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palestinian
museum

Intimate Terrains

EXHIBITION GUIDE



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Hazem Harb, *Untitled #16 from the Archaeology of Occupation series*, 2015
Print on Hahnemuhle FineArt paper, 172cm x 120cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tabari Artspace

Dear visitor,

Thank you for visiting the Palestinian Museum and our new exhibition *Intimate Terrains: Representations of a Disappearing Landscape*. This exhibition explores the changing representation of landscape by Palestinian artists of different generations, via diverse and unconventional media.

We invite you to view the leaflets and documentation on display in the Glass Gallery adjacent to our exhibition hall, which map and highlight the historical and political structuring conditions that transformed landscape into what it is today.

Please join us throughout the year in the different events of our Education and Public Programme. These activities are organized around monthly themes related to the exhibition, and include art workshops, family days, seminars, artist talks, interactive tours, lectures, and film screenings. Please follow us and share your feedback via email and on our social media platforms.

We are delighted that you are joining us in this recollection of place, hoping that together we will rethink and reimagine our longed-for landscape, and what we wish to transmit to the coming generations.

Dr. Adila Laïdi-Hanieh and the Palestinian Museum team
#palmuseum #IntimateTerrains

اقترب الآفاق Intimate Terrains

التحوّلات الفنيّة للمشهد الطبيعي
Representations of a Disappearing Landscape

Introduction

Intimate Terrains explores the changing representation of landscape by Palestinian artists, and our relationship to place and location through the themes of erasure, fragmentation, distance and belonging in a spectrum of artworks drawn from the 1930s to the present day.

The depiction of landscape over the decades provides us with a prism onto the experience of loss and longing, a prominent subject matter for artists, as its topography holds a central place in Palestinian identity formation. Landscape is at once both a vast site of projection and a deeply layered terrain of remains, memories and histories.

How do artists negotiate and articulate collective and personal memory in relation to representations of landscape? What keeps us in a place? What are the limits of nostalgia? How does exile and different experiences of alienation shape views of the landscape? With our diminishing access to the land, the segregation of communities and the fragmentation and isolation of the terrains, and as the violent confiscation and destruction of the land unfolds, how do our intimate relationships to places manifest around landscape?

Yet undeterred by this, what have been and what are our dreams and visions of landscapes of the past and future?

The exhibition includes works by the following artists:

Jumana Emil Abboud, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Jawad Almalhi, Basma Alsharif, Nabil Anani, Johny Andonia, Rafat Asad, Asad Azi, Samira Badran, Tayseer Barakat, Taysir Batniji, Rana Bishara, Benji Boyadgian, Hasan Daraghme, Aissa Deebi, Sophie Halaby, Samia Halaby, Rula Halawani, Hazem Harb, Tawfiq Jawharieh, Yazan Khalili, Manal Mahamid, Bashir Makhoul, Sliman Mansour, Jack Persekian, Khalil Rayan, Steve Sabella, Larissa Sansour, Walid Abu Shakra, Laila Shawa, Amer Shomali, Suha Shoman, Nida Sinnokrot, Nasser Soumi, Vera Tamari, Vladimir Tamari.



Background

The representation of the landscape has a long history in Palestine and was an integral part of cultural practices, it could be found in wall paintings, textiles, ceramics, tilework pottery, stonework, popular folktales, place names, superstitions and sayings as nature and the landscape were part of the vernacular. Representations of landscape did not conform to dominant European conventions of perspective concerned with representing views and vistas, directed at a single individual in a surveying vantage point, but rather often evoked rhythms and patterns in nature such as in textile, embroidery, pottery and tilework. Palestinian women's costumes for example, had intricate and elaborate references to nature in its patterns, and each village and region had its own distinctive evolving styles, while tilework and ceramics drew inspiration from flora and fauna. Popular culture was full of folktales and superstitions related to spirits that inhabited the landscape and their powers. The landscape was not perceived as inanimate, the natural environment was believed to be inhabited by good and evil spirits who dwelled in water, around trees and ruins, and who sometimes could be heard or who appeared as animals or human beings. Villagers used the landscape as their main term of reference in many aspects of their practice of daily life.

Easel painting was another mode of representation, the nineteenth-century paintings of the landscape by Palestinian artists were strongly influenced by European traditions and in particular representations of the Holy Land. However, Palestinian artists' whose works remain today from the nineteenth century and early 20th century reveal that they were imbued with local perspectives and their knowledge of place, unlike foreign visitors whose representations were heavily influenced by their ideological and political predispositions.

Palestine has a long history of being the ambition of others, who have desired to conquer and re-fashion it. This is evident in both the transformation of the physical landscape and the representation of it in painting, photography, literature, political and religious discourses. The image of Palestine as the Holy Land was therefore extensively cultivated in the collective imagination of Europe through various forms of cultural production. This ongoing cultural production was closely tied to political and colonial strategies and was an integral part of Zionist ambitions for Palestine. The question of land and the representation of landscape has been at the centre of the colonisation of Palestine for centuries. Since its creation, the Israeli state has been engaged in carving out the physical landscape, transforming it through massive settlement projects, confiscation of land, and the destruction of historical sites, all of which have been accompanied by a demographic war of depopulation and expulsion and segregation of the Palestinians from each other.

In 2001, Israel began the construction of the Separation Wall, which has been accompanied by hundreds of policed checkpoints that separate Palestinian cities, towns, and villages and dissect the territories into a series of non-contiguous cantons. It is in this highly charged context that this exhibition takes its point of departure to explore how landscape has been represented by Palestinian artists across the decades.

Motherlands and Dreamscapes

- 1 Sliman Mansour
- 2 Nabil Anani

screening room

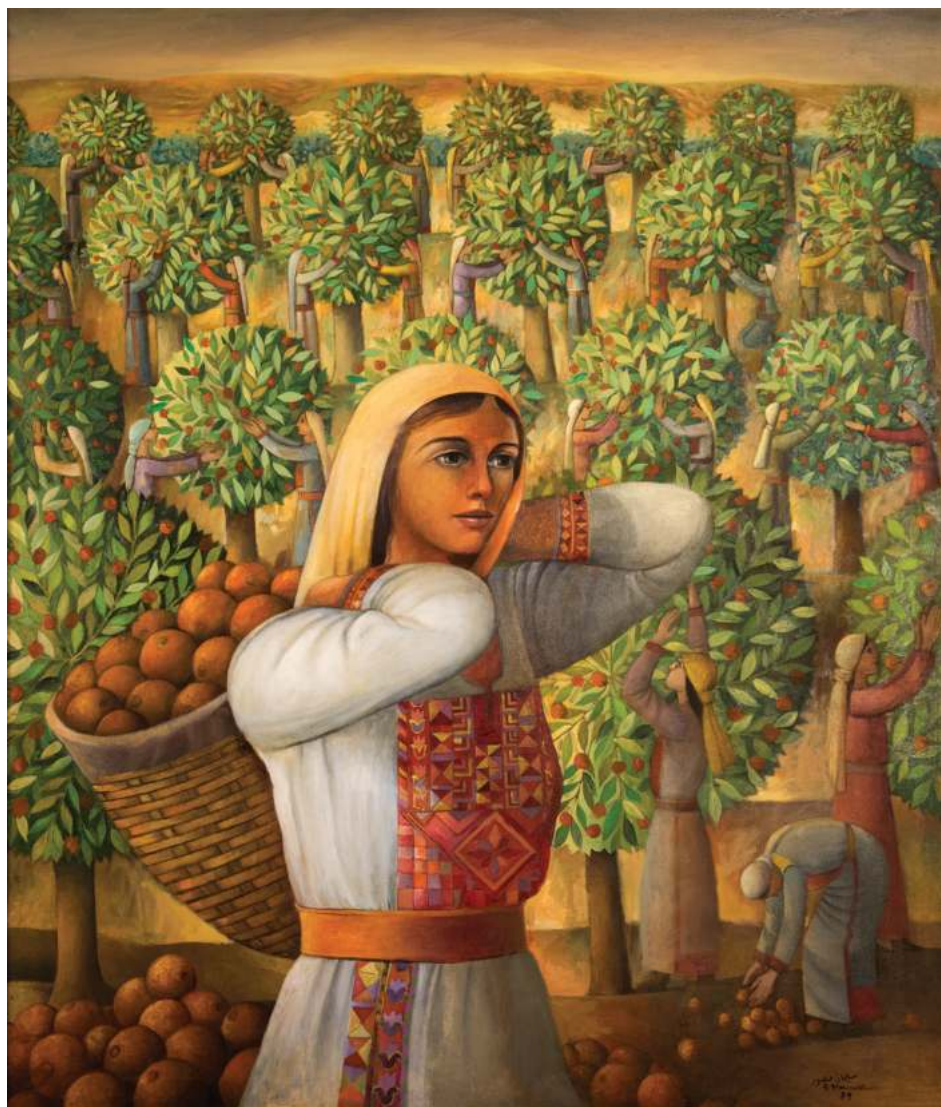
In relation to the above historical contexts, it is not surprising that the representation of the landscape has dominated the artistic expression of Palestinians. The cultural arenas of literature, theatre, cinema, dance, and art have played a significant role in shaping a vision of the landscape, one mobilised in the formation and articulation of national identity. What has occurred over the decades however, are significant changes in the representations of the landscape by artists, as their relationship to the landscape and the landscape itself has been transformed.

Landscapes came to dominate Palestinian art in the mid-1970s and 1980s, particularly by artists living in the Occupied Territories and inside Israel. This was accompanied by calls to resistance through popular posters in which there was a plethora of folkloric symbols. The focus on images of villages coincided with a revival of heritage and folklore that began in the late 1970s. As more explicit forms of national expression were censored by the Israeli occupation, the village, with its pastoral image, served as a suitable metaphor for the nation. The representations were not of specific villages but rather combined elements that together constituted an idyllic utopia. These included a landscape in full bloom, stone houses, and women wearing traditional costume, surrounded by children, or engaged in domestic activities such as baking bread, grinding wheat, and harvesting crops, fruits and olives.

These idyllic representations serve to elide the realities of the present, and in so doing cast an image of the future in a nostalgic utopian lens of the past. The focus on the village and peasantry contours the representation of the landscape as a distinctly domestic one. The presence of the female figure in the landscape in traditional costumes became the foremost visual signifier of national identity. The mother, who becomes the motherland, invested the image of Palestine with maternal symbolism, as in **Nabil Anani's** painting *Motherhood*. In this painting, the landscape is reduced to an arch of vines, and the peasant woman's embroidered dress has lost its regional specificity and has been replaced with the four colours of the Palestinian flag. **Sliman Mansour** created a lifetime of works on this theme, one such example is *Yaffa* in which a young woman in traditional Palestinian costume carries a basket of oranges, while in the background the orange groves are full of women collecting fruit. She gazes into the distance as if lost in memories.

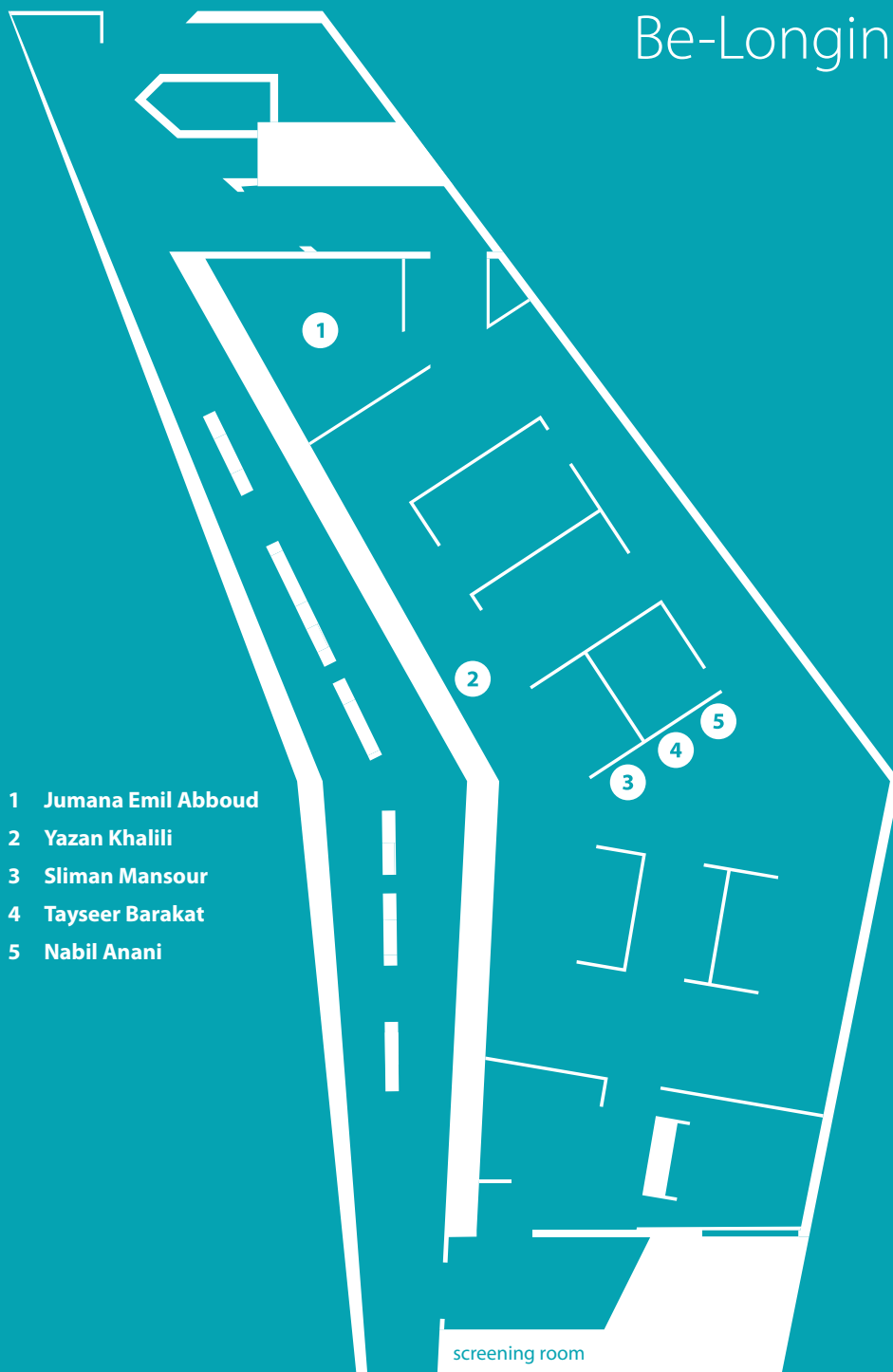


Nabil Anani, *Motherhood*, 1995. Oil on canvas, 75cm x 85cm
Courtesy of the artist and Zawyeh Gallery



Sliman Mansour, *Yaffa*, 1979. Oil on canvas, 120cm x 140cm
Courtesy of the artist and Yvette and Mazen QPTY Collection

Be-Longing



During the First Intifada (1987-1990s), numerous artists moved away from working in oil painting and began experimentation with natural materials, many artists were engaged in attempting to find new forms of expression outside the classical mediums of their training. This venture was also linked with the decision to depart from use of materials imported from Israel as part of a wider popular movement of disengagement with the occupation, its economy and institutions. The former dreamscapes were not represented through the imaginary pictorial field of the painting but through a sensory intoxication with the tactility and the aroma of homeland which artists created with the use of natural materials such as mud, earth, cactus, olive leaves, olive oil, clay, henna, herbs, olive oil soap, oranges and water – all of which permeated their art in paintings, mixed-media works and installations which continued into the 1990s and beyond. Artists such as **Sliman Mansour**, **Tayseer Barakat**, **Vera Tamari**, **Nabil Anani**, **Rana Bishara**, **Nasser Soumi** and others all experimented with natural materials. For example, **Tayseer Barakat** worked with wood and found objects, in *Untitled*, the surface of the wood has been engraved with abstract forms of people and animals, the work imparts the sense of an ancient hieroglyph or tablet, referencing visual traditions of the region and suggests that it is an ancient relic, while **Nabil Anani's** work is made of dyed leather shows a village scene.

Jifna by **Sliman Mansour** is an example, in which a utopic vision of the landscape is not represented through idyllic pastoral images as in previous works but more acutely through its appeal to our senses. The rich tactility of the works, the encrusted surfaces, the areas of scintillating colours resemble the effect of the passage of sunlight and shadow on stone and soil, and the feeling of warmth and heat that transpires through the work call to a nostalgia for the landscape.

In *Maskouneh (inhabited)*, by **Jumana Emil Abboud**, with **Issa Freij**, Abboud speaks of longing and belonging, and of a profound, continual wandering and searching in the landscape. This theme of rediscovering a relationship to the landscape resonates in her the videos, drawings and paintings. In her drawings, landscape and figures merge into one—female figures, ghouls, creatures. Her works impart to us what it feels like to move through the landscape—to pause to engage in intimacy and wonderment—yet they also seem to be imbued with a sense of longing. In the book *On Love and Other Landscapes*, **Yazan Khalili** juxtaposes a series of photographs of the landscape, with an intimate love story. The photographs take us on journey across hills, valleys, vistas and everyday places while we read of separation and memories of a relationship, which unfolds with the turning of each page. As we move across the landscape, the personal details of love story are revealed which convey a pervading sense of separation and lost love.



Sliman Mansour, *Jifna*, 1992. Mud, henna, colour powder on jute and wood, 103cm x 95cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Yvette and Mazen Qpty Collection



Tayseer Barakat, *Untitled*, 1997. Burnt and tinted wood, 75cm x 116cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Yvette and Mazen Qpty Collection

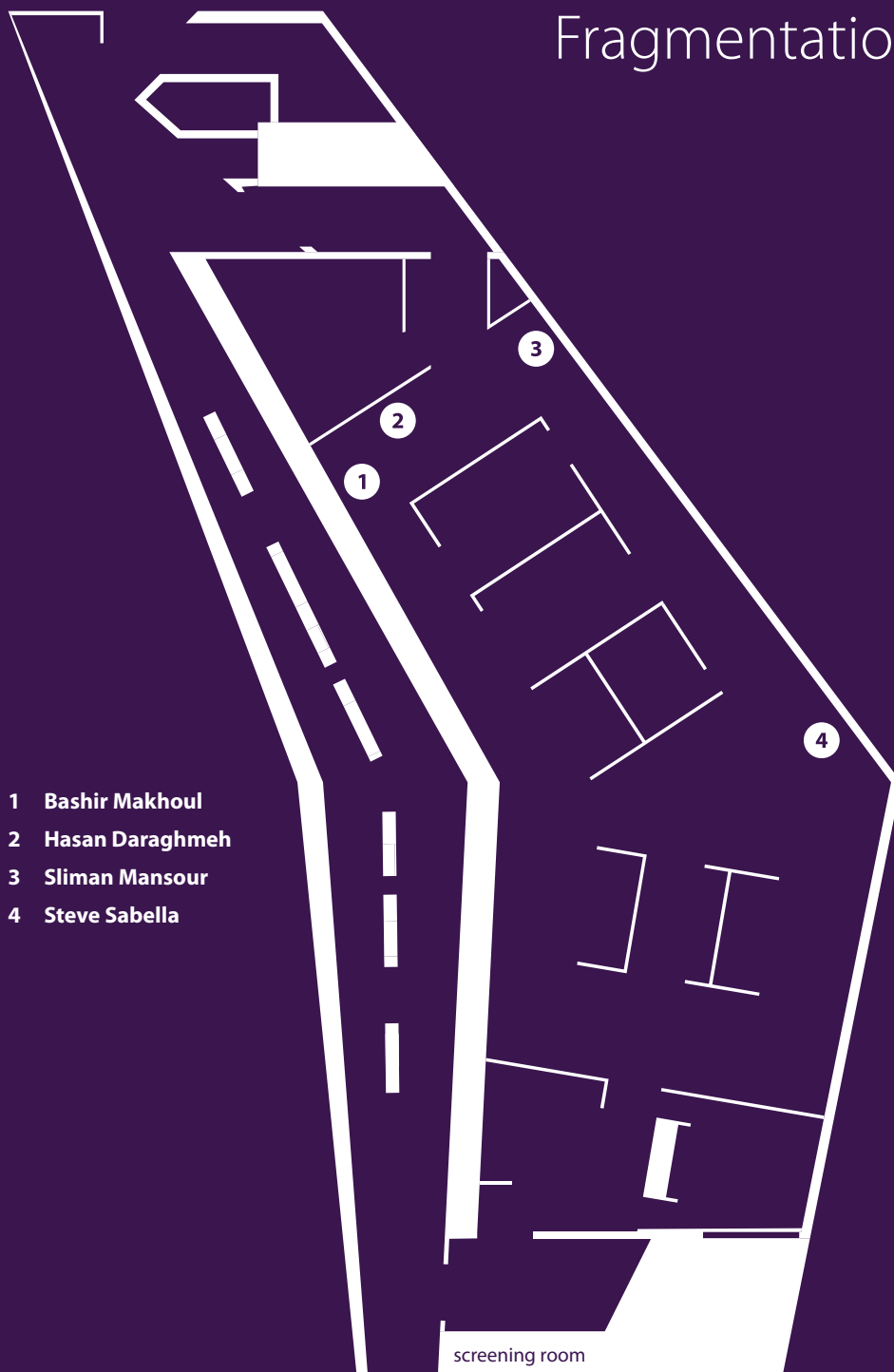


Jumana Emil Abboud and Issa Freij, *Maskouneh (Inhabited)*, 2017. Video still
 Courtesy of the artists



Yazan Khalili, *On Love and Other Landscapes*, 2011. Book, 92 pages. Page size: 32cm x 46cm, photo size: 13cm x 18cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès Gallery

Fragmentation



Bashir Makhoul explores the paradox of singularity and repetition in his series, *One Centimeter of My Sand, One Grain of My Soil, One Centimeter of My Blood, One Drop of My Tears*. The formal repetition of the pattern implies an infinity which contradicts the singularity of the object and the question of ownership that is implied by the title. The cm of blood, the drop of water, the grain of soil could be of anyone and any place. However, the paradox of ownership highlights the anomalies of national identities, in which blood and land are recurring powerful symbols that tie us to homelands, nations and our landscapes.

In **Steve Sabella's** work *No Man's Land*, it is precisely the recurring elements of any landscape that are questioned as we do not know where we are - the specificity of place has been lost as the photographs are a sophisticated seamless collage of everyday elements from the landscape, rotting leaves, feathers, pollen and dust on the surface of a lake. We seem to float in an abyss, an infinity with no rootedness or grounding, in which fragments from the landscape create a cosmos.

Hasan Daraghmeh's *Flower of Salt* consists of hours of video footage of everyday sites in Jericho, Ramallah and al-Am'ari refugee camp from his personal archive. In this work, he reduces the frame size until the vastness of the landscape becomes a texture of colour collapsing the landscape in which the personal intimate memories of place become a vibrating pixel on the screen.

Sliman Mansour's *Drought* consists of hundreds of fragments of dry mud, which make up an outline of a figure (possibly a self-portrait), accompanied by a pattern of olive trees. The work recalls a colourless mosaic, of parched and dried earth which appears to be in a process of disintegration that is held in delicate suspension.

The above works of **Bashir Makhoul, Steve Sabella, Hasan Daraghmeh** and **Sliman Mansour** all speak to a loss of ground, the disappearance of any specificity of location. Each work explores how pattern and repetition can probe the affiliations of identity to place and the paradoxes of our relationship to landscapes and homelands.



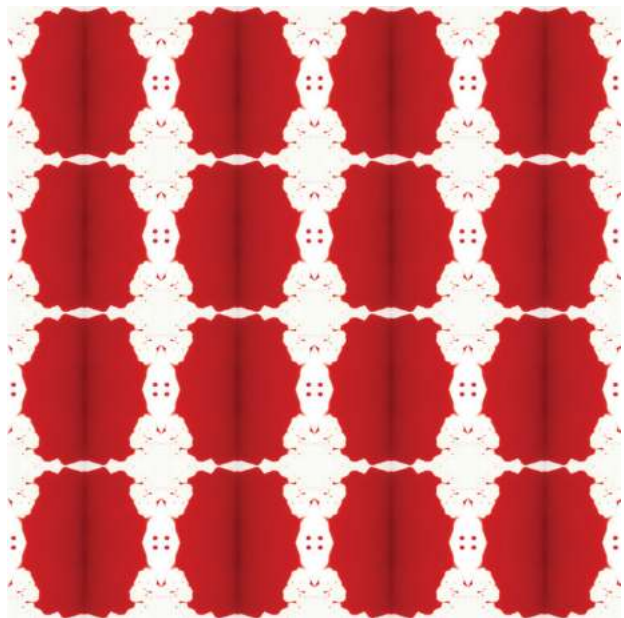
Sliman Mansour, *Drought*, 2005. Mud on wire, 300cm x 300cm.
Courtesy of the artist



Hasan Daraghme, *Flower of Salt*, 2014. 4-channel HD video installation, silent, loop, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist



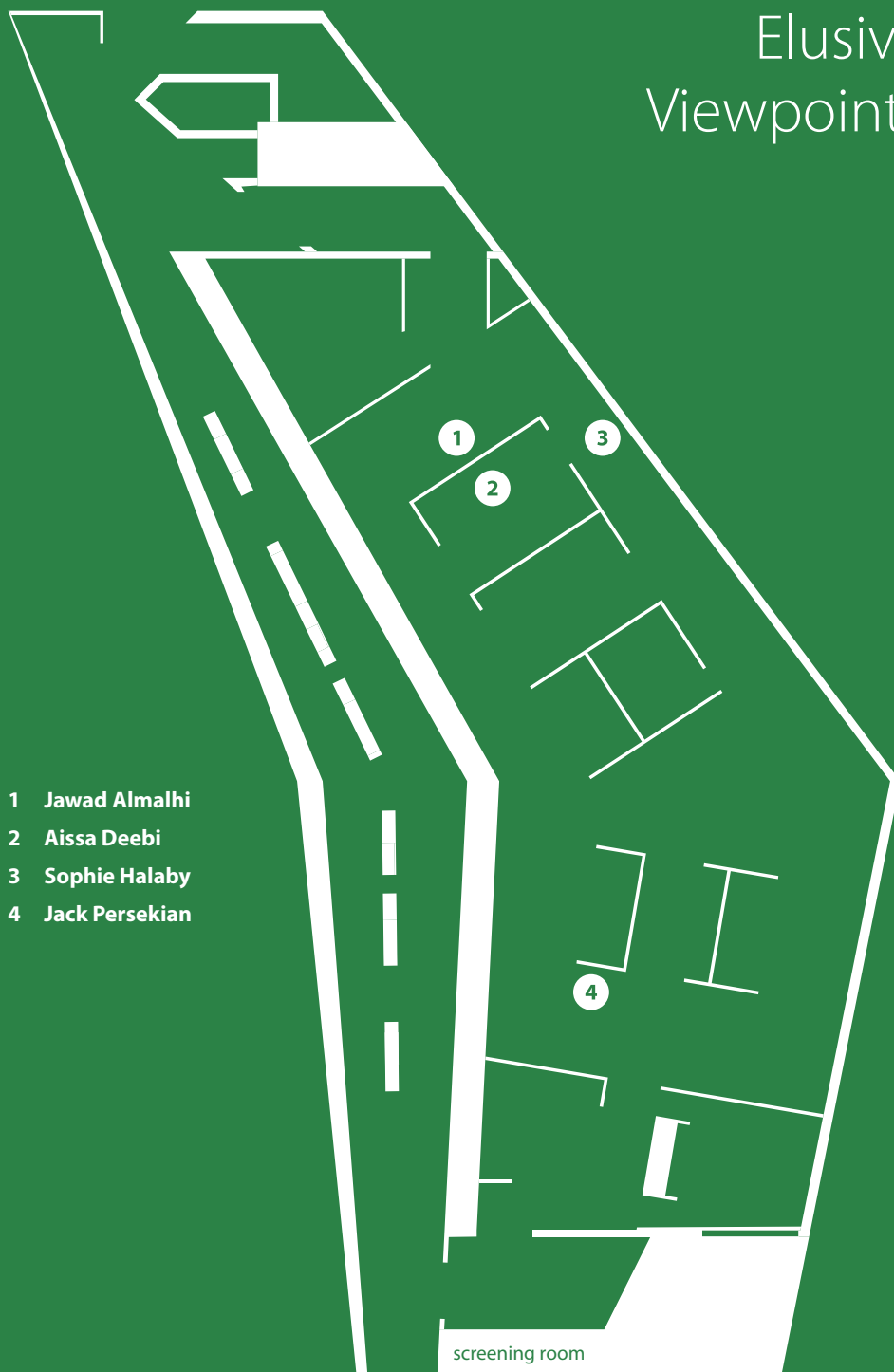
Steve Sabella, *No Man's Land III*, 2015. Light jet prints mounted on matt diasec, 3.5cm, 200cm x 200cm. Courtesy of the artist



Bashir Makhoul, *One Centimeter of My Blood*, 1999. Digital print, 180cm x 180cm
Courtesy of the artist

Elusive Viewpoints

- 1 Jawad Almalhi
- 2 Aissa Deebi
- 3 Sophie Halaby
- 4 Jack Persekian



The classic panorama of the Old City of Jerusalem has been dominated by the view of its Holy sites. **Jawad Almalhi's, *Tower of Babel Re-visited*** offers an alternative panorama of Jerusalem. The photograph allows us a vantage point to view the refugee camp, settlements, Separation Wall and the unfinished Palace of King Hussein. Almalhi searched for a vantage point to photograph the refugee camp, impossible from within its confined passageways, and to capture the encirclement of settlements. The panorama reveals the intensely accumulative topographies of the built environment of refugees which have become a testimony of dispossession.

From another viewpoint, **Aissa Deebi** in ***This is How I Saw, Gaza***, explores the wars on Gaza Strip, via re-representations of TV news screen- as Gaza is a place which he is not permitted to enter. The series of prints offer a frightening and sombre grid of terrifying violence. During her lifetime, **Sophie Halaby** (1906-1998) created tens of drawings and watercolours of Jerusalem, Jericho and Palestinian landscapes from different viewpoints. Halaby was one of few women artists of her generation who studied arts in Italy and France between 1928-1933.¹ In particular, she continually and diligently studied the hills of Jerusalem, repeatedly sketching and painting them. Uncannily, her landscapes have a melancholic and foreboding quality, which perhaps reflect the transformations of the political eras she lived through.

Jack Persekian's series ***Past Tense*** is a detailed study of Jerusalem through archival photographs of the Matson Collection juxtaposed with present-day documentation of the exact sites. The photographs reveal the detailed transformation of the city, and a lost landscape, highlighting detailed changes of each location.

¹ Kamal Boullata, *Palestinian Art: From 1850 to the Present* (London: Saqi, 2009), 166.



Sophie Halaby, *The Mount of Olives series*, 1954. Watercolour on paper, 65cm x 49cm. Courtesy of Yvette and Mazen Qutty Collection



Aissa Deebi, *This is How I Saw, Gaza*, Edition # 3, 2019. Hybrid print, 50cm x 70cm. Artwork commissioned and printed by the Department of Painting and Printmaking, at VCU School of the Arts, Richmond, VA, USA. Courtesy of the artist



Jawad Almalhi, *Tower of Babel Re-visited*, 2008. Digital Print, 500cm x 61cm. Courtesy of the artist



Jack Persekian, *Jerusalem from Mount Scopus*, 2017. 2 inkjet prints on film, light box, 80cm x 120cm x 70cm
 Courtesy of the artist

Traces of Memories

- 
- 1 Walid Abu Shakra
 - 2 Vladimir Tamari
 - 3 Samia Halaby
 - 4 Khalil Rayan
 - 5 Rafat Asad
 - 6 Nabil Anani
 - 7 Nasser Soumi
 - 8 Vera Tamari
 - 9 Rula Halawani
 - 10 Suha Shoman

10 screening room

Walid Abu Shakra's etchings are characterized by careful studies of the landscape. His attention to detail reveals deep relationship and familiarity with each location, as noted on each etching, the place that they document. His etchings can be seen as individual portraits of the olive trees, cactus and the hand-built walls. In **Vera Tamari's** works the layered history of the landscape, its changing colours and hues, and the cycle of its seasons have been a major source of inspiration. In *Rhythms from the Past* and *Fragmented Landscape*, we see the themes of archaeology and history explored in detail, these works reveals a landscape, layered with archaeological fragments and remains.

Rula Halawani presents in her *For My Father* series, a poignant and ghostly portrait of loss and alienation. She revisited several sites inside historic Palestine, photographing the rolling hills, seashores and landscape of her youth. Her memories of place become incongruent with the scenes and vistas, intensifying the sense of insurmountable loss.

Suha Shoman's Bayyaritna is a sombre narration of the violent methodical destruction of the groves on her family's land in Gaza, conveyed through the accumulation of statistics that result in barren lands. **Rafat Asad's Marj Ibn Amer** series, also explores the site of his childhood memories the landscapes become an amalgam of imagination and memory as it is unreachable. **Khalil Rayan** and **Nabil Anani's** landscape paintings are also both taken from a series of works that are imbued with nostalgia towards the landscape. Both artists explore the landscape through a palette of colours. Through Rayan's emotive brushstrokes and colours, we get a strong sense of the rhythm of the hills. While in Anani's work, the terrain is stitched like a lovingly embroidered patterned textile, with repeated olive groves, and fields of the landscape.

Similarly, **Samia Halaby** has a large repertoire of landscape works in which she explores changing seasons through paintings filled with a dabbling of brushstrokes and marks characteristic of her style. While many of the abstract works of the late **Vladimir Tamari's** evoke spaces of landscape as though impressions and memories. *Icon for Jaffa*, by **Nasser Soumi** is a single box from a series of works based on the memories of Palestinians living in the diaspora. Each hand-written memory is preserved in a box alongside the most frequently referred to icon of the city; oranges and the sea. The piece speaks of the persistence of memories as well as the impossibility of reunion with the place and reveals recollected memories of the past of the coastal city.



Suha Shoman, *Bayyaritna*, 2009. Video, 8 minutes and 9 seconds. Courtesy of the artist



Rula Halawani, *Untitled 2* from "*For My Father*" series, 2015. Digital print, 150cm x 100cm
Courtesy of the artist and Ayyam Gallery

Nasser Soumi, *Icon for Jaffa*, 1996/ 2014. Wood, orange peels, water of Jaffa's sea and text on paper, 60cm x 40cm x 12cm
Courtesy of the artist



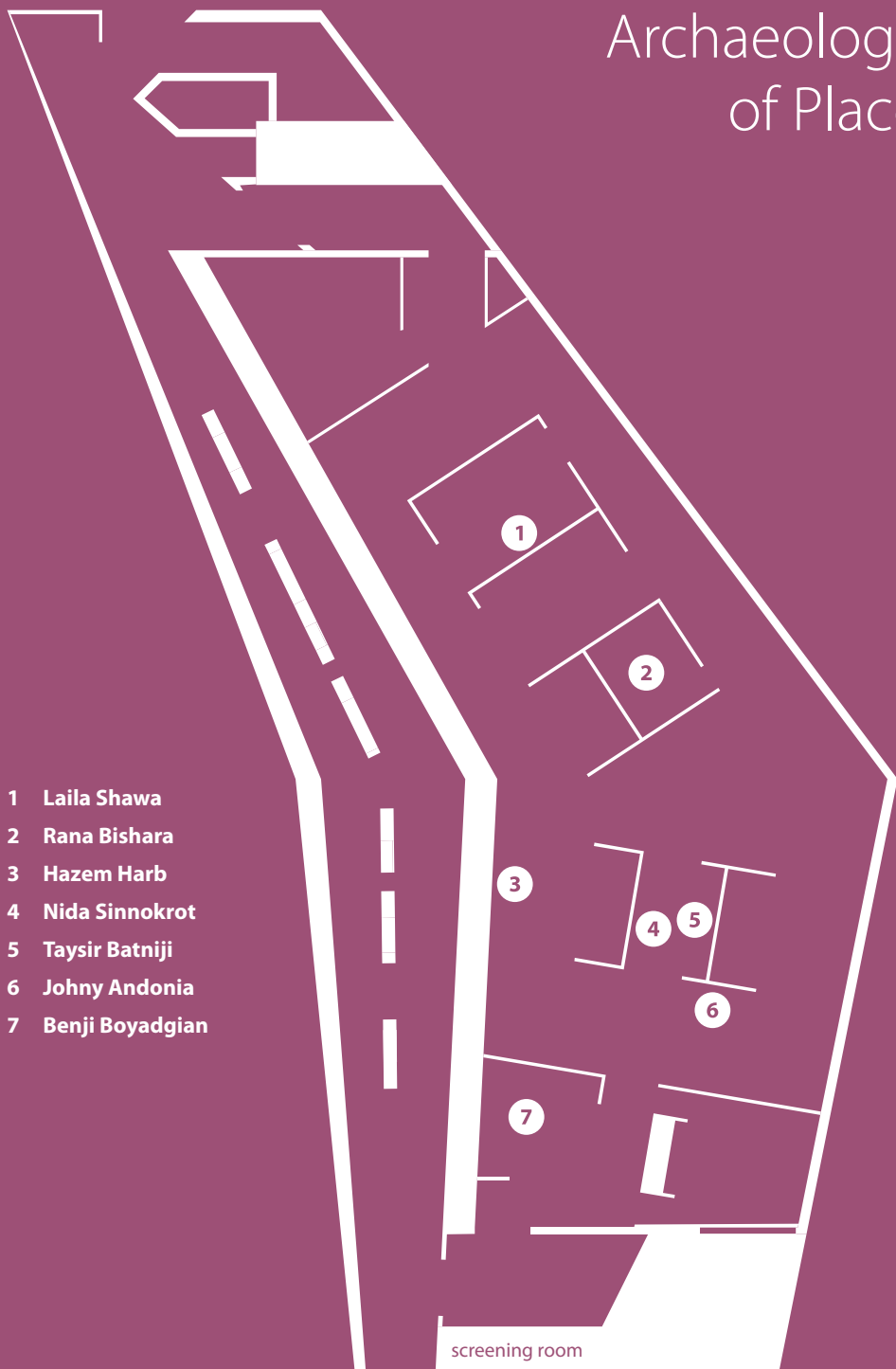
Vera Tamari, *Fragmented Landscape*, 1995/2019. Ceramic relief-terracotta, glazes, engobe and wood, background drawing – pencil, H 51cm x W 41cm x D 6cm. Courtesy of the artist



Rafat Asad, *Marj Ibn Amer (#9)*, 2015. Acrylic on canvas, 130cm x 120cm
Courtesy of the artist and George Al Ama

Archaeology of Place

- 1 Laila Shawa
- 2 Rana Bishara
- 3 Hazem Harb
- 4 Nida Sinnokrot
- 5 Taysir Batniji
- 6 Johny Andonia
- 7 Benji Boyadgian



Taysir Batniji created *GH0809#2* (Gaza houses 2008-2009) after the military operation against Gaza which took place between 27th December 2008 to 18th January 2009. The photographs of each home are displayed in the form of real estate adverts with the detailed neutral description of specifications of each house common to such advertisements. The aim of the artist was to commit these sites to memory through this form of testimony which can also be read as a type of archaeological record of historic ruins. **Laila Shawa's** *Walls of Gaza* series document the walls of the city during the First Intifada. The graffiti was part of the urban landscape, which conveyed resistance strategies and national proclamations of the First Intifada. Walls became a palimpsest of political discourse and positions, that were regularly painted over by Israeli occupation soldiers. **Rana Bishara** also works with remnants of the landscape, through the form of the cactus. The cactus has been invested with particular symbolic value, as it marks the sites of villages destroyed and erased in 1948 and is taken as a sign of steadfastness. In her installation, Bishara creates a room of cacti, their remains are like eerie fragile skeletons, as they hang, they create an array of shadows onto the maps which cover the surfaces of the room. The maps themselves detail the transformation of landscape over time. The cactus forms themselves echo the maps and speak of a perforated fragile landscape.

Another remain in the landscape is the photograph that documents **Nida Sinnokrot's** *Jonah's Whale*, which appears like a skeleton found in natural history museums. The containers are a palimpsest as Sinnokrot describes, "The one I have is inscribed with children's sketches, Russian, Hebrew, Arabic, English, showing the traces of its journey from a container to Israeli caravan to Palestinian construction site, all with resonant stories of promise, default and debt."² The traces remain and ruins of a disappearing landscape come to the fore, in the work of **Benji Boyadgian**. *The Temporary Ruin* is a detailed study of vanishing landscape, through the found objects of this valley, commonly known at the valley of garbage, but which is earmarked for construction in the 'Greater Jerusalem Plan.' "Artistically, I produce a situation to document this material and propose a story for each curiosity. I focus on the objects' anatomy, deterioration, and tonal etiolation, an attempt to "challenge their disappearance."³ Fragments and traces of the landscape are also the subject of **Johny Andonia's** work, the painting, *Jerusalem Stone*, is partly inspired by early childhood experiences of workshops of stone carvers, now dying craftsmanship as a result of the rapid commercialisation of this industry. The groups of stones that could have been quarried at different geographical locations were brought together and merged in compositions that could resemble mountain chains, agricultural terraces or landscapes."⁴ The *Archaeology of Occupation*, is a series of collages by **Hazem Harb**, which combines archival photographs of Palestine prior to 1948, with ominous concrete structures which seem to float in space as though invading the landscape. The works present a strong sense of foreboding, while highlighting the alien forms of concrete, and their formal properties which have filled the landscape of Palestine and which have become part of the physical infrastructure of occupation. Archaeology is an underlying theme that runs through many of the works discussed which is explored by artists, not as its academic discipline but understood more as a form of testimony.

² Nida Sinnokrot. Artist statement.

³ Benji Boyadgian. Artist statement.

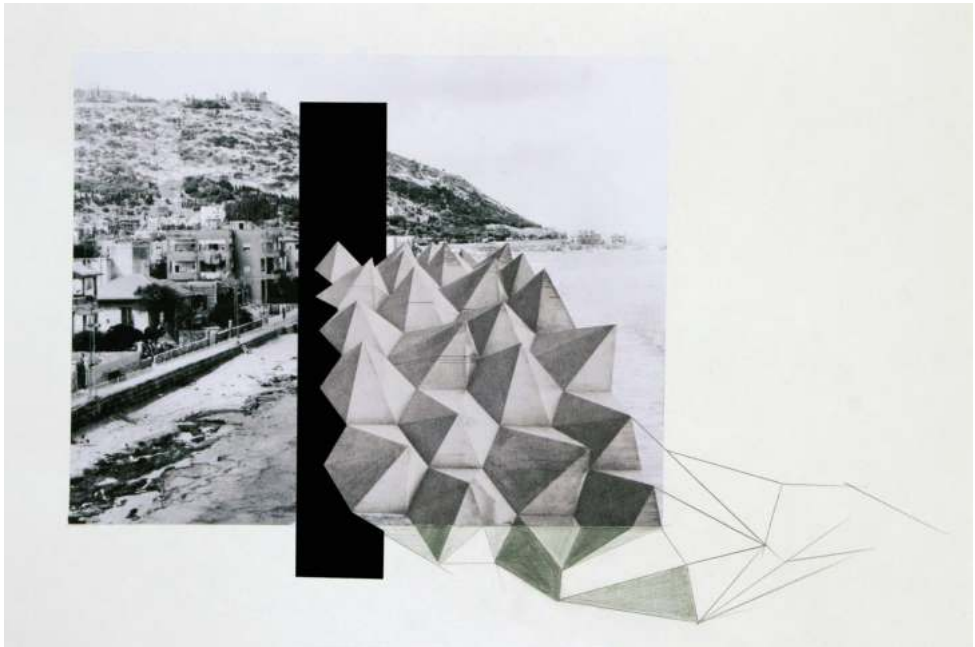
⁴ Johny Andonia. Artist statement.



Laila Shawa, *Gates Within Gates*, 1994. Lithograph on paper, 50cm x 38cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Bank of Palestine



Taysir Batniji, *GH0809*, 2010.
 Series of 20 prints, 21cm x 29.7cm, plexiglass 30cm x 38cm, total dimension
 222cm x 167cm. Courtesy of the artist and Sfeir Semler Gallery



Hazem Harb, *Untitled #16 from the Archaeology of Occupation series*, 2015. Print on Hahnemuhle FineArt paper, 172cm x 120cm. Courtesy of the artist and Tabari Artspace

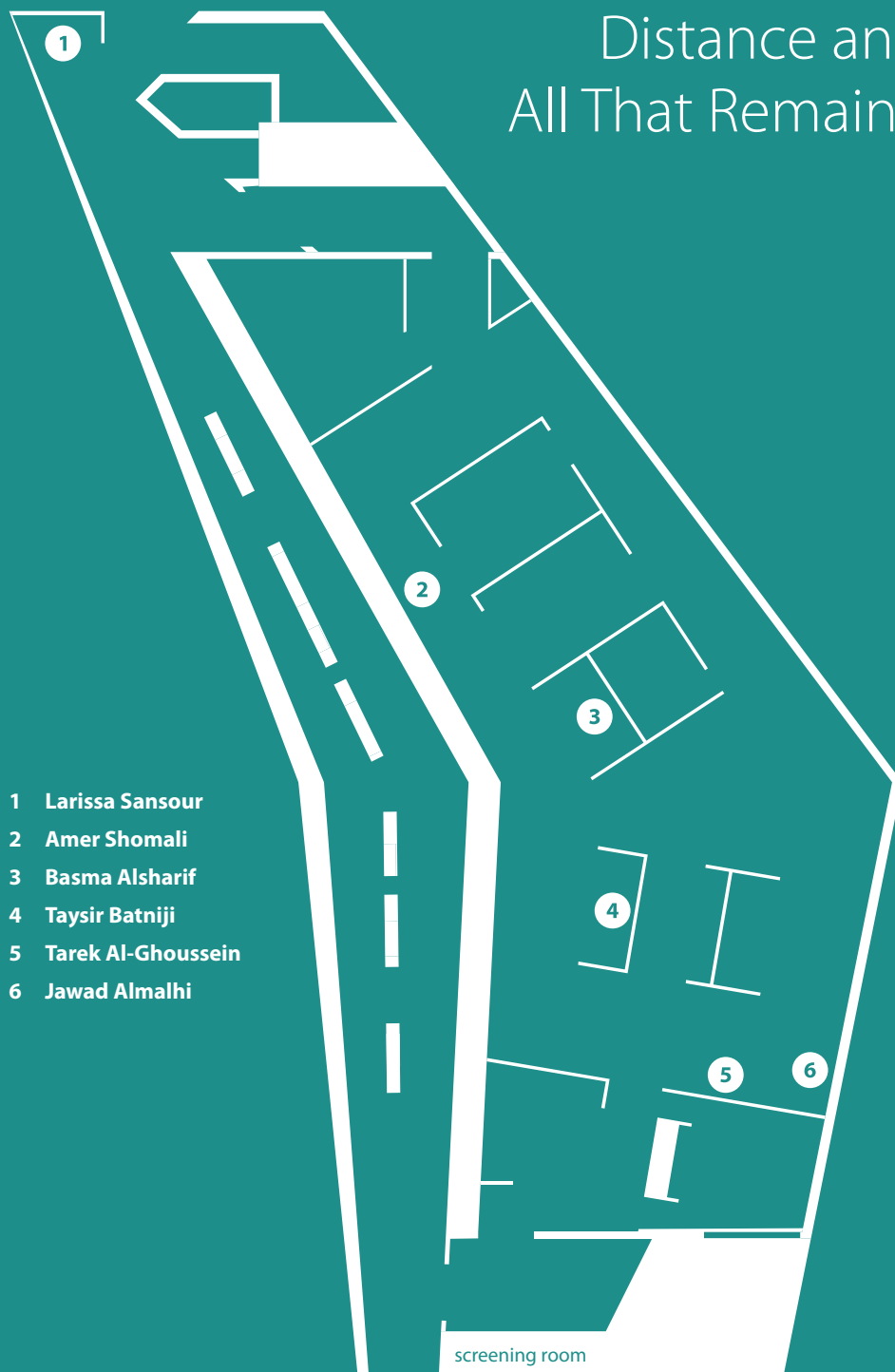


Johny Andonia, *Jerusalem Stone*, 2018. Oil on canvas, 185cm x 35cm. Courtesy of the artist



Benji Boyadgian, *The Temporary Ruin, Chapter 2: The Cabinet of Curiosity*, 2017-ongoing. Cabinet: Plywood and found objects, Paintings: Watercolour on paper. Cabinet: 120cm x 120cm x 150cm, Paintings: Various dimensions. Courtesy of the artist

Distance and All That Remains⁵



Taysir Batniji's *Transit* made in 2004, documents the journey from Gaza to Egypt. As Batniji describes: "It is part of a reflection I led since 1997 on notions of involuntary or voluntary displacements and travels, and state of in-between: in-between identities, in-between cultures."⁶ **Basma Alsharif** takes these idiosyncracies of disturbed time, boredom, waiting and in-betweenness and reveals how they become a state of being. In ***We Began by Measuring Distance***, she explores the exilic condition of time in non- spaces. An anonymous group fill their time by measuring, objects and distances, which speak to the emptiness of time and highlights time spent in continual state of temporariness.

In ***Jawad Almalhi's Afterwards*** the landscape has been erased, all traces washed away from the surface. Figures crouch - suspended in thin air, not unlike the daily poses of many young men we find in public spaces. The permanent state of waiting, repeated humiliation and the weight of inherited dispossession is etched on to their facial features and bodily gestures, as the colours fade from them they are at once familiar and unfamiliar to us. In ***Tarek Al-Ghoussein's*** work we see a lone figure, a recurring motif of his photographic series. Al-Ghoussein explains, "While the work has been concerned with barriers, land, longing and belonging, this most recent series departs from these defining/confining concepts and instead focuses on visualized ideas of transience...while unexpected the strong emphasis on longing led to consideration of changing landscapes and ephemeral moments that are fixed in time rather than located in a specific place."⁷

In ***Larissa Sansour's Nation Estate***, Palestine is now a high-rise tower, with each city a floor. Travel is by elevator or underground, in which we no longer have access to the land, or to its sensual experience, its moisture, smells, and breezes. We are confined in an artificial capsule, where Jerusalem has become a representation of horizon and recreated as a theme park. Sansour's work can be seen in the context of continuous land confiscation, destruction and demolitions. In ***Amer Shomali's*** remaking of the ***Visit Palestine*** poster, which appears in Sansour's video, the Dome of the Rock is partially visible as the view is now blocked by the Separation Wall, no longer an idealistic vista, but rather the work highlights the partial view afforded to Palestinians. The original poster was designed by the Israeli artist Franz Kraus in 1936 and published by a Zionist development agency with the aim to encourage immigration to Palestine.

⁵ Walid Khalidi, *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992).

⁶ Taysir Batniji. Artist statement.

⁷ Tarek Al-Ghoussein. Artist statement.



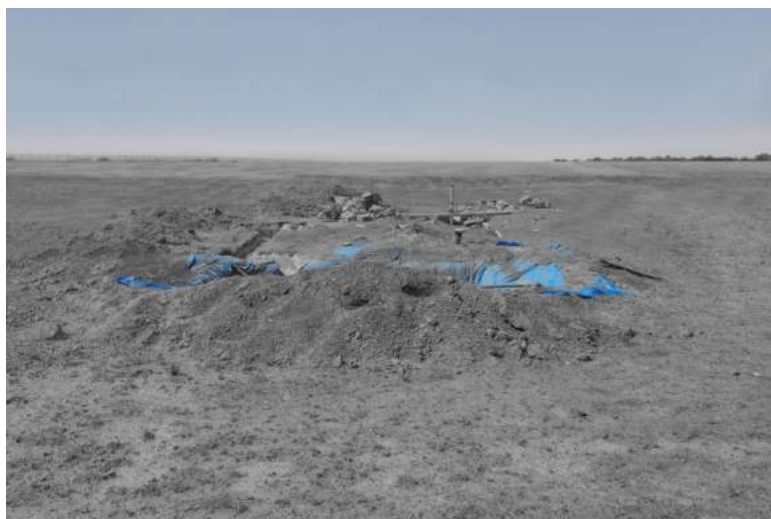
Amer Shomali, Post *"Visit Palestine"*, 2009. Silk screen printing on acid free paper, 70cm x 100cm
 Courtesy of the artist and George Al Ama



Basma Alsharif, *We Began by Measuring Distance*, 2009. Video, 19 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès Gallery



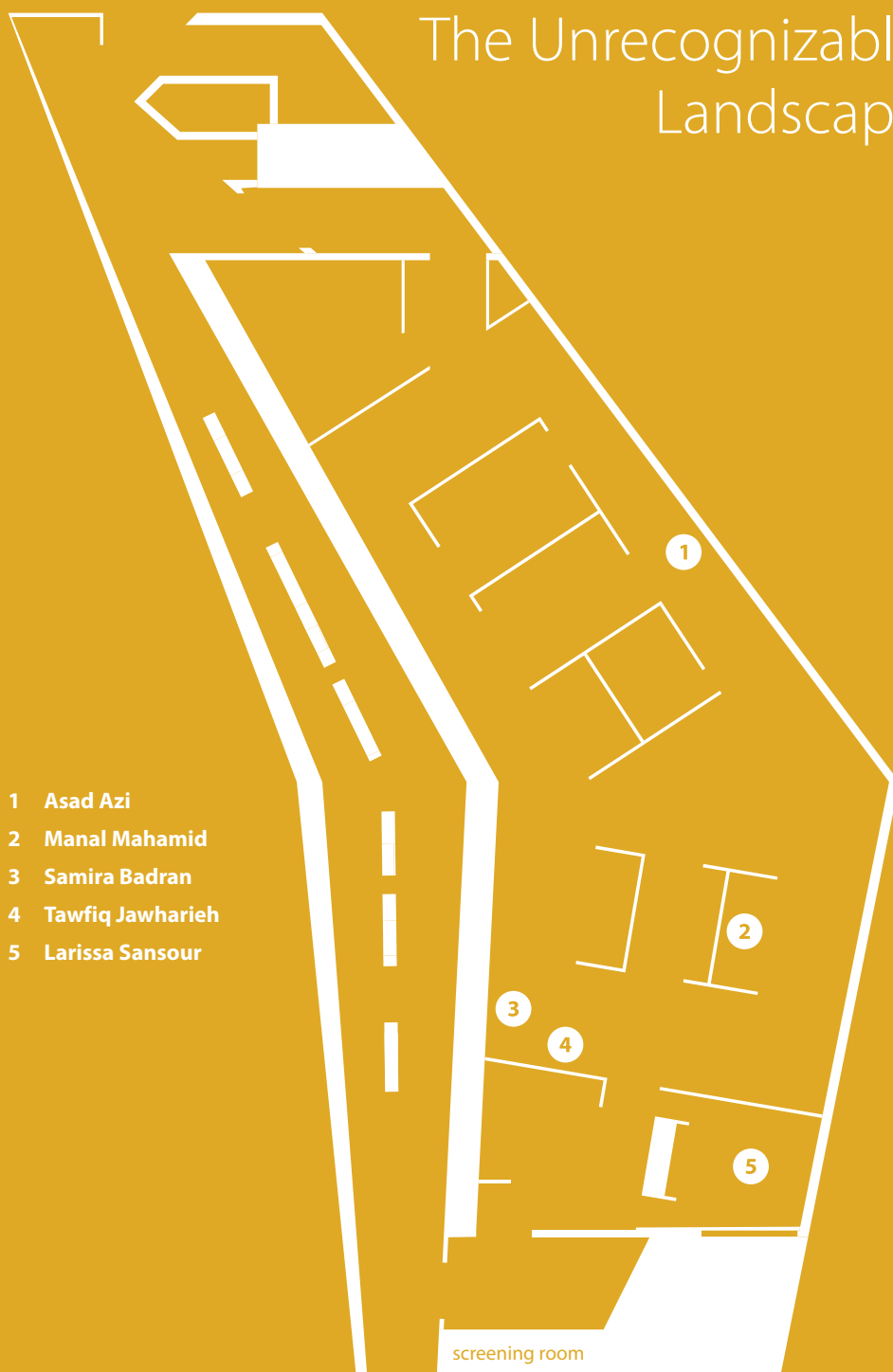
Larissa Sansour, *Nation Estate*, 2012. Single-channel video, 9 minutes. Courtesy of the artist



Tarek Al-Ghoussein, *Untitled 4b (C Series)*, 2007. Digital print, 75cm x 55cm
Courtesy of the artist and The Third Line Gallery, Dubai

The Unrecognizable Landscape

- 1 Asad Azi
- 2 Manal Mahamid
- 3 Samira Badran
- 4 Tawfiq Jawharieh
- 5 Larissa Sansour



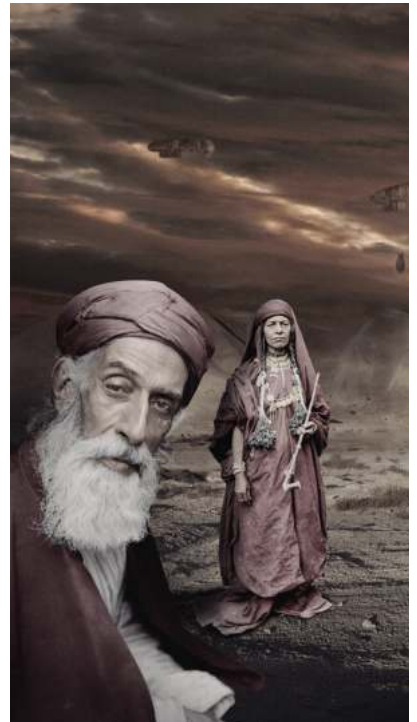
The landscape appears to us now as unrecognizable. The works of **Samira Badran**, **Tawfiq Jawharieh** and **Larissa Sansour**, each made in a different era are juxtaposed to visually suggest an unrecognizable landscape. **Samira Badran's, Jerusalem**, created in the 1970s after the occupation of East Jerusalem, In this painting, the city is unrecognizable, disintegrated into an array of haunting structures in which the ancient architecture and ruins have metamorphized into dysfunctional mechanical forms. Divorced from any surrounding landscape, the city appears as it might on doomsday. **Self-Portrait** by Badran also from the same period shows the interior and exterior of the body which seems to have grown into one, as the rib cage has become a garment- at once both decorative and reminiscent of contraptions of imprisonment and torture. The giant lone figure appears to wander alone along the coastline, in an unknown and indeterminate landscape.

Manal Mahamid, Palestinian Gazelle, named Israeli Gazelle in the zoo, looks at first glance, like an ordinary gazelle, however it is on closer observation we notice its amputated leg. The gazelle appears as a mutation, incomplete, domesticated and tamed and now an uncomfortable oddity in the zoo contained in a fabricated enclosure, of a spectacle of species from the 'natural landscape.' **Asad Azi's** work **Hunt I** shows animal violence in the landscape, the harsh and brutal moment of attack and survival. By distilling violent acts in the painting, he reminds us that the landscape is not a place of picturesque nostalgia but also is a space of power and survival of animal hierarchies.

Tawfiq Jawharieh's landscapes created c1930, propose a surreal Palestinian landscape, could this be Palestine? Serene lake, classical architecture, a landscape of picturesque Cypress trees, a moonlight seascape? These contemplative landscapes underline landscape as space of imaginings and fantasy, a site of projected dreams. This question of the moulding, and construction of fictions of landscapes is one of the central themes in **Larissa Sansour's** film, **In the Future, They Ate from the Finest Porcelain**. The film places us in a future landscape in which the narrative unfolds between a resistance leader and psychiatrist. In the film, a resistance group sets out to create a future history for a fictional civilisation by depositing fine porcelain in the landscape to support its claim as a people before being eradicated. Returning us full cycle to the question, what are our dreams and visions of the past and the future?



Tawfiq Jawhari, *The Palace*, c. 1930. Oil on canvas, 60cm x 80cm.
Courtesy of Yvette and Mazen Quity Collection



Samira Badran, *Jerusalem*, 1978. Ink and watercolour on brown paper, 97cm x 57cm. © Samira Badran. Courtesy of the artist



Larissa Sansour & Søren Lind, *In the Future, They Ate from the Finest Porcelain*, 2015. Single channel digital video installation, 28 minutes, 37 seconds. Courtesy of the artists



Tawfiq Jawharieh, *Untitled* c. 1930. Oil on canvas, 80cm x 60cm. Courtesy of George Al Ama

The Glass Gallery

The glass gallery is designed to complement the artistic propositions of this exhibition.

The gallery displays leaflets and wall texts with a selection of poetry, prose, infographics, chronologies, and advocacy materials. Arranged around the themes of loss, erasure, fragmentation, and resistance, these texts and figures map the political dispensation that structures the art works exhibited in the museum's main gallery.

Loss

(noun)

The fact or process of losing something or someone.

Palestinians experience the ongoing loss of the land and human life. The loss of the land has taken numerous forms which manifests in a continual shrinking landscape. Numerous Israeli laws have been created to justify the confiscation of Palestinian land.

Fragmentation

(noun)

The process or state of breaking or being broken into fragments.

The topology of Palestine is continually undergoing fragmentation, in which the landscape brims with checkpoints, partition wall, by-pass roads, sea barrier, and division into areas A, B and C segregating the Palestinians from each other and their land.

Erasure

(noun)

The removal of all traces of something; obliteration.

«the erasure of prior history»

Palestinians experience the perpetual obliteration of the landscape through decades of village and house destruction, the eradication of trees, plants and wildlife, and the construction of Israeli settlements.

Resistance

(noun)

The refusal to accept or comply with something.

Palestinians continually resist against the loss, fragmentation and erasure of their lives and the landscape through an ongoing history of numerous resistance strategies.

Loss



Fragmentation



Erasure



Resistance



Dr. Tina Sherwell is an art historian, artist and curator, she was director of The International Academy of Art, Palestine, a post she has held between 2007-2012 and 2013-2017. Previously she was Programme Leader of Fine Art at Winchester School of Art, (2005-2007). She was also Executive Director of the Virtual Gallery at Birzeit University and worked with Tate Online on their digital archives (2004-2006). She won a prize at the Alexandria Biennale in 2001 for her map series of Palestine. She is the author of various texts on Palestinian art and visual culture including essays on Jumana Emil Abboud Nabil Anani, Bashir Makhoul and Sliman Mansour. Recent conferences include *From B to X Making History after John Berger*, (Université de Lausanne and Musée de L'Elysée 2018) *The Curriculum*, Creative Time Summit, (Venice 2015). Recent curated exhibitions include *Degree Shows* of the International Academy of Art, Palestine (2011-2018), *Disrupted Intimacies*, French-German Cultural Centre, Ramallah (2015), *Retrospective of Sliman Mansour*, Palestinian Art Court - al Hoash, Jerusalem (2011). She is currently Head of The Contemporary Visual Art Program at Birzeit University.

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