





”الجدار والحواجز”
“The Wall & the Check Points”

"The Wall" by Rula Halawani

Still image from "Crossing Surda"; video
film by Emily Jacir

From "Borders Crossing Bodies"
by Dana Erekat

From the "Untitled Series"
by Tarek al Ghousein

Design concept and layout: Syntax

إميلي جاسر Emily Jacir
رلى حلواني Rula Halawani
طارق الغصين Tarek al Ghousein
دانا عريقات Dana Erekat
رشيد مشهراوي Rashid Mashharawi

مؤسسة خالد شومان
دائرة الفنون
The Khalid Shoman Foundation
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”الجدار والحواجز” “The Wall & the Check Points”

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الجدار والحواجز

"هزمتك يا موت الفنون جميعها"

محمود درويش

مي مظفر

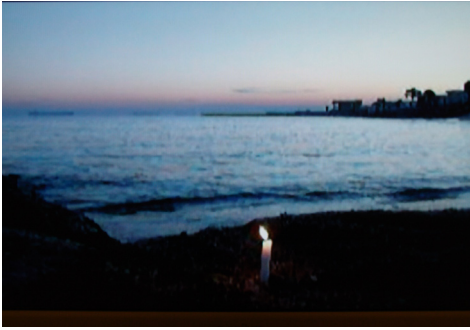
— دارة الفنون، تحت عنوان "الجدار والحواجز".
فالجدار والحواجز، بكل ما تحمله هاتان المفردتان
من دلالات المنع والقهر والتمييز والتحجيم، اختزلت
الحياة اليومية داخل الأراضي الفلسطينية إلى سلسلة
من المواجهات والتحديات اليومية للفرد، وقدراته الهائلة
على التحمل والتكيف مع الخطر والالتفاف حوله، والمعرض
يسرد حكاية حواجز قسّمت وما تزال تجزئ مساحات
الوطن الواحد وتقطع أوصال العائلة الواحدة، بل
الشخصية الواحدة، وتشطر حياة كل فلسطيني إلى داخل
 وخارج. وكشأن الأعمال السردية فإن مفردات المعرض
معنية بشؤون الناس المهمشين والمنسيين: معاناتهم
وأحلامهم وأمنياتهم الصغيرة. ليس لكل فلسطيني مقيم
خارج حدود بلاده الحق في الدخول إليها، كما ليس لكل
مقيم فيها الحق بالتنقل بحرية داخلها. فالوطن أجزاء
تفصل ما بينها الحواجز ونقاط التفتيش المنبثة في كل
مكان.

وراء كل حجر في فلسطين، وكل ذرة من ترابها قصة
حيّة تمتد جذورها إلى أزمنة ضاربة في القدم. ولدى كل
فلسطيني مأساة تقيم في صمت. ويظل الوطن والانتماء
إليه هاجس المبدع الفلسطيني أينما كان. فهي قضية
شائكة تتفاعل في وجدانه وتشكل رؤاه وتحرك إبداعه.
فأينما وجد الفلسطينيون ومهما ابتعدوا أو اقتربوا ثمة
إحساس بالفقدان يتملكهم، وخراب يلاحقهم حتى
منافيتهم.

الفلسطينيون أناس لا يريدون أكثر من حقهم المشروع
في ممارسة وجودهم الطبيعي. لكن المعوّقات والممنوعات
تعترض سبيلهم في كل حركة، بل تقتحم صلب حياتهم
الخاصة. إنهم حائرون واجمون، يتلمسون الخطى بحذر
وتؤدة، فوراء كل شارع موت يترصد بهم، ولدى كل
منعطف خطر كامن. إنه وجود قلق كلما حاول التكيف
مع حالة صعبة، يواجه بما هو أشد صعوبة. ولعل ذلك هو
فحوى المعرض الذي يحتل قاعات مؤسسة خالد شومان

وحدة عسكرية، والحريق والمياه الراكدة، رموز وظفتها الفنانة بإحساس تراجيدي مؤثر.

لكن إميلي جاسر - ولدت في فلسطين وتقيم بين نيويورك ورام الله - استطاعت أن تتوغل في المدن والقرى الفلسطينية بفضل جوازها الأمريكي، لتصور حياة الأهل والأصدقاء، حاملة إليهم توصيات ورسائل شفوية توصلها من وإلى من يتعذر عليهم اللقاء. ومن خلال اثنين وثلاثين لقطة فوتوغرافية مصحوبة بأدبيات الرسائل، توفى إميلي بوعدها فتوقد شمعة على شاطئ البحر، وتروي شجرة، وتلعب الكرة في فناء إحدى الدور وتأكل الصيادية، وتقبل أمهات لم يعدن قادرات على لقاء أبنائهن. وهي أيضا توقد الشموع في كنيسة القيامة، ثم تنفذ أمنية لإحداهن: "تسلقي الكرمل في حيفا وانظري إلى البحر المتوسط من هناك".



في عملها الثاني (فيديو)، أرادت إميلي أن توثق رحلة يومية ما بين مكان إقامتها في رام الله وموقع عملها في جامعة بير زيت. كان عليها أن تقطع كل يوم مسافة كيلومترين ذهابا ومثلها في الإياب، في رحلة شاقة تخضع لتعليمات الجيش الإسرائيلي وتحكمه بالمسارات، مارة بجواز "سردة"، وهو الطريق الأخير الذي بقي مفتوحا ليربط رام الله بجامعة بير زيت وما يقرب من ثلاثين قرية فلسطينية. جنود ودبابات وسيارات تحتشد لدى المعبر وعابرون وباعة تلتقطها آلة تصوير مخبأة في حقيبة الفنانة، وهي تسجل الإيقاع الرتيب لخطاها والخطوط الدائكة لظلالها، في رحلتها اليومية مروراً بالطريق الترابي الوعر والحركة الدائبة فيه.

غالبا ما يواجه الفنانون على وجه خاص تحديات كبيرة حين يقدمون على معالجة أي موضوع يمس قضية في الشأن العام. فالتوصل إلى حالة من التوازن ما بين استخدام لغة تعبير فنية عالمية ومعالجة موضوع محلي محض، أمر ليس من السهل تحقيقه. فهم أبداً في سباق مع مخيلتهم لاستيعاب مجريات أحداث ووقائع فاقت وتفقو التصور. لكن ثلاث فنانات وفناني اثنين استطاعوا أن يخلقوا في فضاء فلسطين، ويخترقوا الموانع ليقيموا معرضهم المشترك هذا بأفكار خلاقة ورؤى متنوعة، ارتقت بالحدث السياسي إلى مستويات تعبيرية إنسانية رفيعة اعتمدت لقطات مكثفة موحية، باستخدام تقنيات السينما والفيديو والصور الفوتوغرافية.

من خلال إحدى عشرة صورة فوتوغرافية متوالية تجسد رلى حلواني - مولودة في القدس وتقيم فيها - مأساة الجدار العازل منذ الشروع بوضع لبناته الأولى (ربيع عام ٢٠٠٢) حتى انتظام الأجزاء العازلة بارتفاعاتها الهائلة (٨ أمتار). تؤكد رلى في صورها الأجواء المرعبة والبشاعة التي يضيفها الوحش الكونكريتي على واحدة من أعرق مدن العالم وأكثرها جلالاً. فوراء كل لقطة من لقطاتها المنتقاة عين مشحونة باللوعة. إنها تصوّر المكان مساءً، أو في جو ملبد بغمام أسود، أو دخان كثيف قادم من حرائق قريبة من الموقع حيث الظلال الدائكة تؤكد جسامة الحدث وتتماهى مع إحساس الفنانة وهي تراقب انشطار المكان الذي ألفتته والشارع الذي تردد عليه يوميا إلى نصفين. تقول رلى إنها حين رأت الجدار يزحف إليها في قلنديا حيث تعمل: "شعرت أن الجدار مسّني وأوجد الرعب في نفسي". ثم تقول، وقد تعمّدت أن تذهب إلى هناك والتصوير ليلاً: "أردت أن أتحدى خويف، كان المكان موحشا.. الأرض مرعوبة والجدار بالغ البشاعة.. ولم يكن هناك غير الجنود والمدافع الثقيلة ونياح الكلاب". وإذ يتسلل إلى الجدار ضوء خافت ليضيء طرفاً منه، تظهر الصورة جوا ضبابيا ماطرا يضيف إلى المشهد دلالات جمالية بليغة. ففي الوقت الذي تجسد فيه الفنانة المعالم البشعة للشكل، فإنها تضيف عليه قيما جمالية تصويرية توجع في المشاهد مشاعر متناقضة. إن المفردات الصغيرة العابرة التي صورتها بجوار الجدار، كالشجرة القليلة والكتلة الكونكريتية التي حملت اسم

يبدأ الفيلم بتوثيق حالة التوتر التي يشعر بها الجميع: المرأة التي تفتح علبة الحلويات بيدها المضطربة، الجندي الإسرائيلي الذي يدقق في هويات المارين وأمتعتهم، توجس المارة والحرس المستترفين على الحواجز. يتوغل جهاز التصوير في الملامح والأجسام ونوافذ السيارات، ينقل للمشاهد معالم الحيرة والأسى والتصبر وكل ما تطفح به وجوه الناس من مشاعر وهم يقطعون الطرقات ماشين أو راكبين. مشاهد المنتقاة من غزة ورام الله والقدس والخليل المخيمات والمستوطنات، تعكس الشيء ونقيضه. تبدو الحياة طبيعية في ظاهرها من خلال المشاهد التي تنتقل ما بين طريق عام ومخيم لاجئين وهي

تبدو دانا عريقات، المعمارية المصوّرة -مولودة في الكويت ومقيمة فيها- أنها معنية بالمرأة ووضعها الصعب في التكيف مع حالات العبور واجتياز الحواجز. في صورها التي تحمل عنوان "حدود تجتاز الأجساد" توثق دانا بلقطات فوتوغرافية حركة الناس وهم يجتازون المعابر والحواجز وما يترتب على ذلك من تبعات، مشددة على الحرج والإذلال اللذين تتعرض لهما المرأة بالتحديد. فهي ترى المرأة في حالة تحد مستمر لقدراتها الجسدية والنفسية، إنها المضحية الأولى والضحية الأكبر. فالمرأة ترضع وليدها من خلف حجاب فيما تنتظر العبور: "الأمومة عين التحدي للاحتلال" كما تقول دانا. وهي

تؤكد رلى في صورها الأجواء المربدة والبشاعة التي يضيفها الوحش الكونكريتي على واحدة من أعرق مدن العالم وأكثرها جلا



تلتقط مظاهر البؤس والظروف المتدنية لحياة الناس، لتذهب بعد ذلك إلى المستوطنات الإسرائيلية حيث الخضرة والتنسيق إزاء الجذب والفوضى.. أرض الله الواسعة المنفتحة على البحر، إزاء الشريط الضيق الذي يقيم عليه المخيم. في الخليل تتجلى مظاهر العنف: جنود يطلقون النار على أطفال الحجارة المقاومين، يهرب الناس فيفرغ الشارع إلا من رجل غارق في غفوته. وفي مكان آخر من أحد المخيمات أطفال يمارسون ألعابهم ويؤدون مشاهد الحرب، ينكل بعضهم ببعض الآخر ويكركرون وهم يستعيدون الأحداث التي يشاهدونها. ينتقل الفنان بالكاميرا ليعيط بمظاهر الحياة، حياة تتواصل في الليل والنهار بصورها بلقطات سريعة لها دلالاتها: نجارون منهمكون، وحدادون يطوعون الحديد، ورجال شرطة في عمل دؤوب، نفايات تحرق وأطفال يوقدون النار، جسد حصان أبيض يتوارى في عتمة الليل كما لو كان شبحا، ساقان تتدليان من شجرة: هل هو إنسان مشنوق! لكن الصورة تقصص عن نفسها لنرى

تخضع لعمليات التفتيش محجبة، وبغض النظر عن سنهما وهيئتهما، تحشر جسمهما حشرا لدى اجتيازها الحواجز. إنها محاطة بالحواجز: حواجز اجتماعية تقليدية وأخرى مادية: "تحت خطر التهديد بالجنون الناتج عن العزل والتهديد بنيران الجنود"، كما تقول. ثم تضيف أنه وفي الوقت الذي ستجوز فيه خارطة الطريق وتطبق: "سيغير خلالها الجسد والعقل وهو يبحث عن مجال بين هذه العوائق المتعددة ليعبر من خلالها". "توتر" هو عنوان الفيلم التسجيلي الذي شارك به الفنان رشيد مشهراوي -مولود في غزة ويقيم في رام الله-. يتضمن الفيلم، ومدته عشرين دقيقة، مجموعة مشاهد تأتي ضمن فصول يوثق خلالها الفنان مجريات الحياة داخل مناطق مختلفة من فلسطين وطبيعة تعامل الناس مع بعضهم البعض ومع السلطات الإسرائيلية، والتي تبدو في ظاهرها مسألة عادية وطبيعية. لكن ما تحت هذه الحركة اليومية شجن وقلق وتوجس يتجلى في تعبيرات الوجوه ورعشة الأيدي والإصرار على الوجود.

الفيلم يخلو من أي كلام، ولكنه غير صامت. فالإ جانب التعبيرات الموحية التي تتجلى في ملامح الناس وأصوات المدن نفسها وما يجري فيها تتفاعل مع المشاهد لتتكامل الصورة البليغة التي نقلها الفيلم من غير أن يتلفظ حرفا واحدا.

شخصية"، ومجموعة أخرى لصور مطبوعة على ورق الرز تتمثل الحواجز بتجلياتها المتنوعة. في سلسلة الصور الشخصية يصور لنا الفنان ذاته متسلقا تالا، أو نازلا منه، ودائما ملثم الوجه بكوفيته الفلسطينية. إنه في حالة تسلل أو هروب. يقول طارق: "إنها صورة الفلسطيني كما يطرحها الإعلام الغربي"، وذلك ما أوحى للفنان برؤية ذات بعدين، إنه، أيضا، الفلسطيني المقترن بانتفاضة قُدر لها أن تمضي دون أن يظهر في الأفق ما ينبئ عن مداها، سيزيف من نوع ما، لا ينتهي من مهمته إلا ليعاود الكرّة من جديد.

أما مجموعته الثانية "بلا عنوان" فهي تصور الجدار والحواجز بأسلوب فني يجمع تقنية الفوتوغراف بتقنية فن الفرافيك. الحاجز ليس الجدار العازل أو حدود التفتيش فقط، بل هو كل ما يمكن أن يحول دون النفاذ إلى الطرف الآخر. كما أن تنظيم الصور جاء على نحو يلزم المشاهد بالتحرك حولها حركة متعرجة كما لو كان يلتف حول الحواجز لينفذ إلى ما وراءها. ولورق الرز الذي يحمل المؤثرات الفنية اليابانية التي اكتسبها الفنان من خلال تدريبه هناك، تأثير ساحر هنا. فقد أضفى على صورة شفافية ذات طابع شرقي. أما اللون الترابي الذي اكتست به هذه المشاهد فقد أسهمت في تعزيز الجانب الحسي من الموضوع وأضفت عليه الرهافة والشاعرية. لعل مصطلح الهوية الذي هو موقع خلاف بين المبدعين والمفكرين والباحثين، يتسلل داخل الأعمال المشاركة في هذا المعرض التي تناولت المسألة على نحو مباشر أو غير مباشر. إنها المحتوى، وهي الانتماء بكل ما تحمله هذه المفردة من دلالات.

أنهما ساقا صبي يجلس على الشجرة ويمد بصره إلى البساتين العامرة. وفي رام الله حيث يسير الناس بهدوء، تحلق طائرات الهليكوبتر فوقهم، والحياة تواصل مسيرتها: المطاعم والشوارع والمتاجر والمساجد ودائما ثمة عسكر يتوجسون، ويفتشون كل شيء. في المقهى يجلس الرجال، بعضهم يمضي الوقت بلعب النرد والدومينو، وآخرون يتطلعون بوجوه صامتة منتظرة، رجال لا حول لهم يحدقون في المجهول، يمشون حياة رتيبة لا يضاهي رتابتها غير صرير السلاسل الحديدية لأرجوحة يتأرجح فوقها طفل في حالة وجوم.

فلسطين هو موضوع هذا الفيلم وما وصل إليه حال ناسها اليوم، ربما يختزلها وجه رجل مسن تحمل قساماته تاريخ الأرض، هذه فلسطينك أيها الرجل الذي أحت ظهرك النواذب، فأنت جزء من تاريخها والشاهد الحي على حاضرها الملتبس. ولعل الفيلم أراد أن يقول ما عبّر عنه محمود درويش شعرا حين يقول:

لبلادنا، وهي السبيّة

حرية الموت اشتياقا واحتراقا

وبلادنا، في ليلها الدموي جوهرة تشع على البعيد على البعيد

تضيء خارجها ..

وأما نحن، داخلها، فنزداد اختناقاً!

الفيلم يخلو من أي كلام، ولكنه غير صامت. فالإ جانب التعبيرات الموحية التي تتجلى في ملامح الناس وحركة الأيدي وغيرها من إيماءات يشدد عليها الفنان، فإن أصوات المدن نفسها وما يجري فيها، حركة الناس وإيقاع الأقدام ورشق الرصاص وأبواق السيارات وأصوات محرقاتها، هي التي تتحاور فيما بينها. أما الموسيقى التصويرية (عودة ترجمان) بإيقاعها المؤثر الذي يصاحب المشاهد، وما يتخللها من أمات متناغمة، فإنها تتفاعل مع المشاهد لتتكامل الصورة البليغة التي نقلها الفيلم من غير أن يتلفظ حرفا واحدا.

إذا كانت هذه التجارب تعتمد كلها على نقل صور من الواقع المعيش برؤية خاصة، فإن الفنان طارق غصين - ولد في الكويت وتعلم في أمريكا ويدرس في الجامعة الأمريكية في الشارقة- يعالج في مجموعة صورته المعروضة مفهوم الحواجز. فأعماله تقع في شقين، الأول مجموعة صور فوتوغرافية ذات أحجام كبيرة تحمل عنوان "صورة

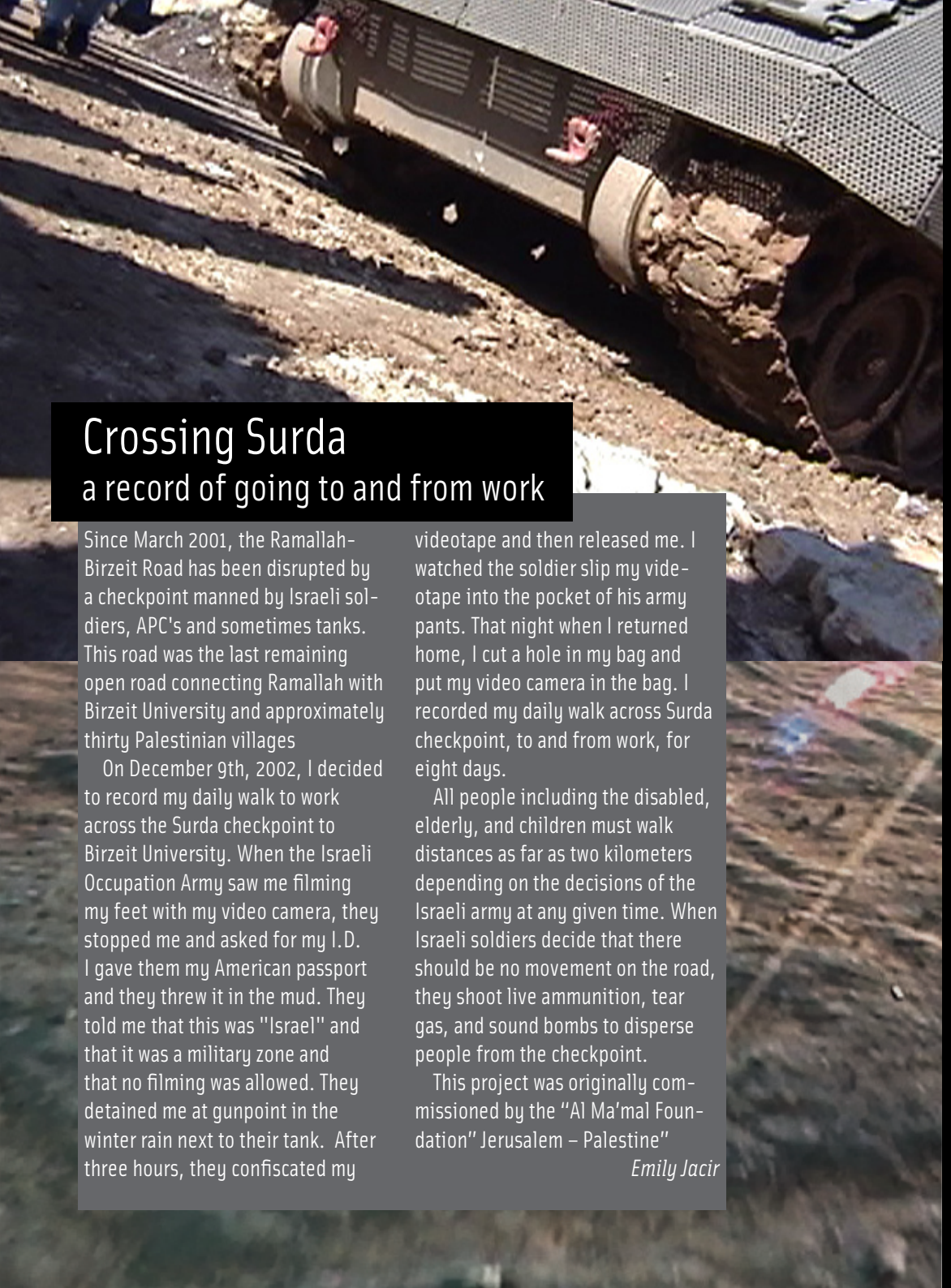


عبور سرده تسجيل للذهاب و العودة من العمل

دباباتهم؟ بعد ثلاث ساعات صادروا شريط التصوير وبعدها أطلقوا سراحني. شاهدت الجندي و هو يضع شريط الفيديو في جيب زِيَه العسكري. عند عودتي الى المنزل في تلك الليلة أحدثت ثقباً صغيراً في حقيبتي ووضعت فيها آلة التصوير. وبدأت بتسجيل رحلة ذهابي اليومية من خلال حاجز سرده من وإلى العمل لمدة ٨ أيام.

جميع الناس بمن فيهم المراقبون وكبار السن والأطفال يجب أن يسيروا على الأقدام مسافة ٢ كيلومتر بسبب قرار الجيش الإسرائيلي الذي يمنع أي حركة على الطريق، في ظل قيام الجنود باطلاق ماء النشادر، الغاز المسيل للدموع والقنابل لتفريق الناس المتواجدين أمام نقطة التفتيش؟

منذ آذار ٢٠٠١، تعطل طريق رام الله بير زيت بسبب نقاط التفتيش التي وضعت من قبل الجنود الإسرائيليين، ناقلات الجنود المدرعة وأحياناً الدبابات. هذه الطريق كانت آخر طريق مفتوحة تصل رام الله بجامعة بير زيت وتقريباً ثلث القرى الفلسطينية؟ في ٩ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٢، قررت تسجيل ذهابي اليومي إلى عملي في جامعة بير زيت من خلال نقطة تفتيش سرده. عندما رأي جنود الاحتلال أصور طريقي بكاميرة تصوير الفيديو، أوقفوني و سألوني عن هويتي؛ أعطيت لهم جواز سفري الأمريكي رموه في الطين. وأخبروني (هذه اسرائيل وهذه منطقة عسكرية يُمنع التصوير فيها) احتجزوني في وحدة السلاح في الشتاء بجانب



Crossing Surda

a record of going to and from work

Since March 2001, the Ramallah-Birzeit Road has been disrupted by a checkpoint manned by Israeli soldiers, APC's and sometimes tanks. This road was the last remaining open road connecting Ramallah with Birzeit University and approximately thirty Palestinian villages

On December 9th, 2002, I decided to record my daily walk to work across the Surda checkpoint to Birzeit University. When the Israeli Occupation Army saw me filming my feet with my video camera, they stopped me and asked for my I.D. I gave them my American passport and they threw it in the mud. They told me that this was "Israel" and that it was a military zone and that no filming was allowed. They detained me at gunpoint in the winter rain next to their tank. After three hours, they confiscated my

videotape and then released me. I watched the soldier slip my videotape into the pocket of his army pants. That night when I returned home, I cut a hole in my bag and put my video camera in the bag. I recorded my daily walk across Surda checkpoint, to and from work, for eight days.

All people including the disabled, elderly, and children must walk distances as far as two kilometers depending on the decisions of the Israeli army at any given time. When Israeli soldiers decide that there should be no movement on the road, they shoot live ammunition, tear gas, and sound bombs to disperse people from the checkpoint.

This project was originally commissioned by the "Al Ma'mal Foundation" Jerusalem – Palestine"

Emily Jacir



من أين نأتي

من "أين نأتي" مبني على "حرية الحركة"؛ فكوني فلسطينية تحمل جواز سفر أمريكي، يعطيني هذا الأمر الحق الإنساني بالتنقل. بجواز سفري هذا أستطيع الدخول الى

لقد طبقت اسرائيل التقنيات العسكرية الأكثر

وحشية وعنفًا في التاريخ لمنع الفلسطينيين من

الدخول الى أراضيهم والحد من قدرتهم على

التنقل بحرية. لا يوجد فلسطيني يستطيع

الحركة بحرية بين الضفة الغربية وغزة.

تدابير مثل نقاط التفتيش، الحدود، الأسلاك

الشائكة، الدبابات، جنود ببنادق م - ١٦

أحاطوا المدن والقرى. ونرى الفلسطينيين

يُقتلون وهم يحاولون عبور تلك الحدود. وهؤلاء

الذين لديهم القدرة على الحركة يتعرضون

إلى أسوأ أنواع الإذلال في كل محاولة عبور

منهم أو الحركة داخل البلاد. تلك الإجراءات

طبقت وجهزت لتقسيم وتدمير نسيج المجتمع

كله. الوضع الآن صعب للغاية. إن الذهاب الى

القدس مستحيل بالنسبة للفلسطينيين في

سوريا ومستحيل للفلسطينيين الذين يعيشون

على بعد ٨ كيلومترات في بيت جالا.

إميلي جاسر

فلسطين عكس الفلسطينيين المتنوعين من

الدخول الى بلادهم الأصلية أو الذين منعوا

من التنقل في داخلها. إن السؤال الذي يطرح

علينا دائما على الحدود هو "هل أحد أعطاك

شيء لتحمله؟" وكان أيضاً إلهام لتلك القطعة

المعروضة هنا.

هذه القطعة أتت من خبرتي الشخصية من

الذهاب والإياب المستمر بين فلسطين وأي بلد

آخر أقيم فيه. والداي لا يملكان حق الدخول

الذي أملكه الى وطننا. لا يستطيعان مغادرة

بيت لحم لأن هويتيهما تقيدانهما حيث

يقيمان. في كل مرة كنا نذهب فيها الى وطننا

في السبعينيات، الثمانينات، التسعينيات، كنا

نشاهد التكاثر المؤلم للمستعمرات، نقاط

التفتيش، الحدود وأرضنا التي تم تقطيعها

الى أجزاء صغيرة. لقد قامت اسرائيل

بتقسيمنا الى أجزاء غير طبيعية اعتمادا



It is now May 2004 and the situation has worsened. I can no longer move freely through the borders with my American passport. I can not make the project "Where We Come From" today. I am no longer allowed to enter Gaza, and certain Palestinian towns in the West Bank. Israel is relentlessly moving forward in the construction of the Apartheid Wall which began in the spring of 2002.

أيار ٢٠٠٤ وقد أصبح الوضع أسوأ. لا أستطيع الحركة بحرية عبر الحواجز حتى مع وجود جوازي الأمريكي. لا أستطيع العمل على مشروع "من أين نأتي". غير مسموح لي أن أدخل غزة وبعض المدن الفلسطينية في الضفة الغربية. إسرائيل تتابع بوحشية إنشاء جدار الفصل العنصري الذي بدأ في ربيع ٢٠٠٢.

Where We Come From

"Where We Come From" is based on my "freedom of movement" as a Palestinian with an American passport, a document which allows me this basic human right. I utilized my passport to access Palestine for Palestinians who are prohibited entry into their own homeland and/or who are restricted movement within it. The question we are always asked at the borders: "Did someone give you something to carry?" was also an inspiration for this piece.

This piece comes out of my own personal experience of the constant back and forth between Palestine and whatever country I happen to be residing in at the moment. My parents themselves do not have the access I have to our own country. They cannot leave the boundaries of Bethlehem because their I.D. cards place them there. Each time we made our way back home in the 70's, 80's, and 90's, we witnessed the unrelenting proliferation of settlements, checkpoints/borders, and the calculated fragmentation of our people and our lands into smaller and smaller spaces. Israel has divided us into unnatural fragments based on our identity cards such as East Jerusalemites, West Bankers, Gazans, Israelis, Jordanians, Americans, and so forth. Israel has implemented some of the most draconian and violent military tactics in history to prevent Palestinians from entry into their own homeland as well as the ability to move freely within it. No Pal-



estinian can move freely within the West Bank or Gaza. Measures such as check-point/borders, barbed wire, tanks, and soldiers with M-16's have encircled every town and village. Palestinians are killed trying to cross these borders. Those that do have the ability to move are subjected to the worst forms of humiliation at every crossing in an effort to discourage people from entering or moving around the country. These measures have been implemented and designed to fragment and destroy the fabric of our entire people. The situation is now so extreme that going to Jerusalem is as impossible a dream for a Palestinian in Syria as for a Palestinian living 8 kilometers away in Beit Jalla.

Emily Jacir

- Nuova Icona, Venice
- "Accumulations" Kunstraum Innsbruck, Innsbruck

2003

- "Where We Come From", Debs & Co, New York
- "Belongings", O-K Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria
- Museum of Modern Art, Arnhem, The Netherlands
- Los Angeles International Art
- Biennial Invitational, Frumkin Duval Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- Al Ma'Mal Foundation, Jerusalem
- Artspace Annex II, New Haven, CT

2002

- "New Photographs: Bethlehem and Ramallah", Debs & Co., Project Room, New York

2000

"From Paris to Riyadh (Drawings for my mother)", University Gallery, University of the South, Sewanee, TN

Selected Group Exhibitions

Emily participated in numerous group exhibition worldwide, most recently

- the Arsenale 51st International Art Exhibition (Venice, 2006),
- Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, 2004);
- inIVA Touring Exhibition, Kulturhuset (Stockholm, 2004);
- 8th Istanbul Biennale (Istanbul, 2003).

Grants

2004

Lambent Foundation Fellowship, New York

2003

Pennies from Heaven, The New York

Community Trust

2002

Barbara Deming Memorial Fund for Women,

Bronx, NY

1995

Kimbrough Award Fund, Dallas Museum of Art

Awards and Honors

2001

Marfa Studio of Arts, Public Arts Project, Marfa, TX

1996

Pamela Joseph Fellowship, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass Village, CO

1995

Juror's Award, DWCA National Juried Exhibition, Irving, TX

1994

Presidential Purchase Award, Memphis College of Art, Memphis, TN

Public Collections

- National Museum of Contemporary Art-EMST, Athens
- Kunstmuseum St. Gallen
- Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, TX
- Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- Moderna Museet, Stockholm



Biography

Emily Jacir

Born 1970, Dallas, USA
Lives and works between Ramallah
& New York

Education

1998-1999
Whitney Independent Study Program
1994
M.F.A., Memphis College of Art, Memphis, TN
1992
B.A., University of Dallas, Irving, TX

Recent Solo Exhibitions

2005

- "Emily Jacir, Anthony Reynolds Gallery, London
- "Where We Come From", The Jerusalem Fund Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- "Accumulations", Alexander and Bonin, New York
- "Where We Come From", Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita

2004

- "Where We Come From" Woher wir kommen, Künstlerhaus, Bremen
- "Den 1:a på Moderna: Emily Jacir": Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- The Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre, Ramallah



بورترت شخصي

للموضوعات التي تقصيتها في السنين الماضية. وفي إطار العملية التي قادتي إلى هذه الصور اتضح لي على نحو متزايد ، إلى أي مدى تحدد الحواجز ، والأرض ، والتشوق ، والانتماء وتشكل بعضها البعض . إن مصطلح "الهوية" إشكالي للغاية وقد يكون له معان كثيرة بحسب سياق الكلام . وبالرغم من ذلك ثمة اتفاق واسع أن جوانب عظيمة للهوية متصلة بمكان معين؛ حيث أن الهوية القومية نتيجة لعلاقة الفرد بوطنه الأصلي .

فكلما حاولتُ تفهم المسائل المتعلقة بتجربتي كفلسطيني- كويتي لم يعيش أبداً في فلسطين، تبين لي أن هذا العمل يهدف إلى تخلي الحجاز الذي يتم بناؤه في أرض الوطن- كمرجع للعمل . فالجدار والحواجز التي تظهر في الصور تتحدث أيضاً عن صراعي الشخصي بصرف النظر عن المفاهيم المتفق عليها للهوية الوطنية.

طارق الفصين

ما انفك البناء المتواصل في " الجدار الواقعي" لما يسمى فاسطين يثير الغضب على نطاق عالمي حيث وجدت نفسي أشعر بالإحساس ذاته من الغضب؛ وكان هذا أحد الأسباب التي دعيتي إلى سبر صلب القضايا، في متن هذا العمل. فقد أثار هذا الحجاز كل ضروب التعليقات السياسية ، والاجتماعية والفنية. وغالباً ما تركزت ردود الفعل على التهديدات الجذرية لاستمرارية البقاء لكثير من التجمعات الفلسطينية. وبالإضافة إلى وضع حدود مادية ثابتة ، فقد أدى "الجدار الواقعي" هذا إلى خلق "جدار" آخر: جدار يعيق الوصول إلى أي حل .

يتناول متن العمل الحالي ، قضايا الحواجز ، والأرض ، والتشوق ؛ وبشكل أساسي قضية الانتماء . وهو ناتج عن عمل سابق تناول مسألة كيفية تصوير الفلسطينيين ، وفي بعض الأحيان تشويههم في وسائل الإعلام المختلفة. وهو متابعة



Self Portrait

The Self Portrait series represents a commentary on contemporary Western media representations of the Palestinian as terrorist. This project started as a result of my growing frustration with the way in which the Palestinians and other Arabs were being represented and, in some cases, misrepresented in Western Media. In addition, I was drawn to the apparent similarities between the Myth of Sisyphus and what can be characterized as the growing "myth" generated through the Western media, specifically the myth that all Palestinians are terrorists and that the Palestinian intifada, like Sisyphus, seems condemned to an endless cyclic struggle. Transcending media representations has been an ongoing "uphill battle" for Palestinians and all Arabs.

The "Untitled" A and B series are both concerned with barriers, land, longing and, ultimately, belonging. It is an extension of themes I have been exploring for the past few years. During the process leading to these images, it became increasingly clear to me how barriers, land, longing, and "identity" inform, shape and define each other.

The term "identity" is highly contested and can be taken to mean many things depending on the context. Nevertheless, there has been widespread agreement that significant aspects of identity are related to a particular place; hence, national identity results from connections to an individual's country of origin. As I attempt to come to terms with the issues related to my personal experience as a Palestinian-Kuwaiti that has never lived within the borders of Palestine, it has become apparent that this current body of work seeks to transcend the obvious reference to the barrier being constructed in Palestine. The "walls" and "mounds" that appear throughout the images also speak of my own individual struggles irrespective of the conventional notions of national identity.

Tarek al Ghousein

Agency (UNRWA), United Nations Relief Fund
Amman, Jordan

1986–1992: Freelance Photojournalist, London
and Cairo

1983–1985: Photojournalist, Montauk Light, New
York, New York

Exhibitions

2005

Aperture Gallery, New York, USA
Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art,
Bonn, Germany
Langhans Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic
La Boca Gallery, Madrid, Spain
7th Sharjah International Biennial, Sharjah, UAE
Houston International fotofest, Houston, USA

2004

Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE
Specta Art Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark
Copenhagen Art Fair, Copenhagen, Denmark
Noorderlicht International Photography
Exhibition, The Netherlands
Kathie Kollwitz Gallery, Berlin, Germany
Chobi Mella, International Photography
Exhibition, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2003

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts,
Copenhagen, Denmark
Randolph Street Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
Sharjah International Biennial, Sharjah, UAE

2002

Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE

2000

Burjuman Center, Dubai, UAE
Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE

1995

Zwemmers Fine Photographs, London, United
Kingdom

1994

Roy Miles Gallery, London, United Kingdom

Publications/Reviews

1994–2005

Reviews and images reproduced by several
publications including: Liberation & L'aujourd'hui
(France), Khaleej Times, Gulf News, Canvas
Magazine & Bidoun (UAE); Daily Star (Beirut,
Lebanon); Berliner Zeitung & Frankfurter
Rundschau & Kunstforum (Germany);
New York Times, Art in America Houston
Chronicle (U.S.A.); deVolkskrant & Fotografie
(The Netherlands); Design News, Politiken
(Denmark); Sharq Al Awsat, British Journal of
Photography, What's On, Time Out and Al-Hayat
(United Kingdom).

Work in permanent collections

- Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United
Kingdom
- Zwemmers Fine Photographs, London, United
Kingdom
- The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts,
Copenhagen, Denmark
- Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, United Arab
Emirates



Biography

Tarek Talat al-Ghoussein

Born 1962, Kuwait
Lives and works in Sharjah UAE
Associate Professor, American
University Sharjah

Education

1989: Master of Arts-Photography/University of
New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico

1985: Bachelor of Fine Arts-Photography/New
York University, New York, New York

Employment Academic

1998-Present: Assistant & Associate Professor
of Photography, American University of Sharjah,
School of Architecture and Design, Sharjah,
United Arab Emirates

1994-1996: Photography Instructor, Blake Art
College, London, United Kingdom

1991: Photography Instructor, American
University of Cairo, Cairo, Egypt

1987-1989: Graduate Student Instructor,
University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New
Mexico

Professional

1993-1994: Photojournalist, Queen Alia of
Jordan Fund, United Nations Refugee Welfare

الجدار

بدأت عملية توثيق الجدار منذ أن بدأوا ببنائه، وفي كل مرة أظهر فيها الصّور كان كل ما أراه هو بشاعته وغضبي . وعندما وصل الجدار الى نقطة تفتيش قلنديا بدأوا ببنائه في منتصف الطريق، طريقي الى عملي. لطالما تخيلت أنه سيكون بإمكاننا زراعة الأشجار في منتصف تلك الطريق. ففي اللحظة التي وصل فيها الى قلنديا وصل الجدار إليّ وأوجد خويّ. وضعوا الأساسات، وتوقفوا لفترة، ثم بنوه حجراً فوق الآخر على طول الطريق.

أردتُ أن أصوّره في الليل . ربما لجعله يعلم أنني لست خائفة. ذهبتُ وكان الجدار بشعاً جداً، والأرض حزينة خائفة. لم يكن هناك سوى الجنود، آلات ثقيلة ونباح كلاب. كنت مرعوبة ومعزولة . قمتُ بالتصوير خلال النهار لكن ذكرى تلك الليلة كانت حاضرة بها.

بعد أن أنهيتُ المشروع، وفي إحدى الليالي شعرت فجأة أنني أريد الذهاب لرؤية الجدار. كانت ليلة رأس السنة اليهودية. الوقتُ منتصف الليل، لكنني ركبتُ سيارتي وذهبتُ باتجاهه. تابعتُ القيادة على طول طريق الجدار ووصلت الى مكان ليليّ الأولى؛ المكان المليء بالآلات والنباح. كانت جميع الكلاب محبوسة. عدتُ الى المنزل عن طريق جبل الزيتون، المكان الذي الذي رأيتُ فيه النور على هذه الأرض... أرضي . عندها ترجلتُ من السيارة، نظرتُ وقطعت وعداً، وعداً لأرضي.





The Wall

I started documenting the wall almost from when they started building it, but each time I developed the pictures all that showed was its ugliness and my anger. Then the wall reached Qalandia checkpoint. They started building it right in the middle of the road, my road to work. I always fantasized that one day we would plant trees in the middle of that road. Once it reached Qalandia, the wall reached me and found my fear. They put down the foundations, stopped for a while and then they put it up block by block along the middle of the road.

I wanted to photograph it at night. Maybe to let it know I wasn't scared. I went. The wall was so ugly, the land sad and scarred. There were only soldiers, heavy machines and the sound of dogs barking. I was terrified and desolate. I took the photographs during the day, but the memory of that night was in them.

After I finished the project, one night and I do not know why but I suddenly felt I needed to go and see the wall. It was the Jewish New Year. It was almost midnight but I jumped in my car and went back. I drove all along the wall and arrived back at my first night there, at the place with the heavy machines and barking dogs. They were all locked up. I enjoyed the scene. I returned home through the Mount of Olives, where I first stepped foot on this earth, my earth. I got out and looked and made a promise, a promise to my Land.

Rula Halawani



Recent Collective Exhibitions

April 2005,
"The Wall", Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah UAE

September 2004,
"Palestinian I'm & Negative Incursion" Fotografie
Forum International, Frankfurt
"Irrational & Negative Incursion" Noorderlicht Photo
Festival, Leeuwarden, Holland

March 2003,
"Negative Incursion" Art Car Museum, TX, USA

May 2000,
"Symbols From My Homeland" Wig more Gallery,
London. An exhibition completed in France, England,
and the U.S. featuring portraits of immigrants from
various nations and their homeland symbols which
they've brought with them to their new homes.

"Graffiti" Drammen Museum of Art and Cultural His-
tory, Norway, Exhibition

Recent Solo Exhibitions

2004
"Intimacy " Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah,
Palestine

2002
"Palestinian I'm & Negative Incursion," 6th Sharjah
Biennial, Sharjah

December 2002,
"Jerusalem; The warm light still there", The Museum
of the city of Rome
March 2002,
"Palestinian I'm" Bridgette March Gallery, Stuttgart

July 1999,
"Liftta 1948.... East Jerusalem 1967"
Gent, Belgium

June 1999,
"Liftta 1948.... East Jerusalem 1967" Tel Aviv

September 1998,
"Graffiti" Folly Gallery, Lancaster, Britain

Selected Bibliography
•Contributed photographs for the book "The Earth
quake" in April by Riwaq, 2002.
•Contributed photographs for the book "Our Story, the
Palestinians" by Sabeel Theology Center, Palestine,
1999.
•Contributed photographs for the book "The New
Palestinians" by John Wallach, 1992.



Biography

Rula Halawani

Born 1964, Jerusalem

Lives in Jerusalem.

Teacher, founder and head of photography program at Birzeit University.

Education

BA Advanced in Math & Photography, University of Saskatchewan, Canada, 1989

Masters in photographic studies, University of Westminster, London, 2001

Awards and Residencies

2000

Grant from the Global Travel and Learning Fund of the Institute of International Education in New York

Artist residency, Multi Exposure Photography Association, London

Artist residency, Chicago Artist International Program, USA

1999

Artist residency, Contre Jour Photography Association, Marseille

1996

Award from the Palestinian Journalist Union, Palestine
Award from the Ministry of Culture & Arts, Palestine

1993

Award from "International Mother Jones," San Francisco

1988

Award from Department of Photography, University of Saskatchewan, Canada

Award & Certificate from Kodak, Canada

Professional Experience

2001

Photography teacher, head & founder of the department, Birzeit University, Palestine

1998-2000

Director and teacher of photography workshops, al-Ma`mal Foundation for Contemporary Art, Jerusalem

1990

Freelance Photojournalist: Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden; Middle East Report, USA; Reuters; Sygma Agency; Ford Foundation annual report;



حدود تجتاز الأجساد

وأنا أشهد ولادة التزمّت تحت قوة الإحتلال. أم تنتظر في نقطة تفتيش في أريحا، أثناء انتظارها تحضن رضيعها، فالأمومة عين التحدي للإحتلال. إنها تجتاز المر الصعب بين التقاليد والمقاومة. إنها تتاور بين الشارع والقسم المخصص للنساء، بين الحواجز الفعلية والتقليدية، بين التهديد بالجنون الناتج عن العزل والتهديد الناتج عن رصاص الجنود؛ كل هذا بينما تنتظر العبور. في الوقت الذي يعاد فيه صياغة وتطبيق "خارطة السلام" بواسطة جدران، حواجز وتدمير، يتغير خلالها الجسد والعقل الإنساني وهو يبحث عن فسحة كافية بين هذه العوائق المتعددة للعبور من خلالها. دانا عريقات

في "حدود تجتاز الأجساد" تواجه امرأة الحواجز المادية التي تقطع الجسد وهي تلقي نظرة على تاريخ دام يتخطى الطفولة. في مخيم للاجئين أطفال يتأرجحون وبالأمل يتراخضون، يبتسمون ببساطة، كونهم أطفالا، في نقاط تفتيش وسط بيوت مدمّرة، على أنهار مسمومة وأعمدة تلفون. مشيتُ وسطهم بالكاميرا، تراخض الأطفال من حولي ومن خلالي. أنا فلسطينية-أمريكية، أنا هم، أنا لستُ هم. أنا أيضاً أفهم الصراع وأسكن الوطن والغرب. "لماذا لا نُعطين شعرك؟" سألتني فتاة في الرابعة من عمرها؛ ولكن يطول الأمر حتى يقول لي ولد في التاسعة من عمره يقف إلى جانبي إن "التدخين مكروه" تبسّمت لتعليقه

Borders Crossing Bodies

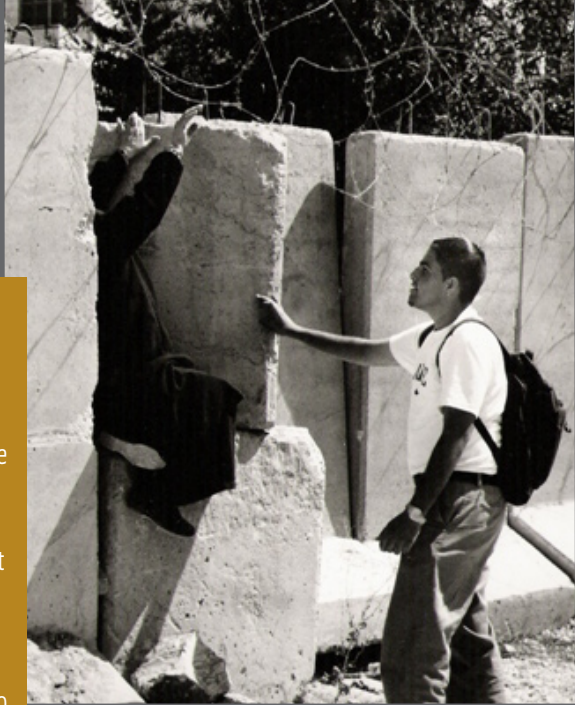
In "How to Cross a Border" A woman defies the physical barriers separating her body from her destination. In "A Gaze" generations of struggle forego childhood. At refugee camps children swing hope running, smiling, simply being children at checkpoints and bulldozed homes, at toxic rivers and telephone poles.

I walk amidst them, with camera in hand children run around and through me. I am Palestinian American. I am them; I am not. I too understand and inhabit the conflicted location of home and the West. "Why aren't you covered," asks a 4 year old girl; it won't be long before I am told that "smoking is a sin in Islam," by a 9 year old boy standing next to me. I grin at his comment witnessing the birth of fundamentalism amidst colonization.

A mother waits at a checkpoint in Jericho, in her waiting she cuddles an infant, motherhood an act of defiance in the midst of colonization. She too traverses the imprecated path of tradition and resistance while garbed in the traditional veil. She negotiates her space between the harem and the streets, between the physical and the traditional barriers, between the threat of insanity confinement and the threat of a soldier's bullet; waiting to cross.

At a time when the Road Map is being redefined by walls, barriers, and destruction, the human body and mind is altered to adapt to the various borders crossing through it.

Dana Erekat





Biography

Dana Erekat

Born 1964, Jerusalem
Architect, lives and works in
Abu Dhabi

Dana Erekat is a Palestinian American architect and artist living in Kuwait. She holds a Bachelors of Architecture from UC Berkeley. She is a former member of the Arab Women's Solidarity Association, San Francisco (AWSA SF). She has organized Sister Rise Up! a cultural and political weekly event which resulted from the impact of 9/11. The event promoted the use of various forms of art, such as spoken words, photography, dance, and song in centralizing Arab women in San Francisco. She has also organized the Practicing Transgressions Activist Institute for Women of Color at UC Berkeley. Dana has participated in the March 2002 Color of Violence Conference organized

by INCITE: Women of Color Against Violence at the University of Illinois, Chicago. She has also participated in the 2003 Empowering Women of Color Conference at UC Berkeley, where her photographs were also exhibited. Her photographs were shown at the Artist Against the Occupation arts exhibit in Philadelphia.

As a recipient of Al-Falah Grant foundation of UC Berkeley, Dana traveled to Palestine in 2003 on a photography assignment titled "Borders Crossing Bodies" during which she spent time in refugee camps and at checkpoints photographing the daily reality of their people. The photographs examine the impact redefining the physical boundary has on social, mental, and physical aspects of human life. They invite the audience to navigate daily life in the West Bank, a life marked by the contours of war, re-emergent Islamic fundamentalism, and globalization.



Tension a documentary film

In "Tension", Mashharawi captures the daily oppression and humiliation experienced by Palestinians especially at the Israeli military checkpoints. In his work Mashharawi transforms people's contenance, looks, body-language and gestures into a non-verbal language effectively communicating the apprehensions, anxieties, and anger dominating the daily life of a whole nation suffering under occupation.

A film without words but far from silent, revealing through intimate images in detail the profoundly deep psychological state of life and living in this terrible reality.

فيلم (توتر)

يرصد المخرج رشيد مشهراوي في (توتر) ما يتعرض له الفلسطينيون في حياتهم اليومية من قهر وبخاصة على الحواجز، ويظهر هذا الفيلم الذي حوّل فيه المخرج ملامح الناس وحركات أيديهم ونظراتهم إلى لغة بديلة عن اللغة المحكية، حالة القلق والانفعالات الداخلية الغاضبة التي تغمر الحياة اليومية لشعب يعاني تحت سطوة الاحتلال.

وقد عبر المخرج عن ذلك بالصمت، حيث يكتفي بالكاميرا التي تتقل أدق الحالات النفسية العميقة للحياة في ظل هذا الوضع الرهيب.

Biography

Rashid Mashharawi

Born 1962, in Al-Shate' refugee camp, Gaza strip – Palestine. Lives and works in Ramallah – Palestine.

Rashid Mashharawi has been active in the world of cinema and movie-making since the age of nineteen, with credit for fifteen movies – both documentaries and feature films – namely "Passport", "Rabab", "Haifa" and "Behind the Walls". Mashharawi took part in numerous Arab and Interna-

tional film festivals including The Cannes Film Festival and Carthage Film Festival. Currently, He is the director of Ramallah's Film Production Centre in Palestine which both produces movies and participates in film festivals. The centre also supports young talents in the field through workshops.

marriages, an increase in domestic violence, and a decrease in levels of education, and this is weird. This has never happened among Palestinians before."

Among the most powerful of Erekat's pictures are a trio of images taken in Abu Dis, where Erekat is originally from. An elderly woman struggles to climb through a crack in a concrete barrier wall, one of the earlier, shorter manifestations of it. She hikes up her skirt, takes high steps that would wind anyone twenty years her junior, and contorts her body to shimmy through the small opening. A young man, presumably her son, lends her a hand and guides her through.

"I had to jump down from this wall myself," says Erekat, who was impressed by the woman's perseverance. "Finding ways to get through," she says, "the body twisting and turning itself to get through." That same wall in Abu Dis is now eight meters high, and completely sealed.

As a student, Erekat was politically active in San Francisco, campaigning for greater awareness of the Palestinian situation on a local, grassroots level. In a sense, she sees her photographs as an extension of those efforts. "It is effective to show people what is happening, that you don't see on the news. The more people see, the more they are aware. The less they see, the more ignorant they are, and the more careless."

It is impressive to see how Erekat, like Jacir, acknowledges her position of privilege and makes it a part of her work, exploring the mechanisms of such privilege along the way. "As a Palestinian you feel awkward taking pictures of other Palestinians," Erekat explains. She had difficulty earning the trust of her subjects, but whenever possible, she spoke to them about their lives and asked them for their stories. Like Jacir, she also hid her camera whenever she went anywhere near

Israeli soldiers, often going so far as to tie it to the inside of her bag, so she could lift one forearm, pull the camera up to her elbow, click the shutter with her other hand, and drop it out of sight again if necessary.

Erekat's photographs, like all the work in this exhibition, do not engage in polemics or hysterical politics. They do not take pity on the Palestinian population but rather seek to document the conditions around them and the resilience within them.

The overall vibe of "The Wall and Checkpoints" is a heavy one. You can't help but reach a point where you say, "This is a tragedy. This situation is impossible, untenable, intractable." But what is striking is the fact that such a tightly themed exhibition could carry so many emotional, aesthetic, and political undertones. The show is both tight and full.

The overriding artistic impulse, more so than meaningful representations of walls or checkpoints, seems to be the desire to leave traces, to create records, documents, and archives of the Palestinian experience, much like the drive, in the terms of political science, to establish facts on the ground. What is haunting about that is the suggestion that artists are now actually grappling with the threat of real extinction, desperate to record presence in the face of absence. Ghoussein's lonely figures, Halawani's nocturnal monsters, Jacir's good deeds and frightened footsteps, Erekat's fearless children, all these works attempt to beat back an unconscionable erasure, all of these works leave traces that speak, that say, we were here, we are here, and we will find an opening in that wretched wall.

Erekat's photographs, like all the work in this exhibition, do not engage in polemics or hysterical politics. They do not take pity on the Palestinian population but rather seek to document the conditions around them and the resilience within them.



"I wanted to capture daily life," says Erekat. "What you hear on the news is who gets killed, but you don't see the daily realities, how people live. I started off wanting to photograph checkpoint and refugee camps, which led to a series on children. When you see these kids, with all the school closures and bombings, there is a strength in them that you don't necessarily see in the adults."

That led to another series on women. The impact of walls and checkpoints and other forms of closure on Palestinian women,

says Erekat, is severe. "She not only fights as a Palestinian, she fights as a woman as well. Women in Palestine have to negotiate the society's traditional values on the one hand, and having to work on the other. And a woman being humiliated at a checkpoint is worse in the eyes of her family." As such, if a checkpoint is erected or expanded on a woman's route to school or work, then it is likely that she will stop going to school or work. "So now, in Palestine," Erekat continues, "you have an increase in early

thing is," she adds, distraught with the tumble of thoughts to follow, "I couldn't do this piece now. I can't get into Gaza. The wall is almost complete. There are no Gazan students at Birzeit University anymore. I can't believe it but really, there are no Gazan students at Birzeit."

In a room next to "Where We Come From" is "Crossing Surda," a video that Jacir began working on while she was, in fact, teaching at Birzeit. The piece unfolds on two screens (one large, one small), recording Jacir's twice daily trek on foot through two kilometers of mud. Since March 2001, the only road between Ramallah and Birzeit (and some 30 other Palestinian villages) has been blocked off by an elaborate and unprecedented Israeli checkpoint.

Palestinians wishing to cross must take a service-taxi to one end of the checkpoint, get out, walk two kilometers to the other end of the checkpoint, and catch another service-taxi to continue their commute. On the vast no man's land in between, they must trudge through mud and uneven terrain, navigate past soldiers, M16s, armored personnel carriers, and tanks. As is their whim, Israeli soldiers may close the checkpoint at any time, using live ammunition, tear gas, and sound bombs to clear the Palestinians out.

In December 2002, Jacir tried to film her feet crossing Surda for no other reason, she explains, than posterity. Because video equipment is forbidden on such sites, a clutch of Israeli soldiers grabbed her, smashed her tape, threw her passport in the mud, held an M16 to her temple, and interrogated her for three hours, all as her students walked by the scene slowly, rattled by the sight of a woman, their teacher, being subjected to the kind of rough treatment usually reserved for young Palestinian men.

The next day, Jacir cut a whole in the bottom

of her bag and filmed her cross, back and forth, clandestinely for eight days. The large screen projects her footage in real time, punctuated by the nervous staccato rhythm of Jacir's footsteps. "Most of the time I was scared to death," she explains. The repetition of her movement back and forth, plunking her bag down on the seat of a bus at the end of each journey, is oddly affecting, almost hypnotizing. The small screen, placed on the floor, plays key scenes of military hardware in slow motion, like memories or nightmares that fade when one wakes.

One watches Jacir's video with a instinctive upward tilt of the chin, desperate to look up, to see what exists at the level of Jacir's eye, not just at a level below her right wrist. This sense of being confined, limited to a downcast view, amplifies the power of her work. By the seventh day, the hole in Jacir's bag has grown ragged, and the viewfinder on her camera is framed by torn thread. It is as apt an image as any of the ever-more threadbare conditions of Palestinian life, emboldened nonetheless by a dogged determination to document it all.

Finally, on a floor below Jacir's and Halawani's installations are the photographs of Dana Erekat, 27. An architect by training, Erekat began taking pictures, she says, "to escape architecture and architecture school." One night in 2002, she got permission to enter Gaza the next morning, unexpectedly. She had just two rolls of film with her -- one color, one black-and-white. But on the strength of the pictures she took then, she won a grant from the University of California at Berkeley to continue her work.

In 2003, she traveled to Palestine to take the pictures that were to become the series "Borders Crossing Bodies," a title that in and of itself illustrates the ways in which Palestinians must constantly adapt to new closures and shifting barriers that impinge their physical movement.

territories), "If I could do anything for you, anywhere in Palestine, what would it be?" Then she set off to complete and document the tasks she gathered, the idea being that her American passport afforded her a level of mobility not accessible to everyone.

The resulting work is a record of about 30 actions. Each request is represented with text printed in black ink on white paper and framed.



"For the exhibition of the work," says Jacir, "I felt the texts should be framed and trapped within a fixed border."

Beside them is the execution, captured in color photographs mounted on cintra or in one case on a screen playing a seamless video loop.

"I felt the photographs should not be framed because this is a dream," Jacir explains.

"Where We Come From" resonates with emotion, candor, sorrow, and occasional humor. In each piece of the project, Jacir's work ostensibly hinges on the fulfillment of a wish. Yet the strength of the work swings on the stark horror of what is wished for to begin with, and why those wishes cannot be fulfilled except by proxy.

Among the requests Jacir collected, ranging from mundane to melodramatic, are: Go pay my phone bill. Take flowers to my mother's grave on her birthday. Take pictures of my family, especially my brother's kids. Go on a date with a Palestinian girl in East Jerusalem who I have only ever spoken to on the phone. Go to Gaza and eat sayadiyeh. Go to Haifa at first light, take a deep breath, and light a candle to all those who gave their lives for Palestine.

In each piece of the project, Jacir's work ostensibly hinges on the fulfillment of a wish.

"This work came from the experience of growing up always carrying stuff back and forth," explains Jacir. "The very first idea was to [approach] Palestinians not living in Palestine but then I realized that Palestinians living in Palestine are living an extreme form of exile, so the final work includes half who are in and half who are out. There is a sense that the narrative of Palestinians living in the West Bank is the Palestinian narrative. But there are a million Palestinian narratives, not one, and no one narrative is more important than the others. It was important for me to strike a balance, in several ways. Some of the people are super rich and bourgeois, some are poor. Some live in the camps in the West Bank, some in Lebanon, Syria, the Gulf. The

piece of architecture, Halawani's photographs expose it instead as an indefensible blight on the landscape, a structure that is deeply, inescapably sinister in intent.

"I'm not just telling my feelings toward this ugly construction wall," says Halawani. "Each photograph symbolizes what the years of Israeli occupation have done to my land: The standing stone symbolizes the tombs of the dead, those I have seen killed by the Israeli army. The water symbolizes all the water that was stolen from the West Bank by Israel. The ugly shadow reflected on the wall symbolizes the monster of the settlements that casts a shadow over our lives. And finally, the emptiness in my photographs symbolizes Israel's continuing attempt to erase Palestinian society, which began in 1948 and continues to this day. So each photo tells part of the larger story of Palestine, a story that all Palestinians know deeply from their

"The very first idea was to approach Palestinians not living in Palestine but then I realized that Palestinians living in Palestine are living an extreme form of exile"

own experience, but one which the world sees only the surface of, or has sometimes chosen to ignore."

Beyond Halawani's projections and further into the main building are two projects by

Emily Jacir, 35. The first is the monumental "Where We Come From," produced between 2001 and 2003, a work of such scope and power it deserves to be in the collection of (and on permanent display in) a major museum. The second is "Crossing Surda (A Record of Going To and From Work)," a dual-screen piece from 2005 and a recent addition to the Khalid Shoman Foundation collection.

With family roots in Bethlehem, Jacir grew up in Riyadh, pursued her education in Dallas and Memphis, and moved at various points to Rome, Paris, New York, and Ramallah. Although she began her career as a painter, Jacir shifted toward a decidedly more conceptual art practice in the late 1990s. Informed by her own nomadic movement and influenced by action and performance-based artists such as Sophie Calle, Jacir typically begins her work with a premise, the execution of which determines the media.



For "Where We Come From," through word of mouth and the placement of a few targeted classified advertisements, Jacir asked Palestinians living in various stages of exile (both within and outside of the Palestinian

"I wanted very harsh light," says Halawani, explaining that the wall there overruns the road she takes every day to work.

Halawani has often said that she wanted to photograph the wall at night to let it know that she was not scared, which, of course, would suggest that on some level she was.



"The first time I drove that road and saw that [the Israelis] were putting up the bases, I was so mad and I was so scared. When I take pictures, I like to be alone, but I cannot say I was not scared. Whatever happens, I don't want to be scared in my own land. So despite the dogs and the army, I really wanted to feel I could still do it. And I wanted the work to document what I went through, the experience of it."

As such, Halawani's work illustrates the ways in which art can function to capture lived experience -- documenting the impact of the wall on even the most basic quotidian routines, such as driving to and from work -- as well as the ways in which the reproduction and dissemination of art can contribute to an actual change in the conditions shaping everyday life -- raising awareness about the

wall outside of Palestine and calling attention to the instances of Israeli aggression that do not always make it onto the news.

It is telling that Halawani worked for many years as a photojournalist, tasked with documenting the political landscape in Palestine with cool objectivity for such press

"Each photograph symbolizes what the years of Israeli occupation have done to my land: The standing stone symbolizes the tombs of the dead, those I have seen killed by the Israeli army."

agencies as Reuters and Sygma. She reached a point, however, where she says, "I couldn't continue as a photojournalist. I couldn't put my feelings on the side anymore. It was too difficult. Now," she adds, "I feel more freedom to express my feelings."

In a room beyond Halawani's first projected series is a second, this one larger, more menacing, shot during grey and somber winter days, amplifying the relationship between the concrete wall, felled trees, and random pools of water, which are emblematic of what many perceive to be an Israeli land grab for Palestinian water resources. Each image is haunted, devoid of human presence, and dominated by the imposition of grossly utilitarian, outrageously oversized concrete planks. While a number of art critics have attempted to write about the barrier wall as a

These images use depictions of a single figure -- the artist with his face obscured by his black-and-white scarf -- set against an often striking but ultimately barren landscape to express the plight of Palestinians who have lost their home and tangible connections to their land. Like Sisyphus, Ghousein, and by extension the Palestinian people in the absence of a guaranteed right of return, are condemned to struggle for, but never reach, their destination.

Next door to the room with his self portraits, in a black-painted enclosure specially constructed at the Darat last September by architect Sahel al-Hiyari (for an exhibition of his work timed to the completion of his ultra-contemporary renovations to the foundation's exterior façade), Ghousein has placed six more images, each printed on translucent rice paper and hung from the ceiling with fishing wire. The effect is such that each photograph seems to float at shoulder level in the tiny rectangular space, luring viewers into the room to negotiate a path around and between them.

The delicacy of the material contradicts the sturdiness of Ghousein's subjects, which are huge slabs of concrete, reminiscent of the barrier wall in Palestine but in fact photographed on construction sites in Sharjah (the just-visible decorative detailing on the edges of each concrete surface betray their benign purpose).

"I wanted to address the psychological aspects of the wall," says Ghousein. "In order to do so it was necessary to move away from the physicality of the wall. The transparency and lightness of the rice paper seemed to be an appropriate medium. In addition, I wanted viewers' shadows to be part of the exhibition as they navigate through the layers formed by the images."

One image in particular echoes the movement of viewers exactly, showing

Ghousein with his back to his own camera, slipping between two walls.

"To me, the wall -- or any wall -- only gains meaning when considered in its specific context and in relation to human beings," the artist explains. "By bringing the human into the image, allowing the scale of the human in relation to the enormous wall to be visible, the power -- and in my view, of course, the destructive and/or self-destructive power -- is underlined. By its sheer scale, the wall overpowers both the individual and communities."

This series has previously been shown at the Sharjah Biennial and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Bonn, but Ghousein is continuously adding new images. There are three such images on view at the Darat, two of which are decidedly painterly and one of which is decidedly sculptural. This cross-referencing of media lends Ghousein's photographic work an added sense of fullness, which is further enhanced by the relationship between the images and the space in which they are being shown. Because the black room in the Blue House is small, the installation of Ghousein's work here feels intimate and direct, suffused with a quiet melancholy that acts as potential release valve for an imagination troubled by images of political, physical, and mental closure.

Down the steep exterior staircase to the main building at the Darat, which overlooks the ruins of a sixth-century Byzantine church, Rula Halawani, 41, has also installed two related bodies of work. Inside the entrance, she is projecting a series of still photographs that flash slowly in sequence like a slideshow, a visual narrative that accumulates meaning with each new image. Halawani's photographs depict Israel's concrete barrier wall near the Qalandia checkpoint at night, illuminated only by the headlights from her car.

identity, mobility, barriers, and belonging.

In one room, Ghousein has placed six images from his "Untitled A" and "Untitled Self Portrait" series flush against the wall. With a clear nod to Albert Camus's take on the myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned to repeat a pattern of pushing a large stone boulder up a steep hill only to let it roll

often treat the keffiyeh as the quintessential accoutrement of terrorists and suicide bombers.

As a Palestinian with Kuwaiti citizenship who is barred from entering Palestine, Ghousein's photographs consider how identity -- already highly contested, as the artist points out -- is constructed through symbols that are

Ghousein's photographs consider how identity -- already highly contested -- is constructed through symbols that are no longer rooted in place, unfixed from their territory, and resigned to dramatic shifts in meaning.



back down and start over again, Ghousein's images also explore the slippery iconography of the keffiyeh, which is taken variably as a proto-nationalist symbol, an emblem of resistance, and a threat of violence, particular in media outlets throughout the West which

no longer rooted in place, unfixed from their territory, and resigned to dramatic shifts in meaning.

Ghousein's "Untitled A" and "Untitled Self Portrait" series also exude a profound sense of longing that borders on loneliness.

Since its inception in 1993, Darat al-Funun -- which means "home for the arts" in Arabic and is known locally as "The Darat" -- has distinguished itself on numerous fronts. The rehabilitation and use of its structures has sparked the urban regeneration of one of Amman's oldest historical neighborhoods. The Darat's robust library and regular schedule of literary meetings, film screenings, and musical performances have given the local community a much-needed platform on which they may engage culture and consider its potential with relative continuity and consistency. The growth of the Darat's collection of modern and contemporary art from across the Arab world, under the auspices of the Khalid Shoman Foundation, has cohered into a crucial archive of creative expression, providing young people in particular with a link between past and present and an invaluable resource for learning about their cultural history and artistic heritage.

Upping the ante another notch is the Darat's program of exhibitions. Whether these three-month-long shows delve into the foundation's permanent collection, highlight new acquisitions, or assemble a selection of works for the occasion, they have greatly contributed to the professionalization of the art world, not only in Jordan but also in the region at large. By mounting exhibitions that survey contemporary art in the Arab world or explore expressions of exile, the Darat has introduced notions of curatorial intent and thoughtful installation practices that are sensitive to site.

With its current exhibition, "The Wall and Checkpoints," the Darat has added another layer to its work. Organizing a show that pinpoints the relationship between experimental art practices and the need to address complex political concerns through cultural production affectively gives visitors

to the Darat a set of critical tools to better understand the world they live in and work through its vexing, often overwhelming, social, political, and economic problems. It is a daring move on the part of the Darat, treading outside the territory of art as a source of aesthetic pleasure. But it is one that pays off in depth of feeling, intellectual rigor, raw expression, and formal innovation.

"The Wall and Checkpoints" runs from February 2 through April 13 and features photographs and video installations by four artists scattered to various spots in the Palestinian Diaspora. Emily Jacir is a multimedia artist who divides her time between New York and Ramallah, Rula Halawani is a photojournalist-turned-fine art photographer who lives in Jerusalem and teaches at Birzeit University, Dana Erekat is an architect who lives and works in Kuwait, and Tarek al-Ghoussein is an art photographer who teaches at the American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Each artist is flexing his or her formal and conceptual skill to grapple with notions of closure, with the physical and mental barriers that are particularly egregious in Palestine but are also operative all over the world, barriers which serve more than anything to limit human movement and freedom of thought. The strength of the show lies in its quiet assertion that the creation and circulation of contemporary art may ultimately prove to be a powerful force for helping one to transcend such barriers and escape such instances of closure. "The Wall and Checkpoints" is, in this regard, an example of radical opening.

At the upper edge of the Darat, Tarek al-Ghoussein, 44, has installed two series of photographs in the rooms of an early-twentieth century building known as the Blue House. Each set of images is a selection from an ongoing project investigating issues of



Representing Palestine: Forms of Closure, Documentary Traces, and the Art of Breaking through Barriers

Kaelen Wilson-Goldie

For the generation of Palestinians who were exiled from their land in 1948, it was the rusted key and dog-eared land deed. For the generation who lived through the first intifada in the late 1980s, it was the stone and keffiyeh. For the generation who are now enduring the latest machinations of the Israeli occupation -- characterized by an ever-changing network of security measures intended to protect one side and wage psychological warfare on the other -- it is the wall and checkpoint that have become the most loaded visual symbols of the current Palestinian condition.

Checkpoints have long disrupted the daily rhythms of work, schooling, and trade in Palestine, adding insult to injury by subjecting members of the Palestinian population to repeated humiliation and interrogation. The wall that Israel began

building in the West Bank in 2002 -- three times the height of the Berlin Wall and plotted on a route equal to the distance between London and Zurich -- is destroying agricultural land, ghettoizing urban neighborhoods, reducing already minimized autonomous zones, robbing resources, and converting the Palestinian territories into apartheid-style Bantustans. As such, the wall and checkpoint have become painful nodes in the narrative tissue of the contemporary Palestinian experience. As visual symbols open to critical inquiry, they also serve as the two points around which an ellipse of an exhibition is presently revolving at Darat al-Funun, an arts foundation in Jordan tucked into a series of old buildings on a site that tumbles down a steep hill on the eastern edge of the old, densely residential district of Jabal Weibdeh in Amman.

"The Wall & the Check Points"

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