

Basma al-Sharif

Portfolio

Imane Farès

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Works: Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Basma al-Sharif (b. 1983 in Kuwait, of Palestinian origin) Lives and works in Berlin.

Basma al-Sharif is a Palestinian artist working in cinema and installation. She developed her practice nomadically between the Middle East, Europe, and North America and is currently based in Berlin. Her practice looks at cyclical political conflicts and confronts the legacy of colonialism through satirical, immersive, and lyrical works.

She received an MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2007, was a resident of the Fondazione Antonio Ratti in 2009, and the Pavillon Neuflyze OBC at the Palais de Tokyo in 2014-15. She received a Jury prize at the Sharjah Biennial in 2009, the Visual Arts Grant from the Fundación Botín in 2010, Mophradat's Consortium Commissions in 2018, and is currently a fellow of the Berlin Artistic Research Grant Programme for 2022-2023. Basma al-Sharif is a finalist of the Aware prize in 2024.

Al-Sharif's major exhibitions include: the Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (2025), the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF, 2025), the Hannah Ryggen Triennial (2025), *After the end. Cartographies for Another Time*, Centre Pompidou Metz (2024), *The Place Where I was Condemned to Live* at De Appel, Amsterdam (2024), the 5th edition of Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2022), the *Ruttenberg Contemporary Photography Series* for the Museum of the Art Institute of Chicago, *Modern Mondays* at MOMA, CCA Glasgow, the Whitney Biennial, *Here and Elsewhere* at the New Museum, Berlin Documentary Forum, and Manifesta 8. Her films have been screened in the international film festivals of Locarno, Berlin, Mar del Plata, Milan, London, Toronto, New York, Montreal, and Yamagata amongst others. Her first exhibition at Imane Farès, *On Love & Other Landscapes*, with Yazan Khalili, was held in 2013.

Her monography *Semi-Nomadic Dept-Ridden Bedouins* was published by Lenz Press in May 2025.

Old Masters

2025

HD video colour and sound

13 min 10 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Edition 1/5: Gothenburg Museum of Art

Old Masters was filmed at the Gothenburg Museum of Art in the spring of 2025. Inspired by Gus van Sant's film *Elephant* (2003) and Alan Clarke's earlier work (1989) with the same title, the video work follows protagonists throughout the museum and through an orange garden in Gaza. In conversation with fellow artists, Basma al-Sharif opens up a space for reflection on the role of the witness.

In *Old Masters*, al-Sharif returns to ideas and questions raised in an earlier work, *Ouroboros*, a film she conceived nearly ten years ago as a visual elegy for Gaza, connecting Palestine to other parts of the world. In *Ouroboros*, al-Sharif asks what gets to survive versus what is destroyed. As a genocide is enacted in Gaza, these questions remain urgent and shape al-Sharif's new work.



MORGENKREIS | *Morning Circle*

2025

HD video colour and sound

20 min 31 sec

Arabic, Armenian, and German with English

Subtitles

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

A short visceral narrative film unfolds in three parts to describe loss. From our earliest experience of separation to the imperceptible violence associated with integrating to a new country when yours is no longer livable, *Morgenkreis* follows a father and son in their intimate rituals as they prepare to start the day and head to kindergarten.

Awards:

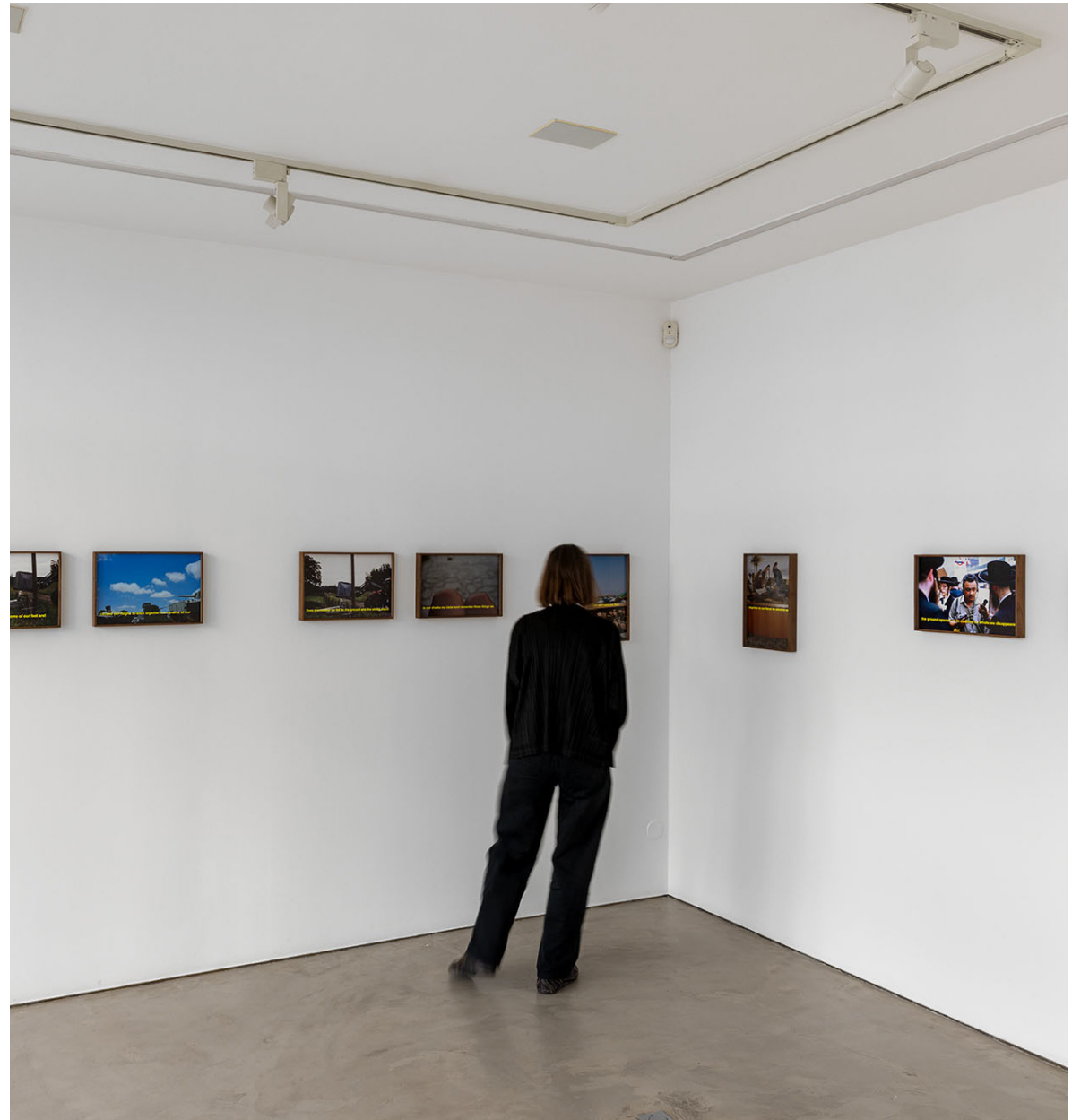
- Best Documentary Short Film Prize at the Sharjah Film Festival 2025
- Grand Prize at the 29th Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur in Switzerland
- Artworks Best Film Award at the 14th Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival



*Semi-Nomadic Debt-Ridden
Bedouins*

Galerie Imane Farès, 2025

I came across the phrase “Semi-Nomadic Debt-Ridden Bedouins” in Zionist propaganda, as a description of Palestinians that was meant to legitimize colonizing our land and ethnically cleansing us. [...] I used those same five words: “Semi-Nomadic Debt-Ridden Bedouins” at the end of a long sentence, superimposed over a series of images, as part of a work I produced while I was a student in Chicago in 2006. Back then, I was obsessed with the idea that the way a story is told is the story itself. This led me to think that I could change the way the story of my people was being told. [...]



Semi-Nomadic Debt-Ridden

Bedouins

2006

12 Archival pigment prints on Hahnemühle

Photo Rag, framed

27,6 x 40,8 x 4 cm (each)

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Spread across 12 images, *Semi-Nomadic Debt-Ridden Bedouin* (2006) abstractly recounts the massacre of a young girl's entire family on a beach in Gaza in 2006. Throughout the series, the artist invited viewers to make sense of a story without a clear beginning or end. Over the following two decades, Basma al-Sharif has continued to develop her artistic practice between the United States, Europe, and the Arabic-speaking world — always in orbit around Palestine. She approaches her country of origin from elsewhere, through other narratives, other voices, and at times from within, shifting the struggle beyond its immediate urgency and inscribing it into a broader memory, woven with echoes and resistance. Rather than fixing violence in images, she conveys its breath — a subterranean, intimate violence, marked by loss, silence, and a refusal to yield.



After Image

2025

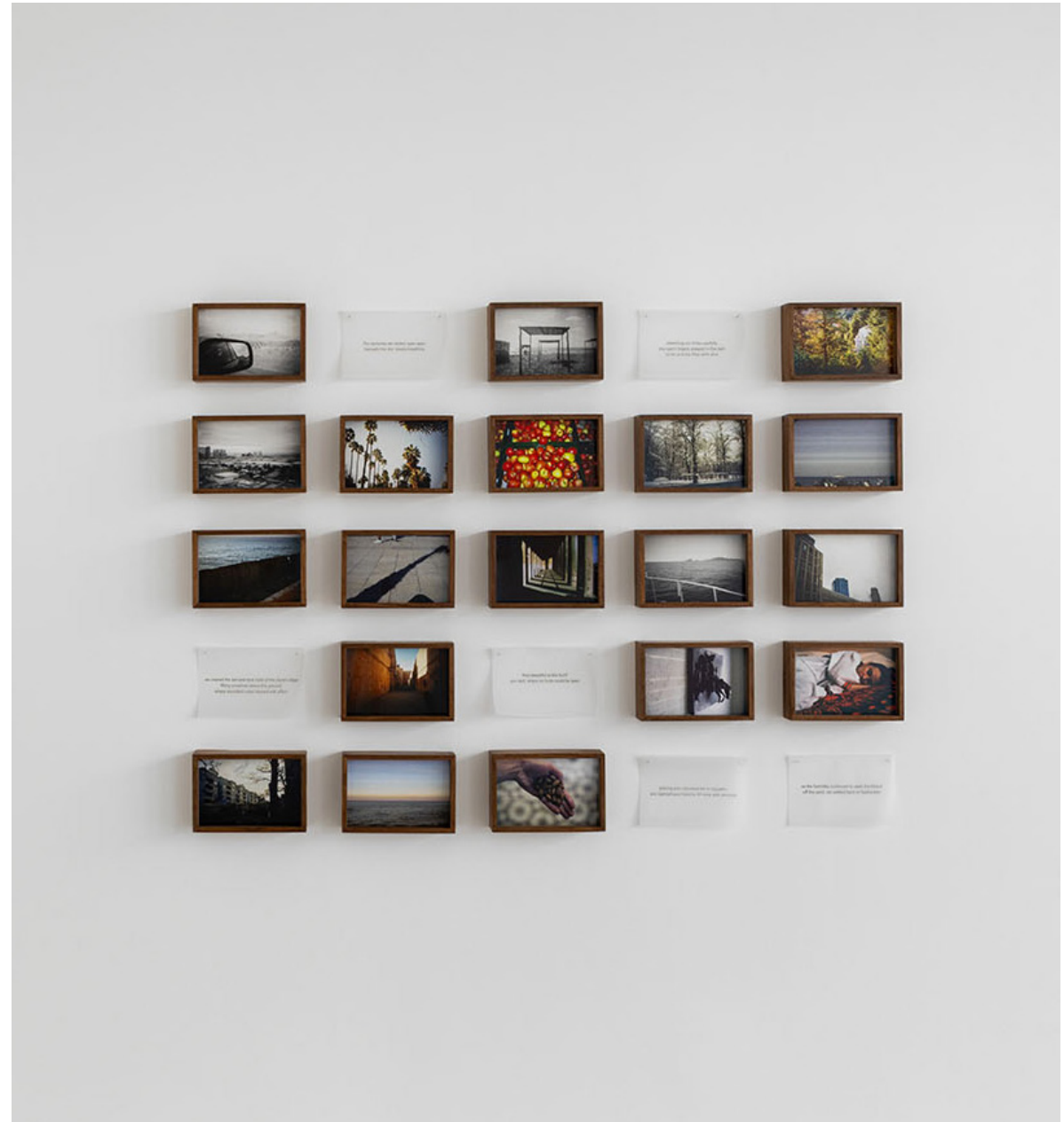
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle

Photo Rag, framed

10,8 x 15,8 x 4 cm (each)

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

On the occasion of the publication of her first monograph, Basma al-Sharif revisits this initial series and introduces a new collection of images. Titled *After Image* (2025), it brings together smaller, domestic, and transportable photographs that serve as a starting point for reflecting on the future. Composed from her personal archives and expanded with new photographs, this narrative suite — akin to a travel album — documents the architectures, seas, scents, tastes, and cities that have shaped the artist's life, and reinterprets the myth of the semi-nomadic, debt-ridden Bedouin in the present day.



The Library of Congress

2019-2023

Series of 7 diptychs

Diptych: pigment prints on Hahnemühle Photo Rag paper, mounted on 1 mm aluminum, framed.

24.5 × 37 × 4 cm

28.5 × 38.5 × 3.5 cm

26.5 × 19 × 3.5 cm

36.2 × 27.2 × 3.5 cm

16.5 × 38.5 × 3.5 cm

24 × 36 × 3.5 cm

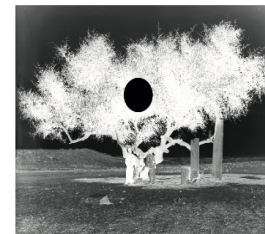
13 × 38 × 3.5 cm

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

This series is part of the installation *A Philistine*

The Library of Congress is a photographic series created by the artist in 2019. It presents positive and negative versions of various images drawn from the colonial archives of the Library of Congress in Washington. These photographs, taken by colonizers in the early 20th century, depict landscapes of Palestine and Egypt. By appropriating and recontextualizing them, the artist questions the construction of memory and the visual representation of their territory of origin.

Marked with a circular stamp—both a sign of artistic intervention and a formal echo of early analog photographic techniques—these images become the support for a critical and poetic gesture through which the artist reclaims authority over the visual narratives tied to their history.



a Philistine

2019 - 2023

The installation comprises:

- a salon made of seating, textile, table
- 20 artist's books
- an ensemble of 6 digital printings from Ex-Yugoslavia series (edition 5/5)

Unique

and

Les Barbares

2023

- a projection on photographs
- a neon
- a sound installation, 19 min

Unique

a Philistine is an installation centered around the reading of a fictional text. The story is broken into three genres: History, Fantasy, and Erotica, and is accompanied by a series of stand-alone image.

This new novella reveals the story of a central character (nicknamed Loza) on a train journey moving backwards in time through history. The book begins in present day Lebanon, travelling through 1935 Palestine and ending in New Kingdom Egypt (16th-11th century B.C.E). Reinventing historical train routes that coincide with the Haifa-Beirut-Tripoli line and Palestine Railways, the story tries to suggest what such a journey would be like today, and invites new readings of the history of the region. Moving beyond exhausted ideas of borders and geographies, the book's story incites new possibilities for Palestinian futures and desires. Hinting at the multiple meanings and geographical etymology of the word 'Philistine', the book weaves together travelogues and science fiction narratives in its first two chapters, as the 'Philistine' encounters mythical creatures and rituals, before climaxing in erotic writing with lush and vivid descriptions that pull her through a series of different rooms, moral questions and confusions. Borders are undone and the various inhabitants of Greater Syria and North Africa intertwine along a train journey that escapes the imminent future and asks questions of the past and present.

Across the two larger galleries, *a Philistine* is expanded into the space as a plush mise-en-scène reading room inviting the viewer to become part of the work. As the book deals with questions of time, rhythm, imagination and slowness, Basma Al-Sharif invites the viewer to read the book in the space. It can not be removed from the gallery or consumed as an object as such - instead it should be enjoyed in situ, with other works and other people. The book is presented in Vernacular Arabic and English, exploring the nuances of translation, and connections and tensions between and within both languages.

A 2018-2020 Mophradat Consortium Commission.

Exhibitions:

- 9ème édition du festival Colomboscope, Colombo, 21 — 31 January 2026
- *Museum Yet to be*, Museum of Contemporary Art of Montenegro, 11 December 2025 — 15 March 2026
- *Après la fin. Cartes pour un autre avenir*, Centre Pompidou Metz, 25 January — 1 September 2025
- *The Place Where I was Condemned to Live*, de Appel, Amsterdam, 27 June — 8 September 2025
- *a Philistine*, Galerie Imane Farès, 23 March — 13 July, 2023
- The 5th Biennale of Kochi-Muziris, 23 December 2022 — 10 April, 2023
- *And Therefore a Philistine.*, SALT Galata, Istanbul, 11 February — 26 April, 2020
- *a Philistine*, CCA Glasgow, 2 November — 15 December, 2019
- *Basma Al-Sharif*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, 14 February — 14 April, 2019

a Philistine
2019-2023



a Philistine, 23 March - 13 July 2023, Galerie Imane Farès. Photo: Tadzio

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a Philistine
2019-2023



5th Biennial of Kochi-Muziris, 23 December 2022 - 10 April 2023. Photo: Biennial Kochi-Muziris

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a Philistine
2019-2023



a philistine, 2 November - 15 December 2019, CCA Glasgow. Photo: Allan Dimmick

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5th Biennial of Kochi-Muziris, 23 December 2022 - 10 April 2023. Photo: Biennial Kochi-Muziris

Les Barbares

2023

The installation comprises:

- a projection on photographs
- a neon
- a sound installation, 19 min

Unique

As an extension of the installation *a Philistine*, *Les Barbares* invites spectators to sit around a table and listen to the story of a train journey back in time to reveal what has always been there. Following the railroad lines that existed before the creation of the State of Israel, from Lebanon to Egypt via Palestine, the story unfolds as a visceral exploration of borders both geographical and physical. Accompanied by large-scale photography reflecting on colonial archives and voyeurism, *Les Barbares* is an absurd and provocative celebration of ignorance.

Les Barbares was created when Basma al-Sharif was a visiting professor at Le Fresnoy.



Panorama 25, 22 September - 13 January, Le Fresnoy

Capital

Two-channel video, sound, loop, and
banners (inkjet prints on canvas)

19 minutes 3 seconds

Edition of 2

Edition 1/2: Art Institute Chicago

Basma al-Sharif's newest work, *Capital*—comprising a two-channel video and a series of banners depicting architectural renderings of proposed urban spaces—references Italian White Telephone (Telefoni Bianchi) films of the 1930s and '40s. Named for what was then a scarce status symbol, white telephone films upheld and promoted conservative and nationalistic notions of home, family, and religion. They were later understood as precursors to fascist propaganda films. Often set in foreign or even imaginary countries, the films featured Italian characters in lighthearted, escapist narratives and offered Hollywood-style glamour untouched by class or social conflict—a far cry from daily life in wartime Italy.

Capital was shot at various locations including the CityLife residential complex in Milan, the Nile riverfront in Cairo, residential neighborhoods in Alexandria, and construction sites of new cities—places where architectural histories are romanticized even as they are being erased. Through these sites, al-Sharif explores the desires that drive politicians, urban planners, and their imagined ideal residents as well as how the resulting designs, with their disregard for the historical failures of colonial architecture, seek to transform and control the cultural and political landscape. Together the film and installation hint at the limits of free speech and reveal how the legacies of fascism live on in the present.

Commissioned by the Ruttenberg Contemporary Photography Series for the museum of the Art Institute of Chicago. Additional support: the David C. and Sarajeen Ruttenberg Arts Foundation; the Sharjah Art Foundation, the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture.

Exhibitions:

- *a Philistine*, Galerie Imane Farès, 23 March — 13 July, 2023

- *Capital*, Ruttenberg Contemporary Photography Series, The Art Institute of Chicago, 12 March — 25 July 2022



Basma al-Sharif: Capital, 22 March — 25 July 2022, Art Institute Chicago

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Basma al-Sharif: Capital, 22 March — 25 July 2022, Art Instiute Chicago

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24/7

2019

The installation* is composed by:

- 26 drawings representing currencies of imperial countries and former colonies, pastel, 30,5 x 43 x 3 cm (each), framed
 - drawings and collages on Papyrus, 97 x 203,5 x 5 cm, framed
 - 6 photographs showing drawings of *trompe l'oeil*, 29 x 39 x 2,5 cm (each), framed
 - a lightbox, 117 x 117 x 2 cm
 - a Neon sign showing '24/7'
- Each unique

*the different elements that make up the installation can be exhibited independently of one another (Each unique)



24/7, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, 2019. Photo: Tadzio

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24/7
2019

A 24/7 neon sign flashes relentlessly on the gallery's vitrine. Reminiscent of Benjamin Franklin's infamous maxim ("time is money") that came to exemplify the spirit of capitalism, it signals a commercial space that is permanently open, accessible at all times. Such is the threshold that welcomes the visitor into Basma Al-Sharif's second solo-exhibition at Galerie Imane Farès.

A fragment of the complex and polysemic project titled *24/7*, this sign alludes at once to the normalization of labour time and the increasing pervasiveness of consumerism in both public and private spheres. The neon appears to be emblematic of the uncanny world that the artist has forged: a world in which the banknotes of imperial countries and former colonies are juxtaposed with a photograph showing the veined body of a pregnant woman. A "nonplace" that telescopes entertainment, consumerism, labour, colonialism, the male gaze and maternity and signifies a whole other form of exploited labour.

Through drawings, photographs and light installations, the artist looks at the visual culture of neo-colonialism, which has come to dominate today's globalized world. Each piece calls on the viewer to reflect on the means through which these "isms" have extended their control on us, seeping into even the most confined regions of our private lives.

— Line Ajan, 2019



24/7, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, 2019. Photo: Tadzio

24/7
2019



24/7, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, 2019. Photo: Tadzio

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24/7, Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, 2019. Photo: Tadzio

A Land Without A People (1)-(10)

2018

Inkjet prints from 120 mm color negative scans on paper

60,5 x 60,5 cm (each)

Unique

Private Collection

The slogan "A land without a people for a people without a land" is where this photographic series takes its title. Set in Death Valley National Park, which occupies part of the Mojave Desert and was previously inhabited by a number of Native American cultures over the course of the last 10,000 years, depicts landscapes that play on the idea that a land is never actually empty - even if we don't see it's inhabitants.

The slogan, used in Zionist Propaganda, was meant to suggest that historical Palestine was a viable place for the Jewish homeland as it's inhabitants were a stateless nomadic population - much like the Native Americans - who eventually lost their sovereignty on the land they had dwelled in for centuries.

The series depicts such supposedly empty lands, highlighting breathtaking desert views as it moves towards Los Angeles and shows us the Hollywood sign - another hint at a colonizing force in the modern day city: the industry that brought us racist depictions of Native Americans played by white actors that would help recreate the narrative of how the United States came to be the nation it is today and questioning who has the right to settle where, and on what premise.



Art Dubai, 2018

Trompe l'œil

2016

- HD video: *Trompe l'œil* (color, sound, 8 minutes)
- 38 inkjet prints, variable dimensions
- 2 wall-mounted inkjet prints: 295 × 295 cm (each)
- Set elements: furniture to be arranged according to the exhibition context

Unique work

Basma al-Sharif's work navigates the fault lines of history to reveal moments, places, and events that are real or fictional. Constantly shifting between past and present, she seeks to reconstruct moments of life and to tell stories, whether infused with real or imagined memories. A visual language—marked by hybrid forms and combinations—emerges from this interplay between individual and collective memory.

— Mouna Mekouar

My work is deeply connected to the human condition and its relationship to nationalism. Using photography, film, video, sound, and text, my interest lies in the gaps and slippages that occur through representation, as well as the violence, apathy, and pleasure it produces. I engage with the political on a visceral level through works characterized by their immersive and lyrical qualities, creating familiar environments that draw us into unsettling experiences. *Trompe l'Œil* is an installation that takes over the exhibition space, reestablishing it as a room in which all the elements of the *mise-en-scène* act as carefully constructed disruptions of a scene.

— Basma al-Sharif



Paratextual, 13 May - 17 June 2017, Samuel Freeman Gallery, Los Angeles. Photo: Samuel Freeman Gallery

Exhibitions/Projections:

The Place Where I Was Condemned to Live, de Appel, Amsterdam, June 27 – September 8, 2025

And Therefore A Philistine, SALT Galata, Istanbul, February 11 – April 26, 2020

MoMA's Festival of International Nonfiction Film and Media, New York, February 2020

Basma al-Sharif, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, February 14 – April 14, 2019

ABRAAJ Art Prize Exhibition, Dubai, March 8 – April 8, 2018

Paratextual, Samuel Freeman Gallery / Iris Project, Los Angeles, May 13 – June 17, 2017

Meeting Points 8: Both Sides of the Curtain, Beirut Art Center, April 12 – June 4, 2017

La Grande Halle, Discovery Award, Rencontres d'Arles 2016, July 4 – September 25, 2016

Trompe l'œil

2016

SH:

What was your intention behind selecting these photographs, and how does their display interrogate issues around access and rights of reproduction? Also, how do ideas around leisure, and even banality, play out within the work?

BA:

-I think there's a line between boredom and leisure, and I think that boredom really does produce evil. The work has a lot going on in it but is pared down to a series of gestures I imagines as trompe l'oeils, as tricks of the eye, where we think we see something but aren't quite sure. So I constructed a domestic scene with various kinds of representations, and within it are these Lawrence of Arabia images. Some are made by him, others just under his collection in the Imperial War Museum. The ones I was interested in were those of Arabs with their Arab slaves. It's not evident that that's what those images are but I think that's what attracts me to them. The violence that is captured in that single image, which includes the person who has captured the image, are all banalized, domesticated. I think we live with horrors in our every day and we find pleasure regardless — which is both a testament to our survival as human beings and also evidence of our self-destructiveness.

Interview with Suzy Halajian in *Of Other Spaces*,
The Abraaj Group Art Prize 2018, 10th Edition,
Ed. Kaleidoscope, Milan



Meeting Points 8: Both Sides of the Curtain, presented by Mophradat at the Beirut Art Center, 2017. Photo © Mahmoud Merjan



Meeting Points 8: Both Sides of the Curtain, Beirut Art Center, 2017. Photo: Mahmoud Merjan

Ouroboros

2017

Feature film

HD video / 16mm film

77 minutes

Premiere: Whitney Biennial 2017

Ouroboros is a feature length experimental film shot across five locations. The ouroboros is the ancient Egyptian symbol of the snake eating its own tail, a reference to the cycle of destruction and renewal. The film's allegorical story explores this constant process of ending and beginning. It opens with waves breaking off the coast of Gaza and follows a young man through geographically distanced landscapes, as he searches for escape from the emotional pain of heartbreak.

Basma al-Sharif takes a sensory approach to her material, at times reversing film, moving between muffled silences, dialogue and intense melodic sound.

We see Gaza at a distance, the images filmed from above by drones, and interior spaces by steady cam, the viewer is positioned in a kind of surveillance role. Unable to visit the blockaded territory at the time, Basma al-Sharif worked with Media Town in Gaza, a documentary film production and Media Services Provider to remotely direct these scenes with the collaboration of her Palestinian producer Mohanad Yaqubi of Idioms Film. The film builds towards a sort of reunion, one that Al-Sharif has described as only possible through a kind of forgetting and letting go.



The Gap Between Us, The Mosaic Rooms, 2018. Photo: Andy Stagg

Ouroboros

2017

Exhibitions:

- Aichi Triennale 2019, *Taming Y/Our Passion*, 1 Aug. - 14 Oct. 2019
- 24/7, galerie Imane Farès, 25 Apr - 20 July, 2019
- *Bahith*, Gazelli Art House, London, 4 July - 10 August, 2019
- *Basma Al-Sharif, The Gap Between Us*, The Mosaic Rooms, 19 Jan. - 31 March, 2018

Selected screenings:

- in 2020: Eye Filmmuseum, Amsterdam; *Doc Fortnight 2020*: MoMA's Festival of International Nonfiction Film and Media, MoMA;
- in 2019: Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions, Tokyo; Karst, Plymouth; Light Industry, New York
- in 2018: WORM, Rotterdam; Mizna's Twin Cities Arab Film Festival, Minneapolis; CalArts, Los Angeles; Glasgow Film Festival; FID Marseille; cinémathèque Robert-Lynen, Paris; Festival Ciné Palestine, Paris; Fronteira International Documentary & Experimental Film Festival, Goiânia; Peck School of the Arts, Milwaukee
- in 2017: Whitney Biennial 2017; BFI London Film Festival; Toronto Palestine Film Festival; Locarno Film Festival; RIDM, Montréal



The Gap Between Us, The Mosaic Rooms, 2018. Photo: Andy Stagg

Comfortable in our new homes
2017

Three-channel video installation, stereo
sound

20 minutes 37 secondes

Edition of 3 + 1AP

Edition 1/3: SAF collection

This three-channel installation is based on Basma Al-Sharif's first feature film, *Ouroboros* (2017), which can be described as an homage to the Gaza Strip based on the eternal return. The deconstructed plot unfolds as like a journey, following one man through five different landscapes. The journey marks the end as the beginning, forgetting as the way forward, and the failure of civilization.



Subjektiv, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, 2017

Renee's Room

2014-15

Video installation

13 min (in loop)

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Production Palais de Tokyo - Le Pavillon

Neuflyze OBC/ 2014-2015

Renée is not a person, Renée is the Renaissance in a cycle of eternal return. Both literary and Cinematic, the installation is the void of the space that the viewer is invited to remove their shoes and enter into a perpetual present. Plush carpeting on the ground is lit by a black and white infrared feed of the space itself, a video loop weaves several landscapes together. A succession of vignettes create the experience of destruction and rebirth that reveal survival as inevitably leading to self-demise. This is a work about the real versus the immaterial, the ruined landscape versus the landscape in ruins, death as rebirth, the end as the beginning.

Filmed in Death Valley California, Matera Italy, Chateau Trohaned Brittany France, and The Gaza Strip.

"This installation is an invitation inside of Renee's room. The only request she has is for you to remove your shoes before entering".

— Basma Al-Sharif



Girls Only

2014

Installation comprises:

- a 8 mm film transferred to video, color, sound, 2 min 24 sec
- 5 inkjet prints, india ink, 49 x 52 cm (each)

Edition of 5 + 1 AP (video)

Unique (installation)

Girls Only is based on a senseless rhyming game set in the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens to the mechanics of lights, camera, and action that compound the relationship between the subject on screen and the one behind the camera leaving us to wonder if there is no rhyme or reason for why something happens, then maybe is there no obvious explanation for it.

Exhibitions:

- *Basma Al-Sharif*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, February-April 2019
- *Basma Al-Sharif*, *Doppelgänger*, April - July, 2014





The story of milk and honey

2011

Installation comprises:

- one SD video, color, sound, 9 min 45 sec;
- 10 photographs titled *Corniche Beirut*, 50 x 73 cm (each);
- 49 photographs titled *Original Family Archives*, 16 x 23 cm (each);
- 6 photographs titled *Les Sauvages*, 59 x 42 cm (each)

Edition of 5 + 1 AP (video)

Edition of 1 + 1 AP (installation)

Exhibitions:

- *Personne pas même la pluie n'a de si petites mains*, La Criée Centre d'art Contemporain, Rennes, April - May, 2019
- *Basma Al-Sharif*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, February - April, 2019
- *Beirut Lab : 1975 (2020)*, Claire Trevor School of Arts, University of California, Irvine, October 5 - December, 2019
- *Fragiles Héritages*, Hotel Dieu, Le Puy-en-Velay, May - October, 2018
- *From Ear to Ear to Eye*, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, December - March, 2018
- *Times of Reasonable Doubts*, V Moscow International Biennale for Young Art 2016, National Center for Contemporary Art, Moscow, June - August, 2016
- *25 Years of Arab Creativity*, Institut du Monde Arabe, October - February, 2013
- *25 Years of Arab Creativity*, Abu Dhabi Music & At Foundation, Emirates Palace, March, 2013



Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, 2019, © Tom Arban Photography Inc.

The story of milk and honey

2011

Video:

Ed. 1/5: Fundacion Botin, Santander, Spain

Ed. 2/5: Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Ed. 4/5: Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris, France

Ed. 5/5 : Private collection, Kuwait

Installation:

Ed. 1/1: Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

For the installation *The Story of Milk and Honey*, Basma Al-Sharif initially wanted to write a love story about the Levant, as though it were a classical Arabic song. However, she found herself conflicted by questions of nationalism and orientalism. This work is installed within an environment that is deliberately synthetic; artificially exoticised, the floor is covered with AstroTurf and dotted with pot plants. Al-Sharif's video *Milk and Honey* tells two stories: one of lost love; the other of the making of the video itself, and its ultimate failure. It tells of collecting materials in Beirut with the ambition of creating a "fictional love story set in the Middle East devoid of political context." Surrounding this are groups of photographs taken surreptitiously of pedestrians walking along the Corniche, the seaside promenade in Beirut.

Text courtesy Nottingham Contemporary

Extract from the exhibition booklet *From Ear to Ear to Eye. Sounds and Stories from Across the Arab World*, 2018





From Ear to Ear to Eye, Nottingham Contemporary, 2017, © Stuart Whipps



From Ear to Ear to Eye, Nottingham Contemporary, 2017, © Stuart Whipps



From Ear to Ear to Eye, Nottingham Contemporary, 2017, © Stuart Whipps

High Noon

2015

Exhibition view: The Gap Between Us. Solo exhibition at The Mosaic Rooms, 2018. Photograph © Andy Stagg, image courtesy of The Mosaic Rooms.

High Noon, a film accompanied by eight photographic stills, embodies the dissonance of experiencing multiple times and places at once. Colour saturated images of two locations, in Japan and in California, are merged together. Both places lie on the Greenwich meridian, the 19th century system of Greenwich meantime which established an international standard to measure time. Al-Sharif seeks to escape these constrictions, as the camera cuts across time zones in a hypnotic drift, accompanied by a low fi electro soundtrack.

Exhibitions:

- *Bahith*, Gazelli Art House, London, UK, July - August, 2019,
- *The Gap Between Us*, The Mosaics Room, UK, January - March, 2018
- *Basma Al-Sharif / Ali Cherni, deserts*, galerie Imane Farès, Paris, June- July, 2015
- *The 4D Project*, Onomichi City Museum, November - January, 2015



The Gap Between Us, The Mosaic Rooms, 2018. Photo © Andy Stagg

High Noon (1)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



High Noon (2)

2015

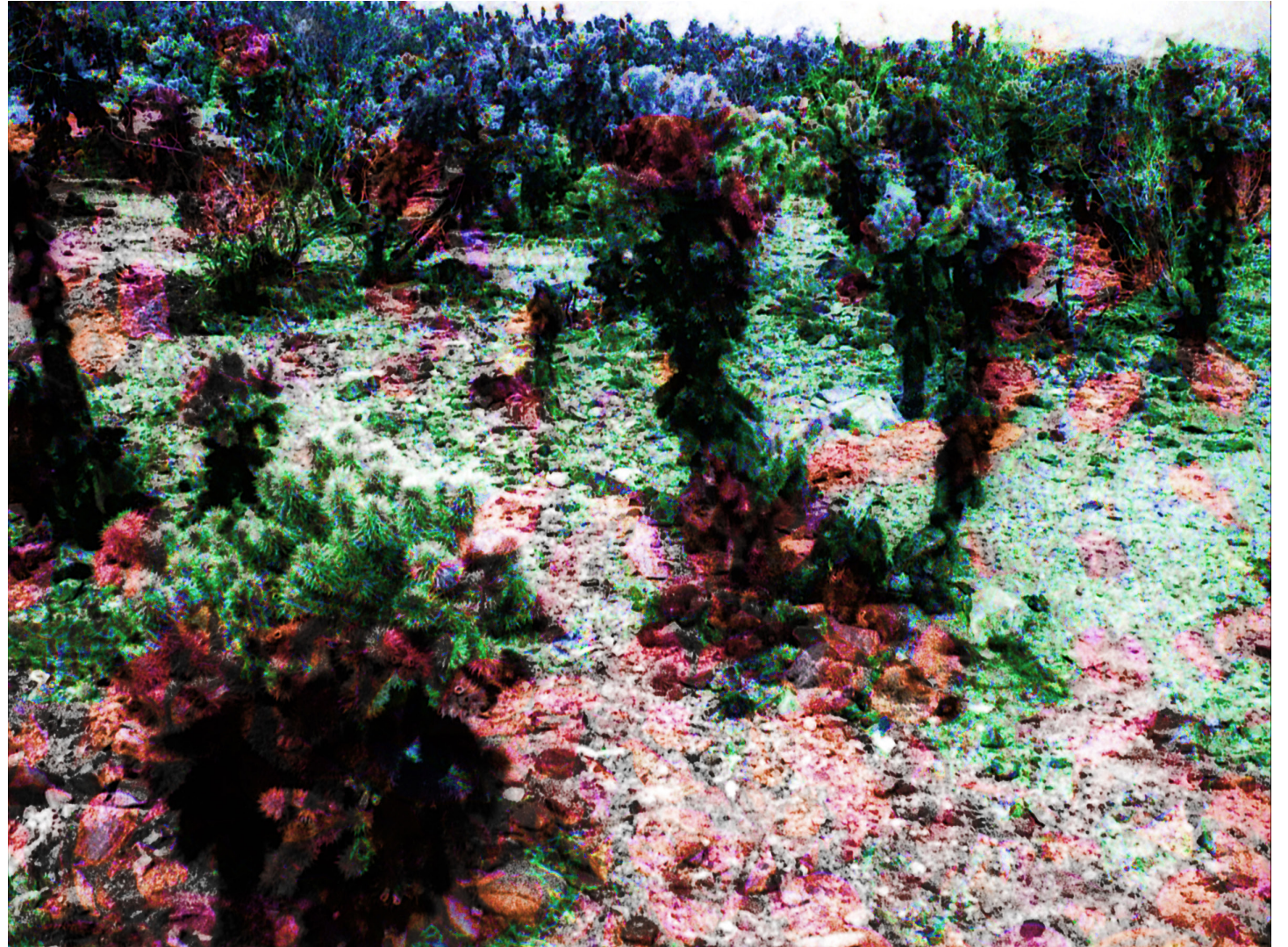
Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/5: Private collection, Beyrouth

Edition 2/5: Private collection, UK



High Noon (3)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/3: Private collection, UK



High Noon (4)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/3: Private collection, France

Edition 2/3: Fonds d'art contemporain -

Paris collections

Edition 3/3: Private collection, Dubai



High Noon (5)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



High Noon (6)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

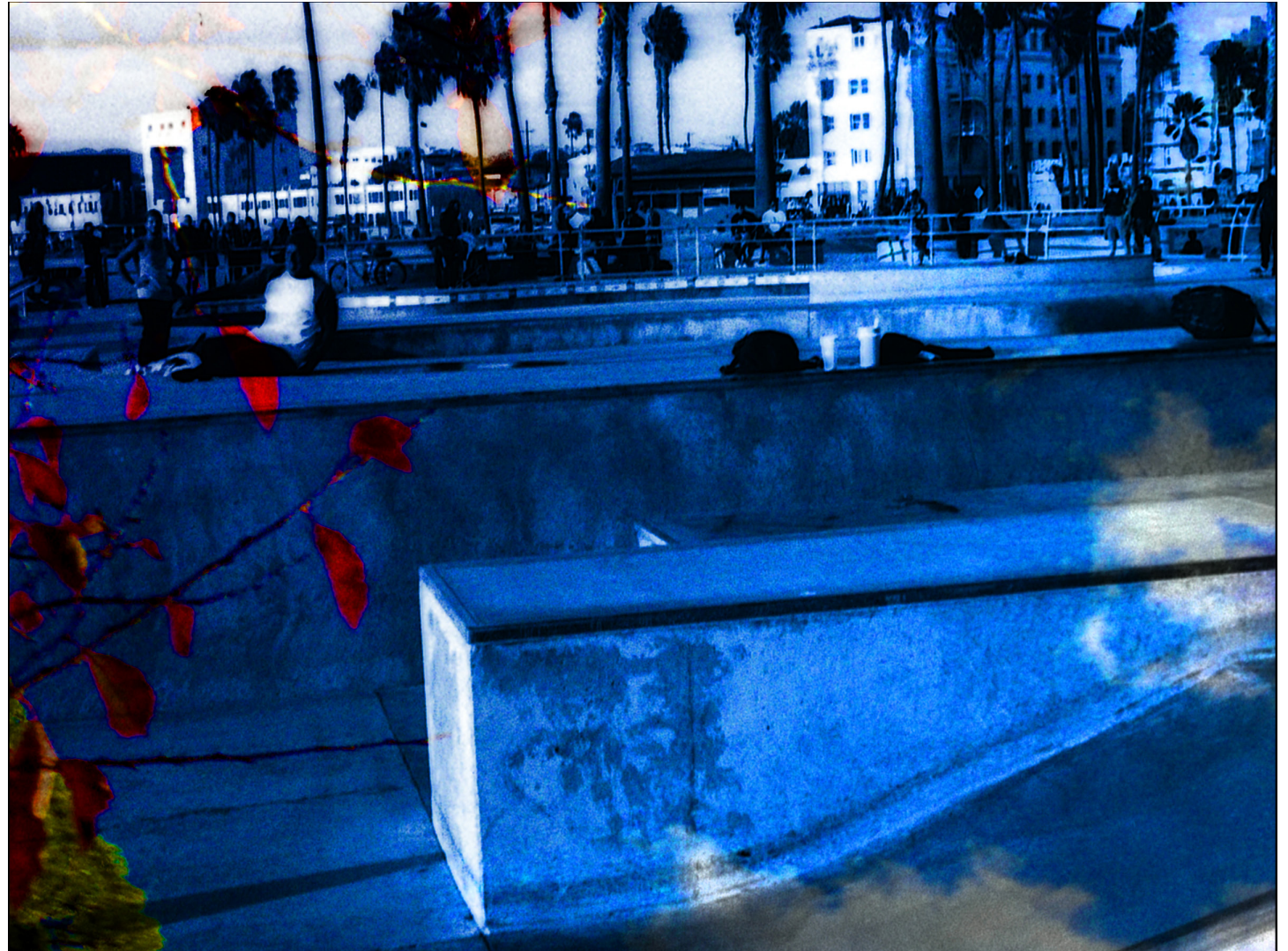
60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/3 : private collection, France

Edition 3/3 : Fonds d'art contemporain -

Paris collections



High Noon (7)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/3: International academy of Art

Palestine



High Noon (8)

2015

Inkjet print from a 16 mm film still

60 x 80 cm

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Edition 1/3: Private collection, France

Edition 2/3: Fonds d'art contemporain -

Paris collections



Semi Nomadic Debt Ridden

Bedouins

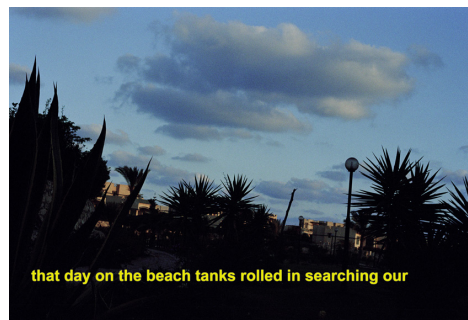
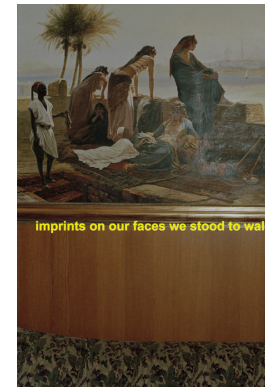
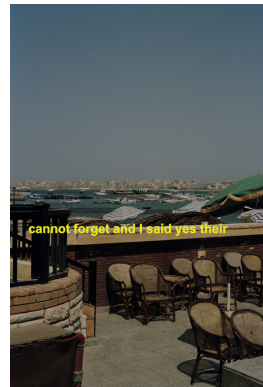
2006

Series of 12 inkjet prints

Inkjet print from negatives 33mm

58 x 40 cm (each)

Edition of 3 + 1 AP



Field Guide to the Ferns

2015

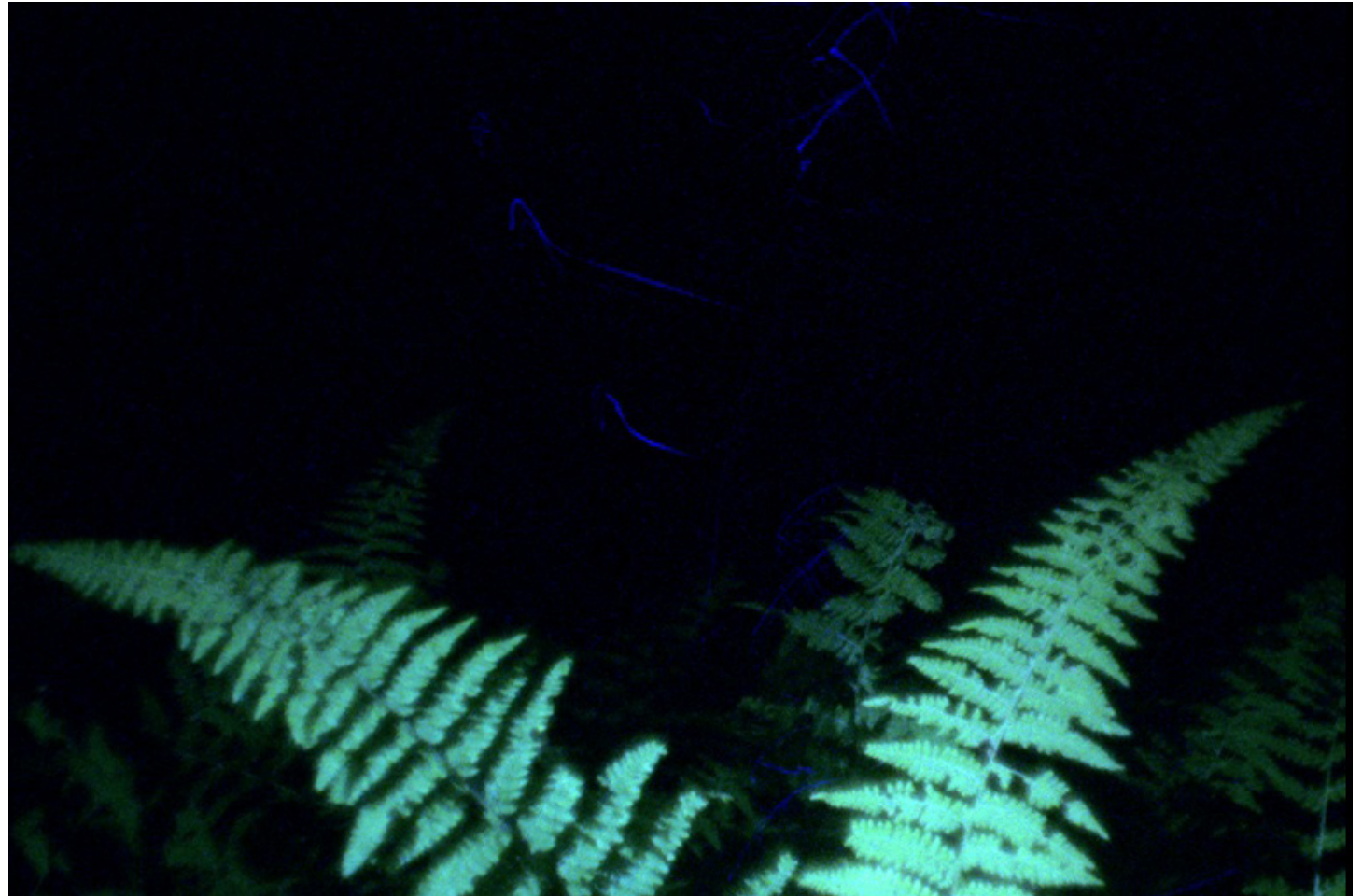
16mm film transferred to HD video

10 min

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

"Primitive savagery meets the brutality of the modern world in Ruggero Deodato's timeless slice of visceral horror".

Cannibal Holocaust is revived deep in the New Hampshire woods where apathy and violence are blurred.



High Noon

2015

16mm film transferred to video, colour,
sound

31 min 48 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

High Noon is the meeting between the Southern Californian landscape with that of the South-Eastern landscape of Onomichi Japan as an experience of the gravitational pull towards the center of the earth, with the knowledge that we are sometimes standing on the world upside down. We briefly glimpse each landscape as a dizzying series of loops that repeat themselves endlessly.



Onomichi City Museum of Art, Japan, © Justine Emard / Le Pavillon Neuflyze OBC 2014-2015

O' Persecuted

2014

16mm film transferred to HD video, colour
and sound

11 min 37 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Premiere: New York Film Festival -
Projections

"In *O' Persecuted*, Al-Sharif offers an occluded view of the restoration of Kassem Hawal's 1974 work of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine agitprop, *Our Small Houses*, before launching into a rapid-fire montage of decadent Israeli party photos, set to a pounding gabba soundtrack. Despairing at the contrast between the certainties of the past and those of present, Al-Sharif suggests an effort to shatter the former through the recapitulation of the latter."

—Colin Beckett, *The Brooklyn Rail*



Deep Sleep

2014

8mm film transferred to HD video, colour
and sound

12 min 37 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Ed. 1/5: Kadist, Paris

Ed. 2/5: Frac Bretagne, Rennes

Premiere: Media City Film Festival

Winner of the International Competition -
Videoex, Zurich

Temporarily restricted from travel to the Gaza Strip because of border conflict, I undertook the study and practice of autohypnosis with the purpose of bi-locating into multiple places at once. Paired with field recordings rendered into a binaural beat soundtrack, *Deep Sleep* is made up of a year's worth of bi-location sessions recorded onto Super8mm film. The result is a movement through the ruins of ancient civilizations as embedded in modern civilization-in-ruins. *Deep Sleep* draws from the historical avant-garde cinema to produce an invitation to move through a body as a body, to transcend geographical borders in a collective act that discards memory in exchange for a visceral present.

—Basma Al-Sharif

Exhibitions:

- MoMA's Festival of International
Nonfiction Film and Media, New York,
February, 2020

- *Delirium & Destiny, A Tale of Tub*,
Rotterdam, September - November. 2017



Untitled (Lyndsay Bloom)

2014

16mm film transferred to HD video

73 min 34 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Edition 1/5 : Private collection, Paris

A 3 minute shot of a woman entering into a lake
slowed down to over an hour as she disappears
into the landscape.



Home Movies Gaza

2013

DV Video, colour and sound

24 min 10 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Premiere: International Film Festival

Rotterdam

Honorable Mention, Media City Film

Festival 2013

Home Movies Gaza introduces us to the Gaza Strip as a microcosm for the failure of civilization. In an attempt to describe the everyday of a place that struggles for the most basic of human rights, this vid-eo claims a perspective from within the domestic spaces of a territory that is complicated, derelict, and altogether impossible to separate from its political identity.

Exhibition:

- *Comfort Zone I (Home)*, VCU Qatar,
January 10 - February 23, 2019



Farther than the eye can see

2012

DV video, colour and sound

12 min 56 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

In a story whose ending is unknown, the tracing of how events unfold is a journey backwards towards a place that no longer exists. *Farther Than the Eye Can See* uses the landscape of the Emirates as an indistinct urban space that appears new, uninhabited, and with a vague promise of something better. It also forms the backdrop for the voice of a woman recounting her story of the Nakbah (the mass exodus of Palestinians from Jerusalem in 1948) beginning with the arrival and ending with the departure. What lies ahead is beyond the range of vision as what came before is becoming a faded memory.

Exhibition:

- MoMA's Festival of International Nonfiction Film and Media, New York, February, 2020



Turkish Delight

2010

16mm film transferred to video, colour and sound

2 min 46 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Production: Manifesta 8, Region of Murcia

"Footage filmed in the interiors of homes in Amman, Jordan, just after their inhabitants have left, is interwoven frame-by-frame over a looped soundtrack of single words. Shot on super 16mm film and transferred to digital video, installed in a room sealed by mosquito netting with no entrance. The words are my grandmother's, the homes are my relatives', and the work was made just after a major war in the Gaza Strip. *Turkish Delight* is a thinly veiled response to the migration of Palestinians to Jordan, to political refugees who settle in the neighboring country waiting for the occupation to end – refugees who never end up leaving. Their domestic space is a prison with invisible walls; for the spectator, *Turkish Delight* provides some semblance of the banality of their exile."

—Basma Al-Sharif



We began by measuring distance

2009

DV Video, colour and sound

19 min 06 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Production: The Sharjah Biennial Production Programme
Marion McMahon Award, Jury Prize, 9th Sharjah Biennial
Third Prize, Experimental, 2012 Athens International Film &
Video Festival

Long still frames, text, language, and sound are weaved together to unfold the narrative of an anonymous group who fill their time by measuring distance. Innocent measurements transition into political ones, examining how image and sound communicate history. *We Began by Measuring Distance* explores an ultimate disenchantment with facts when the visual fails to communicate the tragic.

Recent exhibitions:

- The Lahore Biennale, *Between the sun and the moon*, January - February 2020
- *Intimate Terrains : Representations of a Disappearing Landscape*, The Palestinian Museum, April - December 2019
- *The Gap Between Us*, The Mosaics Room, Janvier - Mars 2018



Everywhere was the same

2007

DV Video, colour and sound

11 min 38 sec

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

Premiere: Arteast: Cinema East Film Festival

In an empty room, a slideshow projection of abandoned places plays alongside the narrative of two girls who find themselves on the shores of a pre-apocalyptic paradise. Told through subtitle text that weaves fact and fiction together, the story of a massacre unfolds. When the image and text malfunction and the story is no longer comprehensible, the video wanders away from the room of the slideshow, allowing us to see what is happening elsewhere.

