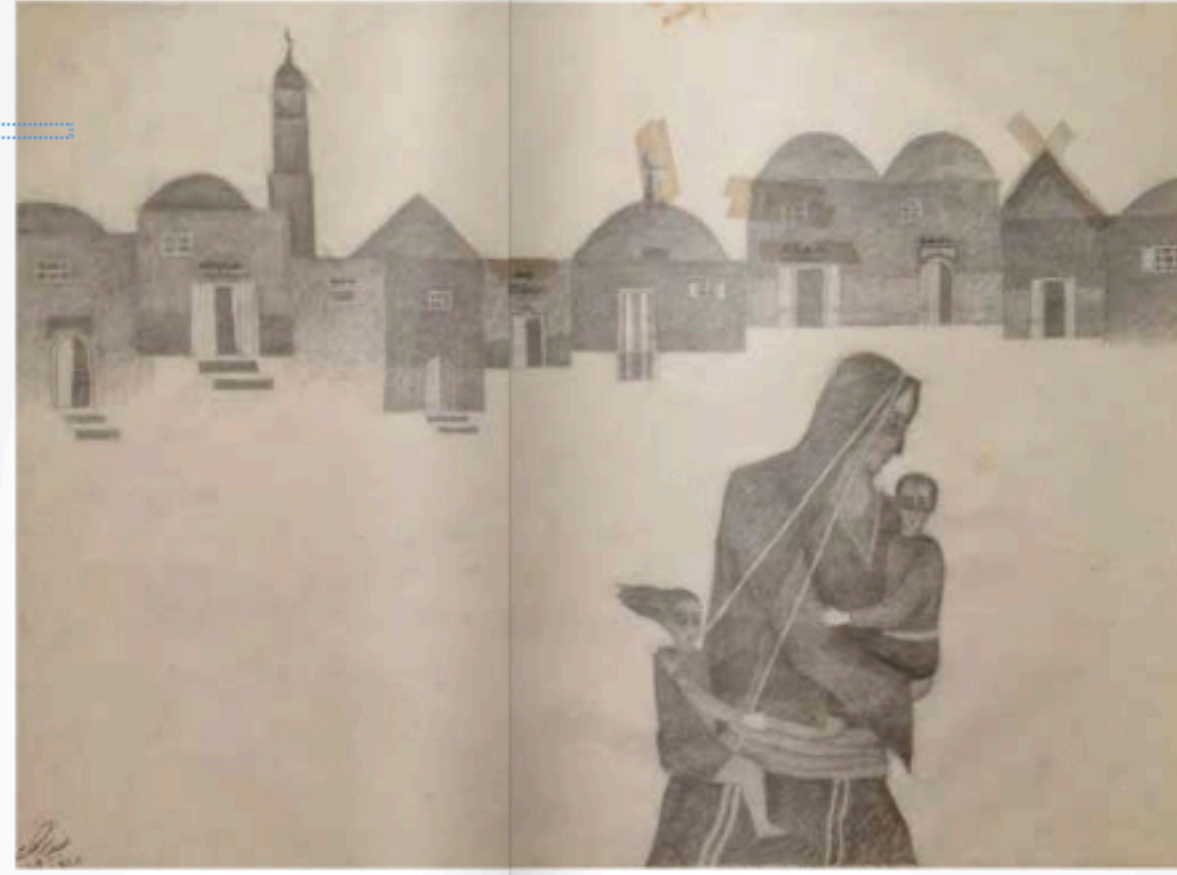




Rana Adnan  
Occupation Paper  
Photography  
4 Printed Co  
Beirut, Lebanon  
Art Paper  
73 x 114 cm  
2017-2019



Tareq Alrakbi  
Rana Adnan  
print on paper  
81 x 107 cm, 1987

Sareya Badran  
single print  
on canvas  
248 x 103 cm  
2008

# PALESTINE PERSONIFIED: 18 ARTISTS ON OCCUPATION AND EXILE

GALLERIST MARK HACHEM CURATED A SUMMER GROUP SHOW AT BEIRUT EXHIBITION CENTER FEATURING THE WORK OF 18 ARTISTS OF PALESTINIAN ORIGIN, SOME LIVING IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, OTHERS IN THE PALESTINIAN DIASPORA — ALL CONCERNED WITH THEIR HOMETLAND AND ITS OCCUPATION, AND THEIR EXILE AND IDENTITY

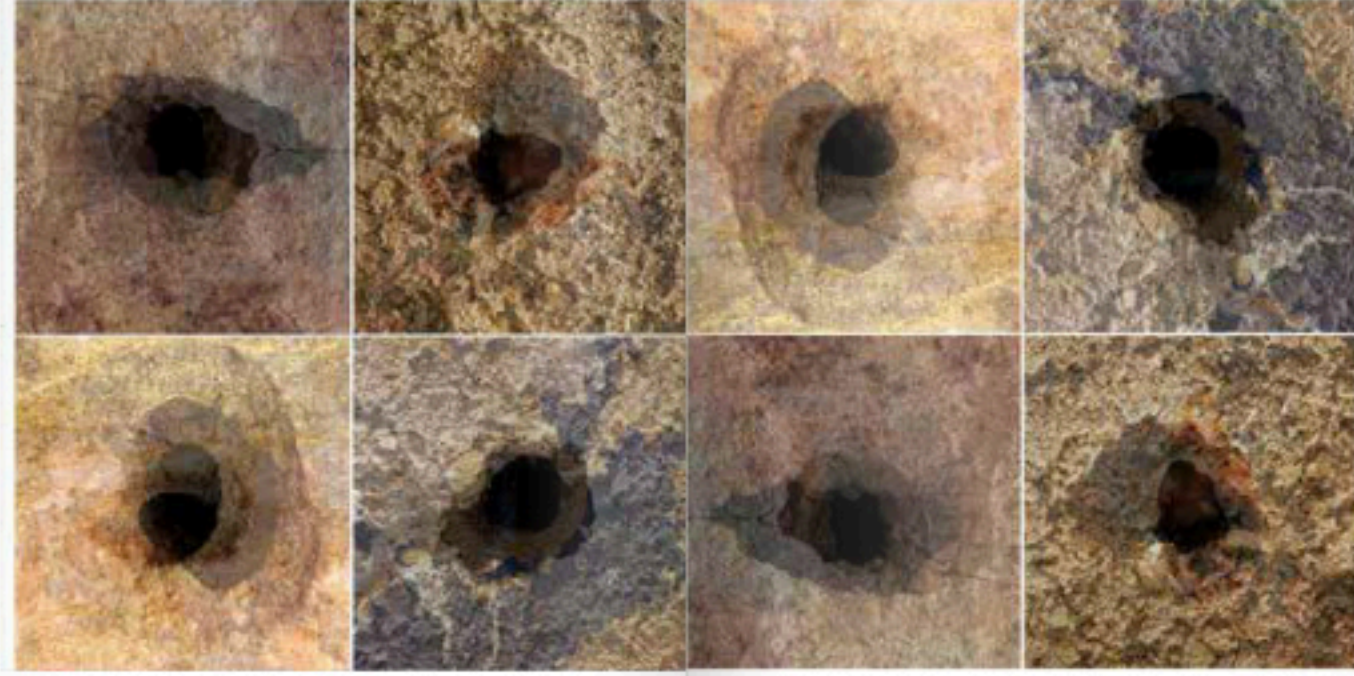
Bahar Alshakr  
Wishful  
Sculpture, print  
2 x 1 x 1 m total  
2017-2018

Muhammad Ali  
Hawari, 1930s  
By Eliezer  
Dikranian, 1933  
Lithro-wood the  
people, printed  
on photo paper  
behind glass, on  
recycled paper  
40x40x10 cm, 2013

Muhammad Ali  
Hawari, 1930s  
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**a** square cardboard egg tray boasts a strange clutch. Instead of smooth pink or white shells, the domes that rise from each cardboard valley are knobby and uneven, variegated shades of green and yellow spotted with black dots, evenly spaced like rivets. In his photograph *Gaza Eggs*, artist Mohammad Musallam has hollowed out the tops of custard apples, transforming the sweet fruit into hand grenades. A poignant reminder of the fate of the Gaza Strip, once home to lush orchards and quiet seaside villages, now embroiled in near constant violence and subject to crippling food, water and fuel shortages, the photograph was exhibited as part of a collective show at the Beirut Exhibition Center in July, entitled *Bridge to Palestine*.

Curated by Mark Hachem, the exhibition featured the work of 18 artists of Palestinian origin, some living in the Occupied Territories, others in the Palestinian diaspora. The works on show ranged from traditional media such as painting and sculpture to installation and new media, but all were thematically concerned with Palestine, occupation, exile and identity.



Highlights of the extensive exhibition included Nasser Soumi's *Icon to Jafa*, an installation piece featuring 30 wooden boxes, in which bottles of local seawater were accompanied by wave-shaped strips of dried orange peel and handwritten letters, some penned by Palestinians born and raised

in Jaffa who now live in occupation, others by those who continue to live there today. The letters, which range in length from a few powerful words to lengthy reflections rich with detail, together form a moving portrait, not of a city, but of a dispossessed people for whom memory is more

powerful than occupation. Laila Shawa's *Where Souls Dwell V*, a replica of an AK-47 machine gun adorned with colorful butterflies, peacock feathers and Swarovski crystals was another high point of the show. The work strips the weapon of its ability to kill, transforming it into a decorative but ultimately useless work of art, on which the butterflies represent the souls of the dead.

Rula Hawani's video work, *Phototherapy*, also explored themes of death and memory. A 15-minute loop shows photographs of Palestinians killed by the Israeli Defense Forces from 1948 until today, juxtaposed with shots of the Israeli medical facilities where the artist was forced to undergo UV light treatments to tackle a skin condition.

Unfortunately, the overall quality of the show was compromised in places by poor presentation, sporadically functioning television monitors and a complete lack of lighting. The sunlight that penetrated the exhibition hall's cloudy skylights came from vertically above the works, allowing video screens to shine in the gloom but undermining the other pieces, which would have benefited from the illumination of the directional spots set up nearby. ●

Rula Hawani  
Phototherapy  
video installation  
Courtesy of  
Sofra Beirut  
Gallery, 2017

Muhammad  
Jawad  
Hawari, 1930s  
By Eliezer  
Dikranian, 1933  
Lithro-wood the  
people, printed  
on photo paper  
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40x40x10 cm, 2013

