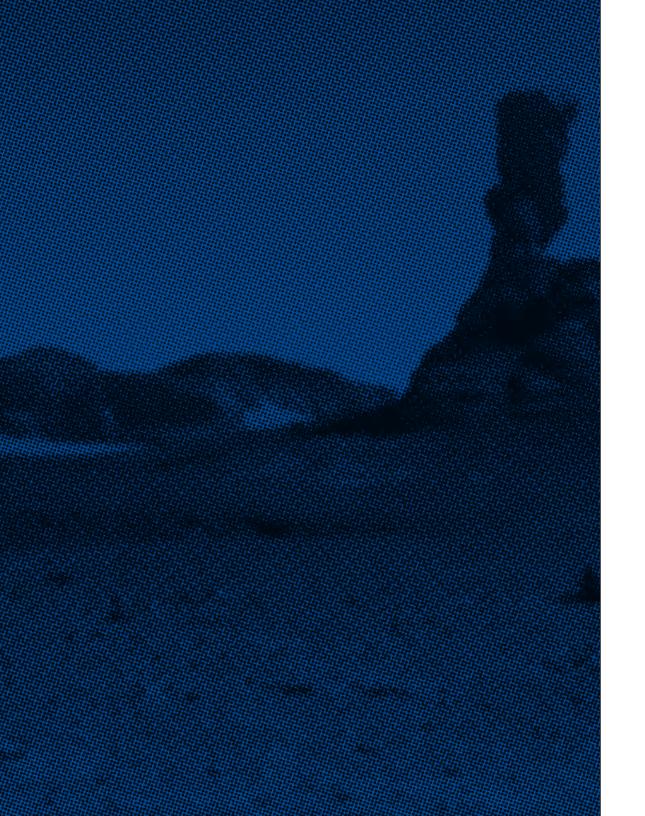
**Lydia Ourahmane:** 

Solar Cry ةيسمش ةخرصر



 $\mathbf{B}$ 

Solar Cry

ح قى يى مى مى مى كا مىنىڭ ئىزلى ادە بىتك ئى ما مىنى تىدر أ ىتلاك ، قمهم قىئى مىل عوا ، قلى ترت وا قمىنرت فزعلا قبحاصمب دل ارى جزتىف الى الهبى عن غت تاوصأب قمهمه نع امؤانغ ديزي الف الوبطلل در فنمل لې د مېهاب ... ېد تهود هوب تهود ېد تهود لې بق نم ي ع يرجي اقوطنم اصن هتدرأ ي إود لي اووي او ىف ترعش نأ ،ارىخأ ،اهتعاس شدح نأ الول ناسللا تىقىلت يىن تى تى ارو ،انىن تى مسو قزازت ماب يبيج ةروص ال إقلاس لا نكت مل اعدى نم قىصن قلاس المراب ال :تاملك اه عمو ةنس 6000 اهرمع ورس قرجش

> نوكي اذام تفرع اريخأ ناميإلاا

ام لك تلق دقف دحل اذه دنع فقوتي ول دوي ينم عزج شيدح مماوق ضرع وه :ضرعلا اذه نع لاقي نأي غبني ،ماس جأل ا يف ذفنت تابذبذ ،تاوص أ مماوق ،تاملك الب "ليوطل اليذلا" يذسدقمل نع قنانفل نم قلاسرو ناسن إلى خيرات لوطب يدتممل

Initially, I wanted to write this in the form of a chant or a hymn. Or by scatting, like Ella Fitzgerald singing over a drum solo, doht dee duht boh duht dee ... bahp m deel yuyl doo ee. It would be a text spoken in tongues. But then, I feel my pocket vibrate and ding and see that I received a text

old Cyprus tree, along with a message:

message from Lydia. It's a picture of a 6,000 year

I finally worked out what faith is.

> Part of me wants to stop right here. I've already said everything that needs to be said about this exhibition: it's made of wordless speech and sounds, vibrating onto bodies, with a message from the artist about the Long Tail of the sacred.

مدع يه اهتالاس على عرد لل قدي حولا ققي رطلا نا تردق قي يرس قالس عف درلا عيتاي الا وا اللصا اهيل عردلا عوضومل قرطتالا يغبن امف ريدقت لقا على عوضومل قرطتالا يغبن امف ريدقت لقا على على عالى عالى المنوك يدق المرجمل عساول اهان عم يف المنكل او حن الا اذه بضما غل المام و ولا المجول المحبول ا

The only way to respond to her message, I reasoned, was not to. Not via text, at least. The topic of faith is far too big, too old, and too loaded to get into, but in a broad and abstract sense, perhaps it's what we need when we come face to face with the unintelligible. It's what rushes to the rescue when we jump into a void, preventing the vertigo that comes with having no points of reference. It's when belief becomes a basis and form of understanding—which can be comforting but also dangerous. Religion, for example, is one way to organize faith or belief around a certain set of principles and rituals. But beyond whichever ideas or explanations our beliefs might provide us, they are also experiences. Something happens to the body.

Lydia Ourahmane is interested in how belief is registered on the body, in the ways it is made *material*. Even if belief is a mental state, she asks, does it also have physical repercussions? How does faith or belief materialize, as it rushes through bodies? Does it leave a mark of where it's been? And does it linger in empty buildings, like an echo, long after believers have left? What types of human belief systems has that Cyprus tree witnessed?

3

\_ \_ راعتسم \_ ةىسمش ةخرص ىأ \_ ضرعمل اذه ناونع سمشلا میف فصی عاتاب جرو جل رعصق صن نم كالذو ،ءاىشأل لك نىب ادىر جت رشكأل اور ابتعاب اذهب عهو معل رظنال الى حتسى عذل عيشال الهنوكال ماستم وه ام لك ـ ياتاب جروج يري ام يف ـ ل تثمت جروج نأ نَّىبتى سَدق مَ لك يأ ـ لاون لا يلع عصعو تاملك سَّدق مل فصو عف اضى ألم عتس ا دق عاتاب ، قىل خادل ا قبر جتال او ، ل أحمل : وهف ، ى رخ أ قرى شك ، تَ اذلُ الله نادقف قوشن و ، قور ذل ا قبر جتو وبرل باي غو عذل انذالم وه نامي إلى نأ ول يتمصل او الدبتل قل احو وه سَّدق ملاف ، ضما غلل انته جاوم دن ع ميل إ تفتلن دق تافتلال اذه لىبق انباتنت عال انومكل الله المال قلاح المال الله المال الله المال الله المال الله المال الم نأش منأش ، تاب اج إلى الب اندادم إى من الله عنه من الله عنه الله ع وه سَّدق مل انكلو اكلذ علا امو قال خال او مل عل او قطن مل قباسل ائىبلسل ا ءاض فا و و ،اوس فن قل واذل ا قل واسمل ،ماودل اىل عو ،ل عفل اب دوجوم من أل ،حارت جال لباق سدقملاو بسرحو مُدومش لب مُلىن دحال نستى مل ناو ابايغ وأ الصقن مفصوب مرابتخا نهمي عذل الحلذ وه ىذل او هو ،لى جستل اىف ءاوخ وأ ،ارى صق انوكس وأ عاض وض نم قىرشبال قبر جتال المسلمة المركك فشكى

> الى اق امتالاس كلع درا نع ملكتي ويداب نَل آن! لاخد! نع ،اقيطتس اللال لامكال يف صقن

The title of her exhibition, قيسمش ةخرص Solar Cry, is borrowed from a short text by Georges Bataille where he describes the sun as the most abstract of all objects because it's impossible to look at. As such, he claims, it represents all that is elevated and out of reach—the sacred. It turns out that Bataille also used many other words to describe the sacred: impossible, inner experience, absence of God, peak experience, rapturous self-loss, altered state, silence. If faith is what we turn to when faced with the unintelligible, the sacred is that sense of suspension that happens right before we do so. Religion might be there to provide answers, as is logic, science, morality, and so on, but the sacred is the stunned interrogation itself, the negative space that precedes and envelops all of those explanations. It can't be performed because it's always already there, and it can only ever be witnessed, never obtained. It's experienced as a lack, an absence, a short pause, a skip in the record, and it reveals all the noise that is the human experience.

Alain Badiou talks about an inaesthetics, about inserting a lack into an instance of plenitude, I write back. يه تمصلل اهيف قدايسلا تخرص ،نذا ،قيسمش قخرص ،تاوصألا نيب قمئاقلا لصاوفلا لكل ميظعت قخرص نيب ام يف مئاقلا نوكملا يه ،تاتكسلا لكل تاوجفلا يه عاقيالا قلخي يذلا وهف ،ققدلا وقدلا مضرعلا اذه يفو ديداخالا نيب ام يف قحتفنملا مضرعلا اذه يفو ديداخالا نيب ام يف قحتفنملا مضام تمص نم عاضفلا يف ام نام حروا ايديل دصحت راوزلا هدهاشي يكل اعيمج كلذ قئيمم ،رضاح تمصو تاخرصلا هذه ساس حال احيتي دق اقايس قلخت يهو فرخ حن نا هيف اهنكميو ،قرباع قلمول ولو ،قسدقملا الهي حرد عب اراثا

جتني اقايس قلخاً ناً ديراً . ةزج عمل الامتحا

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A Solar Cry, then, is one where silence is sovereign. It's a cry that thickens all the interruptions and the intervals between sounds—the suspended part of the beat that makes the rhythm. It's the gaps that open up between the grooves. With this exhibition, Ourahmane harvests the space's past and present silences, making them ready for visitors to witness. She creates a context where some of those sacred cries might be felt, even for a short moment, and where they can leave traces behind as they pass by.

Another ding and vibration.

I want to create a context that produces the potential for a miracle.

\_ \_ \_ اهىل ع اراث آكرت دق اهسفن ةنانفال عضام نأحضاو قبر جت يلع اضي أنايوطني اهدن عقديق علاو نامي إلى او نى وبأل ،رئاز جلا ىف نام حروا اىدىل تدلو برحلا ان الكم تىبل الكلذ ن الك المترس ألا مرىدت تن الكي عامجل ،ددجل انىقنت عمل اونىنمؤمل اقافرل ابتحرى ، هسفن تقول ا يف ميف نوعمتجي ان الكم مه حنميو نىفرطتملل قضرع مهل عجى عىمجتل اكلذ ناك قموك حل دض نوضوخي اوناك نيذل نيىمالسإلا ،دقع نم رثك أل ترمتسا قىساق قىل البرح قدبتسمل ،قاىسلا كلذىف الهل رصح ال دادع الهيف تحب ذف ةاي حو ، متاي حو ، ممسج عرمل عضو ين عي نامي إلى ان اك فيلقأ نم اءزج مهاي إو مسفن مل عجب ، رطح يف مل افطأ ةي عامت جال اطوغض لل الراجم قدي قعل حبصت قده طضم یف امتی رح یلع ً ققی صضم ،قلی ذرل اراصت عا داس جأل ا مُل عتف اهيل ع امهر كنت مل نا ، قكر حل وأريب عتلا قىبلس تاءاضف ىف اوشىعى نأ قرور ضلاب سانلا تعنم ،2002 ماع يف ،برحل تهتنان أ دعب يتحو ارى خأ الإ شدحى ملو ، عُم جتال الكشأ نم لكش عي أ قلودلا مه عاض فب نو بالطي سانل أدب نأ 2019 ماع عف عراوشل الالتحاو عداملا

فالتخم نامحروا ايديل تملعت ملك كان طسو امتايحب يلع فرعت نامحروا ايديل تملعت ليحرلاو بور مال الكشأ ورّزعت نأو لب ،امتقث اميلوتو ةيبلسل اتاءاضفلا ضماغل الإ ةيبلسل اتاءاضفلا امو ،امل امرابتخا تمصلاو تاذل انادقف قوشنو برلا بايغو لاحملاو ميلإ لوصول وأ اذه حاضيتسا نكمي الو سدّقمل و ماراكفأ نوكت ال تازجعمل نأل ،روصل وأ قغلل ربع ماودل على قسوسحميه امنإ لقأل على امتيادب يف عضب قدعبم على رادجب مطترت قصاصر لثم ،ةيدام ينتوي سأر على عقت قافت وأ ،تاصوب

The artist's own past has left its traces on her, obviously. For her, faith and belief contain the experience of war. She was born in Algeria, to parents who were active members of a Christian minority, and grew up near Oran, in a communelike safe house her family ran. It was a place that welcomed fellow believers and recent converts, giving them a place to be together. At the same time, this act of gathering made them exposed and vulnerable to the extremists who were fighting an authoritarian government in a brutal civil war that would last over a decade, with countless killed. In that context, to believe meant putting your body, your life, and your children's lives in danger—as a member of a persecuted minority. Belief became a contestation of social, political, and military pressures, which squeezed those bodies into a vice, limiting or preventing their freedom of speech and movement. By necessity, people learned to live within the negative spaces. Even after the war ended, in 2002, the state prohibited any form of public gathering and it was only recently, in 2019, that the people began claiming physical space and occupying the streets.

Living through all of this has taught Ourahmane about different forms of escape and departure. She has learned to recognize, trust, and even foster the experience of negative space—the unintelligible, the impossible, the absence of God, rapturous self-loss, silence, the sacred. This can't be articulated or arrived at via language or images because miracles are never ideas, at least not initially. They are always felt. They are material, like a bullet that hits a wall just inches away, or like an apple falling on Newton's head.

## نينط نينر 🔼

هذه ، هيصن ال اقلاس رلما يف هغيصب صن طبار ، هَرملا هغيصب صن طبار ، هَرملا ٢٠٠٩ ين سمل نم" مناون علم المناون على مناون على مناون على المناون على المناون على المناون على المناون المنا

وعاق يف ارتسكروأب نوكي ام مبشأ ةيسمش ةخرص ربع قدي و اربوأ قينغم ينغت قيسيئرلا ضرعلا توص منأك ،تاملكلا نم لاخ منكل شيدح قمث نيليجست ،سفننا علا برقأ ىقبي نأ مل حيتأو قغلاا نم ررحت .قغل علائلوحتلا الله عنستي نأ للبق فيقوأ أسفن نأك وأ ،قظل علائلوحتلا الله عنستي نأ للبق فيقوأ أسفن نأك وأ ،قكامس قلختف ضعب قوف المضعب تاوصألا مكارتت الله .قفر غلا لخاد الملقشو ،امتيدام وه الميف ممها نوكي يتأي المنيب كلذ عمو نالي جستال مجسني نأ نكمي علاء المدخ رشعي دق ،تقولا رورمبف ،رخال قوف المودخ نأش ،نمازتلا و مغانتلا نم قريغص تاظحل أشنت رخالا ني ييرس نيقشاع نيب نوكي يذلا

:نينر/نينط

داجي إ ةيفيكب ةلوغشم انأ . مقطنب ءيش

## -O Ding. Bzzz.

This time, it's a link to a PDF of "Who Touched Me?," where Fred Moten tells Wu Tsang that all we are are instruments.

Solar Cry is an orchestra. In the main gallery, an opera singer sings with herself. There is speech but no words, as if a voice had been liberated from language and allowed to remain closer to breath, or as if a breath had been stopped before it could become language. Stacking the voices on top of each other creates a thickness, where what counts is their materiality, their weight in the room. The recordings can't possibly be in synch, and yet, as they pile on top of each other, over time, they might find each other and open up small moments of synchronicity and resonance, like secret lovers.

Bzzzding.

I'm interested in how it's possible to speak something into existence.

نامحروا ايديل ترفاس ضرعملان نم قليلق رومش لبق تاليكشتو نايدو نم لمس ومو ،رجان يليساط يلا ميربكل عربك المربكل عمدود حل الملا الفيل أرشع قسمخ ميفو ،يكامو ايبيل عم دود حل الحل المن فيل قرشع يتنث الحلا عجرت ايف مك المسر الله سدقمل المبرجت المربحت المربك المبرجت المربك المربحت المربك المربك

A few months before the exhibition, Ourahmane traveled to Tassili N'Ajjer, a plateau of rock valleys and formations in the Algerian Sahara desert, on the border with Libya and Mali, where 15,000 cave paintings date back 12,000 years. The experience of the desert, much like that of the sacred, cannot be articulated via language but can only be witnessed. Like the sacred, the desert is too big to see. Like the ocean, it, too, is inhospitable to humankind. It swallows presence. She went there to listen to its absence and to record its silence.

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\_\_\_\_ توصاللا ، يودملا توصاللا ريغ نكي مل متعمس امو ناك لهسال نأ فوهكا تاموس تكح كانه رم ام لك وه فرض خلاب ای مدرم ،سان لاب ارماع مای أل نم موی ی ف اقى وطماى أل نم موى ىف تن اك ققطن مل نأ تملع ءابآل ان اك شيح ، رجين ل او رئ ازجل انيب قراجت ل حلملا نم تامار جولىك قشالتب مهءانبأ نوعىبى ةر وجأ مه عمو سانل بهذي مويل قي اكحل لوقت امبسح يليساطو بهذل انع اهب نوثحبي قيندعم راعشتسا قفرعم اوشرو نىذل قراوطل بعش نطوم اضى رجان اىدىل تطقتلا دقو قىساقلا مفورظ عملماعتلا اهن كم أورس قرجشل قيفار غتوف قروص نامحروأ ولك كالذيل على عبل غتت نأ ام ققى رطب راثآلا قمهلتسم ضرعمل ناردج عف امتبرجت سدت نىنسلا فالآدعب روخصلا على عقىقاب لزت مل عتلا - نايسنل اتدحت داسجا امتكرت عتل راثآل ا ءار و حطس علع قراش إقتبتم ،ءانبل عف رفحت ىقبت فوس قمال ع اهءارو قكرات ،ضرعمل اناردج تبثت بيدصلا ءاقب ،ضرعلا روضح يهتني امدعب جال عل ا عن قداع لم عتست عتل ا نم العور حت تاعامس قى وارحصل المتالى جستو ، رخأ رادج لخاد (توصل اب نىنسلا فالآ تمصب زتهت الهاعجت لىبىسىدلا نود قاطن و ـ لى حسسمل عار حصل قاطن لقن لبس نم نأل ةزج عمل اقاطن و ،دقت عمل اقاطن و ـ لي حسسمل ان امي إلى ا حبصى و المتاباي غل قكامس و المئاو خل نزو يطعى نأ ـ وو لوقى اذك نىنطلا وه عاقى إلى

What she heard was the loud voicelessness of all that had passed through there. The cave paintings told the story of how the plateau was once full of people and lush with green. She learned that the area had once been a route for trade between Algeria and Niger, where fathers would sell their sons for the price of three kilos of salt—as the story goes. Today, people go there with metal detectors and search the sand for lost gold. Tassili N'Ajjer is also home to the Tuareg people, who inherited the knowledge of how to handle its harsh conditions. Ourahmane took a photograph of a Cyprus tree that somehow survives it all.

She embeds her experience into the gallery walls. Inspired by the marks still visible on the rocks after thousands of years—ones made by bodies who have defied being forgotten—she etches into the building, tagging a surface behind the gallery walls, and leaves behind a sign that will outlast the exhibition's presence, like an echo. She installs transducer speakers (usually used for sound therapy) inside another wall, and her sub-decibel recordings of the desert make it vibrate with thousands of years of silence. Because one way to transmit the impossible scale of the desert—and the impossible scale of faith, belief, or the miraculous—is to give weight to its emptiness, to thicken its absences. The beat becomes the buzz, Fred tells Wu.

1.

رازتهال اىلع فتاهل تطبض نينط نينط نينط نينط تينط تينط تينط عنينط توليخ قلام المامين ا

https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=gQvcGVhJ334,
ايتابيهل قرضاحه
مادرتسمأ يف سيمولروف
الوصو انتاعرس نمازن انن!
نم ايعامج ربعن عاقي! عل!
قايحلا على! عفادلا نع ملالخ
ملاعلا كرحن ، ققيرطلا هذهبو
ءارعشل انوكي نا ينستيو
قروشلا نمز يبقارم

مجلوي و دسجل اطروي و دسجل على عرشؤي عامتسال الله مي ، رخآ ءيش يأ وأ قطنمل او أ ةغلل انم طيسو ريغبو ، اعم زته نضر عمل اير غاز نحنو في حتي هل عجيو و دسجل طاقن تمصل و توصل الهشأ حبصت بتال آل انم تقو و داسجال اذا في ، تار اركتل على عقم الق قصقر يف ، طغض في ضماغ ام ءيش ل امتح اقه جاوم يف

نامربوه ينوطناً

Bzzzz. Bzzzz. Bzzzz. I had set it to vibrate-only. A last one:

https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=gQvcGVhJ334, a lecture by Hypatia Vourloumis in Amsterdam —We synchronize our tempos to find a rhythm through which the urge to live is expressed collectively. In this way, we set the world in motion, where poets can become the timekeepers of revolution.

Listening impacts the body. It implicates and *enlists* the body. Without being mediated by language, logic, or anything else, it touches the body and makes it move. As visitors to this exhibition, we vibrate together, like a chorus of instruments. Sounds and silences become pressure points, in a choreography of repetitions, for bodies to come up against the potential for something unintelligible.

-Anthony Huberman

**Programs:** 

February 12, 2020 6:30pm, Free

Anthony Huberman & Lydia Ourahmane are in conversation.

March 7, 2020 2pm, Free

In response to the exhibition, sound artist Letitia Sonami presents a performance that activates empty space.



Visit wattis.org for more information.

Programs are curated by Diego Villalobos.

Lydia Ourahmane: قيس ه خرص Solar Cry is on view at CCA Wattis Institute from February 6 – March 28, 2020.

Lydia Ourahmane (b. 1992, Saïda, Algeria) lives and works in Algiers. She received her B.F.A. from Goldsmiths, University of London in 2014 and has exhibited her work in group exhibitions such as Manifesta 12 (Palermo, Italy, 2018), Songs for Sabotage, the New Museum Triennial (New York, 2018), and the 15th Istanbul Biennial (2017), among others. Chisenhale presented her solo show *The you in us* in 2018. CCA Wattis Institute's exhibition is the first solo museum exhibition of her work in the United States.

Lydia Ourahmane: قيس مَشْ قَحْر كُوْ Solar Cry is curated by Anthony Huberman and organized by Diego Villalobos. It received the 2019 Ellsworth Kelly Award, made possible by the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. The artist thanks Ahmed, Yasmine Allaouat, Myriam Amroun, Khaled Bouzidi, Hiba Ismail, Eliel Jones, Donna and Juan Kong, Lahsen, Sophia Al Maria, Moussa, Sarah Ourahmane, Amine Ali Pacha, Philip Perkins, Nikola Printz, and all the staff at CCA Wattis Institute.

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