



**HERMETIK**

**NORBERT FRANCIS ATTARD**



# HERMETIK

EXILE I

EXILE II

HERMELOCK

DE-FENCE



FOUR INSTALLATIONS BY NORBERT FRANCIS ATTARD

CURATED BY MICHAEL BOCK

FORT TIGNÉ, SLIEMA, MALTA, 2013

The beginning and the end of the “power of words” is summed up in extreme acts of censorship. Fire takes shape devouring the paper, while man is deluded by the idea that what burns in the pyre is not only the memory, but the ideas as well. But ideas are not forgotten, they regenerate themselves, they live and they never cease to evolve, giving rise to culture and to all of its dynamics. For this reason, in addition to the pyre, men recurs to all type of torture, so that ideas are condemned into slavery. Among these tortures, the most abused of is the exile expressed in all of its violent facets, and yet it fails to kill the ideas that, regardless, live on!

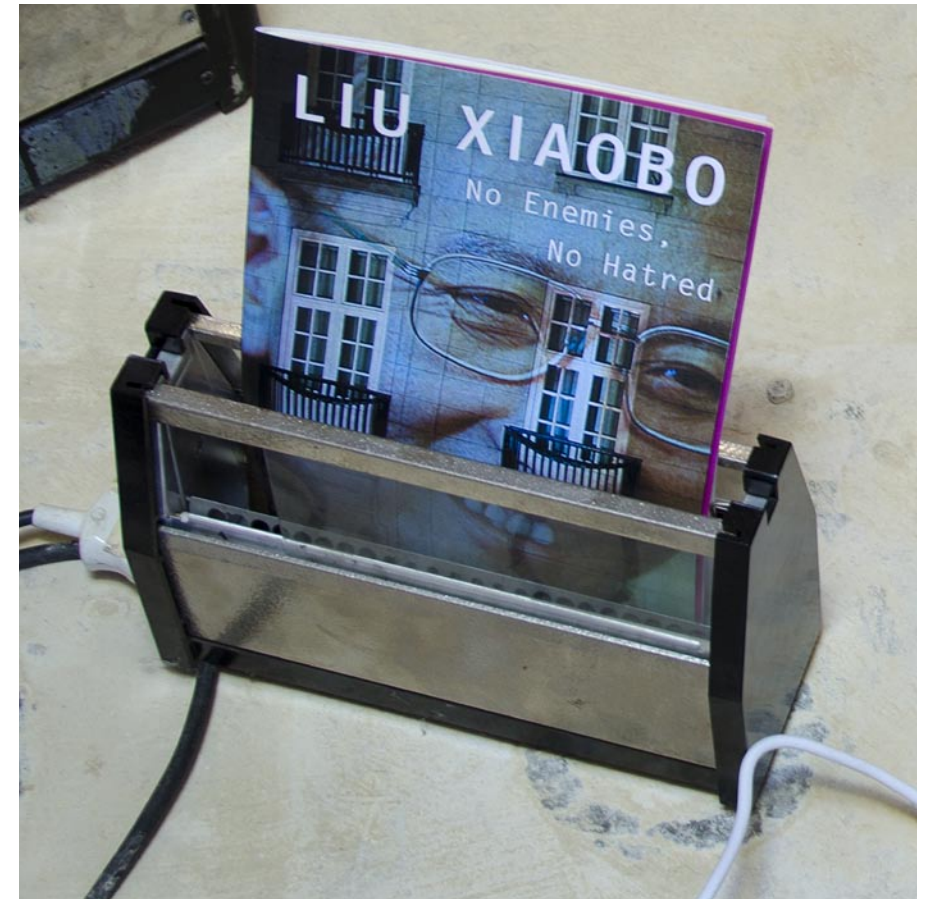




# EXILE I

53 bread toasters and 81 book covers

The prongs of a toaster trap and burn the word, whether contained in a book or in an eternal philosophical quote. Fifty old toasters scattered on the ground, some of them empty, perhaps hungry for ideas and books, others contain the works of philosophers, scientists, authors, including dissidents, who are victims of persecution, torture and even sentenced to swallow the hemlock. But the toasters are no longer of any use and their cables lying on the ground are no more than dead snakes, while the power of words still lives, feeding ideas that perhaps fight for a better world.







<b>Liu Xiabo</b>	<b>Giuseppe Mazzini</b>	<b>Sigmund Freud</b>
<b>Ray Bradbury</b>	<b>Rudolfo Walsh</b>	<b>Kahil Gibran</b>
<b>Baruch Spinoza</b>	<b>Pablo Neruda</b>	<b>Paul Klee</b>
<b>Manuel Dimech</b>	<b>Charles Chaplin</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr.</b>
<b>Marquis de Sade</b>	<b>Salvador Allende</b>	<b>William Shakespeare</b>
<b>Albert Einstein</b>	<b>Hans Kung</b>	<b>John Steinbeck</b>
<b>Salman Rushdie</b>	<b>Arturo Mizzi, Herbert Ganado, Nerico Mizzi, including 47 exiled in 1942 from Malta</b>	<b>Confucius</b>
<b>Galileo</b>		<b>Victor Hugo</b>
<b>Socrates</b>		<b>Peter Abelard</b>
<b>Michael Servetus</b>	<b>Václan Havel</b>	<b>Martin Luther</b>
<b>Rhazes</b>	<b>Lech Walesa</b>	<b>Rosa Luxembourg</b>
<b>Henry Oldenburg</b>	<b>Tran Khai Thanh Thuy</b>	<b>Blaise Pascal</b>
<b>Gerhard Domagk</b>	<b>Duong Thu Huong</b>	<b>Wilhelm Reich</b>
<b>Liao Yiwu</b>	<b>Thomas Mann</b>	<b>Abbas Maroufi</b>
<b>Ai Wei Wei</b>	<b>Giovanni Boccacio</b>	<b>Marjane Satrapi</b>
<b>Dalai Lama</b>	<b>Jorge Amado</b>	<b>Bahman Nirumand</b>
<b>Solzhenitzen</b>	<b>Franz Kafka</b>	<b>Abdolhassan Bani Sadr</b>
<b>Nelson Mandela</b>	<b>Marcel Proust</b>	<b>Ugo Foscolo</b>
<b>Lezek Kolakowski</b>	<b>Ernest Hemingway</b>	<b>Juan Ramón Jiménez</b>
<b>Ovid</b>	<b>Émile Zola</b>	<b>Manuel de Falla</b>
<b>Dante Aligieri</b>	<b>Thomas Mann</b>	<b>Giordano Bruno</b>
<b>Heinrich Mann</b>	<b>Jack London</b>	<b>Malcolm X</b>
<b>Oscar Wilde</b>	<b>Bertolt Brecht</b>	<b>Mahatma Gandhi</b>
<b>Federico Garcia Lorca</b>	<b>Lion Feuchtwanger</b>	<b>Julian Assange</b>
<b>Primo Levi</b>	<b>Louis Braille</b>	<b>Rudi Dutschke</b>
<b>Carlo Levi</b>	<b>Marc Chagall</b>	<b>Alan Turing</b>











## Liao Yiwu

Excerpts from "Massacre" (translated by Wen Huang)  
Dedicated to those who were killed in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

A massacre is happening. In this nation of Utopia, Where the Prime Minister catches a cold. The masses have to sneeze to follow.  
Martial law is declared and enforced. The aging toothless state machine is rolling over.  
Those who dare to resist and refuse to sneeze. Fallen by the thousands are the barehanded and unarmed. Armored assassins are swimming in blood.  
Setting fire to houses with windows and doors locked. Polish your military boots with the skirt of a slain girl. Boot owners don't even tremble.  
Robots without hearts never tremble. Their brain is programmed with one process. A dazed command. Represent the nation to dismember the constitution.  
Represent the constitution to slaughter justice. Represent the mothers to suffocate the children. Represent children to sodomize the fathers.  
Represent the wives to murder the husbands. Represent the citizens to bomb the city. Open fire, open fire, open fire. Shoot women, students and children.  
Shoot workers, teachers and vendors. Riddle them with bullets. Aiming at those angry faces, shocking faces, contorted faces, despondent faces and tranquil faces.  
Shoot with abandon. The fleeing beauty of those faces moving toward you like tidal waves. The eternal beauty of those faces heading toward heaven and hell.  
The beauty of turning humans into beasts. The beauty of seducing, raping and trampling on your fellow citizens. Eliminate beauty.  
Wipe out the flowers, forest, school campuses, love, and the pure air. Shoot, shoot and shoot... I feel good and I feel high. Blow up that head.  
Burn up the hair and the skin. Let the brain erupt. Let the soul gush out. Splash on the bridge, the fence and the street. Splash toward the sky.

Troops followed them into the cloud, into cracks on the ground...  
We live under bright sunlight. But we have lost our eyesight. We find ourselves on a street, so wide. But no one can take a stride.  
We stand in a crowd, supposed to be loud. But people open their mouth without sound. We are tortured with thirst. But everyone refuses water.  
This unprecedented massacre. Survivors are those bastards.







# EXILE II

10 typewriters, 10 oil barrels, photographic prints

Typewriters placed on top of ten barrels of oil,  
summing up the most current form of power.  
From each typewriter the power of words gives  
birth to prejudice, to condemnation,  
sometimes to fatwas.

What the fire has not achieved,  
is realized by slander that spreads  
hate and isolation.

Yet, typewriters and oil in time  
become useless,  
while the power of words,  
and therefore ideas,  
continue to live.





A LANCER SPECIAL 72-663 50¢

# The Sensational Anti-Stalinist Novel

—SATURDAY REVIEW

# ONE DAY

IN THE LIFE OF



HERMES Baby

















# HERMELOCK

52 manhole covers forming the letter X

Hermelock covers have a double hermetic seal which shelters from gas, water and odours. Hermelocks are made to keep out intruders, including unwanted surveillance. In light of Edward Snowden's leak on the NSA's PRISM programme in June 2013, these locks can be perceived as civilian shelters from the state and corporate panopticon that tracks our daily behaviour for their interests. The lock grants safe and untracked exile from the system, be it a physical escape as was Snowden's, or a virtual one through online encryption. The latter is a defense mechanism which retains web activity information so as to protect user privacy. It has become a necessary route for those who do not wish to be unjustly spied on by authorities.





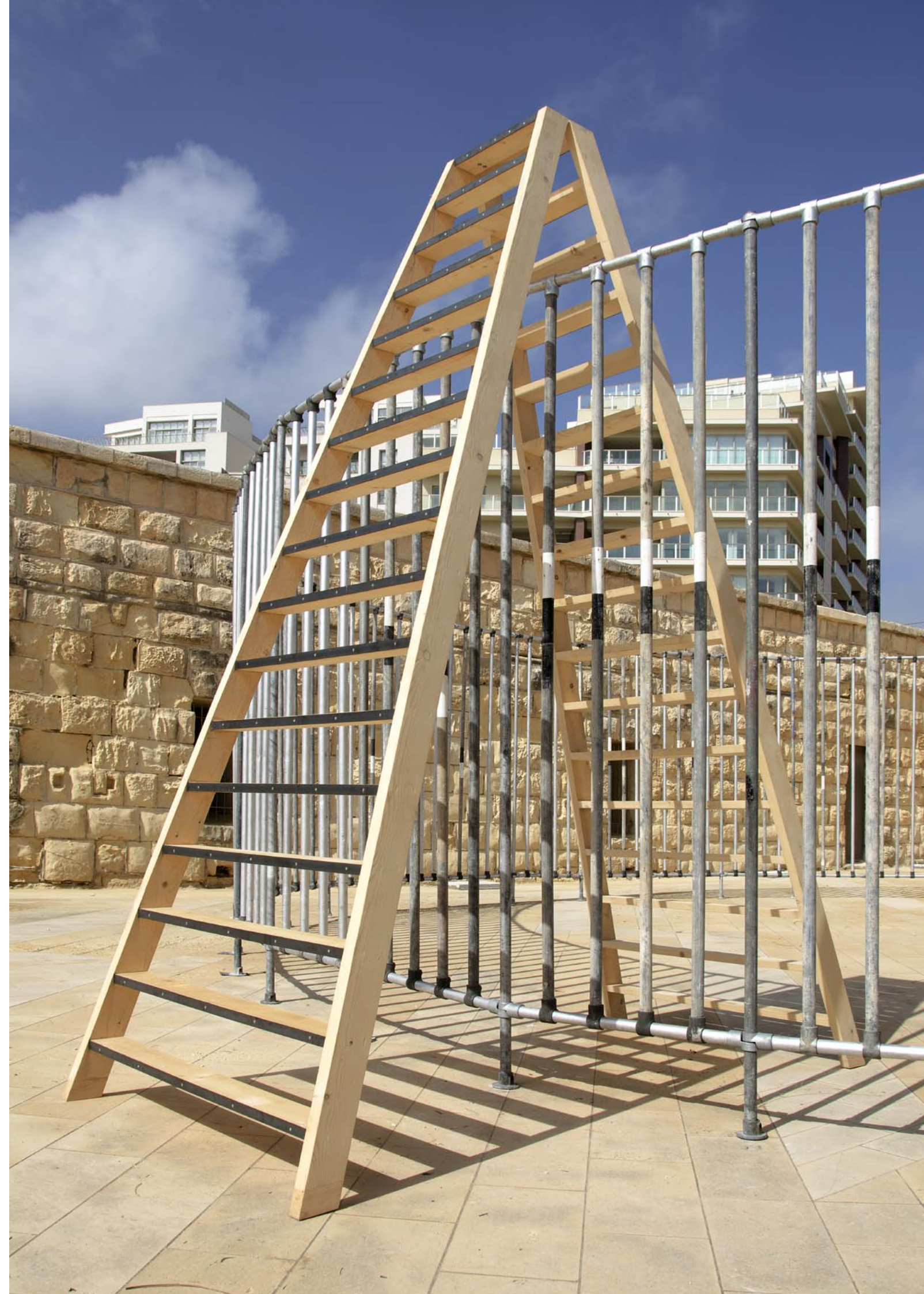




# DE-FENCE

**12 metres diameter scaffolding, timber and metal ladder**

This installation consists of a 360 degree circular fence, 12 metres in diameter, made out of scaffolding construction pipes. The vertical pipes creating a continuous enclosed wall such that outsiders cannot get inside, whilst those on the inside cannot escape. Unless they have the courage to use the available ladder that strides on both sides of the fence. The ladder represents the loneliness of the 'exiled', the 'incarcerated', the 'tortured'. He who climbs the ladder may escape the system's oppression.

























**HERMETIK TITLES**

**EXILED I**

**2012/13, 10 typewriters, 10 oil barrels, photos**

**EXILE II**

**2012/13, 53 bread toasters, 81 book covers**

**DE-FENCE**

**2013, 12 metres diameter scaffolding, ladder**

**HERMALOCK**

**2013, 52 PVC manhole covers**

**TEXT**

CLAUDIO FIORENTINI

Poet, novelist and visual artist. Born in 1959 and based in Rome, Italy.

**ASSISTANTS**

MARISA VELLA, MARILYN GRECH, PAUL VELLA,

JEAN PAUL VELLA, MARK ZAMMIT, NICHOLAS CACCIATTOLO

**CONSTRUCTION OF SCAFFOLDING**

JOSEPH F, SPITERI & CO.LTD. MSIDA, MALTA

PROJECT MANAGER: MARTIN J. SPITERI

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS : EDMOND PENSA, SHAWN BRIFFA

**WOODWORK OF LADDER**

SAVOUR GAUCI, GOZO, MALTA

**TRANSPORT**

ANDREW VASSALLO LTD., MALTA

SAVIOUR GAUCI, GOZO, MALTA

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MALTA ARTS FUND

MIDI PLC



NORBERT FRANCIS ATTARD, BERLIN 2013  
PHOTO BY KAREN BACH





**FRONT COVER: DETAIL OF EXILE I    BACK COVER: DETAIL OF EXILE II**