

GALLERY 2

Made in Germany

## Slavs and Tatars

Exhibition: September 18 – October 22, 2016

Lecture Performance: Sunday, September 18, 7:30PM

When we think of foreign powers in the Middle East, we often think of France, England or the United States. For their second exhibition at The Third Line, *Made in Germany*, Slavs and Tatars look to the unlikely story of German Orientalism and what it can tell us about Europe's contemporary relationship to Islam.



Slavs and Tatars, *Made in Germany*, 2015, Vacuum-formed plastic, acrylic paint, 64 x 91 cm

On the 8th of November 1898, during a visit to Damascus, Kaiser Wilhelm II raised a toast to the Ottoman Sultan and pledged his friendship and the friendship of Germany to 300 million Muslims. In the early months of the First World War, Germany helped convince Sultan Mehmed Reshad V to declare jihad on 11 November 1914, part of a strategy to “set the East aflame.” Though global, this jihad was entirely partial: against enemy infidels (France, England, Russia) but on the side of other infidels (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire).

The publication of a propaganda newspaper called *El-Dschihad* in Urdu, Russian, Arabic, Tatar, and Georgian was perhaps the most curious piece of this pie. Intended to stoke anti-imperial sentiment in territories belonging to the Entente Powers, *El-Dschihad* was aimed at Muslim POWs held at a camp in Wünsdorf, outside Berlin, who would, ostensibly, return to the front on the side of Germany and the Ottomans or to their homelands in an effort to spread their new liberationist message. Today, on the same grounds of the camp stands one of the largest refugee centers in Europe.

Presented for the first time since their exhibition at the Hamburger Bahnhof for the 2015 German Nationalgalerie Preis, *Reverse Dschihad* speaks to the mishaps of Germany's late arrival to empire: in each language of the original, the mirror offers a distorted reflection of oneself. A set of prayer-beads, *PraySway* offers visitors the opportunity to swing between the two, often distant, poles of sacred and profane activity that are at the heart of Orientalism.

Two new works from the artists' signature *Tranny Tease* series, exploring the pitfalls of transliteration, further address the story of German orientalism. In *Dschihad*,

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“dschunglefiieber”, “Dschidida”, and “dschamaa” show the awkward onslaught of four consecutive consonants–DSCH–to approximate the [dʒ] phoneme in German, marking these ideas and words as irrevocably foreign or other.

The renowned mark of quality, *Made in Germany*, is spelled out phonetically using Arabic letters, a military alphabet proposed by the Ottoman minister of war, Enver Pasha for wartime correspondence. The English used the moniker to mock Germany’s behind-the-scenes role in the declaration of *jihad* or holy war, by an Ottoman Sultan, whom few Muslims looked to for spiritual guidance.

*A rare, original copy of the publication will be presented for the run of the exhibition.*

*To mark their tenth year of practice, Slavs and Tatars will present a mid-career retrospective at three institutions: CCA Ujazdowski, Warsaw; CAC Vilnius, and Salt, Istanbul.*

## Lecture Performance: I Utter Other

Sunday, September 18, 2016 at 7:30PM | English

What does it mean for one east to look to and at another one? Can the romanticized romanticize? From Poles in the service of the Tsar to Persian Presbyterians, *I Utter Other* looks at the curious case of Slavic Orientalism in the Russian Empire and early USSR. Slavic Orientalism offers a crucial counterpoint if not antecedent to the received wisdom of Saidian Orientalism. Despite the radical transition from Tsarism to Bolshevism, the study of the East in the East complicates notions of identity politics and knowledge in the service of power, offering a coherent post-colonial critique some 60 years avant la lettre.

*I Utter Other* has been presented at HKW, Berlin; Asia Art Archives, Hong Kong; Mitchell Center for Performing Arts, University of Houston; Salt Istanbul, Muzeum Tatrzańska, Zakopane.

### About Slavs and Tatars

Slavs and Tatars was founded in 2006 and has exhibited in major institutions globally. Their work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at venues including MoMA, NY (2012), Secession, Vienna (2012), Kunsthalle Zurich (2014), Dallas Museum of Art (2014), REDCAT, Los Angeles (2013), GfZK, Leipzig (2014), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2015), Blaffer Art Museum, Houston (2015).

In 2015, they were nominated for Germany’s prestigious Nationalgalerie Preis and their installation at the Hamburger Bahnhof won the audience choice award. The artists have participated in several group shows: at the Tate Modern, Centre Pompidou, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, 10th Sharjah, 8th Berlin, 3rd Thessaloniki, and 9<sup>th</sup> Gwangju Biennials. An upcoming survey marking their ten-year practice will be presented at CCA Ujazdowski, Warsaw; Pejman Foundation, Tehran; CAC Vilnius; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; and Salt Galata, Istanbul through 2017.

Slavs and Tatars have published several books, including *Kidnapping Mountains* (Book Works, 2009), *Love Me, Love Me Not: Changed Names* (onestar press, 2010), *Not Moscow Not Mecca* (Revolver/Secession, 2012), *Khhhhhhh* (Mousse/Moravia Gallery, 2012), *Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi’ite Showbiz* (Book Works, 2013), *Mirrors for Princes* (JRP-Ringier, 2015). A second edition of their translation of the legendary Azeri satire *Molla Nasreddin* will be released in early 2017.

## GALLERY 1

### Hayv Kahraman, *Audible Inaudible*

September 18 – October 22, 2016

The Third Line is pleased to present *Audible Inaudible*, Hayv Kahraman's fourth solo show in Dubai. Hayv returns with a new body of works on linen, wood and paper through which she narrates the violence of sound and the trauma connected to her past, and those of many others, as an Iraqi immigrant.

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### About The Third Line

The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary Middle Eastern artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

The Third Line's book wing *Works on Paper* publishes books by associated artists from the region. Books published to date include *Presence* by photographer Lamy Gargash (2008), *In Absentia* by Tarek Al-Ghoussein (2009), *Cosmic Geometry*, an extensive monograph on Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarman, edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Karen Marta (2011), and the self-titled treatise *Huda Lutfi* about the artist's Cairo based practice.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtekar, Amir H. Fallah, Arwa Abouon, Babak Golkar, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Golnaz Fathi, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Laleh Khorramian, Lamy Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarman, Poursan Jinchi, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Sherin Guirguis, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al-Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

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