

IKON

Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham
b1 2hs
tel. +44 (0) 121 248 0708 / fax. +44 (0) 121 248 0709
website. www.ikon-gallery.co.uk
Ikon Gallery is a registered charity no. 528892

Yto Barrada

RIFFS

Deutsche Bank's Artist of the Year 2011

16 May – 8 July 2012

This is a significant exhibition by Yto Barrada (b. 1971, Paris), whose photographs, films, publications, installations and sculptures engage with the everyday life and times of Tangier, her hometown situated on the Strait of Gibraltar, Morocco. The title of the show, *RIFFS*, simultaneously refers to the musical term, to the *Cinéma Rif*, home of the Tangier Cinémathèque which Barrada directs, and to the nearby Rif mountains, a stronghold of anti-colonial insurgency in Morocco.

Yto Barrada grew up between Tangier and Paris, where she studied history and political science at the Sorbonne, and subsequently attended the International Center of Photography in New York. Her practice, which combines the techniques of documentary with a more meditative approach to imagery, drove her to return home after sixteen years abroad. Now based in Tangier, she continues to engage with the complex realities around her whilst avoiding recourse to the spectacular or melodramatic.

This exhibition, curated by Friedhelm Hütte and Marie Muracciole, features selected works from past series as well as new photos and films, displaying the full range of media in which the artist works. In her first series *A Life Full of Holes: The Strait Project* (2002), Barrada evokes a Tangier where postcolonial history has met one of its dead-ends. The more recent *Iris Tingitana* (2007) extended this inquiry to the fast-growing outer edges of the city, where the monocultural vision of planners and developers threatens to homogenise landscape and human lives. The films *Beau Geste* (2009) and *Hand-Me-Downs* (2011) rearticulate spaces, sounds and meanings. Themes of memory and obliviousness, history and unreliable narratives, refracted in the details and fragmentation of everyday life, are reflected strongly.

One of the recurring figures of the show is that of the tree - physical trees and family trees - serving as metaphors of resistance and strength, of developing levels of vision, of generational transmission, of changing times, of shelter, regeneration and nutrition, and also of decor and tourism.

Yto Barrada is Deutsche Bank's 'Artist of the Year 2011,' an award not based on a financial reward, but positioned as an integral part of Deutsche Bank's commitment to contemporary art. The programme includes a solo exhibition at the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin which travels to Ikon and other museums, a publication and acquisitions for the Deutsche Bank Collection.

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The exhibition is also supported by Institut Francais and Institut Francais du Royaume-Uni. It is accompanied by a publication, produced by Deutsche Bank.

Ends.

Note to Editors:

1. A selection of images is shown below.
2. Ikon is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am - 6pm. Admission is free.
3. Ikon Gallery is a registered charity and receives core funding from Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered address: 1 Oozells Square, Birmingham B1 2HS.
4. For more information, high-res images and to arrange an interview with the curator please contact Helen Stallard on 0774 033 9604 or email h.stallard@ikon-gallery.co.uk



Yto Barrada
Arbre généalogique (Family Tree), 2005
C-Print, 150 x 150cm

Courtesy Yto Barrada & Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Hamburg/Beirut

Yto Barrada
Radeau dans figuier étrangleur (Ficus Macrophylla) (Raft in Strangler Figtree),
2005/2010

C-print, 150 x 150cm

Courtesy Yto Barrada & Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Hamburg/Beirut

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Yto Barrada
Briques (Bricks), 2003/2011

C-print, 150 x 150cm

Courtesy Yto Barrada & Galerie Sfeir-Semler Hamburg/Beirut



Yto Barrada
La Cage aux singes (Monkey Cage),
2008/2011

C-print, 125 x 125 cm

Courtesy Yto Barrada & Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Hamburg/Beirut