

# Nadia Kaabi-Linke

The art of Nadia Kaabi-Linke is related to places and their histories; it is as time-specific as site-specific. The installations and objects, as well as her pictorial works, are anchored in constellations of cultural and historical, social and political contexts and refer to a certain place or to coincidental events. As it is embedded in urban fields, her work is also intertwined with socio-psychological topics: the structure of perception, memory, and geographically and politically constructed identities. Thus her work articulates the interlocking of public and personal issues and reveals the embodiment of time in our experiences by retracing the recent past. Even though she changes media and her forms of expression, there is a particular coherence in her artistic work which results from one and the same motive: Nadia Kaabi-Linke performs a kind of archaeology of contemporary life, which exposes the survivals of the past. One could say her production is about manufacturing strangeness in what we usually consider ordinary.

She makes use of many different media, artefacts, symbolisms and codes, which circulate in everyday life. As Nadia Kaabi-Linke's work addresses elements of popular culture, one could see her approach within the context of the tradition of Pop Art or classic site-specific art. Surely, these movements, which are not closely related to one another, inspired her methods. Nevertheless her artworks distinguish themselves from these forms on account of a highly conceptual use of materials and objects. Also present in her work is a unique performative force, which she generates through her active and constructive use of disturbing contradictions. She seems to bring together beauty and violence, refinement and brutality, the sublime and vulgarity.

Perhaps there is just one sentence which can precisely describe the very object of Nadia Kaabi-Linke's critical endeavour; it is Walter Benjamin's epitaph: "There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism." The truth of this statement can be as shocking as it is clandestine, as cruel as artful, and sometimes it is as humorous as it is serious. We can see it in the work of Nadia Kaabi-Linke.

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Timo Kaabi-Linke