

# À voix haute // Voices aloud

## Group exhibition ///

with Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Juan-Manuel Echavarria, l'Encyclopédie de la parole, Myriam Van Imschoot, Steffani Jemison, Katia Kameli, Camille Llobet, Violaine Lochu, Newsha Tavakolian, Christine Sun Kim.  
from january 25<sup>th</sup> to march 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Guest curator : Ninon Duhamel

## PROGRAM

### Saturday, january 25<sup>th</sup>

5 pm - 8 pm

- Opening, with the artists.

### Thursday, january 30<sup>th</sup>

1 pm

- 15 minut' chrono, free

### Saturday, february 1<sup>st</sup>

11 am

- Visite Grand format  
with the curator, free

### Thursday, february 6<sup>th</sup>

10 am

- Les matinales, sensory path  
6-36 months old, 5€

### Wednesday, february 12<sup>th</sup>

10 :45 am // 7 :30 pm

- Les P'tites mains, workshop for  
3-5 & 6-8 years old, 5€

### Wednesday, february 26<sup>th</sup>

10 :30 am // 4 pm

- Professionnal day

with Camille Llobet, plastician &  
Mathilde Jolivet, trainer for the Réunion  
des Musées Nationaux (impeped  
audiences specialist).

« In frnor of art pieces : from  
perception to transmission »  
Visit and workshop dedicated to  
perception.

### Saturday, march 7<sup>th</sup>

5 pm

- Closing, projection of Ayat Najafi's  
movie, *No Land's song*, with Sara  
Najafi, Parvin Namazi, Sayeh Sodeyfi,  
Elise Caron, Jeanne Cherhal, Emel  
Mathlouthi.

In Iran, since the revolution of 1979,  
women are no longer allowed to sing  
in public as soloists - at least in front of  
men. Defying censorship and taboos,  
the young composer Sara Najafi is  
determined to organize an official  
concert for solo female singers. In  
order to support their fight, Sara and  
the Iranian singers, Parvin Namazi  
and Sayeh Sodeyfi, invite three female  
singers from Paris, Elise Caron,  
Jeanne Cherhal and Emel Mathlouthi,  
to join them in Tehran and collaborate  
on their musical project.

Part of the Festival *les Images  
Vagabondes*.



Newsha Tavakolian, *Portrait of singer Sahar Lotfi, Tehran, Iran, 2010*  
© Newsha Tavakolian / Magnum Photos

« The voice is drawn and set somewhere between nature and culture, body and language, speech and music, between the intimately personal and the deeply social; a symbol of the human condition and a sign of our individual identity [...] »<sup>1</sup>

From our first babbling, the voice is exercised, modulated and transformed as if it were malleable matter. Indistinguishable from the body's envelope, the voice rises from our most organic, innermost regions to echo what we are experiencing inside. Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, women in Iran have been banned from singing alone in public, unless accompanied, drowned out even, by male voices. Their singing is considered by the religious and moral authorities as a call to sensual pleasures, and condemned to silence, confined to the enclosed, private space of the home.

If the voice can be the object of such suppression, because of its deep connection to the body and the emotions it triggers, there must be something inside it that transcends and is expressed through it: to have a voice is to exercise one's individuality.

« To make one's voice heard », « one voice, one vote », « to have a say in the matter », « to listen to the people's voice » ...so many expressions reflect the relationship between voice, speech and power. In ethnomusicology, the study

1. Joëlle Deniot (dir.), *Dire la voix, approche transversale des phénomènes vocaux*, [Expressing the voice, a transversal approach to vocal phenomena], L'Harmattan, 2000, p. 14

of vocal phenomena, and of forms of singing, calling and clamouring practiced around the world, teaches us about the relationship between music and society: whatever the form it takes, the « vocal gesture » always carries a meaning, a social, symbolic, religious, political or salutary function.

For Claire Gillie, a psychoanalyst and PhD in anthropology, « the music of the voice projects signs even before language »<sup>2</sup>. Through its tone, inflection, texture and rhythm, the voice conveys something about who we are. Connected to the body, gesture and tongue, it is a marker revealing our identities and individual journeys, as well as our belonging to a society. Whether spoken or sung, murmured or cried out, written or translated in the form of gestures, signs and movements, the voice is a tool for expression.

The exhibition À VOIX HAUTE [VOICES ALOUD] is an exploration of what the voice conveys, what it signifies and represents depending on context, history and place. From Algerian Rai and German yodelling to African American gospel mime, from sign language and a baby's babbling to the revolutionary cry, the exhibition brings together a multiplicity of vocal forms, documented and produced by international artists of many origins and generations. Their work takes the voice as both sound and physical material, as well as a means of expression where individual stories and collective history intersect. In the form of installations, videos, audio devices, drawings and partitions, the work gathered here resonates with cultural, social and political issues.

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2. Claire Gillie-Guilbert, *Et la voix s'est faite chair... Naissance, essence, sens du geste vocal*, [And the voice became flesh... Birth, essence and meaning of the vocal gesture], in *Cahiers d'ethnomusicologie* (online version), n° 14, 2001, p. 24

Traductor : Francesca Davalier

## THE CURATOR

Ninon Duhamel

Born in 1991, Ninon Duhamel lives and works in Paris.

She is a junior curator and independant art critic. Her research focuses on how contemporary artists deal with language and other forms of speech like writing, translating or talking, to approach social, cultural and political subjects.

Since 2013, she has been working in the field of exhibition and cultural projects production, on behalf of various artistic and cultural structures.

As a regular collaborator, she works with the curatorial team of MAC VAL - Museum of Contemporary Art of Val-de-Marne, she participated in setting up the group exhibition *Tous, des sang-mêlés* in 2017, or the monographic exhibition *TRANS/HUMANCE* by Nil Yalter, in 2019.

She has also been in charge of exhibitions for La Graineterie, Houilles Art Centre (78), and coordinator of the exhibition *Vision* held at the Palais de Tokyo in 2016 by ANDEA (National Association of Higher School of Art).

She also regularly writes for the website [portraits-lagalerie.fr](http://portraits-lagalerie.fr) about emerging artists work, and how their practices are linked around language, history, memory and identity.

In 2019, she was curator for the exhibition *Car, vois-tu, tu as droit d'être obscur* by the mauritian artist Nirveda Alleck, at the Cité internationale des arts (Paris). The exhibition À voix haute // Voices aloud is her first group exhibition project.



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## **La Graineterie, Houilles Contemporary Art Center**

With almost 350m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition rooms, but also several art practice spaces and administrative offices, the cultural and contemporary art center of the town of Houilles, La Graineterie, was inaugurated in September 2009.

At the end of the XIX<sup>e</sup> century, this mid-town building was an important part of the local economic life. It represents an historical witness of the past rural life but also the sociologic and urbanistic evolutions of the town, during the century. Since its recent architectural rebuilt, La Graineterie combines an art performing programm with a contemporary art center. This particularity draws an original cultural project.

La Graineterie supports young contemporary forms of visual art and works to reveal their multiplicity to the public.

Its annual programm is composed by three principal exhibitions, single or collective, including the Biennale of young creation, every two years. Some independent curators are regularly associated with different specific kind of projects. La Graineterie promotes and finances creation by offering the possibility to realize new art works or by inviting artist to residency during several months (every two years). La Graineterie develops also an artistic education programm. Connecting arts and architectural heritage, La Graineterie mixes different kind of experiences and practices. It becomes an art and human meeting place.

**Free entry**

**Tuesday, thursday, friday : 3 pm > 6 pm**

**Wednesday, saturday : 10 am > 1 pm - 3 pm > 6 pm**