



PRESS RELEASE

Marrakech, 28 April 2026

Under Destruction: an exhibition by Ismail Alaoui Fdili in the Artist Room of MACAAL



Ismail Alaoui Fdili, *Under Destruction, Bh'ira*, 2026. Triptych, 200 × 360 cm

As part of the 3rd edition of Mai de la Photo, dedicated this year to the theme “Memory(ies)” and taking place from **29 April to 31 May 2026**, the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL), founded by Fondation Alliances, on the initiative of Groupe Alliances, presents *Under Destruction*, an exhibition by Ismail Alaoui Fdili in the Artist Room, from **2 May to 2 August 2026**, curated by Farah Maakel, Head of Exhibitions at MACAAL.

Mai de la Photo is organised by the Institut Français in collaboration with MACAAL, Maison Denise Masson, the Maison de la Photographie, Es Saadi Resort, Les Étoiles de Jemaa el Fna, Fondation Ali Zaoua, Fondation Montresso, the association Turāth, the Musée Yves Saint Laurent, and Le 18.

Under Destruction is a documentary photography project that examines the destruction of natural and urban landscapes through construction sites. It has developed across different contexts, notably in Sihanoukville (Cambodia), Bouskoura (Morocco), and Romainville (France).

For this exhibition at MACAAL, the work focuses on Casablanca, the artist's birthplace, and more specifically on the districts surrounding the old medina, where several early 20th-century buildings in an Art Deco style are currently being demolished, gradually replaced by more standardised and industrial constructions.

Through this work, the artist documents the final moments of these places, working closely with their inhabitants and labourers.

The exhibition captures this moment of transition in which the present turns into memory, seeking to inscribe this fleeting moment of demolition onto concrete, as one would carve into stone.

The photographs observe gestures of labour, the recovery of debris, and the forms of survival of workers, themselves from the medina, who attempt to preserve fragments of a city they once inhabited.

They also bear witness to a shared moment of waiting, between apprehension and relief, experienced by part of the population as their environment gradually disappears.

The works take the form of frescoes printed on prefabricated concrete and cement slabs, sometimes cut and assembled into relief compositions. A series of cast concrete stools, inspired by those used by women and children as they sit and watch their homes being demolished, completes the installation.

The production of the works takes place in the still-intact parts of the medina, in collaboration with artisans from the medina, one of whom once lived in one of the now-demolished buildings. These exchanges are part of a process of transmission and the valorisation of local know-how, within a territory undergoing rapid transformation.

A black-and-white documentary film accompanies the exhibition. It adopts a contemplative approach and shows the daily uses of the building, the gestures of its inhabitants, followed by the different stages of its demolition. A voice-over, spoken by a resident of the medina, accompanies the images and anchors the narrative in lived memory.

Through this exhibition, Ismail Alaoui Fdili also offers a personal reflection on the disappearance of a neighbourhood that is close to him, while highlighting the resilience of its inhabitants and workers in the face of these transformations.

As the artist summarises, “the present always turns into memories”, at the moment when the disappearance of places has already become memory.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition: *Under Destruction*

Venue: MACAAL, Artist Room, Marrakech

Dates: from 2 May to 2 August 2026

Website MACAAL: www.macaal.org

Website Mai de la Photo: www.maidelaphoto.com

ABOUT ISMAIL ALAOUI FDILI

Ismail Alaoui Fdili is a Franco-Moroccan artist and filmmaker. Born in Casablanca, he lives and works between Morocco and Paris.

Trained in object design at ISDAT Toulouse, then graduated from ENSAPC in Cergy, he continued his film studies at Kourtrajmé under Ladj Ly.

His multidisciplinary practice explores precarious labour, informal economies, and the symbolic value of work, blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction. He is notably the founder of the International University of Car Parking Attendants (UIGV), an artistic and speculative project that questions the visibility and recognition of marginalised professions.

ABOUT MACAAL

The Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech is a private non-profit museum. One of the first of its kind on the continent, MACAAL is dedicated to the promotion of African art through various education and exhibition programs that allow it to cultivate the interest of broad audiences. Through the acquisition and exhibition of works by both established and emerging artists, the museum fosters the understanding of contemporary African art and showcases the creative energy and cultural diversity characteristic of the continent. MACAAL displays art from Morocco and its neighboring countries across different mediums. Beyond its permanent collection, exhibitions highlight art that opens a dialogue with the continent and present both African and international artists.

ABOUT THE ARTIST ROOM

The Artist Room is a space within MACAAL dedicated to temporary solo or group exhibitions. It hosts contemporary artistic proposals and explores the connections between art and disciplines such as craftsmanship, design and performance.



MACAAL Façade © Ayoub El Bardii