

Berrechid 81: A look back at a collective experience at the edge of art and psychiatry

A Public Program by Abdeslam Ziou Ziou
31 May – 5 June 2021

ThinkArt
130 Boulevard Zerktouni
Casablanca, Morocco



Group photo in front of Dr Ziou Abdellah's service accommodation in Berrechid.
June 1981. Archives Dr Ziou Ziou

In the hot early summer of 1981, an unusual activity takes place at the psychiatric hospital in Berrechid, Morocco. Painters, writers, directors and intellectuals are invited to share the daily life of patients for a week. This experience will unlock the hospital, a 'sanctuary of madness' known all over Morocco, to its immediate environment. Murals are made, concerts, discussions and other happenings are organised, the press is invited. The citizens of Berrechid will finally be at liberty to visit this 'fortress of madness' for the first time. The main idea behind this event is to bring to light the conditions of patient care at the hospital. There is also a firm will to bring in other segments of society, especially artists, into the narrative around patient care.

This experience is part of a global approach that Dr Ziou Ziou Abdellah adopted in 1975. By opening up to anti-psychiatry practices and with a growing interest in popular forms of treatment of mental illness beyond psychiatry, Dr Ziou Ziou's project synthesised different forms and modalities of mental health care in Morocco. Unfortunately, for various reasons, this dynamic was halted and later forgotten.

Through an in-depth research of archive material (oral, written and visual) from this period, Dr Ziou Ziou's son Abdeslam reconstructs the threads of a family history that cross national and transnational collective dynamics. He explores questions such as how to make visible a research in the folds of family intimacy? How to abrogate a planned oblivion? And how do collective dynamics come to life and die?

Part of the School of Casablanca

The *School of Casablanca* is a collaborative project that takes as its starting point the legacy of the Casablanca Art School and its innovative pedagogical methods and exhibition strategies in 1960s Morocco.

KW Institute for Contemporary Art and Sharjah Art Foundation, in collaboration with Goethe-Institut Marokko, ThinkArt and Zamân Books & Curating have initiated the *School of Casablanca*. The project includes research residencies, public programs, a digital archive and a touring exhibition of new works created by the residents as well as an exhibition of historical works by the artists who were originally associated with the Casablanca Art School. Launched in 2020, the initiative will continue through 2024.

This public program accompanies Abdeslam Ziou Ziou's research residency at ThinkArt in Casablanca, Morocco, which ran from October 2020 – May 2021. The programme marks a milestone in his research and field work, which contribute to an ongoing investigation/ installation on familial and public archives of the Berrechid Psychiatric Hospital in Morocco and its ground-breaking therapeutic practices at the junction of art and psychiatry.

Open Studio

Monday, 31 May – Thursday, 3 June 2021

1:00 – 7:00 pm (Moroccan time)

Friday, 4 June 2021

10:00 am – 1:00 pm (Moroccan time)

Berrechid 81: Installation of archives

This installation of archives reveals the different steps undertaken for a research around a collective experience for mental healthcare in Morocco between 1975 and 1986. This work has been fueled by a constant dialogue with artists and researchers Ahmad Karmouni, Imane Zoubii, Saïd Rami, Youssef El Foutouhi, Nourredine Ezzeraf, and members of the *Les Démissionnaires du Brunch* group.

Due to health and safety requirements in place, the Open Studio is limited to ten people at a time. We will do our best to accommodate everyone, in compliance with social distancing measures. If you wish to register in advance, please send us an email at info@schoolofcasablanca.com specifying the date and time of your visit.

Online Studio

Tuesday, 1 June 2021

5:00 – 7:00 pm (Moroccan time)

Zoom presentation by Abdeslam Ziou Ziou on the outcome of his six-month research residency followed by a discussion with the curators, fellows and partners of the School of Casablanca.

Moderated by Salma Lahlou.

The presentation will be in French with simultaneous translation into English. Link to registration to be specified.

Closed Studio

Friday, 4 June 2021 / Psychiatry

12:00 – 6:00 pm (Moroccan time)

Looking at the 'Pavilion 36' experience in light of today's psychiatric practices

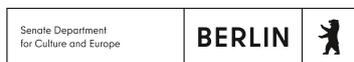
Taking an innovative therapeutic experience around Pavilion 36 in 1975 in Casablanca as a starting point, this meeting aims to discuss the different forms of mental healthcare in contemporary Morocco. Various practitioners, researchers and psychiatrists will debate the current methods of psychiatric care vis-à-vis the treatments that took place in the past at some institutions in Morocco (Berrechid, Salé, Casablanca).

Saturday, 5 June 2021 / Art and Psychiatry

1:00 – 8:00 pm (Moroccan time)

A (great?) time

Lunch and a group conversation with the artist-participants of the Berrechid experience, Toni Maraini and Dr Ziou Ziou Abdellah, followed by a discussion with invited attendees (Moroccan emergent artists, psychiatrists and researchers).



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The *School of Casablanca* is initiated by KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin and Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah in collaboration with ThinkArt, Casablanca, Zamân Books & Curating, Paris, and Goethe-Institut Marokko.

Public programming for the School of Casablanca is realized with additional support of ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), Berlin/Stuttgart.

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