universes-in-universe.org/eng/nafas/articles/2003/rachid_koraichi> (This is a lengthy review of Koraïchi’s work in response to an exhibition.)

Saadi, N., and Pradel, J. (1998) *Koraïchi*, Arles: Sindbad/Actes-Sud. (This is a lengthy monograph.)