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CROSS-POLLINATION BETWEEN ART AND SCIENCE: A CONVERSATION WITH SHULI SADE AND MARTINA CARUSO

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Shuli Sadé is a New York-based multi-disciplinary artist who works across a range of mediums including photography, video, and installation. Her investigation with architects on site-specific art and architectural photography; with Dr. Dorita Hannah on photographs for Hannah's essay in *Eating Architecture* (MIT Press, 2004); neuroscientists at the Weizmann Institute of Science (2011-2012), and most recently, with neuroscientist, Dr. Andre A. Fenton on the creation of a permanent art installation for the Neurobiology of Cognition Laboratory at NYU (2010-2012).

On the occasion of her exhibition at Independent Art Projects, we invited Shuli to discuss how art and science cross-pollinate in her work, her process, and where she's headed next.

Join Sadé and IAP Director Martina for an intimate discussion of the artist's work Friday, September 19, at 3pm at IAP. See Sadé's work on view at IAP through Sunday, September 21, 2014.

Martina Caruso: *Shuli, what has been your creative journey that has brought you to where you are in your career today?*

Shuli Sadé: I was trained as an artist since early age. My interest in spatial perception and structural geometry made architecture a great source of inspiration. Scientific brain research made its way to my creative process as I begun working with the topic of memory in recent years.

MC: *I am fascinated by your creative process, and your relationships with other art and science professionals; you work with architects, with neuroscientists, and you use the information they transmit to you to create incredibly unique works. Can you tell us a little bit more about those cross-pollinating connections?*

SS: My work embodies a cyclical relationship between different media, translating from drawing and photography, to site specific installation and video, to light and sound, and back to drawing. I am interested in the conversations between the media, whether I mechanize a hand drawing, or turn a photograph into an animation of moving images.

I collaborate with architects as part of my ongoing interest in historic and the newly built. Architecture is monumental sculpture. An urban plan is a site specific installation. Often I make a new art project inspired by the construction of a new building, like the renovation of the Morgan Library by Renzo Piano, or the construction of the Diana Center at Barnard College, built by Weiss Manfredi Architects. Other collaborations with architects have led to show in their offices (Gensler in WDC, FXFOWLE Architects in NYC, Ehrenkranz Group & Eckstut in LA). These collaborations have created many wonderful relationships with architects whose work I follow closely.

MC: Your photographs seem to be always the starting point for new concepts, and experiments. What is a photograph for you?

SS: Sometimes a photograph is the remains of a place in time, with the conditions I captured, but often it is a starting point from which I create a layered narrative. Photography is the tool we use to remember a place in time. It is a reflection of the precise memory in real time. A starting point from which inevitable change can occur.

MC: Repetitions, contemplation on sequence of events, composition of multiple photographs, are a strong, powerful component of your production. What is the concept behind your projects?

SS: When I record and reconstruct forms, or when I use one image repetitively, every sign of change between each frame calls for recognition of time, duration, as it carries the past into the present. It reflects on scientific methods of collecting data, as well as disappearing bodies of memory. What we do is making marks. Everything we do is marking both our own path and a universal path. What our brain does is keeping the marks we make in a grid which we call memory.

Inspired by Henri Bergson's (1859–1941) ideas about duration, I created *Durée*, an installation of 120 panels with very little change between each. The sixty bright-white units reflect the sequence of a particular memory. Another sixty black units, negatives in comparison with the white units, suggest the creation of another memory. The grid arrangement of the black and white units frames the memories of a short trip across the Brooklyn Bridge. Memory is imposed upon memory, with the consequence that, over time, the reading moves further away from the original.



Shuli Sade, *Durée*, 2008. An installation of luminous video stills and video, curated by Hyewon Yi, at Amelie A. Wallace Gallery, SUNY College at Old Westbury, NY

MC: In your photographs and videos of high-rise buildings, bridges, factories, and so on, there are no human subjects. How did you choose to omit their inhabitants?

SS: I always thought that eliminating human figures and cars from my photographs make the buildings timeless. Once people enter the image, it becomes personal, narrative, and reveals more information

than needed.

MC: *Can you tell us a little bit about the behind-the-scenes of your process? What is your photographic, elaboration, and printing process like?*

SS: I start a project by taking night photographs of the city from above. The city streets and buildings are defined by a grid of light. A grid is important to my process. Brain activities are read and defined by grids as well. So are the beginning of architectural drawings. I manipulate pixels in my images to reflect memory: either by removing pixels to reflect on memory loss, or by adding and multiplying areas to show repetition of memory and time, duration, connection to the past, and confabulation – the re-inventing of details in a forgotten memory in the brain. Digital printing replaced my dark room and gelatin silver printings which I used to enjoy. Each project defines the method of printing on glass, paper, acrylic or canvas.

MC: *You collaborate with designers, industrial artisans, fellow artists, and neuroscientists. What can you see in your future in the way of projects and collaborations?*

SS: Exciting projects are in-progress. Each project makes way for the following body of work. The continuous investigation of ideas, new material, new software, 2 and 3D printing suggest solutions to a new body of work. I have several collaborations in mind for the coming year, including work with an urban planner and a group of international Neural Scientists who research the cracking of brain codes.

MC: *Mana Contemporary is a two million-square-foot contemporary art center and home to a community of artists in Jersey City, NJ. Shuli, you are one of the artist-in-residence at Mana Contemporary. Can you tell us a little bit more of this impressive cultural economic operations, so similar to our home here at MASS MoCA, and your experience there?*

SS: Like MASS MoCA, Mana Contemporary takes place inside historic factory buildings, rebuilt and renovated to become an incredible contemporary art place. In a relatively short time, owner Mr. Moishe Mana, and artist President Mr. Eugene Lemoy have realized a unique vision, creating a center for contemporary art. Mana Contemporary includes artist studios, artists-in-residence studios, several museum quality gallery spaces, a new glass gallery, designed by Architect Richard Meier, who also opened his architectural models museum in the main building, and so much more.

The community is friendly and collaborative. Mana is a sophisticated utopia, serving both the public and the art community, with a foundry on the ground, and a dance rehearsal floor, a cafe, frame shop, art shipping shop, and changing exhibits. In the fall, Mana will collaborate with the Marina Abramovic Institute on a special project at the gallery. I am grateful to be part of Mana Contemporary, to work at my studio, and to be surrounded by such great energy. I am looking forward to seeing Mana Contemporary and MASS MoCA collaborate in the near future.



Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ

See you at IAP on September 19, at 3 pm, for a more broad conversation!

Israeli born Sadé moved to NY in 1984. With a BFA from Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and

postgraduate work at NY's School of Visual Arts, she has taught and lectured at the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture, Parsons School of Design, Columbia University's Barnard College, and Bezalel Academy of Art and Design School of Architecture. Sadé has received a pollock Krasner Foundation grant 2014, National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, as well as grants from the New York Foundation for the Arts Emergency Grant Fund, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Fund, the Israel Cultural Cooperation Commission, AICF Study Fund, and the NY Art Development Committee. Her work is in numerous private and public collections.

| WHO WE ARE

Founded by contemporary dealers Leslie Ferrin and Cynthia Reeves, Independent Art Projects is a multi-purpose project space that provides a forum to show new works, work-in-progress, and curated exhibits by galleries from New England and New York.

[Click here to learn more about IAP.](#)

| CONTACT

Independent Art Projects
1315 MASS MoCA Way
North Adams, MA 01247
United States

[Email Us](#)

| FOUNDERS

FERRIN CYNTHIA
CONTEMPORARY REEVES