

**Stéphanie Saadé***Building a Home with Time***Opening: August 27, 2016, 6:30 to 9pm****Performance: August 28, 2016, 4pm****August 28 – October 1, 2016**

Stéphanie Saadé's works take as a departure point the moment when one becomes estranged from his/her surroundings. The artist explores the shape, or the shapes of distance, and makes them visible. A process of Artificial Nostalgia is developed, through which strange locations, familiar to the artist, are assembled. The nature of links is questioned, their persistence or their ephemerality.

In her exhibition *Building a Home with Time* Lebanese artist Saadé explores various aesthetics of time-space, derived in part from her personal history, memories of locality and childhood, ruminations about displacement and in so doing relates poetry to the realm of time. It features entirely new works by Saadé, including *Magic Hours*, *Building a Home with Time* and *A Play of One Actress*.

*Building a Home with Time* (2016), the centerpiece of the exhibition, is a large-scale installation, recalling the spatial semblance of a room. The room is proportional to the artist's childhood room, and has been built with 2,832 bricks. This number is the exact number of days between Saadé's date of birth and the end of the Lebanese Civil War. This incidentally also corresponds roughly to the number of days in early childhood, which ends around the age of eight. Inseparable and aligned, this violent political event, the war, and what is usually thought of to be a very sweet moment in life, early childhood, give shape to a space. With its simplicity this rough construction alludes to a shelter, whether it is one that children like to play in, or one where cover is sought; It is also reminiscent of unfinished houses, visible all over Lebanon, never completed but playing an important aesthetical role in the Lebanese landscape. After the end of the exhibition, the room will be destroyed.

In another newly realized work, *A Play of One Actress*, Saadé looks at the surreality and construction of memory and personality: What do we selectively or unconsciously remember or grasp onto and why? In which instances does memory fail us and why? Saadé has asked a 33-year-old actress, Minna Wüdrich, to recall, for the period of one month—the month of her birthday—all the verses she remembers from all of the theatre performances that she had ever played in. Fragments of plays surface, while others are completely forgotten. Wüdrich enacts various distinct characters, mainly but not only, women. From the cultivated and witty spirit of the Devil, Mephistopheles, in *Faust I* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1808) to the loyal *Julie in Danton's Death* by Georg Büchner (1835). An alloy of literary texts is constructed, from classics to contemporary plays, spanning from 1784 to 2013. The work is made up of three parts: a book, a performance and a video. The actress will perform live her own recollections on August 28th. Thereafter the video will accompany the book.

**Counter Space** is an independent exhibition and project venue in Zurich, where contemporary and process-like methods in artistic practice are presented. The programme is curated by Linda Jensen and Angelo Romano; Yasmin Kiss (Research and Text); Vicenta Rodrigo-Jiménez (Administration)

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