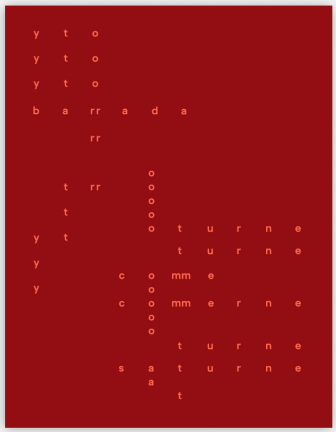
YTO BARRADA

COMME SATURNE



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CENTERING THE MARGINS

This catalogue-cum-artist's book accompanies and prolongs the extensive research conducted by French-Moroccan artist Yto Barrada (b. 1971) for her project *Comme Saturne* (Like Saturn) conceived for the French Pavilion at the 61st Venice Biennale. Published after the 2026 Biennale, it includes exhibition views and provides a detailed overview of Barrada's latest experiments in the fields of color, dyeing, language, myth-making, and material culture unveiled in Venice.

The volume opens with a glossary of terms related to dyeing, fabrics, and textile techniques, which Barrada used as a basis for developing the works and installations created for the pavilion. This glossary highlights polysemous terms—such as "sadden," "exhaustion," "devoured," and "lining"—whose meaning changes depending on the context of enunciation and production, setting the tone for a certain freedom from the authority of knowledge.

The core of the publication consists of "plates" in which the image is always central and the text placed in the margins, overturning Western book conventions and the academic primacy of text over visuals. Just as the margins are

placed at the center of the French pavilion project, the illustrations and footnotes take precedence here, accompanied by commentaries from various sources. Details of a work, a view of a studio or exhibition, an iconographic reference, or a snapshot of production interact with notes, quotations, and oral memoirs to put into practice an aesthetic of relationships, branching structures, and thought in motion. In this “subjective encyclopedia,” the reader drifts according to associations and references, particularly linked to the introductory glossary. In doing so, the book is woven with numerous perspectives and lines of flight that extend the experience of the Venice exhibition.

Designed by London-based studio A Practice for Everyday Life, the book also includes an introduction by Myriam Ben Salah, Renaissance Society Director (Chicago) and curator of the pavilion, an essay by Arnaud Dubois, anthropologist of color (CNRS) and scientific advisor to the pavilion, and new contributions by historian and Oulipian writer Marcel Bénabou and psychoanalyst Sophie Mendelsohn.

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