



michèle didier

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **Yona Friedman**

## ***1001 nuits + 1 jour***

Exhibition of the book *1001 nuits + 1 jour* by Yona Friedman  
and of *Demonstration #6* by A Dog Republic

Opening on Thursday June 5, 2014, from 6 to 9 pm

Exhibition from Friday June 6 to Saturday August 9, 2014

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Yona Friedman

*1001 nuits + 1 jour*

Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Mythes* entitled *Le Paradis, avec licorne*

Artist book in one volume

286 pages and 4 cover pages

34,2 x 24 cm

Limited edition of 75 copies and 25 artist's proofs

Certificate signed and numbered by the artist

Produced and published in 2014 by mfc-michèle didier

©2014 Yona Friedman and mfc-michèle didier

# ***1001 nuits + 1 jour***

## **Yona Friedman**

*Animaux, Mythes, Villes, Contes nègres, Fragments, Miracles* are the six revealing titles of the leading chapters of Yona Friedman's illustrated tale *1001 nuits + 1 jour* (literally: 1001 nights + 1 day), a new artist's book produced and published by mfc-michèle didier this Spring 2014.

The drawings in *1001 nuits + 1 jour* originally covered the walls of the architect's first Parisian studio, on boulevard Pasteur. This decor designed in the 1960's, was taken apart in 1968 when Friedman left the studio on boulevard Pasteur for his (now famous) apartment on boulevard Garibaldi. 168 drawings of them all are reproduced today in the artist's book *1001 nuits + 1 jour*. As for the new mural pattern of boulevard Garibaldi, a true "merzbau" of the 21st Century, it is now part of the CNAP collections.

Caroline Cros underlines «The question of decor is fundamental in Friedman's case (...) he does not conceive architecture without the design of its decoration»<sup>1</sup>. It is thus impossible for him to visualize his studio with empty walls, «what counts the most for him is to personalize his living space» she continues. «...I have created my own world, in order to assimilate my lifestyle. I am convinced that everyone can do so» Yona Friedman confirms. This idea that each individual is responsible for the enhancement of his/her environment by being himself the subject of its evolution underlies all of Friedman's thought process. He elaborated further on this principle in the manual *A better life in towns*, commissioned by the European Council in 1980 for a campaign on renewing the cities.

This is exactly what the architect focuses on in this book. He offers each of us the possibility to recreate the display with the drawings from his studio on boulevard Pasteur on our own walls. Indeed, all the drawings in *1001 nuits + 1 jour* are detachable and can therefore recreate a decor. Depending on how they are laid out, new associations are born and new stories can be told. It is also possible to put the drawings back in the position in the book, where they were initially. Today, the colour of the drawings have faded slightly under the sunlight and the architect's eye, only the most resistant pigments are left unchanged. We can only guess the initial rich variety of hues chosen by Friedman.

The studio on boulevard Pasteur was small, its surface measuring 27m<sup>2</sup>, but Yona Friedman's imagination knew no boundaries. He broke free of this restrictive reality to reach other places drawn up by himself: places in which he would have liked to live – in Atlantis or in an oasis without desert (in reference to the title of the images, *Atlantis* and *Oasis sans désert*) – or with the delicious company of women, his girlfriends' girlfriends, «les amies de mes amies», as the artists writes... Friedman also escapes by illustrating legends and made-up tales, twisted or readapted to his liking as we can see in the stories of *Samba Gana à Ségou* or that of saint Georges who Friedman confronts to a crocodile instead of a dragon. The book consists of 168 drawing-scenes illustrated in a « naïve » manner, his distinctive style that can be found equally in his animated film *Les aventures de cheveux lion*<sup>2</sup>. The African influence shows in his drawings as well as in his choice of subjects, although Yona Friedman does include the adventures of *Don Quijote* in the chapter *Contes nègres*. Such mixing of genres reflects the freedom of thought that the artist cherishes so. Myths merge with each other, the centaur meets Adam and Eve, Noah and Gilgamesh both face lions. In Friedman's world as it is depicted in *1001 nuits + 1 jour*, the traditional order of things is mixed up, the hunter and the rhinoceros chat with each other and the lion wants nothing but love, but he's scary (in reference to the image entitled *le lion ne veut que l'amour, mais il fait peur*). As for Men, they return to their animal state. In accordance with the architect's classification, the lovers outside the city (*Les amants hors de la ville*) and many others, take place next to the bulls, the horses and the birds, which are in turn associated with other legendary images: a lesson of syncretism and of equality offered once more by Yona Friedman.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts of Caroline Cros' text written in the context of the exhibition *Yona Friedman, des Utopies réalisées* at Espace de l'Art Concret, centre d'art contemporain at Mouans-Sartoux in 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Yona Friedman's animated films have been restored in 2008 by the cneai.

# Biographical references

- 1923** Born in 1923 in Budapest, Hungary
- 1943** Studies architecture at the Technical University in Budapest
- 1946** Stays in Israël (Haïfa) to continue his architectural training started in Europe, he lives for six months in a kibbutz
- 1957** Founded GEAM, Groupe d'étude d'architecture mobile (Group of studies on mobile architecture)
- 1958-1962** Presents his project for the *Ville Spatiale* in Paris, Venise, Monaco...
- 1968** Settles permanently the studio boulevard Garibaldi in Paris
- 1970** Takes part in the architectural design competition for the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 1972** Wins the Architecture Prize held by the Academy of Arts and Sciences, Berlin
- 1974** Commissioned by Unesco to create educational guides to share his point of view on various subjects such as ecology, precarious habitats, the Universe, Europe, renewable energy, leisure and recreational time...
- 1975** Publication of his book *Utopies réalisables* by éditions Christian Bourgois (10/18 collection)  
*Une utopie réalisée*, ARC/Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris
- 1980** Travels in India where he meets Indira Gandhi
- 1982** Takes part in the architectural design competition for the Tête Défense, Puteaux
- 1982-1986** Construction of the Technologies Museum in Madras, India
- 1986** Presents his project for expanding the of Bronx Museum, New York
- 1987** Finalizes the project for a *Musée sans portes* (a museum without any doors)
- 1998** *Made in France*, exhibition organized by Centre Pompidou at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
- 1999** Project for a *Musée du XXI<sup>ème</sup> siècle* (a 21st century museum)
- 2002** Takes part in the *Documenta* in Kassel
- 2003** *Rubbish is beautiful*, Venice Art Biennale, Italia
- 2007** *Dare to make your own exhibition*, cneai (centre national de l'estampe et de l'art imprime), Chatou, France  
Yona Friedman, Musée d'art contemporain, Lyon, France
- 2008** Construction of a Street Museum in Como, Italy  
*Tu ferais ta ville*, Arc en rêve/CAPC - Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux  
*Utopie réalisée*, Bund 18, Shanghai
- 2009** *Fare mondi / Making worlds*, Arsenale, Venice Art Biennale, Italy  
*Improvisations*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris - MAM/ARC, Paris  
*La création*, Centre d'art contemporain La Synagogue, Delme
- 2010** *Around The Ville Spatiale*, Mala Galerija / Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana  
*Merz Tier*, neugerreimshneider, Berlin  
*Des utopies réalisées*, Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux
- 2011** Eckhard Schulze-Fielitz & Yona Friedman, *Arena*, Kunsthhaus Bregenz  
*Merz World*, Yona Friedman & Tomas Saraceno, Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich  
*Métropole Europe / Europa Metrópolis*, Musac, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León

# A Dog Republic

## *Demonstration #6*

A Dog Republic was founded in 2011 by the artists Nico Dockx, Helena Sidiropoulos, Jean-Baptiste Decavèle, the musician Krist Torfs and the architect Yona Friedman.

A Dog Republic has presented five events between 2012 and 2013:

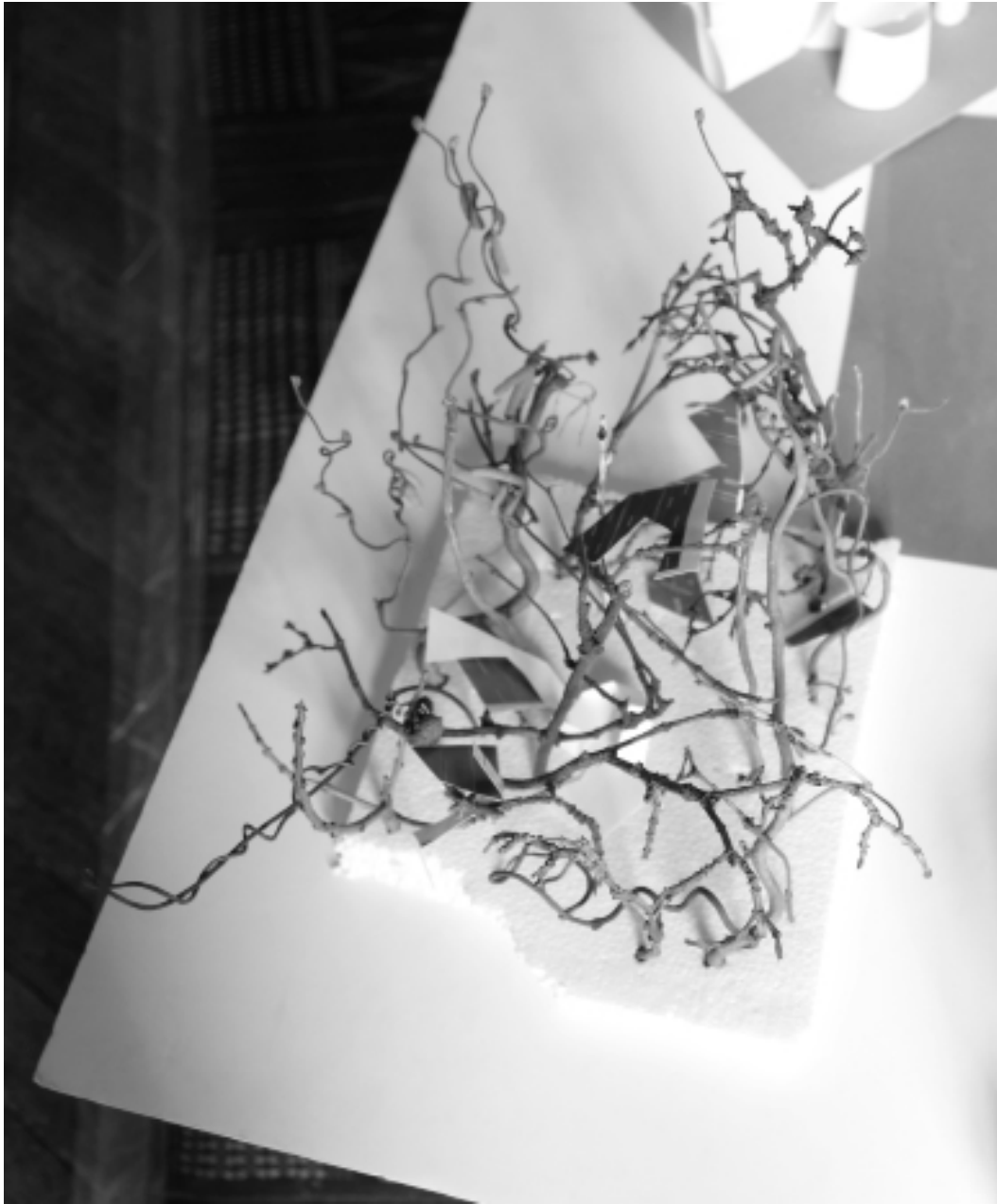
1. *Let's talk peace!* (co-curated by Clara Meister) held at Ludlow38 in New York
2. *Let's have a bone!* (co-curated by Lorenzo Benedetti) held at De Vleeshal in Middelburg
3. *She talks peace!* held at Esther Donatz gallery in Munich
4. *C'est un bon coin chez toi!* upon the invitation of Phillip Van den Bossche at Mu.Zee in Oostende
5. First part of *Demonstration #5* in Venice during the Contemporary Art Biennale. Recordings made during the project will be included later in the second part, during an event presented in 2014

The idea of this sixth proposal by A Dog Republic at mfc-michèle didier gallery is to create a demonstration that represents best the process generated by the ideas and the work of the architect Yona Friedman, as viewed by the members of A Dog Republic. Through an evolving program, the elements presented at the gallery will gradually reveal all the aspects of Yona Friedman's architectural practice.

The exhibition will consist of three elements: the artist's book *1001 nuits + 1 jour*, the prototype of a virgin forest imagined by Yona Friedman for his apartment in Boulevard Garibaldi, and the model of the Tree Museum, one of the architects' projects that was never realized. Furthermore, the drawings of *1001 nuits + 1 jour* will be detached from the book and placed on the branches of the reconstructed forest. All along during the exhibition, several proposals will punctuate this first project – with for starters, the presentation of a documentation on Yona Friedman's work. Several other eclectic proposals will follow each week, each addressing the question in view its discipline. We will keep you informed of the exact program in due time.



*Sharing bones, of which 1001 nuits + 1 jour is part*  
A Dog Republic, *Demonstration #6*



Yona Friedman, *Tree Museum*, model  
Courtesy Yona Friedman. Photograph by Jean-Baptiste Decavèle

# Press images



Yona Friedman

*1001 nuits + 1 jour*

Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Animaux* entitled *Gilgamesh (ou Samson, au choix) avec le lion*

Artist book in one volume

286 pages and 4 cover pages

34,2 x 24 cm

Limited edition of 75 copies and 25 artist's proofs

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Yona Friedman

*1001 nuits + 1 jour*

Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Villes* entitled *La ville interdite*

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Yona Friedman

*1001 nuits + 1 jour*

Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Contes nègres* entitled *Samba Gana à Ségou*

Artist book in one volume

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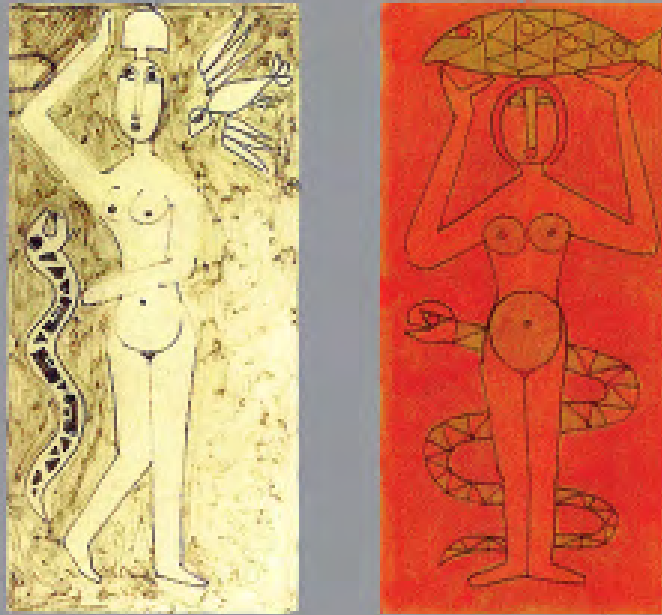
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Yona Friedman

*1001 nuits + 1 jour*

Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Fragments* entitled *Odalisques et serpentes*

Artist book in one volume

286 pages and 4 cover pages

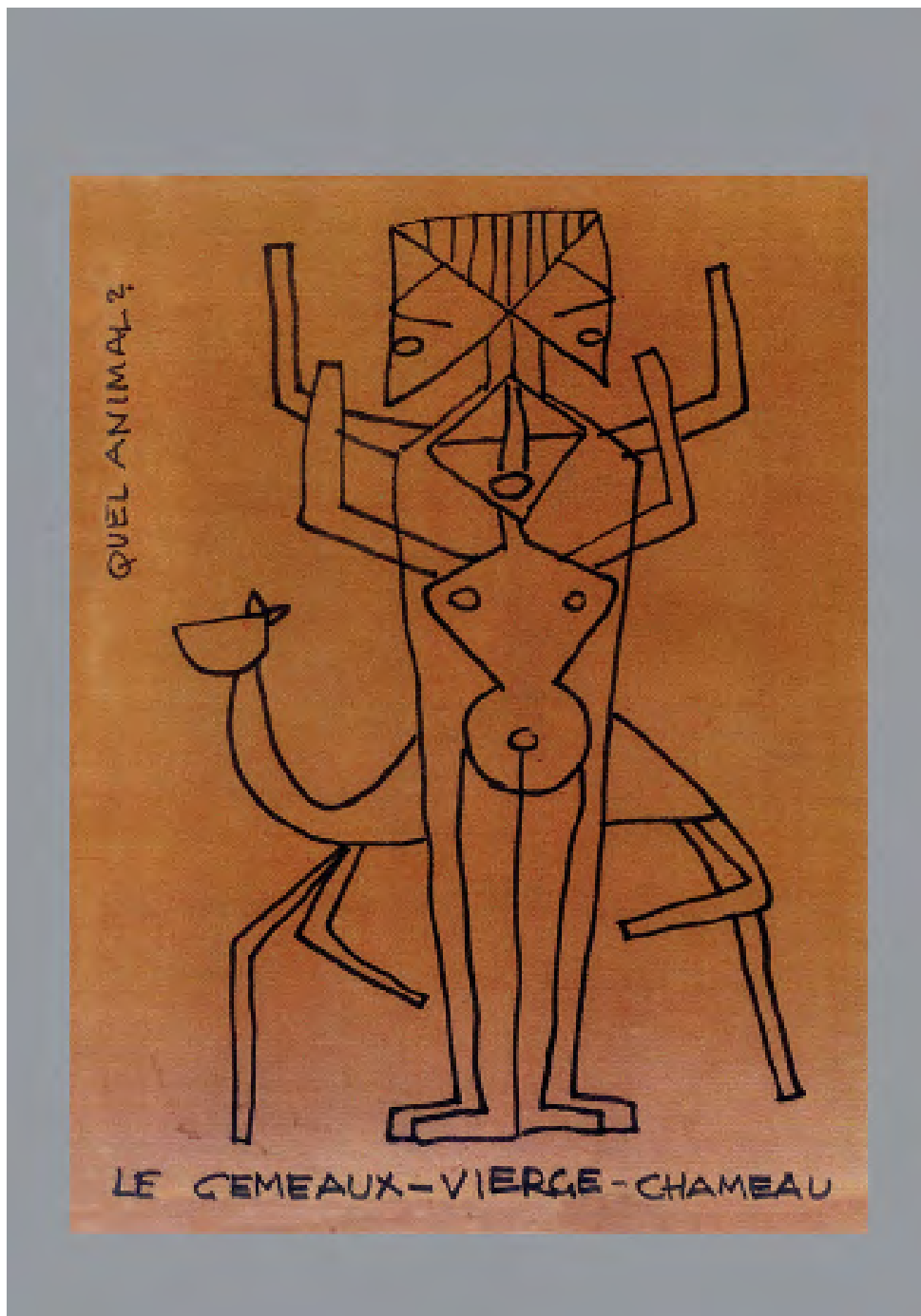
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Drawing excerpted from the chapter *Miracles* entitled *Constellations*

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