

# MAC

# VAL

Full details of exhibitions and programming at MAC VAL at [www.macval.fr](http://www.macval.fr)

Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne

Place de la Libération — Vitry-sur-Seine (94)

T +33 (0)1 43 91 64 20

[contact@macval.fr](mailto:contact@macval.fr)  
[www.macval.fr](http://www.macval.fr)

## Opening hours

Tuesday to Friday, 10 am–6 pm. Saturday, Sunday and public holidays, noon to 7 pm. Last admissions 30 minutes before closing. Closed on 1 January, 1 May, 15 August and 25 December.



Around the exhibition

Sunday 3 November 2019

4pm

**Gestural tour by Levent Beskardes, artist and hearing impaired actor and sign artist.**

Free, information: Luc Pelletier  
[accessibilite@macval.fr](mailto:accessibilite@macval.fr) or (+33) 1 43 91 64 22



Saturday 9 Novembre 2019

1.30pm

**TAXITRAM**

Tour of the exhibition by the curators.

3pm: departure by bus for the CAC Brétigny. Tour of the exhibition by Dana Michel and Yoan Sorin, "Slash Universe". Performance of Yoan Sorin.

Information and mandatory registration:  
<http://tram-idf.fr/parcours/>

Thursday 14 November 2019

10 am at MAC VAL

3.30 pm at Espace Jean Vilar à Arcueil

**Festival "Les Écrans documentaires"**

Dialogue between the films of Collectif Mohamed and the video work of Nil Yalter.

MAC VAL: Free with museum admission ticket

Espace Jean Vilar:

1, rue Paul Signac, 94110 Arcueil

[infos@lesecransdocumentaires.org](mailto:infos@lesecransdocumentaires.org)

Full price: 5,20 €

Reduced rate (students, retirees, unemployed): 4,75 €

Saturday 17 Novembre 2019

3-6pm

**Critical interludes around Nil Yalter**

Free with museum admission ticket

3pm

**Nil Yalter Lecture, translated into LSF.**



4pm

Discussion with Gaye Petek, Turkish immigration specialist.

5pm

Tour of the exhibition Christian Havet, shaman.

Sunday 1 December 2019

4pm

Tour of the exhibition by the curators.

Free

4.30pm

Sign language tour by artist and deaf lecturer Audrey Taguet.

Free, information: Luc Pelletier  
[accessibilite@macval.fr](mailto:accessibilite@macval.fr) or (+33) 1 43 91 64 22



Sunday 8 December 2019

4pm

**"AWARE. Les visites du 8"**  
Tour of the exhibition by Fabienne Dumont, co-curator.

Information and registration: [info@aware-art.org](mailto:info@aware-art.org)

Sunday 2 February 2020

3-6pm

Unpublished performances by choreographers Ana Pi and Radhouane El Meddeb.

Free

Publication

The monography published to accompany the exhibition at MAC VAL is the first comprehensive survey of Nil Yalter's work, covering the whole of the artist's career and placing the works in their cultural, political and social context. This book is the result of twenty years of companionship between the artist and the author, the fruit of countless discussions and detailed analyses of the works.

*Nil Yalter*

MAC VAL Editions, 288 pages, French-English bilingual, 17×24 cm, 23€. Text by Fabienne Dumont.

# TRANS/HUMANCE

## Exhibition by Nil Yalter

Curators: Fabienne Dumont and Frank Lamy, assisted by Julien Blanpied and Ninon Duhamel

# English

From 5 October 2019 to 9 February 2020

“**TRANS/HUMANCE**” immerses visitors in a powerful discourse, with words that speak both to our sensibility and to our desire for rational knowledge. These pieces are emblematic of the struggles and desires of a given period yet resonate powerfully with our own, even if the influence of ethnography and political and social events place them within specific places and histories. In this multimedia ensemble, moving images are associated with drawings, gelatin silver photographs and Polaroid, paintings and collages of materials and texts, adapted to the new computer-based technologies of the 1990s–2000s. “**TRANS/HUMANCE**” offers a magnificent panorama of sixty years of work by a major international artist.

Fabienne Dumont,  
co-curator of the exhibition

“**TRANS/HUMANCE**” is the first major museum exhibition devoted to Yalter’s work, a Franco-Turkish militant artist, born in 1938 in Cairo, Egypt. This monography offers a retrospective of this body of work which takes a feminist and marxist perspective on such issues as immigration, gender and class. Discrimination is the driving theme of this multimedia body of work combining drawing, video, painting, performance, text, photography and objects. This exhibition is also accompanied by the first monographic catalogue about the artist’s work to be published in French.

Art critic Georges Boudaille wrote in 1979: “Nil Yalter sees herself as an instrument, an amplifier, in favour of almost obsessional themes: the situation of all immigrant workers and the position of women in all societies.” Her works, her forms derive from her documentary or sociological material. She explores the conditions of excluded populations or individuals – female and male immigrant workers, exiled communities, women prisoners – by means of investigations and interviews. Nil Yalter gives a voice to individuals who express the difficulty of their everyday life in their quarter, town, country, or society.

“**TRANS/HUMANCE**” sets up connections between different periods, from the constructivist paintings of the 1960s to two new works conceived for MAC VAL (*Niqab Blues*, 2018-19 and *Gitane*, 1980-2019), via the socio-critical projects of the 1970s and 1980s. The displays includes the first recreation of Yalter’s crucial 1983 exhibition at the ARC “C’est un dur métier que l’exil,” in which men and women speak of their living and working conditions in the secret workshops of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. The exhibition takes on the set of works which constitute an important record of immigration in France in the 1970s and 80s, but also reflects the artist’s feminist and marxist positions.

The exhibition “**TRANS/HUMANCE**” follows the one organised by FRAC Lorraine in 2016 and is designed to be complimentary to the one organised at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne and at the Hessel Museum of Art in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

#### Biographical notes

Nil Yalter was born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1938 but grew up in Turkey, where she studied painting at Robert College in Istanbul. Before her work took a political turn, she developed a form of lyrical abstraction. In 1963 she exhibited abstract paintings alongside the work of other Turkish painters at the third Biennale de Paris.

She moved to Paris in 1965 and her work entered a period influenced by russian constructivism and geometrical abstraction.

Travelling in Turkey in 1971, she was deeply affected by the repressive violence inflicted on the nomadic peoples there (Turkmens, Yoruks, Kurds).

Returning to France, and influenced by the practices of the ethnologist Bernard Dupaigne, she worked on her first solo show, “Topak Ev,” which took place at the ARC/Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 1973.

In 1976 she formed Femmes en Lutte with Esther and Mathilde Ferrer, Dorothee Selz and Isabelle Champion-Métadier. This group,

which disbanded in 1980, fought for the fair reception of work by women artists.

In the 1970s Yalter was one of the first women artists to work with a Sony Portapak video camera, using it as a tool in exploring societal, political and feminist issues. In November 1974 she took part in “Vidéo,” an exhibition at the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, with *La Femme sans tête (ou La Danse du ventre)*, filmed specially for the occasion.

In 1976 she exhibited in the Turkish Pavillion at the Fête de l’Humanité, showing the posters constituting her work *Grève générale en Turquie*, conceived in only twenty days as a response to the first general strike held in Turkish factories in September of that year.

In 1978 she became a member of the Turkish communist group, as Communism was illegal in Turkey and the group’s existence in France was secret. It had links with Eastern Bloc countries. In 1979 she founded the Amicale France-Turquie with Joël Boutteville.

On 23 February 1980, Yalter performed a series of *Rituels* with Nicole Croiset at the ARC/Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Since then, she still explores the figure of the shaman in popular rituals and beliefs.

From 1980 to 1995 she taught “video art and installations” at the Sorbonne (Saint-Charles site).

In 1983, ten years after her first solo show at the ARC/Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville in Paris, Yalter put on the exhibition “C’est un dur métier que l’exil” (Exile Is a Hard Job). In 2012 she reused images from her 1976-77 project on Turkish immigrant workers in Paris (*La communauté des travailleurs turcs à Paris*) in a series of wildcat poster campaigns, the first of which was organised in Spain, also under the title “Exile Is a Hard Job,” each time translated in several local languages. This poster series was reactivated for the exhibition “**TRANS/HUMANCE**” notably in the streets of Vitry-sur-Seine.

In 1992 Yalter was invited to take part in the international project “Trans-Voices: French and American artists address a changing world order,” for which she proposed a video installation entitled *Rites circulaires* in response to the question put by the curators about artistic responses to the social changes and major problems of the contemporary world.

Since the early 1990s and throughout the 2000s, Yalter’s work has developed in response to the

evolution of digital technology, using this as an opportunity to go back over old works and themes and hybridise them in a new aesthetic.

Recently, the works *Lapidation* (2009), *Niqab Blues* (2019) and *Gitane* (1980–2019) have shown the evolution of Yalter’s working process as she continues to explore themes related to the representation of women on the Internet and the ways in which images circulate on a planetary scale.

Nil Yalter won the AWARE prize in 2018 (Archives of Women Artists Research & Exhibitions).

#### Sources:

Aline Dallier, “L’itinéraire de Nil Yalter”, *Les Cahiers du GRIF*, nos. 9-10, 1975.

Fabienne Dumont, *Nil Yalter. A la confluence des mémoires migrantes, féministes, ouvrières et des mythologies*, Vitry-sur-Seine, MAC VAL, 2019.

#### A step further

#### Resource centre

A team of documentary specialists is on hand to help you continue and extend your visit with a broad range of reference books.

Admission free, Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 pm and Saturday, noon to 7 pm  
cdm.macval@macval.fr or 01 43 91 14 64

#### Guides tours

Free museum tours included in admission ticket on Wednesday at 2.30pm (during the school holidays), Saturday and Sunday at 4pm.

The MAC VAL thanks its partners:

