

METRO PICTURES

Myers, Holly. "Art Review: Latifa Echakhch at the Hammer Museum," *LATimes.com* (April 26, 2013).

Los Angeles Times



Latifa Echakhch's "À chaque stencil une révolution (For each stencil a revolution)"

Latifa Echakhch's installation "À chaque stencil une révolution (For each stencil a revolution)" wraps the Hammer Museum lobby stairwell in a wave of brilliant indigo.

From ceiling to floor, the vivid pigment drips through a range of shades -- from the deep, near-black of a moonlit sky to a pale, electric sheen of dusk -- before gathering in delicate pools along the floor.

It is an enchanting color, a poetic color, sensually manipulated, drawing associations with Yves Klein and Mark Rothko. It is also, surprisingly, an industrial color, developed not for an artwork but for the practical dissemination of information. It derives from thousands of sheets of carbon paper, plastered to the wall and sprayed with a solution of alcohol.

The work's deceptively political underpinning emerges principally in the title, which comes from a quote by the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat describing the powerful role of the mimeograph machine in the protest movements of the 1960s.

Echakhch, who was born in Morocco and raised in France, has become known for her formally refined installations of symbolically loaded but gently disabled or neutralized objects: flagpoles without flags; prayer rugs whose pile has been unraveled and removed; gunpowder tea that's been hurled against a wall.

Here as in those other works, she neatly separates form and function, but leaves both components essentially intact. The brilliant hue of the paper -- a sensory pleasure -- and the revolutions it helped to underwrite in the days before Twitter and cellphone cameras are revealed to be products of the same once-ubiquitous material.