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ATHR

**HAZEM HARB**  
*BODY OF WORK*



*We Used To Fly on Water*, 2014  
20 Steel cases  
H50 x W400 cm

Tunnel digging between the Gaza Strip to the Egyptian borders has become a commonplace today, driven by the rallying cry that *necessity knows no law*. At a high price, the journey is paved with danger and uncertainty, yet filters Gazan inhabitants with fundamental basic needs. The underground network of tunnels represent the desperate measures reached against the inhumane isolation and suffocation imposed against them and the active defiance and resilience on the part of the Palestinian people in countering such injustices.

Hazem Harb's latest body of work, *Invisible Travels*, responds directly to such circumstances, exposing elusive realities of secret mobility, whereby the underground undisclosed passageways are travelled through his eyes, focusing on the symbolic dimension conveyed to the viewer and aiming at turning individual narrative into a collective participation with which one could interact, further highlighting the importance of freedom of movement, as a basic human right.



These works refer to the ‘ghost towns’ that the Palestinians live in, particularly located on the Gaza Strip. Towns surrounded by soldiers’ barracks, and small plots of land transformed into training grounds, labeling the area a battleground.

Israel’s safety is always secured at the expense of a Palestinian life. That life is transformed into cubic blocks, similar to those of Bauhaus architecture, their sharpness and clean lines a metaphor for the harshness of separation and isolation.

The ‘Isolation’ series is born of the imagination, and speaks of the racist wall of separation on Palestinian land. Similarly, the work ‘The Other Half’; a chair, split in two, with a light concrete base, topped with barbed wire, articulates the state of the separation wall. Also, the work ‘Sustainable Waiting’ refers to the topic of exile that Palestinians have been undergoing since 1948 until the present day. It is constructed out of a transparent box, holding the passport of a Palestinian exiled to Gaza, a suitcase belonging to someone in the Gaza Strip. It also includes two collage works that tie the past to the present through the use of an image of the deserted Gaza

*The Other Half*, 2012  
Installation - Stainless Steel 01 No,  
barbed wire, cement  
H150 x W50 x D50 cm



*Al Baseera* is a series of three-dimensional paintings inspired by abstract Islamic art. The objective is to re-view it from different, contemporary perceptions. Forming an interesting and unique conceptual and philosophical collection that transforms into geometrical shapes.

What is often recounted about the aesthetic of Islamic geometry and its splendor is that it quenches the observer's taste for beauty and awakens the senses. Noticing the difference between the straight and the curved, the moving and the fixed, the closed and the open, the dot and the full circle help appreciate the function of Islamic geometry

The artist believes the role of Islamic geometry is to establish that humans have a unified existences; a solid unit of that is part of the creation of beauty.

*Al Baseera 7 and 1, 2013*  
Acrylic on canvases  
H150 x W120 cm

*Archaeology Of Occupation*  
*TAG*

Text by Lara Khaldi

*Archaeology of Occupation* is a new body of work by artist Hazem Harb. In the collage series Harb juxtaposes pre nakba (1948) photographs of Palestinian landscapes with concrete heavy masses in the horizon of some of the images. Among many things, Harb has been experimenting with the relationship between sculpture and painting; collage as a technique seems to be very fitting, not only in terms of formal experimentation, but as a reference from modernist works of art. Harb is referencing modernism in relation to architecture, the occupation of Palestine and the Bauhaus style that worked hand in hand with military occupation. The series emphasizes a history of colonialism, where the fraught concretions are levitating ominously above Palestinian coastal skies. Thus the collage is double fold: the photos show a landscape devoid of people representing a biblical landscape while the concrete cut outs preempt the arrival of colonial modernizing concrete onto the horizon of the cities. But how does one read it from the present, or from the future? Perhaps in reverse?

The *TAG* series is posing a question to the past in a very contemporary familiar language of tagging. The photos, also archival pre dating 1948, show faces and bodies that seem to be inhabiting their native landscapes, but that almost ornament them rather than pose a physical presence. The act of tagging that Harb introduces is both an effacing and an affirming act. It is worth noting that, during iconoclastic periods in Ottoman times, a line was added onto the neck of the figure in miniature paintings as to annul any animate affect. Thus Harb's work is not only a nuanced affirmation of the presence of people in that landscape, but is also a question about contemporary ways of self-legitimation and archival tendencies on social media and the internet.



*Untitled 3*, 2015  
*Archaeology of Occupation* series  
Print on Hahnemuhle FineArt Baryta 325gms  
mounted on 3mm aluminum composite  
172 x 120 cm  
Ed. 1/3



*TAG 09* from *TAG Series*, 2015  
Inkjet photo copy print, and collage on fine  
art paper  
56 x 76 cm  
Unique



## HAZEM HARB

### THE INVISIBLE LANDSCAPE AND CONCRETE FUTURES

In this solo exhibition for artist Hazem Harb, three bodies of work and several art works are presented. In Architecture of the Disappeared, collage series, HARB's photographs are HARB's (1988), photographs of Palestinian territories with concrete being broken in the hands of the struggle. The series emphasizes a history of colonization, where the struggle continues to be haunting, especially about Palestinian civilian lives. This series is also based on historical photographs of Palestine. The act of logging that their intervention is both an offering and an offering act. The series is not only a historical affirmation of the presence of individuals and bodies in the landscape, but it also addresses contemporary ways of self-identification and political boundaries on social media and the internet. This is not a Museum in an exhibition that is based on the Year plan of the Harb's family house built in 1982 in Jerusalem that was confiscated in 1988 and turned into an Israeli Museum. In the case of the house the architecture was not destroyed but replaced; the intervention happened through erasure and usage. HARB uses this as a context for asking questions about the destruction of social, narrative and material structures. The exhibition and the title on the platform form a dialogue between the different materials of construction and destruction, but all have to do with time, perhaps indicating an act of transformation, and of the potential for rebuilding.

This exhibition is kindly supported by Hans Barth & Soner Yous.

*This Is Not A Museum, 2015*  
 Multimedia sculpture video installation.  
 Wooden platform, glass, concrete stone,  
 pillow, Neon Box.  
 Variable Dimensions.  
 Unique





*Re-proposing the memory, 2015*  
Inkjet photo copy print, and collage on fine  
art paper.  
Unique, with sculptural wooden frame  
Variable dimension

Born in 1980 in Gaza; Palestinian artist Hazem Harb currently lives between Rome, Italy and Dubai, UAE. Harb completed his MFA at The European Institute of Design, Rome, Italy in 2009. Some of Harb's solo shows include: *Al Baseera*, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, 2014; *I can imagine you without your home*, Etemad Gallery, Dubai, UAE, 2012 ; *Is this your first time in Gaza?* The Mosaic Rooms, A.M. Qattan Foundation, London, UK, 2010; *Burned Bodies*, video installation, Città dell'Altra Economia Rome, Italy, 2008.

He has also participated in numerous international group exhibitions some of which are: *Made by War* at the National Ethnographic and Pre-historical Museum Luigi Pigorini, Rome, Italy, 2007; *All that is Unknown* at Al-Ma'mal Art Foundation for Contemporary Art, Jerusalem, Palestine, 2011; *A Patch On My Evil Eye* The Arab British Centre, London UK, 2010; *A View From Inside*, FotoFest Houston Biennial, 2014 and *Sphere 6*, Galleria Continua's Le Moulin, France, 2013 and 2014. In 2015. He will be participating in *Common Grounds* curated by Verena Hein, Museum Villa Stuck, Munich 2015.

Harb was awarded a residency at The Delfina Foundation, London; Cite des Arts, Paris and Satellite, Dubai. In 2008, he was shortlisted for the A.M Qattan Young Artist of The Year award. His work is in the collections of The British Museum, Sharjah Art Foundation, Centre Pompidou, The Oriental Museum - Durham University, Salsali Private Museum, Al Qattan Foundation and Al Barjeeel Foundation among others.

